

## Appendix III:

### *The Sri Lalitha Navaratnam Manaiadi Sasitiram*



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Figure 45. Rickshaw driver in front of exterior wall around precincts of Meenakshi Temple, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India.

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A translation into English of the *Sri Lalitha Navaratnam Manaiadi Sasitiram* by Bonnie G. MacDougall and Christobelle Amarasingam.

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# THE SRI LALITHA NAVARATNAM MANAIADI SASITIRAM<sup>1</sup>



## CHAPTER 1

### *How This Science Was Created*

Long, long ago, the great seer Parasara<sup>3</sup> taught the seer Brahaspati about the principles of housebuilding, and Brahaspati in turn passed on his knowledge to Visvakarma. Visvakarma later laid down all the instructions for housebuilding and the precepts of the science of sites.

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<sup>1</sup> I have used the *Tamil Lexicon* and Winslow (1987) as authoritative sources in the translation. In transliterating words from Tamil, I have identified the letters of the Tamil alphabetic system with their closest English equivalents for the sake of typographical convenience. I offer my apologies to Dravidianists for the absence of diacritics. bgm

<sup>2</sup> The first page of the text shows a drawing of Lord Siva and his consort astride the bull. A salutation to the Goddess, here called Ahilandesvari, is given beneath. This is followed by verses that invoke the blessings of Ganesh, the elephant-headed god, who is depicted in the preface. Ganesh is regarded as the remover of obstacles, and he is propitiated at the beginning of all undertakings of consequence. Verses follow that commemorate Sarasvati, the goddess of learning and literature. A salutation to Sakti (the female energy principle in Saivite religion) and to the nine planets is then given.

<sup>3</sup> The name of a great seer sometimes regarded as the codifier of the *Rig Veda*.

### *How the Site Spirit Came to Be*

In the Silver age, a demon of immense proportions lay asleep in the primordial waters. The very sight of him frightened the gods. They ran to Lord Brahma (the Creator) in heaven who had power over all the demons. "Do not be afraid," said Lord Brahma, "push him to earth, face downward." The gods did it and lived in peace ever after.

So that is how it happened in the Silver Age, in the fortieth year of the Hindu cycle, in the month of Puruttasi (September-October), on a Saturday, in the third phase of the waxing moon, under the Pleiades, in the very early hours of the morning. Brahma transformed the Titan who was previously known as The Great Demon and called him Site Spirit and blessed him. The demon appealed to Brahma for protection. "O Brahma, you who are the creator of everything on this earth, the gods are terrorizing me," he cried. "Do not be troubled," answered Lord Brahma, "you are now known as the Site Spirit. From town, to village, to well side, to house, to temple, people who venerate you will be showered with blessings by the Goddess of Fortune.<sup>4</sup> Whosoever fails to do so, will face hardship, suffering and death."

So that was the great gift that Brahma gave to the Site Spirit. This is why people must venerate the Site Spirit at housewarming ceremonies, when children are born, at marriages, when house posts, windows and doors are set in place and at other times when a new house is under construction. A puja to the Site Spirit should also be performed when lightning strikes, or when fire breaks out, or if the household is menaced by serpents or thugs. If owls, crows and other inauspicious birds nest in the house, or if there is unseemly noise from horses, cattle or cats that live in the place, or if arguments break out among the women, a puja should also be performed on the site.

### *The Characteristics of a Good Architect (Silpin)*

The hair of the builder should be tied in a knot at the back of his head. He should be garbed in a cloth that is tucked in or folded in five ways<sup>5</sup> and wear a shawl across his shoulders, a gold chain, a ring and a rosary.<sup>6</sup> He should be a devout Hindu, performing the prescribed rites on a daily basis and be of good conduct, good countenance and good judgment. He should be well-bred and even tempered. He should be well-versed in all matters that pertain to building

<sup>4</sup> Lakshmi.

<sup>5</sup> The garb of a holy man.

<sup>6</sup> The Rudraksa beads, which make up the Saivite rosary, are made from the small berries of the shrub *elaecarpus ganitrus*.

a house including testing the site, selecting the timber, and the use of other materials such as brick, stone, metal and lime. He should have mastered the art of drawing.

When someone like this builds a town, a temple, a house, a village, a well or a public garden, those who live there will prosper and endure. If lesser men embark on these projects, their clients will fall on hard times.

The builder should be honored with clothes, gold, sandalwood paste, betel leaves, sugar and plantains. When he presides over the rites of construction, the householders, relatives and friends should assemble for the ceremony. Everyone present should be welcomed and honored with sandalwood paste, betel leaves, flowers and fruit.

### *Omens*

Those who go to solicit the services of the architect should never stand on one leg and scratch the opposite one, or scratch their heads or approach him with their hands folded. They should not give the impression of being inattentive or moody or speak in an unpleasant tone. In addition, they should be advised that if they arrive in an untimely manner and catch the builder while he is applying oil on his head, the house will never be completed and the wealth of the householders will be drained away.

### *Good and Bad Characteristics of the Site*

Be advised there should be no hair, ash, bones, scraps of wood, fragments of ivory, or charcoal on the site when the consecration rites are performed. If these substances are found on the site, it will be unlucky for the head of the house. If gold, red brick, frogs, gems, conch shells or silver are present instead, it will bring him good luck. If Jupiter is in the ascendant (=lagna) at the time of the ceremony, it will be disclosed by the appearance of crows and vultures. If the moon is there, it will be disclosed by the common crane. If Venus is there, it will be disclosed by the king crow. If Mars is in the third, seventh or ninth house, it will be revealed by storks. If there are malefic planets in the third, sixth or eleventh house, it will be disclosed by bits of hair and flesh. If Venus is in one of these houses, the sign is a pot of curd. If Jupiter is there, the sign will be a pot of milk. If Saturn is there, the sign will be fire. If Rahu and Ketu<sup>7</sup> are in the *kendra*, that is the first, fourth, seventh or tenth houses from the ascendant, it will be made known by serpents.

### *The Divisions of a Measuring Rod*<sup>8</sup>

|                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 8 atoms                  | = 1 speck of dust         |
| 8 specks of dust         | = 1 speck of cotton fiber |
| 8 specks of cotton fiber | = 1 hairs breadth         |
| 8 hair's breadths        | = 1 nit                   |
| 8 nits                   | = 1 louse                 |
| 8 lice                   | = 1 barley seed           |
| 8 barley seeds           | = 1 manankulam            |

### *General Guidelines on Measure*

The *manankulam* (inch) is the circumference of the middle finger. An orbit, or twice the distance from the elbow to the middle finger, is equal to one *mulam* (cubit). The basic proportional unit used at the Chidambaram *citsabha*<sup>9</sup> was equivalent to 34 English inches.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, a rod of 34 inches in length is the authoritative one. Brahmin houses should be measured in inches. So should places of worship, shelters for pilgrims, chariots, drawings and images. Do not use inches for the other three castes.

### *Wood to be Used for the Measuring Rod*

Make measuring rods of tamarind, *venkai* (kino tree, *pterocarpus marsupium*), teak, *acca* (sal tree, *shorea robusta*), palmyra, bamboo, ebony, coconut, sandalwood, champak (*michelia champaca*), jak, *purasu* (=Battle of Plassey tree, *butea frondosa*), lotus stalks and iron. The rod made of bamboo cane is for Brahmins. The one made of sal wood is for rulers. Those made of teak are for merchants, and those made of kino for Vellalas.<sup>11</sup> The measuring rods of iron are for the gods.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Ketu is the descending node of the moon and Rahu the ascending node. In Hindu astronomy they appear as two of the nine planets.

<sup>8</sup> The treatment of measures is the one section of the text that I have abridged. It contains a long list of archaic technical terms that are not followed up elsewhere. In addition, some of the proportional relations set forth make no sense because of poor editing or proofing.

<sup>9</sup> Chidambaram is one of the most important places of pilgrimage in South India and is said to be the site of Siva's dance of joy. Its innermost sanctum is called the *citsabha* (cf. Shulman, 41).

<sup>10</sup> According to Indian measure, rods of different lengths (generally ranging from 24-34 inches) are to be used for specific purposes. For example, according Acharya, a rod of 24 inches is to be used for measuring carts and furniture (1934:8).

<sup>11</sup> A Tamil cultivator caste.

<sup>12</sup> This means for temples.

### ***Characteristics of the Housebuilding Site***

The consequences of using sites with white, red, and black earth should be clearly understood. It is necessary to examine the soil carefully when building all habitations.

#### ***The Smell of the Earth***

Earth with a fragrant smell is for Brahmins. That which smells like blood is for the Ksatriyas (hereafter, 'warriors'). Soil with the smell of honey is for the Vaisyas, and that with the smell of toddy for the Sudras.

#### ***The Taste of the Earth***

Earth that tastes sweet is for Brahmins. If it is bitter, it is earth for the warriors. If it is sour it is for the Vaisyas, and if it is pungent it is for the Sudras.

#### ***The Shape of the Site***

The following types of sites are not suitable for building: sites shaped like elephants, lions, oxen, horses, donkeys and goats; sites like hatchets, those in the shape of a sacrificial altar, and those that look like a trident; sites in the shape of a Siva lingam, those that look like jugs and flags, those that look like stars, and sites shaped like wheels; sites shaped like serpents, frogs and sheep; sites that are crooked or in the shape of a fan or an arrow, triangular sites and sites that are uninhabited. All these sites should be avoided. Only land that is desirable and good should be selected for building and venerating the Site Spirit. You should examine the building site carefully.

If the site is well compacted and mounded and slopes to the north and east, it is a good one for Brahmins. High sites are good for warriors, and ones with ridges are good for the Sudras. Land that is level is good for everyone.

#### ***Sites Suitable for the Four Castes***

Sites where the kusa and darba grasses<sup>13</sup> grow are good for Brahmins. Those with the arka plant<sup>14</sup> are good for warriors. A site with abundant flowers is good for the Vaisyas, and a site with honeysuckle and one near a river are good for the Sudras.

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<sup>13</sup> These are both names for *poa cynosuroides*, the sacred grass used by the Brahmin community in religious rites.

<sup>14</sup> These passages seem to have suffered a good deal along their journey from their original source. The term given here is *aruhu*, the common Tamil name for darba grass, associated above under its Sanskrit name with Brahmins. This is possibly a reference to arka, a plant

### ***Places Where Houses Should Not Be Built***

Sites shaped like pestles, those that are frightening, those where undesirable plants grow, those that slope to the center, those that have awkward shapes, sites with stones and iron, those next to graveyards and cremation grounds, sites near undesirables, those with anthills, sacred grounds, all these have to be ruled out for housebuilding. Sites with the appropriate taste and smell for each caste should be chosen as those that are beneficial in the long term. If you do otherwise, harm will come to the householders. So examine sites for houses and temples carefully.

### ***Portents of Various Sites***

If the land is regular on all four sides, high, or resembles an elephant, it will make you rich. If it resembles a lion, you will have happy children.<sup>15</sup> Bull-shaped sites will give you cattle. If the site is circular, you will be moderately prosperous. If it looks like an altar, you will be rich. If it is shaped like a trident, it will bring forth heroes and riches. If it is like a lingam, it is good for devotees of Siva. If it is like a star, you will move up in this world. A site like a pot will make you rich.

Triangular sites lead to the destruction of progeny. Land that resembles a cart brings on illness. Sun shaped sites will lead to loss of wealth. A fan shaped site will lead to fear. Smoke and frog shaped sites will lead to death. Cobra shaped sites also lead to death. One resembling a crow or a short-horned owl will bring on misery. Snake-like sites will lead to the death of progeny. They may also produce sons who kill Brahmins. Land inhabited by the wicked will lead to loss of property. Land free from all defects will bring you long life and prosperity.

If the site has water in the north and east, you will be blessed with children and riches. Fertile sites will bring you blessings and wonderful children. High land will confer peace and plenty. Level ground brings good health. Rugged and inhospitable land is left to the outsiders of the realm. The areas around rocky highland fortresses (*kiri turakkam*), forest strongholds (*wana turakkam*)

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associated elsewhere in India with Indra and warriors. In South India, the arka (*Calotropis gigantea*) is associated with Siva and Ganesh and also with rites performed in the month of January-February on *ratha saptami* (the seventh day in the bright fortnight after the new moon day) heralding the beginning of the northward course of the sun. It is also a powerful poison.

<sup>15</sup> Some of these passages contradict the injunctions given above.

and embattlements such as moats (*jala turakkam*) are therefore suitable for Sudras. They are also suitable for hermits, ascetics and thieves.<sup>16</sup>

### *The Properties of the Land*

White soil is for Brahmins, and red soil is for the warriors. Green and fertile soil is for the Vaisyas, and black soil is for the Sudras. Although soils of these colors are generally held to benefit only the respective castes, soil that is white is auspicious for everyone and will confer blessings down through the generations. Soil on which *nanal* (*saccharum spontaneum* = bulrush) grows will bless you with children.

If you choose land by a stream, you will have ill-mannered children. As for sites in the middle of a river, your children will be needy. Those on a crooked site and on uneven sites will be quarrelsome. Pallid sites lead to bad health. Sites that are irregular will bring forth dimwitted sons. Cat and winnowing basket shaped sites and those shaped like pestles will lead to fear and loss of progeny. Sites that have been terrorized will lead to the same. Sites with thick black soil will lead to loss of cattle. Low land between hills will give rise to sons as crafty as dogs and foxes. Soil that gives off heat will spawn children with bad habits. Sites with anthills will lead to accidents and dishonor. The children will die on sites near the wicked. Sites on temple lands will make you restless. Land that has been used by holy men leads to poverty. Sites with ditches lead to danger. Sites curved like the back of a tortoise will lead you to ruin.

### *Testing the Site*

On the site you have chosen for housebuilding, dig a hole one cubit square, then fill it up with the soil you have taken out of it. If the soil more than fills the hole, you will be lucky. If it just fills the hole with nothing to spare, then the portents are neutral. If there is not enough soil to fill up the hole, you will be unlucky.

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<sup>16</sup> In the classical materials, those at the social margins are assigned to the perimeter of the ideal town. Here their association with the periphery is projected on a larger scale. They are associated with the remote lands of the defensive perimeter of the fortified state. associated elsewhere in India with Indra and warriors.

Dig a hole one cubit square, and fill it up with water to the brim. Now retreat about 100 feet from the hole and then come back. If the water level holds steady, it is an auspicious sign.

