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**INFLUENCE OF
THE PHALLIC IDEA**

C. STANILAND WAKE

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Influence of the Phallic Idea by C. Staniland Wake.

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Introduction

IT will not be necessary for me to give details of the rites by which the phallic superstition is distinguished, as they may be found in the works of Dulaure,¹ Payne Knight,² and other writers. I shall refer to them, therefore, only so far as may be required for the due understanding of the subject to be considered--the influence of the Phallic idea in the religions of antiquity. The first step in the inquiry is to ascertain the origin of the superstition in question. Faber ingeniously referred to a primitive universal belief in a great father, the curious connection seen to exist between nearly all non-Christian mythologies, and he saw in phallic worship a degradation of this belief. Such an explanation as this is, however, not satisfactory; since, not only does it require the assumption of a primitive divine revelation, but proof is still wanting that all peoples have, or ever had, any such notion of a great parent of mankind as that supposed to have been revealed. And yet there is a valuable germ of truth in this hypothesis. The phallic superstition is founded essentially in the family idea. Captain Richard Burton recognized this truth when he asserted that "amongst all barbarians whose primal want is progeny, we observe a greater or less development of the phallic worship."³ This view, however, is imperfect. There must have been something more than a mere desire for progeny to lead primitive man to view the generative process with the peculiar feelings embodied in this superstition. We are, in fact, here taken to the root of all religions--awe at the mysterious and unknown. That which the uncultured mind cannot understand is viewed with dread or veneration, as it may be, and the object presenting the mysterious phenomenon may itself be worshipped as a fetish, or the residence of a presiding spirit. But there is nothing more mysterious than the phenomena of generation, and nothing more important than the final result of the generative act. Reflection on this result would naturally cause that which led to it to be invested with a certain degree of superstitious significance. The feeling generated would have a double object, as it had a double origin--wonder at the phenomenon itself and a perception of the value of its consequences. The former, which is the most simple, would lead to a veneration for the organs whose operation conduced to the phenomena--hence the superstitious practices connected with the phallus and the yoni among primitive peoples. In this, moreover, we have the explanation of numerous curious facts observed among eastern peoples. Such is the respect shown by women for the generative organ of dervishes and fakirs.⁴ Such also is the Semitic custom referred to in the Hebrew Scriptures as "the putting of the hand under the thigh," which is explained by the Talmudists to be the touching of that part of the body which is sealed and made holy by

¹ *Histoire Abrege de Differens Cultes*, vol. ii.

² *A Discourse on the Worship of Priapus, and its Connection with the Mystic Theology of the Ancients*. By Richard Payne Knight, Esq. New Edition. To which is added *An Essay on the Worship of the Generative Powers during the Middle Ages of Western Europe*. Illustrated with 138 Engravings. 4to, London, 1869.

³ *Memoirs of the Anthropological Society of London*, vol. i, p. 320.

⁴ The Vanaprastha were Brahminical anchorites, who inhabited the deserts, lived on vegetables, devoted themselves to contemplation, macerated the body, fought with devils and giants (as a natural consequence), and were insensible to heat and cold. They were called later, by the Greeks, Gymnosophists; and although they went perfectly naked, no throb or involuntary movement was ever seen in any part of their bodies. Women who were barren oftentimes came and touched their shrivelled member, hoping thereby to become fruitful. Not the slightest emotion was noticed at such times. The old ascetics would have regarded with contempt the practices of Christian monks, who were indeed children when compared with their Eastern ancestors.--*The Monks before Christ*, by John Edgar Johnson; and *Description of the Character, Manners and Customs of the People of India*, by Abbe J. A. Dubois.}

circumcision: a custom which was, up to a recent date, still in use among the Arabs as the most solemn guarantee of truthfulness.⁵

The second phase of the phallic superstition is that which arises from a perception of the value of the consequences of the act of generation. The distinction between this and the preceding phase is that, while the one has relation to the organs engaged, the other refers more particularly to the chief agent. Thus, the father of the family is venerated as the generator; this authority is founded altogether on the act and consequences of generation. We thus see the fundamental importance, as well as the phallic origin, of the family idea. From this has sprung the social organization of all primitive peoples.

An instance in point may be derived from Mr. Hunter's account of the Santals of Bengal. He says that the classification of this interesting people among themselves depends, "not upon social rank or occupation, but upon the family basis." This is shown by the character of the six great ceremonies in a Santal's life, which are: "admission into the family; admission into the tribe; admission into the race; union of his own tribe with another by marriage; formal dismissal from the living race by incremation; lastly, a reunion with the departed fathers."⁶

We may judge from this of the character of certain customs which are widespread among primitive peoples, and the phallic origin of which has long been lost sight of. The value set on the results of the generative act would naturally make the arrival at the age of puberty an event of peculiar significance. Hence, we find various ceremonies performed among primitive, and even among civilized, peoples at this period of life. Often when the youth arrives at manhood other rites are performed to mark the significance of the event.

Marriage, too, derives an importance from its consequences which otherwise it would not possess. Thus, among many peoples it is attended with certain ceremonies denoting its object, or, at least, marking it as an event of peculiar significance in the life of the individual, or even in the history of the tribe. The marriage ceremonial is especially fitted for the use of phallic rites or symbolism; the former, among semi-civilized peoples, often being simply the act of consummation itself, which appears to be looked on as part of the ceremony. The symbolism we have ourselves retained to the present day in the wedding-ring, which must have had a phallic origin, if, as appears probable, it originated in the Samothracian mysteries.⁷ Nor does the influence of the phallic idea end with life. The veneration entertained for the father of the family as the "generator," led in time to peculiar care being taken of the bodies of the dead; and, finally, to the worship of ancestors, which, under one form or another, distinguished all the civilized nations of antiquity, as it does even now most of the peoples of the heathen world.

⁵ See Dulaure, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 219.

⁶ *Rural Bengal*, p. 203.

⁷ See Ennemoser's *History of Magic* (Bohn), vol. ii, p. 33.

Circumcision

There is one phallic rite which, from its nature and wide range, is of peculiar importance. I refer to circumcision. The origin of this custom has not yet, so far as I am aware, been satisfactorily explained. The idea that, under certain climatic conditions, circumcision is necessary for cleanliness and comfort, does not appear to be well-founded, as the custom is not universal even within the tropics. Nor is the reason given by Captain Richard Burton, in his "Notes connected with the Dahoman," for both circumcision and excision, perfectly satisfactory. The real origin of these customs has been forgotten by all peoples practising them--and, therefore, they have ceased to have their primitive significance. That circumcision, at least, had a superstitious origin may be inferred from the traditional history of the Jews. The old Hebrew writers, persistent in their idea that they were a peculiar people, chosen by God for a special purpose, asserted that this rite was instituted by Jehovah as a sign of the covenant between Him and Abraham. Although we cannot doubt that this rite was practised by the Egyptians and Phoenicians long before the birth of Abraham,⁸ yet two points connected with the Hebrew tradition are noticeable. These are, the religious significance of the act of circumcision--it is the sign of a covenant between God and man--and its performance by the head of the family. These two things are, indeed, intimately connected; since, in the patriarchal age, the father was always the priest of the family and the offerer of the sacrifices. We have it, on the authority of the Veda, that this was the case also among the primitive Aryan people.⁹ Abraham, therefore, as the father and priest of the family, performed the religious ceremony of circumcision on the males of his household.

Circumcision, in its inception, is a purely phallic rite, having for its aim the marking of that which from its associations is viewed with peculiar veneration, and it connects the two phases of this superstition which have for their object respectively the of generation and the agent. We are thus brought back to the consideration of the simplest form of phallic worship, that which has reference to the generative organs viewed as the mysterious instruments in the realization of that keen desire for children which distinguishes all primitive peoples. This feeling is so nearly universal that it is a matter of surprise to find the act by which it is expressed signalized as sinful. Yet such is the case, although the incidents in which the fact is embodied are so veiled in figure that their true meaning has long been forgotten. Clemens Alexandrinus tells us that "the Bacchanals hold their orgies in honor of the frenzied Bacchus, celebrating their sacred frenzy by the eating of raw flesh, and go through the distribution of the parts of butchered victims, crowned with snakes, shrieking out the name of that Eve, by whom error came into the world." He adds that "the symbol of the Bacchic orgies is a consecrated serpent," and that according to the strict interpretation of the Hebrew term, the name Hevia, aspirated, signifies a female serpent.¹⁰ We have here a reference to the supposed fall of man from pristine "innocence," Eve and the serpent being very significantly introduced in close conjunction, and indeed becoming in some sense identified with each other. In fact the Arabic word for serpent, hayyal, may be said also to mean "life," and in this sense the legendary first human mother is called Eve or Chevva, in Arabic Hawwa. In its relations, as an asserted fact, the question of the fall has an important bearing on the subject

⁸ Herodotus, Euterpe, § 104. It was a practice at least 2,400 years before our era, and is even then an ancient custom. Nevertheless it appears to have been found only among nations cognate with the Egyptians and the Phoenicians. The neglect of it by Moses and by the Israelites whom he conducted to the border of the land of Canaan, is a strong presumption against its previous employment by the patriarchs.--Ed.

⁹ See Bunsen's God in History, vol.i, p. 299.

¹⁰ Ante-Nicene Christian Library, vol. IV. (Clement of Alexandria), p.27.

before us. Quite irrespective of the impossibility of accepting the Mosaic cosmogony as a divinely inspired account of the origin of the world and man--a cosmogony which, with those of all other Semitic peoples, has a purely "phallic" basis¹¹--the whole transaction said to have taken place in the Garden of Eden is fraught with difficulties on the received interpretation. The very idea on which it is founded--the placing by God, in the way of Eve, of a temptation which He knew she could not resist--is sufficient to throw discredit on the ordinary reading of the narrative. The effect, indeed, that was to follow the eating of the forbidden fruit, appears to an ordinary mind to furnish the most praiseworthy motive for not obeying the command to abstain. That "eating of the forbidden fruit" was simply a figurative mode of expressing the performance of the act necessary to the perpetuation of the human race--an act which in its origin was thought to be the source of all evil--is evident from the consequences which followed, and from the curse it entailed.¹² As to the curse inflicted Eve, it has always been a stumbling-block in the way of commentators. For, what connection is there between the eating of a fruit and sorrow in bringing forth children? The meaning is evident, however, when we know that conception and childbearing were the direct consequences of the act forbidden. How far this meaning was intended by the compiler of the Mosaic books we shall see further on.

¹¹ The Hebrew word *bara*, translated "created," has also the sense of "begotten." See Gesenius.

¹² See Fashar, by Dr. Donaldson, 2d edition (1860), p. 45 et seq.

