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## RELIGIOUS RITUALS OF THE ARYANS: A HYPOTHETICAL ANALYSIS

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Man's life has always been under the influence of his beliefs while human history shows that it has played a very significant role in the socio-political life of different countries in the world. In the last two centuries religious card in particular, was very successfully used by certain regimes for the attainment of their desired goals. The term religious fanaticism is frequently being encountered in media now a days, but the ancient man also seemed to be not less orthodox in his beliefs and religious outlook it has shaped and unshaped the life style of the ancient communities, and the process still continues unabated. Religious extremism though seems to be fairly a recent emergence, yet remnants of the past cultures show that man's life as well as his after was greatly influenced by certain beliefs that developed under different conditions.

We have glimpses of the religious beliefs of the earliest Indo-Aryan tribes, mentioned in the *Rig Veda*<sup>1</sup>. Its hymns were probably composed between 1500 and 900 BC (Basham 1988:232). It is through the material remains unearthed during excavations of the proto historic graves believed to be those of the Aryan tribes, in the northwest Pakistan, that throw ample light on the beliefs they had about their life and after life (Dani 1967: 26).

As the Aryans were pastoral, cattle breeders, who were greatly influenced by nature, had attributed certain elements of nature with divine powers that had direct influence over their day to day life. Though they had some concept of a supreme being controlling the universe, yet they seemed to be in the belief of the existence of various hidden forces around them, both friendly and harmful. The formers were approached for help against the latter through various means and practices.

To Romila; "The earliest religious ideas of the Aryans were those of a primitive animism where the forces around them, which they could not control or understand, were invested with divinity and were personified as male or female gods (Romila 1966:43).

These tribes while starting from their ancestral home towards mainland India, must have had their own religious faiths but their stay in Mesopotamia and Iran for a considerable period of time exposed them to native beliefs, which they could hardly resist. According to Basham;

"At a remote period their ancestor i.e. Iranians, Greeks, Romans, Germans, Slavs and Celts had similar if not identical beliefs, but by the time they had entered India their religion had developed far from the old Indo-European faith (Basham 1988:233).

Natural surroundings had played a significant role in shaping their religious idea which according to Theodore de Bary;

"These Aryan invaders brought with them religious concepts consisting mainly of a pantheon of naturalistic or functional gods, a ritualistic cult involving the sacrificial use

of fire and an exhilarating drink called *soma*, as well as the rudiments of a social order. To a certain extent their religion derived from primitive Indo-European times; that is to say, some of the gods mentioned in the scriptures of these people are found to have mythological counterparts in other Indo-European traditions, particularly those of Iran, Greece and Rome, and thus indicate a common origin of such gods in antiquity. In addition to such specifically Indo-European concepts, the religion of Aryans involved other ideas which may have developed in the course of their eastward migrations or may have resulted from the assimilation of indigenous religious notions encountered in the Indian subcontinent itself (de Bary 1960:4).

These semi-agriculturist Gandhara Aryans<sup>2</sup> whose graves have been excavated in the northwestern Pakistan had interesting faiths and beliefs about their life after. Their fundamental and main belief was that they, after death, will enter into another world of the invisibles which is as dynamic as the visible one. In this dark world of the souls and spirits, they will also be in need of basic necessities of life as they were in the world of the livings. It was this end in mind that dead person was accompanied with a number of grave furnishings. According to M. Idrees;

"To them the known physical forces were the embodiment of souls, therefore they attributed physical forces with human incarnations, which indicated their belief in polytheism. Their religious beliefs were based on anthropomorphism. The sky was represented in human form as *Zeus*, the sun rays were believed as his hands, flames considered as his tongue and the rain god *Indra* was in total human incarnation (Idrees 1959: 162).

During their stay in northern Iran it is said that the Aryan tribes had given the status of gods to fire and the *Soma juice* thus starting their worship. There are hymns that are specially dedicated to the praise of Soma juice<sup>3</sup> and fire<sup>4</sup>. In the Vedic hymns, Indra, the supreme god, is believed to have killed *Vritra*, the serpent demon after drinking the Soma juice and releasing water, heat and light (the essentials of life) (de Bary 1960: 13).

