# What is Śiva Linga?

*Refuting Left hand meanings and establishing its true meaning with scriptural references*




Somnath Shivalinga

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# Is Śiva Linga a phallic Symbol? Do we Hindus worship private parts? What is Śiva Linga?

Namaste,

Shiva / Śiva is one of the trinity representing Destructive aspect. Other two are Creative aspect represented by Brahmā jī and preservative aspect by Vishnu ji (Viṣṇu jī). However, it is well known that Purāṇās teach us that a formless Brahman manifests in different forms. This formless aspect different from trinity and creator of trinity. Viṣṇu Purāṇa describes Bhagavāna Viṣṇu as the creator preserver and destroyer of the universe. It is from him, the formless Viṣṇu, that the Trinity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu [deity of preservation] and Maheśa (Śiva) are created and they carry out their work. The trinity are having a definite form and get their power from the formless Viṣṇu. This can be found in Viṣṇu Purāṇa 1.2.1-4

Similarly, according to the Upanishads, the formless Brahman is also known as Ātmasvarūpa or Pratyagātmān or Śiva or Puruśa (Purusha). It is from Śiva that the whole universe is created.

For the sake of devotion, this formless Brahman is eulogized as having forms in various Purāṇas.

## Three Types of Brahman as mentioned by Puri Shankaracharya

There are three types of Brahman – Saguṇa Sākāra, Saguṇa Nirākāra and Nirguṇa Nirākāra. With reference to Śiva, we are understand them as -

**Saguṇa Sākāra** is the Bhagāvāna Śankara (Shankara) who holds Trishul (Trident) and Damru i.e. he is Trishula Dhārī.

**Saguṇa Nirākāra** Brahman is omnipresent formless Īshvara from which the whole world is created. Śiva Linga is the representation of Saguṇa Nirākāra Brahman.

**Nirguṇa Nirākāra** is the Śiva, which is the formless Brahman or Ātmā / Ātman which is untouched by creation. It is Sat-Chit-Ānanda, none without a second.

# The Śiva Linga

Due to convoluted interpretation of the word 'Linga', it is described as the male Genital Organ and Yoni, the base, as Female Genital Organ, Śiva Linga is often described as the sexual symbol of intercourse. However, this is not true. We will understand the true meaning of both words 'Śiva' and 'Linga'

The root word (dhatu – धातु) of Śiva is 'śī' (शी) and it means 'In which everything lies'. So, the whole world, the entire universe lies inside Śiva Tattva. Śiva also means 'auspiciousness' and is the very nature of Ātmā (आत्मा) / Ātman (आत्मन् ). Śiva (शिव) is Brahma (ब्रह्म) / Brahman (ब्रह्मन् ) different from the creator Brahmā (ब्रह्मा), the creator.

## The meaning of Śiva as per Śrimad Bhāgavat Purāṇa

**Verse BP 8.7.29 defines Siva as a state of consciousness**

BP 8.7.29: sadyojAta etc five vedic mantras are represented by your five faces [1], from which 38 celebrated vedic mantra-s are created. **When you arise beyond guNa-s and are established in your Self, then this state is called as 'Siva' (Siva-Akhyam). In reality, it is the same Self Effulgent paramArtha-tatva (supreme consciousness).**

[1] Five vedic mantra-s are (1) *puruSa,* (2) *aghora,* (3) *sadyojAta,* (4) *vAmadeva,* and (5) *ISAna*

panca-brahma-upanishad says:

P.B. Up. 40-41: In the body, which depends upon indestructible brahman, there is a dahara (heart), which is the resting place of brahman, also known as punDarika i.e. kamala (lotus), [brahman] is established in this heart-space. Those who wish to get liberated (moxa, moksha) should search sat-chit-Anand Siva in this heart-space. Siva is always seated in heart and is a witness of all [activities]. In this way heart is called as Siva-svarUpa, this heart is called as the emancipator i.e. that which liberates [one] from samsAra.

For more details, please visit https://www.advaita-vedanta.in/vishnu#h.psfqajqqcl2n

## Formless Cannot have Gender, hence no sex is possible

Since the true form of Śiva is 'formless', a formless, omnipresent, immovable Brahman cannot have any gender and so cannot have any organ for reproduction. Since it is present everywhere, it does not need to move i.e. any kind of movement is not possible. Hence there is no question of Śiva Linga, which represents Śiva, as a phallic symbol of Śiva. Similarly, Yoni is formless shakti or energy of

Brahman. So it also cannot be taken as female reproductive organ vagina. Hence Śiva Linga does not represent the 'Intercourse' or simply 'Sex'.

### Śiva Linga and not Śankara Linga or Maheśa Linga or Rudra Linga

One must have noted that with the word 'Linga' only word 'Śiva' is associated and not any other name of Śiva like Maheśa (often mentioned as a part of Trinity – Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa) or Rudra which is associated with one who makes one cry, or anger or sorrow or is remover of sorrow and also as Bhagavāna. All other names do have forms, but Śiva is formless and this is mentioned not only in Bhagavāta Purāṇa, but expectedly in Śiva Purāṇa and Linga Purāṇa too.

## Meaning of Śiva Linga as mentioned by Puri Shankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Sarasvati

The meaning of the word Linga and also the true meaning of the word is explained by Puri Shankracharya Swami Nischalananda Sarasvati (YouTube Channel name Govardhan Matha, Puri) and Swami Avimukteshvaranand Sarasvati (YouTube Channel name 1008.guru), disciple of Jyotir Matha Shankarachraya Svaroopananda Sarasvati.

Videos relevant to the topic available on Youtube -

- ✔ Meaning of 'Linga' in Śiva-linga – Puri Shankracharya Swami Nischalananda Sarasvati (Govardhan Peetham)
- ✔ वाणलिङ्ग और शिवलिंग में क्या अन्तर है?? लड़कियां 'शिवलिंग' स्पर्श कर सकती हैं क्या? #प्रश्नप्रबोधः - Swami Avimukteshvaranand Sarasvati (1008.guru)

The author, Amrut, has extracted the meaning and compiled it in his own words from these two sources. Amrut has also added many more references from Purāṇas and other sāśtras.

## Different meanings of the word Śiva Linga and Yoni

The explanation is given in brief. Relevant slokas are given later. References from sāśtras are not quoted in the order in which they are mentioned here in brief.

1. Entire kāśī (Kashi town) is known as rūpa of Śiva. (Ref: Śiva Purāṇa SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 5.17, 6.29-32). Śiva and Pārvatī (Śakti) are inseparable and permanently reside in Kāśī. Kāśī

is also known as Varanasi or Banaras. Varah + Nāsi = Vārānāsī. Nasiikā means nostrils. Vārānāsī means the point between two nostrils or the Ājñā Chakra (Agya Chakra / Ajna Chakra).

2. As per Nyaya, Linga (लिङ्ग) means a form or representation or an indicator (chinha चिन्ह) or an evidence or an inference. For example, if one sees smoke constantly rising from a location, then one infers that there is a fire in the place from where one sees rising smoke. Since smoke leads one to infer fire, it is an indicator i.e. a linga. In the same way the true nature of Śiva is beyond perception, beyond mind, but was seen as pillar of consciousness. Śiva Linga represents formless aspect of Śiva. This is explained later by citing Śiva and Linga Purāṇa.

3. Worship of Śiva Linga is said to be the worship of entire cosmos and all devi-devatās. It also indicates that the trinity exists in Śiva Linga. The bottom 1/3rd part is known to represent Brahmā jī, Middle 1/3rd to be Viṣṇu jī and top 1/3rd to be Maheśa jī or Śiva jī. Refer Bilvāṣṭakam - 8 (Bilvashtakam, बिल्वाष्टकम).

4. The word , Linga (लिङ्ग) has many meaning other than penis or phallus. It includes an emblem (Object or Symbol that represents something), evidence, mark (symbol), indicator, inference, conclusion, gender, image of God, 'Invariable mark which proves the existence of anything in an object', etc. The word for male genital organ (penis) is Shishna (शिश्न). Linga (लिङ्ग) in sanskrit, Hindi grammar means gender like Pullinga (male), Srilinga (Female) and Napunsaka Linga (neuter). It does not only indicate private part or genital organs. Genital organ is known as Shishna (शिश्न).

5. Like Linga, Yoni (योनि), apart from being known as Śakti (Shakti), it also has different meanings like seed (bīja), womb (garbha), place of rest, race (Human race (manuṣhya yoni), animal race (paśu yoni), race of Demi-God (deva yoni), etc), adobe, place of rest, origin, form of existence, etc. It is sometimes also known as Kuṭstha. Yonī (योनी) has one of the meanings as vagina. Vagina has many names like धारका (Dhārakā), प्रजनु (Prajanu), सम्बाध (Sambādha), योनी (Yonī), etc. Notice the difference between Yoni (योनि) and Yonī (योनी), the 'e' 'इ' is rasva (small) in Yoni (योनि) – shakti and dirgha (bigger) 'ई' in Yonī (योनी) – vagina.

6. Viṣṇu is mentioned as Yonī in SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) Ch. 8, Slokas 16-17. It also represents the letter 'u' of the mantra A-U-M.

