

Cushty Crafting of Female Characters in Undetected Writer's Novels

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Abstract: From time immemorial women have proved their talent in all the fields and they have been trying to get equal opportunity and option with men. But they were allowed to show their scholarly skill only after fourteenth century. In great intellectuals' opinion 'woman is not undeveloped man, but diverse'. So men-scholars feel that women's writings are complementary or supplementary to the man's. Partly through the exigencies of their historical development, partly because of their psychological characteristics, women have, with certain reservations, proved literary artists of the secondary order only. But from eighteenth century onwards women have been beginning to realize their aptitude for novel-writing. The draw-back is most of the feminine pioneers in fiction have seriously handicapped themselves by writing their novels in their mother tongues and haven't tried to translate them into other languages. This paper tries to unfold the hidden talent of a strange Telugu writer who has written many stories but didn't come to lime-light because of her ignorance and lack of deliberation. The anthology of her stories and her two novelettes are discussed in this paper. Her name is P. Jagat Kalanidhi popularly known as Kala who has shown greater vivacity and a more genial breadth than other women writers. Her stories have a strange vitality of their own. This paper tells her keen observation, a fine sense of ironic comedy in her stories viz. *Kannulake Manasunte* (if eyes have heart), *Charithra Punaraavrutham Kaledu* (history is not repeated), *Kaalibaata Pai Raalina Puvvu* (a withered flower on the path), *Taaraka Digivachina Vela* (Star comes to land), *Chaitanya Mangeeralu* (Active Anklets).

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The author is a story-teller of ordinary lives of common people who takes the trivialities of every day life, the little worries, the little pleasures, and the little hardships as her themes. Sometimes she looks as a social reformer who uses her novels as a platform for her social appeals. Her usage of language is a mist of words and phrases. After reading her stories, the readers feel that they have been absorbed in the study of conflicting emotions and psychological subtleties of common human beings. There is more cleverness and greater abstinence and artistic caginess in her novels, and also far less genius. Her vision of life and her character is partial and constrained; but where she did see she had seen with astounding articulateness and insight.

The first story in the anthology, '*Kannulake Manasunte*' follows the journey of a female protagonist who has a matured mind underestimates her beauty and skills. The writer uses a first-person narrator to tell the story. By using her technique the writer keeps both the reader and narrator decisively in the dilemma about the path's itinerary, its signpost and its likely end. The authoress uses the elements of suspense and surprise confidently and sensitively. The final twist in each story makes the reader happy and thought provoking.

When the story opens, the reader finds a haughty and fine-looking lady Samanthaka enters her young aunt Radha's house with a stern and disgusting face. She complains her aunt about her husband Gopaldev and tells that he has loved another girl before their marriage. Then Radha asks her how she detects that news. Samanthaka tells that she has read his diary in his absence and noticed his poetical descriptions about his lover. He has praised the beauty and modest behavior of his lover in his diary. When she compels him to tell his lover's name, he replies "she is married to a gentleman and is leading a respectable life and she doesn't know my love for her. It's not correct to reveal her name now." Then Radha pacifies her niece and

sends her back to her house. But Radha is dazed about this news as she feels that she knows everything regarding Gopal. She recollects her past memories.

Gopaldev is Radha brother-in-law's cousin. Radha's father is a retired clerk. He has four children, Prakasa Rao, Kalyani, Radha and Venu. After 14 years of Prakasa Rao's birth his mother conceived and gave birth to Kalyani, Radha and Venu. So there is age difference between Prakasa Rao and he is many years elder to them. He has completed his Post Graduation in Andhra University staying at his uncle's house and got officer post with the help of his uncle. Later he married his uncle's daughter who came to his house with lot of property and gold. He always believes that his uncle and his wife are the main reason for his growth and it is his duty to listen to their words. His only daughter is Samanthaka, an enticing cute girl who always feels proud about her beauty and riches. Radha is three years elder than her. This description tells how innocent middle class people are lured to some attractions and liabilities and how they lead their lives restricted to norms and conditions.

