

19 April 1998



Sahitya Akademi

# meet the author

Su. Samuthiram





Being garlanded at the Sahitya Akademi Award function.

*" If the art of writing turns into a business, no good writer will emerge in our society. Writing is not meant for entertainment only. It should have definite social objectives".*

*Su. Samuthiram*

**B**orn in Thippanampatti, a remote village in the Southern part of Tamil Nadu, in an agricultural family, Su. Samuthiram started writing at the age of thirty three and his first short story 'Angoru Kalyanam Engoru Galatta', (Wedding is there, turmoil is here) was published in the popular Tamil weekly **Anandavikatan** in the year 1974. During his college days he had been in the Editorial Boards of two national weeklies - Desiya Muzhakkam and Iyakkia India. He has also published various poems and socio-political articles.

His contribution to Tamil literature consists of 15 novels, 8 novellettes, 16 short story collections, one play on Leo

Tolstoy and one collection of essays. His writings are noted for humanity and for social consciousness. Influenced by Premchand, Tolstoy, Pudumaipithan and Vindhan, Su. Samuthiram writes about social issues with rare understanding and a sense of commitment. He sees writing as a means of providing the common man with the voice that the real world often subdues.

He received the Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel **Veril Pazhutha Pala** ( Jack Fruit at the root) in the year 1990. This Award winning book, comprises two short novels which reflect his empathy with the weak and display his courage to speak up for the silenced. For its powerful use of language and compassionate understanding of human compulsions, this book stands out as a remarkable contribution to Indian Literature in Tamil. The Hindi version of this has already been brought out by Sahitya Akademi.

**Oru Kottukku Veliye** ( Beyond a line, 1977) brings out the class factor and caste factor in any caste and he advocates the unification of the proletarian people in all the castes. A play on the basis of this novel had been broadcast in all the major languages by All India Radio. This is also being translated in all the major Indian languages by NBT.

**Chottrupattalam** (They came to eat, 1977) narrates the



Receiving Aditanar Award

ultimate victory of a young woman who revolted against the injustice inflicted on her through a wedlock.

**Illandhorum Idhayangal** (Heart in every home, 1983) portrays the treatment meted out to a social and lovable house-wife when she developed leprosy symptoms. At the end she was visualised as a rebel.

'Life is a continuous struggle. As a partner in that struggle, a writer has greater role to play. There is a difference between a mere observer and an active 'partner'. As a partner, the writer can view the happenings with the intense feeling. The writer should take society as his central theme, experiences as his friend, analyse the problems scientifically and present it in the form of a novel or short story. Instead of observing the society through his own self he should see himself through society'. Opines Su. Samuthiram.

**Velichchathai Nokki** (Towards Light, 1989) illustrates an youngster with compulsive neurosis. **Oorukkul Oru Puratchi** (A Revolution in a Village, 1980) deals with the tardy implementation of our Five year plans leading to social tensions on class lines. **Valarppu Magal** (Adopted Daughter, 1980) pictures the problem of an adopted daughter. **Nizhal Mugangal** (Shadow Faces, 1991) deals with a deaf and dumb orphan boy adopted by the Railway employees in the running trains. **Thazampoo** (Kewra, 1992) describes a city - slum lumban girl who had faced problems only after her reformation. **Moottam** (Fuming, 1996) is a novel dealing with the mad incidents in a village after the demolition of Baber Masjid, depicting the reality that there is no problem between the proletarian people belonging to Hindu and Muslim communities.

**Vaadamalli** (A kind of flower without fragrance, 1994) serialised in the prestigious Tamil weekly, **Anandavikatan** sketches, for the first time, sympathetically with the origin and problems of Eunuch. This may be the first attempt in Indian literature prompting the readers to view the third dimension of human beings namely Eunuch with love and affection.

**Paalaipura** (Pigeon in a desert, 1998) pictures the dreadful disease AIDS. It narrates the trails and tribulations of a young educated and dynamic girl of a village who had been pushed into an matrimonial alliance with a HIV infected boy. In the course of its narration, it deals with drug addiction, Homo-sexualism and the role of NGOs in either way.

