

(Post) Modernising Mythology: A Critical Reading of  
Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy*

A Dissertation Submitted  
to

**Sikkim University**



In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the  
**Degree of Master of Philosophy**

By

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# सिक्किम विश्वविद्यालय SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

(भारत के संसद के अधिनियम द्वारा वर्ष 2007 में स्थापित और नैक (एनएएसी) द्वारा वर्ष 2015 में प्रत्यायित केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालय)  
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I, **Shail Kumari**, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form the basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge, to anybody else and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other university/institute.

The content of this thesis has also been subjected to plagiarism check.

This is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Philosophy in the Department of English, School of Language and Literature.

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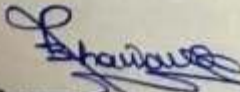
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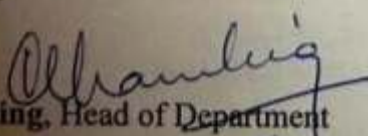
This is to certify that the thesis titled "(Post) Modernising Mythology: A Critical Reading of Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy*" submitted to **Sikkim University** for the fulfilment of the requirement of the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** in the Department of English, embodies the result of bonafide research work carried out by **Shail Kumari** under my guidance and supervision. No part of the thesis has been submitted for any other degree, diploma, association and fellowship.

All the assistance and help received during the course of the investigation have been duly acknowledged by her.

We recommend this thesis to be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

  
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**“(Post) Modernising Mythology: A Critical Reading of  
Amish Tripathi’s *Shiva Trilogy*”**

Submitted by **Shail Kumari**, under the supervision of **Dr. Ram Bhawan Yadav**,  
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### **NOTE ON DOCUMENTATION**

All reference and bibliographic details in this dissertation have been done in accordance with the MLA handbook for writers of research papers, 8<sup>th</sup> edition. Secondary references have also been provided in accordance with the parenthetical specifications of the MLA handbook.

## Chapter I

### Introduction

#### **Introduction:**

The historical account of human knowledge is full of mythical narratives depicted by tales and transmitted from one generation to another by oral or Transcribed ways. When one looks into the basic fabrication of mythical patterns, the question arises, what is Myth? From where does the idea of myth come to people's mind, why it is so fascinating that writers are involved with the Myth as their epicentre, and want to convey their thoughts through the outlines of myths. There exists almost a myth about everything, from creating this cosmos to how things have taken place with human being and have provided entanglement in the societal structure. These are the tales of tradition and culture, which are narrated or passed on from generation to generation from grandparents/ parents to their grandchildren/ children respectively in order to make them aware about the importance of good deeds and the punishment for bad deeds.

Religion is the circumference in which myth is embedded. Every religion has its own relatable myth for their people. Myths are deeply embedded in the cultural roots which show their deity in rightful manner to follow their spiritual path, a system of faith for each one of us. It has a purpose to be served in day to day life, at times it acts as a metaphor for reality. William Bascom in his article, *The forms of Folklore: Prose Narrative* (1965) tells "Myths are prose narratives which, in the society in which they are told, are considered to be truthful account of what happened in the remote past" (Bascom 4). Some times while telling stories, things are tinted according to the storyteller. There is high probability that the storyteller might forget



or add on things or might reduce up the storyline according to his/ her suitability and at times, it depends on the group of listeners on the basis of age and gender as well.

### **Defining and Understanding Myth:**

The word 'Myth' has its origin from the Greek word 'Muthos', which means 'word', 'speech' or story. This Greek Word 'Muthos' use to be interchangeable with another Greek term 'Logos', which means 'word' or 'that which express thought'. With the etymological definition of 'Myth', there are several theories about its origin. There are number of theorists who have defined myth, Robert A. Segal defines, his book *Myth A Very Short Introduction* (2004) "myth as a story, and he incorporates day to day stories in order to present Americans 'rags to riches' story where an underprivileged young lad saves or helps an heirless rich person and in order to be rewarded he ends up having everything" (Segal 3). In earlier times there were mythical stories which can be classified under subtypes of myth like divine myth if it is related to gods and goddesses because God is the supreme being and we are the shadows of him, they teach us the rules for being human. Then there is nature myth, which elaborates the natural occurrences; next there is afterlife myth, which tells about the life that we will have once we will leave this mundane world, when physical form of our body will not exist anymore; next is origin myth which tells about the birth of natural or social world. Then there is prestige myth related to dignity and honour of the protagonist and at last, there is eschatology myth, which tells about the destruction of the world. Slowly with the advent of time and expansion of literary curiosity, these stories have taken the shape of theories because myths do not have boundaries but it has variety that serves many purposes. Cultural myths come under the branch of Anthropological

theories of myth. Theories of psychological myth deals with mind whereas theories of sociological myth deal with society. So it is clear that myth has a wide spectrum spread all around touching all spheres, but what brings all these together in one horizon is the core purpose of myth; as Robert A. Segal in his book *Myth A Very Short Introduction* has given us the clue when he says, “What unites the study of myth across the disciplines are the questions asked. The three main questions are those of origin, function and subject matter” (Segal, 2). And he further contemplates about these three important credo related to the myth and attempts to connect them from theory to theory, there are theories that read myth literally relatable with gods, some set for the symbolical purpose that what it intends to symbolise meaning for humanity. Segal also mentions about some prominent theorists who practice or exercise the theories related to myth. He tells that for Claude Lévi- Strauss, the ‘Structure’ of myth is more important than the story, particularly the theories which are associated with symbolic reading patterns. Theorists like Rudolf Bultmann and Hans Jonas are more inclined towards the function of myth. In his introduction, the author talks about the myth of Adonis. He tells the stories of Adonis one that is found in Apollodorus’ *Library* and another that exist in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. Both the stories are associated with the story of Adonis’ incestuous birth. He was born from incest between father and daughter, and was extremely beautiful. Goddess Aphrodite was awestruck by his charm so she had confined him in a chest and passed it to Persephone therefore, asked her not to open it but the moment she opened it, she was smitten by his look and then fight between the goddesses started. Zeus solved the matter by dividing it into three quarters and allowed Adonis to choose his partner. He chose to spend his time with the goddess Aphrodite but he never exactly came out from that division. He died in a very young age by a boar’s attack out of Ares’

jealousy and the story ends with this note. As for as Ovid's *Metamorphoses* the tale is based on the similar pattern but at the end, it extends after his death, Venus through her magic bloomed flower anemone, unlike Apollodorus' story Ovid's story gives a reason/ story behind the short life of anemone flower.

### **Myth- Methods and Analysis:**

There are certain perspectives or approaches through by which we can analyse myth if it is considered as from of a text. It is known that not every tale is written down; myths are basically orally narrated and transferred in community. There are certain myths that are present in written form, hence those can be analysed on the basis of Intrinsic and Extrinsic approaches. In intrinsic approach the structure of the myth itself is analysed through following the systematic occurrence of incidents, finding symbolic meanings and theme of the myth. Whereas extrinsic approaches have certain sub divisional theories. Under these theories first comes the expressive theory according to which the myth has already been written hence it led to the possibilities of exploring the author or narrator's perspective from within, experiences and concerns, particularly the style of the author. For example, from Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex*, the psychological theorist Sigmund Freud derives out the concept or term 'Oedipus complex'. Moving ahead there comes, the effective theory in which we try to notice that how certain types of characters and events affect the listeners and why do they react so strongly to it, therefore, it raises question about the released psychological mechanism. Third in the line is mimetic theory, which explores the connection between the myth and the culture that it has created. It queries about the customary rituals and its evolvment in the society. Mimetic theorists are more inclined towards myth more or less as realistic reflections. They try to relate origin of objects, places and names; these can also be called Euhemeristic myths, which will be

explored in the second chapter of the thesis. Then the last approach is comparativist theory by which different myths of different cultures are compared and through this comparison, the similarities and conflicts between the existing myths in different cultures can be comprehended. It tries to find out the structure relevance, characterisation of the protagonists and their journey; it also tries to retrieve for the similar symbols, motifs, themes, and most importantly the human nature that the protagonist and characters persist in them.

### **Theorising Myth:**

Joseph Campbell an American professor of literature in his book, *The Hero's Journey* (1991) talks about the journey of mythological adventure of the hero. He designs three stages of a hero's life. The first stage is separation or departure where the adventure of the hero's life starts, he tries to avoid the situation but supernatural beings and other unsuspected episodes take place that eventually lead to the acceptance call, then he crosses the first threshold of his life and starts his gloomy journey of the night. This can be metaphorical because the protagonist had to travel through the passage which will take him into the realm of night. The second stage is the trials and victories of Initiation, in this stage the hero is tested both in his wisdom and in power; map is drawn by the dangerous aspects of gods. Hero is tempted by the mundane attractions that can mislead him and when the hero comes to the realisation of it, he transforms into the supper being and gets the final boon. The third stage is the return and reintegration of the hero with society. In this stage, the hero denies for returning to the world but something magical happens and he returns to the world of common day; now hero has the knowledge about the world and he becomes the master of two

worlds therefore gets the freedom to live the natural life and to practice the ultimate boon.

Another author David Adams Leeming in his book *Mythology: The Voyage of the Hero* (1973) has given the concept of eight stages of the story. He starts with the auspicious conceiving and birth of the hero. Second stage is about the miraculous childhood journey and initiation of divine signs like performing bravery acts which transform him into an extra-ordinary person who is different from rest of the crowd and then as a reward ends up by receiving special powers or a boon. Third stage involves the hero into a spiritual journey where he finds the unknown within himself by practicing meditation and eventually gets prepared for the further tasks. Fourth stage is his test and quest. The hero has to go through a number of dangers and fight escapades in order to complete all the tasks and to bring balance in the world. Fifth stage tells that hero has to die, again it might be a metaphorical death and mourning phase occurs which generally leads to the bad fate for the people and land. In sixth stage hero has to face the journey of underworld and the spectre of death. In seventh stage reincarnation of the hero takes place, once again, he gets united with the natural world and as this happens, the curse is uplifted from the people and land therefore the positive energy is restored again. Eighth and final stage shows how the reincarnated hero is united with the supreme power and becomes a deity for the society and nation.

It is evident from both the authors that they have defined the structure well and there are few things in common. David Adams Leeming has defined specially the childhood phase in a much better and elaborative manner which is a major lacking in Joseph Campbell's three-stage structure, while dealing with the characteristics of hero. There are few more points that could be compared like Leeming focuses on the Hero's actual death and rebirth whereas Campbell stress on the destined fate and

attaining boon. Then there is the discussion about the apotheosis, which Campbell put in much earlier in the narrative but Leeming put this at the last stage of his structure. The other advancement in the Campbell's system of monomyth with Leemings is that latter it connects the hero's story with the seasonal cycle. The different stages of hero's life are relatable and compared with the cycle of the seasons. Hero's childhood is symbolically compared with Spring season. Early growing phase where the hero blooms is analogous to summer. Downfall, sacrifice and journey of underworld is corresponding with winter and his rebirth is compared with spring once again.

This comparison turns out consistent with Campbell's own formation of hero's monomyth which is the microcosmic comparison for the myths of creation of cosmogonic myths. Campbell makes it more prominent by stating "the goal of the monomyth whether in its heroic seasonal or cosmogonic form is essentially the same, to realize the all in one, the whole in the self" (Campbell 386) and to line up this experience this experience this unity for ourselves.

It is an important aspect to be discussed because myth has always been associated with literature. In contemporary times myth literature has taken a new form of literature. Author William Rieger in his book *Myth and Literature*(1975) quotes Warren and Wellek that "myth is narrative, irrational ...story telling of origins and destinies, the explanation ... of why the world is and why we do what we do" (05). Myth and literature share a bond, whenever author tries to relate with a thought to make an impact on present. For example, classical playwright Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* had inspired P.B Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. He starts his story where Aeschylus ends. The story starts with the grounded and chained Prometheus who was petrified and punished for eternal for giving fire to humankind. Shelley made

Prometheus free because somewhere he wanted to be free himself from his own pain and as literary personality, it came out as a form of lyrical drama.

Canadian author Margaret Atwood says, “myth lay out pretty clearly what is on the human smorgasbord: what we want, what we fear, what we would very much not like to have. Those human fears and human desires really have not changed and they’re reflected in the myths that have been with us for long time.” ( atwood 156). These lines of Atwood are absolutely relatable with Indian myth and literature as well. Our own myth has given an outnumber of outstanding literary products for each condition. *The Vedas, Upnishadas, Puranas, Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are not only narratives but it reflects the skeleton of the society. By performing anatomy on these mythical texts, we get radical elements and aids to manage society and bring balance in the society. These have the potential to unveil social problems and creating awareness, which is very important for Indian culture. Girish Karnad was an author who started his literary career with mythological character of Mahabharata. The name of the play is *Yayati* (1961). He takes the character from the Mahabharata who was the predecessor of kauravas and Pandavas, he was cursed with premature old age by his father-in-law Sukracharya for his infidelity but latter he was allowed that he can exchange his old age with his son’s youth then his younger son offered his youth to his father.

Writers like Shashi Deshpande and Shashi Tharoor has dealt with mythology and historical events in order to present contemporary social issues and problems. Shashi Deshpande in her anthology of short stories *The Stone Women* (2000) has chosen female characters from *Mahabharata* and tried to give them their own voice; the characters are Amba, Gandhari, kunti and Draupadi. Kunti’s story has been retold from the perspective of being first wife of Pandu and her desire for self –acclaim

resulted in the protest for regaining her lost identity. Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* (1989) is good choice for picking up the myth from *Mahabharata*. Though the genre is satirical it compares the post-independence political condition with the *Mahabharata*. The author reset the story of new born Indian democracy and a constant struggle between groups and individuals closely related by their personal and political histories. Certain episodes are very significant from mythical narrative patterns like Ved Vyas explaining the society division in India. Gangaji is participating in a round table conference are excellently fabricated as a novel.

Authors always explore new paths to re-inspire the society by using myth. The vivid range of these voices that were subdued in the main text, but those silenced, marginalised and ignored communities they revert with their own voices. The socio-ethics are re-evaluated and questions are raised by deciphering the meaning through various interpretations. It is obvious that myths have been used as prominent tool to expose many crucial incidents of contemporary India. Paralleling through myth plots, those burning issues are re-narrated. It offers them a new meaning and insights by giving a new theme. To make it simpler writers highlight the prevailing issues like freedom movement, casteism, poverty, economic inequality, men- women relationship in the patriarchal society, death of cultural rituals and resources, politics and communal riots, scientific progress and the spreading diseases. Myth is modified to express all the thoughts in a full-fledged manner.

Henceforth Claude- Lévi-Strauss in his *The Structural Study of Myth* (1955) states that “what gives the myth an operational value is that the specific pattern described as timeless; it explains the present and the past as well as the future. This can be made clear through a comparison between myth and what appears to have largely replaced it in modern societies, namely politics” (430).



This is what Amish Tripathi is trying to do with his experimentation with Indian Myth and his emanating idea has produced a brilliant work like *Shiva Trilogy*. In his interview he talks about how this idea was germinated while he was watching a programme. He came to know that in ancient Persian culture, demons were called Devas and Gods were Asura. This gave him an idea that how various civilization approaches same idea with different ways. He comes from a religious background and is a voracious reader of History and Philosophical text. Therefore, he amalgamated both historical elements with Lord Shiva's myth and presented it as a unique creation by devoiding all the divinity but maintaining the humanity in his character.

