

## Part 3:

# COSMOS AND HISTORY

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## Feminine Origin in the Cosmogonic Ideas of the Slavic and Eastern Philosophy: a Comparative Analysis

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*The article is devoted to a comparative analysis of the role of the feminine principle in the cosmogonic ideas of the Slavic peoples and the philosophy of the Ancient East, in particular, India and China, to the establishment of common and distinctive features of female personification. The authors conclude that the ancient tribal culture, which was based on the logic of nature, the maintenance of the world in unity and the balance of opposites, was much more favorable to women than monotheistic religions, which*

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*affirmed the sinful nature of women. Ideas about the origin and development of the universe occupy a central place in the mythological heritage, in the cosmic processes and powerful forces of nature, the unbreakable harmony of male and female principles can be traced, where male energy consists in the idea of fertilization, and female energy – in birth and creation. In every mythological system, there is a character of the Mother Goddess, who acts as a co-creator of the world and living beings, but with the establishment of the patriarchal system, the mythological paradigm undergoes changes, and the female principle is gradually recognized as secondary, or it was completely leveled in the processes of world creation. The archetype of the Great Mother reflects the functioning of human values and runs through the entire history of philosophy and culture.*

*Keywords: culture, cultural phenomena, collective consciousness, cosmogony, cult, mythological traditions, female personification, substance, Archetype of the Great Mother:*

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## **Introduction**

Ideas about the origin and development of the universe occupy a central place in the mythological heritage of all peoples. They are interesting as a product of the collective consciousness of humanity at a certain historical stage, and also as a significant factor that influenced the further socio-cultural life of the community, its value orientations. Cosmogonic myths are the result of the study of such aspects of existence as the world structure and the connection between its parts (synchronic approach) and the process of the emergence of all things (diachronic approach). Comprehension of complex things took place through the use of categories and cultural phenomena familiar to mankind, in particular, the dichotomy of male and female principles.

The current century was marked by the active exit of women “from the patriarchal twilight”. The need to affirm the equality of the sexes and overcome misogynistic views prompts a rethinking of the deep layers of culture – even a return to its sources.

The purpose of the article is to conduct a comparative analysis of the place and role of the feminine principle in the cosmogonic ideas of the Slavs, the Ancient East (in particular, India and China) and establish common and distinctive features in the female personification.

Modern studies of the role of women in the world include different contexts. For example, we can define as original the articles of L. Škof, which focuses on the possibilities of the embodiment of the feminine principle in our time, and considers the problem of the extreme vulnerability of women’s life in the midst of the ancient crisis of sacrifice and proposes a future matrix theology of incarnation (Škof, 2020). K. Sharma focused on the research positions of psychoanalytic jurisprudence through female and male images. The image of the law is that of the paterfamilias – the biological father, the sovereign, or God. In contrast, the researcher presents the image of the mother and analyzes its influence on the subject’s attitude to the law (Sharma, 2018). Feminist intervention in the debate about the relationship between human subjects and the divine ideal is carried out by R. Anderson, who challenges the concept of “God’s eye view” of reality as masculine (Anderson, 2007).

## **Cosmogonic ideas in ancient Indian culture**

In Indian culture, the categories of female and male are presented as polar opposites, but at the same time doomed to mutual attraction to each other. They are the primary foundations of

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being: the male hypostasis is an expression of active creative power, the female hypostasis is a passive, stable nature, but it is no less important, because even the great Shiva is powerless without Shakti, the female principle (Madan, 1990).

Hindu beliefs are rich in images of goddesses, which are mostly associated with the earth, a symbol of fertility. According to an ancient Aryan myth, all living things were created as a result of the union of the earth-mother Prithivi and the sky-father Dyaus. From the womb of the earth, moistened by the families of Dyaus, all beings were born, which will later return to the earth again. Thus, in the image of Prithivi, the cycle of life and death is closed. The cult of this goddess later spread in Buddhism as well, which indicates great respect for her (Shaw, 2006: 237).

