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INSIGHTFUL STUDY OF SURYAPUTRA -THE MOST VIRTUOUS BUT TRAGIC WARRIOR  
FROM *THE MAHABHARATHA*: A STUDY ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Literature is a wide platform which intertwines fields such as history, philosophy, sociology, psychology and so on. In Literature, Psychology also the important branch that deal with the study of human soul. It is a discipline wherein languages are used as a medium of expression so as to interpret men, existence and culture. The relationship between psychology and literature is a bilateral relation. Human's soul makes the literature, and literature nourishes human's soul. Literature and psychology both pay attention to fancy, thoughts, feelings, sensations and soul-psychical issues. Love is an important and complex topic of study for social psychologists. Some think of love as a physical passion and others think of it as long-lasting affection. It is a part of emotion and such an important and complex topic. Robert Sternberg is an American psychologist and Psychometrician who is famous for his influential theories related to creativity, wisdom, thinking styles, love and hate. The focus of this paper is an application of psychological aspects of Sternberg's *Triangular Theory of love* in the character of 'Karna' in the retelling of the Indian epic *the Mahabharata*.

**KEY WORDS:** Expression, Psychology, Physical Passion, Love and Hate, Trust.

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Literature and Psychology explores the relationships between text and reader as well as the relationships within the text and with particular importance on emotions. There are three categories based on the relationship between psychology and literature which is critically examined. The first category represents literature as a source of psychological data. Literature is a source of insights for psychology. The second involves literature as an independent variable and literature as a dependent variable, literature as understood through psychology. The third, at the highest level of abstraction, involves psychology as a culture-free and literature as a Culture-bound. Each option is viable at a particular level of abstraction, although psychology and literature is particularly provocative, and also nurturing the cultural research. The psychological content can take different forms in literature. It can be represented symbolically or with the help of metaphors. It can also

be found in the structure of the text, the time, the place, the action or even in meter and rhythm in the case of poetry.

In literature, psychological novels developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, enriched by Sigmund Freud's discoveries in the field of psychoanalysis. Freud is well known for his theories regarding the unconscious mind and the mechanism of repressions. He states that the mind can be divided into two parts that is, the conscious mind which includes everything people are aware of and the unconscious mind which includes people's feelings, thoughts and memories that influence their behaviour. Psychological content appears in a wide range of literary forms, from poetry to short stories, plays and novels. However, the most explicit reference to the human mind is to be found in psychological novels which deal with individuals' inner experiences, thoughts, feelings, emotions and introspections.

Myth is an indispensable part of every culture. In a country like India myth has greatly contributed in the formation of culture and has acted as a tool in conditioning the mindset of people. The ideas set by myths, especially the narratives, remain the moral authority of the nation for centuries. On the contrary the modern retellings of epic narratives inspire a critical perspective from the part of readers and allow them to question certain ideology contained in epics that was once considered ultimate. This particular trend is an inevitable result of the centuries of suppression experienced by the people who were marginalized in the ancient narratives.

Indian mythology is a large body of traditional narratives which consists of Vedas, epic, puranas and many other works. Probably the most popular among these works are the classical epics in Sanskrit literature such as *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and the ancient epics in cultural norms, political significance and religious connotations. These works have been fascinating people of all age groups in India for generations. *Mahabharata* is the longest epic poem ever written in the world. The authorship of Mahabharata is ascribed to Vyasa, who is known as Veda Vyasa. The title of the epic *Mahabharata* means, 'the greatest tale of Bharata destiny'. The main story of the text deals with the struggle between two branches of Bharata race, the Pandavas and the Kauravas and the ultimate destruction of the latter. In this epic, Vyasa gives more importance to all characters like Arjuna, Bheem, Duryodana, and Draupadi. Among them the most important character is Karna. He is portrayed as a marginalized character.

