



Major Paradigm of the 21st century in Amish Tripathi's *The Secret of the Nagas*

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Abstract

The purpose paper deals with the major paradigm of the 21st century. In *The Secret of the Nagas*, Tripathi represents a clear cut vision of the 21th century India in which various problems as communal violence, human trafficking, bull racing, malnutrition and animal slaughtering that are prevalent in today's Indian society, are the major selected themes of the novel. In the novel, Tripathi tries to draw masses' attention towards the contemporary problems in India. Tripathi tries to define these problems which sickens and spoils the relationship of the individual and society; due to this an individual turns against the society. It represents the clear picture of the Indian past and the present. It represents cultural diversity, geographical situation, religious beliefs, customs and duties, social beliefs and economic system of India. In the novel, Tripathi draw readers attention towards the worse condition of polluted rivers which used to be life line of any civilization. These rivers polluted now became a cause of serious diseases. Tripathi tries to correlate myth with contemporary issues and evils.

Key words: Communal violence, Human trafficking, Bull racing, Animal slaughtering, Malnutrition

Reviews

Tripathi has used excellent narrative skill to recount the study of how nomad is turned into God Shiva. He uses omnipresent third person narrative technique to describe the story. He imparts human expressions to correlate the mythical characters to contemporary problems in such a way that even legendary Shiva appears as a normal individual who works for the betterment of the society and wins respect and faith of other community members because of his karma. *The Secret of the Nagas* is a beautiful representation of classical myth in the modern

context. Many research Scholars have made their attempts with different sociological, political and scientific perspectives. These things encourage me to write a research paper on this work through my critical insights. So, I have chosen the topic “Major paradigm of 21st century in *The Secret of the Nagas*” with the help of contemporary existing school of knowledge building.

Introduction

Tripathi represents a clear cut vision of the 21th century India in which various social problems as communal violence, human trafficking, bull racing, malnutrition and animal slaughtering that are prevalent in today’s Indian society, are the major selected themes of the novel. In *The Secret of the Nagas*, Tripathi tries to draw masses’ attention towards the contemporary problems in India. Tripathi tries to define the social evils which sickens and spoils the relationship of the individual and society; due to this an individual turns against the society. The novel represents the clear picture of the Indian past and the present. It represents cultural diversity, geographical situation, religious beliefs, customs and duties, social beliefs and economic system of India. In the novel, Tripathi draw readers attention towards the worse condition of polluted rivers which used to be life line of any civilization. These rivers polluted now became a cause of serious diseases. Tripathi tries to correlate myth with contemporary issues and evils. The book *The Secret of the Nagas*, published in 2011, is the life story of Shiva and Sati, Ganesh and Kali, Anandmayi and Parvateshwar, Bhagirath, Dilipa, Kartik, Ugrasen and Parshuram. Having dealt with the life story of Lord Shiva, Tripathi discusses the issues that create the situation of collapse in the relationship between an individual and the society. Tripathi tries to raise his voice against inhumanity with the animals. In the various parts of India, the bull racing and the animals slaughtering are illegal. People are inhumane to the animals in the name of the religious traditions. Animals are forced to participate unwillingly for their self-enjoyment. The animals are slaughtered in the slaughter houses in the name of the religion and for the right of their food. But no religion favours the slaughtering and inhumanity with the animals. In *The Secret of the Nagas*, Tripathi tries to highlight such issues. The tribal people live in the jungle. They are lovers of the nature and animals. In Magadha, people arrange a bull race for their enjoyment in the name of the tradition. Ugrasen, the princes of the Magadha, grabs a child from his mother to fulfill his own desire i.e. winning the competition of bull race. People torture animals in every possible way for the sake of their enjoyment. They keep bulls hungry to win the race. In the race, the little male children of six and eight years are used as it helps the bull to increase its speed. But sometimes it is dangerous

for the children and they get seriously injured. Vishwadyumna looks at Ganesh and gives a clarification:

Bull-racing was a craze in the Chandravanshis areas, subject to massive bets, royal interest and intrigue. Riders were needed to scream and agitate the animals to keep them running on course. At the same time, if the riders were too they would slow down the animal. Therefore, boys between the ages of six and eight were considered perfect. - (37).

