

## Reconstructing the Image of Sita: An Eco-Feminist Approach to Samhita Arni's *Sita's Ramayana*

<sup>1</sup> Anurag Kumar and <sup>2</sup> Subah Gautam

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor

School of Languages and Literature, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Katra, J&K, India.

<sup>2</sup>Research Student

School of Languages and Literature, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Katra, J&K, India.

### ***Abstract***

*The perspectives of women has either been ignored or relegated as unimportant in the historical and literary texts in India. The reason may be located in the androcentric social structure. The present paper attempts to remake the account of the Ramayana totally from Sita's viewpoint through revisionist eco-feminist hypothesis featuring the occasions and scenes, which stayed concealed before, and henceforth remaking history with reference to Sita's Ramayana by Samhita Arni. This paper aims at exploring Sita's experimentality in the hostile world of patriarchal power structure and her embodiment of eco-feminist concerns. The paper employs Aartee Kaul Dhar's idea of woman as Nature and Shakti and Vandana Shiva's idea of woman as Prakriti.*

***Keywords:*** Indian Mythology, Ramayana, Sita, Gender Injustice, Ecofeminism

## Introduction:

The present paper argues that Sita in Samhita Arni's *Sita's Ramayana* embodies the ecofeminist concerns. In the *Ramayana*, she shows up as an encapsulation of nature, springing from the Earth and going back to it. The significant years of her life are spent living the unconstrained time in the forest as the major events of Sita's life spent in the forest are explored in *Sita's Ramayana*. The text almost begins with the end of the epic when Sita was banished in the pregnant state, where she is walking into the Dandaka forest alone and how she associates herself to Nature. Therefore, this research argues that Sita's life may be construed as the embodiment of eco-feminist concerns. It is exceptional that the central story of the *Ramayana* begins with Sita's energizing appearance from the Earth and her disappearance in the Earth; however, the story is absent in the many versions of the *Ramayana*. Lavanya Vemsani observes:

The *Ramayana* symbolically represents two themes: First, the struggle between male and female for supremacy, and second the affinity of women to nature (prakriti)... The plant symbolism in Sita's personality and the longing of Sita for life in the forest is indicative of not just the paradisiacal view of life in the forest, but it represents a primeaval feminine urge to experience free-spirited life before the onslaught of civilization<sup>3</sup>.

Keeping in view the aforementioned notion, the paper aims to reconstruct the narrative of the Hindu epic the *Ramayana* from the perspective of Sita with special reference to Samhita Arni's *Sita's Ramayana*. Samhita Arni and Moyna Chitrakar, in the text, bring to the limelight such events that Sita was abandoned in a pregnant state in the forest and how she found solace in the arms of Nature. Her journey in the forest deconstructs the already existing narrative and gives voice to the marginalized character. These events are employed to question the integrity and uprightness of Rama when he fails to become the respectful and devout husband, which he was thought to be. However, keeping in mind the

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<sup>3</sup> Lavanya Vemsani, "Sita: Nature in its Feminine Form", *Journal of Vaishnava Studies* 20, no. 1(Fall 2011): 29-45

purpose of her life intently, Sita's life can be generally partitioned into three parts; Sita before marriage, Sita after marriage in exile, and Sita's second exile. The examination of Sita in these three parts of her life underneath demonstrates Sita as a strong, excusing, and supporting woman. Even though she is devoted to Rama, she is never a submissive or meek woman, although certain retellings of the *Ramayana* represent her as a submissive character. However, the paper expects to remake the account of the *Ramayana* purely from Sita's viewpoint through revisionist eco-feminist hypothesis featuring the occasions and scenes, which stayed unrepresented before, and henceforth-remaking history concerning *Sita's Ramayana* by Samhita Arni.