Throughout history, a variety of disciplines have speculated on the nature of love. Since 1886 the German physician and pioneering sexologist Richard Von Krafft-Ebing has identified five types of love, time love, sentimental love, platonic love, friendship and sensual love. Then after Ebing, psychotherapist Albert Ellies (1954) has also proposed additional love varieties and also has discussed about various types of affection such as conjugal love, parental love, familial love, religious love and love on humanity, love for animals, love for things, self-love, sexual love, obsessive-compulsive love etc. Contemporary social and behavioral scientists also have proposed taxonomies that specify types of love. One among them, Robert Sternberg has also discussed about the different aspects of love. His most famous concept is *The Triangular Theory of Love*.

According to Sternberg, conceptualized love in terms of three components that form the vertices of triangle are 1) Intimacy, 2) Passion, 3) Commitment. Each component manifests a different aspect of love.

**INTIMACY:** Intimacy refers to feelings of closeness, connectedness and in loving relationships. It thus includes within its purview those feelings that rise, essentially, to the experience of warmth in a loving relationship.

**PASSION:** Passion refers to the drives that lead to romance, physical attraction, sexual consummation, and related phenomena in loving relationships. The passion component includes within its purview those sources of motivational and other forms of arousal that lead to the experience of passion in a loving relationship.

**COMMITMENT:** Decision/commitment refers, in the short-term, to the decision that one loves a certain other, and in the long-term, to one's commitment to maintain that love. These two aspects of the decision/commitment component do not necessarily go together, in that one can decide to love someone without being committed to the love in the long-term, or one can be committed to a relationship without acknowledging that one loves the other person in the relationship.

These three components of this theory is suitable to the special character called Karna in *The Mahabharata*. Throughout his life, he comes across three components and attains intimacy, passion and commitments in his life.

Karna is a 'low-born' king. He is the most popular and complex character in the *Mahabharata*, showing both nobility and unpleasantness over the course of the story. His life has gone through various pitches of tragedy and sacrifice alternately. He is the son of Kunti and Surya, the Sun god. He is the half-brother of the Pandavas. However, he does not know that he is born of royal parents. His foster parents, Radha and Adhiratha chief charioteer of King Dhritarashtra, loved him immensely and brought him up very well. He always remembered that how much his mother loved him. Karna has different names in his life. Six different names of the Daanveer in the *Mahabharata* comprise more meanings with reasonable. They are Vasusena, Radheya, Angaraj, Karna, Vaikartana and Vrisha.

He was an intelligent man. He had enough sense to see that Duryodhana's confession. But he was not just a passive participant he was an active participant who goaded Duryodhana on, many times. Duryodhana's life could have been saved by only Karna and his intelligence rather than his loyalty and gratitude.

At the end of his life he is fated to be with full of bad fortune due to his self-centered commitments. In Kurukshetra, Krishna came to sue for peace, he spoke to Karna. Then he realized that he had been actively trying to nurture hatred towards the five Pandavas. Existence is not making a judgment about who is good or bad. It is only social situations that try to judge people as good and bad. It is only individual human beings who try to judge you as good and bad. Existence never judges because it is not written anywhere that one thing is good and some other thing is bad.

Many contemporary works depict the tragedy and sacrifice of Karna's life. *Karna - The Unsung Hero of the Mahabharata* (2015) written by Umesh Kotru and Ashutosh Zutshi, focuses on Karna's life after being abandoned by his biological mother Kunti. The book *Suryaputra Kaunteya (The Story of Karna the Great)* written by Indirabai M. Rau (2002), tells about Karna, One can sing the praises in many tunes. Shine too always at all crucial moments in his life. Deepak Chandar's *KARNA- The Mortal God* (2014) is about the secret of karna's birth and his sacrifice to earth, then complete tragedy. Kavita Kane's *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen* (2013) tells the extraordinary story of Karna, the unsung hero of the Mahabharata, through the eyes of his wife Uruvi who works as Karna's conscience.

