Forging Dialogue through Fiction: Exploring Feminist Resilience in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions*

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ABSTRACT

One of the well-known Indian American writers, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's writings mainly address women's experiences in a highly compelling manner, documenting the unique experiences of women and the patriarchal structures of oppression they had to go through in their lives. For example, in her famous works as *The Palace of Illusions* and The Forest of Enchantments Divakaruni retells old Hindu myths and offers new interpretations through the voices of her female characters. Those voices reinforce the problems that women have to face in life: their struggles, ambitions, and conflicts within the boundaries set by society. This paper explores *The Palace of Illusions* to critically analyse how the character of Draupadi critiques and challenges patriarchal norms. Through a feminist lens, it probes at her resilience. This central narrative force brought to light her role in calling into question the deeply entrenched structures of the male-dominated society. Divakaruni retells the story of the Mahabharata from Draupadi's point of view, thus giving her agency and autonomy in an epic that is a male-centric story. This paper heralds the complex character of Draupadi, from her unusual birth to her bold decisions and actions, and depicts her as a symbol of strength and resistance against oppression. In analysing some crucial events of this novel, like the public humiliation of Draupadi and her vow for justice, this study emphasizes the challenges that lie ahead of us in the form of entrenched gender inequalities. This paper finally argues that *The Palace of Illusions* is a significant contribution to feminist literary analysis by challenging patriarchal conventions and celebrating the unrelenting spirit of female resilience embodied in Draupadi.

Keywords: *Defiance, feminist assertion, androcentric epic, patriarchal power structures, resilience, gendered biases, subverting conventions.*

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is an award-winning Indian-American writer, born in 1956 and celebrated for her pioneering works like *The Forest of Enchantments* and *The Palace of Illusions.* It involves giving fullness to the hitherto shadowy inner worlds, hearts, and lives of

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women from Hindu mythology and epic traditions, yielding new, dynamic, and multifaceted perspectives upon figures long glimpsed through male eyes. Through her dynamic storytelling, Divakaruni brings to the forefront the strength and resilience of women and brings forth struggles that classical Indian narrative either chose to ignore or undervalued. *The Palace of Illusions* is a retelling of the Mahabharata from the perspective of Draupadi, allowing readers to see the epic through her eyes. Divakaruni writes of Draupadi as a multidimensional character affirming her strength, autonomy, and individuality against tradition. *The Forest of Enchantments* is a retelling of Ramayana from Sita's perspective, dealing at great depth with details relating to her inner world while going through her love, loyalty, and self-sacrifice battles.

Through reclaiming the narratives of Draupadi and Sita, Divakaruni interrogates the patriarchal interpretations of these Hindu epics and makes readers find some depth in the complexity of their experiences. She further tries to give them a voice to question the power dynamics, representation, and historical erasure of their stories. Both novels, however, verge on the theme of women's agency in patriarchal settings since both are projected through the voyage of Draupadi and Sita in their fights against the roles preordained by their male-dominated societies. Draupadi is cast as a heroine who breaks many of the conventions placed upon her as wife to the Pandavas, while Sita is cast as a self-reliant figure who takes authority over her own choices and actions.

In *The Forest of Enchantments*, Sita emerges as a powerful, independent woman who defies societal norms, rejects silence and passivity, and upholds her principles. The portrayal of Divakaruni raises awareness of most gender-based stereotypes while highlighting the values of women. In the process, Divakaruni opens up a whole new perspective towards Draupadi and Sita as a complex, multidimensional characters by turning away from their traditional portrayal as either victims or passive figures in Hindu epics. Her work pulls, in a way, at the readers to reevaluate the typical portrayals of such women in classical narratives and urges them to reconsider their prejudiced notions. In a deep examination of agency, complexities, and internal struggles, Divakaruni humanizes Draupadi and Sita, inviting the readers to familiarise themselves with their struggles, desires, and vulnerabilities. It is in this way that Divakaruni has succeeded in deconstructing conventional tropes, bringing forward the power and agency of such iconic characters, thus affording us a far richer understanding of their roles in the epics. Moreover, there is also a theme of female bonding and sisterhood in the face of patriarchal oppression in Divakaruni's novels. In *The Palace of Illusions*, Draupadi finds solace and

strength from other women; sisterhood is one of the important aspects of her life. Similarly, in *The Forest of Enchantments*, the mutual support of women for each other proves indispensable to overcome the odds. Through these relationships, Divakaruni shows the strength in unity and the power of coming together to rebel against patriarchy and the norms of society.

