

THE
PHALLUS

◆
SACRED
SYMBOL
OF
MALE
CREATIVE
POWER
◆

ALAIN
DANIÉLOU

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SACRED SYMBOL OF
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ALAIN DANIELOU

TRANSLATED BY JON GRAHAM



INNER TRADITIONS
ROCHESTER, VERMONT

CONTENTS

[COVER IMAGE](#)

[TITLE PAGE](#)

[INTRODUCTION](#)

PART 1

•

TUE CULT OF THE PHALLUS

CHAPTER 1. [HISTORICAL SOURCES](#)

CHAPTER 2. [SYMBOLISM](#)

[THE IMAGE OF THE WORLD'S CREATOR](#)

[THE SYMBOL OF THE UNIVERSE](#)

[THE MAHĀ-LINGAM, OR TRANSCENDENT SIGN](#)

[DIVINE EROS](#)

[THE PHALLUS, ORGAN OF BLISS](#)

[BĪJA, THE SEMEN](#)

[THE VULVA \(YONI\)](#)

[THE UNION OF THE SEXES](#)

[THE FATHER, PHALLUS-BEARER](#)

CHAPTER 3. [REPRESENTATIONS OF THE PHALLUS](#)

[THE STANDING STONE](#)

[SPONTANEOUS MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SACRED PHALLUS \(SVAYAMBHŪ\)](#)

[SHAPELESS OBJECTS \(BETHELIS\)](#)

[THE OMPHALOS](#)

[THE PILLAR OF LIGHT](#)

[THE LINGAM OF SPACE \(AKĀSHA LINGAM\)](#)

[MUKHA LINGAM \(PHALLUS WITH A FACE\)](#)

[THE SOVEREIGN OF THE DIRECTIONS OF SPACE, THE PHALLUS OF FIVE FACES](#)

[THE COSMIC EGG](#)

CHAPTER 4. [INDIRECT REPRESENTATIONS OF THE PHALLUS](#)

[THE ARROW \(BĀNA LINGAM\)](#)

[THE ALTAR FIRE](#)

[THE PLOW](#)

PART 2

•

THE ITHYPHALLIC GOD

CHAPTER 5. [THE LORD OF THE ANIMALS](#)

[THE GOD OF VEGETATION AND FERTILITY](#)

[THE SPIRIT OF THE FORESTS, THE LEWD AND NAKED GOD](#)

[CASTRATION](#)

CHAPTER 6. [THE GUARDIAN GOD](#)

[HERMES](#)

[PRIAPUS](#)

[THE GOD OF THE HUMBLE](#)

CHAPTER 7. [THE ANIMAL AND PLANT FORMS OF THE GOD](#)

[THE BULL](#)

[HORNS](#)

[THE LUNAR CRESCENT](#)

[THE HEALER GOD AND THE SERPENT](#)

[THE LINGAM-SHARIRA, OR SEXUAL CODE](#)

CHAPTER 8. [NAMES AND ASPECTS OF THE ITHYPHALLIC GOD](#)

[THE ANDROGYNOUS GOD \(ARDHANARĪSHVARA\)](#)

[THE PHALLOPHORIAS, FESTIVALS OF SPRING](#)

[THE UNIVERSAL NATURE OF THE CULT](#)

CHAPTER 9. [THE SURVIVALS](#)

[PHALLUS WORSHIP](#)

