

インドと西洋における 性の神話学

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(要約)

2003年11月のインドでの2週間の研究活動を通して、特に印象に残ったのはカジュラホの神殿を飾る性的な彫刻群だった。疑問は、このような彫刻がなぜ神殿という聖なる建築物を飾るのか。カジュラホだけではなく、インドのいたるところの神殿に西洋の目で見れば「汚い」性的な表現が多いので、性に対するインドと西洋の違いを探ることにした。

結論として西洋とインドの大きな違いは、インドの宗教と神話には、当たり前のように、男女の神々が現在まで国民の宗教活動の対象になっている。それに対して、西洋の神は一人の「父神」であり、「母神」はいない。そのために、性は宗教の中からは排除され人間の社会でもタブー視されるようになってしまった。

インドでは「男根」の意味の「リングム」や女性の「外陰部」の意味の「ヨニ」は崇拜の中心になる。現在インドでは多くの神々の中で一番人気のあるシバ神の神殿の聖なる場所で神体として「リングム」が拝められている、その近くには必ず女性の本源シャクティの象徴「ヨニ」が一緒に信者の崇拜を受けている。西洋の世界では、「リングム」や「ヨニ」のような物を神とすること、または、神と関係あることは、タブー以上に冒瀆になる。

シバ神と奥さんパールバティ神の性交は理想的な愛の表現であり、パールバティ神は若いインド人女性たちの憧れの的である。同じように、西洋でポルノとして見られている「カマ・ストラ」は、インドでは結婚前の女性に理想的な結婚生活の手引書として渡されることもある。

「悟り」(ヒンズ教では「モクシャ」)への道として、ヒンズ教の中に在

るタントラは性行為を含めて、人間のあらゆる欲を清めながら実行する。特にタントリック・ヨーガの中では、性行為の「アーサナ」（ヨーガの種々の姿勢）は悟りに導くとされている。

西洋の世界では、人間の死んでからの世界は「天国」で、「悟り」や「涅槃」ではない。しかし、「天国」に達するために、罪のない人生を過ごすことが条件であり、「性行為」＝「罪」という考えが多く、「天」に到達する一番の妨げになる。それに対してインド（また仏教を含めてインドから始まった宗教）では、輪廻から開放する「涅槃」が目的で、性欲を含めて人間のあらゆる欲をルールにのっとって清めることにより達する。

要するに、父神しかいない西洋では、性行為はタブーとされ（自然の世界では当然行われているが、神に対する良心の呵責の原因となる。）、インドでは、父親の神もいるが当然母親の神もいるから、性行為はいとも自然なことであり、そこが世界の始まりとされている。

Sexual Mythology in India and the West

By Thomas Guerin

Foreword:

In November, 2003, I was given the opportunity to visit India and study the traditional culture and mythology of that country. While India is usually classified as beyond the "Near East" and before the "Far East," there were many cultural and religious customs, artifacts and architecture that could never be included in either the Western or the Asian cultures with which I am acquainted. Among the many images that were etched into my mind were the mobs of people bathing in the Ganges, the burning ghats at Varanasi (Benares), and architecture such as the Taj Mahal, that is certainly among the most beautiful in the world. However, it was the sexual imagery seen in all the shrines and temples that made me stop and think the deepest. This overt sexual imagery seen everywhere in the temples and shrines, juxtaposed to holy

images of the gods was an anomaly to me. Even the sculptures of the goddesses were often given a voluptuous demeanor, something that one who has had no familiarity with goddesses in religion found it difficult to understand.

The sexuality of the imagery in Indian religious sculpture and painting is not limited to Hinduism, but pervades Jain, Yoga, and even Buddhism. One is made to conjecture that the sexuality evinced stems from Indian culture itself, rather than from any of the indigenous religions. It is of course true that the culture of India stems from early religious movements such as Hindu, and now extends to all indigenous Indian movements. I say "indigenous" in order to include Buddhism, Jainism and Tantric Yoga. Buddhism is no longer a major religion in India, although I was fortunate enough to see many historical Buddhist temples and shrines. I visited the birthplace of Buddhism in Sarnath outside Varanasi, which was thronged for a festival of Buddha when I was there. The stone cave temples of Ajanta are also Buddhist, and I was privileged to see them as well as the Buddhist temples at Ellora. Buddhism has changed considerably, having been absorbed by and combined with the cultures of the different areas to which it was transmitted. Today neither Nepalese Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism, nor that remaining in Southeast Asia, have the very Hinduistic flavor of that found in India where Buddhism was born.¹ A striking difference is that Buddhism, as well as the other non-Hindu religious movements, display images with a definite sexual aspect and show a familiarity with sexual expression hardly ever seen in the West with its Judeo-Christian-Islamic bias. Perhaps the major reason why I was so struck with the sexual imagery found in the temples, shrines and holy places of India stems from my own Western cultural background. The Western religious ethic derives from the Judeo-Christian ethic, which not only condemns overt expressions of sex in all forms and situations other than in a very narrow category, but also suppresses all open expression of even that narrow category.

Thus, from the Western² point of view, many of the sculptures on the



Fig. 1. An example of the sculpture on the temples in Kajaraho

walls of the temples at Kajaraho are considered pornographic and catering to the Western tourist who seems to be specifically interested in those carvings. Many crude pornographic images are sold near the temples in Kajaraho. It was my impression that, while the Indians themselves do not consider the sculptures particularly "dirty," they are quite aware that Westerners typically view them as such. (Fig.1)

One of the best selling books in Kajaraho is the *Kama Sutra*, a book reaching extreme popularity in the West due to its very obvious prurient interest in its sexual descriptions. The book, however, has no connection to the temples of Kajaraho whatsoever, having been written in a different time and place, and not being particularly written as a sex manual.³

The Westerner typically reads the *Kama Sutra* as a curiosity and finds it amusing, risqué, perhaps titillating, or even "dirty," but hardly ever "holy." If overt sexual imagery were limited to Kajaraho, it could be seen as a local aberration perhaps. However, sexual imagery is found throughout Hinduism. One of the most prevalent images is the *lingam*. The "*lingam*" is simply another word for the penis. A Westerner for the first time seeing the central image in



Fig. 2. The *Lingam* in the sanctum of the Cave Temple of Elephanta, Maharashtra.

