

## Chapter I

### A Brief Introduction: The Writer and Her works

This research entitled "Suspense as a Contaminating Element between Husband and Wife in Indian Family" probes into the problem of the family life due to the suspense which is a seed of contamination of their relationship. This problem of third world in general and India in particular has been vividly depicted by Kamala Markandaya in her novel, *A Silence of Desire*. Due to her vivid depiction of male-female relationship in her novels, she is successful in presenting the Indian cultures and ethos which is also the main contention of this research.

In *A Silence of Desire* we can find the male-female relationship harmonious at the beginning. But the problem arises when the male character, Dandekar sows the seed of suspicion in to his mind with regard to the issue of his wife's relation with another man. Slowly and gradually, the female character, Sarojini also becomes aware of male domination on female. Later when Sarojini becomes more conscious and Dandekar becomes over suspicious on her nature, their previous sound relation starts to be spoiled and continues until illusion is avoided from the mind of male character and the reality is realized. So in the novel, *A Silence of Desire*, Markandaya has been successful in depicting the burning issues of Indian family, especially the men-women relationship.

In her life time, Markandaya published ten novels all dealing with the themes of burning issues of Indian society like post colonial themes in modern India, themes of feminism, tradition and modernity, hybridity and negotiation and cultural encounter etc. She is the most famous for her novel *Nector in a Sieve* which was her third novel written, but the first novel published. *Nector in a Sieve* became a bestseller in March 1955,

earning her over \$100000 in prizes. Some of her other novels include *A Silence of Desire*, *Some Inner Fury*, *A Handful of Rice*, *Possession*, *The Coffer Dams*, *The Nowhere Man*, *Two Virgins*, *Pleasure City* and *The Golden Honeycomb*.

Through her novels, Markandaya brings to light the complication of post-colonial and traditional Indian social hierarchy as well as the implications prevalent within both systems. These themes are most noticeable in her novels, *A Silence of Desire*, where she addresses the issues of social classes of India and the controversies surrounding this social hierarchy. Kamala Markandaya in her novels also shows her keen interest to depict the relationship of man and woman. The traditional matrimonial bond between Rukmini and Nathan built up by foundation of trust, faith, and confidence and understanding. *Nector in a Sieve* represents an ideal and fulfilling man-woman relationship against the backdrop of life harrowing experiences.

Likewise, her another novel *A Handful of Rice* is very much and more conscious of the context, an urban one, which nevertheless suffers from a lack of solidity. Ravi, the central character, an educated peasant is seen with the coolest and most accurate eye and realized with a very considerable creative skill. This novel doesn't offer any easy solution or any obvious superiority of one side of a spiritual dilemma over the other. The novel ends flatly and hopelessly but rightly in a way which suggest the achievement by the author of a bleaker and more necessary kind of wisdom. Similarly, *Possession* (1963) is a theme in which the artist Valmiki is discovered and taken over by Lady Caroline Bell, a relationship which appears to offer itself as a tiny image of Indians being taken over by Britain. Neither Valmiki nor Lady Carline is irresistibly convincing. There is certain put-up slightly expected air about them. The novel's merit lies in the clarity and

point of the prose. It is an unusual metaphorical capacity and in a gift for the nice discrimination of human motives.

*The Coffer Dams* (1969) is about Indo-British relationships set against the background of the construction of Coffer Dams by a British engineering firm in a remote tribal area of South India. Helen's quest turns out to be both a class-struggle and a race-struggle which alienates her husband Clinton from her and endangers her own identity. Neither man nor woman has the personal freedom to cross the boundaries of community and race to establish communication with the underprivileged alien. The main theme of this novel is that if he or she assumes that freedom. There is either ostracization or complete alienation of the individual.

In *The Nowhere Man* Markandaya is more concerned with unfolding the sense of alienation of Srinivas, or the modern man. In this novel, political considerations occupy a secondary place, the primary purpose being to highlight the isolation of the individual soul and expose the pathos of the human condition. Markandaya succeeds in achieving the delicate balance between unfolding the individual's psychological and social predicaments and portraying a wider cultural and political setting which create these crises. This balance is the hallmark of her success as a novelist and it highlights her distinctive art in the choice of her themes and her skillful craftsmanship. Her *Some Inner Fury* presents Mira's conflict as she is divided between her ardent and genuine love for Richard, an Englishman, and the compelling political forces of Indo-British turmoil. These forces pull them apart and her mind once revealing in romantic love, returns to the harsh realities of life.

*A Silence of Desire* tells of a life journey of a loving, wealthy, middle class family living comfortably and enjoying many luxuries. However, things quickly worsen when Dandekar loses respect for his wife, Sarojini, after finding a mysterious picture of a strange man, whom he believes to be her secret lover. This story focuses on the strong bond of love and dedication between the family and the willingness they have to make things work between them. This novel, *A Silence of Desire* (1960) was widely acclaimed for its portrayal of the relationship of husband and wife, harmonious in the beginning and contaminated latterly due to the suspicious nature of male character, Dandekar and its success lies at revealing the secrecy hidden by Sarojini and feeling of guilt by Dandekar. In *A Silence of Desire*, the primary feminist role model is that wherein the suppressed and thwarted woman Sarojini still dares to question the status quo and in quite an obtrusive way, asserts her individuality. Here we find the woman poised between a compulsion to follow her individual faith and a sense of her domestic responsibilities.

*A Silence of Desire* exhibits the opposition between spiritual faith and rational beliefs. Sarojini's smooth relationship with Dandekar is under threat because she can't reveal to him that she was attempting faith healing from Swami. The opposition leads Sarojini to deception. She snatches the right to resort to whatever remedy she chooses. The prolonged sessions at the Swami's place leave the house unattended and Dandekar begins to suspect his wife of infidelity-the first thought that strikes any middle-aged middle-class Indian man. A wife wouldn't, and can't have any other interest or role, except in relation to a man. The confinement of a woman's sphere is deeply ingrained in Indian society and therefore difficult to alter although women like Sarojini dare to have

their way at the cost of domestic happiness. The complex question of personal freedom and the responsibility of each person to grant the other his/her freedom are thus presented. Dandekar learns that there are areas in which no human beings should trespass on another's freedom even if it is his wife's. The Indian woman needs the freedom to move beyond the sphere at home and family if she desires to, and there would be no constraint that she should bear the domestic burden solely on her shoulders. Sarojini persists in winning this freedom until Dandekar learns to give her the psychological space she has a right to.

