

negativity that comes from outside. In Bhutan the phallus is an integral part of festive rituals observed by communities, commonly used to ward off evil spirits and counter evil. Therefore, we see them tied with the wooden dagger and hung from the four corners of the houses, nailed above the entrance, painted on the walls and carved on wood.

Numerous terms are used to express its significance

or meaning. For instance, *Kharam shing* or *Mikha*, means a piece of wood to counter the evil tongue or eye and curse. *Gulang* or *Wangchuk Chenpo*, which is a reference to Lord Shiva's potency *Wangchuk Chenpo pho taag*, meaning the male symbol of Lord Shiva, or simply *Zur shing*, meaning a piece of wood that hangs from the eaves. But contrary to the popular perception, the phallus has a world of meaning beyond its obvious symbolism to ward off evil influences.

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