



CHARACTERIZATION OF WOMEN IN SELECTED WORKS OF KAMALA DAS

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ABSTRACT

The subject of women's injustice and their search for identity in a society dominated by patriarchy has been addressed by a significant number of female authors in recent history as well as in the current day. Women authors have emerged successful in Indian literature, particularly Indian English Literature, in emphasizing the harsh attitude of families and society towards women as well as the rising authoritarianism of conservative mindsets. This is especially true in Indian writing written in English. It has been said that Kamala Das and Shashi Deshpande are two of the most renowned women writers in India. Both of these authors have established their magnitude by writing on the status of women in the society that is currently in place. They have always placed an emphasis on exposing the sad personal lives and dissatisfaction of women as a result of the given set up and the conventional attitude of the male-dominated society. This has been the case from the beginning of the movement. Marriage may provide women a sense of safety, but it eliminates their opportunities for self-expression and free participation in the wider society. Both Kamala Das and Shashi Deshpande hold the opinion that once a woman gets married, she is moved from one kind of confinement to another. In the works of Kamala Das and Shashi Deshpande that we will be discussing, an effort will be made in this paper to depict the position that women find themselves in. In this article, an attempt has been made to illustrate the humiliation and the helpless attitude of women at different periods in life using a variety of Kamala Das and Shashi Deshpande's literary works.

Keywords: Gender inequality, Female writer, Kamala Das

INTRODUCTION

The search for one's own identity has always served as the primary focus of Kamala Das and Shashi Deshpande's creative endeavors. The wants, goals, and setbacks that a woman experiences in a society that is ruled by men are the focal points of their works since a woman is the center of their universe. Their work is gendered in a way that emphasizes how society has preconceived notions about what women should be like and what they should do. They discuss the awareness of women and the ways in which they are made to feel inferior and like a burden on their families. Both Kamala Das and Shashi Deshpande have written about their experiences growing up in a conventional society and with a traditional and conservative upbringing. The female protagonists in their works may have outward appearances of accomplishment, but on the inside, they are struggling to make sense of their life. The anguish and challenges that women go through in today's patriarchal society have prompted a lot of introspection on the subject of searching for one's identity. Both Kamala Das and Shashi Deshpande depict the



Indian lady and her struggle between modernity and tradition, reticence and the need to express herself, and joy and sadness.

poet In point of fact, Kamala Das's movement is the earliest and most influential feminist movement in India, hence her legacy is closely related to the history of Indian feminism. We found out that she used her works to their full potential in order to elegantly convey the joys and hardships that women face in everyday life. No matter what she wrote, Pan's overarching goal was to illustrate some of the most problematic parts of Indian culture, particularly the significant obstacles that women face in today's society. To comprehend Kamala Das's works, one must first be familiar with the story of her own life. Her biography and her creative endeavors are inextricably intertwined to such a degree that one cannot be handled without the support of the other. Kamala Das had direct exposure to the terrible tragedies that might occur in the context of family life. Her marriage had been a convoluted train wreck from the beginning.

Throughout the course of her life, she saw the dissolution of couples. Because her marriage was falling apart, Kamala Das was forced to cope with the turbulence that it caused. She was able to watch and feel the power that the blind patriarchy had over her, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of all of her ambitions, aspirations, and worries for her health. She must have had an incredible amount of energy since she was able to pull out of the chaos some of the most controversial masterpieces of Indian English language. poetess vehemently opposes the predominance of males and the subordination of women that it entails. Because women are expected to adhere to certain conventional responsibilities, no one pays attention to the objectives and aims that the woman has. The amount of discord may be inferred from the tempo and phrasing of the conversation. It symbolizes the struggle of all women throughout history against the ego of men. The feminine sensibility is shown in all of Kamala Das' poems in a straightforward and sincere manner. She opposed the established, systematic, and conventional norms and goals, and she defends a manner of life that is defined by an unexpected and profoundly current outlook. Two poems that Kamala Das wrote on the birth of her son exhibit her feminine sensibility. These poems were written by Kamala Das.