The people of Hastinapur blindly followed the caste system, it was the radical thinker Duryodhan who broke all the caste system rules and gave the son of the charioteer a status which his skill, talent and knowledge deserved in the graduation day. Even Duryodana noticed his background that the place he grew up unlike his teacher Kripacharya who rejected and insulted Karna in a competition which was based on the basis of his birth, instead he befriended with the Suryaputra and always hold him in high regards all through his life. A very close intense bond of friendship develops between the two and Duryodhana becomes very close to Karna. If there is one good quality in Duryodhana, it is his deep affection for his friend Karna. "Unworthy of being king of Anga, didst thou say? I verily hold him worthy to rule the whole world." In generous wrath, Duryodhana took Karna in his chariot and drove away". (Rajagopalachari 46).

Vrushali is the sister of Duryodhana's charioteer Satyasen. It is believed that Karna's adoptive father Adhiratha wants Karna to get married to her. Vrushali accepts the process of sati on Karna's pyre after his death. Duryodhana also mentions that Vrushali is not an ordinary person but of a very high character equivalent to Karna. Karna remains an enigmatic character. In all the retellings of the *Mahabharata* a very less is revealed of Karna's personal life.

Karna's second wife is Uurvi, the Princess of Pukeya, the only daughter of a powerful king and a favourite of Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas. This book traverses the tale of the *Mahabharata*, beginning from when Uurvi lays eyes on unimaginably handsome Karna at Draupadi's swayamvara. Uurvi falls in love with this low-caste prince and decides that she will marry him or remain unwed. Even though King Vahusha knows that his effort becomes a waste to change Uruvi's mind, he tried his best but it is in vein. Uruvi said to her father that she will marry Karna or otherwise she will not marry anybody.

For me, it is either Karna or no one. If I can't have him, I would rather stay unmarried. Unmarried!' her father scoffed in sudden anger. 'You know that can never happen in the world we live in. Are you threatening me, child? Society will not permit me to keep you unmarried, nor will it allow you to marry a half-cast. You wouldn't be as crazy as that. You are a Kshatriya girl-you cannot marry a sutaputra! (Kane 18).

Uurvi's mother, a childhood friend of Kunti, has promised her daughter to Arjuna as this will make a powerful alliance for the Pandavas, but Uurvi marries Karna against all their wishes. Though Uurvi marries the man she loves, the marriage is not without trouble. These two love stories and undying friendship between Karna and Duryodhana depict Karna's intimacy and relationship in his life.

Karna is brought up by a charioteer, a class much lower than the mighty Kshatriya. But in his blood, he is a warrior. He goes to Dronacharya to learn warfare, but Drona rejects his proposal, because he is not a Kshatriya. He disguises himself as a Brahmin to learn warfare from Parshurama and learned everything about warfare. Such is his dedication. "Karna went to Parshurama and became his disciple by representing to him that he was a brahmana. He learnt of Parshurama the mantra for using the master weapon known as Brahmastra" (Rajagopalachari 47).

After the Pandavas and the Kauravas finish their training, a grand gala is organized where they exhibit off their awesome skills. Karna makes his way to this gala, and defeats them that leave all the Pandavas and Kauravas lay embarrassed. He outshines his talent in front of all. He proves the worth of his skills and passion towards his learning. In front of all, Karna challenged Arjuna to prove his skills. "Karna addressed Arjuna in a voice deep as rumbling thunder: "Arjuna, I shall show greater skill than you have displayed." (Rajagopalachari 43). In Karna's life he totally downturn. His rejection and affront helps him to attain his passion.

In the graduation day the entire country comes together to watch the great princes' display their strength and skill. All the 100 Kauravas and the 5 Pandava princes get ready for the show. It is a festive atmosphere everywhere as thousands of people cheer the princes'. All the elders waited eagerly to watch their wards. One after the other, all the Kauravas and Pandava princes display their skills. There Karna also shows his talents without others permission. Drona, Duryodana and others feel that Karna is better than Arjuna. Drona is astonished at Karna's skills, but he has to keep his promise to Arjuna. But Drona insults him that only princes are permitted to play these games and he is not worthy to play these games. So Karna hung his head in shame.

"This prince, who is ready to fight with thee, is the son Pritha and Pandu and a scion of the Kuru race. Reveal, O mighty armed the parentage and the race rendered illustrious by the birth. It is only after knowing the lineage that Partha can fight with thee, for high-born princes cannot engage in single combat with unknown adventures".

