

## Note:

All quotation marks have been inserted into the nāgarī<sup>1</sup> by the translator to delineate instances of direct speech. The text has been transcribed verbatim, with more obvious errors in orthography or grammar or spelling — particularly those which affect meaning — corrected in footnotes. Punctuation and missing particles have been inserted in square brackets. A nāgarī full stop appears like this [।] Translation follows the noted corrections. The text uses a mixture of Hindi, Sanskrit and even English writing conventions. Most terms are presented with Sanskrit transliteration conventions, meaning that terminal “a” is not dropped. Therefore darśan and darśana are the same term, with the former reflecting Hindi pronunciation and transliteration, the latter Sanskrit. Apologies for any enduring inconsistencies in the following.

Many thanks to Dr. Satti Khanna for his extensive help preparing and revising this translation.

## Preface:

The following is an English translation of a pilgrimage guidebook collected in Banaras by the translator in June, 2014. The same cover design, with presumably the same content, was available in other Indian languages (i.e. Bengali and Tamil). This text was selected for translation because its content, presentation, and availability suggest that it is a resource designed for and used by Hindi-speaking pilgrims who visit Kāśī. The text describes the greatness of the city as a holy place, and relates stories of those saved by visiting it. It also describes, in a rather haphazard fashion, a liturgy of deities to be visited as one proceeds around or through the kṣetra, the sacred region (lit. field), of Kāśī.

The Hindi used throughout this booklet is highly Sanskritized, lending the text an air of formality, authority, authenticity, and traditionalism. The guide is sprinkled with ślokas,<sup>2</sup> most of which are in pseudo-Sanskrit. Sometimes, Sanskrit euphonic morphology (sandhi) is implemented, but inconsistently, and often incorrectly. The most common errors appear to be orthographic, rather than a misapplication of rules.

Though I did not encounter an English version of the same booklet, it is likely that one exists. The price and language are both designed only in English on the cover on this Hindi version.<sup>3</sup> This leads me to believe that while the book is published in Vārāṇasī, it is handled by a group with a more general audience in mind. It seems unlikely that the editing and typesetting was handled by a group familiar with Hindi: there are dozens of small, obvious errors throughout the pamphlet. I would go so far as to say that those who prepared the text could not really read nāgarī, as many of the errors are orthographic: combinations which look the same if you aren't familiar with the script, but are glaringly obvious if you are. For example, there are many instances where को is written in lieu of की। These particles are both common in Hindi, but have very different meanings and uses: the first is an accusative oblique marker, the second is a genitive particle. Not only is the difference obvious to literate Hindi speakers, the meaning of a sentence would be radically changed by substituting one for another, and it would be obvious to an experienced reader that something wasn't quite right. Other examples involve errors which generate non-existent words or all but unpronounceable combinations. Take ddhāra द्वार vs.

---

<sup>1</sup> The script in which Hindi, and Sanskrit, are most commonly written.

<sup>2</sup> Sung verses, presented in meter, usually with religious content, often affiliated with Hindu traditions.

<sup>3</sup> Language: “Hindi.” Price: “Rs. 8.00.”

dūārā द्वारा vs. dvārā द्वारा, for example. Here, the first conjunct looks somewhat similar to the third, but a ddh\* combination usually appears in the middle of a word, and there is no such term as “ddhāra.” The second example is impossible in Sanskrit and does not appear in Hindi: a long vowel followed by a long vowel in this manner would result in one of them being written in full matra form in Hindi, while the sounds would undergo sandhi in Sanskrit.

The booklet’s errors are sometimes phonetic — more common and expected errors such as using a short vowel instead of a long one — but there are so many instances of non-phonetic errors that I do not think the typesetter was a fluent Hindi speaker with a poor sense of spelling. It almost appears that a form of optical character recognition was used to pull copy from other sources, and that it was then cut and pasted without careful proofreading. This would account for the errors of orthographic similarity: a computer might think that की was को, especially if the original copy wasn’t particularly clear.

Beyond phonetic and orthographic errors, there is the issue of sentence division. Often, sentences are stacked one after the other. Sometimes, there are commas used to subdivide units of text. The variation across sections — some well punctuated, some punctuated with English conventions (commas),<sup>4</sup> and some not punctuated at all — leads me to propose that this text was indeed compiled from many sources, most of which were originally scanned. This would account for the irregularity of the errors, and the fact that some portions are well curated while others are not. The content of the sections upholds this proposition: some of the sections deal with stories told in Banaras, some with descriptions of its greatness, and some describe the order of ritual to be observed.

In spite of these errors, this work might well serve as an experiential artifact for pilgrims. Perhaps having a copy is more important than applying specifically the details presented in it. It could be a memento of sorts: an artifact that can be taken home after the pilgrimage, to demonstrate to others and remind oneself of the ritual visit undertaken. Perhaps it is a sense of the language used, rather than the specifics of its meaning, that are important for the pilgrim’s experience. The fact that it looks like Sanskrit, and that the cover holds images of important sites in Kāśī, suggests that it might be important as an object in addition to, or even more than as, a text. This is reinforced by the fact that the image of the most important liṅgam to visit in Kāśī (according to the text) is represented twice on the cover: once in an illustration as part of the set of 12 liṅgams most important to visitors of Kāśī, and once photographically, with a cartoon Śiva’s energy radiating onto it. This photographic image is labelled “darśana,”<sup>5</sup> emphasizing the importance of sight to the pilgrim’s experience. Not only is it important to take darśana while on pilgrimage to the city; the cover itself is a form of darśan. If darśan can be taken of a drawn representation of a deity, how much better a photographic capture must be. In this way, the guide is a devotional object unto itself, but one which suggests through its hierarchy of — 1) text (and instructions); 2) drawing; 3) photo — a trajectory propelling the pilgrim toward the real-world Kāśī Viśvanātha liṅgam. This guidebook is then not merely an accessory: it is designed to potentially function as a ritual object in its own right, as well as a component integral to the layers of ritual experience of pilgrims in Kāśī.

