

WOMEN AND SAMSKRIT LITERATURE

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THE FIVE FEMALE SOULS OF " MAHABHARATA"

The Mahabharata which has The epics which talks about tradition, culture, laws more than it talks about the human life and the characteristics of male and female which most relevant to this modern period. In Indian literature tradition the Ramayana and the Mahabharata authors talks not only about male characters they designed each and every Female characters with most Beautiful feminine characters which talk about their importance and dutiful nature and they are all well in decision takers and live their lives according to their decisions. They are the most powerful and strong and also reason for the whole Mahabharata which Occur. The five women in particular who's decision makes the whole Mahabharata to happen are The GANGA, SATYAVATI, AMBA, KUNTI and DRUPADI.

GANGA:

When king shantanu saw Ganga he totally fell for her and said

"You must certainly become my wife, whoever you may be." Thus said the great King Santanu to the goddess Ganga who stood before him in human form, intoxicating his senses with her superhuman loveliness

The king earnestly offered for her love his kingdom, his wealth, his all, his very life.

Ganga replied: "O king, I shall become your wife. But on certain conditions that neither you nor anyone else should ever ask me who I am, or whence I come. You must also not stand in the way of whatever I do, good or bad, nor must you ever be with me on any account whatsoever. You must not say anything displeasing to me. If you act otherwise, I shall leave you then and there. Do you agree?"

Here is the most valuable decision made by Ganga and If anything displeasing to me I will leave you immediately without argument.

The infatuated king vowed his assent, and she became his wife and lived with him.

The heart of the king was captivated by her modesty and grace and the steady love she bore him. King Shantanu and Ganga lived a life of perfect happiness, oblivious of the passage of time.

She gave birth to many children; each newborn babe she took to the Ganges and cast into the river, and then returned to the king with a smiling face.

Shantanu was filled with horror and anguish at such fiendish conduct, but suffered it all in silence, mindful of the promise he had made. Often he wondered who she was, wherefrom she had come and why she acted like a murderous witch. Still bound by his word, and his all-mastering love for her, he uttered no word of blame or remonstrance.

Thus she killed seven children. When the eighth child was born and she was about to throw it into the Ganges, Shantanu could not bear it any longer.

He cried: "Stop, stop, why are you bent on this horrid and unnatural murder of your own innocent babes?" With this outburst the king restrained her.

"O great king," she replied, "you have forgotten your promise, for your heart is set on your child, and you do not need me anymore. I go. I shall not kill this child, but listen to my story before you judge me. I, who am constrained to

play this hateful role by the curse of Vasishtha, am the goddess Ganga, adored of gods and men. Vasishtha cursed the eight Vasus to be born in the world of men, and moved by their supplications said, I was to be their mother. I bore them to you, and well is it for you that it was so. For you will go to higher regions for this service you have done to the eight Vasus. I shall bring up this last child of yours for some time and then return it to you as my gift."

Here once again the goddess Ganga shows her helping and most exclusive feminine character when the Vasus begged of her ""We pray you to become our mother. For our sake we beseech you to descend to the earth and marry a worthy man. Throw us into the water as soon as we are born and liberate us from the curse." The goddess granted their prayer, came to the earth and became the wife of Shantanu.

She left Shantanu with her eighth child and playing a great role of mother and bring back to shantanu and She said: "O king, this is that eighth child I bore you. I have brought him up till now. His name is Devavrata. He has mastered the art of arms and equals Parasurama in prowess. He has learnt the Vedas and the Vedanta from Vasishtha, and is well versed in the arts and sciences known to Sukra. Take back with you this child who is a great archer and hero as well as a master in statecraft."

Then she blessed the boy, handed to shantanu and not appear when the shantanu marry

Satyavati with the great vow of Bhishma she respect her son,s decision and not tried to interfere in his life and his decision. This is the most necessity that parents does not interfere their children's life and their decision. This made The Real Mahabharata occur If she want her Son Bhishma should to be king she can made it possible. But she never wants to come in between son and husband and their decisions.