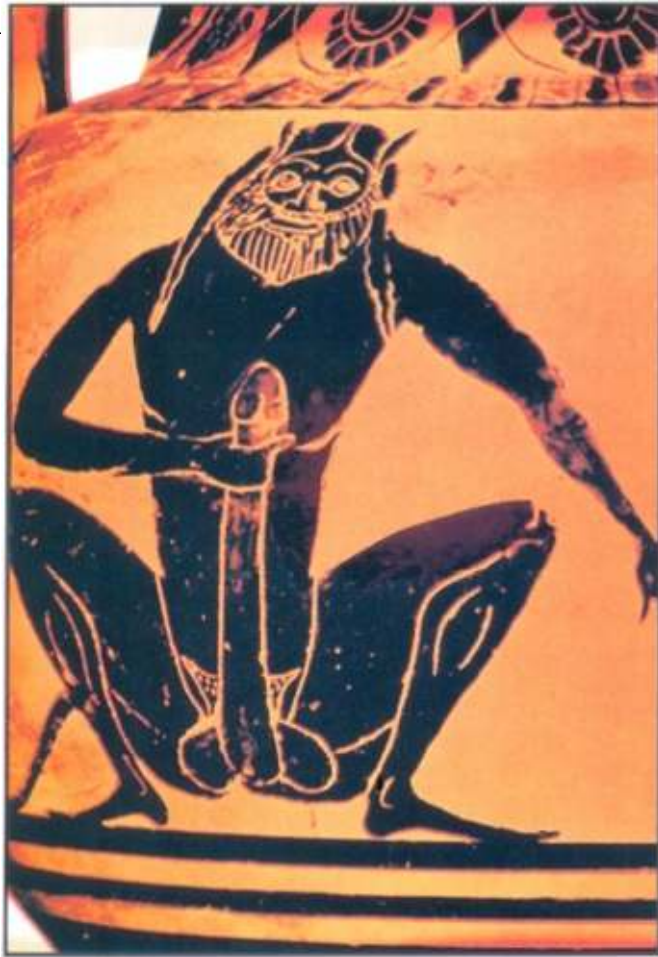
[Glossary of Sanskrit Terms](#)

[Bibliography](#)

[About the Author](#)

[About Inner Traditions • Bear & Company](#)

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Greece: Ithyphallic satyr.

INTRODUCTION

It is only when the penis (*upastha*) stands up straight, that it emits semen, the source of life. It is thus called the phallus (*lingam*) and has been considered, since earliest prehistory, the image of the creative principle, a symbol of the process by which the Supreme Being procreates the Universe.

This is not a case of a symbol plucked at random but the recognition of the continuity of the process that links all the various levels of manifestation, according to cosmological theory. The phallus is really the image of the creator in mankind, and we rediscover the worship of it at the origin of every religion.

A source of pleasure, the phallus evokes divine bliss, the Being of Joy. Within the microcosm of the living being it represents the progenitor, which is always present in its work.

Contempt for this sacred emblem, as well as degradation and debasement of it, pushes man from the divine reality. It provokes the anger of the gods and leads to the decline of the species. The man who scorns the very symbol of the life principle abandons his kind to the powers of death.

THE CULT OF THE PHALLUS





India: Youth with elongated phallus. Photograph by Lance Dane.



1

HISTORICAL SOURCES

The cult of the phallus, the source of life and a symbol of virility, courage, and power, first appeared in the vast civilization that developed from India to the extreme edge of western Europe at the beginning of the Neolithic era following the end of the Ice Age about 8000 B.C. Closely tied to the bull and serpent cults, it has survived in India, with its rites and legends intact, to the present time, but its traces, symbols, and certain other cult elements can be discerned throughout not only all the civilizations of Mesopotamia, the Middle East, Egypt, and the Aegean but also those of Thrace, Italy, and the entire pre-Celtic world, including Ireland.

It is difficult to determine whether even more ancient sources existed in the immense history of humanity before the coming of our ancestor Cro-Magnon Man, which is to say before the debut of our own civilization, which thoroughly remains under its influence. The red horns that Italian drivers attach to the fronts of their trucks to avert misfortune, even today, are analogous to those used more than six thousand years ago by chariot drivers.

Among the cave paintings and carvings of the Paleolithic era, ritual representations of the feminine principle are especially noticeable. The man with the head of a bird and erect phallus of Lascaux (circa 20,000 B.C.) seems to be the exception. From the beginning of the Neolithic era, on the other hand, there are countless representations of the phallus and of ithyphallic figures, such as those of Altamira, Gourdan, and Isturits.

Jacques Dupuis has suggested in his latest book, *Au Nom du Père*, that this passage from worship of the vulva to that of the phallus could be linked to the discovery of paternity—something that is now evident in primitive civilizations.

"Since the phallus offers a kinesthetic and visual comparison to the serpent and fish, we might expect some storied recognition of the comparison, as was noted by the Abbé Breuil. Since the phallus was involved in the ejection of semen and urine, we might expect some storied explanation of the processes, which could compare with the vulval connection to menstrual blood. None of these stories concerning masculine processes need involve the female, nor include a knowledge of insemination or fertilization. They could be part of a specialized masculine mythology, perhaps told at the initiation of boys or at a convocation of hunters or as part of the male shaman's repertory" (Alexander Marshack, *The Roots of Civilization*, pp. 330-32).

