

# The explorative nature of the character of Koman in Anita Nair's Mistress

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## Abstract:

Anita Nair is one of the emerging post colonial Novelist of the Modern India. Her Novels attempt to thwart the Euro centric values imposed on the Eastern culture and art by way of colonial imperialism she exposes the hollowness of western culture and prescribe the Indigenous culture which alone can vitalize and establish one's identity and life. Anita Nair is a popular India English women writer she was born on January 26, in 1966 at, Mudakottakurrisi Near shornur in Kerala state. A best selling author of fiction poetry her Novels "the better man and ladies coupe" have been translated in to 21' Language.

She was educated in Chennai before returning to Kerala where she gained a "BA" in English language and literature she was working as the creative director of an advertising agency in Bangalore. Where she wrote her first book a collection of short stories called "satyr of the subway" which she sold to her Anand press the book won her a fellowship from the "Virginia center" for creative arts Her second book was published by penguin India and was the first book by an Indian author to be published by "picador U.S.A" her books have been published in several language around the world she lives in Bangalore.

There after followed her Novel "The better man" is a great work of her. Anita Nair who is she a short line on her Anita Nair is an emerging Novelist and she is the proud of Nair society around the world. She writes with great energy and creates amazing works at ease her style in modern and her view are universal in appear she is positive thinking woman of typical 21st century product her personality is revealed through her works what she wants to tell the world is being told through her works.

## Introduction:

Koman felt a curious trembling. It was his favourite place, as well. Being too close to the stage-foreshortened the dancers and robbed the gestures of their ability to stoke the imagination. Too much distance from the stage distanced the magnificence. Nanu Mellon choosing that particular place was an omen, he thought. A good men. Nanu Menon. They said one word of praise from him could change a veshakaaran's destiny. He seldom went to see young dancers perform. Tonight he was here.

The pounding began in his temples. He could hear the rhythm of the wrestling scene: Malian matching his prowess against Vallan. It was a tremendous scene to open with. For the first time, Kaman wondered if

he should have demanded to be Vallan. For Vallan was, after all, a synonym for Bheema, the hero of the story. In the wrestling scene, he could have displayed his sense of rhythm by dancing the sequence where he had to move seamlessly from one timing to another, without missing a step. Later in the evening, as Bheerna, he would have emerged as Raudrabheeman, the epitome of fury.

No, no, he shook his head to dispel the thought. A Veshakaaran should never let doubt cloud his mind. There are no heroes or villains, only characters. It is not who you are, but how you are that makes a Veshakaaran,' Koman thought he heard Aashaan says. You are Keechakan. You have to be him. You have to forget Vallan, or that Nanu Menon is here,' Aashaan's voice

continued to murmur. 'All you must think of is Keechakan and how you are to be him.'

Koman felt his disquiet settle. He touched the white balls at the tip of his nose and the centre of his forehead. With their presence, they told him he was Keechakan. Koman to realize that the performance was over the music had paused. The Tirasheela once again shielded him from the audience. A flame of the lamp flickered. All was quiet except for the hammering of his heart. He rose and went backstage. As if in a daze, he went to the Pettikaaran. He took the crown off and sat by himself. I have to be man. I have to be the man Koman, he repeated to himself. I was Keechakan. Now I am man.

Then they began to arrive. Members of the audience and the committee members, each one bearing praise as if on a platter. Koman searched their faces. Would NanuMenon come?

When they had left, he wiped his make-up off quietly. There was no need to be perturbed. NanuMenon may not have come backstage, but he wouldn't be able to ignore him in print. Koman knew that. His Keechakan warranted it.

The following Sunday, Koman glanced through the newspaper eagerly. Interpretation is fundamental to Kathakali but an interpretation that has been perfected over the years by the masters. This Veshakaaran seems to imagine that there is a Keechakan beyond the poet's characterization. With that he does his obvious talent an injustice. As for that final moment of Keechakan's death, what was it, Kathakali or drama?

Koman sat huddled on a chair. He felt his body tremble, suddenly cold. He wrapped his arms around his legs and wedged his face between his knees. He would have to seek a place within himself to shake off the repugnance of NanuMenon's words and gather courage. What was worse?

Total decimation, or the devastating faint words of praise? What hurt more?

When the day spent itself out, Koman went out. Shadows hung in street corners and stillness wrapped the hour. Koman heard the crunch of gravel beneath his feet and tried not to weigh down his steps with the heaviness of his grief. He didn't want to be seen or heard. He didn't want any attention. He wanted to be alone, to lick his wounds and summon back some vestige of self-worth. Enough to let him meet the eyes of all those who had read the review, with nonchalance if not a wry smile. But above all, he needed to forget.

