

EXPLORING AMISH TRIPATHI'S *THE IMMORTALS OF MELUHA* THROUGH JOSEPH CAMPBELL'S MONOMYTH

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Abstract:

Who is a hero, how should a hero be, and most importantly, from where has the concept of a hero derived? There are various interpretations offered by several critics. These definitions initiated some theories like monomyth and archetypal criticism. These are the theories that are directly or indirectly inspired by myths and archetypes. These myths are studied under a broader term called mythology, and later this study of myths has given rise to various other theories like monomyth and archetype. Campbell has named his theory of archetype "monomyth", which is particularly based on the adventures and journey of a hero. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, written by Joseph Campbell, was first published in the year 1949 and serves as the foundation for the monomyth idea used in this research study. The intent behind this research is to discuss the theory of monomyth and to examine the application of this theory in the selected novel *The Immortals of Meluha* (2010), written by Amish Tripathi. The standard procedure for Campbell's mythological adventure undertaken by the hero is represented as the series of three events: separation, initiation, and return. The research focuses on the characters of the novel, which are directly taken from the contents of *Shivapurana*. It will analyse the characters in light of Joseph Campbell's monomyth theory, noting how well they conform to it. The primary focus of this research will be on the character of Shiva, the protagonist.

Keywords: Myth, Mythology, Archetype, Monomyth, Joseph Campbell.

INTRODUCTION

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered, and a decisive victory is won; the hero comes back from his mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.

(Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* 28)

The theory of "monomyth," which is being utilised in this research study, originated in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949), written by Joseph Campbell. In this book, Campbell evaluates mankind from a mythological and symbolical perspective and wants to substantiate that all humans have similar core concepts embedded within them. In his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949), Campbell defines this idea through the archetype of a hero.

The word monomyth is the combination of a couple of Greek words, where *mono* stands for *one*, and *mythos* for story. So, monomyth can be defined as a single structure that upholds all stories. In modern times, the term has been used to describe the 'hero's journey'. The monomyth theory was not really spoken of until 1949, when Professor Joseph Campbell introduced his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Campbell used to be a professor of mythology until 1987, and during his lifetime, he had given much time to studying all of the ancient stories and fairy tales.

The term *myth* has its origin in the Greek roots, which means *story*. Myths are basically the folklore genre, which comprises stories or narratives that play a significant and a fundamental role in any society. These are considered the demonstration of the inner feelings of the universe and human life and are interwoven into the very fabric of human psychology. Hence, myths are by default collective and communal; they play a vital role in binding a tribe or a nation together in some commonly shared psychological and spiritual activities. Myths comprise a variety of motifs. These motifs are nothing but universally recognisable symbols and characters, which are later known as *archetypes*. Several philosophers have provided theories on archetypes, like Carl Jung, who stated in *The Collective Unconscious*, 1968 that the term *archetype* is frequently misinterpreted to refer to specific, definite mythical pictures or themes, yet they are merely conscious representations. The tendency to create these kinds of motif representations—representations that can change significantly in detail without sacrificing their fundamental structure—is known as an archetype. This concept of archetype finds its roots in myths and mythology. Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes are the prominent writers who worked in the field of myths and mythology. Myths are symbolic in nature, as these objects or images relate themselves to some or other concepts and values from ancient times. (Levi Strauss *Literary Theory*, 428).

Thus, one can say that an archetype is a symbol or motif that appears in a myth. And the study of these myths is called “mythology”. Through this study, it can be concluded that each story followed a similar paradigm. Furthermore, Barthes (*Mythologies* 1972) has analysed that every step in the procedure carries a close relation with the human psyche. Since then, a number of books have published on the concept, along with the formation of movies, novels, video games, and several stories following the concept of the monomyth paradigm.

