

Social Reformation, Love and Feminine Virtuosity in the Novel 'The Immortals of Meluha' by Amish Tripathi

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Abstract: Women were given special status equal to men even in the ancient civilization, we can find many such evidence in history, where women fought every challenges of their life and stood as example to the new generation. Women excelled as an artist, actor, warrior, doctor, teacher, etc. They were also few who became reason to bring reformation in the society along with few other intellectuals' for better living. Love at times is seen as the main cause for such reform in the society, it can be love for person, people, or nation. Shiva's love for Sati changed the life of vikrama in the novel, this change and reformation bought new life in the people suffering as vikrama. Improvements in the people, community, society, can definitely lead in growth of the nation. But one needs to know the difference between wrong and right, and follow dharma to win over any evil. The author has very artistically described the Shiva and Sati the main characters of the novel. Sati having every skill of a warrior and a great heart of sacrifice just to follow the rules laid by Lord Ram, nothing is important than Dharma for her and no one can escape their fate by not following dharma, Shiva's journey from a normal person to Lord Neelkanth gives him strength to fight evil. This paper looks into how Shiva and Sati sustained dharma and Shiva proves that with love one can overcome the supremacy of social power.

Thus representing social reformation for love and feminine virtuosity in Amish Tripathi's first Novel "The Immortal of Meluha"

Keywords: Women power, Dharma, Love, Sacrifice, Reformation.

Introduction

The immortals of Meluha, 2010, by Amish Tripathi is set in 1900 BC. After the years of experience in finance and marketing sector he opted writing the fiction on Indian Mythology and chase to reinterpret the Lord Shiva myth. He became popular internationally and is also a winner of young Achiever Award for this contribution to Indian Literature. His books became famous and record breaker world-wide.

Shiva Trilogy is a mythological stories and figures largely unverifiable phenomena. The first part of the series refers to the inhabitants of the Meluhans who have become immortal with consumption of the godly drink somras.

The women challenges are beautifully portrayed equally with the male legend characters. It retells the Mythology in a classical fiction story that attracted reader of every age, especially one who love Mythology, History and stories from Puranas.

In Amish Tripathi's Shiva Trilogy, every character is individually given importance and it stands by its own qualities. The main character legend Shiva and his odyssey, transformation of an ordinary tribe into Neelkanth. He supports truth and justice and follows dharma.

Shiva's love for Sati makes him to accept his destiny as Neelkanth. Sati daughter of emperor Dakshna and queen Veerini. The princesses of Meluha is a strong woman with quality of a goddesses, following her fate without any oppression. She is a strong warrior who only believes in dharma. Multi- talented and has ability to face any challenge's for her loved ones.

Shiva's Odyssey to Neelkanth

It is a mythological fiction, that of lord Shiva his journey from Shiva to Neelkanth, it unfold the Odyssey of the Lord in search of evil and to destroy it for the welfare of the nation.

Shiva a tribe migrates with his gunas from his homeland Tibet to "Meluha the land of pure life", invitation from Nandi a Meluhan, on his request the whole tribe moves to Meluha.

Shiva with his gunas reaches Srinagar, he is introduced to Ayuvathi the chief of medicine of the Meluha, at their stay the gunas of shiva fall sick, Ayuvathi treats them but finds only shiva is not effected by the sudden symptoms of illness and his throat has turned blue. Seeing this Ayuvathi believes and thinks their saviour Lord Neelkanth has come to save Meluha. The emperor of Meluha Daksha orders Shiva's presence in Devagiri the capital city of Meluha

Shiva on his way to Devagiri meets a beautiful lady, whom he protects from some attackers. After meeting king Daksha he later comes to know that the lady whom he saved was actually princess Sati, daughter of Daksha and she is a vikarma a community group are untouchable and live a separate life due to the sins that they consider had effected in this birth, so they are considered untouchable.

Shiva falls in love with Sati, but Sati rejects him because of her commitment towards lord Ram's rule for Vikarama. Shiva with his talent wins her heart. The Meluhans believe that Shiva is their lord Neelkanth and come as saviour to Devagiri. Shiva accepts their faith on him and declares himself as the Neelkanth their fabled saviour. He dissolves the obsolete rules and laws laid by Lord Rama on Vikaram and proposes to marry Sati. Daksha accepts his wish and allows Shiva to marry Sati.

