

Karna's wife – The Outcast's Queen By Kavita Kane

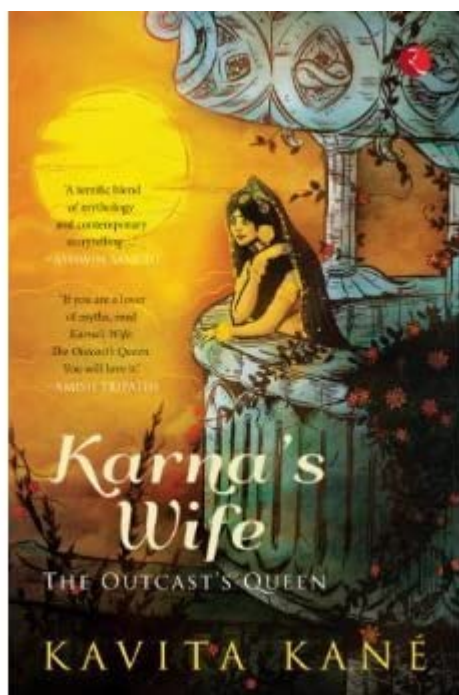
An Overview

Dr. Payal Trivedi

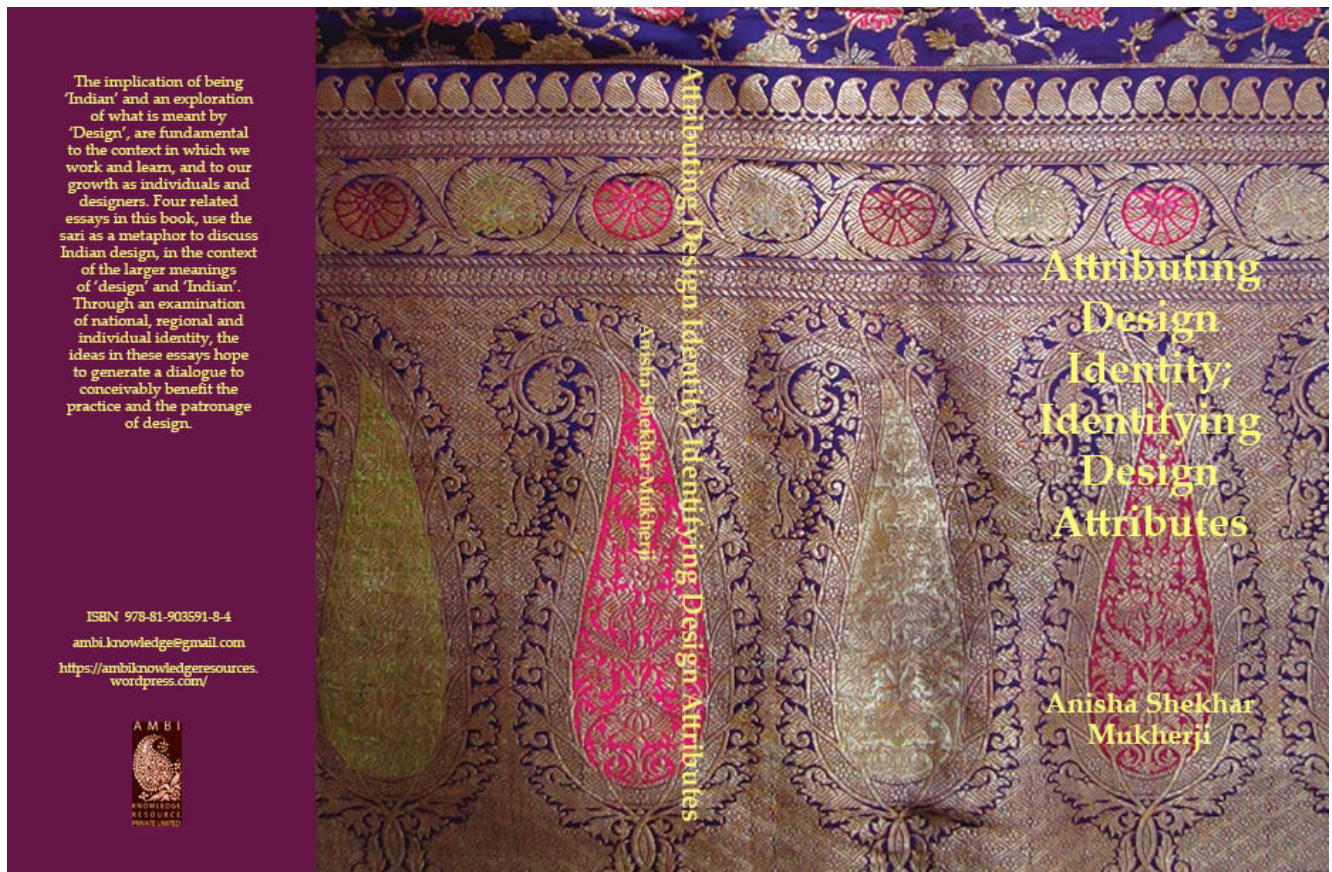
There are events in life we feel we have the RIGHT to change and there are those that make us powerless, Kavita Kane's novel Karna's wife – The Outcast's Queen brings both these facets of life into prominence. As a primary subject matter, the audacity of princess Uruvi to choose Karna, the son of the sutaputra, the charioteer over the royal prince Arjuna as a valiant reformation and comes to the readers as a pleasant surprise. Nonetheless, her powerlessness as a wife to change her husband's course of improper action is more than evident as Uruvi sees Karna meet the dire consequences of being susceptible to his dutiful adherence towards Duryodhana and his inherent disagreement with the Pandavas.