The goddesses who symbolized the earthly elements were considered patrons of procreation, took care of the plant and animal world. That is, they appear not only as the primary foundations of existence, but also actively involved in the course of life. In particular, rituals in honor of female deities, which are supposed to facilitate the birth of a child, are widespread. The combination of female and male potential in cosmogonic myths occurs through the performance of a marriage ceremony. As the researchers emphasize, goddesses are usually in a certain place, and male deities come to them from some distant territories at a certain time, which symbolizes the opposite qualities of permanence and movement.

In ancient Indian myths, the image of an androgynous creature that harmoniously combines the feminine and masculine elements is widespread. To this type of cosmogonic characters belongs Purusha – the proto-man-ginant. Rigveda tells that he was sacrificed, and from his body the universe was formed. This story has been interestingly transformed in Indian philosophy, which considers Purusha as male energy – consciousness devoid of material expression, combined with Prakriti – female substance. At the same time, Purusha does not control Prakriti, but only observes its cosmic development.

According to another concept of archaic androgyny, the birth of the World took place as a result of the division of one divine hypostasis into male and female. The land of Prithivi and the sky of Dyaus were also originally one until the god Indra separated them. Researcher T. Doronina notes that the gods of the “first order” can be defined as androgynous: these gods, in addition to actions of a global scale regarding the world system, single-handedly gave birth to the gods of the second generation, after which certain spheres of the world order were established, which took place at the next stage of the creation of the world – the stage of its division into Heaven and Earth (Doronina, 2012: 41).

According to E. Meletinskyi, veneration of the Mother Goddess was widespread in India, even in the pre-Aryan period. In Hindu mythology, this role was performed by Shakti (Devi), who had several forms, according to some facet of her personality. For example, Parvati is a good creative form responsible for fertility, while Kali is the personification of fury and destructive energy. The multi-faceted image of the goddess not only indicates the changeability of the feminine nature, but also encompasses the many significant roles she performs. The material symbol of Shakti energy is the yoni – an image or object that imitated the organs of the female reproductive system and was used in rituals. The opposite and at the same time the filling of the yoni is the lingam, a phallic symbol associated with Shiva.

The mythological traditions of India allow variability and duplication of functions by different deities. In this context, it is worth mentioning the Vedic Aditi, who is characterized as the personification of the universe and the mother of twelve gods. She controls the space from the earth’s surface to the sky.

The cult of the Great Mother was also projected on ordinary women, who were considered her reflection. In the collection of ethical and legal norms of Manu, dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, despite the establishment of the varna division in it, several dharmas are dedicated to the respectful treatment of women:

- a) A teacher (asagua) is ten times more important than a teacher (...) a father is a hundred times [more important] than a teacher; however, the mother surpasses the respectability of the father a thousand times (Bühler, 2023:145);
- b) Where women are respected, there the gods are pleased; but where they are not honored, no sacred rite is of any use. Where the women belonging to a family live in sorrow, that family soon perishes; But that family, where they live without sadness, always prospers (Bühler, 2023: 56-57).

Thus, the suppression of the feminine leads to the fact that the gods turn their backs on the family, and an imbalance in relationships leads inevitably to the decline of the home (Bühler, 2023:56-57).

### **The beginnings of the world structure in Chinese cosmogony**

Chinese cosmogony derives the origin of the universe from the existence of dark, boundless and indivisible chaos (hundun). An interesting nuance is that the Chinese endowed this substance with creative potential: hundun is capable of self-evolving to the state of space (yuzhou). That is, Chinese philosophy does not have the idea of a diametrical movement or the struggle of different principles, which became the starting point of the creation of the universe. At the same time, hundun contains the cause of polarity in the form of yin and yang. It should be noted that later in certain branches of the philosophy of nature, the primordial state of chaos began to be associated with yin and the water element.

According to a more artistically detailed version, the embodiment of the chaotic substance is the world egg, which was split in half from the inside by the first ancestor Pangu – this is how the sky and the earth were formed. Pangu pushed these surfaces away from each other for 18,000 years, after which he died, and the rest of the natural structures were formed from his body.

