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**WOMAN SUBJECT IN KAMALA MARKANDAYA'S  
NECTAR IN A SIEVE:**

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# Woman Subject in Kamala Markandaya's Nectar in a Sieve:

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**Abstract – There is no denying in the fact that “woman subject” has been prominent in Kamala Markandaya's novels, as women play an important part. In depicting women and their problems, the novelist exhibits signs of deep impact of a feminist school of writing. Women have significant place in Kamala Markandaya's novels. Her presentation of feminine perception is directed towards an objective account of women's emotions, assessing Indian womanhood's confrontation with male reality. There is no overstatement in calling her novels as feminine as they be a sign of more the world of women and their ways of life than the world of men.**

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In *Some Inner Fury* the Feminist novelists refers to the silent barriers against women:

“There is a tradition, perhaps not only in India, that

Women should not be worried, that the best way to

Ensure this is to keep them as far as possible in

Ignorance... certain domains belong to men alone,

And Indian women learn early not to encroach.”<sup>1</sup>

The very novel ‘Nectar is a Sieve’ too reflects like others novels, Kamala Markandaya's concern of feminist moral by the minute study if sexual and family relationships. She exhorts on the significance of faith in the moral superiority of women in maintaining the sanctity of the family.

In this novel, one can easily observe the voice of the female protagonist, Rukmani. Kamala Markandaya doesn't create a woman world but she presents the real world to find out those actual social and emotional bonds that shackle women.

The intensity of her sorrow and misery leaves her speechless. She ruminates: “For this I have given birth my son, that you should lie in the end at my feet with ashes in your face and coldness in your limbs and yourself departed without trace leaving this huddle of bone and flesh without meanings.”<sup>2</sup>

Rukhmani's spirit of endurance and acceptance has put her into much painful situation. She thinks that in tolerance and silent suffering one can purify of all guilt and can come as a purified person. She says, “The

memory of those days was ever with me yet the passing of time had made it quiescent.”<sup>3</sup>

Her heroic struggle and her mute acceptance and silent suffering give depth and integrity to her character and land her with an elevated, philosophical outlook, she says that there is ‘grandeur in endurance.’ “Our priests fast and inflict on themselves severe punishments and we are taught to bear our sorrows in silence, and all this so that the soul may be cleansed.”<sup>4</sup>

In the evening she goes with her husband Nathan on her voyage. She faces much mental conflict but she show courage to face life and support to her husband. This claims the life of Nathan. This is the final shattering blow to Rukmani, “If I grieve,... it is not for you, but for myself, beloved for how shall in endure to live without you, who are my love and life.”<sup>5</sup>

Rukmani isn't simply a rural girl, an affectionate mother, devoted wife, though not an educated woman but she is literate and conscious. Rukmani holds progressive and liberal approach to the problems of life. As she finds out her gynec problems, she meets doctor kennington, who curves her inability to give birth after the first issue. She develops a feeling of affinity with him and him too. Their friendship gets deeper with the passage of time. They, both carry love regard, compassion for each other. However, Rukmani decides not to reveal her relation with Kenny, to her husband.

Rukmani faces innumerable misfortunes and calamities in the forms of poverty, starvation but she never crumbles to down. Though, deep inside, she is much pained and suffers for her loved ones. She is

much distressed about knowing that her daughter, Ira is rejected by her husband only for her inability to conceive a child. Ira chooses prostitution to earn the bread and butter and then Rukmani becomes a restricting force to family. Rukmani's miseries aggravate when she finds her son Raja beaten to death. But her heroic struggle and her meek acceptance give depth and integrity to her character, she bends but never breaks. Kamala Markandaya tries to set up the fact that when a binding influence such as Rukmani is lacking, real group of people and ideal family life will be impossible and the evils inborn in the social order will become perceptible in the home.

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