

# TRECENTO

— Edition 23 —



## UNVEILING THE MYTHOLOGY OF INDIA: A JOURNEY OF REASERCH AND CREATIVITY

### Introduction:

India, a land of diverse cultures and traditions, has a rich tapestry of mythology that weaves together ancient legends, gods, and mystical tales. This article aims to serve as an eye-opener, delving deep into the captivating world of Indian mythology. By drawing upon extensive research and employing creative storytelling, we will unravel the enchanting tapestry of gods, heroes, and mythical creatures that have shaped the spiritual and cultural landscape of this ancient civilization.

### Origins of Indian Mythology:

To embark on our journey, we must explore the origins of Indian mythology. India's mythological roots can be traced back to the Vedas, ancient texts composed over 3,000 years ago. These sacred scriptures contain hymns, rituals, and philosophical musings, providing glimpses into the early Indian belief systems. From the Rigveda to the Upanishads, the cosmic order and the concept of divinity gradually took shape, setting the stage for the captivating myths and legends that would follow.

### Deities and Pantheons:

Indian mythology boasts a pantheon of gods and goddesses, each with their unique attributes, stories, and symbolism. From the revered trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, to the fierce goddesses Durga and Kali, the article will explore the divine tales that have captured the imagination of millions. We will delve into the captivating stories of creation, destruction, and rebirth, highlighting the deeper philosophical and metaphorical meanings behind each deity's existence.

## Epics: Mahabharatan and Ramayana:

No exploration of Indian mythology is complete without diving into the two great epics—Mahabharata and Ramayana. These colossal narratives form the backbone of Indian storytelling and offer profound insights into the complexities of human existence. Through detailed research, we will examine the heroes and anti-heroes of these epics, such as Arjuna, Rama, and Ravana, unraveling their moral dilemmas, virtues, and flaws that continue to resonate with audiences to this day.

## Mythical Creatures and Beings:

The mythological realm of India is not limited to gods and heroes alone; it is also inhabited by a captivating array of mythical creatures and beings. From the celestial nymphs called Apsaras, the wise and divine Nagas, to the valiant Vanaras (monkey warriors) in the Ramayana, we will explore the diverse and fascinating cast of characters that populate the mythological landscape of India. Through artistic interpretation and creative storytelling, we will bring these fantastical creatures to life.

## Symbolism and Allegory:

Indian mythology is steeped in symbolism and allegory, providing profound teachings and insights into the human condition. We will dive into the layers of meaning hidden within these ancient tales, uncovering the lessons they hold for modern society. By examining the deeper philosophical and spiritual significance of these myths, we can discover timeless wisdom that remains relevant even in the present day.





## Regional Variations and Folklore:

India's vast geographical expanse has given rise to diverse regional variations and folklore within its mythology. From the stories of Krishna in the Braj region to the tales of Murugan in South India, this section will highlight the unique mythological traditions that have flourished across different parts of the country.

## Divine Relationships and Interactions:

Indian mythology is replete with intricate relationships and interactions between gods, goddesses, and other divine beings. The article can delve into the complex family dynamics, love stories, and conflicts that exist within the pantheon, shedding light on the various narratives that depict these divine connections.

## Avatars and Incarnations:

The concept of avatars, divine incarnations, plays a significant role in Indian mythology. From Lord Vishnu's ten avatars, including Rama and Krishna, to the lesser-known avatars of other deities, this section can explore the reasons behind these incarnations and the impact they had on the mythological landscape.



## Mythological Rituals and Festivals:

Mythology is deeply interwoven into the religious and cultural practices of India. This section can highlight the rituals, festivals, and ceremonies that are inspired by mythological tales, providing readers with a glimpse into how these stories continue to shape and influence the daily lives of millions of people.

## Female Deities and Empowerment:

Indian mythology offers a plethora of powerful and revered goddesses who embody various aspects of femininity. This section can focus on goddesses such as Saraswati, Lakshmi, and Parvati, exploring their significance, symbolism, and the empowerment they bring to women in Indian society.

## Influence on Art and Literature:

Indian mythology has been a constant source of inspiration for artists, writers, and performers throughout history. This section can showcase the enduring impact of mythological tales on various art forms, including classical dance, sculpture, painting, and literature, highlighting the timeless beauty and cultural resonance of these artistic expressions.

