Chapter 1

Introduction

The traveler has to knock at every alien door to come to his own, and one has to wander through all the outer worlds to reach the innermost shrine at the end. (Rabindranath Tagore)

A work of art is a form of looking before and after. It originates on the anvil of tears, cheers and fears. It is a looking glass as well as a microscope, for it shows the exterior and the nebulous interior. Yet it does not have any photographic reality or fidelity, for what is conceived or concealed is beyond human review and artistic purview. However, the struggle between intention and extension, as stated by Allan Tate, continues creating tension and where there is tension between what is elusive and palpable, either a thing of beauty is grown or a terrible beauty is born keeping in mind the twin nature of art, delighting and teaching which are perceived from an insider-outsider view. And that necessitates a study on A.K. Ramanujan under the title “The Chiarosuro of Creative Tension: A Study of Select Poems of A.K. Ramanujan”. It is true that there is so much on A.K. Ramanujan. The critical oeuvre is endless. But there is always a scope for fresh insights. The present study is based on this hypothesis, the more we know about a writer, and the more we know
how much we ought to know about him. The light and dark shades of Ramanujan’s poems, which he wrote under creative tension are perennial favourite to many a number of research scholars. Therefore, the researcher has taken up the present study on him to analyse, discover and confirm the emergence of creative tension with reference to his selected poems.

The study includes in the introductory chapter, a general analysis of poetry, the efficacy of Indo-Anglian poetry, its origin, growth and development bearing in mind, all the poets concerned in the Indo-Anglian poetry. It contextualises the selected writer and the primary source for the research.

God created the world by means of words, by divine decree. It was words that brought the world into existence, and it is these words that create our own worlds. For it is by means of words that we apprehend, categorize, think, feel and know our world. We even interpret our most important experiences in terms of the words our culture uses to talk about them. Poetry is expressed through means of words. The word itself is of Greek origin and its etymological meaning is making. Poetry is the oldest of the human arts. It was born in song and dance. Rhythm and rhyme go hand – in hand when it comes to poetry. Though poetry breathes through the language of emotions, it is not devoid of rationality either. The literature on poetry is vast. Most famous poets have written about it. For
Alexander Pope, for example, the essence of it came from what “It was thought but never so well expressed” (Sowerby 20), for Wordsworth it was a matter of the “Overflow of powerful feelings……. Emotions recollected in tranquility” (Newlyn 91), whereas for Shelley, poets were the “unacknowledged legislators of the world.” Coleridge was perhaps the most ambitious in assenting that in writing poetry the human mind imitates the divine mind in a god – like act of creation.” (Barfield 87)

A poem may evolve from real emotions due to transitory conditions peculiar to the poet. The total meaning of a poem consists of thought, feeling attitude and intention. It is revealed through the words and their arrangement. The rhythm produced wields the poem together, and gives it significance beyond any prose rendering. It is only by a close understanding of all the qualities of words, their meaning, sound associations and also of the arrangement of the rhythm that the poem can be understood. Communication is the most important element of poetry.

Poetry is read for aesthetic enjoyment. But pleasure becomes scarcely the right word for the experience it offers to readers. It is true that there is some sort of satisfaction in poetry. It delights our faculties so powerfully and refreshingly that one may feel self-complacent. Pleasure is thus an intrinsic value. Besides this, poetry may have also an ulterior value. It conveys instruction. It softens the passions. It stands for good causes. It brings the poet fame or worth. Poetic worth, as a satisfying
imaginative experience, should be judged entirely from within. The consideration of ulterior ends, whether by the poet in the act of composing or by the reader in the act of experiencing seems to lessen poetic value. It does so because it appears to change the nature of poetry. The nature of poetry is that it is not a part. It is not a copy of the real world. It is a world by itself. It is independent, complete autonomous. And to experience poetry fully one must enter that world, conform to its laws, and ignore the particular conditions which belong to one in the other world of reality. This is the ultimate end of poetry. A poet upholds this view and presents both an imaginary and a realistic view of life thereby predicting lessons for the future.

Personal experience forms the basis of all real literature. We can never detach a writer from his personal experience. Milton’s ‘Areopagitica’ says that a good book is the precious life blood of a master’s spirit. It will have something fresh and original to say. By relying on his experiences, the poet expresses his thoughts in a refreshing manner. Plato states that the foundation of all good and lasting work is the entire sincerity to oneself, to one’s own experience of life, and to truth of things as one sees it. Thus the book gains power from the power of the individuality of the poet. In short, a book is the projection or the mirror image of the writer himself. We can define and recognize a writer from his work of art.
Poetry is an interpretation of life, through imagination and feelings, according to Hudson. Poetry can be considered as the experiences of the poet alone. At the same time, a writer can write best about that which lies before him. The poet may be influenced by all socio-economic and cultural events of his time. All these experiences serve as food for thought. Chaucer’s poetry reflects 14th century not in fragments but as a complete whole. The Elizabethan writers gave immense importance to patriotism, love, intellect and so on. Milton’s poetry expressed the issues of Puritan and Commonwealth period. The Restoration period offered to reasoning rather than romantic fancy, thus can realize the influence of personal and impersonal elements on poets. Poetry is a great force to activate good. Just like Wordsworth, every writer’s motive in writing poetry is ‘to console the afflicted. Poetry adds sunshine to daylight. It makes the happy happier. It teaches the young and the old to see, to think and feel. It intends to make every one more active and secure in being virtuous. It is said therefore that ‘every great poet is a teacher’, for he teaches the virtues and exhibits the vices of the society. The poet’s work is didactic. A poet is expected to please the reader and teach the reader as well. Poetry is considered to be the greatest gift that God had bestowed upon us. Poetry is the creation of the aesthetic meaning of life by means of words which thus both create and express who or what we are. There are no limits as to the subject matter of poetry.
If poetry is a communication of an intellectual emotional experience through the medium of language, the patterns of linguistic behaviour become mandatory whenever we encounter a poem. One such pattern is the manner in which, in any given communication situation, we spontaneously get into the mode of identifying appropriate linguistic, to develop a frame of mind to receive messages in the required register. Literature constitutes a special communicative situation. And while explicating a literary text both the reader and the writer get into an agreement of accepting assumptions, expectations and standards regarding the poetic language which they believe, suits this genre of literature. As regards English poetry written by Indians, one has to bear in mind two controversies. The first one is related to the use of English language by an Indian and the other is related to the question whether a foreign language can be used to express one’s innermost feelings which poetry is supposed to express. English language is still considered as a colonial legacy. And this political overtone has given rise to the first controversy. The second conflict of opinions is derived from the assumption that poetry expresses the deepest emotions of an individual through original and creative use of language and this expression cannot be sincere if the poet uses a second or foreign language. It is clear that any discussion of the Indianness of Indian English poetry involves
aesthetic and linguistic considerations. There are also other cultural and political issues to be resolved.

