The Pratiṣṭhālakṣaṇasārasamuccaya on Hindu Iconography

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Chapter 6 of the Pratiṣṭhālakṣaṇasārasamuccaya (=PLSS) is one of a number of Sanskrit sources describing the iconographic characteristics of Hindu deities. This text, also known as the Lakṣaṇa (sāra) samuccaya or Lakṣaṇasamgraha, deals with the construction and installation of Śiva's phallic symbols (*liṅga*). It is said to have been compiled from various Āgamas by a certain Vairocana who probably lived during the beginning of the twelfth century A.D., most likely a disciple of Īśānaśiva, the author of the well-known Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati.

The PLSS consists of 32 chapters which deal with the following topics :
1. *Liṅgadravyanirṇayaavanapraveśa* (different materials from which *liṅgas* can be made and the results obtained from their worship ; the procedure for entering the forest in order to obtain the materials). 2. *Kartur ācāryādiṇīkṣā* (qualities required of the ritualist installing the *liṅga*; the selection of qualified architects and officiants). 3. *Dāruśilāgrahaṇa* (criteria for selecting wood and stone and the ritual for collecting these materials). 4. *Avyaktaliṅgalakṣaṇa* (dimensions of the "unmanifest" (*avyakta*) *liṅgas*, i.e., those made of stone and other materials). 5. *Vyaktaliṅgalakṣaṇa* (dimensions of the "manifest" (*vyakta*) *liṅgas*, i.e., those which are idols (*pratimā*, *arca*). 6. *Rudrādīvyaktaliṅgavartana* (description of the "manifest" *liṅgas* that are idols of the deities of the Śaiva pantheon). 7. *Vyaktāvyaktaliṅgānāṃ daśadhā vartana* (dimensions of *liṅgas* on which Śiva's faces are depicted). 8. *Piṭhavartana* (shapes of the pedestals for the *liṅgas*). 9. *Vāhanāyudhavartana* (shapes of the attributes held by the directional guardians and other deities ; the animals bearing the deities). 10. *Rtvādidinaṇīkṣaṇa* (determining auspicious and inauspicious seasons, days, and times for the installation of *liṅgas*). 11. *Maṇḍapavidhāna* (dimensions of different types of pavilions).

12. *Kuṇḍasruksruvalakṣaṇa* (sizes and shapes of the fire pits; materials used for fire offerings). 13. *Lakṣaṇoddhāraavidhikathana* (ritual for tracing the lines on the *līṅga*). 14. *Tridhālīṅgasnāna* (bathing the *līṅga* with various materials). 15. *Adhivāsana* (rituals for consecrating the *līṅga*). 16. *Tridhālīṅgaropana* (placing the foundation stone in the form of a tortoise on the temple floor and setting the *līṅga*). 17. *Caṇḍeśvarasthāpana* (installation of the idol of Caṇḍeśvara). 18. *Toraṇastambhagrahapūjā, jarāyujādibhātadisthāpana* (installation of Jarāyuja and other *bhātas*; worship of the arches, columns, and the preceptor). 19. *Bāṇalīṅgādiyānadvārahr̥tsaṁsthāpana* (collection and installation of the *līṅgas* called *bāṇalīṅgas*, of the vehicles, doors, and the vessel). 20. *Īśānadidhva-janiveśanākhyāna* (raising the banner). 21. *Jirṇoddhāraavidhikathana* (ritual for abandoning/removing damaged *līṅgas*). 22. *Maṇḍapapātyādigr̥hasthāpana* (suitable sites for building an ascetic's rest house and other buildings). 23. *Sthānadeśayāgalakṣaṇanirṇaya* (selection and purification of the site for a temple). 24. *Śalyoddhāranirṇaya* (things considered inauspicious in relation to temple construction). 25. *Vāstupūjāpadasaṁsthāpana* (worship of the ground and tutelary deity; construction of the temple ground plan). 26. *Talacchandavāstubhūṣaṇākhyasāmānyapañcarathakaprasādavartanā* (description of the temple named Vāstubhūṣaṇa). 27. *Sāndhāranavaprasādavartanā* (description of various other temples). 28. *Līṅgamānaprasādalakṣaṇa* (dimensions of the *līṅgas* in relation to the dimensions of the temples). 29. *Devadvārasthāpanalakṣaṇa* (description of various types of doors). 30. *Maṇḍapādivartinilakṣaṇa* (description of the pavilion, the Nāṭyaśālā, etc.). 31. *Puṣkarīṇīkūpavṛkṣodyānāramasthāpana* (consecration of tanks, wells, parks, and gardens). 32. *Pavitrārōhaṇa* (annual offering of the *pavitrās* to the *līṅga*).