Dig a hole one cubit square and plaster it with cowdung on all four sides. Light an earthen lamp with wicks dipped in ghee and place it in the hole. If the entire hole is illuminated, it is a very good sign. Examine the burning wicks one by one, starting from the east. The east is for Brahmins, the west is for warriors, and the north is for Sudras.<sup>17</sup>

Plow the site and sow seeds all over the building site. If the seeds do not germinate in three, five or seven days, the site is not suitable for building. If they sprout in three days, it is very good. If they sprout in five days, the portents are neutral. If nothing happens by the seventh day, no house, temple or shrine should be built.

The householder should stand in the center of the site and throw a handful of earth into the air. If it is borne off in the wind it is a very good sign, but if it plops back down on the site, it is unlucky.

Before the Site Spirit puja is performed, ask three or five married women (*sumangali*) to bring pots of water to be poured into the hole. Then drop in a flower. If it circulates in a clockwise direction, it means good luck for you. If it goes counter-clockwise, it is an ominous sign. Your house will never be finished. When you dig a hole, pour in water and test the site, if the foundation of the house is cracked, or if it is the dry season, the water will disappear soon after it is poured. Under these circumstances, dig a hole with dimensions of one cubit and pour in water 150 hours (an 'hour' = 24 minutes) before the proposed puja. After doing all this, do the flower test right before the Site Spirit puja is performed. If the flower comes to rest in the east, you will be wealthy, prosperous and blessed with children. If it settles in the southeast, your wife will be barren. Also, you will be threatened by thieves and snakes. If it stops in the south, you will face illness, misery and death. If it stops in the southwest, you will be wealthy and prosperous. If it stops in the west, you will enjoy all kinds of good luck. If it stops in the northwest, you will fall ill and face all kinds of loss. Demons will occupy your house. If it stops in the north, you will be prosperous and very lucky. If it stops in the northeast, you will be lucky and rich.

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<sup>17</sup> The objective here is to observe which wick burns the brightest or longest.

### ***Water for the Site Spirit Puja***

When you perform pujas for the house, you have to bring the sacred water for them from local rivers. For temple pujas, bring water from the four oceans. Otherwise, bring water from the seven sacred places. Otherwise, at least bring water from the four quarters of the town to do the puja.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### ***Good Omens***

The following things bring good luck: listening to sacred recitations, listening to musical instruments, catching the sight of a pot prepared for a puja and seeing a Brahmin, a pregnant woman, a teacher and drums. Also catching the sight of a young girl dressed in white, tasty fruit, healthy cows, flowers, gold, silver, pearls, red coral and good food.

Coming into contact with cows, sandalwood, a mirror, a fan, peacock feathers, a deer, flesh, curd, milk, a palanquin, fish and a married couple will confer good health, wealth and prosperity. If you see lotus flowers blooming, a white heifer, two Brahmins, an elephant, a horse, or a married woman, or if you hear prayers being recited from the Bhagavad Gita, you will have many children and plenty of money. If you encounter a harlot, an axe, a lamp, a flower garland or a beautifully dressed young women at the time of the housewarming ceremony, you will be healthy, strong and powerful.

### ***Bad Omens***

Wicked words, toddy, leather, bones, iron, grass, paddy husks, snakeskin, cotton, salt, mud, oil, hermaphrodites, medicine, feces, sugarcane, grain, sick people, a man with unkempt hair, a madman, a man who has just oiled his head or shaved, firewood, two birds, a naked man, clatter, and the smoke from fires being lighted or extinguished are bad omens. If you hear or see any of this, you will face death and ruin. Do not start building a house or try to occupy one.

### ***How to Do the Puja for the Site***

The householder should choose an auspicious day and a good lagna. He should bathe and put on new clothes. He should be seated facing the east and perform a puja to Ganesh first and then to the nine planets. After this, he should

clear the spot, plaster it with the five products of the cow<sup>18</sup> and draw *kolams*<sup>19</sup> on the ground. Then he should ask for blessings from the astrologers and the Brahmins.

The householder should set out *pancamirtam* (a mixture of five delicacies: either plantain, honey, sugar, cocoa and milk, or milk, curd, ghee, sugar and honey), and the nine auspicious grains,<sup>20</sup> in a brass pot bedecked with fragrant flowers. Then a *purohit* (priest) should chant the necessary verses and waft incense while invoking the sacred rivers, mountains and forests as well as deities such as Varuna who rules the waters and those who rule the sky to bless the pot. Next he should invoke Indra and Vasuki, the king of the serpents, and the serpents of the eight directions. He should perform a puja and invoke the deities in Sanskrit, uttering the mantra known as *satrusan* and the *rudra* prayer. He should invoke the Site Spirit and ask for his blessings on the site, the householder, and his family and all those who worship him. He should also say, "O Site Spirit, please accept this puja we are performing in your honor and come to dwell here. O Site Spirit, you who dwell on the earth, we praise you. Bless us and grant us health, wealth and prosperity." Then he should draw the figure of the Site Spirit either with grains of rice or rice flour on the ground. The Site Spirit should be invoked again with the verses beginning with *visnorradamasi*. Then he should be venerated by reciting the mantra *namo astu sarvepiyaha*. The puja should be performed on the stomach of the Site Spirit.

## CHAPTER 3

### *Coconut Omen*

At the auspicious time when the coconut is broken, if the upper part of the broken nut is bigger than the lower one, you will definitely have the blessings of the Goddess of Fortune. If it breaks into three parts on top, and one on the bottom, you will be very happy. If it breaks into five pieces on top and one on the bottom, you will become exceedingly rich. If the coconut breaks into slivers,

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<sup>18</sup> Milk, curd, ghee, urine, and dung.

<sup>19</sup> Auspicious diagrams drawn on the house site or in the yard at the New Year or on other occasions, usually by women.

<sup>20</sup> These offerings are associated with the nine planets. They include wheat, offered to the sun, paddy to the moon, the pulse *Cytisus cajan* to Mars, *payaru*, the name for a number of beans, to Mercury, Bengal gram to Jupiter, *avare*, a name for several species of pulses to Venus, sesame seeds to Saturn, the pulse *phaseolus mungo* to Rahu and horse gram to Ketu.

you will live a long time. If a small piece of the nut chips off and falls inside, you will acquire gems one day.

If the nut breaks in the center, there will be discord. If it breaks into six and four parts, you will have trouble. If the eyes of the coconut are broken, it predicts death. If the shell comes off the coconut in the process, you will be poor. If the coconut is spoiled, and there is no kernel inside, you will have a great deal of misery.

### *Driving in the Stake*

A stake (*sanku*) should be made from the following materials: the bo tree, the atti fig tree (*ficus glomerata*), elephant tusks, teak, tamarind, ebony, vanni (*prosopis spicigera*), and kino. The perfect stake is twenty-four manankulum long, the next best is eighteen, and a poor third is one that measures twelve. Now, the perfect stake has a six inch base and it is one inch wide at the point. The next best ones are 3/4 and 1/2 inches respectively.

The wood used for making the stake should not be bent, nor should it have any kinks or marks on it. Pegs made of ivory and sandalwood are for the gods. Those made of ebony and vanni are for kings. Those made of kino and teak are for the Vaisyas. Tamarind and atti fig are for the Sudras. It is not good to use the wrong material.

Dig out a square hole of four cubits where the stake is to be driven in. At an auspicious hour, pour saffron water over the stake, smear it with sandalwood paste and decorate it with flowers. Install the stake in the middle. When the sun rises, the shadow of the stake will fall on the western rim of the hole and as the sun ascends, you can mark it out at the half cubit mark and then at the full cubit mark and then at the two cubit mark and so on. Do it as the sun moves through its northward and southward course. Connect these marks with a mason's line from east to west. The months of August-September, October-November and November-December are good for all human habitations. The other months are for the gods.

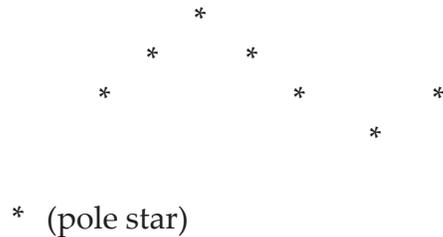
### *Another Method*

In order to find the south, north, east and west direction for the house, stand at the center of the site and face in the direction of the pole star and Mount Meru. That direction is north. Mark the spot where you are standing. Now step back three paces and make a second mark on the ground. Draw a line between the two marks you have made. This will give you the north-south axis. The east-west line is at a right angle to this line. Right to the east is the northeast

direction which is that of Isana (Siva). If you look to the south in the western corner you can see the direction that is under the protection of Kanni (=the Goddess, i.e., Durga).<sup>21</sup>

### *How to Find the Pole Star*

The pole star lies in the extreme north. It does not move. Seven stars called the Seven Sages (the Big Dipper) revolve around the pole star. The Seven Sages are shown below. The two stars in front point to the pole star. The distance between the Seven Sages and the pole star is seven times that between the first two stars.



### *How to Locate the Spot for an Auspicious Ceremony*

Divide the perimeter of the site into 28 parts. Now set aside 17 parts on the side of the feet and 10 parts on the side of the head. Perform the ceremony right in the center between them.

### *Omens for the Spade*

The spade for housebuilding should be strong. It should not bend or break. If the strings for laying out the site snap, it is a sign of bad luck. You will lose your possessions and maybe your life. A three-stranded string of silk thread should be used by warriors. A three-stranded string of cotton should be used by the Vaisyas, and palmyra or coconut strings are used by the Sudras. Strings made of cotton are commonly used by all four castes.

### *The Length of the Stakes*

The length of the stakes should be between eleven virals<sup>22</sup> and twenty-six.

<sup>21</sup> The northeast-southwest axis is marked on the site plans in the *Manushalaya Chandrika* as the 'ear' line, and it has a significance in South India that the other diagonal running northwest to southeast does not. It connects the upward facing axis (northeast), often associated with the upward face of the five faced Lord Siva, with the downward one associated with the Goddess in some form and therefore has an implied vertical dimension.

<sup>22</sup> A finger's breadth.

### *Driving in the Stakes*

Drive the main stake in the area of the Site Spirit's stomach. Then drive others successively in the southwest, southeast, northeast and northwest corners. Once you drive them in, do not pull them out and drive them in again. Do not use broken ones and do not drive them in upside down. It will only bring on trouble.

### *Figuring Out the Right Spot For Building*

The building site should be 50 feet from a riverbank, 25 feet from any waterway and 17 feet from a well.<sup>23</sup> If you do not remember this, you will have no end of trouble. If you want to combine two sites and make them into one, or if you want to include part of a site that already has a house on it, demolish the one that is standing and plow up the whole area and sow it with seeds.<sup>24</sup> When the seeds sprout, let cows graze on the plants for three days. After that, perform the puja to the nine planets, have food cooked for Brahmins on the site and then start building the house. Then you will be blessed with good luck and prosperity. Otherwise, expect trouble.

### *Things That Should Not Be Visible When You Enter the House*

A cross beam or a support of a building should not be visible from the entrance. If the corner of the courtyard, a lintel, or a pillar are visible from the door, you will have bad luck. There will be perpetual discord. A house should never be divided in half. This leads to loss of property, unhappiness and perpetual difficulty.

### *Angling the House to the Northeast*

The house can be turned one inch. That will bring good luck. Six inches is neutral. If it is more than six, illness in the family will follow. The dwelling place of the sun lies from east to west and that of the moon, from north to south.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> These distances are contradicted elsewhere in the text.

<sup>24</sup> Here and elsewhere, especially in Chapter 8, the text is obsessively concerned with new beginnings and with eradicating any material evidence of prior use or occupation, whether by humans or animals.

<sup>25</sup> This terse passage appears to refer to deviations in the main diagonal running from southwest to northeast, but why at this point in the text? It may actually refer to the size of the holes bored into the walls of buildings along the northeast-southwest diagonal, a common practice in South

### *The Positions of the Site Spirit*

The legs of the Site Spirit lie in the house of the Zodiac in which the sun lies. His head lies in the seventh sign of the Zodiac from there. He is lying with his left hand downward. If any ceremony is performed in the area of his legs, the master of the house will die. If it is done on his back, the occupants will be threatened by government authorities. So take note of the place that the Site Spirit faces and there perform the ceremony for placing the main post or any other ceremony connected with building the house.

The Site Spirit lies with his head to the west during March-April, April-May, and May-June. He lies with his head to the north during June-July, July-August and August-September. His head is in the east during September-October, October-November, and November-December. His head is in the south during December-January, January-February and February-March, and in these months he sleeps. His legs lie in the house of the sun, his head is in the seventh house from there, and his left hand is downward.<sup>26</sup>

### *The Rising Times of the Site Spirit*

The Site Spirit wakes in the fifth hour on the tenth day of Taurus, in the eighth hour on the twenty-first day of Gemini, in the second hour on the eleventh day of Cancer, in the twenty-first hour on the sixth day of Virgo, in the second hour on the eleventh day of Scorpio, in the tenth hour on the eighth day of Sagittarius, in the eighth hour on the twelfth day of Capricorn and in the eighth hour on the twentieth day of Pisces.

The Site Spirit is awake for 3-3/4 hours. These hours are divided into five parts. In the first segment, he attends to his toilet. If any ceremonies are performed at this time, the house will be threatened by kings. During the second period, he bathes. Ceremonies conducted at this time will bring on misery. During the third, he performs puja. Ceremonies conducted at this time will lead to poverty. During the fourth period, he takes his meals. Ceremonies conducted at this time will bless the householder with children, wealth and prosperity. In this fifth

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India, through which the mason's line is drawn during construction and in making subsequent additions. This keeps the marmas or vital points clear and visible. Since the preceding passages deal with other problems stemming from visual obstruction, this would make more sense. The dwelling places of the sun and moon seem to refer to the other two major axes on the site running east-west and north-south, although the purpose of inserting this information (which is nowhere repeated or drawn out) is not clear.

<sup>26</sup> The text here gives the Tamil months.

period, he attends to affairs of state. Ceremonies conducted at this time will bring forth everything in plenty.

Note the time of the sunrise and make your calculations. The Site Spirit sleeps during the remaining months. No ceremonies should be conducted at these times. Some books also mention the twelfth, twenty- first, and twenty-second days of Pisces. The twentieth is also mentioned, especially by the *Chudamani* treatise that was written sixty or seventy years ago.

