Political Conception

Kamala Markandaya, born in 1924, had to face the East-West encounters in its ramifications; Markandaya being a woman found enough in her experience to keep the East and the west apart. Whites believed that their race was the elect of God, and down-trodden Blackman were fated to worship sticks and stones. This assumed superiority of whites was the cause of injustice done to her natives. Miss Markandaya makes her novels the forum for her sensitive series against suffering caused by such racial liaison. The existing political scenario seen by Markandaya was that of malice in the hearts of the ruler for the ruled people. This sense of injustice done to her fellow brother always haunted her mind while living in India when Indians were struggling against the imperial rule. Markandaya is still haunted by the memories of her colonial past living in a country that once dominated Indian. She finds herself in a very adverse condition.

Miss Markandaya has boldly shown this confrontation of the east and the west in her novels. She has shown in her novels the racial tension prevailing among the whites and the so-called black people. She feels that a new kind of thinking is necessary which will show people that there are factors common to both whites and non-whites. However, human intellect and philanthropy are found in all races. Miss Markandaya has a generally
patriotic tone when handling political confrontation between Britain and India. Without taking sides she vehemently describes the role of the British as ruler and the role of Indians as ruled. Her attitudes finds expression in the character of Roshan Merchant in her novel “Some Inner Fury” who says that English were insufferable as over lords but humane, civilized and charming as individuals.

Political dichotomy takes three forms in her novels: firstly, there is a mingling of political history with fiction; secondly, the impact of the western political system which was not always in consonance with Indian life; and finally, the breakdown of personal relation because of political wrangling.

Miss Markandaya weaves strands of political events into Mira’s narrative co-ordinate the aspect of time with the declaration of the Second World War in Europe in 1939. The English in India are filled with ‘Shadows and Fears and a sense of the tragic fury gathering across the sea.”(108)

Her novel “Some Inner Fury” pulsates with the spirit of political life and is mainly based on Quit India Movement of 1942 which is the greatest event of pre-independence era. It was a time when a violent movement had started for the freedom of India from British regime. This novel is called the
most destructive and violent novel of the period because it does not hide the brutality and cruelty of the English soldiers under their bloody boots. A number of innocent Indians being caught into the fire of violence, hatred and ill-will get their sad end. The people are shown fully supporting independence-movement boycotting the foreign goods. They are ready to sacrifice their life for seeing their motherland free. The strong desire for freedom created inner fury in their hearts. Govind incites his follower to violence, and they set fire to the newspapers office, where banners put up in the street have an open message of hatred and anger inscribed on them:

There was no mistake in the sense of the message which began and ended with obscene abuse, and which had been written with a hate such as only an occupied country can generate.

Miss Markandaya’s political history is mixed with fiction in her novel “Some Inner Fury.” Political conflict becomes the core of the plot. Her sense of history which she had been studying is carefully woven into the environment in which Mira’s and Richard’s love goes away. Taking aberrations of Gandhi’s non-violence movement she traces the insurmountable situation that separates Mira and Richard. Mira belongs to a rich sophisticated family that has been admitted into the British social circle. Her own brother Kit has obtained his education abroad and
successfully completed into the Indian Civil Services juxtaposed in her foster-brother who gave-up his education midway and ranges himself with the agitators for freedom. He had lost both parents in infancy, “and my mother, from erring for him in the weeks following their death, had grown so fond of him that she had eventually adopted him a course with which his uncle and aunt with their own numerous children were happy enough to concur.” Govind is a man reserved by nature. As a child he had hardly ever cried, as a man it was very seldom he spoke, or he had never been heard to voice and opinion, “These words of Mirabai implicitly point to making of this revolutionary and nationalist. He does not participate in Kit’s outing. He hates western culture and prefers his country and countrymen.”

Govind knows of Mira’s love for Richard and when Richard returns to England after a month finds that Mira feels lonely. He comforts and consoles her. The family in which he was brought-up was mad after western manners and hobbies, and ‘club going’ had become, for varying reason, part of the pattern of our lives. Strangely enough, Govind sounded a note of revolt as far as club going habit was concerned. Even picnic had no fascination for him, ‘He steady declined to accompany us anywhere.’ The first indication of his political involvement is given when he tells Mirabai that ‘I have been offered a job… I propose taking it,” but he does not hint at
what kind of job he is going to take up. National prejudice against Richard and domestic confrontation with Kitsamy shows that Govind was having something secret and dangerous in his mind. He did not want to hurt anybody except Richard and Kitsamy because they symbolized tyranny and slavery.

