Ritual Studies in the Longue Durée: Comparing Shingon and Śaiva Siddhānta Homa

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HOMA AS KEYSTONE: INTRODUCTORY METAPHOR

Think of a stone arch. Think of a second stone arch. Think of these two arches as intersecting—not necessarily at the top, that would be presumptuous, but at some point the two intersect with one another. One arch is ritual studies, the other is tantric studies. The stone best fitted for the intersection of the two is the homa ritual.

The homa is part of almost all tantric traditions, from South India to Mongolia, from Kashmir to California. That alone makes it a key ritual for the study of tantra, a multifaceted religious tradition that places great emphasis on ritual. The importance of the homa for ritual studies is less easily discerned, and hence requires greater explanation.

Ritual studies, as the name implies, is an area of study, the only unifying factor being ritual itself. It is not, in other words, a discipline and as such does not have any unifying theory or method. There is, of course, a pantheon of ancestral spirits to be appeased by repeated mention—obeisances in the form of footnotes—but no unifying theory or even a single unifying theoretical orientation. And since method follows on theory, there is no agreement as to the appropriate method by which to judge the consequent claims.

This is not to say that there have not been important and valuable contributions to the field, but ones that of necessity have been surveys. This is, of course, a horse of two colors. From one side, the horse looks white, from the other black. While the field as a whole lacks any coherent direction for growth, it benefits from the multiplicity of perspectives and approaches that are brought to bear on the topic.
SO, WHAT’S MISSING?

Christiane Brosius and Ute Hüsken have noted that “It is crucial to explore ritual dynamics by examining the development of a ritual in the longue durée.” There seem to be no studies that undertake such an approach. Studies of ritual change have tended to focus on single instances of change, rather than change over the longue durée. One of the difficulties of such a study, despite its desirability, is assembling adequate evidence to study. The homa can fill this lacuna—and is, therefore, the keystone at the intersection of ritual and tantric studies.

There is a huge body of ritual manuals recording different versions of the homa spanning two millennia of development, change, and transmission across the boundaries between religious cultures. This body of literature provides a perhaps unparalleled resource for the study of ritual dynamics in the longue durée.

The following translation provides one instance of a homa and contributes to a larger, ongoing project that has longitudinal aspects. In order to understand the dynamics of ritual change, a ritual’s historicality, it is necessary to establish several such “data points” for comparison. The homa ritual manual translated here, from the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition, will be compared with a homa known from the Shingon tradition of Japanese esoteric Buddhism. Although this is only a single comparison, it is an instance of the kind of comparisons that cumulatively can establish the dynamics of ritual change.

HISTORICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN ŚAIVA SIDDHĀNTA AND SHINGON

The two rituals I have chosen to compare here are from differing religious traditions, cultures, and times. On the one hand is the Śaiva Siddhānta fire ritual described in the Śomasambhupaddhāti, a text dating from the end of the eleventh century. The chapter from this work prescribing the homa ritual is translated from Hélène Brunner-Lachaux’s French translation, and is given below. Brunner-Lachaux identifies the author—Somasambhu—as a South Indian ācārya. Although this particular work is identified as South Indian, Dominic Goodall calls attention to the fact that the “pan-Indian character of the early sect has been obscured, because almost all the extant works that bear the names of the twenty-eight principal scriptures of the Śaiva Siddhānta have been substantially altered or entirely rewritten in South India.” Thus, although we are here examining a work that comes from the
South Indian form of Śaiva Siddhānta, it derives from an older, more widespread tradition.

The second term of the comparison is the Fudō Myōō soku sai goma (Acalanātha Vidyarāja śāntika homa, 不動明王息災護摩). The Fudō Myōō soku sai goma ritual manual employed in this comparison was originally written by Dōhan (道範, 1178–1252), placing the two works within approximately a two-century span of one another (the contemporary version of Dōhan’s text used in the training of Shingon priests on Mt. Kōya today was edited by Taishin Iwahara).\(^\text{10}\) This text is standard for the Chūin (中院) lineage of Shingon, the lineage associated with Mt. Kōya and the predominant lineage of Shingon in contemporary Japan. Beyond the distinctions in religious traditions, cultures, and times, however, it seems probable that the two traditions themselves both trace their origins further back to a common tantric religious culture. The nature of the development of the two distinct traditions—Śaiva Siddhānta and Buddhist—out of that shared religious culture remains an area requiring much additional research.

Goodall has emphasized that while Indian religions are commonly identified as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, this contemporary characterization is not representative of emic categorizations. In particular, in place of the category “Hinduism,” “various soteriologies and schools of thought might be enumerated, but three streams are commonly separated out: Vedic orthodoxy, and those of the heterodox Vaiṣṇavas, and Śaivas,”\(^\text{11}\) that is, the adherents of Viṣṇu and Śiva. In the early scriptures of Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava tantra “no concession is made to Vedism”\(^\text{12}\) as soteriologically effective. However, “they used the Vedic ritual framework as a paradigm for their own; many tantric rites had elements calqued upon Vedic ones, in which the efficient parts of the ritual, i.e., the mantras, were taken from tantric scriptures instead of from the Vedic corpus.”\(^\text{13}\)

One perspective on this early period is that offered by Alexis Sanderson. He has argued that tantric Buddhism appropriated much from the Śaiva traditions. Speaking of the royal patronage of both traditions in Southeast Asian kingdoms, he says that this patronage was surely facilitated by the fact that the form of Buddhism adopted and developed was one that had equipped itself not only with a pantheon of ordered sets of deities that permitted such subsumptive equations [as Vairocana and his retinue with Śiva and his] but also with a repertoire of Tantric ceremonies that paralleled that of the Śaivas and indeed had modelled itself upon it, offering initiation by
introduction before a Maṇḍala in which the central deity of initiation (devatāhankārah, devatāgarvah) through the use of Mantras, Mudrās, visualization, and fire-sacrifice (homah); and this was presented not only as a new and more powerful means of attaining Buddha-hood but also, as in the Śaiva case, as enabling the production of supernatural effects (siddhiḥ) such as averting of danger (śāntiḥ), the harming of enemies (abhicāraḥ), and the control of the rain (varsāpaṇam and ativrṣṭidhāraṇam), through symbolically appropriate inflections of the constituents of these procedures.\[^{14}\]

This suggests just how far-reaching the similarities between the two traditions are.

On the basis of Sanderson’s statement just quoted, and others he has made, the incautious or uncritical reader may adopt the generality that Buddhist tantra is simply derivative from Śaiva. As with most such generalities, however, the situation proves to be rather more complicated.

Before turning to specific considerations, we can point out the high improbability that appropriations were only a matter of Buddhists appropriating from Śaivas. Similar situations, such as the relation between Buddhism and Bön in Tibet,\[^{15}\] Buddhism and Daoism in China,\[^{16}\] and Buddhism and Shintō\[^{17}\] in Japan, all evidence appropriations being made by both parties, what Ronald Davidson has called “reciprocal appropriation.”\[^{18}\] By analogy, then, one would expect that appropriations were made by both Buddhists and Śaivites from each other.

However, let us consider in greater specificity some of the areas in which appropriations may have taken place. While appropriations certainly are possible in a wide variety of areas, such as myths, doctrines, etc., we can focus here on the issues involved in the appropriation of textual materials, deities, and ritual.

The question of textual appropriation plays a key role in discussions of the historical relations between Śaiva and Buddhist tantric traditions. Claims of textual appropriation obviously depend upon the dating of texts relative to one another. However, such dating is notoriously difficult in India, and in turn depends either upon outside sources, such as datable Chinese or Tibetan translations (and even these offer their own difficulties\[^{19}\]), or upon theoretical arguments themselves based on philological principles. The philological issue affecting the discussions of the relations between Śaiva and Buddhist texts is the historical relation of more and less grammatically correct Sanskrit. Are we looking at instances in which scribes are correcting
what they perceive as bad grammar, in which case the historical relation is from less grammatically correct to more? Or, is the process one in which scribes are adding what in terms of classic Sanskrit are errors, perhaps because they are lazy or illiterate or replicating their own spoken language, with the resulting historical relation being from more to less grammatically correct? As Davidson has concluded, to take either of these as a general principle for dating entire corpora is not sound, but instead “decisions about textual borrowing are best made case by case.”

Davidson goes on to suggest “that a reciprocal appropriation model (allowing for oral recitation, partial memorization, ritual imitation, individual conversion, etc.) will prove the most useful.”

In a series of studies on tantric deities, Gudrun Bührnemann has identified several instances in which Buddhist deities are appropriated into Hindu tantric pantheons, coherent with the reciprocal appropriation model suggested by Davidson. In dealing with the appropriation of deities, the scope of research moves beyond philological considerations to include those of art history and material culture. The understanding of art has changed over the last quarter century, a development that has been very important in understanding not only the role of religious art, but also its role in comparative historical studies. No longer is the focus on individual art pieces interpreted solely in terms of stylistic categories, such as Baroque or Gandharan, and relocated into the abstract categorizing space of a museum. Bührnemann emphasizes the importance of practice in relation to understanding the significance of iconography, thus she employs sādhana texts. She notes, “As in other Tantric texts, the deity descriptions in the MM [Mantramahodadhi] are not presented for their own sake but are included in the context of ritual worship to enable the worshipper to visualize the deity.”

For example, in discussing the appropriation of Ugratārā (“the fierce Tārā”), Bührnemann says that “It is noteworthy that not only the iconographic description of the goddess in the Buddhist sādhanā was taken into [the Hindu] Phetkārinītantra, but also the characteristic Buddhist Tantric visualization pattern.” This appropriation extends to “typically Buddhist Tantric worship mantras,” particularly noteworthy because mantras often serve as the most important semiotic markers of religious affiliation.

