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Temple consecration rituals in ancient India: Text and archaeology

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Chapter 6

The function and meaning of the *garbhanyāsa*, the *prathameṣṭakānyāsa* and the *mūrdheṣṭakānyāsa* as expressed by the textual sources

6.1 The *garbhanyāsa*

The principal function of the *garbhanyāsa* as revealed by the textual sources is to bring prosperity and welfare to human beings in general and to those who perform the ritual in particular.[1] According to several works, those who perform the ceremony will obtain success and all their wishes will be fulfilled.[2] Surprisingly, the positive influence of *garbhanyāsa* for the building (here: a temple) in which the deposit is installed is only explicitly mentioned by one text[3] and the protection offered by the deposit to the settlement (in which a deposit is installed) is promised by no more than two texts.[4]

Failing to perform the ritual leads to destruction: of the house and land,[5] of the patron[6] or, simply, 'of everything'.[7] The Kāśyapaśilpa, moreover, warns that

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[1] *yat prāsādaṃ sagarbhaṃ tu sarvasampat karaṃ bhavet … tasmād ādau prakartavyaṃ garbhanyāsaṃ samṛddhidam* || (Suprabhedāgama 28.1c-2); *evaṃ nyaste tu garbhe 'smin sarvatra ca sukhaṃ bhavet* (Viṣṇu Saṃhitā 13.44ab); *yad yad garbhasamāyuktaṃ tat tat saṃpatkaraṃ nṛṇām* (Ajitāgama 17.5cd); *sagarbhaṃ sarvasampatyai* (Kāmikāgama 31.1c); *sagarbhaṃ sarvasampattyai* (Mayamata 9.102a); *sagarbhaṃ vardhanārdhaṃ tu* (Kāraṇāgama 6.1c); *yaśas tu garbhasaṃyuktaṃ vāstu tat saṃpadaṃ padaṃ* (Kumāratantra 29.2163cd); *vāstugarbheṇa saṃyuktaṃ kurute sarvasaṃpadaḥ* (Rauravāgama 60.14ab).

[2] *sthāpayed grāmarakṣārthaṃ sarvakāmābhivṛddhaye* (Mayamata 9.126ab; the same half-verse is given by the Śilparatna 12.3ab).

[3] *garbhanyāsas tv ayaṃ devi devāgārasya vṛddhidaḥ* (Śrīpraśna Saṃhitā 8.25).

[4] *sthāpayed* grāma*rakṣārthaṃ sarvakāmābhivṛddhaye* (Mayamata 9.126ab); *nyased evaṃ vidhānena garbhaṃ* grāmasya *vṛddhaye* (Atri Saṃhitā 10.44ab). Placing the consecration deposit for a settlement (a town or a village) is not mentioned in the Kāśyapaśilpa.

[5] *akṛtvā garbhavinyāsaṃ grāmaṃ prāsādam eva vā | yadi kuryāt kṣayaṃ yāyād acirāt vāstu dhāma vā* || (Pādma Saṃhitā 6.45); *garbhādhānaṃ tataḥ kuryān nāgarbhe dhāmni sampadaḥ* (ViṣṇuS 13.22ab); *sagarbhā pṛthivī sūte vigarbhā sarvanāśinī* (Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa 16).

[6] *garbhanyāsaṃ na kartavyaṃ kartavyaṃ kartṛnāśanam* (Kāśyapaśilpa *garbhanyāsa*, ms T1 after verse 3cd).

[7] *vigarbhaṃ sarvanāśanam* (Mayamata 9.102b); *vigarbhaṃ nāśanaṃ bhavet* (Kāmikāgama 31.1d); *agarbhaṃ nāśanaṃ dhruvam* (Kāraṇāgama 6.1d); *agarbhaṃ yad vimānaṃ tu abhicārāya tad bhavet | tasmād ādau prakartavyaṃ garbhanyāsaṃ samṛddhidam* (Suprabhedāgama 28.1d-2); *akṛte garbhavinyaste pratyavāyo mahān bhavet* || (Śrīpraśna Saṃhitā 8.25).

one should not stay in a house without a *garbha* and assures that no god will ever commit such a deed.[8]

Unsurprisingly, the prosperity promised by the texts is equated with fertility. The successful performance of the ritual will cause the earth to bear fruit and result in the multiplication of wealth and grain.[9] Furthermore, according to the same source, the *garbha* installed in a designated location will bring about rain and increase child birth.[10] The association of prosperity with fertility is, moreover, stressed by the frequent use of the root *vṛdh* meaning 'to increase, grow, thrive' and of the noun derived from it, *vṛddhi*, meaning 'prosperity, welfare', but also 'growth'.[11]

The fertility aspect of *garbhanyāsa* is reflected in the very term by which the ritual is referred to, which means 'the depositing (*nyāsa*) of the embryo (*garbha*)'. The term *garbha* might be translated as 'embryo', 'womb' or 'interior', 'middle', but it is the first interpretation, namely embryo, which seems to be the most appropriate here.[12] This interpretation is also supported by the textual sources: Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra compares the deposit to a human embryo (*strīgarbha*) by means of which life is flourishing on earth.[13] Moreover, the term used in certain texts to denote the ritual is *garbhādhāna*, which suggests an analogy with one of the *rites de passage* in the Hindu tradition known under the

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[8] See Chapter 4.2, Kāśyapaśilpa *garbhanyāsa* 2-3.

[9] *sagarbhā pṛthivī sūte vigarbhā sarvanāśinī* and: *evaṃ pratiṣṭhitā bhūmir dhanadhānyasamṛddhidā | sarvasaṃpatkarā puṇyā saphalā ca bhaviṣyati || vigarbhā ca saśalyā ca vināśāya bhaviṣyati* (Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa 16).

[10] *nagarādīnāṃ devāgāre caityavṛkṣe dvāravāme vā bālānām abhivṛddhyarthaṃ vāhanāyudhasthāne varṣavārivṛddhyarthaṃ* (Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa 16).

[11] *sthāpayed grāmarakṣārthaṃ sarvakāmābhivṛddhaye* (Mayamata 9.126ab); *evaṃ vinyasya tadgarbhaṃ sarvasiddhim avāpnuyāt* (Ajitāgama 17.42cd).

