

Sacred Geometry; The Role of Nature as a Divine Entity in Amish Tripathi's *Trilogy*

Dr. S. UDHAYAKUMAR

Assistant Professor and Head

Department of English and Comparative Literature

School of English and Foreign Languages

Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai

Abstract

This paper analyses the importance of sacred geometry and nature in Amish Tripathi's *Trilogy*. The novel highlights the integrated of human and natural balance. By examining the intricate patterns and symbols of Nagas' architecture and rituals, this paper expresses the connection of nature and their spiritual importance. The Nagas' profound admiration for nature and their part as protectors of the earth are analysed in the sight of eco critical perception. In addition to that, the transformation of Shiva is also examined by applying eco-critical lens. This paper concludes by discussing the application of these themes for contemporary understanding of environmental balancing, ethics and spirituality.

Keywords: eco criticism; sacred geometry; interconnectedness; divine entity; sustainable living; divine feminine.

Introduction

Today, He is a God.

4000 years ago, He was just a man.

The Secret of the Nagas

This article deals with the analyzation of the inevitable environmental conviction which is a hard-hitting concern of this world of technology, with the assistance of ecocriticism in examining Amish Tripathi's *Trilogy* – *The Immortals of meluha*, *The Secret of the Nagas* and *The Oath of the Vayuputras*. Eco criticism is a literary theory that examines the relationship between literature and the natural environment. It explores how a literature or a literary work represents nature and in which way it reflects and shapes environmental attitudes, and how it contributes to environmental awareness. However it emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, at present it has become the dominant and overriding theory which analyses the cultural constructions of nature and its influence on human behaviour and attitudes. It offers a valuable lens for understanding the complex interplay between literature and the environment.

Glotfelty defines ecocriticism in *The Ecocriticism Reader* "ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment."

Literature plays a substantial role in the society by awakening the mind of the reader to show the paramount precaution on nature and environment.

The law of nature governs the culture of nation and shapes the lives of every individual. Though the human is diverted and departed from nature, his life is interconnected with nature. These laws oversee all elements of life, their interactions and guiding evolution. The Rig Veda asserted the importance of various components of ecosystem. It warns that damaging riverbanks can lead to widespread destruction and advices against cutting down trees near water bodies. Vedic culture and scriptures highlight the significance of maintaining the earth's ecosystem.

The Atharvaveda warns against polluting water bodies with toxic substances, as it can cause pestilence. This warning is particularly relevant in today's world, where pollution of rivers and lakes lead to ecological problems. Modern civilization, driven by industrialization, scientific arrogance and greed is encroaching upon the living rights of other life forms by over using and exploiting the earth's limited natural resources.

Amish Tripathi's *Trilogy* is a charismatic harmonious blend of mythology and historical fiction that integrates several eco critical themes and motifs. Through the lens of

ancient India, the novel explores the intricate relationship between humans and the natural world, challenging anthropocentric views and advocating environmental surveillance. The author portrays the gorgeous beauty of India and her magnificent rivers, mountains and jungles.

"The folkloric tales, legends, myths, sayings, songs, ballads, dances, music, and poetry can significantly illuminate on the man-nature relationship. (Selim 2018).

The novel portrays the Nagas, a serpentine race, as custodian of the natural world. They live in congruence with their environment, understanding and respecting its subtle balance. This contrasts with the people of Meluha, who often subjugated the land for their own benefit, the nagas' homeland, Panchavati, is represented as a sacred space, teeming with life and natural beauty. This emphasis on sacred geography highlights the importance of preserving natural landscapes and their spiritual connotation.

The novel addresses issues of environmental degradation, such as deforestation and pollution, which threatens the delicate balance of the natural world. The conflict between the Nagas and the human of Meluha often revolves around these environmental issues. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of all beings, human and non-human. The author, Tripathi, critiques the anthropocentric worldview that often dominates human societies. Through his narrative technique the author portrays the Nagas as wise and compassionate beings, who respects all life, he challenges the notion that humans are superior to any other creature.

