

## KAMALA DAS

1934-2009

This study material has been prepared for B.A. English Literature Paper-III Modern Literature (A) (Poetry) students of Vth semester for the session 2020-21 of Lucknow University

Born at Palaghat, Malabar, Kerala, to poets parents.

- Educated at home and started writing poetry at an early stage.
- So she bypassed the conventional elementary education to move on to higher education.
- She is a bilingual writer writing both in English and Malayalam, her mother tongue.
- She has been poetry editor of '**Illustrated, weekly of India**' and editor of '**Poet**' magazine.
- She was awarded '**Kent Award for Asian English Writing**' and '**Vayalar Award**' for literature.
- Kamala Das was also nominated for **Nobel Prize** for Literature in 1984.
- Kerala Govt.'s '**Ezuthachan Award**' was conferred on her recognizing her outstanding contribution, to language and literature.
- She may be called a confessional poet like Sylvia Plath and Anne Sextant of America, because she writes in haste, 'of everything perceived and known and loved'.
- She is a poet of love and lust, love either fulfilled or rejected and lust which often accompanies love.
- According to Kamala Das: "Love is flower, lust is its fragrance, without love, where is lust, and without lust can life be created".
- She quotes '**Gita Govindam**' of Jayadeve. "I think of Radha and Krishna when I think of love life is all about various dimensions of love".
- But all these views were expressed before she was converted to Islam in 1999 and named herself Kamala Surayya.
- This conversion earned her a lot of enemies and criticism, a 45 minutes documentary '**Malayathinde Madhavakutty**' was shot on her work and life.
- A prayer book in Arabic was released in Qatar few years ago. She said about this book". This was the first Arabic Prayer book written by a women".

- A Canadian movie company, few years ago, was making a film on her. The movie was about Kamala Surayya', the writer, poetess and her experiences with her new religion.
- She ran her charity trust '**Lok Seva Trust**' to help poor and needy people.
- She is also patron of 'Rakesh School' for children with multiple disorders.
- In spite of all that her story continues to hold us in a thrall.

Work Consulted and Cited:

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