

# ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY

(Accredited with “A+” Grade by NAAC (CGPA:3.64) in the Third Cycle & Graded as Category-I University and  
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KARAIKUDI - 630 003

Date: 17.12.2018

The inaugural function of a Two-day National Conference on “Critical Approaches: East and West and Their Application to Literature” was held today (17.12.2018) at Alagappa University, Karaikudi. Sponsored under the aegis of the Department of English and Foreign Languages, the conference was attended by 250 delegates.



While presenting the thematic introduction, Dr.P.Madhan, Head i/c, Department of English and Foreign Languages, said that the role of literature in the creation of an ethically strong, morally bright and culturally renowned society is very significant. Equally important is criticism for “literature is silent and only criticism speaks”. It explores the unexplored and provides richer insights into the creative writings of an author. Adopting multiple critical approaches, critics of the East and West have brought to light the hidden meanings embedded in works of art, he added.

Inaugurating the conference Prof.N.Rajendran, Vice-Chancellor, Alagappa University, referred to the power of Criticism. He said emphatically that “it is criticism that makes a book alive. Without criticism it has no life”. Criticism is as important as breathing, said the renowned critic T.S.Eliot. Dwelling on the inseparability of history and literature, he said that literature not only tells the social history of a people but also portrays the finer aspects of the culture of a particular society. Over the years innovative and inspiring criticism has led to the evolution of literary theories. If literature is a tool, criticism of it, is certainly a guide highlighting how to use the tool for illumination. Whatever be the subject it is the artistic presentation that makes a book a piece of literature. In this context he said that Charles Darwin’s *Origin of Species* is considered a classic though it deals with the scientific subject of

evolution. Gibbon's *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire* is glorified as a piece of literature since its first publication. Providing aesthetic appreciation is the aim of good criticism.

In his key note address Prof.K.Chellappan, Former Professor and Head, Dept. of English, Bharathidasan University, stated that literature is an ever growing live phenomenon. There are no barriers to literature. Through a deeper study of literature the Socio-Economic and Cultural conditions of a nation could be known. The literature of a country is its great asset. Criticism, the other side of a coin, helps in aesthetic appreciation of a work of art and it has also been helping to preserve and propagate significant ideas found in literary works to generations of people. Quoting profusely from the Sangam Tamil Poetry, the speaker brought out the beauty and the drama of intense emotions embodied in them by applying multi-dimensional western critical approaches. He made a reference to the relevance of *Natyasastra*, a treatise on performing arts, attributed to Bharata Muni and the richness of Rasa Theory propounded in it.

A compendium containing selected research papers was released by the Vice-Chancellor and the first copy was received by Prof.K.Chellappan. Among the distinguished participants were Prof.P.Marudanayagam, Fellow, Central Institute of Classical Tamil, Chennai and Founder Professor and Head, Dept. of English, Pondicherry Central University, Puducherry. Prof.S.Venkateshwaran, Former Professor, Regional Institute of English, Bangalore. Dr.DS.Kesava Rao, Professor, National Institute of Technology, Warangal, Telangana, Dr.SP.M.Kanimozhi, Assistant Professor, Alagappa University, proposed a vote of thanks.

**Prof.H.Gurumallesh Prabu**

**REGISTRAR**