

PG AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

MAR THOMA COLLEGE, TIRUVALLA



(RE-ACCREDITED WITH A- GRADE [4TH CYCLE] BY NAAC
AFFILIATED TO MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY, KOTTAYAM)
All India 84th rank in NIRF 2020

In Collaboration with Kerala State Higher
Education Council (KSHEC)

INTERNATIONAL LECTURE SERIES

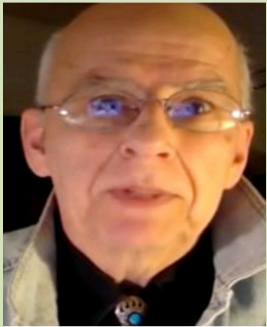
Effacing a Culture of Extinction : Exploration of Green Philosophies and Representations

Register Online at:

<https://forms.gle/DXRTKAM7s3JQxAuL6>

Platform : Zoom

E- CERTIFICATES WILL BE ISSUED
TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS



Dr. R . Michael Fisher

Founder-Director, In Search of Fearlessness Research Institute,
University of Calgary, Canada

Ecology and Fear OR Fear and
Ecology

26-11-2020, 7.00 pm IST

G. M. Pillai IAS

Founder-Director General
Institute of Sustainable Energy, Pune

Climate Fiction and Ecocriticism

27-11-2020, 11.00 am IST



Dr. D. E. Benet

Vice Principal & Associate Professor in English
National College, Trichy

Renewal of our Mind, Towards a Green
Deal

01.12.2020, 5 pm IST

Dr Varughese Mathew , Principal

Dr. Ashley Susan Philip , HOD
(9895321495)

Dr. Remi Cherian George , Convenor
(9446755408)

Susmitha Ann Varghese, Convenor
(9447300318)

Sanju T Soman , Student convenor

Report of the International Lecture Series
**“Effacing a Culture of Extinction: Exploration of
Green Philosophies and Representations”**

Organized by the Post Graduate and Research Department of English,
Mar Thoma College Tiruvalla

In Collaboration with Kerala State Higher Education Council

Ecocriticism, Green Cultural Studies or Environmental literary criticism is fast emerging as an influential tool to analyse cultural artefacts mainly literature. It is the application of ecology and ecological concepts and focuses on the relationship between nature and culture. Today ecology, simply defined, is the way in which plants, animals and people are related to each other and their environment. In this relationship they are so much interdependent on each other that any disturbance in one disturbs the other. History has proved this every now and then that with every change in the civilisation the relationship of humans and non humans have also changed. The effect of the changes in environment has been so acute that sometimes it has wiped the whole civilisation from the face of the earth. Therefore, concern for ecology is one of the most discussed issues today.

Literature and arts, well known for reflecting the contemporary issues, could not have remained unaffected from this theme. The world of literature throngs with works dealing with beauty and power of nature. However, the concern for ecology and the threat that the continuous misuse of our environment poses on human and non human have only recently caught the attention of the writers and artists. It is this sense of concern and its reflection in literature and arts that has been dealt in the lecture series. The department could organize three lectures involving serious discussion on the proposed topic. From the feedback from the participants we could understand that the discourses could generate immense interest.

The International lecture series organised by the Post Graduate and Research Department of English, Mar Thoma College, Tiruvalla, could successfully explore the expressions of environment in literary texts and theoretical discourses.

The International Lecture Series which comprised of three lectures were made available to the participants through the online platforms Zoom and YouTube.

Total Number of Participants Registered: 380

Total Number of Participants from Abroad: 16

Day 1

The Inaugural A. V. Varughese Memorial lecture on 26 November 2020 at 7 PM IST was by Dr. R. Michael Fisher, Founder–Director, In Search of Fearlessness Research Institute and The Fearology Institute, University of Calgary, Canada. He spoke on the topic “Ecology and Fear Or Fear and Ecology”. Dr. Fisher elaborated on how fear becomes a foundational construct to understand human nature. He pointed out the different aspects of fear, the ways to manage it and how fear gets distributed and replicated as human beings are raised in such a culture.



He observed that the Fear Problem is inter- and transdisciplinary in nature, and cannot be reduced to simple notions of “fear” as a problem in the psychological and psychiatric sense which is similar as a manoeuvre to wanting to not have the notion of “ecophobia” reduced either to a psychological or psychiatric problem. It is an ethical problem that we are addressing which more or less revolves around our human and institutional relationship with fear. There is basically a claim that human beings are always doing “fear management” in some way, especially as they feel distress, are traumatized, and are living in a context of a culture of fear, a post-traumatic culture or an

“Age of Terror.” This meta-contextualizing centralizes “fear” not merely as a factor, but as a pivotal core or gravity in a sense, whereby humans cannot ignore it or make it lesser than it is actually functioning overall across all domains of experience and knowing. Knowledge and epistemology itself is to be constructed and deconstructed within and around this contextualizing. Fisher thus offered a corrective to those who have ignored or diminished the nature and role of fear today. Dr. Fisher concluded his lecture by commenting on the literature of the Anthropocene era and the cascading of environmental and ecological crises as central to human survival and the quality of life for all systems on Earth.

Day 2

The second Lecture of the series was held on 27 November 2020 at 11 AM on the topic “Climate Fiction and Ecocriticism” by Mr. G. M. Pillai IAS, Founder Director General, World Institute of Sustainable Energy, Pune. He concentrated on the cause of promoting sustainable energy, energy conservation and sustainable environment in his lecture.



His views on Climate fiction, significant for a number of reasons, explicitly focused on climate change, giving insight into the ethical and social ramifications of this unparalleled environmental crisis, reflecting on current political conditions that impede action on climate change. He explored how

risk materializes and affects society, and finally plays an active part in shaping our conception of climate change. Mr. Pillai stated that while scientists and other people are trying to get their message across about various aspects of the climate change issue, fiction is an untapped way of bringing some serious topics into the consciousness of readers. Mr. Pillai concluded that climate fiction might be an effective vehicle for cultivating an empathetic awareness of climate injustice, by diminishing the social distance between privileged readers and victims of climate change in the Global South and elsewhere.

Day 3

The third lecture of the series was delivered by Dr. D. E. Benet, Vice Pincipal and Associate professor in English, National College, Trichy on 01 December 2020 at 5 PM. His talk on “Renewal of Our Mind towards a Green Deal” dealt with a variety of novels, poems and other expressions of literature brimming with issues concerning nature. He discussed how literary texts orient the readers towards conflicts over the meanings and uses of different aspects in nature.



He elaborated on how literature tries to make readers see struggles over scientific abilities to alter and re-alter life. The combination of literature and the environment may seem unusual given that environmental studies is more often associated with scientists, policy makers, and political movements than it is with literary critics and their texts. Yet, as environmentalism engages increasingly with various places and subjects world-wide, interest in

environmental issues has grown and been institutionalized in different disciplines of knowledge. Dr. Benet summed up his talk by affirming that environmental texts should move in both space and time to radiate across vast spaces.

Thus, the discussions in the lecture series could touch upon such diverse and multifarious stances of environment and its problems, and its representations in literature and arts. The deliberations brought together discussions on various levels regarding the subject to gain valuable insights and make a substantial contribution to environmental thinking.

Note

A fourth lecture scheduled for 04 December 2020 was cancelled on account of the ill-health of the Speaker.