

Research Article

Casting Of Caste In Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy*

Gowthami K

ABSTRACT

Amish Tripathi, the author of *Shiva Trilogy* has raked the Indian consciousness in the present day youth. Aping the western culture has become the trend. But, Amish with his writings, makes the young Indian minds to take a (yo)u turn, in order to behold the richness that our ancestors hold. Amish made his debut with *Shiva Trilogy*, releasing *The Immortals of Meluha* in 2010, *The Secret of the Nagas* in 2012 and *The Oath of the Vayuputras* in 2013. His motive is not just to instil Indianness, but also to correct certain practices which are actually altered and adulterated in modern days. The unparalleled feel, of being an heir of such a prestigious pioneers, is derived on reading his work. This research article is an attempt to read the perspective in which the author of this trilogy has pictured the otherwise much misconceived caste system of India. 'Hail our Tradition' is the motto of Amish.

KEY WORDS: Caste System, Maika, Varna, Mythology, Tradition, Culture

CASTING OF CASTE IN AMISH TRIPATHI'S *SHIVA TRILOGY*

Mythology is the pillar on which every culture is built. To those who believe it to be real, it turns into History, and to the rest, it remains as a part of fantasy. According to Carl Jung, a famous Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, mythology and the connected themes are the essence of human existence. They provide external answers to many of our unquenched internal quests. *Shiva Trilogy* could be brought under psychoanalytical lights, as it involves the balancing of imbalanced minds by using the metres from the past and lost culture. Amish Tripathi is therefore to be applauded for his tremendous efforts in handling the delicate darling of literature – the Mythology. The reason is, handling Mythology is like handling fire. It could either lit up beautifully or bring down drastically into ashes. Equally challenging is the duty of propagating the culture. Amish is an exemplary author, who mastered the art of picturing his heart within the premises of his mind.

In the first book of the *Shiva Trilogy*, Amish brought in the topic of caste and its modern day connotation. He has played his role in a very lucid manner, by simply stating the actual and original design behind it. By stating so, genuine efforts are made to settle the never ending accusation on India, for its caste discrimination. Amish sets up the subject as a topic of discussion among Shiva - a Tibetan immigrant, Daksha – the Emperor of Meluha and Parvateshwar – the Meluhan General.

¹PH. D SCHOLAR, PG & RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, VELLALAR COLLEGE FOR WOMEN (AUTONOMOUS), ERODE – 638012. TAMIL NADU, INDIA.

CASTING OF CASTE IN AMISH TRIPATHI'S *SHIVA TRILOGY*

Amish introduces the place 'Maika', which is the great maternity hospital city of Meluha. This place is devoted to the cause of delivering rightful living. The design of Maika is that, all pregnant women were to go over there before delivery and has to live only under the care of their expert medical aid. No relatives of them are entertained inside Maika. The women carrying the child too will have to leave the place and the baby behind, soon after some weeks from delivery. In the country known for secularity, Lord Ram is said to have devised Maika to ensure the eradication of inheriting caste by birth lineage.

Meluhan society comprises of four major castes namely Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Brahmins are talented professionals like doctors, teachers, lawyers and priests.

Kshatriyas are warriors and rulers. Vaishyas are craftsmen, traders and business people.

Shudras are farmers and workers. One caste cannot do the job of the other. This system is to ensure equal allocation of people for all sorts of work. Brahmins who are involved in knowledge aspects are refrained from getting money, so as to make those essential services available to all with equality. When other civilizations have rarely recognized the existence of a class called women, the super civilized Meluhans allow the service of interested women in their army equal to men. While discussing about the "renegade Brahmins" who revolted for a change in system to facilitate them access to swipe over castes and to mint money, Daksha adds:

"Children of Brahmins became Brahmins. Children of Kshatriyas became Kshatriyas and so on. The formal system of selection soon ceased to exist. A father would ensure that his children got all the resources and support needed to grow up and become a member of his own caste. So the caste system became rigid." (95, *The Immortals of Meluha*)

Maika system is not a system that is unimaginable or impractical. Ancient Spartans practised a system which is much akin to Amish's Maika. They involve in community child raising. Their children are raised only by nurses till the age of six. They consider children as state entity and not a way directly related to families.

Even in our ancient Bharath, the concept of 'Guru Kulam' or residential schools is so prevalent. Children stay with the Guru or the teacher in his place, for years until they master everything. All through these years of stay, they will not be having any touch with their family. This gives a chance to the children to grow and be the person of their choice and calibre, rather than the one handed over by their family.

In the first book of Shiva Trilogy, Amish beautifully pictures the concept of caste and its authentic origin. According to it, Lord Ram has designed the caste system, otherwise called as Varna. Lord believed that only one's karma should decide a person's caste. He forbids the intervention of other factors like birth or sex in this process. Equality in treatment and fairness of chance they get will make them humble and stress free in choosing their duty or caste. After fourteen full years of training with one more year of special tutoring, the individual is put on tracks of their own choice as their 'duty'. The happiness of having a family bonding is not totally denied to them. After the child turns sixteen, parents who apply to adopt a child can approach and pick one at random, with their mere specifications for opting like Brahmins or Kshatriyas or Vaishyas or Shudras. In this way no one will be deemed barren too.

Thus, the brilliancy of ancient system of us is brought into lime light with this beautiful work of art. Thanks to Amish for providing the truth in a logical and reasonable sequence and absolute explanations, which drives away the otherwise clouded image of our knowledge system.

Work Consulted:

Mark, Joshua J. "Mythology." Ancient History Encyclopaedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 31 Oct 2018. Web. 30 Jan 2021.

Work Cited:

Tripathi, Amish. The Immortals of Meluha. New Delhi: Westland Ltd, 2010. Print.