

Different Aspects of Draupadi in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "The Palace of Illusions"

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Abstract

Draupadi's main aim was to elucidate the four goals of the life: duty, wealth, pleasure and liberation. It is an exposition on Draupadi, including the proper conduct of a king, of a warrior, of a man living in times of calamity and of a person seeking to attain emancipation from rebirth. The Mahabharata includes different aspects of Hinduism. Stories of the gods and goddess are explanation of Hindu philosophy. Draupadi also features as an important character in it. The epic employs the story within a story structure, known as frame tales. This is popular in many Indian religious and secular works. Draupadi is one of the major characters within the epic. Myth is a symbolic narrative, usually of unknown origin and at least partially traditional, that relates actual events and is specially associated with religious beliefs.

Key words: Myth, Beliefs, Liberation, Wealth, Epic

This novel portrays Draupadi's life and struggle. Draupadi is a mythological character she is essentially a human being who is forced to face difficulties in life. Chitra Banerjee, in her novel *The Palace of Illusions*. Draupadi's character has been analysed using Horney's stages. Each stage in Draupadi's life is a testament of her strength and determination. These stages help to shape her character and her vibrant spirit shines through each aspect of the variant stages. Divakaruni's novel *The Palace of Illusions* got greatest traditional value and was a national excellent seller for several year in India and it is re-writing and retelling of the Indian epic *The Mahabharata* from Draupadi's phases. The myth surrounding Draupadi's life has been reproduced and her relationship with those surfaces her has been experiment in certifiers.

The term archetype began with Carl Jung's term, "an archetype is defined as the first original model in which all other similar person, object or concepts are merely derivative, copied, patterned or emulated."²⁴ The term "archetype" applies indirectly to the "representation collectives" as it only deals with the psychic contents.²⁵ The common

archetypes are images, archetypal motifs or patterns and archetypes as genres. Within human psyche archetypes represents way of thinking and of acting an inherited mode of psychic functioning or a pattern of behavior (an instinct). An Archetype is a force but it is registered most commonly as an image. In dreams archetypes often appears as persons, sometimes quite ordinary, sometimes as mythological or ancient figures. In psychology, an archetype is a model of a person, personality or behavior.

An archetype is said to express the presence of a divine force within the human soul that manifests itself in the entire typically human pattern of thought, feeling, imagery and behavior. In the novel, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni provides the Mahabharata from Draupadi's phases. The tale begins from her birth. Dhaima is the personal waitress of Draupadi and She mentions about how Draupadi born. Drupada, King of Panchaal needed to get vengeance on Drona and so he enables and composes a yaga. Afterwards a month Dhristadyumna is the originally to arise from the fire, and he is pursued by Draupadi. Drupad is convivial for the visiting of Dhristadyumna and he is neither sad nor happy for Draupadi. He gave importance to Dhristadyumna. But Dhristadyumna perform as a best brother to Draupadi. He preaches her in all situations. She is sensing that Dhristadyumna is over-conserved of her. She feels, "His weakness was that he believed completely in his destiny and has resigned himself to fulfilling it" (Divakaruni 11). As Draupadi swarthy, the other wives of Drupada did not care for her. They do not permit their children to talk to her.

Draupadi fell sorrowed. Draupadi had a best relationship with Krishna. In case, the cause may be because they are both dark skinned. Though Krishna is darker than her, he does not refer his color as a defect. He interests the heart of women with his attraction. Though others do not take care of Draupadi, she lapsed her time with her brother Dhristadyumana. Draupadi focuses to learn archery after watching her brother, but Dhaima does not want her to train such things.

Dhristadyumana tells her that women should only listen and concern to their husbands. But Draupadi objecting and posits that she desire to make a life for herself. Dhristadyumna is the only companion of Draupadi. Dhristadyumana persistently remonstrate Draupadi by saying, "The problem with you is, you are too pretty for your own good. It will get you into trouble with men sooner or later, if you are not careful," (25)

One day through her waitress, Draupadi listen that there is a sage, who prognosticated the future. She begs with Dhaima to get her to the sage. It is Vyasa whom she meets there. Vyasa typify that she would marry five husbands and become the queen of queens. He also tells that she would be the reason of battle. Many of the women would become widows because of her. He also tells that she would deplore a lot. He prophesies,

You will be remembered for causing the greatest battle of your time.