### Methodology:

Women in India are closely related to nature in both the creativity and practicality. At one level, nature is symbolically encapsulating the feminine principle, and at the other level, she (woman) is subjected to produce the life and make sustenance possible<sup>4</sup>. Sita's connection with the Earth cannot be missed and is well pronounced in many texts...authors have written about Sita, tracing her childhood which includes taking education about nature, amidst nature full of sensitive responses to its colors, forging links to elements as air, water, earth, space, fire and flora fauna. The objective of the writer could be to articulate the chain of life or existence at a sublime level, as an endeavor to perceive a woman as a manifestation of Nature and *Shakti*<sup>5, 6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Lavanya Vemsani, "Sita: Nature in its Feminine Form", *Journal of Vaishnava Studies* 20, no. 1(Fall 2011): 29-45

<sup>5</sup> Shakti, one of the most important goddesses in the Hindu pantheon, is really a divine cosmic energy that represents feminine energy and the dynamic forces that move through the universe. Shakti, who is responsible for creation and can also be an agent of change, is often manifested to destroy demonic forces and restore balance. As a vital cosmic force, Shakti takes many forms and names, including mother goddess, fierce warrior, and the dark goddess of destruction. <https://chopra.com/article/shakti-universal-force>

<sup>6</sup> Aartee Kaul Dhar, *Sita in the Ramayana Traditions* (New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers and Distributors, 2018), 20

Vandana Shiva argues that Nature as Prakriti<sup>7</sup> is inherently active, powerful, and productive force in the dialectic of the creation, renewal, and sustenance of all life. Without Shakti, Shiva, the life force for creation and destruction is powerless and equivalent to a corpse “The quiescent aspect of Shiva is, by definition, inert . . . Activity is the nature of Nature (Prakriti)”.<sup>8</sup>

### Theoretical Framework:

Samhita Arni's *Sita's Ramayana* is narrated from the viewpoint of the hapless princess. The title page of the novel shows a “dusky Sita in an essentially regional depiction<sup>9</sup>” with her parted hair wearing vermillion and *bindi*<sup>10</sup> on the forehead, surrounded by flowers. The author begins her story with a pregnant Sita walking around the woods with wounds on her feet and tears in her eyes. The creatures of the forest, the leaves, blooms, creepers, and animals wake up from their long rest at the intrusion. They consider what this graceful woman, wearing silks and trimmings, is doing in their world and start examining her. Appropriately, Sita portrays her story and the sickened forest creatures pledge to ensure her to remain as pleasant and secure her as they can. The title page and the initial narrative evidently substantiate the text as a female-centric, female-driven, and eco-feminist. The opening page of the text reads as “For a thousand years Dandaka forest slept<sup>11</sup>”. One day Sita appeared in the forest “at her touch the flowers, creepers and trees of the Dandaka

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<sup>7</sup> In Hinduism, *prakriti* (also spelled *prakrti*) refers to a primal creative or natural force. It connotes the natural or original intended state of something or of an individual's being. The term is derived from the Sanskrit *pra*, meaning “beginning,” and *kriti*, meaning “creation.”

<sup>8</sup> Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival in India* (New Delhi: Kali for Women, <https://gyanpedia.in/Portals/0/Toys%20from%20Trash/Resources/books/stayingalive.pdf>)

<sup>9</sup> Aartee Kaul Dhar, *Sita Transposed: Multiplicity in Retellings* (New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers & Distributors), 124

<sup>10</sup> A distinct dot is a popular forehead decoration worn mainly in South Asia - especially in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius. It is an old Hindu tradition and is known as a bindi, which means “a drop, small particle, and dot.” The word ‘Bindi’ is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘bindu’ and is associated with a person’s mystical third eye.

<sup>11</sup> Samhita Arni & Moyna Chitrakar, *Sita's Ramayana* (India: Tara Books, 2015), 7

awoke from their long sleep<sup>12</sup>". The forest asks Sita, "What was she doing here? And why was she crying?"<sup>13</sup>

She replied:

I am Sita, daughter of the Earth, sprung from the same womb that nurtures. This forest. I am the princess of Mithila and the last queen of Ayodhya.<sup>14</sup> Let me live here. Sita begged. The world of men has banished me. And then the forest spoke: tell us, sister, how you came here<sup>15</sup>.

