

Man-Woman Relationship in Manju Kapur's the Immigrant

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Abstract

Literature is a medium, through which the writer explores the current situation of society Manju Kapur's novel the immigrant is set in the era when the most of the people are migrated. In this novel, She explores the NRIs sensibility. She delves deep into man-woman relationship. She has discussed the man-woman relationship with two aspects, sexual and Psychological level. In sexual aspect, Nina's love with her friend Rahul is premarital sex and her love with Anton is a extramarital sex. Nina made her different relationship with different men at different situation.

She meets Ananda through an arranged marriage. She prepares herself for a new life. But in a Canada life, she lives alienation. In her mind, Ananda's sexual dysfunctioning sneaks. Nina wants a baby in a house; she gives the importance of baby in her life. Ananda's and Ninda's life has full of dissatisfaction by sex.

Ananda's relationship with Mandy, is another event to break up the mind of Nina. Than Nina enjoyed sexual love with Anton. Both are enjoyed extra marital life. But on Psycho logical level when Nina proposes a field trip to Ottawa which Anand gladly approves. When Nina came back to Canada, she remains still strange. Both are pretending the warmth of love.

KEYWORDS:- immigrant, Premarital, extramarital, alienation, Psychology.

Literature is a medium, through which the writer explores the current situation of society. A creative writer has provide an exact record of human life and social system. Milton Albrecht aptly emphasizes the significance of the relationship between literature and society. "Literature reflects accepted patterns of thought, feeling and action, including patterns of expressions and society's unconscious assumptions. It innovates, giving expression to emerging themes, that may not yet be definable in literal terms".(Milton C. Albrecht.P.425)

Literature reflects not only the social reality but also shapes the complex ways in which men and women organize themselves, their interpersonal relationship and their perception of the socio-cultural reality. The author explores and examines the relationship of man with his fellow men, vis-a vis the social forces at work around him in all their bewildering complexity. The process of examination covers the entire gamut of human experience, the most significant being the man-woman relationship.

Indian novelists have dealt with family relationships with seriously because the traditional heritage of India gives great importance to the family. They do not shy away

from experimenting with any shade of human experience. They have extensively dealt with the theme of man woman relationship which has a great historical, sociological and cultural significance.

In modern Indian English novel, writers like Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Upmanyu Chatlerjee, Amitav Ghosh, Arundhat Roy, Manju Kapur, Anita Nair, Meenu Mehrotra have tried to underline the relationship between man and woman. Mm-Woman relationship in modern Indian English novels has acquired varied dimensions. The hidden meaning and the sexual innuendoes in the dialogues point to a rapidly changing society in which conventional values are crumbling. Social norms has been thrown to the winds.

Manju Kapur emerged in the Indian English scenario as one such writer. Her first novel *Difficult Daughters* (1998), *A Married Woman* (2002), *Home* (2006) and the immigrant (2008), She has evolved as a sensitive writer. Kapur's novels show the struggle of women against the patriarch and male-dominated society. They are searching their own identity.

The immigrant is set in the era when the most of the people are migrated to North America, U.S. and Canada. In an interview Manju Kapur mentioned that the genesis of the book was her desire to explore the NRI sensibility, as well as to convey a sense of the darkness that surrounded India around the time of the "Emergency- When there was this idea that India was just not a place to be in, you had to get at, nobody could get any where here. Its something I grew up with too."(Saturday, Aug. 9, 2008).The immigrant, she deals with the theme and peoples shifting from India to Canada. The novel delves deep into man-woman relationship. The female protagonist, Nina is searching her identity at to level as a female and as an immigrant. Kapur has discussed the two aspects which are important in man-woman relationship in the novel. "First in sexual aspect and second is psychological. But it is the sexual aspect which overpowers the psychological aspect. In sexual aspect Kapur has shown premarital and extramarital relationship in the novel. In premarital sex Rahul, the boy friend of Nina, ignites the fire of sex in her. In extramarital relationship. Nina finds a partner in Anton. In both the relationships Nina comes forward by herself". (Kumar Ashok P.1) Nina made her different relationship with different men at different situation. Nina's relationships began with Rahul who is fifteen years old that her. As like her he is a teacher of English. She devoted her life towards Rahul, not only emotionally but also physically. " But Rahul had always made it clear that he wanted to have his cake and eat it like all cakes this one was chewed, mashed into pulp and swallowed too". (the immigrant P.6)As a result she totally disturb. In her short love affair with Rahul, Nina had sought, " Love in her own terms, untainted by convention and respectability". and when ditched her self-respect forced her to " chose loneliness over compromise." (the immigrant P. 6) Though she meets Ananda through an arranged marriage. After marriage she prepares herself for a new life "laced with choices, novelty and excitement and migrates to Canada to share her husband's money, body an success."(the immigrant P.79).

