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A Patchwork of Hindu Ritual Practices and Technique Performances? A Re-Examination of the *Citrakarmaśāstra*, a Vajrayānic Sanskrit *Śilpa* Text Discovered in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: The *Mañjuśrībhāṣita-Citrakarmaśāstra*, a Sanskrit *śilpa* work discovered in Sri Lanka, deals exclusively with Buddhist image making. It provides technical instructions for the fabrication of Buddhist images as well as guidance for initial and final consecrations. This article offers a comparative intertextual study of the main body of the manuscript, including chapters concerning tree selection, the *ratnanyāsa* ritual, the techniques of clay modeling in the making of images, and the eye-opening ceremony. This study suggests that the *Mañjuśrībhāṣita-Citrakarmaśāstra* bears a remarkable resemblance to South Indian Hindu *śilpa* texts and does not perfectly correspond with actual practices and performances. The main part of the *Mañjuśrībhāṣita-Citrakarmaśāstra* is probably dated no earlier than the 11th century but no later than the 16th century.

Keywords: the *Citrakarmaśāstra*; Buddhist image making; *śilpa*; South India; Sri Lanka

1. Introduction

1.1. Discovery of the Sanskrit Manuscript in Sri Lanka

The *Mañjuśrībhāṣita-Vāstuvīdyāśāstra* and the *Mañjuśrībhāṣita-Citrakarmaśāstra* are both Sanskrit *śilpa* works. The *Mañjuśrībhāṣita-Vāstuvīdyāśāstra* (the first volume, henceforth *Vāstuvīdyāśāstra*) deals exclusively with Buddhist monastic architecture, and the *Mañjuśrībhāṣita-Citrakarmaśāstra* (the second volume, henceforth *Citrakarmaśāstra*) focuses on Buddhist image making. The manuscript of the *Citrakarmaśāstra* is written in Sinhalese scripts and was discovered in Sri Lanka; it is now preserved in the National Archives in Colombo. The manuscript was previously privately owned but was acquired by the Archives in 1972. To edit and publish the manuscript, the National Archives contacted scholars and research institutes to inquire about the existence of any prior editions or publications, including Prof. P.E.E. Fernando, the Asiatic Society in Calcutta, and the Oriental Institute of Baroda, among others. The replies received indicated that there was no knowledge of any existing editions or publications of it. Therefore, according to the available historical and archaeological records, this is a unique manuscript. Dr. E.W. Marasinghe, a senior assistant librarian at the University of Peradeniya, edited and published the manuscript in Devanāgarī script along with an English translation. The sequence of events regarding the discovery of the manuscript is recorded in his publication (Marasinghe 1991, pp. xi–xvi).

Here are the chapters of the *Vāstuvīdyāśāstra* and the *Citrakarmaśāstra*:

- (1) Types of Locale and Monasteries (*sthānālayabheda*)
- (2) Characteristics of the 24 Monasteries (*caturviṃśārāmalaḥṣaṇa*)
- (3) Characteristics of the *Caitya* (*caityalakṣaṇa*)
- (4) Types of Trees (*vr̥kṣasaṅgrahaḥ*)¹
- (5) Explanation of Dimensions (*mānoddeśavidhānam*)²
- (6) Arrangement of the Sanctuary of a Temple (*garbhāgāravidhānam*)
- (7) Characteristics of the Armature (*śūlalakṣaṇa*)



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- (8) Installation of the Gem Deposit (*ratnanyāsavidhāna*)
- (9) Making of the Eight-fold Paste (*aṣṭabandhavidhāna*)
- (10) Placing of the Ligatures (*rajjukarmavidhāna*)
- (11) Characteristics of the Clay (*mṛttikālakṣaṇa*)
- (12) Making of the Limestone Paste (*kaṭisarkarāvidhāna*)
- (13) Description of the Measurements (*pramāṇalakṣaṇa*)
- (14) Description of the Plumb-lines (*lambamānalakṣaṇa*)
- (15) Characteristics of the Five Buddhas and so on (*pañcabuddhādīlakṣaṇa*)
- (16) Preparation of the Pigments (*varṇalakṣaṇavidhāna*)
- (17) Opening of the Eyes (*akṣimokṣaṇa*)

The first volume (chapters 1–3), the *Vāstuvidyāśāstra*, provides instructions for planning, constructing, and consecrating a Buddhist monastery, while the second volume (chapters 4–17), the *Citrakarmāśāstra*, covers the art of Buddhist image making. It offers technical instructions for the fabrication of Buddhist images as well as guidance for initial and final consecrations.³

1.2. Background and Research Questions

Besides being attributed to Mañjuśrī as its author, the detailed iconographic descriptions of the Dhyānibuddhas and the eight Bodhisattvas also indicate the Mahāyānic origin of the text. Hans Ruelius first noticed this manuscript and provided a brief introduction to every chapter. According to his viewpoint, the *Citrakarmāśāstra* has a direct connection with the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, a *śaiva śilpa* text from the 12th century (Ruelius 1978a). However, there is no thorough textual comparison in Ruelius’s article. Marasinghe corrected scribal errors in the manuscript and edited it in the Devanāgarī scripts with an English translation, thus making it available for academic research (Marasinghe 1991). According to Marasinghe, the text’s date is likely from no later than the 7th century A.D., possibly due to the manuscript’s use of considerably old Sinhalese scripts (Marasinghe 1989, p. xiv). In contrast, Heinz Bechert believed that it should be dated to the 14th century A.D.⁴; however, he did not give any further explanation for his opinion. In his discussion of Mahāyāna Buddhist sculptures in Sri Lanka, Ulrich von Schroeder paid attention to the *Citrakarmāśāstra* and mentioned some passages that described five Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as well as other deities. He suggests that these literary references to deities are not sufficiently detailed to be of much help in the identification of the Buddhist images discovered in Sri Lanka (von Schroeder 1990, p. 212). According to him, comparisons of Sinhalese images with the *Citrakarmāśāstra* are of very limited help, as the images barely match the descriptions. In her dissertation’s appendix, Kellie Marie Powell provides a summary of the *Citrakarmāśāstra*’s chapters, but the dissertation lacks detailed textual investigations (Powell 2018, pp. 95–99).

The *Citrakarmāśāstra*, which covers Buddhist statuary, is the most extensive work of its kind discovered in South Asia thus far. Two additional Buddhist *śilpa śāstras*, the *Śāriputrabimbamāna* and the *Ālekhyalakṣaṇa*, also written in Sanskrit using Sinhalese scripts, have been found in Sri Lanka. Both texts deal exclusively with image making and iconography, but they are much shorter and less informative than the *Citrakarmāśāstra*.⁵ No other Buddhist *śilpa* text corresponding to the *Citrakarmāśāstra* exists in Sanskrit, Pāli, Tibetan, or Chinese Buddhist literature. Therefore, questions arise, such as whether the *Citrakarmāśāstra* could be a compilation of various non-Buddhist *śilpa* texts. What are the sources from which the *Citrakarmāśāstra* draws? Finding out where the *Citrakarmāśāstra* issued from has significant implications for our understanding of the history of Vajrayāna Buddhism in Sri Lanka. The aforementioned studies do not thoroughly examine the textual details.

Based on previous studies, this article examines the internal relationship between the *Citrakarmāśāstra* and Hindu *śilpa* texts as well as whether the techniques and rituals mentioned in the manuscript are still practiced in modern South Asia. By investigating chapters on consecration rituals and clay modeling, this research also examines the Hindu origin of the manuscript and the possible date of the *Citrakarmāśāstra*. Through intertextual studies,

we can learn how the knowledge of Hindu *śilpa* and art is integrated in Vajrayāna Buddhism, which deepens our understanding of the development of Vajrayāna Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

2. Analysis of the Compilation of the *Citrakarmaśāstra*

2.1. The Sequence of Chapters in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*

As Ruelius mentioned, the sequence of chapters in the *Citrakarmaśāstra* and in the *Kāśyapaśilpa* shares a striking similarity (Table 1) (Ruelius 1978a). The *Citrakarmaśāstra* follows the same pattern, though it has inserted some other details (e.g., proportions of various images) in between.

Table 1. A comparison of the sequence of chapters in the *Citrakarmaśāstra* and in the *Kāśyapaśilpa*.

<i>Citrakarmaśāstra</i>	<i>Kāśyapaśilpa</i>
4. Types of Trees (<i>vrkṣasaṃgrahaṇa</i>)	79. Types of Trees (<i>vrkṣasaṃgrahaṇa</i>)
7. Characteristics of the Armature (<i>śūlalakṣaṇa</i>)	80. Characteristics of the Armature (<i>śūlalakṣaṇa</i>)
8. Installation of the Gem Deposit (<i>ratnanyāsa</i> vidhāna)	81. Characteristics of the Śūlapāṇi (<i>śūlapāṇilakṣaṇa</i>) ¹
9. Making of the Eight-fold Paste (<i>aṣṭabandhavidhāna</i>)	82. Binding of the Ligatures (<i>rajjubandhalakṣaṇa</i>)
10. Placing of the Ligatures (<i>rajjukarmavidhāna</i>)	
11. Characteristics of the Clay (<i>mṛttikālakṣaṇa</i>)	83. Characteristics of the Clay (<i>mṛtsakāralakṣaṇa</i>)
12. Making of the Limestone Paste (<i>kaṭaśarkarāvidhāna</i>)	84. Making of the Limestone Paste (<i>kalkasaṃskāralakṣaṇa</i>)
	85. Preparation of the Pigments (<i>varṇasaṃskāralakṣaṇa</i>)
16. Preparation of the Pigments (<i>varṇalakṣaṇavidhāna</i>)	86. Plastering of the Pigments (<i>varṇalepana</i>)

¹ This chapter deals with the methods and rituals for establishing the armature (*śūla-sthāpana*) and has much in common with the *ratnanyāsa* chapter in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*. However, in the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, the title of this chapter is “characteristics of the Śūlapāṇi (*śūlapāṇilakṣaṇa*)”. Śūlapāṇi literally means “one holding a trident in his hand” and refers to one of the eight names of Śiva. Strangely, neither this name nor the feature of the image of Śiva is mentioned in this chapter. It seems that a more fitting title of this chapter would be *śūla-sthāpana-lakṣaṇa*.

Ruelius suggests that the *Kāśyapaśilpa* may be one of the sources for the *Citrakarmaśāstra*, or that, at the very least, the authors of the *Citrakarmaśāstra* and the *Kāśyapaśilpa* might have drawn from a common source (Ruelius 1978a). There are many Sanskrit *śilpa* works belonging to different periods in which detailed accounts of techniques and rituals are found.

After studying Hindu *śilpa* texts from both North India and South India, including the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, the *śilpa* sections in the *Agni Purāṇa*, the *Brhatsaṃhitā*, the *śilpa* sections in the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, the *Mayamata*, the *Mānasāra*, and more, I have observed distinct differences between the accounts of rituals and techniques in the two regions. The rituals and techniques documented in South Indian texts closely align with those outlined in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*, differing significantly from the practices detailed in the northern texts. In the next sections of my article, I will conduct a comparative analysis focusing on the main body of the *Citrakarmaśāstra* based on my findings from South Indian texts, which include chapters on tree selection and rituals for cutting trees, the *ratnanyāsa* chapter, chapters on techniques of clay modeling, and the concluding chapter on the eye-opening ceremony. I will begin by introducing the *śilpa* texts selected for comparative studies in the upcoming sections.

2.2. On the Chapter of Selecting Trees and Rituals for Worshipping and Felling Trees

2.2.1. Content of the Text

This section begins with a description of ten types of ground, which were previously discussed in Chapter 3 in the context of *caitya* construction in the *Vāstuvīdyāsāstra* (Marasinghe 1989, pp. 168–71; Jayasuriya et al. 1995, pp. 147–49, 168–69). Next, there is a classification of trees into three groups: hard-cored trees, pithless trees, and hard-barked trees. Only hard-cored trees, such as *Khadira* (Acacia Catechu), *śirīṣa* (Albizzia lebeck), *raktacandana* (Pterocarpus santalinu), *mayūra candana* (sandal or Santalum Album), and *saptaparṇa* (Alstonia scholaris, Echites scholaris), are suitable for making the armature. There is an elaborate procedure for the felling of the selected trees. The process of leaving for the forest to select trees and felling trees is rigorously guided by astrological considerations. For example, the direction the artisan would set off in is determined by astrology: the artisan should set off in an easterly direction if it happens to be a day falling within seven lunar mansions, beginning with the *ṛttikā* and ending in the *āśleṣa*, after taking the night's lodging on the day prior to his setting forth for the forest (*āvāsya śilpināṅṅ pūrvaṃ vanaveśadināt śubham, ṛttikādyāśleṣāntāṅca prastheyampūroake [diśi]*).⁶ Trees infested with flies, monkeys, birds, serpents, and so on, along with trees inhabited by spirits and *yakṣas*, as well as damaged trees or those associated with temples and cemeteries, should not be used for crafting armatures. Auspicious ones are those that can withstand strong winds and are free-standing as well as full of fruits and flowers. Once a suitable tree is identified, columns (*stambha*), an arched door (*torāṇa*), an *aṣṭamaṅgala* diagram, and a pitcher dedicated to Brahmā (*brahmākumbha*) should be prepared. Then the artisan should perform the consecration ritual (*adhivāsana*). The axe blade should be sharpened using two axes made of gold and silver, respectively (*svarnarūpyakuṭhāribhyām santejya paraśor mukham*). The following morning, he should worship the tree and raise the axe in a clockwise direction (*pradakṣiṇa*). If the tree falls to the northeast, east or north, it is auspicious. When felling the tree, hearing the roar of a lion, tiger, or the trumpet of an elephant is considered auspicious (*śilpācāryāḥ prādākṣiṇyāt paraśumuddhṛtya chindiyāt. īśānādityasome ca patite ca viśeṣaṇam, śiṃhaśārdūlanāgānāmśabdaṅca chedane śubham*) (Marasinghe 1991, pp. 12–13).

2.2.2. Correspondence with Non-Buddhist Texts

A comparative study shows that this chapter is mostly correspondent with Chapter 79 in the *Kāśyapaśilpa* and Chapter 59 in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* by Varāhamihira.

The *Kāśyapaśilpa* is a hybrid *śilpāsāstra/śaivāgama* of the eleventh–twelfth century A.D. that originated from South India.⁷ The *Kāśyapaśilpa* possesses, on the one hand, the characteristics of a *śilpāsāstra*—it is a treatise on architecture and iconography. Its first part contains the prescriptions for the building of a temple, starting with the preparation of the terrain, and its second part deals with the rules for the making of images of deities. On the other hand, it is connected with the Āgamic tradition: *Kāśyapam* or *Aṃsumatkāśyapam* is the name of one of the twelve *upāgamas* of the *mūlāgama* *Aṃsumad* (Ślāczka 2007, p. 12).

