

## Power, Prophecy, and Politics in Samit Basu's Select Novels

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### Abstract

This paper claims that Samit Basu's characters' power conflicts mimic real-world social hierarchies, where people and groups navigate, contest, and redefine their positions in his *Game World Trilogy*. This study uses Michel Foucault's power theory to examine Basu's Game World Trilogy's power relations. Power is about control, influence, resistance, and change, and the research analyses how these dynamics are expressed in innovative character relationships. In the trilogy, heroes and villains fight, prophecies appear, and mythological animals form alliances. Power is continuously fought and redefined. This research shows that Basu's work explores power's fluid, unstable character in fiction and in everyday social institutions. Relationships between power and society in modern politics.

**Keywords:** Power, Culture, Gender, Politics, System, Hero, Villain, Animal

There has long been a tradition of straddling different viewpoints in the study of power. Power has been associated with several facets of social life, including the level of the individual, the level of social groupings, and the level of institutions, such as the relationship between the people and the government, according to philosophers, historians, literary theorists, natural scientists, and social scientists. According to social psychologists, social power beliefs can affect social and cognitive outcomes like social cognition, attentiveness, and emotional self-regulation. In addition, the power was utilized to illustrate social discrimination practices that were primarily motivated by political ideology, gender, and ethnicity. However, there is a lack of communication across these various academic disciplines, which is why there is not a comprehensive definition of social power.

When people are driven by the desire for dominance and power, the study of power relations becomes relevant and difficult. The effort to dominate others is the reason behind the ongoing conflicts between states and the encroachment of land on other countries. Power usually prevails over the weak; this is true everywhere these days. There can be no power relationship without resistance or opposing power. Everyone aspires to be powerful because they understand that only those with power can greatly increase their riches. People or a nation will attempt to obtain more and more resources to overcome the scarcity, but if resources are boundless, there is no reason to battle with others. To realise their objectives, they so employ every available method. Because of the insatiable demands of powerful individuals, the weak are crushed. The power that institutions possess and wield oppressively against individuals and groups is incorrect, according to Foucault, who seeks to take analysis a step further by examining how it functions in daily interactions between individuals and institutions. We need to get past the notion that power equates to oppression, he writes in the first volume of *Historie de la Sexualité*, because, even in their most extreme manifestations, repressive practices are not only dominance and censorship but also fertile, giving rise to new behaviors. In contrast to most Marxist philosophers, Foucault is less concerned with the oppressive nature of power and more with the struggle of those who are subjected to it. Foucault proposes another model in which power relations dissolve through all related structures of the society. This allows him to construct a model of the daily and routine manners in which power is exercised and challenged; an analysis centred on the human entity as an active subject, not as a simple object for the power.

Evolutionary scientists say that humans have changed their minds in ways that let them understand how people relate to each other. According to research on nonhuman primates, the primate brain has grown and changed over time to be able to map out a complex social world. This includes keeping track of grooming networks, coalitions, kinship relationships, third-party relationships, and the quality of relationships with both allies and foes. The adaptive value of these social maps is that they help people get the resources they need to stay alive. People can form a coalition with strong people if they understand social power. People are just starting to learn how to keep track of their social network, and the ties in that network are very important.

Samit Basu is an Indian writer best known for his science fiction and fantasy novels. He is known for his *Game World Trilogy*, which blends Eastern and Western myths. *The Simoqin Prophecies*, *The Manticore's Secret*, and *The Unwaba Revelations* depict a complicated world where power relations shape character interactions and the story. With Titan Books' international publication of *Turbulence*, a superhero book set in India, Pakistan, and England, he rose to international prominence. Shortly after, he released "Resistance," the sequel. In addition, he authored the YA (Young Adult) novel "Terror on the Titanic" and a series of children's novels called "Adventures of StooB" that are set in Delhi. He presently works in India in Delhi and Mumbai.

Power Relations in *Simoqin Prophecies*: Indian novelist Samit Basu wrote the English fantasy book *The Simoqin Prophecies* (2004). It is the first book in the *Game World Trilogy* series and has been translated into German, Swedish, and Spanish. *The Manticore's Secret* (2005) and *The Unwaba Revelations* (2007) are the final two books in the trilogy.

