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A woman of substance

K. DAMODAR RAO

T. Vinoda juggles many roles — a teacher, a writer, and a scholar.



Strong spirit Prof. T Vinoda.

Prof. T. Vinoda is known for her indefatigable will, and unflinching spirit. A multi-faceted personality, Vinoda is a conscientious teacher adored by her students, a noted scholar-critic-researcher held in esteem by her peers, an excellent short-story writer with a feel for detail. Besides, she is a caring person and a fine human being always sharing others' joys and sorrows, and offering maternal touch of warmth and affection.

In her work Vinoda is a stickler for discipline and a perfectionist. She served the Department of English, Kakatiya University, Warangal, for more than 30 years — as lecturer from 1973 to 1984, as reader from 1984 to 1993, and as professor from 1993 to 2006. She served as chairperson, board of studies in English for two years. She has seven books and more than 50 articles to her credit. Her scholarly writings are insightful, original and bold. The areas of her interest and research are varied in nature and scope — ELT, American literature, Indian English fiction, women's studies, literature and films, and translation studies. Her articles are frequently cited by scholars in the area.

All through her career, Vinoda fought against many odds, not the least being her physical disability, the debilitating rheumatoid arthritis. With unshaken spirit and unbounded dynamism she relentlessly pursued teaching and research. Lesser mortals would have crumbled in a similar situation. She always said that teaching sustained her like nothing else and hence, she pursued it with an extraordinary passion. The pedagogies for the poor and the backward students could be best seen in her work as the Academic Associate of the Language Cell of the Department. She designed syllabus for the teaching of the written and spoken English to the socially disadvantaged students coming from backward classes. She advocated teaching of English in Indian situation through Advertising English, a topic close to her heart.

Her innovative work is eminently borne out by the several seminars she helped organise — seminars that will be remembered for her signature style of excellence. Along with Prof. Shiv Kumar, her husband and an equally distinguished scholar, she not only conceptualised International Seminar on Indian Literatures and Films in 1992 — a landmark in the history of the Dept and the University — but also produced a souvenir with a fairly comprehensive domain bibliography and a questionnaire of issues in the area, the kind of work only an imaginative and diligent scholar can do. The proceedings of the films seminar were subsequently brought out, with her help, in the form of the book, ***Double Vision: Literature and Films***. This work was followed up with two more seminars — one on translation studies in 1999 which she helped organise with Prof. V. Gopal Reddy.

And in 2005 she had steered the eminently successful organisation of the seminar on Expatriate Indian Writing in English and had put the Department on the world map by bringing out a 3-volume book on the subject with articles by scholars from across the US, Europe and India. These volumes are valued for their reference for a long time to come. Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her.