The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, a 6th-century Sanskrit encyclopedic work compiled by Varāhamihira in India, covers a wide range of subjects, including astrology, planetary movements, eclipses, rainfall, gems, pearls, and image making.

Chapter 79 of the *Kāśyapaśilpa* has been studied by K.M.Varma, who examined both the printed version and the manuscripts (Varma 1970, pp. 30–34). According to the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, the wood of the following trees is suitable for making the armature: *candana*, *campaka* (Michelia Campaka), *raktacandana*, *śāla* (white dammar or Vateria indica), *khadira*, *tinduka* (Diospyros embryopteris), *arjuna* (Terminalia Arjuna), *śiṃśupa* (Dalbergia sissoo), and *saptaparṇa*. Some of the trees mentioned here are also seen in the *Citrakarmasāstra*, such as *raktacandana*, *khadira*, and *saptaparṇa*. The *Kāśyapaśilpa* also mentions that trees in a state of decay, those growing around burial grounds and temples, and those inhabited by serpents and birds should be excluded. It is stated that trees are of three kinds: male, female and neuter, and how to distinguish these three categories is also mentioned in the *Kāśyapaśilpa*. However, this is not found in the *Citrakarmasāstra*. Additionally, the

Kāśyapaśilpa provides more detailed rituals for worshipping the selected tree. One should chant a *mantra* (*mantram samuccārya*) and place oblations in eight directions (*aṣṭadikṣu baliṃ kṣipet*). Then, he should speak to spirits, demons, and deities dwelling in the tree with words such as “This tree is for the purpose of image making, and you go, please (*ayam bimbārthavarṣastu gacchadhvaṃ*)”. A fire oblation (*homa*) should be performed after saying this. The falling tree’s trunk should be positioned on a platform (*sthaṇḍila*) and allowed to season (*śoṣaṇa*) for a minimum of six months before crafting the armatures (*śūlas*) (Vajhe 1926, pp. 241–42). Similar rituals before felling the tree are also recorded in Chapter 59 in the *Bṛhatsamhitā*.⁸ Furthermore, the *Bṛhatsamhitā* states that if a tree falls toward the east, north, or northeast, this signifies prosperity, while a tree falling in the southeast, south, southwest, west, or northwest direction suggests the outbreak of fire, diseases, and the death of horses (*pūrveṇa pūrvottarato ‘thavodakpatedyadā vṛddhikarastadā syāt, āgneyakoṇāt kramaśo ‘gnidāharugrogarogāsturagaḥṣayaśca*) (Shastri and Bhat 1946, p. 521). This partially corresponds with the text mentioned earlier in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*.

2.3. On the Chapter of the Consecration Rituals of the Pedestal of an Image

2.3.1. The *Ratnanyāsa*-Maṇḍala

According to the sequence of chapters in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*, the installation of the gem deposit (*ratnanyāsa*) should be performed after the armature has been made and before the clay work commences. During the initial image consecration ritual, the gem-filled reliquary, which serves as the base for both standing and seated images, is prepared and consecrated. This chapter begins with a description of the reliquary (*bhājana*), the size of which varies depending on the type of the image being installed. It is a square box with 25 or 9 compartments, made of either gold, silver, or copper, and its inner surface should be covered in sheets of mica (*su-abhra*) in order to reflect light onto the gems placed within the compartments. Particular gems, each representative of a deity from one of the quadrants, are then placed in the reliquary. The gems are deposited in the following order:

*āryāmśe mauktika[n] nyāsya[m] puṣparāgaṃ vivasvake,
mitre padmarāgaṃ syād bhūmīndre marakataṃ nyaset,
ajāmśe vajraṃ vinyasyan tasyaiva dhātu niḥkṣipet.*

Step 1: A pearl (*mauktika*) is placed in Ārya’s (i.e., Āryaka’s) quarter, a yellow topaz (*puṣparāga*) in Vivasvat’s quarter, a ruby (*padmarāga*) in Mitra’s quarter, an emerald (*marakata*) in Bhūmīndra’s quarter, and a diamond (*vajra*) in the quarter of Aja (i.e., Brahmā). An unspecified mineral (*dhātu*) is also placed in the center.

pañcabuddhātmakeṣu rūpañcaturdigmadhye niḥkṣipet.

Step 2: Figures of the five Buddhas are placed in the center and in four directions (i.e., in the spaces that are only filled with precious stones).

According to the 15th chapter “Characteristics of Five Buddhas and so on (*pañcabuddhādīlakṣaṇa*)”, the five Buddhas refer to Vairocana 大日如來, Akṣobhya 阿閼如來, Ratnasambhava 寶生如來, Amitābha 無量壽如來, and Amoghasiddhi 不空成就如來. The exact locations of the five Buddhas are not mentioned here. However, in Chapter 15, it is said that Akṣobhya is of a dark blue color, Vairocana is white, Ratnasambhava is yellow, Amitābha is red, and Amoghasiddhi is green (Marasinghe 1991, p. 122). Therefore, inferring from the colors of gems and their standard locations within the Vajradhātu maṇḍala, Vairocana is likely placed with the diamond, Akṣobhya with the pearl, Ratnasambhava with the yellow topaz, Amitābha with the ruby, and Amoghasiddhi with the emerald (Powell 2018, pp. 52–54).

*sāvitrāmśe tu vaiḍūryaṃ hemamākhaṇḍale nyaset,
rudraje [ca] pravālantu āpavatsāmśe nīlakam.*

Step 3: Cat’s eye (*vaiḍūrya*) is placed in Sāvitr’s quarter, gold (*hema*) in Ākhaṇḍala’s (i.e., Indra’s) quarter, coral (*pravāla*) in Rudraja’s quarter, and sapphire (*nīla*) in Āpavatsa’s quarter.

caturdevyātmaḥ rūpañcatuṣkoṇeṣu vinyaset.

Step 4: The four *devīs* are placed in the four intermediate directions (i.e., those quadrants that are only filled with gems).

The names of the four *devīs* are not clear here, but in the third chapter “Characteristics of the *Caitya* (*caityalakṣaṇa*)”, four Buddha consorts are mentioned in the laying of the top bricks (*mūrdheṣṭakānyāsa*) in the building of a *caitya*: the images of the four śaktis (i.e., Tārā 多羅菩薩, Locanā 佛眼菩薩, Prajñā 般若佛母 (?), and Māmukhī 摩摩積菩薩) should be placed in the four corners beginning with the northeast, then the top bricks should be laid (*tārā ca locanā prajñā māmukhīrūpamiṣyate. catuṣkoṇe catuśakti[r] īśānādipratiṣṭhā. evam mūrdheṣṭikā sthāpya uttarampravidhīyate*) (Marasinghe 1989, p. 184). Therefore, it is likely that the four *devīs* used for the *ratnanyāsa* are these four śaktis as well.⁹

*jayante jātihiṅgulyaṃ bhṛṣe tu haritā[la]kam.
vitathe manaḥśilā proktā bhr̥ṅgarāje tu māḥṣikam,
sukanṭhe rājāvartaṃ syāt śoṣāṃśe gairikambhavet,
mukhye aṅjanaṃ vidhātavya ditauttaram bhavet.¹⁰*

Step 5: Vermillion (*jātihiṅguli*) is placed in Jayanta’s quarter, yellow orpiment (*haritālakā*) in Bhṛṣa’s quarter, red arsenic (*manaḥśilā*) in Vitatha’s quarter, pyrite (*māḥṣika*) in Bhr̥ṅgarāja’s quarter, lapis lazuli (*rājāvarta*) in Sukanṭha’s (i.e., Sugrīva’s) quarter, red oxide (*gairika*) in Śoṣa’s quarter, collyrium (*aṅjana*) in Mukhya’s quarter, and ? in Aditi’s quarter.

*īśe vaikṛ{ta}ntakaṃ sthāpyantrapusagnipade nyaset.
sīsantu pitṛmāge (pitṛbhāge?) tu phaṇāntaṃ mārutāmśake.*

Step 6: Mercury (*vaikṛnta*) is placed in Īśa’s quarter, tin (*trapu*) in Agni’s quarter, lead (*sīsa*) in Pitṛ’s (i.e., Nirṛta’s) quarter, and ? (*phaṇā*) in Mārut’s (i.e., Vāyu’s) quarter.

*āditye rajataṃ vajraṃ yamāṃśe khaṅgamāyasam.
varuṇe ratna[n] tāmraṃ syāt so[ma] padāntaraṃ puṣpakam,
sauvarṇaṅcakramadhye tu sthāpayet pañcacihnake.*

Step 7: A silver diamond (*rajata vajra*) is placed in Āditya’s quarter, an iron dagger (*khadga*) in Yama’s quarter, a copper gem (? *ratnatāmra*) in Varuṇa’s quarter, and a flower (? *puṣpita*) in Soma’s quarter. Finally, gold is placed in the center of the maṇḍala marked with five symbols (*sauvarṇaṅ cakramadhye tu sthāpayet pañcacihnake*).¹¹

The figures (Figures 1–3) below show the arrangement of the minerals, gems, and deities of this *ratnanyāsa* maṇḍala. Figure 1 is identical to the *upapīṭha* diagram in the *Mayamata*, a Sanskrit *vāstuśāstra* that likely originated from Dravidian India, particularly the Tamil region. The *Mayamata* is part of the *Śaiva-siddhanta* literature, although it does not emphasize any specific sectarianism, and it is believed to have been composed during the Cola period (848–1279) (Dagens 1970, pp. 3–4). This *upapīṭha* diagram is also seen in the *Mānasāra*, a Sanskrit treatise on South Indian architecture and design. A nine-*pāda* box can also be used (i.e., an image can be consecrated with either a *pīṭha* or *upapīṭha*), but no instructions are given for this inferior (*adhama*) *pīṭha* design (*pīṭhañcaṇḍitavinyāsa[n] navaratnapratiṣṭhitam. evamadhamavinyāsam*) (Marasinghe 1991, pp. 52–53).

It can be inferred that the *ratnanyāsa* maṇḍala in the *Citrakarmaśāstra* combines elements of the *upapīṭha* in Hindu texts with the vajradhātu maṇḍala. Furthermore, this *ratnanyāsa* maṇḍala closely resembles the *mūrdheṣṭakānyāsa* maṇḍala found in the *Vāstuvidyāśāstra* (Marasinghe 1989, pp. 181–84). These striking similarities suggest a shared source between Hindu *śilpaśāstras* and the *Citrakarmaśāstra*.

North

Mārut ? (<i>phaṇḍā</i>)	Mukhya collyrium (<i>añjana</i>)	Soma ? (<i>puspita</i>)	Aditi ?	Īśa Mercury (<i>vaikṛnta</i>)
Śoṣa red oxide (<i>gairika</i>)	Rudraja coral (<i>pravāla</i>)	Bhūmindra emerald (<i>marakata</i>)	Āpavatsa sapphire (<i>nīla</i>)	Jayanta Vermillion (<i>jātihiṅguli</i>)
Varuṇa copper gem? (<i>ratnatāmra</i>)	Mitra ruby (<i>padmarāga</i>)	Brahmā diamond (<i>vajra</i>); unspecified mineral (<i>dhātu</i>)	Ārya pearl (<i>mauktika</i>)	Āditya silver diamond (<i>rajata vajra</i>)
Sukaṇṭha lapis lazuli (<i>rājāvarta</i>)	Ākhaṇḍala gold (<i>hema</i>)	Vivasvat yellow topaz (<i>puṣparāga</i>)	Sāvitrī Cat’s eye (<i>vaiḍūrya</i>)	Bhṛṣa yellow orpiment (<i>haritālaka</i>)
Pitṛ lead (<i>sīsa</i>)	Bhṛṅgarāja pyrite (<i>mākṣika</i>)	Yama iron dagger (<i>khaḍga</i>)	Vitatha red arsenic (<i>manaḥśilā</i>)	Agni tin (<i>trapu</i>)

Figure 1. The *upapīṭha* diagram.

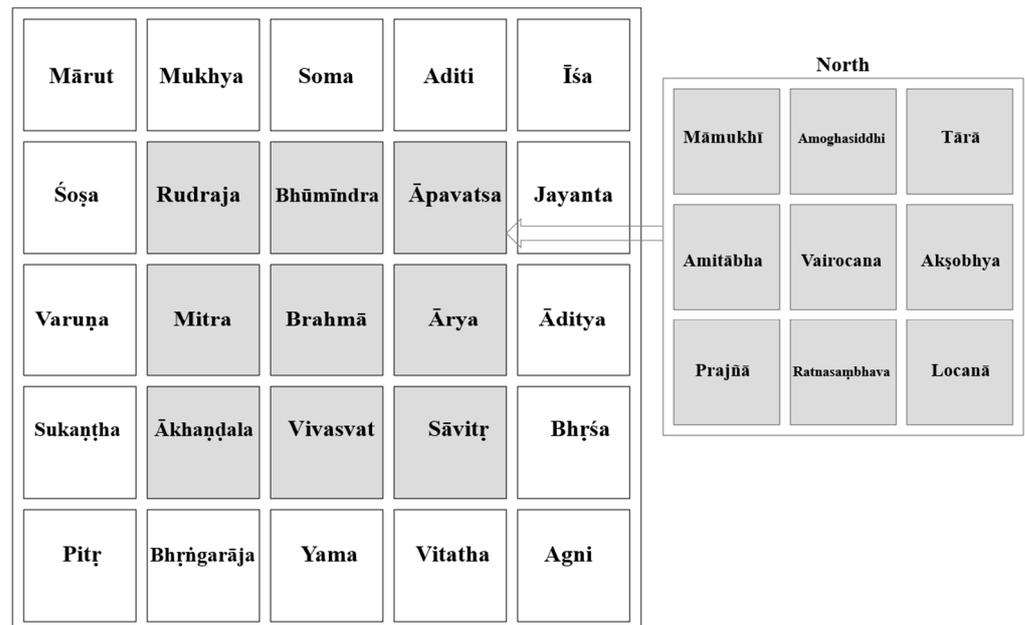


Figure 2. The vajradhātu maṇḍala (featuring five Buddhas and four śaktis).

