

CARRYING GOD: MERELY A MOUNT OR INDEPENDENT DEITY?

(published in the *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, v.21, no.1, 2012)

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The majority of references to Garuḍa in secondary literature know him simply as “the mount of Viṣṇu.” The association between the God and his mount is so close that an otherwise unidentifiable image might reliably be deemed Viṣṇu, or a temple Vaiṣṇava, merely by the presence of his avian form. Such an association is not unlike other Hindu mounts or ubiquitous attributes and their deities: the bull for Śiva, the peacock for Skanda, the lion or tiger for Durgā, the lotus for Lakṣmī, and so forth. In these examples, the mount or attributable object does not tend to be worshipped in its own right and has no history of independent veneration (*pūjā*). But the case of Garuḍa is far more complex.

According to Suresh Chandra's *Encyclopaedia of Hindu Gods and Goddesses* (2001), “Garuḍa is not separately worshipped widely as an independent god; he is worshipped together with Vishnu.”¹ Its odd placement suggests that the adverb “widely” was added as an afterthought. One website called “Indian Divinity” copies Chandra's exact entry, but highlights in red that Garuḍa is not worshiped as separate from Viṣṇu.² Granted, Garuḍa is typically treated as merely a mount in contemporary popular Hinduism, but the fact that Chandra needs to assert this suggests that the issue is controversial within the Vaiṣṇava community. At stake is ritual propriety, of course, but also a fundamental spiritual question of identity. Is Garuḍa divine in his own right or does his divinity depend on his devotion to a true divinity? I cannot answer this question definitively, for it is largely a matter of faith. Nevertheless, my research on medieval Hinduism has uncovered a great deal of evidence that requires us to reconsider the complexity of Garuḍa's identity in South Asian religions.

We now have several books devoted to Garuḍa, such as S. Nagar's *Garuḍa: the Celestial Bird* (1992) and P. Chandramohan's *Garuḍa in Medieval Art and Mythology* (2008). These books highlight Garuḍa's presence in Hindu mythology from the *Ṛg Veda* to his epic and puranic

mythology and his place in the iconographic record. Although these books will be of interest to Garuḍa aficionados, particularly Nagar’s more thorough treatment, neither scholar knows one of the most important contexts of Garuḍa’s medieval identity. Before introducing it, I will review some relevant background points.

The *R̥g Veda* passage 1.164.46–52 contains the oft-quoted declaration “God is One; the sages describe it in many ways” (*ekam sad bahudhā viprā vadanti*).³ Less well-known is the prominent position of Garuḍa (*garutmat*) in the surrounding verses. He is praised as the divine bird Suparṇa (*divyaṃ suparṇaṃ vāyasam*) equivalent to the other gods and is prayed to for relief from drought. Other references to Suparṇa in the Vedic *saṃhitās* occur, but Vedic translators have been quite reluctant to identify him with Garuḍa; they tend to give *suparṇa* the mortal title “eagle” or “bird.” The passage just mentioned, however, unambiguously refers to a divine Garuḍa who is on a par with the other gods.

The *Mahābhārata*’s Book of Āstīka (1.13–53, ed. Sukthankar 1927) contains some of the best known lore about Garuḍa’s genealogy and principal acts: his birth, his animosity toward the snakes, freeing his mother from slavery, and stealing the nectar (*amṛta/soma*) from the gods. After taking the nectar, Garuḍa meets with Viṣṇu, who was impressed with the feat and tells him to choose two boons. First, Garuḍa chooses immortality—thus his apotheosis—and second, to always fly above Viṣṇu.⁴ Read closely, this scene reveals a power struggle. Garuḍa was already described as god-like in stature from his birth, terrifying to all the gods with his splendor that surpasses even the sun.⁵ Choosing to remain above Viṣṇu implies his desire to remain free and superior to him. Physical elevation is indeed a mark of primacy in Hindu mythology. Viṣṇu grants the boon whereupon Garuḍa offers one in return. Viṣṇu then cleverly chooses Garuḍa as his mount (*vāhana*), places him on a flagpole, and says, apparently mockingly, “You will be above me.”⁶ The *Mahābhārata*’s narrative captures Garuḍa’s ambiguous status nicely: he is born god-like yet not a god (until granted immortality by Viṣṇu), he is subservient to Viṣṇu but

reluctantly so until coerced with a boon, and he is a “mount” but one that “flies” above his master.