Chapter 6 describes the deities of the Śaiva pantheon in 409 verses. It begins with a description of Sadāśiva's Nine Śāktis (1), followed by a description of Śiva's forms. Eleven forms of this deity can be identified beginning with Śiva, described in different forms (2-12), and ending with Umeśvara (48-50). These are followed by the Eleven Rudras (51-53). In both cases the important number eleven, associated with Śiva/Rudra since Vedic times, has been connected with these deities. Forms of Viṣṇu come

next beginning with the common forms (54cd-58ab), followed by the Ten Avatāras (63-85), the group of Twelve Mūrtis (86-98), the Four Manifestations (99-106) and other forms (107-121). Following is a description of the god Brahmā (122-126), various forms of the goddess (127-177ab) and semi-divine beings (177cd-180), like Apsaras, deities like Gaṇeśa (184-199) and Skanda (200-205). Then the deities connected with the sky are described: the sun (256-275), the Heavenly Bodies (282-288), the snakes (289-300), lunar mansions (301-306), zodiac signs (307-309), and the directional guardians (310-317). Other divine beings like the Kinnaras (322, 326) and the Sixty-four Yoginīs (327-400) follow. The Yoginīs, divided into eight groups and assigned to the cardinal and intermediate directions, are probably designed for a *yantra* with Bhairava in the centre.

DĀMODARA ŚARMĀ, BUDDHISĀGAR ŚARMĀ and BĀBUKṚṢṆA ŚARMĀ edited the PLSS using seven Nepalese manuscripts in 1966-1968. One of the manuscripts of this text, preserved in the National Archives, Kathmandu (4.331) and dated 1645 A.D., contains 254 line drawings depicting the deities described in chapter 6. The same set of illustrations without text is also preserved in National Archives' manuscript 1. 1314, entitled "*sacitrapatrāṇi*." Both manuscripts have similar styles of illustration and the headings naming the deities and containing remarks in Classical Nevāri are almost identical. Both manuscripts seem to be copies of the same manuscript, or one may be a copy of the other. In addition, both manuscripts have an appendix containing 64 drawings illustrating the "Sixty-four Yoginīs according to the Devī-Purāṇa" (according to a remark in the margin), not described in the PLSS. These drawings have been appended to those of the Sixty-four Yoginīs according to the PLSS whose description is said to be based on the "Brahmayāmala". The textual basis for the drawings in the appendix is chapter 50, verses 10-17 and 84cdff., of the Devī-Purāṇa which lists 60 forms of the goddess worshipped in different years. In 1962 BUDDHISĀGAR ŚARMĀ and BĀBUKṚṢṆA ŚARMĀ brought out a modernized redrawn version of this collection entitled "Devatācitraśaṅgraha". Both sets of illustrations have recently been published in their original form by BÜHNEMANN and

TACHIKAWA along with a detailed description. While chapter 6 of the PLSS is an important source material for the study of Hindu iconography, the line drawings appearing in the two manuscripts represent a systematic collection of illustrations of Hindu deities particularly important to the Nepalese tradition and something very rare to find.

Bibliography and Abbreviations

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〈Key Words〉 Pratiṣṭhālakṣaṇasārasamuccaya, iconography

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