The forest is personified. Nature becomes an active, living agent talking, thinking, conversing calling Sita 'sister'. Her conversation with the world of nature foregrounds a close proximity existing between Sita and natural world. The story is in the flashback called Sita's Ramayana as she experiences and tells it<sup>16</sup>. *Sita's Ramayana* does not give us details of Sita's birth and early life as presented in *SriRamacharitmanas*, where too, Sita's birth and childhood is not mentioned. However, Samhita Arni reverses the representation of *SriRamacharitmanas*, which depicts Rama closer to nature than Sita who is busy worshipping gods to get her desires fulfilled which is evident in when Sita and Rama met in the Royal garden before their *swayamvar*: "When the time came, the two brothers took leave of the preceptor and went out to gather flowers. Having gone out they saw the lovely royal garden, enamored of whose beauty the vernal season had taken its permanent abode<sup>17</sup>". Both Lord Rama and His brother, Laxmana were delighted to behold the garden with its lake. Most lovely must have been that garden which delighted even Sri Rama<sup>18</sup>". Their connection with nature is emphasized whereas Sita is shown worshipping Goddess Girija for granting her a handsome husband. Having taken a dip into the lake with her companions, Sita went with a glad heart to Girija's temple. She offered worship with great devotion and

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<sup>12</sup> Samhita Arni & Moyna Chitrakar, *Sita's Ramayana* (India: Tara Books, 2015), 8

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>16</sup> Aartee Kaul Dhar, *Sita Transposed: Multiplicity in Retellings* (New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers and Distributors, 2017), 124

<sup>17</sup> Tulsidasa, *SriRamacharitmanas* (India: Geeta Press), 222

<sup>18</sup> Tulsidasa, *SriRamacharitmanas* (India: Geeta Press), 223

begged the Goddess, a handsome match worthy of Her<sup>19</sup>. However, an ecofeminist reflected that women in their religious and cultural actions are closer to the Mother Nature, which is different from men. Following deliberation by Vemsani depicts the very birth of Sita as corresponding to nature:

Sita's birth is sudden and spontaneous. Indeed, this is a "secret" birth and unknown to the human world. It is more like plant life; spontaneous birth and a process of cultivation. Therefore, at the outset of Sita's story, the symbolism of women and nature is immediately evident, while the civilizing efforts of culture (cultivation) form the undercurrent of the story<sup>20</sup>.

As portrayed in the *Ramayana*, Sita was found in a furrow when King Janaka was ploughing. Since Janaka was a lord, ploughing was likely a piece of an imperial custom to guarantee the fertility of the land. Sita is considered the daughter of Mother Earth, created by the joining between the king and the land. Sita is an embodiment of the Earth's fertility, plenitude, and prosperity. In Valmiki's *Ramayana*, a little portion of Sita's birth and early life is mentioned. There are very scanty details of Sita's childhood and any information until her marriage<sup>21</sup> in the conventional writings. In the *Ramayana* (1.65.15-20) on Sita's birth, Janaka states that Sita is:

A treasure and a pride for eye.  
Once, as it chanced, I ploughed the ground,  
When sudden, 'neath the share was found  
An infant springing from the earth,  
Named Sita from her secret birth<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 223.

<sup>20</sup> Lavanya Vemsani, "Sita: Nature in its Feminine Form", *Journal of Vaishnava Studies* 20, no. 1(Fall 2011), 34

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>22</sup> Ralph T.H. Griffith, *The Ramayana of Valmiki* (London: Trubner & Co., 1870-74):1.65.15-20

The excerpt points out the fact that Sita springs out of the Earth and hence carries the attributes of nature. Sita continues to carry the qualities of nature before she gets married to Rama; with its strength and natural abilities<sup>23</sup>. Soon after Sita's wedding with Rama, she gets to know about Rama's exile in Ayodhya. Sita resentfully argues with Rama and wanted to follow him into the forest and finally, she accompanied Rama and Lakshmana when they were about to leave for exile from Ayodhya.

