

# **CHAPTER – VI**

## **Gurazada Appa Rao**



## CHAPTER-VI

### GURAZADA APPARAO

Gurazada Venkata Apparao was born on 21. September 1862 in Rayavaram, of Yelamanchili Taluk of Visakhapatnam District. His father Venkata Ramdas worked in vizianagaram estates as peishaker for sometime and also worked as revenue supervisor and khilledar. Sri Apparao had his earlier education in chipurupalli, till he was aged 10. Later he moved to vizianagaram till the completion of his graduation in Maharajas college Vizianagaram. Gidugu Ramamurthi was his classmate during his High School and college days and their friendship lasted till end. He completed his matriculation in the year 1882. Sri C.Chandrasekhara Sastri who was the principal of the college took keen interest in Sri Apparao and arranged for his studies by providing board and lodge. Even when he was just a student of matriculation he wrote poems in English. When he was student of F.A (inter mediate) he wrote *Sarangadhara* in English. He and his brother *Syamal Rao* used to write poems in Indian *leisure hour*- a journal published from Vizianagaram. Sambuchandra mukharjee a famous journalist of Bengal who was the editor of a *Reis and Reyyat* published *Sarangadhara*, and appreciated Apparao, for his literary skills. He also wrote another literary piece called *Chandrasahsa* but this is also not available now.

Apparao studied B.A during 1884-1886. in Maharajas college Vizianagaram with philosophy as the main subject and Sanskrit as the second language. For some time he worked as teacher in maharaja's college high school. For a salary of 25Rs. Per month. He married Appalanarasamma in the year 1885. for some time he worked as a clerk in collectors office in the year 1887. He joined as a teacher in the Maharajas College on



salary of 100/-Rs. He came into contact with Anandagajapathi the then ruler of Vizianagaram in the year 1887. and this has changed the direction of his life. In 1891 he was appointed as third lecturer and he was to teach English, Grammer, Sanskrit literature, Transalation and History of GREECE and ROME.

Bride price (Kanyasulkam) was prevalent in those days and the Maharaja encouraged him to write a drama on themes of social issues, prevailing at that time and Apparao wrote *Kanyasulkam* in 1892. He was appointed in the year 1895 as the Epigraphist of the Estate. He dedicated his *Kanyasulkam* to Anandagajapathi in 1897. In the introduction he also wrote about the need for change in the style of language from classical to the language of the common man. This stress on use of the language of common man became a big movement. The pioneers of this movement were Kandukuri Veeresalingam, Gurazada Appa Rao and his colleague, Gidugu Ramamurthi. It is because of their endeavours, we have the modern Telugu language (sista vyavaharika). Used in all forms of literary writing.

The demise of Ananda Gajapathi in 1897. and the later court litigation regarding adoption continued for a period of 15years and saw Appa rao as the chief advisor of the estate, this has taken much of his time and during this period he could find little time for his literary activities. Inspite of his court commitments, he continued his literary pursuit. He wrote *Kondu Bhattiyam* in 1906, *Neela giri songs* in 1907. revised addition of *Kanyasulakam* was published in 1909, *Thoka chukka* in 1910. *garland of pearls* and *Kasulu* in 1910. *Bilhaneeyam* and the story of *Lavana Raju* in 1911. and *Kanyaka* in 1912, *Subhadra* in 1913.



Appa Rao also became member of the board of studies of Madras University (1911). For his movement for the use of ordinary language he started *Andhra Sahitya Parishad* in 1911. When the University has not accepted the ordinary language as medium of instruction, he sent dissent note to the Madras University in the year 1914. He wrote *Dinchu Langaru* in the year 1914.

Appa rao's health began to fail. And no amount of medical care could improve his health. *Langaru Ethumu* was his last writing in 1915. In the same year he celebrated his house warming and in the same year he passed away on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1915.

### Style of Writing:

Gurazada Apparao wanted that the early marriages in the Brahmin community should be discouraged. He says under the orders of his highness the maharajah of viziayanagaram a list was prepared of Brahmin *sulka* marriages, celebrated in the ordinary tracts of the Visakhapatnam District during three years. The list is by no means exhaustive as the parties concerned were naturally averse to admitting acceptance of bride money but such as it is, it forms a document of great value and interest. The number of marriages recorded reached one thousand and thirty four giving an average of three hundred and forty four for the year. Ninetynine girls were married at the age of five years, forty four at four, thirty six at three, six at two, and three at the age of one! the babies in the last instance carrying a price of from three hundred and fifty to four hundred rupees at head. Strange, as it may sound, bargains are some times struck for children in the womb. Such a scandalous state of things is a disgrace to society, and literature cannot have a higher function than to show up such practices and give currency to a high standard of moral ideas. Until reading habits prevail among the masses, one



must look only to the stage to exert such healthy influence. These consideration prompted him to write *Kanyasulkam*.

About the style of his writing the drama. He says “I clothed the play in the spoken dialect, not only that it is better intelligible to the public then the literary dialect, but also from a conviction that it is the proper common diction for Telugu. Dramatic style is no doubt determined to some extent by usage, but the absence of any real dramatic literature in Telugu, leaves a writer free to adopt that out ward form which he deems most appropriate for the presentation of his ideas. The metres in use in Telugu, with their alliterative restrictions, are incapable of importing to language conversational ease which is indispensable in a comedy, or continuity in which, as Mr.Ward remarks, lies real life. One might invent new dramatic measures but it would be a superfluous task, so far at least as comedy is concerned, as prose is gaining ground all over the world for dramatic purposes”.

Apparao says that a new literary dialact should be developed which can be easily understood by the common men. The purposes of literature is to make the common man understand higher issues or problems of life. He says it has been remarked that the use of what is wrongly termed the vulgar tongue mars the dignity of a literary production but that is a piece of criticism which one need not heed at the present day when the progress of the science of language has established better standards for Judging the quality and usefulness of tongues then the whims of Grammarians of old linguistic strata. The Telugu literary dialect contains many obsolete words and arbitrary verbal constructions and expansions which were necessitated by a system of verification based both on alliterations and on quantity. A licence, which, no doubt, as its own advantages of introducing sanskrit words to an unlimited extent has been but too eagerly availed of by



poets who brought glossaries into requisitions, revealed in fantastic compound formation, and made the Telugu literary dialect doubly dead. This is not the place to dilate on the question of linguistic reform, but this much might be said. If it is intended to make the Telugu literary dialect a great civilizing medium, it must be divested of its superfluous obsolete and Sanskrit elements, and brought closer to the spoken dialect from which it must be thoroughly replenished. There is not much dialectical difference in the Telugu Generally spoken in the various parts of the Telugu Country, so a new common literary dialect can be established with comparative ease if only able writers set about it in right earnest.

Apparao compares his *Kanyasulkam* to Veeresalingam's *Brahma vivaham* which has also similar theme, he says "recently, I happened to read *Brahma vivaham* by Rai Bahadur Veeresalingam Pantulu Garu and found that there were some parallel passages in our plays, a thing perfectly natural considering that his piece traversed the whole field of Brahmin Marriages. But it will be seen that these plays have little else in common, our treatment being essentially different. *Brahma vivaham* was meant to be a pure comedy of manners, while in *Kanyasulkam* humour, characterization, and the construction of an original and complex plot have been attempted with what success, it is for the public to Judge<sup>1</sup>."

About the style of Telugu literary writing Sri Appa rao says the "Telugu intellect is also seriously handicapped by the tyranny of authority of a highly artificial literary dialect, a rigid system or alliterative versification, and literary types which have long

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1. Preface to the first addition: *Kanyasulkam*



played out. I shall say a word here about the literary dialect. Since I wrote the preface to the first addition, this spoken dialect gained ground. My friend, principal P.T.Srinivas Iyengar, recently started a Telugu teaching reform society among the aims and objects of which the cultivation of vernacular Telugu holds a prominent place and Mr.Yates, whose name will always be remembered in the Telugu Districts for the introduction of the Rational Methods of teaching into our schools, has lent weight to the movement by accepting the presidentship of the society<sup>2</sup>.

He further remarks "I cannot understand how modern writers fail to see the merits of spoken Telugu, its softness elicited the admiration of foreigners its range of expression. At this moment the next prose in the language is in the spoken Dialect. Strange as it may sound. Telugu prose owes its origin and development not to the patronage of kings or to the influence of foreign literatures. But to the exertions of a curious English man who stimulated compilation of local histories in the vernacular during the early years of the last century"<sup>3</sup>

About the new literary Dialect he says "I view the Telugu literary Dialect as a great disability imposed by tradition upon the Telugu. Let those who love fetters venerate it. My own vernacular for me, the living Telugu, the Italian of the East, in which none of us is ashamed to express our Joys and sorrows, but which some of us are ashamed to write well. Literature in the vernacular will knock at the door of the peasant; and it will knock at the door of Englishman in India. Its possibilities are immense"<sup>4</sup>

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2. Preface to the Second addition: Kanyasulkam unilit (P.102)

3. Gurzada Apparao. Preface to the Second edition 103

4. Ibid (unilit). P.104



No argument in favour of a vernacular literature is needed with persons who are conversant with the history of the English Dialects and the prakrits, and I know it is not arguments that will evolve a new literary Dialect for Telugu. A great writer must write and make it. Let us prepare the ground for him.<sup>5</sup>

Sri Apparao considers that Kanyasulkam is a social evil which needs social reform. He also considers “that there is legal support for this social reform. The cause of social reform has received strong support from a recent decision of the Madras High Court in which a full bench consisting of chief Justice sir Arnold white. And Justice Miller and Munro rules. “That a contract to make payment to a father in consideration of his giving his daughter is marriage is immoral and opposed to public policy within the meaning of section 23 of the Indian contract Act”<sup>6</sup>

### **Gurazada Appa Rao – The Man And His Work**

#### **Introduction:**

Shelley says poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world; Gurazada as one ranks high amongst them. At a time when the humanity as a whole was about to step on the threshold of a modern era, there appeared Sri Gurazada Appa Rao on the literary scene of the Andhra as a herald of the dawn. He lived in two centuries at the end of the last and the beginning of the present, i.e., from 1862 to 1915, the saddle of the new epoch, and brought about a harmonious blend of the old and the new in his literary output in a short but substantial compass.

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5. Ibid P.104

6. Ibid P.104





Although the great Veeresalingam, his senior contemporary, is acclaimed by one and all as the pioneer of social reform and the protagonist of the literary renaissance in Andhra, Apparao is considered to be the pioineer of the modern poetry and short story and the greatest of the reformist dramatists in Telugu<sup>7</sup>.

### **Gurazada's Poems:**

He was one of the very few writers in Telugu who can be styled as 'thinkers'. I do not mean to say that he was a great philosopher or a Mahakavi in the strict sense of the term, but he happened to be the main stem from which two distinct schools of modern poetry in Telugu branched out and flourished with flowers and fruits of considerable fragrance and taste.

He made the debut of his poetic career with *Subhadraparinayam*, a poor replica of the old models. But very soon he not only realized his limitation, but also the inner urge and the rhythmic being of his poetic temperament; and he turned from the verse form to the song form of poetry. In 1907 he published a volume of his songs of the blue hills<sup>8</sup>.

The poetic element in these song is not of a high order. Within a few years afterwards, he exploited the potentialities of his elements, had grown up in his poetic stature and made a forward march into the realms of modern poetry with his *Mutyala Saralu*, poems in a musical setting with altogether a novel tone of course, the metres newly employed by him, are not at all new to Telugu as some people think. They are good old bottles which he a one for the first time filled with new wine and are proved to

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7. Dr.S.V.Joga Rao, Gurazada Appa rao –The man and his work in Gurazada Sata Varshika Jayanthi (Visakha). century publication. See Page 58

8. Ibid P.58



be capable of any kind of narration and evocation of new modes of expression. Sri veeresalingam had already paved the way to new avenues of thought and Gurazada made a triumphant march along with his charming song and found fresh blossoms of ideas, and fountains of poetic inspiration<sup>9</sup>.