North

Mārut ? (<i>phaṇḍā</i>)	Mukhya collyrium (<i>añjana</i>)	Soma ? (<i>puṣpita</i>)	Aditi ?	Īśa Mercury (<i>vaikṛnta</i>)
Śoṣa red oxide (<i>gairika</i>)	Māmukhī coral (<i>pravāla</i>)	Amoghasiddhi emerald (<i>marakata</i>)	Tārā sapphire (<i>nīla</i>)	Jayanta Vermillion (<i>jātihiṅgulī</i>)
Varuṇa copper gem? (<i>ratnatāmra</i>)	Amitābha ruby (<i>padmarāga</i>)	Vairocana diamond (<i>vajra</i>); unspecified mineral (<i>dhātu</i>)	Akṣobhya pearl (<i>mauktika</i>)	Āditya silver diamond (<i>rajata vajra</i>)
Sukanṭha lapis lazuli (<i>rajāvarta</i>)	Prajñā gold (<i>hema</i>)	Ratnasambhava yellow topaz (<i>puṣparāga</i>)	Locanā Cat's eye (<i>vaiḍūrya</i>)	Bhṛṣa yellow orpiment (<i>haritālaka</i>)
Pitṛ lead (<i>sīsa</i>)	Bhṛṅgarāja pyrite (<i>māḅṣika</i>)	Yama iron dagger (<i>khaḍga</i>)	Vitatha red arsenic (<i>manaḅṣilā</i>)	Agni tin (<i>trapu</i>)

Figure 3. The *ratnanyāsa* maṇḍala for standing and seated Buddhist images.

2.3.2. The Rituals for Performing the *Ratnanyāsa*

Once the reliquary has been filled with the substances and objects mentioned above, oblations are offered. A golden thread is tied around the box, which is then covered with a cloth and placed on the grain (*bhājanādhivāsanantu svarnasūtrantu veṣṭanam. navavastrāvṛtantāmrahājanam dhānye vinyaset*) (Marasinghe 1991, pp. 52–53). The text then proceeds to discuss the ritual pavilion (*maṇḍapa*) that must be constructed for the *adhivāsa*, which is the ritual of summoning and establishing the presence of a deity upon an image. This pavilion should be adorned with canopies, flags, and banners, and decorated with *darbha* grass. Inside the pavilion, a platform (*adhiṣṭhāna*) is constructed for the preparation of water-filled pots (*kalāsādhivāsa*). On this platform, a *pītha* or *upapītha* (depending on the choice for the reliquary) is drawn on a heap of grain. Pots are tied with string and filled with water before being placed on this maṇḍala.

Figures (*rūpa*) of the aforementioned deities are subsequently placed in the pots. Initially, the figure of Brahmā is installed in the central pot. Following that, the figures of the four deities, commencing with Āryaka, are placed. Subsequently, the figures of the five Buddhas are positioned, followed by the deities, starting with Īśa and ending with Aditi (*prathamam madhyakumbhasthaṃ brahmarūpaṃ pratiṣṭhitam, āryakādicaturdevānāṅca brahma ca kalpitam. pañcabuddhātmaṅ rūpaṃ tadrūpaṃ tasya vinyaset, īśānādyadityantaṅca tattattasya pratiṣṭhatam*).¹²

The pots are then wrapped again with string and covered with cloth. Nine gems are placed in Brahmā's pitcher, and all the deities are worshipped in the proper sequence with incense, perfume, flowers, and lamps (*ekaikaṃ vastreṇa veṣṭayet kalāsān kramāt. brahmakumbhasya madhye tu navaratnampratiṣṭhitam, sadhūpagandhapuṣpāiṣca dipaiḥ santosaḅet kramāt*) (Marasinghe 1991, pp. 54–55).

After completing the *kalāsādhivāsa*, the artisan (*śilpin*) spends the night on a pile of grain. The following day, having bathed with water from a sacred ford (*tīrtha*), the chief artisan (*guruśilpin*) circumambulates the site amidst instrumental music and the sound of conches. Subsequently, he places the armature in front of the image house and attaches its

limbs. The consecration process continues: the reliquary is worshipped with unspecified mantras, perfume, and flowers. A golden thread is then tied around the reliquary, and the reliquary is adorned with a garland of flowers. The final consecration occurs when water is sprinkled on the reliquary, and it is covered with a cloth (Marasinghe 1991, pp. 56–57).

Following this, the subsequent sections become unclear, possibly due to some portions of the text being lost. The text mentions the offering of oblations to the *vāstudevas* through a *diśāhoma* ritual, but it does not provide further instructions for this ceremony. At a later auspicious date, the central body (*madhyakāya*) of the armature will be installed. However, the text lacks details on how this installation should be carried out. The chapter concludes with both a blessing and a warning: Prosperity hinges on the stability of the central body of the armature. If it is firmly installed, it will lead to prosperity; if it is shaky, it may result in disaster (Marasinghe 1991, pp. 58–59).

Before moving on to the comparative study of the *ratnanyāsa* and the like in various texts, I would like to clarify what *ratnanyāsa* is in the *Citrakarmasāstra*. This term refers to the ceremony of placing a consecration deposit, which consists of gold and small objects of symbolic value, in the sanctuary of a temple (*garbhāgāra*), below the pedestal of a Buddhist image. Precious and semiprecious stones figure most frequently among items to be deposited, and they give the name to the entire ceremony: “*ratna-nyāsa*” literally means “the placing of gems”. Their location—below the pedestal of the images—is important as it distinguishes *ratnanyāsa* from numerous cognate consecration rituals where similar items are placed in different parts of the temple under construction: e.g., during the *iṣṭakāsthāpana* (the laying of bricks) ritual in the *Vāstuvīdyāsāstra*, whose function is to ceremonially mark the commencing and the completion of construction of a *caitya*, a small deposit is laid among the foundation bricks and top bricks, respectively (Marasinghe 1989, pp. 186–87), and *garbhanyāsa* concerns placing a deposit container called “embryo” (*garbha*) in the base of a temple¹³, to name a few.

2.3.3. Correspondence with Śaiva Texts

Here, I would like to offer some thoughts on the relationship between the *Citrakarmasāstra* and other textual traditions in South Asia that deal with the *ratnanyāsa*. This preliminary survey is by no means complete, but I hope that it will offer a glimpse into the importance of studying the *Citrakarmasāstra* and texts like it.

Among various consecration rituals, *ratnanyāsa* is the one most frequently discussed in texts, which attests to its popularity. Furthermore, it is one of the earliest consecration rituals, or, at the very least, one of the earliest ones described. This ritual is encountered in both *śaiva* and *vaiṣṇava* works (Ślaćzka 2017, p. 98). For instance:

devamānuṣabhāgābhyaṃ sthāpyā yatnāttu piṇḍikā,
napuṃsakaśilāyāntu ratnanyāsaṃ samācaret.
nārasimhena hutvā ratnanyāsaṃ ca tena vai,
vrihīn ratnāṃstridhātūṃś ca lohādīṃś candanādīkān.
pūrvādinavagarteṣu nyāsen madhye yathāruci,
atha cendrādīmantrais ca garto guggulunāvṛtaḥ (Mitra 1873, pp. 173–74).
 (Agnipurāṇa 60. 3–5)

The pedestal should be carefully fixed off the regions of celestials and mortals. Gems should be embedded in the case of a hermaphrodite stone. Having performed oblations with [the mantra sacred to] Narasiṃha, the gems should be placed with [the repetition of] the same [*mantra*]. Rice grains, gems, three minerals, iron and other metallic substances, sandal wood, etc., should be placed in the nine holes, commencing with the east at the center if preferred. Then the holes should be filled with *guggulu* while reciting *mantras* for Indra and others (Shastri et al. [1954] 1998, p. 161). Here, *ratnanyāsa* is mentioned in only

a single sentence. Generally, the nine gems to be placed include diamond (*vajra*), cat's eye (*vaidūrya*), coral (*pravāla*), sapphire (*nīla*), and pearl (*mauktika*).

As far as the objects for deposit are concerned, the *ratnanyāsa* chapter in the *Citrakarmaśāstra* is nearly the same with the *ratnanyāsa* descriptions in *śaiva āgamas* like the *kāmikāgama* and the *Ajitāgama*. However, the ritual for the *ratnanyāsa* in the *Citrakarmaśāstra* has a great deal in common with the *garbhanyāsa* in various *śaiva* texts, and the latter concerns placing a deposit container called “embryo” (*garbha*) at the base of a temple. The 17th chapter of the *Ajitāgama* shows how to perform the *garbhanyāsa* in constructing villages and *śaiva* temples in South India. The *Kāśyapaśilpa* also provides detailed instructions for building and consecrating *śaiva* temples. Anna Ślāczka translates and analyzes three of the *Kāśyapaśilpa*'s ritual chapters: “the placing of the first bricks” (*prathameṣṭakā*), “the placing of the consecration deposit” (*garbhanyāsa*), and “the placing of the crowning bricks” (*mūrdheṣṭakā*). As she notes, only the southern *garbhanyāsa* rituals include a reliquary that has been divided into compartments (Ślāczka 2007, p. 193). The presence of compartmentalized reliquaries in the *Citrakarmaśāstra* indicates that the text was possibly composed in South India, more specifically in Sri Lanka, perhaps a little later than the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, as Hans Ruelius assumes (Ruelius 1978a). Table 2 shows a comparison of Chapter 8 in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*, Chapter 36 in the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, and Chapter 17 in the *Ajitāgama*. The comparison below will not include the first and last sentences, that is to say, only the main body of the chapters will be compared.

As shown in Table 2, the patterns of the *Kāśyapaśilpa*'s and the *Ajitāgama*'s *garbhanyāsa* rituals are similar to the *ratnanyāsa* ritual in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*. Each involves the following processes:

- (1) Preparation of a compartmentalized casket/reliquary made of gold, silver, or copper, with 25 or 9 compartments; the division into twenty-five compartments agrees with the *upapīṭha* diagram of the site plan, while that of nine compartments agrees with the *pīṭha* diagram.
- (2) Construction and purification of a temporary pavilion.
- (3) Decoration of the pavilion for the ritual with canopies, flags, and banners, and beautified with *darbha* grass.
- (4) Consecration objects, including gems, minerals, grains, flowers, perfumes, etc.
- (5) Fire oblation.

Table 2. A comparison of Chapter 8 in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*, Chapter 36 in the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, and Chapter 17 in the *Ajitāgama*.

Chapter 8 in the <i>Citrakarmaśāstra</i>	Chapter 36 in the <i>Kāśyapaśilpa</i> (Ślāczka 2007, p. 88f)	Chapter 17 in the <i>Ajitāgama</i> (Bhatt 1964, pp. 122–30)
Three kinds of receptacles, made of gold, silver, and copper, are desired. (<i>svarṇaṃ rūpyamayaṃ tāmraṃ trividhaṃ bhājanamiṣyate.</i>)	A deposit casket is to be made of gold, silver, or copper. The casket made of gold is considered excellent, the one made of silver is considered average, and the one made of copper is considered poor. (<i>sauvarṇaṃ rūpyamayaṃ tāmraṃ śreṣṭhamadhyādhamam kramāt.</i>)	[A deposit casket is made of] gold, silver, copper, or brass. (<i>sauvarṇaṃ rājataṃ vāpi tāmrajaṃ kāmśyajaṃ tu vā.</i>)
	Make twenty-five compartments inside the casket. (<i>pañcaviṃśatikōṣṭhāni bhājanābhyantare kuru.</i>)	[The deposit casket possesses] twenty-five compartments or nine compartments. (<i>pañcaviṃśatibhiḥ koṣṭhair navabhir vā samanvitam.</i>)
	One should place the gems, metals, and minerals inside the casket. (<i>ratnalohāni dhātūni phelāyābhyantare nyaset.</i>)	

Table 2. Cont.

Chapter 8 in the <i>Citrakarmaśāstra</i>	Chapter 36 in the <i>Kāśyapaśilpa</i> (Ślaçzka 2007, p. 88f)	Chapter 17 in the <i>Ajitāgama</i> (Bhatt 1964, pp. 122–30)
<p>Pearl should be placed in the āryāṃśa... The nine gems deposited in the <i>caṇḍita</i>¹ plan of the <i>pīṭha</i> is the inferior deposit. [These are the three types of deposit, namely], superior, average, and inferior. (<i>āryāṃśe mauktika[n] nyāsya[m]... pīṭhaṇcaṇḍitavinyāsa[n] navaratnapratīṣṭhitam, evamadhamavinyāsa[m] uttamamadhyamādhamā[h].</i>)</p>	<p>One should place a ruby in the <i>kūṭa</i> [compartment] while uttering the <i>kūṭākṣara</i>. In the “Ananta”, one should place a diamond; in the “Sūkṣma”, a pearl. In “Śivottama”, there should be a sapphire; in “Ekanetraka”, a crystal; in “Ekarudra”, there should be a conch; in “Trimūrti”, a topaz... (<i>māṇikyam vinyaset kūṭe kūṭākṣaram udāran, anante vinyased vajram sūkṣme mauktikam nyaset. śivottamendranīlam syāt sphatikam tv ekanetrake, ekerudre tu śaṅkham syāt trimūrtau puṣparāgagam...</i>)</p>	<p>In all these compartments, one should place the <i>kūṭākṣara</i> in the center. In the surrounding eight [compartments], one should place syllables beginning with <i>ya</i> and ending with <i>ha</i>. Outside of that, one should arrange the sixteen vowels from the easterly direction. (<i>teṣu koṣṭheṣu sarveṣu madhye kūṭākṣaram nyaset. yakārādihakārāntam parito ‘ṣṭasu vinyaset. tadbāhye pūrvataścāpi svarāṅśodaśa vinyaset.</i>) In the center, one should place a golden serpent-king and a network of letters extending up to weapons such as thunderbolts (<i>vajra</i>) and spears (<i>śūla</i>). Among these, in the eastern part, one should place a ruby; in the northern part, a sapphire (<i>indranīla</i>); in the western part, a <i>sphaṭika</i> (crystal); and in the southern part, a diamond (<i>vajra</i>), which resides in the realm of the moon. In the northeastern part, a pearl... (<i>madhye phaṇīndram haimam tu vinyasedatha dikṣu ca. vajrādīśūlaparyantamatrajālam ca vinyaset. māṇikyamatha tanmadhye pūve marakataṃ nyaset. indranīlam tu yāmye tu sphatikam paścime tathā. vajram tu saumyadigbhāge vaiḍūryam vahnigocare...</i>)</p>
<p>He should place the copper receptacle covered with a new cloth on the grain. After the consecration of the <i>aṅga</i> (?), a pavilion (<i>maṇḍapa</i>) or a hall (<i>sabhā</i>) or a light building (<i>prapā</i>)² [should be established] in front of the image houseor behind it. It (i.e., a pavilion or a hall or a <i>prapā</i>) is decorated with a base (<i>adhiṣṭhāna</i>) or a base (<i>ādyaṅga</i>)³ occupying three out of twelve parts [of the height], endowed with four doorways adorned with four arches, provided with canopies, flags and banners, and beautified with wreaths of <i>darbha</i> grass. (<i>navavastrāvṛtantāmrahājanam dhānye vinyaset, aṅgādhiṅvāsanampaścād maṇḍapam vā [sa]bhā prapā. bimbālayād mukhe vātha [+++] prṣṭhabhāk, tribhaktidvādaśabhāgam adhiṣṭhānāyaṅgabhuṣanam. catu[r]dvāramamāyuktaṃ catustoranabhūṣitam, vitānaketupatākā-darbhamālāsusobhanam.</i>)</p>	<p>To the north of the temple or in front of it one should build a very beautiful pavilion, measuring five, six, or seven <i>hastas</i> and having sixteen pillars. One should cover [the pavilion] from above with a canopy, [the pavilion which is endowed] with “waves” and pillar wrappings, and it should be equipped with doors and arches and decorated with <i>darbha</i> grass and garlands. (<i>prāsādasyottare vāgre pañcaṣṭasaptahastakām, ṣoḍaśastambhasaṃyuktām prapām kṛtvātisundarām. vitānenodhvamācchādya taramṅgaiḥ stambhavoṣṭanaiḥ, dvāratorāṇasaṃyuktām darbhamālādibhūṣitām.</i>)</p>	<p>In front of the temple (<i>prāsāda</i>), on both sides, construct a pavilion, measuring five, six or seven <i>hastas</i>, with smaller and smaller [pillars] (?). In its center, construct an elevated platform adorned with gems. Prepare four pits in the four directions. One [of the pits] should be made eastward according to the size of a gem. Or, alternatively, one should prepare bare ground everywhere for the purpose of fire oblation. The pavilion should be smeared with cow dung, and the platform and pits should be adorned with <i>darbha</i> grass and other decorations as appropriate. After declaring an auspicious day, one should prepare the platform on the pavilion, with purified rice grains spread as required. After painting there a lotus with eight petals and a pericarp, one should place the deposit container in the center with the <i>hr̥daya</i> mantra. (<i>prāsādāgre ‘thavā pārsvadāvayoh kṛtvā tu maṇḍapam. pañcaṣṭasaptahastaistu kanyasādikramena (?) tu. tanmadhye vedikām kṛtvā ratnimātrasamucchritām. caturdikṣu ca kuṇḍāni caturaśraṇi kalpayet. ekaṃ vā prāci kartavyam ratnimātrapramāṇataḥ. sṭhaṇḍilam vāpi sarvatra homārtham parikalpayet. gomayenopalipyātha maṇḍapam vedikuṇḍayuk. darbhamālādibhiḥ sarvairalaṃkṛtya yathāvidhi. puṇyāham vācāyitvātha kalpayedvedikopari. śālibhīrvimalaistatra sṭhaṇḍilam tu yathāvidhi. tatra padmam samālikhya śaṣṭapatram sakarṇikam. tanmadhye garbhaphelam ca vinyaseddhr̥dayena tu.</i>)</p>

