

Library



Sahitya Akademi

15 November 2011

meet the author

Pothukuchi Sambasiva Rao



Any literary content that possesses universal-appeal would remain forever. Even though, so many styles and classifications exist in poetry, they are only meant for the purpose of criticism and outdo to stand for personal values but not for ever remaining. In course of rushing time, literature of any kind that come into being, based on a particular theory would remain as a tiny spec, down the lane. But universally appealing literature blended with human values would rock and steadily remain in all ages.

- Dr. Pothukuchi

Dr. Pothukuchi Sambasiva Rao occupies a special place among the Telugu writers, for making a multifaceted effort as a poet, narrator, playwright, actor, editor, essayist, biography writer in the modern Telugu literature. During 1950s, when Chalam's writing on one hand and Kovvali & Jampana's popular literary stream on the other hand, were making waves in Telugu Literature he showed a new trend to the readers with his novel Udaya Kiranaalu (Morning Rays).

Pothukuchi Sambasiva Rao was born on 27th January 1928 in Alamuru, a small village that lies on the green carpeted paddy fields and mangrove forests adjoining the vibrantly flowing Gowthami River in East Godavai District of Andhra Pradesh. He was the second child of Shri Pothukuchi Narasimhamurthy and Smt. Suramma. Even as a student in school, he was extremely

fond of going to libraries and temples in the highly cultured town of Kakinada (also nick named as second Madras) in Andhra Pradesh. His mother and maternal uncle Gandikota Rama Murthy inculcated in Pothukuchi an involvement in the world of letters after his father's untimely demise. Young Pothukuchi having much attachment with his father, unable to withstand the rude shock then set off to knowing the secrets about life and death and in the process voraciously read books in libraries. Besides, his mother kept on telling him folktales. Even Panchatantra Stories in which the lines like "What is ordained for a man will always come to pass-God almighty himself cannot prevent this. Therefore, I neither rejoice nor grieve for what was past." perhaps injected philosophy into him at the same time, he says. These newer innovations shaped his life and outlook of literature in course of time. Due to his love for Telugu language and Telugu literature Pothukuchi concentrated more on Telugu Grammar while pursuing his intermediate and BA degree in Kakinada. Thereafter, he started writing poetry.

For the first time in the year 1947 Pothukuchi received silver medals as first prize for his story, play, as well as an actor in *Idee Thanthu* (This Is Routine). The subject in this play was quarrel between husband and wife and Pothukuchi also gave a



With Chief Minister Bramhananda Reddy, Cultural Minister M.R. Apparao, Minister Lakshmi Narasayya, Dr. PSR Apparao and Kalva Satyanarayana gupta



Dr. Pothukuchi with Devulapalli Krishna Sasthy, Padmabhushan (Secretary AP Sangeetha nataka academy)

solution to live in harmony by exchanging pleasantries every now and then and hence, this created a sort of curiosity and left a lasting impression among the couples who watched it. This literary journey coupled with watching patriotic movies on Gandhi and movies on mythology, folklore and other message oriented movies on eradication of social evils like untouchability and dowry systems greatly influenced Pothukuchi in those days.

After passing B.A., the fact that he belonged to a lower middle class background, had forced him to go in search of job for survival and thus moved to Hyderabad in the year 1948 and worked with a chartered accountant, there after as a steno in secretariat, and finally worked in the labour department. While employed in the Labour Department, he completed his LLB. Through one of the Telugu literary stalwarts Boyi Bheemanna, he came closer to the then Minister of Labour Damodaram Sanjeeviah who later became Chief Minister and he being a literary person, had much affinity with Pothukuchi and in the process of their association, he promoted Pothukuchi as Inspector of Labor. Pothukuchi utilized this newly found freedom and spare time at his disposal to organize literary programs in plenty.

