Frank and Realistic Portrayal of Characters in the Work of Kamala Markandaya

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The remarkable feature of Kamala Markandaya’s novels is the realistic portrayal of her characters. She is a gifted novelist with an artistic perfection and simple expression. The realistic approach to life is the hallmark of her fiction. “With her impeccable representational realism and innovative description of the Indian arcadia, Markandaya achieves a perfect poise between the rural reality and the disciplined urbanity of art”. She has a firsthand knowledge of South Indian villages, the real conditions of the villagers, their miseries, their sufferings and their real ways of life. She has depicted all the hardships faced by the poor peasants in her fiction. Markandaya presents all the follies and hypocrisies of her characters. She doesn’t take sides with any of her protagonists. She feels the pain of the suffering humanity and believes in the betterment of man. She aims at educating humanity. Like Mulk Raj Anand, she wants to bring reforms in the Indian society. She doesn’t hesitate in raising her voice against the exploitation of man by man. Her fiction, “rooted in the Indian Soil and ethos, has a subtle social purpose. In a sense she fictionalizes the sociology of India. Her intention is to awaken the polite society to the real problem”?

Kamala Markandaya began her career as a novelist in an age when India was facing a number of problems like racial differences and disharmony, starvation and poverty resulting from natural calamities like famine and draught. For her, fiction is a medium to teach humanity the real meaning of life. She has touched upon all the important aspects of life. To her life is a mixture of happiness and sadness and she has portrayed this fact in her fiction realistically. In her novels she has depicted racial conflicts, cultural differences, temperamental disparities and sexual perversion. She has drawn a realistic picture of rural India contrasted with the glamorous Westernized world of England. Her stay in South Indian villages before marriage and her settlement in England after marriage enabled her to draw a realistic picture of East and West. Consequently, East-West encounter became an interesting subject for her novels, particularly in Some Inner Fury. Being an Indian, she values Indian traditions and culture more than those of the West.

The portrayal of man-woman relationship is a favorite subject of Kamala Markandaya. Her characters are strong and courageous. They are strong-willed and face all the odds of life with courage. Her protagonists are not idealists but they possess the general weakness of the mortals. They know how to bend like a grass and how to face the reality of life. Her protagonists believe that disillusionment and despair, disappointment and frustration, conflict and struggle are the inseparable and integral part of life.

Kamala Markandaya has depicted women in various shades:

In her first novel Nectar in a Sieve, Markandaya has presented the life and travails of a peasant woman, Rukmani. She faces so many odds of life like famine, death, adultery and prostitution in the condition of bone-chilling poverty and fights against them constantly. She has been able to win the sympathy of the readers by her astonishing will-power that endures a life without hope like Nectar In a Sieve? Her plight resembles that of of A Handful of Rice. Here we witness the transformation of a carefree girl into an exploited and victimised woman Ji Ying to pull her family through the harsh and cruel life of a big city. In Some Inner Fury, Possession and The Nowhere Man she has portrayed the East-West Relationship in a man-woman context. Her next novel Two Virgins presents a realistic picture of the problems of growing up into an average woman of an average contemporary Indian family. In A Silence of Desire, Markandaya has depicted the conflict between tradition and modernity faith and rational thinking and married life through Sarojini and Dandekar. The Golden Honey Comb deals with the woman belonging to the royal families, women sheltered under the princely umbrella during the days of the British Raj.

Nectar in a Sieve is a touching novel dealing with the theme of hunger told in the first person by its protagonist, Rukmani. Her family consists of Nathan, her husband, a poor tenant farmer and seven children, Ira, Arjun, Thambi, Murgan, Raja, Selvan and Kutti. Although the family of Rukmani is poor, it is a happy family, fully satisfied with what it has. ‘But the intrusion of industrialism on the one hand, and the vagaries of Nature, on the other, coupled with landlordism, spoil the sweet harmony of the peasant family and destroy the joy and placid rhythms of their simple lives’. Though Nectar In a Sieve has been compared with Pearl Buck’s The Good Earth. “its nearer and apter analogy would be K.S. Venkatramani’s Murugan, the Tiller,”? Nectar in a Sieve is a saga of the sufferings of the peasants of India. It is a story of a peasant couple riddled with economic factors, social evils and natural calamities. In this novel a peasant woman suffers due to the hostility of Nature and industrialisation. She is compelled to lead a life of uncertainty, hunger and degradation. Due to the evil forces of Nature, they starve and face miserable poverty. Owing to these odds of life, Rukmani and Nathan lose their land and are caught in the powerful clutches of draught:

Day after day the pitiless sun blazed down scorching whatever still struggled to grow and baking the earth hard until at last it split and great irregular fissures gaped in the land. Plants died and the grasses rotted, cattle and sheep crept to the river that was no more and perished there for lack of water, lizards and squirrels lay prone and gasping in the blistering sunlight.”

In Nectar In a Sieve, Markandaya has described starvation, authentically and realistically. Look at the word-painting of hunger and starvation portrayed by Markandaya:

For hunger is a curious thing: at first it is with you all the time, waking and sleeping and in your dreams, and your belly cries out insistently, and there is a gnawing and pain as if your very vitals were being devoured, and you must stop it at any cost and you buy a movement’s respite even while you know fear the sequel. Then the pain is no longer sharp but dull, and this too is with you always, so that you think of food many times a day and each time a terrible sickness assails you. 7

Evil forces of nature play a significant role in destroying the crops of Rukmani and Nathan as they recall how their paddy crops were ruined by the heavy rains:

It rained so hard, so long and so incessantly that the thought of
a period of no rain provoked a mild wonder. It was as if nothing
ever been but rain... but Nathan and I watched with heavy
hearts while the water rose and rose and the tender green of the
paddy field sank under and was lost.... The rains have destroyed
much of our work. There will be little eating this year."

In A Handful of Rice, the protagonist, Ravi goes to the extent of
theft due to poverty and starvation. A Handful of Rice is a journey
of a poor young protagonist through different vices of life. All
the talent of Ravi dry up in the scorching heat of poverty and
starvation. He struggles but fails to get even a handful of rice:
He struggled to reach the grain, this time at least, and he clenched
his empty hands and watching with frantic eyes as the rich heap
dwindled and the empty sacks flipped and sagged and were
snatched up and filled or jump away full on shoulders that could
bear them."

Ravi is a promising young man and is the representative of many
unemployed young men dreaming to lead a happy and respectable
life. If I had a wife, he thought as he ate, she would cook for me, it
would be like this every day but what had he to get himself a wife?
I’ll buy her a little house, small but nice, he thought as he finished,
and some nice, new shiny, aluminium cooking vessels.

The miserable poor condition of Ravi disintegrates his family:

His mother was dead. His brothers and sisters, who with their
progeny would have provided the cohorts, were gone, forced out
by the relentless pressure of their existence, in the upsurge of
revolt that had begun to dismantle the old pattern of family life
first in one village, then in other.”

In A Handful of Rice, Markandaya has given a real and vivid
account of the degradation and immorality of its protagonist
who often beats his wife and does not hesitate in raping his own
mother-in-law.

In Some Inner Fury, Markandaya shows the influence of national
struggle on human relationships. Kit and Govind, the two cousins
represent different attitudes of the Indians. Kit is a Westernized
Indian whereas Govind dislikes the British and is a true Indian
by nature. There is a conflict between Kit and Premala as the
latter is the worshipper of Indian culture. Kit’s sister, Mira, loves
an English man, Richards. The fire of the Quit India Movement
spreads and entangles them into its meshes. Richards respects
all the cultures and is a lover of East-West harmony while Mira
possesses a bitter hatred for the Britishers. When she joins the
political agitators, she remarks:

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 other 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.
The main theme of Some Inner Fury is racial tension and hatred
here “The East-West encounter is however depicted in the novel
on a cultural level through the conflict between the Indian spiritual
faith and modernism born of India’s contact with the West.”

