

Asian Research Center for Religion and Social Communication

St John's University, Bangkok, Thailand

Invites you to a webinar on

ECOFEMINISM

in the Asian Context

SPEAKERS

Savita Singh, PhD

School of Gender and Development Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University (Delhi).

Jeramie N. Molino, PhD

Saint Louis University, Baguio City, Philippines

Sharon A. Bong, PhD

School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University Malaysia



FRIDAY 30 AUGUST 2024

4:30 - 7 PM (DELHI); 6 - 8:30 PM (BKK); 7 - 9:30 PM (MANILA/HK); 9 - 11:30 PM (SYDNEY)

ZOOM MEETING ID: 891 4422 8015 PASS CODE: ECOASIA

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89144228015?pwd=aLJP4hW4NPP6O0tnj7nFguk6xqHX60.1>





Dr. Savita Singh is a distinguished feminist theorist and poet. Her literary writing have been translated into major languages, including French, German and Spanish; for which she has received numerous awards. Savita is professor and founding director of the School of Gender and Development Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University (Delhi). She is a member of the board of directors of the International Herbert Marcuse Society (US), also the president of the Association of Creative Theory, Delhi. Among her latest publications in political theory and Philosophy, Reality and It's Depths: A Conversation with Savita Singh and Roy Bhaskar, edited by Marvyn Hartwig (Springer, 2020); "Three Languages of the discourse of Modernity in India", in the book Exploring Indian Modernities: Ideas and Practices, ed. Leila. Chourkounne and Parul Bhandari (Springer, 2018), and "Walking on Dew: A Feminist Reading of Krishna Sobti's Listen Girl!" in Krishna Sobti: A Counter Archive (Routledge, 2022). In literature, Savita Singh, ed., Pratirodh Ka Stree Swar: Samkaleen Hindi Kavita (Poetry of Resistance by Women poets writing in Hindi, Radhakrishna Prakashan, Delhi, 2023) and has recently published collection of Hindi poems, Khoyi Cheezon ka Shoke (Requiem for List Things) (Radhakrishna Prakashan, 2021) and Vasana Ek Nadi Ka Nam Hai (Eros is the Name of a River) (Vani Prakashan, 2024)



Dr. Jeramie N. Molino earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Theology (PhD APT) from De La Salle University, Manila on February 16, 2022. Prior to this, she completed her Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management (PhDEM) at Saint Louis University, Baguio City on January 31, 2015. She also holds a Master of Arts in Education, majoring in Religious Education (MA-ERE), from the Catechetical Center at Columban College, Olongapo City, which she completed on March 28, 2009. Her academic journey began with a Bachelor in Elementary Education, majoring in Religious and Values Education (BEED-RE/VE), also from the Catechetical Center at Columban College, Olongapo City, completed on March 31, 2004. Additionally, she became a professionally licensed teacher in 2006. In addition to her academic pursuits, she has held leadership roles within various professional organizations. She served as the Corporate Secretary of the Religious Educator's Association of the Philippines (REAP). Her dedication to research and publication is evident through her active participation in paper presentations and the publication of numerous articles in both national and international journals, including prestigious Scopus-indexed publications. Her contributions reach beyond academia as she promotes workplace spirituality, youth development, and environmental awareness. She advises youth ministries and research teams, nurturing spiritual growth, leadership, and research skills in students and youth. Furthermore, she leads workshops on topics like team building, biblical studies, ecology, leadership, vocation, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) and Philippine Catholic Schools Standards (PCSS). She strives to be an exemplary figure in the field of education and research, blending academic rigor with a strong commitment to service and youth empowerment.



Dr. Sharon A. Bong is Professor of Gender Studies at the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University Malaysia. She has authored *Becoming queer and religious in Malaysia and Singapore* (2020), and co-edited *Gender and Sexuality Justice in Asia* (2020). She is currently consultant to and former coordinator of the Ecclesia of Women in Asia, an academic forum of feminist Catholic women theologians in Asia. She served in these capacities: a forum writer for the Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (on ecological ethics, sexual ethics, postcolonial theories and LGBTQ theologies) and a member of the Board of Editors and Board of Directors for *Concilium*, the international journal for theology.

