

**COMPREHENDING THE SENSE OF ALIENATION IN AMISH TRIPATHI'S *SHIVA TRILOGY***

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**Abstract**

Marginalization is the exclusion of something or someone from the broader population by reducing their status and importance. In the *Shiva Trilogy*, one can examine the practice of marginalization among the different group of people living in a society. The sense of isolation and alienation is prevalent in all the three novels. It is depicted among the three group of people – Suryavanshi, Chandravanshi and the Nagas. In the most tranquil country known as Meluha, the secret of the Somras (an elixir) is exposed as the cause of all the problems. One come to know the harmful effects of the large production leading to the deformities of the Nagas as well as affecting the health of the Branga people terribly. Civil war breaks out amongst the three races as a means of halting the manufacturing factory of the Somras. However, the three community have the same legend about the Neelkanth with different perception. The myth reveals two things. The Neelkanth will not come from the "Sapt-Sindhu". The second is that the Neelkanth will be the "destroyer of evil". Shiva, the main character, ended up saving the oppressed Nagas and all those who are against the Somras.

**Key words:** Marginalization, Alienation, Mythology, Somras, Oppressed

Amish Tripathi is an Indian author who writes in English. His transformation from a banker to a talented writer is like a fairy tale. He had been an atheist at first but later became a fervent follower of Hindu god, Lord Shiva. The *Shiva Trilogy* is a masterwork of modern Indian English writing in terms of form, language, and style. It can be categorized as either historical or mythological art. The story takes place in 1900 BC in Meluha, a nearly flawless nation that is incorrectly referred to today as the Indus Valley Civilization. Amish attempted to ground his narrative in the crucial tenet that all gods are once just mortals, but their actions earned them fame as deities. *The Immortals of Meluha*, *The Secret of the Nagas*, and *The Oath of the Vayuputras* are taken for the current study of marginalization.

When social inequality exists between groups of people or cultures, it usually takes the form of a hierarchy with one group at the top and the other at the bottom. The *Shiva Trilogy* by Amish contains such examples. The Suryavanshis who are sun-descendants are introduced in the first book as the most civilized community. They reside in Meluha, the largest civilization. The three principles of Satya (Truth), Dharma (Duty), and Maan (Honour) are what they strive to live by. A Suryavanshi must constantly endeavor to be truthful, courageous, and above all, faithful to the truth. The Chandravanshis, on the other hand, reside in the Swadweep region. They are completely the opposite of the Suryavanshis who are dishonest, unreliable, and lazy individuals who lack ethics and morality. Cowards, they never engage in combat like the honorable Kshatriyas. Even their kings are despicable and self-centered. The Chandravanshis are a disgrace to humanity. The Nagas are individuals who are thought to be under a curse and are born with physical abnormalities like extra hands or terribly malformed features as a result of their misdeeds from previous births. They are indigenous people that reside in the Dandak Forest, which is located outside of Sapt Sindhu, the region of the seven rivers (Saraswati, Yamuna, Ganga, Sarayu, Brahmaputra, and Narmada).

Each of the three races has its own issues to resolve but they are all connected by the same fable. i.e., “The legend of the Neelkanth” which says two things. The first one is that the Neelkanth will be a foreigner, from outside the Sapt Sindhu and the second is that the Neelkanth will be the “destroyer of evil”. However, with the three, evil is perceived differently. The Suryavanshis believe that the Chandravanshis are immoral, and vice versa. However, according to the Nagas, the somras is the source of all evil. Civil war breaks out between all three groups as a way of eradicating evil. Shiva, the head of the Guna tribe and a native of the Tibetan foothills of Mount Kailash is declared as the destroyer of evil who must carry out his karma to eradicate evil. He receives the offer to immigrate to Meluha together with his people, which propels him towards his new destiny and changes him from a regular Shiva into a Mahadev or god of the gods.

