



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

MORTALISING IMMORTAL: A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AMISH TRIPATHI'S LORD SHIVA

¹Archi Namdeo, ²Dr. Jaya Sharma

¹Research Scholar, ²Associate Professor

Department of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

¹SAGE University, Indore,

ABSTRACT

Amish Tripathi is an IIM (Kolkata) educated, banker turned award-winning author. He is a well-known modern Indian fiction writer widely acknowledged for his mythological fiction writings. The *Immortals of Meluha*, the first novel in the *Shiva Trilogy*, was so successful that the author decided to give up his fourteen-year profession in financial services to concentrate on writing. His interests include philosophy, mythology, and history. He finds beauty and significance in all major global faiths.

Over the years, mythology has been a constant source and theme of study in literature. Ancient stories are found in the extensive corpus of ancient Hindu mythology. Recently, several kinds of mythological stories have been modernized and turned into historical fiction topics in Indian writing in English. The "*Shiva Trilogy*" by Amish Tripathi is a fantastical account of the life and exploits of the Indian god Lord Shiva. Shiva is considered to be an iconic figure of literature from the period of Kalidas to the era of Amish. As we all know Lord Shiva is immortal since Amish has portrayed him as a mortal being and has attributed him with some manly characteristics. That is the reason the paper aims to highlight all the aspects in which immortal Shiva can be represented as mortal. The way Shiva is portrayed by Amish as the 'Tibetan protagonist' fascinates people, leading them to feel that a man is great and deserving of devotion because of his noble attitude and pure heart. The trilogy additionally demonstrates that at a certain point in time, the gods were humans, a long time ago, till their efforts and actions brought them immortality. Even though Lord Shiva in Hindu mythology is referred to as a "God" or "Mahadev". This study examines how Amish has portrayed him as a man who attained godlike qualities via his karmic actions. Hindu everlasting "Mahadev," the God of Gods and the conqueror of evil, is attempted to be humanized by Amish in the "*Shiva Trilogy*".

Index Terms: Mythology, Mortal, Immortal, Historical fiction

INTRODUCTION

History has witnessed that mythology has not just become mythology, it has become an interest of many modern writers or novelists who have their own way of portraying or demonstrating godly characters in human characters. The modern mythologists Ashwin Sanghi, Ashok K. Banker, Devdutt Pattanaik, Amish Tripathi, and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni used these ancient stories as their inspiration. They have strong research, a creative imagination, and an engaging writing style. They are pioneers of mythical writing, marching with the influential tales as their weapons. Since the concentration of the paper is on the work of Amish, here the paper deals majorly with the character 'Shiva', who is a protagonist of the trilogy, "*Shiva Trilogy*." Shiva is a genuine guy, the author explains. Shiva is real and not just the creation of a wealthy man.

He is an actual human being. Because of his karma, he is a man who evolved to become a godlike being. This trilogy offers an interpretation of ancient India's rich mythological legacy. It combines historical reality with fantasy. This piece is dedicated by the author as an homage to Lord Shiva and the lesson that his life imparts to us. It is a lesson lost to the mists of ignorance and ages. It's an understanding that helps us all become better individuals.

DISCUSSION

"Immortals of Meluha" is the title of the first volume of the "Shiva Trilogy," which chronicles the adventures of this remarkable warrior. Shiva is shown as an average person with a remarkable future ahead of him. An old tale has predicted his arrival, a destiny that makes him a deity and a rescuer. The book offers a fresh viewpoint on Lord Shiva. He is shown to be an ordinary guy, a leader, a dancer, and God by his karma. Shiva is the chief of his tribe and has taken it upon himself to protect his people from the surrounding ethnic groups who constantly invade Shiva's ancestral lands. The "*Immortals of Meluha*," formerly known as Shiva: The Man, The Legend, begins at Mansarovar Lake, Tibet's base of Mount Kailash, in 1900 BC. Shiva, the headman of his tribe, is reflecting on his life and the past. Even though he had seventeen pebbles that he had thrown over the lake's surface, he was still giggling like a regular youngster despite many battle wounds on his skin that shone in the shimmering reflected light of the water. When the war-loving hero tells his companion, "Anything will be better than the pointlessness of the violence we face daily," his tone completely changes. He truly is a headman; he never imposes his will on others and is fully trusted by his tribe. They chose to travel to Meluha. The homage to the leader was found not just in custom but also in Shiva's courage and moral qualities. He has used his cunning and unwavering bravery to lead the Gunas to their greatest military triumphs. "Your decision is our decision," they declared in unison. Because he thinks that people do what their culture pays them for, he also calmed adversaries after a clash with another tribe. People will be more trustworthy if society rewards it. He bears the weight of the past on his shoulders, and it haunts him like a man of flesh and blood. A great fan of Shiva, Nandi approaches him and offers a safe route to their territory. Shiva's voyage to Neelkanth began with his arrival at Meluha. The man with the "blue throat" is referred to as "Neelkanth." The legendary drink Somras causes his throat to become blue when he swallows it. It was initially discovered by Ayurvathi. According to the solar calendar, the Meluhans, also known as Suryavanshis, lived by Meluha. Shiva is revered by the clan as a rescuer who will vanquish Chandravanshi's evil and save the clan, which adheres to the lunar calendar. Shiva was introduced by the Meluhans as the mythical Neelkanth, who would defend them. As the narrative develops, Shiva starts to learn more about the underlying facts of the battle. The quest for perfection by the Suryavanshis has a dark side, he thinks, and perhaps the Chandravanshis and the Nagas are not as wicked as they are made out to be. More complexity develops in his conception of good and evil. The way one man may change the course of events is the central theme of this compelling tale of bravery and battle. With Sati's entrance, the drama in the narrative takes a fresh turn. Sati is also known as Parvati, according to legend. While the primary narrative steadily leads readers through the exciting course of events, the story's undercurrent centers on Shiva and Sati's developing relationship. All along, the storyline is centered upon the conflict between the two kingdoms. Shiva comes from a modest and accessible past; he was formerly a tribal leader from the Mount Kailash area.

