

# Two Lizards in Kanchipuram's Varadarāja Temple<sup>1</sup>

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The Varadarāja temple is the largest Viṣṇu temple in the South Indian temple town of Kanchipuram. It is located at the south-eastern part of the city (figure 1). This temple is visited by hundreds of pilgrims every day, and on special holidays the number of pilgrims increases into the tens of thousands. However, many pilgrims visit this temple not only to have the auspicious sight (*darśana*) of the main deity Varadarāja, but also to see and touch a high relief of the “golden lizards” on the ceiling in the north-eastern corner of the corridor (*prākāra*) around the temple's *sanctum sanctorum* (figure 2).<sup>2</sup> These representations of two house lizards (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) are so widely known that many pilgrims visit the Varadarāja temple mainly to see and touch them. The lizards draw such huge crowds that the temple administration has set up several sign boards in Tamil, Telugu and English, guiding the pilgrims not only to the main deity, but also to the lizards (figure 3). Even though hardly any of the pilgrims today would want to miss these lizards, and many even specifically visit this temple to see and touch them, it is particularly striking that most publications on the Varadarāja temple and its architecture hardly mention them at all.<sup>3</sup>

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2 This *prākāra* is known as *vaiyamālikai* (Raman 1975, 44), meaning “the palace [of god Viṣṇu] on this earth.”

3 Raman (1975) does not mention the lizards at all, and Varada Tatacarya (1978, 55) only briefly mentions their existence. Nagaswamy (2011) does not mention them either, yet Rao (2008, 106) remarks: “The golden and silver lizards installed here are considered very auspicious and no devotee leaves the premises without touching them. The legend has it that Indra after getting released from the curse of Goddess Sarasvatī, got these silver and golden lizards (who were witnesses to the ordeal) made and consecrated them in the Temple.”

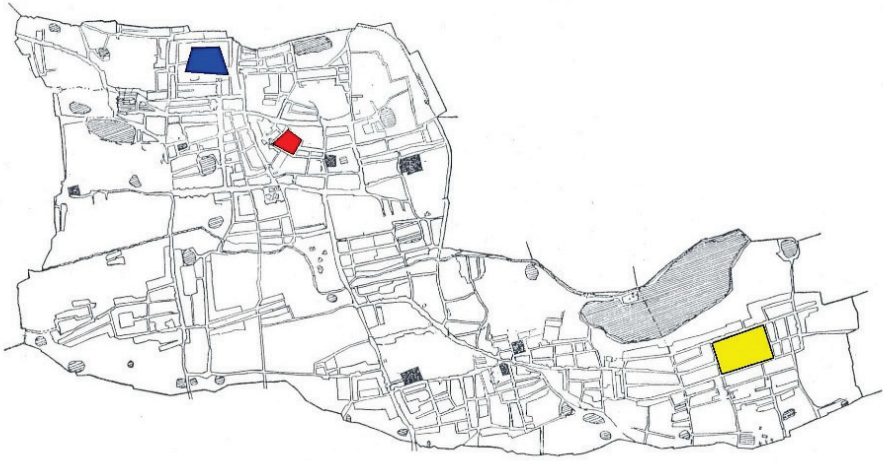


Fig. 1: Map of Kanchipuram with the Varadarāja temple marked in yellow; adapted from Porcher 1985.



Fig. 2: The lizards as they are installed in the Varadarāja temple (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2017).



Fig. 3: Sign board in the Varadarāja temple guiding pilgrims to the lizards  
(photo by Ute Hüsken, 2010)

These two lizards are a ca. fifty to sixty centimeters long brass molding of a lizard, and a ca. fifteen centimeters long silver plaque<sup>4</sup> representing a lizard. Both moldings are—along with copper moldings of the sun and the moon—installed on a ca. five cm thick wooden plank, which is attached to the ceiling in the north-eastern corner of the building at the centre of the Varadarāja temple (figure 4). It is not clear what one would find under this wooden plank, and it is also not known when this plank was installed. We know, however, that the wooden plank with the lizards along with moldings of a sun and a moon must have already been at the temple's ceiling in 1937, when the Tamil text *Taṅkappallikaḷ Mahātmiyam* (TPM, see below) was published, as the current setup is described in the text's foreword.<sup>5</sup> It might be that a high relief

4 The silver lizard-plaque resembles the plaques that are at times offered to deities, when one has experienced the fall of a lizard on one of one's limbs. Thurston (1912, 162) for example reports that "the lizard, associated with the name of Shiva, is regarded as sacred. It is never intentionally killed, and, if accidentally hurt or killed, an image of it in gold or silver is presented by high caste Hindus to a Shiva temple."

5 TPM, pp. 4–5: "In the north-eastern side of this corridor (*prākāra*), there is a pavilion called

of a lizard on the ceiling has been covered by the current installation, possibly to protect the integrity of a stone lizard underneath, or to highlight this specific lizard, when it had become an attraction to pilgrims in the first half of the twentieth century (for details, see below).<sup>6</sup> Even though only the bigger of the two lizards is made from brass (and thus could be seen as “golden”), both lizards together are generally known as “golden lizards,” both in English and in Tamil (*taṅkappalli*).<sup>7</sup>

## Lizards in South Indian Temples

In South India, it is quite common to find high reliefs of lizards or other animals on temple walls or ceilings. Branfoot (2000, 207) says that high-relief animals – he mentions birds, monkeys and lizards – on walls and especially on curved eaves of temples and their pavilions are a “common and distinctively Nayaka-period feature of Tamil temple architecture.” Lizards, snakes, fish, and sometimes frogs are in fact often found as high reliefs on South Indian temple ceilings, walls, and above temple

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*kaccikku vāyittāṅ maṅṭapam*. In this area, there are two lizard figures to the north-eastern side, next to the pavilion, made out of gold and mounted on a wooden plank, attached to the ceiling” (*inta prakārattil īcānya pākattil kaccikku vāyittāṅ maṅṭapam eṅkiṛa tirumaṅṭapam oṅru irukkiṛatu. inta maṅṭapattirku aṭutta vaṭa kiḷakku pākattil palli uruvaṅkaḷ iraṅṭu taṅkattāl ceyyappaṭtu marappalakaiyil cērttu mēlē stāpaṅam ceyyappaṭ ṭirukkiṅraṅa*). On page 5, the text TPM adds: “As a sign that this will happen as long as there is sun and moon, the sun and moon are made of gold and are found on the plank. We can see this with our own eyes” (*itu cūrya cantirāl uḷḷavaraiyil navataperum [read: naṭaipeṛum] enpatarku attākṣiyāka, cūrya cantirālaiyum taṅkattāl ceyyappaṭtu appalakaiyilēyē stāpitam ceyyappaṭṭirukkiṛatai, kaṅ kūṭākap pārkkalām*).

6 Close to the wooden plank there is in fact a small lizard in high relief on the stone ceiling, just to the side of the “silver lizard” (figure 2). Judging from this relief’s poor state of conservation, it seems not unlikely that the temple authorities (or those who ran the “lizard *darśana*”) at some point decided to add the silver lizard to the plank, as the stone relief suffers from the constant touch of the devotees. Concern over the plank with the lizards’ integrity is addressed in a newspaper report from November 28, 2006. On that day, the newspaper *Daily Thanthi* reported that the golden lizard had been damaged in the area of the eyes, which had created tension among the devotees. This report refers to the *Kāmākṣivilāsa*’s version of the lizard narrative (see below), namely that the god Indra provided the lizards with the power to relieve the devotees who touch them form all sins and cure them from all illnesses. The bigger lizard was then replaced by a lizard made of *pañcaloha* (an alloy containing five metals; see *Dinamalar*, December 2, 2007). This *Dinamalar* report also claims that the lizards had been installed “ten years ago” (here, it remains uncertain what time frame this statement refers to).

7 Anna Seastrand, in her online presentation on July 1, 2021 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jvslG-Bywkc>) refers to a mural of Varadarāja in the Srivaikuntham temple (one of the Navatirupatis) in the far South of Tamil Nadu. Here, a lizard is depicted along with the main deity. At the time of the creation of this mural, the efficacy of the lizard(s) in the Varadarāja temple must already have been known transregionally.



entrances (figures 5–7).<sup>8</sup> In Hampi,<sup>9</sup> one also finds a high relief motif on pillars, in which a lizard (or a crocodile or iguana?) worships a *liṅga* with a garland (figure 9). This, however, seems to refer to a specific Purāṇic story and needs to be distinguished from other depictions of lizards on walls, ceilings, curved eaves, or on the beam over the temple entrance.<sup>10</sup> In many instances, these high relief sculpted animals are displayed without any further visual context on the temple walls or the ceilings.

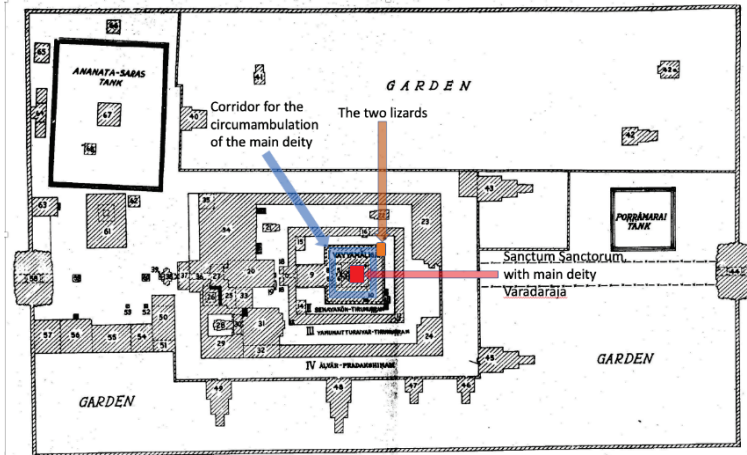


Fig. 4: Ground plan of the Varadarāja temple (adapted from Raman 1975).

- 8 Yet it seems that for example the high relief aquatic animals on the lower part of temple walls in Hampi (figure 7) might refer to the churning of the milk-ocean, similar to those found in the bas-relief scene of the churning of the milk-ocean at the Southern side of the Angkor Wat temple (figure 8).
- 9 For example, on a pillar of the Kadelakalu Gaṇeśa shrine, and on a pillar in the Virūpākṣa temple in Hampi.
- 10 Collins (1976) analyses the motif of a lizard (or an iguana) in high relief, depicted sitting on the beam of door in Angkor. She identifies these lizards as “visual clues referring to the motive of ‘witty conceit’”, based on her analysis of the scenes. These might, she argues, refer to the *bhikṣāyatanana* legend, and/or the Rāvaṇa-and-Indra legend, and to a narrative motive from the Jātakas. It would be worthwhile investigating whether such lizards are in fact visual clues in South Indian temple architecture, referring to certain mythological themes. This, however, is beyond the scope of my research. It is, however, striking how often one finds these animals on South Indian temple walls or ceilings. Thus far, I have not come across a conclusive explanation of their presence, which goes beyond their “decorative” aspects. However, at least in contemporary South India, house lizards are feared (as poisonous and potential omen), yet their presence in the house is also auspicious (Frembgen 1996). Do these lizards make the temple as house of the deity “complete”? Over temple entrances, two snakes together with a sun or/and a moon represent a solar or lunar eclipse (figure 10). As a crocodile (Skt. *graha*) is a “snatcher” just like the planets, it is certainly possible that the depiction of a reptile (lizard, crocodile, or even a *makara*) is understood as referring to a solar or lunar eclipse (see Guy 2019, 319), as suggested by Pankaja (2020).



Fig. 5: High relief of a fish, a lizard and a frog at the ceiling of the Dīprakāśa Perumāḷ temple in Kanchipuram (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2018).



Fig. 6: High relief of a fish at the wall near the entrance gate of the Kṛṣṇa temple in Hampi (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2018).





Fig. 7: Diverse aquatic animals on one of Hampi's temple walls (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2018).



Fig. 8: Fish, crocodiles and other aquatic animals in the scene depicting the churning of the milk-ocean at Angkor Wat (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2020).



Fig. 9: High relief on a pillar of a lizard (crocodile?) worshipping a *linga* in Hampi (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2018).

## The Two Lizards in the Varadarāja Temple

Whatever their significance in other contexts might be, the two lizards in the north-eastern corner of the *vaiyamāḷikai prākāra* in the Varadarāja temple have come to extraordinary fame, thereby also contributing substantially to the local temple economy. For example, for many visitors to the famous Venkateśvara temple in Tirumalai (Andhra Pradesh), the pilgrimage is not complete if they did not visit the golden lizards in Kanchipuram, too. The same holds true for pilgrims from Andhra Pradesh to the Ayyappan shrine in Sabarimala in Kerala. In general, even if people do not come specifically to touch the lizards, most people would not miss the chance to do this once they are in the Varadarāja temple. One important reason for this practice is that touching these lizards is understood to remove the negative effects of a house lizard falling from the ceiling or wall and touching the body of a person (more on this below).





Fig. 10: High relief of two snakes with the sun on the ceiling of a *mandapa* of the Pavalavanna Perumāl temple in Kanchipuram (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2018).

## Questions Addressed in this Contribution

Even though the two “golden lizards” are hardly ever mentioned in literature on Kanchipuram or on the Varadarāja temple, two of Kanchipuram’s temple legends (*sthalamāhātmyas*) in Sanskrit each devote one full chapter to them. Taking the textual, oral, performative, and material aspects of the “golden lizards” in the Varadarāja temple as the basis of the following considerations, this contribution outlines:

- how competing narratives relating to a specific religiously significant place in the temple exist side by side;
- how this significant place impacts the textual narratives rather than the other way around, and
- how at the same time so-called “folk religiosity” is integrated into “elite (sanskritic) religion” in both texts and in actual ritual practice.



Fig. 11: Pillars in the *vaiyamālikai prākāra* (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2015).

## Dating the Lizard Reliefs

The wooden plank with the “golden lizards” is installed on the ceiling of the first corridor (*vaiyamālikai prākāra*) leading around the *sanctum sanctorum* in the central building of the Varadarāja temple. This central building is called “the hill” (Skt. *-giri*, *-śaila*, Tam. *malai*), as it is two-storey high. According to Raman (1975, 149) it is likely that this building was constructed during the reign of the Cōla king Rājādirāja I (eleventh century; “middle Chola style”). The *vaiyamālikai prākāra* is the closed pillared verandah which constitutes the pilgrims’ path for the clockwise circumambulation (*pradakṣiṇapātha*) of the temple’s central chamber (*garbhagrha*). This *prākāra* is mentioned in the list of teacher-student succession (*guruparamparā*) of Piṅṇalakiya Perumāḷ Jīyar (thirteenth century).<sup>11</sup> Yet a good part of the enclosure might date from the Vijayanagara time: Raman points out that the pillars of this

11 “Piṅṇalakiya Perumāḷ Jīyar is traditionally said to be Nampiḷḷai’s disciple, hence a co-disciple of Periyavāccāṅ Piḷḷai and Vaṭakkuttiruvīti Piḷḷai (Piḷḷai Lokācārya’s father)” writes Suganya Anandakichenin in an email communication (February 17, 2021). I thank Dr. Suganya Anandakichenin for sharing her knowledge about Piṅṇalakiya Perumāḷ Jīyar with me.

*prākāra* are of Vijayanagara type (Raman 1975, 44) (figure 11). Accordingly, the “golden lizards” (or high reliefs of lizards on this part of the ceiling) might have been part of the *prākāra* since the Vijayanagara times, likely not earlier.

### The Lizards in Kanchipuram's Sanskrit *Sthalamāhātmyas*

The popularity and rituals connected to these two lizards do not seem to be just a modern phenomenon, as they are dealt with in two of the city's sectarian *sthalamāhātmyas* in Sanskrit.<sup>12</sup> These two texts deal with the origin, the location, the attributed significance, and with the rituals connected to these lizards. However, the two narratives—each encompassing a full chapter in their respective text—do not have much in common and it remains uncertain whether the respective “lizard chapters” have been part of the main texts of these two Sanskrit *sthalamāhātmyas* from the beginning, or whether they have been added to the main text later.

### The Lizard Narrative in the Vaiṣṇava *Kāñcīmāhātmya* (KM(V))

As the two lizards are in the Varadarāja temple, it is not surprising that the *Kāñcīmāhātmya* of Vaiṣṇava sectarian affiliation (KM(V); *Kāñcīmāhātmya*, 1906) dedicates an entire chapter to the two lizards. In the second to last of its thirty-two chapters (chapter 31), the story of the lizards is detailed in fifty-two verses. However, the preceding chapter 30 ends by saying: “Thus I have narrated to you, o king, the majesty of the eighteen places of the one who is armed with the bow Śārṅga (= Viṣṇu) in Kāñcī, in *satyavrataḥsetra*. For these eighteen places are indeed mentioned in the hall of the great Brahmā's horse-sacrifice, o lord of kings.”<sup>13</sup> With these two verses the text refers to and summarizes the major narrative motif of the KM(V): in order to make Viṣṇu appear before him, god Brahmā performs a horse sacrifice (*aśvamedha*) in Kanchipuram, thereby transforming the area into a sacrificial site. Since with this statement the major part of this temple legend is concluded, it is not unlikely that the following chapters, that is, chapters 31 and 32, constitute later additions to the main text of this *sthalamāhātmya*. The last chapter of the KM(V) (chapter 32) is very short. It consists of only twenty-five verses and briefly narrates the origin of the Palar river (*kṣīranadī*), in which Śiva's bull Nandi plays a crucial role (KM(V) 32.1–

12 For a detailed overview over Kanchipuram's *sthalamāhātmyas*, see Buchholz's contribution to this volume. Like other genres of mythological literature, temple legends present themselves as timeless divine revelation, thus obliterating all traces of their human authors. This “authorlessness” of the texts makes it difficult, if not impossible, to date them with precision, and also accounts for the fluid nature of their content: while being handed on, temple legends were altered and were thus transmitted in numerous vastly divergent recensions.