Language is a necessary medium for cultural transference. Man is able to share his past and look forward to the future through the medium of language. Cultural ethos and communal memory become the language of a particular region. But English language did not evolve from the soil of the land but was imposed upon the Indians by the British colonial masters as a tool for cultural and mental colonization.

It is evident that the culture that Macaulay wished to transfer through English language was quite alien to India. It involved western sensibility and western value system. Indian English poetry has faced criticism precisely for the reason that it not only uses the language of the colonial masters, but also communicates a western sensibility and western traditions.

Creative writing in a foreign language is a challenging adventure, especially, when it comes to making poetry in which the medium and the message merge inseparably, in which the poetic vision redefines semantic values. Whether any good poetry could be produced in English in India, has been a problem engaging the attention of the linguist, the sociologist, the educationist, and the common reader. Despite the controversy, English has come to stay in India as a medium of creative literature in general and of poetry writing in particular exhibiting its own race, miles
and moment. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar has explained this complex relationship in these words:

As regards Indo-Anglian literature, the race is the mixed Indian race, a resultant of Invasions, conquests and occupations extending over a period of four or five thousand years; the “Milieu” the variegated Indian Sub-continent, comprising extremes of every kind, heir to a geography and cultural heritage all its own and the ‘moment’ is a meeting of west and India. (22)

Indo-Anglian poetry therefore has been accepted as a genre. However the Indian poet in English faces certain problems. The mother tongue is usually the most suitable language for a poet to use. But the profession of literature in India has been so linked with the English language in such a manner that it becomes instrumental in shaping the world view of the Indian creative writer. Hence a number of poets in India have chosen to write in this alien medium. And this venture is a testimony to the suitability as a medium of poetic expression. Now Indian verse in English has taken deep roots in the soil.

The origin of Indian verse in English can be traced as far back as the publication in 1828 of “The Fakeer of Jungheero” “A metrical tale” by H.L.V. Derozio (1807 – 1831). He was an Indo – Portuguese who left behind a creditable body of English verse.
Michael Madhusudan Dutt (1824-1873) in his ‘The captive Ladie’, published in 1849, narrates the popular Indian story of Pritivi Raj and Sanjukta. With these poets, Indo – Anglian poetry was born “under a Romantic star.” They were of course the pioneers although they were only imitators.

When poetry came to be written in English in India, it was not certain whether it would assure any significance. However, during the closing years of the nineteenth century, it was assimilated that the various strains of poetic mode established its identity. Nobo Kissen Ghose (1837-1918) who wrote under the pseudonym of Ram Sharma published his ‘Willow Drops’ in 1873-74. Then appeared on the Indo – Anglian literary scene Ramesh Chander Dutt (1848-1909) who published his ‘Lays of Ancient India’ (1894) comprising his rendering of some Indian stories in English verse. In The Ramayana and The Mahabharata (1899) he narrated some stories from the two epics in the metre used by Alfred Lord Tennyson for his “Locksley Hall”. By the publication of the ‘Dutt Family Album’ in 1870 and ‘A Sheaf cleaned in French Fields’ in 1876 by the family of Toru Dutt, the lyrical mode emerged in the world of Indo-Anglian poetry.

In the early stages, Indo -Anglian poetry was highly imitative. It started following the poetic style of Byron and Scott. This was seen in the
verse of Derozio, M. M. Dutt and others. The following lines from the poem “The Harp of India” by Derozio provide a good example:

Why hang’st thou lonely on
you withered bough?
Unstrung for ever, must thou there remain;
Thy music once was sweet-
who hears it now?
Why doth the breeze sigh over thee in vain?
Silence hath bound thee with her fatal chain;
neglected, mute and desolate art thou,
like ruined monument on desert plain;
O! Many a hand more worthy far than mine
once thy harmonious chords to sweetness gave,
and a many a wreath for them did Fame entwine. (Gokak 53)

It could be easily seen that the mode of addressing the harp, unstrung forever and expressions like ‘many a hand’; and personifications like ‘Fame’ are all reminiscent of the style of the British poets, especially that of Walter Scott. Michael Madhusudan Dutt also came under the influence of British poetry. A very good example is his poem “King Porus”, which has its epigraph, a line from Byron: “When shall such hero live again?” If we read this poem, one gets an experience similar to that of reading any of the plays of Walter Scott. The poet’s mind is so steeped
in the linguistic pattern of the British Romantic play of the kind composed by Scott that it can only produce expressions like “on his brow did shine the jeweled regal diadem” and “his milk white elephant was decked with many brilliant gem” (Gokak, 15). With the advent of Toru Dutt (1856-77) one could perceive in Indo Anglian- poety, the poets familiarity with Greek mythology, Christian and Hindu symbolism. She also revealed a rare feeling for words. She also made use of the rhythm of the sonnet form.

Her choice of themes is particularly significant in her second collection of poems entitled. ‘Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan’. She narrated the stories of Savitri, Dhruva, Prahlad, Lakshmana and other well known figures of Indian mythology. She was well – acquainted with Sanskrit and the tradition it nourished, and so also with the folk culture which received its nourishment from Sanskrit. She received ample praise from England. H.A.I Fishes for example declared that she will ever remain “in the great fellowship of English Poets.” (40)

It was in short poems that Toru Dutt could establish intensity by a concentration of her gifts. “Our Casuarina Tree” is a case in point. She recalls vividly the presence of a Casuarina tree which recalls the memory of her brothers and sisters who are no more. She adores the tree. The second stanza focuses on the attributes of a human personality with reference to the poet herself. The poem begins with an objective
description of the tree to the poet’s own impressions of it at different times. The third stanza records the memories of her brothers and sisters. In the forth stanza the tree takes almost a human shape. And the lament of the tree is an echo of actual human sentiments. In the last stanza the poet expresses the hope that the tree would stand a testimony to immortality.

