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Feminine Sensibility In The Select Works Of Kamala Markandaya And Mahasweta Devi

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ABSTRACT: -

The present paper is an attempt to throw light on feminine sensibility in the select works of Kamala Markandaya and Mahasweta Devi. kamala Markandaya and Mahasweta Devi both won name and fame all over the world as a novelist in Indo- Anglian literature. They are novelist with an extraordinary vision of life. Their Sense of involvement in social life of India their keen observation combined the feminine sensibility brought fame all over the world as writers like Virginia Woolf and James Joyce, they have projected the inner topography of their female characters. The portray the exciting and mystifying life situations of women characters in their works. Both Kamala Markandaya and Mahasweta Devi have raised the voices of women against male dominance in their literary works. MahaSweta Devi produced over one hundred novels and over twenty collections of short stories. All are written in Bengali. Some of her works have been translated Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, a post-colonial scholar and other translators. I have selected Maha Sweta Devi's "Draupadi" Which appeared in English translation as Agni Garbha (womb of mother) and Kamala Markandaya's major novels," Nectar in a Sieve"," A Hand Ful of Rice" & "Possession" As we find that many of Mahasweta Devi's stories are based on focusing tribal fighting and resisting exploitation Here an attempt will be made to explore into Mahasweta Devi's venture of rewriting an episode from the great epic "Mahabharata" as a feminist response to the myth of Draupadi. She reinvents a cultural history and shows how this deconstructs the representation of women in cultures, images, stereotypes and archetypes. Significantly enough, the politics of interpretation has most often been the politics of gender.in this story, Draupadi is a tribal revolutionary for whom her sexuality becomes the means of a harsh indictment of an exploitative social system. After being gang raped in custody, she quickly turns the terrible wounds of her breast into a counter offensive. Mahasweta Devi has chosen her from the plethora of renewed images of mythic women whom she recreates. After undergoing the third degree in violence, she musters up courage to speak if not for herself at least for her comrades. A subaltern like the tribal, Draupadi spears out and reclaims a cultural identity that re-inscribes her oppressed position in the patriarchal society. Even after being gang raped in custody, her indomitable spirit remains intact. It seems as if a phoenix like Draupadi dies in the rape and a new figure comes out of the ashes.

KEYWORDS - Feminine sensibility, inner topography, mystifying life, male dominance, post-colonial, tribal.

We find a significant trend in Indian English literature during the post-colonial period. In number of talented writers both male and female from different strata of society have contributed in Indian English literature. Writers like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. BR. Ambedkar, PT. Jawaharlal Nehru Root on social economics and social issues of the nation. Other writers like Raja Rao, RK Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Kamala Markandeya, Shashi Deshpande, Mahasweta Devi, Anita Desai etc. dealt with various aspects of contemporary Indian rural life in their writing. There are a number Subjects and issues on which they wrote such as women emancipation, poverty, illiteracy, Oppression of down trodden, child labour, problems of tribals and so on. Shashi Deshpande, Kamla Markandaya, MahaSweta Devi, Manju Kapoor, Chetan Bhagat, Rohinton Mistry, Arvind

Adiga Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri are few of them whose contribution in Indian writing in English is acclaimed and Appreciated by the literature community throughout the world police stock and this acclaim shows the changing trend in Indian writing in English. As far as my topic is concerned with feminist sensibility in Mahasweta Devi's "Draupadi" and Kamala Markandeya's select novels, first of all I would like to explore the feminism in brief. Feminism is a moment it was launched in western world. This movement supported females to secure equality. This movement Influenced and spread to the other parts of the world. It is a diverse collection of various theories, movements and philosophies. Such as social, political and moral concern based on experience of the women. The social movement of feminism is especially dealt controlling and eradicating gender inequality in Indian society. It focuses and promotes women's rights in Indian society in the post-independence. There is second movement of feminism and it is seen in the works of Amrita Pritam, Mahasweta Devi, Shashi Deshpande, kamala Das, kamala Markandaya etc. Their writing show, it is a struggle for existence in new borne freedom in India and their quest of their women identity, dignified place, and value in male dominated society, feminist writing is progressive and positive change in the Indian writing in English. The new aspects of women experiences fictionalized as a form of feminist understanding of life expression in the novels of Shobha De, Shashi Deshpande, Mahasweta Devi, Manju Kapoor, Kiran Desai and others. Shashi Deshpande once said in interview about feminism, "if others see something feminist in my writing, I must say that it is not consciously done, it is because of the world for women is like that and I am mirroring the world." In this way feminism has brought sudden changes in contemporary Indian English fiction. Women novelist mainly focusing on women experiences. The took issues of marginalization end subordination of women in different walks of life presenting women character different from their traditional way is notable change. In the novels of contemporary Indian English novelist, we find assertive and aggressive women characters than submissive docile and passive one. Feminism plays an important role in the literary works of kamala Markandaya and Mahasweta Devi. Kamala Markandaya's sense of involvement in social life of India, her keen observation combined with the feminine sensibility brought her international fame with the publication of her first novel, "Nectar in a Sieve". It is a powerful novel of rural India. It throws light on how the wind of industrialisation blows through rural India. The novel deals with hunger theme. The novelist very vividly records the changes in rural Indian society under the impact of modernity. The novel has become a classic of hunger and rural India. In the novel, we see that the people of the novelist's time or when this novel was written suffered from poverty, hunger and communal disturbances. Urbanisation and Industrialisation were destroying the very basic of rural life. The novelist reveals a woman's self in unadventurous social milieu. The novelist depicts the realities of Indian life and her attitude to women in India under the stress of changing social forces. In her novel, "Nectar in a Sieve", she depicts the tragedy of a traditional Indian village and a peasant family assaulted by industrialisation. Rukmani and Nathan are the peasant couple in a south Indian village. They are the victims of the two evils: the Zamindari System and the Industrial Economy in the novel. We find that Rukmani is the narrator. She is a little educated woman. The novelist divides the novel into two parts: - the first part deals with Rukmani's life as the wife of a simple peasant and the second part deals with the dislocation of the aged couple, their wanderings in the city, their misfortunes and their final disillusionment. Rukmani's husband is considerate and practical. Rukmani leads a married life of happiness. Both wife and husband lead an idyllic life. Once the heavy rain destroyed crops. There will be no rice until the next harvesting. The members of Rukmani's family lived on salted fish, roots and leaves. Again. we find the happy arcadian atmosphere, and the hearty contentment that Rukmani feels