7. Śiva Gita 14.20-21 mentions the word Linga Śarīra (लिङ्ग शरीर) meaning subtle body. Here Linga means subtle. (Ref: Śiva Gita, Hindi Translation by Nandalal Dashora. Page 334. Slokas and Translation given at the end of the page.).

8. Śiva Linga is the manifestation of Śiva. Yoni means Shakti. Śiva Linga means Śiva and Shakti. Both are inseparable. Śiva is like an Axle which remains stable (unmoved) and is the basis upon which the cart wheel moves. This stable axle is known as Śiva and the bottom part is known as Yoni which

means Shakti. So Śiva, who is immovable, stable, infinite acts as the ādhāra or canvas upon which Ādi Shakti, Māyā acts like painting made on canvas. Canvas is Śiva, and the painting is the divine act of creation, sustenance, and destruction.

9. In Shvetāshvatara Upanishad Sh. Up. 1.13-14 the words 'yoni' and 'linga' are used. Ādi Śankarāchārya jī in his commentary has explained the words 'yoni' as 'araṇi'. Araṇi is the wooden stick used to kindle fire. 'Linga' means 'sukshmarūpa'. 'Sukshma' means 'subtle' and 'rūpa' means 'form'. So the word Linga means 'Subtle form'. Detailed explanation is given later with Śānkara Bhāshya.

10. In Shvetāshvatara Upanishad Sh. Up. 6.9, the word 'linga' is used as 'chinha' or indicator or a sign from which one can infer or conclude. Śānkara Bhāshya gives the same example of smoke as linga as given in point #2.

It says 'Dhumādirūpa'.

Dhuma-ādi-rūpa.

Dhum = smoke,

adi = etc and

rūpa = form.

It means in a form like smoke. Sloka explains that there is no visible indicator of the presence of Brahman / Ātman. Detailed explanation is given later with Śānkara Bhāshya.

11. As per Śiva and Linga Purāṇa, once there was a pillar of light. Here light is to be taken as consciousness. From it emerged both Brahmā and Viṣṇu. There was a discussion amongst them who is greater. Then it turned into a fight. This happened at the time of dissolution. In order to solve this issue and grant them wisdom, a linga, infinite pillar of light manifested between the two Gods. When asked to prove who is superior, the voice said, find my beginning and end. Brahmā ji went to top i.e. above to find the beginning while Viṣṇu jī went downwards to find the end. Both could not find it and accepted that this Pillar which represents Śiva is infinite without beginning and end. This is pillar of consciousness or Brahman. Śiva Linga represents this pillar of infinite consciousness. This story reflects in Śiva and Linga Puraṇa too. In Śiva Puraṇa, it is the infinite pillar of Agni or fire manifests.

12. As per both Śiva and Linga Purāṇa, creation happens from OM. The letter A-U-M represents the trinity. OM manifested from the Linga (infinite pillar of light). 'u' is said to be the cause of Viṣṇu which is the 'yoni'. 'a' drops into 'u' and a golden egg is formed. From this the creator is formed and then creation happens. Ref: Linga Purāṇa, Part 1, 17-56. Śiva Purāṇa, SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) Ch. 8, Slokas 16-22.

13. As per Skambha Sukta of Atharva Veda, entire cosmos is within the Skambha which is pillar of light or fire. Skambha Sukta X-7.2,4,6,7,8,12, etc, X-8.2,12, 23,25,37,38 and many more slokas.

14. Swami Avimukteshvarananda ji in YouTube video (see from 1:50 – 2:10) says, Linga means, 'līnam artham gamyate iti lingam' (लिनम् अर्थम् गम्यते इति लिङ्गम्) meaning 'That which indicates the meaning (artha) of the word 'lina' (लिन) is known as 'lingam' '. Linga means Chinḥa (चिन्ह), Pratika (प्रतीक), Linga means - which acts as a symbol or representation of Śiva. It is Bhagavāna Śiva's manifestation.

15. Now, regarding the shape of Linga for which it is criticized as Phallic symbol. Puri Shankaracharya ji says that there are two types of Śiva Lingas. One which is manmade, and the power of Śiva is invoked into Linga i.e. Prāṇapratiṣhṭha (प्राणप्रतिष्ठा) or consecration ceremony is done. Another one is svayambhū linga (स्वयम्भू लिङ्ग) which occurs naturally from nature or mother earth. First linga is said to be the manifestation of Śiva, but Svayambhu Linga is the Śiva itself. It is more powerful then the man made one.

16. Patanjali Yoga Sutras mentions words Linga and Alinga in 2-19 which means undifferentiated and differentiated as per the Vyāsa Bhāśya and sub commentary by Vāchaspatī Mishra. *(added on 19-12-2022)*

17. Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.2.3 Śankara Bhāśya uses the word 'linga' to denote 'evidence' *(added on 29-12-2022)*

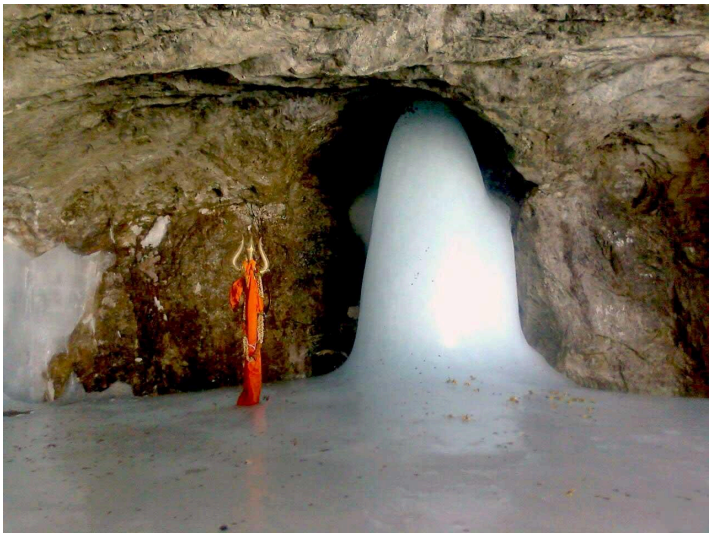
## Kedarnath and Amarnath Śiva Linga

One can search for picture of such a svayambhu Linga known as Jyotirlinga known as Kedarnath. It is a natural stone looking like a mountain top.



Kedarnath Jyotirlinga (Source)

Can anyone imagine that this is a Phallic Symbol? Do you even see the base i.e,. Yoni. Also note that this type of Śiva Linga which is known as Jyotirlinga is a Svayambhū Linga, meaning that which has not been artificially created by men but found naturally upon excavation. These Śiva Lingas are considered to be very powerful having intense, powerful, transforming energy within them.



Amarnath Śiva Linga (Source)

Amarnath Śiva Linga is also naturally formed Śiva Linga made up of ice. It occurs only once a year. As one can see there is no specific base. The Yoni is the floor itself.

Twelve Jyotirlingas along with Amarnath are considered as most powerful. One can know about the twelve Jyotirlingas here and here.

## Other Śiva Lingas

There are other Śiva lingas which has Hexagon at the base of Linga. Some even have square Yoni. Yoni is generally round so that there is no stagnant water and all water or any liquid offered is drained out.




Natural Śiva Linga Stones found in Riverbed (Source)



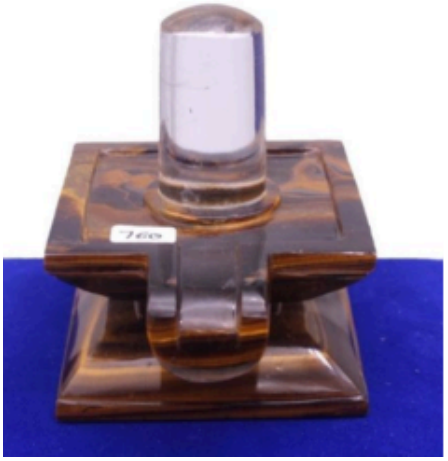


Natural Śiva Linga Stones (Source image 1, Source image 2)

**Note:** Śiva Linga found In Narmada Riverbed is known as Bāṇalinga (बाणलिङ्ग / बाणलिंग). They are considered more potent than other Śiva Lingas.








Śiva Linga with square and hex base (Source 1, Source 2, Source 3, Source 4)




Unique Śiva Linga (Source)

Further Google search will give more unique Śiva Lingas.

# Story of Lingodbhava – Origin or manifestation of Śiva Linga (Śiva Linga) from Linga Purāṇa

The story (kathā, कथा) of Lingodbhava i.e. origin of Linga occurs in Part 1, Chapter 17.

It is a long story from sloka 1 to 48 and then it goes on to explain the creation of universe from OM. How the 'a', 'u' and 'm' of the OM. We will cover only the relevant slokas.

