

**ANNOTATIONS ON THE SACRED  
WRITINGS OF THE HINDÜS: BEING AN  
EPITOME OF SOME OF THE MOST  
REMARKABLE AND LEADING TENETS  
IN THE FAITH OF THAT PEOPLE**

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Annotations on the Sacred Writings of the Hindüs: Being an Epitome of Some of the Most Remarkable and Leading Tenets in the Faith of that People by Edward Sellon

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**EDWARD SELTON**

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**SACRED WRITINGS OF THE HINDÜS**

BEING AN EPITOME  
OF SOME OF THE MOST REMARKABLE AND LEADING  
TENETS IN THE FAITH OF THAT PEOPLE

*Illustrating their Priapic Rites and Phallic Principles*

BY  
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## INTRODUCTION.

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It has been suggested to the Author of the following pages, to compile a small treatise, which, without professing to be an abridgment of the Hindü Sacred Writings, should convey in a concise form an Epitome of the information that has been obtained with respect to the leading dogmas of the Brahminical Superstition.

When we reflect upon certain peculiarities of the Religious Worship practised by the Hindüs; on its great antiquity, on the fact, that two thousand years before the Christian æra it was, as at the present day, in full force; that it witnessed the rise, decline and fall of the Idolatry of Egypt, and of the great Western Mythology of Greece and Rome; that hitherto it has scarcely yielded in the slightest degree to the adverse influence of the Mohammedan race on the one hand, or to European dictation on the other; and that it exercises, by its system of caste, a powerful control over the manners, customs,

costume and social status of the entire Hindü community, it becomes a subject fraught with interest to every cultivated mind, and offers an affecting but curious example of the power of a hoary and terrible superstition in degrading and enslaving so large a portion of the human race.

The sources from whence much of the material in this compilation are derived, are acknowledged in numerous notes.

It does not come within the compass of this sketch to enumerate all the theological dogmas contained in the Sacred Writings of the Hindüs; those only have been selected for annotation and remark which seem to have the most direct bearing on the object in view, in the elucidation of the worship of **POWER**—the Gnosticism of India.



ANNOTATIONS  
ON THE  
SACRED WRITINGS OF THE HINDÜS.

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THE origin of the Religious Worship of the Hindüs is lost in remote antiquity. For many ages anterior to the time of *Menu*, their first Lawgiver, all that has been handed down to us by oral tradition seems to confirm the hypothesis, that they were worshippers of one God only, whom they designated *Brühm Atma*, "the Breathing Soul:" a spiritual Supreme Being, coeval with the formation of the world, without end, everlasting, permeating all space, the beneficent disposer of events. The worship of the Hindüs at this period was probably simple, and their ceremonies few. In process of time, however, the date of which cannot be correctly determined, they appear to have adopted a material type of emblem of *Brühm*: a rude block of stone began to be set up: this was the *Phallus*, or, as they termed it, the LINGA. This

emblem had reference to the procreative Power seen throughout nature, and in that primæval age was regarded with the greatest awe and veneration. To the influence of this image was attributed the fructifying warmth which brought to perfection the fruits of the earth and contributed to the reproduction both of man, animals, and everything that has life.

This simple and primitive Idolatry came, by degrees, to diverge into the adoration of the elements, particularly Fire ; and at length developed itself by the institution of an emanation from *Brühm Atma* in his Triune capacity ; as Creator, Preserver or Saviour, and Destroyer. These attributes were deified under the names of *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Siva*, on whom were conferred three *Gunas* or qualities, viz., *Rajas* (passion), *Sat* (purity), and *Tumas* (darkness). This is the *Trimurti*.\*

The next step towards the formation of a Pantheon was the institution of *Avatas* and *Avantaras*, i.e., greater and lesser Incarnations ; by which one or other of the *Triad* imparted a portion of his divine essence both to men (generally Bahurdurs or heroes) and to brutes. The tendency to deify heroes,

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\* "*Trimurti*, 'three formed,' *Murti* signifying also an Image. Our vital souls are, according to the *Védanta*, no more than images or *eidola* of the Supreme Spirit."—*As. Res.*, vol. iii.

and irrational creatures, was not peculiar, however, to the Hindüs, for the Assyrians, Etruscans, Greeks and Romans had the same custom, as had also the Egyptians in a much more extended degree.

This system of *Avalas* was followed by an almost universal deification, not only of the elements and the heavenly bodies, but of every recognised attribute of the Supreme Being, and the Evil Spirit; Omnipotence, Beneficence, Virtue, Love, Vice, Anger, Murder; all receive a tangible form, until at the present time the Hindü Pantheon contains little short of a Million Gods and Demi-gods. It is admitted, however, that to many of these they pay only relative honour.

It is a little remarkable that of this host of Divinities, especially in Bengal, *Siva* is the God whom they are especially delighted to honour. As the Destroyer, and one who revels in cruelty and bloodshed this terrible deity, who has not inaptly been compared to the Moloch of Scripture, of all their Divinities suggests most our idea of the Devil. It may therefore be concluded that the most exalted notion of worship among the Hindüs is a service of *Fear*. The *Brahmins* say that the other Gods are good and benevolent, and will not hurt their creatures, but that *Siva* is power-