Consideration of the appropriation of ritual practices requires us to consider the philosophic disagreement regarding the nature of
explanation and causality that has been at work in the study of the relation between Śaiva and Buddhist tantra. This disagreement has centered on the concept of a “substratum” of Indian religious culture, as employed by David Ruegg, initially in an essay in 1964. Substratum served to identify the religious culture that constitutes the shared background of all Indian religions. For example, although the idea changes and develops over time and has particular sectarian inflections, the concept of karma can be recognized as an important element within the religious substratum of India.

Alexis Sanderson has critiqued this idea, and the comparable concept of a “common cultic stock” used by Stephan Beyer, saying that they are problematic because “they are by their very nature entities inferred but never perceived. Whatever we perceive is always Śaiva or Buddhist, or Vaiṣṇava, or something else specific. Derivation from that hidden source cannot therefore be the preferred explanation for similarities between these specific traditions unless those similarities cannot be explained in any other way.” Expressed in this fashion, the concept of a religious substratum does sound like Molière’s “dormitive principle”—a tautology that presents itself as explanatory, when it is in fact not. As such it seems “unsatisfactorily vague” and potentially an obstacle to research that would otherwise lead to a better understanding of specific instances of appropriation.

Granted that it may produce such effects upon the intellectually lazy, the explanatory value of an inferred, i.e., theoretical, entity is not, however, to be dismissed out of hand. The status of such entities is a central issue in contemporary philosophy of science, specifically the discussions regarding scientific realism. A classic example of an entity inferred but not perceived is the electron. While electrons have never been directly perceived by anyone, their existence and characteristics are inferred from observations. The philosophy behind applying scientific realism to intersubjective objects such as the Indian religious culture as substratum for both Śaiva and Buddhist tantra would take us too far afield from the specific comparative project of this current essay.

Instead let us simply point to elements within Indian religious culture that were available for use by both Śaiva and Buddhist tantrikas. The components of praxis that come to be crystallized as part of both Buddhist and Śaiva tantra (including mantra, mudrā, votive rituals employing fire, and so on) are free-floating in the religious milieu,
many instances being part of the Vedic ritual culture to which both are defining themselves by contrast.\textsuperscript{33} As such these components, including the homa, were accessible to both traditions—as well as to others, such as Jaina tantra. While further historical study is necessary to clarify the detailed steps by which homas were constructed, including possible appropriations from one tradition to another, such appropriation takes place against the shared background knowledge regarding Vedic practices.

In other words, when considering processes of appropriation, the broader question of “Why?” needs to be asked. One only appropriates what makes sense, what appears valuable in the context of the broader religious culture, and it is that religious culture that needs to serve as an important point of reference in addition to specific texts, mythic tropes, ritual practices, deities, doctrines, or category systems.\textsuperscript{34} As we examine similarities and differences between the Śaiva Siddhānta and Shingon homas as a basis for longitudinal considerations, this shared religious culture provides a background for both traditions. The comparative study of ritual, like the comparative study of texts, can provide additional resources for exploring the historical relations between these two traditions and the early development of tantra.

\textit{Structure of the Homas}

The following table (table 1) gives a side by side comparison of the two homas. The Śaiva Siddhānta homa list has both a letter designation preceding the name of the set of ritual actions, which is related to the following structural analysis, and following the name the numbers of the ślokas in the appended translation. The Shingon goma actions are drawn from the analysis of the Fudō Myōō soku sai goma.\textsuperscript{35} The identifying letters and numbers are based on two overlapping ways of organizing the ritual activities.\textsuperscript{36} As I have noted previously elsewhere,\textsuperscript{38} such linear representations of a ritual—whether based on observation or text—are of limited utility for comparative purposes. This is because they obscure the ways in which actions are grouped together into larger “grammatical” structures. Rituals are not, in other words, simply the doing of one thing after another, but rather a systematically organized and structured set of activities. Although this characteristic of ritual is almost universally emphasized as one of its defining characteristics, the step that might seem obvious—diagramming such structures—seems to be exceedingly rare.
### Table 1. Comparison of the Śaiva Siddhānta and Shingon homas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Śaiva Siddhānta homa</th>
<th>Shingon homa</th>
</tr>
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| (a) return to Agni’s residence (1–2) | • entering the hall  
|  | • purification (A)  
|  | dharma of endowing practitioner (A.1)  
|  | dharma of Samantabhadra’s vows (A.2)  |
| (b) saṃskāra of the kuṇḍa (3–7) | • construction (B)  
|  | aspersion (3)  
|  | building ritual (4, 5)  
|  | kindling and fire (6, 7)  |
| (c) installation of Agni (9–13) | • encounter (C)  
|  | requesting the deities (C.5)  |
| (d) after installation (14, 15) |  |
| (e) saṃskāra for impregnation |  |
|  | (16–19a)  |
| (f) after the birth (19b–23) |  |
| (g) protection of the infant (24–26) |  |
| (h) saṃskāra of the ladle and spoon (27–30a) | sealing the ritual space (C.6)  |
| (i) saṃskāra of the clarified butter | pūjā offerings (C.7)  |
|  | (30b–41a)  |
| (j) aspersion of the face of Agni |  |
|  | (41b–42)  |
| (k) name-giving to Agni |  |
|  | (43)  |
| (l) departure of the parents (44) |  |
| (m) initiating worship of Śiva (45, 46) | • identification (D)  
|  | feeding (45)  
|  | connection of the nāḍīs (46)  
|  | • ingredients and quantities (47–52a)  |
| (n) entirety of oblation (52b) | • entering the homa (D.8G)  |
| (o) departure of Śiva (58–59) | • dissociation (E)  
|  | latter pūjā offerings (E.9)  |
| (p) interior & exterior offerings (60) | symbolic and material offerings\(^{37}\)  
|  | • alternative from the Lilāvatī (61–70a)  
| (q) conclusion (70b–75a) | depart the hall  |
The text includes an alternative version from the *Līlāvatī* and the details of “ingredients and quantities,” both of which are sections of the text that are not part of the ritual *per se*. Therefore, in the tabular listing above, they are not given initial letter designations, and in the following diagrams these sections are not included.

This first diagram (fig. 1) identifies the groups of actions according to clusters associated by symbolic meaning. The ritual axis is the three actions involving the practitioner creating a link between their own nāḍīs and those of the Śiva in the fire and the Śiva in the sanctuary. The ritual would be symmetrical, except for the large cluster of actions involved in giving birth to Agni in the *kuṇḍa*.

![Diagram of the grammatical relations of actions of the ritual.](Payne figure 1)
Figure 2. Diagram of the flow of actions through the ritual.

This second diagram (fig. 2) shows the flow of actions through the course of the ritual, in the order that the linear description in the table above follows, but now reflecting the grammatical relations between clusters of ritual actions.

Similarities and Differences

In comparing these two rituals there are three topics that we will focus on in this essay—a similarity, a difference, and a definitional issue. The similarity is the use of building ritual symbolism for preparing the altar-hearth. The difference is the ritual symbolism involved in evoking the deities into the altar-hearth. The definitional issue is the role of ritual identification in tantric ritual.

Building Rituals

Both the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition and the Shingon tradition employ ritual activities based on the symbolism of building, and the rituals used in building, to establish the altar-hearth where the fire is to be lit and offerings made into it. These point to a common background to be found in Brahmanic ritual culture, such as the Śulva sutras, and texts like the Kāśyapa-Jñānakāṇḍaḥ, which devotes a majority of its
text to questions of constructing not just hearths and temples, but also
houses and towns.\textsuperscript{39}

The \textit{Somasambhupaddhati} prescribes digging up the site of the
\textit{kuṇḍa} (hearth), collecting the earth, filling and leveling the site, asper-
sion and pounding, and finally sweeping and coating of the site (§ 4–5
of translation). Two aspects of the text indicate that this is a set of sym-
bolic activities, rather than literal instructions for the construction of
the altar. First, the \textit{Somasambhupaddhati} makes reference to the \textit{kuṇḍa}
before this set of actions, and, second, the text identifies the mantra
with which these actions are to be performed.

Similarly, in the Shingon \textit{homa}, when one is first using a new
hearth, one first symbolically, i.e., with \textit{mudrā} and mantra, digs up the
earth. Then the (symbolic) clay for the hearth is ritually empowered
\textit{(加持, kaji)}. The ritual instructions for this are located at the end of the
manual, and they indicate that this rite is to be inserted into the larger
ritual when a new hearth is being used for the first time:

When starting a new hearth, after sitting down, it is proper to per-
form the following ritual prior to the universal homage.
[1] First, hoe \textit{mudrā} and mantra. Vajra fist, thumbs and index fingers
extended straight.
Mantra twenty-one times: \textit{oṃ nikhana vasudhe svāhā (oṃ dig the
earth svāhā)}
[2] Next: \textit{mudrā} and mantra to empower the clay. Two hands in \textit{añjali}.
The two ring and two index fingers are bent so that the two pha-
langes of each are pressed together. The two thumbs are extended
straight and withdrawn from the index fingers so as to form a shape
like a mouth.
Mantra twenty-one times: \textit{oṃ amṛta udbhava hūṃ phaṭ svāhā (oṃ
nectar producing hūṃ phaṭ svāhā)}
[3] Next: the “great thunderbolt wheel” (mahāvajra cakra) \textit{mudrā}
and mantra.
[4] The class of various deities: The thirty-seven deities who are re-
quested to come down to the altar are each represented by a seed
syllable (\textit{bīja} mantra). Note this single representation is used as a
support for practice. (The thirty-seven deities are Mahāvairocana,
Aksobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitāyus, and Amoghasiddhi, together
with the thirty-two deities of the Vajradhātu Mandala.)
[5] The devas of the world: The twelve devas, together with the seven
celestial lights and the twenty-eight lunar mansions.\textsuperscript{40}

Taken together, the similarity of this aspect of these two traditions
indicates the perseverance of building rites across a wide diffusion of
ritual practices, here related to the performance of the *homa*. In order to further explore the commonality and perseverance of such building rites, comparisons will need to be made with the record found in the *Śulba* sutras (or, *Śulva* sutras), which “contain minute rules regarding the measurement and construction of the fire-places and sacrificial grounds.” Consideration should also be given to building rites more generally, such as those found in the *Kāśyapa-Jñānakāṇḍaḥ*, a text associated with the South Indian Vaiṣṇava Vaikhānasa sect, which maintained Vedic traditions. Regarding the dates of the author, Teun Goudriaan suggests that “We will not be far off the mark, if we place him in one of the two last centuries of the first millennium of our era.” This text devotes a lengthy section to the construction of temples, providing evidence of the kinds of activities that would have been part of the culture, and available for metaphoric appropriation into ritual form. Here we find instructions for properly preparing the site by clearing it, repeatedly ploughing it, donating the land, ritual ploughing, food offerings to the deities, and so on.

