

**Tribhuvan University**

**Tradition versus Modernity: A Search for Alternative Modernity in Markandaya's  
*Nectar in a Sieve***

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“Tradition versus Modernity: A Search for Alternative Modernity” in Kamala  
Markandaya’s *Nectar in a Sieve*

*This research entitled “Tradition versus Modernity: A search of Alternative Modernity” in Kamala Markandaya’s Nectar in a Sieve tries to investigate clash between tradition and modernity. This research focuses on western encroachment upon Indian culture and tradition and Rukmani’s struggle to preserve her cultural heritage and tradition in the age of western modernization. The protagonist, Rukmani, valorizes her own tradition, culture and rituals in spite of accepting western culture in the pace of changing time. Rukmani advocates for a distinct type of modernity which preserve her tradition and culture and study changes in it. This research finds Rukmani accept modernism which has space for her tradition and culture and studies changes in it in pace of time. The westerners who come as a worker and settle in her village have great influence in villagers. Thus, this research reveals changes in tradition through alternative modernism. To conduct my research, I take insight from Dipesh Chakrabarty, Ashish Nandy and Arjun Appadurai.*

[Key Terms: Alternative Modernity, Tradition, City, Western encroachment, Cultural Heritage,]

This research explores tradition in native India during period of changing from tradition towards modernity. It finds how human status builds up and moreover, it answers how Indian writers define modernity in this age attach with tradition. The paper also examines changes in tradition and culture in Indian village because of western encroachment. It focuses on Rukmani's steps for preserving her tradition and cultural heritage in the time of ongoing changes in villagers' lifestyles and behaviors. The narrator narrates the story of Indian people and shows how tradition and culture are disappearing in the youngster due to influence of production, science and technology. The choice of youngsters and change into their lifestyle pushes the story to find the originality because of modernity in the mind of the villagers.

Kunti, Arjun and other villagers are glad towards establishment of tannery which symbolizes modernity whereas Rukmani criticizes tannery. Tannery brings social, economic, and cultural changes in village. Rukmani's life after tannery turns into suffering and economic crisis because her land is taken by tannery owner. From the beginning of the novel, Rukmani explores how villagers welcome their guest and cooperation among them but after tannery is established villagers are busy and indifference towards others. Rukmani's life becomes painful at last part of novel she is compelled to leave the village to change her life and earn money. But she plans to return in her own culture and tradition which she finds in village. Mankandaya presents her own idea of preserving tradition, culture, rituals, ceremonies and cultural heritage in this changing time. Markandaya brings western and non western characters in the novel to capture the clash between their belief, tradition and lifestyle. Markandaya argues that western modernity cannot describe our changes in tradition because of gap between western and nonwestern civilization. The women in sari cover her head reflects writer's positive attitude towards tradition. Markandaya

captures dowry system, privilege in Indian rural side but modernity erases traditional activities.

Kamala Markandaya has composed this novel in Post- Colonial era after marriage she gets experienced and expresses the view. She compares past and present, village and city, tradition and modernity. Markandaya has composed setting of this novel in a village where people lives in heart to heart connectedness. Married as a child bride to a tenant farmer she had never met, Rukmani works side by side in the field with her husband to wrest a living from a land ravaged by droughts, monsoon, and insects. With remarkable fortitude and courage, she meets changing times and fights poverty and disaster. In this context, Markandaya has composed this novel. Markandaya has brought the scenario of this contemporary time.

The narrative also weaves between an ideological commitment to the village and a deeper instinctive fascination for the city. They connect intermittently through the reformist zeal of some among the city bred characters (Mehta and Malti) who have seemingly come under the influence of Gandhian thought. Village life is seen as authentic in one sense, but as quite limited and foolish in another sense. The agency and cleverness imputed to the characters in a village setting is shown to have deserted them in an urban setting where they either founder or revert to their country bumpkin ways. The city comes across as the place of power, intrigue, money, and political chicanery, but also as the place from whence good governance can issue through a Mehta-like gesture of hard-boiled philosophical aloofness.

Markandaya chooses the most suitable narrative technique for the theme. Her technique in this sense becomes the means of persuasion and enables her to stir her intended idea in readers. Markandaya not only focuses on the social, political, economic and cultural problems alone. But she rather juxtaposes all these elements

with human tragedy in order to show how individual life is conditioned. It is the treatment of tradition and modernity that distinguishes Markandaya with her contemporaries: Ruth Pravar Jhvala, Anita Desai and Nayanatara Seegal. She makes her protagonist love and respect the man-made conventional moral.

Markandaya idealizes womanhood in her novels: most of her novels have female characters. This indicates her interest in woman characters. K.S.N. Rao has remarked that "Markandaya has no heroes but only heroines" (37). In Sudipta's Comparison of treatment of the woman by Markandaya with Virginia Woolf she clearly states:

Both of them have evocatively delineated women simultaneously: from the plane of orthodoxy to the changing modern trends in contemporary society. The cultural background of Woolf and Markandaya is Polaristic. But the way to juxtapose of their protagonists has dissolved all notes of dissonance. This has brought the evidence of woman's fate being universally similar, on predicaments being either on an emotional level or on both physical and emotional. (85)

The most significant in all the themes of Markandaya are the protagonists originating from different strata of society. So, Markandaya's women are earthly and real while Woolf's women are sensitive and ephemeral. The main point of congruency is their familial affiliations.