Amongst the four of his story-poems, '*Purnamma*' although the shortest, stands as a master-piece. It deals with a theme originally conceived by him; the sad story of a young girl given in marriage, nay, sold to a very old man by her own father, which ends in her suicide and appeals greatly to the readers sense of pathos. Sure it was a distinct attempt of social reform on the part of the author against the values of the day. The themes of other story-poems, though drawn from other sources, i.e., *Kanyaka* from Vysya purana, *Damon and pithias* from greek legend and *Lavana Raju Kala* (the dream of Lavana) from Jnanavasishtha, are well presented in a new perspective and in a didactic vein and alluring style. Lofty ideas and fervent feelings in emotional drifts and sentimental currents go hand in hand in all these poems. Even the handful of his stray poems would show the essential features of his personality as a man of ideas and manners, taste and talent, humour and wisdom, as a social reformer and patriot to an extent and above all a rational thinker.<sup>10</sup>

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9. Ibid P.59

10 Ibid P.59



### **Gurazada's Plays:-**

*Kanyasulkam* is the striking key note of Gurazada's eminence as an author. It is an original drama with broad thematic spectrum and definite social purpose well-couched, in pleasant prose in living language of the people. *Kanyasulkam* takes its name from a social custom of the same name prevalent in those days in some parts and in some communities of Andhra. It means a kind of dowry offered in marriage to the bride, nay, to her father, in fact. Some fathers used to be very hardhearted money-mongers and they were even prepared to sell their girls as fillies to men of any age if only they pay price for it. It was almost another form of slave-trade, and savants like Veeresalingam, Dabiru Krishna Murthy Suri, and Gurazada Apparao waged war against the evil. All the three have taken the drama as the best means for its successful operation. But Gurazada's play won high reputation for many reasons. *Kanyasulkam* deals with more than one social purpose. It expounds the native genius of the Telugu tongue in a vivacious manner. It presents the reader a rich exuberance of refined humour in all its aspects and makes him burst into laughter even in his solitude. Above all, it has given us, the people of Andhra, a host of immortal characters who shine bright on the Telugu literary firmament for generations to come.

### **In short, the main theme of the Kanyasulkam is as follows:-**

One Mr. Girisam, the here of 'Bonkula Dibba' of Vizianagaram a place famous for its being a rendezvous of able liars of the town and a loafer and pretender to the core, pretends love to a manageress of petty hotel and to Madhuravani, an angel amongst the dancing girls of the town and an exception to her class. Having been flooded with debts, he cunningly manages an escape from the town and goes to an 'Agrhara' and puts up in the house of Agrihotravadhani, an orthodox Brahmin on the pretext that he can be a good



tutor to his son, venkatesam. There he takes a fancy for Butchamma, the elder sister of venkatesam. She is a beautiful young lady besides being a widow by qualification according to Girisam. He tries to seduce the innocent girl, proves himself successful in eloping with her and boasts of himself as a social reformer in word and deed. But at the end his wickedness is exposed by Madhuravani herself, who once had a soft corner for him. Girisam having been utterly disappointed, cleverly watched the situation of his evil designs becoming frustrated, suddenly leaves off the scene with a flash of his eloquence saying, “ Dame it katha tirigindi” literally meaning the story has turned across (i.e. the tables are turned). Here the play ends most effectively leaving a green memory of the situation for the reader.<sup>11</sup>

Besides this, there is another interesting story, i.e. the marriage farce of the old Lubdhavadhanulu which comes in the middle and runs parallel culminating in the main current of the great fiasco. Coupled with this, there is also another interesting sub-plot, the affair between Ramappantulu and minakshi, the widowed daughter of Lubdhavadhanulu. The play is full of such merry incidents and moving characters. The social conditions of the day in the village and the town as well, are well delineated by the author with flashes of his characteristic wit and humour.<sup>12</sup>

Maduravani, the heroine of Kanyasulkam is some what a match to kalabhashini of *Kalapurnodayam* a Telugu classic of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. She will remain in the history of Telugu literature like Shakspeare’s Cleopatra in English literature. Girisam, the hero of the play might be a descendant of Nigamasarma of the *Pandurangamahatya*, another

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid P 62

<sup>12</sup> Ibid P 62



Telugu classic of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. But truly speaking, has no match at all. Hail to the genius of Gurazada. The great creator of characters! Suffice it to say, one *girisam* or one *Madhuravni* can perpetuate his memory in the great galaxy of the Telugu authors.<sup>13</sup>

After all, the one thing that the play is mostly lacking in, is the thematic unity. On that account, perhaps, some critics think that it is a series of farces knit together. Drama has a specific value of production. But *Kanyasulkam*, first published in 1897, has never been successful production before the demise of the author in 1915. During the later twenties, it was edited, staged several times and greatly applauded by thousands of people. Again, after 1930, nobody took any serious interest in its production, but people in all parts of this vast Andhra Country have begun reading it with great zeal and interest. Some people say that *Kanyasulkam* is the greatest of the Telugu plays, but some hold it is no better than an English comedy of the Restoration period. This divergence of opinion, I think, is inevitable for sometime to come. Two more plays called *Kondubhattiyam* and *Bilhaniyam* stand to the credit of Gurazada as a play wright, but they are left unfinished.

### **Gurazada's Stories:-**

I think there is hardly any room for two opinions if we voice the universal critical consensus that Gurazada is the father of the modern short-story in Telugu. In his art, he is something of a Bernard shaw and an Anton Chekhov, his great contemporaries in the west. Unwittingly he has shown the Shavian flourish in his play and the Chekhovian flavour in his stories. He has drawn for his stories current problems from the contemporary society like hot cakes from the frying pan. The cunning trick of a well-bred housewife to teach a lesson to her pro-nautch husband is the theme of his story called

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13 Ibid P 62



“Diddubatu”. In another story called “*Mi peremiti*” (what is your name) he wisely expounds the absurdity of the relationship between the God-made men and the man-made gods and exposes the exploitation of the credulous common folk by the boorish religious teachers. Amongst his other stories “*Samskartha hridayam*” (the mind of a reformer) and “Metilda” are worth mentioning.<sup>14</sup>

He also wrote few essays, small in stature, discussing some controversial issues of the day. He maintained a diary from which it can be gathered that he had contacts with some of his learned contemporaries and used to have a critical eye on men and matters and some good plans in reserve for the future. In his days he was not recognized as he is now, but today many people think of him as a great social reformer and others say that of course he is writer with a reformist outlook but not a field-worker too as Veeresalingam was.

### **Feminism:-**

Kanyasulkam was written in 1892. Now a days Feminism is an issue through out the world. Some ask what is the relation between Kanyasulkam and Feminism. The foundation for Feminism were laid in 1791. By Meri Olympedi Gougas through her declaration of the rights of women. A book named *Vindication of the rights of women* was written by Meri volstan Craft in 1792. the winds of womens freedom were flowing even from the period of French revolution. This movement spread to America, England, Russia, and other European countries. The aim of this movement was to get equal rights for women in all fields of human activity. In the same year when Kanyasulkam was written (1892). Feminist congress was held in France. This movement continued to effect all countries and it became a strong and wide spread movement through out the world.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid P 63

<sup>15</sup> Kanyasulkam Edited by M Nagabhushana sarma and Y Prasad, Visalandhra publishing house Hyderabad. Year 1919 P 822



### **What is Feminism:-**

The terms 'feminism', 'new feminism' and 'women's liberation' are generally used with different connotations. 'Feminism' is defined as a position of advocating women's rights while 'women's liberation' implies advocacy of the full freedom of women. The term 'women's liberations' is popularly used synonymously with 'new feminism'. The specific term is allegedly coined, either by the students for Democratic society (SDS), or by the women's groups which began to separate from the new left political bodies in 1966.<sup>16</sup>

Some ask whether Gurazada Appa Rao was aware of the movement. Some scholars feel that nowhere in his writings or in his diaries. Gurazada mentions about feminism. But we can say that he was aware of the early social reform movements and he was conscious of the women's problems. In 1895, he discussed about the changes needed in women's dress, the women who were burdened by heavy Jewelry.<sup>17</sup> By the time he published the second addition of Kanyasulkam (1909). He could realize how the women were suffering under the male hegemony.<sup>18</sup>

Apparao was influenced by Ibsen, Shelly, George Eliot and their writings. Ibsen said that workers and women will become the givers of human freedom.<sup>19</sup> Shelling and Eliot of criticized the institution of marriage which subordinates women's position. He felt that modern women will rewrite the human history.<sup>20</sup>

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16. Feminist social thought an introduction to six key thinkers, vidyut Bhagwat. P.1, Rawat Publications, Jaipur and New Delhi, 2004.

17. Writings of Gurazada Mahakavi diarylu edited by Avasarala Surya Rao. Vialandhra publishers vijawade November 1954. P.67

18. Ibid. lekhalu July 1958. P.90.

19. K.V.Ramana Reddy, Mahodayam. 1969.P.412

20. Gurazada writings, (Lekhalu) P.83.



Influenced by these ideas of humanism some critics consider that Gurazada has revised and brought some changes in the revised addition. Sometimes we feel that some of his ideas appear as if they belong to 21 century.<sup>21</sup>

The reformation movement questioned about the treatment of women but it is not the product of the awareness of women. Their problems their life and their approach was conceived by men but not women. Even the ideas were given by males from their view point. They opposed nautch because they felt these women are polluting men. Gurazada though supported reformation he did not like the spirit behind the reform of those thinkers of his time.<sup>22</sup>

The tradition says that the women whose husband dies should think of him that he will be waiting for her to join the heaven and she should not think of remarrying. So women who become widows should lead a pious life and should not think of remarrying even though they are young.<sup>23</sup>

Through the characters of Butchamma and Meenakshi and their dialogues in the drama Gurazada wants to support the remarriage of widowed women. The early marriages of those times when the girls of 10 or 12 were given in marriage (sometimes second marriage) to men aged 40 or 50 are even old led to a number of cases of women becoming widows even in their teens. This was a problem in many parts of Andhra and mainly in the Brahmin Community.

Though the widowed girls were not allowed to remarry the men in their 50s and 60s were allowed to remarry in the case of demise of their wives. So remarriage for men was allowed, but not to women. Through the character of Meenakshi in the drama some of these issues were discussed.

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21 R Ramachandra Reddy

22 Ibid P 64

23 Gurazada through the character Butchamma presents the travails of young widows in his drama Kanyasulkam See, page, Kanyasulkam Edited by Nagabhushan sarma, Atukuri Prasad, 1926





### **Nautch Issue:**

Through the character of madhuravani Gurazada has discussed about the problem of prostitution and other issues of women through the character of Madhuravani. Women bound by the institution of the marriage have to follow certain norms regarding the social life. The institution of marriage and family regulates the behaviour of men and women. The norms are not always rational. The patriarchal system is advantageous to the male members of the society and it is the prevailing system almost the world over.

Through the character of Madhuravani, Gurazada Appa rao wanted to discuss about the problems of women. He criticizes the double standards allowed in the society. Madhuravani is a lady with self respect. She is humane, understanding the problems of the individuals. At the same time she is highly critical of the system, in which she lives. He feels that women whether she is a prostitute or a house wife-both are in a sad and bemoaning plight. She is cultivated and worldly wise. At the same time she has a deep sense of sadness. She wants to change the society she is critical of the situation in a way she is a feminist in the true sense of the term. She feels that women uplift can be done only through women. Gurazada through his characters of Buchamma, Meenakshi and Madhuravani has presented the predicament of women of his times. She also hoped that the society will change in due course and the feminist movement will engulf the society and bring social harmony through an evolution of a better social structure.

### **Gurazada on Modern Telugu (His Philosophy of Language) :**

Gurazada feels that language should change from time to time and it should be understood by the average man. In Indian languages, in the early stages of their development, they used to take much from Sanskrit. Even the Dravidian languages like Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada have borrowed large number of words from



Sanskrit and even grammar was influenced to a great extent by Sanskrit. So the early writers of these languages wrote in highly sanskritised terminology.

In all these languages movements arose to simplify the language, so that it can be understood by the common man. It is generally called as *vyavaharika*, now a days all the Indian languages follow this style. Kandukuri Veeresalingam, Gurazada and Gidugu wanted this change.

