

Feminine Psyche: Female Perspective in Anita Nair's 'Mistress'

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ABSTRACT

Women are unavoidable part of society who shares almost half part of society always consider subordinate in this male dominated patriarchal society. This is a kind of boundary line for their self-growth and development. As literature reflect everything happens in society it reflects the subjugation of women too. As of now many women writers encouraged to demonstrate problems of women in this male dominated society. They write about the attitude of society towards women which is actually based on male dominating ego absurdity and artificial opposite tendencies for male and female. They not only write about their inferior status in society, domination of family mental trauma and agonies as individuals. Anita Nair, renowned writer use her pen to give a voice to the exploitation of women in conservative society with her many novels like Ladies Coupe, The Better Man, Mistress, Cut Like Wound, Chain in Custody and many more. The present paper deals with her famous novel 'Mistress' which published in 2005 where she explore the theme of women subjugation and urge for the freedom in the patriarchal male dominated society.

KEYWORDS: Kathkali, Victim, Subjugation, Marginality, Navrasa

INTRODUCTION

Man is a social animal and so he used to live in society. While living in society he used to speak and share our desire and emotion to each other. But from ancient time women consider as subordinate to men and so dominated in this men dominated society. Women in society struggle really hard to establish her identity but her emotion are always matter of suppression by men. Mistress is a beautiful novel represent the Navrasa of human life. Anita Nair use these Navrasa to express human life and emotion.

About Anita Nair:-

Anita Nair born in Mundakotukurussi near Shoranur Kerala on 26 Jan 1966 consider a best writer in Indian writing in English. She completed her graduation in English Literature from Ottapalam, Kerala. She is versatile genius who wrote novels, children books short story book and poems simultaneously. Her first book which is a short story collection Satyr of the Subway received a fellowship of Virginia Center for Creative Arts. In 1997 she went to Virginia Center for further study. Her first novel was The Better Man published in 1999 and Ladies coupe in 2001 both best-selling and translated in to more than 20 languages. Her novel Lessons in Forgetting has film Adaptation with the same name. Which won her prestigious The National Film Award for 2012. She was also awarded with Central Shitya Academy Award for her contribution to Children's books and literature.

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'Nair makes art a living experience, literally... when the performers in Mistress realise that they have to discard the costume to regain their humanity, it is too late. The art of Anita Nair does it for them, in style'
India Today

Female Psyche in Mistress:-

Mistress is a fine novel divided into 3 part and 3 subpart each. All the parts represented with Navrasa. Shringaaram, Haasyam, Karunam, Raudram, Veeram, Bhayaanakam, Beebhalsam, Dbhutam, Shaantam which means the different emotions of human life. There are five different female characters explain in the novel Radha, Sadiyaa, Angela, Devyani and Maya.

First we introduced with Radha who is an educated modern girl who is aware of her strength. She was living away from her home and doing job. She fall in love with her senior manager who is already married he used her as a playmate when his wife make her realisation of the fact she felt ashamed and she realise that she was taken advantage of. But she has to face many problems and consequences of the same which is she became pregnant. She abort that child pretending that she is going to be separated from her husband. Her father find Shyam who loves Radha as a bridegroom and she agrees for the marriage too. Both they are different from each other Shyam was conservative minded where as Radha is modern and independent girl. Shyam consider women are inferior to men so he never

involve her in to his business affairs with her. He always tries to rule on her

‘Why are you like this, Shyam? You seem to want to rule me. You won’t let me breath. It isn’t rght.’

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Radha is accepted her married life with shyam even she not loves to shyam she transform herself in to the role of a traditional hindu wife. She tries hard to be an obedient wife and even if she don’t want she never protest for his touches. She want to start tuition but shyam not allowed to do so she requested to start chetch for kids but Shyam was not accepted that too. Shyam don’t want to make her wife to be independent. A he is aware of her steath that she was educated more than him and was working in a company befor marriage. She always try to please her but his male ego could not pleased by her. Her patience cross the limit when she could not Pregnant after eight years of their marriage and his sister blame Radha for this . as actually male also responsible for the problem of reproduction but Shyam consider that he must not have any problem cause he is a man. But when report of his eximine out proof that he is having problem for the same. Shyam never accept the individuality of Radha. So he never allow her to strat tuition or crutch for the kids.