The brief *Gāruḍa Upaniṣad* is a fascinating text that is often cited as an example of Garuḍa’s importance. Nagar says, “There is a full fledged Upanished [sic] which is devoted to Garuḍa...”⁷ At least seven modern scholars have made editions or translations of it,⁸ but only one, Wojtilla (1975), has ventured to assign a date to it: 4th–2nd centuries BC. While such a date is plausible for the original core, the “long recension” that Wojtilla refers to is rather a muddling of the brief and older core with several layers of later accretions. Wojtilla claims to improve upon Weber’s 1885 edition of the “long-recension,” but ends up with many more mistakes than improvements. The old core of the Upaniṣad, as given in Jacob 1916, has nothing to do with Garuḍa, whereas the text that Jacob presents below the line as Nārāyaṇa’s *dīpikā* essentially rewrites the text to bring it up to date with medieval Mantra Śāstra, which is to say, the Gāruḍa Tantras.⁹

The Gāruḍa Tantras, at one time a prolific and influential class of texts, has all but been forgotten in modern scholarship. These medico-religious Tantras (concerned primarily with treating snakebite and other poisons) do not stem from a Vaiṣṇava tradition. They are predominantly Śaiva, although their popularity spread across sectarian and religious boundaries. Traditionally, twenty-eight Gāruḍa Tantra scriptures were said to be revealed by Sadāśiva’s eastern face (Tatpuruṣa).¹⁰ As one of five “streams” of Śaiva scripture, the Gāruḍa Tantras were once a significant branch of revelation. It is difficult to pin down the dates of the Gāruḍa Tantras, but surviving references to them begin in the sixth and seventh centuries AD and the production of new titles was on the decline by the tenth century.¹¹ They were liberally drawn on by the redactors of the *Gāruḍa* and *Agni Purāṇas*,¹² as well as numerous Āyurvedic works and, of course, Śaiva compendia.¹³ Although most of the canonical titles are now lost or remain undiscovered in archives, my research has uncovered several important sources.

The *Trottala* is a Gāruḍa Tantra on the canonical lists that was quoted by Kṣemarāja in the eleventh century¹⁴ and drawn on by Śrīkaṇṭhapaṇḍita’s unpublished *Yogaratnāvalī*.¹⁵

Manuscripts of several texts in the tradition of the *Trottala* survive in Nepalese archives; these, however, seem to be briefer redactions of a once-longer text. One, the *Tvaritāmūlasūtra*, presents itself as an epitome of the Ur-*Trottala* of 125,000 verses taught by Śiva to Garuḍa. Consisting of approximately seven-hundred verses, it treats the origin, visualization, and ritual systems of Tvaritā, a spell-goddess (*vidyā*) generated by Gaurī in a fit of jealous rage. A significant verse for the present article tells us that “In the body of one who repeats this *vidyā*—or rather of one who would utter it only once—the Goddess, God, and Garuḍa exist as a triad.”¹⁶

Another important and early source is the *Kriyākālaguṇottara*.¹⁷ Although it is presented as a scriptural revelation between Śiva and Kārttikeya, it does not figure in the canonical lists. Rather, it is a compilation based on several Gāruḍa Tantras as well as texts from the Bhūta and Bāla Tantra classes. Still, it preserves passages from the Gāruḍa Tantras that are earlier than the available non-scriptural compilations and is therefore a significant source.¹⁸