Toru Dutt displays mastery over her subject matter in a sonnet like “The Lotus”. Here, the lotus is presented as something better and more beautiful than the lily and the rose. It is in this poem that she exploits her knowledge of Greek mythology and Christian and Hindu symbolism for poetic effect. “The metaphysical audacity” of the opening lines, “Love came to Flora asking for a flower/That would of flowers be undisputed queen”; and the “Metaphysical wit” which produced flower factions” in “psyche’s Bower” ending in Flora’s final gift of the Lotus, “the queenliest flower that blows’ have been singled out by critics for praise (Narasimhaiah 28-29), Toru Dutt shows a rare feeling for words and a sure grasp in English speech rhythms. Along with this she also expresses an adherence to the Indian tradition.

After discussing Toru Dutt, one is naturally motivated to read Rabindranath Tagore (1961 – 1941). Tagore cannot strictly be called an Indo-Anglian poet, for his English poems are mostly his own renderings into English of the poems originally written in Bengali. The publication in 1912 of the English version of Gitanjali, with an introduction by W.B.
Yeats, established the tradition of the Indian prose – poem in English. The *Gitanjali* songs are mainly poems of bhakti in the great Indian tradition. Moreover, the very style is uniquely Indian. Srinivasa Iyengar states:

> The imagery, the conceits, the basic experience, the longing, the trial, the promise, the realisation all have the quaintly unique Indian flavour and taste (110).

*Gitanjali* denoted a turning point in the history of Indo-Anglian poetry in the sense that much of what has been written after this classic appeared to be more and more basically Indian. Further, encouraged by Tagore’s example, the Indo Anglian poet felt free to handle the English language in his own way. “April” is one of the most significant poems of Tagore poems in which man is presented symbolically as a tree speaking to the universal spirit, in the month of April. The mystical dimension in Tagore’s poetry is quite evident in this poem.

“The Child” (1931) on the other hand is a metaphysical poem which derives its inspiration from the Bible. Tagore composed this poem soon after witnessing a passion play in Berlin. In this poem the philosophical argument becomes poetical through a dramatic presentation. It is a good example of the blending of the Hindu imagination and the Biblical inspiration. The poem is an impressionistic
description of man’s pilgrimage to fulfillment. The poem has a great appeal to humanity in that it is invested with a universal significance.

Manmohan Ghose (1896-1924), a contemporary of Tagore, is typical of the early phase of Indo-Anglian poetry. In his poems the themes are alien, and one of his best known poems “Poplar, Beech and Weeping Willow” (published posthumously in 1926) has for its theme European trees and not those native to Indian soil. It brings “the dainty charms of English landscape and all the technical virtuosity of the Decadent poets” (Gokak, 75). When the poet wants to celebrate city life as opposed to country life, he chooses for his setting not an Indian city but an English city, namely London. “London”, a beautiful lyric, introduces a truly British scene which could be seen in the poems of the British Romantic and Victorian poets. The following lines from “Poplar, Beech and Weeping Willow” are typical of Ghose’s style.

Leaf branches, in their nests set the sweet birds rocking till their happy song breaks out the noon-day ardour mocking. (149)

The poems of Sri.Aurobindo (1872 – 1950) marked another stage in the evolution of Indo-Anglian poetry. According to him, poetry is “the mantra of the real”. “To enquire what is the highest power we demand from poetry; or what may be the nature of poetry; it’s essential law, and
how out of that arises the possibility of its use as the mantra of the Real”
one has to profoundly read Aurobindo’s poems. The discriminative
thought is the essential gift of the philosopher and analytic observation is
the natural ability of the scientists. But according to Aurobindo, vision is
the characteristic power of the poet. In Sri. Aurobindo’s view, the
essential power of the poetic word is to make us see, and all his poems
including the monumental Savitri substantiate this observation.

_Savitri: A legend and a symbol_, published in book form in 1950-51, belonged to the late nineteenth century. It took the poet not less than
fifty years to bring the work into completion. In the final form it consists
of three parts divided into 12 books of 48 cantos and in total there are
24000 lines. In this epic, Sri. Aurobindo invests the Savitri – Satyavan
story in the _Mahabharata_ with a mystical colouring. The poet’s declared
aim in this poem, in the words of K. S. Srinivas Iyengar, is “to articulate
in terms of poetry the promise of the life Divine on earth.” (52) The
flexibility and variety of the style in _Savitri_ have been summed up as
follows.

The style in this epic is flexible and varies according to its
context and theme and ‘Savitri’ is rich in its context and
themes. It can be neoclassical or ‘romantic’, ‘symbolic’ or
‘modernistic’ – There is his narrative or dramatic style
employed when he has to present a character of situation, an
encounter or a debate. His reflective style is of three kinds – the balanced and antithetical style employed when the matter is familiar to the reader, the paradoxical style where he writes at a more intense level or where the thought is subtly metaphysical and the learned style where he is out to capture in precise words the contours of a theme which is likely to be difficult or unfamiliar to the reader. Then there is the expository or analytical style employed while presenting the rare perceptions and levels, introducing the structuring and ordering of the intellect into mystical consciousness. There is also the lyric style rising to a great height of intensity and passion. Lastly there is the allusive style. (Gokak, XXXVI)

The three poems – “Rose of God” (1934), “Thought the Paraclete” (1934) and “A Dream of Surreal Science” (1939) could be taken to be representative of Sri Aurobindo’s output during the pre-independence period. “Rose of God”, is one of the finest mystical poems of Sri Aurobindo. The theme of this poetry is to transfer humanity into divinity. Hence he makes an earnest prayer to change his being into becoming. It is a lyric of ecstatic devotion and exaltation. Devotional in its outer form, it is mystical in its symbolism of colours and metaphysical in its implications “Thought of the Paraclete”, another mystical poem, presents a vision of movement of thought. “A Dream of Surreal Science” is a
different kind of poem. It is a sonnet in which the poet shows the diabolic nature of the triumphs of modern science when they are manipulated by selfish men. It is a devastating attack on the so called achievements of the physical and biological sciences.

