



History As A Living Force: A Comparative Analysis Of *Chanakya's Chant*, *The Krishna Key*, *The Vault Of Vishnu*, And *The Ayodhya Alliance* By Ashwin Sanghi

Name of the Author: P. DHANA GOWRE. Ph.D Scholar, Department of English,

Sri GVG Visalakshi College for Women, Udumalpet, Affiliated to Bharathiar University.

Name of Co-Author: Dr. D. SUJATHA. Associate Professor & Head, Department of English. Sri G. V. G
Visalakshi College for Women, Udumalpet

Abstract

Together, Ashwin Sanghi's *Chanakya's Chant*, *The Krishna Key*, *The Vault of Vishnu*, and *The Ayodhya Alliance* offer a singular blend of Indian mythology, history, and modern political suspense. The Mauryan Empire, the *Mahabharata*, the India-China Silk Road connection, and the *Ramayana* are some of the historical anchors that are explored in each book, but they also include applying ancient wisdom to contemporary issues. *Chanakya's Chant* reflects Chanakya's political genius in a contemporary setting, *The Krishna Key* solves symbolic and archaeological puzzles rooted in Krishna's legacy, *The Vault of Vishnu* explores cultural exchanges through an espionage lens, and *The Ayodhya Alliance* reinterprets the *Ramayana* to address ideological divisions and national unity. Sanghi's main thesis—that the past is a living force influencing the present—is emphasised by his painstaking research, dual or parallel tales, and blending of fact and fiction. create an engaging corpus where contemporary political and cultural issues are met with India's historical legacy. From the statecraft of the Mauryan strategist Chanakya to the symbolic and archaeological legacy of Krishna, the India-China ties along the Silk Road, and the timeless moral and political values of the *Ramayana*, each piece is rooted in a unique historical or mythological setting. However, Sanghi's distinctive storytelling approach—in-depth historical study, careful blending of fact and fiction, and the interplay of past and present through parallel or interwoven timelines—unites them despite their diverse places and stories. *Chanakya's Chant* explores the persistence of political shrewdness over centuries, *The Krishna Key* traverses the fine line between myth and historical truth, *The Vault of Vishnu* emphasises cultural diplomacy and the struggle for heritage and *The Ayodhya Alliance* uses mythological allegory to frame discussions on unity, identity, and governance. When taken as a whole, they serve as both compelling thrillers and insightful analyses of how India's cultural legacy continues to influence modern politics and society.

Key Words: Archaeological mystery, Political allegory, *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, National unity, Identity and governance, Angkor Wat, and Ancient wisdom.

Ashwin Sanghi, who is frequently referred to as India's Dan Brown, has distinguished himself in Indian popular writing by skillfully fusing history, mythology, and contemporary political intrigue. *Chanakya's Chant* (2010), *The Krishna Key* (2012), *The Vault of Vishnu* (2020), and *The Ayodhya Alliance* (2025) are among his notable works in the mythological thriller genre. Although the Mauryan Empire, the *Mahabharata*, the India-China Silk Road connection, and the *Ramayana* are all distinct historical and cultural

settings, they all use a common storytelling style. To show how old wisdom continues to affect and impact the present, Sanghi's works combine parallel or interwoven timelines, considerable research, and the blending of fact and fiction. This comparative analysis examines the author's fundamental concept of India's civilizational continuity while highlighting the thematic, structural, and stylistic similarities and variations throughout these four novels.

The coins of Chandragupta Maurya are a visual reminder of the political might and economic stability of the Mauryan Empire. Mostly punched-marked pieces of copper or silver, these coins were based on historical reality and included unique symbols like the sun, animals, hills, or wheels instead of ruler images. In the tale, they are employed to evoke the grandeur and organisation of Chandragupta's rule, attained under the strategic supervision of Chanakya. In addition to serving as a medium of exchange, the coins are evidence of the Mauryan state's organised government, robust economy, and extensive power. Sanghi links the material artefacts of ancient history with the novel's themes of strategy, power, and the long-lasting effects of political vision by incorporating them into the plot.