Markandaya uses first person pronoun 'I' to narrate the events and incidents which makes the heroine and narrator same. It supports Markandaya to achieve objectivity and reality in her novels. Since the narrator is one of the characters and the narration is carried out on first person. Markandaya as stated by Arnold Kettle. "Gain the advantages of lending its authenticity to the narrator. It's also provides the

necessary distance between the writer and reader" (178).

Primarily concern of novelist is in persuading reader about the existence of Indian people in the midst of their social, economic and political obstacle, for its clarity. Markandaya never brings sub-plot rather weaves fact after fact, situation after situation that is every details that affect the life of character is presented in chronological order. Her novels are not mere narration of incidents but rather an artistic interpolation of cause and effect sequences. One naturally and convincingly followed by the next. Her first novel, *Nectar in a Sieve*, is the best illustration of the aforementioned technique while presenting the story through Rukmani. Markandaya uses both pictorial and dramatic methods. There are dramatic moments when Nathan confesses his illicit relationship with Kunti or when Raja is killed and the body is brought to Rukmani and of the last moments of Nathan before he dies. Though every description appears to be poetic and touches the lyrical heights but each detail is presented in convincing way.

In her writing, Markandaya has strong inclination towards the Indian culture. For instance, in *Some Furry* the strong desire for birth of a son to the parents is unraveled permitted to light the funeral pyre. The couples who parented a son are assured of attaining "moksha". But quite contrarily the birth of girls is not considered as happiness because parents have to manage vast dowry in their marriages. Hence, Indian culture with its multiple ethos play the vital role in her novel but it is always juxtaposed with western one.

Regarding, the language and selection of words unlike her contemporary, Anita Desai reviews Markandaya never provides a list of words and explanation at the beginning or end of the book that results explications because Markandaya claims if the "Indian words and their meanings for the benefit of the non- Indian readers are

given in the text, the reader is constantly obliged to turn pages and there by miss the tempt tine reading material on hand" (183). Desai highlights her colloquial language pattern and mode of presentation.

Markandaya never does aim at Indian zing English in the name of similar attitude. Her English is pure and idiomatic and her style lucid. Unlike, Raja Rao and Mulka Raj Anand. She does not add suffixes to Indianize the words nor does she indulge in giving vernacular color. Similarly, Kamala Markandaya doesn't attempt at the psychological exploration of her characters. Her vision of life is clear. She upholds human values and principles like tile spiritual and the moral; she is against the oppressions in any form- political, economic, cultural or racial. Markandaya uses the novelistic devices like irony and imagery sparingly.

In study of the novels of Kamala Markandaya, we cannot ignore the 'women subject' because women have a significant place in her novels and most of the women characters are presented within domestic wall. In this sense, her investigation and presentation of feminine consciousness is directed towards an objective account of women's emotions. Markandaya's attitude to feminism is established as personal, analytic and exploratory rather than public, political or polemical. As P. Geetha states, "Markandaya does not create a women's world but she presents the real world. Sometimes she raising serious question on attitude to men, women and marriage. She investigates the actual, social and emotional bind that shackle women" (10).

Indian women in Markandaya's novels define herself by a set of relationship and modes of conduct created within a society. Hence Markandaya confronts a tradition oriented society and learns to live under the twin whips of heritage. Kamala Markandaya herself seems to be conscious of the gender differences when she enters a journalist's career. She has feminist dread that her domestic duties will trifle her

literary career. She expressed this fear when she addressed the European branch of Accals in 1975 and mentioned that "the book appears one year later in a case of woman writer as she has also had to make some 1500 cups (A tea and coffee in the mean time)"(10).

Kamala Markandava underlines the traditional attitude to women in her novel. Rukmani in *Nectar in a Sieve* after the birth of daughter feels that she has failed her husband, family and society because Indian society prioritizes the son in the tradition set by women novelist like Jane Austen. Markandaya also believes that truth about human relations can be best expressed in terms of social institution such as marriage and family. Marriage for Kamala Markandaya seems to be profound symbol of community and this phenomenon in her fiction has been the women's adventure, the object of her quest and her journey's end.

The competition among Rukmani and Kenny explains the direct conflict between traditions versus modernity. Rukmini supports tradition whereas Kenny represents modernity. Likewise this Markandaya also develops two distinct characters: Rukmini and Kunti. Kunti is influenced by western ideology and Rukmini stands for Indian culture. By bringing two distinct characters Markandaya visualize the real picture of changing scenario of society from tradition towards modernity. Here, Markandaya brings a western character who is far from his land and attract towards traditional woman Rukmani but hates their old culture, tradition and rituals. A. V. Karisma Rao reviews that: "Markandaya's novel creates opposition between tradition and modernity ( 8).

