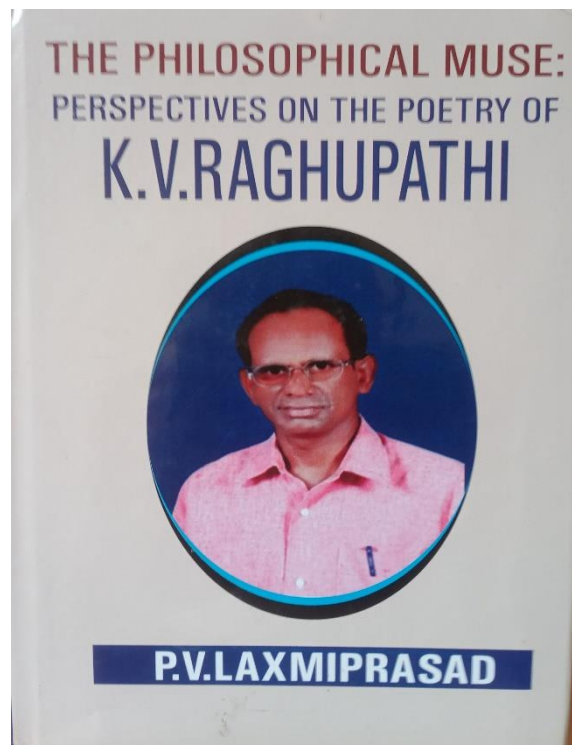


***The Philosophic Muse: Perspectives on the Poetry of K. V. Raghupathi* by P.V. Laxmiprasad, APH Publishing Corporation New Delhi, 2013, ISBN: 978-93-313-1804-6, Pp 229.**

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This critical volume is actually authored by P.V.Laxmiprasad, a scholar in Indian English Poetry. It is on the poetry of KV Raghupathi that P.V.Laxmiprasad critically evaluated his poetry in about 15 scholarly papers. The book has a Foreword written by eminent critic, PCK Prem. Laxmiprasad has written a wonderful Preface in which he has justified as to why he brought out a book. PCK Prem observes that Raghupathi's poetry provokes, excites and cautions. He touches many various wings of feelings and thoughts but ultimately returns to the lap of nature and here, he finds eternal joy and peace, though temporarily. At times, nature gets the status of a deity and yet life remains a mystery with the poet that contains joys, pains, pleasures agonies and it moves in a cycle of birth and death.



Looking at this critical book, Laxmiprasad observes that the poet is essentially philosophic in most of the lyrics though he touches various contemporary issues challenging man at the worldly level. From here originate deep thoughts with melancholy in abundance and a philosophic disillusionment relating to life and death torments the poet's heart. Here, KV Raghupathi, the poet, essentially remains a poet of cynical optimism and probably here, he touches ground realities. This is where Laxmiprasad's book gained importance.

P.V.Laxmiprasad has included fifteen scholarly papers which really speak of the potential and literary merits of KV Raghupathi's poetry. The papers are as follows. 1) Philosophy of Life in Desert Blooms 2) Disillusionment in Echoes Silent 3) Quo Vadis: A Study of The Images of a

Growing Dying City 4) Imagery in The Images of a Growing Dying City 5) Quest for Truth in Voice of the Valley 6) Deification of Nature in Samarpana 7) Imagery in Samarpana 8) Transcendental Element in Dispersed Symphonies 9) Moral Element in Dispersed Symphonies 10) Social Perspectives in Orphan and Other Stories 11) Philosophy of Life and Death in The Poetry of KV Raghupathi 12) A Comparative Note on Nissim Ezekiel's "Night of the Scorpion" and KVRaghupathi's "Nagamani" 13) Interview with KV Raghupathi by PV Laxmiprasad 14) A Comparative Note between Gieve Patel's "On Killing a Tree" and KV Raghupathi's "Felled Tree" 15) Dialogue with KV Raghupathi by PV Laxmiprasad