Their newly married relationship consummate night proved to be the turning point of their life. It was the night of fulfillment of Ananda's carnal love and for Nina it proved to be the night of thunderclap on expectation. But Ananda's sexual dysfunction left a bad impression on her. Ananda seemed to be giving pleasure to himself and Nina. He cares the Nina well. But Nina comparing his love with Rahul. "As she lay in bed she tried to

transform reality into a scenario that would not confuse or upset her. Togetherness was the important thing. To be critical of how it was achieved was against the spirit of marriage.” (the immigrant P.91) Like Nina, Meenu Mehrotra depicted her protagonist of the novel *Medha in Sunlit Hearts*. After marriage medha compares her husband's (Rishi) love with her college lover Nikhil. She finds the backdrop of her husband in Muscat. Manju Kapur also depicted the same character as Nina.

Beside the sexual matter the excessive preference has given for money were also some of the factors responsible for the failure in their relationship.

She thought that all her desires, aspirations were shattered away. It was clearly suggestive of love that was sex based not on what a woman long for. Ananda knew that Nina is thinking wrongly about the relationship. He is a man of cold sensuousness but shows his true love only in hot moments. But Nina does not understand and she is a love seeker. For her “ There was no one to shout, get up, its getting late, no task that would suffer by her staying in bed no person whose loneliness she had to assuage.” (the immigrant P.115)

Nina thought that the life of Canada means alienation. She does not adjust there. Kapur explores the special challenges that the immigrant wives face. The immigrant's wife has a more difficult time to spend the time. Many many hours, they live alone in the house. Nina also lives a lonely life. Anand is aware of his sexual dysfunction problem so he loves more to Nina and giving her the love of a husband, and give her pleasure Nina thought that it is very hard for her to adjust in Canada. Her husband is more indulged in his clinic.

“He loved his wife but he did not want to feel that she was the only one in the world he could have sex with. What kind of man would make him, with his masculinity so limited?”(the immigrant P.151) Nina wants to become a mother. She feels herself. In her neighbourhood she saw the babies, she takes them in her lap. But in vain. After six months of marriage she is accusing herself for not getting pregnant. In her mind, Ananda's sexual dysfunction sneaks. Nina wants a baby in a house, she gives the importance of baby in her life. This makes Ananda hot up rather than understanding Nina's plight. But still it is not all Ananda's stoicism towards Nina's plea, he sounds stubborn because of his suggestive incapability in sexual matters.

Here Manju Kapur shows Nina is a selfish woman and fetish to have a baby. She does not understand the predicament of Ananda's mind. Ananda is also a hard hearted man, he did not communicate with Nina. “Nina brooded over her situation for a few more days before picking up the yellow pages to look for gynecologist.”(the immigrant P.170). Ananda shudders at the thought of knowing to Nina about his dysfunction. He thinks it to be an invasion in his privacy. Nina wants sex to get an egg fertilized in her womb. She knew that any problem is not hidden in her body for fertilization. So Nina wants to ask him openly whether anything was wrong with his sex capabilities. She shared she was frustrated only because of his impotency. It led Ananda to say the reality. He could not help speculating “ The arranged marriage had not, after all, been the perfect solution. The canker of failure had entered the house and forced his back to the wall.”(the immigrant P.184)

Ananda and Nina's life has full of dissatisfaction by sex. They are married but not satisfied. So Ananda decided to go to the California to cure his disease. But he make mistake there. He nothing told Niana about his visit. He keeps it secret. After the treatment, he is successful over his impotency. He told Nina, but she is not believing him. All these things he secretly done.

