

Voice of the Voiceless: Rejuvenating Dispositions in Kamala Markandaya's *Two Virgins*

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Abstract

In the past history, woman's position was considered to be granted as a very subordinate being. She was meant only to procreate and rear children and do the household tasks. It did not just stop with that. She naturally being the weaker sex of the two (male and female), needed protection and this added to her helpless condition. But, as time passed on, women realized the pathetic condition they were placed in and showed signs of resentment. Kamala Markandaya has dealt with this theme in her novel, *Two Virgins* and can be approached from a feminist prospect. This novel says about two sisters who are shown to have contrasting modes of thought and character.

Keywords: Kamala Markandaya's *Two Virgins*, Suppression, feminism, poignancy, Conservatism

Against the verifiable foundation of woman's rights, one can approach a portion of crafted by Kamala Markandaya. The novel, however a straightforward one rotating around two young women in their puberty, has an ethical note in it that each young woman must remember. The very title *Two Virgins* is suggestive of the women's feminist methodology inferred in it. Notwithstanding springing from a similar family and a similar foundation, they contrast in their psychological standpoint, approach towards life and occasions; because of the different cases playing their impact on them, which result in their response concerning the conditions at that point. Kamala Markandaya has managed the part of women's liberation in all respects clearly. Indeed, every novel of hers presents the confident female job of her characters and this specific novel *Two Virgins* is particularly a model.

H.M. Williams appropriately opines that Kamala Markandaya "has a particular interest in analyzing women characters and suggesting the unusual poignancy of their fate". Women's liberation infers that it is to do with woman and her rights. It is to state women and their correspondence with men. Being persistent for the most part commonly, they are fit for taking care of any assignment proficiently and cleverly. Our old history reveals to us that India was a land wealthy in Vedic culture. Women in our nation were given high regard. It is trusted that woman is a proportionate to Goddess Sakthi. She is mother in bodily form. It is stated, God couldn't present

himself to all thus, he made the mother figure! Cherishing and conciliatory commonly, she is contrasted with Mother Earth by artists. She can manage with any hardship and endure any test with a grin. Such is the intensity of the woman who is an imitation of the 'Adisakthi'. She can be effortless and kind, yet firm and strident, as per the conditions. In any case, organically being the more fragile of the two genders, she has been shielded and ensured since old occasions. It was maybe with this thought she jumped into the consuming fire of her dead husband in the prior long periods of convention and custom, But this demonstration called Sati' has been abrogated since the time Sri Raja Ram Mohan Roy strived for its annulment. However, a portion of the old traditions win and just time must bring change. Characterizing the word women's liberation, Sharon Spencer writes, "The adjective 'feminine' when applied to literature now-a-days customarily indicates the author's preoccupation with intimate human relationships, concern with the emotional aspects of life and with the dynamics of the psychic realm of experience."(12)

Kamala Markandaya's works adequately vouch for her worry towards female issues. Being a woman and having lived for an amazing majority in India, she knows the living conditions and the status given to women, principally in India. Writing of the feministic frame of mind of Kamala Markandaya, P. Geetha writes,

This concern about the contemporary women's lives, women's concerns, is worth noting and that is what makes us apply the term 'feminism' in its broadest sense to her works. She is not a radical feminist and her novels are not an outright condemnation of a repressive dominated society calling for radical reconstructing of male-female roles. Kamala Markandaya's attitude to feminism is established as personal, analytic and exploratory rather than public, political or She does not create a woman's world; but she presents the real world; sometimes raising serious questions about contemporary attitude to men, women and marriage. (13)

Kamala Markandaya in her novel *Two Virgins* passes on her considerations relating to the female world with a feministic point of view. She has indicated how socially and in a roundabout way, the women's feminist development has played its impact on the young woman Lalitha, in her teenagers. The young woman with false ideas, gets deceived and ruins her life. But, one must know about the upsides and downsides and admirably handle the circumstance. One must be present day in thought and increase by innovation. The development of science and innovation and industrialisation has presented man. His walk must be towards advancement and headway, endeavouring to achieve incredible statures. Conservatism and Modernism - the two differentiating angles - must be seen reasonably and the best of two, actualized.

Conservatism represents old convictions and traditions which fit past occasions. Back then, man's reality was a little one dissimilar to today, where he can convey and stretch out all round the globe. With the evolving times, the traditionalist viewpoint is step by step declining in individuals. Innovation is being caught up in its place by each body. However conservatism, profound established all things considered, still keeps up its impact on individuals who are in the middle of the road arrange, attempting to primate the West whether it suits them or not. In the event that conservatism

and innovation are both adjusted and followed in an ideal proportion contingent on the conditions one is set in, at that point living will be euphoric affair.