Chandragupta Maurya Coin

<https://coinindia.com/Chandra-4808A-344.29.jpg>

Every one of Sanghi's books takes inspiration from a certain historical or legendary figure. *Chanakya's Chant* compares the political manoeuvres of Chanakya in the Mauryan period with the schemes of Pandit Gangasagar Mishra, a contemporary power broker. The book emphasises the eternal nature of statecraft by demonstrating how traditional political ideas can be reformulated for modern government. *The Krishna Key*, on the other hand, is deeply rooted in *Mahabharata* mythology and follows a mission to unravel symbolic clues related to the life and legacy of Krishna. Here, Sanghi weaves a gripping mystery by fusing mythology, symbolism, and archaeology. *The Vault of Vishnu* broadens the focus beyond India by tracing the Silk Road travels of the Chinese monk Xuanzang, examining cultural exchanges between India and China, and fusing it with a contemporary espionage scheme involving biotechnology and cultural thievery. With a focus on the *Ramayana*, *The Ayodhya Alliance* ventures back to the core of Indian mythology, employing its ethical and political principles as a metaphoric reflection on current ideological divisions and national unification.

Thematic depth unites these novels, yet the narrative approach varies. By switching between ancient and current locales, *Chanakya's Chant* uses a dual narrative to draw comparisons between political intrigues from the past and present. Despite being mostly set in the present, *The Krishna Key* regularly includes flashbacks to mythology that shed light on the mystery's hints. Sanghi's ability to keep the reader interested across time is demonstrated in *The Vault of Vishnu*, which alternates between Xuanzang's historical travels and a current espionage assignment. Instead of using straight retellings, *The Ayodhya Alliance* focuses more on a single modern plot, incorporating mythical concepts into political discourse and action. Across all four works, Sanghi's style is marked by short, fast-paced chapters, comprehensive factual references, and cliffhanger chapter endings, ensuring strong reader engagement while delivering difficult historical material.



The Mahabharata

<https://www.worldhistory.org/Mahabharata/>

The *Mahabharata* serves as an essential link between India's legendary history and the modern mystery-thriller plot of Ashwin Sanghi's *The Krishna Key*. The narrative makes extensive use of events from the epic, particularly the life and teachings of Krishna, who is portrayed as both a historical man whose deeds and wisdom endure, and as a divine being. The protagonist must decipher hints, symbols, and riddles that are derived from *Mahabharata* events, including the Kurukshetra War, the *Bhagavad Gita*'s advice, and the Pandava and Yadava family genealogy. In the pursuit of truth, ancient sites such as Dwaraka, Mathura, and Kurukshetra act as both tangible locations and symbolic turning points. Characters in the narrative face moral conundrums like Arjuna's battle with dharma, reflecting the epic's moral themes and demonstrating the *Mahabharata*'s enduring significance. *The Krishna Key* establishes a smooth connection to the *Mahabharata* by fusing historical interpretation, mythological narrative, and archaeological data, portraying it as a living legacy that still shapes India's moral and cultural landscape.



Dwaraka (Underwater) Picture I

<https://www.altnews.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/dwarka.jpg>

A significant historical and mythical thread that ties the contemporary thriller to Lord Krishna's fabled dominion is the ancient city of Dwarka. Sanghi links the plot's treasure search to India's distant past by using archaeological information, underwater explorations, and cultural traditions to imply that the buried remains off the Gujarati coast might be vestiges of Krishna's capital. The story makes reference to the sacred geography of Dwarka, which includes the island of Bet Dwarka, which is thought to be the home of Krishna. The newly opened Sudarshan Setu, a 2.32 km cable-stayed bridge adorned with images of Krishna and words from the *Bhagavad Gita*, actually connects Bet Dwarka, which was previously only reachable by ferry from Okha, to the mainland. The narrative's subject of connecting myth with new discoveries is mirrored in this fusion of old tale and contemporary infrastructure, which transforms Dwarka from a mere setting into a symbolic link between faith, history, and current research.

