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Empowerment of Women in Tagore's *The Home and the World*

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By

Geeta Katuwal

University Campus

Kirtipur

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Tribhuvan University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

The thesis entitled **Empowerment of Women in Tagore's *The Home and the World*** by **Ms. Geeta Katuwal** has been submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University. It has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Research Committee Members:

Advisor: _____

External Examiner: _____

Head of Department

Central Department of English, T. U.

Kirtipur, Kathmandu.

Date: _____

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Geeta Katuwal

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Abstract

Tagore's *The Home and the world* empowers Woman character. It revolts against the traditional and patriarchal society. It holds modern view and rejects traditional view about woman. It gives voice to equality and freedom for women. It gives voice to equality and freedom for woman. This novel, while reading through a feminist prospective, rejects traditional values and expectations of male made society (Patriarchal society).It supports the beliefs and values of Modern society by showing Bimala as a main strong protagonist around whom the whole story and whole character of the novel roams.

In the beginning, we see Bimala happy with her household duties. She doesn't have concern with the outside world. Through the help of her husband, Nikhil, she comes to the outside world and realizes the fertility of her life. She realizes that outside world is also as much important as the inside world. When a woman will be able enough to adjust herself in the outside world as in the inside world, then only her life will be worthy. Through Bimala, Tagore gives a message to the whole women that they should get education and should make themselves strong enough to struggle in the outside world for their identity.

Chapter I

Introduction

This research is a study of *The Home and the world*, a famous novel of Indian writer Rabindranath Tagore. He wrote this novel in Bengali language as *Ghare Bahire* and Surendranath Tagore translated it as *The Home and the world*. This research examines the novel through a feminist lens by observing how Tagore empowers woman character in this novel. It also focuses on how Tagore gives voice for female freedom and equality. It focuses on how Nikhil who has advance thinking in comparison to the contemporary society becomes able to make his wife understand the importance of outside world and importance of her own identity. Bimala, Nikhil's wife is a conservative woman who is happy with her husband duties and is happy in serving her husband as a god. She considers the narrow boundary of her household duties as her whole world. But Nikhil does not let her to spoil her life being entrapped in the boundary of home and encourages her to come out to the outer world. She comes out to the outer world and starts involving in Swadeshi movement. The whole story roams around Bimala.

The primary purpose of this research is to analyze how Tagore empowers a female character in this novel. Looking through the lens of feminism we can say that Tagore is a supporter of female freedom and equality. He gives equal importance to female character in his novel and sometimes more than male character.

Tagore is one of the popular names in modern Bengali Literature. He is a famous figure in the history of Indian Literature. He is best known because of his writing of Indian National Anthem and his poetry book *Gitanjali*. His contribution to Bengali literature is unique and unequalled. He primarily wrote in Bengali language. He had translated his many Bengali poems and plays into English by changing, telescoping and transforming the original form. His literary writing extends for a period of 65 years.

In *The Home and the world* there are three main characters, Bimala, Nikhil and Sandeep. This novel is written in an autobiographical form. Nikhil is an idealistic husband, Bimala is his wife and Sandeep is his friend. Bimala, a typical Hindu wife, suddenly hears a call from the outside world. She is caught between the whirlpool of outside world and inner home. Of the three main characters, neither Nikhil nor Sandeep change much in the course of novel; it is Bimala alone who changes under the stress of trial and error and failure.

The Home and the world is one among his popular novels. He wrote this novel in 1916. At that time India was under the British rule. He is the one who observes the cruel behavior of British people towards Indian very closely. At that time Indian society was very conservative. Females were facing many difficulties in every field of life. It was very difficult for them to get education. Females were considered as inferior and worthless thing whose only duty was to serve and worship their husband as God. Caste system was also very high at that time. Female didn't have their individual identity. They used to be known by their husband's name.

Jyodsana Chatterji in "Religions and the Status of Women" says "The people's notion about the proper role of women in the home and society and the social restrictions on women are all rooted in religious conceptions regarding women" (1). Still the attitude towards woman has remained unchanged. In the same book Ranjana Kumari says;

A woman's husband is her lord and it is her religious duty to see that he is happy and comfortable by yielding to every wish. The woman is defined primarily in relation to her husband and her household, interest and active participation in domestic matters is expected of her. The role of wife and mother is the optimal, singular and essential role through which a woman fulfills herself. (9)

Bimala is devoted to her husband as a Hindu society expects. In Hindu

society wife is always under the control of her husband. The wife's role is subordinate. Suffering of women in a patriarchal society is private. So society does not know about the suffering of each individual woman. Women are the victims of patriarchal set up. A woman is never free. They are forced to obey and follow the command of their husband. Darshan Trivedi in Shakti says, 'the place of woman is "inferior "and subsidiary to man in Indian society' (250).

But Nikhil is conscious of what kind of support he needs to give his wife. He always gives equal position to his wife. He never tries to impose his decision on her. He himself inspires her to cross the narrow boundary of patriarchal society. Nikhil is a western educated liberal with nationalistic commitments. He seems to improve home life and relation with his wife.

The aim of the research paper is to throw some light on how Tagore empowers a female character in this novel giving challenge to the contemporary conservative society which had considered female as an inferior being.

This thesis is divided into four sections. They are 1.Introduction 2.Theoretical Modality.3.Textual Analysis and 4.Conclusion

The first section includes brief introduction of the writer, social background of that period and proof of the hypothesis.

The second section includes introduction of Feminism, historical phases of feminism, introduction of liberal feminist and other feminists.

The third section analyzes the text on the basis of the theoretical tool discussed in the second chapter. This section includes a brief survey of the context. In order to support the hypotheses of the study, some extracts from the text has been quoted.

The fourth section presents the conclusion of this research. The conclusion has been on the basis of the textual analysis in the third chapter.

Chapter II

Theoretical Modality & Feminism

Feminism is a term which includes social, educational and political equality of women with men. It studies women as suppressed and oppressed beings. Feminism is a kind of awareness in part of women. Feminism as a movement appears as awareness about women position in society, culture and even in literature. When the French Philosopher and Novelist Simon de Beauvoir wrote in her 1949 book, "The Second Sex" the famous sentence "one is not born but rather becomes a woman" she encapsulated an argument that would propel feminist thinking for the next fifty years or more. In one brief sentence she touched upon questions and issues that lie at the very heart of feminist inquiry-questions as simple and complex as "What is a Woman"? In the attempt to address this question, feminism has become fractured, divided and contradictory. It has also developed and evolved. Indeed, feminism can no longer be accurately described as a theory-implying a single and coherent trajectory of thought. Rather Feminism should be understood as a discourse; a discussion of multiple related ideas.

