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Rescripting Womanhood Through Myth in Amish Tripathi's Narrative

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Abstract

This paper critically examines Amish Tripathi's *Sita: Warrior of Mithila* as a transformative feminist text that reclaims the mythological figure of Sita from the margins of traditional patriarchy and repositions her as an empowered, autonomous, and pragmatic agent of change. Situated within the framework of Indian mythology and philosophical traditions, the study explores how Tripathi subverts long-standing patriarchal archetypes by constructing Sita as a warrior, stateswoman, and ethical thinker. Drawing upon indigenous concepts such as the *purusha–prakriti* dyad, the narrative challenges the binary and hierarchical gender constructs often reinforced in mainstream Ramayana retellings. By aligning Sita with *prakriti*, the ever-changing, creative force of nature, and presenting her partnership with Ram (*purush*) as a model of cosmic balance, Tripathi advances a culturally embedded feminist paradigm rooted in harmony, not conflict. Through textual analysis and comparative mythological references, the study reveals how *Sita: Warrior of Mithila* not only disrupts conventional representations of womanhood but also redefines Indian feminism as a dynamic synthesis of tradition, myth, and contemporary relevance. In doing so, it proposes that mythic retellings can serve as potent tools for feminist reimagination and cultural renewal.

Keywords: Indian Feminism, Sita, Mythological Rewriting, Amish Tripathi

Introduction

Indian society is intrinsically complex, marked by its vivid diversity and deeply rooted cultural pluralism. Among the many aspects that draw global scholarly attention is its enduring social stratification, which is structured along the axes of caste, class, and gender. Any critical inquiry into the origins of this hierarchical framework inevitably leads to the domain of mythology, a vast and influential corpus encompassing the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Puranas*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, and *Manusmriti*. These texts are not merely religious or philosophical treatises but are foundational narratives that have profoundly shaped the Indian socio-cultural and moral order. Embedded within them is a patriarchal ethos that continues to inform and legitimize gender roles and power dynamics within contemporary society. Figures such as Ahalya and Sita, despite their divine stature, remain emblematic of the constraints imposed upon women, both symbolically and socially. To comprehend the persistent marginalization of women in Indian society, it becomes imperative to interrogate these mythological and epic narratives that have long functioned as prescriptive frameworks for social conduct. These texts have, over time, evolved into ideological structures that normalize systemic gender-based oppression. The mythological tradition in India has served as a repository of moral paradigms that continue to influence familial, cultural, and gender norms. In this context, the condition of women cannot be divorced from the legacy of epic and mythic representations that perpetuate and sacralize their subordination.

It is within this discursive framework that the present paper studies the portrayal of Sita in Amish Tripathi's *Sita: Warrior of Mithila* (2017). As outlined in the abstract, this study seeks to examine Tripathi's reimagining of Sita through an indigenous feminist lens, one that diverges markedly from dominant Western feminist paradigms. The novel foregrounds a holistic and non-dualistic vision of feminine power, drawing from culturally resonant concepts such as the purusha-prakriti dyad to articulate a form of feminism deeply embedded in Indian philosophical and mythological traditions. The paper critiques the inadequacy of interpreting Indian feminism through Western epistemological lenses and explores the cultural misalignments this entails and also positions Sita, as envisioned by Tripathi, as a powerful archetype of moral strength, autonomy, and leadership, thus offering a redefined model for contemporary Indian womanhood. This endeavour also synthesizes these insights to propose a uniquely Indian feminist framework that transcends reductive gender binaries, embracing instead a vision of unity within duality. Through this exploration, the paper underscores the enduring impact of mythological narratives on gender ideologies and highlights the potential of reimagined mythic figures like Sita to serve as agents of transformative feminist thought.

Patriarchal Codes in Myth and Society

Patriarchy has historically functioned as an inseparable facet of Indian society, embedded in its cultural and social fabric through a host of unwritten, self-imposed codes governing marriage, sexuality, familial structures, economic autonomy, and value systems. These societal norms are not outcomes of empirical inquiry or legal sanction but are instead products of symbolic constructs rooted in religious and mythological traditions. Ancient Indian texts that are often revered for their philosophical wisdom, also serve as repositories of patriarchal ideology, projecting idealized images of femininity through metaphoric and mythic representations. Within these frameworks, divine and semi-divine female figures such as nymphs or goddesses are often depicted through the restrictive ideals of *Sativrata* or *Pativrata*, women whose identity is confined to domesticity, fidelity, and self-sacrifice.

