

## An Analysis of Retelling Folklores Through the Contemporary Interpretations in Modern Fictions

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### Abstract

The proposed article will look at a few texts by contemporary famous fiction writers. The study looks at how these writings show a range of different perspectives toward the performers and occurrences in ancient folklore. One can see the interpretations of ancient folklore through legendary stories, and writers use ancient folklore in a modern way.

We are excited to know our traditions and culture through reading and writing about them. Modern authors have retold ancient Indian culture with contemporary situations by attributing scientific explanations to traditional cultural ethics.

The paper focuses on modern writers who have written in contrast with our own ancient Indian mythical tales with new modern imagination, modern problems, and solutions.

Keywords: Contemporary Rewriting, Heritage, Myth, Modern Fiction, Reconstruction

### Introduction

Many societies and civilizations have their roots in mythology and folklore. Across cultures, legendary stories are seen as embodiments of ideas, values, and philosophies that serve the people's national interests. The *Bible* is the foundation of Christian beliefs and ideologies in Western culture. *Puranas*, the *Mahabharata*, and the *Ramayana* are the primary

sources for Indian literature. Writers worldwide reinterpret classic folklores to elaborate on existing problems through rewriting the work.

“Greek mythological figures and themes have been used as symbolic representations of cultural ideas, values, biases, and ideologies throughout history. As a result, mythology is eternal and evolves in terms of views and implications.” Myths are rich in topics and narrative structures. Literary artists throughout history have used these topics and genres.

Many prominent and bestseller publications now contain lesser-known Hindu mythological stories that have been reinterpreted in new directions. A resurgence in many sources that re-read with extracting new meanings from Hindu mythology’s tales and epics from a contemporary context. The retelling of Hindu mythology was essential in the Indian nationalist movement. (Singh, 2017, p. 172)

Myths and traditional narrative techniques significantly impacted civilization’s resurrection and functioning as a connecting element within a particular culture. However, Hindu mythology is leading in popular literature; current scenarios in the subject has taken new contexts and have been absorbed through peculiar style. One can find innovative narrations, investigate the ancient texts, and dive into uncertain locations. In contemporary Hindu mythology literature, conversations and dialogues of readers, philosophers, and academics validate inferred meanings.

The epics are reimagined in a quiet style that becomes less supernatural and humanistic. Its conflicts and struggles cannot be found regularly appear to be motivated by more significant goals. The myth’s storyline has altered as universal adventures of characters are repeated from the perspective of individuals. These reveal the Gods’ human aspect, allowing readers to connect with them in fresh ways. Characters are questioned and linked to modern ideologies and issues; stories and plots are related to modern philosophies and anxieties.

Traditional myths perspectives, meanings, and connotations by earlier Indian fictional writers utilized mythical hero archetypes, iconography, character varieties, and themes. Contemporary narratives also try a sort of feminist revisionist mythology, which tries to modify society and disrupt the inheritance that women acquire through the strategic revisionist use of gender iconography.

*Sita: An Illustrated Retelling of the Ramayana* by DevduttaPattanaik, *Sita's Ramayana* by Moyna Chitrakar and Samhita Arni, *Ahalya* by Sujoy Ghosh, *Palace of Illusions* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni retells the *Mahabharata* in the context of Draupadi and Kavita Kane's *Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen* is one of a few works of modern fiction that incorporates sexuality and feminism into mythology. Efforts to undermine ethics and notions of evil and good, such as Krishna Udyasankar's *The Aryavarta Chronicles*, Anand Neelakantan's *Asura: The Tale of the Vanquished*, V. Ramanathan's *Duryodhana*, and Gurucharan Das' *The Difficulty of Being Good: On the Subtle Art of Dharma*, try to raise significant ethical concerns from a modern perspective. The volumes try to reformulate the dominant notions of dharma in Hindu ethics by presenting from the views of the stories' villains. *Shikandi and Other Tales*, *They Don't Tell You* by DevduttPattanaik and *The Pregnant King* aim to retell the epics' narratives from the stance of the epics' marginalized voices.

The mythology genre is being experimented with by a fresh batch of authors like Amish Tripathi, Ashok Banker, and Ashwin Sanghi, combining it with different types of writing. These authors have contributed to popularizing and energizing ancient folklore among youth who have so far from their old culture and following the western. For example, Ashok Banker and Amish Tripathi have merged ancient folklore and imaginative narrative in their writings. These writers are modernizing Indian myths with these kinds of adaptations.

Amish took a different approach to mythology than the rest of the world and gave it a fresh viewpoint. Banker's international fame and the economic success of his works demonstrated the public's fascination with the fabled past (Singh, 2017, p. 173). Many books followed Banker's example, and today, retellings of Indian mythological legends are among the most popular. *The Shiva Trilogy* by Amish Tripathi has comprised *The Immortals of Meluha* (2010), *The Secret of the Nagas* (2011), and *The Oath of the Vayuputras* (2013) are included in the collection. Amish Tripathi has chosen Shiva, the most captivating Indian god, Vikram Singh, posing the question from the work of Tripathi,

What if Lord Shiva was not a figment of a rich imagination but a person of flesh and blood? Like you and me. A man who rose to become godlike because of his karma. That is the premise of the *Shiva Trilogy*, which interprets the rich mythological heritage of ancient India, blending fiction with historical fact" (Singh, 2017, p. 173)

The subject that goes across all three works is the search for evil. Shiva is first believed that the Chandravanshis, Nagas, and Brangas are all evil.

Rajiv G. Menon's novel *Thundergod: The Ascendance of Indra* (2012) is the first of a planned "Vedic Trilogy." Menon has chosen deity as the protagonist, although Indra is not a god who is well known among storytellers. Indra has been depicted as a power-hungry, egotistical, deceptive, and even cowardly deity in several mythologies. With his studies merged with Indra as the hero, Menon has sought to rectify all of that. Indra is depicted as the offspring of a tribal chief and the divine deity Daeyus, murdered while Indra is a kid.