*A Silence of Desire* deals with the relationship of husband and wife both of past and present. Hiding of reality of womb tumor by Sarojini and male chauvinistic ego which is rooted in the mind of Dandekar is taken as the evil force or responsible factor to contaminate the relationship of husband and wife. Even Sarojini's traditional nature of believing in Swami for the treatment of her womb tumor appears as the root cause to spoil or contaminate the relationship of husband and wife. Markandaya is successful to depict the condition of Indian family and the relationship of husband and wife in Indian family. The quality of her novels is her passionate portrayal of Indian ness and a sense of profound sympathy though she was never alienated from her Indian roots.

Markandaya helps her to identify Sarojini's and Dandekar's relationship as the relationship of husband and wife. Sarojini is traditional wife and even Dandekar also treats Sarojini in quite traditional way. He wants her to be devoted towards him in worshipping manner. She had to obey him from the very beginning. Even her traditional nature can be understood from her worshipping of Tulsi plant as to be created by God. And Dandekar takes it just as a plant.

Markandaya creates Sarojini as suffering from womb tumor. In the same superstitious way, she wants to treat her womb tumor and never meets the doctor in hospital but meets Swami, faith healer secretly without informing her husband Dandekar. She even doesn't inform Dandekar even if of her womb tumor. But the same secrecy of Sarojini turns out to be the root cause of the contamination of their former sound relationship.

On the other hand, *A Silence of Desire* narrates the story of a Swamiji around whom revolves the conflict of scientific reasoning and religious belief. Sarojini and Rajam are two women who finally pretend to acquiesce to their husband's clamoring that the Swami was a hoax. Suffering and sacrifice give credence to a woman's life and this is a global issue. The voices of female emancipation can hardly be heard in the inaccessible dungeons of a woman's fate, especially in the remote corners of rural India.

Markandaya is often grouped with the three stalwarts: Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao. She created with her limpid style, a distinctive place for herself in modern Indo-British fiction. The quality of her novel is her passionate portrayal of Indianness and a sense of profound sympathy though she was never alienated from her Indian roots.

Markandaya, perhaps the most outstanding Indian female novelist writing in English not only exhibits a conscious concern with the status and identity of Indian people but also she explores themes of cultural differences, identity, relation of tradition and modernity etc equally. Her characters are facing problems by their different cultural practices which lead them to keep the silence with each other.

From the date of publication of *A Silence of Desire* (1960), it has attracted most of the critical readings. So it has been reviewed in a number of ways. Most of the reviewers like N. Ramachandran Nair, Uma Banerjee, Anita Mahajan etc analyze the novel through the relationship between Dandekar and Sarojini whereas B. Sudipta, K. Madhavi Menon etc analyze the novel through feminist perspective.

Meera Bai finds the novel as an outcome of two different cultures which is reflected in the novel. She focuses on the experience of Kamala Markandaya having been filtered. She writes:

In the novel of Kamala Markandaya the encounter between the diametrically opposite East and West in the context of human relationships and cultural values constantly engages her attention and gets reflected in her novels. She herself being the product of both the oriental and occidental cultures, it is not far-fetching to see her own experience being filtered through the consciousness of her fictional characters. (10)

Bai finds that Kamala Markandaya's novels are an encounter between diametrically opposite East and West by various factors. Being an expatriate woman novelist, this is quite obvious that both kind of cultural practices could be found in her novels and her own experiences has also been expressed by means of her fictional characters.

Uma Banerjee finds Sarojini the unconvincing middle class wife. Because of her deep rooted traditional beliefs, it is so much within her that she doesn't want to take even the name of hospital for her womb tumor treatment. She believes in faith-healing and

Swami for her treatment, due to which she has to be bitten by her husband in cruel manner. Banerjee writes:

There are thousands of Sarojinis who automatically turn towards the Swami's religion and faith-healing because they have never known and will never know the miracle of a clean, competent hospital, stocked with all the necessary medicines and staffs. Thus the East West encounter is between the blindly dogmatically superstitious and the gradual flowering of real understanding and appreciation of values for their own sake. (249)

Looking back at the Indian society from the very past there was an influence of Eastern philosophy and its doctrine: Banerjee finds Swami, worshiping Tulsi etc. These are all parts of Eastern culture especially Hindu. Sarojini is portrayed as a true follower of tradition where she has never known and even doesn't want to know the miracle of hospital.

K. Madhavi Menon analyzes her novels in terms of 'the feminist echo'. She writes:

The Indian women needs the freedom to move beyond the sphere of home and family if she desires to, and there would be no constraints that she should bear the domestic burden solely on her shoulder. Sarojini persists in winning this freedom until Dandekar learns to give her the psychological space she has a right to. (230)

Menon presents the pathetic condition of Sarojini and many Sarojinis. They have done more attempts to win the trust of male and to get freedom in their family.

Menon tries to give feminist colour in her analysis. She revises her voice to give freedom to the women where they can feel for themselves and can come out from the family burden structured by the society. As a feminist novelist, in her view, she is strongly in favour of freedom for a woman. So while exploring upon the fictional characters of Kamala Markandaya's fiction, K. Madhavi Menon believes that females are not feminists in role but sufficiently presents the and attitude in the social milieu. She writes: "Deliberate fictional exploration of the feminist roles may not be present but in the presentation of the Indian women, Markandaya knowingly or unknowingly, presents the problems, attitudes and responses to social milieu." (231)

P. Geetha comments Kamala Markandaya as a feminist writer and says that Indian women need enough courage to raise the questions to respond to new development strategies in the Indian social policy. In her attitude Kamala Markandaya is much influenced by the feminist school of writings. P. Geetha writes:

Her novels are not of course not didactic in the narrow sense of pleading for specific reforms. But they illustrate the ambivalence of change in women and men. She is a conservative feminist, to a certain extent, and feminism is implicit in her novels.

Anyway, here Geetha tries to show both males' and females' strength and weaknesses but implicitly her support to female can be found in implicit level.

P. Geetha finds Kamala Markandaya essentially Indian in sensibility. Though she has changed the impact of the Indian culture, her female characters are in the archetypal patterns of Sati-Savitri, but they are in great protest of such sacrificial rule. For example she writes: "The early novels seem to present the wife in her customary role of Sati-

Savitri archetypal pattern. But underlying these sufferings sacrificial role, lurks the new women active with her emancipation cries.” (12)

Anyway, Markandaya reflects the condition of Indian women and how they are suffered from the male patriarchy either due to their superstitious cause or due to their religious belief. The main character Sarojini has been treated as animal from her husband. Dandekar caught her by the wrist and pulled her down and in that act of force he lost self control. Even he didn't fall back to charge her of infidelity as well as he takes her as a thrifty whore.

