
Shiva Trilogy: A reflection of the Harappan civilization with the help of Indian Mythology

Mukesh Panchabihar

Lecturer in English,

PP Dev Mahavidyalaya, Tigiria, Cuttack, Odisha

Article Received: 08/04/2026**Article Accepted:** 12/05/2026**Published Online:** 14/05/2026**DOI:**10.47311/IJOES.2026.8.05.72

Abstract

Harappan civilization is one of the oldest Civilization in the world. It grew near the Indus River. Therefore, it is also known as the Indus valley civilization. The three novels in the Shiva Trilogy that are “The Immortals of Meluha” published in 2010, “The Secret of the Nagas” published in 2011, “The Oath of the Vayuputras” published in 2013 by Amish Tripathi is the perfect reflection of the Harappan civilization. The writer Amish Tripathi portrays the ancient and first love story of the world Shiva and Sati through a fictional world of Harappa Civilization. In this novel Amish Tripathi describes about each and every city of the civilization, just like Devagiri is the capital city of Meluhan Civilization with all types of benefits that the modern capital city of this age possesses. There were rules and regulations for everything and all the citizens of the Meluha were obliged to follow the rules and regulations set by the king Daksha. In term of hygiene also they were very conscious, they used to maintain drainage system and they had toilet and bathroom in each and every house. There were also public toilet and washroom for travelers and the people who were coming from the outside. They used to maintain quarantine system to control the diseases, whenever an outsider came to the Meluha, he/she obliged to drink Somras and then stayed in quarantine e.g. when Shiva and his Guna tribe came to Meluha they were bound to stay in quarantine. They had also advance transportation system e.g. roadway, waterway, etc. They used to trade with many other advance Civilizations like Sumerian Civilization in Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq) Persia, Afghanistan, and Oman. Meluhan used to drink a special drink known as Somras, (Somras was a divine drink made from the water of Saraswati River and a special herb from Himalaya called Shanjivani) that detoxify the body and made them live longer and younger.

Keywords: Civilization, Meluha, Harappa, Somras, Nagas, Vikarma, Maika

Meluhans' way of life

Shiva, the chief of Guna tribe lives in Mount Kailash region of Tibet enters the Meluhan city with all his Guna Tribes through the request of the king Daksha. The Meluhans are allowing outsider to settle in their land because they are searching for their savior Neelkanth, the protector of the righteousness and the destroyer of evil according to the legend. The legend also says that the Neelkanth will come from the outside and when he drinks Somras his throat will turn into blue color. Shiva and his tribe drank somras and requested to stay in quarantine according to the rule of Meluha. After drinking Somras everyone falls ill except Shiva. On the other hand, shiva's throat turns into blue color after drinking Somras, and the Meluhans get their Neelkanth, the savior according to the legend.

Shiva and his Guna tribe first time saw the Civilization like this and they were very amazed to see the development in Meluhan Civilization. In Meluha there was drainage system, the people were very conscious about hygiene, the buildings were two to three stories, the roads were neat and clean and every road had a connection with the main road. Shiva saw the way of life Meluhans lived and thought that if there is heaven on the Earth it would be like the Meluha. Shiva and his people were very shocked to find the crowded market very peaceful because, the people of Meluha were such civilized that they didn't use to bargain anything, the shopkeeper were bound by law and they cannot increase the price in their own choice. when they were talking to each other in market also, they used to talk smoothly. There was every system for everything. In Meluha there were vegetarian hotel for the people who eat veg and nonvegetarian hotel separately for the people who eat nonveg.

The people of Meluha were the blind believer of Lord Ram, their ideal ancestor and ideal king who had set all the rules and regulations for the Meluhans. The occupation of the people was divided into four categories according to their qualification such as Brahmana, Kshatriya, Bashya, Sudra. The foremost caste of this hierarchy is 'Brahmana' who were consider to be the upper caste and they were teacher and worshiper in temple. The second important caste in this hierarchy is 'Kshatriya' who were the warrior and their duty is to protect the integrity of the nation. They were also considered as the ruling class of the nation. In third number comes the 'Bashya', the business class who does business and agriculture. 'Sudra' comes in the fourth and lowest section of the society. Sudra were the service giver who used to provide services like washing, cleaning, cooking, cattle breeding so on and so forth. The caste system of Meluha was completely different from the caste system that is prevalent in our contemporary India. The occupation or the caste of Meluhan is not decided according to their birth but that is decided according to their ability

and qualification. There was a Maika system in Meluha and according to this system the parents abandoned their kids in Maika. In Maika there were doctor, nurse and caretaker to take good care of the children equally without any discrimination of their birth. There was also equal opportunity for all the children despite of their place of birth. The Meluha govt provides education and training to the children and after their education, the children were provided work according to their ability and qualification. Now, the children are ready to serve the nation and any parents can adopt any children without their biological identity. The parents were unaware about their real son, so they will treat everyone equally without any discrimination.

