



Mythological Storytelling in Contemporary India: A Study of Amish Tripathi's: Ram Chandra Series

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ABSTRACT

Mythological storytelling in contemporary Indian literature has taken on new forms, blending tradition with innovation. Amish Tripathi's Ram Chandra Series stands as a seminal work in this space, reinterpreting the epic Ramayana with modern narrative techniques and philosophical depth. This paper explores Tripathi's storytelling method that combines myth with history, ethical dilemmas, and multiple perspectives. By analyzing the characters of Ram, Sita, and Raavan, and the narrative structure of the series, this study highlights how mythology can be repurposed to appeal to modern readers, especially the youth, while maintaining its cultural essence. The paper also examines how Tripathi's work has contributed to a larger cultural movement that revives ancient Indian literature in a way that is engaging and thought-provoking. Amish Tripathi's literary works are profoundly influenced by Indian mythology, which forms the very core of his storytelling. Indian mythology stands as one of the most vibrant and treasured aspects of the nation's cultural legacy, enriching its identity and setting it apart from other traditions around the world. These mythological narratives have been preserved and transmitted over centuries either through oral traditions or sacred texts ensuring their continued relevance.

KEY WORDS

Mythological Fiction, Amish Tripathi, Contemporary Indian Literature, Ramayana, Cultural Revival.

INTRODUCTION

Indian mythology has long served as a foundation for cultural, religious, and literary expression. In the 21st century, mythological fiction

has found renewed popularity, especially among young readers. Amish Tripathi's Ram Chandra Series offers a compelling reinterpretation of the Ramayana that goes beyond mere retelling it reimagines the lives, motives, and personalities of legendary characters. The series includes Ram: Scion of Ikshvaku (2015), Sita: Warrior of Mithila (2017), and Raavan: Enemy of Aryavarta (2019). These books are notable for their philosophical reflections, character depth, and a unique narrative approach. This research paper investigates how Tripathi uses mythological storytelling as a tool to both preserve and transform Indian cultural heritage for a contemporary audience.

Amish Tripathi has gained widespread recognition for reviving Indian mythology through a modern and philosophical lens. His debut Shiva Trilogy comprising *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of the Nagas*, and *The Oath of the Vayuputras* portrays Lord Shiva not as a god from birth, but as an ordinary man whose extraordinary deeds make him divine. Similarly, in the Ram Chandra Series, including *Ram: Scion of Ikshvaku*, *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*, *Raavan: Enemy of Aryavarta*, and *The War of Lanka*, Tripathi offers multidimensional portrayals of iconic characters. These books present Ram, Sita, and Raavan not as one-dimensional figures but as complex individuals shaped by circumstances, personal ethics, and inner struggles. Through this re-imagination, Tripathi blends mythology with political thought, gender discourse, and moral philosophy.

This study aims to examine how Amish Tripathi uses mythology as a dynamic storytelling tool to reflect contemporary social values and philosophical concerns. His narratives challenge traditional interpretations while staying rooted in the essence of Indian dharma and culture. By weaving modern themes into ancient tales, Tripathi not only reintroduces mythology to a new generation but also questions how mythology itself can evolve and stay relevant in a changing society. Through a critical analysis of his major works, this research will explore the significance of mythology in shaping cultural imagination and the role of narrative reinterpretation in constructing modern Indian identity.

Humanizing Mythological Characters

One of the most striking aspects of Amish Tripathi's novels is how he turns distant, god-like figures into relatable, human characters. In *The Immortals of Meluha*, for example, Shiva is not introduced as a god, but as a Tibetan tribal chief with doubts, anger, and insecurities—much like any ordinary man. What makes him divine, Amish suggests, is his choices, not his origin. Similarly, in *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*, Sita is not just a shadow of Ram; she is fierce, logical, and deeply committed to justice, with her own past struggles and inner strength. Even Raavan, in *Raavan: Enemy of Aryavarta*, is portrayed not as pure evil, but as a gifted man haunted by pain, pride, and unfulfilled love. Through such portrayals, Amish invites readers to see mythological characters not as untouchable ideals, but as human beings who make mistakes, learn, and grow. This humanization brings depth to the stories and helps readers connect emotionally with the characters in a way that feels personal and real.

