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The Contextual and Situational Factors that Cause Psychological Difficulties in Anita Nair's Mistress

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ABSTRACT: Anita Nair is one of the most well-known authors of Indian literature to emerge during the post-modern period. The character of Uncle Koman, a Kathakali dancer, serves as the story's central focus throughout its whole. The narrative is held together by the life of Koman's father, Sethu, whose existence acts as a connecting thread that completes the book. Saadiya, Sethu's first wife, gave birth to Koman; Mani was the oldest of Sethu Madavan's children; Babu was the youngest; and Devayani, Sethu's second wife, was the mother of his other children. The mental struggles that Sethu is going through end up being accountable for the various problems that arise in his children's life. All three of Sethu's children, Koman, Mani, and Babu, were mischievous. They were also allowed to have a carefree childhood, which contributed to their being ignorant in a world full with paradoxes and leading them to make poor decisions. The events that occur in the characters' lives demonstrate that they are not prepared to resolve disagreements as a result of the circumstances they faced as children and the lack of security they experienced.

KEYWORDS: Kathakali art, environment, child upbringing, psychological conflicts, wrong choices.

INTRODUCTION

Anita Nair is a major figure in the canon of postmodern Indian literature written in English. The majority of her heroes have an epiphanic transformation. She writes extensively on the truth of one's own experience. She has skillfully represented people, picking up on their inside thoughts and emotions. She skillfully weaves her concepts and words together. Her use of flashbacks helps the reader understand intricate realities and covert truths. Uncle Koman, a Kathakali dancer, is the protagonist and narrator of *Mistress* by Anita Nair. Koman's father, Sethu, is an integral part of the novel's fabric, therefore learning about him is necessary before delving into a study of Koman's life. Sethu's inner turmoil and his search for self-identity end up being to blame for the problems that arise in the family. Sethu leaves home to satisfy his curiosity about his biological father, and he succeeds in doing so. On his journey, he encounters a wide variety of individuals. The people he meets and the bonds he forms provide him with invaluable learning opportunities.

Sethu's parents had an unplanned baby as a consequence of a passionate fling. The only fact known about his paternal grandfather was that he came from Northern Malabar. His sad mother, who had already divorced, had little interest in raising him and remarried. Sethu's maternal uncle was a kind farmer who took care of the little boy when he was upset. His uncle made them clear when he remarked, "You heard what the headmaster said, didn't you? A formal education is essential for everybody who aspires to achieve success in the world. Or, you may drop out of school the day after tomorrow if you'd rather work the land like I do. This is all up to you. Sethu's inability to grasp Mathematics led to his third consecutive failing grade in the subject. He was upset and decided to leave his family. The turning point in his journey towards self-discovery was his first meeting with reality and the subsequent choice he made. Sethu's first blunder was that he ran away from home when he was just fourteen years old. The second time was when he was making preparations to board a train bound towards Madras in quest of his uncaring father. His third misstep was hopping on the incorrect train. Instead of leaving the train, he lied about being an orphan and travelled to Colombo with a couple he met in his cabin.

The fourth time was when he allowed his carer, Maash, to use him as a homosexual partner despite their animosity. When he was just eighteen years old, he went through the rigours to become a government health inspector in Ceylon. Proof from Sethu himself: "Maash secured me a post in the health department. I started working as a health inspector when I was eighteen after completing a course and an apprenticeship.(43). Sethu's parents had an unplanned baby as a

consequence of a passionate fling. The only fact known about his paternal grandfather was that he came from Northern Malabar. His sad mother, who had already divorced, had little interest in raising him and remarried. Sethu's maternal uncle was a kind farmer who took care of the little boy when he was upset. His uncle made them clear when he remarked, "You heard what the headmaster said, didn't you? A formal education is essential for everybody who aspires to achieve success in the world. Or, you may drop out of school the day after tomorrow if you'd rather work the land like I do. This is all up to you.(40) Sethu's inability to grasp Mathematics led to his third consecutive failing grade in the subject. He was upset and decided to leave his family. The turning point in his journey towards self-discovery was his first meeting with reality and the subsequent choice he made. Sethu's first blunder was that he ran away from home when he was just fourteen years old. The second time was when he was making preparations to board a train bound towards Madras in quest of his uncaring father. His third misstep was hopping on the incorrect train. Instead of leaving the train, he lied about being an orphan and travelled to Colombo with a couple he met in his cabin. The fourth time was when he allowed his carer, Maash, to use him as a homosexual partner despite their animosity. When he was just eighteen years old, he went through the rigours to become a government health inspector in Ceylon. Proof from Sethu himself: "Maash secured me a post in the health department. I started working as a health inspector when I was eighteen after completing a course and an apprenticeship.