Somras as a divine drink for Meluhans

The most important thing that one can find in this novel is Somras. Somras is the main theme and the whole story is based on the benefit and the side effect of Somras. It is known as the drink of God and the immortal drink in Meluhan culture. When Shiva reached Meluha, he was amazed to find that all the people he had seen are young and healthy except few. Shiva first introduced with Nandi and when Nandi told him about his real age, Shiva became extremely surprised because Nandi was more than hundred years old and he was just looking like a 20 years old man. There were many things that surprised Shiva, he got to know that it is happening due to the anti-aging property of the Somras. The people of Meluha could live hundreds of years due to the positive impact of the Somras. Then Shiva saw Sati, the princess of the Meluha and the daughter of king Daksha, Sati was nearly 85 years old and Shiva was just 21 years old but no one can find any difference in their age gap, because Sati was looking like 18 years old unmarried girl. Shiva also shocked to find the age of Daksha, because Daksha was above 200 years old but he was looking like a 35 years old man. Everything of Meluhan culture shocked Shiva like their system, infrastructure, architecture, Somras, discipline, so on and so forth. Shiva finds this land a perfect utopian land where everything is perfect and people are living with happiness without any problem.

We have discussed the immense benefit of the Somras but as we know that everything has two sides that is good and bad. Somras had also two sides that is good and bad. There was immense side effect of the Somras that the intellectual people of Meluha used to avoid, the greatest side effect is the drying up of Saraswati River, the birth of the Nagas, the physically deformed people from their birth due to the side effect of the Somras; the toxic waste of the Somras also mixed with the river and caused early death to the children. It also causes infertility among the Meluhans. Shiva, the legendary protector

whom everyone belief as the protector of the weak and destroyer of the evil, was very confused to find the root cause of all evil. Because, shiva was first revealed himself as Neelkanth in Meluha, he saw the evil doing of Nagas and he attacked Chandravanshi by thinking that Chandravanshi are taking help from Nagas and they are the root cause of all evil. After attacking Chandravanshi or Swadeepian, Shiva got to know that there is no any connection of Swadeepian with the Nagas. Shiva also finds that Swadeepians are the most deprived people, they are living in poverty and water scarcity due to the drying up of Saraswati River. Shiva also got to find that they also belief in the same legend like Meluhans' belief. Swadeepian had also a legend that one day Neelkanth will come and protect them by destroying the real evil. Shiva then felt bad for the Swadeepian and he also went to the Brangas where the children were dying due to the toxic waste of the Somras that was mixing with the river water. Eventually, Shiva met the Nagas, whom everyone thought the root cause of all evil were the most vulnerable and the deprived among all, who have been affected by the side effect of the Somras.

Secrets about Nagas

While reading this novel the most suspicious thing that come to our mind is “who are the Nagas and why do they want to harm the Meluhans?” but Nagas were the people who were more kind than the normal people, their only mistake was that they were looking horrible. The first glimpse of Nagas that we find in the novel is when the Nagas attacked Sati in the temple of Lord Brahma. Then, the reader grows a mindset that Nagas are the most horrible creatures in the Meluhans Civilization. The suspense about the Naga reveals when Sati along with a small army, was fighting with a pride of lions to protect the village. In this fight Sati was unexpectedly attacked by a large number of lions and her group was not sufficient to handle the wild beasts. They were about to lose the fight and were about to kill by the lions. Meanwhile, the Nagas entered and fiercely fought with the lions and defeated them. Sati was surprised by the unexpected help from the Nagas, their archenemy whom she hates the most and her only desire is to kill each and every Nagas in her own hand brutally. Sati saw the Naga queen who was the darker version of her with four hands and each hand holding a weapon and had immense desire to kill Sati. Then Sati saw the Naga prince, a horribly giant man with a large elephant trunk like Nose and was crying by seeing her. Sati was surprised by seeing all these strange looking people in front of her. Meanwhile, the Naga queen who is the replica of Sati revealed all the secret that was hidden from her. She got to know that the Naga queen is her own twin sister who was affected by the side effect of the Somras and she was born with the darker body with four hands. Hence, Daksha threw her in the Dandakaranya and she also got to know that the

giant man who is crying in front of her is her own son who was born many years ago with physical deformity and therefore, her father Daksha threw him in the same forest. Sati after many years whom she thought is dead seeing in front of her and she started to cry. There were many Nagas in front of her and all were her own people haunt by the injustice of the Meluhans way of law.

Panchavati, a hidden city with secret route that goes through the Dandakaranya, was the Capital city for all the Nagas. All the Nagas live there peacefully with the guidance of their Queen Kali and prince Ganesha. Kali and Ganesha were the leader of all the Nagas not because of their connection with the royal family but because of their immense power, skill and intelligence, they were unnaturally very powerful than the other Nagas present there. Hence, all the Nagas considered them as their leader. The only purpose in their life was to destroy the Somras rather than the people of Meluha. Somras was their worst enemy because, they were suffering due to the side effect of the Somras. The most worst thing, is that the chief scientist Brihaspati who was making the Somras along with the intellectual people of Meluha like Daksha and his ministers were aware about the side effect but they used to give excuse like the children are taking birth with physical deformity due the sin that they have committed in their previous birth and the people of Meluha used to belief on them. It was not the war between the Nagas and the Meluhans. it was the war against the Somras and injustice. On one hand, Somras was giving immense benefits and on the other hand, it was making the life of the people worse than the hell.

