

Uma Varatharajan's Unorthodox novel

Written by By K S SIVAKUMARAN

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[Uma Varatharajan](#) is an avant-garde writer in Tamil hailing from the East living in Kalmunai, now in retirement from being the Senior Manager of Singer in that area. He writes at leisure and an aesthete at heart with a natural bent towards humour and a slight mischievousness in sarcasm. There are more than 250 creative writers – poets, dramatists, short story writers and novelists - in Tamil in this country. Among them a few writers write differently meaning writing fiction not confining them exclusively to write about 'progressive' themes such as social and political problems concerning caste and class differences, and the ethnic imbroglio. But in the writing of a handful of writers psychological and human condition takes primacy. Among the latter group of writers are Uma Varatharajan, A Saanthan, Somapala Ranjakumar, K Saddanathan, Kokila Mahendran and a few others who began writing such fiction in the 1970s. One distinguishable quality in their writing was that they paid equal attention to the craft of the medium. This I found a miss in other social realism stories written by veteran writers though who were faithful in concentrating on the content than the structure and were rather careless about the form.

Uma Varatharajan's father was from Karaikudi in Tamilnadu and mother from Kalmunai. This accounts for his handling the language in various ways that 'makes it new' as Ezra Pound said. Varatharajan writes short stories, poetry, and criticism. He is also knowledgeable in Tamil Cinema and a columnist writing film criticism. Currently he presents on the Eye channel a series of audio-visual program on Tamil film music of yester year with clippings and critical comments on the situations that necessitated in the picturization of the lyrics, music and singing. I enjoy this program "Aliyaatha Kolangal" (Indelible Patterns) very much. Varatharajan had also edited quality little magazines like "Vyukam" for instance. He has earlier brought about a collection of his short stories under the title "Yull Mana Yaathrai" (A Journey of Inner Searching) His stories have been published in Sinhala, German and English.

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