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Kamala Markandaya's Nectar in a Sieve as an Ecofeministic Novel

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Abstract
Men's over exploitation of nature, land, forest and degradation of nature and this ecosystem is affecting very badly on human and all kinds of animals is the biggest burning topic for today. The misuse of nature and forest, the issues of global warming has been increased which has impacted the rainfall and drought in some regions and states of our country since from many years. Because of the rampant behavior of mankind, water, biodiversity rainfall scarcity and drought famine started in the world and mostly in our country. In this context the concept of eco feminism has gained new significance as it offers a social and philosophical movement that studies the interconnectedness and oppression of the women, the degradation of environment, of course nature. The eco- feminism talks about the exploitation of women and nature from the same social system. This paper attempted to study Kamala Markandaya's 'Nectar in a Sieve' from an Eco feministic perspective and the degradation of nature and natural creatures impacted by modernity both women and nature. Eco feminism primarily "analyses the interconnection of the oppression of women and nature"(Bressler,236). It seeks to dwell into the interconnections between women and nature striving to bring about equality between genders revaluing of non-patriarchal or nonlinear structures and a view of the world that respects organic process, holistic connections, and the merits of intuition and collaboration. These are scores of women writers belonging to Indian literature who seek to focus on the outcome of gender categories in order to demonstrate ways in which social norms exert unjust dominance and nature. They bring out and alternative construction that values the earth is a congenial place burning the point home that humanity's dependency on the natural world and embraces our life as valuable .Ecofeminist have striven to keep the Centrality of insight to environmental philosophy and feminism on the pedestal. They descant upon the insidious nature of man in appropriating nature's laws then by shading light on the commodification of nature and of women.

Keywords: *Ecofeminism, Degradation Natural Disaster, Gender Nature, Women ,Kamala Markandaya , Biodiversity, Destruction Modernity, Tannery etc.*

Introduction

Kamala Markandaya is an Indian English novelist who portrayed the intersection gender and ecology in her writings. She has depicted the deep connection between the nature and women, pointing out the natural calamities due to mens over behaviour on earth on the name of development in the rural atmosphere .She also emphasized the interconnection between women and nature highlighting the ways and experiences are interwind with the natural world.She stresses the importance of protecting the nature and interconnectedness of all living beings. In this context Paravati Misra says,

Kamala Markandaya's novels embody profound and sensitive understanding of the feminine and the female in Indian context"(Misra, 40)'Nectar in a Sieve' is the Novel of realistic document of a village which is in the process of change of Modernity. It shows how the traditional village life is attacked by modernty in the form of Tannery factory. The industrialisation of the village disturbs the peaceful rural Life and traditional set up of social and economic life of rural people like Nathan and Rukmini. At first Rukmini shows violent reactions against this change but it is very difficult not to accept the harsh reality of life. The natural beauty of rukmini's village is disturbed by industries and it finally withers away. There is ugliness of the Loss of moral values. In fact Nathan and Rukmini are the representative of the thousands of uprooted peasants under an industrial economy.

Looking into the details of the status of Indian women in relation to ecofeminism down the ages the Hindu women idealised the mythic models from the Ramayana and other Puranas. Indian women are asked to get inspired by the archetype of women like Sita , the silent sufferer. Often the Indian women are passive and except the given role in shaping her destiny. At every stage of her life she is dependent on her status and survival upon men,her father, her son,her husband and her other relatives. The role of women has been full of contradictions so far as Indian customs and traditions are concerned.

Rukmini gets married to Nathan,a tenant farmer who is impoverished in terms of tangible wealth but will be in terms of affection and concern for her family. She has the deep connection with the

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natural world .She works in the farm like a mother to her own kid providing it with nourishment and care. She looks the Tannery as catastrophe for the whole community. This catastrophe not only disturbs the village's modest, traditional, agrarian focused homes, but it also effects the agricultural land and village .The two aspects of Rukmini's personality that most closely resemble ecofeminist worries are her relationship with nature and her response to the Tannery's establishment on the grazing land and how it affected the lives of the residents. After getting married with Nathan, Rukmini begins the new journey of her life with her husband's community.The story of her compassion for animals is as follows,

