

# Myth and Realities in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's the Palace of Illusions

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“Myths offer a lens which can be used to see human identity in its social and cultural context—they can lock us up in stock reactions, bigotry and fear, but they're not immutable, and by unpicking them, the stories can lead to others. Myths convey values and expectations which are always evolving, in the process of being formed, but—and this is fortunate—never set so hard they cannot be changed again”.

(Marina Warner *Managing Monsters: Six Myths of our Time*, 1994:14)

Lawrence Coupe in his book *Myth* (1997) explains that the word myth comes from the Greek word 'Mythos' which signifies 'Story'. Myths are widespread and ageless stories that reflect and influence our lives. They investigate one's craving, dread, yearning and give stories that advise us that legend never bites the dust or dodges however gets changed likewise. Since myths and legends are the store of one's aggregate, their facts can never be depleted. Myth is the outlining gadget that grills specific socio-social and authentic minutes. Myths manage the development and foundation of human social orders that credits importance to standard practices and custom. Literature is more like a complex human undertaking which goes about as a stage to keep sacrosanct elements as stories and Myths. Writing has frequently acquired stories from different cultural myths, involving them as a significant source in creating plots and subjects which are revamped, remade, and reproduced to adapt to the contemporary reasoning pattern. Every variation of myth is remarkable to an author's particular development of the story and this novel, *The Palace of Illusions* (2008) by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni exhibits a common way of replaying the old stories in new settings and current points of view. *The Palace of Illusions* offers an elective story to an excellent myth by Draupadi who remarks on their encounters and occasions that happened quite a while back to the modern reader to their own viewpoints. As this lay a differentiating step between the mythical world and the universe of the real world. Myth is the manufacture of old stories which adjusts at each point regardless of the period wherein they are spoken. As Bruce Lincoln in his work *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology and Scholarship* (1999) gives a genealogical report with respect to myth where that's what he expresses “Myth is an ideologically weighted narrative about figures and events from a remote past which shapes contemporary ideologies”. Consequently, these clever endeavours to expose the philosophical objectives behind each holy history or myth which brings an elective variant of the amazing story where it goes on de-building, re-developing and re-deciphering the current account. As indicated by Warner, Marina reality comes to the very front when myth is deprived of its deceptions. Myth is destroyed in the little stories like *The Palace of Illusions* so that it has been investigated and the showdown among

myth and reality happens. At long last reality takes a jumping bob in the entirety of its endeavours to reassemble the classical model.

Mircea Eliade in her work *Myth and Reality: Religious Tradition of the World states* (1998), “Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial time, the fabled time of the beginning” (5). As per Eliade legend is a 'consecrated history' so its limit incorporates the significance pretended by divine beings and goddesses. Indeed, even the new Reference book Britannica characterises myth as, “Myths are specific accounts concerning gods or supernatural beings”(Myth). Hence, these meanings of myth clearly share a typical view that the pretended by the divine beings and goddess possesses a significant spot in the legendary practice of Greek mythology and Hindu mythology relating to the Homeric epic *The Odyssey* and the Vyasic tearing of *Mahabharata*.

Divakaruni, in her novel *The Palace of Illusions* doesn't make areas of strength for an among conviction and scepticism however she has declined the flighty thought regarding 'divine beings' and 'goddess'. As she delimits its regularity by bringing a differentiating thought of how people with a pious nature were viewed as divine beings which they are really not. She says:

I didn't give a lot of consideration to the narratives, some of which guaranteed that he [Krishna] was a divine being, slipped from divine domains to save the unwavering. Individuals wanted to overstate, and there was nothing similar to a portion of the otherworldly to brighten up the drudgery of realities. Krishna was a Chameleon. With our father, he was all astute politics, advising him on ways to strengthen his kingdom. He commended Dhri on his skill with the sword but encouraged him to spend more times on the arts. He delighted Dhai Ma with his outrageous compliments and earthly jests. And me? Someday he teased me until he reduced me to tears. (10-11)

