

GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE, RAVULAPALEM

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Pre Reading Activity

- 1. What are social evils?
- 2. Are there any social evils which existed but eradicated?
- 3. What are the existing social evils?
- 4. How can we remove them?
- 5. Have a Group Discussion on any one social evil existing in India and discuss ways and means to remove it.

Social Evils: Meaning less practices which ruin the social and scientific development of the society. Some social evils related to women

- No Education for Girls
- Domestic Violence
- Female Infanticide
- Prostitution
- Dowry

Some Social Reformers

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy.
- Swami Vivekananda.
- Swami Dayananda Saraswati.
- Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar.
- Jyotiba Phule.
- Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar.
- Baba Amte.
- Vinoba Bhave.
- Kandukuri Veeresalingam Panthulu
- Raghupathi Venkatratnam Naidu
- Gurajada Apparao



About the Playwright

- Famous Telugu Playwright, Dramatist, Poet and Writer
- Born on 21 September 1862 at Vizianagaram
- Kanyasulkam – considered the greatest play in Telugu Literature
- His Titles: KAVISEKHARA, ABHYUDAYA KAVITHA PITHAMAHUDU
- Famous Works by Apparaogaru
 - *Kanyasulkam*
 - *Sarangadhara*
 - *Mutyala Saralu*
 - *Poornamma*
- In 1910, Rao has scripted the widely known Telugu Patriotic song **Desamunu Preminchumanna**

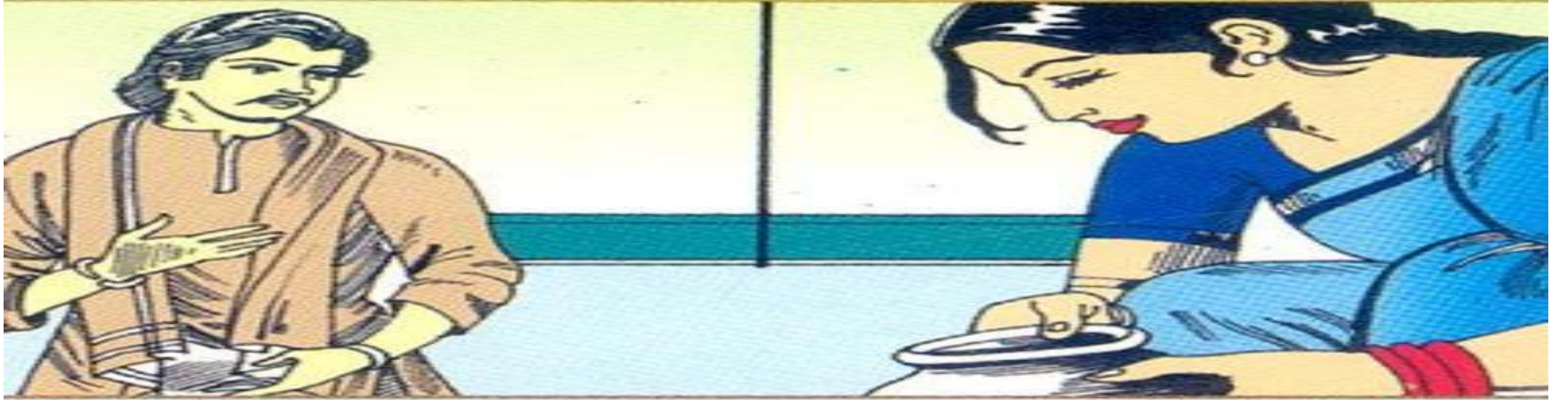
Famous lines

- దేశమును ప్రేమించుమన్నా
మంచి అన్నది పెంచుమన్నా
వట్టి మాటలు కట్టిపెట్టోయ్
గట్టి మేల్ తలపెట్టవోయ్ !
- సొంత లాభం కొంత మానుకు
పొరుగువాడికి తోడు పడవోయ్
దేశమంటే మట్టికాదోయి
దేశమంటే మనుషులోయ్ !

KANYASULKAM



కన్యాశుల్కం



Kanyasulkam

- It was written in 1892
- *Kanyasulkam* is the first original drama to be written in the Telugu spoken dialect.
- It is also the first Telugu drama with a social theme, and it is by far the best drama in Telugu literature so far.
- It is one of the earliest modern works in an Indian Language
- The play portrays the practice of *Kanya-sulkam* (roughly translates to *bride price*) which was common among the priestly Brahmins in Telugu-speaking areas of southern India.
- The Social problems which were in vogue when the play was written are obsolete today.

Some of the evils of the then society

- Widow Remarriages
- Abolition of the practice of taking bride money
- Opposition of the early marriages
- Abhorrence of the ideas of “keeping” prostitutes

OBJECTIVE

- To raise awareness among people about the social evils of the day
- Traditionally Telugu plays were written in a highly stylistic language which can be understood only by the educated people.
- Gurajada's aim was to reach out the masses
- He wrote in colourful spoken language of the day

SETTING

- The play is set in the Vizianagaram, the princely state in British India.
- The play centers on Girisam, an English educated, resourceful but unscrupulous Vaidiki Brahmin man, and Madhuravani, a prostitute who takes her morals seriously.