Poor Sarojini had to rest her faith in Swami due to her rooted culture of treating with faith healer. But the very thing becomes the cause of the contamination of the relationship with her husband because Dandekar couldn't understand the actual Sarojini as how was her heart. Even in the course of treatment, Sarojini gives valuable ornaments like bangle, astray to Swami where Dandekar is opposed to these all. Dandekar searches these things and visits Swami with a purpose to get these things back from him. Sarojini is not ready to visit hospital for her womb tumor treatment because still she believes in Swami's faith healing where as Dandekar believes that Swami is responsible for Sarojini's activities. Chari, his boss also helps him to escape from this situation. By making the Swami, leaving the place, he helps Dandekar to overcome the crisis. At last Swami leaves the city and Sarojini agrees to get admitted in the hospital. The novel ends with the transformation of Dandekar's mind from skeptic to a man feeling spiritually after Swami leaves the city.

With particular reference to Markandaya's novel *A Silence of Desire*, this research attempts to deal with the condition of almost all females in third world

countries. To show the marginalized condition of female, critical theory called feminism, especially third world feminism is applied in this research.

The second chapter deals with the theoretical tool which is feminism, especially third world feminism. In the third chapter an attempt is made to read Markandaya's *A silence of Desire* focusing on the issue of men-women relationship. Finally, the fourth chapter concludes the entire research.

## Chapter II

### Methodology: A Critical Introduction to Feminism

Feminism literally means the belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men; the struggle to achieve this aim is called feminism. Especially before analyzing third world feminism it would be better to analyze and deal with the western feminism. The condition of women in the very beginning was quite pathetic in all aspects of life. But with the passage of time we can find a little bit change in the female's position in the society. In the beginning women were taken only as commodity and with the passage of time, they started to search their position and female also started to appear in canon of literature.

The central concern of feminism is with the social distinction between men and women. It is also a practice to free all the social bondages of patriarchy. It is a commitment to eradicate the ideology of domination. A variety of hypothesis regarding women have been formed, the origins and causes of women's subordinations right through ages have never been definitely explained. Women are expected to serve men physically taking care of their surrounding, home and husband. Only the limited role has been given to the women and they are hegemonized to bear their roles. It is obvious that for long time, women have been consistently treated with ambivalence, misogyny and subordination. These constant themes in the naming of women by patriarchal societies may find different expressions and may vary in intensity effect but they occur again and again almost universally.

If we try to analyze the western feminism, we can find the condition of western females quite deplorable since long time. So feminist critics have taken the western

civilization as pervasively patriarchal, male centered, white, elite and male dominated due to which females are hegemonized and by supposing themselves inferior they cooperate with males in their own subordination. We can cite M. H. Abrams as in his "*A Glossary of Literary Terms*" writes:

It is from the Hebrew Bible and Greek Philosophic writings to the present, the female tends to be defined by negative reference to the male as an "other" or a kind of non-man. By her lack of identifying male organ of male powers and of the male character traits, they are marginalized in the patriarchy. (235)

From this we can get the information that women are taken negatively from the very beginning of human civilization or from the Greek time onwards. From the Greek time onwards and even on Bible also males are taken as "One" and females as "Other". So, they are always in margin.

Whatever is written in male-constructed anthology, literature and articles, feminism views that all these concept which discriminates females from males are cultural constructs. Due to their cultural construction, women themselves are hegemonized. So Simone De Beauvoir, in her *The Second Sex* mentions that women are taken as second sex. And male writers represent males as self and female other. Not only this but also male writers like D. H. Lawrence, Montherlant, Claudel, Breton and Stendhal take females as having emotional nature, dependent and so on. So, Beauvoir criticizes such the representation as only myth in her *Myth and Reality*. Males create only the myth about female but in reality they can't understand the female. (993-1000)

According to Beauvoir, the masculine in our culture has come to be described as active, dominating, adventurous, rational, and creative. The feminine, by systematic opposition to such traits has come to be identified as passive, acquiescent, timid, emotional and conventional.

Besides, Virginia Woolf, a pioneering figure in the development of feminism writes *A Room of One's Own*. In her work, she points out women are back warded all the time due to the lack of proper space. Women can't check their creativity due to the prevention and obstacles established by male. Her key argument is that women don't have money and room of their own. They don't have separate space for writing. So due to the lack of space and opportunities, they have been unable to establish their canon. According to her, libraries can be locked but freedom of women's mind can't be locked. Further Woolf writes:

Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation precisely as men would suffer: and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex. (822)

A part from these, feminist theory reached to the apex point with the sprouting of gynocriticism. Elaine Showalter appeared in the field of feminism with radical view. She

was so radical that her gynocriticism eschewed the inevitability of male modes and theories and seeks a female model.

According to her, gynocritics construct a female framework for the analysis of women's literature. They develop new models based on the study of female experience. Gynocriticism is related to feminist research in history, anthropology, psychology and sociology. In her *A Literature of Their Own*, she divides the three stages of woman writers: feminine phase, feminist phase and female phase. In first phase, women wrote literature in pseudonyms and they copied the ideas of male and in second phase they protested against male values and in third phase women rejected both imitations and protest those two forms of dependency. (1224-1232)

From the beginning of civilization, women were in miserable condition. Many women of the Victorian period also carried the motto of emancipation of women. Women were taken only as show pieces and they were not allowed to have their independent existence. Marriage was their prime concerns. If they had to contribute to their families' economy, they could do works which was only looked down upon. Women were treated no more than a mere commodity.

But as time passed by, women started to work in fields and in firms. Before the agricultural and industrial revolution, there was hardly any job which was not done by women, gradually their canvas of work increased and they started working also in mine factories, shops, markets as well as in workshops and in their homes. Though they are assisting to more extent to their husbands, they are still considered as subsidiary to men. Latterly, with the passage of time, a wave of self awareness among women now propped in. Women now claimed political freedom, the right to work as well as the right to

equality and freedom. The pioneer women writers of that time like Jane Austen, George Eliot, and the Bronte Sisters contributed a lot of the protest against the condition and status of women in society. (24)

If we try to deal with the historical sketch of feminism, we can find it in three divisions; the first wave, the second wave and the third wave. The first wave refers to women's suffrage movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The second wave refers to the ideas and actions associated with the women's liberation movement beginning in the 1960s, which raised the voice for legal and social equality for women. The third wave refers to a continuation of and reaction to, the perceived failures of second wave feminism beginning in the 1990s.