The present novel *Two Virgins* introduces a situation in the family, living in a South Indian town. The father of the two young women Lalitha and Saroja, is a man who has progressive perspectives and raises his girls in such a way, however destiny plays its will on them exclusively, according to their own creation halfway. Their mother remains a quiet onlooker, having no state of hers by any means, however just the coupling join among all. There is aunty Alamelu, who remains with them as she is a widow and has none of her own to depend upon. She, being a universal, moderate woman, dependably comments scathingly of the methods for the changing scene and of Lalitha who, she suspects, is leaving from the ties of conservatism with the help of her father, which may, she fears, lead her to 'no-where'. In any case, her useful tidbits go unnoticed by the father, and the little girl as well. However, Saroja, sister of Lalitha, gains from her sister's habits and with her aunty's direction and her very own feeling of recognition, becomes more astute and remains a virgin, in contrast to her grievous sister.

The account of the two sisters is told from her perspective just - Saroja herself being the storyteller, yet it is Lalitha who is presented to the most different cases and her responses are laid forward, to the readers by the writer, through the storyteller. Aside from whatever is left of the books, this specific novel *Two Virgins* displays women of various mental standpoints, encounters and levels. There is another woman character Manikkam, in the novel who is appeared to be inclined to destitution and issues related with it, because of her obliviousness of anti-conception medication. She is delineated to be a common town woman, unconscious of things circumventing her, upbeat to live in her own little isolated world. The two sisters on their part, are appeared to be inviting with everybody in the town. Hailing from a customary Hindu family, they embrace the methods for their way of life and furthermore get instructed from their town school. Lalitha, being presented to Christian belief system through her instructor Miss Mendoza from her preacher school, gets the hang of moving as well and her excellence adds to her 'gay-go', nature. Saroja, her more youthful sister, a straightforward, sensible, viable young woman, just watches her sister in her blooming state and yearnings to fly high over the ground. She sympathizes with her sister, yet watches her own self. She additionally feels and encounters the typical inquisitive sentiments as her sister, normal in their age. But, remembering her aunty's expressions of alert dependably, remains inside her cut off points and secures herself against flaw. She remains a virgin till the end in the novel - an 'anagrahitha pushpam' in Sanskrit, which implies in English, an unsmelt, immaculate bloom - sufficiently commendable to be laid at God's feet. She especially delineates the Indian - Hindu culture. She spares herself against any dark imprint on her lead or character- - as the idiom goes "... if character is lost, everything is lost". She, indeed, gains from her sister's slip-ups.

Despite what might be expected, Lalitha, however being the senior of the two, acts in a juvenile way, not paying attention to the standards laid by her way of life and falls a prey to the disasters of the modern world. She honestly gives her heart a chance to run her head and recognizes the cold hard reality of her own tune. She causes her own downfall, turning into an injured individual in the hands of the amazing, sparkling show of the filmworld. Similar to the precept, "Every one of

that sparkles isn't gold", so likewise, all the promising pretend world does not demonstrate such encouraging, as is normal. The enticements are too attracting for a young woman in adolescents, who is prepared to do anything, only for a job in movies. All the pageantry and show at last breakdown like strongholds in air. The rich wonder that Lalitha dreams of, is just an obscured, foggy picture, with no legitimate base and frail in structure. Her reality stays to be that of unreasonable hallucinations, disgraceful of anything as a general rule. She escapes by the draws of the grandiose film industry and winds up inclined to the numerous ill faceted astonish of a colorful profession of movies and its partners. She ensnares herself in the trap of the dubious, unpromising film industry, and in the wake of turning into a film-star, loses her virginity. Lalitha's priorities contrast from those of her sister Saroja. She ends up inclined to the human shortcomings and passing delights. Kamala Markandaya's picturization of the bat-butterfly picture is an ideal counterpart for the pitiable state of Lalitha:

The bats were after the butterflies, which were dying, whose day was over. They fluttered their wings feebly, were seized, were finished. The gauzy wings spiralled down, unattached, aimless without their host. It was tragic to see but the bats were happy, it was their hour (p.157).

