

Myth in Amish Tripathi's the Immortal of Meluha

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Abstract

Literature has thousands of threads and each thread has its own importance in the creative work and one major thread in literature is myth. Myths are sacred stories which deal with the great issues of life and death, but they are also linked with the social and cultural values of society. Mythology, in Indian framework is perhaps the most utilized and most admired for every age group and field. In Indo Anglican fiction, the term “myth” kept a prominent position in literary analysis. Myth is always remains the source of inspiration for various writers like Sir Aurbindo Ghosh, Raja Rao , Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayana in 19th century and Nirad C. Choudary, Girish karnard, and Kamla Markandeya in 20th century and Amish Tripathi, Ashwin Sanghi and Salman Rushdi in 21th century. *The Immortal of Meluha* was the debut work of Amish Tripathi. Amish's Shiva Trilogy is based on the reconstruction of several Indian mythical characters and stories drawn from *The Ramayana*, *The Mahabharata* and *Shivapurana*. The story was based on radical idea that all gods were human beings; it was their deeds in the human life that reformed them as Godly figures. The book deals with the rich mythological heritage of ancient India. Amish have picked one of the most multifaceted Gods from Hindu mythology to weave his tale about. He takes a God we believe in and turns him into an ordinary man then tells a tale of how the ordinary man transforms into a God due to his conduct, choices, deeds, and destiny. Throughout the course of the novel, the diverse canvas of Indian history, mythology, folklore and religion keep the reader engrossed from the beginning to the end of the pages and devour the printed words.

Keywords:- Myth, Mythology, God, Lord Shiva, Indian History

Literature has thousands of threads and each thread has its own importance in the creative work and one major thread in literature is myth. Myths are sacred stories which deal with the great issues of life and death, but they are also linked with the social and cultural values of society.

Generally, a myth is a story which is believed to be true and has its origin in the far distant past history of a people. According to Mircea Eliade, myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial time, the fabled time of the beginnings. in other words

myth tells how ,through the deeds of supernatural beings, a reality came into existence...myth, then is always an account of a “creation”, It relates to how something was produced, began to be...myth describe the various and sometimes the breakthrough of the sacred that reality establishes the world and make it what it is today. Furthermore, it is as a result of the intervention of supernatural being that man himself is what he is today a mortal, sexed and cultural being.

A myth is a sanctified or representative account from the past, and it may be ritualistic in natural world. A myth may describe the origins of people, or explain customs or traditions. Mythology, in Indian framework is perhaps the most utilized and most admired for every age group and field. In Indo Anglican fiction, the term “myth” kept a prominent position in literary analysis. It is widely used by various writers. Myth is always remains the source of inspiration for various writers like Sir Aurbindo Ghosh, Raja Rao , Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayana in 19th century and Nirad C. Choudary, Girish karnard, and Kamla Markandeya in 20th century and Amish Tripathi, Ashwin Sanghi and Salman Rushdi in 21th century. They are all prolific writers who are deeply committed to their mission. All these writers explore a unique style and present it to the audience in an ornate form.

Amish Tripathi is an Indian born author who wrote the mythological book *The Immortal of Meluha* in 2010. *The Immortal of Meluha* was the debut work of Amish Tripathi. Amish’s Shiva Trilogy is based on the reconstruction of several Indian mythical characters and stories drawn from *The Ramayana*, *The Mahabharata* and *Shivapurana*. The three books of the series are the one and only evidence of the skill of Amish in crafting poles apart modes such as fantasy fiction, adventure and thriller fiction into the genre of

mythology. For the philosophical point of view he has relied on the classical Sanskrit texts of the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*. The book is in the form of a tribute to Lord Shiva, one of Hindu God. The story was based on radical idea that all gods were human beings; it was their deeds in the human life that reformed them as Godly figures. The book consist a large amount of mythological aspects which are unwrapped by author step by step. The earlier Indian writers have made conventional use of mythology. They either used mythological themes or legendary characters in their works. Amish have picked one of the most multifaceted Gods from Hindu mythology to weave his tale about. He takes a God we believe in and turns him into an ordinary man then tells a tale of how the ordinary man transforms into a God due to his conduct, choices, deeds, and destiny. Myths may be false, fabricated and far removed from authenticity and history. His use of myth is quite fascinating, and finds itself agreeing with the statement of Michael Bell that by the end of the twentieth century, whether in literature or in anthropology, myth had become a less numinous and more workaday category. The metaphysical and universalistic claims were replaced by cultural historical specificity, in which it is both an object and a means of investigation (bell 128).

