Violated Virginity of Nature and Humans: An Ecocritical Study of Kamala Markandaya’s Novels The Coffer Dams and Two Virgins

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Abstract

The Indian novelist and journalist Kamala Purnaiya Taylor, (pseudonym : Kamala Markandaya (1924 – 16 May 2004) expresses her worries about nature and human’s virginity in the sense that both are to harmonize with each other and live in peace , so that none of them attacks the virginity of the other. Once humans or nature lose it, they become a different element that is entirely different from the one it used to be before the attack takes place. Moreover, each one of them may react violently to the cause or doer, vengeance or passivism may be among the results of that cause or action of the doer. It may get out of control and the destruction caused may not be healed easily, and sometime it may not get healed at all. Ecocritically, Markandaya studies the human psychology before and that attack happens. She also assesses the reaction of nature to any harm it may undergo.

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The Coffer Dams, Markandaya’s sixth novel, was published in 1969. At the time, the author could not know that her book would pave the way for future activist literature like Arundhati Roy’s recent offerings. In her novel, Markandaya explores the struggle Indian tribal nations face when an extensive dam project threatens to destroy their communities. Many consider The Nowhere Man (1972) to be the author’s greatest novel. Kamala Markandaya’s style is characterized by the use of metaphors and motifs, and short, clipped sentence structure. Her writing is generally empathetic, and she provides multiple perspectives on a range of subjects. Kumar, Shiv K. “Tradition and Change in the Novels of Kamala Markandaya.” Books Abroad 43: 4 (Autumn 1969): 508.