Amish Tripathi is a contemporary fiction writer from India, who has diligently yoked together the usage of myth and modernity in his novels and has established himself as a literary figure in spite of being a banker. His works are oriented towards a new kind of genre in India where Mythological characters are connected with modernity. The blending of myth and modernity has formulated a new kind of writing singling for assertion and identification of a new genre whereby new mode of storytelling and experimentation with narrative techniques question human's preoccupied perspectives on various issues. The Oxford Dictionary defines myth as 'a traditional story, especially one concerning the early history of people or explaining a natural or social phenomenon and typically involving supernatural beings or events'. Myth plays an important role in our life and in our society too. There is no culture and literature which is devoid of myths; it bridges the gap between the cultural elements and the language which provides a moral to strengthen the society. It reinvigorates the values and faith in humanity even when things are against the tides and are always related to religion from ancient to present time. Myths are always fascinating to human discourses. Are the myths we talk about an illusion or a measure to go into the

reality? In English literature poets used it as illusion, in postmodern Indian English Writing as a canon feature. Writers and artists keep on revisiting myth to find some similarity, marginality or certain predominant ideas which are prevailing in the society. Indian postcolonial writers kind of slams door on the colonialist by extolling their own myth which reclaims the subdued voices or marginalised identity, every community and society has their own patterns of myth and belief systems and their existence have initiated a new mode of interrogation leading to the dismantling and disintegrated spirit to the unifying narrative of discourses. Their revisiting and rewriting emanates new productivity and perception to human centric discourses. The observation of K Satchidanand is quite seminal to note when he applies myths in the sense of “productive in their retelling”. From the 1980’s, rewriting myths were being highlighted among the Indian English Writers who used them in their fictional works to show distinct individuality and distinction of one human society to that of another. This new experiment with narrative methodology provides spaces where the uses of postmodern offshoots concerning with writings (art of narration) started to change fixity of human intellect resulting into various social and philosophical crisis.

The other word ‘modernity’ which was first introduced by a French poet and essayist Charles Baudelaire in the mid of nineteenth century in connection with modern arts and literature. He popularised the term at a time when living standards of the people were being affected by the mushrooming of industrialization, urbanization and secularization. In nutshell it can be understood that new disintegration and reformation, fragmentation with rapid growth new understanding of time and spaces i.e. speed mobility, communication, travel chaos and Cultural Revolution were taking place in the society where new technologies were incorporated with the progress and

betterment of human race and society. The common meaning of modernity says that ‘modernity is the condition that results from being modern’.

The outline frame of the novels in *Shiva Trilogy* is divided into three series. *The Immortals of Meluha (2010)* is the first novel of the *Shiva Trilogy* series by Amish Tripathi. The story is set in the land of Meluha and it starts with the arrival of the Shiva, leader of the Guna Tribe from Tibet. The Meluhan believe that Shiva has come as their Saviour and name him Neelkantha because he drank somras (a potion for anti-ageing) which makes his throat blue. Shiva decides to help the Meluhans in their war against their enemy of another community called Chandravanshi, who had joined forces with cursed Nagas; however, during his journey and the fight that ensues, Shiva learns how his choices actually reflect who he aspires to be and how they lead to the dire consequences. Second book in the series *The Secret of Nagas (2011)* opens all the knots related to the mysteries of Naga Tribe, it answers all questions related to their origin and identity. A properly justified scientific argument has been proposed by the author in his woven literary world. The last book of the series, *The Oath of Vayuputras (2013)* reveals all the politics behind the manufacture of the somras and unveils the concept of different cultures and their acceptance in the society. It also talks about the working science behind Daiviasstras i.e. destructive weapons, and a profound study will be done on the novels mythological characters and use of modernity.

### **Research Problem and Significance of study**

This research will attempt to formulate or associate with the emanating ideas, the distinct concept of myth and how they are being used in the contemporary cultural,

political and historical discourses. The advent of science and technology has commodified the nature of knowledge and their implementation for attaining human goals. These philosophical and structural changes in society have created liquid spaces for individuals and have provided them various reasons to question the established foundation of societal norms and belief systems. The societal condition has become problematic for unifying narrative of homogeneity and is leaking into multiple narrative of heterogeneity in human centric discourses. This poses a threat to the meta- narratives attached with humanity and other philosophical foundations centre towards individual on one line of thought. In such kind of circumstances when meta-narratives and the emergent narrative of sciences failed to cater the need of humanity, new form of narrative is essentially required to hold humanity and this may be possible by blending together myth and modernity.

**Aims and Objectives:**

This research proposal aims to revisit and re-examine [some narratives] of myth assuring contemporary discourses on it by borrowing some conceptions from the cultural condition of modernity. It will take into account some revisionist (art of re-interpretation) methods in order to dismantle singularity and homogeneity of authenticity, meaning and truthfulness, while assimilating disgruntled narratives asserting for distinct form of life and identity. It will also aim to underline and locate multiple unheard voices and will attempt to develop contemporary disgruntled voices in the form of assimilation pattern concerning with being human. This research project will attempt to develop contemporary disgruntled voices in the form of assimilative forces or narrative aiming to provide logical coherences to the micro-narrative of contemporary societies. This research project will take into account the emergence of political and social consciousness in the life of the marginalised people

and its outcome in the contemporary literary and social discourses. This project while focusing on the selected novels will also try to contribute to society in human life by contextualising and analysing them in the new perspectives.

### **The Significance of Studies and Limitation:**

This research plan will be an attempt to analyse Amish Tripathi's series of novel *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of Nagas* and *The Oath of Vayuputras* all together also known as *Shiva Trilogy*. The writer has amalgamated myth and modernity in his work and has produced a new form of modern literature. New twist and turns have been set forth for the long established myths of centuries. The implementation of these themes needs to be critically analysed and looked into the depth for what the piece of work it is. In Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy*, the myth of Indian gods is blended with modernity [technology and sciences]. There are certain descriptions that will show how these two things are mixed together. In Tripathi's world the gods are mortals and they became immortals because of their valour and good deeds. Shiva is not portrayed as a God in the novel but he is represented as a man of power and ethics, his war and struggle for establishing an egalitarian world makes him Immortal. The element of myth and modernity, gender studies, battle fights will be dealt chapter wise. Although there are many aspects, which have been left out from the corpus of this work and it is not possible to include, considering time and spaces required to be devoted to this work. They need to be interrogated separately and the concluding part of the thesis will refer to those issues for further research.

This research work will be focused on the concept of myth and modernity in the select work of Amish Tripathi and will critically engage with them according to the appropriate theoretical patterns

### **Research Methodology:**

It will include a close textual analysis of the *Shiva Trilogy* with the reference to art of re-narration of Indian mythology. In order to explore his works an extensive literary research will be required for knowing the background. After knowing the backdrop of the novel the elements of modernity will be exfoliated in my work. Myth and Modernity by coming together has given birth to a new genre of literature in India. Though it was highlighted in the western modern cult literature with the writing of Stephenei Meyer's *Twilight Saga*, where the concept of Vampires and modernity was mixed and matched. It will also trace the mythical study of the characters specially lord Shiva and the concept of modernity given by Charles Baudelaire's *Painter of the Modern Life*. In short it will be a qualitative research methodology.

### **Literature Review:**

As this trilogy by Amish Tripathi was completed in 2013 not much critical works have been done, there are a few countable critical works or papers that have been written with the perspective of myth and modernity. Dr.Kavita S. Kusugal has given a review as a *Deconstructing the myth in Amish Tripathi's Shiva Trilogy (2015)*. A combine study has been done by RakhiDeshmukh& Jaya Dwivedi on *Reinterpretation of Amish Tripathi's Shiva Trilogy with selected verses of BhagwatGeeta(2016)*, where he has been portrayed as an able leader and Vikram Singh has done from the perspective of *Rewriting myth; A critical Analysis of Amish Tripathi's Shiva Trilogy(2016)*. Here we can see that all the research work is in fragmented and in a scattered form.

## **Tentative Chapter Division:**

### **Chapter I: Introduction**

1.1. Concept of Myth and related theories to analyse the *Shiva Trilogy*

1.2. Concept of Modernity in the Society and in the *Shiva Trilogy*

### **Chapter II: History, Text and Context; A Reading of *Immortals of Meluha***

2.1. Revisionist version of history in the novel

2.2. Tracing the journey of myth and modernity intended in the novel

### **Chapter III: Modernity, Medicine And Myth in *The Secret of Nagas***

3.1. Modernity and its Component and their impacts on Social and Psychological

formation of human thought

3.2. Exploration of medical issues with the connection of Nagas in the novel

3.3. Study of Gender and Caste System in the novel

### **Chapter IV: Narratives of Human Sciences & *The Oath of Vayuputras***

4.1. Technology, influencing Mankind perspective

4.2. Concepts and study of Aastras intended in the novel.

### **Chapter V: Conclusion**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The first chapter will be divided into two sub chapters i.e. the study of the concept of myth and the various theories related to mythical studies so that, the idea would be clear. The Second part of the chapter will focus on concept, definition and theory of modernity and how it was introduced in the society among common masses, and how it is different from the modernism. As these two sub chapters will provide a base to my proceeding research work.

### **Chapter 2: History, Text and Context: A reading of *The Immortals of Meluha***

This is the first novel of the series from where the quest will begin and a revisionist version of history will be re-examined in order to find out alternative version of history. The chapter will include discursive discourses on history and some of the prominent thinkers and their works in order to provide coherent multiples voices of history into one line argument. The chapter will attempt to dissect the novel's historical aspects. It will also trace the journey of history towards modernity. The argument in the chapter will look into the city of Meluha making them to meet with the modern circumstances and will initiate the exploration of modernity intended in it.

### **Chapter 3: Modernity, Medicine and Myth in *The Secret of Nagas***

This chapter will be divided in three parts. The first part of the chapter will attempt to define modernity and its components and their impacts on social and psychological formulation of human thought. The second part of the chapter will take into the connectors linking myths and medicine from anthropological and mythical perspectives. The third part of the chapter will concentrate on the text and will explore the issues related to medical science as nagas are no one but the genetic mutation population of the Meluha who have been disowned because of their body mutation and will also do a gender and cast study will also be discussed in this chapter.



**Chapter 4: Narratives of Human Sciences and *The Oath of Vayuputra***

The fourth chapter of the thesis will be divided in two parts. The first part of the chapter will try to capture the changes influencing human perspectives from various affairs of human life. The second part of the chapter will look into the issues related with technique of wars and it will be dealt with actual scientific technologies and it will dismantle construction of the well-being protected city and we will try to look that whether this part has a hint of being a science fiction or not? This chapter will also look into the arts of narrative at whole.

**Conclusion:**

The research findings would attempt to contextualize and correlate myth, history and narrative with a comprehensive study analysis. The journey of the novel begins with quest of evil in others but gradually it seems that there is no evil in others rather it is inside us. This series has a profound philosophy 'Karma' which is relevant to contemporary society. The myth and history are combined together which is reflecting our present i.e. society with new emerging diseases, environmental issues and many more which will be discussed in an elaborative manner with concrete theoretical concepts in the thesis.

## Chapter 2

### History, Text and Context: A reading of *The Immortals of Meluha*

#### Introduction:

This chapter focuses on the concept of history according to the contemporary realities and academic discourses which have emanated with the arrival of modernist/postmodernist version of historical discourses. The arrival of modernism and post modernism dismantled the stereotypical or traditional version of history by developing multiple mini and micro narratives aiming to provide peripheral vices through questioning the validity and authenticity of colonial/ traditional version of history. The modernist history is ruptured from within and fails to provide a unifying narrative of humanity because of its various versions and each of them striving to assert their own individuality and historicity. This ambivalence and topsy-turvy attempts to formulate a complex socio and cultural condition in the text, making it difficult to line up a linear narrative pattern based on actual and valid historical and social account. With enlightenment projects and after 1980's the ways to conceptualise and to rewrite the accounts changed drastically owing to the influences of discourses like modernity, postmodernity and postcolonialities. These metamorphoses in literary discourses bridged the distances between an individual and nation, a reader and listener, a master and a servant by subverting the foundational philosophies, which had had conditioned humanity by unbalancing ideologies.

David Lodge in his book *The Art of fiction* (2011) has talked about the beginning of novel that how, initial paragraph frames the body of the novel and also gives an idea about the progress of the novel. He asserts, "there are, of course, many other ways of beginning a novel and readers browsing through this book will have

opportunities to consider some of them, because I have often chosen paragraph of a novel or story to illustrate other aspects of the art of fiction (it spares me from having to summarise the plot). But perhaps it is worth indicating the range possibilities here. A novel may begin with a set-piece description of a landscape or townscape that is to be the primary setting of the story.” (07). The novel *The Immortals of Meluha* (2010) opens up with the setting of novel, “1900 BC, Mansarovar Lake (at the foot of Mount Kailash, Tibet)” and then the paragraph starts with a beautiful description of landscape introducing the protagonist of the novel, “Shiva gazed at the orange sky. The clouds hovering above Mansarovar had just parted to reveal the setting sun. The brilliant giver of life was calling it a day once again. Shiva had seen just few sunrises in his twenty-one years. But the sunset! He tried never to miss the sunset! On any other day, Shiva would have taken the vista, the sun and the immense lake against the magnificent backdrop of the Himalayas stretching as far back as the eye could see. But not today.” (01). Setting of the novel gives us a date which can be seen as a fact and the Mount Kailash gives the sense or presence of Lord Shiva. After that the paragraph opens up with Shiva as a common person who was enjoying his leisure by staring at sky. Then the follow up line describes the evening. It gives the hope for a new day and a new beginning. It describes a normal day of a twenty-one-year lad who hardly sees a sunrise but try to seldom miss any sunset. The end of the paragraph: “But not today” gives the twist and sense of seriousness that it is not like the other normal days of his life. Henceforth there is no divinity in the plot but it sheds light on humanistic aspect of the hero in the novel.

As in the introductory chapter it has been discussed about John Campbell’s given treatise about a hero’s journey i.e. separation- initiation- return. It sets on the pattern of Amish Tripathi’s *Shiva Trilogy* the first book from the trilogy is *The*

*Immortals of Meluha* comes under the first stage i.e. separation. In order to proceed ahead in the chapter, it is very much important to analyse the hero's assigned task. The first book and in the very first chapter, 'He has come' is functioning in the same manner that his time or call for adventure has started because any how the hero of the novel Shiva is moved from his native place with the intervention of outsiders and internal war episodes between the two clans of tribe Guna and Pakratis. This was the sudden action in the plan of hero's journey and slowly it will take its own pace this was an important aspect to be introduced while we are proceeding ahead in chapter division because each book of trilogy has those elements of Campbell's treatise.

