

*Devyāmata*, chapter 85: the foundation (mūlapāda) and base (pīṭha), translation.

85.1 Next I will describe the features of the foundation (mūlapāda). Having previously installed the stones, one should make it level with the stone course (śilātala).

85.2 It is the breadth of the temple, my dear, including the temple base (jagatī), the wall projections (rathakas), the projections at the parrot beak (prāgrīva) and pavilion (maṇḍapa). It is aligned with the centre cord (madhyasūtra).

85.3 Making it aligned at the borders (dhārā) and corners, and with every cord (sūtra), the wise man should construct the foundation (mūlapāda) with stones or bricks.

85.4 For each construction, one should make a single, complete foundation (sarvamūlapāda), aligned with the borders, stable and without any gaps.

85.5 The wise man should then commence the base layer (pīṭhabandha), constructing it so that it is level with the ground (bhūlatalasama) and level with the foundation (mūlapādasama).

85.6 In a stone [construction] the base (pīṭha) is stone, and on a stone foundation (mūlapāda). In a brick [construction] the base (pīṭha) for the building (āyatana) should be brick.

85.7 Making it aligned with the cords and borders, and with the foundation (mūlapāda) too, one should build the temple along the centre cord (madhyasūtra), as before.

85.8 One should place the cords in the cardinal directions (diksūtra) by means of the previously established fish-shaped intersection of two arcs (matsyadvaya). After that, one should arrange the parts of the temple according to that cord.

85.1d śīla: The long ā of śīlā has been shortened for metre.

85.9 Having made the foundation (mūlapāda) level, firm, carefully measured. It includes the base (jagatī), wall projections (rathakas), projection at the parrot beak (prāgrīva) and pavilion (maṇḍapa),

85.10 And having made it aligned with the borders and corners, and altogether level, one should shape the base layer (pīṭhabandha) according to the cord path, as before.

85.11 Hear about the characteristics of the base (pīṭha), designated best [middling and least] in turn, according to temple size and base height.

85.12 [The base may be] termed square, round, 8-cornered, rectangular, or oval.

85.13 There are three types of base for all temples, according to their size. Hear about these next.

85.14 The best base is half the temple in height. The middling one is  $\frac{1}{4}$  less than that. The least is half the best.

85.15 The best base is suitable for Brahmā, Viṣṇu or Īśvara. [The base] for Īśvara may be as desired. [Bases] for other [deities] are of the least sort.

85.16 Knowing thus the height of the base according to the temple size, one should construct the base (pīṭha), including the main portion of the base (jagatī) and projections (rathakas).

85.14a ucchrayeṇottamaṃ: At both manuscripts, N and M, the spelling given is utsrayeṇottamaṃ. This unconventional spelling reflects a similarity in pronunciation between cchra and tsra.

85.16cd tataḥ saṃcinayet pīṭhaṃ jagatīrathakānvitam: Here we face the difficulty of the two terms that have been used for a base – pīṭha and jagatī - being put to use in the same instruction, the pīṭha being said to include the jagatī. At times like this I wonder whether I should be distinguishing between the two terms more carefully. Here, I have got around the issue by deeming the jagatī to be the main portion of the base, while the pīṭha is the entire base, including the projections and pavilions.

85.17 The wise man should construct the base (pīṭha) for each [temple type], aligned at the edges. Having thus constructed it well, one should commence a second construction.

85.18 At the Brahma cell [in the vāstu plan] (brahmabhāga), one should carefully make the height of the Brahma stone (brahmaśilā) equal to that of the base (pīṭha), above and below.

85.19 Then, my dear, making the height of the Kūrma stone (kūrmaśilā) equal to that of the hole (śvabhra), one should install the Kūrma stone in the centre.

85.20 Having ascertained the height of the brahmaśilā, at the Brahma cell, one should subtract the portion to be subtracted and install [the kūrmaśilā] in the central position (garbha).

85.21 One should carefully install the Brahma stone in the centre, on top of the kūrma stone, at its centre.

85.22 The stone is stable, level, excellent. Next, one should place the base stone (pīṭhaśilā) on its centre.

85.23 Then one should carefully fashion the base layer (pīṭhabandha), the height of the base (piṇḍa), followed by a square cavity, aligned at the edge and corners (paridhikarṇasammita).

85.24 One should make the base (pīṭha) thus: level, equal, with a cavity. Then, over the base, one should carefully lay the cord of the cardinal directions (diksūtra).

85.25 The foundation (mūlapāda) and base layer (pīṭhabandha) have been described. The features of the Brahma cord (brahmasūtra), above the base (pīṭha), are described next, my dear.

Chapter 85: the features of the foundation (mūlapāda) and base (pīṭha).