

Concealed Valour: A Reinterpretation of Sita in Amish Tripathi's *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*

Jodhi Usha

*Ph.D(Parttime) Research Scholar,
Bharath Institute of Science and Technology,
Selaiyur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600 073*

ABSTRACT

Myths are the ancient stories passed on to all generations with a reason to perpetuate a belief. India is a country where myths have a separate place in Indian Literature . Indian folklores, epics and short stories are highly influenced by myth. Sita is one the most influential and famous characters in Indian mythology. Sita has always been regarded as the epitome of kindness, gentleness, courage and determination. Also she is accepted as a weak, mute sufferer of all pains given by the society through her husband Rama. This paper is to unwrap the concealed and hidden valour in a woman like Sita and to show the brave and courageous side of every Sita.

I. INTRODUCTION

Amish Tripathi is an Indian novelist. His writings mainly concentrate on Indian myth. He has written Shiva's Trilogy - *The Immortals of Meluha, The Secrets and the Nagas, The Oath of Vayuputras*. He has also written Ram Chandra Series - *Scion of Ikshvaku* and about Sita from Ramayana named *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*. Amish has depicted the characters not as heavenly and supreme but as humans with flesh and blood. They are the real people according to Amish and because of their good deeds they became the saviour of common people.

In country like India, the feminine has always been submissive and passive. India is a male dominant country where women are considered as the fragile and are expected to be obedient and a follower. She is not accepted as a leader. Not only in modern days but also in olden days, in our own literature, we can see the upper hand of males. There are many female characters with such examples Draupadi in The Mahabharata.

However, when we go through various sources available about gender equality and discrimination, we shall find that women are far behind than men in various fields. On the other hand women are also harassed, exploited, degraded, violated and discriminated in their homes and outside world. This type of discrimination is easily seen in Indian society. The root cause of gender inequality is patriarchal system deeply rooted in Indian society.

There are some issues where we can find gender inequality extensively existing in our society. They can be summarised as, extreme poverty, lack of education, less nourishment to girls, lack of employments, lack of awareness, social attitude, social customs. There are some other aspects of such inequality in estrangement between woman and other male members in family, marriage and divorce, physical harassment, dowry, pre-marital, extra-marital relationships these are some major forms of inequality on the basis of gender.

Amish Tripathi, in *Sita: Warrior of Mithila* (2017), has broken the image of submissive Sita and portrayed an energetic young Princess who is ready to rule the great India. Amish Tripathi, one of the famous contemporary writers. Here, he intends to voice out the similar story of Ramayana but in different form. In the first book he deals the story of Ram, where the second, *Sita, Warrior of Mithila* portrays the story of Sita from the time of her salvation in her infancy till the abduction by demon Raavan.

The book is both criticized and appreciated for Sita is depicted as a real warrior who is not heard by an ordinary Indian. Through the protagonist Sita, Amish has made an attempt to knock off the view of Indian woman in the present patriarchal Indian society, where she is expected to be a dutiful wife and a humble human being. *Sita, Warrior of Mithila* begins with the story of Janak, the king of Mithila, who, with his wife Sunaina finds a child on road protected by a vulture. They take the child and adopts her and named her Sita, since she is found in a furrow. As Sita grows she is sent to an ashram and there she learns martial arts, horse riding and also gains knowledge in various subjects.

She grows up very skilful and knowledgeable and impresses many by her kind and benevolent nature. After her education she comes back to Mithila and after her mother's death she becomes the care taker of her younger sisters. For her fearless nature and huge wisdom she is made the Prime Minister of Mithila. She proves herself very able and brings many reforms in the city. She gains the trust of the people of Mithila.

She plans to marry Rama, the prince of Ayodhya, through swayamvar. When she comes to know that the demon Raavana and his brother Kumbhakarana have also come for the swayamvar, she manipulates Vishwamitra to announce Rama's name first so that she can choose him as her suitor. Here Sita is using her wisdom to escape from the filthy intentions of the demon Raavan.

The next day, Raavan besieges Mithila with 10,000 soldiers, and Ram is forced to use the weapon Asurastra by Viswamitra, even though its usage is forbidden by Lord Rudra. The Lankan army is defeated and Raavan escapes on his helicopter, Pushpak Viman. Ram returns to Ayodhya and decides to take a 14-year exile as punishment for breaking Lord Rudra's rule. Sita holds a grudge against Viswamitra for forcing Ram to use the weapon and never speaks to him. Together with Lakshman she joins Ram on the exile, but enlists help from Jatayu and his men, to protect Ram and supply the trio with the anti-ageing drink, Somras.

Numerous incidents take place during their exile and thirteen years pass by. One day, with Ram and Lakshman out hunting, the camp is attacked by Raavan and his soldiers. Sita rushes to help

a wounded Jatayu but loses the fight against so many soldiers. She is abducted and carried unconscious into the Pushpak Viman. Once she regains conscious she attempts killing Raavan in the vehicle.

Sita is very clear about her ideas and conceptions of life. Even though she is well known about her story of adoption, Sita never gives up her relationship with her mother Sunaina. In spite of third person narration, Amish clearly expresses Sita's vantage point about her parentage and her love for her mother. Staying away from her family in her growing age makes her to think of her birth mother but at the same time never makes her think negative about her mother Sunaina, who is a strong impact on Sita's life. Being the Queen of Mithila, Sunaina realizes her daughter's responsibilities after her period. When she is in deathbed, Sunaina teaches her that welfare of her nation depends on Sita, the upcoming protector and instils her responsibilities as well. Creating trust on her mother helps her to build a strong self-image and self-confidence. She knows well that before entering into the mainstream of her life, she needs to strengthen herself in every aspect. The life in the Ashram not only proves her as a real warrior but also a good leader. The frequent visit of Vishwamitra allows him to watch Sita as a saviour of the mother land. Recognizing the Vishnu, Vishwamitra declares this decision to Sita by giving her the silver knife with the symbol of fish with crown which is considered as the knife of Lord Parashu Ram.

The character of Sita in Amish's Sita: Warrior of Mithila shows us the beautiful portrayal of feminism. Feminine can be gentle, kind and courageous and dauntless at the same time. She is the epitome of feminine and also sets an example of how a woman should be in her life. She exhibits the quality of a true female and teaches us how it is possible to be dauntless and fearless in the warzone and at the same time how to be kind, gentle and wise in the domestic zone. Thus the role of Sita tells us how the present women should be in life.

II. WORK CITED:

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