

REIMAGINING WOMANHOOD IN MYTHICAL NARRATIVES THROUGH CONTEMPORARY RETELLINGS: AN EDUCATIONAL ENVISIONING AND INTEGRATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Hindu mythologies have played a significant role in shaping social norms, roles, and hierarchies in the Indian subcontinent. They have influenced gender roles, caste divisions, and social practices. The portrayal of women in Indian epics often focuses on a limited range of experiences and perspectives. Feminist revisionist mythmaking aims to disrupt the traditional portrayal of women in myths reinforcing stereotypes, marginalizing female characters, and perpetuating patriarchal power structures. It brings to the forefront the voices of women, empowering and validating their experiences. Through revisionism, female characters are often reimagined as strong and multidimensional individuals who challenge societal expectations, asserting agency, and actively participate in shaping their own destinies. The NEP 2020 recognizes the significance of Indian tradition and culture in shaping the identity of future generations. Contemporary retellings explore issues that resonate with current societal concerns like social justice, environmental sustainability, and gender equality. Incorporating such retellings in academic curricula helps students connect these myths to their own lives, fostering relevant engagement with the traditional and new narratives, thereby fostering gender equity with due importance to binaries and also the third gender. The present paper studies the evolution of the representation of women as self-sustained identities in select contemporary feminist retellings of Hindu epics, through lenses of Gender and other literary theories. Further, it also seeks to explore integrating these fresh narratives educationally as short stories, reading texts, documentaries or animations in the syllabi of the adolescent students to mould and channelise their minds towards value-based learning.

KEYWORDS: *Myths, Revisionism, Womanhood, Gender Equity, NEP.*