

## ANALYSIS OF WOMEN CHARACTERS IN KAMALA MARKENDEY'S NOVELS

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### ABSTRACT

Kamala Markandaya, associate expatriate writer, is primarily regarded the foremost talented Indian English women author. She views about with the plight, standing and angle of women in Indian country beneath the strain of fixing social, economic, modern, non-secular and political forces. She tries to awake the consciousness of Indian women against the normal orientated society and communicates the important existence of women. She is that the superlative trendy author with "Feminism". Indian country may be a male dominating country. Markandaya attracts the image of women within the context of India. She portrays the figure of twentieth century women as they're progressing all told fields of life. She has tried to indicate the plight of women together with her greatness, soundness and boldness and tries to indicate the important existence of women, struggled between tradition and modernism.

**Key words** : feminism, modernism, boldness, Indian author,

### INTRODUCTION

English is still the medium of instruction in many Indian universities and colleges. It is the only language through which one can reach the farthest corner of the world without much difficulty. It is the Indian - English writers who are creating the image of India abroad. Even the best writings of the Indian writers in regional languages take decades to get translated into foreign languages and in case of translations, mostly remain neglected in the English knowing world for reason of linguistic in appropriateness and stylistic insipidity. In India even today, if there is any language that deserves to be called the language of the intellectuals it is English.

Indo - Anglian literature is an all India phenomenon and an offshoot as well as an important ingredient of modern Indian Renaissance. Indo - Anglian literature being both an Indian literature and a variation of English Literature provide the perfect medium to highlight this confrontation. It is an undeniable fact that not only Indo – Anglian literature but all Indian writing has been considerably influenced by the English literature to them through English. Thus Indian English literature has both appeal to Indian reasons as well as the English. English has been domesticated and nativized in India and it is one of the Indian national languages. We find the clear cut stamp of Indianness in the writings of Tagore, Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, Ezekiel, A.K.Ramanujam, Kamala Das and others. Indian writers are no more imitative. They are creative and original. In the context of this new technique, Kamala Markandaya is not afar. Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock* has made the use of this method. Women in modern India have not only shared the exiting and dangerous roles in the struggle for Independence but have also articulated the national aspirations and the consciousness of cultural changes in the realm of literature. Kamala Markandaya is not a powerful novelist like Mulk Raj Anand but She is an outstanding Indian Woman novelist. Though not very prolific in comparison with Mulk Raj Anand and R.K.Narayan, Kamala Markandaya is a novelist of bulk. Of all the women novelists including R.P.Jhabvala, she is the most prolific. Kamala markandaya's novels are chiefly concerned with human relationship and woman's predicament. She has given novel after novel and in each novel she has covered a new ground. Her novel is thematically wide ranging. Her themes are not generally new in the context of European and American fiction and also in the context of Indian English fiction. The themes of ever present poverty and hunger, tradition versus modernity, East West encounter etc, are stock themes of Anand, Bhabani Bhattacharya and R.P.Jhabvala but these themes have been explored by Markandaya with a degree of newness. In the Post - Independence period, most of the novelists like Bhabani Bhattacharya, Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahgal create a scene of urban and rural folk but Kamala Markandaya is the finest exponent of the rural society.

### **ANALYSIS OF WOMEN CHARACTERS IN HER NOVELS**

Other women novelists like Anita Desai, R.P. Jhabvala, Jane Austen have drawn the figure of female characters. Anita Desai, R.P. Jhabvala's women characters belong to the upper - middle class and city life while Markandaya's characters belong to the rural life. Markandaya's keen observation combined with critical acumen and the feminine sensibility brought her international fame with the very first novel. "Nectar In A Sieve" 1954. Her other novels are - "Some Inner Fury" 1955, "A Silence Of Desire" 1960, "Possession" 1963, "A Handful Of Rice" 1966, "The Coffer Dams" 1969, "The Nowhere Man" 1972, "Two Virgins" 1973, "The Golden Honeycomb" 1977, and "Pleasure City" 1982. The description of different types of women in India creates a woman's world. They are natural characters. Today, the victim of these women as described in the novel. Being traditional women like Sita, Savitri, Gargi and Anusuya they denote the qualities of contemporary modernism and struggle for their real existence.

