



ANALYSING THE CHARACTER ARC OF RAM IN AMISH TRIPATHI'S *RAM CHANDRA SERIES* THROUGH JOSEPH CAMPBELL'S *MONOMYTH*

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Introduction

In the open literary landscape, certain stories transcend time and culture and become part of people's storytelling. One such story frame is the hero's journey, a concept famously explored by Joseph Campbell in his seminal work *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Campbell proposed the idea of a monomyth, a universal model that underlies many of the world's myths, legends and religious stories. This archetype, which encompasses the various stages of a hero's adventure, has been the model for countless stories across civilizations and shaped the way we perceive and understand storytelling. In modern literature, writers often draw inspiration from ancient myths and reimagine them. . folklore traditional stories to reflect contemporary feelings and social concerns. One such author is Amish Tripathi, whose "Ram Chandra series" takes readers on a mythological journey through the ancient world of India. Set against the backdrop of Indian mythology, Tripathi's series intricately combines elements of history, religion, and fantasy, offering readers a fresh perspective on ancient legends. The purpose of this research paper is to explore the character of the Amish protagonist. . Tripathi's "Ram Chandra Series" within Joseph Campbell's Monomyth. Analyzing the journey of the main characters in the series, this paper try to reveal how Tripathi interprets and reimagines the journey of the classical hero in the context of Indian mythology and contemporary literature. By comparing the key stages and motifs of

Campbell's monomyth and Tripathi's story, this paper seek to illuminate the thematic depth and cultural resonance of the protagonist's quest. Exploring the protagonist's development, challenges and triumphs in the series " Chandra", this study aims to illuminate the universal elements of the hero's journey while celebrating Indian mythological story material. Through this research, we hope to gain insight into how ancient archetypes continue to shape and inspire contemporary literature, bridging past and present, tradition and innovation.

Discussion

The Call to Adventure

The Call to Adventure is the first stage or step of a hero's journey which is practically a call of fate and destiny to the hero to embark on a journey which is supposed to bring changes not only in the personality and life of a hero but in a society for the betterment of humanity. "This first stage of the mythological journey- which we have designated the "call to adventure"- signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual center of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown" (Campbell,1949). In Ram : Scion of Ikshvaku – the journey of the hero – Ram starts with a call to adventure through Guru Vishwamitra who came to Ayodhya to get Ram and Lakshman in helping him to protect one of his aashrams which is under attack.

"The hero can go forth of their own volition to accomplish the adventure, as did [Theseus](#) when he arrived in his father's city, Athens, and heard the horrible history of the [Minotaur](#); or they may be carried or sent abroad by some benign or malignant agent as was [Odysseus](#), driven about the Mediterranean by the winds of the angered god, [Poseidon](#)." (The Hero with A

Thousand Faces, 48)

"Someone is on his way here, he's coming for you. He's a great man, and he's going to take you away. I cannot stop it. It is beyond me. I want to see you fulfill your swadharma, your true purpose" (Ram, 153)

"The Maharishi had come straight to the point. One of his ashrams was under attack and he needed Ram's help to defend it; that was it." (Ram, 171)

Supernatural Aid

The second stage or step of a hero's journey is the encounter and support of Supernatural Aid. Supernatural Aid can be define as a representative of protection provided by the destiny in the form of a person usually in a form of an old man. The Hero through the support of supernatural aid finds all the support of the unconscious with him, a supernatural aid not only protect the hero

but provide all the possible solutions to him. “The first encounter of the hero- journey is with a protective figure (often a little old crone or old man) who provides the adventurer with amulets against the dragon forces he is about to pass.” (The Hero with A Thousand Faces, 57). In the novel, Ram had more than one supernatural aid – Guru Vashishta , who was ready to sacrificed himself if it mean the rise of sixth Vishu (Ram), he not only was his Guru but a protector, provider, confidant, and a guide. Guru Vashishta fulfilled all these roles brilliantly throughout the journey of Ram.