**Installation of the Deities**

In contrast to the practices of preparing the site which are similar, the ritual actions associated with installing the deities in the altar-hearth differ fundamentally. The Śaiva Siddhānta use the imagery of impregnation, gestation, and birth to bring about the presence of Agni. In contrast, the Shingon tradition employs the symbolism of inviting honored guests and sending a jeweled chariot for their convenience.

In her introduction to the first volume of her translation, Brunner-Lachaux gives a brief summary of the Śaiva Siddhānta fire ritual, discussing the central role of this symbolic gestation. The cult of fire, which immediately follows the cult of Śiva when it is finished, was only seen by initiates of the first degree. The necessity of the cult is in no way questioned; it is on the contrary considered indispensable if one wishes to obtain liberation. It is a complex ritual, the object of which is Śivāgni. One must first have Agni be born: one assists in the sexual union of his parents, in the development of the embryo, in marking the customary sacraments of birth, and in the growing of the young fire. Once the fire has been created, one renders homage through a series of oblations (*homa*), after having the previously united the interior fire and Śiva.
Two deities, Vāgīśvara and Vāgīśvarī (who are identified as Brahmā and Sarasvatī) are installed in the kuṇḍa (§ 8). Burning coals, identified with the semen of Śiva, are poured into the kuṇḍa, while the practitioner imagines Vāgīśvara impregnates Vāgīśvarī (§ 12–13). Then follow the saṃskāras associated with impregnation, gestation, and birth: conception (garbhādhāna) (§ 16), production of a male child (puṃsavana) (§ 17), parting of the hair (sīmantonnayana) (§ 18). The child, Agni, is then born (§ 19b), given a bath (§ 20), the stain of birth is erased from the kuṇḍa (§ 21), and saliva is wiped from the child’s mouth (§ 23). One informs the deities of Śiva’s command that the child be protected by them (§ 26); Agni’s eyes are opened (§ 39), and he is given the name Śivāgni (name-giving: nāmakaraṇa) (§ 43). While not all of these actions appear to follow the classic saṃskāras perfectly, it is clear that the structure of ritual actions is modeled on the saṃskāra system. The sequence is constrained, however, to those most closely associated with birth. The importance of this sequence is evident in the clustering of actions (c through l) in the diagrams above. It is worth noting here that this creates an asymmetry in the ritual, as there is no matching set of ritual actions associated with the death of Agni in the second half of the ritual to match his birth in the first.

In contrast, the Shingon homa shows none of this and is also more symmetrical in form. Agni and the other deities are evoked in the altar-hearth through an entirely different ritual symbolism. As alluded to above, this involves sending a jeweled carriage to the deities and inviting them to return to the site of the ritual—these actions being performed ritually with mudrā and mantra. In contrast to the Śaiva Siddhānta birth symbolism, this is in keeping with the metaphor of feasting an honored guest, a metaphoric appropriation of symbolism from daily life that is found in the Vedic and Brahmanic ritual cultures as well.

The difference in the ritual symbolisms is reflected in differences in the organization of the ritual activities. In the case of the Śaiva Siddhānta homa, the fire is introduced into the kuṇḍa (altar-hearth) early in the ritual sequence, since it is the embers/semen of Vāgīśvara entering the kuṇḍa/vulva of Vāgīśvarī that lead to the birth of Agni. In the Shingon homa, the fire is not lit until after the deities have been invited into the ritual enclosure (dōjō), and it is sealed against external malevolent powers. Speculatively, we may suggest that the difference between the ritual symbolism employed by the two traditions...
can be attributed to the difference between the Buddhist monastic tradition with its emphasis on celibacy, and the more householder oriented character of Śaiva Siddhānta. An additional consideration may be that Buddhist monastics did not adapt the life-cycle *saṃskāras* into their own ritual processes of initiation into the order. The symbolism involved in the life-cycle *saṃskāras* is strongly associated with the “twice-born” Brahmans.51

### Ritual Identification

One of the recurring issues for the study of *tantra* has been its definition. Following the lead of Michel Strickmann, until the work of Davidson, I (and perhaps others) had considered ritual identification (Jpn. *nyūga ganyū*, 入我我入, Skt. *ahaṃkāra*) to be the defining characteristic of *tantra*. Previously, based simply on an examination of this ritual and an overly simplistic understanding of Śaiva Siddhānta theology as strong dualism, I had understood the tradition as one important exception to the defining character of ritual identification. An anonymous reviewer of another essay, however, drew my attention to the important role of ritual identification as part of the necessary preparations required to qualify to perform such rituals. Attempting to verify this I found, for example, that although it is only Śiva who liberates, such liberation is effected by means of initiation (*dikṣā*) performed by an officiant who embodies the agency of Śiva.53 According to Sanderson, when the officiant (*ācāryaḥ*) “prepares himself to perform the ritual he must surrender all sense of individual agency. He must see his person as the locus and instrument of the action of Śiva himself.”54 Thus, although not constituting an explicit ritual element within the Śaiva Siddhānta *homa*, ritual identification is still a very important element of the tradition as such. Goodall characterizes Śaiva Siddhānta along with other tantric groups, by calling attention to the goal as one of equality with Śiva. “The central fact that characterises these tantric cults is that they are private cults for individuals who take a non-Vedic initiation (*dikṣā*) that uses non-Vedic (as well as Veda-derived) mantras and that is the means to liberation, a liberation which consists in being omnipotent and omniscient, in other words realising the powers of Śiva.”55 The nature of the relation between practitioner and Śiva, however, appears to have been conceived differently at different points in the history of Śaiva Siddhānta. Goodall suggests that “it appears likely
that the old Śaiva Siddhānta was a broadly dualist school which only after the twelfth century felt the influence of non-dualist Vedānta.”

Jan Gonda summarizes the Śaiva homa with its embryological symbolism. He adds a step that is relevant to the question of ritual identification. Once Agni has been born and ritually cleansed, Gonda explains that

Now the worshipper, soul and mind, shares in the process which is taking place. While considering himself identical with Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra successively, and simultaneously performing the three ceremonies of establishing the fire, putting on the vessel and dismissal, he purifies and consecrates sacrificial butter and sprinkles with it the faces of young Agni, who then receives the name of Śivāgni. His parents, Vāgīśvarī and Vāgīśvara, are honourably dismissed, and Śiva is invoked to be present in the heart of the fire, seated on his throne, brilliant and supreme, worshipped and offered food. After that the worshipper must unite the arteries of his (yogic) body (nāḍī) with those of Śiva-of-the-temple and Śiva-of-the-fire, creating a sort of luminous circuit between these and proceed to perform the fire sacrifice (homa), consisting of oblations of ghee, and accompanied by offerings of fried rice grain, sugar-cane, flowers, etc. Finally he installs Śiva-of-the fire in his own heart and after some other observances returns to the temple to implore God to accept the pūjā, the homa and the merit produced by these.

Here we see the use of esoteric physiology as the means by which ritual identification is effected. The same threefold identification by means of a circuit of light connecting the nāḍī of Śiva permanently located in the temple sanctuary, of Śiva temporarily evoked in the kuṇḍa altar-hearth, and the ritual practitioner himself is found in the section of the Somaśambhupaddhati translated below. This raises an important issue that also apparently distinguishes the Śaiva Siddhānta tradition from the Shingon form of tantric Buddhism, and which may have broader implications as a marker by which historical relations may be traced.

That is the conception of ritual identification per se. The visualization based on esoteric physiology found in the text examined here differs from the way in which the visualization of the three mysteries are visualized in Shingon. In the latter, it is by taking the bodily posture (by āsana and mudrā), speech (mantra), and mind (visualization and liturgical recitation) of the deity that the Shingon practitioner becomes identified with that deity. As a definitional point there may be a significant difference between being connected via an “energetic”
linkage of the nāḍīs, and visualized embodiment. The significance of this difference may also contribute to a deeper understanding of the histories of Śaiva Siddhānta and Shingon that a comparative study of their ritual practices will reveal, augmenting existing resources for historical studies.

CONCLUSION

These three factors, ritual construction of the altar-hearth, installation of the deities, and the nature of ritual identification, are three aspects of the ritual practices of Śaiva Siddhānta and Shingon that help us to begin to articulate the historical relations between these traditions from the perspective of ritual studies. The almost exclusively philological focus of prior study can in this way be augmented and given greater depth and nuance. In order for the method to yield more substantive results, however, many more such comparative studies of ritual praxis will be required.

**SOMAŚAMBHUPADDATI: SECTION IV, FIRE RITUAL**


Translated from the French by Richard K. Payne

*Note*: parenthetic and bracketed materials are Brunner-Lachaux’s, as are the footnotes unless otherwise indicated; both text and footnote material in braces are mine; awkward grammar, etc., are also mine.

