

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **SELF AND EAST-WEST ENCOUNTER:**

#### **KAMALA MARKANDAYA**

The situation of woman is that – a free and autonomous being like all creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the other.

(Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* 33)

Kamala Markandaya is one of the most significant Indian women writing in English novelists. She entered the circle of writing to pursue a career in journalism. After working as a journalist in India, she immigrated to England in 1948. Later, she married an English journalist Bertrand Taylor and settled in London as a writer. As an Indian diaspora writer, Kamala Markandaya is preoccupied with the theme of East-West encounter. At the same time, her novels are remarkable for the variety of women's experience.

Writing by male authors had created a great impact and had started a big change in the dimension of Indian writing in English. Consequently, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, and R.K. Narayan have risen up Indian writing in English to be standard. At the same time, they have portrayed the perception of women through their eyes and opinions as well as male's perspectives.

Mulk Raj Anand is an outstanding exponent of social realism during nineteen twenties and thirties. In his fictional world, he depicts the real position of women in the Hindu society. For instance, in his novel *Lajwanthi* (1966), he presents with deep

compassion the female character and the psychological torture by the young wife as she becomes a lust machine for her husband. However, M.K. Naik (1982) discusses the writing of Anand about the depiction of women characters in his novels that:

The position of woman in traditional Hindu society is a recurring theme in Anand's fiction, and quite a few of his short stories are devoted to it, bringing out both the tears and the laughter latent in the subject. (Naik 1)

Another male writer, Raja Rao portrays a significant role in Indian politics of that time, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi. He depicts his women characters as the representatives of *Shakti*. They represent the devotional aspects of *Shakti*. Women are presented as freedom fighters in *Kanthapura* (1938) while in *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960) women are represented as different aspects of *Shakti*. And, R.K. Narayan, who is a writer of the series of Malgudi novels, depicts his women characters into two groups. First, the housewives are simple, modest, loving and obedient in an Indian household such as Sushila in *The English Teacher* (1945) and Savitri in *The Dark Room* (1938). And, the other types are more modernized, and unconventional in their ways of life such as Rosie in *The Guide* (1958) Shanti in *Mr. Sampath: The Printer of Malgudi* (1948), and Rangi in *Man-Eater of Malgudi* (1961).

As a matter of fact, Mirza Mohammed Rushra was first portrayed the true picture of a woman in his work as *Umrao Jan Ada*. It presents the life story written by male writer with such true feelings. It comes out very vividly in a realistic mould. In his novels, Sarat Chandra was formed in all their different aspects of love, chastity, tenderness, loyalty, and sacrifice in the darker shades of nature.

The women characters depicted by the trio, it is clear that they have depicted women in their stereotyped forms as daughter, wife, mother, and so on , but their depictions were not totally authentic. Women appeared in their works only as a necessary tool to be used by men. Women upheld the conservative ideals or they were labeled immoral. Such male tradition, morality, and aesthetics dominated these narratives. These male writers have presented an idealized concept of womanhood. They have depicted women characters in a way a woman is supposed to be, according to the patriarchal society. They have never represented real woman, their desire, their

longing, and their own self. Their women characters have never represented the real woman. The images of women portrayed by male are much more different from female. Kamala Markandaya handles the portrayal of real desires and sufferings of women to the reader more than male writers. She has been successful in dealing with the problems of women in society from female's perspective.

Self is very important in human consciousness. Self is a psychological process which implies a sense of identity. Self can be referred to the sum of the physical and mental attributes of the person, including both individual and social dimensions. The concept of self comes to develop such questions as Who am I? What am I? How can I find out? According to American psychologist Gardner Murphy, he describes that "self is a center, an anchorage point, a standard of comparison, an ultimate real. Inevitably, it takes its place as a supreme value" (Gardner 536).

"Self" helps people to know themselves, their feelings and their real images. It means the feeling of knowing their own self. People look to their identities in the social context. In semantic dimension, the self can be similar with identity in terms of meaning. Daphna Oyserman describes in *Handbook of Self and Identity* (2012) that:

Identities are the traits and characteristic, social relations, roles and social group memberships that define who one is. Identity can be focused on the past – what used to be true of one, the present – what is true of one now, or the future – the person one feels obligated to try to become, or the person one fears one may become. (Oyserman 69)

The term 'identity' defines as one's feelings about one's self, character, goals, and origins. Identity refers to personal characteristics or attributes. These can be expressed in terms of an individual's self-respect. However, self and identity are sometimes used interchangeably and other times used to refer to different things.

The assumption of stability is belied by the malleability, context sensitivity, and dynamic construction of the self as a mental construct. Identities are not the fixed markers people assume them to be but are instead dynamically constructed in the moment. (Oyserman 69)

As German psychologist and psychoanalyst Erik Erikson's famous *Childhood and Society* (1950) interpreted a range of modern personal, social and political

problems and difficulties in achieving identity. Erikson's concept of person's identity is based on Freudian concept. Sigmund Freud, who is an Austrian neurologist, had focused on the conflict involving unconscious agencies of the mind as the 'id' and 'superego'. In contrast, Erikson emphasized the conscious agency, the 'ego'. The ego is the mental agency involved in transactions with the outside world, the agency where the conscious sense of self is located. According to Erikson, the term 'identity' meant the coherence of the psychological mechanism by which the ego handles the pressures from the unconscious mind and the outside world.

The concept of identity was made by the American psychiatrist Robert Stoller (1968), who altered it in two ways. First, Stoller saw the 'core gender identity' as the basis of adult personality. It was supposed to be formed very early in the first two or three years of life, not in adolescence. Second, the concept of identity acquired a different frame of reference.

According to Rosenberg (1979), the self-concept only concerns with self-evaluation. Self-concept means self-esteem in which one's evaluation of oneself in affective (negative or positive) terms. He defined the self-concept as the sum total of our thoughts, feelings, and imaginations as to who we are. Later, the self-concept was made up of cognitive components, given the collection of identities as well as affective components or self-feelings including self-esteem (Franks and Marolla, 1976; Stryker, 1980).

The term 'self' includes both the actor who thinks 'I am thinking' and the object of thinking 'about me'. And, the actor both is able to think and is aware of doing so. (Oyserman, Elmore, and Smith 71)

The self can emerge in the social interaction. The responses of the self as an object to itself come from the others' perspectives to whom one interacts. When the role of other is being the responses of the other, the self is sharing the meaning to other. In the use of language, individuals (source) communicate the same meanings (information) to themselves as to others (receiver). Thus, the self controls the meaning itself. The perspectives of the self and others always have interrelation between them when individuals respond in interaction.

According to American psychologist George Herbert Mead, the symbolic interactionist perspective in sociological social psychology in his book *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934). The self is as emerging out of the mind. The mind arises and develops out of social interaction. And, the patterned social interaction forms the basis of social structure.

Societal changes are responsible with the self among many people in the world. Stryker (1980) suggests that the 'self reflects society'. Correspondingly, Daphna Oyserman, Kristen Elmore, and George Smith have given the notions of self and identity in *Handbook of Self and Identity* (2012). There are three core notions: mental construct, social product, and force for action. Self is mental construct that is represented in memory while in sense of social product it refers to the time and place in which one live and the experience in early life in social context. It is the self that matters for behavior as how people think about themselves and how they influence in their behavior. As a result, the self begins to generate as a unique aspect because the social structures themselves are unstable and dynamic. And, the process of selfhood is reflexivity. Also, it shows that the self can always be changed. When human has self-awareness and consciousness, it means they are aware of their self and existence. Self involves the social status. Alicia, Stets, and Burke mention in their work "Does the Self Conform to the Views of Other" (1999). And, they explain that the spouse with the higher status in such issue as education, occupation, and income in the marriage not only influence their partner's self-views, but also their partner's views of them.

The self of womanhood also plays an important role in the patriarchal system. According to feminist and novelist Simone de Beauvoir's approach, she focuses on the cultural mechanism of oppression which placed women in the role of Other to man's Self. She developed this women's otherness in her book *The Second Sex*. *The Second Sex* explained the existence of patriarchal constructs in society. It posed a threat to women and forced to keep women in a subordinate position relative to men. Beauvoir argues that humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him. "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (Beauvoir 267). Woman is not regarded as an autonomous being. Woman is defined and

differentiated with reference to man and not be with reference to her. Woman is the incidental and the inessential as opposed to the essential. “He is the Subject, He is the Absolute - she is the Other” (Beauvoir 6). So, Beauvoir mentions the expression of a duality that of the Self and the Other, related to gender.

In Indian literary works, the search for one’s identity is a common theme of Indian women novelists. They feel culturally and socially alienated when they position themselves in search for their identity. A woman’s individual self has recognition and self-effacement is her normal way of life.

Epistemology the term ‘post-colonialism’ implies ‘after colonialism’ which shows colonialism never ends. This has presented the distinction between colonizers and settlers. As in India, this clash is deeply rooted as they had the history of colonization. So, it shows the distinctive modes of values, thought, and behavior in the attributes of the East and the West. Hence, language and literature have always been used by colonizers as a powerful tool in the process of colonization with its political and cultural aspects. Therefore, the East-West confrontation has become one of main themes in the Indo-Anglian literature.

In the body of Indo-Anglian literature, the contents were to be Indian while its medium of expression was English. Historically Indo-Anglian literature has made the remark in freedom of India in 1947. The notable school of women novelists in Indo-Anglian literature took place after Indian Independence in the nineteenth century. At that time, Indian novels grew in variousness. This denoted original literary creation in the English language by Indians. The post-Independence era marks the inception of the literary emancipation of women. Especially, this period revealed the creative release of the feminine sensibility by virtue of its self-sufficiency. Ramesh Kumar Gupta says that:

In the growth and development of Indo-Anglian novel, the feminine sensibility has achieved an imaginative self-sufficiency which merits recognition in spite of its relatively later manifestation. (Gupta 83)

Kamala Markandaya is the one of most known Indo-Anglian women novelists like Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai among several others.