Such texts have historically conditioned women to internalize the belief that their primary purpose lies in aiding men in fulfilling cosmic or societal obligations. This is reinforced through legends and epic narratives that elevate self-sacrifice as the ultimate virtue for women, thereby setting it as the only legitimate path to moral purity. Female figures are consistently ritualized as dutiful mothers and faithful wives, and their agency is circumscribed within these narrow roles. The *Manusmriti* provides particularly explicit evidence of such ideologies, codifying discriminatory norms that institutionalize gender inequality. In Chapter 3 of the *Manusmriti*, for instance, we find shlokas that promote patriarchal preferences and son-preference logic. The following verse endorses selective conception practices that clearly indicate gender bias:

युग्मासु पुत्रा जायन्ते स्त्रियोऽयुग्मासु रात्रिषु।

तस्माद् युग्मासु पुत्रार्थी संविशेन्नातिसक्तिमान् स्त्रियम्॥ 3.48

This shloka suggests that sons are conceived through intercourse on even nights, whereas daughters are born from unions on uneven nights, implying a ritualistic method to ensure male progeny. Such injunctions are disturbing in the contemporary context, as they indirectly legitimize female foeticide and patriarchal control over reproduction. Another verse objectifies women by reducing their worth to their physical attractiveness:

यदा तु रात्रौ न रोचते पुंसां न प्रमोदयते।

अप्रमोदात्पुनः पुंसः प्रजनं न प्रवर्तते॥ 3.61

This verse implies that if a woman does not physically arouse her husband, he will not derive pleasure from her, and consequently, no procreation will take place. It centers male desire as the decisive factor in reproduction, denying any agency or subjectivity to the woman. Yet another shloka upholds colourism and body shaming:

स्त्रियं तु रोचमानायां सुतं रोचते कुलं।

तस्यां त्व अरोचमानायां सुतं न रोचते कुलम्॥ 3.62

Here, it is suggested that a fair and radiant wife brings glory to the household, while one who is 'unattractive' or of a darker complexion does not. This reflects the deep-rooted biases around beauty, skin tone, and desirability that continue to pervade Indian society. These biases are shaped not only by local constructs but also by colonial legacies of racial hierarchy. Through such verses, the *Manusmriti* constructs an idealized image of womanhood that prioritizes subservience, chastity, physical beauty, and reproductive utility. India's sociocultural development, thus, has taken a peculiar trajectory. Over generations, knowledge transmission has shifted, and while many Indians are no longer intimately familiar with the *Vedas* and *Puranas*, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* remain culturally dominant, particularly due to their repeated re-interpretation in television, cinema, and popular literature.

Within this landscape, Amish Tripathi's *Ram Chandra* series and *Shiva Trilogy* have gained immense popularity. Several factors contribute to their widespread appeal:

1. The blending of mythology and fantasy renders ancient stories more accessible to modern readers.
2. Divine beings are humanized, portrayed with emotional complexity and moral ambiguity.
3. Traditional epics are reinterpreted from fresh perspectives, often with subversive or alternative readings.
4. Tripathi introduces a "hyper-looping technique," which fuses known mythological elements with speculative imaginings, enabling a multidimensional narrative experience.
5. Most importantly, his work offers more balanced gender representation, often placing female protagonists such as Sita at the center of narrative agency.

Tripathi's *Sita: Warrior of Mithila* reclaims the mythic figure of Sita not as a passive consort but as a strategist, warrior, and moral anchor. In doing so, he contributes to a growing corpus of contemporary mythological fiction that seeks to dismantle traditional gender hierarchies and offer empowered representations of womanhood rooted in indigenous epistemologies.

Rewriting Womanhood through Epics and Feminist Scholarship

A significant body of feminist scholarship has underscored the distinctive trajectory and epistemology of Indian feminism. Chandra Talpade Mohanty's landmark essay *Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses* (1986) is often referenced in this context. Mohanty critiques the dominance of Western feminist paradigms, particularly their tendency to homogenize the category of *Third World Women* and impose reductive binaries. She interrogates the Western model of power which typically casts men as oppressors and women as victims and argues that such universalizations disregard the historical, cultural, and socio-political specificities of non-Western contexts. In doing so, Mohanty calls attention to how such frameworks strip women of their agency and elide localized gender dynamics.