13 KM(V) 30.73–74: *evam aṣṭādaśasthānamāhātmyam śārṅgadhanvanah | kāñcyām satyavrata-ḥsetre kathitam te mayā nṛpa || aśvamedhasya śālāyām brahmaṇah parameṣṭhinah | sthānāny etāni rājendra proktāny aṣṭādaśaiva hi ||*.

10). In addition, ten verses in this chapter refer to three Śiva temples: Vṛṣabheśa (KM(V) 32.11–14), Puṇyakoṭīśa (KM(V) 32.15–17ab), and Śānteśa (KM(V) 32.17cd–20ab).<sup>14</sup> These three temples are then called “Rudra’s places in Kāñcī” at the end of the chapter (KM(V) 32.20cd).<sup>15</sup> The entire chapter therefore might also well have been added to the main text as an afterthought, since chapters 1 to 30 deal with Vaiṣṇava temples and *tīrthas* in Kanchipuram, and mention Śaiva temples and *tīrthas* only in the context of these Vaiṣṇava narratives. Another indication that points towards a later addition of the “lizard chapter” to the main text of the KM(V) is the specific narrative framing of this chapter. This chapter differs from the other chapters in the KM(V), as it is framed similar to the frame story of the entire KM(V): similar to chapter one, chapter 31 starts with a discussion among Ṛṣis about an important aspect of universal rights and duties (*dharma*). No other chapter of the KM(V) starts with such a frame story. While the Ṛṣis in chapter one discuss which religious acts done by humans are most significant, as they imply that Viṣṇu grants them liberation (*mokṣa*),<sup>16</sup> here in chapter 31 the god Indra asks the Ṛṣis, which of the four stages of life (*āśrama*) is most important.<sup>17</sup> A dispute among the Ṛṣis on this matter then provides the background to the lizard narrative (see below). As such, chapter 31 could as well be a stand-alone *sthalamāhātmya*, as its content does not build on or even relate to the narratives that precede it.

Chapter 31 of the KM(V) (for the printed text, see Appendix 1) begins with Indra asking the Ṛṣis, which of the four stages of life (*āśrama*) is most important. While

14 A shrine named Vṛṣabheśvara is mentioned in the forty-first chapter of the Śaiva *Kāñcīmāhātmya* (KM(Ś); 1967) and is located in the fourth prakāra of the Ekāmbareśvara temple. However, according to the KM(V), Vṛṣabheśa is located north of *Hastīśaila* (Varadarāja), yet at the shore of the Palar river (KM(V) 32.12: *uttare hastīśailasya kṣīranadyās taṭe śubhe | samsthāpya liṅgaṃ rudrasya pūjayāmāsa vai vṛṣaḥ* ||). As the Palar river today flows to the south of the Varadarāja temple, we might see here a reference to an older riverbed, which we also see in other passages of the *Kāñcīmāhātmya*s (for details, see Buchholz in this volume, fn. 37). Moreover, it remains unclear whether the text refers to the Vṛṣabheśa shrine in the Ekāmrānātha temple, or to another Vṛṣabheśa temple. Puṇyakoṭīśvara is described in KM(Ś) 5.1–70. This temple is located to the south-west of the Varadarāja temple. Śānteśa is neither mentioned in the KM(Ś) nor could I locate this temple in or near Kanchipuram.

15 These three Śaiva places are then said to represent 1008 (v.l.: 108) wish-fulfilling places (KM(V) 32.21).

16 KM(V) 1.7: *keneha karmanā nṛṇāṃ bhaven muktīprado hariḥ | yajñena tapasā vātha kiṃ vā dānena yātrayā* ||. In KM(V) chapter 1, Vasiṣṭha argues that any act, if done with devotion to Viṣṇu, leads to liberation (KM(V) 1.27), and that the concrete act (*tapas*, *yajña*, *tīrthyātra*, *dāna*) depends on the *yuga*. In the end, giving to Brahmins turns out to be the right way to attain *mokṣa*. Then the sages ask Vasiṣṭha about the right place, time, and person to which gifts should be given. This provides the occasion for Vasiṣṭha to praise Kanchipuram as the best of all places, starting with chapter 2 of the KM(V).

17 KM(V) 31.6: *caturnām āśramānām hi garīyān ka udāhṛtaḥ | taṃ āśramaṃ puṇyatamaṃ sunayaḥ prabruvantu me* ||.



the majority of the Ṛṣis agrees that the life stage as a householder (*gṛhasthāśrama*) is most important, Bṛhaspati not only disagrees and insists that the life stage as a Vedic student (*brahmacāryāśrama*) is the best, but he also calls the other Ṛṣis fools (*mūḍha*), as they do not consider the meaning of the *śāstras* (KM(V) 31.10–11). Enraged, the other Ṛṣis curse Bṛhaspati, who then is immediately born on earth as the sickly son of a poor gleaner, in a village at the shore of the Narmadā river (KM(V) 31.14–16). The following five verses (KM(V) 31.17–22) dwell on the details of the poor boy's desperate situation. As he reaches marriageable age, his desperation leads him to approach Ṛṣi Bharadvāja, who resides at the shore of river Bhāgīrathī (KM(V) 31.23). The boy tells the Ṛṣi about his fate (KM(V) 31.24–26) and explains that he wants to do severe ascetic practices (*tapas*) in order to please Viṣṇu.<sup>18</sup> Bharadvāja recognizes Bṛhaspati in the poor young man and advises him to go 1000 *krośas* to the south, to Satyavrata, which is a place dear to Viṣṇu. There he would find *hastīśaila* (the elephant hill), where Viṣṇu resides as someone who grants wishes (*varada*) to everyone. As the auspicious sight (*darśana*) of this deity has the power to relieve a person of all sins, irrespective of one's background, Ṛṣi Bharadvāja advises Bṛhaspati-as-poor-young-man to go there and to perform austerities to please Varada (KM(V) 31.30–34). In order to illustrate his claim of *hastigiri*'s salvific power, Bharadvāja then narrates the story of the two lizards. This "lizard narrative" in KM(V) 31 encompasses fifty-eight verses (KM(V) 31.36-94ab):

Upamanyu is a pious yet poor Brahmin in *kurukṣetra*. He is devoted to Viṣṇu and is married to the equally virtuous Lakṣaṇā. The couple has a small son. Although they are poor, they fulfill their ritual obligations and honor guests as gods (KM(V) 31.36–41). The small family embarks on a pilgrimage and reaches the shore of the river Godāvārī. Here, too, Upamanyu earns his living as a gleaner and with this meager income first performs the rituals and only then feeds his family and himself. One morning Upamanyu feeds his child with the "left-over" offerings. However, before he or his wife can eat, a Brahmin arrives and asks for food. Upamanyu gives this guest all the food they have, so he and his wife go hungry (KM(V) 31.42–54). When he rinses the bowl from which the Brahmin has eaten and throws the cleaning water onto the shrubs, this water with the "left-over" food of a Brahmin touches the heads of a couple of lizards living there (KM(V) 31.55–57). From this auspicious touch, the lizards' heads turn golden. They also remember their previous births and are able to communicate in human voice with Upamanyu (KM(V) 31.58–61).<sup>19</sup>

At this point the narrative explains how the couple came to be born as lizards in their current existence (KM(V) 31.62–69):

The lizards reveal that they had been king Sagara's son Asamañja and his wife, seven lives ago. As Asamañja and his wife cruelly killed children and

18 KM(V) 31.27cd: *icchāmi vā tapaḥ kartuṃ paramaṃ viṣṇutuṣṭidam*.

19 While not explicitly mentioned, it needs to be remembered here that hearing the chirping of lizards in South Asian traditions is considered an omen (see below).

also wild animals in the forest, they were reborn as animals, with their current rebirth as lizards.<sup>20</sup>

Upamanyu intends to help the lizards and therefore takes them along on his pilgrimage. However, no matter which holy place they visit,<sup>21</sup> the lizards are not relieved from their current form. Upamanyu then arrives in Prabhāsa, where he encounters Ṛṣi Mārkaṇḍeya, who he asks for help (KM(V) 31.78–80). Mārkaṇḍeya advises him to go to Kanchipuram, as “it is on this earth the most meritorious destroyer of dark *karma* and gives even *mukti* to men who have done great sins” (KM(V) 31.81). Mārkaṇḍeya advises Upamanyu to bathe the lizards in the temple tank Anantasaras, and to have them have *darśana* of Varadarāja on the “elephant hill” *hastiśaila* (KM(V) 31.82–83). Upamanyu does as told and indeed, the two lizards go to heaven, leaving their despised lizard bodies with the golden heads behind (KM(V) 31.86–87). Upamanyu, together with his family, happily thanks Viṣṇu as Varada. Varada then asks Upamanyu to install the bodies of the lizards on top of the “elephant-hill” *hastiśaila*, so that the devotees could first have *darśana* of him, and then touch the lizard couple and thus get rid of illnesses (KM(V) 31.88–92).

Now the text briefly returns to the frame story with Bṛhaspati, who had been cursed to be a poor gleaner’s son: Bṛhaspati swiftly goes to Kanchipuram, performs austerities at the shore of the temple tank Anantasaras, has *darśana* and worships Varada with devotion during the Dvāpara Yuga, and then reaches the highest abode (KM(V) 31.94cd-98a).

### The Lizard Narrative in the *Kāmākṣīvilāsa* (KV)

The text *Kāmākṣīvilāsa* (KV) is a temple legend of Kanchipuram, which represents at least in parts the perspective of the goddess Kāmākṣī.<sup>22</sup> The text encompasses fourteen chapters, and chapter 2 to 5 mainly deal with the area known as “Viṣṇu Kanchi” in this south-eastern part of the town. In the *Kāmākṣīvilāsa*, the lizards are first briefly mentioned in chapter 2: “One *aṃśa* to the east (of the four-armed [Viṣṇu]) is the pair of lizards, having a golden and a silver body, who were twice-born and installed previously [there] by Śakra (= Indra)” (KV 2.27cd–28ab). The lizards are mentioned just before some crucial details of the physical lay-out of the

20 The story of Sagara and his descendants is narrated, with variations, in the Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, and in several Purāṇas; see Bock 1984.

21 Explicitly named are Vārāṇasī, Haridvāra, Puṣkara, Prayāga, Naimiṣa, Vṛṣabhādri, Ahobala, Siṃhādri, Gokaṛṇa, Śrīśaila and Kaurma (KM(V) 31.74–75).

22 On the sectarian orientation of this text, see Ambach, this volume. Thus far, we know of only one manuscript of the text (see Buchholz, this volume, fn. 26). There exist two printed editions of the text (*Kāmākṣīvilāsa: Śrī kārveṭṭinagarasaṃsthānādhiśvarāṇāṃ śrī bommarājamūrdhābhiṣiktānāṃ nideśena śrī Mārkaṇḍeyapurānāntargataḥ śrīkāmakoṭimahimadarśaḥ śrī kāmākṣīvilāsākhyarāṃthah*, 1889, in Telugu script, and *Śrīmārkaṇḍeyapurānāntargataḥ Śrīkāmakoṭimahimadarśaḥ*, 1968, in Devanagari script).

Varadarāja temple are explained. Most of KV's chapter 3, entitled "the power of the 'elephant hill'" (*hastiśailaprabhāvaḥ*), is dedicated to the lizard story, which is narrated by Mārkaṇḍeya to king Suratha (see Appendix 2 for the printed text of KV 3). One major aim of the story is to explain how and why the place came to be in the shape of an elephant.<sup>23</sup> The narrative in chapter 3 of the KV runs as follows:

Goddess Sarasvatī and goddess Lakṣmī argue who of them can be considered superior. They ask Indra for his judgement, who picks Lakṣmī. This angers Sarasvatī and she curses Indra to take the form of an elephant (KV 3.7–15ab). Lakṣmī tries to help and tells Indra-as-elephant to go to the "daṇḍaka forest at the highest lion mountain (*siṃhācala*)". There he would find a boy named Prahā-daka, the best of Viṣṇu's devotees (KV 3.17). Prahā-daka would give him the thirty-two-syllabelled *mantra*. This *mantra* would facilitate his entry to Viṣṇu's holy area (*harikṣetra*), where the lion would relieve him of the curse (KV 3.18–21). Indra-as-elephant does as told and enters the city of Kanchipuram (KV 3.22–24). There, "Viṣṇu as Narasiṃha (the divine man-lion) went into Indra's heart in the form of thought, and bound Śakra with his lotus hands, who had taken the elephant form. He opened the heart of this elephant and out came the king of the gods" (KV 3.25–26ab). Narasiṃha makes the elephant into a hill and takes residence in this elephant mountain as a statue in Yoga posture.<sup>24</sup> Indra worships him (KV 3.26cd–28ab). However, when Indra is about to return to his own world, he sees two beautiful Brahmin boys emerging from the mountain (KV 3.28cd–29). He asks them who they are and where they come from (KV 3.30–31ab). Here begins the actual narrative pertaining to the lizards. The boys explain:

"We are two Brahmins, sons of Śṛṅgiberi, named Hema and Śukla, born in the Śāṅḍilya *gotra*, belonging to the Vaikhānasasūtra, conversant in the texts of this line, two boys and *brahmacārins*. We are students of Gautama on the Bhadra mountain." They lived in an *āśrama* in the Koṅkana area. They had been cursed by their *guru* to be lizards, as once, while they were collecting *samidh* sticks for the sacrifice, a black lizard had fallen in the pot filled with water for their *guru* Gautama's *pūjā*. As lizards they fell by accident on Indra-the-elephant's back and were taken by him to Kanchipuram. Once there, they were freed from the curse by the power of the place. They greeted Indra, venerated Varada, left their lizard form, and went home (KV 3.31cd–39).

Indra, after hearing their story, places their lizard bodies on the mountain and grants the mountain the boon that its sight be as effective as praising Viṣṇu's

23 KV 3.4-6: *hastiśailo mahāpuṇyo vartate parvatottamaḥ | gajābhidheyakaś śailo harikṣetrasya bhūṣaṇam || KV 3.4 || puṇyakoṭyāṃ nivāsena puṇyakoṭir iti śrutah | purā mahendraśāpena parvato 'bhūd gajottamaḥ || KV 3.5 || tad ahaṃ sampravakṣyāmi purāvṛttaṃ caritrakam | tasya śravaṇamātreṇa sarvapāpaiḥ pramucyate || KV 3.6 ||*

24 This part of the narrative refers to the *mūrti* of Yoganarasimha which is installed in the Varadarāja temple at the foot of the "elephant hill" (figure 12).

name during Ekādaśī. Consequently, those who come to Hastigiri seeking *mokṣa*, reach Viṣṇu's abode just by seeing this mountain (KV 3.40–45ab).

The chapter closes with a short story that exemplifies this claim: a Brahmin named Gaṇu lived a bad life as a murderer and robber. However, he nevertheless reached Viṣṇu's world after death, because he had seen the elephant mountain (KV 3.45cd–54). Mārkaṇḍeya, the narrator of the story, adds that just hearing this story brings the same results as seeing the elephant mountain (KV 3.55–57).



Fig. 12: *Utsavamūrti* of Yoganarasimha in the Varadarāja temple, during Narasiṃhajayanti (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2015).



## Comparison of KM(V) and KV

While the two texts give different accounts of the lizards' origins, they also bear commonalities: both stories agree in claiming that the sacred space of *satyavrata-kṣetra* has the power to release from curses, and that the two lizards profited from this power and escaped their curse along with their animal bodies, which they left behind.

Yet it stands out that only in the Vaiṣṇava text KM(V) the salvific power of the god Varada on the *hastiśaila* (elephant hill) in Kanchipuram, in the holy field *satyavrata-kṣetra*, is explicitly contrasted with less powerful holy places. Upamanyu takes the lizard couple to several other Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva holy sites (Vārāṇasī, Haridvāra, Puṣkara, Prayāga, Naimiṣa, Vṛṣabhādri, Ahobala, Siṃhādri, Gokarṇa, Śrīśaila and Kaurma), but only Kanchipuram has the power to release the lizards from their curse (KM(V) 31.74–75). Kanchipuram is described as giving “*mukti* even to men who have done great sins” (KM(V) 31.81). This speaks of an underlying competition of the Vaiṣṇava places in Kanchipuram with other pilgrimage sites.<sup>25</sup> The Śākta text KV shows no signs of such competition.

