



Amish Tripathi's Approach of Re-Telling Ancient Indian Story of Lord Shiva in Shiva Trilogy: A Content Analysis

Milanbhai Mahendrabhai Chaudhari

Abstract:

Creative and imaginative approach of writing classic epics has become a trend as well as need of the times; this is very well identified by many new upcoming and skilled writers in India. Amish Tripathi is one such author, who has become very popular in recent times due to his language skill as well as his method of writing stories and creating imaginative plots. This paper is aimed at understanding and evaluating Amish's approach of re-telling very popular story of Lord Shiva in his books of Shiva Trilogy. This study is done with the intention of understanding Amish's way of re-telling various original incidents and plots actually taken place in the history along with the personality traits of various characters of the ancient epics especially in his books of Shiva trilogy.

Key Words:

Amish Tripathi, Shiva Trilogy, Imaginative Approach, Demystifying Mythology

Amish Tripathi's Approach of Re-Telling Ancient Indian Story of Lord Shiva in Shiva Trilogy: A Content Analysis

(1) Introduction

In recent times, there is a trend of re-writing the epics and ancient stories of India to attract the interest of the modern generations. Many renowned and upcoming authors are taking this new trend to publicize their works and become popular in the eyes of new generations. Authors like Kavita Kane, Ashok Banker, Ashwin Sanghi etc have very successful re-written the historical epics in their own ways of narrating. Amish Tripathi being a Management student is very creative and very imaginative in his way of narrating an epic in his own distinct way.

(2) Research Objectives and Methodology

Followings are the basic Objectives of the current research paper:

- 1) To understand narrative approach of various ancient stories.
- 2) To study imaginative way of Amish Tripathi in his Shiva Trilogy.
- 3) To evaluate Amish Tripathi's approach of narratives as compared to some classic authors
- 4) To study the plot and characters portrayal in imaginative method of narration of epics.

This research is purely based on secondary data, as all the three major books of Shiva Trilogy of Amish Tripathi have been taken as sources of secondary data. As far as, Data Analysis method is concerned, Content Analysis technique is taken as a tool of analysis of the narratives of the story.

(3) Amish's Imaginative Narrative Approach

Amish Tripathi is very famous modern and contemporary Indian author who has written many bestsellers. His books written on Shiva trilogy have broken all the records at Indian bookstands and have sold more than three million of books of this series which consist of *The Immortals of Meluha* (2010), *The Secret of the Nagas*(2011), and *The Oath of the Vayuputras* (2013). Demand of this great trilogy has reached more than Rs 500 million and made this superb the Shiva Trilogy the highest and rapid selling book series in Indian arena. He has also written the series on Lord Rama by keeping the same theme of writing alive that he has used in Shiva trilogy. It seems that Amish Tripathi has been motivated by renowned writers like Ashok Banker but Amish's verbal communication is extraordinarily brilliant and gem of literature. As far as the matter of focus is concerned, Tripathi has wonderful blend of written communication with modern and classic language, in absence of the essential component of authenticity.

In the novel, *The Immortals of Meluha* written by Amish, Lord Shiva is portrayed as a GOD who is one of the Trimutis as per Hindu Belief. It is also understood that these Trimutis are immortal and present in the universe since ages. Lord Shiva is considered as Destroyer of the universe when needed. Lord Shiva occupies some unique elements like snakes, chillum and has blue neck (Neel Kanth), as per the Shiva trilogy these are the signs of savior of the society and universe at large. In the books of Shiva Trilogy, Shiva is shown as protector, influencer as well as leader of a particular tribe called Gunas. This tribe lives at the foot of Mount Kailash in Himalaya. As per book Nandi is shown as Senapati (Captain of Army of Suryavanshi) and not the vehicle of Lord Shiva. Nandi is the person who actually brings Lord Shiva to Meluha along with his tribe. The book describes Meluha as very rich and powerful state in the universe. After reaching there Lord Shiva is announced as savior of the Meluha (140), who is there to assist Suryavanshis against Chandravanshis in the forth coming war. The books show that even though Chandravanshis worship Lord Rama but they have moved away from the teachings of Lord Rama. The books also portray that these Chandravanshis have taken help of Nagas to fight against Suryavanshis. The first part of the book shows Chandravanshis as terrorists, who attacks on Suryavanshis.

