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## **SEARCH FOR LOVE IN KAMALA DAS' POETRY**

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# Search for Love in Kamala Das' Poetry

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**Abstract –** *If we throw a closer look at Kamala Das's poems, one can find easily that love, sex, marriage and companionship were major concerns to her. Quest for love has been the prominent feature and preoccupation of Kamala Das. She analyzes love's several facets and basically her love poetry can be grouped into two parts. In the first part, the physical love is quite important and in second part Das' concern can be seen towards real love. To her ideal love means the sort of relation that exists between the lord Krishna and Radha? It is the very phase of love, where lovers leave their egos or narrow outlook to mingle with each other. On the other hand, the first phase signifies the lovers who are not ready to sack their egos which come in their way to have perfect love.*

**Keywords :** Love, Frustrations, Feminine, Male Dominated Society, Essence.

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In the contemporary literature, written by women, the feminine voice resolves for the most part round claim for faultless independence in personal matters, essentially in relation to love and sex. The old customs compliant place to the all-pervading spirit of modernism which has crystallized principally in the exclusion of the status quo in every implausible walk of life. It appears flawlessly natural that Indian women make higher their voice against the well-known order and try to pronounce their divergent identity breaking the conventional taboos as to love and sex which is the upshot of male dominated society.

It is noteworthy to mention that Das' exhibition of several shades of physical love is found in confessional mode. She talks boldly about her unpleasant sexual experiences. This is one of the reasons that her poems are autobiographical. But this offers a kind of genuineness to her poems which is found absent in love poetry written today.

But in Kamala Das' poetry the element of 'bhakti' is missing. Her affinity with Krishna is largely human. But very soon she reaches at this point that her such ideal search is futile. Even she realizes the cure worse than the disease. The pain of not finding a true lover and a sense of loss torments her much. She faces the truth that the body can't take her for enough as it is mere a trap which stops her from tasting true love.

As the convict studies  
His prison's geography  
I study the trappings  
Of your body, dear love,

For I must someday find

An escape from its snare

(The Prisoner)

Her search for love ends up in sheer frustrations. She spends her life in deep pain, repenting and crying most of the time.

"They let her slide from pegs of sanity into

A bed made soft with tears and she lay there weeping

For sleep had lost its use; I shall build walls with  
tears,

She said, walls to shut me in... her husband shut her

In every morning; locked her in a room of books..."

(The Sunshine Cat)

It is crystal clear that she feels crazy, sad, and hungry in finding a true lover in her life. Her heart, she says, remains, discontented. She writes,

"... Who can?

Help us, who have lived so long,

And have failed in love? The heart,

An empty cistern waiting

Through long hours, fills itself  
 With coiling stalks of silence...  
 I am a freak."

(The Freaks)

A closer look at her poems will show that love, sex, marriage and companionship were important subjects to her. Hari Mohan Prasad and Chandra Prasad Singh have understood these points clearly when they write, "Her poetry has often been considered as a gimmick in sex or striptease in words, an over exposé of body or 'snippets of trivia.' But the truth is that her poetry is an autobiography, an articulate voice of her ethnic identity, her Dravidian culture. In her, the poet is the poetry fully obliterating Eliot's distinction between the man suffering and the mind creating 'A poet's raw material,' she says, is not stone or clay; it is her personality. I could not escape from my predicament even for a moment.(35)"

She has written her poetry to describe the different aspects of hypocrisy which got shadowed in present life. She was severely criticized for this by the high priests of social morality. Her views about love and domestic life become a tool of a rash criticism though she was not fully prepared for this. Anisur Rahman says, "As a poet, she explores her psychic geography with an exceptional female energy and achieves the capability to express her inimitable vision through the technique of sincerity (1)." Some world famous poets in this confessional mode are Robert Lowell, Theodore Roethke, Anne Sexton, John Berryman and Sylvia Plath.

Kakar remarks, "Encourages the individual to identify with an ideal primal self, released from all social and super ego constraints. Krishna's promise, like that of Dionysus in ancient Greece, is one of utter freedom and instinctual exhilaration (142)."

Kamala Das often feels that love is a hollow word as the male dominated society shows no compassion, affection of a woman's aspirations. For a woman, according to Kamala Das, love is the essence of her life. The initial flirtations, the teenage exuberance, the lust and sexual instincts of the young woman, her love for the children are all nothing but the peripheral expressions of her love. A woman expects for love and their love is not one sided. She wishes to get love and to give love. Rukmani in her assertion against the social forces comes out as a positive mature leader. Kamala Markandaya lets her woman have the long-established role, but makes them feature the modern dilemma.

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