Beginning with the Magdalenian epoch (about 13,000 B.C. to about 6000 B.C.) representations of the phallus multiplied. The site of Audoubert in the Pyrenees is covered with engraved phalluses.

Placard (old Magdalenian) a bone has been found on which a phallus was carved with a stream of liquid leaving the meatus. It is similar to those of successive epochs, such as the phallic baton of Bruniquel (Dordogne) or the double phallus of the Gorge d'Enfer.

From Eyzies (later Magdalenian) comes a carved bone depicting the head of a bear, with its mouth open, facing a phallus whose testicles resemble flowers. Myth and tradition associate the image of the phallus to fish, water, and serpents.



Moravia: Phallic amulet of Dolni Vestonice. Gravettian culture, 30,000 B.C.

A fish is carved on the Gorge d'Enfer phallus. In Placard the eyes of the fish have the form of testicles. In Bruniquel can be found one phallic fish after another, all very realistic, with waves representing water. In the grotto of the Trois Frères, in Ariège, there are representations of masked, horned ithyphallic men wearing beast skins, who are very likely shamans, wizards, or dancers.

India is the only region where the cult of the lingam—the phallus—as well as its rituals and legendary narratives has been perpetuated without interruption from prehistory to the present day. It is thanks to Indian documents, therefore, that we are able to understand the reasons justifying the existence of this cult, the philosophical conceptions that explain it, and the significance of the legends whose variants, as we will see, are to be found everywhere.

The cult of the ithyphallic god of the protohistorical civilization of India was unknown to the Aryan invaders who came out of the north about the third millennium previous to our own era. The phallic cult has no place in Vedic rituals. The god-phallus (Shisna-deva) is, however, mentioned in the *Rig Veda* (712.5, and 10.99.3) as well as in the *Nirukta* (4.29), but its worship is banned.

It is the same in the Greco-Roman world where phallic cults came from civilizations predating the arrival of the Achaeans. "A colossal rough image of the ithyphallic god Min [dates] from predynastic Egypt (circa 4500 B.C.)" (Rawson, *Primitive Erotic Art*, p. 14).

The conflict between the ancient cult of Shiva, the ithyphallic god of Nature, and the social religion of the Aryan or Semite invaders is illustrated in the stories of the Purānas, the "ancient chronicles" of Shaivism.

According to the *Shiva Purāna* (*Rudra Samhitā*, *Satī Khānda*, 1.22-23), the patriarch Daksha, who was preparing a Vedic sacrifice, is cursed by Nandi (Joyous), the bull, the animal kingdom's companion and personification of Shiva, whose symbol is the phallus. Nandi speaks of Daksha with disdain:

"This ignorant mortal hates the sole god who remains benevolent towards his detractors, and I

refuses to recognize the truth. He concerns himself with naught but his domestic life and all the compromises which that entails. To satisfy his interests he practices interminable rituals with mentality debased by Vedic prescriptions. He forgets the nature of the soul, as he is preoccupied with something totally different. The brutal Daksha, who thinks only of his women, will henceforth have the head of a goat. May this stupid individual, swollen with the vanity he takes in his own knowledge as well as all those who with him oppose the Great Archer Shiva, continue to dwell in their ignorant ritualism.

"May these enemies of 'He who soothes suffering,' whose spirit is troubled by the odor of the sacrifices and flowery phrases of the Vedas, continue to dwell in their illusions. May all these priests who think only of eating, who put no stake in knowledge save that which profits them, that practicing abstinence and ceremonies only to earn a living, seeking naught but wealth and honors, end up as beggars."

The vedic sage Bhrigu, who presides at the sacrifice, replies:

"All those who practice the rites of Shiva and follow him are only heretics who oppose the true faith. They have renounced ritual purity. They dwell in error. Their hair is tangled, and they wear necklaces of bones. They coat themselves in ashes. They practice the initiation rites of Shiva in which intoxicating liquors are considered sacred beverages. Since they scorn the Vedas and the Brahmanas, the supports of the social order, they are heretics. The Vedas are the sole path of virtue. Thus let them follow their god, the king of evil spirits."

