

## Female: Refusal to accept the subjective position in Chitra Banerjee's *Arranged Marriage*

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### Abstract:

The people, places, cultures, classes, habits, economies, and more that make up India are incredibly varied. As a result, women, who make up nearly half of the population but are still denied equal rights, despite being created by the same God as men but with only opposing attributes, have had to fight for recognition as human beings ever since. The concept of "New Women" is presented by Chitra Banerjee, an accomplished Indian-born multitalented individual. She portrays the continued tyranny, oppression, anguish, trauma, and other hardships that Indian women face at the hands of society, patriarchy, and her own family. On the other hand, her female protagonists have the strength and physique of men. The goal of this study is to highlight the hopeful future that "Arranged marriage" holds for Indian women as they seek self-actualization. Whether in India or elsewhere, she showed women in distress. Divakurni's writings take into account multiple points of view from the Diaspora and examine the experiences of Indian women who have immigrated both domestically and internationally. If you can keep your mind at peace no matter what challenges you face, you can find happiness everywhere, not just in India. Many universities now use this collection as required reading, and its themes of Indian immigrants stranded between cultures are explored. As they seek to define who they are, the protagonists find themselves at once freed and entrapped by cultural shifts.

**Keywords — Feminism, trauma, stereotypical, misogynistic, patriarchy**

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### INTRODUCTION

By giving a voice to the challenges faced by Indian women living in the United States, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's book "Arranged Marriage" is a significant step forward in the development of feminist writing. She, her husband, who was born in the United States, and both of their sons have Indian ancestry. She has also produced a number of exotic novels and short story collections, including her debut work, Arranged Marriage, which is a collection of short stories. Many of her poems have gone on to become literary classics. This book of

short stories, which takes place in India, establishes a strong connection between two women who live on opposite sides of the globe yet struggle with many of the same issues. In total, there are eleven separate components. Chitra Divakaruni illuminates for us, via her writing, the struggles that Indian women face, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

These women, who live in the most powerful country in the world, are making strenuous efforts to realise their ambitions of achieving equality in both the household and the larger community in which they participate. what she does not have and

what she would like to obtain in the future. In addition, Betty Friedan pointed out that "the drive for self-realization, independence, individuality, and self-actualization is as essential as the sexual urge" for both men and women. A woman's development as an individual is critical to the success of both her household and the community in which she lives because of the central role she plays in all human interactions. She begins to achieve above the confines of the traditional roles of "good girl," "good wife," and "good mother" that have been required of her for such a long time. These roles have included "good girl," "good wife," and "good mother." She does not intend to conform to the unreasonable regulations.

The story of prejudice harboured by some American Indians is told via the medium of clothing. Sumita is shown in the narrative as a dedicated wife and mother who fulfils all of her social obligations with grace and dignity up until the point where her husband unexpectedly passes away. She has no idea what to do next or where she should go. She is obligated to conduct herself in accordance with the customary practises associated with being a widow in Indian culture. Her existence since the loss of her husband has been colourless; as a result, she chooses to drape herself in a white sari to represent the void in her life. Her existence has turned into one that is ruled by gloom, and she is making hesitant steps towards the end that is inevitably awaiting her. With the character of Samita, the author paints a clear picture of the struggles that a widow in Indian society faces as a result of patriarchy.

The sari is an article of clothing that is usually borrowed and is composed of heavy voile. *"It causes the wearer's waist to bunch up. When I attempt to tuck it into the top of the petticoat, my fingers have become numb and are refusing to cooperate. It exceeds their capacity, and as a result, I'm currently being pounded by several white waves. My anger causes me to propel myself forward with a kick, but the sari is too flexible to support my momentum"*.