In the past, the literary works of Indian women writers has always been undervalued because of patriarchal system. Particularly, in 1980, they have moved away from traditional portrayals of enduring, self-sacrificing toward conflicted women characters searching for identity. Women characters were defined in terms of their victim status. In contrast to the trend of earlier novels, women characters from the 1980s assert themselves and break marriage and motherhood. Later, the modern Indian women writers have articulated woman's aspirations, professional endeavors, and newly formed relationship with man and the changed perceptions of sexuality. Such writers as Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Manju Kapur, Namita Gokhle, Gita Hariharan, Shobha De and the diasporic writers like Bharti Mukherjee, Shona Ramaya, have presented various modes of resistance to patriarchal norms.

These Indian women writers have produced literary works related to human relationship. They have depicted their revolt against traditions of patriarchal society through their characters. As one form of literary works, novel has been presented by several talented women novelists including Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, and Shashi Deshpande, and so on. They have used novel as a form of literary expression. Their works have explored the moral and psychic crisis on their women characters. As John Peck (1947) mentions that:

The novel is the ideal form for presenting a picture of human experience, in particular the problems that beset the individual in society, so far the novel has been treated almost as a clear window on the world. (Peck 52)

Particularly, Kamala Markandaya is the one who stands at the head of these women novelists. In Indian literary world, she is one of the famous Indian women novelists writing in English in post-Independent era. The vivid descriptions of India after independence had appeared with various themes as clash of tradition and modernity, rural versus urban, spiritual quest and scientific, husband and wife relationship, feminine attitude, Indian immigrants, racial antagonism, and East-West encounter.

Also, Kamala Markandaya is a pioneer member of the Indian Diaspora who has an outstanding place among Indian women novelists writing in English. In the Introduction to *Story-wallah*, Shyam Selvadurai explains the term 'diaspora' in his Diaspora Literature classes that:

The word 'diaspora' (a term unfamiliar to many who are diasporic themselves) comes from Greek and implies a scattering of seeds. In its most classical sense, diaspora was used to define the experience of Jews expelled from Palestine and forced to disperse to the various parts of the earth. It is now broadly used to define other groups that have, through forced or voluntary migration, taken up abode in places other than the original centre. The Chinese, Irish, Turkish, Armenian, South Asian, and Greek diasporas are examples of this dispersal. Immigrant is often used to identify these groups (and, indeed the writers coming from these groups). The problem with this term is that the emphasis is on the act of arrival in a new land; it conveys a sense that someone is a perpetual newcomer, a perpetual outsider. The term immigrant does not leave much room for the process of becoming and changing and the dynamic cultural mixing that diaspora suggest. Diaspora also allows for the encompassing of a wider range of people and experiences. (Shyam 4)

The writing of Bharati Mukherjee, Kamala Markandaya and other writers were writing about the experience of making homes in foreign lands and amidst foreign cultures. They had immigrated and attempted to adapt to new environments as their experiences. This is known as transnational realism. It refers to the reality of finding homes and creating homes in new lands and representing those homes. Correspondingly, Salman Rushdie describes the diaspora community in views of homeland and its culture in his essay "The Indian Writer England" that:

Our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind. (Rushdie 76)

Kamala Markandaya has left her country India (by birth), and moved to settle in England. Since 1950s, she had been living in England and has written novels about



India and Indians in England. She tried to portray her experiences of Indian women through her works.

Diaspora writers are divided into two; the writer who focuses on their home country and other writer who talks about the host country. Certainly Kamala Markandaya belongs to the first type of writers. She has taken her place with writers such as Salman Rushdie, V. S. Naipaul, Bharati Mukherjee and Jhumpa Lahiri. All of these writers have their origins in India. They can be called diaspora writers, but their theme of writing are either same or different based on ages. Lisa Lau states that most of the first generation diaspora writers are familiar with “culture and the geographical location of their countries (and cities) of origin” (Lau 240). This means that they shared their experiences such as common ideas of diaspora in their own way through their writings. Similarly, Kamala Markandaya located her works in her country India. Besides, her home country and its culture have been portrayed to the readers. Her works have been used as a tool to remember India as her home country. Hence, she has brought the cross-cultural and interracial conflicts theme through her novels.

The term ‘insider-outsider’ is used to describe the nature of thematic preoccupations. Kamala Markandaya is an expatriate writer who lived in England for number of years outside India. That is why all of her works have the presentation of both the eastern and the western ways of life. It also has been presented in terms of intercultural encounter and capturing of women in diverse roles of life. In the other words, it shows a direct relationship in multiple views between Indians and British characters. Hence, the impact of the modern urban culture brought in by the British rule on traditional Indian life. Conversely, Ruth Praver Jhabvala is matched in the term ‘outsider-insider.’ She was born of Polish parents in Germany and educated in England as outsider. Then, she married an Indian and lived in India for more than twenty-four years as insider. So, she had declared herself to be “one of those European writers who have written about India” (Agarwal 36). Hence, Kamala Markandaya and Ruth Praver Jhabvala stand in the converse position, relating to their own life and their experience.

The theme of cross-nations and cross-cultures brings the point that the West meet with the East, known as East-West encounter. Literature has become the port to

exchange any ideologies and practices between East and West. Historically, first the West had evidently come to the East side. This sense can be mentioned to the word 'colonialism'. According to Ania Loomba, she has brought up the definition of 'colonialism' from Oxford English Dictionary that is described as:

A settlement in a new country... a body of people who settle in a new locality, forming a community subject to or connected with their parent state; the community so formed, consisting of the original settlers and their descendants and successors, as long as the connection with the parent state is kept up. (Oxford English Dictionary)

According to Oxford English Dictionary, the word 'colonialism' comes from the Roman 'colonia' which meant 'farm' or 'settlement'. It refers to Romans who settled in other lands but still retained their citizenship. This definition remarks the colonizers who might already have been living in those places where colonies were established. It also implies an encounter between peoples, or of conquest and domination. This process is of forming a community in the new land. It means that 'unforming' or 're-forming' the communities existed there. And, it involves a wide range of practices including trade, plunder, negotiation, warfare, genocide, enslavement and rebellion. As far colonialism is looked the original inhabitants and the newcomers into the most complex and traumatic relationships in human history.

When the age of colonialism is over, it does not mean everything involving colonial context is demised. Because the descendants of colonized peoples live everywhere, so the term 'postcolonial' has come into existence. Ania Loomba describes the term 'postcolonial' that implies as aftermath in two senses. First, in temporal sense, postcolonial is as coming after while second implication is as supplanting in ideological sense. As a result, "the inequality of colonial rule have not been erased, it is perhaps premature to proclaim the demise of colonialism" (Loomba 7).

The relationship between human practices and literature had existed in human history. Also, literature within postcolonial context is shaped by cross-cultural encounters.

Mary Louise Pratt uses the term ‘transculturation’ takes place in all its complexity. Literature written on both sides of colonial divide often absorbs, appropriates, and inscribes aspects of the ‘other’ culture, creating new genres, ideas and identities in the process. (Loomba 70)

In accordance with Ania Loomba, between the fifteen and sixteenth centuries European ventures to Asia, America, and Africa were not the first encounters between Europeans and non-Europeans but writings of this period do mark a new way in thinking about these two categories of people. They are binary opposites as difference between black and white, or self and other. Hence, “postcolonial literatures only consider literatures written in English, or widely available in translation, or those that have made the best-seller lists in Europe and the United States” (Loomba 93).

As in Indian Writing in English, the examples of classic literature within the theme of East-West encounter are known as Raja Rao’s *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), Ruth Praver Jhabvala’s *Heat and Dust* (1975), Anita Desai’s *Bye-Bye Blackbird* (1971), Bharathi Mukherjee’s *The Tiger’s Daughter* (1973), and Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake* (2001). So, the theme of the East-West encounter is mainly part of postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory “shifts the focus from locations and institutions to individuals and their subjectivities ... In part of dependence of postcolonial theory upon literary and cultural criticism, and upon post-structuralism is responsible for this shift” (Loomba 17).

According to Peter Barry (1995), he gives the shift in attitudes in the 1980s to 1990s towards the postcolonial writers seeing themselves as using African or Asian forms, supplemented with European-derived influences. Barry describes its characteristic into three phases of post-colonial literature in his book *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. The first phase is the ‘adopt phase.’ In this phase, the writers follow the authority of European models (especially in the novel) that will be masterpieces entirely in this tradition. The second phase can be called the ‘adapt phase’ in which the writers adapt the form and norms to their subject matter. In the last phase, the writers remake the form to their own specification, without reference to European norms. This phase can be called the ‘adept phase,’ since the colonial mind becomes independent, creative and really cross-cultural in expressing its experience.

As in the adept phase, Kamala Markandaya's experiences had come from her past life. The East and West encounter had become the major theme of her novels. This theme is manifested in varied shades, directly related to her experience. She absorbed the Indian values by birth and acquired Western values by settled in England as an expatriate. She looks like carrier between the confront values of Indian and England in opposed perspective of history, culture, social norms, religions, politics, economy, so on. The tension of inequality of these perspectives also brings the influences on human psyche and spirit, particularly on women.

Kamala Markandaya was born and brought up in India, though settled in England after she had got married. Her presentation of the East and West conflict as tension of both cultures is characterized by her direct experiences. This opposing encounter is presented on different levels in all of her novels. R.M. Varma calls this confrontation depicted in Markandaya's novels as the "Bi-cultural world of Kamala Markandaya's novels" (Varma 32). Kamala Markandaya has brought the various points of weakness and strength of both cultures. The cultural differences clearly keep the East and West apart. She looked at the West through her eyes of the East. As per Gauri Shankar Jha supports that "the cultural alienation of Indian writers in English is most often referred as swing towards west, east-west encounter or cross-cultural conflict" (Jha 1). Kamala Markandaya has explored the emotional reactions and spiritual responses of women through her real attitudes in her works.