Sita is as powerful and strong as the man she married, not a meek woman, by any stretch of the imagination. From the beginning of the story, then, these two events, Sita's birth and her marriage, establish her spontaneous wild nature as well as her strong and independent character<sup>24</sup>.

A close observation of the event reveals that choosing exile with Rama has been a deliberate choice on Sita's part which again may be directed by Sita's love for the wild and nature. Further events in the forest establish that Sita has been quite happy in the wild until she is kidnapped by Ravana. The 'golden deer' episode in *Sita's Ramayana* also reveals Sita's impulsiveness in the wild. Sita is lured by the beauty of deer and asks Rama to get it for her. Rama goes behind the deer and shoots him down, it changes back to Maricha. Maricha, a demon is also the uncle of Ravana who has plotted this to avenge Surpanakha's insult who was deformed by Ram and Laxmana. Sita is finally captured and imprisoned by Ravana. "...Shrupanakha and Sita are examples of forest impulsivity, where even though it seems natural to express one's desires, one can end up worse than before. Sita's desire to obtain the 'golden deer' again shows this will of the forest – a simple attraction to a pretty object, for no particular reason or gain"<sup>25</sup>

After Sita's abduction, Ravana imprisoned her in a beautiful garden *Ashokvan* when she refused to marry him. When she enters Lanka, she observes "...with palaces built of gold and adorned with priceless gems and lovely gardens... It was one such garden that Ravana imprisoned me, when I refused to marry

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<sup>23</sup> Lavanya Vemsani, "Sita: Nature in its Feminine Form", *Journal of Vaishnava Studies* 20, no. 1(Fall 2011), 35

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>25</sup> Lavanya Vemsani, "Sita: Nature in its Feminine Form", *Journal of Vaishnava Studies* 20, no. 1(Fall 2011) , 37

him”<sup>26</sup>. She refused to enter the palace and avail the royal amenities. “She merely lamented and repented at length. Strong woman that she was, she could not be forced into following anyone’s orders”<sup>27</sup>. The conviction and her strong decision not to enter in the Ravana’s palace and instead choosing to live in *Ashokvan* may be traced back to Sita’s preference to stay close to nature. Sita may have thought that living close to nature in such circumstances would offer her some kind of solace.

The war between Rama and Ravana gets over and Sita’s abduction ends with that. Though the ending of abduction symbolizes that Sita could have become happy, however, it has disillusioned Sita and she is compelled to think that life in *Ashokvan* could have been better. After Rama’s victory over Ravana, Rama tells Sita, “Sita, you are free. I have freed you. You can do whatever you wish. Go wherever you want”<sup>28</sup>. Rama assumed that Ravana must have touched her. He tells her, “Ravana must have touched you. I can’t take you back”<sup>29</sup>. Sita asks Rama that “then why did you fight this war?”<sup>30</sup>. For the sake of your honour, people paid a bloody price<sup>31</sup>. Rama remains silent.

Sita is rescued by nature while she is dumped by Rama in a very precarious condition, during her second exile. Rama leaves Sita believing that his situation as a ruler may be compromised and it appears to be remorseless on his part to have left Sita when she is pregnant. Her part as an immaculate spouse is just remunerated by put-down and embarrassment. She has no place to go and no place to live. She presumably does not have any thought concerning how she would get by in the forest, bringing forth her sons and raise them:

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<sup>26</sup> Samhita Arni & Moyna Chitrakar, *Sita’s Ramayana* (India: Tara Books, 2015), 29

<sup>27</sup> Vemsani, “Sita: Nature in its Feminine Form”, 37

<sup>28</sup> Arni, *Sita’s Ramayana*, 115

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>30</sup> Samhita Arni & Moyna Chitrakar, *Sita’s Ramayana* (India: Tara Books, 2015), 116

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 117.