The concept of yin-yang, which long ago went beyond the boundaries of Chinese cosmology, enriching world culture, was born within the philosophy of Daoism, and further developed in Neo-Confucianism. Two opposites, which permanently balance each other, arose on the basis of qi – a special substance and at the same time energy. Each of the two elements represents a number of distinctive qualities: Yin – northern shaded mountainside, earth, darkness, moon, cold, heaviness, softness, stability, right side, sleep, rest, autumn, winter, feminine. Yang – the southern illuminated slope of the mountain, sky, light, Sun, warmth, lightness, firmness, dynamism, left side, wakefulness, activity, spring, summer, masculine;

In the context of the covered topic, the following aspects are important:

- a) none of the two bases is marked as something unequivocally good or bad;
- b) yin is not more important than yang, and yang is more important than yin, they cannot exist without each other;
- c) division, according to the principle of opposites, is not absolute, because yin contains a particle of yang and vice versa;
- d) yin and yang interact in each person;

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- e) women are associated with yin, and men are associated with yang, but this division is also mobile. For example, older women are considered the personification of yang.

Therefore, the original interpretation of the concept does not contain direct discrimination. Over time, different philosophical currents began to differ in their opinions regarding the concept of yin-yang: “Some interpreters of yin and yang prefer to emphasize the non-dualistic, harmonious nature of the relationship, while others emphasize the imbalance, hierarchy and conflict built into the idea” (The Chinese Cosmos, 2023). Since it is possible to apply the yin-yang principle to anything in life, in practical terms this resulted in the establishment of gender, age and social hierarchies. For example, on the basis of the dual pairs “top – bottom”, “strength – softness”, women were required to be submissive to their husbands and older relatives.

As in ancient Indian beliefs, in China, there was a cult of deities associated with the earth. The most revered chthonic personification is the goddess Nuiva, who is depicted as a snake with a human head and hands. It was she who created people from yellow clay and taught them to continue the family. In addition, as a result of the transformation of her body, ten more deities were born from her entrails. According to the legend, Nuiva saved the world from destruction: when heavenly fire and water flows destroyed all life on the earth’s surface, the goddess, repairing and strengthening the sky, stopped the elements. Thus, she appears as the personification of great creative energy, strength and mercy.

The concept of divine marriage is also inherent in Chinese cosmogonic myths. For example, Nuiva married Fusi, who was also her brother. The holy couple was often depicted with entwined snake tails. Unlike European myths, the feminine and masculine elements in this union are not antagonistic. Considering the fact that Fusi taught people how to farm, fish and use fire for cooking, it is more about the co-creation and development of what the wife created.

The issue of harmony and following Yin and Yang on the path of humanity is explored in articles by authors of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Chai, 2023); the historical processes of Chinese traditional culture are analyzed with the help of innovative approaches, which make it possible to delve into the essence and basic structure of Chinese traditional philosophy (Feng & Chen, 2023) and the origin of Chinese civilization and history through the prism of the main traditional philosophical teachings (Zhongjian, 2023). Modern researchers of the inner meaning of the ancient and culturally important symbol, Yin-Yang, relate it to the concept of the Jungian archetype. The results show that the qualities of the symbol supported the concept of the Yin-Yang archetype and were consistent with the Jungian concept of anima and animus (Ray et al., 2010).

### **Cosmogonic ideas in Slavic mythology**

Slavic cosmogonic myths have been preserved fragmentarily. In some places, they are reconstructed based on folklore layers and cultural artifacts. In a broader context, this is part of the Indo-European mythological heritage, so common motifs are found in this space. In particular, the ancient Slavs also derived the beginning of the world from the world egg, which split in half. We can see the echo of this belief in the Ukrainian tradition of creating Easter eggs, legends and fairy tales (“Egg-raitse”). Folk tales also tell that the birth of life occurred due to the interaction of passive water and active fire elements, which correspond to the female and male elements, respectively (the king-fire and the queen-water created the world).

