



CROSS CULTURAL INTERACTION IN THE NOVELS OF KAMALA
MARKANDAYA: PLEASURE CITY

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ABSTRACT

Pleasure City, the latest of Kamala Markandaya's novels, is based basically on the motto 'live and let live'. It has all the elements needed for a happy living. All the terms associated with comradeship like love, affection, co-operation and understanding are significant. Pleasure City is a novel about the building of a pleasure complex in a coastal village where Rikki a fisherman and Tully the director of the British firm building the city must work together to complete the creation. Much akin to some of Markandaya's earlier novels Pleasure City also addresses the issues of the interaction between East and West native tradition and imported technology in the context of the scientific and technical development of India. .

Key words: *conflicts ,resolutions, literature, knowledge , wisdom, aspirations , dreams.*

INTRODUCTION

Cross Cultural Interaction in the Novels of Kamala Markandaya is a vivid depiction of Kamala Markandaya's life and her approach to it according to changing circumstances. The interaction between two varying cultures—foreign and Indian, as portrayed in her novels—has been exquisitely described in the book. The fact that the West gets the benefit of ethical values from India, and the spiritual India profits from the modernization of the West, as depicted in the novels of Kamala Markandaya, has been accentuated. The interaction between the two different civilizations, the Eastern and the Western, has been discussed in the book. In fact, Markandaya's own personality combines in itself the antipodal values of two diverse cultures. Her novels bear testimony that she was in favor of a synthesis of the two ways of life. This has been ably

**Anveshana's International Journal of Research in Education, Literature, Psychology and Library
Sciences**

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examined in the book. The theme includes the building of a pleasure complex in a coastal village of India. It is the productive work accomplished by the two representatives of the East and West. Rikki, the fisherboy of coastal Indian village and Tully, the director of British enterprise on duty to set up the pleasure resort – ‘Shalimar’, jointly work to build the complex. The rapport between the two characters flourishes and blossoms into a fruitful venture.

Pleasure City 1982”. Markandaya’s range of experience is so remarkable and varied that the contextualization may appear to be a serious lacuna in her fiction, particularly from a western critical view point R. K. Narayan resolves this problem by sticking to Malgudi as a place symbol. Markandaya tries to resolve it by peopling the landscape in the most impressive and convincing manner. She does, of course, view the problem of human relationships in different contexts in order to arrive at a most sympathetic grasp of it. Her technical control and artistic competence are, in this regard, more evident in her later fiction than in her earlier novels. Her early novels, none the less, dramatize the agony and ecstasy of cultural changes in India, involving innumerable persons. Markandaya’s Indian sensibility enables her, it is true, to grasp the plights of her Indian characters more easily than her British characters set in the Indian context. She is thus on ‘terra firma’ when she depicts a Rukmani or a Mira rather than a Caroline or even Helen in the Indian milieu. Kamala Markandaya points to the fact that she is basically a novelist of feminine sensibility and undertakes to analyse the changing pattern of Indian sensibility, urban or rural, East-West conflict, Indian maternal feeling, feminine superiority, through feminine perspective. This effort obviously results in a very wide spectrum of episodically and character analysis. Though the novelist believes in the advantageous values of modernization and globalization yet she has firm faith in the pathological role of traditions and her different novels prove that people of a new colonial nation like India are basically struggling for an identity which is yet to be but in this search for new soil they uproot themselves completely from the existing system thereby enhancing their miseries manifold. Markandaya’s different novels also present the aspects of feminism which spread very fast in India after independence

PLOT OF THE NOVEL

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In Pleasure City, though Kamala Markandaya has not done enough justice to her women characters, in her still mood, she breathe life into her female world and makes her women alive. Mrs. Bridie, Amma, Valli, Cornea, Zavera, Mrs. Contractor, Mrs. Pearl, Mrs. Chari, Mrs. Lockwood, Mrs. Lovat and so on arise, move, feel, understand and contribute a lot in making the threads of Tully- Rikki relationship stronger. Mrs. Bridie is an angel in human body. She has come in this world to help the poor and the needy and to relieve them of their sufferings. Beautiful girls who think of physical beauty as an end in itself commit mistakes. They enjoy this hallucination of being beautiful. By dint of beauty they dream of winning the whole world and wish to rule over the people. Their imagination soars high in the sky when someone praises them for their beauty. They are poor in real sense as they are devoid of real beauty- the beauty of character and beauty of thought. Kamala Markandaya's women characters are caught in the whirlpool of tradition. They fight a heroic struggle but in most cases they fail as the chain of tradition binds their feet. They muster up with great force: some of them break it but not completely, to come out and enter the domain of "new woman". They still retain traditional colour though faint in the dazzling light of the new domain. The changes in time bring changes in the circle of their activity and they adapt themselves to new environments but their basic traditional mental vision remains unchanged. All the women characters feel the warmth of changes, struggle in their minds whether they should reject the old ones and welcome the new ones, find out a possible solution out of this inner dialogue in following the via media and ultimately vote for transformation and redefining the concepts in the new light of changes. Burdened with the bitter experiences of the past, they hopefully dream of a better future but invariably they have to face the stark realities of life that smithereens all their dreams. Kamala Markandaya, unquestionably one of the most outstanding novelists in Indian fiction in English, is primarily a humanitarian novelist. Her large-heartedness, humanitarian sympathies, abundant kindness, good nature, and generous pity reflected in her novels, testify to her "zeal of a crusader in the cause of humanitarianism". In her treatment of social problems, she aims at achieving the welfare of the entire humanity. To her, man is a puppet in the hands of malignant fate, which is out to thwart his efforts and rob him of any chance of happiness. Kamala Markandaya's characterization is clear in the light of the cultural and social process and achieves meaning



within the mode of life she depicts. Her artistic transmutation of the social reality is convincing enough as she relates her characters to social phenomena. Kamala Markandaya is a brilliant and unique story teller. All her novels are absorbing and highly readable. The narration in her first three novels is simple and straight forward. They are presented in the reminiscent mood. In the other novels, the tradition of the omniscient author is followed. In two of her novels she has employed the technique of stream of consciousness. The plot construction of the novels of Kamala Markandaya is traditional and well-organized as in a classical play. The plot is gradually revealed and the climax is followed by a rapid denouement. All the characters and incidents contribute to the action. A continuous struggle between man and fate explains very well the human situation in Kamala Markandaya's novels. Man is ranged against impersonal forces. Even evil characters are looked upon as creatures of circumstances that they are far more pitied than blamed. Fate is the common enemy of all in a just vision of human life. The hopeful dreams of man are mercilessly shattered by the cruel hands of reality. These observations, may very well serve to highlight Kamala Markandaya's social concern and her outlook on the overpowering forces of reality.

CONCLUSION

The novel *Pleasure City* depends on obvious comprehension of East-West experience. The sociological angle has in this manner profited to watch financial relations in a perfect way. The talk examination made here has looked into the subject in a basic view point. The way toward comprehension of truths was clear and sufficiently significant to contemplate these collaborations in another edge. The *Pleasure City* or *Shalimar* is hence a viable advancement of social life depicted by Kamala Markandaya in a South Indian town which is domiciled by anglers. *Joy City* leaves a sign of undoubted, blameless love engraved forever, in one's recollections, solidifying the bond between the two characters which talk.

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