Here, writer is passionate about mythology, history and philosophy. His belief is that there are prettiness and significance in all world cultures and religions. He recreates the myth of Shiva, Ganesh, Sati and Kali through his study of all spheres of Indian life and literature. He makes Shiva myth appealing and intelligible to the modern mind. Those who still keep the oral tradition alive through chanting and singing of hymns and folk songs deserve gratitude and admiration of young generation. At the same time, there is also a need to understand and reinterpret its meaning. Amish insist to engage oneself in

action because actions purify as knowledge liberates. Through recreation, "The Shiva Trilogy" becomes living inspirational scripture capable of providing spiritual direction in the modern world. The life of Shiva as more human than God is what the theme of the book revolves around. The perfect mixture and set of scales of adventure, action and love along with ideologies, mythology and viewpoint is what has led Amish to his destiny of producing this nationally acclaimed bestseller. The book's biggest strength is how it plunks the mythological characters from the epics and plants them into tale with fitting characters, but still ensures that they are all humans. The subplots tell tales of Vasudevs, Sati, Nandi, Gunas, Rudra, Devas and Asuras, and more making it strikingly clear that everyone including Gods can make mistakes. The narrative is thought through and the story is well-paced.

The book *The Immortals of Meluha* is set in 1900 BC; in the geographical area that land on the paradise which the author Amish Tripathi calls Meluha and today which is recognized as Jammu and Kashmir. The novel starts with the mythological character 'Tibetan tribal Shiva' who, along with his tribe, is invited in the Meluha Kingdom which is ruled by the Suryavanshi kings. Shiva the tribal leader of Gunas, is the great admirer of nature and for him nature is the Almighty. Myth is to be understood as having two meanings. Firstly, as Greek etymology suggests, a legend, a symbolic account of the human condition, secondly, it is a lie, a collected story.

Myth is not a new form for this postcolonial world. The word myth has many meanings. For some people, it means little more than lie and for others it has no particular truth value, but refers to a type of story. It is a story, usually an account of a real event that happened in times when people did not invent writing. It is handed down to the next generation through the word

of mouth, so that the time when it can be finally written down, it has a very few trait typical for the specific event. Barthes explains that "myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification" (Barthes168).

The chief factor that constitutes literature is myth which "recounts something that is centrally important for a society's history, religion or social structure" (Frye). However, Frye points out that the function of myth in literature is different from its function in society:

Myths . . . enable members of a society to hold together, to accept authority, to be loyal to each other and courageous against attack. Such myths are verbal constructions designed for specific purposes. In literature, myths are disinterested: they are simply forms of human creativity and as such they communicate the joy that brings to pure creation" (Frye).

Thus basically, myth creation has a psychological origin. Man's mental makeup is an admixture of historical as well as contemporary superstitions therefore, a study of myths is essential for an understanding of his whole thought pattern. Myths thus are partly the product of man's imagination and free association of ideas, but mainly man's thought pattern is guided by an unknown archetype which forms his mythic patterns. The new breed of writers like Amish Tripathi, Ashok Banker and Ashwin Sanghi are experimenting in genre by blending it with the other modes of writing. For instance, Ashwin Sanghi and Amish Tripathi have blended mythology with fantasy mode. With this kind of implementations these writers are modernizing the Indian myths. On the other hand Amish Tripathi has created purely a fantasy fiction out of the mythical stories by establishing a unique identity for Indian Writing in English with his Shiva Trilogy.

Like the writer Sarat Chandara Chatterjee in Bengali, and Munshi Prem Chand in Hindi, Amish Tripathi had found an end eared niche in every Indian reader's heart. Amish Tripathi transcends the boundaries of their respective language. He gives a language to the millions of those suffering social Injustice beside mythological issues; his novel also depicted the real society and tradition of the people of ancient times. The writer's thoughts are to be mystic because he deals with the trivialities of life where man is reduced to an aspect.

Moreover the fundamentals of myth and history are very common to most audiences in our country. Most of the myths have a well-built affecting consequence and the audiences have set responses towards them. Most of the myths that are part of our culture have been transmitted through literature. The earlier Indian fictional writers assigned perspectives, meanings, and connotations to the long-established myths. They used archetypes of legendary heroes, symbols, character types and themes. But now the common practice of retelling mythical stories involves reconstruction of stories and characters in accordance with the context that clearly brings mythology into the living room conversations and debates. According to Kirk "An analysis of many myths shows that actions of gods and heroes often presuppose a keen analysis of given circumstances and are based on rational decisions ."

Amish words:

Indra Dev ki Jai!

Agni Dev ki Jai!

Jai Shakti Devi ki!

Varun dev ki Jai!

Jai Pawan dev Ki! (Amish 342)

These symbolic words are for their god's where they get mythological spirit for war from the side of their gods. Some fighters raise their voice: Mahadev, Mahadev, Mahadev..!!

Amish novel reveals that there is a conscious use of Indian myths. But if one goes deeper one can draw parallels with myths of another culture. This is an unconscious use of myths. Amish Tripathi does not take myths in their entirety. He takes them only in parts that are useful to him and the rest he supplements with his imagination. The immortal of Meluha, first part of Shiva Trilogy, is a fiction by Amish Tripathi. The book deals with the rich mythological heritage of ancient India. Amish have picked one of the most multifaceted Gods from Hindu mythology to weave his tale about. He takes a God we believe in and turns him into an ordinary man then tells a tale of how the ordinary man transforms into a God due to his conduct, choices, deeds, and destiny. Throughout the course of the novel, the diverse canvas of Indian history, mythology, folklore and religion keep the reader engrossed from the beginning to the end of the pages and devour the printed words.

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