A Silence of Desire exhibits the husband-wife relationship with
a natural and real fervour. In the beginning Dandekar shows an
unflinching faith in Sarojini:

She was a good wife, Sarojini good with the children an excellent
cook, an efficient manager of his household, a woman who still
gave him pleasure after fifteen years of marriage less from
the warmth of her response than from her unfailling acquiescence to
his demands. He was lucky.... 14

Sarojini’s faith in Swami awakes suspicion in the mind of
Dandekar and he succeeds in separating Swami from his wife
but he realizes that Swami was superior to him and was not a
charlatan. In this novel Markandaya gives the message that there
should be a harmony and proper understanding in husband-wife
relationship. Suspicion without proof is the greatest enemy
of conjugal harmony.

Possession is the portrayal of the exploitation of the havenots
at the hands of have’s. It “may be described as an allegory of
the direction the independent India has to follow in its onward
march to its progress. It poses a question as to whether India has
to cut itself off from its roots and shape itself in the image of
materialistic West or seek its growth from the life-giving springs
of its own culture.”.

The Coffier Dams presents the hatred of the Britishers and even
Indian officers towards the hill tribesmen of India. The dam is being
constructed for the betterment of these tribal. But, unfortunately,
they are humiliated and exploited by their own employer, Clinton.
Contrary to Clinton, Helen is an enlightened character with healthy
outlook. She does not believe in castes, creed and color but is the
true worshipper of humanity.

The Nowhere Man is a psychological analysis of human relations
and presents the racial animosity. “The younger generation in
England wish to stem the inflow of colored immigrants.” “In this
novel unemployment becomes the cause of conflict between the
whites and the coloured people. When the young men of England
wage their attack on Srinivas, he realises that if he is compelled
to leave England, he would be nowhere, he said to himself, and
he scanned the pale anxious eyes which were regarding him out,
a nowhere man looking for a nowhere city.”

In Two Virgins, The protagonist, Lalitha, allured by the false
promises made by Mr. Gupta, the Film Director, is exploited
sexually. Mr. Gupta is a shameless rascal who exploits innocent
girls like Lalitha for his sexual satisfaction. When Lalitha’s Appa
and Amma go to Mr. Gupta, he blames the innocent girl for inviting
him for sex:

What she was doing in his studio then flapping her lashes and
issuing invitations to all and sundry.

The Golden Honey Comb is the revelation of the racial tension
and hatred of Indians towards the British and the Indian Maharajas,
their sycophants.

In her latest novel, Pleasure City, Markandaya has tried to reconcile
East with West. She has tried to convey through this novel that
there are no boundaries between East and West.

Kamala Markandaya is an ideal novelist and has a ‘varied repertoire
of women characters of her fiction. She has successfully presented
almost all the important aspects of life. She has presented a large
variety of her themes with a rare realistic touch. She doesn’t
idealise or glorify but paints a realistic picture of life. She has
very successfully and realistically given a true account of life in
her novels. Life is a mixture of good and bad elements we see the
angelic and the wicked characters in our daily life. In the same
way we come across this variety in her fiction. Her novels are
for the welfare of humanity. She writes with the crusading spirit
for the welfare of mankind and calls her literature a ‘literature of
concern.’

The Indian system, with a few exceptions, is specialized by
patriarchal, which identifies male dominance and female
subordination. The leading role is in man’s share and woman
who has to be satisfied with the secondary role, remains in the
background. She is expected to mould herself in the pattern of the
family into which she is married and merged her individual identity
into that of her husband. She becomes her husband’s shadow and follows him through the course of life. She is expected to support him in all kinds of weathers, adding her strength to his. Chastity and devotion to her husband and her precious ornaments. Family is her shrine and the enclosure in which she remains confined, is kitchen where she operates her daily activities like cleaning, washing, cooling etc. in bedroom, she worships her husband and calling him her pati parmeshwar, as he is not less than god for her, she offers flowers of worship at the feet at night. She observes several fasts to ensure the same husband life after life. She also prays for the long life of the husband so that she does not have to suffer the suffering of the widow.

The kitchen culture that she inherits form he mother brings decency, decorum order and fragrance. She knows fully well that, in future, she has to be the kitchen queen of her so called sweet home. This is the traditional image that a girl forms in her mind in girlhood. She is a taught to be submissive, committed docile and tolerant so that she may prove herself an ideal woman not only for her husband but also for her father-in-law, mother-in-law and others-in-law. She is supposed to keep the family tree grow and prosper. She is taught not to copy male qualities that will make her polluted and demonic.

Man for the field and woman for hearth
Man for the sword and for the needle she
Man with the head and woman with the heart
Man to command and woman to obey.

Marriage is a woman’s adventure and with it, there is an end of her search as she merges herself in the family losing her identity. Now, for her family becomes more important than individual. She sacrifices herself following the merging and self negating theory. She wishes to produce a son to continue the pedigree. The infertility, she knows well, is a curse. S. C. Dubey has significantly analyzed it.

The infertility of a woman was considered as a curse
In matrilineal groups she is expected to produce a son
To continue the line. In matrilineal societies this was
Not considered a necessary, though it was desirable.
But even among them, as in patrilineal societies,
Procreation is a social necessity and a value.

Leela Dubey observes: “for woman, the positive value of marriage,
which signifies “good fortune and a sate of bliss,” is contrasted with
the negative and inauspicious significance of the widowhood.”
A traditional woman, being deeply religious, develops stoicism that
gives mental potency and protects her from tension and conflict.
And it is true that happy women do not make history. Suffering
women make it and epics are the records of suffering women.

Kamala Markandaya projects her women characters basically
traditional women with all their characteristic traits and inborn
qualities. She is conscious of the silent barriers that are laid against
women.

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.

She laughs at the way of ‘society’, the beastly tamer; when she says:
All the rules and restrictions against which you had
Chafed since you were a little girl, all were designed,
It was amply confirmed as you grew older, to stop
You becoming pregnant until the marriage be not
Had been tied. It did not work.

Social institutions like marriage and family, kamala Markandaya
believes, emotionalize human relations. Marriage, for her, seems
to be a symbol of community and marriage in her world is the
final resting place for a woman. Her early novelists present the
wife in her customary role of sati Savitri archetypal pattern. But,
underlying this suffering sacrificial role is the new woman who
complains with pressing tongue for emancipation.

Kamala Markandaya’s nectar in a sieve is the story of Rukmani
who never loss faith in life or love for the husband and children—
despite her endless battle against relentless nature, changing
times and dire poverty. Praising rukmani, A. V. Krishna Rao
observes:

The real truth of the novel is the spiritual stamina of
Rukmani against such formidable enemies to her
Culture: the draconian landlord, and the soulless
Industry. She knows:

Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve
And hope without an object cannot live.
And this mother of rural India lives in her children,
Selvam and Ira who belong to a different age but
Who are of the same self?

Rukmani, the youngest of her sisters—shanta, Padmni, Thangam
is the daughter of a village headman who, due to changing
circumstances, is forces to marry his daughter to Nathan, a
tenant farmer who is poor in everything but certainly not in love.
Being the protagonist of the novel, she adopts the dramatic role of
a said chronicler of the traditional life of an Indian village in
transition.
As soon as the marriage ceremony is over, se leaves her father’s
home with her husband Nathan in a bullock cart. This memory
is still fresh in her mind. She reviews of past:

Then the cart began to move lurching as the bullocks
Got awkwardly into rhythm I was sick. Such a
Disgrace for me… how shall I ever live it down? I
Remember thinking. I shall never forget… I have not
Forgotten, but the memory is not sour.

She feels the soft touches of her husband who soothes and calms
her saying: “it is a thing that might happen to anybody,” he said.
“Do not fret. Come dry your eyes and sit up here beside me”.
On reaching her new home, she sinks down as much with grief
as with deep anguish and frustration. I wanted to cry. This mud,
nothing but mud and thatch was my home. My knees gave first
the cramped one, then the other, and I sank down”.
But her husband assures her that every soon they will have a better
and bigger house. She is deeply touched by his kindness and can
ever forget it. She assures him that the house is all right and she is
happy with him. She does not complain at all and is rather grateful to her husband for being so kind to her. Love starts showering in her heart when she comes to know that Nathan has built the hut with his own hands or her. The mud house is the creation of love and so she admires her husband or his nobility of heart. She feels highly euphoric and proud realizing the intensity of her husband love. She says:

A woman they say always, remembers her wedding Night. Well, may be they do; but for me there are Other nights I prefer to remember, sweeter, fuller, When I went to my husband matured in mind as well As body not as a pained and awkward child as I Did on that first night.