### *Astrological Predictions for the Householder According to the Paksi<sup>27</sup>*

#### *Auguries for the Rising Period*

If ceremonies are initiated in the first minute, it will lead to happiness for 300 years, and in the second one, for 250 years. If in the third minute, there will be peace and prosperity for 200 years and prosperity down through the generations. If in the fourth minute, health and well being will continue for eighteen years. If in the fifth minute, there will be good luck for twenty-five years. Good marriages and other signs of prosperity will follow.

#### *Auguries for the Transiting Period*

If ceremonies are conducted in the first minute, the lifespan will be 100 years but without much prosperity. The house will be plundered by thieves, and the owner will be moody. If in the second minute, there will be mixed luck for 90 years. The third minute will confer a span of 80 years but invite terrorism from kings. The owner will be disgraced. In the fourth minute, the span will be 80 years, but there will be many adverse effects. There will be many obstacles and

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<sup>27</sup> This word *paksi* (bird) probably has an identity here with *paksa* (segment), the 'segment' being either one of the five states in which a planet is located (rising, transiting, ruling, waning and setting) as it passes through a particular house of the Zodiac or the house itself. Winslow (1987), however, connects these periods with a system of augury called The Five Birds. The birds, eat, sleep, walk, govern and die between the full and new moon. These terms (rising, transiting, etc.) are my own attempts to lend coherence to these passages. Tamil speakers who are not specialists in astrology generally see them as non-technical terms referring somewhat enigmatically to eating, walking, ruling, sleeping and dying. These passages are introduced without any further clarification. Since the author suggests in the passage immediately following that divination by respiration be used as a simpler method, it may be that even he was not fully knowledgeable about these particulars. They can no doubt be fully explicated by consulting Tamil manuals on astrology, but I leave that to others.

intolerable tyranny from kings. The owner will be so poor that for a time, he will not even be able to afford a lamp. In the fifth minute, there will be 60 years of life, but women will die. The owner will feel apathetic. The men of the household will be maimed and have enemies.

### *Auguries for the Ruling Period*

The first minute leads to a bountiful life of 1,000 years that cannot be summed up in words. There will be elephants, lions and palanquins everywhere. The second one leads to a life of 800 years that will be happy and prosperous. The owner will enjoy the goodwill of kings. He will have many friends, and the Goddess of Fortune will rule over the house. The third minute leads to a life of 600 years, great happiness, goodwill from kings and nobles, fame and favor at court. The fourth minute leads to a life of 150 years. The owner will be as wealthy as Kubera. His lineage will prosper, and people will praise him. He will go around on horseback or in some other kind of conveyance and will not be obliged to travel on foot. Four hundred years of life will follow if the fifth minute is used. The owner will be so wealthy that no words can describe it. The owner will be prosperous and marry well. He will have no enemies.

### *Auguries for the Waning Period*

If the first minute is used, the life span will be a mere fifty years, and there will be terror from thieves and fire. No one will help the householders, and there will not be a second of happiness in the house. The dwelling will always be afflicted by misery. If the second one is used, a foreshortened life of forty years is in store. Illness, poverty and terror from fire are some of the other consequences. If the third one is used, a ruinous life of thirty-five years is predicted. The householders will lack money, friends and heirs. Nothing will ever work out. If the fourth minute is used, there will be a span of thirty years. The house will go to ruin in poverty and distress. If the fifth minute is used, the span will be only twenty years. Misery will be everlasting. No one will assist the householders, enemies will abound and the residents will be so poor that they will not be able to afford a lamp.

### *Auguries for the Setting Period*

If the first minute is used, the predicted lifespan will be twenty years, but it may be foreshortened to five by some disaster. There will be misery in the house. If the second one is used, the entire lineage will be destroyed within ten years. The other consequences are punishment, loss of wealth, loss of support

and anguish. If the third one is used, the house will be robbed within five years. The owner will die soon after he occupies the house. He will never have a single day of peace. If the fourth one is used, there will be a lifespan of a mere three years. Misery and fear of death are the other consequences. If the fifth one is used, the owner will up and die in a year. The family will be ruined. The occupants will be unspeakably wretched. So, it is very important to reconcile the times at which the Site Spirit is awake with these other considerations when you plan out a site consecration ceremony.

### *The Science of Divination Through Respiration*

Sometimes it is difficult to determine the correct time from the complicated procedures given above. So here is an alternate method. When the owner breathes out through his left nostril, it is a good time to start housebuilding activities. The portents are not as good when he is breathing out of his right nostril. If he is breathing out of both nostrils, then the portents are comparably worse.

### *Finding Auspicious Months*

In Taurus, Gemini and Cancer, the stomach is in the northeast, the neck in the northwest and the tail in the southwest.<sup>28</sup> The months of Leo, Virgo, and Libra come next. In these months, the head will be in the northwest, the stomach in the southwest and the tail in the southeast. After these months come Scorpio, Sagittarius and Capricorn. In those months the head will be in the southeast, the stomach in the northeast and the tail in the northwest. Install the first post in the area of the stomach. That will make you lucky. If you do it on the head, it will lead to death, and if you do it on the back, bad luck will follow. If you do it on the tail, there will be incessant quarreling.

After you perform the puja to the Site Spirit, impale the stomach and recite verses from the Vedas. It is best to lay the foundation in the three months beginning with Aries, in the three months from Cancer, in the three months from Libra and in the three months from Capricorn only after you have thought about the direction in which the Site Spirit is lying.

In the three months starting with Aries, do these things in the north. In the three starting with Cancer, do them in the east. In the three from Libra

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<sup>28</sup> These passages seems to describe a snake, but no sense can be made out of them because of substantive errors and careless editing. For a depiction of the image the author might have been trying to describe, see Figure 22.

onward, do them in the south and in the three months starting with Capricorn, do them in the west. If you cut the door in the area of the Site Spirit's head, the household head will perish. If you do it on the back, your parents will perish. If you do it on the tail or feet, the women will perish, but if you do it in the stomach, you will have very good luck.

### ***The Construction of a Building and the Position of the Moon***

In the seven asterisms beginning with Krittika, the third, the moon is in the east. In the seven beginning with Anuradha, the seventeenth, the moon is in the west. In the seven beginning with Magha, the tenth, the moon is in the south, and in the seven beginning with Dhanistha, the twenty-third, the moon is in the north.

If the asterism under which an auspicious ceremony is performed is opposed to the asterism of the owner, it will bring him very bad luck. If it is to the right side of his asterism, the householder will come into a great deal of money. If it is to the left side, the women in the house will be blessed. The householder should offer prayers. He should chant the mantra that begins with *sivayanamah* and the mantra *nivarttayami*. He should then impale the stomach area of the Site Spirit with an iron rod. The deeper the cut, the longer the Site Spirit will remain in the house.

Then, the iron rod should be covered with cloth and given to a Brahmin along with money and betel leaves. If the cloth is folded once, the owner will have male heirs. If twice, he will have daughters and granddaughters.

### ***Dreams***

Auspicious words and the sight of handsome men and women will ward off the evil eye. At this time, the recitation of the Vedas, and the sight of flowers, offerings and musical instruments are all auspicious. Curd, gold, buried treasure, silver, pearls, jewelry, coral, gems, gold leaf, cat's eyes, crystal, savories and perfumes are all auspicious for the site. Thorns, date palms, honeycombs, termites, insects, hair, bones, nails and so forth are not good.

First, the petitioner should worship Ganesh, Lord Indra, the deities of the directions and the nine planets. He should also worship the earth. Next, he should spread a white cloth on a clean spot, sit down, and worship the Goddess of Fortune and Badrakali,<sup>29</sup> chanting the necessary mantras. Then, he should invoke the deities of the earth with special mantras. The petitioner should wear

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<sup>29</sup> The goddess Durga in her horrific aspect.

silk clothes and face the east. He should chant the mantra beginning with *sudra sudra*, and he should also recite the *sadrikkeyum*<sup>30</sup> prayer. Along with the Brahmins, astrologers, and the family priest, he should pray to the deities. Next, he should clear and purify the place, scattering white mustard seeds and reciting more mantras. He should utter the mantra *yatastai tan, yajakkirtho deva mut avi* and venerate the deities. Then, he should lie down on his right side and repeat the following invocation: "O Siva, the three-eyed one, O Rudra. O thou who ridest the bull, answer our prayers." If he has good dreams after he falls asleep, it is a sign of good luck.

### *Significance of the Various Directions*

When you build a new house in a new place, take note of the following. A house built in the east will be blessed by the Goddess of Fortune. One in the southeast will bring on misery, and the one in the south is associated with Yama. The one in the southwest spells terror, and the house in the west is one of the waters. The house in the northwest is associated with the fear of death, but the one in the north will bring on longlasting prosperity, and the one in the northeast is associated with the nine precious stones.

### *The Portents of the Months*

These are the portents of the months:<sup>31</sup> April-May (illness), May-June (wealth), June-July (fear of death), July-August (loss of cattle), August-September (many friends), September-October (no friends), October-November (discord), November-December (prosperity), December-January (fear of death), January-February (fear of fire), February-March (luck in precious stones), and March-April (fear of death). June-July, September-October, December-January, and March-April are unlucky months for housebuilding. May-June, August-September, November-December and February-March are the lucky months. Mixed results come from the house built in the remaining months.

### *Portents of Days*

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are good days for beginning construction. Saturday and Sunday are neutral. Tuesday is very unlucky.

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<sup>30</sup> The print is not clear here.

<sup>31</sup> These refer to the months of the Tamil calendar.

### *Portents of Lunar Days*

The following lunar days are not good: the eighth day after the new moon, the fourth day, the fourteenth day, the new moon day and the full moon day. The others are acceptable.

### *Portents of Asterisms*

The following asterisms are auspicious: Rohini, the fourth, Sravana, the twenty-second, Anuradha, the seventeenth, Pushya, the eighth, Uttaraphalguni, the twelfth, Uttarabhadra, the twenty-sixth, Revati, the twenty-seventh, Mrigasiras, the fifth and Hasta, the thirteenth. Chitra, the fourteenth, Dhanistha, the twenty-third, Svati, the fifteenth, and Satabhishak, the twenty-fourth are neutral. The rest of the asterisms are inauspicious.

### *Houses of the Zodiac*

The fixed signs of the Zodiac: Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius are good. Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius and Pisces are neutral. The rest of the houses are not auspicious. If you build under favorable astrological conditions, you will have wealth, prosperity and success for your family.

### *Building Without Paying Attention to the Portents of the Months*

When certain kinds of flimsy materials are used in housebuilding, i.e., wood like bulrush, palmyra, bamboo and sugarcane, you need not look for good and bad months. However, when durable materials such as brick or stone are used in housebuilding, it is necessary to pay attention to these matters. In months that are supposed to be very lucky, you should not just go off and start building a house. You need to take note of other things such as the position and strength of Jupiter, Venus, the sun and Mars before beginning. A good time to start building the house is when the moon and Mercury are strong. Most important of all, the positions of the sun and the moon should be taken into account.

### *Good and Bad Planetary Influences*

If the sun is in the house of the owner's lagna, the master of his house will fall ill. If Venus is there, there will be no prosperity in the house. If Mercury is there, the children and grandchildren will be adversely affected. If the moon is there, bad luck will come to friends. If Mars is there, the siblings of the owner will be badly affected. If the sun is in a strong position, and the owner's Zodiac

sign and asterism are weak, the sun will dominate. When the ruling planet is in a debilitated condition, no ceremonies should take place.

If a foundation laying ceremony is performed when the sun is in the same lagna, the owner will be stricken with leprosy. If it is in the second house away, poverty results. The following are the other portents: third house (wealth), fourth (fear), fifth (death of children), sixth (enemies will suffer), seventh (loss of wife), eighth (death), ninth (no good fortune), tenth (success), eleventh (wealth) and twelfth (loss of wealth.)

Before performing any ceremony or undertaking any housebuilding at all, you should worship all the ancient deities. Unless you do so, you will not lead a peaceful and happy life. When ceremonies are conducted during good planetary conjunctions, or if Jupiter is in the sixth house from the lagna, or if the sun is in the twelfth house or if Mercury is in the fourth house and Saturn is in the third house, the dwelling will last for 100 years.

If Venus and Mercury are in the seventh house, the sun is in the eleventh house and Jupiter is in the first, fourth, seventh or tenth house, the house will last for 100 years.

If Jupiter is in the fourth house, the moon is in the seventh house and the sun and Mars are in the eleventh house, the house will last for 80 years.

If Venus is in the lagna, Jupiter is in the fifth house, Mars is in the sixth house and the sun is in the third house, the house will last 100 years. If Venus and Jupiter are in the lagna, Mars is in the sixth house, and the sun is either in the first quarter or the third, that house can go on for 200 years.

If Venus is in the lagna, or in Taurus or in Pisces, and if Jupiter is in the fourth house or in Sagittarius, Pisces or Cancer, and if Saturn is in Capricorn or Aquarius, that house will go on for 1,000 years.

If Mercury is in Gemini or Virgo, or in the first, fourth, seventh, or tenth house, the house will last for 200 years. If Cancer is the lagna and the moon is there, and if Jupiter is in the first, fourth, seventh or tenth house, and if the sun is in Leo, Aries or Scorpio, the Goddess of Fortune will reign in that house for a very long time.

When Venus is in the lagna, and the sun is in the fourth or seventh house, towers and weaving houses built at that time will last 100 years. If the moon is in the lagna, and Mercury and Jupiter are in the fourth house, the house will go on for 100 years.

If Venus is in the lagna or in the tenth house, and Mercury is in the third house, and Jupiter has set, the house will last 600 years.

If a ceremony is performed when Jupiter is in the ksetram<sup>32</sup> and Mercury is in the house of Jupiter, the house will last for 800 years. If in addition the sun sets or the moon rises at the same time, the building will last for 1,000 years.

When Venus is in the lagna and is ruling the seventh house, and the moon is in the tenth house, the house will last 1,000 years.

If an auspicious moment is chosen when Venus is in the lagna or Jupiter is in the ksetram, you need not fear fire. When the moon is in Cancer, Pisces or Capricorn, it is a good time to lay up hay. On a Thursday when Rahu (the ascending node) is in the following lunar asterisms, to wit, Purvashadha, the twentieth, Sravana, the twenty-second, Rohini, the fourth, Uttaraphalguni, the twelfth, Uttarashadha, the twenty-first, Aslesha, the ninth and Mrigasiras, the fifth, the ceremony will bring happiness.