In *The Secret of the Nagas*, author depicts the Nagas as custodian of the earth, tasked with protecting its resources and ensuring its well-being. They are deeply connected to the natural world, living in harmony with it and respecting its limits. They have a symbolic relationship with the earth. They rely on its resources for survival, and in turn, they protect and incubate it. This mutual dependence highlights the interconnectedness of all living beings.

"Ecocriticism believes that literary, visual, and other representations of nature are very much to do with an age's views and treatment of nature. Further, it seeks

links between literary studies and environmental activism, between human and social sciences and environmental discourse. It appropriates the rhetoric or environmentalism while looking at the effects such discourses have on the culture." (Nayar 2010, P. 330)

In *The Secret of the Nagas*, Amish Tripathi portrays the Nagas are a serpentine race who are much connected with the earth and its natural cycles. They are reptiles who is always closely warmed with the mother earth is projected as the custodian of the natural world, exemplifying its sacredness and divinity. They have a multifaceted role in this novel. Being a protector, they are in need to protect the resource of the earth and its well-being like bulwark. They safeguard the earth that rampart and shattered the attempts to demolish the sacred space or harm the environment.

The form of serpentine is much supplemented with fertility, renewal and transformation so they represent the natural world, its cycles, and its power. In the second book, at the beginning they are the antagonists to shiva and the place Meluhans, however, later they become allies because of the rise of a common enemy, the Asuras, unites the Nagas and the Meluhans. Then they both realized the impending danger, and faced the common threat to them. This shift in relationship highlights the importance of cooperation and understanding in the face of shared challenges.

The serpentine form and their harmonious relationship with the elements of nature such as water and earth signifies the natural world and its cycles. In the course of this understanding, they respect the limitation of earth. Even though the Nagas, too, have their own culture to follow certain traditions, customs and beliefs. They have their own well-defined social structure which is organised with leaders, warriors, and priests. They have the knowledge of medicinal herbs and they could easily adapt to the environment. This shows that the Nagas has dual nature – have a deep connection with natural world, and also with their sophisticated culture and values. This dual nature of Nagas and its narrative style of the author make them a unique and compelling element of the novel.

The nature is the inspiration of Indian culture and mythology, serpents, or Nagas, is deeply interconnected

with the nature and our culture. For instance, most of our Indian deities associated with water such as Varuna and Ganga, our civilization is also established on the river bank, are often illustrated with serpents, suggesting their role in protecting water sources. These serpents are maintaining ecological balance by controlling rodent populations and other pests.

In the *Trilogy*, Shiva pays much attention to the progress and development of human. In his belief, humans have the rights to indulge the natural resources for their welfare and development. In this patriarchal society, His belief determines that human are observed as superior to nature and have empowerment to control the nature. Whereas Nagas prioritize the prosperousness of the natural world and preserve the environment. They believe that human should respect nature and live with harmoniously without exploiting the nature. "The conflict between the Meluhans and the Nagas was not merely a battle for territory; it was clash of ideologies, a struggle between human progress and the preservation of nature." These lines are the illustration of the conflict between Shiva and Nagas over the power and dominance of the earth's resource.

Amish Tripathi eminently adheres the Nagas (serpent) as a powerful symbol throughout his second *Trilogy- The Secret of the Nagas*, which is indissoluble in his narrative skill to represent nature, mysticism and the interlaced of all living beings. Being an underground dweller, the Nagas are naturally associated with abundance and replenishment of the earth's regenerative powers. The author symbolizes the Nagas with their unique qualities and capabilities. He examines the relationship between nature and human through the eye of this mystic creature. In the lens of interconnectedness, he often implies the unwavering theme of the preservation of the natural world and harmonious living with nature.

Thus, Amish Tripathi incorporates nature as the core character of his novel and the conflicts happening in the novel revolves around the nature and to preserve the mother land with its abundant resources. He uses the Nagas as symbol to bring out his core ideas and also shaping human experience. In addition to this he

emphasizes the model of sustainable living to exist harmoniously with nature.