His persona is rendered more approachable and relatable by showing his ascent to become a beloved figure as a journey. Shiva's phases of inquiry and uncertainty during which he ponders his actions and goals highlight his humanity. He is shown to be a person who learns and develops rather than as perfect. Shiva's path is made accessible and realistic by the portrayal of him as an imperfect but remarkable human being. Shiva's elevation to prominence is characterized as a result of a combination of fate and free will, emphasizing the importance of accountability and the challenge of doing things right. Lord Shiva's characteristics and emotions are vividly depicted in "*Immortals of Meluha*" because of the rich and detailed literary style. Lord Shiva is portrayed by the author as a versatile character who speaks to readers on a human level by bringing out the details of his character through rich vision and deep characterization. There are descriptions of Lord Shiva's appearance that show him to be very different from the other gods with characteristic human traits. A face that radiates power and wisdom is framed by his black, flowing hair that spills over his shoulders. He attracts people with his deep, sharp eyes because they contain a spark of compassion and curiosity. Lord Shiva is shown as having a realistic and approachable physical shape, which appeals to the mortal residents of Meluha despite his heavenly position. By introducing mortal characteristics into Lord Shiva's persona, "

Immortals of Meluha presents a novel view of the god, emphasizing the ongoing conflict between divine power and mortality. The story invites readers to interact with timeless topics more deeply and intimately by bringing mythical characters like Lord Shiva to life. This creates new opportunities for thought and reflection. By surpassing the limitations of mythology and striking a profoundly emotional chord with readers, Lord Shiva's human side ultimately acts as a reminder of the universality of human experiences and emotions.

In Amish literature, Lord Shiva, who has no background and no genesis tale, feels heavy on his shoulder but is ultimately freed from it by his karmas. Despite having a few little character flaws, he is truly a hero. He numbs his senses and takes marijuana to get over his prior remorse. Shiva's fondness for Sati and his willingness to give her room to grow are indications of his deep comprehension of human nature. This work of fiction employs all the legendary symbolism associated with Lord Shiva and greatly demystifies and resolves them. An emblem of AUM, he favored the Nagas, valued the Sarasvati River, loved Kashi, had a blue throat, considered somras to be poison, invented the trident, was obsessed with Sati, enjoyed raw milk, wore garments made of tigerskin, and had an elephant-headed Ganesha. Shiva's character is skillfully developed via the usage of warrior Kartikeya, Parvati from Parvateshwar, and Kali, a furious deity. This illustrates Shiva's development from a mythological lord whose name cannot be said to a man whose actions and decisions are considered goodness. Amish has described Lord Shiva as a human being just like the rest of us. It was because of his karma that a guy elevated to become like God. We have been exposed to legends about Ganesh across India. However, the idea that Ganesh, with his strange appearance, is a part of Nagas is distinct. Ganesh is the child of Sati and Chandandhvaj, her initial spouse. Given the infant's unusual looks, Sati's parents tossed it in the river and informed her that her child had not taken birth. She hears about her husband's passing at the same moment. However, once Shiva departs to hunt for the Nagas - the terrorists, according to King Daksha - the father of Sati, it is discovered that the production of Somras is the source of the contaminated water that affects the Naga people. Among them are Ganesh and Kali, Sati's elder sister. Some Meluhans become sterile as a result of using Somras excessively and frequently. When this reality is acknowledged, Shiva begins an attack against evil and the production of Somras. In the trilogy, Shiva fights a battle but not a war against anyone. However, it opposes any potential evil in people. Throughout the series, Shiva develops and learns new things about the world, its people, and himself. His quest for self-awareness and his developing comprehension of his Neelkanth persona serve as examples of how adaptable and growing humans can be. Like every other person, Shiva has to arrive at difficult judgments and deal with moral difficulties. His inability to make proper decisions and cope with the fallout emphasizes his mortal characteristics. His attempts to combat evil while striking a balance between justice and compassion demonstrate his humanity. Blue represents bad thinking or gradual poisoning in the Neelkanth idea. The same in the neck suggests that the poison should be retained in the throat for a short while to be diluted when the proper moment comes, rather than being consumed or spit out. Attachments, rage, greed, wants, and ego are the well-described slow poisons. Shiva experiences bodily suffering and harm as well, which serves to emphasize his mortal state. He is prone to wounds and distress, which he feels during wars and conflicts, unlike an invincible deity. Shiva goes through a vast spectrum of emotions, including sadness, rage, and love. His incredibly human responses to setbacks and difficulties in his life highlight his fragility. His deep affection for Sati and his sorrow over his buddy Brahaspati's passing, for instance, highlight his human feelings. Shiva's relationships with other characters - such as his love for Sati and his friendship with Veerbhadra - emphasize his humanity. These connections emphasize his mortal state and are essential to the formation of his character. The Vayuputras is a secretive group of devotees of the former Mahadev Lord 'Rudra'. They reside in the isolated region of Pariha and are in charge of creating Neelkanth when evil forces in the world get out of control. Shiva sets out with Gopal, the Vasudeva leader, to enlist their assistance because it is difficult to eliminate evil. Thus, the title "*Oath of Vayuputas*" represents the Vayuputras' vow or pledge to support, produce, and help 'Neelkanth' in his last struggle to defeat evil. He addresses several environmental concerns here, therefore it is also possible to read the "*Oath of the Vayuputras*" from an ecocritical viewpoint. According to Brahaspati, the legend of the Saraswati river's disappearance is explained by the fact that the substantial quantity of water needed to produce Somras caused the river to dry up. When the garbage from the Somras' production was thrown into the Tsangpo River, which passes through Branga land as the Brahmaputra, it caused a terrible disease. Somras was also associated with causing the rapid rate of cell proliferation that resulted in the distortion and outgrowths of the Naga newborns upon birth. Shiva and his group journey to the secret city of Ujjain to see Gopal, the head of the Vasudev Pandits. In the West, in the isolated area of Pariha, he tells the story of the Vayuputra council, an old tribe left