Serpent Symbolism Associated With Phallic Worship

That we have, in the Mosaic account of the “fall,” a phallic legend, is evident from other consideration, connected with the narrative. The most important relate to the introduction of the serpent on the scene, and the position it takes as the inciting cause of the sinful act. We are here reminded of the passage already quoted from Clemens Alexandrinus, who tells us that the serpent was the special symbol of the worship of Bacchus. Now, this annual holds a very curious place in the religions of the civilized peoples of antiquity. Although, in consequence of the influence of later thought, it came to be treated as the personification of evil, and as such appears in the Hebrew legend of the fall, yet before this the serpent was the symbol of wisdom and healing. In the latter capacity it appears even in connection with the exodus from Egypt. It is, however, in its character as a symbol of wisdom that it more especially claims our attention, although these ideas are intimately connected--the power of healing being merely a phase of wisdom. From the earliest times of which we have any historical notice, the serpent has been connected with the gods of wisdom. This animal was the especial symbol of Thoth or Taaut, a primeval deity of Syro-Egyptian mythology,¹³ and of all those gods, such as Hermes and Seth, who can be connected with him. This is true also of the third member of the primitive Chaldean triad, Hea or Hoa. According to Sir Henry Rawlinson, the most important titles of this deity refer “to his functions as the source of all knowledge and science.” Not only is he “the intelligent fish,” but his name may be read as signifying both “life” and a “serpent,” and he may be considered as “figured by the great serpent which occupies so conspicuous a place among the symbols of the gods on the black stones recording Babylonian benefactions.”¹⁴ The serpent was also the symbol of the Egyptian Kneph, who resembled the Sophia of the Gnostics, the Divine Wisdom. This animal, moreover, was the Agathodaemon of the religions of antiquity--the giver of happiness and good fortune.¹⁵ It was in these capacities, rather than as having a phallic significance, that the serpent was associated with the sun-gods, the Chaldean Bel, the Grecian Apollo, and the Semitic Seth.

But whence originated the idea of the wisdom of the serpent which led to its connection with the legend of the “fall”? This may, perhaps, be explained by other facts which show also the nature of the wisdom here intended. Thus, in the annals of the Mexicans, the first woman, whose name was translated by the old Spanish writers “the woman of our flesh,” is always represented as accompanied by a great male serpent. This serpent is the Sun-god Tonacatl-coatl, the principal deity of the Mexican pantheon; and the goddess-mother of primitive man is called Cihua-Cohuatl, which signifies woman of the serpent.¹⁶ According to this legend, which agrees with that of other American tribes, a serpent must have been the father of the human race. This notion can be explained only on the supposition that the serpent was thought to have had at one time a human form. In the Hebrew legend the tempter speaks; and “the old serpent having two feet,” of Persian mythology, is none other than the evil spirit

¹³ Bunsen's *Egypt*, vol. iv., pp. 225, 255, 288.

¹⁴ *History of Herodotus*, vol. i., p. 600.

¹⁵ Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iv., pp. 412, 413; and King's *Gnostics*, p. 31. See also Bryant's *Ancient Mythology*, vol. iv., p. 201. The last named work contains much curious information as to the extension of serpent-worship.

¹⁶ See *The Serpent Symbol in America*, by E.G. Squier, M.A. (*American Archaeological Researches*, No. I, 1851), p. 161 et seq.; *Palenque*, by M. de Waldeck and M. Brasseur de Bourbourg (1866), p. 48.

Ahriman himself.¹⁷ The fact is that the serpent was only a symbol, or at most an embodiment, of the spirit which it represented, as we see from the belief of certain African and American tribes, which probably preserves the primitive form of this supposition. Serpents are looked upon by these peoples as embodiments of their departed ancestors,¹⁸ and an analogous notion is entertained by various Hindu tribes. No doubt the noiseless movement and the activity of the serpent, combined with its peculiar gaze and marvellous power of fascination, led to its being viewed as a spirit-embodiment, and hence also as the possessor of wisdom.¹⁹ In the spirit-character ascribed to the serpent, we have the explanation of the association of its worship with human sacrifice noted by Mr. Fergusson--this sacrifice being really connected with the worship of ancestors.

It is evident, moreover, that we may find here the origin of the idea of evil sometimes associated with the serpent-god. The Kafir and the Hindu, although he treats with respect any serpent which may visit his dwelling, yet entertains a suspicion of his visitant. It may, perhaps, be the embodiment of an evil spirit, or for some reason or other it may desire to injure him. Mr. Fergusson states that "the chief characteristic of the serpents throughout the east in all ages seems to have been their power over the wind and rain," which they gave or withheld according to their good or ill-will towards man.²⁰ This notion is curiously confirmed by the title given by the Egyptians to the Semitic god Seti (Seth)-Typhon, which was the name of the Phoenician evil principle, and also of a destructive wind, thus having a curious analogy with the "typhoon" of the Chinese seas.²¹ When the notion of a duality in nature was developed, there would be no difficulty in applying it to the symbols or embodiments by which the idea of wisdom was represented in the animal-world. Thus, there came to be, not only good, but also bad, serpents, both of which are referred to in the narrative of the Hebrew exodus, but still more clearly in the struggle between the good and the bad serpents of Persian mythology, which symbolized Ormuzd, or Mithra, and the evil spirit Ahriman.²² So far as I can discover, the serpent-symbol has not a direct phallic reference,²³ nor, after all, is its attribute of wisdom the most essential. The idea most intimately associated with this animal was life, not present, but future, and ultimately, no doubt, eternal.²⁴ Thus the snake Bai was figured as guardian of the doorways of those chambers of Egyptian tombs which represented the mansions of heaven.²⁵ A sacred serpent appears to have been kept in all the Egyptian temples, and we are told that "many of the subjects, in the tombs of the kings at Thebes in particular, show the importance it was thought to enjoy in a future state."²⁶ The use of crowns formed of the asp, or sacred Thermuthis, given to sovereigns, and divinities, particularly to Isis,²⁷ the goddess of life and healing, was, doubtless, intended to symbolize eternal life. This notion is quite consistent with the ideas entertained by the Phoenicians as to

¹⁷ Lajard, *Memoires de l'Institut Royal de France (Acad. des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres)*, t. xiv., p. 89.

¹⁸ Wood's *Natural History of Man*, vol. i., p. 185; also Squier's *Serpent Symbol*, p. 222 et seq.

¹⁹ I have a strong suspicion that, in its primitive shape, the Hebrew legend, as that of the Mexicans, gave the serpent-form to both the father and the mother of the human race.

²⁰ *Tree and Serpent Worship*, p. 46. Rudra, the Vedic form of Siva, the "King of Serpents," is called the father of the maruts (winds). See *infra* as to identification of Siva with Saturn.

²¹ The idea of circularity appears to be associated with both these names. See Bryant, *op. cit.*, vol. iii., p. 164, and vol. ii., p. 191, as to derivation of "Typhon."

²² Lajard, *loc. cit.*, p. 182. See also *Culte de Mithra*, p. 35.

²³ In the Bacchanalia the serpent's head is seen at the open lid of the box. See Dom. Martin's "Explication," etc., pl. II., p. 29.

²⁴ "Wise (phronimoi) as serpents, and harmless (or pure) as doves."--Matthew x. 16. By serpents the masculine and by doves the feminine attribute are represented.

²⁵ See *Memoires de l'Institut (Academie des Inscriptions)*, tom. xvii., p. 97.

²⁶ Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. v., p. 65.

²⁷ *Do.*, p. 243.

the serpent, which they supposed to have the quality “of putting off its old age, and assuming a second youth.”²⁸

²⁸ Sanchoniathon (translated by Cory), in *The Phoenix*, p. 197.

The Tree Of Knowledge Of Good And Evil

Another feature of the Mosaic legend of the "fall" which deserves consideration is the reference to the tree of knowledge, or wisdom. It is now generally supposed that the forbidden fruit was a kind of citrus,²⁹ but certain facts connected with arborolatry seem to me to disprove this opinion. Among peoples in the most opposite regions various species of the fig-tree are held sacred. Thus it is, throughout nearly the whole of Africa, with the banyan (*Ficus indicus*), the sacred tree of the Hindu Brahmins. Even in several of the Polynesian islands, as in various parts of the Indian Archipelago and in Northern Australia, the fig-tree is highly venerated. In ancient Egypt, the banyan, or the *Ficus sycamorus*, was always considered sacred.³⁰ So it was in Greece and Italy. According to Plutarch, a basket of figs formed one of the chief objects carried in the procession in honor of Bacchus--and the sacred phallus itself appears to have been made of the wood of the fig-tree, as was also the statue of the phallic god Priapus.³¹

Judging from these facts, and considering that the sycamore was sacred among the Hebrews themselves--its fruit having the significance of the virgin womb³²--there can be little difficulty in identifying the fig-tree, whether the sycamore or the banyan, with the tree of knowledge planted in the midst of the garden of Eden. The sense intended to be conveyed by this expression would be evident enough without the introduction of the "tree of life." That this is intended to represent the male element is undoubted. The Chaldean god Hea, who was symbolized by the serpent, was also the god of life and knowledge; and Rawlinson states that "there are very strong grounds indeed for connecting him with the serpent of scripture, and with the Paradisiacal traditions of the tree of knowledge and the tree of life."³³ The bo-tree (*Ficus religiosa*) of the Buddhists is said to derive greater sacredness from its encircling the palm--the Palmyra palm being the kalpa-tree, or the "tree of life" of the Hindu paradise.³⁴ This connection is termed by the Buddhists "the bo-tree united in marriage with the palm," and we have in it the perfect idea of generative activity, the combination of the male and female elements. Mr. Fergusson, in accordance with his special theory as to the origin of serpent-worship, thinks that this superstition characterized the old Turanian (by which probably he means Hamitic) empire of Chaldea, while tree-worship was more characteristic of the later Assyrian empire.³⁵ This opinion is, no doubt, correct; and it means really that the older race had that form of faith with which the serpent was always indirectly connected--adoration of the male principle of generation, the primitive phase of which was probably ancestor-worship; while the latter race adored the female principle, symbolized by the sacred tree, the Assyrian "grove." The "tree of life," however, undoubtedly had reference to the male element, and we may well suppose that originally the fruit alone was treated as symbolical of the opposite principle.³⁶

²⁹ Smith's Dictionary of the Bible. Art., "Apple-Tree."

³⁰ Wilkinson, op. cit., vol. iv., pp. 260, 313.

³¹ Horace, 8th Satire. See also Ante-Nicene Library, vol. iv., Clement of Alexandria, p. 41.

³² See Inman's Ancient Faiths Embodied in Ancient Names, vol. i., p. 108. This seems to have been the symbolical significance of the fig throughout the East from the earliest historical period; as the pomegranate symbolized the full womb.

³³ History of Herodotus, Book i., Appendix, Essay 10, § iv.

³⁴ Tennent's Ceylon, vol. ii., p. 520.

³⁵ Op. cit., p. 12.