The novels also espouse themes of power imbalances, gender roles, and female empowerment. In *The Palace of Illusions*, Draupadi rebels against the role that the epic has traditionally prescribed for her as a woman in society by assertively claiming her voice and agency in a world dominated by men and calls for change. The events and choices she makes in the novel, and more importantly, during her humiliation in the Kaurava court, bring forth injustices done toward women and the destructive results of male entitlement. Similarly, in *The Forest of Enchantments*, Sita comes out as a strong character who undergoes pressures of gendered expectations and, within the parameters set by the patriarchal systems around her, still holds onto her beliefs. Divakaruni's portrayal of Sita emphasizes the strength and perseverance of Indian women, showcasing their ability to endure hardship with grace and conviction. Both novels underline the issues of women reclaiming their voices and fighting against oppressive systems, holding the power in their hands to self-actualize their choices. In speaking for Draupadi and Sita's voices, Divakaruni added her voice to the contemporary feminist debate, adding light to wider contexts such as gender dynamics, caste, and class. Such works talk of very real issues in women's lives today: issues of gender inequity, societal norms, and fighting for self-determination.

Divakaruni's novels highlight the necessity of diverse storytelling and the elevation of underrepresented voices in ongoing social discussions. Though in their historical context, *The Palace of Illusions* and *The Forest of Enchantments* retain remarkable relevance today, reflecting on gender inequality, identity, and the power of women's voices. Divakaruni challenges the stereotypical portrayal of Draupadi as a passive victim but builds her up as strong, agential, and leading. Through her writing, Divakaruni ignites a dialogue toward gender equity and the need for solidarity, inspiring readers to rethink their assumptions and work toward gender justice. Born from fire when her father, King Drupada of Panchala, performed a yagna in his aspiration for a child of great power, Draupadi—known also as Panchali—was born surrounded by divine prophecy, foretelling the important role she would play in the future. Raised in a palace, Draupadi knows she is destined for greatness. Her life comes of age when her father arranges a *swayamvara*, a competition to choose a husband, and she picks Arjuna, one of the five Pandavas. But once home with them, the Pandavas misunderstand her and are

seated in an extraordinary marital arrangement where they share her. Indeed, throughout her life, Draupadi is said to be very close to Krishna, who, to her, was not only a confidant but also a protector.

There comes a critical moment in the life of Draupadi when Duryodhana, the eldest Kaurava, invites the Pandavas for a game of dice. Lured by his uncle Shakuni, Duryodhana gets Yudhishthira trapped into the gamble for the kingdom, wealth, and even Draupadi herself. At the Kaurava court, Draupadi is publicly humiliated; she calls out to Krishna and is saved from the ignominy remarkably. The Pandavas are forced into exile, and it is then that Draupadi wrestles with her anger, a sense of betrayal, and the crushing weight of the situation. This enforced exile strengthens the bond among the Pandavas; however, in Draupadi, it nurtures greater resolve to fight back. As the conflict escalates, Draupadi stands by the Pandavas in their preparation for war against the Kauravas. Her desire for vengeance transforms into a quest for justice. And now, with the war won, and the Pandavas triumphant, Draupadi reflects on the fruits of war, on the nature of power, on what it costs to exact vengeance. However that is not the only legacy for which she is remembered. Rather, she comes as a symbol of rebellion against injustice—a far more compelling legacy than the mere status of a queen. In *The Palace of Illusions*: Draupadi is portrayed as a very independent, outspoken woman challenging the normative assumptions in her society. Most importantly, it is a first-person narration that gives voice to the personal thoughts of Draupadi. The story is mostly of vendetta, deceit, and friendship against the backdrop of a society dealing with patriarchy. Dhai Maa, Draupadi's mother, sarcastically addresses her as the "Girl Who Wasn't Invited" owing to the circumstances surrounding her birth, which was of a very unorthodox and unexpected nature; the Mahabharata actually describes Draupadi as born out of a sacrificial fire without taking the normal course of action of natural human birth. Her arrival wasn't anticipated in the traditional sense, and thus, she is metaphorically referred to as "the girl who wasn't invited". Draupadi's presence and actions were central to the unfolding of Mahabharata's grand narrative despite not being born in a conventional manner. (Divakaruni, 11). Draupadi's life is filled with allusions suggesting that she was to blame for the unimportant circumstances that she was forced into. She prayed to Shiva five times in her former birth to grant her a husband, and each time Shiva answered her wish, which led to her five spouses. However, Draupadi reinvented herself into a formidable, self-assured individual.

