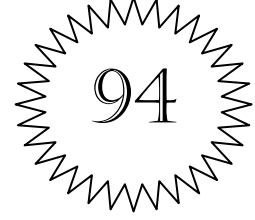


TANTRA AND NATYA

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Abstract:

Tantra has influenced Natya in many ways. While Tantra arose from the Agamas, Natya arose from the Vedas. Acaryalaksanas are more extensive in Tantra than Natya. Hastas are used in Natya to complete the performance and interact with the audience while in the Tantra mudra is used to interact with the murti. Lord Shiva stands as Guru in Natya and Tantra. Dakshinamurthy swarupa of Lord Shiva in Tantra and Nataraja swarupa in Natya adorns Gurustan. When Puja is performed in temples, dance, song, and musical instruments accompany the puja from outside. In Natya, the Ashtadikpalakas are worshiped through pushpanjali (an item), while the Dashadhikpalakas are worshiped in Tantra along with the murtis. Mudras are classified in Tantra based on the puja vidhis. In Natya, there are three categories of Asamyutahasta, Samyutahasta, and Nritahasta.

Aim:

Through this article, I would like to tell how Natya and Tantra are related and in which areas, and in which ways they are combined.

Keywords:

Tantra, Natya, Murti, Puja, Mudra, Hasta.

Introduction:

Tantrasamucam written by scholar and poet Chennas Narayanan Namboothiripad is a very important book for Tantra students. All other Natya scriptures are related to Bharata Muni's Natyasastra. Tantra is fully integrated into temple and temple rituals. Although Natya is a temple art, today it is performed in arenas outside the temple. Natya is mostly based on mythological stories. There is the freedom to make changes in Natya according to the imagination in one's own style. Tantra follows the hymns written by the ancient sages and the rules of worship prescribed by them. Tantri has no authority to make changes to it.

Tantra and Natya:

Tantrasastra is the science that depicts worshiping god, mantra chanting, and puja rituals. Natyasastra is a book that deals with all aspects related to dance such as Natyolpathi, Mandapavidhi, Rangapooja, Tandavalakshana, Hastabhinayam, and Shiriphinayam etc. The meaning of sastrahere is "reproved" by acaryas. Tantrasastras is a kind of ritual knowledge that came from agamas. They are classified into four; sruthi, smriti, purana and tantra. Tantra describes aradhana, sadhana, siddhi, and dhyana. Thanu means

body. Because it is done by the body, it gets the name tantra. The acaryas characterize Tantrasastra as a path to achieve prosperity, abundance, and peace by chanting(pronouncing) the beejakshara or mantrakshara in a special way of pronouncing and acting in accordance with it.

Tantrasastra is a science that originated from the five faces of Lord Shiva. Natyasastra was formed by Bharatamuni from the Natyaveda which was written by Brahma. Tantra is of two types, they are known as Vamatantra and Dakshinatantra. Dakshinatantra is described by panchadevaUpasanaas a person who is sathwaguna in nature. Vamatantra is for people who are thamoguna in nature. The origin of Tantrasastra is from the Agamas. Karanam, Kaamitham, chindham, vadulam, vyamalam, kalotharam, shubhram and makudam are Aagamas. Aagamas are the Sivaparvati conversations. Tantra is the custom of determining and executing the puja rituals inside the temple according to science. Tantra is a branch of Indian Philosophy. Tantrasastra contains authoritative rules of puja krama and puja vidhi. According to nirukta the meaning of the noun Tantra is “tanuvistareititantra”.