Describing Govind’s attitude to the western influence on India, his cousin Mira remarks:

Govind was not and had never been a part.

Kamala Markandaya presents a true picture of India’s independence in her novel. She rightly brings out picture of the Indian society which was coloured with political consciousness. The political conflict between the Indian patriots and the British rulers was an external aspect. Even the members of a family could have divergent conflicting views on various aspects of political struggle. It was a scene of people who were extraordinary alive. Govind believes in violence whereas Mira and Kit’s wife, Premala, are in favour of peaceful means to oppose the cruel British rulers.

After the marriage with Premala, Kit goes to join the job. After a few months he takes Premala with him. Premala going to Kit causes complete loneliness in Mira’s life. Govind also leaves the house and becomes a revolutionary and works for anti-government community. After a few
months Kit informs Mira that Richard is coming to India for a week and he wants to meet her. Mira goes to Kit, but due to her bad luck Richards returns to England. She stays with Kit for a long time and starts writing on rural life in collaboration with Roshan merchant. Roshan herself is a columnist and writes anti-government articles. In a sense she is a participant in national movement for freedom.

Roshan sacrifices her parents, her husband and aristocratic life. She takes an active part in the freedom struggle and goes to jail. When Mira asks her life in prison, she gives a spirited reply:

What do you think? Of course, I’m not sorry! I’d rather go to the devil my own way than be led to heaven by anyone else and it wouldn’t give up being free like that for anything it hasn’t always been that way no, not even for me.

In her sacrifice, Roshan resembles Rajeshwari who has been depicted in K.S. Venkataramani’s novel, “Kandan, the Patriot” as the symbol of the new awakening among Indian women in the wake up the national movement. Like Roshan merchant, Rajeshwari is highly educated daughter of millionaire. She renounces the comforts of her life for the sake of India’s struggle for independence.
Govind was questioned about the nature of job that he was going to take up, and he eluded all knots of revealing his employment. ‘When questioned, he grew vague; questioned further; he told my mother it was community work, and beyond that he would not specify.’ The wars in Europe began and before long Indians were somehow involved in it. Indians concerned only with their own freedom aware of the other storm impending in the country.

Govind walked in one evening and both Mira and Premala were surprised. Always before I had known him grave, somber, dark-browed. Lacking that quick carefree, quietly and lightens the focus of young man; all this was still there, but now-dismaying, disquieting, implacability, that had been never there before. ‘He informed Premala that he did not have the desire to marry for she had other things to think of. Govind had gone into the night as he had come, abrupt, locked in silence, refusing even to leave his address. During one of Roshan’s visits they came to know that Govind was the member of independence party. She discloses that followers of the party were organizing civil disobedience to government. She further said that ‘I do not think there is any length to which he would not go. Do you not know your brother?’ But what followed thereafter was a matter of shock and surprise. Govind wanted some volunteers “the people who are not
afraid of prison.” Roshan and Govind wanted freedom. The former by peace and the latter by violence were different, deepen and more dangerous. To him missionaries were not merely men who assaulted the religion which was his, though he might not cherish it, impugning its dignities in a hundred ways: they were also white men, who not only setup their alien and unwanted institution in the land but who, for the preservation of these institutions, invariably sided with those other white men who ruled that country and with whom otherwise they had little in common. Therefore, Govind planned to destroy the building in which the missionary Hickey lived.

Govind leaves Premala and comes to meet Mira and Premala from time to time. He warns Premala against Hickey but Premala does not care for this warning. Govind went with his companions and set fire to the building because he hates the missionaries and the British. He warns Premala even the day he decides to burn the school building, but Premala goes there and dies of suffocation in the school. Mira, Kit and Govind go to the village to save Premala but find her dead. Kit is also stabbed to death by someone in the village. Govind is arrested on the charge of Kit’s murder Hickey gives evidence against Govind but Mira is in his favour. On the day of Govind’s trial, a racial hatred inflames the mob and it gets mad with rage
to get his leader released. Richard and Hickey are killed by this violent mob and Mira is left alone with the hopeless memory of her lover.

A thorough study of the novels discloses that Miss Markandaya’s novel is based on the themes of love, destruction and politics, but, as we expose the depth of the story, we find the love theme integrated with politics and Quit-India-Movement of 1942 becomes the central themes of the novel. Though Miss Markandaya is one of those novelists who belong to ‘Post Independence Era’ yet her novel “Some Inner Fury” is the mirror which shows the picture of 1942, when a violent struggle took place. So the novel is called the novel of destruction and violence:

It is a novel not of the struggle of non-violence but of violence and destruction.