**Linga Purāṇa eulogies Śiva and gives the meaning of the word 'Linga'**

ऋशय उचु:

कथं लिंगमभूल्लिंगे समभ्यर्च्यः स शङ्करः ॥ १७.२ ॥

किं लिङ्गं कस्तथा लिङ्गी सूत वक्तुमुहार्हसि ।

Linga Puraṇa, Part 1, 17.2: The Ṛṣis spoke – What was the origin of linga? How was Śiva adored in the form of linga? What is meant by linga? What is linga? O Sūta, you reveal everything to us.

पितामह उवाच

प्रधानम लिङ्गमाख्यातं लिङ्गी च परमेश्वरः ॥ १७.५ ॥

Linga Puraṇa, Part 1, 17.5: Linga is the pradhāna (prakriti, māyā) and Lingī is the Parameshvara (Śiva) himself

Note: Here the linga is mentioned as 'pradhāna' which indicates Śakti. Pradhāna also means the prominent one. Slokas says the controller of linga is Śiva (Parameśvara).

Slokas 6-13 described the origin of Linga.

Linga Puraṇa, Part 1, 17.6-13: Extract: Linga appeared by itself from the ocean for the protection of Brahmā and Viṣṇu. It appeared at the times of dissolution. It was both sat and asat.

Note: Being both sat and asat means this pilar of light or consciousness is beyond empirical reality and represents formless Brahman.

Slokas 15-32 describes the common narrative i.e. the fight for superiority between Brahmā and Viṣṇu. In order to put an end to this conflict a linga appears.

Linga Purāṇa, Part 1, 17.33:

In the meantime, a linga (pillar) appeared in front of us in order to end our dispute and to enlighten us.

Linga Purāṇa, Part 1, 17.34:
It had thousands of clusters of flame (jvāla, Jwala). It was comparable with hundreds of all consuming flames / fries. It was stable with no decline or increase. It was without beginning and end.

Linga Purāṇa, Part 1, 17.35:
It was beyond comparison, inexplicable and indistinct …

## Creation from OM from Śiva linga in Linga Purāṇa

Linga Purāṇa, Part 1, 17.49:
O great Gods, then a loud sound of OM (AUM) came out of the pillar (linga). It was clearly a protected nāda (sound).

Linga Purāṇa, Part 1, 17.50-51:

Thinking as to what it could be, Viṣṇu stood there with me (Brahmā). Then, he saw the first letter 'a' on the right side of the linga, then the letter 'u' was seen on the left side. Therefore, the letter 'm' was found in the middle and the vibratory sound at the end. This formed the word 'OM'

Linga Purāṇa, Part 1, 17.52-55:
Viṣṇu saw the first syllable 'a' in the south like the disc of the sun, the second syllable 'u' as refulgent as fire in the north, the third 'm' in the middle as refulgent as the sphere of the moon and above it, he saw the lord like the pure crystal It was the fourth entity, devoid of attributes, nectarine, unsullied, undisturbed, devoid of mutually clashing opposites, unique, void, without an interior or exterior, as it was stationed both inside and outside. It was devoid of beginning, middle [and end] an besides being the cause of bliss.

Linga Purāṇa, Part 1, 17.56:
The three mātras (मात्रा) and half mātra called nāda together constitute Brahman …

**Note:** This story explains the creation of universe from OM i.e. A-U-M. 'a' is like Sun, 'u' is like fire and 'm' is like moon. These are all said to be brilliant spheres. The fourth entity is beyond these spheres. It is formless attributeless Brahman beyond creation.

These three letters also imply three nāḍīs – iḍā, pingalā and suṣhumnā. iḍā is cool, representing moon. Pingalā is hot representing Sun and suṣhumnā is represented by fire which indicates consciousness. It is through these nāḍīs that the prāṇa (energy) flows. When Kuṇḍalini flows through both iḍā and pingalā a yogī has divine experiences. But when both of them merge in 'm' suṣhumnā and Kuṇḍalini flows upwards through suṣhumnā upto sahasrāra chakra then one enters the state of samādhi. These are also represented by letter 'a', 'u' and 'm'. The fourth sthiti is known as turiyā. It is beyond māyā. It is represented by the crescent moon adorned by Śiva. In OM it is known as 'chandrabindu' – the fourth aspect of OM which is silence or peace. It is the nirguṇa Brahman of the Upanishads. It is the Śiva. Moon also represents mind. Śiva wears it as a jewel

indicates Śiva has total control over mind and he himself is beyond mind i.e. his true form is beyond the comprehension of mind and five senses.

## Story of Lingodbhava – Origin or manifestation of Śiva Linga (Śiva Linga) from Śiva Purāṇa

**Śiva Puraṇa also eulogises Śiva as Supreme Brahman from whom Trinity is created.**

Śiva Purāṇa , Rudra Samhitā, Chapter 1, Sloka 17

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation), 1.17: Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa – all three have been born of the aṁśa (part) of Śiva. Out of them Maheśa is pūrṇa aṁśa , therefore Śiva is the supreme tattva.

Śiva Purāṇa , Rudra Samhitā, Chapter 5, Sloka 30

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation), 5.30: Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa – all three have been born of the aṁśa (part) of Śiva. Out of them Maheśa is pūrṇa aṁśa , therefore Śiva is the supreme tattva.

Note: Both SP RS Creation 1.17 and 5.30 are same slokas.

**Śiva is both Nirguṇa and Saguṇa**

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation), 5.25: O Dear one, how could Śiva who is absolute and nirguṇa (free from attributes), become saguṇa (full of attributes) as Śankara ? Having been overpowered with the māyā of Śiva, I remained unaware of the tattva of Śiva.

### Entire Kāśī (Kashi) is the form of Śiva

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 5.17: The sage Nārada has the best of all in the sphere of grace and he ultimately reached the city of Kāśī which was the form of Śiva, was comfortable and dear to Śiva.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.28: The best of that place is known as Kāśī. The place bestows salvation, therefore it is considered as superior to all.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.29: The holy place is considered to be the place of supreme bliss, because the primordial lovers who were extremely blissful, made that lace as their permanent abode.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.30: The city of Kāśī is called an Avimuktakshetra (avimukta-kshetra), the holy place because Śiva and Pārvatī can never be separated from each other even at the time of dissolution.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.31: In ancient times, Pināka – bearing Śiva has initially given the name of Ānandavana (Ānanda-vana) i.e. Blissful forest to this place and subsequently it was known as Avimuktakshetra due to the cause of bliss.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.32: O Nārada, the ṛṣi of the gods, both Śiva and Pārvatī, while roaming in the Ānandavana, developed a desire for creation of another being, entrusting on whom, the entire responsibility, they could move freely in the city of Kāśī, embracing vairagya (detachment).

Note: So Śiva and Pārvatī (Śakti, shakti), lives a detached life in Kāśī.

**Now we will also know how the Śakti was created. It is described in earlier slokas 6.19-21**

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.17: Then he created the auspicious image of Īśvara, then the original being (formless Śiva) who was beyond comparison, eternal, beyond measure, form of consciousness, which illuminates everything, form of pure knowledge, all pervading, indestructive, and supreme Brahman, disappeared.

Note: The formless Śiva who is Brahman is the real Śiva. He created Īśvara who is known as Sadāśiva

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.18: The manifest form of formless being is Sadāśiva who is presently called by the people of wisdom as Īśvara.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.19: The lonely Īśvara produced from his own body everlasting Śakti. This Śakti did not effect his original body in any way.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.20: The said Śakti is variously known as Pradhān-Prakriti, Māyā, Guṇavatī, Parā. She happens to be the creator of Buddhi-tattva (cosmic intelligence) as is unblemished.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 6.21: The same Śakti is also called Ambikā, Prakriti, besides being the mistress of the three worlds. She is the mother of the three Gods (Trinity). She is everlasting and the main cause of the creation.

Note: 6.24 says she alone is known as Māyā, who takes many forms.

**Śiva Purāṇa - Śiva Linga appears**

Once, when Viṣṇu was sleeping, from his navel lotus Brahmā emerged. Both argued about who is superior and a fight began. In order to solve the conflict, a Linga appeared.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 7.47: In the mean time in order to remove (solve) their controversy between us (Brahmā and Viṣṇu), and in order to educate us both, a linga appeared between us.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 7.47: It was beyond the beginning, middle or end and had thousand flames resembling the fire at the time of dissolution.

**Note: Here the linga represents Jvālā Linga (Jwala Linga) or Agni Linga.**

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 7.66: This form cannot be expressed clearly. It is without karma and name. It is without any linga (form) but still appears as a linga and is beyond the path of meditation.

Note: The true nature of Śiva is Nirguṇa and Nirākāra i.e. without attributes, qualities and without form. Hence it is beyond comprehension with our five senses and so it is beyond the path of meditation as an object of meditation.

In the next chapter i.e. SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) Ch. 8, slokas 2-21 describe OM as Śabda Brahman.

## Process of Creation from OM in Śiva Purāṇa

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) Ch. 8, Slokas 16-17 says, from OM trinity were formed or say 'a', 'u' and 'm' ('अ', 'उ', 'म') of AUM (OM) represent Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva respectively. When 'a' dropped in 'u' (yoni) then creation happened.

