

# **Affect beyond the human: {Indian} agriculture in a multispecies world**

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## ***ABSTRACT ORIGINAL***

Transcultural perspectives have been effective in decolonizing epistemologies and representational strategies of the humanities and social sciences in their engagements with historical and contemporary dynamics of our globalizing world. As many chapters in this volume demonstrate, transcultural studies have destabilized many of the epistemological binaries and purities that underlie persistent constructions of race, culture, civilization, religion, language and nation (see König, Krämer, Maran and Tontini, all in this volume). This anti-essentialist stance has redirected humanities and social sciences, and, in particular, area and cultural studies, towards the study of encounters between people, ideas and practices, building on the awareness that actual encounters challenge putative purities of identity and belonging. Transcultural perspectives, focusing on encounters, have effectively highlighted the cultural dynamics at the interstices and in-betweens of entities – cultures, nations, religions or languages – that are central to humanistic studies, but have shaky ontological foundations. Transculturality is thus ultimately also a world-making project (see also Juneja, in this volume), it is a quest for adequate knowledge practices for the study of a world that is made up of relations rather than entities and essences. But does the relational perspective of transcultural studies and its study of encounters have to stop at the boundaries of the human? Are transcultural perspectives equipped to study relations made up of humans, technologies, plants, animals and other non-humans? What vocabulary and concepts do anthropological studies have available to talk, in a non-essentialist way, about more-than-human relationality?