It is also evident that the efficacy of the rituals performed on or in connection with *hastiśaila* are represented differently in both texts. In the Vaiṣṇava version KM(V), the existence of the golden lizards on *hastiśaila* is explained, the rituals connected to them are prescribed, but their rituals are tied into and dependent on the auspicious sight (*darśana*) of Viṣṇu as Varadarāja in the centre of the temple: in the KM(V) Varada asks Upamanyu to install the bodies of the lizards on top of *hastiśaila*, so that the devotees could first have *darśana* of him, and then touch the lizard couple and thus get rid of illnesses (KM(V) 31.91–92). Consequently, the lizards' efficacy *adds* to the efficacy of Varada, but is not independent of the main deity in this temple. In contrast, in the KV, not Varadarāja, but the elephant hill is of crucial importance: seeing the elephant hill (or hearing his story) brings *mokṣa* (KV 3.41–45ab, and 3.55–57ab). Even more importantly, the KV's version narrates that the god Indra—and not Varadarāja—gave this salvific power to the mountain as a boon. Indra rather than Viṣṇu is central to the KV story: he is cursed to be an elephant, which then explains both the name and the form of the building at the centre of the Varadarāja temple.<sup>26</sup> Only the KV's version uses the lizard story to explain the name and the form of the (centre of the) temple: Hastigiri, the elephant-hill, is the elephant form that Indra left behind when he was released from his curse. In the KM(V), the “hill” is explained as being a hill (*valmīka*) made of the ground dug up by Varāha (KM(V) 2.51–52, 3.54) and the name “elephant hill” is explained as

25 In this context it might be significant that the Śaiva versions of Kanchipuram's temple legends do not mention the lizards at all—possibly ignoring them on purpose, so as to not give the Varadarāja temple undue credit.

26 This might have to do with Indra's mythical white elephant Airāvata, although he is not explicitly mentioned here.

referring to the many elephants that roamed the woods in this area, and by reference to the *gajendramokṣa* story (KM(V) 3.55–57)<sup>27</sup>, which is an important narrative connected to Kanchipuram’s Aṣṭabhuja temple (KM(V) 13.19–23).

However, among the residents of Kanchipuram today, there is no unanimous opinion about the reason why the hill at the centre of the Varadarāja temple is called Hastigiri<sup>28</sup>, “elephant hill.” A senior member of the Tātācārya families, Śrīnivāsa Tātācārya (Ambi Ayyangar) in an interview conducted on March 2, 2003, insisted that Varadarāja was venerated by an elephant here and that the place is called Hastigiri for this reason.<sup>29</sup> His notion was mainly based on Śrīvaiṣṇava literature, and especially on the texts composed by Kūrattālvār and by Vedāntadeśika. Thus, Śrīnivāsa Tātācārya pointed out that this motif is also referred to in Vedāntadeśika’s *Varadarājapañcāśat* (*śloka* 1) and in Kūrattālvār’s *Varadarājastava* (*śloka* 1).<sup>30</sup> In these texts, the Purāṇic story of Gajendramokṣa is alluded to, according to which Viṣṇu saved the elephant Gajendra from the jaws of a crocodile (Srinivasan 2004, 80). It is also debated whether the name of the temple in fact derives from Sanskrit *hasti*, “elephant”. While the Tamil term *atti* could in fact be derived from Skt. *hasti*, it might also be that the Sanskrit *hasti* here is a (mistaken) Sanskrit rendering of Tamil *atti*, which refers to the *atti* tree, which is the material of Varadarāja’s original *mūlamūrti*, which is immersed in the temple tank today.<sup>31</sup> Further explanations of Hastigiri are for example that the god Varadarāja is well known for his hand (Skt. *hasta*) gesture, the *abhayamūdra* (the gesture indicating “have no fear”!). Hence his name is *hastin* and the place is called Hastigiri. Another explanation is that Varadarāja first appeared in this place “on the ascendancy of Hasta Nakṣatram and hence this place is called Hastigiri” (Srinivasan 2004, 80). Yet another common interpretation is that “In olden days lots of elephants used to be around this hill. Elephant is *hasti*, and since the elephants used to be here, it is Hastigiri” (Sīma Bhaṭṭar, interview, January 11, 2003; see also Srinivasan 2004, 80). One of the temple priests in an interview voiced the opinion that Indra, due to a curse, had become an elephant, and that Varadarāja used to ride on him (Sīma Bhaṭṭar, interview, January 11, 2003). Thus, while the name of the hill “elephant hill” clearly warrants an explanation, many different interpretations exist side by side.

27 In KM(Ś) 5.62–63 the name *Hastigiri* is also connected to the *gajendramokṣa* story.

28 Raman (1975, 7) also mentions the designation *tyāgamaṇḍapa*, mentioned in the text *Hastisailavaibhava*, which however seems not to be not used today.

29 Similarly, Varada Tatacharya (1978, 46) claims that the name *attiyūr* is based on Hastigiri, which means a place where the *aṣṭadig-gajas* worshipped the god (see also Srinivasan 2004, 80).

30 Raman argues that the occurrence of the names *Hastigiri* and *Karigiri* (elephant-hill) in the Sanskrit work *Varadarājastava* by Kūrattālvār suggests that a nucleus of the legend was already current during the eleventh century CE (Raman 1975, 9).

31 For details see Raman (1975, 4–6). The designation *attiyūr* for the village surrounding the Varadarāja-temple and its derivatives are mainly found in found in the hymns of Pūtattālvār and the earlier Cōla inscriptions of the temple (Raman 1975, 8).

As mentioned above, chapter 31 of the KM(V) would work well as a stand-alone *sthalamāhātmya*. Its content does not build on or relate to the narratives that precede it. In contrast, the third chapter of KV is much more neatly embedded in the overall textual structure of KV: chapter 2 to 5 deal with the “Vaiṣṇava realm” of Kanchipuram, e.g., with *harikṣetra* (chapter 2), *hastisāila* (chapter 3, the lizard story is part of the narrative that explains why the hill is an “elephant hill”), Brahmā's *aśvamedha* sacrifice and Varadarāja's appearance (chapter 4), and the river Vegavati (chapter 5). It is not unlikely that the lizard chapter entered the larger body of KM(V)'s narratives about the greatness of the main Vaiṣṇava sacred spaces of Kanchipuram *because* the ritual practice connected to the lizards was both pervasive and efficacious.<sup>32</sup>

### Lizards in the *Taṅkappallikaḷ Mahātmiyam*

The *Taṅkappallikaḷ Mahātmiyam* (TPM) is a Tamil text which was published in 1937 (Cuntaravaratācāriyar 1937) (see Appendix 3 for the printed version of the TPM). This text treats the lizard-story as a *māhātmya* in its own right. Moreover, this text is the first active “promotion” of the “golden lizards” in the Varadarāja temple that we know of. The date of its publication indicates that it most likely was authored to meet the demands of an anticipated increased influx of pilgrims, triggered by the 1937 Atti Varata Vaipavam festival. This festival is celebrated only once in ca. forty years. During this event, the old statue of the main image in this temple, which is made of *atti* wood and is kept under water in the temple tank Anantasaras, is taken out of the water and displayed publicly for ca. forty days. In 1937, this festival was advertised widely for the first time, with the aim to sell tickets and thus to increase the income of the temple.<sup>33</sup> While Cuntaravaratācāriyar, the author of the TPM, does not mention this rare festival in his preface or foreword to the TPM, he explicitly says that he compiled this text for the benefit of the pilgrims<sup>34</sup> and that he hopes to fund the elementary school he runs through the income generated by selling the TPM.<sup>35</sup>

32 This suspicion is supported by the fact that the KM(V) explicitly lists rituals connected to the lizards and mentions their power to heal from illnesses, which are missing in the KV.

33 Interview with Sundararajan, July 4, 2019.

34 TMP, p. 1: “Pilgrims from many parts of our motherland India come daily to discover the greatness of the golden lizards, and to quench their thirst for information, I dared to publish it in this booklet” (*nam tāy nāṭākiya intiyāviṅ palapākaṅkaḷiliruntu, piratitiṅamum varum yātrī-karkaḷ taṅkappallikaḷiṅ mahātmiyattai terintuk koḷḷa, niraṃpa āval paṭu vatāl, avarkaḷuṭaiya āvalait taṅikka, atai iccīru puttaka vāyilāka veḷiyiṭat tuṅintēṅ*).

35 TMP, p. 2: “Most of the printing costs of this booklet is borne by the author of the book, who runs the ‘Sri Krishna Elementary School’, which is established and maintained at Chinna Kanchipuram Chetty Street. I humbly request that the public should view this book, endorse it, buy it, and through it also support the running of the school mentioned above” (*iccīru putta-kattiṅ kirayattukaiyil acciṭṭa cilavukaḷ pōka mikutiyaṅ itaṅ ācīriyar ciṅna kāṅcipuram ceṭṭitte-*

His text TPM is a Tamil compilation of both Sanskrit stories summarized above, though relying more on the KM(V) than on the KV. Yet while the text itself claims to be a Tamil version of the thirty-first chapter of the KM(V),<sup>36</sup> the author in fact mixes narrative motifs of KM(V) and KV. For example, according to his version, the Ṛṣi Bṛhaspati is cursed by the Ṛṣis to be an elephant (cf. KV 3.15, where Indra is cursed to be an elephant by Sarasvatī), not to be born as a son of a poor gleaner, as the KM(V) (31.16) has it.<sup>37</sup> However, while the story of Upamanyu and the two lizards is narrated in this context (TPM, p. 6–16), the author Cuntaravaratācāriyar does not return to the frame story with Bṛhaspati-as-elephant. Unlike the KV, the Tamil text therefore does not identify the Hastigiri with the left-behind form of the elephant—in fact, the reader does not learn at all what becomes of Bṛhaspati in the end. Another motif taken from the KV rather than the KM(V) is narrated in the author’s preface, which very briefly summarizes the content of the Vaiṣṇava *Kāñcī-māhātmya* (TPM, pp. 3–5). Here, Cuntaravaratācāriyar cites as the reason for Brahmā’s horse sacrifice Brahmā’s desire to receive the *sṛṣṭidaṇḍa* from Viṣṇu, a stick that would enable him to create the world.<sup>38</sup> This *sṛṣṭidaṇḍa* is not mentioned in the KM(V). Rather, there Brahmā performs the sacrifice to make Viṣṇu appear before him. Moreover, the TPM text is much longer than KM(V) by going into detail regarding the lizards’ bad deeds as descendants of Sagara. In the TPM the sage Mārkaṇḍeya narrates this myth in great detail over nearly four pages (TPM, pp. 10–15; of overall eleven pages of text). Since this story only superficially relates to Kanchipuram and the lizards, one cannot but suspect that the author of the TPM used this story to fill the pages.<sup>39</sup>

Most importantly, the power attributed to the lizards is highlighted in various passages of the TPM. In the preface, the TPM (p. 5) explains:

Normally, when house lizards fall on (a person), they cause the faults (*doṣa*) mentioned in the first attachment (of this booklet). If anyone sees or touches these

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*ruvil stāpittu naṭattivarum śrī kirusṇā elimeṇṭeri pāṭacālaiyiṅ upayōkattirku eṭuttuk koḷḷappaṭu-mākaiyāl. mahājanāṅkaḷ iṅṅuttakattaik kaṅṅurru, niṅampa viśvāsattuṅaṅ ātarittu, vāṅki, mēṅpati pāṭacālaiyai naṭaiperac ceyya vēṅumāy niṅampa paṅivutaṅ kēṅṅuk koḷḷukirēṅ).* T. K. Cuntaravaratācāriyar also was hereditarily in charge of the deity Varadarāja’s jewelry (Murli Bhaṭṭar, interview, March 9, 2017).

36 TPM, p. 6: “The story of *Taṅkappalli Mahātmyam* in the thirty-first chapter of the *Brahmāṅḍa-purāṇa*” (*taṅkappalli mahātmya varalāru. prammāṅṭa purāṅē śrīkāñcī mahātmyē 31-vatu atyāyē*).

37 TPM, p. 6: “Due to this curse, he was born into this world as an elephant” (*anta cāpa vicēṣattāl iṅṅū lōkattil yāṅaiyāka vantu*).

38 TPM, p. 4: “Viṣṇu appeared under the Puṅyakōṭivimāna with the *sṛṣṭidaṇḍa* in front of Brahmā and granted him the *sṛṣṭidaṇḍa* he had demanded” (*śrī pēraḷāḷaṅṅerum tiruṅmamuṅaiyarāy puṅyakōṭivimāṅamatyaṅkatarāy sruṣṭitaṅṅattutaṅ prammāvukku cākṣātkāramāki, avar kōriya ciruṣṭi taṅṅattaik koṅṅuttaruḷiṅār*).

39 Seeing that he was keen to sell the booklet and use the money to run the elementary school he managed, I cannot but sympathize with him.

lizards after having had auspicious sight of Śrī Varadarāja, he will be relieved from the stain of sins, illnesses and ailments. Even if, after *darśana* (of the golden lizards), lizards should fall on someone, if one thinks for even a second of the *vaiyamālikai* lizards, then in that moment the fault will be removed.<sup>40</sup>

Similarly, the lizard story in the TPM ends with Varadarāja's advice (TPM, p. 16):

If anyone worships me on the Hastigiri, afterwards does the *pradakṣiṇa*, thinks of, worships, or touches the embedded golden lizards there while thinking of them as *vaiyamālikai* lizards, if lizards fall on him afterwards, the sin, illness and stain will be dispelled.<sup>41</sup>

Of the KM(V) and KV, only the former connects touching the “golden lizards” with the avoidance or removal of illness (KM(V) 31.88–92), whereas in the KV Indra grants the elephant hill the boon that its mere sight would grant *mokṣa* (KV 3.40–45ab). The KV thus attributes no specific power to the lizards as they are installed on the elephant hill. In contrast, the ill effects of lizards falling on a person are a major concern of the TPM, as after the end of the *Taṅkappallikaḥ Mahātmiyam* story, the text lists in an appendix the “outcome of the fall of lizards” (*palli viḷutaliṅ palaṅ*; TPM, p. 17), thus explicitly connecting the temple legend with the South Indian divinatory “folk” science related to house lizards.

## Lizards in South India's Popular Religiosity

As Frembgen (1996) based on his literary review and interview in Pakistan and North India shows, not only in South India are people afraid of lizards. House lizards are often considered poisonous, even though in fact they are harmless (see also Thurston 1912, 99). They have a shrill voice which is considered a bad omen in many parts of South Asia (Frembgen 1996, 136–137; Thurston 1912, 16, 48, 70). In South India, a science as to interpret the cries of lizards developed, interpreting the direction from where the sound comes.<sup>42</sup> Since lizards are thought to be poisonous, contact with lizards is avoided by all means (Frembgen 1996, 139).<sup>43</sup> Both events, hearing the cry of a lizard and the fall of a lizard on one's limbs, have for long been interpreted

40 TPM, p. 5: *sātāraṇamāka vīṭtilirukkum pallikaḥ, mēlē viḷuntāl 1-vatu aṇupantattil kaṅṅirukkum tōṣaṅkaḥ uṅṅākiṅraṇa. inta palli uruvaṅkaḥai evaṅoruvaṅ śrī varatarājanai taricittup piṛaku, taricittālum allatu sparicittālum, avaṅ pāpatōṣa, rōka, camaṅaṅkaḥai yaṅaintu cauṅkiyama-taiṅvāṅ. ivaṅkaḥai taricitta piṛaku pallikaḥ mēlē viḷuntālūṅ kūṅa. oru kṣaṅa nēram vaiyamāli-kaippalli eṅru maṅatāra smarittāl anta niṅiṣattil anta tōṣam nivāraṅamāy viṅum.*

41 TPM, p. 16: *yāvaṅoruvaṅ inta hattikiriṅyil eṅṅai cēvittavaṅantaram pātaṅṣaṅastilūḷla ippalli-kaḥai vaiyamālikaip palli eṅru kṣaṅakālam smarittālum sēvittālum sparicittālum avaṅṅukkup pallikaḥ mēlē viḷuvatālūṅṅākum pāpa rōka tōṣa camaṅaṅkaḥ uṅṅam eṅpatu tiṅṅam.*

42 Frembgen (1996, 137), referring to Walhouse (1876, 21). See also Ayyar 1992.

43 At the same time, one should never kill a house lizard, as it brings prosperity and is also connected to fertility (Frembgen 1996, 140). On the connection of lizards and fertility, see also Guy (2019, 319).



as omen, and several texts contain prognostications based on the sounds produced by the house lizard, by its movements and by its fall on the various limbs of a person.<sup>44</sup> The text *Dharmasindhu* gives details regarding the significance of a lizard's fall on one's body parts. Moreover, according to this text, the impact of a lizard's fall also depends on whether the lizard falls on a man or a woman. This text also explains that the impact of a lizard's fall can be removed for example by taking a bath with clothes on, by drinking *pañcagavya* (a mixture of five cow-products), looking into clarified butter, or by paying honor to (a golden image of) a lizard (Kane 1977, 792). Today, the prognostication based on a lizard's fall on one's body parts is common in South India, and the author of the TPM was not only aware of it, but placed his text in this context, as the appendix to the TPM shows: here, he gives a list of forty body parts and the assumed impact of a lizard's fall on it (TPM, pp. 17–18). As lizards are considered to be poisonous, if a lizard falls into or touches food, this food is considered poisonous, too. Frembgen (1996, 139) reports:

For example, Ashok Mukherji, a Bengali living in Kanpur, told me of an incident he had heard about in which two boys in Varanasi bought sweets and some yogurt in a clay pot from a shop. In the pot they found a dead gecko, which they removed along with some of the yogurt. They then ate the yogurt; they are said to have died soon after.