Sloka 19 says 'u' ('उ') is the yoni of Hari (Viṣṇu). This Viṣṇu tattva originated from 'a' ('अ')

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 8.16:
The syllable 'a'kāra ('अ' कार) is the source of the Lord Brahmā. The single syllable' u'-kāra ( 'उ'कार) is the source of Lord Viṣṇu, the source of ultimate cause.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 8.17:
With the single syllable 'ma'kāra ('म' कार), Lord Śiva (Nilalohita). Creator of sarga (universe) was created from 'a'kāra ('अ' कार) while from 'u'-kāra ('उ' कार) is the enchanter / Attractive one (mohaka) i.e. Viṣṇu of the universe is born.

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 8.18:
'ma'kāra ('म' कार) is always graceful, all pervading as well as the progenitor. 'a'kāra ('अ' कार) is the seed.

शिव पुराण, रुद्र संहिता (सृष्टि खंड), अध्याय ८, स्लोक १९:
**उकाराख्यो हरिर्योनिः** प्रधानपुरुषेश्वरः ।
बीजी च बीजं तद्योनिर्नादाख्यश्च महेश्वरः ॥ १९ ॥
***ukārākhyo hariryoniḥ*** *pradhānapuruṣeśvaraḥ* |
*bījī ca bījaṃ tadyonirnādākhyaśca maheśvaraḥ* || 19 ||

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 8.19:
**The Bīja (seed) [syllable] 'u'-kāra ('उ' कार) is the yoni (योनि) of Hari, who is the Pradhāna-Puruṣa-Iśvara**, meaning the lord of all originated from the bīja (seed) [syllable] 'a'kāra ('अ' कार) nāda is known as Maheśvara.

Another translation:
'u'-kāra ('उ'कार) is the yoni of Hari, who is the source, perceptible, the lord of the primordial nature and primordial being, the progenitor, the lord, arose from the seed – the syllable 'a'kāra ('अ' कार)

Note: When the seed 'a' drops in 'u' golden egg was formed. From it the universe was created. This is mentioned in next few slokas.

शिव पुराण, रुद्र संहिता (सृष्टि खंड), अध्याय ८, स्लोक २०:
बीजी विभज्य चात्मानं स्वेच्छया तु व्यवस्थितः ।
अस्य लिंगादभूद्बीजमकारो बीजिनः प्रभोः ॥ २० ॥

*bījī vibhajya cātmānaṃ svecchayā tu vyavasthitaḥ |*
*asya liṃgādabhūdbījamakāro bījinaḥ prabhoḥ* || 20 ||

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 8.20:
The progenitor is stationed after dividing itself, from whose linga, the lord, arose the seed syllable 'a'kāra ('अ' कार).

शिव पुराण, रुद्र संहिता (सृष्टि खंड), अध्याय ८, स्लोक २१:
**उकारयोनौ** निःक्षिप्तमवर्द्धत समंततः ।
सौवर्णमभवच्चांडमावेद्य तदलक्षणम् ॥ २१ ॥

***ukārayonau*** *niḥkṣiptamavarddhata samaṃtataḥ |*
*sauvarṇamabhavaccāṃḍamāvedya tadalakṣaṇam* || 21 ||

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 8.21:
When the seed was dropped in the yoni named 'u'-kāra ('उ'कार) then it started growing from all the sides and was turned into a golden egg. It was beyond the comprehension of everybody and it has one other symbol (lakshaṇa).

SP Rudra Samhitā (Creation) 8.22:
The divine golden egg lay in the water for a long time. When it was broken after a thousand years, Brahmā emerged out of it.

**Note:** In these slokas the word yoni is used during creation of sound. The yoni is represented by Viṣṇu who is taken as Male. Note that Śakti is different then Viṣṇu in this chapter. Hence there is no question of intercourse. It is commonsense that to create a universe which consist of inert and or non-living things like Mahat tattva and five great elements, there is no need to have sex. Hence Śiva Linga does not represent intercourse. In the present context creation happens from sound OM. Sound is vibration. Sound, vibration and energy are all interconnected. Hence there is no question of convoluted interpretation.

Source:
https://www.getwisdom.in/index.php?mdi=D&flg=N&pmd=W&vip=puran+eng&puran=4+Shiv&sec=3&chap=8&cod=shiva&pn=230&bn1=chap&act=back&bn=page

*Note: For Linga Purāṇa , please select it from the drop down list. This site is best viewed in mobile. If you wish to read it on desktop PC, please click 'restore window' which is inbetween 'minimize' and 'close' symbol.*

## References for Trinity being born out of Viṣṇu and Śiva from Viṣṇu and Bhāgavad Purāṇas

VP 1.2.1-2: srI parASarajI said – **the one who is the cause of brahmA, viShNu (hari) {deity of preservation} and Sankara and assumes the forms** of brahmA, viShNu {deity of preservation} and Sankara for the creation, preservation and destruction of the world (or universe). And who helps his devotees to swim the ocean of samsAra i.e. transcend his devotees beyond samsAra (this transcient world), **that changeless, pure,** indestructible, paramAtmA, always one and uniform (ekarasa), completely victorious (sarvavijayI), my salutations to bhagavAn vAsudeva viShNu.

VP 1.2.3: Inspite of being one, still is [seen] in different forms {appears in different forms}, is of the nature of gross-subtle, is unmanifested {the cause - kAraNa}, and is manifest {effect – kArya} (vyaktarUpa), and is the cause of liberation (mukti) [of his devotees who worship him with continuous devotion / or with feeling 'I am not different from brahman'] [I bow to that bhagavAn viShNu]

VP 1.2.4: The one who is the root cause of the creation, preservation and destruction of this world, I bow to that viShNu paramAtmA.

More details, please visit https://www.advaita-vedanta.in/vishnu#h.cmv99gw1qo4f

**Śiva as Supreme Brahman**

bhAgavat purANa also glorifies Siva as supreme brahman. During samudra-manthan, a deadly poison emerged from the churning. In order to save the universe and all devatA-s and asura-s, brahmA ji along with devatA-s approached bhagavAn Siva. In following verses, Siva is glorified

BP 8.7.21: O deva of devatatA-s mahAdeva! you are the AtmA of all beings and are the life saver of all. We all have come to your refuge. Please save us from this deadly poison which otherwise destroy the whole universe.

BP 8.7.22: Only you are capable of liberating and giving bondage of the world(s). Hence wise persons worship only you, as you are the remover of sorrows of those who have taken refuge in you and are jagadguru (world teacher)

BP 8.7.24: **O prabhu! (O lord) with the help of your own illusive power which consists of three guNa-s, you creation, preserve and destroy this world; though you are one, you manifest (appear) as brahmA, viShNu and Siva.**

BP 8.7.25: You are self effulgent, the reason for this [being self effulgent] is that you are the deeply mysterious brahma-tatva. You are the life giver of all devatA-s, humans, animals, birds, etc whatever is real or unreal, living / moving or non-moving. There is no creation which is not you (i.e. Siva is

present in all living and non-living and Siva is everything. Nothing exists that is not Siva); because, you are everybody's AtmA. By various types of energies (Sakti-s) you are manifested as this world; because you are ISvara and are all-powerful.

## Linga Śarīra as mentioned in Śiva Gītā (Śiva Gita 14.20-21)

Śiva Gita, Chapter 14 – Pancha Koshopapādana (शिव गीता, चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः - पंच कोशोपपादन)

समस्तेभ्यो रजोंऽशेभ्यः पञ्च प्राणादिवायवः ।

जायन्ते सप्तदशकमेवं लिङ्गशरीरकम् ॥ १४.२०॥

From the rajas (activity) aspects of all the elements (ether etc.)., the five vital airs of prana etc., are produced. All these seventeen factors constitute the **subtle body (Linga Śarīra)**

Note: Five Elements are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space (Ether).

Five Pranas are Prāṇa, Vyāna, Udāna, Apāna and Samāna

एतल्लिङ्गशरीरं तु तप्तायःपिण्डवद्यतः ।

परस्पराध्यासयोगात्साक्षिचैतन्यसंयुतम् ॥ १४.२१॥

In the case of the red-hot iron, the iron is made red-hot by the fire. The heat really belongs to the fire. But by mutual superimposition, iron is itself mistakenly referred to as being hot. Similarly, the subtle body is, by superimposition (adhyasa), mistaken for the Witness-Self (Sākshi Chaitanya) and vice-versa, thus initiating all empirical activities. In truth, the Self or Witness does not act. It is the **subtle body (Linga Śarīra)** that is responsible for actions.

Source: Siva Gita English Translation by Dr.P.K. Sundaram, The Centenarian Trust

Śiva Gita translated in Hindi by Nandalal Dashora

**Note:** Online sources, Mahapashupatastra Blog (who has written translation on Śiva Gita) and the version found on Sanskrit Documents website (Śiva Gita Transliterated and Proof read by Shri Sunder Hattangadi) has has slokas nos as 14.23 and 14.24. and The one translated by Dr.P.K. Sundaram has Slokas 14.20 and 14.22. (The author has taken all three Slokas explaining the formation of bodies by all three Guṇas – Tamas, Rajas, and Sattva together from Slokas 14.20 to 14.22.