SATYAVATI:

Another mere female character which also an equal role with all her glory and feminine character who lived her entire life according to her choice and her bold decisions which made the whole story of Mahabharata took a different mode and happened.

When King Shantanu fell for Satyawati a fisherwomen with a great body fragment which earned by accept sage Parashurama's request and give birth to vyasa without wedlock and asked sage for remove her fishy smell. without her acceptances vyasa shouldn't be born and the story of Mahabharata does not goes as it gone.

After marrying when the time come Her aged husband died leaving her with two sons. Both her sons later died in their youth without producing an heir to the throne. The elder one died valiantly waging a lone battle and the other was too young and consumptive. The younger son too died in his youth of poor health and overindulgence.

Satyavati then tried to entice her stepson Bhishma by offering to release him from his vow of celibacy and asked him to marry the widows of his half-brother and produce sons. A piqued Bishma however sternly refused to oblige her "Let doom overtake the world! Immortality cannot tempt me, nor lordship of the three worlds! I will not break the vow."

She was unwilling to accept defeat. She did not want it said that because of her the great line of the Bharatas came to an end. Hungry for grandsons, desperate to propagate her lineage, Sathyavathi summoned Vyasa, born to her by Parashara out of wedlock; and ordered him to produce sons from his half-brother's widows through *Myoga*. Vyasa an ascetic, who never lived in the family of his mother's husband, shocked, refused to obey his mother's orders. He even counseled his mother that preserving the dynasty by adopting such heinous means was improper (VI.24.46-48). Satyawati desperately argued that improper directives of elders ought to be obeyed and such compliance attracted no blame, particularly as it would remove the sorrow of a grieving mother. It was when Bhishma stepped in and urged Vyasa to obey his mother that he gave in

reluctantly and agreed to engage in what he described as "this disgusting task" (VI.24.56). Vyasa wondered whether such progeny born of out of wedlock "vyabhicharodbhava" (VI.25.28) could ever be a source of happiness for him.

Vyasa asked his mother that the widows be on a year-long vow and austerity so that they purified themselves of the lust they were tainted with through seven years of over indulgence. Satyawathi was in a hurry for a heir and was in no mood to wait. From this decision made by Satyawati the main reason for the birth of Pandu and Dhritarashtra and Vidura.

KUNTI:

Another dare lady with all virtues and full of duty oriented who took a strong decision to give birth to Karna without wedlock. And made Draupadi as a wife of her five sons to obtain unity among themselves. And also stayed calmly in the Hastinapur when the battle was going on and said that I am Dhritarashtra and Gandhari's inner consciousness "Antarvivek" who made them to remain in guilty whatever wrong steps taken by themselves and its cause how they are responsible.

Kunti showed no signs of regret of her "slip-of-tongue". She urged Drupada "I fear my words will become as pointless as lies. And if that happens, will I not be tainted with untruth?". What that decision of Kunti did to the Brothers and how that bonded the six together becomes explicit later in the Epic.

The respect and implicit obedience her sons displayed was a tribute to Kunti and her motherhood. It was something that Gandhari could not achieve. Truly, Kunti is a remarkable picture of maternal heroism created by Vyasa.

Finally, Kunti in order to ensure safety of her sons, humiliated herself and revealed the "misdeed" of her youth. She begged Kama to join his brothers. Though Kama rejected her, he fell into an abyss of indecision.

Some commentators have sought to justify Kunti's prolonged silence by saying that Kunti had long realized the futility of letting know Kama his birth-

secret; and she rightly deduced that doing so would cause more humiliation , suffering and harm to Pandavas. Because, Kunti by then knew very well of Kama's intense loyalty and submission to Duryodhana; and, she calculated if Yudishthira promptly hands over the throne to his new-found elder brother Kama the latter would undoubtedly surrender it to his master Duryodhana. That would not in any manner help Pandavas in regaining their heritage; instead it would worsen their position. Kunti, therefore, made the heroic choice of keeping the secret as long as it was possible although it caused her much anguish and agony.

Without her decision to have sons by her boon the pandavas are not be born and without her decision which makes draupadi to become common wife for pandavas.

