

## Subaltern Speech Acts: Urmila in Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister* and the Global Discourse of Marginalised Women

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### Abstract

*The representation of marginalised women and their struggle for voice has become a major concern in contemporary feminist and postcolonial literary studies. The concept of subalternity provides a critical framework for examining how patriarchal and hierarchical structures suppress, exclude, and negotiate marginalised voices. Kavita Kane's Sita's Sister (2013) reimagines the Ramayana from the perspective of Urmila, a woman whose experiences and sacrifices remain largely peripheral to the dominant narrative. This study examines Urmila through the frameworks of subaltern studies and speech-act theory, focusing on her speech, silence, agency, and resistance. Drawing on Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's concept of subalternity and J. L. Austin and John R. Searle's understanding of language as action, the study analyses how Urmila's utterances function as acts of questioning, negotiation, refusal, and self-assertion. By situating Urmila within the broader discourse of marginalised women, the study argues that Sita's Sister challenges dominant representations and creates space for a previously peripheral female voice. The study thus highlights Urmila's transformation from a marginalised figure into an active speaking subject and demonstrates the significance of female voice, agency, and resistance in challenging structures of marginalisation.*

**Keywords:** Subalternity, Speech Acts, Urmila, Marginalised Women, Female Voice, Agency, Patriarchy, Resistance, Kavita Kane, *Sita's Sister*

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## Introduction

Voice and representation have become central concerns in feminist, postcolonial, and cultural studies. Literary narratives have traditionally been shaped by dominant social groups, while the experiences of women, minorities, and socially disadvantaged communities have often remained outside the centre of representation. Marginalised individuals may appear in a narrative without the authority to define their own experiences. Others can describe their lives, while their perspectives, desires, and responses go unheard or unrecognised. Studying marginalised voices, therefore, involves not only examining who is represented but also asking who is permitted to speak, whose speech is recognised as meaningful, and under what social conditions a voice can acquire authority.

The concept of the subaltern offers a useful theoretical framework for examining marginalisation and representation. Antonio Gramsci used the term to describe groups positioned outside dominant political and social power structures. Gramsci's discussion of subaltern groups highlights the unequal distribution of power and how dominant classes control systems of representation and knowledge. His ideas later influenced postcolonial studies, where scholars extended the concept of subalternity to examine the experiences of people whose social, political, and cultural positions prevent them from participating equally in dominant forms of discourse. The concept is particularly significant in the study of women because gender operates alongside other structures of social hierarchy and can restrict women's access to authority and representation.

Ranajit Guha further developed the subaltern concept in Indian historiography. In *Elementary Aspects of the Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, Guha challenges historical approaches that privilege colonial administrators and elite nationalist leaders while neglecting the political consciousness and actions of ordinary people. His work highlights the importance of recovering the agency of groups excluded from dominant historical narratives. Subaltern Studies consequently opened an important space to examine history from below and question the assumption that political agency belongs only to elites or officially recognised figures. This approach helps literary studies because fictional narratives can similarly privilege certain voices while relegating others to the margins.

The question of whether the subaltern can speak is most influentially formulated in Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak examines the relationship between power, representation, and the production of knowledge, arguing that the problem of subalternity cannot be reduced simply to the absence of speech. A marginalised person may speak; however, the structures that hear, interpret, and represent speech may prevent it from gaining authority. Spivak therefore distinguishes between speaking and being heard within dominant systems of representation. Her discussion is particularly important for feminist studies because she demonstrates how gender, class, colonialism, and social hierarchy can intersect in ways that make marginalised

women especially vulnerable to being represented by others.

Spivak's argument also draws a key distinction between having a voice and having that voice recognised. A woman may express her desires, objections, suffering, or resistance, but her speech may be dismissed because of her gender, social position, or lack of institutional authority. The subaltern condition can therefore be understood not merely as silence but as a structural inability to participate effectively in dominant discourse. This perspective allows literary analysis to move beyond asking whether a marginalised character speaks and instead examine the circumstances under which her words become meaningful acts of resistance, self-definition, and agency.