Kamala Markandaya is by all accounts against free living, without good qualities. She approaches or embraces a sort of 'center methodology' - a methodology that is neither totally preservationist nor totally innovator. This sort of methodology might be the best one for any person as, by along these lines, one is neither falling excessively behind, aimlessly following the moderate standards of yester years, nor is one negligently endeavoring to be 'present day', removing oneself from the old conventional traditions.

A sound living will be such a one which will guzzle and teach the best from the two by conquering any hindrance of both- - moderate and present-day patterns and develop one's character and direct immovably and make one's living, beneficial. Kamala Markandaya strikingly portrays through her character Lalitha, the aftereffect of being very advanced, lacking absolutely in moral qualities, without a legitimate method of conduct and direct. Such a free living without any standards will emphatically prompt a deplorable life at last, destroying and criticizing oneself. Lalitha, who had sought to be a film star, fell into the grip of Mr. Gupta, the movie chief, giving herself, with a want to be a performing artist. She needed to keep her virtue in question, for a sparkling world which at long last brought her solitary flaw. Through the picture of the 'kolam' delineating the photos of a pigeon and afterward a hawk, Kamala Markandaya conveys to us the powerless circumstance her character Lalitha places herself in - she draws the image of a bird - an appreciated sign for Mr. Gupta, the movie chief who visits their home on an event. The picture of the bird recommends the aspiring soul of Lalitha taking off high into the sky. Whenever Mr. Gupta truly visits their place, he happens to venture on to the image making it cloudy and Lalitha adjusts the image and it amusingly ends up being a hawk! This wind in the image, symbolizes the contort in her life itself, structure a tranquil, ensured living, to that of a tragic, ruinous nature. Lalitha's aunty, an old-clock of conventional, preservationist thoughts as she seems to be, cautions her numerous an opportunity to be in her own breaking points, circling herself inside the standards of their Hindu

society; not to make herself modest according to Mr. Gupta, however to Lalitha, these expressions of exhortation appear to be easy-going and she answers, "I'm an artist, you have no conception of artistic affinity, which is what lies between us, you can see only evil in the most beautiful things" (p. 104).

Lalitha has the help of her father who miscounts his little girl's dauntlessness and obliviousness of the more extravagant, worthier estimations of life. He has faith in the social personal conduct standard among the male and female genders. He has current thoughts with respect to the free blending between individuals from society, independent of standing, religion or sex. So he ingrains such musings into his little girls, not knowing the unsafe reactions of his advanced idea which will at long last lead his senior little girl into disgrace and disfavor. His progressive thoughts are confounded by her, and aunty Alamelu censures him for his preparation, "You have given your children rights. Brother ...and they have come to roost" (18). She feels it stunning to realize that her niece needs to be a film star which, she feels, is on a par with being a moving young woman or a 'devadasi', a calling which is looked downward on. She feels it a disrespect to move out into the reality where one gets presented to the disasters lastly, misused. Lalitha, actually, discloses to her aunty that in the changing present day world, young women from good families act and she, as well, wishes to build up her creative ability. She in this way sheds off her connections to her home and town, and aches for a real existence in the city, fully expecting sumptuous delights. She has no high sentiment of or an aching for her local town where she was conceived and raised. She alludes to it as, "one horse town, this backward place, this outpost of civilization" (p.84). A young woman with such mean musings of her the place where own grew up pays luxuriously for her lost needs. The city life that she pictures and dreams of, brings her solitary depression and distress. Her visually impaired confidence in Mr. Gupta handled her in imagining a child. As can be anticipated, he in all respects helpfully rejects her and renounces his duty, to the frightfulness of her folks and herself. Having no other option, they get her prematurely ended. On an event, she even endeavors suicide, when she is spared by her quiet and formed sister Saroja. Powerless to see her sister's desolation, she stands amazed at the secret. She, "was tom between her parents, both were right, both were wrong. She wondered wildly why they could not solve the problem simply by the two of them marrying" (p. 179).