Their intermingling with other tribes resulted in the infusion of diverse religious beliefs in their faiths, thus creating a multitude of faiths and beliefs. The rumbling of thunder and the flash of lightning had their own place in their beliefs representing the ferocity of these gods. Similarly the change from the pastoral-raider to the agrarian food-producing economy also brought about significant change in their religious beliefs. Their economy, occupations and religious beliefs were simultaneously in the process of change. But their tribal influence still remained great.

Though religious beliefs were very strong among those people in their day to day life and they offered sacrifices to the multitude of gods and goddesses to win their support, yet they were not totally in their hands (because the clergy class had not yet emerged) Professor Dani further explains it thus;

"All these gods were generous and the Aryans always had high hopes from them. The attitude of complete surrender to them is not evidenced, nor do we find the Aryans worshipping them in the fashion that the modern Hindus do by *Puja*" (Dani 1967: 53).

The graves materials discussed below accompanied with the deceased were not without purpose, but it definitely had some meaning to the people, which shows glimpses of their religious beliefs.

### **Copper Pins**

Copper pins placed with the deceased and placed inside the burial urns along with the charred bones of the dead person have been widely found in graves of the Gandhara Aryans. In Swat such pins are found in large number as compared with those found in Dir, where these are reported from more than forty two graves. In majority of the cases, pins are found lying near the head portion of the dead person. These may have been used according to some scholars as garment pins or hair ornament (Rahman 1967: 197; Dani 1998: 159; Nasim 2000: 12; Stacul 1966: 49).

We think that with the availability of eye needles stitching needles, the people had no need of using such bulky pins in their dress, when they could easily stitch their dress with needles. But their presence in cinerary urns along with the burnt bones and even in the fractional burial graves negates the very idea of these pins as garment or hair pins. These have different head shapes, ranging from broad flat to conical, disk or loop shaped. Their different head shapes are indicative of the fact that these were made in large number and extensively used by the then people. It could also be speculated that different head shapes represented different age group, sex or social status. This well-developed casting and hammering copper technology indicates that the people were well familiar with the copper work, and that it had already passed through its developmental stages. As they strictly believed in the life after, the supposed precautionary measure of protection for the deceased from spirits of the dark world was also adequately provided. It seems that the people believed in certain evil spirits, to save themselves from those evil beings in the living world, they also felt it necessary to do something for the protection of their deads as well. They might have thought that the dead have passed from one state of life to the other and their safety in that new stage was also of dire importance to them. The deceased was believed to be as active and dynamic in that dark world as he was in this one. Pointed objects, specially metallic ones, were considered to possess mysterious power of warding off those evil spirits. Still their mothers who assert that their sleeping child is safer in the company of a small knife or other pointed object, hung with his neck or even placed under his pillow<sup>5</sup>.

### **Burial Urns**

Those who practised cremating their dead, put their ashes and charred bones into a specially prepared earthen jar, after the completion of the ritual and then buried it. These jars are of different sizes and shapes, while others have holes and nose representing a human like face in relief. The former is called the eye-bearing urn (Stacul 1971: 12)), while the latter is called face urns (Stacul 1971: 11). Face urns are said to have been widespread in cremation graves in Central Europe, going back to the early and middle Bronze Age. While the eye bearing urns, where all reference to the human face is limited to the eyes, expressed only with a pair of holes, such anthropomorphic urns are widely distributed in the cemeteries at southern Anatolia and middle Danubian basin (Gulzar 1973: 45). Even in the areas of Balkan and the middle Danube, the use of anthropomorphic vases, traditionally goes back to the late Neolithic Period, when the use of this kind of container does

not as yet seem to have been related to the burial rites (Stacul 1971: 18). Burial urns have also been noted at the Indus Valley site of Harappa in cemetery H upper level, which are not of facial type, but are simply made. The idea of this special type of container may have been derived by the Gandhara Aryans from the West.

