



Existential Crisis of Female Protagonist in Chitra Banerjee's The Palace of Illusions

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Abstract- The turmoil of existential crisis continues to shape literature since time immemorial. With the advancement of technology, this turmoil transitioned but continues to remain intact. Existential crisis may be an outcome of the trauma of migration, racism, technology, cultural assimilation, or isolation (i.e. alienation). Regardless of the reason, the central cause of existential crisis is the encounter of an individual with meaninglessness in the journey of existence and the quest inherited to make her/his identity significant. As characterized by Psychology, Identity is the set of beliefs and the traits of personality that construct a person. However, the inquiry in regards to self-identity or the search for it continues to evolve. The search for identity might be either constructive or destructive. This paper centers upon how Draupadi encounters existential crisis in the patriarchal hegemonic society and her quest for establishing her identity that helped to redefine her role by overcoming socio-cultural constraints. The paper also tries to parallelize the similarities between Banerjee's Draupadi to that of contemporary women who quest against the shackles of conventionality and customs to redefine their roles and to make her existence felt.

Keywords: Existential Crisis, Female Subjugation, Women Empowerment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Literature, explicitly or implicitly deals with contemporary social, political and economic realities reflecting a culture. We witness that the quest to establish an independent existence is an idea that finds its expression in works of literature since time immemorial. Today, the concept of existential-crisis is playing a highly polemical role in the discussions on man and society. Is man a free being? If yes, then why men are deprived of freedom and feel estranged from their self? Again, if a man is a free being, how s/he can regain her/his lost freedom and overcome the state of existential crisis? Is existential crisis a historical and historically transcendable phenomenon or a necessary aspect of man's existence? Again, if it is a historical phenomenon, what are the concrete historical conditions which breed existential crisis into estrangement and how it can be overcome? These are some of the questions that are continuously raised when the issues concerning of existential crisis are discussed.

There is virtually little to analyse with in conventional life in terms of "existentialism" It definitely appears to be the modus operandi and the most remarkable features of this century. The notion of absurd has been dominant in literature. Human predicament can be explored as a prominent expedition of self-discovery, a journey taken to overcome "existential-crisis". It is also explained by the growing pretension to social relations, the decline in self improvement, the predominant nature of the traits of delusional temperament, and the disassociated interpretation of life and God's "disappearance."

The Ethics of Creativity describes the constraints of existential crisis as "forced out of conscious awareness and into the realms of the unconscious" (Morgan 119). Existential Crisis is a separation of something from other. Though the concept may vary from philosopher to philosopher, it can be discerned that some fundamental elements of existential crisis are commonly referred to as elements constituting man's state of estrangement. It is supposed that usually, man witness existential crisis from self, nature and society. So, Man, Nature and Society are the essential components of alienation. Of course, in religions like Christianity and Judaism, God is said to be the being and ground from whom a man is supposed to feel estranged. With the

progressive secularization of thought and development of scientific knowledge and thus, with overcoming mythical consciousness the notions like man's fall and bondage etcetera are also explained in terms of its existence in nature and society. Despite this general progress of human knowledge, the problems of existence and reality are still approached from different angles, and the methodological and philosophical differences have their direct bearing on the concept of existence.

Nowadays, the concept of self, identity and existence are popular. Not only literature but various other fields like sociology, psychology, philosophy and law are also discussing it on the forefront. It is becoming a part of everyday speech. Since this concept is multifaceted; it becomes hard to explain what it exactly means across various fields. In the 21st century, the theme acquires a greater relevance due to the various factors that impact human life and lead to crises in individual life. Our lives today are generally characterised by "crisis or devoid" This relates continuously to the rise of superficiality of human relations, the deterioration in the formation of personality, the pervasive presence of neurotic personality characteristics and loss of purpose in life and the "disappearance" or "death" of GOD. The study also aims at examining these questions from the existential dilemma facing the feminine heroine in *The Palace of Illusions*.

The Palace of Illusions is an account of the great Indian epic *Mahabharat* as narrated by the wife of Pandavas' Draupadi, who was famous as Paanchali. The novel is written from Draupadi's narrative, unlike traditional epics that are male-centred and less attention. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni stated in the introductory note of *The Palace of Illusions* that, "I was left unsatisfied by the portrayals of the women... they remain shadowy figures, their thoughts and motives mysterious, their emotions portrayed only when they affected the lives of the male heroes" (POI 14-15).