Another major poet in the tradition of Indian verse in English is Sarojini Naidu (1879 – 1949). She had spent her impressionable years in England when Decadent poets like Arthur Symons and Ernest Dowson dominated the literary scene in England. Consequently, her poetic style is modeled on the verse of the Decadents. Even though she is accused of having no “organic connection with English as a living language” (William Walsh, 5), she exhibits a great mastery over English verse forms. Her poetry includes a wide range and she reveals her talent in the delineation of the beauty of familiar things. She discloses romantic sensibility whenever she responds to the sights, sounds and colours of nature. The employment of Indian themes gives a new vitality to Sarojini Naidu’s poetry. It was Edmund Gosse who advised her

………to consider that from an Indian of extreme sensibility who had mastered not merely the language but the prosody of the west, what we wished to receive was, not a rechauffe of Anglo-Saxon sentiment in an Anglo-Saxon setting but some revelation of the heart of India, some sincere penetrating analysis of native passion of the principles of
antique religion and of such mysterious intimations as stirred
the soul of the East long before the West had begun to dream
that it had a soul. (qtd. in Srinivasa Iyengar, 209)

Sarojini Naidu’s poetry gives importance to emotions. She is a
non-intellectual poet. Therefore, her poetry does not influence others. Her
early poems are filled with the atmosphere of Indian folk songs – the
songs of the bangle sellers and the palanquin – bearers. Her poems
acquire their strength from the Indianness of the themes and picturesque
imagery characterises her traditional Indian poetry. The poem “Awake”
(1928), for example, recalls the spirit that activated India at the time of
the First World War. The poem strengthened the spirit of unity and the
concept of India as mother and goddess. Sarojini Naidu’s poem “Village
song” (1928) which deals with the hopes and fears of villages projects
rustic images in an arresting fashion. Similarly, “The Soul’s Prayers”
(1928) is a reflective poem, in which a philosophical argument is made
poetic through a dramatic presentation.

During the first half of the 20th Century many poets continued in
the tradition established by Toru Dutt, Sri. Aurobindo and Sarojini Naidu.
There were, however a few poets in the First and Second decades of this
century who wrote under the direct influence of the Romantic and
Victorian poets. V. K. Gokak points out that these poets reveals a
“Georgian love of the colloquial idiom and of a simple and forth right
handling of poetical themes”. (Gokak, XXI) The following lines from
N.W. Pai’s romance in blank verse, ‘The Angel of Misfortune’ (1903),
bear evidence of the poet’s training in the conversions of British poetry
down the ages.

From his cool nest within the leafy shade

scares ventures forth the feathered wanderers

into the open, where the heated wind

feels like the ‘fiery furnace’s burning breath

scrolling and withering all its blows upon. (Gokak 138 )

Perhaps the most popular of the Indo Anglian poets who began
writing poetry during this period was Harindranath Chottopadhyaya
(1898). He published two volumes of poems ‘The Feast of Youth’ and
‘The Coloured Garden’ in 1918 and 1919 respectively. Being to the core,
Harindranath expressed himself in colourful words such as these:

the Peacock dons his blue and bronze

and under the falling shower

spreads out his plumes and swiftly blooms

to an enameled flower. (Gokak 195)

Armando Meezes, the academician poet is a typical writer of this
era. He combines in himself the stock-in-trade of conventional British
verse and a humanism that informs all his poems. In the poem entitled
‘Tonight’ (1940) he declares his creed that love is what sustains the universe in spite of what philosophers have said about the true nature.

Tonight I question not life’s mystery.

but bring thy warm breast close, kiss me hard,

and Let me once forget that man is of dust. (Gokak 208)

The Indo-Anglian poet’s humanism acquired a new dimension, when it promoted the patriotic sentiments of the educated Indians of the time. Ironically enough, it was in the language of the British rulers of India that some of the poems expressing a deep urge for political independence came to be written, for instance, V.N. Bhushan’s. “Ninth August 1942” (1948) contains the following lines.

No, no longer shall we be indifferent to the new sunrise.

And taint our souls with unpardonable apathies;

here and now we vow to follow the nation’s stirring call

champion the country’s cause of freedom and peace!

(Gokak 238)

Mysticism was nurtured as a poetic strain by the Indo-Anglian poets during the second quarters of this century. T.L. Vaswani (1879-1966), Nalini Kanta Gupta (1889-1983), J. Krishnamurthi (1895-1986) and a host of other poets contributed to the mystical elements in Indo-Anglican poetry. Typical of this class is T.L. Vaswani’s “Forget Me Not” (1928). It is a prose poem set in the imperative mood. The protagonist
requests God not to forget him even if he forgets God. Beginning with a short supplication like this, the poem gathers momentum and ends with a justification of the protagonist’s habits of wandering and smiling.

We find in Indian literature Vedas and the Upanishads which probe into the relationship between man and his maker. In this sense, Indo Anglian mystical poetry of the early decades of this century, though written in a foreign language, is typical for the Indian mind. The forties and fifties of these centuries saw the emergence of certain modernistic tendencies in Indo Anglian Poetry. These tendencies took the form of a propensity towards the imagistic mode and neo-symbolist techniques. Pritish Nandy, a contemporary poet is known for graphic description.

The situation changed with the introduction of Hindi as the national language and the exclusion of English from the languages of Indian. This was one of the main reasons that gathered Indian poets in English closer to each other to reaffirm their faith in English as a language that could play a creative role in Indian literature and produce poetry which is in no way inferior or less Indian in content than that being written in the other Indian languages.

Two reasons are generally attributed for this transition.(Pritish Nandy, 11) The first is that in the late forties and the early fifties Indian poets in English became self – conscious about the use of the foreign medium. Another reason is, the poet’s familiarity with what
was happening in British and American Poetry. American Poetry of the post – war years contributed a great deal to the reawakening of Indo-Anglian poetry after independence. Unlike the poets writing in the regional languages of India, Indo Anglians like Nissim Ezekiel (1924), Kamala Das (1934), A. K. Ramanujan (1929) and R. Parthasarathy (1934) were better – educated in the conventional sense and more familiar with the poetic techniques contemporaneously practiced in the west.

Nissim Ezekiel regards himself essentially as an Indian Poet writing in English. “His Poetry”, says William Walsh, “more than that of any other of these writers, seems to be generated from within and to have within. It is a natural capacity for development. It is intellectually complex, mobile in phrasing, fastidious in diction, and austere in acceptance.” (23) His “Enterprise” (1960) is an allegorical poem on the common theme of Pilgrimage. It presents journey as a metaphor for life. A group of persons take up a journey with high hopes; but soon differences of opinions crop up. In the end, there is complete disappointment. “Night of the Scorpion” (1965) has for its setting, a tender family situation which provides the poet with an opportunity to juxtapose the opposing words of superstition and science. The world of superstition is represented here by the ignorant peasants who come” like swarms of files”, to see the poet’s mother who has been stung by a
scorpion. The world of science, on the other hand, is symbolized by the protagonist’s father, a skeptic and rationalist. The poem reaches its climax in a beautiful situation upholding maternal affection that the scorpion has spared her children. As a poet, he treats common place events in an extraordinary manner. In fact, he gives an ironical twist to the end of the poem.