## Contemporary Relevance and Popularity:

Despite its ancient origins, Indian mythology continues to captivate and inspire people in the modern era. This section can explore the reasons behind its enduring popularity, its influence on popular culture, and its relevance in addressing contemporary issues and values.

## Conclusion:

As we conclude our exploration of the mythology of India, we can reflect upon the remarkable depth, diversity, and creativity that it encompasses. From its ancient origins in the Vedas to the elaborate tales of gods, epics, and mythical creatures, Indian mythology offers a treasury of knowledge and inspiration. By blending rigorous research with imaginative storytelling, this article has aimed to serve as an eye-opener, inviting readers to immerse themselves in the captivating world of Indian mythology and discover its enduring significance. May it inspire a renewed appreciation for the cultural and spiritual heritage of this ancient civilization.

-Vidhi

## GRIEF CLAD VOWS

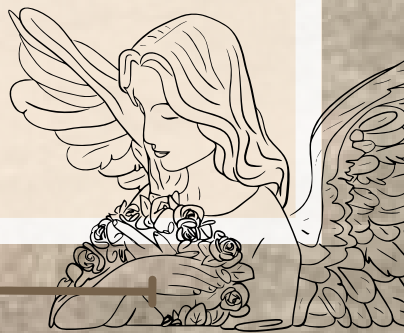
The story of Orpheus and Eurydice.

I am confused and I don't remember who I am.  
I've never been more lost in these streets that were  
etched onto my brain.  
But amongst all this fog, honey I still remember your  
name;

And the way you scrunch your nose when you're annoyed.  
I remember every crook of your silhouette,  
I can still sing along to the tempo of your breath.  
My vision's getting blurry but how are you standing so  
still?

My voice is getting shaky but how are you dancing still?  
I've never been a fan of green eyes until I saw yours.  
I've tried to find you in every stone I've turned,  
I've tried to summon you in every melody I've hummed.  
I've my lyre with me, but alas my muse isn't.  
I've breath in me, but alas my soul isn't.  
It all started when we took our grief clad vows;  
Ended when I couldn't resist looking back.  
Eurydice you looked Soirely beautiful amongst the swirl of  
Netherworld,  
And your Orpheus looked Soirely awful as he made it out  
to light.

~ Tina Singaria



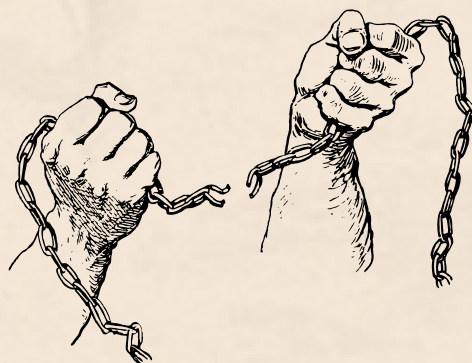


## TASTE OF FREEDOM

Born under the shadow of genius  
Icarus was caught up in exile with his father  
Like an unwanted curse  
To be imprisoned forever  
He was paying the cost of his father's choice  
Youthful and desolated  
Trapped In this daunting hell.  
A never ending tunnel with no light.

A way out , his father wrought  
Weaving Wings to fly out of this trap.  
Father didn't just give a key to escape  
He gave Icarus a heady rush of anticipation  
O! To move away from dreary  
To drink it all in one go  
Everything that was out of reach till now.  
Father gave out a warning before departing.  
Desperation to move clawed at Icarus , he just nodded.

They sprung to the sky and flew away.  
O! The rush of winds hugging Icarus  
It was much better than whatever his mind  
ever conjured about liberation.  
He let instincts rule over his mind now.  
They were flying side by side but  
Icarus wanted to immerse in more euphoria  
An itch to acquire everything in this moment  
To not let go of even a single scene around him  
The clouds, birds , sea underneath and the  
Almighty sun . He charged forward and upward.