According to the heading of chapter, the proceeding will occur but why this heading? Answer lies here, in this line of the first book in The Shiva Trilogy author's page or note. On the very first page author mentions that: 'the Shiva Trilogy, which interprets the rich mythological heritage of ancient India, blending fiction with historical facts. Yes, it indeed started from the fact i.e. date, novel opens up with date '1900 BC'. This date in history text book refers to one of the oldest civilizations, Indus Valley Civilization. In Upinder Singh's *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India* (2009) we get a line "recent calibrated C-14 dates give a time frame of about 2600-1900 BCE for the urban phase in the core regions of the Indus Valley" (138). This is just the opening, proceeding forward in the chapter when Shiva along with his tribe enters into the land of Meluha, a description of Indus valley Civilization is portrayed in the text:

The platform built of earth, towered almost five metres high. On top of the platform were the city walls, which were another twenty metres high and four meters thick. The simplicity and brilliance of building an entire city on a platform astound the Gunas. It was a strong protection

against enemies who would have to fight their ways up a fort wall which was essentially solid ground. The platform served another vital purpose: it raised the ground level of the city, an extremely effective strategy against the recurrent floods in this land. Inside the fort walls the city was divided into blocks by roads laid out in a neat grid pattern. It had specially constructed market areas, temples, gardens meeting halls and everything else that would be required for sophisticated urban living. All the houses looked like simple multiple-storeyed block structures from the outside” ( Tripathi 11).

According to some scholars Meluha is the Sumerian name also attributed to Indus Valley Civilization hence forth there citizens Meluhaites. The geographical location of Meluha is described from north-western part of contemporary India and some parts of Pakistan. Henceforth the description described in the novel seems relatable to Indus Valley. There are many more characteristics of Indus valley civilisation mentioned in the first book of the Trilogy. While reading about Indus valley Civilisation and culture we got to know about the urban culture i.e. well-developed planned city with proper drainage system, governance system policy and one of the most important things is maintaining hygiene and Cleanliness. While going across the novel at very initial stage when immigrant Gunas enter to the Meluhan boundary they got a strict advice from Ayurvati, the chief doctor of Meluha that “one of the guidelines that you have to follow in order to control disease is to maintain strict hygiene standards” (Tripathi16). This is the way Indus Valley civilisation is described after the excavation process about its advance underground drainage system and personal washroom.

Recent excavations at Harappa have uncovered toilets I almost every house. The commodes were made of big pot sunk into floor....most of

the pots had a small hole in the base, through which water could seep into the ground” (148, upinder sing). Around same manner, things are dealt in the novel *The Immortals of Meluha*. “they cover the underground drains, Shiva. The drains take out all the waste of the camp. It ensures the camp remains clean and hygienic ( Singh 14).

In the fiction when all the Guna tribe members were allotted rooms in the guesthouse, there was a separate and attached washroom in each room in order to take care of their personal hygiene so Shiva was amazed by the advanced construction.

Each room had an attach bathroom with a sloping floor that enabled the water to flow naturally to a hole which inculcated in a large hole. The side walls have some kind of device, which when turned allowed water to flow through” (Tripathi14). The similarity can be seen by these lines “the fact that some house walls at Mohenjodaro survive up to a height of 5 m is a tribute to the strength of the bricks and the brick-laying skill of the Harappans (Singh 147). People lived in houses of different sizes, mostly consisting of rooms arranged around a central courtyard. Doorways and windows generally faced the side lanes and rarely opened onto the main streets. The view from the lane into the courtyard was blocked off by a wall. There are remains of staircases that may have led to the roof or a second storey. The fact that some of the houses at Mohenjodaro were two stories high or more is also suggested by the thickness of their walls ( Singh 148).

The similarity is clearly visible by using quotation from these two texts. This is an initiation of parallel similarities between the novel and the once upon a time existing

civilization. Gradually we will see how wonderfully the extinct civilization is once again revived with the blend of modernity inside of it.

For example, writers like Salman Rushdie in his fiction *Midnight's Children* has also dealt with the history of India-Pakistan-Bangladesh partition with a blend of magic realism. The creativity of Rushdie is at par excellence. The way this fiction starts, take up the narration and build up the fiction plot. In one single novel the story of two partitions has been told from 1947 to 1971.

Amish Tripathi has also used history but he took his base from once existing civilization that is Indus valley civilisation and put in the Hindu deities in his fiction. He made Shiva, leader of the Guna tribe. In Hindu mythology Shiva is known as 'destroyer'. In the fiction also, Shiva is destroyer of evil. The story in the novel has been retold but it has the same essence. The very first chapter of the novel, tells a new story that how Shiva was named as 'Neelkantha' in the novel. There is an ancient story which all of us are listening and watching on television as serial episodes that how Lord Shiva got his name 'Neelkantha'. The story behind the name was that, there was a dispute between Gods and demons while churning for elixir in order to become Immortals. In that course while churning in the Chhir Sagar they got poison and it was taken or kept in the neck by Lord Shiva in order to restore lives and save the world and because of that poison his throat turned blue and he got this name 'Neelkantha'. While in the fiction story rests on a soothsaying that Neelkantha will come and save all the Meluhan from the evil.

The legend says that the Neelkantha will be a foreigner. He cannot be from sapt-Sindhu. And that his throat will turn blue when he drinks the Somras" (Tripathi 119). Shiva the protagonist of the novel enters as an

immigrant in the Meluha and when he drank the ‘somras’ “the neck shone an eerie iridescent blue.... he turned around to the polished copper plate and stared in stunned astonishment at the reflection of his *Neel Kanth*; his blue throat” (Tripathi 24).

The so-called anti-oxidant poison, his neck became blue and he was named Neelkantha in the novel. Amish dared to mix and match the concept of Indian mythology, character, and historical facts of Indus valley Civilization and create a prominent trilogy. This shows his imagination level and clear conceptual knowledge because for a writer it is a matter of consciousness that whichever topic they are dealing with they must have the prominent knowledge about that subject. Amish proved this in his novels by interpreting the rich Indian mythological heritage with historical facts. The novel begins with the story line which is set in the 1900BC. The blend of Shiva mythology and Indus Valley Civilization also gears up page by page. Meluha is the focus centre in the entire trilogy and to save Meluha each and every step is taken and gradually the secret folders are unfolded in the due course of journey in the novel. Meluha is shown as a utopian place or empire in the novel where everything is perfect, Shiva praises “the land of pure life” (Tripathi 10).

This was a land of abundance, of most ethereal perfection. It was an empire ruled by clearly codified and just laws, to which every Meluhan was subordinated. Inclining the emperor. The country supported a population of nearly eight million, which without exception seemed well fed, healthy and wealthy (Tripathi 35).

Lord Ram centuries long back established this empire. He belonged to Suryawanshi clan. And each principle and rule has been set by him, although Lord Ram is a passive



character present throughout in the novel. Amish has given human attribution to Lord Ram by making him the founder of Meluhan Empire and perfect emperor. Parvateshwar is one of the important characters in the novel who tells, “Lord Ram, Suryawanshi of the Ikshvaku clan. Son of Dashrath and Kaushalya. Husband of Sita. Honoured and respected with the title of the seventh Vishnu” (Tripathi383). According to the *Ramayana* Ram was the incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

Historians were amazed to find that the Indus valley civilization had a developed uniform standard for weights and measurements, one fine example of this can be the bricks, which were found after excavation, whole civilization had uniform structure of bricks. In the novel also, Shiva was amazed on the apt standardisation of brick layers in whole Meluhan empire. “all the bricks in Meluha are made in accordance with specifications and guidelines given by the chief architect of the empire. They are all exactly of same dimension” (Tripathi63). One of the main monuments found in the excavation is the ‘great bath’ of Indus valley civilisation and this monument is also discussed in the fiction as well when Shiva was traveling in the royal citadel to meet the Emperor, “the only magnificent structure was to the far right and sported the sign ‘Great Public Bath’ (67). There are names in the novel like Lothal, Karchappa, Taksheela and Mohan Jo Daro, which are the names of Indus valley civilization cities.

Civilizations were situated near river and this Indus Valley civilization got its name from the river Sindhu or Indus. It flourished under the healthy environment and climatic condition and it came to an end because of the river. Somewhere the water level was high and somewhere water level was decreasing. Drying or dyeing of river is one of the major causes for the destruction of the Indus Valley Civilisation

water affects everything. We even get a paragraph in Upindar Sing's book on how or in what manner it might have affected the civilization.

The issue of environmental change can be connected to the ways in which the Harappans were treating their environment. Perhaps they were over –exploiting it through over cultivation, over grazing, and excessive cutting of trees for fuel and farming. This would have resulted in decreasing soil fertility, floods and increasing soil salinity. (Tripathi180).

In the Novel *The Immortals of Meluha* the grave danger was indirectly related Saraswati river. Saraswati river water plays the most important role in the lives of Meluhans because from her water only Somaras was made which made peoples of Meluha Immortals. In the novel also, Daksha was found showing his concern for river Saraswati in the conversation with Shiva and Parwateshwar. “The flow of Saraswati has been gradually warning for the last half century. The Saraswati doesn't even reach the sea now and ends in an island delta just of Rajasthan” ( Tripathi 112).

There is a reason behind it, that how Amish Tripathi has become a well-known face among the contemporary writers with his first novel, *Immortals of Meluha* which set a high record of sell in few weeks of its launch and gave him an international fame. Roland Barth has said in his essay *The Death of the Author* (1967) “this is because the true locus of writing is reading” (5) and Tripathi in his interview has told that he from very early age he was a voracious reader and his keen interest was in the subject of history. He comes from a very religious background that is the main reason that Lord Shiva is the Protagonist of the novel and rest are the mythological characters. Therefore, his love for reading History knowing different

culture and interest in Hindu Religion has yielded the *Shiva Trilogy*. He takes out the best from the past and then shows us the loopholes in the perfect governed so-called Ram Rajya where everything was too perfect.

In the novel, the author has mixed the antiquity with the modern elements that has made it amazing in the creation level. The spiral journey of the novel starts with war then it is proceeding with love, quest of the evil, karma factor and ends on the destiny. The Author has taken base of all the stories from *The Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Shivpurana*. He reconstructs all the stories but the essence, meaning and value remain the same and that is what the trilogy comes under the genre of epic fantasy. The story of Shiva in trilogy is dealt with the humanistic approach. Three fragments of the book take us on an amazing journey which starts from being a Tibetan Immigrant who comes to the land of Meluha for the safe and secured future of his tribe but eventually befalls under his destined task of ‘destruction of evil’. Unknowingly he became the incarnation of lord Rudra for all the peoples of the nation and his throat turned blue after he drank somras. His personal consciousness of what is evil and what is not makes him a good leader who was chosen to bring balance in the world and by the end he succumbed to his destiny then the novel ends in a very serene way with the last chapter “By the Holy Lake” (551).

The whole trilogy lies on the philosophical platform of ‘Karma’ and ‘Evil’. Shiva the protagonist goes under a transition phase of knowing the value of karma in life and then deciphering that what is ‘evil’. Wherever the word karma comes, it is any how relatable with the Gita. Devdutt Pattanaik in his book *My Gita (2015)* has said in a very simpler manner “the Gita can be deciphered simply by reversing the syllable that constitutes Gita. So, Gita, or ta-gi, becomes ta-gi, or tyagi, which means ‘one who let’s go of possessions” ( Pattanaik 2). The manner in which these novel

proceeds on the law of Vikarma, that is very much similar to untouchability that we had in our society- system but in novel, it has been projected in a subtle and sophisticated manner. Shiva and Nandi were in the main Rajat platform market when he heard the loud voice of a person who was giving direction about the procession of Vikarma Women. Then he was curious enough to know what is the matter and enquired about it from Nandi. Nandi tries his best to make his Lord aware about the rule of Vikarma people at his own level, he says:

‘Vikarma people, my Lord,’ said Nandi sighing deeply, ‘are people who have been punished in this birth for the sins of their previous birth. Hence they have to live this life out with dignity and tolerate their present sufferings with grace this is the only way they can wipe their karma clean of the sins of their previous births... They are not allowed to marry since they may contaminate others with their bad fate. They are not allowed to touch any person who is not related to them or is not part of their daily life. (Tripathi 95).

These Vikarma people become sort of untouchable in the society. This is the first time in the novel that Shiva raises a question about this law with a suspicion on the so-called epitome of perfect society. He replied to Nandi “A woman could have given birth to a still born child simply because she did not take proper care while she was pregnant. Or it could just be a disease. How can anyone say that she is being punished for this sin of her previous birth?” (96). Shiva strongly refuses this practice of Vikarma law of Meluha and asserts, “Well to be honest, it sounds like a rather unfair law to me” (96). In addition, as the discussion continues on the whole Varna system, a new idea of making everyone equal and fair chance i.e. Malika system has been noticed in the counsel of king Daksha. However, our prime focus is on ‘Karma’. It

will progress gradually through the journey of novel but for now let see the loop hope in the utopian empire when princess Sati herself is a Vikarma Woman though she has abided each law of being a Vikarma. In the novel author has woven a new story about the name 'Parvati' through old myths. We know that Parvati is the incarnated form of Sati who came another time to be with his love of life Shiv, but Amish has wonderfully given sati another name in same birth only by mentioning her as Parvateshwar's Goddaughter. This shows the level of compactness in the novel for each and every story line. Well setting back to the track this Vikarma law is the key from where we can see the corruptness of a king for his own interest. When Parvateshwar informs King Daksha that Shiva is developing a love interest towards Sati he was happy rather being concern because in Meluhan empire everyone is equal before the law, king was in favour of exploitation of law for his personal benefit.

“The Vikarma law...?”

It doesn't need to be changed, my lord,' said Daksha. 'If you decide to marry my daughter, then the law cannot stop you.'

'All the same,' said Shiva. 'That law must be changed'

'Of course, it will be my lord,' said a beaming Daksha... he continued, 'Make a proclamation to be signed by the Neelkantha, saying that from now on any noble woman who gives birth to a still-born child will not be classified as Vikarma.'

'No, your Highness,' interrupted Shiva. That not what I asked. I want the entire Vikarma law scrapped. Nobody will be a Vikarma from now

on. Bad fate can strike anyone. It is ridiculous to blame their past lives for it.’

Parvateshwar looked at Shiva in surprise. Though he did not like even a comma being changed in any of Lord Ram’s Laws principles — the same law applies to everybody, equally and fairly, without exceptions.

Daksha however looked at Shiva in shock. This was unexpected. Like all Meluhans, he too was superstitious about the Vikarma. His displeasure was not the Vikarma law itself but with his daughter being classified as one. But he quickly recovered and said, ‘of course my lord. The proclamation will state that the entire Vikarma law has been scrapped. Once you sign it , it will become law’ ( Tripathi 282).

The above conversation between the King Daksha and Shiva provides a clear version of a selfish King. That he wanted to scrap the law first only for his daughter, as he was personally sad for her own daughter. When Shiva was developing a love interest for Sati, Daksha was happy that her daughter will be no more belong to the group of Vikarma Woman which will add favour to his own side. Neelkantha will be his son-in-law that will make him a more powerful king then he can rule over the whole India. But when Shiva demanded that this law should be scrapped out for each and every citizen of Meluha, Daksha hesitated but he did not want to lose his own opportunity of being an Emperor of whole India. But Shiva’s firm decision brings out his own identity of being just and fair to everyone. This is what it makes him a Leader who understands equality before law for everyone. He saw this law inappropriate for every citizen therefore he thought over it and eradicated this law. This is what Devdutt Pattanaik has also told in his *My Gita* “Krishna’s solution involves analysis (sankhya)

and synthesis (yoga) – Slicing the whole into parts and then binding the parts into a whole” (Pattanaik 2).

