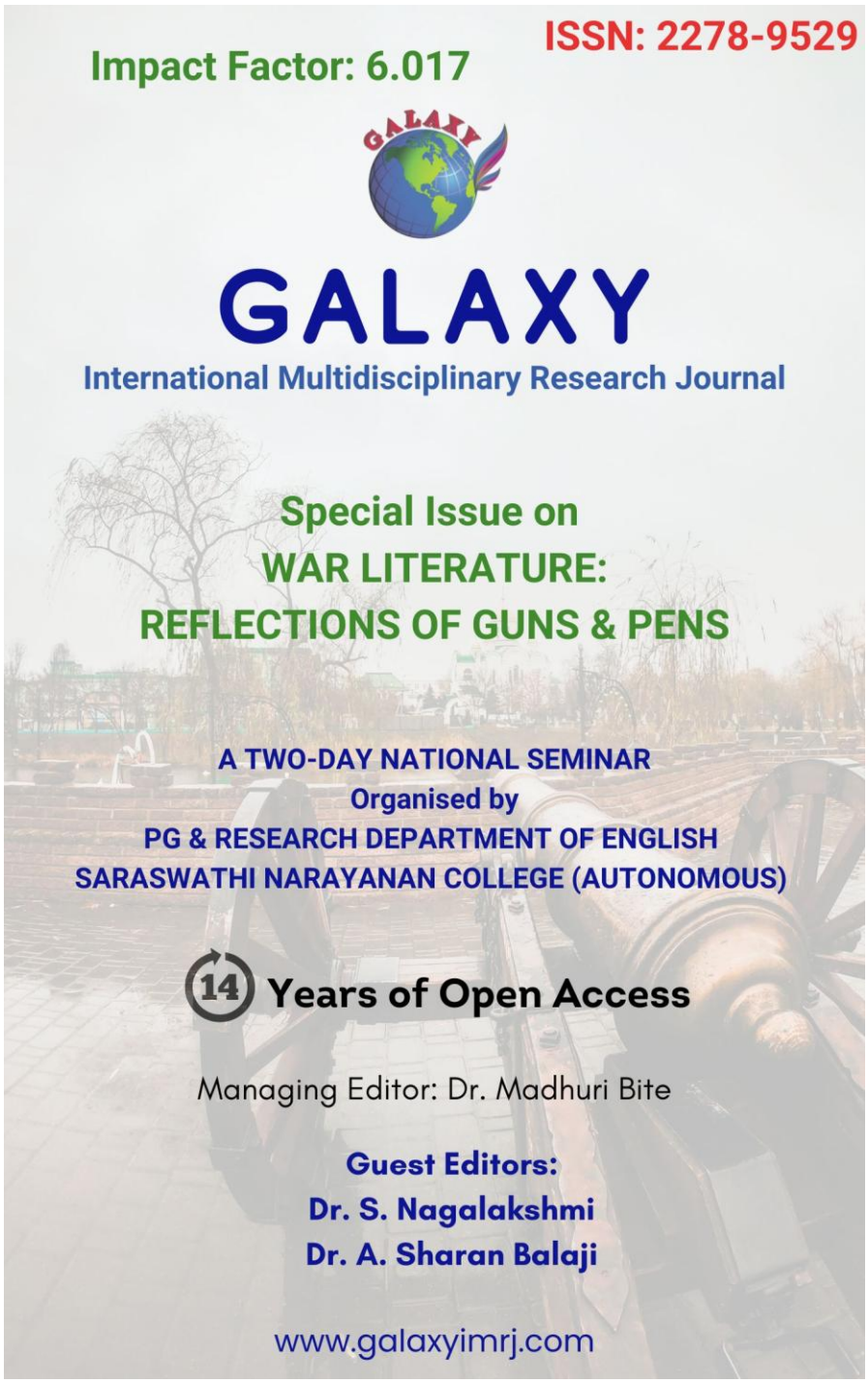



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# Portrayal of the Psychological and Moral Effects of War in Sudha Murthy's "The Serpent's Revenge"

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**Abstract:**

This paper looks at how Sudha Murthy shows the moral and psychological effects of war in her version of the Mahabharata. Murthy's work is different from most stories because it focusses on how war changes people on the inside. This paper also looks at how her writings show that she went through full psychological war trauma, which affects victims in ways other than physical injuries. It further analyses at how Murthy uses textual analysis of her short stories from "The Serpent's Revenge" to show the moral problems that character's face in war-torn places and how heavy the burden of guilt is found, while also showing how intensely empty people feel in postwar settings. This paper will also analyse how Murthy shows decisions made during wars affect both mental health and family relationships in order to show how survivors are affected by violent legacies. The writer gives complicated readings of the Mahabharata based on her research into war deaths that explore basic human feelings like grief, guilt, and the search for forgiveness by interpreting the psychological effects of war in a way that goes beyond the Mahabharata and looks at how people generally feel after war.