The most important mantra of the Gāruḍa Tantras is known as the Vipatī¹⁹ mantra or simply “Garuḍa’s five syllables.” The syllables are KṢIPA OM SVĀHĀ, and they correspond to the five great elements in their natural order: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Æther, as well as various other groups of five such as the five senses and the five subtle senses. First, the practitioner consecrates his heart, hand, and body with a visualization of the mantras and element maṇḍalas. The eight *nāgas* are also installed in pairs, but rather than the *nāgas* being directly involved in the treatment, it seems that the purpose of installing them was to make the practitioner resemble Garuḍa more directly, since Garuḍa is visualized as being adorned with these *nāgas*. Next, the practitioner engages in an elaborate visualization and worship of himself as Bhairava, who can then be transformed into Garuḍa for rites of curing snakebite envenomation. The practitioner is possessed by, and therefore completely identifies with Garuḍa, the archenemy of snakes. The order of the syllables can be rearranged to emphasize one element for a specific type of ritual. For example, the syllables of Earth and Fire could be transposed in order to prioritize the Fire

element: OM PAKṢI SVĀHĀ. One can see that the resulting mantra also yields an apt meaning with its middle-Indic vocative *pakṣi* (“O Bird”).

The Vipati mantra was very popular, with mentions or elaborate descriptions in over thirty premodern Indic texts: Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, and Jaina Tantras, as well as Purāṇas, Upaniṣads, and Vaiṣṇava devotional poetry. It may also be the specific mantra that the *Guru Granth Sahib* has in mind with the words *Garuṣ mukh nahī sarap tarās* (“As with the magic spell of Garuda the eagle upon one's lips, one does not fear the snake.”)²⁰ Although one would expect that a mantra so widely distributed in Indic literature would have been discussed in modern secondary sources, I have turned up almost nothing. The mantra is still prevalent today, to judge from the numerous references to it available online.²¹ It is particularly popular among devotees of the fourteenth-century Śrīvaiṣṇava luminary Vedānta Deśika, because one of his works gives it in code (*Garuḍadaṇḍaka*²²) and another is arranged in five sections to match the five syllables (*Garuḍapañcāśat*²³). Despite claims that Vedānta Deśika himself invented the mantra, it predates him by over five hundred years.

This mantra to Garuda also appears in other Vaiṣṇava scriptures, including some versions of the “long recension” of the *Gāruḍa Upaniṣad*, which is, as I have argued, a blending of the old core with various other accretions inspired by the Gāruḍa Tantras. Also of note is the Pāñcarātra scripture known as the *Kāśyapasamhitā* or the *Garuḍapañcākṣarīkalpa*.²⁴ This sizable text is solely devoted to healing poison and is centrally focused on the Vipati mantra in the early chapters. It states openly in the beginning that it is a recasting of Śaiva scripture²⁵—and here, this means the Gāruḍa Tantras. It does, nevertheless, modify the rituals and mantras to make them particularly Vaiṣṇava. For example, some mantras contain Vaiṣṇava epithets for Garuda that never occur in Śaiva sources: *bhagavadanṅarakṣaṇāya* (he who protects the body of the Lord), *dhvaje pratiṣṭhitāya* (he who is stationed on a flag), and *puruṣottamavāhanāya* (the vehicle of Puruṣottama). The second chapter teaches an elaborate Earth maṇḍala of nine squares with Garuda worshipped in the middle square. Later, the text instructs the reader to add Viṣṇu and

Lakṣmī to the middle square as well, but this comes across as a formality: after all, Garuḍa is the main deity worshipped in the maṇḍala and he is the one perceived as able to bring about the desired healing.

The unedited Śākta *Jayadrathayāmala*²⁶ features many interesting appearances of Garuḍa in its twenty-four thousand verses.²⁷ In several passages, Garuḍa serves as the mount of a goddess, presumably based upon the Vaiṣṇava model: Ekavīrā, a Kālī-form named Khageśvarī, and Meghakālī are all visualized as mounted upon Garuḍa.²⁸ It is no accident that each of these goddesses specializes in curing snakebite, although they also serve other purposes. Ekatarā is another goddess of interest described in the *Jayadrathayāmala*. She is visualized as having three heads, one of which is that of Garuḍa, and she is said to be capable of destroying snakes.²⁹

