

Social Consciousness in the Stories of Kalipatnam Rama Rao

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INTRODUCTION

It is a fact that literature not only reflects life, but also reforms the society by exposing the follies and foibles of human beings in the day-today society. In modern Telugu literature, Kalipatnam Rama Rao popularly known as Kara, is considered to be the creative artist, who has presented in all his works, the social realities when compare to other Telugu story writers. That is why he occupies a conspicuous place in Modern Telugu literature. He strove hard to express his felt feelings of Marxist philosophy in his works with a commitment.

Kara was born to a humble parents Bramaramba, Perraju at Ponduru Village, Srikakulam District in 1924. His native place is Muraka Village, Srikakulam District. Most of his childhood days, he spent at his village, observing his father's professional activities, related to lands. He became curious to learn more about the changing of lands, crops, and other upsurges in villages, and he found some were beneficiaries and others were the losers. Later he settled in Visakhapatnam as a school Teacher till his superannuation.

WRITINGS OF KARA

In his earlier stories 'Abhimanalu' 'Abhisapthlu' 'Asiksha – Avidya', 'Palayithudu' etc he portrayed the Characters belonging to middle-class families, who suffered from financial and family problems by setting Rural background with much animation. At that time, his contemporary writer Rachakonda Viswanatha Sastry on the other hand, rocked the society with his writings on Marxist point of view, of ordeals of labourers and exploitation of the rich in making labourers suffer from poverty. Consequently Kara realized that the society was run by wealth, but not by sentiments. This led to his close-friendship with Viswanatha Sastry to alter his attitude towards the society.

His companionship with Viswanatha Sastry, enabled him to involve in discussions on Marxist approach, which made him understand the misconception of Gandhi and Nehru and their way of thinking about politics. Because of these, he acquired a strong opinion on politics. In that process, in his later stories, such as Theerpu, 'Vadha' 'Yagnam' 'Mahadaseervachanam, we can find a transformation in his Social consciousness, in all societal issues.

IMPACT OF SOCIAL PROTEST ON KARA

The farmers' revolt at Srikakulam broke out due to Naxalbury Movement that took place in Bengal in 1967. Subsequently, the Srikakulam District Communist Party Committee decided to start a Movement to liberate farmers with militant operation. Virasam came into existence in 1970.

During this period he wrote some more sensational stories, which depicted Social injustice to the down-trodden. They are "Himsa" "No Room" 'Sneham', 'Aarthi', Bhayam' 'Chaavu', Shanthi', 'Jeevadhara', 'Kutra' etc made an indelible impression on the readers.

The present paper focuses on analyzing the stories of Kara, which are responsible to determine his social consciousness.

SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF KARA

In his stories, Kara stresses the need for awareness among the downtrodden towards the present conditions. He gives much importance for Social reality in his writings. His style is simple and his characters are very very ordinary. He sketches them with the contemporary problems and discovers the solutions to them.

Palayithudu (1953)

This story reveals Kara's agony over the exploitation of the poor by the rich. Rajasekharam is son of a freedom fighter, who has participated in Non-Cooperation Movement against British. However facing all difficulties, anyhow, he becomes a householder. Even then he remains a victim in the hands of termagant wife, Orthodox elders, Insufficient Salary and debts. But he is neither coward nor unworthy person. In fact, he is a wise man. But he runs away from his life as a derelict. In a letter to his friend, he confesses that the failure in economic system is only the reason for all his problems. He also says that as long as one is in the grip of defective system, it is an uphill task to come out successfully.

Through the character of Rajasekharam, Kara expresses his social commitment towards protest against economic system and sympathizes with the victims of social injustice.

Yagnam (1966)

The major turn in writer's creative journey can be seen through the story 'Yagnam'. From this story onwards, he has diverted his attention from middle class family to the down-trodden. According to Kutumba Rao, "the story 'Yagnam' picturises 'demoniac element of a village'". Primarily the story deals with the conflict between the rich and the poor. The poor are prone to untold sufferings in the hands of the upper community mercilessly. Though the poor are subjected and subdued by the class, they cannot revolt or even strongly appeal their sad plight openly, however one or two poor, though they try to protest, they cannot come to a suitable solution to their burning problems. At that juncture, they could endeavor to express their opposition and protest, and are ready to sacrifice their lives for a genuine cause. The story 'Yagnam' obviously mirrors the sad and pathetic predicament of the poor.