Wealth will be the result of performing a ceremony on a Friday when Venus is in an aquatic sign of the Zodiac. If the moon stands in an aquatic sign at the time of the wife's menstrual period or during a bereavement, it is inauspicious.

### *Effects of the Sun*

If you start building a house when the sun lies in the second part of Bharani, the fourth part of Kritika or the first part of Rohini, fire may break out.

### *Effects of Mars*

If you start building a house when Mars is in Kritika, Pusya, Magha, Purvaphalguni, Hasta, Mula or Revati, your children will perish. When the moon, Jupiter and Venus are opposed to Virgo, Gemini, Libra or the aquatic signs of the Zodiac, there is no need to consider the potential effects of Mars.

### *Effects of Mercury*

The family will thrive if housebuilding is started when Mercury is in Asvini, Mrigasiras, Hasta, Chitra, Rohini or Uttaraphalguni or high in the lagna.

### *Effects of Jupiter*

If Jupiter is in the lagna or in Sravana, Uttarashada, Purvashada, Mrigasiras, Aslesha, Rohini or Pusya, it will bring forth everything in plenty.

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<sup>32</sup> The situation of the moon in conjunction with Jupiter, also in the first, fourth, seventh or tenth sign.

### *Effects of Venus*

If Venus is in Krittika, Punarvasu, Chitra, Asvini, Purvashada, Dhanistha, Anuradha, Ardhra, Vishaka or Satabhishak, the family will be healthy and prosperous.

### *Effects of Saturn*

If Saturn is in Satabhishak, Purvabhadra, Svati, Uttarabhadra, Bharani, Dhanishtha, Anuradha or Krittika, the house will be taken over by birds and demons.

### *Effects of Rahu*

The third asterism forward from the one in which Rahu is located and fourteen more after that foretell death.

### *Inauspicious Conjunctions*

1. Do not build houses when Venus and Jupiter are set or when they are waning. Whatever caste the builder of the house belongs to, if his birth planet is aligned with an opposing planet or has set or is waning, it is not the householder but outsiders who will eventually occupy the house.
2. The ksetra planet is inimical to the rising one, and if in the tenth place, it is also inimical.
3. When a house is built when an inimical asterism is in an inimical house to the lagna of origin or is in the seventh or the tenth house of the Zodiac, the house will be of no use to anyone.
4. If the house is built when there are waning planets in the lagna, or if there are no favorable planets opposite, the house will be unlucky for the owner.
5. If a house is built when the moon is waning in the lagna, or if Mars is in the eighth house, it will go to ruin.
6. Below are the portents of the times for laying the foundation with respect to the positions of the planets in the twelve houses of the Zodiac. If a house is built when the sun is in the lagna, the house will be struck by lightning. If the

moon is in the lagna, the owner will fall on hard times. If Mars is in the lagna, the owner will fear death. If Mercury is in the lagna, he will be prosperous. If Jupiter is in the lagna, the owners will be prosperous. If Venus is in the lagna, the house will be blessed with children. If Saturn is in the lagna, the family will fall on hard times.

7. If a house is built when the sun is in the second house, the owners will lose money. If the moon is in the second house, they will lose gems. If Mars is in the second house, wild animals will frequent the place. If Mercury is in the second house, the owners will be rich. If Venus is in the second house, the family will be healthy. If Saturn is in the second house, there will be all sorts of trouble for the owner.

8. If there are good planets in the third house, it does not matter what other planets are there.

9. If the sun is in the fourth house from the lagna, it will lead to terror. If the moon is there, it will bring good health. If Mercury is there, the owners will be rich. If Jupiter is there, the owner will win the favor of kings. If Venus is there, it will be blessed. If Saturn or Mars are there, the owner will lose everything.

10. If the sun is in the fifth house from the lagna, children will die. If the moon is there, there will be discord. If Mars is there, expect enemies. If Mercury is there, expect big profits. If Jupiter is there, health, wealth and prosperity will follow. If Venus is there, the house will be blessed with many children. If Saturn is there, expect trouble with relatives.

11. If the sun is in the sixth house from the lagna, expect good health. If the moon is there, expect the same. If Mars is there, you will find buried treasure. If Mercury is there, you will be cursed by poverty. If Jupiter is there, mantras will be efficacious. If Venus is there, there will be no ill effects. If Saturn is there, life will be tranquil.

12. If the sun is in the seventh house from the lagna, the owner will lose his reputation. If the moon is there, expect trouble and worry. If Mars is there, there will be accidents. If Mercury is there, the owner will possess horses and

carts. If Jupiter is there, the owner will acquire an elephant. If Venus is there, he will come into more land. If Saturn is there, he is likely to fall ill.

13. If the sun is in the eighth house from the lagna, enemies will suffer. If the moon is there, all will go to ruin. If Mars is there, there will be conflict. If Mercury is there, the owner will be rich and command respect. If Jupiter is there, he will be doubted by others. If Venus is there, there will be conflict. If Saturn is there, the householders will fall ill.

14. If the sun is in the ninth house from the lagna, the owner will become very stingy. If the moon is there, he will fall ill. If Mars is there, money will be scarce. If Mercury is there, all kinds of happiness will follow. If Jupiter is there, the owner will be widely respected. If Venus is there, you will defeat your enemies. If Saturn is there, it will lead to dishonor.

15. If the sun is in the tenth house from the lagna, the owners will have many friends. If Mars is there, they will acquire precious stones. If Mercury is there, they will get money through the women in the house. If Jupiter is there, they will acquire household goods. If Saturn is there, it will make you famous.

16. It does not matter whether the planets in the eleventh house from the lagna are weak or strong, the owners will still enjoy good results.

17. After performing the initial consecration ceremony, you should refer to a book on architecture and plan out the house to suit your family, closely observing all the rules and precepts described therein. After that you can start laying the foundation.

## CHAPTER 4

### *The Entrance (vacalpati)*

There are fifteen different types of designs described for installing an entrance. Divide the twelve months of the year into threes and locate the entrance on the side the Site Spirit is facing. If it is put in any other position, there will be misery in the house. No other position (other than the one the Site Spirit is

facing) is suitable for installing the door. During the three months in which no auspicious work can be undertaken, no entrance should be placed on the eastern side. If you must, you can put the door on the other three sides during these months.

When the sun is in Cancer, an entrance can be placed in the east, and in Aquarius, it can be put in the west. During Aries, it can be put in the north, and in Sagittarius, it should be put in the south. If you fail to observe these rules, illness and bad luck will follow.

In August-September, put the entrance in the west, and in October-November, put it in the north. In July-August, put it in the east. It should not be placed in the west. Also, in October-November, if the sun has already entered Scorpio, it should not be placed in the west. In January-February and February-March, do not put it in the north. When the sun is in Leo and Cancer, an entrance should not be put on the south. During July-August, September-October, December-January and March-April, no main posts or pillars should be set in place. During August-September and February-March, do not cut down trees for doorways. If you do so, the house will go up in flames. From the full moon to the eighth lunar day, place no entrance on the east and from the ninth lunar day to the fourteenth in the lunar fortnight, place none on the north.

Put the entrances for Brahmins on the north, for the warriors on the west, for the Vaisyas on the east and for the Sudras on the south. Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces are good for Brahmins, Aries, Leo and Sagittarius are good for warriors, Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn are good for Vaisyas, and Gemini, Aquarius and Libra for Sudras. It is advisable to install the door under the appropriate sign of the Zodiac. If you do otherwise, you may have bad luck. When the moon is in Sagittarius, Aries or Leo, the door should be put on the east, and when it is in Taurus, Virgo or Capricorn, it should be put on the south. When the moon is in Gemini, Libra or Aquarius, the door should be put on the west, and when it is in Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces, it should go on the north.

Build doors in the east under the seven asterism beginning with Krittika, in the south under the seven asterisms beginning with Magha, in the west under the six asterisms beginning with Anuradha and in the east under the seven asterisms beginning with Dhanistha, but not behind these directions. Brahmins can place doorways in the directions in which these bodies are in retrograde.

Put no door in the north in the month of August-September. Do not put a door on the west or the south during May-June. Remember that doorways should not face the corner directions. The consequences will be discord and danger from fire.

Beginning with the month of December-January, divide the months into segments of three. No entrance should be put in place on a Sunday in the following direction: southwest, north, northwest, south and southeast. Do not use the east. Do not install doors, build houses or organize housewarmings on Sundays.

There should not be too many apertures in the walls. A door to the east will yield bountiful harvests. One to the south will bring victory. One to the west will bring good health. A door on the north will bring on health, wealth and prosperity.

There should be no opening to the minor directions. In the northeast, however, a small opening of about one inch can be made.<sup>33</sup> A door facing directly north is not good. This orientation is a so-so one for places of worship, but if it is used for houses, it is very unlucky. The northeast is the same. An orientation to the south can bring about accidents. Entrances on all four sides can lead to victory. However, this arrangement is good only for kings.

### *Features of the Main Entrance*

A plank, called the sun plank, should be placed above the door. The planks on the sides should be in pairs. There should be three steps to the door. If the door post is set in place under an asterism that faces upward, the owner will be famous and powerful. If the post is installed under asterisms that face downward, he will perish. Transverse asterisms bring health and good fortune.<sup>34</sup> The door should be not installed under one that is incompatible with the birth asterism of the owner.

The door post can be installed under the transverse asterisms. The side planks can be put in place under Asvini, Uttaraphalguni, Hasta, Pushya, Svati, Mrigasiras, Rohini and Punarvasu and on the following lunar days: the fifth, the seventh, and the ninth. If they are installed on the new moon day, it will cause misery. The second day causes loss, the third, sickness, the fourth, very bad luck. The eighth day brings bad luck to the whole community. The tenth day brings loss of wealth, and the full moon is not lucky. These days are not good for installing the frame.

Before installing the main post, a puja should be performed for the Site Spirit, the directional guardians and the nine planets. The good planets should

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<sup>33</sup> Again, an apparent reference to keeping the main northeast diagonal open.

<sup>34</sup> The twenty-seven asterisms are grouped into three sets of nine, those that face upward, those that face downward and those that are transverse. Those facing upward are numbers 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 16, 19, 20, and 25. Those facing downward are 4, 6, 8, 12, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 26. Those that are transverse are 1, 5, 7, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, and 27.

be in the first, fourth, seventh and tenth houses of the Zodiac, and the malefic ones should be in the third or sixth houses. The lagna, the sixth house and the twelfth house must be completely favorable before any decision is taken to make an opening in the wall.

After the walls have been constructed, they should not be knocked out in order to create an entrance. Entrances can be installed on any of the four sides of the house, but if they are on all sides but east, the house will attract animals and thieves. If there are entrances on all sides but south, it will bring good luck. If there are entrances on all sides but west, it brings the best possible results. If there are entrances on all sides but north, it is also good.

### *Installing the Street Door*

Measure the side of the house and divide it into nine parts which are sun, moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu and Ketu respectively. You can put the entrance in the areas assigned to the moon or Mercury. To use other parts of the facade for the door is not appropriate in the case of houses. If it is placed in the area of the sun, it must face the east. If it is placed in the area of the moon, it must face south. For temples and palaces it can be placed in the Jupiter area. Doors to cattlesheds should be placed in the area of Venus.

### *Effects of Building Doorways in the Nine Areas*

A door constructed in the area of the sun will lead to discord and loss of wealth. One constructed in the moon area, will make you very prosperous. If it is in the Mars area, there will be debts, suits and loss of wealth. If it is placed in the Mercury or Jupiter area, it will bring forth riches, but you should be careful to place the door slightly off center. If it is in the area of Venus, look for paltry returns, disputes and trouble. Saturn, Rahu and Ketu will lead to loss of children, money and, eventually, the house itself.

The areas of the facade assigned to Mars and Jupiter give good results, but if there are other kinds of constraints on where the door should be placed, the opening can be moved a little to one side or the other. If you do so, however, do not expect the best possible outcome.

A house with main buildings in the south and west is 'lotus-like' and brings prosperity. Those with buildings in the west and north are called 'golden' and are associated with thieves and illness. Those with buildings in the north and east are called 'flower-destroying' and are associated with the threat of robbery. A house built in the south, west and north is called 'lineage destroying' and generates fear. A house with an entrance on the west with rooms or buildings

in the east, south or north is a configuration associated with bad luck and injury. If a house is built on the east, west and south and a main entrance on the north, the occupants will be healthy and happy. For houses built in the west, east and north, entrances can be placed in the three directions. It leads to health and happiness. Entrances built on the four sides of houses built in all four directions bring very good luck, but they are meant only for kings and gods.

### *Setting the Main Pillar or Post*

The activities associated with the cutting of the trees for the post should be undertaken under asterisms that face downward. The post should be set during their transverse aspects. For a two storey house, the post should be put in the southeast. Installing it in the first watch is good. The second one leads to fear. The others are prohibited. After setting the post, the owner should not look at the sky so as to avoid bad omens from birds of prey. Do not allow any bird to sit on the post. If necessary, a parasol should be tied to the top of it. Precious stones should be buried beneath. Before you do any construction, you should organize a puja for the Site Spirit.

No door should be built in the center of the house. The post should not be made of granite. Only one type of wood should be used for making the doorframe. The post should be constructed when Jupiter is in the lagna. The crossbeam should be placed when Mercury is in the lagna. If the roof tiles are placed when Venus is in the lagna, the house will be free of fire, terror and theft. If you start building on a Friday when the moon is in the fifth house of the Zodiac and Venus is in the ninth house from an aquatic sign, you will be healthy, wealthy and happy.

Conduct the ceremony for installing the post in the southeast when the sun is in Taurus, Cancer, Virgo, Aquarius or Libra and when the moon is in Uttaraphalguni, Hasta or Chitra. The ceremony should be conducted in the southwest corner of the house when the moon is in contact with Aquarius, Pisces, and Aries or when the moon is in Rohini, Mrigasiras or Punarvasu.

### *The Height of the Walls*

The bricks should be one cubit by two. A height of ten spans is for Brahmins, sixteen for warriors, nine for Vaisyas and eight spans for Sudras. The walls should never be shorter. If the wall falls down during construction, the owner will have to worry about theft. If an outer wall falls, there will be discord. If an inner wall falls, it is bad luck for the owner. The wall should generally be at least nine feet in height and one and a half feet thick. For doorways and posts,

make sure that the cut tree is installed in the same way it grew, that is with its root side down. Similarly, for horizontal members, the root side should face west or south and the top should face north or east.