As an aforementioned ornaments color her novel with traditional attitude. Unlike her contemporary, Anita Desai, who presents women with fundamental problems and shows the predicament of women not merely s wife or mother, Kamala

Markandaya lets her women to have traditional beliefs as well as makes them face the modern predicament. Unlike Raja Rao who believes that "to be wife is to worship your man." Kamala Markandaya's heroines do not adore or worship their husbands though they respect to love them. What provides the feminist touch in her novels is her treatment of the women character. Markandaya makes her heroes quite bold and strong enough to face each and every kind of hazards and obstacles that come forth. By doing Markandaya does two works simultaneously. On the one hand, she erases the traditional negative image of women as Eve. On the other unravels the dignity and importance of womanhood in human existence. Her first novel, *Nectar in a Sieve* also dismantles the image of woman as something evil and tries to unravel the important role women have played in the family and society. As P. Geetha states about her writing:

The mythical pattern of women as even incarnate has been discarded and Kamala Markandaya idealizes her motherhood in her virgin novel but with a difference. *Nectar in a Sieve* is the best example to illustrate the novelists' instance. Rukmani seems to be the legend archetype of an ideal house wife but she also rises against the social forces confronting her remaining with their, in the sanctity of her home. (12)

Hence, Markandaya exposes modern and traditional characters. Her characters are also native and dutiful wives who have not been imparted formal education. Markandaya always delineates women character form of static orthodox to the changing modern trends. Markandaya does so because she wants to create socially and timely approve image of women. That's why; we find the identification of women as best expressed in terms of social institution such as marriage and family. Markandaya through her writing never tries to create obstacles on the flow of

tradition. Commenting on this, Judith rightly states, "Kamala Markandaya as a woman writer uses her text as part of continuing process of involving her own self-definition and her emphatic identification with her character" (20).

This failure on the part of the critics may be attributed to a perception of terms like tradition and modernity as Polar opposites—a polarity that ignores what Sudhir Chandra calls “the complex simultaneity of change and continuity” (4). This bipolar perception has been dominant so far in the discussions regarding tradition and modernity by Indian intellectuals and suffers from a serious perceptual limitation, according to Chandra. Moreover, this perception helps to perpetuate this polarity. Chandra advocates another interpretative framework in which tradition, even while opposing modernity and westernization, is not inimical to change. On the other hand, modernity too is in a position to recognize the coexistence of change and persistence in actual human and social situations. The view Chandra puts forward acknowledges that “the same person, group of persons or movements may be progressive and revivalist, reformist and reactionary, secular and communal, and so on” (3).

Markandaya as postcolonial Indian writer initiated a large-scale rethinking of the living traditions of the natives. Such rethinking is often necessitated by a sense of crisis that confronts a community. This sense of crisis was triggered by a feeling that the traditional way of life was somehow responsible for the victimhood of the natives. That’s why Markandaya brings Indian and western character together and shows their different attitude towards tradition and culture. Markandaya’s protagonist, Rukmani demands a modernity which is applicable in Indian geography and history. At the same time, it was not possible for many to discard the living traditions, since it was a way of life validated by a large span of time. Several consequences emerged out of this tension. The westerners, through misreading, or in their haste to create a culture

of the “Indian,” or for ideological purposes, invented a tradition for the native subjects (9).

To support the claim the researcher draws the theoretical insights from alternative modernity especially forwarded by Arjun Appadurai, Radha Krishnan, Dilip Goonkar , Dipesh Chakarbarty , Ashish Nandy,

Modernity advocated in this project is not simply against the western form of modernity. One should accept that the concept of growing modern is a western product but the same facet does not corresponding the non-western location. However, had modernity not been guardian by the west, it would probably never be with the form it is today as the third world. With Edward Said's concept of Orientalism, the non-western people have discovered their own form of discourse, accentuating the importance of the native culture, rituals and philosophy. With that every national and cultural sites today can no way escape the legacy of western discourse on modernity. On the same ground Dilip Gaonkar asserts:

However, to think in terms of alternative modernity does not mean one blithely abandons the Western discourse on modernity. That is virtually impossible. Modernity has travelled from the West to the rest of the world not only in terms of cultural forms, social practices, and institutional arrangement but also as a form of discourse that interrogates the present. (13)

The overwhelming global cultural flows leave people with three specific options; to accept them totally, to neglect or reject the entire flow or to create a hybrid culture by accepting some and rejecting the other. To accept the entire flow risks in the loss of native culture and to reject them totally isolates people from the global scenario of science, technology and other power plays. An appropriate option would be to

amalgamate both the local culture and foreign one to form a culture of hybrid nature. Markandaya's reflection of the middle class people in *A Nectar in Sieve* delineates on how hybridity draws on local and transnational identification and generate historically new mediation. Such mediations are new because they are located outside the official practices of the national cultural boarders.

Arjun Appadurai states in his that body communities in the postcolonial literature that every citizen is nationalist. In his book *Modernity at Large* he writes:

The globalization of culture is not the same as its homogenization, but globalization involves the use of a variety of instruments of homogenization that are absorbed into local political and cultural economics, only to be repatriated as heterogeneous dialogues of national sovereignty, free enterprise, and fundamentalism in which the state plays an increasingly delicate role: too much openness to global flow . . . . (42)

We live in the world obsessed with national pride. The world is rampant with boundary wars, and the felling of nationalism, on the banners of countless parties. No manner how conflicting their place and destination is. Nation is myth, acts as a character for the present day social order. It supplies a retrospective pattern of moral values, sociological order and magical belief. The function of such things is to strengthen tradition and endow it with a greater value and prestige by tracing it back to a higher, better and more supernatural reality and initial events.

