

29 November 2014

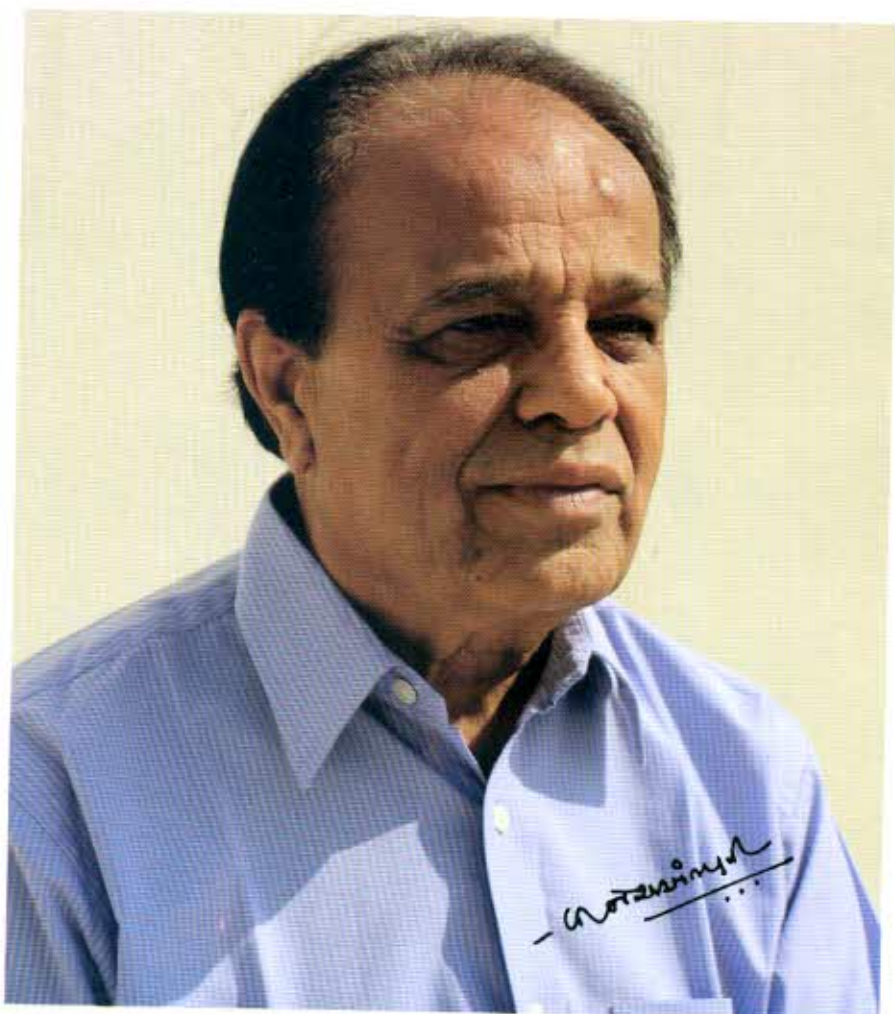


Sahitya Akademi

invites you to

meet the author

Vinesh Antani



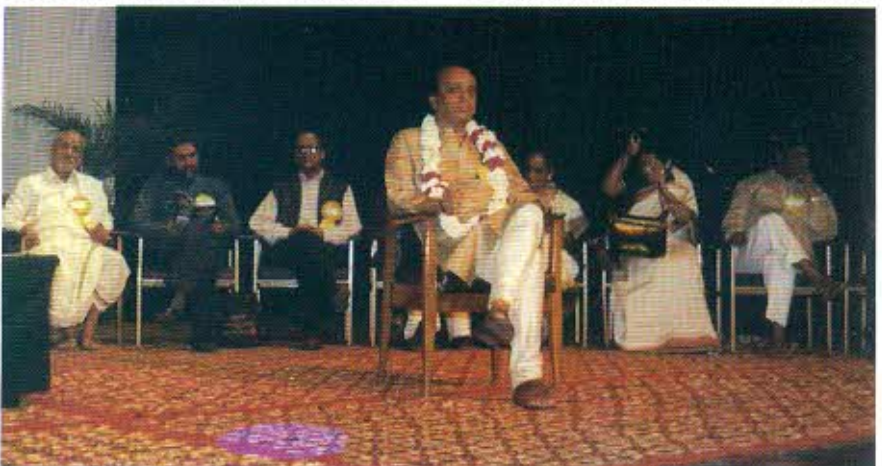
Vinesh Antani is one of the outstanding writers of Gujarati literature. He has evolved his identity as a modern fiction writer without breaking away from the traditional art of storytelling. His versatile genius has been kaleidoscopic. His literary muse finds manifestations with equal ease and excellence in various forms of prose writing. His uniqueness has won him unbounded love and respect from a common reader to the literary genius.

