

Women, Myth and Self-Realization: Re-Envisioning Female Agency in Tagore’s Mythical Drama

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 13 May 2024; Received in revised form: 11 Jun 2024; Accepted: 15 Jun 2024; Available online: 20 Jun 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).</p> <p>Keywords— Rabindranath Tagore, Mythical Plays, Female Self-Assertion, Feminine Consciousness, Gender Equality</p>	<p><i>This study examines the assertion of female self in the mythical plays of Rabindranath Tagore, focusing on how myth is reinterpreted as a dynamic medium for articulating feminine identity, agency, and ethical autonomy. Drawing upon feminist literary criticism and myth studies, the research analyzes select plays Chitra, Chandalika, Natir Puja, and Shyama to explore Tagore’s reconfiguration of traditional mythological women into self-aware, morally conscious individuals. The study argues that Tagore departs from patriarchal mythic archetypes by foregrounding women’s inner awakening, emotional autonomy, and capacity for ethical decision-making. Rather than portraying female assertion as mere rebellion, Tagore presents it as a balanced process rooted in self-realization, responsibility, and humanist values. Through a critical examination of identity, desire, devotion, caste, and power, the paper demonstrates that Tagore’s mythical plays anticipate modern feminist concerns while remaining grounded in ethical humanism. The research contributes to Tagore scholarship by highlighting the dramatic corpus as a crucial site for feminist interpretation and underscores the enduring relevance of Tagore’s vision of gender equality in contemporary literary and cultural discourse.</i></p>

I. INTRODUCTION

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), one of the most towering figures of modern Indian literature, emerges as a profoundly original dramatist whose works reflect a harmonious synthesis of aesthetic creativity, philosophical depth, and social reform. As a modern humanist, Tagore consistently interrogated rigid social structures, moral dogmas, and institutionalized hierarchies that constrained individual freedom and human dignity. His dramatic works, in particular, serve as powerful sites of resistance against patriarchal authority, caste oppression, and gender discrimination. Through his

plays, Tagore envisioned a humane and inclusive society grounded in ethical consciousness, emotional truth, and spiritual freedom, thereby positioning himself as a reformist dramatist deeply engaged with the social realities of his time.

Myth occupies a central and dynamic position in Tagore’s dramatic vision. Rather than reproducing mythological narratives in their conventional or devotional forms, Tagore reinterprets myths to articulate modern psychological, ethical, and social concerns. Myth, for Tagore, is not a static repository of tradition but a living, malleable framework capable of accommodating new meanings. By

reshaping familiar mythic characters and narratives, he interrogates inherited values and exposes the tensions between tradition and modernity. His mythical plays thus function as symbolic narratives through which contemporary issues—particularly those related to gender, freedom, and identity—are explored with philosophical subtlety and emotional intensity.

Within this mythic framework, Tagore presents women not as passive archetypes but as conscious individuals striving for self-definition and autonomy. The concept of female self-assertion in literature refers to a woman's articulation of her identity, desires, and moral agency in opposition to socially imposed roles and expectations. It involves the rejection of silence, submission, and objectification, and instead foregrounds self-awareness, choice, and ethical independence. In Tagore's mythical plays, female self-assertion often emerges through moments of inner awakening, moral conflict, and decisive action, where women challenge patriarchal norms, spiritual hierarchies, and restrictive cultural traditions.

The relevance of studying female self-assertion in Tagore's mythical drama lies in the playwright's ability to anticipate and articulate feminist concerns long before the emergence of organized feminist movements in India. Characters such as Chitra, Prakriti, and the dancer in *Natir Puja* embody a modern feminine consciousness that seeks authenticity, dignity, and freedom rather than mere social approval or romantic fulfillment. Their struggles reflect a deeper quest for selfhood, where love, devotion, and desire are aligned with moral responsibility and self-respect. Through these characters, Tagore critiques the marginalization of women in both myth and society while simultaneously offering an alternative vision of empowered womanhood.