The relationship between speech and agency can also be examined through the concept of speech acts. J. L. Austin, in *How to Do Things with Words*, challenges the assumption that language merely describes reality. He demonstrates that utterances can also perform actions. Certain forms of speech can make promises, issue commands, offer apologies, make declarations, or establish relationships. John R. Searle further develops speech-act theory by examining the relationship between language, intention, and social action. In literary studies, this framework lets us see dialogue not simply as conversation, but as an important form of action through which characters negotiate power and identity. Marginalised women's words can therefore be studied as acts that question authority, express disagreement, establish boundaries, and claim a position within social relationships.

Judith Butler's discussion of gender and performativity provides another useful perspective on the relationship between speech, identity, and social power. In *Gender Trouble*, Butler argues that gender is not simply a fixed natural identity but is constituted through repeated social practices and expectations. Gendered behaviour is therefore connected to the norms through which society recognises individuals. This understanding matters for studying women who challenge conventional expectations because their speech and actions can disrupt established ideas about femininity. A woman who refuses silence, questions patriarchal authority, or asserts an independent identity may challenge the social performance expected of her.

Two trends of women's writing were distinctly visible in this period of literary history. The first trend included those individuals who highlighted the problems of women and yet kept themselves restricted within the then existing social norms. These writers stood against the attack of Western education and culture on Hindu ways of life by supporting and singing the praises of the ideals and legitimacy of traditional Hindu religion. Anurupa and Nirupama Devi are particularly noteworthy among the writers of this group. The other trend of writing was constant adaptation of Western thoughts without overruling traditional norms. Santa Devi and Sita Devi belonged to this progressive stream of writers. Their literary creations reflected the coordination of their inlaid thoughts with Western feminism, opening a new area of thinking and a new outlook for the women of Bengal. The main focus of their

writings was the constant analysis of the intricate mentality and change in emotional faculty of the females of the society inundated by the diverse current of western education. They placed woman as a conscious and enlightened companion of man in the complicated and “strifeful” field of life’s struggles (Datta 327–44).

The intersection of gender and subalternity becomes particularly important in the Indian context. Women in traditional social and familial structures have frequently been represented through roles such as daughter, wife, mother and sister. These roles can give women a recognised social identity while limiting their individual agency. Mythological and epic narratives are especially significant here because they have shaped cultural understandings of ideal womanhood for generations. Female characters are often remembered through their relationships with male protagonists, while their individual experiences receive comparatively less attention. Re-examining these characters from their own perspectives can therefore challenge established hierarchies of narrative representation.

Through centralising Sita, the perspective of the reader is deliberately and pointedly shifted to empathising with her experience of hailing from a royal family, being a partner in her husband’s life, trials and tribulations; and being suppressed because of her gender. Further, the rendering of the story by Sita, moves the narrative away from androcentrism, where the male voice is the central determining and unifying point of the plot (Bhat 193–210).

Urmila’s marginal position becomes significant when examined through the concept of subalternity. Her absence from the centre of the traditional narrative does not necessarily mean a lack of experience, emotion, or agency. Instead, it raises questions concerning narrative selection and representation. The dominant epic structure focuses more on the journey of Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana, while Urmila remains within the domestic sphere. Her sacrifice is acknowledged indirectly through Lakshmana’s absence, but her own emotional and intellectual responses have comparatively less narrative space. Urmila’s study therefore offers an opportunity to examine how a woman can remain central to the emotional consequences of a major event while remaining peripheral to its dominant narration.

Kavita Kane’s *Sita’s Sister* (2013) responds to this narrative marginalisation by placing Urmila at the centre of the story. Kane reconstructs the familiar epic world from the perspective of a woman whose experiences traditional representations have largely overlooked. By shifting the narrative centre from traditionally dominant figures to Urmila, Kane creates an alternative space from which to reconsider the established epic narrative. The title *Sita’s Sister* itself reflects the complexity of Urmila’s representation. Rather than identifying her primarily by her own name, Kane introduces Urmila through her relationship with Sita, demonstrating the relational nature of female identity within the traditional narrative. Kane’s novel, however, gradually establishes Urmila as an independent subject. The narrative highlights her experiences of marriage, separation, family expectations, and emotional conflict. This shift from relational identity to individual selfhood matters to

a subaltern reading because it transforms a marginalised figure from an object of narration into a speaking subject.