It is not on the first night but later that she comes to love him as a true and dutiful wife. She is faithfully devoted to be husband and according to Indian traditions, does not call hi shame but address him only as husband.

It was my husband who woke me—my husband, Whom I will call him Nathan for that was his name, Although in all the years of our marriage I never Called him that, for it is not meet for woman to Address her husband except as “husband”.

Being a sagacious and prudent housewife, she manages her home well. She is amiable and gentle and soon she has a number of friends among the womenfolk of the village. She is particularly close to janki and kali, though she does not like Kunthi so much. However, when Kunthi gives birth to her first child, she serves her to the best of her ability, though it puts so much of strain on her. To increase the family income, she sows some vegetables in the small patch of ground at the back of the cottage. She sells first to old Granny and then to Biswas, the banya, as he pays a much higher price. She collects cow dung early in the morning from the field around, and thus saves the cost of purchasing fuel. She is prudent and farsighted and ever in days of prosperity saves something for the rainy day.

She gives bath to her first female child and names her iravadi. But after she does not conceive for full seven years. Her husband wants a son to carry on his name. He waits patiently but she feels his pain and disappointment. At her mother’s house, she meets Dr. Kenny and confides her troubles to him. It is by virtue of his treatment that she conceives again and soon becomes the proud mother of six sons—Arjun, Thambi, Murugan, Raja, Selvam and Kuti. She never tells her husband about the treatment that she has taken from Dr. Kenny.

Her concept of life is very simple and elemental; it does not require seeing much happy. She ponders on bare necessities consisting largely of food, clothes, and shelter.

While the sun shines on you and the fields are green And beautiful to the eyes and your husband sees Beauty in you which no one has been before and You have a good store of grain laid away for hard Times a roof over you and a sweet stirring in your Bodies, what more can a woman ask for? My heart Sang and my feet were light as I went about my Work getting up at sunrise and going to sleep Content. Peace and quiet were ours.

She is keen observer of nature. She believes that nature represents some cosmic power constructive and destructive. She expresses her points of view:

Nature is like a wild animal that you have trained to Work for you. So long as you are vigilant and walk Warily with thought and care, so long will it give you Its aid, but look away for an instant, be heedless Or forgetful, and it has you by the throat.

The happiness of rukmani and her family is dependent on good harvest and then tin turn is dependent on timely and adequate rains. Nature plays the game of hide and seeks and ultimately snatches all joys from her life destroying the crop something in the form of heavy rains—sometimes in the form drought. She does not get over the shock given by nature. Meanwhile industrialization in the form of tannery flattens her. She is quite aware of this chance. But the change that now came into my life into all our village, blasting ties way into our village seemed wrought in the twinkling of an eye”. She is dead against the change because of its noise, stinking smells and crowed. In place of quiet, the village has “all noise and crowds everywhere and rude young holligans idling in the streets and dirty bazaars and uncouth behavior and no man thinks of another but schemes only for his money”. The tannery, symbolizing the industrialization and its associated evils, invades the village with clatter and in, depriving it of its children’s playground and raising the bazaar prices high. With the setting up of tannery, she feels that the crows, kites and other scavenging birds that are eager for the filth and garbage of the two, have taken the place of paddy bird and flamingoes. She pathetically recollects:

Somehow I had always felt the tannery would Eventually be our undoing. I had known it since the Day the carts had come with their loads of bricks and Noisy dusty men, straining the clear soft greens that Had once colored our village and clearing its cools Silences with clamor.

But, she does not wholly hold the tannery responsible for her misfortunes. Her husband is dispossessed of the land on which he worked for thirty years under the illusions of owning up. Her poignant words, which are spoken nostalgically, describe the pathetic plight of an uprooted farmer.

This home my husband had built for me with his own Hands in the time he was waiting for; brought me to It with a pride which I used to better living, had so Very nearly crushed. In it, we had lain together and Our children had been born. This hut with all its Memories was to be taken from us for it stood on Land that belonged t another. And the land itself My which we lives. It is a cruel thing, I thought, they Do not know what they do to us.

She is shocked when her son-in-law returns Ira saying that she is a barren woman. She knows that people think a barren woman to be a counterfeit coin, which is returned to the owner or discarded, as useless. Her sorrow crosses all the limits when she discovers ira who has been prostituting to buy milk for her ailing brother Kuti.
She tries to stop her daughter but of no use as she has not made up her mind that she will neither go hungry herself nor allow her brother to do so. Her helplessness is seen in these lines.

Well let her go. We had tried everything in our Power; there was nothing more we could do. She was no longer a child, to be cowed or forced into Submission but a grown woman with a definite Purpose and an invincible determination…” we forbade, she insisted, we lost. So we got used to Her coming and goings as we had got used to so much else.

A woman can bear a shock but her husband infidelity, is too much for her. She faces the gravest crisis in her married life when she learns about her husband’s relationship with Kunthi. She is stunned as she thinks of Kunthi who continues blackmailing her for platonic relationship with Kenny. First she is speechless, alter full of speech.

Disbelief first; disillusionment; anger reproach, pain. To find out after so many years, in such a cruel way… at last I made an effort and roused myself:

“It is as you say a long time ago,” I said wearily, “That she is evil and powerful I know myself, let it Rest”.

She becomes shockproof as one shock comes after another death sees her house and carries her son Raja to the unknown world. She reacts to the death of her son Raja thus:

For this I have given you both, my son that you Should let at my feet with ashes in your face and Coldness in your limbs and yourself departed without Trace, leaving this huddle of bones and flesh without Meaning.

She shows herself spiritually and mentally strong when she says:

…These things were you? Now there is no Connection whatever, the sorrow within me is not for This body which has suffered and in suffering has let Slip the spirit, by for you my son.

Nathan tells her that their last child Kuti, conceived in glee have been taken away by cruel death. She grieves for him and feels too well what Nathan feels. Her grief is more controlled, though no less poignant this time:

Yet, although I grieved, it was not for my son; for in My heart I could not have wished it otherwise. The Strife had listed too long and had been too painful For me to call him back to continue it.

She muses over the death of old Granny in a philosophical manner:

Death after all is final… so it had been with my sons So it was now with old Granny, one day it might be The same for me, for all of us. A man might drift to His death before his time unnoticed…

Similarly, when Nathan dies, she says poignantly: “I licked my wet lips. There was a taste on them of salt and of the fresh sweetness of the rainwater. I did not know I had been crying”.

Time is a great healer, and with the passing of time, she reviews her life with “calm of mind, all passions spent”. Her calm acceptance of the reality of the situation and stoic resignation to the imminent will manifest typical image of an Indian woman. Meena shriwadkar identifies her with maurya in J.M. Synge play, riders to the sea. Failures of harvest, the deaths of Raja and Kuti, the departure of her son for city and for Ceylon, the desertion of ira by her husband the withdrawal tragic incidents make her a mother of sorrow stub fail to crush her spirits or to shake her faith in the basic human values. Having faced the biggest blow of her husband death, she comes back to her village with a renewed faith in an adopted son puli and reconciles to life, which is in store for her.

Some inner fury is set against the background during the Second World War when the quit India movement was in air in 1942. It studies the impact of the troubled national spirit upon the love of Richard and mirabai who belong to the different races—the ruler and the ruled. Mirabai is the central consciousness of the novel. She is the most roundly presented character with her sensitivity and imaginative insight. She is more modern than traditional as she is brought up in a westernized household where there are two dining halls and two sets of cooks and whose members go to European clubs and dance and play. In the family, club going is compulsory for everyone and Mira is introduced to the club to get her adequately Europeanized.

I went because I was taken; and to learn to mix with Europeans. This last was 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 except his wife to move as Freely in European circles as he himself did.