---

<sup>4</sup> It is possible that English is a preferred medium for guidebooks as it is a non-region-specific language spoken all over India, and a language of the learned, knowledge of which indicates class. This could be a contributing factor to the presentation of details on the cover in English, as well as the relative difficulty of finding a Hindi guide, when there were many other guides available in English.

<sup>5</sup> Darśana is a mode of religious, ritual interaction between a devotee and a deity with an emphasis on the visual (as opposed to the aural, oral, tactile, etc.). Seeing is therefore central.



obverse.



reverse.

**Cover: (obverse)**

श्री<sup>6</sup> काशी माहात्म्य — The Blessed Majesty of Kāśī

पंचकोशी<sup>7</sup> यात्रा रुद्राक्ष माहात्म्य

काशी सारनाथ गाईड<sup>8</sup> सहित

The Greatness of the Recitation Cycle<sup>9</sup> of the Pañcakrośī<sup>10</sup> pilgrimage,  
Kāśī and Sārṇāth Guide Included

There are 13 images of liṅgams on the cover. Twelve of the liṅgams are artists' renderings of the most important liṅgams for pilgrims to visit while in Kāśī. Inside these liṅgams, Śiva is depicted with his consort standing in front of the golden roof of the Kāśī Viśvanāth maṇḍir, which houses the Kāśī Viśvanāth liṅgam. In front of them is a photograph of that liṅgam, which is labelled "Śrī Kāśī Viśvanātha darśana." The importance of this image being a photograph is discussed above. The liṅgams are, clockwise from top left,

श्री मल्लिकार्जून — Śrī Mallikārjūna

श्री नागेश्वर — Śrī Nāgeśvara

श्री रामेश्वर — Śrī Rāmeśvara

श्री विश्वनाथ — Śrī Viśvanātha

श्री त्रयम्बकेश्वर — Śrī Trayambakeśvara

श्री केदारनाथ — Śrī Kedāranātha

---

<sup>6</sup> श्री (śrī) can have many meanings. As a proper noun, it is the name of a Goddess. When combined with the name of a male deity, the term denotes the presence the female energy which makes effective the actions of the male deity. Although indistinct (i.e. integrated with the male form of the deity) she is understood to be present. As an adjective, śrī can mean blessed, holy, lavish, exalted, or lord. Śrī Kāśī, then, can mean "Holy/Blessed Kāśī" or "The Goddess Kāśī." Śrī Viśvanātha can mean "Lord Viśvanātha," or "Lord Viśvanātha imbued with the effective power of the Goddess Śrī." In the following, I have most often translated Śrī as an honorific particle, but it always carries a multiplicity of meaning.

<sup>7</sup> पंचक्रोशी

<sup>8</sup> This is a transliteration of the English word "guide," a use which does not fit with the high-Hindi of much of the rest of the booklet.

<sup>9</sup> The term used is rudrākṣa, meaning "eye of Rudra." It is a type of seed held to have protective and purificatory qualities. Here, it is a synecdochal reference to a looped string of these seeds used to count off recitations of certain prayers of mantras, somewhat similar to the use of a rosary.

<sup>10</sup> Literally "five krośa," a krośa being a unit of measure around 3.5 or 4 miles. This refers to the length of the pilgrimage circuit around Kāśī, which passes by Sārṇāth. Sometimes, in Hindi, the term has become "pañc kośī," with the terminal "a" of "pañc" dropped as is common in Hindi, and the "r" dropped from "krośī," perhaps due to orthography. I have heard this modified term interpreted as "five doorways," but the definition based on distance is supported both textually and by contemporary vernacular explanation.

श्री घृशणेश्वर — Śrī Ghṛṣaṇeśvara  
 श्री श्रीसोमनाथ — Śrī Śrīsomanātha  
 श्री महाकालेश्वर — Śrī Mahākāleśvara  
 श्री ममलेश्वर — Śrī Mamaleśvara  
 श्री बैघनाथ — Śrī Baighanātha  
 श्री मिमाशंकर — Śrī Mimāśaṅkara

### **Cover: Reverse**

The back of this booklet is also brightly covered, and depicts Śiva as a mendicant, receiving alms of porridge from Kāśī Annapūrṇā Devī. Below the image, the address of the publishing house is listed in Roman letters. The address is in the middle of Kāśī, making the irregularity of the Hindi in this pamphlet curious indeed. There are thousands of people in Kāśī who read and write Hindi beautifully, and it seems likely that literate pilgrims would also notice many of these inconsistencies. Again, this points to the importance of the booklet as an object rather than as a text itself. Its exterior is bright and glossy, with images that would be important to pilgrims. It is also true that Hindu, particularly Sanskrit-derived, tradition holds that the authoritative text is in the mind and upon the tongue of a paṇḍit, and not necessarily in a book. There is no shortage of such paṇḍits to recite pertinent verses and instruct pilgrims in their ritual and journey.

॥ ॐ नमः शिवाय ॥



समुद सुगन्धित सुमन ले सुमन सु-भक्ति सुवार ।  
 पुष्पाञ्जलि अर्पण करुँ देव ! करी स्वीकार ॥

श्री काशी माहात्म्य

frontispiece to interior text.