One cannot but notice the remarkable overlap of narrative elements between this story and the KV's lizard narrative: two boys with a clay pot, a lizard falling into the pot and the dire consequences for the two boys.

## Popularization of the “Golden Lizards” after 1950

It remains unclear, how successful the TPM's version of the lizard narrative was, and it is not known to me whether Cuntaravaratācāriyar managed to finance the Sri Krishna Elementary School with the income generated by the *Tankappallika! Mahātmiyam*. It is however clear that the transregional importance of the lizards has been decidedly promoted roughly twenty years later, since the mid-1950s.

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<sup>44</sup> Thurston (1912, 70–71). Kane mentions for example *Vasantarāja-śakuna*, *Adbhutasāgara*, *Jyotisattva*, *Śāntiratna* (or *Śāntikamalākara*), and *Dharmasindhu* and suspects that prognostication based on the fall of the lizard on a person's limb developed later than prognostication based on the sounds of lizards (see also Kane 1977, 792 and fn. 1282b). On prognostications relating to the house lizard, see the PhD-project by Dominique Baur.



Fig. 13: Srinivasan's grandfather, holding Srinivasan as a toddler (ca. 1970) (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2017).

In two interviews the main temple musician (*ūtal kārar*) of the Varadarāja temple, Srinivasan, described to me how his grandfather (figure 13), a musician who enjoyed transregional repute and who also worked as a pilgrims' guide in the Varadarāja temple, advertised the two lizards transregionally (interview, September 7, 2017). As a guide, he would show the two lizards to the pilgrims. However, as the lizards are on the ceiling, too high up to actually touch them by hand, the pilgrims would throw a piece of cloth or a coin at the ceiling, and afterwards touch their eyes and forehead with the coin or cloth. Even today one can observe such a practice in the Varadarāja temple. In December and January, when Kanchipuram's temples are especially crowded with pilgrims, some of these visitors—either because of lack of knowledge about *the* lizards, or because they lack the time to join the long queue for



Fig. 14: High reliefs of lizards on the ceiling of a *mandapa* in the Varadarāja temple (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2022).

the golden lizards—"touch" other high relief lizards (figure 14) they discover in the temple. They do this by throwing pieces of cloth or coins at these reliefs, with which they then touch their eyes or forehead, to realize their share in the lizards' positive effect. Seeing the attraction and popularity of the lizards, Srinivasan's grandfather aimed to make them more widely known, to attract more visitors to the temple. He had leaflets printed in Telugu, Tamil and Kannada, which contained a short version of one lizard legend, and then distributed these leaflets when he was called to play music in other towns in South India. Evidently, this form of advertising contributed substantially to the lizards' transregional popularity. Srinivasan's grandfather soon managed to draw a contract with the temple administration (annual worth then 25,000–30,000 INR), allowing him to charge pilgrims for access to the lizards. This contract was renewed annually. Srinivasan's grandfather retained this contract for sixteen years. In the beginning, he sold entrance tickets to the lizards for only fifteen paise and still earned a lot of money (Srinivasan, interview, March 8, 2004). However, in 1972, after the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971, when the flow of pilgrims suddenly had dried up, Srinivasan's grandfather gave up the contract. Since then, the temple administration (Devasthanam Board) runs the lizard ticket counter in the *vaiyamālikai prākāra* (figure 15).



Fig. 15: The lizard ticket counter run by the Devasthanam in the *vaiyamālikai prākāra* (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2006).

## The Sign Board on the Hill

Even today, pilgrims and tourists visit the Varadarāja temple and touch these lizards for a small fee, in order to relieve themselves from the evil effect of contact with a house lizard, which is thought of as dangerous for health and well-being (see above). Typically, devotees enter the temple through the main gate, the Western *gopuram*, proceed into the temple building, pass through a second gateway into the last corridor (*prākāra*) on the ground level. There they first pay their respects to Yoganarasimha in the shrine (understood as a “cave”) at the foot of the two-storey-high building that forms the centre of the temple. From there they walk to the Eastern side of this building, the Hastigiri or “elephant hill.” There they enter the building and climb up twenty-four steps to the corridor on the upper floor. This corridor leads them first to *mahāmaṇḍapa*, a hall which allows access to another staircase towards the centre of the temple, the *garbhagrha* with the huge stone statue of the main deity Varadarāja. After *darśana* of the main deity, devotees take the steps down again back to the *mahāmaṇḍapa*. From there they continue the clockwise circumambulation of the *sanctum sanctorum*. Right after they step out of the *mahāmaṇḍapa* and into the



corridor, they are greeted by a sign advertising the “golden and silver lizard,” which claims that touching them (for a fee of two INR) would relieve one of “all sins and evils” (figure 16). After paying the fee, they are led by metal dividers to the north-eastern corner of this corridor, where they enter an area separated from the main corridor by wooden dividers. In this chamber they climb up a ladder onto a small platform under the “golden lizards,” high enough to allow them to touch with their hands the lizards installed on a plank on the ceiling (figure 17). With this, for many pilgrims their main aim of visiting this temple is fulfilled. They climb down the ladder and continue the circumambulation of the *sanctum sanctorum* of the temple, perhaps admiring the murals of important Vaiṣṇava places painted on the walls of this corridor. They climb down the stairs and continue their way around the “hill,” some worship Dhanvantarī, the divine healer, on their way out.



Fig. 16: Sign board at the lizard ticket counter (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2006).

While waiting for their turn to enter the lizard area, the pilgrims see and read a short version of the legend of the lizard couple, which is written on a metal board in Tamil and Telugu near the entrance to the lizards’ area (figure 18). The text reads:

#### Legend of the *vaiyamālikai* lizards

At the time when two sons of the sage Śṛṅgibera were with sage Gautama as his disciples, they brought water for the *guru* for his *pūjā*. There were two lizards in





Fig. 17: Pilgrims touching the lizards on the ceiling of the *vaiyamālikai prakāra* (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2017).



Fig. 18: The lizard legend in Tamil and Telugu on a metal board in the *vaiyamālikai prakāra* (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2017).

the water. On seeing the lizards, sage Gautama was angry and cursed [the boys] to become lizards. When the disciples asked how they could be relieved from the curse, Gautama said – “If you go and request Varadarāja in Kanchi, the Satyavratākṣetra, where one gets thousand times the fruit for one action, you will get rid of your curse”. By doing so the disciples got rid of their curse. The souls went to Vaikuṅṭha and the (lizard) bodies remained here [in Kanchipuram] as a *pañcaloha* statue. God Varadarāja said: “If the devotees who come here to see me also see you [= the lizards], they will be relieved from all sins and illness and attain prosperity. The sun and the moon are the witness to this”.<sup>45</sup>

No elephant is mentioned, but the positive effect of touching the lizards is emphasized. It is noteworthy that on this metal board several elements of the version of the legend given by the KV are referred to, whereas the version of the KM(V) is not referred to here at all, although this text is considered authoritative in the Varadarāja temple.<sup>46</sup> As the queue often is very long, the pilgrims have ample time to read this sign board and memorize the story, to retell it when they are back home.

### Online Representations of the “Golden Lizards”

Not surprisingly, this version of the lizard narrative also conforms to most online sources on the “golden lizards,” both in its incompleteness and in its reference to the KV narrative, rather than to the KM(V)’s narrative.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the Wikipedia entry on the Varadarāja temple gives the following story: “Indra, the king of celestial deities, after getting released from the curse of Goddess Saraswati, installed the silver and golden lizards who were the witness of the ordeal.”<sup>48</sup> The online temple directory of the newspaper *Dinamalar* mentions the story of the lizards in their entry on the Varadarāja temple as follows: “Devotees also pray to the golden and silver lizards in the temple for relief from any untoward happening due to the fall of real lizards on their body. The prayer also brings them mental peace, safety and success in their endeavours.”<sup>49</sup> One website, for example, names as remedy that one should touch “the people who visited Kanchipuram and touched the golden Lizard, the silver lizard along with the sun and moon images [...] or touching the photo frame of

45 I thank R. Sathyanarayanan for helping me with this translation, and for comparing the Tamil and the Telugu text on the sign board.

46 In interviews I conducted on March 9, 2017, two of the temple priests of the Varadarāja temple retold the story as found in the KV, evidently not aware of or oblivious to the fact, that the KM(V) contains a different narrative.

47 See, for example, <http://gotirupati.com/varadaraja-perumal-temple-kanchipuram/>, date of last access February 16, 2021. However, there are also websites which give summaries of both the KV’s and the KM(V)’s narratives, see <https://travel727874468.wordpress.com/2018/11/20/what-is-the-uniqueness-of-lizard-temple-in-kanchipuram/>; date of last access: February 16, 2021.

48 See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VaradharajaPerumalTemple,Kanchipuram>; date of last access: February 16, 2021.

49 See [https://temple.dinamalar.com/en/new\\_en.php?id=633](https://temple.dinamalar.com/en/new_en.php?id=633); date of last access: April 25, 2022.

Kanchipuram golden Lizard.”<sup>50</sup> In many online sources, the temple is even labeled as “golden lizard temple”, thus confirming and reinforcing a notion often found among the pilgrims, that the lizards, rather than Viṣṇu as Varadarāja, are the most important feature of this temple.<sup>51</sup>



Fig. 19: Lizard plaque sold to tourists (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2018).

## The “Golden Lizards” in Popular Culture

The pilgrims might even bring home small plaques with an image of the lizards (figure 19), which vendors near the temple entrance sell to tourists and pilgrims, partaking in the “lizard-economy.”<sup>52</sup> With the increasing popularity of Kanchipuram’s “golden lizards,” the lizards also have received a place in the annual festival routine of Navarātri in South Indian households. During this annual festival, which is celebrated in September or October, many families in Tamil Nadu choose to “keep *kolu*”: they set up in their living rooms elaborate doll displays (*kolu*) on stages for

50 See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hdxF-QL804>; date of last access: April 25, 2022.

51 It seems that the popularity of these lizards even led other temples to “copy” them. For example, TV5 News on April 29 (2010) reported: “Now kanchi’s golden lizard darshan in Srikalahasthi temple also!!” (see <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xj8cdy>; date of last access February 16, 2021).

52 A share in the income from the “lizard tickets” also forms part of the temple priests’ income (Sīma Bhaṭṭar, interview, January 11, 2003).



the entire duration of the festival. Among these dolls, the goddess is ritually installed (usually in a *kalaśa* pot filled with water and closed with mango leaves and a coconut). The *kolu* arrangements encompass many different sets of dolls, including mythological scenes and representations of ritual practices from specific temples (Hüsken 2012; Ilkama 2018). When people visit each other in the evenings to look at and admire each other's *kolu*, often the diverse scenes are pointed out and explained by the hosts (figure 20). Not surprisingly, I found an image of a “*kolu* set” representing the golden lizards at the Varadarāja temple (figure 21), and one can safely assume that their story, or one of their stories, are retold on that occasion, too.



Fig. 20: Visit of neighbors during Navarātri, when the hosts explain the diverse *kolu* sets (photo by Ute Hüsken, 2008)



Fig. 21: The 'golden lizards' as *kolu* set.

## Conclusion

The comparison of the lizard narratives in the two Sanskrit *sthalamāhātmyas* related to Kanchipuram, the Vaiṣṇava *Kāñcīmāhātmya* and the *Kāmākṣīvilāsa*, clearly shows how parallel or even competing narratives relating to a specific religiously significant place exist side by side. Both narratives are transmitted and accepted, irrespective of their sectarian background. Significantly, even in the Vaiṣṇava Varadarāja temple and among the Vaiṣṇavas connected to this temple, the narrative of the Vaiṣṇava *Kāñcīmāhātmya* was and is not as successful as the *Kāmākṣīvilāsa*'s narrative. For, the *Kāmākṣīvilāsa*'s version is propagated today not only on the metal board at the entrance of the lizard-section of the Varadarāja temple, but is also internalized by several of the Vaiṣṇava temple priests, who refer to major elements from the *Kāmākṣīvilāsa*'s version when retelling the lizards' story. One might suspect that the popularity of the *Kāmākṣīvilāsa* version is based on its successful effort to connect the lizards with the (assumed) elephant form and the corresponding name of the central building in the Varadarāja temple, Hastigiri, the "elephant hill." This is also reflected by the more recent version of the lizard-narrative given in the Tamil text *Tankappallikaḷ Mahātmyam*, which in general follows the Vaiṣṇava



narrative, yet inserts the *Kāmākṣīvilāsa*'s elephant. Thus, even though the different Hindu sects have their own versions of temple legends relating to Kanchipuram, the success of the one or the other text does not necessarily reflect people's sectarian affiliation as strictly as the authors of the texts might have hoped. Rather, the "success" of one narrative over the other, is connected to many more factors.

One of these factors in our case is certainly the importance of so-called "folk" or "vernacular" local religiosity. By these terms I refer to those aspects of religious practice, which are not derived from or integrated in Sanskrit Hinduism.<sup>53</sup> As the investigation of the "lizard story" in Kanchipuram's *sthalamāhātmya* texts in Sanskrit shows, the contrast between popular religion, which attaches much importance to the potentially dangerous touch of house lizards as affecting one's fate, (mis)fortune, and state of health, and normative Brahmin-dominated religion is minimized in these *sthalamāhātmya* texts. Rather, vernacular religious practice is integrated into "elite (sanskritic) religion," and hardly any distinction is made between the worship of the lizards and the worship of the main deities of the Hindu pantheon. This is a marked difference between the *sthalamāhātmya* literature in Sanskrit and the *āgama* and *saṃhitā* literature pertaining to temple worship. While the latter rather reflects the priestly and normative view on what should happen in a temple, *sthalamāhātmya* texts rather reflect actual practices in a temple, which not always conform to Brahmanical norms, but give expression to local understandings and beliefs.

This neat collaboration between vernacular and Sanskritic religion in the *sthalamāhātmyas* is, however, not at all acknowledged in the major works on the Varadarāja temple. For, as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, in spite of the importance attached to the lizards by the temple visitors, and in spite of the importance attached to the "golden lizards" by the temple administration (if only because of the income generated by the tickets allowing access to them), academic descriptions of the Varadarāja temple mostly ignore the lizards. Here it is important to note that both authors of standard works on this temple, K. V. Raman and R. Varada Tatacharya, are Vaiṣṇava Brahmins, albeit of different sectarian affiliation. Their personal affiliation to "elite religion" might be the reason why they both did not acknowledge the importance (or even existence) of the lizards, in spite of their popularity among temple visitors. This attitude is also prevalent among the male Brahmin priests of the temple, who unanimously and somewhat dismissively claim that they do not touch the lizards, as they "have access to Perumāḷ [= the main deity] himself."<sup>54</sup> Implied here is that for them, touching the lizards is secondary to and not as efficacious as touching the main deity of the temple, which is the prerogative of the initiated male members of six priestly families hereditarily affiliated to the

53 "Sanskrit Hinduism" refers to those forms of Hinduism which mainly refer to normative religious texts in Sanskrit. In the context of South Indian temple Hinduism, these are the *āgama* or *saṃhitā* texts, or the handbooks (*prayogas* and *paddhatis*) based on these *āgamas*.

54 Murli Bhaṭṭar, interview, March 9, 2017.

Varadarāja temple (Hüsken 2010). In contrast, most wives of these priests use every opportunity to touch the lizards, as they assured me in several interviews. Their practice reflects the ritual instructions we find in the KM(V), where the temple visitors are advised to have *darśana* of the main deity first, and then touch the lizards while circumambulating the temple's *garbhagr̥ha* (KM(V) 31.88–92). At the same time, this also attests to the identification of women—and evidently even women from Brahmin temple priests' families—with “low,” vernacular, and folk religion, both in theory and in practice (see also Hüsken 2013).

Yet importantly, the Sanskrit texts *do* incorporate the lizards' stories, as evidence of how the success of a specific and popular religiously significant place is able to impact the textual narratives, rather than the other way around. There is evidence that the lizards' narrative entered the main corpus of the Vaiṣṇava *Kāñcīmāhātmya* later, as an “appendix.” In this case, the popularity of the lizards as efficacious salvific place not only preceded, but even effected the inclusion of its narrative into the Sanskrit text which therefore constitute unique texts, which give us access to local lived religion. The *sthalamāhātmyas* are a uniquely fertile ground for research on Hinduism, as they give access to the complex relationship between textual precept and actual practice, between local (“folk”) and elite religiosity, between oral, written and performative transmission, and consequently, enable us to understand the great variety of Hindu traditions, past and present.

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## Appendix I

Diplomatic transcript of the thirty-first chapter of the Vaiṣṇava *Kāñcīmāhātmya* (KM(V)), based on the printed edition of 1906 (*Kāñcīmāhātmyam Brahmāṇḍapurāṇāntargatam*. Ed. by P.B. Anantācārya. Kāñcīpuram: Sudarśana Press, 1906), proofread and corrected by Marija Grujovska and Malini Ambach.