Urmila's speech acts are particularly significant in this transformation. Her conversations with family members and other characters let her express disagreement, question decisions, and articulate her understanding of duty, love, and responsibility. Her words are not merely descriptive elements of the narrative; they become acts through which she negotiates her position within the family and challenges expectations imposed on her. Her speech can therefore be examined as a form of agency. At the same time, the significance of her speech depends upon the social relationships within which it occurs. Her ability to speak does not automatically eliminate the structures that restrict her choices. This tension between speaking and being empowered connects speech-act theory to Spivak's discussion of subalternity.

Spivak's account of the gendered subaltern is widely cited by postcolonial scholars, but its relationship to the patriarchal foundations of capitalist modernity is not fully understood. Indeed, what Spivak refers to as the gendered subaltern raises profound questions about the conventional understanding of subalternity as a subject position outside of capital logic (Allogmany 284–303).

Urmila's experience of abandonment further complicates the relationship between voice and agency. When Lakshmana chooses to accompany Rama into exile, Urmila is left behind without being given an equivalent opportunity to determine her own future. Her personal life becomes affected by a decision made within a larger patriarchal and familial structure. The traditional narrative can interpret Lakshmana's action as loyalty and duty, but a feminist reading can also consider its consequences for the woman left at home.

The contemporary rewriting of mythological women is therefore significant because it creates an opportunity to question established representations. By retelling familiar stories from the perspectives of women previously kept peripheral, contemporary writers can challenge the authority of a single narrative and introduce alternative understandings of identity, sacrifice, and agency. Such rewriting does not simply replace one version of the story with another; it demonstrates that cultural narratives can contain multiple perspectives. Kane's *Sita's Sister* participates in this process by letting Urmila narrate and interpret experiences previously understood primarily through male characters' actions. Thus, *Sita's Sister* can be read as a significant intervention in representing marginalised female voices. Through Urmila, Kane shifts the narrative focus from a largely male-centred epic structure towards the experiences of a woman whose presence has historically remained peripheral. Spivak's concept of subalternity, Gramsci's understanding of marginalised groups, Guha's history from below, Austin's theory of speech acts, and Butler's discussion of gender and performativity together provide a theoretical foundation for examining this transformation. The present study argues that Urmila's speech acts function as significant forms of self-expression,

negotiation, and resistance through which she moves from narrative marginality towards subjecthood. By placing Urmila within the broader global discourse of marginalised women, the study further argues that Kane's novel demonstrates the continuing importance of recovering female voices, questioning dominant representations, and recognising speech as a significant form of agency.

### **Literature Review**

The concept of subalternity has become an important area of inquiry in postcolonial and feminist studies, particularly in relation to questions of power, representation, and voice. Antonio Gramsci's understanding of subaltern groups provides an early theoretical foundation for examining communities excluded from dominant structures of power. Ranajit Guha further developed this perspective through Subaltern Studies by focusing on the historical experiences and agency of groups neglected by elite-centred narratives. These approaches provide a useful framework for examining literary characters whose experiences remain outside dominant forms of representation.

Subhakara Rao Gattupalli, in "Gender Perspectives of Kavita Kane in the Novel *Sita's Sister* through the Character of Urmila," examines Urmila's experiences within patriarchal structures of duty and sacrifice. The study highlights her struggle for autonomy and the changing representation of women in Kane's retelling.

Ayuta Mohanty and Puspita Das, in "Urmila's Feminist Stance Against Patriarchy in *Sita's Sister*," analyse Urmila's resistance to traditional gender expectations. Their study presents her as an independent woman who questions patriarchal notions of obedience and sacrifice.

Yashika Bisht and Shweta Saxena, in "Assertion of Individuality and Emancipation of Urmila in Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister*," focus on Urmila's individuality and emancipation. The study demonstrates how she challenges conventional definitions of wifedom and asserts her independent identity.

Poonam Sharma and Nitin Bhatnagar, in "Urmila of Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister*: A Paradigm of a Contemporary Indian Woman," examine Urmila as a representation of contemporary womanhood. Their study emphasises Kane's transformation of a traditionally neglected epic character into an independent female subject.

Tarun Preet Kaur, in "Giving Voice to Urmila: A Study of Kavita Kane's Novel *Sita's Sister*," examines Kane's feminist rewriting of the Ramayana. The study focuses on Urmila's previously neglected perspective and the narrative space created for her voice.