But her Europeanized mind does not obstruct her from being a traditional woman. She has Indian heart and possesses Indian tolerance and fortitude. At the railway station, she goes to welcome her brother who returns with his English friend Richard from England. It is the tradition of Indian culture that the guest is like a god and hence, the first priority is given to him. She welcomes Richard with the garland that she has brought for the brother. The traditional shyness can be seen on her face when she garlands him. And yet the first time we met I was so shy I hardly looked up until someone prodded me and I stumbled forward and garlanded him.

Her heart is highly exhilarated and feels for him when she sees him trying to imitate an Indian by wearing a dhoti and a parity of chappals that he borrows from a servant. A seed of love starts germinating in her heart. She goes to the club not with he father but with Richard and feels quite cheerful and smiling. A gift from Richard becomes more meaningful to her. His absence makes her uneasy as a chameleon in summer. To being the company of Richard becomes a pleasure in itself. She shows the vastness of her heart in loving him. It is in the roots of Indian culture that when one loves, loves whole heartedly and devotedly. Love or duty, if there is one option to choose out of these two surely, a traditional woman will opt for duty sacrificing love.
Country becomes more important than her love and she sacrifices it for the sake of performing her duty. Mira opts her traditional manner. When Richard asks her “do you really think people can be singled out like that? One by one, each as an individual? At a time like this? After today?

Mira in spite of her optimism and bravado realizes that this is true. She says:

But it was not; it was just beginning though exactly of What I could not tell.

There is a time in one’s life, they say, when one Opens the door and lets the future in: I had the Feeling I had done so, but had neither the power Nor the courage to recognize the shape of thing to Come and therefore I could not speak.

Her fears come true when govind is accused of stabbing kit to death by hickey. So, govind’s is arrested and put on trial. She is convinced that govind is innocent since she remembers that she had thrown her arms around govind as kit left the hut, and therefore it is impossible for him to have thrown the dagger. Hickey maintains that he had seen govind throwing the dagger. Before the issue could be decided, the court is mobbed by slogan shouting crowds and govind throwing the dagger. Before the issue could be decided, the court is mobbed by slogan. She also realizes that it is no longer possible for taken away. She rises above the self and plunges into the great redeeming fire of the national movement. Quite helplessly and inescapably, she forsakes her love reconciling her lot with the crowd. After all, she is convinced:

…it was simply the time for parting we had known Love together, whatever happened the sweeteness of That knowledge would always remain. He had drunk Deeply of the chalice of happiness, which is not? Given too many even to hold. Now it was time to set it Down, and go.

She takes the great decision of leaving her lover for the sake of her country. Country is bigger and higher than love for her. She is not mean and selfish as she thinks of the people and the country.

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 other were his… and I know I would go, even As I know Richard must stay. For us, there was no Other way, the forces that pulled us apart were too Strong.

H. M. Williams calls this love, “a deep and maturing experience for both young people, is shipwrecked on the rocks of Indian nationalism”. The influence of the idealistic national movement is so far reaching and unreenting that it prompt K. R. Srinivasa lyengar to regard some inner fury a tragedy engineered by politics.’

The floods of the quit India movement engulf this love of Richard.

Comparing Mira with rukmani, laxmani, R. Moktali says:

If her heroine rukmani in nectar in a sieve represents The peasant women folk, mirababai of some inner Fury represents the rebellious young blood of pre Independent India. If one is rural, the other is Urbane. But the situations in which these women are Placed, and more or less, the same, in that both of Them had once their golden days and are now Thwarted. The problem is universal. But, the Environment is particular, that is peculiarly Indian.

Quite opposite to Mira Richard relationship, which is based on love without marriage, is Premala Kitsmay relationship, which is better known as marriage without love. She is made to deny her impulses and is forced to live according to an abstract set of ideals far removed from reality. Her family has protected her from the realities of being a woman. Her mother wishes kitsmay to be her son in law but he will not marry Premala until or unless he meets her. In order to facilitate marriage, Premala comes to stay with kit family. She knows, of course, the object of her coming. No woman, after all, goes lightly to her marriage, there are always shadows before.

When she comes, she is quite nervous and her face becomes wet. She feels uncomfortable in the new changing circumstances as Mira says: “she is too young. I thought forgetting she was older than me. To me she seemed a child and this feeling was always to remain for like a child, she had no defenses. She is by nature shy and conventional and basically Indian in spirit. She bends backwards in order to become a suitable mate for kit; she Endeavour to mould herself according to his ultra modern tastes. She comes so Mira to borrow her shorts, which she puts on only to satisfy kit’s linking. But her blushing has no meaning and favor in the eyes of kit.

… For she would have done anything for him— Premala came to borrow my shorts, put them on, Blushing blushed again, furiously, when kit looked at Her bare legs, for she had never worn anything but a Sari. But this modesty, which is supposed to grace a Woman, found little favor in kit eyes.

During a month, she wins everybody heart in the family. There was no one who could not speak of Premala with affection with affection, “for she was gentle and unassuming, and had tender pleasing ways”. Mira who likes Premala praises her saying: “and Premala….? A lovely face, tenderly moulded, which never lost its tenderness because she could never learn to be tough. In her heroic efforts to please her husband and abiding her concept of dharma, she thinks of abnegating her identity. She is deeply religious and is in accord with the religious part of the ceremony. Mira writes about her religious nature:

Several times I saw her praying eyes closed, Forgetful, of the crowd, with that expression of Desperate entreaty you sometimes see on the face Of a small pleading child.

Within a year of her married life, she and her husband drift apart. She is Indian to the core and cannot adjust completely to kit lifestyle—though not for lack of effort on him apart. She has sympathy for the children who are fighting for scraps. As she sees their pitiable condition, she is moved to pity. Dodama and kit are
against this sentimentality and ask her not to be sentimental. She says it is neither emotional nor sentimental to call children. She is innocent, modest, utterly unpretentious and universally loves. To her goodness of heart was almost the sum of perfection and little else of consequences for there are many keys that unlock the gates of men liking, and each is differently fashioned. She becomes a martyr without a cause. She sacrifices herself at her attempts to be an ideal wife and later when she rushes to protect the school, which she has helped to build, and which to her perhaps symbolizes the reason for living, she is burnt to death. Govind blames kit for driving her to her death.

She loved you, he said, “you never loved her—you Do not even know the meaning of love. You gave Her nothing not even a home. You drove her to the Village you drover her to her death.

Premala remained virtuous and beautiful in her life and also in her death, she was looking more beautiful. Death who would not have the courage to touch an destroy her beauty, helped a lot in making her more beautiful. Mira writes about her death: but I could not believe she was dead. The feeling would not come, then I looked at her and she had always been beautiful and she was beautiful now.

For people like Premala who scatter love around, death means nothing because one remains beautiful in death. Premala as her name suggests, is an embodiment of love-perm and she, like a reformer, must lavish on her husband, on govind, on the adopted child as also on the entire village but which in the prevailing violence and hatred, cannot survive and must inevitably die. Kamala Markandaya rare gift to scrutinize human crises of a fundamental strain and to track grippingly and realistically the psychological stress and isolation is not better seen anywhere than in her novel. A silence of desire, an imaginative commentary on the psychological mal adjustment of a middle class woman sarojini who is religious and traditionalist to the core. Sarojini husband dandekar, a clack in the new Indian centers his whole peaceful life in on his adored wife, his life for her and three children. Though she knows no luxury, she is quite satisfied with what she had and builds the building of her sweet home on the foundation of mutual confidence. But, one evening by her absence at home, she causes an earthquake that shakes the buildings N. Ramachandran nair observes:

Kamala Markandaya seems to stress the point that There are times at which one had to keep silence And time at which one had to speak. Indiscretion in This regard may be denter mental to the preservation Of joy and peace. Dandekar and sarojini are victims Of such an impasse. The root cause of their Prolonged uneasiness is their inability to speak out.

Kamala Markandaya portrays sarojini calling her “a good wife, good with children, an excellent cook, an efficient manager of his household, a woman who still gave him pleasure after fifteen years of marriage, less from the warmth demands”. The walls of a house reveal the character and nature of the woman who lives among them. The walls of sarojini dining room clearly reflect that she is deeply religious. “These were all of gods and goddesses singly and in groups, tableaus that showed them holding court in their heaven, or worrying, or being miraculously born of the earth or the sea”.

