

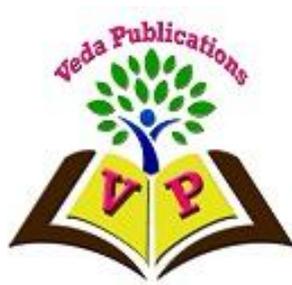


## THE RICHNESS OF THE TELUGU LANGUAGE WITH REFERENCE TO GENRE "NOVEL"

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### ABSTRACT



This paper tries to examine the richness of Telugu Language with reference to the genre of Fiction "Novel". Telugu language is rich in "Novel"(Fiction) literature. Hundreds of novels, related to social issues, family life, miseries of the down trodden, problems facing the youth and the marginalized sections of society like Dalits and Adivasis, oppressed sections like women, minorities and gays etc. issues like gender justice, child labor, exploitation of children, and problems connected with industrial labor have been the themes of the novel. In fact, novel has come too closer to life than poetry and drama have. The term "Novel" is foreign to Telugu language. It came from English language. The word is derived from the Italian word "novella". The first novel is said to be *Mahaswetha* written by classical scholar named Kokkonda Venkata Ratnam Panthulu in 1867.

**Keywords:** *Novel Form in Telugu- Variety- Traditions-Culture- Translation*

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### THE RICHNESS OF THE TELUGU LANGUAGE IN NOVEL LITERATURE

Translations from one Indian regional language to another language are mostly a recent phenomenon. This development led to renaissance initially in Bengal. It gradually spread to other states. Most Bengali writers like Rabindranath Tagore, Sarat Chandra, and Bankinn Chandra Chaterjee took to novel writing to bring about political, social and cultural awakening among Indian masses.

Translations into Telugu from foreign languages such as English, Russian, French and Japanese are good in number. Charles Dickens is the most popular among English novelists. Tenneti Suri translated 'A Tale of Two Cities' into Telugu. Tapi Dharma Rao translated Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and *Anna Kerinana*.

Telugu language is rich in novel literature. Hundreds of novels, related to social issues, family life, miseries of the down trodden, problems facing the youth and the marginalized sections of society



oppressed sections like women, minorities and gays etc. issues like exploitation of children, and problems connected with industrial labor have been the themes of the novel. The term 'novel' is foreign to Telugu language. It came from English language. It originally belongs to western literature. The word is derived from the Italian word 'novella'. In English, it has become novel. This form is known in Indian Languages as 'Kadambari' in Kannada, 'Upanyas' in Hindi, Gujarati and Bangla. Telugu writers have adopted the English word and made it a Navala – (English-Novel, Telugu-Navala).

### PHASE ONE

The first novel in Telugu is said to be '*Mahaswetha*' written by a classical scholar named Kokkonda Venkata Ratnam Panthulu in 1867. It remains in manuscript, never in print. There is a controversy around it as to whether it was an imitation of any English novel, or a product influenced by Sanskrit *Kadambari*. The Second novel, chronologically speaking, was "*Rangaraja Charitra*", an original Telugu novel by Naraharisetty Gopala Krishnamma, Deputy Collector of Kurnool. It was written in 1872. The third novel in Telugu was '*Rajasekhara Charitra*' authored by Sri Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu, a literary figure and an ardent social reformer. It was published in 1878. The writer was inspired to write it by Goldsmith's '*The Vicar of the Wakefield*'. It was the first novel in Telugu to be translated into English. He wrote two other novels namely- "*Raghavendra Vijayam*" and "*Satyarajapurva Desa Yaattralu*". Orthodoxy and senseless rituals had been ridiculed in these novels.

An equally talented scholar, Chilakamarthi Lakshmi Narasimham Pantulu wrote a good number of novels among which '*Dasi Kanya*', '*Ramachandra Vijayam*', '*Krishna Veni*', '*Rajaratnam*', '*Ahalya Bai*', '*Hemalatha*', '*Karpoora Manjari*' and '*Ganapathi*' are important. They illustrated his originality and creative talent. He was conferred the title of Andhra Scott for the historical element in his writings. Other novelists of his time worth mentioning are Ketavarapu Venkata Sastry, Venkata Parvateeswara Kavulu and Ravala Subba Rao. They took a cue from Chilakamarthi and wrote historical novels. Ketavarapu's '*Rayachuru Yuddham*', Venkata

Parvateeswara Kavulu's '*Pramadavanam*' and Subbarao's '*Rani Samyukta*' are also historical novels.