Table 2. Cont.

Chapter 8 in the <i>Citrakarmaśāstra</i>	Chapter 36 in the <i>Kāśyapaśilpa</i> (Ślaçzka 2007, p. 88f)	Chapter 17 in the <i>Ajitāgama</i> (Bhatt 1964, pp. 122–30)
<p>The placing of the pitchers is carried out at the eastern part of the shed. [There shall be] twenty-five or nine pitchers, each full of water and tied with thread. It is known that the width of the grain [heap] is two <i>hastas</i>, and the height is half a <i>hasta</i>. One should draw the <i>pīṭha</i> or the <i>upapīṭha</i> diagram on the grain...[Next,] one should place the figures of the five Buddhas in it. The deities, starting with Isa and ending with Aditi, are placed [in the appropriate <i>padas</i>]. After worshipping with a pleasant mind..... [The artisan] shall wrap each [pitcher] with a white cloth in due order.</p> <p>(<i>maṇḍapāt pūrvabhāge tu kalaśasthāpanam kṛtam, pañcaviṃśan[na]vo vāpi kalaśāḥ sūtraveṣṭitāḥ. dvihastandhānyavistāram hastārdhocaṃ samāśrutam (? samāśritam), dhānyopari likhet pīṭhamupapīṭham vā kalpitam... pañcabuddhātmaṃ rūpaṃ tadrūpaṃ tasya vinyaset, īśānādyadityantañca tattattasya pratiṣṭhitam. [+ + +] namaskṛtya prasannadhīḥ, ekaikaṃ [śveta]vastreṇa veṣṭayet kalaśān kramāt.</i>)</p> <p>Inside the Brahmā pitcher, the nine kinds of gem are deposited. [The artisan] shall propitiate [the pitchers] with incense, perfume and burning lamps in due order... After offering the <i>vastudevātās</i> their oblations, which include ghee thrown into the fire, one should offer food in the form of milk rice and ghee to the five deities identified with the <i>brahman</i>.</p> <p>(<i>brahmakumbhasya madhye tu navaratnampratiṣṭhitam, sadhūpagandhapuṣpaiśca dīpaiḥ santoṣayet kramāt... vāstudevabalindatvā ghr̥tānnampāvākādīnām, pañcabrahmamaya[n]devān pāyasānmaṃ ghr̥taṃ dadyāt.</i>)</p>	<p>Having worshipped the gods of the directions with incense, flowers, and so on while reciting to each god his own <i>mantra</i>, having sprinkled the casket with the products of the cow, one should bathe it with fragrant waters. Having tied the <i>kautuka</i> [around the casket] by means of a thread, one should wrap [the casket] in a new cloth. [The casket] should be placed on the ceremonial ground while pronouncing the <i>kūṭākṣara</i>.</p> <p>(<i>gandhapuṣpādibhiḥ pūjya digdevān svasvamantrataḥ gaṇyābhiṣicya phelām tu snāpayedgandhatoyakaiḥ. tantunā kautukaṃ baddhvā navavastreṇa veṣṭayet, sthaṇḍile tu nidhātavyaṃ kūṭākṣaramudāharan.</i>)</p> <p>Having placed the eight jars all around, tied with cords, provided with covers, [decorated] with bundles of <i>kuśa</i> grass, enveloped with cloth, filled with fragrant water, having placed the jars dedicated to the <i>Vidyēśvaras</i>, having worshipped them with their own <i>mantras</i>, having performed the five sacraments for the <i>kuṇḍas</i>, one should begin the fire oblation.</p> <p>(<i>parito ṣṭau ghaṭānnyasya sasūtrān sapidhānakān, sakūrcān vastrasaṃchannān gandhāmbuparipūritān. vidyēśādhipakumbhāmstān sthāpyābhyarcya soamantrataḥ, kuṇḍānām pañcasamskāram kṛtvā homaṃ samārabhet.</i>)</p>	<p>Then one should perform the fire oblation and then prepare the fire oblation to the revered deity with a root <i>mantra</i>. Following a specific order, [one should offer] various ingredients one by one, including ghee, rice, parched grains, sesame seeds, mustard seeds, barley, and others. One who is proficient in the <i>mantra</i> should offer either one hundred and fifty oblations or half of that amount. Upon completing [the offering of] all the ingredients, one should sprinkle water with the same <i>mantra</i>. Subsequently, one should offer only the deposit container to the Phaṇindra. One should offer the oblation enriched with all the spices, while [reciting] the <i>pūrṇamūla</i> [<i>mantra</i>].</p> <p>(<i>tato homaṃ prakurvīta tataḥ prasthāpitasya tu. devasya mūlamantreṇa samiddhomaṃ prakalpayet. ājyaṃ caruṃ tathā lājyaṃ tilaṃ sarṣapameva ca. yavāṃśca tattadaṅgaiśca hr̥dayādyairanukramāt. homayecchatamardham vā tadardham vāpi mantravit. sarvadravyāvāsāne tu tattanmantreṇa saṃspr̥set. garbhābhāṇḍam tataścaiva phaṇindrāya nivedayet. haviḥ sarvopadaṃśādhyam pūrṇam mūlena⁴ homayet.</i>)</p>

¹ The term *caṇḍita* is a proper name for a site of sixty-four plots in the *Mānasāra*; see Acharya (2011, pp. 56–61). However, the *Citrakarmaśāstra* and the *Vāstuvīdyāśāstra* present “*caṇḍita*” as their all-embracing term for referring to temples of varying size and plan. According to Long (2009, p. 90), “*caṇḍita*” is possibly a Hindu–Javanese word that derives from the old Javanese *caṇḍi*. The term *caṇḍi* refers to Indic temples, including both Hindu and Buddhist temples; see Stutterheim (1931). ² In architectural terms, “*prapā*” often refers to a light building without a base or a pavilion built of light materials, similar to the *maṇḍapa*, but probably without a base; see Dagens (1985, p. 384). ³ In architectural terms, both “*adhiṣṭhāna*” and “*ādyāṅga*” denote a base. According to Dagens, they are synonyms; see Dagens (1985, p. 68). ⁴ Manuscript A reads “*pūrṇamūlena*”, while Manuscript B reads “*pūrṇa mūlena*”. However, in Manuscripts D and F, it is “*pūrṇamūlena*”; see Bhatt (1964, p. 129).

The main differences lie in: (1) The religious affiliations of the texts; (2) *Garbhanyāsa* is for the base of a temple, while *ratnanyāsa* is for the pedestal of an image. In the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, *bijamantras* of Śiva and his entourage are placed inside the compartments of the reliquary during the *garbhanyāsa* ritual (Ślączka 2007, p. 177), whereas in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*, images of the pañcatathāgatas or symbolic objects such as colored gems are placed within the reliquary during the *ratnanyāsa* ritual. According to the *Ajitāgama*, ingredients, including earth, auspicious things, nine gems, primary minerals, and seeds, should be placed into the casket in the proper order (Bhatt 1964, pp. 122–28). Therefore, the *śaiva* architectural tradition and Vajrayāna Buddhism in South India appear to have both adopted elements of earlier consecration rituals and adapted them according to their different needs. It is also quite possible that the *Citrakarmaśāstra* is an imitation of the *śaiva* tradition.

2.3.4. Archaeological Evidence Correspondent with Texts

These partitioned reliquaries, commonly known as *yantragalas* in Sri Lanka, can be found in many Sri Lankan Buddhist sites. As already suggested by earlier scholars, the Sri Lankan *yantragalas*, preserved in many ruins, are made of stone, whereas the *Citrakarmaśāstra* prescribes gold, silver, or copper. Examples of such stone containers with twenty-five compartments have been discovered in Sri Lankan Buddhist sites like Vijayārāma (Figure 4), dating back to the 9th to 10th centuries, and Puliyankulama, dating to the 10th century, both in Anurādhapura (Ślączka 2007, pp. 371–72). These reliquaries match the instructions for image consecration in the *ratnanyāsa* chapter in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*, wherein a receptacle with twenty-five compartments is installed below sacred images as part of the initial consecration ritual (Powell 2018, pp. 75, 78). In addition, a remarkable deposit receptacle preserved at the Colombo Museum that was also found in Anurādhapura deserves a mention. As Ślączka suggested, it is possible that this box originates from a Hindu structure, though Anurādhapura is famous mainly for its Buddhist remains. The container is divided into twenty-five regular compartments. The difference with numerous other compartmented deposit boxes discovered in South and Southeast Asia is that, while all of those are made of stone or earthenware, this box is made from copper or bronze, corresponding entirely with the descriptions in Sanskrit texts (Ślączka 2007, pp. 248–49). Partitioned reliquaries are also widely used in Hindu images or the *liṅga* in India. An example is the Somnath shrine in Gujarat, in which a flat stone with nine cavities on its surface was found below the Śiva *liṅga*, dating back to a period between the 11th and 16th centuries. The stone appears to be a support for the *liṅga*. Placing such a support is an important part of the *liṅga* installation. The nine holes in it probably functioned as receptacles for the nine precious stones deposited on this occasion (Ślączka 2007, pp. 281–82). Undoubtedly, the idea of deposit boxes originated from India. Later, the design of partitioned boxes, together with an appreciation of the consecration rituals involved, reached Sri Lanka and even Java.¹⁴



Figure 4. Reliquary stone (*Yantragala*) with 25 compartments in the Vijayārāma Monastery, Anurādhapura (photographed by Osmund Bopearachchi).

2.4. On the Chapters of the Techniques of Clay Modeling

2.4.1. Content of the Text

According to the *Citrakarmaśāstra*, a clay image is said to have *saptasamśkāras*, meaning it can be made using seven materials: *śūla*, *aṣṭabandha*, *rajju*, *mṛttikā*, *kaṭaśarkarā*, *paṭa*, and, lastly, *varṇa*. The subsequent explanations for each of the materials are as follows:

- (1) The wooden armatures (*śūla*) are crafted in varying measurements, each tailored to the intended figure's system of measurement.
- (2) After the armatures are made, a paste or glue made from eight ingredients (*aṣṭabandha*) should be applied over the whole body of the armature (*sarvāṅgalepana*). These eight ingredients are prepared in proportion: red mineral (*dhāturāga*), lac (*lākṣā*), *iḥṣura*¹⁵, gum-resin of the Indian bdellium tree (*gugguli*), bel resin (*bilvaniryāsa*), wood-apple resin (*kapitthaniryāsa*), rasa-resin (*rasaniryāsa*)¹⁶, and coconut water (*nālikerajala*). However, the section dealing with the preparation of the paste is missing from the manuscript. This paste is applied to provide the image with channels, veins, ligaments, and arteries.
- (3) Ligatures are attached to the wooden armature, representing the major and subsidiary subtle channels (*nādis* and *nāḍikas*), veins (*sīras*), ligaments (*snāyus*), arteries (*dhamanis*), and navel cakra (*nābhicakra*). The central channel, the *suśumnā*, is coiled like a sleeping serpent along the central pole (*bhujāṅgaḥ śayita iva{bhya}suśumnā śūlamāvṛt[t]am*), while the *idā* and *piṅgalā* are applied to the right and left sides, respectively. These three major *nādis* meet at the meeting place of the eyebrows and give rise to seven *nāḍikas*: *gāndhārī*, *hastijihvā*, *pūṣā*, [*yaś*] *asvinī*, *alambuṣā*, *kuhū*, and *śaṅkhinī*. The veins, ligaments, and arteries are twenty-four in number. Details on the *sīras* and *snāyus* are lacking in the text, and only the section about the *dhamanis* is clear. Of the twenty-four *dhamanis*, ten originate from the head. The remaining ten firmly bind the thighs, legs, and the navel, while the last four run horizontally and are referred to as the lower *dhamanis* (*caturviṃśaddhamanyaśca daśa mūrdhodayaṃ viduḥ, ūrūjaṅghāṃ tathā nābhimdaśena vadhnīyātsthiram, tiryagāśca caturbhedādho dhamanyo vidhīyate*) (Marasinghe 1991, pp. 62–65). The section regarding the navel cakra remains unclear.¹⁷
- (4) The next stage is the preparation of the clay (*mṛttikā*) that covers the armature. Clay collection should be performed in the forenoon during the *śatabhiṣaj* star conjunction, near a lake, mountain, or holy site (*vāpikūpataṭākānām dīrghikānām [ca] saṅgame, parvate puṇyadeśe vā pūrvāhne [śa]tayogataḥ*). The clay should be perfumed and heated, with additional ingredients such as gold, silver, copper, three sweets (*trimadhuka*), three spices (*kaṭuka*), *pūtanāśī*, fragrant powder (*vāsayoga*), yellow orpiment (*haritāla*), three fruits (*triphala*), resin, *sarja* tree, *vājimūla*, and coconut water mixed in. The text then mentions the creation of three clay varieties but does not clarify what these are. Having decorated every *abhra* (?), the master artisan should accordingly perfume three varieties of clay for a month (*trividhaṃ mṛttikālepyaṃ yatamānena kalpitam. ekaikamabhraṃ samskṛtya guruśilpī vidhānataḥ, trividhaṃ mṛttikālepyaṃ māsaikam vāsayet kramād*).
- (5) Then limestone paste (*kaṭaśarkarā*), in three varieties based on gender (male, female, neuter), is added. The process for determining the gender of the powder is not specified. The limestone powder is mixed with *kapittha* juice and extracts from three fruits, then fumigated for three to four months. The subsequent steps are less clear.
- (6) A new white cloth for covering the image should be made. The artisan should perform the *adhivāsana* ritual, offer oblations to the *vāstudevas*, and then gradually cover the image with the cloth (*paṭamācchādana*).
- (7) Then follows the preparation of pigments (*varṇa*) and coloring of the image. The text briefly mentions the six primary colors by citing various objects representative of each color but does not provide further instructions for preparing them. It speaks of six types of skin (*chavi*) painting: the hue of the lotus (*padmaka*), light color (*gauraka*), *bindu*, dark color (*dhūmraka*), *vartana*, and *pravartana*, with the last three remaining unexplained. Before applying the appropriate colors, a white coating is used, fol-

lowed by a yellowish-white coating; lastly, lines or figures are drawn that resemble the colors. (*prathamam śvetavarṇaṅca dvitīyaṃ paṇḍaracchaviḥ. tṛtīyaṃ varṇasaṃkāśam patrakādīnimīṣyate*).¹⁸

