

12 December 1998

Naghen



Sahitya Akademi

meet the author

Kove. Manisekaran





Receiving Sahitya Akademi Award (1992) from Prof. U.R. Anantha Murthy, President of the Akademi.

*To think that I write for someone else or something else is **maaya**. The truth is that I write for myself. Just like philosophy of **Meemamsa** slightly accentuated it becomes the philosophy of **Prabhakara**.*

Time makes me write. I write and offer my writings at its feet. To reject it or joyously accept it is in its hands. I write; awards are offered by time.

Kove. Manisekaran

Kove as he is affectionately called in literary circle, Kove. Manisekaran has authored more than 1000 short stories, 150 novels and nine plays besides scripted and directed three films and edited four Tamil weeklies in a span of 50 years. This is an achievement worth mentioning. His first poem was published in *Tamil Nilam* a monthly in the year 1945.

Born in 1927 at Vellore in North Arcot District in Tamil Nadu, Manisekaran, graduated in Carnatic Music from the Annamalai University. His career in literary journalism began with the *Kalaimanram* weekly and *Kalai Arangam*, a Finearts monthly. Later he became the Managing Editor of *Murugu* and then of *Mangalam*. He has won number of Awards, including Raja Sir Annamalai Memorial Award (1979), three State awards in 1972, 1981 and 1985, respectively, V.G.P. Award (1983), Thiru ViKa Award (1984), Mamannan Raja Rajan Award (1987), Kanchi Kamakoti Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal Award (1987) and Sahitya Akademi Award (1992).

Kutralakurinji which got him the Sahitya Akademi Award is a social historical novel conceived in the background of the political history of Thanjavur in the early period of 19th century. The author has put his knowledge of music to good use in this novel while introducing great musicians like Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Tyagaraja as characters. The very theme of the novel is the impact of Carnatic music on the common man. The author shows how music transcends the barriers of caste and creed through his heroine,

Kurinji, a dalit girl who scales the heights of art assisted by her master, Muthuswamy Dikshitar. With its catholicity of approach, its effective characterisation, its invocation of the power of the art of music and its absorbing narration of events, Kutralakurinji is considered an excellent example of contemporary Indian fiction in Tamil.

In **Yagasalai**, which got him the Rajah Sir Annamalai Memorial Award, the 10 yogas mentioned in Bhagavat Gita have been exquisitely depicted. The author seems to postulate the ultimate purity of the soul despite the evils the mortal body is subjected to. This novel has been produced and directed by him as a film.

In **Thennang Keetru**, the difficulties encountered by a woman who has not attained puberty has been cautiously dealt with by the author. Attaining puberty is an important milestone in the life of woman. That is the basis for happiness and reproduction. When it is lacking, it became a complication for the individual and the family. Social ceremonies picture these deficiencies in bad colour. If these deficiencies are seen with humanitarian outlook it will not look, as a deficiency at all. The author put these into the mouth of Santhanam, a character in the novel.



with his grandson

The outstanding qualities of the author is his unique style of writing in Tamil. Apart from the literary sphere, the author has written several plays in the world of stage. His novel **Suthanthira Boomiyil Vellai Naraigal** based on the recent history centering round Rani Velu Nachiar and Maruthu brothers, Vella Maruthu and Chinna Maruthu. The passion of Vella Maruthu for Velu Nachi has been neatly brought out. Their subsequent encounters make interesting reading, both trying to outwit the other.

He has written the dialogue for the Tamil film **Nalla Kaalam** (1954) and penned lyrics for **Boologa Rambai**. After working as an Assistant Director under the veteran Director K. Balachander for over 10 Films, he himself

directed four Tamil films and one Kannada film.

Presently the author is writing the Kove Ramayanam in classical version. He has divided this into three volumes. Ayodhya Kaandam, Uthama Kaandam and Maguda Kaandam. The first two volumes have been released and the last volume is under production.

Many of Kove. Manisekaran's short stories and novels have been prescribed by Universities for Graduate and post - Graduate courses. More than 25 research students have received M. Phil., and Ph.D., degrees on Kove's novels and short stories.

He is an effective orator and critic. Now he is producing Video serials for Doordarshan and private channel Televisions.

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Silver Jubilee Conference (1984), Calcutta.

A CHRONOLOGY

- 1927 May,2
Born at Vellore
- 1945 First poem in **Tamil Nilam** a monthly
- 1947 Studied Carnatic Music at Annamalai University
- 1954 Assistant Editor, **Kalai Manram**, and Managing Editor, **Kalai Arangam**
- 1955 Marriage with Saraswathi
- 1972 Tamil Nadu Govt. State Award for '**Seran Kulakkudi; Kovien Kathaigal, Kanchi Kathiravan**
- 1979 Raja Sir Annamalai Award for **Yagasalai**
- 1983 VGP Award
- 1984 Thiru Vi Ka Award (Govt. of Tamil Nadu)
- 1987 Mamannan Rajarajan Award of Tamil University for **Vengai Vanam**
- 1987 Kanchi Kamakodi Jayendra Swamigal Award
- 1992 Sahitya Akademi Award for **Kuttralakurinji**
- 1993 Annai Rajalakshmi Award
- 1993 Lilly Deivasigamani Memorial Award for **Mudisoottu Vizha**
- 1996 V.O.C. Award, Pondicherry

