Role and the Untold Stories of the Women in Power in the Epic Mahabharata

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Abstract:

This paper provides an overview of existing research papers analysing "Palace of Illusions" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. It highlights key findings and contributions of these studies, which explore various aspects of the novel, including its feminist perspective, narrative techniques, cultural representation, and character analysis. Through close textual analysis and theoretical frameworks such as feminism, postcolonialism, and psychology, scholars investigate how Divakaruni reimagines traditional mythology, crafts her narrative, navigates cultural complexities, and portrays the character of Draupadi. The paper concludes by suggesting avenues for further research to deepen our understanding of this captivating work and its significance within Indian literature, feminism, and postcolonial discourse.

Keywords: Feminism, Mahabharata, Draupadi

1. Introduction

As one of the greatest epics in Hindu mythology, the Mahabharata tells stories of gods, soldiers, and kings, but it also contains a wealth of narratives that highlight women, who are frequently marginalized. It is thought that this vast epic was written between 400 BCE and 400 CE. It skillfully tells the stories of women, highlighting their tenacity, resiliency, sacrifices, and difficulties amid the complex sociopolitical context of ancient India. With its convoluted story, extensive mythology, and profound philosophical ideas, the Mahabharata, an ancient Indian epic of unmatched depth and complexity, has enthralled audiences for ages. Draupadi, a lady whose story develops amid the turbulent events of a world torn by war, power conflicts, and divine intervention, is the central figure of this epic. In the context of ancient India's patriarchal society, Draupadi must negotiate the complexities of her responsibilities as a daughter, wife, queen, and mother. Her story is one of moral complexity, agency, and endurance.As writers, academics, and artists attempt to delve into the murky corners of Draupadi's story and examine the intricacies of her persona, interest in the character has surged in recent years. Two modern retellings of the Mahabharata—"Palace of Illusions" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and "Panchali's Pledge" by Subramania Bharati—are at the center of this investigation. Readers might gain a new understanding of Draupadi's story from these novels, which retell her story and character in ways that go against conventional wisdom and highlight her importance in the epic tale.The examination of Draupadi's story in "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge" provides a framework for looking at other major topics and motifs found in the Mahabharata, such as the nature of divinity, gender dynamics, power dynamics, and moral quandaries. We can better understand the intricacies of prehistoric Indian civilization and the epic's continuing significance in modern culture by seeing through Draupadi's persona.This introduction

lays the groundwork for an in-depth examination of the Mahabharata's account of Draupadi and the inventive ways that Divakaruni and Bharati repeat her tale. We will dig into the subtleties of Draupadi's character, her hardships, and her significance in the epic story through a thorough analysis of their writings. We will also look at the Mahabharata's more general themes and motifs and how Draupadi's story has endured in the minds and hearts of readers throughout history.A rare chance to delve into the depths of the Mahabharata, reveal hidden truths, question conventional wisdom, and consider the epic's continuing relevance in today's world is presented by the examination of Draupadi's story in "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge." Our goal in conducting this analysis is to provide fresh insight into the persona of Draupadi, her role in the epic story, and the larger ideas and motifs that have persisted in readers' minds throughout history and society.

2. Women in the Mahabharata

Draupadi: The wife of the Pandavas, Draupadi is one of the most famous characters in the epic because of her beauty, wisdom, and unflinching bravery. But a lot of difficulties and injustices are woven throughout her life like a tapestry. Although at first her marriage to five husbands was a source of strength, it quickly revealed her weaknesses, resulting in arguments and humiliations. Kunti: The mother of the Pandavas, Kunti's story is a tale of hardships characterized by moral dilemmas and abandonment. Her choice to ask for divine favors and have children with gods like as Surya, Indra, and Vayu not only demonstrates her inventiveness but also puts her in the crosshairs of society and moral quandaries.

Gandhari: The wife of King Dhritarashtra, blindfolded from birth, is a symbol of strength and dignity. Her life is marked by tragedy and suffering, particularly after losing her hundred boys in the Kurukshetra war, even if her decision to reveal her husband's blindness is a noble and altruistic act.

Satyavati: From modest beginnings to great fame, Satyavati's tale captures the complexity of ambition and power in ancient India. Though her desires sow the seeds of discord and ultimately result in disastrous results for her progeny, her strategic maneuvering assures the succession of the Kuru dynasty.