The next stage in novel writing was dominated by three stalwarts namely Viswanatha Satyanarayana, Adavi Bapiraju and Nori Narasimha Sastry. Viswanatha strode Telugu literature like a colossus. He was also the most prolific novel writer. His magnum opus is '*Veyipadagalu*'. This novel depicts a whole period of Telugu society, its culture, social changes occurring at the time etc. He gives a very vivid and authentic picture of his times. It is a matchless realistic novel. Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Former Prime Minister of India, translated the novel into Hindi with the title '*Sahasraphan*'. If one wants an insight into Telugu history, culture, art and social life, one must read *Veyipadagalu*. Viswanatha had an inimitable style of writing poetry, prose, drama and novel. Another noted Telugu novelist of the time was Nori Narasimha Sastry. He wrote '*Narayana Batta*', '*Rudrama Devi*', '*Malla Reddi*', '*Kavi Sarvabhoomudu*' and '*Vaaghira*'. These works related to Andhra history. They set an example to the later writers in historical writing. Another great novelist of the time was Adavi Bapiraju. He penned three important novels. The stories have a historical back ground. '*Himabindhu*' is a historical novel.

In this connection, we cannot miss mentioning the name of Mokkalapati Narasimha Sastry and his master piece '*Barrister Parvateesam*'. This novel, known for its humor, left a lasting impression on the readers' mind. Narasimharao's creation of '*Kantham*' has become an icon of humour in Andhra area. '*Deekshatitulu*', '*Thirumaliga*' and '*Rukkutalli*' are his other writings. Pilaka Ganapati Sastry is another popular novelist of the time.

Another great novelist of the time was Unnava Lakshmi Narayana. He and his wife were committed Gandhians. Lakshminarayana's novel '*Malapalli*' is an original work in fiction. It is a social classic. '*Malapalli*' depicts village life in Andhra as it was around 1920. This novel inspired people to sacrifice everything they had for the sake of achieving independence. It promoted sense of equality among various castes and a genuine desire to live a righteous life.

Gudipati Venkata Chalam was another great



novelist that gave a shock to Andhra readers with his radical views on the institution of marriage, marital life and freedom of choice to women in the matter of sex etc. He championed the cause of those who were victims of the social and religious restrictions and inhibitions imposed by tradition. He fought dauntlessly for free sex. His most important novel that fetched him an equal measure of both praise and condemnation is 'Maidanam'. Chalam's other novels are "Radhakrishna", 'Daivamicchina Bharya', 'Jeevita Darshanam', Aruna and one or two other works. Chalam was acclaimed as the best novelist of his day for his radical ideas on marriage and sex, his technique of novel writing and his mastery over the use of Telugu language and its idiom. He stood in direct contrast to Kavi Samrat Viswanatha Satyanarayana in his ideas and outlook on life. Viswanatha was a committed traditionalist while Chalam was an iconoclast, and a radical rebel.

#### PHASE TWO

The next phase in Telugu fiction witnessed the emergence of great writers like Gopichand, Kodavatiganti Kutumba Rao, Samavedam Janakirama Sharma, Penumarti Satyanarayana Raju etc. Gopichand was a writer par excellence. He imbibed in him several ideologies and integrated them into his novels. He inherited rationalism from his father, Ramaswami Chowdari, humanism from M.N. Roy, psycho analytical approach from Freud and super consciousness from Arabindo. His first novel 'Parivartana' depicts the hero Rajarao's recovery from despondency and his heroic effort to become an altogether changed being.

Kodavaganti Kutumba Rao is another prolific writer. He penned a dozen novels. By conviction, he is a socialist. Yet his literature is not propagandistic in tone, he gave his convictions an aesthetic expression. In these twin novels 'Kotta Alludu and Kotta Kodalu', he portrayed middle class mentality, selfishness, ego and narrowness of mind. His contemporaries Kovvali Lakshmi NarasimhaRao and Jampana Chandrasekhara Rao wrote a few novels which catered to the erotic instincts of the youth of his

time. Their works enjoyed a larger readership and gained instant popularity.