³⁶ As to the sacred Indian fig-tree, see Ginguiaut's Religions de l'Antiquite, vol. i., p. 149, note.

There is still an important point connected with the Hebrew legend which requires consideration--the nature of the protecting kerub. That this was merely intended as a symbol of the deity himself, there is every reason to believe, and that the symbol was nothing more than the sacred bull of antiquity, is evident from the description of the kerub given by Ezekiel (chaps. i. and x.).³⁷ But what was the religious significance of the bull, an animal which it would be easy to prove was venerated by nearly all the peoples of antiquity? It is now well known that the bull symbolized the productive force in nature, and hence it was associated with the sun-gods. The symbolic figure carried in procession during the festival of Osiris and Isis was representative, probably, of the phallus of this animal.³⁸ According to the cosmogony of the Zend-Avesta, Ormuzd, after he had created the heavens and the earth, formed the first being, called by Zoroaster "the primeval bull." This bull was poisoned by Ahriman; but its seed was carried, by the soul of the dying animal, represented as an ized, to the moon, "where it is continually purified and fecundated by the warmth and light of the sun, to become the germ of all creatures." At the same time, the material prototypes of all living things, including man himself, issued from the body of the bull.³⁹ This is but a developed form of the ideas which anciently were almost universally associated with this animal among those peoples who were addicted to sun-worship. There is no doubt, however, that the superstitious veneration for the bull existed, as it still exists, quite independently of the worship of the heavenly bodies.⁴⁰ The bull, like the goat, must have been a sacred animal in Egypt before it was declared to be an embodiment of the sun-god Osiris. In some sense, indeed, the bull and the serpent, although both of them became associated with the solar deities, were antagonistic. The serpent was symbolical of the personal male element, or rather had especial reference to the life of man,⁴¹ while the bull had relation to nature as a whole, and was symbolical of the idea of fecundity. This antagonism was brought to an issue in the struggle between Osiris and Seti (Seth), which ended in the triumph of the god of nature, although it was renewed even during the exodus, when the golden calf of Osiris, or Horus, was set up in the Hebrew camp.

The references made to the serpent, to the tree of wisdom, and to the bull in the legend of the "fall," sufficiently prove its phallic character; which was, indeed, recognized in the early Christian church.⁴² This view is confirmed, moreover, by analogous legends in other mythologies. The Hindu legend approaches very nearly to that preserved in the Hebrew scriptures. Thus, it is said that Siva, as the Supreme Being, desired to tempt Brahma (who had taken human form), and for this object he dropped from heaven a blossom of the sacred fig-tree. Brahma, instigated by his wife, Satarupa, endeavors to obtain this blossom, thinking its possession will render him immortal and divine; but when he has succeeded in doing so, he is cursed by Siva, and doomed to misery and degradation. Mr. Hardwicke, when commenting on this tradition, adds that the sacred Indian fig is endowed by the Brahmans and Buddhists with mysterious significance, as the tree of knowledge or intelligence.⁴³ This legend confirms what I have said as to the nature of the Hebrew tree of knowledge, and also the phallic explanation of the "fall" itself, which we consider the attributes of the tempter of the Hindu story. The Persian legend preserved in the Boun-dehesch is, however, still more conclusive.

³⁷ Faber's Pagan Idolatry, vol. i., p. 422; vol. iii., p. 606.

³⁸ See Dulaure, op. cit., vol. ii., p. 32.

³⁹ Lajard, *Le Culte de Mithra*, p. 50.

⁴⁰ This superstition is found among peoples--the Kafirs, for instance--who do not appear to possess any trace of planetary worship.

⁴¹ This is evident from the facts mentioned above, notwithstanding the use of this animal as a symbol of wisdom.

⁴² In connection with this subject, see St. Jerome, in his letter on Virginité to Eustochia.

⁴³ *Christ and other Masters*, vol. i., p. 305.

According to this legend Meschia and Meschiane, the first man and woman, were seduced by Ahriman, under the form of a serpent, and they then first committed “in thought, word, and action, the carnal sin, and thus tainted with original sin all their descendants.”⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Lajard, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-60. The destruction of purity in the world by the Serpent Dahaka is stated in the 9th Yacna, v. 27. We have probably here the germ of the fuller legend, which may, however, have been contained in the lost portion of the Zend-Avesta.

Source Of The Legend Of The “Fall Of Man”

Under the circumstances I have detailed, we can hardly doubt that the legend of the “fall” has been derived from a foreign source. That it could not be original to the Hebrews may, I think, be proved by several considerations. The position occupied in the legend by the serpent is quite inconsistent with the use of this animal symbol by Moses.⁴⁵ Like Satan himself even, as the Rev. Dunbar Heath has shown,⁴⁶ the serpent had not, indeed, a wholly evil character among the early Hebrews. In the second place, the condemnation of the act of generation was directly contrary to the central idea of patriarchal history. The promise to Abraham was that he should have seed “numerous as the stars of heaven for multitude;” and to support this notion, the descent of Abraham is traced up to the first created man, who is commanded to increase and multiply.

It is very probable, however, that when the legend was appropriated by the compiler of the Hebrew scriptures it had a moral significance as well as a merely figurative sense. The legend is divisible into two parts--the first of which is a mere statement of the imparting of wisdom by the serpent and by the eating of the fruit of a certain tree, these ideas being synonymous, or, at least, consistent, as appears by the attributes of the Chaldean Hea.⁴⁷ The nature of this wisdom may be found in the rites of the Hindu Sacti Puja.⁴⁸ The second part of the legend, which is probably of much later date, is the condemnation of the act referred to, as being in itself evil, and as leading to misery and even to death itself. The origin of this latter notion must be sought in the esoteric doctrine taught in the mysteries of Mithra, the fundamental ideas of which were the descent of the soul to earth and its re-ascent to the celestial abodes after it had overcome the temptations and debasing influences of the material life.⁴⁹ Lajard shows that these mysteries were really taken from the secret worship of the Chaldean Mylitta; but the reference to “the seed of the woman who shall bruise the serpent’s head,” is too Mithraic for us to seek for an earlier origin for the special form taken by the Hebrew myth. The object of the myth evidently was to explain the origin of death,⁵⁰ from which man was to be delivered by a coming Saviour, and the whole idea is strictly Mithraic, the Persian deity himself being a Saviour-God.⁵¹ The importance attached to virginity by the early Christians sprang from the same source. The Avesta is full of references to “purity” of life; and there is reason to believe that, in the secret initiations, the followers of Mithra were taught to regard marriage itself as impure.⁵²

The religious ideas which found expression in the legend of the fall were undoubtedly of late development,⁵³ although derived from still earlier phases of religious thought. The simple worship in symbol of the organs of generation, and of the ancestral head of the family, prompted by the desire for offspring and the veneration for him who produced it, was

⁴⁵ The turning of Aaron’s rod into a serpent had, no doubt, a reference to the idea of wisdom associated with that animal.

⁴⁶ *The Fallen Angels*, 1857.

⁴⁷ See *supra*.

⁴⁸ *Memoirs of the Anthropological Society of London*, vol. ii. p. 264, et seq.; and compare with the Gnostic personification of “truth”; for which see King’s *Gnostics and their Remains*, p. 39.

⁴⁹ Lajard, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

⁵⁰ Jehovah threatens death, but the Serpent impliedly promises life, the former having relation to the individual, the latter to the race.

⁵¹ Lajard, *op. cit.*, p. 60, note.

⁵² Several of the Essenes, who appear to have had some connection with Mithraism, taught this doctrine.

⁵³ It is well known to biblical critics that this legend formed no part of the earlier Mosaic narrative.

extended to the generative force in nature. The bull, which, as we have seen, symbolized this force, was not restricted to earth, but was in course of time transferred to the heavens, and, as one of the zodiacal signs, was thought to have a peculiar relation to certain of the planetary bodies. This astral phase of the phallic superstition was not unknown to the Mosaic religion. A still earlier form of this superstition was, however, known to the Hebrews, probably forming a link between the worship of the symbol of personal generative power and that of the heavenly phallus; as the worship of the bull connected the veneration for the human generator with that for the universal father.

Hermae, Termini, Pillars And “Groves”

One of the primeval gods of antiquity was Hermes, the Syro-Egyptian Thoth, and the Roman Mercury. Kircher identifies him also with the god Terminus. This is doubtless true, as Hermes was a god of boundaries, and appears, as Dulaure has well shown, to have presided over the national frontiers. The meaning of the word Thoth, erecting, associates it with this fact. The peculiar primitive form of Mercury, or Hermes, was “a large stone, frequently square, and without either hands or feet. Sometimes the triangular shape was preferred, sometimes an upright pillar, and sometimes a heap of rude stones.”⁵⁴ The pillars were called by the Greeks Hermae, and the heaps were known as Hermean heaps--the latter being accumulated “by the custom of each passenger throwing a stone to the daily increasing mass, in honor of the god. Sometimes the pillar was represented with the attributes of Priapus.”⁵⁵

The identification of Hermes or Mercury with Priapus is confirmed by the offices which the latter deity fulfilled. One of the most important was that of protector of gardens and orchards, and probably this was the original office performed by Hermes in his character of a “god of the country.”⁵⁶ Figures set up as charms to protect the produce of the ground would, in course of time, be used not only for this purpose, but also to mark the boundaries of the land protected, and these offices being divided, two deities would finally be formed out of one. The Greek Hermes was connected also with the Egyptian Khem, and no less, if we may judge from the symbols used in his worship, with the Hebrew Eloah. This, in the history of the Hebrew patriarchs, we are told that when Jacob entered into a covenant with his father-in-law Laban, a pillar was set up, and a heap of stones made,⁵⁷ and Laban said to Jacob, “Behold this heap and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee; this heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shall not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me for harm.” We have here the Hermae and Hermean heap, used by the Greeks as landmarks, and placed by them on the public roads.

In the Linga of India we have another instance of the use of the pillar-symbol. The form of this symbol is sufficiently expressive of the idea which it embodies--an idea which is more explicitly shown when the Linga and the Yoni are, as is usually the case among the worshippers of the Hindu Siva, combined to form the Lingam. The stone figure is not, however, itself a god, but only representative of a spirit⁵⁸ who is thought to be able to satisfy the yearning for children so characteristic of many primitive peoples this probably having been its original object, and the source of its use as an amulet for the protection of children against the influence of the evil eye. In course of time, however, when other property came to be coveted equally with offspring, the power to give this property would naturally be referred to the primitive phallic spirit, and hence he became, not merely the protector, as we have seen, of the produce of the fields and the guardian of boundaries, but also the god of wealth and traffic, and even the patron of thieves, as was the case with the Mercury of the Romans.

The Hebrew patriarchs desired large flocks as well as numerous descendants, and hence the symbolical pillar was peculiarly fitted for their religious rites. It is related even of Abraham,

⁵⁴ Faber's Pagan Idolatry.