The same accusation. The same doubts. I wish I had died in Lanka. Now I am pregnant, and alone. My belly is huge, and I can't see the ground under my feet. How will I avoid the poisonous snakes that slither across this earth? How will I, with my huge belly and swollen ankles, outrun beasts of prey? And when my hour draws close, when my child is to be born, who will calm my fears and assist me in my labour? How will I, alone, raise a child, born to be king, in this forest?"<sup>32</sup>.

Initially, Sita seems to be worried about her conceived state. However, as Sita wanders in the forests and admires nature, she realizes that nature values all. Sita being pregnant is calmed with the silence of trees, chirping birds, roaring animals, clouds, blue skies, and first rain, etc. Sita eventually, seeks refuge in Valmiki's hermitage. She gives birth to twin sons in solitude without pomp and show. Valmiki takes care of Sita's two sons and names them as 'Luv' and 'Kush'. Sita functions as a single mother. She nurtures her children under nature and makes them learn to value nature. The boys grow up following their mother. They learn how hard life is for her but she takes it with ease. The boys grow up to be intelligent. Ultimately, the sons united with their father. Sita was happy to see the reunion of father and sons. She eventually, sought refuge in the arms of the Earth goddess from where she was born. She requested the Mother Earth to take her back.

If unstained in thought and action I have lived from the day of my birth, spare a daughter's shame and anguish and receive her, Mother Earth! If in duty and devotion, I have labored undefiled, Mother Earth! Who bore this woman, once again receive thy child! If in truth unto my husband I have proved a faithful wife, Mother Earth! Relieve thy Sita from the burden of this life!<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>33</sup> Malashri Lal & Namita Gokhale, ed., *In Search of Sita: Revisiting Mythology* (India: Penguin Random House, 2009), 21

Sita lived and carried on as a part of the nature around her. This is evident from how she taught her sons the forest life. She wishes to be sent to the forest while pregnant, anyway not to her parents, as generally happens. She is conceived from the Earth like grass, and Valmiki names her son Kusha, from the grass. The same incident is recreated by Arni in the text. Sita went to “bathe in a nearby river<sup>34</sup>” and asked, “Lava to stay back in the hermitage<sup>35</sup>”. The anxious child followed her. Valmiki “returned to the hermitage<sup>36</sup>” and “couldn’t find Lava. He thought the boy must have fallen prey to a wild beast”<sup>37</sup>. Valmiki feared Sita’s reaction and “took a blade of kusha grass, and using his powers, turned that into a boy, identical to Lava<sup>38</sup>”. On her return, she was stunned and happy to discover she had another son. She named him Kusha<sup>39</sup>. Valmiki “told them the story of the kingdom of Ayodhya” and told that “their mother was the heroine of that tale”<sup>40</sup>. The parts of nature and forest life are a bit of Sita's quality in the *Ramayana*. This bit of Sita's life exhibits her strong character and her capacity to stand up to existence without losing certainty. Sita does not bow to challenges and tribulations while continuing to maintain and endeavor to abstain from freezing under all conditions. She made peace with her past and was living a happy life in the forest. “She was no longer Sita, the Queen. She was Sita, the simple forest woman”<sup>41</sup>.

The entire story of Sita from her birth to her death in the Earth embodies the association of women and nature. As Sita is seen as a daughter of the Earth herself, the plants and animals of the Dandaka Forest can understand Sita, and she can appreciate them; predators vow to relinquish her in peace, snakes forsake

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<sup>34</sup> Samhita Arni & Moyna Chitrakar, *Sita's Ramayana* (India: Tara Books , 2015), 131

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.,131.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 132.

<sup>40</sup> Samhita Arni & Moyna Chitrakar, *Sita's Ramayana* (India: Tara Books , 2015), 133

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 135.

her, and winged creatures pass on her story everywhere. Arni underlines the point that the eco-items promptly react to an anguished woman:

The forest heard Sita's story. Her tale was passed from tree to tree, leaf to leaf. The birds flew high into the sky, promising to spread her tale across the forest. The snakes, hearing of her loss, vowed to stay free of her feet, and the lions and tigers swore to leave her in peace<sup>42</sup>.