Nature is the part of a planet and also the part human life that influences everything and moulding humans' physical and mental health for our cultural identity and spiritual well-being. We have a profound impact from nature to reduce and to cure depression, anxiety, and stress. The cognitive functions such as memory, attention and creativity can be enhanced by nature when we have the close contact with it.

"a significant driver of ecocide and the environmental crisis, for society has been madly pursuing project 'human planet' without considering that humanity is fully dependent on nature" (Washington 2013).

In his *Trilogy*, Amish implies nature as the structure and manipulation of human life. It has been the backdrop and driving force which influence characters' decision, framing their destinies and extreme factor that determines the fate of civilization. Nature is an unpredictable force which provides both challenges and opportunities to the characters. It can be both the source of motivation and nourishment and also the arduous antagonist, pretending hazard for survival. "Our relationship with nature is different from that of other living creatures. Others have nature's will have forced upon them. We have the privilege, at times, of forcing our will up on nature." (*The Oath of The Vayuputra*, p. 89).

In the novel *The Secret of the Nagas*, nature is depicted as a living, breathing existence which possess organisation and awareness. This personification of nature promotes the ecological theme of the novel and emphasizes the idea that human can't live alone and isolate himself from nature, human must understand that he is the part of the natural world. Nature has the power to influence the events and frames the lives of the characters. The recent best example is the land slide of Wayanad in Kerala. The way how it eradicated the lives of the people. The author also conveyed that nature is the force that can both punish and reward humans based on their actions. This repeatedly emphasize the fundamental notion that humans are amenable to the natural world. "The entire expanse was covered with a carpet of thick and carefully manicured grass, which provided the base around which

flower beds and trees were arranged in perfect harmony. The flora had obviously been imported from around the world; roses, narcissus, tulips, lilacs, jasmine, orange and lemon trees dotted the landscape in poetic profusion.”(*The Oath of The Vayuputra*, p. 311).

In many cultures and religions, the concept “Divine Feminism represents the nurturing, creative and compassionate aspects of divinity.” It is frequently interrelated with nature, motherhood and the earth. Amish also applies the same concept that the Nagas are portrayed as feminine or androgynous, having the incubating capability and the productive quality of the Divine Feminine. Their meticulous care for the nature is with compassion and devotion. This supports the eco centric perspective that cares the well-being of the entire ecosystem at the core of moralistic concern. This idea, too, establishes that the nature is sacred and deserving of respect. “The Nagas were the embodiment of the Divine Feminine, nurturing the earth and protecting its inhabitants.”

The other prominent theme is observed in the novel is Sacred Geometry. It is the “study of the shapes, patterns and symbols that are believed to have spiritual or mystical significance.” In this *Trilogy*, the interconnectedness between humans, nature and the divine is explored in the theme of sacred geometry. This architecture and rituals are distinguished by the exquisite geometric patterns and symbol which exposed the deep connection to the natural world and their spiritual beliefs.

The details of the geometric architecture pattern are as follows: the mandala, circular pattern found in Hindu and Buddhist inheritance, as same as common motif in Naga architecture. This type of architecture is believed by the Nagas to exemplify the universe and its interconnectedness. “The walls of the temple were adorned with intricate geometric patterns, each one a symbol of the universe and its interconnectedness.” The second pattern is Yantras, are used for meditation spiritual practices. This is another geometric pattern found in Naga temple and other sacred spaces. Being a symbol of nature and divinity, the Nagas are often connected as coiled around yantras or mandalas, depicting the integrated of nature and divine.

The structure of sacred geometry pattern plays a predominant role in the narrative. Amish skilfully employs the pattern of architecture to develop the eco critic perspective. This structure also reflects the Nagas’ deep connection to the earth and its natural cycle. This geometric pattern denotes the divine and signifies the underlying structure of the universe. The intricate patterns and structure generates a visual magnificent and awe-inspiring environment. The belief that these patterns have spiritual power enhances the sacredness of the space.