In near future, Vinesh Antani will be completing the seventh decade of his life's journey extended from his birth place Kutch to various places in India and beyond. Parallel to this temporal journey of his life flowed a perennial creative brook from his awakened conscience assuming various literary forms such as 24 novels, six short story collections, 10 essay collections and three translations. His three novels are translated in Hindi and Oriya languages. This sumptuous contribution gives a happy account of the pilgrimage of his inner journey. He sums up his creative journey saying "as if a gypsy within me has been singing songs of love, suffering and loneliness."

Vinesh was born to Dinkerray and Bachuben at Durgarpur (Mandvi) in Kutch. He completed his primary and secondary schooling in Nakhatrana,

did his M.A. at Lalan College, Bhuj and became a lecturer in Gujarati at Commerce College, Bhuj for five years. In 1975 he joined All India Radio as Programme Executive and served the organization in different capacities. After twenty years of government job, he opted voluntary retirement from the post of Station Director, AIR, Chandigarh. He explored the field of journalism by joining *India Today* (Gujarati) as Senior Copy Editor. Since 1998 he has been devoting his time to creative writing. In 1969 he married Pushpa Antani, Programme Announcer, All India Radio and a children story writer. They together undertook the fulfilled journey of married life and creative activities.

Vinesh Antani's childhood experiences of rural festivals, healthy and closely knitted sense of relationship among the rural folks, aimless wandering into the vastness of the land, sandy rivers, empty wells, wild smell of flowers – cattle – desert wind – sporadic rains helped him develop unique sensibility for future writings. The grief of the death of a close sibling felt at adolescence has given birth to lifelong sense of missing and has exerted profound influence upon his sensitive disposition. An incessant voice of struggle towards the attainment of satiety of some insatiate longing, deep void and solitude lying in the innermost self of the writer, is



At Sahitya Akademi Award Presentation Ceremony



Receiving Sahitya Akademi Award

constantly resounded and reflected in his creations. The dry and barren land of Kutch, deprived of regular rains, has been at the core of his creative sensibility and has played a vital role in moulding his concept towards life and writings.

Beginning with poetry, Vinesh Antani switched over to short stories, novels and later to literary essays. He deals with innermost layers of human relationships. He explores the deepest pain and agony in his writings through poetic language, compensating for the poet hidden within him. The visualization of different locals and their interpretation to the mood of the themes and inner self of the characters is the most important feature of his fiction. This is visible all through his short stories, novels and essays.

His short stories deal with different shades of relationship, love, loneliness, old age sensitivity, happiness of being together, agony of separation, feminine emotions, solitude, deprivation and more. He handles various themes with subtle compactness and compels the reader to read between the lines. He carefully structures the story to achieve a single effect.

The publication of his fourth novel entitled *Priyajan – The Beloved* – in

1980 instantly made him the favourite writer of Gujarati household. In his outstanding novel *Kafalo* he has symbolically captured the futility of human existence and endeavour to overcome it. His love for his native Kutch, inspired him to adapt prominent Gujarati writer Jayant Khatri's unique short story "Dhaad" into a novel of the same title. Vinesh mostly deals with the urban life and its characters. His deep understanding of human psychology and relationship has given his fans many memorable situations and characters. His novel *Soorajni Par Dariyo* drills deeper and deeper the agony of a lonely wife who has become nothing but a piece of furniture to her materialistic husband.

Vinesh Antani's literary journey is destined and shaped by his experiences and the travelling he underwent while serving in All India Radio. He had to be constantly on the move changing cities and houses. In one of his essays entitled "Chhaveesh Ghar Ane Hun" he has captured the gypsy like experiences of living in twenty six different houses so far. He went to Chandigarh to head the AIR station and was confined by strict security arrangements. Prior to his posting as Director, the previous incumbent was killed by the Punjab terrorists only because he was heading an important media organization. Such