Radha's sister Lavanya lives in Hyderabad with her husband Rama Rao and searches bridegrooms for her sister. Radha is 5'6 tall and has very good facial features. But many people have rejected her as she is in mixed complexion. The genuine reason is her father is unable to give a lot dowry for her. So Lavanya invites her to come to Hyderabad and encourages her to join a job. Rama Rao's cousin Gopaldev is doing his post graduation in Hyderabad. There Radha meets Gopal and both of them discuss so many things. Gopal likes the friendly nature and positive attitude of Radha and treats Radha as his best friend. He shares everything with her and enjoys her company. But Radha considers him a small child because of his innocuous behavior though he is elder than her. She feels that Gopal is a suitable groom for her brother's daughter Samanthaka and tells about his brilliance and good character to her brother.

Both her brother and sister-in-law are impressed by observing Gopal, his bank officer post and his property. Samanthaka also likes him immediately as he is equally handsome and attractive. But Lavanya hates her elder brother because he always thinks about his daughter, never helps his father and his siblings. While his sister Radha who is three years elder than his daughter is leading a spinster life, he never cares about that thing and arranges his daughter's marriage. Radha consoles her sister and says that she is not at all equivalent to Samanthaka and it is neither appropriate to think about her marriage nor loose such a good match.

At that time Rama Rao's friend Viswanadh, a widower requests Radha to marry him as she always says that though he has lost his wife he is still young and good natured person. Without any hesitation Radha accepts him as her husband. She becomes an ideal wife, ideal mother and ideal friend to every one. Once in a while Samanthaka comes and complains against her husband and gets consolation and good suggestions from her aunt Radha.

The authoress has given a clear picture of social and economical conditions of the society in 1960's with great observation. She has presented the main character Radha as a symbol of matured mind, down-to-earth mentality and unambitious nature. She illustrates how the characters maintain their great values and ethics. When Gopal comes to Radha's house that evening, she asks him with a great curiosity about his lover. This curiosity reveals the common womanly nature. Though Gopal doesn't want to reveal the name, she persuades him to tell the name. At that time she sits with a plate of rice on her lap and waits fervently to listen to him. Then Gopal bends down and writes the name of his lover in the rice. The name is "**RADHA**".

In this story the author has magnificently carved all the characters and their mindset and contemporary social conditions. How poverty and color complexion make people think inferior to others, how irresponsible family members neglect their functions and how middle class people adjust themselves according to their financial status are clearly depicted in her stories. The story is simple but the presentation of the story, mixing of different emotions is really outstanding.

In the second story '*Kaali baatapai raalina poovu*', the author describes how the poverty and adolescence make the young girls go in a wrong direction. She efficiently criticizes the superstitions of low middle class people and the need of population control and family planning. The protagonist Krishna explains the penury of his house owners and how their eldest daughter because of her innocence and

negative attitude gets her own destruction. Krishna comes from his village to a small town for his college education and stays in a room. The house owner Rama Rao, a clerk in a government office has six children. They live hand to mouth with his meager income but never show dissatisfaction or sadness on their faces. Krishna observes their poverty, how they take only one meal for half of the days in a month and gets sympathy on them. Rama Rao's eldest daughter has stopped her education after her fourth form and always criticizes her parents for not providing minimum facilities for them. Krishna wants to help them but he is also a dependent not an employee. Once in a while he gets the children some snacks and food items. It is very hard for him to look at their financial problems and wants to vacate the room. But the couple's affection and children's love for him stop him and he is unable to leave them.