Nandalal Dashora's edition mentioned slokas 14.20 and 14.21, which are taken into consideration here.

Also note that there is slight variation in sloka 14.21 i.e. 14.24 in both editions.

एतल्लिङ्गशरीरं – Sanskrit Documents

एवं लिङ्गशरीरं – Nandalal Dashora's copy

## Bilvāṣṭakam (Bivashtakam) बिल्वाष्टकम

मूलतो ब्रह्मरूपाय मध्यतो विष्णुरूपिणे ।

अग्रतः शिवरूपाय ह्येकबिल्वं शिवार्पणम् ॥ ८॥

mūlato brahmarūpāya madhyato viṣṇurūpiṇe .

agrataḥ śivarūpāya hyekabilvaṃ śivārpaṇam .. 8..

Worshipping Lord Shiva with a leaf from the Bilva tree which represents

**Brahma, the creator in the root portion**

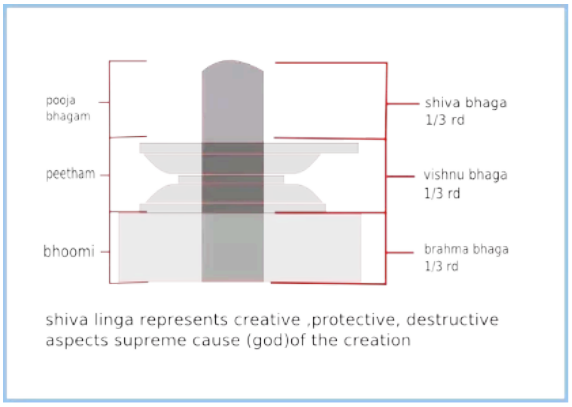
**Vishnu, the sustainer in the middle portion**

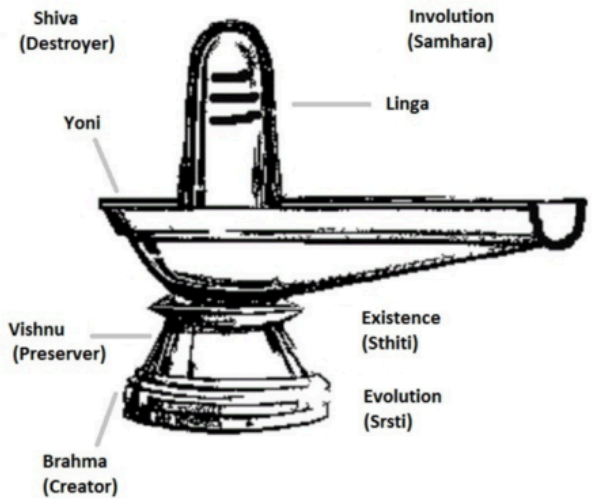
**And Shiva, the destroyer in the top portion**

One can derive Supreme benefit.

I offer one leaf of Bilva to Lord Shiva – Bilvāṣṭakam – 8

*Note: Here the form of Śiva is Saguṇa Nirākāra i.e. Śiva Linga*




Śiva Linga (Image Source 1 / Source 2)

## Lingāṣṭakam लिङ्गाष्टकम्

Lingāṣṭakam is a stotra dedicated to Śiva Linga. It eulogizes Śiva Linga and in the end gives phlashruti meaning the fruit of singing this hymn. Nowhere in the stotra or in phalashruti does it

mention that it is the sexual union. The phalashruti (benefits of singing this hymn Lingāṣṭakam) is given as

ब्रह्ममुरारिसुरार्चितलिङ्गं निर्मलभासितशोभितलिङ्गम् ।
जन्मजदुःखविनाशकलिङ्गं तत् प्रणमामि सदाशिवलिङ्गम् ॥१॥

Brahma-Muraari-Sura-Arcita-Linggam Nirmala-Bhaasita-Shobhita-Linggam |

Janmaja-Duhkha-Vinaashaka-Linggam Tat Prannamaami Sadaashiva-Linggam ||1||

Meaning:

1.1: (I Salute that Eternal Shiva Lingam) Which is Adored by Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and the Gods, which is Pure, Shining, and well-Adorned,

1.2: And which Destroys the Sorrows associated with Birth (and human life). I Salute that Eternal Shiva Lingam.

Source: https://greenmesg.org/stotras/shiva/lingashtakam.php

## Linga in Skambha Sukta of Atharva Veda

Skambha means the pillar. It is known as pillar of light (consciousness) or pillar of agni (agni-linga / jwala-linga). Upon careful study, skambha can be mentioned as the suṣhumnā nāḍī. A yogic process of activating Kuṇḍalini (Śakti) and rising it through Iḍā and Pingalā nāḍīs and then through suṣhumnā nādī rising to sahasrāra chakra uniting with Śiva. It also indicates breathing through Iḍā and Pingalā which the yogis do.

There are two parts of Skambha Sukta in Atharvaveda. X-7 and X-8. Each part has 44 slokas. For the first part, devatā is skambha itself. For the second part, devatā is ātmā or ātman indicating Śiva is the ātman of all.

Excellent commentary is given on both parts of Skambha Sukta by the owner of Mahapashupatastra blog. Amrut humbly request all to read the Skambha Sukta with commentary. It is advised to read the entire article to better understand the commentary.

Please visit Skambha Sukta as explained by Owner of Mahapashupatastra Blog. For those who wish to read sanskrit slokas and their English translation, please visit this link.

## Skambha Sukta PART-I (Atharva Veda X-7)

The 'dēvatā' of this hymn is 'skambha' the 'jyēṣṭhaṁ braḥman'.

2) Out of which member glows the **light of Agni**? Form which proceeds the breath of Mātarisvan? From which doth Chandra measure out his journey, travelling over Skambha's mighty body?

4) Whitherward yearning blazeth Agni upward? Whitherward yearning bloweth Mātarisvan? Who out of many, tell me, is that Skambha to whom with longing go the turning pathways?

Note: Mātarisvan is Prāṇa. Normally, one breaths only through one nostril. However one can activate both nostrils by doing anuloma viloma in which one breaths in from left nostrils and breaths out from right nostrils and vice versa. It is better to breath through both nostrils when in meditation. In this breathing the prāṇa not only indicates air but also energy. So the breathing is energy breathing. Better than both is (breathing through one nostril and breathing through both nostrils) is to breath prāṇa by suṣhumnā. Here the breathing happens from Sahasrāra Chakra. This is the best of all breathing. Sahasrāra chakra represents Śiva while the base of all three nāḍis is kuṇḍalini. This yogic breathing activates kuṇḍalini. It must be done strictly under the guidance of a competent guru, an adept in such kriyas. When one is breathing in, it is Śiva who is actually breathing out. When the yogī exhales upwards, it is inhalation by Śiva. So Jīva's inhalation is Śiva's exhalation and Śiva's is inhalation is Jīva's exhalation. It is the divine sport. Blessed are those yogiis who can do it correctly and experience bliss.

When the divine breath of Śiva touches Śakti, it activates and rises up through iḍā and Pingalā and later both nāḍis merge in suṣhumnā and breathing happens through suṣhumnā only. Rising up, kuṇḍalini Śakti touches sahasrāra and merges in Śiva. This divine union leads way to samadhi. In this union, one's consciousness detaches from jīva bhāvo from chakras, from different bodies, from nāḍīs and experiences infiniteness. This leads to experience of oneness. One proclaims, there is only oneness. Beyond this experience, one by the grace of Śiva who is Ātman, the Brahman, one experiences breathless, pulseless divine state of nirvikalpa samādhi. It happens only by the grace of Śiva. But to attain the grace of Śiva we need the compassionate grace of Śakti, Mā, the mother of us all, Ādi Śakti. Without śakti, one cannot get rid of samsāra. This śakti is both within us and outside us. Within us it manifests as prāṇa, various 10 vāyus like prāṇa, apāna etc. It is also dormant as Kuṇḍalini devī which has to be revered and prayed to be safely awakened under the guidance of an adept yogī. Out of us, she is everything. She is the māyā, the cosmic energy and also the entire creation. It is impossible to rise beyond māyā without her grace and infinite compassion.

My prostrations to Śiva and Śakti the divine couple whose divine sport liberates one form the cycle of birth and death. They both stay permanently at Kāśī which is also known as Vārānāsī meaning varah+nāsī i.e. center between two nostrils at their tip i.e. in between eybrows. It is indeed Ajña chakra (Agya / Ajna chakra). So one can meditate on that spot. They also reside in our heart. Hence one can meditate on anāhata chakra as described in dahar vidyā which says inside the stem of anāhat there is a whole and beyond the hole there is a golden flame or circle. Meditate on this. This

types of meditations must be strictly done under the guidance of an adept yogī. Some people also meditate on anāhat chakra and are filled with divine qualities like spiritual love and bliss. Such meditative practices are hidden in our sāśtras. They are coded, they are encrypted for the good of laymen, for our protection. Capable ones with purified heart and mind can be taught this divine knowledge and must practice under strict guidance of a competent guru.

6) Whitherward yearning speed the two young Damsels, accordant, Day and Night, of different colour? Who out of many, tell me, is that Skambha to whom the Waters take their way with longing?