The cult of the earth among the Slavs has the same character as Hindu beliefs. It is positioned as the Mother who gives life and nourishes. In addition, the earth takes life and receives the dead into its bosom. This role is well revealed in traditional folk art, such as in curses: “May the wet earth devour you” (Nomys, 1993: 194), “So that the land does not receive him” (Nomys, 1993: 194); or proverbs: “Let the earth and water weep for him, not me, the young woman” (Nomys, 1993: 372). The moistening of the earth, which appears in the image of the Raw Earth Mother, is a symbol of fertility and fertilization with heavenly liquid. The highest manifestation of personification is the practice of naming an earthly entity by a female name, which was used, for example, in orders.

The folklore heritage of all Slavic peoples leaves no doubt that the ancestors also personified astral bodies – the Sun, the moon, and the stars. A notable feature of the Ukrainian interpretation is the representation of the Sun in a female form. In particular, in carols that have preserved pre-Christian symbolism, the Sun is called the “bright maiden.”

Slavic deities cause conflicting opinions among scientists. As a rule, the debates revolve around whether a certain mythological character can be considered a god/goddess or whether he was just a spirit or in general some kind of generalizing concept; and how widespread their worship was. For example, there are several interpretations regarding Rod – Rozhanitsy. In particular, *rode* is attributed the status of the main god from whom other deities originate. His sphere of influence includes the role of a great creator, the patron of fate, and possibly fertility. According to other sources, this is a spirit that cares about the well-being of the family and the happy fate of the descendants.

Views on the “nature” of the deity also differ:

- a) he is attributed with primordial androgyny, from which the female and male elements were later separated;
- b) at first, people worshiped Rozhanitsa – spirits or goddesses of fate, and the figure of Rod is a later patriarchal transformation;
- c) in the Christian literature of the 13<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the worship of both personifications is mentioned, that is, they coexist in the same cultural-time continuum. Rozhanytsia is used as a general name, not a proper name.

It can be concluded that the gender variability testifies to the archaic nature of the cult. The social system contributed to the activation of one or another form.

The personification of the Mother Goddess in the Slavic territories was Mokosh. She was considered the patroness of fertility, and therefore of women. Probably later, in some regions, this function was supplemented by the promotion of “womenes” crafts – spinning and weaving. Mokosh was married to Perun, the lord of the sky and thunder. One version of the myth says that Veles, an earthly snake-like god who was Perun's opponent, also fought for her.

The story of Morana (Mara) and Yaril is a classic example of the myth of the god of vegetation and spring revelry, who dies every year only to be resurrected in the spring. A similar scheme of interpretation of natural changes is characteristic of the period of the birth of agricultural culture throughout the Indo-European space. The divine couple, around whose relationship events significant for nature are formed, are the children of Mokosh.

The mythical story consists of several significant periods:

- a) birth of twins – brother and sister;
- b) the abduction of the brother by the god Veles, who raised him in his underground world;

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- c) the return of Yarylo to the earth, as a result of which spring comes;
  - d) the meeting of Yarylo and Morana, the birth of feelings between them;
  - e) a divine wedding corresponding to the summer solstice;
  - f) the period of happy family life, which is associated with nurturing the harvest;
  - g) the murder of Yarylo, either by Morana herself, or by Veles for adultery – it is autumn time after the harvest;
  - h) Morana builds a house from the body parts of a deceased man – an action symbolizing astral renewal (there are clear analogies with the act of sacrifice of the Indian Purusha and the Chinese Pangu);
  - i) without Yarylo, Moran wastes away and turns into a gloomy goddess of death – winter is coming. Eventually the goddess dies too;
  - j) at the end of winter, Yarylo and Morana are born again, a new cycle begins.

Thus, in this myth, the feminine and masculine are interdependent, their interaction is related to the idea of death and rebirth of nature, but Morana takes a more active position. Beliefs in Yarylo and Morana, with some regional variations, were widespread among all groups of Slavs.