Ezekiel’s ironical stance is even sharper in some poems, in which he makes use of Babu Angrezi or Indian English. For Example, in “Goodbye party for Miss Pushpa” (1975) he presents the common Indian trait of using the present continuous tense in place of the simple present. The poem is in the form of a farewell address given by Miss Pushpa on the eve of her departure “for foreign”. This effective parody of Indian English reveals yet another dimension of Ezekiel’s ironical view of life.

Kamala Das, on the other hand, expresses in many of her poems a longing of the individual mind for certain vague objectives. “The Dance of the Eunuchs” (1965) presents through an array of images of sterility a part of her own mind which yearns for motherhood. In the poem “The invitation” (1967) language approaches a state of delirium. Here love is treated as a sort of death, partly because love is for the poet as significant as life and death.

“The Looking Glass” (1967) is a hymn to sexual love in which the physical aspect of love is treated without any embarrassment. “The Old
Playhouse” (1973) confronts the reality of the situation in which the woman finds herself in an extramarital affair. In all these poems what is easily discerned is a strikingly bold, uninhibited and individual stance. In A.K. Ramanujan’s poetry family relationships impinge on the poet’s personality. His “Still Another View of Grace” (1966) is a love poem with a difference. It is fascinatingly deviant from the sentimental depiction of love found in the earlier poets. The man woman relationship is depicted in an ironic manner in “Looking for a cousin on a swing” (1966). In “A River” (1966) the Vaikai provides to the poet a context in which he could contrast the attitudes of the old and new Tamil poets towards human suffering. “Obituary” (1971) is a good instance of how far a poet can go in avoiding sentimentality in the presentation of the death of one’s own father. As a poet, Ramanujan is sensitive to the nuances of the English language. As he himself has declared that English, linguistics and anthropology gave him the “outer” forms of his poetry, while the experiences during the first thirty years of his life in India provide him with the “Inner” forms, images and symbols.

R. Parthasarathy gives a clarion call to the Indian English poets, to return to their own roots for writing poetry.

How long can foreign poets
provide the staple for your lines?

Turn inward, scrape the bottom of your past (48).
Indian situation finds a major role in the Post-Independence Indo-Anglian poets. The nation, tradition and past find place in the writings of Parthasarathy, Arun Kolatkar and Ramanujan’s poems. R. Parthasarathy is mostly concerned with the individual’s attempt to face contrasting cultural heritages. His “Rough Passage” is a long poem written over a period of fifteen years between 1961 and 1975. It is autobiographical in tone. It dwells upon the question of the inner conflict that arises from being brought up in two cultures. Being at home in two languages, English and Tamil, he establishes in his poetry the tension arising out of bilingualism which invites comparison with a similar predicament experienced by Michael Madhusudanan Dutt in the nineteenth century.

There are other poets too on the Indo – Anglian scene who are making significant contributions to the contemporary phase of Indo – Anglian poetry. Shiv K. Kumar (1921) for example, deals with the situations of daily life in a probing, often ironic, manner. The poet employs contrast as a mode of perception. Keki N. Daruwalla (1937) is concerned with North Indian landscape. And he employs a bitter and satiric tone in his poetry. His “Vignette I”, for example presents a very unusual but highly original picture of the river Ganga. The other contemporary Indo – Anglian Poets include Arun Kolatkar (1932) P. Lal (1930), Jayanta Mahapatra (1928), Arvind Krishna Mehrotra (1947),
Cleve Patel (1940), Adil Jussawalla (1940) and Gauri Desh Pande (1942) who have taken their poetic vocation very seriously and given a new lease of life to Indo-Anglian poetry.

It has often been argued that the earlier generation of Indo–Anglians did not leave a tradition of their own. Each of the major poets of that era—Toru Dutt, Sri Aurabindo, Sarojini Naidu was busy perfecting a personal idiom for his or her own style of poetical communication. Toru Dutt was striving towards the lyrical. In any case a literary tradition is formed when poets and writers in a given unit of time share amongst themselves a common definition of their art or strive together to build one. Historically, that was not the time for it. The preposition that the earlier Indo-Anglians did not leave a tradition behind themselves should be taken into account. However, certain common characteristics could be found in the poets of this generation. They were pan Indian in their outlook. At the same time they adhered to literary and linguistic conventions. They were influenced by Wordsworth, Byron and Scott and some of the Victorians poets.

The new generation of poets, on the other hand, gave importance to the roots of personal experience. They are completely cut off from politics and are devoid of mysticism. They are regional as well as staunch internationalists. As for style, they are in search of the concrete representation. They avoid stereotyped subject matter. The influences that
act upon them are those of T. S. Eliot and W. B. Yeats. The differences in themes between the two generations of poets are naturally reflected in their respective styles. An application of certain techniques of stylistic analysis to the study of these two generations of poets will establish the difference in their poetic sensibility and the difference in the linguistic resources exploited by them.

Ramanujan was born in the princely state of Mysore in 1932. His family moved there only two years before his birth, from the neighboring state of what was then Madras. Information about his childhood is available in small parts in Ramanujan’s own essays. His father was the patriarch of the house, with a library on the second floor where, being a professor in Mysore University, he perused books on astronomy and mathematics. Ramanujan makes reference to this library when he talks of the “upstairs language” of English and the “downstairs languages” of Kannada and Tamil that were part of his childhood experience. This separation between languages at home was seen because it was his father who instructed him in studying English texts while his mother, grandmother and aunts talked to him and told him tales in Tamil. Outside, on the street when playing with his friends and at school he learned Kannada, the language of his region.

Besides being an Indo-Anglian poet, Ramanujan is known as a Kannada poet and translator of Tamil and Telugu poetry into English.
After studying B.A in English in Mysore, he took up various teaching jobs in south India, many of them involving heart breaks and disappointments. Girish Karnad, an Indian playwright and a close friend of the poet refers to an incident. Once, Ramanujan was invited from Baroda to come to Dharwad for an interview to fill a vacancy in English department. On the train to Dharwad, he met a co-passenger who told him, to his dismay, that he had already been selected for the job and the interview was merely a technical facade. It seemed that Ramanujan told the interview board, that he could not afford to waste his money. Thus Ramanujan was bold in expressing his unhappiness to the authorities who did not have work ethics.

