

## ***Confessional Poetry***

*Confessional Poetry* is a form of poetry in which the poet reveals very personal, intimate, sometimes shocking information about himself or herself. This style of writing was emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s and is associated with poets such as Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton and W D Snodgrass. It is sometimes also classified as a form of Postmodernism. It has been described as poetry of personal or 'I', focusing on extreme moments of individual experience, the madness and personal trauma, including the incidents of past as well as the present such as mental illness, sexuality and suicide, often set in relation to broader social themes.

Confessional poetry is quite different from traditional poems. This genre breaks down the traditional definition of poetry and explores new poetic style where poets vent out their inner feelings and unspoken words through their writings. Confessional poetry is famous both for male and female poet but female poets' theme; writing and style are different from male poets. For the female poets, confessional poetry is a medium where they can expose their psyche. Through this genre woman poets seek self-definition. Female confessional poets struggle to find connection between the name that was set for her by the society and the name that they want to give themselves. Sylvia Plath and Kamala Das are

two confessional poets belong to different country. Plath is an American confessional poet and Kamala Das is Indian poet. Though these two poets belong to different country, different society even their themes of poems are quite different but the tone of their poems is same. Their personal trauma, childhood suppression is vented out by their poetry. Both mental and physical sufferings can be seen in Sylvia Plath and Kamala Das's poems. Plath's poetry books *The Ariel* deals with her suffering for being a woman, this book also deals with mental sickness, the urge to find the Self of Plath. Then, Kamala Das's book *The Descendants* is more about her experience of love and lust. Many poems of this book are about her search for true love. Just like Sylvia Plath Kamala Das also portrays her sufferings for being a woman and her struggle to find self- definition. Actually, by showing personal sufferings in their poems, these two poets depict the universal sufferings of womanhood. This two women's struggle is to find their identity and Self. Actually, these two poets use this genre as a medium for their oppressed voice in a rebellious way. They project their emotion as well as represent the reality of the world through portraying their own experience.

Though the term. Confessional writing. was first used in the 20<sup>th</sup> century but it was still being practiced earlier and was considered as autobiographical writing. Confessional writing is a subgenre of autobiographical writing. Autobiography is the subjective, retrospective work written about the life of the self, by the self and aims to connect the past life of the self to the present of that self. But the history

of autobiography is a history of changing ideas about what may be meant by 'life' and 'self'. Such an example is the subjective, retrospective autobiography in Western literature of both women and men which defined life as 'Eternal Life' and the self as the 'Soul'. It was spiritual kind of writings. But, during the nineteenth and twentieth century this idea of autobiographical writing has changed (Oldfield 296). This era has come up with different idea.

Though autobiographical writing is based on a writer 's personal experience but it also represents an era, different issues and different ideas of that era. Confessional autobiography is neither spiritual, nor intellectual, nor social, but emotional. The 'self' in such autobiographies is the heart. However, Confessional poetry can be defined as the poetry. of the personal. According to M.L. Rosenthal .In the confessional poems the private life of the poet himself, especially under stress of psychological crisis, becomes a major theme. (Perloff 471). So, this genre is focused on extreme moments of the poets and their personal experiences. Then, the mode of this poetry arose from the 1960, s society of America. During this time, the sudden development made changes in all sectors of life which led cultural discontinuity in America. New generation avoided the old culture and lived a very carefree life. This type of sudden change created a distance between two generations. So, social lifestyle became collapsed due to this miscommunication and generation gap (Molesworth 163). In this situation, writers, sociologists found themselves alienated and isolated from the society. It

created the mode of confessional poetry where the poets wrote about themselves and about their beautiful past.

Lastly, I want to say that *Confessional Poetry* works as a mirror of the poets because it reveals the life and the psychology of a poet. This genre works as a medium for the poets to vent out their all personal feeling, experiences and their own thought about life. *Confessional Poetry* always works as a bridge between the poets and the readers. By reading confessional poems readers can connect their life with the poems since confessional poems also represent different aspects of human life. Sylvia Plath and Kamala Das are two examples of confessional poet whom universalizes the sufferings of womanhood through the lens of their own experiences in life. Their works depict the tragedy of life being a woman in the patriarchal society.

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