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THE POWERFUL COUNTERPARTS AS DESCRIBED IN AMISH TRIPATHI'S *THE SECRET OF THE NAGAS*

MATANGI R

I M.A. English Literature, PSGR Krishnammal College for Women

Myths were used to set examples for the commoners - both men and women. Sometimes, this, by itself may lead to formation of stereotypes and gender typing, especially in case of women. But, Amish Tripathi in his novel, *The Secret of The Nagas*, has taken his female protagonists to the next level, where they prove to be a good example to the society and help women to achieve their potential by serving as a role model.

Amish Tripathi (1974- present), is the author of the series- Shiva trilogy and The Ramachandra series, both retelling of the famous mythologies of Lord Shiva and Lord Ram- the two major Gods of the Indian mythology. After he got tired of his 15 year old career in the banking sector, he started pursuing literature and succeeded in the field. . Now, he is working on the third book of the Ramachandra series- "Raavan, The orphan of Aryavarta"

Awards: Society Young Achievers Award for Literature in 2013, Dainik Bhaskar Reader's Choice Awards in 2016 etc.,

The Secret of The Nagas is the second book of the Shiva Trilogy. This book unveils the way towards the mysterious Nagas (people born with deformities which were considered to be an effect of the sins of their last birth) and the reason behind Daksha's strange and hostile attitude towards the Nagas. It also unveils the identity of a mysterious Naga, referred to as *The Lord of The people* who keeps tailing Sati and his relationship with her. Just like the myth, Daksha is portrayed to be a selfish character who cares for his own reputation and the progeny who will carry it forward.

Lord Shiva marries Sati, the daughter of Daksha, who is the son of Lord Brahma and a great king. This displeases Daksha and he does not invite them both to a yagna which he performs. Enraged and ashamed of her father, Sati immolates herself to be reborn to parents whom she can respect. She is reborn as Parvati and she attains Shiva, who has renounced the worldly pleasures as her husband through severe penance.

Meluhha, an epitome of a perfect society awaits the arrival of their saviour-The Neelkanth, a man with a prophesied blue throat who can save them from the "evil" Chandravanshis. Their prayers are answered with the arrival of Shiva, the leader of a tribe from a small village beyond Himalayas. Things take a much happier turn when Shiva and Sati- the daughter of the emperor Daksha fall in love, get married and have a son. The question of the need for an outsider to save the perfect society to save them from the inefficient Chandravanshis forms the plot of the trilogy. The book which this paper deals with shows how Shiva goes beyond all sorts of external influences in discovering what the true evil is and attains the ability to differentiate between being evil and being different.

The main female protagonists- Sati and Anandmaya are poles apart in character. They neither refrain themselves nor are they refrained by the society for doing anything just because of their gender. The bond between Sati and Shiva and Anandmaya and Parvateshwar is based on mutual love and respect. This book concentrates on the relationship of the latter pair, since the former's marriage takes place in the first book itself. In the beginning, it is shown that Parvateshwar and Anandmaya are always at loggerheads, since they are the extremes of the masculine and feminine way of living. But as time flows, they find love in each other. They

balance each other; they are like the halves of an apple- completing each other and balancing the flaws. This balances their relationship and through this Amish shows gender equality.

Demythification is removal the mythical characteristics from a person.

No character in the play has mythical or supernatural powers. All that they have is an outcome of the scientific developments of their age.

Demythologisation is to eliminate all mythical elements from a piece of writing so as to arrive at an essential meaning. It can also be defined as restating of a message, especially a religious one in rational terms. The characters can live a long life owing to a scientific invention called the "Somras", which is not a myth but a scientific creation. And, Daksha is neither beheaded nor is his head replaced with that of a goat's ,as it takes place in the myth.

Feminism involves establishment of personal, social and political equality of women as well as creating opportunities for women in all fields.

"We believe that everything in this world is a carrier of *Shakthi* or *energy*...But the biggest carrier of energy that we are physically in touch with is *Mother Earth* herself."(Amish Tripathi,54)

Here, the energy is personified in form of a woman which is an aspect of feminism where you see all aspects of the world to be of the fair sex.

"You are my sister. I don't care what the society says. If they accept me, they will accept you. If they reject me, I leave the society too." (Amish Tripathi,128)

The society's decision does not force a woman to give up her relationship with her sibling and son. Thus she is portrayed a strong-willed and independent woman.

Both Sati and Anandmayi are well known for their military prowess, which eliminates the general taboo of a woman who is described to be a "*delicate creature to be handled with care*".

Since Parvateshwar and Shiva consider their wives as a person to be respected and treated with honour, these women are able retain their individuality. Though Veerini is a good wife to Daksha, he does not have the good sense to understand and accept her decisions, which lead to later misery. So, gender equality depends on both the sexes- women who should come out with ideas and men who should acknowledge and accept them.

Works Cited

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