To evaluate women's condition briefly, women are expected to serve men physically taking cares of their homes , property, clothing or person; economically doing countless jobs of which women are ill-paid or not paid at all; sexually as wives, mistresses or prostitutes; and reproductively, assuming men of paternity through female chastity. Since women do all the works of society which men don't wish to do, men are free to spend their time on socially valued activities for which they receive all kinds of material and psychological rewards. The softer, weaker and more dependent the woman is, the stronger and more powerful the man appears; the more a servant the woman, the more the master the man. And the more the woman withdraws into home and gentility, the more the arenas of government and industry are left to the iron grasps of warrior and warrior values.

Hence, being dominated and subordinated from the very beginning feminists had to prove themselves as different from the myth and concepts created by males. Further,

major feminist concern is that the most important obstacle to a women's freedom was not her biology, or the political or the legal constraints placed upon her, or even her economic situation; rather it was the whole process by which femininity is manufactured in society. According to Beauvoir, it is not biology to determine who a woman is, it is civilization as a whole that produces discourse about woman. At the most basic level of human consciousness each individual seeks domination by asserting himself as subject and the other as object. In *The Second Sex*, De Beauvoir argues that freedom and responsibility could be achieved by women that are historically denied to them. Beauvoir forwards her view; women are defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her.

Women's subordination was no longer based on physical necessity; the only thing preventing women from seeing themselves as subject in their own right was the artificial idea of womanhood engendered by society which still saw women as secondary object, acquiring meaning only in relation to men. If women were to be free, they must therefore be freed from this prevailing idea, and persuaded to take responsibility for their own lives rather than accepting the security of dependencies or the bad faith represented by conformity to the feminine idea. The aim of Beauvoir was therefore to reveal the artificial nature of womanhood. Beauvoir argued that women could lead independent rationality ordered and autonomous lives once they were freed from artificiality restricting myths and cultural assumption. She, here implies that only by denying her femaleness that women can achieve humanity, and devalues traditionally female qualities such as nurturing. Beauvoir in her *Women and the Other* writes:

Humanity is male and man defines woman not in her self but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being.... Man can think of himself without woman. She can't think of herself without man. And she is simply what man decrees; thus she is called "the sex", by which is meant that she appears essentially to the male as a sexual being. For him, she is sex-absolute sex no less. She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is an absolute-she is the other. (282)

Hence, female is taken here as parasite in the representation of male. Female are treated as second grade citizen without their own status and only subordinated to male.

Besides, Sandra M Gilbert and Susan Gubar, in their work *The Mad Women in the Attic* try to avoid the literary stereotypes of women. The male tendency of creating images about women is deconstructed by them. Almost all literature present male as subject and usurp the power position but women are depicted powerless creature. Females are represented as powerless object and given no prestigious position. They are shown in literature as they are to be suitable to the male ideology. In this way, the masculine in our culture has come to be identified as active, dominating, adventurous, rational, creative, whereas the feminine by systematic opposition to such traits, has come to be identified as passive, emotional, timid and conventional.

Gilbert and Gubar are of the opinion that the true self of women has never got space in literary domain. Images such as "angle and monster" always thwart female creativity; and women are represented negatively in art and literature before they can

write themselves. They express their anxiety; "the images of angle and monster" have been represented into art before women can write. They express their anxiety, "the images of angle and monster" have been so common throughout literature by men that they have been represented as the object which can be nominated by men. Throughout most male literature, a woman is portrayed as "a sweet heroine" inside the house and "a vicious bitch" outside. (1234-1244)

Hence, the condition of western women was also pitiful and deplorable though towards the later phase emancipation of women was established only as the motto for reformation of women's condition. Not only in western countries, the females' condition of third world country is rather deplorable. Females of third world country even are not only taken as commodity but their natural occurrences are also not accepted normally even their serious and painful period is taken as untouchable period. And there are many obstacles to female on each and every path of their life. Not only this, pitiful condition of women can be found in the dowry system. There is no value of women, they are evaluated on the basis of measurement of dowry provided in their wedding. And further in Indian society even if there is insufficient dowry given to female, they are burned alive. So the being and spirit of female is not measured properly in third world country. They are treated only as inanimate things.

In the context of third world country, Sue Ellen M Charlton says that decision makers were male like the colonial administration. All had to obey the male governed and male dominated society and custom. But further he says:

"recent research on women in third world countries points to a number of factors that determine the quantity and the quality of changes the women

experience in the course of development. Four of these factors are especially significant; traditional cultural norms, the productive roles of women, political values and structures and the position of the country in the international situation." (24)

Similarly, according to Charlton, social dichotomy is created between male and female. The notion of dichotomy between the domestic and private sphere and the public sphere has drawn increasing attention as an analytic focus for expressing the near universal gap between the political influence of men and women. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, for example mentions that women's status is the lowest when the domestic and public sphere of activities are strongly differentiated and when women are isolated from each other and placed under the authority of a single man in the home. Their status is higher when they can develop social ties or taken men's roles or when the public and domestic domains are weakly differentiated. The public and the private distinction must be linked to an explanation of its origins in the growth of the state and in the ability of women to distribute resources. The dichotomy and incumbent subordination of women can be traced to female reproductive activities, social as well as biological (25).

As the condition of women of every nation, the condition of women in Nicaragua also can be found as the same. In Nicaraguan society being guided from the machismo culture, males beat their wives or female to show their bravery. As well as showing the negligence on the heart of female, they are free in beating their wives. Simultaneously, fathering children in multiple households, abandoning wife and children, gambling away hard earned money, and drinking to excess can be found as a tendency in Nicaraguan male. All the result of males' all these behaviour is imposed on female in negative way.

They have to face any kind of difficulties and obstacles established by males in a silent manner. Then, further female is taken as an object and male as subject. A binary is created between them. The subject is always supposed as the matter of honour and object is always supposed as the matter of shame. So the condition of Nicaraguan women is also pitiable (Rogar Lancaster 41).

In the context of third world feminism, we can raise the issue of Bengali women also which can be found in the history of bourgeois domesticity in colonial Bengal. It was not surprising fact that ideas relating to bourgeois domesticity, privacy and individuality came to India via British rule. As Dipesh Chakrabarti says, values and norms of Victorian period were attempted to be imposed on the Indian women also. Chakrabarti, in his "Post Coloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for Indian Pasts?" refers the lines of James Mill's *The History of British India*:

The condition of women is one of the most remarkable circumstances in the manners of nations.... The history of uncultivated nations uniform represents the women as in a state of abject slavery, from which they slowly emerge as civilization advances.... As society refines upon its enjoyments...the condition of weaker sex is gradually improved till they associate on equal terms with the men and occupy the place of voluntary and useful coadjutors. A state of dependence more strict and humiliating than that which is ordained for the weaker sex among the Hindus can't be easily conceived. (460)

Hence, Chakrabarti has shown the condition of female which is going to be improved with the passage of time, though all their pitiable and abject condition could not be seen as easily changing at once.