and enjoys will soon disappear after the construction of the tannery. The tannery, symbolic of mechanical power, destroys the traditional village. Rukmani opposes this intrusion of modernity, industrialism and city upon the village and its tradition. The tannery ruins the beautiful countryside. The evils of industrialism crop up inflation, vice, ugliness and disease. These evils disturb the peaceful flow of life in the village. Finally, Rukmani and Nathan are evicted from their land. Rukmani, the narrator heroine is also a mother of sorrow. She receives shock after shock. Nathan's infidelity, her daughter's sacrifice to save the family from starvation, the death of the child Kuti etc. are her unbearable grief. But her strong heart doesn't easily accept defeat. Rukmani and Nathan leave the village for the town to join their son. But unfortunately, their son has disappeared leaving his wife behind. They become stone breakers. They save a little money. They want to return back to their village. Suddenly, Nathan dies, leaving Rukmani alone. She gets back to village bringing with her adopted crippled son Puli. She with the other children, Ira and Sevam, starts to rebuild their fortunes on the old ruins. "Some Inner Fury" is Kamala Markandaya's second novel. The plot of the novel is concerned with the Struggle for Independence. These novel records Markandeya's resentment against political bungling by England. The context of the Indian culture milieu during Indian Struggle for Independence may have provided sufficient reason for personal frustrations of Mira and Richard in the novel. Mira is the heroine of the novel and the narrator of the story. The Indo-British interaction is depicted through the experiences of Srinivas an Indian immigrant in Britain Mira, caught in the whirlpool of nationalist politics, is faced with the awesome choice of love or the Indian cause. Her love story as the leitmotif symbolises in part the theme of cultural conflict. The clash is also between two modes of life the Western and the Asian. Mira is a product of these two cultural modes. In Markandaya's depiction of character, rootedness in culture is of prime importance, there is no survival without roots. "A Silence of Desire" is a subtle study of husband wife relationship. Dandekar and Sarojini are husband and wife. Dandekar belongs to an urban middle class family. Sarojini is a traditional house wife. The novel presents tension between tradition and modernity, husband-wife relationship and psychological adjustment. Sarojini's desperate faith blinds her to her familial responsibilities while Dandekar's rationalism corrupts his behaviour. In the novel, the novelist highlights the points at which the culture and social background has a bearing on the mental processes of the individual. Her "Possession" has been written under the impact of the Feminist Movement in Europe, particularly in France. The novelist was influenced by this movement in shaping the women characters, particularly Caroline Bell. In the character of Lady Caroline Bell, the novelist has transformed the patriarchal suppressed woman into a domineering and tyrannical possessor and an active victimizer of an adolescent male. Anasuya is the narrator. Being a journalist, she captures certain subject and person in her journals and books and can be identified with the novelist. "A Handful of Rice", the novelist turns to the urban situation in India for her subject. The novelist turns her attention to the social setup in urban culture. Like "Nectar in a sieve", this novel also depicts the rural hunger and poverty. To escape rural poverty and hunger he joins the general exodus to the city and journey to madras. He however, disillusioned. He joins a group of local petty criminals. He becomes a part of the underworld of smugglers. He falls in love with Nalini. He again joins a coward that attacks godowns for a handful of rice. The novel ends on a note of despair. Nalini is the traditional recipient of suffering. "we'll manage" is her favourite expression. Here I would like to explore the theme of racism and quest for identity, racial discrimination is the pivotal issue for Mahasweta Devi. Being a social activist, she reveals dehumanization of women from marginalized communities in her works. Here I would like to interrupt her famous short story Agni Garbha Agni Garbha (1978) is a short story by Mahasweta Devi. The narrative revolves around the life of a tribal woman, Surja, who lives in the forests of Chhota Nagpur. Surja is impregnated by a policeman, symbolizing the exploitation and oppression faced by tribal communities. The story explores the intersection of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism, highlighting the struggles of marginalized women.

The title "Agni Garbha" translates to "Womb of Fire," symbolizing Surja's body as a site of resistance against oppressive forces. Through Surja's story, Devi critiques the systemic violence and injustice inflicted upon tribal communities, emphasizing the need for resistance and empowerment.

To conclude it may be said that both novelists are quite conscious of their artistic design and purpose as well as of their responsibility towards their vision of life. Both have raised undoubtedly a feminist voice articulating the hopes and oppressions, the concerns and tensions, of womankind. Their voices imbued with feminine cum-feminist sensibility are typically their own and it cannot be confused with anyone else's. Both novelists make the social system responsible for the suffering, oppression and exploitation of women. Their approach to women's problems, as depicted in their works, is quite distinct.

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