As compared to the humans, Nature is more kind to Sita. Humanized, it becomes more human than human society to banished, suffering, pregnant, innocent woman<sup>43</sup>. In any case, in *Sita's Ramayana*, Arni questions Rama's choice of giving up Sita since whose affection and regard has been limitless and everlasting. It appears to be silly how Rama went ahead to help outlandish gossips and abandoned Sita just to maintain his honor as an excellent and perfect ruler. Sita exclaims, "In Ayodhya, whispers and rumours surrounded me. The people of Ayodhya didn't know the entire story- of my sojourn in Lanka, how I had spurned Ravana, the fire-test...<sup>44</sup>". Sita was troubled with this Rama's thought of abandoning her in the forest, "The same accusation, the same doubts. I wish I had died in Lanka. Now I am pregnant, and alone".<sup>45</sup>

It takes Sita a ton to gather her mettle and be an individual in the forests and solitude. It was never easy for her to avoid her kin, family, and husband when she was to bring forth her first child. She needed this minute to be unique and life changing. She needed to share and commend it with her husband. In any case, regrettably, the truth ended up being a remarkable inverse and cruel for her. In any case, Sita was given shelter by sage Valmiki in such a troublesome hour when she was defenseless and powerless. The injuries of her past were profound yet they start to mend after the introduction of her sons were born. She cherishes them furiously and sustains them with incredible love and fondness. With time, she discovers

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>43</sup> Aartee Kaul Dhar, *Sita Transposed: Multiplicity in Retellings* (New Delhi: Adhyayan Publishers and Distributors, 2017), 123

<sup>44</sup> Arni, *Sita's Ramayana*, 125

<sup>45</sup> Samhita Arni & Moyna Chitrakar, *Sita's Ramayana* (India: Tara Books, 2015), 127

her lost bliss once more. Sita as a character portrays feelings and sentiments, which are extremely human and rudimentary. Her torment, responses, manner of thinking and so on is exceptionally relatable from a human perspective since she shows a straightforward and typical woman who has experienced hardships and afflictions because of the public of Ayodhya. Discussing the same, Samhita Arni affirms, "Sita is a woman a lot many Indian women will identify with. She goes through dilemmas and tough situations all her life".<sup>46</sup> The manner how Sita is depicted in this novel represents numerous women who have experienced some troublesome circumstances and along these lines, she turns into a common character that any woman can connect herself with.

It is seen that Sita's voyage, at last, changes her into a self-dependent woman who finds a generally new character for herself and becomes an engaged individual. Her honesty and reliability do not get her anything, rather she is put to test incidentally to demonstrate her unobtrusiveness. These were some ridiculous and inadmissible things that Sita was asked who has devoted her entire life to her husband. So toward the end when Rama comprehends his mistakes and solicitations that Sita returns, she stands firm for herself and settles on the decision of not coming back to people who were the reason behind her sad life "I don't wish to be queen. I have been questioned once, twice, and I couldn't care less to be questioned once more"<sup>47</sup>. Then again, perhaps she comes back to her foundations from where she came asking that the Mother Earth take her along. The Earth absorbs her. Sita went back to the same place from which she was born. Volga likewise shows *The Liberation of Sita* and exhibits that the discipline and expulsion prompt her definitive freedom. She makes her mark, finding her personality and character and concludes that she needs nobody, not, in any case, her better half, to feel complete "I am the daughter of Earth, Rama. I have realized who I am. The whole universe belongs to me. I don't lack

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<sup>46</sup> Samhita Arni(author of *Sita's Ramayana*), interviewed by Hema Vijay, August 2013 .

<sup>47</sup> Samhita Arni & Moyna Chitrakar, *Sita's Ramayana* (India: Tara Books , 2015), 145

anything. I am the daughter of Earth”<sup>48</sup>. Along these lines, Sita takes the order of her life in her grasp dismissing to live as per the society.