Through her novel, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's examines the patriarchal norms of Indian culture portrayed in the original epic and is a powerful symbol of feminism. By revealing the

structures of power and creating a new "reality" and "truth" in which even women have their say through constant interrogation or dialogism, the novel challenges the authority of power exercised on women through masculine literature. King Drupada of Panchal, a wealthy king in Bharat, sought revenge for his humiliation at the hands of his friend and nemesis, Drona. Draupadi, who made the Pandavas' alliance with Drupada possible, was the key component that Drupada's plan for a son lacked. Draupadi was born into a separate palace, where the entire royal family treated her differently and with disdain. Draupadi was raised in a separate palace, and her father was reluctant to accept her. She had no faith or trust in her father as well. King Drupada arranged for Draupadi to have her swayamvar, an event designed to put the most renowned warriors in the nation to test. Draupadi was treated like a valuable trophy and destined to change the course of history.

Draupadi was a renegade from the start, aiming to close the disparity between men and women and defying patriarchal conventions. She was expected to conform to and follow its established traditional rules, but she yearned for knowledge that would enlighten her about politics, governance, and the wider world. She was determined to realize her destiny and made every effort to acquire as much education and knowledge as possible to fulfill the prophecy. Draupadi was believed to be Lord Vishnu's ninth avatar, the Lord of kindness, love, and protection. He was the only one who could have adequately prepared her by teaching her about the political climate of Bharat. During King Drupad's *swayamvar*, Draupadi felt like a lure being pursued by a lion, and her father's happiness lay in seeking revenge. During the terrible *vastraharan*, Draupadi deals with the terrifying attempt to ruin women's sense of belonging and the embarrassment of exposing herself. Her friend Lord Krishna persuaded her to get married for the happiness of her and her family. His supernatural and magical abilities protected her honour; amazingly, Draupadi's saree expanded to infinity. His affection for Draupadi was soothing, making her suffering go away, and giving her the warmth and tenderness she had always yearned for. Draupadi was a prominent female hero in the story, known for her intelligence, cunning, and beauty. She advocated for the marriage of her five sons, who were ordered to divide their wealth. Draupadi's attitude towards her sons and persistent attempts to control them are evident throughout the novel.

Kunti made multiple attempts to degrade Draupadi, such as mocking her lack of culinary experience, offering oil massages to her feet, and treating her like a commodity. Draupadi was aware of the patriarchal mentality and felt that she would never receive the love she deserved as a wife with five husbands. Draupadi's marriage to Arjun was always Drupad's intention, and

it became clear that Draupadi's decree to divide the alleged "reward" was the reason behind her marriage to the Pandavas. Her married life was fraught with difficulties, as she was treated like a commodity with no voice in her own life. It was considered improper for a woman to have more than one husband in a patriarchal society. Draupadi became one of the most influential ladies in the nation when she simultaneously wedded the Pandava brothers. Vyasa's prediction of five spouses for Draupadi required her to wed each brother for a year, going from the oldest to the youngest. She was granted a blessing by Sage Vyasa, which said she would revert to virginity each time she visited a new brother.

