

Analysing Personal Identity and Enduring Quality of Kamala Markandaya's Female Characters

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Abstract

In Markandaya, the female figures are like common ideas about Indian women. They don't just sit back and accept their position in life; instead, they show great endurance and character strength to become people who fight for their lives. The feminist views in her books are unique and original. The female figures are shown to be strong, independent minds who are ready to deal with any weird situations that come their way. The women she writes about as heroes are brave, strong, determined, and persistent, and they do this in direct opposition to the male-dominated systems that reinforce negative ideas about women. The author puts her female characters through a lot of tough situations to see how strong they are. This makes a better female attitude that outweighs all the bad things about being a woman. In many of her books, she makes her female characters strong and patient, overcoming all chances instead of making them seem like victims. Throughout the book, her characters stay true to themselves and are able to claim and confirm a unique identity that respects her gender. The author disagrees with the gender model that says men are better than women.

Keywords: Endurance, Anomalies, Perpetuate, Stereotypes, Outweighing

Introduction

As a writer, Kamala Markandaya writes about the many social problems her characters face, even as they find their own place in society. One important part of the feminist point of view is easy to see in how culture affects society. Many people agree with Kamala Markandaya when she says that she thinks man is like a doll in the hands of fate and that no matter how hard he tries, his happiness ends. Even when people work hard, their weak fates win, and they can't stop them unless they change. Men can't change their fate, but their brave persistence helps them deal with bad luck and makes problems seem less bad. The reason why the author's female characters are who they are is because they have amazing endurance. In writing, women are always shown to be ruled by different ideas that are hierarchical oppositions, with men repressing and controlling women. So, women had to protect themselves from being misrepresented, which made them quiet. They go beyond all the limits and come out as survivors. Her female figures are a good response to the male-centered rules and norms that were common in society. Women's ideas are strengthened by modern studies.

Personal Identity

Kamala Markandaya Protagonists are different in some ways. Because of these traits, her personalities are different from most women. People who are important to her, like Rukmani, Nalini, Vasantha, Anasuya, Roshan, Mira, and Helen, show up as unusual women. They have their own way of life and can stay alive even when things go badly. Their special traits are their patience, endurance, and ability to figure out who they are even when they're living a secret life.

In *Nectar in a Sieve* Rukmani, the main character finds out who she is, even though she has to go through a lot with her husband Nathan. But it's not their fault. Their parents did not raise them in poverty, but bad luck and natural tragedies have caused them to have a sad end to their lives. Rukmani is a normal country woman, but what makes her stand out is her strength and hopefulness in the face of suffering. At first glance, the book seems to be about the bad luck and problems that an agricultural family faces. In the book, Markandaya puts Rukmani through many hardships, but she manages to stay alive until the end. Indira Ganesan says in the book's "Introduction" that "our heroine doesn't necessarily win over her suffering; she endures, which may be a better response to a world that can never quite be counted on to keep its consistency." The bad luck and poverty they are in are caused by many things. They are poor because of bad weather (heavy rain or drought), money problems, living with other people, and fear of God's wrath on people. For the family, land is their only source of income. God's weather changes, like rain, drought, and then food, can make people dependent on land. Rukmani's strength is put to the test by a series of natural disasters. First, heavy rains destroy their fields but spare their hut. Then, droughts leave them without food. Setting up tanneries is also becoming a big threat to land, both in terms of getting land and raising the prices of everyday goods. People who get paid a salary to work in the tannery can easily buy things they need every day, but poor people can't because the prices of goods go up a lot when there is a lot of demand. Markandaya talks about her own life when she says, "First a piece of land is taken, prices go up, people are hired, and they lose their native strength to work the land and keep it in good shape."