When he heard these words, Karna bent down his head like a lotus under the weight of rain water. (Rajagopalachari 45).

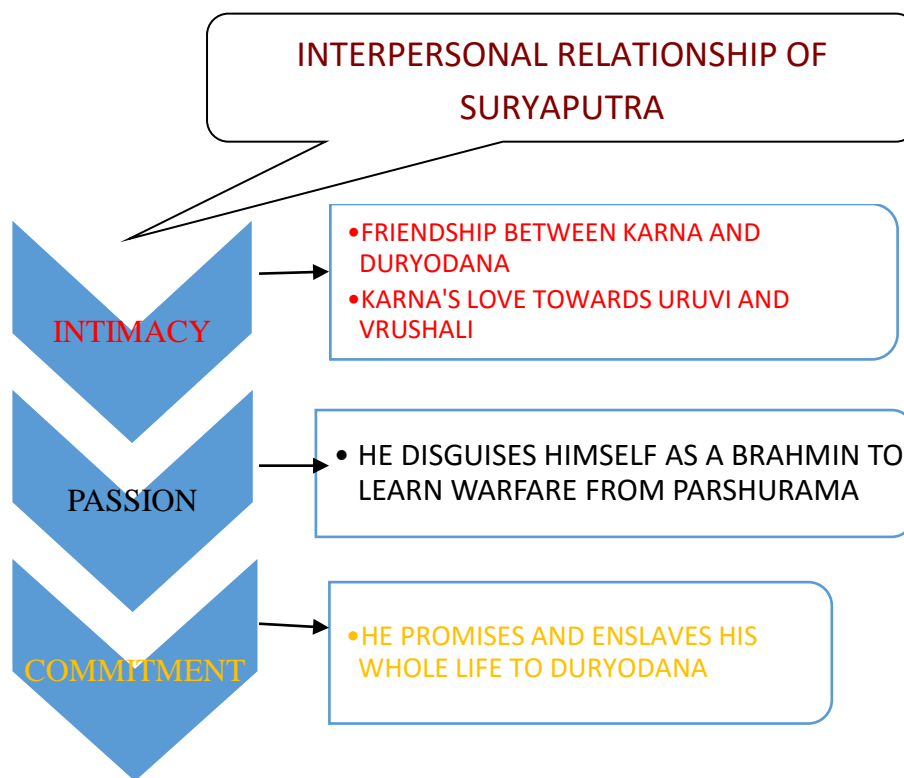
There Duryodana supports him and accepts him as his friend. Then he announces to everyone that he is the prince of Anga. Karna is overwhelmed by Duryodana's affection, and he promises him that he will be a supporter of Duryodana's good and bad fortune. Here he promises and also a enslaves all his life to Duryodana.

Duryodhana stood up said: "If the combat cannot take place merely because Karna is not a prince-why, that is easily remedied. I crown Karna as the King of Anga." He then obtained the assent of Bhishma and Dhritarashtra, performed all the necessary rites and invested Karna with the sovereignty of the kingdom of Anga giving him the crown, jewels and other royal insignia (Rajagopalachari 45)

Karna is a wonderful human being who has gone totally badly because he has invested himself in bitterness. His bitterness takes him into a disastrous life story. He is a man with a phenomenal sense of integrity and generosity but all this is lost. He dies in the battle in a bad way.

## CONCLUSION

The three components of love interact with each other. Intimacy may lead to greater passion or commitment; likewise the commitment may lead to intimacy, or with passion. These components are separable, but interactive with each other. Although all three components are important parts of loving relationships, their importance may differ from one relationship to another. Likewise in Karna's life these three components interact with one another. His passion to learn interacts with his commitment with Duryodana, His intimacy of love and friendship also create interact with commitment and passion. Through this interpersonal relationship study the impact of intimacy, passion and commitment which makes Karna's life eventful is explored here. To conclude, a triangular theory of love has been presented that attempts to explain and characterize a variety of love-related phenomena not only in karna's life, but in each personality. It provides at least one step toward understanding the nature of love in everyday life.



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