## Result/Discussions:

Vandana Shiva claims that women are connected to the environment based on their regular interactions with the environment, or otherwise women are ignored ones. Vandana states that women produce “wealth in partnership with nature, and are experts in their own right of holistic and ecological perception of the nature’s processes.”<sup>49</sup> However, she makes the point that “these alternative modes of knowing, which are oriented to the social benefits and sustenance needs are not recognized by the capitalist reductionist paradigm because it fails to perceive the interconnectedness of nature, or the connection of women’s lives, work and knowledge with the creation of wealth”<sup>50</sup>. Arni's *Sita's Ramayana* unequivocally bolsters ecofeminist beliefs that are enthusiastically spread by steady activists, particularly to maintain ecofeminist morals and culture.

The ecofeminists determinedly feel that while men summon women and human rule nature. Typically, by then, women and the environmentalists should have participated in their fight. Today, the ecofeminists assume that genuine changes ought to be made in our modern society. Similarly, Sita has fought her battle with the human world that always wanted to control her and test her fidelity. Rama ousts Sita to the forest for having been blamed for infidelity by one of the incompetent citizens of Ayodhya. She is constrained to bring forth her twins without any other individual and live in the woods as a single parent in this way. A long time later, when Rama meets her again coincidentally, in spite of all that he

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<sup>48</sup> T. Vijay Kumar and C. Vijayasree, *The Liberation of Sita*, trans. Volga (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers, 2016), 41

<sup>49</sup> Beena G., “ECO- FEMINISM: A Significant World-View towards Empowering Women and Environment”, *International Journal of Language, Literature and Humanities* 4, no. 7 (July, 2016): 151-57

<sup>50</sup> Beena G., “ECO- FEMINISM: A Significant World-View towards Empowering Women and Environment”, *International Journal of Language, Literature and Humanities* 4, no. 7 (July, 2016): 151-57

flounders to take her back, as regardless he questions her loyalty. His dithering influences Sita to call up her mom *Bhûmi* to get a handle on her and be subsumed into the Earth.

O wonders of wonders, O miracle surpassing all miracles: for even as *Vaidehi*<sup>51</sup> in her trance of absolute surrender raised her resonant voice to the Mother, the ground opened at her feet, the Goddess Madhavi seized Maithili in her protective embrace, and as the awed celestials rained flowers in an unceasing shower, Maithili shared Madhavi's throne as it disappeared under Earth.<sup>52</sup>

In the conventional writings where Sita goes through the fire ordeal or *Agnipariksha*, in some texts Sita herself and in some texts Sita's shadow or *Chhaya* is employed to prove her chastity. However, she always emerged "pure and a strong woman. It was not in Sita's nature to shy away from anything, even fire –for that, too is a part of nature"<sup>53</sup>. Sita demonstrated that she could stay unfaltering and be effective in amid challenges. As noted in a few of the reproduced the *Ramayana* stories, Sita may carry on with a "happily ever after life"<sup>54</sup>. She may decline to take any fire ordeals and choose her particular destiny, or she may live in a perfect world of female. The entire discussion above may be concluded that Sita stays consistent with her nature and offers an ideal of non-compromise who comprehends what she may do in the creative abilities of future writers. She may even fly into space; however, she will embrace the test and may almost do it effectively.

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<sup>51</sup> Sitawas plowed out of the earth by Janak, king of Videha. She was called Janaki meaning Janaka's daughter, Vaidehi meaning Videha's princess and Maithili meaning resident of Mithila, the city of Janak.  
<https://devdutt.com/articles/from-earth-to-earth/>

<sup>52</sup> Srinivasa K.R. Iyengar, *Sitayana: Epic of Earth- Born* (Madras: Samata Books, 1987), 647

<sup>53</sup> Lavanya Vemsani, "Sita: Nature in its Feminine Form", *Journal of Vaishnava Studies* 20, no. 1(Fall 2011), 37

<sup>54</sup> Lavanya Vemsani, "Sita: Nature in its Feminine Form", *The Shakti Initiative*.  
<https://www.shaktiinitiative.org/entry/sita-nature-in-its-feminine-form>

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