

RESEARCH ARTICLE



INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

2395-2636 (Print);2321-3108 (online)

Transcending gender stereotypes in the autobiography of Kamala Das My Story and her willingness to explore transgressions of the Love Laws

SAPNA G.S

Research Scholar, REVA University, Rukmini Knowledge Park, Kattigenahalli, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India.

Email id –gshsapna@gmail.com

ABSTRACT



SAPNA G.S

The highlight of this paper is to focus on the significance of how Kamala Das transcends the gender stereotypes in her autobiography *My Story* and her willingness to explore transgressions of the Love Laws in contrast to a Female society which takes the subservient and peripheral position by the authoritative potential of male in the whole history of human civilization, as it breaks the flatness from the erstwhile female Indian writers. The autobiography gives an insight into of her life from the age of four where Kamala Das auto biography transcends the typical gender stereotype image of the society and has unambiguously elucidated every concern related with gender, class, caste and oral history by using the straight forward mode of writing. She gives us an rendition in her autobiography about colonial Indian society and their favourism to missionary schools, then her forced and untimely marriage which she was not satisfied and happy ,birth of her children; her blooming literary career her sexual inspiration; infidelity ; and, finally, a slow but steady reconcile with her husband, writing, and sensuality . *My story* reveals from the first time in Indian English literature the truthful, candor and honesty by women writers of her sexual needs where the women sexuality had to be channelized in order to achieve innate morality which was presumed to be the stereotypical image of the woman, but a commemoration of the omnipresent experience of self, love-despair, torment and desolation, depicting an aversion and odium against the traditional mode of gender illustration apprehended through a Indian feminine cognizance.

Keywords: Kamala Das, autobiography, transcending, stereotype.

©KY PUBLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Autobiographical modal and genre was ignited as it gave way to a new meaning and thus opened up new vistas and prospect of cognition for all. This aided the women writers to be unvarnished, open-minded and emancipated from preconception giving way to the audacious and self-confident power of speech through autobiography of Kamala

Das *My Story* where she confidently implied embarrassment and emotional aversion as a woman is indoctrinated to do her duty without being selfless, submissive and docile and should play only the role of a daughter, a wife or a mother subordinate, never to question the male member. Rules were laid down by men and women had to follow. In spite of all these illogical and biased rules

strictness and regulations and their strong enforcement by male members and more sadly and aggressively by the elderly female members, there are many examples where Indian women have tried to break their monotony and have come out of the veil of shame, and have tried to listen to their hearts. Although they knew that this change by their side would lead for punishment, criticism and they would be forbidden from the society but none of these would affect them hence these women bravely expressed their mind. These writers transcended the gender stereotypes.

India became self-governing in 1947, a new instigation was performed, the society gained solidity and the urge for self-expression through poetry, fiction and in the autobiographies became popular due to the new social scenario which inspired creativity in the minds of the Indian writers to write in English as well as in other regional languages.

Kamala Das speaks of women in India of their actual value and symbolic value which has been marginalized by man. Women were supposed to be acquiescent for their spouses who were always masters. And the same holds good for Kamala Das too. Her autobiography is also a bold expression of the torture and trauma faced not only by her, but it inwardly speaks of the predicament, and heart breaking condition of an Indian woman. Kamala Das was determined to revolt and transcend against the traditional society's definition of womanhood and dared to question the conservative sex-roles.

Theoretical framework

In her autobiography, she brings out, infertility of married life as she awaits love, conversation, companionship and warmth from her husband which he fails and the intensity of misery to surrenders to her husband who is abhorrent, obnoxious, and with whom she has no emotional contact paving way to emotional desolation she feels herself lost and unhappy and she is going to be the scapegoat of a husband lewd and carnal hunger and perhaps, Kamala Das awaits love, conversation, She wanted him to treat her as her father treated her, his dear companionship and warmth from her dear which he fails out of [their] union, there would

be born a few children But all she gets in her marriage is ferocity and insolence.. Kamala Das here clearly reprehend Indian marriage as patriarchal victimization.