Kamala Markandaya has shown the images of women prominently in her novels such as *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954), *Some Inner Fury* (1955), *A Silence of Desire* (1960), *Possession* (1964) and *Two Virgins* (1973). These novels have taken up the female aspects as well as woman's quest for identity. The woman consciousness is also central theme of these novels. Through her female characters such as Rukmani, Irawaddy, Mira, Roshan, Lalitha, Saroja, Sarojini, Anasuya, and Caroline, Kamala Markandaya has depicted a realistic picture of contemporary women.

As a woman novelist, Kamala Markandaya has used her text as process of continuing her own self-definition through her female characters. Her women subjects can be active because they have got significant place in her works as defining their own identity images. Kamala Markandaya's attitude towards women shows the

influence of feminist school of writing as there is awakening of feminist consciousness through her words.

Kamala Markandaya herself was conscious of the gender differences when she entered her journalistic career. She had a feminist dread that her domestic duties would suppress her literary career. She expressed this fear as woman writer. Being a woman novelist, Kamala Markandaya has taken mostly female dominant characters. Hence, the woman consciousness is the central theme of her works. She has created the authentic women characters, reflecting real society.

Kamala Markandaya is also one of the members of the economic and political alliance, known as the British Commonwealth because she was born in India where there was a British colony. Most of British Commonwealth writers either speak English as their native language or write in English such as R. K. Narayan, Anita Desai, Raja Rao, and Salman Rushdie of India. As S.K. Desai gives reference to Laxmi R. Moktali that “though Indian, Kamala Markandaya has strong bonds with England, and this fact has a great influence on her language” (Desai 130).

Birth place of Kamala Markandaya is India which is one of the countries of Asia where there are many races, languages, religions as well as cultures. That is why there are distinct identities. According to Guru Charan Behera, he mentions that “multiculturalism implies a multiplicity of contesting cultural voices that are allowed to articulate the imagined community of the nation on their own terms” (Bahera 120). More specially, Behera describes the post-modern multicultural space through the concept of rhizome of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guatari by outlining the concept of culture. A rhizome is any plant like grass. Its root system spreads horizontally on the ground. The rhizome can grow to cover across the entire land. This image of a root is as cultural complexity which is open system, structureless and non-hierarchy.

As a model for culture, the rhizome resists the organizational structure of the root-tree system which charts causality along chronological lines and looks for the original source of ‘things’ and looks towards the pinnacle or conclusion of those ‘things’. A rhizome, on the other hand, is characterized by ceaselessly established connections between

semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles. (Deleuze and Guatari 7)

Multiculturalism has presented in many cultures as a site of contestation and competition in which the periphery is having conflict with the centre. That is why the East-West encounter has become the main theme of Kamala Markandaya. The East-West confrontation is the major theme in most of her novels of post-Independent era. Even though she settled in England, she still continued to write her novels with an Indian setting and Indian perspective. As Meenakshi Mukherjee comments on this point of identity that “writers who are made aware of their Indianness as well as of the difference in the two systems of values: one rather acquired the other inherited and taken for granted” (Mukherjee 67).

This indicates that Kamala Markandaya is very familiar with the situations of East-West confrontation. Her writings have revealed the cultural interaction of both countries, India and England. According to R.K. Dhawan, he mentions that the encounter between the opposite East-West in the context of human relationships and cultural values engages her attention. Kamala Markandaya’s works show the struggles of contemporary Indians. She is combination of oriental and occidental cultures. According to Shiv K. Kumar’s words, he observes in an article that “all the contemporary Indian novelist writing in English ... both in respect of her sensitive handling of a foreign medium and her authentic portrayal of the Indian scene” (Kumar 1).

Kamala Markandaya’s novels have shown various shades of gender and East-West confrontation. As in *Nectar in a Sieve*, Rukmani is a woman narrator who presents the self-consciousness. She is a typical Indian rural woman who symbolizes the East whereas the rapid industrialization such as tannery and Dr. Kenny presents the West. Dr. Kenny is a kind-hearted British doctor and social worker. He is having a good character. When Rukmani goes to see Dr. Kenny, she remarks that “your presence means a lot to us. There is a rare gentleness in you, the sweeter for its brief appearances” (NS 110). Dr. Kenny is as the bridge of the East and West. Although the people of the West are concerned about the sufferings of the people of the East, Dr.

Kenny collects a sum of money from England for building a hospital in Rukmani's Indian village.

Rukmani feels surprised that Dr. Kenny had divorced his wife after several years of marriage. "I tried and failed to imagine her, this woman who could after so many years renounce altogether her husband, break the bond that must surely have existed despite his long absences" (NS 111). The novel talks about the man-woman relationship as well as husband-wife relationship, and this rule out any extra-marital relationship with any other man or woman. From the view of Eastern Indian women, Rukmani states that "women need men... A woman's place is with her husband" (NS 111). She thinks that woman must accompany her husband. It is a general outlook of Indian woman that differ from the view of the West as Rukmani says that "our ways are not your ways" (NS 111).

Kamala Markandaya has presented a realistic picture on the impact of industrialization in rural India. Advent of the tannery brings changes in the life of Rukmani and her village. The tannery is a symbol of modernity while Rukmani opposes it. The tannery spoils the natural beauty of the village. In contrast, Rukmani represents tradition as a conservative woman. This tension between tradition and modernity comes along with the East-West encounter as the tension between Rukmani and tannery. It is the cause of tragedy of Rukmani's life, but Rukmani represents her stamina to struggle against her ill fate. K.R. Chandrashekhara presents the outline of the novel in an article entitled "East and West in the Novels of Kamala Markandaya."

The life of toil and uncertainty lived by the tenant farmers of India who comprise the bulk of the population is represented with understanding and compassion through the simple peasant, Nathan, and his family. It is the lot of Nathan to till the land which belongs to another, paying exorbitant rent for it and getting hardly a square meal a day as reward even after the best harvest. The ravage caused by draught or by excessive and unseasonal rain, is graphically described. When a harvest fails, the farmer not only faces starvation but also has to sell his possessions like vessels and clothes in order to pay the rent. The kind of starvation which he experiences exists only in the East, and Kamala Markandaya gives a moving account of it probably for the benefit of

the Western reader. There is genuine pathos and tragic intensity in her description of the youngest child of Nathan slowly dying of starvation. (Chandrashekhara 62)

The title *Nectar in a Sieve* indicates that rural life is like nectar flowing through a sieve. They work with hope, but they cannot hold in a sieve. Nectar is such as traditional culture, beauty of nature, human values. If nectar is put in the sieve, it will drop down and get spoiled as destroying by influence of modernity. On the Eastern and the Western cultures, Kamala Markandaya points out that the people of the East are passive and submissive whereas the people of the West are active and conscious of their rights. According to Edward Said, his *Orientalism* enlarged the scope of the post-colonial approach. The discussion of colonial discourse treat such images as the product of opposition between Western self and non-Western other peoples and ideas. It exposes the Eurocentric universalism which establishes Western superiority over the East, identified as the 'Other'.

The Orient that appears in *Orientalism*, then, is a system of representations framed by a whole set of forces that brought the Orient into Western learning, Western consciousness, and later, Western empire... The Orient is the stage on which the whole East is confined. On this stage will appear the figures whose role it is to represent the larger whole from which they emanate. The Orient then seems to be, not an unlimited extension beyond the familiar European world, but rather a closed field, a theatrical stage affixed to Europe. (Said 203)

The Orient features in the Western mind as a sort of surrogate and underground self. The Orient is represented in terms of the qualities. The Westerners do not wish to attribute to themselves while the people in the East are seen as masses and not as individual. Especially Kamala Markandaya has held the East-West code of clash as the intercultural tension on her literary works. According to S.C. Harrex, Kamala Markandaya's novels deal with "different predicaments of identity... each ... affected by the East-West clash of codes that is part of modern India" (Harrex 65).

*Nectar in a Sieve* is an autobiographic novel. Correspondingly, Kamala Markandaya married to an Englishman. She had personal experiences of the confrontation between East and West. In her childhood, she was deeply touched by the destruction of the Second World War and the zeal of the freedom fighters during



the Quit India Movement of 1942. She found India awakening, enjoyed the unforgettable moments of freedom of India. She remained in touch of surging wave of nationalism. During the war, she worked for the army in India and later shifted to journalism. She valued Indian traditions and culture more than those of the West. She also highlighted the anguish of Indians. As S. Krishnaswamy opines that:

She, however, is not a theorist to dwell upon caste and class problem only. Her concerns being predominantly socio-economic, her novels offer a savage tale of brutality, ignorance, mental and physical bludgeoning that the ordinary Indian man and woman, is subject to. (Krishnaswamy 162)

Kamala Markandaya was in her teens in the 1940s when she participated in the freedom struggle. She did liaison and staff work for the army India during the war. She confronted a traditional society and learned to live and adjust everywhere. This appears in her novel *Some Inner Fury*, since this political novel deals with India's national movement. It shows the feeling of love-hate relationship between the ruler and the ruled that sets the East and the West apart. The main couple as Mirabai and Richard loves each other. But, because of their awareness of different nationalities, their relative is unsuccessful. Moreover, Kamala Markandaya mentions the East-West encounter in terms of agreement through one male character Kitsamy. Deepty Pandey points that "Kitsamy belongs to East while Richard belongs to West. Both meet and become an intimate friend. East meets West and honored West when it comes to the East. Kit welcomes Richard and meets him to others" (Pandey 143).

