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# Social Sciences Winter School



in

Pondicherry



<http://winterspy.hypotheses.org>

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

Call for participants

## Water and Socio-Environmental Challenges

December 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

At the Pondicherry University and the French Institute of Pondicherry

The Social Sciences Winter School in Pondicherry (SSWSP) has been designed as a **programme of intensive and multidisciplinary training workshops addressing theoretical and methodological issues in social sciences research.**

### Themes

The major thread of this 2017 Social Sciences Winter School will be to **address issues at the interface between society and environment**, especially around water and resource management, through the lens of the social sciences, in different milieus and scale of interpretation, and with different thematic focus and methodological frameworks.

Most research in social sciences has historically focused on social, political, cultural and economic systems somewhat in isolation from their biophysical surroundings, the environment being considered as merely a backdrop for social actions and the functioning of social systems. However, it is now widely recognised that human societies cannot be understood without analysing their interactions with the environments that supported them; as it is also widely understood that most terrestrial and near-shore environments have been and are profoundly shaped by human actions and policies.

Indeed, the past five decades or so have seen the traditional nature/culture divide being increasingly challenged on the conceptual and analytical ground of various field disciplines. Along with the growing awareness of the ecological and social challenges facing society and all life on earth, the study of socio-environmental issues has





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become of major concern to a wide research community of both scholars and practitioners from various disciplines, so that we now refer to “environmental social sciences”.

Themes and scientific questionings and approaches to explore the complex relationships between society and environment are many and call for interdisciplinary thinking. Any socioenvironmental issue – around resource perception, use, management, politics, appropriation, water access, sustainability, depletion, environmental inequalities and injustices, health and sanitation, cultural landscapes, land use and land changes, vulnerabilities to environmental hazards and changes, social construction of knowledge on the environment, and so on – can be studied from a multiplicity of angles and disciplines. Data and information can be extracted and produced from various areas and fields. Approaches are heterogeneous, qualitative and quantitative, combining localised and multi-sited research, diachronic and synchronic perspectives, and statistical, discursive or spatial analyses. There is no single methodological nor theoretical framework.

This year, the objectives of the SSWSP is to expose students and young researchers to research frontiers in this field of environmental social sciences.

Following the framework of the past editions, the SSWSP will be organised according to three complementary axes:

- (a) **Plenary sessions at the beginning of the school:** three presentations will introduce different thematic and methodological research of environmental social sciences.
- (b) **Three thematic workshops lasting four days:** issues related to social needs/experience in sanitation (workshop 1), resources appropriation (workshop 2), the use of spatial technologies as a research tool (workshop 3), will be addressed from various cross-cutting angles.
- (c) **Restitution, discussions, exchanges:** participants of each workshop will work on a research design as a group based on the four days of training and make their presentation.

## Workshops

### **Workshop 1. Urban Ideals and Sanitation Experiences: Toward a New Research Agenda**

Among major socio-environmental challenges related to water management and health facing society in South Asia and elsewhere is the issue of sanitation, a field of growing interest to policy makers and economists since access to drinking water and sanitation was recognised as a human right by the UN General Assembly in 2010. Workshop 1 will tackle this complex subject by focusing on the specificities of sanitation experiences in towns and cities of the global South. Its objectives will be to work out a research agenda for sanitation aiming at a better articulation between public action, private sector and civil experiences.

### **Workshop 2. Exclusionary Regimes and Resource Appropriation: Conceptual and Methodological Dynamics**

International policy on the environment has for long been sounding the call for sustainability, paradoxically leading to an ever increasing appropriation of natural resources. Workshop 2 will focus on how appropriation of natural resources flow via the exclusionary regime (the agents of globalization). Its objectives will be to tackle the politics of appropriation by introducing the students to the methodological potentials in recording and understanding the voices of the dispossessed people through the framework of ‘cultural politics’ and ‘reverse anthropology’.

### **Workshop 3. Tackling Socio-environmental Issues: Stakes and Potentials of Using Spatial Technologies**

Advances in spatial technologies and spatial data infrastructures/services, and the development of digital globe browsers over the past 2 decades have been major factors in raising awareness and interest toward critical spatial and socio-environmental thinking in many disciplines. Workshop 3 will be methodology-oriented and focus on





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the use, potentials and limits of spatial technologies for research in social sciences concerned with issues at the interface between water, society and environment. Highlighted with case studies, it will provide a broad introduction to basics and principles of GIS and remote sensing.

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## Participants

The Winter School is **open to Doctoral and Master Students of all fields in social sciences**. Trainees will be selected on the basis of their qualifications, while taking into account the value of the training with regards to their research or professional projects.

The trainers will be from various disciplinary background and the teams will be international, composed of young and senior researchers originating from Indian universities and research centres of excellence, as well as from abroad. It is the result of a long-lasting Indo-French collaboration between Pondicherry University and the French Institute in Pondicherry, with IRD and CNRS in France.

## Venue

The plenary sessions will take place at **Pondicherry University** (School of Social Sciences and International Studies, Silver Jubilee Campus) and the trainings at the **French Institute of Pondicherry (IFP)**, from **December 4 to 8, 2017**.

## Registration

- The deadline for registration is **October 22, 2017**
- Please fill in and submit the **electronic application form** via the following link:  
<https://goo.gl/forms/yn00vXjYYnqHbL543>
- The application should further include:
  - **Full CV**
  - **Postgraduate degree certificate**

These 2 documents should be sent by email to [winterschoolpy@gmail.com](mailto:winterschoolpy@gmail.com)

- **The registration fees of Rs. 2,500** are payable on arrival (subsidized for Pondicherry University students to Rs.500/-).
- Selected students will be offered accommodation and food in Pondicherry for the duration of the programme
- Selected students will be offered round trip train fare (II Sleeper).

## Contact

All correspondence should be addressed to the team of coordinators:

[winterschoolpy@gmail.com](mailto:winterschoolpy@gmail.com)

More information and detailed programme will soon be available on the website of the Winter School:

<http://winterspy.hypotheses.org>