In her early childhood Draupadi started to search for belonging as she thought of her father's palace, "Through the long lonely years of my childhood, when my father's palace seemed to tighten its grip around me until I couldn't breathe, I would go to my nurse and ask for a story " (POI 1) her days of childhood are lonely because of the restrictions imposed upon Draupadi, it shows how women, whether they belong to an aristocratic or common class are subjugated by the laws of patriarchal society, such subjugation creates a sense of existential crisis that makes her seek her palace, her own space. She ponders, "When I had my palace, I promised myself, it would be totally different. Delicate and intricate, like gold filigree? I only knew that it would mirror my deepest being. There I would be finally at home" (POI 7). Draupadi's for 'a space of her own' is the fundamental search for womanhood.

The novel gives an insight how every male around Draupadi is trying to rule over her, suppressing her identity in some way or the other, her father, named her brother Dhrastadyumna i.e. the destroyer of enemies whereas she was named "Draupadi" i.e. 'Drupad's daughter'. It shows that she doesn't have an identity of her own; she is the daughter, wife, sister or mother of some male, who possesses her. This was the reason she liked being called Krishna over other names. And later the name Panchaali as given by sage Vyas is a name strong like the land. *The Palace of Illusions* possesses many instances that show how Draupadi's identity was governed by the males around her.

While discussing the motive behind Dhrastadyumna's birth, her brother tells, "You're looking at the story through the wrong window" (POI 15) pointing that being a woman she has a narrow perspective like the windows. And later on, she was criticized a lot about being a woman she has a short memory or she was not capable of doing things that a man can, their sole purpose is just to please a man and support them blindly. "Being a girl, she is cursed with a short memory" (POI 25) but Draupadi opposed it which is equivocal to opposing the patriarchal society as much as a woman could. However being an alone woman, she cannot stand against the entire society of men, still, she tried, she did everything that she could to help herself and other women, "And who decided that a woman's highest purpose was to support men?" (POI 26) and by doing this she questioned the traditional suppressing norms of society.

When Draupadi visited the great sage Vyas, she was advised by him about the three dangerous moments that'll befall her. The first to befall before her wedding when she was advised to refrain from asking a question. The second to befall when her husbands would be at the height of their power; she was asked to hold back her laughter at such a moment. The third when she'd be shamed beyond imagination, she was advised to hold back her curse at that moment. Perhaps it might limit future mishaps (POI 40). In all these

circumstances, her impulses to 'ask,' 'laughter and' curse were sought to withheld because they are manifestations of resistance. She was advised not to speak up, even if embarrassed publicly (i.e. Disrobing of Draupadi by Kauravas). So she wasn't ever allowed, because it counteracted the masculine hegemonic system of culture i.e. to speak her mind or what she desired. The third, when Panchaali asks Vyas, "What are you writing?" and he answers "The story of your life, if only you'd stop interrupting it" (POI 41). Vyas could write the story of her life even before she lived it due to the tradition of hegemonic ascendancy over women. Men can decide their fates, their entire lives, can write their joys, pains, did they even understand the complexity of women's emotions. "How could such a book be written before I'd lived the incidents it described? Did this mean that I had no control over what was to happen?" (POI 43). No, but they expect women to follow what was written for them and that is the reason Draupadi has to marry all her husband whom she doesn't love that much, and then has to go through the humiliation in front of the entire sabha. Even after that all the blame of the Great War was on Draupadi she was known as the one who started it, and she was alone blamed for all those losses, yes she played an important role, but the role was already written by someone else, and she didn't even know she was about to do all those things, "But I should have begged your pardon instead for all the humiliation you'll suffer before the war, and all the sorrow afterwards. And much of this you'll endure, sister, because your destiny is linked with mine" (POI 52) when her brother Sikhandi met Draupadi for the first time he confessed about her future humiliation and suffering, this shows that people knew what was about to happen to expect Draupadi, she never knew where her destiny will lead her too. Still, she was blamed for the destruction of the Great War. This shows that in Patriarchal society women had to follow which was already by a man and even after those women are held accountable for everything they were a force to do by men.