⁵⁵ See Dulaure, *op. cit.*, vol. i., as to the primeval Hermes.

⁵⁶ Smith's Dictionary of Mythology. Art. "Hermes."

⁵⁷ Genesis xxxi. 45 to 53. Jacob called the heap or cairn of stones Galeed, a circle, and the statue Mizpeh, or a pillar.

⁵⁸ Linga means a "sign" or "token." The truth of the statement in the text would seem to follow, moreover, from the fact, that the figure is sacred only after it has undergone certain ceremonies at the hands of a priest.

the traditional founder of the Hebrew people, that he “planted a grove (eshel).⁵⁹ in Beersheba, and called there on the name of Jehovah, the everlasting Elohim.”⁶⁰ From the phallic character of the “grove” (ashera,) said to have been in the House of Jehovah, and from the evident connection between the two words, we must suppose that the eshel of Abraham also had a phallic reference.⁶¹ Most probably the so-called “grove “ of the earlier patriarch, though it may have been of wood, and the stone “bethel” of Jacob, had the same form, and were simply the betylus,⁶² the primitive symbol of deity among all Semitic and many Hamitic peoples.

The participation of the Hebrew patriarchs in the rites connected with the “pillar-worship” of the ancient world, renders it extremely probable that they were not strangers to the later planetary worship. Many of the old phallic symbols were associated with the new superstition; and Abraham, being a Chaldean, it is natural to suppose that he was one of its adherents. Tradition, indeed, affirms that Abraham was a great astronomer, and, at one time at least, a worshipper of the heavenly bodies--and that he and the other patriarchs continued to be affected by this superstition is shown by various incidents related in the Pentateuch. Thus, in the description given of the sacrificial covenant between Abraham and Jehovah, it is said that, after Abraham had divided the sacrificial animals, a deep sleep fell upon him as the sun was going down, and Jehovah spoke with him. “Then, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.” The happening of this event at the moment of the sun’s setting reminds us of the Sabaeen custom of praying to the setting sun, still practiced, according to Palgrave, among the nomads of Central Arabia.

⁵⁹ Said also to mean a tamarisk tree. It is asserted to have been worshipped in subsequent times.

⁶⁰ Genesis xxi. 33.

⁶¹ Even if the statement of this event be an interpolation, the argument in the text is not affected. The statement sufficiently shows what was the form of worship traditionally assigned to Abraham.

⁶² “The deity Uranus devised Baetylia, stones having souls”--lithous empsuchous).

The Great Religious Movement Of Archaic Time

That some great religious movement, ascribed by tradition to Abraham, did take place among the Semites at an early date is undoubted. What the object of this movement was it is difficult to decide.⁶³ It should be remembered that the Chaldeans worshipped a plurality of gods, supposed to have been symbolized by the seven planets. Among these deities the sun-god held a comparatively inferior position, the moon-god, coming before him in the second triad.⁶⁴ It was at Ur, the special seat of the worship of the moon-god,⁶⁵ that Abraham is said to have lived before he quitted it for Haran; and this fact, considered in the light of the traditions relating to the great patriarch, may, perhaps, justify us in inferring that the reformation he endeavored to introduce was the substitution of a simple sun-worship for the planetary cult of the Chaldeans, in which the worship of the moon must to him have appeared to occupy a prominent place. The new faith was, indeed, a return to the old phallic idea of a god of personal generation, worshipped through the symbolical betylus, but associated also with the adoration of the sun as the especial representative of the deity. That Abraham had higher notions of the relation of man to the divine being than his forerunners is very probable, but his sojourn in Haran proves that there was nothing fundamentally different between his religious faith and that of his Syrian neighbors. I am inclined, indeed, to believe that to the traditional Abraham must be ascribed the establishment of sun-worship throughout Phoenicia and Lower Egypt, in connection with the symbols of an earlier and more simple phallic deity. Tradition, in fact, declares that he taught the Egyptians astronomy;⁶⁶ and we shall see that the religion of the Phoenicians, as, indeed, that of the Hebrews themselves, was the worship of Saturn, the erect pillar-god, who, under different names, appears to have been at the head of the pantheons of most of the peoples of antiquity. The reference in Hebrew history to the teraphim of Jacob's family recalls the fact that the name assigned to Abraham's father was Terah, a "maker of images." The teraphim were, doubtless, the same as the seraphim, which were serpent-images,⁶⁷ and the household charms, or idols, of the Semitic worshippers of the sun-god, to whom the serpent was sacred.

Little is known of the religious habits of the Hebrews during their abode in Egypt. Probably they scarcely differed from those of the Egyptians themselves; and, even with the religion of Moses, so-called, which we may presume to have been a reformed faith, there are many points of contact with the earlier cult. The use of the ark of Osiris and Isis shows the influence of Egyptian ideas; and the introduction of the new name for God, Jahve, is evidence of contact with late Phoenician thought.⁶⁸ The ark was, doubtless, used to symbolize

⁶³ May it not have been the "Religious War" which is recorded as having taken place in the different countries of the archaic period, from India to the remoter West?--Ed.

⁶⁴ Rawlinson's *Five Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i., p. 617; ii., p. 247.

⁶⁵ The later Hebrews affected the Persian religion, in which the Sun was the emblem of worship. Abraham evidently had a like preference, being a reputed iconoclast. The lunar religionists employed images in their worship.--Ed.

⁶⁶ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book i., chap. viii., § 2.

⁶⁷ The serpent-symbol of the exodus [Numbers xxi.] is called a "seraph."

⁶⁸ Moses is set forth as the son-in-law of Jethro or Hobab, the Kenite, a priest; and probably became his disciple. At Horeb he learned, by a sacred vision, or initiation, the sacred name. As the Kenites were scribes or hierophants (I Chronicles ii. 55), it is very probable that they had the knowledge of this name, in common with the Phoenicians, Chaldeans, and the sacerdotal orders of other Asiatic nations.--Ed.

nature,⁶⁹ as distinguished from the serpent- and pillar-symbols which had relation more particularly to man. The latter, however, were by far the most important, as they were most intimately connected with the worship of the national deity, who was the divine father, as Abraham was the human progenitor, of the Hebrew people. That this deity, notwithstanding his change of name, retained his character of a sun-god, is shown by the fact that he is repeatedly said to have appeared to Moses under the figure of a flame. The pillar of fire which guided the Hebrews by night in the wilderness, the appearance of the cloudy pillar at the door of the tabernacle, and probably of a flame over the mercy-seat to betoken the presence of Jehovah, and the perpetual fire on the altar, all point to the same conclusion. The notion entertained by Ewald, that the idea connected with the Hebrew Jahve was that of a “Deliverer” or “Healer” (Saviour),⁷⁰ is quite consistent with the fact I have stated. Not only was the primeval Phoenician deity, El, or Cronus, the preserver of the world, for the benefit of which he offered a mystical sacrifice,⁷¹ but “Saviour” was a common title of the sun-gods of antiquity.

⁶⁹ The ark was the depositum of divine or generative power for the preservation of the human race. The dove always accompanies it.

⁷⁰ The History of Israel (English translation), vol. i., p. 532.

⁷¹ See Sanchoniathon (Cory, op.cit.)

The Hebrew Identified With Ethnic Religions

There is one remarkable incident which is said to have happened during the wanderings of the Hebrews in the Sinaitic wilderness, which appears to throw much light on the character of the Mosaic cult, and to connect it with other religions. I refer to the use of the brazen serpent as a symbol for the healing of the people.⁷² The worship of the golden calf may, perhaps, be described as an idolatrous act, in imitation of the rites of Egyptian Osiris-worship, although probably suggested by the use of the ark. The other case, however, is far different; and it is worth while repeating the exact words in which the use of the serpent-symbol is described. When the people were bitten by the “fiery” serpents,⁷³ Moses prayed for them, and we read that, thereupon, “Jehovah said unto Moses, make thee a fiery serpent [literally, a seraph], and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made the serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass that, if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived.”⁷⁴ It would seem, from this account, that the Hebrew seraph was, as before suggested, in the form of a serpent; but what was the especial significance of this healing figure?⁷⁵

At an earlier stage of our inquiry, I referred to the fact of the serpent being, indirectly, through its attribute of wisdom, a phallic symbol, but also directly an emblem of life, and to the peculiar position it held in nearly all the religions of antiquity. In later Egyptian mythology, the contest between Osiris and the Evil Being, and afterwards that between Horus and Typhon, occupy an important place. Typhon, the adversary of Horus, was figured under the symbol of a serpent, called Aphophis, or the Giant,⁷⁶ and it cannot be doubted that he was only a later form of the god Seth. Professor Reuvens refers to an invocation of Typhon-Seth;⁷⁷ and Bunsen quotes the statement of Epiphanius that “the Egyptians celebrate the festivals of Typhon under the form of an ass, which they call Seth.”⁷⁸ Whatever may be the explanation of the fact, it is undoubted that, notwithstanding the hatred with which he afterwards regarded, this god Seth, or Set, was at one time highly venerated in Egypt. Bunsen says that, up to the thirteenth century before Christ, Set “was a great god universally adored throughout Egypt, who confers on the sovereigns of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties the symbols of life and power. The most glorious monarch of the latter dynasty, Sethos, derives his name from this deity.” He adds: “But subsequently, in the course of the twentieth dynasty, he is suddenly treated as an evil demon, inasmuch that his effigies and name are obliterated on all the monuments and inscriptions that could be reached.” Moreover, according to this distinguished writer, Seth “appears gradually among the Semites as the background of their religious consciousness” and not merely was he “the primitive God of

⁷² “But for the foolish devices of their wickedness, wherewith being deceived, they worshipped serpents void of reason, and vile beasts, thou didst send a multitude of irrational beasts upon them for vengeance, that they might know that wherewithal a man sinneth, by the same also shall he be condemned.”--Wisdom of Solomon, xi. 16.

⁷³ Much discussion has taken place as to the nature of these animals. For an explanation of the epithet “fiery,” see Sanchoniathon, “Of the Serpent” (Cory, op. cit.).

⁷⁴ Numbers xxi. 8, 9.

⁷⁵ “Having come to the interior of the desert, the people were exposed to the attacks of Burning Serpents, as the original text reads, the bite of which caused great pain; and not a few of the sufferers died, which again produced an immense excitement in the camp. Moses was ordered to resort to the means of the Phoenician Esculapius, whose symbol, the brass serpent, was erected in the camp, which produced the desired effect.”--History of the Israelitish Nation, by Isaac M. Wise, p. 102.

⁷⁶ Wilkinson’s Ancient Egyptians, vol. iv., p. 435.

⁷⁷ Ditto, P. 434.

⁷⁸ Egypt, vol. iii., p. 426.

