Do I Exist: Deconstruction of the Fire Daughter 'Draupadi'

Santanu Panda[1*] & Shri Krishan Rai[2]

1* PhD Research Fellow, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology Durgapur, W.B, India. Email- sp.20hs1102@phd.nitdgp.ac.in
2 Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology, Durgapur, W.B, India. Email- shrikrishanrai@hu.nitdgp.ac.in

ABSTRACT
Women have been portrayed as the embodiment of purity and selflessness for ages. They are raised with the 'pride of the household' façade ensnaring them, weighing them down, making them doubt their own needs and desires, and leading them to wonder if it is even illegal to put oneself first. This paper is an endeavor of unearthing to look into the process of making subalterns by some colonial power over its subordinates through various means. We intend to analyze how these two writers have rewritten the character of Draupadi, an 'epitome of suffering' who has eponymous popularity. This paper evokes the plight, triple layer of subjugation, and resistance faced by the protagonist of the great Indian epic, Mahabharat. This is also designed to make a comparative study between ancient and hard-core, realistic modern characters. It deals with two prominent contemporary works of Chitra Banerjee's The Palace of Illusions (2008), and Mahasweta Devi's Draupadi (1997), from the point of view of gender studies and postcolonialism with its' nexus in Dalit feminism. It will ultimately conclude that, whereas Devi's unconventional Draupadi, a reflection of 'power against center' or Banerjee's rebellious protagonist while growing up under the heavy influence of the earlier, canonizes herself in a model manner while also acknowledging her classical namesake, Veda Vaysa's Draupadi remains a canon like the epic itself. This character is a perfect paragon of breaking the cage of societal jurisprudence.

Key Words
Epitome of sufferings, Jurisprudence, Paragon, Power against center, Subaltern, Unearthing Women

Introduction
Women in India and their gender roles have been traditionally imagined in literary and cultural imaginations. These roles exhibited some recurrent themes in literature in English or mainstream cinema: daughter, wife, mother, caregiver, and domestic help, and so on. Women's roles, thus, as Puri states, were given a cultural mandate, creating social statuses for middle class urban women (Puri 110). However, in the first decade of 21st century India, we see a changing situation in which women have been presented in texts where they are trying to break gender roles. For instance, in fictions of Shashi Deshpande, Githa Hariharan, R.K. Usha, and others, women characters are found struggling to achieve a greater degree of self-definition and autonomy, fighting back societal and cultural conventions, and negotiating with new identities. The pre-British records include an abundance of perspective texts but fewer documents that shed light on the actual lives of women noted Forbes as "the pre-British records include an abundance of perspective texts but fewer documents that shed light on the actual lives of women" (Sen 66). When it came to the condition of 'Third World Women', G. C. Spivak made the initial observation that subaltern women are subjected to oppression more than subaltern men; they do not have proper representation and are not able to voice their opinion (Kalpana 80).

Writers such as Kamala Markandeya, Anita Desai, and Shashi Deshpande use their writing to express issues that affect women. In actuality, Kamala Markandeya is largely responsible for introducing the subgenre of 'feminist writing' to the field of literature in India. Writers of the next generation, notably modern women writers, are experiencing a paradigm shift as they become more concerned with confronting and stifling the 'female of the

species' (Martin 16) and its mutilation. A subset of the authors are writers of Indian English literature. Similar to R.K. Narayan's *Mahabharata (1978)*, Sashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel (1989)*, and female authors like Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions (2008)* and Mahasweta Devi's "*Draupadi*" (1997), these authors used Draupadi as a basis for rewriting well-known and renowned Hindu epics.

As the central theme of this paper, they examined it from their point of view in order to assess the condition of Indian women regardless of the era to which they belong, including their suffering and cruel torment. An overview of the existing scholarship around new Indian women, resistance, autonomy, and empowerment can be mentioned here. This paper's main objective is to investigate how Divakaruni and Devi, the writers, proceed beyond the traditional narrative of Draupadi's portrayal to both narrate the story and advance the myth. In Hindu mythology, Draupadi is regarded as the first feminist and the heroine Draupadi holds a special place because there aren't many other female heroines who have spoken out against a society ruled by men. Through rediscovering and rewriting the original, they have attempted to respond to and challenge the dictatorial systems that have ruled over women for decades due to the patriarchy. They are presenting a discourse or alternative story on gender and hegemony.