In any case, since that was unrealistic, her folks wanted to at any rate spare their little girl from further setback. However, Lalitha's future was shut. It was not blushing as she had aimed for. She had lost everything in her life. Her own silly ideas and destiny had demolished her. She therefore wound up inclined to the bothering insults of her own heart and powerless to raise her head with certainty and face her own friends and relatives, leaves for the city for a second time - without any sentiments of excitement or anything unique to anticipate. Her underlying dream of turning into an on-screen character and sparkle as a film star demonstrates a worthless endeavor, bringing about her losing her virtue, She in this manner turns into the objective of her own wrong, mis-set needs. Her excellence, appeal and insightfulness without standards bring her no place; bring her no trees however just turn into a horrendous reason for her ruin. Kamala Markandaya has really demonstrated how the destiny of an Indian town young woman having lost her virginity plays on the disastrous young woman and her own kin. Anyway progressed and current one may move toward becoming,

one can't go past nature and certain standards of society. Indian culture is with the end goal that character could really compare to all characteristics or accomplishments. Every single other thing relating to present day thought stand just alongside convention and culture. This is one idea of which India can be glad for Kamala Markandaya, through her character Lalitha, has attempted to centre that a young woman with excellence and no character is worthier than a young woman with no magnificence however with character. One may attempt to achieve the skies yet it is in every case great to recollect the tallness that one needs to reach and the gravity of the earth and stay inside one's own points of confinement. Lalitha's scan for a superior living in the courageous city or her struggle to end herself ... Isn't known, Lalitha helps one to remember those couple of women's feminists who, for the sake of freed woman's rights in America, proceed according to their will and face strongly, the repercussions. Subsequently we discover Lalitha's character blossoming in full for a limited capacity to focus blurring ceaselessly in a similar speedy way. It is an exercise to be scholarly for each young woman with illogical thoughts and lost needs. Saroja, the more youthful sister of the two, is dnovelted with an alternate, differentiating disposition. Writing of Saroja, H.M. Williarms writes,

Saroja's character pervades, surrounds, the novel. Her vision and language retain and invade all the experiences, and she is one of Markandaya's finest and most attractive creations: innocence embracing knowledge, love embracing jealousy, and above all there is the girl's deep love of the village including the widowed aunt, the patient buffalo, her bicycle, and even the monsoon rain. (21)

Saroja, as one can find, is a straightforward soul, a practical young woman without any restraints. She appreciates the storm downpour sand the crisp greenery around, she runs on her bike through the fields, breathing outside air, far from the quick running, frantic surge of the city, in the wake of innovation. A long way from contamination, she is cheerful to remain immovably established in her town, submitting to the conventions and traditions. She has love and delicate affections for children and respects parenthood to be a glorious happiness and anticipates it. Having assimilated the social qualities and continually remembering her aunty's useful tidbits and experience, which impact her, she figures out how to regard the estimation of virginity and remains a pure young woman all through. Picking up information of good and terrible, she keeps under control the odd sentiments she gets and holds her feelings with it power over herself, in body and psyche. She blossoms into womanhood, with ordinary inquiries and sound questions and having seen her sister's predicament, moulds herself as indicated by the standards of her general public. She perceives a straightforward actuality - that of the imagery of a thistle and a leaf', relating to a man and a woman. The thistle symbolizes man, and the leaf, woman. It is an old idea that when either the leaf falls on the thistle or the thistle falls on the leaf, the outcome is that the leaf gets torn. So additionally, however ethically, both man and woman are to blame our general public with its intolerant methodology just accuses the woman. In this manner, Kamala Markandaya has seen the parts of innovation and conventionalism through a feministic approach. Appa, the father of the two young women, and their aunty represent two furthest points and through the character of Saroja, the contention between the two is settled, as she keeps her equalization taking the best of the two patterns. "In her dispositions to women", writes P. Geetha,

the novelist shows signs of profound influence of a feminist school of writing. Her novels are not, of course, 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. (22)

In this way we discover Kamala Markandaya presenting her women characters in each novel of hers in an emphatic way, making their essence felt at each vital crossroads. Her anxiety for womanlike issues is unequivocally communicated. "The books of Kamala Markandaya, writes P. Geetha, "also express her feminist moral concern through the detailed examination of sexual and familial relationships. She stresses the need to believe in the moral superiority of women in upholding the sanctity of the family."(23) And Kamala Markandaya has advanced her thoughts regarding womanlike steadiness and solidarity to maintain the familial ties. But, *Two Virgins* is by all accounts distinctive in passing on the most fragile issues of sexual taboos in our general public. The subject is great however the passing on mode is gruff and rough, flanking now and again on profanity. P. Geetha says,

Kamala Markandaya breaks away from tradition in treating the theme of sex in *Two Virgins* and this has aroused some adverse criticism. This novel, devoted to setting before us the view of life of a sexual, moral and cultural deviate, is a feminist novel in every sense of the term.... Kamala Markandaya here allows herself much more freedom to describe social reality for its own sake and ideological issues tended to be played down by her here. The portrayal of contrasting sister heroines is very much in the moralistic tradition of female writing" (24).

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