

TEMPLE DESIGN IN SIX EARLY ŚAIVA SCRIPTURES

Critical Edition and Translation of the *prāsādalakṣaṇa*-
portions of the *Bṛhatkālottara*, *Devyāmata*, *Kiraṇa*,
Mohacūrottara, *Mayasaṃgraha* & *Piṅgalāmata*



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This book is a contribution to the history of Śaiva temple-construction that furnishes for the first time an edition and translation of prescriptions given in some of the earliest known Sanskrit sources. The six works represented in this volume are all scriptures of the Mantramārga (*tantras*) transmitted to us in early (tenth- to thirteenth-century) manuscripts that have survived in the Kathmandu valley, and all of them, with the exception of the *Piṅgalāmata*, belong to the Śaivasiddhānta. As to the provenance of the texts themselves, the present state of our knowledge does not allow us to be certain, but none of them seems to have been composed in the Tamil-speaking South. This is significant because hitherto treatments of the architecture and iconography of temples have tended to be heavily skewed towards South Indian *tantras* of the second millennium. This is partly because many of these have been made more accessible in recent decades by the work of the French institutions of research in Pondicherry (the *Raurava*, *Ajita*, and *Mayamata*, for instance). But the tendency to give weight to the testimony of such sources was evident already in Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography* (1914), long before critical editions of āgamic literature had begun to appear from Pondicherry. And yet it is clear that the iconographic themes that such literature prescribes were unknown before the construction of Chola-period temples in the Tamil-speaking South. The disconnect is similar for architectural prescriptions too. This ground-breaking book for the first time brings together, edits and translates the prescriptions for temple-types from six *tantras* that predate Chola-period norms and that hail from more northerly regions.

About the author

Libbie Mills teaches at the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto. Her principal research interest is in *pratiṣṭhā* texts. She is currently engaged in two group-research projects: "The Nāgara Tradition of Temple Architecture: Continuity, Transformation, Renewal", funded by the Leverhulme Trust, and "Tamil Temple Towns: Conservation and Contestation", funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council.