Gurazada says that modern telugu has many advantages and it should be propagated. He says the merits of modern telugu (by which I mean, the polite speech of godavari and Krishna) as a literary instrument are great. His arguments are as follows:

1. INTELLIGIBILITY: Intelligibility which the old school claims as the saving merits of the neo-Kavya school is best secured by the employment of modern Telugu in literature. Local variations are slight, and even if they were considerable, they could not prove a bar to intelligibility, as the countless variations from standard speech which the poetic dialect presents. In his defence, Mr.Ramayya mentions that chinnaya suri gives no less than 16 forms of (okadu or one man) and no less than 29 forms of its plural: “we have no less than sixteen forms of this single work (that is, or that is to say), all of which are met within poetry”

Local variations of words are not many, and when they are introduced into literature they are easier learnt than the poetic forms.

2. Literary cultivation of modern Telugu necessitates a study of it, and the study of a refined living vernacular has great cultural value.



“Command of noble vernacular involves the most valuable discipline and culture that a man is capable of receiving. It conditions all other discipline and culture. Reference is not new made, to its scientific study, to its history and phonology, its lexical and grammatical elements; what is meant rather is the man’s growing up in the language, so to speak, and using it for all the purposes of his mental life.”

3. If school books are written in modern Telugu, vernacular education will improve at one bound. At present elementary school books are written in a bad type of the poetic or kavya dialect and the elementary school teachers who are required to teach those books are as a class ignorant of the literary dialect. To impart instructions to little urchins in an unfamiliar literary dialect contravenes the first principles by educational method. To this fact should be traced the failure of vernacular studies in the Madras University. In this connection, I invite attention to an Article on the Arabic language question in Egypt which appeared in the Asiatic quarterly Review of October 1912 (Appendix H).
4. A study of modern Telugu will prove the best training for a proper study of the language of the poets. A scientific study of Telugu can begin only with the spoken vernacular, and without such a study, a study of the poetic dialect would continue to be irrational and blind. Far from supplanting the study of old literary Telugu, a study of modern Telugu will improve it and strengthen it.
5. If books are written in modern Telugu, both the quantity and quality of literary production will improve. The difficulty of the poetic dialect has discouraged literary composition in the vernacular on the part of intelligent graduates. Who dread violating rules of grammar at every step. They can write correctly in



modern Telugu without fear of violating an imaginary and impossible standard which is fatal to all spontaneity. In Bengal and Bombay persons who have received the best English culture apply themselves assiduously to the cultivation of the vernaculars while the leaders of Madras are content with talking about the improvement of the vernaculars on wrong lines.

6. Modern Telugu is acquired naturally, by the higher castes, and it can be acquired by the natural and direct method by the lower classes. It is so learnt now in towns by domestic servants.

Elementary school-books should be written in modern Telugu without an admixture of poetic forms. Poetic forms may be sparingly used in books intended for higher forms. But it should be borne in mind that the writing of books should not be entrusted to writers who have not cultivated literary art on western lines. That a person has succeeded in securing an appointment as pandit in a school or college does not argue sound scholarship or literary power. Good writers alone can decide which poetic forms can be used with effect in prose; but not writers wedded to the Kavya or the Neo-Kavya dialect whose literary sense has been trained to spoken forms.

This repugnance to spoken forms is a feeling of recent growth. Its psychology is simple. Two generations of school-boys were bred up in the grammatical tradition. Those school-boys have grown up to be the men of to-day and the grammatical tradition what is worse, the really ungrammatical tradition of the Neo-Kavya school has grown natural to their tastes, and deviation from it sounds like heresy.

The question of a prose diction which we seek to resolve, now was solved long ago in practice by the ancients, and the tradition of that practice has continued unbroken to the present day. It is the direction of epistles, of popular stories and local chronicles, of



light literature and of learned commentaries. It should not be supposed that this blend of poetic modern forms was the creation of the half-educated. The pandits employed it in learned commentaries on books on grammar, poetics philosophy and the sciences. In inscriptions this traditional prose blend appears side by side into verse in Sanskrit and in literary Telugu. This fact shows that the writers were scholars.

It is essential that we should not lose sight of one material distinction made by the pandits of by-gone day. When verse entered into a work, that work was Kavya or literature. To a pandit an epistle, a commentary, an inscription was not generally literature. When he felt that he was not writing Kavya or literature, he gave full play to his natural tendencies and employed modern form. This gave to his prose a life and a spontaniety, which is always lacking in later poetry in the literary dialect.<sup>24</sup>

What the pandit with his narrow literary standard was unable to recognize as literature, is literature in the view of advanced western nations. A well-written epistle, a diary or a speech is prose and good literature in English.

In his pamphlet entitled "A Defence of Literary Telugu" Mr. Ramayya speaks of the popularity of the literary dialect. The literary dialect was never popular. It was the property of a narrow cult. Some Telugu poetry of a popular character was, no doubt, taught in piai schools in the old days, but students used to "get up" verses without their meaning. The classics were as unpopular in those days as the Honors courses of our university are to-day in the vernaculars. The pial school teachers were poor scholars and could not teach them.<sup>25</sup>

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24. Unilit. P.54

25. Ibid. P.54



There was no vernacular education worth the name in the past. British rule with its systems of popular education has brought it into being and there is little sanity in all the talk of present neglect of vernacular education. It is equally absurd to say that the modern school, seeks to supplant literary Telugu by modern Telugu. The position which literary Telugu has acquired in education is quite recent and it was due to the establishment of schools and the university. To prose works in the Kavya and pseudo – Kavya dialect patronage came from the university and the department of education, that is, practically from Boards of studies and Text-Book committees. But for that patronage most of them would not have commanded any circulation. Their existence has been artificial.<sup>26</sup>

Without the advantage of any such adventitious aid, but on the other hand discouraged by the university and by schools, the traditional prose blend has maintained a vigorous life. After the introduction of printing into the country, a vast mass of popular literatures has sprung up in this dialect and appeals to a much larger reading public than prose works in the Kavya dialect<sup>27</sup>

Mr. Ramayya appears to justify the use of the poetic dialect for prose for the following reasons. No spoken dialect of Telugu, or several dialects at the same time, should be employed for literary purposes, because there is a tendency in languages everywhere to develop a common uniform literary dialect out of number of heterogeneous local dialect. Where such a literary language already exists as in Telugu, no local dialect should be employed for literary purposes.

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26. Ibid, P. 54-55

27. Ibid P.55



Mr. Ramayya's general proposition is not correct. Many languages have lived and without developing literary dialects. There exist even now languages spoken by civilized communities which have not developed a literary dialect. It is the archaic and artificial character of old literary Telugu that necessitates the cultivation of modern standard Telugu, and it was single favored dialects that developed generally, into literary languages. English and French literary dialects, as well as standard speech, developed mainly out of London and Paris dialects.

As time went, forms from other dialects made their way into the standard owing to causes which it is not necessary to detail here.

Mr. Ramayya says that Rao Sahib G.V. Ramamurthy misunderstood the case of Italian. Prof. Whitney will answer for him. "The Italian was in like manner the popular idiom of Tuscany".

Uniformity is no virtue unless it is accompanied by ease in acquisition. Sanskrit is uniform in the whole of India, but like literary Telugu it has to be acquired with great effort. The vernacular on the other hand, is acquired naturally.

### **Orderly development of Language:**

He says organic growth or orderly development of language is a metaphor, and like most metaphors-introduced into serious discussion, it is misleading. Living languages change, some times for the worse. The forces which are in operation in a living language and the process of operation are very different from the few changes, mostly mechanical which occur in an archaic literary dialect. Telugu poets made a few deviations from literary usage but these were mostly due to metrical exigencies and did not except in rare cases, receiving general acceptance. I may instance, "Khtharthakekera Sandhi"



Gurazada says that as long as a language is alive it changes constantly. He says “so long as a language is alive, it is constantly changing. So that the grammar and the rhetoric of a living language can never be absolutely fixed. It is only when the language has ceased to be spoken-has become as we say, a dead language that fixed rules can be framed which every one who undertakes to write it must observe. The very statement that language is dead implies that hence forward no individual or body of persons has power to change it .....(“Greenrough and Ketredge).<sup>28</sup>

### **Views on Patriotism:-**

Gurazada was not only concerned with social reform. He was equally concerned with patriotism and other values which are necessary for strengthening the unity of our people. No Nation can thrive without the unity of its people. He says that we should not only be united but should make ourselves strong and sturdy. He says

If I ask you  
to love your land  
or better what is good  
it is just to say

Waste not your word  
but think of a little good

To strive in the way  
of the golden corn  
for food is blood  
and blood makes the man.

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28. Ibid P.50





The country must fare  
not on the heaves or sighs  
of men or their languishing dreams  
but on that which it can bring  
from its root.<sup>29</sup>

He further says that India should become rich and prosperous. It should improve its industry and commerce. Though one should be proud of his past one cannot go on ruminating too much. He says

Make commerce of that you can grow  
and fill your people with pride

Do not look back ward  
There is little there  
Do not hesitate your forward foot  
Behind is beyond<sup>30</sup>

It is no use seeing that we love our country one should try to do some good to the people what you do how you with your neighbour is more important he says

Do not talk of your love  
for your land, Do  
a little good  
that will speak for you

Bear with your neighbour  
fill your heart  
with his success  
Together you are<sup>31</sup>

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29. P.1Unilit.

30. Ibid P.1

31. Ibid P.2



One should think less about one self. Our concern should be for others and country means not merely earth. It is the people. One should not give much importance to caste nor religion nor faith. We should all use the resources of our earth for our common well being. He says

Divided your world is nil.

Think a little less of the self

a little more of the next one

This land is not earth not water

This land is our life

This land belongs to the brothers of men

Not caste nor faith nor race

But of men who use the earth

For the common good.<sup>32</sup>

Gurazada says that we should all work for the happiness and prosperity of our people.

He says

Our land is the big tree

With slender flowers of love

And fruits of our labour and sweat

Your words must stir like leaves

In a land in love with life

Where the harvests have a good heart

And the people are full with

The happiness of being.<sup>33</sup>

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32. Ibid P.2

33. Ibid P.2 (Rendered units English by SRINIVAS Rayaprol)



Gurazada Appa Rao exhorts people to stay united and work for the greater glory of the country without work there is no progress and unless one is strong he can not do any thing for the country. He says

Your country, brother, shall be your love!

Good into better you shall improve!

Let idle chatter

Get no Quarter!

*Great deeds indeed are needed now!*

Work hard, work long in farm and factory!

Let the land flourish in milk and honey!

Food is Good

To build brawn and blood!

*No brawn, no man-and man is body!*<sup>34</sup>

Gurazada Appa rao was one of the early propagators of the swadesi movement and pleaded for using country made products and wanted people to create wealth by hard work. He writes

Wisplike, wasplike men are a shame!

With such goes down a country's name!

All arts master

Flood the land with goods, all made at home!

Spread your handiwork all over the world!

Swadeshi every where be sold!

That man is filth

*Who cannot create wealth!*

*He can never hope for glory or gold!*<sup>35</sup>

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34. P.3.Ibid (Desa Bakti)

35. Ibid P.3



Gurazada was not against glorifying the past. Though we had hoary past we should not always look back. We should take all that is great and good and proceed, forward. He says

A little that is good, a lot that is bad,  
That is what the past is, so do not look back!  
Do not be a sluggard,  
Take a step for ward!  
*If you fall behind once, then forever you shall lag!*<sup>36</sup>

Gurazada gives importance to cooperation than competition. He pleads for harmony instead of strife. He says

Compete only when knowledge calls;  
Only in commerce contest at all;  
Strife is no good,  
Nip it in the bud!  
Throw away the sword, it is a total loss.<sup>37</sup>

One should not brag about his patriotism one should do constructive work quietly. He gave importance to silent work. He says

*Are you a patriot? Do not shout it aloud!*  
Bragging never did anybody any good!  
Quietly instead  
Do a fine deed!  
*Let the people see it: it is they that decide!*

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36. Ibid P.3  
37. Ibid P.3



One should think always about the welfare of the society and one should not be  
Jealous of other mans prosperity. One should think more about others than himself and  
should try to give a helping hand to neighbours and the people.

The sinful wretch who weeps all day  
Because another is rich, how can he be gay?  
Always happy  
Is really he  
Who sees his own in the others Joy!