Note: Here, the symbolism is used. This also indicates that one uses creativity to convey the message. One also uses criptic language to hide the true message.

The famous Yin-Yan is described in many ways In Hinduism (Sanatan Dharma)

Yin-Yan

Ida-Pingala

Soma-Agni

Chandra-Surya

Cold-hot

Night-day

7) Who out of many, tell me, is that Skambha, On whom Prajāpati set up and firmly established all the worlds?

Note: This sloka indicates the world created upon skambha. It means skambha is the substratum of entire universe. It indicates it’s infinite formless nature.

8) That universe which Prajāpati created, wearing all forms,, the highest, midmost, lowest, How far did Skambha penetrate within it? What portion did he leave unpenetrated?

9) How far within the past hath Skambha entered? How much of him hath reached into the future? That one part which he set in thousand places,—how far did Skambha penetrate within it?

12) Who out of many, tell me, is that Skambha On whom as their foundation earth and firmament and sky are set; In whom as their appointed place rest Fire and Moon and Sun and Wind?

Note: Earth element is said to be stable element. Here earth can be taken as planet earth or Prithvi. Water, fire and air are not stable. It Is said that ākaśa (Akash) is the stable. It does not move as it is present everywhere. It gives space to the three tattvas. So the bottom (earth) and top ākaśa are stable and give stability to creation. Other three elements are supported by these two. The moon represents mind. It also at times represents Jīva. The Sun represents sākshi ātmā or consciousness which is witness. It also represents the creative aspect as from Sun other planets were created. The entire creation is dependent upon Sun. Hence Sun equated with Brahmā as said to be Sūrya – Brahma. This is aspect is present in the mandir (temple) of all Hindus who are worshipping five devatās. The panchdeva pūjā or Pancāyatna Pujā (upāsanā) is practised by smārtas. In this worship five devi – devatās Śiva, Śakti, Gaṇeśa, Sūrya and Viṣṇu are worshipped.

Five elements (earth, water, etc), Sun, Moon and Ego are the other three (need t0 be verified)

13)Who out of many, tell me, is that Skambha He in whose body are contained all three-and-thirty Deities?

16) Who out of many, tell me, is that Skambha, He whose chief arteries stand there, the sky's four regions, he irk whom Sacrifice putteth forth its might?

22) Who out of many, tell me, is that Skambha In whom Ādityas dwell, in whom Rudras and Vasus are contained, In whom the future and the past and all the worlds are firmly set;

Note: This sloka too indicates that universe exists inside the skambha.

32) Be reverence paid to him, that highest Brahma, whose base is Earth, his belly Air, who made the sky to be his head.

33) Homage to highest Brahma, him whose eye is Sūrya and the Moon who groweth young and new again, him who made Agni for his mouth.

34) Homage to highest Brahma, him whose two life-breathings were the Wind, The Angirases his sight: who made the regions be his means of sense.

Note for slokas 32-33: The two breaths are mentioned in cryptic manner. Śiva is also represented having three eyes. Third eye is eye of wisdom. It is denoted by agni.

35) Skambha set fast these two, the earth and heaven, Skambha maintained the ample air between them. Skambha established the six spacious regions: this whole world Skambha entered and pervaded.

Note: This sloka too indicates that universe exists inside the skambha.

## Skambha Sukta PART-II (Atharva Veda X-8)

Devatā of this sukta is ātman. The first sloka starts with salutations to Brahman. This Brahman is Ātman as per Upanishads.

1) Worship to loftiest Brahman, Lord of what hath been and what shall be, To him who rules the universe, and heavenly light is all his own!

2) Upheld by Skambha's power these two, the heaven and the earth,stand fast. Skambha is all this world of life, whatever breathes or shuts eye.

12) The infinite to every side extended, the finite and the infinite around us,These twain Heaven's Lord divides as he advances, knowing the past hereof and all the future

23) Him too they call eternal; he may become new again to-day.Day and Night reproduce themselves, each from the form the other wears.

25) One is yet finer than a hair, one is not even visible. And hence the Deity who grasps with firmer hold is dear to me.

37) The man who knows the drawn-out string on which these creatures all are strung,The man who knows the thread's thread, he may know the mighty Brahmana.

38) I know the drawn-out string, the thread whereon these creatures all are strung. I know the thread's thread also, thus I know the mighty Brahmana.

Note for slokas 37 and 38: Skambha is sutrātmā

44) Desireless, firm, immortal, self-existent, contented with the essence, lacking nothing, Free from the fear of Death is he who knoweth that Ātman, courageous, youthful, undecaying.

Note: Only Ātman can know Ātman.

Source:
http://bharatkalyan97.blogspot.com/2016/07/cosmic-inquiry-in-skambha-suktam-av-x7.html?m=1

http://www.mahapashupatastra.com/2015/09/the-unassailable-glory-of-lord-bhuvaneshwara-the-primordial-skambha-supporting-the-worlds.html

## Linga in Svetashvatara Upanishad (श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद)

Ādi Śankarāchārya jī has written a commentary on Shvetāshvatara Upanishad (श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद). Prior to this sloka i.e. sloka Sv. Up. 1.12, in the end of commentary, Ādi Śankara while introducing the next slokas mentions the purpose of the sloka. The purpose is to do dhyana of Ātmā using praṇava (OM), the shruti (i.e. this Upanishad) explains it with an analogy -

*[The next sloka starts]*

MEANS OF KNOWING BRAHMAN

Chapter 1, Mantra 13 page 36

वह्नेर्यथा योनिगतस्य मूर्तिर्न

दृश्यते नैव च लिङ्गनाशः ।

स भूय एवेन्धनयोनिगृह्य-

स्तद्वोभयं वै प्रणवेन देहे ॥ १.१३॥

vahner yathā yonigatasya mūrtir na dṛśyate naiva ca liṅganāśaḥ /

sa bhūya evendhanayonigṛhyas tadvobhayaṃ vai praṇavena dehe // 1.13 //

The visible form (murti) of fire, while it lies latent in its source (vahner yathā yonigatasya yoni), the fire-wood, is not perceived; yet there is no destruction of its subtle form (liṅganāśaḥ). That very fire can be brought out again by means of persistent rubbing of the wood, its source. In like manner, Atman, which exists in two states, like fire, can be grasped in this very body by means of OM – Sv. Up. 1.13

Āchārya explains the meaning on the important words in the beginning of the commentary.

- ✔ yoni means arani (piece of wood used for kindling fire by attrition i.e. rubbing)
- ✔ Mūrti / Mūrta = form, here it is taken as svarūpa the true form which is formless.

- ✔ Linga = subtle form

Commentary:

vahner yathā, etc. Just like **Fire hidden latent in *yoni* meaning *araṇi*** (Wooden stick used to ignite fire by rubbing/friction), without *manthan* (kindling fire by friction), [the true nature] of fire; ***murti* meaning *svarūpa* of fire,** cannot be known, and **it's *linga* meaning *sukshmarūpa* (subtle form) is not destroyed**. And, Fire hidden in araṇi, the wooden stick, which is source of fuel (īrdhana-yoni), can be remanifested i.e. seen by repeated rubbing of stick. Here the word 'yoni' indicates a cause; meaning it is fuel [for fire]; meaning due to being fuel for fire, by repeated manthan (churning) it (fire) can be seen again …

… meaning, similar to both [linga and agnilinga], just like before manthan they cannot be grasped or cognized, but after manthan they can be known; similarly, agni which represents Ātman, by means of higher araṇi which is OM, with the help of mind, can manifest in lower araṇi which is body.

> The missing part for those who wish to dive deep.
>
> Here, the sanskrit word 'vā' (वा) in the mantra 'tadobhayam' (तदोभयम्) i.e. 'tad-vā ubhayam' (तद्वा उभयम्) is to be taken as 'iva' (इव) i.e. 'as if'
>
> Personal Note: [ubhayam means 'in both ways']. So the meaning of word tadvā ubhayam is 'that [linga] as if in both ways'

Simple meaning with explanation:

Fire represents Ātman

Wooden Stick (araṇi) Represents the mind

Mūrti means svarūpa

Linga means subtle form or hidden form. It also indicates it's true form.

Praṇava is OM

The commentary implies that just like fire which represents Ātman is present hidden in the wooden stick representing mind, cannot be seen i.e. known, but by constant churning or repeated rubbing of wood makes the hidden fire manifest, similarly, one's true form cannot be seen without repeated manthan-dhyāna (churning of mind), but by repeated chanting the mantra OM (dhyāna) in mind, the true Self gets manifested in both subtle and gross body. So one can know one's true nature through mind.

Here, higher body is Brahman and lower is Ātman which is bound to mind and body. This bound Ātman is known as Jīva. So realise that the Ātman is Brahman.

Here the words agni and agnilinga are used kīping in mind the next sloka –

Sh. Up. 1.14 Thinking of one's body as araṇi and praṇava as Uttara-araṇi, by the practice of dhyana (manthan), know the svaprakāśa , jyorisvarūpa paramātmā as hidden [agni].