Methodology

The purpose of this paper is to develop a theoretical research project related to subaltern studies. The character 'Draupadi', a marginalized individual throughout history, whether ancient or historic or present, is the subject of a lengthy discussion. This study aims to reveal the true nature of 'devi' and challenge the societal perception of them. Renowned scholar in this area Lois Tyson articulated the steps and goals of feminism-focused text analysis, from a feminist perspective, when we interpret texts or anything else, the way to deal with our subjectivity is not to try to avoid it but to be aware of it as possible to include it in our interpretation as fully as possible, so that others will understand it as well.

(Re) Developing of the Character Draupadi

The author's choice of 'Draupadi' as her heroine is distinctive in that, rather than portraying her as the demise of the 'Third Age of Man' (Dwarapa Yug), she is shown as a role model who can be used to rewrite the difficulties that women face in society. While portraying Draupadi, Banerjee defies the conventional and hierarchical portrayal of the character in R.K. Narayan's *The Indian Epic Retold*, where she is referred to as the goddess Lakshmi herself in stature, grace and complexion; eyes like lotus petals; a woman who is an ideal wife to guide, serve and sustain a man at all times (Narayan). *Mahabharata* is one of the defining cultural narratives in the construction of masculine and feminine gender roles in ancient India, and its numerous telling and retellings have helped shape Indian gender and social norms ever since (Black 59), B. Black scrutinized about the great epic *Mahabharata* while evaluating it. In actuality, Divakaruni was not happy with how Draupadi was portrayed or that the role was thrust upon her. It's never easy to retell a beloved and critically acclaimed classic from a feminine perspective. However, when it came to public opinion, she consistently adhered to the earlier, highly regarded text. In order to go into the primary analytical point of the study, we must first talk about how many modern writers have rewritten the epic Mahabharata. Multiple perspectives can be explored and debated when it comes to the Mahabharata story. The story might be interpreted philosophically as the incarnation of Lord Krishna, who came to earth to rescue human souls, or as the tale of humanity and their never-ending quest for dominance and power. Gender studies, however, reveals that, behind all its religious, historical, philosophical, and literary merits, the Mahabharata is a patriarchal tale. The 'Rise and Fall of Patriarchal Society' was chronicled by Simon de Beauvoir in his 1949 book *The Second Sex*. Woman? She has a womb, an ovary, she is a female, one word is adequate to define her, say those who prefer straightforward responses. 'Female' sounds insulting coming from a man's mouth, yet he is proud to hear, "He is male!" (Beauviour 65) and is not ashamed of his animality. The derogatory label 'female' limits women to their sex rather than rooting them in nature. The myths found in our ancient literature demonstrate that men are the main characters, with women's responsibilities consisting solely of naively supporting them. The mothers of the five famous 'Pandava' brothers, Kunti and Madri, are pleading with God in the first chapter of R.K. Narayan's *Mahabharata* to become pregnant via the favor of God and bear male children. Their dream is to become the mother of legendary warriors who would protect the land and write history. In this sense, every character is a member of the 'Ksatriya' caste, which is a higher caste made up of soldiers.

Draupadi: An Epitome of Sufferings

Now, let's turn our attention to the study's main subject, which is the well-known and graceful character of Draupadi from Indian mythology and literature. Draupadi is a representation of motherhood, a symbol of pain,