Sarada M. Devi and Shakila Bhanu Shaik, in "Urmila: Revealing the Power of an Exceptional Woman in Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister*," explore Urmila's strength, individuality, and negotiation of patriarchal expectations. This analysis establishes her as an empowered female character within the mythological retelling.

Existing studies have examined Urmila through feminism, gender, individuality,

empowerment, patriarchy, and marginalisation. However, scholars have paid limited attention to Urmila's speech as a form of subaltern agency. The present study addresses this gap by combining Spivak's concept of subalternity with Austin and Searle's speech-act theory to examine how Urmila's words function as acts of questioning, negotiation, refusal, and resistance.

### Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, interpretive textual approach informed by subaltern studies, feminist literary criticism, and speech-act theory. The study's primary text is Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister* (2013). The analysis focuses primarily on Urmila's representation, particularly her speech, silence, agency, resistance, and negotiation of patriarchal expectations. The study examines how Urmila's voice challenges her marginal position within the traditional *Ramayana* narrative.

The study uses close reading to analyse Urmila's dialogue, interactions, narrative situations, and relationships with other characters. The study uses J. L. Austin's concept of speech acts and John Searle's view of language as social action to examine how Urmila's words function as acts of questioning, assertion, negotiation, and resistance. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's concept of subalternity provides the framework for examining the relationship between voice, representation, and power. The study also considers the broader feminist and postcolonial significance of Kane's rewriting of the epic.

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- RQ1: How does *Sita's Sister* represent Urmila as a marginalised yet speaking subject?
- RQ2: How do Urmila's speech acts function as forms of agency, negotiation, and resistance?
- RQ3: How can Urmila's experience be situated within the broader discourse of marginalised women?

### Discussion and Analysis

Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister* re-centres the *Ramayana* narrative by placing Urmila, a traditionally peripheral female character, at the centre of the story. Rather than presenting her merely as Sita's sister or Lakshmana's wife, Kane constructs Urmila as an individual with an independent consciousness, emotional complexity, and capacity for judgment. This transformation matters from a subaltern perspective because the traditional narrative focuses more on the actions of Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana, while Urmila's experiences remain comparatively unexplored. Kane's narrative therefore creates space for a marginalised woman to speak, interpret, and respond to events traditionally narrated from other perspectives. The novel's reconstruction of Urmila can consequently be understood as an attempt to transform a neglected figure into a speaking subject.

Urmila's marginality is established through her position within the traditional epic structure. She is defined through her relationships with others: Sita's sister,

Janaka's daughter, and Lakshmana's wife. These relational identities show how patriarchal narratives often recognise women through their connections to male or socially prominent figures. Kane challenges this limitation by giving Urmila an independent narrative consciousness. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's discussion of the subaltern helps explain the significance of this transformation. The problem of the subaltern is not simply that the marginalised person has no words; rather, structures of representation determine whose words are recognised and whose experiences enter dominant discourse. Urmila's movement from the margins of the epic towards the centre of Kane's narrative therefore becomes an important act of representational recovery.

The novel's treatment of the exile decision provides a key example of Urmila's position within this power structure. When Rama announces his exile, Urmila observes the emotional reactions of those around her. She recognises the difference between outward composure and inner suffering, particularly in Rama's response to the crisis. Kane writes that Urmila could see Rama "containing his pain and masking it with a smile" (23). The significance of this observation lies in Urmila's ability to interpret the emotional condition of another person rather than simply react to the event. She is not presented as a passive observer. Her consciousness interprets the situation and assigns it meaning. The narrative consequently gives her a form of intellectual authority that is absent from her traditional representation. The ability to observe, interpret, and articulate becomes an important part of her agency.

Urmila's position becomes more complex when Lakshmana decides to accompany Rama into exile. The epic tradition generally celebrates this decision as an expression of fraternal devotion and duty. From Urmila's perspective, however, the decision also creates a personal loss. She becomes the woman left behind while her husband undertakes the heroic journey. Kane's narrative therefore shifts attention from the public significance of Lakshmana's decision to its private consequences for Urmila. Her experience shows that heroic duty can involve silencing or marginalising another person's needs. The question is therefore not whether Lakshmana's duty is meaningful but whose sacrifice becomes visible and whose remains hidden.