In this field of myth, mythology, archetype, and archetypal criticism, many works were written and thus many theories were also formulated. These works are as follows: *The Golden Bough* (1890) by James Frazer, *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934) by Maud Bodkin, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949) and *The Masks of God* (1959) by Joseph Campbell, *Mythologies* (1972) by Roland Barthes, *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) by Northrop Frye, and finally *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1959) by Carl Gustav Jung. These were the major works related to the subject. The most scientific study of myths and mythologies has been done by Claude Lévi-Strauss through structuralism: “Myth is a language to be known, myth has to be told, it is a part of human speech” (*The Structural Study of Myth*, 86). Northrop Frye, who brought light on myths as an area of literary studies and established a relation between myth, ritual, and dream, and this triangular relationship caused the emergence of the archetype. He says, “The union of ritual and dream in a form of verbal communication is a myth...the myth accounts for and makes the ritual and the dream.... Ritual is the archetypal aspect of mythos and dream” (*Anatomy of Criticism* 106).

A mythological novel is one that is rooted in the characters being drawn from the ancient myths, legends, folklore, and fairy tales. *The Immortals of Meluha* (2010), the first book in the series of *the Shiva Trilogy*, draws its characters from the ancient text of *Shivapurana*. Tripathi has published many mythological retellings. This research defines how the theory of monomyth is perfectly applied to this novel. Also, many researchers have analysed this trilogy as a mythological retelling. Like Prasadita L. Raveendran in her paper “Myth and Folklore Embodiment in the Female Protagonist of Contemporary Fictions: A Reading of the Shiva Trilogy and Bulbul” (2021), depicted mythology and feminism in the Shiva Trilogy. Madhan Ponkoliyandi, in “Symbolism in Amish Tripathi’s Shiva Trilogy: A Study” (2019), analysed symbolism and spirituality in this book. R. Devendiran and B. Kathiresan represented two cultures and examined them in their paper “Cultural Analysis of Amish Tripathi’s Shiva Trilogy” (2020). Deimantas Valanciunas examined socio-cultural transformations, political climate, and the emergence of Indian fantasy in his paper “Re-imagining Hindu Mythology in the Twenty-First Century: Amish Tripathi and Indian Fantasy Fiction in English” (2023).

ANALYSES

According to the theory of the monomyth by Campbell, a hero initially belongs to a common place, like a common man, and in no time, he is dignified to perform some extraordinary tasks with some supernatural wonders, followed by some fabulous and extravagant works done by the hero, and eventually steps towards victory; ultimately, the hero returns back from his mysterious adventures with the power to serve his people the best. Campbell has recognised some seventeen steps to the journey of a hero; however, the base structure states three stages: Separation—Initiation—Return. Each of these three stages is divided into different steps; these are as follows: In the very first place, separation: call to adventure, refusal of the call, supernatural aid, crossing first threshold, and belly of the whale. The second stage is initiation, which involves: road of trials, meeting with the goddess, temptation, atonement with the father, apostasies, and the ultimate boon. Finally, return is divided into refusal to return, magic flight, rescue from without, crossing the return threshold, master of two worlds, and freedom to live.