Initially, the Vedic scholars didn't accept the Tantra shakha. They despised Tantra shakha by saying that it is anti-Vedic. Over the years, when Veda shakha lost its importance, the ones who claimed to be scholars in Vedas came along in the way of Tantra. Because it was of low expense, an advantage for laymen, and adequate to achieve god's blessings swiftly, the common people promoted and encouraged Tantra Margam over Veda Margam. Thus, the brahmins who followed Veda Margam gradually came to Tantra Margam and by combining these two, made another shakha or branch called as 'Mishram'. As the Vedic Mantras were combined with Tantra shakha, the Vedicbrahmins became the heirs (Tantris) of Tantra karma. Moreover, a condition occurred that only brahmins who did ShodasaSamskara should be placed as Tantri. But according to Mahanirvana Tantra, the condition that being Brahman is not important in Kaliyuga and merely wearing a Yagnopaveetham (poonool) will not give Brahmanathwam was promoted widely. In Kaliyuga, a scheme was made that anyone who attains knowledge (Deeksha) from Guru than ShodasaSamskara has the authority over Tantra. In this scheme, there is no differentiation in caste, religion, or race according to Kularnava Tantra. Like a Tantribecomes a resemblance of the murti on which puja is performed while doing puja rituals, so should a dancer mentally transform into the specific murti about which the dance is being performed.

The first guru in the universe is Dakshinamurthy who is the ' Mahadeva'. Dakshinamurthy is an embodiment of knowledge. Guru Vandana and Guru Puja should be done before every auspicious action. While MahadevaDakshinamurti is assumed as a guru in Tantrasastra, Mahadeva Nataraja is assumed to be the Natya guru of Natyasastra.

The fundamental principle of Tantrasastra is that by worshipping the God and Goddess which are the Panchabhoothaswaroopa, One will attain Papa Samhaara, Dharma,Artha,Kama, Moksha, and through it,

will attain success in life and inner peace. It is a specialty of Natyasastra that, when a dancer worships the God and Goddess which are the Panchabhoothaswaroopa, they will attain success in life and inner peace just like tantric acarya experiences in Tantra.

There are a lot of Tantra Saakhas like Saiva, Vaisnava, Shaktheya, Ganapatya, Saura (regarding sun), etc. Tantrasastra is not merely a branch of science but it is a treasure of different sciences. Kshetra-related things such as Mantras, Puja vidhi, KshetraNirmidi, Idol, Pradishta, Sheeveli, and Kalasha puja are explained in Tantra. Like Tantra Shastra tells about puja rituals and temple construction, so does Natyasastra tells about dances and things related to it, so depicts the construction of Natyagruham.

At the beginning of a puja, one has to greet the deity and the Guru. The puja for any idol greets that idol and Parabrahma as the Guru. If an idol is given to the Guru, it is actually Lord Shiva. This is because the Guru series begins with Lord Shiva.

Guru sloka in Tantra :

SadhashivasamarambamShankaracaryamadhyamam
asmadhaacaryaparyandhamvande guru paramparam

The meaning of this sloka is that after saluting Sadashiva, Shankaracharya should salute all other teachers and gurus.

Guru sloka in Natya:

Guru Brahma Guru Vishnu, Guru DevoMaheshwara, Guru sakshath para brahma
Thasmaishriguravaenamah.

Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu and Guru is Lord Shiva. In addition to this, Guru is the real Parabrahma. Here, whether in dance or in tantra, the Guru is Parabrahma himself.

BhoomiNamaskar in Natya:

BhoomiNamaskar is done in various ways in Natya. Bhumi Namaskar is different from classical dance forms like Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, and Mohiniyattam. Changes are seen in Bharatanatyam itself in Bhumi Namaskar when there is a change in style. The meaning of all this is the same. According to Hindu tradition, Earth is considered Bhumi Devi. Therefore, the performer touches the ground and asks for forgiveness from the goddess Bhumi Devi for stepping on the ground. After that, Anjali hasta remembers all the other deities holding their hands above the head. Displaying Anjali hasta in front of the chest and saluting the audience. This is Bhumi Namaskar in natya.

Origin of Tantra:

Based upon the knowledge that beyond the humans as well as all the other creatures, there is a supreme power that controls all of them, the investigation to know about the supreme power and to ultimately reach towards it is the origin of Tantraasatra. The next thought is how to connect the supreme power

with man. The origin of Tantrasastra begins as a part of the investigation on how to keep in company with the supreme power to arrange an environment for us to live, exist in favorable conditions, and survive in adverse conditions. The meaning of Tantra is 'knowledge'. By knowledge, it means the knowledge of ourselves. The discovery of the knowledge that the supreme power is only within us is achieved through Tantra.