He has completed his degree and B.Ed. and got a teacher post in the same town and stays in the same room. Now he helps them with some of his salary and the children treat him as their family member. All the children chat with him in a friendly way but the eldest daughter Mallika never tries to talk with him. She is the most attractive and charming girl who speaks very little and constantly exhibits her discontentment with harsh words. The second daughter Indira is also a beautiful girl who attracts others with her humble and friendly deportment. As Mallika always thinks about luxurious life and lavish desires, their neighbor Raja Rao tries to allure her. He is a vagabond and spends money copiously. So Mallika prefers to chat with him. One day her mother notices her chatting with Raja Rao and chides her severely. But Mallika censures her mother for giving birth to six children and questions her why they have given birth to them if they can't provide sufficient food and clothes. By observing their conversation Krishna decides to marry Mallika and gets consent from his parents. Rama Rao and his entire family feel very happy to make Krishna as their family member. But the very next day Mallika elopes with Raja Rao. Krishna is shocked and her family members are devastated with her reproachful deed.

Mallika's malicious act brings a terrible name to their family and many people stop coming to their home. Meanwhile Indira has completed her S.S.L.C. and gives tuitions to many children. She is an obedient and thoughtful girl. She understands her parent's problems and tries to help them. At that time Krishna asks her to marry one of his colleagues who has many ideals and tells her that he won't ask about her sister Mallika in future. But Indira reveals her love for him and requests him to marry her. With a pure heart Krishna marries Indira and becomes the sheet-anchor for the family.

After many years, one day Krishna goes to another place on some work and meets his friend Madan. Madan is debaucher but a friendly person. He doesn't like marriage and prefers to visit prostitutes. That day he calls a call girl named Jasmine who is very attractive and tempting and introduces her to Krishna. When that girl sees at Krishna and is shocked. She is Mallika who has changed her name into Jasmine. She request Krishna come to her house the next day. Krishna visits her and asks about Raja Rao with whom she has eloped so many years ago. She tells that Raja Rao has left her after two months of their elopement without giving his address. She is not educated and doesn't know other works. Her house owner has helped her and asked her beauty. From that day onwards he has been working as a call girl. She reveals her love for him and informs him that when he was ready to marry her it was too late. Raja Rao has seduced her already. That's why she has fled away with him. Now she requests him to spend a night with her but he chides her and discloses that he is her sister Indira's husband. He shows pity on her.

The reader grasps the author's skill in describing the value of character and the influence of social and economical conditions on people. In every story she tries to give a message which shows a perfect path to the youth. Even in the present conditions also we find many girls are changed into prostitutes compellingly because of their poverty and large family. It is a different craze to some of the girls at their young age and they don't know the severe consequences that will happen in future.

In the next story '*charithra punaraavrutham kaaledu*', the author takes a diverse task which also reveals the provoking nature of some of the girls who create havoc in the lives of innocent wives. In this story the narrator Manjula, a medico notices a letter in her lover's room, comprehends the letter has come from his fiancée who is requesting him to write letters regularly and come to their house in holidays. Manjula's lover is Sivaji who is two years senior to her. His marriage is settled with his sister's daughter. But he neglects her when he got acquaintance with Manjula. Manjula is a beautiful and intelligent girl and attracts everyone with her modest demeanor. Sivaji falls in love with her and praises her beauty for ever and

a day. He doesn't tell about his engagement with his niece Lakshmi to Manjula. After reading the letter, Manjula finds a group photo in the cover. She is stunned when she looks at the photo. She recognizes her English teacher Sumathi in that photograph in a group and understands that Sivaji is nephew of Sumathi.

Manjula starts recollecting her childhood memories. She is the only child to her parents Raja and Soudamini. Raja is an engineer and Soudamini belongs to an affluent family. So Manjula never knows about the problems of middle class people. When her father is transferred to a village, she has joined a school. In that school Sumathi works as an English teacher and treats the students as her own children. Sumathi likes Manjula because of her brilliance and beauty. One day she asks her about her father and mother. From that day onwards she hates Manjula and censures her in front of the students and staff. Manjula is confused and unable to understand her behavior. She wants to know why she first liked her intensely and why she hates after knowing the name of her mother. But she doesn't dare to ask her. So she expresses her doubt to her mother. Her mother tells that their marriage is a love marriage and they are rich. So the middle class people are envious about them.