Markandaya has written ten novels and all novels reveal her deep preoccupation with the changing Indian, social and political scene, her careful conscious craftsmanship and her skilful use of the English language for creative purpose.

"Feminism in the Novels of Kamala Markandaya" bases on the different chapters as "The Maternal Instinct", "Spirituality", "Modernity", "Urban Influences", "East- West Conflict", and "Feminine Superior" etc. The Maternal Instinct as the feeling of a mother can be clearly seen in the character of a female. Markandaya is herself a mother, having a daughter Kim and she is successful to portray the picture of a mother. She has tried to show the inner feeling of a mother as hers own through her fictional character. Rukmani in "Nectar In A Sieve", is an idol of Indian woman and Indian mother. As the conservative and traditional belief of Indian people that children are the boon of a God. Rukmani has also six children and she suffers all difficulties and problems related to social, economical and individual for the sake of her own children. As a mother, she teaches them, nourishes them with providing all essential facilities and show her affection tenderly. Markandaya's motherly feeling is the sequel to these Indian mothers. She is very near to Indian tradition and feelings while living abroad. Through her novels Markandaya has tried to reveal the positive and negative attitude of a mother towards their child as the feeling of both Indian and Britishers or Western. She is grieved to see the negative vision of an Indian mother and feels the breaking unconscious vision of modern Indian mother.

India has been a spiritual country for a long time and many holy persons exist and preach to the world. So through the novels "A Silence Of Desire" and "Possession", Markandaya expresses the religious and spiritual mind of Indian characters, how they believe in Sadhus and how they indulge to serve these Saints and Swamis leaving their own daily routine work they are ready to neglect their own children. Sarojini in "A Silence Of Desire" is such a character who forgets to fulfill her responsibilities towards her husband, children and family for the sake of a Swami and spent more and more time in the company of Swami. These novels show Markandaya's spiritual thinking as she is also an Indian novelist. It shows Markandaya's positive attitude of a religious person who helps the people in the developing of their whole point of view while the negative attitude of Sadhu deprives from the society and feels ashamed.

Through the novels "Two Virgins", "Some Inner Fury", "The Nowhere Man", the novelists have tried to show the changing features of contemporary India that how the Indian people are copying the Western thinking and are adapting their ways of living, wearing and eating. If modernity shows the positive development of a people, it also disgraces the personality of a person. Lalitha in "Two Virgins" loses her graceful personality engaging with a modern man and its view of the film industry. She is puzzled to see the glamour of a film world and sinks in this false world.

"The East- West conflict" is the major theme in the novels of Post- Independence novelist. Kamala Markandaya herself shows this conflict through her novels. She was born in the East and settled in West. She is well able to understand the racial conflicts, and faces difficulties to exist in this alien country. Her chief purpose to express the feeling of the people in an alien country and her novels deal with the tension between the two races and two countries. "Feminine Superior" shows the superiority of a woman over a man. Today's women are new women. They have been changing in all walks of life. Today, nobody can bind them. They are free individually as well as economically. Being a woman novelist, Markandaya has expressed her own views and thought about women as they are progressing in all fields. She suggests to the woman to go ahead and win all fields. A woman should have played different role in her life as wife, mother and sister. This role of a woman as wife and mother is directed toward attachment to family, submissiveness to husband, devotion to children and in the efficient management of the