Despite this antagonism, Shaivism and the lingam cult were incorporated little by little into the Vedic religion as well as into numerous philosophical texts and legendary tales related to it. However, the whole of the texts coming from pre-Aryan culture and banned by the invaders were translated into their language, Sanskrit, and published only after the revival of Shaivism, starting about the second century B.C.

The oldest images of the ithyphallic god and the phallus in India come from the civilization of Mohenjo Daro (two or three millennia before our time). The megalithic monuments found in India and Europe, however, are even older.



Corsica: Standing stones in phallic form, 3000 B.C. Photograph by Louis Trémellat.



Egypt: Glyph showing Pharaoh's power of procreation, Temple of Karnak exterior wall. Luxor. Photograph by Jeanie Levitan

The European megalithic complex precedes the Aegean contribution and the sexual significance of the menhirs is universally attested to.... the belief in the fertilizing virtues of the menhirs was still shared by European peasants at the beginning of the century. ... The megalithic complex would have radiated out from one sole center, very likely the eastern Mediterranean ... linked to Tantricism. Stonehenge (before 2100 B.C.) is pre-Mycenaean" (Mircea Eliade, *Histoire des croyances et des idées religieuses*, pp. 130 and 135).

We have discovered the worship of the phallus in both Mediterranean and northern Europe from prehistory to the Dionysian cults of the sixth century A.D. The phallus was worshiped in Egyptian temples. In Greece it played a large role in the ceremonies honoring Hermes and Dionysus. In Egypt special honors were given to the sex of the butchered Osiris. The worship of the sacred foreskin was brought back from Palestine by Godefroy of Bouillon and still practiced in France and Italy, is a vestige of this cult. One can see erect phalluses on tombs in Anatolia, in Phrygia from the pre-Hellenic epoch, and in Italy dating from the first Iron Age. In Rome, "the custom of sculpting a phallus on the walls of the city comes from the Etruscans" (Jean Mercadé, *Roma Amor*). This is also the case for the Roman *bulla*, a phallic amulet carried by Roman generals on the days commemorating their victories.

In the Greek world, Orpheus was originally considered a native of Thrace, where one phallus cult originated. Hermes was revered under the form of Priapus by a column crowned with a head and decorated with a sex organ.

"One of the most basic of Celtic god-types ... is the horned, phallic god of the Celtic tribes.... The earliest Celtic portrayal of the antlered god occurs in the ancient sanctuary in the Val Camonica in northern Italy ... round about 400 BC The antlered god is known from one inscription only ... Cernunnos, 'The Horned One.' ... Over his left, bent arm are traces of the horned serpent, his mo-

consistent cult animal. ... his worshipper, smaller in size and having his hands raised in the same *orans* posture as the god—a posture used by the Celts for prayer—is markedly ithyphallic.... Sometimes, in Roman contexts, the horned god was likened to Mercury, no doubt in his earlier role as the protector of the flocks and herds. Here too he is usually ithyphallic, but carries instead of weapons the purse and wand of the classical god" (Anne Ross, in *Primitive Erotic Art*, pp. 83-84).



Greece: Hermes of Siphnos. Marble. National Museum, Athens. Photograph by Antonia Mulas.



2

SYMBOLISM

THE IMAGE OF THE WORLD'S CREATOR

The means by which a male infant is distinguished at birth is his sex organ. It is why the masculine organ is called in Sanskrit *lingam*—a word that implies "sign."

"The distinctive sign by which one can recognize the nature of something is therefore called lingam" (*Linga Purāna*, 1.6.106).

The principle from which the universe has issued is formless, without lingam, without a distinctive sign.

"Shiva (the supreme divinity) is without sign (without sex), without color, without taste, without odor, beyond the reach of words or touch, without qualities, immutable and immobile" (*Linga Purāna* 1.3.2-3).

Absolute being, not being manifested, can be perceived only by means of its creation, which is its sign—its lingam. The existence of a transcendent being who *thinks* the world can be known only through this sign. The lingam, or phallus, the source of life, is the form by which the Absolute Being from whom the world is issued, can be evoked.

"We revere in the sun the dispenser of light, the sum of all eyes; it is in the same regard that in the phallus we worship Shiva who is present in all generative power. It is not one particular eye that we venerate and make images of, but the sun, the complete eye that gives us sight, the sun that is the source of all visibility. In the same regard it is Shiva, the total being, who is revered in the phallus, his symbol" ("Lingopāsanā Rahasya," *Siddhanta*, vol. 2, p. 154).