In point of fact, she has made up her mind to start again on her own. "I adjust my posture, stand a little bit taller, and take a few deep breaths. My lungs are currently being filled with the same air that was just in so mesh's lungs. The concept is analogous to being surprised with a personal gift out of the blue. Because the condition of a single, independent woman in our taboo-ridden culture is the same as that of a widow, I tilt my chin in preparation for the debates and arguments that will take place in the next few weeks". The idea that a woman's life is meaningless if it does not include a male is pervasive in popular culture. Marriage is, in the eyes of the vast majority of people, the single most important event that may take place in a woman's life.

The protagonist of "A Perfect Life," Meera, has an unorthodox life throughout the course of the story. She has her own affluent existence in the United States, complete with a successful career, a gorgeous home, and a charming young American partner. She also has a handsome young American buddy. She finds it difficult to acknowledge the authority that other people have over her, which causes her to be frightened of the golden chains that come with marriage. She claims that it's not true that she ever had a problem with getting married or having children. I simply desired to ensure that it took place when I wanted it to and according to the parameters that I set. She places a high value on independence, singularity, and dignity in others. She does not want to be in a relationship with someone who is constantly striving to establish dominance over her. According to her, the most significant source of suffering and anxiety in a woman's life is her marriage. According to Aruti Nayar, Marriage is no longer a guarantee of a happy life, and remaining married solely for the purpose of living apart and avoiding conflict is also unethical.

In the film Meeting Mrinal, Asha, much like Meera, makes an attempt to forget the good times she spent with her former husband so that she can concentrate on her own life and the future. She takes an engaged interest in the things that drive her most.

She comes to the conclusion that getting a degree in Library Science is the best way for her to safeguard her finances. *"The last thing I want to do is spend time in the kitchen preparing food from India. I feel like I've wasted a significant portion of my life on meaningless activities like chopping, sautéing, and grinding different herbs and seasonings. I have decided to attend a neighbouring institution to get an official education rather than squander my time on pointless pursuits such as quilting or searching for the meaning of life"*

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's innermost aspirations as a wife and mother are presented in the form of the fictional character Asha, who was invented by the author. Her top concern is to fulfil their requirements, and she pays her undivided focus to working on this particular task. Yet, if her usual schedule is unexpectedly altered in any way, she can start daydreaming. She no longer gives a damn about the opinions of those closest to her, as well as those of complete strangers. She is ready to put her own happiness ahead of what other people think she ought to do and pursue the things that bring her joy. The primary character in *Affair*, Meena, engages in identical behaviour in her own unlawful relationship. She has reached the point where she can no longer tolerate her husband's lack of emotional support and even tenderness, and she has made up her mind to immediately quit the marriage. Meena heeds the words of "New Woman" and seeks refuge with her American coworker Charles in order to protect herself. She does not make any attempt to conceal her emotions from her close friend Abha, telling her that *"And this he things I wanted out of life he wanted the same all of the things I wanted out of life he wanted the same things with him."* I did not have a sense of being greedy, guilty, or dishonourable at all. As a result of her dedication to obtaining it, she has emotionally disconnected herself from both her partner, who is emotionless, and her genuine friends. Instantaneously, her lover steps in to fill the vacuum that was left by her late husband.

A important component of the feminist uprising against the patriarchal structure is the promotion of

extramarital relationships, which are seen as a sort of sexual liberation. Runu is a typical Indian housewife who, much like Meena, possesses the courage to speak up against the inequalities that stem from patriarchy. Yet, in contrast to Meena, Runu does not tolerate the terrible treatment that she receives at the hands of her husband and his family. Due to the fact that she is a conventional Indian woman, she never challenges the authority of her husband and always does what she is told. In other words, when it comes to the welfare of her child, Runu transforms into a more contemporary version of "Sita." Because her husband and his family are so set on having a son, they insisted that she obtain an ultrasound to confirm their prediction. When they find out that Runu is carrying a girl, they will do all in their power to prevent the pregnancy from continuing. Runu's undivided attention is not on her sexuality but rather on the child she is carrying. After she gives birth to her child, she wants nothing more than to provide a rock-solid foundation for her child while shielding her from her own broken family. In order to ensure the wellbeing of her child, she is prepared to act in a manner that is unconventional for Indian women and divorce her husband. She gives a friend a call to let them know what she plans to do and says, *"Just in case I choose not to go back."* She feels a shift in her feminine instincts as she learns more about the rigidity of her spouse and the nefariousness of her mother-in-law.