Draupadi's wedded life was not pleasant, even though she remained chaste, obedient, and faithful to her husbands. She constantly chastised herself for her actions and questioned them. The narrative also centers around Bheem and Panchaali's romance, where Bheem lavishes his wife with love in exchange for Draupadi's extra food. Despite her efforts to captivate her husbands, Draupadi never felt fully satisfied or whole with any of them. She gave birth to their children, went into the wilderness, and supported them through thick and thin. The most difficult relationship of Draupadi was between herself and Karna, who was born before Kunti's union with King Pandu. Despite being constrained by patriarchal social conventions, Draupadi had a tremendous desire for him, but was unable to wed him. Draupadi, who experienced great hardship due to male dominance, often compared her current life to the life she could have had if she had not stopped Karna on the day of her swayamvar. Her love for Karna was so immense that she was willing to forgive him for doing as horrible a thing as insulting her. Both Draupadi and Karna were open about their feelings for one another, even to Kunti, who promised Draupadi's hand in marriage to Karna in exchange for his joining his brothers in the Great War. Draupadi's longings for Karna serve as a symbol of her unmet emotional expectations and unfulfilled dreams. Women today experience the same sense of exclusion as Panchaali had when she was born when her father only extended his arms to her brother Dhristadyumna after she emerged from the sacred fire beside him. Many Indian parents still display an unwelcoming attitude towards a female child in contrast to a male child who is expected to fulfill their parents' dreams, even after practices like female foeticide have been outlawed. Draupadi is also a victim of colourism, as she was shunned for being strange in a society that looked down on anything except milk-and-almond hues. With Krishna's help, she asserts that she is beautiful too, and overnight, she goes from being shunned for being strange to being a celebrated beauty. The work introduces the idea of polyandry, the state or practice of having multiple husbands or male partners at one time. In those days, polygamy was a fairly regular occurrence, but tales of

polyandry were confined to folklore. Vyasa framed a unique set of rules for herself so that her virginity was maintained, but often she felt isolated and would seek approval from the five husbands. The chauvinistic society around her, as if to hypocritically extol virginity, succeeded in laying bare the egocentric ideologies in its own patriarchal structure. Draupadi suffered infinite pains in this male chauvinist world, due to which she was sent into exile for twelve years and spent one year in hiding. Through all those awkward situations, she moved with dignity and fortitude. Her character was as fearless and righteous as Arjun and Bheem. How she evolved as a strong and loyal woman played a crucial role in shaping the human world's destiny and her legacy continues till today. In conclusion, the story of Draupadi reveals the psychological and emotional condition of women who suffered a lot because of male dominance.

Myth serves as a fresh voice for feminism in this specific *Mahabharata* adaptation, as it masterfully illustrates the subject of feminism, which is predicated on the idea that women should conform to broad norms and be upheld. From the outset of their relationship, Draupadi discovers that the duties traditionally assigned to women are not fit for her. Positions such as "wife" or "daughter" were social rather than natural, as women were conditioned to think, speak, and behave in a certain way. According to feminist theory, real-world social contexts where women lack authority and are viewed as objects are the source of an impact how women are portrayed. The *Mahabharata*, the greatest work of Indian culture, comprises lengthy prose sections and more than 100,000 slokas. The myths found throughout the Mahabharata are moral lessons meant to emphasize the correct course, not just stories. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel provides a very realistic and compassionate account of Draupadi's intellectual and spiritual development from a naive princess to a queen capable of rivaling or outwitting monarchs.

Divakaruni's book portrays Draupadi as a fiery woman with a strong head destined to change history. She is a fiery decision-maker and aspires to be a stunning queen and becomes well-known, as prophesied by King Drupad. Draupadi's aspirations for personal development are evident in her, as she desires a name more fitting for a princess who will alter the course of history. Class divisions in society were more pronounced at the time, but all classes were equal in terms of the enslavement of women. Draupadi's ideal maid and tutor, Dhai Ma, introduces her to societal norms and customs and explains the differences between people from different social strata. She tells stories and dresses like a queen, and Dhai Ma worries about losing her job when Draupadi tells her to see the local sage. The unhappy marriage of Dhai Ma and Kallu,

the palace cook, demonstrates how lower-class women are mistreated by their husbands. Draupadi's life as *sairandhri* for Queen Sudeshna illuminates the issues experienced by maids, similar to the unhappy marriage of Kallu and the plights of warrior's wives. The rulers take pleasure in their military prowess, and the wounds remain on the troops for the remainder of their lives. Draupadi's curiosity about worldly affairs and kings is evident in her life, as she believes that having a wide range of knowledge is beneficial. She enjoys learning about and resolving the issues faced by the lowly palace employees, but they are reluctant to express their affection to her as a queen and powerful woman. Draupadi and Dhrishtadyumna were raised from the same fire, both having historical significance based on prophecies. However, their education differs. Draupadi received a different kind of education than Dhri, who was taught the laws of war. She invited tutors from around the world to teach her dancing, singing, and embroidery crafts. King Drupad also dispatched bards to her place to instill acceptable attitudes and warn her against dangerous ones. Draupadi's desire to know when the war was and just and when it wasn't is evident in her later years, as she hesitates to learn these topics.

