



Pañcabuddha Caryā performance by the Faculty of Dance, Sirjana College of Fine Arts, September, 2018.

PAÑCABUDDHA PERCEPTION OF CARYĀ

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Abstract

My study of ahorātrapadasādhavidhi is the study of caryā repertoire and in this repertoire of caryā of 'performing ritual', pañcabuddha is the store house of vajrayāna philosophical system from which emerges the bunch of deities who fill the kaleidoscopic scenario of visualization process in the religious practice of vajrayāna religion. The play of symbolism is swung to the extremes of space and beyond through the projection of akṣobhya, vairocana, amitābha, ratnasambhava and amogasiddhi as five divine forces or pañcabuddha representing pañcaskandha, driving all the sentient beings to their 'non-existent existence'. On the basis of the reliance on the 'visualization' of pañcabuddha, a path to nirvāna is eased through the 'realization' of śūnyatā and ultimate liberation of humanity a mass.

Caryāⁱ is basically a sādhanaⁱⁱ of pañcabuddhaⁱⁱⁱ who in essence is pañcaskandha^{iv}.

To authenticate the statement pronounced here, let us begin analysing the conceptual vajrayāna phenomenon like caryā, sādhana, pañcabuddha and pañcaskandha in sequence and establish a logical relationship.

Caryā in essence denotes a path for a human life leading to salvation. It endeavours to explain the deeper meaning of the existence of the human life in body and mind. In this process, for all practical purposes, practice of song, dance and the rituals are the means to enliven the spirit in man. It is scientifically

religious or religiously scientific. Very uncharacteristically, it does not rely on faith or moral lessons as preaching of the religions do. The study reveals the system to be followed to lead a chartered trail to enlightenment. It's so called mystical thought process is aesthetically spiritual and thus contradictory in character inciting the human mind to solve the mystery of complex human life's existence (bhāva) and non-existence (abhāva). Apparently aesthetic Caryā or practice is inherently spiritual in content.

In caryā one dances away to nirvāṇa, which is liberation from future rebirths realizing the extinction of sufferings, in the ritual process or sādhana, whereby worshiper becomes worshiped and achieves divinity.



Vairocana

What then is the place of *sādhana* in *caryā*?

‘The *Sādhana* is concerned with the process (or a *caryā*) for worshiping a particular deity... This consists in meditating in a quiet place and there practicing Yoga till a state similar to deep sleep is brought about. In this state of deep sleep the ascetic communes with the Infinite Spirit or the inexhaustible store-house of energy, which is supposed to be the highest creative principle behind the world structure. By this communion the ascetic draws forth energy from that inexhaustible store-house, and

becomes powerful himself. This process of the realization of the Infinite Spirit is what is called *sādhana*. The deity is the part of this psychic process.’^v

This *caryā* or practice of a *sādhana* or process is in fact a yoga or rather a *ṣaḍāṅga* yoga adhered to in *vajrayāna* Buddhism which affiliates itself to the concept of *pañcabuddha* in execution of yoga practice.

This is how *guhyaśamājatantra* explains the relationship of *ṣaḍāṅga* yoga with *pañcabuddha*:^{vi}

Caryā is a yoga and in *vajrayāna* yoga of six limbs, *ṣaḍāṅga* yoga, are employed: *pratyahāra*, *dhyāna*, *prāṇāyāma*, *dhāraṇa*, *anusmṛti* and *samādhi*.

Pratyahāra is the process by which the ten sense-organs are controlled.

Dhyāna is the conception of the five desired objects through *pañcabuddha*.

Prāṇāyāma is the control of the breathing process by which breath is drawn from inside and is meditated upon.

Dhāraṇa is the meditation of one’s own mantra.

Anusmṛti is the constant meditation of the object for which the psychic exercise is undertaken.

And finally, when by this process the



Akṣobhya

transcendental knowledge is suddenly realized by the worshiper, it is known as *samādhi*.^{vii}

In a yoga process, *dhyāna* (meditation) is the conception of the five desired objects through *pañcabuddha*, the five Buddhas, which is again sub-divided into five kinds: *vitarka* (cogitation), *vicāra* (thinking), *priti* (pleasure), *sukha* (happiness), and *ekāgratā* (concentration).^{viii}

The five desires are in condensation through the application to the five Buddhas. Meditation (*dhyāna*) is said to be imagination. And that Meditation is fivefold: Primary

Conception (*vitarka*) is the secret triad, from the enjoyment of which comes Secondary Conception (*vicāra*). The vicinity of joy is the third, and the sum of pleasure is the fourth. One's own consciousness with removal of the upsurge of knowledge and knowable, is known as the fifth, with a peace composed of all Buddha and abiding in all desires. Drawing forth the breath made of five knowledge and which is the self-existence of the five elements, one should imagine it in the form of a tiny ball on tip of the lotus nose.^{ix}

In a *caryāgīti* of *caryāgītikōṣa*, *pañcabuddha* is assigned a role of a *karṇadhāra* or helmsman in the *sādhana* or process of *caryā* or religious practice:^x