"Poor beast they seemed glad of the water for already their hides were dusty"(Markandaya 5). She enjoys listening to the call of the mynahs, in addition to the songs of a variety of other birds, including the eagles call which causes her to feel comfortable and sleepy. The garden is a source of acclaim satisfaction for Rukmini.She enjoys tending to the plants she has grown from different seeds. In the yard behind the hut she cultivate pumpkin seeds and not long alter the seeds begin to grow tender green talks, she frequently visits the yard and waters the tiny plants until a pumpkin starts to turn golden and crimson as it ripens. Rukmini is a strong and industrious woman embodies many traditional, Indian cultural values and beliefs including a deep reverence for the natural panorama. She looks the cobra as a sacredness in Indian rituals and respect it with reverence rather than fear. She knows the importance of water as a precious and sacred resource. Her daughter is named Irawaddy river as Ira. The common people can no longer afford the outrageously high prices that are being charged as bazaars.Kamala Markandaya has depicted various other customs of innocent peasant as for instance,

"As soon as the rains were over and cracks in the earth had healed and the land was moist and ready we took our seed to our goddess and placed it at her feet to receive her blessing and then we bore it away and male customs sowing"(Markandaya, 128)Later on if it does not rain Rukmini will go to her goddess with pumpkin and a few grain of rice to pray for the rains means their behaviour is purely ecosystematic. So Rukmini and Nathan were cultivating the land but the land is possessed by Shivaji. Rukmini and Nathan were only tillers. But one day Shivaji thought to sell the land for more profit and for his personal difficulties .Here he looks unconcerned about Nathan and Rukmini 's livelyhood. Shivaji says that of the land. The tannery owners are buying the land. Nathan says that,

"The land is to be sold we are to move .Shivaji came this morning he says there is nothing to be done they pay good prices"(Markandaya,134)

The owners of the tannery are destroying the village economy and environment. After the being disposessed from her property ,Rukmini describe her feelings of tenderness concern and connections to the land as she makes the journey to the city in the bullock cart.

"The hut, it's inhabitants resides behind us and yet in front of us for sitting with our backs to the bullocks. Our beloved green fields far away to a blur ,the hut becomes a smudge on the horizon. Till we strain our eyes to pierce the reddish dust wheels throw up"(Markandaya,144).

This meant it is abuse over environment and women. There is a kind of cultural rupture between nature and society. Nathan and Rukmini's attachment with nature is really appreciable. But now they are uprooted l and alienated individuals reaching for another, place bred and shelter. The Ecofeminists contend that women have a greater concern for the land and other creatures where as man have supposed to have a tendency to be more apathetic to them. But Rukmini is a strong and resilient women embodies many traditional Indian cultural values and Philips having a deep reverence for natural creatures.

Actually ,Rukmini and Nathan are unable to pay there payments to Shivaji the land owner. So ,Shivaji decided to sell his property to the Tannery. But Rukmini fears about the destruction of natural world. She says,

"That tannery would eventually be our and doing since then it had spread like weeds in untended garden strangling whatever life grew in its way."(Markandaya,135,36). The negative of the Tannery can be seen in the loss of bird's populations on the surrounding land which used to be rich in biodiversity and was home to many species of birds as hidden in the text."At one time there had been kingfishers here flashing between the young shoots for our fish and puddy birds, and sometimes in the shallower the water reaches the river flamingoes trading with ungainly among the water reeds"(Markandaya,71)

The starting of Tannery Rukmini's sons are taken away by the modern juggernaut.,Thambi and Arjun are up living their traditional occupation of agriculture to work in factory and later move Ceylone. To work on a plantation there Raja another son loses his life while working in Tannery. Of course that Tannery has totally ruined their existence.

Conclusion

Kamala Markandaya's"Nectar in a Seive"is powerful eco feministic fiction of domination of modernity over natural creatures. The fiction presents an image of women as a passive sufferer but saviour to nature and natural world inguise of Rukmani. On the other hand male characters are portrayed as exploitative and destructive. The novel points out that a more balanced and harmonious relationship with nature is possible. Indian English literature specially the novel has been the instrumental for eco- feminist portrayal in their novels. They write about the sustainable development,nurturing the nature and natural panorama,importance of natural chain of food, flora and Faunna and sustainable world. The writer Kamala Markandaya used thematic and narrative of interconnectedness between nature and natural diversity the article concluded the eco- feminist portrayal of nature,harmony, ecological chain and sustainable world.

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