

Reimagining Myth and Identity: The Feminist Subtext in Tagore's Retelling of Chitrangada

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Abstract

This research focuses on the feminist subtext in Rabindranath Tagore's Chitrangada, an original reworking of a Mahabharata tale. The paper uses a feminist lens to examine how Tagore reimagines the figure of Chitrangada, a warrior princess, by challenging traditional gender norms and patriarchal structures. Tagore's depiction of Chitrangada as a complex heroine who symbolizes both strength and vulnerability is a critical rethinking of female identity in traditional mythology. By examining the story structure, character development, and thematic aspects, the study reveals Tagore's progressive approach to gender dynamics and contribution to feminist debate. This study tries to illustrate how the play Chitrangada subverts standard portrayals of women, pushing for a more egalitarian representation in literature and underlining the value of Tagore's work in contemporary gender studies.

Keywords: Rabindranath Tagore, Chitrangada, Feminist Subtext, Gender Roles, Patriarchy, Mahabharata, Mythological Retelling, female Identity, Literary Feminism, Gender Dynamics.

Introduction

Rabindranath Tagore, a Nobel Prize-winning Indian writer, is considered the titan among Indian English and Bengali writers. The abilities of a poet, playwright, novelist, artist, storyteller, painter, musician, politician, and deep thinker can be seen flourishing under this multisided creative and literary genius who left no form of literature untouched. His talent was not limited to any genre; rather, through his mastery of all forms of creative art, he enriched every field of literature. Tagore's literary works represent his vastness, diversity, depth, and his deep understanding of Indian society and culture. K.R.S. Iyengar hailed Tagore as the supreme inspiration to millions in modern India, saying, "Next only to Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo, Tagore has been the supreme inspiration to millions in modern India." (99-100) Undoubtedly, Tagore's restless attitude towards new knowledge and an unquenchable thirst for art and literature sowed the seed for his remarkable participation in the creative world of literature. His famous work, *Gitanjali* (1912), gained him global recognition with a Nobel Prize in 1913. This award positioned him as an international literary figure. *Gitanjali* elucidates his

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profound understanding of life's philosophy, demonstrating exceptional analytical and expressive abilities. Furthermore, he is widely acknowledged as a prodigiously gifted creative luminary, composed over 2,000 songs and contributed substantially to two countries' national anthems. His brilliance extends beyond his writing work; he was also interested in domains such as painting and music. His wide talent is seen in his extensive collection of musical works. Among all of these accomplishments is the honour of receiving a doctorate in literature from Oxford University on August 7, 1940. This is especially noteworthy since the university traveled for the first time in its history to award the degree. Commenting on Tagore's never-ending efforts, Sisir Kumar Ghosh points out: "[...] one is struck by the variety (vachitra), the abundance (prahurya), and the dynamism (gatimayata). Tagore continued to grow till end [...]." (S. Ghose, 114)

Though Tagore is best known as a poet, drama is a constant expression of his creative talent, he could be considered a pioneer of theatre in Indian English and Bengali literature. This study will concentrate on his brilliant theatrical creativity and the legendary mythological insights presented in the play *Chitrangada*. The research paper will opt for the English translation of the play into *Chitra* for the present study.

Chitrangada: A Masterful Fusion of Historical, Cultural, and Feminist Dimensions in the Mahabharata Myth

Rabindranath Tagore's *Chitra* (1894) is a theatrical sermon on the subject of pure love. This lyrical drama is based on the epic *Mahabharata*. It is a one-act play with nine scenes in the English version and eleven in the Bengali version. According to Thompson, the English translation of the play "has a swiftness of action which the Bengali text lacks." (Thompson, 118) *Chitra* is Tagore's first clear portrayal of feminism in India, and it is without a doubt one of his most fascinating and gratifying plays. The play is a masterpiece of art and a dream of immaculate beauty in an awakened condition. Tagore's notion of love and relationships is brilliantly depicted in the heroin Chitra, which is an expression of the holy aspect of life and love. It is a heavenly message delivered to the human soul by an enlightened woman, promoting the genuine meaning of love and relationship. The play is more than just entertainment; it also highlights real-life challenges and disagreements between mind and heart. According to Dvijendralal Ray, "Nevertheless, Chitrangada remains the best poetic drama of Rabindranath." (Mohit K., Vol.-I, 31) It is a systematic and smooth flow of natural events in life. Krishna Kriplani describes the work *Chitra*:

Indeed the theme is the enchantment of spring and the power of its spell on the senses, and Spring is itself one of the characters in the play which is one of Rabindranath Tagore's best and perhaps the only one that is flawless if any thing made by man can be called flawless. (Vol.-II, 126)

Chitra is not only a narrative of two legends, but also a significant topic that is related to everyone's life. She is the daughter of the King of Manipur and has been raised by her parents as a boy. She is very comfortable handling bows and arrows and many responsibilities. Additionally, she has perfected all of the skills that a Kshatriya king and soldiers must perform. Chitra dutifully performs her duties to the state, presenting herself as the saviour of her people. Despite being a woman, she is fully conscious of her responsibilities to her state. She possesses amazing physical power but lacks the attributes of feminine sensibility and appeal, which play an important part in the flowering of the man-woman relationship. She can bend the bow but does not know how to play cupid archery. Arjuna, the Pandava prince, comes into contact with the princess in his days of exile. This meeting between Chitra and Arjuna sparks a sequence of revolutionary changes in the princess's life, who was previously unconscious of any feminine pretensions. During a period of rapid mental shift, Chitra begins to engage in all girl-like activities, abandoning her man-like appearance. However, all of her efforts are useless when Arjuna rejects her due to her physical ugliness. This rejection establishes the groundwork for the entire play. Chitra resolves to win his affection at all costs. Now begins a sequential occurrence of changes from the thrilling experience of heart emotions to the supreme realisation of true love.

Certainly, the play Chitra is a very spontaneous and extremely intriguing story of a woman's journey from earthly desires to the astounding heights of self-realization and the realisation of true love amid worldly deception. "It is almost perfect in unity and conception, and miraculous in expression; an almost flawless whole knit together by the bright heat of inspiration. "For lightness, it is a mask rather than a play, but with a central core of drama..." (Thompson, 116) Tagore's play Chitra marks the beginning of the contemporary period and is unquestionably a voice for feminism in India. Chitra's strong reactions and resolute personality are unquestionably a source of inspiration for any woman in India during the twentieth century. Though Chitra lacks the tenderness of flowers, she possesses the bravery to tackle the most terrible situation in her life. Her eyes are not appealing and do not capture men's attention, but she has a bright and intelligent mind that can shape anyone into her. She lacks physical charm but excels in dedication, devotion, and teamwork. Men are not infatuated with her personality but brave salutation. Chitra is acutely aware of humanity in general and womanliness in

particular. She is not self-centered; rather, in the early stages of the play, she may be seen sacrificing her entire self to others for their sake. Chitra appears to be a watershed moment in the history of women's free thought. She is a great example of both tradition and modernity. Tagore has done an excellent job of creating women in her entire endeavour. For him, woman is God's strongest and most tender creation. Chitra regards women as a wonderful reason for giving happiness and bliss to her household. She has played every role with wonderful spontaneity, whether it is a good friend of her life partner, a lady full of self-esteem and intelligence, a wife willing to participate in every field actively and full of confidence, or a kind and affectionate mother. Tagore believes in the multifaceted dynamism of women. He certainly succeeded in distinguishing between two sides of Chitra: the individual and the universal. The first is to satisfy her adolescent emotional wants, while the second is to sacrifice all to realise the meaning of humanity and true love. That is why she can easily transition from one type of role to another. According to the dramatist, a woman can tell the difference between the two and lives more than half a life for others.

Tagore is always sympathetic to his women and their relationships as a writer. The daily events of a woman's life and their circumstances have always captured his imagination.