Simon de Beauvoir says that there is no difference between two sexes such as male and female in the process of biological creation. Later, men seize all the ineffectual beings. In 'Second Sex', she argued that there was no such thing as 'feminine nature'. There was not physical or psychological reason why women should be inferior to men, and, yet, throughout history and across cultures, women had always been second class citizens. Even when worshipped and adored, they have had no autonomy and received no recognition as rational individuals, any more than when they have been abused and denigrated. Biological differences do not provide a causal explanation for women's oppression, however their reproduction function has placed

woman at a disadvantage by tying them to the domestic sphere and associating them with the body and thus with animals and nature. Just as man considers himself superior to nature, so he considers himself superior to woman.

The work of De Beauvoir was heavily influenced by existentialism, which denies the existence of a pre-ordained 'Human Nature' and emphasizes the freedom and responsibility of each person to create him or herself as a self-governing individual. It is this philosophy that she brought to her examination of femininity. She began with a principle laid out by the German philosopher G.H.F. Hegel, who argued that each conscious being enters into a struggle for recognition with every other conscious being and each concludes that he or she is the essential subject, whilst all others are the inessential object (the 'other'). This is how we achieve a sense of identity.

Feminist theoretical and critical writings although recent in origin, expand yearly in volume and range. There exist a number of specialized feminist Journals and Publishing houses, almost all colleges and Universities now have programs in women's studies and courses in women's literature and Feminist criticism and ever increasing place is given to writers by and about women in anthologies, periodicals and conferences of the many critical and theoretical innovations of the past several decades, the concern with the effects of sexual differences in the writing, interpretation, analysis and assessment of literature seems destined to have the most prominent and enduring effects on literary history, criticism and academic instruction, when conducted by men as well as by women. In its diversity feminism is concerned with the marginalization of all women. That is, one organized in favor of the interests of men.

Feminist literary critics try to explain how power imbalances due to gender in a given culture are reflected in or challenged by literary texts. Adrienne

Rich, a contemporary American poet describes Feminism as “The place where in the most natural, organic way subject and politics have to come together.” (In Gelpy and Gelpy 114). In short, Feminism represents one of the most important social, economic and aesthetic revolutions of modern times.

The history of Feminism started before 18th century. Before 18th century women were not given any opportunities in the outer world. They were regarded as weaker beings who could not occupy the equal status in the society.

As a distinctive and concerted approach to literature, feminism criticism was not inaugurated until late in the 1960s. Behind it, however lie two centuries of struggle for the recognition of women’s cultural roles and achievements and for women’s social and political rights. Much of Feminist literary criticism continues in our time to be interrelated with the movement by political Feminist for social, legal and cultural freedom and equality.

Virginia Woolf, an important precursor of modern feminist criticism continually examined the problems faced by women writers though she never adopted a feminist stance. She believed that women had always faced social and economic obstacles to their literary ambitions. Rejecting a feminist consciousness, she hoped to achieve a balance between a ‘male self-realization’ and female “self-annihilation”. Her ultimate belief was that woman could freely develop their artistic talents if they achieved social and economic equality with men.

She, in addition to her fiction wrote, *A Room of One’s Own* (1929) and numerous other essays on women authors and the cultural, economic and educational disabilities within what she called a “Patriarchal” society that have hindered or prevented women from realizing their productive and creative possibilities. In this novel, she argues about the imbalance of power between men and women. She says

that Feminist movement is to liberate women. Women don't have their own room. It means they don't have their own right, prestige, space and don't have any identity. Room is the place where people get comfort.

Women writers don't have their own right, they write literature in common room. She herself protests against the Patriarchal society for not providing rights to own a room of her own. She as a writer feels difficulty in accommodating in her husband's room. She argues that women should have their own room to go on with their writing works writing works and they should have their own income for their survival so that it will not be necessary for them to depend upon their husbands. She says:

It was a thousands pities that the women who could write like that, whose mind was turned to nature and reflection. Should have been forced to anger and bitterness. But how could she have helped herself? I asked, imagining the sneers and the laughter, the adulation at the toadies, the skepticism of the professional poet. She must have shut herself up in a room in the country to write, and been torn asunder by bitterness and scruples perhaps, though her husband was of the kindness, and their marriage life perfection. (818)

Elaine Showalter one of the Gynocritics has not only shaped feminism but has also introduced 'gynocriticism'. It is a criticism by the women for the women and of the women. Like Woolf, she also wants to see happy women. According to her a woman can be as much tyrannical as a powerful man is, if she is extremely powerful in the family.

She has identified three historical phases of women's literary development. The "Feminine" phase {1840-80} during which women writers imitated the dominant

tradition; the “Feminist” phase {1880-1920}, during which women advocated minority rights and protested and “female” phase {1920-present} during which dependency on opposition—that is, on uncovering misogyny in male texts—is being replaced by a rediscovery of women's texts and women show alter attacks traditional literary history that reduce female writers to only a few who are “accepted” she describes a women’s tradition in literature that is an “imaginative continuum of certain patterns, themes, problems and images from generation to generation” (11).

Mary Wollstonecraft a prominent critic in “A Vindication of the Rights of Women” went beyond her dissenter friends, whose view remained strictly patriarchal. Through her essay she paved the way to feminist writing. In her book she says that women are made inferior at several levels such as social, political and economical. In all these areas women never get proper position; they never get proper education, never get right to vote. When all these things are impossible for women they suffer from inequality. Every time women’s greater responsibility goes to men but men never give possible right for them.

In general, the fundamental principles enunciated in her book are that the mind does not know sex and society is wasting its assets if it retains women in the role of convenient domestic slaves and alluring mistress, denies them economic independence and encourages them to be docile and attentive to their looks to the exclusion of all else: she further writes:

Were women more rationally educated, could they take a more compressive view if things, they would be contented to love but once in their lives; and after marriage calmly let passion subside into friendship into that tender intimacy, which is best refuge from care; Yet is built on such pure, still affections, had idle Jealousies would not

be allowed to disturb the discharge of the sober duties of life, or to engross the thoughts that ought to be otherwise employed. This is a state in which many men live; but few, very few women. (1792)

According to her feminine weakness of character, often produced by a confined education, is a romantic twist of the mind, which has been very properly termed sentimental. She tells, "Women subjected by ignorance to their sensations and only taught to look for happiness in love, refine on sexual feelings, adopt metaphysical notions respecting to neglect the duties of life, and frequently in the midst of these sublime refinements they into actual vice." (395)

Feminists have long puzzled over the problem of getting beyond patriarchal programming and have differed many different solutions. For example, French Feminists, who generally have focused more strongly than British and American feminists on the Philosophical dimension of women's issues, have suggested that women (and men) may maintain a connection to their pre-verbal relationships with their matters and that this connection generates a capacity for a kind of writing (*écriture féminine*) and thinking that is different from patriarchal modes of writing and thinking. Patriarchal modes generally require prescribed, "correct" methods of organizations, rationalist's rules of logic, and linear thinking. In contrast, *écriture féminine* is fluidly organized and freely associative. Thus, it has the capacity to both reflect and create human experience beyond the control of patriarchy.