Dani while describing the importance of these facial urns hinted that:

"These urns prominently show the mouth, the nose, the eyes and the eye-brows as if representing them (the dead person). These are definitely not meant for worship. Then what could be the sense behind this human facial representation? As the urns contain only human bones, it is not necessary to specify them by such representation as human burial. And what we realise that this type of burial is a development from the earlier inflexed and multiple burials, it is possible to imagine a special part played by the visage urns in relation to the rite of cremation. It seems that there was some sanctity attached to the burial rite though...latter people (Dani 1967: 27).

Gulzar is also of the same view that these urns had some special connection with the cremation rite and says:

"As a preliminary remark it may be observed that these jars which are characteristically associated with the rite of cremation only, were perhaps connected with some special feature considered to be of sanctimonious ceremony highlighting the process of cremation (Gulzar 1973: 47).

Stacul considers them to have served as a house for the soul of the dead person when he says:

"As an initial working hypothesis we suggest that the purpose of these holes in the sides of cinerary vases was to provide a passage for the soul. In this connexion it is germane to recall the discovery at Leobanr of two tombs the lower cavity of which was divided crosswise by a small stone wall containing a tiny rectangular doorway at its base". (Stacul 1966: 65-66)

As the people had a strong belief in the life after, to them man's life has to pass through an endless cycle of constant changes from one stage to the other, also known as the cycle of birth and rebirth. In this cycle of changed shapes and stages, man has to spend a specific period in his mother's womb, which was a totally dark world for him. Similarly he had to spend after death, a considerable period of time in another dark world (the specially made earthen container) like his mother's womb, until he is passed on from that stage to the next one.

The belief was given practical shape by putting bone and ashes of the dead person into an open-mouthed earthenware jar, which according to their faith would serve like his mother's womb. The urns were mostly made simple, while some had been represented with shapes bearing human faces in abstract form<sup>6</sup>. A closer look at these facial urns shows some slight but fundamental difference. Those, which are larger in size and have raised eyebrows represent a male, while the relatively smaller ones having curved eyebrows represent a female. As man's natural needs were automatically met at in his mother's womb, it was also believed to be fulfilled in the same way in those jars by the forces of the hidden world.

## **Box Urns**

Besides globular visage urns used for placing ashes and burnt bones, there is also found another kind of specially prepared urns with a box shaped body, that look like a rectangular or oval shaped room. It is made of baked clay with hand, has red colour with vertical sides and circular holes on one or more sides (Karpe 1983: Abb.40: (1-3), P.112). These are usually equipped with flat lids. It was from the cemeteries in Swat only that specimens of such box shaped urns have so far been reported, and only five in number (Stacul 1966: 56). Here too, like globular urns, copper pins are frequently found beside the residue of the deceased.

Stacul, while discussing these box urns in detail has compared it with those found in northwest Hungary (North Panonian Encrusted Pottery Culture) dated to about the middle of the 2nd millennium BC (Stacul 1971: 12).

It seems that the box contained remains of those who had been in position of prominence in the society like a tribal chief, a warrior or a religious leader. As a very limited number of these terracotta burial containers have been obtained, it hints that this special type of burial was associated with V.V.I.Ps only.

## **The Role of Horse**

Horse, as an emblem of sun has been revered by the ancient man. It is present Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Indian, Chinese and Japanese mythology. Jars in which burnt bones of the dead were kept, often had a lid to cover its mouth. One such lid from Swat had a horse as a catch or handle (Antonini 1963: Fig. 12). Italian excavators have also attributed these graves to an ancient tribe called by Alexander's historians as Assakenoi (Tucci 1963: 28).

It was horse, which is said to have been introduced by the Aryans in this part of the world. The two complete horse skeletons found in the Katelai cemetery are a convincing proof that the people were equestrians and had a special liking for the animal. Orientation of their skeletons were just like those of human skeletons, i.e., head towards the mountains (Azzaroli 1975: 353-5).