Divakaruni through Draupadi has brought a differentiating thought and revamped the essential example of the mythic practice which thus stood out from the truth, consequently making areas of strength for an on the truth which was neglected and disguised in the old fashioned stories. Through her story power, particularly full of feeling quality, conveyed this problematic philosophical matter in mask. Subsequently, Draupadi is trapped in the pressure between the prophet which was more similar to a conundrum and this underlies the way that the enchanted profession of the prophet is only the unexpected vital checks that makes life more feverish and awkward. Divakaruni through her story has brought a cognizant cross examination of the legendary supposition and undermines it with coherent thinking. Divakaruni says that the occasions and circumstances in each attempt occur as per one's naturally suspected, which is made right into it. Be that as it may, life isn't simply the course of a prophet materialising. She outlines it through Draupadi, when she says “The spirits answered me so obliquely, in riddles that were more hindrance than help”(21). She likewise ridicules at this thought and how stupidly individuals succumb to these sorts of things covered with the phoney name of eternity. According to her, “Fortune-tellers are always predicting weddings. They know that’s what foolish girls want to hear most. That’s how they fatter fees”(35).

Consequently, this clever unravels the customary ethnic practices and goes against the sensible undertaking of understanding. This is many times smothered in the conceptualization of fantasy and its parts. As one turns blindfolded and will not reveal the imaginary conviction that wraps and lessens reality which is brought dynamically out through the postmodern accounts. This novel isn't only an improvement

of fantasy in the illumination of heartfelt philosophy yet a verifiable scrutinization of the legendary territories which are praised in the conventional form of *The Mahabharata*. The episode of undressing Draupadi, one of the critical episodes in the legendary that is much of the time expressed and discussed takes up a parodic disruption, turning our concentration and comprehension of the epic or specifically that occurrence to an alternate domain of significance. The humiliator, the victim, the deliverer, the observer and safeguard take up an alternate position in Divakaruni's story gives a profound knowledge into the psyche of Draupadi which gives an outsider comprehension and view on that specific case. The survivor of unspeakable hopelessness is as of now not a shaking lady battling with Dussasan to save her from embarrassment. She is nothing else than an antique lady defencelessly requiring a hero however she is an alternate lady through and through. Divakaruni has given an alternate presence to Draupadi who is depicted with fortitude and persistence. As she said, "No one can shame you, he said, if you don't allow it. It came to me in a wash of amazement, that he was right. Let them stare at my nakedness, I thought. Why should I care? Then and now I should be decent...I felt my muscles relax; my fist open. He smiled, and I prepared to smile back". (193)

These lines show the distinction that Divakaruni has acquired her account. Here the connection among Krishna and Draupadi is presently not as a hero and the enthusiast or the person in question, it is a long way past it, it is more like a solid obligation of fellowship that mitigates the aggravation of the heart with the medicine of affection and harmony. The writer has made implied endeavours to get reality which is exceptionally distant from the mythoi custom. Divakaruni immerses the space among fantasy and reality by thinking out the conventional counter-intuitive mythic convictions and reproducing it as another legend of the past packed with reason. The depiction of the battle of Kurukshetra and its fallout presents maybe Divakaruni's most extreme alteration of the first plot. There are areas of strength for an on the female cognizance and specifically Draupadi's cognizance, which is widened and gives an outsider understanding of the conflict and its occasions which is discarded in the more established text. As she says, "but there's something more Vyasa didn't put down in his *The Mahabharata*" (314).

In the postmodern connection among legend and the truth is the parodic adjusting of the text based on the past of both 'world' and 'writing'. The literary fuse of the intertextual past goes about as a constitutive component of postmodernist fiction. From the beginning apparently it is just its steady unexpected motioning of distinction at the actual heart of comparability that recognizes the two unique universes of past and the present. Postmodernism offers a feeling of present for the past which is modified, re-deciphered, re-gave more sensible positions. In the postmodern books, the shows of Myth and the truth are at the same time utilised and manhandled, introduced, and undermined, stated and denied. By drawing an old legend, the creator Divakaruni have summoned a pre-assembled edge of importance which empower a numerous conceivable outcome in the postmodern story, there by controlling an exchange of progress from homogeneous to heterogeneous voicing, fixed to shaky truth, from orchestrated personality to multi-faceted character. Here legend goes about as the ideal postmodern vehicle which gets the truth testing the conventional account by revamping the old-fashioned model. The all-out change of occasions and personality of characters introduced in the postmodern text features the truth that is shadowed in the stupendous variant.