Regarding Mirabai's love for Richard, Mirabai says that Richard is not like other Englishman "who had forgotten the decencies of England amid the authoritarianism of empire" (*SIF* 106). Richard is the Englishman who makes a symbolic by bringing India and England close. He absorbs the Indian culture as he puts on shirt, *dhoti*, and *chappals* borrowed from his Indian servants. However, the feeling of hatred between nationalities does not allow Richard and Mirabai to come closer. In the courtroom during the trial of Govind, Mira rejects Richards that:

Go? Leave the man I loved to go with these people? What did they mean to me, what could they mean, more than the man I loved? They were my people – those others were his. Did it mean something then –

all this 'your people' and 'my people'? For us there was no other way, the forces that pulled us apart were too strong. (*SIF* 223)

To Pramod Kumar Singh, he supports that:

The conflict of East and West comes on the surface through the mutual relationship of a Hindu woman Mira and an English man Richard who have fallen in love with each other. Their love becomes gradually stronger and also the struggle of the Indians and Britishers become more intense in the political arena. Increase in intimacy on one side and breaking off in otherside is the basis of conflict in the novel. (Singh 68)

Likewise, Premala and Hickey are as innocent persons who have to suffer. Premala is burnt in the fire and Hickey is tortured. So, the East and the West is separated by hatred in a sense of political situation. On another shade, Kamala Markandaya refers to the silent barriers against women that:

There is a tradition, perhaps not only in India, that women should not be worried, that the best way to ensure this is to keep them as far as possible in ignorance...certain domains belong to men alone, and Indian women learn early not to encroach. (*SIF* 87)

This presents the cultural and traditional clash. Kamala Markandaya emphasizes the impact of the Western culture on the Indians. One couple as Kitsamy and Premala, they are different from the couple of Mirabai and Richard. Kitsamy is an Indian trained in England and immersed in English culture but his wife Premala does not like his English ways. Moreover, Govind is a blazing man who wants to drive the English rulers out of the country through violence. Although Kitsamy and Govind belong to India, but their identity is different as one follows Western culture and another one Eastern. Thus, identity can be changed, depending on one's own attitude and thought.

East and West encounter appears in *A Silence of Desire* in the form of a conflict between Indian spiritualism and Western modernism. The story is about the life of middle-class family consisting of husband, wife, and three children, living in South India. Dandekar is a senior clerk in a central government office while Sarojini has managed all housework very well. A silent conflict starts when Dandekar knows that Sarojini has begun to visit a Swamy. He is afraid of that his wife may be

possessed by the Swamy. This confrontation is depicted through the Western educated and Oriented individuals like Sarojini. C. Paul Verghese observes in *A Silence of Desire* that:

This conflict between the husband and the wife is treated in the novel as part of a conflict between science and superstition. The novelist in presenting the conflict does not make an outright condemnation of superstition or faith healing Swamy. She attempted to strike a balance between science and superstition. (Verghese 1)

This shows the husband and wife relationship through an emotional conflict. It opens Dandekar's heart. He suspects that his wife Sarojini is cheating him by going to a Swamy's house daily. He knows Sarojini meets Swamy because of her tumor healing. Sarojini is confident in the spiritual healing of the Swamy, but Dandekar is so nervous and does not trust them. He wants her to get tumor cured through a surgical process. He is under the influence of the Western culture. In the end, Sarojini agrees for the operation as the west healing because the Swamy permits her to do so. And, she says that "I am not afraid now of knives or doctors, or what they may do. All will be well. He said so" (*SD*, 144). This shows Sarojini's strong faith in Swamy. As Sudhir Kumar Arora suggests about Sarojini's role that:

Through her, the author also makes us aware of the tensions inherent in a confrontation between Eastern and Western attitudes towards religion, suffering and man-woman relationships, herself having been a witness to it all. (Arora 28)

On the other hand, Dandekar's own self has shown his two parts, "his part-western mind fought against alleviations which his part-eastern mind occasionally hinted might be wise" (*SD* 117). Dandekar is an Indian who still believes in the Indian traditions. While discussing the role of a wife with Sastri, Joseph, and Mahadevan in the officer, he says "our women are not like that – they don't flaunt themselves in front of men, either before marriage or after. They're brought up differently" (*SD* 24). The modern education under the Britishers makes him suspicious by nature in his wife's strong faith.

The conflict between Indian spiritualism and Western materialism has appeared through characters in *Possession*. All of events in this novel are narrated by

Anasuya as narrator and participant. She is an Indian who tells the story of the relationship between Caroline British woman and Valmiki Indian boy. As an English woman, Lady Caroline Bell tries to possess Valmiki, but the spiritual values of the Indian culture are so deep rooted in him that she could not exploit him. She takes Valmiki to England and tries to exploit his talent of painting for selfish gains. Kamala Markandaya emphasizes that the British rulers exploit the innocence of the Indians and tries to possess them both physically and mentally. But, finally they failed.

Possession, I thought appalled: attenuated form of the powerful craving to have, to hold which was so dominating and menacing a part of Caroline; which left a grey and ugly trail of human misery such as, horribly swollen but not unrecognizable one saw stumbling in the wake of power-societies and empires. (PS 219)

About her relation with Valmiki, Caroline says that “we go out of way to meet, and we squabbled every time we do. It’s a sort of love–hate relationship, don’t you think? Like the kind British and Indian used to have” (PS 69). When Valmiki stops painting owing to his relation with Ellie, Caroline does not say him anything. She says to Anasuya that “England and India never did understand one another” (PS 77). H.M. Williams gives his words that this novel “is one of the most forceful artistic explorations of the distortions of India’s national character in the British embrace and of her consequent urge to be free” (Williams 151). As another aspect, Kamala Markandaya tries to show different types of woman in the context of India and England.

A contrast between the traditional simple village life and the artificial modern city life along with English culture has shown the conflict of East and West in *Two Virgins*. Referring to two sisters in this novel, Saroja and Lalitha are made to choose between the Eastern and the Western way. The contrast between the tradition and modernity, between India during and after the British rule, between the older and the younger members of the family, and between sons and the daughters are sets in two in any way.

Kamala Markandaya has portrayed Lalitha as a girl with modern outlook who is lured by the life of city. Mr. Gupta is the film director who is a symbol of urban

values in modernity. He exploits her weakness. He makes Lalitha pregnant. Although, she returns to her village after deceived by Mr. Gupta, she leaves her village again. She runs to the city for her modern life. “She couldn’t face going back to the village: it stifled her, her talents, her ambition. She intended to stay in the city where she belonged. She could look after herself” (TV 182). This shows that rural life is disturbed by the urbanization.

Lalitha is lured by the modern facilities like her school teacher Miss Mendoza. Modern Lalitha tells her sister Saroja. “It’s barbaric, not having a fridge ... Everyone in the city had a fridge” (TV 18) and “you have to seize your opportunity before it passes you by, you have to be quick with your answers if you want to get anywhere” (TV 58). Lalitha advises her sister Saroja as Dr. Kenny advises Rukmani in *Nectar in a Sieve*. Lalitha wants Saroja should become active and lead smart life. Kamala Markandaya highlights the qualities of the East and the West by identifying the forces between the two girls. As Albert Camus, Saul Bellow, and John Updike supports in *Indo Anglian Literature: A Survey* that:

She treats of the theme of tragic waste, the despair of unfulfilled or ruined love, the agony of artistic ambition, the quest for self-realization and truth by the young, all themes popular with European and American novelist of recent decades. (Camus, Bellow, and Updike 54)

In the theme of conflict between the Eastern and the Western values is revealed in a realistic touch of Kamala Markandaya’s hands. R.M. Varma points that “it would be seen that Kamala Markandaya in portraying the conflict between the East and the West is all comprehensive and all embracing and ranks atop amongst Indian novelists writing in English” (Varma 68).

Kamala Markandaya becomes one of those Indian-English novelists who have the unique distinction of seeing the East and the West. Her works have undertaken the task of interpreting the East to the West. She has portrayed the tension between the two opposite ways of life in her novels successfully. People at the East are peer and hungry, sincere, honest, and optimistic and love their country while people of the West are cruel. Some are trying to improve the suffering of people of the East by helping them and by bridging between the East and the West.

Kamala Markandaya has taken her women characters from Indian students, Saroja and Lalitha; emigrant in England, Anasuya; memorable Indian woman, Rukmani; British woman, Caroline Bell; and a spiritual and traditional woman, Sarojini. Her female characters are of different ages, groups, educations, and social backgrounds.

Hence, the different roles in Kamala Markandaya's women characters project different themes. In *Nectar in a Sieve*, the self of woman protagonist Rukmani is projected in an authentic way. This story is narrated in a simple and straightforward way. Kamala Markandaya has used the autobiographical, retrospective and subjective narrative techniques. She has portrayed Rukmani as a first person novel. Rukmani is the central character who narrates the story of past. She was born in the family of the village headman and married to a tenant farmer below her family status, but she thinks about her husband as "a tenant farmer who was poor in everything but in love and care for me, his wife, whom he took at the age of twelve" (NS 4). She feels proud of him. Although, some think about her relative, she still stands at her point that "our relatives, I know...the match was below me; my mother herself was not happy, but I was without dowry and it was the best she could do" (NS 4). Rukmani feels a true satisfaction in keeping herself in the household work. She stays with Nathan in times of happiness and suffering as the loss of their sons, land, home, humiliations in the town, the grievance of their daughter and separate at last. She exhibits her tremendous power of tolerance and patience as she speaks her last words to the dying Nathan, "if I grievance, I said, it is not for you, who are my love and my life?" (NS 191).

*Nectar in a Sieve* exposes the traditional attitude of Indians towards a female child at her birth. With the birth of her first child Irawaddy, Rukmani thinks that:

They placed it in my arms when I had recovered a little from the birth, in silence. I uncovered the small form, beautiful, strong, but quite plain, a girl's body. I turned away and, despite myself, the tears came, tears of weakness and disappointment; for what woman wants a girl for her first-born? (NS 16)

Although, Rukmani is a little literate, she still presents the prejudice of the first girl child. Rukmani supports her husband's view that a male child is an asset and a girl child is a liability to the family.

