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K. P. Appan as an Individual and Critic - Critical Analysis

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K. P. Appan was a critic who presented a modern countenance and contemporary vision to Malayalam criticism. He gave meticulous appraisal and elucidated the writers including C.V. Raman Pillai and the young writers who penned only their first work of his time in relation to the trends in world literature. Appan created a series of critiques that integrated an intelligible theoretical foundation, subtle perspectives, a comprehensive assessment, and a contemporary vision. Another seal imparted by Appan in Malayalam was that he was an unmatched literary preceptor. Appan was able to take multitudinous students into the coterie of literature and strongly influence the teaching pattern of a generation.

K. P. Appan made distinctive contribution to the Malayalam reading community. Appan was one of the foremost geniuses who immersed himself in the sphere of writing by embracing the world of reading until his death. Reading is one of the rare activities that a person can do alone. When one reads, one is absolutely confined to oneself. But the writing is antithetical. While writing any kind of readers will have to be put it in front. One writes considering a community that stands out, reads and thinks. Despite being great readers, some people are impotent to become social creatures because they do not have access to writing. Nevertheless K.P. Appan loved not only reading but also writing. Thus he was constricting to himself through reading and leaping into the society via writing. It was Kesari Balakrishna Pillai who embarked on reading Malayalam literature in the context of world literature. However, K.P. Appan is the only critic who has enriched the analysis with an extensive reading that can be compared to Kesari, despite his different stance from Kesari.

K. P. Appan's Literary Criticism

The emerging trends in literature paved the way for innovative visions in the art of criticism. The practice of evaluating texts modelled on the rhetoric of Sanskrit has transformed. An innovative method of interpreting literature was introduced based on Western aesthetics. K. P. Appan is a critic who rejected the ancient critical literary traditions. His views on criticism were revealing. The primordial publication titled *Thiraskaram* (Rejection) deals with his views on literary criticism. Literary criticism should be carried out without traditional poetic concepts and prejudices. The principles of the architecture of a literary work must be formed from it. The poet's vision of poetry is the mastery achieved from the form of poetry. Thus he entered the field of criticism as an advocator of certain notions. Appan's literary philosophy utterly denied the Indian philosophy to free the art of criticism.

K.P. excelled in his critique of fiction. The literature of the common man and the literature admired by most people are stories. Some people are of the opinion that the stories are meant to be read and not to be interpreted elaborately. Perhaps it was the change in the philosophy of our literary criticism that necessitated the critique of fiction. Appan criticized modern writers like Mukundan, O.V. Vijayan, and Kakkanadan. His viewpoints focused to repudiate the argument that the writer had a social commitment. He valued the feeling and aesthetics of a literary work. In other words, he developed a modern style of interpretation of literature.

Appan believes that O.V. Vijayan, M. Mukundan and others who have emerged as the contemporary generation in fiction deserve the reverence of the people. They have written enormous stories that can always be attributed to be novel. There is a sense of aesthetics that amalgamates concept, time and language in their story. Appan adds that their glory is enhanced by the fact that there are no stories that surpasses them afterwards. Death, alienation and unfamiliar experiences and paranoia have been incorporated into their stories. These are the verities of life during this period. They were creating a tradition in the story realm with their own experience. Appan finds that their achievement is establishment of an individuality and identity through their own writing. He claims that his achievement was to expand his own individuality via the evaluation of the stories and to discover some dimensions to the critique.

K.P. Appan's eminence lies in the fact that he gave a moral spirit to criticism. There are very few people in Malayalam like Mundasseri and Marar who have reconstructed criticism into an art. Appan implies that the language itself should be infused with creative spirit. When the vocabulary becomes more poetic, the potential of language ameliorates. If literature is written in the old language and stagnation is created, the cultural sphere will deteriorate. Appan suggested that the writer composes a language of his own to invigorate the story. If words are not to lose their meaning over time and become stagnant, they must be given new meaning. It becomes active when words contribute to the meaning. Therefore the role of the poet is to create another language within the language. Explaining further, he expresses his vision through the rhythm of language beyond the possible meaning given by language. This is the revolution that the writer spawns in the world of literary language.

In any case, the writer must have the liberty to stand firm with his viewpoints. He experiences freedom while designing and envisaging an imaginary idea in his mind. Liberty to express one's own vision is paramount. The art works are the outcome of an exploration of the purpose of life. Accordingly, he must be free in the course of its construction. External impulses should not hinder it. Affiliations and partiality shouldn't hold him back. Appan believes that only such freedom can usher good creation.

