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The Nuptial Rites Amongst the Paippalā dīns with Special Reference to the
Karmapañjikā

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Abstract

The adherents of the Paippalā dī school of the Atharvaveda residing in the Eastern Indian State of Orissa, in the absence of a Sū tra text, use priestly manuals such as the Karmapañjikā (KP) and the Karmasamuccaya for conducting the rituals. The KP, attributed to an otherwise unknown Śrī dhara, claims to follow the Sū tra and elaborately explains the rituals in the tradition that originated from the Saṃhitā and adapted to the changed religious situation with the influence of Hinduism.

There is a rare availability of KP manuscripts in Orissa. Currently, the work of critical edition of the KP is being carried out by the author in collaboration with Professor Arlo Griffiths, who discovered and collected 5 manuscripts of the KP, mainly from private collections in Orissa. All are palm-leaf manuscripts consisting of approximately 175 folios, written in Oriya script.

The KP explains seven important rites in the tradition, viz. Vivā ha "Nuptial ritual", Garbh ā lambhana "Rite of Impregnation", Puṃsavana "Rite for obtaining a male child", Jā takarman "Rite for new-born child", Godā nakarman "Rite of shaving the hair, Upanayana "Initiation rite" and Āplavana "Bath of a student who has completed his study".

Along with the preliminary rites, the KP describes five main nuptial rites of the Paippalā dīns viz. Prasthā na "Depature of the bridegroom, Dā rikā snā na "Bridal bath", Dā naprahigraha "Giving away of the bride in marriage and bridegroom accepting her as a wife", Vaivā hikakarman "Nuptial offerings" and Caturthī karman "Ritual on the fourth day of wedding". The rites consist of various acts to be performed in a particular sequence. The core of the Nuptial ritual though resembles with other Vedic traditions has a peculiarity of Ātharvaṇic rites, some of which are unique to Paippalā dī tradition.

The present paper attempts to introduce the audience to the KP by focusing on one of the important ritual, viz. Vivā ha.