all the temples dedicated to Shiva, the *Linga* or *Lingam*, is usually shocked. (Figure 2) This *Lingam* is a large round-topped column representing the phallus. Size ranges from about a meter in height to over two meters, with some measuring even three meters. The inner sanctum of these temples is usually thronged with worshippers scattering flowers or pouring water on the *lingam*. In the West, worshipping the phallus could only be the most deplorable of fertility rites. Having entered into the sanctum on several occasions and viewing this at close range, however, it is impossible imagine these worshippers to be in any way sexually deprived. The worshippers are young as well as older men and women, a cross-section of the population. The greatest reverence is shown toward the *lingam*, and indeed, it is usually not allowed to take photographs or video images of it. At one temple I had to take off my shirt with all the other men before going into the sanctum. The reason is not clear, but it is akin to removing one's shoes as a sign of reverence, which was also necessary in all shrines and temples in India.⁴

Several years earlier I had observed the worship of the *lingam* in Bali for the first time, and was duly shocked. There the worshippers were primarily women, more younger than older and somehow it made me think that the Balinese women were somewhat fixated on sex. At the time I thought it a local aberration, but such is hardly the case. At that time had I known of the accompanying adoration of the "*yoni*," or "vulva," (represented as an oval relief carving or stone), (Fig.3) I would have been considerably more shocked. While not being the most prominent object in a temple, the *yoni* is always present in some way nearby the *lingam*. I'm sure now that it must have been so in Bali, too, although I was unaware of its existence at the time.

Bombarded by these images throughout a two-week tour of Indian holy places, my initial reaction was to see these sexual expressions as searches for enlightenment gone awry, a case of confusing divine inspiration and sexual ecstasy. However, after a great amount of reading and thought upon the history of the Indian culture and religions, I began to see that it could possibly be that



Fig. 3. The *Yoni*, from 19th century South India

the confusion may be Western rather than Indian.

I saw that only a small portion of the sculptures on the temples at Kajuraho described sex, while many of the others described the everyday life of the Indian of the day. It is true that in all the sculptures, sexual or not, women are depicted as very voluptuous. While women are uniformly depicted with sexual attributes pronounced, i.e. large round breasts and full hips, their actions

are such everyday things as looking at oneself in a mirror while putting on makeup; walking arm and arm with the husband; writing a letter; weeping at the response, and so on. They seem to say that; "This is life, and sex is part of life." Leaving it out would be leaving out an important part of life. And I began to think that seeing the *lingam* and *yoni* as symbols of the divine energy of procreation is more normal than trying to deny their existence.

The West may indeed be more unnatural than India in that the religious literature ignores even the existence of sex, except as a hindrance to those seeking salvation. It is with the idea that in achieving enlightenment, the acceptance rather than rejection of sex is more natural, and with a more natural outlook, the quest is more likely to be successful. And the abundance of sexual expression found in Hindu mythology is more natural than the extensive repression of the same in the West.

I began to imagine the origins of Western repression of sexual expression and the somewhat contradictory conclusion I reached was the absolute "maleness" of the God of the Hebrews, Yaweh. God the Father, as "He" is known throughout the West, has no mate; begetting all things through a force that is anything but sexual, allowing no equal power of any kind, least of all a

female power. Anyone brought up in the West, whether he be Jewish, Moslem or Christian, thinks of "God" (Allah, Yaweh, Elohim, etc.) as the "Father." Asked to say who the "mother" is, they are all at a loss. Most would simply deny the existence of a "mother" to accompany God the Father.

When I was still in my teens I remember an uproarious joke, which told of a person who dies and goes to heaven, and then comes back to life. One of his friends asks him, "How was God?" and he answers; "Well, first of all, She's black!" What made the joke so funny was that no one in my milieu could conceive of a female god, much less a black one. It was only later that the recognition of the huge role the mother goddesses played in ancient religions became more commonly known.

Of course the ancient Greek and Roman goddesses were known, and their portrayal in Renaissance art became symbols of artistic excellence. But even in the Renaissance the painting of a Grecian goddess such as Aphrodite was done mainly as an opportunity for the artist to portray the nude female form rather than for any religious or mythological reason.⁵ In the West until the mid-19th century the nude female form was not painted or sculpted unless it pretended to concern classic "Greek or Roman" mythology. At the time of the Renaissance, even the works of such a famous sculptor-artist as Michelangelo were condemned for portraying nudity. El Greco, on viewing Michelangelo's portrayal of the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican, remarked; "Erase that! I'll paint you a *decent* picture for nothing." And, in fact, that same mural was considerably defaced by one of Michelangelo's students who covered up the private parts of many of the figures after Michelangelo's death.⁶

That same Michelangelo, on the ceiling of that same chapel, painted the temptation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, portraying the insidious snake as a woman. Whether this was an unconscious expression of his own homosexuality or the expression of blaming the introduction of evil into the world on the woman, or both, is hard to determine at this time. It is, however, more certain that in the Middle East at the time that the Bible was being

written, Mother Goddesses proliferated. In Canaan, which the Hebrews saw as their land given to them by Yaweh,⁷ there were already several Goddesses, among them Aserah (Astarte) and Ananna, who were certainly known to the Hebrews. It would seem that Yaweh was not simply a pantheon of one for the Hebrews, but a god in competition with other gods and goddesses, and the goddesses were especially abominations. Why goddesses were so vehemently rejected is a matter of conjecture.⁸

It is this rejection of the female principle that led to the rejection of any kind of sexual union as a source of humanity. Through my sojourn in India it has become clear to me that the Western rejection and repression of sexuality, which has been the rule for literally thousands of years, is unnatural and detrimental to the achievement of human enlightenment, or human salvation, if it can be so described. While the opposite is true of many of the sexual expressions found in India.

I. Sexual Activities of Hindu Deities

This is a category, which cannot be compared to anything in modern Western mythology, since no female gods exist. Greek and Roman mythology contain many sexual episodes, but these are hardly part of modern religious thought, and no one in the West now thinks of him- or herself as a believer in Zeus or Jupiter. In the Hindu religion, however, goddesses abound and, indeed, every god has his consort. It is from this point that West and East differ, since the East sees it as only natural that a male god, by the very fact of being male, must indeed have a female counterpart. Unlike Zeus in ancient Greece, the Hindu gods are not necessarily profligate in the manner of the Greek gods.⁹ Zeus, known for his philandering, had unions with many other goddesses and human women, but these unions invariably result in offspring, and the mention of these unions in Greek mythology is to show the prowess of Zeus and his dominance. There is no mutual loving embrace of Zeus and Hera,¹⁰ for example, comparable to that of Shiva and Parvati. Sexual unions in Hindu

mythology are simply that, expressions of love, which may or may not result in offspring. Shiva's wife is usually said to be Parvati, although this is just one of the avatars (reincarnations) of Shakti, the female principle that is the power of the universe. She has several avatars or reincarnations and so may become different goddesses for different purposes. But it is Parvati who is considered the kind and loving mother. (But Parvati is also Devi, one of the goddesses who repels demons and Durga, another fearful mother goddess.) Parvati is the most loved by Shiva and, the story goes, the two were together in a thousand-year embrace when the sage Bhrigu went to visit Shiva to ascertain who was the most powerful god. He was stopped by the doorkeeper who said that no one could interrupt Shiva and Parvati when they were together. After waiting for some time, Bhrigu left, announcing the curse that, since Shiva preferred the embrace of Parvati to meeting with Bhrigu, they would be doomed to be worshipped as the "*lingam*" and "*yoni*" forever after.¹¹ And indeed, today the *lingam* and *yoni* are worshipped as symbols of sexual love, not simply fertility.