Varma's suggestion provides a metaphorical interpretation of the seven materials employed for making a clay image. These materials are correlated with elements of the human body, and the scheme is as follows:

śūlas correspond to bones (*asthis*),
aṣṭabandha is associated with fat (*medas*),
rajjus are compared to veins (*sirās*),
mṛttikā symbolizes flesh (*māṃsa*),
kaṭaśarkarā represents blood (*śoṇita/rudhira*),
paṭa is metaphorically linked to skin (*tvak/tvaca*), and
varṇa is seen as the embodiment of life (*jīva*) (Varma 1970, p. 7).

The comparison provided in this context reveals a unique approach to techniques of clay modeling. It is notable that these techniques are not found in other known Sanskrit, Pāli, Chinese, and Tibetan Buddhist scriptures. Therefore, the discussion proceeds to explore non-Buddhist texts, such as Hindu *śilpa-śāstras*, for further insights.

2.4.2. Correspondence with Hindu *Śilpa-śāstras* and Present-Day Performances of Hindu Image Making

As shown in Table 1, both the *Citrakarmasāstra* and the *Kāśyapaśilpa* share a common sequence of chapters. Thus, the *Kāśyapaśilpa* is an essential text for a comparative study in this context. Additionally, the *Śilparatna*, a work that focuses on art and compiled by Śrīkumāra in Kerala, is another valuable text for comparison. Scholars generally date this text to the later part of the 16th century A.D. (Losch 1950). Notably, the compiler of the *Śilparatna* directly borrows the section on clay modeling techniques from the *Kāśyapaśilpa* and incorporates it into his work. Therefore, the *Śilparatna* offers an opportunity to compare different readings.

Furthermore, the *Vimānārcanākalpa*, which belongs to the *vaikhāna* sect and is dated to the 10th century A.D., is an important text to consider.¹⁹ It has also been published under an alternative name, *Vaikhānasāgama*. A third edition in the Telugu script was later published.²⁰ Multiple editions of this text exist, and they primarily align with one another in the section related to clay modeling techniques. Consequently, I will use the Devanagari script edition of the *Vimānārcanākalpa* for the comparative analysis, as it offers a consistent basis for comparison.²¹ Table 3 shows a comparison of sections dealing with the techniques of clay modeling in various texts.

Table 3. A comparison of sections dealing with the techniques of clay modeling.

<i>Citrakarmasāstra</i>	<i>Vimānārcanākalpa</i> ¹	<i>Kāśyapaśilpa</i>	<i>Śilparatna</i>
making of the eight-fold paste (<i>aṣṭabandhavidhāna</i>)	eight-fold paste (<i>aṣṭabandhaḥ</i>)	characteristics of ligatures (<i>rajjubandhalakṣaṇa</i>)	characteristics of ligatures (<i>rajjubandhalakṣaṇa</i>)
placing of ligatures (<i>rajjukarmavidhāna</i>)	encircling [the armature] with ligatures (<i>rajjuveṣṭanam</i>)	characteristics of the clay (<i>mṛtsakāralakṣaṇa</i>)	rules for smearing the clay (<i>mṛllepanavidhi</i>)
characteristics of the clay (<i>mṛttikālakṣaṇa</i>)	employing the clay (<i>mṛtsaṅgrahaṇam</i>)	preparation and characteristics of the limestone paste (<i>kalkasaṃskāralakṣaṇa</i>)	
making of the limestone paste (<i>kaṭaśarkaravidhāna</i>)	employing the limestone paste (<i>śarkarāgrahaṇam</i>)		

Table 3. Cont.

<i>Citrakarmaśāstra</i>	<i>Vimānārcanākalpa</i> ¹	<i>Kāśyapaśilpa</i>	<i>Śilparatna</i>
preparation of the pigments (<i>varṇalakṣaṇavidhāna</i>)	preparation of the pigments (<i>varṇasaṃskāraḥ</i>)	preparation of the pigments (<i>varṇasaṃskāralakṣaṇa</i>)	painting of the pigments (<i>varṇalepana</i>)

¹ Chapter 18; see (Prayāgadāsajī et al. 1926, pp. 85–91).

In the Hindu texts mentioned above, the eight ingredients of the paste differ slightly from those described in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*.²² Furthermore, the methods for cooking and blending these eight ingredients are extensively detailed in both the *Kāśyapaśilpa* and the *Śilparatna*: One should mix and grind the ingredients properly, then place them in an earthen vessel. Set them on a gentle fire with a mixture of ghee and oil to cook. When the mixture starts to resemble molasses, one should smear it on the armature (*saṃyojya cūrṇayet samyaṅ mṛtpātre niḥśipet punaḥ. āsicya ghr̥tatailābhyāṃ mandāgnau pacyatāmidam, yadā kṣaudramivāyāti tadā śūle vilimpayet*).²³ According to the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, there are two types of eight-fold pastes. One is used to permanently affix the images to their designated locations, while the other is applied to the wooden armature (for more details, see Varma 1970, p. 11). The *Citrakarmaśāstra* only mentions the latter type.

Concerning the ligatures, the method and ritual for making and employing ligatures are mentioned in the *Vimānārcanākalpa*, while proper names of the ligatures are not: Make two lines with coconut peels and the essence of cotton, each as wide as two *yavas*. Then a fire oblation should be performed, while reciting *sirābhyah svāha* 108 times. After pouring oblations into the fire, one should perform circumambulation from the left to the right of the fire. Then, enter the inner room and recite the names of the deities. Starting from the navel, wind threads onto the 24 *nādis*, beginning with the *suṣumnā*. Then, wind the threads from the head to the end of the feet on both sides, craft the hands and feet using copper strips, and, finally, cover them with cotton threads (*nālikeraphalatvaktūlasārair yavadvayasamasthūlamāyatam rajjudvayam samāhṛtya dakṣiṇāgnikuṇḍam kṛtvā āghāraṃ hutvā pūrvavaddhānyapīṭhe rajjuṃ sanyasya sirābhyonam ityabhyarcya adhvāsyā pūrvavaddhomam hutvā sirābhyah svāhetyaṣṭottarasātamāvartya hutvā agniṃ visṛjya pūrvavatālayam pradakṣiṇīkṛtyā 'bhyantaram praviśya atodevādinā nābhishthānamārabhya suṣumnādicaturdaśanādinām sthāneṣu rajjuṃ sanyasya pāścāt śirāvanmūrdhādi pādaparyantam ubhau pārsvau samāveṣṭya tāmrappattena hastapādatalau kṛtvā kārpāsatanunā sarvāṅgam samāveṣṭya punastathā rajjumāveṣṭayet*) (Prayāgadāsajī et al. 1926, p. 86).

In the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, only the three main *nādis* (i.e., *suṣumnā*, *iḍā*, and *piṅgalā*) are mentioned, and they all terminate at the male organ of the image (*mūlamedhṛvāsānakam*) (Vajhe 1926, p. 250). The *Śilparatna* has more details: The *suṣumnā* is known to be in the middle, and the *piṅgalā* runs along the right side. The *iḍā*, on the other hand, is situated on the left. These are the principal *nādis*. Each of them measures two *āṅgulas* in diameter. They are intertwined, encircling each other, being triple-curved. The joint of the three *nādis* should be in the middle of the eyebrow, separated below [the eyebrow], depending on the stick representing the vertebral column. The three *nādis* should converge into one, starting from the space between the eyebrows and extending to the top of the head. As they ascend the head, they divide into seven branches. The *gāndhārī* resides within the whole body. The *hastajihvā* is inside [the body] to the end (?). The *pūṣā* runs to the end of the right ear. The *yaśasvinī* runs to the left ear. The *alambuṣā* runs to the end of the male organ. The *kuhū* should be to the end of the anus. The edge of the *śāṅkhinī* should end in the middle of the navel (*suṣumnā madhyagā khyātā piṅgalā dakṣapārsvagā. iḍā vai tasya vāmathā pradhānā nādayastvoime, dvidvayaṅgulaparīnāhayutāstā vai trivartikāḥ. teṣāṃ nāḍitrayāṅgām tu yogaṃ bhrūmadhyame bhavet, tadadhovigrahāstvoṣṭavaṃśadaṇḍapurāśritāḥ. bhrūmadhyānmūrdhniparyantam trināḍī caikavad bhavet, sā mūrdhānoparigatā saptaśākhāvibheditā. gāndhārī sarvagātrāntā. hastajihvāntarāntakā.*

pūṣā dakṣiṇakarṇāntā. vāmakarṇā yaśasvinī. alambuṣā meḍhramūlāntā. gudāntā kuhū bhavet. nābhimadhyāvasānaṃ tu śaṅkhinīlambanaṃ bhavet) (Ganapatisāstrī 1929, pp. 88–89).

The *Goraḥṣasāta*, a *Hāṭhayoga* text composed in the 14th century A.D., also mentioned ten *nādis*: They are the *iḍā*, the *piṅgalā*, the *suṣumṇā* as the third, the *gāndhārī*, the *hastijihvā*, the *pūṣā*, the *yaśasvinī*, the *alambuṣā*, the *kuhū*, and the *śaṅkhinī* as the tenth. The *iḍā* is located on the left, while the *piṅgalā* is located on the right, with the *suṣumṇā* in the middle portion. The *gāndhārī* is in the left eye, while the *hastijihvā* on the right. The *pūṣā* is in the right ear, while the *yaśasvinī* is in the left ear. The *alambuṣā* is in a sitting posture (?). The *kūhu* is at the *liṅga* portion. The *śaṅkhinī* is at the root place (i.e., the male organ?) (*iḍā ca piṅgalā caiva suṣumṇā ca trītyakā, gāndhārī hastijihvā ca pūṣā caiva yaśasvinī. alambuṣā kuhūś caiva śaṅkhinī daśamī smṛtā. iḍā vāme sthitā bhāge piṅgalā dakṣiṇe tathā, suṣumṇā madhyadeśe. gāndhārī vāmacakṣuṣī. dakṣiṇe hastijihvā. pūṣākarṇe ca dakṣiṇe. yaśasvinī vāmakarṇe. āsane vāpyalambuṣā. kuhūś ca liṅgadeśe. mūlasthāne ca śaṅkhinī*).²⁴ Proposed by Varma, the *nāḍī* theory has been adopted by many individuals who are neither medical professionals nor physiologists. This adoption can be attributed to its early association with the exploration of human existence and life's essence. The correlation of ligatures with *nādis* appears to have influenced artists in determining the number of major ligatures based on the concept of *nāḍī* (Varma 1970, pp. 15–16).

The quoted text indicates that the *Śilparatna*, the *Goraḥṣasāta*, and the *Citrakarmasāstra* share commonalities in the names of ten *nādis*, but the latter is much more concise, listing only the names. Moreover, both the *Kāśyapaśilpa* and the *Śilparatna* provide details on the methods for preparing ligatures and their sizes. According to both texts, the human body is believed to contain 27,000 *nādis*. However, using so many ligatures on a clay image is impractical, so only 28 main ligatures are to be tied on the armature in their proper positions.²⁵ However, in the *Citrakarmasāstra*, neither the number and the size of ligatures to be tied nor the preparation of ligatures are explained.

Regarding the preparation of clays, limestone paste, and pigments²⁶, the methods and materials described in the *Citrakarmasāstra* closely resemble those found in Hindu texts.²⁷ Each follows similar steps: the clay is fragrancd and stored in pots, combined with gold, silver, copper, and a decoction made from sugar, honey, ghee, three Myrobalans (*triphala*), and three pungents (namely pepper, long pepper, and dry ginger), among other ingredients. The limestone (*śarkarās*) should be collected from the vicinity of water sources, dried, and then added with specific materials like the extract from the *Feronia Elephantum* tree (*kapittha*) and three Myrobalans. After the application of the limestone paste to the armature, the *Vimānārcanākalpa* suggests covering the image with a piece of pure delicate cloth made from cotton thread (*śuddhaṃ kārpaśatantunā kṛtaṃ sūkṣmaṃ vastram*) (Prayāgadāsājī et al. 1926, p. 89). Interestingly, this step is also prescribed in the *Citrakarmasāstra*, but it is notably absent in the *Kāśyapaśilpa* and the *Śilparatna*. The final stage involves painting the image. The three steps for coloring the image mentioned earlier—applying a white coating, followed by a yellowish-white hue, and then using various colors—are evident both in the *Citrakarmasāstra* and the *Kāśyapaśilpa* (Vajhe 1926, pp. 258–59).