Within the Indian context, several scholars including Jasbir Jain, Radha Kumar, and Maitrayee Chaudhuri have contributed extensively to the theorization of indigenous feminisms. In her work *Feminism in India* (2005), Chaudhuri challenges the applicability of Western feminist taxonomies which is liberal, Marxist, socialist, and Black feminisms to the Indian scenario. She contends that the assumption that Indian

feminist thought mirrors Western developmental trajectories is fundamentally flawed. According to her, feminist consciousness in India did not emerge as an imported ideology from the West but has historically engaged with and resisted gender constructions in multiple indigenous ways.

Radha Kumar's *The History of Doing* (1993) offers a thematic and documentary history of the women's movement in India, spanning from 1800 to 1990. It traces how gender issues were initially taken up by male reformers within the broader social reform movement, before becoming a domain of women's activism during the nationalist struggle and later, in the post-independence feminist resurgence of the 1960s and 1970s. Through a combination of photographs, archival documents, letters, and literary excerpts, Kumar demonstrates how women transitioned from subjects of reform to active agents of change, leading to the formation of India's first women-led organizations.

Jasbir Jain, in her seminal work *Indigenous Roots of Feminism: Culture, Subjectivity and Agency* (2019), turns to India's vast cultural and philosophical heritage to trace the evolution of feminist consciousness. She situates feminist inquiry not as a contemporary or imported discourse, but as one that is historically rooted in classical Indian texts such as the *Upanishads*, the *Manusmriti*, the *Natya Shastra*, and especially the epics and Bhakti literature. Jain reinterprets figures like Draupadi, Sita, and Kali, exploring their symbolic disruption of conventional notions such as chastity, power, violence, sexuality, and devotion. According to Jain, feminism in the Indian context is not merely an oppositional voice; it is an act of moral introspection, self-realization, and relational continuity with the past.

Rashmi Luthra's essay *Clearing Sacred Ground: Women-Centered Interpretations of the Indian Epics* (2014) also contributes to this discourse by examining how feminist thinkers, artists, and ordinary women have reappropriated characters from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* to articulate postcolonial Indian feminist positions. While acknowledging the risks of such appropriations, especially the potential alignment with right-wing cultural politics or the neglect of caste and class complexities, Luthra maintains that these reinterpretations are necessary. They enable feminist discourse to remain connected to culturally resonant texts while allowing space for subversion and critique within a tradition-bound framework.

Taken together, these works not only chart the historical and intellectual evolution of Indian feminism but also assert its divergence from Eurocentric feminist frameworks. They affirm the indigenous origins of feminist consciousness in India and emphasize the legitimacy of woman-centered reinterpretations of mythological texts.

This paper contends that Indian feminism is not a borrowed construct from the West but is deeply rooted in the cultural and spiritual fabric of Indian civilization. Divine figures such as Durga and Kali have long symbolized feminine power and agency at a macrocosmic level, while local traditions in Indian villages honor *Grama Devis*, village goddesses who are seen as protectors and embodiments of strength in the immediate social environment. These divine archetypes reflect a long-standing cultural acknowledgment of female power across both sacred and everyday realms.

Despite their cultural prominence, however, such powerful female icons are seldom invoked in the social conditioning of young girls. Instead, figures like Sita and Savitri are idealized and frequently presented as models of ideal womanhood. Sita, in particular, has been enshrined in the Hindu cultural consciousness as the paragon of self-sacrifice, loyalty, and obedience. Within the patriarchal framework of Indian society, these attributes are emphasized in order to reinforce norms of female subservience, while her lesser-acknowledged qualities such as resilience, moral clarity, and independence, are often marginalized or omitted in popular retellings.

The Feminist Revival of Sita

Over time, Sita's character has undergone a significant transformation, from a decisive and assertive figure in Valmiki's *Ramayana* to a more subdued emblem of silent endurance. This literary evolution can be seen as a strategic reframing intended to align her image with patriarchal values and socio-religious expectations. The selective remembrance of her virtues serves to legitimize gendered hierarchies and condition women into roles defined by compliance and sacrifice.

In light of the multiplicity of Ramayana traditions, one version that often escapes mainstream scholarly and cultural discourse is the *Adbhuta Ramayana*, traditionally attributed to the sage Valmiki. In her insightful essay *The Sita Who Smiles: Wife as Goddess in the Adbhuta Ramayana* (2005), Ruth Vanita draws attention to a radically different portrayal of Sita in this lesser-known text. Unlike the more familiar Ramayanas, which focus heavily on Rama's exile, Sita's abduction, and the battle with Ravana, the *Adbhuta Ramayana* allocates only a single *sarga* to these events. Vanita highlights a pivotal episode in Chapter 17, wherein the sages celebrate Rama's triumph over the ten-headed Ravana of Lanka. Sita, amused by the celebration, remarks that this Ravana pales in comparison to his more formidable twin brother, the thousand-headed Ravana of Pushkara Island.

