Preface

The purpose of the present study is to make a modest attempt to identify and analyse the Exploitation Syndrome in the first nine novels of Kamala Markandaya. In modern times, science has given new orientation to literature and hence it will not be inappropriate to incorporate scientific or medical terms into modern literature. In medical science, the congenital disorders are generally called syndromes. Concurrence of different symptoms is indicative of a syndrome. In Kamala Markandaya's novels exploitation is the consequence of various factors in the existing social order which cause problems of various kinds, making the people suffer. Some of them become crippled and disabled. Many of them are tortured mentally and physically. The novels of Kamala Markandaya are analysed in the light of the syndromic theory.

The novelist's purpose in fiction is to reveal life as a series of changing relationships with its conflicts within and against society. She depicts a traditional and rural mode of existence under the assault of modernity. The novelist has gone to the
roots of the rural and urban segments of Indian life and reality. Conjugal clashes, cultural chaos, loss of identity and other dilemmas of individual characters point out how people are exploited. The political vortex of the Quit India Movement, the conflict between faith and reason, the cleft in spiritual attitudes and economic values, cause exploitation of various kinds.

The various symptoms which cause Exploitation Syndrome in the novels of Kamala Markandaya are landlordism introduced by the British, the intrusion of industrialization, cultural tensions, economic disparity, and racial antagonism. Due to these symptoms, the agrarian equilibrium is upset, the curriculum of the poor sons of the soil gets spoilt and their peace and quietitude get affected adversely. They are made to quit the land on which they have tilled for years together and they wander like nomads in search of new abodes.

Because of racial difference man exploits man and the victims are rendered rootless. They lose their native land as well as the alien land of their settlement. As a result the characters of Markandaya suffer mental agony. They withdraw themselves from human society and seek shelter in loneliness and isolation. Their loss of identity
makes some of them become nervous wrecks too.

Chapter One, Introduction, traces the various themes in the novels of Kamala Markandaya and tries to establish the fact that she is a novelist with a humane approach. The research work conducted on Markandaya's novels so far is summarised in order to establish the fact that no analysis has yet been attempted on the title selected.

Chapter Two, Sceptre and the Sickle analyses how in Markandaya's novels, the society has divided itself into two hostile forces. The "sceptre" stands for industrialization which is introduced by the British, it shows how it strikes a deadly blow on the lower class people. It represents the encroachment of western technology corroding the antique civilization of India. The "sickle" stands for the peasants, labourers, tribals and also the native rulers who are slavishly held under the powerful and authoritative sceptre. They are constantly exploited under all circumstances of life.

Chapter Three, Feminine Response clearly shows how the woman reacts to the world around her when she is exploited.
The women characters are classified as traditional women and progressive women. They may belong to the weaker sex but they exhibit exorbitant strength in all circumstances when they are exploited.

Chapter Four, *Trauma of the Male Mind* examines how the mind of the male characters is traumatised. They suffer physically and mentally because they are injured either by individuals or society in general. Like the women characters, the men too are categorised into three groups as older generation of passive sufferers, younger generation of ebullient rebels, and westernised Indians. The shackles of the society tightening on individuals is too heavy to bear and most of the men cow down under the harsh blow.

Chapter Five sums up the findings of the researcher. With regard to the format of the thesis, the researcher has followed closely the mechanics of writing outlined in *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 4th Edition 1996*.

Kamala Markandaya's objective method of narration, evasion of the exact location and the proper names of characters give the Exploitation Syndrome a universal touch.
In spite of the most modern scientific inventions and technological advancements, not only India but also the world at large is infected with the fumes of man's inhumanity to man and Kamala Markandaya in her own way is one of the best exponents of the evils in the society. Syndromes or congenital disorders though they cannot be cured medically, may be treated in the light of modern invention. Perhaps Kamala Markandaya envisages a better India which will be altogether a different land in which all the discords and discriminations of various kinds are reconciled and man will be tolerant to his fellowmen.