He writes emperor capitalist economist of postcolonial culture within this universe by connecting Europe and Asia, tradition and modernity, east and west and so on. He further adds:

...the nation-state is threatened by revolt, as in the China syndrome;

too little, and the state exist the international stage, as Burma, Albania, and North Korea in various ways have done. In general, the state has become the arbitrageur of this repatriation of difference. But this repatriation or export of the designs and commodities of difference continuously exacerbates the internal politics of . . . and homogenization, which is most frequently played out in debates over heritage. (42)

Postcolonial states incorporated models and institutions based on the European concept of nation created the continuing linkages that allowed the neocolonialist control of these states to operate to effectively. The use of nationalist myths and sentiments to control, suppress and discriminate against minority groups within many postcolonial states has been the subject of much recent comment. These groups claim their distinctive place and argue for a greater tolerance and acceptance of cultural diversity.

Markandaya thus tries to amalgamate these far-fetched attributes and form a fusion out of it that can appeal to the ideas of alternative modernity. Both originate in the belly of the culture of modernity fractured by the traditional archetypes and western innovations. 'Rukmani' becomes a democrat archetype that distinguishes the cultural and a cultural understanding of modernity. A cultural understanding as Charles Tylor focuses, deals specifically with the changes in the modern west in terms of rise of new culture whereas a cultural understanding refers to the description of transformation in some culture-neutral perspective. A cultural theory advocates on the use of reason emphasizing modernity as belonging to one 'Enlightenment package'. But it has to exceed this descriptive boundary and encompass an understanding that modernity cannot be complete without the study of all constellations such as religion,

faith, and metaphysics. Charles Tylor rightly advocates that: "the belief that modernity comes from one single universally applicable operation imposes a falsely uniform pattern on the multiple encounter of nonwestern cultures" (28).

Ziauddin Sarder's critique in his article "Surviving postmodernism", appear extreme, conflating postmodernism with globalized Capitalism, Colonialism, Secularism and a general embracing of "evil", it is important to register that first, there are myriad such culture perspectives, concerning postmodernism around the globe that similarly reject its value system, and second, that Sarder is not advocating a return to traditionalism or fundamentalism, but rather a continuation of non-western, non-postmodern tradition. "In many respects, traditionalism emerges as a direct response to postmodernism, whereas tradition can be utilized to more positively counter global postmodern values" (22).

Prem K. Nayar explains the situation of newly independent nations such as India where changes cannot be accepted easily at the cost of abandoning native culture. He elucidates:

While the newly independent nation state in the 'Third World' sought to model itself after secular Western ideas of the nation, the native culture's roots in religion and spirituality were not easy to abandon. Further, most colonies had shared a difficult history with Christianity. The issues of conversion, the dialectic between native faith and a colonial education and the search for a secular form for the nation-state are part of African, Asian and South American histories in the twentieth century. One way of dealing with this theme is to posit a spiritual native culture/tradition against the materialist 'West'. (96)

The East-West confrontation in *A Nectar in Sieve* is broad in scope and depth mainly

because the character of Rukmani is focused to bring out the clash between his inherited and adopted cultures. The East-West encounter from a 'third world' location is dramatized in term of the character's respective concentration of their native belongings.

Ashish Nandy says that the decline in public morality in the country is due to the all-round decline in religious sensibilities. Many distorted or perverted versions of religion circulating in modern or semi-modern India owe their origins to this perception of the triumph of secularization, rather than to the persistence of traditions (81). Nandy with the raise of technology finds bipolar and contrasts between modernity and tradition. He further adds: " plethora of advisories on how to choose 'correct' wines for different kinds of Indian food, to the utter surprise of Indians, accustomed to drinking mainly plain water with their meals . . . . One suspects that the culture of ethnic cuisine and ethnic dining has become more and more sophisticated and complex because it has become a major symbolic substitute for the cultures it is supposed to represent" (91). Nandy mostly compares and contrasts western lodging, food, and culture. He highlights with the nature of behaving with monetary.

Nandy explicitly and implicitly forwards his views about the ongoing change of life that "All through his life, he retained a sharp sensitivity to the interrelationships between morality, vocation, and traditions . . . He grew up, it seems, with a diffused concept of paternal authority, composed of the distant, world-renouncing and quasi-mythical image of his father on the one hand, and the protective but overly practical, unimaginative, fleeting"(107).

Dipesh Chakarvartory gives an effort to uplift the villagers. He finds the period of 1960s as consciousness period because people find fundamental identity. So, he depicts "The river line landscape of East Bengal was as critical to this development as were new waves of seeing that landscape, including the influence on

the Bengali imaginative eve of Sanskrit literature, classical Indian music, and European writing, painting, and photography. Two major literary and intellectual Figures-Tagore and Nirad Chaudhuri-should suffice as evidence (8).

Modernity, the same way enables its subjects to choose some among several alternatives. Eduardo Mendiata puts:

To live in a post-traditional society means that we live in societies in which we critically appropriate the way in which we decide to position our slaves to our past and our future [...] what is taken to be tradition is itself a choice made available to us by the very conditions of post national and post-colonial society. (413)

The colonial legacy left over into Nathan or Rukmani psyche is amalgamated with what they possessed of their own. Their life is so much the result of their own choice. Their desire to live a debt free life, have a steady job, a fair pile of saving.

