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**A RARE GLIMPSE OF CONFESSIONAL POETRY:
KAMALA DAS**

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A Rare Glimpse of Confessional Poetry: Kamala Das

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Abstract – In the current Indian literary setting Kamala Das occupies a high-flying position as a poetess of talent and creativity. She, a major Indian poetess in English, has fascinated international attention by desirable quality of her bold, uninhibited expression of feminine urges following with other women poets. Among the presented Indian female writing in English, Kamala Das's name ends the list of the writers who have shown serious apprehension with the representation of woman in literature and have spoken restiveness with the conventional positioning of woman. Kamala Das's works show her concern with the social and cultural creation of gender, raising her objection against the marginalization and mistreatment of woman.

Keywords: Confessional, Marginalization, Identity, Hideous, Self-Centered

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INTRODUCTION

(p.87)

Kamala Das is often reckoned as a confessional poet. She has succeeded in going into the subliminal needs, desire and apportions of the feminine mind. Anisur Rahman comments in this connection, "As a poet, she explores her psychic geography with an exceptional female vision through the technique of sincerity." (p.1)

While Sylvia Plath writes,

"Dying

Is an art, like everything else?

I do it exceptionally well"

(p.573)

It is important to point out that Sylvia Plath is often compared with Kamala Das. She was also sensitively and socially upset and she committed suicide at the young age of thirty. She wrote poetry which had intense insights into the inner depths of human psyche.

Kamala Das also has a few common qualities of Sylvia Plath, like her suicidal tendencies. Kamala Das's poem "The suicide" is particularly, noteworthy in this association she writes:

"O sea, I am fed up

I want to be simple

I want to be loved

And

If love is to be had

I want to be dead, just dead"

She found herself in a custom ridden, conventional society dominated by men who looked different and acted different. They looked funny, hideous, self-centered and proud to Kamala Das: Women on the other hand are like dolls in the hands of men. According to her, modern women need freedom, self-respect, and affection and so on. Her poems are a means of transportation to bring to the surface the concealed tension in the mind of women, who are unwilling to raise their voice, unlike Kamala Das. Kamala Das, therefore, has uttered her emotions freely in fact boldly through her poems, making herself, controversial.

Kamala Das writes with an outspokenness and unusual in the Indian framework. Most Indian poets in English do not have the sincerity of Kamala Das in creatively analyzing and evaluating their experience. Confessional mode of writing has its essential origin in the mid-50s in America, Johan Berryman, Robert Lowell, Anne Sexton, Sylvia Plath being its chief exponents. Confessional poetry means objective diagnostic or even clinical surveillance of incident

from one's own life whether tinged with comedy or irony, self-loathing or compassion.

Kamala Das, who writes in the tradition of confessional writers, make a fuss of in a great deal. She says "The poetry never reaches a stage of sickness and breakdown but in her morbid moods Kamala Das comes close to the more pathological states of confessional poetry when she steers clear of self-pity on the one and the loneliness and despair come through." (p. 81)

Most of the poems by Kamala Das are examination of the gender role an Indian woman plays --- the humiliation they involve, the resistance they provoke, and the pain they cause. The confessional mode in Kamala Das is a performance of the self, to struggle hard to accomplish its own identity, is the central theme. In "The Freaks," the speaker says : " who can help us who have lived so long and have failed in love." The speaker says that she is a freak and the freakiness is an internalization of the spacer's urgently felt need to save her face.

"The Looking Glass" in which Kamala Das exhorts women to be cautious in matters of love; it is poem which suggests that woman's Achilles' heel lies in her body, which has its needs.

Oh yes,
getting A man love is easy, but
living Without him afterwards
may have to be Faced....

His last voice calling out your name and your Body
which once under his touch had glared like burnished
brass, now drab and destitute.

("The Looking Glass" p. 16-24)

The very poem also shows that the female body seems to make her a victim of male domination, which she whole-heartedly recants. The free and frank erotic lyricism are part of the creative poetry of Kamala Das as is the case with other women poets

Writing on the motif isolation in contemporary American women's poetry, Deborah Pope says, In modern confessional poetry, as an extension of The Adamic tradition, the stance of Everyman is Readily available to the male poet. It is expected that, Personally alienated and desperate as his voice may Be, it is still the voice of his time. By articulating the Personal psychoses of his experience, he is Simultaneously relaying the social fabric of his world.

Yet, for the female confessional poet, there is not The same extension. She is not Everyman, and is Hardly Everywoman. Her experience only serves to Reinforce her sense of isolation and freakishness.

She cannot even believe in a solidarity or community With other woman. Although in a very real sense Male confessional poets to bespeak trauma of their Times, poets like Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton remain Individual "crazy women."

(p.6-7)

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