

## TARA: WOMAN OF ENTITY

Dr. Aruna Jadeja, Chitale Rajashree Pushkar

Research Guide

Ph.D. Research-Scholar  
Lakulish Yoga University  
Higher Studies and Research Academy  
Chharodi, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India

### Abstract

*The Ramayana Mahakavya describes Rama's Journey with his wife Seeta. Journey portrays pictures from birth of Rama to wedding of Lord Rama and Seeta, his banished life from kingdom, Ravana carries Seeta to Shrilanka. Numerous adventures Lord Rama did to get his beloved Devi Seeta back. Life of every human being is a journey. That journey is of birth and rebirth. Incarnation or avatar of saints or Gods is same the birth and rebirth cycle. In the same way Ramayana is "Rama's Journey". Ramayan and Mahabharata (Great Epic of the Bharata Dynast) epic poems (Mahakavya) of India. The Ramayana was composed in Sanskrit, probably not before 300 BCE, by the poet Valmiki and in its present form consists of some 24,000 couplets divided into seven books.*

### INTRODUCTION

**Ahalya Draupadi Kunti Tara Mandodari tatha Panchakanya smaranityam mahapatata nashaka** Ahalya, Draupadi, Seeta, Tara and Mandodari One should forever remember the panchakanya who are the destroyers of great sins.

(A variant replaces Seeta with Kunti.)

Practicing Hindus, especially Hindu wives, remember the *Panchakanya* in this daily Morning Prayer. Five iconic women and their names are extolled and the prayer is pratah smaraniya, prescribed to be recited in the early hours of the morning. The holy **panchakanya mantra** not only destroys one's previous sins, it also has power to stop one from doing a sin. There are people who after doing something wrong, regret and try to wash away their sins. Imagine the power of this mantra which can divert our mind from doing something bad. The *panchakanya* literally means five *kanyas*. *Kanya* may be translated as girl, daughter, maiden or virgin. Though all being married, the choice of the word *kanya*, not *nari* (woman), seems interesting.

While I was reading this holy mantra and thought about these five women. I decided to describe these women not only as virgin but women with entity. The good aspect of *Panchakanya* is that all these women are married and some of them have more than one man in their life but still they are considered to be holy and pure virgins by scriptures.

### WOMAN OF ENTITY: TARA

Seeta is the heroine of the *Ramayana* and the consort of the Hindu God Rama. Seeta and Rama are avatars of Vishnu and his wife Lakshmi, goddess of wealth. She is esteemed as a model of wifely and womanly virtues for all Hindu women.

*Ramayana* is considered as journey of Rama and Seeta at the same time includes many more journeys. During numerous adventures, meeting with Sugriva king of the monkeys and, monkey-general Hanuman is mentioned as *Kishkinda Kanda* in *Mahakavya Ramayana*.

*Kishkinda Kanda* includes Tara as a hero rather than heroine. As mentioned in above paragraph she is one of the women with entity. Further subdivisions of this content will illustrate Tara with characteristics and define her as WOMAN OF ENTITY.

### TARA'S BIRTH

Tara was daughter of Sushena who happened to be a *Vanara* doctor. Another story of Tara's existence is Tara emerged through the **Samudra Manthan**, one of the most remarkable events described in the purana, and was one of the divine pearls from the ocean. She was very beautiful so Dev (God) and Asur (demons) both wanted to get married with her. Powerful *vanras* Sugriva and Vali helped Gods for *Samudra Manthan*. Both Sugriva and Vali wanted to get married with Tara when she emerged as one of the beautiful outcomes of *Samudra Manthan*. Lord Vishnu resolved confusion of Tara's marriage. Person who stands in right side of a girl is her husband and person who is on the left side is her father. As Vali was standing beside right so Tara was Vali's queen.

The Samudra Manthan churning of the ocean is one of the best-known episodes in the Hindu philosophy narrated in the *Bhagavata Purana*, in the *Mahabharata* and in the *Vishnu Purana*. The *samudra manthana* explains the origin of amrita, the nectar of immortality. *Samudra mathanam*, *Mathanam* is the Sanskrit equivalent of Manthan meaning 'to churn.'

There are stories about Tara emerging. She was a woman with extraordinary intelligence, well versed in state craft. She also possessed the amazing gift of being able to understand the language of birds and beasts (*sarvabhutarutajna*).

## TARA AND VALI RELATIONSHIP

Vanara king Vali one of the strongest personages of his time was Tara's husband. She was known for her diplomacy and was the counterweight to Vali's hotheadedness. Unfortunately, Vali rarely heeded her and this resulted in his end by the hands of Rama.

**Warnings to Vali: Queen though not sitting on the throne**

**Vali was king and being a queen Tara was fair enough to rule while not sitting on the throne. She warned Vali and proved herself as counsellor to her husband many times. Though king Vali ignored her warnings.**

Tara's journey in the *Kishkindha Kanda* of the *Ramayana* was very strong. She warned husband Vali to be careful of Sugriva's intentions and not to trust him. She also warned that Sugriva is being protected by Shri Ram. So instead of fighting with him should declare Sugriva to be the heir and live in peace and amity.