This study is therefore undertaken to examine how Tagore's reinterpretation of myth becomes a medium for asserting female selfhood and challenging patriarchal discourse. By focusing on select mythical plays, the research seeks to analyze the ways in which Tagore transforms traditional female figures into voices of resistance, ethical strength, and self-realization. In the contemporary context where questions of gender equality, identity,

and agency remain deeply relevant such a study not only enriches Tagore scholarship but also contributes meaningfully to feminist literary criticism and the broader discourse on women's empowerment in literature.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The critical reception of Rabindranath Tagore's dramatic works has been both extensive and varied, encompassing formalist readings, philosophical examinations, and socio-cultural interpretations. Scholars such as Sisir Kumar Das and Krishna Kripalani have foregrounded Tagore's contribution to Indian theatre, emphasizing his innovative use of language, symbolism, and dramaturgy as tools for social reflection and moral inquiry. These studies, while offering comprehensive overviews of thematic and aesthetic dimensions in Tagore's plays, often treat the question of gender either incidentally or within the broader context of humanism and cultural nationalism. Consequently, while the dramatic oeuvre has received substantial attention, focused explorations of gendered subjectivity particularly the assertion of female selfhood remain comparatively under-emphasized.

In the domain of feminist literary criticism, scholars have increasingly engaged with Tagore's texts to examine representations of women and to re-evaluate traditional characterizations. Feminist interpreters such as Uma Das Gupta and Sukrita Paul Kumar have illuminated how Tagore's female characters negotiate patriarchal structures, emotional autonomy, and moral agency. These studies provide valuable insights into the lived experiences of women in Tagore's narratives, highlighting issues of marriage, education, and socio-cultural constraints. However, a closer investigation reveals that existing feminist critiques largely concentrate on social novels and lyrical poetry, with less emphasis on the dramatic corpus, particularly his plays that draw on myth. This trend points to a significant lacuna in scholarship where the intersection of *mythic discourse and feminist agency* in Tagore's dramatic works remains insufficiently explored.

The reinterpretation of myth in literature has been another prominent field of scholarly inquiry. Myth criticism, drawing upon the works of Northrop

Frye, Joseph Campbell, and modern feminist theorists, foregrounds myth as a symbolic structure that encodes cultural values, archetypes, and collective imaginaries. Within Indian literary studies, scholars have examined the ways in which modern writers reconfigure mythological figures to challenge traditional narratives and to articulate new ideological positions. In the context of gender representation, feminist myth criticism exemplified by scholars such as Anne Baring, Jules Cashford, and Carol Christ reveals myth's dual potential to both reinforce and subvert patriarchal ideologies. These theoretical frameworks facilitate a deeper understanding of how reimagined mythic paradigms can empower female subjects by destabilizing patriarchal archetypes. Yet, while the utility of myth as a critical lens is well acknowledged, specific applications of myth-based approaches to Tagore's plays especially with a focus on *female self-assertion* are relatively sparse.

A review of existing literature therefore underscores a discernible research gap: although Tagore's plays have been widely studied in terms of form, philosophy, and social critique, the assertion of female self within the mythic framework of his drama has not been systematically examined. Most feminist studies have prioritized social narratives or lyrical texts, leaving the potentially rich site of Tagore's mythical plays under-investigated. Likewise, while mythological reinterpretation has been discussed in broader critical theory, its specific role as a vehicle for female empowerment in Tagore's dramatic works warrants further scholarly attention.

This research seeks to address these gaps by centering the concept of *female self-assertion* within the mythic plays of Rabindranath Tagore. It aims to synthesize feminist literary criticism, myth criticism, and Tagorean studies to elucidate how myth can be re-imagined not just as a cultural artifact but as a transformative medium through which women in Tagore's drama articulate identity, agency, and moral autonomy. In doing so, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of gendered subjectivity in modern Indian theatre and extends the critical discourse on Tagore's dramatic legacy.

Myth and Female Representation in Tagore's Plays

Rabindranath Tagore's engagement with Indian myth is marked by reinterpretation rather than replication. Unlike traditional mythological dramatists who largely reinforce established religious and cultural narratives, Tagore reimagines myth as a flexible and symbolic medium through which modern ethical, psychological, and social concerns can be articulated. His mythical plays do not seek to reaffirm ritualistic or devotional orthodoxy; instead, they interrogate the ideological assumptions embedded within myth, particularly those related to gender, power, and authority. Through this reworking of mythic material, Tagore transforms inherited narratives into sites of critical inquiry and humanist reflection.

Tagore's reinterpretation of Indian myths is distinguished by a shift in focus from heroic masculinity and divine authority to inner consciousness and moral choice. He selectively adapts mythological episodes to foreground the emotional and intellectual experiences of female characters who were traditionally marginalized or idealized. In doing so, he detaches myth from its deterministic framework and aligns it with the modern individual's quest for freedom and self-realization. Myth, for Tagore, becomes a living discourse capable of questioning inherited values rather than a static vehicle for their transmission.