"By worshiping the lingam one is not deifying a physical organ, but simply recognizing a form that is eternal and divine manifested in the microcosm. The human organ is the image of the divine emblem, the eternal and causal form of the lingam, present in all things. The phallus is the perceptible aspect of the divinity who exceeds the state of noncreation by the width of ten fingers" (*Purusasūktā*).

In the microcosm, which is to say in man, the sexual organ, the source of life, is the form in which the nature of the formless manifests itself. However, "it is not the phallus in itself which is revered but that for which it is the sign—the progenitor, the cosmic individual. The phallus is the emblem, the sign of the individual Shiva for whom it is the symbol" (*Shiva Purāna*, 1.1 6.106–7).



Nepal: Ithyphallic Shiva, seventeenth century. Kathmandu. Photograph by Ira Landgarten from James Wasserman's Art and Symbols of the Occult (*Destiny Books*).

"The symbol of the cosmic man Purusha, the archetype, the universal plan present in all things, the male emblem, the phallus. The symbol of energy, which is the world's substance, the generator of all that exists, is the female organ, the yoni" ("*Lingopāsanā Rahasya*," p. 154).

THE SYMBOL OF THE UNIVERSE

In the being without form within which exists no distinctive sign appears a sign which is the Universe. This sign can be mentioned, touched, breathed, seen, and tasted. It is the source of both coarse and subtle elements" (*Linga Purāna*, 1.3.3–4).

"Fundamental Nature is therefore called phallus. He who possesses this distinctive sign is the supreme being" (*Linga Purāna* 1.17.5).

"The lingam has its roots in the formless, in the nonmanifested (*avyakta*). Shiva is therefore himself without the lingam. The lingam is the thing-of-Shiva" (*Linga Purāna* 1.3.3–4).

"Shiva, as an indivisible causal principle, is worshiped under the form of the phallus. His different manifestations within the created world are represented by anthropomorphic images. All the other gods form part of the multiplicity and are therefore represented by images" ("*Shrī Shiva Tattva Siddhānta*),



India: White crystalline sandstone Shiva lingam, circa fourth century. Photograph by Nik Douglas

"In the hierarchy of the created, it is the sun that appears as the progenitor of the terrestrial world. It is the image of the creator, which is why its symbol is the organ of procreation" (*Shiva Purāna*, 1.16.105).

"Shiva said: I am not distinct from the phallus. The phallus is identical to me. It draws my faithful close to me; therefore it must be worshiped. My beloveds! Everywhere an erect penis is to be found. I am present, even if it is no more than another of my representations" (*Shiva Purāna*, 1.9.43–4).

"The entire world has the phallus as its foundation. All is issued from the lingam. He who desires the perfection of the soul must worship the lingam" (*Linga Purāna*, 1.3.7).

"It is the lord who is the source of all pleasure... For existence to be a perpetual joy, the faithful should worship the phallus, which is Shiva himself. We venerate the sun which gives birth to the world and sustains it as the symbol of the origin of the terrestrial world. In the same regard, it is under the form of the phallus that Shiva, the universal principle, should be revered. This is why the masculine principle is recognizable as that which is called phallus. The phallus is the symbol of the god" (*Shiva Purāna*, 1.16.103–6).

THE MAHĀ-LINGAM, OR TRANSCENDENT SIGN

Purusha, the cosmic man (the ideational principle of the world) and Prakriti, Nature (the universal substance) are one and yet distinct and, even though distinct, inseparable. They exist only by their relationship to each other. From the perspective of principle, they form part of manifestation; from the perspective of the world, however, they exist before creation. It is their nondivisible state, the stage which the sign, the lingam, is still united to that which is without sign (alingam), which is called the transcendental sign: the Mahā-lingam. It represents the independent divinity (niralamba) beyond change (nirvikāra)" (Gopinātha Kavirāj, "Linga Rahasya," *Kalyāna*, Shiva anka, p.476).

"Universal Consciousness, which is the first stage in the order of creation, is called *mahat*, the 'great principle.' It forms the womb in which I deposit my semen. From it comes, according to the hierarchy of creation, all elements and all creatures" (*Bhagavad Gītā*, 14.3).