Lada was also called the goddess of world harmony, the universe, beauty and love, or there are other names such as Zhiva and Rada. She was born from the Tree of Life (Heavenly Tree, Tree of Knowledge, Paradise Tree). It is Lada who is called the Great Mother and is depicted in a wreath of wheat ears and flowers, holding a red apple and grapes in her hand. On the head is a baby, which meant the embodied material world, and an apple (like an egg) is a symbol of the beginning.

According to ancient legends, every year Lada gives birth to a new Sun. Even in folk songs of Bulgarians, Romanians, Serbs, Lithuanians and other peoples, Lada is called “Great Goddess”, “Great Lada.” This goddess is mentioned in rites related to rain and also symbolizes the Goddess of fertility, love and marriage. However, along with the female hypostasis, there is also a male hypostasis – the God of the Omnipresent order, the husband of the Goddess Lada – Lado. He was called the God of life, marriage, love and well-being. Legends say that Lado turns into a cuckoo in the spring to bring people long life. Lado is a kind of mediator between the Sun and people.

At the same time, the deity Zhiv (Living) is also another name for Lado, the supreme ruler of the universe. As we can see, it is Lada (woman) who gives birth to the new Sun, and the man is the mediator between him and the people. Together they carry out the process of “creation”, in the unity of the Male and Female beginnings and form the Heavenly Marriage. The symbolism of Lada is a sown field (displayed in the form of a rhombus combined with the motifs and elements of the Sun, the Tree of Life and the image of the Goddess Oranta raising her hands to the sky). Our ancestors “worship Lada, the mother of Castor and Pollux, and the twins born from one egg, Castor and Pollux, which can still be heard in the most ancient songs: “Lada, Lada and Lel, and Lel and Pole!”, singing this, they clap in the palm of your hand” (Information-analytical, 2023).

Researchers hypothesize that the myth of Lada has parallels with other myths, for example, ancient Greek ones, which mention the Goddess Latona (Leto), the daughter of the titans Kei and Phoebe, the mother of Artemis and Apollo. The Romans also compare Lada with Aphrodite, and the Scythians with Argimpasa. It is likely that she was depicted in Scythian clothes with a mirror in her hand – a symbol of the Sun, fertility and femininity. In Poland there is the Lada River, the right tributary of the Tanva, in the Vinnitsia region

the Lyadova is a tributary of the Dniester, in the Kyiv region there is Lake Ladava and a tract with the same name. Folk craftswomen depict the symbolism of Lada in folk art – on household objects, in folk clothes, in particular, on embroidery. In Ukrainian folklore, we find the words “Bless, mother Lado, call for spring”, and the name “lada” itself is formed from the Proto-Slavic word “lad”, which meant harmony and order. Gifts in the form of flowers and cookies were brought to the gods Lada and Lado. The well-being of the family and the birth of children depended on their blessing. To this day, girls in some regions of Ukraine gather in groves, meadows, near rivers, lead dances, sing songs and throw wreaths into the water. Wherever the wreath floats, the bridegroom will come from there.

Slavic mythology is multifaceted and reflects the deep cosmogonic layers of the worldview of our ancestors. The mythological worldview embodies the movement from chaos to order, from Heaven to Earth, which is carried out cyclically. A duality has been inherited since ancient times – a strong feminine element, which goes back to the roots of the Trypylian culture, and patriarchal elements, which probably belong to the Scythian-Sarmatian peoples who were engaged in cattle breeding. Mythology is a unique phenomenon in world culture. V. Voytovych is a well-known contemporary Ukrainian researcher of Ukrainian mythology, who in his writings reflects the folk beliefs, outlook, worldview and mentality of the Ukrainian people (Voytovych, 2014).

