



## The Problematics of Parenthood in the *Shiva Trilogy* by Amish

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### ABSTRACT

The paper attempts to analyze the perennial issue of parenthood through a psychoanalytical perspective, in a mythical context for making it relevant for the present generation which is more inclined towards western cultural values. Myths have been used as a tool by authors to discuss contemporary issues and challenges in society. The representation of child-parent relationships has always been one of the most coveted subjects for writers in general and new-age writers in particular. Kahlil Gibran, renowned Lebanese American poet advocates detached individuality in the relationship between parents and children. In this context *Shiva Trilogy*, one of the most popular works by Amish is relevant to refer to. The psychoanalytical lens probes the conceptual framework of the text for endorsing responsible parenting as a must for rearing children for the greater good of society in general by citing examples from the *Shiva Trilogy*.

**Keywords:** Parenthood, child-parent relationship, *Shiva Trilogy*, Contemporary Indian English Literature, Amish Tripathi, Social Psychology, Psychoanalysis

### INTRODUCTION

CHILDREN BEGIN BY LOVING THEIR PARENTS.  
AFTER A TIME, THEY JUDGE THEM. RARELY, IF  
EVER, DO THEY FORGIVE THEM.

—Oscar Wilde, *A Woman of No Importance*

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (ISBN 0194311015, 9780194311014), Parenthood is the state of being a parent. It is a process of bearing or adopting, and rearing children. This can be called the most difficult unpaid job in the world which demands patience, tolerance, and never-ending expectations from both sides. From British essayist Francis Bacon to an expert on parenting, Sudha Murthy of India, many writers have given advice on parenting. A unique piece of advice on successful parenting is given by Kahlil Gibran who very smartly explains how some amount of detached individuality needs to reform the relationship between parents and children. With the increasing suicide rate among students and teenagers, it is imperative to study the reasons behind it. The first reason that comes

to mind is insufficient quality time spent with the parents. In this context psychoanalytic theory comes to the rescue for analyzing and providing solutions to the problem. The sharing of ideas, feelings, and problems on a regular basis creates a caring and healthy attitude between both parties for a secure future. This foundation helps a sound emotional and physical growth of a family. So, parenthood is an essential aspect of life that needs to be discussed and explored. This issue has been a substantial part of literature, psychology, films, mythology, and folklore. It has been a recurring theme in the works of many writers at a global level. The focus of the paper places this aspect in the *Shiva Trilogy* for proving its perpetual significance in the world. Although this theme is shared by the mythology of many cultures, the current study will concentrate on Indian mythology as the *Shiva Trilogy* has its roots in the same. Throughout centuries Indian mythology has contained a myriad of stories associated with parent-child relationships. For instance, the story of Shraavan Kumar, who carried his blind parents for the pilgrimage on his shoulders, is a part of the Indian psyche. The mythology

of different civilizations and writers of English and other languages have raised the issue of parenthood in their works. Dickens's novels have the recurring theme of the parent-child relationship in many shades. Shakespeare's dramas also have this theme with the subtle treatment of the problem to highlight the crises. The heterogeneous representation of the child-parent relationship has a textual narrative feature in Amish's works where allegiance to values in the relationship and the violation of the same prevail juxtaposed against each other. Many sets of parents and children leave their mark on his works. The current study speculates reasons and social dynamics of parenting as relevant problems. The styles of parenting spelled out in literary works may be endless and unique to every household, yet a balanced mix of some common principles undergird responsible parenting, as exemplified by Shiva and Sati which stem from their uncorrupted, pure and mindful state of being. *The Immortals of Meluha* is the first book of the *Shiva Trilogy*, which introduces Daksha and Veerini who are Sati's parents. At the surface level, everything seems fine but in the course of time, it is revealed that Sati has a twin sister Kali, who was Naga as she had outgrowths on her body. King Daksha abandoned her at the time of birth against the wishes of his wife, Veerini who wanted to accept fate and requested Daksha to go to Panchavati where their abandoned child and grandchild were staying but Daksha remained stubborn and decided otherwise. Even in their grey years, she requests him to leave the kingdom for the sake of expiation for the sins they committed against their daughter and grandson. The story has psychological significance as well as it calls for the inner turmoil that might be unnerving for the abandoned child in this context:

I AM SAYING ONCE AGAIN, DAKSHA, LET'S FORGET EVERYTHING,' SAID VEERINI. 'YOU HAVE ACHIEVED ALL YOU WANTED TO. YOU ARE THE EMPEROR OF INDIA. WE CANNOT LIVE IN PANCHAWATI ANYMORE. WE LOST OPPORTUNITIES LONG AGO. KALI AND GANESH DESPISE US. AND I DON'T BLAME THEM FOR IT. LET US TAKE SANYAS, RETREAT TO THE HIMALAYAS, AND LIVE OUT THE REST OF OUR LIVES IN PEACE AND MEDITATION. WE WILL DIE WITH THE NAME OF THE LORD ON OUR LIPS (AMISH, 2013, P. 82).

The pivotal role played by the politics of cultural supremacy has a deep impact on relationships. A royal ambition apparently seems to prevail over filial affection and acceptability. That is why he does not follow Veerini's well-meant advice. His deep-rooted colonial aspirations

and excessive attachment to Sati do not allow him to take the righteous path. When Sati gave birth to a Naga child, he threw it away without the mother's consent and got his first son-in-law killed. His obsession with his daughter Sati's safety leads him to plan to get his second son-in-law killed by mercenaries but his plans get foiled. In contrast to Daksha, Sati is a devout Suryavanshi who follows all the rules made by the great Lord Rama. Despite being a royal she follows all the rituals to be performed as a Vikarma woman who is discriminated against in society. She is overjoyed to meet her estranged son Ganesh and twin sister Kali who are not acceptable in Meluhan society due to their physical deformities. In Swadeep, the Chandravanshi kingdom also, it is the power structure that rules private life. Swadeepan king Dilipa is yet another case of abused parenting. He does not trust his own son Bhagirath and keeps him away from matters of administration. Although Bhagirath, the Swadeepan prince is a virtuous person, Dilipa's insecurity as an old person keeps his son at bay. After the attack on the convoy of the Neelkanth, Bhagirath has suspicion that it might have been the work of king Daksha and his father:

"YES! IT LOOKS LIKE EMPEROR DAKSHA AND MY WEAKLING FATHER HAVE FORMED AN ALLIANCE AGAINST THE NEELKANTH" (AMISH, 2013, P. 8).

Neelkanth recognizes his worth and supports him in his endeavors. There is yet another mythical character Renuka who has also been given a makeover for presenting the problems of parenting. The extraordinary relationship of Renuka with her son Parshuram is rather touching. The dreaded outlaw Parshuram's plight in obeying his mother's order to behead her sets a benchmark in obedience. Society could not accept the inter-caste marriage of his parents and his mother's kinsmen killed his father in front of her eyes. This devastated her and forced her to think of her own end which led to her beheading. Parshuram's parents were responsible parents but unfortunately due to oppressive societal pressure could not lead a peaceful life.

The guiding principle of parenthood is a cosmopolitan concern that extends beyond time and space represented through the critical and creative endeavor of the writers for instance one of the most profound English essayist Francis Bacon in his essay '*Of Parents and Children*' opines:

"LET PARENTS CHOOSE BETIMES THE VOCATIONS AND COURSES THEY MEAN THEIR CHILDREN SHOULD TAKE, FOR THEN THEY ARE MOST FLEXIBLE; AND LET THEM NOT TOO MUCH APPLY THEMSELVES TO THE DISPOSITION OF THEIR CHILDREN, AS THINKING THEY

WILL TAKE BEST TO THAT WHICH THEY HAVE THE MOST MIND TO” (BACON 2001, P. 30).