Fifth, after realising that his roommate Balu knew about his secret, he stabs him with a pen knife and rushes away into the ocean. The following paragraphs recount a former event..

There was a penknife Balu had left on the table. I grabbed it and I remember screaming, "Stop it, stop it!" Then I stabbed him. 'Why? I don't know. Perhaps because he tore that last veil off. Then I ran. I ran into the ocean and was about to leave, and I went with them. There is sordidness in my association with Maash. There is Balu. (193)

The sixth time was when he lied about who he was when he was rescued from drowning and sent to the hospital at Rameswaram Camp. Sethu, a Hindu youth, had lied up until that point that he had no memory of his ancestry. He adopted the name Seth, converted to Christianity, and worked willingly as Dr. Samuel Sahayaraj's assistant after being released. When he moved to work in Arabipattinam, he made the seventh error of having an affair with the local Muslim leader's daughter, Saadiya. The eighth time was when he married her secretly, much to her parents' disapproval. Dr. Samuel Sahayaraj warned Seth that the marriage would not work since he and the girl were of different religions, but Seth remained unmoved. He left Dr. Samuel Sahayaraj and found work and a place to live in Nazareth with the aid of another wealthy guy, James Raj. This exemplifies Seth's lack of gratitude and selfishness. He felt absolutely no remorse.

When he moved to Manapad for work, number nine, he was very accommodating to Saadiya's religious preferences. He let her give their son Omar Masood a Muslim name, despite his opposition to the sunnah Muslim practise of circumcision. It caused a split in their relationship. Their conversation escalated into an angry debate. Tenth, when Saadiya's words infuriated Sethu, he shouted, saying that she could get back to her family at any time, leaving the child with him, and when she insisted on the ritual, he added that he had promised earlier not to interrupt her religious choices, and she said, in anger, that it was a great mistake and didn't want her son to repeat it. This exemplifies his callous disregard for the emotions of others around him. Saadiya's suicide was a direct result of his rage. With that, Sethu got things rolling. And then he made up his mind. His hope had perished along with Saadiya. I can't come up with a name for it. My uncle's name was Koman, so you may call him that for now. Dr. Samuel Sahayaraj was briefed by Seth (229). This is his ninth fatal error. He gives the infant the name Koman and puts him in Dr. Samuel Sahayaraj's care at the rescue camp with Mary, the mother of three sisters who helped save Seth. He made a yearly commitment to provide for the child's needs and then vanished to a foreign nation in an attempt to escape his painful past. He refuses to confront facts and keeps making the same errors again and over. Koman was twelve years old when Samuel Sahayaraj brought him to see Seth. He was given a new identity and family and became Sethu Madavan, a rich businessman in the area. Mani, age seven, and Babu, age five, are Sethu and Devayani's younger boys. Sethu pretends to be a coward until the youngster reaches the site, when he reveals his true identity. However, his mental health issues prevent him from considering anything else. Finally acting like an adult, he told his second wife, Devayani, about his history. The family was first taken aback, but they quickly warmed up to Koman and welcomed him with open arms as their oldest son. This demonstrates how the unpalatable reality aided in the discovery of individuality. Sethu Madavan allowed his children complete autonomy in all aspects of their life, even intimate ones. Unfortunately, it was a problem. That's ancient history now. Koman, one of the main characters presented to the audience, was a twelve-year-old child who had been born to Sethu and Saadiya. As a result of her disagreements with Sethu, Saadiya takes her own life. Sethu is

affected by her sudden firing, so he leaves the kid with a well-wisher, launches a business career, achieves financial success, and remarries. In the future, when Sethu brings Koman home, his stepmother and stepbrothers welcome him with open arms. After living nearly entirely on his own, Koman was adopted by a loving family and given a fresh start in life: "Koman with no tags, tails, or suffixes, age twelve, enrolled in a school and a new life. With a readily family with a father, mother, and two younger brothers." (262) Koman's father Sethu encouraged him to pursue an academic career, but Koman instead followed in his mother's footsteps and became a Kathakali performer. Without hesitating, Sethu sent his kid to a boarding school, where he believed he would thrive. He met an intoxicated man named "Aashaan," whose name means "guru" in Sanskrit. He was taught the art well, but not how to live a disciplined life. The harsh light of truth shone on this and revealed itself as the source of all his inner turmoil and character faults. His solitary existence had shielded him from the world.

Koman's weakness lay in the fact that his devotion to his career coincided with the navarasa, turning him become the persona he portrayed. Two, his brothers Mani and Babu, who are also performers, brought him a prostitute named Lalitha after his show ended. He gave in to the pressure. The third time was as a senior Aashan at a dancing school in Madras, where he led a wildlife and had his first taste of freedom and independence. The fourth was the recurring nightmares he had whenever the topic of marriage was up. He was single and carefree because he refused every marriage proposal he received. Fifth, he continued training a foreign lady called Angela who had previously been one of his students (Aashan) in Kathakali. He decided to take her on as a pupil. An affair between the instructor and student developed over time.

