

Remembering the Literary Icon: U. R. Ananthamurthy

A one-day symposium was organised by the Department of Kannada Language & Translation Studies on 03.03.2016 at the Dravidian University, Kuppam, at 11 am, at Emeneau House, in the campus. The symposium titled “*Smrithisanchaya: The Literary Icon— U. R. Ananthamurthy*” aimed at bringing awareness about the unique literary genius U. R. Ananthamurthy.



Padmashri Girish Kasaravalli, eminent film director, and a well-known pioneer of parallel cinema in India, and the Guest of Honour of the program has described Ananthamurthy as a man with multiple facets to his personality— writer, social activist, and a philosopher who reflected deeply on the inexorable encounter between tradition and modernity. He also emphasized the fact that Ananthamurthy has combined realism and metaphorical writing and many of his writings are interpreted in both ways. But, he added that, as an artist, Ananthamurthy did not take sides in the emotional and cultural conflict that he presented with unforgettable artistic skill and unmistakable insightful understanding. After his inspiring speech, a film directed by him on U. R. Ananthamurthy’s

life and works is screened to the audience, and Girish Kasaravalli himself has responded to the questions of the audience after the screening.



Dr Manu Chakravarthy, a note writer, critic, and academician, and the special invitee in the program has given an inspiring and informative lecture on U. R. Ananthamurthy. In his presentation he depicted Ananthamurthy as a writer who recognised the need for negotiation between tradition and modernity. He also added that Ananthamurthy's crusade is to democratise the tradition and culture, and not to reject it as a nihilist. Although Ananthamurthy has been a trenchant critic of the cultural erasure caused by globalisation and liberalisation, he was also a fervent supporter of modern literatures like the Dalit and Minority literatures. The speaker also brought home the point that Ananthamurthy rejected dichotomising the East and the West. He presented Ananthamurthy as a man of cosmopolitan sympathies in culture. After the lecture, Dr Manu Chakravarthy also responded to the queries from the audience and persuasively established the literary genius of U. R. Ananthamurthy.



In his speech on this occasion, Prof. E. Sathyanarayana, honourable Vice-Chancellor of the university stated that cultural exchanges between Dravidian literatures is crucial for the mutual enrichment of the Dravidian culture as a whole and for Comparative Studies that have a key role to play in Dravidian University. In the afternoon session the celebrated film *Ghatashraddha*, directed by Girish Kasaravalli was screened in the hall, and later both the guests were felicitated by the VC, with garlands. Prof. Sharada was the Director of the symposium.