

**THEMES AND TECHNIQUES OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENT  
WITH SPECIAL FOCUS TO KAMALA DAS AND ADRIENNE RICH  
WORKS**

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**Abstract:**

It has drawn comparisons between Kamala Das and Adrienne Rich's cognitive processes and autobiographical reflection in their poems in this particular situation. The cultures of Adrienne Rich and Kamala Das are very different from one another. Indian society has never been thought to be as developed as American culture. Due to practices like child marriage, the murdering of unborn children, dowries, the lack of equal rights for women, and the status of women in general, Indian society is seen as archaic and tradition-bound, and even though advancements can be beneficial, changes are not readily welcomed. In this article, themes and techniques of autobiographical element with special focus to kamala das and Adrienne rich works has been discussed.

**Keywords:** Autobiographical Element, Kamala Das, Adrienne Rich.

**INTRODUCTION:**

The poetry of Kamala Das bears witness to the catastrophic effects of societal oppression on women in India. When it comes to American society, these kinds of social problems don't exist. Traditional customs do not bind or chain women; they are aware of their rights. However, the way the human mind functions in two quite distinct social and cultural contexts is nearly identical. Kamala Das, an Indian woman from an ordinary middle-class household who did not benefit from schooling, sounded a lot like her highly educated American counterpart, who lived in a society that had supposedly progressed and had a long history of feminism and women's emancipation. These authors' poems frequently contain autobiographical information, whether on purpose or by accident.

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**AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENT:**

These two women had very fond memories of their grandmother. Rich tells us about both her paternal and maternal grandmothers in her poem "Grandmothers." She describes her maternal grandmother, Mary Gravely Jones, who seldom visited them, in the opening section of the poem: Grandmother Jones was the formal guest under my father's roof, and we didn't have any nicknames or diminutives for her. She was a rare visitor.

She talks about her memories and how her life may have ended differently if she had been able to give her creativity a genuine outlet. Her mentality revolves around the idea that her potential was wasted and that neither marriage nor children could have helped her develop her gifts. Rich remembers spending a summer evening with her grandmother. She writes:

You sat with my sister and me one summer night.

Long after dusk, the wooden glider held us there with torrents of suppressed speech.

You looked as though your emerald eyes were clinched against resistance, and you could quote every poet I had ever heard of, including Amiel, Bernard Shaw, and The Opium Eater.

She discusses her paternal grandma, Hattie Rice Rich, in the second poem in Grandmothers. She recalls that she catered to everyone's needs and that her friendly demeanor made other people's lives easier.

Everyone found your kindness of soul to be convenient.

How you boiled your own egg, woke up with the birds and the kids,

Hours of fishing on a pier with your umbrella out,

took the streetcar to go shopping in the city.

Forever at your son's whim

We also learn that, as a widow without a real home, her grandmother spent the last years of her life traveling between Rich's father and his sister.

You were always just "Anana," not "Grandmother Rich."

Despite having personal wealth, Hattie, the widow of Samuel, was without a matriarch and lived among her children and grandchildren.

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In Kamala Das's memories, her grandmother was never far away. Her poetry frequently conveys the impression of grandma. Her grandmother comes to mind every time she looks out to sea. She discusses the profound love and understanding she experienced from her grandmother in her family home in her poem "My Grandmother's House." With nostalgia, she says:

There used to be a house far away from me where I used to feel loved.

We also find references from her grandmother, who tells us about the time she went to her hometown and her grandma asked her to stay the night. In her poem "Composition," she pens:

I was requested to stay one night at the former family house by my grandma.

We'll chat, darling, she said.

We'll talk all night long.

Another poem, "Nani," from the collection "The Old Playhouse and Other Poems," tells of a grandmother's desire for her granddaughter to move past any negative experiences that might have an impact on her life.

These poets' poems don't list the events in their lives in any particular chronological order. It flashes through their recollections at different times. We learn about the individuals who have impacted their lives in one way or another. Their relationship with their family members and how they remember them are documented in their poetry.

In contrast to Kamala Das's loving grandma, her father comes across as a self-centered monster who never made an effort to comprehend her wants or feelings. According to Das, she is the one to blame for all the hardships she experienced in life. If she's fallen short

My way, and now ask for love—if not in modest change—at the door of a stranger?

She adds that she was completely unprepared for her marriage, which his father arranged. She always associates her father with having condemned her to hell. She composes "An Introduction," a poem.

Well, it seems like it. I asked for love, not knowing what else to ask for, and he pulled a sixteen-year-old into the bedroom before shutting the door. Even though he didn't beat me, my depressed body felt like it had.

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Even though she frequently berated her father for not loving her, she still harbored some affection for him. She writes in her poem "My Father's Death" that throughout her father's hospitalization and coma:

Well, well, well, well. My father was the one I feared.

He only seemed close to me while he was in a coma, and I whispered my love for him to him.

Wholeheartedly, she yearned for his affection. She hoped that you had asked me honestly who I was and that you had hugged me once, father, and held me to your breast.

Rich and her father have a close bond, whereas Das does not. In her poem "After Dark," she expresses her sorrow at her father's passing and laments the end of their relationship, all the while remembering her resentment and annoyance at his condescending behavior toward her and his continual monitoring of her texts. She was appreciative of him at the same time, since he was the first to see her ability and make her pursue it. It was he who demanded that she become a proficient poet and woman of letters by learning the craft of poetry and mastering rhymes and metric. She claims that he was the one who knew her the best.