Sex for Hindu gods does not necessarily result in offspring. In this case, it is the loving embrace of Shiva and Parvati that has become the model for Indian marriage. It would seem that, as opposed to Greek mythology in which sex is an expression of the power of the male partner, sex is the ideal expression of marital love. In modern Western religion, no such activity exists and could hardly be an ideal for the Christian, Jew or Muslim. This thousand-year embrace of Shiva and Parvati does not result in a child, but is simply an expression of the love of Shiva for Parvati. Shiva and Parvati do have two children but at least one of them is not born from sexual union. One of the most popular gods in India today is Ganesha, the God of Wisdom and "Artha"¹² (the duty to amass wealth and possessions for the benefit of one's family). Ganesha is a child of Parvati who was supposedly born from the scrapings from her body, which she formed into a child.¹³ There are many family portraits of Shiva, Parvati, Ganesha and Karttikeya, seen in India as representations of ideal family life.

The triumvirate (*trimurti*) of Hindu gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, all have their consorts who are of Earth Mother stature as far as the role they play in the Hindu cosmology.

What is now referred to as "Hindu" was originally the Dravidic culture that arose in India between 4000 and 2500 B.C. Being agricultural, the Dravidian gods were concerned with fertility, with many phallic symbols and goddesses from whose womb grew plants and animals. There were serpents found as well, whose presence signaled the power of the Mother Goddess. Around 1700 B.C. the Aryans moved into northern India, and it was from that time that the Vedas were written and transmitted to the Indian culture and religion.¹⁴ The Vedas contained little reference to mother goddesses, It was only later that the Dravidic worship of mother goddesses returned to emphasize the role of Shakti in world cosmology. Devi, Durga, Kali, Anapurna, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Parvati, came to play major roles in Hinduism, not just as wives and mothers of the gods, but influential in all aspects of life.

While Devi, Kali and Durga often have shrines devoted to them, the consorts of the trimurti are almost always worshipped in combination with their spouses.

The wife of Brahma, the creator, is Saraswati. She is the Muse and plucks the Veena producing the "Om,"¹⁵ the source of all music and rhythm. She is also said to be incestuous, having been born from Brahma, while also being his spouse. She is also said to have been born from Brahma's head and to be the mother of wisdom, (because of which she is sometimes associated with Ganesha).

The consort of Vishnu is Lakshmi, who is the goddess of both fortune and wealth. She originally emerged from a sea of ambrosia mixed by the gods to help defeat primeval demons who threatened the world of man and the gods. She appeared from the sea as a radiant beauty seated on a lotus. Amidst the praise and adoration of all, she threw herself on the breast of Vishnu, by which

act all the demons were defeated. Lakshmi was so enamored of Vishnu that she followed him through all his incarnations. When Vishnu appeared in the form of Vamana, or the dwarf avatar, she was Padma, born from the waters floating on a lotus; with Parasurama she was Dharini, the earth; with Rama she was Sita, who was born when the earth was ploughed. She was Radha, the love of the famous playboy, Krishna (when she was also Rukmi).¹⁶

Parvati is the wife of Shiva, the destroyer, the latter pair being by far the most revered in present day India. Parvati was originally Sati, who desired Shiva against the will of her father and finally threw herself on a funeral fire in protest and grief.¹⁷ She was reborn as Parvati, the daughter of a king of the Himalayas, and succeeded in this new life in becoming the wife of Shiva. She is often the focus of prayers of young Indian women seeking marriage with an ideal mate.

While the dominant gods of the Hindu pantheon are male, the role of goddess is not really subordinate, but rather cooperative, and many of the works of goddesses, such as the role of Ganga, the great river goddess, can only be achieved by themselves.¹⁸ This is a far cry from the cosmology of the Western religions, which conceive of no equal to the one, single God, much less a female cooperator.

2. Western Mother Goddesses

Mother Goddesses abounded in ancient Western mythology. Currently the cult of Gaia has been revived in what may be called a modern ecological religion. Traces of many other Mother Goddesses or Earth Mothers can be found in the Middle East and early Europe. They were overcome, for the most part, by male divinities early in recorded history. For the Greeks, in fact, it is almost possible to place an approximate date on the time when female goddess became subordinate to male gods, specifically Zeus, in the area of the Greek culture. That would be around 1000 B.C, give or take a hundred years.

The pre-existing goddesses were subdued or destroyed by male gods such

as Zeus, Marduk, Apollo, Yaweh, etc. While, in some cases, the goddess continued to exist in a subordinate role, in other cases she was totally destroyed. In all cases, even when the goddess continued on in a lesser role, the male god broached no insubordination from the goddesses, nor sought their cooperation.

In the Hebrew Bible, King Josiah removes the figure of the Canaanite Goddess Asherah from the temple in 800 BC. The Hebrew prophets had been preaching against her for a long while, railing against the Hebrew worship of Astarte, a well-known Middle Eastern Goddess akin to Ishtar, who appears in the Gilgamesh epic, popular at the time. In Proverbs we are introduced to Chocmah (Wisdom) who was present from the time of creation as the loving consort and coarchitect along with Yaweh.¹⁹ According to Raphael Patai, Asherah (or Astarte) was long considered the mate of Yaweh.²⁰ In the Book of Soloman, erotic chapter after erotic chapter are interpreted as descriptions of the love of Yaweh for His people and that of His people for Him. It requires, however, a very restricted imagination to acquire religious inspiration from such phrases as: "How beautiful art thou, my love...Thy lips are as a scarlet lace; and thy speech sweet. Thy cheeks are as a piece of a pomegranate...Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies."²¹ The biblical destruction of the Mother Goddess is, however, found in the Book of Job, chapter 40, in which Yaweh slays Leviathon, the serpent of the sea, which seems to lay her to rest. In any case, the absence of any female divinity was established in the Hebrew religion a little later than it was achieved in Greek mythology.