household. Markandaya, as another and wife, is also successful to achieve the aim to be the greatest novelist and her concern with the Indian woman to achieve those objects that they want to achieve. Her characters Lalitha, Rukmani, Sarojini are successful to achieve the aim, facing difficulties, they are never be discouraged. Markandaya is very close to her characters. All the chapters deal with the documents as we find in the novelist also. Her novels deal with all these chapters. Her first novel "Nectar in a Sieve" 1954, treats the theme of hunger and starvation in Indian villages. It depicts the rural life of the south India. It reflects the real condition of peasant woman and farmers in the light of contemporary India. It tells the story of India that what was the picture of India after the independence. It shows the difficulties, suffering, disasters, desolation and problems of Indian peasants. It is a touching tragic novel, compared to Pearl S. Buck's "The Good Earth" and Alan Paton's "Cry, the Beloved Country". It is a realistic chronicle of Rukmani's family in particular and the sufferings of peasants in colonial India in general. Rukmani is the youngest of the four daughters of a village head man and is married at the age of twelve to Nathan. Her family is tortured by poverty, hunger, deprivation and starvation created not only by socio – economic factors but also by the vagaries of cruel nature. Rukmani was the hardworking and devoted wife of Nathan. She was willing to accept challenges in order to achieve her aims. Rukmani bore six sons and one daughter. Her daughter, Ira, resorts to prostitution to save the family from prostitution. Kuti, the youngest child of Rukmani dies of starvation. Her two sons Arjun and Thambi leave for Ceylon for work, and Raja, the third son, dies in a quarrel and at last they lost their land. Markandaya's second novel "Some Inner Fury" is entirely different from "Nectar in a Sieve". For the first time, Markandaya dramatises the East – West conflict. It is a novel of violence and destruction. Essentially, it is a political novel. It is also a tragic novel like "Nectar in a Sieve". The novel deals with political passions prevailing over love and justice. The clash between passion and patriotism is presented in the novel. The Inner Fury is suggestive of Indian passion for independence. The third novel "A Silence Of Desire" explores the theme of the clash between traditionalism and modernism, between faith and reason represented by Sarojini and Dandekar who form a married couple in the novel. This novel depicts the east – west encounter in the form of a conflict between the Indian spiritualism and the western modernism. The conflict between husband and wife represents the conflict

between science and superstition. “A Handful Of Rice”, the fifth novel, is comparable to Bhabani Bhattacharya’s “He who Rides a Tiger”. Escaping the poverty and apathy of his village, Ravi comes to Madras with a view to living a better life. But contrary to his expectation the city offers him nothing but unemployment and frustration. He comes into contact with Damodar who introduces him to his gang that deals in smuggled goods. One night, he tries to escape a policeman, he forces his entry into the house of a tailor. This novel shows the personal failure and struggles of Ravi. “A Handful Of Rice” is an original product of Markandaya. Markandaya’s sixth novel, “The Coffers” deals with East –West theme. It is laid in the jungle of south India. “The Nowhere Man” is the most powerful and the maturest of the novels of Markandaya. It deals with the theme of east – west encounter through individual experience and relationship. The ambivalent relationship between India and England is realistically depicted in the novel through the experiences of individuals. The novel treats the tragic life of an elderly Indian immigrant. Srinivas, who spent half a century in England is compelled to feel like an outsider, an outcast. He and his wife, Vasantha, were forced to leave India, as their family was suspected of underground activities against the British rule in India. They settled down in England and their two sons, Laxman and Seshu were born there. Seshu is killed by a German shell during the war. Vasantha dies of tuberculosis, rendering Srinivas utterly lonely. The eighth novel “Two Virgins” has been rated as the weakest of all her novels. It has the theme of adolescence and growing up, of love and conflict between parents and children, of contrast between village and city. This novel is divided into six parts. In part I, Markandaya depicts the village background with Appa and Amma, their two daughters Lalitha and Saroja, In part II, Miss Mendoza, Lalitha’s school mistress, introduces her to Gupta, the film director who selects her to cast her in a documentary film he is making on the village. In part III, Lalitha goes to the city for the premiere of the film and attracts the lure of the glamorous film world. She hates her family. In part IV, She returns seduced, In part V, Lalitha’s parents meet Mr.Gupta. Mr. Gupta refuses to adopt Lalitha. He says, “Lalitha is a woman with the natural desires of a woman”. In part VI, Lalitha undergoes abortion successfully and leaves her parents. The ninth novel “The Golden Honeycomb” is an immensely satisfying fictional piece. It is a momentous historical novel in which the novelist makes a remarkable fictional assessment of the Indo – British encounter. This novel is divided