Nathan at first paid scant attention to her: he had wanted a son to continue his line and walk beside him on the land, not a puling infant who would take with her dowry and leave nothing but a memory behind. (NS 17)

Rukmani seems to conform to the traditional image of Indian women who silently bear all problems and remain devoted to their husbands, nevertheless, she still keep her identity as mother of child.

She was a fair child, lovely and dimpled with soft, gleaming hair. I do not know where she got her looks; not from me, nor from Nathan, but there it was; and not only we but other people noticed and remarked on it: I myself did not know how I could have produced so beautiful a child, and I was proud of her and glad even when people pretended to disbelieve that I could be her mother. (NS 17)

In Indian society, Indians prefer the boy child to the girl because the son is expected to earn and pay back by looking after the parents in old age. Usually the male child grows up and commands a large dowry and continues the name of the family while all the money spent on a girl's education is considered a waste as the girl earns it will go to the husband's family. So, giving birth to a girl means that the parents will have to buy a groom for her when the time comes. Similarly, Ramesh Chadha gives the statement about the Hindu tradition and religion that:

The birth of a daughter in India is not considered an occasion for rejoicing. A son could have continued Nathan's vocation whereas the daughter would take dowry and leave only a memory behind. This attitude arises partly out of the dowry system (Rukmani herself had suffered from it) and partly due to the traditional view that a son is his father's prop. This view is also supported by religion: A son is the ancestors as he alone has the right to offer oblations. (Chadha 100)

Rukmani's self can evaluate her experiences of life in terms of human feelings. There is also the stream of the self through Rukmani as feeling of pleasure, fulfillment, pain, suffering, shock, and degradation from her experiences.

Furthermore, Rukmani's self is a mother's self. She becomes the mother of five sons and one daughter. "Indeed Rukmani is the mother figure in *Nectar in a Sieve*. Like in most Indian women, her strength lies in her innate capacity for compassion and sacrifice. It is true that she is not a match for the physical strength of a man" (Pandey 26). Correspondingly, Arundhati Chatterjee also states on this view in his article titled "Rukmani, The Mother Figure in *Nectar in a Sieve*" that:

Rukmani, the mother figure, symbolizes the mother earth, is the virgin soil, the source, the origin, the well-spring, the life-giver, the superior, the sustainer, the nourished and even more, the last resort, the consoler, the healer. It is the positive, sustaining force of life... Her integrity is never on the brink of collapse. (Chatterjee 92)

In the second part of the novel, Rukmani and Nathan go to the city in search one of their sons Murugan who had been employed as a domestic servant of a doctor through the offices of Dr. Kenny. But they find that their son has already left the place and gone. He abandoned his wife and his child. Rukmani describes the miserable condition of her son's wife. She says:

I looked about the room in which my son's wife lived, and I know that at any rate we couldn't stay here. Such resources as she had were not stretch to cover our needs. Except for a small bowlful of rice there seemed to be no other food in the place. The little boy was thin and hollow-cheeked, his mother looked worn and haggard and was obviously hardly able to feed the baby who kept whimpering fitfully: the cry of hunger which is different to the other cries of infants. (NS 166)

Rukmani's daughter has the bad fate in which her son-in-law sent her back to Rukmani after five years of marriage because Irawaddy is barren. He says to Rukmani that "mother-in-law... I intend no discourtesy, but this is no ordinary visit. You give me your daughter in marriage. I have brought her back to you. She is a barren woman" (NS 52). Also, Nathan supports this behavior of his son-in-law that "I do not blame him... He justified, for a man needs children. He has been patient" (NS 52). As a sacrificing woman, Rukmani do not protest the actions of her husband and her son-in-law for their male attitude. However, as a spiritual mother, she takes her daughter to Dr. Kenny for healing barrenness.



Mother is the important role of women, but Irawaddy fails to satisfy this role at first. She recognizes that “women... and I a failure, a woman who cannot even bear a child” (NS 52). According to New Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, the word ‘maternal’ means “having feelings that are typical of a caring mother towards a child”. More specially, Kamala Markandaya has shown some turning point through Irawaddy. Irawaddy is portrayed as woman and spiritual mother. Although she is a young girl, she is a surrogate mother to her brother Kuti. She sells her body to men from the tannery. She adopted prostitution to feed her brother who was dying of starvation. “There was no option but to accept the change” (NS 103). This shows that a woman is not only a biological mother, but she can function it emotionally also. When Rukmani came to know this painful truth but accepts her fate afterwards. Likewise, Deepty Pandey significantly mentions on the mother’s role that “like other instincts as love, anger, jealousy and sex, The Maternal is also unquestionably an instinct. It is generally found in all women” (Pandey 24).

Motherhood is considered to be the significant feature of women. Wifhood is one of womanhood of female’s life. Both of roles, a mother and a wife, always come along together.

The house is made of brick and stone but the home is made of love alone. It is the wife who makes the home. A home without a wife is like wilderness. A wife is considered as friend, counselor and champion. (Tikoo 1)

The image of sacrificing woman has shown through Indian wife Rukmani. Rukmani knows the extra-marital affair of Nathan with Kunthi. Nathan tells her that he slept with Kunthi a long time ago when he “was very young, and she a skillful woman... The first time was before our marriage” (NS 88). Later, Kunthi had given two sons after his marriage with Rukmani.

Disbelief first; disillusionment; anger, reproach, pain... Kali’s words: ‘She has fire in her body, men burn before and after’. My husband was of those men. He had known her not once but twice; he had gone back to give her a second son. And between, how many times, I thought, bleak spirit, while her husband in his impotence and I in my innocence did nothing. (NS 88)

Although, Rukmani loses her self-control, she still protects the honor of her husband as a sacrificing woman with Indian cultural and social norms. In this view, Deepty Pandey states about the woman's position as partner of man who is her husband in Indian society:

India is a male dominating country and women are regarded as inferior in mind and superior in heart. Indian women are mostly traditional believing in Indian culture, tradition, customs, creeds and trends. In ancient time, women had an honorable position in society. They were equal partners of men in all walk of life. Indian women intend to be like Sita, Savitri, Gargi and Anusuya because they are pillar of Indian womanhood. (Pandey 10)

The role of a wife also has been a myth and a legend. As in Vedas well-known Hindu scriptures, wife is addressed as the *ardhangi* (the best half of man). The word 'sati' means faithful wife and 'pativrata' who is the 820<sup>th</sup> evocative name of the Supreme Shakthi in 154<sup>th</sup> sloka of Sri Lalitha Sahasranama.

In Puranas, she is referred to as Sati who becomes Uma (Parvathi) who dwells with Shiva, to form *Ardhanarishwara* figure. 'Sati' means "pure existence of Sat-chit-ananda - the true Omnipresent Reality" (Ambedkar 22). Hence, Sati is the holy, fair and chaste woman, the guardian and savior-strength of her spouse, the bearer, and the fosterer. In Hinduism, the terms ideal wife can be as *pativrata*, *grihalakshmi*, and *sahadharmacharini*. Hindu religious ceremony can attain perfection and sanctity with the presence of wife. This is to show the importance given to woman as wife in Hinduism.

Obviously, *Nectar in a Sieve* is a representation of Indian rural life that gives the pictures of a society and self. Kamala Markandaya dramatizes the tragedy of a traditional Indian village and a peasant family assaulted by industrialization. The peasant couple in South Indian village, Rukmani and Nathan, is the victims of the two evils: Zamindari system and the industrial economy. They are victims of the system of landlordism because they are rural tenant farmers who do not have their own land. They have to pay rent for land. So, this brings them to lose their land when they cannot pay the rent. Then, they have to leave the land and search for the new place.

Rukmani is the central character of the whole story. Her identity is either daughter of her headman father, mother of her children or wife of her husband. All misfortunes fall on Rukmani's life. The tannery symbolic of mechanical power destroys the traditional village while Rukmani is presented as an Indian housewife faithful to her husband and children. One of her sons is killed at the tannery. The crops fail because of drought conditions. Another son dies of starvation. And, only one her daughter Irawaddy turns into prostitution for earning money for her dying brother. Rukmani keeps her spirit to struggle against all of her bad fate. As per Indira Ganeson writes in Introduction of *Nectar in a Sieve* that:

...by giving voice to the main character Rukmani, Markandaya gives us a woman who has great affect on us through not only the problems of rural life, but also the problem that she is a woman. (Ganeson vii)

Also, Kamala Markandaya has portrayed her female characters in a different way. Rukmani's woman neighbors, such as Kali, Janaki or Kunthi are portrayed as typical village woman. The coming of modernization and industrialization impacts some of the rural women as well as Third World Women like them. As Kunthi is progressive and immoral, she accepts the industrialization that comes to the village while Rukmani is opposed to the tannery. Rukmani and Kunthi present the conflict between tradition and modernity. However, their lives show a rural victimisation due to urban civilization in different ways. R.S. Singh points out that "the cultural clash of the two modes of life, the western and the oriental and the consequent actuation of the painful process of modernization" (Singh 138).

Moreover, in women's education chance, Rukmani represents the rural woman who differs from other female characters such as Kali, Kunthi, and Janaki who are illiterate. Rukmani is little literate. Rukmani's father was a village headman and gave her some education.

It was my father who taught me to read and write. People said he did it because he wanted his children to be one put above the rest; perhaps so, but I am certain that he also knew that it would be a solace to me in affliction, a joy amid tranquility. So he thought his six children, myself the youngest by ten years, with the patience he brought to all things. (NS 13)

Rukmani is less educated village woman who looks back at her past life after the death of her husband, but Rukmani's mother is illiterate who thinks that education for women is not necessary.

What use...that a girl should be learned! Much good will it do her when she has lusty sons and a husband to look after. Look at me, am I cannot spell my name, so long as I know it?" (NS 13)

Although Nathan is uneducated man, he does not oppose Rukmani's education for her sons. She taught all her sons how to read and write as she thinks that "when my child is ready... I will teach him too; and I practiced harder than ever lest my fingers should lose their skill" (NS 13). And, when Rukmani goes to the city, she decides to work as a letter-writer to earn a little of money. This shows the illiteracy in rural India, but also it presents the socially uplifted people in rural India who know a little of reading and writing.