अथ एकत्रिंशोऽध्यायः

नारदः

पुरा देवसभामध्ये महेन्द्रः पाकशासनः ।  
 आसीत्सिंहासने दिव्ये समासीनस्सुरैस्सह ॥ १ ॥  
 तदा केचिन्महाप्रज्ञा ब्राह्मणा ब्रह्मवित्तमाः ।  
 आजग्मुस्सहिता द्रष्टुं कदाचित्पाकशासनम् ॥ २ ॥  
 अगस्त्यो भगवानत्रिमूर्कण्डुर्गौतमो महान् ।  
 भार्गवश्च्यवनो विद्वान्तथान्ये च महार्षयः ॥ ३ ॥  
 तानागतान्समुद्रीक्ष्य गुरुणा सह देवराट् ।  
 पूजयित्वा यथान्यायं पप्रच्छ कुशलं द्विजान् ॥ ४ ॥  
 तैश्चापि पृष्टः कुशलं निवेद्य स्वं पुरन्दरः ।  
 ततः पप्रच्छ धर्मार्थनिश्चयं द्विजसत्तमान् ॥ ५ ॥  
 चतुर्णामाश्रमाणां हि गरीयान्क उदाहृतः ।  
 तं आश्रमं पुण्यतमं सुनयः प्रब्रुवन्तु मे ॥ ६ ॥  
 एवमिन्द्रेण संपृष्टास्तमूचुर्मुनिपुंगवाः ।  
 आश्रमाणां हि सर्वेषां ज्यायानेव गृहाश्रमः ॥ ७ ॥  
 नतदृशोस्ति लोकेन्यो ह्याश्रमो धर्मसाधनः ।

ब्रुवन्ति मुनयस्सर्वे श्रेष्ठं गार्हस्थ्यमाश्रमम् ॥ ८ ॥  
 तस्मात्तमेव देवेन्द्र श्रेष्ठं विद्याद्गृहाश्रमम् ।  
 इति तेषु ब्रुवाणेषु वाक्पतिर्विस्मयान्वितः ॥ ९ ॥  
 तत्र धिक्कृत्य तान्विप्रानुवाच वचनं नृप ।  
 गरीयान्ब्रह्मचर्याख्यः परमः प्रथमाश्रमः ॥ १० ॥  
 तं उल्लंघ्य कथं ब्रूत यूथं श्रेष्ठं गृहाश्रमम् ।  
 अनालोच्यैव शास्त्रार्थान्सर्वे मूढधियो यथा ॥ ११ ॥  
 इत्युक्तवन्तन्धिषणं ते समीक्ष्याथगर्वितम् ।  
 शेषुः प्रकुपितास्सद्यस्तमनर्थार्थवादिनम् ॥ १२ ॥  
 यस्मात्त्वमवलेपेन सर्वात्रस्सत्यवादिनः ।  
 अधिक्षिपसि मन्दात्मन्हीनार्थं स्वर्थवद्ब्रुवन् ॥ १३ ॥  
 तस्मात्तितः प्रपतितो भूम्यां दारिद्र्यपीडितः ।  
 सर्वदुःखसमायुक्तो भवरोगैः प्रपीडितः ॥ १४ ॥  
 इति शप्त्वा गुरुं सर्वे प्रजग्मुस्ते यथागतम् ।  
 ततश्शप्तो गुरुर्विप्रैस्तक्षणात्र्यपतत्क्षितौ ॥ १५ ॥  
 कस्मिंश्चिन्नर्मदातीरग्रामे ब्राह्मणमन्दिरे ।  
 उच्छवृत्तेर्दरिद्रस्य जज्ञे तस्य सुतो नृप ॥ १६ ॥  
 जातमात्रे तु जननी जगाम यमसादनम् ।  
 क्लेशेन महता पित्रा रक्षितोत्यन्तबालकः ॥ १७ ॥  
 ततस्संवत्सरे पूर्णे मृतो भूज्जनकोपि च ।  
 रुदतो बालकस्यास्य नैव संबधिबांधवाः ॥ १८ ॥  
 यया कयाचित्कृपया रक्षितो बालकस्तथा ।  
 मृदुशय्या न तस्यासीन्न च दंशनिवारकाः ॥ १९ ॥  
 एवं संवर्धितो बाल्ये शयानो यत्र कुत्रचित् ।  
 उपनीतश्च कृपया केनचिद्ब्राह्मणेन सः ॥ २० ॥  
 ततस्तु यौवनं प्राप्य कुचेलः कुत्सिताशनः ।  
 बभुव भृशनिर्वेदमापन्नोत्यन्तदुर्भगः ॥ २१ ॥  
 पीडितो व्याधिभिर्नित्यं मनोरथशताकुलः ।  
 स कदाचिन्नृपश्रेष्ठ तपसे कृतनिश्चयः ॥ २२ ॥



ययौ भागीरथीतीरं पुण्यवृक्षलतायुतम् ।  
 तत्रोपविष्टमद्राक्षीद्भरद्वाजं महामुनिं ॥ २३ ॥  
 तं प्रणम्य महाभागं ब्राह्मणो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ।  
 केनाहमस्मि विप्रेन्द्र दारिद्रः पापकर्मणा ॥ २४ ॥  
 मातापितृभ्यां हीनश्च बाल्यादारभ्य दुःखितः ।  
 निश्च्रीतो भ्रष्टसंकल्पः कदन्नादश्च केवलम् ॥ २५ ॥  
 यद्यहं सुखमुत्सृज्य भौमं दुःखसमन्वितम् ।  
 इच्छामि वा तपः कर्तुं परमं विष्णुतुष्टिदम् ॥ २६ ॥  
 तत्र दुर्निग्रहं चित्तं चंचलं मे भवत्यलम् ।  
 तस्मादिह पराभ्याम् मां सुखाभ्यां हीनमागतम् ॥ २७ ॥  
 त्रातुमर्हसि विप्रेन्द्र यथाहं मुक्तिमाप्नुयाम् ।  
 इति तस्य वचश्श्रुत्वा भरद्वाजो महामनाः ॥ २८ ॥  
 ध्यात्वा मुहूर्तं तपसा तं विज्ञाय बृहस्पतिम् ।  
 शप्तं महर्षिभिः पूर्वं एवं भूतं सुदुर्भगम् ॥ २९ ॥  
 तस्य निष्कृतिमन्विच्छन्नुवाच द्विजपुंगवः ।  
 शृणु विप्र प्रवक्ष्यामि वचस्तव हितं शुभं ॥ ३० ॥  
 अस्ति दक्षिणतः क्षेत्रमितः क्रोशसहस्रके ।  
 देशे सत्यव्रतं नाम विष्णुप्रीतिकरं परम् ॥ ३१ ॥  
 तत्रास्ति हस्तिशैलाख्यो भूधरः पुण्यवर्धनः ।  
 तस्मिन्वसति देवेशो वरदस्सर्वदेहिनाम् ॥ ३२ ॥  
 तस्य दर्शनमात्रेण मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।  
 नराः पातकिनो वापि तिर्यं चोपि कुयोनिजाः ॥ ३३ ॥  
 तस्मात्त्वं तत्र गत्वाशु तपश्चर हरेः प्रियम् ।  
 तपसा वरदस्तुष्टः प्रसन्नस्ते भवेद्भुवम् ॥ ३४ ॥  
 अत्रैवोदाहरिष्यामि प्रत्ययार्थं तवानघ ।  
 तच्छृणु त्वमुपाख्यानं पल्लिकामोक्षणं द्विज ॥ ३५ ॥  
 कश्चितासीत्कुरुक्षेत्रे ब्राह्मणो वेदपारगः ।  
 उपमन्युरिति ख्यातस्तपस्वी विजितेंद्रियः ॥ ३६ ॥  
 विष्णुभक्तो जितक्रोधः प्रशांतात्मदृढव्रतः ।

तस्यासील्लक्षणा नाम भार्या रूपगुणान्विता ॥ ३७ ॥  
 पतिव्रता महाभागा विष्णुव्रतपरायणा ।  
 तया सभार्यया सार्धं सततं विष्णुमर्चयन् ॥ ३८ ॥  
 वर्तयन्नुच्छवृत्त्यैव कुर्वन्निषवणं द्विजः ।  
 पूजयन्नतिथीन्नित्यं पितृन्देवांश्च तर्पयन् ॥ ३९ ॥  
 तस्यैवं वर्तमानस्य ब्राह्मणस्य महात्मनः ।  
 सुषुवे तनयं पत्नी लक्षणा लक्षणैर्युतम् ॥ ४० ॥  
 ततः कदाचिद्विप्रेन्द्रः पत्न्या सह सुतेन च ।  
 तीर्थयात्रापरो भूमिमुपमन्युश्चचार ह ॥ ४१ ॥  
 तत्र तत्र च तीर्थेषु हृदेषु च नदीषु च ।  
 स्नात्वा लक्षणया सार्धं तर्पयंश्च पितृन्द्विजः ॥ ४२ ॥  
 क्षेत्रेषु च सुपुण्येषु पश्यन्विष्णुं रमापतिम् ।  
 उच्छवृत्त्यैव सततमतिथींश्चापि पूजयन् ॥ ४३ ॥  
 स तु गोदावरीतीरमाययौ सह भार्यया ।  
 तत्रैकस्मिन्दिने मार्गे नद्यास्तरे वने शुभे ॥ ४४ ॥  
 कस्मिंश्चिदाह्निकं कर्तुमवसद्ब्राह्मणोत्तमः ।  
 तत्र स्नात्वा स गौतम्यां मध्याह्ने द्विजसत्तमः ॥ ४५ ॥  
 सन्तर्प्य च पितृन्देवान्पूजयामास केशवम् ।  
 ततस्तत्र चरुं कृत्वा तण्डुलैः पंचमुष्टिभिः ॥ ४६ ॥  
 सिलोच्छवृत्त्योपहृतैस्तत्र लब्धैश्च तद्दिने ।  
 वैश्वदेवबलिं चक्रे निवेद्यान्नं तु विष्णवे ॥ ४७ ॥  
 शेषमन्नं सुपूतं तच्चक्रे भागद्वयं तथा ।  
 भागमेकं तु शिशवे पुत्रायादाद्धरिं स्मरन् ॥ ४८ ॥  
 द्वितीयं भागमतनोत्स्वपत्न्याश्चात्मनोपि च ।  
 एवं विभज्य विधिवदन्न विप्रवरस्तदा ॥ ४९ ॥  
 प्रथमं भोजयामास बालं पुत्रं बुभुक्षितम् ।  
 स्वयं चापि यदा भोक्तुमैच्छदन्नं द्विजोत्तमः ॥ ५० ॥  
 तदैवाभ्याययौ तत्र विप्रः कश्चिद्बुभुक्षितः ।  
 सौभ्ययाचत विप्रेन्द्रमन्नं देहीति याचकः ॥ ५१ ॥

तस्मै स प्रददावन्नं स्वभोज्यमपि हृष्टधीः ।  
 स तु भुक्त्वात्रमतिथिर्नालमित्यब्रवीत्युनः ॥ ५२ ॥  
 ततस्स्वभोज्यमन्नं च लक्षणापि ददौ मुदा ।  
 स तु भुक्त्वा द्वयोरन्नं प्रययावतिथिर्द्विजः ॥ ५३ ॥  
 उपमन्युस्तदा प्राप्तकोटियज्ञफलो द्विजः  
 मुमोद सहितः पत्न्या भृशमन्नप्रदानतः ॥ ५४ ॥  
 ततस्तद्गृह्य चोच्छिष्टं पत्रं भुक्तस्य चातिथेः ।  
 चिक्षेप गर्ते कस्मिंश्चिल्लतागुल्मसमावृते ॥ ५५ ॥  
 क्षिप्तमात्रे तदोच्छिष्टे ब्राह्मणेनोपमन्युना ।  
 पतिता बिन्दवो मूर्ध्नि तत्र पल्लिकयोर्बिले ॥ ५६ ॥  
 चिरं निवसतोः पापात्पल्लिकारूपिणोर्द्वयोः ।  
 पतिताद्ब्राह्मणोच्छिष्टात्पल्लिकायुगळस्य तु ॥ ५७ ॥  
 बभूव तत्क्षणादेव शिरोमात्रं तु कांचनम् ।  
 अभूत्पूर्वस्मृतिश्चापि तयोस्तत्र कुजन्मनोः ॥ ५८ ॥  
 पल्ली च पल्लिका चोभौ दंपती पापकर्मिणौ ।  
 वाचा चुक्रोशतुर्दीनौ मानुष्या तं द्विजोत्तमम् ॥ ५९ ॥  
 स्मृत्वा पूर्वकृतं पापं त्राहि त्राहीति दुःखितौ ।  
 क्रोशन्तं पल्लिकायुग्ममीक्ष्य कांचनमस्तकम् ॥ ६० ॥  
 प्रच्छ कृपया विप्रः कौ युवामिति विस्मितः ।  
 तमुवाच तदा पल्ली स्मरन्दुष्कृतमात्मनः ॥ ६१ ॥  
 अहं नृपसूतः पूर्वमासं जन्मनि सप्तमे ।  
 अयोध्याधिपतेः पुत्रः सगरस्य महात्मनः ॥ ६२ ॥  
 असमंज इति ख्यातो बालघ्नः पापकर्मकृत् ।  
 हत्वा सहस्रशो बालान्सरख्याः प्राक्षिपंजले ॥ ६३ ॥  
 तदा मां पापिनं दृष्ट्वा राजा जनहितेच्छया ।  
 सभार्यमनयद्रोषात्सर्वस्वं गृह्य काननम् ॥ ६४ ॥  
 ततोहं भार्यया सार्धं वनेषु भृशदारुणः ।  
 हत्वा मृगान्पक्षिणश्च भक्षयन्नचरं द्विज ॥ ६५ ॥  
 ततः कदाचित्कान्तारे व्याघ्रेणावां च घातितौ ।

श्वानयोनिमनुप्राप्ता वेनसः पूर्वसंचितात् ॥ ६६ ॥  
 मार्जारिं सौकरीं चापि प्राप्य योनिं च नाकुलीम् ।  
 षष्टे च जन्मनि पुनः श्वानौ भूत्वा सुदुःखितौ ॥ ६७ ॥  
 अस्मिन्नेव वने पूर्वं शशं दृष्ट्वा बुभुक्षितौ ।  
 भक्षार्थमनुधावन्तावज्ञानात्पतिताविह ॥ ६८ ॥  
 कूपेस्मिन्मरणं लब्ध्वा सम्प्राप्तौ पल्लिकातनुम् ।  
 तव सन्दर्शनादद्य पूर्वस्मृतिरभूच्च नौ ॥ ६९ ॥  
 शिरश्च कांचनमभूदावयोस्त्वत्करोदकात् ।  
 तस्मान्नाबुद्धरक्षिप्तं त्वामेव शरणम्गतौ ॥ ७० ॥  
 इति तदुष्कृतमश्रुत्वा तावप्युद्वीक्ष्य दुःखितौ ।  
 ब्राह्मणः कृपयाविष्टस्समुद्धर्तुमियेष ह ॥ ७१ ॥  
 ततो वस्त्रेण संगृह्य पल्लिकामिधुनं द्विजः ।  
 पत्न्या पुत्रेण सहितस्तीर्थयात्रां चकार ह ॥ ७२ ॥  
 तत्र तत्र च तीर्थेषु स्नाप्य पल्लिद्वयं द्विजः ।  
 क्षेत्राणि दर्शयामास मोक्षार्थं पल्लिकातनोः ॥ ७३ ॥  
 पुनर्वाराणसीं गत्वा हरिद्वारं च पुष्करम् ।  
 प्रयागं नैमिशं चापि वृषभाद्रिमहोबलम् ॥ ७४ ॥  
 सिंहाद्रिमथ गोकर्णं श्रीशैलं कौर्ममुत्तमम् ।  
 एतान्यन्यानि पुण्यानि क्षेत्राणि विचचार ह ॥ ७५ ॥  
 पल्लियुग्मस्य मोक्षार्थमेवं विचरतस्तदा ।  
 उपमन्योर्द्विजेन्द्रस्य महान्कालो बभूव ह ॥ ७६ ॥  
 नैव चासीत्तयोर्मोक्षः क्षेत्रेषु सकलेष्वपि ।  
 ततः कदाचिद्विप्रेन्द्रः प्रभासन्तीर्थमाययौ ॥ ७७ ॥  
 तपस्यंतम्मुनिं तत्र मार्कण्डेयं ददर्श च ।  
 तं प्रणम्य द्विजश्रेष्ठमुपमन्युरुवाच ह ॥ ७८ ॥  
 मार्कण्डेय महाप्रज्ञ ममोपायं वदानघ ।  
 पल्लियुग्ममिदं ब्रह्मन्मामेव शरणं गतम् ॥ ७९ ॥  
 तस्मादेतस्य मोक्षार्थमहं यामि क्वाधुना ।  
 इति तस्य वचश्रुत्वा मृकण्डुतनयोब्रवीत् ॥ ८० ॥