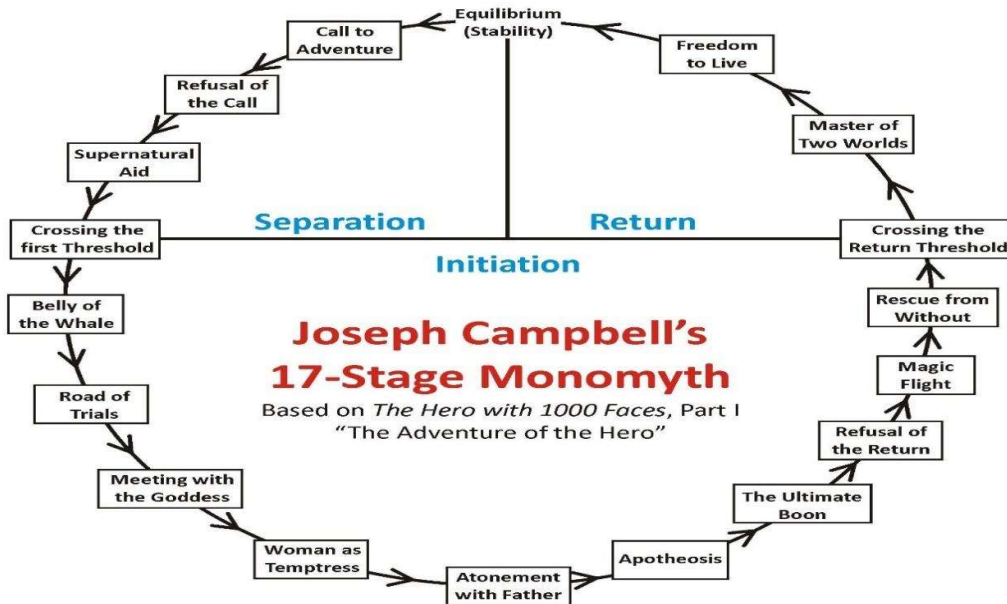


Figure 1: Seventeen stages of Campbell’s monomyth

In the words of Joseph Campbell (*The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 1949), a hero is “...symbolical of that divine creative and redemptive image which is hidden within us all, only waiting to be known and rendered into life” (30-31). A brief discussion of the seventeen stages of the monomyth theory in accordance with the chosen novel, *The Immortals of Meluha*, is discussed here.

1. Separation

a. Call to adventure

This very first step tells the hero that there is a different life waiting for him. Most of the time, this call is towards a different life, and it is in his best interest to follow. It may often be a better one, but surely not easier. The novel *The Immortals of Meluha* by Amish Tripathi starts with the protagonist Shiva gazing at the orange sky during the time of sunset near Mansarovar Lake at Mount Kailash. Sitting perplexed as to whether to accept the offer of the people of Meluha to come to their place or not. Shiva belonged to the Guna tribe; the tribe had to fight very often to save their lives from their enemy, the Pakratris. In such a situation, Shiva feels better accepting the offer and moving to the city of Meluha from Mount Kailash, his childhood place. Shiva thinks:

“Do I really have the destiny my uncle spoke of?

Do I deserve a good destiny?

My people come first. Will they be happy in Meluha?” (Tripathi 4)

The decision to move to a completely new place with his tribe was very difficult for Shiva, as he was the leader of that tribe. All the people of the tribe moved to the city of Meluha to undergo new adventures with a new beginning. Another side of the story belongs to the Meluhans, who are called the Suryawanshis, who were inviting immigrants from other places to their city. Meluhans were engaged in the search for their saviour, who would bring them out from all the evil and miseries; this saviour was called the Neelkanth. Any person whose neck will turn blue after drinking the magical drink called Somras will be their Neelkanth. Finally, they got their Neelkanth as Shiva, whose throat turned out to be blue after drinking the magical drink, somras. When Shiva got to know about this, he refused to accept his destiny. This incident of denial fits perfectly in the theory of Campbell’s monomyth.

b. Refusal of the call

In this step, Campbell offers that a hero first denies any calls to adventure. The reason may be his fear, insecurities, and lack of confidence in himself. In the novel, Shiva initially refuses to accept his role in the lives of the people of Meluha. In the first place, he misses his birthplace, Mount Kailash. But he also remembered his guru’s teachings that he has some destiny, and for that he has to cross these massive mountains of Kailash. He could not understand and decide his future course of action. According to him, how can he be a saviour and like God to some well-maintained, structured, and systematised society? He was just a mere barbarian who didn’t know anything. He was absolutely puzzled by the unanticipated devotion of each and every Meluhan around him.

c. Supernatural Aid

Supernatural means beyond the laws of nature. It is the guidance and help of any mentor, helper, or talisman that helps during the worst. Devagiri was the capital city of the kingdom of Meluha. After the arrival of Neelkanth, a bird courier was sent to the emperor to inform him of the pleasant news. A few soldiers, along with Governor Chenardhwaj and Nandi, were sent with Shiva, the Neelkanth, to the capital city. The journey was filled with a lot of adventures and challenges. On the way, the entourage met with an accident due to a bad weather condition in which Nandi drowned in the river, and it looked impossible to save him. Surprisingly, Shiva went to Nandi and somehow managed to save his life with a heroic move. Due to the injury of Nandi and Shiva, the journey took a pause, and Shiva found some time to immerse himself in the beauty of the heavenly city. He reached near the temple of Lord Brahma. The role of supernatural aid in this novel was played by the pandit of Brahma Temple. Pandit understands Shiva’s troublesome situation and tries to lessen some of his burden through his guidance. Pandit Ji acted as the mentor to Shiva.