The life of an Indian woman is not as easy as it may seem at first glance; rather, she is confronted with challenges, difficulties, and problems at every single step. As a good wife, she understands that it is her duty to put her husband's needs before her own. The modern woman, on the other hand, is not afraid to speak her mind and takes direct action to challenge both the established order and the male-dominated culture in which she lives. This explanation is provided by the protagonist of *Doors*. With the character of Preeti, the author Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni successfully expresses the fervent yearning of a young wife who is highly educated and cultured for freedom from the authoritarian rule of her husband.

She was able to successfully adjust to the norms and beliefs of Western culture as a result of her relocation to the United States. She finally gets to meet the man of her dreams, and she can't help but fall in love with him right away. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel *Arranged Marriage: An Indian Search for Identity* features a number of strong female protagonists (2) February 2016 issue of the *Asia-Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies* Preeti is well aware that open communication is essential to the success of any marriage, but she also values the time she spends by herself. She exists in a world that is quite distinct from the rest of us. Even her husband understands the importance of her desire for privacy and makes an effort to accommodate her wishes. His Indian cousin Raj enters the picture, and the dynamics of the family immediately shift. Because he interferes way too much in Preeti's life, Raj is a source of annoyance for her. Yet because she is unable to persuade her husband of her discontent, she hastily chooses to go out of the house when she realises that she cannot change his mind. As a result of the fact that she does not wish to continue being in a circumstance in which she is unable to express herself, she will be departing. Her tone was neutral when she announced, "I'm leaving." Cathy and I have decided to live together for the foreseeable future in the same flat.

Similar to Preeti, the main character of *The Bats*, she suffers from mental stress as a result of the poor treatment she receives from her partner. In addition to this, she is sometimes the victim of domestic abuse. In Calcutta, life for her and her young daughter will be nothing but a living hell for them both. She doesn't speak her mind about anything since she doesn't want to cause her daughter any distress. Nevertheless, as things begin to go poorly for her, she decides to pack up her belongings and walk away from his life. With the exception of a distant cousin, she has no living relatives, either nearby or far away. Thus, she rushes over there without giving it any thought before acting on her impulse.

Women are exploited for their sexuality in many different ways, including but not limited to sexual assault, domestic violence, sex abuse, and rape. There are also many different forms of discrimination against women and girls. A man is guilty of the crime of rape if he forces a woman to participate in sexual activity with him against her consent. This offence was committed by a male offender who was motivated to engage in sexual activity by an intense desire to do so. Sarala, from "A Tale of a Maid," is a character who exemplifies this idea. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni exposes the hypocrisy of a man in this piece by laying it all out in the open. A man from a wealthy Bengali family makes an attempt to sexually assault his maidservant, Sarala, while his wife is out of the house. He gives her his word that he won't tell anyone, and he also guarantees that they won't figure out the truth. The man was becoming increasingly difficult to deal with- *"If not. I'm going to scream at the top of my lungs so that everyone in the house instantly springs out of bed"*

## CONCLUSION

To summarise, the women in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's seminal work "Arranged Marriage" are strong, self-reliant, and unafraid. Their arrogance is demonstrated by the fact that they flout the conventions established by patriarchy. Foucault contends that the confessional technique, which has its roots in Catholicism, is the most prevalent example of this kind of authority in Western culture. The confessional approach is now given higher priority in enquiry and "scientific" understanding than it ever was. If this approach to bringing up sexual topics in discussion was going to accomplish anything at all, its foundation had to be laid according to very specific guidelines.

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