Slowly women started writing to reform the society, changing men's attitude towards women. Women of every society have to look after their children, household works, cooking food, washing clothes and are also forced to work outside their homes to solve their economic problem. The term feminism is originated from the awareness of the women. The concept of feminism was popularized since the women's

Liberation movement of 1960s in America. Feminists started to revolt against male hegemony to protect women from their domination. In a society women's identity has been shaped by the values and norms set by men. The main cause of women's suffrage is due to the domination of powerful males. The great Greek philosopher Plato's philosophical theories have glorified women for their physical beauty only but not for the adventurous works. Women's status is always shaped by the norms and values set by men.

Women's writing reflects women's voices. Their writing presents painful life of women mostly in eastern countries males are holding power and property they are the successor of parental property. With the rise of women's voice different women novelist appeared in the history of literature. The women characters in their novel are very conscious about their work and look bold at the difficult movement. Though they faced different problems in the society they are never afraid. Besides the four walls of the houses they seem more conscious about the outer world. They know that beside domestic matters there is also another world of music, painting, law, which they want to adopt.

As the women were given franchise right feminist movement nearly disappeared. Later during 1900s a large number of women entered the labor force. They come to know that many high paying jobs were closed to them; they began actively participating to end educational and job discrimination against women. In second half of 20th century women became more independent. These women have challenged men for their exploitation and domination over them. They believed that married women are not husband's property but man's life partner to run the family.

After the introduction of feminism, different feminists appeared in the world history. Marxist feminist believe that women are being dominated because of lack of

mode of production. Women are always proletarian and males behave as bourgeois so women must be economically independent. They opine that capitalism is the source of oppression. When capitalism is removed from the society then only the suppression of women will be removed.

Cultural feminist believe that the culture where women are living is the culture of male. All rituals, behaviors are male centric so women must decide their own culture then only they can be independent. Bio-feminists talk about female body. They believe that female are richer than male, they have stronger experience like menstruation, pregnancy etc. Men never understand such type of women's experience. Bio-feminists are proud of being women. They never feel inferior in front of males.

Gayatri Spivak Chakravarty, a post colonial feminist in 'can subaltern speak?' says that eastern women are suffering from two problems i.e. they are women and they are not western. There is double domination for the non-western women. Women of east have suffered more. They are fighting with males as well as white women. Males dominate women and white women dominate eastern women. So, post colonial feminist demands equality.

Psychoanalytical feminist like Helen Sexon says males are suffering from phallus + logocentricism. These feminists simply oppose the Freudian idea. They say women never see erotic dreams. Males never understand the psychology of females.

Linguistic feminist believe that male has created language. They say that language should be desexing. Most of the time a woman is a homemaker and a mother. Ruth in this regard says;

To the question" why haven't women produced any geniues? Why are there no female Shakespeares or Beethovens? Virginia Woolf

answered that we have not been allowed a room of our own'. We have been accorded bread, but not roses. We have not been allowed the spiritual atmosphere, the creative space men are heir to the amenities that raise life above the mundane and encourage one to creativity.

(160)

Lawrence believes that a woman should have demure quality rather than dauntless quality. In *Elements of Literature* he says:

The tragedy of cocksure women is that they are cockir, in their assurance, than the cock himself. They never realize that when the cock give his loud crow in the morning, he listens acutely afterwards, to hear if some other wretch of a cock dare crow defiance, challenge. To the cock there is always defiance, danger and death on the clear air; or the possibility thereof. (12)

It means hen is hen all the time; she can't be cock. The patriarchal society believes that cocksure women are dangerous and devastating.

Feminism in India:

Feminism started from the western countries and slowly it influenced the eastern countries too. The seed of feminism flourished all over the world. In 1904 an Indian women's conference was organized in India. Indian women boycotted foreign goods in 1905. Women's Indian Association (1917), the National council of women (1928) and the all India women's conference (1972) discussed women's issues and social problems concerning them. The formation of women's groups has changed people's views about male and female roles. Geraldine Forbes in *Women in Modern India* writes:

This women's movement continued to focus on traditional practices, beliefs, and institutions as the source of oppression. It also attends to violence against women, the institutional framework for the maintenance of gender differences, and the impact of the economic situation on the day-to-day lives of women. (244)

By the late 19th century Indian women took active participation in life of outside the home. Women became more involved in politics during the early 20th. During this period women actively joined the agitation, boycotted foreign goods and donated money and jewelry to the nationalist movement. Indian women have limited options to extend their role outside the domestic domain. They are often subjected to pressure from high caste ideology and male domination.

The social reformers spent much of their time and energy in organizing different movements, such as the abolition of sati, widow remarriage, anti-polygamy and female education which were concerned with the position of women. B.N. Banerjee in *Sang Badpatre Sekaler Katha* writes, "As early as 1835 women started expressing their own views on the status of women" (246-7).

Gandhi believed that women are the companions to men, who are given equal mental capacities. But instead of realizing this truth males considered themselves as lords, or masters of women, rather than considering them as their friends. Kumari Jayawardena in *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* says;

Gandhi believed that every man and women had a duty to perform in the interest of self-realization and social well-being (...) even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying a superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have. (95)

Later, Indian women followed this Gandhian Ideology. Gandhi brought

women in public life and gave them the tools to solve their own problems. Jawaharlal Nehru also talks about women. He believes that women should go outside the home to be independent. He says that freedom always depend on economic condition, if a women is not economically free, she should have to depend on her husband and she will never be free.

Chapter III

Textual Analysis

Brief Synopsis of the Novel

Tagore's *The Home and the world* is a story of an aristocratic Bengali family. There are three main characters; they are Bimala, Nikhil and Sandeep. This novel is written in autobiographical form. Nikhil is an idealistic husband, Bimala is his wife who is typical Hindu woman and Sandeep is his friend. Bimala is happy in serving her husband as a God and devoting her life in household activities. But Nikhil who is an educated modern man inspires her to come out from the narrow boundary of household duties and involve in the outside world. Nikhil is a loving husband who wants to establish his relation with his wife on the freedom of love. This can be done only when Bimala his wife, comes out of seclusion of home, and mingles freely with the outside world. If her love for him blossoms forth in the background of the larger world, their union will be real, for then it will be based on complete freedom.

The swadeshi movement in Bengal in the first decade of the present century supplies the necessary background of this larger world so essential for testing the genuineness of the relationship between Nikhil and Bimala. She joins the swadeshi movement and meets Sandeep, a staunch nationalist with a robust vitality of body and mind. She becomes fascinated by his dynamic personality.