Tantra is divided into three categories: Shaivism, Vaishnavism, and Shakti. According to Shaiva, Tantra is said to have originated from the Agamas. 'Agamas' means conversations of Shiva and Parvati.

In Kerala, 108 Shiva temples, 108 Durga temples, 108 Sastha temples, and 84 Bhadra temples have been established by Sri Parasurama. Although the exact number of Vaishnava temples is not known anywhere, 13 of the most famous Vaishnava temples in India are located in Kerala.

Origin of Natya:

Natyaveda originated from Lord Brahma in Tretayuga. Natyaveda was created for the relief of sorrow in Tretayuga, which was a mixture of happiness and sorrow. Indradikpalakas are the protectors of India, a part of Jambudweep (Jambu Island). It was their prayers that caused Lord Brahma to create Natyaveda. Lord Brahma remembered all the Vedas and composed the Natyaveda by adding the contents of all four Vedas. The pronunciation of words is adopted from Rigveda, Geetam from Samaveda, Abhinaya from Yajurveda, and Rasas from Atharvaveda. After creating Natyaveda, Lord Brahma summoned Lord Indra and conveyed his demand. Gods with qualities of intelligence, wisdom, courage, and health were asked to practice Natyaveda. Indra deva replied that the gods are not suitable for it, and sages who are well-versed in Vedas and are steadfast in their practice are the ones who are suitable to practice Natyaveda. Brahma gave the mission of teaching Natyaveda to Bharatamuni and his 105 sons. Bharatamuni studied Natyaveda and trained his sons in all the practices of bharativritti, satvativritti, and arabhativritti. But Brahma asked Bharatamuni to practice Kaishikivritti also. Brahma created 24 Apsaras with his mind and gave them to Bharatamuni because women were needed to practice Kaishikivritti which is important for sringararasa. Finally, with the permission of Brahma, the Natyaveda was performed on the day of Lord Indran's Dhvajotsava. Its theme is the war between the gods and the demons and the victory of the gods.

Connection of Vedas with Tantra and Natya:

Natyasastra is completely in accordance with the Vedas. But only a small portion of Tantrasastra is dependent upon the Vedas. Among the Vedas, Tantrasastra has similarities with the Atharvaveda. The Atharvaveda is a desirable one i.e., it has a utility for the satisfaction of our material needs. But the Tantra is existing on a spiritual level. The Vedas, it has the complete reference to non-violence but in Tantra, it is the opposite. There are many violent actions to be done in it, for example, rituals like animal sacrifice are to be done in the shastheyam rites. It is because of this it is said that Tantra has a similarity with the

Atharvaveda. Lord Brahma created Natyaveda by taking essences from the four Vedas. Therefore Natyaveda is based on all four Vedas.

Importance of mudras in Tantra and hastas in Natya:

The five fingers are the symbols for the earth, water, fire, air, and the sky. It is certain that the mudras made by touching and joining these symbolic fingers with each other will please each of its respective Gods. Whether in Tantra or Natya, mudra is very important. Mudra is used in Tantra to please the murtis. Just as Mantra and Mudra are related in Tantra, Hastas and music are related in Natya. Mudra is used to communicate with murti in Tantra. In Natya, the performer uses hastas to communicate with the audience. If we look at the structure and use of Mudras, we can see many similarities between Tantra and Natya. In Natya, each murti has specific hastas. In Tantra, the murti is understood through the symbols of weapons. In Tantra and Natya, ayudhamudras are specially prescribed. As the position of the hastas changes in Natya, its meaning and use also change. As the position of the mudras in the Tantra changes, its name is seen to change.

Conclusion:

Through Tantra, one can know about supreme power. Tantra shows the ways to Tathwamasi. When all the surroundings necessary for the presence of Parabrahman are present in Natyavatharana, the performer can feel the supreme power.

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