

WOMEN'S MARGINALISATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SELECT POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON AND KAMALA DAS

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ABSTRACT

This study intends to show how patriarchy marginalises women at different levels of their lives. It tries to explain how women endure submissive status in their own families, how matrimony appears to be a trap for them and how they face patriarchal literary prejudices as women writers. To substantiate this view, a few of poems of both Emily Dickinson and Kamala Das have been analysed in detail. An analysis of these poets' poems shows how they reject their mediocre status as women to arise as powerful female literary figures. It also tries to depict these poets as the envoys of women in liberating them from the obsolete principles of patriarchy.

KEYWORDS: *Marginalisation, Submissive Status, Matrimony and Patriarchal Literary Prejudices*

INTRODUCTION

Women's marginalisation demands a serious attention in the twenty-first century, despite several progressive changes that have occurred in our society. "Women are considered as mute beings in the domestic, social and political spheres. The universal generalization is that historically and culturally women have been identified with, and defined by terms of inferiority and subordination" (Vinyard 92). In the nineteenth-century, America witnessed drastic changes and developments in society. In spite of these social changes, it was an age marked by the inequality among men and women. The Victorian era, praised men as the superior gender. Consequently, women had to accept a secondary status. Though the early nineteenth-century women had cherished judicial, political and social rights, they remained inferior to their parents and partners. Women were forced to obey the norms designed by patriarchy. The family and social lives of the American society underwent considerable changes with the beginning of industrialisation and urbanisation. "The middle-class families began to focus more on children as individuals, and women, freed from the most time-consuming aspects of household or agriculture, labor, spent more and more of their time on childrearing and developing skills as efficient housekeepers" (Wayne 3). All these changes had a serious impact on women's life. In nineteenth-century India, women's condition remained the same as that of America. The twentieth-century witnessed the emergence of the country from the iron grips of the colonial rule. Gradually, the middle-class life of the Indians transformed. However, women's subordinate status did not undergo any change. Even now, patriarchy continues to subjugate women emotionally as well as physically and curb their freedom to think and act in their own ways.