

# An Analysis of Mythical Elements in Amish Tripathi's *The Immortals of Meluha*

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## ABSTRACT

The present research paper deals with Amish Tripathi's *The Immortals of Meluha* (2010). In this research paper is going to focus on ecological perspectives, blending of history, mythology and science or science and religion, geographical of ancient India, utilization of the modern-day slang and jargon. The story's mythological aspect is highlighted in a very big way. The characters seem a bit two-dimensional. Characterization is very relatable. Amish Tripathi has succeeded in establishing geographical unity and socio-cultural, religious and historical facts. In the novel, all the main characters do work for the welfare of all. The social elements, historical facts, the concept of duality as Chandravanshis and Suryavanshis, mythical elements and philosophies are used in modern forms.

**Keywords:** Mythology, ecological perspectives, alienation, realism, history.

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## INTRODUCTION

Amish Tripathi is a very notable novelist in Indian English literature. He is known for his Shiva trilogy. They are *The Immortals of Meluha* (2010), *The Secret of the Nagas* (2011) and *The Oath of the Vayuputras* (2013). After this Trilogy, he wrote many fictional and non-fictional works such as *Ram Chandra Series; Ram: Scion of Ikshvaku* (2015), *Sita: Warrior of Mithila* (2017) and *Raavan: Enemy of Aryavarta* (2019) and *The War of Lanka* (2022) and non-fiction; *Immortal India: Young India, Timeless Civilisation* (2017) and *Dharma: Decoding the Epic for a Meaningful Life* (2020). The Shiva trilogy is a fantasy in which the novelist portrays the Indian deity Shiva's adventures and life. The debut work of Amish Tripathi, *The Immortals of Meluha*, is a widely acclaimed novel. The present research paper is going to throw light on the study aims at an analysis of the novel *The Immortals of Meluha*. The novel is interesting to read. The paper is as to highlight Tripathi's portrayal of the environment in Meluha and Tibet which is the land of pure life. It also aims at the study of modernity and myth. Shiva is the tribal leader of Gunas. He is the great admirer of nature and for him nature is everything as well as the Almighty. He does not accept to believe in the idol worship and symbolic Gods. "Oneness" is felt with nature by Shiva and his tribal Gunas. They live at the foot of Mount Kailash, Tibet near Mansarovar lake.

Using Indian epics and myths seem to inspire the reader or audience but may be in a different package. Amish Tripathi's *The Secret of Nagas* (2012) and *Immortals of Meluha* (2010) and Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* (1989) are to be considered as examples. These novels are bestsellers. Tripathi gives a new dimension through Lord Shiva's story in both novels. While the Great Indian novel is presented in traditional Indian Epic style of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Another novelist Ashwin Sanghi's *Chanakya's Chant* (2011) portrays the story of Chanakya. The setting of the novel is in Patna in 340 B.C. On the basis of this, it can be said that Indian readership is still interested in mythology, puranas Indian history, epics and myths.

Amish Tripathi presents a wonderful blend of reality and historical facts. The novel, *The Immortals of Meluha* is a quite fascinating piece of fiction. In Hinduism, Shiva is the most popular and potent Gods. Though God has some very human traits. His journey symbolizes the physical and spiritual journey of every human being into enlightenment, into this world and life itself.

For the mythological parts in the present novel, Tripathi relied on the fables and stories that he heard in his childhood days from his family. He realized that there was no subject better than Shiva. That is one of the major Hindu deities and

the destroyer of evils. His stories and journey about Shiva would deliver the philosophy which is he wanted to convey to his readers. Once he started to work on Shiva as a book frame, he decided to base it on some fundamental beliefs of his ancestors. He noted that the Hindu Gods were probably not “a figment of a rich imagination or mythical beings”, but rather once they were human beings such as the rest. In the human life, it was their good deeds that made them very famous as Gods. Tripathi’s *The Immortals of Meluha* deals with the trends of mythology, alienation, historical elements blended with modernity and ecological aspects.