Tripathi deviates from the divine, idealistic portrayal found in traditional texts and instead offers psychologically complex characters. In *Ram: Scion of Ikshvaku*, Ram is not just the epitome of virtue but a deeply moral leader who constantly questions his decisions and seeks to do what is right. His struggles reflect ethical dilemmas relevant to modern governance and leadership.

Narrative Structure and Multiple Perspectives

One of the most innovative aspects of the Ram Chandra Series is its multi-linear narrative. Each book follows the life of one major character Ram, Sita, or Raavan leading to a convergence of timelines. This allows readers to witness key events from diverse viewpoints, deepening the moral and emotional complexity of the story.

Such a structure not only enhances storytelling but also mirrors the Indian philosophical tradition of accepting multiple truths (*anekantavada*). It encourages readers to reflect on the subjectivity of experience and the gray areas between heroism and villainy. Amish's multiple perspective technique also humanizes

characters traditionally seen in rigid roles heroes, villains, victims. Amish moves beyond mere retelling of epics he engages in reinterpretation. It reflects not only on mythology but on modern life too, where every story has more than one side and true understanding requires listening to all.

Myth, History, and Political Commentary

Amish blend mythical themes with realistic historical backdrops to create a believable ancient civilization. The society in his books has established systems of governance, laws, education, and warfare allowing readers to relate ancient myth with present-day political systems. In *Ram: Scion of Ikshvaku*, Ram's dilemma over punishing a criminal despite popular disapproval draws parallels with the contemporary tension between justice and public opinion. Through such moments, the novel raises pertinent questions: What is the role of a ruler? Is a leader accountable to truth or to the people's emotions? In exploring such dilemmas, Tripathi turns myth into a platform for political ethics.

Cultural Relevance and Youth Engagement

One of the defining achievements of Amish Tripathi's work is his success in engaging younger generations with India's mythological heritage. Through simple, action-oriented language and accessible moral dilemmas, Tripathi reintroduces ancient stories in a form that resonates with the digital-age reader. His characters, though set in mythic times, speak the language of modern values—choice, freedom, justice, and individual growth. Youth readers find in *Ram* a role model of leadership; in *Sita*, a symbol of courage and intellect; and in *Raavan*, a cautionary tale of unrestrained ambition. Tripathi's books have become popular not just as entertainment but as vehicles for moral reflection, identity formation, and cultural pride among young Indians.

Additionally, by presenting mythology through the lens of philosophical inquiry and emotional realism, Tripathi transforms reading into an interactive process. The stories encourage questions rather than preach answers prompting young minds to engage critically with India's literary and cultural traditions.

Philosophical Dimensions: Dharma and Karma

The foundational concepts of dharma (duty/righteousness) and karma (consequence of actions) recur throughout the series. *Ram's* adherence to law and principle, even at the cost of personal happiness, represents a deep commitment to moral order. Yet, these ideals are not presented simplistically. Each character in the series must define their own dharma what is right for *Raavan* may be wrong for *Sita*, and vice versa. Through this relativism, Tripathi echoes the complexity of real-life ethical choices. His exploration of karma shows how every action, no matter how noble in intent, carries consequences that shape the future—a lesson particularly resonant in today's world of accountability and moral ambiguity.

CONCLUSION

Amish Tripathi's *Ram Chandra Series* serves as a bridge between ancient wisdom and modern storytelling. It respects the sanctity of the myth while offering creative liberties that make it accessible to today's readers. Through humanized characters, a multidimensional narrative, and ethical inquiry, the series becomes more than a retelling it is a rethinking of the *Ramayana* for the 21st century. Its impact lies in its ability to engage readers emotionally, culturally, and intellectually, thereby redefining the role of mythology in contemporary Indian literature. As such, Tripathi's work is a testament to how mythological fiction can revive the past while speaking powerfully to the present.

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