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## Spiritual Values In The Writings Of Kamala Markandya

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### ABSTRACT

It is the repression, resistance, and rejection of a once colonial world that Postcolonial Studies echoes, propelling a multidisciplinary and cross-border method of studying a text that frequently oscillates backward in time. Similarly, Indian Writing in English is a byproduct of the blending of British and indigenous Indian cultures, as is the case with all Postcolonial Literature. Kamala Markandaya has seen the decline in Indian aesthetic standards and the loss of Indian cultural values as a result of colonialism. This thesis is an effort to analyze the postcolonial undercurrents in her books, *A Silence of Desire* and *Possession*.

**KEYWORDS** Spiritual Value, Kamala Markandaya, rationalism, tradition and progress.

### INTRODUCTION

*A Silence of Desire*, by Kamala Markandaya, focuses on the spiritual, religious, and social elements of the life of the common people in India. A saintly guy is featured in this book. The Swamy is a representative of India's traditional religious culture. An excellent tale about a guy who chooses material comforts and sensuality above spiritual fulfillment. He had forgotten about the force of the spirit in struggle and now longs for tranquility, "the quality he longed for above all" (SD, 220). In the beginning of the novel, Sarojini offers to pray to God in front of a tulsi plant, but Dandekar, although being Brahmin, refuses to acknowledge the significance of the plant. Within the narrative, the tulsi plant serves as a metaphor. It was a representation of the deity adored, and according to Sarojini, "it was necessary that god should have symbols since no man had the power or temerity to visualize him."

A spiritual being is a heavenly being who is interested in spiritual matters. It's a reaction to the materialism of the West. The spiritual life and the material existence are diametrically opposed. Compared to the spiritual life, which is divine, holy, and full of order and value, the material life is a rootless, unstable, isolated, and fragmented individual existence. Man becomes spiritually blind as a result of materialism, which motivates him to focus only on material goals such as gratifying his physical needs and advancing his career and social standing. When modernity and the resulting gross materialism of the industrial revolution took

hold, it rocked the very roots of man's spirituality. The lack of even the most basic financial resources has led to a widespread disregard for spiritual ideals. Conversely, advancement toward worldly goals at the expense of spiritual ones has resulted in widespread unhappiness, inequality, and poverty. There is a fundamental incompatibility between the concepts of spiritualism and modernity. We can't be too spiritual or too contemporary. Likewise, a person can't be too modern or too spiritual. In order to participate in contemporary society, one must have a modern perspective and set of ideas that allow him to approach the spiritual. Kamala Markandaya, an Indo-Anglo novelist, uses her writing to explore her spirituality. Her book, *A Silence of Desire*, has a character named Swamy, a devout Hindu whose outlook on religion can be both good and harmful.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**Vandana Shrivastav (2019)** Famous Indian author and journalist Kamala Markandaya writes on the clash between Eastern and Western ideals in the modern world. In 1924, she entered the world in the city of Mysore, in the Indian state of Karnataka. Kamala Markandaya's writings reflect the evolving spiritual and cultural norms of contemporary Indian society. Her writings have a particular voice that has helped bring to light the problems inherent to being a woman and to feminism. Through her work, she also showed that being a woman is a struggle in any culture. Markandaya aimed to portray strong, independent women while still acknowledging the constraints of conventional gender roles in several of her stories. She was a part of the groundbreaking generation of Indian women writers who changed the face of literature with their bold topics and elegant prose.

**Sarbani Das (2018)** The purpose of this study is to do an analysis on the topic of "east-west," the dichotomy that exists concurrently but is characterized by natural racial hostility, a love-hate relationship, and a collision of cultures. The women in Kamala Markandaya's books are as strong and resourceful as the land itself. The fact that Rukumani, the family's primary architect, provides for and nurtures her children illustrates her limitless tolerance. Kamala Markandaya's perspective as an outsider insider allowed her to draw vivid portraits of the human psyche, multicultural contacts, and women in a variety of positions. The gloomy outlook on life shown in the books, the cultural divide between East and West, and the protagonist's quest for an identity are all topics I want to investigate.