**Keywords: The Mahabharata, retelling Indian mythology war, psychological effects, conflict, trauma, moral ambiguity, human cost.**

## Introduction

In Indian folklore, *the Mahabharata* is one of the most important stories. Different storytellers have changed it over time to fit their own time and place. Sudha Murthy is a modern writer whose insightful works paint unique pictures of people by capturing their behaviour. This gives her a unique take on this old story. Murthy's “The Serpent's Revenge” is a unique retelling of the epic because it focusses on the psychological trauma and moral problems that come up during war instead of traditional battles and divine meddling. This paper looks into how Murthy uses her writing to show the human side of war that isn’t shown in military events and to show victims’ personal experiences in war zones.

Instead of focussing on victories and heroic acts like most authors do, Murthy looks at how characters deal with their own moral problems through the way she writes. By telling the same stories over and over, Murthy shows how war makes people make choices that go against their morals, which slowly destroys their morals. Researchers will look at this paper to see how the author shows mental scars that last long after the years of fighting are over. Murthy doesn’t celebrate war in her writing. Instead, she leaves room for readers to think about the long-lasting psychological effects of violence on people.

This study looks at how Murthy uses stories to show how difficult family relationships can be when disruptions caused by war change those relationships. She connects great characters to the reader through specific stories, which makes one to care about real people. The study will also look at how her changes become strong proof that war leaves scars that go beyond physical harm and cause long-lasting trauma in the mental and moral areas of survivors. The main intention or goal of this paper is to look at Sudha Murthy’s

unique way of telling stories as she reads *the Mahabharata* to get a deeper look at how all people experience war.

**The Deconstruction of Heroic Narratives:**

In her new versions of *the Mahabharata,* Sudha Murthy changes the traditional story by focussing less on heroic characters and wartime feats. There is a sophisticated analysis of heroic war-related material in the written story, which focusses on the soldiers' deep emotional struggles. The new view comes from reevaluating the main theme because it puts the pain of people in battles ahead of celebrating victories. Murthy's view of events reveals the secret flaws in character and questionable morals of these historical figures, which changes how one can see them. She doesn't show Karna as a skilled fighter like most people do in her character study of her. The story takes readers into the complicated world of mental pain that a man goes through because of social prejudice and moral problems. Karna is more than just a typical bad man in a story. Murthy makes him feel like a real person by going into great depth about his deep struggles, his need to be accepted, and the choices he makes between loyalty and doing the right thing. This way of telling stories is important because it makes readers think about the moral complexities of war instead of just knowing simple good vs. bad problems.

Murthy's new interpretations make readers think about what it means to be heroic by looking at the decisions and sacrifices people have to make in order to win. Murthy makes readers care about the characters by showing them their flaws and human traits through her stories. This lets readers connect with the characters on a personal level. Her research shows that people hide behind masks of fear and doubt, and they feel sorrow just like everyone else. The epic's vast brilliance grows as new psychological and moral aspects are revealed through analysis, which makes it easier to understand.

**The Psychological Scars of Conflict:**

Sudha Murthy's retellings go into great detail about how war hurts people's minds in ways that can't be fixed. The figures turn into real people, which shows how they deal with the mental and emotional scars of constant war. There is constant psychological damage to troops from death, destruction, and loss of morals, which changes their minds and affects how they act after the war. Through her writing, Murthy shows how long-term violence in war hurts people's minds in ways that are hard to see. Her drawings of Kurukshetra war survivors are mostly about how they felt after the fight was over. The characters have melancholy guilt, painful regret, and terrible loss because they can't get their minds off of the horrible things they did in the past. The survivors are under a lot of mental stress because of the choices they had to make, the fact that they knew people had died, and the fact that they had lost their morals. The focus on the psychological harm in the stories is because this method shows that war has tragic effects that last beyond military activities.

Psychiatric injuries caused by war hurt everyone, including battle veterans, their troubled families, and the community as a whole. Though her work, Murthy shows how painful it is to lose loved ones, the pain that comes with breaking up with them, and the struggles people have to rebuild their broken personal lives. Her changes help us understand that war deaths aren't just the physical deaths of troops, because survivors also have to deal with wounds that can't be seen.

