

TRANSFORMATION OF SHIVA FROM MYTH TO MAN IN SHIVA TRILOGY OF AMISH TRIPATHI: A STUDY

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Abstract

Ancient India is prime interest of people and Hindu mythology is chief attraction of literary genius. Hindu mythology is a vast body of traditional narratives and the most antique one. Present mythological writers Devdutt Pattanaik, Ashwin Sanghi, Ashok K. Banker, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Amish Tripathi took these age-old narratives as their theme are called charioteers of the Gods. They are armed with solid research, vivid imagination and gripping writing style. Marching with powerful tales as their weapons they are the pioneer of mythological writing. From the time of Kalidas to the present era of Amish, Shiva has been the luminous figure for writing. People are spell bound by the representation of Shiva by Amish as Tibetan protagonist who makes reader believe that a man's high attitude and purity of heart makes him grand and worthy for worship. So, in literature how the concept of Shiva is transformed from myth to man in the works of Amish Tripathi is the present concern.

Key words: Mythology, Transformation, Shiva, Deconstructionist, Multifaceted, Karma.

Creativity has no other substitute in this grand edifice called universe. From God to man, everyone is preoccupied with this concept. Literature, being one of the grand creative discoveries of man claims more attention. It is always called the stream of intellectuals. Man, the most curious being always remains in search of the ultimate truth. He delves deep and tries to find the root of every concept. In this journey of realization of self, all the stories connected to man's history, his potentiality, decisions, intensions, his status up to God and down towards a demolished devil, his highness and his bleakness is revisited again and again. This repetition of stories from one generation to other makes it a myth. The simple bare footed existence emerges like avatar and becomes grand statue; his use of conscience at the peak of situation makes him a God. God is not any supernatural power, it is just the proper use of inner self and exposure of inherent skills, it is the story of a selfless entity. As

is quoted by Devdutt Pattanaik in an interview that the definition of God varies depending upon our intellectual evolution. It can be an external all-powerful force, a force of nature, a defied hero. But for the evolved mind, it is the human potential. Today's supernatural power if seen in the mirrors of past, they can be assumed as simple, down to earth man.

Myth is basically a conception or an ideology which emerges after centuries from the fight, flight, fright, freeze and substantial reactions of a community to establish a structure of perfection. Sometimes it was explained as half-truth. But Amish believes, "Myths are nothing but jumbled memories of a true past. A past buried under mounds of earth and ignorance." Myth has always been a center of attraction for masses. In this high-tech world of 21st century, man has gone totally materialistic and 'trees exactly similar like clones. It seems quite amazing of his belief in ancient culture and myths of his land. Highly ambitious and technical generation is returning towards their roots. This is the law of nature; everything is compiled in circle. From where it begins, it finds its end. So, in quest of completion, myths are studied in a new perspective. Recently a well-equipped army of mythological writers is marching in the field of literature. Myth is not mithya now, it is a thriving cultural resource that people are actively re-engaging and re-involving with, in new ways it gives meaning to them and satisfy their rational mind. From Tagore through Naipaul to Amish literary scenario is thoroughly changed and writers in English have acquired their independent identity. They are not watching India through the veil of western lens.

The new steel nib of mythology - Amish Tripathi present a different view of lord Shiva and discloses Shiva from a mythical figure to a common, blood - throbbing man who establishes himself as myth. In *Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of the Nagas* and *The Oath of Vayuputras* certain vexed questions are likely to come up such as how this maverick God is transformed into a deconstructionist and from where his transformational journey started, how he transformed others into HAR HAR MAHADEV and at last this reverberated enigma was solved. According to a contemporary research, the Archeological department treasures Lord Shiva in the form of Pashupati in Indus valley civilization 6000 years ago. But image of Amish's Shiva is not the same image of ash smeared, naked, trident bearer, desolated and introvert being or a god who is easy to please and gives everything to his devotees, a figure to be afraid or a linga which fulfills all desires, a mythical figure with image of ganga, snake, his blue throat, ghosts and goblins as his followers, or a saintly figure sitting on the icy platform, wearing rudraksh and bearing a third eye. But he demystified all these myths related to Shiva and established Him as a man of high values. He spelled out the mythical image of Shiva and presented Him as livid Shiva, the Mahadev, the God of Gods, Destroyer of Evil, a Passionate lover, Fierce warrior, Consummate dancer, Charismatic leader, all-powerful yet incorruptible, a quick wit accompanied by an equally quick and fearsome temper, overall a multifaceted personality. Amish says that over the centuries, any foreigner who came to this land - conqueror, merchant, scholar, ruler, traveller - held that such a great

man could possibly have existed in reality. They supposed that he must have been a mythical God, whose existence was probable only in the realms of human imagination. Unfortunately, this belief became received wisdom and in rich imagination a person of flesh and blood rose to become godlike because of his karma.