Characters in the play

- **AGNIHOTHRAVADHANULU:** A resident of Krishnarayapuram agraharam
- **VENKAMMA :** Agnihotravadhanulu's wife
- **VENKATESAM :** Agnihotravadhanulu's son
- **BUTCHAMMA :** Agnihotravadhanulu's elder daughter, a child widow
- **SUBBAMMA :** Agnihotravadhanulu's younger daughter
- **KARATAKA SASTRULU :** Agnihotravadhanulu's brother-in-law
- **MAHESAM :** Karatakasastrulu's Student
- **LUBDHAVADHANULU:** A resident of Ramachandrapuram Agraharam
- **MEENAKSHI :** His daughter, a widow
- **RAMAPPANTHULU :** A village administrator
- **GIRISAM :** Lubdhavadhanulu's cousin, Venkatesam's tutor
- **MADHURAVANI :** A saani (dancinng girl/prostitute)

PLOT

- Agnihothravadhanulu , an orthodox Brahmin, determines to give his second daughter, Subbi, aged about 8 years, in marriage to Lubdahvadhani, a rich miser of 65 years for a kanyasulkam of Rs.1800
- He did the same to his elder Butchamma who became a widow at a very young age.
- Venkamma (Agnihothravadhanulu's wife) objects to this marriage.
- She entreats her brother Karatakasastri to stop this marriage.

- Lubdhavadhani was reluctant to marry.
- Ramappanthulu, the diplomat of the village, persuades him to marry. He predicts that Lubdhavadhanulu's life would be miserable if he doesn't marry.
- Karatakasastry tries to dissuade Agnihothravadhanulu.
- He resorts to subterfuge (deceit in order to achieve one's goal)
- Karatakasastry disguises himself as Guntur Sastri and he dresses his disciple Mahesam as his daughter and approaches Ramappa Panthulu to marry his daughter for Rs.1200/- only to Lubdhavadhanulu instead of Subbi. Ramappa Panthulu is to get half of the sum for his services.
- He takes the help of Madhuravani (Ramappa Panthulu's keep) to prevail upon Ramappa Panthulu.
- Ramappa Panthulu forges a letter as from Agnihothravadhanulu refusing Lubdhavadhani's alliance, and settles the second match.

- In the absence of Ramappa Panthulu, Guntur Sastri gets Lubdhavadhani married to his daughter (Mahesam)
- Ramappa Panthulu finds himself cheated.
- He throws out the suggestion that the girl must have been a widow, secretly married away a second time.
- Lubdhavadhani gets nightmares as if the former husband of his newly-wedded wife was strangling him to death.

- Ramappa Panthulu has borrowed a jewel from Madhuravani and lent it to the bride (Mahesam) for the marriage.
- Mahesam returns the jewel to his Madhuravani.
- But Madhuravani insists on Ramappa Panthulu to bring the jewel back.
- Lubdhavadhanulu finds that his newly wedded wife has disappeared.
- Ramappa Panthulu charges Lubdhavadhanulu with the murder of that girl and the theft of jewel.

- Meanwhile, Agnihothravadhanulu, in total ignorance of what has happened, turns up for marriage.
- He finds out that the bridegroom (Lubdhavadhanulu) is already married.
- Ramappa Panthulu induces him to finance the case he was launching against Lubdhavadhani for the murder of the girl.
- Girisam fancies himself in love with Butchamma and decides to marry her
- He elopes with Butchamma on way to the marriage.

- Agnihothravadhani finds that his first daughter- Butchamma has eloped with Girisam, his son's tutor.
- Agnihothravadhani files a complaint against Girisam.
- The case is withdrawn owing to insufficient details about Girisam and Butchamma.
- Lubdhavadhanulu, ashamed of his mistake, falls at the feet of Saujanya Rao, an extremely good and virtuous lawyer.
- Meanwhile, Karatakasastri requests Madhuravani to return money and jewel to Lubdhavadhani to rescue him from criminal case.
- Madhuravani goes to Saujanya Rao in male attire. After winning his confidence, she reveals herself and the whole hoax of the marriage.

- Saujanya Rao calls Madhuravani a good woman and advises her to give up prostitution.
- She assures him she will.
- Saujanya Rao requests her to tell about Girisam.
- She tells him that she was once the mistress of Girisam.
- Girisam tries to persuade Saujanya Rao that he has turned over a new life.
- Saujanya Rao doesn't believe Girisam.
- He sends Butchamma to the widow's home in Poona.
- He advises Girisam to pursue higher education seriously.

ACT-1

- Location: A small hill in Vijayanagaram
- Actors : Girisam and Venkatesam
- Action begins with Girisam

Act I Scene: 1

- The play begins with the entry of the character of Girisam
- He is a typical social reformer of the spurious kind- a social reformer because social reform is the fashion!
- His capacity for brilliant conversation is his strength.
- He stays in the house of Pootakoolamma, a widow.
- He has many debts to clear
- The character of venkatesam, son of Agnihotravadhani, is also introduced in this scene.

Act I opens with the dialogue of Girisam

- Venkatesam fails in his exam.
- To escape from debts and debtors, Girisam plans to flee to Venkatesam's place to teach him.
- The conversation between Girisam and Venkatesam amuses us.

ACT I SCENE II

- Ramappanthulu and Madhuravani enter the stage
- The meetings of Girisam, Ramappanthulu and Madhuravani offer a comic effect when Pootakoollamma comes in search of Girisam for taking some money from Madhuravani and consequently attacks Ramappanthulu with the broomstick.
- During the quarrel, both Girisham and Ramappanthulu hide under the bed of Madhuravani.

Act II, Scene I

- This scene opens in the house of Agnihothravadhanulu at Krishnarayapuram village.
- The characters of Agnihothravadhanulu, Venkamma, Karataka Sastrulu and Butchamma are introduced.

Location 2 : Temple

- Here we have a delightful discussion between Karatakasastrulu and his disciple Mahesam.

Location: 3 The street in front of Agnihothravadhanulu's house

- Conversation between Girisam and Venkatesam