[12] This contrary to the term *garbhagṛha* where the translation of *garbha* as womb or embryo does not seem desirable. *Garbhagṛha*, the temple's cella, has often been referred to as 'womb-chamber' (see Kramrisch 1946: 162, Michell 1988: 62, Blurton 1992: 234). Unjustly so, because the comparison of the temple's cella to a womb, often encountered in secondary literature, is not based on any textual source. The term was popularised by Kramrisch, whose monograph "The Hindu temple" became probably the most frequently quoted source in discussions on Hindu architecture. See Kramrisch (1946: 163): "Garbha which signifies the womb as well as the embryo in the microcosmic sense, denotes Prakṛti, primordial Substance, in its macrocosmic application. The name of the innermost sanctuary does not primarily designate it as the house of God; it refers to a state or degree of manifestation" and "The name [*garbhagṛha*] refers also to the human body and to the inception of life." There might be some truth in the latter view, but it has to be remembered that the deposit (*garbha*) is also installed in other parts of the temple complex, not only in the garbha*gṛha* and that the term *garbhagṛha* denotes in Sanskrit literature simply an inner apartment or a bedroom (for instance in the Mahābhārata; Monier Williams Sanskrit English Dictionary, p. 349). Hence, the interpretation of *garbhagṛha* as 'womb-chamber' is misleading as it implies unnecessary symbolism. The translation 'inner chamber' seems thus more appropriate.

[13] *strīgarbheṇa yathā jīvo vardhate bhuvi nityaśaḥ | tathā bhūgarbhamāhātymāt jīvarāśis tu vardhate* || (Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra 6.16).

same name, which is performed to secure the conception of a child.[14] According to the majority of the texts, the *garbha* should be installed at night, for – as formulated by one work – if done during daytime it will be destroyed.[15] The same warning is found in some works with regard to the *garbhādhāna*, the conception rite (see Pandey 1969: 52). Besides, the deposit is sometimes called 'life' (*jīva*) or the 'life breath' (*prāṇa*) of the temple to be constructed.[16] The prescription found in certain works, which stipulates that the ritual should not be performed when the wife of the 'performer' (*kartṛ*, either the priest or the patron) is pregnant (*garbhinī*),[17] is also interesting.

Apart from the association with an embryo, the texts provide other hints as to the nature of the *garbha*, all of them, however, emphasising the life-giving character of the deposit. In certain works the deposit is equated with earth or the earth is invoked to enter the deposit casket.[18] The invocation is pronounced before the final act of placing the casket in the prescribed location. This is not surprising considering that the contents of the deposit casket chiefly consist of the 'riches of the earth', such as minerals, metals, grains, herbs and soil taken from various

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[14] The term *garbhādhāna* is mainly used in the Pāñcarātra works: Viṣṇu Saṃhitā 13, Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra 12, Viṣvaksena Saṃhitā 1 as well as in Agni Purāṇa 41 which contains many verses which are identical with Hayaśīrṣa 12. It occurs together with the term *garbhanyāsa* in Pādma Saṃhitā 2 and in Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati 27. For *garbhādhāna* as a Hindu rite performed in order to secure conception, see Kane (1974: 195-196, 201-202) and Pandey (1969: 48-59). It should be stressed, however, that the term *garbhādhāna* is used in only some of the sources. In the Śaiva sources, for example, it is much less prominent (if ever) than in the Vaiṣṇava ones.

[15] *divaiva nirmale dravyāṇi bhājane kṣiptvā rātrāv eva nidhāpayet | divā vinaśyati |* (Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa 16). Other texts prescribing the depositing of the *garbha* at night include: Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra 12.50c, Viṣvaksena Saṃhitā 1.55cd, Pādma Saṃhitā 2.23 and 6.17ab, Atri Saṃhitā 10.35ab, Kriyādhikāra 5.29cd, Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati 27.102ab and Tantra Samuccaya 1.122. On the other hand, Kāmikāgama 31.5-6ab prescribes night in the case of a deposit for the people, but day for the gods while Mayamata 12 prescribes night in verse 102, but day in verse 112.

[16] *ālaye vinyased dhīmān garbhamantreṇa mantritam || yad vāstu garbhasaṃyuktaṃ kurute sarvasaṃpadam | sarvavāstukriyākāle tad garbhaṃ jīvam ucyate | tasmād ādau nyased garbhaṃ sarvagarbhaśamitrayam |* (Dīptāgama 4.1cd-3ab as given by Dagens 2004). The transcript T1018 reads: *yad vāstu garbhasaṃyuktaṃ kurute sarvasaṃpadam | etat prāsādakāyāṃ tu tadgarbhajīvam ucyate*. See also Kāśyapaśilpa *garbhanyāsa* 1cd.

[17] *gṛhiṇī garbhiṇī kartur yadi garbhaṃ na nikṣipet* (Mayamata 12.95cd; exactly the same half-verse occurs in Kāmikāgama 31.6cd).

[18] See, for instance, Suprabheda Saṃhitā 28.13cd: *tasmin dhyātvā tu bhuvanaṃ vinyased garbhabhājanam*. The mantra in which the earth is invoked to enter the deposit casket occurs mainly in the works of the Pāñcarātrins, see Viṣṇu Saṃhitā 13.43, Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra 12.41cd-42ab (the same verse in Agni Purāṇa 41), PādmaSaṃhitā 6.41cd-42ab and 2.24cd-25ab. Apart from the Pāñcarātra works, the mantra is also present in Tantrasamuccaya 1.124-125 (the basis for which was the Viṣṇu Saṃhitā) and in Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati 27.105cd-106ab (a work bearing some similarities to the Pāñcarātra texts). The mantra differs slightly among the texts, but the fragment *devi garbhaṃ samāśraya* or *āśraya* is always present. The version from the Viṣṇu Saṃhitā reads as follows: *sarvabhūtadhare kānte parvatastanamaṇḍite | samudraparidhāne tvaṃ devi garbhaṃ samāśraya ||*

locations (from a river, a marsh or a mountain), which represent the totality of the earth.[19] Moreover, the compartments of the deposit casket are 'inhabited' by the same gods that govern the plots of land into which the whole building terrain is divided.[20] This transforms the deposit casket into a miniature replica of the building terrain and, perhaps, of the entire earth.

In this regard, one might also consider the role ascribed to the 'performer' of the ritual. According to one of our sources one should perform the ceremony knowing that "the earth brings forth the embryo, the one who places [it] is the procreator, that is why the success depends on his purity."[21] Further on, the text adds that a deposit should be installed by a twice-born, who is pure, ascetical and possesses authority. Otherwise, the 'embryo' will become, as it were, a 'bastard' (*jāragarbha*) and will lead to destruction.[22] Some texts state that before the placing of the casket the performer should meditate on himself as Viṣṇu,[23] so it is in fact Viṣṇu who impregnates the earth (which is, of course, his consort). This view about the procreative role of the main deity embodied by the officiant is absent in the Āgamas, which are Śaiva.