(Indo-Anglian Fiction: An Assessment 299)

The above given comment on the novel is fully true to the story of the novel, because the story of the novel is full of violence, destruction and inhuman deeds, and the violence causes lifelong loneliness in the life of the heroine. Now, here first of all the question rises-what is violence and non-violence? For the answer, one simply says that-non-violence and violence are essentially the characteristics of the individual mind. A mind free from selfishness, greed, anger and lust is at peace with itself and whatever it does
is non-violence. On the other hand, every action actuated by motive of self-
is violent however harmless and useful it might look. Now it is clear that
both the ideas are like two facets of coin and just as one can see only one
side of it at a time. At a time one cannot adopt both violence and non-
violence simultaneously. They are both poles apart. If a person decides to
adopt violence has no alternative but to reject non-violence and vice-versa.
To move on the path of non-violence is too difficult in this materialistic age
when everyone is engrossed in greed and selfishness and every individual is
thirsty of other’s blood. But there is an exceptional case of Mahatma
Gandhi who followed non-violence completely even in modern time and set
a new example before the world. His non-violent ideas were based on the
Geeta and he was called Vashnav (who followed Lord Vishnu). But one can
find a clash between the principles of “Slimed Bagdad Geeta” and
Gandhiji’s non-violence because the Geeta never says to tolerate injustice.
It always prefers violence for right cause and justice. In the Geeta Lord
Krishna he says:

For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked
and for the establishment of Dharma I am born age after age.

(Srimad Bhagwad Geeta: Chap. IV 8)
But we see that in spite of being a Vaishnav and a follower of the Geeta, Mahatma Gandhi never took arms against injustice and tyranny of the British rulers. He did not order his countrymen to take arms against them. He wanted to acquire freedom for his country by means of non-violence and love. The Doctrine of the Sword, a famous article, he had written in 1921:

I do believe that when there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence … I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in cowardly manner become or remain a helpless victim to her own dishonour. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence. Forgiveness is more mainly than punishment as forgiveness is the ornament of the brave.

(In Nehru: An autobiography 83)

And again

The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the rishis and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of brute.

(In Nehru: An autobiography 83)
I have, therefore, ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For Satyagrah and its offshoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The Rishis, who discovered the law of non-violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warrior than Wellington. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation laid not through violence but through non-violence.

(In Nehru: An autobiography 83)

Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting of one’s whole soul against the will of the tyrant.

(In Nehru: An autobiography 84)

The beautiful passages exhibit Gandhi’s belief in non-violence. Under his leadership countrymen moved on the path of non-cooperation and ahimsa. In the beginning, his ideas of non-violence influenced the countrymen much and recognized him as the leader of ‘National
Movement’. They worked according to him. Not only mobs but also influenced the literature of that time and the number of novels, books and article were written on Gandhian principles; but, some congress leader were not in favour with the peaceful policy and were unable to understand his ideology. At that time British government got the opportunity and created dissatisfaction among the Indians and then the sudden arrest of Indian leaders in August 1942 by British government set fire to the heart of Indians. They forgot the lesson of non-violence which had been taught them for more than twenty years and became violent against the tyranny of British rulers. A number of inhuman deeds took place in the country in the absence of proper leader. They attacked especially what seemed to them the symbol of the British authority and power. The novel “Some Inner Fury” gives an authentic picture of this violence and destruction of 1942.

The opening chapter of the novel shows the story of love between Mira, an Indian teenager, and an Englishman Richard, who comes from England with her brother Kit. But as one can see the story moves forward, it takes a turn towards politics and throws light on ‘Quit India Movement’. This movement of 1942 was not a movement based on Gandhian non-violence, but was carried on its spirit of violence and hate. Every young Indian specially the students became thirsty for English blood and wanted to
uproot the British rule in India. Miss Markandaya shows in Govind such a young man who becomes revolutionary after completion of his graduation and works for anti-government. He does all his work secretly without telling his family, but when his mother insists, he tells her that it is a community work. Mira tells about him:

In the following month Govind sat for his finals and passed, and left almost at once to take up his job. What it was, no one knew. When questioned, he grew vague, questioned further he told my mother it was community work and beyond that he would not specify.