Here, we find contradiction. Because in one hand, Tagore seems in favor of female freedom and in the other hand, he seems in against of it. He tries to empower Bimala in the outside world but when she crosses the boundary of home and tries to adjust herself in the outside world, she becomes unsuccessful, she loses everything even her husband. In this point, many misread Tagore. But by making Bimala unsuccessful in the outside world, he intended to show the real face of the society, the

difficulties which a woman should be ready and strong enough to face before she comes to this world. Sandeep represents social evils as well as the way of the society to look at the females.

Woman's empowerment in *The Home and the World*

Many critics saw Tagore as a supporter of patriarchal society. But he was a supporter of female freedom. In other words we can call him a feminist who shows the suffering of female in male dominated society. Tagore was a writer of 19th century. If we compare him with 19th century society and the contemporary Indian society we can prove him a supporter of female freedom. The position which he gives in most of his novel to the female protagonist was a big challenge in the contemporary Indian society. In the present novel also Bimala is presented as a strong woman who has control over her house as well as over her husband, Nikhil's life. Nikhil is a supporter of female freedom. He favors equality among husband and wife. He wants his wife to come out of the boundary of household duties and tackle with the outer world so that she could understand her real identity. Nikhil wants his wife to come out from her world of traditional belief where husband is regarded as the god. He always inspires her to understand her importance and be equal partner of his life. Bimala's words prove this, "my husband was eager to take me out of purdah. One day, I said to him: ' what do I want with the outside world?' the outside world may want you, he replies" (17).

Tagore was modern in his concept and looking through the eye of feminism, one can say that through Bimala he wanted to give message to the all contemporary women that they should they should understand themselves and for this they should come out crossing the boundary of home. Nikhil's attitude towards Bimala's freedom can be known through his following dialogue, "I longed to find Bimala blossoming

fully in all her truth and power” (43).

Bimala is a typical Indian woman who represents the traditional norms and values. Her only dream is to be a devoted wife and enjoy her life in the boundary of her household duties. She wants to make herself an ideal wife as her mother. She said:

I know from my childhood’s experience how devotion I beauty itself, in its inner aspects when my mother arranged the different fruits carefully peeled by her own loving hands; on the white stone plate, and gently waved her fan to drive away the flies while my father sat down to his meals, her service would lose itself in a beauty which passed beyond outward forms. Even in my infancy I could feel its power. It transcended all debates, or doubts or calculation: It was pure music.

(10)

The above lines say, Bimala is an innocent typical Indian wife who knows only to give. From generation to generation, same message is delivered that woman should sacrifice there self interest in the name of home. Her mother is an ideal for Bimala, so she tries to follow the footprints of her.

Nikhil is western educated and wishes for Bimala to emerge into the world outside so that she could regard her love, her husband in the light of other men. He is the one who introduces Bimala to the English way of life. He wants her to come out crossing the narrow boundary of household duties and recognize herself in the light of outside world. It is not Bimala who desires freedom, who has wishes and ambition, but it is Nikhil who inspires her to come to the outside world of freedom. He wants his wife to be independent and educated. Once he said to Bimala, “I would have you come into the heart of the outer world and meet reality. Mere going on with your household duties, living all your life in the world of household conventions and the

drudgery of household tasks,-you we made for that; if we meet, and recognize each other in the real world, then only will our love be true” (18).

After marriage she proves herself as a devoted wife for whom the foot of her husband is the world. Bimala does not care for her own desire, happiness and dignity but she submits to the wishes and demands of the patriarchal society. She serves her husband as god. She remembers, “I would cautiously and silently get up and take the dust of my husband without waking him, how at such moments I could feel the vermilion on my forehead shining out like the morning star” (10-11).

She is very much happy with her life and with her belief. She says” I had the prince of my real world enthroned in my heart” (12). *The Home and the world* revolves around the lives of a married couple Bimala and Nikhil who are deeply in love with each other, problem arise only because of their different belief. Nikhil is an educated man of modern thinking where as Bimala is a typical Indian woman who favours traditional values. According to Nikhil, husband and wife are equal in love, they are two wheel of the chariot of the married life with equal importance and equal claim on each other. But Bimala’s view is different regarding love as well as married life. In her opinion love is devotion of wife towards their husband. She finds pleasure in his feet. She says, “It was my woman’s heart, which must worship in order to love” (11). The different belief between Nikhil and Bimala regarding love can be known through Bimala’s words:

My husband used to say that man and wife are equal in love because of their equal Claim on each other. I never argued the point with him. But my heart said that devotion never stands in the way of true equality; it only raises the level of the ground of meeting. Therefore the joy of the higher equality remains permanent; it never slides down to the vulgar

level of triviality. (14)

Bimala is happy with the love which she gets from Nikhil and with the love which she has in her heart for Nikhil. She is happy in serving Nikhil as a God but Nikhil wants to test their love in the outside world. He wants Bimala to find out her real identity first. As he said, "I longed to find Bimala blossoming fully in all her truth and power." He further says, "I would have you come into the heart of the outer world and meet reality. Merely going on with your household duties, living all your life in the world of household conventions and the drudgery of household tasks,-you were not made for that. If we meet, and recognize each other, in the real world, then only will our love be true" (18).

Nikhil keeps on inspiring Bimala to come to the outside world. He makes her realize that she is not only for household duties. She is also needed in the outside world. Her life will be fruitful only when she comes in the outside world and maintain balance between the outside and the inside world. Slowly, Bimala starts understandings of outside world as well as her life. She comes to the outside world and tries to establish her own identity.

As she steps outside her home, she changes slowly. As she comes out into the outside world, she becomes a revolutionary woman. Instead of giving time to her family members most of the time, she is engaged in the revolution. She is caught in between the impulses of outside world and inside world. For her outside world becomes more important than inside world. In the name of swadeshi movement, she comes close to Sandeep, a leader of swadeshi movement who flatter a lot with Bimala. She was fully trapped by the sweet words of Sandeep. When she comes close to Sandeep, she becomes fully attracted by him. She is fully illusioned by the dynamic personality of Sandeep. She becomes unable to choose the right way. In a confused

mood she just moves towards Sandeep forgetting her duty towards her house, towards her husband Nikhil who gives freedom to her and inspires her to cross the boundary of the home and understand her real identity in the light of outside world. But Bimala becomes unable to utilize that freedom. Instead of utilizing the freedom and realizing her identity and coming out from the world of her illusion she charmed by the attractive personality of Sandeep and forgets her duties towards her home as well as towards her husband. Bimala who was a devoted wife and dutiful and responsible woman becomes irresponsible and careless towards her home and her husband. She starts spending more time with Sandeep in the name of Swadeshi movement.