The way women are portrayed in the Mahabharata is a reflection of the social mores and limitations that were common in ancient India. In spite of their extraordinary traits and contributions, women in the epic face many difficulties and injustices:

Patriarchal Oppression: Women's autonomy and agency are restricted when patriarchal structures marginalize and subjugate them. The vulnerability that women face in countries where men predominate is highlighted by Draupadi's disrobing and Gandhari's anguish over her sons' deaths.

Marital Discord: Conflicts between spouses and siblings arise from polygamous marriages and familial rivalries. The difficulties faced by women in negotiating familial duties are shown by Draupadi's connection with the Pandavas and Kunti's hardships.

Social Stigma: Women who don't conform to society norms risk being shunned by their peers. Conservative parts of society take issue with Satyavati's lowly beginnings and Kunti's choices.

Emotional Chaos: Women experience a great deal of emotional distress as a result of war, loss, and betrayal. The psychological effects of violence and strife are emphasized by Gandhari's sorrow and Draupadi's suffering.

The Mahabharata presents a complex picture of women, emphasizing their resiliency, weaknesses, and capabilities. The epic provides insight into the nuances of gender, power, and morality in ancient India

through characters like Draupadi, Kunti, Gandhari, and Satyavati. It is a timeless monument to the legacy of women who, in the face of historical upheaval, defied expectations and established their own paths in life. The Mahabharata's mysterious and complex heroine, Draupadi, has captivated writers' and poets' attention for centuries with her portrayal. Two different perspectives of Draupadi's character are presented in "Palace of Illusions" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and "Panchali's Pledge" by SubramaniaBharati. Each interpretation has its own subtleties, viewpoints, and insights into Draupadi's struggles and roles within the epic literature. Examining the characterization, difficulties, and contributions to the Mahabharata narrative, this comparative analysis explores the parallels and divergences between the portrayals of Draupadi in these two masterpieces.

3. Characterisation of Draupadi

Divakaruni portrays Draupadi as a multifaceted and lively heroine in "Palace of Illusions," with her own voice serving as the narrative's protagonist. Draupadi's portrayal is notable for her emotional depth, resiliency, and intelligence. Divakaruni paints a realistic and vivid picture of Draupadi, emphasizing her flaws, vulnerabilities, and inner conflicts—from her turbulent birth to her fiery personality and unshakable devotion to the Pandavas. A more contemplative and poetic examination of Draupadi's personality may be found in Bharati's "Panchali's Pledge". Bharati's poetic prose presents Draupadi as a woman full of courage, dignity, and fight against injustice. Bharati explores the deepest recesses of Draupadi's mind and heart, lyrically expressing her inner anguish, desires, and tribulations.

As she struggles with the weight of her fate and the injustices visited upon her, Draupadi's portrayal in "Panchali's Pledge" is filled with a feeling of tragic grandeur. "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge" both paint a realistic picture of the many hardships and obstacles that Draupadi encountered in her lifetime. Adversity, treachery, and sacrifice characterize Draupadi's path, which includes her swayamvara, her marriage to the Pandavas, and her humiliation in the Hastinapuracourt.Divakaruni portrays Draupadi's battle to balance her personal desires with her responsibilities as a queen and wife in "Palace of Illusions," delving into her deepest anxieties and worries. Draupadi has a complicated and tense relationship with the Pandavas as she negotiates the challenges of a polygamous marriage and intergenerational rivalry. In Divakaruni, Draupadi faces the hard facts of her life and struggles with sentiments of betrayal, desire, and hatred.Bharatihighlights Draupadi's steadfast determination and moral rectitude in the face of hardship in "Panchali's Pledge." In Bharati's story, Draupadi's vow to get revenge on her oppressors emerges as a key theme, representing her defiance and will to protect justice. It becomes clear that Bharati'sDraupadi is a sad character whose unwavering quest of morality finally brings her to ruin. Bharati emphasizes the enduring strength of moral character and the catastrophic results of arrogance and retaliation via the trials and sacrifices made by Draupadi. With their depictions of Draupadi as a pivotal character whose choices and deeds determine the path of fate, "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge" both provide original insights into her roles within the Mahabharata story. Through her bravery and disobedience, Draupadi breaks customs and defies society expectations in "Palace of Illusions," emerging as a catalyst for change. In spite of hardship, Divakaruni'sDraupadi affirms her agency and individuality, transcending her status as a helpless victim.Draupadi represents the archetype of the tragic heroine in "Panchali's Pledge," whose destiny is inextricably tied to that of her family and realm. Bharati'sDraupadi is a moral compass that helps her husbands and allies navigate the perilous seas of moral ambiguity and political intrigue. Draupadi continues to follow the values of justice and dharma in spite of her hardships and disappointments, serving as an inspiration to others.