Professional life in India was not very kind to him in those years. In 1957, he joined the Deccan College as a Fellow to study linguistics, and a year later he secured a Fulbright scholarship to Indian University to further his study. Thus he moved from Kannada society and culture to which he felt he belonged. This shift had directly or indirectly influenced his ways. Equally it provoked multitude of reactions and effects upon his artistic theme.

First thirty years of Ramanujan’s life was spent in India, in and around Karnataka for the most part, the next thirty-three years he lived in the United States. At the University of Chicago, he undertook the study of South Asian languages and civilization and it was in the basement stacks
of this institution that he made the discovery of the books of Sangam poetry, the ancient Tamil poetry dating back to the first century of the Common Era. This led to a lifelong project of translation, which was in addition to his earlier passion for documenting and translating the oral folklore of Karnataka. These projects earned him the Mac Arthur genius award in 1983. This award was only one of several others, notably the highly prestigious Indian award, the Padma Sri, which was given to him in 1976. And after his untimely death in 1993, his reputation has been further embellished by the institution of awards in his name by various organizations in India and in the United States and with the continued publication of his unpublished works in English and translations of his Kannada works by his ex-wife Molly Daniels Ramanujan.

It is stated in the introduction that a creative writer is under the influence of his inner need or an urge to know his self, so that he could impersonalize or universalize the same for the readers. The researcher has chosen a number of poems from the four volumes such as *The Striders* (1966), *The Relations* (1971), *The Second Sight* (1986) and *The Black Hen* (1995). The researcher also refers to a few short stories and essays of A.K.Ramanujan to substantiate the chiaroscuro of creative tension.

Ramanujan to some extent like Mathew Arnold is ‘torn between two worlds’- the Eastern and the Western, and explores the memories of his childhood in a language that keeps him ‘apart’ but still near. While he
is searching for roots in an alien idiom, he achieves a synthesis which results in enhancement of both his vision and language. He successfully transplants the Indian landscape in some of his American Poems whereas in his Indian Poems one could see the flavor of America. Similarly we can also see in some of his poems an Indian sensibility encountering the American milieu and sometimes the reverse. Bruce King in a curiously worded statement says:

Ramanujan’s poetry blends the techniques and conventions of European, Indian, American and British literature, with those of Kannada, Tamil and Sanskrit (61).

More reasonably the critic observes that as a translator and scholar of Kannada and Tamil, “Ramanujan has been influenced by their conventions and problems of translating Indian classical and medieval verse into modern English” (61)

He also says that in A.K. Ramanujan’s poetry, there is a Tamil and Indian nationalist. Ramanujan’s India is also an India of particularities of family life. Mishra isolates six signature personae in Ramanujan’s poetry. They are:

The neurotic Hindu, the sardonic husband or lover; the wry chronicler of family matters; the disembodied consciousness of the imagist poems; the self-reflexive ironist; and the pseudo-bhakta as parodist (229)
Ramanujan is one of the poets whose distance from India enables and sustains this insider-outsider status as much as the English language does. The poems of Ramanujan expose his extraordinary ability to record facts in such a manner that the past integrates into the present and the present into the unknown future. Indian people, their customs, their cultural and spiritual heritage, their past history with its many plumes form the basis of his art. His strong association with and firm convictions in the native culture enabled him to see the essential India despite his long stay in United States. Robert Lowell once observed in an interview. “From year to year, things remembered from the past change almost. More than the present” (113), Ramanujan’s poems are also about the complication of memory by one’s engagement with the present.

The contemporary Indian English poetic situation can be analysed with reference to the modern world of urbanization, industrialization, mobility, independence, social change and the individualistic national culture evolved out of them. English becomes an adequate medium of expression of their complex of tradition, local realities, the immediate present and ways of feelings.

The search for identity is conducted at two different levels of expression in Modern poetry. The journey conducted into the interior regions of the self and the one directed outward to the world of reality, form the essence of modern poetry. The iconoclastic treatment of themes
and the writers’ experimentation with language and form becomes the hallmark of modern poetry which incorporates the existence of an audience. These innovations are contrary to the attitude of the early common wealth poets who could not visualize the creation of a regional tradition of their own. The latter half of the fifties represented by P.Lal, Nissim Ezekiel and A. K. Ramanujan witnessed the ordinary and the mundane invading the poetic scene which was to be faithfully rendered by poets like Kamala Das, Monika Varma, R. Parthasarthy and Keki N. Daruwala, Shri. Shiv. K. Kumar, Jayanta Mahapatra and Gauri Desphande continued with the same zest for innovation, experimentation and exploration with marked individualized features, their efforts to count in the creation of tradition in this sphere. His modernity and sense of alienation yoke the present with the past, India with the west and the inner with the outer. R Parthasarathy observes in him a tendency to relapse into private life and to place family as “one of the central metaphors with which he thinks.” He attempts to define his self with reference to the past and family in his expatriate position born out of an awareness of his identity as a distillation of that past. His translation of Kannada and Tamil Poetry into English through the precise use of language, which is, in other terms, a rendering of one culture in terms of another culture, makes it evident that Ramanujan manipulates his language so as to function in terms of artifact. The special thematic focus
accorded to his family necessitates the critical approach of “Poetry as family history” in relation to those poems which are blend of Indian subjectivity and western objectivity.

The poems of Ramanujan sought an “unobtrusive personal voice” in order to express their vision of “everyday Indian reality” and cultural crisis which indicates the direction through which Indian English poetry in modern times progresses. Satyanarain Singh believes that Ramanujan employs language, images and situations only as vehicles of expression of his attitudes and utilizes images to control and even to determine the theme. Ramanujan, like other Modern poets, aims at the redefinition and representation of the essential values of Indian tradition and culture through secular living and religious commitment. The sense of alienation, the awareness of the importance accorded to trivia in modern life, the reflection of the contemporary consciousness and the ironic perception of a saving grace even in the dehumanizing situation of the present reality distinguish the poetry Ramanujan. Simplicity and prayer acquire prominence in Ramanujan’s poetry. Generally, the love poems are analytical in tone projecting detachment and also the endless discourse of the marked self and the naked self. The unconventional attitude towards man-woman relationship communicated through ironical expositions evinces a closer vision of the present day reality. His love themes range from infatuation, promiscuity, sensuality and longing.
For the modern poet the assimilation of the urban sensibility engenders the perception of the irony and paradox inherent in things and events, the limitations of choice, the circumscribed range of human responses, and the same of tragedy intimately connected with the very existence of things. For the modern poet the failure of old values in a civilization of spirituality, becomes an obsessive preoccupation.