You will bring about the deaths of evil kings and your children's and

your brother's. A million women would become widows because of you,
Yes, indeed, you will leave a mark on history. You will be loved, though
you will not always recognize who loves you.(Divakaruni39)

There are several complex women characters in *The Palace of Illusions* such as mother of Pandavas, who dedicates her life to making her sons become Kings. There is Gandhari, wife of the sightless Kaurava king who chooses to blindfold in marriage, thus relinquishing her power as queen and mother. Duryodhana is the first all and Dushasan is the second. Duryodhana is the villainous character and he did many evil deeds. The most evil deed he has done is humiliating Draupadi. And most of all, there is Draupadi, King Drupad's beautiful daughter who has the unique distinction of being married to five men at the same time the Pandava brothers, the greatest heroes of their time.

The portrayal of Draupadi in this novel is authentic. She is not the mere character, but in fact is the story teller of her own story. She constantly raises questions about the significance of her life and wants to establish the purpose. She has got the vibrant spirit and she is one of the enchanting women of all ages. Divakaruni is able to create an intense portrayal of her life as closely associated with mythical aspects. Draupadi feel that king Drupad as a father according to the dictates of Manu protected and takes care of her. But she feels suffocated. She feels that the only meaning full thing in her life is to hear about the story of her birth. Draupadi does not want to listen to stories which do not place her at the center.

King Drupada gives importance only to Dhristadyumna because he is born with the mission to destroy Drona. But ironically, it is Draupadi's birth that brings the great change. She changes the life of the people who associate with her in the future. Draupadi wants her story to be her own. Her deep interest in hearing her story made her realize that her birth is as significant as her brother. Draupadi's purpose in life is revealed through these lines "I want to leave a mark on history, as was promised to me at my birth" (Divakaruni 39)

Draupadi who some might argue, by headstrong actions helps to bring about the destruction of the third age of man. But in some way, they remain shadowy figures, their thoughts and motives mysterious, emotions portrayed only when they affected the lives of the male heroes, their roles ultimately subservient to those of their father or husbands, brothers or sons. Relevant to today's war-torn world, *The Palace of Illusions* takes us back to a time that is half history, half myth and wholly magical. Narrated by Draupadi, the wife of the legendary Pandava brothers in the *Mahabharata*, the novel gives us a new interpretation of this ancient tale.

On the day of Swayamvara, Draupadi costumed and dressed neatly and Dhristadyumna took her to the court. He introduces some of the special kings to Draupadi. When the contest starts, everyone efforts their best to shoot the eyes of the fish, but they could

not shoot targeted point. When Karna comes onward to steer arrow, Dhristadyumna decisive that he would shoot it accurately so, he inhibit him from contest. When Karna is vexatious, Krishna intimates Draupadi to take adduct over the situation. Draupadi asks Karna that if she becomes his wife she should know his birth.

As Karna could not reply he feels that he is offended. Draupadi feels worry to insult Karna, she feels that Karna would be vexation with her. Later she feels worry for her actions “My disobedient heart kept going back to Karna, to that most unfortunate moment in his life” (78). Her action shocks every one present, but Draupadi is the most affected. On meeting Karna for the first time, she feels,

Draupadi’s character in *The Palace of Illusions* has been analyzed using Henry’s stages. She goes through several phases in her life which could be clearly shown. Though Draupadi is a mythological character she is essentially a human being who is forced to face difficulties in life. By delving into her inner self, it becomes easy to find correlation between Henry’s views on Draupadi’s behavior. Each stage in Draupadi’s life is a testament of her strength and determination. These stages help to shape her character and her vibrant spirit shines through each aspect of the various stages.

In the modern time it is necessary to be self-confident for a woman but in the name of audacity she should not uprooted from her base. The fusion of traditional mythology and modernity of the present world here presented through the retellings, which is a conventional message for those who are rooted to the orthodox traditionalism and also for those who are uprooted from the moral ethics of their own culture. Breaking free from the trends, retellings are the genre where a character like Draupadi has been presented as a heroic sovereign in the epic of Mahabharata. Draupadi appears from the flames with a divine announcement from the heavens that she would be the cause of destruction of evil warriors. Draupadi is always exposed to vehemence: her Swayamvara ends in strife; a fivefold marriage is imposed upon her; she is outraged in the royal court twice over; Through Draupadi, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has shown the modern world that she is firm and a woman with a rigid determination. Throughout the epic we visualize Draupadi questioning about her own endurance, her will, her preference and her aptitude to take resolution. Through the character Draupadi, Chitra Banerjee persuades the reader to further investigate the issue of female and male identity and the ruthless employment of man’s social power over a woman. According to Draupadi of this revised epic there should be a world free of male demands and orders. The text is a wonderful example of feminine anxiety simulated in this epic.

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