“The horrifying scope and cumulative effects of the human-induced crisis of mass extinction and habitat” the manufacture of Somras becomes an ecocidal practice (Broszimmer, 2020, P. 2-3)

The other notable theme of *Trilogy* is Somras, a powerful symbol of the tension between human growth and ecological accountability. The manufacture and consumption of Somras lead to widespread environmental destruction, which includes the pollution of rivers and the annihilation of ecosystems. Hence, the conflict arises between the development of human and the conservation of the natural world.

“The horrifying scope and cumulative effects of the human-induced crisis of mass extinction and habitat” the manufacture of Somras becomes an ecocidal practice (Broszimmer, 2020, P. 2-3)

“The Somras gives you a long life and you are grateful for that. But these years that it gifts to you are not for free! It takes away a lot more from you! And its hunger for your soul has no limit!” (*The Oath of The Vayuputras*, p.242). The production of Somras makes a dark side, where humans disengage the nature cycle. It is the human who have to face the consequence which demolish the elusive balance between human and nature. The Nagas always wish to live in harmony with nature. They believe that nature is the only source that give hands to us in all circumstance. If we destroy the interconnectedness and the cycle of nature, that will violate the principles of ecological balance. The novel constantly deals with the importance of preserving the omnipotent nature.

“The horrifying scope and cumulative effects of the human-induced crisis of mass extinction and habitat” the

manufacture of Somras becomes an ecocidal practice. (Broszimmer, 2020, P 2-3)

The negative consequences of human influences with cycle of nature is opposed by the Nagas, who have a profound admiration for nature. However, the obsession for power and progress never stop them in the production of Somras, in spite of its destructive effects. The consumption of Somras states the threat of unjustifiable practices, in which it leads us to be more irresponsible on natural resource management.

Another notable motif of this novel is the transformation of Shiva who was a conqueror in the beginning and became a protector of nature. In the beginning of the novel, the author portrayed Shiva as a commanding warrior, a conqueror of the Meluhans, who believes the human is the superior in the world and can have the privileges to exploit the nature. His transformation from a conqueror to a protector of nature echoes a shift in perception towards the sacredness of the natural world. "He realized that his true purpose was not to conquer, but to protect. To protect the earth and all its inhabitants." The interaction of Shiva with the Nagas and observance of the demolition caused by the consumption of Somras awakens his spiritual thoughts. Then he improves a deeper appreciation for the natural world.

"Banyan tree was considered holy in India; a tree that unselfishly gave its all to others, building an ecosystem that sustained many birds and animals. Innumerable plants and shrubs found succour and shade under its protective cover. (*The Oath of The Vayuputras*, p. 432)." Shiva experiences the natural world as a living entity that rightly deserves respect and devotion. The furthestmost turning point of the novel is the transformation of Shiva and his alliance with the Nagas. By working with the Nagas, he acknowledges the values of environmental stewardship and the significance of living harmony with nature. His understanding of nature bestows prominently to his spiritual growth. In addition to that he gradually absorbs the sense of peace, tranquillity and purpose of life. His connection to nature assists him to transcend the limitations of human existence and to connect with something larger than himself.

Furthermore, the land of the Nagas, Panchavati, is a decisive land for maintaining the balance of nature. The land is believed to be permeated with spiritual energy and is essential for the well-being of both humans and the natural world. For that reason, the land is often conquered by defeaters. The next conqueror, Asuras, to conquer new territories and exploit their resources. Here, the Asuras prioritize material wealth and power over spiritual values and the well-being of others. Their dogma is to dominate and exploit the earth and its resources, without understanding the consequences. The Asuras are defeated by Shiva, the Nagas which symbolizes the victory of good over evil and the significance of preserving the nature on the earth from this materialistic destructive forces.

Amish Tripathi's *Trilogy* is a well-endowed tapestry woven with ecological themes, inspiring the researcher to do with eco critical analysis. This novel proclaims the daedal relationship between humans and the natural world, emphasizing the inference of environmental exploitation and the importance of ecological balance. By exploring the novel, it provokes the readers to protect our planet for future generation. The novel depicts the themes such as the sacredness of nature, human-nature relationship, natural resource exploitation, and ecological wisdom.