behind by the prior Mahadev Lord 'Rudra'. They groomed a member of their tribe to become the 'Neelkanth' when evil arises. Shiva is shown as a magnificent leader who assumes the duty of defending his people and battling evil. His devotion to fairness and feeling of responsibility serve as the foundation for his leadership. Shiva encounters several moral and ethical problems along the way. He is forced to make tough choices that put his morals and convictions to the test, representing the difficulties and complexity that mortals frequently encounter. Shiva is shown as a fighter with extraordinary endurance both mentally and physically. His strength as a mortal hero is demonstrated by his battle prowess and strategic insight. Shiva is on a heavenly mission to destroy evil, yet he approaches and interprets this work from a mortal point of view. He is on a path of self-discovery and personal development as he explores the essence of good and evil. Shiva becomes a more accessible figure for audiences when Amish Tripathi presents him as a mortal. Shiva is an inspiring and approachable figure because of the way his setbacks, triumphs, and personal development reflect the human condition. Despite confronting multiple hardships and disappointments, Shiva's tenacity and determination enable him to overcome barriers. His persistence is a monument to his human character. Shiva is made approachable and sympathetic by Amish Tripathi's portrayal of him as a mortal. Shiva's journey reflects the hopes, hardships, and victories that readers may relate to and find parallels in their own lives. Shiva presents his quest to drive out evil from a mortal's point of view. He challenges the nature of good and evil, making the goal of his voyage a path of self-discovery as much as one of accomplishing a divine mission. Readers as well as people around Shiva are inspired by his mortal journey. His narrative demonstrates that morality, bravery, and persistence - rather than only supernatural intervention - are necessary for greatness to be attained. Shiva is made relatable to modern readers while adhering to old traditions because Tripathi humanizes the god. This effectively bridges the gap between mythology and modern morals. Shiva is portrayed as a mortal creature in the "*Oath of the Vayuputras*," which emphasizes his humanity and makes him a strong and inspirational figure whose path is shaped by his morals, leadership, and decisions. Our classical tales served as the basis for the author's story. These three volumes center on religion, truth, and the ongoing struggle between good and evil. They use everyday vocabulary, such as "bloody hell," "damn it," "bullshit," and "holy lake," to humanize Shiva.

CONCLUSION

The writings, as conveyed in the intelligent narrative, are entirely the product of simple imagination; the characters are not new. Legends like Shiva and Sati all wander a certain geography as real, flesh-and-blood humans. The author's neutrality about the crucial subject of "virtue" against "vice" also permits readers to establish their own opinions. When considering the deity, one adopts a charitable viewpoint in which "Karma" serves as the sole predictor of such sublime deeds. A voyage through our past is offered by The Shiva Trilogy, where readers may discover that myths are social rules and that tales are nothing more than the fundamentals of history. Amish observed that the Hindu gods were previously humans just like everyone else and that this was the case for them throughout the whole trilogy, rather than being legendary creatures or the product of a fertile imagination. They were known as gods because of the acts they did during their human lives.

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