

## POETRY AND WOMEN: MEENA KANDASAMY'S SELECT POEMS

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### Abstract

Matthew Arnold says: Poetry is simply the most beautiful, impressive and widely effective mode of saying things, and hence its importance. It is an absolute expressive element of thoughts. Poetry is always original in its expression and so this paper focuses on the modern poems of Meena Kandasamy. Her poems expound the oppression and love. The interesting facts of her poems are the way of expression. It is loud and bold. She is a rare personality of rationalistic thought and not hesitated to express her views. She defies with rare themes and issues in her poetry. Her spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling flows extremely on the downtrodden and oppressive class. Here is a true democracy of hers is a poem: of the people, by the people and for the people. This paper consists of 'Aggression', 'Another Paradise Lost', 'Becoming Brahmin', 'Mohandas Karamchand' and 'The Gods Wakeup'. These are placed under the title *Touch*. Like her poems she is an unconventional poet. Through her poems she breaks the so called feminine language. Writers are not always name as Writers; they are "Women" writers. Male writers are not name as "Male" writers, for female writers are named as "Women" writers. She is the one who breaks it. Her themes convey all these. This paper is therefore titled as: Poetry and Women: Meena Kandasamy's Select Poems.

**Key Words:** Poetry, Women, Rationalism, Meena Kandasamy, Modern Poetry.

Coleridge put into words beautifully as: 'I wish our clever young poets would remember my homely definitions of prose and poetry; that is prose; words in their best order; - poetry; the *best* words in the best order'. It suits this poet Meena Kandasamy who is the symbol of modernity, rationalism and bold voice. This paper talks about her five select poems: 'Aggression', 'Another Paradise Lost', 'Becoming Brahmin', 'Mohandas Karamchand' and 'The Gods Wakeup'. It's a wonder that since these poems are selected and so it binds with each other like a circle in its theme. She registered her strong voice by representing the oppressed class. Her intention of

writings these poetry is not the same. She has just put out words and while reading it conveys that these poems are written for a reason. It might be her suppressed emotions of the society and its conduct towards a particular group of people. By analysing it one by one it can be conveyed.

**Aggression:**

In this poem the poet talks about the aggressive state of a group. They have been waiting for a longtime to their dream come true. Out of their endless wait their aggressive state may one day broke into wails. The suppressed emotions would one day come to light, but it is not possible with all the emotions. Their controlled underneath emotions (rights) will definitely get into greater forms. She rightly says: “Sometimes the outward signals of inward struggles take colossal forms” (5). There their dreams get fulfillment. Therefore she concludes and she believes that aggression is not just a stressed state, for it leads to a positive change.

**Another Paradise lost**

The poet has proved the real sense of innovation and the exact sense of creativity which consists of virgin imagination the very title says “Another Paradise Lost” everything. It limned a new rendition of paradise lost. The poets rune usher in with a conversation between the poet and the snake (serpent). While she tried to kill it with acid, it started talking to the poet. It shows that the snake is in an exile. Here the poet has a political reference to Salman Rushdie’s state of exile. She has made a political reference and shows her poetry can also be a political poetry. When a poet is a rationalistic thinker he/she has to fall into this reference. As edited by Marcus Graham: “Poetry and propaganda are two sides of the same shield. Without passion there can be no poetry and all who feel strongly burn with zeal to have other share their feeling. True poets are also propagandists, even though their propaganda may be simply for the love of life and the life for love”. The snake talks about life where its perfection is in the difference between yielding and resisting. It also talks about the rebirth and reincarnation to the poet who is an agonist. It questioned her agnostic state. It takes a while for the poet to realise persuasive state of snake. It was the weapon of Satan in the Paradise Lost. The poet brings out her ideal point on how it is different from Milton’s. Being a rationalistic thinker, she delineated snake in her style. The words of snake would be evidence: “look here comrade, my credentials are different. In heaven, I was an activist and a dissenter” (9). It is conveyed that the snake was degraded from its position to suffer. What could be its so called question to God? Its, “I wanted to know why caste was there, why people suffered because of their karmas. I questioned the gods. I asked them what would happen if a high-born did manual work just like the low-born” (9). Through this one could comprehend the state of mind of the poet. It is evident from the very Tamil culture that caste came only after the commencement of Aryan. Previously people were segregated with the work. The poet even questions this particular partiality. Through the words of snake “I was a rebel pleading for liberty-equality-fraternity” (9). She attempted her clear state of mind. She is strong enough to be at her pivotal point –evading Caste. She also well versed it that: “In this tale, there was no forbidden fruit, no second fickle-minded woman. Tradition triumphed over reason and the good were cast away” (9). She once again registered the obvious state of every activist. Their freedom of speech in under question and their entire life will only be in solidarity. She has also depicted it: “I realised brutally that theirs was just another occupational hazard for choosing a life where I was to be showing solidarity with activists and dissenters” (9). With a personal interest towards the society lead her to be pinned among the Activists. And she has also become the one.