A significant departure in Tagore's myth-based drama lies in his portrayal of women in contrast to their traditional mythological counterparts. Classical Indian myths often present women as archetypes devoted wives, obedient daughters, seductive temptresses, or self-sacrificing figures whose identities are defined primarily in relation to male protagonists and patriarchal ideals. Such representations tend to emphasize submission, chastity, and moral endurance, thereby restricting female agency within narrowly prescribed roles. In contrast, Tagore's women are introspective, articulate, and morally autonomous individuals who actively question the social and spiritual structures that seek to confine them.

Female characters in Tagore's mythical plays – such as Chitra in *Chitra*, Prakriti in *Chandalika*, and the dancer in *Natir Puja* – are not merely symbolic figures but complex psychological subjects. They assert their right to self-definition, emotional

authenticity, and ethical choice. Chitra challenges the externally imposed ideals of beauty and femininity, demanding recognition of her true self rather than an illusory identity. Prakriti's awakening represents a radical assertion of self-worth against the twin oppressions of caste and gender. Similarly, the dancer in *Natir Puja* embodies spiritual courage and moral resistance in the face of political and patriarchal authority. Through these portrayals, Tagore dismantles traditional mythological stereotypes and replaces them with women who negotiate identity on their own terms.

Myth, in Tagore's dramatic vision, thus becomes a powerful medium of social critique. By reworking familiar mythic narratives, he exposes the patriarchal ideologies embedded within cultural traditions and questions their ethical legitimacy. The mythic setting provides Tagore with a symbolic distance that enables him to critique contemporary social realities without direct didacticism. Within this symbolic framework, issues such as gender inequality, caste oppression, spiritual authoritarianism, and the suppression of individual freedom are examined with philosophical depth and emotional resonance.

Moreover, Tagore's use of myth allows for a synthesis of tradition and modernity. While rooted in Indian cultural heritage, his mythical plays articulate progressive ideals of gender equality and human dignity. The assertion of female selfhood within mythic contexts underscores Tagore's belief that social transformation must arise not through the rejection of tradition but through its critical re-interpretation. Myth, therefore, becomes an instrument of renewal one that enables women to emerge as agents of change rather than passive bearers of cultural continuity.

In re-envisioning mythological women as self-aware and assertive individuals, Tagore not only challenges patriarchal norms but also redefines the moral and philosophical scope of Indian drama. His mythical plays stand as enduring testimonies to the possibility of reclaiming cultural narratives in the service of gender justice, ethical freedom, and humanist values.

Assertion of Female Self in Select Mythical Plays

Rabindranath Tagore's mythical plays constitute a significant site for the articulation of female selfhood, where women emerge not as passive recipients of fate but as conscious agents negotiating identity, morality, and freedom. Through characters drawn from mythic and quasi-mythic frameworks, Tagore dramatizes the inner struggles of women who challenge externally imposed identities and assert their right to self-definition. The plays *Chitra*, *Chandalika*, *Natir Puja*, and *Shyama* collectively illustrate Tagore's progressive vision of womanhood, where female assertion unfolds through choice, ethical awareness, and spiritual courage.

Chitra: Assertion through Identity and Choice

In *Chitra*, Tagore reinterprets the Mahabharata episode of Chitrangada to foreground the protagonist's quest for authentic selfhood. Unlike the conventional mythological portrayal of women as objects of male desire or moral exemplars, Chitra asserts her individuality by questioning the very basis of romantic love founded on illusion. Initially transformed into an embodiment of idealized feminine beauty to win Arjuna's love, Chitra soon realizes the emotional falsity of an identity shaped by external expectations. Her demand for recognition as her "true self" marks a decisive moment of female assertion.

Chitra's rejection of imposed femininity challenges patriarchal norms that equate womanhood with physical beauty, passivity, and compliance. By renouncing the borrowed allure granted by divine intervention, she asserts her moral integrity and psychological autonomy. Her declaration that love must be rooted in truth rather than illusion reflects Tagore's humanist belief in authenticity as the foundation of meaningful relationships. Chitra thus emerges as a modern woman who refuses to be defined by socially constructed ideals of femininity and instead claims the right to be loved as a complete human being.