Pothuckuchi co-founded a

cultural organization by name Navya Sahiti Samithi and organized many literary Programmes. In those days besides encouraging talented people through his Cultural Organization, he was also actively subscribing his writings to many magazines such as Andhra Vara Pathrika, Telangana Golkonda, Telugu Desam, Chitraguptha, Rupavani, Telugu Swatantra. This brought him very close to the writers in those days. He independently founded Viswasahithi (Universal Literature) a cultural organization in the year 1960 for providing a space for young and established talented people, which is still vibrantly managed by him.

His first novel Udaya Kiranaalu was published in the year 1955. It brought him recognition as a novelist of rare distinction. He personally attributes to writing this novel after being inspired by watching a Hindi movie 'Biraj Bahu' in which the lead lady role after being driven out of home by her husband, encountering many difficulties, makes her way back into her home with her will power and breathes her last in front of her husband. This novel carried perfection, in handling the images besides highlighting the thematic forms, rightly won the first prize in a novel competition.

His caricature of the society is depicted at many places in Udaya Kiranaalu novel. This Novel was then serialized which created a

sensation in the whole of Andhra Pradesh region. A leading publishing house by name "Vishalandhra" brought it into a book form and the Novel also got translated into Russian language and became very popular.

While organizing meeting and programmes, he reached out to many stalwarts of Telugu poetic world like Dasaradhi, C. Narayana Reddy, Durgayya, Nellori Kesava Swami, Bhaskarabhatla Krishnarao, Neela Jangayya, Kaloji Narayanarao, B. Ramaraju, Hayagreevachari, Kappaganthula Lakshmana Sastry, Diwakarla Venkatavadhani, Khandavalli Lakshmiranjanam, Adiraju Veerabhadhrarao, PSR Anjeneya Sastry, A.R. Krishna and more particularly to the former Prime Minister Late P.V. Narasimharao who were all from Telangana Region. He brought together Telangana Writers with the rest of the regions and served Telugu literature which is unparalleled, and still continues.

The nucleus of Pothukuchi's works, as a writer or a play wright, unearths the deteriorating ethics of all forms in the society and finally presumes to transform and turn to the path of righteousness and attain the bliss of God. This indeed is the central trend that penetrates itself through all his novels, short stories, poems, in his articles and speeches, in aesthetics and sociology.

Pothukuchi's characters are from middle class and lower middle class where life is a prolonged struggle. They are always in scarcity and pain of all sorts. Each character of Pothukuchi has its own unusual inner worlds of romance, passion and hatred. Their life is full of contradictions, personal encounters, disputes and interpersonal conflicts; they harbor enmity with each other and so not hesitate to assault verbally. This kind of social life is explored by Pothukuchi in many ways. His novels are though close to reality and simple in narration, still male lead characters are left to pathetic trauma in the hands of opposite sex. He creates deceitful female characters, soft and innocent male leads, finally paves the way to accepting the mysticism of God as the only solace for human race. His language is filled with dialects of Godavari regions of Andhra.

Of the novels which came after Udaya Kiranaalu was Anveshna (Search) that drew the attention of the readers (serialized in Andhra Pathrika, the Telugu popular weekly magazine for one complete year). This is the first Telugu novel written with characters based in and around the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Which means to say, he did a great deal of strenuous field work by going from lane to by-lanes, observing from home to home, children, adolescents, youngsters, adults and octogenarians and



Dr. Pothukuchi speaking at Bhasha nilayam with Burgula Ramakrishna rao, Bheemshankar (Governor), Damodaram Sanjeevayya (Ex chief minister), Madapati Hanumantharao.



Dr. Pothukuchi acting in his own play
"Idee thanthu" (comedy drama)

identified appropriate characters, in assimilating them and recreating them as art. This novel therefore gives clean visual thinking of 1959 Telangana and other Andhra regions that were combined and Hyderabad as also the capital, migration of Andhra people, their integrity, co-ordination and cultural differences. Then came his *Edu Rojula Majili* (Seven Days Sojourn) which is the only novel written in Telugu Literature intertwining Vedic Astrology. The hero and heroine in the story are subjected and influenced by the celestial positioning and its overall influence on them in different cosmological elements and with cosmos, in all seven days of the week. Therefore, Pothukuchi did a different kind of experiment by combining this science to the story in an expressive form of the unison, underlying super intelligence governing the entire precision as he is himself an Astro-Palmist.