So friend! Think less of selfish ends  
And lend your neighbour a helping hand!  
*Never does land  
Mean clay and sand!  
The people, the people! They are the land!*

He further says  
Hand in friendly hand enclocked  
Shall all the people together walk!  
In brotherhood  
All creeds, all breeds  
Shall live and move and love and laugh<sup>38</sup>

India is a pluralistic society with many religions.  
This divergence should not effect the brotherhood.  
“If minds are one” all men or one. He says  
*Faiths may differ but what does it mean?  
If minds are one, all men are one!*  
one day the soul  
of the human whole  
shall rise and grow and forever shine!<sup>39</sup>

38. P.4 Ibid  
39. Ibid P.4



Gurazada believed in toil and hard work without sweat and toil, wealth cannot be created. He compared the country to a tree and just as we feed the roots of the tree we should toil to make the country prosperous. He says

Like a tree a country shall  
Put forth its flowers of love and all  
The toiling peoples  
Sweat in ripples  
Shall feed the roots for the tree to yield wealth!<sup>40</sup>

Gurazada says that love for the country should be supreme for any individual and one should not think always about the past glory. The near prattle of patriotism is not sufficient. It should be supported by action. He says

Let love for country,  
Supreme be,  
And good ness rule the day.  
No more of endless babble  
Thy shoulder to the wheel now!

Let now past glory  
for the present,  
go forth to the farthest corners  
of the globe  
in search  
undaunted.

Hey, go ahead, I say  
murdering morbidity;  
ere art thou pushed  
into the abysmal mire.

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40. P.4 (Translated by Sri Sri.)



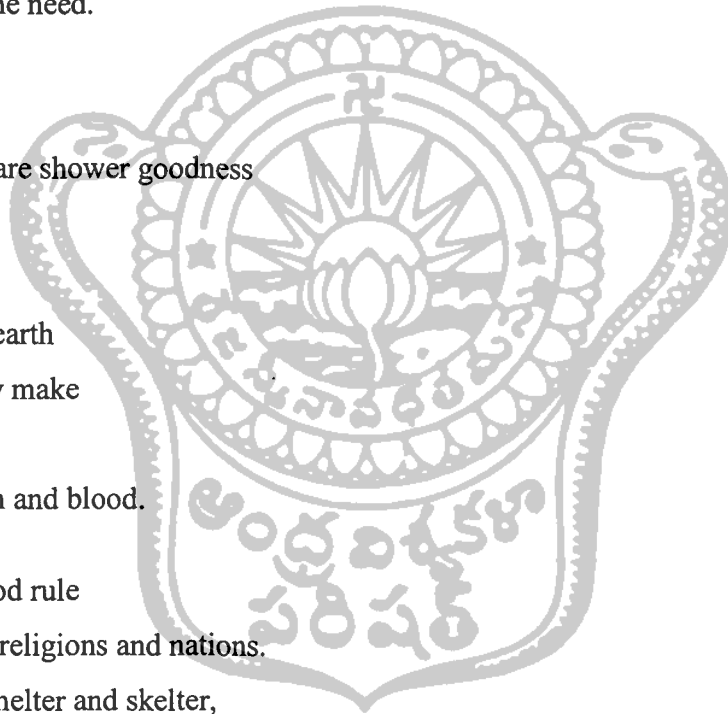
Now no more  
the mere prattle of patriotism,  
Let action prove intention.<sup>41</sup>

Gurazada pleads for unity of the people and says that country is not made from just a clod of earth. He says that people should march forward shoulder to shoulder.

Let tolerance be thy creed  
unity is now the need.  
it comes back  
million fold  
to those that care shower goodness  
on others.

Not a clod of earth  
shall a country make  
but men,  
men with flesh and blood.

Let brotherhood rule  
the destiny of religions and nations.  
Oh, brethren, helter and skelter,  
Let's march shoulder to shoulder.<sup>42</sup>




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41. Ibid P.5

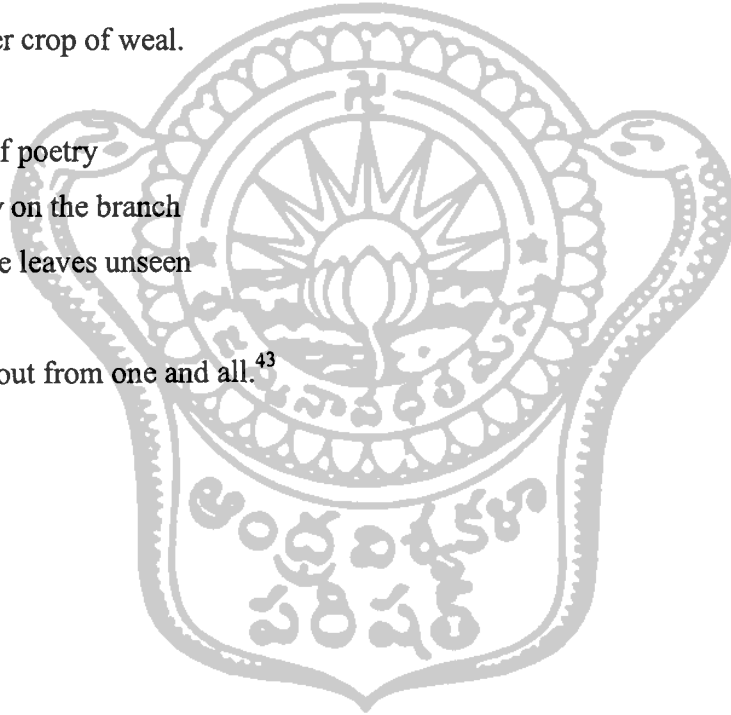
42. Ibid P.6



He wants that country should prosper and wishes for the common wheel and wants that all should live happily. He says

Let flowers of love  
blossom out  
from that giant tree  
the country  
and  
in the sacred sweat of brow  
yield a bumper crop of weal.

Let the koel of poetry  
sitting prettily on the branch  
covered by the leaves unseen  
sing of life,  
and sense sprout from one and all.<sup>43</sup>




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43. Ibid P.6 (Rendered into English by A.Muralidhar)





### **Scientific Temper:**

#### **From strings of pearls:**

Though patriotic he has praise for certain aspects of western civilization. He says about comets

“Comets are rare phenomena,  
So wondrous that the minds of old,  
Steeped in gross ignorance believed  
That the trains they trailed brought harm.”

“It’s a pity pundits who lay claim  
To wisdom weave such silly fancies  
About things so sublime which poets  
Should hail as Heaven’s blessings.”<sup>44</sup>

Gurazada praises the western inquisitiveness and their scientific temperament he says  
“Minds English, love, in science versed,  
penetrate to the core of things,  
And fetch forth truth, they will not let  
untruth obscure their vision”.

“I’ve learnt from them that this rare comet  
To this our earth claims some relation  
And gives us sight of its great beauty  
Once in some seventy years.”<sup>45</sup>

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44. Ibid P.12

45. Ibid P.12



Generally we believe that comet brings illluck and disaster but Gurazada says that it will bring good to the society

“My sweetest love, it is my fancy  
That this great star brings good, not harm:  
It spells great social change, I take it  
As the standard of reform”.<sup>46</sup>

Gurazada was a visionary. He fore saw the transformation and social change in India and he hoped that many of the social ills will be a thing of the past. He visualized a new society and a new world order. He writes

“In days to come reforming men  
Will spring and bring their strength of mind  
To bear up on our social ills,  
And break the chains of caste”

“Caste and colour shall be things  
of the past; all nations will be brought  
Into one fold; the lowliest  
Shall come to man’s estate.”

“The many creeds which now divide  
Mankind shall have been laid to rest:  
To this high end was set in motion,  
A movement in the town.”

“The cream of high society,  
A cosmopolitan dinner held,  
Without observing caste or creed  
The news may have reached here.”<sup>47</sup>

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46. Ibid P.12

47. Ibid P 13 (Rendered in to English by R.Appalaswamy)



### Gurazada - An Estimate

Narla Venkateswara Rao The eminent Andhra Journalist, has paid many tributes to Gurazada. He says contemporary yet timeless, local yet universal such s the art of Gurazada Venkata Appa Rao. With his poor physique and poorer health and his preoccupation with the affairs of the princely house of vizianagaram which he served, he could find little time and energy for sustained literary work.

Inspite of this Gurazada has left us his legacy. A full length play, half a dozen short stories, a bunch of poems and songs, a sheaf of light essays, and his letters, diaries, and notebooks. Though meager in quantity, it is a rich legacy. Its value is to be Judged not by its volume but by its impact. So forceful indeed was its impact, that it brought about a clean break with the dead past with its rigid conventions and stifling taboos. It had also effected a change of direction. The force of that impact is not spent even to day. Can the other hand, it is going stronger with the passage of years.<sup>48</sup>

The honours of pioneering modern Telugu literature are shared by Gurazada and Veeresalingam. So some comparisons are often made between them. According to Narla Gurazada had decidedly a more original mind, A richer imagination and by far greater poetic power “But to rate him higher as a man or a leader of men will be doing Justice neither to Gurazada nor to Veeresalingam. No doubt, Gurazada wrote better poetry, but the life of veeresalingam was by itself a poem; It was indeed an epic of mighty struggles against ignorance, social oppressioin, religious bigotry and much else that was evil in the society of his day.<sup>49</sup>

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48. Traditional Indian culture and other essays – V.R. Narla, Vizaya Books-Vizayawada – 2. 1969, p.130.

49. P.130



Narla says Gurazada too may have taken part in some, though not all of these struggles, but not as a general in the field. By temperament and training he was averse to the dust and din of battle. He was primarily an intellectual, and not a warrior. As an intellectual who was also a visionary he saw more deeply into human nature and much farther into the future. But he was not, he could not be, the hero of a hundred fierce battles as Veeresalingam was. The lone fight which he led was purely a literary one.

As one of the two pioneers of modern Telugu literature, Gurazada experimented boldly with style. He invented a new metre and named it *Mutyalasaram* ("a garland of pearls"). And he created two or three new branches in Telugu literature. True; we had poetry earlier, and plenty of it, but he was the first to write lyrical poetry. We had tales (folk tales, moral tales, and others) earlier, but he was the first to write the short story. We had plays earlier, but his *Kanyasulkam* stands apart by virtue of its superb characterization, its sparkling dialogue, and its bubbling humour.<sup>50</sup>

#### **Sense of humour:-**

Both as a man and a writer what distinguished Gurazada was his sense of humour. Nature had endowed him with a robust sense of humour, and the circumstance of his life sharpened it. A middle-class man with a modern mind and education, he had to spend all his adult life in bolstering up a fast decaying feudal order of society. He came to believe so much in the potency of humour that one of the last entries in his note books reads: "I shall be terrible as I was humorous". Probably to emphasize his faith in his sense of humour, he made this particular entry in what were for him unusually bold letters.<sup>51</sup>

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50. P.131

51. P.132



### **Gurazada as a humanist:-**

Basically, the concern of Gurazada was more with persons than with problems. He was in love with man as man; he loved man irrespective of the fact whether he was educated or illiterate, cultured or boorish, moral or immoral. Indeed, he loved people of the later categories much more than those of the former. All his life he watched from close quarters what is called "high life". It is vulgarities, debauches, and cruelties, hidden behind a façade of respectability, were familiar to him. It is conceivable that this very familiarity with "high life" made him sympathetic to what is despised as "low life".<sup>52</sup>

Humanism was to him more than an intellectual conviction; it was the quintessence of all beauty, charm, and poetry of life. His inner being was so much suffused with the spirit of humanism that it made him a poor hater. One who is incapable of passionate hatred cannot be a crusader for any cause, however worthy. Is it any wonder, then, that Gurazada failed as a crusader for political, social, or religious or any other major reform, while he achieved success as a poet with a vision that stretched to the very ends of the earth, and a love that embraced the whole of humanity?<sup>53</sup>

### **Literary style:**

Narla says that language is something that is living and growing. The moment it ceases to grow, it becomes a movement; may be a beautiful monument, a precious monument, but still a monument. Even living and growing is not enough; the living should be natural the growth should be spontaneous. For this a language should take its sustenance from the soil, which in its case is the fertile bed of the speech of the common people, the speech which they use as they eat and drink, as they work and play, as they

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52. P.132

53. P.132



love and hate, as they laugh and cry, as they dream and despair, in short, the speech of the people as they live their full and eventful lives. When we talk of a spoken language we refer to this speech only. It enriches a language and helps the growth of its literature. Those who oppose it are foolish enough not to realize that their literary Telugu was the spoken speech of an earlier age.<sup>54</sup>

When Gurazada pleaded for spoken Telugu, he urged the use of the living language of the day. He felt that the literary language, with its archaic words, artificial usages, was more a hindrance than a help for a really creative writer. "My own vernacular for me" he declared. "The living Telugu, the Italian of the East, in which none of us is ashamed to express our joys and sorrows, but which some of us are ashamed to write well."<sup>55</sup>

Gurazada wrote generally well and occasionally superbly, in spoken Telugu, there by setting and inspiring example to all modern writers. Today spoken Telugu is used by the press, the radio, the cinema; it is used by most of our novelists, short story writers, play wrights, as well as others. It is also used by our legislators. Yet it is still kept out of our schools and colleges. There is a ban on text books written in spoken Telugu. Unless the ban on spoken Telugu is removed and it is allowed to enter the portals of our colleges and universities, we will not be doing real honour to the memory of Gurjada.<sup>56</sup>

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54. Ibid P .133

55. Ibid P.133

56. Ibid p.p 133-134



### **Gurazada - Some Critics:-**

Let us see how his works are estimated by some eminent writers and literary critics of our times and how they have assessed his contribution to social reformation and literature.