The man wrapped the bottle in a sheet of newsprint. Koman searched the sheet to see if by some strange and macabre coincidence it was the one with his review. No one had seen him walk to the toddy shop. He searched the man's face. Had he read what NanuMenon had written about him? He dismissed the thought. The man was not interested in Kathakali.

In his room Koman took the bottle out of the fold in his Mundu. Then he took a glass and poured a measure of toddy. He gulped it down. Sour, rancid and vile, the stench of its fermentation rode his nostrils. His stomach heaved. But for the first time that day Koman felt his nerve ends settle. The second drink wrapped him in a layer of cotton wool. The third sent the annoying gnat-like fears out of his mind. Now there was only one thought: the next drink.

When the vomit came up his throat, Koman just leaned forward and let it spew. It felt as if every ugly thought he carried within was finding its way out. When there was nothing left to vomit, he retched. Great, loud sounds that seemed to drag themselves from the bottom of his soul. His throat hurt. His tongue felt like wood. Words slurred out of him: a line from a Kathakalipadam. Even as he drifted into a senseless state, he knew this physical degradation was nothing

compared to the humiliation he had felt. In the morning, the light penetrated his brain with the edge of a blade. He sat up, dragging his limbs and senses from the ground. Around him were remnants of his dissipation. A bottle lay on its side: The glass stood on its head. Pools of dried vomit patterned the floor. His clothes were strewn about on the floor and the stench of vomit and festering pain swamped the air. Koman wanted to lie down and die. To drift away to some place from where he would never have to return.

Koman pretended that nothing was the matter. For the rest of the morning, he pretended a serenity he didn't feel. He led the boys through a scene from *Lavanasura Vadham*. The boys, taking their cue, responded with their best. When the class was over, he walked to Aashaan's room. He would find respite there. Aashaan was waiting. There was a furrow on his brow as he prepared his betel leaves. Koman sat on a chair heavily. 'How was your class?' Aashaan's asked. Koman shrugged. 'What am I going to do?'

Koman stared at him in astonishment. How can I pretend nothing happened? my career as a Veshakaaran has as much worth as the red-stained earth. How can I pretend that NanuMenon's criticism means nothing? every one who has anything to do with Kathakali would have seen it. Koman moved away. How could Aashaan be so indifferent to what NanuMenon had written? Aashaan looked at him and smiled. 'Anyone who has anything worthwhile to do with Kathakali knows the exact worth of NanuMenon's criticism. Koman sat up straight, How can you say that? even the Pettikaran I think his name was Shankaran seemed to be in awe of him that's my point Shankaran may be Lord of the Green Room but he is not a Veshakaran or a Musician. And he is not even a very skilful Pettikaran. Shankaran is

impressed by NanuMenon. He might even take him seriously. But speak to our Gopi. He will tell you what he knows about Nanu. 'Do you know that Nanu was a Veshakaaran once? They said he was destined for great things, but I thought he was a mediocre artist. In fact, his most convincing role to date has been that of a great artist who had to give it all up because of illness. I am sure his illness is a myth. He probably realized that one day he would be discovered for what he was. A pose now he is the self-appointed guardian of the performing arts. You know me well enough to know that I don't gossip or spread vicious stories about other artists or even critics.

### **Conclusion**

Indian society still relies on many conventional norms and values of tradition which the women have to follow the tradition. However, in present times, at least for a number of young people, caste and religion are not as rigid as in earlier centuries. They are losing their ground rapidly because of Modernity and Globalization. The impact of these factors is clearly discernible in the novels of Anita Nair. Being the part of new generation, mostly all her major characters are not away from its influence.

*Mistress* is a great contribution to the construction of the female self. Her novels espouse and voice the need of emancipation and education of Indian women and hence its reformist objective is fore-grounded in her novels. Anita Nair's woman characters in her novels rebel against patriarchal community in order to explore their lives. They take the position of "considerers" to fight and criticize those cultural ideologies that come in their way of becoming free individuals. Anita Nair has also projected her own Indian sensibility and attitude through her women characters in her novels. Most of the Indian women living in an orthodox and conservative family feel

inhibited to raise their voice against aggressive dominance of the male person of the society owing inferiority complex and rigid code of conduct imposed on them. Their ambitions, desires, sense and sensibility are faithfully expressed in Nair's novels. Her novels show how such women in spite of being highly educated undergo psychological suffering due to inferiority complex and dead sense of inhibitions. She not only limits her writing to upper class urban people, but also picks up characters

from all stratum of society. Her theme is not only restricted to domestic problems, but it is variegated in nature. Besides, her novels represent what is authentically Indian or native.

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