"To the Latin philosophers and mythographers, the god Pan, represented by Priapus, is the symbol of the Whole, of the Universe. In the Orphic litanies, Pan is the first principle of love, the creative force incorporated into universal matter. Sky, earth, fire, and water are its limbs" (Payne Knight, *The*

DIVINE EROS

Within the immutable causal being first appears desire, the desire to procreate. "He will desire. May I procreate! May I exist for always!" (*Taittirīya Upanishad*, 2.6.1). In Greece, Eros is always associated with Himeros, desire.

"Desire, the attraction of opposites, is the first manifestation of dualism; it gives birth to the distinction between the person and Nature. Tied to Nature by desire, the cosmic person procreates countless worlds. This desire, this inclination to pleasure, that makes up part of his nature, is the supernatural Eros" (Karpātri, "Lingopāsanā Rahasya," p. 153).

"Desire forms part of the universal Being, which is present in all things" (*Bhāgavata Purāna* 10.55.1).

"Born from the primordial egg, Eros was the first of the gods; none of the others could have been born without him. Born before Aphrodite, he is the origin of all species of plants and animals. He is responsible for the union of Heaven and Earth.

"To Orphism, Eros Protogonos, the primordial principle of Eros, appeared at the same time as the Ether, which is to say at the beginning of the world. Child of time (Kronos) and necessity (Anagyrōs), he acts upon inert matter (Chaos), eternally engendering.

"In the Orphic hymns, Eros is the 'father of the night,' attracting light unto himself. He penetrates the world by the movement of his wings. He is called the Magnificent, the Sovereign, Priapus, the Illuminated One" (Payne Knight, *The Worship of Priapus*, p. 9).

"[Eros] was a wild boy, who showed no respect for age or station but flew about on golden wings shooting barbed arrows at random or wantonly setting hearts on fire with his dreadful torches... His most famous shrine was at Thespieae, where the Boeotians worshipped him as a simple phallic pillar—the pastoral Hermes, or Priapus, under a different name" (Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, I.15.1).

THE PHALLUS, ORGAN OF BLISS

From the mystical Shaivite perspective, as in the Dionysian orgy, erotic ecstasy is only secondarily a means of reproduction. Above all it is a search for pleasure. In erotic rituals, "to please the lord his symbol must be worshiped independently of its physical function. As this function is to give birth, the function is thereby excluded" (*Shiva Purāna*, 1.16.108).

The union of Shiva and his lovers—Shakti, Pārvatī, or Satī—is not procreative. Their respective infants are engendered separately. Skanda, the god of beauty and the head of the army of gods, was born from the sperm of Shiva, which fell into the mouth of a sacrificial fire and then into the waters of the Ganges. Ganapati, the elephant-headed god who is prayed to at the start of all endeavors and who protects the entrance to the home, is the son of a goddess who formed him from her skin's flaking while she bathed.



India: Bhuvaneshvar, Temple of Mukteshvara. Shiva and his "avatara" of Lakulisha, tenth century.

"According to the *Sefer Yezirah*, the phallus fulfills a function that is not only generational but also confers equilibrium in regard to the structures built by man and the order of the world. For that reason, the connection was established between this 'seventh member' and the righteous seventh day of creation. Under various representations it designates the creative force and it is worshiped as the very source of life" (G. C. Scholem, *Les Origines de la Kabbale*, pp. 164—65).

Pleasure, in the Shaivite conception, is the image of the divine state. This is why, when the divine manifests itself in its procreative aspect, it shows its aspect as pleasure in equal degree. The sexual organ therefore has a double role: the inferior one of procreation and the superior one of contacting the divine state by means of the ecstasy caused by pleasure (*ānanda*). The orgasm is a "divine sensation." So whereas paternity attaches man to the things of the earth, the ecstasy of pleasure can reveal divine reality to him, leading him to detachment and spiritual realization. "The phallus is the source of pleasure. It is the sole means of obtaining earthly pleasure and salvation. By looking at it, touching it, and meditating on it, living beings are capable of freeing themselves from the cycle of future lives" (*Shiva Purāna*, 1.9.20).

"Pleasure's center resides in the sexual organ (*upastha*), in the cosmic lingam, source of all orgasmic joy. In the terrestrial world, all love, all sensuality, every desire is a quest for that pleasure. We desire things only insofar as they can procure for us sensual bliss. Divinity is only a love object when it represents an unmitigated sensual pleasure. Other things are merely the objects of a temporary love because they can bring only fleeting satisfactions.