In the search for textual explanations of the function of the *garbhanyāsa* ritual it is difficult to determine how much importance should be attached to the

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[19] See, for example, Kāśyapaśilpa *garbhanyāsa* 19-29ab.

[20] See Chapter 4.2, Kāśyapaśilpa *garbhanyāsa*, under verse 27.

[21] Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa 16: *pṛthivī garbhajananī sthāpako janakaḥ tasmāt tatprasādāt samṛddhir iti jñātvā samyak samārabhet*. Goudriaan (1965: 62) translates the word *prasāda* as 'kind disposition': 'the earth brings forth the embryo, but the establisher is the procreator, and therefore success depends on his kind disposition' omitting the fragment beginning with *iti jñātvā*. The word *prasāda* may indeed mean 'kind disposition'. This fragment, however, is preceded by a list of prescriptions for the performer stressing his purity (of both body and mind). Hence, the translation given above, viz. '… the success depends on his purity' seems more appropriate.

[22] *anyena sthāpitaṃ jāragarbham ivobhayoḥ vināśāya bhavati*. The translation by Goudriaan (1965: 66): "If [established] by another man, it will cause destruction because it is (then), as it were, withered" does not reflect the, in my view, intended meaning of the term *jāragarbha*. Another element not mentioned in Goudriaan's translation is the fact that the placing of a *garbha* by an inappropriate person will cause destruction of both (*ubhayor*): the *garbha* itself and the person who dared to place it without being authorised to do so. This is not without importance. There are several analogies between the installation of a deposit and the installation of an image of a deity and it is often stressed that the image of a deity, when ritually brought to life, should not be touched by an uninitiated person for fear that contact with the divine may harm a person not prepared for it; at the same time, the statue touched by an uninitiated person may have to be consecrated again (see, for example Davis 2000: 155-156, Bhatt 1993-94: 75-76).

[23] Pādma Saṃhitā 6.27cd: *ātmānaṃ keśavaṃ dhyātvā sarvābharaṇabhūṣītam* and 2.23d: *svam ātmānaṃ hariṃ smaret*. According to Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa 16 the performer holding the casket should "meditate on himself as having the figure of a boar and lifting up the earth" (*ātmānaṃ varāharūpaṃ vasundharoddhāraṃ dhyātvā*; translation Goudriaan 1965: 65). Apart from the fact that these two texts belong to the Vaiṣṇava tradition, the importance of Viṣṇu in the ritual might have its roots in the Hindu belief that each stage of life is presided over by a deity, Viṣṇu being the chief deity during the conception (see Pandey 1969: 27-28). On the other hand, in the Śaiva ritual texts Viṣṇu does not play a role during the *garbhanyāsa*.

mantras pronounced, as stated by the texts, during or directly before the installation of the casket. Some of them seem to carry a meaning, which is specifically connected to the placing of the deposit and emphasises its association with a human embryo. A case in point is the Rigvedic mantra uttered before the installation of the casket. The same mantra seems to be recited during the *garbhādhāna* or conception ceremony.[24] On the other hand, many mantras recited during the *garbhanyāsa* are used also on other occasions, for instance during the daily worship in the temple. The formula *idaṃ viṣṇuḥ*, 'a frequent litany in praise of Viṣṇu' (Goudriaan 1970: 170 note 21) is pronounced not only before the placing of the deposit casket, but also during the invocation of the deity in the *praṇidhi* vessel and during the offering of drinking water to the image.[25] A fragment of the *ekākṣara* prescribed by the Atri Saṃhitā for the *garbhanyāsa* ceremony is also pronounced at the end of the ritual bath of the main image of the temple deity, namely during the rubbing of the image with a piece of cloth.[26] These mantras are thus not specific to the *garbhanyāsa* ceremony. In the same way, the identification of the performer with the deity (as encountered in the Vaiṣṇava texts describing *garbhanyāsa*; see above) is also required during the daily worship (for the Vaikhānasa tradition, see Goudriaan 1970: 176f; for the Śaiva tradition, see Davis 2000: 58-60).

In spite of the hints provided by some verses and by the prescribed mantras, not all aspects of the *garbhanyāsa* are explained by the texts. One of them is the location of the deposit. According to the majority of the sources, the *garbha*, at least in the case of a temple, should be installed to the right or to the south of the door (*dvāradakṣiṇe*) - the Sanskrit word *dakṣiṇa* may mean either 'south' or 'right'. None of the works available to us reveal why this location was

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[24] The mantra should be recited during the *garbhādhāna saṃskāra* according to the Vīramitrodaya Saṃskāra Prakāśa (see Pandey 1969: 56 note 48). The whole mantra reads:
viṣṇur yoniṃ kalpayatu tvaṣṭā rūpāṇi piśatu |
ā siñcatu prajāpatir dhātā garbhaṃ dadhātu te
garbhaṃ dhehi sinīvāli garbhaṃ dhehi sarasvati |
garbhaṃ te aśvinau devāvā dhattāṃ puṣkarasnajā
hiraṇyayī araṇī yaṃ nirmanthato aśvinā |
taṃ te garbhaṃ havāmahe daśame māsi sūtave (RV 10.184).
This mantra occurs in the *garbhanyāsa* description according to Marīci Saṃhitā 13.1.2. In the Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa the formula is not used in the *garbhanyāsa* chapter (chapter 16), but it is recited in chapter 6 ("Obtaining desires from the Lotus-fire") during a ceremony performed in order to obtain a son (see Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa 6 and Goudriaan 1965: 36).

[25] See Goudriaan (1970: 194, 206). The formula *idaṃ viṣṇuḥ* should be pronounced during the *garbhanyāsa* according to Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa 16.

[26] See Atri Saṃhitā 10.40 and Goudriaan (1970: 186). The fragment recited during the ritual bathing of an image concerns verse 12 of the *ekākṣara*. The second part of it, as given by Goudriaan, reads: *tvayā vṛtaṃ jagad ulbeva garbhaḥ*, which he translates as "by You the world is enveloped as an embryo by its membrane." (Goudriaan 1970: 186). The edition of the *ekākṣara*, to which Goudriaan refers, however, gives a different reading: *tvayā 'vṛtaṃ jagad udbhavagarbhaḥ* (see Sastri 1921: 106).

specifically chosen. This question does not seem to have bothered the editors and translators of the ritual and architectural texts either.[27] They often stress the analogy with the *garbhādhāna* ritual and remark on the life-giving function of the deposit, but they remain silent with respect to its location. Nevertheless, it may be expected that the location for an object as important as the deposit casket was somehow meaningful.