The poem "Jaisurya" expresses the most significant feelings that a woman goes through both before she gives birth to a child and after she gives birth to the child she had been hoping for. The second poem is titled "White Flowers," and it is about flowers. Her poetry is plainly geared at female readers owing to the prevalent female themes that she explores, as well as the images and symbols that she employs. She holds the human bodies, both male and female, in high regard as priceless relics and holy vessels. Her poetry has a feminine tone and subject matter, and the tone itself is feminine. She is sensual, passionate, and sensitive in equal measure. She has a very emotional nature, and she sometimes has trouble keeping it under control. To provide one example, her approach to the topic of forgiveness in her poetry "Composition" exemplifies the feminine sensibility that is prevalent in India. She states in the poem that she



has reached the age of global forgiving and that she is willing to forgive both friends and those who have caused harm to friendships. She also says that she has acquired the age of universal forgiving.

In point of fact, she manages to skilfully mix endearingly feminine impulses with militant female protest in her poems. Protest poetry is one possible classification for her compositions. Her demonstration is a stand against the discrimination and repression that women in India's past have often been subjected to. In the poem titled "Conflagration," she attacks the Indian women for their belief that their primary duty is to sleep beneath a man so that he may express his love. She is explaining to the ladies that the globe is far more extensive than their husbands who are six feet tall. As a result, the purpose of her poetry is both social and transformative. Her poetry is revered, in contrast to the majority of other female poets writing in the English language, whose works are not regarded.

KAMALA DAS AS POET

Her poetry often make light of women by comparing them to dolls or other playthings, and she often makes fun of herself. The feminine form is represented in her art by a skeletonized version of itself. In her representation of a woman's intellect and emotions, Kamala Das has done an excellent job of communicating the thoughts and sensations that go through a woman's head. Kamala Das, a poet, is unrivaled in her field. Her unhappiness at not being able to have a happy relationship, either inside or outside of marriage, is a recurring theme in her poetry, and she expresses her displeasure on several occasions. She doesn't only look for someone who can fulfill her bodily needs, but also her emotional and spiritual ones, when she's looking for someone to share her life with. According to CN Srinath, "Kamala Das's fundamental preoccupation is her fixation with love desire, true love, and love on multiple dimensions." As a natural and unavoidable fallout of this, the poet's fixation with the theme of the human body emerged. In spite of the fact that she has a deep respect for the human body, she views it through the lens of an instrument of subjugation and exploitation because of the violent relationships she has had in the past.

OBJEACTIVES

1. The Study Women in Selected Works of Kamala Das.
2. The Study Women Writers Have Emerged Victorious in Highlighting the Harsh Attitude of Families and Society.

In this collection of poetry, Kamala Das includes a significant number of pieces that focus on love and desire. The conflict that exists between the physical self and the spiritual self is addressed in a number of her poetry. Women's inherent attraction to men, their longing for a holy and perfect love that transcends sex, and their disappointment when men are just interested



in her body are all themes that appear in Kamala Das's poetry. These themes all play a part in women's dissatisfaction with men. The female experience of emotional shock from a disastrous marriage, humiliation from desire-less subordination in sex, and her disgust at male domination are all portrayed in her poetry. Her poems also convey her scorn at male supremacy. Kamala's art includes depictions of a variety of prominent women from Indian culture. She means it when she says things like "I am every woman who desires love," because it is who she is. (Summer in Calcutta:60) In the context of feminism and the roles that women play in society, Kamala Das is known for being a vocal opponent of patriarchal forces, which are those that compel women into roles that are predetermined by society. She is also an Indian English writer who has expressed her discontent with the way literary critics approach her work by engaging in a debate with them. She has taken on the critics of the literary world.

Kamala Das shows her discontent with the smothering nature of the masculine ego by expressing it in this way. She discusses the close relationship she had with both her grandpa and her grandma throughout her life. Even though his fortune was modest, he seemed to have all of the trappings associated with royalty: According to her aunt, her uncle's wife was obligated to demonstrate some degree of sycophancy for her brother. The hookah that was located next to my granduncle's chair was meticulously cleaned by my great-aunt every morning. (Firestone !167) When Kamala Das equates love with sexual interactions or a desire that hasn't been satisfied, her poetry brings to light the bitterness that women feel against the superiority and ego of males. In a number of different ways, she has expressed her thoughts on matters of love and desire. According to Kamala, there are some women who consider that their interests are a waste of time and who wish they could be liberated from this "soul-eating burden." Is it possible that you, lady, have found satisfaction by burying yourself under a man? It is time to go back into the fray and get things done. There is more to this planet than what can fit into a space of six feet.