He projected his entire self into authentically depicting the fluctuations in mood and feelings and the progression of awareness and consciousness in a woman's psyche. In the drama a woman naturally expands her awareness through life events, finally achieving self-knowledge and self-transcendence. She educates herself by experiencing the genuine meaning of relationships and reaches unrivaled levels of sublimity. "When the borrowed beauty is cast aside, Chitra continues to be graceful as she has known love, because she is now a prospective mother." (N. Tandon 132)

A Critical Examination of the Play through the Prism of Women's Psychic Intrigues and Deep Psychological Probing

The play's first scene occurs in Ananya Ashram, where the play's heroine, Princess Chitra, appears. Chitra, who is going through a terrible emotional crisis, summons the gods of love and beauty, Madana and Vasantha, to help her solve her dilemma caused by Arjuna's rejection of her love offer because she is unattractive. She tells the gods the entire account of her fortuitous meeting with Arjuna, including how she fell in love with him at first sight of his legendary demeanour. She reveals her innermost thoughts to the gods, saying, "Then for the first time in my life I felt myself a woman, and knew that a man was before me." (R.N Tagore, *Chitra*, 18) Further revealing the truth to the gods, she informs them of the changes that have occurred in her personality and describes how a princess falling in love begins to do things that

were never in her favour. Chitra discards her boyish clothes to gain Arjuna's attention and secure her place in his heart. She chooses all womanly ornaments to enhance her personality, which was previously banned to the princess's manly demeanour. Going deeper into her feelings, she reveals:

...next morning, I laid aside my man like clothing. I donned bracelets, anklets, waist- chain, and a gown of purple red-silk. The unaccustomed dress clung about my shrinking shame; but I hastened on my quest, and found Arjuna in the forest temple of Shiva. (19)

However, the harsh realities of life quickly wrecked all of her hopes. Chitra discovers the harsh reality of the physical world, in which superficial beauty is valued more than inner goodness and characteristics. All her innocent hopes and soft ideas are dashed by the devil of diplomacy, accepted by the world, which only makes heavy admirations and grandiose discussions about inner virtue and soul beauty. However, it never fully embraces goodness while dismissing physical ugliness. This reality severely upsets all of her considerations. A woman inside her couldn't take the insensitivity of the man she adored. She is in severe misery and resolves to gain Arjuna's love through unfair means. She is in severe misery and resolves to gain Arjuna's love through unfair means. Chitra's weak and emotive plea manipulates the God's answer to her advantage. They offer to assist her in realising her aspirations. Chitra develops an attractive and alluring personality through the gods' blessing. Now, she is the most beautiful woman on the planet, with her brilliant charm and magnificent grace of undisturbed celestial beauty to which Arjuna loses all his senses.

This undefined and wonderful impression of beauty causes him to forget all of his promises, and he is unable to control his heart's emotions. His heart races as he watches the woman, who appears to be a living wonder "Was I dreaming or was what I saw by the lake truly there?" (25)

This undefined and wonderful impression of beauty causes him to forget all of his promises, and he is unable to control his heart emotions. He enquires "What stern vow keeps you immured in this solitary temple, depriving all mortals of a vision of so much loveliness?" Her reply "I harbour a secret desire in my heart, for the fulfillment of which I offer daily prayers to Lord Shiva" makes him wonder "Alas, what can you desire, you who are the desire of whole world!...I have seen whatever is most precious, beautiful and great on the earth." (27) But now that Chitra has won Arjuna's heart, she is not completely pleased; instead, she experiences an unfamiliar sense of crushing guilt in Arjuna's love submission "...you have dissolved my vow even as the moon dissolves the night's vow of obscurity", now she suffers from an insatiable need, exacerbated by Arjuna's surrendered manhood and bursts "Oh, shame upon you! What have you seen in me that makes you false to yourself? Whom you seek in these dark eyes, in

these milk-white arms, if you are ready to pay for her the price of your probity? Not my true self, I know. Surely this can not be love; this is not man's highest homage to woman!" (31) This replicates a profound psychological examination of a woman's rapidly changing desires and moral ascendancy. She pleads with the God of Love to return the terrible sparks of beauty that have inadvertently been the cause of Arjuna's departure from moral values. Chitra decides to tell the truth without considering the consequences. She is open to accepting any shade of his response, whether it is acceptance or rejection. After attentively listening to the whole subject, the gods introduce her to the spontaneous flow of the universe's natural process, which, according to them, never stops and instead continues infinitely. They advise Chitra to enjoy her gifted days without feelings of regret or repentance. However, this highly learned piece of consolation does not alleviate her mind's unrest, as she continues to believe in the infinite activity of the universe. Throughout the play's course, "the dramatic action develops as a result of conflict—some clash of opposed individuals, or passions, or interest." (Hudson, 60)