## Chapter 3

### Modernity, Medicine and Myth in the Shiva Trilogy

#### Introduction:

The word modernity comes from the root word 'modo' which means 'current'. There are two terms budding up from the root, one is modernity and another is modernism, both are completely different from each other as they bear different concepts. First the former term 'modernity' will be discussed and then later one. Charles Baudelaire a French poet, essayist and an art critic in his book *The painter of Modern Life* (1863) has discussed about the term modernity as an individual topic. Where he tries to establish an intertwine relationship amongst beauty, fashion, and lifestyle from the perspective of an artist. The interpretation of an artist is always different from other common people. An artist will have a master, but through his/her endeavour and observant nature he/she creates own specimen. This creativity is a never-ending process along with the time, age and generation. Baudelaire writes in the starting lines of his essay *Modernity* "he is looking for that quality which you must allow me to call 'modernity'; for I know of no better word to express the idea I have in mind. He makes it his business to extract from fashion whatever element it may contain of poetry within history, to distil the eternal from the transitory" (Baudelaire 2). He gives examples of paintings and fabrics in his essay in order to make things clear. That how old master can teach you basics but not the speciality intended in their work of art. Further he provides a justification of his own understanding regarding the term 'modernity'. He says, "by 'modernity' I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable. Every old master has had his own modernity; the great majority of the fine portraits that have come down to gesture, glance and smile (for each age has a deportment, a glance and



a smile of its own)—everything, I say, combines to form a completely viable whole. This transitory, fugitive element, whose metamorphoses are so rapid, must on no account be despised or dispensed with.” (Baudelaire13). The infusion should be celebrated rather than to be criticised. Although Baudelaire has done it by bringing the comparisons of paintings of different artists and different era but he is a keen propagator of accepting changes in the society. In short, Baudelaire is inclining towards the progressing society, which includes new materials and fabrics. As this era was mushrooming with the inventions with the help of science; new technologies were budding up hence different kind of machines were made and with them varieties of products were launched in the market. Further, the modernity element, which will be discussed in this chapter, will be based on the intervention of different kind of fabrics and technologies and the related terms that are incorporated or infused in the novel. The term ‘Modernism’ has been discussed as an age in the chronological order of English literature. This was a movement where every art form for example music, painting, architecture and literature were becoming the subjects of experiments. In this period not only, literature but different art forms were getting experimented and different existing canonical forms and rules were formulated in the art. Things were changing as whole so it is obvious that how literature will not get affected by this change. This was the time when writers were experimenting with their work which was different from the already existing work and the work which was being written in the modern era. The actual portrayal and feelings were carved on sheets. We get an apt explanation of what ‘modernism’ was in the book *Beginning Theory* (2015) by Peter Barry. Barry asserts:

Modernism is the name given to the movement which dominated the arts and culture of the first half of the twentieth century. Modernism

was that earthquake in the arts which brought down much of the structures of pre-twentieth-century practice in music, painting, literature and architecture. One of the major epicentres of this earthquake seems to have been Vienna, during the period of 1890-1910, but the effects were felt in France, Germany, Italy and eventually even in Britain, in art movements like Cubism, Dadaism Surrealism, and futurism... In all the arts touched by modernism what had been the most fundamental elements of practice were challenged and rejected...and in literature, finally, there was a rejection of traditional realism (chronological plots, continuous narratives relayed by omniscient narrators, 'closed endings', etc) in favour of experimental forms of various kinds" (Barry 78-79).

The trilogy of Amish has abundance of modernity infused in the novel. Amish reshuffled the mythological settings with the modernity and modern facility. He has incorporated certain term at the initial stage of novel, when we were getting the glimpses of ancient past. There is a character in the novel Chitraangadh who introduces himself as 'Orientation Executive' when Shiva along with his tribe enters in the Meluhan City Srinagar. "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" (Tripathi12). These are two distinct terms but the author has put these terms in such manner that it fits appropriately in the context and if we think it from different point of view that is according to the set-up of the novel then it is a modern term collaborated together to make it a designation for the empire. This cannot be in imaginable term when it comes to Meluhan Civilization or when we think about Lord Shiva's perspective. This is an innovative terminology induced in

the text which is very much applicable as in the form of a tourist guide. Who takes the responsibility to make a tourist feel comfortable and be acquainted with the various sides of the place. In the text it has given a formal designation to make it more corporate and authoritative feel. There are many more instances and modern facilities in the text. There is another episode where this infusion can be witnessed when Shiva and Nandi both were walking on the street of Srinagar “Nandi, what are those differently coloured stones running through the centre of road? Asked Shiva. They cover the underground drains, Shiva” (Tripathi14). Any way it gives the resemblance of Indus valley civilization as in the form of underground drainage system but nowhere we get a hint of coloured stones to beautify the coverings of a drainage system. Then there is another instance in the novel when the tribe was shifted into a modern facilitated room or quarters where they encountered with number of new things and luxury items like furniture, clean linen bed sheets, towels and mirrors, which were unimaginable for the Guna tribe. They were mesmerized with the quality of softness of the beds, which they were provided. Shiva even enquired about the material to the designated orientation executive “a bewildered Shiva asked, ‘What is this material? Chitraangadh replied enthusiastically, its Cotton Shiva. The plant is grown in our lands and fashioned into the cloth that you hold” (Tripathi14). Another modern element that we find is the bathroom which was designed and decorated in a modern way. First of all each room had its own personal washroom and the washroom was well furnished. In the novel Meluha is a well-developed city in terms of infrastructure. The inbuilt tap in the washroom and soap are the modern things which have been included in the novels like this “he turned the magical device on the wall to increase the flow of water. He used the strange cake-like substance that the Meluhans said was a soap to rub the body clean” (22). Then there is another episode when Shiva

goes to dine with Daksha and his family where his beloved Sati was also present, it was an astonishment and pleasure for him to share a table with them. This was the first time when actually Shiva enjoyed in Meluha on personal level. Prior to this, he was a foreigner who eventually turns out to be a saviour and he himself was confused that what is the matter and over a single night, his world turns upside down from being a leader to a tribal group; he became an avatar of lord Rudra the Saviour from the evil. As humanistic features are attached to Shiva in the novel hence forth the love angle or the courtship of Shiva has been dealt in an elaborative manner with all the twist and turns, for his love he has guts to face all the problems. He was mesmerised at the very first look of Sati when he went to the Brahma temple because he saw a warrior in her without even knowing that she is the princess of Meluha. This is the rising action of his fate as a hero that he gets what he wants but it all comes with an attached price. There are all sorts of denial from Sati's side because she was not only a royal untouchable but she was also a widow. He remarried a widow and Vikarma woman in order to break the evil ritual persisted in the Meluhan society. The arrangement which was set up for his honour seems familiar with the modern times formal table arrangements. The accessories and decor on the table gives a glimpse of modern times. The crockery and food give the essence of present times but in a lavish manner as it was a meeting in a palace. It was all a lavish arrangement for Shiva because for him all these were unimaginable and unthinkable as he was from a nomadic background. We can have a look on the excerpts from the novel,

Sati looked over the arrangements. A formal table and chairs for breakfast rather than the preferred low table and floor cushions that Meluhans normally sat upon to eat. The beloved banana tree leaf had

been replaced by gold plates. The taste enhancing kullads or mud cups, had been replaced by refined silver glasses ( Tripathi147).

This above sentences from the novel shows that how every existing traditional formality was replaced by some modern arrangements; somewhere it gives a colonial impression of them being superior. Amish has selected all hindu mythological names and has woven the story for example we have characters like Ganesha, Brahaspati, Bhadra, Parvateshwar, Parshuram, Daksha, Maharshi Bhrigu and many more. Any ways Shiva has been attributed with all kind of humanistic shades, now we will see how other characters has been dealt in the novel. Start with Ganesh, it is known that ganesha was the youngest son of lord Shiva and Parvati but in the story of the novel Ganesha is the stepson of Shiva. He is a Naga because of his bodily features, his face resembles of an elephant he is different from rest of the common child. Henceforth when he was born as a naga his grandfather Daksha without informing her daughter, he sent him to panchvati the place where naga tribe live and lied to sati that her first-born was a stillborn child. As the trilogy opens up the secret of Nagas, the hidden truth comes out in front of sati and after learning the truth, she whole-heartedly accepts her Naga son and twin sister Kali who has an extra pair of hand with dark complexion with exact face of Sati. In start of the novel Ganesha was addressed as hooded figure in *Immortals of Meluha*. It is in the second *The Secret of Nagas* when for the first time Ganesha and kali were unveiled while fighting with the ligers in order to save Sati and other soldiers in Kashi. The description that has been given in the novel is like this:

The Naga's forehead was ridiculously broad, his eyes placed on the side, almost facing different directions. His nose was abnormally long, stretching out like the trunk of an elephant. Two buck teeth

struck out of the mouth, one of them broken. The legacy of an old injury, perhaps. The ears were floppy and large, shaking of their own accord. It almost seemed like the head of an elephant had been placed on the body of this unfortunate soul (Tripathi222).

Yes because of these extra features or resemblance from the animals they were out casted not only from Meluha but from entire Sap Sindhu reign; they had to go to extreme south of India Panchvati, where they had their own world, rule and they were not allowed to enter to the main boundaries. In Panchvati Ganesha was known as 'the lord of the people'. Amish very innovatively has given an extra name tag by bifurcating on Hindi words. For his people in the land of Nagas he is the lord who has been out casted from the entire Sap Sindhu region. Let us look at the Kaali the goddess, a symbol of anger existing form of the Devi Parvati whose wrath is her beauty. But in the novel, she is a royal abandoned child whose twin sister Sati has been accepted happily in the society but she was abandoned because of her being born as a Naga. Her appearance in the novel has been described as follows:

Her entire torso had an exoskeleton covering it, hard as bone. There were small balls of bone which ran from her shoulders down to her stomach as, almost like a garland of skulls. On top of her shoulders were two small extra appendages, serving as a third and fourth arm. One was holding a knife, clearly itching to fling it at sati. But it was the face that disturbed Sati the most. The colour was jet black, but the Naga Queen's face was almost an exact replica of Sati's (Tripathi 223).

This was for the first time when Sati was meeting nagas as well as her own bloods. She was startled at the Kaali's view but she was not able to figure out that how this

could be possible. After that, Kali reveals that the queen of Nagas Lashes out the truth in front of her and she was not ready to believe that Sati actually did not know about their existence at all. These two main characters have put in different manner to make the plot more relevant to the context. Author has incorporated lord Narsimha and Ravan as god and evil from different races, this will be unfolded when the myths of Nagas will be discussed that how Nagas are born in society. In the third book of the series, *The Oath of Vayuputras* when Brahaspati discusses whole issue with Shiva and Nagas. His extensive research has made it clear that how the Somras is affecting the entire region and people of Branga. He tried to find out an alternative for this but failed. Earlier the Somras was made for few thousand peoples but slowly the consumption was started on mass level. In addition, anything that is used in excessive amount depleted has negative effects. While conversation Brahaspati makes Shiva understood that how it affects the greater good, which is now converting into an evil. Here Brahaspati asserts, “When Somras was being made for just a few thousand, the amount of Saraswati water used didn’t matter. But when we started mass producing Somras for eight million people the dynamics changed. The waters started getting depleted slowly by the giant manufacturing facility at Mount Mandar” (17).

This was the reason behind the attack on Mount Mandar and it was a plan that Brahaspati could escape from the wrong doing. On his level he has tried to convince Maharishi Bhrigu but he failed instead he was drifted away from his love Tara. Moreover, this Maharishi is the mastermind behind everything. Brahaspati cannot afford to challenge him that is the reason he plans to his own death because while staying in Meluha he was always under observation and this was a kind of threat to him.

Now focus on the Nagas, the cursed or deformed people who were out casted from the boundaries of entire Saptasindhu. The question is that how they came into their existence. So, answer has been provided in the novel itself. A miracle, which is done by Somras, is the sole reason for the formation of Naga races. Brahaspati and Kaali make Shiva and Sati understood that how the formation entire Naga race happen. In one conversation with Shiva and Sati in the panchvati, Brahaspati narrates the history of Somras. In the novel, it has been mentioned that Brahma the greatest scientist formulated the creation of Somras. Earlier, the Somras was restricted to only Brahmans as they were the superior in race, they had the responsibility of guiding and teaching common people and for the growth of the society. Brahaspati mentions Ravan's name as Naga Lord who is Ram's enemy but Lord Ram removes this bar and introduced Somras in the world of common people. The moment it came in between common masses the side effects became more frequent. Moreover, slowly the Naga population started to increase. Let us have a look to the matter how Brahaspati and Kali explain the formation of Naga and the secret of Nagas are revealed:

“The first sign was the Nagas, said Barahaspati. There have been always Nagas in India. But they were usually Brahmins. For example, Ravan, Lord Ram's greatest foe, was a Naga and a Brahmin” (12). Sati was astonished at this point when Brahaspati revealed out this fact and then Kaali puts an affirmation to this statement. Again, Brahaspati starts “So the Nagas, though small in number initially were usually Brahmins. But then, the Somras was used only by Brahmins until then. Today the connection seems obvious, but it did not seem at the time” (13). Shiva asks this question “The Somras created the Nagas?” (13) and he got his answer “Yes. This was discovered only a few centuries ago by Nagas” (13). This is the twist in the story that from very first chapter of the series Somras was seen as world's best invention for the



betterment of humankind but while reaching up to the last book of the series it eventually turns out to be the main source of the destruction of humankind. Use of that Somras makes some changes in the body of those who are consuming from very long time. To add on the Saraswati river is being depleted, at last the people of Baranga face the horrible plague where their young ones die because the disposal of Somras's waste in the river Tsangpo which comes and meet in the Branga water. This is well explained by Brahaspati to Shiva "Nagas were born with deformities as a result of the Somras. The Somras randomly has this impact on a few babies when in the womb, if the parents have been consuming it for a long period" (14). After this Brahaspati is dealing with the mechanism of Somras works in one's body. He asserts, "we use to believe the Somras blessed one with a long life by removing Poisonous oxidants from one's body. But that is not the only way it works".

Shiva and Sati leaned closer. It also operates at a more fundamental level. Our body is made up of millions of tiny living unit called cells. These are the building blocks of life.... They combine to form organs, limbs and in fact, the entire body. These cells have the ability to divide and grow. And each division is like a fresh birth: one old unhealthy cell magically transforms into two new healthy cells. As long as they keep dividing, they remain healthy. So, your journey begins in your mother's womb as a single cell. That cell keeps dividing and growing till it eventually forms your entire body... this division and growth has to end sometimes. Otherwise, one's body would keep growing continuously with disastrous consequences. So, the Almighty put a limit on the number of times a cell can divide. After that, the cell simply stops dividing further and thus in effects, becomes old and unhealthy... And do these old cells make one's body age and thus eventually dies? Asked Shiva. Yes,

every cell reaches its limit on the number of divisions at some point or the other. As more cells in the body hit that limit, one grows old, and finally dies.