No extant Sri Lankan or Indian Buddhist images made using the techniques of clay modeling described in the texts have been found. However, my investigation of the current practices of Hindu image making suggests that this tradition is still prevalent in South India and even in Hindu temples in the USA. During the Kumbhabhisheka festival, a series of consecration rituals are performed on the image, partially conforming to the text. As depicted in the flier for the *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā* rituals (establishment of the image in its vital breath, see Figure 5), a series of rituals, such as immersing deities in the rice paddy and conducting fire oblations, are performed in advance. The *nadisandhana homa* ritual is related to the *nāḍī* theory, but the present-day practice differs from the descriptions in the *śilpa* texts. The cords for the *nādis* consist of six different types of threads (*darbha* grass, copper, silk, cotton, silver, and gold) woven together,²⁸ and they are connected to the main fire-pit (*homakuṇḍa*) in the sacrificial hall (*yajñasālā*), rather than being directly linked to the image. According to a diary account, the *nadisandhana* ritual comprises three processions.

In each procession, ghee, carried in the *sirk siruvam* (special covered spoons), and pitchers full of holy water (*pūrnakumbhas*) are carried from the sacrificial hall to the temple idols. “Soul energy” is infused into the idol through the chanting of *mantras*, and ghee is poured onto the idol, from bottom to top. Finally, during the third procession, life is symbolically breathed into the *murti*, and the priest recites the *mantra* with the name of the deity, spoken into the idol’s right ear.²⁹ As indicated in Figure 5, the eye-opening ceremony is then performed, which will be discussed in the following section. The next step is the *ratnanyāsa* ritual, which is highly simplified, using small coins. Finally, the image is affixed to the pedestal using the eight-fold paste.

Day 2: SATURDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2019		
General Program & Pooja Sequence for both deities	Program Highlights or additional rituals for Lord Muruga / Sri Subrahmanya Swamy (Specific Times, if any are noted)	Highlights or additional Rituals for Sri Ayappa Swamy (Specific Times, if any are noted)
8:00 AM Onwards	8:00 AM Onwards	8:00 AM Onwards
Nitya Pooja (Invocation) Punyahavachanam (Purifications) Kalasha Sthapana & Aradhana (Kalasa Pooja) Dwara Aaradhana (Entrance Door-way Pooja) Mandala Aaradhana (Hindu emblem Pooja) Pancha Gavya Snapanam (Holy-Cow product Preparation) Dhanyadhivasam (immersing deities in Rice Paddy) Murti Homam - Sri Subrahmanya Swamy and Sri Ayappa Swamy Homam (Holy Fire Ritual) Bimba Manonmana Pramana Homam (Deities Holy Fire Ritual) Poomahuthi (Concluding offering) Mangala Aarathi (Concluding Prayer) Theertha Prasada Viniyogam (Holy water handout)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Dhanyadhivasam ❖ Murti Homam - Sri Subrahmanya Swamy and Sri Ayappa Swamy Homam ❖ Bimba Manonmana Pramana Homam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 8:00 am KumbheshaKalasha, Pooja; ❖ 8:30 AM NidraaKalasha Pooja ❖ 9:00 Shayyaa Pooja ❖ 10:AM BimbaShudhi
5:00 PM Onwards	5:00 PM Onwards	5:00 PM Onwards
Punyahavachanam (Purifications) Dwara Aaradhana (Entrance Door-way Pooja) Kalasha Aaradhana (Kalasam vessel puja) Mandala Aaradhana (Hindu emblem Pooja) Puspadhivasam (Immersing Deities in flower bed – Chanting Thirupugazh Parayanam) Sheyyadhivasam (Placing deities on bed ritual) Nadisandhana Homam (Transferring power to deities thru Homam) Mantriyasa Homam (Holy Fire Ritual) Murti Homam - Sri Subrahmanya Swamy and Sri Ayappa Swamy Homam (Holy Fire Ritual) Nathronmilanam (Ritual for opening eyes of Deities) Poomahuthi (Concluding Offering) Mangala Aarathi (Concluding Prayer) Theertha Prasada Viniyogam (Holy water handout)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Puspadhivasam ❖ Sheyyadhivasam ❖ Nadisandhana Homam ❖ Murti Homam - Sri Subrahmanya Swamy and Sri Ayappa Swamy Homam ❖ Nathronmilanam (Ritual for opening eyes of Deities) <p>9:00 p.m. onwards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ *Ratnanyasam (Placing Precious Materials under Peedam) ❖ Astabhandanam (Installation & sealing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 5:30 pm Adhivaasa Homam ❖ 6:30 pm Dhyanaadivaasam
9:00 p.m. onwards *Ratnanyasam (Placing precious materials under Peedam before installation) Astabhandanam (Placing and sealing deities to the peedam)		
6:00 PM: Music Concert By Mandakini Swain, Tabala Jitendra Kumar Swain, Harmonium Smt Shruti		
*Devotees - Gold and silver for Ratnanyasam is limited to coins weighing no more than 1 gram		

Figure 5. A flier for the *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā* rituals. Source: <https://www.orlandohindutemple.org/> accessed on 1 October 2023.

It should be noted that the present-day ritual practices do not correspond perfectly with the techniques described in texts. Using the flier for the *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā* rituals in the Hindu Society of Central Florida as a case study for this broader typological argument, I have demonstrated that the ritual technologies outlined in these texts are not only still in use but also underscore the effectiveness of a multidisciplinary approach.

2.5. On the Chapter of the Eye-Opening Ceremony

2.5.1. Content of the Text

The opening of eyes (known as *akṣimokṣa*, *akṣyunmeṣana*, *akṣyunmocana*, *netramokṣa*, *nayanonmīlana* in Sanskrit) serves as the final stage of the image-making process, as detailed in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*. While Buddhist eye-opening ceremonies have been previously studied by scholars like A.K. Coomaraswamy (1908, pp. 70–75), Richard Gombrich (1966), Hans Ruelius (1978b), Yael Bentor (1996, pp. 287–90), and Donald K. Swearer (2007, pp. 94–118, 212–17), they have often paid minimal attention to the *Citrakarmaśāstra*. The concluding chapter of this text outlines the procedures for the ceremonies associated with opening the eyes of the central image. The ceremonies start with an *aṅkurārpaṇa* (sowing of seeds) ritual, conducted one day before the actual eye-opening ceremony (*akṣimokṣadinātp-ūrve*). At an auspicious moment, a designated spot is chosen, usually to the south or east of the image house where the idol is placed. This area is covered with cow dung, and four burning lamps are positioned at the four corners. An *aṣṭamaṅgala* diagram is likely drawn on this surface, most probably using rice. The chief artisan then proceeds to circumambulate the auspicious diagram, starting with the *śrīvatsa* figure. Afterward, he takes either nine, seven, or five fumigated mungo seeds and spreads them across the square smeared with cow dung (*sumuhūrte sulagne ca priyamaṅgalavācakaiḥ, ātodyavādyaghoṣaiśca śaṅkhakāhalaghoṣakaiḥ. vāstudakṣiṇe vāpi pramukhe vā viśeṣataḥ, daṇḍamānantu vistīrṇaṃ gomayamālipyā bhūmyām. vitānaketupatākādyā citracitrañca kalpanam, koṇeṣu dīpasamyuktaṃ tanmadhye dhānyaṃ vinyaset. tasyordhve pālikāṃ sthāpyamācāryāyamanāḥ smitah, aṣṭamaṅgalamāvṛtya śrīvatsāttu pradakṣiṇam*). This is the *aṅkurārpaṇa* ritual.

The eye-opening ceremony involves the performance of a *kalaśādhivāsana* ritual within an elaborate *adhivāsana-maṇḍapa*. This *kalaśādhivāsana* can be carried out using either the *pīṭha* maṇḍala or the *upapīṭha* maṇḍala.

A relatively large portion of the chapter, consisting of forty-six out of eighty-nine verses, is dedicated to the discussion of flagstaffs and banners that are to be placed in the cardinal and intermediate directions surrounding the image-hall. The main banner is adorned with depictions of five Buddhas and various auspicious symbols, such as lamps, a six-spoked *ratnacakra*, parasols, and more.

At the culmination of a complex series of rituals, the consecration master (*pratiṣṭhācārya*) undertakes the task of painting the black pupils onto the image, effectively opening its eyes. The procedure involves the consecration master using a golden needle along with a round mirror, with his assistant also contributing to the task. Once the eyes have been successfully opened, a calf is to be presented before the idol, followed by the performance of the *homaśānti* ritual and a circumambulation from left to right (*drṣṭimaṇḍalamunmīlyāḥ hemasūcikṛtantathā, ādarśamaṇḍalā[t] sarvaśilpikṛtyaṃ samāpti ca. śeṣaṃ pūrvoktavaddhidyaḍ govatsābhīmukhādi ca, nayanonmīlanāt paścād homaśānti[h] pradakṣiṇam*). Following this, the idol should be bathed in water for three consecutive nights. Right after the eyes are opened, various objects such as mirrors are presented before the idol (*drṣṭimaṇḍalamunmīlyā darpaṇādīni darśayet*). After the ablution ritual, reverence is to be offered to the image from all directions (Marasinghe 1991, pp. 164–83).

2.5.2. Correspondence with the Other Sanskrit Buddhist and Hindu Śilpa Texts

The ritual descriptions for the eye-opening ceremony can be found in various *śilpa* texts representing different religious sects. In this comparative study, I will focus on five specific texts. While these texts share many similarities, they also diverge in certain details. It is not necessary to present all these minor differences at once, as they might become tedious.

The *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* attributed to Kuladatta (ca. 11–12th A.D.), a commentary on the collection of Buddhist tantric rituals, is, as a whole, a kind of monastery construction manual.³⁰ There is a section that pertains to the consecration of a deity's eyes. The text instructs the tantric practitioner to anoint the image with five products of the cow, followed by anointing it with saffron and other substances. Subsequently, the image should be sprin-

kled with water empowered by the *mantra* of Akṣobhya. The practitioner is then directed to wipe off this water. The next steps involve empowering specific parts of the image, such as the forehead, throat, heart, eyes, ears, nose, tongue, hairline, and navel, by using seed-syllables. After this, the practitioner should proceed to open the eyes of the image using a golden stick smeared with ghee and honey contained in a silver vessel while reciting the relevant verse and *mantra*. However, those of the deity in a scriptural text's manuscript or other should be reflected in a mirror (*pustakādidevatāyās tu darpaṇe bhāvitapratibimbāyāh*) (Tanemura 2004, pp. 181, 281). In this text, the use of a mirror is mentioned, but there are no further details about its role in the ceremony. The overall procedure described here differs significantly from the one outlined in the *Citrakarmasāstra*, with the exception of the shared use of a mirror. Now, let us explore Hindu *śilpa* texts for further insights into this ritual.

The *Mānasāra* is a comprehensive Sanskrit text comprising seventy chapters that cover a wide range of architectural and iconographic topics. These topics include architectural principles, systems of measurement, technical instructions for building construction, rituals related to construction, building classifications, and characteristics of building materials such as wood and stone. Additionally, the *Mānasāra* addresses aspects of deity iconography. The text lacks a specific author or known historical date, but, based on internal evidence and archaeological findings, it is estimated to have been compiled around the tenth or eleventh century in the context of the Chola kingdom, with its capital in Tanjavur (Tanjore) located in South India on the banks of the river Kaveri.

The final chapter of the *Mānasāra*, titled “nayanonmīlanalakṣanam” (Description of Opening the Eye [of an Image of the Deity]), is particularly significant. It offers a detailed account of the iconographic procedure for carving the eyes of a deity (in this case, Śiva) and installing them in the inner sanctum of a completed temple during a ceremonial ritual setting. This chapter provides insight into the symbolic meaning, ritual processes, and technical aspects involved in temple architecture and iconography, particularly in the context of the eye-opening ceremony (Jacob 2007).

The *Mayamata* is another significant treatise from South India that can be regarded as a “sister treatise” to the *Mānasāra* in terms of its form and content. According to scholars like Bruno Dagens, the *Mayamata* is believed to predate the *Mānasāra* (Dagens 1970, pp. 1–2). In Chapter 18 of the *Mayamata*, titled “śikhara-karaṇa-bhavana-karma-samāpti-vidhāna (Rules for the Making of Roofs and for the End of the Building Work)”, there are only a few simple verses that describe the eye-opening ceremony of the images placed at the four cardinal points around the newly-built temple and other images. The architect begins the ceremony by bathing the image with water from vases and worshipping it with perfumes and flowers. Then, using a gold point, the first circle of the eye is drawn, followed by the other three circles, using a sharp point. This eye-opening ceremony is part of a series of rituals related to the completion of the temple building.

Two additional texts that offer valuable insights for comparison are the *Vimānārcanākalpa* and the *Vaikhānasāgama*, both of which belong to the *vaikhānasa* sect. The sections dealing with the eye-opening ceremony in both texts display similarities, with the *Vaikhānasāgama* providing more detailed instructions. Chapter 30 of the *Vaikhānasāgama* outlines the rituals associated with opening the eyes of an image. The rituals begin with an *aṅkurārpaṇa* (sowing seeds), which includes making the grain-pots, sprinkling the grains as well as adorning the *bimbālaya* with banners, garlands and *kuśa* grasses. Following this, the *ratnanyāsa* (deposit of gems) and *kalaśādhivāsana* (the placing of pots) are performed, accompanied by the recitation of hymns to Viṣṇu. The next step involves establishing the image of Viṣṇu (*bhagavato nārāyaṇasya sthāpanāvīdhim*) on an auspicious day, accompanied by a *homa* (fire oblation). The third step entails opening the eyes of the image with a golden needle and showing cows and grains to the newly opened eyes of the image (Śāstrī 1935, pp. 103–8). Table 4 shows a comparison of the eye-opening ceremony in the texts mentioned above.

Table 4. A comparison of the eye-opening ceremony in the *Citrakarmasāstra* and Hindu *śilpa* texts.