Prompted by her words, Rama engages in battle with this greater adversary, only to find himself defeated and rendered unconscious. In a dramatic reversal of roles, Sita transforms into her divine aspect as Parameshwari or Kali, annihilates the demon army, and beheads Ravana with devastating force. This powerful episode subverts the traditional narrative structure in which the husband protects the wife and the wife worships the husband. In contrast, here Sita emerges as the supreme warrior and protector, while Rama lies helpless. The narrative resists patriarchal norms by depicting Sita as autonomous, capable, and divinely potent.

Moreover, the *Adbhuta Ramayana* departs from the familiar portrayals of Sita's suffering and instead presents her as composed and even amused in the face of events typically interpreted as traumatic. The text places Sita and Rama on an equal pedestal, both in epithets and in praise, although Sita's supremacy is subtly underscored, Rama is described as her devotee, whereas the reverse is not emphasized. Vanita notes that while goddesses like Durga and Kali represent abstract divine force, they often lack the emotional accessibility and intimacy embodied in the human figure of Sita. Her association with Parameshwari and Kali thus reclaims the divine feminine in a relatable, embodied form, suggesting that every woman carries a spark of the goddess within her.

Amish Tripathi draws explicitly from the *Adbhuta Ramayana* in shaping the protagonist of his novel *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*. In various interviews, he has acknowledged this influence and defended his decision to reimagine Sita as a figure of power, leadership, and moral clarity. Tripathi also references ancient female sages such as Ma Rishika Maitreyi, Lopamudra, and Gargi who have contributed to the *Rig Veda*, to argue that women held positions of intellectual and spiritual authority in Vedic times, often surpassing even kings in esteem and influence. He asserts that the contemporary discourse on women's empowerment would resonate more deeply if anchored in indigenous cultural traditions, rather than framed solely through Western ideological frameworks. Tripathi's vision, therefore, is not shaped by Western feminist icons such as Simone de Beauvoir or Betty Friedan. Instead, he offers a culturally rooted feminist vision, one that honors Sita not for her suffering and endurance, but for her dignity, courage, and self-determination.

The idea of goddess-inspired feminism has also been examined by several critics. Notably, Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, in her influential essay *Is the Hindu Goddess a Feminist?* (1998), explores the complex

intersections of religion, politics, and feminist thought in the Indian context. She traces how the image of the militant goddess was appropriated during the Indian freedom struggle to elevate both the status of Hindu women and the collective identity of Hinduism. Reformist organizations such as the Arya Samaj utilized goddess symbolism to inspire nationalist fervor, mobilize women's participation, and construct an idealized image of womanhood exemplified by *Bharat Mata*, the deified motherland.

In the postcolonial era, this tradition has persisted, as seen in the political elevation of figures like Indira Gandhi, often likened to Goddess Durga. Rajan argues that while these symbolic appropriations served reformist and nationalist ends, they also perpetuated a complex ideology where femininity was simultaneously revered and regulated. During the nationalist movement, Gandhi often invoked Sita's mythic endurance in his addresses to women, drawing parallels between her resistance to Ravana and the Indian woman's resistance to colonial oppression. The goddess thus became not only a figure of devotion but also a metaphor for resistance and national awakening. In this regard, goddess-centric feminism which is rooted in both mythic imagination and lived cultural experience has long informed feminist consciousness in India. Rather than adopting imported theoretical models, Indian feminism has often turned to its own symbolic traditions to articulate agency, resilience, and empowerment. Through myth, reinterpretation, and cultural memory, figures like Sita continue to offer powerful frameworks for rethinking gender and reclaiming feminine strength.

Tripathi's Sita and the Subversion of Patriarchal Archetypes

Amish Tripathi's portrayal of Sita in *Sita: Warrior of Mithila* builds upon the enduring motif of the triumph of *dharma* over *adharma*. Tripathi begins his work with the declarative: "She will defend dharma. She will protect us" (Tripathi xi). This invocation of the divine feminine sets the tone for the novel and underscores the author's commitment to presenting a feminist vision rooted in Indian tradition. His belief in the administrative and intellectual capabilities of women is evident throughout the narrative.