“Vashishta had pinned his hopes on the namesake of the sixth Vishnu : the six-year-old eldest prince of Ayodhya, Ram.” (Ram, 39)

“I know they will think I’m wrong. They may even curse my soul. But you were the only one who had said, My Lord, that a leader must love his country more than he loves his own soul.

By this blood oath, I swear on all my knowledge, I will make my rebellion succeed, or I will die trying” (Ram, 41)

“Vashishta nodded in agreement. Then he leaned over and spoke earnestly. ‘I will spend the next fourteen years preparing the ground for you’ .”

The second supernatural aid that Ram got was in the form of his brother – Lakshman who various times saved his life and protected him even if that came with the cost of living in exile for fourteen long years and risking his own life everyday for every moment.

“I will always take care of Ram Dada” (Ram, 46)

“DADA! screamed Lakshman, as he lunged forward and pushed Ram aside.” (Ram, 107)

Another supernatural aid that Ram had was Hanuman- a Naga who protected Ram from the shadows for thirteen years and then fought war by his side till the last moment while ensuring that nothing could ever harm Ram.

“There is no time for rest! I have given my words to Guru Vashishta! Raavan cannot be allowed to reach them before we do! We need to find them now! Tell the men to hurry!

Both. They are both vital. Princess Sita is important to the Malayaputras, and Prince Ram is to us.” (Ram, 352)

The Crossing of the First Threshold

The third stage or step of a hero's journey is the crossing of the first threshold. This stage can be defined as the situation where the hero finally steps out of whatever that is known to him to a dark, dangerous, unexplored, and unknown world whose rules, methods, and people he is not aware of.

“The regions of the unknown (desert, jungle, deep sea, alien land, etc.) are free fields for the projection of unconscious content.” (The Hero with A Thousand Faces, 65)

“The adventure is always and everywhere a passage beyond the veil of the known into the unknown; the powers that watch at the boundary are dangerous; to deal with them is risky ; yet for anyone with competence and courage the danger fades.” (The Hero with A Thousand Faces, 67-68)

For Ram, the crossing of the first threshold was the moment he stepped out of Ayodhya with Guru Vishwamitra to help him in protecting his ashram, it was the first time Prince Ram was going for a war, it was the first time he was stepping into an unknown territory which tested his courage, wisdom, and patience as he dealt with Asuras not only with his arrow and bow but with his wisdom and patience of making Asuras understand the reality of their present life.

“Ram turned to address the small band of Asuras. ‘Try to understand what I am saying to you. You are law-abiding people; you follow the masculine way. But your laws are not working anymore. They haven't been for centuries, because the world has changed. This is what karma is trying to teach you, again and again’.”

The meeting with the Goddess

Another stage of hero's journey is the meeting with the goddess, it's the stage where the hero meets his partner and get married. The Goddess guides , protects, and provides strength to the hero. The hero accepts the goddess the way she is and descends to her.

“(Woman) represents the totality of what can be known. She can never be greater than himself, though she can always promise more than he is yet capable of comprehending. She lures, she guides, she bids him burst his fetters.” (The Hero with A Thousand Faces, 97)

In Ram's journey his wife Sita plays the role of goddess. Sita from the very first meet with Ram in Mithila have made him bow his head not only in admiration but respect also. Throughout the series Sita have guided Ram in his decisions specially in exile, she have protect Ram in exile from not only enemies but from old age also with the help of Somras to keep him healthy for his people.

“I guess what I’m trying to say is that I want a woman who is better than I am; a woman who will compel me to bow my head in admiration.” (Ram , 79)

“Lakshman took hold of Ram’s elbow and attempted to step aside. But Ram seemed to be in the grip of higher power. The only movement was his angvastram fluttering in the breeze; exaggerated by his immobility. Almost as if it was beyond his control, Ram bowed his head.” (Ram, 233)

“People see my husband as a naïve and a blind follower of the law. But a day will come when the entire world will see him as one of the greatest leaders ever. It is my duty to protect him and keep him alive till then.” (Ram, 304)

The Belly of the Whale

Another stage of hero’s journey is the belly of the whale which is can be described as a situation in which the hero is completely separated from his known world and entered into an entirely unknown world while entering this stage there are chances of a minor setback, attack or some danger.