The ability to entwine eco centric theme and mythology is the one of the greatest strengths of Tripathi. His inspiration to write this *Trilogy* is from the ancient mythological texts and redesigning the core concepts with existing environmental issues. He constructs a bridge between the earliest knowledge of the past and the modern-day challenges of the present. Eco criticism has emerged as an important concept to address the challenges of climate changes. By analysing the literature in the view of eco criticism, the researcher can understand the complex interplay between human and the natural world and has the possibilities to encourage action towards more sustainable future.

Summing up the central theme *Trilogy* expresses the nagas' intricate connection with the earth. The Nagas, guardians of the earth, enacts as protectors of the nature and continues the ecological balance through harmonious

existence. They provide the value of ecological living and demonstrating the human dominance over nature in a negative way. They illustrate the strong communication of human can live in harmony with nature. The only goal of the author is expressed through the characters of Shiva and the Nagas that is to preserve nature and ecological balance. By representing the Nagas as both a force of nature and a civilization, Amish emphasizes the dependence and interconnectedness of human and nature. These Naga have their own rituals and traditions to protect the nature and divine entity. This symbolism has deeply ingrained in Indian culture and mythology for centuries, reflecting the profound respect and admiration of India. Amish affirms that nature is the fundamental base of human life that provides physical, mental, and spiritual benefits.

Sacred geometry, the intricate pattern and symbols of the Nagas expresses their spiritual importance and their contribution to sacredness. This structure offers a sense of peace and tranquillity to the human to understand the value of nature and its ecological balance. Then the Somras is the utmost exploitation of nature by human without understanding the consequence of destructing the natural cycle. It highlights the anxious between human development and ecological imbalance, and bring the solution of the most sustainable and harmonious relationship with the natural world.

The transformation of Shiva is the main theme that posits that human is the only living being that cause harm and deformation to nature and also the only living being can transform themselves to protect the nature and to live with nature harmoniously. The influence of Sati and the witnesses of the Nagas assists Shiva to transform himself from a conqueror to protector.

The outcomes from the eco critical analysis of *Trilogy* have a notable suggestions for this modern environmental discourse. This novel arises our awareness of environmental issues, encourages us to take necessary action toward the harmonious living. By exploring the

interlaced connection of human and nature, we work for the equilibria of the society.

References

1. Amish (2010). *The Immortals of Meluhu*, New Delhi, India: Westland Ltd.
2. Amish (2011). *The Secret of the Nagas*, New Delhi, India: Westland Ltd.
3. Amish (2013). *The Oath of the Vayuputras*, New Delhi, India: Westland Ltd.
4. Glotfelty, Cheryl and Harold Fromm (1996). *Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, University of Georgia Press.
5. Selim, MA. "Re-reading Folklore: An Ecocritical Perspective." *International Journal of English Language, Literature in Humanities* 6(4):108-124, 2018.
6. Nayar, Pramod K (2010). *Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory: From Structuralism to Ecocriticism*, Pearson Publ., P. 330.
7. Washington, H. *Human Dependence on Nature: How to Solve the Environmental Crisis*.
8. Borswimmer, Franz J (2002). *Ecocide: A Short History of the Mass Extinction of Species*, Pluto Press.
9. Garrad, Greg (2011). *Ecocriticism: Theory, Practice, and Politics*. Routledge.
10. Buell, Lawrence (2005). *Nature's Fables: A Guide to Ecocriticism*. Harvard University press.
11. Mitchell, Timothy (2001). *Geographies of the Imagination: Living and Thinking in the World of Maps*. University of Chicago Press.
12. Gottlieb, R. S(2006). (Ed.) *Introduction: Religion and ecology-What is the connection and why does it matter in The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, OUP.
13. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s42240-021-00098-y>
14. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecocide>
15. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368012502_Re-understanding_Deification_and_Hunger_An_Ecocritical_Venture_into_Shiva_Purana