Divakaruni's novel *The Palace of Illusions* where Draupadi ups the job of a storyteller and tells her own rendition of the incredible legendary which tears the phoney cover and the one-sided assumptions of the early-stage mythic account and uncovered reality with authenticity and authority. The nuances of the mythic story, *The Mahabharata* adopts a varying calculated strategy in the small story which empowers to fathom the misleading gesture and to make a differentiation between the fantasy and the truth as isolated separation. As Draupadi says "It was my turn to play the storyteller. And so I began" (13). The power of fantasy has declined from the esteemed position it appreciated. This is reflected in the lines of Draupadi, as she says "were the stories we told each other true? Who knows? At the best of times, a story is a slippery thing... we'd have cobbled it together from rumours and lies... from our agitated imagination" (15).

In the novel *The Palace of Illusions* Divakaruni likewise takes the postmodern smooth out by making a feeling of doubt about the legendary customs and rituals and through Draupadi she stands up to the legendary thoughts with more legitimate thinking. As in one occurrence Draupadi says "I was sceptical about the entire endeavour. Even if there were lokas, what proof was there that the dead could be promoted from one to the next based on what we did here on earth?" (157). Draupadi at long last finishes up by saying that these thoughts were made by the sages to cause individuals to limit themselves from the malevolent and underhanded deeds by making a trepidation reared righteous ways of life. Thus, Divakaruni counter-points the mythic shape with reciprocal reality which is the uniqueness of the postmodern story. In the novel, Draupadi who is known to be the steadfast spouse of the Pandavas admits her dull longing and her mysterious fascination for another person, which perusers couldn't have ever envisioned. Draupadi uncovers her internal psyche to the perusers saying that she subtly cherished Karna, the chief adversary of her spouses from the very start yet because of destiny and conditions she was unable to uncover such sentiments towards him. She legitimises it by saying that assuming she is bound to cherish and wed Pandavas, it ought to be Karna the first since he is the primary conceived Kunti. This piece of the portrayal can't be tracked down in the great accounts. As she says, "I saw a different pair of eyes... what evil magic does it possess to draw the human heart so powerfully to it?" (193-194). In the end Draupadi communicates her joy of being joined with her darling, Karna in the superb homestead. "I reached my other hand for Karna... the only one I've ever needed" (360).

In the Divakarunian transformation, however, it doesn't take up a direct clashing example. Divakaruni has figured out how to draw out a multi-layered depiction and story which is altogether different from the first source. As called attention to by Andrea Custodi saying, Draupadi is lauded in the conventional epic as "perfect wife chaste, demure and devoted to her husband" and in the modern version she is portrayed as "intellectual, assertive and sometimes down-right dangerous"(213). The characters and occasions from the first source are re-utilized with a distinction that strays from the antique scholarly artefact shedding of its legendary variety and scent coded with the real world and fact. The postmodern story generates the strain between the noteworthy legend and writer's reality. The special style of creator explains the thought of adaptability featuring the distinction, tearing away the misleading assumptions and bringing to the surface frequently overlooked thoughts. Caroline Alexander in her article "Myth made Modern" remarks on how fantasy has been utilised in the postmodern story says, "Myth... have been readdressed, readjusted, reinterpreted... apparently to dislodge the tale from its mythical motive and relodge it with mirth"(1-3).

The legendary revising of the old stories is in many cases opposite and investigates the sensible elective behind each strange deception. Divakaruni adapting to the contemporary techno-present day universe of reality coordinates every fantasy with revamped variant in some way legitimises a justification for which it was finished or told. The Royal residence of Deceptions the revising of the legend which may be a parodic rendition of traditional fantasy. Postmodernism gives a freeing space to one's viewpoint or a singular discernment which is against the laid out idea of thoughts or a regularly held thought. The postmodern stories honour colloquial methodology against a conventional viewpoint. The legendary mutilations additionally empower in advancing the truth encouraging the doubtful disposition towards the occasions and portrayals of the stupendous stories.

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