“The hero, instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown.” (The Hero with A Thousand Faces, 74)

In Ram’s journey of a hero, the belly of the whale stage comes when Ram uses Devi Astras against Ravan to protect the people of Mithila, which was banned to use by the previous Mahadev , Lord Rudra. And the punishment for using a Devi Astra was an exile of fourteen years which resulted in Ram finally stepping into a completely unknown world filled with enemies and danger.

“Ram has accepted the punishment that must be his. He will leave Ayodhya, for I banish him from Sapt Sindhu for fourteen years. He will return to us after cleansing himself with the fire of penance. He is a true follower of Lord Rudra. Honour him!” (Ram, 312)

The Road of Trials

Another stage of hero’s journey is the the road of trials. As the name suggest the road of trails is nothing but the challenges that the hero faces during his journey, some of these challenges are win by hero and some aren’t. By overcoming these challenges the hero moves on to his next step.

“The original departure into the land of trials represented only the beginning of the long and really perilous path of initiatory conquests and moments of illumination. Meanwhile there will be a

multitude of preliminary victories, unretainable ecstasies, and momentary glimpses of the wonderful world.” (The Hero with A Thousand Faces, 90)

In Ram’s journey of hero, the road of trials began with the exile of fourteen years. There were physical, mental, and emotional challenges that he had to go through throughout the exile. Starting with the death of King Dashrath, fights in Jungle over the period of thirteen years for survival, and the abduction of Sita resulting in the War of Lanka and the tactics involved the rescue mission for Sita which was the amalgamation of three armies- Ayodhya, Malayaputras, and Vayuputras. With physical trials there were some tests of wisdom also that Ram had crossed taken by Shabari to judge the ability of Ram as a Vishnu by showing him two sculptures of a girl and a bull attacking her.

“ They had faced dangers, no doubt, in these six years, but these had not been due to any human intervention. The occasional scars serves as reminders of their adventure in the jungle” (Ram, 334)

“Shayri turned to Ram. ‘Tell me, great prince, what do these two sculptures say to you? What is their message?’

‘There is a thin string tied to the horns and going through the bull’s mouth, like a bit. It may appear that the bull is baring its teeth, but actually the bit of the bridle is pulling its cheeks back. It’s symbolic. What we do with dharma is in our control. It is our choice. Only our choice.’ (War of Lanka , 73)

Atonement with the Father

Another stage of a hero’s journey is atonement with the father. It refers to the stage where the hero reconcile or confront with a figure which have a lot of power over him. All the previous stages of a hero’s journey have led to this stage which will provide a closure to that relationship of the hero with this figure. The hero usually takes help and guidance from the helpful female figure.

“[Atonement](#) consists in no more than the abandonment of that self-generated double monster—the dragon thought to be God ([superego](#)) and the dragon thought to be Sin (repressed [id](#)). But this requires an abandonment of the attachment to [ego](#) itself, and that is what is difficult. One must have faith that the father is merciful, and then a reliance on that mercy. Therewith, the center of belief is transferred outside of the bedeviling god's tight scaly ring, and the dreadful ogres dissolve. It is in this ordeal that the hero may derive hope and assurance from the helpful female figure, by whose magic (pollen charms or power of intercession) they are protected through all the frightening experiences of the father's ego-shattering initiation. For if it is impossible to trust the

terrifying father-face, then one's faith must be centered elsewhere ([Spider Woman](#), [Blessed Mother](#)); and with that reliance for support, one endures the crisis— only to find, in the end, that the father and mother reflect each other, and are in essence the same. (The Hero with A Thousand Faces, 110)

In Ram's journey of hero, this powerful figure is Ravan because of whom his entire life was effected as Ram was born on the day King Dashrath was defeated by the king of Lanka ; Ravan. Because of the defeat of Ayodhya, Ram was tagged as an omen for Ayodhya and was treated as an omen his entire childhood until he joined as the chief of Police force of Ayodhya. Ram never got the love of his father because of Ravan's victory over Ayodhya which resulted in the sheer anger and dislikeness of Ram towards Ravan but it changed to admiration the day Ram defeated Ravan in dual and realised by his last wishes and confession of love towards Vedavati, Sita's biological mother that perhaps he was a good person, a man in love and a great king.