After his marriage to Sati Shiva is told many things about suryavanshi's and their constant attack from the land of chandravanshi for river Saraswathi. Shiva through the chief scientist of Meluhan Brahaspati comes to know about the manufacture and use of legendary somaras. He is told about the importance of somaras and its effects for which the Meluhans are living a long life. Brahaspati also tells him that the water of river Saraswati is very important in preparation of somaras, shiva also comes to know that somaras was the reason for his gunas to fall sick in srinagar and also cause for his throat to turn blue. Shiva and Brahaspati in this course become good friends and Shiva is taken to Mount Mandar, where somras is prepared with the help of water of river Saraswathi.

One fine morning the Meluhans wake up with loud noise which comes from mount Mandar. On reaching their Shiva and his soliders find that the major portion of mandar is destroyed and many scientist have be killed along with Brahaspati.

Shiva is hurt and misses his friend a lot, a war is declared on Chandravanshi in which the Meluhans conquer and the Chandravanshi king along with his royal family is captured by Meluhans. The Chandravanshi king and princess Anandmayi becomes startled seeing the Neelkanth, as they also believe that their lord Neelkanth will come to save their land against "evil" hearing to this Shiva is astonished.

In the famous Ram temple, he meets the temple priest from him Shiva learns that his karma and fate would guide him in destroying the "evil"

Love and faith can change karma

In this novel we can see how Shiva's love for Sati has changed the laws for vikarma. Shiva goes beyond the concept of karma and judges the virtue of the vikarma, makes a decision to bring reformation in the law and establishes a sense of justice among the people of Meluhans. "Shiv's expression made it clear that he thought the vikarma law was unfair" (pg. 280) he was genuinely disturbed with the law laid for the vikarma, basing on the problems faced by them in this birth. This change not only looks forward to rupture or mould the old laws but lay new ones for the better future of the citizen of nation as Shiva was considered the lord Neelkanth by the people of Meluha and saviour. It became important for Shiva to see that the change is accepted by his follower with love and respect, without it even the new law would become an unfair for the people who trusted their saviour.

His proposal to king Daksha to marry princess Sati shocks the emperor, but also made him happy because his daughter would be saved from the life time injustice. Shiva wishes to free all the vikaram people from the unjust law not only his Sati.

"No your Highness, "interrupted Shiva. "That is not what I meant. 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. "It is believed that vikarma people are carriers of bad fate, 'continued Daksha. "Hence if she marries again, she will pass on her bad fate to her husband and possibly he future children".

Though few felt that it was not right to change the laws of lord Rama, but could not dare to attempt a direct attack on their present Lord Neelkanth.

General Parvateshwar, cheif of Meluha armed forces, never accepted the change in Lord Ram's law but later accepts it.

"Parvateshwar looked at Shiva in surprise. Though he did not like even a comman being changed in any of Lord Ram's laws, he appreciated that Shiva was remaining true to a fundamental canon of Lord Ram's principles-the same law applies to everybody, equally and fairly, without exemptions." (pg. 282)

It proves that even in vedas and ancient Indian Mythology the social reformation was acceptable when it benefits the people equally, and any law that brings people together and removes inequality among the communities should be allowed and accepted.

Shiva after been accepted as the Lord Neelkanth by both suryavansi and chandravanshi made it possible for them to change the karma of the vikaram too. Shiva's love for sati helps him to free the ill-fated people of vikarma when he touched sati at the dance practice he was asked to go for shudhikaran (the purification ceremony)" What? What is a shudhikaran? Why would I need it? "please go for a shudhikaran, shiva,' said sati, as tears broke through her proud eyes.'I would never be able to forgive myself if something were to happen to you....."the violence of sati's reaction threw Shiva off balance.'*why the hell is this simple thing being blown completely out of proportion?'* (pg.105)

Shiva's love for sati opened this eyes and helped him to know the evil, the suffering of ill karma community. The right laws lead the nation to progress and its citizen to enlightenment and all this is possible only with love.

Amish Trapathi beautifully portraits shiva's personality to be the true Neelkanth, rightly appealing and intelligible to the modern mind. Shiva is uncertain about the evil he is going to destroy to save the suryavanshi and the chandravanshi, no doubt he is an enigmatic leader and a superlunary person. He becomes more responsible and committed towards future when sati intruded into his life. His human charm in its perfection leads him on the path of virtuous, respectful a sacred Mahadeve.

Feminine virtuosity and mastery in the novel

Sati's character in the Novel is quite contrast to that of the Myths. In this novel sati is born with bad karma and is a person who is punished for her previous birth bad deeds, because of which in this birth a naga child was born to her and her husband died after a very short period of thier marriage. Therefore, she is considered as vikarma. A woman who is confined to a life of deprivations.

