CONTEMPORARY SCUFFLE OF WOMEN IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF ANITA NAIR AND GITA MEHTA

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ABSTRACT

Women in India are frequently depicted as silent victims. They are portrayed as defenders of traditional Indian culture. They will be cast in a variety of roles in India, including mother, spouse, girl, sister, love, whore, and so on. The contemporary man-centered culture is largely responsible for this way of life. In Indian society, women placed a high value on helping others and being charitable. The primary focus of this paper is on Anita Nair’s novel “Mistress” and Gita Mehta’s novel “The River Suthra”, which explores the perspectives on current female contemporary scuffle [1]. The portrayal of their memorable women protagonists and the feminist tone in their novels make them one of the most outstanding female Indian novelists in English. These narratives have an uncanny ability to penetrate closed worlds. The goal of this study is to learn more about Anita Nair and Gita Metha’s abilities in the contemporary scuffle over the deeper components of a woman’s personality in the selected novels.

Keywords: Pain, Suffering, Scuffle, Mistress, River Suthra, Female Protagonist and Struggle

INTRODUCTION

India is a country that is well-known around the world for having the world's largest majority ruling system; nonetheless, women's backwardness is evident in Indian culture due to social worries, issues, and different constraints imposed on women. Bringing a woman into the world may be considered a disgrace in Indian culture. Women in India face a lot of societal worries and contemporary scuffles throughout their lives, making life a struggle for them from the start. Women in India are regarded as a burden by their families and spouses, who believe that women are only here to spend money for the rest of their lives without acquiring anything. Another exam that women pass is sex segregation, which begins when they are born and continues until they die. In India, ignorance, a lack of basic education, being responsible for household duties, assault, inappropriate behaviour at work, and other issues are major worries for women. Nonetheless, as the country's educated population grows, many significant advancements in women's status have happened.
Gita Mehta and Anita Nair are two of the most well-known authors in Indian English writing, with works that focus on Indian culture, customs, and politics. Women are restricted by religion, shows, culture, and custom. The majority of their women characters strive to overcome cultural barriers and find their place in society. A River Sutra by Gita Mehta was published in 1993, while Mistress by Anita Nair was published in 2005[2]. The artists of those works explore problems such as male dominance, racial discrimination, and one's never-ending search for personality. This paper will demonstrate the contemporary scuffle of women from the perspective of women activist. The paper's main argument is on contemporary scuffles of women and self-identity in male-centric culture.

“Mistress” is a novel about domestic sexual violence. Despite the fact that Anita Nair is far from a feminist, her works look into the expectations of married Indian women and the choices they make in their relationships. Relationships are a prudence in human life. It functions as a driving force in people's lives. It strengthens a man's ethical character, allows him to see his own hidden potential, and recognizes him as a person. When a relationship's path is altered, it breaks people's lives and turns them into survivors of fate. When confronted with a predicament, the individual who has persevered becomes locked in a character crisis. It is irrevocable for such a man, and his ability to sustain relationships with others is lost. As a result, man's ethical strength is critical in preserving relationships and avoiding character crises [3].

Gita Mehta is a well-known writer. She is a great female author. Mehta is a clever, forthright individual who is always open to new experiences and ideas. Gita Mehta's next novel is A River Sutra (1993). It's a more involved and bottom-up approach to work. The Narmada, India's holy watercourse, is central to the novel's design. Changed Sutras can be used to decipher the stories. The purpose of this essay is to find the subtle but consistent "sutra" that runs throughout the text and supports the feminine thought. Streams, snakes, the goddess's group, and womanly reign are all intertwined in the overarching plot in fascinating and significant ways. It's interesting that this is refined despite the all-male cast of characters in the outlining account. The message's women's activist setting in the book A River Sutra is revealed by the connection between present-day scene, mythic examples, and female rule, revealing the message's previously disregarded women's activist setting.

SCUFFLE IN MISTRESS
An adaptable novelist from the Asian mainland's south India, Anita Nair, captures interpersonal and personality crises with vigour and remarkable quality, revealing people through her characters. Her books are mental understandings that begin with a peak and progress through the reader to the conclusion. Paramour is a play about relationships and personalities. It shows a group of artists who perform Kathakali, a traditional folk dance from Kerala, in which Nair's characters are imprisoned in dysfunctional relationships and are sufferers of identity crisis. Nair studied ancient folklore in depth and received training in Kathakali art in order to include beautiful aspects in her story. As a result, the characters are subjected to a psychological examination.
The story begins with a portrayal of a unique relationship between a couple in which the woman desires financial and social liberation. It has to do with how people attract, notice, and sell out one another outside of the constraints of religion, marriage, authenticity, and social standards. There's also a depiction of pre-conjugal and post-conjugal sex, both of which have disturbing endings [4]. The River Suthra, which is described as having plenty of water, represents the shallowness of life among the major characters. The three major female characters Saadiya, Angela, and Radha, who come from different realities, are remarkably similar in their relationship and understanding of their personality crisis. The navarasas in the story depict the similarities and differences between these characters and their male partners. Love, contempt, sorrow, fury, courage, fear, disguise, wonder, and peace are the nine aspects of human emotion. The article analyses the relationships, current squabbles, and identity crisis of the pairs Radha–Shyam/Chris, Koman and Maya/Lalitha/Angela, and Sethu/Saadiya/Devayani through their characters.