Bracketed by Sanskrit full-stops, the mantra above the image reads “Om namaḥ Śivāya,” meaning, very roughly, “blessings be, praises to Śiva.” While discerning and explaining the meaning of Om can be a life’s work unto itself, what is important to recognize about this phrase is that it is often chanted by devotees (it is a candidate for the tāraḥ mantra, discussed below), and it here consecrates the presentation of this māhātmya and dedicates it to Śiva.

The image is of Śiva as an ascetic, meditating while seated upon a tiger skin, with the Gaṅga flowing from his hair. Just as Śiva is joined by the Gaṅga, so too does the Gaṅga join Kāśī by creating one of the city’s borders and being home to its most holy sites.

The following śloka, presented in pseudo-Sanskrit, dedicates the presentation to God, implicitly Śiva.

समुद्र<sup>11</sup> सुगन्धित सुमन ले<sup>12</sup> सुमन सु-भक्ति सुवार<sup>13</sup>।  
पुष्पाञ्जलि अरण्य करुँ देव! करी स्वीकार।।

Partake of the brilliant, fragrant ocean; that glorious writ adorned with righteous devotion  
(सु-भक्ति),  
Let me approach with cupped hands full of flowers; Oh Lord! Accept this offering!

**श्री काशी माहात्म्य — The Blessed Majesty of Kāśī**

### ***Interior Text***

---

<sup>11</sup> समुद्र

<sup>12</sup> This is a Hindi imperative form, quite out of place in this Sanskritized verse.

<sup>13</sup> सुवार

**प्रथमोऽध्यायः — First Portion**

एक समय नर्मदा नदी के तट पर आनन्दपूर्व बैठे हुए भृगुमुनि से लोमशादी ऋषियों ने श्री काशी क्षेत्र का महात्म्य पूछा, तब सहर्ष भृगुमुनि ने वर्णन किया कि “हे मुनि श्रष्ट! श्री विश्वनाथ आदि लिंग शिवाजी का स्थित हैं, जिसके प्रभाव से काशीजी में पापात्मा<sup>14</sup> कोई भी जीव शरीर को त्यागता<sup>15</sup> है तो उसको निःसन्देह मुक्ति पद प्राप्त होता है।

Once upon a time, Lomaśādi and his retinue of sages asked the blissful Saint Bhṛgu, who was seated upon the banks of the Narmadā river, to tell them about the Blessed Majesty of the Land of Kāśī.<sup>16</sup> Overjoyed, the cliff-saint began his description, saying, “Oh Great Sages!<sup>17</sup> The primordial liṅga of Lord Viśvanātha is the abode of Lord Śiva, by whose power any sinful-self that leaves its body in the revered Kāśī will assuredly achieve a state of liberation (मुक्ति).

काशी यह शब्द उच्चारण करने वाले पुरुष का पाप रुपी पहाड नाश होकर ज्ञान के प्राप्त होने से मोक्ष अवश्य मिल जाता है।

Kāśī: those who demolish their gargantuan sin by uttering this word will surely obtain liberation by the acquisition of understanding.

धन्य हैं वे पुरुष जो निरन्तर काशी धाम में बास करते हैं।

Blessed are those who eternally dwell in the realm of Kāśī.

---

<sup>14</sup> पाप + आत्मा। The first component of this word, pāpa, is often translated as “sin” or “sinful.” The term sin has specific networks of meaning attached to it due to its use in Jewish and Christian theology, and these networks should not be presumed to exist in a Hindu context. Here, pāpa means infraction; trespass; ill-action; transgression; misdeed; crime; wicked; vile; evil. Most of the infractions described here are severe, and the weight of the term “sin” is appropriate. It also facilitates the flow of the translation: “sinful self” or “sinner” are more intelligible and digestible than “the self typified by the perpetration of irreligious action.” Please keep this distinction in mind whenever the term “sin” appears.

<sup>15</sup> This verb means quit/exit/leave, and literally means to leave a body. I keep this literal translation because it reflects a Hindu notion of a soul or self inhabiting a body, and describing death as the exit of a soul from a body can be understood to reflect an understanding of liberation from their physical realm. It is therefore often used to for holy people who are believed to have escaped the cycle of rebirth. It should also be noted, however, that it is often used to soften the brunt of the idea of death: as one might say in English “they have passed on” or “they are no longer with us,” so too might a Hindu refer to someones death as their having left their body. Here, it is useful to maintain this metaphysical indication due to the religious nature of the text, but ultimately it is death that is being described.

<sup>16</sup> Essentially the same as the title of the work, this reference includes the word क्षेत्र indicating that they are asking about the sacred geography of Kāśī and environs.

<sup>17</sup> The Hindi uses the singular term for “saint” to describe the speaker and whom he addresses, but uses the word for “sage” to denote those who asked the question in the first place. It is for this reason that I translate मुनि differently in these instances.



हे मुनि! काशीपुरी का महात्म्य<sup>18</sup> में कहाँ तक वर्णन करूँ?”<sup>19</sup>

Oh sage! To what degree shall I describe the Blessed Majesty of Kāśī?”

### **द्वितीयोऽध्यायः<sup>20</sup> – Second Portion**

सत्युग<sup>21</sup> में अति शूरवीर भूरिद्यम्न नामक राजा राज्य करता था।<sup>22</sup> जिसकी सहस्रों रानियों में विभावरो नामक पुरुष रानी थी [।]<sup>23</sup> दैववश कामदेव के वशोभूत होने के कारण समस्त राज्यों को शत्रुओं ने निज वाश में कर लिया और राजा भूरिद्यम्न विभावरी रानी को राथ लेकर तलवार लिये भयानक विन्ध्य पर्वत पर चला गया।

In the Sat Yuga, the Golden Age, there reigned a chivalrous king named Bhūridyamna, amongst whose thousands of queens one by the name of Vibhāvaro was most excellent. As fate would have it, he was so besotted by Kāmadeva — by amorous desire itself — that his enemies took control of his entire federation of territories. Taking his queen Vibhāvaro with him, and grabbing a sword, he rode off to the terrifying Vindhya mountains.