(Some Inner Fury 102)

The anti-government activity of Govind throws him behind the bars and after his release from the jail he becomes more active. He takes help from Roshan merchant who herself is working against the British regime but in peaceful manner. She writes anti-government article and believes in Gandhian non-co-operation and ahimsa. She is against the violence and destruction and does not like Govind’s violent steps. She is there to divert the mind of Govind but he refuses. Even then she argues when Govind came to her house for help:
At last Roshan said, half to herself, ‘There is no power in violence… only destruction.’

(Some Inner Fury 108)

And

She said looking at him steadily ‘I am not really interested in destruction’.

(Some Inner Fury 108)

Though Govind and Roshan belong to different path yet their destination is one. One wants to break the British Government by means of violence and the other by peaceful means of non-violence. The following passage presents the realistic scenario of the younger generation of India in 1942:

All over India, the younger generate especially university students, played an important part in both the violent and peaceful activities of 1942. Many universities were closed. Some of local leaders attempted even then to pursue peaceful method of action and civil disobedience, but this was difficult in the prevailing atmosphere. The people forgot the lesson of non-violence which had been denied into their ears for more than twenty years, and yet they were wholly unprepared, mentally or
otherwise, for any effective violence. That very teaching of non-violent methods produced doubt and hesitation and come in the way of violent action. If the congress, forgetful of its creed, had previously given even a hint of violent action, there is no doubt that the violence that actually took place would have increased a hundred fold.

(Nehru: The Discovery of India 407)

And further

But in the excitement of the moment few people think; they act in accordance with their long-suppressed urges which drive them forward. And so, for the first time since the great revolt of 1857, vast numbers of people again rose to challenge by force {but a force without arms} the fabric of the British rule in India. It was a foolish and inopportune challenge. For all the organized and armed force was on the other side and in greater measure that at any previous time in history. However, great the numbers of the crowd, it cannot prevail in a contest of force against armed forces themselves changed their allegiance. But those crowds had into prepared for the contest or chosen the time for it. It comes upon them unawares and in their immediate reaction
to it, however unthinking and misdirected it was. They showed their love of India’s freedom and their hatred of foreign domination.

(Nehru: The Discovery of India 480)

Two brothers Kitsmay and Govind are contrary to each other in their disposition in the novel. Kit, a westernized young officer, is faithful to the British government; while Govind, a revolutionary, is loyal to his country and countrymen. As a district magistrate Kit has to keep a watch on Govind’s violent activities. Kit warns him but Govind ignores his warning. He get’s imprisonment on the charge of burning gazette and when he is released for the bar, he becomes more violent. He plans to set fire to the missionary school where Premala visits daily. He warns Premala against Hickey with whom she has closeness, because he hates him. But in spite of Govind’s warning, Premala goes there and gets suffocated and dies. She meets unnatural death due to her own countrymen. Not only Premala but Kit is also stabbed by someone when he rushes to the spot to save his wife. Both Premala and Kit becomes the victim of violence created by their own people. Though the revolutionaries’ aim was not to harm their own people, but it was by chance that Premala went there and died, yet the violence
caused destruction. Govind gets mad with anger and much grieved when he comes to know of Premala’s death. Mira describes his condition:

I think Govind must have gone out of his mind then. He stepped forward. His face was working, his hands were groping out; but even as he did so, Kit gripped him, dragging him back so that he almost fell.

(Some Inner Fury 203)

The above described violence was not only the singular incident that took place in the country, but a number of such incidents were common in different parts of the country. In the novel Mira feels the smell of this violence and racial hatred when she returns from outing of six weeks with Richard. A curtain like situation in the city and slogan of hatred against the British on the walls shocks her, and unknown fear takes grip in her mind, because on one side her revolutionary brother is there and on the other side her lover Richard, who belongs to British regime. Her fear changes into reality when she finds herself alone in the court after the murder of lover Richard. The misguided revolutionary has not only killed her brother Kit and sister-in-law Premala but knifed her lover too. They do not leave even Hickey who is a missionary. The scene is really terrible when the huge and furious mob enters the court chamber to kill Hickey:
But there were no troops yet to fling back the wave. At the entrance it checked, a moment only, then the heavy teak doors began to bulge, they feel, the people came swarming in over each of the nine fallen doors, and met and massed in the court room. But these were not people any more this was a mob, to which each human being within it had surrounded his personality to create a new giant identity, the blind unreasoning, powerful, and exultant, inhuman identity of a mob. Within the court it paused, this mob, for as yet it had thrown up no leader; its movements were those of a robot, functioning only through this one vast force within it; then it swung round of Hickey.

