

Self Exploration of Urmila in Sita's Sister

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Abstract

To understand the novel in Urmila's perspective, her image has to be traced in her reference. Urmila has played a variety of roles in the perfect manner as a sister, a daughter, a wife, a daughter-in-law and so on. No matter what the situation was, she always emerged as a shield for her family like a pole star. She emerged in all these roll of her full potential, ability and logical approach to fineness in every adversity and adverse condition. After the exile of Ram, Sita and Lakshman, there was no one left in Ayodhya who could take strong decision for the court and take care of the family. Bharat was in Nandigram, Shatrughan was not very experienced because he was the youngest one, Urmila became a good leader and managed the situation smartly. In fact, the journey of Urmila from Mithila to Ayodhya is an allegorical and tenacious search for an individual identity targeted to going beyond being only Sita's sister or Lakshman's wife. In the novel Urmila's character is represented as a woman of many dimensions: she is a scholar, an artist, an archer and most importantly a woman who is a pivot, holding everyone together. She marched her journey with "trumphed teams and tragedy with dignity and strength".

Keywords:Adventure, Real-self, Suffering, Devotion, Sacrifice and Exile.

Introduction

In Ramayan, Sita, Kaushalya, Kaikeyi, Sumitra, as far as a maid, Manthara portrayed all very well but Urmila's character was eliminated in few lines, whereas she should have got some more importance in Ramayana. Sita had Ram, Lakshman had Ram, similarly everyone had someone or the other. Urmila was the only one who spent the best time of her life in waiting for her husband, her wait was a penance.

Kane is there-creator of Urmila and represents her as a woman with immense strength and conviction, a distinguish identity, a sharp thinking mind and loving voice. The purpose of this article also explores the empowered attitude of her and how Urmila opposes and fights against patriarchal prejudices and male dominated environment of her law's house. Her parents brought up her in a healthy environment. She was treated as a princes and participated actively in every Yagna of Mithila. She is a free thinker and open minded woman. ***She might be a little timid, but she was very strong in the face of mishaps and crises.(2)**

Urmila, and Indian women negotiated her way throughout life to live with her a clear purpose. Kavita Kane's Urmila is "for the woman, to the woman and by the woman."

Urmila was the biological daughter of King Janak, she was the actual princess of Mithila. Urmila never got this right. Sita got all the aspects of Janak's daughter. She was accepted as the first child of King Janak. Was it true? Sita got respect, prestige and place of ideal daughter besides Urmila has enough courage, intellectually liberal, perfect in life skills. She was more better than Sita in every aspects of princess. First her father ignored her, her sister then her husband and her-in-laws'. From the beginning to end she was neglected by everyone. Even the legends have completely ignored her by saying only that she kept on sleeping for fourteen years. Whatever happened, she performed her every duty in a perfect manner and at the same time she was also aware about her rights. From Mithila to in-laws, she has not faded anywhere, she is the best example of a strong woman. As Mandavi has told the truth for Urmila. ***Marriage did not hold much interest for Urmila but it was a social discipline. She would have to confirm to, she would rather seek knowledge instead of a suitor.(9)**

When Lakshman was away for fourteen years as she was portrayed as tempestuous princess in love, vivacious bride, insecure wife and ambitious lady who did not bother to impose herself on her husband to become his ultimate distraction. Lakshman had put a condition on marriage that he would devote his whole life to serve his elder brother. Urmila accepted his condition without any

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problem. She devoted her life to her husband. She loves her husband and all the members of in-laws unconditionally.

The name of the novel is Sita's Sister. Who is Urmila, sister of Sita and wife of Lakshman, is her identity correct? What is her own existence? She was called by the name of relative's relative but not called as a princess or the actual daughter Janak's Urmila. Throughout the novel, she appears busy in fulfilling her promises and responsibilities. But Lakshman's responsibility and duty towards Urmila are completely lost. He has always given an impression of being a person who is devoted, committed to his brother duties all through his life and his personal relationship and never bonds of surface in prominence.

Memories of Maithili Saran Gupt's Saket are refreshed once again, he has illustrated the separation of fourteen years as a penance and personal exile of Urmila is in a pictorial way. She was the perfect combination of beauty withers away, the subtle human emotion can be feel frequently in Saket.

As a wife, her honesty, humanity and most of all, unflinching trust in her husband shook us to the core. It is the journey of a woman which leads her suffering to sacrifice.

Urmila and her three sisters were brought up freely and independently. They were treated as the princes and got education of vedas. They used to take part in every one of the yogyas held in Mithila, there were no restrictions on them. As Urmila was very courageous and strong heart princess. She does not tolerate any kind of injustice or any pressure without mistake. She directly asks Guru Kashyap in the meeting of Ayodhya about the dharma of Brahmin and Kshtraya of the king, princes and of the sons and father, even wife for her husband. Is it really correct? there is not any duty and responsibility of the husband for his wife? There is no dharma of the son for his mother? It is always about the fathers, sons and brothers?