कुछ समय के बाद एक दिन राजा से रानी ने कहा कि हे राजन् आपने कामदेव के वश होकर निज राज्य और अन्य स्त्रियों को खो दिया अब हमसे और आपसे इस निर्जन वन में कैसे रह जायगा?

One day, after some time, the Queen said, “Oh king, having succumbed to Kāmadeva, having lost your own kingdom and your other women, how are we now to survive in this desolate forest?”

जो पुरुष धर्म अर्थ को त्याग कर काम ही के वश में रहता है उसकी आपकी आप ही की सा-गति होती है।

“He who forsakes righteousness (धर्म) and prosperity (अर्थ) remains indeed in the throes of desire;<sup>24</sup> his, theirs, and yours indeed will such a path be.

बाह वे राजा रानी क्षुधा से व्याकुल हो निज कर्मम का स्मरण करते हुए धुमने<sup>25</sup> लगे।

Then, the king and queen began to wander about, racked by hunger and preoccupied by the memory of their deeds.

---

<sup>18</sup> माहात्म्य

<sup>19</sup> Quotation marks inserted by translator to help demarcate direct speech.

<sup>20</sup> I believe it would be more common to see this written without declining the cardinal, making the heading instead the compound word तृतीयाध्यायः।

<sup>21</sup> Should be सद्युगे

<sup>22</sup> Probably shouldn't be a sentence break here.

<sup>23</sup> Looks like sentence break should go here, based on typical word order.

<sup>24</sup> This implies that other aims of life, namely goal acquisition, righteousness and (especially important for this text) liberation, are being neglected.

<sup>25</sup> Should be घूम\*

एक दिन क्षुधा से पीड़ित राजा के मन में पाप आया कि मैं निज रानी ही को मार कर खा जाऊँ।

One day, a thought came into the mind of the hunger-crazed king: “I shall kill my very wife, and eat her!”

रानी को यह बात मालूम<sup>26</sup> हुई तो रानी ने कहा कि “हे<sup>27</sup> महाराज प्राणका मुख कमल क्षुधा से पीड़ित है अब मेरे शरीर में से मांस निकाल कर भोजन कोजिये और निज प्राणों को बचाइये।

The queen was savvy of this spark, and said, “Oh, Great King! Your lotus-face has become shriveled from hunger. Take meat from my very body and make of it food, that your own life can be maintained.”

नीति के वचन सुन, घोर पापी राजा ने<sup>28</sup> रानी को मार कर ज्योंही मांस खाने को बैठा ज्योंही<sup>29</sup> दो सिंह आपस में खेलते हुए वहाँ पर आये।

Hearing these words of council, the horrifically perverse king slew his wife and was just sitting to eat the meat when two lions approached, playing with one another.

सिंह<sup>30</sup> को देखकर राजा भाग खड़ा हुआ और चार कोस की दूरी पर धान के बाँझ को लिए चार ब्राह्मणों को देखकर राजा ने उन्हें मार कर धान खाने को ज्योंही<sup>31</sup> उद्यत<sup>32</sup> हुआ यज्ञोपवीत<sup>33</sup> और मृग चर्म को देखा तो राजाको दैववश ज्ञान हुआ कि मैंने निज कुबुद्धि से स्त्री<sup>34</sup> और ब्राह्मणों को मार कर ब्रह्म हत्याकिया जिससे मनुष्य सौ जन्म नरक में बास करता हूँ और स्त्री<sup>35</sup> के बध से वह पचास कल्प है।

Upon seeing the lion the king up and ran, and after a distance of four kos<sup>36</sup> he saw four Brahmins who were set about carrying rice bundles.<sup>37</sup> He slew them, and just as he was ready to eat their rice he saw a sacred thread and their deerskin.<sup>38</sup> Serendipitously, it suddenly dawned on him that, “My own foul mentality has led me to slay my own wife and these

<sup>26</sup> Should be मालूम

<sup>27</sup> हे

<sup>28</sup> This particle is wayward: there is no perfective verb in this sentence.

<sup>29</sup> ज्योंही

<sup>30</sup> Singular in original.

<sup>31</sup> ज्योंही

<sup>32</sup> उद्यत

<sup>33</sup> यज्ञोपवीत

<sup>34</sup> स्त्री

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Roughly 2 miles.

<sup>37</sup> Sentences divided by translator.

<sup>38</sup> This reminds him that they were no ordinary people. Thanks to Dr. Khanna for pointing out that he is becoming aware of his increasingly severe infractions: killing his wife is horrible, but killing four Brahmins worse still, especially as they might have been engaged in ritual activity, for Brahmins wouldn't often carry rice otherwise.