ABSTRACTS

In the Mirror of Nature: Ecofeminism in India (Savita Singh)

Abstract. Ecofeminism in India has deep philosophical roots. The Sankhya school in particular equates nature with women, whose essence lies in the regeneration and nurturing of life on earth. In the realm of material existence, it is this feminine principle that sustains everything, including purusha, the conjoined masculine principle in the universe. This is believed by women in India who save trees when under the threat of felling; when they save myriad seeds to protect the diversity of nature; and also when they cultivate rare varieties of rice and other kinds of grain to promote the good health of their children. In contemporary India, the most famous ecology movement, the Chipko Movement, was led by women of the Garhwal region against the contractors who treated trees as raw materials for the factory. Women argued that trees, as much as forests, are living beings and cannot be murdered. The source of livelihood for families in the Himalayan region, was ultimately their source of life. Their destruction would entail destruction of human life as well. All life forms are interconnected. In recent years, Vandana Shiva, the most famous ecofeminist of India, has deepened these ideas by critiquing the reductionist western scientific ideology as anti-nature and, to that extent, anti women. She has argued more in line with two important Western ecofeminists, Carolyn Merchant and Maria Meies, who also connect the destruction and death of nature with the rise of western modernity, science, and capitalism. Ecofeminism in India is thus, theoretically connected with the historical truth of its colonization, in more than political and economic sense, the colonization of India's forest tell a story of its ecological subordination as well.

Ecofeminism in the Philippines: Intersections of Gender, Culture, and Environmental Justice (Jeramie N. Molino)

Abstract. This paper explores the unique manifestations of ecofeminism within the Philippine context, highlighting its integrated approach to environmental issues through the lenses of gender and culture. Central to Philippine ecofeminism is the recognition of the interconnectedness between nature and gender roles, challenging patriarchal norms that exploit both women and the environment. Cultural diversity is celebrated, with indigenous wisdom and spiritual relationships shaping sustainable practices rooted in local communities. Despite significant challenges posed by patriarchal structures, economic pressures, and globalization, Philippine ecofeminism perseveres through community-based conservation initiatives led by women. These efforts prioritize the preservation of cultural practices that promote ecological balance and advocate for women's rights in environmental decision-making processes. Philippine ecofeminism contributes to regional and global environmental discourse by offering cultural sensitivity and an intersectional approach that integrates gender equality into sustainable development policies. Through advocacy and knowledge exchange, Philippine ecofeminism inspires inclusive environmental strategies that resonate globally, promoting resilience and sustainability in the face of environmental challenges. This paper underscores the transformative potential of Philippine ecofeminism in advancing a more equitable and sustainable future, advocating for holistic approaches that uphold gender justice and environmental stewardship within local and global contexts.

Gender, Ecology and Religions: A Queer-Ecofeminist Proposal for Climate Justice and Gender Justice (Sharon A. Bong)

Abstract. To what extent are religions and spiritualities a source and resource in realising climate justice and gender justice? The Christian story of creation begins with fashioning order from chaos and positions the human at the centre of creation and superior to other creatures. Yet the church calls for an “integral ecology” that celebrates the profound relationality of Creator and all of creation. Within a Christian framework that is not only anthropocentric but also androcentric – privileging the domination of (hu)man over nature and man over women, respectively – might turning to other religions and spiritualities in Asia offer a way forward in realising the vision of an “integral ecology”? The presentation shows the need to gender eco-theologies from the lens of ecofeminists. The intersection of climate justice and gender justice within a religious framework is thematically explored through: 1) creation as proliferation through the eco-theology of a Malaysian Jesuit priest-shaman, and 2) creation as materiality through the narrative of a young Muslim women ecofeminist. I argue that to green religions is to queer religions and in these other queer beginnings that go beyond the Christian narrative, lie radical hope.