Interestingly, a symbol very similar to Yin-Yang is depicted on a miniature model of an ancient temple in the Cherkasy region, found by archaeologists. Historians note that this find is a creation of the Trypil culture and dates back to approximately 7000 BC. Currently, the artifact is in the exposition of the “Platar” museum. The model of the ancient temple of the Trypilians is probably a miniature copy of the ancient cult temple, has a dome-shaped roof, decorated with images of moon haze, resembling the horns of a bull, which was the totem animal of ancient farmers. And the walls of the temple are decorated with symbols similar to snakes, which create a composition very similar to the Yin-Yang symbol.

## **The archetype of the Great Mother**

Archetypes, as initial images, ideas, original forms, resonate with the philosophy of Platon and his “*eidosis*”, the traditions of Platonism, scholasticism, which considered the images that were the basis of human knowledge. Archetypes play a key role in the analytical psychology of K. Jung (*The Archetypes*, 1981). They act as structural elements of the collective unconscious and universal models that spontaneously determine human thinking and behavior. The basis of spiritual life is the experience that is passed down from past generations next, and is a set of archetypes. Archetypes, projected onto the outside world, determine the uniqueness of culture. K. Jung is considered to be the founder of studies of the Archetype of the mother, who advocates the position of correlation of this image with the image of the Great Mother or the Great Goddess.

The research of the archetypes of the Mother at the present stage is focused on different aspects and has a different orientation. For example, one can single out the direction of ecofeminist rhetoric, within which the archetype of the Mother is defined as a rhetorically strong image that motivates the protection and support of the environment. A gender-neutral metaphor may more effectively serve both the environmental and feminist interests of the ecofeminist movement (Lynn, 1994); E. Leslie (Leslie, 2001) advocates the fusion of the Goddess archetypes with consciousness-raising methods, rituals and skills for empowering women in groups, the correlation of the Mother archetype with the Goddess archetype. Based on the biblical story of Moses and the golden calf and the archetypal spectrum of the solar



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spirit and its earthly and corporeal aspects, Junges original symmetry is analyzed: the male with his anima and the female with her animus, united together in tandem (Bradley, 2017).

The archetype of the Great Mother unites the value field of the Slavic peoples and is reflected in the rituals, folklore, and traditions of the Slavs. The analysis of the archetypes of national culture and national mentality, the prehistory of the image of the Great Mother and its manifestations in the culture of various Slavic peoples makes it possible to assert that for many centuries, from the cohabitation of the Slavic peoples to their separation, settlement in different territories and the formation of separate ethnic groups, remains of the researched cult in folklore, traditional celebrations and everyday life. The Ukrainian people, together with other Slavic peoples, belong to the Indo-European or Aryan race, which, due to its spiritual abilities, has reached world-historical significance, and is the bearer of modern civilization.

The national mentality, language, traditions, and folklore reflect the peoples metaphysical connection with ancient beliefs. The image of the Mother causes contradictions in interpretation and interpretation, and is dominant in the collective experience. This archetype reflects both the aspect of fertility, abundance, sexuality and the aspect of purity, chastity. The symbol of the eternity of human existence, its guarantee was the idea of the Great Mother, because as long as she exists, life does not stop. Her image has various hypostases, which are embodied in different goddesses, which contribute to the knowledge of her multifaceted functionality and significance. As you know, in the pantheon of Indo-Europeans, the supreme position was occupied by the goddess, the echo of whose cult is preserved in mythology and folklore. The archetype of the Mother found its full reflection in the national mentality of various peoples and cultures. Historians associate it with primitive matriarchal cultures, in which the Great Goddess acted as the beginning of all living things and reflected the immanent connections of the mother symbol with nature. The mother in cultures and religions may not be depicted in human form, but in natural objects, the most popular of which are a tree and a mountain. For example, the Tree of Life, which is discussed in both Eastern and Western worldviews, has a feminine energy. It is the female primary element, reflected in the image of the Mother, that initiates world creation and gives rise to life.

