



Sahitya Akademi



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meet the author

Swayam Prakash





Eventually, this is not the work that I wanted to create. It is just a prelude to it. We are in need of a totally new form to write the narrative of our times in, which, probably, can be done through efforts such as this.

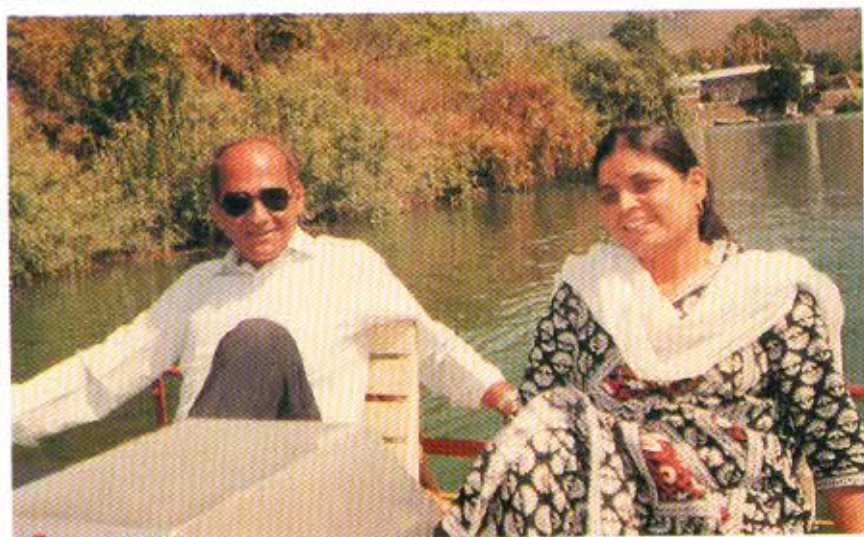
Swayam Prakash

Swayam Prakash is a writer who has deep faith in continuity and growth in the understanding of the intricate network of relationships between an individual and reality. He has not only filled the gap successfully in the tradition of the writers like Premchand, Yashpal, Bhisham Sahni and Shekhar Joshi but also recommenced cherishing the bond between fiction and the Indian reality. His narrative and descriptive powers find him choosing characters in his works who represent people from almost all

social strata and encapsulating the themes from the turmoil that erupted from a philosophical position one holds in life to even stark battles for survival. With his sagacious sense of humour he puts his finger on the myriad contradictions and ironies in human life and invites readers to become a part of his work. The writer in him does not restrict the experimental spirit that is his when he declares in the short preface to his novel *Beech Main Vinay* (1994), that we need a totally new form to write the narrative of our times in.

Swayam Prakash was born in 1947 at Indore in Madhya Pradesh. He passed the diploma in Mechanical Engineering from the Government Polytechnic at Jaora and took up a job in the Indian Navy in 1967. In the next two years his artistic inclination made him opt for an apprenticeship to a roadside painter in Mumbai and later to become an assistant to the late Rajendra Singh Bedi in directing the film, *Dastak*.

Swayam Prakash graduated from Indore University as a private candidate and then took a Master's degree in Hindi from Rajasthan University, Jaipur, in 1980. Udaipur University (Rajasthan) awarded him Ph D after which he joined Hindustan



Naukuchia tal and Pedal boat. What a combination!!!

Zinc Ltd. as Hindi Officer in 1983. During this service, he was initially posted in Orissa and later, in Rajasthan. Seeking voluntary retirement from Hindustan Zinc Ltd. he moved to Bhopal and joined as the editor of *Chakmak*, a science magazine for children. In 2005, he left the editorship to become a fulltime writer.

Although he began writing at an early age, he published his first short story in 1969 in *Samaj Kalyan*. His first collection of short stories *Matra Aur Bhar* was published in 1975, and *Jalte Jahaj Par*, his first novel, in 1982. He has fourteen collections of short stories, five novels, two collec-

destroyed even in the dark times of communal disharmony and globalization. In his short story "Suraj Kab Nikalega," Bhairaram and his family's agonizing battle with the deluge for survival becomes a metaphor for the hard struggle of all mankind to keep the sensitivity and conscience alive.

In Bisham Sahni's words, "Swayam Prakash's short stories are very effective, excellent and up to the brim with human emotions." Namvar Singh, eminent critic, writes: "I like Swayam Prakash's stories very much, for they are immaculate and told with a discerning consciousness. His short stories have indeed



Receiving Subhadra Kumari Chouhan Award from Habib Tanvir

tions of essays, a memoir, two translations, two books for children, a play and a telefilm to his credit.

Swayam Prakash's works promise to offer their readers deep understanding of our developing nation from within. He is very keen on capturing the radically changing lifestyles of the developing society. The nature of development and its distinct impact on human relationships seem to remain one of his major concerns. He impresses upon his readers that the fundamental sensibility of human beings and human relationships cannot be

kept up the tradition of the short story writers like Gyanranjan and Kashinath Singh."

There is hardly any work of his which does not juxtapose dehumanization and the fall of human values with hope, innocence, fighting spirit and warmth. His short stories as well as novels seem to be open-ended, as his protagonists finally meet with a world altogether different from their previous ones with matured worldviews and hope for a better life. Innovative narrative details, rare bits of reality collected through keen observation of the lives of common people,



Receiving Pahal Samman from Baburao Bagul

transforming them into fiction with a sensibility that has a tinge of folk-culture, make the style of his fiction genuinely new, vibrant and as fresh as a daisy.