### *Dividing the House Into 64 Parts for Building*

The site should be divided into 64 squares leaving 16 in the center as open space. The remaining 48 can be used for building. Before beginning any construction, remember that you must organize a puja for the Site Spirit.

### *The Party Wall*

The overall measurements for the house include the exterior walls. All four walls must be taken into account, but if one building is attached to another, the three walls should be included in the calculations but not the party wall. The spaces occupied by the lane by the side of the house and the roof overhang should not be considered in calculating the overall dimensions.

### *Wood for Constructing the Entrance*

Teak, kino and *puvarasu* (Portia tree, *thespesia populnea*) are the preferred woods for doorframes. You should avoid using other types of woods. The frame should be divided vertically into nine parts. The proportion of the width to the height should be nine to five. The same type of wood should be used for the entire frame. Use the same wood for the windows and doors. Use a single plank of wood, not two, for each door of the house.<sup>35</sup>

The doorway to the house should be at a higher elevation than the outside entrance (to the compound.) Otherwise, the owner will lose his property. Odd numbers such as 1, 5, and 9 should be used as dimensions for the interior spaces between the pillars, that is for the courtyard. Even numbers are bad. The main beams must be equal on all four sides. As for the rooms of the house, they should have dimensions such as 5, 7, 9, and 11 and not 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12. Measure the dwelling using the appropriate stick and then divide the area by 8.<sup>36</sup> A remainder of 1 or 2 is auspicious. The lintels of the house should not be uneven. The entrances of the rooms of the house should not be directly opposite each other. This leads to anguish and distress.

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<sup>35</sup> This would seem to apply to a door of two leaves.

<sup>36</sup> This refers to the *yoni* formula discussed below.

### *The Number of Detached Buildings or Rooms*

The house of the Brahmin should be composed of four rooms<sup>37</sup> and that of the warriors, three. The Vaisya house is composed of two, and the Sudra house is composed of a single main building. Houses with a single main building are good for all castes.

### *The Location of the Cattleshed, Staircase and Drains*

The cattleshed should be separate from the house. It should be placed in the north or east parts of the compound. The staircase should be built so that it rises upward to the north or east. The drains should flow outward to the north, northeast or east. If the drains flow to the west, it is not a serious matter, but no drain should flow to the south.

### *The Use of the Eight Directions Within the House*

Put the shrine room, bedrooms and granary in the east. Use the southeast for the kitchen and dining area. The husband and wife should not use the southeast for their bedroom since children conceived there will turn out to be thieves. The south can be used for the shrine room and dining, but not for anything else. No bedrooms should be located in this direction since children conceived there will be born deaf, dumb, blind or with other handicaps. The southwest may be used for storage of vessels, weapons and study, but not for other purposes. The shrine may be in the west. Male children conceived there will be wise, and females will be chaste and virtuous. Northwest is used for grain storage and the shrine. A lying-in room may be constructed here, but no bedrooms should be placed on this side. A child conceived here will be poor. Money should be kept on the north side of the house, and bedrooms can be placed there as well. The granary can be placed in the northeast, as can the shrine and the bedrooms of the owners.

The kitchen outside of the house (in a separate outbuilding) should be in the east. Put the cattle shed in the southeast, the rubbish pit in the south, the garden in the southwest, the buffalo shed in the west, the granary in the northwest, the dining room in the north and the well in the northeast.

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<sup>37</sup> This refers to detached, or semi-detached buildings arranged around a central courtyard.

## CHAPTER 5

### *Instructions for Felling Timber*

1. The following trees are good for Brahmins: cedar, teak, sandalwood, vanni, the mahua and the Battle of Plassey tree.
2. The following trees are good for warriors: ebony, *vilvam* (bael tree, *aegle marmelos*), the maruta tree (*terminalia alata*), sal and teak.
3. The following are the ones suitable for the Vaisya: ebony, *sindu* (Tuscan jasmine), sandalwood, arka, banyan and mango.
4. Mango trees, those with thorns and those with milky sap are good for Sudras.
5. Fell timber during the fixed signs of the Zodiac, that is when the sun is in Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, and Pisces, and during the months of February-March and September-October.
6. You can also fell timber under the asterisms that are two, three, four, eight and nine places away from the sun, and under the asterisms in which the moon is located. These times are suitable for all four castes.
7. It is auspicious to use the same wood for the entire house. If two woods are used, the portents are neutral. If three types of wood are used for the house, it will bring you bad luck.
8. Fruit bearing trees and those with milky sap or thorns should be avoided.

### *Good and Bad Trees for Housebuilding*

9. Trees that ooze milky sap have bad effects on human beings and other creatures that nurse their young. Trees with thorns lead to discord. Fruit bearing trees will bring bad luck to the children. Do not use the following timber: wood from cremation grounds, trees struck by lightning or felled by

wind, rotten trees, temple trees, trees that are chopped up or dried out, forked trees, fruit trees, lean trees, female trees and those with too many branches.

10. You will lose your money if you use trees with milky sap or those in which birds have built their nests. Trees where crows once lived will bring on disease. Trees from cremation grounds will lead to death. Trees felled by storms and lightning will bring on more of the same. If trees along the byways are used, it will bring on bad luck, and if those from the town are felled, it will lead to terror. Trees from intersections where roads meet will bring bad luck right down through the generations. Deformed trees lead to stillborn children. Rotten trees lead to trouble with authorities. Trees with three forks lead to problems in pregnancy. Trees cut by strangers bring enemies to the house. Trees from parks cause harm. Trees entwined with creepers lead to poverty. Flowering trees and those from temple grounds cause fear. Trees with holes bring on danger from snakes. If female trees are used, only female children will be born. Do not cut down any trees when the moon is in Kritika, Rohini, Mrigasiras, Ardhra or Punarvasu.

11. Before felling any timber, you must examine the position of the stars and the planets.

12. The malefic period in the month, the one in the week and the one in the lunar fortnight are not good times to fell timber. Other inauspicious times include the new moon day and the sixth lunar day. Do not cut timber at the time of eclipses or under a death conjunction of the planets.

13. The following asterisms are generally good for the felling of timber: Mrigasiras, Punarvasu, Anuradha, Mula, Uttaraphalguni, Uttarashada and Sravana.

### *Procedures for Felling the Tree*

14. The ground should be leveled for the puja and the tree should be venerated with flowers, fruit, and sweetmeats. It should be covered with dhotis (cloths worn by males) and tied with sacred threads.

15. At an auspicious time, the builder, or whoever cuts down the tree should tie a sacred thread around his arm. He should then touch the tree to be felled and repeat the following: "I worship this tree. However many demons are living in this tree, may you all prosper. I salute you all."

16. The builder should set out such things as sweetmeats, curd and lighted lamps for the puja and repeat the following: Please accept my prayers O you spirits, hobgoblins and demons of various stripes. I am petitioning you on behalf of the house. Please give it your blessings and bless our efforts. I beg you all to accept what I have offered and to go elsewhere to dwell from now on. I salute you all."

17. Then he should anoint the tree with water, pour out honey and ghee and cut the tree from the northeast with his right hand.

### *Portents Associated with the Direction in Which the Tree is Felled*

18. If the tree falls to the east, you will be wealthy. If it falls to the southeast, the house will be consumed by fire. If it falls to the south, you will perish. The southwest will lead to discord, the west to abundant cattle, the northwest to plunder, the north to wealth and the northeast to blessings of all kinds.

19. If the tree falls on other trees, or if it breaks in pieces, the portents are not good.

20. If a branch falls on a living creature and kills it, it will lead to poverty.

21. If the tree is felled in one piece, it will lead to prosperity. If in two pieces, it is also good. But if it breaks apart and falls in three pieces, it will lead to misery. If it breaks into four or six pieces, wealth will increase, but if it separates into five pieces, it is very inauspicious. If the sections of the tree have hollows in them or if the outer bark of the tree penetrates the wood, it will cause misery. If the timber is bent, the owner will run out of money. If the pieces have gashes in them, it can lead to illness. If the pieces are unusually large, the owner will have many daughters. If the pieces are wormy or dripping with sap, it will bring on very bad luck.

22. Avoid the bright half of the lunar month in felling timber. The dark half of the lunar month is acceptable.
23. Once the trees are felled, they should be carried to the house or transported on a cart.
24. If the timber is not cut cleanly, or is of a peculiar hue, it is inauspicious.
25. When the tree is brought home, if anyone young or old makes a prediction, it will come to pass, so people should hold their tongues. If the rope breaks while the tree is being moved, the children will fall ill.
26. Now you know the scientific method of felling timber. Remember these instructions when you do it.

## CHAPTER 6

### *Rules for Housewarming*

1. Jupiter and the moon must be in a strong position for a successful housewarming to take place.
2. July-August, August-September, September-October, December-January, January-February and February-March are not good months for the housewarming.
3. The other six months are good ones in which to have the ceremony.
4. On the day before the housewarming, you should do the puja to the Site Spirit and make sacrifices to the demons. Colored stones should be set out in the four directions and the offerings placed on the four sides while uttering the mantra that begins with *hey butali*.
5. Lamps should be lighted from the east to the west. Then the householder should offer ghee, honey and sweetmeats and appease the deities. After this,

the Site Spirit should be worshiped with the mantra that begins with *visnunaradamasi*.<sup>38</sup> The serpents who are the lords of the directions should also be venerated with the mantra beginning *namo asta sri devaya*. The other deities should be worshiped by reciting the Gayatri.<sup>39</sup>

6. The person uttering the mantra should do so at an auspicious time.

### *Auspicious Times for Housewarming*

7. July-August, August-September, September-October, December-January, January-February and February-March are not good months. It is not necessary to observe auspicious times in order to renovate or repair old houses.

8. Before you conduct a housewarming, appear before kings or go on long journeys, you need to observe the correct position of the sun.

9. If you go on a journey or do a housewarming ceremony in a particular place, do not repeat the same activity nine years, nine months or nine days later or after nine hours on the same day.

10. Do not embark on two different major undertaking such as journeys and housewarmings on the same day.

11. The best times for a housewarming are those when the sun in the north from January-February to June-July. When the sun is in Cancer, Virgo, Sagittarius or Aquarius, a first entry into a house can be made during the fixed (*stira*) asterisms, but not under the ones that are not fixed (*sara*) or Uttaraphalguni.

12. If Rahu is in the asterism, it is not auspicious. Vishaka, the sixteenth lunar asterism, will bring destruction. The Agni asterisms lead to fear from fire.<sup>40</sup> A

<sup>38</sup> Some of the letters are missing here.

<sup>39</sup> A mantra regarded as one of extraordinary power that is repeated in daily devotions. It is addressed to the sun.

<sup>40</sup> There are three such periods each year: when the sun is in the last quarter of the second lunar asterism Bharani, when it is the third lunar asterism Kritika and when it is in the first quarter of the fourth lunar asterism Rohini.

second phase of the moon occurring in the same month is inauspicious. Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sundays are likewise. They will lead to terror from thieves. The following conjunctions are inauspicious: the south during the eleventh phase of the moon, the west during the second, seventh and twelfth lunar days of a lunar fortnight, the north during the third, eighth and thirteenth lunar days and the east on the full moon day.

13. The first phase counted from the owner's own will lead to freedom from illness. The others are as follows: (2) poverty, (3) wealth, (4) discord among relatives, (5) bad for children, (6) bad for enemies, (7) poverty, (8) death, (9) good health, (10) and (11) success and (12) ruin.

14. If you are under the favorable aspect of the declination and in a good lagna, it is good. Opposing ones are inauspicious.

15. Aries will bring destruction. Cancer and Libra can bring on illness and Capricorn can cause the ruin of crops.

16. Whoever conducts a ceremony venerating the Site Spirit under the following asterisms will have the blessings of the Goddess of Fortune: Chitra, Satabhisak, Svati, Anuradha, Pusa, Punarvasu, Rohini, Revati, Mula, Sravana, Uttaraphalguni, Dhanistha, Uttarashadha, Uttarabhadra, Asvini, Hasta and Mrigasiras.

17. Do not don new clothes or engage in housewarming or marriage ceremonies during the conjunction of Venus and Jupiter.

18. If the planets are positioned in a trigon within the kendra,<sup>41</sup> it is lucky. The sixth, eighth and twelfth places are not auspicious. Abhijit and Sravana are not auspicious for a housewarming ceremony. Jupiter in retrograde is prohibited to all but kings and Brahmins.

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<sup>41</sup> As noted previously, the kendra is the first, fourth, seventh or tenth house from the ascendant.

19. Asterisms in which Mars is located and the asterisms that precede and follow them are unlucky. If Ketu is in the lagna, it is inauspicious. Do not select times during eclipses or during a *tiyacciyam*.<sup>42</sup>
20. Asterisms in which the moon is located are auspicious. The tenth, sixteenth, eighteenth, twenty-third, and twenty-fifth asterism from the birth asterism of the owner are unlucky. The rest bring good luck.
21. If Venus or Jupiter are ruling or exalted, it is auspicious.
22. If the sun is ruling in the fourth house, it is lucky.
23. If Jupiter is risen, or if Venus is set, or if the sun is in the sixth house, or if Saturn is in the eleventh at the time of housewarming, you will defeat your enemies.
24. If Venus is in the birth lagna, Jupiter is in a beneficial house of the Zodiac, the sun is in the eleventh house or Mars is in the sixth house, the portents are the same.
25. If Venus and Jupiter are in beneficial houses, and Mars and the sun are in the eleventh house, you will become wealthy.
26. If Venus, Jupiter and the moon are ruling, it is auspicious.
27. If the moon is set, it brings bad luck regardless of other considerations.
28. As for the eighth day of the waning moon, within three years the wife will perish.
29. The eighth day of the waxing moon is generally good. Do not use the seventh or there will be conflict.
30. If a housewarming is conducted under malefic asterisms or Mars, it is very unlucky.

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<sup>42</sup> A period of one and a half hours during an asterism considered inauspicious.

### *Omens for Positioning the Feet*

31. When you lie down on a bed, your feet should never be pointed in the direction of a teacher, a deity, a fire, a cow or a Brahmin. You will lose all your wealth if they are.

