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Gender Expression in Kavita Kane's *Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen*

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Letter of Approval

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Abstract

The research paper analyses the gender expression in Kavita Kane's Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen. This paper examines how the author in this text challenges the performances and utterances that have misled the identity of genders in the society in the name of holy insights and ideology. The Writer through the character of Uruvi projects that gender identity is just a masquerade, A-pretence. By taking theoretical ideas on gender proposed by Judith Butler. this paper concludes that characters of Kane's story do not revolt against patriarchal orthodoxy but show their interest for self-repairment. In this way the paper helps the readers in understanding how minorities of the society, show the contradictory appearances in the role they perform and the psyche they have inside.

Key Words- Performativity, Identity, Self-acceptance, Celebration, Patriarchy, Masquerade

The research paper presents the quest for an identity in Indian writer Kavita Kane's novel *Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen*. It retells the story of *Mahabharata*; the religious Hindu epic from the perspective of the character Uruvi in relation to Karna as an enigmatic character who is the King of Anga and husband to Uruvi and Vrushali. An extraordinary Mythology of Hindu's *Mahabharata* written by Vyasa is read for moral guidance in Hindu religious society. The stories of *Mahabharata* are related with the subjects such as war, challenges, politics, family roles, and sacrifice and morality essence. Many characters, blending of superficial elements and presenting ancient Indian social culture are its components. Here, in the novel "*Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen*," Uruvi presents her point of view as narrator in the novel. She, wife to Karna and the beautiful princess of Pukeya, is the witness to

Karna's twist and turns and her own femaleness designed in the epic. Uruvi herself is the marginalised character of this novel but is historically and rarely listed as Supriya, the friend of Bhanumati. In search for the Uruvi's attempt which the author has appointed her for powerful voice presents writer's ideas of equal gender presence and evaluates the participation of other characters in the novel. Though the historical epics are blamed for female subversion, Uruvi's exercises and expressions for the identity are the major interests for the research.

Myths are highly criticized for the bias presentation of females and low marginal characters. The narration of the *Mahabharata* which has the gigantic episodes of acts and events are presented with experimental exercises and expressions with multi narration by Kane. Analysing from different angles, multiple voices and questioning and re-acting them are the modern trend of writing. This study is also on the positioning agent that carries the multiple voices. The narration of Uruvi as character in the novel suggests that "the narrating (Identity) is a 'subject' always in the process of coming together and dispersing" (60). The voices are far synonymous to the real narrator sometimes. The experimentation of constituting subjectivity with historical characters attract to study and explore how the character Uruvi the outcast queen engages to authenticate self and voice to the post of conversion certainty.

This research views the writer's different approaches to renegotiate the performance of genre and gender expressions (femaleness) addressing the authentic- I space rather than challenging the hetero discourses. The novel has semi-autobiographical essence; the character Uruvi reconstructs her selfhood. She creates her personal account of self-discovery. The novel '*Karna's Wife: the outcast queen* is the terrific blend of mythology and contemporary story telling experimented on writing by Kavita Kane, an Indian female writer from Pune. Culture of India cannot

be missed for the influence to create this work as writer shares her decision to choose *Mahabharata* and rewriting its stories that she listened since her childhood.

Mahabharata narrates the struggle between two groups of cousins in the battle of Kurukshetra and fates of the Kaurava and the Pandava princess. The characters are large in number, have genealogical lists and their performances are highly portrayed with fictional imagination. Every character is built with the socio-ideal reasons and Kauravas and Pandavas are the heroes of the story. The tussle for the throne of Hastinapur, their appearances, birth, death, morality essences are highly described in it. This epic is an observance of one's sacred duty 'karma' and 'dharma'. Responsibility, political turbulences, dynastic conflict and friendship are its thematic subjects. It is also believed that *Mahabharata* was the "final age of human kind" in which great values and noble ideas crumbled and people headed towards the complete dissolution of right action, morality and virtue.

Writer Anindita Basu in her article records "at 1,00,000 verse, the longest epic poem ever written, generally thought to have been composed in the 4th century BCE or earlier". The epic has huge influences for setting moral essence to the Hinduism so that the presentations of identity issues are well asserted. The story Kuru-war is an effect of Pandu and Dhritarashtra's succession for rightful king. Both of them are the Vichitravirya's sons the king of Kuru. Dhritarashtra was stronger but disabled, so the Pandu was accessed to throne as king. Beside this women's perspectives are far practised. The writer Kavita Kane with her writing is very parallel to the events of Mahabharata. In the novel *Self-celebration*, self-formations are expressed with the experiences of Uruvi. The identity is significantly discussed in the text so that along the story, Uruvi's role and discovery is another insight. Her writing has settled quest to read performances relating with identity. Not all writing attains the

lacks, reduction of ideas and complains the ideas to hold the view higher. The writer is expressive with multi-reports of finding an independent agent establishing self in unread character. The writer Kane represents the story of Hindu historical women who under go through life's ups and down but express her celebration for womanhood and form her state of being.