K.P. Appan who stands rigid in his standpoint, has gone through frequent controversies. He is an advocate of modernity in literature and a master of postmodernism. The theories that Appan put forward are novel but have not been examined whether it is contemporary. This may be due to his reluctance in Indian literary philosophy. The notion that anything arriving from the West is alluring and elegant has plagued modernists. The theories he explores about poetic language are another interpretation of phonology project. Phonologists explain the infinite meaning of language. It's exclusively about poetry. Comments on the freedom of the artist were recorded by Marar and M.P. Paul more than half a century ago. M. P. Paul who disagrees with the progressive literary movement has openly stated the reasons why Marxian philosophies seem inappropriate. Despite all this, there is no one like Appan who can take an independent position among the modern literary critics and give a new exposition to fiction.

K.P. Appan's works include *Innalekalile Anveshanaparishodanaka* (Yesterday's Inquiries), *Uttaradhunikata Varthamanavum Vamsavaliyum* (Postmodernism: Present and Genealogy), *Katha: Akhyanaavum Anubhava Sathayum* (Story: Narration and Experience), *Kalahavum Viswasavum* (Conflict and Belief), *Kalapam, Vivadam, Vilayiruthal* (Rebellion, Controversy, Evaluation), *Kshobhikkunnavarude Suvisesham* (The Gospel of the Disgruntled), *Charithrathe Aghadahamakkiya Guru, Charithrathe Ningalkoppam Kootuka, Thanichirikumbol Ormikunath, Thiraskaram* (Rejection), *Penayude Samaramukhangal, Prakopangalude Pusthakam* (Book of Temptations), *Bible: Velichathinte Kavacham, Maduram Ninte jeevitham, Malayala Bhavana: Mullyangalum Sangharshangalum* (Malayalam Imagination Values and Conflicts), *Marunna Malayalam Novel* (Changing Malayalam Novel), *Rogavum Sahithyabhavanayum* (Sickness and Literary Imagination), *Varakalum Varnangalum* (Stripes and Narratives), *Vivekashaliyaya Vayanakkara* (Discreet Reader), *Samayapravahavum Sahithyakalayum* (Time Flow and Literary Art), *Swargam theernnu pokunnu narakam nilanilkunnu* (Heaven Ends and Hell Exists).

K.P. Appan is a powerful creative commentator of contemporary Malayalam criticism. His life was devoted to literature and criticism. Appan emerged with a new approach at a time when Malayalam criticism was traversing towards indolence and apathy. While most of the previous generation's critics were repeating old principles and philosophies through their criticism, Appan was able to create a new sense of unique literary concepts and philosophies. Appan's entry has perturbed or annoyed many critics of the ancient generation. Appan was unfluctuating in his viewpoint, accepting all opposition serenely and gently.

Thiraskaram was a revelation of the Appan's sense of identity and vision. He articulated a philosophical criticism that exposes the identities of the author and the critic through his work, while gently denying the past in Malayalam literary criticism.

K.P. Appan was not a critic who was interested in poetry. His focus and interest was on fiction. Appan exerted exemplary contribution in the field of Malayalam novel and short story criticism.

His best criticisms such as *Kalahavum Viswasavum* (Conflict and Faith), *Marunna Malayalam Novel* (Changing Malayalam Novel), *Malayala Bhavana: Mullyangalum Sangharshangalum* (Malayalam Imagination, Values and Conflicts), *Uttaradhunikata Varthamanavum Vamsavaliyum* (Postmodernism: Present and Genealogy), *Katha: Akhyanaavum Anubhava Sathayum* (Story: Narration and Experience), and so on are centered on novels.

Appan has made significant contributions in Malayalam literary criticism through his critical work, *Kshobhikkunnavarude Suvisesham* (The Gospel of the Disgruntled).

Approach the literary work biologically without systematic poetic principles and prejudices, to understand the principles of design from them that are the norm for each work, and thus to see the writer's vision through the symmetrical position of form and expression. It is self-sufficient through language. Each writer is creating a new language by his own creativity.

Literary criticism signifies not a science but an art. Criticism reflects the critic's liberal and unique creative business. What a critic should pay the most attention to is his language. It is through language that he makes the writers and works witness new sculptural towers. In this way, Appan developed a unique approach and innovative vision different from the critics of the time. Going through Appan's critical principles, one realizes that he had an innovative consciousness when he was modern. Each critic attains contentment in his life when he introduces new works and new writers to peers with the right perspective. Perhaps, Karthikayil Padmanabhan Appan, commonly called as K. P. Appan brought contemporary Malayalam criticism to fruition with purity and self-satisfaction and endeavoured to create a new platform

leaving before us literary approaches and philosophies that are unlikely to come in the near future.

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