# Poetry

Once the sun's kisses warmed Icarus' body  
There was no going back  
The sudden urge to get near the blazing god  
His father's voice of plea echoed from somewhere,  
Icarus was too far gone and too high on ecstasy.  
Something started burning on his back  
A burning pain and a flurry of his feathers unbecoming  
His motion becoming out of control  
Instead of going near Sun, now  
Gravity was pulling at his legs  
As if the Sea god was beckoning him now

Father's warning flashed in his mind  
This time with vivid details  
"Heat is our enemy, wings are clamped with wax"  
Icarus understood the implication of his decision  
He was again delving into an unknown territory  
This time without his choice  
It was as if the gods were punishing him for crossing  
The invisible line of mortality  
Yet he never regretted his decision  
His death was near, just within reach  
So was the sun who became the reason  
Of his demise.  
He prayed in his mind to give his father  
A strength to overcome his coming doom.

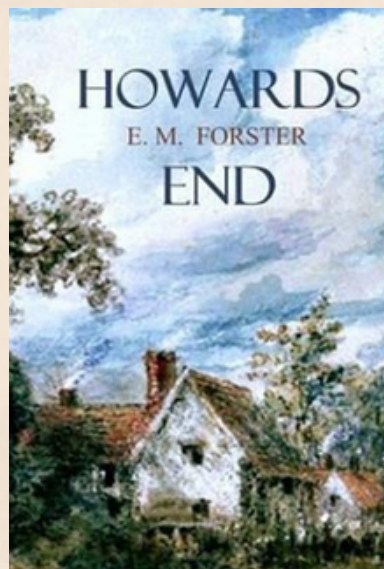
Icarus closed his eyes and screamed Not just in pain or in fear  
of looming death but in the memory of that Fleeting  
exhilaration he felt When he finally got the taste of Freedom.  
He never regretted his decision. Perhaps, death will also be a  
form Of freedom. No more, the lingering attachment, The  
unexplainable thirst, resentment. Just him, the sky moving  
away And the waves of water waiting To let him reside in the  
abyss

~Manasvi Jaiswal





## PROSE AND POETRY OF DIVIDED SOCIETY



Students these days cannot overlook the problem of economic inequality and formulating the remedial policies required to reduce it. In fact, the Global Word Cloud (2016-2020) exercise of the CoreEcon Project of the University College London, for example, had found inequality as the dominant concern of econ students worldwide. In India, the exemplary programmes and activities of the nonprofit outfit called Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action are conducted in keeping with the following five non-negotiable core values:

SOCIAL  
JUSTICE

GENDER  
JUSTICE

SECULARISM  
AND  
DEMOCRACY

HONESTY  
AND  
INTEGRITY

ENVIRONMENTAL  
SUSTAINABILITY

# Review

I take up two great books here, written with the literary purpose of highlighting social and economic divisiveness, one from the hoary past (Forster, 1910) and the other from the recent present (Sidel, 2016). They are excellent examples of literary purpose and writing—how you can do literary writing about unending unequal economy and society.

Don't read the best book of Forster on British class ladder before you sink deep into its cinematic spectacle of the drama of class warfare exploring the conflict inherent within English society of the early 20th century. Which, is a sumptuous delight indeed.

*SparkNotes* for students has this unbeatable commentary about it, though.

It is a wonderful symbolic exploration of the social, economic, and philosophical forces at work in England during the early years of the twentieth century. Written in 1910, the novel offers an extraordinarily insightful look at the life of England in the years preceding World War I. Preoccupied with the vast social changes sweeping his nation, which was then at the height of its Imperial world influence, Forster set out to address the question critic Lionel Trilling expressed as, "Who shall inherit England?"--meaning, which class of people would come to define the nation? To answer the question, he explores the lives of three different groups of people, each of which represents a particular social class or class aspect: the literary, cultural Schlegel family, who represent the idealistic and intellectual aspect of the upper classes; the materialistic, pragmatic Wilcox family, who represent the "solid" English work ethic and conventional social morality; and the impoverished Bast family, headed by a lower-middle-class insurance clerk who desperately hopes books will save him from social and economic desolation.



# Review

Forster explores these three groups by setting them against one another in relief, gradually intertwining their stories until they are inextricably linked. Helen Schlegel has a brief romance with Paul Wilcox; Margaret Schlegel befriends Ruth Wilcox, then marries Henry Wilcox after Ruth's death; Jacky Bast is revealed as a former lover of Henry; Helen has an affair with Leonard Bast and ultimately bears his child. In the end, Mrs. Wilcox's estate of Howards End--a former farm now within distant sight of the outskirts of London--comes to represent England as a whole, and the question of "Who shall inherit England?" symbolically centres around each character's relationship to Howards End. At the end of the novel, Margaret, Helen, Helen and Leonard's son, and Henry all live at Howards End; Henry makes provision for Margaret to inherit the house, suggesting that, like the characters of the novel, the classes of England are mixing beyond recognition, and will be forced to adapt to an England that they can all share.