In bond with ideas many critics have examined Kavita Kane's novel the "*Karna's wife: an outcast queen*" from various perspectives. Majorly, views are studied from the perspective of marginalized and feminist views. So far, researchers, critics have made a report that mythology is obsessed with hetero concept and it is criticised for biased presentation of the characters in myth. However, Kane's novel reflects gender issues relating genre studies (autobiographical) components are the different views explored with critiques discussion.

The reviewer Swarnima Bhattacharya in her work writes about the eponymous wife of Karna, an outcast queen Uruvi was more result of 'dramatic license'. The novel entitled as an 'outcast' tries to speak up as unread speaker in the whole story and Uruvi known as 'other' put herself as real character to reflect an epic *Mahabharata* again. The critic shares the character Uruvi is fictitious as she intervenes with the other hetero characters to address the authorial space of being somebody in the story. For overlooking the women's consent, my reading reflects the Uruvi's attempt to establish her-self as- I and presents her self-portraiture. The character in this genre re-establishes her oneness. Bhattacharya posed the Uruvi for her take as manipulative bold character and narrator of the story.

Another critic Nanditha Kalidass revises this novel from the perspective of her bold choice for Uruvi and genre she narrates into. She sees Uruvi as capable as male for witnessing the story from Kaurava's point of views. She states "As young,

beautiful capable women she dares to choose ‘sutaputra’ socially inflected identity as her better half and rejects the Tshatriya conventional state”. Here, the women’s choices and decisions are self-made and the character Uruvi stands bold to her decision and choices. Though the society seems imposing and never approve of her marriage to perceived low cast, Uruvi reminds readers and character inside that her man Karna “ isn’t the wrong man but the wronged man (18)” Kalidass shows her support to genre for retelling Hindu myth again so she states “author’s choice of contemporary style of storytelling has stolen the show”. Parallel to Nanditha’s idea Sruti Nayani in her blog writes about her interest for the ‘anti-hero’. Karna’s story through Uruvi forms the authentic story lines of performances as epic lists. Both of them are struggling for gender reality as the subject.

Similarly, Shrividya studies novel as the one of ‘societal recognition’. Karna’s life is sensed with fair insights in comparison to Pandava’s heroic appearances. Writer represents Uruvi being fair towards all her women instinct, judging and mediating with the secrets. She shows logical insights for most ‘wronged character’ like Karna and her invisible identity. Her narration presents how the society sees him play the vital part of all decision making and bearing the label of sutaputra. Critique Shrividya depicts an “enforced choice that each woman makes in her personal and social life nags Uruvi’s sense of right”. Reading sees the Karna is victim of circumstances; he is wronged antihero of the history who accepts the death for the friend Duryodhana and the Uruvi standing with her fictitious reversal identity. Karna who seems negatively performing, is a man of right to his own morality practices in favour to society and divinity. With Karna’s story, Uruvi tries to reflect the presence in the story. The social factor affects not only the female but also the male. Criteria creates the confusion on capability of ‘being real- I’ a subject. Here, every character

in this novel is triggered with social question marks as Uruvi sees for herself.

With new sets, gender dominative epic is delivered with the insight of 'self-fulfilment'. The characters in it are mysterious, dual in nature and different in an expression. The concept of presenting every character with acceptance and ignorance of values, social emotional instinct is well depicted in the story. The critique Pradip Bhattacharya writes;

“Women as an object are first made by Kunti herself”. Kunti aware about Arjuna and Bhima come home with Draupadi, calmly asks the five brothers to divide the princess among them equally, and then gets extremely anxious that her word should not become false”. Vyasa puts on a command performance with mythical tales in order to persuade Draupadi to agree to the polyandrous union, with both Kunti and Yudhisthira (126)”.

Here, Kunti roles out for dual mysterious female character. Kunti's word is not disobeyed by five Pandava brothers. She as social and emotional mediator gives her decision to share 'Draupadi' with each other. She can stand not a peripheral (insignificant) but central to command the performances. The novel gives the oddly modern figure and social hierarchies both challenging for the 'subject'. Kavita Kane's novel is not far from criticism. Srujan in his review reports “An only angle of the story differs. It is founded on the closer “psychological understanding of the epic”. In so much the culture, society has shaped the writer's perspectives; the novel is as usual and repetition of authorial-I's stories. Kane's characters are extracted from epics more like Uruvi from the Mahabharata.

Sayantani Chakraborty, in her journal entitled “We Love Mythology Because We Can Still Relate to Them” records the interview with Kane for why she chooses this version of writing. She depicts “it is a huge canvas to express contemporary

thoughts through our old stories, to create and reinterpret characters' population. Our mythology is to invest them with certain present-days sensibility especially against the social framework of change". The research sees women's instinct are more acceptable and can interpret the roles to their own sense. The approaches to stand for self needs no reason to disassemble from the society where Uruvi shares her celebration of being mother, beloved wife and a bold speaker of her own life. Here, reading sees the self-adoption to reframe the women's sentiments.