Shyam, Radha's better half, is one of the main characters in the original. He's always wanted Radha since he was a child. Despite knowing that Radha was having an extramarital illicit relationship with a married man, he was far too ambitious to even consider marrying her. Radha is also a part of my family. It's me, Radha. I'm getting better every day and from every angle, and I need unrestricted reign over her. After marriage, the two of them had a natural dislike for one another. In light of Shyam's behaviour, Radha despises her marriage to him. She despises his habit of portraying himself as a macho man who demands authority over her. When Shyam extinguishes his genuine delight without her agreement, he feels it an assault. Because of this repugnance, they didn't have any children for the next eight years. Chris, an American writer and a man who is passionate about music, now enters their lives.

Radha, who is already enraged with Shyam, falls head over heels for Chris, believing that he will provide her with genuine pleasure and allow her to find inner peace. Her selling out of Shyam has no effect on her [5]. Because of her repeated visits to meet Chris, Shyam is agitated and tortured in his decisions. After that, Radha realises that Chris, as Shyam, has a genuine desire.

Radha, who should have been a loyal wife, went too far and had an illicit connection with Chris. This deprives them of life, causing them to suffer the consequences of a character crisis. When Chris discovers the truth about his origins, he also undergoes a character crisis. He learns about his father and thus learns that his mother Angela had a relationship with Koman and that he is the progeny of that relationship. As a result, the largest group of persons who had been involved in an illegal relationship ended up suffocating in a personality crisis. Koman is the hero of the clever. He is the son of Sethu. His father provides him with a good education, but he is obsessed with Kathakali. He honed his skills in Kathakali and became a skilled Kathakali artist. Koman's father also wants his son to be financially and intellectually successful. As a result, he obtains a residence on the Nila River's straight. Angela met Koman as he was performing Kathakali. She's been reading Kathakali with him for her thesis for the past two years, and their relationship has grown stronger. He's overly
charming, amusing, sassy, and a compassionate instructor, she thinks. In her opinion, he appears to be lively and generous.

Their problem begins along these lines. Before they marry, they begin to live as married couples. Angela must progress westward in order to establish her scholarly mission and gain recognition. 'Think about it, Koman,' Angela replies. You will be well-known all throughout the world. Your skill merits a large audience. You do realise you're being squandered by her, don't you? Koman is also looking for her, and they both lived in London. Regardless, problems arise in a series, and each circumstance impacts negatively on Koman's male self-image. Following that, he travels to India. His life appears to be a closely guarded secret to him. He has now realised that their connection has destroyed him in his current situation [6].

Maya and Lalitha are two separate women with whom Koman has had an unlawful affair.

Maya is a beautiful woman who has a lot of good qualities. Koman meets her in Delhi. They shared a house in Madras, where she currently resides. Their devotion has progressed to a greater degree, as evidenced by their souls and bodies. When Koman is in her company, he finds peace and comfort. When he returns from his trip abroad, he runs into Lalitha and rejoins the dance school as Ashan. For a long time, Lalitha has been his fancy woman. Even Koman makes an attempt to persuade her to marry him. She declines because of his and society's families. As a result, Koman's relationships with a variety of women intertwined his life and caused him to be discovered. They've all struggled with personality disorders at some point in their lives. Sethu is depicted as a Hindu vagabond child who has been trained to be a medical examiner. Dr. Samuvel provides him with his preparation, which he accepts [7]. When he travels to Arabipattinam with the specialist, he encounters Saadiya. He develops feelings for her. She cherishes him as well. When Saadiya's family finds out about their relationship, they expel her from the family since she is in love with a Hindu man. She quickly joined Sethu and began to live and bear a male child, and their predispositions toward religions as well as other issues as a result.

As their feud grew, Saadiya put an end to it all. Sethu eventually marries Devayani and has a child with her. As a subsequent spouse, she retains her traditional femininity, but she loses all of her conjugal benefits. Devayani's life is also in jeopardy because of Sethu. As a result, Sethu's relationship with Saadiya has become entangled, and she has stopped it all, while Devayani has become an appended lady with a tormented heart and no prospects. These characters' ties are dissolved as a result of their previously formed impulses, and they succumb to wistfulness.