Draupadi has been described in many ways, a modern woman rebelling against the fact that the major decisions in her life are taken by men without consulting her. She discloses the different layers of Mahabharata through various conversations, stories and dreams. She sees that strong women tend to have unhappy marriages, whether be Kunti or Gandhari. She couldn't find any suitable reason behind Gandhari's choice to persist with the blindfold to accompany her blind husband by not seeing. Panchali exhibits free thought here by challenging the preference of being blind as unintelligent. If a woman can opt blindfold for her husband or can do other sacrifices for her husband, why can't men do the same for their wives? Divakaruni's Draupadi is highly self-obsessed and self-conscious. She knew her place at the time of her birth (i.e. to alter history) as she predicted, "The voices said, —Here is the son, you asked for he'll bring you the vengeance you desire, but it will break your life in two...They said, Behold, we give you this girl... she will change the course of history" (POI 5). Drupad, however, only held out the arms of the boy. The first rejection by her father, her father holding Dhri's hand upon her, was never forgotten by Draupadi. She never overcame this condemnation as throughout her life she remained fascinated by her part of the narrative and would ask, "Change the course of history! Did they really say that?" (POI 5). Whether she displays obsessive interest in it, she still denied the prophecy, "I thought of the prophecy then, with yearning and fear. I wanted it to be true. But did I have the makings of a heroine – courage, perseverance, an unbending will? And shut up as I was inside this mausoleum of a palace, how would history even find me?" (POI 5). She couldn't understand that her people were afraid of her. She thought people acknowledged only the man and not the woman, however both of them were born for the same purpose, but a woman was not taken seriously, "They could, perhaps, accept men like Dhri who were divinely born, to fulfil a destiny shaped by the gods. But women? Especially women who might bring change, the way a storm brings the destruction of lightning?" (POI 32).

Women never have a home of their own, they are always the second person, before marriage their parents treat them as a liability and remind them time to time that they have to get married one day and they have to leave their father's place and after marriage, they are treated as an outsider, a person who was never born at that place, a person who doesn't know the place well and will always be an outsider. "But Dhai Ma puffed out her cheeks at my tendency to drama, calling me the Girl Who Wasn't Invited" (POI 2). But it was so much more different for Draupadi, she was born with from the fire with her brother, but she was not expected. Her father just wanted a boy to take his revenge and when she was born with his brother she was not wanted and accepted. "He held out his arms—but for my brother alone. It was only my brother he meant to raise up to show to his people. Only my brother that he wanted" (POI 6). This says that she was not expected, and when she was born, she was ignored because she was a woman, and according to patriarchal society women are just liabilities, and nothing more than it. According to the Theory of Neurosis,

basic anxiety (and therefore neurosis) could result from a variety of situations including direct or indirect domination, indifference, erratic behaviour, lack of respect for the child's individual needs, lack of real guidance, disparaging attitudes, too much admiration or the absence of it, lack of reliable warmth, having to take sides in parental disagreements, too much or too little responsibility, over-protection, isolation from other children, injustice, discrimination, unkept promises, hostile atmosphere, and so on and so on. (Horney 1945)

And we see that Draupadi was facing most of these issues, she was kept away from her father's other daughters, "He had kept me segregated from other men and women? (POI 11)", separated from the world she has always longed for an intimate relations with friends and family. But when she was born she was rejected by her father, the first time she came out of the fire and it is really hard to forget to the rejection she has faced from her father. Although King Drupad has provided Draupadi a certain right, but she wasn't able to forgive him for his first refusal that she faced at her birth, "But I couldn't forgive him that initial rejection... I didn't trust him completely" (POI 6). Even when Draupadi was with her family she was always avoided. People always try to stay away from her, there was always a fear of her, which she was never able to understand. "They could, perhaps, accept men like Dhri who were divinely born, to fulfil a destiny shaped by the gods. But women? Especially women who might bring change, the way a storm brings the destruction of lightning? All my life, they would shun me" (POI 32).