Most of the epical works of art have laid down ethical discourses on parenthood illustrating the lives of the characters. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata in Indian and Greek cultural epics are some of the radiant examples to refer to. Telemachus, the son of the great Greek warrior Ulysses, is altogether different from his father in ideology. For him, the comforts of his palace, country, and terrain are preferable to travel and adventure. After his return from the great war of Troy Ulysses finds life very dull and adventureless for lack of action and challenges. Therefore, Ulysses decides that his son can govern Ithaca and he himself can go outside his kingdom and lead an adventurous life according to his whims and fancies. The following excerpt from Tennyson’s well-known poem ‘Ulysses’ is observable in this context:

MOST BLAMELESS IS HE,  
CENTERED IN THE SPHERE  
OF COMMON DUTIES, DECENT NOT TO FAIL  
IN OFFICES OF TENDERNESS, AND PAY  
MEET ADORATION TO MY HOUSEHOLD GODS,  
WHEN I AM GONE. HE WORKS HIS WORK, I  
MINE (Tennyson, 2008, p. 408).

As a good parent Ulysses does not criticize Telemachus’ different temperament and priorities. He describes his son as a perfect heir who can rule Ithaca successfully after he is gone as Telemachus possesses the competence, right attitude, and ability to handle political matters.

As for the *Shiva Trilogy*, a superior moral order dictates the maintenance of a child-parent relationship. As such taking the ‘elixir’ or *Somras* as referred to in the text is an apparent cause of parental aversion and dislike towards their own children for the fact that the Nagas are associated with the elixir and the resultant Naga offspring is bound by an irony where parents are at fault by drinking *Somras* in excess. Daksha as a Meluhan has easy access to *Somras* which empowers him with longevity. This makes him think about more and more power over other provinces of Sapt Sindhu. For him, parenthood means greater access to security through normal and able-bodied Sati and Shiva, who is the Neelkanth. Anyone who is a hindrance in his path to power is an enemy even if it is his own child (Kali) and grandson (Ganesh). He does not even think of Sati’s grief over the death of her first husband Chandradhwaj, who gets killed by Daksha himself. Daksha’s irresponsible parenting is of the worst kind that leads to the death of Sati and the destruction of his own kingdom, Meluha itself. Paul, Sandeep (2020) argues that “Tripathi’s treatment of mythology is more a frame

of reference to contemporary issues of the twenty-first century than a historical retelling” (Paul, p.1). The cultural and psychological dimensions of parenting manifested in the text explore the inner recesses of the human mind. This paper demonstrates a psychoanalytical perspective of the literary representation of parenthood in the *Shiva Trilogy*.

### Materials and Methods:

The critical analysis of the three texts of the Shiva Trilogy:

1. THE IMMORTALS OF MELUHA (ISBN 978-93-80658-74-2)
2. THE SECRET OF THE NAGAS (ISBN 978-93-8065-879-7)
3. THE OATH OF THE VAYUPUTRAS (ISBN 9789382618348)

The current study has employed an eclectic methodology which consists of a close reading of the text. The psychoanalysis theory propounded by Freud is applied to analyze the text, characters, and ideologies. The methodology adopted in the paper involves a comprehensive study of the psychological ramifications of parenting in the text. The text is simultaneously placed within the socio-cultural and socio-historical contexts to understand the psychoanalytical perspective of the author. Along with textual analysis of the main text, parallels are drawn from the literature of the past. Since it is a qualitative study, data was not collected and analyzed.

### RESULTS

The prime importance given to dynamic, unconscious, and psychological conflicts by the Freudian theory is applied to the text for understanding the problematics of parenthood in the *Shiva Trilogy*. The rapid advancements in science and technology have changed the course of life and aggravated many existing problems due to the generation gap. Current crises of the parent-child relationship are due to the apathy of children towards parents who are less proficient in the use of ever-growing advancements in technology. Moreover, easy access to the internet has resulted in enhanced exposure to western culture which has brought a radical decline in moral values. In fact, the problem of parenthood has been an ancient phenomenon that has changed/evolved at every age according to the culture and traditions of society. The ancient example from the *Bible* is Abraham’s obedience in accepting God’s will and sacrifice of his son Isaac. The symbolic meaning of this sacrifice is that God is our parent and human beings must obey in order to reap benefits from the Lord. In Shakespeare, different hues of parenthood can be observed in plays like *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Lear*, etc. The history of humankind is replete with diverse instances of parenthood

that are either exemplary/moderate or shamefully startling. Parenting is exemplary when the moments of pride, joy, and inexplicable satisfaction are balanced with a mindful execution of responsibilities. At the same time, an abdication of responsibility and mutual hostility makes for an unhealthy parent-child relationship. Amish has cleverly discussed many such contemporary problems through his fictional account of Shiva's adventures. "Amish Tripathi's *Shiva Trilogy* is an epic fantasy that treats the life of God Shiva from a humanistic point of view in an odd blend of fantasy, reality, and speculative history" (Chatterjee Abhinaba, 2017, p. 75).