Social Institutions versus Kamala Das' s writing

Marriage and families, as institutions, play a significant part in the process of assigning gender roles among the members of society. Gender roles are set in a manner that is distinct for men and women, and there is a boundary between the two. In her short tale "The Cattle Market," Kamala Das raises ethical concerns about the practice of confining young women to the confines of the home. She places a strong emphasis on the fact that women and girls deserve the information of the outside world and that they have the potential to achieve success in a variety of disciplines if they strengthen the knowledge that they deserve to have. Through her writing, she gives women more agency. She introduces the idea of education for women and further advises that women should take part in civic events. As a result, she defends the intellectual ability of women in contrast to the images constructed by males, which are founded on the preconceptions that women are inept, uneducated, and weak. She argues that the male presumptions, interests, and modes of thinking are prejudiced and demonstrates her point by disproving and proving these points. Through the use of her revolutionary ideas, Kamala Das



contests the conventions that put limitations on women and their independence. She confronts the tensions between the female body and the female spirit via the expression of the inner world of women.

The narrator of one of her tales called "The Game of Chess" conveys this sentiment in the following way: "One part of me – my mature self – kept telling my other, weaker self: "Why do you love this guy who provides you only pain?" This suffering of mine is beyond my ability to endure. It is having an effect on my physical body as well. The author makes brazen statements regarding sensitive topics such as sexuality, adolescence, menstruation, adultery, and homosexuality, all of which are socially unacceptable topics that most authors would never have the guts to discuss. Anjuly Mathai is of the opinion that it was revolutionary during her time since it occurred at a period when Malayali society was still confined inside the hypocritical bounds of Puritanism. She is the first person, according to Anjuly Mathai, to educate us that it is OK to want, not only with our thoughts, but also with our body. This demonstrates the writer's willingness to break taboos by presenting the audience to subjects that are associated with the sexual yearnings of a woman, which are subjects that previous female authors have never addressed. According to Ancy K. Sunny, "Her writings open a window into the complexities of the female mind and thought process, as well as her struggles with the patriarchal setup to which she was bound, her search for love, and her acknowledgement of the body's carnal desires."

Feminism In the Works of Kamala Das

In her short story "The Sunshine Cat," Kamala Das details one specific incident in which a lady was subjected to abusive treatment. A yellow cat is referred to in the title. When her significant other locked her in a room, she was kept company not by a cat but by a single ray of sunlight that found its way into the space. When she was locked up, her significant other kept her restricted in a room. The lady in the sonnet is looking for a meaningful experience in the company of her partner, who has repeatedly let her down by his lack of sincerity, infidelity, and consistency. According to her, he is a tyrant and a predator. The sonnet is a subdued mobilization of the sensitive outrage at the humiliation of woman in a male-dominated environment where nobody truly focuses on her uniqueness, purpose, or the necessity for emotional pleasure. The sonnet is written in the form of a question.

She presents herself to the outer world as a sunny cat who seems to be permanently satisfied with every real convenience. In reality, she is a yellow cat that once lived but has since passed away. Her attractiveness, freshness, and splendor have all been eradicated as a result of being denied freedom and contentment. She lacks what may be called "intellectual pride" but is straightforward and credulous in her role as a poet of emotion. She composes of her yearnings in opposition to a moderate and banned society and brings out the tenderness of women rising from dormant jobs to the point of finding and arresting her own freedom and individuality in the process. She states that as of late I have begun to experience a desire in the book "Summer in Calcutta." to take in with fervor, like a forest fire that is burning through, and, with each killing, to acquire a wilder and more spectacular attraction to everything that is coming my way. It is sufficient to assert that her poetry is predicated, at least partially, on the physical



characteristics of women in order to accomplish what has to be done. One may claim that her refrains expressing real love are not devoid of sentiments, despite the fact that feminine rationality, in its truest sense, places importance on passionate bonds.