This situation becomes particularly significant when considered through speech-act theory. J. L. Austin's understanding of language as action lets us examine Urmila's words as more than expressions of emotion. Her questions, arguments, and responses perform social actions because they negotiate relationships and challenge assumptions. When Urmila speaks within the family, her words establish her position relative to those with greater social authority. Her speech becomes a means of negotiating the expectations associated with being a wife, daughter, and princess. Her voice, therefore, matters not merely for what she says, but for what it does within the social structure.

The contrast between Urmila and Sita further demonstrates the complexity of female agency in the novel. Sita chooses to accompany Rama into exile, whereas

Urmila remains in Ayodhya. The two women, therefore, experience sacrifice differently. Sita's decision is highly visible because it forms part of the central heroic narrative, while Urmila's decision occurs within the domestic space. Kane's representation challenges the assumption that physical participation in an epic journey is the only form of courage. Urmila's decision to stay behind can instead be read as an act of responsibility, emotional strength, and political awareness. The woman who stays within the palace is not necessarily less active than the woman who enters the forest.

Urmila's decision to remain in Ayodhya also challenges the traditional association between silence and weakness. Her silence is not presented simply as submission. Instead, it becomes part of a complex process of thought and decision-making. The distinction between choosing silence and being silenced matters especially for a subaltern reading. Spivak's argument encourages attention to the structures that determine whether a marginalised subject can be heard. Kane complicates this problem by giving Urmila both silence and speech. Her moments of silence emerge alongside moments of questioning and assertion, suggesting that female agency takes many forms. A woman can resist through speech, but she can also exercise agency through decisions that dominant structures do not immediately recognise.

Urmila's intellectual identity further challenges conventional representations of mythological women. Kane presents her as a woman capable of reflection, argument, and independent judgment. Her character is not restricted to emotional suffering or domestic responsibility. "The Indian storytelling of femininity has experienced a mythical and devotional tradition in the Sanskrit epics, such as the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*" (Gamberi 354-72). This matters because marginalisation often reduces women to limited social roles. By representing Urmila as intellectually active, Kane expands the possibilities available to the female character. Her voice becomes evidence of an individual consciousness rather than merely a reaction to male actions.

The relationship between speech and identity becomes especially visible in how Urmila defines herself. In one significant moment, when she is addressed through titles associated with her family and social position, she rejects the imposed identification and asserts, "I am neither" (Kane [page]). The statement is brief, but its significance is considerable. Urmila refuses to let others define her entirely through inherited relationships and titles. The utterance functions as an assertive speech act because it does not merely describe her identity; it actively rejects an externally imposed identity. Her words therefore become an act of self-definition. "The transmission of the epic occurs through different means such as oral, written, and performative accounts. Narratology analyses the themes, character development, and narrative structures of the epic" (S and Jha 3).

Urmila's speech also becomes a means of negotiating patriarchal authority. Her arguments do not always immediately transform social circumstances, but they

make disagreement visible. This distinction is important because resistance cannot always be measured by whether an individual successfully changes an institution or decision. For a woman in a restricted position, articulating disagreement can itself challenge the expectation of obedience. Urmila's speech, therefore, creates a discursive space within which patriarchal authority can be questioned. Her relationship with the other women of the royal family further expands this dimension of resistance. Urmila does not exist in isolation; her experiences connect with those of Sita, Mandavi, Shrutakirti, Kaikeyi, and the other women whose lives are shaped by the same social order. Their responses to marriage, duty, separation, and family responsibility differ. This diversity prevents the novel from presenting women as a homogeneous category. Instead, Kane shows that women experience marginalisation differently, depending on their relationships, social positions, and individual choices. Such differences are important to the global discourse of marginalised women because they demonstrate that gender oppression cannot be understood through a single universal female experience.

Urmila's experience, therefore, connects to the wider question of representation. Traditional narratives may preserve the actions of powerful figures while reducing women's experiences to brief references or secondary roles. Kane's rewriting challenges this hierarchy by making the neglected woman the narrator of her own experience. "Expectations of chastity have been placed upon Indian women for centuries" (Moodley 52-61). Retelling thus becomes an act of resistance. The novel does not merely add another female character to the existing epic; it changes the perspective from which the epic is understood. Urmila's voice gives narrative importance to previously overlooked experiences.