These pieces are connected by recurring themes. One is the interaction between myth and modernity, where old tales are viewed as dynamic frameworks for resolving contemporary issues rather than as static artefacts. Another is political power and strategy, which is demonstrated by Chanakya's skill at manipulation and *The Ayodhya Alliance* geopolitical scheming. A third major theme in *The Vault of Vishnu* is cultural heritage and identity, which discusses how historical legacies can be disputed, exploited, or lost in

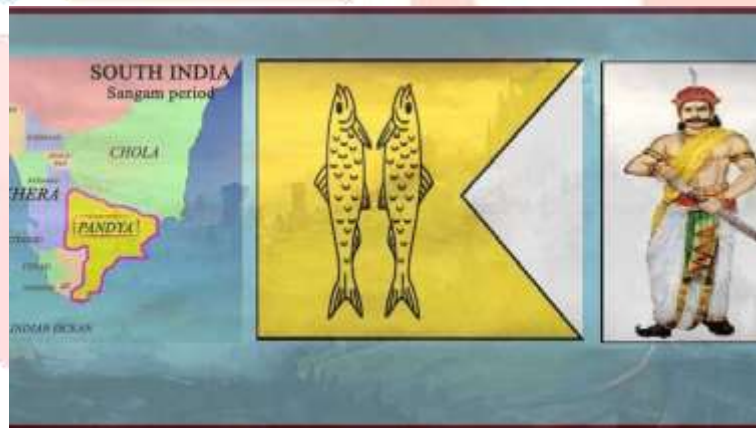
international situations. Sanghi also frequently employs the theme of the search, whether it be for unity, truth, or power, which motivates his characters to unearth information that could alter the course of events.



Dwarka (Underwater) Picture II

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As a historical location and a symbolic connection to Lord Krishna's legacy, Dwarka is important. In order to create a story that combines archaeology, mythology, and contemporary conspiracy, Ashwin Sanghi uses the legend of the ancient, sunken city, which is thought to have served as Krishna's capital in the *Mahabharata*. In the work, Dwarka plays a significant role in the protagonist's pursuit of a mysterious truth related to Krishna's life. There, old clues are concealed in temples, ruins, and antiques. The idea that the mythological city may have historical origins is further supported by Sanghi's incorporation of actual sea archaeology, which has shown evidence of submerged structures off the coast of modern-day Dwarka in Gujarat. In this way, Dwarka in *The Krishna Key* represents the work's theme of deciphering India's legendary past through reason and science, serving as more than just a backdrop but a link between ancient history and contemporary research.



Pandiyan Dynasty

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The Pandyan dynasty is an important historical connection that connects the political and mythical stories in the book. In ancient Tamilakam, the dynasty is depicted as a defender of sacred artefacts and esoteric knowledge, and it is well-known for its maritime trade and rich cultural legacy. Sanghi uses the Pandyan royal symbol, the twin fish emblem, to build a thematic link between the past and present. According to the narrative, this symbol has ancient transoceanic ties since it can be found in both South Indian history and far-off cultures like Korea and the Middle East. For contemporary protagonists, this cross-cultural repetition serves as a crucial clue, suggesting that the search for the Dvaitalingam and *The Ayodhya Alliance* cuts across political lines and draws upon a common civilizational memory that has been preserved since the Pandyan period. Sanghi highlights India's longstanding involvement in cross-cultural interchange while firmly establishing the thriller's worldwide mystery in real South Indian history by incorporating the Pandyan dynasty into the scenario.

Sanghi's recurring literary strategies bind the four novels together, even though their settings and plots differ. His writings are heavily influenced by study and frequently make reference to historical writings, religious literature, archaeological discoveries, and scholarly discussions. Whether in the shape of Buddhist

relics, *Ramayana*-inspired allegories, Krishna symbolic items, or Chanakya's political strategies, they demonstrate an interest in codes, riddles, and hidden messages. Crucially, Sanghi presents India's cultural knowledge as a resource to help deal with modern issues as well as a legacy to preserve. By doing this, he places his work in a larger cultural conversation about how people remember, understand, and use history to inspire their imaginations.