Despite all her wishful thinking that her husband would come to terms with the truth of being misguided by vengeance towards the Pandavas Uruvi is unable to deviate Karna from the path of his own destruction. This brings us to the acknowledgement of a woman's opinion being of secondary or negligible importance in a man's life in spite of it being true. At the same time, Uruvi's strong denial to be subservient to her man's choice of being indulgent in his decision of supporting the wrong is a defiance of the conformist notions that subject a woman to blindly consent to her man's beliefs. When she leaves Karna and opts for a reclusive life away from all the obligations of being a dutiful wife, we see this as the author's appreciable effort towards dethroning the regular assumptions of modernity towards traditional figures as essentially submissive.

The ending of novel does evoke a sense of resignation towards fate and undoubtedly seems to be a conventional approach towards understanding life. Krishna becomes a clairvoyant messenger in informing Uruvi that she cannot change the predestined fate of her son and cannot escape the massacre of war by just evading the truth of her being a warrior's wife and her son being the posterity of a royal clan – Angaraj. Nonetheless, this very conventional approach exposes the unspoken or often avoided truth of life as a preordained karmic cycle which is inescapable. While we know for the fact that individual reaps the fruit of one's own karma, the same fact leads us to acknowledge the fated destiny in case of Karna that brought him to his helpless death end. It is Karna's own choice that brings his downfall but that same choice was made not out of his own choice to be with the wrong doers. His unfortunate destiny of being Kunti's illegitimate child was instrumental in shaping up the course of events in his life; an undeniable truth. Kane adopts a more subtle but an effective mode of unravelling the fact of life being a perplexing arena of the constant feud between fate and deeds. This universally pertinent message makes this novel interesting, appealing and even mysteriously absorbing in its own regard.



Identity and Design & Identity in Design



Taking off from the previous talk on Design Thinking and Attributes of Identity (see Design Thinking – and the Idea of India) this talk is a continuation of the exploration of the relationship between design and identity.

Through a comparative analysis of the meanings of 'modern' and 'Indian', as seen in contemporary and earlier pieces of architecture and design in India, we see how culture, society and philosophy affect aesthetics and ethics – and thus, the appreciation or articulation of design.

Both these talks were prepared and recorded as part of an online set of public lectures for the students of the School

of Architecture, World University of Design in February 2021. For more information on the rest of the talks in the series, please see <http://anishashekhar.blogspot.com/p/talks-and-videos.html>
https://youtu.be/u3i0y_QnZe0

Folk Arts of India: Madhubani

Madhubani paintings find their origin in the Mithila region of Bihar. The tale of Madhubani paintings goes back to the times of Ramayana where it is said that when King Janaka, the father of Sita, had asked the painters of his kingdom to create paintings for his daughter's wedding, the art form came into existence.

Folk Arts of India: Gond

The Gond art form in contemporary times has reached the global scale with the efforts of modern artists and the steps of the government to preserve the art form.