People are instinctively social; Hegel treats this relationship between people as an essential harmony. In his study of the structure of bourgeois society, however, Hegel claims individual has independent existence in the form of "distinct moments" persisting as private individuals (111). As a part of this conflicting unity, in Hegel's vocabulary people are both a being for others and a "being for oneself." One entity lives for one another and must look at one another through the eyes of the other. Any consciousness, however, recognizes:

Each is for the other the middle term, through which each mediates itself with itself and unites with itself; and each is for itself, and for the other, an immediate being on its own account, which at the same time is such only through this mediation. They recognize themselves as mutually recognizing one another. (112)

Marx focused on the proletarian movement that tried to eradicate the class life. Fanon calls the necessities and shortcomings of tyranny and the prevalent nationalism of in the conclusion of Blacks in *Black Skin, White Masks*. The argument, like Marx, is not only to create people and culture, but also to replicate their own existential problem through their modes of thinking and organisation. As Fanon insists, racist conditions are the basic basis for the self-abolition of race in a white supremacist society, and those conditions are not clearly resolved, because it continues to replicate itself. In this contradiction, Fanon saw Négritude as ensnared. The problem, in a more brief way, lies within a set of essential boundaries which appear to replicate obsolete, alienated race forms and, simultaneously, a universal consideration i.e. mankind free of race. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, W.E.B. Du Bois, the black individual writes in the opening chapter:

born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American world,—a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others...The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self.(17)

Du Bois' double-consciousness idea precisely captures Fanon's line of thought which, in his anti-colonialism writings in *Wretched of the Earth* and elsewhere, he established in a greater historical scale. In reality, the history of the fight for self-realization for Fanon is ethnical and racial: it is a culture in which content will determine its own type, "a sense of minority? No, a sense of not being there" (5).

Racism which is still a substantial problem in the world, Draupadi has to face it a lot when she was young, "We both severely dark-skinned. In a society that looked down its patrician nose on anything except milk-and-almond hues, this was considered most unfortunate, especially for a girl" (POI 8). When you are a girl the only things matters is her beauty because the society looks towards the girl with judging look if she is

not beautiful. Society disgrace people who are dark skin, they are simply not acceptable because of the thing which is not even in their hands to resolve.

Panchali wanted to be taught like the way men are taught; she doesn't prefer ladylike tasks. "A girl being taught what a boy was supposed to learn? Such a thing had never been heard of in the royal family of Panchaal!" (POI 23), But a woman being taught was never taught about. Women were prepared differently. Why? Are women not humans? What is it about women that make men think her less than him? "The tutor's declaration that women were the root of all the worlds troubles" (POI 24). The tutor whose sole job is to teach and pass knowledge from one generation to another thinks that women are trouble, then how can we expect young boys or men to respect women when they are taught that women cannot be respected "He brought me news of the world that no one else cared to give me, the world that I was starving for—even news that I suspected would be considered improper for the ears of a young woman" (POI 12).

She wanted to know everything going on in this world like any other human would have wanted, but unfortunately, she was a woman and princess, she was not allowed to have or to do things men can do, even if she was capable of doing it. She confesses that she has been sent to change the course of history, "I had the destiny to fulfill that was no less momentous than Dhri's. Why was no one concerned about preparing me for it? (POI 26)". Because she was women and women were not suppose to full-fill destiny, they were just there to follow commend, first their father's and then their husband's. But Draupadi continuously questioned paradoxical society, "And who decided that a woman's highest purpose was to support men (POI 26)?" .Though there was no one to hear her questions and answer them. Most times she felt she was not doing what she was born to do, she felt that she was presumed to do different things, learn differently, in way that can help her full-fill the prophecy she was born to full-fill, but no one thought it important apart from herself. And she felt left out, "I felt as though I were drowning in a backwater pond while everything important in the world was happening elsewhere (POI 36)".