Sarojini whose life is full of sufferings due to severe ailment is pious and naive. She spends much of her time in prayers and visiting temple where she listens to the preaching of saints will bring her healing. Her husband Dandekar is modern in outlook but cherishes the traditional image of woman and wishes to see it in his wife sarojini. He makes others know about his attitude towards woman. “Our women are not like that. They do not flaunt themselves in front of me either before marriage of after. They are brought up differently”.

But this same Dandekar changes his opinion when he finds sarojini absent and sees a photograph of a man. She is shocked at her husband’s spying on her and takes deeply to her heart arises, she will state rather than explain.

The man whom I worship as a god; she said, looking At him directly. You are very nearly right in that one Thing. Just that one thing.

A traditional woman values her chastity above all and thinks it to be the precious ornament of her life. Sarojini thinks that she is right and has done nothing wrong that makes chastity unchaste. She informs him: “I have growth in my womb.” This disclosure stuns him as he thinks the worst: it could be cancerous. To his whispering “if only you had told me… why could not tell me?” she replies that he would have called her superstitious, a fool and then reasoned with her until she lost all faith.

Because you would have stopped me going to be Healed… you would not have let me be—no! You Would have reasoned with me until I lost my faith, Because faith and reasons did not go together and Without faith… I shall not be healed.

Their intimacy begins to reassert itself; it does not matter if it is temporary. Both make their emotions flow out as soon as they find an outlet. Sarojini is more emotional than her husband.

I didn’t mean it—she was gasping for words, for Breath did not mean what I said. Anger makes you Say—strange things, but I did not mean—how could I? After so long and—and our happiness, but it Wasn’t me.

Her husband persuades her to have an operation but she refuses flatly.

I can’t
‘I will be cured, in my own way.’
‘By this—this faith healer?’
Yes, I have faith in him and he will cure me.

She finds herself under pressure but she is capable of keeping poise even in the adverse circumstances. Significantly, she does all possible to keep the home going. She works hard and sleeps all possible to compensate for the time she is away. Her explanation that the swamy has left is direct, free of rancor, though, obviously deeply distressing to her. She gets the strength of her character and tells her husband Dandekar:

“I formed an attachment, it is broken, and that is all. One Must accept it… he prepared us for his going, I Realize that now though I didn’t at the time…
Perhaps because I did not want to. She said there
Must be no repining,” she said, he was insistent on
That.

She becomes ready for an operation, as she has got inspiration and
strength form the swamy. I not afraid now of knives or doctors;
or what they man do? All will be well. He said so. Her face was
confident?

Truly, a silence of desire, there is more silence of speech than
silence of desire. Both sarojini and Dandekar lack mutual
understanding and they almost do not speak. At last, this dumbness
of the couple is broken and everything becomes all right. Sarojini
decided to entrust her life to medicine and successfully undergoes
an operation. She recovers and is now free from the power of
swamy.

Kamala Markandaya’s another prominent novel possession deals
with the story of a traditional woman but in a different cast. She is
the central character, yet her friend anasuya who is only a minor
participant in the action narrates the story. Hence, the story is
told predominantly from Indian point pf view. Iyengar has rightly
commented on the role of Anasuya:

Perhaps anasuya is trying to
Make the story of Caroline and valmiki something of
A parable of colonialism, the passing of one empire,
And the current insidious movement of new-
Colonialism.

Anasuya is a friend of Caroline who comes to India and then
takes Valmiki, a young talented Indian, with her to England. She
narrates the story as an objective reporter. Her character remains
enigmatic to the end, and hence, is the frail bridge between kamala
Markandaya eastern and western world.

Anasuya is well aware of Indian traditional and her culture, when
Caroline who after discerning in Val the talent of a painter, wants
to take him with her, anasuya makes her rememors: “you forget”
I said, “He may have a family. He may not want him to leave
them. They may not want him to leave”. Hence, she refuses flatly
to help her. I meant I was not going to help you. This boy is a
human being even if he’s goatherd and simpleton. He’s not a toy
influence on valmiki. In her eagerness to possess the boy outright,
she oversteps the bounds of matriarchal patronage by seducing him
into an almost incestuous carnal alignment despite the disparity in
their ages and the difference of race. Whenever, she fails to get on
with the swamy. I not afraid now of knives or doctors;

Anasuya feels the pulse of Caroline who does not wish to lose Val
at any cost. She analyses her anxiety for Val and his attachment
with the swamy. She peeps into Caroline’s heart and describes:

I think she sway him as in the end the real adversary
The one who could, more formidable than anyone
Else who had crossed her path, show up for shadow?
Her authoritative declarations of an austere
Disinterestedness in and a legitimate entitlement
To the boy; and resist her taking and keeping
Possession of what she wanted.

Though she is a friend of Caroline, she is deeply impressed by
Ellie. I fond it was not she but Ellie who dominated me. Pale
ineffectual Ellie, asleep—or more probably awake—in her room
across the landing, surrounded by Valmiki’s work, and carrying
his seed in her womb”.

Anasuya is sympathetic, kind and merciful to Ellie whom she
sees being exploited by Caroline. She supports Val and is aware
of the struggle that is taking place in his mind.

Quite contrary to the swamy who represents the traditional
spiritual image of the east, Caroline Bell represents the traditional
materialistic view of the west. What she sees, she sees with the
spectacle of materialism. The British traditional face of cruel
exploitation emerges in her. She can have her own way for she
has the attributes of the British who, wherever they go, “as the
whole of the east knows, they lives on the fat of the land, though
the British themselves have no inking of it”.

She is the representative of her race in her pride, possessiveness,
egosim and cunning manoeuvres. While portraying her character,
anasuya says:

She was supremely confident, born and brought up
To be so, with as little through of fallibility as a
Colonial in the first flush of empire, as a missionary
In the full armor of his mission, dogged by none of
The hesitancies that handicap lesser breeds.

The desire to taste arak crude, country liquor made by villagers, takes
her to south Indian village where she meets by accident Valmiki,
a rustic Tamil boy who was natural born talents of a painter. She
perceives with an uncamly insight the rich potentialities of valmiki
as an artist. She buys hi from his parents for five thousands as
compensation for the loss of his services. She succeeds is settling
the matter.

Caroline must have known at once she had won for
She put her arm round the boy, as it were taking
Possession of him in full view of his family.

She takes him to England where she makes him, in the purely
western sense of the term, a celebrated painter. Her attitude signifies
the changed role of the Whitman burden to maintain control over
others—to substitute political dominance by cultural dominance
with a view to alienating Indian from their own roots.

She takes pride in Val and boats: “I discovered him in a cave. Oh
yes, a real one. In India hideously bare and uncomfortable, expect
for those superb walls. And Val of course”.

From the very beginning, she is aware of the swamy invisible
influence on valmiki. In her eagerness to possess the boy outright,
she oversteps the bounds of matriarchal patronage by seducing him
into an almost incestuous carnal alignment despite the disparity in
their ages and the difference of race. Whenever, she fails to get on
well with Val, she describes it as an old ailment, ”that England and
Indian never did understand one another. He ought never to have
been allowed in. her concept of Val’s art is essentially bourgeois;
she looks at his painting merely as commodities to be bartered
in the market rather than an expression of his communion with
the divine.