Throughout the year, Chitra is concerned about the outcome of her relationship. After a year of passionate love, conflict, and emotions, a gradual transition process begins to move the wheel of change in the relationship of the two incredibly devoted couples. After a long period of unconsciousness, Arjuna awakens to the practical world and its events. Returning to the real world, Arjuna asks his lady love to accompany him home since he wants to marry Chitra. The gods have already told Chitra of the impending changes, but she is unsure of Arjuna's deviant mind. Chitra believes her ardent lover is reverting to his former form as a heroic Kshatriya, having vanquished all perceptions of dishonesty and deception. As soon as Arjuna becomes concerned about what is going on around him, he learns of Princess Chitra's well-known and brave personality, which the criminals fear. He asks, "I'm trying to imagine what kind of woman Princess Chitra may be." I hear so many stories of her from all sorts of men." To which she replies, "Ah, but she is not beautiful. She has no such lovely eyes as mine, dark as death. She can pierce any target she will, but not our hero's heart". Arjuna expresses his desire to meet the woman who is regarded as a living legend: "They say that in valour she is a man, and a woman in tenderness". (66-67)

The drama "is the quintessence of romance. The speeches burn with passion, and light up the way from truth to illusion and gain the arduous climb from illusion to truth." (Iyengar, 136) Arjuna is now being released from the bond of the heart, capturing the beauty of Chitra, and inadvertently being entwined with Princess Chitra's fortitude and strength. Though Chitra is secretly pleased to observe her lover's restlessness, whose heart is finally craving for her true self, she is unsure about the stability of Arjuna's passion for princess Chitra. To probe Arjuna's

emotions, she exposes the terrible aspects of the princess's appearance and manlike demeanour. Arjuna has a strong desire to know more about Chitra from his beloved, which pleases Chitra immensely.

She has realized that the long-awaited moment has arrived, but she remains skeptical about her lover's mental stability. She is unsure whether he will accept her with all of her flaws and abilities. In response to Arjuna's demand to know about the princesses, she tells him, "Her every qualities are as prison walls, shutting her woman's heart in a bare cell. She is obscured, she is unfulfilled. Beauty is denied to her. She is like a spirit of cheerless morning, sitting upon the strong mountain peak, all her light blotted out by dark clouds. (70)

Chitra is mentally prepared now to reveal her true self to Arjuna, and questions her happiness and satisfaction in having a playmate who shares her life partner's responsibilities. In the final scene, Chitra, the embodiment of love, truth, and beauty, reveals her true identity to Arjuna, who is amazed by her pure and holy love. She becomes the queen of Arjuna's heart, transforming everything wrong into right, and remaining true to herself. Arjuna accepts Chitra wholeheartedly, and his five words, "Beloved, my life is full," establish truth as the supreme reality of the universe. These words do justice to Tagore's transient idea of true love and the ultimate relationship a human being can imagine. This is a woman's true victory and sacrifice, positioning Chitra to a surprising height of womanliness and making her the image of true beauty and absolute goodness. "It is a play 'about Everyman and Everywoman,' about the wisdom that lies beyond body,' 'about woman' and a journey from physical to spiritual love." (Ray, 137) Chitra is the central character in the drama. When she is radiant with beauty, youth, and wants, she is the fleeting marvel of a woman in love. She opposes traditional bonds and succeeds in developing the idea that woman is synonymous with truth and immaculate beauty.

Comparative Analysis of Other Feminist Myths Retellings

Like Kalidasa's Shakuntala, Tagore's Chitra embodies truth, love, and beauty. The dramatist seemed to be attracted by Kalidasa's Shakuntala's emergence as one of the most beautiful and graceful women in Indian literature. Kalidasa's Shakuntala remained the ultimate expression of beauty and love for centuries. She has unconventionally glorified the image of heavenly beauty and eternal truth. She is Vishwamitra and Menka's daughter, and Kanva Hrishikesh raised her. She grew up surrounded by nature's breathtaking splendour and has somehow become a part of this heaven. Shakuntala's pure presence enhances the beauty of the Ashram. She is far removed from all worldly affairs and does not know life because she has never been exposed to the world outside of the Ashram. Shakuntala, like Chitra, is shown offering her services to the people around her. Before meeting Dushyanta, the King of Hastinapur, she is utterly

