

SYMBOLISM IN THE PLAY CHANDALIKA

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Abstract:

Rabindranath Tagore has a distinct place as a dramatist. He is well-versed in the classics of Indian drama and is alive to the European dramatic tradition. He borrows his themes from Indian mythology, Buddhist legends and other classical sources with the least artistic inhibition or compunction. The short drama Chandalika discusses Tagore's lasting regard for the Buddha. The short drama is based on a Buddhist legend. Ananda, the famous disciple of the Buddha, feels thirsty and approaches a well on the way.

Keywords: symbolism, social equality, rational, humanistic aspects

Chandalika:

Rabindranath Tagore discovered the important image of the Indian girl. He is the primary to depict her as Associate in Nursing intellectual temperament. The heroines of Tagore aren't weak or humble. They have their own pride and self-respect. They have knowledge of their own self. His feminine characters like Chitra in Chitra, Prakriti and her mother in Chandalika, Nalini in Red Oleanders, have their own voice. The title of the play Chandalika, itself shows that the heroine of the play may be a girl happiness to all-time low category of society. The protagonist, Prakriti may be a lady World Health Organization belongs to the untouchable category. She falls in love with Buddhist bhikshu, who makes her aware of herself. Prakriti gets her spiritual comfort. This journey of Associate in Nursing untouchable lady from self-ignorance to savvy is shown in Chandalika.

A Brahma-Hindu Rabindranath Tagore had lasting regard for the Buddha. It is based on a Buddhist legend associated with one of the Buddha's disciples named Ananda. a pair of Rabindranath Tagore realised that Indian society was "permeated by faith and living story, endowed with a psychic landscape having its own concept of time and space."³

The story of Associate in Nursing untouchable lady Prakriti is told in Mitra's book, Indic Buddhist Literature of Asian country. She went to her mother and asked her to use magical powers to make Ananda fall in love with her. Tagore created use of this tiny a part of the story that within the original, the Shardulakarna Avadana, runs into dozens of pages.

The location of the story is at Sravasti. Lord Buddha had been staying at the garden of Ananthapindad. One day his favorite disciple Ananda, while on his way back from lunch at some house felt thirsty. He saw that a girl of the chandals, Prakriti by name, was drawing water from the well. He asked for water, she gave. The girl became charmed at his beauty. Finding no alternative thanks to have him, she sought help from her mother. Her mother knew magic. She smudgy her court with scrap, prepared an altar, lighted a fire and chanting a magic spell offered 108 sunflowers in that fire. Ananda could not resist the power of the magic and arrived at her house in the night. As he Saturday on the altar, Prakriti began to unfold the bed for him. Then Ananda felt rue and fearfully prayed to Buddha to rescue him.

Lord Buddha had in the meantime come to know, by means of his divine power, of the condition of his disciple and cited a mantra. Under the impact of that mantra, the spell of the chandal girl became weak and Ananda came to the cloister.

So far the initial story underscores the orthodox plan of the prevalence of the monk and therefore the lure of lustful women; however the conclusion of Avadana story adds the information—supposedly given by Buddha himself—that in her previous birth Prakriti was the daughter of a

Brahmin who had contemptuously declined the offer of marriage from Sardulakarna, the accomplished son of the learned and wise chandal Trishanku, and when being defeated within the prolonged discussion the Brahmin had, at last, give his daughter in marriage to the chandal boy. Trishanku was Buddha himself in the previous birth. Thus the account additionally highlights a radical angle to casteism.

In 1933 Tagore wrote a little play Chandalika on the premise of this tale. All the dramatic action during this play is disclosed within the dialogues of Prakriti along with her mother. After abundant deliberation and spurring by Prakriti, the mother consents to use her magic powers to draw Ananda back to their shack. As the mother is engaged during this magic, Prakriti reports to her mother however Ananda is fighting the urge to travel back to Prakriti's home however within the finish is giving in. In 1938 Tagore rewrote the story, but now people with more characters, in the form of a dance-drama which is also called Chandalika. Marjorie Sykes translated Chandalika into English.