In "Palace of Illusions," Draupadi's Agency and Empowerment:In "Palace of Illusions," Divakaruni depicts Draupadi as a complex figure with agency and self-governance in addressing her situation. Draupadi demonstrates agency via her deeds, decisions, and connections throughout her life, from her early years in Panchala to her marriage to the Pandavas and beyond. The fact that Draupadi defies social conventions and expectations in "Palace of Illusions" is a noteworthy example of her agency. Even though Draupadi was raised in a patriarchal culture where women's responsibilities and conduct are prescribed, she defies these expectations.

Instead, she uses her words and actions to speak up against patriarchal authority and declare her independence.In her relationships, especially with the Pandavas, Draupadi's agency is also clear. Draupadi, who has been married five times, doesn't let her marital status define her. She still remains unique. She demands respect, loyalty, and love in return from each of her husbands, treating them equally. As a tactician and counselor to the Pandavas, Draupadi further exemplifies her agency.

In addition to giving her husbands advice and influencing their choices, she actively engages in political discourse. The quest for justice and retribution is one aspect of Draupadi's agency. Draupadi fights back against silence and submission in the face of injustice and humiliation in the Hastinapura court. Rather of avoiding her oppressors, she confronts them, demands an explanation, and wants revenge for the wrongs done to her. The book "Palace of Illusions" demonstrates Draupadi's agency and empowerment via her unrelenting commitment to uphold her honor and dignity in the face of hardship. The Empowerment and Agency of Draupadi in "Panchali's Pledge":Bharati portrays Draupadi as a representation of moral bravery and justifiable outrage in "Panchali's Pledge." Bharati's poetic prose presents Draupadi as a personification of fortitude, resiliency, and unflinching resolution. Draupadi's unwavering dedication to justice and righteousness is one of the main facets of her agency in "Panchali's Pledge." Draupadi is unwavering in her pursuit of justice and the truth despite countless obstacles and betrayals. Even in her lowest points, she never wavers from her moral convictions or gives in to hopelessness.The fact that Draupadi disobeyed social mores and customs is another example of her agency. Draupadi opposes patriarchal authority and calls into question the validity of caste, gender, and status-based societal systems throughout "Panchali's Pledge." Instead of accepting her fate as a helpless victim or submissive wife, she takes action to claim her identity and agency as a unique person with inherent rights and dignity. Draupadi's interactions with other characters in the book show her independence. Draupadi is humane, empathetic, and compassionate in spite of the injustices and betrayals she encounters. With her friends, allies, and family, she develops strong emotional ties and provides them with support, direction, and consolation when they are in need.In her capacity as a force for transformation and change, Draupadi embodies agency. Her actions and words encourage others to oppose injustice, think critically about the present quo, and work toward a society that is more just and equal.For everyone in her path, Draupadi's unflinching dedication to justice, truth, and righteousness is an inspiration and source of hope.

4. Comparison of Draupadi's Agency and Empowerment in Both Novels

There are significant variations in how Draupadi's agency is portrayed in "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge," despite the fact that both books present Draupadi as a powerful and independent woman. In "Palace of Illusions," Draupadi's agency is demonstrated by her pursuit of justice and vengeance, her active participation with the world around her, and her violation of social norms. She confronts patriarchal power, stands up for her individuality and autonomy, and handles her situation

bravely and tenaciously. On the other hand, Draupadi's moral bravery, honesty, and steadfast devotion to morality are highlighted in "Panchali's Pledge." Her agency is demonstrated by her dedication to moral beliefs and her reluctance to compromise her integrity or values, even though she faces comparable difficulties and injustices. Upholding moral principles and universal truths is more important to Draupadi's agency in "Panchali's Pledge" than it is about empowering the individual.

Mahabharata's mysterious and complex heroine, Draupadi, has captivated writers' and poets' attention for centuries with her portrayal. Two different perspectives of Draupadi's character are presented in "Palace of Illusions" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and "Panchali's Pledge" by SubramaniaBharati. Each interpretation has its own subtleties, viewpoints, and insights into Draupadi's struggles and roles within the epic literature. Examining the characterization, difficulties, and contributions to the Mahabharata narrative, this comparative analysis explores the parallels and divergences between the portrayals of Draupadi in these two masterpieces.