The Universe within the Womb

/ Gouri Nilakantan



Does the cold womb speak to the warm vagina, are we meant to be bound and knit into the body, so much so we do not seem to belong, not to have any identity ever? The guess is not in the mystification nor in the pontification of the “female” in the eyes of society. Nor it is amongst the peering eyes of manhood and by keeping them as some elusive or exclusive superior race. It lies in the individuality and the recognition of the self amongst all. For once let us not see ourselves only through the wombs, the vaginas, or pining breasts but only as having separate yet same voices. This through which we can declare strongly enough to be defined as all belonging to each other.

The time to be in categories of gender has long gone, it needs to be attacked and discarded as worthless. These binaries and super binaries that do not see women as individuals first but use the safety net of phrases of gender are to be shot down as fallacies. We have been honoured enough by given powerful names by our ancestors. We have been given recognition for sounding phrases strong. Enough of gendering, enough and more than enough, it's time to think ahead, as “you and me”, and “we all”, “as all of us” that belong entirely to each other.

This will allow us to love unconditionally, to let go unconditionally and remain forever within the societal definitions of a “wife” “mother” “daughter” or “sister”. It will thus also not negate the man as a “husband” “father” “son” or “brother” and bondages will only only grow stronger and stronger. Such singular terms of unity therefore allows one to outgrow force and coercion that often come within societal relationships. The urge here I see to all of us

only as me and you and forget the male, female, alpha male, alpha female etc. The society will then accept unconditionality in loving and wanting to be loved.

For once live only for you and me and forget all expectations from each other, not because god says so, or you have enlightened and seen Buddhahood, or emerged victorious from the caves of inner meditation, but only because you truly and truly believe in the selfhood of each person. Wombs will then create the universe with its totality and spirit of mind. Enjoy and embark in this unconditionality of living and letting to live.

Tete-a-tete with the Sighting Shadows / Gouri Nilakantan

Shadows of course are hazy, difficult to pin as someone true, and further becomes even more not worth a glance, if it belongs to mere passerby. However, for once it is important to..

The General having crossed a Torii boundary – Drawing with

a Torii and a figure

The trajectory of my art practice takes on a zigzag path sometimes; and at other times a circuitous one or a U-turn that I didn't expect to take.

The work "The General" is one such. I started off with figure sculptures and then went on to study life drawing at Boston University.

Memories of the Recitative Past



All of us are born with memories that we wish to forget and discard like faded photographs having hazy blurry images or the thrown pennings of blue inland letters and creamy pages fading with endearing attachments. We would rather regurgitate the past than carry it within us. Are we in the real sense of

failing to remember or do we wish not to hear the words of the recitative past and not get the truthful recollection of the echoing sights? To be called only as a witness is easier than to bear and pour out the visions we wish not to see. The ability to see things as they are, are so difficult to break, that to escape into the light hearted day seems much easier and much more uncomplicated.

No one wants to resound pain, express trauma or grieve for a loss. The identity of the self to happily live only within the confines of the day, going from hour to hour and knocking down the doors of the minutes that dissolves then into seconds, is true serenity and peace. However, many times we need to challenge the tranquillity we have falsely created and listen to the polyphonous sounds of the dead and buried. The graves of the bygone as much as you bury, as much as you decide the deepest depth the coffin should lay, needs the embalming, only and only to cleanse your soul.

To gain the convincing reincarnation of this lost spirit, is only possible if we allow ourselves to cry, lament and mourn for the forgotten memories. Just by dismissing the bygone and not evoking the emotions of sorrow, by not shedding the salty reservoir, we are creating only adulterated personifications of what we term as today. Its reason is enough to moisten the sodden earth of the buried past, so that the watering down can reach the submerged coffins. One has to sometimes open to see the enclosed skeletons and beat one's breast to lament for the faded photographs or tethered inland letters or torn creamy papers that are screaming to be heard.

So, hear the cries within, grieve for the past, sob along with the beats of your heart and let your tears become the pulse. It will only allow the recitative past to become beautiful, melodious verses of songs of your life you will want to hear again and again.



The Exodus Needs a Companion / Gouri Nilakantan

I see the human mind seeking and wandering eternally in the search of this unerring habitat. If our birth homes can define and allow such unconfined liberties, uncontested un-contemptuous ways, will only then, this never ending.....

**Abstractionist Prabhakar
Kolte's Exhibition, 'The
Mind's Eye' opens 9th Oct**

The Preview will be followed by wine and cheese

The exhibition will be on view until 10th December, 2021.
Monday-Saturday, 11am-7pm