

# Probing Identities Amid Racial and Cultural Conflicts: Kamala Markandaya's *The Nowhere Man* and *Some Inner Fury*

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Kamala Markandaya, a pioneer member of the Indian Diaspora occupies an outstanding place among the Indian women novelists writing in English. She belongs to the body of writers who, by choice or otherwise, have left their countries of origin and made their homes elsewhere. Since the 1950s she had been living in Britain and has written novels about India or about Indians in England. She thus takes her place alongside the writers such as Salman Rushdie, V. S. Naipaul, Bharati Mukherjee and Jhumpa Lahiri to name a few, all of whom trace their origins to India. In a wider context, she comes under the umbrella of third world post-colonial writers. Her strength as a novelist comes from her sensitive creation of individual characters and situations which are simultaneously representative of a larger collective. Cross-cultural and inter-racial conflicts are the recurring theme in her novels. Her novels deal with different predicaments of identity. This paper highlights identity crises in the two of her novels: *Some Inner Fury*<sup>1</sup> which dramatizes the lives of young people lost in the political confusion of Independence struggle; and *The Nowhere Man*<sup>2</sup> that foreshadows many diasporic issues with which we are preoccupied today and in which she astutely critiques an Indian immigrant's experience in Britain. Here the identity crises arise out of political and socio-cultural background, as the struggle for independence in India enters in to a violent phase.

As a multicultural, diasporic, post-colonial Indian living in London, Kamala Markandaya's works portray what constitutes her experience — the expatriate dilemma. In *The Nowhere Man*, Markandaya delved insightfully into the diasporic issues and problem of expatriation twenty years before others spoke of it. In post-colonial societies, the crisis of identity often seems to override all considerations. The social identity of people is rooted in their culture while at individual level it is determined by personal achievements. The

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<sup>1</sup> Kamala Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury* (London: Putnam, 1955).

<sup>2</sup> Kamala Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man* (Bombay: Sangam Publishers, 1975).

main character, Srinivas, settled in London, performed well in business, bought his own house, came to recognize himself as Londoner and tried to assimilate within the local society. However, in order to achieve 'completeness', fusion of individual and social consciousness is necessary which Srinivas could not achieve as English society never approved of his assimilation, and for Englishmen like Fred, he was a soulless 'black man', an intruder with the mark of a devil.

In *The Nowhere Man*, Srinivas is the 'nowhere man' who, after passing two-thirds of his life in England, during which he sacrificed a son to war, is heckled by racist hoodlums to go back to his own country. He is bewildered as to where he belongs: he has lived in England for thirty years and yet became a rootless, restless individual disposed of India and disowned by England. He represents millions of men who, for some reason or other leave their own roots and fail to strike roots in alien soil and die as rootless, restless individuals.

*Some Inner Fury* depicts the dilemma of Mira, whose family becomes tragically involved both for and against the struggle for freedom. One of her brothers is pro-British; the other a freedom fighter; and she herself is torn between her Indian patriotism and her ardent and sincere love for Richard, an Englishman. Kitsami's westernized outlook makes him an alien in his own country. *Some Inner Fury* is a semi-autobiographical novel, the story of a young woman Mira in love with an Englishman, Richard, in the tumultuous 1940s when India was fighting for independence, focusing on her conflicts as she is divided between her ardent and genuine love for Richard, an Englishman, and the compelling political forces of Indo-British turmoil. These forces pull them apart and her mind, revelling in romantic love, returns to the harsh realities of life. However, in *The Nowhere Man* Markandaya is more concerned with unfolding the sense of alienation of Srinivas, or the modern man. Here political considerations occupy a secondary place, the primary purpose being to highlight the isolation of the individual soul and expose the pathos of the human condition.

Identity is the core issue in exploration of Diaspora, especially diasporic identity that is composed of various factors and sub-factors and can be identified with hybridism, cross-cultural and contaminated social and cultural regimes. Theorist E. H. Erikson described identity as "a subjective sense as well as an observable quality of personal sameness and continuity, paired with some belief in the sameness and continuity of some shared world image."<sup>3</sup> It is a characteristic that defines a person and impacts upon everything they do, from the relationships they form, to the work they do and everything in

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<sup>3</sup> E. H. Erikson, 'Reflections on the Dissent of Contemporary Youth', *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, vol. 51 (1970), p. 13.

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between. Identity achievement occurs when an individual has gone through an exploration of different identities and made a commitment to one but if he loses the sense of personal sameness and historical continuity he undergoes identity crisis.