Chandalika: Assertion against Social and Spiritual Hierarchies

Chandalika presents one of Tagore's most radical explorations of female self-assertion, intersecting issues of caste, gender, and spiritual awakening. Prakriti, an untouchable girl

marginalized by social exclusion, experiences a transformative moment of self-realization when the Buddhist monk Ananda accepts water from her hands. This act disrupts deeply entrenched caste hierarchies and instills in Prakriti a newfound sense of dignity and self-worth. Her awakening is not merely emotional but profoundly political, as it challenges the ideological foundations of social discrimination.

However, Prakriti's assertion of self is marked by intense inner conflict. Her desire for Ananda leads her to transgress ethical boundaries, resulting in guilt and psychological turmoil. Tagore does not idealize her assertion but presents it as a complex process involving moral struggle and self-awareness. Prakriti's eventual realization of her ethical responsibility signifies a mature assertion of selfhood that balances desire with moral consciousness. Through Prakriti, Tagore foregrounds the intersectional nature of female oppression and emphasizes that true self-assertion must be grounded in ethical self-realization.

Natir Puja: Spiritual Selfhood and Resistance

In *Natir Puja*, Tagore situates female assertion within the realm of spiritual conviction and political resistance. The central female figure, a court dancer, defies royal authority and social conventions by embracing Buddhism a faith that represents moral equality and spiritual freedom. Her devotion is not passive submission but an active assertion of conscience, as she chooses spiritual truth over personal safety and social privilege.

The dancer's willingness to face persecution and death underscores Tagore's portrayal of female devotion as moral courage rather than emotional surrender. Her resistance to political and patriarchal authority transforms spiritual belief into an act of defiance. Through this character, Tagore elevates the female self to a position of ethical authority, suggesting that women can embody moral leadership and transformative resistance. *Natir Puja* thus redefines devotion as an empowered and conscious choice, reinforcing the idea that spiritual selfhood is integral to female assertion.

Shyama: Desire, Guilt, and Moral Assertion

Shyama explores the assertion of female agency within the morally ambiguous terrain of desire, love,

and consequence. Shyama's passionate love for Uttiya leads her to manipulate circumstances that result in tragic outcomes. Unlike traditional mythological women who are either idealized or condemned, Shyama is portrayed as a morally complex individual who confronts the consequences of her actions. Her assertion lies not in moral perfection but in her capacity for ethical reflection and acceptance of responsibility.

Shyama's journey from desire to guilt and eventual self-realization illustrates Tagore's nuanced understanding of female selfhood as an evolving process. Her acknowledgment of moral accountability signifies a deeper assertion of self, grounded in ethical awareness rather than emotional impulse. By allowing Shyama to experience remorse and self-judgment, Tagore affirms women's moral agency and rejects reductive portrayals of female virtue or vice.

Feminine Consciousness and Modern Sensibility

Rabindranath Tagore's dramatic oeuvre reflects a profound engagement with the emergence of feminine consciousness within the broader framework of modern sensibility. His female characters embody the transition from traditional, role-bound identities to self-aware, morally autonomous individuals who actively negotiate their place in society. This transformation signals the rise of the "New Woman" in Tagore's drama—one who is not merely a symbolic figure within myth or tradition, but a thinking, feeling, and decision-making subject shaped by modern ethical awareness and humanist ideals.

Emergence of the "New Woman" in Tagore

The "New Woman" in Tagore's works represents a decisive break from conventional representations of women as passive, self-sacrificing, or morally dependent beings. Influenced by modern humanist thought and reformist impulses, Tagore envisions women who possess an acute awareness of their individuality and moral responsibility. His female protagonists challenge patriarchal authority not through overt rebellion alone, but through introspection, ethical reasoning, and conscious choice. This emergence of feminine self-consciousness marks a significant shift in Indian dramatic literature, where women begin to assert

their identities beyond the confines of social prescription and mythological idealization.

In Tagore's mythical plays, the New Woman is characterized by her refusal to accept externally imposed identities—whether derived from beauty, caste, devotion, or desire. Characters such as Chitra and Prakriti articulate a modern feminine consciousness that demands authenticity and dignity rather than approval or validation. Their journeys reflect an awakening that is deeply personal yet socially transformative, underscoring Tagore's belief that true reform must originate in individual moral awakening.

Emotional Autonomy and Ethical Independence

A defining feature of feminine consciousness in Tagore's drama is emotional autonomy. Unlike traditional portrayals where women's emotions are subsumed under duty or obedience, Tagore's women recognize, articulate, and critically examine their emotional experiences. Love, desire, devotion, and guilt are not treated as weaknesses but as integral aspects of human selfhood that require ethical engagement. Emotional autonomy enables these women to move beyond impulsive reactions and toward reflective decision-making grounded in moral awareness.