Among the post - independence novels Dr.G.V. Krishna Rao's 'Keelu Bommalu' is worth mentioning. This novel highlights the differences between the rich land lords, communists and the consequent conflicts between them. His novel 'Raaga Rekhalu' was put up by Andhra Jyothi Daily in a serial for a long time. 'Butchi Babu' is another renowned novelist. His 'Chivaraku Migiledi' is a marvel in novel technique. Another novel Potukucchi Sambasiva Rao's 'UdayaKiranalalu' draws a factual picture of middle class families which became victims of inner and outer conflicts, having been unable to strike a balance between social change and strangulating traditions.

R.S. Sudarshanam is one of the few novelists who wrote phycho-analytical novels. His 'AsuraSandhya' is a mile stone in this genre. A senior novelist Muddamsetti Hanumantha Rao, in his novel 'Vidhi Vanchitulu' gives a graphic account of how young girls who fall in love and leave home suffer in their life when they are betrayed by their so-called lovers. Seela Veera Raju, a poet, artist and novelist, in his novel *Velugu Rekhalu* potrays the life of an ideal woman, encounters the ordeals of life with courage.

Sri Ravuri Bharadwaja is another great novelist who in his classic novel 'Pakudurallu' depicts a woman who enjoyed wider patronage for her impressive roles on stage and silver screen, but how she suffered a life of neglect in the end having lost all her youthful beauty and charm. A brief survey of history of the growth of Telugu Novel is presented here to get an idea of how the practice of translation has enriched the language and literature of Telugu. The survey is useful to understand what type of books were translated and the type of translation practiced. Translators from English to Telugu were not aware of any translation theory. Their works looked like adaptation. For them the main goal was to satisfy the reader of the target language. That is the reason why most of the translations appeared like original works. They are more like transcreations. But the need of the day is translations from Telugu into English. If the works of great Telgu novelists are translated into English, they will attain good place in the galaxy of Novel literature.



The translator must be a bilingual with deeper knowledge of the image, idiom, syntax, traditions and ethnicity of the societies speaking those two languages. Everything said, it should be conceded that perfect translation is rather a mirage than reality. Perfection to the extent of cent percent is only an ideal worth-pursuing. Translation is no new phenomenon. Translation in India has a different story. It was not caused by forced migrations as in Europe and elsewhere. There was a time when Sanskrit was widely prevalent in India. It was not only the lingua franca of India. It was the main vehicle as well, of Indian thought, philosophy, astrology, dance, music, astronomy, sculpture and literature. The Vedas, The Upanishads, The *Bhagavad Gita*, Epics like the Ramayana and the *Mahabharata* and works on material sciences were all in Sanskrit. It was a great repository and a perennial source of Indian thought and culture. One thing is very conspicuous here. Most of the translation works from Sanskrit related to its religious texts and texts of literature, such as poetry and drama.

Translations from one Indian regional language to another regional language are mostly a recent phenomenon. Infact, this kind of work started around 1920 in the then undivided Bengal. Bengal is a fertile land for literature. That was the State where the Colonial English rulers finally settled after the battle of Plassey. They opened colleges in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta as they were assured of their continuous stay as rulers. They were pressurized to introduce teaching of English literature and history. This development led to renaissance initially in Bengal. It gradually spread to other states. Most Bengali writers like Rabindranath Tagore, Sarat Chandra, and Bankinn Chandra Chaterjee took to novel writing to bring about political, social and cultural awakening among Indian masses. Among them, Sharat Chandra's name should be mentioned first. He was a prolific writer. He authored dozens of novels in Bengali.

Telugu writers like Venkata Parvateeswara *Kavulu* etc translated almost all the Bengali novels of Tagore, Bankim and Sharat into Telugu. Their translations enjoyed a larger readership in Andhra area. The third type of translation i.e. from regional language to English is somewhat assuring. There have

been a good number of novels, short stories and poems translated into English from various regional languages. In this respect, Bengali Writings have a lion's share. Almost all books of Tagore were rendered into English.

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