Brahmins; and so I am guilty of Brahminicide. For that, I'll have to endure a hundred births in hell; and for the woman, it'll be fifty kalpas.”<sup>39</sup>

उनहों मैंने महाभारी घोर पाप किया। यह विचार करता हुआ राजा भूरिघुम्न शाकल्य मुनि के स्थान में आकर समस्त निज कथा को कह सुनाया और प्रायश्चित पूछा तब दया भाव से मुनि ने कहा अरे दुष्ट। अब तू काशी जा इसके निश्चय के लिए पाँच काले कपडे तु पहन ले सो काशी के दर्शन मात्र से सब सेद हो जायेंगे [।] यह सुन भूरिघुम्न सात दिन में चलकर समस्त जीवों के भय को नाश करने वाली काशी को पहुँचा तो श्री काशी के दर्शन मात्र से उसके पाँचों काले कपडे शरद् ऋतु के सुदृश उज्ज्वल चन्द्रवत् सेद हो गयो और वह धार<sup>40</sup> पापी काशी नित्य श्री गंगा<sup>41</sup> स्नान और श्री विश्वेश्वर का दर्शन पूजन करने लगा।

“I have committed the most grievous of sins against them!” Dwelling upon this thought, King Bhūridhumna came to the abode of Saint Śākalya. When he related the story of his deeds, and asked the saint what expiation he should perform, the saint said, with a pitying tone, “Oh, you poor Bastard. Get to Kāśī right away, for it is certain that should you wear clothing of five dark hues, then by merely taking darśan<sup>42</sup> of Kāśī they all will become white.”<sup>43</sup> Having heard this, Būrihumna, journeying for seven days, arrived in Kāśī, which destroys the fears of all living beings. Then, just by taking Blessed Kāśī's darśan, his five-dark-hued clothing shone brilliant, lustrous white like a winter's moon, and that wretched man began to perform ablutions in Kāśī's eternal Gaṅgā and the requisite darśan and pūjā of Viśeśvara.

गंगा गंगेति ऐसा उच्चरण<sup>44</sup> करने से, श्री विश्वनाथ मणिकर्णिका के दर्शन पूजन से और तारक मन्त्र के प्रभाव से इस क्षेत्र<sup>45</sup> में शिव सारूप्य मुक्तिको प्राप्त हुआ। इससे हे मुनिवर्य।

“Gaṅgā, oh Gaṅgā!” By uttering thus, by performing pūjā and taking darśan of Śri Viśvanātha at Maṅikarṇika, by the impact of the Tāraka Mantra,<sup>46</sup> in this dominion<sup>47</sup> becoming like unto Śiva, he achieved liberation. Thus it is, Oh Sages.

काशी में किसी जगह देसा ही घोर पापी शरीर त्यागता है तो उसे अवस्य ही मोक्ष प्राप्त होता है। धर्मात्माओं को गति को कहना हो क्या है।

<sup>39</sup> Kalpas = eons.

<sup>40</sup> घोर

<sup>41</sup> Also commonly written गङ्गा।

<sup>42</sup> Darśan (दर्शन) is a mode of interaction with the sacred based largely upon sight.

<sup>43</sup> Sentence break inserted by translator.

<sup>44</sup> उच्चरण

<sup>45</sup> क्षेत्र. if it's क्षेत्र, it means that Śiva, with from, achieved liberation in the

<sup>46</sup> The mantra of liberation or crossing over (tāraka, caus. from tī - to cross over; achieve; liberate; rescue; save) so that mantra which saves you or crosses you over (here, the river dividing the living and the dead). This mantra is said to be whispered by Śiva to the faithful, but there is disagreement as to what the mantra actually is. I have heard claims that it is Om ॐ, Rāma Rāma राम राम, or Om Namaḥ Śivāya ॐ नमः शिवाय.

<sup>47</sup> Meaning Kāśī ksetra.

In Kāśī, in whatever place and whichever way a horrible sinner leaves his body, it is certain that he will achieve liberation. So what's there to say about those who walk the righteous path?<sup>48</sup>

### तृतीयोध्यायः<sup>49</sup> Third Portion

भृगुमुनि न<sup>50</sup> कहा कि “हे ऋषियों!<sup>51</sup> जिस काशी में पतितो द्वारिणो<sup>52</sup> और मणिकर्णिका का कुण्ड, श्री साक्षात्<sup>53</sup> आदि शिवलिंग विश्वनाथजी विराजमान हैं, उस काशी के माहात्म्य को मैं क्या कह सकता हूँ<sup>54</sup>।

Saint Bhṛgu said “Oh, Ṛṣis! Of that Kāśī in which are the Sinner-Liberator and Maṇikarṇika Kuṇḍ,<sup>55</sup> the Goddess Śrī made manifest, the primordial Śivaliṅga, and the revered Viśvanātha, what can I say about that Kāśī's greatness?

जिस पुरुष ने काशी में वास करके कोई पाप कर्म किया उसको तीन हजार वर्ष रुद्र पिशाच होना पडता है, इसलिए, काशी में रहकर सदैव धर्म का आचरण करे।

Whichever person who, having set up residence in Kāśī, does some infractuous deed, they must spend three thousands years as a howling demon. Therefore, upon residing in Kāśī, engage only in righteous behavior.

श्री विश्वनाथ जो काशी में रहते हुए समस्त जीवों को तारक मन्त्र का उपदेश करते हैं, जिसके प्रताप से वह अवश्य ही मोक्ष को प्राप्त होता है।।

<sup>48</sup> Suggests that if those with lots of obstacles achieve liberation, how much easier still must it be for those who have lived righteously.

<sup>49</sup> These headings are Sanskritized, adding to an air of refined authority. The correct sandhi here would be तृतीयो ऽध्यायः (०अः + अ० = ०ओ ऽ०). However, I believe it would be more common to see this written without declining the cardinal, making the heading instead the compound word तृतीयाध्यायः।

<sup>50</sup> ने

<sup>51</sup> In other instances, sanskrit vocative phrases of greeting are used. Here, the vocative plural of ऋषि is ऋषयः। Here, the oblique plural is used instead.

<sup>52</sup> द्वारिणो

<sup>53</sup> The line below the final letter is a *halant*, used in Sanskrit to indicate a consonant is not followed by any vowel. This name is pulled from Sanskrit, but employing *halants* is done irregularly in this text.

