

Readings - Dionysos and Shiva  
August 18, 2007

I woke this morning to the sounds of a truck backing up and shouting voices telling its driver how to move. I got up to see what it was. It is a tree pruning service to give the palm trees 'a hair cut' of their aged stalks. After a while the bushy tops get all brown and must be pruned to reveal the green stalks below.

As the morning continues, the sounds of noisy buzz saws trimming trees continue, the neighbor's TV is blaring, and I must consider what to do this day. I would like to read ***The Presence of Siva***, but it hasn't arrived. I have a book on Dionysos, I could read that...

With my learning a little about the contrasts between Odinn and Tyr, how it relates to Set and Horus and then Dionysos and Apollo, it is clear the Princes of Dark and Light have many archetypes in the various cultures, always contrasting, disagreeing, but both essential to the balance.

*(Now how does this fit with SHIVA?)*

Hmm, I am just looking randomly at the thick book, (***Dionysos, Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life***) and I come across the following:

"Throughout its development the Dionysian cult preserved the character it had when it first entered into history. With its sensuality and emphasis on sexual love, it presented a marked affinity to the feminine nature, and its appeal was primarily to women; it was among women that it found its most loyal supporters, its most assiduous servants, and their enthusiasm was the foundation of its power. Dionysus is a woman's god in the fullest sense of the word, the source of all woman's sensual and transcendent hopes, the center of her whole existence. It was to women that he was first revealed in his glory, and it was women who propagated his cult and brought about its triumph." *Kerényi is quoting J. J. Bachofen there on page 130*

Wow, the feminine frenzy he elicited! I can't say this compares to Odinn, Set or Shiva, although I suspect a few females might feel some sort of sexual adoration that way.

But apparently this feminine lust for Dionysos is something only emphasized by Bachofen, as other scholars don't stress that. Otto and Nietzsche say things which are more like Shiva:

"In this context Nietzsche may be quoted to advantage: 'Dionysos is the frenzy which circles round wherever there is conception and birth and which in its wildness is always ready to thrust forwards into destruction and death. it is life.'" So it was for Otto, but life in only one particular state: 'life which, when it overflows, grows mad and in its profoundest passion is intimately associated with death,' not *zoë*, which is tested (though not affected in its innermost core) by its diametric opposite, *thanatos*.'" *Page 132*

"Setting aside Bachofen's picture of Dionysos, Nietzsche prepared the way for Otto's vision. I shall cite here those words of his account that deviate most radically from the path taken by Muller and by Bachofen, which might have led to a true understanding of the origin of the Dionysian religion. 'A tempest seizes everything that has outlived itself, everything that is decayed, broken, and withered, and, whirling, shrouds it in a cloud of red dust to carry it into the air like a vulture. Confused, our eyes look after what has disappeared; for what they see has been raised as from a depression into golden light, so full and green, so amply alive, immeasurable and full of yearning.'" *page 134*

Now, in comparison, I have some quotes from *The Presence of Siva*, which I was able to nab off of the Amazon Reader:

"Creation is an act of violence that infringes upon the Uncreate, the undifferentiated wholeness that is before the beginning of things." *page 4, "The Primordial Science"*

"The brahman tells of the mystery and at the same time tells of its mode of telling. It shrouds and at the same time conveys His name in the form it gives to him by calling itself a *raudra brahman*, a wild creation, or Rudraic creation, for this poem and the creation are of Rudra, the Wild God. Raudra, an adjective from Rudra, means wild, of Rudra nature. Rudra as the name of the god would signify 'the Wild One', or 'the Fierce God.' According to later Vedic tradition, however, the word Rudra is derived from *rud*, to cry, howl (TS.1.5.1.1; MS.4.2.12; SB.6.1.3.19). While the words of the *mantras* conjure up the primordial action and evoke the entire myth, they also carry the effect of this action on the gods, that is, on the evoking consciousness." *page 5*

"The double meaning of the word *raudra* is intentional: the poem is about Rudra, the wild, formidable god, and it is itself a fiercely wild creation charged with many meanings.

"It is of the very nature of Rudra, who creates in order to destroy, for he will create again in an inexhaustible renewal of life on earth, where creation is the aeviternal answer to destruction, and both have their ground and antithesis in the Uncreate. This is the course that Rudra set. More truly than any other god he could have said of himself: 'I am not a puzzled-out book, I am a god with his contradictions.'" *page 7-8*

Now for me, the difference with Set, is that he destroys in order to *\_create\_*, for all that is "*decayed, broken, and withered*" must undergo its transformation so that it can be reborn anew.

I am that which takes you to the Wall,  
I am that which pushes you to the wall,  
opens your eyes, your mind, pushes...

(You will not be the same!)  
Take now the knife to slash away the decayed and rotted...  
(like the tree masters trim the tree...)

Go now, find your vision,  
it is where you last left it...

Parts not in quotes:  
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