A lot of people see *Nectar in a Sieve* as a book about pain, battle, human ideals, and endurance. Its main idea is that people's values, habits, and tastes in life change over time, just like their personalities do. In a humane approach, the main character suffers because of a cruel fate, but there is a strong ending. She is positive and has the strength to deal with the bad situation, probably without getting angry about the unfair things that happen in society. She bravely deals

with the hard treatment of social rules and becomes a model of virtue. The author H.M. Prasad gives a clear picture of the book by saying, "peasants grow and live, suffer and endure, and emerged more human in their elements with their torn rags."⁴ Rukmani uses her tall size to show amazing endurance in different parts of her life. They learn to be proud of their home and enjoy every part of their married life, whether it's sexual, physical, or mental. She doesn't say anything bad about herself and completely shapes herself into the mold of a traditional woman who works for her family from dawn until dusk. As a woman from her age, she gives up everything for her husband's happiness and satisfaction. For her, he is "be all and end all" of life.

Male chauvinists believe that because women were created from a man's rib, they should be submissive. The main characters, Rukmani, show that they are the true embodiment of tradition-bound women by being patient and sure of themselves. They come out of a man's rib, not from his feet to be walked on or from his head to be superior, but from his side to be equal. Unknowingly, her life keeps going the same way. Rukmani through life without knowing it. People must live even when the odds are against them, they must hope for the best, they must suffer, and they must survive, so they must deal with it with patience and endurance. According to the author, a woman should use her intelligence and knowledge in everyday life, which would show how valuable she was. The advice was to encourage women to become more self-aware and evaluate themselves so that they could see themselves as a real pledge to humanity. People in our society think that women's loyalty and patience are signs of weakness, while their love and kindness are seen as less important. Reading Kamala Markandaya's books shows that each woman figure is not fixed in one way, but grows into her own person. A close look showed that the growth or changing of aspects doesn't rely on outside inspiration, but on realizing their own independence.

There are parts of *Inner Fury* where Premala is shown as a brave character and an idealized stereotyped girl who follows Indian custom and culture. She has shown a lot of strength and effort in her life. Her English-speaking husband doesn't get how she feels. She starts going to the village Christian school, which is run especially to help children. Premala loves school kids and enjoys being with them. He talks about what he thinks about Premala's character. In *Some Inner Fury*, he says, "Premala is the sweetest and bravest of them all. She is a symbol of Mother India, who is full of compassion and suffering and must indeed suffer all hearts and survive."⁷ In the same book, *Some Inner Fury*, Roshan Merchant is shown as a modern Indian woman who has gained freedom. It has been said that she is like a bubble full of life and an open heart. Markandaya shows how the modern, educated, and forward-thinking Indian woman has her

own unique sensibilities. In many ways, she presents a national picture and a sense of patriotism. Roshan is willing to go to jail to protect her country, even if it means giving up her parents, her husband, and her life as a princess. "I'd rather go to the devil my own way than have someone lead me to heaven!" she yells.⁸ Another character in the same book is Mira. She is not a real feminist in the sense of being a rebel, but she does fight against both male dominance and foreign oppression. The book is told from Mira's point of view, so the reader can see how she rewrites her past and connects the present with the past. Mira is brave, and she walks with ease and honor. She makes good decisions and has a good attitude. "Yet it was our life, by our own choice, by being born when we were, even by fate if one so chose," she says. We made it just as much as it made us, and we were just as much a part of it.⁹ Mira's return to her traditional home and hearth marks the end of her disobedience. Of course, she knows that her duty to her community is also her duty to herself. And because of this, Mira becomes a strong-willed woman with a great attitude who handles things well. By writing three different sets of Indian characters for this book, Kamala Markandaya shows three different views on women's points of view. One group of characters has a fundamentalist view. These are people who were devoted to old Indian practices and beliefs and hated foreign rule very much. In what they think and do, they are the real nationalists. The second type is for people who believe that English education is better than other types of education, and they see nothing good in their own society or education. The last and third type of characters are those who got ideas from the liberal, moral, and democratic values of other people and made their own vivid views of life. The land of their country has fed them well, and they care deeply about national and social goals. They are unique and can make their own decisions.