d. Crossing the Threshold

This step signifies that the hero is ready to accept the challenge and is now committed to his destiny. He prepares himself to cross the gateway that separates him from his ordinary lifestyle and takes him to the special world. As Shiva moves out of the temple, he soon encounters an attack on Sati, the royal princess of Meluha. Since the very beginning, Sati has captivated Shiva. As Shiva was continuously observing things around him, he sensed some threat. The very next moment, some terrorists attacked Sati, the princess. According to Shiva, it was not just a simple attack but an attempt to kidnap the princess. Shiva and Sati both fought bravely and defeated the attackers. Shiva, undoubtedly a great fighter, along with sharp eagle eyes, noticed an *Aum*-shaped bracelet on the wrist of a terrorist. The symbol of *Aum* belonged to the tribe of *Nagas*, who wished to kidnap the princess. This bracelet made Shiva curious to know more about the Meluhan empire and the *Nagas*. *Nagas* are the cursed people with certain deformities because of their previous birth’s sins, like extra hands, animal-faced humans, and more to go, but they have tremendous strength and skills. With this, Shiva, consciously or unconsciously, has accepted that he has some work to do here and thus validated another step of Campbell’s monomyth theory.

e. Belly of the Whale

In this step, according to Campbell, the hero undergoes a complete separation from his known world and enters into a totally new and different world to face challenges and shows a willingness to undergo a metamorphosis. As soon as Shiva enters the capital city of the Meluha kingdom, Devagiri, he encounters Emperor Daksha along with Prime Minister Kanakhala and Chief of the Armed Forces, General Parvateshwar. The blue throat of Shiva was examined by them. The next meeting disclosed a few problems faced by the empire, like cutting short the *Saraswati* River, due to which the production of somras has decreased, and frequent terrorist attacks by *Nagas* and the Chandravanshis, known as the Swadweepan Empire, their enemy. The most dangerous problem was that they outnumbered the Meluhans; it was a population of eighty million Chandravanshi. Emperor Daksha told Shiva about the unfinished task of Lord Ram; the task was to save the Chandravanshi Empire. Shiva was shocked initially. Daksha explained, “Yes, my lord. Save them from the evil philosophy that infects their soul. Save them from their treacherous rulers. Save them from their sorry, meaningless existence. And we can do this by giving them the benefits of the superior Suryavanshi way of life” (Tripathi 116).

Shiva thought of his uncle’s words, uttered many years ago: “Your destiny lies beyond the mountains. Whether you fulfil it or run away once again is up to you” (Tripathi 117).

Shiva realises his duties and accepts his destiny that he has to do whatever he can do for them. In any way he has to offer help to them, a lot of things should be changed. He undergoes a complete separation from his people, the Guna tribe, and his closest childhood friend, Bhadra, and moves towards the Meluhans. With this, the novel attains one more step of Campbell’s theory of the monomyth.

2. Initiation

a. Road of Trials

The next step mentioned in the book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell is the Road of Trials. This is the initial step of the second stage, Initiation. In this step, the hero encounters a series of trials and challenges. They learn from their past mistakes, and they also link up with some allies who will help them through their journey. Shiva exhibited his interest in visiting the place where somras was manufactured, Mount Mandar. Brahaspati, the chief scientist of Mount Mandar, soon became a good friend of Shiva. Brahaspati was one such ally to Shiva who understood Shiva’s feelings and concerns and tried to help him out, as mentioned in the theory of the monomyth. Both talked regarding the scientific reason behind the discovery of blue throat and so on. Soon Shiva left Mount Mandar to go back to the capital along with Nandi, his companion, Princess Sati, and Queen Veerini. On their way, they again encounter one more terrorist attack. Sati, Shiva, and Nandi fought well along with the soldiers. This time Shiva was very sure that the attack was to kidnap the princess and also noticed the hooded figure with the same bracelet, the *Naga*.