Jain Tantras also incorporated the tradition of an independent Garuḍa who could be invoked for healing snakebite victims. Indeed, Tvaritā, the goddess of the *Trottala* mentioned above, is invoked in the opening verse of the eleventh-century *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa* (ed. Jhavery 1944) as a form of the Jain goddess Padmāvatī. Malliṣeṇasūri, the compiler of this *kalpa*, appears to have been a specialist in Gāruḍa Tantra, since the entire tenth chapter is devoted to this topic and teaches, among other subjects, the Vipati mantra. He also includes the syllables and customary uses of a mantra called Nīlakaṇṭha in the Gāruḍa Tantras, but without giving it this name. This leads me to believe that sectarian concerns were at play: though he didn't feel comfortable incorporating a form of Śiva, Garuḍa's presence posed no such discomfort.

Garuḍa figures in Buddhist literature from as early as the Pali canon. In the *Bhūridattajātaka*, for instance, Garuḍa (*garuḷo*) teaches a snakebite mantra (*alampāyanamanta*) to a sage.³⁰ The later *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* (c.6–7th century AD) has many references to Garuḍa and the Gāruḍa Tantras. A hallmark of this proto-tantric text is its ritual syncretism: nearly every chapter mentions the division between Buddhist mantras (*lokottara*) and those of Hindus or others (*laukika*), but both are accepted as effective and conducive to enlightenment in the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*. At times the theme is applied specifically to Gāruḍa mantras, such as in

the second chapter of the text where Mañjuśrī says: “Each and every one of the extensive ritual manuals taught in Gāruḍa Tantra were actually taught by me in order to benefit living beings. Garuḍa is a Bodhisattva who came here to convert [people to Buddhism].”³¹ Chapter 40 of the text is devoted to Garuḍa and healing, and one visualization has Mañjuśrī mounted upon Garuḍa to punish deviant serpent deities (*nāgas*).³²

In Nepal and elsewhere in the Himalayas, Garuḍa is ubiquitous as a protective finial over Buddhist, Śaiva, and Śākta temples. Specifically, he appears at the top and center of the semicircular and intricately carved or cast arches (*toraṇa*) over doorways or on temple struts. Scholars may be reluctant to identify these figures as Garuḍa: after all, what would “the mount of Viṣṇu” be doing on a Buddhist shrine? Some insist that the image must represent a form of Kīrtimukha.

In Nepal, Kīrtimukha is also known as Chepu and is regarded as the elder brother of Garuḍa. Elsewhere in Asia, Kīrtimukha is often pictured swallowing his own arms, but in Nepal he tends to be shown devouring two snakes. Also like Garuḍa, he is usually at the top and center of the *toraṇa*, thereby functioning as a protective figure for the deity that resides beneath him or within the temple. Nevertheless, close observation of the iconography reveals key differences: Garuḍa is always shown with a beak and wings, whereas Chepu never has a beak and is only rarely portrayed with wings in what amounts to iconographic hybridization with Garuḍa.³³

Because Garuḍa has an important place in Tibetan and Newar Buddhist art, his presence on temples should come as no surprise. One other artistic context in which Garuḍa frequently appears is in Nepalese, Tibetan, and Mongolian Buddhist paintings, carved manuscript covers, and statuary. Frequently, his portrayal in paintings merely reflects his customary position on architectural finials. For example, he adorns an arch over a Lama of the Karma Kagyu Order in a Thangka painting from eastern Tibet dated to the first half of the seventeenth century.³⁴ The *toraṇa* position is not the only context in which Garuḍa figures in Buddhist art. In one statue from circa 1000 AD, he instead appears in a devotional pose beneath the main figure, which Pal,

Vajracharya, von Hinüber, and Heller identify, with some reservations, as Amoghasiddhi (*Himalayas: An Aesthetic Adventure* [2003]).³⁵ In the same volume, the stone Mahākāla statue from central Tibet (fifteenth century) features Garuḍa in a *torāṇa*-like position.³⁶