RIVER SUTHRA

A River Sutra is structured in a frame narrative, similar to Boccaccio's Decameron or Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales, with six episodes connected by the spine of a single individual and a country inn. The word "Sutra" has various etymological meanings, according to the 'Sabdakalpadrum' (standard Sanskrit dictionary). Sutra is a thread or string in literal words, it has a unifying theme, and it is also a maxim that is usually aphoristic [8].
A River Sutra is written in the form of a framing story, similar to Boccaccio's Decameron or Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales, with six episodes linked by a single person and a country guesthouse. According to the "Sabdakalpadrum," a traditional Sanskrit word reference, "sutra" has different etymological connotations. Sutra is a string or string in precise words, with a connecting subject, and it is also a statement, usually aphoristic. The Narmada fills in as an account bend that associates an assortment of stories, proposing that a philosophical or moral rule can be construed from the waterway's representative presence in the tales, maybe in aphoristic structure. The epigraph of the River Sutra peruses, "Tune in, O sibling/Man is the best truth/Nothing past," proposing that "man is the best truth just in light of the fact that he is moved by the power of adoration and contacts others [9]." The Narmada takes the stand concerning our lives by means of insights on affection, its force, longing, and cost. In the novel, she fills in as both the setting and the hero.

Individuals who meet the storyteller, on the other hand, have told stories that depict the chaotic side of human existence. The astute on the banks of the river, there is a River Sutra. In the narrative, the narrator frequently encounters someone who visits their guide on the banks of the waterway, which provides a safe refuge for anyone who has had some disruption in their daily routine. By paying attention to their accounts, the storyteller obtains knowledge and insight from their encounters. Gita Mehta's A River Sutra has been compared to an Indian Canterbury Tales. It is made up of a series of lyrical stories. Narmada is the novel's shared conjunctive link. They take place along the Narmada River's banks. The energy of a River Sutra is derived from the presence of multiple narrators. The narrator and Tariq Mia serve as the connecting thread between the numerous characters, events, and stories [10]. A River Sutra isn't a random collection of stories.

The protagonist of Gita Mehta's work is a riverbed dweller. People come to the water's edge with their problems and issues in search of profound silence. The author depicts numerous aspects of daily life and its challenges in A River Sutra through the experiences of a few characters. Instead of portraying the hero's initial perspective on life, the author depicts his dynamic investment in the events. The author has depicted completed storylines or events that have occurred recently. He becomes thoroughly engrossed in the events, and a slew of questions arise in his thoughts. He makes him reflect on the significance of life and death in a profound way. Every narrative is a profound investigation of life's bleak realities. It's got a unique problem with it. They are concerned in man's relationship with the nature in which he lives. It is possible for a man to go of his own limitations. Instead of finding peace on the banks of the Narmada, the administrator learns about his own life. Through novels, the novelist has expressed her thoughts about contemporary women's scuffles.

In ancient India, men were seen as bread-winners, while women were regarded as bread-makers confined to the kitchen. In modern India, women are educated, inherit and own property, and participate in public and political life, and they are rapidly gaining equality with men in all aspects of life. Women face challenges such as dowry, domestic abuse, female infanticide, sexual exploitation, molestation, and murder.
The six stories of A River Sutra are The Monk's Story, The Teacher's Story, The Executive's Story, The Courtesan's Story, The Musician's Story, and The Minstrel's Story. The Narmada River is the main character in the original. According to legend, the Narmada can relieve a person's mental and physical anxieties or troubles. According to Mehta, the Narmada is the thread that connects the main plot and the six sub-stories. The evocative depiction in these six stories transports the reader to a cutting-edge India. It tells the story of women's mistreatment from several perspectives [11].

The collection's last three stories can be viewed through a feminist perspective. In his story "The Musician's Story," Mehta draws a link between nature and music. The musician teaches to his daughter how the classical notes "Sa," "Re," "Ga," "Ma," "Pa," "Dha," and "Ni" match to the sounds of various creatures in nature. The musician's daughter is overlooked by her mother and society due to her lack of so-called physical appearance. The poor child bemoans the way her own mother treats her because of her "ugly" appearance. "Unfortunately, my mother seldom spoke to me," Mehta adds of the unfortunate young woman's situation. She is irritated by my appearance." He performer's little girl is guaranteed a young man, who subsequently oddities her. Because of her failure and agony, she despises music. The sound of music irritates her greatly. She considers the Narmada's bank, as taught to her by her father, in order to repair her connection with her sweetheart. She finds peace in nature and is relieved of stress. In 'The Minstrel's Story,' Uma is a victim of Western man-controlled civilization. Regardless, she doesn't have a name. Her own father refers to her as "adversity" after selling her to a whore for 500 rupees.