Nikhil knows everything but doesn't say anything to her. He knows she is infatuated by the dynamical personality of Sandeep. But he can't say anything as that freedom was given by him but Bimala misuses it. Nikhil says:

I had hope that when Bimala found herself free in the outer world she would be rescued from her infatuation for tyranny. But now I feel sure that this infatuation is deep down in her nature. Her love is for the boisterous. From the tip of her tongue to the pit of her stomach she must tingle with red pepper in order to enjoy the simple fare of life. But my determination was never to do my duty with frantic impetuosity, helped on by the tiery liquor of excitement. (44-45)

Here, Nikhil misunderstands Bimala. He thinks she is infatuated by the tyrannical and revolutionary manner of Sandeep. He compares his sober nature with the tyrannical nature of Sandeep and makes a conclusion that she loves Sandeep's nature. Actually Bimala is attracted toward Sandeep because of his flattering words. She feels pleasure in his words which overestimate her. Though she crosses the wall of inside world, she is still inside the trap of patriarchal society where she learns to

count the physical beauty of woman instead of counting her inner talent. Sandeep knows her weakness and takes advantages.

Bimala likes Sandeep's deceiving and flattering words more than Nikhil's words which are full of wisdom and reality. She gets more pleasure in Sandeep's flattering words. As she says:

Sandeep's hungry eyes burnt like the lamps of worship before my shrine. All his gaze proclaimed that I was a wonder in beauty and power; and the loudness of praise, spoken and unspoken, drowned all other voices in my world. Had the creator created me of flesh, I wondered? Did he wish to make up now for neglecting me so long? I who before was plain and become suddenly beautiful. I who before had been of no account now felt in myself all the splendour of Bengal itself. (56)

Thus Bimala starts overestimating herself by being fully convinced by the flattering words of Sandeep. She starts forgetting her reality. Actually she was dark in complexion and was not good looking also. She was very unhappy due to her black color as she says, "I thought that it was God's unfairness which was wrapped round my limbs-that my dark features were not my due, but had come to me by some misunderstanding" (9). She knows she is not beautiful. She gets chance to marry with Nikhil to become daughter-in-law of a Rajah's house only because of the good signs in her palms. She knows the fact and is always busy in making herself an ideal wife. But after the entry of Sandeep she forgets her duties and starts feeling proud about herself. Slowly she starts passing her more time with Sandeep and starts ignoring her husband.

Here Sandeep represents the patriarchal society where most of the people

consider female as a means of entertainment. They see only physical attraction in females as Sandeep sees in Bimala. Sandeep's false praise makes her happy because she is also one part of that society. And she also gets similar kinds of teaching. An innocent woman becomes victim of the false teaching of the society.

Nikhil becomes silent observer of Bimala's changing behaviour and her day by day increasing closeness with Sandeep. In the name of Swadeshi movement they start spending more time with each other. They start having long discussion. Before, Nikhil was also involved in their discussion. But slowly they start ignoring Nikhil, they start avoiding him in their discussion. As Bimala says:

My husband had no place in our counsels. Sandeep Babu treated him as younger brother, of whom personally one may be very fond and yet have no use for his business advice. He would tenderly and smilingly talk about my husband's childlike innocence, saying that his curious doctrine and perversities of mind had a flavor of humor which made them all the more lovable. (58)

In this way Sandeep tries to show himself superior to Nikhil and tries to impress Bimala more. In the beginning of married life relationship between Nikhil and Bimala seems very cordial and happy. But as she comes in contact with Sandeep, her husband's friend, this happiness soon turns into anxiety.

Though Nikhil realizes that Bimala is going close to Sandeep and slowly parting from him, he says nothing to her. He does not utter any words but suffers a lot because of her changing behavior. He says:

The house which becomes empty through parting of lovers, still has music left in the heart of its emptiness. But the house that is empty because hearts are asunder, is awful in its silence. Even the cry of pain

is out of place there. This cry of pain must be silenced in me. So long as I continue to suffer, Bimala will never have true freedom. I must free her completely, otherwise I shall never gain my freedom from untruth....” (110)

Nikhil only watches her closeness with Sandeep but says nothing. The future is clear, he knows that his future is going to be dark because of Bimala growing attraction towards Sandeep. Still he didn't say anything and didn't try to stop Bimala. He never tries to tell Bimala that her doing is wrong. He becomes a silent sufferer. He says: Suffering there must be, but I must save myself by every means in my power from one form of self-torture: I must never think that my life loses its value because of any neglect it may suffer. The full value of my life does not all go to buy my domestic world; its great commerce does not stand or fall with some petty success or failure in the bartering of my personal joys and sorrows. (78-79)

Bimala's closeness with Sandeep becomes unbearable for Nikhil. But he tries to show as if nothing happens. He consoles his heart thinking that family life is only one part of his life, it should not affect him much. He does not show his dissatisfaction with Bimala and never tries to say that her doing is wrong. Here, we can see male ego. Though, Nikhil is educated and modern in thinking, he is not totally free from the patriarchal convention.

Though he has been always talking about the equality between husband and wife and inspires his wife to come to the outside world, he becomes unable to see her attachment with the outside world. For Bimala, Sandeep is only a comrade. She is unaware of the bad intention of Sandeep.

He further says:

I had simply come to understand that never would I be free until I could set free. To try to keep Bimala as a garland round my neck, would have meant keeping a weight hanging over my heart. Have I not been praying with all my strength, that if happiness may not be mine, let it go, if grief needs must be my lot. Let it come; but let me not be kept in bondage. To clutch hold of that which is untrue as though it were true, is only to trottle oneself. May I be saved from such self destruction. (80)

Bimala is involved in the outer activities but she is not totally free. Nikhil once says, "To try to keep Bimala as a garland round my neck, would have meant keeping a weight hanging over my heart" (178). With the words of freedom one cannot be absolutely free. Bimala is not satisfied with the words of freedom, she is lacking freedom. She says, "And then, the other day in the garden, how easy my husband found it to tell me that he set me free'. But can freedom-empty-freedom-be given and taken so easily as all that? It is like setting a fish free in the sky, for how can I move or live outside the atmosphere of loving care which has always sustained me" (183).

Nikhli sets her free but she needs to pay high cost for that freedom. She feels lack of love and care from Nikhil.

Bimala becomes unable to choose the right way when cross road came before her she becomes victim of two world inside world and outside world. in inside world that is home she found Nikhil who inspired and encouraged her to go and struggle and find other real identity however in the outer world she found Sandeep who always tries to take benefit from Bimala's innocent nature. He flatters a lot with her and entrapped her in his sweet words.

Slowly Bimala starts realizing her mistake. She starts feeling guilty because of her doing. She knows that her growing attraction towards Sandeep is not acceptable in the society. Slowly she starts realizing that Sandeep is not a right person. She tries to come out from the trape of his flattering world but can't. She says, "there must be two different persons inside me. One of these in me can understand that Sandeep is trying to deduce me; the other is content to be deduced. Sandeep has power, but not strength of righteousness" (200).