Modernity for Ramanujan appears to signify neither the acceptance of inspired sensibility as a way of life nor the hardening of his sensibilities and dehumanization. Ramanujan displays a modern concern with the self. His poetry enables one to look into oneself to discover one’s truth, accepting different identities in time in various roles. His self is constituted of both the inherited and the acquired identities.

A.K. Ramanujan’s writing is a perennial attempt to achieve a split vision of the world, and on close readings, it opens up multiple, even contradictory, view of self and world. For instance the complex imaging of his Mother who is present in her absence throughout his poetry. By representing the voiceless forces in its myriad forms in Ramanujan’s life, the mother becomes the symbol of the subaltern in his work. We can categorize Ramanujan’s question about origins into several sections : 1) his biography, which is integral to his work because, in his poetry, he openly fed upon the people and events in his own life, 2) the role of English in his personal life, in the society around him, and as
representative of westernization and of modernity, 3) the role of the vernacular languages in his English poetry, but also his persistent attempt to engage the vernacular contexts through his writings in Kannada, 4) the significance of folk literature in his writing 5) questions of gender role and an identity derived from these questionings 6) and finally, the supreme importance of translation practices in his work which, by their very nature of double vision, that never brings lasting comfort.

Ramanujan cannot demarcate his loyalty to various linguistic culture and literature either on the international or the intra–national level. Ramanujan is more firmly grounded in Indian socio-political realities than has been acknowledged previously. He felt that he never found the resting place for his literary self that he ceaselessly pursued. The source of such a lack is located in the depiction of women in general, and his mother in particular in this self–reflexive poetry which adores as well as challenges the role of woman in various contexts.

Ramanujan was a linguist and it is not surprising that the study of languages should be central to his thinking. But that also forms the core of his literary output, where his various languages and their traditions continue to interact with each other even when he is not translating from one to the other.

This concern with languages and origins can be interpreted as Ramanujan’s dilemma about his diasporic existence in Chicago and in
Bangalore. While this is relevant as certainly one important way of interpreting Ramanujan’s angst, it ignores the local and regional factors that might also have influenced the poet to question his linguistic and philosophical choices. Ramanujan’s Kannada novella, *Mattobane Almacharitre* (Someone Else’s Autobiography) bears evidence to this fact. Here, the narrator, A. K. Ramanujan, meets a poet and the ensuing interaction between the two is one of lost selves and double identities. A. K. Ramanujan writes down his feelings about his divided self and says, “I don’t know why, but for five or six months, the events of our three days in Madras still haunt me....” (214). In this semi-autobiographical sketch the poet discusses the recurrence of the influence of past in his work and in his life. Such references to the divided self, which abound in Ramanujan’s poetry can be interpreted not only as an Indo–American diasporic expression of the loss of home, but also that of a post independence Indian who has lived through the making and remaking of nation and home in the linguistic and literary identities. Ramanujan connects the two experiences of living in multiple linguistic regions in India and living a diasporic life abroad -in this same novella, A. K. Ramanujan writes, “When I think of those memories now, I agree, that for someone like me who had never left Mysore, Madras was another country. Though, I had hardly gone 300 miles, it felt foreign to me.” (Ramanujan 258).
Language plays a conspicuous role in Indian life – after all, India is internally divided mainly by linguistic boundaries and in Mysore, Ramanujan lived through the bitter struggle to establish the linguistic state of Karnataka in the fifties. The national leaders refused to support such linguistic division in order to foster a sense of unity in the new nation and to discourage divisive sentiments. In response to such ideas, the Kannada leaders instigated a long protest movement which included fasts and even acts of violence.

These suppressed the native language identities in order to strengthen the bonds of the nation. Then, in order to quell the revolt, the British had tried to question the local, native language press which, according to them, was encouraging and fuelling the rebellion against the British Raj. The new Indian nation, in its refusal to recognize regional linguistic identities, thus came to be seen as a neo – colonial institution that still silences difference and otherness, and the freedom struggle took on a double meaning. Ramanujan lived in Karnataka as people were acrimoniously fighting over this home, Kannada on the street, and English at school. He utilized many of the linguistic resources of these three major languages in which and from which he wrote and translated. Thus, even before Ramanujan left Indian shores for the United States, he was facing difficult questions about national and regional identity and the impossibility of taking unequivocal stances on the issue of his own
linguistic predilections. This aspect of his disputed allegiance needs to be emphasized because he is always seen only as a diasporic poet torn between cultures. Different writers, politicians, and artists were trying to configure an identity for their own spaces and regions. Ramanujan’s work can be seen as one voice influenced by this regional process, one that expressed an opposition to the Indian identity in an individual manner, even as it can also be interpreted as having the larger, diasporic concerns of a displaced Indian. English is the bridge that connects Ramanujan’s expatriate existence with his life in India. After all, he was a teacher of English literature and this was also the language that he was encouraged to use by his father. In this crowded melee of languages in the country, this is the once - colonial language which reconfigures the relations between the writer and his world and also between him and his other regional cultures.

There are several aspects of the use of English that one needs to know when reading Indian writing in English in general, but particularly the works of A.K. Ramanujan, who agonized over this issue in much of his work. English language instruction was also seized upon by the Indian activists who wanted to break the strangle hold of traditional expectations on the minds of the Indian leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Roy who believed that access to an English education would enable the Indians to
reexamine many of their retrogressive traditions and also bring them closer to the modern world with which this language was associated.