R. Radha Krishnan develops the view of the double consciousness, clearly a global situation from postcolonial perspective. He mainly raises the context of “the developed world, the movement from modernity to post modernity is macro – politically continuous and conservative, whereas in the context of the underdeveloped world, whose very claim to citizenship in the modern world is the phenomenon of “underdevelopment,” the movement towards a postmodern economy of meaning is disruptive" (4-5).

Markandaya has brought the scenario of depressed and tired characters. Markandaya presents a joint family where a great dream remains. In the every touch of different action fails down because she finds uncountable dreams but the memory is not in her favor. That draws idealistic views, thought and remembering in characters. That is why she opines that, "A large building, spruce and white; not only

money has built it but men's hopes and pity, as I know who have seen it grow brick by brick and year by year" (3). Rukmini seem reluctant towards the encroachment of large buildings in village which snatches parks, gardens and fields from the villagers. This idealistic and spiritualistic view possesses them into tradition, culture and rituals. They don't expect the materialistic and western values. They find their norms very ritualistic. Their psychological understanding forwards them to attach to their tradition.

Rukmani is wife of a farmer. She lives in village but she has some odd women to associate with her husband. She gets happiness, platonic love and beautiful smile with her life partner. She gets very simplistic life to spend but while talking to her husband she finds some terrors and fad of her husband's life. She finds her husband very peaceful. Being married she finds a separate life to spend with her husband. In this base Markandaya presents their association in this narrative. She narrates:

While the sun shines on you and the fields are green and beautiful to the eye, and your husband sees beauty in you whom no one has seen before, and you have a good store of grain laid away for hard times, a roof over you and a sweet stirring in your body, what can a woman ask for? My heart sang and my feet were light as I went about my work, getting up at sunrise and going to sleep content. Peace and quits were ours. (8)

In the above lines, Markandaya visualizes the very beautiful and peasant woman to connect her husband. On the change of social arena, she presents the above imagery. Rukmini always concerns about nature and land that is why she metaphorically represents husband and wife's relation which represents Indian tradition.

Nandy's fundamentalism remains in native Indians daily activities and mode of alternative leads to rethink about our traditional mode rather than money. Even money is important for us we should try to balance our regular activities in certain parameters. In this concern Markandaya notices:

Today we would eat and tomorrow, and for many weeks while the grain lasted. Then there was the fish, cleaned, dried and salted away, and before that was we should earn some more money; I would plant more vegetables . . . such dreams, delightful, orderly, satisfying, but of the stuff of dreams, wraithlike. And sleep, such sleep. . . deep and sweet and sound as I had not known for many nights; it claimed me even as I sat amid the rice husks and fish scales and drying salt. (45)

Nathan finds his village natural and agriculture worthy. He gets the land is mutable but each vegetable and corn speaks because eating is not difficult but source of cultivation for eating is difficult. These sources are easily found in village. He finds a great dream and sound imagination of trade in the village without any destruction to environment. He finds the establishment of tannery has brought noise, pollution and different unrest.

Different fundamental dresses are according to geography and rituals. The dhoti and women wearing are alike to their boon for color. In this setting Markandaya has brought the concept of Nandy, who has raised the voice of east Bangal. In the same narrative Markandaya has generalized the idea of Indian according to their geography to defend their colonizers and narrates:

in charge of the men was an overseer who looked and spoke like the men, but who dressed in a shirt and trousers, and he had a hat on his head such as I had only seen Kenny wear before, a topee the color of

thatch. The others wore loincloths and turbans and a few wear shirts, but as they wore on the doffed their shirts, one by one, until all were as our men. The man worked well and quickly, with many a sidelong glance at us. (26)

The western dresses have makes great influence upon youngster. Rukmani and other villagers are witness of sudden change brought by tannery workers in term of uniformity. Kenny is very close to Rukmini; she is attracted by his dress code. Before these villagers celebrate their traditional dress code but western influence creates gap between old and younger generation in term of dress code. Here, Mrkandaya brings polar opposite of western and nonwestern to compare their way of wearing clothes. Rukmani feels worry about the encroachment of western dress in non-westerners which is threat for tradition.

Markandaya develops her protagonist as a character who advocates for preserving cultural heritage and tradition but she also crosses the limitation set by Indian tradition. She hides her relationship with Kenny a foreign doctor and gets five children with his help. It shows that Rukmani is somehow a modern woman of Indian village because she finds hiding relationship with Kenny from his husband is shame for her. Markandaya writes "... but could not say it: for at the beginning I had not wished my husband to know that I was putting myself in the hands of the foreigner, for I knew not what his reaction would be" (21). In these lines Rukmani hides her relationship with other man because she is afraid of her husband's reaction. So, Rukmani is in between where is take a bold decision like modern woman but in the same time she is conscious about her tradition.

The nature of the village and each developed rational analysis, there lurks a deeper truth- a truth that remains intractable to any logical reasoning. This

Transcendental view of experience dawns upon Nathan when he himself visits to Rukmani. In his presence, time comes to a stop, all questions and misgivings are suspended: all activities are petrified. Markandaya narrates:

For in the town there was the crowds, and streets battened down upon the earth, and the filth men had put upon it; and one walked with care for what might lie beneath one's feet or threaten from before and behind; and in this preoccupation forget to look at the sun or the stars, or even to observe they had changed their setting in the sky; and knew nothing of the passage of time save in dry frenzy, by looking at a clock. But for us, who lived by green, quite field . . . close though to the town, nature still gave its muted sound. (113)

Rukmani's the ancient spiritual emphasis on self-abnegation is reiterated. But as soon as Nathan moves away from holy presence, back into the banalities of humdrum existence, doubt and negation reasserts themselves, and vacuity grips of soul. A salient problem of modern Indian life has been the process of urbanization, its price - the pain and travail it brings in the wake of what too often turns out to be the mirage of a better life, the gradual loss of innocence and dignity, the slow but certain erosion of old values and decencies one had clung on the past.