The Immortals of Meluha- originally titled as *Shiva: The Man, The Legend* starts in 1900 BC at Mansarovar Lake, at the foot of Mount Kailash, Tibet. Shiva, headman of his tribe is introspecting over his fate and recollect his past days. The numerous battle-scars on his skin gleamed in the shimmering reflected light of the water but he simply like an ordinary child is still smiling on his highest record of throwing pebbles that bounced off the surface of the lake seventeen times. This war loving hero has a totally opposite shade when he says to his friend, "Anything will be better than the pointlessness of the violence we face daily." He is a headman in real sense, never force his decision on others and others tribal have full confidence on him. It was their decision of going in Meluha. This respect for the leader was not just based on convention, but also on Shiva's character and bravery. He had led the Gunas to their greatest military victories through his intellect and absolute personal bravery. They spoke in one voice for shiva "Your decision is our decision." While after a fight with other tribe, he relaxed enemies also because he believes: 'People do what their society rewards them for doing. If the society rewards trust, people will be trusting.' Like a man of flesh and blood, he also carries the burden of past on his shoulders and it haunt him in nightmare. Lord Shiva who has no past, has no story of origin is a myth for world, is feeling heavy his shoulder in Amish book but at last relieve this burden by his karmas and proves Bhagwadgeeta saying

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।
 मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥2.47॥

All architectural designs, drainage systems, administrative skills, discovery of copper, cotton clothes and awareness for hygiene in Meluha is beautifully depicted. Lady Ayurvati, greatest doctor on the land is a character of grace and intellect. Somras is a drink of gods in Indian mythology and it is depicted with numerous benefits and drawbacks. It works as background for every evil and when shiva realized it, he vowed to take it out from equation. Amish though took all mythological facts in root of his story and blended well it with his fantasy and knowledge of history. His family background of Banars worked well. Blend of ancient and modern is fantastic even in name of towns also, Kahmir, Takshila, Karachapa, Lothal, Devagiri etc. Meluhan tradition of 'But the laws cannot be broken, my Lord. Not even for you' proved Meluha a Ramrajya but its shiva who believes its contrary that 'Some traditions are meant to be broken'. He used such type of words, "Nonsense! I don't deserve any destiny. If these people knew of my guilt, they would stop this bullshit instantly!". Here he is not a mythical Lord but a Macho man and Bollywood type hero.

He is really a hero with some flaw in his character though these are minor. Like Hamlet he did not allow his flaw to overpower his personality but used it as a source of inspiration for future deeds. He uses marijuana to get rid of his guilt of past and numb his senses. Shiva attraction towards Sati and his giving space to her so that she can flourish well is a proof of his high understanding of human nature. All mythological symbols related to Lord Shiva are used and significantly demystified and resolved in these books. Symbol of AUM, Nagas as his favorite people, importance of Sarasvati river, his love for Kashi, his blue throat, somras as poison, trident his invention, his obsession for Sati, his art of dancing and singing, his liking for raw milk, tiger skin as his garment, elephant head Ganesha, warrior Kartikeya, Parvati from Parvetswar, Kali a fierce goddess are dexterously used for developing character of shiva and it shows his transformation from a mythical lord whose name cannot be uttered to a man whose actions and decisions take goodness in equation and united this Saptasindhu.

Amish, a great devotee of lord Shiva and brilliant man of words took this theme, broke all prevailing myths and established him as a man whose philosophy of life is really to be adhered by mankind and took Shiva even more close to the hearts of people. So, his books broke all the previous records and proved a milestone in history of mythological reading. This is actually a story of a man who became god by his deeds. Indian scriptures are abundantly filled with praise songs of Lord Shiva and Amish Tripathi has aptly used it and transformed mythical image of Shiva to a man on this earth. Amish Tripathi dusted off myths related to shiva and illuminated this grand figure in new mythological trend. It is Mahadev who learns at last, "just because someone is different doesn't make them evil" and present the ultimate truth.

This trio of books focus on religion, truth and the constant battle between the good and evil in very common language like 'bloody hell', 'damn it', 'bullshit', 'holy lake' which make Shiva more human. Amish while writing for free, globalized, techno-rich, popular culture of India has not forgotten rich cultural heritage and golden age of India. He voluntarily revived long forgotten heroic age and made it more enticing and appetizing by spinning it with fantasy. In fact, he has taken Vedic concepts from the scriptures and presented it with scientific explanations; terrorist attack to deformed Naga babies, working of Somras on human bodies, abolition of concept of Vikramas, secret revelation of Shiva blue throat, destruction caused by Daivi Astras. He has also added some spice to story by creating myriad of emotions and distributing them proportionately among characters. passionate and emotional scenes between Shiva and Sati, picture perfect locales, reference of soap, a modern coined word- liger, beats of Shiva's dumru, fumes of intoxicating chillum, Shiva strength of character on Agni-Pariksha of sati, wailing warrior on his beloved death are all tracts that make this story authentic and unlock myth with a new cryptographic-

historical key. However, new quasi-mythopoeic, quasi-scientific elucidations that replace the age-old interpretations of Shiva's blue throat, Sati's death by fire or Ganesha's elephant head and reference of Manu Smriti stimulate a new rubric of myths and mix well myths into new concoctions. Along with myths, these books focus on fierce issues of untouchability, women empowerment, love and caste system in a compelling narrative style. Surprisingly, in present era of demythologization and re-mythologization, Amish has surely established a fictionalized historical and geographical account of India by rendering the recreation of the traditional myths through the means of fantasy.

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