Enduring Quality

Through her books, the author paints a real picture of her time. Being poor is one of the main problems that stops people in the community from moving forward. According to novelists, this is one of the sad situations in which they feel sorry for the people who suffer because of it. The characters in Markandaya also have to deal with this deep-seated problem, and they are the real proof of what's going on in society. Rukmani was a sign of love, care, and understanding, and she was married to Nathan, a poor farmer who was less important in society. She never moans or says that her parents are to blame for her perfect marriage. There is harmony in Rukmani's marriage because she feels close to her husband and never complains to him. Instead, she helps make more money for the family. Nathan has to leave the town because he is poor, so she helps him and takes her sick husband to the doctor. In this way,

Rukmani's figure is a hero who handles all problems with bravery and kindness. It's hard to describe how strong she is because she accepts life's ups and downs with a positive outlook. Margaret P. Joseph says, **"Rukmani is able to suffer and is okay with it. She faces her problems with courage and honour."**

In her next book, *A Handful of Rice*, the author focuses on the female characters and looks at how Indian women have different attitudes. The main character of this book is Nalini, who shows how women normally act and behave compared to men. She also shows herself to be the revivifier of women, giving people hope for the future with her lasting power over men. When Prof. Geeta talks about Markandaya's early female figures, she says, "They seem to show the wife in her usual role of sati-Savitri archetypal pattern." But beneath this part of suffering sacrifice lies the new woman who is active with her cries for freedom. Roshan Merchant, the main character in *Some Inner Fury*, is shown to be a free feminist woman who follows current Indian fashion styles. She shows herself as a woman with a strong and free spirit. She is an Indian woman who goes to Oxford to get an education and then goes back to her home country to help the poor get an education, food, and a place to live. She gets the idea of what both cultures are about. Harish Raizada says this about Roshan: "Her only goal in life is to be herself in her own way, and for that, nothing is too important to her." To reach her goal, she is willing to give up her parents, her husband, and the high-class life she is used to living. Roshan really wants to live a free life, so she fights for freedom and leads the cause in a brave way. Helen is a stereotypical woman in *The Coffin Dams* who is matched with parts of nature. This book did a great job showing how much she loved nature and tribal people. Helen doesn't like how her husband, Clinton, takes advantage of workers and destroys the earth. She keeps telling Clinton that he is doing wrong by bothering the workers and cutting down trees, but Clinton's controlled behavior doesn't pay attention to what she says. Helen's husband was bad to her; he never listens to what she has to say; even the author talks about how Clinton took advantage of his own wife. Helen never really lived in that house when she was married to an engineer. Clinton, the British engineer, is always thinking about how to make more money and doesn't care about how Helen feels. Clinton gets angry and scolds Helen every time she tells him about how her worker was mistreated. Helen's bravery in continuing to speak out against worker abuse, even after being humiliated so many times, is truly inspiring. Too many bad things happen to Helen because of her husband. Helen puts up with her husband making fun of her, but she keeps her approach to nature and tribal welfare the same. This is the start of her amazing endurance. Rao and Menon say, "Clinton doesn't like her spirit of independence

and her tendency to act in unpredictable ways." His main goal is for her to fully understand that she is responsible for him.

Analysis and Discussion

In societies with strong male roles, women have always been put below men. In almost all societies that value custom, having men in charge leads to the development of traditional beliefs and practices that shape and control women's roles. People always expect women to be obedient and true to men, whether it's their father, their husband, or their boss at work. When things are like this, women can't find their place in society or in writing. Many women writers who were able to show women as they really are disagree with this point of view. She gets to where she is because of her brave actions and the lasting qualities that make her a good carrier. Many people think that Kamala Markandaya is one of the best novelists of our time because her views on women are so vivid and clear. She talks about what she thinks about new trends in society and how they can help women stay true to themselves.

Conclusion

When you look at Kamala Markandaya's writing, you can see that her female characters have a positive and hopeful view of life and end up being better than their male partners. They work hard at their freewill view of life, show their independence, and find happiness and respect in their lives. In this way, they bravely deal with all of life's good and bad sides and establish their independence.

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