The most important factor seems to be the proximity of the deposit to the door. An entrance is always a 'vulnerable spot' that connects and at the same time separates the inner space from the outside world.[28] That is perhaps why the installation of the door is an important stage in the building of a house and why, according to some texts, a small deposit should be placed under the threshold.[29] In fact, as reported by the local people, in contemporary Tamil Nadu nine precious stones are sometimes deposited under the threshold of a newly built house and, in certain districts, similar items are placed in the two holes of the threshold in which the door jambs will be fixed.[30] It should also be noted that in a Hindu temple the threshold is considered to be a sacred space: no believer will ever put their feet on the threshold and sometimes one touches it with one's right hand and then touches one's own forehead, which is a sign of respect.[31] One may wonder whether the origin of this custom is connected with the presence of the deposit (of which the average believer today is probably not aware) or whether the deposit is installed there just because the entrance, particularly the entrance to a temple, is a special place where one must pause to pay respect to the deity and which marks the border separating the sacred space from the profane.[32]

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[27] See Goudriaan (1965), Colas (1986), Smith (1963) and Dagens (1994). Ananthalwar and Rea (1980: 184) are an exception among authors on Indian architecture, because they do mention *garbhanyāsa* in their study. Nevertheless, they say only that "In the case of temple foundations, the [deposit] vessel should be buried under the ground beneath the Sanctum." No word is being said about the location near the entrance, which is strange, considering that the main source of their study was the Mānasāra, which explicitly states that the deposit should be placed to the right or south of the door. The location of the deposit is not discussed by Kramrisch (1946) either.

[28] As nicely formulated by Grimes (2000: 6), the threshold zone is "neither here nor there", it is a "a no-man's land, it is dangerous, full of symbolic meaning, and guarded." And, like another "neither here nor there" place – a national border crossing – it "requires ceremonial gestures.".

[29] See, for example, Agni Purāṇa 61, Aparājitapṛcchā 129.24 and ViṣṇuS 13.45cd.

[30] The items include paddy, turmeric root, precious stones (red and white) and a piece of gold. They are wrapped in a betel leaf and placed in the cavities on both ends of the threshold. The ensemble is sprinkled with milk. For the description of the entire ritual, see Reiniche (1981: 33).

[31] It should be added that a lotus is often depicted in the central part of the threshold belonging to an entrance to a temple. The lotus, probably the most popular of the auspicious symbols, is a very common decorative motive in Hindu art. On the other hand, it should be noted that lotus images played a particular role as markers of the location of consecration deposits. They were often depicted on the cover of the deposit boxes and many deposit boxes had, in fact, the shape of a lotus with eight petals (see Appendix IV).

[32] According to the texts, the first bricks or stones should be placed in the same location, which even more stresses the importance of the entrance. In this case the location may also symbolise the

Considering this point, attention should be paid to an enigmatic verse from the Mayamata, which shows that a deposit is perhaps installed not so much for the protection of the building as for the protection, and as a marker, of the space within its walls.[33] The verse states that the deposit placed to the right or to the south of the door (viz. within the wall of the building) should face inwards, while the one installed in the centre of the building should be oriented towards the exterior.[34] The technical aspects of installing a deposit so that it faces a desired direction have nowhere been explained and Dagens, the editor and translator of the text, remarks that the meaning of this passage is unclear (Dagens 1994: 145 note 54). However, what is shown by the verse is that the deposit should always face the inner space, the area within the walls.[35] Moreover, what is meant by *abhyantaramukham* (or *antarmukham*) and *bahirmukham* is, perhaps, not a prescription concerning the way in which the casket should be positioned in a mechanical sense, but a metaphorical expression pointing to the role of the *garbha* as a protector and a marker of the inner space.[36]

With respect to the location of the deposit, the majority of the texts very clearly state that it should be *dvāradakṣiṇe*. The difficulty lies in the fact that *dakṣiṇa* may either mean 'right' or 'south'. The texts do not provide any clue for the correct interpretation of the word. Some provide additional information about the location of the *garbha*, but none of them make the interpretation of the word *dakṣiṇa* any easier.[37] The answer cannot be deduced from the archaeological

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beginning: the door being the 'starting point' while entering a house, like the placing of the first bricks is the starting point in the construction of a building.

[33] As noted previously (see beginning of the chapter), while several treatises emphasize the role of the consecration deposit in bringing about *general* prosperity and wellbeing, only one text explicitly states that the placing of the deposit will cause the prosperity *for the building* (see note 3 above).

[34] Mayamata 12.97: *dvāradakṣiṇe sthāne svāmisthānasya dakṣiṇe | abhyantaramukhaṃ garbhaṃ vastumadhyaṃ bahirmukham ||*

[35] A similar verse, as noticed by Dagens (1994: 145 note 54), is given by Mānasāra 12.108cd: *gṛhagarbham antarmukhaṃ syād grāmagarbhaṃ bahirmukham* (the deposit for a house should be facing the interior, the deposit for a village should face the outside). Remembering that a deposit for a house should, in the majority of the cases, be placed near the entrance and that for a settlement it is often placed in the centre, one realises that the meaning of this verse is the same as the meaning of the discussed verse from the Mayamata.

[36] A similar hypothesis was proposed by Goudriaan (1993: 60) for the expression *abhyantaramukham* referring to the *garbhagṛha* (Marīci Saṃhitā 12.1.2). According to him the expression probably "does not refer to a practical rule" but to the fact that "the interior hall is the domain of the Supreme Being which is totally immersed within Itself."