and an obedient Hindu woman. R.K. Narayan refers to her as a "Bride for Five" (Narayan 343) which is repugnant behavior that is neither acceptable in that era's culture nor in the current one. However, Draupadi as she exists today remembers her former self and attempts to understand why she defied social standards. We may claim that Narayan's *Mahabharata* is a reflection of Vays's original epic, which portrayed Draupadi as a youthful and endearing princess of Panchal. Usually, in 'Swayamvara'[1], the girl is free to select her spouse as she pleases, but her father, the king, sets up an archery match because he wants Arjun to be her spouse. The victorious warrior shall be considered Draupadi's spouse. She is really presented to the winner as a sort of 'trophy'. This event bears an apparent parallel to Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Knights Tale" from *The Canterbury Tales* anthology, where Theseus, the Duke of Athens, handed his daughter-in-law Emelye as a reward in the sward combat between Arcite and Palamon. Emelye's state and that of Draupadi are fairly comparable. The legendary warrior Arjun, the third son of Kunti and Pandu, declared himself the victor and was able to hit the eye. Upon arriving at the forest home with Draupadi, the five Pandavas are told by their mother to divide Draupadi equally among themselves, not observing anything or whatever they bring. Draupadi becomes the fifth Pandav wife as a result of this. Even mother Kunti does not stop her from functioning as a sex object. Suddenly, all of a sudden, her "womanhood" turns into "otherhood" (Divakaruni 97). Because the dispute between Kaurava and Pandava to claim individual sovereignty over the throne is so essential Draupadi's existence becomes increasingly crucial. Draupadi suffers yet more humiliation as a result of the dice game plot. Yudhisthira descended into a gambling frenzy, losing sight of the world around him except for the white, striped dice and the checkered board. He lost track of his identity, location, other people around him, and what was good and evil (Narayan). He finally bet on his wife after losing all of his material possessions and his brothers. Draupadi was dragged by her hair before the court as the outcome of this incident. Following this harassment event, there occurs the great conflict known as 'Kurukhestra'[2], which ends with the extinction of nearly four generations.

Draupadi Looks Back with Anger

By allowing us to rethink and recreate previous works and their characters, literary thought and development aid in the deconstruction and subversion of those writings' hegemonic viewpoints. To highlight Draupadi's other qualities, Chitra Banerjee narrated the narrative from Draupadi's point of view in her book *The Palace of Illusions*. The name Panchali, bestowed by Draupad, Draupadi's father, is used in *The Palace of Illusions*. The name also alludes to contemporary women, who face difficult circumstances and societal conventions as well as archaic customs and purported principles. She will be challenging any and all language that perpetuates the effectiveness of patriarchy. Draupadi's investigation into society's expectations on women began with the novel's introduction. She expresses her wish in the first scene; she readily admits that despite being a loving wife, she is not in love with her husbands. It was, as it is now, somewhat taboo to make these kinds of statements or words. She is determined to fight back and is focused on exposing the negative aspects of the macho culture.

Renuka Narayanan, one of the famous critics of feminist writings, commented in the Hindustan Times. Divakaruni's tale takes us through the epic in Draupadi's voice. From being born of the sacrificial fire (thus her beautiful name 'Yajnaseni', though the author doesn't use it, preferring 'Panchali'), to her strange, lonely childhood, her tricky marriage to five men with a persecution problem and a control freak mother, her own, lovely home at last, and then the unbelievable traumas that follow that nobody should have to go through (but millions of refugees do). It is fairly clear from the narrative that one of the numerous instruments of internal dominance in our society is racial discrimination. Even though she is called a princess and is hailed as lovely, she has been given the very first descriptor, such as "dark skin" (Divakaruni 138), to further repress women. Right away, she is unhappy with her name, saying, "Couldn't my father have thought of something a little less egoistic? Something more appropriate for a girl who was meant to alter the course of history?" (136). She rejects the conventional wisdom that says women ought to be obligated to live under men's names. She therefore refuses the name Draupadi, which means 'Drugupad's daughter', preferring to become well-known under the name Panchali. It turns out that Draupadi's father is praying to God for a son, not a daughter. She's an "unwanted child" (198). Prophecy predicts that history and its peculiarities will change along with her, although her name is evocative of a subservient state. By using the initials described above, the author is actually attempting to convey that her

---

[1] This is customary; often, the rulers of any kingdom arrange an event to provide the princess or princes of that kingdom an option for a "partner." This word is a compound of two Sanskrit terms: "groom" (Vara) and "self," or "Svayam."