Does the Somras removes this limit on division? Yes. Therefore, your cells keep dividing while remaining healthy. In most people, this continued division is regulated. But in a few, some cells lose control over their division process and keep growing at an exponential pace. This is cancer, isn't it? Asked Sati. Yes, said Brahaspati. This cancer can sometimes lead to a painful death. But there are times when these cells continue to grow and appear as deformities — like extra arms or a very long nose” (15-16). Here the concept of how the Nagas are born is made clear that they are not cursed as demons but they are the result of excessive use of Somras by their parents, which made them deformed. Not only one effect there are other consequences too. First is that, because of the disposal of the Somras's waste people of Baranga are getting affected by incurable plague every year, the another is that in making of Somaras huge amount of Saraswati water is needed up henceforth it is also the main cause of the depletion of river Saraswati. Let us have a look over the excerpts from the book three where all the knots are untied:

the Somras is not only difficult to manufacture, but it also generates large amounts of toxic waste. A problem we have never truly tackled. It cannot be disposed of on land because it can poison entire districts through ground water contamination. It cannot be discharged into the sea. The Somras waste reacts with salt water to disintegrate in a dangerously rapid and explosive manner... what seemed to work was fresh river water. When used to wash the Somras waste, over a period of several years, fresh water appeared to reduce its toxic strengths. This was proven with some experiments at Mount Mandar. It seemed

to work especially well with cold water. Ice was even better. Obviously, we could not use the rivers of India to wash the Somras waste in large quantities. We could have ended up poisoning our own people. Therefore, many decades ago a plan was hatched to use the high mountain rivers in Tibet. They flow through uninhabited lands and their waters are almost ice-colds. They would therefore work perfectly to clean out the Somras waste. There is a river high up in the Himalayas, called Tsangpo, where Meluha decided to set up a giant waste treatment facility” (18-19). The whole plan is exposed to Shiva by Brahaspati and then it further continues like this even the small quantity packs in a huge amount of poison (Tripathi20).

So, this little amount of waste was so harmful that it almost ripped half of the population of Baranga. Moreover, this is not only one thing, which is to be concerned. Shiva raised a question that Meluha dropped Somras’ waste so far from their lands but they were not bothered about the other people living near Tsangpo River. By this time, he was seeing the hypocrisy of the elite members of Meluhans. They were not at all bothered or concerned for the other people who were living beyond their boundaries. He sees the hollowness of the so-called Ram Rajya in which every people are living double the more of their life expectancy which is injustice for others, who were because of Somras not was able to lead their year of expected life. Shiva showed concern for these people therefore he was answered by Brahaspati that “they may have, said Brahaspati. But that was considered acceptable collateral damage” (20). This damage or harm was acceptable because it was for the betterment of humankind; this was the ideology behind dumping the Somras waste. It any how did not affected the people living near Tsangpo river because of the cold temperature the waste did not

reacted or got activated. When Tsangpo River enters into the Indian boundary by taking the name of Brahmaputra River because of the sudden changes in the temperature, the waste starts to react and it affects the people of Branga. Brahaspati says,

The Nagas, with the help of Parshuram, finally mapped the upper course of the Brahmaputra. It falls at almost calamitous speeds from the giant heights of the Himalayas into the plains of Branga through gorges that are sheer walls almost two thousand metres high ... the Tsangpo flows east only for the duration of its course in Tibet. At the eastern extremities of the Himalayas, it takes a sharp turn, almost reversing its flow. It then starts moving south-west and crashes through massive gorges before emerging near Branga as the Brahmaputra... the Brangas are being poisoned by the Somras waste... the cold waters of the Tsangpo diluted the poisonous impact to a degree. However, as the river enters India in the form of Brahmaputra, the rising temperature reactivates the dormant toxins in the water. Though the Branga children also suffer from the same body-wracking pain as the Nagas, they are free from deformities. Sadly, Branga also has a high incidence of cancer. Being highly populous, the number of deaths is simply unacceptable (Tripathi 20).

After knowing this Shiva recalls the episodes and connects that with what Dividas a Branga chief had told him that the plague hits harder in the summer season “Dividas told me the Branga plague peaks during the summer every year. That is the time when ice melts faster in the Himalayas, making the poison flow out in larger quantities” (21). So, the root of the problem is Somras. It is both good and evil. Amish has

intertwined the relation between river Saraswati and Somras. It seems that Amish is inspired by the Michel Danino who was born in France but now has become Indian Citizen and a visiting faculty of IIT Gandhinagar. A well-known researcher in the fields of ancient Indian history and culture and who was honoured with the Padamshree in 2017. His book *The Lost River; On the trail of Saraswati* (2010) where he talks about the importance of Saraswati river and her mention of the flow and meeting with river Ganga and Yamuna at the sangamprayag (Allahabad). He has done an extensive research behind the existence and extinction of River Saraswati, and concludes on the point that, Saraswati used to flow from some regions of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. To prove his points, he has taken support of both ancient texts like Rig –Veda, Mahabharata, Ramayan, folklores along with the branches of modern sciences like hydrography, DNA analysis, Carbon Dating. And Amish has tried to put up a mythological story which tries to show that how River Saraswati was dying through this. Somewhere he wants to compare the present scenario or condition of river flowing in India. For example, Yamuna River's condition is pathetic and now few years back the Government has taken the action to clean the rivers in order to maintain ecological balance and save our environment. In the novel also, river Saraswati flows cover the places like Gujrat, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, Kashmir and some parts of present Pakistan and this entirely known as Meluha. Its origins from Mount Kailash to devagiri to Mrittikavati and forms an inland delta. River Saraswati plays a key role in the *Shiva Trilogy*, as it is a key ingredient of Somras. Somras is not an alcohol in the novel but an invented medicine by greatest Meluhan Scientist Brahma. He has tried to understand that how human beings get energy from, it metabolises inside our body as if it gives out energy by reacting with oxygen and after that it releases oxidants as toxins and then the food is digested. Therefore, this

great scientist was in search for something which requires to release the toxic oxidants from humans and so he invented Somras. Brahaspati tells that how Somras as a medicine works “Lord Brahma invented the Somras, which when consumed, reacts with the oxidants, absorbs them and then expels them from the body as sweat or urine. Because of the Somras, there are no oxidants left in the body” (137). This was the mechanism that how Somras performs its action. After this conversation, as Shiva was on a travel trip to mount Mandar, which is the set-up factory for the production of Somras its very obvious that after knowing this magical medicine its natural to be curious about its manufacturing process. Here is the excerpt from the novel that how this Somras is prepared “Manufacturing the somras is not without its fair share of Difficulties. It requires various ingredients that are not easily available. For example, the Sanjeevani tree. The Empire has giant plantation to produce to produce these trees. The manufacturing procedure also generates a lot of heat. So, we have to use a lot of water during the processing to keep the mixture stable. Also, the crushed branches of the Sanjeevani tree have to be churned with the waters of the Saraswati river before processing begins water from other sources doesn’t work”(138). Therefore there was a canal through which Saraswati water was brought up inside the factory and was stored in a pool for its further use in making process. Shiva knows the process of Somras production. So more or less river Saraswati is directly proportional to Somras. The main function of Somras is to enact as an anti-ageing medicine so that Meluhans can stay young for many years as it strikes in Shiva’s mind when at first he visited the Temple in Meluha there for the first time he saw the priest as an old person. “Shiva realised that the pundit was the first truly old person that he had seen in Meluha” (46). The effects of Somras are that it heals many old injuries and helps in recovery from injuries as well. For example, when for the very first time Shiva drank

Somras he felt that His Shoulder was twitching. The familiar pain was missing. He looked down at his knees. It didn't hurt anymore. The scar had vanished. Still gasping for breath! He looked down at his toe. Whole and complete now. He bent to check it. A cracking sound reverberated through the room as his toe made its first movement in years" (18-19). Where the quotation begins? This way Somras has healed Shiva from his battle scars and injuries as well. Somras saved sati also when she was injured from the antiban. People have lost their hopes but it is Shiva who realises the power of somras and asks doctor Ayurvati to give it to Sati so that she can be fine soon. Somras was actually a lifesaving medicine but anything which is over used or when the greed is there it shows the adverse effect too hence forth the medicine and the myth of the Nagas have been dealt in this section.

Amish has mesmerizingly used the concept of mythology and modernity by blending together but the way he has portrayed the women in the novel is amazing. Eventually proceeding towards the characterization of female in the novel he is very much unbiased. He has celebrated the female spirit. Osho the spiritual guru in his *The book of women (2014)* says that "Man and women are two strings of one harp" (8). He continues that "the woman can be of immense help in creating an organic society. She is different from man, but not unequal. She is as equal to a man as any other man" (9). This just what Amish has well understood about women and it's a matter of appraisal fact that he has done well justification while characterising women in his novels in this *Shiva Trilogy*. However, the society that is presented in the trilogy is patriarchal and semi- patrilineal in some cases but the women were given equal chance based on their talent. In ancient Indian society in Vedic age women had liberty to choose what they want to be, they had all the opportunities and rights from education to marriage. Vedic age gives us the names of female scholars who wrote hymns of the Vedas.

Lopamudra, sikta, Ghosha, Vishwara were such women who has established their names in the Vedic history. *Shiva trilogy* has also such resemblance when it comes to women not only in the field of education but everywhere they have equal opportunity. In the trilogy there are nine female characters starting from Ayurvati, Kanakhala, Sati, Kali, Anandmayi, Kritika, Uma, Tara, and Veerini they play a very distinct role in the novel and take their own stand. And none of them are Damsel in distress. They all are well equipped with self-defence art and equally compatible to their male partners or we can say that rather being a burden they believe in sharing the burden and responsibility. The appearance and look it all depend on them no boundation or bifurcation is done with their clothing. The very first female character we mate in the first book of the series i.e. *Immortals of Meluha* is Ayurvati. She is the Meluha's Chief Doctor. There is no gender discrimination in the novel. The novel deals with both the sides of society one being rational and another being orthodox from the story of Parshuram. Eventually things will be discussed that through mythological character one side that rationality is shown towards women then the other side is so irrational towards their own daughter and sister. Through novel author tries to give an analogy of what glorious past we had and ill prevailing orthodox system as well. Both sides of a coin have been dealt in the novel. So start with the Ayurvati the name itself is very clear and gives the hint that she is by profession a doctor. Her appearance in the novel is "the doctor, a petite, wheat-skinned woman was dressed in a simple white cloth tied around her waist and legs in a style the Meluhan called dhoti. A Smaller white cloth was tied as a blouse around her chest while another cloth called an angavastram was draped over her shoulders. The centre of her forehead bores a white dot. Her head had been shaved clean except for a knotted tuft of Hair at back called choti. A loose string called a janau was tied from her shoulder across her torso down to the right side" (15).



Here if we look up to the appearance of Ayurvati it can be noticed that she has not been portrayed in a sari to identify her gender. Women in the novels of Amish neither have been portrayed nor treated like the object of subjugation. Their identity is not made on the basis of gender bifurcation. As Judith Butler wants to say in her book *Gender Trouble* (1990) “Although the unproblematic unity of “women” is often invoked to construct a solidarity, a split is introduced in the feminist subject by the distinction between sex and gender. Originally intended to dispute the biology-is-destiny formulation, the distinction between sex and gender serves the argument that whatever biological intractability sex appears to have, gender is culturally constructed: hence gender is neither the casual result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex” (Butler 8). In short, Butler tells about the gender performance in the society but in Amish’s novel, this bondage is not seen. Ayurvati is described wearing a janau, and it is commonly wearing by the males of Brahman cast. Similar discrimination is found for the Kanakhala, prime minister or the right hand of the King Daksha who looks after the administrative function of Meluha she is also a Brahmin by cast but she is there because she has also earned her place. Her description in the first meeting is described as “her head was shaved except for a tuft of smooth hair at the back which had been tied into a knot. She had a string called the janau tied across from her left shoulder down to the right side of her torso. Ayurvati and Kanakhala they both belong to Brahmin cast but the way they have been describes that head shave with a tuft and angavastram on the body with a dhoti gives an impression of Brahmin boy. The only extra thing was a blouse to cover the women’s physiological anatomy. Women had to shave their head in Indian society if they were a widow and this shaving of head was a compulsion imposed on the widows. However, here it is their own choice. Now coming to the other female major character of the novel, which is

Sati. Sati is a royal princess by birth and she comes from a khastriya cast. She being khastriya women knows all the fighting skill and she do not need any bodyguard to protect her. As khastriyas are known for their war skill. Sati is also known for her Khastriya Dharma. Her first look is described as “She rode in on a chariot, guiding the horses expertly into the courtyard, while a lady companion by her side held on to the railings.” (48). This entry of her shows that she does not need any extra royal arrangement like another princess, she can handle her own chariot and her friend was just accompanying her on the ride. She is a ferocious warrior she fought a number of battles alone and helped Shiva in the battleground. She has alone fought with the pride of ligers in the kasha and saved the life of villagers. Then she had been seen fighting with the Nagas and she accepted the dual fight with the Tarak as agnipariksha and defeated her every time she has proven her identity as a khastriya who is aware of her duty in order to protect the society. Her valour is admired when she was fighting with the Egyptian assassins after being deadly injured; she still fights with the Egyptian hires army who were actually hired by his own father to kill the Shiva. She alone fights with goons in spite being terribly hurt she has lost her finger, one eye and gets several cuts on the body but she does not stop. She calls for the “duel of Aten” (470). “the duel of Aten was an ancient code of the Egyptian assassins, wherein anyone could challenge them for duel. They were honour bound to engage in the duel. It could only be a one-to-one fight; multiple assassins could not attack or they would suffer the wrath of their fiery Sun God – an everlasting curse from Aten” (470). When she was captured by number of goons instead of surrendering or fleeing from the battleground, she chose to fight one by one. At this point Swuth the leader of Egyptian assassins was awestruck at this fierce lady. She fought bravely with every assassin till her last breath; Swuth was mesmerised by Sati’s fighting skill and he had

tears in his eyes when he was about to do his last killing of his life. Nevertheless, being a khastriya she has performed her all the duty of being an obedient daughter, as a passionate wife and a loving mother. Sati's character is really brave character portrayed in the novel. Another character is twin sister of Sati. Kali who was abandoned at soon as she was born because she was born as a Naga. However, she manage to become a Queen of the Panchvati and she also is like her sister was a fierce warrior. Then there comes another Character Anandmayi the royal princess of Swadeep who was opposite of these people. She is portrayed as an extremely bold character who has never hesitated to flaunt her beauty. And she is the one woman who made Parvateshwar break his vow of Celibacy for life time. She celebrates her sexuality without any hesitation. She is described in the book as:

she was taller than her father. And distractingly beautiful. A deep walnut coloured complexion complemented a body that was voluptuous, yet muscular. Her doe-eyes cast a seductive look while her lips were in a perpetual pout, sensual yet intimidating. She was provocatively clothed, with a dhoti that had been tied dangerously low at the waist and ended many inches above her knees...her blouse was similar to the cloth piece that Meluhan women tied, except that it had been cut raunchily at the top to shape of her ample breasts, affording a full view of her generous cleavage. She stood with her hips tilted to the side, exuding raw passion.” (Tripathi 367).