In all time periods, the condition of women can be found pathetic. If we analyze the context of civil rights, women are not given the equal rights as of males in bodily integrity and autonomy; to cast the vote; to hold public office; to work to fair wages or equal pay; to own property; to education etc. Besides, in context of language also, gender neutral language uses are aimed to minimize assumptions regarding the biological sex of human referents. But it has been impossible to find in existence. Similarly, in the field of religion also, women are dominated too much. Same dominance can be found there in Christian marriage, and claims of moral deficiency and inferiority of abilities of women compare to men. So, women domination and subordination can not be thrown by root since it has been the custom of the third world countries.

At one time in third world especially in India, there were equal rights between men and women and even feminist law-makers like Gargi and Maitreyi. But latterly, Vedic period polarized the sexes. Males oppressed females and treated them as other or similar to lower cast. Today, patriarchy is just one of the hierarchies which keep females down oppressed by the tradition system. The predicament of Indian female can be found vividly in context of marriage also. In India love marriages are restricted and only arranged marriages are preferred. In arranged marriage if more dowries lacks there, even male dominated society doesn't fallback to burn the female alive. If a daughter stays unmarried, she is seen as a spinster even in her late twenties and becomes burden to her

parents too. If she is married, she is taken as the personal property of her husband and in-laws.

C. T. Mahanty is a strong advocate of transformative, economically and socially just feminist politics. She defines herself as an anti-racist, anti-capitalist feminist. Her feminist vision is one of a truly free world where every person can enjoy true equality, security and integrity, where there is economic stability, ecological sustainability, racial equality and the redistribution of wealth..." (3). She says:

Here is a bare-bones description of my own feminist vision: this is the vision of the world that pro-sex and woman, a world where women and men are free to live creative lives insecurity and with bodily health and integrity, where they are free to choose whom they love, and whom they set up house with, and whether they want to have or not have children; a world where pleasure rather than just duty and drudgery determine our choices, where free and imaginative exploration of the mind is a fundamental right: a vision in which economic stability, ecological sustainability, racial equality and the redistribution of wealth from the material basis of people's well being. (3)

In *Decolonizing Feminism*, Mohanty uses several examples of western feminist works that are characterized by reductionism. It is not possible to understand women's oppressions in simple terms or using neither a universal yardstick, nor it is objective to even use universal frameworks and ideologies to study and make generalization about women's oppression. "There is, it should be evident, no universal patriarchal framework

that scholarship attends to counter and resist unless one posits an international male conspiracy or a monolithic, a historical power structure” (20).

Actually, the premise that all women around the world are oppressed and victimized by men is a narrowly defined ethnocentric assumption that only exacerbate, divides, highlights borders and reiterates western imperialism. The assumption of women as an already constituted, coherent group with identical interests and desires, regardless of class, ethnic or racial location or contradictions, implies a notion of gender or sexual differences or even patriarchy that can be applied universally and cross-culturally. She writes:

The first analytic presupposition I focus on is involved in the strategic location of the category “women” vis-a-vis the context of analysis. The assumption of women as an already constituted, coherent group with identical interests and desires, regardless of class, ethnic or racial location, or contradictions, implies a notion of gender or several difference of even patriarchy that can be applied universally and cross-culturally. (21)

Hence, like the condition of female in every nation, the Indian women are not exception to it. Indian women also have to be victim in the hand of patriarchy, which can be depicted vividly in Markandaya’s novel. Men always want to limit women as commodity and they think that women are only for the utility of males. Such is the condition of Sarojini in Markandaya’s *A Silence of Desire*.

Other females in real life have to be limited only as the commodity of male and as male suspects their female even if the female spears with other women openly even

the nations of our third world. Such is the pathetic life and condition of Sarojini. She also has to be puppet in the hand of patriarchy or of her husband. Her husband is suspicious on her behaviour since he comes to know the Sarojini's continuous visit with Swami. And he himself contaminates the relationship between them until the reality is disclosed to him. Hence, Sarojini is also suffering in the patriarchal society.

Finally, as mentioned above, one of the ways of male domination on the basis of male domination is based on male suspicion on female due to her regular visit to Swami by devoting and paying homage on superstitions and faith-healing will be analyzed in detail in the textual analysis in the third chapter.

### Chapter III

#### **Textual Analysis: Suspense as a Contaminating Element between Husband and Wife in Indian Family in *A Silence of Desire***

Suspense universally stands as the contaminating element in every relation of human beings. More than that suspense can be taken as a root cause to contaminate the pure and secret relationship of husband and wife. Though one is happy in the beginning with other, after the plantation of the seed of suspense, he or she can't be happy with other and the only result of that is the contamination of their relation until and unless the curtain of suspicion is opened and avoided.

Therefore, Kamala Markandaya has also constructed the very nice and suitable elements in this novel that is very worthy to spoil the family relationship of husband and wife, which was very nice in the beginning. Markandaya is able to explore the relationship of husband and wife. Though Dandekar seems responsible to contaminate the relationship by doubting his wife, Sarojini and abusing her of infidelity, it is not so in reality. Because Dandekar does all this due to the social construction which opposes every activities of female which they do themselves. In *A Silence of Desire*, deliberate fictional exploration of the feminist roles may not be present but in the presentation of the Indian women, Markandaya knowingly or unknowingly presents her problems, attitudes and responses to social milieu.

Several factors and compromises make the relationship. Or life is full of compromises. If one is able to compromise with other, s/he can adjust easily in society and in family. Both the husband and wife should have nice understanding. Then only their family life moves smoothly. And if one of the partners is unable to compromise,

then the relationship fails. In reality some individuals are able than others to adjust in family by making compromise. In *A silence of Desire*, we find both husband and wife in harmonious relationship in the beginning but latterly due to the suspense of Dandekar; their relationship is contaminated due to the storm in their relation. Their relation is spoiled until and unless Dandekar starts to rest faith on Sarojini and Sarojini also unfolds the reality in clear-cut way. After that their relationship again started to be purified.

In the novel, we find the woman poised between a compulsion to follow her individual faith and a sense of her domestic responsibilities. Does Sarojini's spiritual faith become a poser to the limit of her own freedom? Can she neglect loyalty and duty to home and her husband because she needs faith healing from a Swami? *A silence of Desire* exhibits the opposition between spiritual faith and traditional beliefs. Sarojini's smooth relationship with Dandekar is under threat because she can't reveal to him that she was attempting faith healing from a Swami. The opposition leads Sarojini to deception. She snatches the right to resort to whatever remedy she chooses.