### *Omens for Positioning the Head*

32. If you sleep with your head to the east, you will have good luck and prosperity. If your head is in the south, you will have a long life. If in the west, it can cause misery and if in the north, you may perish. If you sleep with your head in the minor directions, count on loss of your money and luck. The north is bad because the pole star is there, and if you sleep with your head in that direction, you may fall ill.

### *Portents for Beds*

33. You can use iron to make a bed. Figures of the elephant, lion or the cow can be carved on the frame.

34. Beds, swings and chairs should be made with sandalwood, cedar, tamarind, the maruta tree or teak. Do not use wood from thorny trees, trees felled to the west or south and trees growing close to rivers or tanks or where waterways meet. If you use them for making furniture, you can count on enemies and illness.

35. As you start to construct a bed, the sight of any of the following is a good omen: the color white, flowers, curd, an elephant, fruit and a brass pot ready for a puja.

### *Dimensions of Beds*

36. A bed for a king should be 100 inches long and 92 inches wide. Its height should be one-third of the other dimension(s). For other people, it should be six inches shorter. For princes and ministers, it should be ten inches less. For others, it should be eighteen inches less. For Brahmins, it should be twenty inches less. The height should be six parts less.

37. Beds six feet six inches long and three feet six inches high are good for everyone.

***Portents When Building the Bed: Woods and Other Matters***

38. The Indian kino tree brings freedom from illness. The tamarind gives rise to bile. Sandalwood will help you defeat enemies. Ashoka wood will bring you fame. *Simsava* (also probably Ashoka)<sup>43</sup> wood is a very good one, and *padmaham* (*cerassus pudum*) will confer long life and prosperity. Teak will lead to a happy marriage.

39. If the bed is made of sandalwood, and it is studded with gold and gems, the owners will be worshiped by the gods themselves.

40. If the bed is made of Ashoka, cedar or *tindukam*, the owner will be very healthy.

41. If mango wood is used, it will lead to fear of death. If the atti fig and sandalwood are used, it is very lucky. These woods can also be used for making chairs, although the measurements for them are different.

42. If you start building a bed under the wife's birth asterism, it can cause destruction. If it is started under the birth asterism of the husband, the couple will be blessed with children.

43. Trees that look like chameleons or snakes, crooked trees or trees on which the eagle, short-horned owl or crows have dwelt should not be used.

44. Trees that are red and black are not good. Trees that are white, trees with a mild fragrance, lush, green trees and trees from the northeast are good.

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<sup>43</sup> The names of some of the woods given here have been taken from Sanskrit sources. They are not Tamil words and have sometimes been curiously spelled. When I have found a gloss in a Tamil dictionary, or even an unambiguous one in Monier Williams (1899), I have provided a translation.

## CHAPTER 7

### *The Location of Wells, Tanks, Canals and Gardens*

1. You should construct wells, tanks, canals and gardens according to the principles of the ancient sciences. Before you build a well, drop a betel flower or a jasmine flower on the site where you intend to dig a well soon after the sun sets. Leave it there all night. If it has not faded in the morning, you can be sure that the site is suitable for a well. Further details will appear in Chapter 11.<sup>44</sup>
2. If the site is triangular, square or circular, it is lucky. If it is in the shape of a bow or a pot, the portents are neutral. If it is shaped like a snake or a banner, it is unlucky.
3. Work undertaken in April-May will lead to wealth, and that undertaken in May-June will give you abundant harvests. June-July is a dangerous month for work, and July-August will bring on misery. August-September will bring you good health, but September-October will lead to danger. October-November will lead to illness, and November-December will bring on misery. If you work in December-January, you will become famous, and in January-February, wealthy. Work undertaken in February-March will lead to terror from fire. For March-April, the portents are neutral.

### *Portents of Times For Digging Wells*

4. The well dug on Sunday will run dry. There will be no water in the one dug on Tuesday, and the water in the one dug on Saturday will go bad.
5. Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Mondays are the auspicious days for digging wells.
6. Rohini, Uttaraphalguni, Uttarashadha, Uttarabhadra, Pusya, Anuradha, Satabhisak, Dhanistha and Magha, are the asterisms under which it is auspicious to dig wells and construct canals and tanks.

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<sup>44</sup> There is no Chapter 11.

7. The first and the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight are neutral. The fifth, seventh and twelfth day of the lunar fortnight and the third, eighth and eighteenth days and the full moon day can bring very good luck. The fourth day is unlucky.
8. If the moon is in the lagna, an aquatic sign, the twelfth house or the kendra, or if Venus, Jupiter or Mercury are in the lagna, the water will remain pure, fresh and plentiful.
9. Mars should not be in the third house, Venus should not be set, the sun should not be in the sixth house, Saturn should not be in the the eleventh house, and the beneficial planets should not be in the sixth, eighth or twelfth houses.
10. If you propitiate the lords of the directions when Saturn is in the third house, the moon is in the seventh house, the sun is in the sixth house, Mars is in the eleventh house, and the beneficial planets are in the first, fourth, ninth or tenth houses, there will be abundant water, money and children.
11. If the beneficial planets are in the first, fourth or tenth houses, all will be well. This is just the right time to sink wells and to construct waterways, canals and dikes.
12. When the moon is risen or in the lagna or Jupiter is in the kendra, wells can be sunk.
13. Three houses of the Zodiac, Leo, Sagittarius, and Scorpio, are not good for sinking wells. The others are beneficial.
14. Sink wells in a lagna that is associated with good planets or with aquatic signs or in a lagna facing beneficial planets.
15. The southeast, the south, and the northwest are not good at all. The others are better.
16. A well in the east will lead to riches, but if it is built in the southeast, the children will perish. The wife will perish if it is sunk in the south. If it is dug in

the southwest, it will lead to wickedness and poverty. The west is a good direction, but the northwest will bring out your enemies. The north will lead to fame. The northeast is beneficial in every way. Sink no well in the center of the site. It will lead to poverty. These ideas are confirmed in the book the *Vastu Ratnavali*.

17. Building waterways that run from the south to the northwest and from the west to the north will lead to illness, anguish and poverty.

## CHAPTER 8

### *Diagnosing Injury to the Site*<sup>45</sup>

1. To understand whether there are any injurious substances (*sallium*) on the site, first divide a rectangle into twenty eight parts from the head to the tail beginning with the rising of Aries (probably Rahu or Sesa).<sup>46</sup> Add up twelve and then subtract sixteen to find the sixteen locations of *sallium* fixed in Sesa.<sup>47</sup>
2. There are sixteen kinds of *sallium*: (1) skull, (2) bones, (3) red brick, (4) potsherds, (5) firewood, (6) an idol or image, (7) ash, (8) charcoal, (9) human bones, (10) grain, (11) gold, (12) stone, (13) frogs, (14) ivory, (15) dog bones and (16 or zero) a jar.

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<sup>45</sup> This treatment of the portents of a site merges two redundant divinatory systems. The first ascribes good luck or bad luck to maleficent influences that lie underground. It is a system of omens and essentially non-numerative in nature. Bad luck is merely the result of bones, ash and other leavings from prior use that need to be identified, dug up and thrown out. The location of the disturbances beneath seems to have been read originally from the body of the owner by a diviner. The second system, a numerative, astrological one, must have been a subsequent overlay, as the science of astrology increased in influence during the medieval period and into the modern one. In this system, the 'body' that is read is the one of the serpent that encapsulates cosmic elements and cycles. The cakra or wheel, sometimes called the Wheel of Sesa, the cosmic serpent, is a mnemonic device for astrological data. It is not a map of the site.

<sup>46</sup> Mesha. Probably a scribal error for Sesa which appears immediately below.

<sup>47</sup> This passage is almost unintelligible because of scribal errors. It is not even clear that the term 'remainder' refers to Sesa, the great serpent (also known as 'The Remainder') but that seems to be the intent. The term used in calculations elsewhere in the text for remainder is the more common *miccam*.

3. Of these types of *sallium*, numbers 10, 11 and 14 are lucky, 16 is neutral, and the rest are very unlucky.

### *The Organization of the Cakra for Diagnosing Injury*

4. The *cakra* (=wheel or astrological diagram) for diagnosing *sallium* consists of a rectangle with seven boxes in each of the major directions for twenty eight in all, each of them associated with one of the lunar asterisms.

### *The Cakra for the Forenoon*

5. Of the seven boxes that lie in the east, leave out the first two and begin with the third. Then go three boxes southward, take four westward, five northward and two eastward for a total of fourteen so that the boxes are all enclosed in the wheel beginning with *Krittika*, the third asterism.<sup>48</sup>

### *The Cakra for the Afternoon and Night*

6. Afternoon begins with the box for *Magha*, the tenth asterism. Evening begins with the box for *Anuradha*, the seventeenth. Evening begins with *Satabhisak*, the twenty-fourth. For the afternoon, count westward and for evening, count eastward. The first part of the night should take you northward and the latter part of the night, south.

7. The six asterisms from *Rohini* onward in the morning cycle, the seven beginning with *Magha* in the afternoon, the seven beginning with *Anuradha* in the evening and the seven from *Sravana* in the night should be measured out in sets of 2-1/4 hours each. These boxes are the locations for *sallium*.

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<sup>48</sup> The rest of the passage describes how the asterisms are laid out in the diagram shown in Figure 16.

### *Using the Zodiac Signs to Identify the Presence of Sallium*

8. Since the duration of a Zodiac sign is one month plus three days, add the other days to the beginning of the cakra and then begin to count forward beginning with Krittika.<sup>49</sup>

### *How to Determine Whether There is Sallium or Not*

9. If the beneficent planets are in conjunction or they are opposed, it is a sign of sallium. If they are not in conjunction and are not opposed, perhaps no sallium will be found. If the moon is in conjunction with Mars, or if Mars is opposed to the moon, or if Mars rises within the Zodiac sign, it is a sign that the bones of sheep will be found.

10. If Jupiter is in conjunction with the moon, or has risen within the same Zodiac sign, it is an indication that either the bones of a Brahmin, a cow, or red brick or gold will be found.

11. *Images and buffalo bones.* When the moon is in conjunction with the sun, or if it is opposed to the sun, a sacred image will be buried below. If Saturn is in conjunction with the moon and/or the sun, the portents are the same. If Saturn is in conjunction with the moon or opposed to it, buffalo bones will be found underground.

12. *Snakes or snake bones.* If the moon is in conjunction with Rahu or Ketu or opposed, a snake pit or snake bones will be found on the site.

13. *Dog bones and silver.* When the moon is in conjunction with Mercury or opposed, dog bones will be found on the the site.

14. If malefic planets are in conjunction with good planets or opposed to them, there will be bad luck in the house. The owner will lose the house and all his possessions.

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<sup>49</sup> This is not entirely clear. The discrepancy between the number of days in the months and the number of asterisms appears to be connected with counting from the third place, that is Krittika, the third lunar asterism.

15. If beneficial planets are completely absent and malefic ones are present, it is a dangerous sign. It is a good sign if only the good planets are present.
16. If the segment is ruled by good planets, the family will prosper and the owner will hold on to the property.
17. If the beneficial planets are at the zenith or are opposed to it, the owner will hold on to the property. If there are malefic planets in this segment, however, outsiders will eventually take over the house. In addition, the house may be inhabited by demons.
18. If you want to calculate the depth at which the sallium is buried, take the number of degrees or rays and calculate how many spans they are in all. Two spans make one cubit. Divide it into spans. Consider the positions of the beneficial planets, the ruling houses and their regents, and calculate the depth in spans at which the offending substances are located.
19. Measure out the dimensions of the east, west, north and south sides of a house in spans, divide it by 21 (to get the cubit)<sup>50</sup> and multiply it by 28. This will give inches.
20. If (malefic) planets are in the seventh place from the birth sign, and if the moon is in the first, fourth or seventh place, there is influence from sallium. Women in the household will die and the lineage will go to ruin. Very bad luck and loss of property will follow.
21. If (malefic) planets are in the birth sign, and if the sun and Saturn are in the kendra, there will be ashes and chaff buried in the ground. Apathy and fear will beset the house. There will be discord between husband and wife. The family will fall on hard times. The occupants will be subject to illness and face danger from poisonous snakes.
22. If there are planets in the fifth place from the birth sign, and if the moon is in the kendra, granite, wood and bones lie buried beneath the house. This will bring destruction to the whole lineage.

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<sup>50</sup> This seems to be a misprint for two.

23. If the moon is in the second house from the birth sign, human bones lie buried below. This owner will lose strength, determination and his money.
24. If planets are in the tenth place from the birth sign, bones, stones, pieces of metal or brass lies buried below. This will lead to terror and bad dreams. The house will go to ruin.
25. If there are planets in the sixth, eighth or twelfth place away, you will be afflicted by the three ravaging diseases that are the result of sins in previous births, and sallium such as flesh, bone and shells will lie underground. If the moon lies in the kendra in the birth sign of the owner, the world of the householder will break apart like a ship in a storm on the ocean. The women of the house will be miserable and the lineage will go to ruin.
26. If Jupiter is in the birth sign, and the moon and Saturn are in the fourth or seventh houses, charcoal, bone, shells and pieces of tile lie buried in the ground. If the sun and the moon are in the second or third house, black granite and idols can be found buried beneath.
27. Compare the birth sign with the one in which the moon is located. When someone consults an astrologer, he should be asked to name a house of the Zodiac. If the moon is there, if Saturn or the sun or Mars are in it, or in the fourth, seventh, or tenth house from there, or if the sun is there, bones, ashes and elephant nails will be buried in the ground.
28. When Mercury or the moon are in the fourth, seventh or tenth house, and if the sun is in the third, sixth or eighth house, the householders will be wealthy.
29. When Mercury and Venus are in conjunction, the moon is in the seventh house, and they are not in retrograde, and if Saturn is in the sixth house from the moon, there is treasure buried below.
30. If children's bones are buried in the east, and you do not look into the portents, you will be like a person with a cow that does not give milk.

31. If bones are buried in the southeast, you will be threatened by kings.
32. If the remains of elephants are buried on the south side of the house, you will live in fear of death.
33. If the bones of pig are buried in the southwest side, there will be misery in the house.
34. If the bones of a bull are buried in the west of the house, there will be terror.
35. If donkey bones are buried in the northwest of the house, it will lead to destruction.
36. If goat bones lie buried in the north of the house, there will be conflict.
37. If the bones of a dog are buried in the northeast, there will be strife.
38. If human bones lie in the center of the house, there will also be strife.
39. Before building any house, you should dig up the earth to a depth of six spans and carefully examine the soil.
40. Dig down seven spans for a temple. As a general rule, the earth should be dug up to a depth of six spans for the dwellings of Brahmins, to four spans for Vaisyas and to three for Sudras.