Sayantani comfortably discusses the writer's choice of choosing her protagonist; minor character of folk stories that provide "interesting nuggets that can be expanded into a strong storylines". For example; Surpanakha in Lanka's Princess, Urmila in Sita's sister, Satyavati in the Fisher Queen Dynasty and Uruvi in Karna's wife etc. and other characters from the Ramayana. The characters who are shadowed in the folk are not only meant for presenting marginalized, oppressed but carries the concern of common encounters of daily lives. Writer Kane states, "It is not the story of gods but man and his war with himself and the world he lives in which is an existential crisis even today. It is about his flaws and follies". The elements of identification are the very essence of the stories and characters and events are narrated to us to see them without bias, prejudice and discrimination. Writer seems inspired with cultures so her experimental ideas for mythoi- fiction enrol identical issues of the characters within the myth. Besides this, writer Sayantani delivers the relationship of genre and gender both reflected insights in her journal.

Reading to the responses from critiques here I found the voice in support to Uruvi. My reading to this novel is an attempt to see the unrevealed facts of character's origin and influences. Character of Uruvi is in focus with her story. Reviewers focus on the woman and power highly admired her as powerful speaker, anti-hero and the

sensible site of her psychology. Uruvi in this genre re-states about her identity where as she seems to be constructive for who she is in the epic. The gender issues seems recurring and the writer being more active to reflect her sensibility about outcast women from different stories.

Female agenda is obvious that writer puts on her story. Writer seems thoughtful presenting women's and her perspective. The story "*Karna's Wife: The outcast queen*" is creative in a sense that her experimentation to genre as well as invisible gender act is interesting to study. Writer's recent works are all practice of viewing angles of more character to the important events of the religious folk stories. She writes from character's view point especially female characters. Her reading of folk female characters such as; Urmila, Satyawati, Uruvi, Menka etc have come with the genre and gender experiment. Her gender exercises are nutty.

The critiques have helped analyse the text through multi perspectives under feminism, socio-cultural studies, psychological and myth but the theory of gender studies still have the different way to look at all the text as whole. Roles are extremely highlighted also the gender studies here limit the biased utterances upon the patriarchal concept of mythology. Myth is just a source to novella. Writer's attempts can be seen justiciable for her character in the story.

The story *Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen* by Kane proceeds with the historical, socio-patriarchal data with superficial elements, also the biographical factors can be read with in it. Uruvi's narration gets shifted with the character in and out with writer sometime. She has used memories to set story's plot and herself as real narrator. Writer creatively addresses the audiences individually leaving conscience to think about history and where story leads to think. What the real-subject be narrating? Stories are shared easily but the real situation and effects are left to imagine. So its

possible approach to provide angle for the matter is writer's effort. Recently her published works mark the space for mythical texts interpreting the scenes, plot, and the minor character's expressions to reach the discourse fixed with in same story. Novella has challenges this idea in support to gender and genre.

The finding in the novel helps to practise gender studies. Neither male nor females are separately focused. Research studies characters and their appearances. All the characters are involved equally during circumstances so the perspectives are built not expressed. She gets genre as medium to express the Uruvi's life experiences. Together with Uruvi, she reads Karna's life in her favour too.

Novel uses normal monologue of speaker; simple wording and dialogue between Karna, Uruvi and others. There are several studies done with feminist issues challenging the traditional, conventional strategies on female bases in which novel is different because Kane as female writer simply shows the adoption of hierarchy and pass her logic to reframe the society. Biases in the society are obvious result of circumstances and the behavioural influence. Male and female are forming different 'self' within limitation and acceptance is its focus.

The myth is always entangled with identical issues; Kane's novel is presenting the identity degrades of male and female. Both of them represent gender and are challenged equally due to circumstances. Their performances matter as Butler states in his idea about 'performativity'. Butler argues "Gender is constructive rather than core authentic innate subjectivity" (218). Research sees narrator is not authentic until she holds Karna beside. Though Karna is male and hero, he is socially marginalised. The situation is tough for both characters in the story. Butler's ideas of gender supports the performing I. Autobiographical essence has helped writer's character to be 'somebody' for story. Hierarchy regulates the quest for male female subjectivity

with gender performances.

In this regard, it is clear that though the text is repeatedly analysed with feminine perspective by various critics, the theory of gender studies help to study the practises of social cultural acts to assist exclusively exploring the gender expression in Kane's story. The hierarchy in the great epic has well presented with the imbalances according to various critics, the research approaches to seek other possibility of reading its gender performance in balance that mean 'not' drag only is an idea to represent gender that can be suspensive mode of expressing gender. Kane's represents the good deal of performance, sets of male female acts in balance practises of retelling story.

The research equips gender studies. The term coined before by British Critique Cora Kaplan merging two words 'gender' and 'studies'. This theoretical study is rich in practices with every discipline. "Gender Studies refers to the academic study of the phenomena of gender"(187). Within feminist thought a distinction has been made between 'sex' and 'gender'. Sex here refers to the fact of being either male or female and gender to the cultural and social ideas of masculine and feminine that is assigned to different sexes. Butler's "Gender refers to those traits and characteristics that a person is expected to possess by virtue of being male or female, as well as the different roles that the person is expected to perform" (3). It focuses upon existence with social roles and positions". In normal practises theorist Butler states "Gender as a conceptual tool is used to analyse the structural relationships of inequality existing between women and men as reflected in a various aspects of life such as the household, the labour market, education and political institution" (10).