It is amazing to know how Rukmani learnt acceptance from the Nathan and how both stubborn heads melted down into liberal individualism. The novelists further dramatize:

There would be meals to cook on the journey, however, since we were travelling by bullock cart and expected to be on the road at least two days, . . . Under the granary floor our money lay buried: three rupees of our own, three that Selvam had given us out of his earnings, and a ten

rupee note that Kenny had sent through Selvam. When everything was done I took out the money, counted it and tucked it in securely at my waist. Then we were ready. (139)

Markandaya's clash full setting demonstrates the evils of so called modernization through the declining psychological crisis of Nathan and the charismatic ensuring of faith and reasoning on the part of Rukmani. Rukmani and Nathan have come near only to exchange their words but also their heart in order to respect each other's attitude through communication. The confluence of divergent views creates a ground for the protagonists to come near to term with each other form a meaningful existence of life.

Belief in God, faith in ritualistic sensibilities and spiritual anchorage are the characteristics features of Oriental culture. A form of alternative modernity as advocated by Charles Tylor essentially assumes the essence these culture explanations and a cultural understanding along cannot fulfill the demands of modernity.

A thin girl with untidy hair came out; the baby we had  
 Heard crying at her hip, a small boy clinging to her sari; stood  
 Starting at us with a slight frown.  
 "Who is it? What do you want?"

No smile, no welcome. Perhaps she thinks we are beggars. (160)

Relaying on tradition, rituals is inherent into our psyche not because we implant it from an alien world but it is the way we are taught to behave what Pierre Bourdieu calls 'habitus'. Rituals can have an evocative dimension that permits the prayer to forward his wishes and desires towards the God.

The clash of values in Markandaya's novel occurs at several levels, but we most crucial encounter remains between the ideas inculcated by Indian cultural

traditions and the forces of progress unleashed by western science and technology.

Kunti's attitude towards life stands in sharp contrast to the Rukmani. But Kenny and Rukmani character may be the emblematic of Markandaya's vision of reconciling the two worlds. Markandaya silently seems to suggest that preserving outdated tradition is as futile as jumping on a wagon of technological advancement simply for the sake of change. Markandaya presents:

Every day for two months the line of bullock carts came in laden with bricks and stones and cement, sheets of tin and corrugated iron, coils of rope and hemp. The kilns in the neighboring villages were kept busy firing the bricks, but their output was insufficient, and the carts had to go farther afield, returning dusty and brick- filled. Day and night women twisted rope since they could sell as much as they made, and traders waxed prosperous selling their goods to the workman. (27)

Markandaya's novel illustrates an interesting aspect of the modern Indian enlightenment that has not only been a release of the feminine subjectivity but also achieved and imaginative self- sufficiency which paves a way to explore newness in practices. This newness endows her novel with certain representative character that makes them out as a significant entity in Indo-Angalican fiction. Rukmini's fundamental spiritual urgency and her moral scrupulosity need not to be either scarified or subordinated, but, only her attitude needs reorientation. This novel projects perception of the different and distinct forms of consciousness, which propel the individual's progress in the modern world.

Rukmani as an Indian mother is worried about her daughter. Within the change of time, Ira is married to a villager but she is also deceived by her own fate. Like her mother she couldn't offer a son to her husband. As she is forced

to return her maternal house. When she comes to Rukmani, she is taken to Kenny for treatment. Rukmani advocates for tradition but she crosses the boundary which is marked by Indian tradition. She hides reality of relationship between Kenny and her. She wants to be a mother that's why she visits Kenny and able to give birth to the baby which shows her thinking is not restricted in only tradition. She is modern women who dare to take bold steps or decision. Ira also crosses the boundary of tradition and sell her own body to feed her brother Kuti which shows her capability in taking decision. She wants to save the life of newly born baby. Both mother and daughter believe in tradition but somehow they try to settle themselves in modernity but fails. Changes in the face of modernity snatches their happiness, peace and property.

Rukmani is not shown as rebel for Indian tradition. She follows the norms and values which society is laid down. She never takes her husband's name. She says "my husband, whom I will call here Nathan for that, was his name, although in all the years I never called him that for it is not meeting for a woman to address her husband as husband" (4). Here the devotion of Rukmani to Nathan is very important because this relation is compared with the husband wife relation of Kenny. Rukmani wants her relation with Kenny to be secret. She wishes her husband not to know that she was putting herself in the hand of foreigners. She intends so because she is afraid of her society and Indian convention which does not allow her to keep the relationship with the other male especially with foreigner. Rukmani controls on her feelings because she valorizes Indian culture, norms, values and tradition.

The intruders in the face of tannery provide work for villagers but they also make villagers life difficult by increasing bazaar price. The trader's encroachment over maiden and land of the villagers because of these villagers are compelled to work in tannery. Markandaya further narrates that "there were some among the trades -

those who had put up their prices and made their money - who regretted their going. Not I. They had invaded our village with clatter and din, had taken from us the maiden where our children played, and had made the bazaar prices too high for us. I was not feeling sorry to see them go" (27).

