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Musashi Tachikawa, Shoun Hino, and Lalita Deodhar, *Pūjā & Saṃskāra*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001, xiv + 177 Pp. Rs. 495.

It is felt sometimes that the traditions of individual countries, their culture and ritual will be lost due to mechanization, urbanization etc. in the modern world. The fear that the new generations will not know about their own heritage gave rise to various ethnological museums in different countries. The ancient arts and crafts got captured in videos and went on display in various museums. Similarly, with the intention of preserving the ritual tradition of India, the ritual of Pūjā and the sixteen Saṃskāras is caught in photos and is published with the necessary information by Prof. Tachikawa, Dr. Hino and Dr. Mrs. Deodhar.

The first part is a revised version of Dr. Tachikawa's paper entitled "A Hindu Worship Service in Sixteen Steps, *Shoḍaśa-upacāra-pūjā*," *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology*, Vol. 8, no. 1, March 1983, pp. 104 -186.

Image-worship is an important aspect in Hindu life. Every Hindu has a

separate place for god in his house and at least the gods Gaṇapati, Annapūrṇā and Bālakṛṣṇa in it. Then there can be many others according to individual choice. Moreover, people go to temples also for worship. They ask the priest to perform worship for them.

Dr. Tachikawa asked the priest of the Catuḥśṛṅgī temple to perform the *pūjā* 'worship' (the word service, I think, is not necessary) for him. He paid 11 rupees for that in 1981. There the photos were taken of the *pūjā* performed. There are 88 photos and figures in all of the worship in the Catuḥśṛṅgī temple. In the App. 1 the worship in the Nāgeśvar temple and in the App. 2 that in the Pārvatīnandana temple is documented. A map of Pune city is given as App. 3 pointing towards the locations of these three temples together with other important landmarks.

The first one is a very good illustration of the Catuḥśṛṅgī temple. Figs. 2 to 29 give the idea of the surroundings of the temple as well as the shops, the people gathered there, the temples of the associating gods and goddesses etc. The pictures are very clear and inform well the one who does not have any idea about them and make one nostalgic who knows the place. There, while commenting on Fig. 20, it is said, "This is an image of Mhasobā, the most famous water-buffalo demon. --- In Maharashtra State Mhasobā is particularly worshipped by farmers." It is difficult to agree with the statement. By the way, on p. 16 and also on p. 24 the abbreviations Skt. and Marth. are used. But they are not found explained in the list of abbreviations on p. 173. Skt. is Sanskrit and Marth. is Marathi, the language of the Maharashtra State. The pictures of the main hall start from Fig. 30, and from fig. 34 starts the section "A. The preliminaries performed by the priest." First is the *ācamana* 'purification of the self by sipping water' with the utterance of the twenty-four epithets of god Viṣṇu. The author comments on this, "This seems to suggest that Worship Service in sixteen steps was originally formed in a Vaiṣṇava environment." It seems, however, difficult to draw any such conclusion on this basis. There might be some other reason for this. The *ācamana* forms a rite of the daily morning and evening *sandhyā* ritual also. "... it is now the practice in the Deccan to repeat the 24 names of Viṣṇu at the very beginning of the sandhyopāsana, (fn. 24 names are enumerated in *Agnipurāna* ch. 48.)," Kane, in *The History of Dharmashastra*, Vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 315. Following this practice, it is possible that the *ācamana* now always consists of the mutterance of the names of Viṣṇu.

After the *ācamana*, the *prāṇāyāma* is performed. In that connection a note is given on p. 30. The word Brahman occurs there twice. The first Brahman should have been as Brāhmaṇa or Brahmin.

In Fig. 36 is given a very good sketch and the list of the utensils used. After the worship of Gaṇapati starts the section "B. The Main worship" from fig. 43. (On p. 33 occurs a fn. 16, but the number in the text is missing.)