Identity is a constant companion of an individual and determines how they see and how they feel about themselves. The formation and sustainment of identity in society is dependant on the theory of the sociologist. An individual's identity is related with race, class and gender. Other factors such as nationality also lead to an individual's identity. National identity takes precedence over other possible identities. In *Some Inner Fury*, Mira and Richard had to part, owing to their different national identities and obligations pertaining to these identities. In *The Nowhere Man*, Vasantha identifies herself as an Indian and even after years there never thinks of herself as a Londoner. Yet, identity is not something simply inherited, it is also transmitted culturally as is the case of Kit in *Some Inner Fury* and Laxman of *The Nowhere Man*. Both identify themselves with the adopted culture in which they grew up instead of the inherited one.

Identity crises and alienation are some of the greatest problems confronting modern man. In the twentieth century, specially the post-war period, has been an age of great spiritual stress and strain and has rightly been dubbed 'The Age of Alienation'. Edmund Fuller remarks that in our age "Man suffers not only from war, persecution, famine and ruin but from inner problems... a conviction of isolation, randomness and meaninglessness in his way of existence."<sup>4</sup> It is perceived that there is always a struggle between what the individual aspires for and the harsh reality of what he achieves, what he professes and what he practises, what he really is and what he would like to be taken for, and this has crumpled his life leaving an insidious effect on his inner being. The injuries inflicted and the scars left on his psyche make him realize his helplessness.

Alienated individuals have been variously delineated in modern literature; the outsider as a protagonist is a recurrent figure in much of twentieth century Indo-English fiction and in Markandaya's novels owing to historical and socio-cultural reasons. Man's rootlessness and the consequential loneliness and anxiety are the keynotes of her unique vision of predicament of modern man in contemporary Indo-English fiction. Srinivas, in *The Nowhere Man* is an alien, rootless and outsider as an immigrant whereas Kit, in *Some Inner Fury* is westernized to such an extent that he becomes alien among his own people. Premala's alienation results from her estrangement from her

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<sup>4</sup> Edmund Fuller, *Man in Modern Fiction* (New York: Random House, 1958), p. 18.

culture and her failure to adopt her husband's westernized manner and mode of living. All of them are probing for their roots and identities.

*The Nowhere Man* is a compassionate and distressing tale of an Indian immigrant caught up in racial prejudices. Srinivas, a South Indian Brahmin, finds himself in London not by volition but by coercion. When his family became embroiled in the Nationalist Movement by their association with their neighbour, a distant relative. Srinivas had to flee the displeasure of the British in India after hasty marriage with Vasantha. As Srinivas and Vasantha settle down on alien soil, their ties with India are more or less broken. They, along with their two sons Laxman and Seshu, make a house of their own, give it the name 'Chandraprāsād' after their original home in India, although for their neighbours and others in this new land it is simply 'No. 5' and their family, 'the people at No.5'.

Cut off from their native land, they try to assimilate themselves in their adoptive land but the western biased attitude towards the aliens is seen through their relations with their neighbours. Their neighbours are not intimate, not because they have been reticent or uncivil but because their neighbours like Mrs. Field and Mrs. Glass as V. Rangan explains: "have not taken kindly to an Indian family, entrenching itself comfortably in their locality when they themselves been living an economically precarious life."<sup>5</sup> However, with the passage of time Srinivas develops a sort of patriotic affinity with England as he tells Mrs. Pickering with pride: "This is my country now. ... My country! I feel at home in it, more so than I would in my own."<sup>6</sup> He shows similar feelings to his friend, Abdul Bin Ahmed telling him that England is his country, "This is where I live, in England."<sup>7</sup> Srinivas does not agree with Abdul that Britain would one day like to turn him out and harbours the illusion that he is happy and content in this foreign land. Srinivas who has started considering himself English 'by adoption' is, however, soon to be disillusioned. His sense of belongingness receives a rude shock when Fred tells him without any reservation, "You got no right to be living in this country."<sup>8</sup> Unable to secure decent jobs the young men of England like Fred, Mike, Joe and Bill begin to look upon the émigrés to be the cause of their miseries and turned hostile towards them: "They came in hordes, occupied all the houses, filled the hospital beds and their offspring took all the places in the school."<sup>9</sup> Scornful

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<sup>5</sup> V. Rangan, 'The Nowhere Man: An Analysis', in *Perspectives on Kamala Markandaya*, ed. Madhusudan Prasad (Ghaziabad: Vimal Prakashan, 1984), pp. 189–90.

<sup>6</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 78.