Angkor Wat (Cambodia)

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An important link between the work's contemporary exploration and the wider historical and cultural dissemination of Indian culture is made possible by Cambodia's Angkor Wat. Sanghi connects the historic maritime and cultural ties between India and Southeast Asia with Angkor Wat, one of the biggest temple complexes in the world. The book examines how Indian art, architecture, and religion—especially that of the Pallava and Chola dynasties—influenced Cambodia and resulted in the building of Angkor Wat, a magnificent Vishnu temple. Angkor Wat is presented as a crucial location concealing hints about the fabled vault and the ancient information systems it protects, elevating it above the status of a mere historical landmark during the protagonist's quest. Vishnu devotion and the expansion of Vaishnavism outside of the Indian subcontinent are linked to the temple's bas-reliefs, inscriptions, and alignment with celestial occurrences. Sanghi highlights India and Cambodia's close historical ties by including Angkor Wat in the story and demonstrating how their shared religious customs, trade routes, and cultural exchanges have left behind enduring architectural and spiritual legacies.



The Ramayana

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hinduism/The-Ramayana>

The mythical framework that ties the ancient past and the current political drama together is formed by the *Ramayana*. In addition to recounting Rama's voyage, Sanghi incorporates aspects of the epic as a coded historical record that identifies actual places, objects, and dynasties. The *Ramayana* events and symbols—particularly those pertaining to dharma (moral duty), cross-kingdom alliances, and the unity of disparate armies to fight a bigger threat—are linked to the search for the Dvaitalingam. In order to track the relic's journey through the ages, characters in the contemporary timeline decipher hints from the epic, which range from topographical landmarks to symbolic symbols like the twin fish. According to this integration,

the *Ramayana* is a cultural and geographical map that continues to impact India's identity and political strategies, making it more than just a work of mythology. Sanghi highlights the timeless value of traditional knowledge in resolving contemporary disputes by tying the novel's main mystery to the moral and strategic teachings of the *Ramayana*.

Each of the four novels offers a unique viewpoint, even though they all have similar themes. Perhaps the most politically motivated is *Chanakya's Chant*, which offers a realistic yet cynical perspective on authority. *The Krishna Key* challenges the distinctions between myth and historical reality in a more philosophical manner. *The Vault of Vishnu* is notable for its global reach and emphasis on espionage and cross-cultural diplomacy. The most current of the four, *The Ayodhya Alliance*, is more directly focused on Indian politics today, highlighting the stark similarities between traditional values and the difficulties of contemporary government. When combined, they provide a comprehensive picture of India's past and present, demonstrating how they are always communicating.

Myth, history, and politics come together in Ashwin Sanghi's *Chanakya's Chant*, *The Krishna Key*, *The Vault of Vishnu*, and *The Ayodhya Alliance*, creating a cohesive literary tapestry. Even if each book is a gripping thriller on its own, taken as a whole, they have an impact because they affirm the timeless value of India's traditional knowledge in contemporary settings. Sanghi encourages readers to consider the deeper cultural and political legacies that continue to influence the subcontinent today, in addition to enjoying the excitement of the story by fusing thorough research with compelling storytelling. This comparative study emphasises how the past is a dynamic, changing force that shapes and inspires the present in Sanghi's imaginary world, never really being passed.

A comparison of *Chanakya's Chant*, *The Krishna Key*, *The Vault of Vishnu*, and *The Ayodhya Alliance* demonstrates Ashwin Sanghi's unique skill in fusing mythology, history, and modern tales into coherent, provocative narratives. Despite having distinct plots and settings, all of the novels have a similar structure: they connect traditional knowledge with contemporary issues, frequently through political intrigue, mystery, and cultural symbolism.

Chanakya's Chant demonstrates how political genius endures across ages, highlighting the ageless nature of strategy and statecraft. *The Krishna Key* uses religious symbolism to challenge religion, truth, and history while fusing myth with a contemporary thriller. *The Vault of Vishnu* highlights the Silk Road and Buddhist knowledge while connecting India's intellectual and spiritual legacy with international histories. *The Ayodhya Alliance*, on the other hand, reinterprets the *Ramayana* through the lens of contemporary sociopolitical issues, highlighting the age-old moral and ethical quandaries.

When taken as a whole, these pieces not only provide readers with entertainment but also prompt them to consider the interconnectivity of civilisations, the cyclical nature of history, and the timeless value of old tales. Sanghi shows that the myths, leaders, and ideologies of antiquity are not artefacts but rather dynamic forces influencing the modern world by fusing the past and present into complex narratives. His novels are more than just literary masterpieces because of the way fact and fiction interact; they are cultural conversations that cut across time, space, and ideologies.

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