Kavita Kane's story on Uruvi has set the normal gaze of imbalances of male and female, an opposition to the stereotypical representation of the gender on the

grand narrative of the text. Kaplan's idea of 'Gender' seems more flexible with the study resources by Judith Butler on her work "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution", the theoretical ideas are mostly concerned to roles and performances of being. Butler seeks "the mundane way in which social agents constitute social reality through language, gesture and all manner of symbolic social sign"(519).

Performances influenced by certain mode of cultural belief have formed the real identity of the agent. Male and female are biologically different and socially constructive. They are rarely possible to identify because masculine and feminine are characters, constitutive with acts. Therefore, some boy can act feminine and girl acts masculine. Biological tag is an objectifying act but characters keep on changing according to time and situation.

In support Simone De Beauvoir claims, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman, re-interpretation for this doctrine of constituting acts from the phenomenological tradition" (519). Her prior is an act of 'becoming' which is socially affected. The identical movement, subjectivity has the moral bond between acts and language. Beauvoir sees "In this sense, Gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceeds; rather, it is identity tenuously constituted in time- an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts" (519). Beauvoir in her work "The Second Sex" sets the claims women and by extension; any gender is an historical situation rather than a natural fact. In both contexts, the existence and facticity of the material or natural dimension of the body are not denied but reconceived as distinct from the process by which the body comes to bear cultural meaning. The reproduction of historical situations is due to perception which later gets naturalised into discourse practise. The manner of doing priors the existence of body and body is the source for historical conditions of identity.

Identity is culturally constructed and culture acts as the power shaping human minds. The culture governs to regulate the production, consumption of material body. Assumption of individual's social acts through his or her body is defined gender appearance accordingly. Social behaviour that culture has set as man or woman becomes the identity in difference. Butler ideas of gender is supporting to the adoption of culture and natural identical acts. It is not about the highly defined culture but causal existential condition, roles and subjective processes which is equally compatible with 'performativity'. It is a key term used by Butler in her gender theory. Performances for her are an act, the shared experiences and 'collective action'. Beauvoir states "The act that gender is, the act that embodied agents re in as much as they dramatically and actively embody and indeed, wear certain cultural signification, is clearly not one's act alone" (525). The bodies enact the significant set of meanings which is applied to gender. Indeed, "the performance is affected with the strategic aim of maintaining gender with in its binary frame".

The origin of the term performatives can be traced back to Austin's Posthumous '*How to Do Things with Words*'. And more recently Gender links language to act upon it. Austin talks on the "verifiability of statements, introduced the performative as a new category of utterances that has no truth values since it does not describe the world". Language is a medium to share your performances that means the language can act. Utterance is equivalent to meaning in the traditional sense. While we perform it has a certain (conventional) force. Performances mean to indebted by the cultural socio acts. For this Butler states gender is performative, "a ritualized production: constituting the identity is all about doing, though not before doing gendered acts" (60). Identity forms with the acts and effect it produces. Time and effects continuously constitute the new one. So gender is not stable to claim single

identity. It is referred to the internal- self, not assigned during birth.

The criticism about the way that Butler wrote about transgender people and people who perform drag did not influence Butler to adapt her view of gender performativity. Gendered acts and identity exist at the same time so her theoretical aspects sees queer is not opposed to all identity claims. Butler's gender ideas mostly used to support ideas as she again attempt avoiding ideas implementation on claiming all subverting identity. Kavita Kane's novel is presenting form of being self with acts in epic. 'Drag' is repeated claiming gender ability according to viewers Kane see's Uruvi's acts are more exemplified for Butler's idea of gender acts and adoption rather than the subversion.

Gender Study in this research sees performances of different characters not for the issue of isolation but different adaption of suspense identical mark. The ground of the stereotypes and conventional report helped for gender claims also discussion entangles with sexuality to conceptualise the gender. The people in a society create their own criteria the traditional patriarchy for defining gender and sex in some way similar. The way society sees gender as an adoption of culture and culture equals to power source. Critique Alex in his journal "*Sex in Society*" reports;

The gender role which an individual adopts 'manly' or 'womanly' according to the standards of his culture is oddly enough almost wholly learned, and little if at all built in, fact, the gender role learned, by the age of two years is for most individuals almost irreversible even if it runs counter to the physically defined as of the subject (42).

Here, we appear with the behaviour we are taught and grown up in that very environment and culture. It does matter than the biological appearances. These certain acts, expression, roles define who we are. The effect vows the identical essence.

Kavita Kane's retelling of *Mahabharata* sufficiently has those characters that can be catch-up for good study to gender reason. Uruvi starts retelling the own perspective; draw-up the manly appearances of Karna's. The story begins with the tournament setting, the 'swayamvara' as the traditional platform of ancient historical time. The Competitor performs the manly quality to prove self-worth. The point is *Mahabharata* in its history lists the traditional royal patriarchal contest and context where both 'men' and 'women' are characterized on the base of culture, knowledge and society status. Men are more involved to war as outsider and ladies more covered with social emotional boundaries. Writer Jayanti Alam states,

"The women in the *Mahabharata* enjoyed quite a bit of freedom of thought and expression, though their activities were confined to the 'andarmahal' ladies section of the palace; that is why perhaps, more or less the same moral standards were applicable to men and women, Yudhishtira was no less censored for 'selling' his wife in the gamble" (517).