[37] For instance, the Suprabhedāgama states that when the door is directed towards the east, the *garbha* should be deposited in the middle of Indra and Pāvaka (southeast), while when it is directed towards the west, the *garbha* should be placed *dakṣiṇe* (Suprabhedāgama 28.34: *prāgdvāraṃ cet prakartavyam aindrapāvakamadhyame | yadi cet pāścimadvāraṃ dakṣiṇe bhittike nyaset*). This explanation does not solve the problem of the interpretation of *dakṣiṇa* as in the first case the prescribed location happens to be to the *south* of the entrance and, at the same time, to the *right* of it (looking from inside). Hence, none of the two meanings of *dakṣiṇa* here deserve

remains either, as they seem just to go against the more precise prescriptions of the texts.[38] It is possible then that the architects followed distinct traditions in which the interpretation of *dakṣiṇa* differed, or depended perhaps on practical aspects, such as the orientation of the building ground and the location of a lake or a river.[39] An additional hint, at least for the Pāñcarātra tradition, is provided by the contemporary Pāñcarātra practice according to which the priests, while performing the *ṣaḍaṅganyāsa* and other rituals that allow them to enter the *garbhagṛha* for the first time in the morning, should position themselves to the south of its door (Rangachari 1931: 134). It should be added that the double meaning of *dakṣiṇa* was until now not taken into consideration by the translators of the passages dealing with the *garbhanyāsa*: all the translations read 'to the right of the door'.[40]

The expression *dvāradakṣiṇe* in reference to a deposit casket occurs only in the South Indian texts. In the North Indian works this expression is absent. This connection with the south of the subcontinent is again accentuated by the fact that the only archaeological traces of a deposit located near the entrance (in India) were found in Tamil Nadu. The origins of the custom of placing the deposit in the vicinity of the entrance should thus be looked for in the south of India.

The terms *garbha* and *garbhanyāsa* are used by the primary sources almost exclusively in reference to a well-defined type of deposit, placed in a

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priority. In the same way, in the Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati the expression *dakṣiṇato* may be translated either as 'to the south' or 'to the right' (Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati 27.73: *indrapāvakayor madhye dvārād dakṣiṇato bhuvi | kurvīran garbhavinyāsaṃ sarve varṇāḥ samṛddhaye* ||). The remaining texts are no more helpful in providing a solution to the problem.

[38] Only very few traces of deposits were found to the side of the entrance. In Ulagapuram, Tamil Nadu, four bricks (which are supposed to be placed at the same location as the *garbha*, but on a lower level) were discovered under the western door jamb. The direction of the door is not reported, but most probably it was north, as directing the door to the south would be very unusual. Also the deposit of Site no. 15 in Kedah was located to the right of the door. In both cases the deposit seems to be located to the right of the door looking from outside. This, however, is in disagreement with the statements of the Suprabhedāgama and the Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati (see the note above) where the deposit is located to the right of the door looking from *inside*, thus from the perspective of the deity.

[39] The instances of (Vedic) rituals where both translations of *dakṣiṇa* are possible are discussed by Gonda (1971: 12-13).

[40] See Colas (1986: 157): 'A droite de la porte' (Marīci Saṃhitā 13.1.2 *dvāradakṣiṇe*), Dagens (1994: 131): 'to the right of the door' (Mayamata 12.41cd *dvāradakṣiṇe*) and Dagens (2000: 429): 'à droite de la porte' (Rauravāgama 60.16c *dvārasya dakṣiṇasthāne*), Acharya (1934: 116): 'towards the right side' (Mānasāra 12.65ab *harmyādidvārasarveṣāṃ pādamūle vā dakṣiṇe*), Kramrisch (1946: 126): "… a casket which holds the Seed and Germ of the temple is immured in its wall, to the right of the door…" (referring to Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati 27). The double meaning of *dakṣiṇa* was already brought to attention in my paper presented during the 12th World Sanskrit Conference (Helsinki 2003).

(usually compartmented) receptacle, which is in all but a few cases[41] installed inside the wall in the proximity of the entrance. The installation of the deposit located below the pedestal of an image of a deity or under a *liṅga* is generally called *ratnanyāsa*, the placing of gems, even when more than only gems are deposited.[42] The small deposits installed together with the first and crowning bricks are never referred to as *garbha*, either, even when they contain 'the riches of the earth', which is frequently the case. Such a consistent use of the term *garbha* solely for one type of deposit proves that the function of the *garbhanyāsa*, especially its fertility-increasing property, is particular to this ritual only and was not associated with other rituals involving the depositing of symbolic items in a chosen location. Hence, the *garbhanyāsa* should not be equated with other rituals, even if it shares certain features with them.[43]

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[41] According to a few North Indian texts the *garbha* is placed elsewhere, mainly in the centre, cf. the Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra, the Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra and Agni Purāṇa (the description in the latter is almost identical to the one of the Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra).

[42] The only exception is Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra 73.10 which uses the term *garbhanyāsa* in reference to the deposit for an image. The term *ratnanyāsa* is used in Aṃśumadāgama 32b (transcript T3, chapter *devīsthāpanam*), Atri Saṃhitā 18.57, Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra 38 (the verse numbers are not given), Matsya Purāṇa 266.9 and Viṣṇu Saṃhitā 18.22, Kumāratantra (T675, pp.24-25). Of the Kāmikāgama, Suprabhedāgama and the Kāraṇāgama, I was able to check only the fragments of the chapter dealing with the placing of the first and crowning bricks and with the foundation deposit. The remaining works either do not use any term for the ceremony or, like the Śilpaśāstras, do not mention it at all. Goudriaan (1965: 137) and Dagens (2004: 204) use the term *garbhanyāsa* for a deposit for an image. There is, however, no basis for this in the texts, namely the Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa and the Dīptāgama respectively.

[43] This distinct nature of the *garbhanyāsa* was not taken into consideration by Brunner in her study of the Somaśambhupaddhati. According to Brunner, in the Somaśambhupaddhati the *garbhanyāsa* is replaced by the deposit for a Śiva *liṅga* and by the ceremony of placing the first bricks. She states that only the name *garbhanyāsa*, not the ritual itself, is absent from the text. She writes: "Le rite décrit par les śloka 8-14 [the deposit for a *liṅga*] ressemble au rite de *garbhanyāsa* ("dépôt de l'embryon"), décrit dans de nombreux *Āgamas* et manuels… Somaśambhu ne parle nulle part de *garbhanyāsa*, et l'on peut donc comprendre que le rite actuel en tient lieu." (Brunner 1998: 194 note 19). And: "… le *garbhanyāsa* est décrit par notre auteur sans que son nom habituel soit prononcé;" "Somaśambhu n'en parle pas sous ce nom; mais comme il enjoint des rites de même nature, d'une part sous les "Pieds" du Temple [viz. the installation of the first stones], d'autre part sous le liṅga et sous les autres images, on peut considérer que l'omission n'est qu'apparente et que le nom seul est absent" (ibid., p. xxxiii and xxxiv). One has to disagree with this view. The omission of the *garbhanyāsa* is not merely apparent, but it is an important indication which, together with the way of installing the first stones (under the walls of the sanctuary, not near the entrance), places the Somaśambhupaddhati half way between the South Indian tradition (describing the *garbhanyāsa* and prescribing the first stones to be near the entrance) and the northern tradition (including rarely *garbhanyāsa* and never using the expression 'to the right of the door' in relation to the deposit casket or to the first stones). In fact, the author of the Somaśambhupaddhati was a North Indian *ācārya*, but the manuscripts of the text were multiplied and apparently modified in the south (Brunner 1998: xliii and lii ff). Finally, it must be mentioned that in the Somaśambhupaddhati no deposit is placed together with the first stones, certainly not a deposit that could symbolise a '*garbha*', so the statement that this ceremony, in fact, replaces the *garbhanyāsa* cannot be accepted. Of all the rites described in the Somaśambhupaddhati, the

