



South Carolina

# Oceans, Gardens, and Jungles: Worldviews and the Planet

Tuesday, Oct. 11, 4:00 pm  
McKissick Museum Theater

Contemporary world politics is structured around the world order of nation-states in turn founded largely upon a Newtonian cosmology and an associated worldview. I develop a conceptual framework around the 'epistemic engine' which organizes and circulates the cosmological and institutional structures of Enlightenment modernity. Subsequently, I explore how the imperial Chinese world order--functional until at least the late 19th century--reveals a different cosmology shaping a different world order and politics. I also explore the contemporary PRC view of the world order probing the extent to which its historical experiences can be seen to re-shape the hegemonic epistemic engine. In the final section, I draw from a paradigm of 'oceanic temporality' to grasp counter- finalities generated by the epistemic engine on the earth and the ocean itself. Can the counter-flows of social movements allow us to imagine a post-Enlightenment, planetary cosmology?



Prasenjit Duara is the Oscar Tang Chair of East Asian Studies at Duke University. Born and educated in India, he received his PhD in Chinese history from Harvard University. He was Professor and chairman of History at University of Chicago (1991-2008) and Raffles Professor and Director of Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore (2008-2015). He was the President of the American Association for Asian Studies (2019-20).

His books include *Culture, Power and the State: Rural North China, 1900-1942* (Stanford Univ Press) winner of Fairbank Prize of the AHA and Levenson Prize of the AAS, USA, *Rescuing History from the Nation* (U Chicago 1995), *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (Rowman 2003) and *The Crisis of Global Modernity: Asian Traditions and a Sustainable Future* (Cambridge 2014). He was awarded the doctor philosophiae honoris causa from the University of Oslo in 2017.

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