The titles of the papers truly reflect the class and merit of KV Raghupathi as a poet. P.V.Laxmiprasad evaluated KV Raghupathi's poetry in a scholarly way. All the papers testify Raghupathi as an established poet in English. The first paper of this book throws light on the philosophy of life as it contains in *Desert Blooms*. It mostly deals with the journey of insights that ultimately go into the core of life. The poet, as Laxmiprasad observes, see those experiences, transcends, and traces the essence of meaning of life. *Desert Blooms* is thoroughly reflective, contemplative and meditative. It is, according to Laxmiprasad, difficult to decipher the depth of meaning concealed in numerous similes and metaphors as this requires an in-depth study to unravel. The meaning operates at higher level and the reader cannot understand with his ordinary physics of reason. The second paper deals with disillusionment in *Silent Echoes*. In fact, the poet has expressed his disillusionment, shared all those with his readers and sought a lasting solution from nature. In the lines, Raghupathi as Laxmiprasad claims, sounds Great English Romantic poet John Keats. He echoed the silences of life in his actual experiences first as a student and later as a poet. Laxmiprasad sums up that the collection *Echoes Silent* is deeply rooted in disillusionments and detachments at every stage of poet's journey. It is indeed the poet's silent echoes of disillusioned life in disenchanting world. In the third paper, Laxmiprasad's title of the paper is typically of a foreign phrase. It is "Quo Vadis: A Study of The Images of a Growing Dying City". In each poem the poet has represented a particular state of the city in a particular image in a remarkable way. Laxmiprasad writes that as we move from poem to poem, we discover the gradual decay in terms of life and values. These images are not imaginative but concrete and evocative. The city has grown considerably and at the same time, collapsed on similar lengths and breadths of Value –based life. Every bit of life, according to Laxmiprasad, projects that the city is growing and dying, dying and growing.

In yet another research paper, Laxmiprasad explores quest for truth in *Voice of the Valley*. This collection is replete with endless quests for truth. The author observes that *Voice of the*

Valley intrudes into the reader's minds a search for roots of enlightenment. This is the most unusual work of literature for it is in the form of a longer poem of 85 pages immensely philosophical and richly spiritual appeal of a calm, serene and mesmeric wisdom. It becomes a thoroughly scrutinized journey in the quest for Truth. In the next research paper, Laxmiprasad explores through the collection Samapana 50 reflections written when Raghupathi was holding HD Thoreau Fellowship at Dhvanyaloka in Mysore in 2000. To Raghupathi, the myriad objects and forms around us are nothing but various manifestations of the divine. It is, according to Laxmiprasad, the power of nature i.e. to teach, elevate, soothe, and console. Nature relieves the pains of human life. It sweetens the miseries and lightens the sleeping hearts by spreading from the garden around the perfumes of flowers.

The perfume of flowers in the garden around

Speak itself what is strife in human condition

And sweeten the miseries for lighting the sleeping hearts ( XXXII –p33)

In the backdrop of eco-criticism, this collection stands as a testimony for man's relentless struggle for restoring the ecological balance which he has lost amidst mind-blowing technological growth. In another paper, Laxmiprasad explored transcendental elements from the reading of Dispersed Symphonies. It is rooted in meditative, transcendental and spiritual reflections. It carries 104 reflections which the poet composed at different points of time and basked in the beauty of creation. Although these reflections are prose in form, they sound highly lyrical. Laxmiprasad brilliantly sums up that the collection contains a kind of pervasive moralism and ethical interpretation of life from transcendentalism. "Moral Element in Dispersed Symphonies" is the paper rooted in the acquisition of moral values. Laxmiprasad observes that for Raghupathi poetry is not mere description. He feels differently and enables us to feel differently and to see differently. He makes the ordinary extraordinary. Yet in his case, the extraordinary is only extraordinary if it refers back to the ordinary. Laxmiprasad brilliantly sums up the paper that the imperfect becomes perfect. In another paper, "Social perspectives in Orphan and Other Poems", Laxmiprasad explores Raghupathi's creative passion for the Indian themes and sensibilities. The poems of this collection, as Laxmiprasad write that they deal with the common social encounters in the society. Laxmiprasad describes Raghupathi as "Zeitgeist". In the next paper, Laxmiprasad explored the philosophy of life and death in the poetry of KVRaghupathi. He raises serious questions of life and death. Movement of man and life are predominant in Raghupathis' poetry. In his innovative approach,

Laxmiprasad compares the poetry of KV Raghupathi with those of Gieve Patel and Nissim Ezekiel. Poems like “Night of the Scorpion” and “Nagamani” present traditional and superstitious ways of life in India and at the same time question the existence of blind beliefs in the age of science and technology. In another comparative study, Laxmiprasad compares the poems of Gieve Patel and KV Raghupathi. Both the poets have registered their anxiety, protest and bitterness with the readers and strongly advocated a campaign for the protection of trees. There are interviews done with KV Raghupathi in the last go. Thus, Laxmiprasad has emerged as the most potential critic. The critical book will be useful for research scholars. It has benefitted most of the students. It is worth reading. The quality of criticism is really scholarly. I recommend the book to the libraries.