MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY IN JEAN SASSON’S WORKS

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ABSTRACT
Jean Sasson, a popular American writer has unveiled the life of women behind the veil in the Arabian Peninsula in her books especially Princess and trilogy. This paper is focused on the primitive traditions surrounding marriage and allied issues in Muslim culture and its harrowing impact on women as delineated by Jean Sasson in her works. In Muslim culture marriage is a solemn covenant, a legal contract unlike sacramental affair in other religions. Numerous factors determine marriage-ability of a girl in South Arabia: her family name, her family fortune, her lack of deformities and enchanting beauty. Apart from permanent marriage there is temporary marriage, Nikah-al-Mut’ah; according to which a man can marry a woman for an agreed amount of time and money. In Daughters of Arabia, Jean Sasson makes a mansion of Mut’ah and its serious consequences. Mut’ah is no more than debauchery of men. Jean Sasson not only portrays a strange spousal behaviour within marriage but also manifests the true spousal behaviour bordering on criminal sexuality caused by men folk in Princess and trilogy. Divorce, in Jean Sasson’s novels, makes a life of woman intolerable as she cannot have the custody of her children after divorce and leads a very miserable life thereafter.

KEY WORDS: Covenant, sacramental, nikah, marriage-ability, muta’h, debauchery.