In early pagan cultures, the mother finds a different image and often appears as a goddess along with her husband. So, for example, as we discussed above, the Slavs have Lada and Lado. The woman was the patroness of fertility, personifying eternal rebirth. She is also a role model of a wife and mother. The feminine embodiment of eternal life is conveyed in the relationship of spouse or mother and child. The Mother Goddess can have a direct connection to the chaos that comes from nature as the primordial state of things. The connection to chaos and life shows the ambivalence of the Mother archetype.

We can also compare the archetype of the Great Mother with the images of the Verkhovna Rozhanytsa and Berehyna. The archetypal structure of the Ukrainian mentality is a symbolic representation of the earth as a maternal, feminine beginning of existence. The archetype of the Great Mother reflects the functioning of human values and runs through the entire history of philosophy and culture. The forms of manifestation of the archetype of the Great Mother in the image of the goddess Marena in the ancient culture of various Slavic peoples are presented in the research of O. Ryzhova, who proves that throughout the history of the development of individual Slavic peoples, the remnants of this cult were preserved in their culture. Rites related to Marena have a lot in common among various Slavic peoples, the appearance of the goddess herself, her functions and significance are different. It remains a common cultural and axiological heritage, shows the dual nature of Slavic culture and life itself (Ryzhova, 2020).

## Conclusions

The beginning of the universe in archaic cosmological ideas is associated with the transformation of an egg-shaped chaotic mass into an organized cosmos. Corresponding myths existed in all three cultures. The concept of androgyny played an important role in constructing the picture of the world. First, it was embodied in the images of human prototypes, thanks to whose self-sacrifice astral bodies and the earthly landscape were formed (Purusha, Pangu). Secondly, through the representation of the demiurges in the images of perfect androgynous deities, as a result of which the separation of heaven and earth, time and space arose. An example of such a personification is the Vedic deities Prithivi and Dyavus. Primordial androgyny determined the equality of male and female principles, they complemented each other, their essence was fully revealed only in interaction.

According to the Chinese version, a peculiarity of cosmogenesis is the lack of diametrization of “masculine” and “feminine.” The world was formed not as a result of a contradiction between principles, but as a result of the independent unfolding of a chaotic essence into an ordered cosmos. The first married couple among the gods are Nuiva and Fusi, who are similar in their form and direction of activity.

As mentioned, in the cosmic processes and powerful forces of nature, people saw an inseparable harmony of male and female principles, where male energy consists in the idea of fertilization, and female energy – in birth and creation. In each mythological system, there is a character of the Mother Goddess, who acts as a co-creator of the world and living beings (sometimes her functions are duplicated by several goddesses). In addition, she is the patroness of people, animals and plants.

The feminine and masculine principles correspond to certain dual principles:

- a) balance between yin and yang in Chinese philosophy;
- b) association of the female principle with the elements of water and earth, while the male principle – with the sky, wind, fire energy (an exception may be the fiery female energy of anangu in the Brahmanical tradition);
- c) the interaction of the cosmic consciousness of Purusha and the matter of Prakriti;
- d) the division of the world egg into white, which formed the sky, and yolk, which became the earth.

From the analysis of cosmogonic myths, it follows that none of the teachings insisted that woman has an inferior nature.

Nevertheless, with the establishment of the patriarchal order, the mythological paradigm began to undergo changes. Male deities were assigned the main roles. The feminine principle was positioned as secondary and dependent, in some places it was completely pushed out of the world creation process. Female personifications became limited to taking care of childbirth and some crafts (for example, weaving). This shift affected the social position of women in the future, because the relationship between the gods was considered a model that should be followed by people.

Separate spheres of activity and desired behavior patterns were fixed for women and men, and the gender role of women was narrowed. Figuratively speaking, throughout the history of mankind, a woman came down from the pedestal on which she was exalted as a Great Goddess, equal in strength and holiness to her companion God, reflected in the archetype of the Great Mother, and became a submissive executor of the will not only of God, but also of man.

It is worth admitting that the ancient tribal culture, which was based on the logic of nature, the maintenance of the world in unity and the balance of opposites, was much more favorable to women than the monotheistic religions, which affirmed the sinful nature of women.

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