Northern Egypt and Palestine,” but his genealogy as “the Seth of Genesis, the father of Enoch (the man), must be considered as originally running parallel with that derived from the Elohim, Adam’s father.”⁷⁹ That Seth had some special connection with the Hebrews is proved, among other things, by the peculiar position occupied in their religious system by the ass--the firstborn of which alone of all animals was allowed to be redeemed⁸⁰--and the red heifer--whose ashes were to be reserved as a “water of separation” for purification from sin.⁸¹ Both of these animals were in Egypt sacred to Seth (Typhon), the ass being his symbol, and red oxen being at one time sacrificed to him, although at a later date objects of a red color were disliked, owing to their association with the dreaded Typhon.⁸² That we have a reference to this deity in the name of the Hebrew lawgiver is very probable. No satisfactory derivation of this name, Moses, Mosheh (Heb.), has yet been given.⁸³ Its original form was probably Am-a-ses or Am-ses, which in course of time would become to the Hebrews Om-ses or Mo-ses, meaning only the (god) Ses, i.e., Set or Seth.⁸⁴ On this hypothesis, there may have been preserved in the first book of Moses (so-called) some of the traditional wisdom said to have been contained in the sacred books of the Egyptian Thoth, and of the records engraved on the pillars of Seth. It is somewhat remarkable that, according to a statement of Diodorus, when Antiochus Epiphanes entered the temple at Jerusalem, he found in the Holy of Holies a stone figure of Moses, represented as a man with a long beard, mounted on an ass, and having a book in his hand.⁸⁵ The Egyptian mythus of Typhon actually said that Seth fled from Egypt riding on a gray ass.⁸⁶ It is strange, to say the least, that Moses should not have been allowed to enter the promised land, and that he should be so seldom referred to by later writers until long after the reign of David,⁸⁷ and above all, that the name given to his successor was Joshua, i.e., Saviour. It is worthy of notice that Nun, the name of the father of Joshua, is the Semitic word for fish, the phallic character of the fish in Chaldean mythology being undoubted. Nin, the planet Saturn, was the fish-god of Berosus, and, as I think can be shown, he is really the same as the Assyrian national deity Asshur, whose name and office bear a curious resemblance to those of the Hebrew leader, Joshua.

But what was the character of the primitive Semitic deity? Bunsen seems to think that Plutarch, in one passage, alludes to the identity of Typhon (Seth) and Osiris.⁸⁸ This is a remarkable idea, and yet curiously enough Sir Gardner Wilkinson says that Typhon-Seth may have been derived from the pigmy Pthah-Sokari-Osiris,⁸⁹ who was clearly only another form of Osiris himself. However this may be, the phallic origin of Seth can be shown from other data. Thus, it appears that the word Set means, in Hebrew, as well as in Egyptian, pillar, and in a general sense, the erect, elevated, high.⁹⁰ Moreover, in a passage of the Egyptian Book of

⁷⁹ God in History, vol. i., pp. 233-4.

⁸⁰ Exodus xxxiv. 22.

⁸¹ Numbers xix. 1-10.

⁸² As to the God Seth, see Pleyte, *La Religion des Pre-Israelites* (1862).

⁸³ The Sanscrit, Maha vuse, a great sage, seems to be a plausible etymology. Musa as it is pronounced, is the Arabic name; and it may have an affinity with the Muses of Thessaly and the ancient sage Musaeus.--Ed.

⁸⁴ According to Pleyte, the Cabalists thought that the soul of Seth had passed into Moses (op. cit., p. 124). It is strange that the name of the Egyptian princess who is said to have brought up Moses is given by Josephus as Thermuthis, this being the name of the sacred asp of Egypt (see supra). We appear, also, to have a reference to the serpent in the name Levi, one of the sons of Jacob, from whom the descent of Moses was traced.

⁸⁵ Fragments, Book xxxiv. See, also, in connection with this subject, King’s *Gnostics*, p. 91.

⁸⁶ Bunsen’s *God in History*, vol. i., p. 234.

⁸⁷ Ewald notices this fact. See op. cit., p. 454. See, also, Inman’s *Ancient Faiths Embodied in Ancient Names*, vol. ii., p. 338.

⁸⁸ *Egypt*, vol. iii., p. 433.

⁸⁹ Op. cit., vol. iv., p. 434.

⁹⁰ Bunsen’s *Egypt*, vol. iv., p. 208.

the Dead, Set is called Tet, a fact which, according to Bunsen, intimates that Thoth inherited many of the attributes of Set.⁹¹ They were, however, in reality the same deities. Set, by change of the initial letter, becomes Tet, one of the names of Thoth, or rather the same name; as Set agrees with Seth.⁹² We have in this an explanation of the statement that Tet, the Phoenician Taaut, was the snake-god Esmun-Esculapius;⁹³ the serpent being the symbol of Tet, as we have seen it to have been that of Seth also. In this we have a means of identifying the Semitic deity Seth, with the Saturn and related deities of other peoples. Ewald says that “the common name for God, Eloah, among the Hebrews, as among all the Semites, goes back into the earliest times.”⁹⁴ Bryant goes further, and declares that El was originally the name of the supreme deity among all the nations of the East.⁹⁵ This idea is confirmed, so far as Chaldea is concerned, by later researches, which show that Il or El was at the head of the Babylonian pantheon. With this deity must be identified the Il or Ilus of the Phoenicians, who was the same as Cronus, who again was none other than the primeval Saturn, whose worship appears to have been at one period almost universal among European and Asiatic peoples. Saturn and El were thus the same deity, the latter, like the Semitic Seth, being, as is well known, symbolized by the serpent.⁹⁶ A direct point of contact between Seth and Saturn is found in the Hebrew idol Kiyun, mentioned by Amos, the planet Saturn being still called Kivan by Eastern peoples. This idol was represented in the form of a pillar, the primeval symbol of deity, which was common undoubtedly to all the gods here mentioned.⁹⁷ These symbolical pillars were called Betyli, or Betulia. Sometimes also the column was called Abaddir, which, strangely enough, Bryant identifies with the serpent-god.⁹⁸ There can be no doubt that both the pillar and the serpent were associated with many of the Sun-Gods of antiquity.

Notwithstanding what has been said, it is undoubtedly true that all these deities, including the Semitic Seth, became at an early date recognized as Sun-Gods, although in so doing they lost nothing of their primitive character. What this was is sufficiently shown by the significant names and titles they bore. Thus, as we have seen, Set (Seth) itself meant the erect, elevated, high, and his name on the Egyptian monuments was nearly always accompanied by the representation of a stone.⁹⁹ Kiyun, or Kivan, the name of the deity said by Amos,¹⁰⁰ to have been worshipped in the wilderness by the Hebrews, signifies God of the Pillar. The idea embodied in this title is shown by the name Baal Tamar, which means “Baal as a Pillar,” or “Phallus,” consequently “the fructifying God.”¹⁰¹ The title “erect,” when given to a deity, seems always to imply a phallic notion, and hence we have the explanation of the name S. mou, used frequently in the “Book of the Dead,” in relation to Thoth, or to Set. There is doubtless a reference of the same kind in the Phoenician myth that “Melekh taught men the special art of erecting solid walls and buildings;” although Bunsen finds in this myth “the symbolical mode of expressing the value of the use of fire in building houses.”¹⁰² That these

⁹¹ Ditto, vol. iii., p. 427.

⁹² As Tet becomes Thoth, so Mo-ses becomes in the Hebrew Mo-shesh.

⁹³ The Brazen Serpent made by Moses, it will be remembered, was the symbol of this divinity; and it was worshipped till the time of King Hezekiah, by whom it was broken in pieces.--Ed.

⁹⁴ Op. cit., p. 319.

⁹⁵ Op. cit., vol. vi., p. 328.

⁹⁶ As to the use of this symbol generally, see Pleyte, op. cit., pp. 109, 157.

⁹⁷ On these points, see M. Raoul-Rochette's memoir on the Assyrian and Phoenician Hercules, in the *Memoires de l'Institut National de France (Academie des Inscriptions)*, tom. xvii., p. 47 et seq.

⁹⁸ Op. cit., vol. i., p. 60; vol. ii., p. 201.

⁹⁹ Pleyte, op. cit., p. 172.

¹⁰⁰ Chap. v. 26.

¹⁰¹ Bunsen's *Egypt*, vol. iv., p. 249.

¹⁰² *Egypt*, p. 217.

myths embody a phallic notion may be confirmed by reference to the Phoenician Kabiri. According to Bunsen, “the Kabiri and the divinities identified with him are explained by the Greeks and Romans as ‘the strong,’ ‘the great;’ while in the book of job, kabbir, the strong, is used as an epithet of God. Again, the father of the Kabiri, is “the Just, or in a more original sense, the Upright,” and this deity, with his sons, correspond to the Phoenician Pataikoi, and to Ptalh, their father. Ptah, however, appears to be derived from a root, xxx, which signifies in Hebrew, “to open,” and Sydyk himself, therefore, may, says Bunsen, be described as “the opener” of the Cosmic Egg.¹⁰³ The phallic meaning of this title is evident from its application to Esmun-Esculapius (the son of Sydyk) who, as the Snake-God, was identical with Tet, the Egyptian Thoth-Hermes.

The peculiar titles given to these pillar-deities, and their association with the sun, led to their original phallic character being somewhat overlooked, and, instead of being the Father-Gods of human kind, they became Powerful Gods, Lords of Heaven. This was not the special attribute taken by other sun-gods. I have already stated that Hermes, and his related deities, were “gods of the country,” personifying the idea of general natural fecundity. Among the chief gods of this description were the Phoenician Sebazius, the Greek Bacchus-Dionysos, the Roman Priapus, and the Egyptian Khem. All these deities agree also in being sun-gods, and as such they were symbolized by animals which were noted either for their fecundity or for their salaciousness. The chief animals thus chosen were the bull and the goat (with which the ram was afterward confounded¹⁰⁴), and this doubtless because they were already sacred. The sun appears to have been preceded by the moon, as an object of worship, but the Moon-God was probably only representative of the primeval Saturn,¹⁰⁵ who finally became the Sun-God El or Il of the Syrians and the Semites, and the Ra of the Babylonians. The latter was also the title of the Sun-God of Egypt, who was symbolized by the obelisk, and who, although his name was added to that of other Egyptian Gods, appears to have been the tutelary deity of the stranger-kings of the 18th dynasty, whom Pleyte,¹⁰⁶ however, declares to have been Set (Sutech).¹⁰⁷ We are reminded hereof the opposition of Seth and Osiris, which I have already explained as arising, from the fact that these deities originally represented two different ideas--human fecundity and the fruitfulness of nature. When, however, both of these principles became associated with the solar body, they were expressed by the same symbols, and the distinction between them was in great measure lost sight of. A certain difference was, nevertheless, still observable in the attributes of the deities, depending on the peculiar properties and associations of their solar representatives. Thus the powerful deity of Phoenicia was naturally associated with the strong, scorching summer-sun, whose heat was the most prominent attribute. In countries such as Egypt, where the sun, acting on the moist soil left by inundations, caused the earth to spring into renewed life, the mild but energetic early sun was the chief deity.