In keeping with this asexual religious ideal, the Christian scriptures also deny sex any role in birth. Mary became the mother of God without the intervention of sex.²² The Virgin Birth is a dogma of the Catholic Church along with the Immaculate Conception and to think of sex in relation to Mary or Christ is to blaspheme. (The non-Catholic Christian church, however, tends to accept the statements in the Scriptures concerning the "brothers" of Jesus as

being factual rather than symbolical, and does not consider Mary a virgin except in regard to the birth of Christ.) Forty years ago the musical "Jesus Christ Superstar" attempted to make a modern hero out of Christ, but it was roundly denounced by traditional Christians, not least for the way in which it hinted at a love affair between Jesus and Mary Magdalene.

Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians (the city of Corinth was known for its plethora of prostitutes) states that it is better for a man to marry than to burn (with lust).²³ He does not condemn the married state, but hardly condones it.

Mary did indeed become a "Great Mother,"²⁴ and remains so today. There was a certain amount of resistance to Mary worship, (sometimes referred to as "Mariology") within the Church, but the necessity of a female principle among the divinities was eventually too difficult to oppose completely. The Catholic Church, while denying any equality of Mary to God, awards her primary place in its list of saints and makes her subject of several of its dogmas, including the above Virgin Birth, Immaculate Conception,²⁵ as well as the Assumption, (the assuming of Mary's body physically into heaven.) It were as if the Church were entirely satisfied with a Great Mother figure, as long as it has no sexual aspects which would make it equal in any sense to "The" God.

3. *Lingam* and *Yoni*

In Hinduism, the *lingam* and *yoni* are seen as procreating energy but are not necessarily fertility symbols in the narrow sense. The worshippers at any shrine are not necessarily seeking opportunities for sex, the birth of children or harvests or other such fertility-centered blessings. While they pray fervently to the *lingam*, it is for success in business, welfare for the family, or a peaceful marriage, but most of all for enlightenment,²⁶ and freedom through it from constant rebirth. Still, the act of procreation, or more simply, "sexual intercourse," is seen as imitation of the gods, and in the ideal Hindu marriage, a couple performing sex become, in one sense, Shiva and Parvati themselves, and their actions are those of the gods.

The history of the phallus as the object of worship is very long, and throughout the world there are examples, though now a rarity. In Ancient Greece the erect phallus was worshipped with the god Hermes, and the word "Herm" was used to designate the stone image of an erect phallus that was used as a guidepost and named after the god Hermes, the guide for the gods. It may be somewhat difficult for modern Western scholars to conceive of a society where the everyday public display of the erect phallus is normal. In Athens there was a scandal when the phalluses of the Herms were found broken, apparently by some youths of the city in protest against city policy. Defacing the guideposts of the god was blasphemous, the work of hooligans, not that of moral reformists. It was the moral reformists who saw the defacing of the monuments scandalous.

The *lingam* was found very early in India, and examples of it are found in the relics from Harappa and Mohenjo-daro of the Indus civilization of 2500-2000 B.C. In the National Museum in New Delhi phalli from that period are found, among them are some which are not stylized, but have the shape of a real penis, foreskin and all. These *lingams* are accompanied by many triangular representations of the woman's vulva on clay dolls, usually labeled a "Venus" in archeology to indicate its function as a symbol of fertility. These symbols from the very earliest found among Hindu artifacts remain today dominant symbols in Hindu worship. The story quoted above concerning the curse put on Shiva and Parvati by Bhrigu that they be forever worshipped as *Lingam* and *Yoni* is obviously much later and is an etiological explanation of why they are so worshipped. The story, however, is significant in that it sees these symbols as not just tools of procreation, but of mutual love between man and woman, the latter even more focused upon than the former. In the story there is no mention of offspring, nor is there any evidence of such. The assumption is that these represent physical love and present it as an ideal to the worshipper.

Even though the *lingam* and *yoni* are frequently encountered in the Hindu religion, it does not follow that sexual perversion, pornography or what would

be called "indecent exposure" are rampant throughout India. While the sexual coupling of Shiva and Parvati are held up as ideals, it does not therefore follow that the society is focused on sex. I found it much less so than America in terms of the mass media, movies, TV, etc. There is little or no pornography found in the movies of Mumbai (Bombay, or "Bollywood" as it is called). There is a constant stream of romantic movies on TV. Most places in India can receive around 60 channels, and there are always ten or twelve movies on at any particular time, (as opposed to two or three for cricket, and about the same for the news.) The movies almost always involve a love story and the female lead is usually required to sing and dance through a good part of the picture. But there is no nudity and few overtly sexually suggestive scenes.²⁷

It would seem that there is little reflection in public morals²⁸ of the worship of the *lingam* and *yoni*, as some Westerners would want to believe.

4. Sexuality in religion in the West

There are no modern Western religious objects equivalent to the *lingam* and *yoni*. While recognizing that in the distant past such did exist, they are considered objects of simple-minded savages. The symbols for fertility, i.e. women's breasts, the vulva, the phallus, have been removed from all religious iconography. The phallus is barely recognized as existing at all, and the modern Westerner sees the codpieces that were fashionable in Medieval Europe courts as vulgar, and are barely able to allow the bulge in men's ballet costumes of today. In "polite" society the word "phallus" is only tolerated in connection with scholarly discussions or works, and "penis" in medical treatises, while common words such as "cock," "dick," "prick," etc. are definitely intolerable sexual slang. In any case, any reference to the existence of a penis is denied. In the Bible, Old and New Testaments together there is no direct reference to a man's penis. When mention of sexual intercourse is absolutely necessary, the Bible speaks of the man "going into her." This is the only suggestion that such a tool as the penis even exists. (The reference to

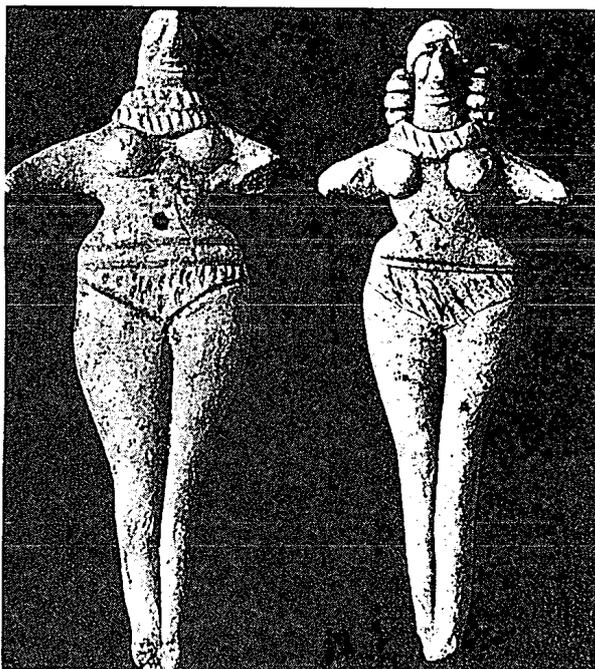


Fig. 4. Triangular representations of the "yoni" from c.2300 BC Mesopotamia.