कांची पुण्यतमा लोके कलिकल्मषनाशिनी ।  
 सैव मुक्तिप्रदा नृणाम्महापातकिनामपि ॥ ८१ ॥  
 तत्रानन्तसरो नाम तीर्थमस्ति सुपवनम् ।  
 तत्र स्नापय गत्वा त्वमेतौ गृह्य कुयोनिजौ ॥ ८२ ॥  
 दर्शयस्व च देवेशं वरदं हस्तिशैलगम् ।  
 दर्शनादेतयोर्मुक्तिर्भविष्यति न संशयः ॥ ८३ ॥  
 इति तस्य वचश्श्रुत्वा मार्कण्डेयस्य धीमतः ।  
 उपमन्युर्जगामाशु काम्चीं संगृह्य तावुभौ ॥ ८४ ॥  
 तत्रानन्तसरस्तोये स्नापयित्वा विधानतः ।  
 दर्शयामास देवेशं वरदं हस्तिशैलगम् ॥ ८५ ॥  
 तौ चापि दृष्ट्वा देवेशं दम्पती मुक्तकिल्बिषौ ।  
 उत्सृज्य स्वर्गतौ विप्र कुत्सीतां पल्लिकातनुं ॥ ८६ ॥  
 तयोस्स्वर्गतयोस्तत्र दम्पत्योस्तत्कळेवरौ ।  
 तत्रैव पल्लिकाकारौ स्थितौ कांचनमस्तकौ ॥ ८७ ॥  
 तदोपमन्युर्हृष्टात्मा ववन्दे वरदं हरिम् ।  
 सहितः पुत्रपत्नीभ्यां तुष्टाव च जगत्पतिम् ॥ ८८ ॥  
 तमुवाच तदा देवो वरदो भक्तवत्सलः ।  
 उपमन्यो महाप्रज्ञ धन्यस्त्वमसि सुव्रत ॥ ८९ ॥  
 यन्मां दर्शयता चात्र दंपती उद्धृतौ त्वया ।  
 तयोः कळेवरावेतावत्रैव स्वर्णमस्तकौ ॥ ९० ॥  
 तिष्ठेतां हस्तिशैलाग्रे तव च ख्यातिकारणात् ।  
 ये चात्र मनुजास्सम्यक्त्वां दृष्ट्वा मत्प्रदक्षिणे ॥ ९१ ॥  
 स्पृशन्ति पल्लिकायुग्मं नीरोगास्ते भवंत्यलम् ।  
 इति दत्त्वा वरं तस्मै ब्राह्मणायोपमन्यवे ॥ ९२ ॥  
 श्रियं चैवाचलां दत्त्वा ततश्चांतर्हितो हरिः ।  
 उपमन्युः श्रियं लब्ध्वा शाश्वतीं हृष्टमानसः ॥ ९३ ॥  
 सहितः पुत्रपौत्रैश्च मुमुदे शाश्वतीस्समाः ।  
 तस्मात्त्वमपि विप्रेन्द्र गच्छ शीघ्रमितशुभाम् ॥ ९४ ॥  
 तत्र दृष्ट्वा तु वरदं पापान्मुक्तो भविष्यसि ।

कुचेलस्त्वेव मुक्तस्तु भरद्वाजेन धीमता ॥ ९५ ॥  
 जगाम कांचीं वेगेन वरदं द्रष्टुमुत्सुकः ।  
 तत्रानन्तसरस्तिरे चकार तप उत्तमम् ॥ ९६ ॥  
 देवं च वरदं विप्रो ददर्शाद्भुतदर्शनम् ।  
 ततो देवाज्ञया तत्र पूजयन्द्वापरे युगे ॥ ९७ ॥  
 वरदं सततं भक्त्या जगाम परमां गतिं ।  
 इति श्रीब्रह्माण्डपुराणे काञ्चीमाहात्म्ये एकत्रिंशोऽध्यायः

## Appendix II

Diplomatic transcript of the third chapter of the *Kāmākṣīvilāsa* (KV), based on the printed edition of 1968 (*Śrīkāmākṣīvilāsaḥ*. Baṅgalūru: Bhāratalakṣmī Mudraṅālayam, 1968), corrected and proofread by Malini Ambach.

श्री कामाक्षीविलासः

तृतीयाध्यायप्रारम्भः

पुण्यकोटिविमानाङ्गं तत्वसोपानभूषितम् ।  
 नारसिंहाधिष्ठितगुहं हस्तिशैलं नमाम्यहम् ॥ १ ॥  
 इति स्तुत्वा नमस्कृत्य चाथ वारणशैलकम् ।  
 राजानं सुरथं दृष्ट्वा वचनं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥

मार्कण्डेय उवाच

हस्तिशैलप्रभावः

अथ तत्र नृपश्रेष्ठ हरिक्षेत्रधरातले ।  
 पाञ्चालिकातीर्थराजवाते चांशद्वयात्मके ॥ ३ ॥  
 हस्तिशैलो महापुण्यो वर्तते पर्वतोत्तमः ।  
 गजाभिधेयकश्शैलो हरिक्षेत्रस्य भूषणम् ॥ ४ ॥  
 पुण्यकोट्यां निवासेन पुण्यकोटिरिति श्रुतः ।  
 पुरा महेन्द्रशापेन पर्वतो ऽभूद्भ्रजोत्तमः ॥ ५ ॥  
 तदहं सम्प्रवक्ष्यामि पुरावृत्तं चरित्रकम् ।



तस्य श्रवणमात्रेण सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥ ६ ॥  
 पुरा सरस्वती लोके विद्यानां मूलकारणात् ।  
 स्वयं लोके वरा चेति हृदि कृत्वा वरोन्मदात् ॥ ७ ॥  
 तथा लक्ष्मीर्हरिः पत्नी लोकानां भाग्यकारणात् ।  
 स्वयं लोके वरा चेति हृदि कृत्वा वरोन्मदात् ॥ ८ ॥  
 परस्परविवादात्ते स्वस्वोत्कर्षनिमित्ततः ।  
 स्वर्गलोकं तदा गत्वा चावयोः का वरा त्विति ॥ ९ ॥  
 यथार्थं ब्रूयतां शक्र निष्पक्षादावयोरपि ।  
 इति पप्रच्छतुश्शक्रं ततश्श्रीभरती च ते ॥ १० ॥  
 तदा सुराधिपो वज्री तयोर्लक्ष्मीर्विशिष्यते ।  
 वरा लक्ष्मीर्भाग्यमूला लोकानां च तथा विधेः ॥ ११ ॥  
 जननी विष्णुपत्नीत्वात्तव श्रुश्रूसरस्वती ।  
 लक्ष्मीर्विरति तत्त्वेन भारती तेन चोदिता ॥ १२ ॥  
 ततस्तयोस्तु वाणी तमशपत्पक्षपाततः ।  
 स्वश्रियस्थापनार्थाय परां मत्वा तु पद्मजाम् ॥ १३ ॥  
 अन्यायेनोक्तवान्यस्मात्तस्मान्त्र्यायविवर्जितः ।  
 अहंकारी श्रियोन्मत्तो दुष्टात्मा मूढधीर्वृषा ॥ १४ ॥  
 इति संचिन्त्य सा वाणी शशापेन्द्रं गजाकृतिम् ।  
 ततो लक्ष्मीर्महेन्द्राय कृपया शापमुक्तये ॥ १५ ॥  
 दृष्ट्वा न्यायाधिपं शक्रमिदं वचनमब्रवीत् ।

लक्ष्मीरुवाच

देवेन्द्र श्रुणु मद्वाक्यं तव शापविमुक्तये ॥ १६ ॥  
 भुलोके दण्डकारण्यं गत्वा सिंहाचलोत्तमे ।  
 तत्र प्रह्लादको नाम बालो भागवतोत्तमः ॥ १७ ॥  
 अस्ति तत्र तु तं प्राप्य तस्य वक्त्रारविन्दतः ।  
 शीघ्रसिद्धिप्रदं मन्त्रं द्वात्रिंशद्वर्णसंयुतम् ॥ १८ ॥  
 संगृह्य मन्त्रराजानं नारसिंहमहामनुम् ।  
 तदेकध्यानतश्शक्र दिव्यज्ञानं प्रजायते ॥ १९ ॥  
 तद्ज्ञानकुशलत्वं हि हरिक्षेत्रप्रवेशदम् ।

अवशाच्च भवेत्तत्र मन्नामध्यानमुत्तमम् ॥ २० ॥  
 तेनैव मत्प्रियस्सिंहस्तव शापं विमोक्ष्यति ।  
 तस्मात्कारुण्यतः प्रोक्तमविळम्बेन तत्कुरु ॥ २१ ॥  
 इत्येवमुक्त्वा शक्राय रमा मङ्गलदेवता ।  
 सह वाण्या महलक्ष्मीर्वादाद्ब्रह्मपुरीं गता ॥ २२ ॥  
 ततश्चेन्द्रो गजो भूत्वा महालक्ष्मीवचोनुगः ।  
 तदा प्रह्लादकं प्राप्य तस्य वक्रारविन्दतः ॥ २३ ॥  
 संगृह्य मन्त्रराजानं तदेकध्यानपूर्वकम् ।  
 काञ्चीपुर्यां हरिक्षेत्रं प्रविवेश गजाकृतिः ॥ २४ ॥  
 महेन्द्रहङ्गतो विष्णुर्ध्यानरूपो नृसिंहकः ।  
 गजदेहगतं शक्रं बध्वा हस्ताम्बुजैर्हरिः ॥ २५ ॥  
 तन्नागहृदयं भित्वा बहिरेत्य सुराधिपम् ।  
 तद्गजं वीक्ष्य शैलाभं कृत्वा तत्पुण्यभूतले ॥ २६ ॥  
 निवासकाम्यया सिंहः पुनश्शैलोदरं विशन् ।  
 बिम्बाकृतिस्ततो भूत्वा प्रबभौ योगवेषतः ॥ २७ ॥  
 ततश्चेन्द्रस्सुरपतिस्समभ्यर्च्य मृगेश्वरम् ।  
 स्वलोकाय ततश्चक्रो गन्तु निश्चित्य संस्थितः ॥ २८ ॥  
 ततश्शैलोत्तमे विप्रौ बालकौ दिव्यसुन्दरौ ।  
 दृष्ट्वा विस्मयतश्शक्रो वचनं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥ २९ ॥

वरदराजदेवालयस्थफल्लियुग्मकथारम्भः

इन्द्र उवाच

वदतां मे युवां विप्रबालकौ वेदनिर्भरौ ।  
 यत्राश्रमस्तु वामत्र किमर्थं चागतौ युवाम् ॥ ३० ॥  
 कदा शैलसमारूढौ तन्मे ब्रूतं द्विजोत्तमौ ।

विप्रावूचतुः

शृङ्गिबेरसुतौ विप्रौ हेमशुक्लाभिधानकौ ॥ ३१ ॥  
 शाण्डिल्यगोत्रसंजातौ सूत्रे वैखानसाह्वयौ ।  
 तत्सूत्रशास्त्रे निपुणौ बालकौ ब्रह्मचागिणौ ॥ ३२ ॥  
 गौतमस्य तु सच्छिष्यौ नौ गुरुर्विष्णुभक्तिमान् ।

नौ गुरुर्विष्णुपूजार्थमावां भद्राचलं समम् ॥ ३३ ॥  
 आपूर्य कुम्भमादाय कोङ्कणस्याश्रमे शुभे ।  
 अनाच्छादनतस्थाप्य समिदर्थं द्विजद्रुमम् ॥ ३४ ॥  
 आरुह्य समिदं तत्र गृहीत्वा समुपागतौ ।  
 तत्कुम्भतीर्थे त्ववशाभ्यपतत्कृशफल्लिकः ॥ ३५ ॥  
 तं दृष्ट्वा पाददृक्कोपादनाच्छादनतश्च नौ ।  
 अशपत्फल्लिरूपेण तेनावां फल्लिरूपकौ ॥ ३६ ॥  
 तद्दृक्षसंस्थितौ पश्चात्तव तुण्डप्रचेष्टया ।  
 छिन्नवृक्षान्निपतितौ तव पृष्ठे गजात्मनः ॥ ३७ ॥  
 आवान्तु धृत्वा दैवात्त्वं हरिक्षेत्रमवीविशः ।  
 नौ शापमुक्तिरभवदस्य क्षेत्रस्य वैभवात् ॥ ३८ ॥  
 इत्येवमुक्त्वा विप्रेन्द्रौ प्रणम्य शिरसा हरिम् ।  
 विहाय फल्लिरूपं तौ यथा स्वभवनं गतौ ॥ ३९ ॥  
 एवमाकर्ण्य देवेन्द्रो हस्ताभ्यां फल्लियुग्मकम् ।  
 धृत्वा दृष्ट्वा तु तच्छैलं विप्रयोरुपकारकम् ॥ ४० ॥  
 मुदा शैलाय देवेन्द्रो दत्तवान्वरमुत्तमम् ।  
 एकादश्यामहोरात्रं विष्णोस्संकीर्तनेन च ॥ ४१ ॥  
 यत्फलं तत्फलं नृणां हस्तिशैलस्य दर्शनात् ।  
 इति दत्त्वा वरं शक्रो गतस्वभवनं मुदा ॥ ४२ ॥  
 स्वदेवतायास्सदने कृत्वा तत्फल्लिलालाञ्छनम् ।  
 स्वपीठे तु यथा पूर्वं तदा देवपतिर्बभौ ॥ ४३ ॥  
 काञ्च्यां हस्तिगिरिस्तत्र हरिक्षेत्रे तदादितः ।  
 आस्ते तत्पर्वतं दृष्ट्वा बहवो मोक्षकाक्षिणः ॥ ४४ ॥  
 महिम्ना तस्य शैलस्य गतास्ते वैष्णवं पदम् ।

गणुब्राह्मणोपाख्यानम्

तेषु कश्चित्पुरा विप्रस्सरयूतीरमन्दिरः ॥ ४५ ॥  
 भारद्वाजकुलोद्भूतश्शुक्लवेदी महीसुरः ।  
 विप्रो गणुरिति ख्यातः पापी कर्मविवर्जितः ॥ ४६ ॥  
 जीवितश्चोरकृत्येन शुद्धवेषधरो बहिः ।

ऊर्ध्वपुण्ड्रवनाक्षाढ्यो वेदविद्याविशारदः ॥ ४७ ॥  
 धनुर्विद्यासु निरतः प्रत्यहं स नरो द्विजः ।  
 यात्रापदे सदा स्थित्वा स्वयं यात्रार्थवेषतः ॥ ४८ ॥  
 यात्रार्थं ये समायान्ति स तैर्युक्तश्शठाग्रणिः ।  
 शैलं वनं दुर्गमं वा वीक्ष्य कार्मुकविद्यया ॥ ४९ ॥  
 हत्वा तान्सर्ववस्तूनि हत्वा दस्युपथेन च ।  
 गृहं गत्वा जीवतीत्यं प्रत्यहं स नरः क्रमात् ॥ ५० ॥  
 कदाचित्स नरस्तत्र निकृत्या नैमिशे वने ।  
 वीरेण बद्धः केनापि छिन्नयज्ञोपवीतकः ॥ ५१ ॥  
 क्षुरप्रेणालूनशिखो नष्टमानोन्नतिर्द्विजः ।  
 याम्यां दिशं प्रयाहीति तेनाबध्य विसर्जितः ॥ ५२ ॥  
 यात्राकाले स वै विप्रस्तत्कोलाख्ये पुरे शुभे ।  
 समागतो हस्तिशैलं दृष्ट्वा सद्यो मूर्तिं गतः ॥ ५३ ॥  
 ततो वारणशैलस्य दर्शनात्पापवर्जितः ।  
 विष्णुदूतैर्विमानेन नीतो विष्णुपदं गतः ॥ ५४ ॥  
 तस्माद्धारणशैलो ऽसौ पुण्यराशिर्नृपोत्तम ।  
 वर्तते च हरिक्षेत्रे दर्शान्मुक्तिदायकः ॥ ५५ ॥  
 एतद्रहस्यमाख्यातं हस्तिशैलप्रभावयुक् ।  
 यः पठेच्छृणुयान्नित्यमिममध्यायमादरात् ॥ ५६ ॥  
 दर्शनाद्धस्तिशैलस्य यत्फलं तत्फलं लभेत् ॥

इति श्री मार्कण्डेयपुराणे श्रीविद्याखण्डे कामाक्षीविलासे हस्तिगिरिप्रभावो नाम तृतीयो  
 अध्यायः ॥

### Appendix III

Diplomatic transcript of a scan of the *Taṅkappallikaḥ mahātmīyam* (TPM), British  
 Library, shelve mark pTam.B.S931 (transcript by Ramya R.)

காஞ்சிபுரம்  
 ஸ்ரீ தேவராஜஸ்வாமி தேவஸ்தானம்  
 தங்கப்பல்லிகள் மஹாத்மியம்.

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இயற்றியது'

T.K சந்தரவரதாசாரியர்  
திருவாபரண மிராசுதார்  
ஸ்ரீதேவராஜஸ்வாமி தேவஸ்தானம்  
&

ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணா எலிமெண்டரி பாடசாலை ஸ்தாபகர், மானேஜர்.

முதல் பதிப்பு 1,000 காபிகள்.

டவுன் பிரஸ், காஞ்சிபுரம்.