“Raavan smiled. ‘Your wife is right....You are a good man..’

Ram paused. He appreciated this first sign of grace from Raavan. He repeated his question, softer this time. ‘King Raavan, do you want to hold your sword?’

‘No....I am holding what I want. The only thing I ever truly needed...Vedavati's hand...

Ram held his breath for a moment. A man who loved a woman so magnificently could not have been all bad. Maybe there was some good in him...Maybe...” (War of Lanka, 459).

The Ultimate boon

Another stage of a hero's journey is the Ultimate boon which was the goal of hero's journey.

All the previous stages led to this stage, the ultimate boon is the aim of a hero's journey.

“The gods and goddesses then are to be understood as embodiments and custodians of the elixir of Imperishable Being but not themselves the Ultimate in its primary state. What the hero seeks through his intercourse with them is therefore not finally themselves, but their grace, i.e., the power of their sustaining substance. This miraculous energy-substance and this alone is the Imperishable; the names and forms of the deities who everywhere embody, dispense, and represent it come and go. This is the miraculous energy of the thunderbolts of [Zeus](#), [Yahweh](#), and the [Supreme Buddha](#), the fertility of the rain of [Viracocha](#), the virtue announced by the bell rung in the [Mass](#) at the [consecration](#), and the light of the ultimate illumination of the saint and sage. Its guardians dare release it only to the duly proven” (The Hero with A Thousand Faces, 155)

In Ram's journey of hero, the ultimate boon was to rescue Sita his wife from Lanka which resulted in his recognition as Vishnu which was the ultimate goal of Guru Vashishta, Sita , and Raavan and the second boon was to get the solution for the society which will result in harmony , peace, unity, progress, development, and equality and all of this by following certain laws. Ram gets the answers to his questions on how to make such society by realising at the end of his journey that there is a need of amalgamation of masculine and feminine ways then only a society can sustain.

“The Mahadev's was not the task to guide humanity to a new way of life; this was reserved for the Vishnu.” (Ram, 38)

“We need a new way of life, Lord Parshu Ram. My great country must be rejuvenated with the blood and sweat of patriots.” (Ram, 39)

“Yes, Ram. Laws! Laws are the foundation on which a fulfilling life is built for a community. Laws are the answer.” (Ram, 61)

“We need a King who can create systems with which one can harness even selfish human nature for the betterment of society.” (Ram, 73)

Conclusion

Exploring Amish Tripathi's "Ram Chandra Series" through Joseph Campbell's Monomyth, this paper discovered rich storytelling that seamlessly blends ancient mythology with contemporary themes. Analyzing the character maps of the protagonist, we witnessed how Tripathi reimagines the journey of the classical hero in the context of Indian mythology and contemporary literature. Dive into the development, challenges and triumphs of the protagonist, we discovered universal elements. of the hero's journey in Tripathi's story. From the call to adventure to the ultimate apotheosis, each stage resonates with themes of selfdiscovery, sacrifice and transformation, echoing the timeless motifs of Campbell's monomyth. In addition, this research revealed cultural resonance and thematic depth. A series by Ram Chandra that illustrates how ancient archetypes continue to shape and inspire modern storytelling. Tripathi's skillful weaving of history, religion and fantasy not only entertains, but also provokes reflections on the human condition and the eternal struggle between light and darkness. At the end of the journey, we are reminded of the enduring power of man, myth and the universality of the hero's time and cultural journey. With creative reinterpretations of ancient stories, writers like Amish Tripathi breathe new life into ancient stories and offer readers a fresh perspective on familiar themes while honoring the rich heritage of mythological storytelling. Finally, this research emphasizes the importance of story. to understand and appreciate the connections between past and present, tradition and innovation in

literature. As we continue to navigate the ever-changing landscape of storytelling, let us remember the enduring legacy of the hero's journey and the transformative power of myth to shape our understanding of the world around us.

References

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