As she explains in the first footnote, Brunner–Lachaux’s footnoted material largely draws on the work of Aghoraśiva and the commentary by Nirmalamaṇi: *Aghoraśivācārya-paddhati (= Kriyākramadyotikā), with Commentary (Prabhā) by Nirmalamaṇi*, ed. Rāmaśāstrin and Ambalavānajñānasambandhāparāśaktisvāmin (Cidambaram: n.p., 1927). In some cases she refers to Aghoraśiva, in others to Niramalamaṇi, and in at least one case refers to this text simply as A. She gives many internal references to other sections within the *Somaśambhupaddhati*, and with one exception, those have been left as given. The exception is notes 145 and 162, which refer to material within this section itself (i.e., to note 147), and have been revised accordingly. She also makes reference to the *Mṛgendrāgama*; see her *Mṛgendrāgama: Section des Rites et Section du Comportement, Avec la Vṛtti de Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇaṇaṭha* (Pondicherry:
Institut Français d’Indologie, 1985). This latter also contains material on homa per se.

**THE FIRE RITUAL**

*How one returns to the residence of Agni*

1. And now,60 after having obtained the permission of the master,61 he makes his return to the residence of Agni,62 and circumambulates in silence, with all the utensils of the cult, and carrying in his hands a vase of arghya.63

2. Then, looking upon all of the materials of the sacrifice with a divine gaze,64 he seats himself facing north,65 the center of the kuṇḍa in front of himself.66

**Saṃskāra of the kuṇḍa**

3. One should finish the rite of nirīkṣaṇa (or gaze) with the kuṇḍa; then with [a bundle of] kuśa, reciting ASTRA, the rites of prokṣaṇa (aspersion of the top) and tāḍana (tapping); finally, with VARMA (KAVACA), the rite of abhyukṣaṇa (aspersion of the base).

4. [Then]; with ASTRA (KHADGA): digging (khanana or khāta), collecting [the earth] (uddhāra),68 filling (pūraṇa) and smoothing (samatā); aspersion (secana) with VARMA (KAVACA); and pounding (kuṭṭana) with SARA (ASTRA).

5. With VARMA: sweeping (saṃmārjana), coating (samālepa), establishing the kalā (kalāprakalpana), and wrapping the three blades (trisūtryāveṣṭana); one then pays homage71 with [the bija] HṚD.

6. Speaking the mantra of Śiva, [next one should place in the kuṇḍa] four blades of kuśa with three pointing north and one east, or reversed (rekhācatuṣṭayavinyāsa);72

7. Then, lighting73 with ASTRA (vajrīkaraṇa); the fourfold darbha (catuspatha) with HṚD; the net75 (akṣapāṭa) with TANUTRA (KAVACA); the seat76 (viṣṭara) with HṚD.

**Invocation of Vāgīśvarī and Vāgīśvara**

8. Install the goddess on the seat with HṚD, like a flax flower, with all the [favorable] signs, and in the same manner, the god, Vāgīśvara; then render them homage.78
Installation of Agni

9. Then, in a pure receptacle, bring the fire to a suitable place;\textsuperscript{79} give the demons their portion;\textsuperscript{80} then purify with the nirīkṣana rites and so on.

10. The officiant then performs the union of the three fires: the stomach fire, the Bindu fire, and the terrestrial fire;\textsuperscript{81} then one places [in the fire] the mind of Vahni, by means of the bīja of Vahni [HRŪṂ]: “Om Hṛūṃ, before the mind of Vahni, I bow.”

11. Then recite the samhitāmantra to Vahni; perform the transformation into nectar with the dhenumudrā\textsuperscript{82} (gesture of the cow); protect with ASTRA; encircle with KAVACA, and render him homage;\textsuperscript{83} then one carries it in a circle around the kuṇḍa, for three times, in the proper direction. Think of the fire as the semen of Śiva, and imagine that it is emitted by the god Vāgīśvara into the womb of Vāgīśvarī.\textsuperscript{84} The officiant, kneeling down, should pour it into the kuṇḍa with HṚD [leaning] towards [the recipient which is the opening].

After the installation of Agni

14. Following that, in the navel of the kuṇḍa, gather together the semen which has been emitted,\textsuperscript{85} cover with a cloth, and give [the water for] purification (śauca) and for ācamana\textsuperscript{86} with HṚD.

15. Next, render homage to the fire-in-the-womb;\textsuperscript{87} to assure protection, attach a bracelet of darbha grass around the wrist of the goddess with ASTRA.

The saṃskāra to start the rite of impregnation\textsuperscript{88}

16. In order to perform the rite of impregnation (garbhādhāna), after having rendered homage to the fire with SADYOJĀTA, one offers three oblations\textsuperscript{89} with the mantra HṚDAYA.

17. In order to perform the rite for producing a male (puṃsavāna), in the third month one renders homage with VĀMA (-DEVA), then offer three oblations, accompanying each pouring of water with ŚIRAS.

18. In order to perform the rite of parting the hair (sīmantonnayana), in the sixth month one renders homage with RŪPIN (AGHORA), then offer three oblations with ŚIKHA; and again with ŚIKHA, one forms the face and limbs, opens the mouth, and completes the formation\textsuperscript{90} [of the infant].
What is to be done after the birth\textsuperscript{91}

19b. And in order to perform the rite of birth, in the tenth month one renders homage with NARA (TATPURUṢA) and VARMA (KAVACA).\textsuperscript{92}

20. Reviving the fire with blades of darbha, etc., imagine giving [the infant] a bath that cleanses the impurities [originating from] the womb and attaching a strap of gold to the goddess’s wrist.\textsuperscript{93} Then honor with HṚD.

21. Then, to erase the stain caused by the birth,\textsuperscript{94} asperge the kuṇḍa with water consecrated by ASTRA (prokṣaṇa), strike [the ground] around the kuṇḍa with ASTRA (tāḍana), and asperge with VARMA (abhyuksaṇa).

22. Then with ASTRA place the blades of kuśa, pointing toward the north and east, on the exterior and on the mekhalā,\textsuperscript{95} and install the paridhī\textsuperscript{96} and the bundles of darbha (viṣṭara\textsuperscript{97}) on top with HṚD.

23. To remove the saliva from the mouth,\textsuperscript{98} offer five sticks\textsuperscript{99} [into the fire] with ASTRA, the base and tip of each soaked in melted butter.

How to assure protection of the infant Agni

24. One then renders homage with HṚD\textsuperscript{100} to Brahman, Śaṅkara, Viṣṇu, and Ananta, who are held on the paridhī, to the east and north, in that order.

25. Then, for Indra and Īśvara\textsuperscript{101} who are seated on the viṣṭara, facing toward Agni, one should render homage to them with HṚD, each in the proper direction, successively.

26. After which, one makes known to all the order of Śiva: "Remove the obstacles, protect the infant!"

Saṃskāra of the ladle and spoon

27. One then takes up the ladle and spoon\textsuperscript{102}—the first turned upward, the second turned downward, heat them in the fire three times; then they are touched [three times]\textsuperscript{103} with the base, middle, and point of a blade of kuśa [successively];

28. and then place the three [groups of] tattva, touching with the tips of the kuśa grass: ātmatattva, vidyātattva, and śivatattva, with the mantras HĀṂ, HĪṂ, HŪṂ, respectively.\textsuperscript{104}

29. Then with HṚDAYA “place” Śakti in the ladle and Śambhu in the spoon. After encircling their necks three times\textsuperscript{105} [with kuśa blades], and rendering homage to them with flowers, etc.,

30a. set them down on the left,\textsuperscript{106} on top of the kuśa grass.
Saṃskāra of the clarified butter

30b. Then take the clarified butter and the vase of milk, purify with the rite of gazing, etc. (īkṣaṇādi).

31. Imagine one’s own body as that of Brahmā, take the butter, carry it three times around {holding it} over the kuṇḍa, and heat it in the south-east direction107 {i.e., section of the kuṇḍa}.

32. Then next, imagine one’s own body as that of Viṣṇu, and place the butter in the north-east section, using the point of a blade of kuśa, and with the bija ŚIRAS [at the beginning] and SVĀHĀ at the end,108 make an oblation of these drops to Viṣṇu. Following which, imagine one’s own body as that of Rudra, hold [the butter] at the center of the kuṇḍa.109 Following which, utplavana [which is performed thus]:

34. grasp two blades of darbha, the length of a span,110 between the thumb and ring finger, proceed with the sprinkling of the fire111 (utplavana), in the direction of the fire, with ASTRA.

35. In the same way, but toward oneself, proceed with the sprinkling of oneself (samplavana), with HṚD. Then,112 with HṚD, take a burning blade of darbha and proceed with the purification by throwing it [in the butter] with ASTRA.

36. [The rite of] illumination (nīrajāna) is done with another burning darbha, and [the rite of] dipa with yet another. These blades of burning darbha are then thrown in the fire with the mantra ASTRA.113

37. Then, first knotting it, deposit a blade of kuśa the length of a span in the butter,114 imagine the butter is divided thus: īḍā and pīṅgalā are on each side, and the third [suṣumnā is at the center].115

38. Then, with the spoon, one takes butter of the three parts, successively; offer into the fire when saying “SVĀ,” and replace when saying “HĀ,” and the remainder in the portion from which it comes:

Om Hāṃ to Agni Svāhā!
Om Hāṃ to Soma Svāhā!
Om Hāṃ to Agni and to Soma Svāhā!

39. Thus for the opening of the eyes, in the eyes of Agni;116 then with the spoon full of butter, one must offer a fourth oblation in the mouth.117

Om Hāṃ to Agni who grants wishes Svāhā!