Tripathi's novel does not with passivity or beauty but with action: Sita, a young girl, cuts through thick foliage with skill and precision. Her characterization is physical and powerful, her height and developing muscles are emphasized rather than her physical charm. She is portrayed as assertive, courageous, and quick-witted, qualities traditionally overlooked in the representations of Sita. From confronting disrespect with physical retaliation, to using her voice as a tool of resistance, Sita demonstrates unrelenting resolve. Her actions, such as angrily cursing upon seeing a wounded ally or smashing a royal seal to thwart political betrayal, show her as a figure of both emotional depth and moral clarity. Her fierce resistance during her abduction by Ravana's forces also shows that Tripathi's Sita is no silent victim. The title itself, *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*, signals that Sita's valour is not born from adversity but is inherent to her identity from the beginning. She stands not as a supplement to Ram but as his equal in power and agency.

Tripathi's feminist reconstruction extends beyond Sita. Queen Sunaina, often a marginal character in other retellings, is here portrayed as an active ruler of Mithila while King Janak pursues intellectual endeavours. Sunaina plays a crucial role in shaping Sita into a pragmatic and independent leader. She ensures Sita receives a holistic education, from philosophy and administration to warfare and martial arts. This maternal vision challenges the conventional model of feminine education and instead promotes a paradigm where women are trained not just in morality but in self-defence and strategic thinking. As Prime Minister of Mithila, Sita proves a competent administrator. She initiates infrastructure projects, reorganizes the city's chaotic market, enhances urban planning, and fortifies the city's defences. Her response to political betrayal and assassination attempts further affirms her acumen in diplomacy and statecraft.

Amrita Basu's work, *The Gendered Imagery and Women's Leadership of Hindu Nationalism* (1996), provides a relevant theoretical parallel. Basu explores how Hindu nationalism has produced visible and assertive women leaders without negating traditional notions of Hindu femininity. Sita in Tripathi's work is both assertive and aligned with the cultural ideals of devotion and loyalty, embodying an empowered femininity that does not reject tradition but redefines it.

Tripathi's reinterpretation also includes several key subversions of traditional gender roles. For instance, Sita is depicted as older than Ram, challenging prevalent norms that normalize significant age gaps in favor of male seniority. She also performs her mother's last rites, a task traditionally reserved for sons, reinforcing her position as a legitimate heir and autonomous individual. Sita chooses Ram for marriage, not out of submission but conviction, believing he will respect her warrior identity. She desires not a passive partnership, but a collaborative one where both share the role of *Vishnu* (the nurturer of the people). In a significant scene, Sita articulates her views assertively during a dialogue with Bharata, repeatedly insisting, "I am not finished" (Tripathi 277), to ensure her voice is heard. Such moments underscore her strength in speech and moral argument, traits often erased in patriarchal representations.

Tripathi also advances a progressive social ethic by emphasizing merit over birth. Sita is anxious about being judged for her unknown lineage, but Ram affirms that *karma*, not *janma*, determines worth. Consequently, characters like Samichi, a slum girl who rescues Sita, are elevated to positions of leadership based on their capabilities. Sita's selection as the next *Vishnu* by Vishwamitra further reinforces the vision of an egalitarian society where gender, caste, and class do not define destiny, merit does.

A significant aspect of Amish's literary vision, as articulated in both *Ram: The Scion of Ikshvaku* and *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*, is his consistent emphasis on maintaining a balance between competing forces, particularly through the conceptual framework of *purusha–prakriti* harmony. This philosophical idea, rooted in ancient Indian cosmology, functions as a cornerstone of Tripathi's narrative world.

Ecofeminist scholar Vandana Shiva, in her influential work *Staying Alive*, interprets the *purusha–prakriti* dyad as a foundational principle in Indian ecological thought. Contrary to the dichotomous and hierarchical opposition often drawn in Western philosophy between man and woman, or human and nature, Indian philosophy conceives this binary as a "unity in duality." Shiva posits that "In Indian cosmology, by contrast, person and nature (Purusha-Prakriti) are a duality in unity. They are inseparable complements of one another in nature, in woman, in man. Every form of creation bears the sign of this dialectical unity, of diversity within a unifying principle, and this dialectical harmony between the male and female principles and between nature and man, becomes the basis of ecological thought and action in India" (39). In Indian thought, *prakriti* is not an abstract metaphysical entity but a lived, everyday presence that nourishes and sustains life. According to *Sankhya* philosophy, this cosmic balance arises from the interaction between *purusha*- the unchanging eternal subject, and *prakriti*- the mutable material world. The *purusha–prakriti* division is a subject-object relationship: *purusha* represents the soul or consciousness, constant and immutable; *prakriti* denotes the ever-changing world of matter, names, forms, and gender. Importantly, both are co-eternal and mutually dependent.