Tagore's play Chandalika is a short two-act play. The story of the play revolves around only three characters – Prakriti, a chandal Girl, Ananda, a Buddhist monk and Prakriti's mother who has magic powers. The play could be a story of terribly sensitive lady condemned by her birth to a despicable caste. "Tagore presents a psychological study of a young woman who suffers on account of her vanity and self-consciousness. Tagore highlights the enigmatic character of a woman, the character of being all dominating over possessive to devour all that stand before her precisely, her excessive materialistic approach that ultimately fails".⁵

Prakriti was born in a very chandal family; and, like all chandal youngsters, she has been brought up in the belief that she was inferior to all other people and that even her touch would pollute a member of the other classes of society or of the other castes. As usual, Prakriti visited the well to fetch water, finding her nowhere to be seen the mother of Prakriti calls out to Prakriti who should by now come back home. However, hearing her mother's shout, Prakriti comes and tells her that she was sitting close to the well. The mother scolds her saying: "Past high noon, and blistering sun, and therefore the earth too hot for the feet! Why the terribly crows on the amlok branches square measure pury for warmth. Yet you sit within the Vaisakh sun for no reason at all!" (Act I, 147)*.

Prakriti back to her mother's scolding and questioning, says that she had really been doing penance.

Mother asks: Did you tell him that you are a Chandalini?

PRAKRIT: I told him, yes. He said it wasn't true. If the black

Prakriti feels excited and delighted by the Bhikshu's words and he or she then pours water into his cupped hands.

At identical time she has fallen crazy with the Bhikshu, and indeed, begun to be haunted by the thoughts of him.

On hearing this account of Prakriti's experience, the mother tells her that she had behaved like a stupid girl and that she had been too reckless in her behavior. Prakriti would ought to pay an important worth for such misconduct, says the mother, as a result of Prakriti had forgotten the caste into that she was born. Prakriti ignoring her mother's warning says: "Once did he cup his hands, to take the water from the mine " (Act I, 148).

The mother says that even Prakriti's manner of speaking has modified which it looks that the Buddhist monk had forged some quite spell upon her. She then asks Prakriti if she extremely understands all that she has same. Prakriti replies that the Buddhist monk had come to her for water when he could have got water from any other place in the city of Sravasti through which he had been walking all day. He had come to her at this well instead of going to any other well. It was on her that he had bestowed the honor of quenching his thirst. It was truly a new birth for her. The Buddhist monk had performed a highly commendable act by asking her for water and thus conferring an honor upon her. Evidently, he wanted to fulfill some sacred purpose by coming to her, though he could have gone to some sacred stream to quench his thirst. Prakriti quotes Buddhist monks example of however Chandals have served water to the priestly individuals. My heart has been terpsichore ever since, and night and day I hear those solemn tones- 'Give American state water, give me water' (Act I, 149). Prakriti has currently become attentive to her standing as a personality's being, on no means inferior to the other. A feeling of self-esteem or self- esteem has currently taken roots in her heart.

Prakriti shows herself to be a awfully sensitive quite woman and he or she proves to be a sensual one too. When the Buddhist monk happens all over again to pass the well where Prakriti had given him water to quench his thirst, he doesn't even look towards the well because he's not thirsty as a result of{and since} he had fully forgotten the incident of his having met a Chandal woman to whom he had imparted the information of her identity as a human being. Prakriti misinterprets the Buddhist Bhikshu's forgetfulness of the total incident as Associate in Nursing insult to her, and he or she currently becomes even additional determined than before to own him as her lover. She even says that her mother's magic are some things ancient, as old as life itself, while the Mantras of the Buddhist Bhikshu's are raw things of yesterday. These Bhikshus will ne'er be a match for her mother, she says, and that this particular Bhikshu is therefore bound to be defeated by her magic.

In fact, Prakriti goes so far as to say to her mother: "No matter where he goes, you must bring him back. He showed no pity for me. I shall show none to him. Chant your spells, your cruelest spells. Wherever he goes, he shall never escape from me" (Act I, 151). Driven by her need for the Bhikshu, Prakriti entreats her mother to chant her magic spells so as to bring the Bhikshu to

her door to hunt her love. The mother demurs on grounds of faith and morality however offers means once ironed laborious by Prakriti.