When she realizes her mistake she becomes unable to face Nikhil, she says, "When my husband nowadays comes in for his meals, I feel I cannot sit before him; and yet it is such a shame not to be near him that I feel I cannot do that either so I seat myself where we cannot look at each other's face" (202).

She further says:

I spent the night lying on the terrace. When at last it was morning, and I was sure that my husband had risen and left the room, then only with my shawl pulled over my head, could I retrace my steps towards the bedroom. (194)

As Nikhil is the silent observer of Bimala's growing attraction towards Sandeep as well as her mistakes, now also he becomes silent observer of her suffering. When he sees her suffering, he becomes unable to avoid her though she has given a lot of trouble to him as he said, "Once I thought I should turn back. But I could not. I sat down on the ground near Bimala and placed my hand on her head" (296). He just observes her suffering but utters nothing as he did when she was misled. Had Nikhil stopped her when she was misled by Sandeep and was engaged in extra affair with Sandeep, may be she would not have to suffer this much and he himself would have saved from his suffering. Nikhil was also guilty in Bimala's

mistake. Because when Bimala was happy inside the boundary of household duties he inspires her to come out crossing that boundary. But when she became unable to choose the right way and started to go in the wrong way he didn't stop her. He just observes her changing activities as a silent observer. Instead of trying to stop Bimala he starts comparing himself with Sandeep. He says, "I must acknowledge that I have merely been an accident in Bimala's life. Her nature, perhaps can only find true union with one like Sandeep" (79). Here also we can see male ego in Nikhil's character. Bimala's growing attraction towards Sandeep hurts his ego. That's why he compares himself with Sandeep. When she realizes her mistake and comes back, he again become silent because same male ego comes in front of him he is confused whether to accept her or not.

Bimala would have been the happiest woman if she had understood the real meaning of freedom and would have become able to utilize that. For this she should not have extra relation with Sandeep. B.C. Chakraworty in Rabindranath Tagore; his Mind and Art says:

When Bimala meets Sandeep for the first time, she is fascinated by the dynamic Personality of Sanip. Sandeep is absolutely selfish and crafty. He flatters Bimala as the incarnation of Shakti; who is the source of inspiration to all the sons of Bengal. They come to closer to each other as comrades in the service of the country till Sandeep's homage to the 'goddess' is reforms into his love for Bimala. Bimala is hypnotized by the dynamic personality of Sandeep and she almost surrenders herself to him. (207)

Bimala is always eager to listen her praise from others. This is the main reason why she is attracted more towards Sandeep than Nikhil. Sandeep knows her weakness

and always makes her happy praising falsely as he says;

I have never yet found any one source of impartation suffice me for good. That is what I have been compactly moving about rousing enthusiasm in the people groom which in turn I draw my own store of energy to easy you gave given me the message of my country. Such fire I have ever behold in any man. I shall be able to spread the fire of enthusiasm in my country by borrowing it from you. No, don't be ashamed. Or are far above all modesty and diffidence. You are the queen bee of our hive, and we the workers shall rally around you. You shall be our centre, our impetration. (48)

When she heard such praise she becomes spellbound. As Sandeep says after watching her reaction as a reply of his praise, "Bimala flushed all over with bashful pride and her hand shook as she went on pouring out the tea" (48).

Thus Bimala is presented as a foolish woman who doesn't use her common sense and easily spellbound by the sweet words of Sandeep. On the one hand she is presented as a responsible woman who is fully devoted onward her family and her husband on the other hand she is presented as a fool woman who is easily misleder by Sandeep who easily forgets her duty and responsibility being infatuated towards on ordinary man, Sandeep. Though Bimala was successful woman inside the house, she becomes failure outside. It shows that the women who are perfect in the home may not get same success in the world. There are many ups and down in the world. To face all this, woman should be strong enough before coming out to tackle with if.

Though Tagore favors female's freedom and tries to give equal position for both male and female, he lacks in understanding female psychology fully, he lacks in some areas in his attempt to present Bimala as on ideal woman who is entrapped and

exploited by a crooked man. He presents Bimala as a foolish woman who is always eager to listen her false praise forgetting the reality that actually she is black and not good looking .her infatuation we can know through her own words, “It seemed clear to me that, since he had caught sight of me, in his words had flamed up more directly. Indri’s steed refused to be rained in, and there came the flash of lighting. I said within myself that his language had caught fire from my eyes; for we women are not only the dirties of the household fire, but the flame of he soul itself” (29).

She further says, “I returned home that evening radiant with a new pride and joy” (29). There are two types of world. One is inner and another is external world. The inner world is the world of female where they can have their identity. The external world is the world of male, it is material world where the identity of female is lost if she is not educated and intelligent enough to find out what is wrong and what is right. Partha Chatterjee in *Postcolonial Discourse; An Anthology* says:

Now apply the inner/outer distinction to the matter of concrete day to day living. You get a separation of the social space into ghar and bahir, *The Home and the world*. The world is the external, the domain of the material; the home represents our inner spiritual self, our true identity. The world is a treacherous terrain of the pursuit of material interests. Where practical Considerations reign supreme it is also typically the domain of the male. The Home in its essence must remain unaffected by the praline futilities of the Material world –and a woman is its representation and so we get an Identification of social roles by gender to correspond with the separation of the social space into ghar and baher. (156)

When Bimala come out form the boundary of inner world she is totally lost in

the outer world she becomes noble or chose the weight way she was not educated and was not intelligent enough to find out what is right. Instead of utilizing the freedom and world she is attracted towards Sandeep. She revolves around him and passes precious time being engaged in a salient relationship with him. All these things happen because of lack of education. Instead of giving her chance to have education and understand her true identity her parents search for a good and perfect husband for her. In their opinion to find a good husband is everything for a daughter, a good husband is more important than an education for a daughter. Bimala also follows her parents' view. She makes herself busy in preparing to be a perfect wife and daughter-in-law. When she was married with Nikhil, she became so happy, she says, "At that time the prince of the fairy tale had faded, like the moon in the morning light's had the prince of my heart. I was queen. Had the prince of my real world enthroned in my heart. I was his queen. I had my seat by his side. But real joy was, that my true place was at his feet" (12).

There are two types of girls, one who are always busy in preparation of their coming married life. They think their life is for their husband. Husband is god and everything for them. They never try to find out their identity, they feel proud to be known by the name of their husband. But another type of girls are also there who are always conscious about their own identity. Such types of girls always want to make themselves independent. Bimala is the former type. For her, Nikhil, her husband is everything. She never thinks about herself, about her own identity. She serves Nikhil as a god. She finds pleasure in worshipping him more than anything in this world. But Nikhil is not in favor of such devotion. He wants her to know about the outer world and know her own identity. As Bimala said, "My beloved, it was worthy of you that you never expected worship from me. But if you had accepted it, you would have

done me a real service. You showed your love by decorating me, by educating me, by giving me what I asked for, and what I did not” (14).