First the goddess is invoked, offered a seat, then is offered the water for washing her feet, then the *arghya*. Then start the illustrations of bathing the deity. He first bathes her with milk. Then offers the bath with clean water. The note from *śuddhodakasnānam* .... which is given below Fig. 49 should come below Fig. 50. Then he gives a bath with curds, ghee, honey, sugar followed each time by

that with plain water. For sugar on p. 44 the word *śarkarā* is better than *śarkara*. In the annotation to Fig. 55 it is said, “The priest is taking a small quantity of sugar or saccharin out of the sugar bottle. But saccharin in ritual is impossible. It might be the chunks of sugar instead. (While describing the procedure of bathing suddenly the sketch of the paraphernalia appears again, apparently without any reason.)

Then are the illustrations of offering turmeric and *kumkum*, flowers, lamp etc. Then while offering the fragrant materials, a mantra is employed. Its translation is ‘From the universal sacrifice sprang the rich ...’ The word rich here might create confusion. It should be *ṛks*. Then the priest recites the Puruṣasūkta, Rudra mantras and the Vasordhārā mantras while consecrating the deity with water. Then the goddess is offered *vastra* ‘garment’, *upavastra* ‘upper garment’, fragrant material etc. Though it is not stated separately, he puts a nose-ornament (*nath* in Marathi) in the nose of the deity. It is not seen in Fig. 67, but in Fig.68 it is there. Hence it can be concluded that after the *gandha* and before the flowers he puts it. Then are offered flowers, *dhūpa* etc. Then occurs the waving of the lamp. After that comes *naivedya* ‘the offering of the food to the god.’ There while commenting on the Figs. 74 -76, it is said, “Finally he sprinkles it over the food,” (Fig. 76). The sentence is not very clear. It should better be, “Finally he pours a line of water clockwise around the container of the food.” In this connection, the author has stated on the same page, “The five substances, i.e. milk, curds, ghee, honey, and sugar, which are offered at the sixth stage ... are also called the *naivedya* offering.” But it is not so. There the five substances are used for the bath of the deity. It is *not* the *naivedya*. What the author has in mind might be, ‘the five substances which are called *pañcāmṛta* can also be offered as *naivedya*.’

Then is *ārātrika* ‘the waving of the lamp’ together with the sound of cymbals. It is no doubt to felicitate the goddess, as he has stated, but both, the light and the sound also have another function, and that is to ward off the evil. For Fig. 79 there is a comment in the lighter vein that the cat (which is seen in the photo) is not involved in the ritual, suggesting thereby that the cat has come into picture just by coincidence. It also demonstrates the carefulness and precaution the author has taken while annotating the photos. The procedure ends with a very clear and beautiful picture of the goddess (Fig. 83). Then are the illustrations of obtaining power from the light and receiving the *prasāda* (blessings)(Figs. 84-88). In Fig. 84 it is said, “As soon as the *ārātrika* was over, the lamp was placed on the floor.” Generally in the ritual, the things used or to be used are not put directly down on the earth. First some *akṣatā* ‘unbroken rice-seeds’ are put down and then the things are put. Surprisingly, in the whole of the *pūjā*, the *akṣatās* are totally absent!

The first App. illustrates the *pūjā* in the Nāgeśvar temple. The names ending with *Īśvar* are always the names of Śāṅkara, e.g. Omkāreśvar, Koḷeśvar, Ghṛṣṇeśvar, etc. Here it is told that the deities in it are Viṭṭhal (here wrongly written Viṭṭal) and Rukmiṇī. But if I am not mistaken, this also is a temple of Śāṅkara, and perhaps the oldest one in the city and it has the images of Viṭṭhal and Rukmiṇī also.

