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## **WOMEN AS SUPREME CONSCIOUSNESS**



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### Abstract:

A woman's image has always been of respect and significance because of her status as a highly esteemed member of the society into which she is born and the role she plays in its development. The fact that women have shaped and improved the attitudes and behaviors of their male counterparts has been strongly supported by traditions throughout the world. They are a source of historical turning points in private and official affairs. This research paper thus attempts to examine the various dimensions of feminine consciousness in the context of their significant function as a keeper of human values and moral order, concluding that womanhood encompasses within herself the universal/collective consciousness, which is nothing but the expansion of the supreme consciousness that pervades.

**Keywords:** Womanhood, Primordial Motherhood, Epic.

### Introduction

“Now Dopdi spreads her arms, raises her face to the sky, turns toward the forest, and wails with the force of her entire being. Once, twice, three times. At the third burst, the birds in the trees on the outskirts of the forest awake and flap their wings. The echo of the call travels far.”

VIDHYAYANA

--- Mahasveta Devi, *Draupadi*

“Lady Macbeth: That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold; What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.”

--- Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, (Act 2 Scene 2)

Pt. Vidyaniswas Mishra, in his essay titled “Women in Tantras,” asserts, “There is a mandate in Prapanchasara, a work ascribed to Sri Sankaracharya, that higher consciousness reveals itself with less effort in a woman rather than in man. The reason has not been given by Shankaracharya. Still, it can be surmised that it is the women who have the potential of being matrix creativity along with the measure of higher consciousness. Every being is provided with male and female instincts, and it is the female instinct that, when aroused, makes a man artist, poet, singer, and creator. The highest bliss is not the absence of



dualism but the merger of two positive aspects into each other to enable a person to become one with Shiva and Shakti simultaneously” (Mishra 83).

The above-mentioned intriguing insight by the great thinker of Indology incorporates within its bounds the long-reigning component of Indian philosophy that grants a female figure numinous honor. In reality, the Supreme Creator can only make what we would refer to as "selfhood," or, in other words, "womanhood," of all the things she has produced.

India has long been a trove of pluralism and a nation with many different cultures. Women have had tremendous respect and appreciation from society since the Vedic era. She has been referred to as “Shakti,” “Paraiba,” “Jagat Janani,” and “Bhavani.” Even Sankaracharya, the great visionary, saw only the pang-erasing attribute of a mother --- “Param jane matas tvadanusharnam klesh harm.” Additionally, they represent the Indian value system in every way. Purushartha cannot be achieved without the Prakriti that is innate in women. A standard for the perfect condition of being may be found in the great seer Manu's perspective on Indian society,

“Yatra naryastu poojyante ramante tatra Devatah/

Yatraitastu na poojyante sarvast traphalaah kriyaah/” (Manusmriti; 3/56)

There is no doubt that the Supreme Deity possesses all human emotions and sensations. Everyone petitions the Supreme Mother, requesting that She grant Her protection to the higher presence in all guises, including Shakti, Trishna, Shanti, Kanti, Lakshmi, etc.

Indian tradition is expressed in its culture, which finds expression in the country's major epical traditions. The Mahabharata and the Ramayana are the two epics reflecting Indian sensibility and geography. The well-known Avadhi poet and author of "Ramcharitmanas," Tulsidas, spares no effort in honoring Early Motherhood. It is unnecessary to state that this historical epic highlights the epic Ram journey, whose primary purpose was to present the story of what is genuinely perfect. The female protagonists of the epic, such as Kaushalya, Kaikeyi, Sita, Mandodari, etc., are all-powerful. When Sita, the daughter of Janak, finds herself in a difficult situation where she is both seduced by Rama's



VIDHYAYANA

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attractions and reminded of the great bow of Lord Shiva that had to be broken to marry Sita, she makes the following gesture of sympathy to Bhavani:

“Jay jay giribar rajkisoni/ Jay Mahes mukh Chand chakori//

Jay Gajabadan shadanan maata/ Jagat janani damini duti gaata//

Nahi tava aadi Madhya avasaana/ Amit prabhau bedu nahin jaana//

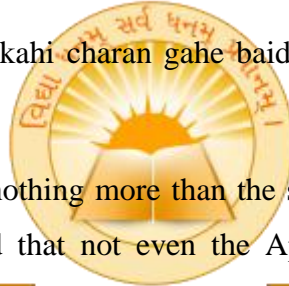
Bhava bhava bibhav parabhav karini/ Bisva Bimohani Svabas Biharini//

Sevat tohi sulabh phal chari/ bardayani purari piaree//

Devi pooji pad kamal tumhare/ Sur nar muni sab hohi sukhare//

Mor manorath janahu neeke/ basahu sada ur pur sabahee ke//

Keenehu pragat na karan tehi/ as kahi charan gahe baidehee// (Ramcharitmanas, Balkanda, 200,201)



VIDHYAYANA

What Sita states above is nothing more than the simple truth that the Divine Devi is exempt from birth and death and that not even the Apaurusheya Vedas can sing of her grandeur. She is exempt from the tortuous cycle of birth and death. Praying to the Eternal Goddess will make it simple to obtain desired blessings and eternal pleasure. Additionally, she lives in everyone's spirit self, so there is no need to convey one's feelings to her.