Why did the people give a human like burial to the animal then? Azzaroli, while analyzing the skeletons of these two horses sums up thus:

"The horses were buried in the graveyard among the tomb, but their positions relative to the graves do not tell much about the significance of their burial. The simple fact of their having been entombed among human graves is however evidence that they were held in great esteem" (Azzaroli 1975: 355).

Horse bones and terracotta horse models have been found in period V of Gumla (D.I.Khan), where pot forms like those belongings to the cremation graves of Gandhara Aryans have also been found (Dani 1970-71: 41). On the Ashokan pillars it is one of the four sacred animals<sup>7</sup>. The animal had a unique place in the activities of the people, which was not only a quick means of transportation, but was also their constant companion in raids against their enemies.

Professor Dani, while acknowledging the special role played by the animal in their life adds:

"It is, however, well to underline the fact that horse played a significant role in the life of the people" (Dani 1967: 26).

Burial of the two horses in human cemetery is a convincing proof of their reverence for the animal. It was not only mount of the valiants and heroes, but also a symbol of courage, strength and swiftness. As it was considered a symbol of strength, beauty and nobility and was their most trusted life companion, therefore they wanted the creature to be close to them in the after life also.

### **Terracotta Beads**

Quite a large number of backed clay beads have been obtained from the graves of the Gandhara Aryans. These are in a variety of shapes and sizes, made on wheel and sometimes slipped (Rahman 1976: 193). Some are decorated with incised geometrical lines while others are even filled with white paste. Some scholars call it fishing net sinkers, because some of these have bigger than normal axial holes (Dani 1967: 30). The Italian excavators call it spindle-whorls (Antonini *et al* 1972: 30), which seems to be somewhat confusing because whorls are generally flat on one side while the other side is conical and are relatively larger, while beads may be round or bi-conical.

The Gandhara Aryans were basically livestock breeders in later stage they had also started practising agriculture on small scale, when they entered Gandhara (Dani 1967: 243). From cattle they obtained items of their basic necessities, that is why they had great reverence for their livestock, especially the cow which was their most valued commodity and considered by them *aghnya* (not to be killed) (Dani 1967: 52). The bull had also much importance among them, which was taken help of in agriculture and used for ploughing.

As animals were their life companions, they also wanted to keep them in their company in the after life as well so that their basic necessities were also fulfilled. Besides attainment of the blessings of their gods, animal sacrifice was made by them, because they considered these dearest beings the most worthy gifts for offer to please their gods. Each adult, male and female, specially kept one or more animals that were to be sacrificed soon after their death. Those animals that were meant for such sacrifice, were specially looked after by their masters during their life time. It is most probable that terracotta beads were hung round the neck of those special animals as a mark of identification. Whenever a person died, that animal was immediately scarified, and terracotta beads hanging round their neck were buried with the deceased. The practice of using beads (though not necessarily of terracotta but made of more durable materials) which are hung round the neck of domestic animals still continues in the area.

### **Multiple Cup Ritual Pots**

Apart from the usual grave pottery some unusually shaped pots having multiple interconnected cups have also been observed. From Swat a grey ware pot having three cups mounted on a pedestal (Stacul's ceramic type Cb/XX) (Stacul 1966: 52) have been found (Antonini 1966: 21). A similar three cup vase called a *three-branched pottery vase* have been noted at the Marlik (Iran) cemetery (Nigahban 1964: 40). A somewhat parallel specimen *Hashtnagar ritual pot* has been noted at Katozai (Charsadda) (Qasim 2001: 127).



With these few examples of three pieces only we cannot at the moment guess about the exact use of these unusually shaped vessels, anyhow these seem not to be some common vessels of everyday use. These might have served at some special occasion connected to their religious life. These ritual pots of somewhat analogous nature and their rare occurrence at three different localities bespeak of common cultural traits among the people residing in a wider stretch of land.