Uruvi in the story make the uses of words such as; 'archery skilled', 'attractive', 'taller', 'handsome face', 'muscular' and 'god-like'. This description is on 'manly' character and character with these feature are conceptualized to be ideal in that society. Writer again uses the words to describe Hindu women like 'oval face', 'sighed', 'warmth', 'smile', 'elfin', 'charm', 'doe-eyed' etc. Even the words used reflect the gender frame. They are more cultural but both gender differs biologically and defined as 'sex'. Language helps identifying the sex by its feature. After all, quality that the society marked is constructed, framed according to acts.

In concept, *Mahabharata* was stamped as filmy story about those war heroes who fought with raining arrows in cloudy masked war weather. Very interesting incidents like Draupadi's marriage to five husbands, her disrobing, Kunti's exile with

five Pandavas, Kauravas equal to other normal man, Shakuni with gambling stuffs, Gandhari blind folded, gurukul practises of the Pandavas and Kauravas in the history etc are major glimpses to recall *Mahabharata*. Ancient Era highly valued the traditions. Ancient characters are still highly marked ideal to social, political, moral and cultural aspects. *Mahabharata* serves the same ancient taste of plot but several interpretations topped up with new insights presently. The epic's over patriarchal data are fractioned for research, experimenting them to normalize, implies the creative ideas to primary text 'Karna's Wife; the Outcast Queen' by Kavita Kane is reasonable attempt that switch more theoretical insights.

We assume the characters are true in the story as they are presented submissive, direct, moralized, religious and ideal being of the society. Behave Godliness, family's priority and the society acted too authoritative to lead each individual life. Wrong and rights expressions are seriously evaluated to identity. Like, writer Kane, we have been brought up to practises to idealize self-worth. Righteous being as Arjuna, divine Krishna, and intellectual Yudhishtir are our ideal figure to retreat as male and act polite, normal, submissive, shy as Kunti, Sita (from *Ramayana*), Draupadi for female ideality. If the acts are problematic or contrary then it is marked to the quality of Shakuni, Duryodhana the false characters of the epic.

The epic marked the thick set about gender. The acts are predestined to construct ideal identity. Here, Butler's ideas of 'gender acts' reverse at the identity marks. Her real claim is gender performativity acts that hold the identity. The directive ideas are at conventional mode. Re-reading to Uruvi's story the contexts are turned over. Research sees the 'then' and 'now' concern of *Mahabharata*, reading the acts into identity rather than identity into acts. Ideally glorified *Mahabharata* story reflects the ancient social behaviour where women's were soft, kind, doomed,

submissive, and males too brave, direct, determined and obedient. Human being heavily moralized to religious, serious, punctual and responsible in all aspects she or he deals with. The characters are royally modelled. For them the issues of disrobing, love affairs, against home culture, wanderer women, participation on political likely to men are offensive, impolite in society. The conservative society is found with no subjects of choosing self or following actions of own. The line “the noblest duty of a Kshatriya is to be true to his faith, to overcome his foes in righteous battle, and to win glory” (71) reflects the stereotype. That used to be directive life style, regulated with cultural time and ‘ved’ the holy inscription as ruling source. Here, present concern of writer tries to structure Uruvi’s character dealing with the issues, time of that passed history. Her performances constitute the instant change of perspective, the ancient original programs.

The writer Kane’s through the story of the outcast queen discloses the same docile, direct religious society and agents dealing the issues to think in different ways. The social performances were overlooked found out self-orient, self-motivated according to writer’s gaze. Gadhari, Kunti, Draupadi, Uruvi who are female agents of story has bold, tactical, straight forward, willed and optimistic esteem who has led the life goals, roles and the history in their behalf. Uruvi dared though “she was made cruelly conscious of her unpopularity and her fall from grace; she would often make fun of them with her sharp wit, leaving them fuming with indignation” (42). The incidents are perceived with logical response by the character not the way epic directed the history again is always appropriate. The certain traditional patriarchal society is dealt with the present social reality through language gesture and social expressions of gendered society. This studies study those roles to be flexible according to time, situation, and culture. Those roles are equal to the way they act.

Actions, gestures are keys not the sex to determine who we mean to be as Butler states about biological and cultural construction of gender. Those acts are essentially a performative repetition which produces the effects of series to construct the fact. For example; Draupadi, Kunti are two major ideal females subverted, inflected by patriarchal in history. They are women as mother, princess, wife, maid to some heroic men. They were presented more emotional, soft and helpless for the so called society. Kane's in her ideas of retailing same story portrays the gender in real. With traditional mark the appearances are registered different one.

