

A Study of Silent Female Characters in Kavita Kane's Novels

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ABSTRACT

The main points are the author's feminist retelling of the same story through myth, the way these reprints of antiquated literature recast the mythological past, and the conflicting viewpoints she presents in her writings regarding the particular female characters and incidents from Indian myths. A myth is a cultural, religious, intuitive, and subjective truth. A modern myth will eventually come to pass. Certain voices, ideas, and views are inherently more favoured in literature than others. Since we can more readily discriminate between voiced and buried voices in myths, this is perhaps even more true. In general, mythology is a factor in feminist politics.

Mythology and feminism are out of style in today's society. The foundation of many societies and civilizations was mythology. The cultural myths are supposed to stand for concepts, principles, and ways of thinking that serve the interests of the general public. Classic myths are being used by authors worldwide to tackle contemporary problems and reconstruct the past in light of the present. Mythological figures and themes have symbolic meanings for a wide range of cultural beliefs, ideals, and ideologies throughout history. Because of this, myths endure and grow in importance and range. Myths excel in rich concepts and narratives. These subjects and formats are used by writers of all ages in their writings.

Keywords: Modern Retelling; Feminist Revisionist; Indian Culture; Popular Fiction.

1. Introduction

Indian fantasies are presently retold in a distinct form by a number of well-known imaginative essayists. Books, films, and other art pieces that analyse specific characters and incidents from Hindu folklore and repeat and analyse their contemporary significance seem to be proliferating. In modern India, legend-telling plays a big part. The stories' myths and reoccurring themes had a big influence on the preservation of Indian culture and civilization as a whole.

The imagined India of today has changed significantly in almost every aspect of life, particularly in the twenty-first century. It has indeed seen a generational leadership transition. We no longer wear the borrowed colonial clothing and instead read and write about our own roots, shadows, and cultural branches in an effort to better understand them.

While the precise historical moment when erosion began is impossible to determine, it is evident that it has been occurring for some time. Investigating the changing roles and duties of women within the community may be done by comparing the cultures of Ancient India. After realising that she was more drawn to the female mythological figures who were accorded the least amount of praise and glory, Kavita Kane started penning mythology-based books.

Nonetheless, Kavita Kane is unique for a number of reasons. First off, revisionist novels have made up the majority of her body of work ever since the release of her debut book, "Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen's," in 2013. Though successful in this genre, books like "The Great Indian Novel" by Shashi Tharoor, "The Indian Epics Retold" by R.K. Narayan, "Draupadi" by Mahasweta Devi, and "The Palace of Illusions" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni have benefited from widespread attention and praise. Kane steps forward and shifts into the "lady with

a goal." She achieves this by recounting the stories of legendary women who have experienced marginalisation, misunderstanding, misrepresentation, and outright abuse inside their own myths.

Thinking about an Indian culture with distinctive features helped. Fantasies, according to Nietzsche, "are filled in with social institutions that shield the majority from discontinuity." It establishes social bonds between individuals to justify life's worth despite its difficult situations." Even when current experts have recognised a different contemporary perspective, tales nonetheless have a special position in great literature. Discussions and exchanges between readers, researchers, and scholars legitimise the conclusions that have been decided after the stories are investigated, analysed, and explored in murky regions.

In this new interpretation, the legends take on a more human, less real quality. Even the heroes experience the most vulnerable human emotions. Perhaps less noble objectives drive their disagreements and confrontations. As people's inclusive adventures are told from many points of view, the legends' story has changed. By doing so, readers are able to relate to the supernatural entities in fresh ways and discover their human aspects. While the individuals are examined and studied, the stories and narratives are debated and connected to contemporary concerns and belief systems. An emotive, natural, sociable, confident reality is what's known as a daydream. The illusion of now will eventually give way to reality.

In any event, women's liberation needs to be unique if it is to flourish in the upcoming decades. The question is what precise shape the difference will take. In actuality, how we go with reclassifying and achieving feminist activist aims will determine the destiny of women. Modern retellings also aim to incorporate a kind of women's activism revisionist folklore that emphasises a crucial revisionist usage of orientation symbols to alter society and harm the legacy that women get. The Disgraced Queen, the Ramayana's sister Sita's research and Kavita Kane's bride of Karna Revisionist and feminist tales about women activists are not often seen in well-known works of literature. Efforts to cast doubt on the highest ideals and the most repugnant concepts, as well as to raise significant ethical issues from a contemporary standpoint. The intention is to rephrase the ideas from sexist and patriarchal literature, Aims to recount the tales again from the neglected voices of the sagas.

