

Reflection of Women's Inner Feelings in Sri Lankan Literature through the Poet "Kamala Wijeratne"

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Abstract

Kamala Wijeratne is a well-known educationist in the field of English, and she is a famous writer in literature. She won awards for her poetry. She is considered as a gift from her mother country Sri Lanka to the field of English Literature. She has contributed to the growth of English literature by writing hundreds of poems and poetic books. She writes on aspects of Sri Lankan culture; among her poems, some of them reflect women's inner feelings in Sri Lankan Culture. Through that kind of them, she has expressed her feelings on women's inner feelings by exemplifying women and their different situations in life. According to that, the purpose of this project is to analyze the poems of women's inner feelings, which were written by the poet Kamala Wijeratne. She has written many poems. Here this project focuses only on them related to the women's inner feelings. Three poems of Kamala Wijeratne are selected to analyze the women's inner feelings. These are "Farewell," "A mother laments," "A soldier's wife weeps." This study focuses on descriptive methodology to analyze the reflection of Women's inner feelings. According to the poems, they reflect women's inner feelings through the lines of them.

Keywords: Inner Feelings, Sri Lankan Literature, Kamala Wijeratne, Poem, Analysis of poem, Literature

Introduction

Kamala Wijeratne is a well-known educationist in the field of English, and she is a creative writer. She is a famous writer in literature. She won awards for her poetry. She is considered as a gift from her mother country Sri Lanka to the field of English Literature. She has contributed to the growth of English literature by writing hundreds of poems and poetic books. She writes on aspects of Sri Lankan culture; among her poems, some of them reflect women's inner feelings in Sri Lankan Culture. Through that kind of them, she has expressed her feelings on women's inner feelings by exemplifying women and their different situations in life.

Research Problem

It states that how the poems of Kamala Wijeratne reflect Women's inner feelings in Sri Lankan Literature.

Research Objective

To identify women's inner feelings in the poems of Kamala literate.

Research Methodology

This study used a descriptive methodology to explore the themes of her poems. Three poems of Kamala Wijeratne were selected to analyze the research problem, such as a soldier's wife weeps, Farewell, and a mother laments.

Literary Review

Ekanayake, C. (2007). "A soldier's wife weeps." Sunday Observer. The author describes the poem a soldier's wife weeps, written by Sri Lankan poet Kamala Wijeratne. The poet deals with a woman's feelings when her soldier husband dead in "the separatist was waged by the militant group." This poem reveals the sad, pathetic feelings of the woman after the burial of her husband. It shows her behavior pattern after the death, her feelings, her ardent love, her concern, her regard, and her sincere affection for her husband.

Anoysius, D.N. (2017). "Impact of Social Problems on Sri Lankan English Poetry." The poem deals with various concepts, such as humanity, natural scene, kind, war and violence. Sri Lankan poets who write in English express their personal, social, ethnical, political, and religious practices. Here, the poet uses social issues in this poem.

Discussion

Analyze the Poem 'Farewell'

The poem 'Farewell' is one of them of Kamala Wijeratne about reflection of women's inner feelings. This poem resembles Patrick Fernando's The Fisherman Mourned by his wife. She stands by the coffin of her husband's dead body, so too the protagonist of the poem Farewell seems to sit by the side of the coffin and reflect on some of the events related to their life. She thinks of a home destroyed by fire. We did not tell whether it was arson or an accident. But the husband painstakingly rebuilt it to make it again. But a fateful day had dawned when that homeliness built on sharing came to an end. The ironic pattern was that the husband could not share the sorrow of the wife. The poet uses the technique of Montage when she mounts the scene of her mourning at the funeral house with the sad history of our races fighting the ethnic issue. When one reads the next stanza, it reminds one of the songs by Shakespeare in his work Cymbeline. It sings the liberation death bestows on one when dead.

The wife's thoughts in this stanza are similar vein. She imagines how her husband now liberates from everything that trammels up life. The next stanza seems to be a wife had as she sat. She imagines the husband walking out to the west, supporting the

daughter and the mother on each arm. The journey towards the west is symbolic; the west is the side of sunset when the day ends.

In the last stanza, the scene shifts to the cremation grounds. The poet remembers the scene of death and how she had stood there as if unable to wrench herself from that scene. As the body burned like through a haze, she saw the last remains of her husband. The cemetery had taken her husband to itself and an uncanny fear overcame her. Death is a monstrous reality, and the cemetery is where the dead go. We associate it with the it and are scared of it.