Ref: Shvetāshvatara Upanishad – Sanskrit – Hindi with Śānkara Bhashya, Page 1189-1190)

Chapter 6, Mantra 9

न तस्य कश्चित् पतिरस्ति लोके

न चेशिता नैव च तस्य लिङ्गम् ।

स कारणं करणाधिपाधिपो

न चास्य कश्चिज्जनिता न चाधिपः ॥ ९॥

na tasya kaścit patir asti loke na ceśitā naiva ca tasya liṅgaṃ /

sa kāraṇaṃ karaṇādhipādhipo na cāsya kaścij janitā na cādhipaḥ // 6.9 //

No one in this word is his Svāmī (master), nor has anybody any control over him, nor is there any **linga i.e. chinha (sign, form, emblem)** of him [from which one can infer is presence]. He is the cause of all, the lord of the jīvas. There is no originator of him, nor is anything his Lord. Sh. Up. 6.9

Śankara Bhāshya –

Sh. Up. Sh. Bh. 6.9 - No one in this word is his Svāmī (master), hence no one is his controller. He does not have any **linga – dhūmādirūpa chinha** [1] from which one can infer [his existence / presence]. Is the cause of all and is kāraṇādhipa (supreme cause) – parameshvara. Because of this reason, there is no janitā – creator and no one is his Svāmī .

Dhūma ādi rūpa chinha –

Dhūma means smoke.

Chinha means indicator.

When one sees constantly rising smoke from any place, one can infer that there must be fire in the place where the smoke is rising. Here smoke is an indicator which helps one infer or conclude that there is fire. This fire is not directly seen, but smoke can be seen. Smoke here is the chinha or linga. Puri Shankaracharya also gave this example citing Nyāya siddhānta / darshan (Philosophy of Logic)

Source: https://archive.org/details/SvetasvataraUpanishadTyagisanandaRKMutt

https://esamskriti.com/essays/Svetasvatara-UP-TNS-Complete.pdf

https://sanskritdocuments.org/doc_upanishhat/shveta.html

The word Brahmāṇda means egg of Brahmā, the creator. This egg is also known as Hiraṇyagharbha. If you have noticed, the natural stones found in river bed are egg shaped. So they also represent entire cosmos hidden within egg. It is said that this golden egg was split into two and thus universe was created.

Ref: Ishadi nau Upanishad with Shankara Bhashya in Hindi. Gita Press: Page 1293

## Patanjali Yoga Sutras 2.19 mentions words Linga and Alinga

**[Added on 19-Dec-2022]**

विशेषाविशेषलिङ्गमात्रालिङ्गानि गुणपर्वाणि ॥ २.१९॥

विशेष्-अविशेष्-लिङ्गमात्र-अलिङ्ग् गुण्-पर्वाणि

Viśeṣa – aviśeṣa – **linga**mātra – **alinga** guṇa – parvāṇi

2.19. The divisions of Guṇa-s of nature i.e. pradhāna / prakriti [sattva, rajasa, tamasa] are -

viśeṣa (specific),

aviśeṣa (non-specific),

**linga** (defined / differentiated / manifested) and

**alinga** (undefined / undifferentiated or unmanifested).

As mentioned in the commentary and sub-commentary (Vyāsa Bhāśya and vyākhyā by Vāchaspatī Mishra), the word **'linga'** P.Y.Su. 2.19 means differentiated / defined / first manifestation and refers to mahat tattva, the first evolution of Prakriti which is just the presence (sattā). The word **'alinga'** means unmanifested or undifferentiated Prakriti (Māyā, Pradhāna). When three guṇa-s of prakriti (sattva, rajasa, tamasa) are in equilibrium, then there is no creation. When the equilibrium is disturbed, creation begins. First tattva is Mahat-tattva which is known as Buddhi or Cosmic intelligence. Mahat-tattva evolves into Ahaṃkāra which further other tattva-s which is described in the table and as an infographic.

If we go as per the sūtra, the order of four types of modifications in the shloka is viśeṣa – aviśeṣa – **linga** – **alinga**. It describes Involution or merging back into the source. In order to understand evolution of one into many, we have to interpret shloka in reverse order alinga – linga – aviśeṣa – viśeṣa. Maharshi Patanjalī mentions the order from the point of view of sādhaka and Yoga, as the path of Yoga is to merge back in the source of all – Paramātmā or Īśvara or Brahman of the upaniṣads. The involution i.e. merging back of effect into their source eventually leading to merging of many into one final ever present tattva is explained.

In brief, the four types of divisions of guṇa-s are -

**Alinga** – Prakriti / Prakruti or Pradhāna (before creation in equilibrium) = **1**

**Linga** – Mahat Tattva (buddhi) – cosmic intelligence = **1**

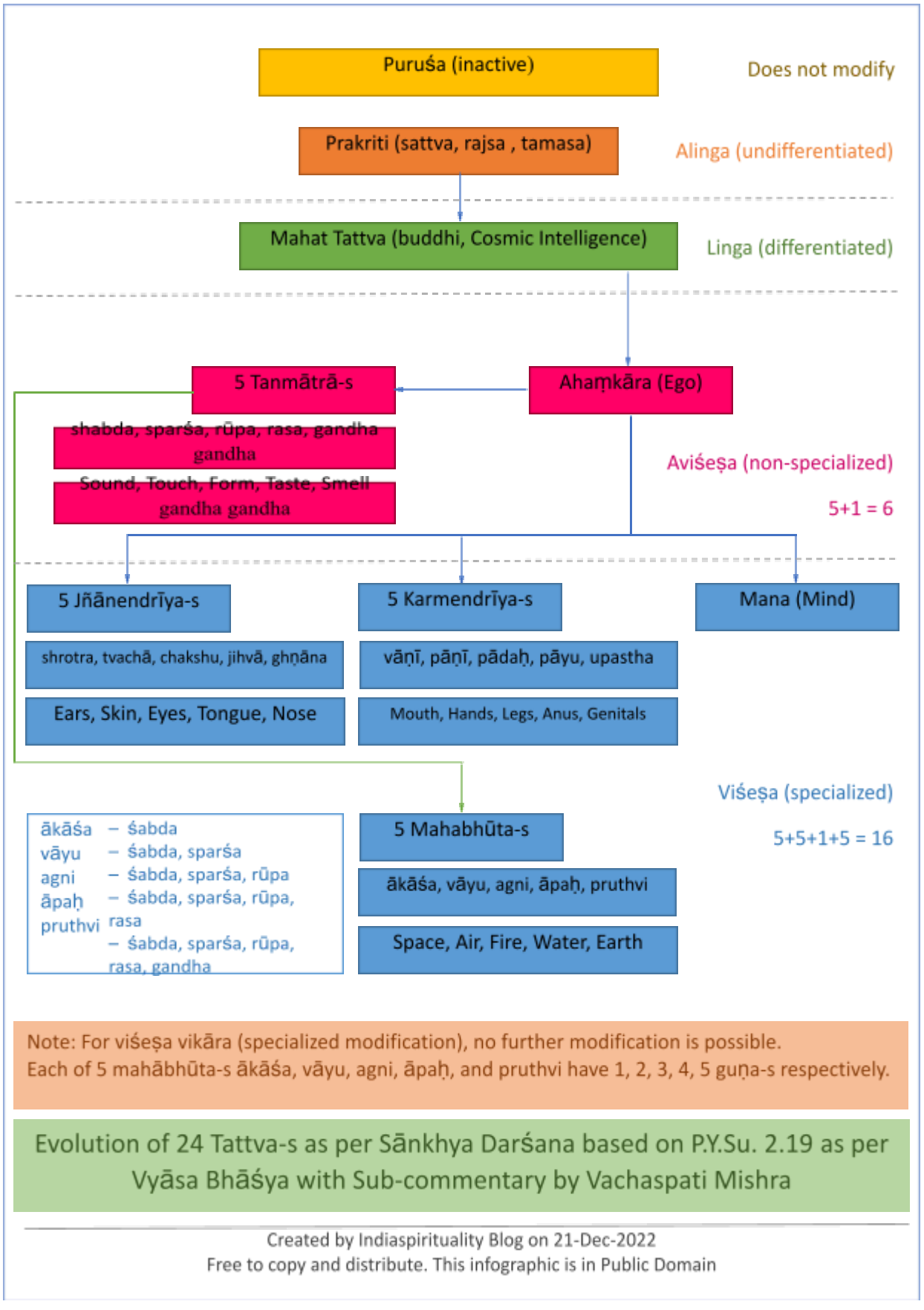
**Aviśeṣa** – Pancha Tanmātrā-s and Ahaṃkāra (ego) = 5 + 1 = **6**