Draupadi's character development: Divakaruni introduces Draupadi as a multifaceted and lively figure in "Palace of Illusions," telling her story in her own words. Draupadi's portrayal is notable for her emotional depth, resiliency, and intelligence. Divakaruni paints a realistic and vivid picture of Draupadi, emphasizing her flaws, vulnerabilities, and inner conflicts—from her turbulent birth to her fiery personality and unshakable devotion to the Pandavas.Bharati, on the other hand, explores Draupadi's character in greater poetic and introspective detail in "Panchali's Pledge". Bharati's poetic prose presents Draupadi as a woman full of courage, dignity, and fight against injustice. Bharati explores the deepest recesses of Draupadi's mind and heart, lyrically expressing her inner anguish, desires, and tribulations. As she struggles with the weight of her fate and the injustices visited upon her, Draupadi's portrayal in "Panchali's Pledge" is filled with a feeling of tragic grandeur.

Trials and Challenges Faced by Draupadi: "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge" both eloquently portray the numerous trials and difficulties Draupadi encountered during her life. Draupadi's path is characterized by hardship, treachery, and sacrifice, from her swayamvara and subsequent marriage to the Pandavas to her humiliation in the court of Hastinapura.

Divakaruni portrays Draupadi's battle to balance her personal desires with her responsibilities as a queen and wife in "Palace of Illusions," delving into her deepest anxieties and worries. Draupadi has a complicated and tense relationship with the Pandavas as she negotiates the challenges of a polygamous marriage and intergenerational rivalry.

In Divakaruni, Draupadi faces the hard facts of her life and struggles with sentiments of betrayal, desire, and hatred.Bharati highlights Draupadi's steadfast determination and moral rectitude in the face of hardship in "Panchali's Pledge." In Bharati's story, Draupadi's vow to get revenge on her oppressors emerges as a key theme, representing her defiance and will to protect justice.

Bharati'sDraupadi comes out as a sad character, one whose unwavering quest of morality finally brings about her demise. Bharati emphasizes the catastrophic results of arrogance and retaliation, as well as the enduring strength of moral courage, via the trials and sacrifices made by Draupadi.

5. Roles within the Mahabharata Narrative

The Mahabharata story features Draupadi as a pivotal character whose choices and actions determine the path of events, and "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge" both provide original insights into her roles in the story. As a force for change in "Palace of Illusions," Draupadi disobeys social norms and customs by being brave and defiant. By exerting her agency and autonomy in the face of misfortune,

Divakaruni'sDraupadi goes beyond her status as a passive victim.In "Panchali's Pledge," Draupadi personifies the ideal of the tragic heroine, whose destiny is inextricably bound up with that of her family and her homeland. As a moral compass, Bharati'sDraupadi helps her husbands and supporters navigate the perilous seas of moral ambiguity and political intrigue. Draupadi continues to follow the values of justice and dharma in spite of her hardships and disappointments, serving as an inspiration to others. A comparison between the ways that Draupadi is portrayed in "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge" illustrates the intricate details of her struggles and roles in the Mahabharata story. The tragic grandeur of a heroine who fights fate and destiny is embodied by Bharati'sDraupadi, while Divakaruni'sDraupadi is distinguished by her emotional depth and resilience. Readers can gain a fuller understanding of Draupadi's lasting legacy and her eternal relevance as a symbol of strength, courage, and resilience in the face of hardship from Divakaruni and Bharati's subtle and perceptive interpretations.

In both Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "Palace of Illusions" and SubramaniaBharati's "Panchali's Pledge," Draupadi's pledge—a crucial point in the Mahabharata story—serves as a potent emblem of her tenacity, resolve, and pursuit of justice. This essay explores how Draupadi's pledge reflects her character, morals, and the overall themes of the Mahabharata, delving into the symbolism and relevance of the vow in both novels.Speaking in the midst of shame and hopelessness, Draupadi made a vow that symbolizes her unwavering dedication to pursuing justice and preserving her honor. Draupadi's vow in "Palace of Illusions" is a rebellious reaction to the injustice she endured at the hands of the Hastinapura court. Draupadi invokes her identity, her heritage, and her resolve to make her wrongdoers responsible for their deeds as she stands before her captors, devoid of both dignity and agency. As a symbol of her refusal to accept oppression and her determination to fight for her rights and dignity, she has vowed to tie her hair only when it has been drenched in the blood of her oppressors.