Chalamayya shashtipoorthi (Chalamayya's sixtieth birthday) is with predominance of comedy and such comic filled novels Telugu are very rare. This novel tickled all age groups to laughter and became popular among not only the literature connected people but also cross section of readers, in those days.

He also published a rare volume on the legendary socio fiction writer of Telugu, Gurazada Apparao, during his centenary along with other volumes in English on Panuganti and other writers.

He was conferred Bharath Basha Bushan and Sarasvathi Samman by Akhila Bharatiya Bhasha Sahitya Sammelan, Bhopal.

Pothukuchi as an editor, founded news papers *UNILIT* in English which is now called *VISWA* and *VISWARACHANA* (Universal Literature) in Telugu in the year 1960 and they are still being continued. He lent free legal advices to many through news papers and journals as being a lawyer. With all his literary and cultural activities, he also worked in Congress party of the State occupying many high organizational posts, while his affinity to Late Radhakrishnan (President of India), Damodaram Sanjiviah (Central Minister) are still memorable feathers on his cap.

Pothukuchi is also very popular as Radio Play artist as well as significantly popular as stage drama artist. His role as Donga (House Breaking Thief) and Dora (Aristocrat) on stage dramas brought him lot of accolades all of which are scripted by himself. He received the coveted Kalaaprapoorna (Honorary Doctorate) award from Andhra University. He has also received Ugadi award from the then Chief Minister Chandra Babu Naidu.

As a Member of the Film Censor Board for nearly ten years, he worked for elimination of Vamp characters which were spoiling the Telugu culture. He entered cine field and successfully wrote some Cine novels and extended his activities of acting and also writing for nearly 30 years. He was the pioneer for organizing World Telugu Conferences in 1975 at Hyderabad. He organized eleven All India Telugu Writers Conferences, seven AP Women Writers Conferences and AP Young Writers and Artists Conferences along with many workshops to focus the richness of Telugu literature.

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- Editor** : Viswa Sahithi, Fortnightly (Estd. 1960), Viswa Rachana, Telugu Small Daily Viswa, English Monthly
- Positions held** : Member, Osmania University Senate Member, Regional Censor Board (10 Years) Member A.P. Sahitya Academy (20 Years)
- Member** : General Council, Telugu Advisory Board of Sahitya Akademi; A.P. Lalith Kala Academy
- Other Organizations** : General Secretary and founder of Navya Sahiti Samithi, Hyderabad. Secretary, Sri Krishna Devaraya Andhra Bhasha Nilayam, (2 Years)
- Associate Editor** : Natya Kala of A.P. Sangeetha Nataka Academy.
- Titles** : Sahithi Chaitanya, Sahithi Bhisma, Bhasha Bhusa (Akila Bharatiya Bhasha Sammelan (Bhopal), Viswa Andhra Samdhata, Sahithi Chaitanya Samvardhaka (2008), Kalaprapooma Doctorate from Andhra University (1993), Sri Giriraju Vijaya Laxmi Mother Award, Narayana Reddy Kalapitham award, Award of K. Subbaya Dikshitulu - 2005, Award of Suravaram Pratap Reddy Award - 2005, Received Dharmanithi Awards P.S. Telugu University, Hyderabad (2Times), Received Kasi Chainula Suryanarayana Gold Medal. P.S. Telugu University Pratibha Purashkaram (2007), Ugadi Purashkaram A.P. Govt. 2007, Goutha Raju Purashkaram Dr. Someswara Rao Amritostava Award, Nori Narasimha Sastry award (2008)



Dr. Pothukuchi honoured with "Saraswathi Samman Award" by Akhil Bharat Bhasha Saahitya Sammelan from Mahaveera Swami, Dr.Sathish Chaturvedi, Dr. C. Narayana Reddy and others