<sup>7</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 75.

<sup>8</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 171.

<sup>9</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 207.

remarks of Mrs. Glass such as, “It’s these people. These immigrants. They keep coming here, who asked them? One day they are poor, living off the rates, the next they could buy us all up”<sup>10</sup> demonstrate her hostility towards immigrants like Srinivas.

As the agitation against blacks mounts, the posters carrying “man sized messages of hate, BLACKS GO HOME open up new hells of fear and desolation”<sup>11</sup> within Srinivas and others like him. Abdul of Zanzibari, who himself has been a victim of discrimination, has warned Srinivas not to think of England as his country, “The British won’t allow it.”<sup>12</sup> Srinivas realizes the truth of these words when he suffers torment at the hands of Fred. He becomes a ‘disoriented’ person as he finds himself an unwanted man and a trespasser. He tells Mrs. Pickering, “It is the time when one is made to feel unwanted, and liable to be ostracized further, perhaps beyond the limit one can reasonably expect of oneself.”<sup>13</sup> He receives a stunning blow when he realizes that if he leaves England, he has nowhere to go. “Nowhere, he said to himself, and he scanned the pale anxious eyes which were regarding him for the reasons that might drive him out, a nowhere man looking for a nowhere city.”<sup>14</sup>

Sometimes Srinivas feels reassured by the sympathetic words of Mr. Fletcher, Fred’s mother, when she asks him not to leave and to treat this country as his own country. He feels confident and says, “No, I won’t. I do belong here now. It was good of you to remind me.”<sup>15</sup> However soon afterwards, he senses the hollowness of his claim as he faces the existentialist problem of loneliness, alienation, adjustment and belonging. In the midst of agitations arising from racial prejudice and discrimination, he tries to accept his position as an outsider. He says out of utter frustration, “I am a stranger.” He muses over his situation as: “An alien whose manners, accents, voice, syntax, bones, build, way of life — all of him — shrieked *alien!*”<sup>16</sup> He feels terribly lonely and rootless and often resorts to the memories of past. He finds vicarious pleasure in looking in to old tin box containing Vasantha’s belongings. He wishes to return to India but cannot do so. He can make an expedition to the land of his birth only in imagination. There is nothing fixed or predetermined in identity and like shifting kaleidoscopic images, identities are constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed regularly. Srinivas, a nationalist Indian deported to England in youth; being seceded from his well-founded

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<sup>10</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 207.

<sup>11</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 175.

<sup>12</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 78.

<sup>13</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 202.

<sup>14</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 174.

<sup>15</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 174.

<sup>16</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 241.

traditional and cultural roots, he tries to get sustenance from his adopted country and after a long stay almost becomes a neutralised Briton but again he is robbed of this identity in last phase of his life by racist like Fred who asks him to leave their country.

However, there has been a marked difference in the attitudes of Srinivas and Vasantha towards England. Vasantha always identifies herself with the Indian culture and way of life, and despite her long residence in London, she never separated herself from her deep-rooted native traditions and culture. She continued to dress in her nine-yard *sari* and kept her hair in bun. With deep veneration she treasured Ganges water, which she brought from India, for the remainder of her life. Her wish that Ganges water to be sprinkled over her ashes reflects her attachment for the Indian milieu and her identity as an Indian. Naming their house in London 'Chandraprāsād' after their original home in India reflects this nostalgia. Moreover, Vasantha's longing for stability and identity is reflected in her strong desire to acquire a house of their own. In the history of human civilization, the question of identity is usually tied to the politics of place. The idea of self stands in close relation to the passion for place — one's own place. Her words reflect her contentment on forging link with native place in alien land, "At least we have achieved something. A place of our own, where we can live according to our own lights although in alien surroundings: and our children after us."<sup>17</sup>

Their sons, Laxman and Seshu, born and raised in England, do not inherit any Indian character. They are an example of the second generation of immigrants. Thus Laxman's situation, since he has never known India, is different from Srinivas's. He attended a Christian school and remained an ardent Christian from the age of ten, to the extent of never lifting a finger on the Sabbath. He fought in the war on the behalf of British and married an English girl. He completely identified himself with the English culture and ways of life. He is a pillar of the community, employer of thousands, a magistrate and member of the Hospital Management Committee and, as all these, integral to the nation. The question of 'them' and 'us' raised by the racists, therefore, shocks him deeply. Though, engrossed and integrated in the western life pattern, he feels utterly lost. He tenaciously wishes to belong to the country in which he was born, lived and laboured, not in some reservation rusted up with in it. The rebellious feelings aroused in him make him muse over his situation:

Whatever anyone might say or think or do he knew he belonged, and where belonged. To the country in which he was borne and lived and laboured, not in some reservation rustled up within it. Whatever

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<sup>17</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 200.