This sensuous side shows that a female is allowed to celebrate her sensuality freely. This makes her Anandmayi she is a well-versed dancer and learnt the art of self-defence in order to protect herself and be independent. Then we meet another character Tara who was the scientist of Meluha and beloved of Brahaspati. She is

highly educated and now she serves in Pariah region. Then there is Uma who was the Gatekeeper or safe guard of Branga without her permission no one can enter into the regions of Branga and she has been seen performing her duty very honestly in the novel. No weakness and mercy can be seen in her eyes when it comes about the safety and protocol for Branga. Then finally yet importantly is the character of Sati and Kaali's mother Veerini. She is a person who has accepted all ill fate in order to be his husband's support. She is not shown as warrior but she is emotionally very strong and time to time she has tried her best to his husband's better half by providing him full support and showing him correct path. She scolds Daksha at the last time when she got to know that his husband is on wrong path. All the female characters enhance the beauty of their entity.

Varna system or cast system is the integral part of our society. Most of the times an identity is ascribed on the basis of caste. This Varna includes Brahman, Khastriyas, Vaishya, and Shudra. On the basis of that Varna system the work uses to be assigned. In *Rig Veda* it is mentioned that from where, all the varna's people have origin from Purush this hymn gives an indication that from where these came into existence "From the mouth of the Purush were born the learned Brahmans. From his arms were born the brave Kshatriyas. From his thighs were born Vaishyas and from his feet were born the shudras" (93). These altogether combine and help to manage the society. As Brahmans are the scholars, their responsibility is to teach the entire race. Kshatriya is responsible for the protection of society. Vaishya was responsible for the business in the society and last comes the shudras who were responsible for the maintenance of cleanliness in the society along with serving the rest three varnas. In the *Shiva Trilogy*, also we get a similar kind of description about how the Brahman, Khastriya, Vaishya and Shudra all came into existence. Nandi tells Shiva when he

asks about his amulet. He tells Shiva “this is the amulet which represents my caste. the lines drawn on it Symbolise the shoulder of the Parmatma, the almighty. This means that I am a Kshatriya” (38). After this Shiva was curious to know more about the Meluhan caste system because in Meluha everyone has to wear an amulet. He further proceeds “if lines are drawn to represent the head of the Parmatma, it would mean the wearer of Brahmin. The symbol for a Vaishya would be the lines forming a symbol of the thighs of the Parmatma. And the feet of the Parmatma on the amulet would make the wearer a Shudra.” (39). Then Nandi further explains more to Shiva that Brahmins are supposed to choose their tribe among birds, kshatriyas from animals, Vaishyas from flower and Shudra will choose from the fish. And then they will practice for their respective tribes. Amish in the novel has tried to portray an egalitarian world when it comes to choose the caste. The caste in Meluha is not chosen by birth but based on individual’s ability and talent. As in Bhagwat Gita Shree Krishna says –

“Caturvarnyam mayasrjam gunakarmavibhagsah/Tasya kartaram apimavidyakataram avyayam” (Geeta,4/13). This hymn can be understood by bifurcating the meaning of the given Sanskrit shloka, first catur-varnyam is the four divisions of human society; Maya is by me; system means created; guna means quality; karma is work; vibhagsah means in the basis of division; tasya is of that; kartaram means the father; api is although, mam is Me; vrddhi means you may know; akartaram means as non-doer and avyayam being unchangeable. Krishna says that he creates these four casts for the betterment of the society or the society can run smoothly by functioning in a way that is why he has created these divisions but it is based on the person’s quality, ability and talent. And yet he has created this system of division I am a non-doer and unchangeable and constant. He creates this division to uplift the human race from the

animal race. And this philosophy of caste division is well explained by Devdutt Pattanaik in his *My Gita* (2015) he paraphrases the conversation between Arjun and Krishna and keeps up like this

“Arjun, it is these tendencies that create the four aptitudes: scholarship, leadership, entrepreneurship and servitude” (178).

So logically these four varnas are meant to run a society on the basis of ability. The division of humans are not done the division of work and responsibilities are done in order to maintain the decorum of human life. Pattanaik further tells that our talents come from our guna. This does not mean that every talent can be mapped to a particular guna. It does not mean that scholarship comes from sattvaguna, or leadership and entrepreneurship come from rajas guna or servitude comes sattvaguna. It means that three guna, in different proportions manifests as scholarship, leadership, and servitude. We will find scholars who are rajasik, sattvik or tamsik; leaders who are rajasi ksattvik or tamsik; entrepreneurs who are rajasik, sattvik or tamsik; servants who are rajasik, sattvik or tamsik ( Pattanaik 178).

In the novel Amish has also tried to present it with a new form of Varna system through the mouthpiece of Shiva as he raised every question in order to understand the Meluhan society’s administrative governance system when it comes to allocation of caste. The word Varna in Sanskrit means colour and different colours are associated with different cast. The colour white is for Brahmin, red is for Khastriya, green for Vaishya and black for Shudras. Parvateshwar reveals that how a person’s cast is allocated in the Meluha. He tells that Lord Ram has taken out the solution that

cast should be divided on the basis of ability and talent. And every person should get an equal and fair treatment in order to prove their own potential for choosing that cast. For this he founded Maika city hospital. Down towards to south of the city near Narmada River where a pregnant woman is allowed to stay alone there. All her care is done by hospital staff and nurses. When a child is born after few days the mother has to leave her child there in the Maika city hospital and move to her respective places. From here all the children are taken to Meluha Gurukul and there they all are given equity in every field from eatables to education everything is equal without any discrimination. In this way, everyone gets an equal opportunity to prove themselves. As they reach in their adolescent period each one of them are given Somras so that no discrimination happens after that they take an exam at age of fifteen and on the basis of that exam's result they are assigned their Varna or caste and after that they get their specific training in which caste they have qualified for. At the age of sixteen they are ready to be adopted by the parents of their respective caste. This conversation ends with Daksha's word saying that because of this equality the population of upper caste grew and everyone got a fair chance to make their identity.

## Chapter 4

### Narratives of Human Sciences & *The Shiva Trilogy*

#### Introduction:

The fourth chapter of the thesis is divided in two parts. The first part of the chapter is trying to capture the changes influencing human perspectives from various affairs of human life. There are so many scientific concepts in the novel written by Amish which are in many ways not so modern, but surely does not exist in the Indus valley civilization. There is again and again the mention of radio waves in the novels, when Shiva used to meet the Pandits in the temples. While talking to the pandit in Kashi Vishwanath temple, Shiva is having discussions he forgets that the pandit can receive his thoughts. He asks him how he can hear his thoughts, the pandit answered that this is simply a science. The science of the radio waves.

The concept of modernity is made interesting by Amish by blending it by myth and science in the book third there is a beautiful blending of Somras, myth and science. All these together results into modernity. The Nagas in the novel are shown as people having deformities and ugly people. Although by the end of the novel the real character of Nagas appear. They are good people but the bodily deformity is due to use of the Somras by the Nagas. The two main Naga characters are Ganesh and Kali. The cause of their deformity is by birth, that is why they were sent to that country. Kali explains of the cause of her deformity to king Vasuki. She tells him that Nagas were born with deformities as a result of the Somras. The Somras 'Impact on a few babies when they are in the womb, if the parents have been consuming it for a long time. She tells that not all the babies are born with deformities but a few unfortunate ones like her are born with such



complications. She tells him that this is also a way of god to punish those people to had committed sins in their previous birth. Somras removes the poisonous oxidants from one's body, it operates on a fundamental level. Human body is made up of millions of tiny living unit called cells. These are the building blocks of our body. She is here explaining about the theory of cell. These cells are the tiniest living units. They combine to form the different organs of the body or we can say our entire body is made up of cells, which is the smallest unit. These cells have the ability to divide and grow. In these divisions takes place it is like a new birth. One old unhealthy cell transforms into two new healthy cells. This process of division is a continuous process. As long as this division takes place the body remains healthy. The journey of the body begins from the mother's womb as a single cell. This single cell keeps dividing and growing till it forms the entire body. The pandit explained thus, "This is certainly not a theory. This is a fact. Just like light, which helps you see, there are radio waves to help you hear. While all humans can easily use the properties of light to see, most don't know how to use radio waves to hear. We are dependent on sound waves to hear. Sound waves travel much slower through the air and for much shorter distances. Radio waves travel far and fast, just like light" (104) *The Secret of the Nagas*.

For dealing with the narratives of human science intended in the novel one must understand the concept of human science. This term was first used by Theophilus Gale in the seventeenth century as an exemplary term when Gale was drawing a comparison between supernatural knowledge i.e. divine science and the study or knowledge done by humans i.e. human science. This is how this phrase was introduced in the literary world. John Locke another English Philosopher and physician used the term in broader spectrum to define it as knowledge produced by

people. He did not make any comparison to other knowledge but slowly this definition by him became more popular. The word science comes from Latin word 'scientia' which means knowledge. So, if we combine this term human and science so it becomes human knowledge. And human knowledge has no boundaries. It depends on a person's ability that up to how much extend one can exercise their knowledge. It is an interdisciplinary term which can be used in terms of empirical sciences which works on the basis of facts, figures and rules but at the end it is helping us only. One should understand the purpose behind the human science. Human science is not just one subject it is a combination of every aspect of knowledge inter-related with history, sociology, folkloristics, anthropology, social sciences and even life science can also come under this. To make it short it can be told that human science is one umbrella term under which every other interdisciplinary course can be fitted. Question can be raised like this what is the function or role of human science. So, in order to answer human science is related to human knowledge, now human knowledge is used for both for the betterment of humans and for the betterments of others (it includes society, environment, and rest other organisms and animals) because we being humans are super privileged. We understand nature we know all the consequences of bad happenings but still we ignore the greater good and for personal selfish reasons we keep on taking advantages.

In the *Shiva Trilogy* Amish has tried to find out the evil through by taking the mythological characters and giving a twist to the old existing stories. All the characters are taken from mythological story but a new story is narrated by the author to form his own story. Now the interesting point is that all the mythological character present in the novel has its own new story developed and created by Amish. As novel itself has its own gravity but the touch of myth gives it a new flavour. Each and every

term has been made very relevant to that character. The novel itself start from the Shiva as a tribal lad but gradually we see along with the time how his wit and sense of judgement has made him worthy enough to be worshipped. Three books open up all the knots related to the evil. Every point was connected in a circular way. Things happen the way it was planned by the two uncles of Shiva. The third book *The Oath of Vayuputras* (2013) make everything clear that how the avatar of Neelkanth has arrived. Turning point comes when all the secrets are unveiled and true faces of the Characters are seen. There are deep hidden political aspects in the governance of Meluaha. Elite class strategy to govern the weaker section is very much visible by the time we go through the last book. There the working of somras is explained and after that it reveals that how the different satras are made. Misuse of power over the weaker section is narrated in the wrapping story of mythology. The Immortals of Meluha opens up with a dispute among the two tribe but as the story deepens the war and strategy are exposed. In this section of chapter, the art of war and weapons will be discussed. The book ends with the destruction of the Meluha. With one of daivi astra. So now lets us discuss about the astras there are several battles fought in the three books one by one battles will be discussed but let first focus on the 'astra'. Astra comes from the Sanskrit word which means weapon. And Daivi astras are one which have supernatural potential in it. These astras at a time are assigned on the names of gods. In the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* when the fight battles use to happen then we came to know about the various astras and their importance to fight the war. The swords, spears and gadas are the manual astras which was use in the duels and battle fields but when it come for larger spectrum these astras are very dangerous and has great value. The way it has been telecast on television when an astra is invoked few mantras are recited before the leaving of that astra. At times the seeker or that person

has to earn that astras from some particular god. In order to ensure their victory in the battle. The astas used to be summoned by meditating on that god and mantras. But in the Shiva trilogy these astras are portrayed as a modern-day technology weapons of war. It has a science behind its working. It is built rather than invoking a chant to release it. Now gradually the wars and weapons will be discussed that how these are used in the novel. In the novel there are many fights and disputes from very starting of the chapter to the end. Small fights and disputes show personal excellence of the fighter and the spirit. There are fights between gunas and pakratis in the novel and then small duels between Naga and Shiva and many more and apart from this there are six major battles fights have been discussed. Though it seems like battles are fought in a well organised and planned way. The first battle which was fought is the battle of Koonj. At koonj Shiva along with Sati and Parwateshwar was exploring the beauty of the Meluha. This battle was not a planned battled instead it was just an attack by the Nagas as they were on the mission to destroy temples which is the secret centre for making Somras. But at this time this important piece of information was not known rather Somras was also not declared as evil. No one was prepared for this battle but more than a battle it was an attack by Nagas who comes under the category of chandravanshi. So basically, this was the first fight between the Suryawanshi and Chandravanshi. There were five Nagas who attack on the temples and decapitate the priests. People were in awe of the Nagas as everyone was afraid by listening the name of the nagas. As they were very skill fighters. This was the revelation point and Shiva unveiled himself and boosted up the morals of the mutiny. Though the Suryawanshi army was some thousand and five hundred but still they were in doubt to fight with the nagas. And this is really true that nagas were very skill full fighters as one naga was defending himself against five Suryawanshi soldiers. Though they were the race

who were despised in every manner but at this point Shiva and Parvateshwar praised their fighting technicalities and the way they were skilled. In this kiinj battle only Sati was shot by agnibaan a fire bow by a naga which was targeted for the Shiva. This is the first time that a Baan has been used to kill. It does not have an antidote. Even the tongs which has been used by Doctor Ayurvati was kept secluded because it will get infected other apparatus also and that tong will never be used as it cannot be sterilize. The poison was so dangerous. Everyone has lost their hope except Shiva because of his intelligence the somas saved Sati's life. And here the battle ends with the Sati's getting hurt in the battle and expressing her love by saving Shiva.

The second battle is called The Dharmayudha or the holy war in the first book *The Immortals of Meluha (2010)*. The term Dharmayudha comes from the *Mahabharata* when Arjun was not able to fight with his kins. He got swayed away by his emotions and affection for his relatives. Then this was the time lord Krishna transformed himself and showed him his reality of being the supreme power. Whatever is happening this was meant to be happened. This was the time when evil in the society has prevailed. And the fight was for the honour of truth. This is not a family dispute fight rather it is a fight between the dharma and the adharma. And people has chosen their own side in support. So, in the novel also its seen as a Dharmayudha. As the plot continues from the very first battle i.e battle of Koonj. That war was not prepared but this time it was well prepared and planned from both the sides that is Suryawanshi and Chandravanshi. By this time Shiva has been made believed that chandravanshi are the evil existing on the earth and he being the Neelkantha avatar has to take s strong step against the evil. This fight was organised to take over the swadeepan empire as they were found to be guilty for giving refuge to the Nagas. Shiva was also furious and eager to avenge his friend's death Brahaspati as

well as the attack on his wife Sati. Most important thing to be highlighted in this war is that for the first time in the history that Vikarma people have also participated in the war. Though the Meluhan army was less in number in comparison of Swadhepan army but instead of that they made ensure to their victory. There has been a tremendous and equal level fight between both the parties. Both of them were well planned and had strategies to fight the battles. Chandravanshi army followed the bookish advice to fight the battle against the Suryawanshi whereas Shiva find out the ways to invade their battle plans. Their position and strategy can be sensed by this paragraph from the battle ground.