“Sadly it looked to her that ever good sex didn't ensure happiness beyond act.”(the immigrant P.210)

She also secretly, joining the La Leche League. In her mind a sense of competition and rivalry sprouted up. She tested herself and doctor has given the positive report. When Ananda felt he had recovered, Nina's passions cooled down. That time, She wanted to attract her attention towards the job and live a life independent.

Manju Kapur has depicted the Ananda's relationship with Mandy. It is the another event to break up the mind of Nina. In the hospital, Ananda has appointed a new receptionst who was found the least of sexual inhibited and demanding. She has a craze to have a sex with different men. Ananda attaracted towards her and physically they get together. Like Ananda, Nina with Anton proved yet another step to destroy their married relationship. But the turning point of Nina's life comes with the help of Anton.

With the relationship, Ananda and Nina would be left free to enjoy their extra marital life with Mandy and Anton respectively. One day Nina proposes a field trip to ottawa which Ananda gladly approves. But on psychological level Ananda felt striken and Nina remains a formal behavior.

“Filled with the guilt of this, he would not fight with Niana even when she was irritating him. This artifice lessened their relationship and made it seem superficial. Laove for Niana began to wear the face of responsibility, and when he was with mandy he naturally felt less burdened.”(the immigrant P.253)

Anton is admiring the beauty of Nina. He loved her and Nina also satisfied with Anton. This emotional, fascination and admiration led to their physical relationship. Nina surprisingly.

“For the first time she had a sense of her own self, entirely separate from other people, autonomous, independent, so strange that sex did not make her feel guilty, not beyond the initial shock”. (the immigrant P.267)

After their trip Anton turned out to be cold and dispassionate. Anton made it clear that our relationship is only give and take. “Anton gave her pleasure if his easy acceptance of her gilded her studies did not she owe it to herself to sleep with him?”(the immigrant P.273) Now Ananda's relationship with Mandy also started getting sloped. She demanded much to Ananda and it's hard to Ananda. He is in a tense, to give the money Nina, as a wife and to Mandy as a lover.

Ananda and Nina come upon a turn, one side Anton passed his time with Nina but he is loyal to his own wife. on the other hand she was on the verge of break up with Ananda.

Ananda seeks the enjoyment with Mandy and therefore arranges and gives consent not only for Ph.D. but also for Nina's ticket to India to her utter surprise.

When Nina came back to Canada, she remains still strange. Both are pretending the warmth of love which neither had. For Nina- "His obvious pleasure upon her return contributed to her guilt... but in this endeavor she experienced a barrier impossible to cross. (the immigrant P. 296). Ananda is very happy when Nina came back. That time she found a more caring husband than a lover. Though she knew it and didn't expect it. Something was there which was not letting her to be at ease and left her disillusioned and frustrated after her had raped her forcefully. Even later on when he wanted absolution from she was not ready for it, rather she thought him to be beneath contempt.

Nina has found the character of Anand is a fictitious. Thus we find that both Ananda and Nian enjoy extra marital relationship, betray each other and are themselves responsible for marring their married relationship.

The Immigrant explores NRI's experiences and sensibility of many Indian educated women who marry the Indian emigrants. The novel is written in "deceptively simple." English with extra ordinary brilliance, and feminist issues in the narrative style. The theme of the novel makes readers cautious, feel, think and analyse its broader perspectives. Manju Kapur narrates the predicament of an Indian woman in a foreign land in her immigrants status.

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