Similar to this, in "Panchali's Pledge," Draupadi's vow affirms her moral bravery and honesty. Draupadi defies hopelessness and resentment in the face of betrayal and treachery. She instead promises to exact revenge on those who have harmed her and reiterates her dedication to justice, truth, and righteousness. She uses her vow to spur others to action in the struggle against oppression and tyranny by using it as a rallying cry for justice.Draupadi's commitment has greater symbolic meaning that touches on issues of justice, authority, and the human condition in addition to the specific character.

The fight of the poor and downtrodden against the powers of tyranny and injustice is symbolized by Draupadi's vow. It represents the unbreakable spirit of rebellion and resistance that the wealthy and powerful cannot quell or stifle. As a reminder to individuals who have been wronged that their voices matter and that justice is something worth fighting for, Draupadi's vow becomes a source of inspiration and hope.Draupadi's vow serves as a metaphor for the transformational force of just rage and outrage.

In all of the books, Draupadi's vow is the result of intense fury at the wrongs done to her and her family. It's an instinctive reaction to the way her rights and dignity were violated; it's a primitive cry of protest against the powers that be. Draupadi's vow acts as a trigger, setting off a series of events that ultimately bring her oppressors to the ground and restore justice.In the quest for justice and emancipation, Draupadi's vow represents the interdependence of personal initiative and group efforts.

As Draupadi makes her vow in "Palace of Illusions," her husbands and allies are motivated to fight alongside her against their shared foes. Her promise in "Panchali's Pledge" inspires the downtrodden masses to rebel against their oppressors and seek their rights and dignity. As diverse voices and communities come together to fight for justice and liberation, Draupadi's vow serves as a call to action for resistance and solidarity.The symbolism of Draupadi's vow in "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's

Pledge" highlights its importance as a potent representation of tenacity, grit, and the pursuit of justice. The commitment made by Draupadi symbolizes the unwavering spirit of defiance and resistance that will not be silenced or weakened by the forces of injustice and tyranny.

Encouraging people and communities to unite in the struggle against injustice and oppression, it embodies the transforming potential of righteous wrath and indignation. A timeless lesson on the value of battling for justice and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of overwhelming adversity is found in Draupadi's commitment. Throughout literary history, different interpretations have been made of the portrayal of Draupadi, the main female character in the Mahabharata, who is a complex and multifaceted figure. Two separate perspectives of Draupadi's character—one by SubramaniaBharati's "Panchali's Pledge" and the other by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "Palace of Illusions"—each showcasing unique facets of her complexity, weaknesses, and strengths.Divakaruni offers a complex portrayal of Draupadi in "Palace of Illusions," emphasizing her intelligence, fortitude, and unflinching resolve. From her early years in Panchala until her union with the Pandavas, Draupadi shows herself to be a woman of agency and autonomy who isn't scared to question patriarchal expectations and stand up for who she is.

Draupadi's vulnerabilities and insecurities beneath her exterior of strength and confidence are exposed by Divakaruni, who digs into her deepest feelings and thoughts. The complex dynamics of polygamous marriage and family relationships are reflected in Draupadi's connection with the Pandavas, which is marked by a mixture of love, loyalty, and strife. Draupadi is adamant about pursuing justice and righteousness and is prepared to maintain her honor and dignity at all costs, even in the face of many obstacles and betrayals.Bharati's depiction of Draupadi in "Panchali's Pledge" highlights her moral fortitude, honesty, and steadfast devotion to justice. Draupadi is presented by Bharati's poetic prose as a figure of tenacity and resistance to injustice. Draupadi's inner anguish and difficulties with identity and purpose are revealed when Bharati delves into her innermost thoughts and feelings.There are times of struggle and strain in Draupadi's relationship with the Pandavas, but there is also mutual respect and affection.Draupadi doesn't compromise her integrity or give up hope in the face of injustices and betrayals; instead, she stays loyal to her beliefs and ideals.It's important to consider Draupadi's character complexity, weaknesses, and strengths in light of both readings of her portrayal. In Divakaruni's portrayal, Draupadi is a strong, independent woman who bravely and resolutely challenges patriarchal conventions and society expectations. Her flaws and fears give her character depth and let readers identify with and empathize with her.