Among other issues like environmental pollution, marginalization, and power politics, parenthood is also woven into the tale. With working mothers, nuclear families, and a lack of a healthy support system, the problem of parenting is surmounting in cities. Parents splurge money as if to show their parental care and concern which gets misappropriated with adverse impacts with a resultant rise in cases of suicides, mental depression, and loneliness in children. Insecurity among children/youth is increasing as parents throw money instead of giving them quality time and attention. A child today has become more of a necessity and a liability to bear. Some couples decide to remain childless for the sheer sake of their career and pleasure. What Hindi poet Surdas rejoiced in (Krishna's childhood pranks) has become a servant's privilege in the current era. Very few parents enjoy the childhood activities of their children. Most parents invest/believe in earning and spending money on their children through good schools, expensive clothes, and gadgets. Money is the mantra and hedonism is the philosophy of life. Parenting is a social burden for some couples as they are career oriented and keep running after promotion and pleasures. Amish has contemporized this phenomenon through his work based on Hindu mythology where the mythical character of Daksha has been given a new persona that is obsessed with power. As the emperor of Meluha, he is selfish and self-centered and his primary interest in colonizing the other provinces of the Sapt Sindhu region leads him to manipulate Suryavanshi's principles. He breaks rules made by the great Lord Rama but expects others to follow the same rules. Sati gets shocked when she discovers the secrets of her twin sister Kali and her son Ganesh's abandonment and the murder of her first husband by her father. Daksha holds Shiva responsible for his soured relations with his beloved daughter Sati. Exasperated Daksha tries to attack Shiva with his knife but Nandi saves him with the shield in his hand. Sati puts her sword at her father's neck to force him to acknowledge the truth:

*"DAKSHA'S EYES WERE GLUED ON A TEARY-EYED SATI, WHO HAD HER SWORD INCHES AWAY FROM HER FATHER'S THROAT. HIS FACE EXHIBITED THE SENSE OF BETRAYAL AND LOSS HE FELT. SATI WAS THE ONLY PERSON HE HAD EVER TRULY LOVED"* (AMISH, 2011, 329).

*SHE ADMITS LATER ON THAT SHE WAS "ASHAMED" THAT DAKSHA'S "BLOOD" RAN IN HER "VEINS,"* (AMISH, 2011, P. 330).

Parental responsibility as a duty comes in the way of blind love for the child which reminds us of King Dhritrashtra's obsession with his evil-minded son Duryodhan in the epic Mahabharata. The irrational decisions taken by Dhritrashtra to please his son Duryodhan led to the great war that annihilated the Kuru clan. Although Daksha is a doting father, but he is not a responsible parent who can think of her welfare in the long run. His plan for a peace conference which is actually a guise to kill his second son-in-law Neelkanth turns the table on him. Instead of Neelkanth, his own daughter gets killed by the mercenaries and Daksha's dream of keeping Sati in close vicinity gets shattered by his own conspiracy. On the other hand, in contrast to her father Sati is righteous and compassionate toward the needy. Her goodness brings joy and comfort to the helpless residents of Ichhawar village where she fights with the man-eater ligers and saves their lives. It is rightly said that an intelligent child brings joy to all the people around him/her. It is a blessing to have such a child who can excel/outwit its own parents. Thiruvalluvar, a Tamil saint-poet has expressed the same thoughts in *Thirukkural*. Kural-68 says "If the children's intelligence is more than that of parents, it will be a joy to all the living beings of the earth" (Chakravarti, A. 1953, p. 56).