In the past, polygamy was not a questionable idea, as monarchs often married multiple wives. Women's societal roles were limited to providing for their husbands and having children, regardless of class. Divakaruni clarifies that Draupadi's marriage was arranged to entice Arjuna to Panchaal, preparing the Panchaal kingdom for the impending battle with the Kauravas. The task winner at the swayamvara is a Brahmin, and Draupadi is compelled to marry him without knowing his identity. She is compelled to wear modest clothing and pursue the man on foot, denying all gold and presents given to him. It is ironic that Draupadi marries a man who withholds his name, even though she asks Karna about his origins. Sage Vyasa arranges a unique marriage custom for Draupadi, requiring her to marry a new person every year. He bestows the blessing of remaining a virgin for the following year's spouse, but its true purpose is to bring happiness to the princes. Draupadi was drawn to Arjuna due to his kind demeanour and physical appearance, but their union was delayed until the third year. Her sexuality was determined by the rules established by a "wise" person, and her wishes are irrelevant to the situation.

Shikhandi, the eldest daughter of King Drupad, is reincarnated as Princess Amba of Kashi after being abducted by Bhishma. She confesses her love for King Salva and returns to Bhishma, who regrets not marrying her due to his lifelong pledge of celibacy.

Amba becomes enraged and starts to seek revenge from Bhishma but unable to find the wearer she ends her life having placed the garland at the gate of King Drupad's kingdom The story of

Shikhandi brings to light the very painful struggles of trans women in those times, being pushed by patriarchy into a conformation to given traditional ideals of femininity. In her work, *The Palace of Illusions*, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni exposes how women were being systematically suppressed within their own potential by the societal expectations placed on them ever since time immemorial. Set in Draupadi's life, the novel displays her version of feminism and shows her fighting against long-held myths and traditions. Fighting through her way of life against this patriarchal society, she was never submissive in her lifetime nor in spirit. Her transformation begins after learning the truth behind her father's initial rejection, slowly building her into the strong woman she becomes. Draupadi finds fulfillment in her identity and connects her experiences and the prophecy foretold. Divakaruni lifts Draupadi's narrative to reflect universal struggles faced by women, contrasted sharply with other interpretations that unfairly place the blame for the Kurukshetra war on her shoulders. She emphasizes Draupadi's feminine love and passion for Karna, despite the myth's prediction of her marriage to the five Pandavas against her will and wants. Krishna persisted in using pictures of Arjun to dominate Draupadi's thoughts, as though he were the only one capable of rising to the *swayamvar* challenge and enabling her to change the course of history. Draupadi loses herself when she sees Karna's appearance and describes him as the man who attracted her attention on Duryodhan's right. He was older than the prince, had an austere countenance, and appeared completely alone during court. His only jewelry was a set of gold earrings and an oddly patterned gold suit, with old grief in his eyes. Draupadi's interest in seeing what the man's eyes would look like when he smiled vanishes, and she becomes more interested in seeing what the man's eyes would look like when he smiled.

In India, women were not allowed to choose their life partners, leading to societal advantages for men. Draupadi, a feminist icon, desires her husband to be committed to her and adore her alone. The precepts of "dharma" forces Draupadi to choose between five husbands, but she is granted the unique advantage of being a virgin throughout her marriages to her brothers. Draupadi's husbands benefit from this gift, but she does not gain it because no father in her close area confirms her memory. In the original Mahabharata, Draupadi is worshipped as the goddess of virginity and is granted divinity to uphold the rule for women. However, it is unclear how Draupadi intends to change history until she is humiliated in front of stalwarts of the Kuru court, such as Bhishma, Dronacharya, and Kripacharya. This raises the feminist question of reversing the public-private hierarchy, as the public domain is often seen as more significant

and masculine than the private sector in sexist homes, workplaces, and educational settings. Divakaruni highlights Draupadi's desire in *The Palace of Illusions*, which was absent from the original tale. Draupadi's main ambition since childhood is to reign in the most exquisite palace on earth, inspired by Vyasa's prophecy. The arches of Krishna's Dwaraka palace resemble the ocean's waves, and Draupadi's dream would need to be exclusive to her.