[2] The great battle fought between the two groups Kaurava and Pandava in the epic Mahabharata.

heroine will be distinct from the epic character of the past; rather than being a mindless automaton of accepted norms, she will live her life according to her own terms and reject all preconceptions. The plot takes a turn thanks to her actions, giving the parental Mahabharata all control. Represented as a symbol of an "active agent"(290), she aspires to control her life and is in a state of perpetual dispute. She is a steadfast supporter of education and desires her own education. She has advocated for genuine education. She was most envious of him for these lessons—those that bestowed authority. To influence history, she needed to know them, according to Divakaruni. She challenges her tutor, who persistently dissuades her from pursuing an education. She uses her objections against the traditional school system and her tutor's comments about women. The tutor's assertion that women are the cause of all problems in the world also infuriated her. She decides to be a rebellious wife as opposed to the archetype of 'Pativrata', a subservient one. Despite hailing from a military/Khatriya lineage, she harbours a curiosity regarding the reason behind men's endless fighting. She aims to transmit to them the knowledge that achieving fame may be accomplished in multiple ways. She expressed herself by yelling the words, kings are always fighting, adding, that all they want is more land and more power. They compel the general populace to fight in their armies and tax them till they go hungry. Divakaruni also brought up her relationships with her five husbands as another instance of her sorrows. She was shared as a commodity among the five brothers following her marriage to Arjun. She must spend a year with each brother before being given over to the "next husband" (200), as determined by the dynasty's oldest member, Bishwa. Because she feels like a "water jug"(202), passed from one hand to another and from one husband to another, the novel's heroine criticizes this kind of absurd arrangement and feels obligated to become useful to all members of the family. As Divakaruni (2008) said, I would be passed from hand to hand whether I wanted it or not. This is a ridiculous social norm that degrades women only to the advantage of men. Dr. S. G. Puri observed that some individuals or organizations have the authority to decide how women are treated and in what roles. The social conditioning of a woman who deviates from her place in the cultural paradigm is discussed by Divakaruni in her book *The Palace of Illusions*. The importance of cultural scripts is another topic she covers, which challenges women to negotiate the space they have made for themselves through exercising agency. The organization assists society in achieving its goals. Even if she is bound to her spouse by some heavenly conventions, she can readily see that he doesn't love her all that much because there are other things they love more. For them, values like honour, fidelity to one another, and reputation are of greater importance than my pain (Divakaruni). Not only in that situation, but she also becomes an object, a trophy for the game of dice. She has also begun to doubt her ability to play with respect and dignity. In front of everyone, she responded, "He had no right" (319), is genuinely attempting to clarify that ladies do not have a palace or a place of their own; this is all a mirage. This episode makes us think of Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, in which it is demonstrated thatfor wom en to battle against masculinity and decolonize themselves, they have to occasionally re-create or re-appropriate their own space.

She pretended to be a maidservant even throughout the year of disguise, but Keeechak still took advantage of her. This episode serves as an example of how males consider women as objects, regardless of whether they are maids or queens. She even trips and falls during the last trip to Heaven with the five brothers, going completely unnoticed by all of them, for whom she endured all of their humiliations and sorrows. This illustrates her life's experience of constant rejection. Regarding the current state of decency, Metka Zupancic wrote, in a world ruled by self-absorbed individuals, with egotistic preoccupations that foster divisions, conflicts, and separations. The prose works of Divakaruni, particularly those from the last few years, are full of deep moral lessons and the hope of a future we can all create together, using literature as a powerful and effective means of bringing people together through love as a unifying factor and mutual understanding (ZupAncic 107).

Dopdi, the 'Adivasi'[3] Power against Centre

One of the most elegant writers of the post-colonial era, Mahasweta Devi re-presented the well-known character Draupadi in a nuanced way, presenting the episode of Draupadi in her well-known short story "Draupadi" (2010). This is a Bengali story translated by G.C. Spivak in the collection *Breast Stories (1997)*. English translation can sometimes act as a mechanism to empower marginalized people of the society, like Dalit, female subjugation and

---

[3] The phrase literally refers to the first people to settle in India. Vasi signifies people, while Adi indicates first. See Orissa Temploy tribus (2008) by Ana Garcia Arrayo for further information. Actually, Santals belong to this category.

it can act as an active agent to empower them. Devi is a Bengali writer who always has concern and love for the indigenous tribal people of India. Spivak pitches this story into international consideration and attention. Devi felt compelled to raise her voice in order to represent the pain and harsh realities faced by the Adivasi (neo)-colonized people of India, particularly those who are women. I find my people still groaning under hunger, landlessness, indebtedness, and bonded labor (Spivak 129), Spivak remarked. The only thing that has inspired any of my writing is a brilliant, fiery, and passionate rage at a system that has failed to free my people from their abhorrent confines.