After the insult occur at kururajasabha Drupadi crying Kunti came and console draupadi by saying " why are you crying there is no chance you to consider as a insult made by kauravas is your's it is the insult of kauravas, it is the insult of bhishma, it is the insult of whole male genders which made them as unworthy and who shows acted like cowards ," so get up and go to rajasabha with Pandavas where the second dice will be gong. You are the daughter of fire no one can insult you. You are untouched and pure as no one can dare to touch your's soul.

She had not given up the fight. When Krishna came to Hastinapura on a peace mission she was terribly upset and angry . She chided Krishna and asked him to urge Yudhishthira to fight for his rights as a Kshatriya must. She asked Yudhishthira through Krishna " Can anything be more humiliating than that your mother, friendless and alone, should have to eat others food ? Strong-armed one, recover the ancestral paternal kingdom by use of gentleness, dissension, gifts, force or negotiation. Follow the dharma of the kings, redeem your family honour. Do not, with your brothers, watch your merits waste away."

These are the words which make me rethink and it is most relevant to this period where the man's thought that making women insult we can get over them.

DRUPADI:

Who is a sole women who fight along with the beginning from her birth because her birth is also by the revenge decision of Drupada who performed yajna for having son and daughter who are capable for taking his revenge on guru Dronaacharya.

She sprang out of the sacrificial fire , resplendent and glowing as a tower of blaze , full grown and in the bloom of her youth not requiring the matrix of human womb. She was to be a kshatriya, an avenging fury to wreck vengeance on his foes, though Drupada had not asked for her. Fire was her nature. She was fearless , endowed with a single-minded determination as a piercing jet of flame . She lived with a fire burning in her soul, all her life. Avenging the grievous injury to her honour became a major premise for the war that ended in death and destruction of millions. Yajnaseni the one born from out of fire offered her entire being as a flaming sacrifice in that holocaust presided by Krishna . No wonder Draupadi is worshipped even to this day in South India as a personification of Shakthi. Her sense of pride and esteem remains unconquered even in the direst circumstances. As the blind king intervenes his wayward sons, he grants Draupadi three boons. Draupadi in her first boon asks her hapless husbands to be set free from bondage. As her second boon, she asks for restoration all the wealth that Pandavas lost in the game of dice. And, when Dhritarashtra asks her to state her third wish, she shoots back saying that only the Brahmans ask for three boons. It is beneath a Kshatriya to ask for more than two favours.

After the second dice game, instead of meekly obeying Yudhistira's summons , she had the sagacity to send back a query that challenged the very concept of Dharma and the basis of their conduct towards her. Draupadi threw a question at Duryodhana 'Have you won yourself? Or myself ? How do you presume that one husband is authorized to stake the wife while she has four other husbands? Moreover, according to Sastras , the deeds of a king who is in a miserable state due to over indulgence in hunting , drinking , gambling and

hankering after women are not lawfully binding .Hence how could the Kauravas own Panchali? I am a free woman by all means. "

Throughout the thirteen years of exile, Draupadi did not let her husbands forget how she was outraged and how they were deceitfully deprived of their kingdom. After the years of exile and the year of incognito, when she learnt that her husbands were suing for peace, she was angry and smouldering with rage like a volcano about to erupt.. She thundered that she shall tie her loose hair only when bathed in the blood the villain who dared to pull it. When Krishna visited her , she poured out her heart to him , holding up her serpent-like thick glossy hair and with tearful eyes urged Krishna to recall those tresses when he negotiated for peace with the kauravas. She exhorted that he was bound fourfold to protect her: "For four reasons, Krishna, you are bound to protect me ever: I'm related, I'm renowned, I'm your sakhi and you rule over all." (Vana Parva 10.127). In case even he did not care to help her, she declared that her five sons led by Abhimanyu and her old father and brothers would avenge her .