In addition to the thematic role played by houses in the novel (the Schlegel house on Wickham Place also becomes an important symbol of their class and family identity), Forster explores the symbolic value of other objects and ideas, including money. Continually contrasting the "seen" with the "unseen"--the physical, material world of the Wilcoxes with the imaginative, spiritual world of the Schlegels--Forster posits the possibility that, ultimately, the universe has no meaning, that all of life is simply a struggle for subsistence, represented by toil for money. This is the core of Helen's realization at the performance of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in Chapter 5, when she imagines "goblins" marching across the universe, observing that there is nothing great in human beings. However, Helen eventually realizes that the idea of death forces people to confront the idea of the unseen and forces them to look for meaning in their lives. In this regard, life is not merely a quest for enough money; money is an important part of life, because it enables leisure and security, but it is not all of life. Then again, Helen realizes this largely because she has money: It does no good for the doomed Leonard Bast.



# Review

In relation to Forster's portrayal of what money does and doesn't do to our happiness, you can go through the supplementary reading of Morgan Housel, *The Psychology of Money*, which like Forster's book, digs into the history of greed, insecurity, and optimism.

So much on homage to E. M. Forster and connecting his work to the present.

Seidel, the American poet, is now 87 years old. He has been called "the poet the 20th century deserved" and lauded as one of "the best poets writing today". His poetry, alleged to be "sinister" and "disturbing", can supplement well your study of economic inequality, for example, by following Thomas Piketty. Racism, violence, the legacy of slavery, the connection between privilege and misery, are also constant themes in his poetry.

I have taken to Seidel's poetry which you can taste as follows.

## Widening Income Inequality

*I live a life of appetite and, yes, that's right,  
I live a life of privilege in New York,  
Eating buttered toast in bed with cunty fingers on Sunday morning.  
Say that again?  
I have a rule—  
I never give to beggars in the street who hold their hands out.  
I woke up this morning in my air-conditioning.  
At the end of my legs were my feet.  
Foot and foot stretched out outside the duvet looking for me!  
Get up. Giddyup. Get going.  
My feet were there on the far side of my legs.  
Get up. Giddyup. Get going.*

# Review

I don't really think I am going to.  
Obama is doing just fine.  
I don't think I'm going to.  
Get up. Giddyup. Get going.  
I can see out the window it isn't raining.  
So much for the endless forecasts, always wrong.  
The poor are poorer than they ever were.  
The rich are richer than the poor.  
Is it true about the poor?  
It's always possible to be amusing.  
I saw a rat down in the subway.  
So what if you saw a rat.  
I admire the poor profusely.  
I want their autograph.  
They make me shy.  
I keep my distance.  
I'm getting to the bottom of the island.  
Lower Broadway comes to a boil and City Hall is boiling.  
I'm half asleep but I'm awake.  
At the other end of me are my feet  
In shoes of considerable sophistication  
Walking down Broadway in the heat.  
I'm half asleep in the heat.  
I'm, so to speak, wearing a hat.  
I'm no Saint Francis.  
I'm in one of my trances.  
When I look in a mirror,  
There's an old man in a trance.  
There's a Gobi Desert,  
And that's poetry, or rather rhetoric.  
You see what happens if you don't make sense?  
It only makes sense to not.  
You feel the flicker of a hummingbird  
It takes a second to find.  
You hear a whirr.  
It's here. It's there. It hovers, begging, hand out.



What such inequality prose and poetry have you discovered in the Indian context? For example, you can explore Jayant Mahapatra's Indian-English poetry about inequality, poverty and social issues plaguing the country. Thou shall also know the humanising slam poetry movement and the gender-equality storytelling movement. This exploration should continue along with the inconclusive as also upending study of inequality and growth (Furman, 2018). There is still the old point, "Focus on Poverty, Not on Inequality". And there is the ascendant new counterpoint, "Focus on Inequality, Not Just on Poverty". How social policy and economic policy can be integrated in this regard for the betterment of all communities in a multi-cultural society is a most challenging, up the ante question.

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