The mother of Ram, Kaushalya, supports Ram's obedient decision to spend fourteen years in exile to uphold the teachings of his revered father, Dasaratha. She extolled him for choosing to keep the venerable tradition of Raghu kula. She stated with great assurance that obeying one's father is the pinnacle of decency and that it has the virtue of the greatest moral resolution:

Saral subhau Ram mahtari/ boli bachan dheer dhar bhari//

Taat jaun bali keenhehu neeka/pitu aayasu sab dharmak teeka// (351)

As a result, the difficulties that Ayodhya encountered were made possible by Kaikeyi's use of her feminine faculties and Triya hath (woman's obstinacy) to secure the

kingdom of Ayodhya for her son Bharat. Sulochana's genuine love for her husband Meghnad and Mandodari's moral knowledge is of the highest significance in the history of feminine awareness, particularly in the setting of India.

We may also witness female characters' higher consciousness come to the fore in Ved Vyas's epic masterpiece, the Mahabharata. Her significant involvement in the judgments taken in courtly matters and her forthright choice to prepare Ambika and Ambalika, the daughters of the king of Kashi, for the Niyoga to uphold the Chandra clan's bloodline confirm Satyawati's extremely prestigious status. The supreme acts of Gandhari's dispassionately emancipated personality include her decisive action of adopting a blind way of life as a mark of revolt against the patriarchal dominance of Hastinapur estate that forced her to marry a blind prince Dhritrashtra, her refusal to grant a victory boon to her son Duryodhana during the great war, which demonstrates the higher sense of decency that she upheld. Finally, the fatal humiliation of Draupadi in the Rajasabha at Duryodhana's request ultimately proved to be the final straw for Dhritrashtra's kingdom. The robust expression of Urvashi's love for Arjuna before him and the curse she imposed on him serve as examples of the influence of a woman's emotions.

There are numerous allusions in literature worldwide to the crucial roles that women have played. Shakuntala by Kalidasa is the pinnacle of elegance and knowledge. Her moral compass and love of organic piety eventually bring her luck. Vasantsena, a courtesan figure and the protagonist of Shudraka's Mrichchakatikam (The Clay Cart), prefers the adoration of Charudatta, a wealthy man who became destitute due to his heroic deeds, to that of Sansthanaka's sexual gestures. The heroic deeds of Antigone, the heroine of Sophocles, are also quite charming in the annals of Greek literature. Shakespeare's characters Cordelia, Desdemona, Lady Macbeth, and Rosalind were crucial in shaping the ideas of his brilliant plays. With its created intricacies, Lady Macbeth's guilty conscience explains the moving story of human life. How beautifully she sobs,

“Out, damned spot! Out, I say! --- One:

Two: why, then, 'tis time to do it. --- Hell is murky!



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---Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need do we fear? Who knows when none can call our power to account? --- Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" (Shakespeare Act V, Scene I, 67)

Undoubtedly, Nora Helmer in Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* marked a turning point for the advancement of women's rights.

There are many examples of women at the height of their consciousness. Indeed, women have always supported their male counterparts while standing up for their ideologies, despite the stereotyped narratives about them in society. They have gone into great detail about many important social and political topics. Neither feminism nor mythology is a new construct, according to Urmi Chanda-Vaz. In Indian mythology, strong female characters have long been a defining feature. A dazzling group is brought together by a well-known old poem. The Panchakanya or Panchasati stanza encourages the faithful to begin each day by thinking about the five famous "maidens" from the Indian epics:

Ahalya Draupadi Kunti Tara Mandodari tatha / Panchakanya smaranityam mahapataka nashaka//". Sonia Gomes aptly observes in "Gender equality and female empowerment as a norm,"

"Women's roles should be increasingly valued as an active presence within the family with responsibilities, whether in work, communities, or just as mothers. Their contribution is indispensable to a sustainable society since their participation has become an example of social inclusion and empowerment." Quite amazingly, Simone de Beauvoir beautifully depicts about women's role in the context of marital bondage with her husband, "A husband regards none of his wife's good qualities as particularly meritorious; they are implied by the institution of marriage itself... he is still more profoundly ignorant of her dreams, her fancies, her nostalgic yearnings, of the emotional climate in which she spends her days." (Beauvoir 492)

Finally, it can be said with reasonable certainty that a woman's world is one of the sentiments, emotions, bondage, affirmations, abundance, and worth. No single word can describe her fully. In actuality, she cannot be evaluated and cannot be explained. She is a



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tangible representation of the goodness of Providence, reaching out to people who are suffering and at peace with her kindly, charming presence.



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VIDHYAYANA

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