Years of hardship, places I went, and even languages I didn't know well—I know you better than you know yourself. I have a deeper understanding of you than you do. I knew you till I hobbled away, ripped from my roots, and self-maintained.

In the poem "Sources," she makes a similar reference to her father and discusses how he raised her like a son, but she also admits that there are moments when he treats her cruelly, which makes her ideal for poetry. She also criticizes him for raising her without acknowledging her Jewish heritage. I battled with you for years over your classifications, theories, will, and the cruelty that was inescapably linked to your love.

I'd been carrying on arguments with you in my brain for years.

I imagined myself as the oldest daughter in a household without a male, brought up as a son, educated to read and write with reverence, and taught to study but not to pray.

Why poets share details of their own lives is a question that arises when we read such autobiographical poetry or memoirs. What kind of impression do these writers and poets hope to make on their readers? Canker provides a really articulate response to these queries. He claims that someone wrote it.

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In order to survey the enormous expanse of his own soul, react painfully and tremblingly from one abyss of his soul to another, and seek the light of day, he must not by any means put himself on display like a prostitute. This is his sole purpose. (Irena Avesenik Nabergoj, "Reality and truth in literature: from ancient to modern European literature")

Therefore, we might define autobiographical reflection as an echo of the poet's personal experiences and memories of those experiences.

Kamala Das's poems reveal that her marriage was a living hell. Her lover was imprisoned by "skin lazy hunger," unable to reach her soul. Her womanly figure pleased him. She says in "The Old Playhouse":

You were happy with my body's reaction, the weather, and my typical shallow convulsions. Your spittle trickled into my mouth, filling every nook and crevice, and your bitter-sweet liquids embalmed my weak lust.

She goes on to say that. Cowering

Under your hideous ego, I consumed the magic loaf and shrank down to dwarf size. I murmured meaningless answers to all of your questions since I had lost all motivation and rationality.

She makes a comparison between her husband's hand and a hooded serpent in her poem "The Stone Age."

Ask me, everyone, what he perceives in me and why he is referred to as a lion.

During his free time, he should describe the flavor of his mouth and explain why his hand sways prior to clasping my pubis like a hooded snake. Why does he lean across my breasts and sleep like a fallen giant tree? Why is love so fleeting and life so short?

Her husband was unable to see past her physical appearance; therefore, the things she yearned for remained unrealized dreams. Her writings occasionally mirror these things, which were so vividly imprinted in her mind. She began looking for love outside of marriage as a result of her husband's inaction, and we learn more about this from her poems in "An Introduction."

All rights reserved. I loved a man that I met. He is every man who desires a woman, just as I am every woman seeking love. Call him what you will. In me, the oceans' ceaseless waiting, and in him, the ravenous hurry of rivers.

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She also pens a poem titled "Substitute."

Love then turned into a reversible door.

One departed, and another entered.

Then I became overwhelmed, as always, in my arms.

Served as a stand-in for another stand-in.

Well, what use was it to explain? The mob had no names and no faces.

Rich fully embraced womanhood and expected everything to be as prosperous as her academic and writing careers, but she discovered that having children was far more difficult than she had imagined. She was fighting for her identity as a woman, and she wanted to win. She poses the query:

Not that everything is completed flawlessly, but is it completed at all? Indeed, consider the odds! or ignore them indefinitely.

Rich experienced the same yearning for love in her married life that Das did, but all he got was passion masquerading as love. In her poem "Two Songs," she says:

He seems incredibly attractive to me all day, like a treasure one could ruin their tranquility for.

If love didn't require so many years, I would refer to it as love, but lust is also a gem, a lovely blossom, and what pure joy it is to know that all of our deep questions are bred into a vibrant animal.

In a world dominated by men, Rich discovers that women are relegated to the status of bodies. In the poem "Planetarium," she makes the following claim:

In an attempt to convert pulsations into visuals for physical comfort and mental repair, I am a woman-shaped instrument.

Rich made the decision to divorce her spouse because she felt suffocated in her marriage. But she was unable to fully detach from her thoughts. She had unspoken feelings of concern for his first husband. She called him as soon as she learned of his poor health because she wanted to save him. Her poem "For the Dead" captures this moment in her life:

I had a dream that I gave you a call.

Saying: Take better care of yourself, but you weren't well and couldn't respond.

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This is how my love is wasted.

Attempting to protect you from yourself I've always been curious about the residue.

Water of energy pouring down a slope

long after the last drop of rain.

She was unable to move on from her first husband's death, and memories of him would constantly rush across her head. In "From a Survivor," a poem:

She discusses the nature of her relationship with him.

The agreement we reached was just the typical agreement between a man and a woman back then—I'm not sure who we believed we were—that our personalities could withstand the defeat of the race.

She claims that his body is just as vivid as it used to be and that she can clearly feel her feelings for him.

Functioning of mind does not have any fixed order. Streams of memory can flow in any direction.

**CONCLUSION:**

Adrienne Rich, like Kamala Das, was not content with her status as a conventional wife, mother, and housewife. Although she was intelligent and had a creative mind that seeks and develops opportunities, she felt confined by her duty as a housewife, which clogged her thoughts and made her life unpleasant. She was becoming less of a poet and was overworked with housekeeping duties. She describes this predicament in her poem "Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law":

Your mind is currently rotting away like a wedding cake, crumbling beneath the sharp edge of simple fact, rich with rumors, suspicion, and fantasy, and heavy with worthless experience. At the height of your abilities.

She likens her spouse to a monster that is obliterating her dreams.

A reflective lady sleeps with monsters; she becomes the beak that clutches.



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