### **Becoming a Brahmin**

This is well known poem among the readers again for its reasonable theme. The poet not depicted she has almost verbalized the computerized of how to become a Brahmin she oppugn the conventional practice (prolonged) which is widely accepted. The poetical stanza is an oxymoron because she has also impeached about the failure for one group. This is often a succeeded program in the society the sequence of the lines are:

- Step 1. Take a beautiful Shudra girl
- Step 2. Make her marry and Brahmin
- Step 3. Let her give birth of his formal child
- Step 4. Let this child marry and Brahmin
- Step 5. Repeat steps 3-4 is times
- Step 6. Display the end product its Brahmin. (12)

These lines are her firestorm towards the father of nation. She records how nation seem behind the inept intelligence. She referred to Periyar document on 2.9.1947 on how the so called faith of nation did so. She derived in audacious way that the program failed for these unlucky follows and eagerly waiting for another father of nation. This particular poem can be called as a prologue for “Mohandas Karamchand”.

### **Mohandas Karamchand**

The poem is bounded with the controversial ideas in Mahatma. Though the ideas she discussed in the poetry are previously felt by all whenever one read it stamps its strong portrayal. The poet mocked at Einstein’s words: “generations to come will scarcely believe that such a one as this walked the earth in flesh and blood (36). At the beginning her mocking would not be revealed to the readers. Towards the end the readers could comprehend and wonder her bold attempt to use it in poetry. For her truth, non-violence ends all the other Gandhian connotations are a taboo. She brings out the reason why all these praised terms are taboo to her. She conveys that they had a separate name for Pariahs as “Harijans”. According to her this term dissolves their identity. Devotes of Mahatma throughout India would call them with the term he coined. She stands against it. She roared at his behaviour of posing himself with chant called Hey Ram. This is the exact line which reminds us about Mahatma’s rejections of Ambedkars’s Annihilation of Caste. Arundhati Roy wrote an article namely *The Doctor and The Saint* there she arise questions on why do the so called father of nation was not ready to bring out think act. She also focused on the politics behind it. she also says that this is the four state of India’s democracy.

The poet also pointed out how he treat his our women and this basic rights she warns indeed that he should remember, he stood with the help of women and survive because of women. Remember how you dealt with your poor wife. But they wrote your books, they make your life” (36). She rose he voice on how Mahatma itself a contradictor of his own principles. this reminds of the great person and their treatment towards this own women, critics are there on quoting the great Bharathiyar who strived hard for the empowerment of women he wrote poems on liberation, virtue, God, love and women. For all these he is remembered for supporting women and their Rights. Whenever we talk about modern women, Bharathi is the first person who strikes in most of our minds, as if he had coined the term “pudhumai pengal”. In this poem Meena Kandasamy says that Gandhi is known for all the good nature and people celebrated him for all his good. Behind the screen there lies a different phase of Gandhi. The world believe that he supports the untouchables in every mean and had a replaced name for them. For, he stood as crucial reason for the retainment of caste practice. She vociferates that caste troubles the people a

lot. Before she do something lucky he was killed for to her he died already because f his serpentine mind: “sadist foil you killed your body many times before this too”(36. For these unbeknownst character of Mahatma. She (representing the suppressed) hates him. it is wonder that this particular poem is the boldest view on Gandhi fortunately she has not mentioned the word Gandhi and to say it minimize the intense of theme. otherwise the poem is a firewall and who ever holds the white heat prolongs.

### **The Gods wake up**

The poet was addressed as agnostic and this poem is a wakeup call for Gods. She brings out how Gods too snore. With the common meaning heaven is the place of peace, for her it is the most loving place where Gods snore. They enjoy the endless sleep with the help of meaningful hymns of Brahmins are used to the charts of birth marriages and yognans. On the contrary gods also gets excited to a sound where it wakes them up. It is the funeral ceremony where the loud drums would be played she reminds and call it by name Necrophilia. It is the only music which reverberates the skies. It is not just the music of loved ancient noise for it has the deeper sense.

### **To Sum up**

The poet has touched the unfamiliar areas like protest to politics. Therefore poetry for women is a personal flow in words

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