In present-day Tamil Nadu, one of the rituals inaugurating the construction of a new house is known as *muḷaipiṭikkiRatu*.[44] *PiṭikkiRatu* means 'taking', while the word *muḷai* has a double meaning: a peg and a shoot, germ.[45] As noted above, the term *garbha* in reference to a consecration deposit does not occur in the earliest available texts mentioning construction rituals (for example, in the Bṛhat Saṃhitā, see Chapter 5). The symbolism of the *garbha* as 'embryo' is not present there either. In fact, the term together with its symbolism are probably not earlier than the 7-8th century AD and they, most likely, reflect a South Indian belief, as the majority of the texts using it originated in South India. The construction rituals described by the earlier texts involve throwing a piece of gold under the main pillar of the house (see, for example, Mānavagṛhyasūtra 2.11.7). One may tentatively conjecture that the double meaning of the word *muḷai* was one of the factors in the transmission of the pillar-symbolism to the germ-embryo one. The pillar is still mentioned in the *garbhanyāsa* descriptions: the deposit should be placed *stambhamūle*, 'at the bottom of a pillar', which may or may not designate a door jamb.[46]

Finally, one should ask why the *garbhanyāsa* lost somehow its popularity in South India and is today much less frequently performed than, for example, the

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placing of gems, seeds and plants under the entrance seems the closest to the *garbhanyāsa*, the elements in common being the location and the invocation to Ananta (Somaśambhupaddhati IV. 7). Yet, other features of the *garbhanyāsa* are absent there.

[44] The ritual involves placing nine bricks in the southwest corner of a square pit and planting a small tree (Melia azedarah) there. For a detailed description of the ritual, see Reiniche (1981: 30-33).

[45] "Le… rite est appelé *muḷaipiṭikkiRatu*, de *muḷai* 'pieu, germe' et *piṭikkiRatu* 'le fait de prendre' (Reiniche 1981: 30).

[46] The double meaning of *muḷai* and the similarity of both *muḷaipiṭikkiRatu* and another building ritual of Tamil Nadu – the fixing of the door jambs – with the *garbhanyāsa* was noticed by Reiniche (1981: 45). She compares the fixing of the door jambs as done in Tamil Nadu and the planting of a tree during the *muḷaipiṭikkiRatu* with the depositing of seeds and so on during the *garbhanyāsa*. All three activities can, in fact, be designated by the term *muḷaipiṭikkiRatu*, 'taking the germ' or 'taking the peg', which is certainly an interesting fact. Her final remarks, however, based on the discussion of *garbhanyāsa* by Kramrisch (1946) are, perhaps, a little forced. She remarks: "Si l'acte de déposer la semence ou l'embryon 'préfigure la verticalité', l'acte de planter verticalement un poteau ou un pieu revient à féconder un espace, à définir un champ qui est une matrice et une aire sacrificielle. Le fruit de l'acte est une reproduction. La symbolique des substances auspicieuses déposées dans un pot ou toute autre matrice, et celle du poteau qui est enfoncé verticalement dans la terre ou dans le seuil s'échangent l'un l'autre. Le rite, en reproduisant la copulation de Maître du *vāstu* et de la Terre, redit l'union – dans l'imperfection et dans le simulacre d'une fusion jamais réalisée – du ciel et de la terre, de la lune et du soleil, des dieux et des hommes par les rites" (Reiniche 1981: 45; see also Kramrisch 1946: 110: "The ritual brick 'foundation' however is below the door-jamb, it underlies and pre-faces its vertical direction").

placing of the first bricks, at least in the case of temples.[47] After all, the reasons for the disappearance of a ritual carry as much meaning as those for which the ritual was invented and persisted for centuries. In fact, the *garbhanyāsa* already seems to have fallen out of favour for several decades. Otherwise, how could one explain the mistake by Acharya, the editor and translator of the Mānasāra and a respected specialist on the topic of Indian architecture, who translated *garbhanyāsa* as 'laying of foundations', which resulted in a misinterpretation of the whole chapter?[48] Moreover, the important verse of the Kāśyapaśilpa alluding to the life-giving function of the deposit has been corrupted by the scribes and misunderstood by the editors of the text, which may suggest that the understanding of the deposit as the life-breath of the temple and of the *garbhanyāsa* in general was perhaps not so widespread.[49] In addition, it is interesting to note that the recently edited Āgama-kośa or 'Āgamic encyclopaedia' does not make a single mention of the *garbhanyāsa* in its volume dedicated to temple and image consecration while it does describe the placing of the first bricks and of the support for the *liṅga*. (see Rao 1994). The reasons for this decrease in popularity might be several: taking over the meaning of the *garbhanyāsa* by the ceremony of placing the first bricks, or excessively high costs of the ceremony involved for the builders of smaller, less significant temples. Or did perhaps the main aspects of the *garbhanyāsa*, the life-giving and fertility,

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[47] Many temple priests whom I asked about the building rituals said that they witnessed the placing of the first bricks, but they never participated in *garbhanyāsa*. The only priest who stated to have participated in *garbhanyāsa* in person was Parameswaran Namboodiripad of Kerala.

