



SUGATHAKUMARI AND MALAYALAM POETRY

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Sugathakumari is a poet who has made her mark in the world of Malayalam poetry and literature. The poet was born on January 22, 1934, in Aranmula, Pathanamthitta district, as the daughter of freedom fighter and poet Bodheshwaran and Sanskrit scholar V.K. Karthiya Yanimma. Sugathakumari was also a social and environmental activist who was interested in the problems of Kerala. Most of her poems spoke for women and nature. Sugathakumari is also the founder secretary of the Nature Conservation Committee and Abhaya, an institution that operates as a day care center for destitute women and the mentally challenged. The poet, who played a major role in the Silent Valley movement, has also made her own contributions to the social scene of Kerala, such as Abhaya Gramam, Athani Bhavan for destitute women, and a care home for the mentally ill.

“What distinguishes Sugatakumari’s poetry is its pure lyricism. The musical expression of a subjective and intense unity. Those poems often give the impression of a veiled mind pouring out. Sugatakumari does not write poetry, she sings it. This ‘soul-singing’ nature is most evident in Sugatakumari among the later romantic poets,” says Dr. K.M. George. Sugatakumari’s poems entered Malayalam poetry at a time when the color of romanticism was beginning to take hold. Modernity without any bitterness or harshness; those poems flowed through new streams of romance. The poetess Sugata Kumari is one of the links in the chain of a powerful legacy. Her father, Bodheshwaran, and her mother, a scholar and a soothsayer, have had a great influence on the poetess’ life.

In Sugata Kumari’s early poems, a unity of thought can be seen with the poems of G. Shankarakurup. The themes of those poems are the supernatural ignorance that the eternal seeker reaches and the wisdom that emerges from it. The harmonious combination of romanticism and modernity is evident from that pen. Neither tradition nor lack of faith is completely evident in those poems. But melancholy and fragmented desires are their undercurrents. The oceans of tenderness of romanticism are spread across the collections Muthuchippi, Paavam Manavahrudayam, Partirapuukkal, Irulchirakkal, Rathrimazha, Ambalamani, Khunniyuukkal, Swapnabhumi, Tulavarshappacha, Where is Radha?, Krishna Kavitalakal, and Devadasi. Apart from these; The poems Vazhathen, Malamukulirikke, Vaayadikkili, Kadinu Kaval and the essays Kavuv Theendalle and Vari Yellu are notable works of the poetess. The poem Silent Valley or Nishabdavanam shares the poetess’ concern about the loss of Silent Valley. This poem is also a symbol of the poetess’s bond with nature.

The warmth of the interaction between nature and humans leads Dr. M. Leelavathi described Sugata Kumari as the “modern era’s great neo-romantic poet”. The subsequent works that touch upon various aspects of femininity are the result of the chemical transformation of the poetess’ poetic mind. Love and sorrow are the main ingredients there. As a fierce and self-sacrificing woman, feminine qualities were born from that pen. Above all, they also conveyed the presence of Krishna, standing as a savior. This diversity of subjects that makes it seem like one is a surprising element in Sugata Kumari’s poems. Radha Krishna love, environmental problems, the lives of destitute women, political and social problems, the struggles and conflicts of tribal and Dalit lives, etc. In all the poems that gain relevance due to their diversity of subjects, the song of a lonely and longing wild bird with withered wings is buried. The bitterness that emerges from the poet’s final scene is the anguish she feels when experiencing insecurity in the social environment.

In the last few days, the power of the troubled; quarrelsome mind has increased. Standing as the guardian of nature, seeing every blade of grass, greenery and the huge mountains swallowed by the axe, grappling with the darkening lungs of the earth, the poetess constantly questioned the development strategies. The poetess opened her eyes to the views of the marginalized tribal people and the lives of women who are subjected to exploitation regardless of age. The different aspects of the Radha-Krishna bond, which attracts any mind that is mixed with love and longing, and their depth and breadth, have touched the love feelings of the Malayalis. This clear and pure sweetness of expression has intoxicated the world of Malayalam poetry.

The love of motherhood is the essence of Sugata Kumari’s poems, and the poet pours the nectar of poetry into the hearts of the appreciators to preserve the tenderness, goodness and warmth of the last drop of the onion without drying out. Poetic images flow in the poem like a turbulent stream of water. This flow towards the ever-restless sea in the poetess is the image of the ever-restless romantic mind,

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