Literature Review

Shiva trilogy is a very trending novel in the 21th century, some people even demanding to make movie on it. The writer Amish Tripathy has given a soulful touch to this novel, the students, the teacher, the common people and even celebrity are reading this novel and they are giving the review like best fiction ever written on the Indian Mythology. Before writing this journal first I read some of the journal written on it. The first journal on Shiva trilogy that I studied is “Reimagining Myths and History: A Critical Study of Shiva Trilogy by Amish Tripathy” published on 15th March 2023 under the journal “International journal of novel research and development” by Tamanna Arora under the supervision of Dr. Shweta Tiwari. In this journal Tamanna Arora has interpreted all the three novels of Shiva trilogy separately. She has discussed about the storyline of the three novels. In the novel “The immortals of Meluha” she has described about the Meluhans’ culture and the tribe of Shiva and how Shiva become the Neelkanth. In the second novel of the Shiva trilogy “The secret of the Nagas” she has interpreted about the Nagas and their secrets and she has also written about the side effect of the Somras. In the third novel of this trilogy

“The oath of the Vayuputras” she has written about how Shiva, the legendary man became Mahadev by destroying the evil. The second journal I studied is “Revitalizing Indigenous Culture: A study of Amish Tripathi’s Shiva Trilogy” published in Feb 2017 under the journal “The Criterion: An International Journal in English” by Suresh Kumar. In this journal Suresh Kumar has interpreted the Shiva Trilogy with different perspective. He has explained it how the readers of 21th century are interested in this ancient epic story. He has also explained about how the writer Amish Tripathi has portrayed the image of our ancient history and culture with the mythical story of Lord Shiva and Devi Sati.

Everyone has different perspective on this Trilogy but my perspective is different. Here, I have tried to connect Meluhans culture with the culture of our ancient Harappan Civilization. While reading these novels Shiva Trilogy, I felt like I am reading about the most developed Civilization with the help of our Mythology and that Civilization was none other than our oldest Civilization that was grown on the bank of the Indus River, the Indus Valley Civilization or the Harappan Civilization. There are many similarities we can find between these Civilizations like the drainage system, road, building, rich culture, trade, so on and so forth. I have also tried to give an interpretation on the Nagas, the Somras and the culture of the Meluhans.

Conclusion

In the wheel of time many Civilizations have come and vanished from our Earth. Archeologist believes that Sumerian Civilization (Mesopotamia) and Harappa Civilization are the oldest Civilization but we don’t have any idea about the Civilization that was grown earlier than these Civilization. We knew about these Civilizations through the Archeological sources that is available with us. We don’t know exactly what would have happened with them. Just like that Meluha is also a developed Civilization grown in our India with all the facilities that a well develop Civilization need. As the title mention above, Meluhan Civilization is the perfect glimpse our oldest Harappan Civilization. Both Harappa and Meluhan are not the two different Civilization but the same Civilization with different name. Meluha was the oldest name of the Indus Valley Civilization. Meluha is widely believed to be the ancient Mesopotamian name for the Indus Valley Civilization, flourished in present-day India and Pakistan around 2500-1500 BCE. Mesopotamian texts (cuneiform tablets) from the 3rd millennium BCE refer to trade with a land called Meluha, located to the east, identifying it as a source of exotic goods. The writer Amish Tripathi has given a new life to the Civilization through the mythological story of Lord Shiva and Mother Sati. The idea of the Mythological story of Lord Shiva and Mother Sati came to the mind of the writer, because while doing excavation in Mohenjo-daro a “Pashupati Seal” or

“Proto-Shiva Seal” was found and Archeologist believed that Meluhans or the Harappans were also the believer of Lord Shiva. Here, lord Shiva has been portrayed as a common man who achieved the title of Mahadev through his own Karma. Shiva finds Somras as the real cause of all evils and destroys it through the Pashupatastra, the most powerful weapon of that time period. Though, it is a mythical story but it is our real history, our India is rich with legendary characters like Lord Shiva, Lord Krishna, Lord Ram so on and so forth, who always protect the Dharma by destroying the Evil. The writer has not left a single detail to explain the ancient Civilization of our India through the mythological story.

Works Cited

- Tripathi, Amish. *The Immortals of Meluha*. Westland Press, 2010.
- . *The Secret of the Nagas*. Westland Press, 2011.
- . *The Oath of the Vayuputras*. Westland Press, 2013.
- Arora, Tammana. “Reimagining Myths and History: A Critical Study of Shiva Trilogy by Amish Tripathi.” *International Journal of Novel Research and Development (IJNRD)*, vol. 8, no. 4, 2023, supervised by Dr. Shweta Tiwari.
- Kumar, Suresh. “Revitalizing Indigenous Culture: A Study of Amish Tripathi’s Shiva Trilogy.” *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2017.
- Possehl, Gregory L. *The Indus Civilization: A Contemporary Perspective*. AltaMira Press, 2002.
- Wright, Rita P. *The Ancient Indus: Urbanism, Economy, and Society*. Cambridge UP, 2010.