

Religious Life

- ① A large number of terracotta figurines have been found from almost all the Harappan sites. It seems that the Harappan people were idol-worshippers. ② A large number of female figurines of terracotta have been found from Harappa. The scholars believe them to be the representation of the Mother Goddess. ③ A figurine found at Harappa, has been depicted with a plant growing from her womb. Perhaps, it represents the Earth goddess. It seems that the Harappan people worshipped earth as the goddess of fertility. ④ The scholars opine that the Harappan people worshipped

a male deity with three faces. The deity is portrayed on a seal seated on a throne in a typical posture of a yogi. It has elephant on its right, rhinoceros and buffalo on left and two deer standing under the throne.

John Marshall identifies it as Pashupati Shiva. It seems that the Harappans also worshipped linga and yoni. Several small stones¹⁴ such as the Shiva-lingas of today, have been found from Mohenjodaro and Harappa. A terracotta piece having linga¹⁵ and yoni in one piece has been found in Kalibangan. Several symbols of linga and yoni made of stone, have been found in Harappa also. Trees were also worshipped by the Harappans. On many seals worshippers are shown standing in front of the tree. The seals and sealings, terracotta faience and stone figurines found from several Harappan sites, suggest that perhaps, animal worship was also in vogue.

Disposal of the Dead

7 On the basis of the evidences found from the excavated sites, the scholars opine that the Harappans used to dispose of their dead in the following three ways:

(i) The dead body was buried in the ground. (ii) The dead body was burnt; the remains were collected and placed in an earthen vessel which was buried in the ground. (iii) The dead body was left in the open for the wild animals and birds to eat its flesh and the remaining skeleton was buried in the ground.)