The Gāruḍa Tantras teach many protective measures that people in medieval South Asia would have taken involving Garuḍa: a Garuḍa-amulet carved from the tooth of a hyena or bear, for example, is recommended in several texts.³⁷ Doorways are potent symbols of boundaries between controlled domestic space and the dangerous public sphere. The ninth-century Prakrit *Samhitāsāra* of Śaṅkuka, based on the Gāruḍa Tantras, suggests that a Kurukullā *yantra* be placed over doorways to drive out snakes.³⁸ Related to this is the contemporary practice of hanging offerings for malignant spirits over doorways and windows, usually consisting of hot chilis and lime. This is common throughout Nepal and India. Another example of protective doorway charms can be found in the *nāgapāśa* images put up on the summer holiday called Nāg Pañcamī. These images often include pictures of snakes, spiders, scorpions, and centipedes with a protective verse. I mention these examples to support my claim that Garuḍa's protective function over temple doorways is an extension of practices that likely extend back to antiquity.

Traditional thangka art reflects the visualization practices (*sādhana*) of Buddhists from the Himalayan and central Asian regions. Consider the eighteenth-century Mongolian painting of a deity called Vajrapāṇi-Hayagrīva-Garuḍa, which is available online.³⁹ This figure is evidently an amalgamation of these three gods who elsewhere appear separately, with Garuḍa perched atop Vajrapāṇi. However, one can also find images of this deity where the Garuḍa element appears in the main figure being winged. For example, Lokesh Chandra reproduces a woodblock from the Narthang pantheon of a Hayagrīva figure with Garuḍa wings.⁴⁰ While one could object that wings do not necessarily indicate the deity Garuḍa, or that Garuḍa just means a generic eagle, the text below the image specifies that the figure is “Garuḍa-feathered Hayagrīva.” Tibetan tradition did of course envision multiple Garuḍas, but they were understood to be divine and were distinguished from mortal birds by certain iconographical features: the crescent moon and dot,

hands in addition to wings, and special coloration. What's more, Hayagrīva is a deity found across sectarian divides: I am aware of Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, and Buddhist versions. It would be fruitful to systematically explore the iconography of Garuḍa in Buddhist art, but that extends beyond my purpose here. One final comment I would make is that the index to Pal et al.'s *Himalaya: An Aesthetic Adventure* references all of its Buddhist Garuḍa images in the reflexive manner that I have sought to complicate in my article: "Garuda (Mount of Vishnu)."

The last topic I will discuss is the occupational role of the Gāruḍika, the traditional doctor who is possessed by Garuḍa to cure snakebite. Who were these figures? Did they have to be male or from a certain class or caste? What role did they play in society? Were they sedentary or nomadic? What were some features of their practice and what other functions did they fulfill? Although these questions cannot yet be answered definitively, a good deal of evidence is available.

First of all, let us look at who could become a Gāruḍika. Although most references are to male practitioners, the *Camatkāracandrikā* suggests that females were also sometimes involved. In this Vaiṣṇava devotional poem, Rādhā is bitten by a cobra and refuses to be seen by a male practitioner because it would involve being touched by a man other than Kṛṣṇa. Her mother-in-law goes to a female mantra practitioner who refers her to another female who learned snake mantras from her father (*sarpamantrān pituḥ adhyagīṣṭhāḥ*). This lady, named Vidyāvalī, is actually Kṛṣṇa in disguise. Although the story is fictional, it suggests that female practitioners would not have struck the audience as odd, although the expectation is that they depend on the more normative male lineage for knowledge and did not teach the profession independently. A real-life example that backs this up comes from a well-respected Nampūtiri Brahman; when interviewed by Yamashita and Manohar (2007), he reported that he had taught his knowledge of *viṣavaidya* to seven disciples, including his daughter.⁴¹

In terms of social class, both of these examples involved Brahmans. A small argument occurs in the *Camatkāracandrikā* story when Rādhā's mother-in-law requests Vidyāvalī (Kṛṣṇa) to come

with her to attend to Rādhā. Vidyāvalī feigns offense by saying “I am a woman of good family, wife of a Brahman, what am I in your mind, a Jāṅgulikī?” (*kulāṅganā vipravadhūr ahaṃ kiṃ bhavanmate jāṅgulikī bhavāmi?*). Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja translates *jāṅgulikī* as “knowledgeable in the uncivilized art of snake charming,”⁴² but it does not make sense for her to deny her knowledge when she is about to consent to go tend to Rādhā. Rather, the text seems to be making a distinction between Vidyāvalī’s high-class occupation as a Gāruḍikī who remains in her home while patients are brought to her and a lower-class Jāṅgulikī who will travel to the patient. If I am right that Jāṅgulika refers to a lower-class practitioner, this could account for the scarcity of this word in Sanskrit discourse.