Ethical independence further distinguishes Tagore's female characters from their traditional counterparts. They do not derive moral authority from social norms, religious orthodoxy, or male approval, but from an inner ethical compass. Whether it is Chitra's insistence on truth in love, Prakriti's realization of moral responsibility, or the dancer's spiritual resistance in *Natir Puja*, Tagore presents women who evaluate right and wrong through self-reflection rather than submission. This ethical independence affirms women as complete moral agents capable of shaping their own destinies.

Women as Thinkers and Decision-Makers

Tagore's modern sensibility is most evident in his portrayal of women as intellectual and ethical thinkers who actively participate in decision-making processes. His female characters are not merely emotional beings but reflective individuals who engage in philosophical inquiry and moral reasoning. They question authority, interrogate social

conventions, and confront the consequences of their choices with courage and accountability.

By positioning women as decision-makers, Tagore challenges the patriarchal assumption that agency and rationality are exclusively masculine domains. Women in his plays take responsibility for their actions, whether those actions lead to fulfillment or tragedy. This acknowledgment of female responsibility reinforces the idea that women are not only entitled to freedom but also capable of bearing its ethical consequences. In this sense, Tagore's women are neither idealized nor infantilized; they are portrayed as fully human, complex, and morally accountable individuals.

Through the depiction of feminine consciousness informed by modern sensibility, Tagore redefines womanhood as an active, self-aware, and ethically grounded mode of existence. His dramatic vision anticipates contemporary feminist thought by affirming women's intellectual autonomy, emotional depth, and moral agency. As such, Tagore's portrayal of the New Woman remains a significant contribution to feminist literary discourse and continues to resonate in modern discussions of gender, identity, and empowerment.

Tagore's Vision of Gender Equality

Rabindranath Tagore's vision of gender equality is deeply rooted in his humanist philosophy, which affirms the inherent dignity, freedom, and moral capacity of every individual, irrespective of gender. Rather than advocating a confrontational or purely ideological feminism, Tagore articulates a nuanced and ethical critique of gender inequality that seeks harmony between individual freedom and social responsibility. His dramatic works, particularly the myth-based plays, reveal a sustained interrogation of patriarchal norms and a reimagining of womanhood as an autonomous, morally accountable, and intellectually equal presence within society.

Critique of Patriarchal Norms

Tagore's critique of patriarchy is neither overtly polemical nor didactic; instead, it is embedded within character development, symbolic action, and moral conflict. He exposes the subtle mechanisms through which patriarchal authority operates—such as the idealization of female sacrifice,

the glorification of obedience, and the suppression of women's voices under the guise of tradition and spirituality. In his mythical plays, Tagore dismantles the assumption that social or religious authority is inherently just, particularly when it denies women the right to self-expression and ethical choice.

Through characters like Chitra, Prakriti, and Shyama, Tagore challenges the patriarchal construction of femininity that confines women to roles defined by male desire, caste hierarchy, or moral expectation. These women resist being reduced to symbols of beauty, purity, or devotion, and instead assert their individuality and moral autonomy. Tagore's critique lies in revealing how patriarchal systems dehumanize not only women but society at large by denying the ethical agency of half its members. His drama thus functions as a quiet yet powerful indictment of gendered injustice embedded in cultural and mythological traditions.

Balance between Love, Freedom, and Responsibility

A distinctive feature of Tagore's approach to gender equality is his insistence on balancing love, freedom, and responsibility. Unlike radical paradigms that may prioritize individual freedom at the expense of ethical accountability, Tagore envisions liberation as a morally informed state of being. Love, in his plays, is not possessive or illusory but demands truth, equality, and mutual recognition. Freedom is not synonymous with self-indulgence but is inseparable from responsibility toward others and oneself.

Tagore's female characters exemplify this balance through their conscious choices and ethical struggles. Chitra's assertion of truth in love, Prakriti's recognition of moral limits, and Shyama's acceptance of guilt and consequence all reflect a mature understanding of freedom as an ethical commitment rather than unchecked desire. In presenting women who are capable of both passion and moral judgment, Tagore rejects patriarchal stereotypes that portray women as either morally superior angels or emotionally irrational beings. Instead, he affirms women as ethically complex individuals whose freedom is grounded in self-awareness and responsibility.