The inner feeling of a woman who married a fisherman accurately reflects through this poem when the wife saw the deadbody of her husband. That time she remembers the past life of them. At first, she realizes the effort of the husband to rebuild the home that was damaged. Here she gives the ownership of it to her husband because she feels her husband is a leader of her life.

Can you remember
the last time we met
over the ashes
and the smoking debris
of what was once your home?

Painfully you built it
year after year
adding bit by bit
as your resources permitted
and filled it with your presence
to give it the feeling of home

She also remembers the situation that occurred when they were without a home. At that time she felt such a miserable about their life. On the other hand, her husband was without any sagging. Here she takes pride in her husband.

That grim day
under the mournful splatter of rain
your hand felt clammy to my touch
your brow when I kissed it was stone cold
but the tears that sprang to my eyes
brought no answering wetness to your own
you did not lament nor protest

She felt inner feeling nervous about the situation when her husband died. That time she thought that there were no more.

I hung down my head
in misery and shame
the weight of history sagged down my shoulders
its pages heavy with the grim saga of our war-
torn races

Her reveries reflect the moment of her husband,
who supported her daughter and mother to go forth.

You held your head erect
and there was grace in your bearing
you gave your two hands
one to the daughter
one to the aging mother
and supporting both
you set forth
your face to the west
she also reflects her inner feeling as,
you did not tell me
whether you would begin all over
where you would pick up
and how you would go on

These lines reflect a wife's inner touching
feelings by how she feels the moment of her husband,
who was in a coffin.

I lingered on, the smoke choking me
I remembered that drawing room
the twilight filtering through the west window
the fading sunlight a rainbow on the pane
how you used to talk on as the shadows deepened
around us
I listened, and there were moments
when we did not speak at all
but sat companionably by side
and let the light come down on us

After losing her husband, she feels aimless,
alone. Because when they were together, they shared
their life one to another. The higher feelings of a
woman reflect through these lines when she loses her
desirable husband.

For hours I stood there.
Aimless, alone;
Shaking off the dull paralysis
I saw the charred skeletal wall.
And the shadow that stretched over the mountain.
And the fear of the cemetery was on me.

Now, the life of the woman is like a cemetery.
She feels the world a cemetery, no one to help her, no
more to make happy.

“The fear of the cemetery was on me.”

Description of the Poem “A Mother Laments”

The poem “A mother laments” deals with a
mother who likes her son to be an ordinary human
being. The mother reflects her inner thoughts through
the lines of the poem. The first stanza describes
them of the mother who never desires to equalize
herself with famous and well-known peoples in the
history of the world. Likewise, she declares that she
is not as the mother of Achilles, who became king
of the Myrmidons, mighty Arjuna, and passionate
Shorab. In this way, she tries to confirm that she is
an ordinary woman who has desires. She is not that
much as successful persons in history. She also does
not want to be a heroine.

I never thought to equalize myself
with the mother of Achilles
nor with mighty Arjuna's
nor with passionate Shorab's
and crown me with a heroine's diadem

Continuously, the second stanza deals with the
imagination of the mother. Here, she did not dream
of herself as valuable persons who did something
to the success, who bore sons of steel, who bore
historical persons, and who fought for a long-lost
land. She also never thought of herself as stern
Lucretia, stiff Roman matrons. But she declares that
she is normal as around her.

In the third stanza, she reflects her inner feelings
about her son. She declares four desires among her
son to do in life; to suckle at her breast, to grow
into constructive manhood, to bear with honor the
ancestral name, to beget heirs to comfort her in old
age.

As a normal woman, her desires are acceptable.
She expects these habits from her son when he was
born. These four desires are the fundamentals of all
mothers. These desires occur according to the age
stages of a human being: childhood, teenage, and
elder.

I bore you to suckle at my breast
to grow into constructive manhood
to bear with honor the ancestral name
and beget heirs to comfort me in age

Here, the poet as a woman accurately reflects the
inner feelings of a mother who has a son. No one can
complain that these desires are not well. Because a
woman who has a child or minor or elder likes to
cover the desires according to the age limits. On the

other hand, the mother who the poet says laments about her son. Her son is instead of her wishes. That's why she determines some points.

Instead, you seemed determined to be chronicler's
meat
and stalk elusive justice in its hiding
leap upon tyranny with its Gorgon's head
and tear a world thrown on its back in inequality
and shed my unrequited blood in vain
and claw the dust long before me, my son

So, this poem reflects a mother's inner feelings according to herself and her son. At first, she declares that she is an ordinary woman who has desires among children. After that, she determines that her son is instead of her wills. Commonly, she reflects her inner feelings through the lines of the poem.