Shiva's love for Sati brings in a hope of miracle to be happy for the rest of her life. Living all the deprivations behind, though her heart quenched for shiva's love but sati never wanted her bad deeds effect shiva's life as she is vikarma. Sati later agrees to marry shiva after a proclamation of swapping the law laid on vikarma was declared by the Neelkanth.

Sati is a multi- talented and follower of Dharma, being the daughter of the emperor Daksha she never over lured the law to her favour, she believed following Dharma she can be righteous to the meluhans. She is a great warrior being a vikarma she wasn't allowed to touch anyone but nothing could stop her from protecting her citizen. She was a skilled sward fighter, even shiva envayed and adored her sword fighting skills, he always appreciated her posture and perfection while he saw her practicing.

Ayurvati, she is the first female introduced in the novel, the head state doctor, she is considered very skilled and experienced in the field of medicine and also highly respected by the Meluhans. She is known for her capability of treating people at even critical situations, she is the one who saves Sati's life when attacked by a fire arrow. "O Lord Brahma!" cried Ayurvati as she reached Sati and recognized the arrow. "Mastrak! Dhruvini! Get a stretcher Now!" (pg.255)

"Come on Ayurvati, urged Shiva, 'You are the best doctor in the land'". (pg.263)

Ayurvati saved Sati from death bed. She was a dedicated and committed doctor who always accompanied Shiva and Sati in their battle field.

Women not only protect her family from every difficulty and take care of them but she is also a virtual victory in many other professions. She can anytime overcome the authority and men's domination when the time demands. "What makes the role of these characters important is their duplication in the distant past; people tend to derive their pride by associating themselves with idealistic mythic past and so these characters serve as a solid bridge between the dignified present and the imagined glorious past of the Indian women."¹

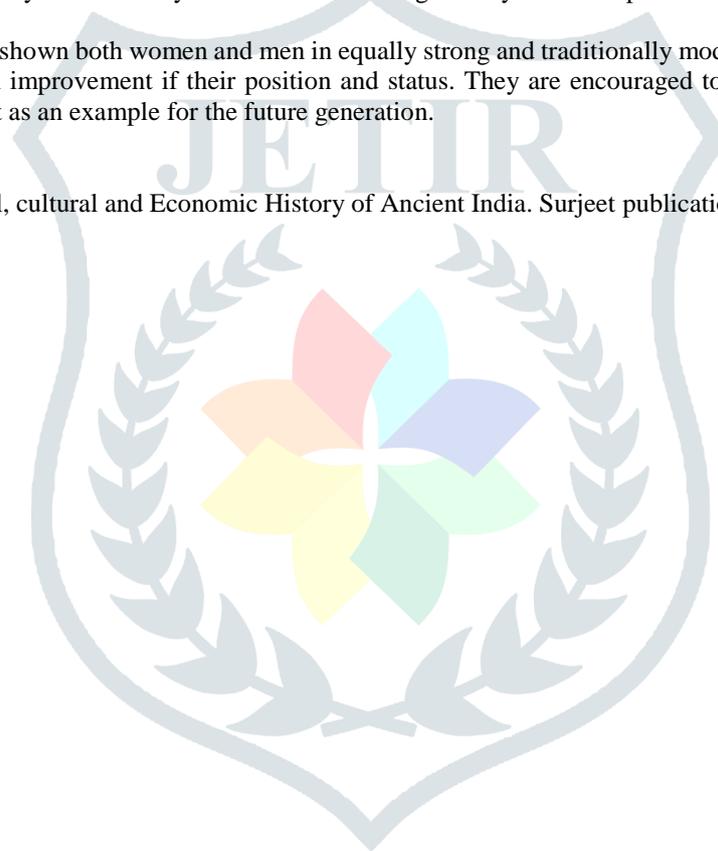
In any ancient history or civilization, women have the capability to hold their status equal to men or any other class. Women always played a prominent role in the development of the society and in building a great emperor or nation.

Women with the support of her family and better half can change the fate of the nation for good or for bad. If she holds dharma and selflessly wishes for the prosperity of the society and Nation. She can go to any extent to protect it, even at the cost of her life, like Sati in this novel.

In this novel, the author has shown both women and men in equally strong and traditionally modern, there has been long support from the family and society in improvement of their position and status. They are encouraged to set a new role and accept new challenges on their way and set as an example for the future generation.

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1. ¹ Neha Kumari and Dr. Rajesh Kumar, "The correlation of Myth and Feminism and presented in Amish Tripathi's Shiva Trilogy" The Criterion: An International Journal in English. Vol. 8, Issue-IV, August 2017, ISSN: 0976-8165