Dhai Ma's accusation that Draupadi is full of herself is also a significant point about her personality trait. When Draupadi hears about her swayamvar, she thinks, "Why would our father, who delighted in control, allow me so much freedom?" , when she learns that, "there would be a test of skill" (POI 55), she questions, "Why even call it a swayamvar then?" (POI 56). Here, she was not given a choice to select her husband but a thing to be won in this swayamvar through a test of skill. When Krishna clears her doubt and explains her father's motive towards setting the skill test for the swayamvar. She feels, "My mouth filled with ashes. How foolish I'd been, dreaming of love when I was nothing but a worm dangled at the end of a fishing pole (POI 57)". The feeling suddenly fills her with disappointment that her choice doesn't matter. Her excitement towards her own choice is mitigated by her father's motive; she thought her marriage is only a medium for her father to get more power. The only thing mattered was her father's pride, she was supposed to get married and go away with a person she have never seen or meet before, just because she was women and women was suppose to follow men's command. And because of this, she couldn't marry the one she loved, still, she continues to love him because she couldn't do anything about it. She cannot just replace him with someone else. She was an idol wife, she was always there for her husbands, even when they were not kings and lived in a small hut, but she couldn't stop loving the one she truly admired Karna and finally at the end when she was done with her duties on this earth, she finally met him, "We are husband and wife no more; nor is Karna (if I can still use that name for this being with his joyous, patient eyes) any longer the forbidden one. I can take his arm in view of everyone. If I wish, I can embrace him with all of myself (POI 359)". The world is full of stories of how Brahmans get impure when they see or touch the Shudras, about how the elites were not supposed to see the lower caste people. Why is it that nobody was allowed to see Drupadi or any other princess? Royal family should be respected and normal people should be allowed to know what's royalty is. Why was that just a woman, a princess was not allowed to meet the commoners and a prince was? The men knew who were they ruling but a woman should not? Why?, Women were told, "Don't you know that the women of the Panchaal royal family are supposed to remain hidden even from the gaze of the sun?(POI 36)".

Men were allowed to have as many women as they want, the can have any women the laid eyes on but women are not even allowed to look at other men apart from their husband and sons, "husband! You know what our shastras call women, who've been with more than one man, don't you? Though no one seems

to have a problem when men sleep with a different wife each day of the week! (POI 42)", who gave so much right to men over a woman's body? Draupadi was expected to marry all the Pandavas just because she was won by them, they own her now? When Kunti says to all Pandavas brothers, "you must now honour my words. All five of you must marry this woman (POI 108)". On this she feels insulted, "this woman, as though I were a nameless servant. It angered me, but it also hurt (POI 108)".

Since childhood she had the confidence to know more and her viewpoint but the discourse that she took up a woman's lives with her prescribed, limited rules manlike her manlike, was considered difficult-hearted and debating. At times of quenching her curiosity, her brother taunted "As you know, being a girl, she is cursed with a short memory. Additionally, she is of an impulsive nature, a failing in many females" (POI 24). Even after such indifference, she learned to voice, she even never hesitated in expressing her resentment to her tutor when he declared women as the primary reason for world's troubles. But her intellect was valued by Yudhisthir as he used to seek her advice in matters of state, "I had a good eye for matters of governance. More and more, Yudhisthir began to ask my advice when a tricky judgment had to be delivered. And I, having learned more of the working's of women's power, was careful to offer my opinion only in private, deferring to him always in front of others (POI 148)".

Panchali's intention to engrave her name in history falls preposterous to her expectations. This is because she designs her palace on the masculine foundations of pride and envy, of making a mark in society and ages to come and not on her principles, "I smiled with sudden elation, thinking, this is what I've been waiting for all my life! ... This creation that's going to be the envy of every King of Bharat—we'll call it the Palace of Illusions" (POI 146). But still, even though she should have, she doesn't call the palace after her. That also represents the idea of Virginia Woolf that femininity is anonymous to the feminine virtue against the male propensity to name all.

In the forest, the sages visit the Pandavas and narrated the stories. One of the stories is about the sufferings of Nal Damayanti. Nishad King Nal, during his exile, leaves his wife Damayanti sleeping in the forest so that she could return to her father's home, but Damayanti instead of going back searches for her husband. On hearing this, Draupadi feels the misery of Damayanti and thinks that if she had been in place of Damayanti she would have never gone for the search of her husband. Instead, she would have planned for another Swayamvar, the real one. This particular incident indicates Draupadi's rebellion and anger towards the conditions of women of the time. Many times she even tried to question the condition of women, why women are not allowed to do things that man can, why women are considered weaker, without even testing them. "Why don't the gods appear to me? Is it because I'm a woman? (POI 222)" And she was always in haste to change the situation of women, but she couldn't do much because her destiny and deeds were already written by a man, she couldn't do much for women. But at last, she created a safe place for women, "It was time I shook off myself pity and did something. I resolved to form a separate court, a place where women could speak their sorrows to other women (POI 323)".

