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An Overview of Reception of Myth in *The Shiva Trilogy* and *The Shivapurana*

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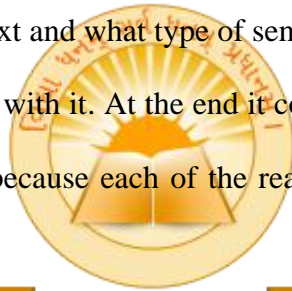
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The dictionary meaning of Myth is, “a traditional story which embodies a belief regarding some fact or phenomenon of experience and which often the forces of nature and of soul are personified; a sacred narrative regarding God, a hero, the origin of world or of the people etc.” (32)

While focusing on Amish Tripathi's opinion, it is more interesting, "Myths are nothing but jumbled memories of a true past, a passed under mounds of earth and ignorance." (112)

To understand the reception, it is generally believed that, it is something the way we response or receive the text, but it's a little bit more than that. One important aspect to remember while talking about reception of literature is, “where meaning can be found and from where the influence is taken.” Different theories focus on the meaning being found in the ‘writer’, the ‘text’ itself or the ‘reader’, but it is basically focused on the reader, how the reader is engaged in the text and what type of sense does the reader take, the meaning of text is not really there until the reader engages with it. At the end it comes out as if how the reader receives. The reception of the text is more interesting because each of the reader is different and each reader may have different perspective and response either.



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For this concept one can create a margin with, “What an ideal reader can receive and what kind of audience the text can engage?” It is researcher’s utmost duty to understand out of the box, that what the variety of reader can receive or interpret from the piece of the text. The ideal way to receive and interpret the text is based on the expectation, those are created by the text i.e., if text gives a situation of a character and its deeds, the expectations would be created by the receiver for the future that this should happen with the character. The question arises when the events move on, whether the expectations are full-filled? Do the things happened as the reader expected? Or the events redirected the receiver for the other expectations, so this is purely based on responding and receiving the text.

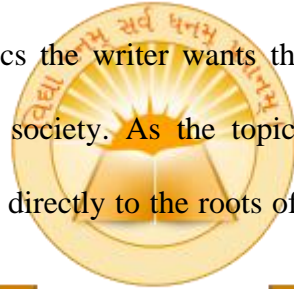


Personal Engagements

The reader generally receives for responds to the text as he was treated in the condition or situation in past and what were his on circumstances and the personal experience, all these things reflects the reception of the text, when the receiver or the reader is engaged with the text so one can make out that the reception is based on the personal way of receiving the text.

Shivapurana and The Shiva Trilogy

Through the study of the primary sources of the research one can easily understand that Amish Tripathi is impacted by the myth and he has applied it very practically in his work. The background, setting, culture, region and characters used in the Shiva Trilogy are clear evidence of Shivapurana's influence on him. With the help of these characteristics the writer wants the reader to reach in the past and feel the conditions and situations of the ancient society. As the topic is received from the past of the Indian Mythology and Purana, it joins the reader directly to the roots of one's own origin and the beginning of the mankind and society developments.



The aim of Amish Tripathi is to present Shivapurana to the modern man with the help of literature itself, but in a contemporary way. So that the reader can understand the importance of Myth and Mythology. The Myths are nothing but a law-book which sets the example for the society with the help of simple yet powerful and influencing examples from the society itself. The only change is the editing of supernaturalism, extra ordinary deeds, special events and different influencing characters. Sometimes the message or the morals are passed through the normal conversations or the actions of the characters also.

The main concept which is taken as the route of entire trilogy is 'Somras', the divine drink a kind of Amrit which increases the life of the consumer. The idea is surely taken from the purana, but Amish has not missed a single chance to prove all of the supernatural events with a scientific view and explanation, and



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that is actually the Indian culture. The use of different medicines, rules for society, social rituals, way of living, the war strategy, the weapon systems, training of the army, development of materialistic pleasure and many other things too. When we go through all the experiences the only thing, we feel is the lack of industrial revolution, otherwise the society that is displayed especially in Meluha is far better and more developing in compared to the contemporary social life.

