

**Discuss Sultana's Dream as a feminist utopian science fiction.**

Science fiction is a genre of fiction dealing with imaginary but plausible content such as aliens, future settings, futuristic science and technology, and space travels. Exploring the plausible consequences of scientific innovation, is one purpose of science fiction, making it a literature of ideas. Sci-fi or science fiction is based on writing rationally about alternative possible worlds in the future. And this has sometimes come out to be true.

Feminist science fiction is a sub-genre of science fiction which tends to deal with women's roles in society. Feminist science fiction poses questions regarding the unequal power distribution between men and women, about how society constructs gender roles, and most iconoclastically, about how reproduction defines gender.

In Sultana's Dream there are two exclusively women's universities; where novel scientific schemes are drawn up and implemented. One allows water to be drawn directly from the clouds; another allows solar energy to be collected, concentrated and stored. This is the solar power system of today.

The dream that Rokeya designs in Sultana's Dream is very much visionary. One evening, half-awake and half-sleepy, was in her bedroom, thinking about the miserable condition of Indian womanhood. All of a sudden, she sees a woman before her: whom she takes to be her friend, Sister Sara. The place she takes Sultana to, Ladyland, is 'free from sin and harm.'(p.4) Here, no man can be seen on the streets, as they are kept in zenanas.

The case against men is that they waste six hours every day simply in smoking. Few years ago, some people from a neighbouring country took asylum in Ladyland. The Queen refused to return them as it was against her principle to return refugees. As the result, there was a war between the two countries. Nearly all the men of the country went out to fight: even boys of 16 years old were not spared. When the male soldiers of the country proved inadequate to defend their country, the principal of the second university, which had made much scientific progress, came forward to use their brain power to defeat their enemies. But they made the withdrawal of the men into the 'Mardana' a precondition for agreeing to come forward to defend the country. Using the concentrated solar power stored by the women's universities to power missiles, the enemy is routed. With the men safely isolated in the Mardana, the land continues to be governed by women. It is evident that the driving force behind the success of the utopian feminist country is women's education. Rokeya lays particular importance on women familiarising themselves with science. She clearly condemns male militarism. Ladyland is a utopian country where science, technology and virtue work together, in perfect harmony. Air travel is the only mode of communication; land is cultivated by solar-powered electric motors and the weather is controlled too. Ladyland embodies the triumph of the enquiring, enlightened, scientific, virtuous and welfare-oriented spirit in women. And its heroines and champions are female educators.