"Lustful desire for women exists only because one sees within it the form of one's own pleasure and the source of enjoyment. The joy of possession momentarily tames the suffering of desire, and man can then experience the pleasure that is his desire's target. Within that pleasure he perceives his own

essential nature, which is joy.

"Every orgasm, every pleasure is a divine experience. The entire universe springs forth from enjoyment. Pleasure is at the origin of all that exists. But the perfect love is that whose object is limitless. It is that love which is pure love, love of love itself, the love of the transcendental being-over-sensual-pleasure" (Karpatri, "Lingopāsanā Rahasya:' p.153)'

BĪJA, THE SEMEN

Sperm is the essence of life, the best of oblations, the purest form of sacrificial elixir (soma). All beings are born from an offering of sperm hurled into the fire of desire. There is a representation of Agni, lord of fire, drinking the sperm that gushes out from Shiva's phallus.



India: Temple of Gyarspur. Bas-relief known as "sperm sacrifice on the domestic altar," eighth century.

Sperm is worshiped under various names. It fills the cup of the moon worn by Shiva on his forehead. It is the Ganges flowing from the head of the lingam. All forms of oblation and all beverages that give life or immortality are represented as forms of Shiva's sperm.

Sperm is called *bīja* (the semen), *soma* (the oblation), *chandra* (the moon), and *viryā* (the viri-essence). "In Egypt the sun god Re-Atum-Khepri manufactured all of creation by masturbating." (Mircea Eliade, *Histoire des croyances et des idées religieuses*, p. 101).

The sex organ is that mysterious organ through which the creative principle is manifested by giving birth to a new being. It is therefore the organ by which that principle is visibly represented in every particular species. Sperm, which potentially contains the entire ancestral heritage, race, and characteristics of the person to be, is called *bindu* (point limit). Indeed, it is the minute passage between being and nonbeing. The sex organ is thereby that organ by which communication is established between man and the creative force, the manifestation of the divine being.



Nepal: Shiva lingam with pilgrims' offerings. Kathmandu. Photograph by Kevin Bubriski.

Within the microcosm, which is to say within man, the design is contained within the semen and becomes real only through the matter that nourishes it within the belly of the mother—the egg, which is the departure point of all living things.

Ritual offerings of sperm were part of agrarian rites in various civilizations. Even today, in certain regions of Africa, young men of various tribes dig holes in the earth into which to pour their sperm. In Hindu rites, except in the case of certain tantric practices, symbolic substitutes for sperm are used, such as rainwater and the seeds of rice or grains. "Since the fluid semen came to be identified as the generic cause of fertility, it may well be that the identification of the sky as male, moistening and fertilizing a female earth, which appears in the oldest layers of so many literatures, took place during the very early stages of agriculture" (Philip Rawson, *Primitive Erotic Art*, p. 50),

In alchemy, the origin of which is Shaivite, mercury corresponds to the moon, Shiva's cup of sperm. In tantric ritual the lingam is consecrated with mercury. To the Chinese, who call it liquid silver, mercury represents sperm, water, kidneys, blood, and the dragon. The alternation of mercury with cinnabar corresponds to yin and yang.

In Egypt and Greece, as in India, ritual phalluses are painted with cinnabar. In Western alchemy metals are believed to be produced by the underground conjunction of mercury, considered as feminine semen, and sulfur, considered as masculine semen.

"The semen of Shiva and his lover Satī fell upon the back of the earth and filled the world. It is the seed which caused the appearance of every phallic emblem of Shiva that can be found in the infernal regions, the Earth, and Heaven. From it all past and future emblems of Shiva are made. Shiva's lingam issued from the radiation of two semens" (*Nārada Pañcharātra*, 3.1).

In the sanctuary where it is worshiped, the lingam is represented surrounded by the female organ, the yoni.

"Universal energy, the substance of the world, is represented by the yoni, which grasps the lingam. It is only when the phallus, the giver of semen, is surrounded by the yoni that God can manifest and the universe appear.