¹⁰³ See ditto, pp. 226-99.

¹⁰⁴ It has been suggested that the ram was introduced as an astrological symbol. By the precession of the equinoxes, the sign Aries became the emblem of the Sun, as the genitor of the new year, and so a proper effigy of the Deity. The appearance of the lamb or ram would, of course, create confusion and misapprehension, as well as controversy among those who did not understand astronomy.--Ed.

¹⁰⁵ Rawlinson's History of Herodotus, Book i.; appendix, essay x.

¹⁰⁶ Ditto, ii.; appendix, viii. 23,

¹⁰⁷ Op. cit., p. 89 et seq.

The Sun-Gods Of Antiquity

When considering the sacred bull of antiquity, the symbol of the fecundating force in nature, I referred to Osiris the national sun-god of the Egyptians, as distinguished from the Semitic Seth (Set), who was identified with the detested Shepherd race. The association of Osiris with Khem shows his phallic character,¹⁰⁸ and, in fact, Plutarch asserts that he was everywhere represented with the phallus exposed.¹⁰⁹ The phallic idea enters, moreover, into the character of all the chief Egyptian deities. Bunsen says: "The mythological system obviously proceeded from 'the concealed god,' Ammon, to the creating god. The latter appears first of all as the generative power of nature in the phallic god Khem, who is afterwards merged in Ammon-ra. Then sprung up the idea of the creative power in Kneph. He forms the divine limbs of Osiris (the primeval Soul) in contradiction to Ptah, who, as the strictly demiurgic principle, forms the visible world. Neith is the creative principle, as nature represented under a feminine form. Finally, her son Ra, Helios, appears as the last of the series, in the character of father and nourisher of terrestrial things. It is he whom an ancient monument represents as the demiurgic principle, creating the mundane egg."¹¹⁰ The name of Ammon has led to the notion that he was the embodiment of the idea of wisdom. He certainly was distinguished by having the human form, but his hieroglyphical symbol of the obelisk, and his connection with Khem, show his true nature. He undoubtedly represented the primitive idea of a generative god, probably at a time when this notion of fecundity had not yet been extended to nature as distinguished from man, and thus he would form a point of contact between the later Egyptian sun-gods and the pillar-gods of the Semites and Phoenicians.¹¹¹ To the Egyptians, as to these other peoples, the sun became the great source of deity. His fecundating warmth or his fiery destroying heat were, however, not the only attributes deified. These were the most important, but the Egyptians, especially, made gods out of many of the solar characters;¹¹² although the association of the idea of "intellect" with Ammon-ra must have been of late date, if the original nature of Ammon be what I have suggested.

As man, however, began to read nature aright, and as his moral and intellectual faculties were developed, it was necessary that the solar deities themselves should become invested with co-relative attributes, or that other gods should be formed to embody them. The perception of light, as distinct from heat, was a fertile source of such attributes. In the Chaldean mythology, Vul, the son of Anu, was the god of the air; but his power had relation to the purely atmospheric phenomena rather than to light.¹¹³ The only reference to light I find in the titles of the early deities is in the character ascribed to Va-Iua, the later Bar or Nin-ip, who is said to irradiate the nations like the sun, the light of the gods.¹¹⁴ But this deity was apparently the distant planet Saturn, although it may have been originally the moon, and I would refer to the Aryan mind the perception of light as a divine attribute.¹¹⁵ Thus the Hindu Dyaus (the Greek

¹⁰⁸ Wilkinson, *op. cit.*, vol. iv., pp. 342, 260.

¹⁰⁹ Bunsen's *Egypt*, vol. i., p. 423.

¹¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 388.

¹¹¹ In the temple of Hercules at Tyre were two symbolical steles, one a pillar, and the other an obelisk. See Raoul-Rochette, *op. cit.*, p. 51, where is a reference to a curious tradition preserved by Josephus, connecting Moses with the erection of columns at Heliopolis.

¹¹² Wilkinson, *op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 299.

¹¹³ Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, Book i.; appendix, essay x.

¹¹⁴ Rawlinson, *op. cit.*, Book i.; appendix, essay x.

¹¹⁵ Mau, the name of the Egyptian God of Truth, certainly signifies "light" but probably only in a figurative sense.

Zeus) is the shining deity--the god of the bright sky. As such, the sun-gods now also become the gods of intellectual wisdom, an attribute which likewise appears to have originated with the Aryan peoples, amongst whom the Brahmans were the possessors of the highest wisdom, as children of the sun, and whose Apollo and Athene were noble embodiments of this attribute. The Chaldean gods Hea and Nebo were undoubtedly symbolized by the wedge or arrow-head, which had especial reference to learning. In reality, however, this symbol merely shows that they were the patrons of letters or writing, and not of "wisdom," in its purely intellectual aspect. If the form of the Assyrian alphabetical character was of phallic origin,¹¹⁶ we have here the source of the idea of a connection between physical and mental knowledge embodied in the legend of the "fall." In the Persian Ahuro-Mazdao (the Wise Spirit) we have the purest representation of intellectual wisdom. The book of Zoroaster, the Avesta, is literally the "Word"--the word or wisdom which was revealed in creation, and embodied in the divine Mithra, who was himself the luminous sun-god.

¹¹⁶ The importance ascribed to the mechanical arts may, perhaps, lead us to look for the formal origin of this character in the "wedge," which was the chief mechanical power the ancients possessed.

Lesley's "Arkite Symbolism"

I have already referred to the similarity between the symbols of the sun-gods of antiquity and the natural objects introduced into the Mosaic myth of the fall; and it is necessary now to consider shortly what influence the phallic principle there embodied had over other portions of Hebraic theology. The inquiries of Dr. Faber have thrown great light on this question, although the explanation given by him of the myth of Osiris and of the kindred myths of antiquity is by no means the correct one. Finding an universal prevalence of phallic ideas and symbolism, Dr. Faber refers it to the degradation of a primitive revelation of the Great Father of the Universe. The truth thus taught was lost sight of, and was replaced by the dual notion of a great father and a great mother "the transmigrating Noah and the mundane Ark" of the universal deluge. Noah was, however, only a re-appearance of Adam, and the Ark floating on the waters of the deluge was an analogue of the earth swimming in the ocean of space.¹¹⁷ There is undoubtedly a parallelism between the Adam and Noah of the Hebrew legends, as there is between the analogous personages of the other phases of these legends; yet it is evident that, if the deluge never happened, a totally different origin from the one supposed by Dr. Faber must be assigned to the great phallic myth of antiquity. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, to any explanation (other than the phallic one) of the origin of this myth, to establish the truth of the Noachic deluge.¹¹⁸ Accordingly, a late American writer has formed an elaborate system of "Arkite Symbolism," founded on the supposed influence of the great deluge over the minds of the posterity of those who survived its horrors. Mr. Lesley sees in this catastrophe the explanation of "phallism," which, "converting all the older Arkite symbols into illustrations of its own philosophical conceptions of the mystery of generation, gave to the various parts and members of the human body those names which constitute the special vocabulary of obscenity of the present day."¹¹⁹

But the priority of these symbols or conceptions is the question at issue. Did the development of "arkism" precede or follow the superstitions referred to by Mr. Lesley as Ophism, Mithraism, and Phallism, all of which I have shown to embody analogous ideas? If the question of priority is to be determined by reference to the written tradition which furnishes the real ground of belief in a great deluge, it must clearly be given to the phallic superstition; for I have shown, conclusively as I think, that almost the first event in the life of man there narrated is purely phallic in its symbolism. Nor is the account of the fall the only portion of the Mosaic history of primitive man which belongs to this category. The Garden of Eden, with its tree of life, and the river which divided into four streams, although it may have had a secondary reference to the traditional place of Semitic origin to which the Hebrews looked back with regretful longing, has undoubtedly a recondite phallic meaning. It must be so if the explanation I have given of the myth of the fall be correct, since the two are intimately connected, and the garden¹²⁰ is essential to the succeeding catastrophe.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Faber, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 20.

¹¹⁸ Bryant, in his *Ancient Mythology*, has brought together a great mass of materials bearing on this question. The facts, however, are capable of quite a different interpretation from that which he has given to them.

¹¹⁹ *Man's Origin and Destiny*, p. 339.

¹²⁰ Compare this with the figurative description of the garden of delights of "The Song of Songs."

¹²¹ The Hebrew term GN, or garden, appears to be closely related to the Greek word *gune*, or woman. Indeed, in the ancient languages the former is used as a metaphor for the latter. See Inman's *Ancient Faiths Embodied in Ancient Names*, vol. i., p. 52; vol. ii., p. 553.

The priority of the phallic superstition over “arkism,” is proved, moreover, by the undoubted fact that, even in the traditions of the race to whom we are indebted for the precise details of the incidents accompanying the deluge, the phallic deities of the Hamitico-Semites are genealogically placed long before the occurrence of this event. The Semitic deity Seth is, according to one table, the semi-divine first ancestor of the Semites. Bunsen has shown clearly, also, that several of the antediluvian descendants of the Semitic Adam were among the Phoenician deities. Thus, the Carthaginians had a god Yubal, Jubal, who would appear to have been the sun-god AEsculapius, called “the fairest of the gods;” and so also “we read in a Phoenician inscription of Baal, i.e., beauty of Baal, which Movers ingeniously interprets AEsculapius-Asmun-Jubal.” Here, then, adds Bunsen, “is another old Semitic name attached to a descendant of Lamekh, together with Adah, Zillah, and Naamah.”¹²² Hadah, the wife of Lamekh as well as of Esau, the Phoenician Usov, is identified with the goddess worshipped at BabyIon as Hera (Juno), and, notwithstanding Sir Gardner Wilkinson’s dictum to the contrary, her names, Hera, Hadah, point to the connection with the Egyptian Her Her, or Hathor, who was the daughter of Seb and Netpe, as Hera was the daughter of Cronus and Rhea. The name of the god Kiyun, or Kivan, who was worshipped by the Hebrews, and who in Syria was said to devour children, is connected with the root kun, to erect, and therefore doubtless with the antediluvian Kain or Kevan. Kon, derived from the same root, was, according to Bunsen, a Phoenician designation of Saturn.¹²³ Even the great Carthaginian god Melekh, who was also held in universal honor throughout all Phoenicia, appears, although Bunsen does not thus identify him, to be no other than Lamekh, the father of Noah.¹²⁴ Ewald, indeed, says that both Lamekh and Enoch were gods or demi-gods, and that Methuselah was a sort of Mars, while Mahahal-el was a god of light, and Jareda a god of the lowland or of the water.¹²⁵

The priority of the phallic superstition over Arkism, or rather the existence of that superstition before the formation of the deluge-legend, is proved, moreover, by the agreement of this legend with the myth of Osiris and Isis in its primitive form, while Typhon (Seth) was honored by the Egyptians as a great god.¹²⁶ Bunsen fixes the origin of this myth in its amended form so late as the thirteenth or fourteenth century B.C.¹²⁷ In the face of this agreement we can only suppose the myth and the deluge-legend to have had the same basis--a basis which, from the very circumstances of the case, must be purely “phallic.” This explanation is the only one which is consistent with a peculiarity in the Hebrew legend, which is an insurmountable objection to its reception as the expression of a literal fact. We are told by the Mosaic narrative that Jehovah directed Noah to take with him into the Ark “of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort.” Now, according to the ordinary acceptance of the legend, this passage expresses a simple absurdity, even on the hypothesis of a partial deluge. If, however, we read the narrative in a phallic sense, and by the Ark understand the sacred argha of Hindu mythology, the Yoni of Parvati, which, like the moon in Zoroastrian teaching, carries in itself the germs of all things, we see the full propriety of what otherwise is incomprehensible. As an arche, the Elohim created the heavens and the earth, so in the Ark were the seeds of all things preserved that they might again cover the earth. Taken in this sense, we see the reason

¹²² Egypt, vol. iv., p. 257.