unconscious of her feminine desires. When Shakuntala first meets Dushyanta, she, like Chitra, is captivated by the beautiful personality of a Kshatriya. She is so gorgeous that Dushyanta, like Arjuna, falls in love with her at first sight. He, too, forgets his duties as a King. In the story, Shakuntala and Dushyanta marry in the Ashram using the Gandharva viwah procedure. After spending months together as a married couple, Dushyanta departs for his country, promising Shakuntala that he will return, no matter how long it takes. When Dushyanta did not respond, Shakuntala approached him. As a result of the curse, Dushyanta is unable to recall memories of his wife Shakuntala and denies being the father of her unborn child. Shakuntala attempts everything she can to prove her chastity, but she fails since she has lost the ring that was supposed to eliminate the curse's impact. As a result, Shakuntala struggles to bring the situation to the King's attention. In the scene, many hues of a woman may be seen clearly. Shakuntala, a highly innocent, worldly-free, and faithful beloved, has been transformed into a brave and practical woman as a result of the King's rejection. She confronts the King about not accepting her and her unborn kid.

Both these female figures share significant similarities. On the one hand, both are excellent examples of beauty, youth, and love, while on the other, they represent bravery, courage, and resolve. Shakuntala doesn't let her pride down. She returns to the Ashram and chooses to wait for the time. She is well aware that the King will undoubtedly arrive and accept her with the utmost honour. She does not ask for her rights; rather, she raises her child on her own. The curse's effect has faded over time. When Dushyanta approached her, Shakuntala, as a beautiful model of women, justified all of his mistakes accepting him wholeheartedly.

Shakuntala and Chitra both appear to symbolize a unique blend of traditional and modern Indian women. They possess both womanly characteristics and the determination to fight for their self-esteem and rights. Tagore, like Shakuntala, portrayed Chitra as the plain simplicity of truth. She is a significant synthesis of two female characters: energetic and peaceful. The feminine appeal she gets after discovering the truth transforms her into a complete woman and dignified human being. Commenting on the source of inspiration for writing the beautiful play like Chitra, Tagore confesses:

It was probably the month of Chaitra (March-April). Yellow, violet and white flowers were over-abundantly bloom amid the weedy growth that lay thick by the railway lines. While I was gazing at them it struck me that before long in the scorching sun the colourful phantasm of the flowers disappear and then, in the village orchard mangoes would appear on the branches; [...]. At the same time, I wonder why all of a sudden it came to my mind that a beautiful woman, if she feels that she has captivated her lover by her youthful charm alone, might inveigh against her beauty as the main rival in bringing about the consummation of her good fortune, as this beauty is extraneous to her nature, received as a boon

from Vasanta, the king of Seasons, to satisfy the biological urge by transient enchantment, If she has true strength of character within, it would be that infatuation-free power which would be a gift of the highest value to her lover and would be helpful in the triumphant journey of their united life.[...] This power of character is the ineluctable sustaining prop of life; it is not carried away by the instant claim of imperious appetite. [...] As the desire for dramatizing this idea flashed into my mind, I was reminded of the story of Chitrangada recounted in the Mahabharata. (Rabindra Racnabali, 160)

The drama Chitra establishes a very clear and lovely concept of human love and relationships. Tagore's play addresses a very important and emotive subject. Regarding the play Chitra, Srinivas Iyengar justifies the fundamental nature of human relationships: Love between man and woman is one of natural laws, and it can neither be avoided nor can its pace be forced. The progress of love is from the sensual to the spiritual. But the desire to force the pace could provoke tragic consequences." (Iynger, 40) Tagore masterfully depicts the growth of human love from physical to spiritual in the final scene, in which Chitra devotedly sacrifices her emotional affection for Arjuna. Here, Tagore has reached the utmost height.

The gift that I proudly bring to you is the heart of a woman. Here have all pains and joys gathered, the hopes and fears and shames of a daughter of the dust; here love springs up struggling towards immortal life. Herein lies an imperfection which yet is noble and grand. If the flower-service is finished, my master, accept this as your servant for the days to come. (77-78)

Tagore sees the physical attraction between man and woman as a natural part of life, but he rejects love that is solely focused on the body. Tagore successfully preached the concept of real love via Arjuna's yearning to bring their relationship to completion by taking his lady love home. Arjuna invites Chitra to accompany him to his home, which Tagore considers the most honourable tribute to their devoted relationship.

