

PORTRAYAL OF MYTHOLOGY IN AMISH TRIPATHI'S "THE IMMORTAL OF MELUHA"

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All the literature of our world, are the outputs of the human emotions. Indian English literature is not essentially different in kind from the other Indian literatures. Its writers have made the most significant contribution in the fields of poetry, fiction, drama, short story, biography and autobiography. Indian English Literature is deeply rooted in our geographical climate and cultural beliefs. The Indian English novels were developed as a subaltern awareness; as a response to break away from the colonial literature. Hence the post-colonial Indian literature witnessed a revolution against the idiom which the colonial writers followed. However the Indian English writers started employing the techniques of mixed language, magic realism garnished with native themes. Hence from a post-colonial era Indian English literature ushered into the contemporary and then the post-modern era. The saga of the Indian English novel therefore stands as the tale of changing tradition, the story of changing India.

The history of Indian English novel, a journey which began long back has witnessed a lot of alteration to gain the current stylish delineation. In the past few years many prominent writers have made a mark on the Indian Diaspora. Later, the concept of Indian English novel or rather the concept of Indians writing in English came much advanced and it is with the coming of Raja Rao, R.K.Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, the journey of the Indian English Novel began. After that some eminent writers like Arundhati Roy, Jumpa Lahiri, Shoba De, V.S. Naipaul, Shashi Tharoor etc. have given a complete new level to the Indian English novel. The novels include various concepts of fact and fiction and are based on current events and recent social problems. Women writers usually explore old wives tales, condemn exploitation and try to make sense of the fast changing pace of the new world.

Among them many new young writers like Chetan Bhagat, Amish Tripathi, Sharath Koomarraju etc. are came and made a tremendous changes in Indian English novel since its initiation and has attained a whole new strength in terms of concept, marketing, presentation, business and impact on the Indian culture. Many writers have created waves with their work. And they have all gained commercial and critical success. These writers may belong to different ages and may work on different genres. We cannot compare these writers with each other as each of them belongs to a different coalition of their own. However they have all equally impressed us with their works and in a way, helped in shaping the nation for what it is now. Books and novels would always play a vital role in our country. And the work of these and many other writers need to be glorified and highly appreciated.

Amongst Amish Tripathi, who is having joined the exclusive group of Indian English writers recently, he is more of a storyteller than a writer. However, his first novel *The Immortals of Meluha* became a powerful success and might soon be adapted into a movie. History and Mythology are considered as a main theme of his books and his portrayal of the Hindu god Shiva, who is considered as a Tibetan tribal is indeed marvel-inspiring. How someone could come up with such an interesting idea would remain a mystery. While the second novel in the series, *The Secret of the Nagas* gained huge success and the third novel, which titled as *The Oath of the Vayuputras*. All novels are based in a fictional re-imagining of the Indian immortal Lord Shiva's life and adventures. As am a Hindu I totally inspired by his novels so I choose his one of the novel for my paper. In this paper i am going to discuss about the Portrayal of Mythology in his novel *The Immortals of Meluha*.

Mythology is collective intellectual property, and there's little they can do to stop retellings. Particularly epics are considered as a creative feedstuff for generations of writers and artists. They have inspired thousands of versions from Tulsidas's *Ramcharitmanas* to Ekta Kapoor's *Kahaani Hamare Mahabharat Ki*, from Kamba's *Ramavataram*. In this way *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of the Nagas*, *The Oath of the Vayuputras* found the trilogy and may have been largely responsible for turning many book lovers into mythology admirers. The books offer a retelling of Shaiva mythology, in a fresh new plot and it's language is very easy-to-understand.

According to M.H. Abrams Myth is one story in mythology. It is a system of hereditary stories which were once believed to be true by a particular cultural group, and which served to explain why the world is as it is and things happen as they do, to provide a foundation for social customs and observations and to establish the agreements for the rules by which people bearing their lives.

Myths are traditionally explained one. In which people explain the nature of the world and their place in it. The term myth is a usually belongs to traditional story of superficially historical events that aids to explain the part of the world views of a people or describe a practice and belief or natural phenomenon of them. Whereas it deals with the religious world and natural phenomenon, mythologies are considered as a semi-historical narratives who coming from the past they narrate the deeds of heroes, movement of peoples, and the establishment of local civilizations. Mythologies, which is serves as a function of entertaining, instructing, inspiring and encouraging the pride of a family, tribe or nation by using a mixture of practicality and the supernatural things. Repeatedly historical figures are given characteristics, values and ideals which place them above the ordinary people. Thus these historical figures lose their humanity and attain a mythological status which helps to make their actions outside the kingdom of human.