Modernity which comes in village with establishment of tannery gradually makes a numerous change in culture, lifestyle, and clothing of the villager's. Kunti and Rukmani's son also works in tannery. Villagers earn money from tannery but after sometime their life becomes difficult. There is no work for unskillful man like Nathan.

Kunti and Arjun are planning to settle in small town. They dislike village in this time Kunti undermines villagers. She plans to be as a Kali and Janaki because they were already accompanied with colonizers. In this context, Kali also evokes Kunti to go to nearby tannery and desire of Kunti grows up. Kali and Janaki find regret but do not reveal their pain to other. So, Markandaya narrates that "If I was a village girl, Kali and Janaki were too, and had no taste for the intruders: but after a while Janaki confessed that at least she now knew what to do with sons, for the land could not take them all "(29). In this period Kunti does not find her children important. She lusts for luxury later on she wishes for her children.

In the village mostly the research find tolerance, co-operation and existence. For this they associate with different pet animals, In this novel, Markandaya includes different animals for association and connection with human and animal which has been regulating from tradition. Modernity always tries to focuses individual's and throws the collectivity. For this, Markandaya has brought the scenario of collectivity in the village and puts: "Day and night the tinning went on. A never-ending line of carts brought the raw materials in- thousands of skins, goat, calf, lizard and snake

skin- and took them away again tanned, dyed and finished" (47). The stuffs of tannery boost of their work they used to earn money but do not pay attention on their culture. They do not pay attention on their climate. They are declining their fundamentalism but Markandaya's has brought attention on their tradition with new change alternatively.

The life of old villagers on the street and temple once again begins. Cursing their own fate, Rukhmi and Nathan return to the temple on the hope of getting free meal but mistreated there. Other people who had been leaving there in the temple since before become jealous of them because their food is going to be divided. All of them start looking at them with antagonistic eyes. The compulsion to live in the hatred and isolation breeds distress to the city life and the longing to return to their country. Though, both of them wanted to return to their village but they didn't have required money. Rukmani remembers her by gone days and finds the cause of hazard in every step of life is money. She shows her anger to the materialistic world, " wide, wide world but as narrow as the coins in your hands like a tethered goat. So, far and no further, only money can make the rope stretch, only money" (166).

Rukmani and Nathan wishes to return to their village after earning eight annas and they try to convince Puli to come with them but on contrary Puli, asserts him to stay in city. Markandaya narrates that:

The boy stared the thought of leaving the city seemed to shock him. He shocked his head No! I do not want to go to your village.' It is much nicer than here . . . More peaceful, with green fields and open air and when the paddy is ripe- ah, such a sight as you have never seen. And what would I do there. (175)

Nathan will to return his village reflects his connectedness towards his land, culture and tradition which he lacks in city. Now, he is totally disillusioned. This bitter feeling aroused inside Nathan tells us how the poor villagers suffer in the city. In contrast to Nathan, Puli finds solace in city and rejects the offer of Nathan to settle with him in village. This shows a contrast between tradition and modernity in terms of belief.

Markandaya presents tannery as a symbol of modernism. Modernity brings lot of changes in culture, custom, rituals and lifestyle of the villagers. Kunti and Kali supports modernity and they advocate for luxurious lifestyle because they have not enough money to fulfill their desire whereas Rukmani argues in favor of tradition. Later in this novel she is compelled to visit city but her desire is to be return in village with some earnings which help her to save her land. Tannery brings social, cultural and economic changes in the village. "There was a great noise everywhere. Men, women and children from the tannery and the fields had come out, many of them in new clothes such as we too had donned, the girls and women with flowers in their hair and glass bangles at their...clashed round their ankles and studded belts around their waists"(55).

Markandaya brings the reflection of modernity in compare to village but it juxtaposes the clear sky of village. The jewels flash and very bright ornaments becomes white less in front of the riches of village. Village is the association of different institutions of tradition and presents the memory of childhood. The village from all round burn fires every system of society. So, Markandaya symbolizes the modernity with the words, "In the town and in the houses nearby hundreds of small beacons where beginning to flash: now and then rocket would tear into the sky, break and pour out its riches like precious jewels and to the darkness. As the night went on,

the crackle and spit of exploding fireworks increased” (54). The most popular seen are visualize in the city. There is diversity in the town change of visuals can be seen in the city. There is crackling and enormous sound to find the climax of the character in the society. In this situation light and dark contrast as town and village appear. These are dichotomy of each other but we should balance it.

Markandaya draws noise and crowdy state of people in the city; in this case this research connects Sardar's opinion to acknowledge the fundamentalism in one place because each life is confusing and puzzled in the city. This life is always full of pain and different contaminated thought. To answer the simple life Markandaya implicitly brings idea of tradition and says," Through the streets of the terrifying city, amid the unaccustomed traffic and crowds, screwing up our courage each time we asked our way, we went slowly alone "( 151). There are many turnings in the life. Almost turnings are dangerous. We cannot get certainty for each life. In this regard Markandaya talks about people courage to encounter each challenge.

