

GLIMPSES IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	Content
01	Non-Verbal Communication as an Integral Aspect of Personality Dr. Sanjay N. Kadam & Dr. Tukaram Bobade
02	Theme of Partition and Religious Discord in Khushwant Singh's "Train to Pakistan" Mr. Kailas B. Giri
03	आधुनिक हिंदी उपन्यासों साहित्य में दलित चेतना प्रा. डा. निवृत्ती एस. भेंडेकर
04	Feminine Consciousness Reflected In Rabindranath Tagore's Play 'Chitra' Dr. Sanjay N. Kadam
05	दृक-श्रव्य प्रसार माध्यम : दूरदर्शन और हिंदी विज्ञापन भेंडेकर एन.एस.
06	Voice to the Unvoiced In the Play of Mahesh Dattani'S 'Tara' Mr. Kailas B. Giri
07	आंबेडकरवादी समीक्षेचा मानदंड: मूल्यवेधी सम्यक समीक्षा डॉ. कीर्तीकुमार मोरे
08	A Complex East- West Culture Conflict In Girish Karnad's "Driven Snow" Dr. R. T. Bedre, & Dr. Sanjay N. Kadam
09	आईच्या संवेदनशिलतेने क्रांती घडवू पाहणारी कविता: प्रश्नांची मातृभाषा प्रा.डॉ. कीर्तीकुमार मोरे
10	Anita Desai's 'Fire on the Mountain: A Critical Study Mr. Kailas B. Giri

FEMININE CONSCIOUSNESS REFLECTED IN RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S PLAY 'CHITRA'

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The growth of Indian drama suffered as it was written in local languages. Later on some dramatists handled English language successfully, the notables among them are Shree Aurobindo, T.P. Kailasam, and Rabindranath Tagore. Girish Karnad and many dramatists arose in the course of time. These playwrights have utilized Indian themes expansively in their plays. Their writings served instructive purpose. Among these playwrights, Rabindranath Tagore was the principal figure who dared to criticize ills in the contemporary society through his plays. Mainly he focused on castism, religion when the old order was wearisome out and the new emerging forth; when the people were looking for new thoughts and ideas.

Rabindranath Tagore's Bengali play Chitrangada (1892) was published as Chitra in English in 1913. He has used an episode from the Mahabharata as the base to the plot of the play. Making drastic changes in Chitra- Arjuna episode, the playwright has conveyed the message of power to the audience. The story of Chitra resembles to Kalidasa's Shakuntal.

Therefore K.R.S. Iyengar remembers it as: 'Chitra is succinct Tagore and version of Kalidasa's Shakuntal' (Iyengar, KRS: 1987: 136) Chitra herself is embodiment of power. She has been conscious of her power as the princess. She is an expert in riding, hunting and duel. It is her inner passion to challenge Arjuna in single combat. She is a dogmatic lady with strong will power. She gets whatever she desires to get. A glance at Arjuna makes Chitra to think about her womanhood. She proposes him to marry but he refuses

saying: "I have taken the vow of celibacy. I am not fit to be thy husband." [Tagore. 1980:08]

Chitra feels ashamed and her will power provokes her to seek vengeance against Arjuna. A young charming lady makes penance to defeat Arjuna in the battle of romance. She gains perfect beauty for one whole year from Madana and Vasanta. It was the victory of Chitra's will power. Again her spirituality is reflected here. She turns towards penance instead of any worldly mean. Her spiritual power compels the divine power to grant her wish. With perfect beauty, Chitra comes to the temple of Lord Shiva in the midst of the forest. Seeing such a beautiful creature, Arjuna forgets his celibacy and surrenders before her and can not help himself from proposing her for marriage. Here the power of beauty is reflected.

A great warrior and the greatest archer of the world is surrendered before the beauty of a woman. He says: "You alone are perfect; you are the wealth of the world, the end of all poverty, the goal of all efforts, the one woman!" [Tagore. 1980: 09]

In scene VIII the villagers are anxious about their safety, because their princess has gone on journey. It shows that Chitra is a server for evil doers. No can emerge in her presence in the state. She is like subjects. At the end of the play Chitra dares to reveal her to Arjuna. It demonstrates her moral courage to face the disaster. When the time of parting comes, she prepares care of her child and says that she shall teach him as Arjuna. At the end, she has been projected as a dedicated caring mother.

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