Reflection of the Poem 'A Soldier's Wife Weeps' about a Woman's Inner Feeling

The poem 'A Soldier's Wife Weeps' of Kamala Wijeratne, is a good example of highlighting the social issues of women according to their inner feelings, which existed in the country during war period. She expresses to how a soldier dead in it, and about the dead body. Traumatic incidents occurred on the country during the war in North and East places. Many tragic events virtually occurred in Sri Lanka. It is an example of the evil consequences of war, and violence among women's inner feelings. A mother laments, and Farewell is some of the poems Kamala Wijeratne has composed regarding social issues of women among their inner feelings. Rural village people are aware that many such unfortunately and cruel deaths were caused by the war that wants to overcome some inhuman elements of the country. Though, it seems to be over presently, the people, who confronted with such tragedies, are still living in great fear.

This poem describes in detail a woman's inner feelings when her soldier husband was dead.

It is an elegy. It is a poem written to express the inner feelings of sorrow for the dead. In the poem, the poet reflects a woman's inner feelings that he evens preceding the unexpected death of her husband.

He had been on leave and gone back on the previous Saturday. She had stood and watched until he disappeared over the bend on the road. She had heaved a sigh and had come and lit the lamp before

the statue of the Buddha and prayed endlessly. These actions of the wife manifest devotion on the part of the wife and a certain amount of anxiety for the safety of the husband. She knew that he was returning to the battlefield and that nobody was safe on the battlefield. The wife's thought for the care of the husband is further revealed in her getting his horoscope read on the previous Wednesday. The horoscope ad said that there were no bad times for him. Therefore "when the crow cried on the dead branch" and the sky-colored black, she had no fears about his safety. Horoscope readers had assured her against omens.

There are times when our mind fails to keep track of the events passing before our eyes. It happens when we do not want something to happen. We wish things were otherwise. For example, we often fail to see the imminent death of a loved one ailing even when death hovers around him. A slumber seals our vision. In our desire that he loved one live, we fail to accept death even when he dies actually. It is not seldom we hear someone saying about a loved one; "Even though he is dead, we feel as if he is still with us."

The poet is in a similar situation; she had the assurance of her husband's safety. She wanted him to live and not die. Accordingly, when the husband's dead body came home on Thursday following, she was baffled. It was like a dream, something not real. It is a time when the memory of life asserts over the actuality of death. So she recalls a pleasant moment together when they were at the well bathing. Ominously overshadowing it moment was the scent of the giant palm that had blossomed. A tree who's blossoming, known as "Thalamala," is considered a bad omen among the Sinhala people. When the husband was at home, this palm had blossomed, and the wife remembers that was a bad omen. Sometimes one understands things in hindsight. The husband has come behind and touched the wife's hair. That is a gesture of affection. He had leaned against the door and watched her bustle. With a look back, wife sees meaning to some of these actions. They were like omens pointing to what was to come.

The ceremony is part of a funeral, and when it is the funeral of a soldier who dies for his country, military honors awarded him. On such occasions,

speeches are made to honor the hero. But the wife is faintly aware of the content of these speeches because she is still dazed, and these words mean almost nothing because she had lost not a military hero but her beloved husband. Despite the words spoken of her husband, what the wife sees is the bare and barren years ahead. She does not know how she would meet the barrenness of the days ahead.

Marriage is the moment when a man and a woman launch on an adventure together, As long as they are together they lend strength to each other to make that adventure a success. When sometimes fate cuts one off from the other, one is lost. Thinking of the day when they were married, now, the wife feels how lost she is.

Finally, she realizes how death came falsifying even the horoscope readers. There is a note of unpredictability of life in this realization. Thus Kamala Wijeratne's poem, a soldier's wife weeps is more than an elegy. It also reveals a few other truths to us. First of all, it tells us how uncertain life is. Then how unpredictable it is. Death comes at a time most unexpected. A soldier is a man who has committed himself to protect his country. He is a man stronger than other ordinary people. Yet death is a respecter of no ranks.

Conclusion

Kamala Wijeratne is a well-known Sri Lankan poet. She has written a lot of poems that have varieties of themes according to Sri Lankan culture. From her poems, this project focuses on three poems that reflect women's inner feelings. The poems 'Farewell,' 'a mother laments,' 'a soldier's wife weeps' accurately reflect women's inner feelings in different situations. As a woman poet, she has done the work well and written poems in a pathetic way. The poet gives us a particular way to understand women's inner feelings. So, the poems' lines fulfill the reflection of women's inner feelings.

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