¹²³ Egypt, p. 209.

¹²⁴ This notion furnishes an easy explanation, founded on the human sacrifices to the Phoenician deity, of the curious verse in Genesis as to the avenging of Lamekh. Lamekh here referred to was not father of Noah. Compare Genesis iv. 18-24, with v. 25-29.

¹²⁵ Op. cit., vol. i., pp. 266-7.

¹²⁶ For explanation of this myth, see Bunsen’s Egypt, vol. iii., p. 437.

¹²⁷ Ditto, p. 413.

of the curious analogy which exists in various points between the Hebrew legends of the creation and of the deluge; this analogy being one of the grounds on which the hypothesis of the Great Father as the central idea of all mythologies has been based. Thus, the primeval ship, the navigation of which is ascribed to the mythological being, is not the ark of Noah or Osiris, or the vessel of the Phoenician Kabiri. It was the moon, the ship of the sun, in which his seed is supposed to be hidden until it bursts forth in new life and power. The fact that the moon was in early mythologies a male deity almost necessitates, however, that there should have been another origin for the sacred vessel of Osiris. This we have in the Hastoreth-karnaim, the cow-goddess, whose horns represent the lunar ark, and who, without doubt, was a more primitive deity than the moon-goddess herself.¹²⁸ The most primitive type of all, however, is that of the argha or yoni of the Indian Iswara, which, from its name, was supposed to have been turned into a dove.¹²⁹ Thus, in Noah and the Ark, as in Osiris and the Moon, we see simply the combination of the male and female elements, as they are still represented in the Hindu lingam. The introduction of the dove into the myth is a curious confirmation of this view. For, this bird, which, as “the emblem of love and fruitfulness,” was “consecrated to Venus under all her different names at Babylon, in Syria, Palestine, and Greece.¹³⁰ which was the national banner-sign of the Assyrians, as of the earlier Scythic empire, whose founders, according to Hindu tradition, took the name of Ionim or Yoniyas, and which attended on Janus, a diluvian “God of opening and shutting,” was simply a type of “the Yoni or Jonah,¹³¹ or navicular feminine principle,” which was said to have assumed the form of a ship and a dove.¹³²

¹²⁸ Want of space prevents me from tracing the developments which the primeval goddess of fecundity underwent; but to the idea embodied in her may be traced nearly all the female deities of antiquity.

¹²⁹ Faber, *op. cit.*, vol. ii., p 246.

¹³⁰ Kenrick's *Phoenicia*, p. 307.

¹³¹ The story of Jonah, the xxx, dove or symbol of femininity, going to Joppa, a seaport where Dag-on the fish-god was worshipped, and having entered a ship is swallowed by a Ceto or great fish, betrays a suspicious relationship to the same cultus. The fish was revered at Joppa as the dove was at Nineveh. Was there an esoteric meaning?--Ed.

¹³² Faber's *op. cit.*, and Bryant's *Ancient Mythology*, ii., pp. 317 et seq.

Phallism In The Modern Religions

In bringing this paper to a close, I would refer shortly to what may be called the modern religions--Brahminism, Buddhism, and Christianity--seeing that these still exist as the faiths of great peoples. As to the first of these, it may be thought that its real character cannot be ascertained from the present condition of Hindu belief. It is said that the religion of the Vedas is very different from that of the Puranas, which have taken their place. It should be remembered, however, that these books profess to reproduce old doctrine, the word "Purana" itself meaning old, and that Puranas are referred to in one of the Upanishads, while the Tantras, which contain the principles of the Sacti Puja, and which are, as yet, almost unknown to Europeans, are considered by the Brahmans to be more ancient than the Puranas themselves.¹³³ The origin of the ideas contained in these books is a difficult question. The germs of both Vishnu-worship and Siva-worship appear to be found in the Vedas,¹³⁴ and are undoubtedly referred to by the Mahabharata.¹³⁵ I am inclined to think with Mr. Fergusson and other late writers that they are only indirectly sprung from the primitive Hinduism. The similarity between Sivaism and the Santal worship of the Great Mountain, pointed out by Mr. Hunter, is very remarkable, and this analogy is strengthened by intermixture in both cases with river-worship.¹³⁶ There is no doubt that the Great Mountain is simply a name for the phallic emblem, which is the chief form under which Siva is represented in the numerous temples at Benares dedicated to his honor.

¹³³ On this question, see the Memoirs of the Anthropological Society of London, vol. ii., p. 265; also "Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus," in the Asiatic Researches, vol. xvii. (1832), 216 et seq.

¹³⁴ This question is fully considered by Dr. Muir, in his Sanskrit Texts, part iv., p. 54 et seq.

¹³⁵ Ditto, pp. 161, 343.

¹³⁶ Rural Bengal, pp. 152, 187 et. seq. This association of the mountain and the river is found also in the Persian Khordah-Avesta. See (5) Abun-Yasht, v. 1-3.

Serpent-Worship A Vishnavic Custom

Considering the position occupied by the serpent as a symbol of life, and, indirectly, of the male power, we should expect to find its worship connected to some extent with that of Siva. Mr. Fergusson, however, declares that it is not so; and, although this statement requires some qualification,¹³⁷ yet it is certain that the serpent is also intimately associated with Vishnu. In explanation of this fact, Mr. Fergusson remarks: "The Vaishnava religion is derived from a group of faiths in which the serpent always played an important part. The eldest branch of the family was the Naga worship, pure and simple; out of that arose Buddhism, . . . and on its decline two faiths--at first very similar to one another--rose from its ashes, the Jaina and the Vaishnava." The serpent is almost always found in Jaina temples as an object of worship, while it appears everywhere in Vaishnava tradition.¹³⁸ But elsewhere Mr. Fergusson tells us that, although Buddhism owed its establishment to Naga tribes, yet its supporters repressed the worship of the serpent, elevating tree-worship in its place.¹³⁹

It is difficult to understand how the Vaishnavas, who are worshippers of the female power,¹⁴⁰ and who hate the lingam, can yet so highly esteem the serpent, which has, indirectly at least, reference to the male principle. Perhaps, however, we may find an explanation in Mr. Fergusson's own remarks as to the character and development of Buddhism. According to him, Buddhism was chiefly influential among Naga tribes, and "was little more than a revival of the coarser superstitions of the aboriginal races,¹⁴¹ purified and refined by the application of Aryan morality, and elevated by doctrines borrowed from the intellectual superiority of the Aryan races."¹⁴² As to its development, the sculptures on the Sanchi Topes show that at about the beginning of the Christian era, although the dagoba, the chakra, or wheel, the tree, and other emblems, were worshipped, the serpent hardly appears; while, at Amravati, three centuries later, this animal had become equal in importance to Buddha himself.¹⁴³ Moreover, there can be no doubt that the lingam was an emblem of Buddha, as was also the lotus, which represents the same idea--the conjunction of the male and female elements, although in a higher sense perfect wisdom.¹⁴⁴ The association of the same ideas is seen in the noted prayer, Om mani padmi hum ("Om, the jewel in the Lotus"), which refers to the birth of Padmipani from the sacred lotus-flower,¹⁴⁵ but also, there can be little doubt, to the phallus and the yoni. We may suppose, therefore, that, whatever the moral doctrine taught by Gautama, he used the old phallic symbols,¹⁴⁶ although, it may be, with a

¹³⁷ See *Tree and Serpent Worship*, p. 70; also Sherring's *Benares*, pp. 75, 89. Here the serpent is evidently symbolical of life. In the *Mahabharata*, Mahadeva is described as having "a girdle of serpents, ear-rings of serpents, a sacrificial cord of serpents, and an outer garment of serpent's skin." (Dr. Muir, *op. cit.*, part iv., p. 160.)

¹³⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

¹³⁹ Ditto, p. 62.

¹⁴⁰ Mr. Sellon, in the *Memoirs of the Anthropological Society of London*, vol. ii., p. 273.

¹⁴¹ It should not be forgotten that the Vedic religion was not that of all the Aryan tribes of India. (See Muir, *op. cit.*, part ii., p. 377, 368-383); and it is by no means improbable that some of them retained a more primitive faith, Buddhism or Rudraism; i.e., Sivaism. See also Baldwin's *Prehistoric Nations*.

¹⁴² *Op. cit.*, p. 62. To come to a proper conclusion on this important point, it is necessary to consider the real position occupied by Gautama in relation to Brahminism. Burnouf says that he differed from his adversaries only in the definition he gives of Salvation (*du salut*). (*Introduction a l'Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*, p. 155.)

¹⁴³ Fergusson, *op. cit.*, pp. 67, 222, 223.

¹⁴⁴ See Guigniaut, *op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 293, 160 note.

¹⁴⁵ Schlaggenweit, *Buddhism in Thibet*, p. 120.

