

POEMS TRANSLATED FROM TELUGU BY T. S. CHANDRA MOULI

THAT SILENCE ONLY!

---Dr. C. Narayana Reddy.

To pierce frozen silence
sound services never solicited...
single shaft of a smile is sufficient,
that's all!

To exult in the shaft's caress
folded silence swells.

Activating a syllable in quietude
it ambles across wind's enclosure,
voice in deep sleep
waking up sluggishly, smoothly
stretches in corporeality.

That ecstasy
resonates rising to a fathom.

That's the most delicious moment
when silence transmutes into a symphony!

For that moment alone
I await all the time!

THOSE THAT ENTWINE!

---K. SivaReddy

The arms that entwine you are not reptiles---people only;
once entwined last lifelong ,
not one or two, crores and crores
those that entwine you are not shackles for you
indeed, affinities only---so as to enable you to soar higher
providing energy ,life sustaining fuel--
arms that entwine are like burning furnaces;
you are not allowed to freeze--nor sleep---nor turn into a corpse--
not seen explicitly ---but like the all pervasive
body odour ---or like perfume
reach the nostrils of conscience.

As though armless man is not useful for any thing---
as though entire human progress relies on arms alone---
here when these lips of arms kiss you
germinating like a seed you start living,
flow rhythmically---melting, molten tear swollen eyes
land on earth for a new birth---fly like a fighter plane.

With out arms what is man? A branchless withered tree---
if there are no arms entwining the self
is it a body, but a basket of dung ?

If a few thousand arms embrace the self
it becomes a river---the heart throb of the sea;

an ever green field of crops---a great sugarcane;
a bow it becomes---a colourful rain bow---
a bounteous beautiful bosom!

WOOD THAT VANISHED

--Saleem

Once upon a time, a wood was there--
dense, dark it was,
inaccessible to crows or ambulating ants—
Virginity unsullied
by pests and parasites,
once vile viper man defiles it
every forest turns into a blazing *khandava*!
Forest on fire is
a fuming furnace now!
As man, the magician
twirls the wand,
thick vegetation vanishes at once!
Horrrifying narrow new-fangled forests
of concrete pierce the crust.
Once *Bhetala* hanging from the tree branch
shifts to *Vikramarka*'s shoulder,
right away disappears the tree!
To wear your weariness
let me narrate

tales of felled trees—
Tell me, where does exist
a vestige of sap rich sapling?
Knowing the answer
if you do not respond
your head will split into thousand pieces.
Despite spanning seven seas
the parrot in the hollow of a tree
is a homeless orphan now.
Bhetala surrenders to *Vikramarka*.
Falling trees ,
heaps of corpses—
testimonial for massacre of masses!
Kaikeyi can no longer send her dear son
to tread the path of forest—
Only when forests are there
life in a forest possible.
Once I worshipped the lord
with tender blossoms,
if a flower is seen
I prostrate now!

[Translated By T.S.Chandra Mouli]

LAND

--Devipriya

Now
living here...
took birth at some place,
in electric crematorium
turn to ashes some where else---

What is history of a place
what is value of a land

Which place is
exclusive to historic figures?
How many epics can you write
on exploits of heroic men...

How is seven feet land comprehensive
for the one who swam across seven seas...?

Which place is a stake for the one
who sees self attributes
in every human being
that wanders in this wide world!

FLUID FEET

----Sikhamani.

Yes

if only one can move about
evidence of life in you or me.

In this country
all rivers
flow into eyes of women.

Entire bush fire
enters labourers' entrails.

Jungles too surge
with waves of movements.

Here--

water gushes
fire too surges,
except man.

River of cities
heaves with waves of feet.
Every where pairs of feet
walking along , wrapping like a vine.

Blossms of vision bloom not
on their eyes of branches .

Smiles dance not
on lips of tender shoots.
Even the issuing 'heart' fruit,

a blasted fruit--
never ripens .
Mother earth's tenderness
as known to the tree
is unknown to even water.
As the earth turns fallow
a tree withers with sympathy.
If it enters into a banter
with fecund feelings ,
touched turns green all along
with fruit and flowers.
A tree knows sky's spirit.
As frolicsome drops of rain descend
with swaying heads of twigs
it shares ecstasy.
If the same sky trundles
cowering in fear
embraces earth
like a child sliding into mother's lap.
A tree knows pulse of wafting breeze.
Extending fragrance
to the breeze that calls on,
providing palliative to the worldly worries
posts it as a Prophet.
Galore of feet here---
Dynamic feet of the new born in hospitals,
cold feet sans mobility in cemetery.
Feet of a farm hand

though paired with progressing crop
yield not rewards in return.
Feet of a labourer
though entrenched in a factory as a machine
reach not a mouth as a ball of rice.
In a land proclaiming
honour of a lady
even today
there are feet with clinking anklets
struggling for a square meal on dirty, dusty roads.
Come, let's worship these feet!
They too should move gracefully!
But, the original objective of this run
goals to be identified .
Distance covered has to be recorded,
destination certainly has to be decided.
Otherwise—
in an upheaval
feet turn into mere rolling rocks.
If one forges ahead
then only survival---
for you or me!

EVOLUTION

---Renuka Ayola.

Gliding like a white cloud, a tiny seed
lands on lap gently,
surviving in moist soil.
Soil kissed seed holds an offer.

In the voyage amidst
ebb and tide, twister, typhoon
if one can love the community ,
if one can move and get moved ,
carrying conflicts and concerns---
if the one steeped in strife and spite ,
if the one robbing liberty for liberation,
gets respite under a greenwood tree !

Image in water ---
Compassion, mercy, clemency.
Immutable beauty in every image
ripening as ripples
moves with waves to blend and fade.

Seed from folded fist
dances down.
Evolution of
evergreen woodlands of human harmony!

7. WOMAN OF NEW ERA

--- Edluri Vijaya Kumari

It is said
lying low lends grace
tolerance an ornament
Anasuya, Savitri, Sita
icons for all women
Quoting 'Manu', unquestioned
men handcuffed women
imposed slavery
confining to home and hearth,
invaluable service.
He enjoys life like a king
loading her with ever increasing labour,
a restless machine, sacrificial lamb...
demonic domination!
Tolerance no longer an ornament my younger sister...
Cast away that jewel,
initiating efforts for rights
unlike a scared rabbit, lunge like a lioness
grasp power on your own
proving your supremacy
not confined to home and hearth alone
unleash authority like 'Adishakti'!

Bio

Dr T. S. Chandra Mouli is an academic. He was a Visiting Fellow in Nagaland University (2005). He is a Fellow of Royal Asiatic Society, England and Ireland. His translations of Telugu poetry and fiction are extensively published. His publications include 2 books of poetry in English, 1 Telugu play translated into English (A University assignment) and 18 anthologies of literary criticism. Two more books are in press. He completed translation assignments for institutions of higher learning. An executive member of AESI [Association for English Studies in India], he lives in Hyderabad (India).