Onan "spilling his seed on the ground may be included among the indirect references, perhaps.) Even this rather harmless phrase is usually replaced by "he *knew* her," often referred to as the "Biblical" euphemism for sex.

A women's vulva is likewise studiously ignored in all religious literature. Since Western religion has no need of a female god for bearing or, for that matter, to receive the love of a "Father God"

(who has no penis in any case), no reference is made to it, except as the receptacle "gone into." In polite circles the word is even more avoided than "phallus," "vulva" only allowed in such scholarly contexts such as this concerning mythology, or perhaps biology. The words "cunt" or "pussy" are, of course ostracized, and even go beyond slang into the realm of blasphemy.

The vulva was represented much more than the phallus in antiquity, and it is one of the most frequent findings in stone-age archeological digs. It is rare to find a very realistic representation of the vulva such as the "yoni," the most frequent being a triangle positioned between the legs of a clay doll. On occasion this symbol is reduced to only the triangle. (Fig.4) This symbolical vulva was present even before the era of Mother Goddesses began with the advent of agriculture, and is one of the most frequent fertility symbols.

But the vulva became history in the Mid East and Greece with the rise to power of the male gods. It was no longer a birth canal but the object of lust of the male gods. It remains an object of lust today, and thus has become suppressed as a religious entity, and, in fact, as an entity at all.

Women's breasts are not relegated to the same oblivion as the phallus and

vulva, presumably because they are so important as sources of nourishment for children and not directly connected to the act of intercourse. Their role as objects of lust is still recognized however and public display of breasts is still not normally recognized (nudist colonies and no-bra beaches notwithstanding). Their role as objects of lust is understood and there has always been a tendency of women to exploit this by making their

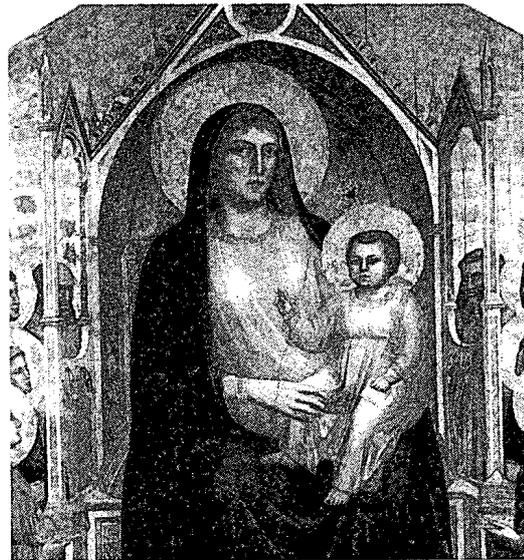


Fig. 5. Giotto's *Ognissanti Madonna*

breasts as prominent as possible within the limits of propriety set by the local society. In the courts of Europe it was the fashion to expose as much of the cleavage as possible, and this has continued to the present day in fashionable Western European and American circles. In the Middle Ages in Europe, however, the female breasts were totally ignored in art and sculpture. At the time of the Renaissance, the first artist to suggest that Mary had breasts was Giotto. He painted in slight swellings in her robe in his *Ognissanti Madonna*, (c.1310) (Fig.5) now hanging in the Uffizi Museum in Florence alongside another painting by Cimabue, *Madonna di Santa Trinita*, (c.1280) in which, by contrast, there is no suggestion of Mary's breasts in evidence. This was in the late 13th and early 14th century, and the tendency continued into the 15th when Leonardo portrayed Mary actually breast-feeding Jesus. This, however, was as far as the revolution in religious art was allowed to proceed.

It is a well-known story that missionaries were scandalized by the topless costumes of the women of Hawaii, and invented the *muumuu* to make them conform to European moral standards. Throughout the rest of the world there were many areas in which breasts only became covered after contact with European civilizations. In the Bible, Adam and Eve, after eating the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, hid themselves from Yaweh because

they were naked. It can only be assumed that nudity was already "evil" for the Hebrews at the time this story was written down, sometime around 800-700 B.C. (The coincidence with the time Greek myths were being written down should be noted.)

Throughout the history of Christianity the ideal has remained the total denial of all sexuality and therefore the description of sex-related objects are outside the pale. Sexual impulses of any kind are *impure* and sex is *dirty*. Nudity in any form is a suggestion of sex, and it is therefore deplored, and not allowed in any but the most extremely necessary cases, presumably for the rectification and guidance for the wayward. This is evident in the Cathedral art of the Middle Ages when Adam and Eve were grudgingly depicted nude, but Eve especially was a sorry, desiccated, misshapen figure.²⁹ Religious art could, in no way arouse concupiscence, at least until the Renaissance, when the ideal artistic form of the female nude came into conflict with religious principles. It became popular to paint Biblical scenes in which the nude female form could be displayed. "Susannah in her Bath" and "Mary Magdalene" became special favorites.³⁰ (Even in these paintings, however, the vulva was never displayed. In Botticelli's very demure *The Birth of Venus*, the hands of Venus are very strategically placed to avoid any hint of reprobation).

In Western literature, the penis or the vulva are often referred to as the "private parts," but even these euphemisms have become too risqué for polite society. The Englishman, Basil Hall Chamberlain, in translating the Japanese "Kojiki" (古事記-Record of Ancient Matters) in 1882, was unable to use even this phrase to describe the actions of the dancing goddess Ame-no-Uzume, writing instead; "...pulling out the nipples of her breasts, pushing down her skirt-string *usque ad privates partes*," apparently feeling that the words would be less offensive in Latin.³¹

In the past, the exposure of any part of the female body besides the face, was somehow a sexual invitation, and therefore condemned by Christianity, (and, even more by Islam.) With the Renaissance, the rules were gradually

relaxed in the West. Still, the basic value is that sex is ritually dirty (i.e. a "sin," in Christian terminology) and therefore avoided by "nice" people. Today, for example, urinating in public is a crime in most places in the United States. This has little to do with polluting the environment, (although that is the specious reason given for the law,) but everything to do with exposure of private parts, which has sexual overtones. Even more so breast-feeding in public places, another action often forbidden. This is obviously a moral judgment on exposure of the breast, presuming such to have an immoral influence on the chance onlooker, the obvious benefit to the baby notwithstanding.