40. One is to then recite the six aṅgamantra,118 rejoicing with the dhenumudrā,119 encircling by TANUTRA (KAVACA), and protecting the butter with ASTRA.120

41a. Purify the other [parts of the] clarified butter by throwing, with HṚD, some drops of the butter.
Aspersion of the face of Agni with the butter

41b. And now, the aspersion of the faces, their junction, their unification:

- Oṃ Haṃ to Sadyojāta Svāhā!
- Oṃ Hiṃ to Vāmadeva Svāhā!
- Oṃ Huṃ to Aghora Svāhā!
- Oṃ Heṃ to Tatpuruṣa Svāhā!
- Oṃ Hoṃ to Īśāna Svāhā!

Thus, one asperses the faces (vaktrābhighāra), with separate oblations:

- Oṃ Haṃ, Hiṃ to Sadyojāta and Vāmadeva Svāhā!
- Oṃ Hiṃ, Huṃ to Vāmadeva and Aghora, Svāhā!
- Oṃ Huṃ, Heṃ to Aghora and Tatpuruṣa Svāhā!
- Oṃ Heṃ, Hoṃ to Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna Svāhā!

*Thus, one joins the faces (vaktrānusandhāna).

One must then make the unification, with the spoon let a trickle of clarified butter pour from Agni to Vāyu and from Nirṛti to Īśāna:

- Oṃ Haṃ Hiṃ Huṃ Heṃ Hoṃ to Sadyojāta-Vāmadeva-Aghora-Tatpuruṣa-Īśāna Svāhā!

*Thus one unifies (ekīkaraṇa) by dissolving the faces into the chosen face.

42. Where appropriate, one represents the chosen face just as large as the kuṇḍa, and the disappearance of the other faces into it is called unification.

How his name is given to Agni

43. With the mantra IŚA one renders homage to Agni, and one offers him a triple oblation with ASTRA; then with SARVĀTMAN (HṚD) one gives the name:

“O eater of oblations, you are Śivāgni!”

Departure of Vāgīśvarī and Vāgīśvara

44. One must then, after having rendered homage to them with HṚD, give leave to the parents of Agni; then with the mūlamantra followed by VAUṢAṬ, offer as directed the entirety of the oblation, which ends the series of prescribed rites.

Worship of Śiva before the homa

45. And now, in the lotus of Agni’s heart, one must invoke Śiva as he is called, with his limbs, with his throne, resplendent, supreme, and to
him render worship; then, after having requested [his] permission, he feed Śiva.

46. Then, having effected the connection of one’s own nāḍī with the Śiva of the sanctuary and the Śiva of the fire, he should proceed with the homa, as much of the time as possible with the mūlamantra and at least six times with each of the aṅgamantra.

Ingredients to be offered, and in what quantity

47. Each oblation of melted butter should be a karṣa, those of milk and of honey also; it should be one śuki for the curdled milk, and one prasṛti for the sweet milk rice.

48. One places cooked solids in the dish to the extent suitable, a handful of lāja; one cuts the roots in three, but one leaves the fruit whole.

49. One ought to offer the rice in half mouthfuls, and also the five small things, the sugar cane by internodes, the lianas in fragments of two fingers’ lengths;

50. the flowers and leaves are whatever; the ritual wood (samidh) are sticks of ten fingers’ lengths; the camphor, sandal, saffron, musk, yakṣakardama;

51. one offers these in large grains, and the incense in fragments large as a jujube; the large tubers are cut into eighths. It is good to make the oblations following these rules.

52a. Thus one performs the homa, with the brahmanatra accompanied by their bija.

How to proceed with the entirety of the oblation (pūrṇāhuti)

52b. Place the spoon, opening turned down, over the ladle filled with clarified butter.

53. And, after having fixed a flower at the spout of the ladle, hold the two instruments with the śaṅkhamudrā (gesture of victory), the left hand holding them at their end, the right hand at their front.

54. Standing, feet together, chest inclined forward, place the point end of the instruments against your navel, gaze fixed on the spout of the ladle.

55. And, while it is successively [one before the other] Kāraneśvara, the first is Brahman, taking away then from suṣumnā without trembling bring their point end as far as level with your left breast,
56. while reciting the *mūlamantra*, followed by VAUṢAṬ, very distinctly. Then pour the melted butter into the fire, in a continuous stream about the size of a grain of barley.

57. Following which, give ṛcāmanā, the sandal paste, the betel, and the rest; with devotion, chant Sa glory; then offer a full prostration.

*Departure of Śiva who is in the fire*

58–59. Then after having honored Vahni as one should, one gathers with the *saṃhāramudrā*, with ASTRA followed by HUMPHAṬ, all the mantra, as well as the divinities who exist in the *paridhi*, saying to them, “Pardon me.” Thus, as in beginning, with the *bīja* HṚD, one establishes in the lotus of one’s heart, [having entered] onto the most pure path.

*Interior offerings*

60. Then one must take [a little of] all which has been cooked, and on the two mandalas which one traces beside the *kuṇḍa*, on the southeast side, give the interior offerings and the exterior offerings.

- to the east: Oṃ Hāṃ to Rudra Svāhā!
- to the south: Oṃ Hāṃ to the mothers Svāhā!
- to the west: Oṃ Hāṃ to Gaṇa Svāhā!
- to the north: Oṃ Hāṃ to the Yakṣas Svāhā!
- to the northeast: Oṃ Hāṃ to the planets Svāhā!
- to the southeast: Oṃ Hāṃ to the Asuras Svāhā!
- to the southwest: Oṃ Hāṃ to the Rākṣasas Svāhā!
- to the northwest: Oṃ Hāṃ to the Nāgas Svāhā!
- to the center, toward the northeast: Oṃ Hāṃ to Nakṣatra Svāhā!
- to the center, toward the southeast: Oṃ Hāṃ to Rāśi Svāhā!
- to the center, toward the southwest: Oṃ Hāṃ to Viśva Svāhā!
- to the center, toward the northwest: Oṃ Hāṃ to the Guardian of the domain Svāhā!

Then one dissolves the interior offerings.

*Exterior offerings*

Then in the second mandala:

- Oṃ Hāṃ to Indra Svāhā!
- Oṃ Hāṃ to Agni Svāhā!
- Oṃ Hāṃ to Yama Svāhā!
Oṃ Hāṃ to Nirṛti Svāhā!
Oṃ Hāṃ to Varuṇa Svāhā!
Oṃ Hāṃ to Vāyu Svāhā!
Oṃ Hāṃ to Soma Svāhā!
Oṃ Hāṃ to Īśāna Svāhā!
These in the eight directions, from the east to the north-east.
Then:
Oṃ Hāṃ to Brahman Svāhā: directed toward the top of the north-east edge
Oṃ Hāṃ to Viṣṇu Svāhā: directed toward the bottom of the south-west edge
Oṃ Hāṃ to the Guardian of the domain: between the two
Then, outside the mandala:
Oṃ Hāṃ to the crows and their fellows, to those who break their commitments and their fellows Svāhā!
Such is the rule for the exterior offerings.
One must offer [again] the offerings to the exterior of the yāgamaṇḍapa.
Then gather the mantras of the internal and external offerings with the saṃhāramudrā, one makes them return to oneself.

The fire ritual according to the Līlāvatī

61. And now, here, in summary is one form of the fire ritual which may be made in a kuṇḍa or to a sthāndila, and which is described in the Śaivite āgama named Līlāvatī.
62. In “depositing” the mūlamantra on the eyes, one performs the rite of gazing (īkṣana), then the rite of aspersion toward the top (prokṣaṇa) and the tapping (tāḍana), with ASTRA followed by HUṂPHAṬ; then give the demons their share,
63. and as previously, with VARMA (KAVACA) proceed to the rite of aspersion toward the base (abhyukṣaṇa), with the mūrtimantra pour the fire into the kuṇḍa:
   “Oṃ Hāṃ Hāṃ Hāṃ, before the form of the fire, I bow down.”
And with the same mantra, one makes Vahni enter the Bindu with the saṃhāramudrā.
64–65a. to begin. Then, holding one’s breath, arrest it in the navel. Following which, with udbhavamudrā, and exhaling with the mantra
   “Oṃ Hāṃ Hṛūṃ Hāṃ, before the form of the fire, I bow down,”
one [places] the bija of Agni in the form of a glowing wick, into the fire in the kuṇḍa, then render homage with the five brahmamantra.
65b. That finished, one offers five oblations (āhuti), with the mūlamantra.
66. With (the bija) HRD preceded by OṂ, one gives the name:
“You are Śivāgni.”
And with ṢRD, render homage to Brahman, Śaṅkara, Viṣṇu, and Ananta, 67. from the east to the north, in the four directions, on the exterior of the kuṇḍa.
Following which one offers a cult to Śiva, as given above, to the section [at the invocation] of Ādhāraṣakti.161
68–69a. One is to offer the oblations [in the fire], every time possible with the mūlamantra, and at least ten times with each aṅgamantra. One then gives leave to Śiva. Then one offers four oblations (āhuti) with the three mantra: Bhūḥ, etc., accompanying the praṇava, which are spoken at first separately, then all together.162
69b–70a. Mentally reciting: “Oṃ Hāṃ Hūṃ Hṛdayāya,” one dismisses Agni in his turn. This is the opinion of the Līlāvatī.

[Conclusion of the worship of Śiva]
70b–71a. One then approaches Śiva,163 saying: “Oh Bhagavan! Take these karman: pūjā, homa, etc., and the fruit attached which is its merit!”
71b–72a. and with arghya water, with the mudrā called udbhavā, with the mūlamantra preceding the bīja HRD, and a firm heart, one completes the offerings.164
72b–73a. Then one should render homage as has been described,165 praising with the hymns, say good-bye, give the final arghya,166 and say, “Pardon me!”167
73b–74a. Then gather together with the nārācamudrā with ASTRA followed by HUMPHAṬ, the entire group of mantra,168 making the divyamudrā, reunite them on the līṅga by uttering the mūrtimana. 74b–75a. If it is a sthāṇḍila upon which homage has been rendered to the god,169 it is into oneself that the mantra are to re-enter in the fashion described.
After which one proceeds to the cult of Caṇḍa.

