

## **Report by HENNA MULIYANA on Parallel Session: Green Capitalism: A Sustainable Future or Oxymoron?**

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March' 2024**

**Venue: Main Hall**

**Chaired By: Kelly Gillespie**

**An Axiology of the Ostensive: Value in Art, Literature, & Green Studies** presented by Dr. Sanjay Mukherjee focuses on significance of art and its values in society and how the growing weed of capitalism forces art to be tethered to some form of capital. The paper traces terms like Axiology which means, 'a study of the nature of value and valuation'. Literature and art are inevitably connected to some form of material base which forces them in the domain of capital, to what extent they are connected is what this paper discusses. The valuing in art and value of a commodity are not the same but in this post-modern-capitalistic world even art ends up being tagged with a price. It is apparent that the value of a piano or a painting is high but the artist remains penniless. With passing of time, capitalism has grown even more outstretched in all the domains of literature and art and devours the aesthetic values of literature and leaves it commodified. This paper also discusses the term 'Taste' tracing the word with reference to the word Culture which meant, 'to have refined taste' but in the journey of capitalism, the term has undergone immense alteration so much so that now the idea of taste cannot be separated from the consumer; these two ideas have developed together and have significantly affected the response to art and literature and even criticism. Besides this, the nature/culture binary has also been elaborated here by tracing the threads of how the elite culture of the aristocrats and their greed for earning money has commodified the most basic things like air in air purifiers and conditioner and water into a vast business earning billions of money for booming companies.

**Green Capitalism, Climate Crisis, and Optopia in Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Ministry for the Future*** presented by Dr. Piyush Raval discusses Kim Stanley Robinson's Mars Trilogy of 1990s *The Ministry for the Future* and 'the science in the Capital' of 2000s which deals with the building of a new social and political system on Mars and consequences of climate change. In his novel, he depicts his views about direction of capitalism in the age of climate change. Due to the climate crisis, we are faced with a choice between utopia and catastrophe, leading to the making of a new world which is neither dystopia nor utopia. This paper uses the word Optopia used by Kim Stanley Robinson in his novel. The term denotes, 'not a perfect society, but the optimum society, the best possible given where we are now. This paper traces the implication of Green Capitalism which means that government should regulate market-based instruments to resolve environmental problems. By keeping *The Ministry for the Future* in focus, this paper dwells on three major concerns; notion of optopia as a choice between utopia and dystopia for the new emerging world, approach to green capitalism and the new role of academy as Ministry.

**Crisis of Capitalism: An Ecological View of Annie Zaidi's *Prelude to a Riot*** was presented by Dr. Gagan Bihari Purohit. This paper focuses on increasing impact of corporate culture which has given rise to concept of rising authoritarianism. Through Zaidi's novel the paper traces the varied ways in which the term "development" has been perceived in this era of the Anthropocene. We are living in the world where growth/development is not inclusive of entire ecosystem and ecology; rather it has become a peril to the future of humanity. This paper elucidates on the consequences of using pesticide to increase the production of banana which has destroyed the peace of life of the southern town famous for banana plantation.

By encompassing disintegration of family life, transformation of idyllic ambience of local village into noisy city, the paper contemplates on the impossibilities of ecological harmony in the midst of man-made nature/culture binary.

At the end of this informative session there were also some meaningful Q&A focusing on the possibilities of reformation and transformation of environment through works of fiction and to what extent literature can be helpful in changing the perspective of society to save the planet and how and what scope the field of humanities has in the world to make a difference.