Mehta depicts Uma's terrible situation in the massage parlour. "In any case, I paid 500 rupees for her," the proprietor of the shady establishment says, declining to deliver Uma. It was a magnificent achievement I made for her father. When I got her, she didn't have any tissues on her. There can never be enough of her to satisfy a person, no matter how carefully I feed her". This demonstrates how society exploited Uma and treated her as if she were a commodity. Women are treated as if they were mere objects. In his book Sexual Politics, Samuel Beckett depicts this kind of male strength.

According to Millett, men have regarded Millett's soul mate as "just an item to him in the most strict sense." People believe ladies to be objects of man yearning because of society's thinking. Uma is referred to as "chand" by a patron at the shady establishment, who claims that her skins are as delicate as the moon. It's a sign that the client is physically abusing her. Despite the fact that she is a child, she is compelled to abandon her modesty. 'Uma,' which means 'harmony,' was bestowed to her by the Naga Baba. When she scrapes down in the sacred river, she emerges as a new person. She resurfaces with a different character [12].

She is also revered as the Narmada's singer, who sings praises to the river. As the novel progresses, Uma embarks on a journey of self-discovery and self-acceptance. Uma is a character in Mehta's play who has gone by several names, starting with 'misfortune,' then 'Chand,' and finally 'Uma.' Throughout her life, she has dealt with a variety of difficult situations, including violence, social rejection, and terrifying preliminaries. She later
recognizes her own distinct place in the public sphere. In her book The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir writes, "A lady who isn't afraid of men terrifies them."

In A River Sutra, Mehta addresses the issue of sexual orientation separation in a straightforward manner. Ladies in Indian culture are not allowed to eat or drink before their period. Mehta represents a wide public in "The Minstrel's Story." Uma is treated inexcusably in her own house. Her ability to burn through things is limited. She laments, "I was never permitted to eat until every other person had finished eating, so I was always ravenous." In addition, my father whipped me." In another case, Mehta investigates how women with less inclination are currently unable to make ends meet in today's male-dominated world. Ladies are viewed as insufficient and fragile [13].

In 'The Courtesan's Story,' the distribution will take a gander at how society has neglected to ensure ladies' wellbeing. The prostitute wails over the way that she couldn't shield her girl from a lethal scoundrel named Rahul Singh. Rahul Singh grabbed her little girl in a public marketplace where nobody cares to mediate and secure her. Mehta underscores how society isn't worried in ladies' insurance. The prostitute's little girl is frightened by getting by in the public arena as an outlaw spouse, detained on charges of abetting her better half's wrongdoing.

Mehta also looks into how women are regarded by mainstream researchers. Mehta employs the eco woman's rights theory, which equates women to nature and aims to demonstrate how women who advocate for the conservation of natural resources regret environmental harm. It's in line with the eco-feminist activist hypothesis, which claims that there's a strong link between women's power and masculinist attitudes' mistreatment of nature. The concubine bemoans the fact that women may be allowed to relax along the Narmada's bank before the introduction of modern development in Shahbag. They used to spend their time idling and wandering aimlessly around the nursery. Because of logical and mechanical advancements, women are now deemed sexual trades fifty years later. They are not allowed to wander about freely in the open. In a male-dominated culture, Mehta clearly represents the current social status of women, which jeopardises their virginity. She is aware of today's society, in which women have no plan of action if they find themselves in a dangerous situation[14].

The purpose of this paper is to conduct an critical analysis of Gita Mehta's original A River Sutra (1993) and its numerous implications. This article examines the original's commitment to ecological tensions, its positive outline of woman nature association, contemporary woman scuffle, testing man-culture identicalness to foster another nature-man condition, as well as analysing the Narmada River as a piece of social memory, which connects all of the previously mentioned issues.

CONCLUSION
Woman's rights are a broad concept. If there is a common thread running through many of its manifestations, it is the examination of man-centric instances of thought that promote male
power and feminine submission. Male-centered philosophy teaches women to hide this idea during the inculcation process [15]. It brings sex's counterfeit notions to the fore. In a men society, the focus also addresses a number of contemporary scuffles such as racial segregation, sexual abuse, and low social status. The women protagonists in Anita Nair's and Mehta's works do not want to be grouped in with other women. The article also seeks to blame society for remaining silent in the face of outrages and failing to protect women's health. If all else is equal, they must be seen as entire individuals.

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