(Some Inner Fury 240-241)

Thus it appears quite distinct that the novel “Some Inner Fury” is chiefly a novel of political destruction and violence. This destruction is not only of the British ruler but also of Indians in the country. A number of innocent Indians get caught into the fits of hatred and violence. Miss Markandaya has given an allegorical representation of ‘Quit India Movement of 1942’, through the novel which was a political movement. There was a mass felling of patriotism in the hearts of Indians at that time and at any cost they wanted to see their motherland free from the hand of the cruel Britisher. This feeling created inner fury and hatred in them and
they adopted the way of violence to break down the British government. In the novel Govind’s hatred for the English government created an inner fury in him and he becomes violent and sets fire to the missionary school. This violent rage makes him blind and he forgets those innocent Indian children who take education in the school. A critic rightly writes about this Inner Fury:

I would appear in the final analysis that this, socio-political novel of modern India is symbolically significant on two levels: first, the emotional inner fury of Mira is completely quenched when her love for Richard results in an ecstatic experience of the sweep and surge of love; secondly the wider inner fury of the nation at large is fully vented; culminating in the violent demonstration of national indignation at the alien rule, Govind being its focal figure.

(The Indo-Anglian Novel and the Changing Tradition 59)

The novel “Some Inner Fury” ends mysteriously and it shows affinity with E.M. Foster’s novel “A Passage to India”. In “A Passage to India” the writer leaves the mysterious notes before the reader and creates confusion in the mind of readers. The reader finds himself unable to understand the reality when he binds-up the novel and he fails to know what really
happened to Miss Quested in the Marabar Caves. The same mystery we find in Miss Markandaya’s “Some Inner Fury”. In the opening it seems a love story, its middle spot lights on ‘Quit India Movement of 1942’, and the end totally surprises the reader when a mark comes before them in regard to Kit’s murder. They get confused when they close the novel because neither they can blame Govind for Kit’s murder nor any other person. Mickey proves that Govind stabs knife on Kit and Mira proves that any other person would be the murderer and both the eye witness is strong at their points. The reader favours Hickey and blames Govind for murder. It means that Mira lies, but why she will lie when her own brother has been stabbed. Then who is the real murderer?

A study of the novel “Possession” shows that this novel is a parable of colonialism. We find that the novel presents a living picture of Britons’ possession over India. Interpreted as a political novel, it presents a political confrontation between the East and West. S. Krishnamurthy rightly observes when she says that Caroline is queen England lording it over her colony India and Val is a poor India underdeveloped and unschooled but spiritually intact.

In the beginning the British came to India as missionaries and traders to spread their religion and trade. Later, they established East India
Company in 1600. Earlier their policy was peaceful, but soon they started to interfere in the politics and internal affairs of the country. They broke the promises they had made in regard to trade between India and Britain and with their diplomacy they possessed Indian trade and the country. One can find a comparable situation of Valmiki and Caroline in the novel. Caroline comes to India to attend a party and then she goes to find ‘ark’ (wine) in a village of South India where she meets Valmiki, an inborn painter. Val and Caroline belong to two different races of the ruler (the Britons) and the ruled (The Indian). If Val is an Indian and Caroline is a British, yet Val’s talent in the trade brings them close to each other. In the beginning Caroline takes he under her patronage to make him a distinguished artist and with her help Val stands a well-known artist. Caroline feels proud of her discovery:

I discovered him in a cave. Oh yes, a real one in India. Hideously bare and uncomfortable, except for those superb walls. And Val of course.

(Markandaya, Possession 125)

She changed the form of Val into a sophisticated Youngman. Anusaya is surprised to see him a sophisticated painter:

Did it make him more acceptable? In this polished western world, obviously yes. The east was too strident, too dissonant,
too austere, too raw; it has to be muted, toned down, tarted up-
its music larded with familiar rhythms, its literature wrenched
into shapes recognized by western tradition, its dances made
palatable by an infusion of known idioms, its people taught to
genuflect before understatement- before a measure of
acceptance comes. Undiluted east had always been too much for
the west; and soulful east always imitated lan-dog fashion to the
west, mutely asking to be not too little and too much, but just
right.

(Possession 109-110)

But here Caroline is not apart from those British who came to India,
started trade and then possessed the country. Caroline takes Val with her to
make him a well-known painter with the promise that Val will be free to
return to his country, but when Val becomes a sophisticated youngman and
distinguished artist, she possesses him. Although Val is possessed later, but
the smell of this possession we find since the moment she decided to take
him under her patronage, like those colonials who started trade with India
with their underhand mission:

She was supremely confident, born and brought-up to be so,
with as little thought of fallibility as a colonial in the first flush
of empire, as missionary in the full armour of his mission, dogged by none of the hesitancies that handicap lesser breeds.