### **Gurazada – The poet of the Marrow:-** (Kavuri Ramesh Babu)

Gurazada Apparao is one of the principal architects of modern Andhra and leader of the renaissance movement. He formed a victorious triumvirate with Kandukuri Veeresalingam and Gidugu Ramamuthy, who successfully fought against orthodoxy for social reform, emancipation of women and for breeding new grounds in Telugu literature.

### **Comparison of the Three:-**

Veeresalingam, the fire-breathing, impatient colossus of a reformer, and Gidugu, the scholar – destroyer of Pedantic literary forms – both needed a Gurazada to give their movements a humanistic touch. Gurazada was indeed a synthesis of Kandukuri and Gidugu, for he powerfully expressed the call for social reform, given by the former in the live idiom of spoken dialect, championed by the latter. A great visionary, he was far taller than his contemporary luminaries by virtue of his qualities of head and heart.<sup>57</sup>

### **His poem on “Desabhakti”:-**

He had bequeathed us a small bunch of poems. But each one of it is a jewel by itself. The metre he chose is simple, the words he chose are simpler – the live native idiom, but together they blossomed into poems. Whose lyrical beauty is unsurpassed, whose lucidity of expression is unrivalled and whose wealth of imagination

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<sup>57</sup> Gurazada commemorative volume Edited M Chalapati Rao, P 47



and ideas are prodigious. Not only did his literary work leave a lasting imprint on the Telugu world of letters. But it decisively influenced its course.

There are many poems on 'patriotism; written before and after his time in the world literature, but none rose to these heights. They generated, no doubt, lot of turbulence and forth, but ultimately they petered out into chauvinism-pure and simple or coupled with romanticist mysticism. None of them are replete with ideas so forward-looking. So prophetic and envisage the heralding of a welfare state, even the rudiment of which was non-existent in those days.

**Fighter for the cause of the people:-**

The strenuous labours of his bossom friend, Gidugu, in liberating the Telugu diction from the shackles of obsolete literary forms could not have been fruitful so soon without the magic wand of Gurazada's craftsmanship, which blazed new vistas of vision. A poet of the people in every sense of the word, he mobilized all his literary and artistic resources in fighting for the cause of the people, and successfully too.

**Consummate Artist who exploited humour:-**

His masterpiece "Kanyasulkam" exposes the social evils of the day, not with the Gargantuan thunders of a reformer, but with the laughter of a consummate artist 'Hasya rasa' (humour) has never been exploited, either before him or after him, so dexterously, either in the classical literature or in the modern literature of the world, his doctrine of love transcends all barriers, and humanistic philosophy gets unveiled in all its pristine purity.<sup>58</sup>

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58. Ibid 48





**Exposer of social degradation and hypocrisy:-**

His exposure of the inhuman institutions of child-marriages was no less devastating. This trade 'in flesh and blood' was the bane of the society of his day, which derived much of its moral strength apparently from tradition and religion, but Gurazada had torn this garb of respectability asunder and presents the crude materialistic considerations under living it. He proceeded further to show the resultant morbidity in all its horridness in the lives of young widows, that stinked, petrified and what not.

Not only did he depict the duplicity of the false rages, who go on fooling people in days by-gone and present, but did not spare the theosophy also, which tried to rationalize things irrational. The hollowness of the genuine reformers as well as the viciousness of the false ones stood condemned squarely. Notwithstanding his sympathies for the rising nationalism and his respect for the civilized and civilizing rulers from across the seas, he literally showered ridicule on the head of the opportunist politicians and high-handed police officials.<sup>59</sup>

**With malice towards none:-**

Above all, none of his character, even the villains, does evoke revulsion from us, but only sympathy, pity, understanding, amusement and laughter; not only does it require a keen sense of observation, which he had in abundance, but also an ability to see into the minds of the people, understand their 'modus operandi' and draw it in kaleidoscopic colours.

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59. Ibid P.49



The fact that, though he wrote the play 84 years ago (in 1892, but revised in 1909), his characters remain evergreen, further highlights his greatness and his ability to deep into the future by decades.<sup>60</sup>

The quantum of Gurazada's works is rather microscopic, by the standards of other masters. But the intensity of his work and its efflorescent humanism, makes him stand out head and shoulders above his contemporaries in the sub-continent with his 'Kanyasulkam' not only does he live in the heart of every civilized Telugu, but has carved out a niche for himself in world literature.

The tribute of Matthew Arnold, composed in praise of Goethe, applies with no less Justice to Gurazada.

"Goethe has done his pilgrimage  
He took the suffering human race  
He read each wound, each weakness clear  
And struck his finger on the place  
And said – then ailest here, and here."<sup>61</sup>

**Gurazada said:-**

"I wrote it (Kanyasulkam – Ed.) *to advance the cause of social Reform and to combat a popular prejudice that the Telugu language was unsuited to the stage.*"<sup>62</sup>

Let us see some appraisals of some critics of Gurazada

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60. Ibid P.49

61. Ibid P.49

62. Ibid P.49



### **K.V.Ramana Reddy**

K.V.Ramana Reddy writes Appa Rao was an avid student of philosophy both in and out of school. Text book philosophy apart, he assiduously cultivated a love for the verities of life and, in this process neither utilitarianism nor radicalism of the British variety nor Auguste comte's positivism failed to hold his attention for long. Ibsen was only his last acquaintance in this realm. The important thing that should be noted in this context is that Apparao did not conceive of a philosophy which divorces the human concerns from the divine ones, or slights them preference from unmundane things. What the Buddha in his compassion taught, what Jesus in his pity preached and what shelly even in his wrath and rage sang, was only of love – Love – to Apparao. Platonic or sensual, love was the spirits cement which holds together the individual souls in their mundane relations and erects a social edifice in place of an impossible atomism of the spencerian variety. From this root stems out all that is good and true and beautiful here on this society. Tolerance and good-will, sympathy and charity are only its fruits. Apparao was, thus a philosopher in his own right, though he never lay claim to that high title.<sup>63</sup>

### **H.V.Sarma:-**

H.V.sarma writes about the verses of Gurazada the subject matter in the chosen verses expresses the poets longing to out grow the unmeaning rigidities reached by the imposter maintainers of culture. Shri Gurazada seems to have intellectually and emotionally reacted to the evils in the society. The divisions and subdivisions in caste an unthinking assertions of authority worked against National unity. Men and women as parents had turned merciless towards their young daughters by entertaining child

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63 Ibid P 34



marriage and 'Kanyasulkam'. Consequent to which the remaining life of the girls was rendered pathetic. Shri Gruajada was an eye-witness to such atrocities which ostensibly went in the name of respectable convention.

His interest in literature was independent of his negative experiences. The important matter is that he utilized his literary talent as a weapon to fight against ignorance and bigotry in social life and their timely, unrectifiable after-effects. All of his works bear evidence to these facts.<sup>64</sup>

### **Gurazada and Veeresalingam:-**

It is not known whether shri Gurazada was inspired by sri Kandukuri Veeresalingam panthulu whose views, were similar to the former or sri Gurazada acquired support from the later. But shri Gurazada had immense respect for shri Veeresalingam Panthulu. The fact, however, remained that sri Veeresalingam Panthulu was, the first man to react to the plight of the women and to boldly convert his views into practical terms. Sri Veeresalingam pantulu's literary events also were equally forceful. Again, his literary endeavours included both social reformation and language reformation, separately. He had no disregard, however, for conventional literary language and literature in which he was also efficient.<sup>65</sup>

Sri Gurazada viewed that literary faculty was only a means to an end. He is basically a social reformer and he utilized his faculty to express his preparatory views alone. He also had to (or felt the need to) simplify language in order to publicise his opinion. It would not be out of place to compare him to Bertolt Brecht of Germany who

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64. Ibid P.40

65. Ibid P.40



was basically a poet but, charged with the permanent mood to reform the unthinking masses, took to theatre. Through the theater he attempted to provoke thinking among the masses against military influence in social matters. He had to break through the conventions in the theatre for his purpose and to experiment new ways precisely to infuse rationalism among masses.

In the matters of simplification of language, which he recognized as the universal medium of expression, Sri Gurazada was not the first man. Already there were others, some his seniors and some his equals who advocated the idea and did some good work. Shri Sreenivas Iyengar and Sri Burra Seshagiri Rao were among those that greatly helped him in such effort.<sup>66</sup>

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66. Ibid P.40,



**Achanta Janakiram:-**

The famous writer Achanta Janakiram says, Apparao's love for man was so great and his sense of Justice so acute that he could not tolerate class-discrimination in any form particularly against the Harijans. He sought every opportunity to condemn it. He says:

I see only two classes among men;  
The good and the bad.  
If good men are classed as untouchables,  
I myself would fain be an untouchable.<sup>67</sup>

In a very powerful poem entitled "MAN" the poet says  
You who prostrate before man-made gods  
          endelessly propitiating as stone or a shrub,  
Why are you so blind to real god – hood  
          resplendent in every man?  
Why do you treat some men as worse than  
          stones and shrubs?  
You who search over hills and dales,  
          through hot deserts and fair valleys,  
for a god a deep hidden in some remote  
          retreat,  
Open your eyes and see;  
Your god is by your side!  
He walks with you in the shape of every man!  
Know that salvation comes to man  
Only through service of fellow-man.<sup>68</sup>

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67. Ibid P.27

68. Ibid P.27



**Ronanki Appala Swamy:**

R.Appala swamy says the fact of his having left behind him no large body of work has long delayed his inclusion among writer of the highest rank. We don't Judge a writer by bulk, but by the social, moral and spritirual value of his work in the longrun, by the purification that is wrought in dialect of the tribe to which a poet belongs and the subtilization of sensibility of the people. He frees from the inertial of custom. What wonder if Gurazada has at last clicked with the public and has captured the hearts an imaginations of all classes and conditions of the population.

About Desabhakthi Appala swamy says I have never in all my reading, in several European languages, both ancient and modern come across a song which expresses the sentiment of patriotism like this, Andhra poet's love of country. It gives no quarter to aggressiveness, makes no boastfull gestures, recognizes the equality of all men and women and envisions a world of collective effort, of peace, plenty and prosperity.<sup>69</sup>

To day Gurazada's Telugu is the Telugu of our newspapers, magazines, novels, and pamphlets and even of original verse. Gurajade's skit upon the Board of studies in his own day still holds. 'Thou shalt read!' it commands and straight thousands of unfortunate youngmen read books that no mortal can read with profit or with pleasure. "Youngmen still read the old books for their examinations, but turn to the new books for pleasure, self culture and self-improvement."

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69 Ibid P 23



About his achievement he says. The poet's dream of political independence has come true, untouchability has been abolished and economic equality for the sexes and social Justice are in process of realisation. His dream of one world still remains a dream in a war-torn world. Let us hope that a seer's words cannot go in vain.