In the second App. are the photos of the Gaṇapati worship performed by a householder without any priest. It is similar to that of the Catuṣṛṅgi worship up to Fig. 120. Then his son comes into picture. He offers the garment etc. to the deity. The former one offers the food. It is said there, "He is dropping water from a small ritual spoon on the food such as fruits and betelnuts. It is by this action that he offers food to Gaṇapati." Regarding the fruits the description is all right. Afterwards those things are given to the priest or to a Brahmin. But there is a plate full of food in front of the god. It is also offered to god by pouring a line of water clockwise around it. Afterwards that food is partaken by some member in the family. There seems to be some misunderstanding regarding the next photo, Fig. 123. It is annotated, "Now that the householder has offered food, the rest of the family are offering food. The son is holding a plate filled with food, while his sister is touching him with her right hand in the same way as her mother does with her father." Actually it is not so. It seems to be the preparation of *ārātrika*. The son is holding the lamps in the plate, not the food. It is said here that it is the sister who is touching his hand. It needs some verification. Generally, it is the wife alone who touches the hand of the husband.

In the preface there are some statements which are difficult to understand. E.g. "... the meaning of the sacred and profane differs depending on the category of religious activity (p. vi)". "These are ordinary conditions when there are no occasions of tension such as death, birth, and marriage," (p. vii).

Here ends the first part of the book. It gives very important information beautifully illustrated by the photos. They are very vivid and to the point. Each and every step becomes very clear through them. The author deserves hearty congratulations for the commendable efforts.

The second part of the book is the "Sixteen Saṃskāras Handed down by the Hiranyakeśins". It has a separate introduction, which is very informative. Regarding the saṃskāra it is said there, "The sacraments relating to the body are called Saṃskāra rituals which aim at purifying the body, mind and intellect of an individual and are performed on all major stages of life from birth to death." But according to the Indian tradition, *saṃskāras* are to make a person fit or eligible for certain stage or purpose, as Śabaravāmin has commented on *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* III.1.3, *saṃskāro nāma sa bhavati yasmin jāte padārtho bhavati yogyaḥ kasyacid arthasya* / 'Saṃskāra is that which being effected makes a certain thing or person fit for a certain purpose.' According to *Tantravārttika*, *yogyatān ca ādadhānāḥ kriyāḥ saṃskārā iti ucyante* / 'Saṃskāras are those actions and rites that impart fitness.'

The list of the *saṃskāras* varies according to different traditions. Here the author seems to have followed Jātukarṇya as quoted in the *Saṃskāraprakāśa*. The procedure is that laid down in the *Hiranyakeśibrahmakarman* and the *Hiranyakeśibrahmakarmasamuccaya*.

Unlike the first part, here the photos were ready. They were chosen and used according to the need. They belong to Natu family. Unless and until one knows this, the matter on the blurb does not become clear. There it is said about Mrs. Deodhar, "She is from the Natus and a heroine of Saṃskāras presented here,

Vivāha in particular.” On a scholarly book like this such introduction looks a little odd. The reader further stumbles on the word Natus. There also, as in the text, the words Natu family would have been unambiguous.

On p. 92 the author has stated, “I have quoted some significant mantras when relevant to the context.” Just after a few lines he states, “I have omitted all the mantras or the Sanskrit portions referring to that relevant photographs in my illustrations.” When we go to the actual text it is seen that at so many places he has quoted the mantras together with the translations. On the same page a chart of the saṁskāras dealt with by the *Hiranyakeśibrahmakarmasamuccaya* is given. In it he has used some symbols which are not explained, hence it is difficult to understand what is meant by availability.

In *niṣkramaṇa*, it is told, “the practice is to go to Śītalādevī or Jogeśvarī temple as the place for first outing.” In reality, however, optionally it is the Kasbā Gaṇapati and the invariably Jogeśvarī temple which are visited. The rites common to all rites he has dealt with in the Introduction itself. They are Gaṇapatipūjana, Punyāhavācana, Mātṛkāpūjana and Nāndīśrāddha.

Then starts the description of the rites Garbhādhāna, Pūṁsavana, Sīmantonnayana etc. He has given important information regarding these rites, has cited modern practices also. The persons in the photos, however, do not seem to be from the Natu family. It is not mentioned who they are. There is no photo for Jātakarma. In the naming ceremony on p. 106 he gives into bracket the information ‘The Nāmakaraṇa saṁskāra was performed in the case of Giriśa, son of the Natus and the Baṭu on the occasion of Upanayana seen below.’ Below are the photos of Nāmakaraṇa, but not of Giriśa, but of the child of Mrs. Deodhar. So the sentence becomes misleading. The information given regarding the rite is very important and useful. Then come the ceremonies of Annaprāśana ‘introduction of cooked food to the child’, Caula ‘the first tonsure’ etc.

