

Myth and Womanhood: Rewriting Indian Feminism through Retellings

Ishika Singh

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Humanities and Linguistics
Sarla Birla University, Ranchi, India

Abstract: *This paper, Myth & Womanhood: Rewriting Indian Feminism through Retellings, explores the evolution of Indian feminism through the lens of mythology, as re-imagined by contemporary writers. It examines how shifting societal perspectives have reshaped the portrayal of mythological female figures, offering a deeper understanding of gender complexities. Mythological retellings serve as a powerful medium for challenging traditional gender roles, particularly through the stories of Draupadi, Gandhari, and Kunti from the Mahabharata, as well as Ahilya and Sita from the Ramayana. These narratives provide critical insight into the layered experiences of women, both within ancient texts and their modern reinterpretations. This paper argues that Indian feminism extends beyond the conventional fight for equality—it is an intricate interplay of regional, religious, and cultural identities. With the creative liberty afforded by contemporary literature, mythological retellings have surfaced that not only redefine these iconic women but also reflect the changing dynamics of gender discourse. By reimagining these characters with agency and depth, modern feminist writers challenge both contemporary societal constructs and the historical misrepresentation of women's roles in traditional Indian society. Through this, mythology becomes more than just a relic of the past—it transforms into a foundation for progressive feminist thought.*

Keywords: Indian feminism, Mythology, Mythological texts, Modern Retellings, Feminism, Feminist Literature