**Mr.S.Sasintharkumar (2018)** One of the most well-known authors to write in English from India is Kamala Markandaya. She tells fantastic tales. She adheres to established methods in her technical work. Her storytelling ability is superb. Unlike many Indian authors of English novels, she does not adapt the language to the region. She uses standard English conventions in her writing. She also doesn't bother with attempts to translate Indian curse words or proverbs into English. The

poetry of her words is undeniable. Each of her books is like a little slice of India. She portrays the lives of men and women in the context of society and fate, and her works are centered on the idea that art must have a social purpose. As a writer, she is acutely aware of the way that modern socioeconomic realities worsen the lives of millions of Indians. In several of her stories, she employs the dynamics inside families to set the tone. She stands out among her peers because of the accuracy and depth with which she portrays everyday Indian life.

**Krunalsinh Rana et.al (2017)** Kamala Markandaya has been well recognized as a leading female author. Ten of Kamala markandaya's works of fiction were published during her lifetime. Her works explore topics including the westernization of Indian culture and identity, maaraiges (caste systems), and the duality of the human experience in contemporary India. Kamala Markandaya's success as a writer, however, comes from the care with which she creates individual people and circumstances that are yet emblematic of a greater collective. Many female authors have written women out of the mainstream masculine society. The modern women authors who are breaking ground now are quite different from their predecessors. The purpose of this research is to investigate the commonalities shared by the novels of Kamala Markanday. Two elements of Kamala's books' suburban protagonists will be discussed in this article: Authenticity and Reality in the Search.

**MD. SAHIDUL ISLAM (2014)** The emphasis of this research is on Kamala Markandaya's Nectar in a Sieve (1954) and the role it played in the renaissance of India's indigenous culture after the country's independence from British domination. This topic was prevalent in Indian literature before British colonial rule, but Indian authors were so befuddled by the new regime that they didn't delve further into it at that time. Kamala Markandaya is not alone among postcolonial Indian authors in her quest to restore Indian ideals; several of her contemporaries have made similar efforts and achieved significant success. Conflict between the two cultures, with a particular emphasis on the colonial relationship between the two in the process of modernization, is discussed in this article as well. The author notes that Eastern traditions run counter to the Western ideal of consciousness, modernity, innovation, evolution, and improvement.

### **A SILENCE OF DESIRE: AN ANALYSIS OF SPRITUALITY AND CONFLICT**

Those who adhere to the beliefs and practices of spiritualism believe that it is possible to contact the hereafter, often via spiritual intermediaries. The inhabitants of the subcontinent consider spiritualism to be an integral element of their cultural history and the hidden world of their temperament. The Vedas, which lay forth a foundational moral, ethical, and spiritual way of life, are the texts upon which modern spiritualism is built. Spirituality may be summed up in the

teachings of the Vedas. Through the study of Nyaya, Yoga, Vaishashika, Vedanta, etc., rishis, gurus, and swamis nurtured spirituality and incorporated it into Indian culture. Mantras, darshana, the Vedas, and the Upanishads all had a role in its transmission from one age to the next. Indian culture now has a strong spiritual tradition. It's like a drink to the soul. It reveals the lofty, unseen realities of existence. The nature of God and the purpose of the universe's creation are discussed. It gives a person the higher or spirit of knowledge, lifting them beyond their material hardships. It's the key to getting out of this world, or moksha. Ayurveda and yoga both advocate for this. Its message of love, compassion, and finding common ground amongst differences is taught and shared. A spiritualist worldview might be seen as the polar opposite of a materialistic one. A spiritual lifestyle is one that is holy, mysterious, and sublime. A materialistic lifestyle, on the other hand, is motivated by physical needs, economic success, and social standing. As time and technology progressed, philistinism became more prevalent than spirituality. The once-held ideals, rituals, and beliefs were seen as useless, if not wasteful, today. The progress gained in the name of materialism has resulted in a life of uncertainty and disconnection, which in turn has led to the formation of a murky and fragmented sense of self. Thus, spiritualism and materialism are polar opposites. Both are motivated by a desire for immortality, but one is motivated by material success and the other by a belief that such success and riches are illusions.