Alternatively, Bharati'sDraupadi is portrayed as a symbol of moral strength and integrity, whose unshakable dedication to righteousness acts as a lighthouse of inspiration and hope for others. Her personal difficulties and dilemmas in the search of justice and truth are brought to light by her struggles with identity and purpose. The ways in which Draupadi is portrayed in "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge" provide subtle and perceptive depictions of a person who is both multidimensional and complex. Bharati'sDraupadi displays moral fortitude, integrity, and a steadfast dedication to righteousness, while Divakaruni'sDraupadi is distinguished by her intelligence, resilience, and willingness to challenge patriarchal standards. Each of the two readings draws attention to distinct facets of Draupadi's virtues, frailties, and complexity, deepening our comprehension of the woman and her ongoing relevance in Indian literature. By rewriting the epic from the perspective of Draupadi, one of its main female characters, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "Palace of Illusions" offers readers a fresh perspective on the events of the Mahabharata. The epic has traditionally been dominated by male

perspectives, with Draupadi frequently reduced to the role of a passive victim or pawn in the power struggles of men. This retelling is significant for several reasons, as it reshapes the narrative, challenges preexisting interpretations, and amplifies the voices of women in the epic.

Divakaruni, on the other hand, retells the story with an emphasis on Draupadi's experiences, feelings, and agency, providing readers with a deeper understanding of her character and inner life.The way "Palace of Illusions" humanizes Draupadi and gives her agency in her own tale is one of the main ways it rewrites the story. Draupadi is shown as a dynamic, complex character who is capable of love, rage, and resistance rather than as a helpless victim of fate. Divakaruni explores Draupadi's innermost feelings and ideas, exposing her passions, fears, and driving forces. Readers are given a greater appreciation for Draupadi's hardships, her selfless dedication to justice and righteousness, and her sacrifices through her perspective.

"Palace of Illusions" offers an alternative reading of the Mahabharata, challenging conventional wisdom on important incidents and figures. Divakaruni reworks well-known passages from the epic, shedding new light on them and challenging readers to reevaluate their preconceptions of the characters and their intentions. Readers can relate to Draupadi's experiences and understand these events through her eyes because, for instance, her swayamvara, marriage to the Pandavas, and humiliation in the Hastinapura court are all told from her perspective."Palace of Illusions" not only changes the storyline but also adds more voice and viewpoint to the ladies in the epic, allowing them to share their ideas and opinions.

In Divakaruni, the stories of other women from the Mahabharata, including Kunti, Gandhari, and Hidimba, are also explored, making Draupadi not the only prominent female figure in the book. Divakaruni challenges the male-centric paradigm that has dominated interpretations of the Mahabharata for millennia by giving voice to these women and highlighting their agency, resilience, and contributions to the epic.ThroughDraupadi's perspective, "Palace of Illusions" presents a feminist retelling of the Mahabharata, examining themes of gender, power, and identity. The methods in which Draupadi and other female characters defy social restraints and negotiate patriarchal norms and expectations are highlighted in Divakaruni. Readers are urged to consider the place of women in ancient Indian society and the manner in which their voices have been suppressed and ignored by examining Draupadi's challenges and victories.

6. Narrative Techniques and Perspectives in "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge"

The reader's perception of a story and its characters is greatly influenced by the narrative devices and points of view employed. These components are used to highlight the struggles and experiences of Draupadi, the main character of the Mahabharata, in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's "Palace of Illusions" and SubramaniaBharati's "Panchali's Pledge." In order to examine how the authors employ storytelling tactics to depict Draupadi's character and her journey, this research examines the narrative approaches and perspectives employed in the two novels.In "Palace of Illusions," Divakaruni uses a first-person narrative viewpoint, letting Draupadi tell her own tale and communicate her innermost feelings and ideas to the reader.

Through this literary method, readers are able to better understand Draupadi's point of view and develop a deeper empathy for her circumstances. Divakaruni humanizes Draupadi's character by using her voice to show her as a complicated, multifaceted person with dreams, fears, and wants. Through Draupadi's narration, readers can also experience the Mahabharata's events from her perspective, gaining a new insight into well-known moments and personalities.The narrative perspective of "Panchali's Pledge," on

the other hand, is third-person omniscient, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the plot and its characters. Bharati is able to explore the motivations and inner thoughts of several characters by using this storytelling method, which gives readers a deeper comprehension of the Mahabharata story.

The plot revolves around Draupadi, but Bharati is able to delve into the thoughts and experiences of other characters, including Kunti, Gandhari, and the Pandavas, thanks to the third-person viewpoint. Bharati crafts a vibrant and energetic story that effectively conveys the intricacies of the epic by alternating between several points of view.In order to give Draupadi's character and the events of the Mahabharata context and backdrop, both books use flashback as a literary device. In Divakaruni's "Palace of Illusions," she uses flashbacks to describe Draupadi's upbringing in Panchala, her swayamvara, and her union with the Pandavas. These flashbacks include information on Draupadi's early life, her ties with her family, and her opinions of the Pandavas.