It is shown in the book that the people living in Meluha are living very advance lifestyle and have very modern city, established nearby Hariyupa (or Harappa). *The*

Immortals of Meluha also shows that scientists of Meluha have developed Somras, which is considered as “the drink of the gods. Consuming the Somras at particular times not only postpones our death considerably, but it also allows us to live our entire lives as if we were in the prime of our youth - mentally and physically” (81). This achievement of Suryavanshis has led to jealousy of the Chandravanshis, and due to which they have tried to destroy the Somras factory by changing the flow of river Saraswati. Actually, water of this great river is used for the production of Somras. Chandravanshis have understanding with Nagas, who are martial race instead of having physical disabilities.

Nonetheless, Amish Tripathi has humanized the God. It is shown in the book that God has some typical characteristics of human being like Shiva cannot leave his habit of smoking Marijuana (169) and swears a lot (293). It is shown that when he was taken in front of king of Suryavanshi, he was made little Presentable: “His hair had been oiled and smoothed. Lines of expensive clothes, attractive ear-rings, necklaces and other jewellery were used to adorn his muscular frame. His fair face had been scrubbed clean with special Ayurvedic herbs to remove years of dead skin and decay” (30).

This book also talks about romantic story between Shiva and Sati. Shiva catches the glimpse of Sati, when she was learning dance from her dance teacher. Sati is King Daksha’s daughter. Shiva won the heart of Sati due to her Dance skill better than the dance teacher himself. This plot of the book resembles with the Bollywood movie scenes. The book shows that Sati is living life of ‘Vikarama’ due to the sins committed by her in her previous life. This philosophy was protested by Shiva. The author describes that Lord Rama had established this ‘Vikarama’ depends on the deeds performed by person in his life. This ‘Vikarama’ system is very similar to the modern caste based system in India.

Amish Tripathi's Shiva in the book is very ignorant and diffident personality. He does not know about Lord Rama (34), nor does he know the meaning of the sacred word ‘Aum’ or ‘Om’. The book also shows that even Nandi sometimes plays the role of teacher to Shiva. Whenever Shiva feels peace and tranquility while chanting Aum, Nandi told him: “My Lord, Aum is the holiest word in our religion. It is considered to be primeval sound of nature. The hymn of the universe; It was so holy that for many millennia, most people would not insult it by putting it down in written form” (56).

Amish Tripathi has tried to show that he has grown philosophically when he claims that “The Shiva Trilogy was built around the philosophical question of “What is Evil?”. These type of discussion is not very profound in the book too he has depend upon the very known Foucauldian’s opinion that one should not be considered as evil even though they are not accepted by society due to certain reason. The action is placed around 1850 BC and the reign of Lord Ram is forward to it by 1250 years, as per this book. When we compare the mythological stories of Rama and Krishna, we cannot have them before Lord Shiva or any of the Trimutis i.e. Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. As we all know that Lord Rama and Krishna are incarnations of Lord Vishnu. So, the biggest question is to whom should we worship? It is also known fact that Lord Rama has worshiped Shiva before making an assault over Ravana.

Shiva achieves the title of ‘Neelkanth’, the reason behind this title was he had drunk the poison that came out during ‘Samudra Manthan’, which ultimately resulted into Deva-Asur battle, but Amish has given this characteristic to the consumption on Samaras which make Shiva a Messaih (92). Amish Tripathi does not standby history even. His creative mind is the reason behind the claim that the great civilization of Mohan Jo Daro, is named after Mohan (Another name of Lord Krishna).