The popular book *The Palace of Illusions* by Chitra Banerjee Diwakaruni presents Draupadi as a strong, independent, and prominent woman. This is not how Draupadi is portrayed in the books by Kavita Kane and Chitra Banerjee Diwakaruni. She shows us that Panchali's existence is a sequence of choices she has taken, not ones that have been dictated to her, and thus gives her the voice to be heard in the mostly patriarchal culture. Diwakaruni's understanding of the epic gives it a whole plot, occasionally rewriting and reinterpreting the original epic, and showing the women in the story as equal members of society while also giving them a more significant role.

Madhavi S. Mahadevan honours their mother Kunti in her work "Kaunteyas," wherein she makes reference to their mother. The writers' aim was to provide readers feminist alternatives to the conventional narratives by rewriting established and distinctly patriarchal myths. Its pages are filled with anecdotes about motherhood and women, affirming the feminine's divinity, which the female-centered group loves to romanticise. These books can be classified as "revisionist fiction," since they question patriarchal viewpoints and provide reimagined stories through the experiences and voices of women who have typically been left out of the narrative. These books specifically

concentrate on the experiences of marginalised women. Revisionism is one of the techniques used by feminist authors to unearth previously unpublished works. Building a sense of history is a prerequisite to gaining public recognition for the ownership and control of that history. Women were exposed to statements that were almost exclusively made by men throughout the propagation of the myths. In the past, women were represented as weak, fragile beings that could be easily tricked. This was a long-lasting perception. Post-feminism was created in an effort to undermine the patriarchal system that underpins society.

2. Female Struggles in the Past and Present

The issues women have faced throughout history date back to the Palaeolithic period. The status of women in ancient India was significantly better than it is now, especially when contrasted to more recent periods. Women enjoyed tremendous personal liberty throughout the Aryan civilization-dominated Rig Vedic period, which spanned from 2000 BC to 1500 BC. That being said, it is impossible to say for sure that women in ancient India were completely freed from the patriarchal rule of their culture. Ladies had suffered immensely for their life, even though they had tasted independence in marriage, education, and other spheres of their lives.

A closer look at the later Vedic era, which spans from 1500 BC to 800 BC, reveals that women's standing began to progressively deteriorate about this time. In his book "Indian Women through the Ages," P. Thomas claims that during the later Vedic era, people believed that only sons could save their parents from damnation and that females were not capable of performing this type of spiritual deed. Only sons were capable of this spiritual deed. Mothers who had just children were devalued as a result of this misperception. Women's standing declined much further throughout the Post-Vedic era. Religious traditions, foreign invasions of India, and other causes have contributed to the subjection of Indian women, a practice that persists in higher echelons of society. Nevertheless, Lord Buddha's teachings and example inspired people to elevate women's status throughout the Post-Vedic Period. The collapse of Buddhism and the introduction of Islam to India are considered the beginning and conclusion of the darkest period in Indian history. Writings of the Dharma Shastras and Puranas were beginning to appear about this period. Remarrying for widows was strictly forbidden during this time, and girls had to get married before they could start menstruating.

3. Female Education

In emerging nations, educated women are exceptionally valuable. The capacity to bravely face the various obstacles life presents to a woman is essential. Women cannot seek education for its own purpose, unlike males, unless it fulfils a socially prescribed role. Females are restricted in what they can try to do. They are not given the opportunity to voice their opinions when it comes to making decisions about their future. The chance to develop their inherent potential and qualities is denied to women. Compared to men, women make up a higher proportion of the population who lack literacy or have just a low level of education. This wicked culture is spreading like wildfire across underdeveloped society, especially in rural places. Women need to be educated not just to pursue better careers and settle down, but also to reduce the number of deaths, domestic abuse, dowry torture, and other types of violence against women. Women's status in India is lower than men's due to the nation's admiration of conservative traditionalism.

Since a comprehensive education involved learning from one's environment under the tutelage of a guru, forest universities were widespread in ancient India. In the novel *Ahalya's Awakening*, Ahalya and her sibling attended the Vashisht ashrama, where they were instructed in traditional Indian knowledge. Ahalya demonstrated from an early age her extraordinary brilliance and rapid learning speed. She was only allowed to be married, despite her desire to live at the ashram. It was not allowed for her to relocate there. She could not get her mother to change her mind no matter how hard she tried. But there had no alternative but to transfer Ahalya to Rishi Gautam's ashram because the kingdom was about to be attacked. Despite all of their difficulties, she was ultimately married off to him after serving her time there. Ahalya continued to be steadfast in her commitment to learning even after she got married. Ahalya exemplifies a lady who is relentless in her pursuit of the education she so passionately loves throughout her life, both in the kingdom and at the ashram. But being a woman and the daughter of a fisherman, it is evident that Satyavati never attended school; nonetheless, she did learn enough to become proficient in using her powerful and sinewy arms to manoeuvre the boat. She can use her skills effectively, which is evidence of her intelligence. Later on, after marrying King Shnatanu, she travelled to the palace of Hastinapur where she was escorted by Kripa, a Rishi's daughter, who taught her the customs and equipped her with all the attributes a queen ought to possess. On top of that, Kripa groomed her to have every attribute a queen ought to have. When faced with a decision, Satyavati has always acted with determination. After telling Bhishm about Satyavati's intelligence and wit, Kripa once counselled Bhishm not to teach Satyavati any more knowledge since she might use it all against her and the people of Hastinapur, including the king and Bhishm, in the future. Satyavati is revered.