He means to say that it will be a joy to the entire living beings including parents if the children excel their parents in intelligence.' Children by virtue of their behavior, attitude, knowledge, nobility, obedience, duty towards parents, compassion towards the poor and needy, broader human outlook, etc. can make this world a beautiful place. The case of the famous Raghuvanshi king Dashrath and his sons can be cited in this context. In the famous Indian epic Ramayana parenthood and children's obedience to parents, are both exemplary. The Raghuvanshi kings like Lord Rama made the earth a better place to inhabit where there was no fear of anti-social elements like Asuras and Rakshasas. Lebanese American poet Kahlil Gibran (2017) a great name in the world of prose poems has very wisely explained the status of parents and children in his book *'The Prophet'*:

“YOUR CHILDREN ARE NOT YOUR CHILDREN.  
THEY ARE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF LIFE’S  
LONGING FOR ITSELF.  
THEY COME THROUGH YOU BUT NOT FROM YOU.  
AND THOUGH THEY ARE WITH YOU YET THEY  
BELONG NOT TO YOU.” (GIBRAN, P. 17)

Literature is full of examples of parenthood, be it Hamlet’s mother, King Lear’s relationship with his daughters, Jane Austen’s portrayal of parents, Migrant parents in Diaspora literature, and parenthood in Dystopian novels to name a few. Dickens is famous for the theme of the parent-child relationship in his works. Kr. Dombey’s love for Paul is an example of oppressive and destructive love. *Pickwick Papers* is the only novel where Dickens adds humor and a healthy understanding of parental affection. In his later novels negativity is more visible in child-parent relationships. In the 18th century, didactic books were written for parents and children to educate them on the right conduct. *The Family Instructor* (1715) by Defoe, *Parent’s Assistant* (1796) by Edgeworth, and *Early Lessons* (1798) by A L Barbauld are a few examples of such books. Even now the market is flooded with books on parenting to help young/old parents. Famous scientist Nicola Tesla recommended that only deserving couples should get the right to become parents and others should be deprived of this responsibility. The overpopulated countries can find a solution in this personal opinion of the scientist. Georgieva, M. (2009) concludes in her paper on Parenthood in literature:

“Through diverse forms of literature, society gradually came to conceptualize parenthood, often without making direct reference to the word itself. However, the ramifications of the theme are numerous and provide a rich background for innovative academic research” (Georgieva, p. 6).

In contrast to Daksha’s ambition to get respect from the Meluhan society, Shiva and Sati as ideal parents don’t care for society’s opinion of them. Not only for their own children but for others’ children also they give their best to help them. Her desperation to save the villagers of Ichhawar brings out her extraordinary courage and martial skills which help her fight the pride of ligers that have turned man-eaters. In contrast to her bravery, father Daksha is weak in mind and body. Mishra, Lata (2013) in her paper ‘Ethical Wisdom and Philosophical judgment in Amish’s *The Oath of the Vayuputras*’ states about Sati:

HER IDENTITY, NATURE, AND ACTIONS  
ARE DEFINED AND ACTED OUT VIS-A-VIS  
HER FATHER, DAKSHA. MUCH DOTING  
FATHER BUT EQUALLY MANIPULATIVE,

KING DAKSHA KEEPS SATI IGNORANT OF  
THE TRUTH THAT SHE HAS GIVEN BIRTH  
TO A DEFORMED SON AND MISINFORMS  
HER OF A STILLBORN BIRTH, (MISHRA, P.  
28).

Sati’s acceptance of Kali and Ganesh despite having their stigma of being Nagas resonates with the discourse of disability studies. The hegemonic tyrant Daksha expects submission and subordination from the Nagas for proving his authority over them. His weak-mindedness is reflected in his decisions to destroy the convoy of the Neelkanth in alliance with the sage Bhrigu. This gives a clear picture of the dictum- ‘power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely’. Thus, the study explores the psychological reasons and negative consequences of unhealthy parenthood exemplified through the character of King Daksha detailed in the *Shiva Trilogy*.