Literature that explores social realism is found in Draupadi. Another way to look at it is as a parallel to the three components of the classical Draupadi. 'Dopdi,' a tribalized version of the original protagonist, is how we are first introduced to him in the first section. Because of their involvement in the peasant uprising that resulted in the death of a landowner, Dopdi and her husband Dulna are listed by the police as "wanted person" (Devi 387). This is how the story begins. In addition, they are accused of killing numerous landowners, moneylenders, and officials in addition to attacking police stations and leading various ideological groups and their followers. A part of the undoing of the opposites the intellectual rural, internationalist tribalist that is the unwavering constitution of the underground, and the wrong side of the law, Gayatri wrote of Draupadi, calling her "Comrade Dopdi" (390). Senanayak, the army officer who is tasked with apprehending them and quelling the uprising, is another significant character in the narrative and a villain. After his death, he is the kind of military chief that lured Dopdi in by using her corpse as bait, but she escaped and sought safety in the forest. The atmosphere at the end of this part is one of apprehension, with the Adivasi people living on the fringe terrifying the center. The true circumstances of the Adivasi people and their run-down appearance are revealed in the second section of the narrative. This feeds the dependency hypothesis, according to which the state occupies the top echelons to maintain control over its citizens, hence facilitating the capitalist system's quick ascent to prominence in its own right. Like Dulna and Dopdi, only a few people possessed the courage to challenge the central authority. The ladies of the 'Adivasi' community, on the other hand, are treated differently from women in the so-called contemporary society; Dulna and Draupadi battle side by side with the home stealers. Dopdi appears pale and weak when Senanayak and his companions finally catch her manipulating her, yet she still possesses remarkable strength to defend her people against the oppressive force.

The third chapter of the narrative has been regarded as the most remarkable since it details the innumer able humiliations, hardships, and agonies that Dopdi experiences. Senanayak commands her troops to "do the needful" (401). And like conquerors, they colonize her body and begin to display their macho strength. Women are a 'target' for men, a means of expressing their dominance over them. Senanayak's unheard word is where rape begins. She is, in fact, we-made up. Her nipples are torn, her breast chewed raw. What number? At four, five, six and seven, Draupadi had collapsed (401).

Society blatantly depicts the dehumanization of women by male authority. In our community, 'rapability' is a strange term since we consider a woman's physical body to be sacred and her 'inviolate body' to be the source of her dignity. It is not merely a coincidence that the protagonist of the aforementioned story, named 'Draupadi', is named after the historic Draupadi. Creating that section of the Mahabharata from a feminist perspective has been Devi's goal from the beginning. In the preface, Gayatri C. Spivak noted that the old Draupadi is possibly the most celebrated heroine of the Indian epic *Mahabharata*. According to Devi (1997) and (2010), the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* serve as the cultural resume of India's supposedly Aryan civilization. While Devi does not specifically name the tribe that the main character, Draupadi/Dopdi, is a member of, it is reasonable to presume that she is a 'Santal', which renders her vulnerable as a result of her caste and gender-based twofold denial.

British, like the previous race, colonized Indians and along with them, they brought their culture and so the Adivasi have to defend their own culture by defending the new intruders. Her stories, taken metaphorically, highlight the multiple and ongoing colonization that the Adivasi people are subjected to. Her attempt with this novel was to somewhat recreate the battle of her Adivasi people against all kinds of colonizers, from the ancient to the modern, from the English to the Aryans.