The way King Vahusha responded to her bravery or fortitude struck me as odd. This intentionally cold treatment and the hurtful remarks would not have kept my lioness Uruvi shut up within her home.

4. Women's Social Exclusion

A serious concern for women worldwide is social marginalisation. According to studies on women's growth, significant progress could be shown over time. Nevertheless, because of the ubiquitous and deeply ingrained social foundations of cultural inequality, certain societies still forbid women from engaging in economic, social, and political life. Several populations of women are impacted by social exclusion worldwide. A woman cannot develop and progress the globe without the help of society. In both official and informal economic events, women ought to be permitted to participate. Instead than a premeditated, focused propaganda onslaught, women face a step-in lack of access to education and sufficient income, which implies social and economic subjugation. This problem has long been a barrier to women's independence since it puts women's sense of dignity in jeopardy.

It is inhumane to stigmatise a woman and make her suffer as a result of her gender. It is women that bear this cost of social isolation disproportionately. Women are not allowed to offer their views, suggestions, or other ideas, have access to a quality education, make decisions or participate in decision-making, etc. Kavita Kane uses her persona Ahalya to highlight her points about women's societal marginalisation. It was forbidden for her to know the specifics of some things going on in the family and even inside herself. Without realising it, her family had isolated her from the outside world. With Ahalya considered as just another item, everyone gave up on her. She was feeling alienated in her own life, even more so than Satyavati from the book "*The Fisher Queens Dynasty*," who was

treated in a way that made her feel like an outsider and didn't even have the right to know that she was a king's daughter. A woman's birth right is rejected since her father, King Uparichar Vasu, abandoned her when she was a new-born, and Dashraj only told her about this event after a long period of time.

Satyavati is a fisher chieftain's daughter who is compelled to curb her goals and use marriage as a means of moving up the social ladder. Similar to this, the princesses of Ambalika, Amba, Ambika, and Kasi have also been abducted in order to settle political grudges. A new assessment is being made on the capacity of the female members of royal families to bear children who would inherit the throne. When women's identities are reduced to their bodies and their personalities are debased, they become observers of their own lives as well as detached from their social realities. Women must be allowed the freedom to take charge of their own lives in our country. Women should not simply be seen as resources to be used for personal gain by society. Before a society's perception of women can be changed, individual women will need to fight for their rights until their needs are met. Ahalya has rebelled against the traditional traditions, and even though she knew that society did not support her, she took the right choices.

Kavita Kane did a fantastic job portraying the oppressed and feminist character Urivi towards the conclusion of the narrative. She offered the reader a novel perspective. Women are defined by their willingness to sacrifice, and she has aptly shown this idea with her own deeds. Like Uruvi, who never stops thinking about her husband and has taken on many various roles as her voice, she always prioritises the needs of her family no matter what. She has always played a variety of roles throughout her life, such as mother, wife, daughter-in-law, and daughter. In every single one of these roles, she gave it her all. Women have never relied on men, period, but they have stayed silent about injustices they have faced because they accept social norms and ideas. The world can be improved by women. This is the lady who, by consistently encouraging and covering for her husband in his attempts, has turned into a major contributor to his success. Some communities controlled by men choose to disregard this fact. The ladies are always assigned to the "Ardhnareshvar" job.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, it is imperative that we avoid straying from the precise vices that Kavita Kane is trying to rid us of namely, passing judgement on others while reading her works. We must not wander from Kavita Kane's attempts to rid ourselves of these vices. This would be detrimental since patriarchal tyranny may afflict men and children in addition to women, unlike with women alone. Thus, by promoting awareness unquestionably a necessity for the development and dissemination of feminist philosophy Kane is combating the oppression of women and girls through Satyavati and Ahalya. Analysing some of Kavita Kane's female characters demonstrates that these women never satisfied the demands and desires of the males in their life, while living in civilizations where men held a dominant position.

Declarations

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This study has not received any funds from any organization.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Consent for Publication

The authors declare that they consented to the publication of this study.

Authors' Contribution

Both the authors took part in literature review, study, and manuscript writing equally.

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