Kamala Markandaya has presented perspective on the man-woman relationship in which woman is deserted by her husband such female characters are Kunthi, Irawaddy, Ammu. Kunthi is prostitute who enjoys the sexual company of men. She is different from Irawaddy and Ammu. Irawaddy failed to provide a child because of her barrenness. That is why she is deserted by her husband. Later, she turns to prostitution. She has relationship with other men from the tannery. And, she gives birth to a child Sacrabani. For Ammu's life, she is a wife of Murugan son of Nathan and Rukmani. She has one child after her husband had left her for unknown place.

It is the way to present the female sensibility and female identity. Thematically, this novel is the portrayal of uneducated and uncivilized peasants with their problems of industrialization and landlordism through the couple Rukmani-Nathan while *Some Inner Fury* describes civilized upper class gentlemen and ladies with the issues of political violence and racial conflict through the couple Mirabai-Richard. Mirabai's love for on Englishman Richard is foredoomed to failure. Mirabai is presented as a middle class Indian girl whose family becomes tragically against the freedom struggle. She is involved in the national movement.

In *Some Inner Fury*, Mirabai is the central character because she narrates the story. As a heroine, Mirabai belongs to the upper class. The strong romance of Mirabai and Richard has been subordinated to the nationalist movement. Mirabai is the youngest member who represents both an aristocratic and Westernized family. She brought up with all urban sophistication. And, she is well aware of her superior status as she thinks of her family.

My mother went to play bridge and to keep my father company. I went because I was taken, and to learn, to mix with Europeans. This last part of my training, for one day soon I would marry a man of my own class, who like my brother, would have been educated abroad, and who would expect his wife to move as freely in European circles as he himself did. (SIF 14)

Within aristocratic life style, Mirabai is happy when she goes to the club and speaks English to guests. The club provides amenities such as billiard room, squash court and tennis court. Her family's house has two dining halls and two sets of cooks as well as one western and the other Indian. This is opportunities of plentitude build up her background during her adolescence.

Moreover, Mirabai's brother Kitsamy is educated in Oxford. Influenced by Western culture, he does not find anything valuable in Indian culture. During the British rule such Anglicized men from upper class enjoyed high posts in Government services. Kitsamy as a civil servant holds the prestigious and powerful post of District Magistrate. His Westernized outlook alienates him from his own countryman. He marries Premala who is a girl with traditional Indian attitudes. Premala promotes humanitarian feelings in her community. She enjoys her selfless service while Kitsamy keeps himself aloof from his countrymen. Premala engages herself in educating the poor, illiterate and unprivileged ones. So, Kitsamy is a product of the West. He is self-centered and self-indulgent, but his wife Premala is innocent, modest and universally loved as the East.

In Mirabai's relationship with Richard, Mirabai's mother cannot accept Westernized behaviors of her daughter. She feels uncomfortable at the close relationship of her daughter with an Englishman. Kamala Markandaya has portrayed

the figure of a liberated woman in Roshan's character. Roshan is a friend of Mirabai's brother, Kitsamy. Mirabai starts working for Roshan's paper. Roshan is a liberated young woman who publishes a paper with nationalist zeal. Roshan is born in educated-world. She belongs to the majority of Indian national leaders who take active part in the political struggle against colonial rule. As a woman journalist, Roshan runs a progressive newspaper to apprise the public of various constructive works the nationalists have undertaken. She engages Mirabai in her establishment. Margaret P. Joseph reflects on such point as the breakdown of personal relationship that:

The volcanic 'inner fury' of the nation crept destroying the illusion of harmony, with wide connotations of relationships between races and nations. The microcosm of individual relationship is also destroyed by the inner fury of love, jealousy and violence. (Joseph 25)

During India's national movement, Mirabai faces a psychological barrier between the ruler and the ruled. She renounces wealth, honor, and love in order to identify herself with the Indian sentiments. The inter-racial emotional bond can be threatened by the powerful pressures of political exigencies. As Premela dies in a mob fury, she cannot adjust her idealism to the irrational demands of her Westernized husband. Samares C. Sanyal rightly observes that:

The delineation of roots of different classes of Indian society is Kamala Markandaya's continuing theme. She has artistic insight enough to know where the roots are and how do the roots get disentangled resulting in inter-cultural tension and changing individuals. Her chief went lies in that she presents the direct and indirect clashes between two sets of values in Indian ways of life without authorial commentary. (Sanyal 94)

In spite of the tragic separation of Mirabai and Richard, *Some Inner Fury* ends with a sense of patriotism. Mirabai scarifies her personal pleasures for the greater national cause. She joins the mob defending Govind against the false allegation of murdering Kitsamy. There is a quest for self-discovery. When she makes her final decision to depart from Richard and join the crowd of demonstrators, she has realized her roots. Her wounded self is appeared when the external fury of the crowd demanding Govind's release suppresses her emotional inner fury. As a grown up girl,

she decides her course of action. She prepares herself to embrace the revolution. Punim Juneja mentions that:

*Some Inner Fury* reiterates the fact that a meeting of East and West is always possible at the level of personal relationships. But by placing Mira and Richard in a particular historical context, Kamala Markandaya shows how sometimes social and political compulsion become too strong to be withstood and one is compelled to take sides. (Juneja 185)

In this novel, Kamala Markandaya has presented her female characters as a typical cross-section of India. They are set to act, speak, and think in particular way determined by their social class. This class consciousness is the tension of moral argument. Such sensitive characters attempt to fight against destiny in the face of anguish and suffering. From this view, A.V. Krishna Rao says that:

Kamala Markandaya's novels, in comparison with those of her contemporary women writers, seem to be more fully reflective of the awakened feminine sensibility in modern India as she attempts to project the image of the changing traditional society. (Rao 55)

Correspondingly, in the interview with Ramlal Agrawal, Ruth Praver Jhabvala represents the picture of Indian society in her powerful autobiographical essay titled "Myself in India" published in the *London Magazine*. She writes that:

The most salient fact about India is that it is very poor and very backward. There are so many other things to be said about it but this must remain the basis of all of them. We may praise Indian democracy, go into raptures over Indian music, admire Indian intellectuals-but whatever we say, not for one moment should lose sight of the fact that a very great number of Indians never got enough to eat. Literally that from birth to death they never for one day cease to suffer from hunger. Can we lose sight of the fact? God knows I have tried. But after seeing what one has to see here every day, it is not really possible to go on living one's life the way one is used to. People dying of starvation in the streets, children kidnapped and maimed to be sent out as beggars-but there is no point in making a catalogue of the horrors with which one lives, as the back of an animal. (Jhabvala 17)

Furthermore, Kamala Markandaya has given the reflection in terms of the influence of West on people of the East. As Rukmani and Kunthi of *Nectar in a Sieve* are quite similar to Saroja and Lalitha of *Two Virgins*. Lalitha is progressive like Kunthi, but Saroja is traditional woman like Rukmani.

In *Two Virgins*, the two young girls, Lalitha and Saroja, have been presented in which they symbolize two different attitudes through adolescence life. Likewise, K.S. Ramamurti states that:

The novel has something of the theme of initiation too worked into it, for we find in it again a series of initiations, initiations into modernity and into city life and Western Culture, initiation into the mysteries and excitements of sex, initiation into the secrets of professional success which happens in the life at Chingleput and Lalitha's initiation into the world at art. (Ramamurti 198)

*Two Virgins* has presented the growth and development of two growing sisters, Lalitha and Saroja. Kamala Markandaya has portrayed the younger sister Saroja as the village girl. Her parent responds the changing situations in the post-Independent India. The two girls are portrayed in contrast to each other in spite of being born and brought up in the same family, environment, and parental care. As Roger Iredale points out that "the modernism/traditionalism conflict is central to the developmental problems of not only India, but many other nations of the current time..." (Iredale 38). So, the two sisters have their individual self-knowledge in the difference by the end of the story.

Kamala Markandaya makes them different. Lalitha goes to an expensive and superior school run by an Anglo-Indian Miss Mendoza while Saroja goes to the traditional school in the same village. Saroja comes to acquire a self-awareness of her and her family's social position in a class society. Moreover, the father's liberalism in the national struggle during the pre-Independence period stands on the opposite pole with Aunt Alamelu's Hindu traditionalism. Aunt Alamelu is one of female characters who shows her belief in the importance of maintaining Indian cultural identity in the face of westernization. Modernism in the social organization comes to exist in the village. The environment around her supports Lalitha's dream as the city life. Mr.



Gupta, Devraj, and Chingleput represent those evil forces in society. For example, this novel presents a woman who is ruined by these forces such as she becomes pregnant before marriage.

In contact with Western people, Lalitha village girl start revolting against traditional ideals of spiritualism. She got education in public school and trained by Anglicized teacher Miss Mendoza. Lalitha is easily attracted towards opportunities offered by the metropolis. The film director Mr. Gupta represents the corrupt and vile forces of the city who exploits Lalitha's innocence. When she tries to commit suicide, neither Gupta nor Miss Mendoza comes to rescue her. Only her family members try to save her from disaster and shameful existence but she cannot reconcile herself to the rural set up. At last, she again goes to the city to be lost in its moral chaos.

On the other hand, Aunt Alamelu is a dependent widow. And, she constitutes a lower middle class Indian family. Lalitha hates Aunt Alamelu who restricted her movements such as she is not allowed to celebrate Diwali with boys. When her aspirations to go to the city broke she curses that "the one-horse town, this backwards place, this outpost of civilization" (TV 64). She is aggrieved by the unfair attitude of sexual discrimination. This brings to the contrasting attitudes among the older and the younger generations towards modern living and life style. As A.V. Krishna Rao comments that:

Parents and aunt in vary in degrees stand for the stability and continuity of the tradition of their village community while Mr. Gupta symbolized the fast changing, superficial and immoral exploiting system of the city. (Rao 21)

And, R.M. Varma studies in this view of the novel and comments that "*Two Virgins* shows great concern about the irresistible encroachment of new and material values borrowed from the west, on the ancient Indian believes and old established relationships within the family and the village" (Varma 33).