“Surrender the princess to us, and we will leave, said the hooded figure. Want no unnecessary bloodshed” (Tripathi 162).

Shiva and his companion made the terrorist retreat. This was the first trial faced by Shiva after his acceptance of his duties. Shiva was the Neelkanth; he wished to visit the cities closely, amongst the working class. In the meantime, Veerbhadra, a childhood friend of Shiva, joined him back, who also acted as an ally and companion of Shiva in the novel. Shiva, Sati, Parvateshwar, Brahaspati, Ayurvati (the doctor), Krittika (Sati’s companion), Nandi, and Veerbhadra set off to visit the vast empire of Meluha. During the journey, Shiva again met the pandit ji in the city of *Mohan Jo Daro*, who again acted as a mentor to Shiva. He also helped Shiva to win Sati’s heart. Through these trials and with the companions, the novel followed this step perfectly.

b. Meeting with the Goddess

This step is considered the ultimate test of the hero to win the quest for love. The hero encounters the goddess, who is the epitome of beauty and portrays the feminine ideal. Moving forward with the journey, on their way, they again encounter an attack that was going on in some nearby village. All of them went to rescue the villagers and defeat the terrorists. The terrorists were none other than the *Nagas*. Shiva also revealed his identity as the Neelkanth:

“I am going to fight these terrorists, roared Shiva. I am going to show them that we are not scared anymore. I am going to make them feel the pain we feel” (Tripathi 250).

All of them went to the place and fought the battle. There were in total five *Nagas*; during the battle, almost three *Nagas* were killed, and the battle still continued. According to Shiva, those people might be evil, but they were fearless soldiers. During the battle, an arrow was shot towards Shiva by a *Naga*. In the meantime, Sati deviated her body in midair before Shiva; the arrow slammed into her chest. Later discovered, it was not a normal arrow but an *Agnibaan*, and in the entire history, nobody could have ever fought against an *Agnibaan*. Everybody left hope for Sati, even though Sati decided that she could not survive anymore. Shiva, on the other hand, was not ready to accept her death, he was continuously thinking of some way in which Sati could be saved. In the course of time, Shiva found a way and asked Ayurvati to provide some Somras to Sati, which can heal her injury and stop the high-rising fever. Ultimately, Somras started working, and her temperature started decreasing.

“This is a miracle, Sati. Nobody has ever recovered from an *Agniban!*” said Ayurvati (Tripathi 272). Sati undoubtedly liked Shiva, but this incident melted her heart, and she confessed her love towards him. His efforts melted her soul into tears, as nobody has ever felt for her in such a way. Soon the emperor arrived at the medical camp and encountered the whole love confession. Ultimately, the wedding was announced, and the couple reconciled.

c. Women as Temptress

This pace refers to those material desires that may distract the hero from his duties. This can make the hero stay away from his quest. After the finalisation of the wedding of Shiva and Sati, Shiva, Emperor Daksha, and the entire Meluha city shifted their attention from the terrorist attacks to the great wedding. There was a breeze of celebration in Devagiri, the capital city of Meluha. Each and every person in the kingdom was now occupied with the wedding preparations. Wedding celebrations were held over the last seven days and are still left on. In the meantime, Veerbhadra and Krittika also developed feelings for each other and desired to marry. The series of events and celebrations worked as a huge distraction in the course of the actions of Neelkanth and his duties. In this way, the woman of Shiva’s life and their wedding served as a temptation for the hero.

d. Atonement with Father

This is the ninth step of Campbell’s monomyth, where the hero must confront and get motivated by whatever holds the ultimate power in his life. In most of the mythological stories, this role is played by the father or a father figure who possesses the ultimate life-and-death power. During the celebrations, Brahaspati, the chief scientist of Meluha, went back to Mount Mandar to perform some important experiments. The wedding ceremonies were settled till the time, and the entire kingdom was inhaling the air of joy and happiness. During the night, Shiva came into contact with the pandit again, who had shown his real identity to him. Pandit guided Shiva for his future course of action. He made Shiva understand that he has to absorb all the negativities from inside the people because it is not necessary that if one thing is true, then the opposite would definitely be false. Pandit Ji disclosed in his dream that he is Vishnu, who spreads positivity in the world, and Shiva is the Mahadev, who possesses the power to bring out the negativity from people by absorbing it himself.

e. Apotheosis

Apotheosis is the position of actualisation through which a perfect understanding of actions can be gained. Accompanying this fresh wisdom and perception, the protagonist is resolved. He becomes ready for more difficult and vital challenges. In the previous step, the knowledge given by Pandit Ji enlightens Shiva, through which he feels much stronger and more powerful.

