



AARHUS UNIVERSITY

# RESPONSIBILITY CLIMATE CHANGE AS CHALLENGE FOR INTERCULTURAL INQUIRY ON VALUES

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An international interdisciplinary conference for  
researchers in the Humanities and human sciences,  
educators, journalists, and business representatives

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**NOVEMBER 3-6, 2009, AARHUS UNIVERSITY**



**GLOBAL DIALOGUE  
CONFERENCE  
2009**

# CLIMATE CHANGE – A CHALLENGE TO HUMAN NATURE

Climate protection cannot be motivated by self-interest alone; it depends on our capacity to act morally. There are no practical or political reasons that can trump our moral responsibilities. Climate change is primarily a moral challenge: Who are 'we' and why does 'our' future matter to each of 'us'? This is a question for intercultural inquiry on values.

The aim of this conference is to address, in intercultural dialogue, the most important question in the international debate about climate change: Can we develop a notion of joint global ecological responsibility?



# COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FUTURE: ANSWERS ACROSS CULTURES

Climate change requires globally concerted actions, but our moral principles of action are local: They are tied to a culture or religion, and often in conflict with each other.

Various models of collective and non-reciprocal responsibility have been suggested to clarify problems of ecological or "global" responsibilities. But these models mostly incorporate Western values. The question is: Can they motivate agents around the world? Or should we give up on a shared notion of global ecological responsibility and rely on regional accounts only?

If we are responsible for the well-being of future generations, which notion of human well-being can be globally endorsed, if any?



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# THE CONFERENCE: MAKING INTERCULTURAL THOUGHT MATTER

**AIM:** This conference will highlight the significance of intercultural value research for the international debate on climate change. Policies on climate change are framed in terms of concrete interests and strategies, but they are motivated by notions of responsibility that in turn rest on conceptions of justice and human well-being. Responsibilities can only be ascribed to agents who understand that they are under an obligation to produce or maintain a certain value. A better understanding of cross-cultural differences in values and associated models of responsibility may lead to more effective negotiation of transnational policies. The conference will also investigate the role of individuals as citizens and consumers.

**OBJECTIVES:** The conference will compare conceptions of responsibility across cultures. In doing so, the meeting will explore the role of intercultural value research for the formulation, communication, and practical implementation of ecological responsibilities.

**FORMAT:** Taking ecological responsibility requires that change in our praxis is promoted through responsible public communication, education, financial and economic organization. Responsible practice often reveals underlying values. Thus, the conference will bring together international scholars in the Humanities and human sciences, educators, journalists, business researchers, and business representatives reporting on current praxis. To increase cross-disciplinary dialogue, participants will be able to choose freely among parallel sessions in four tracks:

**TRACK 1: CONCEPTUAL AND FOUNDATIONAL ISSUES**

**TRACK 2: EDUCATION**

**TRACK 3: JOURNALISM**

**TRACK 4: BUSINESS (RESEARCH AND PRAXIS)**



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# TRACK YOUR TOPIC

## TRACK 1: CONCEPTUAL AND FOUNDATIONAL ISSUES

Session in track 1 will address questions in philosophy, religious studies, psychology, sociology, and anthropology:

- Are there important cross-cultural variations in the conception and significance of e.g. individual, collective, ex post, ex ante, non-reciprocal, moral, and political responsibility?
- Which notions of responsibility are at play in the current scientific and public debate?
- Which values enter into the obligations that constitute ecological responsibilities in different cultural contexts? Is ecological responsibility a matter of personal responsibility or of social responsibility? Are there intrinsic values on which there could be cross-cultural consensus?
- How can we protect the rights and interests of geographically remote agents and future generations? Does the scope of morality extend with the scope of technological agency?
- Does it hold across cultures that taking responsibility is a source of existential orientation, respect, and self-respect?
- How does intercultural dialogue on values differ from discourse-theoretic foundations of values, and in which way can intercultural dialogue lead beyond the trilemma of so-called 'global' ethics and value theory: empty universalism vs. conflicting substantive ethics vs. purely performative constitutions of consensus?



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## TRACK 2: EDUCATION

Sessions in track 2 will address questions of intercultural education and education for sustainability/ecological responsibility:

- Are there important variations in the social perception of the role of education for ecological responsibility in different cultures?
- Which educational styles, methods, or practices (e.g., affective, cognitive, normative, participatory) are used to educate for responsibility across cultures?
- To what extent, and in which regards, is climate change currently an issue in national (e.g., Danish) education programs?
- What is intercultural education and which are the main challenges of climate change for the tasks and concerns of intercultural education?
- How do we promote responsible behavior in culturally diverse communities with different conceptions of human well-being?
- Does the diversity of cultural models of education and increasing cultural contact call for a new philosophy of education that is sensitive to cultural axiological differences?