Aarthi (1969)

This story realistically elucidates that even to have conjugal relationship between wife and husband, money decides their communion. The financial problem plays a vital role to generate differences in the poor families. In the story, the mother desires to bring her daughter from in-laws house to make her work to earn some money, with which she wants to buy something for her daughter. But, mother-in-law as well wishes the same for her son's sake in her house. Eventhough, either family fights each other for the same cause, at large their ambition is to see the felicity of their children. The writer's woe is about the poor, the labour, and the hard-working men and women, who should not lead a deplorable and congested life.

Bhayam (1970)

This story proves the transformation in a man occurs due to fear. In the story, satthaiah is a snake charmer. His profession is to trap snakes, who ever urges him in the village. Howsoever, satthaiah's commitment is to drive fear of the villagers from snake's menace. When Satthaiah becomes a victim for a snake's bite, none in the village comes to his rescue, Sommula Guravadu', a silent spectator of the story observes the deceiving tendency of different characters and realizes that people are selfish, never caring for any person, who attempts to save them from any difficulty.

The writer wants that the consciousness about the society should begin from an individual, which later tantamount, to the 'collective consciousnesses' due to the constant struggle in the society.

Chaavu (1971)

It is a poignant story which speaks eloquently about the death of an old lady. In a certain village, the poor Dalit are not treated with any mercy, even they are not allowed to take fire wood from their houses. It so happens an old poor lady dies due to biting winter. As a result, heated discussion takes place among the men of dalits either to bury or burn. Ironically the old lady once tells her son to burn after her death. So that, her lifetime chilliness would be burnt on the burning pyre. The discussion goes on by considering all possibilities to get logs. Ultimately, all resolved to forcibly to grab logs to fulfill the old lady's cherished desire.

The writer describes the story by infusing into the characters heart-rending emotions, that Dalits' experience in their village.

Moreover, we can confidently perceive that such kind of situations may not be found in the modern mechanized world.

Shanthi (1971)

The story illustrates the conflict between genuine demands of labourers and the capable management to redress their grievances in a factory.

The writer analyses and exposes how the Collector, labour Officer and Superintendent of Police support the management in suppressing the labour in the factory. Besides, the writer satirises how the responsible community use the words 'Peace' and 'Security' conveniently for the sake of management in the garb of maintaining 'Law and order'. Further the writer proves the words 'Justice and 'Peace' are useful only to the exploiting class, rather to the poor.

Jeevadhara (1971)

Minute problems procreate major issues in the hands of Kara. The bone of contention in the story is about water. Of course, it is indispensable for every human being to survive on this planet. In the story, the problem turns centre of conflict between two groups of people. The rich obstructs the poor in using the water in their houses. The poor feel that rebellion is the only way out to solve the problem. Otherwise it is very difficult even to get water rather than gruel (Ganji).

CONCLUSION

Above all, Kara has made a bench mark in modern Telugu literature by studying the poor, who are supposed to be the vulnerable class in the society. Literally speaking he sheds his tears to observe their socio-economic and cultural conditions in certain villages, which later impressed him to develop him own social consciousness for the sufferers and tried to show solutions for their pathetic problems.

It is worthy to say umpteen writers may pen their feelings only to describe the Society as such. But in Kara, it is something different. He ventures to dissect the human emotions and infers that the conflict in characters is only economic reasons. In spite of all these things, we can find simplicity, clarity of communication, equanimity, compassion, and reflection of Human values in Kara's stories. So to say, like G.B. shah, an English writer, Kara also aims at uplifting the labour class which is considered to be his utmost social consciousness.

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Sri C.V. Viswanatha Rao has been working as Lecturer in English in Government College for Men (Autonomous), Kadapa. Earlier he worked as Junior Lecturer for 20 years in different Junior Colleges. As for his qualifications are concerned, he is an M.A., M.Phil. To his credit, he also cleared APSET 2013. He has zest for writing Research articles for journals and other magazines. Even in the present journal, he made joint effort with Mr. K.N.Sundareswara Rao, Assistant Professor in Telugu, in publishing the article Social consciousness in the stories of Kalipatnam Rama Rao.

The key purpose of writing this article as to focus on Kara's social consciousness, as a story writer.



K.N. Sundareswara Rao has been working as Assistant Professor in Telugu in Government College Men (Autonomous), Kadapa. As well, he deals with P.G. Classes for the last two years, who pursue M.A., in Telugu in the same College. He has also worked for 9 years as Junior Lecturer in different Government Colleges in Kadapa District. Inspired by the literature of Kara, he is making an attempt to produce thesis on Karas's Technique for his Ph.D. Infact he is a post graduate in Telugu and Sanskrit and did M.Phil from S.V. University, Tirupati. He received

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