Amish Tripathi is very good at blending imaginations from different sources from Plato to Marx. It is shown that children are the state property in the city of Meluha. Amish has very good sense of fiddling with the concept of cast based society and it is also shown in the novel also. Children are bought up by the state in ‘Maika’. When these children become sixteen years old they have to appear in the exam and if the pass this particular exam, they will be given for adoption to people from different caste based on the exam they have passed, like the child who has passed Brahmin exam, will be given to Brahmin family. Over the years, the Brahmin caste went up in number (99). So, where was the effacement of caste? Even here in *The Oaths of Vayuputra*, Lord Vishnu is said to have left behind the Vasudev caste and Rudra the Vayuputras (395-6) that, of course, is advertisement for the next book, and the doubting Thomases are clearly told to wait for the next book in the end, with the phrase 'to be continued'.

Amish Tripathi is very good at blending different concepts. As the element of untouchability is very well covered in the book by portraying people belong to ‘Vikarama’. These people who are known as ‘Vikarama’, suffers from some physical deformities since

birth. It is believed that this deformity is the result of their sins of the past life (92). It is also believed that a person contracts an incurable disease or a woman gives birth to such child, she also is treated as 'Vikarama'. This system was protested by Shiva very aggressively. The book mentions that the Chandravanshis are like terrorists and they are compared with terrorists from Pakistan. The incident of elephant turning around in the war and started attacking its own army take us back to the Indian history when the Babur's guns have behaved same against the army of Hemu. Even the book of Shiva trilogy it is shown that the roads and conditions of the streets of Swadeep (Capital of Chandravanshi) is very similar to the anarchy seen on the Indian roads. Encroachments are the order of the day:

Some open grounds had been converted into giant slums as illegal immigrants simply pitched their tents on public land. The already narrow roads had been made even narrower by the intrusion of the cloth tents of the homeless. There was constant tension between the rich home-owning class and the poor landless who lived in slums.

The emperor had legalized all encroachments established before 1910 BC ! (372)

It can be seen that Amish Tripathi has mastered the art of creative writing. Tripathi is very good at blending elements of classic mythology with the modern beliefs and lifestyle. His writings are very thrilling and gripping even better than any script of bollywood blockbuster. Even the glamour of heroine is also shown in the book when the character of Anamdmayi is asking milk for her bath. The hero's friend is entailed to his prize; it is also seen by marriage of Bhadra and Krittika. It is also shown that Ayodhya is as passive society as Europe, where we find the young and old try to attract everything in different manner.

(4) Conclusion

If we look at the ways in which such mythological stories have been re-written by authors in India, we can observe various patterns of writing. Considering the works of Rajgopalachari and Patnaik, they are very serious authors and have re-written Epics like Mahabharata and Ramayana in their original essence and keeping their text very near to the original works. On other pattern which can be seen, that is adopted by Amish Tripathi. In his approach Amish is seen very creative and imaginative. Amish's work of Shiva Trilogy is a living example of how some mythological stories can be re-crafted. In his Shiva Trilogy he

has very creatively portrayed all the characters revolving around Lord Shiva in very imaginative manner yet some facts of the stories at the macro level. One of the very important and significant points to be made is that in his book of Shiva Trilogy, Amish has kept the basic instinct and behavioural characteristics of all the characters intact with the originality instead of taking advantage of freedom of expression.

WORKS CITED

Tripathi, Amish. *The Immortals of Meluha*. Westland Press, 2010.

- - -. *The Secret of Nagas*. Westland Press, 2011.

- - -. *The Oaths of Vayuputra*. Westland Press, 2013.

Patra, Indrajit. "Analyzing Amish Tripathi's 'Shiva Trilogy' from the Perspective of Campbell's 'Monomyth' Theory." *IMPACT: International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature*, Vol. 6, Issue 2, Feb 2018, pp. 227-237. oaji.net/articles/2017/488-1520069128.pdf.

Sunil Kumar. "A Study of Novels in Amish Tripathi." *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education*, Vol. 15, Issue No.12, Dec. 2018, pp. 253-258. ignited.in/p/78838.