In this interpretive framework, Ram and Sita symbolically represent *purusha* and *prakriti*, respectively. Sita's character is deeply connected to the earth as she is discovered in the soil, referred to as *Bhoomi* (Earth), and ultimately returns to it. The imagery around her mother Sunaina also reinforces this earthy connection: her lap is described as soft like fertile soil after rain and later, as dry and cracked like parched earth. Sita, closely aligned with nature, intuitively senses the collapse of support structures, like a sparrow

perceiving the fall of the banyan tree. Her life, from exile in the forest to giving birth in Valmiki's hermitage, reinforces her embodiment of *prakriti* as the creative, nurturing, and enduring force of nature. Ram, as the upholder of law and ethical order, signifies *purusha*. In Amish's *Ram: The Scion of Ikshvaku*, he meticulously codifies law by extracting essential principles from the diverse and sometimes contradictory *smritis*. His goal is clarity, coherence, and relevance. He ensures these laws are publicly displayed in temples and enforces them impartially through an empowered police force. Tripathi's narrative emphasis on both Ram and Sita as co-bearers of the Vishnu role reflects the philosophical vision of balance, a synthesis of the masculine and the feminine. A key moment in *Sita: Warrior of Mithila* that crystallizes this worldview is Sita's conversation with Bharat, where she affirms the necessity of integrating both masculine and feminine approaches. She reiterates "The Masculine way is ordered, efficient and fair at its best, but fanatical and violent at its worst. The Feminine way is creative, passionate and caring at its best, but decadent and chaotic at its worst. No one way of life is better or worse. They both have their strengths and weaknesses" (280). Sita thus advocates for *Balance*, a harmonious fusion of masculine and feminine energies.

The text also critiques radical feminism through characters like Samichi, who is initially portrayed as a misandrist. Jatayu rebukes her, noting that reverse sexism is equally unjust: "...hating all men because of one man's actions… is a sign of an unstable personality. Reverse-bias is also bias. Reverse-racism is also racism. Reverse-sexism is also sexism" (115). Through this exchange, Tripathi advocates for a feminist pragmatism rooted in mutual respect and cooperation rather than antagonism.

Sita's pragmatism is further demonstrated in her philosophical stance. When asked by Vishwamitra if she aligns with the Charvak School of philosophy, which denies the soul and divinity, Sita declines. Instead, she claims to be pragmatic, open to all philosophies, and driven by outcomes that maximize wellbeing (64). She values experiential wisdom over rigid dogma, placing action and consequence above abstract ideology. Her ethics are consequentialist and grounded in the lived realities of governance and justice.

Conclusion

In reimagining Sita, Amish Tripathi dismantles centuries-old patriarchal archetypes and resurrects her as a formidable force, an unyielding warrior, incisive administrator, unsparing strategist, fiercely loyal daughter, and a self-aware, equal partner in love. Gone is the submissive, tender princess who falls prey to Ravana due to a fleeting fascination with a golden deer. In her place stands a woman of fire and resolve, capable of shaping the destiny of kingdoms and holding her own in the battlefield of ideas, politics, and war. Tripathi's Sita is the embodiment of *prakriti*, the primal creative force that is at once nurturing and destructive, tender and terrifying. She is the vital pulse of the cosmos, the source of all transformation, and the ground from which both creation and annihilation spring. In Ram, she finds her *purusha*, not as a superior or saviour, but as a counterpart. This symbolic partnership asserts a cosmic balance, where masculine and feminine principles exist not in hierarchy, but in harmony.

Such a portrayal does not merely retell an epic; it reframes the cultural imagination. It carves out a space for an indigenous feminist paradigm that does not mimic Western templates, but rises from the sacred soil of Indian myth, philosophy, and lived experience. Sita, as envisioned by Tripathi, becomes the new archetype of the ideal Indian woman, not one defined by obedience and silence, but by strength, wisdom, autonomy, and balance. In doing so, the narrative reshapes the contours of Indian feminism and calls for a reclamation of feminine power deeply rooted in tradition yet urgently relevant to the present.

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