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fathers of sons or sons of bitches might think, suitable inmate for a ghetto he was not, and didn't intend to be.<sup>18</sup>

The situation becomes more perplexing for second generation migrants like Laxman who are far removed from their family's place of origin and are strangers to their ancestral culture; they immerse themselves in the culture of their birth country but find hostility and rejection and become double strangers. Avtar Brah rightly observes, "Identity then is simultaneously subjective and social and is constituted in and through culture. Indeed culture and identity are inextricably linked concepts."<sup>19</sup> When an English woman tells him, "Go back where you belong", he replies, "I belong right here."<sup>20</sup> He responds to the rude remark of his adversary with equal rudeness.

Srinivas's life-long battle with an alien environment comes to an end when Fred sets the house on fire. Ever since he was forced to land in London, though he has entertained the idea of returning to India now and then, but all along he earnestly tried to feel one with his adoptive country, making every effort to identify with it. But the host community never absorbed him into its mainstream; he is considered to be a trespasser and his presence has always been viewed with suspicion and anger, even by his own son, Laxman. When Srinivas and Vasantha bought 'Chandraprāsād', they dreamt of living happily there with their children. But as fate in the form of racial and cultural differences should have it, and with the family shrinking, Srinivas could occupy only the attic room and even that is resented by Fred and Mrs. Glass; in fact his very presence is considered to be a contagion by Fred who is out to remove the pestilence of immigrants. As Srinivas's body shrinks on account of his disease, even the space occupied by him shrinks only to finally be removed from all spatial and temporal limitations. He dies a rootless, alienated individual longing for an identity of which he was robbed by circumstances. The story ends bringing the life-long battle of an individual in the pursuit of identity to a sad end.

*Some Inner Fury* is a tragedy engineered by the political confusion of the struggle for independence, interracial relationships, deracination from one's native culture and concomitant problems, especially with powerful political pressure, affecting the life of characters. It is the story of Kitsami, Mirabai, Roshan, educated, sophisticated, westernized Indians; Govind, a nationalist, with a dislike for westernized manners; Premala, an embodiment of Indian culture; and Richard, a British visitor to India and Mira's lover. Kitsami,

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<sup>18</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 271

<sup>19</sup> Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> Markandaya, *The Nowhere Man*, p. 273.

educated in London, is a thoroughly westernized son of a moderately progressive family, and represents that generation of youth “who had been completely swept off their feet by the English education and found nothing valuable in their ancient culture and way of life.”<sup>21</sup> He is an anglicized Indian, wholly loyal to western culture and impatient with traditional attitudes whether they are advocated by his own mother, Mira, or Premala. He is self-centred, self-indulgent, loves company and to that end unmindful of the inconvenience or hurt he may be causing another. “Kit being entirely a product of West, emerges as a stereotyped *Burra Sahib*.”<sup>22</sup> Western culture has gone deep in his blood and he had a genuine respect for it. Contrasting him with Govind in his attitude to western ways of life, his sister Mira points out:

But Kit did not merely participate in it: he was a part of it; his feeling for west was not a cheep flirtation, to be enjoyed so long, no longer, to be put aside, thereafter and forgotten, or at the best remembered with a faint nostalgia. It went deeper: it was understanding and love.<sup>23</sup>

Westernized men like Kit live in a world half-western and half-Indian and suffer the inner conflict that goes on within them. Kit married an Indian girl, willy-nilly observed the Hindu rituals of society. His bi-cultural identity, duality of culture threatens his identity. He is an alienated person, who is like a vine clinging to the British Raj, having no individual identity.

Premala, innocent, modest, utterly unpretentious, is shown straddling two diverse cultures — an inherited collectivist culture with its emphasis on close family ties and the other with westernized modes and manners of life which she is expected by her husband Kit to adopt. Premala embodies an Indian culture that has long eulogized the values of self-effacement, self-denial, service, sacrifice and subjugation among women. European entertainments like clubs, tennis and parties are profoundly alien for her whereas Kit evaluates his wife only in terms of Western social grace or the lack of it. Premala makes heroic attempts to measure up to Kit’s requirements but is unable to fit into Kit’s world. As a result she grows lonely and miserable without an outlet for her pent-up affections.

