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From the Agamas

How to Establish a Village

Steps for laying out a town and rituals of first entry to the new homes

The following text is from the Kriya Pada of Kamika Agama, chapter 33, entitled "Directions for the solemn entry into the allocated parts of the village and the houses." Chapter 30 (July, 2011) detailed the layout of a village. This chapter explains how a village should be created and first settled.

Now I will tell you the sequential activities related to the establishment of the village and to the first entry into the new houses and other buildings: 1) systematic analysis of the appropriate time to begin; 2) ascertaining of exact site; 3) examination of the site; 4) offering of bali (such as cooked rice) prior to taking possession the selected land; 5) taking possession of the site; 6) executing the preliminary activities such as ploughing the selected land, sowing the seeds and so forth (to determine the fertility of the soil); 7) erection of a post to ascertain the true east and true north (by observing the shadow of the sun); 8) selection of a suitable vastu mandala (architectural pattern) to be applied to the proposed village and houses; 9) establishment of a rectangular pattern of east-west lines and north-south lines; 10) offering bali to the vastu Deities (governing architecture); 11) planning of various roads and streets and of various types of houses to be constructed along the proper roads and streets; 12) laying of foundations in appropriate places and construction of buildings.

Now I will explain the process for the first solemn entry of the king (or his representative) into the village and other settlements, houses and such others, the large edifices known as malika, pavilions, halls, kitchen and other such buildings.

On the occasion of his first entry, the king should donate land and valuable gifts to the highly qualified brahmins. These are brahmins who are always good-minded, who control their senses, who are compassionate, who hold firmly to their vows,

who live with spouses, sons and daughters, who know how to behave properly in all situations, and whose birth stars are compatible to the birth star for the village (as determined by vastu). They worship the Deity, fire and guru without fail and know well the tattvas (basic principles of creation) enshrined in the Vedas and the Vedangas. They have been well trained in the recital of the Vedas and are pleasing and gracious to look at. They have elaborately studied the Saiva scriptures and are bereft of distressing factors, such as poverty, indigence and so forth. They take delight in performing exalted and supreme deeds and are highly motivated in the practice of religious austerities.

Having invited such highly qualified brahmins and appointed them to be the honored recipients of the donations, he should make a record of certain features related to their identity. These ten particulars are to be inscribed in copper or on stone: 1) the name of their region of origin, 2) the name of their birthplace, 3) their gotra (family lineage), 4) their sutra (Vedic lineage), 5) any marks of identity visible on the right side, 6) any marks visible on the left side, 7) their educational qualifications, 8) their sub-division of the caste, 9) the name of their father and mother, and 10) honors received.

Having prepared such a record, he should donate valuable things in a careful and systematic manner, each time pouring water from his right hand. First, he should make the gift of land, then he should donate household tools and utensils. For the ladies related to those brahmins, he should donate ornaments, food-grains, clothes, milk-yielding cows, and suitable female servants and male servants.

The brahmins who do not have faith in God, scriptures and self-disciplines, who are harsh and unkind, malicious, who abuse the Deity, fire ritual and guru, who have violently plundered the assets dedicated to God, as well as the brahmins who are in the company of traitors and rebellious men, are to be abandoned by the king in such activity of making grants and donations.

The solemn and first entry should not be performed in the houses that are not yet provided with doors, which are not covered with enough roofing, in which the offering of bali for the vastu Deities had not been duly performed and in which some of its parts had already been used. Without any hesitation, such houses are to be avoided for the first entry, since they will yield misfortunes to the occupants. The owners should arrange for the entry of the qualified brahmins into their newly built houses according to their capacity. The owner should make his first entry in an

auspicious day, synchronizing with a lunar mansion or a zodiacal house favorable to him.