(Possession 15)

In the hands of Caroline Valmiki, a well known painter becomes a puppet. He cannot go against her and this diabolic woman plays a cruel game with this innocent native. She not only possesses his talent but also his life. She does not permit him to live with Ellie whom he loves with the core of his heart, and separates them when she comes to know about their love affair. She makes him her paramour inspite of being older to him. Here Val’s separation from Ellie hints at the cruel policy of the British rulers under which they divided the countrymen to fulfill their selfish motive. Like them Caroline too follows the same policy- ‘Divide and Rule’. First she separated Val and Ellie and then Val and Annabel. Anasuya says of her inherited policy:

Divide and Rule. It was a formidable inherited skill.

(Possession 226)

Seeing the difficult situation of Valmiki we easily understand the situation of the Indian people during British rule in India. Caroline takes Val to make him a painter but in England she exploits him to fulfill her selfish goal. The forgery in regard to letters from swamy, lies, separation
from Ellie and Annabel, negation of his natural needs, hurt Val’s feelings. Valmiki wanted to improve his talent with her help but did not like to sacrifice the right of freedom at its cost. Caroline’s tricks against him for her own good break his heart. Exploitation of his right and feelings compels him to return to his country for freedom and peace, and with the help of Ansuya he becomes successful.

If we look back to the past we see that Britons possessed India through trade and after being the rulers of the country they exploited the countrymen. They neglected their (Indians) needs and tortured them in such a way that an awakening took place among the countrymen as the reaction of this exploitation. They organized and fought against the Britons to find their fundamental right of freedom, and they acquired it.

The Britons who ruled the country had hateful sight for the ruled Indians. They regarded themselves superior to Indian, but their superiority failed to understand the mystiques and spirituality of India.

Emotional, Caroline murmured. “Unstable. Foreigners are Dear Annabel; you must realize they aren’t like us… You would never be able to rely on one of them.”

(Possession 206)
More bloody fool I to have thought you had any because now could you, you aren’t like us, you wouldn’t even know what decency means.

(Possession 207)

Caroline’s superiority fails to understand Indian spirituality. She calls it ‘wildernesses. She possesses Val, culturally, morally and physically, but when he turns to spiritual world, she fails to posses him. When the Swamy goes to England to attend the meeting of ‘International Guild for the Advancement of Theosophy’, she bitterly criticizes spirituality and the Swamy;

‘It’s a seduction’, she said, spiritual if you like. There’s no place for it in England. He ought never to have been allowed in.

(Possession 143)

This all shows that the theme of Indian spiritual philosophy and western materialism, and subordinate theme east-west confrontation are successfully developed in the novel, the victory of Indian spirituality over western materialism.

The presence of the Swamy in Possession is highly significant. As a potent symbol of India’s spiritual tradition, he continues to influence and
embolden Val to reach the right place. Gandhiji, though apparently a political leader during the freedom movement, had also been an inexhaustible source of moral and spiritual inspiration to the millions of freedom fighters. Caroline’s surrendering before the Swamy is comparable to the surrender of the British Raj before Gandhiji’s non-violent movement.

“Markandaya, while dealing with the confrontation between Britons and India, remain thoroughly objective and does not deliberate till the balance this way or that. This is why her depiction is not only highly objective but also artistically beautiful she is, therefore, in no hurry to come very ‘near the paradise of reconciliation and ultimate harmony”.

(Modern Fiction Studies 765-6)

K.R. Rao is fully justified when he asserts that:

Only Kamala Markandaya, among others appears to be unsentimental in the presentation of the East-West dilemma, for she concocts no solutions and arrives at no platitudinous synthesis or coalescence. She maintains objectivity throughout, and very scrupulously avoids the dichotomy which we find in the works of other novelist.

(The Fiction of Raja Rao 7)
A deeper analysis of Miss Markandaya’s both novels reveals by a judicious accommodation of interests, harmony could be achieved between the two worlds. The love of Mira and Richard would have fructified if it were not dramatized against the backdrop of a political unheard and push Val away from her. A considerate approach towards the freedom movement could have averted the conflict between the British rulers and the Indian freedom fighters.
WORKS CITED


*Srimad Bhagwad Geeta*: Chapter IV.