[48] Acharya (1934) repeatedly translates *mañjūṣa* and *bhājana* (box, receptacle; here: deposit-box) as 'excavation,' even in situations when this does not result in an appropriate meaning like in the passages dealing with the size of the deposit box (MS 12.12-18). As Acharya understands *mañjūṣa*, the deposit casket, to be an 'excavation', viz. a foundation for the whole building, he obviously finds the given measurements of the casket (given in *aṅgulas* or 'finger-breadths') too small. He writes: "These measures seem to be in rods of four cubits or two yards; if it be taken literally to imply the *aṅgula* of 3/4 inch, the dimensions would be too small for the foundation of any building" (1934: 110 note 1). Further on, in verse 19a, which prescribes that the deposit casket should have nine compartments, Acharya emends the term *navakoṣṭha* (nine compartments) to *navanavakoṣṭha* (eighty-one compartments) and interprets '*koṣṭha*' as the plots of land in which the entire building terrain is divided. On this place, he apparently confuses *garbhanyāsa* with *padavinyāsa*, one of the ceremonies preceding the building of a temple, and thus preceding *garbhanyāsa* and described in chapter 7 of the MS. During *pādavinyāsa* a diagram is marked on the terrain chosen for the future temple. The diagram consists of variable number of compartments, each assigned to a different deity. The diagram consisting of 81 compartments is one of the most common, hence probably Acharya's emendation of 'nine' to 'eighty-one' (see MS 19 and Acharya 1934: 111). Such misinterpretations are abundant in Acharya's translation of the *garbhanyāsa* chapter.

[49] KŚ *garbhanyāsa* 1cd: *prāsādaṃ deham ity uktaṃ tasya prāṇas tu garbhakam*. The 1926 Poona edition of the Kāśyapaśilpa reads: *prāsādadeham ity uktaṃ tasya prakāro vāstugarbhakam*, the 1968 Thanjavur edition gives almost the same text: *prāsādaṃ deham ity uktaṃ tasya prakāro vāstugarbhakam*. The emendation proposed by Kṛṣṇarāya Vajhe, one of the editors of the text, is *geham* instead of *deham*, which does not add to the understanding of the fragment.

become out-of-date in modern India? Whatever the answer may be, this decrease in popularity of *garbhanyāsa* is certainly noteworthy, especially considering its importance in the Sanskrit texts.

6.2 The *prathameṣṭakānyāsa* and the *mūrdheṣṭakānyāsa*

The rituals of placing the first bricks and the crowning bricks cannot boast of having an intriguing name like the *garbhanyāsa*, nor is their importance as frequently stressed by the texts either. Concerning the latter issue, the only exceptions are the Pāñcarātra works – the Viṣvaksena Saṃhitā and the Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra. The first one expresses a warning that if the *prathameṣṭakānyāsa* is not be performed, the *piśācās* and other (demons) will enter the site and a great sin will be committed by the architect and the patron.[50] The Hayaśīrṣa states that the person who performed the ceremony will rejoice in the world of Viṣṇu, free of all sin, and adds that naming all the merits of constructing a temple endowed with the eight first bricks is simply impossible.[51] The latter statement is also found in the Viṣṇu Saṃhitā.[52] The texts sometimes mention the consequences of not performing the *prathameṣṭakā* ceremony according to the rules, usually with regard to specific features, but, in the majority of the cases, do not warn against not performing it at all, which is a noticeable difference with the prescriptions for the *garbhanyāsa*.[53] The merits of performing the *mūrdheṣṭakānyāsa* are even more rarely enumerated than those of placing the first bricks.[54]

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[50] Viṣvaksena Saṃhitā 8.35-36: *evaṃ kṛtaṃ cen medhāvī sarvasaṃpat samṛddhitam | yady evaṃ na kṛtaṃ cet tat piśācādi samāviśet || kartuḥ kārayituś cāpi mahān doṣo bhaviṣyati | tasmāt sarvaprayatnena vidhānoktaṃ samācaret* || See also Viṣvaksena 8.8cd: *ādyeṣṭakāvidhānādi sarvakāmapradaṃ sadā*.

[51] The text praises the merits of the constructing of a temple in general, in some passages it also stresses the importance of placing the first bricks: *ya imāṃ sakalāṃ kuryyāt pratiṣṭhāṃ pādasaṃśritām || sarvvapāpavinirmukto viṣṇuloke mahīyate | maraṇaṃ ca vrajen martyo yaḥ kṛtvā prathameṣṭakām || sa samāptasya yajñasya phalam āpnoty asaṃśayaḥ |* (Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra 12.56cd-58ab) and: *aṣṭeṣṭakāsamāyuktaṃ yaḥ kuryyād vaiṣṇavaṃ gṛham | na tasya phalasampattir vaktuṃ śakyet kenacit* || (Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra 12.60cd). A similar praise of those who undertake a construction of a temple is also found at the end of the *prathameṣṭakā* chapter in another Pāñcarātra work, the Pādma Saṃhitā (see Pādma Saṃhitā 5.85 ff).

[52] Viṣṇu Saṃhitā 13.2ab: *aṣṭeṣṭakānidhāne 'pi phalaṃ vaktuṃ na śakyate*.

[53] The texts warn against using bricks or stones 'of a wrong gender' (Pādma Saṃhitā 5.23cd-24), against placing them too high or too low (Śilparatna 12.29, Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati 27, the section in prose after verse 71; similar prescriptions are found for the *garbhanyāsa* as well, see for example Pādma Saṃhitā 6.22 and Śilparatna 12.7ab), against placing them on the 'vulnerable places' (*marma*) of the *vāstupuruṣa*, the spirit of the site (Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati 27, verse at the end of the prose section, before verse 63, Śilparatna 12.12, 5-13, 5) and against performing the ritual without reciting the appropriate mantras (Suprabheda 27.21cd-22). Yet, nothing is said about the consequences of not performing the ritual at all, see, for example Kāśyapajñānakāṇḍa 32, Ajitāgama 10, Dīptāgama 2, Kāmikāgama 51, Marīci Saṃhitā 6, Kāraṇāgama 4, Suprabhedāgama

The texts do not provide an explicit answer about the function of the placing of the first and the crowning bricks. Nevertheless, the descriptions of the rituals are not devoid of intricate symbolism. One of the most significant features is probably the identification of the (both first and crowning) bricks with the four elements: earth, water, fire and wind. In the ceremony of placing the crowning bricks, the axis of the temple finial, which is also installed on this occasion, is thought to represent ether. The 'essence' of the elements is transformed into the bricks and the axis by means of writing the respective syllables on them and by means of recitation of mantras.[55] It has to be noted that such identification with the five elements occurs only in certain Śaivāgamas. The depositing of sacred syllables on the bricks and the axis is also mentioned in the Mānasāra, probably under the influence of the Āgamas, but the syllables used there are different. They do not point to the four elements, but can perhaps be understood as endowing the bricks with life-breath.[56] Indeed, many elements of all the three rituals under discussion - *prathameṣṭakānyāsa*, *garbhanyāsa* and *mūrdheṣṭakānyāsa* – like those employed during the installation of an image of a deity or of a *liṅga*, point to charging them with divine powers and animating them. The view that the bricks were also meant to be animated is supported by the fact that at least one of the texts prescribes the performance of the *nayanonmīlana* (the opening of the eyes) rite for the bricks.[57] Perhaps then, the placing of the first and crowning bricks can be seen as inserting more *prāṇa,* life-breath, into the building, without being a catalyst for fertility and prosperity in general as the *garbhanyāsa* is. At the same time, the four or five bricks, being identified with the four or five elements, are perhaps to be understood as representing the 'body' of the temple (in

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27, Mayamata 9 and 12, Atri Saṃhitā 6, Śilparatna 12. Verse 64ab at the end of the *prathameṣṭakā* chapter in the Aṃśumadāgama gives a standard statement: *evaṃ yaḥ kurute martyaḥ sa puṇyāṃ gatim āpnuyāt*.