Leo Tolstoy - play (1987) depicts the fag end life of Leo Tolstoy without fictitious information. This has been staged at the Soviet Cultural Academy, Chennai.

**The Story of my Stories** (Collection of Essays, 1996) narrates the background and experience of short stories written by the author at different times.

Several of his books have been prescribed for degree and post - graduate courses in many Universities. He is associated with several literary and social organisations.

Su. Samuthiram has also published several short stories in **Semmalar** and **Tamarai** two important progressive monthlies.

Su. Samuthiram was in the Indian Information Service for nearly three decades and retired very recently. He lives in Chennai.

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1. **Kuttram Paarkkil,**  
Manivasagar Pathippagam,  
1979, pp -161
2. **Poyyai Puthukkanavai,**  
Gangai Puthaga Nilayam  
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3. **Evatha Kanaigal** - New  
Century Book House,  
1990, pp - 200



With his wife Kokila

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## A CHRONOLOGY

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1941 Born in Thippanampatti.  
Graduated in Economics at  
Sir Theagaraya College,  
Chennai.

Worked as Headmaster,  
Cooperative Inspector,  
Panchayat Officer and  
finally entered into Indian  
Information Service,  
Ministry of Information and  
Broadcasting, Govt. of  
India.

1966 Worked as Sub-Editor,  
Tamil News Unit, AIR,  
Delhi.

1968 Marriage with Kokila.

1974 First short story published  
in **Anandavikatan**; another  
story published in the  
popular Tamil weekly

**Kumudham** in the same  
week.

1976 Ilakkiya Chinthanai Award

1981 Assistant Editor, **Yojana**  
(Tamil)

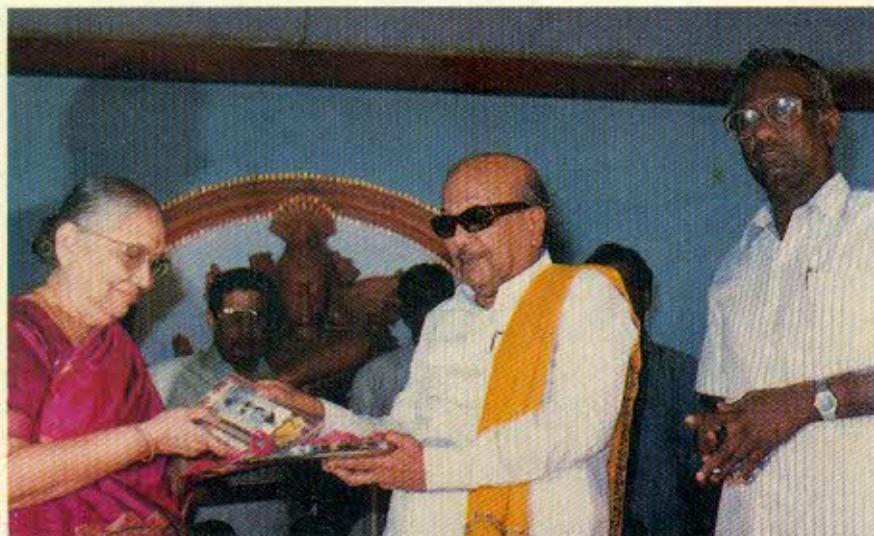
1982 Tamil Nadu State Govt.  
Award for short story  
collections and novel.

1990 Sahitya Akademi Award  
for **Veril Pazhutha Pala**.

1993 Honoured by Christian  
Literature Society, Tamil  
Nadu Progressive Writers  
Association & Tamil Nadu  
Ilakkiya Peru Manram.

1994 Adityanar Award for  
**Vadamalli**

1998 Retired from Government  
Service.



The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu releasing 3 books of Su. Samuthiram.  
Received by Smt. A. V. M. Rajeswari.