Then comes the elaborate description of the rite of Upanayana. A useful chart is given there showing the Vedic, post-vedic and the local nature of the rites. In it while explaining *Ghāṇā*, he states, ‘this is grinding of the *māṣas* ‘beans’. It is, however, not grinding. The first photo is of pounding. Grinding is also done, as Fig. 15 shows, but not as the part of the *Ghāṇā* rite.

Two important rites which are performed in Upanayana and also in the marriage ceremony are Grahamakha and Devadevaka performed generally by the parents. In Upanayana, the Baṭu is from Natu family, but the persons performing the Maṇḍapadevātapraṭiṣṭhā are not his parents, but Mr. and Mrs. Deodhar. Grahamakha is not dealt with here but in the marriage ceremony.

Afterwards comes the Mātṛbhōjana, the ceremonial meal with the mother before initiation. Then come the offerings, and *Āsmārohaṇa*. The next sub-division is *Bohole*, but unlike other rites, this is a thing. It is a raised platform on which the actual rite takes place. Then are the rites up to *daṇḍagrahaṇa*. On p. 118 it should be girdle instead of gridle of *muñja* grass. On p.125, he uses the word stuff for *daṇḍa*. It does not seem to be a misprint, but misunderstanding, because the word comes again four-five times. *Daṇḍa* is a staff.

The description of the Upanayana is given elaborately up to the ceremonial

procession and welcoming home the initiated one. After that is the description of the Satyanārāyaṇa pūjā. It is said, “This Pūjā is performed on every auspicious occasion, invariably after the Upanayana or Vivāha.” However, it is not so. In most of the Citpāvan families, actually the *boḍaṇ* rite is very common. Satyanārāyaṇa is common in the Deshastha Brahmins. Generally due to some special circumstances Satyanārāyaṇa is performed instead of the *boḍaṇ*. Then comes the description of the marriage. He starts it with the *grahayajña* or *grahamakha*. Up to *āsmārohaṇa* it is the same couple. But suddenly after *āsmārohaṇa*, in *paṇigrahaṇa* ‘holding the hand (not seizing)’ the couple is different. Again in Figs. 65 and 69 the old couple comes. In Figs. 70a, 70b, and 73 another couple is seen. Also in Fig. 76 the couple seems to be different. From 77 again it is Mr. and Mrs. Deodhar.

Like *bohole*, in the description of marriage also on p. 142 comes the word *rukhatvat*. This also is not a rite. *Rukhatvat* actually has two meanings. Generally, the girl is given in the marriage to the bridegroom together with some utensils and chattel besides ornaments. Those utensils and other things are called *rukhatvat*. What is meant on p. 142 is the *rukhatvat* meal. It is a meal, something like breakfast given to the bridegroom and his close relatives. The author himself has rightly explained so. The caption better be *rukhatvat* meal.

In the description of Lakṣmīpūjana first the name is written and then it is told. The photos in Figs. 79 and 80 are wrongly arranged.

Unlike the first part, the second part does not give annotations to each photo, consistently. Sometimes they are given and sometimes they are omitted. I personally think that the annotations would have increased the value of this very important monograph. It would have become more precise and further, it would have been possible to overcome the discrepancies.

There is no doubt that the author has done a very appreciable job and I have no hesitation to agree with him, “The importance of such a work is valued ... in the field of sociology, as it covers the social and cultural aspect (or, phase) of today’s Hindu religious society. The ceremonies and customs of every mode of their life depict their moral, psychological and spiritual attitude and approach towards their life and society as well.”

Deccan College  
Pune, India

Madhavi KOLHATKAR

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