Meluhan conch shell, announcing the Suryawanshi attack, was blown With an ear-shattering yell, the infantry charged towards the Chandravanshi. The tortoise corps moved in their slow, inexorable pace towards the Chandravanshi centre. The sides of bow formation moved quicker than the centre. The Cavalry cantered along the flanks protecting the infantry from an enemy charged. Courageous remnants of the third and fourth legions of the Chandravanshi meanwhile were rapidly forming their lines once again to face the Suryawanshi onslaught. But the mass of dead bodies of their traditional Chaturanga formation which could have allowed some lateral movement. They were huddled together in a tight but thin line when the Suryawanshi fell upon them.

The Suryawanshi battle plans was being executed immaculately. The tightly curved line of highly trained and vicious Soldiers had the tortoise corps at the centre with the flanking line of light infantry slightly behind the unstoppable tortoise corps tore ruthlessly into the Chandravanshi centre. The shields provided protection for the corps against the best Chandravanshi swordsmen, while their trishuls ripped through the Swadhepan. The Chandravanshi had but two choices. Either fall to the trishuls, or

to be pushed towards the sides where the Suryawanshi were now bearing down hard on them. Even in the centre of the Chandravanshi army broke under the unrelenting assault, the Suryawanshi flanks tore through their sides” (352-353). So, with this excellence and strategy Suryawanshi army won the battle against all the odds. The Swadeep was under the mercy of Meluha. Shiva had successfully led the battle win along with Parvateshwar and other excellent assistants like Vidyunmali and Mayashrenik.

The battle of Madhumati is fought when Shiva realised that Chandravanshis are not evil they have just different from the Meluhan way. After the battle of Dharmayudha Shiva has gone through many analyses and put in his own sense to find the evil. In this battle both Suryawanshi and Chandravanshi fought along with Shiva in the dense forest of Madhumati. Shiva went along with his new troop which had both of best soldiers to find the remedial medicine for the Brangan population. He had been told that in the forest stays a bandit who does not allow to enter any one into Madhumati territory. So, Shiva has taken a firm decision to have a faceoff with this Bandit Parshuram. The voyage has been started, Shiva along with his troop started planning about the battle plans as it was not a battle ground but an unknown forest where they don't know about their enemies also. And yes, his doubt was true. The moment they entered into the forest Shiva sensed the trap which was settled for them. The time he saw that the territory was marked to mislead them Shiva bellowed “come out you coward !... Fight like a man” (201). And then in reply he heard a reply from his opponent “ why don't you get out of the Ship, you spineless wimp? I will show you how Man fights!” (202). So, like this the battle invokes. Bandits were in no mood to fight on the front foot they had planned a hidden archer so that without much commotion they can win the battle. After the bandit's reply Shiva and his men jump

down on to the land and was searching for a clue so that they can take get ready for the action but trap has already been set by the Bandits. Suddenly Shiva sniffed some paraffin smell, his men was in position to attack but from far behind a fire arrow comes which crossed Suryavanshi army and hit the land. The moment it hit the land whole boundary of the river Madhumati caught fire. Shiva was fully trapped in his schemes. The scene is like this:

The man raised an arrow, touched it to a flame, and shot the burning arrow high into the air, way beyond the range of the Suryawanshi... Shiva lost sight of the arrow in the light of the sun for a moment. It landed quite some distance behind Shiva's men, and immediately set off the paraffin lying there. The flames spread quickly, making an impenetrable border. The Suryawanshi were trapped on the beach. No retreat was possible (209).

The fierce battle started Parshuram's main weapon was an axe whose one hit was enough to knock out a person. The battle started in full blow bandits Vs Shiva's Men. In this battle Drapaku has shown tremendous courage to fight against Parshuram. He was amazed by this lad's spirit to fight for his lord. But on a sad note Drapaku is brutally killed by Parshuram. This killing of his raged Shiva's anger like a fire and in his fit of anger he moved towards Parshuram forgetting his own words that the bandit should be captured alive. Drapakus heroic death made him ferocious that he single handed started killing bandits and soon reached to Parshuram. The bandit realised that finally his end has come and the moment he calls his god like "Jai guru Vishwamitra! Jai guru Vashistha!" (218). His identity was discovered as a Vasudev who will help Neelkantha to find the evil. This battle was very much important as it made another alliance of Shiva who is going to help him fight against evil. Finally, Shiva learned



that Nagas are not bad but excessively who helps other in their need. Parshuram gave the process of making of the medicine which will help Barangan in their plague time. This battle adds another chain to get closed near what he was searching for he again got a friend who will reveal things to him or guide. Later Parshuram cut his own arm by his own axe in guilt that he raised weapon against his lord Neelkantha. Later Parshuram gave another Ship to his Lord and asked to seek refuge under his group. Though one very near and dear Drapaku was Sacrificed in this battle but this was really an important battle for Shiva.

The next important battle is the Battle of Bal- Atibal Kund. This battle was fought between the Shiva's army and the Magadhan army. In this battle Kartik had got the opportunity to show his skill and indeed he proved it. He fought like a beast none of the Magadhan soldiers were alive. In the novel this war is called a massacre because from Kartik's side only five thousand soldiers had lost their life but the opponent had been repressed brutally. In novel its description is given:

Later in the day, when the dead were counted, it would emerge that seventy thousands of the Magadhan army from amongst seventy- five thousand had been slaughtered, burned or drowned. Kartik on the other hand, had lost only five thousand of his own hundred thousand men.

This was not a battle. It had been a massacre (Tripathi260).

This place is called Bal –Atibal Kund because this was the place where Lord Ram had been taught by his mentor and Saptarshi Vishawmitra. The Magadhan prince Surapadman had a treacherous plan to attack the voyage which was going to the Kashi. This was the attack which happened in the night. Its impact was so bad that even the water of River became red and Divodas had to normalise Kartik's adranile

rush by putting his own life in danger. But this battle was a retaliation of what treachery was led by Magadhan prince. Magadhan Prince use to exploit its own people for their own benefit. They use to take bounded slaves who were not able to pay the taxes. Heavy taxes were imposed on the citizens of Magadh. Then they use to Gamble on Race of the bull and on bull fighting and for this they use to take small kids as their riders and maximum of the kids use to die in that race. So, this battle was important to win. One more speciality of this battle is that this was fought on ship and on land also.

The Battle of Mrityukavati is the next important battle fought. By this time Shiva has declared Somras as evil. He made a proclamation that anyone who is consuming Somras is committing sin because Somras' excessive use has made it evil. The ratio of the lives is getting affected. It is against the Rule of Lord Ram. This time the sides have been taken Shiva along with Sati was followed by Barangans, Vasudevs, and Nagas. All of them had formed their own alliance with Shiva against the evil. Now it was not a territory bound for choosing the sides. It is actually the for and against parties for the manufacturing of Somras. This battle is important because if Shiva conquers this area it will be easy to usurp the Meluha and easily the factory of Somras can be destroyed permanently. This was a well- planned battle the supporter of Daksha and Shiva now know their enemies. Battle strategies has been formulated. This battle was led by Vidyunmali and from Shiva' side Sati and Vasudevs have taken the lead in Battle ground. Vidyunmali has formulated the Tortoise cavalry and he has horses in his battle along with pawn soldiers. Whereas Vasudevs had trained elephants with extra features in their chariots. This fight is very intruding as for the first time smartly trained elephants are going to be on the battle field. Another thing is that Shiva knows all the loop holes of this tortoise strategy

because it was his thought only. He knew that this tortoise cavalry can only be destroyed if they attack from the rear. In the book this battle episode is very much intense:

The Meluhan chariots moved quickly as the Vasudev elephants drew near, weaving around the pachyderms as they Charged, throwing their spears at the giant beasts, hoping to injure or at least slow them down. But the elephants were prepared. There were massive metallic balls tied to their trunks. The elephants swung their trunks expertly, smashing the metallic balls into the bodies of the horses and the charioteers. Some of the Meluhans were fortunate enough to die instantly, but others had the balls smash through their bones, leaving them alive to suffer in agony. And as if this wasn't ad enough, a second surprise was in store for the Meluhan Charioteers. All of a sudden, fire spewed out of the elephant howdahs!

The Vasudevs had fitted their elephants with machines designed by their elephants with machines designed by their engineers. Two Vasudev soldiers kept pushing the levers, shooting out an almost continuous stream of flames which burns all in its path. The few unfortunate Meluhan chariots that did not get burned were stamped out of existence under massive elephants' feet the chariots corps of the Meluhans was no match for the Vasudev elephants. (Tripathi 287).

This massive fight ensures that Shiva has earned his victory by showing great valour and skill.

The battle of Devagiri is a very difficult battle not on field but from emotional perspective as well. Because for Sati it was her home where she has spent her childhood to being Vikarma and getting Married to Shiva. While sitting on the platform made outskirts of Devagiri her eyes were moist. She was being nostalgic. But any how she had to fight against her Guru and Pitratulya Parvateshwar this was her main concern. She knows that Parvateshwar is the best Commander with whom fighting a battle without Shiva will increase the chances of her failure. Sati was on the outskirts of Devagiri prepared for the battle. She had well trained Vasudevs elephant's army but yet she was afraid because she knows that Parvateshwar will soon find out how to defeat them because he knows that Shiva is not there and he wanted to ensure that before Shiva comes the Battle of Devagiri should be won by Meluhans otherwise Shiva will overtake the city and destroy the Somras Manufacturing Factory. This was the main concern of the Maharishi Bhrigu and Daksha. Tensed Sati was sitting on the uppermost platform to keep an eye on the Devagiri fort. The fort's gate was closed but she suddenly sees that gate of the fort opens and Meluhan soldiers are coming out with oxen carts. They were not in abundance but still she commanded everyone to maintain the position and prepared. By that time, she was sensing a trap set up by Meluhan General. Because a handful number of archers were not sufficient to fight battle. She thought;

The Meluhans probably have some secret weapon that they are not absolutely sure about. The ox-drawn carts may have some role to play in it. They want to provoke some of my men into charging at them so that they can test their weapon. ( Tripathi 321).

She ordered everyone not to take any initiation for this oxen cart troop. These oxen cart was not having man soldiers and there was something in the cart which she was

not being able to figure out. Suddenly she sees Meluhan soldiers in position to attack with archers. She estimated that those arrows will not reach upto his own cavalry but she ordered her cavalry not to make any move against their enemy. It was a trap and they should hold until Shiva is back. But Vasudev Army commander did not listen to her command. Her order was overruled by Vasudev commander and they broke the position and move forward to battle against Meluhan archers and their oxen cart. The moment Vasudev commander moved ahead with their elephant's army they smell something burning but they didn't understand what was going to take happen. Meanwhile Sati was constantly telling them to return to their decided position of defending. This disobedience cost a lot to Sati. As the elephant army was moving ahead suddenly Mahaouts on the elephants sniffed that Meluhan soldiers are burning dung cakes with chilli powder whose smoke will ensure elephants frenzied reaction, and yes, the elephants started reacting. Chillie smoke make them panic and these giant beasts once they are out of control will create destruction only. The self-destruction started. Sati ordered for the retreat but by that time it was too late the oxen carts started burning and the panic oxen started sprinting upwards which made elephants also panic. They started rolling their metallic balls and started hitting their own people:

as soon as the smoke hit them, the elephants shrieked desperately. The mahouts recognised the smell. Chilli! retreat! Screamed a mahaout. No ! shouted back a belligerent elephant rider. We have them! Crush the Oxen. Move forward! But the elephants were already in a state of frenzied panic. They turned from the sources of their discomfort and ran. The hysterical oxen, with the fires burning hard on the carts, continued their frantic sprint forward as though to elude the blaze.

Sati could see the developing situation unfolding from the distance. Whatever the oxen were carrying was making the Pachyderms hysterical. Within a matter of a few minutes the oxen would reach her remaining outer elephant line and spread the panic deep into her forces. She saw a fire arrow being shot from the gates of Devagiri as they opened once again. The meluhans could see their strategy was working and were committing themselves to full attack. Her worst fears were confirmed as she saw the Meluhan cavalry thunder out of the Devagiri gates. The city was ten kilometres away, and she knew she had the luxury of sometime before they reached her position. Her immediate concern was the oncoming oxen that could make all the Vasudev elephants charged madly back into her own force ( Tripathi 327-328).

So, this was the strategy planned by the Meluhan General Parvateshwar. His experience and knowledge in the battle field easily led down the Sati's cavalry. Somewhere he was knowing that there will be men who will overrule sati's commands just because she was leading the troop. This exactly happened and sati lost the battle because of some over smart brigadiers. Hence forth the Battle of Devagiri was lost though Sati tried her best to save her maximum army for the last battle when Shiva arrives. In all this she burnt her face and lost her consciousness. And here this battle was lost.

In the novel there are particular names of certain Astras like Daivi Astras, Brahmastra and Pashupatiastra which are very dangerous in terms of using. These astras in are mentioned in the epics like Ramayana and Mahabharat has totally divine concept when they are about to use in the battle ground of to kill any devil. For example, Daivi astras were the divine weapons which were granted by Deities to their

ardent devotee who has earned it by doing many years of meditation. Another instance that guru use to teach about these astras tht how to summon and use them. Brahmastra is assumed to be lord Brahmas creation and this has the capability to destroy entire whole world and there was no encounter to this deadly weapon. Another Pashupatiastra is lord Shiva's weapon. It is equally dreadful. In the novel also, these names are mentioned but their preparation is scientifically. Author has taken these names from the old Indian epics but their working shows that these are modern weapons and it needs material to be prepared. In the novel lord Bhrigu is the person who attacked with the Daiviastra when Shiva along with his troop was on the trip to panchvati. Slowly it is revealed that lord Bhrigu with the help of his own materials made the Daiviastras. In novel also it is said that Lord Rydra put ban over the use of Daiviastras. "the laws of the Lord Rudra make it clear that for the first unauthorised use of daivi astra the punishment is fourteen years of exile into the forest. A second unauthorised use is punishable by death" (391).

This paragraph from the book shows that it was banned and punishable act in spite of that lord Bhrigu broke the law. Further when its process and woe=rking are mentioned in the novel it gives the impression of an atomic or nuclear bomb. When Shiv asks from Gopal that how does these astras are different from each other and how they function. Gopal after this clarify Shiva's all doubts regarding Daivi Astras and Brahmastra, he tells that

Most daivi astras only kill men. But there are some, like the Brahmastra, that can destroy entire cities if not kingdom...the Brahmastra is the weapon of absolute destruction, my friend; a destroyer of cities and a mass –killer of men. When fired on some terrain a giant mushroom cloud will rise, high enough to touch enough

the heavens. Everyone and everything in the targeted places would be instantly vaporised. Beyond this inner circle of destruction will be those who are unfortunate enough to survive, for they will suffer for generations. The water in the land will be poisoned for decades. The land will be unusable for centuries; no crops will grow on it. This weapon doesn't just kill once it kills again and again, for centuries after it has been used (Tripathi 342-343).

After this conversation and clarification Shiva was sure that for winning the final battle he needs bhrahmastra. Gopal the chief of Vasudev has advised him to seek permission from the Vayuputra tribe who has the authority to grant permission and materials. Shiva along with Gopal started his journey to Pariha. There he will meet the Vayuputra tribe and request for the Brahmastra. After a long tiresome journey they reached Pariha. There he met with the Mithra the head of Vayuputra tribe. Shiva told all the perspectives that why he needs those astras then Mithra tells Shiva that he cannot give him Brahmastra but he can give him another one that is Pashupatiastra. But one condition that he should only use it as a threat. He explains why he cannot give Brahmastra:

I cannot give you the Brahmastra because it is too uncontrollable. It destroys anything and everything. Most importantly, its effect spreads out in circles. The worst destruction is in the epicentre, where everything living is instantly incinerated into thin air. While there is less destruction in the outer circles, the damage is still significantly widespread in the vicinity (Tripathi 401).