“Shiva! BOOM! What the hell was that? Cried Shiva, alert now. Someone is using *diviastras*! Divine weapons!” (Tripathi 301). Soon everybody realised that there was an attack by some terrorists not in Devagiri but at Mount Mandar. Shiva collapsed as he heard this news because Brahaspati, his best friend, and the chief scientist had left for Mount Mandar just a few days ago. Soon the soldiers and generals left for Mount Mandar; Shiva, Sati, Nandi, and Veerbhadra also accompanied them in search of Brahaspati and others. This attack broke Shiva, and he announced the war against Swadweep and the Nagas. This incident acted as a realisation for Shiva to commit to his duties.

f. The Ultimate Boon

The hero willingly attains the desired goal of the quest. All the previous trials and challenges serve to prepare the hero for his achievement; that is why this step is named after the ultimate victory. The death of Brahaspati and the complete destruction of Mount Mandar led Shiva to invoke war against the Swadweepans and the *Nagas*. The entire country had begun to prepare for the war strategies, weapons, and soldiers and planned the preventive measures to be taken. Before the Suryavanshis could announce war on the kingdom of Swadweep, a huge army knocked Meluha for war from Swadweep itself.

“Who is Mahadev? Roared Shiva A man becomes Mahadev when he fights for good.

A Mahadev is not born as one from his mother’s womb.

He is forged in the heat to battle when he wages a war to destroy evil!

I am Mahadev! Bellowed Shiva

But I’m not the only one! For I see a hundred thousand Mahadevs in front of me!

Har Har Mahadev! bellowed Shiva” (Tripathi 348).

War was fought well, and the victory was absolute. The Swadweepan army had consequently declined to be independent strugglers fighting courageously for a losing cause. And soon victory was declared, and Shiva, the Neelkanth, won the ultimate boon.

3. Return

a. Refusal to the Return

This is the twelfth step of Campbell’s theory of the monomyth, which states that the hero, after the ultimate boon, refuses to get back home and bestows their freshly found wisdom upon the rest of humankind. Meluhans won the war against the Chandravanshi kingdom, but they were unable to find the hooded figure with the *aum*-shaped bracelet. Neelkanth won the war with the support and efforts of the people of Meluha, but Shiva was not satisfied with this victory. The terrorists who tried twice to kidnap Princess Sati were none other than *Nagas*, but the absence of *Nagas* on the battlefield made Shiva furious and impatient. He had shown the least amount of interest in celebrating victory with Emperor Daksha, and thus he refused to return to his original place to honour this triumph.

b. Magic Flight

This is the thirteenth step of Campbell’s monomyth; the hero must escape from his ultimate victory; the hero’s return is marked by a chase. Shiva, the Neelkanth, was in search of the *Nagas* when he encountered Dilipa, the Chandravanshi king, and his daughter, Princess Anandmayi. After the exchange of thoughts between Shiva and Anandmayi, Shiva came to know that they were not evil; they were just different from Meluhans, a bit unsystematised, poor, and focused more towards beauty and passion rather than working hard and making efforts, but not evil. They loved freedom more than following some strict set of rules. This made Shiva completely lost and depressed. He accuses himself of the

destruction of thousands of soldiers. He doesn't wish to see anybody; the truth was haunting him, and he was doing nothing but just running from this mishap.