An earlier version of this paper was presented to the 1997 conference of the Society for Tantric Studies, Flagstaff, Arizona. I would like to thank my fellow Society members for their helpful comments at that time, and for their support and interest in my work over the intervening years.
NOTES

1. To this extent, then, our approach here—looking for characteristics that spread most widely through the tantric cosmopolis—is effectively the opposite of that taken by David Gordon White in his *Kiss of the Yoginī: “Tanric Sex” in Its South Asian Contexts* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003). In that work he specifically focuses on tantric sex “because sexualized ritual practice is the sole truly distinctive feature of South Asian Tantric traditions” (p. 13).


3. If you have never heard this old folk expression, that is good, because I just made it up.


8. Hélène Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati, Première Partie, Le rituel*


12. Ibid., xxxi.

13. Ibid., xxxi–xxxii.


20. Davidson, Indian Esoteric Buddhism, 386n105. See this note for a fuller discussion of the specific issues involved.

21. Ibid.


25. Ibid.

26. For example, Sanderson notes that Vedic and tantric religious forms differed most importantly in the mantras employed. “This became the chief formal criterion: in Vedic worship (pūjā) the actions that compose the liturgy were empowered by the recitation of Vedic mantras drawn from the Ṛgveda and Yajurveda rather than by that of the heterodox mantras of the Tantras.” Alexis Sanderson, “Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions,” in The World’s Religions, eds. Stewart Sutherland et al. (London: Routledge, 1988), 662.


32. See, for another perspective, David Gordon White, Kiss of the Yoginī: “Tantric Sex” in Its South Asian Contexts. White explains his decision to focus on tantric sex on the grounds that “All of the other elements of Tantric practice—the ritual use of mandalas, mantras, and mudrās; worship of terrible or benign divinities; fire offerings [i.e., homa]; induced possession; sorcery; and so on—may be found elsewhere, in traditions whose emic self-definitions are not necessarily Tantric. In addition, all of the elements of Tantric exegesis, that is, Tantric ‘mysticism,’ are second-order reflections not unique to Tantra, and that in fact have, over time, brought Tantra back into the fold of more conventional forms of South Asian precept and practice” (p. 13).

Payne: Ritual Studies in the Longue Durée

34. Ronald M. Davidson makes this point in his forthcoming “Rise and Development of Tantric Buddhism.” My thanks to the author for sharing a prepublication draft of this essay.


36. Ibid., 92–93.

37. These two sets of offerings in the Śaiva Siddhānta homa, one to the inner mandala and one to the outer, take place at the same place in the ritual structure as the two sets of offerings in the Shingon homa, one symbolic offerings and one material. The parallel here is noteworthy, and perhaps significant enough to warrant attention in future studies based on ritual history.


43. Ibid., 10.

44. Ibid., chaps. 21–33: 78–116.


52. The interpenetration of the three mysteries (sanmitsu, 三密) of the buddha and the three acts (sangō, 三業) of the practitioner (body, speech, and mind, which in the case of ritual are: mudrā, mantra, and visualization) as the central ritual act for Shingon tantric rituals. Not all Shingon rituals have this characteristic act at their center, indicating a different source that can be traced back to China.


57. Gonda, *Viṣṇuism and Śivaism*, 85; internal citations to primary sources elided.

58. On esoteric physiology, see Gavin Flood, *The Tantric Body: The Secret Tradition of Hindu Religion* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006). Symbolically related to ritual identification is possession, and in his discussion of possession, Flood notes that the distinction between the possessing being and the possessed person is in some cases not maintained (p. 92).

59. This section is by far the most detailed in our text, like those manuals of Aghoraśiva. The ritual complex that Somaśambhu presents as the daily ritual of fire is given as a special ritual by Aghoraśiva, for example, in the section “Pavitrawidhi,” in the section “Dikṣa,” etc., it is situated in the section of the work dealing with naimittikakarman. It is in these sections, commented on also by Nirmalamanī, to which we will appeal for elucidation of our text, for all the details which are not in the daily ritual according to Aghoraśiva.

60. The primary question to resolve is the following: who is qualified to officiate in the ritual? According to Nirmalamanī who cites the Śārasaṅgraha: only those who have received abhiṣeka, otherwise known as deśika or ācārya [1a]. But we have summarized (see Introduction, p. xxiii) other opinions, according to which initiates of the second degree (putra) may already perform the ritual. The ritual of fire is indispensable for obtaining liberation, according to a majority of texts [1b].
According to Appayadikṣita one requests, “Śvāmin, agnikāryaṃ karomi.”

Agni-niketana, -sadana, -āgāra: the place at which one performs the ritual of fire. For grand occasions, temples have a hall especially reserved for the cult; but on ordinary days it is performed in the ardhaṃḍapa, in a kuṇḍa permanently dug into the floor.

Ordinary arghya, probably.

This is a look trained by the invisible eye (aparacakṣus), says the editor of our text. The difference between this action and that which carries the name nirīkṣana is not clear, but Aghoraśiva also distinguishes between the two.

Facing the East or the North, according to A. (RKP: A is the abbreviation Brunner-Lachaux uses for the Aghoraśivācārya-paddhati.)

The kuṇḍa is a pit dug into the floor but surrounded by raised walls, and bordered on the exterior by a ditch or belt (mekalā) of decreasing width toward the center, formed like stairs (see plate VIII [in Brunner-Lachaux, Somaśambhupaddhati, unnumbered page, following p. 372]). For special rituals the shape is variable, depending upon the goal that one seeks to attain; for the daily ritual (of Śivāgni) it is cubic, and the sides are of the length of a forearm. There are mobile kuṇḍa, small containers of metal in which one may perform the ritual of fire. In the absence of a kuṇḍa, the fire will be lit in an area specially prepared (sthaṇḍila): a square platform constructed of sand or of clay, a forearm’s length on each side, and three aṅgula in height. It is to be very regular, without undulations [2a]. It is in this fashion that the mekhalā is drawn. In each case, a vulva (yoni) having the form of a sheet of aśvattha must be symbolized at the middle of the side of the uppermost belt (see plate VIII [in Brunner-Lachaux, Somaśambhupaddhati, unnumbered page, following p. 372]), and it is on this side that the officiant is seated. The kuṇḍa or the sthaṇḍila is prepared in the south, the southwest, or the north, or elsewhere [2b].

The rites that are described in this section prepare the kuṇḍa (or the sthaṇḍila) to receive Agni. They are for an empty kuṇḍa. The first four, already encountered, assure its purification (see III, 2, note 1; and 5, note 7). The following six “construct” the receptacle; it is evidently a fictive construction, performed by the mantra, and it is at the same time a transformation, and a purification. The next two assure the birth following on the balance of the construction (one should note samālepa, application of a slurry of cow dung)—equally fictive. The last install on and in the kuṇḍa the objects required for the ritual. To facilitate references, I have given in parentheses, if it is not in the text, the Sanskrit term that designates each saṃskāra in the usual lists.

It was the earth (by thought) for in removing the debris of coals, bones, etc., and gives into a hole in part of that earth (pūrana). The same rites are given in the Mrgendrāgāma [4a] and explained in its commentary, with some differences; for example, khāta is not distinguished from uddhāra (here
utkīraṇa) nor rehācatuṣṭayavīnyāsa from vajrīkarna; and in the description of vajrīkarna, the commentator gives it as in our śloka 6, but the lines are drawn instead of being formed by the blades of kuśa [4b].

69. One distributes the five kalā of Bindu (see Introduction, p. xix) in the following fashion:
   - at the center of the kuṇḍa: śāntyatītakalā
   - on the east edge: śāntikalā
   - on the south: vidyākalā
   - on the north: pratiṣṭhākalā
   - on the west: nivṛttikalā.

The kuṇḍa is then “made of kalā” [5a]. The correspondence between the kalā and the directions is that of the “faces” of Sadāśiva with which the kalā are associated, and the directions.

70. According to the authors, the son is in cotton or in darbha. It is nothing other than simply the construction of the three mekalā that the kuṇḍa has, which has been ritually constructed. The action, according to Aghoraśiva, is done with ASTRA [5a].

71. Enjoined in accord with the two preceding actions; according to A., the mantra is: “Oṃ Hāṃ kalāmayāya kuṇḍāya Namaḥ” (HĀṂ is the bija of HṚD).

72. Three parallel blades, the fourth across the first. If the officiant is turned toward the north, perform as described; if the is turned toward the east, perform the contrary [6a].

73. The vajra is made with of three blades of kuśa formed as a trident (double) [7a].

74. The fourfold is made by to blades of kuśa crossed: one pointing toward the east, the other toward the north [7a].

75. The net: one places vertically in the interior of the kuṇḍa, against the walls, blades of kuśa spaced evenly. [7a].

76. The seat is called kārcarūpa: it is formed of a stack of blades of kuśa. According to A., one welcomes the deities to this āsana with the invocation: “Oṃ Hāṃ Vāgīśvarī–Vāgīśvarāsanāya Namaḥ!” [7a].

77. Vāgīśvarī (Goddess of Speech) is one of the names of Sarasvatī in the Purāṇa. One could, through the association of ideas, think that Vāgīśvara of our text is Brahma. But the dhyāna-śloka is described with the characteristic attributes of Śiva, and there is no indication suggesting that there should be a linking of the names.

78. With gandha, puṣpa, etc. [9a].

79. That is to say, it must either come from friction between the two arañi, that is, the “stones of the sun” (sūryakānta, which gives fire when seeing the sun,
says a legend), or from the home of a dvija (Śaivite initiate) [9a]. Needless to say there is a third procedure that is used daily. One brings the embers on a ceramic or copper tray.