G.C. Spivak noted the deteriorating characteristics of women in relation to the oppression that the state armed forces in Myanmar inflict upon their people in an interview with Francis Wade. People are making every effort, even at the risk of their lives, to survive during this period of political unrest. The state constantly seeks to lessen these matters because it views them as burdens. Since they have learned to speak through their deaths, the fact that multiple lives have been sacrificed in response to Myanmar's political urgency shows how much dread and life loss influence these people. There are two ways to view this dying: internally and externally. A somewhat

incomprehensible voice is also brought about by the sacrifice of their rights and origins. Along with supporting the notion that the state, in its interpellation, may not always be able to silence the voices expressed through fatalities, these deaths also serve to reinforce the idea of liberation. As Spivak observes of Devi's protagonist Draupadi, who attempts to undermine and dismantle the state institutions mediated by hegemonic practices, it is crucial to remember that the subaltern speaks through dying (Spivak 399), to challenge these notions and elevate the voice of the voiceless, the author may be supporting and disseminating this message through her writing. Senanayak is an active agent of modern India, the officer currently tasked with stopping them. "He is Prospero as well" (Devi 394) is said to draw attention to him. This quote transports us to Prospero usurping Caliban's territory and enslaving him in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Similar to this, Senanayak attempted to colonize the Adivasi territories in this instance as a representative of the center. In his book *Post-Colonial Transformation*, Bill Ashcroft noted that Prospero and Miranda, as well as Prospero and Caliban, can be seen to provide endlessly adaptable models for the relationship between empire and settlers, or between colonizers and indigenous inhabitants. (Ashcroft 20). From Devi's *Draupadi* analysis, we may uncover multiple relationships between historical colonization events, such as Senanayak and Draupadi, and British and Indians. These relationships blur the lines between the ancient and modern, as well as between time and place. A crucial component of any colonized nation was the cultural exchange between the colonizer and the colonized, whether it be an

Adivasi Indian or a figure like Draupadi. What does resisting entail, then? The subtle and often even wordless forms of social and cultural resistance have been considerably more widespread; they are most fascinating since they are most difficult for imperial powers to defeat, according to Bill Ashcroft's commentary on it in his book *Post-colonial Transformation (2001)*. In the third chapter of the narrative, the soldiers begin to rape as a kind of punishment to both preserve their dominance and to reform when Senanayak gives them the order to "Do the needful" (Devi 401). The definition of 'rape' according to *Devi* (1997) is active pistons of flesh rise and fall, rise and fall over it (401). Perhaps they have abandoned her, was the description of Draupadi/Dopdi that made her lose hope when it became tinged with blood. She is not endowed with any celestial ability, unlike the *Mahabharata's* Draupadi, who was able to call someone at times and invoke the highest type of degradation a woman could experience. In that classic tale, Lord Krishna helps queen Draupadi by coming to her aid and mysteriously giving a Sari that the adversary is unable to open. It is a fact that women who experience such humiliations rarely receive outside assistance. They are mostly responsible for their own self-defense. That is where Devi's Draupadi differs. Invoking Senanayak as "the object of your search" (388), she gives her body to the highest authority within the relevant force. Her expression is one of resistance against colonizing power and its proxies. Draupadi says she does not feel ashamed of her nude appearance. As Sunder Rajan noted, to create the unsettling counter effects of shame, confusion, and terror in the enemy, it is simultaneously a deliberate rejection of a shared sign-system of about nakedness and rape and an ironic deployment of the same semiotics (Dutta 42). However, a woman is a "terrifying super object – an unarmed target"(Devi 388) in the fight against sexual assault by men.

She finds this difficulty perplexing because all colonizing forces undervalue the other: colonizers underestimate the colonized, patriarchy underestimates women, and masters underestimate slaves. When fighting the monarch, Devi's heroine enjoys using her body as a weapon, or 'kounter'. For the first time Senanayak is afraid to stand before an unarmed target, terribly afraid (Devi 402) said of the woman who changed from an unadorned colonized object to a thruster capable of instilling dread in the decision-makers in the center. With the amazing denouement and perceptive storyline, the author establishes a formidable position of authority.

Conclusion

The best way to portray any harsh or painful subject involving humans in a positive light, literature excels. In reality, subalterns are from the 'fourth world', which is the most impoverished region in the cosmos. It is evident from extensive and in-depth research on how women are portrayed in literature, particularly in Indian English literature, that while women's status and representation are changing on their own, they are still not re-presented in every aspect of society or culture. Even though they are subtly facing the same obvious and invisible challenges, their financial freedom and security through education enable them to overcome any obstacle. In actuality, they are confined questionably while still enjoying freedom. Even now, despite their prestige and status, they remain trapped in a state of misery and drudgery. A major problem and one of the more advanced types of apartheid that a civilization may eradicate is discrimination based on a person's sex, vanquish primitive forms of apartheid in a

civilization.