Without considering the allusions, parodies, and revisionist writing, *The Simoqin Prophecies* is a diverse mix of eastern and western fantasy with a huge bestiary of dragons, vanars, rakshases, manticores, and others, often with interesting twists.

Two centuries before the events in the novel occur, two prophecies were made prior to a great war. One of these prophecies foretold the return of the mighty rakshas Danh-Gem, and the other revealed that a hero would also come to confront the reborn rakshas. The dangerous Danh-Gem will reappear in this tale; he is so strong that only the protagonist can overcome him. The hero will likewise reincarnate to confront Danh-Gem after two centuries (*Basu Simoqin Prophecies*, 16). The hero must be raised to achieve power balance. The villain would have a monopoly in a story if he was strong and the other characters were weak; this would make him uncontrollable and act in the way he desired. An equally powerful individual, the story's hero, must be raised in order to exert some control and triumph good over evil.

As the day of raising Danh-Gem draws nearer, the hero is dispatched on a mission.

The story's protagonist, Asvin, was targeted by the secret fraternity because if he did not, he would gain power and become king, after which he would murder Danh-Gem. Because they do not want him to become a king and gain power, the secret fraternity intended to have him put to death. Individuals continue to retain relationships with those who share their authority and/or who could support them in the future in times of need. To remember the Danh-Gem without any problems, it was crucial for the secret brotherhood that they kill their enemy before he attacks. It is the guards' responsibility to keep the prince safe, but instead they turn against him and threaten to have him put to death. The prince is the master and supreme authority over all the guards, but they do not defend him; rather, they warn and inform him of anything that could happen to him. The guards were under the influence of others and were not under the prince's control. The guards were influenced by someone else, thus the prince no longer has control over them. On the top civilian's orders, the chief civilian of Kol wanted Asvin to be a hero who would fight the deadly evil Danh-Gem and be rescued by the Silver Dagger and his troops.

When the deadly villain Danh-Gem showed signs of returning, the chief civilian became alarmed and gave Silver Dagger and his troops orders to save Asvin. The chief civilian of Kol and Asvin have certain power dynamics. If he fails to save Asvin, the villain would ruin his dominion. The head citizen had to figure out a means to keep his country and authority safe; he believed that if Asvin was saved, he would undoubtedly confront Danh-Gem, the villain. Sometimes the characters' power dynamics are hindered by the unknown facts. In reality, the spellbinder's best buddy, Kirin, was ravian and was two hundred years old. When other ravian warriors left from there, he was transformed to stone. The spellbinder must figure out how Kirin was transformed into stone after the other ravian warriors departed, as he is as strong as the other ravian warriors.

Bali, the vanar lord, takes a text from Enki University dubbed "untranslatable," which is incomprehensible because it was written by Danh Gem himself. The villain's rebirth would be caused by the darkness symbolized by Bali and the other characters who want Danh Gem return. Within the story's gloom, Bali searches for a method to remember Danh-Gem. It takes a lot of effort to figure out how to understand the untranslatable book that Bali took because these folks want the villain back. These advocates of darkness want the villain to return and help them stay in power since becoming powerful requires external assistance from other powerful people.

Mantric, the greatest Kol spellbinder, was sent to teach Asvin. Maya, Spikes, Kirin, the Dagger, a century-old Red Pearl, VamanGaam, and the Dagger under the name Amloki were all with Asvin. Supporters of the positive side of the narrative unite as the evil side's members seek to strengthen their position and remember the lethal Danh-Gem (*Simoqin Prophecies*, 36). It is imperative that they form coalitions to safeguard themselves and their objectives. In this case, the pursuit of power is evident.

A mystical book in Kol's library instructed Kirin that he must slay Danh-Gem when he rises again, but there is a catch: Kirin must cooperate with Danh-Gem's followers until he does. According to the book, he had to leave his friends' company since the Danh-Gem's followers pose a threat to their lives. Kirin must give up his friends' company in order to fulfil his goal of eliminating the evil. He then became one of the villain's followers and read the book that Bali had stolen and deemed untranslatable. The text states that in order to remember the Danh-Gem, five factors need to be combined. Kirin was following orders from his followers, known as the hidden brotherhood, without understanding the future power dynamics.