## DISCUSSION

The *Trilogy*, in the garb of mythology, carries many important issues of the contemporary world. The humanized character of Shiva gives solutions to many problems which are relevant in the present time. Karthic & Immanuel (2018) observe in this context:

We affirm that Tripathi actually endeavors to give an account of contemporary society in the guise of Meluha. (Karthic & Immanuel, p. 207)

Like contemporary society, the social structure of Meluha is under influence of the power structure owned by Daksha. This influence is visible in the parenting style of Daksha who is not ready to mend ways in spite of the immense pressure of his beloved daughter Sati. He flaunts his desire to impress his over-dominating father Brahmanayak:

“It is his intense desire to impress the person he loves the most,” expounded Daksha. “Look at me. I have always loved my father. My desire to impress him is what is driving me even today. Even after his death, I still want to make him proud of me. It is driving me to my destiny as the king who will re-establish the pure Suryavanshi way of life across India” (Amish, 2010, p. 154).

The conflict between the strong-minded and the weak-minded has been a part of mythical narratives. This struggle gets reflected in his father Brahmanayak’s impossible standards of courage versus the shameful weaknesses of his son. The narrator goes on to state the obsessiveness “about the honor and respect that his empire should garner his son’s lack of courage and character was a source of anger and dismay.” (Amish, 2011, p. 337)

Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius in the first book

of *Meditations* shares qualities he inherited from his grandfather and mother saying “Of my grandfather Verus I have learned to be gentle and meek and to refrain from all anger and passion. Of my mother I have, I learned to be religious, and bountiful” (2016, p. 28). In the *Trilogy*, Sati inherited bravery from her grandfather and the layering in the nuances of courage is glorified in the case of Sati many times over in the *Trilogy* for instance when she tries to save an immigrant woman from a pack of wild dogs at the age of sixteen. During the war, she accepts the responsibility of defeat as a leader which proves her exceptional moral standards. Nothing can beat her fight with Swuth, the Egyptian killer that forces him to accept her greatness as a warrior. Unlike her cowardly father, she shows her gallantry as a brave Kshatriya and a true Suryavanshi.

The apprehensions, turmoil, and dilemmas shape the characters of people as Daksha’s faulty and selfish concern for his emperor hood forces him to oppose the Neelkanth who is the prophesied savior. As an opportunist, he is very humble to Shiva when he marries Sati after abolishing Vikarma law. In *The Immortals of Meluha*, the narrator mentions Daksha turning “to Shiva with a grateful smile” saying “I have one more thing to thank you, my Lord. My daughter is part of my soul. I wouldn’t have been able to survive without her” (Amish, 2010, p. 278).

But when Shiva discovers that he was misguided in considering Chandravanshis as evil and *Somras* as the actual evil, Daksha takes the help of Egyptian mercenaries to get the prophesied savior Shiva killed.

Amish has resurrected the ancient mythical character of Daksha of Hindu mythology in a new avatar. As an emperor of Meluha, his colonial aspirations are over and above the relationships. Opposite to Daksha Sati’s virtues as a good parent, daughter and Kshatriya are exceptional. Her virtues are shared by her both sons who follow the right path guided by Shiva and Sati. Ganesh and Kartik are obedient sons who excel in martial arts as true Kshatriyas. Sati’s pride in Shiva’s greatness as a large-hearted father is beautiful and is revealed when she says “You are my son. You are his son. He will accept you. You don’t know the size of your father’s heart. The entire world can live in it” (Amish, 2011, p. 259).

Sati is right in her assumption when she expresses her faith in Shiva’s role as a parent to her Naga child Ganesh from her first husband. After discovering Ganesh’s virtues as a chivalrous person Shiva does not hesitate to show his approval and happiness:

“Shiva breathed deeply. Ganesh had once again shown tremendous character, fighting injustice even at the risk of

his own life. Shiva was proud of his son. ‘You did the right thing.’ (Amish, 2013, p. 140)

Not only Ganesh and Kartik but the son of Swadeepan king Dilipa also finds a place in Shiva’s heart. Prince Bhagirath is betrayed by his army during the war with the Suryavanshis as King Dilipa does not trust his own son for war tactics. He wanted to strike from the rear but Chandravanshi generals did not listen to Bhagirath’s advice. This resulted in their defeat in the war with the Suryavanshis. Shiva also comes to know about it that Bhagirath “is not trusted by his father. And therefore, not by most Swadeepans kings or generals either. They believed he would have taken the soldiers, escaped to Ayodhya, and declared himself Emperor” (Amish, 2011, p. 19-20).