Although the Gāruḍa Tantras themselves do not explicitly exclude any class from practicing, we need information on this subject. In the beginning of the aforementioned *Samhitāsāra*, a single *āryā* verse describes the qualities of a potential Gāruḍika. I translate the text along with its anonymous commentary:

Those men of stable minds, raised in the house of a guru, and devoted to the pure path always become fit recipients of success in all rites.<3> *With this [verse] he describes who is entitled [to seek] the attainable rewards that are taught in this text; to explain he says “those of stable minds,” by which he indicates that they have correctly received the descent of power (śaktipāta). Indeed, without the the Supreme Lord’s excellent descent of power, there is not stability of mind, which is the source of all success, nor a lack of negative mental activities such as doubt. With the phrase “raised in the house of a guru” he conveys that they serve the guru, worship Śiva, study the scripture, and have concentration and correct conduct. Likewise, with the phrase “devoted to the pure path” he conveys that [these entitled students should] have correctly carried out the range of ritual duties, such as those of a putraka initiate,⁴³ immediately after getting initiation, since the pure path consists of being intent on the performance of daily and occasional rituals without any desire [for rewards], service to the guru, etc. through being solely intent on propitiating the mantra, and the ritual [duties] of putraka initiates, sādḥaka initiates, etc. Doing [all of] that out of a desire for reward or for controlling others, etc. is the impure path. With the phrase “these kinds of men become fit recipients of success in all rites,” he is saying that (ity uktam) only a man who has the full set of characteristics of one entitled always becomes a recipient of the aforementioned rewards for all the particular rituals taught in this text.⁴⁴*

Clearly, social class or caste is not an explicit requirement—only a stable mind, proper religious training, and devotion to following a pure path.

I do not mean to suggest that sedentary Gāruḍikas were the only students of Gāruḍa Tantra and other systems of treating snakebite. The same texts also mention snake-charming as an activity that the practitioner can perform. I have yet to see a history of snake-charming in India, which would be a wonderful project to take up in light of the many unpublished references to it that I have uncovered in the course of this work. It seems likely that the snake-charming profession requires a nomadic lifestyle, or at a minimum, residing in a large city with a high turnover of pilgrims: a small village would have little means to support a performer and his family. At the same time, the snake-charmer would need to be well-versed in healing snakebites and controlling snakes. It would be fascinating to investigate the knowledge transfers that occurred, and perhaps still occur, between high-class, text-based Gāruḍikas and wandering snake-charmers who handle the snakes themselves everyday.

The “hand of Garuḍa” (*tārḥṣyahasta*) is a ritual deposition of the five syllables of the Gāruḍa mantra on the practitioner’s hand. It is akin to the snake-charmer’s “Hood-shaped hand” (*bhogahasta*). The *Kriyākālaguṇottara*’s final chapter, entitled “Snake-charming” (*nāgagrīḍā*), opens with instructions for using this hand cupped like the hood of a cobra for three purposes: inspiring belief among people, showing the power of mantras, and for entertainment (*lokānāṃ pratyayārthaṃ tu mantrāṇāṃ baladarśanam...kautukārthe*). According to the mantras that follow, the hand is possessed by the *nāgas* Vāsuki and Ananta, among other deities, to tame snakes and cure bite victims. The same chapter includes instructions for mounting the *yantra* of Kurukullā above the door of a house to drive out snakes. Therefore, a picture emerges of an alternative type of practitioner who travels around showing snakes, curing bites, and perhaps selling protective *yantras* door-to-door.

