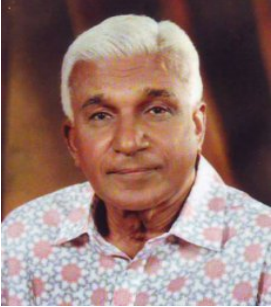


Madduvil Gnanakumaran's poems

Written by K S Sivakumaran

Sunday, 27 November 2011 20:39 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 November 2011 20:44



Madduvil is a place in the Yaalpaanam (Jaffna) peninsula in the North. A youngster from this area has been writing poems in Tamil for more than 10 years but many had had no opportunity to read them because he had not brought them in book form. However two books have been already published in recent time. This is the third one. This collection is called "Siraku Mulaiththa Theeyaaka..." (Like Fire with a Wing). This poet named Gnanakumaran was away in Germany for a long period of time and has come back to his motherland having qualified in the German language and presently teaches that tongue. He also interests himself in making short films. He has contacts with some of the writers in Tamilnadu. In the collection mentioned there are a number of poems with a few illustrations. Some of the poems are his attempts to write poetry, while a few others underline humanism as his motif. With his present maturity he could shine as a notable poet with a strong sense of a vision and philosophy.

This columnist chose to attempt a translation of five of his poems he liked over the others.

Here are a few that you may find as examples of the type of poetry written in Tamil in this country:

01. Arunthu Viluntha Kaneer Maalai (The Garland of Tears Snatched Down)

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One Day in the Four Weeks
Of the Month of Mach
When the February Snow
Breathes out
The Hot White Sand
Wets the legs and feet
Old Memories smart
Like hot hot Sun

I remain like one
Who lost his ear-rings
In the temple festival
Of the Goddess

If it's an object
It maybe found

This was the cluster of tears
That my Grandma shed
Eighteen years ago
Same thoughts
Even years had lapsed
Like falling firebrand
Piercing the sky
Fire within me
Enraptures

Then children of my age
Had in their hands
Balloons that looked like
Colourful grapes

I like to have a doll
Say me, let's go with

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Grams, she says
Resisting I insisted
Searched her purse
Confirming its emptiness
A tear drop fell on my hand
And fell on the sand

No more my Grandma
And yet I'm searching
Only the tear drop
She gushed out

02. Ellame Sollik Kondana (They all said)

The world says that
Our Houses are all safety

Surrounding the houses are
Barbed wires and
Full of sand bags
Landmines are planted
Near the fences preventing
Humans or beasts entry

In such a security area
There are no tiles above or walls
In our houses except the
Foundation engulfed with bushes and shrubs
And yet every medium announced
That our houses are safe in the
High Security Zone.

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03. Pasumaip Puratchi (The Green Revolution)

The village is frozen
With green garb and iron helmets
Bombs and cells here and there
Hang around like toys planted
In all nook and corner
It's this that the world claims
Green Revolution.

04. Iruthayath Thanalkal (Embers in Heart) - Two Poems

They say Murugan
Is a Tamil God
But the chanting is in
Sanskrit

*

Even the parrot too
Told a lie
To satisfy the hunger of
The Soothsayer

*

A poem with legs
Oh! Oh! It's a baby

*

Baby will cry in hunger
But the milk pored on the deity

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Falls on the ground

05. Vali Kaadi Illayaa? (Don't we have a Guide?)

Under the street lamps
Studied an American President
The father of a Russian Head
Had been a cobbler
From a fishing village
Sent a spaceship Kalaam
Don't we have someone
Among us going up the tower
From heap of garbage?

They're hiding or refuting
The path they came from
'cause their honour
Would be damaged.

Madduvil Gnanakumaran's poems speak of pain that confronts his community and the displacement of a once reckoned race, of poverty, of hypocrisy among his own people, of motherly love and false values.

One could suggest to him to be a little more concise in his expressions and bringing in more of his experiences in foreign climes that might have been more interesting to local readers.

He has a poetic mind and an 'inner eye' but he is merely satisfied with simply narrating things but with occasional satire.

He could write better if he could lay his hands on reading better poetry written by Lankan poets in Thamil. One could not blame him for this lacking as he has returned after a long stay in the west where access to reading such material was none.

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However one should congratulate him for his sincerity in rendering into words of what he felt as important to him.

The book is published by Gayathri Publication in Dehiwela (Phone: 011-2727621)

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