



Shiva Shakti union – Celebration of sexual celibacy

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Abstract

The article intends to explore the enigmatic union of Shiva and Parvati in their physical and metaphysical core as Purush and Prakriti represented in the Shiva lingam. Shiva is known as a perpetual ascetic who is Kamavijayi or the one that has conquered amorous desire. His consort Parvati was also deprived from procreation by Kamadeva's consort Rati after her husband was turned to ashes by the fury of Lord Shiva. This creates an interesting mystery around the issue of their physical intimacy and still we find the most powerful connotation of the union of male and female sexuality in the emblem of the Shiv lingam which denotes the intersection of the phallus and the yoni that engenders the process of reproduction.

The article examines the paradox in this image and tries to unfold the sublime masculine and feminine energies ingrained in the Shiva lingam which make Shiva Parvati union much more than just a denotation of the male and female sexual union. Furthermore, the article explores the manner in which this spiritualism intrinsic in the Shiva Shakti union represents the harmony executed by the divine masculine and feminine energies to engender and retain the process of creation and sustenance of the universe.

India being a spiritual country has uplifted the union of Shiva and Shakti from its earthly level to its metaphysical dimension. Nonetheless, it has also acknowledged that this transcendence cannot be possible without a physical unification which is the reason we find this in the sexual paradigm of the lingam as well as in certain artistic endeavours of the country which also carve the image of their physical union quite prominently. In the Indian context, the union of Shiva and Shakti is an acknowledgement of the purusha and prakriti union both, in its sexual as well as asexual plane. Therefore, I call this a sexual celibacy because ARDHANARESHWARA – congruence of Shiva and Shakti dismisses the division of male and female and therefore gives us the possibilities of understanding them both as undivided whole. In this case, their sexual union remains a matter of worldly phenomenon but it is this very material reality that leads us towards manifesting their sacred union as the divine purusha and prakriti who are already united in their 5D space. The lingam of Shiva denotes the way to identify the perpetually indivisible masculine and feminine divinities and helps us to solve this enigma in my viewpoint.

Keywords: Shiv, Shakti, Shivlingam, Purusha Prakriti

INTRODUCTION

When the lord and master of the universe (Shiva) adorns celibacy, he knows that he's still bound to initiate marital life in order to bless the world. Shiva's perpetual alliance with Parvati, his consort is a matter of speculation. Many have given the *Shivlingam* the prestige of personifying the physical union of the divine forms –Shiv and Shakti in the paradigm that is touted as the epitome of the sexual affinity between masculine phallus and the feminine yoni. The fact yet remains that Shiva is famous as a perpetual nomadic ascetic and Kamavijayi – the one that has won over the cupid's indomitable bow. This duality in the Lord's persona has led up to acknowledge the sexual celibacy that governs his sacred sanctified image as the *Mahakala*.

The sexual/ union of Shiva-Shakti

The conjectures about their actual sexual union after their marriage have been many since time immemorial. For instance, *Mahakavikalidasa* in his magnum opus *Kumarasambhavam* spoke magnificently of this sexual union only to

bring a curse upon himself. The holy goddess Parvati inflicted anger on the bard stating that he wasn't supposed to be audacious enough to depict a private moment of those who were revered figures known to be the mother and father of the universe. This led the poet to compose the sacred epic *Raghuvansham* in order to ward off the hex by honouring the sanctity in the Purush Prakriti union of the Maryadapurushottam Ram and his equally righteous Anugamini Siya. *Ramayana* celebrates the divinity in masculine and feminine togetherness. It is to be understood that Ram and Siya when subjected to exile weren't supposed to boost their sexual energies and hence during the fourteen years of their forest dwelling, they did not have any child. Lav Kush are born later after their return to Ayodya when Sita finally gets pregnant; of course, she is abandoned after this and unfortunately has to give birth to Lav Kush in exile once again. The sacred text *Ramayana* celebrates divine union more than sexual union; Ram and Sita are inseparable, moments of togetherness that they spent are neither prioritized nor even mentioned except for the readers to assume that the sexual union was fundamental to engender the birth of their sons. Bhavabhuti does this very sacredly in *Uttarramacharitam*,