The idea of being understood is directly related to a person being rooted in a place and tradition. Premala is split between ‘primitive’ and ‘civilized’; her struggle is the struggle of one who finds their identity lost in the so-called civilized world. She is culturally uprooted and feels estranged in Kit’s society

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<sup>21</sup> Harish Raizada, ‘East-West Confrontation in the Novels of Kamala Markandaya’, in *Perspectives on Kamala Markandaya*, ed. Madhusudan Prasad (Gaziabad: Vimal Prakashan, 1984), p. 41.

<sup>22</sup> Meenakshi Mukherjee, *The Twice Born Fiction* (New Delhi: Heinemann, 1974), p. 83

<sup>23</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 121.



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and is certainly an alien. Her decision to adopt a girl is an attempt to fill the void in her life. She sublimates her feelings in schoolwork with English missionary Hickey. She is involved in her school work to such an extent that after a fright from Govind's warning she dashes to the village to save the school at tremendous risk to herself and gets caught in the fire and dies. In Premala Markandaya shows the insecurity, isolation, bewilderment and vulnerability that the traditionally brought up Indian women feels, when she has to adjust to Western norms of living. She fails to accommodate to tastes and values of a culture in flux and suffers from insecurity, loneliness, distraction and scepticism. Being sensitive and gentle by nature Premala is overwhelmed by harsh reality. She tries to be an Ideal wife and companion to her husband but ends up being a non-person and her death puts a stop to her desperate adjustments, to her soul shrinking compromises. Her tragedy results from the fact that she was transplanted in the alien soil, rendered rootless, and thus consequently lost her identity.

Govind is a staunch nationalist, rooted in the native soil; he identifies himself completely with Indian milieu. The adopted brother of Kit, he harbours a deep hatred for the British rule and western civilization. He despises even a well-meaning English missionary, Hickey. In his opinion these missionaries are,

men who assaulted the religion which was his, though he might not cherish it, impugning its austere dignitaries in a hundred ways. They were also white men who not only set up their alien and unwanted institutions in the land but also, for the preservation of these, invariably sided with those other white men who ruled the country.<sup>24</sup>

In spite of being brought up in a Westernised household with two dining halls and two sets of cooks, one European and other Indian, whose members went to European clubs and danced and played, where women folk spoke in English with English visitors, where even Dodamma, the orthodox widow could understand English, Govind as Mira says:

was not and had never been part of a culture which was not his own — the culture of an aloof and alien race twisted in the process of transplantation from its homeland, and so divorced from the people of the country as to be no longer real. For those who participated in it he had a savage, harsh contempt.<sup>25</sup>

Govind with his unstinted identity as a true Indian presents a contrast to the westernized Indian, Kit.

Roshan Merchant, an emancipated young lady, Oxford educated and divorced is born in one world and brought up in another, enters both the East

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<sup>24</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 127.

<sup>25</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 107.

and the West and moves in both with equal ease and nonchalance. “It was a dual citizenship which a few people had, which a few people may have spurned but many more envied, and which she herself simply took for granted. And curiously enough both the worlds were glad to welcome her in their midst.”<sup>26</sup> She always tries to affirm and assert her individuality and her independent identity as a woman of strong resolution and perseverance. In spite of her English education, when it comes to western values Roshan is truly Indian. Despite her sympathy and appreciation for the West and her intimate relationship with certain western individuals, she is, no doubt genially and truthfully Indian at heart and takes active participation in the political freedom struggle against Britain. She bubbles up with vitality and free spirit. The people like Roshan, with their tremendous inner strength, are capable of carving their identity and never facing identity crisis. Stephen Hemenway remarks, “She transcends artificial barriers without compromising her personal and political integrity.”<sup>27</sup>

In *Some Inner Fury*, Kamala Markandaya focuses on the dilemma of inter-racial romance and marriage through Mira’s deep love for Richard Marlowe. The lasting and intimate relationship is made impossible as they belong to two different races locked in political conflict. The spreading conflagration of the ‘Quit India Movement’ divides the loyalties of people by its fury and ruthlessness. This political conflict plays havoc with Mira and Richard’s life: caught in its web, they are torn apart.