Kamala Markandaya maintained connections to both the eastern spiritual community and the western materialist, practical one. Her spiritual beliefs seep into her fiction, which includes the books *A quiet of longing* (1960) and *Possession* (1963). Through the character of Swamy, Markandaya strives to depict the fundamental gulf that exists between the East and the West, spirituality and materialism, and to provide a solution to this gulf in his stories. She also shows the friction and competition between the two worldviews. She looks at the two civilizations with an objective and dispassionate eye.

The axis of a stillness of yearning is between the old and the new. Conflict between the husband's scientific temperament and logical attitude and the wife's spiritual beliefs and conventional mind set drives the storyline of the book. It demonstrates the extent to which their unique worldview has shaped and influenced their daily experiences. Dandekar is a senior clerk who enjoys a comfortable lifestyle thanks to the help of his doting wife. He is a hardworking parent who prefers to walk to work rather than use his car. He represents the offspring of a cultural hybrid, the product of a meeting of traditions from two distinct groups. There is the Western, contemporary, and materialistic culture, and there is the Indian, traditional, and mystical culture. He is a stranger to both worlds and has no attachment to either. On the other hand, Sarojini is deeply ingrained in the norms and customs of her society. She is a devout believer who observes all the standard rites.

The story does a good job of contrasting spiritual and worldly ways of living. In the book, the Swamy plays the dual role of husband and wife's issue solver. The spiritualist ethos is made clear in the worship of Tulasi. This idea is introduced right away in Chapter 1. Despite this, Dandekar did not pray over the plant. But he, too, sees in the planta a representation of the divine. Nonetheless, he explains, "it was a symbol of God, whom one worshiped, and it was necessary that God should have symbols, since no man had the power to temerity to visualize him." When a husband and wife have a fight, they might turn to the spiritual realm of the Swamy for guidance. Dandekar learns from the Swamy the importance of taking personal responsibility for the well-being of others. His words that "compulsion is the beginning of corruption" rang true across the room. He goes as far as to say that compulsion "...is an eating away of the spirit of whoever does it and whoever has done to him." He's the one who opens Dandekar's eyes to the fact that certain things are just beyond the scope of the logical mind's perception and comprehension. He is realistic enough to know that he cannot even force his own wife. He realized his obligations and learned to appreciate the little things he had taken for granted before. He was able to see the value in both contemporary and historic perspectives. However, acceptance was a lesson that Sarojini eventually absorbed. She has decided to get surgery since she has heard the spiritual teacher declare that everything would be well. She also realized the need of maintaining emotional distance. By the novel's conclusion, the pair has come to a profound understanding, but it is the spiritual realm that serves as the vehicle for this understanding.

Kamala Markandaya has seen the deterioration of aesthetic and cultural values as a result of colonialism. The two books she has written, "A Silence of Desire" and "Possession," both dive deeply into these issues. She vividly portrays the damaging effects of the clash between the materialistic outlook of the West and the traditional ascetic outlook of India. She discusses the clash between India's spiritual traditions and the individualism, scientism, and egotism of the colonial powers in two related issues. She also disapproves of the Western value system that has been embedded in our society and culture.

It's clear that the Indian idea of unwavering confidence in spiritual forces and the Western belief in pragmatism and unwavering faith in technology or science as the ultimate answer to all our problems are at odds in A Silence of Desire. Dandekar, Sarojini, and Swami are the novel's three primary characters. Dandekar represents the dispossessed Indian upper class who have adopted the Western ideals taught to them by the British via their strategic infusion of education. Sarojini personifies the stereotypical Indian woman, who has an unwavering faith in God's omnipotence. The Indian spiritual virtue represented by Swami. Dandekar is opposed against Swami in an interesting ideological struggle since they are portrayed as polar opposites; Swami is trying to pacify his devotees, while