4. Enlightenment and Sex

The final goal of Hindu religion is "*mokusha*" or "enlightenment," with a release from continual rebirth and absorption into the universal being. This is the same goal as that of Buddhism and Jainism, but not of Christianity and other Western religions, which see "salvation" or "eternal life" as the goal. Concretely the Christian usually speaks of "heaven" as a place, although the Christian theologian would usually term it a state or condition.³² It would seem that the goal of the Christian, Jew and Muslim is different from the Hindu and Buddhist, and the means of arriving at that goal also differ. While both the Hindu and the Christian see adherence to a moral code as necessary to qualify for, or achieve the ideal of "heaven" or "nirvana," i.e. enlightenment and avoidance of a particularly poor rebirth as a toad or grasshopper, etc. The Western religions think of people as reaching salvation more or less by default, absence of sin being the sole requisite, and the only positive effort necessary for the believer is to trust in Yaweh, God or Allah. The Hindu, and to a great extent the Buddhist see "enlightenment" as the final goal, which can only be achieved by great spiritual effort. (It is true that Shinran taught that the true Buddhist can achieve salvation by a single repetition of the Buddhist sutras, but the goal of enlightenment or "satori" (悟り)³³ still remains basic.) The

meditations of Buddhism as typified in *zazen* (座禪-literally "sitting meditation") is well known, but its roots are certainly found in Hinduism.

In Christianity there is a tradition of meditation, which began early with hermits and progressed into the monastery movement and is still in evidence today among the many religious orders and societies. Originally the focus was on contemplation, or meditation. Today the emphasis is less on contemplation than on social work and education, but there are contemplative orders such as the Cistercians of Strict Observance, otherwise known as the Trappists, who are known for their devotion to prayer and meditation. In the history of the Church, ascetics have often become famous, and personal sacrifice and self-denial have produced many saints in Christendom. Whether these saints have achieved "enlightenment" is, however, a moot question, since such is not their goal. "Union with Christ" is often stated to be the ideal, but it seems there is no target such as "enlightenment" set before the one meditating. Meditations in Christendom tend to be ratiocinations based on some particular episode in the Bible or other religious works. There is usually nothing like the Buddhist "the sound of one hand clapping" designed to eliminate reason altogether from the meditative process.

Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-74), ranked among the saints of the Roman Catholic Church, was the epitome of Church scholars in the later Middle Ages. His Aristotelian philosophy (acquired by way of the Turks in Spain along with the Jewish Maimonides (1135-1204), was considered nearly dogma³⁴ and he himself the intellectual cream of the Church. Through meditation he is said to have achieved the understanding of "Being," after which, he wrote that it made all that he had written up to that time as "grass," (i.e. worthless).

Rational enlightenment is almost a contradiction in terms to the Hindu, to whom a syllogism is a hindrance rather than an aid. Enlightenment itself cannot be explained by one who has achieved it, because it is outside any category of reference.

The Hindu tradition of meditation in the quest of enlightenment has led to

many religious movements, one of the most well known being Yoga. Yoga is thought of in the West as being a method of achieving a functional and healthy physical condition for the practitioner. That is not its purpose, however much it would seem to be conducive to such a goal. The goal of Yoga is, like other Hindu religious movements, "enlightenment." Its various "*asanas*" or positions are meant to lead the practitioner through steps to the final goal of enlightenment. The Yoga discipline sees the individual's body as a sort of "*lingam*." It schematizes the meditation through the body, called the "*kundalini*."³⁵ The program of "*asanas*" starts from the hips, presuming the person is sitting in the lotus posture, and proceeds by stages upwards from the base of the spine to the navel to the heart, throat, forehead and finally the top of the head where enlightenment is achieved. (Fig.6) The point is that the physical and spiritual parts of a person are one, and enlightenment is as much a physical as spiritual phenomenon.

Not only Yoga, but other disciplines see some kind of physical action as necessary adjuncts to progress toward enlightenment, usually, however, the actions are in the area of asceticism; fasting, refraining from various pleasures such as sex, drink, etc. Buddhist meditation as represented by *zen* requires only a modicum of physical action, although the newcomer to *zen* will find the "lotus position" for meditation excruciatingly painful, if it is even possible for him or her. The exception to any demand for ascetic practice is Tantra.

Tantra is really the designation of texts dealing with religious practices in Hindu, Buddhism and Jain. The Sakta tantras especially



Fig. 6. kundalini

emphasize the goddess Shakti as the female personification of the creative power of the god. It deals with Shiva and Shakti as one, although "Shakti" is seen by many to be the basic incarnation of Parvati, the consort of Shiva, by some Shiva is but a corpse without Shakti. Shakti is also identified as the "*kundalini*" mentioned above in connection with Yoga, the energy that lies at the base of the spine and brought up through the body by yogic disciplines.

Tantra aims at the purification of the body and the control of physiological and psychological processes, but it does so rather through exercising the human faculties that afford pleasure. By the purification and control of these faculties, it is believed, the body and the mind may be made perfect media for the realization of the highest truth, i.e. enlightenment. By this reasoning, it follows that rather than denial of sex, its proper control is a means by which enlightenment can be achieved.

The sculptures on the temples at Kajuraho deal in part with Tantric Yoga, and are descriptions of ritual sex as practiced by the followers of this form of Hinduism. The simple depiction of the actions seen from Western eyes is definitely pornographic. It involves many actions condemned as unnatural in the West, fellatio, cunnilingus, bestiality, etc. It is the apparent contradiction in the presence of these "filthy" images on a presumably "sacred" temple which first motivated me to investigate their religious aspects. Did these actions actually occur, and were they prevalent? In what manner could such actions, if they had actually occurred, lead to enlightenment? If they had never actually occurred, why should they be found in such a sacred spot? What is the meaning of enlightenment that could be so achieved? Is there anything equivalent in Western religion?

Did these actions actually occur and were they prevalent? Yes, they definitely occurred, and the very fact that the actions are depicted upon a temple wall in the most detailed way is perhaps a proof that such rites were held. The temples were built from the ninth to the 12th century but the Tantrists themselves claim a much more ancient origin, at least of the Tantrist

principles. The earliest Tantra texts are said to have been written in the seventh century A.D., but in their earliest form date back to Vedic times.³⁶ A work quoted in the Upanishad (explanations in Sanskrit written c.800 B.C) is the Vamadevyā, "a song concerned with sexual intercourse," which compares the sexual act to a religious sacrifice, identifying each stage with a corresponding stage in the ritual. From the oldest Upanishad:

Woman is the sacrificial fire,
the lips of her *yoni* the fuel,
the hairs around them the smoke,
and the vagina itself the flame.
The act of penetration is the lighting,
the feelings of pleasure are the sparks.
In this fire the gods offer up semen seed,
and from this offering man is born.³⁷

The Kama Sutra was written before the temples at Kajuraho were built, sometime between the second and fifth centuries, but they were certainly written with an awareness of the Tantra Yogic tradition. The makeup of the Kama Sutra shows an awareness of the secret rituals of the Tantras and lists the techniques in a systematic sequence, which must have conformed to the sequence of the ritual itself.