<sup>54</sup> हूँ

<sup>55</sup> A kuṇḍ is a pool of water, usually man-made, and often square. They are usually found beside temples or within temple complexes. They are used for ritual bathing by pilgrims and holy people as a part of their religious activity. Maṇikarṇika Kuṇḍ is built into the stairs which make up the bank of the Gaṅga in Kāśī, just north of Maṇikarṇika Ghat, one of the cremation sites in the city. Pilgrims who are performing pūjā for the benefit of their ancestors bathe both in this kuṇḍ and in the Gaṅga during the relevant rite.

The Holy Viśvanātha, who dwelling in Kāśī teaches the tāraka mantra to all living beings, by the power of which one is most assuredly attains liberation.

एक समय सरस्वती नदी के किनारे वशिष्ट जी के पास वामदेव मुनि आये और परस्पर वार्तालाप करते हुए श्री काशी धाम के माहात्म्य का<sup>56</sup> वामदेव ने वर्णन किया की हे तपोधन। श्री विश्वनाथ जी का क्षेत्र जो काशी पुरी हैं इसमें पापी और पुण्यात्माओं को श्री शिवजी शुभ गति देते हैं और आप सदैव काशी में वास करते हैं।

One day, on the bank of the Sarasvatī river, Saint Vāmadeva approached the revered Vaśiṣṭha, and in the course of their discussion Vāmadeva described the greatness of the abode of Blessed Kāśī, saying “Oh, great ascetic! The Revered Lord Viśvanātha’s domain, which is indeed the city of Kāśī, in this very place the Revered Lord Śiva provides the auspicious way for the wretched and the virtuous, and you dwell eternally in Kāśī.

परलोक यह वाराणसी शंकर जी का आनन्द वन है[1] गद्यपि<sup>57</sup> पृथ्वी<sup>58</sup> में अनेकों ही तीर्थ हैं, परन्तु सुधारने के लिये काशी है।

The afterworld is the great Vārāṇasī, Śaṅkara’s forest of bliss. Although there are indeed many tīrthas<sup>59</sup> on earth, for rectification,<sup>60</sup> however, there is Kāśī.

यहाँ के पुण्य भाव अनन्त है जो कोई यहाँ पर एक वर्ष एक भी ब्राह्मण को बराबर भोजन देता है तो उसको गंगा जी की जितनी बालुकायें हैं उतने वर्ष भोजन देने का फल प्राप्त होता है।

This place’s auspicious atmosphere is eternal, so that whoever here gives food to a Brāhmaṇ regularly for a year, they will receive fruits as though they had done so for as many years as there are grains of the great Gaṅga’s sands.

जो पुरुषकाशी में सदैव वास करते हैं वे शिव समान हैं।

Those people who dwell forever in Kāśī, they are just like Śiva.

इस भाति वशिष्ट और वामदेव की वार्ता होकर दोनों ही ऋषिवर्य काशी को चल दिये।

In this way, Vaśiṣṭha and Vāmadeva’s conversation coming to a close, both of these great sages set off for Kāśī.

---

<sup>56</sup> को

<sup>57</sup> गद्यपि

<sup>58</sup> पृथ्वी

<sup>59</sup> Sacred sites, where the worldly and transcendent intersect. Usually involving water, or the crossing of a body of water, they are in this literature sacred sites for purificatory bathing.

<sup>60</sup> This term more commonly means improvement, especially self-improvement. Thanks to Dr. Khanna.

काशी के निकट आये दो जंगल में विकरालोन्माली राक्षस के अनेक निशाचर अस्त्र लिये दिख पड़े और उक्त राक्षसों का स्वामी डक नाम के राक्षस ने वशिष्ठ और वामदेव से वार्तालाप करके कहा कि हे राक्षसों इन दोनों पुरुषों को शिघ्र ही मार डालो[।] इन्हीं वशिष्ठ के पुत्र पराशर-घातक<sup>61</sup> नाना यज्ञ करके सकु टुम्ब<sup>62</sup> हमारे पिता को मार डाला है।

As those two drew near to Kāśī, the Demon Vikarālonmālī's many, arms-bearing nightwalkers<sup>63</sup> appeared in the jungle, and the leader of the aforementioned horde, by the name of Ḍak, having parleyed with Vaśiṣṭha and Vāmadeva, said "Hey Demons! Kill these two men: tout-suite! Amongst these, Vaśiṣṭha's sons, the Parāśara the assassi, having performed various sacrifices to kill our father and family."

यह आज्ञा पाये ज्यों ही निशाचर लोग दौड़े त्यों ही श्री शंकर जी क्रोध करके निज तीसरा नेत्र खोलकर राक्षसों को भष्म<sup>64</sup> करके वशिष्ठ और वामदेव जी का कष्ट छुड़ाये अर्न्तध्यान हो गये और वे दोनों मुनि काशी में आये तीन हजार वर्ष तक तपस्या करके शंकर जी को प्रसन्न किये और विश्वनाथ जी<sup>65</sup> निरन्तर काशी वास करने का वर पाये निवास करने लगे।

Having received this command, as soon as the Nightwalkers ran [to kill them], at that very moment Śaṅkara, becoming enraged, opening his third eye, turned the demons to ashes, and so ameliorated the predicament of the Revered Vaśiṣṭha and Vāmadeva and they, both Saints, arrived in Kāśī, and having done tapas for three thousand years, they pleased Śaṅkara, and receiving the boon from Lord Viśvanātha of dwelling endlessly in Kāśī, they set up residence.