80. One throws some embers in the direction of Nirṛti (southwest) with ASTRA. For the four rites of purification, see III, 2 and 5.

81. The details of the procedure, as described by Aghoraśiva, are: one says, “ॐ हः हः हः वाह्निमुर्तये नामाः” as one captures the terrestrial fire with the samhāramudrā (evidently a simulated action), one attracts it [to the interior {of the mudrā?}] and breathes in through the left nostril; retaining the air, with ṢRṛD one unites the fire of the navel and the fire of Bindu; then, breathing out through the right nostril, one says, “ॐ ह्रूः वाह्निकायाया नामाः!” and deposits with the fire as the recipient, using the udbhavamudrā and the bija of Vahni, as a bouquet of bright flames [10a]. The bija HRŪṂ (śikhābīja) is not in the first mantra, but it does appear in the second, symbolizing Śivāgni (H = Śiva; R = Agni; Ū = vowel of the Śikhā; see III 12, note 4, p. 107) or Agni in his divine form, in relation with Śiva. One “places” the bija in the fire of the kuṇḍa, which is no longer an inert fire (jaḍa) but a divine fire (cit), of the same seed as Śiva, as we shall see.

82. By reciting the mūlamantra followed by VAUṢAṬ.

83. With a flower.

84. The god and the goddess have their heads toward the northeast side [13a].

85. A lotus is drawn in the center of the kuṇḍa in relief (see plate VIII {in BL}); it is this lotus that marks the “navel” [14a]. As one gathers the embers together, imagine that the semen of the god is being gathered in the same way in the womb of the goddess. {A lotus also occupies the center of Siddhānta mandalas; see Hélène Brunner, “Mandala and Yantra in the Siddhānta School of Śaivism: Definitions, Description and Ritual Use,” trans. Raynald Prévèreau, in Maṇḍalas and Yantras in the Hindu Traditions, ed. Gudrun Bühnemann (Leiden: Brill, 2003).} A lotus is also drawn in the center of the kuṇḍa in relief (see plate VIII {in BL}); it is this lotus that marks the “navel” [14a]. As one gathers the embers together, imagine that the semen of the god is being gathered in the same way in the womb of the goddess. {A lotus also occupies the center of Siddhānta mandalas; see Hélène Brunner, “Mandala and Yantra in the Siddhānta School of Śaivism: Definitions, Description and Ritual Use,” trans. Raynald Prévèreau, in Maṇḍalas and Yantras in the Hindu Traditions, ed. Gudrun Bühnemann (Leiden: Brill, 2003).}

86. This is done with a few drops of the arghya water, which one throws into the fire [14b].

87. First, one covers the dry darbha (sad–indhana) and one empowers (“attise”: fuels) with ASTRA. One then renders homage with the mantra: “ॐ हः हर्बग्नये नामाः!” [14b].

88. The rites that follow occur in the intra-uterine life of the embryo, then in the young infant. They are accomplished with the five brahmāmantra and the five corresponding aṅgamantra, imagining the growth of Agni. The fifth is described in śloka 43.

89. Oblations of sesame, according to A.
90. Here we follow the editor rather than Somaśambhu, who places the last two actions after the birth. On the contrary they appear to be prior to the birth: complete the formation of the infant, and render him perfect. Nirmalamaṇi explains vaktrāṅgakalpanā as: one gives form to the heat, the face, the neck, etc. [19a]; and niṣkṛti is glossed as niḥśeṣakaraṇa by a commentator of Somaśambhu, cited by Nirmalamaṇi. This is also found in the Rāmanāthapaddhati which clearly distinguishes the three actions: vaktrāṅgakalpana, vaktrodghāṭana, and niṣkṛti, as in our text [19b]. If niṣkṛti means, as the editor of our text says, purification of the mouth, the rite would duplicate that described in śloka 23.

91. We have relocated this title, see preceding note.

92. VARMA for the oblations.

93. One first removes the bracelet of darbha.

94. Not only the mother, but all the close parents are impure, as one knows, for several days following the birth of an infant. It is this state of impurity that is ended immediately here by the three ordinary rites of purification.

95. Or: on the mekhālā and on the exterior.

96. According to the Mrgendrāgama, the paridhi are sticks from sacrificial trees; they are of a forearm’s length (like the side of the kuṇḍa), as large as the little finger, and they should be fresh, regular, and without fault [22a]. One places these as the first or the second mekhālā (we say the gurukkal); but according to the Mrgendrāgama, they are placed outside, at some distance from the last mekhālā. This is the āsana of Brahman, Śaṅkara, Viṣṇu, and Ananta (śloka 24).

97. Viṣṭara = bundle of thirty darbha, the length of a forearm. One places these as the third mekhālā, and it is the āsana of the Lokapāla.

98. And to nourish Agni [23a].

99. For Agni with five mouths (see infra).

100. “Om Hāṃ Brahmane Namaḥ!” etc. Each mantra evokes the corresponding deity, and installs them on their seat. The texts are not in accord on the subject of which direction to direct each of these; but Aghoraśiva gives the same directions as Somaśambhu.

101. These eight deities (the Lokapāla) are the cardinal and ordinal compass points. Aghoraśiva adds two: Brahman and Viṣṇu.

102. Sruc is the ladle; sruva smaller and masculine, the spoon. They are made of hardwood.

103. Following Aghoraśiva, first prokṣana, abhyuksana, and avakunthana. Then heat, turning round in a circle once above the fire, touch the point of the kuśa to the points of the instruments; heat again, turning in a circle, and touch with the middle of the kuśa the middle of the instruments, etc. [27a].
104. Aghoraśiva, while maintaining the correspondences given here, indicates the nyāsa in inverse order, as he indicates an inverse order of touching {kuśa to instruments} to that given in our text.

105. With VARMA [29a].

106. With the mūlamantra [29a].

107. The text appears to be very incomplete here. Śloka 31 may be completed as follows: ...place it there, and with the point of the blade of kuśa, and taking a drop of offering, say, “Oṃ Hūṃ, Brahmaṇe Svāhā!”; to which Aghoraśiva adds, “this is the rite called sthāpana, or installation [of butter into the fire]” [31a]. But one also finds tāpana [31b].

108. Therefore, “Oṃ Hīṃ Viṣṇave Svāhā!” to which Aghoraśiva adds, “this is the rite called adhiśrayana, that is to say, maintaining [of the fire]” [31a].

109. Ending with “...and by saying, ‘Oṃ Hūṃ Rudrāya Svāhā!’ one should offer with the point of a blade of kuśa a drop [of butter for Rudra]. This is the rite called udvāsana or cessation [of the fire]” [31a]. The names of these three rites are related to the functions of Brahman, Viṣṇu, and Rudra respectively; but their symbolic significance is not entirely clear.

110. One first makes a knot (brahmagranthi) at the middle; the instrument so constituted is called pavitra (purifier) [34a]. One grasps the two ends, between the thumb and ring finger of each hand, and in the left hand hold the bases of the darbha, the right hand the points [34b]. The same gesture for saṃplavana.

111. According to the Bālajñānaratnāvalī: “utplavana makes it possible to rise over the highest obstacles that exist in the most subtle form; the descent is made with samplavana” [34c].

112. First throw the darbha that was being used into the fire, after having undone the knots.

113. Just as the first time when one throws the butter—one throws it into the fire.

114. According to Aghoraśiva, two blades knotted and then separated to form a V, with which one divides the surface of the melted butter, upon which the V is floated, into three parts.

115. Iḍā on the left, piṅgalā on the right.

116. If one believes Aghoraśiva, the order indicated is followed during the light fortnight (waxing moon): one begins by taking the butter in the right part (piṅgalā) and offering it into the right eye in invocation of Agni; then one draws from the left (iḍā) and offers the butter into the left eye in invocation of Soma; finally, one draws from the center (suṣumnā) and offers the butter into the center eye of Agni with the three mantra. In the dark fortnight (waning moon) one inverts the first two actions, and in performing the third one days
Somāgnibhyāṃ in place of Agniṣomābhyaṃ [38a].

117. Taking the butter from the center.

118. Brahman mantra and aṅgamantra, according to Aghoraśiva [38a].

119. “Recayet” is surely an error; read: “rocayet.” The dhenumudrā is accompanied by the mūlamantra and completes the rite of amṛtikaraṇa. This is the last of the eighteen saṃskāras of the butter, according to A., which are given after rakṣaṇa and avakaṇṭhana [38a].

120. According to Aghoraśiva, one renders homage here with the mūlamantra [38a].

121. For this section we follow the Kāśmir edition, which presents the actions in a more satisfactory manner than does the text of Dēvakōṭṭai; that one seems to have significant errors, because the mantra clearly show that the rite has three stages, and it gives the second the name of the third. The modified verses are marked with an asterisk.

122. The Dēvakōṭṭai edition gives “matam” instead of the “tataḥ” reading of the Kāśmir edition which we have adopted.

123. Then cross, over the kuṇḍa.

124. Nirmalamaṇi comments on the expression abhilaṣitavaktra (here iṣṭavadana) in the section entitled pavitravidhi. He cites the Brhatkālottārāgama which indicates that the face to which one must make these oblations (and therefore the others have to be melted) depends on the goal of the homa. For a homa performed with the goal of liberation it would be Iśa; Puruṣa for obtaining siddhi (animā, etc.); Aghora for rituals of reparation or when the intention is malevolent; Vāmadeva if one seeks to make other people dependent upon you; and Sadyojāta (the western face) for the daily performance of the fire ritual [42a]. This citation is reproduced (in truncated form) by the editor of Somaśambhu (p. 50); but he does not indicate the divergence of opinion between Somaśambhu and the others since it retains the face of Iśa for the daily ritual, instead of Sadyojāta. One is to imagine the chosen face takes the dimension of the kuṇḍa, and that it is placed in the upper part, i.e., it is turned toward the top, so as to receive the oblations [42b].