### **Bull Figurines**

Cattle breeding and domestication of animal was the most significant achievement as well as a leaping step in the history of mankind. Man needed animals for the fulfilment of his most immediate needs. With the passage of time the status of some of these animals was elevated to objects of worship. It is because of their extraordinary strength and other characteristics, that some were associated with gods and goddesses. Anything beyond the reach of his comprehension had a place of fear, reverence and mystery to him. Animal worship has been attested in the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Indus valley as well. Presence of animal figurines in other historic and proto-historic settlement sites could be the indicative of their use as toys, but their presence with the deads in their graves might have some special meaning to the people.

Bull has been given a very prominent place in the mythology of the known ancient civilisations. In Babylonia and Mesopotamia bull was a sacred manifestation of power, strength and vitality (Gulzar 1971: 84). In the neo-Assyrian monumental sculptures (9th—7th century B.C.) with a human head and wings, it performed the role of a guardian in front of the temples (Hall 1994: 13, 53). It was considered to be a sacred animal with supernatural qualities. Well known humped bull seals and terracotta bull figurines of the Indus Valley people remind us of the special place given to this animal by the earlier people much before the arrival of the Aryans in this region.

Human and animal figurines are present in grave chambers as well as in the cinerary urns. Bull figurines made of terracotta have been found in graves from Dir and Zareef Koroona cemeteries. The bull cult might have been emerged in the early agrarian communities, where it helped man great deal in his farming activities<sup>8</sup>. At Zareef Koroona eleven figurines have been found from different graves, which belong to period III, the late cultural period associated with fractioned burials and is dated to about 10th–9th century BC. One grave (12B) has alone yielded eight bull figurines that were placed near the feet of two fractional burials. Similarly from Balambat settlement period III (associated with fractional and multiple burials) a terracotta bull figurine has been found. From these are hand-made, having well built body and a prominent hump. Some of these seem ferocious, as if ready to attack (the supposed evil spirits confronting the dead person). It is very significant to note that the Swat cemeteries have not yielded a single terracotta bull, which geographically are not far from that of Dir and Zareef Koroona.

Bull is not even present in prehistoric rock engravings, but also present on the famous Ashokan pillars, and on the coinage of the Kushan rulers (Shiva and bull type). It seems to be continuation of the old tradition by the later people. It has also been found with secret powers in the ancient civilisations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Indus valley. It is even present in the Hindu mythology, where he is a constant companion of Shiva riding on a white bull as his mount to drive away the forces of dark<sup>9</sup>.

Presence of the terracotta bulls in graves seems not to be without purpose. Their presence in the graves testifies the fact that, it was not only revered by them during their life time, but they also wanted to revere it in the after life as well.

Their occurrence with the dead bodies might have some special meaning to the people. These terracotta bull images most probably were placed with male corpses, signifying the strength and reproductive qualities of the bull, which the dead person had, when he was among the living. It may also be possible conceivable that the figurines were meant for the mount of the dead person's soul in his onward journey that is why these are found near the feet of the deceased<sup>10</sup>.

### **Mother goddess figurines**

Apart from animal figurines the Gandhara-Aryan cemeteries have also yielded a number of terracotta female figurines, though not so finely made<sup>11</sup>. Other specimens have been found from the Indus Valley and proto-historic sites of Baluchistan as well. These are generally termed as mother goddesses which continued to exist till very late in this region. These were the symbol of veneration, from the prehistoric times and were used to be having destructive powers, which they were supposed to use against the evil spirits.

The cult of mother goddess has its roots in ancient Mesopotamia. It has also been noted that this in relation to Mesopotamia was regarded to be the divine power in fertility in its manifold forms, and was the incarnation of the reproductive forces of nature<sup>12</sup>. The figurines are normally noted near the body of the deceased. Some of these are even found on the abdomen of the dead, which shows that the dead person was probably a female, who was supposed to possess her reproductive qualities even in the after life.

From Swat cemeteries ten terracotta figurines were found, except one in Katelai I (grave No.168) where it was placed in a cinerary urn, the other nine have been found in graves having mixed or multiple burials. It shows that these were present with varied burial modes. Beads of terracotta are also noted with nine of these figurines. Apart from the beads, copper pins and ear-rings are also noted with most of them.