He says: "I am thinking that you, with this same lightness of touch and sweetness are weaving my days of exile into an immortal wreath, to crown me when I return home." (43) Arjuna wants to complete their relationship. He has not forgotten those lovely times full of strong feelings of love and understanding as time passes. Though he believes that a long period has passed and that the time has come to take things seriously, this does not imply that all they spent in those happy days will be forgotten as a nightmarish dream. Rather, Arjuna wishes to retain the beauty of his nighttime fantasies as well as the brightness of morning. The real one will follow the imaginary world. The light of reality will illuminate the moon of their fantasy country. Commenting upon the craftsmanship of the dramatist Krishna Kriplani gives his assessment that:

The play is very characteristic of the author. It represents a basic and permanent attitude of his mind and philosophy—his unification of man and nature, the latter almost an active participant in the drama of life

and his concern with the perennial question, what is beauty; what is love; what is the true and enduring basis of man-woman relationship? (K. Kriplani 143)

Arjuna's speech effectively conveyed Tagore's vision. He accepts that the sexual interaction between a man and a woman is the foundation of true love and a decent relationship between them. Tagore prioritized love above all other values in life. The dramatist has emphasised the concept that true love can only be discovered via a genuine connection between spirit and body. Chitra's pure and passionate love demonstrated that the beauty of the soul is immortal, just as the soul is immortal. She has fully experienced love, based on the beauty of the soul, by revealing her actual identity to Arjuna. Tagore states that the real oneness of soul and body is the ultimate objective of love, which both lovers have undoubtedly experienced. Representing Chitra as an example of a modern Indian woman, the dramatist appears to be forcefully advocating for women's equality in all fields. Chitra defines love as the primary source of life, leading to self-awareness, sacrifice, purity, and immortality. She is not a puppet in the hands of destiny; rather, she creates and shapes her destiny.

Thematic Exploration of the *Mahabharata* Myth and its Contributions to Feminist Discourse in the Contemporary Scenario

Though the narrative of the play is based on the *Mahabharata* ethos, its approach and subject matter make it a true awakening of the modern era and a loud voice of feminism in India. Its main character, Chitra, seems to represent a modern Indian Woman. She is fearless, gutsy, audacious, and determined. Furthermore, she exudes feelings of dedication and loyalty to her job. She possesses all of the abilities that a King should have. She sometimes has more human traits than the average male. There are times when we see her in varied moods, yet she also becomes as strong as a rock in her decisions. She is an ocean of turmoil but is as silent as the sky in the face of human weakness. The play highlights the importance of a woman's inner goodness and incompatible personality in a man's life. "Rabindranath uses this story to show that a woman is not only an object of sensual pleasure for man; she takes part in joys and sorrows and is intimately associated with his entire life." (Ray, 31).

The play represents the voice of today's women, who are not just proud of being awarded the title of queen of home but are eager to participate in every activity and face life's challenges. Women are not just passive listeners to their men's words, but want equal participation, as Chitra has expressed. This shift is breaking the long-standing notion that women are supposed to take care of the home and entertain men. However, women are often expected to live their lives according to their male partners' will, who often maintain a non-appreciative and indifferent attitude towards their achievements. Chitra has raised crucial questions that require

sincere consideration. By breaking this notion, women can play a vital role in society and break the dominating notion that women are primarily responsible for entertaining men. Chitra has forwarded some crucial questions; those require some sincere regard-

- Can a man accept an unattractive woman as his life partner willingly?
- Why always men's wish is superior and women's emotions keep no significance for them?
- Why it is necessary for a man only to work outside, restricting his woman's participation in it?
- Why a woman is concerned about being limited within the four walls of a house?
- Does a woman hold an equal position to a man in society?