In modern scientific world, human race has lost their values and identity but myth has been playing the vital role of torch bearer and light house in it. Myths render the modern world the much-required spiritual values by reconnecting the people through faith by playing purpose of bringing man in union with the entire society. In myth:

“..the sounding of the battle-drum is important; the fierce waging of the war itself important; and the telling of the story afterwards- each is important in its own way. But if you ask me which of them takes the eagle’s-feather I will say boldly: the story.....because it is only the story can continue beyond the war and warriors. It is the story that outlines the sound of war-drums and the exploits of brave fighters. It is the story, not the others, that saves our progeny from blundering like blind beggars into the spikes of the cactus fence. The story is our escort; without it, we are blind.” (Anthills of Savannah, 124, qtd. In K Sivasankar & Dr.V.Ganesan).

Under the period of post-colonialism myth is never going to be treated as rhetorical expression among educationists and intellectuals. Myth is not mere stories or expression but inanimate guider. The people firmly believe in myth.

There are many ways through which myth can be detected. We join both palms together to greet someone. People greet by joining their palms called “Namaskar.” The general reason behind this tradition is that greeting by joining both the palms means respect. Scientifically speaking, however, joining both hands ensure joining the tips of all the fingers together which pressure points of ears, eyes, and mind. It is said that pressing them together is to activate the pressure points which helps us remember that person for a very long period.

Nandi requested Shiva to wait outside as he went into the office. He soon returned, accompanied by a young official. The official gave a practised smile and folded his hands in a formal namaste. ‘Welcome to Meluha. I am Chitraangadh. I will be your Orientation Executive. Think of me as your single point of contact for all issues whilst you are here. I believe your leader’s name is Shiva. Will he step up please?’ Shiva took a step forward. ‘I am Shiva.’ (Tripathi 17)

Myth is not a story but a reality lived. It is a living reality, believed to have once happened in long times before, and continuing forever to influence human destinies. Myths have reached to us from our ancestors and we did not have any questions, doubts and any added flavour for the rhetorical purpose through these past generations. Myths were fabricated not for the scientific satisfaction or explanation of the people but to guide the people who were devoid of practical wisdom, moral, scientific and religious aspects. Myth fulfils its indispensable duty of expressing, enhancing people’s beliefs to have harmony with society, with nature and another human. It safeguards morality and carries the practical wisdom for the leadership of people. Myth is science and intellectual proclamation. It is a highly pragmatic chanter of faith and moral wisdom to be firmly preserved, believed and followed by its people to live in harmony and keep their own identity:

Sati stood resplendent, looping the aarti thali in small circles around Shiva’s face. She stopped after seven turns, took some vermilion on her thumb and smeared it up Shiva’s forehead in a long tilak. ‘Come back victorious or don’t come back at all.’ Shiva raised one eyebrow and grimaced. ‘What kind of a send off is that?!’ ‘What? No, it’s just...’ stammered Sati. ‘I know, I know,’ smiled Shiva as he embraced Sati. ‘It’s the traditional Suryavanshi send off before a war, right?’ Sati looked up, her eyes moist. (Tripathi 168)

Amish firmly believes in myth. As he says ‘Myths are nothing but jumbled memories of a true past. A past buried under mounds of earth and ignorance’. In the novel, Shiva is a common man but because of his virtuous and good deeds he turns into God. He is idealized that he becomes much above the humanity in a general way. He is a simple man whose



Karma recasts him as Neelkanth, the Mahadeva the God of all Gods. Ayurvatises the throat of Shivas turning blue, tears broken outfrom her eyes.

The research paper tries to study and analyzes the ecological study of the novel because it is an emerging trend of the decade. This novel has ecological perspective that gives natural vision. The legend turned into a God and karma re-casts him as *Mahadev*, the God of Gods. One of the aims of the study is to highlight Tripathi's portrayal of the environment in Tibet and Meluha which is the pure land in the novel, *The Immortals of Meluha*.

*"A man becomes a Mahadev when he fights for good. A Mahadev is not born as one from womb. He is forged in the heat of battle, when he wages a war to destroy evil."*

#### **REFERENCES**

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