Parallel to this, Bharati employs flashbacks in "Panchali's Pledge" to examine Draupadi's early years, marriage to the Pandavas, and place of birth. The reader's comprehension of Draupadi's personality, motivations, and the occasions that determine her fate is enhanced by these flashbacks.The use of imagery and symbolism to create mood and atmosphere is another storytelling device used in both books. Divakaruni uses rich and evocative descriptions of palaces, landscapes, and courtly ceremonies in "Palace of Illusions," bringing the culture of ancient India to life through intense imagery. By employing symbols like fire, water, and the elements to highlight Draupadi's internal problems and struggles, Divakaruni delves into themes of identity, power, and destiny.

Similarly, Bharati uses imagery in "Panchali's Pledge" to evoke a feeling of location and time by fusing human emotion, architecture, and natural landscapes. This helps the reader visualize the world of the Mahabharata. Bharati uses symbols like the moon, stars, and skies to illustrate the transcendent beauty and complexity of Draupadi's character and the epic. Bharati uses symbolism to explore themes of love, responsibility, and sacrifice.In order to shed light on Draupadi's experiences and difficulties in the Mahabharata, "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge" both use narrative approaches and perspectives. Readers can relate to Draupadi's character personally thanks to Divakaruni's first-person narrative viewpoint, while Bharati's third-person omniscient perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of the epic and its characters. Both authors provide readers with a deeper comprehension of Draupadi's character and the intricacies of her journey by employing flashback, symbolism, and imagery. This results in rich and dynamic narratives that linger with readers long after the last page.Throughout history, the ancient Indian epic Mahabharata has been presented and reinterpreted innumerable times, with each rendition presenting fresh interpretations and insights on its characters and themes. Two such reimaginings that center on Draupadi, one of the epic's main female characters, are "Palace of Illusions" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and "Panchali's Pledge" by SubramaniaBharati. This examination looks at the innovative methods used by Divakaruni and Bharati to retell the story of Draupadi and how they add fresh viewpoints and insights to the Mahabharata saga.With its audacious and inventive recounting of Draupadi's tragedy, Divakaruni's "Palace of Illusions" gives readers a new insight into the Mahabharata's events.

Divakaruni gives Draupadi agency in her own story and humanizes her by putting her point of view at the center of the narrative. Readers get insight into Draupadi's motivations, feelings, and ideas by experiencing the epic's pivotal moments via her voice. Offering fresh perspectives on their interactions and dynamics, Divakaruni delves into Draupadi's relationships with other characters in the Mahabharata, including her rival Duryodhana and her husbands, the Pandavas. Moreover, Divakaruni infuses the story

with magical and mystical themes while reinterpreting well-known epic scenes in a bizarre and imaginative manner. By using these imaginative techniques, Divakaruni gives the Draupadi story fresh vitality and encourages readers to reevaluate their preconceptions of the heroine and see her in a different light. The Mahabharata is retold in a more conventional manner in Bharati's "Panchali's Pledge," which emphasizes Draupadi's moral bravery and integrity as she works her way through the intricate plot of the epic. Readers are whisked away to ancient India through Bharati's poetic narrative, where duty, honor, and destiny converge in a bloody struggle for dominance and righteousness. Bharati'sdepiction of Draupadi highlights her tenacity and will in the face of hardship, as well as her unshakable dedication to justice and morality. Bharati presents Draupadi's story in a more grounded and realistic manner than Divakaruni, who adds fantastical and magical components to the story. Bharati maintains faithful to the original source material.

Bharati, however, also adds his own distinct viewpoint to the Mahabharata story, imbuing it with themes of spiritual enlightenment, love, and compassion. Bharati provides readers with a more profound comprehension of Draupadi's character and the lasting relevance of her story in Indian literature by means of his imaginative method.By reinventing Draupadi's story, Divakaruni and Bharati both succeed in adding fresh viewpoints and insights to the Mahabharata tale, despite their divergent approaches. The story is retold in a daring and inventive way in Divakaruni's "Palace of Illusions," while Bharati's "Panchali's Pledge" offers a more conventional yet poetic reading. Both authors give Draupadi's story new life through their imaginative writing styles, encouraging readers to reevaluate their preconceived notions about her and view her from fresh angles.