Playing Dhol at his elder son's marriage



Receiving Munshi Award



Receiving Dhanji Kanji Award

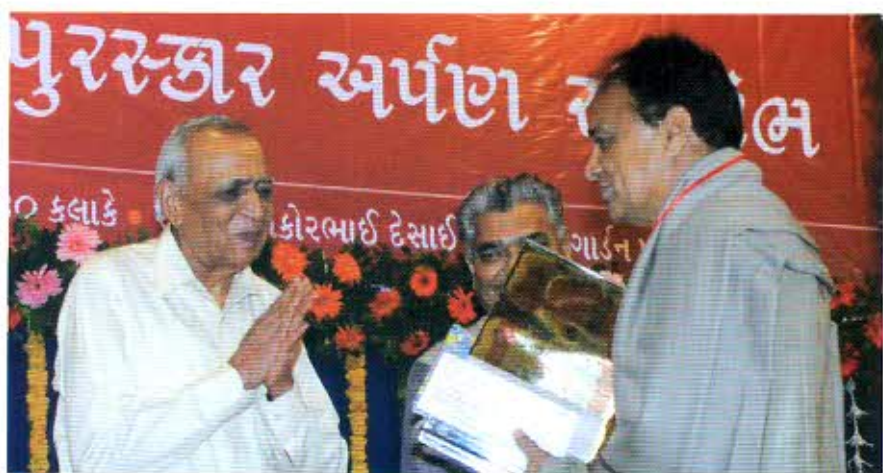
an experience of confinement and solitude gave a new dimension to his creative skill. He did not succumb to outer threats and inner loneliness.

He converted this unique situation to his creative best. He travelled to various places in Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and kept on writing. In the preface of his essay collection *Dhumadani Jem* written during Chandigarh stay, he says: "I had not only to survive in such a horrible situation, but also grow as a human being and a writer as well. I decided to make my empty and deserted hours fruitful. And in this process of survival, my creativity helped me a lot." Yes, it did. It turned out to be an achievement, when the novel *Dhoondhbhari Kheen*, depicting the conscious effort of a female character understanding and learning a lot from the Punjab situation, received the Sahitya Akademi Award for the year 2000. It is noteworthy that Vinesh has utilized all his travelling and moving experiences into creative

outcomes. He went to the UK and wrote a novel *Sarovar*, he visited Dalhousie and wrote a novel *Ahin Sudhinun Aakash*, he went to Goa and created a novel *Sooraj ni Paar Dariyo*.

The interest in writing essays developed while he was staying alone in Mumbai. He says: "I was surrounded by the vast sea of people outside and was all alone within. Mumbai is a city where every minute something is happening. Lost in the crowd, creative soliloquies were bubbling inside me and without my knowledge I was drawn to writing essays for the first time in my life." If it was an act of expressing oneself under compulsion, the embarkation on the new form has also added feather to his writing. Like his stories and novels, his essays are sensuous, lyrical and multidimensional. His skills as fiction writer are visible in his essays too.

The creative genius of Vinesh Antani has been felicitated widely by numerous awards and prizes. Every



Honoured with Gaurav Purashkar

time he gets a new award, he keeps reminding himself of the responsibilities he carries on his shoulders. He calls his creative efforts a bridge between the author and the reader. He thinks that it is a journey from one human soul to another. The affinity between Vinesh Antani's works and his readers is soothing and seems to be everlasting. And to him it is the best award a writer can ever win.

The conclusion that emerges from the whole creative pilgrimage of Vinesh Antani has been expressed by himself with reference to his classic novel *Priyjan*. He says: "every feeling, every pain and every relationship is complete in its own way."



Speaking at an Authors Meet at Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi

A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Novels

<i>Nagarvasi</i>	1976
<i>Ekantdiveep</i>	1977
<i>Palashvan</i>	1979
<i>Priyjan</i>	1980
<i>Aasopalav</i>	1980
<i>Beejun Koi Nathi</i>	1983
<i>Anurav</i>	1984
<i>Soorajni Par Dariyo</i>	1985
<i>Jeevanlal Kathamala</i>	1986
<i>Fans</i>	1987
<i>Kafalo</i>	1988
<i>Sarpadansh</i>	1989
<i>Nirvansh</i>	1990
<i>Patalgadhi</i>	1992
<i>Luptanad</i>	1993
<i>Dhoondhbharee Kheen</i>	1996
<i>Ahin Sudhinun Aaakash</i>	1996
<i>Anfargat</i>	2002
<i>Sarovar</i>	2003
<i>Dhaad</i>	2003
<i>Ame Ajanyan</i>	2006
<i>Beeje Kyank</i>	2010
<i>Jeendagi Aaakhi</i>	(In Press)

Short Story Collections

<i>Holarav</i>	1983
<i>Ranzanvun</i>	1989
<i>Ahi Koi Rahetun Nathi</i>	2001
<i>Sadabahar Vartao</i>	2002
<i>Tana Khbar Nathi, Niru</i>	2008
<i>Pachha Valavun</i>	2012