The words may be powerful, yet the sentiments they evoke are soft and delicately feminine. In addition to her exploration of women's necessities, she demonstrates the want to lose oneself in impassioned love, which is a topic that is covered in "The Looking Glass" from *The Descendants*. She, along with her female friends, encourages her partner to offer her "what makes you woman." The things that society says should be avoided because they are dirty or untouchable are the same things that women should be providing for the people they care about, such as the scent of perspiration between their breasts. The cozy jolt of feminine blood should not be kept a secret from the person who loves you. The poet believes that love should be characterized by an unequivocal and real sincerity. It is important for a woman to "Stand nude before the glass with him" and let her significant other see her in all of her natural beauty. In a similar vein, the lady has to show appreciation for even the "affectionate details" of her cherished one. Because Kamala Das dissented against the overarching frameworks that the society upheld, people began to refer to her as a "rebel."

Her insulted feminine self embarked on ardent wanderings in an effort to discover an identity and independence for herself. When everything was taken into consideration, her typical make-up of an average lady was a component that always prevented her from breaking endlessly and completely free from the role of a conventional spouse. The environment in which Kamala's poetry take place is either wholly Indian or a world that the poet has created on her own. Nevertheless, the female rationality in her poetry is what strikes one as being most striking about them, more so than the Indianness. In her affirmation, which can be seen in both her poetry and her work, she reveals herself to be the essayist of feminine wants, desires, and worries, or the champion of women's motivation. She shown a tremendous amount of commitment by rejecting the sexual progressivism and providing hope and reassurance to young people that they can reject the damaged individual attitude and that they can baffle the most flaming culture's effort to mistreat and diminish women. She did this by challenging the sexual expansionism. Each lady is a manifestation of Kamala Das.

An energy of the self is required for the entry stall mode in Kamala, and this self must be placed in focus with "all selves." Her poems such as "A Relationship," "Summer in Calcutta," and "An Introduction," along with a few others, will, all things considered, admit her strength and opportunity in communicating for all to hear the riddle longings and objective of womankind or of women who are suffering women, appalling spouses, and hesitant sex fiends. The majority, by a wide margin, of her poems investigate the role of sex labor that an Indian woman performs, including the humiliation it entails, the conflict it generates, and the torment it brings about. Poetry written by Kamala Das symbolizes the experiences and aspirations of women who have risen above abusive and subservient relationships and are now working to strengthen



their identities and sense of self. It should come as no surprise that this is in no way a straightforward or simple technique, given that it involves getting rid of a lot of things, adopting a guarded attitude, and putting one's broken self through the ringer in a large number of different personas. Her poems are often seen as a proclamation of the pitiful predicament of a bewildered woman who is in need of love, thinking, and compassion, as well as a life partner who values her, warmth, and a home.

CONCLUSION

The writings of Kamala Das are characterized by their heavy use of personal material and their high degree of confessional tone. The majority of her poems are about marriage, which displays her bitter attitude towards her husband and with other men with whom she developed endless sexual connections in order to get some comfort of her sufferings. These relationships were made in order for her to find some relief from her ordeals. A life spent on a ground that was empty and burnt owing to barren relationships both before and after marriage is the kind of life that Kamala Das described as being the life of a woman who is filled with sadness and hardship. She not only expressed her personal anguish and despair, but also the anguish and despair of other women who are the victims of a society that is dominated by males. Her experience became the experience of a woman who fought an unconquerable battle against the predominance of men. The memoirs and poems of Kamala Das reveal the unfolding picture of a woman afflicted with indecision, restlessness, worry, and insecurity at various points in her life. In a same manner, Shashi Deshpande has painted a portrait of Indian women and how they manage to maintain their identities in a society that is controlled by males while yet fulfilling the roles of daughter, wife, and mother. Instead than using her heroines as stand-ins for other people, Shashi Deshpande portrayed them as fully realized people in their own right. When Deshpande examines man-woman interactions, he often focuses on the subject of where women stand in patriarchal societies and how they might maintain their uniqueness within such societies.

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