Caste and colour shall be things of  
Of the post; all nations shall be brought  
Into one fold; the lowliest  
Shall come to man's estate.

These lines occur in the title poem of "Mutyalu Saralu" what a limpid compendium they compose of the new humanism!

**Sarvepalli Radha Krishnan:-**

About Gurazada Radhakrishnan, addressing the century celebrations of Mahakavi Gurjada Appa Rao. New Delhi, 5<sup>th</sup> May, 1963. He said "I had the privilege of meeting him once or twice in Madras. During the period on which he lived there was a ferment in the social life of the Andhra Country. There were Kandukuri Veeresalingam pantulu, Ragupati Venkataratnam Naidu and others who were deeply interested in ridding our society of the social evils which afflicted it. Gurazada Appa Rao took up his powerful pen in vindication of the rights of the common people and condemned unequal marriages, child marriages, etc., His prose and the few poems which he wrote are simple and lucid. I remember reading a small work called 'Kanyaka' – I do not know how people know about it now, but I read when I was a student; then his play Kanyasulkam. I have seen it staged. Here was a man who stood for individual freedom and human fellowship. He tried to break down all walls of prejudice built by caste, race, religion, and wanted every human being to feel that he belonged to the one tribe of the human race. That was the great contribution which he made."<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Gurazada commemorate vol. South Delhi, Andhra Association, October 1976 P 17







# APPENDIXES



## APPENDIX - I

### Some Important Events In The Life of Gurazada

21.09.1862, Appar Rao Birth in Rayavaram of Yalamanchili Taluk of Visakhapatnam District

1882, passed matriculation.

1882, written a poem “cuckoo”

14.08.1883, the famous editor Sambhu Chandra Mukharjee of the journal reese and rayyat (Culcutta) praising Gurazada’s “Saranghadhara”

01.04.1884, joined as 10<sup>th</sup> assistant lecturer in M.R.College V.Z.M. salary of 25/- Rupees Per month

1885, Marriage with Appalarasamma

1.1886, Awarded B.A. Degree with Sanskrit as second language, and philosophy as optional

January.1886, promotion as 8 assistant lecturer

3.3.1887, Appointed head clerk in the office of General Deputy Collector, Vizianagaram, having lien on his post in the college

27.10.1887, Addressed Indian National Congress Meeting at Vizianagaram

October, 1887 promoted as 4 assistant lecturer on a salary of 100/-

1887, Birth of Daughter (Oleti Lakshmi Narasamma)

1887, Acquaintance with Anandagajapathi

27, 1888 membership in the voluntary organization in Visakhapatnam.

22.06.1889, Ellected as Vice President for Vizianagara Samsthanam Debating Society

1890, Birth of the second child – son – Venkataramadasu

1891, promoted as third lecturer

1892, Demise of his brother Syamala rao who was studying in Madras Law College



- 1892, Kanya Sulkam staged (first edition)
- 1894, Criticism of Sanskrit drama Sri Rama Vijayam
- 5.06.1896, Appointed Epigraphist of Vizianagaram Estate
- 1896, Declaration as editor of Prakasika
- 01.01.1897, introduction to Kanyasulkam and dedication to Anandagajapathi
- 1897, writing introduction to his English drama Harischandra
- 06.1898, Appointed private secretary to Reevamaharani, the sister of Anandagajapathi
- 1902, Birth of third Child (Daughter) Puligedda Kondayamma
- 24.04.1905. demise of his father.
- 1906 discussions with Gidugu Ramamurthy beginning of vyavaharika bhasha udyamam(a movement for the use of ordinary language for the literary purposes.)
- 1906finished writing Kondu Bhattiyam(play).
- 1907 publication of Neelagiri songs.
- 1908 English poem on Madras congress.
- 1909 change in kanyasulkam and the revised publication on may '1 and writing of introduction in English.
- 11.03.1909revised some scenes of kanyasulkam.
- 01.05.1909preface to the second edition of kanyasulkam.
- 21.05.1909letter to muni subramanyam, explaining the characteristics of realism in literature.
- 1910 participation in the inter caste dinner at Berahampur.
- 1910 muthyala saralu.(strings of pearls)
- 1910 Revision of kondu battiyam.
- 21.04.1910 Publication of the act of Bilhaniyam.



24.11.1910 Essay on spoken dialect.

29.12.1910 Reply to adverse criticisms by anonymous writer.

27.03.1911 Declaration of the poets magna carta “my cause is peoples cause and cultured opinion is at my back”.

04.1911 Publication of the second act of Bilhaniyam.

1911 Board of studies member Madras University.

1911 founding Andhra sahitya parishat.(for using ordinary language)

23.01.1912 “at home” by the bangiya sahitya parishat at Calcutta in honour of the poet.

16.05.1912 lecture on the usefulness of the spoken dialect at the meeting of Andhra sahitya parishat at madras.

27.06.1912 attempts at a compilation of the glossary of technical terms in telugu.

15.11.1912 Publication of “kanyaka”.(poem)

12.1912 Meeting Rabindranadh tagore in Calcutta.

1913 writing of “subadra”(poetry).

30.01.1913 offer from the madras governor of the fellowship of the madras university.

12.02.1913 retirement pension rupees 140/-

20.04.1914 publication of “the minute of dissent to the report of the telugu composition sub committee.

30.10.1915 publication of the “dinchu langaru”.(poem)

1915 House warming.

30.11.1915 demise of the poet in vizayanagaram at 8:25.A.M.



## APPENDIX - II

### WORKS OF GURUZADA APPA RAO

#### TELUGU

1. Kanyasulkam, First Edition. Reprinted with annotations by Bangorcy, Madras, 1969.
2. Songs of the Blue Hills, Madras, 1907.
3. Kanyasulkam, Revised edition, madras, 1909.
4. Kanyasulkam, A bridged Edition, by V.R. Narla, Vijayawada, 1976.
5. Animutyalu, Vijayawada, 1959.
6. the annals of Handeh Anantapuram, ed. By G.V. Appa Rao, Madras, 1920.
7. matyala Saralu, Vijayawada, 1955.
8. Kondubhattiyam-Bihaniyam, Vijayawada, 1954.
9. Vyasa Chandrika, Vijayawada, 1953.

#### ENGLISH

1. The minute of dissent to the Report of the Telugu composition Sub Committee, Madras, 1914.
2. Introduction to Sri Ramavijaya, Bombay, 1901.
3. Introduction of Harischandra – The Martyr to Truth, Madras, 1897.





### **APPENDIX – III**

#### **CHILD MARRIAGES IN A.P. VILLAGE**

**KAKINADA, April 17.**

During his recent visit to Nagulapalli village 32 kms. From here in connection with opening of a Balavadi, Mr. Mala kondayya, collector, East godavari shocked to find a number of girls below eight wearing thalis symbolizing their married status on enquiry he learnt that in a particular community in the village child marriages were in vogue and even one year old babies were married.

To express his strong disapproval, of the practice the collector refused garlands and declined to speak at the function. He left the meeting and asked one of the officials to explain to the assembled villages that he would not participate in any function in the village till they gave up the evil practice.

(The Hindu, April 18, 1972)



## APPENDIX - IV

HINDU 8-12-79

### BABES IN ARMS MADE BRIDES AND GROOMS

VIJAYAWADA, Dec, 6.

Breast-fed babes who cannot as yet crawl a few feet or lisp a few words are made wives and husbands under a strange marital practice in vogue in nagulapalle and half a dozen other villages in a cluster near pithapuram in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh.

With parents holding the babies in their laps, the rituals are gone through amidst the chanting of mantras by the purohit in the presence of the invited relatives and friends.

Your reporter on a visit to nagulapalle found scores of toddling female children sporting the 'mangala sutrams' made of gold or consisting of a piece of turmeric knotted to a cotton thread. The mission to ascertain the number of the married among children had to be abandoned and converted into one of finding as to how few among the children still remain to be married.

Nagulapalle is neither remote Gilly area nor is populated by illiterate and ignorant tribals cut off from the mainstream of society. It is a rich and prosperous village with a population of 9,500 in the Godavari delta. It is linked to nearby towns by R.T.C bus service and has postal, telegraphic and telephone facilities.

There are as many as 900 children on the rolls in the two school in the village, one of them having facilities up to the ninth standard.

About 200 young men of the village strut the coastal Andhra districts from srikakulam to Krishna either as partners or as employees in arrack business. A majority of the villagers has taken to sterilization, limiting the number of children just to two.

It is in this otherwise progressive and enlightened village child marriages are common.

Nagulapalle and the six other villages – Isukapalle, mallavaram, ramanakkapet, komaragiri, pallipalem and Bhimakrosupalem – are populated mainly by pakanati-reddis, who say they have little in relation to the reddy in other districts of coastal Andhra. The pakanati reddy marry only among themselves.

Enquiries show that child marriage has taken deep roots in the last two generations. Sixty - eight year – old. Anisetty Narayana murthy says his father married when he was around 20, But Narayana Murthy's marriage was performed when he was



12. Narayana murthy performed the marriage of his son. Tatabbai just when he was 10. now, tatabbai has performed the marriage of his only child just 18 – month – old.

Narayana murthy recalls that prior to 1930 the parents used to wait until the girl was 10 or the boy 12 for performing the marriage when the British implemented the sharda act prohibiting child marriages, the villagers used to go to Yanam then under French rule to beat the law.

Thirty – two years after independence, the villagers still perform child marriages.

Why are the parents of girls eager to perform their marriages even in child hood ? is it because the girls out number boys in the community ? certainly not, reply the villagers by pointing out that in such a case many girls should have gone unmarried. Not a single girl has gone unmarried for want of a suitable boy.

Is there no danger of early married girls becoming windows. The answer is if it had been the case, the practice of child marriages would have died long ago.

Narayana murthy, who performed the marriage of his 18 – month – old grand – daughter, asserts the practice had its origin in the parents' desire to see their daughter happily settled in life. The farmers in the area cultivating pithapuram estate lands became patta holders after the Estates Abolition Act in early 1900's. it was around that period that parents began to see the virtues of early marriage of their children. The parents of a girl were eager to give their daughter in wedding to a boy who is to inherit land. The boys parents were lured by the offer of dowry. It all started as a race with the girls parents hunting for suitable boys. No parent would like to be left behind in the race.

Even if the male child's parents are bit reluctant the girl's parents would not mind kidnapping the 'boy' and performing the marriage, which is irrevocable.

The villagers see nothing wrong in the custom of early marriages. The only trouble they experience relates to the 'honouring' of the son – in – law on the occasion of three to four festivals every year from the time of marriage to the time he setup his won family in adult hood. Besides new clothes for the child son – in – law (which cost in a pittance), the female child's parents have to make cash gifts of Rs 500 to Rs 1000 during the specified festivals to the son – in – law's parents. The cost of looking after the son – in – law from the time of marriage till he attains say 20 years has become prohibitive. Complain the villagers. But they laugh away saying they can make good the loss through their sons.

Mr. P. Surya Chakram, a 27 – year – old graduate doing arrack business, points out there is the risk of young girls becoming widows early, though their number is little. But pitiable is the ease of girls after marriage because their freedom is stifled. They are forced to drop out of school and confined to homes once they attain puberty. There after they are made to lead a secluded life.





A Yuva Lok Dal leader of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. Chinni (Parchuri Kutumba Rao) of vijayawada during a visit to East Godavari last month discovered to his dismay that babes in arms are made brides and bridegrooms. He held discussions with the village youth with a view to introducing social reform in the village. And Mr. Chinni is aware of the magnitude of the problem. Of the 275 school – going girls in the village about 175 belongs to the Reddi community and of then only 30 remain unmarried.

Could at least the future generation be saved from the scourge of child marriage and a beginning be made in this international Year of the child?

- Our Vijawada Staff Reporter.



## APPENDIX - V

### G. O. Ms. No. 13, dated 1- 1888

‘Kanyasulkam Bill’ Introduced in the Madras Legislative Council by Puspati Ananda Gajapathi, the Maharajah of Vizianagaram in February 1888.

Bill to be introduced into the council of the Governor of Fort Saint George for making laws and Regulations 1888.

A bill to discontinue the sordid practice of selling girls in marriages among Brahmins under the guise of relegation.