into three parts, each introduced by an epigraph. It is different from other earlier novels. Besides, the novel has a prologue and an epilogue, shedding light on the historical events. “Pleasure City” 1982, the last novel written by Kamala Markandaya. The short review of the novels of Kamala Markandaya points to the fact that she is basically a novelist of feminine sensibility and undertakes to analyse the changing pattern of Indian sensibility, urban or rural, East-West conflict, Indian maternal feeling, feminine superiority, through feminine perspective. This effort obviously results in a very wide spectrum of episodically and character analysis. Though the novelist believes in the advantageous values of modernization and globalization yet she has firm faith in the pathological role of traditions and her different novels prove that people of a new colonial nation like India are basically struggling for an identity which is yet to be but in this search for new soil they uproot themselves completely from the existing system thereby enhancing their miseries manifold. Markandaya’s different novels also present the aspects of feminism which spread very fast in India after independence.

## CONCLUSION

Being an agricultural country, India has a large majority of women who play her role in this society. They are coming from the four walls of the house and contribute their importance in improving the condition of family and village. Now the role of woman is equal to man. Both are partners in society. They bond together and do their duty very sincerely. They are devoted to each other. In the context of present day, women are being independent. Markandaya has tried to raise the condition of woman in rural India.

Keeping an optimistic view, she shows her humanism. She is such a novelist, who tries to show different types of woman in the context of India and England. Different novels present different figures of women - as Peasant woman, Traditional woman, Lustful woman, Glamorous woman, Westernized woman, English woman, Spiritual woman and Motherly woman. She shows greater power and insight in portraying different types of women characters. She is a typical representative of the feminine sensibility.

In comparison with other novelists, she is the most gifted and the greatest novelist, who shows remarkable skill in portraying women characters. Mulk Raj Anand, the greatest social reformer and novelist, creates the figure of lower and poor class but lacks in portraying such women

characters Markandaya shows her own despair of rural India which is suffering from political, social, economic and individual problems even after the achievement of independence and different types of technical changes.

Markandaya is a realist to depict the true picture of urban and rural areas of South India and tries to evaluate the aspect of suffering peasant woman who struggles alone and succeeds to win over all difficulties social and economic.

It shows the 20th century as the new woman entering India. The main purpose of Markandaya is to show the image of modern India under the impact of various changes political, social, intellectual and cultural.

Being an agricultural country, India contains a massive majority of women play their role in this society. They are coming back from the four walls of the house and contribute their importance in raising the condition of family and village. Currently the role of women is adequate man. They bond along and do their duty terribly sincerely. They're dedicated to one another. Within the context of day, women are being freelance. Markandaya has tried to lift the condition of women in rural India. Keeping an optimistic read, she shows her humanism. She is such a writer, World Health Organization tries to point out differing kinds of women within the context of India Peasant women, ancient women, Lustful women, exciting women, Westernized women, English women, non-secular women and Motherly women. She shows bigger power and insight in representational process differing kinds of women characters. She may be a typical representative of the female sensibility. In comparison with different novelists, she is that the most precocious and also the greatest writer, she show outstanding ability in representational process women characters. Mulk rule Anand, the best social reformer and writer, creates the figure of lower and poor category however lacks in representational process such women characters Markandaya shows her own despair of rural Bharat that is affected by political, social, economic and individual issues even once the action of independence and differing kinds of technical changes. Markandaya may be a realist to depict actuality image of urban and rural areas of South Bharat and tries to evaluate the facet of suffering peasant women World Health Organization struggles alone and succeeds to convert all difficulties social and economic. It shows the twentieth century because the new women getting into Bharat. the most purpose of



Markandaya is to point out the image of recent Bharat below the impact of varied changes political, social, intellectual and cultural.

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