After some days Sumathi is transferred to another place. When she is going to leave the school, Manjula goes to her house and pleads her to tell why she hates her and her parents. Then Sumathi told how Manjula's mother Soudamini cheated her sister Parvathi and confiscated Parvathi's husband Raja. Soudamini, a stunning beauty is a close friend of Parvathi. Parvathi stopped her education after her S.S.L.C. but Soudamini joined Intermediate. Parvathi got married with her aunt's son Raja, a handsome and friendly person. He started a business in Chennai and for the ransom he sold his little property. He wanted to take Parvathi with him after settling in his business. So he wrote letters to his wife and whenever he was free he came to his in-law's house. He talked with Parvathi's brothers and sister just like an elderly brother. Soudamini's father was transferred to Chennai. As Soudamini stopped writing letters to Parvathi, Parvathi requested her husband to go to Soudamini's house and inquired about her. Raja started visiting her regularly. Parvathi was conceived. Raja felt happy for that news but reduced his visits to his house instead of taking care. Parvathi was worried about her husband's behavior but others consoled her and gave the idea that he would have been engrossed in his work. She gave birth to a pretty girl. Raja felt happy and came to his house with many toys and dresses. But he didn't show any affection on his wife. After some months Parvathi went to Madras with her small daughter.

Though she came to her father's house once in a while, she was sad and didn't reveal her problems. After two years she gave birth to a son. Then one day she came to her father's house with bag and baggage. She explained how Soudamini captured her husband Raja with her beauty and forced him to leave her. Soudamini gave birth to a daughter when Parvathi gave birth to Sita. Sumathi told this story to Manjula and said, "you wear that pearl necklace and costly clothes. My sister's yearly income is less than that pearl necklace. You and your mother are enjoying my sister's property and happiness. If you feel your mother has spoiled the happy life of another woman, you never do any harm to others". Then Manjula vowed her that she would never do harm to anyone.

Now Manjula is thinking about Sivaji and his fiancée. She understands that his fiancée is none other than Sita, Parvathi's daughter whose life her mother has destroyed. She doesn't want to destroy the life of Sita as her mother. She tells the entire story to Sivaji and beseeches him to marry Sita and gives him the pearl necklace and asks him to present that necklace as her gift to Sita. When Sivaji presents that necklace to Sita, Sumathi recognizes the necklace and says, 'thank god, history doesn't repeat'.

The author clearly portrays the emotions of each character and makes the reader riveted to the story. After reading the story everyone feels empathetic and sometimes eyes are brimmed with tears.

Next I want to present a novelette '*Taaraka digi vachina vela*' the story of a film actress and her niggling journey. She wrote this story in 1960's with a great vision and understanding. In these present days many writers feel that they are investigating many things and writing the real stories of filmy people. But with a brave heart she exposes the problems in the film industry, anguish and agony of female actors and the influence of god-fathers. In this story the protagonist is eighteen year old young heroine called Deepthi. Actually she wants to go to school and colleges but her mother forces her to act in movies. She is a child artist and becomes a heroine after some years. She helps the poor students and donates large amount of

money for their studies. Her mother doesn't like this type of alms and grabs money from her. Her step father forces her to earn more money and compels her to act in more pictures. When she comes to middle age and rejects to act in movies, they snatch all her property and throw her away from the house. At that time a brilliant doctor Ravi who has been educated by her donations saves her and gives place in his heart and house.

This story is simple and a mirror to the lives of filmy people. The reader knows the real difficulties of movie people and their lives. She also depicts how some heroines loose their psychological and mental balance and become the puppets in the hands of impish people. Some are addicted to alcohol and drugs.

The last story is also a novelette 'Chaitanya manjeeraalu', the story of a lady who is trapped by a rich rogue and how she escaped from his cruel shackles. In this story also the writer explicates the result of illiteracy and poverty which create major hardships in people's life. She also gives the hope that there are still some people who have humanity and humility, who help others with their philanthropic nature and good Samaritans in the world. She advises the young girls to maintain good character and academic qualification in order to prove themselves and better future.

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