*Govinda* (2012), *Kaurava* (2013), and *Kurukshetra* (2014) are the three novels in Krishna Udaysankar's *The Aryavarta Chronicles trilogy*. The novels retell the *Mahabharata*. *Govinda* depicts Aryavarta as a land divided into multiple tiny kingdoms because of conflict between two major parties in the first novel. The Angirasa possess hidden knowledge of

tremendous weaponry. When the final secret keeper dies, everyone in Aryavarta attempts to get this information to become the only power in the region. Vyasa, a member of the scholar sages' clan, places the Kurus family on the throne of Aryavarta. Aryavarta is thrown into a massive fight for control and imperial power.

*Asura: Tale of the Vanquished, the Story of Ravana and His People* (2012) and *Ajaya: Roll of the Dice- Epic of the Kaurava Clan I* are retellings of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* epics, respectively, by Anand Neelkantan. Ravana and an Asura mother are the central characters. His brother, the Sri Lanka kingdom's Emperor Kubera, mistreats him. Ravana is pictured here mobilizing soldiers and attempting to seize the Empire's crown. Ravana's daughter, Sita, has been abandoned owing to a prophecy. She was supposed to be slain, but she managed to escape.

The narrative depicts the *Ramayana* fight and Ravana's eventual defeat. The novel is based on the alternate *Ramayana*, particularly popular in India's south. The whole narration is told by Ravana, and a fictional figure named Bhadra depicts a typical Indian citizen easily duped by politicians. In some lesser-known versions of the *Ramayana*, Sita is shown as Ravana's daughter. However, once this viewpoint is chosen, the entire tone of the novel shifts dramatically. Ravana is not a ten-headed monster in this world. The ten faces have a symbolic meaning provided by the author.

The *Mahabharata* is told from the perspective of the Kauravas in *Ajaya*. Suyodhana (Duryodhana) supports the Kauravas and feels that ruling the kingdom is his birthright. The Pandavas are royal princes who adhere to strict caste restrictions and place little value on ability, while the Kauravas believe in inequality. Suyodhana elevates Karna to the position of king solely on merit. The book depicts the Pandavas and Kauravas as children, with the Pandavas torturing their relatives. The Pandavas have ascended to the throne, but the Kauravs

must be granted birthright. The novel concludes with a gaming event where the Kauravas use the dice game to gain the kingdom.

In a postscript to the novel, Neelkantan explains why he chose Duryodhana's narrative to tell. He had been to a hamlet; inhabitants revered Duryodhana as a good prince had an annual celebration in his honour. This inspired the author to study Duryodhana's evil persona with courage, self-assurance, and eagerness to battle for his beliefs (Singh, 2017, p. 174).

*The Winds of Hastinapur* (2013) by Sharath Komarraju is yet another retelling of the *Mahabharata* Epic. Notable female characters, Ganga and Satyawati, primarily present the epic. The book picks up where the *Mahabharata* leaves off. Ganga is the last to survive on the ice mountain. She is well aware that her time is running out. In the first part of the work, she tells the narrative of the ancient tale from her own point of view. The second part describes King Shantanu's marriage to Satyawati, a fisherwoman. The narrative revolves around Ganga's descent to earth and marriage to Shantanu. Satyawati's grandson Dhritarashtra is born at the end of the story. Pandu and Vidur's births are awaiting. Komarraju clarifies viewpoints that are often disregarded in epics. Despite playing pivotal parts in the *Mahabharata*'s action, Ganga and Satyawati have never been granted the ability to speak themselves. This version comes awfully close to recreating the epic.

*The Ramayana 3392 AD* by Shamik Dasgupta is a three-volume graphic novel series intended for adult audiences. People like Deepak Chopra and Shekhar Kapur came up with the notion of putting the *Ramayana* narrative in the future. The future described in these novels is in jeopardy of human lives due to the Asuras/demons. Together with his siblings, Prince Ram emerges as the human race's rescuer. The historical period depicted in this literature is following World War III. *Nark* and *Aryavarta* are the two continents that make up the globe. The Asuras' home is *Nark*, where they assault the people of *Aryavarta*. The

Ramayana tale has been altered significantly. Ram, for example, is exiled for striking a brief piece with the Asuras (which he was forced to do owing to the death of his brother Lakshman, Singh, 2017, p.175). Ram encounters Sita, a woman with magical abilities. The emphasis in this graphic novel, like in all others, is on the action. The numerous battles with the demons are a recurring theme in these works. The dystopian scenario is a unique element that piques the reader's curiosity.

### Conclusion

As a result, this article has sought to demonstrate how an author may return, revitalize, and reconstruct mythology and make required modifications to an old narrative and extend it or build a new story entirely. The novels chosen are alternate adaptations of well-known mythical classics. They portray gods, goddesses, and superheroes as ordinary people, attempting to rationalize their personalities and situations. Second, minority voices are prioritized in these narratives. In the *Shiva Trilogy*, Ganesh and Kali are portrayed as thrown away and brought back by Sati. The authors of the postcolonial era appear to be demolishing domestic grand stories.

Therefore, these stories are recounted not just because of a fascination with or interest in the mythological past but also as comments on the current situation. There is no denying that the Indian literature landscape is undergoing with audiences finally rejecting colonial origins and the notion of capitalist supremacy. Whatever the reader's and writers' intentions, we may take solace that these contemporary retellings permit us to recover Hinduism. We might examine the patriarchal strains in the *Ramayana*, recollect the sensuality in Shiva's stories with delight, and rejoice in Devi's abilities.

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