

Indian

Literature : 347

REIMAGINING MELUHA: AMISH TRIPATHI'S NARRATIVE BRIDGE BETWEEN INDUS VALLEY AND MYTH

Dr. K. N. Uma Devi – Associate Professor, Department of English, Vels University

Mr. A. Desilva – Assistant Professor, Gojan School of Business and Technology, Part-Time Research Scholar, Vels University

Abstract

Amish Tripathi's *The Immortals of Meluha* reimagines the mytho-historical landscape of ancient India by creating a narrative bridge between the archaeological realities of the Indus Valley Civilization and the mythic traditions surrounding Lord Shiva. By blending historical speculation with cultural memory, Tripathi constructs Meluha as both a geographical entity and an ideological utopia, grounded in the urban sophistication of Harappan society yet infused with the moral codes and cosmological frameworks of Hindu mythology. This paper examines how Tripathi's portrayal of Meluha employs a hybrid narrative mode—integrating archaeological evidence, historical conjecture, and mythopoeic storytelling—to reconstruct an accessible yet philosophically layered vision of India's past. The study also explores how his work redefines epic heroism, religious symbolism, and socio-political order in a way that resonates with modern readers while preserving the essence of traditional narratives. Ultimately, Tripathi's reimagining serves as a cultural dialogue between history and myth, positioning Meluha as a timeless archetype of civilization and moral Order.

After the discovery of the Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro civilisations during excavation, Amish Tripathi used historical sources to develop Meluha. India's amazing and illustrious heritage is known as the Harappan civilisation. Unfortunately, the writing of this civilisation is still unknown. Archaeologists are unable to form a comprehensive understanding of the Harappan civilisation; thus, their agreement that it is pictorial writing is not very helpful. As a result, virtually no information is known about this civilisation. Nonetheless, academics and historians from all over the globe have highly valued and revered the civilisation's roadways, drainage system, and town layout.

According to historical accounts, the Indus Valley Civilization was an ancient society that flourished along the banks of the Indus and nearby rivers. Most of this civilisation still exists today in northwestern India and Pakistan. It is estimated that the civilisation started around 5500 BCE. Settlement and agriculture are estimated to have begun around 4000 BCE. Urbanisation began around 3000 BCE, and by 2500 BCE, twelve towns had been founded. This civilisation flourished between 2500 and 2000 BCE. The most recent historical sources state that “over 1000 towns and villages were recorded by 2002, but only have been excavated” (Singh 137). Scholars and archaeologists believe that most of these towns are from the Late Harappan and Post-Harappan eras. Two of the most important ancient society settlements ever discovered are Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. Mohenjo-Daro is situated on the lower Sindhu River, whereas Harappa is situated on the higher river.

Historical accounts and archaeological evidence indicate that Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa were highly developed urban centres. The social conditions of the locals were superior to those of the Egyptian and Babylonian civilisations. A well-thought-out urbanisation system may be observed in the remains of historic settlements. It is also believed that there were artistic, religious, and economic connections between the North East and the Indus Valley Civilisation. The people who lived in the Indus Valley civilisation were called Meluhaites by the Sumerian culture, and the valley itself was called Meluha. According to a document from around 2000 BCE, the Meluhaites, the men of the dark country, brought all kinds of strange wares to Naram-Sin of Agade (Haywood 76).

The mature Harappan Phase was a significant period in the history of the Indus Valley Civilization. The question of whether each city in this civilisation existed independently or as a

component of a greater kingdom has long been disputed. Since the Indus people's writings have not yet been decoded, this is still up for contention.

There are no depictions of battles or military campaigns” (Voilatti). One of the reasons of decline of Indus Valley Civilisation is believed to Aryan Invasion through Hind Kush Mountain ranges. However, this theory has also not been accepted by many scholars. “Some major gods of the Hindu Pantheon actually originated during the Indus Valley Civilisation and were kept alive by the original inhabitants through the centuries (Ibid).

The Indus Valley Civilization's demise is believed to have been caused mostly by the Aryan invasion. The Aryans subdued the Indus people by crossing the Hindkush mountain range. They were tribes that lived on the move and had no fixed residences. Because they were nomads, they had superior fighting skills and strategies. They also had a highly developed written language. The peaceful Indus people left their cities and relocated elsewhere after they were unable to repel the frequent attacks of the migrant Aryans. Most Indian scholars and archaeologists believe that the belief that the Indus Valley Civilisation collapsed because of an Aryan invasion was a strategy used by conquerors to divide Indians between natives and invaders to maintain power.

Many scholars also concur that a natural calamity, such as a major flood in Sindhu and other nearby rivers, caused the fall of the Indus Valley civilisation. Some scholars reject this theory, arguing that a drop in average rainfall caused the decline of the Indus Valley Civilisation. They claimed that a decline in average rainfall caused desert-like conditions to emerge, which, in turn, caused a decline in trade and agriculture. Others believe that a change in the River Ghaggar's—Harka's—flow created the area's aridity. The Indus Valley Civilization flourished in the present-day desert.

Amish Tripathi reworked the myth in light of geography, history, science, and psychoanalysis using all of the resources at his disposal. The opening of his first novel describes the ongoing war between "Gunas" and "Pakratis." Shiva, the ferocious warrior, is regarded as the leader of the "Gunas", a tribe of people. Thus, Amish Tripathi, a typical tribal chieftain of the "Guna" tribe who often clashes with "Pakratis," recreates the almighty Shiva with "Prakriti," his feminine counterpart in myth. Another tribe in the Himalayas, near the holy lake.

Conclusion

Amish Tripathi's *The Immortals of Meluha* successfully forges a creative continuum between the tangible remnants of the Indus Valley Civilization and the enduring myths of Indian tradition. By reinterpreting Shiva not as a distant deity but as a historical protagonist shaped by human choices and moral dilemmas, Tripathi humanizes mythology while keeping its spiritual core intact. His *Meluha* becomes a narrative construct where archaeological imagination and cultural symbolism coalesce, offering readers both a sense of historical rootedness and mythic grandeur. In doing so, Tripathi not only revitalizes ancient narratives for contemporary audiences but also underscores the fluid boundaries between history and myth, suggesting that civilizations are sustained as much by stories as by stones.

Works Cited

- Haywood, John. *Historical Atlas of the Ancient World: 4,000,000–500 BC*. Barnes & Noble, 1998.
- Singh, Upinder. *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12th Century*. Pearson Longman, 2008.
- Tripathi, Amish. *The Immortals of Meluha*. Westland, 2010.
- Voilatti, Michael. “The Indus Valley Civilization.” *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, 2015. www.worldhistory.org/Indus_Valley_Civilization/. Accessed 9 Aug. 2025.
- Possehl, Gregory L. *The Indus Civilization: A Contemporary Perspective*. AltaMira Press, 2002.
- Kenoyer, Jonathan Mark. *Ancient Cities of the Indus Valley Civilization*. Oxford University Press, 1998.