**Feminist: Not to marry Sugriva's wife and send her back to Sugriva**

**She was of course a feminist. The reason may be possessive for her husband and her belief of abducting a woman is an immoral act.**

She advised but Vali rejected her counsel of not to abducting Ruma, Sugriva's wife. She warned Vali that *kal* (time or death) will hasten his end. At the same time, she explained Vali about the law of humanity and society. That society law says younger brother's wife, sister and daughter should be always given respect, care and love. Abducting, physical assaulting, incest with anyone of them is an act of evil. Fruits of such sins or karmas banish for sure. At the moment of Vali's last breaths Tara mentioned same to him. And reminded him about her saying. Tara expressed her unhappiness at her time of getting widowing that because of *kal* and sins Vali has to submit his kingdom.

**An affectionate mother: Relationship with Angad**

**She was an affectionate mother who wanted her child to be always in comfort. She wanted Angad as a next emperor and to own throne of *Kishkinda*.**

At the time of Vali's death, she was afraid about the Angad's fate without his father and with his uncle Sugriva. Vali who was on death bed she asked about being orphan, unhappy and her dependency on Sugriva. Tara wished to join Vali's funeral pyre to pay respect to husband. She was an affectionate mother so it is said that father, uncle or a male of the family is a true companion of a child not a mother. A strong feminist, queen said after Vali she will not be a queen and will have no right for Angad. Shock of husband's demise captured a strong woman by an affectionate mother. Here, Tara counselled by Hanuman.

**Tara's Grief**

**Fighter with emotions: Death of val**

Tara after seeing her fallen husband Vali remembered her advice to him about *Kal* that is his end. She was in grief and felt helpless when her husband fallen like an uprooted tree. A king who used to lie down on cozy bed is now on ground and caked in blood with Lord Rama's arrow. Her roaring king husband never shared or submitted his kingdom to even his brother Sugriva. *Kal* hastened his end. She had to accept widowhood. She was unhappy felt like an orphan.

**Leader aka administrator: married Sugriva to make Angad as king**

**It is a saying that marrying previous king's wife is to giving shelter to queen. History also has many stories about this when a king wins any battle and kills king. He gets married to died king to give shelter to queen and prince of kingdom. In this way the generations of killed king continues with his name.**

Same story can be attached to the Tara's life. She knew after Vali, Sugriva will be king. Being an intelligent, leader and desire to see Angad crowned after Sugriva. Quick to realize the gravity of the situation she maneuvered things so that she became the wife of Vali's brother Sugriva on the condition that her son Angad becomes heir to the throne.

**Politician with capability of being a mentor: Laxman incidence after val death**

Though it is said Tara is also cursed Lord Rama, who actually killed Vali. And which was fulfilled in his next incarnation, Shri Krishna. But when Sugriva became king of *Kishkinda* and forgotten promise he made with Rama to search for Seeta. For that Rama's younger brother Laxman came to ask Sugriva for the same. Tara was the person in *Kishkinda* who reasonably convinced Laxman that Sugriva has not forgotten the favour Rama has done. With only Rama's grace Sugriva was able to gain the unbroken Vanar kingdom, Ruma and Tara. Tara

requested Laxman that Rama should forgive Sugriva for his faults caused by natural sensual tendencies of body. She gave confidence to Laxman that for his promise given to Rama Sugriva can sacrifice kingdom, wealth and his family. She said as Sugriva cannot kill Ravna and his army so importing excellent vanras for war. She asked to show sincere grace towards Sugriva. She won Laxman by her kind politically correct words and being a chief diplomat. She actually became Sugriva's mentor and distress the Laxman who was burning with rage because of Sugriva's ignorance.

## CONCLUSION

As in mentioned Panchkanya Mantra that worshipping them will destroy sins or wickedness. When had brief look to Tara's life would like to conclude with a strong feeling "Holy and Strong Tara". A woman with all shades. Our Indian mythology not only portrays stories but gives motivation to fight all situations of life. A woman can be loving mother but a strict empress. She can handle family well at the same time she can be warrior. She may be emotional but strong personality. She can be reason for two men to fight for her sensuality but is able to make a wonderful kingdom too. She can be seen as fighter for her rights and save others rights too. She is adamant but agreeable in difficult situations. Portraying Tara as a **feminist, loving and affectionate mother, empress though not sitting on the throne, fighter with emotions, leader and administrator and politician with capability of being a mentor.**

## REFERENCES

- [1] Kr. Fateh Singh Jasol, 2015, Life Mission, Vadodara
- [2] <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ramayana-Indian-epic>
- [3] <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panchakanya>
- [4] <https://www.speakingtree.in/blog/women-of-substance4-the-story-of-tara>
- [5] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FVK1vcO3BF4>