This was the reason that Mithra did not give the Brahmastra and he tells that how Pashupati astra is not that dangerous as compared to Brhmastra, “the Pashupatiastra. It is a weapon designed by lord Rudra. It has all the powers of the Brahmastra, but with much greater control. Its destruction is concentrated in the inner circle. Life outside this zone is not impacted at all. In fact, with the Pashupatiastra, you can even focus the effects in only one direction, leaving everyone else in the other directions safe. ( Tripathi 402).

With this piece of advice Shiva bids Farwell to Mithra giving the hope that he will not use this weapon at all, this is only for the threat so that Somras manufacture can be stopped. But the destiny has written something else with Shiva. By the time he reaches Devagiri sati has Sacrificed her life fighting with the Egyptian mercenary Swuth. The moment Shiva reached he sees Sati’s dead body on ice slab with uncountable wounds. This triggered her anger and blown his mind he was aghast, he sat with sati’s body in lap for two days as it is. At last Satis spirit form came and said him to do the crimination. After this everyone was in despair. this is the time when Kali says that her sister’s death should be avenged and this city Devagiri should destroy who is the centre of evil. With the help of Tara, the perihan scientist now, she set up the Missile or Pashupati astra and everything in one blow was gone nothing was left. And here the Neelkantha’s assigned task was done by losing her better half.

## Conclusion

The research findings have attempted to contextualize and correlate myth, history and narrative with a comprehensive study analysis. The journey of the novel begins with quest of evil in others but gradually it seems that there is no evil in others rather it is inside us. This series has a profound philosophy 'Karma' which is relevant to contemporary society. The myth and history are combined together which is reflecting our present i.e. society with new emerging diseases, environmental issues and many more which will be discussed in an elaborative manner with concrete theoretical concepts in the thesis.

The contemporary academic political and social discourses are extremely oriented to revisit and re-examine various foundations concerning with human's existence and its social dealings by the methods of rewriting reimagining keeping at the centre the politics of appropriation guided chiefly by the notion of power and recognition. These human centric discourses from various disciplines are inconstant revival of their own conceptual or theoretical articulations in order to have their own distinct identification, aiming to be contributory force in decision or policy makings. The contemporary human being is now not merely a numb subject which can be used systematically and be instrumental to provide growth to the higher subject of it as depicted in various text. Contemporary self of human being seems to realise the systematic deception (various ideologies) which had been used as a convincing medium to subjugate and dominate others by systematic process. So this contemporary condition of self is in the process of realisation and experimentation with other's adjoining self and the experimental outcome by various method is that each established foundation of human life is in the constant flow of change or

dismantling them by the analysis of conditioned structure of human self and their affiliated institution.

In this kind of topsy-turvy, social and political condition there is a necessity for each conditioned self to realise a systematic imposition on them to shrug off their self and to look at it from a new human prospective. In a way this process of decolonising the self after the realisation of liberation. Various human centric discourses have considered the liberation of human soul / self is the intrinsic necessity of human life on the earth as it equates with the primary motive of education that is freedom. The contemporary nature of knowledge therefore is full of conflict and has assumed ambiguous position by dismantling the centralised motive of knowledge by its dwindling nature. This status of knowledge is based on the conflicts of ideas as depicted in ancient text or historical accounts cemented by hierarchical ideologies and they are reflected in human history in various ways particularly by myth and history. From the inception of human civilisation myth have been assigned having supernatural essence and have played very significant role in providing patterns and structures in our society. the historical records available to us is full of mythical patterns and their cultural association with human life. When one looks into fabrication of myth and culture it is very hard to separate it from human life their analysis simply seems to tell the history of natural / supernatural kinship there is not a single culture and literature which exist without the presence of myth in it and additionally it bridges the gap between the cultural elements and the language which provides a moral to structure human society in a line of thought. These mythical narratives emanating from historical accounts have been philosophising value and faith in humanity even when things are against the tides and are always linked religion from ancient to the present time. Myths have had fascinating essence used as

instrument in human discourses, motivated to establish a certain class of the world. Since they had been assigned supernatural agents, connecting with fair so they existed in the same order since their origin without doubts and questions. In literature or in other forms of the art writer or artist have initiated using myth as an illusion as modernity and postmodernity produced doubt on the production of knowledge labelling it as commercialised adventure. Contemporary writer and artist revisited mythical narratives to underline some similarity, marginality and certain predominant ideas prevailing in the society. The postmodernist writers used myth in interrogative narrative mode in order to provide alternative voices to the marginalised section of the society which finally led to the production of dismantling and disintegrated spirit causing problems to the unifying narratives if mythical narratives.

This dissertation has focussed on the mode of revisiting and rewriting has attempted to produce arguments which are relevant to human freedom and its possibility in posterity. The first chapter focuses on the concept of myth and the various theories related to mythical studies so that, the idea is clear. William Bascom in his article *The forms of Folklore: Prose Narrative (1965)* tells that “Myths are prose narratives which, in the society in which they are told, are considered to be truthful account of what happened in the remote past” (Bascom 4). In earlier times mythical stories can be classified under subtypes of myth like divine myth if it is related to gods and goddesses because God is the supreme being and we are the shadows of him they teach us rules for being human, then there is nature myth which elaborates about natural occurrences after that an afterlife myth is there which tells about the life after we leave this mundane world and the physical form of our body is no more, next is Origin myth which tells about the birth of natural or social world. Then there is prestige myth related to dignity and honour of the protagonist and last

there is eschatology myth which tells about the destruction of the world. There are certain perspectives or approaches through which we can analyse myth if it is considered as text. There are certain myths which are present in written form, hence those can be analysed on the basis Intrinsic and Extrinsic approaches. In intrinsic approach the structure of the myth itself is analysed for say systematic occurrence of incidents, finding symbolic meanings and theme of the myth. Whereas in Extrinsic approaches has certain sub divisional theories. Under this comes first expressive theory, in this theory the myth has already been written and hence led to the possibilities to explore more within author or narrator's perspective, experiences and concerns particularly the style of the author, for example from Sophocles' play *Oedipus Rex*, the psychological theorist Sigmund Freud derives out the concept or term 'Oedipus complex'. Moving ahead there comes, the effective theory in this second theory we see how does it affect the listeners and why do they react so strongly to certain types of characters and events and raises question about the released psychological mechanism. Third in the line is mimetic theory, it explores the connection between the myth and the culture which it has created. It queries about the customary rituals and that how it has evolved in the society. Mimetic theorists are more inclined towards myth more or less as realistic reflections.

Joseph Campbell an American professor of literature in his book, talks about the journey of mythological adventure of the hero. He designs three stages of a hero's life. First stage is separation or departure in this stage the adventure of the hero's life starts, he tries to avoid the situation but supernatural beings and other unsuspected episodes happen which eventually lead to the acceptance call then crosses the first threshold of his life and starts his gloomy journey of the night, this is at times metaphorical because the protagonist had to travel through the passage which will

take him into the realm of night. Then second stage is the trials and victories of Initiation, in this stage the hero is tested both in his wisdom and power, map is drawn by the dangerous aspects of gods. Hero is tempted by the mundane attractions which can mislead him and when the realisation occurs to hero then he transforms into the super being and gets the final boon. The third stage is the return and reintegration of the hero with society, in this stage the hero denies to return and to the world but something magical happens and he returns to the world of common day. Now hero has the knowledge of both the world and becomes the master of two worlds and gets the freedom to live the natural life and practice the ultimate boon. The protagonist of the Shiva Trilogy has a same kind of journey in the novel.

The chapter two of this dissertation has contemplated Shiva Trilogy from historical perspectives while considering the concepts of text, context and intertext as the grounding fabrication for the articulation. This is the first novel of the series from where the quest begins and a revisionist version of history is re-examined in order to find out alternative version of history. The discussion in the chapter includes discursive discourses on history and in the process of it some of the prominent thinkers and their works have been considered in order to provide coherent multiples voices of history into one-line of argument. This chapter attempts to dissect the novel's historical aspects. It also traces the journey of history towards modernity. The argument in the chapter is to look into the city of Meluha making them to meet with the modern circumstances. According to the heading of chapter, the proceeding occurred but why this heading? Answer lies here, in this line of the first book in The Shiva Trilogy author's page or note. On the very first page author mentions that: 'the Shiva Trilogy, which interprets the rich mythological heritage of ancient India, blending fiction with historical facts. While reading about Indus valley Civilisation

and culture we got to know about the urban culture i.e. well-developed planned city with proper drainage system, governance system policy and one of the most important things is maintaining hygiene and Cleanliness. While going across the novel at very initial stage when immigrant Gunas enter the Meluhan boundary they got a strict advice from Ayurvati, the chief doctor of Meluha that “one of the guidelines that you have to follow in order to control disease is to maintain strict hygiene standards” (Tripathi16). The way Indus Valley civilisation is described after the excavation process about its advance underground drainage system and personal washroom, around same manner things are dealt in the novel *The Immortals of Meluha*. “they cover the underground drains, Shiva. The drains take out all the waste of the camp. It ensures the camp remains clean and hygienic” (14). One of the main monuments found in the excavation is the ‘great bath’ of Indus valley civilisation and this monument is also discussed in the fiction as well when Shiva was traveling in the royal citadel to meet the Emperor, “the only magnificent structure was to the far right and sported the sign ‘Great Public Bath’ (67). There are names in the novel like Lothal, Karchappa, Taksheela and Mohan Jo Daro which are the names of Indus valley civilization cities.

### **Chapter 3: Modernity, Medicine and Myth in *The Shiva Trilogy***

The chapter three is divided in three parts. The first part of the chapter has attempted to define modernity and has tried to contextualise the novel in its discourse. The Second part of chapter took into the connectors linking myths and medicine from anthropological and mythical perspectives. The third part of the chapter concentrated on the text and explores the issues related to medical science as nagas are no one but the genetic mutation population of the Meluha who have been disowned because of their body mutation. Cast study is also discussed in this chapter.

The discussion in the chapter argued that word modernity comes from the root word 'modo' which means 'current'. There are two terms budding up from the root one is modernity and another is modernism, both are completely different from each other in the concept and this case. First discuss on the former term i.e. modernity and then later concept will be discussed. Charles Baudelaire a French poet, essayist and an art critic in his book *The painter of Modern Life* (1863) has discussed about the term modernity as an individual topic. Which has arisen with the changes by industrialization, urbanization and secularization; its characteristics are disintegration and reformation, fragmentation and rapid change, ephemerality and insecurity. It involves certain new understandings of time and space: speed, mobility, communication, travel, dynamism, chaos and Cultural Revolution. 'Modernism' is a period, style, genre or combination of all in English literary canon. The *Shiva Trilogy* is full of modern concepts. Amish changed so many things, characters, buildings and concepts according to his own interest. He has done these changes to make the story to make it more interesting. The *Shiva Trilogy* is full of modern concepts. Amish changed so many things, characters, buildings and concepts according to his own interest There are clean linen bed sheets, towels and even some clothes. The material of the bed sheets is cotton, which Shiva has never seen before. The bathrooms in the camp were modern. Amish here has mentioned such things which do not existed in that trend. "He turned the magical device on the wall to increase the flow of water. He used the strange cake-like substance that the Meluhans said was a soap to rub the body clean" (*Tripathi 24*).

Amish in the *Shiva Trilogy* has given much importance to Somras. Somras is a medicine, which is shown to treat so many diseases. Shiva's neck turns blue with the help of somras, Sati was injured with agnibaan but was treated with somras,



Parvateshwar was injured and is treated with somras, the hump of men can also be removed with the help of Somras. Therefore, the medicine somras plays a very important role in the novel. However, there are many side effects of the somras also.

A utopian world has been discussed in the novel and it has given a perfect way of unbiased caste system in the form of Maika system. It was a great hospital city where delivery of child is done in that city only pregnant women are allowed to stay without their husbands and parents the care of such women was taken by the hospital staff which was the team of experts. After a few weeks of delivery, the women were allowed to leave the place without her child. When the child grew a little he was placed in a Gurukul in Meluhaa massive school built by the empire near Maika. Same education was provided to every single child. They were given same facilities that are to say that every child regardless of their caste were brought up in the same atmosphere. The records of their parents were kept secret. When these children reach is the age of eleven they are all given the Somras. So, they have An equal opportunity of success. Then through examination at the age of sixteen their success rate was judged and according to their performance they were allocated different caste or varna. For more than one year they were given specific training related to their caste they used to wear one colour bands, white for Brahmins red for Khatriyas green for Vaishyas black for shudras.

The fourth chapter of the thesis has been divided in two parts. The first part of the chapter tried to capture the changes influencing human perspectives from various affairs of human life. There are so many scientific concepts in the novel written by Amish which are in many ways not so modern, but surely does not exist in the Indus valley civilization. There is again and again the mention of radio waves in the novels, when Shiva used to meet the Pandits in the temples. While talking to the pandit in

Kashi Vishwanath temple, Shiva is having discussions he forgets that the pandit can receive his thoughts. He asks him how he can hear his thoughts, the pandit answered that this is simply a science. The science of the radio waves.

The pandit explained thus, “This is certainly not a theory. This is a fact. Just like light, which helps you see, there are radio waves to help you hear. While all humans can easily use the properties of light to see, most don’t know how to use radio waves to hear. We are dependent on sound waves to hear. Sound waves travel much slower through the air and for much shorter distances. Radio waves travel far and fast, just like light” (104) *The Secret of the Nagas*,

The concept of modernity is made interesting by Amish by blending it by myth and science in the book third there is a beautiful blending of Somras, myth and science. All these together results into modernity. The Nagas in the novel are shown as people having deformities and ugly people. Although by the end of the novel the real character of Nagas appear. They are good people but the bodily deformity is due to use of the Somras by the Nagas. The two main Naga characters are Ganesh and Kali. The cause of their deformity is by birth, that is why they were sent to that country. Kali explains of the cause of her deformity to king Vausaki. She tells him that Nagas were born with deformities as a result of the Somras. The Somras ‘Impact on a few babies when they are in the womb, if the parents have been consuming it for a long time. She tells that not all the babies are born with deformities but a few unfortunate ones like her are born with such complications. She tells him that this is also a way of god to punish those people to had committed sins in their previous birth. Somras removes the poisonous oxidants from one’s body, it operates on a fundamental level. Human body is made up of millions of tiny living unit called cells. These are the building blocks of our body. She

is here explaining about the theory of cell. These cells are the tiniest living units. They combine to form the different organs of the body or we can say our entire body is made up of cells, which is the smallest unit. These cells have the ability to divide and grow. In these divisions takes place it is like a new birth. One old unhealthy cell transforms into two new healthy cells. This process of division is a continuous process. As long as this division takes place the body remains healthy. The journey of the body begins from the mother's womb as a single cell. This single cell keeps dividing and growing till it forms the entire body.

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