When Richard falls a victim to racial hatred enflamed by the nationalists against the ruling class his feelings echo Srinivas’s. Like Srinivas, he is made to feel unwanted in his adopted country with the agitation mounting up against the British during the ‘Quit India Movement’. Though he survives the acid bomb attack, the scars that remain are too deep. Like Srinivas he realizes, “It is a terrible thing to feel unwanted. To be hated.”<sup>28</sup> Even Mira’s assurances, “Richard – this feeling isn’t for you. Or – or for people like you. You must believe me”,<sup>29</sup> can not satisfy him for he knew that at such turbulent time it was not possible to make individual differentiation as the divide going on in was racial; the people were considered either Indians or foreigners, natives or outsiders either be. That is why he asks Mira,

Do you really think people can be singled out like that? One by one, each as an individual? At a time like this?... No, of course not. There is not the patience, the courage, the time. You belong to one side, if you don’t you belong to other... There is no in between. You have

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<sup>26</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 107.

<sup>27</sup> Stephen Hemenway, *The Novel of India* (Calcutta: Writers’ Workshop, 1975), p. 66.

<sup>28</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 169.

<sup>29</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 168.

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shown your badge, you have taken your stance, you on the left, you on the right, there is no middle standing.<sup>30</sup>

What Richard thought about India and Indians hardly mattered, more important was that he was a foreigner – it was “there in your face, the colour of your skin, the accent of your speech, in the clothes on your back.”<sup>31</sup>

National identities and obligations influence the lives of individuals. The same happens with Mira as she is torn between her ardent love for Richard and her obligation toward her motherland. During Govind’s trial, when the court is thronged by the slogan shouting mob and Govind is taken away, she could not keep herself aloof from her own people and is forced to leave Richard who was her angel and stood by her in miserable times. She throws in her lot with the crowd. Quite naturally, helplessly and inescapably, she forsakes her love for the sake of a cause, even if it means being pitted against her own Richard. They become victims at the hands of convention and are helpless:

Soon I would go too. When the tail of that procession went through the door, I would join it, and Richard would stay behind. This was not a time for decision, for he knew he could not come with me, and I knew I could not stay: it was simply the time for parting.<sup>32</sup>

Identity formations are determined by concrete and tangible everyday realities such as allegiance to a nation, culture and family. Every human being, in addition to his or her personal identity, has a sense of who they are in relation to the larger community – the nation identity. Mira and Richard are separated into ‘our people’ and ‘your people’ owing to their national, political and racial identities. Mira herself becomes a divided soul puzzled by the questions of ‘our people’ and ‘your people’. As she parts from Richard and joins the procession of political agitators, she reflects:

Go? Leave the man I loved to go with these people? What they mean to me, what could they mean, more than the man I loved? They were my people – those others were his. Did it mean something then – all this ‘your people’ and ‘my people’?... For us there was no other way, the forces that pulled us apart were too strong.<sup>33</sup>

She knows however that in a hundred years, it will all be one and there will be no more ‘my people’ or ‘your people’: “It is all one, I said to myself. In a hundred years it is all one; and still my heart wept, tearless desolate, silently to itself.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 169.

<sup>31</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 169.

<sup>32</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 222.

<sup>33</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 223.

<sup>34</sup> Markandaya, *Some Inner Fury*, p. 223.

Two people deeply in love, who had earlier merged their identities into one, are torn apart by the political strife which makes them identify themselves separately as the members of two distinct communities – the ruling and the ruled – and this gulf was too wide to be breached.

Mira, Premala, and Kit are all fragmented selves and suffer from divided loyalties; they are unsure of their identity and experience emotional turmoil. Markandaya's novels are a startling and powerful collage of the experience of uprooting and resettlement, of the intermingling of personal and social histories and of many other human dimensions involved in transplanting a new culture to a new land. Identity crises and cultural alienation faced by the expatriates, immigrants and even by the natives who become alien in their own country owing to deracination from their moorings, have been presented with deep insight in her works. Unable to identify themselves with the adopted land and culture, migrants like Srinivas and natives like Premala suffer from socio-psychological problems such as rootlessness and alienation and continuously oscillate between two identities – one belonging to native country and culture and other to the land and culture of adoption. As Stuart Hall puts it, "identities are never unified and in modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply, constructed across different often intersecting and agnostic, discourses, practices and positions."<sup>35</sup> Along with illustrating identity crises in *The Nowhere Man* and *Some Inner Fury*, Markandaya achieves a delicate balance between unfolding the individual's psychological and social predicaments and portraying a wider cultural and political setting which creates these crises. Kamala Markandaya is one of those novelists who succeed in recording the inner working of the minds of their characters, their perplexities and social confrontations and endeavours to portray them as individuals growing to themselves, unfolding the delicate processes of their being and becoming.

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<sup>35</sup> Stuart Hall, 'Introduction: Who Needs Identity?', in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, eds Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (London: Sage Publication, 1996), p. 1.