In the twentieth century, the postcolonial fiction of Indian English Literature, myth is used as an enclosing method that includes and questions historical event, thus it functioning as form of alternative history. In spite of the commonness of cross-cultural symbolic systems and totally mixture forms of narration, the dominant method of reading myth in postcolonial literary criticism remains dependent on abstract models that construct myth as ordinary racial narrative. This particular approach raises readings of contemporary imaginable myths of nation, land or identity within culturally huge frames. The early structuralist approaches to myth give sufficient space for postcolonial reading of myth. *The Immortals of Meluha* questions current discourses

like archetypal myths; the myth in the narrative still does not believe the socio-cultural framework.

Tripathi's Shiva story unfolds, strangely, around 1900 BCE. That is when the Indus Valley Civilization begins to decline. He does a Vedic-fiction of the Indus Civilization, covering on its geography Vedic gods, religion and caste system. Mohenjo Daro becomes Mohan Jo Daro where Shiva goes to Lord Mohan's Temple; where Brahaspati and Brahma become scientists; where doctors perform cosmetic surgery. Tripathi reveals a strange mixture of mythical land where the glory of Harappan civilization meets Vedic religion, American slang and even modern expediencies such as restaurants. Meluha is a near perfect empire, set up many centuries earlier by Lord Ram, one of the greatest monarchs that ever lived. However, the once proud empire and its Suryavanshi rulers face simple threats as its primary river, the esteemed Saraswati is slowly drying to destruction. They also face devastating radical attacks from the east, the land of the Chandravanshis who have joined forces with the Nagas, a cursed race with physical abnormalities.

The present king of Meluha, Daksha, sends his representatives to North India in Tibet, to invite the tribes who live there to Meluha. One of those invited are the Gunas, whose chief Shiva is a brave soldier and protector. Meluhans recognize Neelkanth, their famous rescuer from his blue throat. He meets King Daksha, after reaching Devagiri. While staying there, Shiva comes to know that Princess Sati, the daughter of Daksha is a vikarma, an untouchable in this life due to sins of her past births. The Chief scientist of Meluha, Brahaspati invites Shiva and the royal family on an expedition to Mount Mandar, where the legendary Somras is manufactured using the waters of the Saraswati river. Daksha makes arrangement for Shiva to discover the entire kingdom of Meluha. He is accompanied by Sati, Veerbhadra, Krittika, Nandi, Brahaspati and Parvateshwar on his journey across the land of Meluhans. They visit many different cities where Shiva is welcomed with princely, grandeur and splendor; many pujas are held in his honour.

During a similar puja in a city, a man disrespectfully talks to Shiva for allowing a vikarma (Sati) to attend the puja. Incensed by the disrespect shown by the man toward Shiva, Sati challenges the man for an Agni Pariksha. Even though the chances for Sati's victory were low, she wins the Agni Pariksha and instead of killing that man, she forgives him. On their way to another city, the group comes across a village under attack. As they rush to save the village, they find out that it is being attacked by the Nagas and some Chandravanshi soldiers. During the fight, a naga fires an agnibaan towards Shiva. But Sati saves Shiva heroically. Severely injured, she is taken to the village where Ayurvati treats her. Sati's life remains in danger because of the poison of the agnibaan. Somras gives Sati power to come round. Daksha comes to visit her daughter and asks Shiva to marry his daughter. Shiva agrees and also makes up his mind to dissolve the Vikarama Law. After returning to Devagiri, Shiva and Sati get married along with Veerbhadra and Krittika. One morning, the whole of Meluha wakes up to loud noises coming from Mount Mandar. Shiva and his troops reach the hill to find out that a large part of Mandar has been blasted off and many of the originators killed.

There is no sign of Brahaspati, but Shiva finds the sign of the Nagas, confirming their involvement in these unfaithful wars of the Chandravanshis. Infuriated by this, Shiva declares war on the Chandravanshis. With discussion from the Devagiri Chief Minister Kanakhala and the Head of Meluhan Army, Parvateshwar, Shiva advances towards Dharmakhet, the border is of swadweep, the land of the Chandravanshis. A fierce combat is fought between the Meluhans and

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the Swadweepans in which the Meluhans succeed. The Chandravanshi king is captured and brought before Daksha. The Chandravanshi princess, Anandmayi, tells them that they too have a similar legend that the Neelkanth will come forward to save their land by launching an attack against the 'evil' Suryavanshis. Hearing this, Shiva is astonished. Shiva decides to visit Ayodhya, the capital of Swadweep. He then visits the famous Ram temple of Ayodhya. There he meets the priest from whom he comes to know about the karma, his fate, and his choices in life, which will guide him. As Shiva comes out of the temple, he hears a scream. Running to the location he watches in horror as a Naga is about to attack Sati.

Thus this novel, create an interest among people to know about their culture through that they come to know about many things like Prakriti and karma. Mythology is providing knowledge of understanding life and universe.

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