Kamala Das opposes the ill-treatment of mind or body. She portrays her aversion against mastery of one on another. As she feels her body as liability hence She wants autonomy of all kinds of oppression as the women were considered as inferior to man, deprived of rights even the right for living, speech, expression and the incompetence of the female body .Utmost Indian houses pursue the patriarchal system of male leverage where the male are loaded with superior position and high respect in society, paving way for sexuality in all possible ways like physically, emotionally and spiritually for the oppressed and enslaved women in a patriarchal society. Kamala Das is in an unlike situation. She wants to get a severance but at the same time she knows that it is objectionable as she could not return to her Nalapat House as a divorcee as there was good bondage between the two families for three generations which she did not want to crumble. Troubled marriage life and the impossibility of breaking it, her son's illness, and her husband's refusal of her in favour of a homosexual bond, Kamala Das finds herself on a balcony attempting to commit suicide: However_Kamala Das did not jump instead_she began to write about a new life, an unstained future and her innovative writing where she attempts to manifests her pressure for originality and deliverance from harm which exhumes its fruition and realization, accomplishment and cognizance. Now a days women writers are showing increasing willingness to explore transgressions of the Love Laws, in particular extra –marital affairs. Sexual fidelity to a single man, the husband has been a defining feature of the Indian ideal of the womanhood. As it has emerged through the ages .Although Sita represents th eideal of womanhood in India but writers who were bold like Kamala Das who had growing awareness of their own sexuality which led to a stronger demand for emotional and physical satisfaction within marriage.

Results and Discussion

Das saves her life by telling her life. Her autobiography encompasses the mental and emotional attainment of the female. Charged with sexual and erotic experience and physical warmth. Kamala Das in her autobiography unshelters her sexual hurl, the cravings for truth and perfection, adulterate affairs and ardor for spiritual solace. She discovers her sexual self where woman's desire becomes dominant.

Thus Kamala Das pencils the life force of the renaissance, protest and dissent against patriarchal order, confrontation and encounter of desires with feminine modesty, the inner dissension of ached woman, and sustained masculine supremacy which were very rarely explored by the other writers. Kamala Das's writings are unvarying and have their seduction, allure and leanings on unambiguously as to how Kamala Das goes to describe emphatically about the hankering she arouses the readers with an afoot of exotica of a woman which was never done before. The whole Indian society was dazed by her revelation and disclosure hence she is presumed to be the most undaunted and vexed writer as a mark of transcending for the better because of her assertive articulation of the complications of women in her own style.

Conclusions

Hitherto as New Women, Kamala Das for the first time began to register the paramount need to disentangle and liberate the deep felt emotions and secrecies without inhibitions.. She has search for unblended love throughout her existence. Kamala Das has exhibited her spirit and valour in unvealverity and psychosexual accomplishments of the female which transcends the typical gender stereotypes and labels .Abounding with sexual encounters and physical rapport; Das analyses and surveys the deep incitement of the human soul, craving for truth and eminence. In other way, this is a comprehensive book. *My Story* brings out inner strength of Kamala Das and her pursuit for self-identity she discards altogether The rooted patriarchal value the debilitate and fabricate

traditional restriction which she thinks deteriorate against her essential self and thus splinters open her sheathe and comes out from it to have a better glimpse of the world around her. She has opened new panorama of autobiographical writings. The present article examines as to how Kamala Das autobiography has dynamically responded to the instabilities of this rapidly changing world. It tries to raise questions and formulate answers, tentative at times: have contemporary Indian women writers in English gone beyond the feminist search for identity and self assertion against patriarchal forces which were the central concerns of all the writers of the previous generations.

References

1. Das Kamala, *My Story*, Sterling pub. New Delhi 1988, p3
2. Das Kamala, *an Introduction*, Pen craft, London, 1994, p43
3. Millar J S, 'The Subjection of women', pen craft, New York, 1969, p 37
4. Khan Coppelia, 'The Freedom to Decompose: The Poetry of Kamala Das', *Journal of Indian writing in English* Vol. VIII, No. 1, 1980
5. Lim Lin Geok Shirley, 'Terms of Empowerment in Kamala Das's *My Story* Decolonizing the subject', Ed.Sidonie smith And Julia Watson, Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press, 1992, p 347
6. Bhatnagar, M. K. *Indian writing in English*, Vol. VII. Atlantic Publishers, 2001, p. 183.