जो कोई यात्री उन मुनियों स्थान पर जाय दर्शन करेंगे और इस कथा को सुनेगे तो उनके काशी वास करने के जितने विघ्न हैं, वे सब नाश हो जायेंगे।

Whichever pilgrim will go to the abode of those sages and does darśan, and will listen to this story, then whatever obstacles there are to their setting up residence in Kāśī will all be destroyed.

### **चतुर्थोध्यायः Fourth Portion**

एक समय याज्ञवल्क्य<sup>66</sup> ने कहा कि "आशुतोष श्री विश्वनाथ जी की काशीपुरी में जो शरीर को त्यागता है उसे निश्चय ही मोक्ष मिलता है[।] काशी में ब्रह्म स्वरूप हजारों लिंग हैं, जिसमें ज्योति लिंग श्री विश्वनाथ जी का है जिसके दर्शन से सहज ही में मोक्ष होता है।

Once upon a time, Yājñavalkya said, "Those who quit their bodies in Āśutoṣa's, the Lord Viśvanātha's, City of Kāśī, they most certainly find liberation. In Kāśī Brahmā is self-manifest in

<sup>61</sup> पराशर-घातक, name of a son, meaning "Skillful Killer"

<sup>62</sup> सकुटुम्ब

<sup>63</sup> Literally "nocturnal," this term refers to those who move in the night, i.e. demons.

<sup>64</sup> भस्म

<sup>65</sup> Should have the word से here.

<sup>66</sup> याज्ञवल्क्य

thousands of liṅgas, amongst which the Jyoti Liṅga is of Lord Viśvanātha, by the darśan of which mokṣa transpires easily indeed.

ज्ञानवापी के जल सेवन करने से दिव्य दृष्टि<sup>67</sup> होती है ।

By performing worship with the water of Jñānavāpī,<sup>68</sup> the Divine becomes visible.

किसी समय में स्वेत देश का राजा एक हजार वर्ष काशी में और कैलास में एक सौ वर्ष तक राज्य करके शंकर जी के भेजे हुए दुर्वासा ऋषि द्वारा<sup>69</sup> काशी में यज्ञ किया था।

Once, the King of Sveta Country, having ruled for a thousand years in Kāśī and a hundred years on Kailāsa, performed a sacrifice in Kāśī by means of Sage Durvāsā, who was dispatched by the Revered Śaṅkara.

ऐसी यह पुनीत पूरी है। काशी में ब्रह्मा ने दशाश्वमेध यज्ञ किया और शंकर जी से अनेक वार्तालाप कर ब्रह्म<sup>70</sup> ने कहा कि “धन्य है काशी और काशीवाशी काशी में प्राण त्यागने वाले।

So holy is this city.<sup>71</sup> In Kāśī, Brahmā performed the ten-horse<sup>72</sup> sacrifice and after multiple conversations with the Revered Śaṅkara, Brahmā said, “Blessed is Kāśī, and Kāśī-dwellers and those who relinquish their lives in Kāśī.

काशी में आकर कामादि अनर्थों से खुब ही बचा रहे।”

Having come to Kāśī, may you remain safe from desire and other pointlessnesses.”

एक समय नारद जी मरुत के यज्ञ में काशी माहात्म्य को सुन पर आश्चर्यान्वित हो सूर्य<sup>73</sup> नारायण से काशी माहात्म पूछे सूर्य नारायण भगवान ने मरने के वक्त — काशी यह दो अक्षर सहायक होकर पानी और पुज्यवात्मा को तारक मन्त्र द्वारा<sup>74</sup> मोक्ष मिलता है।[I] केवल पापी।<sup>75</sup> को भैरवी यातना भोगनी पडती है परन्तु वह नरक द्वार<sup>76</sup> में नहीं जाता है।

Once, the revered Nārada, astonished by hearing the Greatness of Kāśī in a sacrifice to the winds, asked Sūryanārāyaṇa about the Greatness of Kāśī and the god Sūryanārāyaṇa ligurgized: “Kāśī: these two syllables being combined, the trespasser and the righteous both, by

<sup>67</sup> दिव्य दृष्टि can also mean “perception of the Supreme Lord.”

<sup>68</sup> Literally “knowledge-pool,” this is the name of a particular tīrtha in Kāśī.

<sup>69</sup> द्वारा

<sup>70</sup> ब्रह्मा

<sup>71</sup> Lit: To such an extent is this holy city.

<sup>72</sup> Daśāśvamedha: now the name of one of the most popular ghats for pilgrims and the performance of public ritual.

<sup>73</sup> सूर्य

<sup>74</sup> द्वारा

<sup>75</sup> This is probably an errant sentence break.

<sup>76</sup> द्वार

means of the tāra mantra,<sup>77</sup> achieve liberation. The trespasser alone must endure horrific purgatory,<sup>78</sup> however he does not cross the threshold into hell.

इस भांति नारद को सूर्य भगवान ने समझाया तब प्रसन्न<sup>79</sup> होकर नारद निजलोक को चले गये।

In this way, the god Sūrya explained to Nārada; then, pleased, Nārada returned to his own realm.

