

An Introduction : A Poetry of Freedom

Kisor Baulia

When Indo Anglian poetry was badly in need of a strong and bold feminist voice, Kamala Das emerged with a gust of wind. The earlier Romantic poetry of Toru Dutt and Sarojini Naidu gave way to the renaissance of Indo-Anglian poetry through the experiments of Kamala Das and her crew. She had a traumatic marital experience and its reflection can be found in her early poetry. She brought about a kind of confessional poetry for the declaration of a feminist revolution advocating the rights of women.

Mary Wollstonecraft gave her dictum in, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1793). Later Simone De Beauvoir and as late as Elaine Showalter ushered in the era of the so-called feminist poetics. *An Introduction* is an Indian woman's reply to the western quest. Her main purpose is to break the robust barrier of male chauvinism. Kamala Das raises a voice against the 'Subjugation of Women'. In *An Introduction*, Das explores her complex emotions regarding the system controlling her life and the lives of countless suffering women. She also has the experience to back up her assertions about freedom and oppression as she played a critical role in the establishment of the Indian feminist movement.

She inherits a Malayalam language and South Indian parentage. Born in 1934, She wrote in Malayalam under the pen name of Madhavi Kutty. Her publication includes *Summer in Calcutta* (1965), *The Descendants* (1965), *The old Play House'* and others. She was given Sahitya Academy awards in 1969. *An Introduction* is a confessional poem. It is semi auto-biographical in every inch. She frankly speech what she feels. This faithfulness to clarity of expression makes her to be the most frank and confessional:

...for I became tall, my limbs, Swelled and one or two places
sprouted hair.

She chooses English to be her poetical vehicle, but critics violently

.....
Assistant Professor, Department of English, Karimpur Pannadevi College

charged her to be original. She claims that whenever she writes in any Language, it becomes her own democratic identity. Of course she attains mastery in giving stamp of her own in diction. Her rebellion against patriarchy is to secure an identity for herself in a male-dominated world. The poem begins with the assertion, 'I don't know politics, but I know the names of those in power'. She can announce the names of the contemporary politicians just like the days of weeks or names of months, beginning with Pandit Nehru. She writes that she is well acquainted with the Indian patriarchy. Simultaneously she can speak in three language, write in two and dream in one. Critics advised her to avoid English, because it was un-English. Kamala Das protests through her half English and half Indian hybrid language. She thinks her language as natural as the blind speech of the trees in storm or the monsoon clouds or of rain or of incoherent mutterings of the blazing preys.

When She grew and became adolescent, she was pinning for love, an able-bodied boy of sixteen was pushed into her bed room and preserved virginity molested: He did not beat me. But my sad woman-body felt so-beaten. Gradually she had to bear the burden of pregnancy. An intense sense of hatred grew for mankind (specially the man). She began to wear male garments, cut her hair short and simply ignored her womanliness. The categorizers asked her to be a woman in dress and manner, and behave like a woman. This is a kind of social pressure upon her feminine existence.

They advised her to be good wife, an embroiderer and a house hold woman, skillful enough to quarrel with her servants or to be Madhavi Kutti or Kamala Das. On the whole they tried to compel her 'to fit in'. They forced her to the patriarchal ecosystem only to be dominated by the predators, 'namely men'. Kamala Das appears to be staunch supporter of the growing tendency to feminism, declaring her independent existence: It is time to choose a name, a role. She began to live in her own way, by drinking at midnight and gossiping late. She frequented many hotels and tasted promiscuous love of many men of her choice.

Apparently she is transformed to a kind of fallen woman, but-Kamala Das is to be looked up as a non-traditional unique voice in

indo-Anglian poetry. She a sinner as well as a saint of lover. She represents the binary opposition of the beloved and the betrayed, the fallen and revived. She wants to highlight her own through a self-coined idiom. Her frustration disillusionment represents every woman. The way she had been exploited physically and mentally will be revenged upon men.

'Blood will have blood'

An Introduction is itself a prelude to the process of feminine liberation. She represents the Post -Modern and Post-Colonial poetical thesis on feminism in Indo Anglian Context.

Works Cited:

1. Das, Kamala, *My Story*, New Delhi: Sterling Publisher, 1977.
2. Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Penguin Books, 2004.