Finally, they manage to gather all five items, assemble them, and successfully recall the antagonist. Kirin tries to murder Danh Gem as he awakens, but he is unable to do so because he is not in the material form. Kirin's father is, regrettably, the villain Danh-Gem. He gave him the choice of becoming a dark lord and making the world right or allowing the brotherhood to incite conflict and instil dread in the populace. Since Kirin is the dark lord's heir, he must accept the first offer to take charge of the situation because the second one is heroic. Kirin was not aware that the villain was his father. He chose to become a dark lord rather than merely engaging in heroic endeavours because he had a deeper understanding of power dynamics.

Unknown animals such as manticores portend the devil's entrance, as demonstrated in the first scene of *The Game World Trilogy's* second book. They facilitated the ravians' arrival on this planet (*Manticore's Secret*, 07). There are two reasons why the devil's disciples serve him: either they fear him because he can do anything with them, or they follow him for their own gain. The people who follow Danh-Gem want their master to return and take over the globe. People follow someone if he has more authority than they do; hence, power-based relationships are evident in these book series.

Since most of his rakshases in the council are giving stupid commands in his name, Kirin is having problems in the recently built dark tower, Izakar, even though he wished to put an end to the battle. Ravians appear to pose a greater threat than the Dark Lord because they minimise expectations. They aim to govern and conquer the planet. The council members are acting under Kirin's authority, but they are giving stupid directives in her name even though Kirin intended to halt the battle. Asvin was excited to fight the hordes that belonged to the dark lord and was still convinced that ravians were still noble heroes who worked in the humanities.

Killing the dark lord was Behrim's mission, but he was astonished to learn that Kirin was the real dark lord. Because they are followers of Kirin, the Dark Lord, the Rakshas have a strong relationship with the Dark Lord, and Behrim was discovered by them. Nevertheless, Behrim was captured by werewolves and nearly slain; however, he was restored in the Dark Tower and informs Kirin that the time has come for him to govern the vast ravines. Behrim was targeted by Kirin's supporters for murder, yet he supported Kirin, which may lead to power dynamics.

According to a Simoqin prophecy, when the dark lord rises, the true king will return and use his hands to smite the town with the evil forces that ruled Kol. Peori revealed this to Ararthogorn. It may be challenging to subdue the evil lord if there is no opposition to him. According to the second book of the Game World Trilogy, to equalize the power dynamics and outcomes, someone must show up to oppose the dark lord's abilities; when the hero and the dark lord emerge, both sides will have equal strength.

The final instalment of the 2007 Game World Trilogy is titled *The Unwaba Revelations*. The chameleon known as the "Unwaba" is derived from a Zulu-traditional animal that serves as the story's narrator. According to Devangshu Datta from Outlook, the book heavily references the Ramayana, John Brunner, Lovecraft et al., and George Lucas, while also drawing from Tolkien and Pratchett in terms of structure. Mint's Parozaad Khan responded positively, describing it as a "delicious read." According to Ramya Sharma of Daily News and Analysis, Basu's most recent work is worth reading, if only to see how the loose ends from the first two novels were resolved.

The story's characters' power dynamics with one another are linked to the end of the world. The movement of armies and assembled gods are to be used as examples of the power's manifestation. In order to defeat the gods at their own game and save the planet, a solution must be found in the last book of the Game planet trilogy. The truth is that due to a rule that states that their own creations cannot beat them, the gods are able to govern everyone, including heroes in *Unwaba Revelation*. Gods retained their supreme authority so that no one could overthrow them; this is a wise tactic that is also evident in contemporary politics, as some individuals seek to hold onto power and never cede it to others.

Kirin and Maya, supported by the typical motley gang and led alone by an elderly and incredibly unreliable chameleon, pulled out their secret plan while the earth was destroyed by the great wars. According to *Unwaba Revelation*, the plan was so covert that not even the people participating knew what they were doing. People influence others and carry power; as Foucault illustrates, the best way to grasp the power relationship is to comprehend the people who are influencing others and carrying power. Together, Kirin and the others executed their strategy.

In comparison to institutions, organizations, or states, individuals lack power. Though power is distributed across society rather than remaining in one location, Foucault does not disagree that there should be no limitations placed on individuals. Characters in the Game World Trilogy exhibit this distribution in their interactions with one another. Power relations must be permanently changed and reaffirmed because power is perceived as a more unequal and unstable aspect that is constantly up for debate. The characters in the Game World Trilogy maintain power dynamics among themselves and carry power with them.

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