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A Comparative Study of Female Characters in Mythological Context

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Abstract

Mythology often portrays female characters as goddesses, enchantresses, or heroines. They embody traits like wisdom (Athena), love (Aphrodite), or power (Isis), but can also be depicted as temptresses (Eve) or victims (Persephone). Despite diverse roles, they often symbolize aspects of femininity, shaping cultural norms and archetypes. Mythology sometimes depicts female characters as culprits, often portrayed as seductresses or villains. Examples include Medea, who betrays her husband, and Circe, who ensnares men with her magic. These portrayals reflect cultural anxieties about female power and sexuality, perpetuating stereotypes of deceit and manipulation. Seeta's abduction by Ravana in the Ramayana sparks the war between Rama and Ravana. Draupadi's insult at the hands of the Kauravas leads to the Kurukshetra War in the Mahabharata. Helen's elopement with Paris triggers the Trojan War. These women, often blamed for igniting conflicts, symbolize themes of desire, betrayal, and the consequences of human actions in various mythologies. Hence, an attempt is made to compare these prominent female characters along with their traits and circumstance from renowned epics.