

Feministic Overtones in “The Palace of Illusions”

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“I would venture to guess that anon , who wrote so many poems without signing them , was often a woman”- Virginia woolf

To create a own space for women in the field of literature has been received after a movement pioneered by many wonder women like Elaine showalter, Virginia Woolf , Simone de Beauvoir , Mary Wollstonecraft and much more. Here in the novel The Palace of Illusions by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, she takes a tremendous challenge by taking up the great epic MAHABHARATHA in the voice of Draupadi

Taking up an epic and interpreting it is done by many but portraying this in the view tone of a female is the greatest challenge. In the prologue of the novel itself author describes her struggles while undergoing this project. Author deals with the protagonist Draupadi her feelings, her desires, her vengeance, in short all were surrounded by the term ‘HER’ which we often failed to notice in the great epics like Ramayana and Mahabharatha.

All over the world till the feminist movement had started there were women readers and even there were women writers with pseudonyms, who hides their identity voluntarily. Not getting any recognition for something we have done is a cruellest thing to happen and we are the living victims of it. Feminist movement became a voice of the voiceless or suppressed, an attempt to bring marginalized to centre, We created our own language, shared our experiences and finally created our own space.

Author noted even the minute details that how the palace looked in the view of Draupadi, her desire to hear her birth story and portrayed her as an unwanted child, her secret love for Karna and unfortunates with Pandavas, her possessiveness towards other wives of Pandavas and finally a destruction and redemption

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Towards the end of the novel author portrayed Draupadi uniting with Karna in the heaven, which have no rules, no subjugations, no societal pressure but only the true love and happiness. All the desires of Draupadi will become true there, finally an epitome of happiness. Here we should note that none of the epic masters were dared to portray this because it will raise a question about morality. But it should be noted that none of the marriages happened

because Draupadi wished for but she was vulnerably pushed into the situation. The pathetic situation is morality became an unwritten rule for women whether it is right or wrong that does not matter, we should accept it even by sacrificing our own lives. Her pure and fascinating friendship with Krishna is also portrayed in modern terms especially there is a mention about her unrobing scene were Krishna saves her instead of Pandavas.