SOCIAL VISTA IN REFERENCE WITH AMISH TRIPATHI'S *THE IMMORTALS OF MELUHA*

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ABSTRACT

The sociological perspective nurtures us to educate how society is important in molding our daily lives. Literature has been used as a tool to convey and to shape the society. To convey the powerful messages, the writers have adopted the best medium, known as story-telling. As a result, myth has flourished and accepted by the people. In literature, myth has its own priority. The form and function of mythology in the modern world is concentrating more on literature.

KEYWORDS: Literature, Vikarmas

INTRODUCTION

Many writers revolve around myth to impart the virtues to people. For the past few decades, retelling of mythology in literature, especially in Indian Writing in English is increased with tremendous changes and serving to the expectations of the younger generation as well grabs the eyeballs of the modern readers. The reason behind the writers' interest for selecting mythology is to pattern and to elevate the society into next level. The new breeds of mythological storytellers are budding in this era with the expectations. Raja Rao was the pioneer to use myths in his fiction. Rajiv Menon, Ashok Banker, Shashi Tharoor and Ashwin Sanghai are also wanted to convey morals to their society via myths.

In line with them, Amish also experiments mythology in every aspects. By breaking all protocols, Amish has given a new aroma to his plot and his readers. In his *Shiva's Trilogy*, he has explored the pains and frustrations of oppressed people by depicting them in the form of Vikarmas through mythological characters. In this sequel, Sati represents the Vikarma community. The most ordered and well defined city of Meluha is deformed with some corrupt rules like Vikarma.

Vikarmas are enslaved groups in Meluha. They are untouchables and never allow touching others. They can be identified with their deformities and mothers of still-born child who are suffered by their ill- fate in life. Any person who touches a Vikarma has to observe Shudhikaran ritual.

Shiva is portrayed as the leader of Guna tribes who falls in love with sati at first sight. He wants to marry her. King Daksha hides sati the truth that she has been given birth to deformed son and misinforms her of still-born child. This makes her as a Vikarma, but she has the privilege of living in a palace. She strictly coheres the rules laid down for Vikarmas. Shiva's presence gives sati a new identity. Later Shiva comes to know that:

> Vikarmas 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 sufferings with grace. This is the only way they can wipe their Karma clean of the sins of their previous birth.

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 life. They have to pray for forgiveness every month to Lord Agni, the purifying Fire God, through a specifically mandated puja. (IM 92, 93)

By knowing this atrocity, Shiva's mind starts its mutiny. He wants to rescue his beloved Sati and the injustice done to Vikarmas (socially excluded group) in Meluha. Finally Shiva irons out the subjugation of Vikarmas and he brings dignity to the ostracized group.

This plot construction hints the readers to relate the present scenario. A society is blended with the people of certain group who are suffered with oppression and injustice. They should be sheltered in secluded areas and excluded to avail the facilities. The group of people is ruled by the leaders of the society. People of that community are still back in many fields. To reach next level, they have to overcome many hurdles. They are tormented by upper class people. To rescue the pathetic community they are in need of rescuer like Shiva in this story. The scenario has to be changed. By considering the fact, Amish may create Shiva's Character. As a writer he brings social reformation in the most ordered society of Meluha through the character of Shiva. Contemporary society also needs such a human to regularize the flaws of our system. The writer emphasizes this to his readers.

To destroy the domination of renegade Brahmins, Lord Ram has introduced the Maika system. This system never underestimates any particular caste and it helps to avoid all kinds of caste problem. Though Lord Ram has created this astounding system for the benefit of all people, it has some corrupted rules. All pregnant women deliver their babies in Maika without their husband and parents but they have the care of well trained staff. Husbands and parents of royal families are exceptional from the rules. After the child birth, the mother has to travel back to her own city. The child is grown up in Meluha Gurukul which is near to Maika. In that Gurukul, each children gets equal education. The records of their birth are kept confidential with the record-keeper of Maika. When they enter the adolescence age, they are provided the Somras to taste. At the age of fifteen, a comprehensive exam is held, on the basis of which castes are allocated. After the allocation, the child has to undergo for a one more year of training, this time, caste specific. In line with that, each caste has their own Varna's. Every child is retreated to the respective caste schools to take up their education. In this way the privileges of caste and fair society is created. Families adopt a child at the age of sixteen according to their request. For example,

If some Brahmin parents have applied to adopt a child, one randomly chosen student from Maika, who has won the Brahmic caste in the examination, is allotted to them. The child grows up with these adopted parents as their own child (IM 99)

This system paves way to the astounding and civilized society. In line with the Meluhans perception like teachers, lawyers, priests and etc. They are highly talented people. Kshatriyas, who are the warriors and rulers. Vaishyas are craftsmen, traders and business people and finally the Shudras are the farmers and workers. Ultimately, one caste cannot do another caste's job.

Indian caste system has the powerful structure. It is designed with the values of the society's beliefs. The caste system is a division of society based on differences of wealth, inherited rank or privilege, profession, occupation or race. (Veda.Merriam-Websters Online Dictionary). The caste system and creation of myth goes hand in hand. Rig Veda and Aryan influence are the best evidence for the blooming of caste system. Society is segregated into four main class levels or

Varna's in the caste system, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Ancient myth reveals that each level of caste is created from each body part of Purush. In Hindu Myth, Purush is the primal man (Aharon 33). To create the boundaries, Purush has destroyed himself. He has dedicated his top to bottom for the creation of the caste system. Brahmins are originated from the head of Purush are acknowledged as the highest level of the caste system. By following that Kshatriyas are from hand are having the next position of Brahmins. Vaishyas from his thighs and finally Shudras are created from his feet. So they are considered as the lowest class. With the influence of Aryan, again the caste system has slightly changed and it determined the profession of the community. In addition to that Brahmins are considered to be the priests, Kshatriyas are to be the warriors, Vaishyas are the traders and Shudras serves as laborers. Without myth there is no beginning for the caste system. It assists the society to enrich and enhance their fundamentals. Every culture has influenced one another with great impact.

The system has originated with the aim of identifying the skills and to bring out the efficiency of the people. Caste system should felicitate the people. It shouldn't rule them. But now it is polluted and excretes illimitable trouble to the people. A free thinker, Amish tries to explain natural phenomenon with the help of natural causes. Through *Shiva's Trilogy,* Amish has discloses many flaws of the society to the readers. But in the current scenario, caste system is the root cause for major violence in the society. To educate the society, Amish has tried his hand in resurrecting the mythological themes.

CONCLUSIONS

Deep analysis of his theme reveals as many solutions to the existing problems. In society, clashes may occur with the base of caste system. This system has to be reconstructed or at least has to be monitored whether it is equal to everyone.To explore meticulously, the society is in constant interaction with its surroundings and any attempt to block the system would be cut it off from the interactions that maintain it, thereby likely leading to its destruction. Thus, this paper traces the imposing customs of *Shiva's Trilogy,* and how far it instigates the readers mind to think of existing scenario in addition it cognizes the social vista.

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