Valmiki for Caroline is a means to achieve success in society. After
winning the recognition in the higher society, Caroline aspires
for the recognition of Valmiki himself and makes him her lover.
Desiring to bind the young man to herself, she does not disdain
anything: she forces the Tamil cook to write Valmiki a letter on
behalf on his friend Swamy, drives away her maid servant Ellie
who expect a child from valmiki and thereby drives her to commit
suicide, discredits the young man in the eyes of his beloved anabel,
and deprives valmiki of any means to return to India. Val is her
discovery and, therefore her possession. She is the representative
of the traditional image of the Britishers who exploited Indians
and other people of the world. She stands for those people who

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“do not easily give up what they think are their possessions”. In Ellie kamala Markandaya portrays a 20-years Jewish girl who looks crippled and aged because of the cruel inhumanities she has suffered at the hands of Nazis in concentration camp. She is described as a victim of European crime in European confine. A refugee, a domestic last bastion of the servant fewer eras” is Ellie in the opinion of Caroline who supposes her “better than nothing”. Being orphan she is hopeless and helpless. She had no parents, no state, no passport, and no paper None of those hollow stacking blocks on which the Acceptable social being is built. Her one assert was That she was trained and fully experienced domestic Help. She has no particular musical ability, but for music itself she has real love as well as a deep insatiable mind. Anasuya presents her the entire collection of records. Though she refuses yet on pressing, she accepts on condition that she will return them on her return. Caroline refers her saying poor Ellie and is surprised when Val makes her portrait. She tells anasuya: “it’s beyond me why Val should have thought her worth putting on canvas”. She feels quite easy and comfortable with ansuya and at her lodging, she plays on music of her liking and handle with the volume so low that the music is reduced to a whiner, though even that seem to satisfy her. Anasuya asks her whether she loves val or val loves her. She tells her: I lie with a man—so I do not talk about love, because I do not know if that is what I feel. It is not easy to Feel because I am burnt out, inside. I am burnt out. But valmiki loves me. He does not know it, but he Does. At times like tonight he forgets, he cannot Understand himself how it is possible to love Someone as dull as I am, you can see in his face he Is asking this question. Then when the others are Gone and it is day time again he comes back to me, We are of one kind. She has the seed of valmiki in her womb. She has the feeling for a child “if I had no feeling for a child would I have conceived?” It is a surprising fact that she was raped every night in the camp but she was not conceived. And she sleeps with Val only once and is conceived. Raping symbolized colonial suppression and her conceiving final inevitable liberation. “First time with valmiki,” she said carefully, “but in The camp it was every night. They came for us every Night. In the beginning I would ask them to kill me But they only laugh… it made it worse… I was too Dry. Also after a few months were not women any More… the flow stopped, we looked like men no Flesh, no hair. Ellie, an innocent girl becomes a prey to colonial suppression and exploitation. Val is right when he says about her “but she still bleeds within”. “A Handful of Rice” is drawn with a masterstroke. She is virtuous, decent and comely with bright eyes and thick glossy hair that could transform a man’s life. Her voice is ever soft and low which is an excellent quality in woman. Ravi falls in love with her at first sight and logins to be bound in nuptial bond. He assesses her in following words: What a girl like that and half a man’s troubles would Be over. Haply, iyengar aggress with him for he says: “what is however, astonishing is the womna’s power of patient endurance, her inexhaustible capacity for love, her simple tenderness. The sisters and thangam are the salt o the earth and the character of is exquisitely drawn. She is the sort that can redeem ever an errant husband like Ravi. Fallible he may be, but he does not cease to be a credible human being, always more sinned gained than sinning.” Her charm makes Ravi adopt a hones job of tailoring and makes him aware of respectability and a respectable householder, a decent citizen with a decent job and a wife to support”. It is the magic of her personality that attracts him to be a gentleman. A. v. Krishna personality observes: …. symbolizes the subtle fragrance of life, a clean, healthy and traditional life. She promises sweet life but demands hard and honest labor. It is she who becomes a ray of hope in his life and converts his barren life into glistening greenery with the water of sympathy, tenderness, love and affection. “Remove and ravi would be watered down version of Damodar.” She is flesh and blood embodiment of his dream. She gives him a sense of satisfaction, a comfort, in the form of “the sound of mother’s biting or a glimpse of her sitting cross legged like an inaccessible goddess in one of the inner rooms”. In their quest for happiness of individuals and of the family disregarding social considerations, Ravi and together becomes as Kamala Markandaya suggests, “symbolic of India” for has what Ravi effective where most people in the new generation fail. has some traces of apu uncomplaining temperament, endures poverty, and faces others difficulties and puts up with thrashing at the hands of her husband even in the advanced stage of the hands of even in the advanced stage. Ravi sees her fighting for breath, massaging her abdomen or arching her back for relief against the cold granite stone, but he had never heard her complain”’. Hers is stoic ungrudging attitude towards the sea of troubles. In fact, she adopts all those traditions and ceremonies, which were followed by her father Apu. She is modest and humble on account of this traditional upbringing. She is satisfied with her present condition and does not pine for what is not. She understands that the mensahibs for whom, Apu and Ravi work, belong to a different class. She never appreciates displaying of female anatomy, which is shameless. Presenting an ideal of good sister, she helps her sister thangam in her need and gives new dresses to her daughters. When her husband Ravi condemns thangam for the act of stealing by puttanna, she opposes him raising her voice, “you blame her, what about him, stealing, and taking what wasn’t his is there no such thing as right and wrong. What’s the matter with you that you can’t see it”. She has sympathy for her sister but holds puttanna responsible for stealing Apu’s savings. She is not only a good sister but a godmother also. She takes all troubles to give her children comfort and gets upset when Ravi beats raju near the beach. She is shocked when her own son died of meningitis in the absence of timely medical assistance. Being a true daughter, she looks after apu in his illness. She passes sleepless night for her father. She is like Cardelia nursing her father Lear when he is insane. Her sister thangam is very began or general who, after sucking her father’s
wealth, give him up. Hence, she is virtuous, blameless and possesses childlike innocence on her face. She plays well her traditional role of a good mother, an affectionate sister, an obedient and dutiful wife and a lovable daughter.

Quite contrary to who is a paragon of virtue like epical sita, her sister thangam betrays not only her father but also truth and honesty. She is an aberration of traditional image of woman merely a stain on the fair ex. She is a selfish woman who with her husband puttan puts Apu’s wealth. It seems her husband puttan seeking a job but unfortunately tolerates and believes him when he says there is no job. She leaves her father in his illness and says nothing when her husband steals his hard earned money. Though she shows her unawareness to it, she keeps contact with her husband and finally goes to him with her children. Had she had a little sense of morality, she would not have done so. She is also equally responsible for the stealing episode. Yet, she simulates to be ignorant of it. She is mean, callous and incorruptible woman.

A bitch a sow and old cow, a many goat are the terms used by Ravi for his mother-in-law Jayamma. She is the mother of virtuous daughter like and also a mean one like thangam. As the novel. A Handful of Rice begins, she is shows as cruel, selfish and mean. She beats Ravi violently and chains him but hearing that he wants foods, she feed him. She is sympathetic, though she does not look so outwardly. She is a practical woman gifted with down to earth common sense. It is the result of her practical approach that she raps puttan and gives him thangam in marriage. When she realizes that Ravi is mad in love with her daughter, she exploits him. She makes his income theirs and wishes to get rid of the burden of a daughter’s marriage. She virtually manages the household affairs and skillfully solemnizes the marriage.

She is a greedy woman who looks both for money and sex. When Ravi beats, Jayamma is much concerned for her daughter but when she realizes that there are no injuries, she thinks apu had never once raised his hand to her. Her morality is at its low ebb. When Ravi asks her to forgive him for raping her, she retorts:

What for the last night? Do you think I care about? That? Who cares what goes on between four walls?

But she has a redeeming feature. With a strong sense of duty, she cares her husband in his illness, though without love. After his death, she honors her husband. Perhaps I wrongful him, said Jayamma, staring queerly at her daughter. He was a good man your father, perhaps I did him wrong… but he was an old man you know he seemed old to me even when married… no mater, it is over.

Kamala Markandaya weans that in the process of change, all human values should not be last. In the coffer dams, she explores individual conflicts, in the context of the opposition between tradition and modernity, responsibility and freedom and stresses the importance of sympathy in all human relationships through the protagonist Helen Clinton. She does a new experiment through Helen Clinton in bridging the gap between human values and industrial progress in the western style and in her endeavors; she thrives to a great extent. In doing so, she reminds us of Dr. Kenny who sympathizes with the poor villagers in nectar in a sieve. She is the female version and represents those healthy forces, which are active in the present day world to develop healthy human relations. Calling her, a novice in the east, Elena J. Kalinnikova writes:

Contrary to her husband she finds in the natives not The tribesmen… were changing. A backward people Whose primeval ways had exasperated successive Governments, monumental impediment in the path Of progressive companies and administrations, even They had felt the glancing blow of social change.

