

**Special Issue of [Scrutiny2](#) (Taylor & Francis, Routledge) on  
Ecology, Decoloniality, and African Literature**

**Special Issue Editor**

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The ecologies of African countries have been at the centre of environmental struggles and justice from the days of colonial preoccupation to contemporary times. The exploitation of the African land and environment can be traced back to Western modernity's epistemological structuring, which conceived nature as passive, inert, and subservient to the human world. Modernity, colonialism, and capitalism functioned as interrelated components, reinforcing the metanarratives of civilization, and, in turn, sanctioning the subjugation of nature and ecology under the myth of developmentalism. The commodifying practices of colonial capitalism have been perpetuated ruthlessly in colonised regions like that of Africa, in which the Western powers have exercised their political and epistemological supremacy by systematically authorising the African land and ecology and repudiating the indigenous communities' rights, knowledge, and voices on it. The objectifying ethos of colonialism has thus been incremental in perpetrating colonial ecological violence in Africa, relegating the indigenous population as 'disposable people' and disrupting their existential interconnection with the African ecology (Iheka 2018).

Ecological violence continued in layered patterns vis-à-vis capitalist expansions and mechanisms in different phases of history in Africa and is rampant even today under the façade of neo-liberalisation. The market demands for minerals, metals, and oils that emerged in the post-World War II era, followed by the de-regulation of environmental and trade laws to foster global integration, accentuated the plundering of ecological resources in the developing regions of the Global South, especially in African countries. Consequent to this, resource extraction, accumulation, and transportation have been continuing in Africa, under the aegis of the affluent Global North's capitalist and corporate needs (McMichael 2017). Petro-violence, or strife and violence aggravated by exploitative oil industrialization, marks the prevalence of 'violent capitalocenes' in Africa (Ferguson 2005). The nationalist governments of Africa have also exhibited a neocolonialist temperament in complying with the Global North's capitalist and profit-oriented interventions, making Africa a source of raw materials for the developed nations, throwing its citizens into vicious forms of environmental injustices and inequities, and magnifying disproportionate economic equations at the global level (Oulu 2016).

The protracted ecological violence has unleashed in Africa an endless nexus of environmental hazards and toxicities, affecting the disadvantaged strata and people of colour poignantly. Masses in Africa have become victims of 'slow violence' (Nixon 2011), experiencing ecological degeneration and being denied the right to articulate or participate in ameliorative discourses to combat the ecological injustices. Writers and environmental thinkers such as Zakes Mda, Sindiwe Magona, Imbolo Mbue, Wangari Maathai, Ken Saro-Wiwa, and others have engaged with these sustained issues of coloniality, capitalism, and environmental injustices that have circumscribed the indigenous African people in racialized politics, internal discord, and exacerbated poverty. They have been in multifarious ways endeavouring

to probe the ecological jeopardising in Africa in the context of what Satgar (2018) observes as the structuralised and politicised power of the capital, embodied by colonial epistemic and disseminated by agents of industrialization and progress.

As a countermeasure to the systemic disparaging of African ecology and masses, there is a necessity to debunk and subvert the colonial capitalist notions of accumulation, profit, and productivity. The prevailing parameters of anthropogenic growth must be dismantled, and decolonial thinking that valorises the primacy of nature, indigeneity, and planetary wellbeing, has to be embraced. Decolonial thinking involving 'epistemic disobedience' and the transcendence of hegemonic colonial categorizations and assumptions, needs to be championed through recuperating indigenous knowledge systems, values, and interconnected ways of planetary sustainability. This, in turn, can offer comprehensive modes of ecological preservation and equitable survival, and assure the possibilities of harnessing environmental and social justice for the disenfranchised people of Africa.

This special issue aims to address the alarming concerns of environmentalism and its representations in African literature. The focus of this issue will be to highlight the ways in which African writers are reiterating the ramifications of ecological damage through their works and engaging with the politics of 'decoloniality.' In so doing, the issue looks forward to mapping how far the literary interventions in Africa are adhering to what Malcolm Ferdinand calls 'decolonial ecology,' which encompasses an ethical repositioning and envisioning of the ecology outside the premises of colonial modernity and capitalism.

This issue, therefore, seeks essays on literary and theoretical writings on existing and emerging African literature. The topics may include (but will not be limited to):

- Eco-literature and African indigenous epistemology
- Eco-pedagogy and literary representations of Africa
- Colonial ecological violence and novels of Africa
- Epistemic disobedience and African indigenous narratives
- Extractivist fiction and crisis in African literature
- Petro-fiction and capitalism in African narratives
- Planetary Well-being in African literary responses
- Decolonial perspectives and contemporary African textual practices
- Decoloniality and capitalism in African works
- Decolonial praxis and new eco-centric pedagogies in Africa

### **Submission Instructions**

Abstracts should be around 500 words long (excluding bibliography) and should be sent to both special issue editor, Goutam Karmakar ([goutamkrmkr@gmail.com](mailto:goutamkrmkr@gmail.com)) and Editor, Prof. Deirdre C. Byrne ([byrnedc@unisa.ac.za](mailto:byrnedc@unisa.ac.za)) no later than **September 30, 2023**. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the special issue editor.

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

- Deadline for abstracts: **September 30, 2023**
- Notification of acceptance: **October 31, 2023**
- Submission of full manuscripts: Will be decided later

Full papers should be within 7500 words in length (including abstract and list of works cited) as per the author submission guidelines of [Scrutiny2](#).

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