The prolonged session at the Swami's place leave the house unattended and Dandekar begins to suspect his wife of infidelity-the first thought that strikes any middle aged middle class Indian man. A wife wouldn't, and can't have any other interest or role, except in relation to a man. The confinement of a women's sphere is deeply ingrained in Indian society and therefore difficult to alter although women like Sarojini dare to have their way at the cost of domestic happiness. The complex question of personal freedom and the responsibility of each person to grant the other his/her freedom is thus presented. Dandekar learns that there are areas in which no human being should trespass on another's freedom to move beyond the sphere of home and family if she desires to, and

there would be no constraint that she should bear the domestic burden solely on her shoulders. Sarojini persists in winning this freedom until Dandekar learns to give her the psychological space she has a right to.

In *A Silence of Desire*, Kamala Markandaya examines, in terms of suspicion on issue of mutual concern, the threat to the conjugal bliss of Sarojini and Dandekar. The relationship between these two has been harmonious for fifteen years. In spite of their long journey, some factors bring the conflict such as faith and reason, superstition and science, religion and materialism and the root cause of conflict is suspicion and reality. And one wants to be modern and wants to dominate the traditional one. One is devoted to religion and another is devoted to modernism.

It was a small evergreen plant, crammed into bright and decorative brass in which it languished, surviving without health, but with a sharp imperious smell that made you forget its looks—a smell that clung to your hands until you had washed and scrubbed out even after, and could haunt you if you didn't pray. Dandekar didn't pray to it, he was always careful to say; it was a plant; one didn't worship plants: but it was a symbol of God, whom one worshipped, and it was necessary that God should have symbols. Since no man had the power or temerity to visualize him. (10)

The main point to bring the difference in the characters of Dandekar and Sarojini is their attitudes and beliefs. Dandekar is a man of progressive ideas, and he has no faith as Sarojini has. She worships the Tulsi plant considering it as God and tends it with due reverence. The idea of worshipping a mere plant as a God doesn't appeal to Dandekar's mind who, while conceding it as a symbol of God, refuses to pray to it.

In the beginning, despite their different ideological stands Dandekar and Sarojini are perfectly happy with each other. Dandekar considers himself lucky to have a wife like Sarojini, she is a good wife, mother and housekeeper:

She was a good wife, Sarojini good with the children and excellent cook, an efficient manager of his household, a woman who still gave him pleasures after fifteen years of marriage, less from the warmth of her response than from her unflinching acquiescence to his demands. He was lucky there, he knew from guarded, half revelatory conversation with his colleagues. Other men's wives thought of the working day ahead, or of the possibility of at another baby, feigned sleep, pleaded malady, practiced one or another of those little coldnesses which emasculated a man as effectively as any more ruthless method. Sarojini came to him when he wanted her, placidly; but since she had never done otherwise he didn't miss the passion. She did most things placidly, he thought with affection; and from this calm proceeded the routine and the regularity that met the neat and orderly needs of his nature. (7)

Their family is happy in the beginning until the plantation of suspicion. But, later on, unexpectedly an external stress enters, and the orderly pattern of the relationship is disturbed. Breaches in their well built edifice of domestic harmony begin to appear in the form of belated arrivals of Sarojini in the evenings. For instance, once when Dandekar reached home a little earlier after his usual month end purchase of presents for the family, his wife was not there. But “he stood in the courtyard, wondering where she could be and telling himself, reasonably, that a housewife was not physically chained to

the house, yet feeling somehow a little adrift" (16). On being asked she takes recourse to lies to hide the real purpose and destination of her outing. Dandekar in the beginning doesn't suspect her. However, Rajam, his cousin reveals that she hadn't visited Sarojini. Here the seeds of doubt are shown:

Why had Sarojini lied? Had she? Was she playing some matrimonial game? Was it conceivable, feasible, that she might? No he said stoutly. It was all the poppycock office talk that had done the damage. But he had begun to be troubled before all that poppycock talk otherwise it would have flowed having lessly over him leaving him careless and buoyant instead of half-drowned as now. (18)

Sarojini's regular absences increase his doubts. His mental equilibrium is jolted when he finds the photograph of an unknown person cherished and worshipped by Sarojini. So, his suspicions are conformed and conflict arises to the extreme point: and even he didn't think her as animate thing:

"he caught her by the wrist and pulled her down, and in the act of force he lost self control" he cried shaking her furiously so that's what you went out for. Not for anything else...No, oh no. Just for a little fruit like a dutiful house wife. Like a loving wife. Like a thrifty whore- a- ." (70)

Dandekar pinches Sarojini much and more. Her belief on faith healing was rooted on her from the time of her womb to which neither she can throw or cut from her mind nor she can unfold her belief with her so called modern husband. Being sufferer, she had to hide the reality to her husband even not to be insulted by him. But on the contrary, Dandekar doubts on his wife's purity and he observes her behaviour silently where she

also fears because of his different attitudes, about these all, and the suspicion done by him on her turns out to be wrong later on.

In this novel, the condition of women has been shown pitiable and deplorable. How conservative way is shown in context of female. Not only Sarojini, but also her cousin sister Rajam also expresses her absolute faith in the Swami's power to cure diseases. On being asked by Dandekar whether the Swami is fake or true, she tells him that the Swami has cured the pain in her stomach which the doctors had dismissed as her phobia. Entrenched as Rajam, is in her beliefs, she advises Dandekar to believe in the Swami's powers if things don't happen to be as he might desire. But here also suspense lies on her. She doubts if he can have faith in these things due to his contact with European. Both Sarojini and Rajam still belong to that generation which has so much faith in rituals for cursing all kinds of diseases.

Hence, here women have been presented in quite conservative manner and males want to be superior and modern. He suspects each and every activities of woman and wants to limit her only within him. But women also doubt that if she unfolds the reality in front of him, he will not accept her belief and attitude. So on the one hand, male suspects and on the other hand, female suspects each other but both of them are hesitated to unfold the reality. Hence due the very suspense of both, their relationship can be found as contaminated until and unless the reality is disclosed.