Kamala Markandaya attempts to present the basic problem of the adolescent girls in the modern period of India. While Lalitha is lost in the faceless crowd of the metropolitan world, Saroja gains wisdom from her sister's down fall. She undergoes a

process of self-education being guided by the tradition bound Aunt Alamelu and the experienced Manikkam's wife and her sympathetic companion Chingleput. Not only Saroja is portrayed as the key issue who surveys the whole action of the novel, but also she is as a symbolic point of reconciliation between tradition and modernity.

*A Silence of Desire* also holds the conflict between deep faith and insistence on rational explanation. As an Indian man, Dandekar has both Eastern and Western minds. His Eastern part is about religious belief and Western is scientific. A typical Indian lady Sarojini presents Eastern values as whose faith in a Swamy result in wide differences with her husband, Dandekar. As she tells her husband that:

Yes, you. You can call it healing by faith, or healing by grace of God, if you understand what that means. But I do not expect you to understand you with your western notions, your superior talk of ignorance and superstition when all it means is that you don't know what lies beyond reason and you prefer not to find out. (*SD* 68)

Dandekar tries to make his wife understand the importance of scientific cure. A majority of the Indian women are religious-minded and consider Swamy, Gods who can solve all their problems. Kamala Markandaya highlights the tension between Dandekar and Sarojini. She has shown sharply ironic of Indian middle class through *A Silence of Desire*. She demonstrates the strong impact of western culture and education on the mind of middle class Indians. The complexity of human relationships has been examined from the view of an urban middle class couple. Similarly A.V. Krishna Rao observes that:

In her third novel *A Silence of Desire* (1960) Markandaya's diagrammatical representation of the contemporary consciousness shows up a new dimension of sensibility in that the fictional focus is on the psychological adjustment of an urban middle class family. (Rao 47)

Even after fifteen years of marriage this couple lacks a sense of adjustment and mutual tolerance. It shows domestic and spiritual conflict that drifts them apart. Sarojini as woman protagonist of the novel is a traditional Hindu housewife who is devoted to her domestic duties, taking care of her husband and children. On the contrary, her husband Dandekar is a city dweller working as a clerk in a government department. His contact with the Europeans has given him a pragmatic and scientific

outlook on life but their domestic life is threatened by the appearance of a spiritual leader as the Swamy. Sarojini frequently visits him with the hope that the Swamy can heal her tumor while Dandekar insists on treatment in the hospital. Hence, this conflict strains their conjugal relations.

Dandekar suspects her relationship with the Swamy. He becomes suspicious of his wife because of a lack of communication each other. This destroys his peace of mind both at home and in the office. Sarojini hides things from her husband. She apprehends that he might not allow her to go to the Swamy to be healed. Hence, she argues that:

Because you would have stopped me going to be healed...You would have sent me to a hospital instead. Called me superstitious, a fool, because I have beliefs that you cannot share. You wouldn't let me be – no! You would have reasoned with me until I lost my faith because faith and reason do not go together, and without faith I shall not be healed. (*SD 68*)

Sarojini is neither rich, highly educated from a sophisticated society nor poor, illiterate from a rural class. Her views are based on a middle-class disposition of acceptance. She complains to her husband about his understanding of the healing process by the grace of God that:

You with your western notions, your superior talk of ignorance and superstition when all it means is that you do not know what lies beyond reason and you prefer not to find it out. (*SD 68*)

Dandekar has never paid attention to his wife's problems. He tries to speak to her but "speech seemed looked somewhere beyond his dry lips, his constricted throat. He looked at Sarojini, his wife, a stranger" (*SD 66*). When middle class people cannot fulfill their desires, they surrender themselves to a spiritual guide for relief from tension. Margaret P. Joseph states on the theme of this novel that:

The theme is the clash between faith and reason and it provides the immediacy of a contemporary problem in India, but the real achievement of the author lies in the projection of this theme through awakening of a mind developing from thoughtless complacency to tremulous introspection. (Joseph 36)

Madhusudan Prasad remarks that “the chief thematic tensions in ‘A Silence Of Desire’ issue from a conflict between deeply held faith and that insistence on what is broadly described as rational explanation and behavior” (Prasad 121). Likewise, Usha Pathania comments in *Human Bonds and Bondages: The Fiction of Anita Desai and Kamala Markandaya* (1992) that:

The peace and happiness of the Dandekar family is restored. The unhappy interlude is over and the good old days return with the encouraging change that Sarojini and Dandekar have now achieved interpersonal fusion on both the place-physical as well as mental. A sort of compromise has been struck between scientific views of Dandekar and religious belief of Sarojini, the ties between them are stronger than before. (Pathania 95)

Another novel of Kamala Markandaya that has presented the East-West encounter is *Possession*, but in this novel the main woman character differs from other novels. The memorable character is the English woman Lady Caroline Bell. She desires for possession leads her to the tragic event of taking a peasant boy Valmiki from South India. She wants to patronize his artistic talent and takes him from his village far away to London. She pays to the Valmiki’s parents and takes him with her to London. However, Caroline does not understand Indian sentiment and character. Then, she misinterprets it to the outside world. She observes artistic potential and turning him into a Western genius. Caroline is presented as a monster of possessiveness. In her character, Caroline is a smart, resolute, and self-willed lady. She stands for all that the British thought of themselves in relation to their colonies. And, she symbolizes those people of materialistic society who take delight in exploring the innocent persons for selfish motives.

As time passes on, Caroline’s life with Valmiki does not run in smooth that is based on a love-hate relationship. Valmiki often disputes with her about the issue to other women such as Ellie and Annabel. Caroline’s relation with him as:

We go out of our way to meet, and we squabble every time we do. It’s a sort of love-hate relationship, don’t you think? Like the kind Britain and Indian used to have. (PS 69)

To compare Caroline with her Jewish maid-servant, Ellie is a crippled girl of twenty. She is one of the victims of human cruelty perpetrated by the Nazi army. She lost her identity.

She had no parents, no state, no passport, no papers-none of those hallow stacking blocks on which the acceptable social being is built. Her one asset what that she was trained and fully experienced domestic help. (PS 72)

While drawing her nude portraits, Valmiki tends to be emotional preoccupied with Ellie. When she signifies her stage of pregnancy, she shyly admits that Valmiki would be child's father. His love for Ellie is a bond of human attachment of passion, mutual understanding, and sympathy for each other. After that, Caroline loses Valmiki again to one young woman Annabel who eighteen years old, small, and slim with a soft mouth. Caroline is much older than he whereas Annabel is a young lady nearby his age. Her sense of possession does not allow her bad-partner to lie with another woman. Her patronage for art gives way to a strong sense of possession. She wants to possess him so that she can dominate over him.

Kamala Markandaya has portrayed her women in *Possession* as a powerful expression of the intercultural tension in psyche of women. The Western psyche of Caroline Bell is temperamentally different from an Indian lady Anasuya. Anasuya narrates all events as the omniscient narrator. The tie of racial connection between the East and the West is bound up when Anasuya takes Caroline to a South Indian village. As per Madhusudan Prasad remarks that:

Kamala Markandaya evokes the twin theme of colonialism and colonial confrontation deftly through her characters, the interaction, of certain events serving symbolic suggestions and in an almost direct expressiveness in the frequent confrontation between Caroline the imperial English lady and Anasuya, the self respecting westernized yet truly Indian narration. (Prasad 152)

Kamala Markandaya realistically portrays the life of the two women characters: Caroline and Anasuya, on their ethnic differences and divergent temperaments. The sense of possession of Anasuya is weak compared to Caroline's. As a divorcee, her need for a man can be fulfilled by Valmiki. Every woman needs a

man's support in life and vice versa. Normally, it is a case of the perversion of sexual desire in a divorce. However, Anasuya has none of Caroline's desire even if she is a lonely woman. Both women cross ethnic barrier in establishing personal relation with each other. Caroline develops personal love relation with Valmiki whereas Anasuya takes pity on him for his miserable condition. The undertone of the novel stresses the human desire for possession at each stage.

Moreover, Kamala Markandaya has presented her humanitarianism and zeal for reforms, called the 'Literature of Concern.' She focuses on the craving of a woman to dominate over a young man in culturally, physically, morally, and emotionally. The nature of women is possession by nature as titled *Possession*. Correspondingly, Margaret P. Joseph points out that:

While she succeeds in the first three-making Valmiki a well-known artist, becoming his mistress, teaching him her materialistic values – she fails in the last, for in every crisis he turns to his mentor the Swamy. (Joseph 49)

In recent years, many Indian women novelists writing in English have discussed the role and status of Indian women in their writings. Kamala Markandaya is the one of them who has represented the problems of woman. Hence, her women fall into two distinct categories: one is those who follows their traditional social roles and perceive ideal womanhood as an obedient daughter, a subservient wife, and, another is who struggle against the traditional Indian womanhood and attempt to assert social and sexual power in a sense of social-moral resistance.

The female characters of Kamala Markandaya are defined in search for self and to rediscover their real identity. Her women's self is suffocating and struggle for freedom. Kamala Markandaya's novels have risen up the women's strong voice of protest against the male-dominated Indian society and against male conventions.