Nikhil always inspires her to give importance to herself and try to understand the reality. But she never listens to him. She keeps on worshipping him. But slowly Nikhil’s words work and she comes out from her household duties boundary and starts involving in swadeshi movement. She comes to the outer world. She comes out but she is entrapped by Sandeep’s sweet words. When first time she hears Sandeep’s words, she becomes so infatuated that she thought as if all those words are for her. She remembers her feeling when she heard his words for the first time:

I returned home that evening radiant with a new pride and joy. The storm within me had shifted my whole being from one centre to another, like the Greek Maidens of old, I fain would cut off my long, resplendent tresses to make a bow string for my hero. Had my outward ornaments, my bracelets, would all have burst their bonds and flung themselves over that assembly like a shower of meteors. Only some personal sacrifice, I felt, could help me to bear the tumult of my exaltation. (29)

In this way Bimala becomes infatuated by the sweet words of Sandeep. She lacks the knowledge to differentiate between right and wrong. She becomes unable to adjust in the outside world because the society where she is living only teaches her how to adjust inside home. She knows nothing about the outside world. That’s why she doesn’t Sandeep’s intention.

Before marriage, a girl’s palms are consulted with an astrologer to know whether she has good signs to be an ideal wife. Her marriage is fixed only after palm reading. After consulting the astrologer if her palms show no good fortune, she will be

rejected for marriage. Similarly, when the proposal came for Bimala's marriage an astrologer was consulted to read her palm, he said, "This girl has good signs, she will become an ideal wife" (10).

Such type of superstitious belief we can find in a patriarchal society. A boy doesn't need any good signs before marriage. But such belief is not for male. It is believed that he is already perfect but a girl is searched for good signs. It is only a means of dominating women in the society. Bimala also believes in such things as she is also a part of the same society and feels proud because of the good signs in her palm. But the astrologer's forecast is proved wrong later. In the beginning Bimala proves herself as an ideal wife according to the traditional belief.

But slowly when she comes out from crossing the boundary of home she forgets her duty. In this way Tagore proves the traditional belief wrong. Though Bimala is presented as an ideal woman, we can say that she is perfectly stupid and submissive in the sense that she doesn't understand the trick of Sandeep who wants to loot her by taking money in the name of nationalistic movement. When she comes to know the reality and realizes her mistake it becomes too late. She says, "Only a few minutes ago I had thought that Sandeep, whom I had once taken to be a hero, was only the stage hero of melodrama" (242).

If women get power they can also be tyrannical and dominating as male. Nikhil gives equal right to Bimala. She has as much power as Nikhil has in that house. It was a very big thing in that conservative society even today. To have this much respect and power in the house is unthinkable thing for female. Giving challenge to the contemporary society he gives her that much power and respect. But she misuses that power and starts dominating him by ignoring his wishes as well as him. As a result she herself suffers and makes Nikhil a sufferer. As Nikhil says:

The real fact is that Bimala has only come into my home, not into my life. I had magnified her so, leaving her such a large place, that when I lost her, my Whole way of life became narrow and confined. I had thrust aside all other objects into a corner to make room for Bimala, taken up as I was with decorating her and dressing her and day and night; forgetting how great is humanity and how nobly precious man's life is. (114)

Now Nikhil realizes that he overestimates Bimala. He spends lots of time in decorating her and forgets to give time to himself. In fact, Nikhil himself puts him in such difficulties. All the pains and suffering through which he is going is the outcome of his own decision. Without thinking a minute about whether Bimala can survive in the outer world, he pushes her out. He should have tried to give her good education before sending her out.

In patriarchal society male are supposed to be superior and they themselves feel superior. Man's superior physical strength to woman and his role as a head of the family have put him in more favorable atmosphere than woman in the society. They do not need to seek for freedom. Nikhil, in his autobiography, says: "We, men are knights whose quest is that freedom to which our ideals call us" (143-144). He further adds, "I have gained freedom myself; I shall allow freedom to others" (144). A proud feeling can be sensed in this saying of Nikhil. He feels himself superior as a husband.

Instead of enjoying the freedom alone, he tries to share it with his wife, Bimala giving challenge to the patriarchal society. In such type of patriarchal society, males are more educated than females. They even go outside the house; they are quite modern in comparison to females. Bimala in her autobiography says, "But my

husband was absolutely modern. He was the first of the house to go through a collage course and take his M.A. degree” (11). Nikhil is the first person of that family who takes M. A. Degree. That’s why his opinion about women is different.

In the house, the husband is the senior partner and wife is under his guidance. A good wife is one who is obedient towards her husband. Wife is regarded as the ornament of the house; it means she is the means of decoration in the house. But Nikhil never regards Bimala as an ornament instead he gives equal importance to her. For a happy and peaceful life, there should be union between husband and wife. They are equal partners of life. One should not feel oneself superior and another inferior. As Altekar in the position of women in Hindu civilization writes:

The wise observed, says manu, that the husband is identical with the wife and vice versa was therefore natural that the happiness of each should be regarded as depending upon the other. If there was complete harmony between the two, the house would be a heaven, if there was discord, it would be a hell. Wife is the keystone of the arch of the husband’s happiness. (96)

He further says;

She is the only friend, who never forsakes him in adversity. You may be in a forest, still your comfort is assured if your wife is by your side; in fact a home without wife is a forest. Wife alone is the husband’s trust friend, counsel and companion. (96)

Nikhil always gives equal space to Bimala as he gives to himself. Though Bimala was not educated, he never lets her to feel that he is superior. Bimala's every decision has great importance in his life. In each and every decision of his life he

consoles with Bimala. He always inspires her to understand the importance of her life. He respects her as much as he respects himself.

At that time freedom for women is an unthinkable thing in a typical Indian family. Nikhil's family was a typical Indian family. They were very strict in following their rituals and custom. They were conservative. Their house was known as Raja's house. Bimala becomes daughter in law of that house only because she had good signs in her palm according to an astrologer. It proves how much conservative that family was. For them female members are only a means of house decoration. So it is a big challenge for Nikhil to provide equal rights to Bimala, his wife and he does that.

Not only Nikhil's family but Bimala is also conservative in her thinking. It is not Bimala who desires freedom, who has wishes and ambition but it is Nikhil, her husband who always tries to make her active in every field of life. He always inspires her to understand herself, love herself, make an aim of her life and fulfill that aim. He is not happy to see her spending her previous time in serving him and involving only in the household duties.

Usually an ordinary husband expects his wife to serve him and look after his household works unlike their Nikhil considers his wife as an equal partner of his life who has equal right to take any kinds of decision. He respects her as much as he respects himself. He never tries to impose his decision on her.