விலை 0-2-6 [ரிஜிஸ்டர்ட்]

[new page]

ஆசாரியன் திருவடிகளை யடைந்த  
எனது பௌத்திரி ராஜம்  
எனது பௌத்திரன்  
கலியாணகோடி சௌந்தரராஜன்  
இவர்களிட கியாபகார்த்தமாய் இப்புத்தகம்  
வரையப்பட்டது.

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முகவுரை.

கஇதிப்ரம்மணோநாம - தேநத்தராஞ்சிதோஹரி: தஸ்மாத், காஞ்சீ இதி, விக்யாதா - புரீபுண்ய விவர்த்தநீ, என்றபடிக: என்பது ப்ரம்மாவினுடைய நாமம். அவராலே இந்த நகரத்திலே பகவான் ஆராதிதராகையாலே இந்த நகரத்துக்கு காஞ்சி என்கிற பேர், ப்ரஸித்தமாயிற்று என்று ப்ரம்ம புராணம், ஸ்ரீ ஹஸ்திகிரி மஹாத்யம் ப்ரதம, அத்யாயத்தில் கூறப்பட்டிருக்கிற படியால், காஞ்சிமாநகர் மிகவும் புனிதமான ஷேத்ரம். நம் தாய் நாடாகிய இந்தியாவின் பலபாகங்களிலிருந்து, பிரதிதினமும் வரும் யாத்ரீகர்கள் தங்கப்பல்லிகளின் மஹாத்மியத்தை தெரிந்துக் கொள்ள, நிறம்ப ஆவல் படுவதால், அவர்களுடைய ஆவலைத் தணிக்க, அதை இச்சிறு புத்தக வாயிலாக வெளியிடத் துணிந்தேன். இப் புத்தகத்தில் அனேக பிழைகளிருக்கக் கூடும். அப் பிழைகளை நேயர்கள் கண்டறிந்து எனக்கு எடுத்துக் காட்டக் கோருகிறேன். நிறம்ப விசேஷமானதும் ஆவச்யகமானதுமான சேர்க்கைகள் ஏதாவது கிடைத்து அவைகளை எனக்குத் தெரியப்படுத்தினால், அடுத்த ப்ரசுரத்தில் அவைகளையும் ப்ரசுரிக்கிறேன்.

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இச்சிறு புத்தகத்தின் கிரயத்துகையில் அச்சிட்ட சிலவுகள் போக மிகுதியை இதன் ஆசிரியர் சின்ன காஞ்சிபுரம் செட்டித்தெருவில் ஸ்தாபித்து நடத்திவரும் ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணா எலிமெண்டரி பாடசாலையின் உபயோகத்திற்கு எடுத்துக் கொள்ளப்படுமாகையால். மஹா ஜனங்கள் இப்புத்தகத்தைக் கண்ணுற்று,

நிறம்ப வில்வாஸத்துடன் ஆதரித்து, வாங்கி, ஸ்டீ பாடசாலையை நடைபெறச் செய்யவேனுமாய் நிறம்ப பணிவுடன் கேட்டுக் கொள்ளுகிறேன்.

T.K.S.

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ஸ்ரீ

ஸ்ரீ ப்ரணதார்த்திஹர வரத பரப்ரும்ஹணேநம:  
ஸ்ரீமதே வேதாந்த குரவேநம:  
ஸ்ரீமதே வேதாந்த ராமானுஜ மஹாதேசிகாய நம:

“அயோத்யா, மதுரா மாயா,  
காசி, காஞ்சி, அவந்திகா,  
புரீ, த்வாரா வதிஸ்சைவ,  
ஸப்தயிதேதி மோக்ஷதாயக:.”

என்று வழங்கும் புண்ய கேஷத்ரங்கள் ஏழில் காஞ்சிமா நகர் ஒன்று. காசியைக்காட்டிலும் காஞ்சி மேன்மைப்பட்டது. இதை தக்ஷிணகாசி என்று சொல்வதும் உண்டு, "நகரேஷு காஞ்சி" என்று மஹாகவிகளாலும் கொண்டாடப்பட்டது. ஸ்ரீவைஷ்ணவர்களால் மண்டப்த்ரயம் என்று வழங்கப்பட்ட கோயில், திருமலை, பெருமாள் கோயில் என்ற ப்ரபல விஷ்ணு ஸ்தலங்கள் மூன்றில், காஞ்சிமாநகரை பெருமாள் கோயில் என்று அழைப்பதும் உண்டு. இது நிறம்ப புனிதமான கேஷத்ரம். இதற்கு அருகாமையில் வேகவதி என்கிற, புண்யநதியும் இரண்டுமைல் களுக்கப்பால்

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க்ஷீரநதியும் (பாலாறு) தென்பாகத்திலிருக்கின்றன. வேகவதிக்கும் க்ஷீரநதிக்கும் மத்தியில் நிறம்ப பெயர் பெற்ற, இரண்டு நன்னீர்த்தடாகங்களும் உண்டு. அவற்றுள் ஒன்று தென்கிழக்கேயும். மற்றொன்று தென்மேற்கேயும் இருக்கின்றன. இந்தப்புண்ய கேஷத்ரத்தில். ப்ரம்மாவானவர், பகவானை ஸாக்ஷாத் கரிக்க, அஸ்வமேதயாகம் செய்து, அந்தயாககுண்ட மென்கிற உத்தரவேதிகையிலிருந்து ஸ்ரீ மஹாவிஷ்ணு, வரதனென்றும் விண்ணார் பெருமானான தேவாதி பனென்றும், ஸ்ரீ பேரருளாளனென்றும் திருநாமமுடையராய் புண்யகோடி விமானமத்யங்கதராய் ஸ்ருஷ்டி தண்டத்துடன் ப்ரம்மாவுக்கு சாக்ஷாத்காரமாகி, அவர் கோறிய சிருஷ்டி தண்டத்தைக் கொடுத்தருளினார். அக்காரணம் பற்றி "வரம் தத: இதீதி வரத:" என்றபடி, வரதன் என்ற திருநாமம் உண்டாயிற்றென்றும் சொல்லுவார்கள்.

ஸ்ரீ பேரருளாளன் அத்திகிரியில் புண்ணியகோடி விமானத்தின்கீழ் ஐந்து ப்ரகாரங்களுக்குள்ளிருக்கிறார். முதல் ப்ரகாரத்திற்கு வையமாளிகை என்று பெயர். இந்த வையமாளிகை, சங்கோத்தமாங்கி, சக்ரோத்த மாங்கி என்கிற இரண்டு தேவர்களால் கார்க்கப்படுகிறது. இந்த ப்ரகாரத்தில் ஈசான்ய பாகத்தில்



கச்சிக்கு வாய்த்தான் மண்டபம் என்கிற திருமண்டபம் ஒன்று இருக்கிறது. இந்த மண்டபத்திற்கு அடுத்த

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வட கிழக்கு பாகத்தில் பல்லி உருவங்கள் இரண்டு தங்கத்தால் செய்யப்பட்டு மரப்பலகையில் சேர்த்து மேலே ஸ்தாபனம் செய்யப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன. இவைகள் வையமாளிகையில் வைக்கப்பட்டிருப்பதால் இவைகளுக்கு வையமாளிகைப்பல்லி என்கிற காரணப்பெயர் உண்டாயிற்று. ஸாதாரணமாக வீட்டிலிருக்கும் பல்லிகள், மேலே விழுந்தால் 1-வது அனுபந்தத்தில் கண்டிருக்கும் தோஷங்கள் உண்டாகின்றன. இந்த பல்லி உருவங்களை எவ்வொருவன் ஸ்ரீ வரதராஜனை தரிசித்துப் பிறகு, தரிசித்தாலும் அல்லது ஸ்பரிசித்தாலும், அவன் பாபதோஷ, ரோக, சமனங்களையடைந்து செளக்கியமடைவான். இவைகளை தரிசித்த பிறகு பல்லிகள் மேலே விழுந்தாலுங் கூட. ஒரு கூண நேரம் வையமாளிகைப்பல்லி என்று மனதார ஸ்மரித்தால் அந்த நிமிஷத்தில் அந்த தோஷம் நிவாரணமாய் விடும். இது சூர்ய சந்திராள் உள்ளவரையில் நடைபெறும் என்பதற்கு அத்தாகூடியாக, சூர்ய சந்திராளையும் தங்கத்தால் செய்யப்பட்டு அப்பலகையிலேயே ஸ்தாபிதம் செய்யப்பட்டிருக்கிறதை, கண் கூடாகப்பார்க்கலாம். இந்த க்ஷேத்திரம் தோன்றியது முதலாக, நாளது வரையிலும், ப்ரதி தினமும் இந்தியா என்று வழங்கும்

இப்பரத கண்டத்தின் ஒவ்வொரு பாகத்திலிருந்தும், யாதீர்கள், ஸ்ரீவரதராஜனை தரிசித்துப் பிறகு, இந்த பல்லிகளையும் தரிசித்துப் போகிறார்கள்.

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தங்கப்பல்லி  
மஹாத்மிய வரலாறு.

“ப்ரம்மாண்டபுரானே ஸ்ரீகாஞ்சி மஹாத்மியே 31-வது அத்யாயே.”

ஸ்வர்க்க லோகம் என்கிற இந்திர லோகத்தில் தேவேந்திரன் தேவர்களும் மஹரிஷிகளுமாய் சேர்ந்த ஸபையில் வீற்றிருந்து, மஹரிஷிகளைப்பார்த்து, தர்ம விஷய ப்ரஸ்னம் பண்ணினார். அதாவது ப்ரம்மசர்ய, க்ருஹஸ்த, வானப்ரஸ்த, ஸந்யாஸமென்று சொல்லப்படுகிற நான்கு ஆஸ்ரமங்களுக்குள்ளே எந்த ஆஸ்ரமம் உத்தமம் என்று கேழ்க்க அந்த மஹரிஷிகளும் க்ரு ஹஸ்தாஸ்ரமமே உத்தமமென்று சொன்னதை ப்ரஹ் பதியானவர் தூஷித்து அதிக்ஷேபித்ததற்காக மஹ ரிஷிகள் அந்த ப்ரஸ்பதியைச் சபித்தார்கள். அந்த சாப விசேஷத்தால் இப்பூலோகத்தில் யானையாக வந்து பிறந்து வாசா மகோசரமான கஷ்டங்மளையனு பவித்து வரும்போது, மஹாபுநித நதியான கங்காதீரத்தில் நிவாஸமாயிருந்த, பரத்வாஜ மஹரிஷியைக்கண்டு சேவித்து தன் துர்த்தசையை அவருக்கு அறிவித்து அது நீங்கும்படியான உபாயத்தை அருளிச்செய்யும்

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படி ப்ரார்த்தித்தார். அந்த பரத்வாஜ மஹரிஷியும், தன் யோக மஹிமையினால் இந்த யானை ரூபமாயிருப்பவர் ப்ருஹஸ்பதி யென்றறிந்து ச்ஷேத்ரோத்தமமான ஸத்யவ்ருத ச்ஷேத்திரத்தில் ஹஸ்திகிரியில் ஸர்வாபீஷ்டப்ரதனாய் விளங்கும் ப்ரணதார்த்திஹரன் என்கிற பெருமானும் அனந்த ஸரஸ் என்கிற திவ்ய புஷ்கரிணியும் உண்டு. அங்கே போய் அனந்த ஸரஸ்ஸில் நீராடி, வரதனை சேவித்து தபஸ்வியாயிருந்தால் தேவப்பெருமாள் அபீஷ்டங்களைக் கொடுத்தருளவர், அங்கு போம் என்ன, அந்த தேவாதிராஜன் அபீஷ்ட வரதன் என்பதற்கு உபாக்கியானம் சொல்லும்படி யானை ரூபமாயிருந்த அந்தப்ரஹஸ்பதியானவர் வேண்ட பரத்வாஜர் சொல்லுகிறார்.

“கேளும் ப்ரஹஸ்பதி பகவானே! குருச்ஷேத்ரத்தில் வேதாத்யயன பரனான உபமன்யு என்கிற நாமம் பூண்ட பிராம்மணன் லக்ஷணை என்கிறதன் தர்ம பத்னியுடனும், தன் புருஷப்ரஜையுடனும், உஞ்சவ்ருத்தி பண்ணி, பிரதிதினமும் அதிதிகளை ஆராதித்த வண்ணமாகவே, தீர்த்தயாத்ரையும் பண்ணிக்கொண்டு கடைசியாக கோதாவரி நதி தீர்த்துக்கு வந்தார். பிரதி தினமும் செய்துவரும், நியம நிஷ்டை, அனுஷ்டானங்களை, சாங்கோபாங்கமாக நிறம்ப பக்தியுடன் செய்து முடித்தபிறகு, உஞ்சவிருத்தி பண்ணினதில் கிடைத்த அமுதுபடியை தளிகைபண்ணி, அதை பெருமாளுக்கு

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திருவாராதனம் செய்தபிறகு, கண்டருளப்பண்ணி, (நிவேதனம் செய்து), ஒருபாகம் தன் குழந்தைக்கு வைத்துவிட்டு, மிகுதி நின்றதை, இரண்டு சரிபாகங்களாக்கி இருவரும் ஸ்வீகரிக்கப் போகும், ஸமயத்தில் மிகுந்தபசியால்களைத்து, வாட்டமடைந்து, அதிக ஹீனஸ்வரத்துடன் கூடிய ஓர் அதிதி, தன்னை சக்சரிக்கும்படி வேண்ட அந்த உபமன்யு என்கிற பிராம்மணன் தனக்கும் தன் தர்மம் பத்னிக்கும் வைத்திருக்கும் இரண்டு பாகங்களையும் அவ்வதிதிக்குக் கொடுத்து அதிதி ஸத்காரம் செய்து, பிறகு பாத்திரத்தை அலம்பி, அலம்பிய ஜலமும் யிரஸாதமுமாய் தாங்களிருவரும் உட்கொண்டு, அதிதியின் உச்சிஷ்டத்தை ஒரு புதரில் வீசி எறிய, அது அங்கிருந்த புத்தில் விஷ, அந்த புற்றிலிருந்து மனிஷ்ய சப்தம் கேட்டது.

உடனே உபமன்யு என்கிற பராம்மணன் அங்கு போய் பார்க்கையில், ஸ்வர்ண மயமான தலையுடன் கூடிய இரண்டு பல்லிகள் வெளியில் வந்து, பிராம்மணோச்சிஷ்டம் மேலே விழுந்ததால் தலைகள் ஸ்வர்ணமயமானது மாத்ர மல்லாமல், பூர்வ ஜென்ம ஸ்மிருதியும் வந்து, ஸ்வாமின், அடியோங்களைக் காப்பாற்றி, உஜ்ஜீவிக்கும்படி அனுக்ரஹிக்க வேணு மென்று நிரம்ப பணிவுடன் பிரார்த்தித்து, தங்களுடைய பூர்வ விருத்தாந்தத்தை ஸ்வாமியின் நியமனமானால், விண்ணப்பித்துக் கொள்கிறோ மென்று

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தெரிவித்தன. உபமன்யு என்கிற பிராம்மணன், தெரிவிக்மும்படி சொல்லியதும், அப்பல்லிகளில் ஒன்று தங்களுடைய பூர்வ ஜன்ம விருத்தாந்தமான ஸூர்ய வம்சத்தரசனான சகரச்சக்ரவர்த்தியின் குமாரர்களில் ஜேஷ்டன் அலமஞ்ஜஸ னென்பவனும் அவன் பத்னியுமான நாங்களிருவரும் சிசுஹத்தி முதலான, பஹு துஷ்க்ருத்யங்களைப் பண்ணி, அதடியாக, அனேக ஹேயஜன்மங்களை யடைந்து, இப்போது இந்த ஜன்ம மடைந்தோம், எங்களை தேவரீர் கடைத்தேரப் பண்ண வேணுமென்று யிரார்த்திக்க, உபமன்யு வென்கிற பிராம்மணன் க்ருபாவானாய் பல்லிகளிரண்டையும் வஸ்திரத்தாலே யெடுத்துக்கொண்டு, புண்ய ச்ஷேத்திரங்கள், புண்ணிய தீர்த்தங்கள் முதலானதுகளுக்குப் போயும் பல்லிகளிரண்டுக்கும் சாபவிமோசனம் உண்டாகவில்லை. பின்பு, ப்ரபாஸதீர்த்தத்திற்கு வரும்போது அங்கு மார்க்கண்டேய மஹரிஷியை யடைந்து, ப்ரணா மாதிகளைப்பண்ணி, அடியேனை சரணமடைந்திருக்கும், பல்லிகளிரண்டிற்கும் பாப விமோசனமாய் மோக்ஷமடையும்படிக்கு அனுகிரஹிக்க வேண்டுமென்று ப்ரார்த்தித்து அந்த வழியையும் தனக்குச் சொல்ல வேண்டுமென்று வேண்டிக்கொள்ள, மார்க்கண்டேய மஹரிஷி சொல்லுகிறார்.

"கேளாய் பிராம்மணோத்தமா இந்தப் பல்லிகளின் பூர்வ ஜென்ம வரலாறுகளைச் சொல்லுகிறேன்.