The condition of women in the human race is illustrated in the following verse. They are getting colonized, and the amount of subjugation is developing from age to age.

In the Satya Yuga Renuka was Kritya,

In the Treta Yuga Sita was Kritya,

In the Dwaparyuga Draupadi was Kritya

And in Kalyugas there are Krityas in every house (Sinha 4).

We would like to discuss how both Divakaruni and Devi have rewritten and re-presented a feminine character, Draupadi, in various settings and eras before wrapping up this paper. In addition to being denial, the two pieces listed above are also palimpsests. They investigate the actual issues that ancient women faced and dispel the myth of what it meant to be a 'woman', as well as the ambiguous perception of their place in the patriarchal society. By their eccentricities, the writers served as representatives of the modern feminine and modern realities. Subordinates lack a voice and are incapable of speaking, according to Spivak's essay, though it is incorrect. However, this document does not imply that s/he lacks authority or voice. It doesn't imply that s/he lacks authority or voice, as this paper's descriptions and analysis made clear. Draupadi accepts Kali, in contrast to Sita and Renuka, saying, "My honor does not lie in between my legs" (Devi 402). Finally, we would want to emphasize the following: rewriting a story or redeveloping a character does not entail the addition of a voice or a character; rather, it entails modifying the rhythm of the same colonizing circumstance and highlighting its ridiculousness. Women can be represented as agents since Draupadi "looks like a victim but acts like an agent" (Mishri 608). Her voice is described as "terrifying, sky-splitting, and sharp as her ululation" (Devi 402).

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank the researcher and scholars who worked in different fields related to this paper, and their papers played a vital role in making this paper.

Disclosure statement

The authors have not pointed out any potential conflict of interest.

References

Aristotle. *Poetics*. London: Penguin Publication (1984). Print.

Aristotle. "The politics……. on Slavery." www.wright.edu. Web. Accessed on 12 Jan, 2024.
   http://www.wright.edu/~christopher.oldstone-moore/Aristotleslavery.htm .

Arroyo, Ana G. "A Deconstruction of the Mahabharata: when Draupadi Writes Back". *Miscelánea: A Journal of English and American Studies (2017)*. 13-29. Print.

Ashcroft, B. *Post-Colonial Transformation*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001. Print.

Bhaktivedanta, A.C. *Bhagavad Gita, As It Is (*2nd Edition). Mumbai, India: The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 2006. Print.

BhAumik, S. "India probes tribal woman forced to walk naked". *BBC News Calcutta*. 2017. Web. Accessed July 5. < http://www.bbc.com/news/world- south-asia-10938729>

Bhawalkar, V. *Eminent Women in the Mahabharata*. New Delhi: Sharada Publishing, 2002. Print.

Beauvior, S. D. *The Second Sex*. Random House, 2014. Print.

Black, B. "*Eavesdropping on the Epic: Female Listeners in the Mahabharata"*. In E. S. Black:

Gender and Narrative in the Mahabharata. London: Routledge, 2007. 53-78. Print.

Brook, P. *The Mahabharata*. USA, UK, France: Channel Four Television Co. The Brooklyn

Academy of Music, Mahabharata Ltd, 1989. Print.

Butler, J. *Gender Trouble*. London: Routledge, 1990. Print.

Chakrabarty, B. *Left Radicalism in India*. London and New York: Routledge, 2015. Print.

Chakravarti, U. *Gendering Caste: Through a Feminist Lens*. Calcutta: Mandira Sen for Street, 2003. Print.

Chauddhary, P. "Frailty! Thy Name is Not Woman' with reference of Draupadi". *BBSSES* 5.3 (2014). Print.

Chauhan, A. *Tribal Women and Social Change in India*. New Delhi: Aditya Publishers, 1990. Print.

Das, S. "Vyasa's: Draupadi: A Feminist Presentation". *International Journal of Gender and Women's Studies*. 2.2 (2014): 223-231.Print.

Devi, M. *Breast Stories.* Translated by G.C Spivak. Calcutta: Seagull Books, 1997. Print.