c. Rescue from Without

Most of the time, Campbell's hero requires an efficient guide or mentor to bring him back from his pain and misery and to motivate him to follow his usual course of action. This is needed, especially when the hero has been injured or weakened by some experience. Depressed and lost, Shiva enters the Swadweepan capital city, Ayodhya. He was unable to make eye contact with the people of Swadweep as he blamed himself for his wrong decision. He had visited the temple of Shree Ram with a hope of finding his answers and some peace. On his way, he met some local people of Ayodhya and discovered that they were not evil but were tender-hearted, helpful, and trustworthy. His grief was increasing with time; he felt helpless. He entered the temple and sat aside with tears in his eyes. Shiva finds the pandit ji who looked exactly the same as the pandit ji whom he had encountered at Lord Brahma temple and Mohan temple at Mohan Jo Daro. In Shiva's journey, throughout the end, Pandit Ji played a vital role as his guru or guide, who always tried to bring Shiva out of his confusion and pain and reminded him to adhere to his duties.

"I know what you have done, oh Neelkanth, said the Pandit Ji and asked again, Is it really so bad? I don't deserve the title. I have the blood of thousands of innocents on my hands." (Tripathi 393)

"Don't be so hard on yourself, my friend..... Whichever side you entered from, you would obviously be coloured by their ways while viewing the other side as evil. You have realised your error early."

"Your challenge is to stay true to your karma, to your duty, in spite of the pain. That is the fate and the duty of a Mahadev" (Tripathi 396).

d. The crossing of the return threshold

This step marks the retention of the previous wisdom into the hero's life that he gained on the quest and the incorporation of that wisdom into human life. The hero successfully returns to his normal life with a great power to fight his disquiet. After the exchange of thoughts between Pandit Ji and Shiva, he felt light and strong. He had shown his willingness to face his problems and solve them.

"He put his hands together in a namaste and paid his respects to Lord Ram.

His burden didn't feel any lighter.

But he felt strong enough to carry it." (Tripathi 400).

As he began to descend the temple steps, he found Sati standing downstairs.

In a good mood, Shiva teased Sati and said,

"Are you always going to follow me around?" (Tripathi 400).

With this, Shiva returned back to his usual life to adhere to his duties.

e. Master of two worlds

This step signifies that the hero has now become a master of both the natural and supernatural worlds. He can face the threshold between the two worlds without any trials or tests. This stabilises the hero's status as an ultimate power. The conversation with Pandit Ji at the temple of Lord Ram made Shiva understand all the worries he possessed. The relationship between the pandit ji and Shiva as Vishnu and Mahadev, who balances the whole world together. He had understood his role and his mistake and discovered the way in which he had to resolve the challenges. He acknowledged the balance between the inner and the outer world, or the materialistic and spiritual world.

f. Freedom to live

This is the final step of Joseph Campbell's theory of the monomyth. With this step, the hero becomes free from all his worries and his miseries, and he starts living in the present without any thought of the past or future. Through the past course of actions, he masters the terror of death, which ultimately turns

into the freedom to live. Hero manages to find a balance between his internal and external worlds. Shiva comes out of the temple, and he finds Sati waiting for him downstairs. Shiva descended the steps, and another challenge awaited him. He could see someone wearing a robe and moving around the trees. They were none other than the Nagas, who once again planned to kidnap Sati. Both Shiva and Sati have become cautious with their weapons in their hands, and the fight continues to the next book of *the Shiva Trilogy*, *The Secret of the Nagas*.

At times, this is identified as to live in the moment and performing the expected duties, neither prophesying the future nor lamenting for the past.

CONCLUSIONS

We have examined the concepts of myth, mythology, and monomyth in this piece of writing. Based on the above discussion, the researcher has found that the monomyth theory by Joseph Campbell, provided in the book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, satisfies all the desired steps of the theory and hence can be applied in the chosen novel, *The Immortals of Meluha*. We can analyse this point through the above-discussed seventeen steps from the phase of separation to return. Shiva, the protagonist, starts from an absolutely raw place; eventually he gains consciousness and realises his duties towards the world and effectively performs that without fail. As a consequence, all the steps of the theory of the monomyth fit perfectly in this novel as per the above discussion, as undoubtedly this theory has been formulated to be applied in myths and legends. Through this explanation, it is stated that the protagonist of the novel *The Immortals of Meluha*, i.e., Shiva, can definitely be considered a hero in accordance with the theory of monomyth by Joseph Campbell.

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