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KAMALA MARKANDAYA NOVELS: A CHANGE IN THE CULTURAL TRADITIONS

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ABSTRACT

Numerous philosophers and critics, including Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Dante, Aquinas, Hegel, and Marx. Derrida and Freud both saw literature within a broad cultural framework. The meaning of "culture" that is most commonly used refers to the customs, beliefs, and behaviors of a particular social or ethnic group or country. Among Indian women novelists writing in English, Kamala Markandaya, a trailblazing member of the diaspora, holds a distinguished position. The recurrent topic in her works is conflicts between races and cultures. The purpose of this study is to illustrate the cultural tension seen in some of Kamala Markandaya's works. In *Nectar in a Sieve*, the East-West Encounter concept is presented in the setting of rural vs. urban India. *Tannery* stands for modernization of rural India. Western way of life is depicted in *Some Inner Fury*. *A Silence of Desire* depicts conflict between traditionalism and modernity.

Keywords: Culture, Conflict, Races, Tradition, East-West

Introduction

Indian ideals, which differ greatly from those of Western civilization, are also depicted in detail in *A Handful of Rice*, *Two Virgins*, and *Pleasure City*. *Possession* emphasizes both western consumerism and Indian spiritual values. The idea presented in E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, which highlights the stark differences between Indian and Western life, might be linked to the theme of East-West Encounter. After living for a while in a village in southern India, Markandaya eventually made her home in England. There are various levels at which the tension between the two ways of being manifests itself: the individual, the group, the political, the cultural, the industrial, and the agrarian. But in the end Markandaya advocates a compromise between the two ways of life.

Cultural studies are not a recent development. Its past is extensive. A wide range of intellectuals and critics, including Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Aquinas, Dante, Hegel, Marx, Freud, and Derrida, have considered literature within a comprehensive cultural framework. Coleridge, Burke, Arnold, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris were among the nineteenth-century writers who wrote a great deal about cultural issues. The topic has been written about by a number of Marxist intellectuals, D.H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, T.S. Eliot, F.R. Leavis, and Raymond Williams in the 20th century. The definition of "culture" that is probably most commonly used describes the values, customs, and behaviors of a particular social or ethnic group or country. Matthew Arnold described culture as "the best that has been thought and said in the world" in his book *Culture and Anarchy*.

There is a literary tradition that views literature and the arts as the storehouse of culture, tracing its roots from Arnold and Living Babbit to T.S. Eliot, F.R. Leavis, and John Carrey. Among Indian women novelists writing in English, Kamala Markandaya, a trailblazing member of the diaspora, holds a distinguished position. She is one of the writers who have moved away from their native places, whether voluntarily or not. She has been a British resident since the 1950s and is the author of novels about India or Indians living in England. She thus joins the ranks of writers who have Indian roots, including Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipul, Bharati Mukherjee, and Jhumpa Lahiri, to mention a few.

Her ability to delicately create unique characters and events that are simultaneously emblematic of a larger collective is what makes her a strong novelist. With the release of her incredibly quick novel *Nectar in a Sieve* in 1954, Kamala Markandaya gained international recognition and acclaim. The main theme of the majority of her writings is the encounter between East and West. Her own experience informs the way she presents the tension, East-West conflict, and culture. This conflict is appropriately referred to by R.M. Verma as the "Bicultural world of Kamala Markandaya's novles." She highlights a number of the cultures' strengths and weaknesses. In C.D. Narasimhaia's opinion, right.

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Dr. Kenny's comments convey an underlying sense of melancholy and genuine suffering at the deaths of the helpless innocent people. He comforts Rukmani when she is upset, but he also chastises her for being docile when she is happy with a small amount of rice and says she wishes for a better day. "Time is better, times are better," he fiercely tells her. It won't get any better for several months. You meek suffering fools will suffer and die in the interim. Why do you maintain this horrifying silence? Why don't you make demands, scream for assistance, or take action? This nation is devoid of anything. Oh my god, nothing exists.

A change in the Cultural Traditions in the Novels of Kamala Markandaya

There is an obvious difference between the Western and Easter cultures. When Kamala Markandaya makes the observation that whereas people in the West are active and aware of their rights, people in the East are docile and obedient. She also emphasizes the positive aspects of Eastern culture at the same time. Dr. Kenny reminds Rukmani that marriage is just a contract in the West, but it is a sacrament in the East.

My spouse has moved out. My sons are trained to disregard me. In India, marriage is not governed by a contract between men and women. For most Westerners, divorce after marriage is not a major concern.

Nectar in a Sieve also addresses the conflicts that result from an Indian village becoming more industrialized. The East West encounter can be examined through the destabilizing and corrupting influence of western science, technology, and industry on rural India. The tannery in this book represents the West, and the arrival of this contemporary tannery has an impact on the traditional or rural way of life. Nathan and Rukmani's family's disintegration serves as a case study for this. In actuality, Nathan and Rukmani speak for the thousands of peasants who have been uprooted by the modern economy. As a result, the story turns into an examination of a rural society suffering from customs rooted in the traditional agrarian

From the current industrial way of life. In this study, the "East" is connected to basic country driving, whereas the "West" represents industrialization and modernization. Since Rukmani is a highly traditional woman, she has been adamantly opposed to the tannery being built on the outside of the village from the start. As a result, she herself gives us a detailed account of the tannery's repulsiveness, filth, and methods. The novelist's words could be understood in this light. It was an enormous, sweeping growth. This tannery expanded and flourished over time. Before a month had passed, someone was engulfed and another building materialized.

