

The Spirit of Sisterhood in Volga's the Liberation of Sita

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Abstract

Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* is a compelling exploration of the untold stories and voices of women in the epic Ramayana. Within this narrative, the concept of sisterhood emerges as a powerful force, challenging traditional patriarchal norms and giving voice to the suppressed experiences of women. This article delves into the spirit of sisterhood as portrayed by Volga, analyzing the relationships between female characters and their collective journey towards liberation. It delves into Volga's portrayal of Sita's journey as a quest for independence and self-discovery, emphasizing the importance of solidarity among women. It will discuss how the author challenges traditional gender roles and norms, presenting a nuanced exploration of the relationships between female characters. The article will also explore the ways in which sisterhood becomes a source of strength, resilience, and empowerment for the women in the narrative.

Keywords: Feminism, gender, sisterhood, patriarchy

1. Introduction

The Liberation of Sita by Volga is a collection of short stories. Each story within the collection provides a reimagined perspective on the character of Sita, who is a central figure in the Indian epic, the Ramayana. The stories explore various facets of Sita's life and experiences, offering a feminist reinterpretation of her narrative. Each story within the collection contributes to the overall theme of liberation and empowerment, creating a collective and interconnected exploration of Sita's character from different angles.

In the vast tapestry of literary works, Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* stands as a captivating exploration of feminist ideals within the context of one of India's ancient epics, the Ramayana. As Volga delicately weaves her narrative, the threads of sisterhood emerge as a central theme, intricately connecting the experiences of women in a profound and

transformative manner. This article embarks on a journey through the pages of *The Liberation of Sita* to unravel the nuanced layers of sisterhood as depicted by Volga, shedding light on the profound impact it has on the characters and the broader societal context within which their stories unfold.

Volga's rendition of Sita's journey transcends the conventional narrative, offering readers a fresh perspective on a character deeply embedded in cultural and mythological significance. The focus on sisterhood becomes a guiding force, allowing readers to navigate the complexities of female relationships and solidarity within a patriarchal framework. As we delve into the text, it becomes evident that the spirit of sisterhood is not confined to the familial ties but extends to a collective resilience and empowerment that women find in each other.

This article seeks to engage with the transformative power of sisterhood as portrayed by Volga, examining how the women in *The Liberation of Sita* navigate societal expectations, question traditional gender roles, and carve out spaces of autonomy. By doing so, Volga not only reimagines the fate of Sita but also provides a broader commentary on the possibilities that arise when women come together to redefine their narratives.

Through an exploration of Volga's narrative lens, this article aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on feminist literature and the evolving role of women in literature and society. As we embark on this analysis, we invite readers to join us in uncovering the intricacies of sisterhood within the pages of "The Liberation of Sita," recognizing the profound impact it has on shaping narratives of empowerment, liberation, and resilience.

2. Literature Review

Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* is a poignant and thought-provoking work that reimagines the narrative of Sita, a central figure in the Ramayana, through a feminist lens. It provides a unique space for the exploration of sisterhood, a theme that has garnered attention in various literary and academic discussions on feminist literature and gender studies. This literature review aims to contextualize Volga's work within the broader discourse on sisterhood in literature and highlight key themes that resonate across diverse cultural and historical contexts.

Volga's works belong to a broader genre of feminist literature that engages with mythological narratives to subvert traditional gender roles and offer alternative perspectives. Authors like

Anita Diamant and Madeline Miller have similarly reimagined mythological tales, breathing new life into female characters and emphasizing the importance of sisterhood in reshaping their stories.

The concept of sisterhood has been a recurring theme in feminist literature, emphasizing the bonds between women and the collective strength that arises from their shared experiences. Works such as Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* explore the transformative power of female relationships, echoing the themes that Volga explores in *The Liberation of Sita*.

Volga's work is situated within the context of postcolonial feminism, where authors reclaim and reinterpret cultural narratives. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* and Chandra Talpade Mohanty's *Under Western Eyes* are seminal works that have shaped discussions on feminism in postcolonial contexts, providing a framework for understanding the intersection of gender, culture, and power.

The exploration of sisterhood is increasingly viewed through an intersectional lens, acknowledging the diversity of women's experiences. Kimberlé Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality has influenced discussions on how race, class, and other factors intersect with gender. Volga's portrayal of diverse female characters in *The Liberation of Sita* aligns with the broader call for inclusive narratives within the feminist discourse.

Within the specific context of Indian feminist literature, Volga's work contributes to a growing body of literature that challenges traditional norms and amplifies women's voices. Authors like Arundhati Roy and Kamala Das have paved the way for narratives that explore the complexities of women's lives in the Indian context.

In synthesizing these diverse strands of literature, this article aims to situate Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* within a rich tradition of feminist thought, drawing connections between her exploration of sisterhood and broader themes in feminist literature. Through this analysis, we can gain a deeper understanding of how Volga's work contributes to the ongoing dialogue on the empowerment and liberation of women within cultural and mythological frameworks.