Essay Collections

<i>Potpotano Varsad</i>	1992
<i>Dhumadani Jem</i>	2000
<i>Atmani Nadine Kantihe</i>	2000
<i>Tyan Marun Ghar hatun</i>	2007
<i>Doobaki</i>	2007
<i>Marjeevo</i>	2009
<i>Koik Smeet</i>	2010
<i>Sugandh Ane Smrutti</i>	2011
<i>Sath Secondnun Ajavalun</i>	2013
<i>Soneri Bund</i>	2014

Compilations

<i>Gujarati Navlika Chayan:</i> 1994 & 1995	1996
2005ni Shreshth Vartao	2006
<i>Gamvato - Essays by</i> Manilal Patel	2013

Translated Work

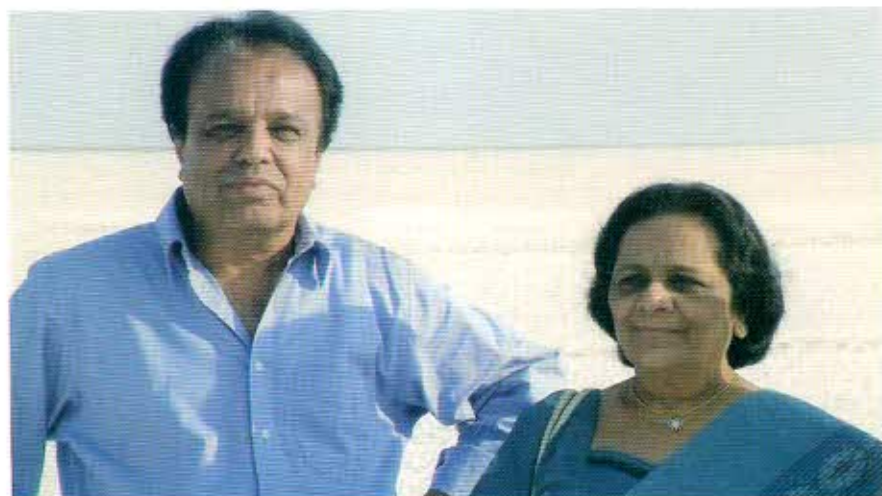
<i>Nagarvasi</i> in Hindi	1982
<i>Kafalo</i> in Hindi	1994
<i>Dhundhbahri Vaadi</i> in Hindi	2003
<i>Dhumrabha Upatyakain Uriya</i> in Oriya	2005

Translations

<i>Eak Chitharun Sukh</i> (Nirmal Verma)	1997
<i>Kagado Ane Chutakaro</i> (Nirmal Verma)	2003
<i>Love Story</i> (Erick Segal)	2010

A CHRONOLOGY

- 1946 was born at Navavaas (Durgapur), Kutch.
- 1963 left the village Nakhatrana (Kutch); Completed Secondary Education
- 1969 Completed M. A. with Gujarati Literature
Marries Pushpa Mehta
- 1970 Joins as a Lecturer, J. B. Thakker Commerce College, Bhuj
- 1975 Joins All India Radio: Bhuj as Programme Executive
Second novel *Ekanidveep* receives prize by the Gujarat Government
- 1976 First novel *Nagarvasi* receives prize by the Gujarat Government
- 1979 Novel *Palashvan* receives award by Gujarat Sahitya Academy
- 1980 Two novels *Priyajan* and *Aasopulav* awarded best novels of the year by Gujarat Sahitya Academy
- 1982 Leaves Kutch
- 1983 First short story collection *Holarav* published.
- 1988 Becomes Assistant Station Director, All India Radio, Mumbai
'Govaradhanram Tripathi Award' for the novel *Kafalo*: the best novel of the year.
- 1992 First essay collection *Popotano Varsaad* published
- 1993 Takes over as Station Director, All India Radio, Chandigarh
- 1995 Voluntary retirement from government service, joins *India Today* (Gujarati) news magazine
- 1997 Receives Jayant Khatri Award
- 1998 Retires from active employment activities
- 1999 Visits U.K. and Switzerland, etc.
Kanaiyalal Munshi Gold Medal for overall contribution to Gujarati Literature by Gujarat Sahitya Academy
- 2000 Sahitya Akademi Award for the novel *Dhoondhbhari Kheen*
- 2001 Dhumketu Award for the short story collection *Ahin Koi Rahetun Nathi*
- 2009 "Darshak Award" for overall contribution to Gujarati Novel
- 2011 'Gaurav Purashkar' by Gujarat Sahitya Academy
- 2013 "Nandshankar Award" for the novel *Ame Ajanyan* by Narmad Sahitya Sabha, Surat



With wife Pushpa at the white Rann of Kutch