**Ethical Dilemmas and Moral Ambiguity:**

Sudha Murthy shows the Mahabharata through her unique portrayal of moral dilemmas that arise in battle. Instead of showing relationships that are good or bad, she shows a place where things aren't clear. Murthy's stories show how her characters are put to the test of their morals and have to choose between grey and black and white choices. The epic is a

serious look at how people act in a world at war because it deliberately looks into difficult moral issues. In her talk about Yudhishthira, Murthy shows how the figure stands for completely good behaviour. Because this character is so dedicated to dharma, bad things happen that force them to accept moral problems. The author shows how absolute moral standards don't match up with real-life battlefield situations instead of just talking about them in general terms. As a result, she shows how good people get stuck in moral problems. Dharma is a central idea in the epic, but it is also a flexible philosophical theory that readers can change by what they read.

The author doesn't hold back when talking about how war makes people question their morals. People had strong beliefs before the war, but the war makes them see for themselves how good deeds can lead to bad results. In times of war and chaos, Murthy says, even the most moral people can lose their way. Through her works, she forces readers to think about their own morals and the difficulties of making moral decisions during war. Murthy shows how people suffer mentally when they give up their morals by showing how her characters' minds are in turmoil. In the stories, morally grey choices are shown by characters who are sensitive to both the guilt that weighs heavily on them and their long-lasting questions about the wrong things they did. She does not give easy moral judgements throughout her story, instead, she leads readers to accept human flaws in a difficult way.

**The Disruption of Familial Bonds:**

The stories that Sudha Murthy tells show how war causes big problems that break up normal family ties. The story shows that family is its main theme while also showing how violence can break down basic human connections. In her writings, Sudha Murthy shows families whose members have been through terrible wars that force them into painful relationships full of betrayal and loss and then split them. Family ties that are supposed to

comfort and support each other fall apart when there is conflict. This leaves family members alone while they are in danger. The fact that Gandhari lost all of her sons is a big example of how war can destroy close family ties that can't be fixed. According to Murthy, the author, losing a child leaves a hurt that can never heal. This part of the story shows how terrible armed conflicts are for close family relationships. The fact that her boys died shows how deeply personal her loss was, going beyond political issues to be a powerful expression of human suffering during wartime. The great focus on genetic heritage has been replaced by grief and loss.

Murthy looks at how complicated family relationships are in her writing, especially by showing how disagreements between siblings can lead to anger and betrayal. The Pandavas and Kauravas are related by blood, but their hatred for each other turns their blood relationship into fratricide, even though they share a history. They should have been united by their family ties, but instead they turn into things that cause problems. The war events in the stories show how bad war is for parent-child relationships. Mothers have to watch their kids die in war, while fathers have to fight against family members and children have to die in the battles. Murthy's writing shows how deeply upsetting it is when family relationships break down because of loss and separation. The breaking up of families is a key theme in the retellings; it adds to the human element and shows how terrible war is for people.

**Conclusion**

Sudha Murthy gives us a deep look at how people suffer during war, through her versions of the Mahabharata. Through her choice to change the direction of her stories, Murthy shows how war hurts people's minds and morals for life. In her writings, she goes beyond the usual hero stories to show how famous people have hidden flaws and have to make hard moral choices. Murthy shows in her story how war leaves long psychological

scars that change people's minds. Throughout her writing, the author shows how people with heroic personalities become mentally scarred by the things that happen to them. The epic is deeper because it shows the hard decisions people have to make during war by looking at moral problems and decisions that aren't clear-cut. Through her retellings, Murthy shows how people's actions are tainted by moral doubts that make it hard to tell the difference between good and evil. She also forces characters to deal with the results of the choices they made.

Murthy shows how war breaks down important human links by focussing on family ties. Some critics see Homer's epic as a record of military victories, but Sudha Murthy uses it to show how war wrecks families and causes long-lasting pain and loss. Murthy says that the deep effects of war can be felt in emotional connections. She shows that these combat losses are still felt for a long time after the war is over. Instead of sharing traditional stories about heroic battles, Sudha Murthy uses her retellings to give *the Mahabharata* a new look by looking at the deep psychological layers of human conflict. Through her view, the epic is seen in a new way because she sees it as a constant warning about violence that teaches people how important it is to be kind and understanding. Murthy's writing address timeless themes like grief, regret, and the search for redemption, which help readers get a better understanding of how people react to war. Through the characters' human points of view during the war, the author turns the Mahabharata into an eternal story that is related to modern discussions about moral violence and lasting family connections. Through her work, she gives us important information about how to understand the long-term mental damage that war does.

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