Uruvi's role challenges to those social patriarchal where she makes selections of her own decision and never hesitates to talk back straight with her consciences very well. She questions with logic, argues for possible. She finds her comfort zone. She is highly motivated to follow self, create self and celebrate self. She makes selection of choosing life partner beyond social rules, she is daring to question her uncomfortable state occurred through any modes in her life. She shares her enjoyed love life, her "initial flash of jealousy" (31) felt for husband, most emotional attachment, her motherhood experiences and secrets. She does not list the patriarchal point to grade her identity. Her acceptance reflects of gender, 'her-own ness' in society adds new appearance where subversion, drags are not really implied. It indicates an attempt of invisible social expression as drag. Similar to the role of Uruvi, writer Kane puts much other character. Such as Kunti, Draupadi, Gandhari, Karna, Duryodhana and other deals obvious act attendant.

Writer creating of this version refigures the relationship between gender and the roles. The assuming roles are presented in a different look. Draupadi and Uruvi are similar to each other who are the ideal heroines in the history. Draupadi is repeatedly exemplified role and Uruvi, though lost, she identify with own narration of

Karna's story. They both are unpredictable, steadily determined and possess the austerity of traditional Hindu wife. Alam reports;

Draupadi of early yuga/ era is analysed as early feminist because her fearlessness in confronting those who harmed her or her family. She was educated, beautiful and her opinions well-respected, supported in ancient time where 'woman' role was to meekly serve the husband, family and silently suffer than speak (517).

Kavita Kane's story came with this very representation of Uruvi who has the same quality as Draupadi. Uruvi exhibits as much dexterity in the arts of being typical Indian women and everything associated with womanhood. Uruvi is described "spirited to be restrained, too proud to be cautious and far too forthright to think of the consequences of her actions. She had a charming candour, a blithe audacity; steeled with a stubborn resilience which many admired but few appreciated" (5). Uruvi, the princess of Pukeya with her confidence is unfamiliar to most women of her time. Draupadi and Uruvi both had the strength to encourage self for education where Draupadi was educated in 'political science' and princess Uruvi "was more interested in art, literature and medicine than the idle gossips" (42). She is also a lover, determined to choose her better half so she chooses Karna 'sutaputra', casted low birth, the son of charioteer.

The statements state; "Draupadi did not pick and choose Arjuna at her Swayamwara, Kunti continued smoothly. He won her. Uruvi, we are the lucky ones. Karna did not win you – you chose Karna. As I choose king Pandu. Not that ever regretted that decision." (106). Convincing to her father for her decision finally gets accepted. The king of Pukeya in his assembly, pronounce about "no tests of valour, of bravery or skills. It is but the honest desire of the princess to garland a young man

present here whom she wished to marry” (190). Not choosing skilled Arjuna in her swayamvara she makes equality for Karna who was insulted in Draupadi’s swayamvara. He was wronged hero of the story though the Panchal king pronounced fair tournament where any winner in archer would be eligible husband for his daughter Draupadi. Karna was socially refused, emotionally hurt, publicly tormented for being son of ‘sutaputra’ and verdict made before he competes.

Uruvi’s performances as a devoted wife, chaste, religious minded and adhering to duty is well admitted as to writer’s view. She narrates about Uruvi’s story that is likely to women empowerment Uruvi’s experience of after/ before marriage life is full of interesting episodes. She makes fall in love, with obvious human flaws she challenges the personal life with social patriarch. She leads Karna’s life and his determination for justice though he is cursed and affected many time by unexpected consequences, situation till his brave death. Uruvi’s as normal princess speaks of her emotional sentiments and realisations. “It was Draupadi , Uruvi realized, who was making the decisions and turning the course of the flow of events to come, deciding not only her own fate but that of generation follow” (89). Her clear judgement challenges to the knowledge of right and wrong of the verdicts, find secrets of her familial royals, their issues and its origination.

Performances are observed as day to day consequences by Kane. Butler’s explain “the mundane way in which social agents constitute social reality through language, gesture and all manner of symbolic social sign” (519). Uruvi sees her flaws with celebration of her being-self. The notable points writer puts is Uruvi’s own struggle of discovery and her identity with Karna is empowering her with the situation and states her authentic-‘I’ through story. Her gendered self-disclose much other identity through the language. She as agency express self, her evaluation of

environment around where the Hindu women's are expected to be helpless, emotional and homely cornered. Draupadi, Kunti, Gandhari come with different taste.

Social tradition has selected certain activities, performances to be men or women of that time. Karna, Arjuna, other kings were highly prayed for their noble quality but patriarchal limitation seems challenging to both male and female. Being male, not all possibility and hardship must be dealt with courage. They too had emotional breakdown, foolish attempts, sentiments, and attachments etc. Males' are in command to be skilled physically, mentally. Do all of them really have to prove them as male during wars tournaments and especially at swayamvara. Male's in Mahabharata are not always ideal or wicked, strict or kind hearted and courageous or coward. They have the expression as normal man has. During Draupadi was disrobed, nobody noble, stronger man appear for her rescue. The war enflamed due to the ego hurt which is the human behavioural aspect.