The play represents modern Indian women and aims to raise awareness about women's awakening. Chitra asserts that female rights and roles complement men's rights, depicting the everyday life and concerns of Indian women. Chitra believes that God has endowed both men and women with equal qualities, but men often draw a queue to influence women. Tagore's play Chitra conveys a message to all women: before asking for equality, consider the impact of men on women. Chitra, a beloved creature of God, is renowned for her ability to balance everything harmoniously. She promotes equality between men and women, from physical to mental aspects. Despite societal expectations, Chitra chooses Arjuna as her life partner, demonstrating her female rights, willpower, and self-confidence. This decision marks a significant shift in thought and decision-making, marking the beginning of a new era. Chitra's courage and determination destroy barriers in her love path, leading to her success in achieving dignified satisfaction and happiness. Despite her emotional turmoil, Chitra's determination and courage ultimately lead her to success in her pursuit of happiness and fulfillment.

Chitra is a beautiful blend of traditional and modern Indian woman with qualities such as patience, sacrifice, dedication, and willingness to face any situation for her ambitions. Tagore symbolises her as a mental conflict and a symbol of strength and courage. Chitra has a tender heart within her strong body and willfully changes her personality for love, but does not let her existence be destroyed. She undergoes intense conflict while being loved by Arjuna for her false endeavor. However, she acknowledges that the honor is for things not part of her personality. This emotional crisis is a result of her idol's tormented image, unaware of the truth. Tagore highlights when a woman is not truly happy after achieving a desired position. A sensitive woman may find her body a rival if her lover is bound to her solely for external charms, rather than her heart and long-lasting companionship. Chitra's character highlights the importance of a woman's true happiness and the importance of a strong heart and companionship. Chitra, a woman who deceived Arjuna, has not forgotten her inner goodness.

Initially, her negative thoughts overpower her inner goodness, but she soon realizes the destructive side of her actions. Tagore's narrative highlights the hidden virtues of a woman who has adopted outer beauty from external sources. However, Chitra's inner beauty takes victory over temptations. She proves herself as the second name of truth and is not willing to let her real self be shattered by falsehood. Instead, she returns to the gods with her inner conflict and requests to return the boon of gorgeous charm. Tagore's portrayal of Chitra's psychological dilemma reflects the human quest to make her true self known to her beloved. Chitra's character is characterised by a strong attachment to her body, which she views as her rival. She finds it a hateful task to dress her and send her to her lover, ensuring their caressment. "...my body had become my own rival. It is my hateful task to deck her everyday, to send her to my beloved and see her caressed by him." (39) Tagore emphasizes that love is not just for self-protection or ambition but a true reality and the most pious face of womanhood. Chitra's instincts work to bring things to fullness, but she feels guilty for winning the lover through falsehood. She feels like she has been cheated by her means, as no true happiness has been received from it, and it has snatched away all she has.

Conclusion

Tagore's Bengali literary tradition views women as primordial energy. It categorizes them into two types: confidently assuring their place in society and calmly radiating the glory of a silent rule over the heart and life of their man. A woman plays two roles: Urvashi, innocently capturing the heart of a man, and Laxmi, smartly holding responsibilities of family and society as a director. In Tagore's play, Chitra is not a silent sufferer but knows how to meet her desires and achieve her ambitions. She questions her lover about the true response of a man who is conditioned to choose a woman without physical charm as his life partner. Chitra believes that a woman represents a man's power and a king's firmness, away from womanly tenderness. She boldly declares that if she stands up straight and strong with a daring heart, holding her head high like a tall young mountain, she may appeal to a man's eye. Undoubtedly, Chitra is a perfect model of womanhood. She is the ideal woman not because she is flawless, but because she recognizes her flaws and is willing to correct them. She symbolizes female will, psyche, and consciousness. Tagore conceived Chitra as a representation of Soundarya (beauty) and Shakti (power). She is a woman who can combat the worst evil. Tagore's Chitra is still remembered today for her uncommon blend of determination, daring, and devotion. Tagore has succeeded in portraying the woman as the embodiment of love, truth, and beauty.

This play embodies a thoroughly modernized attitude to society and a message to male members of society to be generous towards women and their achievements. Tagore's Chitra

has reached a deep portion of every woman's soul and successfully persuaded her thoughts.

The proclamation made by Chitra will best sum up the paper:

I am not the woman who nourishes her despair in lonely silence, feeding it with nightly tears and covering it with the daily patient smile, a widow from her birth. The flowers of my desires shall never drop into the dust before it has ripened to fruit. (21)

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