She possesses human considerations and good will and becomes a symbol of love and fellow feeling. She diverts her energy to the beneficiary activities for the tribal people in whom she recognizes the sense of community. She has a soft corner for bashiam whom, the British and the Indian officer call jungliwallah. She makes him feel easy and comfortable in her company. When she finds him reeling in his uncertainty, she quickly reassures him with this ardent declaration.

Look at me; I’ve never been a memsahib. You’re not Some kind of freak to me. We’re alike, we’re freaks Only to the caste. We come from not to each other.

Her prolonged visits disturb her husband who feels too much. He puts blames on the blasted country but she digresses with him. Her relationship with bashiam symbolizes perfection of kindred
spirits. It is a union of minds rather than bodies of cross cultural human affinities rather than wanton sexuality. She has always been the centre of her husband private life, “at the heart of his homecoming”. Though there is gulf in their relationship, the quality of mutual respect which still, exists, help in bridging the gulf. Her flexibility patches up the breach. Her progression to realization becomes intense and moving through her rebellious phase to an awareness of the total situation. She accepts her responsibility as Mrs. Helen Clinton.

In the nowhere man, vasantha, wife of Srinivas, is purely a traditional woman who sticks to him Indian ways of livings, dressing, easting and even dying, though transplanted on a foreign soil. She grows tired to moving like the gypsies and persuades her husband to own a house.

There is no nomadic strain in us, those forces us to wander. Although it may well manifest in our children if we continue this vagabond existence. We will buy a house. We she said, my family, have for generations been accustomed to living in a house”.

She makes plans for the future of her two son’s seshu and ladman. She has a bit of the British pragmatism despite her otherwise strong Indian character. But her practical sense leaves her, as it does not help when it is called for. She never thinks of herself as a Londoner. Indeed, she feels herself superior to the whites in that she belongs to a religion of cosmic concepts. She describes Christianity which, in her opinion, is the religion for ten years old. She builds castle in the air as she demarcates in the new house they have brought arras for laxman, and seshu, should they be married and have their own establishment. But, her son laxman feels irritation at her sentimentalism. She is proud of acquiring no. a last we have achieved something. A place of our own, where we can live according to our rights although in alien surroundings; and our children after us and after them theirs.

She is shocked at the death of her dear son seshu who dies in harness. Her only surviving son Laxman throws colds water on her too much. When even the birth of a child of laxman does not help to unite the family, she collapses and dies leaving her husband all alone, desolate and depressed in the big mansion and the world.

Being a truly Indian she feels a fish out of water in London and wishes to return to India. Indian blood bubbles in her veins. Though she is suffering from tuberculosis, she expresses her desire to return to her country. This shows she has patriotic feelings.

When I am better, she said to her husband, we must Return to our country. There is no reason, now that India is free, why we should not. Nor, she said Painfully, is there anything, really to keep us here?

Any more.

She is imbued with the spirit of Indian philosophy and becomes quite detached with the world in the evening of her life. Detachment grants peace and solace to her:

She was very calm, very lucid, putting her affairs in Order in so far as she could, though with a certain Detachment, as if the concerns and liaisons of the World had fallen into peace, if not insignificance. Yet They were close; closer perhaps than many couples, Since there had been no alternative vines and

Supports to which each might have attachment.

“It has been,” said Vasantha hoarsely, the breath From her ruined lunged coming up rough, “a happy Marriage”.

She has been a devoted wife throughout her life. Her husband Srinivas, while throwing her ashes into the river, recalled the unforgettable moments, which he passed with her.

…he could not help feelings with vasantha, who in Her breath and bones had remained wholly Indian. She would have liked her remains committed to the Currents of an Indian river, though she had Scrupulously refrained from such onerous Impositions; and now, watching her ashes drift away Downstream.

The western culture does not believe in throwing the ashes into pure water of the river. The policeman who represents this culture reacts when Srinivas throws her ashes. “The river’s not the place for the rubbish.” Srinivas takes it to his heart and replies pathetically:

“It was not rubbish,” said Srinivas, and found to his Dismay that his throat was working painfully. “It was my wife”.

Hence, she leaves an indelible imprint on the mind of Srinivas who, after her death, feels desolate and isolated in this world Two virgins is about two village girls, the sisters Lalitha and Saroja, the elder running after a film director and coming to grief and the younger moving from innocence to experience by living through the family traumatic experience. The sisters are neatly contrasted, but while Lalitha is the budget of experiences, it is saroja’s consciousness that observes considers, weighs and places the developing events”.

Saroja, who is a thoroughly traditional, is the role model for the young girl. Apparently, she is not good looking yet she possesses the beauty of soul. Lalitha physical beauty gets eclipsed before her inner beauty. She has achieved a wonderful balance and stability partly under the influence of aunt alamelu and partly learning from her sister’s experience. She is the ideal image of innocence and modesty.

She is never envious of her sister’s beauty and smartness. She never suffers from any inferiority complex for not having magnetic personality like her sister. “Lalitha wishes her to become active, vivacious and smart like her. She is conscious of her weakness. Saroja knew she hadn’t she knew she was slow, she was often compared with lalitha on the score and found wanting”.

She is morally strong and presents an ideal of sister by consoling and stopping lalitha from committing suicide.

When lalitha took the fork Saroja knew. It led to the Well where the woman walked in her dripping needs, Along the track where no one would walk by night. She fought the knowledge, she ran up panting and \_

…she is suffering from tuberculosis, she expresses her desire to...
She learns much from her sister’s experiences, which leave an effective print of hatred for the city life on the mind of Saroja. Lalitha’s traffic disillusionment with the ethics that dictate the pattern of living in the city serves as a practical lesson in growing up for her. She is quite satisfied with the life of her village and after experiencing the double standard with the life of her village and after experiencing the double standard of the life of the city, she wants to return to her village for, at home there were fields her eyes on, “color that changed with the seasons. The tender green of new crops, the tiny shades of harvest, the tints of freshly earth.” She says further:

You could have told the week and the month of the Year by these alone. You know each grove, each Acre, of the each homestead on it, who owned then And the names of the owners. You knew every Pathway. No one could ever be lost not by trying. The well, the fields each had its name, the well By the banyan, the field next to the mill. You always Knew where you were. You knew who you were. The city took it all away from you. You were one in a Hundred, in a thousand… you might have been an Amoeba. You drifted, amoeba like.

She learns a lesson from Lalitha bitter experience and comes back to the village with a firm determination to remain secure in her village without being misled by the attraction for the modern world. She has an adoration of life and a deep involvement with nature and village life. Unlike ex-virgin lalitha who opts tragically for the fate of the town mouse, saroja is satisfied with the life of the country mouse. She is right in her suspicion that the males prowl through the streets like wolves on the look out for girls. She confines absolutely in chingleput, the sweet seller. But soon, when she recognizes his evil design of her sexual exploitations, she rejects him.

Saroja was not afraid, she knew too much, she had Gone through too much to be afraid of anything. She knew she wasn’t for him, she would never be. So, she drew away from him.

She saves herself from Devraj, the assistant of Mr. Gupta who attempts to make a pass at her. Joseph compares her with Miriam Henderson and writes: “Saroja is a stream of thought; Miriam’s is stream of consciousness”.

