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## History and Myth in the works of Githa Hariharan — An Overview

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### ABSTRACT

Women authors in India are keeping up with the world's pace with their powerful and sure strides. They're known for their creativity, adaptability, and the local flavor of the soil they brought to their work. Since 2002, Githa Hariharan has held a prominent position in the realm of Indian English fiction. In the Indian setting, mythology is undoubtedly the most widely used and adored by all generations and genres. Indians of every era, time, region, and dynasty have exhibited an eager desire to be enriched and versed in myths, stories, and folklore, as evidenced by history. In her works "Thousand Faces of Night" and "In Times of Siege," Githa Hariharan has beautifully explored all of these topics

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### Article Content

With reference to Githa Hariharan's writings, this research article aims to investigate the concepts of "myth," "history," "ideology," and "politics of identity."

Women authors in India were coordinating the world's pace with their steady and powerful leaps. They seemed to burst forth in full bloom, spreading their identities. They were recognized for their innovation, adaptability, and the local type of dirt they brought to their job. Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Anita Desai, Kamala Das, and Shobha De were among the Indian women writers who had their own interactions with the women scholars' cosmos of introductory dismissal, despair, familial relationships, social life, and so on. It was incredible to see how these authors, along with a slew of others, climbed the ladder of success in such a gradual and torturous manner. Women writers in India provided abstract work an undeniable edge. They painted a lovely picture of a world filled with affluent women. Their women were genuine living creatures and true heroes who made you wonder about their environment, society, men, children, families, mental makeup, and themselves and us just by looking at them. They have addressed their grievances and difficulties in relation to contemporary India's foundation. At the same time, they looked into the socio-social modes and importance that have shaped Indian women's perceptions of themselves and their roles in society. The shifting landscape has placed these female authors in an untenable situation. Women's scholars in India in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries appear to take a fresh look at issues concerning women. These female writers have given life to amazing individuality through their writing. One of the most important characteristics of these authors is that they are all well-educated, interested in social issues, and willing to experiment with their work. Each of these essayists delves deeper into the traditional themes of love, conjugal disappointment, inappropriate behavior observed by women professors in the public, or the illness and challenges they battled or quietly swallowed. In response, Githa Hariharan has used an utterly unexpected weapon to expose all of the concerns that women are concerned about. Every one of these points of view is definitely present in her works, but the technique of introduction is wholly unexpected in the context of our usual authors.

Hariharan's primary goal in revisiting and rewriting the past is not simply reconstruction, but also re-examination and reinterpretation, with the goal of redirecting the present or determining the future. She discusses the right of women to self-determination. Her revisionist fiction seeks to resurrect a long-forgotten relationship. Modern feminist literature criticizes the portrayal of women in classical literature. The picture of a woman in classical literature appears to be a myth. As Luce Irigaray points out, male norms are used to portray women in phallogocentric discourses. She claims that women are imposed femininity, a set of beliefs, an image, and a role.

There is a contradiction between women's forced femininity and their true selves. She wants to say that femininity is a set of false values that women have developed in order to meet masculine demands. As a result, "New American women's" true selves are denied to them. TFN's most well-known novels are Githa Hariharan travels to a far-off mythological country to reveal the true state of female life and how she has been oppressed for centuries. Devi, Parbatamma, Devi's mother-in-law, and Mala, Mala's grandmother, all have this kind of inner turmoil. They desire something more in life than a husband, children, and a house. Hariharan has created self-defining and rebellious female characters such as Devi, her mother, mother-in-law, and Mala, mythifying/falsifying the representation of women in classical literature as frail, meek, submissive, obedient, quiet, domestic, homesick, and wistful. In her essay "The Sita-Savitri Tradition in Indian Literature," Meenakshi Mukherjee argues that society generally promotes and supports male aesthetics. "The image of Draupadi has been overwhelmed by the image of Sita," she argues. Though a sophisticated epic like the Mahabharata unabashedly depicts a passionate woman like Draupadi, the idea of Sita as a wife is widespread in the race's mind" (Mukherjee 15). The theological text One Thousand and One Nights, often known as Arabian Nights, portrays women as unfaithful, untrustworthy, and insatiable. As a result, When Dreams Travel stands in stark contrast to these self-annihilating portrayals of women. What is clear is that tyranny and suppression have always been a part of

Indian culture. Many fabled women, such as Ganga, Amba, Gandhari, Sita, whether divine or human, have been robbed of their freedom, choice, and sense of self. Sacrifice, sorrow, and loneliness have all been a part of their lives. Ganga, a heavenly deity who marries Shantunu, Bheesma's father, under certain circumstances, is forced to abandon him since Shantunu violates the marriage agreement's conventions by subsequently refusing to accept her condition. Bheesma violates Amba's right to choose her husband by snatching her from her swayamvara and then purposely rejecting her offer. It has been a severe humiliation and annihilation of her life, which she would prefer to a life of exile in order to avenge. Gandhari's story is one of immense sacrifice and brave resistance against institutional deception. Gandhari's marriage to Dhritrashtra, prince of Hastinapur, is arranged without her being informed of his blindness. Her marriage is also supported by an old saying that states that a woman is only given once for her marriage. She doesn't have/won't have a second or third option. She is obligated to accept her socially conditioned fate, according to traditional conventions. No one can deny that it is for a good reason. It's a question of custom. It's a case of societal fidelity to an unreasonable tradition. When Gandhari learns that her would-be spouse is completely blind, she shreds her fabric and ties it around her eyes to prevent her from seeing the deceptive world again. It might be interpreted as a silent protest against the system. Furthermore, sati Sita, Rama's wife, is a well-known mythical heroine who serves as an example of an Indian devoted wife, perfect mother, and chaste woman. Nobody looks at Sita's life from her point of view. Her defiance of the old system, her rebellious nature, is never examined. She is a victim of patriarchal desired values and biases to a large extent. Her chastity is repeatedly questioned by society. Rama removes her from the royal court to appease the blind commoners. She is unable to live comfortably with her husband after marriage. She becomes a scapegoat of hostility between Rama and Ravana after joining Rama's exiled existence in the forest. She's being blamed for starting the feared battle between two warriors. She lives in a constant state of tension, frustration, and loneliness. Devi, too, has a revisionist perspective on her grandmother, mother, mother-in-law, and Mayamma's lives. She is able to see both the myth and the reality of their lives. Hariharan appears to follow Elaine Showalter's feminist literary concept, "..... a woman writer must murder the Angel of the House," as stated in her book *A Literature of Their Own* (Showalter 217). Because she has demonstrated in the novel, the majority of faithful and ideal housewives abandon their husbands.

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## Conclusion

In today's identity-conscious liberal society, feminist intellectuals, theorists, and authors have subverted or probed patriarchal tradition, value systems, and aesthetics through their writings, dialogues, and debates. They face a difficult task in re-creating a new tradition and society free of gender discrimination and subordination. Githa Hariharan portrays women who are fighting against their training and predicaments in order to gain control over their own choices and selves. Breaking traditional relationships and maintaining a reciprocal interaction between man and woman is urged. It has been attempted to either eliminate the distinction between subject and object or to create a world without objects. As a result, in her early works of fiction, Hariharan exploits myth and history as feminist battlegrounds, calling for a renegotiation between man and woman.

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