Dandekar is trying to win back his wife mentally from Dandekar. Markandaya's second work, *Possession*, too features a clash between the Western ideal of material progress and the Western belief in the primacy of material possessions, and the Indian ideal of non-possessive spirituality and the significance of life and art. The book represents the long-awaited first encounter between Indians and British on equal terms. Lady Caroline Bell, a British divorcee, and her Indian companion, Anusuya, go to a small town in southern India, where Lady Bell finds a child prodigy and adopts her after paying his parents \$5,000. Away from his customary obedience, however, Valmiki's creativity sprung to life, so a descanted Lady Caroline reveals her spirit by introducing bogus letters from his teacher Swami, which reignite his spirit and motivate him to create. His mother's age or not, she has a sexual want to possess him. And she even tries to ruin his romantic life in an effort to do so. All of his regret and disappointment lead him back to Swami, where he rediscovers the meaning of life and art in India's ascetic and spiritual principles.

The East-West conflict, and in particular the Indo-British encounter, is examined in these books; it is this conflict that has caused the current generation to dig deep into their roots, alienate themselves from their traditional values, and ultimately come into conflict with themselves as a result of an identity crisis. On the other hand, Markandaya's books approach the topic head-on, rejecting imported western standards in favor of reintroducing the modern middle class to its traditional aesthetic norms.

Both of her books deal with East-West tensions, but *Possession* is where the colonial mentality is most completely realized and explicit. Lady Caroline Bell believes that "being British is best" and, whether intentionally or not, seeks to emphasize Britain's continued relevance in India. When compared to Valmiki's emphasis on aesthetic merits, her consideration of the potential monetary benefits of his work stands out as particularly clear. Right this second, he has to go with us. He's not very useful in this situation (*Possession*: 9). It's true that "there was not even a pause to consider whether he would like to or not; not any recognition of him as a human being" (*Possession*: 10). Narrator Anusuya said of Caroline's handling of Valmiki, "Caroline feels Valmiki belongs to her, and in a sense she's correct. She just can't let go. When asked to part up something they consider a possession, most people will resist the request. It's reasonable to assume that, in her support of the arts, she has been guided by the western ideology of materialistic approaches, which has led her to mistake ownership for appreciation of Valmiki and prevented her from fully appreciating his feelings—the feelings of a native Indian artist who has always tended to be forthright with himself and with society. Dandekar's inability to comprehend his own wife or his spiritual beliefs stems from his exposure to western thought in *A Silence of Desire*. Even Dandekar's recently acquired rationality can't help him cross that gap. The Tulsi

plant is a metaphor for the chasm that separates their worldviews. As Dandekar puts it, "a plant; one did not worship plants," he is rejecting Sarojini's beliefs and her practice of Tulsi worship. When asked whether or not Swami's spiritual skills can cure, Sarojini responds, "Yes, you can call it healing by faith, or healing by the grace of God if you understand what that means." This statement exemplifies Sarojini's rejection of western thinking. But I do not expect you to comprehend me with your western concepts, your arrogant discourses of ignorance and superstition when all it means is that you do not know what lies beyond reason and would rather not find out. You probably think of Tulsi as just another plant you may find growing in the dirt. And mine is a sickness that can be treated; had you done that, I wouldn't be here because I would have died in the hospital.

## **CONCLUSION**

The way in which modern awareness has revealed itself in India demonstrates its deep roots in the present. Simple attitudes and quick value judgements don't cut it when dealing with the complexity and pressures of so-called contemporary life. In this way, doubts about one's own conventional beliefs and feelings of identity crisis might be a hindrance. Kamala Markandaya's books reveal the abrasive in action in each of them. In *A Silence of Desire*, the battle between materialism and spirituality is won. Because of the commotion it causes, we are able to get useful glimpses into the societal shifts that are taking place. The Indian believes that the spirituality of his people's culture gives it an edge over the materialistic West. When compared to the physical beauty-focused art of ancient Greece to the west, which was praised, this culture's art was seen as more genuine since it conveyed deeper spiritual ideals.

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