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சூர்ய வம்சத்து அரசனான இக்ஷ்வாகுவின் வம்சத்தில் பிறந்த சகர மஹாராஜனுக்கு கேசினி சுமதி என்கிற இரண்டு தர்ம பத்தினிகள் இருந்தனர். இருவருக்கும் புத்திர சந்தானம் கிடையாது. புத்திர சந்தான அபேகையின் பேரில் அந்த சகர மஹாராஜன் தன் இரண்டு பத்தினிகளுடன் "ப்ருகுஸ்ரவணம்" என்கிற பர்வதத்தில் போய் நூறு வருஷம் தபம் செய்தான். அந்த தபஸ்ஸினால் ப்ருகு மஹரிஷி ப்ரீதியடைந்து சகர மஹாராஜனுக்கு ப்ரத்தியக்ஷமாகி மஹாராஜனே, உம்முடைய பத்தினிகளுக்கு புத்ர சந்தானம் உண்டாகப் போகின்றது. வமசோற்பத்திகா(கர?)னான ஒரு பிள்ளை ஒரு பத்தினிக்கும், அறுபதினாயிரம் பிள்ளைகள் மற்றொரு பத்தினிக்கும் உண்டாவர்கள் என்று சொன்னார். இவர்களுக்குள் யாருக்கு ஒரு பிள்ளையும் எவருக்கு அறுபதினாயிரம் பிள்ளைகளும் உண்டாகுமென்று அரசன் ப்ரச்சனை பண்ண, ப்ருகு மஹரிஷியானவர் உம்முடைய பத்தினிகள் இருவரில் வம்சோற்பத்திகா(கர?)னான பிள்ளையை யார் விரும்புவனோ அவருக்கு ஒரு பிள்ளை கெட்ட குணமுடையவனாயும், மிகுந்த துஷ்டனாயும், தீர்க்காயுளோடும் ஜனிப்பான். அறுபதினாயிரம் பிள்ளைகளை எவள் விரும்புகிறாளோ அவருக்கு கீர்த்திமான்களாயும் மஹா பலிஷ்டாளாயும் அற்ப ஆயுளோடும் கூடிய அறுபதினாயிரம் பிள்ளைகள் ஜனிப்பார்கள். ஆகையால்,

உங்களிஷ்டப்படி நீங்கள் புத்திர சந்தானம் பெறலாமென்று சொல்லி அனுப்பி விட்டார். கேசினி வம்சோற்பத்திகா(கர?)னான ஒரு பிள்ளையையும், ஸுமதி

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அறுபதினாயிரம் பிள்ளைகளையும் விரும்பி அப்படியே பெற்றார்கள். கேசினி குமாரனுக்கு அஸமஞ்ஜஸன் என்று பெயர் அவன் சிறுவயதாயிருக்கும்போதே, துஷ்க்ருத்யங்களைச் செய்ய வாரம்பித்து, யௌவனத்தில், இவனுக்கு விவாகம் நடந்தபடியால் அம்சமானென்கிற ஒரு நல்ல பிள்ளையையும் பெற்றான்.

இந்த அஸமஞ்ஜஸன் என்பவன் ஊரிலுள்ள சிசுக்களையும் சிறுவர்களையும் தூக்கி லரயூவென்கிற மஹா நதியில் போட்டுவிட்டு அவைகள் படும் ப்ராண அவஸ்தைகளைக் கண்டுகளிக்கும் மஹா பாதகன். இன்னும் இத்தன்மையைப்போல அனேக ஹேய காரியங்களைச் செய்து, தன் பிதாவின் பட்டணத்திலுள்ள ஜனங்களுக்கு கெடுதியை விளைவித்துக்கொண்டு வந்த படியால் சகர மஹாராஜன் அந்த அஸ்மஞ்ஜஸனுக்கு எவ்வளவு நற்புத்தியை போதித்தும் கேளாமல் துஷ்க்ருத்யங்களையே செய்து வந்தமையால் அவனை தேச ப்ருஷ்டம் செய்து விட்டான். அப்போது அவனுடைய பத்தினியும் அவனுடன் கூடவே சென்றாள். காட்டில் மிருகங்களை ஹிம்சித்தும் வழிப்போக்கர்களை மடக்கி அடித்தும் வரும் வியாபாரங்களில் இவர்களுக்கு அபிருசியுண்டாய் விட்டபடியால், மேன்மேலும் பாப கிருத்யங்களையே செய்து வந்தார்கள். கடைசியாக இருவரும் மரணமடைந்து, அனேக ஹேய ஜென்மங்களையடைந்து இப்போது இந்த பல்லி ஜென்மத்தையும் அடைந்திருக்

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கிறார்கள். பிராம்மணோச் சிஷ்டம் இவர்கள் தலைமேல் பட்டபடியால் அந்த உச்சிஷ்ட மஹிமையினால் இவர்கள் தலை மட்டும் ஸ்வர்ண மயமாய் விட்டது.

பிறகு ஸகர சக்ரவர்த்தியானவன் அஸ்வமேத யாகம் பண்ணத்துடங்கி, அந்த அஸ்வத்தை பூப்ரதக்ஷணம் அனுப்பியதில் அந்த அஸ்வத்தை தேவேந்திரன் அபகரித்துக் கொண்டு போய் பாதாள லோகத்தில் தபஸ் செய்துகொண்டிருக்கும் கபில மஹரிஷியினிட சமீபத்தில் கட்டிவிட்டுப் போய்விட்டான். அஸ்வம் குறித்த காலத்திற்குள் திரும்பி வராமற்போகவே, ஸகர சக்ரவர்த்தியானவன் ஸுமதியின் அறுபதினாயிரம் பிள்ளைகளை அனுப்பி அஸ்வத்தை தேடச் செய்தான். அவர்களும் பூமி முழுவதும் தேடி அஸ்வம் அகப்படாமல் பூமியைக் குடைந்து தோண்டி பாதாள உலகத்தில் சென்று தேட அங்கு கபில மஹரிஷியின் பக்கத்தில் அஸ்வம் கட்டப்பட்டிருக்கக் கண்டு இந்த மஹரிஷி தான் குதிரையை அபகரித்திருப்பானென்று அவரை பலபடியாக ஹிம்சித்தார்கள். அவர் கண்ணைத் திறந்து பார்த்தவுடனே இந்த அறுபதினாயிரம் பேர்களும் சாம்பலாய்ப் போய்விட்டார்கள். இவர்கள் பூமியைக் குடைந்து செல்லும்போது தேவர்கள் பயந்து ப்ரம்மாவினிடம் முறையிட அவர் ஸ்ரீ மஹாவிஷ்ணுவே கபில மஹரிஷியாக பாதாள உலகத்திலிருக்கிறார் அவரால் அவர்கள்

முடிவடையப்போகிறார்கள் என்று சொல்லக்கேட்டு தேவர்கள் க்லேச மொழிந்து போய்விட்ட

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டார்கள். பிறகு சகரமஹாராஜன், அறுபதினாயிரம் பிள்ளைகளும் திரும்பி வராமற்போகவே அஸமஞ்சன் பிள்யான அம்சமாணை அழைத்து உன் சிறிய தகப்பன்மார்கள் இன்னும் அஸ்வத்தைக்கொண்டு வரவில்லையாகையால் நீயாகிலும்போய் அஸ்வத்தைதேடிக்கொண்டுவா வென்று அனுப்ப, அவனும் பூலோகமெங்கும் தேடி அஸ்வம் அகப்படாமல் தன் சிறிய பிதாக்கள் சென்ற வழியே சென்று பாதாளத்தில் தேட அங்கு கபில மஹரிக்கியின் பக்கத்தில் அஸ்வமிருப்பதையும் எங்கு பார்த்தபோதிலும் பஸ்ப மயமாயிருப்பதையுங்கண்டு மஹரிஷியை ப்ரார்த்தித்து நடந்த விஷயங்களை யெல்லாம் அவரால் சவிஸ்தாரமாய் அறிந்துக் கொண்டு தன் சிறிய பிதாக்கள் அறுபதினாயிரம் பேர்களும் முத்தியடையும் வழியை அருளிச்செய்ய வேணுமென்று அவரையே ப்ரார்த்தித்த போது அவர் ஸ்ரீவிஷ்ணுவின் சரண கமலங்களினின்றும், பெருகி வரும் மது தாரையாகிய கங்கையைக் கொண்டு வந்து அதில் பிதுர்க் கடன்கள் செய்தால் அவர்கள் முத்தியடைவார்கள் என்றும், இனி நீ உன் அஸ்வத்தைக் கொண்டு போய் பாட்டனார் துவக்கிய யாகத்தைப் பூர்த்தி செய்யக் கடவை என்றும் அருளிச் செய்யக் கேட்டு அந்த அம்சமானும் அவரிடம் விடை பெற்று அப்படியே பாட்டனார் யாகத்தைப் பூர்த்தி செய்வித்தான்.

பிறகு சகர சக்ரவர்த்தியானவன் தன் மக்கள் கடைத்தேறும்பொருட்டு கங்கையைக் கொண்டு வர

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எவ்வளவோ யோசித்தும் அதற்கு மார்க்கம் ஒன்றும் அறியாதவனாகவே அம்சமானுக்கு ராஜ்யாபிஷேகம் செய்துவிட்டு தன் காலகதியை யடைந்தான். அந்த அம்சமானும் தன் குமரான் திலீபனுக்கு ராஜ்யாபிஷேகம் செய்வித்து தான் கங்கையைக் கொண்டுவர வெகுநாள் தபம் செய்து காரியம் நிறைவேறப் பெறாமல் கால கதியை அடைந்தான். பிறகு திலீபச்சக்கிரவர்த்தியும் தன் குமரான் பகீரதனுக்கு மகுடாபிஷேகம் செய்துவிட்டு, தபத்துக்குப் போய் காரியம் நிறை வேறாமலே, லோகாந்தரத்தை யடைந்தான். கடைசி யாக பகீரதன் பெரிய ப்ரயத்தனம் செய்து கங்கையைக் கொண்டு வந்து பிதுர்க்கடனை நிறைவேற்றி, அதனால் தன் மூதாதைகளை முத்தியடையச் செய்தான்.

ஆகையால் கேளாய் பிராம்மணோத்தமா இந்தப் பல்லிகள் முத்தியடைய வேண்டுமானால் ஸத்ய வ்ருத மென்னும் பெயரையுடைய காஞ்சி நகரமான புண்யக்ஷேத்திரத்திலே அனந்தசரஸ் என்கிற புண்ணிய தீர்த்தத்தில் இவைகளைக் கொண்டு போய் தீர்த்தமாடப் பண்ணுவித்து ஹஸ்திகிரியில் புண்ணியகோடி விமானத்தின்கீழ் எழுந்தருளியிருக்கும் வரதன் என்கிற தேவப் பெருமானை ஸேவிக்கப்பண்ணுவித்தால் உடனே இந்த பல்லிகள் இரண்டிற்கும் பாப

விமோசன முண்டாய் மோக்ஷ சாம்ராஜ்ய முண்டாகு மென்று மார்க்கண்டேய மஹரிஷியானவர் அருளிச் செய்யக்கேட்டு,

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அந்த உபமன்யு வென்கிற பிராம்மணன் அவரை தீர்க் கப்பிராணாயம் பண்ணி விடைபெற்று அப்பல்லிகளுடன் அவ்விடத்தினின்றும் புறப்பட்டு காஞ்சி கேஷத்திரத்தை யடைந்து மார்க்கண்டேய மஹரிஷி சொன்ன படி அனந்த சரஸில் பல்லிகளை தீர்த்தமாட்டி வைத்து ஸ்ரீப்ரணதார்த்தி ஹரவரதனை ஸேவிக்கப்பண்ணி அதனால் அவைகளுக்கு பாப விமோசன முண்டாய் மோக்ஷத்தையும் அடையும்படி செய்து வைத்தார்.

பின்பு அந்த உபமன்யு வென்கிற ப்ராம்மணன் பல்லிகள் மோக்ஷமடைந்ததைக் கண்டு ஆனந்தங் கொண்டு தானும் ஸ்ரீபேரருளாளனை ஸேவிக்கும்போது ஸ்ரீதேவப்பெருமாள் அந்த பிராம்மணனைக் குளிரக் கடாக்கித்து அருளிச்செய்ததாவது:- " உபமன்யு நீ மஹா பாக்கியசாலி கேவலம் ஹேயஜன்மக்களான பல்லிகளிரண்டும் மோக்ஷமடையும்படியான மாமஹோப காரத்தைப் பண்ணினாய், உன் க்ருபா விசேஷத்தையும் உன்னுடைய க்யாதியையும் பற்றிப்பேச யாருக்குத்தான் முடியும். பல பேசி, என்ன இப்பல்லிகள் இரண்டும் உன்னால் மோக்ஷமடைந்தன. ஆகையால் இவ்விரண்டு பல்லிகளையும் ஸ்வர்ணத்தால் செய்வித்து நம்முடைய ஹஸ்திகிரியில் கிழக்குப்பாகத்தில் ஸ்தாபிக்கக் கடவை. யாவனொருவன் இந்த ஹத்(ஸ்)திகிரியில் என்னை சேவித்தவனந்தரம் பாதக்ஷணஸ்திலுள்ள இப்பல்லிகளை வையமாளிகைப் பல்லி என்று

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க்ஷணகாலம் ஸ்மரித்தாலும் ஸேவித்தாலும் ஸ்பரிசித்தாலும் அவனுக்குப் பல்லிகள் மேலே விழுவதாலுண்டாகும் பாப ரோக தோஷ சமனங்கள் உண்டாம் என்பது திண்ணம். உன்னுடைய க்யாதியானது சூர்ய சந்திராள் உள்ள வரையில் நிலைத்திருக்கும் படிக்கும் அனுக்கிரஹித்தோமாகையால் நீ இப்பூவுலகின் கண் இன்னும் சிலகாலம் நம்மையே உபாஸித்துக்கொண்டிருந்து இறுதியில் நம்முடைய பேரின்ப வீட்டை ப்ரா பிக்கக்கடவை." என்று இவ்வாறு தேவப்பெருமாள் அருளிச்செய்தபடியே செய்துபிறகு சிலகாலம் அவரை உபாசித்து மோக்ஷமடைந்தான்.

ப்ரம்மாண்ட புராணே ஸ்ரீ காஞ்சி மஹாத்மியே

31-வது அத்யாயே ஸ்வர்ணமய பல்லிகளின்

மஹாத்மியம் முற்றிற்று.

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டவுன் பிரஸ், காஞ்சிபுரம். 562. - 34.



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ஸ்ரீ

அனுபந்தம்

பல்லி விழுதலின் பலன்.

1. தலையில் - கலகம்.
2. கூந்தல் - லாபம்
3. சிரசில் - மரணம்.
4. நெற்றி - பட்டாபிஷேகம்.
5. முகம் - பந்து தரிசனம்.
6. புருவம் - இராஜானுகர்ஹம்.
7. மேலுதடு - தனவிரயம்.
8. கீழுதடு - தனலாபம்.
9. மூக்கு - வியாதி சம்பவம்.
10. வலது செவி - தீர்க்காயுசு.
11. இட செவி - வியாபார லாபம்.
12. நேத்திரங்கள் - காராக்ரஹப்ரவேசம்.
13. முகவாய்க்கட்டை - ராஜதண்டனை.
14. வாய் - பயம்.
15. கழுத்து - சத்ருநாசம்.
16. வலதுபுஜம் (ஜம்) - ஆரோக்கியம்.
17. இடது புஜம் - ஸ்த்ரீ சம்போகம்.
18. வலது மணிக்கட்டு - பீடை.
19. இடது மணிக்கட்டு - கீர்த்தி.
20. ஸ்தனங்கள் - பாப சம்பவம்.
21. மார்பு - தன லாபம்.
22. வயிறு - தான்ய லாபம்.
23. நாபி - இரத்தின லாபம்

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24. உபயபாரிசம் - வெகுலாபம்.
25. துடைகள் - பிதா அரிஷ்டம்.
26. முழங்கால்கள் - சுபம்.
27. கணுக்கால் - சுபம்.
28. பாதம் - பிரயாணம்.
29. ப்ருஷ்டம் - சுபம்.
30. நகங்கள் - தனநாசம்.

31. ஆண்குறி - தரிதர்ம்.
32. இடக்கை - துயரம்.
33. வலக்கை - துக்கம்.
34. முதுகு - பொருள் நாசம்.
35. அபானம் - தனமுண்டு.
36. கால் விரல் - பயம்.
37. இடக்கை விரல் - துயரம்.
38. வலக்கை விரல் - இராஜ பயம்.
39. கணுக்கால் - சுபம்.
40. தேக ஒட்டம் - தீர்க்காயுஸ், இதில் எரினால் ஜெயம்.  
இறங்கினால் அபஜெயம்.

- கூந்தல் - ம்ருத்யு பயம் என்று கூறுவாறு முளர்.

இப்படிப்பட்ட தோஷங்கள் ஸ்டி புராணத்தில் கண்ட வையமாளிகைப் பல்லி என்கிற தங்கப்பல்லிகளின் தரிசன ஸ்பரிசன-ஸ்மரண மாத்திரத்தினாலே சமனமாய் வி(வீ)டுமென்பது ஸ்டி புராண ப்ரசித்தமாயிரா நின்றது.