Especially the title of Kamala Markandaya's novels implies the characteristical theme of each novel. Such title is ironical as *Nectar in a Sieve*. This title refers to the illusory happiness of woman in her struggle for survival in which the whole situation orbit around woman protagonist Rukmani. This novel illustrates

all her basic preoccupations: the protagonist Rukmani as narrator caught in a peasant life, the unexpected nature, and the depredations of modern civilization in form of the tannery and industrialism, and the forced migration to a city. It reveals how ‘work without hope’ draws as nectar in a sieve. So, this title is taken from the 1825 poem “*Work Without Hope*” by the English Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—  
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—  
And Winter, slumbering in the open air,  
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!  
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,  
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,  
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.  
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,  
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!  
With lips unbrighten'd, wreathless brow, I stroll:  
And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?  
Work without Hope draws **nectar in a sieve**,  
And Hope without an object cannot live.

(*Work Without Hope* 1.1-6)

Kamala Markandaya has used this poem’s final couplet as an epigraph to hint that the problem described in the poem will be a central issue in her novel. This novel shows that hope or the sweetness in life as nectar can be difficult to hold on in a sieve as strainer. The title indicates the draining of life in the face of suffering and death. The woman protagonist Rukmani demonstrates the need to hold on to hope and the nectar of life even in the face of overwhelming adversity. It also means that the characters do not always receive happiness from it. Their work is never-ending. However, the characters in *Nectar in a Sieve* are constantly at work, but their work only provides enough to survive and not to celebrate. Thus, the characters of the

novel identify with the idea that work without hope is like nectar draining from a sieve.

The title *Some Inner Fury* refers no less the incomprehensible outer fury of the people against the whites. The love of Mirabai for Richard in the political context has been denied by the fury of the freedom movement. There is another trauma couple as Kitsamy and Premala. Kamala Markandaya has selected the title of *A Silence of Desire* from Longfellow's sonnet, "The Three Silences of Molinos" (1878) of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow which opens with the following lines:

Three silences there are; the first of speech,  
The second of desire, the third of thought.

(Longfellow, *The Three Silences of Molinos*)

Correspondingly, the contents of novel towards the silence of speech imply no mutual understanding between husband and wife lack of communication between the peaces at home. K.S. Narayana Rao explains the breakdown of family tie that:

Inner peace comes from a silence of all the three-speech, desire, thought – and this novel we see that the silence of speech in the wife is disturbed by Dandekar with his own desires, which he should have silenced at last for some times, and this disturbance leads to the loss of peace and harmony, the tranquility that he wants, so much when he sees the Banyan Tree. (Rao 350)

*A Silence of Desire* is one of Kamala Markandaya's successful novels that is characterized by probing and creation of living characters in meaningful dilemmas. One side is the Western-oriented nationalism of Dandekar while another is the traditional, religious faith of his wife Sarojini. The encounter assumes intensity and seriousness. Hence, *A Silence of Desire* implies that a desire can never be silenced. Variously *Possession* is concerned with the Indo-British person relationships as the encounter between Caroline and Swamy for the possession of the soul of Valmiki. Valmiki is the rustic artist. And, he has been focused on the conflict between his being draw to England and his mentor. *Possession* exposes the idea that a free spirit could be possessed by the material wealth while *Two Virgins* raises the innocence against degeneration under the modern impact on two girls.



*Two Virgins* attempts to probe into the mental and psychological states of two young girls of middle class upbringing. Lalitha is born in a typical middle class family of Appa and Amma. Appa encourages her to utilize the first opportunity at her disposal to develop her artistic talent. She feels that her restricted village life moves into the promising city life. She feels that her future career may be crushed under the outdated social systems. She joins the film industry in the city but becomes unsuccessful in her ambition to uplift her social position.

Finally, Lalitha becomes rootless, losing her family affections as well as her moral life to the immoral industrialist Gupta. Lalitha has been portrayed as a rebel against the existing social conventions which tends to resist any change and advancement that the youth aspires. Indian middle class in Kamala Markandaya's novels is torn between two irreconcilable worlds of traditional moral and religious order and on the other, the emerging order of a utilitarian and materialistic society. The mind remains essentially ambivalent in attitude to life and living.

Kamala Markandaya has evolved her own style and technique in her writings. *Nectar in a Sieve*, *Some Inner Fury*, and *Possession* are cast in a reminiscent mood. Prof. R.S. Singh remarks that:

All the three narrators are women and the plots are circular. When the story begins, the narrator gets into the mood of collection, and ends when the experiences of a whole conscious life lead her to moment of decision to shake off her ambivalent attitudes. (Singh 137)

In these three novels the narrators are Rukmani, Mirabai, Anasuya all women, but they belong to different sections of society. All of them are quite sincere and honest in the presentation of their experiences. Especially, there is the shared womanhood because of at the back of them is the centrally hand of novelist, a woman herself. The reminiscent mood in three novels allows the writer to move backwards and forwards without any hindrance. The first person narration adds to the reliability and credibility of the setting, story, and characterization. Hence, Kamala Markandaya reviews the whole life story of the protagonist with ease and naturalness.

*Nectar in a Sieve* is in the mode of first person narrative in which all events is kept in the eyes of female protagonist Rukmani. Kamala Markandaya narrates all events through Rukmani in a chronological pattern. The novel begins with the protagonist Rukmani in a retrospective mood and closes with at the end of her reminiscences. In this regard, memory is used as technique of women's writing. As Kamala Markandaya opens the first paragraph that:

Sometimes at night I think that my husband is with me again, coming gently through the mists, and we are tranquil together. Then morning comes, the wavering grey turns to gold there is a stirring within me as the sleepers awake, and he softly departs. (NS 4)

From the female perspective, Rukmani suffers every hardship that comes to her family by reminiscing her own past. The story consists of two parts. The first part is about the married life of Rukmani and Nathan. And, the second part is about Rukmani's life in the city for searching one of her brothers. This shows that the story surrounds the central woman character as axis and is narrated by woman through woman perspective with woman's feelings and attitudes. In *Some Inner Fury*, K.S.N. Rao mentions in his work "Kamala Markandaya, The Novelist As Craftsman" that:

Markandaya is on safer ground because her first person Indian narrator Mira [like the author herself] is rich, educated, a Brahmin, a writer, and in love with an Englishman (Rao 35)

In *Possession*, Kamala Markandaya treats a philosophical topic like possession in the framework to show that spiritual influence is more enduring than material possession. Caroline serves for materialistic possession is contrasted with in Swamy's inner influence on Valmiki. She runs to dominate over him that is opposite to the Swamy's affection for him no sense of possession. At the end, the discourse between the Swamy and Caroline rises to a philosophical level without any suggestion for resolution. As Caroline, an English woman remarks that "spiritual, if you like. There's no place for it in England. He ought never to have been allowed in" (PS 139). Caroline is the symbol of villain while the Swamy is that of good. Kamala Markandaya stimulates the mind of the reader to take an active part in the controversy between materialism and spiritualism. India stands for spiritual knowledge while

England symbolizes material prosperity. As a result, Stephen Ignatius Hemenway observes that:

Markandaya is a fine storyteller whose handling of point of view, in particular, reveals a serious commitment to explore the potential of English language, fiction of India. Her first person narrations, though flawed, contribute much originality to the Indo-Anglian novel. (Hemenway 67)

In different way, *A Silence of Desire* is narrated by the method of the third person narration. The delicate deep husband-wife relationship is skillfully traced in the Dandekar-Sarojini combine. The wife represents the old, spiritual way of life while the husband represents the new, rational way of life clash between the two. The Swamy proves to be a source of inexhaustible power over the couple, though Dandekar has his doubts in the initial stages.

With the female narrative in Indian context, the female self-discovery always has unfolded. According to Elizabeth Jackson (2010), she describes about the female self-discovery narrative that tends to centre on a married woman, usually a mother related to her life and her relationships. When we talks about the self-discovery, it always relates to the concept of identity. Such identity of women as wife, daughter child-bride, and adolescent student, has been portrayed through Kamala Markandaya's female characters as Rukmani, Irawaddy, Mirabai, Saroja, Lalitha, Sarojini, Anusaya, and Caroline, so on. According to Ramesh K. Srivastava, he suggests in his essay "Kamala Markandaya's Style" that "if Markandaya's style is the image of her mind, it is also the image of her characters, events and actions which it attempts to portray" (Srivastava 71).

Kamala Markandaya has succeeded in showing the oppressed women in male-dominated society. Woman is supposed to be in multirole of wife, daughter, home maker, etc. As an Indian woman novelist, she has portrayed a true picture of Indian women. She has exposed the issues of women in relation to gender. She also has presented the women's struggle to establish themselves and assert their identities.

Hence, Kamala Markandaya makes a powerful impact on women's mind and conscience by asserting their own self. Anil Kumar Bhatnagar in, "Kamala Markandaya: Her Themes and Art" in *Indian Women Novelists in English*, states that:

Kamala Markandaya's themes are not new but this weakness becomes strength because the Indian setting still has the attraction of novelty for the western reader, and universal themes set against an Indian background are welcome. (Bhatnagar 34)

The expression East-West encounter has appeared in Kamala Markandaya's novel that stands for the conflict between indigenous and new comers, tradition and modernity, spirituality and rationality, superstition and scientific outlook. All of these contrast views means the East-West cultural conflict. So, this theme is one of major themes of Indian writing in English novels during the post-colonial era. Kamala Markandaya has depicted the clash of rooted values of Indian culture and tradition in most of her novels in various forms. Also, she has portrayed her female characters to face these contrasts in terms of hybridity by post-colonial context. The impact of hybridity has influenced both direct and indirect on the identity of woman. She has presented the different types of women characters with the representative of the feminine sensibility.

Kamala Markandaya's novels have given realistic images of women in her writings of the post-colonial era through her own words. She has presented how women maintain their own values and sense of original culture and tradition when they face the West as a cross-cultural contrast. The novels also help us to see that the traditional way of life, in villages or cities cannot be maintained at the cost of woman's freedom. The pre-industrial way of life nether allows women much chance of freedom in the changed world of capitalism nor honor in her traditional role as can be seen in the conflict between East and West depicted by Kamala Markandaya in her novels.