To what extent these admittedly secret rituals were practiced by the Hindu population at large is more difficult to determine. It can only be supposed that Tantric Yoga, while not being "mainstream" Hinduism, was at least well known. There are practitioners even today, but outside India they are very cultish and rather outside the pale of society, seeming to condone debauchery and orgiastic rituals. There is an interesting parallel in early Christianity. Robert Wilken in *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, in describing accusations against early Christian groups writes:

"A number of *Christian* (italics mine) writers mention bizarre rites

practiced by certain libertine groups, for example, the Gnostic sect known as the Carpocratians. Clement of Alexandria, writing in the early third century, says that the Carpocratians celebrated a 'love feast' in which the participants had intercourse 'whenever they will and with whom they will' (Strom.3.2.10). Justin Martyr, writing in the middle of the second century, had heard stories about Christian groups who 'upset the lamp' to engage in intercourse and partake of human flesh (1 Apol.26.7)."³⁸

Within India, however, Tantric Yoga today seems to be somewhat an anachronism but, in typically tolerant Indian fashion, its practice is not particularly noted nor harassed. Asking Indians about the sculptures at Kajuraho, the first answer I received was that it was a depiction of "Yoga." The person neglected to add the word "Tantra" to his explanation, but he was apparently aware of the relationship of the so-called "erotic" sculpture to Tantra. I have seen a small handbook on Tantra Spirituality & Sex by Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, a well-known Tantric guru, which lists 40 "Rajneesh Meditation Centers, Ashrams and Communes in 21 countries throughout the world."³⁹ Tantric Yoga listings on the Internet run into the hundreds and are accompanied by illustrations and cataloguing.

In what manner do the Tantric Yoga practices lead to what is called "enlightenment" by the Hindu, Jainist and Buddhist? In the past I presumed that "enlightenment" was an intellectual occurrence in which the mind was the main, or perhaps even the "only" participant. As mentioned above, the mind is not particularly at the heart of the Hindu concept of "enlightenment," and In Tantric Yoga there is constant reference to how one "feels." The role of the mind, while not being eliminated, is very much downgraded. Some books on Tantra seem to view a mutual culminating orgasm as the goal of the exercises, and give a great amount of detailed instructions on a daily and monthly schedule to achieve an ideal orgasm. Even prolonged abstinence from sex seems to have this ideal as a goal. One book expounding the regime of Tantric Yoga states in the introduction that; "The ultimate reward of Tantra, is the

achievement, *even for a fleeting moment*, (italics mine) of Nirvanic bliss."⁴⁰ However, even for the Hindu, enlightenment is not a transitory thing, but a life-changing event. I have a difficult time seeing this attitude as basic Tantra. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, however, in the handbook mentioned above, speaks of achieving sex without orgasm as being the ideal, and in the process hints at the content of Tantric enlightenment.

"Only Tantra can create a new man. And a man who has known timelessness, egolessness and a deep *non-duality with existence* will grow now. A dimension has opened. It is not far away, the time is not very far away, when sex will simply disappear. When sex disappears without your knowledge, suddenly one day you realize that sex has disappeared completely and there is no lust, *brahmacharya* is born."⁴¹

It would seem that Tantric Yogic enlightenment is really similar in content to what may be called "satori" by the Buddhist. If the above phrase, "non-duality with existence" can be taken to mean a unity with the universal being, then it would seem that there is no conflict. In fact, it would seem that it was not too far away from the understanding of "Being" that was mentioned above in regard to Thomas Aquinas.ⁱ

At Kajuraho, our guide, in explaining, rather vaguely, the erotic sculptures, made sure that I understood that during these ritual orgies, neither men nor women were to have orgasms, and that this was part of the "purification and control" exercised over these faculties. It would seem that, while sex is part of the ritual of the Tantrists, it is not an end in itself, but rather the route by which one seeks enlightenment. As such, sexuality is not considered an illegitimate route to salvation, but rather one among several possible.

5. Conclusion

In the West, sexuality as a part of man's search for the ultimate Being is not only rejected, but condemned. In Western traditions, the mystics at times



Fig. 7 .Bernini's *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa*.

have described their experiences in mediation in erotic terms. An example are the writings of St. Theresa of Avila, who wrote that at one point during meditation she felt as though an arrow of divine love was piercing her heart, she was in such ecstasy. Gian Lorenzo Bernini did a sculpture of the Saint undergoing this experience entitled "The Ecstasy of St. Theresa," currently found in the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome. (Fig.7) A *tour de force* by the sculptor produced a work, which later caused controversy due to seemingly depicting the saint in the state of orgasm. (Fig.7) The sculpture, except for its Baroque style, would fit well on the walls of the temples at Kajuraho. The imagination of Bernini might have been responsible for the erotic effect, but it seems possible that the ascetics knew, or at least intuited the relation of the sexual faculties to the goal of enlightenment, and when the word "love" was used, its essence may in fact be present in sexual love.

In Hinduism, the sexual nature of man is not rejected. The gods have their goddesses, and Shakti, the great mother goddess is joined with Shiva to form what the Hindus perceive as a whole. While the Tantras seek enlightenment through fulfilling the concupiscence of man, other ways such as ordinary Yoga, Jain and Buddhism, do not reject sexual activity, but see it as one of the several possible subjects of self-denial in curbing human passions. But all of these disciplines seek an enlightenment of the whole person, a recognition of the wholeness of a human being.

The Jains, especially, follow a severe regime, which denies the believer access to many human delights. Jainism has a special reverence for life, and sees even the smallest life as sacred. They do not eat food that can be thought

of as living in any way, or having come from a living thing. This includes not only meat, but even chicken eggs as being potential life. They do not even drink water during the night or in the dark lest they imbibe an insect with it. At Kajuraho I bought a small pamphlet on vegetarianism at a Jain temple in Kajuraho, which explained how terrible it was to eat meat. It included a vignette in which a meat eater is reborn as a sheep and describes his terror at eventually being sent to the slaughterhouse. On that same Jain temple there were several depictions of sexual activities, presumably of Jainists.

After considerable thought and reflection on the sexual expressions found in a religious context in India, it can only be concluded that such are indeed part of a general description of the condition of man. They describe sexual love in detail, but they also describe sadness, anger, pleasure in eating, drinking and conversation. In other words, they describe the human condition. Throughout these descriptions the presence of a Mother, (Shakti) is felt, supporting the powerful aegis of the Father, Shiva. The sexual expressions may indeed be pornographic to the Western eye since, for the Westerner, there is no motive perceptible other than lust. With the absence of sexual expression in the context of religion, the Westerner is unable to conceive of these descriptions of sex as descriptions of a search for enlightenment. The only possible motive for him is lust, inordinate sexual desire.