Preamble: whereas it is expedient to discourage and put down

The barbarious practice of selling girls to persons for marriages under the colour of the forbidden form of marriage called ‘Asura’ which appears to be very prevalent among Brahmins in Southern India

It is here by enacted as follows:

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Short title:                  | 1. This act may be called the ‘Kanyasulkam act of 1888’   |
| Local extent and application: | 2. It extends to the presidency of Fort Saint George and to all Brahmins governed by Mitakshara Law   |
| Commencement:                 | 3. It shall come into force from such date as the governor in council may notify in the Fort St George Gazette.   |
| Interpretation clause:        | 4. In this act, ‘Kanyasulkam’ means money or any other property which is given to the guardian of a girl for her purchase in the marriage, though not sanctioned by religion, but without which the marriage could not have been brought about. |

Guardian means father, mother or any other person who has a legal right to give a girl in marriage.

5. Whatever ‘Kanyasulkam’ is received by the guardian of the girl shall be deemed to be the property of the girl, and in shall be obligatory on such guardian to convert the same into government security bonds in her name, and on his failing to do so, her husband or other next best friend shall be at liberty to recover the same from him with interest at 12% per annum by suit in a competent court, and invest the same as above directed and the girl, on attaining majority, shall be entitled to recover her property from the aforesaid persons, their successors or assignees as the case may be.



### Statement of objects and reasons:

By no other people is greater importance attached to marriage than by us the Hindus, as it partakes more of a religious sacrament than a civil contract.

Once of the eight forms of marriage which according to Hindu sastras seemed to have been once in existence, as far as I can see two forms of marriage called Brahmo and Asura are at present in vogue, the former being one of the approved and then latter the prohibited form. The gift of a daughter clothed only with a single rope to a learned man whom her father voluntarily invites and respectfully receive is the nuptial rite called Brahmo, when the bride groom giving away as much wealth as he could afford to the father, the paternal kinsman and the damsel herself, takes her voluntarily as a bride that marriage is termed Asura,

It is laid down in Smriti Chandrika that the term 'Patni' means a wife lawfully wedded in one of the approved forms of marriage capable of conferring upon the wife a power to associate with her husband in the performance of religious sacrifices and that therefore a wife bought as in the Asura form of marriage is not a patni, and that the learned call her to be a slave or 'daasee' and the children begotten to her are unfit to perform the funerals of their parents Hence Manu says 'Let no father who knows the law receive a gratuity for that purpose is the seller of his offspring'.

A practice obtains in many districts of Southern India (for example) Ganjam, Vizagapatnam, Godavari, Nellore, Guntur & C and in the town of Madras itself, for Hindu parents of all castes to sell for money their infant daughters in marriage. The price of each bride is called as 'Kanyasulkam'. This practice is becoming, it is found, more common year by year.

The Hindu law does not forbid the giving and receiving of a dowry. Manu says 'when money or goods are given to damsels whose kinsmen receive them not for their own use, it is no sale it is merely a token of courtesy and affection to the brides'. It is only the sale of the girl for considerations, that is considered to be a sordid proceeding and as such constantly forbidden by our law. It appears simply to be a survival but in a milder form of that iniquitous traffic in human being or slavery which has been put down so gloriously benign rule of the British Government. It is, I regret to submit, growing first not only on the lower but also in the provision not being made for her by her parents or by the husband or his relations.

Generally the old and the sick who of course cannot be chosen as proper objects of brahmo marriage resort to the avaricious men who hold out their daughters as valuable commodity for sale to the highest bidder without the safeguard to imminent misery and irreparable widowhood which their innocent girls are exposed to. These unnatural parents tempt not unfrequently many a poor family into ruin by drawing out all that they have and some times even by forcing them to borrow to pay for their daughters.

The husband often becomes helplessly involved a debt mortgaging his property to raise the necessary 'Kanyasulkam' and is deprived of the chance of making any



provision against death or accident while the parents desirous of seeking only then own profit send forth a dowerless bride to wed an insolvent bridegroom and become the mother of a family of paupers.

I believe there are many instances of such marriages which have generally resulted in great misery.

Under the present law the sale by parents of their daughters in marriage is not a crime in penal code. Under the 'contract act' money paid as 'kanyasulkam' cannot be recovered by the payer although probably a suit upon a promise to pay would be dismissed on the consideration of the promise being immoral. So the present Bill while being entirely clear of any religious interference on the one hand, and on the other being quite within the jurisdiction of the Madras Government, cannot fail to be in my humble opinion of some use as it will not only have a wholesome effect in mitigating the wide spread evil, but will also entirely remove the stigma of British Government tolerating the sale of human beings in how so mild a form it be.

**Letter to the Hon'ble H.E. Strokes,  
Chief Secretary to Government:**

Sir,

I beg most respectfully to bring under the considerations of the Legislative council the Bill, a copy which together with the statement of objects and reasons, I have now the honour to enclose in here. The object of the Bill is put a stop to the increasing employment of the Asura form of marriages, which in purchase of a wife by a paymen to her parents it is obvious that this form of marriage is irreligious for Brahmins will be seen from all the most authoritative Hindu Sastras existing, and most of which have been quoted in the appended paper. That this form of marriage is iniquitous is self evident because to parents as the proper guardians of the child by receiving money of some other consideration corresponding to it, for their own interest instead of that of their girl, add to the many inexpressible miseries of Hindu girls under the existing Hindu marriage laws instead of mitigating them. Again it is amounting to slavery easily found by the fact of the parents receiving money or its equivalent for their benefit instead of that of their charge, which at once makes marriage as above mentioned irreligious and then shorn of its false religious cloak. It must be admitted that it naturally covers under the slavery act in one form or another if not in letter at least in the spirit of the code. Therefore, and, as the English were the first among the natives of the world, to put down this immoral practice, I think it is the all the more sad to allow the irreligious, iniquitous and illegal practice, to go on any further. The other essential point to be considered is whether the evil is of such a nature and extent is would necessitate Legislative interference. I can almost say with certainty that not less than one thousand such marriages take place annually in Northern Circars alone. As the Bill streeing clear of interference either with Hindu religion or its rites, or which the Indian penal code, the concluding para in the statement of objects and reasons will clearly show. Thinking in activity in not bringing to light the fact of this deplorable traffic being carried on with every show of impurity under the debasing false parents of religion would be unpardonable omission in my part, I have



intruded on the valuable time of H.E. the Governor in council for which all the same, I beg to be excused.

17<sup>th</sup> January 1888  
Egmore  
Madras  
Appendix

I have the honour to be  
sir  
Your most obedient servant  
**Sd. Ananda Gajapathy**

**Native members opposed the Bill.  
S. Subramanya Aiyar and P. Chantsal Row.**

**S. Subramanya Aiyar**  
**Kodaikanal**

**5<sup>th</sup> June 1888**

I am unable to the government any useful opinion on the Bill referred to me. The subject of the Bill treats of is no doubt of some importance to a section of the Hindu community, but I have no reliable information as to the real extent of the evil which is sought to be removed. In the southern part of the presidency, it is difficult to say whether the practice is so prevalent as to call for Legislative interference, as to what it may be in the Northern parts I have authentic information.

**Sd. S. Subramanya Aiyar.**

**P. Chantsal Rou**  
**The Grove, Mylapore**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 1888**

I beg to state that I am unable to support the Bill proposed by the Hon'ble the Maharajah of Viziamagaram.

In the first place what the Bill proposes to enact is already the Hindu law. Kanyasulkam is 'sridhana' of the girl in whose account it is taken (vide paras 566 and 574 Mayo's Hindu law) and if it is misappropriated by the father there is nothing to prevent the girl or some one interested in her bringing a suit against him but such suits or seldom or never brought because money is given and taken with the parties consent.

**Sd. P. Chantsal Row.**



**Note on the file:**

Both the Hindu non – official members of the Legislative Council who were consulted.....are opposed to the proposed legislation. Both point out that the evil affect of the Bill as directed is a result of the custom of early marriage and will diminish as that disappears. Mr. Chantsal Row shows that the Bill will be useless and its provisions easily evaded.

The Maharajah's views do not therefore appear to be shared by other intelligent prespectable Hindus, therefore will hardly be preferred adopt the measure. It is not yet before the Council. The question is how best to dispose the matter.

The maharajah of Vizianagaram informed that the members of whom the above Bill was referred for option are opposed to its introduction to proceed with the Bill.  
Dated: 25<sup>th</sup> June 1888.



## APPENDIX - VI

**G.O. Ms. No. 55, 57 10<sup>th</sup> August, 1898 of G.O. No. 65, 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1898.**

### **The Mysore Infant Marriages Prevention Regulations.**

**Regulation No.X of 1894 of the Government of Mysore (passed on the fifth day of October, 1894.)**

#### **A regulation to prevent infant marriages in the territories of Mysore.**

**Preamble:** where as it expediter to prevent infant marriages in the territories of mysore; his highness the maharajah is pleased to enact as follows

**Short title:** 1. This regulation may be called the mysore infant marriages prevention regulations.

2. It shall extend to the whole of the territories of Mysore but it shall apply only to marriages to among the Hindus. It shall come into operation at the expiration of six months from the date of its publication in the official gazette. For purpose of this Regulation, an infant girl means girl who has not completed eight years of age.

3. any person who causes the marriages of an infant girl, or who knowingly aids and abets within the meaning of the Indian penal code such a marriage, and any man who having completed eighteen years of age marries an infant girl shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine or with both.

4. Any man who having completed fifty years of age marries a girl who has not completed fourteen years of age shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine or with both.

5. Any person who causes the marriage of a girl who has not completed fourteen years of age, and any person knowingly aids and abets, within the meaning of the Indian Penal Code, such a marriage shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine or with both.

6. No offence punishable under the regulation shall be tried by any court inferior to that of a Magistrate of the district.

7. No marriage which has actually taken place shall be deemed to be invalid, on the ground of the penalties provided by the Regulation,

8. No prosecution under the regulation shall be instituted without the previous written sanction of the Government may deem fit to make.



*(Proceedings of Assembly of Representative Raiyats and Merchants of the Province of Mysore-Held at Mysore in October 1893 – subject No.10)*

**APPENDIX - VII**  
**GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS 1898**  
**LEGISLATIVE**

The Madras age of Marriage Act

Draft Bill introduced by P. Ratnasabhapatil Pillai 28<sup>th</sup> January 1898.

**Draft Bill:**

To – fix the marriageable age limit of boys and girls. Where as it is expedient to fix the age limit for the marriages of boys and girls in the presidency of fort St George and its dependencies in view to preventing infant marriages and the attendant evils result therefrom.

It is here by enacted as follows:

1. (1) This act may be called the Madras age of Marriage Act.  
 (2) It extends to the territories for the time being administered by the Governor in council of Fort St George and its Dependencies.
2. This Act shall come into force on such date as may be specified by the Local Government in a modification published in the Fort St George Gazette.
3. (1) No boy who has not completed his sixteenth year and no girl who has not Completed her tenth year can be married.  
 (2) But marriages performed in contraventions of the age limits prescribed above Shall nevertheless be valid as regards civil rights.
4. In cases of marriages performed in transgression of the age limit laid down above, the Parents or guardians of the bride and bridegroom and, where the bride or bridegroom is A major, such major shall be liable to criminal prosecution.  
 Provided that no such prosecution shall be instituted without the previous sanction of The Local Government, and before notice to show cause against such prosecution has Been issued to the party's concerned.
5. In cases of bonafide disputes on the question of the age of the contracting parties, the District Magistrate, under the orders of the Local Government, shall summon five Jurors from the list of jurors in force for the time being in the court of sessions and Obtain their verdict. Such verdict shall be final, and binding on the Local Government.
6. Offences under this Act shall be triable by Magistrates of the First Class, and are Punishable with fine
7. Rules for carrying out the provisions of this Act shall be framed by the Local Government, and after publication in the Fort St George Gazette shall have the force of Law.

Sd. P. Ratnasabhapatil pillai  
 28<sup>th</sup> January 1898.





