

Session 1- July 12- Inauguration- Sri Adoor Gopalakrishnan

Sri Aspin Asharaf, College Managing Committee Chairman welcomed the gathering. **Dr A Biju**, Principal presented a report of the College. **Sri Kamal**, chairman, Kerala State Chalachitra Academy in his key note address talked about the importance of giving awareness among the students on how good films are made. He emphasised on the need to educate the students not in the academic line, but by screening good films. It is the need of the hour to educate the students and lay men as well. There is a programme called, 'tour and talkies' to promote films, but it is hindered during the pandemic. On the other hand, the replacement of seminars with webinars has its benefits as well. For example, people from anywhere, any of the MES colleges or others can participate in webinars in connection with film appreciation. He appreciated the attempt made by the college and stressed the relevance of the title. He ensured that this webinar series which is inaugurated by the veteran film maker, Sri Adoor Gopalakrishnan would be an excellent opportunity for students to experience films. **Dr Fazal Gafoor**, MES president in his presidential address called Sri Adoor Gopalakrishnan as the spokesperson of new wave in Malayalam cinema. His reflections upon the humble beginning of theatres and the crisis in Malayalam movies with the advent of OTT platform, was also mentioned. Commercial movies are also needed in the society. Those who have passion for film can learn languages and cultures. Sri Adoor Gopalakrishnan's movies even have Psychology in it. He talked about Malayalam movies' evolution to two hundred releases per year. He called Kamal as the 'Gulzar of Kerala' who uses contemporary themes and music. He concluded by wishing good luck to the webinar series.

Sri Adoor Gopalakrishnan started his talk with the anxiety of talking without having eye contact with the audience. He appreciated MES for offering courses of contemporary significance as wanted by the society. He studied Economics and Politics, have independent opinions about contemporary events, but is not affiliated with any political organisation. These opinions can cause many issues, especially when we are

against the ruling party. Regarding censoring, originality is sometimes censored; the films which are censored had the authority to approach an appellate body with decision for objection. The decision to discard this authority is symbolic of dictatorship. There are people who ask why there are no stunts or songs in Adoor movies. What is there in those movies would not be taken care of, but the features that are not present are taken into consideration. Silent movies started during the late nineteenth century, then came sound, colour, wide screen and then big screen. When sound was introduced to movies, the objection in Europe was that sound would hinder the visual impact. Chaplain introduced inappropriate whistling with breathing and entered the world

of sound. After sound, new waves in Italy, France and Germany as an after effect of neo realism came. New wave influenced not merely Europe, but the whole world. The trio from Bengal began new Indian cinema. As instigation, Pune film Institute was started in 1961 and he joined the second batch. The students were mostly Malayalees, in a way with a detailed article in Mathrubhumi magazine; he was also responsible for it. No warm welcome was there from the Malayalam industry for PFI products. In the first movie, everyone was PFI products. In 1972 the movie 'Kodiyetom' got national award, but no recognition from Kerala Government was received. It did not get theatre in the beginning. There were fourteen prints, but only two theatres gave permission, one in Harippad and another in Kottayam. Within three days the movie got demand. It completed 145 days in theatre which was the movie's own strength, not of any actor or actress. Such movies are not rejected by people. Though Keralites are literate they like set concepts, basically they have blunt taste, not polished. Film societies should be started and masterpieces should be screened. Classics cannot be discarded as old by looking at the year. They are classics forever, never out dated. Great writers read classics, in the same way good movies also should be watched.

A Britain based journal 'sight and sound' expressed its concern over movie release in OTT platform and asked opinion about how to evolve interest of people to good

movies and bring people to theatres. Classics in various languages should be screened. When he visited Paris, he got the fortune of watching classic movies. Such an experience cannot be obtained in Kerala, this situation should be changed. The talk was followed by a question answer session.

- The movie 'Mathilukal' only portrayed a female voice, but no female characters how was the challenge accepted?

K Balakrishnan published it as a story, caused agitation in the reading public and should not be misunderstood as a novel. Many producers approached Basheer with the script and asked for permission, but none turned out to be successful, due to one or other reason, the prominent one being the challenge to be taken in the case of a movie without the physical presence of a heroine. The circumstances somehow became successful that he visited Basheer, who gave both royalty and permission. The movie got acceptance in every continent in which it was screened. But the greatest asset he got was the close relation he had with Basheer, the great writer and human being.

- What is your opinion about new generation film makers?

Everyone is new generation in the beginning. Within 20 years technology in film changed completely. What was thought to be impossible earlier is possible now. Technology has become as flexible as

to make movie making accessible to common people. A famous Spanish filmmaker while he visited Trivandrum said, “Today it is very easy to make films, but it is very difficult to make a good film.”

- What is your reflection about film societies?

In Kerala intellectuals had degraded people associated with movies, in order to change this tendency film societies were initiated. Malayalees had no exposure to classics, film societies became instrumental for screening foreign movies. Within 10 years, hundreds of film societies were started. Film societies could prove that genuine movie lovers will continue to promote good movies.

Sri Ajoy Chandran, from Chalachitra academy said that ‘Kodiyettom’ which was uploaded in YouTube six years before got 313k views and plenty of comments from youngsters; new generation people viewed it in connection with their education or for entertainment. They should watch more movies and try to interpret them. The academy has taken the responsibility of learning and research during the pandemic.

Sri P H Mohammed, the corporate manager talked about the cinema background of Kodungallur from P Bhaskaran to P S Rafeeq. Film Society started in Kodungallur during the 1960s by Dr Kareem and Dr Siddique. The college is also promoting and following the same line. He wished for good movies to happen in the future and let students get the opportunity to watch them.

The webinar series ‘Deep Focus’ got an excellent beginning with the gracious presence of Sri Adoor Gopalakrishnan, the veteran film maker. The occasion was blessed with the presence of Dr Fazal Gafoor and Sri Kamal. As the great filmmaker remarked, our students and faculty members got great opportunity to know more about films through the webinar series.