3. Critical Analysis

Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* is a literary work that invites readers to reevaluate and reinterpret the character of Sita from the Ramayana through the lens of feminist ideology, with a particular emphasis on the theme of sisterhood. This critical analysis seeks to explore key aspects, examining how Volga navigates cultural and gendered narratives to articulate a vision of empowerment and liberation for women. *The Liberation of Sita* stands as a powerful exploration of feminist themes, with sisterhood emerging as a central and transformative element throughout the narrative. A critical analysis of the portrayal of sisterhood reveals nuanced layers of empowerment, resistance, and reclamation of agency within a patriarchal framework.

Volga skilfully subverts traditional mythological narratives, offering readers a fresh perspective on Sita's character. By liberating Sita from the conventional roles assigned to her in the Ramayana, Volga challenges ingrained cultural expectations and provides a platform for the reimagining of women's stories. Sisterhood becomes a vehicle through which women transcend their prescribed roles and reshape their destinies. Volga engages in a profound deconstruction of the traditional narrative surrounding Sita, challenging the age-old portrayal of her as a passive and submissive figure. By questioning the established norms and expectations imposed upon Sita, Volga liberates the character from the constraints of the patriarchal framework, offering readers a reimagined and empowered Sita. This deconstruction is a crucial aspect of the feminist discourse, disrupting entrenched gender roles.

The stories intricately weave a tapestry of female relationships, portraying the complexities and nuances of sisterhood. The bonds formed between Sita and other female characters transcend mere familial ties; they become a source of solidarity, empathy, and shared resilience. Volga emphasizes the importance of women supporting each other in the face of societal expectations and constraints. Volga presents a nuanced exploration of sisterhood that extends beyond familial ties. Through the diverse female characters in the narrative, she portrays a spectrum of relationships, from friendships to alliances formed in resistance to patriarchal norms. This multi-faceted approach to sisterhood underscores the idea that solidarity among women is not a monolithic concept but a dynamic and evolving force.

Through the characters in "The Liberation of Sita," Volga explores the theme of agency as an integral aspect of sisterhood. Sita's journey towards self-discovery and independence becomes a collective endeavor, echoing the broader feminist call for women's autonomy. It

underscores the transformative power that arises when women support and empower each other, challenging oppressive structures. It accentuates the agency and autonomy of its female characters, portraying them as active agents in their own destinies. Sita emerges as a symbol of resilience and self-discovery. Volga dismantles the notion of women as passive recipients of fate, instead portraying them as architects of their own stories. This emphasis on agency aligns with broader feminist goals of challenging narratives that disempower women.

Volga's work serves as a form of cultural critique, questioning and challenging the deeply rooted patriarchal norms within the Indian cultural and mythological landscape. Sisterhood becomes a tool for dismantling oppressive structures, and the stories serve as a vehicle for feminist ideals that seek to reshape narratives, allowing women to reclaim their voices and stories. Volga's work can be seen as a form of cultural critique and reclamation, where she challenges and reinterprets a revered mythological narrative. Through this process, she offers a subversive perspective on the treatment of women in traditional tales. The act of reclamation is a powerful feminist strategy, allowing women to assert control over their narratives and redefine their roles within cultural contexts.

Volga employs rich symbolism and imagery to convey the spirit of sisterhood. The metaphorical liberation of Sita extends beyond her individual character to symbolize the collective emancipation of women. The use of vivid imagery enhances the emotional and psychological dimensions of the sisterhood theme, creating a resonant and evocative narrative. The narrative structure, with its interwoven tales and perspectives, adds complexity to the exploration of sisterhood. Symbolic elements, such as the forest as a space of liberation and the river as a source of collective strength, deepen the layers of meaning in the text. Volga's use of symbolism contributes to the richness of the narrative, inviting readers to engage with the text on multiple levels.

Volga introduces a diverse range of female characters, each navigating their unique challenges. This approach aligns with contemporary feminist discourse on intersectionality, recognizing that women's experiences are shaped by a multitude of factors such as caste, class, and religion. The intersectional lens adds depth to the portrayal of sisterhood, acknowledging and celebrating diversity within the feminist narrative.

In conclusion, Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* offers a profound and multifaceted exploration of sisterhood within the context of a reimagined mythology. It stands as a significant contribution to feminist literature, offering a compelling exploration of sisterhood, agency,

and cultural critique. It challenges conventional narratives, providing a platform for women's voices to be heard and celebrated. Through its multifaceted characters and thought-provoking themes, Volga's work continues to inspire critical conversations about gender, culture, and empowerment.

4. Conclusion

Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* stands as a testament to the enduring power of sisterhood to reshape narratives, challenge established norms, and liberate women from the confines of patriarchal expectations. In the reimagining of Sita, Volga transcends the boundaries of myth and tradition, offering readers a Sita who is not defined by passivity but instead emerges as a symbol of resilience and self-discovery. The deconstruction of traditional narratives serves as a powerful feminist act, challenging ingrained gender roles and inviting readers to question the historical framing of women in literature.

The exploration of sisterhood in the stories go beyond familial ties, embracing a diverse spectrum of relationships among women. Volga's portrayal emphasizes that sisterhood is not a singular, uniform concept; rather, it is a dynamic force that evolves through friendships, alliances, and shared resistance to societal norms. It invites readers to recognize the strength that arises when women unite, finding solidarity in their collective experiences.

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