Divakaruni, C. B. *The Palace of Illusions*. New York: Random House, 2008. Print.

Diesel, A. "Tales of Women's suffering: Draupadi and other Amman Goddesses as Role Models for Women". *Journal of Contemporary Religion*. 7.1 (2002): 5-20. Web. DOI: 10.1080/1353790012098138.

Doniger, W. *Kamasutra: Oxford World's Classics*. Oxford University Press, 2003. Print.

Dutta, B. C. (2019). "Questioning Subalternity: Re-reading Mahasweta Devi's Draupadi". *Quest Journals Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*. 7.2 (2019): 41-43. Print.

Ganguli K M. *The Mahabharata of Vyasa*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1990. Print.

Haj-Yahia, M. M. "On the Characteristics of Patriarchal Societies, Gender Inequality, and *Wife Abuse: The Case of Palestinian Society"*. Adalah's Newsletter. 2005:1-3. Print.

Kalpana, M. "From Silence to Supremacy: A Subaltern Critique of Anitha Nair's Ladies Coupe". *Shanlax International Journal of English*. 6.S1 (2018):79-83. Print.

keAy, J. *India: A History*. London: HarperCollins, 2000. Print.

MARTIN, M. KAY, and BARBARA VOORHIES. *Female of the Species*. Columbia University Press, 1975. *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.7312/mart03875. Accessed 16 Feb. 2024.

Mankekar, P. "Television Tales and Women's Rage: A Nationalist Recasting of Draupadi's disrobing". *Public Culture*. 5.3 (1993): 469-492. Print.

Mishri, D. "Are You a Man? : Performing Naked Protest in India". *Signs*. 36.3 (2011): 603-625. Print.

Morris, P. *Feminism and Literature*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995. Print.

Nabar, V & Shanta T. *Bhagavad Gita (Wordsworth Classics)*. Wordsworth Editions Ltd: Ware, Hertfordshire, 1997. Print.

Narayan, R. *The Indian Epics Retold*. Viking: Penguin Books India, 1995. Print.

Narayan, R. *The Mahabharata*. London: Vision Books, 1978. Print.

Narayan, R. Review: The Palace of Illusions. *Hindustan Times* 13 April 2008, 12-13. Print.

Neelakantan, A. *Short Notes-Polyandry in Ancient India*. Google Books: Leadstart Publishing Pvt. Ltd, 2013. Print.

O'Flaherty, W. D. *Textual Sources for the Study of Hinduism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988. Print.

Pattanaik, D. *The Common Wife Jaya: An Illustrated Retelling of the Mahabharata*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2010. Print.

Pillai, P.K N. *Sambhava Parva*. Bharatham Pattu: National Book Stall, 1988. Print.

Puri, D. S. (2015, August). "Replication of the Cultural Scripts in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions"*. *Contemporary Literary Review India* 2(3) 2015:1-5. Print.

Rajagopalachari, C. *Mahabharata*. New Delhi: Auromene Publishers, 1979. Print.

Ruth, S. *Issues in Feminism*. Boston: Houghton Miffin Company, 1990. Print.

Sen, B. *Role of Women in Indian Society*. Delhi: Better Books Panchkula, 2007. Print.

Sharma, S. "Subverting Hegemonic Patriarchal Discourses: A Study of Mahasweta Devi's Draupadi". *International Journal of English Language, Literature*. 2.3 (2015):158-162. Print.

Singh, S D. *Polyandry in Ancient India*. New Delhi: Vikas, 1978. Print.

Sinha, K. "Deconstructing Patriarchal Structures in Mahasweta Devi's *Draupadi"*. *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*. 4.5 (2016):1-4. Print.

Spivak, G. *In Other Worlds*. London and New York: Routledge, 1987. Print.

Spivak, G C. "Mahasveta Devi Draupadi. Translation.' Critical Inquiry". *Writing and Sexual Difference*. 8.2 (1981):381-402. Print.

Tyson, L. *Critical Theory Today*. New York: Routledge, 2006. Print.

ZupAncic, M. "Ethics of Wisdom and Compassion in the Novels by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni". *Asian Studies*. I. XVII (2013): 105-117. Print.