

Akkitham Achyuthan Nambudiri (1926) won recognition as a poet of note with his narrative piece "Irupatham Noottantinte Ithihasama". Among his other notable works are "Bali Darsanam" and "Nimisha Kshetram" the poet won Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 1971 and Central Sahitya Akademi Award in 1973.

(i) UGLY ERA

This poem presents the Devil Darika in rampage. Mother goddess Durga is there. She looks for her sword. Unless man loves virtue how can she find her sword and destroy the devils?

Oh! Is it Darika, the Time meets
With two bloody hands outstretched
Down the street?
Wield he the hatchet in the right hand
And his own head in the left
His fettered legs crawling
In the scammed side-walks.
Smelling the sweating rags of darkness
Pursuing piercing realities
With wry nose on their pallid paper faces
Numbed multitudes awful and depressed:
Below, Kali sobs at the head of Dharma
Sleepless, and not knowing
The unstrung stars
Dropping from her neck.
"Where is my sword!"?
Oh! the human soul. I who discern
Thy delusion in the heart of a tiny ant

That leans against her glowing instep
Am swimming in the flood of sweat
Oh! the universe, dozing
On the shoulder of bigotry,
Clinging with claw of instinct
To the Isle raised through chants
From your unknown sacrifices,
Let Heaven be dawns,
That alone is my salvation

(ii) FIRE DRILL

In the poem the poet compares himself to the wooden device 'Arani'. It is churned by the Lord. The pressure is hard upon the device. Yet it does not produce the fire to start sacrificial ritual. What has come over to this device, that symbolises the modern?

Standing on my ground
Turning round and round
I'm – in the scorching heat;
Burnt are my head and feet.
The play louts thou hast dropped
And churned me long non-stop
Presses that divine hands on shell;
Not a single sparkle still.
Breaks the day, hasn't thou put

Fibre under my foot?
Ashtamirohini - all celebrate
Oh my Dharma I rotate
Without a holy dip;
I want to weep.
But tears are dried up
Not that I am a chunk of wood
The set aside the bridle rein
And held the arrow; on the shell
Enow isn't pressing me hard enough

(iii)CHITRA GUPTA

It is a difficult to draw the line between good and evil. Yudhishtira was condemned to spend a few seconds in hell, Duryodhanan was privileged to spend a few seconds in heaven. Both of them opted to spend their allotted time in hell first. This situation is puzzling but thought provoking.

Who there? Oh yudhishtira?
None like you
With boundless virtues
Entered this upper world
Hiterto; My fingers ache
Thumbing through pages.
Hence, pass on to the Heaven first
The accounts of sins

Oh! very little
A sixteenth part of day only
At the end of your term in heaven
Need to be considered
Still persisting?
Yes, the door to Hell I shall open.
But oh! even Dhuryodhana,
Entitled to live in heaven
For a sixteenth part of day
Wanted it earlier
Oh! the great soul, is a tearful smile
You may reply

(iv) CONTINENCE

This is a romantic poem with a difference. It has realistic touches. The poet was in love; and wished to hold his beloved close to his heart. Yet he controlled himself which only intensified his love for his beloved.

Like a saint on an hill
In those days I stayed
As the fragrant resplendence of your courtship
Effulged all around me.
Did you touch me now and then

With your rose petal tenderness?

Was I covered with a

Soft, Silken, horripilation?

The giggling of bangles

From your arms, twisted

Across the table- cloth

Like nectar dripping in my ears

Startled in a flash

I saw the birth-mark on your ankle;

Eager to press it to my heart

I gasped

Caught under the lactic surf

Like my poor mind

A fly was crawling

A smile flickered on your lips,

'Did you see'?

Release it.

I cried out.

As you talked critically

Of a novel recently released

The twilight stood outside

Overhearing it.

Lights went off suddenly

Wearied out, I sat.

Fearing I may touch you
If I move my hands.
Oh, my love,
Am I caught under the spell of your eyes
For years and years
Like a monkey on a charmer's string?
Alas you leave today
Without unleashing me;
But remember always
I 'm your well-wisher.