Markandaya in the postcolonial era focuses the idea aroused in the change of all dimension of society with pace of time in each individual. She presents the economic, social, cultural dimensions of the society mostly to understand the prominent issue of the contemporary time. In this sense she weaves the idea and writes, “The tannery owners are buying the land. They pay good prices." The tannery! That word brought instant understanding. Realisation came like a rocket, swift and fiery. "They can't, I remember saying helplessly. It is our land; we have been thirty years" (130). The tannery is the symbol of economy in this base the culture can be moved in the centripetal and centrifugal perspective. In this time cultural, political and economic play triangular relation to get the flourished idea in these, among of these

absence of any one makes disable to move ahead. Time is dynamic but fixity of anyone sets the tradition into traditionalism rather than fundamentalism.

The novelist raises the concept of Depesh Chakarvartory to understand the real voice along with Sarder we can adopt the climatic pain with environmental degradation with slight beauty in the city. There is no natural beauty in absence of love and affection. Markandaya point outs greed, cruelty etc. in the city whereas affection in the village. She visualizes:

It is true, one gets used to anything. I had had got used to the noise and the smell of the tannery; they no longer affected me. I had seen the slow, clam beauty of our village wilt in the blast from town, and I graved no more; so now I accepted the future and Ira's lot in it, and thrust it from me; only some times when I was weak, or in sleep while my wish lay dormant, I found myself rebellious, protesting, rejecting, and no longer calm. (62)

Above narration reflects negation, rebellious sentiment, protesting attitude with grievances. This dramatically wraps unethical behavior of city life. In this contract with city there is contrast with village calm, slow and beauty of village as projected by Markandaya.

The frustration with family and attachment with new family gives energy to do business. The novelist presents the colonizers attraction towards Indian villages and girl. She narrates colonizers action with Selvem in this Indian Territory to find the real meaning of life. She puts "Kenny return was the beginning of another change in our lives, and in Selvam's. Selvem, who for all that he had been reared on the land and had the earth in his blood, yet did not take to farming. Like his brothers, he was hardworking and conscientious, but he had no love for it and in return it did not yield

to him"(109).Kenny returns with change of time in the same field. There are privileges of territory, craftsman and rules in the Indian geography to do job. Kenny starts business to give the facilities to the Indian in the western model but it is rejected by Rukmani. She finds this job to intervene in the Indian culture and environmental crisis. In this time, she understands about colonizers other mode of making a colony.

The novelist asks about the skill or knowledge about the Indian society. Markandaya gets this landlord and misrepresentation of Hindu ideology to get the reality of the society. The conflict between idealism and realism is expressed by Markandaya in another form. Black Selvem and his attendance with skill make him awarded. Markandaya presents,"Yet the effort must be made," said Nathan, "for we cannot live except by the land, for I have no other knowledge or skill; and as you say I am getting on and for me it would be impossible to find another landlord. Who indeed would rent his land to such as I am, past hard labor and uncertain of paying what I woe?"(133). There is skilled person however lack of guidelines people are dismissed through different other reasons. This current unsure meaning of memory misleads them towards the modernity. To conserve the rituals, tradition is out of their consciousness.

The novelist depicts the idea of mothering to the village and terror of a city because everything can be found in the village to fulfill the desire accepts the new life. In this time this research gets Markandaya's voice," I will stay," said Ira, whom we had supposed asleep, and she rose and came and knelt beside her father " I will not be a burden to you. I am happy enough here, people are used to me and to my son. I cannot start a new life" (135). The youth who are parent less are suffering different problems in this time we try to adopt our personality or symbol of status through deeds. The narrative gives an impulse to get brotherhood or fraternity in the society.

Most of the masters make their servant quarter in different place to take a rest. Rukmani finds pain during business time in the field. In this quarter every youngster has their own position to stand in this village. Rukmani's behavior is projected by Markandaya in this novel. She narrates, "I will take you to his wife. The servants godowns are at the back of the house." My son's wife, the girl we had never seen, my son, who had been gone so long. A queer excitement took hold of me, I felt myself trembling. Nathan beside me quickened his step: his excitement was a part of me too"(159). Nathan has also his quarter. Markandaya depicts a farmer life in feudal India. She approaches the social structure of village as well as city in this novel. She finds a clash between modernity and tradition, the encroachment of the city in the village, the relentless forward march of progress and materialism.

To conclude, the entire novel, *Nectar in a Sieve* is a journey of a peasant, Rukmani from the village to the urban and her return to her own native land. Though this journey, Markandaya reveals that industrialization and scientific development doesn't necessarily bring happiness and solace to the poor people like Rukmani and Nathan. It also connotes if the spirituality, morality, and family bondages are undermined, Indian people can never be happy. In short, Markandaya has successfully revealed the Indian villagers have not been benefited and happy from such modern achievements rather it has destroyed all the spiritual properties like spirituality, morality, familial affinity and unity. They will remain in the same condition till they won't germinate again the very ornaments of Indian culture.

This dissertation finds Rukmani desires to save tradition, heritage, and culture. She presents its importance and necessity for further generations. She inclines towards village though her will for better life draws to the city because the impulse of modernity visualizes in the tradition. The research finds that the western modernity

has influence over Indian culture, tradition and values. However, the character like Rukmani adopts modern trend of life with complete consciousness at her own socio-cultural background. Thus, she desire for modernity that includes Indian tradition, culture and values and studies its newness.

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