The worst was yet to come, Ashvatthama heinously slaughtered Draupadi's sons and brothers while they were asleep. Even at that most agonizing and heartbreaking moment Draupadi had not lost the sense of life , humanity and compassion. When Ashvatthama was brought before her , bound in ropes as an animal , and all were thirsting for his blood , Draupadi had the nobility of heart to ask her husbands to let him go ."I know how much it hurts to lose sons . I cannot bear to see that vriddha matha , the aged mother of Ashvatthama , endure the agony and grief of losing her only son in her old age. Let him go for the sake of his old mother. Let her not cry as I do now." she said .

Draupadi finds her five husbands discarding her repeatedly. Each of them takes other wives. Draupadi stands quite apart from her five husbands not one of them not even Sahadeva of whom she took care with maternal solicitude, nor her favourite Arjuna tarries by her side when she falls and lies dying on the Himalayan slopes.. Yajnaseni leaves the world all by herself.

A nature of every women and a very nature of mother carved by vyasa.

AMBA:

A another lady who becomes a main role in laying bhisma on sharashayyaa (a bed of arrow). And become the important role who fought against her After deserted by Shalva and Bhishma, Amba decides that Bhishma is the main culprit for her situation. She goes to a hermitage and tells the sages her story. Those sages advise her to go back to Kashi (her father's residence). Amba rejects this suggestion reasoning that she will be disrespected. She confirms that she would like to perform austerities so that she does not get any more bad fortune. This is when a sage Hotravahana (He is Amba's maternal grandfather who was a king and then later retired to be a sage) comes to the hermitage. He listens to her story and consoles her by advising, "Go to Parashurama who is Bhishma's guru. If Bhishma does not listen, then Parashurama will kill him". At that time Akritvrana (Parashurama's follower) arrives there. He asks Amba if she wants to be married to Bhishma or wants him to be killed. Amba chooses the latter. The next day Parashurama comes there. Amba and the others narrate her story to him. Parashurama confirms that he only fights to protect those who are learned about the brahman. Parashurama offers to speak to Bhishma or Shalva for marriage but Amba demands killing Bhishma. After some convincing from Amba and Akritvrana, Parashurama agrees to fight Bhishma if he does not listen to him. Amba then takes upon herself to kill Bhishma. She performs lots of penances. Pleased with this, Shiva grants her the boon that she will attain this goal in her next life. He elaborates that she will be born to King Drupad first as a woman but then later will change to be a man. Saying this he disappears. As soon as he disappears, Amba jumps into the fire to kill herself so that she can take rebirth soon. She lived her life according to her decisions and never forgave Bhishma who made her life become a sad story.

The Mahabharatha which considered as Hindu Epic and also called as "Panchama veda" is exist only by the strong decisions which are taken by five women Ganga, Satyawati, Kunti, Drupadi and Amba.

The most powerful decisions taken by Ganga the wife of Shantanu. Who gave birth to Bheeshma and leave him and told that he is bound by his oath that he always stand by his father Shantanu's side and he live his whole life for of Hastinapura. Satyawati who gave birth Vedavyasa without wedlock After Chitrangada and Vichitravirya's death, Satyawati asks Bhishma to have sons with Ambika and Ambalika. But after his refusal, she asks her son, Vyasa who was born to her from sage Parashara, and made him as a sperm donor for her daughter-in-law. Kunti who also took a dare step to have sons by using her boon. Drupadi is the another women who accept all the five Pandavas as her husband and also play a vital role for existence of Mahabharata. Ambika who made Bheeshma to lay down and made easy to Pandavas to win the battle and the main thing of Mahabharata that "Dharma wins over Adharma" .

In the modern world women should be learn how to make decisions and reach their goals by reading and understand the willness of feminine which is basic characteristic of women by understanding women in this literature who lived their whole life according to their wish and according to their decisions. Living according to their decisions without making themselves to compromise and live a struggle less life instead they face everything which came across and without a banded and live a within the frame of dharma they are all live and without regret whatever causes they lived upholding their self esteem and bravery and feminine characters. From understanding the different aspects of feminine characters which are truly well crafted by Vyasa should be revisiting under each and every shades of human nature under feminine character base there are new results may shown and we can even more lessons be able to learn by our epics and get assured that women are the best among decision makers.

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