At Loebanr, Swat (grave No. 36) three of these figurines were found besides the charred bones of an individual, but here an unusual thing has been noted, a copper pin was found stuck into the south-eastern wall of the grave chamber (Antonini 1972: 95). One can not call it an accidental happening, the people might have done it deliberately with some purpose in mind, especially in the presence of not one, but three figurines.

At Timergarha a single figurine, which appears to be a male one, because of the absence of breasts and hair do, has been found in grave No.183 with the fractional bones of two individuals (Rahman 1967: 89). Along with three funerary vessels, a terracotta bead and a copper pin was also recovered from this grave. The contents of this grave are very interesting, because snake bones have been found in one of the three accompanying pots (bowl on stand).

Bernhard has analysed the skeletal remains of these two individuals and found them that of a male and female (Bernhard 1967: 313). They were most probably husband and wife. The presence of snake bones in the offering bowl inside the grave chamber compels us to speculate that after the

death of her husband, the wife too later on killed herself by the bite of a poisonous snake<sup>13</sup>. The snake was also later on seems to have been killed and buried in the same grave. Throughout the human history snake was regarded as the most fearful of all the animals<sup>14</sup>. Presence of snake in an offering bowl in the company of female figurine indicates some special meaning and reverence for both (figurine and snake), among those people. Apart horse and snake, bones of other animals like goat, sheep, stag and hare are also found in the graves which according to Bernhard had a ritual meaning (Bernhard 1967: 332).

From Zareef Koroona grave No.9B, a single terracotta figurine of mother goddess has been recovered with the fractional bones of two individuals. Its profiles are more beautifully shaped, as compared with the other terracotta figurines found elsewhere in the Gandhara Aryan graves. It has conjoined legs like the elaborately decorated *Baroque ladies* from Charsadda (found from Greek to the Kushan period) (Wheeler 1962: 104-5). Its fan shaped headdress reminds the well-known specimens of mother goddess from Mohenjodaro (Gulzar 1973: 60, 85). The headdress has six semi circular incised lines arranged in three sets. Its belly and the area below are also covered with a set of triangles with its apex down. All these seem not to be mere decorative details but it might have some ritual significance as well.

### **Eye goddess figurine**

A unique grey alabaster image<sup>15</sup>, recovered from Zareef Koroona (grave No. 9B), with the fractional bones of two individuals is the only piece of its kind found in Pakistan (Gulzar 1973: 56). Another terracotta female figurine<sup>16</sup> was also found from the same grave as well. It resembles so closely with the eye goddess specimens from Mesopotamian sites that we can safely speculate about the uniformity of beliefs between the two peoples.

In Mesopotamia the image of eye goddess was an object of worship, and a vast majority of them have been found from the podium of the eye temple (Gulzar 1973: 85). At Brak and Chagar Bazar their images have been recorded as belonging to the early phase of Jamdt Nasr. Its clay models have also been recorded from Bakun (Gulzar 1973: 85). It is the only piece of its kind so far reported from outside Mesopotamia.

Presence of this piece of mother goddess in a grave of the Gandhara Aryans is a strong and convincing proof that people of the Peshawar plains had direct contact, commercial, cultural, ethnic or religious, with the people of Mesopotamia. The presence of two figurines of different nature in a single grave shows that the people had strong belief in religious affairs, not only when they were living but their after life was also strongly influenced by their religious beliefs.

Professor Dani also considers these images having some special meaning in their life and says:

"What could be the purpose these figurines? They are obviously not toys, as the whole manner of depiction is highly ritualistic. If we could generalise from one specimen found in our graves, it is possible to surmise that these figurines have some totemic significance.

The rarity of such figurines in the settlement site points to their not very common use by the people" (Dani 1967: 27).