“I there anything I can do that won’t? I wanted to teach in one of the primary schools and younsaid it was too much work for too little money. When I started to start a tuition class, you said the same. Then I wanted to start a crèche and you said you don’t want house filled with bawling babies.”

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Thus she was limit herself. According to Shyam patriarchal hindu tradition woman should be busy at household duties only and not to interfare in husbands business matter or not to speak openly about the subjugation of her. She could not tolerate the attitude of Shyam.

“Don’t I have a right to an opinion? I am your wife . your wife,do you hear me? But you treat me as if I am a kept woman. A bloody mistresss to fulfil your sexual needs and with no rights.”

-Mistress 73

Here Radha protested against the domination of patriarchal husband. Radha’s dissatisfaction towards married life made her attract towards Christ. Christ Stewart is a traveller came from London for Interview Kathakali artist Koman. She unknowingly buidup relationship with Chris. When her uncle talks about this to her and make her aware about the watch of Shyam on him she stated that.

“My marriage is dead. And Shyam means nothing to me.”

-Mistress 207

She finds her lost happiness in Christ. In many circumstances and incidents with Radha and Shyam Radha prepared her mind to disobey the traditional norms of a good wife she break up the values of Patriarchal marriage and started extramarital affair with him. Shyam’s dominationg attitude towards Radha made her encourage to Christ.

Sadiya another femal Protagonist who is dealing with mental trauma in this patriarchal society. Sadiyaa is a teenage girl from Arab muslim family. Her fathe was one of six chief members of the village and so the family is to follow strict orthodox patriarchal muslim customs and tradition.there is no freedom for a girl to take education or to go close to the sea shore. Or many girl of her age are married but Vappa her father appointed a teacher at her home to teach her and she is not married even at the age of 15. In Arab families girl got married at the age of eight or less. Sadiya fond of exploring new things around her. She fall in love with Sethu a hindu boy. She used to call him Malik, a muslim person to whom she wished for. Her lovetowards Sethu and there stict religious laws opposed it resulted in tragedy. When her father coms to know about this he brands her with heated iron rod. With much effort she manage to escape from home she consider herself as Eve from The Paradise Lost who first disobey the forbidden thin =g to escape from home and second to love for a man who is from different religion. She was craving of freedom because of which she married to Sethu but she doesnot understand the consequences of marrying Sethu. She is proud of her being Kahirs of Arab ancestry so she decide to perform rituals on their new born child stated in Kuran. Fwhen she was having her delivery she was worried for her child stating

“What kind of life would it have anyway, with no ancestry to speak of , no family , not even a religion or a God to call its own?”

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Sethu always tries to console her that baby is approval of love gift from God. This baby is us. Sadiyaa wants to brought up her child with true Muslim values as she is in very sensitive state Sethu agrees for the same. She named the Child ‘Omar Masood’ and wants to do muslim ritual of fitra which is actually five acts of cleanliness in Islam. Then the conflict between inter-religion marriage arise there. Husband and wife had quarrel on the circumession or Khitan for new born child. Bur Sethu don’t want to do that as it may gives harm to new born child. Sadiya tries to convince him but Sethu opposed by say saying it is upto the child when he grown up he will decide to do so. But Sadiya could not convence by Sethu she said

“I made a mistake. I can’t allow my son to make the same.”

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Sadiya thought she is responsible for her son who will be infidel in the world . so she decide to quit and choose sea for final rest. Sadiya’sinnocence made her mistake to consider Sethu as Malik. This is our orthodox patriarchal society which forced to follow the ritual given from the ancestry of huband and not from the wife. This is her tragedy which arise because of her innocence and the discrimination of gender. Her urge is for in search of freedom and not for the equality. She wanted to see the world with her own eyes want to know people and places. Her tragedy represent the conservative society which never allow a women to be free and independent. The mental trauma of her inner soul forced her to commit suicide as she found the only option left for. She was not having enough knowledge of wolrd as she never went outside. Hindu or Islam both religion have strict rules for women if she disobey she get punishment .

Conclusion:-

Anita Nair present the mental condition of women who tried to be an obedient wife for their husband . but the ego of male dominated society hurt their feelings and desire which convert into tragedy or dissatisfaction of married life. She has to obey everything even if she don't want to but still she is always treated as a property of a men and her emotions never consider to be take care of.

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