Dandekar wants Sarojini to move according to his own wish. He likes her not to go to meet faith healer. So, he is not ready to put her in the hands of a faith healer. Like Sastri, his colleague, Dandekar is of the opinion that his wife must go to hospital and get herself operated. Sarojini is opposed to the operation fearing that like her mother and

grandmother, she might also die due to it. “I can’t ! I tell you I can’t”. Dandekar realized he was shouting, forced himself to be calmer. “You-You don’t understand. Her mother and her grandmother both-both died of the same thing, in hospital after operation” (96). Dandekar doesn’t want to reason things out with her fearing that she may lose her faith in the Swami, nor does he want to compel her to go to hospital, for her cure is not guaranteed. This explains Dandekar’s ambivalence who is caught between two ideas. One is scientific and the other is traditional. Even Sastri, who is so vociferous in his opposition to faith-cure, doesn’t want to express openly his disbelief in the swami’s powers because:

Healing by faith, the performance of the impossible, the revelation of the divine, Mystery and beatitude-all these coursed in his blood were a part of his inheritance from a country that looked inwards in its quest for light. He couldn't deny it, and he didn't wish to; yet he felt quite clearly, though loath to clothe it in words even to himself, that he didn't want to be involved. (113)

In fact, all these things are part of the culture he has inherited and, as such, doesn't defy them. So he persuades Dandekar to confirm his wife's disease from the hospital and also the Swami's genuineness from others.

Sarojini is so devoted towards the faith healing of Swami that she gives invaluable things and ornaments to Swami where Dandekar is opposed with these all and wants these back again from Swami, he visits Swami to get invaluable things. Distracted by his powerlessness, Dandekar visits tart's quarters. He squanders money and becomes indifferent to his job. By these factors domestic peace and marital bliss has ever been

burning in Dandekar and Sarojini in silent ways. Sarojini is not ready to go to hospital and still she believes in Swami's faith healing where as Dandekar believes that Swami is responsible for Sarojini's disagreement of visiting the hospital. Chari, his boss is a very humane person. By making the Swami leave the place, he helps Dandekar to overcome the crisis. Swami leaves the city and Sarojini agrees to admit in hospital. "I know" she answered; he said I would be, and not to hold back when the time came. I am not afraid now of knives or doctors, of what they may do. I will be well. He said so." (218)

Although the Swami is not able to cure the growth in Sarojini's womb, he is successful in preparing her mentally to undergo the operation and assuring her its success: Silence has been rejected by heart and mind by Sarojini and Dandekar at the end of the novel. In spite of various reasons, they agree to come with each other's ideals. Sarojini is ready to visit hospital as wanted by Dandekar where as the power of faith is also quite apparent in the transformation of Dandekar from skeptic man to a man feeling spiritually elevated.

In the centre of the courtyard where he had seen them worship it stood a Tulasi tree, neglected its leaves shriveled from lack of water, the soil dry and crumbling in the brass. He turned from the Tulasi to the faces of the people he passed, and with a shock, thought he recognized there the same disintegration. (221)

In the earlier part of *A Silence of Desire*, the solid foundation of the matrimonial relationship depends upon the emotional feedback and physical attention Sarojini provides to Dandekar rather than sharing each other's ideal and beliefs so from the very beginning the bond between Sarojini and Dandekar suffers from some limitations.

Dandekar is a typical middle class husband, whose expectations remain the same for ever. For Sarojini, her role as a wife has become a routine, a reflex:

For instance, now that she had heard his step in the courtyard, she would be putting the potatoes into fry. The agreeable his would last until she had washed and changed, and by then she would be ready for him. And so would be the evening meal. (47)

Sarojini and Dandekar behave each other in strange way. Actually they don't discuss intimate aspects of the man woman relationship and share their reality to each other. Dandekar usually repeats the office conversation to her except those which deal with sex. He cares for her but shows a fleeting interest in her ideas, attitudes and thoughts. In the evening he settles down in his easy chair in the courtyard and Sarojini joins him for their evening chit-chat. He exploits the moments of togetherness, mainly for the narration of his deeds during the day: "Had a nice day?" This was perfunctory: he was not really interested in Sarojini's day, and he was always grateful to her for keeping her account of it brief" (28). Dandekar only dares to detail even this part of the office gossip. But his wife's interruption startles him, he feels restless. He can't digest any intelligent point raised by Sarojini as it makes him feel unsure of himself. When he expresses his opinion about the behaviour of a young girl, she makes detailed queries which are disquieting for him. She agrees but he remains tense:

He knows he ought to be satisfied, but somehow her words chilled him.

He didn't take up the matter again but turned to other things, hoping to recapture peace, but as the evening progressed he found usually, that he had very little to say. He felt slightly cramped, mentally, and he now

realized physically as well; then he recalled the reason for his self imposed martyrdom and got up stiffly, gingerly placing his weight on each leg alternatively. (29-30)

In fact, for a conjugal life; believes, trust and confidence are major. When the protagonists of the novel, Dandekar and Sarojini realize to unfold the problems, and cause of disbelief and mistrust disappear and the bliss of conjugal life starts again. But in the beginning, the Sarojini Dandekar bond woefully lacks this essential prerequisite. Sarojini's ideas which are based on superstition are in sharp contrast with Dandekar's modern and developed ideas which are based on western thinking. Sarojini's ideas are always dominated by the ideas of Dandekar. So, on the one hand, she can't forsake her own rooted ideas and on the other hand, due to the adoption of the same ideas, she can't unfold the reality with her husband. And the very secrecy becomes the plantation of seed of suspense in the mind of Dandekar. She has the photograph of Swami, but she hides it in the folds of an old exercise book of her daughter. Once by chance, Dandekar finds it in the fold of an old exercise book of daughter and the seed of suspense sprouted in his mind. On the one hand, he is offset. He is trapped between absolute faith and denouncing betrayal. He can't muster courage to ask her about the identity of this man. Now they can't have there usual evening conversation with ease and pleasure like:

The rest of the evening he spent passing between violent trust and extreme mistrust. It gave an uneven edge to the conversation, their relationship, which tired not only him but, he could see, also Sarojini. Nevertheless, doggedly, he stayed up until the usual him, intending while he hung on somehow to question her tactfully about the photograph. It

had to be tactful: the blunt question was beyond him; it stuck in his throat, and he had by now acknowledged that he couldn't get it out. It might hurt her, he tried to fool himself, but he knew it was a lack of courage. (46)

In a family only the physical nearness of members doesn't signify their intimacy. In the relationship however the element of belief and respect is much more important. In this novel sound relationship can't be found even in husband and wife. It seems quite strange that Sarojini hides from her husband even about her womb tumor. Dandekar's suspension on Sarojini and use of word like 'whore' are some of the examples of misunderstanding and disbelief between the spouses. It is already very late when he discerns the truth, and by that time doubts and suspicions have already robbed him of his mental peace, "she never refused him unless she had some reason, and turning it over in his mind he could think of none. He might have been mortified but was too bewildered. After all these years was he to suffer as certain of his colleagues did?" (48-49)