<i>Mayamata</i> ¹	<i>Mānasāra</i> ²	<i>Vimānārcanākalpa</i> ³	<i>Vaikhānasāgama</i> ⁴	<i>Citrakarmasāstra</i>
Sowing seeds (<i>aṅkurārpaṇa</i>)	Sowing seeds (<i>aṅkurārpaṇa</i>)		Sowing seeds (<i>aṅkurārpaṇa</i>)	Sowing seeds (<i>aṅkurārpaṇa</i>) The description of flagstaffs and banners that should be placed in the cardinal and intermediate directions surrounding the image-hall
The establishment of a pavilion (<i>maṇḍapa</i>) and an altar (<i>vedi</i>) for the sacrifice in connection with the opening of eyes	The establishment of a pavilion (<i>maṇḍapa</i>) and an altar (<i>vedi</i>) for the sacrifice in connection with the opening of eyes	Drawing a <i>pīṭha</i> on the ground and installing the gem deposit (<i>ratnanyāsa</i>)	Drawing a <i>pīṭha</i> on the ground and installing the gem deposit (<i>ratnanyāsa</i>)	The establishment of the sacrificial altar
The drawing of a <i>upapīṭha</i> or <i>pīṭha</i> and placing of pots (<i>kalaśādhivāsana</i>)	The drawing of a <i>upapīṭha</i> or <i>pīṭha</i> and placing of pots (<i>kalaśādhivāsana</i>) as well as the fire oblation (<i>homa</i>)	Performing the fire oblation to <i>vāstudevas</i> (<i>vāstuhoma</i>)	Performing the fire oblation to <i>vāstudevas</i>	The placing of pots (<i>kalaśādhivāsana</i>)
Worship of the image and painting of eyes	Worship of the image and painting of eyes	Opening the eyes with a golden needle	Opening the eyes with a golden needle	Opening the eyes with a golden needle and with the help of a mirror Burnt-offerings to avert evil (<i>homaśānti</i>)
	The placing of pots and worship of the image	The placing of pots and worship of the image	The placing of pots and worship of the image	The placing of pots and worship of the image

Sources: ¹ Dagens (1970, p. 417); ² Acharya (2011, pp. 1073–82); ³ Prayāgādāsajī et al. (1926, pp. 204–8); ⁴ Śāstrī (1935, pp. 103–8).

Hans Ruelius assumed that the eye-opening ceremony in the *Citrakarmasāstra* is exactly the same as described in the *Vaikhānasāgama*. However, he did not give a detailed comparison (Ruelius 1978a). Nevertheless, after conducting a comparative study between these texts, I cannot entirely agree with him. As shown in Table 4, there are distinct Brahmanical elements found in the Sinhalese eye-opening ceremony, as outlined in the *Citrakarmasāstra*, which share a striking resemblance to Hindu image consecration rituals. Each involves the following processes:

- (1) Commencing with the sowing of seeds.
- (2) Constructing and purifying a temporary pavilion.
- (3) Decorating the pavilion with canopies, flags, banners, and embellishments using *darbha* grass.
- (4) Applying either the *pīṭha* maṇḍala or the *upapīṭha* maṇḍala.
- (5) Performing the placing of pots (*kalaśādhivāsana*) after opening the eyes.

There are primary differences between the *Citrakarmasāstra* and the Hindu texts: (1) The religious affiliations of the texts; (2) The detailed description of the flagstaffs and banners is not covered in the Hindu texts; (3) The use of a mirror (*darpaṇa*) is not mentioned in the Hindu texts.

Numerous details on the flagstaffs and banners are unclear, making it challenging to form a complete understanding of some of the decorative features described in the text. Moreover, it is difficult to ascertain the corresponding archaeological evidence in Sri Lanka.

Concerning the use of a mirror in the eye-opening ceremony, investigations into present-day rituals suggest that this tradition has persisted in Sri Lanka up to the present day.

2.5.3. Partial Correspondence with the Buddhist Ritual Practice in Sri Lanka

In South India, the members of craftsmen communities were generally known by the name *Kammālan*, a word derived from the Tamil *Kannālar* or *Kannālan*, which means “one who rules the eye” or “one who gives the eye” (Thurston and Rangachari 1909, p. 106). The idols consecrated in temples are made by members of this caste. On an auspicious occasion, they perform the ritual of the opening of the eyes of the idol using a small chisel, usually made of gold. In Sri Lanka, the people of this caste paint the eyes of the idols in a ritual, believed to infuse the idol with divine powers (Rajeev 2016, pp. 37–38). As told by Richard Gombrich, the eye-opening ceremony (Sinh. *nētra maṅgalya*, *nētra pinkama*, or *nētra pratiṣṭhāpanaya utsavaya*) consists of six parts, referred to as *sadaṅga pūjāva* in Sinhala. According to an eye-opening ceremony he observed in the Kandyan hill country, these six parts include drumming (Sinh. *maḡul bera*), worshipping the gods (Sinh. *deviyanta pūjāva*), setting pots (Sinh. *kumbhasthāpane*), setting up indra-posts (Sinh. *indrakīlaya*), worshipping the statue(s) (Sinh. *mūrta pūjāva*), and making peace (Sinh. *sānti karaṇaya*) (Gombrich 1966).

Coomaraswamy regards the eye-opening ceremony as “Hindu rather than Buddhist in origin” in his monumental work, but he does not discuss this further (Coomaraswamy 1908, p. 71). However, Gombrich considers that the rite is the exclusive property of Sinhalese Buddhism (Gombrich 1966). In the ceremony Gombrich witnessed, the temple was decorated with Buddhist flags—bars of red, yellow, white, orange, and blue—the colors of the rays of Buddha’s halo. Over the floor of the shrine, from just inside the door to the Buddha’s pedestal, the craftsman had spread out a bed of rice grains, and on its surface was traced a *yantra* divided into a number of squares. On the rice of the central square was traced a lotus design. On each square stood a pot full of rice that was covered with a betel leaf and a coin. Then, offerings were made to Śakra, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, nine *grahayō* (Skt. *navagraha*), eight *Bahiravayō* (Skt. *aṣṭabhairava*), and so forth. Finally, the ritualist placed an indra-post (Sinh. *indrakīlaya*, Pā. *indakhīla*, Skt. *indrakīla*) shaped roughly like an umbrella in a brass pot at the center of the *yantra*. After offering incense and water and chanting Sanskrit verses, the ritualist walked clockwise around the image hall, accompanied by drumming and music. After the last altar, he went up to a tree at the edge of the temple area and struck it thrice with the sword; it exuded a milky sap. Then the *mūrta pūjāva* began. As the auspicious moment approached, everyone but the craftsman and his assistant left the temple. The ritualist, sitting high with his back to the image, looked into the mirror and painted in the eyes. Then came the *sānti karaṇaya* ceremony to ensure that no harm ensued from any mistakes in the rituals.

As Gombrich observed, the craftsman did not dare to look at the statue in the face but looked into a mirror, which caught the gaze of the image he was bringing to life. As soon as the painting was completed, the craftsman himself had a dangerous gaze. He was led out blindfolded and the covering was only removed from his eyes when they would first fall upon something which he then symbolically destroyed with a sword stroke (Gombrich 1966).

I was fortunate to witness an eye-opening ceremony in the Managala Viharaya in Kandy on 27 April and 3 May 2023. Early in the morning on 27 April, the ceremony began with the chanting of Sanskrit and Pāli *sūtras*. The temple and the nearby garden were decorated with Buddhist flags of five colors. A square drawing was placed on the ground just in front of the door of the image house. According to Paranagama Podisadu, this drawing has a Sinhalese name, “kolam adhima”, and incorporates elements from the Tamil “ababa”. It consists of 35 coconuts, 25 kg of rice, 180 coins, 180 betel leaves, and 25 kg of grain, with the design of an “om” in the center (Figure 6).

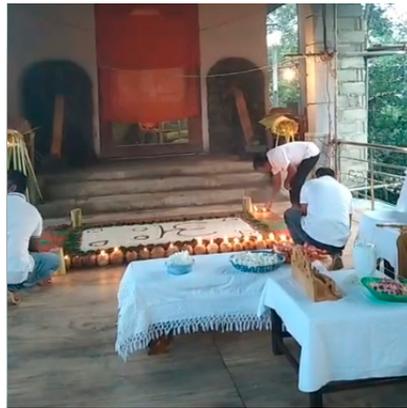


Figure 6. *Kolam adhima* in the eye-opening ceremony in Kandy (photographed by Paranagama Podisadu).

The reciting of *sūtras* lasted throughout the entire ceremony. Rev. Paranagama Gnanawimala Thero, abbot of the temple, the craftsman, and his assistants entered the image house to prepare for the painting of eyes. None of them dared to look directly at the statue. With a mirror in his hand, the craftsman gazed into the mirror and painted the eyes with another hand (Figure 7). According to Rev. Paranagama Gnanawimala Thero, tradition dictates that nobody should gaze directly at the Buddha's eyes due to the dangerous power released during the painting process. Therefore, a mirror is used to receive the image's gaze. After completing the painting, the craftsman himself was subject to this potentially harmful gaze. Following the eye-painting, the craftsman was blindfolded and guided out of the image house. He first looked at a small cow and was then blindfolded again and led to a jackfruit tree. Symbolically, he cut the tree with a sword, causing milky juice to flow. He then cautiously walked across the *yantra*, still blindfolded. This act of symbolically cutting the tree is believed to dispel the potentially harmful power of the evil eye. Afterward, Rev. Paranagama Gnanawimala Thero tied a white thread around the craftsman's wrist, acting as a talisman to ward off evil spirits. Actually, this practice cannot be reconciled with any Buddhist doctrine, but it is maintained as part of their tradition.



Figure 7. The painting of eyes with the help of a mirror (photographed by Rev. Paranagama Gnanawimala Thero).

During this ceremony, they did not use the *indra-post*. According to Rev. Paranagama Gnanawimala Thero, the *indra-post* is only utilized in the *pirith mandapa* created for *pirith* chanting at the Managala Viharaya.³¹ On 3 May, with the eyes of the image covered, Rev. Paranagama Gnanawimala Thero himself personally affixed the tuft of hair made of gold

to the statue's forehead (Figure 8). This tuft is considered one of the 32 major characteristics of a great man. With this act, the entire ceremony came to a conclusion.



Figure 8. The golden tuft of hair pasted on the forehead of the statue (photographed by Rev. Paranagama Gnanawimala Thero).

The ceremony I witnessed was less elaborate than the ones described in Coomaraswamy's and Gombrich's works, but they did share some similarities. As stated in Gombrich's version, the blindfolded ritual practitioner, carrying the pot, has the covering removed from his eyes so that the first thing his gaze falls upon is the bull. He also smashes the pot on the bull's horns. He then takes a sword or knife and slashes at any tree which will exude milky sap. Plainly, he "kills" the tree instead of the bull. Buddhism forbids the slaughter of animals (Gombrich 1966). In Coomaraswamy's version, there is no pot and no bull, but there is a water-cutting ceremony instead. The blindfolded ritualist is led straight to a vessel of water in which he washes his head; he then cuts the water with a sword, and the vessel is shattered. Thus, any evil that might come from his gaze passes into the water and is harmless (Coomaraswamy 1908, p. 74). In Coomaraswamy's view, both the mirror and the indra-post in the ceremony are intended to absorb the dangerous power of the image's eyes: the mirror receives the gaze of the image and the *indrakilaya* functions as a scapegoat for this gaze (Coomaraswamy 1908, p. 76). Gombrich agrees with Coomaraswamy (Gombrich 1966). Rev. Paranagama Gnanawimala Thero's explanation corresponds well with Coomaraswamy's and Gombrich's opinion.

Ruelius also witnessed an eye-opening ceremony in Sri Lanka and has offered a different interpretation. In his view, the mirror is used not to receive the dangerous power of the image's eyes but to symbolize this transformation. The mirror represents the Buddha's absence, and by painting the eyes, the craftsman divines the Buddha's presence into the image. For those waiting outside the image hall, the image behind the closed door is literally absent from view (*darśana*). But once the eyes are painted and the door is opened, the Buddha is present in both a form-likeness (*rūpa*) and in essence (*dharma*) (Ruelius 1978b). As he suggests, the use of a mirror as a ritual implement is to infuse the *dharma* into the image.

By further studies on the mirror in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist consecration rituals, Yael Bentor concludes the following points: The purpose of the showing in the mirror during the initiation (also called mirror initiation) is to create a predisposition for the realization that all *dharms* are like reflected images in a mirror. Even though they seem to possess inherent existence, they are, in fact, devoid of a nature to call their own. The mirror plays another important role during the consecration. It serves as a temporary abode for the entity invited into a receptacle for the duration of the consecration. The ritual actions of the consecration are often performed not to the actual receptacle itself but to its reflection in a mirror situated at the center of a special consecration *maṇḍala* (Bentor 1995). The employment of the mirror is also popular in East Asian Buddhist image consecration rituals. I witnessed another eye-opening ceremony of Buddhist images in the Dafo Monastery 大佛寺 in Guangzhou on December 28, 2023. During the ceremony, Buddhist monks held

up mirrors in their hands and chanted verses simultaneously, with the reflective surfaces of the mirrors facing the Buddhist images (Figure 9). The verses read:



Figure 9. The use of mirrors in the eye-opening ceremony in the Dafo Monastery (photographed by Rujing).

“Let us raise this great circular mirror, with light radiating across all directions.

The circular radiance universally illuminates all directions, bestowing increased merit and wisdom upon all sentient beings.

The nature of radiance is inherently the same; the mirror’s light reflects compassionate radiance [of the Buddha and bodhisattvas].

Radiance illuminates throughout all directions, marvelously without hindrance.”

提此大圓鏡，光明遍十方。

圓光普照於十方，咸令眾生增福慧。

光光體本同，鏡光映慈光。

光照遍十方，妙用無障礙。

These verses are widely used during the eye-opening ceremony in Buddhist monasteries in China, indicating the use of mirrors as reflecting the radiance of consecrated images. Mirror symbolism is common in Buddhism. Evidence makes it clear that the widespread use of the mirror in Buddhist image consecration rituals denotes multiple meanings.³²

As Alex Wayman reported, the uses of the mirror fall into three categories: Firstly, the mirror as a metaphor of the mind, found primarily in the literature of the Yogācāra School. Secondly, the mirror as a simile for the emptiness of all phenomena whose true nature is likened to reflections in a mirror, a notion prevailing in the Madhyamika School. And thirdly, the use of the mirror in divination. The mirror plays an important role in the concept of the five knowledges (*jñānas*), one of them being the mirror-like knowledge (*ādarśa-jñāna*) (Wayman 1971, 1974).

Investigations suggest that contemporary practices conform to only a few ceremonial elements, mainly the oblation to Hindu deities and the application of a mirror, as described in the 17th chapter of the *Citrakarmasāstra*. More Hindu elements, such as the sowing of seeds and the drawing of the *upapīṭha* (or *pīṭha*), are mentioned in the text but are not incorporated into the practices of contemporary Sri Lankan Buddhists.

3. Conclusions

This study highlights several aspects for further discussion:

Through a philological analysis of chapters concerning tree selection, the *ratnanyāsa* ritual, the techniques of clay modeling in image making, and the eye-opening ceremony, it becomes evident that the *Citrakarmasāstra*, while shorter and less informative than Hindu *śilpa* texts, shares a similar structure and content with the Hindu statuary tradition.

The *Citrakarmasāstra* demonstrates a remarkable resemblance to South Indian Hindu *śilpa* texts in its main body. This suggests that the *Citrakarmasāstra* might be a composite

work originating in South India, drawing from various sources and composed at different times. The probable date of the main part of the text, which includes the chapters discussed above, is a little later than the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, is likely not earlier than the 11th century A.D., but not later than the *Śilparatna*, possibly predating the 16th century A.D.