[54] The great majority of the texts do not mention it at all. Ajitāgama 15.50 concludes the chapter with a standard verse: *evaṃ yaḥ kurute martyaḥ sarvān kāmān avāpnuyāt | dehānte gaṇapo bhūtvā śivaloke mahīyate* || A similar statement is found in Kāmika 61.20cd: *evaṃ yaḥ kārayen martyas sa puṇyāṃ gatim āpnyuyāt* || Viṣvaksena Saṃhitā 34.65 reads: *iti mūrdheṣṭakānyāsaṃ kārayīta kramād guruḥ | rājño rāṣṭrasya kartuś ca svasyāpi hitakāmyayā* ||

[55] The syllables representing the five elements are: *la* (earth), *ra* (fire), *va* (water), *ya* (wind or air) and *haṃ* (ether), see: Brunner (1963: Appendice V and 1998: 39 n 121), van Kooij (1972: 16). See also Kāśyapaśilpa *prathameṣṭakā* 36cd ff, *mūrdheṣṭakā* 27d ff and 49 ff and the texts quoted there.

[56] The *śa*, *ṣa*, *sa* and *ha* prescribed by Mānasāra 12.103cd-104 for the first bricks form a part of the life-imposing mantra (*prāṇamantra*) in the Tantric text Śāradatilaka, see Bühnemann 1991: 354-355. According to Somaśambhupaddhati IV.2.205-207, however, the syllables *śa*, *ṣa*, and *sa* represent respectively the *yajamāna*, the sun and the moon. These three, together with the five elements represented by the letters *ya*, *ra*, *la*, *va* and *ha*, are, in turn, associated with the eight 'embodied forms' (*mūrti*) of Śiva (see Brunner 1998: 38 note 117). *śa, ṣa, sa* and *ha* are also prescribed by Kāraṇāgama 10.19cd-20 and by Mānasāra 18.200ab for the crowning bricks.

[57] Smith (1963: 68 note 70). The ceremony of opening of the eyes is commonly performed for the images of the deities as well as for the Śiva *liṅga*, see Barazer-Billoret (1993-94: 44-46) and Bhatt (1993-94: 75).

agreement with the verse from the Kāśyapaśilpa *garbhanyāsa* 1cd: *prāsādaṃ deham ity uktam*, 'the temple is said to be the body'), which in this case is built of the elements, in the same way as a human body is.[58]

Whatever the meaning of the placing of the first and the crowning bricks might have been for the temple priests versed in the sacred texts, for an average believer their chief function was probably to ceremonially mark the commencement and completion of construction. The connection of the first bricks and the crowning bricks, with a new *building* is, in fact, much stronger than that of the *garbha* (for the latter, see note 34 above), and not only in the symbolic sense. The bricks are, for instance, never installed for a settlement, while a *garbha* is.[59] It should also be noted that the passage warning against the danger of demons entering the site where the ceremony has not been performed shows that the *prathameṣṭakānyāsa* should be regarded as a part of the numerous ritual activities whose aim is to 'take possession of the site', to consecrate it and make it fit to serve as a construction ground.[60] This last function of the placing of the first bricks is shared with many other construction rites described by the Sanskrit sources, which consecrate or perhaps rather 'initiate' the site or the completed building by transferring it from one stage to another: from a mere plot of land to a building ground suitable for the construction of a temple, from a stone construction to the abode of god. Perhaps the *garbhanyāsa* together with cognate rituals should indeed be compared to a *rite de passage*, but less so because it in a certain way imitates the conception rite, but due to its ability to perform a transition from one stage to another.

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[58] It has to be remembered that the first and crowning bricks should be of the same material as the temple, thus as the temple's 'body': of stone for a stone temple, of brick for a brick one etc. See Kāśyapaśilpa *prathameṣṭakā* 18cd-19.

[59] The passages describing the installation of village deposit (*grāmagarbha*) never mention the first bricks; see Mayamata 9.101 ff, Mānasāra 12.84cd-92ab and Pādma Saṃhitā 2.17-27. Mayamata 9.127ab states that the deposit for a village should be placed in a pit lined with bricks or stones, but the same is stated in the chapter describing the deposit for a building (12.4) and it seems that, at least in this text, these bricks are not the same as the ceremonially installed first bricks, which should be placed at the top of the *garbha* (see Mayamata 12.109).

[60] The claim that the *prathameṣṭakānyāsa* and the *garbhanyāsa* "form an inseparable ideological whole" as formulated by Smith (1963: 63 note 47), does not find support in most of the texts. Smith bases himself on the concept that the *garbha* is installed in a pit lined with the first bricks, which are of feminine gender. He writes: "It makes good symbolic sense to line the *garbha*-pit with 'female' stones, if this is to be the symbolic womb for the immanent *garbhādhāna*-ceremony…" (ibid.). His suggestion, however, only makes sense for the text he edited, namely the Pādma Saṃhitā, and even there it is just said that the first bricks should be 'female', but it is nowhere explicitly stated that they are going to constitute the walls of the *garbha*-pit. In fact, after placing the first bricks (which in the Pādma Saṃhitā happens before the installation of the *garbha*), the pit *with the bricks* inside should be filled up and covered (Pādma Saṃhitā 5.82). It does not look as if there would still be some spare space for the *garbha*. Besides, the majority of the texts prescribe that the first bricks are masculine; the Pādma Saṃhitā belongs here to a minority.[60] The suggestion that the *prathameṣṭakānyāsa* is mainly a preliminary part of the *garbhanyāsa* should, therefore, be rejected.