### *Instructions for Builders Regarding the Diagnosis of Sallium*

1. If the person who sets out to build a house begins scratching an area of his body, it is a sign of disturbances within the site.
2. If he touches his head, it is a sign that there is something bad buried eight cubits down.

3. If he touches his nose, it is the same. If he clasps his hands, horse bones will be found six feet under.
4. A good way to test for trouble is to fold a rope six times over and lay it out on the site. If something trips over it, it means there is some problem far down at about the height of a human body.
5. Another test for sallium is the letter test. Write the following letters beginning in the east around a square: (1)a, aa, (2) ka, kaa, (3) ca, caa, (4) da, daa, (5) ta, thaa, (6) pa, paa, (7) ya, yaa, (8) sha, shaa, and (9) ha.<sup>51</sup>
6. If someone or other says something beginning with the sounds in 1 above,<sup>52</sup> it means that human bones lie buried in the east 1-1/2 cubits down. The owner of the house will die.
7. If someone or other says something beginning with the letters in 2, it means donkey bones lie buried two cubits down in the southeast. The portents are punishment and death in the house due to trouble with the authorities.
8. If the utterance begins with the letters in 3, there is something terrible buried waist deep in the south. It will lead to the death of the priest.
9. If the utterance begins with the sounds in 4, dog bones have been buried in the southeast 1-1/2 cubits down. Children will die.
10. If the utterance begins with the sounds in 5, fox bones lie in the west 1-1/2 cubits down. The householders will not occupy the house very long.
11. If the utterance begins with the sounds in 6, human bones lie in the northwest four cubits down. The owners will have no friends.

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<sup>51</sup> Single and doubled letters are here used to represent the difference between short and long vowels given in the text.

<sup>52</sup> When the troubled householder consults the astrologer, the latter supposedly makes the diagnosis based on the first utterance of the householder.

12. If the utterance begins with the sounds in 7, donkey bones lie 1-1/2 cubits down in the north. No cattle will ever survive.
13. If the utterance begins with the sounds in 8 above, the bones of cattle lie in the north at a depth of 1-1/2 cubits. The owners will lose money and cattle.
14. If the utterance begins with the sound in 9 above, it means that hair, bones, ashes and metal are buried in the center chest deep. The owner and his family will be ruined.
15. In order to counteract these problems, first repeat this powerful Sanskrit mantra twenty-one times.<sup>53</sup>
16. The earth should then be examined down to the water level or to the height of a human being.
17. The objects you should be worried about are those connected with human beings: pieces of metal, ancient coins and things like that. A thorough examination should be made before beginning construction.
18. If you do not identify troublesome substances at the time of construction, you may be able to discover them later after living in the house for a time. If they are still there after you occupy the house, you will fall ill, have bad dreams and endure endless trouble.
19. We will mention some of the omens that suggest there is sallium underground. Suppose for seven nights a cow, a horse or a dog keeps on making noise, or suppose women argue all the time. Suppose wild animals come into the house or vultures, tigers, foxes, pigeons and snakes are attracted to the property. This means that human bones are buried beneath, and lightning will eventually strike the dwelling. This house will be damaged by fire or wind. Demons will take up residence there. Crows will come to the house at night. There will be arguments day in day out between the husband and the wife.

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<sup>53</sup> The mantra is given in the text.

20. Sometimes problems arise from evil trees as well. If bones and other inauspicious objects are found on the site, they should be carried away from the boundaries of the land. Bad luck can be caused by bamboo, doorframes and other influences. Anyone who cares about the welfare of his family will try to find out what is causing the bad luck and get rid of it.

21. The day the offending objects are removed, you must organize a puja to the Site Spirit. Pick an auspicious day under an auspicious asterism and other good astrological signs, and get a Brahmin to conduct the rites to extirpate the influences of the sallium. Make an image from nice stone. Now think of various deities as parts of its body. Nanda, as the head, for example, Bhaddra as the left hand, Rikta as the right one, Jaya as the legs and Purna as the navel. Now think of the Site Spirit and worship him as you meditate on the image.

22. Mark out the house site into three major divisions. In the center of the site, dig a small hole. In each of the four directions, venerate the aforementioned deities, Nanda, Bhaddra, Jaya, and Rikta, at the four directions. Right at the center, dig a hole waist deep and draw the auspicious sign of the swastika on top of the head of the image. This area should be divided into three parts with the square pit in the middle. Now have a priest invoke Nanda in the northeast, Bhaddra in the southeast, Jaya in the southwest, Rikta in the northwest and Purna in the center.

23. Around the perimeter, place eight brass pots wound with thread and filled with water. Make sure they are decorated with mango leaves and that each has a coconut on top. These are for the deities of the major and minor directions who are to be propitiated by the builder. Place the pots on the nine auspicious grains. Kohl, sandalwood paste, musk, and leaves of the Deodar cedar should be laid out. The following substances should be offered: sand on which lions and wild boar have trod, pieces of elephant tusk, pieces of bull horn, nail of lion, sand from a temple entrance, the five products of the cow, the five fruits in sugar syrup, water from the five rivers, leaves of the five auspicious trees, the five spices, the three kinds of honey and the seven<sup>54</sup> kinds of grain. Now Ganesh and the other gods should be invoked. Next, the

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<sup>54</sup> Seems to be a mistake for nine.

planets should be invoked with the appropriate prayers. Then 800 Gayatri mantras and 800 mantras beginning with *tirunipata* should be recited. Then another mantra beginning with *tat vipara so* should be recited 100 times. The mantra beginning with *ato devaya* should be recited 300 times. At the end of all this, the soma sacrifice should be performed to Agni.

24. After the Brahmins have performed the soma rite, a puja to the Site Spirit and a soma puja must be performed. The nine planets, Ganesh, and the directional guardians all have to be worshiped. Also, the guardian deities of sacred places and the deities of the earth and the sky.

25. On an auspicious day at an auspicious time under an auspicious planet, place the image in the hole. There should be a bright lamp burning to the west of it, and all the brass pots should be placed to the east. After this, recite the mantra pertaining to sallium as follows:

*O Nanda the daughter of Vasistha, bless me and my family with wealth and prosperity. O Bhaddra, you who are belong to the seer Kasyapa, give us good health and long life and protect us from the evils of sallium. O Jaya, you who belong to the seers named Bhargava, you who perform wonderous feats, save us from these evil influences. O Rikta, you who belong to the seer Atri, you who can dispel poverty, grant me and my family good health, wealth and prosperity. O Purna, you who belong to the seers called Angirasas, you who are without fault, grant us good health, wealth and happiness.*

26. Now the main pot and the fire should be covered with sand. Then the priest should place one hand on the heart of the image and address the Site Spirit as follows:

*O Site Spirit, guardian of the earth, protect this house. Fill it with abundant grain. Grant it wealth and prosperity. Keep everyone safe from harm. I bow before you, and I venerate you. You are the incarnation of the site. Confer your blessings on all mankind.*

27. After this, a puja and prayers should be made to Ganesh and to the Goddess of the Earth. Then Isana (Siva as lord of the northeast), various demons, devils, serpents and the like should be invoked with lamps and prayers.

28. Take the water in the pots and sprinkled the entire house with it. As the priest sprinkles the water, he should recite more prayers asking for the end of the evil influences.

29. A cow should be given as a gift to the priest. Money and betel should be given to those who assisted. Food should be laid out for all the Brahmins. If all this is done, the householder will live safely from then on, free of all influence of sallium.

## CHAPTER 9

### *Defects in Dwellings (vedai)*<sup>55</sup>

There are sixteen types of unsuitable houses, named as follows with their corresponding defects:

| Name             | Problem                   | Consequence              |
|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Antakam       | Not enough space          | Disease                  |
| 2. Rutiram       | Derelict house            | Dysentery                |
| 3. Kupjam        | Not complete              | Leprosy                  |
| 4. Karanam       | Absent doors              | Blindness                |
| 5. Vikikaran     | Doors on the earth area   | Misery                   |
| 6. Tikavakkaram  | Too many openings         | Danger to pregnant women |
| 7. Cipidam       | Not high enough           | Enmity                   |
| 8. Viyankam      | Frightening appearance    | House will be degraded   |
| 9. Surajam       | One side too high         | Poverty                  |
| 10. Kudilam      | Gates and doors           | Tuberculosis             |
| 11. Kuttakam     | Wall in front of entrance | Bad luck                 |
| 12. Sankapatajam | Chaotic                   | Fear                     |
| 13. Sankapalam   | Frightening               | Disaster to owner        |
| 14. Vikadam      | Minus one side            | Disaster to children     |
| 15. Kankam       | Very ugly                 | Beset by evil spirits    |
| 16. Kainkaram    | High and ugly             | Destruction of women     |

<sup>55</sup> This word refers to contact on a particular day between a particular lunar asterism or lunar day (*titi*) and the ones that precede or follow it. By extension, it appears to refer to other kinds of contact or obstruction.

1. These sixteen types of defective houses can cause untold misery. A few more are enumerated below.
2. If there is a dilapidated passage by the side of the house, the householders will be threatened by death. If there is a passage where there has been a fire, it can cause poverty and barrenness.
3. Avoid a house that is derelict, or has a fallen roof, or a history of fire.
4. If the front of the house is broken down, the householder will become a wandering ascetic.
5. If there is any defect in the top part of the house, it brings bad luck to the owner.
6. If the house is dilapidated, wealth and prosperity will trickle away.
7. If there is too much space in between the buildings, it can mean death.
8. If black granite is used in building the back side, it can bring good health to the householders.
9. A house that has been enlarged (or that is too large?) will lead to disturbance.
10. A house that is too long brings on poverty.
11. A three sided house can bring instant destruction.
12. A house built right in front of another or right behind can bring on illness, discord and poverty.

13. This is an example of a defect due to misalignment.<sup>56</sup> If the inside entrance is larger than the main one, it can leave to poverty and death.
14. This is an example of a four sided defect. Cattle will be destroyed if there are doors on all four sides.
15. This is an example of a defect due to a shadow. During the second and third part of the night, if a shadow falls on a house, it leads to illness.
16. If the four walls of the house are not even, the lineage will perish.
17. If one end of a bamboo frame is fitted with another member, and they come apart, the entire lineage will be destroyed.
18. If the beams or cross beams are of unequal size, it leads to discord and destruction.
19. If there is a defect due to height on the east or north, it leads to fear of death.
20. If one room is at a lower level than the other, it will lead to lethargy and illness.
21. If there is any black granite stone in the middle of the house or facing the entrance, it will lead to illness and poverty.
22. If a house is close to a river or a mountain, if it has no walls or if it is on marshy ground, if it is built with black granite, if the short-horned owl lives there even for one day, or if crows live there, or if rabbits, snakes and such live there, or if the house is struck by lightning, or by fire, or if there is perpetual discord in the house, or if the water dries up, or if tortoises, iguanas, dogs and such inhabit the place, if bees abound in the place, if there are no apertures, if there is no roof, if trees such as the jujube are there, or if the house has no

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<sup>56</sup> Verses 13 to 20 give Sanskritized technical terms for types of defects or obstruction which I have not glossed.

locks, if the doors make noise, or if the doors have more than one layer of wood, or if there are processions of horses and elephants, or if the atti fig is nearby, or if the site is terrorized, you may go blind, be stricken with leprosy or become afflicted in other ways. A house with a bad history, one in which a murder or suicide has taken place, one without apertures, one built with thorny trees, one with an unbuilt frontage, a house built with the wrong kinds of timber, one too close to the jungle, one on marshy ground, one on which outsiders or mixed caste people have lived and so forth is most undesirable.

23. If one doorway built first is closed off and another one built in its place, or if the sun plank is not mounted on the main doorway, those living in the house will be vulnerable to harm. They may also experience the threat of death.

24. One house should not be torn down and a second one built with the materials from the first. It will lead to disaster, especially for the household head.

25. If the house is dilapidated, it can be rebuilt. The preceding prescriptions pertain to all castes.

26. If the east and north are lower than the west and south, it can be harmful.<sup>57</sup>

27. No house should be higher in the west than on the other sides. It leads to harm.

28. If you have a house with rooms on the north and the south, live in the one built in the north. Otherwise the children will be defective.<sup>58</sup>

29. If the front side of the house is lower than the back side, it leads to bad luck.

30. It is good if the sides of a house are high and the central section lower.

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<sup>57</sup> Changes in pen have been made in the text which are virtually illegible but seem to reverse east with west.

<sup>58</sup> This refers to a prescription elsewhere in the text prohibiting bedrooms in the south.

31. In a house with obstruction from two corners, that is from the southeast and northwest, you will have to marry more than once, and you will have bad luck. If the southern side of the house is too high, you will lose influence. The wife will die, and money will trickle away. No one should live in such a house.

32. Children born on a new moon day are like houses with defects. Both bring bad luck. A house with defects is harmful just like as a wife with thick lips and black hair on the sides of her forehead who kills her husband. A phlegmatic body, a family with no children and a person born destitute are all similar.

33. If there is a water source close to the south of the house, no sons will be born there. If born, they will soon die. There will also be illness and death in the house. If there is too little water or too much, it is inauspicious.

34. If the banyan tree, atti fig, bo tree or tamarind tree are close to a house, it is bad luck. If the cassia tree or the margosa are close to the house, it is good. If there are trees with milky sap to the east of the house, thorny trees to the south, plantain trees to the west, and fruit trees to the north, it is very good.

35. If the cotton tree, arka tree, the palmyra, jambu, *nelli*, emblic myrobalan (*phyllanthus emblica*), the poison nut tree (*Strychnos nux vomica*), tamarind, castor, banyan or bo trees are nearby it can be harmful and drive the Goddess of Fortune from the house.

36. Beginning in the east, there are eight kinds of yonis, namely the eagle, cat, lion, dog, snake, rat, elephant and rabbit. The animal of any yoni is opposed to the one that is removed by four places. Thus, the eagle is opposed to the snake, and so forth. The eagle, the lion, the bull and the elephant bring good luck. So build a house in the north, south, east or west. The minor directions are no good.

37. Building the house in the minor directions is acceptable only for non-caste Hindus such as candalas.<sup>59</sup>

38. The proper directions and the ones chosen for the house should not be opposed to each other.

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<sup>59</sup> Untouchables who make their living by hunting.