The concept of Shiva itself flows out to show the reception of Shivapurana on the writer. Shiva, from the Shiva Trilogy, a man of 1900 BCE, for whom the writer himself says;

“The story of the man,

whom legend turned into a God.”

If the focus is moved on Amish Tripathi’s narrative technique once the reader might get misguided by comparing the protagonist Shiva as the lord Shiva in the Hinduism, but the story twists when the protagonist himself gets the information about the Lord Rudra, who is saviour of the mankind and especially Meluha, The Kingdom of Suryavanshi’s. This introduction also makes Shiva to know the ideas of *Avatar*, which the public of Meluha was thinking for Shiva himself. A special psychological trauma continues for both the reader and the protagonist. Each and every character performs their duty to express his or her own role.



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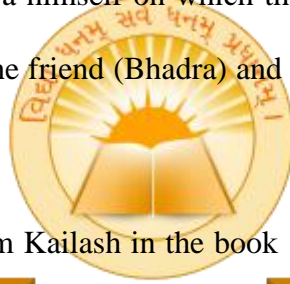
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Influence from The Shivapurana

The different ideas taken from *Shivapurana* and Indian mythology are as follows. The story begins from the land of foothills of Mount Kailasha that is considered from the Tibetan region. the Mount Kailash is the base of reception a place that is believed were the Lord Shiva rests. The appearance of the protagonist in the Shiva Trilogy is also as similar as the Lord Shiva; the strong body who wears the "Vyagh Charm", the skin of a Tiger. A tribal community who is struggling for the existence, with the opponent tribe that is 'Prakriti' the simple meaning of the word Prakriti is the nature. The Tribe that lives on the foothills of mount Kailash it is obvious for them to struggle and fight with the nature for the existence. The companion of Shiva in the Shiva Trilogy is Bhadra again a character from the Shivapurana itself in Purana Bhadra is an *Avatar* or an incarnation of the Lord Shiva himself on which the lord can have faith and trust without any doubt, similarly the protagonist believes the friend (Bhadra) and a constant companion like his own Shadow from the beginning of the book 1.



After the migration to Meluha from Kailash in the book 1, of Shiva Trilogy the protagonist sees the first civilized people and the society in his life. He sees the land of Meluha, A '*Ramrajya*' a nearly perfect empire that was established by the lord Rama in the past. *Ramrajya* is an ideal place to live, and that is ruled by Suryavanshis, the word '*Ramrajya*' is symbol of honesty equality Unity security and fraternity. The successor of Surayavansh and that is Lord Ram himself. The setting of Meluha is also an evidence that gives us information about the influence of Ramayana and Indian Epic composed by the ancient sage Valmiki.

The root cause of the problem and issue in Meluha was '*Somras*' that is a divine drink that increases the human age and makes the human nearly immortal. The concept of this divine juice, *Somras* is the clear influence of Vishnu Puran and the Bhagwata Puran in which the deities and the domains churns the ocean for the nectar of immortality, that is well known as *Amrit* in Indian myths. Here in the narration, the similar



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incidence is developed which symbolises the Somras as the poison, *Vish* according to the Indian mythology. At the arrival of Meluha the medical check-ups were done of Shiva and the fellows of the tribe who migrated along with him. And a medicinal syrup was given to them for the wellbeing and fitness, Now the story begins, everyone from the tribe was suffering from fever and other health issues first but the protagonist Shiva does not suffer from any health issue rather his neck turned blue and he was considered as '*Neelkanth*' the saviour of Meluha, according to the ancient legend but the important thing to understand the reception here is the event of '*Neelkanth*'. Lord Shiva in Hinduism is considered as '*Neelkanth*' because he consumed the poison the '*Vish*'. Where as in Shiva Trilogy, Shiva consumed the '*Somras*', a liquid or the juice of immortality. And becomes the '*Neelkanth*' this contradictory event explains that the '*Somras*' is something than be compared with the poison itself.



