

# Diary of lady murasaki - the autobiography of the authoress shikibu murasaki

Literature



“The Diary of Lady Murasaki” is the autobiography of the life of the empress Shikibu Murasaki, the author of the Tale of Genji. The diary captivates the daily life of Lady Murasaki Shikibu. The time frame of autumn of 1008 when Empress Akiko was preparing to produce the New Year’s festivities of the year 1010 is captured in the enlightened pages of this collection of memoirs. The book captures the coincidental occurrence in contemporary court life. The book explores the subtle activities of everyday life that are hard to find in any historical chronicles. The book also records the appreciation and appraisals for her contemporaries and colleagues like Izumi Shikibu and Akazome Emon. The tale diary also unfolds a saga of rivalry between Murasaki Shikibu and her contemporary Sei Shonagon. Along with this, the book evolves out to be one of the most enlightening literary pieces as it captures the authoress’ profound vision on life.

The rivalry between, Shikibu and Shonagon composes a formative part of the autobiography and is most instrumental in learning about the socio-economic condition of China during that period in general and women of the Chinese society in particular as the book involves a strong feministic approach being the mirror of a woman’s mind.

It can be easily contended that the status of the women in the contemporary society was that of a subjugated status. Women were educated not for their own sake but for attracting men or their prospective grooms and this was prevalent in all the classes of the society.

Shonagon, the greatest rival of Shikibu, is described in her diary as the woman who is very ambitious and her pursuit for ambition is described as quite desperate which indicates that over-ambitious attitude in women was

not encouraged in the society of that period. Women were required and expected to be extremely feminine, quiet and demure. Expressing fort right opinion in the case of the women was not acceptable in the social context and milieu of Shikibu's time. Under this situation, Shonagon was projected as a woman who devastated every opposition by the force of her sarcasm and that of her wit.