### **Statement of Objects and Reasons:**

The object of this Bill is to fix a limit for the marriageable age of boys and girls in this presidency. The subject of infant marriages has been before the public for upwards of two decades. It has formed the subject of sympathetic controversies all over India social reform associations are to be found in important centres of the empire, and journals denied to the cause have been working side by side. The intelligent public opinion has been long ago awakened to the evils of the existing marriage systems. The consequences of child marriages are disastrous. The evils are of a manifold character affecting the social, moral, intellectual and physical well-being of society. Child marriages are the greatest curse of the country. As morality among infants is larger, the system results in increasing quantities of the widow population, and among Hindus parents deplore widowhood with all its attendant misery. There is no misfortune which the Hindu parents deplore so much as the widow hood of a young daughter in their household. The physical defects or moral taints among children may be imperceptible. They may grow with age, and 'the husband may become fit for the grave when the wife becomes fit for home'. The practice leads to the deterioration of the race. The boy becomes the father and the girl becomes the mother very often when they are scarcely sixteen and thirteen and they grow old and decrepit almost in youth. the state has to face a grave economic problem in the shape of over – population steeped in poverty.

Some idea may be formed of the extent of the misery caused by the practice of infant marriage. When it is remembered that, in the presidency out of 5 females 1 is widow; where as in England, there is 1 widow in 13 females. This high percentage in our midst is very largely brought about by child marriages. According to the census of 1881, the number of widows under 10 years of age in the Madras presidency was about 5,600. the percentage of child widows is largest among the Brahman community among whom infant marriages are largely practiced.

The following extracts from the Madras census report are very suggestive:- "This gives us roughly an estimate of the age at which the Brahman girls married. Some are married before, for 7 years of age, nearly all are married before 10. the figures suggest that between 6 and 7 is the average age of marriage for females among Brahmans. This has the natural result of a high percentage of widows, and we find that nearly one – third of the Brahman women are widows'.

"There are proportionately fifty per cent more widows among Brahmans than among other castes, and thus surplus may be wholly attributed to the greater extent to which infant marriages occur among Brahmans than is the case with other castes. Certainly one – third probably a larger proportion of the number of Brahman widows are widows owing to their custom, that is to say if Brahmans countenanced infant marriage only to the extent that other castes do, there would be nearly 60,000 fewer figures show that there are 80,000 widows under 20, and the foregoing remarks suggest that the Brahman custom is responsible for three- fourths of these".



Komatis and high cast vellalas among Hindus have followed the example of the Brahmans in practicing infant marriages. The practice is not confined to Hindus. It obtains among Muhammadans and even parsees.

The present measure does not seek to effect any violent change opposed to the time – honoured instincts of the Hindus. It only seeks to discard the puranic period, which have been still further corrupted by mercenary motives on the part of parents with recent times.

Sd. P. Ratnasabhapati.

23<sup>rd</sup> January 1898.

### **The Madras Infant Marriage Prevention Act Introduced by C. Jambulingam Mudaliar**

Draft Bill:

An Act to prevent infant marriages in the Presidency of Madras.

*It is expedient to prevent infant marriages in the presidency of Madras, it is here by enacted as follows:*

1. This Act shall be called the 'Madras Infant Marriage Prevention Act'
2. (a) It shall extend to the whole of the presidency of Madras, and shall apply to marriages among Hindus only. Provided that the local Government may be notification exempt any district or part of a district, or any class or classes of people from the operation of this Act for such time as it may deem fit, and may in like manner alter or cancel such notification.  
(b) It shall come into operation at the expiration of six months from the date of publication.

Section 2, Mysore Infant Marriages  
Prevention regulation X of 1894

Section 3, Mysore Infant Marriages  
Prevention regulation X of 1894

3. For the purpose of this Act 'Infant Girl'  
means a girl who has not completed 8  
Years of age.

4. any person who causes the marriage of an  
infant girl or who knowingly aids and abets  
Such a marriage within the meaning of the

Indian Penal code. and any man who, having Completed eighteen years of age, marries an infant girl shall be punished with simple Imprisonment for a term which may extend to Rs. 500 or both.

5. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in the last preceding, section, the marriage of a girl, who has completed her sixth year, may be performed, provided that the sanction



of the District Court, having jurisdiction in the place when the girl and her guardians are resident or if they are resident within the limits of the city of Madras, the sanction of one of the judges of Her Majesty's High Court of Judicature at Madras, has been previously obtained.

(2) Such sanction may be granted by the said court or judge, after due enquiry only if the following conditions are satisfied.

- (a) The absence of a proper guardian to attend to the comforts of the girl and administer her property, or the serious illness or expected death of the father or mother of the girl.
  - (b) And also the immediate prospect of getting a suitable husband in a respectable family. In dealing with an application under this section, health, character and other particulars of the proposed husband, and may prescribe a time within which, if it approves and sanctions the proposed marriage it shall be performed.
6. (1) The Court competent to take cognizance of, and to try an offence under this act shall be that of a District magistrate or the chief presidency Magistrate. Section 2, Act X of 1891  
new section 561, of the  
Criminal Procedure code.
- (2) And if a District Magistrate or the Chief presidency Magistrate deems it necessary to direct any investigation by a police officer of a rank below that of a police inspector shall be employed either to make or to take part in the investigation.
7. No Court shall take cognizance of an offence under this act after the lapse of two years from the date of marriage.
8. No marriage which has actually taken place, shall be deemed to be invalid on the ground of the penalties provided by this Act.

(Section 7, Mysore Regulations X of 1894)

9. Every village headman or other Revenue Officer and every police officer shall forthwith communicate to the nearest police station, which is nearer the performance of, or the intention, or the preparation to perform an infant marriage punishable under this Act, and such Magistrate or officer in-charge of the police station, shall without delay submit the said information with a report there on to the District Magistrate.

(Section 45, Cr. PC Act X of 1882)

Sd. C. Jambulingam Mudalir.



## APPENDIX-VIII

(ఆంధ్రజ్యోతి, దినపత్రిక 21.12.1977)

కట్నాల నిషేధ చట్టంవల్ల పోలీసులకు లాభం

కట్నాల నిషేధ చట్టం వచ్చినందువల్ల ఉత్తర ప్రదేశ్ లో కట్నాలు తీసుకోవడం ఇంకా ఎక్కువయింది. ప్రస్తుతం కట్నంతో బాటుగా పోలీసులకు కూడా కొంత తప్పనిసరిగా ముట్టచెప్పవలసి వస్తున్నది. ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ జైల్ల ఇన్ స్పెక్టర్ శ్రీ టి.యస్.రావు ఈ విషయాన్ని నిన్న ఇక్కడ చెప్పారు. అదే విధంగా గుజరాత్ లో బాల్య వివాహ నిషేధం వల్ల పోలీసు బాగుపడుతున్నారని ఆయన చెప్పారు. బిడ్డపుట్టకముందే పెళ్లి నిర్ణయాలు జరుగుతున్నాయని కూడా ఆయన అన్నారు.

(ఆంధ్రజ్యోతి దినపత్రిక సంపుటి 18 సంచిక - 282 విజయవాడ ఏప్రిల్ 26-1978 - బుధవారం 5వ పేజి)

వాయల్పాడులో కోదండరామస్వామి ఉత్సవాల్లో సంఘర్షణలు

144వ సెక్షన్ విధింపు  
("ఆంధ్రజ్యోతి" విలేఖరి)

మదనపల్లి, ఏప్రిల్ 25 - గత సోమవారం రాత్రి వాయల్పాడు వద్ద దేవదాసీల నృత్యాలతో కోదండ రామస్వామి రథోత్సవం జరిపారు. ఆ విధంగా దేవదాసీలను ఉపయోగించడం చట్ట విరుద్ధమని ఒక పార్టీకి చెందిన ప్రజలు ఫిర్యాదు చేశారు.

అనంతరం సబ్ కలెక్టర్ కుమార్ జానకీ కృష్ణమూర్తి జోక్యం చేసుకుని పోలీస్ బందోబస్తుతో ఊరేగింపు జరపవలసిందిగా ఆదేశించారు.

ఆ మరునాడు వారు ఉలు తిరునాళ ఉత్సవానికి ఆటంకం కలిగించడానికి ప్రయత్నించగా పోలీసులు 144వ సెక్షన్ విధించారు.

దేవాలయం ధర్మకర్త ఇంటివద్ద రెండు చిన్న చేతిబాంబులు ఉంచినట్టు, ఒక గడ్డివామును తగలబెట్టినట్టు కూడా తెలియవచ్చింది. మదనపల్లి నుంచి ఫైర్ ఇంజను వచ్చి మంటలను అదుపులోకి తెచ్చాయి. 144వ సెక్షన్ ఇప్పటికీ అమలులో ఉన్నట్లు తెలుస్తోంది.

ఈ సంఘటనలకు గత ఎన్నికల సమయంలో ఏర్పడిన రాజకీయ విభేదాలు కారణం.



("ఈనాడు" 15-2-1979 గురువారం మొదటి పేజీలో వార్త)

### ఎనిమిదేళ్ళ అమ్మాయికి అయిదు రోజుల పెళ్లి!

నరసరావు పేట, ఫిబ్రవరి 14: న్యాయశాస్త్రంలో నిష్ణాతుడయిన ఒక న్యాయవాది మూఢాచారాల ప్రభావం వల్ల చట్టాలను సైతం కాలదన్ని ఊహకూడా తెలియని పసికందులకు వివాహం జరిపించిన ఉదంతం ఒకటి తెలియవచ్చింది. స్థానిక న్యాయవాది శ్రీ లంకా రామనాథం ఈ నెల 7వ తేదీన తన మనుమరాలు చిరంజీవి రాజ్యలక్ష్మికి తెనాలి వాస్తవ్యులు శ్రీ భాగవతుల ఆంజనేయశాస్త్రి కుమారుడు చిరంజీవి విద్యారణ్యశాస్త్రికి ఆర్థధర్మశాస్త్ర ప్రకారం అయిదు రోజుల వివాహం ఘనంగా తన స్వగృహంలో జరిపించారు. కానీ ఈ వివాహ విషయం గోప్యంగా ఉంచడానికి చేసిన ప్రయత్నాలు విఫలం అయ్యాయి. ఈ వివాహ విశిష్టత వధూవరుల ఇద్దరి వయస్సు కలిపినా 20 సంవత్సరాలు నిండకపోవడం. చి|| వల్ల రాజ్యలక్ష్మికి స్థానిక పెనుగొండ భ్రమరాంబా బాలికా పాఠశాలలో నాల్గవ తరగతి చదువుతోంది. వయస్సు కేవలం 8 సంవత్సరాలు కాగా వరుడు చి|| విద్యారణ్యశాస్త్రికి 12 సంవత్సరములు మాత్రమే. ఇటీవల జరిగిన పార్లమెంటు సమావేశంలో వివాహ వయస్సు పెంచుతూ చట్టాలను సవరించారు. చట్టాలను ఉల్లంఘించిన వారిని కఠినంగా శిక్షిస్తామని పేర్కొన్నా, అంతర్ జాతీయ బాలల సంవత్సరం జరుగుతున్న ఈ సమయంలో ఈలాంటి బాల్య వివాహం జరగడం శోచనీయం. అందుకే పెద్దల ఛాందస మూఢాచారాల బలిపీఠంపై పసుపు వస్త్రాలతో కూర్చున్న ఆ పసికూనలను చూసిన అనేక మంది విజ్ఞుల హృదయాలు భగ్గుమన్నాయి. అమ్మతో ఏదో మారాం చేస్తూ పెండ్లి పీటల పైనే విలపించిన ఆ పసికందు రాజ్యలక్ష్మిని ఎలాగయితేనేమి అనేకులు ఆశ్రునయనాలతో ఆశీర్వదించారు. అక్షింతలు విసిరారు.

వివాహ చట్టాలకు వ్యతిరేకంగా 5 రోజులు ఈ వివాహం జరిగినా పోలీసులకు ఈ విషయం తెలియకపోవడం విడ్డూరంగానే ఉంది. పట్టణంలో ఎవరూ ఈ విషయంమై తెలియజేయకపోవడం ఫిర్యాదు చేయకపోవడం వల్లనే మేము ఏమీ చేయలేక పోయామని పోలీసులు తమను తాము సమర్థించుకున్నారు. ఈ వివాహానికి తరాలుగా తరగని వరుని అస్తి కారణమని ఇక్కడ భావిస్తున్నారు.