The English language may have a tainted origin, according to some, but English also was becoming the global language of discourse in India, and one tries to achieve fluency in it in order to gain a presence in the world of commerce and capital. While talking about the Indian expatriate poets, Bruce King aptly remarks:

Indian expatriate poets do not write from the position of a distinct foreign community, such as the exiled black or West Indian novelists, but their writing reflects the perspective of someone between two cultures. They may look back on India with nostalgia, satirically celebrating their liberation or asserting their biculturalism, but they also look skeptically and wryly on their new home land as outsiders, with a feeling of something having been lost in the process of growth. The ability to tolerate, accommodate and absorb other cultures without losing the consciousness of being Indian marks the expatriate poets. (209-10)

Bruce King refers to Ramanujan’s ability to live peacefully in two different worlds - the world of his self and memory which is ‘within’ him and the world of the present which is ‘without’ and explains that the core of the essential self remains as an inner world, but this is modified by changed circumstances and decisions.
A.K. Ramanujan himself endorses this view when he says, “You cannot entirely live in the past, and neither can you entirely live in the present, because we are not like that. We are both these things. The past never passes, either the individual past or historical past or cultural past. It is with us, it is what gives us the richness of – what you call it – the richness of understanding and the richness of expression (Jha, 5). Ramanujan’s poems take their origin in a mind that is simultaneously Indian and Western. There exists the Indian mode of experiencing rootlessness, which is a predominant factor in his works. As a third world expatriate poet, Ramanujan, unlike his western counterparts who hesitate to cherish the roots carried with him his roots from India and therefore his works do not contain elements of existential rootlessness.

As Ramanujan was alive to the sharp difference between the enriching culture and tradition of India and the west, his sense of nostalgia got intensified with passing years. The readers are driven to juxtapose the “Spiritual community – oriented, tolerant value system of India and the materialistic, racist, power-hungry exploitative system of West (Kripa 15). The myth of the white man’s superiority probably becomes meaningless. And hence, the poet goes back with renewed spirit and vigor to his people and his country. Therefore, a major theme of Ramanujan’s poetry has been his obsession with the familial and racial past. And memory always plays a vital and creative role.
The formative influence of religion which provided him a system to know the meaning of life is rich in him because he grew up in a traditional middle class Southern Hindu Brahmin family. He retained his faith in the Hindu philosophy of the Unity Consciousness. His acceptance of the oneness of all life is evident from his poem. “Christmas”.

For a moment, I no longer know
leaf from parrot
or branch from root
nor, for that matter
that tree
from you or me. (Daniels-Ramanujan, Molly 30-31)

The man, the tree and the parrot possess identical creative impulses and therefore they must be considered as expressions of the same erective force. Though the western tradition also accepts God as the creator of the universe, it seems to maintain the dichotomy between man and Nature, and Man and lower creations like animals and birds. Though Wordsworth could, for instance, find a “Lurking soul” within the “meanest flower”, he could not equate it with the human soul. To him and to poets like Robert Frost, the objects of nature, however closer they may be to the life of man, cannot become ‘the man’.
This kind of difference between the oriental and occidental traditions is also emphasized further through the tree image in the same poem. The bare leafless tree standing outside his window in USA and the lively tree seen out of his window in India which is more than a mere “stiff geometrical shape” are images that bring to his mind the two different cultures. After his death the poet desires to “rise in the sap of trees” and “feel the weight / of honey” hives in my branching / and the burlap weave of weaver – birds in my hair “. (9). The oneness of life could be illustrated through the example of the sap. Though the sap itself is a colourless pigment, it creates all colours and all colours converge into one creative source.

Ramanujan is not blind to certain superstitious aspects of his religion. The Hindu principle of non-violence sometimes reminds the poet of cowardice, the poet who has lived in a country known for rationality, dynamism, fast scientific and technological growth and violence. There is the danger of the principle degenerating into callousness and indifference in actual practice. As the Hindu is not expected to hurt a fly or a spider, his great grandfather remained a helpless victim of and silent spectator to the adultery of his wife. In his poem “obituary” he recalls his father’s death, and comments ironically on rituals and ceremony associated with the cremation of the dead.
As an expatriate writer, Ramanujan is a ‘teacher’ and he does not revolt against his society like the western counterpart. The revolutionary zeal which permeates the poetry of the west like those of Shelley and Byron for instances, and the humanistic vision or the social concern and commitment found in their poetry is totally missing in him. Expatriation has not caused any setback in his growth as an artist because he has not lost touch with his mother country. The mother figure also remains a dominant figure. Yet he shows the usual love – hate relationship with his motherland which characterizes intense relationships. Sometimes, she is a symbol of awe and authority and at other times she is the mother, the only home and only companion as in the case of A.K. Ramanujan. The journey motive that is predominant in Third World expatriate writings could also be perceived. The poet’s mind often undertakes a ‘pilgrimage’ to the mother or motherland. And the constant movement represents transition from one mode of being to another. Ramanujan’s expatriate sensibility includes an objective and accurate portrayal of both countries. Apart from the introductory chapter the thesis has three core chapters.

Chapter two under the title ‘The Recurrent Concerns’ will depict the family life, which serves as a primary theme in many of A.K. Ramanujan’s early poems. The composite sphere of the family turns out to be a part of society which contains the whole. The web of domestic relations functions as a means to map and interpret social relations in

The third chapter titled ‘The Double Vision’ will show that his imagination acquires an ‘enabling ambivalence’ by moving forward and backward. He says that his family impulse pulls him back while the external world pushes him to march forward. Nostalgia and memory for relations and familiar sites compel him to restrict his movement, at the same time, the desire to explore the unknown and the unlimited pressurizes him to look beyond. The chapter portrays that how, in poem after poem, Ramanujan travels back to his childhood memories and experiences of his life in India. In his poetry we find collections of his personal emotion showing a sense of loss and an unbearable rift between one’s origin and dwelling. For many writers the expatriate experience invariably results in a sense of loss. The study shows that it is easy to take
a man out of his land but it is not possible to take away the feeling of nativity from his mind.

The fourth chapter titled “Craftsmanship” will explain the linguistic and the cultural determinants of a poet’s imagination – what Ramanujan calls the “outer and “inner” forms which are primarily responsible for creating familial and personal poetic symbols. Ramanujan tries to incorporate the native tradition into English language. His Hindu heritage has immensely influenced his poetry to a great extent. At the same time he has certainly been influenced by western life and culture too. However, the traditions of Hinduism and the cultural values of Hinduism have always clung to him.

The chapter on conclusion would sum up the arguments of the preceding chapters and establish the fact that in the poetic sensibility of A. K. Ramanujan, we find a combination of the East and the West – the inner world of his Indian heritage and experience and the objectivity and accuracy of the Western poetic tradition. Though his memory is sharp and his vision of Indian society is comprehensive, he cannot be called a nostalgic traditionalist, though he was alive to western modes of expression, changes and attitudes, we cannot conclude that he accepted them fully and advocated modernization and westernization. As in the case of several expatriates, Ramanujan’s works include nostalgia and inwardness, and documentary realism; but there is no idealization and the
vision does not become dark inspite of the ironic and satiric tone born of creative tension.