किमपिकिमपि=मन्दमन्दमासक्तियोगात्
 अविरलितकपोलंजल्पतोरक्रमेण ।
 अशिथिलपरिरम्भव्यापृतैकैकदोषोः
अविदितगतयामा रात्रिरेव व्यरंसीत् ॥

"We were sitting close together, our cheeks touching and arms in a tight embrace, chatting aimlessly about all kinds of things — the night itself went by before we knew it!"

It is important to acknowledge here that *Ramayana* was meant for a different purpose. It was to promulgate idealistic living to the human society. Therefore, sexual union is never prioritized in the religious text. Even the sexual attraction between Rama and Sita is tacit as is seen clearly in the above verse. Indian subcontinent has also been culturally abstaining with regards to 'sex' and matters of sexual intercourse in relations to the deities have always been effaced as a tabooed matter. It is interesting to note here that while religion in India has discouraged abounding sexual depictions of Indian deities, ancient artistic tradition of India does not refrain from giving us such illustrations unabashedly on the carvings of ancient temples or historical monuments. Sexual activity of lord Shiva and his wife Parvati is depicted on a sculptured wall of 12th century Hindu Hoysaleswara temple in Halebidu, India. Such illustrations blur the distinction of the sacred and profane making complex dualism a salient feature of Indian culture.



Amorous images of Shiva and Parvati are depicted by Bundi painters. Ragini Madhu Madhavi is a miniature worth seeing in which the aspect of 'sex' finds prominence in the depictions like Shiva Parvati embracing each other showing the pleasure they find in love union during the night time.

There has been much critique of modern art <https://english.newsnationtv.com/india/news/nude-paintings-of-hindu-deities-spark-controversy-1768.html> that acknowledges sexual activity as a fundamental aspect of divine union in the

masculine and feminine energies. Shiva and Shakti union has been a subject matter of perpetual interest and discussion on account of the PHALLIC LINGAM which is been regarded as a sexual emblem signifying the physical unification of the phallus and the yoni the paradigm of the male and female sex organs. On the other hand, it also implies the asexual commitment on their part towards uniting their subtle but equally powerful SEXLESS energies that are capable to engender creation observing the most obstinate celibacy which is why we call Shiv as the married ascetic – the celibate having powerfully won the KAMA. When he incinerates Kamadev or cupid as we popularly know him, Shiv unabashedly declares himself as advocating abstinence from sex. Parvati also receives a curse from Rati who incapacitates her procreation calibre. This is in fact her implicit vow towards retaining the abstinence that her man is actually committed to. Such an inspiring union requires mutual indefatigable urge and insurmountable love to manifest into a reality.

CONCLUSION

For me is Shiva Parvati union is an already existent phenomenon that requires extraordinary TAPA- penance to happen in the 3D world – material world because it is not an easy goal to accomplish. While the masculine –purusha is thoroughly controlled as far as his amorous feelings are concerned, despite being solely dedicated to him and his preferences to estrange worldly attraction and enticements, prakriti has to lure him towards her in order to create a child that could destroy the asura-demon TARAKASURA. Kartikeya is born out of the divine energies that unite to procreate and this is the magnificence of the pious love that blends these two divinities in spite of compensating with worldly idea of procreation.

The union is not on the physical plane but is on a metaphysical plane indeed wherein the body becomes the means to fructify the soul and Parvati has to reach to this level of heightened enlightenment before she could dream of marrying the awesome ascetic who is far from acknowledging his sexual affinity with her. It is therefore a rigorous penance for several epochs Parvati does in order to traverse the range of material zone that thwarts her self-realization of being the equally POWERFUL SATI – THE SHAKTI and the PRAKRITI who could energize the vitality and the inclination in the Purusha to procreate for the good of the universe. This is the union of two celibates who enjoy their sexual proximity by the means of asceticism.

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