Divakaruni and Bharati show the everlasting power of narrative to shed light on the human condition and encourage readers to delve into the depths of their own hearts and thoughts, whether through magic and mysticism or honor and integrity

7. Conclusion

A rich tapestry of insights into the complexities of women's roles, struggles, and significance within the epic narrative is provided by the exploration of various topics related to the portrayal of women in the Mahabharata, with a particular focus on Draupadi, through different lenses and creative interpretations. Each conversation adds a distinct viewpoint that deepens our comprehension of these enduring characters and concepts, whether it be by exploring feminist viewpoints, literary devices, or reworkings of Draupadi's story or looking at her agency and empowerment.Both "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge" depictions of Draupadi highlight the character's complexity and adaptability as well as the story's ongoing significance in Indian literature. By emphasizing Draupadi's perspective and deftly and sympathetically examining her inner world, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's innovative reworking in "Palace of Illusions" gives Draupadi's story new life. Divakaruni's imaginative style challenges readers to reevaluate their preconceptions of Draupadi and perceive her as a complex, multidimensional woman who possesses agency and resiliency.Similar to this, SubramaniaBharati's poetic rendition of "Panchali's Pledge" provides a more conventional yet powerful depiction of Draupadi's moral bravery and honesty. Bharati adds spiritual enlightenment, love, and compassion into the story without deviating from the original source material. Readers are inspired by Draupadi's unshakable dedication to justice and righteousness as she is portrayed through Bharati as a symbol of tenacity and rebellion against injustice. The contrast between Divakaruni and Bharati's interpretations and points of view are brought to light by comparing the way Draupadi is portrayed in the two books. As Divakaruni highlights Draupadi's virtues,

flaws, and complexity, Bharati highlights her moral fortitude and honesty. Both writers contribute to our comprehension of Draupadi's persona and her ongoing relevance in Indian literature by telling compelling stories about her.The Mahabharata's larger themes of gender, power, and identity were clarified by examining feminist viewpoints and the significance of Draupadi's vow. Inviting readers to consider the hardships and sacrifices made by female characters like Draupadi, Divakaruni and Bharati subvert patriarchal conventions and elevate the voices of women in the epic.By employing imaginative techniques, the writers accentuate the fortitude, autonomy, and enhancement of women's rights throughout historical Indian civilization, motivating the audience to acknowledge and rejoice in their roles in the epic story.The conversation clarified the Mahabharata's larger themes and patterns in addition to Draupadi's nuanced representation, giving readers a better comprehension of the epic story and its applicability to modern society. We learn about the complexity of gender relations, power structures, and moral quandaries that permeate the ancient Indian epic by studying Draupadi's struggles, sacrifices, and victories.The many ways used by authors to recount the Mahabharata from Draupadi's point of view are highlighted by the comparison of storytelling techniques and perspectives between "Palace of Illusions" and "Panchali's Pledge." Divakaruni uses a first-person narrative perspective to take readers inside Draupadi's head, but Bharati uses a third-person omniscient perspective to provide readers a more comprehensive understanding of the epic narrative. Both writers enhance our comprehension of the Mahabharata story by offering fresh insights and viewpoints on Draupadi's persona and her journey through their distinctive storytelling styles. In order to challenge patriarchal norms and structures, female agency, empowerment, and solidarity are crucial, as the feminist perspectives in both works are examined to show. Divakaruni and Bharati elevate the voices of women in the epic by emphasizing their bravery, tenacity, and narrative contributions. By means of their imaginative retellings, the writers push readers to reevaluate their preconceptions regarding gender norms and power structures in historical Indian society, motivating them to acknowledge and honor the bravery and independence of female figures such as Draupadi.In addition, the meaning of Draupadi's vow is a potent allegory for justice, tenacity, and fortitude in the face of difficulty. The deeper importance of Draupadi's promise is explored by Divakaruni and Bharati, who emphasize its relevance as a representation of moral courage and integrity. Both authors encourage viewers to consider the moral ramifications of Draupadi's deeds and the story's ongoing significance in today's world through their imaginative interpretations.The conversation provides an all-encompassing examination of Draupadi's persona and her importance in the Mahabharata, in addition to the various perspectives and inventive methods used by writers to recreate her tale. Readers are encouraged to critically interact with the timeless themes and messages of the epic narrative as we gain insight into the complexity of gender, power, and morality through the analysis of narrative strategies, feminist perspectives, and symbolism. Thus, the study of Draupadi's tale encourages readers to delve deeper into the Mahabharata's complex and multifaceted narrative for future generations by serving as a reminder of the work's ongoing relevance and significance in Indian literature and culture.

8. References

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