In the golden honeycomb, kamala Markandaya’s audacious enterprise is to introduce with an authentic touch of national awakening leading to mass struggle against the cruel British rulers. This bold attempt is successful because of its skilful handling of the character of the British and the Indians. More importance is given to men than women in a historical novel. It is only partially true in case of the golden honeycomb. Characters like mohini and usha have their roots in Indian traditions. They are the model of India’s traditional womanhood in guiding, re-guiding shaping and re-shaping, the fate of Bawajiraj III and Rabindarnath. What they are, they are made by Manjula and Mohini who fire enthusiasm and inspiration in them. Following the path shown by these women characters, Rabi provides peace and progress to the people of India’s traditional womanhood in guiding, re-guiding shaping and inspiration in them. Following the path shown by these women characters, Rabi provides peace and progress to the people of India. It seems that in pleasure city, pleasure though in possession of women, is meant for men. To give a symbolical meaning to Rikki tully relationship, she has sketched them artistically. To paint them in bright colors, she has taken the color of her women’s share. She enters the male world but forgets the password to exit. Her mind is charged with male fire but a female river is flowing in her heart. No sooner does this fire extinguish than she is conscious of the female river and gives it place for its flowing. In her still mood, she breathes life into her female world and makes her women alive.

Pleasure city marks the voyage in and celebrates the essential superiority of Indian culture and values over the western… with the emergence of a regime of decentralization---Africanizing the Africans, emerging the oriental, orientalizing the oriental, westernizing the western—in the post colonial era, Markandaya text and suggest the relevance of relationships across frontiers. And her women character especially western—Mrs. Bridie, Corrina, Mrs. Pearl etc. strengthen the possibilities of relationship.

Mrs. Bridie, an angel in human body, has come in this world to help the poor and needy and to relieve them of their sufferings. Her first real neophyte is rikki whom she moulds into such cast possibilities of relationship.

As she is childless, she pours her motherly affection on rikki. She is, rikki thinks, such a woman as possesses “the key of locked, mysterious boxes that he barely knew existed except for the barest outlines that were showing up hazily in the distance”.

She takes it to her heart when Muthu comes to take him away from school, as it is prawn fishing season. She believes food is not everything in life. She feels pain of others. She takes away pen from rikki hand when she sees his palms galled and says:
“your hands will have to heal before you do any more writing”. But, when he asks for pen as he can manage, she advises him: “if a think is worth, it is worth doing well. You must always aim to be immaculate”. She takes care of him well and pours her heart’s feeling. She stared him again an again as she sees the image of her son is she had one. She asks:

“HE would have been like you, you know rikki.”

Who? He could hardly guess whom she meant. If I had had a soon; she replied looking him full In the face.

After such blissful conversation, she breathes her last.

That yellow stick of a woman! Is always present on the screen of rikki mind’s van after her death, she is alive in his memory. He takes guidance from time to time remembering her valuable saying. At the end of the novel, he repeats the words of Mrs. Bridie: “there was a time and a season, for everything. A time to sow ad a time to reap”. In spite of her infertility, she is fertile as she considers others children as her own. She presents the image of mother—universal mother.

Amma in her traditional role presents herself as a mother who makes no difference between the real son and foster one. She takes her responsibility of rikki bringing up as she thinks that the poor one has none in the world after her parent’s death. She dowers her motherly love making him feel easier and more comfortable. Call me amma if you’re like, she said busy with the bellow and charcoal so as not it embarrasses the child. I am your mother, now and lucky to be. She looks after him well and makes him eat more and more so that he may become strong and master the era. She takes care of his health. East, she urged. Eat and grow up big and strong, so that you can master the sea”.

In spite of her traditional role, she is curious to know more and more but is not anxious of the future as Rukmani is in nectar in a sieve. She is rejoiced at the sight of Shalimar, which looks beautiful to her. She goes in its building and is lost. To press switch in Shalimar, is a new experience.

Mrs. Pearl, as the name suggests, is needed, a precious pearl. The dust of materialism is on this pearl. Indian spiritualism with his brush cleans it, with its fire, purifies it and with its spray, polishes it. Rikki describes Mrs. Pearl, a new arrival at Shalimar:

Gray curls with blue lights in them, a dumpy figure Not improved by the flowered costume—a glance And he had placed her firmly in the brigade of aged And authoritative ladies that overflowed the camp.

She has an inclination towards spiritualism. She loves water and wishes to stay in it forever. She is desirous of learning swimming but thinks herself a hopeless case. Water symbolized re-births—death of materialism. She feels she is too late to learn. I’m a hopeless case I know, but I’ve always wanted to be able”. Rikki sympathizes with her and tries to understand the feelings of this lonely woman. She gives him money but he returns it. She advises him to take it as he has given his time and hence, he should get its compensation. She asks him: why not rikki? Time; she blunted, is money. She did not think it was. Time was mysterious stuff, not an issue from a human mint.

She takes interest in helping others by showing sympathy or giving money. When rikki refuses to take her money, she feels too much. She asks him. “Is my money polluted, or something?” she is sympathetic and kind to the orphan. She tells him: “So I am sure; she said, and rose above the fumes to even higher reaches of honesty and self-knowledge. I’m old, I’m rich, and I’m alone in the world except for one nice by marriage. It pleases me to give. Why can’t you take?”

During her vast to the cave, she finds a child there takes it and looks after it. She nurses the infant developing an attachment. She finds the country is growing on her. “She also discerned—perhaps insights followed, inevitably—she was not alone”. The infant is named kali to invoke the protection of the powerful goddess. “Where she is, she’s looked after. She loves kali and pours her heart to the infant.

“And who knows”, said Mrs. Pearl now and then, to kali or anyone else within hearing. “One of these Day I might even carry you off to England with me”. And rocked and tickled the child under the chin Lovingly, only half playing with the lovely, crazy Notion.

She loves Zavera but her parties weary her. She wishes to go to those places that prove solace to her soul. She wishes to commune with nature. She is a tranquil woman who is never tired of waiting. She has given up wearing shoes—another step on the route to her nirvana. She finds herself wrong in the description when she compares Shalimar with Avalon. Praising Avalon, she says:

Neither love, nor hate went into its fabric. Meticulously built for selling itself, is fulfilled that Purpose. Shalimar went whoring after money… Shalimar did nothing of the sort. Its wiles were more Courtly, those of a courtesan.

Her preference for Avalon to Shalimar shows her inclination towards spiritualism and not towards materialism. Kamala Markandaya’s women are caught in the whirlpool of tradition. They face a heroic struggle to come out but fail as the chain of tradition their feet. They must up and with great force; some of them break it but not completely, come out and enter the domain of new woman. They still retain traditional color though faint in the dazzling light of this new domain. The changes in time bring changes in the circle of their activities and they adapt themselves to new environment but their basic traditional mental vision remains unchanged.

All the women characters feels the warmth of changes, struggle in their minds whether they should reject the old ones and welcome to new ones, find out a possible solution out of vote for transformation re-evaluating and re-defining the concepts in the new light of changes. They re tin the train of modernity and in this wonderful journey they get experiences learn a lot, see the world from its windows but never pull away their roots from the soil that is tradition.

Kamala Markandaya’s women like rukmani who fights a heroic battle against unfavorable circumstances of her life to keep her family united, Mira who sacrifices her love for the country, Premala who does her best to adjust in the modern world of her husband but, ultimately gets peace in social service and dies for the noble cause, sarojini who believes in the faith healer, becomes ready for operation to save the family, anasuya who makes Caroline realize of the Indian culture and traditions, who, like a true wife, guides her husband rabi at every step, saroja who controls her passions, keep balance and remains virgin, vasantha who supports her husband
morally and psychologically, Helen Clinton who beacons to the tribal people out of darkness, Manjula and Mohini who instill patriotic feelings in Rabindranath and make him ready for the final battle against the British, Mrs. Pearl who believes in Indian spiritualism, Amma who makes no differences between her son and foster one and Mrs. Bridie who present an ideal of universal mother—are exemplary traditional bricks that build the traditional image of woman. But under the garb of tradition, they have the latent material of modernity, less in quantity though weighty in quality.

References
The main character, Frank (played by Frost/Nixon’s Frank Lagella), is developing dementia in his later years. When his son arrives Frank thinks he’s going to put him in a retirement home. Instead the son pulls a robot out of his trunk. Thus begins the relationship between Frank and his robot which, by the way, bears a striking resemblance to Asimo. He resists at first but later on the old man begins warming up to his robot helper. The following clip is a very believable portrayal of breakfast with a grouchy old man and his robot. But then Frank gets used to it. And not just the character but the actor Frank as well. Entertainment Weekly described part of a Q&A session that followed a screening.