Prakriti's mother offers Prakriti a magic mirror within which Prakriti would be able to see wherever the Bhikshu is and what's happening to him as a results of the magic spells that the mother would begin to chant. The mother then begins her magic operations, whereas Prakriti appearance into the mirror. The magic of Prakriti's mother begins to take effect. Prakriti sees Bhikshu showing symptoms of a change in his look and behavior. Soon, a conflict begins in Prakriti's mind. This conflict shows that Prakriti isn't just a creature of lust that she isn't a brazen girl seeking just the gratification of her sensual need, and that she is devoid of all moral scruples. Prakriti sees Bhikshu experiencing the agony of a struggle which has begun to take place within him. As a consequence of the magic spells being musical by Prakriti's mother, a sensual desire to hold Prakriti in his arms and to satisfy his craving for his flesh has up in his heart, but he is stoutly resisting this desire and trying to overpower it. As the magic spell continues, the sensual desire in Bhikshu grows stronger and stronger, but the resistance increases too at least in the beginning. A conflict between sensuality and spirituality then begins to take the shape of a storm in his soul and the onslaught of the sensual desire has begun to distort and twist his face that is quick losing its radiance and its serenity.

Prakriti's mother asks Prakriti to appear into the mirror and tell her wherever the Bhikshu is at this point. Prakriti looks into the mirror and then throws it away. She asks her mother to prevent and to undo the spells right away. In a tone of nice distress, she says to her mother:

Mother, mother stop! Undo the spell now—at once—undo it! What have you done? What have you done? O Wicked, wicked deed! Better have died. What a sight to see! (Act II, 165).

She tells her mother that Bhikshu is extremely close to their house however a good amendment has come across him. All the sunshine and also the radiance, all the shining purity, and every one the heavenly glow, that he originally had, area unit currently gone fully. He looks worn-out and faded. It seems that he carries on his back the heavy burden of his defeat. His religious self has fully been overpowered by his passion and his lust for her. He is coming to her door with his head hanging downwards in shame. Prakriti tells her mother in in a very categorical manner to place an finish to her magic operation and kicks away all the gear of magic.

The mother feels all too glad to undo the magic that she has been operating and she or he, of course, pays the price for having misused her magic powers. At this time, Bhikshu appears at the door of Prakriti's house. Prakriti, overcome by her feeling of regret and remorse, falls at Bhikshu's feet, seeking his forgiveness. She apologizes to him for having pulled him down into the dust by the force of her mother's black magic, but she also says that this visit by him would become the means of her going to heaven. "(Act II, 165).

The Bhikshu now released from the effect of magic becomes aware of his surroundings and begins to sing a song in honor of his master, the Buddha. The song runs thus:

To the purest Budha, the mighty ocean of mercy Seer of knowledge absolute, pure, supreme,
 Of the world's sin and suffering the Destroyer— Solemnly to Gautama Siddhartha, I bow in
 homage.

The Bhikshu has been rebuilt to his original self with all his spirituality and his dedication to a lifetime of purity and worship.

Prakriti may be a combination of beauty and rare intelligence. Throughout the play, the reader can experience her intelligence which is revealed by her speaking. It is because of her intelligence that she quickly imbibes the lesson which the Buddhist monk has tried to teach her. The advising words of the monk infuse a way of her identity as a personality's being. She thinks that the monk's words have caused her to be reborn. She tells her mother that for the primary time she had detected the type of words that the monk had spoken to her which normally, she would have not dared even to touch the dirt underneath the feet of that man to UN agency she had given water and who had truly drunk the water. She had therefore deeply been influenced by the monk's words whereas running water into his cupped hands. She had felt that the water was growing to a bottomless ocean which into the water were flowering all the body of water of the planet, drowning her caste and laundry her clean of the stigma of her low birth.