The novel, therefore, presents speech as an important form of agency. Urmila's words let her question, interpret, refuse, negotiate, and define herself. Her speech does not completely remove the patriarchal structures surrounding her, but it prevents those structures from having total control over her identity. Her voice becomes particularly powerful because it emerges from a traditionally secondary position. In this sense, the novel turns marginality into a vantage point from which to question dominant assumptions.

Different characters in Ramayana and incidents like protecting rishis doing rituals, constructing an overpass across seawater for reaching Suvarna Lanka, accepting Vibhishana as a friend, and Shree Ram's refusal to rule Sri Lanka after Ravana's demise are classic management situations that enable student managers to hone their management-based reasoning (Chitrao et al. 3).

Thus, Urmila in *Sita's Sister* can be understood as a significant representation of the transition from narrative marginality to discursive agency. Kane gives voice to a woman who has traditionally remained at the periphery of the *Ramayana* and reconstructs her as an individual capable of thought, speech, disagreement, and self-definition. Through her speech acts, Urmila challenges imposed identities and negotiates patriarchal expectations. Through Spivak's concept of subalternity and

Austin and Searle's understanding of language as action, her voice becomes more than dialogue; it becomes agency and resistance. Kane's retelling therefore contributes to the broader literary discourse on marginalised women by showing how recovering a neglected female voice can challenge established structures of representation.

### Findings

The study finds that Urmila's representation in *Sita's Sister* transforms her from a peripheral epic figure into a speaking subject with agency and self-awareness. Her speech acts function as assertion, negotiation, and resistance, enabling her to challenge patriarchal expectations and articulate experiences traditionally excluded from the *Ramayana*. The study further finds that Kane's representation of Urmila contributes to the wider discourse of marginalised women by questioning dominant structures of representation and foregrounding female voice.

RQ1: How does *Sita's Sister* represent Urmila as a marginalised yet speaking subject?

The novel represents Urmila as a woman whose presence has traditionally remained secondary to the central figures of the *Ramayana*. Kane brings her experiences, thoughts, and emotions into the centre of the narrative and gives her a distinct voice. Her movement from being known primarily as Sita's sister and Lakshmana's wife to an independent speaking subject demonstrates narrative recovery and self-definition.

RQ2: How do Urmila's speech acts function as forms of agency, negotiation, and resistance?

Urmila's speech functions as a significant form of agency because she uses language to express disagreement, emotional pain, self-awareness, and personal choice. Her statement, "I love myself too much to suffer that misery of being without him" (72), shows she recognises her own emotional needs. Her words do not simply express feelings; they establish her position within a relationship shaped by patriarchal expectations. Speech, therefore, becomes a means of negotiating love, duty, and self-respect.

RQ3: How can Urmila's experience be situated within the broader discourse of marginalised women?

Urmila's experience reflects the wider condition of women whose voices have historically been limited by patriarchal structures of representation. Her position in the epic shows that marginalisation does not necessarily mean complete silence; it can mean being present but insufficiently heard or represented. Through Urmila's voice, Kane creates space for a previously neglected female experience and connects her story to the broader global concern with recovering marginalised women's voices.

### Overall Findings

The study shows that *Sita's Sister* transforms Urmila from a marginal figure

into an active speaker. Her speech, emotional expression, and acts of self-definition function as forms of agency and resistance. The novel, therefore, shows how recovering a neglected female voice can challenge dominant patriarchal narratives and contribute to the broader discourse on marginalised women.

### Conclusion

Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister* offers a significant reinterpretation of Urmila by moving her from the margins of the *Ramayana* to the centre of narrative consciousness. Through her speech and emotional experiences, Urmila emerges as a woman capable of questioning, negotiating, and asserting her identity within patriarchal structures. A subaltern reading reveals that Urmila's marginality is not simply a condition of silence but a consequence of dominant structures that determine whose experiences receive narrative importance. Her speech acts challenge this marginality by transforming private suffering and personal thought into articulated forms of agency. Kane's representation of Urmila demonstrates the importance of recovering women's voices from dominant cultural narratives. Her journey from a peripheral epic figure to a speaking subject contributes to the broader global discourse of marginalised women and affirms the significance of voice, self-definition, agency, and resistance in challenging structures of representation.

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