As a child feels himself safe from all worldly dangers when he is close to his mother, so do presence of these female figurines (termed as mother goddesses), in the graves indicates that the dead person felt himself safe and protected from being harmed by the evil spirits, with the company of these mother goddess images<sup>17</sup>.

## Conclusion

The people though retaining some of their indigenous beliefs also attained those of the people with whom they made contact while on their prolong eastward exodus. Their stay in Mesopotamia as well as in Iran and Afghanistan made them vulnerable to the local beliefs, thus resulting in the change in their own beliefs. The Mesopotamian influence could be traced in the presence of Eye goddess image in one of their graves at Zareef Koroona. From Iran they got the Soma juice and fire worship. But as Basham<sup>18</sup> has hinted they with the passage of time lost their own beliefs and acquired those of the others people through whose territories they passed in their journey towards their final destination Ganges/Jamuna valley. When more cemeteries of the Gandhara Aryans are excavated in future, its material study will greatly help in determining the true picture of their beliefs.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> One of the most ancient religious texts in the world which according to some scholars is still looked upon as sacred by millions.
- <sup>2</sup> As our discussion is primarily confined to the so-called Aryans whose culture has been revealed through their graves excavated in the Gandhara area, that is why we prefer to call them as Gandhara Aryans.
- <sup>3</sup> As the locally called wild plant, Bhang (Ephedra) is widely available in the Gandhara region, its intoxicating juice is extracted from its leaves, prepared into a juice called Tandayee with special precision and is still used in hot season. It not only produces a cooling but also hallucination effect sought by a special class. The drinker's un-comprehensible utterances are considered as if he is talking to the spirits or vice versa. In Rig-Vedic times it was called Soma or Amrita and considered a favourite drink of the Hindu gods. It was believed to have the power of eternal life, knowledge and eternal happiness.
- <sup>4</sup> From birth till death fire has still a place of reverence in the life of an ordinary man throughout Gandhara.
- <sup>5</sup> The tradition of keeping small knives and other sharp pointed metallic objects with the infants is still alive in the region and in most parts of the sub-continent as well. Presence of the invisible beings has been attested from the Holy Quran. See AL Rahman, AL Jin, AL Kahf, R.7 and AL Ibraheem, R.4 Even Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had forbidden Muslims to let their infants come out of homes soon after dusk, lest they are harmed by mischievous goblins. (Mishkat: vol. 2, pp.377,78) Also see on the topic,  
— Abdul Rauf: *The Vision*, 1987, 80  
— Marmaduke Pickthall: *The Meaning of the Glorious Quran*, 1984, pp.588-89
- <sup>6</sup> Box urns seem to be the early or even later shapes of those burial urns.
- <sup>7</sup> In Brahmanic period, the royal horse sacrifice (aśvamedha) was thought to bring prosperity to the state and also enhance the king's status and stability.
- <sup>8</sup> Even in today's semi-mechanized farming in the area, importance of bull is still acknowledged.

- <sup>9</sup> 1. Bull's head is even now a days placed on top of the newly built houses to ward off evil spirits  
2. The present bull fighting sport of Spain has its roots in remote antiquity.
- <sup>10</sup> Supra : Zareef Koroona Grave 12B
- <sup>11</sup> Also called Anthropomorphic figurines.
- <sup>12</sup> Gulzar: 85
- <sup>13</sup> The practice of voluntary suicide by the wife, after her husband's death in the shape of *Sati* (self burning) was very common among the Hindus till the arrival of the British in India.
- <sup>14</sup> Because of its mysterious nature and deadly venom, snake in some religions, has been incarnated as a god. From the prehistoric times it has been used as a religious symbol that has many attributes. Some primitive societies like the Naga tribes of Indian Assam and Burma associate their decent with snake.
- <sup>15</sup> Also called Eye goddess.
- <sup>16</sup> See under mother goddess figurines.
- <sup>17</sup> At Pandyalai (Mohmand Agency) where there is an extensive pre-Islamic cemetery we have noted a terracotta figurine found from one of the graves which had a hole in its head that might have been used as an amulet.
- <sup>18</sup> See Infra

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