125. The giving of the name (nāmakaraṇa) is the fifth of the saṃskāras of which Agni is the object (the first four are described in slokas 16–19). It is completed with the fifth brahmamantra and with the fifth aṅgamantra.

126. Assuming again (cf. 1, 20) that SARVĀTMAN is synonymous with the HṚD (bijā), this is also in accord with the parallel passage of Aghoraśiva [43a]. The mantra is in effect: “Oṃ Hāṃ Śivāgni tvam Hutāśan!” The name Śivāgni reminds us that Agni is here not an independent deity, but an aspect of Śiva. The form of Śivāgni meditated upon differs in its attributes from Agni in other traditions (see Rauravāgama, I, p. 59, note 23).
127. One then offers three āhuti, according to Aghoraśiva. Prior to the following phase, that author describes a ritual (perhaps prescribed solely for exceptional occasions), which consists of evoking one by one, then joining together, the seven tongues of Agni, as was done for the faces. The oblations are to be made to the one tongue that remains.

128. Pūrṇāhuti, will be described later.

129. This entire oblation effects in a single act the samskāras that remain, up to and including the tonsure (cūḍā-karman) [44a]. The first five have been effected one after the other, according to the regular lists; the sixth is niśkramaṇa (first outing of the infant), the seventh prāśana (first solid food), and the eighth is cūḍā-karman (tonsure).

130. Sāṅga is perhaps to be understood in a technical sense (see II, 3, note 1).

131. Begin with the invocation of Śiva in the heart of Agni, to be meditated upon in the form of Śivāgni. The mental worship which one offers following is, according to the Jñānaratnāvali, cited by Nirmalamaṇi, a complete worshipping, ranging from the invocation of the throne to the offering of pavitra [45a] (see section III, 47–92). The term bhāsvara of our text perhaps means “accompanied by the heart,” which indicates that the pūjā must include an āvaraṇa (see III, 85b, note 1).

132. According to a passage from Aghoraśiva, permission is requested of Agni in these terms, “O Agni, you are the splendor of Īśvara, you are pure, you are supreme; that is why I am establishing in the lotus of your heart, that I may offer these oblations” [45b]. This begins the invocation of Śiva in the heart of Agni. But in the passage of the Jñānaratnāvali, just cited, the permission to offer oblations is requested of Śiva, after one has made the invocation [45a]. It seems that this is the opinion of Somaśambhu.

133. This action is described in detail by Aghoraśiva, “After this, one is to penetrate into the nāḍī that is in the middle of Agni’s body (suṣumnā); then, in the lotus of his heart offer dhūpa and diṣṭ; unite the faces of Śiva with those of Agni, and exit by pronouncing the mūlamantra; and imagine that the luminous śikhā exits through the nose of Śiva who is in Agni, and passes into the Śiva in the sanctuary, a continuous line of light uniting the two” [46a]. And, this is the union with the nāḍī of the Śiva of the sanctuary. One is then effect in an analogous fashion the union of one’s own nāḍī with those of the two Śiva [46b]. A sort of imaginai luminous circuit is established, whereby the three aspects of Śiva {in the fire, the sanctuary, and the practitioner} are united. It is said that after the invocation of Śiva in Agni one is to separate the fire into two parts, one which serves to cook the rice (and where one does not evoke Śiva), the other where Śiva is evoked and the homa performed [46c].

134. A karṣa, a śukti, a prasṛti, weigh respectively a quarter, a half, and two pala. A pala is approximately equal to 93 grams.
135. Lāja is rice expanded (soaked in water?) and dried.

136. The term sūkṣāṇi seems to designate the small things such as sesame, barley, etc., as well as flours and similar powders. But, we do not know for sure what the five varieties to which our text alludes actually are.

137. See III, 84, note 1.

138. It must be added that it is not necessary to offer all of these ingredients, a single ingredient will suffice, and the one that is preferred is melted butter. In the absence of that, one offers black sesame, or grains of rice, or barley, or samidh.

139. With SVĀHĀ at the end. The recitation of each mantra is accompanied by an oblation.

140. It reads: puṣkara-upari in Aghoraśiva, that is, above the hollow portion of the ladle.

141. Action explained above, see III, 62b, note 1.

142. As it is said in the section japa (III, 93).

143. Following Aghoraśiva and Appayadikṣita, at this time one gives cooked rice to the fire as naivedya [57a].

144. It seems clear that the beginning of the half śloka 57b is corrupt. One finds in Aghoraśiva’s manual, at this stage, the following injunction, “tad bhasmābhivandya,” that is, render homage to the ashes [57a]. Nirmalamaṇi details this, “light some blades of darbha, and make a mark on your front with the ashes in which the nature of Śiva manifests” [57b]. Bhūti may perhaps be placed for vibhūti, but āvartya is surely wrong. It is not customary to chant the hymns at the end of the homa, beginning with visarjana.

145. By offering the eight flowers (see below, note 147).

146. And by viṣṭara.

147. That is, susumnā. The text is not very clear. One installs in the heart not only the various mantra and divinities who have been disturbed (displaced from the sanctuary and brought to the hearth?), but above all Śivāgni, that aspect of Śiva who has been invoked in the form of Agni. Aghoraśiva describes this action as follows (parentheticals add the details given by Nirmalamaṇi), “Then render homage with the eight flowers, and give arghya for departing, one should make up those (the mantra) which are in Agni, they unite with the mūrti (of Agni), give separately leavetaking to Śiva (i.e., install in his own heart), then with: Oṃ Bhūḥ-Svāhā, Oṃ Bhuvah Svāhā, Oṃ Svaḥ-Svāhā. Oṃ Bhūr-Bhuvah-Svāhā, give the four āhuti, then the bali to Brahman and the others. Greet Agni; in making the oblation, one says “rest yourself,” and then give leavetaking with the mantra, Oṃ Hrauṃ Hrūṃ Śivāgnaye Namah! one should then give leavetaking to Brahman and the others in inverse order.
(of their installation, that is, the placement like Agni in one’s heart)” [59a].

148. These are two squares that have been drawn to the right, toward the sun, and southeast of the kuṇḍa; that which is more west (the left) is called the interior; that which is more east (the right) is called the exterior [60a].

![Figure 3. Location of the two mandalas for the interior and exterior offerings, stanza 60.](image)

149. Offerings of cooked rice mixed with water [60b].

150. The kṣetrapāla is Bhairava.

151. In A., “Nilalohitāya Svāhā!”

152. Coat the surface with cow dung [60c].

153. That is, dogs, bhūta, outcastes, preta, crows, etc. [60c].

154. A bit more extended in Aghoraśiva, who has furthermore offerings to the fire, the sun, etc.

155. Not indicated precisely. It seems that it may be new offerings that are given outside the temple. But according to actual usage, the offerings to the crows and so on are the same as those given outside the temple; one should perhaps adopt the reading of the Kāśmir edition, “Yāgamaṇḍapād bahir vābalir deyāḥ,” one should make these (last) offerings outside.

156. Āgama is taken here in the larger sense of Śaivite texts, since the Lilāvatī does not figure in the list of Śaivāgama. A manual by this name is not known in our time, but the ritual of fire that is given {here} is well known; it is a simple ritual, whose different phases have already been commented upon above.

157. That is, unite the fire with Bindu.

158. Mudrā by which Agni was first grasped.

159. Hrūṃ.

160. Dhruva = praṇava.

161. That is, following the start of the pūjā proper (see III, 47, et seq.).
162. As shown in note 147 to śloka 59 above.

163. Here one returns to the sanctuary, or to the place of the worship of Śiva (section III) to bring this worship to a close. According to Aghoraśiva, one is to chant the hymns and make sakalīkaraṇa, then approach Śiva holding arghya [71a].

164. One completes the offerings of japa (see III, 94 et seq.); a knee on the ground, one deposits one’s offerings, mentally, with a little of the arghya, into the hands of Śiva who makes the varamudrā [71a].

165. By means of the eight flowers ritual [73a].

166. Parāṃmukhārghya: this is the arghya given at the moment that the pūjā is brought to a close. One presents to the “members” from ASTRA, and to the “faces” of Sadāśiva from the Sadyojāta, that is, in the inverse of the normal order [73a]. See III, 76a, note 4 and 90a, note 3. Nirmalamaṇi explains that this arghya does not mean that given upon the leavetaking of Śiva, but simply marks the end of the pūjā [73b]. One is to understand that Śiva continues to be present in the liṅga (if there is a liṅga), but it is not more than a “special presence” that has been obtained by the rites of invocation. According to certain texts, a distinction is made between the fixed liṅga (the rite is then as described here) and the mobile liṅga which requires the application of the relative injunctions as in the case of the sthāṇḍila (last śloka).

167. The śloka given by Aghoraśiva is as follows:

“Oh master, your insignificant servant, who has an impure heart, impor-tunes you.

“However, for the speck of true devotion that I have for you, deign to pardon me!” [73c].

168. The mantra that are outside of Śiva, in the locations called bhogasthāna, are to be honored separately. They are to be replaced in the mūrti, so that they do not totally disappear [73d]. The mantra that are around the god (āvaraṇadeva) return into the liṅga, and the mantras invoked during the worship of the throne return into the pitha [73e]. In the case of a mobile liṅga, it is explained that these return into the box, “By mentally repeating the mūlamantra, the deśika should take the liṅga, envelop it in colored cloths, and place it in the middle of the box; one then closes the cover, recollecting Bhīma-Rudra [by which one requests his protection]” [74a].

169. That is, if one has worshipped without the use of a liṅga as a support.