The sixth mistake occurred when Koman decided to go to London since Angela understood her homesickness. The sixth mistake he made was going against his father's wishes in the hopes of finding fame and fortune abroad. On the eighth day, he recognised that London wasn't the place for him to pursue his ambition, so he delayed leaving. He had no official training but could learn to cook and help out financially when they were in need. He secretly want to keep practising Kathakali. The ninth error was a hasty choice he made to return to India from London without even telling Angela goodbye. He showed little appreciation to Angela, who gave her everything to have a relationship with him.

Eleventh, he isolated himself from society and led a carefree life with a prostitute named Lalitha who had turned down his marriage proposal and a stray dog named Ekalavyan. The twelfth mistake was turning down an opportunity to teach at a German institution as part of a scholarship. He instead rejected it and suggested that his classmate Sundaran try it. Sundaran's attempts to modernise his dance for a western audience didn't sit well with Koman. This demonstrates his inflexible character.

On the thirteenth, he made up his mind to pursue Kathakali once more, and he began touring both domestically and internationally. He met Maya, an accountant in Madras, during the opening ceremony of a performance during one of his stays in Delhi on his way back from Europe. They began as buddies and quickly became into romantic partners. He rekindled his friendship with Maya since he missed being among ladies. Maya, a voluptuous married lady, sought solace in Koman's company. They moved in together, had an affair that lasted a time, and then kept in touch over the phone.

After ten years, Maya visits Guruvayur to attend a Pooja and once again is happy to renew her friendship with Koman. Though she felt shy because she looked older, she was glad to marry Koman straight away. She stayed there for some time with Koman and went back.

Throughout his life, Koman was not steady, which led to psychological problems. Koman's life was a lot like that of his father Sethu's because he didn't have any older people to shape and guide him. His life was about getting by and had no purpose.

Mani was the oldest and second son of Sethu Madavan and his second wife, Devayani. Mani was seven years old when Koman joined his family. Soon, he started to think of Koman as his older brother. All three of Sethu, Koman, Mani, and Babu's kids were naughty and didn't have many rules to follow as they grew up. Mani used to be a boy with less patience who used bad words to start fights and arguments. He was tall, had a strong voice, and a thick beard when they were teenagers. The boys used to like people of the other gender. The people who brought Lalitha into Koman's life were Mani and his brother Babu.

Koman was 27 years old when he was summoned to return home for Mani and Gowri's impromptu wedding. Koman fathered a child for Gowri before the wedding. But three nights before the wedding, he disappeared. So, his younger

brother Babu wed Gowri to preserve the family's honour. Mani reappears years later, threatens Gowri, and demands to know whether the kid is biologically theirs. Unfortunately, Gowri remains silent. As in, "She's mine, isn't she? Share with me... She doesn't resemble either you or my little brother, I can see that. (339). Gowri suffered a miscarriage only a few days after the wedding, therefore Babu, not Mani, became the father of Radha. After spending a few days together, they were devastated to learn of Mani's untimely death in a vehicle accident. Radha's dad, Babu, had two older brothers named Koman and Mani. Since they were younger than him, he treated them gently. Babu, a skinny little kid, was always the one to shoulder the blame when his older brother Mani made a mistake.

After he becomes rich, he begins mistreating his sister-in-law since she hails from a poor household. A boy called Shyam and a girl named Rani were raised by Babu's sister-in-law, a widow. Babu subsidises their lifestyle and education but yet disapproves of them. They were staying in the home that rightfully belonged to Radha's mother, Gowri. Shyam had just graduated from college and developed feelings for his cousin Radha. But Shyam's mother is against it because she thinks his uncle Babu would disapprove.

Radha became pregnant soon after graduating from college, fell in love with the business boss, and rose to the position of executive assistant. She later finds out that he had a wife and kids. She had an abortion behind closed doors. The news that his daughter had an affair with a married man causes Babu to hurry to Shyam in an attempt to urge him to marry Radha in order to restore his reputation and social position. "Shyam, you are my last, best chance." (121) Cleverly, Shyam negotiates a loan from Babu to keep his firm afloat. The only option Radha has is to wed Shyam. The guy Babu has always found distasteful has become the focus of his efforts to cover up his shame. This demonstrates that for his own profit, Babu would go to any length to keep his family safe.

CONCLUSION

As a result, Anita Nair's book *Mistress* features individuals whose lives aren't grounded in self-discipline and worldly understanding; they raise children who grow up to be confused by the complexities of the world and make poor decisions. The characters' pasts show that they aren't ready to handle dispute resolution because of adverse childhood experiences and a lack of safety.

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