

B.A. Third Year

Discuss R.K. Ramanujan is a great

INTRODUCTION: Ramanujan is one of the leading Indo- Anglican poets. He is a born poet who has given a new direction to Indian poetry in English. He composes poems in Kannada and English with equal command and mastery. His real greatness lies in his unsurpassable ability to translate his experience. His status as a poet can be compared with that of Nissim Ezekiel and Kamala Das.

INTEREST IN THE FAMILY: Family is the central theme in Ramanujan's poetry. According to a critic, the family is one of the central metaphors with which he thinks. In 'Of Mothers Among Other Things' the poet recalls his mother's youth, middle age and old age. 'Obituary' relates to his father who had left debts and daughters and a bed- wetting grandson behind him. 'Love Poem For a Wife I' deals with poet's relationship with his wife. In 'Small-Scale Reflections On A Great House' the poet recalls his ancestral house and some of his relatives. In 'History' he exposes the greed in the family. Thus Ramanujan shows his strong interest in family.

HINDU HERITAGE: Hindu heritage is an important theme in Ramanujan's poetry. In 'Conventions of Despair' the poet categorically points out that he can't get rid of his Hindu consciousness. Here there is a conflict between the claims of western culture and those of the Hindu heritage of Ramanujan. He says: I must seek and will find My particular hell in my Hindu mind.

In 'Small- Scale Reflections On A Great House' the poet deals with the great observing power of his Hindu faith. At the same time he highlights the superstitions of the Hindus. Of course, the poet does not accept his Hindu heritage blindly. He is equally alive to both the strengths and the deficiencies of his racial ethos.

HISTORICAL SENSIBILITY: Ramanujan shows historical sensibility in his poetry. He is interested in his family and in the history of his country also. He reveals his inborn affinity with India. This country has always been alive in his consciousness. He explores India's common heritage of myth and tradition. His interest in his country's history is powerfully projected in several poems. In fact, Ramanujan seeks his identity neither in America nor in the immediate present but in the mythical and literary past.

PSYCHOLOGICAL REALISM: Ramanujan's poetry is characterised by psychological realism. This quality is visible in poems as 'Ecology', 'Love Poem For A Wife I', 'Self Portrait' and 'Conventions Of Despair'. In 'Self- Portrait' the persona has lost his identity and he speaks of his helpless position in this respect. In many of his poems the poet recalls his mother, father, wife, children, relatives and his ancestral house. Thus self plays a significant role in Ramanujan's poetry.

LOVE POEMS: Ramanujan has composed some love poems also. They deserve attention. 'Love poem For A Wife I', 'Still Life' and ' Looking For A Cousin On A Swing' are some of them. These poems are remarkable for their deep emotion and their treatment of love.

CRAFTSMANSHIP: Ramanujan is a great craftsman. So far as his poetic technique is concerned, he towers above most of the Indo- Anglican poets. His verse is tightly constructed and his phrases are original and apt. He uses everyday words. His images are highly suggestive. In this context he is closer to Keats. Irony is also a striking feature of his style. He makes its effective use in almost every poem.

CONCLUSION: Thus A. K. Ramanujan is a very great poet. He will remain matchless in Indo- Anglican poetry. As an artist he is flawless and has achieved perfection. Thus his contribution to Indo- Anglican poetry will always be remembered.

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