Here, the act is lead to destructive one. Dronacharya, guru to Arjuna rejects two potential rivals, both worthy opponents of Arjuna. The first one was eklavya, a tribal prince and master archer who was asked to give his right thumb as guru dakshina and the other contender who challenged Arjuna was Karna, rejected on the pretext that Karna was not born a royal warrior" (164). There starts a terrible rivalry and ends to the war at last. It's a performance that identify. Duryodhana with his alter ego to win on Pandava is always portrayed negative but Uruvi sees them considered. Noble Characters are enforced with negative attitude and villains with the right. It is due to the upbringing of the situation and environment that he/she came to act according to time demands. Karna sensed humiliation, disrespect though he was courageous as Arjuna, Bhima and other warriors. Karna to revenge back for his disrespect he support the man Duryodhana who had fight and stands for him.

Draupadi does the same who was shamefully dishonoured at the palace. She takes vows to revenge with wars that extended long for eighteen days. The point is she dared to stand for herself and speak up, aloud against male- perpetrated injustices. She satirically reacts questioning to Duryadhana and his false influence in her life. She says “from when has any women been informed or asked for advice on court politics and family intrigue?” (57). When the identity is questioned, more of them have struggled for it. Karna is hated for being ‘sutaputra’, Duryodhana being immoral, arrogant, Draupadi mostly disgraced of being termed a ‘prostitute’, ‘whore’. The identities they are defined in these terms are due to the acts they perform but same subjects, context varies to the perspectives. The version of ancient epic portrays that character in both positive and negative insights.

Another, highly exampled character is Kunti, a foster mother to Uruvi is kind hearted, mild mannered, morally, socially respected women in history. She is the one who constantly guides her sons on their actions and keeps the family bound as one never to have them fight among each other. Kane’s story portrays her to be more cunning, shrewd and mysterious. With Uruvi, Kunti shares her original family history since birth and mediates each and every situation. The ancient time demands of moral, shy women but Kunti talked about ‘niyoga’, “the practises of offering one’s body to another man with the husband’s consent for bearing child” (107). She shares the accepted culture of polygamy, had five different sons from five (god) males including Karna. For this Draupadi and Kunti are similar for having multi husbands. Many characters are married to more than two wives separately. Female acts it normal. It is not about confinement as society. Uruvi too selects the married man but no regrets seen for her decisions. All social patriarchal boundaries are given no importance so *Mahabharata* is also studied for its controversial story and characters with in it.

Majorly acts observed to evaluate identity as they used to be claimed.

Identity is not what society standardized. There is mobility of identity therefore; Butler speaks about social behaviour and shaping of human minds with its cultural attitudes. Simone De Beauvoir explains 'becoming' is an act of identity tenuously constituted according to the time. Butler states

“Gendering act is broadly constructed which constructs the social fiction of its own psychological interiority and ‘self is not only irretrievably outside’, constituted in social discourse but that the ascription of interiority is itself a publically regulated and sanctioned form of essence fabrication” (528).

Performance regulates the identity in differences there would be no true or false, real or distorted acts of gender and “the postulation of a true gender identity would be revealed as a regulatory fiction” (528). The certain acts interpret as “expressive of a gender core or identity”, also the strategy of disavowal constitute the gender we tend to believe. The character like Gandhari in this epic is read with dual characteristics. She blind folded to her eyes, because her husband was blind. Epic represents her to be “symbol of devoted wife, subservient to her husband, body and soul” (518). She is more concerned for Draupadi, the glowing symbol of the prosperity and welfare of the Kauravas. When she is disrobed she confronts saying “he who has disgraced you will remain immortal in the history of mankind as disgrace and cowardice personified: your disgrace is miniscule as it has been equally shared by all women of the world” (518). Here feminism struggles to empower other women in the history.

In the Kane's story Gandhari is questioned for her acts. She is not accepted as real women, wife and good kind hearted mother according to Uruvi. Her argument was her hundred Kauravas lacked mother love and concern. They were brought up by Sakuni his uncle totally calculative and wicked. She being wife to blind Dhritarastra

she sees her masochistic person of such stubborn resolve that she deprived her husband of seeing the world through her eyes. She finds out the reason for Gandhari's blind fold was rebel. She put them as "the mark of silent protest to make Bhishma Pitamaha feel guilty for forcing her to marry a blind prince" (142). Since her marriage to her family she was imposed. As result her intense dislike has led some plots of the history to be affected also "her anger and disappointed knew no bounds and she did not hesitate to curse even the god, Krishna" (519). Likewise, Gandhari, Draupadi, Kunti, Uruvi are those spirited being who are portrayed the manifestation of the moral and spiritual power of womanhood. Rebelled for the identity also has led the entire story with own stronger take of incidents. They are not helpless always but flexible characters who admit every possible ups and down. They are experienced, accepted to form real gender. Speaking the different angle of the story appears convincingly.

