

POETRY

P C K Prem

Of This Time

Word is a sacred asset
on the crowded mall,
near the church ancient
of peanuts and grams roasted,
in warm winters,
as monkey on feet
extend frowning hands at visitors,
colliding with lusty glances
in passions cold,
when the white man refused,
to see a soul,
in bodies brown.

It was a non-existing wedge
between cultures,
of people denying man to live
in prayers with no wish,
to think of statues erected
on crowded crossings.

Of This Moment

A hymn a crowd sings turns into posers,
many scorpions,
and temples surge with natives
thump noisy whispers,
and it is a patchwork
of moans, prayers and grimaces,
ironic oblique looks
while disciples of monkeys' god

prowl around munching grams,
to enact a historic scene,
in a theatre of absurd gaieties.

Of This Obscurity

Meanings transmitted make out
lethal phantoms,
for a few moments more men, women
and children close eyes,
and construct scenes,
of joyous gnomes
as if landing from the blue
on the spacious lawn,
before many vermilion painted
tall stony figures,
and form grisly rainbows
with multi-layered torsos,
spitting fire.

Of This Prayer

Aromatic and lightly sour bouquet,
spatter around as if
a whole beauty of earthly breast,
and the world
not imagined,
opens before the eyes
and the praying forms,
oblige smiles on the lips
that listen to mantras and chants.
Tingles of bells incessantly charm
blissfully it drives silly pack,
to a smoggy coma.
There the beauty of a woman
unlocks ecstasy,
to find a vacant grave
when a firm string prolongs,
to exhaust fortitude
of a hungry pit.

Of This Priest

In saffron with patches snaky
observes beauties of curves,
and mumbles amorous words none hears

in solemn shades of temples.
 This *pundit* nurses many love scenes
 with the damsels,
 and next moment
 looks at the huge statue of god
 and sighs, groans and yet sings
 rhymes of glory,
 with watery mouth.

Of This Secret

A mast of hymns bursts out,
 the great laughter of liking for body
 as gods look on a new prayer
 composed for another,
 shadowy daytime to dole out
 gods bequest
 after people pour whispers
 at bathed feet,
 the wily priest with dozens of religions
 and sermons,
 in extracts showers soft touches
 on fair ladies,
 with detached looks at others.

Of This Pillar

A legend of a blind king
 crushes an iron sculpture
 and black is born to warn an arc idol,
 the golden awning, the granite floor
 and the chandeliers with huge
 brass bells,
 where the naked feet
 the covered head and the burning flames,
 remind mortals,
 of a bloodstained field
 that appear red.
 This is all I view around
 and forget the ancient man,
 on the death bed.
 As I am engaged with a *pundit*
 to strike a bargain,
 philosophy assaults the head
 with blows and it bleeds,
 and I run away as wicked feelings fill
 an empty brain.

Of This Vision

Closed eyes put up images
of bloated bellies,
half smiling lips and truths in plenty
to create illusions.
An idea emerges
to fill up space in time.
Guilt speaks out without prompting
and I feel crushed.
Fierce little words invade
and I analyze vainly.
A cauldron burns energies
of stirrings of gods,
while searing heat burns and re-burns,
as the body refuses to agree
where tragedy occurs.
Still I derive pleasure
from the closed eyes.

Of This Feeling

Of hindsight, a man is just confused
hungry and thirsty.
Suffocates and yet feels relaxed
at another time.
Lips murmur a secret prayer
as eyes observe,
and eat up beauty around.
Awful experience wanders inside
with witches gory.
I wonder what I do
in the abode of god
crying for identity.
Muttering hymns in delight
of fervent fable,
I cry why I close eyes.

Of This Stage

Of ancient sin, I try to materialize
a logogrph to baffle,
as I revisit *Mahabharata*
and get relieved,
when I see *Bhisma*
that sin is not new,
and penance is primordial.

I am probably a newly born saint
of an old age in times new.
It is a classic tale of lie
and pretence in a warrior in fears
survives in an era of deception.

Of temples filled with crowds
ungodly,
sponsored by the state mostly
to capture booths and ballots,
in an age of dons in religions
and cons in politics.
And I watch
the priest standing alone
singing love songs of yore.
I laugh with the song
and walk out in disgust,
to weave another story
of sins in the shrines of gods.

About the Poet

A former academic, poet, short story writer, novelist, book reviewer, critic besides a staunch yoga practitioner K.V. Raghupathi (1957) holds a PhD in English Literature and has published twelve poetry collections, two short story collections, two novels, eight critical/edited books besides five books on Yoga and numerous stimulating and thought-provoking articles in various international journals, both online and print. His poetry collections include, *Desert Blooms* (1987), *Echoes Silent* (1988), *The Images of a Growing Dying City* (1989), *Small Reflections* (2000), *Voice of the Valley* (2003, 2014), *Wisdom of the Peepal Tree* (2003, 2014), *Samarpana* (2006), *Orphan and Other Poems* (2010), *Dispersed Symphonies* (2010), *Between Me and the Babe* (2015), *On and Beyond the Surface* (2018), and *The Mountain is Calling...* (2019); two novels: *The Invalid* (2014) and *The Disappointed* (2015); two short story collections: *The Untouchable Piglet* (2017) and *A Gay and a Straight Woman* (2018). His poetry is rooted in the abundance of philosophy, nature, transcendentalism, imagery and social perspectives, and is replete with similes, metaphors, personifications, apostrophes, irony, climax, anti-climax and full of rhetoric and symbols. More often he takes the readers on the spiritual exploration of radical philosophical thoughts which strongly speak throughout all the collections. He is a recipient of several awards for his creativity at the national level that include Michael Madhusudan Dutt Award (Kolkata, 2000), H. D. Thoreau Writing Fellowship (Mysore, 2001), Best Chosen Poet for 2003 (Mumbai, 2003), Lifetime Achievement Award in Poetry (Chennai Poetry Circle, 2010), Rock Pebbles National Award for Creativity (Bhubaneswar, 2014), King Phrasal Arbind Chowdhury Award for Poetry (Parbhani, 2018), and a Citation of Brightest Honour, International Sufi Centre (2020) besides Lifetime Achievement Award in Yoga and Best Yogic Publication Award (Bengaluru, 2018). He lives at Tirupati, AP. Email: drkvraghupathi@gmail.com