Kamleshwar, one of the most acclaimed Hindi writers, opines about his short story "Ek Khoobsurat Ghar": It proves to be a very beautiful short story in which all circumstances go against the human being. But it is only these circumstances from which a ray of hope comes subtly." The faith in humanity and in the integrity of mankind enables the central characters in Swayam Prakash's works to bear the brutality of the struggles in life. As in *Beech Main Vinay*,

Vinay seems to find support in Rucha to explore his own world. Rohit and Snigdha (*Eiendhan*, 2004), though fail to understand each other fully, try rigorously to adopt a lifestyle that both of them hate personally in order to suit and understand each other in a better way and in the course of time, they, though unknowingly, come up with full-grown worldviews.

As Shambhunath, a noted critic, points out, "The ability to epitomize not only the subtlety and density of the Indian reality, but also its diversity makes Swayam Prakash remarkable among the writers of his generation."



L to R: Durgaprasad Agarwal, Vijendra, Nand Bhardwaj, Swayam Prakash, Madhav Hada and Shivram

A Select Bibliography

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- Jalte Jahaj Par* (1982) Prakashan Sansthan, Delhi
Jyotirath Ke Sarathi (1987) Dharati Prakashan, Bikaner
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- Beech Main Vinay* (1994) Rajkamal Prakashan, New Delhi
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Rangashala Main Ek Dopahar (2002) Samayik Prakashan, New Delhi

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- Phoenix* (1980) Dharati Prakashan, Bikaner

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- Hamsafarnama* (2000) Rachana Prakashan, Jaipur

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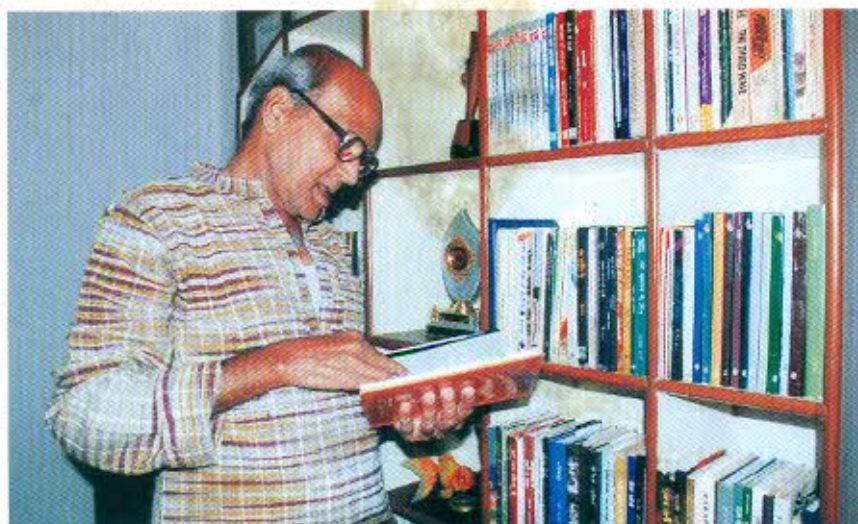
Translations

- Pangu Mastishka* (2000) (Sushanta Gunilke)
Loktantrik Vidyalyaya (2007) (Apple and Beene)

Telefilm

- Partition*





Lost among best friends

A Chronology

- | | | | |
|---------|--|------|--|
| 1947 | Born at Indore in Madhya Pradesh | | Udaipur University, Rajasthan |
| 1966 | Passed the Diploma in Mechanical Engineering from Govt. Polytechnic, Jaora, Madhya Pradesh | | First novel, <i>Jalte Jahaj Par</i> published |
| 1967 | Joined the Indian Navy | 1983 | Joined Hindustan Zinc Ltd. as Hindi Officer |
| 1968-69 | Worked as a shore fitter with M/s Jayanti Shipping Company, Great Eastern Shipping Company and Sandhia Steamships and Navigations. | 1992 | Shifted to the Vigilance Department |
| 1969 | First short story published | 1994 | Won Subhadra Kumari Chouhan Award for the collection of short stories, <i>Aadmi Jaat Ka Aadmi</i> |
| 1970 | Joined Indian Post and Telegraph Department as Repeater Station Assistant | 1995 | Awarded Banmali Katha Puraskar |
| 1973 | Edited and published a little magazine, <i>Kyon</i> in association with Mohan Shrotriya from Bhinmal, Rajasthan | 2001 | Awarded Pahal Samman |
| 1974 | Passed the BA from Indore University
First collection of short stories, <i>Matra Aur Bhar</i> published | 2002 | Sought voluntary retirement from Hindustan Zinc Ltd. |
| 1980 | Passed the MA (Hindi) from Rajasthan University, Jaipur | 2003 | Worked for voluntary organization <i>Prayas</i> , Chittorgarh |
| 1982 | Awarded Ph D from | 2004 | Moved to Bhopal
Joined <i>Eklavya</i> as Editor of <i>Chakmak</i> |
| | | 2005 | Left the editorship and opted for fulltime writing
Inducted into the Editorial Board of <i>Pragatisheel Vasudha</i> , the central organ of All India Progressive Writers' Association |