Males and females are both in-depth to the societal practises. The society sees the characters perspectives with a social principle. Both Genders in society has their own flaws regarding emotion, culture or politics. When Gandhari was not happy for her life she admits his (Gandhar's) sentiments toward his wife saying "It is true that great injustice was done to you also not been unjust to me by remaining hurt and unhappy till this day" (519). Here Gandhar as king father also states his emotions to be helpless, biased, deprived. It's an expression of gender reality. No males or females can be destined in the name of fate or destiny but make own decisions. Acceptances can be seen in the both characters. The identity is what we perform. Gandhari, Draupadi have acted to be tactful, bold and leading personality like male. Gandhar, Bhima, Pandavas are brave enough but acts opposite as society generalises of being the male and female. These roles seems struggling to different state. Pandava males in power are guilty, helpless, quite in significant time of need. It's not about

what we wear defines the gender we are. It's accepting all expressions, normalizing the reason, appearances.

The writer Kane's with her retelling story of *Mahabharata* disclose the semi-autobiographical features. She makes uses of novel the ancient genre for women especially. Her experiments of using this genre support the expression, acts of those epic characters. Literature has been the site of gender representation constituting identity that exists in the story and out the story. Though not body of the speaker but ideas through it. Genre is author's way to be chosen. We get to know the point of view of writer for how she creates the expression on certain issues. Her expression are likely to construct the identity knocked down once historically rejected to be dull, immoral, low as women's genre which didn't match the highly crafted canon. It was criticized to be women work. It has appeared very experimental and equal to other interesting genre today Kane's making of this genre is an approach to consolidate the gender practises. Character Uruvi's in this genre is her conscious move who makes existences using her memory of historical-I. She stands culturally fabricated/ formed her as agency to narrate her expression for the epic. She is the character deprived to history but creatively presents Karna's story by authenticating familiar one and its Uruvi's discovery. Marleay Ponty states body "a set of possibilities to be continually realised, mediated expression in the world" (65).

Uruvi as lost character in the history retells her point of view; writer explores her with different attributes. She confesses Karna's ups downs, mediates to whole story and character equally. No drag again is used but her self-adoption of womanhood, self-creating of identity and acceptance to be self'. Uruvi's point of view shares Kauravas are acceptable as Pandavas are. Admiring Kauravas for who they are is new expressions of writer through Uruvi. Entire history has settled the patriarchy,

an old fashioned ideal, moral society value. The novel arranges the performances lively though there is lots of de-gradation of the traditional facts; blemishes are studied to the constructive result of socially aspects. It is accepted as normal human error and that can be treated with different perspective.

The writer Kane's retailing of this version serves the insight of the gender real. Genders are real to the particular time demands or make an angle to see in different observation. The character that is multi-fold with same issues several time. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson state "the site of narration is also a moment in history, a socio-political space in culture. So we might want to think about how particular sites of narration perform cultural work, how they organise the personal storytelling upon which they rely" (58). Narrative producers are divisible. The story is itself the historical and mythological blend so the character of the certain time and place holds the historical essence. This real gender can be narrating the experiences and logic using his/her collection of memory. The speaker speaks the gender roles on the ideological bases and memories she uses to make subject matter credible. To readers it appears with different I reflecting the voice. Uruvi shares the stories of those ideal I through her angle. She speaks women are in command to regulate home, relationship, society and the nation and as mediator to every possible aspects Uruvi has reflected in her story so well. Uruvi passes her judgment for the right wrong of the effect. Male version has fall for certain heat of the time and for this writer are creatively providing the proof or study relative to the characters of downfall. Male stereotypes have challenged. That right or wrong is human reaction, judgement, perspectives. Writer sees the consequence. They are Duryodhan and Shakuni, the real man of the consequences. They are real villain because they are brought up to same kind of intensity, relation mostly with demolishing incident.

The noble personality who are believed to be courageous, righteous, rational and determined failed apart because, they in their hardship steps back, Krishna the divine man and Kunti as laudable women of Hindu history cheated on the Karna, drag the context to own favour. The act influenced many characters positively and negatively to destine the acts. Either nobility or shrewdness the real faces are observed variously. The writer sees the tiny mark of characters and the effect of situations. Situations are the cultural conduct agent acts accordingly. All noble, ritual culture humorously overlapped to the human mind so they forget to act real. The same presence of the subjects can varies different so the story also reveals the challenge narrating the point of view of Kauravas, the villain of the holy history Mahabharata.

The gender practise contains the situated identity talking on the time and site bases. Uruvi as the character strongly gives voice to re-condition the story of Karna and the epic's contemporary observation is reading stereotype is now older and Kane makes use of missed character, missed moments, missed memories to see the story again. She fills up the gaps for how the missed character would make interpretation leading the real gender, emerged after the words and world. Her view of no drag simply encourages the voice of self-appearance, a different discovery.

The research sees how the character performances reflect the real identity beyond the ancient sets of patriarchy. The characters like Kunti, Uruvi, Karna etc. states their logical repairmen and take no ignorance of the stereotyped and hetero norms. The forming of real gender frees the repetitive load of the primitive mark of theory about gender, sex and sexuality. It challenges the performances and the utterances projected as Masquerade. Lastly the research sees the contradictory appearances in the role and the psyche they have inside. The concept of performance determining the gender practise; so far the real gender is constructed.

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