The simplicity and the greatness that we find in Nikhil, hardly we can find in any ordinary male. In that time when female were considered as an inferior being who were supposed to worship male or their husband as God as a provider of everything in their life, Nikhil utterly rejects such tradition. Bimala said "But my husband would not give me any opportunity for worship. That was his greatness. They are cowards

who claim absolute devotion from their wives as their right, that is a humiliation for both" (13).

Instead of enjoying the respect that he gets from Bimala and making himself superior in the eyes of Bimala he tries to make her equal in knowledge.

Looking through the eye of feminism we can say that Tagore has given a big challenge to the patriarchal society. In patriarchal society female were considered as goods only. But Tagore presents Bimala as a strong character whose small decision also has great importance in their family life. Through Bimala he tries to prove those females are equal partner of male in each and every steps of life. Without their support male can't think about a happy family or happy world. When Bimala was supporting him Nikhil's family life was full of harmony but when she stopped supporting him and respecting his decision his life filled with sorrows and sufferings and their home remain no more home. So husband and wife are equal partner, they have equal rights as well as responsibilities.

We can see some marks of that time in Nikhil's character. There is no doubt that he is a man of modern thinking and is advance in his thinking, but still we can see some signs of that period in his character. Bimala's words also prove that, "my husband couldn't break completely with the old time traditions which prevailed in our family" (13).

Nikhil becomes unable to bear the day by day increasing close relation of Bimala with Sandeep. Here we can see the mark of that time. A husband can not even think of pleasure if his wife can not participate with him. A society expects woman to be true to her husband and lead the life of an ideal Pativrata.

One can not analyze the thing of the outer world living inside the four walls of the house. Nikhil's master once told Nikhil to take away Bimala from the home. So,

she could see the outer world. He says, 'Take Bimala away to Calcutta. She is getting too narrow a view of the outside world from here; she can not see men and things in their true proportions. Let her see the world, men and their work, give her a broad vision' (224).

From the primitive time women are supposed to be the means of decoration and can satisfy the family members who were limited only in the household activities. Women are decorated in the traditional manner. Bimala also limits herself in household activities to satisfy the desire of the family member. She herself is also satisfied with it. But Nikhil does not become happy. He tells her to cross the boundary of household duties and try to find out her identity. He talks about equality but Bimala always thinks herself nothing in front of him and wants to praise him as god. But Nikhil does not like hers such type of narrow thinking. Bimila said, "His love for me seemed to overflow my limits by its flood of wealth and service. But my necessity was more for giving than for receiving" (13).

Nikhil gives equality to Bimala in every field. He makes her his equal partner, shares ideas and problems, still Bimala hasitates with him. She feels him different from her. This makes Nikhil sad. Nikhil in his autobiography say, "She has ahs to steal these six thousand rupees because she could not be open with me because she felt that, in certain things, I despotically different from her" (272). In typical Hindu society, husband is always supposed to be superior to his wife. He is the decision maker. Wife needs to support him no matter whether he is wrong or right. Though they are life partner, the relation between them is just like master and slave. Wife always needs to be afraid with her husband. Nikhil gives equal importance to Bimala still she is not open with him. That's why she needs to steal six thousand rupees. She

spends almost half of her life in that society where husbands are supposed to be someone with whom wife needs to be always afraid.

Character is very important for a woman in a patriarchal society. If a woman loses her character the society will reject her even husband also. Bimala, being a married woman keeps relation with Sandeep Babu. Everyone looks her in negative way.

At last, she realizes that her growing attraction towards Sandeep is wrong. Actually, he is a fraud and has misled her. When she knows all these things, she tries to return back to her home. She becomes unable to adjust in the outside world. She can't adjust in the world because she doesn't have education and enough knowledge about the situations and problems of the outside world so that she can tackle with it. Sandeep represents the problems of the society. His narrow thinking regarding woman represents the way of the society to look at the women. Bimala returns being fail to tackle with the world. Through this, Tagore wants to give a message to all women that they should cross the boundary of the home and search their identity and equality in the society. But before coming to the world they should make themselves strong enough so that none can mislead them as Sandeep does Bimala. Outside world is not so easy; it's very difficult to struggle against the narrow thinking of the society. So they should have good education before coming out. The only one and most important weapon that a woman should have when she comes to the outside world is education.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

In *The Home and the World*, Tagore empowers Woman character .While reading through a feminist perspective, it holds modern view about women. It also rejects the approaches as depicted in Indian Myths regarding the Indian Ideals of womanhood. During his time, Tagore was regarded a genius .He was a modern thinker and full supporter of female freedom. I f we go back to the period of Tagore and compare his advance thinking in the contemporary conservative society we can find out how modern he was in his thinking. At that period when female were regarded an inferior and who were supposed to be the material of male entertainment, he gave strong and central position to female in his novel.

My research on this novel is from feminist prospective. It focuses on how Tagore empowers a female character, Bimala in this novel. Bimala in this novel symbolizes the Indian wife whose capacity for endurance is proverbial. In the beginning, Bimala's happiness and satisfaction inside the four walls of her house seems nothing lacking. She is so much happy and satisfied having a seat as a head of the house that she rejects her husband's proposal to go Calcutta with him. But slowly, she realizes that she has become a caged bird inside the home and whatever husband tells is right. Her husband had always inspired her to cross the narrow boundary of household duties and examine herself in the outside world to get her own identity.

She crosses the boundary of home and comes out. It was not a simple thing for a woman in that period. She faces many hindrances from her family members as well as from outside. She ignores everything and comes out. Here, we see Tagores great attempt to empower a woman. At the same time, he is also aware of the fact that to get identity in the outside world is not easy for a woman. The cruelty and injustice of the

society is shown in Sandeep's character. The way of the society to look at a woman can be sensed in Sandeep's way of looking at Bimala. For him, Bimala is only a material who is useful for him in many ways. He exploits her and makes her a means of earning money. She is easily entrapped by his sweet words. Bimala, who was perfect housewife and who was perfect and mature inside the house becomes unable to differentiate between right and wrong and herself becomes victim. By the pitiful condition of Bimala, Tagore gives message to all women that they must come to the outside world and search their identity but before coming out, they must be ready to face the hindrances and difficulties of the world. They must be strong enough to defeat such problems in the outside world.

Finally, if we compare Tagore and his thinking with a society of that period, we can say he was very advance in his thinking. The strong and respectful position that he gave to a female character in this novel shows he was a supporter of female freedom. During Tagore's time women were not aware of their rights. They were busy in their household duties and were enjoying their family life. None was there to make them aware as female were less educated. Most of the female were not educated. But Tagore tries to make them aware through this novel. By empowering a female character in this novel, he shows female are equal with male.

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