

common plants. And mine is a disease to be cured and so you would have sent me to hospital and I would have died there.”⁷

But when Dandekar or Chandru fall ill, she calls the doctor and administers the “Western” medicines rather than running to the faith healer. Markandaya has presented the clash of two modes of life, the Western and the Oriental and the resulting process of modernization. The British influence was conducive to the growth of a new approach towards life. Sarojini does not like to visit hospitals but when it is a matter of life and death, she does not hesitate. Perhaps this symbolizes the change that was coming among the natives regarding their views towards Western culture and medicine.

In her novel, *Possession*, Kamala Markandaya has presented the East West theme in the context of Indian spiritualism. Among other things, the writer is indeed emphasizing colonial confrontation, Prof. H.M. William wrote,

“This novel is one of the most forceful artistic explorations of the distortions of India’s national character in the British embrace and of her consequent urge to be free.”⁸

Lady Caroline, an aristocratic English woman comes across an illiterate young man, a goat-herd, Valmiki in a remote area of South India. She takes him to England where he becomes a celebrated painter but loses his soul. He gets involved with Ellie and then Annabel and has to ultimately return to India to recover his true self. In this novel, Kamala Markandaya has presented the theme of colonialism and also colonial confrontation through her characters and events like the frequent confrontation between Caroline, the English Lady representing Western culture and Anasuya, the Westernised Indian, who is self-respecting and is true to her culture. The novel suggests that a brief contact with the West may be good for India’s development, growth, modernization and cultivating a scientific, rational approach but ultimate fulfilment can be attained only by holding on to our own spiritual values, culture and heritage. The Western philosophy is too materialistic. India’s relationship with the West may be good for progress but not to the extent of the possession of its soul by the West. Valmiki resents Caroline’s attempt to possess his soul. Anusuya feels,

“Possession I thought appalled:attenuated form of the powerful craving to have, to hold, which was so dominating and menacing a part of Caroline; which left a grey and ugly trail of human misery such as, horribly swollen but not unrecognizable, one saw stumbling in the wake of power-societies and empires.”⁹

Caroline is a typical representative of her Western culture with her pride, possessiveness, ego, cunning and Valmiki too never ceases to be an Indian in his honesty, simplicity, large heartedness and compassion Valmiki work makes an American critic say,

“This young painter paints as if unknown to himself he had glimpsed, beyond the horizon, the transcendent powers of Universe, and the refracted light brings a hint of the power and the menace into his own painting.”¹⁰

Perhaps this was due to his Indian spiritual heritage. Like Kamala Markandaya, Anusuya is an Indian influenced by the Western philosophy on the intellectual plane. Kamala Markandaya’s exposure to Western life and culture enabled her to take a balanced view of both the cultures. Margaret P. Joseph wrote,

“Her achievement lies chiefly in her artistic first position of the sustaining values of the Indian spirited tradition and the soulless prurient of a western virtuoso ‘sans’ the sense of enduring values of life, and in breathing into their polarized