By using three, (*kāya*, *vāka* and *citta*) as a protection, kill (by) the group of eight

Honor compassion and void (in your) own innate body

Cross the worldly existence, as the ocean of water, like a dream of illusion

Think of (worldly existence) in the middle of the confluence of the rivers made of waves

By the means of *Pañca Tathāgata* as a large oar used as rudder or helm

The outer body, *Kṛṣṇā* (says), is a web of illusion

Smell, touch and taste are such, as resembling a dream forsaken of (or without) sleep



Ratnasambhava

Perception (*citta*) is a helmsman for a path to void

Kṛṣṇā (the composer) departs in addiction (or devotion) of the great pleasure or bliss (*mahāsukha*)

After establishing a link between *caryā*, *sādhana* and *pañcabuddha*, we are led to a further link of these three to *pañcaskandha*. *Guhyasamājantra* very categorically specifies *pañcabuddha* to be nothing but *pañcaskandha* or basic elements human beings are composed of:

pañcaskandhā samasena pañcabuddhāḥ prakīrtitāḥ |



Amitābha

vajra-āyatanānyeva bodhisatvāgryamaṇḍalamiti || 50 ||
guhyaśamājantra saptadaśa paṭalāḥ
p.111

The five *skandha* or *pañcaskandha* are proclaimed in short to be the five Buddha or *pañcabuddha*.

In a dramatic turn of *vajrayāna* thought process, *vajrayāna caryāgīti* incites us to destroy the basic elements of our constituent that is *pañcaskandha*, on a spiritual path to elevate and achieve *nirvana*:^{xii}

The mind is full of the void by the grace of *sahaja*.



Amoghasiddhi

Do not be sorry for the loss of the
skandhas.²

Tell, how *Kāhna* does not exist.
He is flourishing every day, entering
into the three worlds.⁴

The fool is sad to see the sense of
destruction.

Do the broken waves suck the ocean?⁶
The fool cannot see the existing man.
The butter seen contained in milk is
not seen.⁸

Nobody goes or comes in this world.
In this style the yogin *Kāhna* makes
sport.¹⁰ ^{xiii}

Vajrayāna Buddhism accepts the basic

doctrine of existence and *nirvāṇa*. The reality of the existence of the body and mind apart, it vies to perfect the mundane existence through the yogic exercise to reach the ultimate goal of *śūnyatā* passing the stage of *sahaja*. Identifying 'the five mundane existence' in *pañcaskandha* symbolized by *pañcabuddha*, it aims to perfect, control and ultimately destroy those *panca skandhas*, of which *pañcabuddha* is a manifestation, which signifies 'so-called existence' to attain *nirvāṇa* conceptualized in the form of *śūnyatā*. *Sahaja*, in this process, is the state of the mind.

In this backdrop of the conceptual formation of the doctrine, leaning on belief, faith and soul is not called for. Pure reasoning is applied in explaining the emmundane existence' and final relief from it all, so the need to fall back on faith is negated. When the reality of the emmundane existence' is denied the belief in the existence of the soul takes a back seat, and so the concept of re-birth.

In the kaleidoscopic formatting of *vajrayāna* Buddhism religious practice, a visual form given to *pañcabuddha* is a visualization part and the concept of *pañcaskandha* attached to it is a part of the realization path.

Closing the statement we began with, we can assertively pronounce that '*caryā* is a *sādhana* of *pañcabuddha* who in essence is nothing but *pañcaskandha*' destined to be won over in a spiritual



Pañcabuddha

path of *vajrayāna* Buddhism so conceptualized.

On a parting note, let us praise the gains of *caryā*:^{xiv}

One captures all the mystical powers and shines in the cosmos even when vanishing from sight.

One sees with divine eyes when set on *trivajra* abode of *kāya*, *vāka* and *citta*.

One hears all the sounds through magical psychic power.

Through a drama or *nāṭaka* one knows *kāya*, *vāka* and *citta* of all the sentient beings.

One remembers the incidents of the eon of the former lives dwelt in *samsāra* as if only of three days.