Draupadi, a woman who has faced numerous challenges throughout her life, struggles to maintain her status as a woman due to patriarchal culture. She is the daughter of the highly acknowledged King Drupad and the wife of the five greatest warriors in history. Draupadi's ambitions to own a unique palace and rule over all other queens rise when she learns that Drupad's disdain for her birth is a result of her gender. Draupadi further declines from the eyes of Karna due to her active life with five husbands and the domineering mother-in-law Kunti. Their meetings consistently result in discontent between them, leading to Draupadi's hatred of Karna. However, after learning that Karna was also attracted to and craved Draupadi, she is happy with her life. Draupadi's life is characterized by emotional highs and lows uncommon for the typical woman. The author challenges the notion that women should submit to men and give up their hobbies for the good of the community by showcasing Draupadi's passions and honoring women as human beings who should live life to the fullest. As a result of her unrequited love for Karna, Draupadi voluntarily accepts the fall from the mountain on the path to paradise.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni criticizes the portrayal of women in the Mahabharata and explores Draupadi's journey to overcome oppression. The book defies convention by presenting Draupadi as a valiant ruler, a character that represents a strong, determined woman. Indian epics, such as the Mahabharata, have a timeless appeal and have been reinterpreted by writers through various lenses be it psychoanalytic, feminist, or cultural. Divakaruni's work, a notable example of assertive femininity, explores the disordered mind of Draupadi, a mythological heroine, and speaks out against societal injustices perpetrated by patriarchal society. The book provides readers with an excellent vantage point to see the depth and strength of an oppressed woman, Draupadi. *The Mahabharata*, the world's oldest and longest epic, is considered a culturally foundational text that imparts intellectual, spiritual, religious, and educational qualities and promotes social standards, gender roles, and moral ethics (dharma). Divakaruni uses the Mahabharata story's ubiquity to her advantage by rewriting it from a feminine perspective. Her novel challenges the traditional androcentric themes of the epic, focusing on

the female characters' emotions and intentions when they impact the lives of their male counterparts. The novel also highlights the prevalence of patriarchy in the Mahabharata, with female characters remaining unseen and subservient to their fathers, husbands, brothers, or sons. Divakaruni's Draupadi is a strict, nervous, and resilient woman with an unyielding determination. She diagnoses her position in altering history as predicted at the time of her birth and is nearly obsessively interested in the tale of her life. Her birth narrative is recounted by the admirable grandmother figure and a fairly considerable guardian Dhai Ma, who nurtures Draupadi's tendency to take charge and lead by example.

To conclude, *The Palace of Illusions* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni offers a unique and fresh perspective on the Mahabharata, highlighting the evolving roles of women in society.

The oppression of women is a result of the patriarchal system's appropriation of women, leading to their writing within patriarchal frameworks and perpetuating traditions associated with men. This fictional rebellion compelled women to speak up, leading to the Second Wave of French Feminism, which introduced new ideas to the field. Helene Cixous, too, advocates for women to carve out a place of their own in the text, just as they would in the real world. Divakaruni explains the Mahabharata through dialogism, using Draupadi as her narrator. She constantly interrogates others, challenging their beliefs and customs, but is discouraged from asking questions because her inquiries make others aware of their injustices. A Kshatriya woman's greatest goal is to assist the warriors in her life, including her father, brother, husband, and kids. In *The Palace of Illusions*, Draupadi's greatest goal is to help the warriors in her life, including her father, brother, husband, and kids. Divakaruni exposes the pathetic state of women defined solely by men. The Pandavas were left with a kingdom of widows during the Kurukshetra War, and Draupadi's curiosity is evident from an early age. However, she becomes well-versed in several rules and the Shastras when her father stops her classes and tells her to concentrate more on things that are feminine. Women then did not have access to the best knowledge due to the structure of society and institutions. In *The Palace of Illusions*, Draupadi marries off to five brothers, fulfilling none of her sexual needs. They debate and ponder her fate without taking her acceptance into account. For a woman to be recognized as an independent individual, she must have self-respect. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has demonstrated her firmness and determination to the current world through Draupadi, who doubts her own strength, resolve, taste, and ability to accept responsibility. In conclusion, the portrayal of Draupadi in both traditional mythology and modernity serves as a conventional

message for individuals uprooted from their own culture's moral principles and those firmly anchored in orthodox traditionalism.

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