### **पञ्चमोऽध्यायः<sup>80</sup> – Fifth Portion**

हे महर्षि! एक समय शिव भक्त में सुनन्दन नामक राजा के विश्वपति यज्ञ में सुनत्कुमार जी ने जाकर काशी जी का मायात्म्य वर्णन किया की समुना<sup>81</sup> तट पर मौन नामक मुनि के माण्डव्य<sup>82</sup> और मुद्गल नामक शिष्य थे। उन शिष्यों में माण्डव्य बलिराजा के यज्ञ में तथा और यशपूर्ण होकर काशी का मायात्म्य बलीराजा<sup>83</sup> के साथ माण्डव्य काशी जी को आये। इतने ही के अन्दर में मौन ऋषि भी काशी भी आये थे। सोमाण्डव्य और बलि ने मौन को केधकर पूजन करके मणिकर्णिका में स्नान कर श्री विश्वनाथ जी का दर्शन करके काशी माहात्म्य पूछा। तो मान<sup>84</sup> मुनि ने भली-भाँति मोक्ष प्रद काशी जी का माहात्म्य वर्णन किया कि “हे बलि[,] जो पुरुष काशी में धर्म दरता हुआ सदेव वास करता है उसको मोक्ष वश्य ही मिलता है और जो कोई पाप कर्म करता है उसको अवश्य ही भैरवी यातना भोगनी पडती है,<sup>85</sup> यह सुनकर बलि ने शिवमूर्ती की स्थापना काशी में करके निज राज्य को चले गये। श्री काशी जी में देवीदास नामक राजा अपुत्र था सो राजा रानी के साथ पुत्र अथ<sup>86</sup> निकुम्भ महाराज की एक वर्ष सेवा किया<sup>87</sup> परन्तु पुत्र न मिलने से क्रोधकर निकुम्भ जी का मन्दिर तोडवा डाला[,] तो निकुम्भ जी ने श्राप दिया की तेरे इस अन्याय से काशी एक हजार वर्ष शुन्य रहेगी। प्रातः होते हो देवीदास की<sup>88</sup> मारने के लिए तालजघा<sup>89</sup> राजा आये। बाद में घोर संग्राम होने से देवीदास हार भारद्वाज के आश्रम को चला गया और उक्त दोनों<sup>90</sup> राजाओं<sup>91</sup> ने काशी को शुन्य कर दिया। राजा देवीदास ने भारद्वाज से समस्त कथा कही [।] तब भारद्वाज ने काशी मायात्म्य

<sup>77</sup> In this instance, implied to be का + शी (kā + śī). Thanks to Dr. Khanna for pointing this out.

<sup>78</sup> Alternatively, could be the Purgatory of Bhairava: the word is an adjective here, and can mean typified by the trait of horribleness, or by association with Bhairava, the horrifying one.

<sup>79</sup> प्रसन्न

<sup>80</sup> पञ्चमो ‘ध्यायः

<sup>81</sup> यमुना

<sup>82</sup> माण्डव्य

<sup>83</sup> बलिराजा

<sup>84</sup> मौन

<sup>85</sup> Should be full-stop rather than comma.

<sup>86</sup> अर्थ

<sup>87</sup> की

<sup>88</sup> को

<sup>89</sup> तालजघा

<sup>90</sup> दोनों

<sup>91</sup> राजाओं



वर्णन करके राजा को पुत्रेच्छिषिट यज्ञ कराया। प्रतदन नामक पुत्र उत्पन्न कराया कि जिससे तालजंघा राजा मारे गये[1] और एक हजार वर्ष काशी शुन्य रही बाद देवीदास [ने] काशी में क्रिया पूर्वाक वास किया तब कोक्षको प्राप्त हुआ।

**॥इति पाञ्चमोऽध्यायः॥**<sup>92</sup>

Oh, Great Sage! One time, during devotion to Śiva, during King Sunandana’s sacrifice for All Lords, the venerable Sunad, having gone to Kāśī, described its greatness, that “On the bank of the Yamuna were Māṇḍavya and Mudgal, disciples of the sage named Maun. Of these two students, Māṇḍavya went to King Bali’s sacrifice, and the greatness of Kāśī having become famous, Māṇḍavya came to Kāśī with King Bali. Just at that very point, Sage Maun also had arrived in Kāśī. So Māṇḍavya and Bali, having seen Maun, having performed pūjan, having bathed in Maṇikarnikā, having taken darśan of Lord Viśvanātha, asked after the Greatness of Kāśī. So Saint Maun described exceedingly well, and for the purpose of liberation, the Greatness of Revered Kāśī, saying, “Oh, Bali! Whoever dwells in Kāśī and is always engaged in virtuous behavior doubtlessly receives liberation; and whoever engages in wicked behavior doubtlessly endures the horrific suffering of Bhairava’s purgatory. Having heard this, Bali had a Śivamūrti installed in Kāśī and returned to his own kingdom.

In Kāśī there was a sonless king named Devīdāsa. The king, with his queen, served the Great King Nikumbha for a year for the purpose of obtaining a son. Becoming angry when a son was not forthcoming, they had Nikumbha’s temple razed; so Nikumbha laid a curse upon them that due to this wrongdoing of theirs, Kāśī would remain barren for a thousand years. On the very next day, a king named TālaJamgha came for the purpose of killing Devīdāsa. Later Devīdāsa, having lost a fierce battle, went to Bhāraddhāja’s āśrama<sup>93</sup> and the two aforementioned kings rendered Kāśī barren. King Devīdāsa told Bhāraddhāja the entire story. Then, Bhāraddhāja described the Greatness of Kāśī, and had the king perform the Desirous-of-a-Son sacrifice, causing to spring forth a son named Pratadana that by him King TālaJamghā died. And for one thousand years Kāśī was barren. Later, Devīdāsa dwelt in Kāśī penitently, and eventually obtained liberation.

So reads the Fifth Portion.

<sup>92</sup> Literally “thus, the Fifth Portion,” it could be translated “So reads the Fifth Portion.” This is a highly Sanskritized way to end a passage, and it is not used elsewhere in the text. The spelling of pāñcamodhyāyaḥ does not match at the beginning and end of this passage. There are no sentence breaks original to this passage. these inconsistencies indicate that this booklet was cobbled together from several other sources, and not edited for consistency.

<sup>93</sup> Dwelling, usually rural, of a saint or holy person.