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Characters:

The clear influence can be seen with the names, introduction, features, behaviour, Peculiarity of the characters from the Shivpuran.

All the important characters in the Shiva Trilogy are as similar as the Shivapurana i.e. the protagonist Shiva, Sati, Ganesh, Daksh, Kali, Kartik, Parwateshwar, Sage Bhrgu, Sage Brihaspati, Veer Bhadra etc.

Shiva

Shiva the protagonist of the Shiva Trilogy is the character whose features, characteristics, deeds and even the expectation of the mass are similar to the Lord Shiva from the Shivpurana. Lord Shiva from the Shivpurana is considered as a peaceful personality who likes to be in *Samadhi Mudra* who lives at the Mount Kailash and is comfortable with his life partner that is Sati (Parvati) is similar to the peaceful soul



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like the protagonist of Shiva Trilogy by Amish Tripathi, yet capable enough to destroy everything at any moment like a warrior.

Sati:

Sati, wife of Lord Shiva from the Shivapurana and also the wife of protagonist of the Shiva Trilogy by Amish Tripathi, here the reader can observe a great similarity and also the influence of Shivpurana on the contemporary writer, through the events in both of the works Sati was not only the wife of Shiva but the daughter of Daksh Prajapati, the king who always takes care of his people. A king who loves his dignity the most and daughter a lot. Similarly, the Sati has two children in both of the works, here the writer of The Shiva Trilogy brings a fabulous dissimilarity, it might create a confusion but the story takes a twist when the introduction of the elder son clearly comes up as Ganesh, Sati's son, but not from Shiva and similarly in the Shiv Puran also Parvati had a child that was Ganesh and he was a child without a biological father and was born with Supernatural powers of Parvati herself. The other child, younger one was Kartik was a normal child by both parents and Amish masters in the scientific aspect. very well proved that Ganesh was a normal child by Sati but he wasn't the son of Shiva, i.e. Shiva was not the biological father of Ganesh.

In *Shivpurana* two different characters are presented for the same post that is Lord Shiva's wife, Sati the daughter of Daksh Prajapati and Parvati that means daughter of the Parwat, that is a mountain. Where in the Shiva Trilogy by Amish only one character is portrayed, who is Sati daughter of Daksh Prajapati the king, the master of all the people but Amish Tripathi very nice the depicted a character 'Parvateshwar' as the fatherly personality for Sati.

Ganesh:

Each character is very well connected as if they all are inter-woven with various threads so perfectly



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to create a strong plot.

Ganesh is Sati's child in the Shiva Trilogy whose biological father is different than Kartik, the other siblings of Shiva and or Sati because Sati's first husband died due to illness and as Ganesh was born as a Naga, his resembled the Lord Ganesha itself from the Shivapurana. Lord Ganesh from the Shivapurana is a man with great strength and huge head of an elephant according to the myth, where as in Shiva Trilogy Ganesh is having a strong body but due to genetic mutation and side effects of Somras that was consumed by the mother and father, his nose grew longer as a trunk of an elephant and even the eyes moved to either sides like an elephant. This shows the clear influence and reception taken from the Shivapurana of Maharshi Ved Vyas. As Ganesh born as a Naga child (a child with mutation) he was sent to the southern part of India which was known as 'Naagbhoomi' the land of Nagas from the birth itself, as he was even unknown for the mother, that he was alive. He was taken care by the maternal aunty Kali another Naga.



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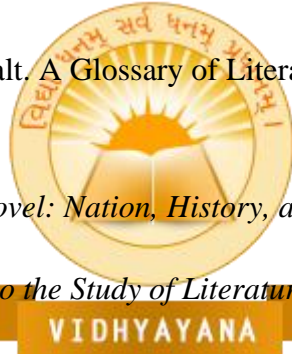
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