How should we interpret the connection between the text and the archaeological evidence as well as present-day performances? Is the *Citrakarmaśāstra* a manual for practical use or just a compilation of an idealized *śilpa* knowledge system? A section from Chapter 10, which is relatively clearer in its language but obscure in content, serves as a useful example that sheds light on the intended audience and style of the text (see Table 5).

Table 5. Literary style of the *Citrakarmaśāstra*: *nāḍis*.

Manuscript	Edition ¹
<i>gandhārihastajivhāpūṣāsvinīralamprataḥ kuhūcatuhāmadhyamanīsaptadhātukproktampurovotrāyodaśādhikā evampradhānanāḍīcaśeṣāmrājuprabandhanam tatmadhasandhaurūpasyājivhāsthānavidhīyate</i>	<i>gāndhārī hastijihvā [ca] pūṣāsvinīr alambuṣā. kuhū ca śaṅkhinī saptadhā {tuk}proktās {pūro}trāyī nāḍīkāḥ. evaṃ pradhānanāḍīyaśca śeṣāṃ rajjuprabandhanam. tanmadhyasandhau rūpasya jihvāsthāna[m] vidhīyate.</i>

¹ This edition is based on Marasinghe (1991, p. 62).

English translation:

Three *nāḍikas* are said to [be divided into] seven [*nāḍikas*, namely] the *gāndhārī*, the *hastijihvā*, the *pūṣā*, the *yaśasvinī*, the *alambuṣā*, the *kuhū*, and the *śaṅkhinī*. Such are the main *nāḍis*, and the rest is the binding of cords. At the middle joint of these, the tongue of the idol is placed.

This passage exemplifies the text’s concise style, which may explain why Schroeder found it less helpful for identifying Sinhalese sculptures. A literal translation of the first verse reads: “Three *nāḍikas* are said sevenfold, the *gāndhārī*, the *hastijihvā*, the *pūṣā-svinīr*, the *alambuṣā*, the *kuhū*, and the *śaṅkhinī*.” Based on this description alone, it is unclear what the text is describing. While the subject is clear, the lack of a verb makes it challenging to understand the precise relationship between the three primary *nāḍis* and the seven *nāḍikas*. Fortunately, consulting the *Śilparatna* provides more details: The three *nāḍis* should converge into one, starting from the space between the eyebrows and extending to the top of the head. As they ascend the head, they divide into seven branches. (*bhrūmadhyānmūrdhniparyantaṃ trināḍī caikavad bhavet, sāmūrdhānopariḡatā saptaśākhāvibheditā*). The explanation regarding the relationship between the three *nāḍis* and the seven *nāḍikas*, as inferred from the compound “*saptaśākhā-vibheditā*” here, is quite clear. With the help of the *Śilparatna*, we also learn that “*pūṣā-svinīr*” is short for “*pūṣā*” and “*yaśasvinī*”. However, even with emendations and insertions, we could not form a clear idea of the ten *nāḍis* in the *Citrakarmaśāstra*. The text lacks further details about the seven *nāḍikas*, such as their precise locations in the body, their divergence from the three major *nāḍis*, their spatial relations, and the significance of the middle joint (*madhyasandhau*) in relation to the tongue. It is mentioned later in the text that the total number of *nāḍis* is 2070 (*sarveṣāṃ nāḍīsamayuktaṃ dvisahasrādhisaptatiḥ*).³³ However, is it possible/practical to lay thousands of cords representative of *nāḍis* onto the wooden armature of the image? The text does not relate the exact number of cords to be laid and the method for making the cords. For a modern reader, it appears impractical and challenging to implement these instructions effectively based on the information provided in the text.

It is essential to acknowledge that similar examples can be identified throughout the entire text. These instances contribute to our understanding of the text’s overall style and content. Therefore, it is important to recognize that such examples are not isolated incidents but part of a broader pattern within the *Citrakarmaśāstra*. If we consider this text seriously and assume that it was written in order to be understood, we can draw three conclusions:

- (1) The *Citrakarmasāstra* was likely intended for ritual specialists and artisans who already possessed a good understanding of the practices described in the text.
- (2) The *Citrakarmasāstra* appears to serve as a rough outline or reference guide rather than a comprehensive and detailed explanation of the practices and performances. It may have assumed that practitioners were already familiar with the basics.
- (3) The *Citrakarmasāstra* can be seen as a Buddhist attempt to emulate Brahmanical *śilpa* literature, as well as a compilation of an idealized knowledge system. This idealized system might not perfectly correspond with actual practices and performances, which could explain the absence of crucial information and the use of simplified Sanskrit within the text.

These conclusions shed light on the possible purpose and audience of the *Citrakarmasāstra*, as well as the reasons behind its specific style and content.

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Abbreviations

Pā.	Pāli
Sinh.	Sinhalese
Skt.	Sanskrit

Symbols used in the Transliteration and Translation

{}	superfluous <i>akṣara</i> (s)
[]	omitted (part of) <i>akṣara</i> (s) and word(s)
[+ + +]	corrupt sections in the manuscript, with no suggestions offered by the editor or the author
'	<i>avagraha</i> (not written in the manuscript, but added in the transliteration)

Notes

- ¹ Marasinghe splits the fourth chapter into two separate chapters, which become chapters four and five of his edition. Because he splits this chapter into two, he also emends each of the subsequent chapter colophons to accommodate this change (i.e., there are 18 chapters in his edition). Powell does not agree with his change and follows the original colophons for the subsequent chapters, giving seventeen rather than eighteen chapters. I agree with Powell; see Powell (2018, p. 95).
- ² According to the manuscript, the concluding sentence at the end of this chapter is “vṛkṣasaredavidhāno pañcamo ‘dhyāyaḥ.” Based on the contents of this chapter, Marasinghe reconstructs the title of this chapter as “mānoddeśavidhānam.” I follow his suggestion; see Marasinghe (1991, p. 18). Powell also agrees with Marasinghe; see Powell (2018, p. 95).
- ³ The two volumes covering the two subjects separately are, therefore, published under the two titles *Vāstuvidyāsāstra* and *Citrakarmasāstra* respectively; see Marasinghe (1991, p. xi).
- ⁴ Bechert only mentioned this in a private conversation with Hans Ruelius; see Ruelius (1978a).
- ⁵ Regarding the studies on the *Śāriputra-bimbamāna*, see Coomaraswamy (1908, pp. 150–63), Ruelius (1974), and Marasinghe (1994). Regarding the research on the *Ālekhyalakṣaṇa*, see Ruelius (1974).
- ⁶ Marasinghe (1991, pp. 8–9). The translation of passages from the *Citrakarmasāstra* is based on Marasinghe’s translation, with some modifications and explanatory notes added by the author. The same approach is followed throughout the article.
- ⁷ For a discussion of the date of the *Kāśyapaśilpa*, see Ślaczka (2007, pp. 18–19).
- ⁸ Shastri and Bhat (1946, pp. 518–21). The Sanskrit text reads: *paramānnamodakaudanadadhipalallopikādibhir bhakṣyair madyair kusumair dhūpair gandhaisca taruṃ samabhyarcya. surapitṛpiśācarākṣasabhujagāsurasaganavināyakādyanām, kṛtvā rātrau pūjām vṛkṣam*

saṃspr̥śya ca brūyāt. arcārthamamukasya tvaṃ devasya parikalpitaḥ, namaste vṛkṣa pūjeyaṃ vidhivat sampragr̥hyatām. yāniha bhūtāni vasanti tāni balim̄ gr̥hītvā vidhivat prayuktam, anyatra vāsam̄ parikalpayantu kṣamantu tānyadya namo 'stu tebhyaḥ.

- ⁹ It is interesting to note that the names of the four śaktis (i.e., Tārā, Locanā, Prajñā, and Māmukhī) here are slightly different from the regular four consorts (i.e., Tārā, Locanā, Pāṇḍarā, Māmakī) in the vajradhātu maṇḍala in Buddhism in North India and Nepal as well as China's Xizang. The text reads *catuṣkoṇe catuṣakti[r] iśānādīpratiṣṭhā*, literally meaning "the four śaktis are placed at four corners beginning with Iśāna (i.e., Iśa)". Marasinghe interpreted "Iśāna" as the quadrant of Iśa; see Marasinghe (1989, p. 185). According to Powell, "Iśa" here refers to the northeast, rather than to the quadrant of Iśa. Otherwise, the four śaktis would be placed on the periphery of the maṇḍala, at quite a distance from their male counterparts, which is possible but unlikely; see Powell (2018, p. 48). I agree with Powell's suggestion.
- ¹⁰ The manuscript reads "mukhye añjanaṃ vidhātavya ditauttaram bhavet", but E.W. Marasinghe reads "mukhye añjanaṃ vidhātavya[n] ditāvantaritam bhavet". He proposes "antaritam" to be red lead; see Marasinghe (1991, pp. 50–51).
- ¹¹ The manuscript reads "pañcaciṅkane", while Marasinghe emends it to "pañcaciṅkanam". Marasinghe's translation states: gold as well as the five symbols should be deposited in the center of the diagram; see Marasinghe (1991, pp. 52–53). I follow the reading in the manuscript and interpret "pañcaciṅkane" as a *bahuvrīhi* compound (one having five symbols), describing "cakramadhye".
- ¹² Marasinghe (1991, pp. 54–55). The deities here are clear, though not mentioned by name. The only deities that might be missing are the four female consorts.
- ¹³ Regarding the definition of "ratnanyāsa" and the associated ritual in the *Devvyāmata*, see Ślāczka (2017).
- ¹⁴ Similar stone deposit boxes have also been discovered in Hindu and Buddhist ruins in Java; see Deraniyagala (1978).
- ¹⁵ In the manuscript, this ingredient is first referred to as "pusāraka" and later "ikṣara". Marasinghe emends the latter to "pusāraka", aligning it with the first enumeration; see Marasinghe (1991, p. 60). Powell suggests the reading "ikṣura", which likely refers to the Saccharum Spontaneum, a common grass in the Indian subcontinent and Sri Lanka; see Powell (2018, p. 97). I concur with Powell's interpretation.
- ¹⁶ The manuscript reads "rataniryāsa", while Marasinghe emends it to "rasaniryāsa"; see Marasinghe (1991, p. 60). Powell suggests the reading "ratnanyāsa"; see Powell (2018, p. 97). I agree with Marasinghe.
- ¹⁷ The manuscript reads: "nābhicakradamāśṭho ca sarveṣārmāstabandhanam", which Marasinghe emends to read: "nābhicakraṃ daśāṣṭaṅga sarveṣāmaṣṭhibandhanam." Both readings are confusing; see Marasinghe (1991, pp. 64–65).
- ¹⁸ Marasinghe (1991, pp. 162–63). In the third step, Marasinghe literally translated the *patraka* into "leaf-design". According to the revised and enlarged edition of Apte's dictionary (p. 958), "patraka" also means drawing lines or figures on the body as a decoration. Chapter 16 is about the coloring of a clay image; thus, the latter meaning better reflects the context's intended meaning. I take the latter one in my translation. For the link to the dictionary, see https://dsal.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/app/apte_query.py?page=958 (date of access: 30 December 2023).
- ¹⁹ Regarding the date of the *Vimānārcanākalpa*, see Rao (1914, p. 56), Kramrisch (1946, p. 261), Banerjea (1956, p. 26), and Colas (2019).
- ²⁰ Regarding these three editions and an introduction to the *Vimānārcanākalpa*, see Colas (1984).
- ²¹ I have published a Chinese article conducting a textual comparative study of these chapters in the *Citrakarmāśāstra* and the *śaiva* texts. However, in my previous article, the *vaikhānsana* texts were not examined, and the study did not investigate the current practices in Hindu image making; see Wu (2021). In this part of my article, I build upon my previous research by including the *vaikhānsana* texts for comparison and focusing on the relationship between the texts and contemporary practices.
- ²² Vajhe (1926, p. 250); Ganapatisāstrī (1929, pp. 87–88). For a discussion of the eight-fold pastes in the *śaiva* texts, see Varma (1970, pp. 11–12).
- ²³ Ganapatisāstrī (1929, p. 88). A similar method is also mentioned in the *Kāśyapaśilpa*; see Vajhe (1926, p. 250).
- ²⁴ http://gretel.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretel/1_sanskrit/4_rellit/saiva/gorst1pu.htm (date of access: 1 October 2023). For an introduction to the *Gorakṣaśataka*, see Mallinson (2012).
- ²⁵ For a full discussion of this section in both the *Kāśyapaśilpa* and the *Śilparatna*, see Varma (1970, pp. 16–18).
- ²⁶ Colors in the *Citrakarmāśāstra* are associated with the three *guṇas* (i.e., *sāttvika*, *rājasa*, *tāmasa*), aligning with the definition of colors in the Sāṃkhya school of Hindu philosophy; see Marasinghe (1991, p. 160). Notably, this viewpoint is rejected by Buddhists, as evident in certain Chinese Buddhist texts from the Tang Dynasty. However, the author/compiler of the *Citrakarmāśāstra* embraces this perspective, revealing non-Buddhist influences on the text; see Wu (2021).
- ²⁷ Vajhe (1926, p. 254), Ganapatisāstrī (1929, p. 93). For a discussion on their resemblances, see Wu (2021).
- ²⁸ <http://www.westmichiganhindutemple.org/wmhthevents-sep-pranaprathishta.htm> (date of access: 1 October 2023).
- ²⁹ Richard Clarke, "Culmination of Kumbabishekam of Gowthama Maharishi Temple in Tiruvannamalai", <https://richardarunachala.wordpress.com/2013/01/10/culmination-of-kumbabishekam-of-gowthama-maharishi-temple-in-tiruvannamalai/> (date of access: 1 October 2023).
- ³⁰ For an introduction to the Sanskrit manuscripts and the author, see Tanemura (2004).
- ³¹ Regarding the function of the *indra*-post, see de Silva (1978).

- ³² For a full discussion on the use of the mirror in Buddhist image consecration rituals, see Swearer (2007, pp. 212–22). The use of a mirror is also a tradition preserved in Hindu image consecration rituals, with a symbolism different from that of Buddhism, although not mentioned in the aforementioned Hindu texts. According to Hindu mythology, the well-being of the world is believed to depend on the gaze of the deities. This is why the all-seeing gods are said never to close their eyes. Worshipers, in turn, must keep their eyes open to make reciprocal contact with the divine. The mirror, therefore, serves as a medium used in Hindu rituals and incorporated into religious images to help manufacture and propagate *darśan*: the sense of ritual connectedness with the divine through the gaze; see Babb (1981).
- ³³ Marasinghe (1991, pp. 64–65). It is interesting to note that the total number of *nādis* is 27,000 in both the *Kāśyapaśilpa* and the *Śilparatna*.

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