39. Do not build houses near paths on which corpses are carried or near burial grounds.
40. It is good to place temple gardens and sites where there is plenty of water. The south is the best direction and then the west, north, center and east.
41. Two houses (or rooms of one house) facing each other should not have their entrances on axis.
42. Those living in houses that are too high will suffer and lose their money.
43. If a house is renovated to build another storey on top, the husband and the wife will come to harm.
44. If the house is too high on the south and the east, the householders may go from riches to rags.
45. A site where four roads meet is no good for building a house. If there is a wall to the south of the house, it is bad luck. If the southwestern side is concealed, there is no problem.
46. If there is a resthouse or an inn on the south side of the house that faces the east, or if there is a big water pond on the west, or an inn or a boarding house on the north, it is good luck for the house.
47. If there are fruit trees to the east of the house, trees with milky sap to the south and watery trees to the west, you will be safe from your enemies.
48. Trees with milky sap will make you poor. Fruit trees will lead to misery. Keep these trees away from the house.
49. The following trees can be planted around the house: the coconut, the plantain, the arecanut, the lime, the grape, the lemon, the jasmine, pomegranate, Arabian jasmine, the margosa, *cassia fistula*, Jasmine spp. (*nyctanthes tristis*), mango, Mandarin orange and dew flower (*guettarda speciosa*).

50. If an existing house is demolished on the east side, the occupants will perish. If it is demolished on the southeast, arguments will break out. If on the south, they will live in fear of death. If on the southwest, it will cause happiness all around. If on the west, money will run out. If on the northwest, they will perish. And if on the northeast, the wife of the house will die.

51. If there is an anthill on the east of the house, it can bring riches. If it is on the southeast, it can cause illness. If it is on the south, it can lead to misery. If on the southwest, it can bring prosperity. If on the west, you will be blessed with many children. If on the northwest, enemies will abound. If it is on the north everything will be fine, and if it is on the northeast, it can cause illness and death.

52. The *pancakam* are the five inauspicious periods of time.<sup>60</sup> There are certain ones for the installation of a priest and other important events<sup>61</sup> and also one for housewarming which is referred to as the *akkini pancakam* or the Agni period.

53. There are also fifteen inauspicious hours called Abhijit that are inauspicious and have bad effects.

54. You can minimize the negative effects of the Agni period for housewarming by making offerings of sandalwood paste.

### *Sanctifying the Site*

55. The place in the bright half of the lunar month for the housewarming ceremony is the twelfth.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Obtained when the sum of the numbers of lunar day, hour, lunar asterism and lagna are divided by nine and yield remainders of 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8.

<sup>61</sup> Enumerated in the text, but omitted here.

<sup>62</sup> Places for other activities of importance are given in the text .

### *The Portents of the Openings to the House*

56. Houses with buildings facing the west and the south are called 'lotus-like' and can lead to prosperity. Those facing the west and the north are called 'golden' and will be threatened by thieves and illness. Those to the north and east are called 'flower destroying' and will be threatened by robbery and wickedness. Houses to the south and west with entrances on the east are called 'lineage destroying'. The result will be fear. Houses with buildings on the east, south and north that have entrances on the west, will lead to ruin. If a house has buildings in all four directions and entrances right round, it is good. If there are buildings on the north, east and west of the house, and entrances in these directions, it is also good.

### *Unlucky Portents*

57. Proximity to a temple and the following additional locations: near a Durga temple entrance, in a place where the shadow of a temple falls, near a canal or a river, opposite a street—these locations are not at all suitable for a house. The house should be at least 100 feet away from a river, 50 feet away from a village tank and twenty feet away from a well.

58. Two houses built together on the same site are not good. No house should be built attached to an existing one. It can bring bad luck. If you want to build on an existing site, the structures on it should be razed and the nine kinds of grain sown on the land. After the seeds sprout, cows should be brought in to graze and live on the ground for three days. After that a puja for the nine planets should be performed. Only then will it be safe to build on the site. Once a house is built, it should never be separated into two units. It will bring bad luck.

59. You should not see the following when you enter a house: the joints of the beams or the corner joints of the central courtyard. The sight of both is unlucky. The occupants will die one after another. There should be no obstructing wall opposite the house entrance on the roadside. It can be very unlucky for the occupants.

60. All inside doorsteps should be the same size as the main ones to the house. This will bring good luck in every way. If they are different, the occupants will be unlucky.
61. All beams of the house should be joined at the north and west. They should not be joined east-south.
62. If two sets of wood have to be fitted together, the two thick sides of the wood should not be joined, nor should the two thin sides.
63. The doors in the house should not have double planks. The doors should not be without bars. The bolts and locks should be fixed near the middle of the door in the area called the Visnu part. If fitted elsewhere, it will bring bad luck.
64. The beams should be no higher than the household head can reach.
65. The northwest side and the southeast side of the house should not be built higher than the other sides.
66. The doorsteps should be properly aligned with each other. We have already dealt with doorsteps in Chapter 4.
67. The eagle, the tortoise, the iguana, the snake, the goat, the owl, the dog, the non-caste Hindu called candala, women in their menses, pigs and donkeys should never enter the house. There should be no bee hives on the outer walls, nor should the walls be so flimsy as to catch fire. If any of this happens, organize a puja to restore peace to the site.
68. If stones once burnt are used in building a wall, there will always be an echo which could be the sign of an evil influence. Black granite should not be used to hide the burnt stone.

69. No housebuilding should be undertaken when Durga appears as a yogini in the sky<sup>63</sup> or under the influence of the Goddess of the Earth or Venus.<sup>64</sup>

70. Other consequences and remedies are discussed in Chapter 11.<sup>65</sup>

## CHAPTER 10

### *The Kerpam Formula*

1. Measure the length and breadth of the house with a 34 inch measuring rod, multiply them to get the area and divide the product by 8. The remainder is the *kerpam*.

#### *How to Interpret the Remainders*

- Remainder 1 (Garuda, the vehicle of Visnu) is suitable for all four castes
- Remainder 2 (pigeon) leads to poverty
- Remainder 3 (lion) leads to good luck.
- Remainder 4 (dog) leads to poverty
- Remainder 5 (bull) to success in every way
- Remainder 6 (crow) leads to mixed results
- Remainder 7 (elephant) leads to good results
- Remainder 8 (vulture), poverty will be unabated by the passage of time

#### *Applying the Second Rule, the Rule of Gain*

2. Take the area multiply it by 8 and divide by twelve. This is how to interpret the remainders: 1 (good luck), 2 (wealth), 3 (fame), 4 (good luck), 5 and 6 (neutral), 7 (neutral), 8 (happiness), 9 and 10 (neutral), 11 (owner becomes rich and generous), 12 (good luck).

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<sup>63</sup> On each day of the cycle of the moon, the goddess Durga appears in a particular direction and makes it inauspicious.

<sup>64</sup> The text here is unclear and also partially obliterated.

<sup>65</sup> There is no Chapter 11.

*Applying the Third Rule, the Rule of Loss*

3. Take the area multiply it by 9 and divide by 10. This is how to interpret the remainders: 1 loss of wealth), 2 (fire), 3 (good luck), 4 (good for children), 5 (all efforts will be wasted), 6 (good health), 7 (poverty), 8 (wealth), 9 (children will suffer), and 10 (very good luck).

*Applying the Fourth Rule, the Rule of the Yoni*

4. Take the area and divide it by 3 and multiply it by 8. The remainder is called the yoni. This is how to interpret the remainders: remainder 1 (eagle) will lead to wealth and success. Remainder 2 (cat) will lead to misery and discord. Remainder 3 (lion) will lead to success in all things. Remainder 4 (dog) will lead to illness, discord and enmity. Remainder 5 (snake) leads to riches. Remainder 6 (rat) leads to perpetual illness and sorrow. Remainder 7 (elephant) leads to prosperity and remainder 8 (rabbit) leads to poverty, illness and misery.

*Applying the Fifth Rule, the Rule of the Lunar Asterisms*

5. Take the area, multiply it by 8 and divide by 27. This is how to interpret the remainders:

| <u>Remainder</u> | <u>Asterism</u> | <u>Consequence</u> |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1                | Asvini          | success            |
| 2                | Bharani         | death              |
| 3                | Krittika        | fear of fire       |
| 4                | Rohini          | success            |
| 5                | Mrigasiras      | good luck          |
| 6                | Ardhra          | good luck          |
| 7                | Punarvasu       | all good fortune   |
| 8                | Pushya          | luck with children |
| 9                | Aslesha         | death of wife      |
| 10               | Magha           | neutral            |
| 11               | Purvaphalguni   | neutral            |
| 12               | Uttaraphalguni  | wealth             |
| 13               | Hasta           | luck with children |
| 14               | Chitra          | illness            |
| 15               | Svati           | good luck          |

| <u>Remainder</u> | <u>Asterism</u> | <u>Consequence</u>      |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 16               | Vishaka         | loss                    |
| 17               | Anuradha        | good luck               |
| 18               | Jyestha         | disturbance             |
| 19               | Mula            | illness                 |
| 20               | Purvashadha     | ruin of house           |
| 22               | Uttarashadha    | good luck               |
| 23               | Dhanistha       | house goes to outsiders |
| 24               | Satabhishak     | wealth                  |
| 25               | Purvabhadra     | ruin of house           |
| 26               | Uttarabhadra    | all good luck           |
| 27               | Revati          | illness                 |

*Applying the Sixth Rule, the Rule of the Lunar Days*

6. Take the area, multiply it by 4 and divide it by 30. This is how to interpret the remainders: 1 (neutral), 2 (peace and profit), 3 (success), 4 (neutral), 5 (good luck with children), 6 (neutral), 7 (good luck and riches), 8 (good luck), 9 (house will go to ruin), 10 (good luck), 11 (decline), 12 (food and clothing in plenty), 13 (householders will become educated), 14 (house will go to ruin) and 15 (good luck in all things).

*Applying the Seventh Rule, the Rule of the Days of the Week*

7. Multiply the area by 9, and divide it by 7. This is how to interpret the remainders (indexed to the weekdays beginning with Sunday): 1 (discord), 2 (success), 3 (loss), 4 (success), 5 (many children and riches), 6 (success) and 7 (theft and trouble).

*Applying the Eighth Rule, the Rule of the Houses of the Zodiac*

8. Multiply the area by 8 and divide by 7. The remainder is the house of the Zodiac. This is how to interpret the remainder: 1 (Aries) leads to illness and 2 (Taurus) to fame. 3 (Gemini) is neutral, and 4 (Cancer) leads to success and long life. 5 (Leo) leads to riches, and 6 (Virgo) leads to wisdom and long life. 7 (Libra) brings health, wealth and happiness, and 8 (Scorpio) leads to benefits of all kinds. 9 (Sagittarius) is lucky and 10 (Capricorn) will bring you children. 11 (Aquarius) is neutral and 12 (Pisces) brings success.

*Applying the Ninth Rule, the Rule of Age*

9. Multiply the area of the house by 27 and divide it by 100. The result is the age. If the remainder is below 45, abandon the project. If the remainder is greater, it will bring you good luck.

*Applying the Tenth rule, the Rule of Caste*

10. Multiply the area by 9 and divide it by 4. The remainder is caste. This is how to interpret the remainders: 1 (Brahmin) success, 2 (warrior) success, 3 (Vaisya) riches and 4 (Sudra) neutral.

*Applying the Eleventh Rule, the Rule of the Angle or Junction*

11. Multiply the area by 4 and divide by 9. The remainder is the angle or junction. This is how to interpret the remainders: 1 (great, probably an epithet of the sun) leads to misfortune. 2 (moon) is associated with wealth, 3 (Sakti, perhaps also Mars) brings health, wealth, and happiness. 4 (Mercury) brings wisdom and friendship. 5 (Jupiter) and 6 (Venus) are both associated with good luck. 7 (Saturn) brings on poverty, and 8 (Rahu, the ascending node) is neutral. A remainder of 9 (Ketu, the descending node), means the family will flourish.

*The Effect of the Yoga or Astrological Conjunction*

12. There are six, named auspicious or inauspicious conjunctions (of the days of the week with the lunar asterisms). The *sittayogam* and the *amirta yogam* are good, and the *marana* (death) *yogam* leads to disaster.

*The Effect of Conjunctions Pertaining to the Astrological Class (Gana)*

13. If the house falls under the group of nine asterisms that belong to the god (deva) class and the human class, it brings very good luck. If it conjoins asterisms from the god class and the demon class, enmity and discord are the results. A conjunction of the demon and human classes leads to death.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> The asterisms are divided into three groups (called *ganans*). This rule seems to pertain to matching the *gana* of the owner to that of the house, although this is not stated explicitly.

### *The Effects of the 'Eyes'*

14. One eye is neutral, two eyes are most beneficial, and blindness leads to bad luck.<sup>67</sup>

### *The Effects of the Sutra*

15. Multiply the area of the house by 7 and divide it by 5. The result is the sutra or line. This is how to interpret the remainders: 1 (good), 2 (neutral), 3 (beneficial), 4 (neutral) and 5 (harmful).

### *The Effects of the Five Inauspicious Periods of Time (Pancakam)*

16. Remainders of 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8 are inauspicious and 3, 5, 7, and 9 bring good luck.<sup>68</sup>

### *The Presiding Deity*

17. Divide the area by 8. The remainders yield the presiding deities who are as follows: 1 (Indra), 2 (Agni), 3 (Yama), 4 (Nirutti), 5 (Varuna), 6 (Vayu), 7 (Kubera) and 8 (Isana/Siva). Remainders of 1, 3, and 5 are for Brahmins and warriors; 7 and 5 are for the Vaisyas and the Sudras. [Note: The auspicious and inauspicious consequences of given yonis are here reprised with alterations as follows: 1 (flag) will lead to beneficence, 2 (smoke) to death, 3 (lion) to poison, 4 (dog) to illness, 5 (bull) to influence of demons, 6 (monkey?) to illness, 7 (elephant) to good luck and 8 (crow) to poison.]

Anyone following the prescriptions given herein and performing the rites as described, will live a full life. Best wishes, best wishes, best wishes.

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<sup>67</sup>The considerations refer to classes of asterisms. Weekdays are also sometimes referred to as sighted or not, Tuesdays and Saturdays being considered 'blind'.

<sup>68</sup>See Chapter 9, verse 52.