



NEWSLETTER

Dear SIETAR members and supporters,

The theme of this newsletter is mythology, given its omnipresence in India and the chord that it is striking with such a large audience across the world. Some of India's most popular authors today are those that are writing on Indian mythology whether it is Amish Tripathi with his Shiva trilogy or Ashok Banker with his Epic India series. But of special interest to interculturalists is Devdutt Pattanaik, mythologist and Chief Belief Officer of the Future Group. To the regulars of the SIETAR India conference, he is no stranger since he delivered our keynote speech in 2011 in Chennai. If you missed it, you can hear him on Ted talks: East versus West. We had the privilege of catching up with him this month in Chennai, where his drawings based on Indian mythological figures were showcased in an exhibition. Here are some excerpts from our conversation as we discussed his book "Business Sutra" shortly to be released, where he studies the connection of mythology and business in India.

Sunita Nichani: Devdutt, why would you say it is important to understand the mythology of a country that we do business with?

Devdutt Pattanaik: If you wish to create a relationship, then you have to understand the subjective truth of your business partners and that is where mythology comes in. Mythology is the study of stories, symbols and rituals which communicate a subjective truth. It is important to clarify that mythology is not religion or religious. It is secular.

SN: What do you think is the strength of Indian mythology?

DP: Faith in rebirth and hence the capacity to accept multiple truths.

SN: What is the fundamental theme of your new book?

DP: What would you prefer? To chase Lakshmi (Goddess of wealth) or have Lakshmi chase you?

SN: (taken aback) Well, I would rather have Lakshmi (wealth) chase me than run after her.

DP: Well, in the current business model followed by most companies, they would rather chase Lakshmi (etymologically laksh or target). The whole Western concept of business is based on reaching targets and objectives and this is what leads to conflict or rangbhoomi (war field). Whereas if you follow the Eastern paradigm, and get Lakshmi to chase you then business becomes a rangabhoomi or a playfield.

SN: Interesting!

DP (with a smile): If you want to know how to attract Lakshmi and get her to chase you then you need to read "Business Sutra".

SN: I most certainly will!

To end on a humorous note, here is the link to a local ad that took help from a mythological figure to drive home the message of drinking and being driven!

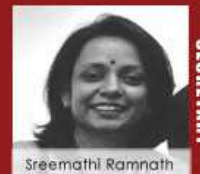
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsSenbHekes>

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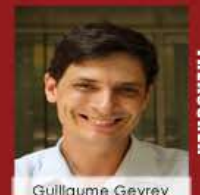
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