References

- ⁱ *Vajrayāna* religious practice
- ⁱⁱ the process of excessive concentration or focus for evocation
- ⁱⁱⁱ *akśobhya*, *amitābha*, *amoghasiddhi*, *vairocana* and *ratnasambhava*
- ^{iv} *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saṅgyā*, *saṅskāra* and *vigyāna*
- ^v Buddhist Iconography by Binoytosh Bhattacharya p. 24
- ^{vi} *aśānāmindriyāṇāntu soavṛtisthānāntu sarvataḥ* |
pratyāhāramiti proktamāhāra pratipattaye || 141 ||
pancakāmāḥ samāsenā pancabuddhaprayogataḥ |
kalpanam dhyānamucyate taddhyānam pancaddhā bhavetaḥ || 142 ||
vitarka ca vicāram ca prītiśaiva sukhām tathā |
cittasyaikāgratā caiva pancaite dhyānasangrahāḥ || 143 ||
guhyantrṣu sarveṣu vīvidhāḥ parikīrtitāḥ |
guhyaṁ tarkodayam tarkam vicāram tat prayogataḥ || 144 ||
ṭṛtīyam prīśankāśam caturtham sukhasangeham |
soacittam pancam gyeyam gyānam gyeyo dayaksamam || 145 ||
sarvabuddhamayam śāntam sarvakāmapratīṣṭhitam |
pancagyānamayam śvāsam ^{vi} *pancabhūtasvabhāvakam* || 146 ||
nīśvārya pīṇdarupeṇa nāsikāgre tu kalpaye |
pancavarṇam mahāratnam prāṇāyāmamiti smṛtam || 147 ||
svamantram hṛdaye ghyātvā prāṇabindugatam nyaset |
nirudhya cendriyam ratnam dhārayan dhāraṇā smṛtam || 148 ||
nīrodhavajragate cite nimittamupajāyate |
pancaddhātu nimitm tat bodhivajreṇa bhāṣitam || 149 ||
prathamam marīcīkākāram dhūmrākāram dvitīyaam |
ṭṛtīyam khaddhotākāram ^{vi} *caturtham dīpavajjalam* || 150 ||
pancam tu sadālokaṁ nirabhram ^{vi} *gaganasannibhm* |
sthīranta vajramārgenāsphārayīta khadhātuṣu || 151 ||
vībhāvya yadanuamṛtyām tadākāraṇta sansmaret |
anusṛtiriti geyāpratībhāsohra jāyate || 152 |
pragyopāyasamāpatyā sarvabhāvān samāstah |
samhṛta pīṇdayogena bimbamadhya vībhāvāam || 153 ||
jhaṭiti gyānanīṣpattih samādhiriti saggyitah |

pratyāhāram samāsāddha sarvamantrairadhiṣṭhyate || 154 ||

guhyasamājantra aṣṭādasah paṭalah p.132-133

vii *Buddhist Iconography* by Binoytosh Bhattacharyya p.25-27

viii *Buddhist Iconography* by Binoytosh Bhattacharyya p.25-27

ix *Yoga of Guhyasamājantra* by Alex Wayman p.45

x *sanskṛta cāryā gīti of caryāgītikoṣah* 13

trisaranaṇauka kṛtva astakam hatam 1

nijadeha karunasunyate mahile || 1 ||

tirnau bhavajaladhih yatha kṛtva mayasvapnam 1

madhyevenim tarango maya matah (=gyatah) ||

pancatathagatam kṛtva kenipatam 1

vahya kayam kṛsna mayajalam || 2 ||

gandhasparsarasa yadrsastadrsah 1

nidravihine svapnasadrsah || 3 ||

cittam karnadharah sunyatamarge

gatah kṛsno mahasukhaprasange || 4 ||

Caryāgītikoṣa of Buddhist Siddhas by Prabodha Chandra Bagchi

xi *Yoga of Guhyasamājantra* by Alex Wayman p.229

xii || 42 ||

[*rāgakāmoda* ^{xii} *kānhapādānām* 1]

cia sahaje śūna sampunnā 1

kāndhavitoen mā hohi visannā || [1] ||

bhaṇa kaise kānha nāhi 1

pharaha anidinam ^{xii} *teloe pamāe* || *dhruvapada* ||

mūdā ditha ^{xii} *nātha dekhi kāra* 1

bhānga taranga ki soṣai sāra || [2] *dhru* ||

mūdā acchante loa na pekhai 1

dudha mājhe laḍa ^{xii} *ṇacchante dekhai* || [3] *dhru* ||

bhava jāi ṇa āvai ṇa ethu koha 1

aisa ^{xi} *bhāve vilasai kānhila joi* || [4] *dhru* ||

DohāKośaCaryāGīti No. 42 by Nilratna Sen

^{xiii} *Dohā Kośa Caryā Gīti* No. 42

Translation by Nilratna Sen Appendix-A p.143 *Caryāgītikośa*

^{xiv} Gains from caryā:

antaraddhāneṣu saveṣu sāhastraiḥkāvabhāsakah |
harate sarvasiddhīnām bhunkte kanyām surāgrajām || 53 ||
gangāvālukasamān buddhāmstrivajrālayasansthitān |
paśyate cakṣurvajreṇa svahastaikamyathāmālam || 54 ||
gangāvālukasamāih kṣetraih ye śabdāh samprakīrtitāh |
śṛṇotyabhigyaṅvāśatah śrotrasthabhiva sarvatah || 55 ||
gangāvālukasamāih kṣetraih kāyavākcittalakṣaṇam |
sa vetti sarvasatoānām cittākhyam nāṭakodbhavam || 56 ||
gangāvākasamāih kalpāih sansārasthītisambhavam |
purvanivāsasamayam dinatrayamiva smaret || 57 ||
guhyaśamājantra samaya sādhanāgranirdeśapaṭalo dvādaśah p.45



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Two papers presented on Caryā and Caryānṛtya on the auspices of Department of Education and Sanskritik Sansthan, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Caryā: Dancing Away to Nirvāṇā, a book based on study of 'Ahorātra Pada Sādhana Vidhi' ready for publication.