¹⁴⁶ These are figured in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. xviii.

peculiar application. If the opinion expressed by Mr. Fergusson, as to the introduction into India of the Vaishnava faith by an early immigrant race, be correct, it must have existed in the time of Gautama; and, indeed, the Ionism of Western Asia is traditionally connected with India itself at a very early date,¹⁴⁷ although probably the early centre of Ion-ism, the worship of the Dove, or Yoni, was, as Bryant supposes, in Chaldea.¹⁴⁸ We see no trace, however, in Buddhism proper of Sacti Puja, and I would suggest that, instead of abolishing either, Gautama substituted for the separate symbols of the linga and the yoni, the association of the two in the lingam. If this were so, we can well understand how, on the fall of Buddhism, Siva-worship¹⁴⁹ may have retained this compound symbol, with many of the old Naga ideas, although with little actual reference to the serpent itself other than as a symbol of life and power; while, on the other hand, the Vaishnavas may have reverted to the primitive worship of the female principle, retaining a remembrance of the early serpent associations in the use of the sesha, the heavenly Naga with seven heads,¹⁵⁰ figured on the Amravati sculptures. It is possible, however, that there may be another ground of opposition between the followers of Vishnu and Siva. Mr. Fergusson points out that, notwithstanding the peculiarly phallic symbolism of the latter deity, “the worship of Siva is too severe, too stern, for the softer emotions of love, and all his temples are quite free from any allusion to it.” It is far different with the Vaishnavas, whose temples “are full of sexual feelings, generally expressed in the grossest terms.”¹⁵¹

Siva, in fact, is especially a god of intellect, typified by his being three-eyed, and, although terrible as the resistless destroyer, yet the re-creator of all things in perfect wisdom;¹⁵² while Vishnu has relation rather to the lower type of wisdom which was distinctive of the Assyrians among ancient peoples, and which has so curious a connection with the female principle. Hence the shell, or conch, is peculiar to Vishnu, while the linga belongs to Siva.¹⁵³ Gautama combined the simpler feminine phase of religion with the more masculine intellectual type, symbolizing this union by the lingam and other analogous emblems. The followers of Siva have, however, adopted the combined symbol in the place of the linga alone, thus approaching more nearly than the Vaishnavas to the idea of the founder of modern Buddhism. Gautama himself, nevertheless, was most probably only the restorer of an older faith, according to which perfect wisdom was to be found only in the typical combination of the male and female principles in nature. The real explanation of the connection between Buddhism and Sivaism has perhaps, however, yet to be given.¹⁵⁴ The worship of the serpent-god is not unknown, even at the present day, in the very stronghold of Sivaism,¹⁵⁵ reminding us of the early spread of Buddhism among Naga tribes. In the “crescent surmounted by a pinnacle, similar to the pointed end of a spear,” which decorates the roofs of the Tibetan

¹⁴⁷ Higgin's *Anacalypsis*, vol. i., p. 332 et seq. See also p. 342 et seq.

¹⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, vol. iii., p. 1 et seq., 25.

¹⁴⁹ Mr. Hunter points out a connection between Sivaism and Buddhism. *Op. cit.*, p. 194.

¹⁵⁰ See Mr. Fergusson, *op. cit.*, p. 70. The serpent is connected with Vishnuism as a symbol of wisdom rather than of life.

¹⁵¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 71.

¹⁵² Hence Siva, as Sambhu, is the patron deity of the Brahmanic order; and the most intellectual Hindus of the present day are to be found among his followers. (See Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 171. Sherring's *Sacred City of the Hindus*, p. 146 et seq.)

¹⁵³ The bull of Siva has reference to strength and speed rather than to fecundity; while the Rig-Veda refers to Vishnu as the framer of the womb, although elsewhere he is described as the fecundator. (See Muir, *op. cit.*, part iv., pp. 244, 292, also pp. 64, 83.)

¹⁵⁴ This question has been considered by Burnouf, *op. cit.*, p. 547 et seq. But see also Hodgson's *Buddhism in Nepaul*, and Paper in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 18 (1860), p. 395 et seq.

¹⁵⁵ See Sherring, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

monasteries,¹⁵⁶ we, undoubtedly, have a reproduction of the so-called trident of Siva. This instrument is given also to Sani, the Hindu Saturn, who is represented as encompassed by two serpents,¹⁵⁷ and hence we may well suppose the pillar-symbol of this primeval deity to be reproduced in the linga of the Indian phallic god.¹⁵⁸

But the pillar-symbol is not wanting to Buddhism itself. The columns said to have been raised by Asoka have a reference to the inscribed pillars of Seth. The remains of an ancient pillar, supposed to be a Buddhist Lat, is still to be seen at Benares;¹⁵⁹ the word Lat being merely another form of the name Tet, Set, or Sat, given to the Phoenician or Semitic deity. In the central pillar of the so-called Druidical circles, we have, doubtless, a reference to the same primitive superstition, the idea intended to be represented being the combination of the male and female principles.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Schlagenweit, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

¹⁵⁷ Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*, vol. vii., p. 566.

¹⁵⁸ As to the identity of Siva and Saturn, see Guigniaut, *op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 167 note. Kivan, a name of Saturn, is really the same word as Siva.

¹⁵⁹ Sherring, *op. cit.*, p. 305 et seq.

¹⁶⁰ It should be noted that many of the so-called "circles" are in reality elliptical.

Phallism In The Christian Symbols

In conclusion, it must be said that Christianity itself is certainly not without the phallic element. Reference may be made to the important place taken in Christian dogma by the "fall"--which I have shown to have had a purely "phallic" foundation--and to the peculiar position assigned to Mary, as the Virgin Mother of God.¹⁶¹ It must not be forgotten, however, that, whatever may have been the primitive idea on which these dogmas are based, it had received a totally fresh aspect, at the hands of those from whom the founders of Christianity received it.¹⁶² As to symbols, too, these were employed by the Christians in the later signification given to them by the followers of the ancient faiths. Thus, the fish--and the cross--symbols originally embodied the idea of generation, but afterwards that of life, and it was in this sense that they were applied to Christ.¹⁶³ The most evidently phallic representation used by the Christian iconographers is undoubtedly the aureole or *vessica*. This was generally elliptical in form, and contained the figure of Christ; Mary herself, however, being sometimes represented in the aureole, glorified as Jesus Christ.¹⁶⁴ Probably the nimbus, also, is of phallic significance; for, although generally circular, it was sometimes triangular, square, etc.¹⁶⁵ The name of Jehovah is inscribed within a radiating triangle.¹⁶⁶ Didron gives a representation of St. John the Evangelist with a circular nimbus, surmounted by two sunflowers, emblems of the sun, an idea which, says Didron, "reminds us of the Egyptian figures, from the heads of which two lotus-flowers rise in a similar manner."¹⁶⁷ There is also a curious representation, in this work, of the divine hand, with the thumb and two forefingers outstretched, resting on a cruciform nimbus (p. 215). In Egypt, the hand having the fingers thus placed was a symbol of Isis, and from its accompaniments, there can be little doubt, notwithstanding the mesmeric character ascribed to it by Ennemoser,¹⁶⁸ that it had an essentially phallic origin, although it may ultimately have been used to signify life.

There can be no question, however, that, whatever may be thought of its symbols,¹⁶⁹ the fundamental basis of Christianity is more purely "phallic" than that of any other religion now

¹⁶¹ On this subject, see Higgin's *Anacalypsis*, vol. i, p. 315 et seq.

¹⁶² We must look to the esoteric teaching of Mithraism for the origin and explanation of much of primitive Christian dogma.

¹⁶³ The serpent elevated in the Wilderness is said to be typical of Christ. (John iii. 14, 15). A Gnostic sect taught that Christ was Seth.

¹⁶⁴ Didron's *Christian Iconography* (Bohn), pp. 272, 286.

¹⁶⁵ It is a curious fact that Buddhist deities are often represented in the *Vessica* and with the nimbus. (See Hodgson's figures, plates v. and vi. in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 18.)

¹⁶⁶ Didron, pp. 27, 231.

¹⁶⁷ Didron, p. 29.

¹⁶⁸ *History of Magic* (Bohn), vol. i., p. 253 et seq.

¹⁶⁹ The "Black Virgins" of the French cathedrals prove, when examined critically, to be basalt figures of the goddess Isis. The Virgin Mary succeeded to her form, titles, symbols, rites, and ceremonies. Thus the devotees of Isis carried into the new priesthood the former badges of their profession, the obligation to celibacy, the tonsure, and the surplice. The sacred image still moves in procession as when Juvenal laughed at it--vi. 530--"grege linigero circumdatus et grege calvo"--escorted by the tonsured, surpliced train. Her proper title, *Domina*, the exact translation of the Sanscrit *Isi*, survives, with a slight change in the *Madonna*. By a singular permutation, the flower borne by each, the lotus, ancient emblem of fecundity, now renamed the lily, is interpreted as significant of the opposite quality. The tinkling *sistrum*, a sound so well pleasing to the Egyptian goddess, is replaced by that most hideous of noises, the clattering bell. The latter instrument, however, came directly from the Buddhist usages, where it forms an essential element as of yore in early Celtic Christianity, when the holy bell was the actual type of the Godhead to the new converts. The bell in its present form was

existing. I have referred to the presence in Hebraic theology of an idea of God--that of a Father--antagonistic to the Phoenician notion of the "Lord of Heaven." We have the same idea repeated in Christ's teaching, its distinctive characteristic being the recognition of God as the Universal Father, the Great Parent of Mankind, who had sent His son into the world that he might reconcile it unto Himself. It is in the character of a forgiving parent that Christians are taught to view God, when He is not lost sight of in the presence of Christ. The emotional nature of Christian faith, indeed, shows how intimately it was related to the older faiths which had a phallic basis. In Christianity, we see the final expression of the primitive worship of the father as the head of the family, the generator, as the result of an instinctive reasoning process leading up from the particular to the universal, with which, however, the dogma of the "fall" and its consequences--deduced so strangely from a phallic legend--have been incorporated. The "phallic" is, indeed, the only foundation on which an emotional religion can be based. As a religion of the emotions, therefore, the position of Christianity is perfectly unassailable. As a system of rational faith, however, it is far different; and the tendency of the present age is just the reverse of that which took place among the Hebrews--the substitution of a Heavenly King for a Divine Father. In fact, modern science is doing its best to effect for primitive fetishism, or demon-worship, what Christianity has done for phallic worship--generalize the powers of nature and make of God a Great Unknowable Being, who, like the Elohim of the Mosaic cosmogony, in some mysterious manner, causes all things to appear at a word. This cannot be, however, the real religion of the future. If God is to be worshipped at all, the Heavenly King and Divine Father must be combined in a single term; and he must be viewed, not as the unknowable cause of being, but as the Great Source of all being, who may be known in nature--the expression of his life and energy.

THE END

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unknown to the ancients; its normal shape is Indian, and the first real bell-founders were the Buddhist Chinese. Again, relic-worship seems from the third century to have been virtually the present form of Christianity in the East. A fragment of the bone of a Buddha is indispensable in the founding of a temple of that faith.

It is astonishing how much of the Egyptian and the second-hand Indian symbolism passed over into the usages of the following times. The high cap and hooked staff of the god became the bishop's mitre and crosier; the term nun is purely Egyptian, and bore its present meaning; the erect oval, symbol of the Female Principle of Nature, became the Vesica Piscis, and a frame for divine things; the Crux Ansata, testifying the union of the Male and Female Principle in the most obvious manner, and denoting fecundity and abundance, is transformed, by a simple inversion, into the Orb surmounted by the Cross, and the ensign of royalty. (Gnostics and their by C. W. King, pp. 71, 72.)