Among all the three group of people, the Suryavanshis are thought to be the most cultured. They are experts in all disciplines and have lifespans that are practically indefinite. The anti-aging medicinal herb known as Somras is the key to the long-life span. The drink is made available to the whole country. Everything is organised and beautiful in Meluha but even the most ideal state is not immune to harm. Due to misunderstandings and misinterpretations of their interactions with one another, the Chandravanshis and Suryavanshis have troubles. However, the ruling elites' disregard and oppression of the Naga people is the primary cause of all their troubles. The Nagas are marginalized because the other group of people have distinguished them from the others socially, morally, religiously. Above all, they are branded as evil. The governing classes do not look into their situation, recognize or accept them for who they are.

The Naga race is marginalized because of the ruling class's abandonment. Kali, the abandoned daughter and queen of the Nagas is born with deformities. On the other hand, Ganesh, the son of Sati, is tricked and abandoned because of his monstrous appearance. This exposes the horror of the almost ideal land and the brutality of the affluent. The area of the Sapt Sindhu, which Lord Manu is assigned to the Suryavanshis and the Chandravanshis for living peacefully. However, the marginalized Nagas are not welcomed into the land of peace. The Nagas are deceived and mistreated. They are deprived of their rights and are called demons. It is considered a bad luck to even speak of them for they are believed to be sinners. In *The Immortals of Meluha*, Nandi says to Shiva,

‘The city of the Nagas exists to the south of the Narmada, beyond the border of our lands. In fact, it is bad luck to even speak of them, my Lord!...Cursing under his breath, Nandi said, ‘Because of the Chandravanshis! What levels have these two-faced people sunk to? Using the demon Nagas in their attacks! In their hatred for us, they don’t even realize how many sins they are inviting upon their own souls!’ (61-62).

The Naga minority is overlooked, excluded, and neglected on a social, cultural, and geographic level. They defend their rights after being betrayed in order to survive. Despite their horrifying deformation, the Nagas are talented and are accomplished warriors which is why they are able to defend their opponents.

When people are judged according to their fortunes and birthplaces, Meluha, the land of pure life, loses some of its purity. Based on their karmas, the highly civilized society labelled its citizens as "Vikarma" and marginalized them. A lady giving birth to a stillborn child or a person who contracts an incurable sickness are both referred to as Vikarma in Meluha. They are expected to lead a solitary existence. They are not permitted to contact anyone because they might expose them to their terrible fate. Giving birth to a stillborn child qualifies a woman to be a Vikarma. The Suryavanshi princess Sati has been isolated and designated as Vikarma for the deaths of her husband and son. Shiva who respects and adores her, gives her a new life by nullifying the Vikarma system. In *The Immortals of Meluha*, Nandi tells Shiva,

‘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 sufferings with grace. This is the only way they can wipe their karma clean of the sins of their previous births. Vikarma men have their own order of penance and women have their own order’. (TIM 94-95)

The Vikarma notion is morally repugnant and illogical because one shouldn't be judged according to the suffering they endure. Suppressing and excluding individuals based on their illnesses is racially motivated. As a result of internal and external factors, illness has a clear nature. Both the disease and the karma from a past birth cannot be attributed to either person. Nandi clarifies,

‘Their own karma, my Lord,’ said Nandi, his eyes suggesting the obvious. ‘For example if a woman gives birth to a still born child, why would she be punished thus unless she had committed some terrible sin in her previous birth? Or if a man suddenly contracts an incurable disease and gets paralysed, why would it happen to him unless the universe was penalising him for the sins of his previous life? (95).

Traditions dictate that inhabitants in Meluha are divided into caste groups such as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. The top class consists of priests, scientists, and doctors are considered Brahmins. Next to them are the Kshatriyas, who are warriors and kings. The Shudras, who are traders and merchants, are situated next to them. The Vaishyas, who are farmers and labourers, are at the bottom. They all wear amulets that are symbolic of their chosen tribes and castes. Nandi says, “Well, if the lines are drawn to represent the head of the Parmatma, it would mean the wearer is a 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.”(TIM 38)

Shiva appears as Neelkanth, the exterminator of evil. He justifies and goes to fight against actual evil after recognising it. The somras is the real evil. He demolished the secret factories in Meluha, liberating the populace from their negative effects and restoring their freedom and liberty. Additionally, he abolishes the Vikarma system and accords everyone their due rights, respect, and dignity. Shiva, the head of the Guna tribe, is portrayed by Amish as a human being who is revered as a god due of his excellent deeds.

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