**Viśeṣa** – Pancha Mahabhūta-s, Pancha Jñānendrīya-s, Pancha Karmendrīya-s, mana (mind) = 5 + 5 + 5 + 1 = **16**

**Table 1: Evolution of Prakriti along with her four types of modification – Detailed**

| Sr. No. | Type of modification | Modifications | Modified from | Total Tattvas | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Alinga** (undifferentiated / unmanifested) | Prakriti / Prakruti / Pradhāna (before creation when all three guṇa-s *i.e. sattva, rajasa and tamasa* are in equilibrium) | Ever present | 1 | 1 |
| 2 | **Linga** (differentiated / manifested) | Mahat Tattva (buddhi) – cosmic intelligence | Prakriti | 1 | 1 |
| 3 | **Aviśeṣa / Non-specialized / non-specific** - Undergoes further modification (vikāra) | 2.1. - Ahaṃkāra (ego)<br><br>2.1.1. - Pancha Tanmātrā-s (Five functions of senses of knowledge – Viśaya-s of Jñanendriya-s) {śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa and gandha (speech, sense of touch or feeling, form, taste and smell)} | Mahat Tattva<br><br>Ahaṃkāra | 1<br><br>5 | 6 |
| 4 | **Viśeṣa / Specialized / Specific** – Cannot undergo any further modification (vikāra). | 2.1.2. - mana (mind)<br><br>2.1.3. - Pancha Jñānendrīya-s – Five senses of knowledge {vāk, tvachā, chakshu, rasendriya, ghṇānendriya (speech, skin, eyes, tongue, nose)},<br><br>2.1.4. - Pancha Karmendrīya-s – Five senses of action {vānī, pāṇī, pādaḥ, gudā and upastha / jananendriya (hands, legs, mouth, organ of excretion and regenerative organ)},<br><br>2.1.1.1. - Pancha Mahabhūta-s - Five Great Elements {ākāśa (space), Vāyu (air), agni (fire), āpah or jala (water), pruthvi / prithvi (earth).} | Ahaṃkāra<br><br>Ahaṃkāra<br><br>Ahaṃkāra<br><br>Tanmātrā -s | 1+5+5+5 | 16 |
| | **Total** | | | | **24** |
| 0 | | **Purusha** – untouched by creation – taken as tattva for the sake of completion. | Ever Present | | 01 |
| | **Grand Total** | | | | **25** |

**Figure 1: Evolution of 24 Tattva-s as per Sānkhya Darśana based on P.Y.Su. 2.19 Vyāsa Bhāśya**



Further explaining the commentary and sub-commentary is beyond the scope of the current article, as the purpose of article is to explain the correct meaning of word 'linga' and give references from śāstra-s where this word is used and in what context it is used.

## Sources for Patanjalī Yoga Sutra-s:

1. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras with The Commentary Of Vyasa And The Gloss Of Vachaspati Misra Rama Prasad Translation, Page 129 of book, PDF file page no 144)

2. Patanjali Yoga Sutras with translation and commentary by Shri Nandlal Dashora in Hindi, Page 73 of book, PDF file page no 94 – Simple and easy to understand commentary (Vyākhyā) covering Vyāsa Bhāśya. (सूत्रोकी व्याख्या सरल शब्दोमे की गयी है।)

3. Maharshi Patanjali Pranita Yoga darshan "hindi Vyakhya sahit" by Swami Ramdev, Page 54 – Very simple explanation covering Vyasa Bhashya – महर्षि पतंजली पतञ्जलि प्रणीत योगदर्शन "हिन्दी व्याख्या सहित" – स्वामी रामदेव – पृ ५४ - अत्यंत सरल अनुवाद अन्वय सहित अनुवाद और व्याख्या।

4. Yoga Darsana Sutras of Patanjali with Bhasya of Vyasa by Ganganath Jha, Page 87

Note: There are other books by Ganganath Jha which contains translation of sub commentaries is available on Arvhive.org

The Yoga-darsana, Page 69 of book, PDF file Page no 84

Yoga Sutras Of Patanjali Bhashya Of Vyasa Ganganatha Jha 1907, Page 69 of book, PDF file page no 88

The Yoga-darśana: The Sutras of Patañjali with the Bhāsya of Vyasa, Page 69 of book, PDF page no 89

5. Kriya Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and the Siddhas by Marshal Govindan with Translation, Commentary and Practice, Page No 83 – Some sutras are explained with quotes from Thirumandiram. Has Anvaya and meaning of each word in a sutra.

## Linga in Kaṭha Upaniṣad (Upanishad) 2.2.3

**[Added on 29-Dec-2022]**

Katha Upanishad, Shankara Bhashya 2.2.3 uses the word 'linga' which translates to evidence.

(last line of mantra 2.2.2] - Hence, the essence of this mantra is that there is only one omnipresent Ātman in the jagat (universe), there is no difference in Ātman

After completing the commentary on mantra 2.2.2, before commenting on mantra 2.2.3, in continuation, Ādi Śankara writes :-

आत्मनः स्वरूपाधीगमे लिङ्ग् –

(अब आत्माका स्वरूपज्ञान करानेमें लिङ्ग बतलाते हैं -)

In realising the existence of the *atman* an evidence is offered –

Both mantras have nothing to do with sensuality. Mantra 2.2.3 starts with the upward rising of Prāṇa from heart and Apāna being pushed downwards. Essence of mantra 2.2.2 is already mentioned which is to establish omnipresence and non-duality of Ātman. There is only one Ātman, not many due to it being omnipresent and all pervading.

Ref: Kaṭha Upanishad – Sanskrit – Hindi with Śānkara Bhāśya, Page 276)

## Sources and References:

The Religion and Philosophy of Tevaram (Thevaram)

Chapter 1.2 - Lingodbhava-murti (depiction of the pillar of fire)

Source:

https://www.wisdomlib.org/hinduism/book/tevaram-religion-and-philosophy/d/doc421134.html - Important Information

THE UNASSAILABLE GLORY OF LORD BHUVANESHWARA – THE PRIMORDIAL SKAMBHA SUPPORTING THE WORLDS - Excellent, in-depth, well researched article with scriptural references.

Direct Link:

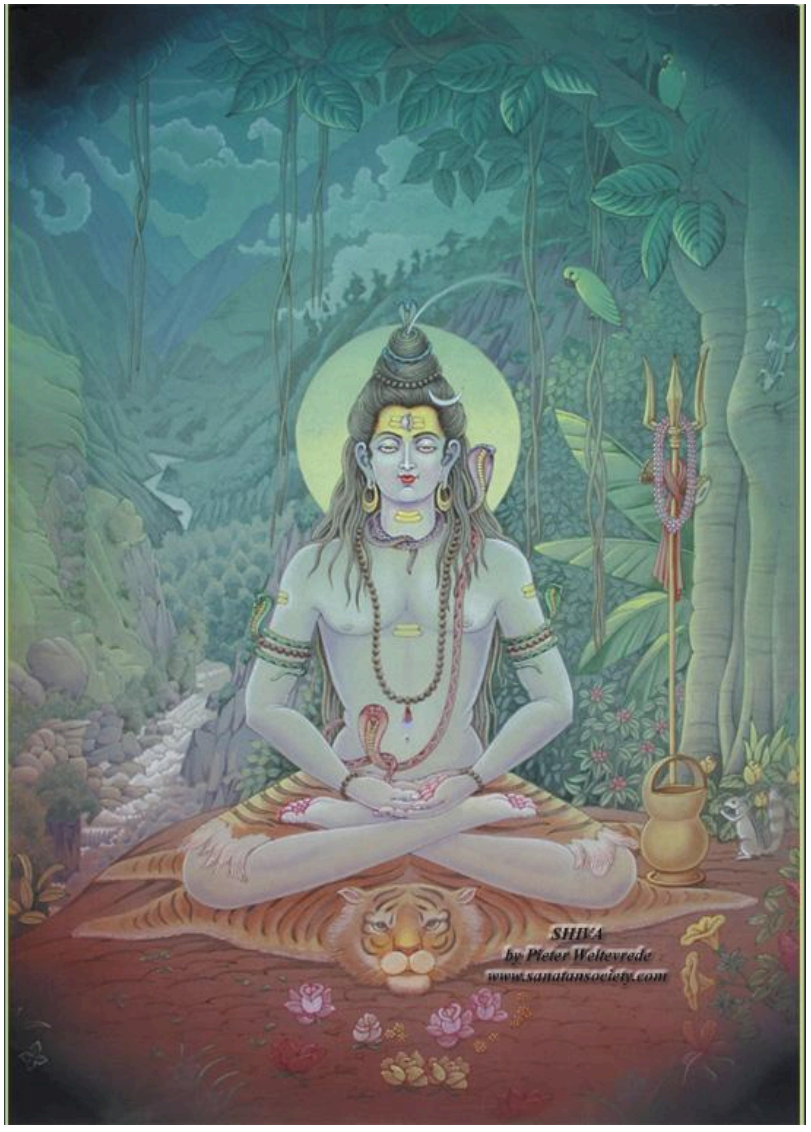
http://www.mahapashupatastra.com/2015/09/the-unassailable-glory-of-lord-bhuvaneshwara-the-primordial-skambha-supporting-the-worlds.html

Lingodbhava – The Origin of Shiva Lingam - Good Article. *(Note: Source of Shiva Purana is wrong.)*

Direct Link:

https://www.hinduismfacts.org/lingodbhava/

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॥ ॐ नमः शिवाय ॥