Relevance of Tagore's Female Characters in Contemporary Discourse

The relevance of Tagore's female characters extends far beyond their historical and cultural contexts, resonating powerfully within contemporary debates on gender equality, identity, and agency. In an era marked by ongoing struggles against gender-based discrimination, social exclusion, and moral policing, Tagore's women offer enduring models of empowered yet ethically grounded femininity. Their insistence on dignity, authenticity, and moral autonomy aligns closely with modern feminist concerns surrounding consent, self-representation, and intersectional justice.

Moreover, Tagore's emphasis on inner freedom and ethical self-realization provides a valuable corrective to contemporary discourses that may prioritize visibility or resistance without sufficient attention to moral responsibility. His female characters remind readers that genuine empowerment involves not only challenging external structures of oppression but also cultivating an inner ethical consciousness. In this sense, Tagore's vision anticipates contemporary feminist-humanist frameworks that seek transformative change through both social critique and personal moral engagement.

By integrating gender equality within a broader humanist vision, Tagore offers a timeless and inclusive model of empowerment one that affirms women as equal partners in love, thought, and ethical action. His mythical plays thus continue to serve as vital texts for understanding the intersections of gender, freedom, and responsibility, reinforcing Tagore's enduring relevance as a progressive thinker and dramatist.

III. CONCLUSION

The present study has examined the assertion of female self in the mythical plays of Rabindranath Tagore, revealing how myth functions as a transformative medium through which women articulate identity, agency, and ethical autonomy. By reinterpreting traditional mythological narratives, Tagore reconfigures female characters from passive symbols of devotion, beauty, or sacrifice into conscious individuals capable of self-reflection, moral reasoning, and resistance. The analysis of plays such as *Chitra*, *Chandalika*, *Natir Puja*, and *Shyama* demonstrates that female self-assertion in

Tagore's drama is expressed through authentic self-recognition, rejection of imposed femininity, ethical decision-making, and spiritual courage. These women negotiate love, desire, faith, and responsibility on their own terms, thereby challenging patriarchal structures embedded within both myth and society.

One of the major findings of this study is that Tagore's female protagonists embody a modern feminine consciousness that anticipates contemporary feminist concerns while remaining rooted in humanist ethics. Their assertion of self is neither impulsive nor purely oppositional; rather, it emerges through inner awakening and moral accountability. Tagore's vision of empowerment is thus distinguished by its insistence on the balance between freedom and responsibility, enabling his women to assert autonomy without rejecting ethical commitment. This nuanced portrayal underscores Tagore's departure from traditional mythological representations and establishes his mythical plays as powerful sites of gender critique and redefinition.

The study contributes significantly to Tagore scholarship by foregrounding the relatively underexplored intersection of myth, drama, and female self-assertion. While previous studies have focused largely on Tagore's novels, poetry, or socio-political ideas, this research highlights the dramatic corpus—particularly the myth-based plays—as a crucial space for understanding his progressive views on gender and individuality. By situating female selfhood at the center of mythic reinterpretation, the study offers a fresh critical perspective that deepens appreciation of Tagore's dramaturgy and philosophical vision.

From the standpoint of feminist literary studies, this research reinforces the relevance of Tagore as an early and ethically grounded feminist thinker. His portrayal of women as thinkers, moral agents, and decision-makers challenges reductive binaries of tradition versus modernity and offers an alternative feminist paradigm rooted in self-awareness, dignity, and moral autonomy. The study demonstrates that feminist empowerment in literature need not be divorced from ethical reflection, thereby contributing to broader feminist-humanist discourse and expanding the scope of feminist criticism in Indian English literature.

The scope for further research remains substantial. Future studies may undertake comparative analyses between Tagore's female characters and those in the works of other Indian or Western dramatists who engage with myth. Interdisciplinary approaches incorporating performance studies, translation studies, or cultural history could further illuminate the reception and reinterpretation of Tagore's mythical plays. Additionally, examining Tagore's women through the lens of contemporary feminist theories such as intersectionality, postcolonial feminism, or ecofeminism may yield new insights into the enduring relevance of his dramatic vision. Tagore's mythical plays stand as enduring literary texts that reimagine womanhood as a site of self-assertion, ethical strength, and transformative potential. By reclaiming myth as a space for female empowerment, Tagore not only critiques patriarchal tradition but also offers a timeless and humane vision of gender equality that continues to resonate in contemporary literary and feminist discourse.

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