

Study of Tantrik Lokachara in Jagannath Culture

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Abstract: The article reflects on the Tantrik Lokachara as prevalent in the worship of Hindu Deities in the Jagannath Culture. The study argues that both the Aryas and the Anaryas follow the various forms of 'Tantrik' rituals in performing their pujas. There are three prescribed ways of performing pujas in Hindu Deities, i.e 'Nigam,' 'Agam' and 'Lokachara'. 'Nigam' is considered as very pious form of Hindu Vedic rituals, whereas 'Agam' is associated with Tantrik system and Lokachara is the union of both the system. The study analyzes that the mode of upasana or worship of Lord Jagannath is unique and mysterious. The paper unearths that as this Adivasi Deity is purely associated with 'Sabari Tantra', the tantrik rituals are closely associated with Jagannath upasana along with karmakanda parampara. This Karmakanda is connected with Agam, which mainly associated with Japa, Tapa and Yagna. Whereas Agam rituals are guided by Jantra, Tantra and Mantra. Hence, Lord Jagannath is considered as the Tantrik Debata. His 'Ratna Vedi' is on the 'Sri Yantra'. Apart from that, Lord Jagannath is also popularly known as Dakshinakalika due to his Feminine attire. Tantra aims at transforming every action into reality. So, Prabhu Jagannath has a Kriya shakti 'Bimala' which is known as 'Hladini Shati.' The moving lord is nothing without Shakti. So, Lord Jagannath is considered as Peetheswara and Maa Bimala is Peetheswari. The research reveals that Panchamakara Upasana is one of the Tantric rituals of Lord Jagannath cult. As Odisha was a great 'Uddiyan Kshetra' and Shakti Upasana is strongly associated with this, Feminine Shakti commands as much respect as does Lord Vishnu or Lord Shiva. The study highlights that this is the only Kshetra where Lord Jagannath is worshipped as Bhairav who is the union of both Kala and Mahakali Swarupa. Thus, the article by shedding light on the synthesis of Arjya and Anarjya Paramparas in Jagannath cult contributes to the religious and cultural awareness of people for a harmonious coexistence in the society.

Keywords: Koulachara, Uddiyan Dharma, Shapta Matraka Upasana, Panchamakara Upasana.

Puri or Purushottam kshetra is rich in art, culture, literature, religion and traditional values. For centuries, it has been the principal religious centre of the Hindus ; one among the four Dhams of Hinduism along with Dwarka, Badrinath and Rameswaram. Puri or Purushottam Kshetra is variously referred in ancient Vedic texts and prachin puranas as Niladri, Nilachal, Sankhakshetra and popularly known as Srikshestra Puri. We find syncretisms of different cults, such as Vaishnavism, Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, Shaktism and known other than Sabari tantrachar in Jagannath Culture. The mode of worship or Upasana of lord Jagannath is unique. His puja or worship rituals are the union of vedic and non vedic Lokachara. It means Mahaprabhu Jagannath's Puja has been systematised in a well designed and developed by Aryans and Tribals (Non Aryans) along with Tantric rituals. There are three main streams for worship of Hindu Deities, i.e. 'Nigam', 'Agama' and Lokachara. 'Nigama' is associated with Vedic rituals whereas 'Agam' is connected with purely Tantric system and 'Lokachara' is the combination of both. Nigam system is guided by karmakanda which concentrates mainly in Japa, Jaaga and Yagnyn (Fire sacrifices). Moreover India's spiritual transmission has been nurtured the concept of ' Shakti' or 'Power'. It means the Devine Mother concept of Shaktism is the ultimate source of Supreme power or you may call it as premordial cosmic energy. which is personified as the Feminine Shakti.

Despite the global prevalence of this Feminine Shakti, many other aspects and incarnation have been forgotten, over shadowed or marginalized over time. As the Tantrika culture of the Devine Goddess and Lord Jagannath apparently appear to be contradictory, but in reality there has been more relevant and inscaple synthesis of the two in the mode of worship. As far as Odia Dharmadhara is concerned Mahaprabhu Jagannath is the union of both Parama and Shakti. This Shakti or Feminine concept and Parama tatwa or Purushottam is considered as Male entity. Gradually Feminine Shakti commands as much as respect as Lord 'Vishnu' or Lord 'Shiva'. Shaktism is strongly believed in odisha from pre-vedic period to the contemporary days. In Sree Kshetra Mahaprabhu Jagannath is worshipped as peetheswar 'Bhairava' whereas Maa Vimala is known as peetheswari 'Bhairabi'. It means Mahaprabhu Jagannath is the supreme entity of Kshetra and Maa Vimala is his kriya Shakti. Though Maa Lakshmi is his wife, but Lord Jagannath's Cheet Shakti is Goddess Vimala., whereas Odisha or Udra Desha was popularly known as one of the foremost Tantric peetha of India. Inspite of this the Bhairabi Chakra has been drawn near Ratna Vedi in the Jagannath Temple and Prabhu Jagannath is on Sree Jantra. Which one is the sacred symbol of Tantric rituals. In Odra Rastra Mahaprabhu Jagannath is worshipped as Dakshinakalika and he is worshipped in 'Pancha Makara Upasana '. Even in Tantric texts like 'Kalika Purana', 'Tantrajamala' and 'Rudrajamala' Prabhu Jagannath is worshipped in 'Klim' bijamanta where as lord Balabhadra is worshipped as 'Hling' and 'Sling' respectively. In Tantric lore Purushottam kshetra is as famous as the oldest principles of Tantric Peetha or Shakti Peetha. Practically all the religions or religious denominations that came to Odisha through the Shakta lokachara. Thus Shaktism is very vital part of Tantric system, there is no distinction with regard to caste, sex, colour and religious background. Thus lord Jagannath is not Just a Deity but he is an unique consciousness of Human values. Sree Jagannath Culture is a splendid synthesis of nt only the synthesis of different ideologies in Hinduism, but also it has assimilated to its concepts and core thought of Buddhism, Jainism and Tantraism. More ever Puri or Purushottam kshetra is primarily a Shakta Tantra Peetha. As we know this Tantric system is guided by Shaktism, so Feminine Shakti holds more powerful position in Jagannath Temple. Although Purushottam Kshetra came to be recognised as a great centre of Vaishnavism, particularly during the Gangas, it was also a centre of Shaktism. And Devi Vimal is worshipped as a Kshetra Shakti.

(See : Mohanty, Rajender, "Matruka Upasana o Sree Jagannath". Rajendra Kumar Mohanty, Pokhariput, Lingaraj vihar, Bhubaneswar,2012, P.24)

This is the true essence of Tantric system, which reflects Matruka Upasana or Shakti Upasana. Infact, the long cherished history of Prabhu Jagannath and Feminine Shakti hold one swarupa of various thoughts, beliefs, faith and ideologies of many more. In this conclusion it can be safely said that Sree Jagannath is nt just a Deity but union of seven Mahavidya or Shakti. Which is non other than Mahamayaa Adyashakti Dakshinakalika. So they are seen as embodiments of Feminine Shakti and Parama in a unique feature. Which reflects the Tantric Lokachara in terms of Jagannath Culture.

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