Of the three plays Muktheadhara, Chandalika and Natirpuja, Chandalika is the shortest play, but the most powerful. It is a poetic drama. Imagery and symbols play a significant role and every one the conflict takes place within the theatre of the soul. The Buddhist monk Ananda woke up self-awareness and self-esteem in Prakriti by spoken communication, "Give me water" and accepting it in his cupped hands. Prakriti is transformed. The simple words "Give Pine Tree State water" acquire associate incantatory impact and run through the material of the play as a silver thread. They symbolize her "awakening" and freedom from bondage. "My birth is washed clean."

In Chandalika the central operative image is that of 'giving'. Prakriti, the Chandala girl, gives water to Ananda. Ananda offers her the notice of self, her new birth. Prakriti, in turn, longs to offer herself (her ego-bound physical self) to Ananda; however this sort of giving goes with possession. Prakriti's mother offers to offer her life for the sake of her female offspring by enterprise to figure her spoken communication to pull Ananda to Prakriti. Through sympathy, pity, and love, through her identification with Ananda's suffering, Prakriti realizes that on balance this what she had desired to offer him is nothing however her 'wretched self'. The play ends with three different 'giving': Prakriti gives Ananda his freedom; Ananda gives her deliverance, a spiritual rebirth which is superior to the ego-birth that he had given her earlier;

Prakriti's mother offers her life itself, her sacrifice serving to to cause the non secular union (which is however mutual giving of 'mukti') of Prakriti and Ananda.

There square measure incalculable little and nice symbols throughout the drama. The King's son, "hunting" for the "beast" symbolizes all people who see solely the flesh of the ladies however not her soul. "The house of darkness", is the state of ignorance of the self. "Water" is the symbol of love. Autumnal clouds symbolize free-floating things, detached persons just like the monks.

Why hurt will I bathe In the deep waters of my pain's immensity (Act II, 162).

This "pain's immensity" refers to the suffering heart of Prakriti and her infinite oceanic love. This is a complex symbol. It is a union of souls. Souls unite through the fires of suffering. She additionally speaks of the fusion, of "gold" and "copper" within the nice hearth. Gold stands for Ananda and copper for Prakriti, for spirit and earth, for heaven hood and earth hood. That is why she tells him boldly in the end." (Act II, 164).

Thus Chandalika is a cosmic drama. Prakriti stands for Nature. Mother stands for the planet, an area of patience, suffering, and understanding. The primal spell could also be taken because the "force of attraction: in Nature. Even the word "Chandals" is created to represent folks with "mean spirits." The union of Ganga and Jamuna is that the union of the white and therefore the dark.

Prakriti has become aware of her standing as a personality's being, in no manner inferior to the other. A feeling of self-esteem has currently taken roots in her heart. She is changed. She is no more Chandalini. She has got the knowledge of herself. She supposes herself equal to all human beings. She got the knowledge of her own. Now she is a woman, more than the woman she is a human being. Till she was Chandalini, she wasn't having any expectation from the society however currently she is that the a part of society. She got this knowledge from Ananda.

Tagore has delineate lady as a partner, daughter, sister, mother beloved then on. But Prakriti is different from all these. Tagore depicts Prakriti as a girl United Nations agency is soliciting for her own identity and therefore the approved recognition of her identity by others, that is denied by the society right along.

Tagore is aware of the fact that orthopractical Hinduism owes its existence to the observances of Brahmins who do not touch anything ritually impure. Tagore typically lampoons the blue blood strict taboo on touching outcasts. It depicts the discrimination of the outcasts, exemplified in the main character of the play, the untouchable girl Prakriti, by the higher castes. It also shows a way out of this perpetual humiliation. The Buddhist mendicant Ananda asks the untouchable girl to give him some water from the ritually impure well. This single question of Ananda: 'give Maine some water' becomes the liberating speech communication for Prakriti. She begins to imagine another potential manner of life, a life outside obedience and self-depreciation before

persons of a higher caste. Thus Prakriti shows in her new found assurance not solely that she has lost her concern of discrimination, but also that she is capable of taking her destiny into her own hands. In other words, she emancipates herself, while the source of her emancipation is, in fact, the message of Buddha – conveyed to her by Ananda – that nobody is born impure and nobody needs to undergo social ostracism and discrimination. Chandalika exemplifies Buddhist individualist self-emancipation. It is a play concerning personal selections and self-realisation.

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