Even after the defeat in the war king Dilipa, the Swadeepan king is happy as for all practical purposes, he would retain his empire and his independence. He feels at least safe from his son who might appropriate the throne.

The ideological difference is stark in the parenting style of Suryavanshis and Chandravanshis as parenthood is not a matter of choice in Meluha where birth children are not allowed to live with their parents except in the case of the royals. Kusugal (2015) highlights this aspect: “Shiva is not with the Maika system also”. He questions, “But this is about flexibility. What about stability?” (p. 37). Maika the hospital city of Meluha decides the future of the children where they are born and brought up. The freedom of parenting is not given to Meluhan parents as they can adopt a child by putting in an application. All pregnant women have to travel to Maika for delivery. Husbands and relatives of the pregnant woman are not allowed to enter. After the birth of a child, he or she is kept in Maika for a few weeks but the mother is sent back to Meluha. The Meluhan Gurukul is a massive school established by the empire that takes care of the child. Every child gets equal opportunities in this education system. As they enter adolescence, they are given the *Somras*. They all can follow their vocation according to their abilities to become successful in life. When children turn sixteen, they are allotted to the parents who are applicants for adoption. Children born with deformed bodies are sent to Panchawati. The third book, *The Oath of the Vayuputras* states:

“ACTUALLY, TENETS OF MELUHAN LAW REQUIRE PARENTS TO ACCOMPANY THEIR NAGA CHILDREN TO PANCHAWATI. IN DOING SO, THEY ARE FOLLOWING THEIR LAW. BUT OTHERS REFUSED TO DO SO. THEY ABANDON THEIR CHILDREN

AND RETURN TO THEIR COMFORTABLE LIFE IN MELUHA. IN SUCH CASES, ONLY THE CHILD IS HANDED OVER. THE MAIKA GOVERNOR PRETENDS NOT TO NOTICE THIS BREACH OF LAW” (AMISH, 2013, P. 67).

The parenting style of Meluhan society is juxtaposed against the rival Swadhepan kingdom which gives enough liberty to parents and children. Oscar Wilde’s quote fits the Meluhan princess’s upbringing as she respects her parents till the day, she discovers the secret of her twin sister and sons’ abandonment. She questions her father’s integrity and expresses her grief over having his blood in her veins. She leaves him for good and never forgives him for his faults. Thus, Amish’s indirect reference to contemporary problems like parenting is successfully done through the myth of Shiva. Paul, Ritika (2013) also writes the same thing in her paper on Amish’s *The Immortals of Meluha* when she states, “Amish Tripathi through this novel tries to address the social reality of the contemporary society.” (p. 427) The world is witnessing a crucial phase these days when children’s loneliness is increasing across the globe due to many reasons. The citizens/government must rectify this problem according to the cultural norms of society.

## CONCLUSION

Amish has psychoanalytically investigated the multiple dimensions of the problem of child-parent relationships in his three books of the *Shiva Trilogy* which comes under the genre of mythological fiction. King Daksha’s illogical parenting style is attachment driven which begets doom for himself and everyone around him both within the family and society at large. His lack of guilt in disowning his Naga progeny speaks volumes about his callousness and eventually leads to his punishment through Sati’s assassination by the mercenaries hired by him to get the Neelkanth killed. The irony of losing his beloved daughter has been coupled with the annihilation of the Meluhan capital Devgiri also. However, Sati prefers to protect both her long-lost sibling and the child even if it means abandonment by the Meluhan society. We have witnessed alleged stark examples in contemporary times of parents’ apparent indifference to their children, which is painful and shameful as well. Parenting is a pious responsibility that sanctifies one’s own life and one’s children’s lives, which eventually furthers nation-building as future citizens are healthily groomed and develop meaningful, mutually reinforcing bonds of love and respect. This is no less than patriotism because it creates social capital within the nation at large, where citizens grounded in healthy relationships within families also manifest mutual trust and respect in flourishing democratic states. Though Amish has

been successful in highlighting the problem of parenting by citing many examples in his *Shiva Trilogy* based on mythical characters, the juxtaposition of their cases paves the way for further research in other mythological works.

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**Conflict of Interest:** There is no conflict of interest among authors for the present work. We also declare that all academic ethical guidelines have been followed in this study.

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