How the relationship of husband and wife sustains if one is scared of another all the time. To establish the smooth relationship between two, there should be the free and frank behaviour and heart to heart relationship between two. But on the contrary, we find quite opposite relationship between them. One hides his/her problem with another and each makes the suspense unnecessarily and doesn't ask about the reality and doesn't try to understand the heart of each other. So there lies the rift in their relationship. To be honest, it is the inability to communicate with each other that complicates Sarojini-Dandekar's relationship. Sarojini is scared of loosing his faith once Dandekar knows the reality. Again, she is scared after she discloses because of Dandekar's attitude and thinking and can force her to forget Swami's treatment and to have her checked up with a

doctor. So she doesn't unfold the reality in the beginning and wants to evade the issue by telling lies. Fear and the action of hiding the truth leads to disillusionment and bitterness in intimate relationship. Sarojini's and Dandekar's secret activities, lies and deceptive manners lead them to contaminate their relationship.

Suspicion is taken as the strong element to contaminate the relationship of husband and wife. Until and unless the plant of suspicion and secrecy is thrown from the root, the relationship between husband and wife can't be smooth and sound. Only towards later phase the relationship of husband and wife has been sound only after disclosing the reality and Swami's departure from there. They start to share their ideas, and the reality with each other. Poor Sarojini being obliged due to the suspense of her husband on her unfolds the reality and her problem with him as why she visits Swami secretly:

you can call it healing by faith by the grace of God, if you understand what that means. But I don't expect you to understand you with your western notions, your superior talk of ignorance and superstition. When all it means is that you don't know what lies beyond reason and you prefer not to find out to you the Tulsi is a plant that grows in earth like the rest-an ordinary common plant and mine is a disease to be cured and so you would have sat her to hospital and I would have died there. (87-88)

*A Silence of Desire* revolves round the issue of suspicion and secrecy made by Dandekar and Sarojini, husband and wife due to which their relationship is contaminated and their problem is resolved when they unfold the reality with each other. So, the central concern of Kamala Markandaya in the novel is to explore the results of suspicion

and secrecy while dealing in own style and neglecting other though they live in same family and are very near physically.

It is obvious that the main cause of suspicion in *A Silence of Desire* is due to the male dominated society and patriarchal construction of the society where there is no right of secrecy to female. Here suspicion is spreaded because by breaking the norm of patriarchy, Sarojini searches for her right of secrecy and puts things secret or she doesn't like to unfold her secrecy with other or even with her husband. So, there appears the contamination in the relationship of the protagonists. Until and unless they stop their nature of suspecting and keeping the thing secret, they can do nothing except the spoiling and contaminating of their relationship until and unless they unfold the secrecy and cut the plants of suspension from the root. There is contamination in their relationship due to superstitious and traditional belief and attitude and on the other hand due to the patriarchal construction of society in third world country where female even can't keep the things secret.

The main element of conflict between them is suspicion. The conflict arises due to the suspicion and secrecy which is maintained by the protagonists. But only in the later phase, when they start to believe each other and unfold the reality, the suspense is avoided. Only when the suspense is avoided, again their relationship is maintained nicely. In this novel the main responsibility goes to Dandekar because he can establish as well as destruct their relationship whenever he likes. Due to the status of women in the third world society, where they live and the actual behaviour of Sarojini seems vice versa due to which Dandekar doubts in each and every activities of Sarojini. Though in the later phase there seems the establishment of their relation, due to the patriarchal

construction of the society to hate female on the basis of their conservative notion, we can see much and more possibility to be the contamination due to the presence of suspense on protagonist's heart of their filtered relationship again. So, how the suspense plays the important role to contaminate the family relationship has been portrayed vividly by Kamala Markandaya in her novel, *A Silence of Desire*.

## Chapter IV

### Conclusion

The suspense and the contamination in the relationship of characters can be found vividly in the novel of Kamala Markandaya, *A Silence of Desire*. In fact Markandaya is very much familiar with the condition of females in India. Females in India are suppressed and dominated by patriarchy. Being an Indian woman herself, she may have written about the condition of female on the basis of her own experience being suppressed and being victim in the hand of patriarchy.

After the detailed analysis and discussion of Markandaya's novel *A Silence of Desire* (1960), it is found that the problem faced by the protagonists in family life is due to the suspense in their relationship. The protagonist of this novel, Sarojini, a typical traditional Indian wife, worships Tulasi as a God. And due to her own traditional notion, she has to be dominated by her husband, Dandekar. On the other hand, she is too much dominated and suspected by her husband because she is in contact of Swami, a faith healer. She, being rooted with tradition, doesn't forget to worship Swami and believe on the faith healing of Swami. After that she wants to visit Swami times and again with a view to getting her recovery from womb tumor. Visiting Swami for womb treatment by Sarojini and his continual effort to stop to visit Swami and force her to visit the hospital are indications of different cultural practices by the spouses. Due to the construction of male patriarchy to dominate women and restrict them within four walls of house and no permission to make their self decision in their personal affairs even in her treatment, it leads the condition of characters towards conflict. It is obvious that though Sarojini is conservative and quite traditional in her notion of treatment, it is believed that almost all

diseases can be lessened due to the psychological impact on the characters. So, Sarojini also may be getting such kind of treatment but her reality and agony of heart is never understood by her husband. He only tries to impose his ideology on her.

The male female relationship is contaminated due to the suspense done by male protagonist. However, fictional resolution can be found towards the end of novel. Both characters suffer due to their secrecy and suspense. Female wants to keep things secret from her husband and as a result of that secrecy, male starts to plant the seed of suspense in his mind. And later on their relationship is contaminated. Though ultimately we can find the resolution of their contaminated relationship as being integrated, there is no fixity whether their smooth relationship will be durable or again spoiled.

Being a writer of third world, Kamala Markandaya has complex experiences of third world females and is experienced about the coarse behaviour of males upon females. So, she has realistically depicted the issue of man-woman relationship. The creative works of an author is to show the male-female relationship and their struggles to realize each others notions and on which basis there has been the contamination of their relationship. Though, at the end, improvement can be seen in their relationship, there is equal chance or possibility to be repeated the same contamination. But due to the suspense, relationship of characters can't be improved permanently. So, suspense and secrecy should be avoided between husband and wife which can be taken as the main message conveyed by Kamala Markandaya in her novel, *A Silence of Desire*.

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