## TRACK 3: JOURNALISM

Sessions in track 3 address questions of environmental journalism and the role of journalism for intercultural dialogue:

- When and under what circumstances does climate change become a news item?
- What type of actors and themes can attract the attention of journalists and get climate change onto the news agenda?
- How does environmental journalism operate and how does it affect changes in individual behavior and public policy?
- Is it possible to build a global public and what role can and should local media play in this effort?
- At a time where scientists disagree amongst themselves and very few journalists have a thorough scientific understanding of the issues, how can we be sure that the information in the media is both accurate and adequate?
- What is the appropriate role of journalists when reporting on industries offering market-based solutions to climate problems?
- Can peace journalism help to prevent "climate conflicts", i.e., social conflicts due to climate change?
- Do journalists carry increasing responsibility for intercultural communication and if so, how will it affect the goals of journalism?



## TRACK 4: BUSINESS (RESEARCH AND PRAXIS REPORTS)

Sessions in track 4 address questions in finance theory and corporate responsibility in theory and praxis:

- To what extent have investment networks created new institutional arrangements that promise to transform privately managed capital into a driver of responsible governance?
- Are current engagements in corporate ecological responsibility effective, or are they just 'green-washing'?
- Which of the control parameters in the network of factors involved in CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions have been proven as most effective, and in which contexts?
- Could partnerships (among companies and NGOs, or between the public and private sectors), be used to reduce the CO<sub>2</sub>-impact of production and consumption?
- Should companies communicate their current policies and activities on ecological responsibility, and how should they do it?
- What are the cross-cultural variations in approaches to corporate ecological responsibilities and to what extent do such differences present a problem for companies with multicultural staff or transcultural organization?



# PLENARY SPEAKERS

**Lord Bhikhu Parekh**, Centennial Professor at the Centre for the Study of Global Governance at the London School of Economics. Emeritus Professor of Political Theory at the University of Hull. Member of the House of Lords. Leading expert on questions of cultural diversity, identity politics, and intercultural dialogue..

**Fred Dallmayr**, Packey J. Dee Professor in the departments of philosophy and political science at the University of Notre Dame. Leading expert in intercultural political philosophy and ethics, known in particular for his studies on new ways of 'being self' in a world that values diversity.

**Robin R. Wang**, Professor of philosophy at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. Special researcher at the Center for Religious and Ethics Study at South Central University, Hunan, China, and former Vice-president of the Association of Chinese Philosophers in America. International expert on world philosophy and intercultural value theory.

**Audrey Osler**, Professor for Education and Director of the Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights Education, University of Leeds, UK. International expert on international and comparative education; education for human rights, equalities, and democratic citizenship.

**Timothy Reagan**, Professor of Education at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut, USA. International expert on educational linguistics, foreign language education, critical pedagogy, educational leadership, and comparative and international education.

**Susanna Priest**, Professor at the Hank Greenspun School of Journalism & Media Studies, College of Mass Communications and Information Studies, University of Nevada. International expert on science communication and environmental journalism.



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**Chris Nash**, Professor of Journalism, Head of Discipline, Monash University, former Director of the Australian Centre for Independent Journalism (1998-2008), University of Technology, Sydney. International expert on environmental journalism, investigative journalism, comparative journalism, and issues surrounding the freedom of communication and information. Received the Walkley Award of Journalism.

**Hu Angang**, Professor of Economics at Tsinghua University, China, and Director of the Center for China Studies at the Tsinghua Chinese Academy of Science. Influential economist and advocate of "green revolution", pressing the Chinese government to take a leadership role in Copenhagen by making a public commitment to reduce emissions.

**Jim Hawley**, Transamerica Professor in Business Policy and Strategy in the Graduate Business Programs, School of Economics and Business Administration, at Saint Mary's College, California, and Co-Director of the Elfenworks Center for the Study of Fiduciary Capitalism. International expert on sovereign wealth funds and corporate governance failures in the current financial crises.

**Mads Øvlisen**, Chairman of the Board of Directors of LEGO A/S, member of The United Nations Global Compact Board, New York. Adjunct professor of corporate social responsibility at the Copenhagen Business School. Mads Øvlisen served as chairman of The Copenhagen Center for Social Responsibility and was a founding Co-chair of the European Academy for Society in Business (EABIS). International expert on



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# THE GLOBAL DIALOGUE PRIZE

This year's Global Dialogue Conference is part of a series of five bi-annual international meetings to take place in Aarhus between 2009-2017. Each conference concludes with the award ceremony for The Global Dialogue Prize.

The Global Dialogue Prize honors exceptional achievements in the advancement and application of intercultural value research.

The Global Dialogue Prize has been established in order to underscore that intercultural understanding is a primary social good of our present age.

The prize is one of the world's most significant recognitions for intercultural value research.

The award is sponsored by the Grundfos Foundation.

[www.globaldialogueprize.org](http://www.globaldialogueprize.org)



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# COLOPHON

## MAIN ORGANIZERS

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