After being disrobed, she realized the utter importance of "self-identity" and she learned to stand for herself as well as for others,

They would avenge me later; yes, but only when they felt the circumstances would bring them heroic fame. A woman doesn't think that way. I would have thrown myself forward to save them if it had been in my power that day...I no longer depended on them so completely in the future. And when I took care to guard myself against hurt; it was as much from them as from our enemies. (POI 195)

Kunti asked her five sons to get married to one woman 'Panchali' and they agreed to her without a word because according to her sons, one cannot deny what their mother asked them to do "admittedly, this is an unusual arrangement. But how can it be heinous to obey one's mother?" Yudhisthir asked. 'Haven't our scriptures declared, the father is equal to heaven, but the mother is greater?' (117)". This is was said by Yudhisthir the eldest son of Kunti and one of the husbands of Panchaali, to Panchaali's father to so he could allow all of his brothers to get married to Panchaali, they didn't think about her feelings they sabotaged her, used her one by one as a mere object, which doesn't have feelings of its own "I was distressed by the coldness with which my father and my potential husband discussed my options, thinking only of how these acts would benefit—or harm—them (118)". And when their mother Kunti herself warned them against Duryodhan told

them not to go they didn't listen to her they did what they wanted to and at last lost everything "You're making a mistake," Kunti said to Yudhisthir. "At least leave Draupadi behind—it's neither right nor prudent that she goes with you (178)". This shows that men only listen to women, even to their mother, when they think it is for their benefits.

Following these incidents, Panchaali's comments vary significantly from what she had modelled herself before. She moves towards self-sufficient narrative, she no longer relies upon her husbands, "I've always known you to be stronger than your husbands" (POI 329). And in her life, though it was not entirely hers because everything was already written and fixed by a man, by Vyasa, she tried everything she could for women so that they could live on their own a happy and respectful life "Hastinapur remained one of the few cities where women could go about their daily lives without harassment" (POI 325). When her brother Sikhandi said that it is waste of time to keep faith in a man that he will avenge her honour she didn't understand what he meant, "Remember that, little sister: wait for a man to avenge your honour, and you'll wait forever (49)", but later on when her husband's did nothing when she being humiliated in front of the entire sabha she realized his brother Sikhandi was right. "She's dead. Half of her died the day when everyone she had loved and counted on to save her sat without protest and watched her being shamed" (POI 206). So when the war ended she tried to console the widow of the dead soldiers, she empathized with them, She understood the pain and sufferings better now and give them a safe space to live their rest of the lives without fear. Because she knew if she wouldn't do that a man would eventually come and ruin them.

Even after all these things happened to Panchali she was filled with sympathy though people know her for her anger, that is because they have heard her stories or read her stories from a man or written by a man. She was sympathetic for others even for the ones that have hurt her badly, she felt for Karna even when he had ordered to remove clothes in front of the entire sabha. "After all that had transpired, why should I care what happened to a man with ancient eyes?" (POI 218), she felt for Kunti, her mother in law, who forced her to marry five husbands, who treated her like a thing that can be sabotage, anytime she wants even when she tried to sell her to Karna, by saying that he could marry to her if he chooses to fight with the Pandavs instead of fighting against them. "A little of my anger faded. I remembered my girlhood sympathy for Karna's unknown mother" (POI 289). And as a queen she had sympathy for her subjects, and she understands that people depend on her, and she wants to be there for them "I'd started to address the women as a queen might her subjects, but as the words formed in my mouth, I spoke as a mother among mothers, and together we wept" (POI 314), and all of this is because she understands the pain of others. After all, she has gone through worse than this.

Panchaali moved towards the establishment of women's domain in the public realm following the battle of *Mahabharat*. She did this with the aid of other mighty women, such as Kunti, Gandhari and Uttara, the women she had never entrusted before. She decides to set up a women's court intended with considerable results, rather than advising Yudhisthir on legal matters. The author retold the same epic of *Mahabharata* with the feminist perspective that makes Draupadi the crucial character. Draupadi's interrogation upon the life, purpose, choice and moral choice is dominant throughout the epic. Through the character of Draupadi, Chitra Banerjee compels the reader to explore the problem of the existence crisis of women in the patriarchal society and the brutal application of the social conditioning of men over a woman. The female protagonist Panchali alone quests to fight against the atrocities of patriarchal society and did everything possible to gain the freedom and safety for the women of Hastinapur which she couldn't get for herself.

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