Tripathi voices contemporary issues using mythical characters and environment. He raises his voice against the child labour and human trafficking. It is a big business in the developing countries. The little children are kidnapped and sold in the market. There, these children work as beggars, house workers, hotel workers and factory workers. They work in very miserable and harmful conditions, even children between the six and seven years are asked to work in the dangerous and hazardous environment of industries. There, they are badly affected with serious diseases that lead them to death. The industrialists pay no attention towards the well being of the children. In *The Secret of the Nagas*, the tribal people live in the jungle that is spread between the Ganga and the Narmada rivers and they do not have enough work and money to fulfill their demands. So, their children have to work for their living in the factories and industries. Ugrasen tries to kidnap a little boy. But his mother tries to save her child. Ugrasen wants a child so that his bull may win the race. In the bull racing, sometimes it becomes dangerous for the boy. If the bull sits down, the rider may be seriously injured or even die. Vishuwadyumna suggests to Shiva:

Therefore, the boys between the six and eight years were perfect. They would shriek out of fear and weight was inconsequential. The children would be tied to the beasts. If the bull went down, the boy rider would be seriously injured or killed. Therefore, tribal children were often kidnapped to slave away as riders. Nobody important missed them if they died. - (37-38)

Tripathi tries to highlight the contemporary issue of the animal versus the man. It is the most controversial issue in the recent years. The animals enter the villages because humans have destroyed their natural home, jungle for the fulfilling of their day to day needs. The man's greediness and unlimited desires has snatched the natural habitat of the animals. Man cuts jungle in bulk for meeting the place, food and fuel. So, the animals do not have sufficient place to live and eat food. Therefore, they enter human colonies and kill human beings for their food. Man and animals fight for their areas. Both do not want to leave their area. In the Icchawar village, some animals attack the villagers. They killed some villagers. The villagers request the

king to send force for them and hunt the animals so that they may live their lives without any danger. Sati along with the Kashi soldiers goes to Icchawar and sees the situation. There she sees that the animals attack on the villagers for past few days and a number of the villagers have been killed in the attack. Sati sees that the lion has marked the area to attack. Now she decides to live along with the soldiers and the rest of the villagers will have to leave the area. But the villagers do not agree to the decision. So, they do not want to evacuate the area. Sati whispers, Lord Ram to be merciful:

The beast didn't even drag the children's bodies away. May be they wanted vengeance for the single lion killed when he fell into the trap. 'They are not humans, Your Highness,' said Sati, irritated. 'They do not feel anger or the need for the vengeance. Animals kill for only two reasons: hunger or self-defense.' 'But why would they kill and then leave the bodies there?' (202)

Tripathi tries to highlight the problem of communal violence in India. India is a diverse country. It is a country of different cultures, religion, caste and colour, where people live together. The diversity in their religion, tradition, habit, ritual, dress up, food habits, customs and culture provide strength to the country. But sometimes the diversity may be harmful for the society. Kashi is a Chandravanshis city. There people from the different areas and different cultures live together for the trading and the other purposes. They are different to each other on the basis of culture, custom and tradition. The people of Kashi do not like them because they have totally different opinions regarding the culture, religions and their religious customs which results in the emergence. Shiva comes to Kashi to offer a puja ceremony. At that time, Brangas kill a bird which has the religious significance. As a result of this, there arises confusion between the Branga and the citizen of Kashi and in this conflict many people are seriously injured and Kaavas, a police officer, looks at Parvateshwar and speaks, "We accept every community from India in Kashi. All of them live peacefully, making this great city their home. But the Brangas purposely want to infuriate every one of us. This riot is an actually a bad path to a good end just let it happen" (*TSOTN* 75).

To conclude, the present paper deals with the concept of major paradigm of the 21st century in the critical insight of postcolonial theory with the help of classical Hindu Myths. Amish Tripathi has tried to unfold that the paradigm of 21st century are communal violence, human trafficking, bull racing, malnutrition and animal slaughtering. These issues are the major problems of the society of 21st century that create panic in individual and society.

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