The sexual hang-ups of the West make it impossible for the Westerner to understand fully the sexual expressions found in Indian religious art as other than sexual depravity, but from the Indian point of view, the Westerner leaves out a major part of the human experience and the approach to spirituality when he or she eliminates the all-embracing Mother, and the accompanying sexual ramifications from relevance to life itself.

Notes:

1. "*Mahayana*" or "大乘" Buddhism, which developed especially in Tibet shows its Hindu roots more than "*hinayana*" or "小乘" Buddhism.

2. "West" or "Western" is used throughout this paper to indicate the areas of the world dominated by the influence of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
3. The Kama Sutra is given to young unmarried women in India, not as a "How-to" guide to sex, but as a primer to help the young wife achieve a peaceful and happy home life. As such it not only includes descriptions of sex, but on home decoration and cooking as well. The average Westerner never sees those chapters or at least shows little interest in them.
4. Wearing shoes in holy places is always forbidden: Taj Mahal, temples of Shiva, those of Buddha, including the caves at Ajanta and Ellora; and even the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi; and the "Mother India" temple in Augurabado which housed a huge relief map of India, constructed at the urging of Mahatma Gandhi in 1937.
5. Religion and mythology are actually the same thing, it only depends on the viewpoint of the person. Any believer in a religion does not want his beliefs labeled "mythology" simply because the word has come to include the meaning of falsehood.
6. Only recently have many of the "additions" been removed, but a few vital ones are still not acceptable to Rome and remain in place.
7. They still apparently think so.
8. One explanation is that Moses, in his exile from Egypt went to live in Madian and married into a tribe there, according to Exodus 2-3. There he learned and associated with Yaweh at Mt. Horeb. It was this Yaweh that became the god of the Hebrews, a singular male god of herdsmen and hunters.
9. Krishna, the fifth incarnation of Vishnu, was certainly known as a playboy, and loved several beautiful nymphs, among them Radha, who is said also to be the reincarnation of Vishnu's consort, Lakshmi, who followed him in each reincarnation out of love.
10. Except that in the Illiud, in which Hera uses a belt borrowed from Aphrodite to trick Zeus into sleeping with her in order to keep his attention away from aiding the Trojans against the Greeks. It is hard to label this "mutual love" however.
11. Bedi, Anjula: *Gods & Goddesses of India*; Eeshwar, India: P.62
12. Sinha, Indra; Kama Sutra, Introduction: Bookwise (India) PVT LTD New Delhi;1999, p.9.
13. Parvati had her newly-formed son guard the door while she took a bath. When Shiva came to see Parvati, Ganesh would not allow him to enter and, angered, he cut off the head of Ganesh. This grieved Parvati greatly and, feeling remorse,

- Shiva went in search of another head and found an elephant, whose head he brought back and attached to Ganesh's body. Today the Elephant-headed Ganesh is seen everywhere in India, especially at the entrances to shops.
14. There are four Vedas: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Samur Veda and Atharva Veda.
 15. This is the same as "Aum" made famous in Japan by the Aum Shinrikyo (オウム真理教).
 16. When it comes to Buddha, the eighth avatar of Vishnu, (an historical figure) the avatar of Lakshmi becomes somewhat vague, however.
 17. She gives her name to the practice of Sutee, in which the widowed woman threw herself on the funeral pyre of her husband, a practice prevalent in India until recent times.
 18. In the case of Ganga, the cooperation of the god Shiva is needed to keep her from destroying the earth, a clear reference to the yearly flooding of the river during the rainy season.
 19. Novick, Leah: Encountering the Shekinah, *The Jewish Goddess: The Goddess Re-Awakening*: The Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Ill., 1992: p.205.
 20. Patai, Raphael: *The Hebrew Goddess*; Wayne State University Press, Detroit; 1990, p.35.
 21. The Holy Bible; *Canticle of Canticles*; chapt. 4.
 22. As did many other mother goddess such as Artemis.
 23. Corinthians, Chapt. 12, vs. 9.
 24. Mary is a "benevolent" Great Mother without the fearsome aspects of Devi or Kali. She is, however depicted like Devi, wielding a sword against a devil above the north entrance of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.
 25. The Virgin Birth and Immaculate Conception are often confused. The former refers to not having been impregnated by man, the latter to not having inherited the sin of Adam. The former concerns the birth of Christ, while the latter, Mary's own birth.
 26. "Enlightenment" is used here to translate the Hindu word "*mokusha*," which might be better translated "Nirvana" or "涅槃".
 27. Until recently there was law in India that prohibited kissing in movies.
 28. The words "public morals" I use in their customary sense to indicate attitudes toward sex. It would be better, perhaps to say "sexually-related activities in public."
 29. From Kenneth Clark's *Civilization*.
 30. Even in these painting the vulva was never openly displayed. And even in so-

- called "soft porn" on TV, which considers itself somewhat beyond the pale of society, the vulva is always "mosaiced" out.
31. *The Kojiki*; Trans. Chamberlain, Basil Hall: Charles E. Tuttle Co.:Tokyo, 1981; p.64.
 32. A recent poll taken in the United States reported that over 80 percent of the people living in the U.S. believe that there is a "heaven" and all but a very few believe they are "going" there. (CNN report, Dec.25, 2003).
 33. There is an Indian wine called "Satori" made from the Merlot grape in the State of Padesh. I made some enquiries as to the source of the name but got no response. My guess is that someone wanted to relate it to "enlightenment" without being disrespectful to religious non-drinking Hindus.
 34. A statement, which the Franciscans would dispute, since their own Duns Scotis was of a different discipline, and disputed Aquinas' philosophy on several points, including the efficacy of free will.
 35. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines "*kundalini*" as:"latent female energy believed to lie coiled at the base of the spine."
 36. Sinha, Indra: Introduction to the Kama Sutra; Bookwise, Pvt Ltd., New Delhi:1999; p10.
 37. Sinha, p. 10
 38. Wilken, Robert L.: *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*: Yale University Press, New Haven, 1984: p.19.
 39. Bhagwan Shree Rajisheen is well known in India, but infamous in the United States. He ran a commune in Oregon for a while which, because of the sexual practices there was the object of a great amount of protest among the local citizens. Rajneesh left the U.S. and has since died, though many of the communes he founded still continue.
 40. Frost, Gavin and Yvonne: *Tantric Yoga*; Samuel Weiser, York Beach, Me.: 1994: p. xvii. For sale only in India.
 41. Rajneesh, Bhagwan Shree: *Tantra Spirituality & Sex*: Rajneesh Foundation International, Oregon : 1976: p.97.