Night and day the training went on. A never-ending line of cars through the raw material in- thousands of skins, goat, calf, lizard and snake skins- and took them away again tanned, dyed, and finished. It seemed impossible that markets could be found for such quantities- or that so many animals existed - but so it was incredibly (Chapter VIII).

Nathan and Rukmani experience catastrophe as a result of the tannery. Their family breaks down as a result. Since the village was transformed into a town, Kunthi has supported the creation of the tannery, and she wants to capitalize on her attractiveness. Society is degraded as a result of this. It is a big tragedy for the rural existence, according to Rukmani. It also degrades Ira's moral standing. People in the countryside are uprooted. They are compelled to relocate from their rural surroundings to an urban one. This imposes an emotional strain on the people who have been living together for a very long time by severing their emotional bonds.

Discussion on the Cultural Differences

The confrontation between Indian spiritualism and Western modernity is the embodiment of the East-West encounter in her third novel, *A Silence of Desire* (1960). In actuality, this book contains not a single western character. Dandekar stands in the heart of the cultural conflict, which is represented by the Western-educated and -oriented people like Ghosh on the one hand and the ladies who are essentially Indian in their outlook on life, like Sarojini and Rajan, on the other. As Paul Varghese correctly points out, the novel treats the husband and wife's disagreement as a component of the struggle between superstition and science. The novelist presenting the conflict does not make an outright condemnation of superstition and faith healing Swami. She makes an effort to reconcile superstition and science.

Caroline Bell's book *Possession* depicts an ongoing struggle between Western materialism and Indian spiritualism, with the former triumphing. In the story, Caroline Bell strives to possess Val. By hook or by crook, he manages to free himself from the grips since the spiritual principles of Indian culture are deeply ingrained in him.

The East-West relationship is depicted in *A Handful of Rice* (1966) as a divergence in cultural values. The West despises some Eastern customs and practices, and vice versa. The author's subsequent comments against the shameless behavior of Europeans are characterized by mutual loathing. Ravi had sisters and so he knew the strict watch that was kept on young unmarried girls in their community in all communities except shameless ones like the Europeans.

When he informs Memsahib of his father-in-law's passing, Ravi breaks his word to Memsahib that he will have the gown ready on time. She doesn't appear to be content.

The Memsahib remained firm. These people were indeed very impossible, she thought, impossible people living in an impossible country with their countless uncles, aunts, and cousins who appeared to be dying all the time. However, he was mistaken if he thought that a woman who had spent so much time in India could be taken for granted. She quickly remarked, "Rather Sudden Was it not? Furthermore, I fail to understand why that should have prevented you from working. The novelist points out the difference between the two cultures. However, she keeps her impartiality. In fact, she chides the Indian for not appreciating the value of time. The Memsahib tells Ravi plainly.

For the reception on Saturday, the dress had been requested. Acknowledging India, she had purposefully given herself a five-day extension. The novelist highlights the shortcomings of both the East and the West through Ravi and Memsahib. The Eastern population is naturally slow-moving and does not value Western ideas of punctuality, but they do respect their elders.

The *Coffer Dams* (1969), Kamala Markandaya's sixth book, explores the issue of East West encounter through a conflict between Indian human ideals and Western technological perspectives. The main plot point of the book is a dam that the British engineering company Clinton- Mackenack Co. is building to channelize a raging river.

Once more, Kamala Markandaya emphasizes the qualities of Helen, the young wife of British engineer Howard Clinton. She is repulsed by her husband's inhumane treatment of the Indian tribal people. She grows to have a deep affection and empathy for the underprivileged Indian laborers and becomes very interested in Indian culture, values, and traditions.

In her eighth book, "Two Virgins," published in 1977, Kamala Markandaya illustrates how Western culture is invading traditional beliefs and long-standing relationships within families and communities. In this book, Markandaya tells the tale of two virgins, or girls, named Lalitha and Saroja. The fundamental theme of this book is the necessity of individual freedom. Greatly fascinated by the westernized outlook of Mr. Gupta, a film director, Lalitha, the heroine, displays her revolt against all the conventional ideas values of traditional Hindu Lalitha is more beautiful and charming and ambitious than Saroja, her sister, therefore she becomes an easy prey to the temptations of Mr. Gupta, In fact, there is a sort of conflict between urban and rural culture in the novel "Two Virgins".

Conclusion

In her most recent book, *Pleasure City* (1982), Kamala Markandaya attempts to close the gap between two Eastern and Western cultures by fostering a romantic relationship between "Rikki," an impoverished and unassuming Indian lad, and Tully, an English officer. Similar to Roshan and Anasuya in *Possession*, she is mentally free and does not live in her four walls, but she has a strong connection to and sympathy with the individual westerns. Despite this, she is patriotic at heart and does not give up her Indian ideals. Despite having lived there and realized her creative potential, Kamala Markandaya was deeply rooted in India, its culture, and her memories. Her books mostly focus on the female protagonists in a chaotic world of opposing cultures, one of which is dead and the other incapable of existing. Cultural differences in the novels of Kamala Markandaya can be identified with the idea depicted in E.M Forsters *a Passage to India* which emphasized the wide gulf between the Indian and the western life. Markandaya express her views on this verity of situations and characters.

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