"The symbol of the cosmic man, Purusha, the formless, the immutable, the all-seeing eye, is the masculine emblem, the phallus. The symbol of the energy that is the world's substance, generator of all that exists, is represented by the female organ, the yoni" (Karpātri, "Lingopāsanā Rahasya," p. 154). "The yoni represents the womb of the visible and the subtle world" (*Yajur veda, Vājasenīyā Samhitā, 13.3*;

Taittirīya Samhitā 4.2.8.2), "the universal womb in which all things that are individual develop" (*Shvetāshvatara Upanishad, 5.55*).

The phallus fertilizes that womb. The semen giver is the phallus; it fertilizes Nature, giving birth to the visible world and to the multiple forms of life.

"Because it is the origin of all life. nature is comparable to a womb" (*Shiva Purāna, 1.16.101*).

"This womb is Nature, the base of all existence. He that sports with her is Shiva. It is he who dispenses pleasure. There is not nor has there ever been any other dispenser" (*Shiva Purāna, 1.16.101*).

As the universal fertilizing principle the phallus is unique. But every form of existence requires a different womb to be fertilized. That is why all the different species are called wombs, or yoni. The Purānas speak of 8,400,000 yoni, or different species residing on the earth.

The principle called Shiva represents the totality of procreative power to be found in the universe. All individual procreation is a fragment of it.

"The universe is the issue of the relationship between a masculine and a feminine principle. Everything, as a result, carries the signature of the lingam and the yoni. It is the deity who, in the form of the individual phallus, penetrates each womb and procreates all beings" (Karpātri, "Lingopāsanā Rahasya," p. 163).

"It is he alone who actually penetrates every womb" (*Shvetāshvatara Upanishad, 5.2*)

The very name *Delphi* stems from *delphys*: womb.

THE UNION OF THE SEXES

In the state preceding embodiment, the gods form but one sole being; there is no perceptible duality, no positive or negative force. But from the moment that the first tendency towards manifestation appears in the nondifferentiated substratum, duality is already present. This duality has the character of two poles of opposite attraction—one of positive tendency, the other negative—which are manifested throughout creation under male and female aspects. There is no possibility of creation without the union of opposites. Nothing can issue from either Shiva or Nature alone. For creation to take place, the union of an active and a passive principle, a male organ and a female organ, is indispensable. The union of the cosmic person and universal Nature is represented by the copulation (*maithuna*) of Shiva and the goddess.

Transcendental virility is the immanent cause of creation. Transcendental femininity is its efficient cause. These principles, in the microcosm, are especially apparent in the reproductive organs, which represent the essential physical function of all living beings. In nature everything pivots on reproduction and is made to assure the continuity of life. It is in the union of the lingam and the yoni that divinity, the power to create, becomes visible in man. Procreation is impossible without such union, and divine manifestation is equally so without its cosmic equivalent.

The rituals that provide the means for us to communicate with the gods are interwoven with the act of making love.

"The first appeal is the invocation of the god (*hinkāra*).

"The invitation represents the laudes (*prastāra*).

"Sleeping next to the woman is the magnificent (*udgītha*).

"Facing one another is the choir (*pratihāra*).

"The orgasm is the consecration.

"Separation is the closing hymn (*nidhāna*).

"He who understands that every sexual act is a hymn addressed to Vama-deva, the fiery form of Shiva, recreates himself with each copulation. He will thrive all the days of his life; he will live long and become wealthy in both offspring and in livestock; rich will be his renown" (*Chāndogya Upanishad*, 2.13.1).

In Celtic mythology there is "the powerful Fergus mac Roich, 'Fergus son of Great Horse', the name itself being suggestive of virility. ... His penis is described as being seven fingers in length; he mated with the divine queen Medb, 'Drunk Woman', whose own sexuality is boundless" (Anne Ross, *Primitive Erotic Art*, p. 83).

The transmission of the genetic code and its transplanting into a rigorously selected soil, the transfer to a new being of an ancestral heritage containing the archetypes bequeathed it by divine thought, is the most important religious act of a man's life. It must be practiced as a ritual, following rules that take into account the most favorable moments and the convergence of the stars, in such a way that the new flame-bearer is suitably adapted to his role and that the breed fashioned by the long line of ancestors continues and neither is degraded nor dies out in the course of its journey. All religions accord a central role to the act of reproduction in its moral code, even if at times they have lost the true meaning of it and reversed its values. Sexual diversion under any of its myriad forms is not to be condemned, so much as the progeny of ill-matched couples, the blending of breeds or races which deform the model drawn by the gods and transmitted by the ancestral lineage.

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