After hearing this Guru Kashyap preached that it is not Mithila where your father allows you to agree freely and shamelessly like free thinker Gargi. "It is the assembly of the greatest minds of Ayodhya." But these arguments couldn't make her silence. As the daughter-in-law of Raghukul, she again asked and wanted to know what is the dharma of a son for his mother. She further asks that when Sita wanted to go to forest with Ram none of dared to stop her to going of forest despite everybody knows that how much danger was there for her. She further said. **"If you couldn't keep the bows you made to your wives, why did you brother marry? You may be the best of princes, the perfect sons, the ideal brothers, probably the ideal king too, but never the good husband. You are right Guru Kashyap. Ayodhya is not Mithila. Mithila does not treat woman so shabbily."** 223

When Sita went to forest for fourteen years exile with Ram. Nobody wants to stop her because where she will look after to Ram and by no means was the forest safe for her. The exile belonged only to Ram, he should not have been taken Sita there. Lakshman was able to kill Meghnath because of her wife 'Urmila' Meghanath had a been that no one can kill him expect a **"devout celibate ascetic, divinely strong"** and who has not slept for a long time.

Urmila who was lifeless in Ramayana and Kavita Kane's Urmila is alive, enough daring, intelligent, full of logics, witty and great leader. She has great capacity of taking good decision against the patriarchy. She played a vital role among the princess and has vast capacity and courage of defeating the great hardships in her life. Although she was alone through the fourteen years in palace exile. But she was never afraid of the adverse situation. She faces every tough situation of her life as a brave and mighty soldier. She stood alone for every woman's right and has taken tough decision in her life without any care of her husband and father. She raised her voice against the dominated males of her law's house. She was very broad minded who fought for her rights of woman and took a stance against the dominated minds of her time.

Urmila's story of sacrifice and devotion is a recreation of mythology which reflects a subaltern viewpoint. Urmila's so many divine sacrifices would not have known the world if Kavita Kane had not written this novel. Kavita Kane's Lakshman

understands Urmila's pain, he has become her mouthpiece in the novel. As he said:

“O Urmila will the world ever know of your inner suffering your divine sacrifice?”. (158)

She was a woman who was imprisoned in the house only for the name of responsibility. Whereas this did not happen with Sita. Injustice was done to her, when her husband would go into exile with his brother then she was forced to spend her time in sleeping and house keeping for a long time. She breaks down for a while from despair, but at the second she quickly takes care of herself and understands Lakshman's condition. Life partner is needed at every stage of life, his advice, his sympathy, his support, his love, etc.

Her beauty is that she loves him unconditionally and without any expectation. Even through she knows that her place is always second in Lakshman's life. He gives first priority to his elder brother. She forgave both her husband and father for this injustice, her heart is very enormous. She was always chosen after Sita in Mithila too. Sita was married to the future king of Ayodhya. She never looked down upon Sita for this. She always raised her voice for the wrong thing but never to victory or rule. She maintains the dignity of every relationships and also aware about the freedom of a person. She asks her husband, sages and scholars to answer that what is the responsibility of the men of Raghukul Dynasty towards the women of this lineage. Laksman does not love her because she is devoted and intelligent but she kept the promise given to him and supported him with whole heartedly even in every difficult situation. Lakshman can go to exile because Urmila let him go and no princess can show such sacrifice. This is the difference between Sita and Urmila. She is great sister, wife, daughter and daughter-in-law too. She did not let Kaikeyi's image get spoiled, she also exposed the real enemy behind the conspiracy. It is not a matter how wrong Kaikeyi did but she stands with her in odd circumstances. When everyone was believing Kaikeyi to be wrong, then Urmila brought the information to everyone and caught the real culprit. She didn't let a mother put to shame in front of her son. When Ram takes Sita's ordeal and questioned her chastity after the rescue from Lanka then she denounces Ram and stands with Sita.

Objective of the Study

The name of the novel is Sita's Sister. Who is Urmila, sister of Sita and wife of Lakshman, is her identity correct? What is her own existence? She was called by the name of relative's relative but not called as a princess or the actual daughter of Janak, 'Urmila'. The aim of this article is the exploration of the empowered attitude of Urmila, how she opposes, fights against patriarchal prejudices and male dominated environment of her law's house. It traces the journey of Urmila's real adventures which start with her dedication and becomes the story of her suffering to sacrifice.

Conclusion

The time has changed expect nothing. Everything is still what is used to be. Urmila's story is not only her story, but every girl of today has a say in which stereotypes, power, corruption conspiracy, deceit, love, hate, jealousy and insecurity. This is not just an old story, it is not a re-formation, it is a lesson of man's foolishness and misconceptions. Valmiki's Urmila is portrayed in few lines and there is a feeling of freshness and newness in Kavita's Kane's Urmila. She has infused a new spirit in Urmila which Valmiki has ignored. She enlightened her character, the exile is not only for Ram, Sita and Lakshman rather it is Urmila's personal exile which she spent alone in the palace. This journey of her is without any despair, hope, drying of her tears in her eyes and feeling self pity. These fourteen years are of her self-illumination and achievements too. This story is to perform everyone's responsibility, which has been given the wrong term as Dharma, it is the state of dilemma of the epic. What is right what is wrong, what is bad, what is good, what is religion, what is duty and what is action towards them. It is the two sides of a coin.

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