It should be clear by now that Garuḍa was—and continues to be—many things to many traditions: the single epithet “mount of Viṣṇu” is insufficient. It is not at all surprising to find him on Buddhist shrines, considering his long and intricate history in Buddhism. His connection with Śaiva and Śākta Tantric traditions is now firmly established in light of the Gāruḍa Tantras. I do

not wish to downplay his importance in the Vaiṣṇava tradition; it is indeed his oldest sectarian affiliation as far as our sources reveal. Rather, I have focused on other contexts to broaden our understanding of Garuḍa, the immortal archenemy of snakes.

Endnotes

¹ S. Chandra 2001: 101.

² <http://www.webonautics.com/mythology/garuda.html> (accessed 11 Aug 2012).

³ Text of van Nooten and Holland 1994. I translate *sad* as “God” rather than “truth” because that the first half of the verse enumerates various gods ending with Garuḍa.

⁴ *Mahābhārata* 1.29.13cd–14: *sa vavre tava tiṣṭheyam uparīty antarīkṣagaḥ // uvāca cainaṃ bhūyo 'pi nārāyaṇam idaṃ vacaḥ / ajaraś cāmaras ca syām amṛtena vināpy aham //*.

⁵ *Mahābhārata* 1.20.

⁶ *Mahābhārata* 1.29.16: *taṃ vavre vāhanaṃ kṛṣṇo garutmantaṃ mahābalaṃ / dhvajam ca cakre bhagavān "upari sthāsyasī"ti tam //*.

⁷ Nagar 1992: 29.

⁸ Editors: Weber 1885, Jacob 1916, Wojtilla 1975, and Sastri, J.P. 1996. Translators: Deussen 1905, Varenne 1972, Wojtilla 1975, and Sastri, J.P. 1996.

⁹ Nārāyaṇa's *dīpikā* is included in Jacob 1916, but it does not begin until the second page (in the middle of a paragraph that begins with material that should be considered part of a later accretion to the *mūla* rather than part of the *dīpikā*).

¹⁰ For a list of the titles, see Dyczkowski 1988: 34.

¹¹ The earliest references to the Gāruḍa Tantras are in the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* (G. Sastri 1920: 34–35), the commentary of Bhāskara I to the *Āryabhaṭīya* (Ed. Shukla 1976), and *Brahmayāmala* (64.154). Only select chapters of the *Brahmayāmala* have been edited (Hatley 2007), but a rough transcription of the whole text is available in the Muktabodha Digital Library: <http://muktabodha.org>.

¹² Text of *Gāruḍa Purāṇa*: Sresthi 1906; *Agni Purāṇa*: Joshi 2001.

¹³ I substantiate these claims in my as-of-yet unpublished dissertation (2012): 40–46, 84–85.

¹⁴ Kṣemarāja quotes the *Trottala/Trotula* in his commentary to *Netra Tantra* 19.68 and other verses in the same chapter (ed. M.K. Shastri 1926). He also quotes it in his commentary to *Svacchanda Tantra* 7.46 (ed. M.K. Shastri 1926b).

¹⁵ Manuscripts widespread; e.g. one filmed by the NGMPP as reel A210/10. See also the fledgling project to edit and translate it: <http://yogaratanavali.garudam.info>.

¹⁶ *Tvaritāmūlasūtra* 1.92 (see Slouber, forthcoming): *yas tv imām 'bhyāsate vidyām sakṛd uccaraye 'thavā / devī devās ca garuḍas tṛtayaṃ tiṣṭhate tanau //* Several non-standard (*aiśa*) Sanskrit features are present, but the sense is clear.

¹⁷ Partially and provisionally edited in Slouber 2012 (thesis).

¹⁸ I have edited and translated approximately one-third of the text for my doctoral dissertation and I plan to publish the entire text in the coming years.

¹⁹ *Vipati* implies both “Lord of Birds” (*vinām patih yaḥ sa vipatih*) and “disaster/misfortune” (*vipatti*) of which snakebite is a prime example.

²⁰ *Guru Granth Sahib* p.987. English translation of Dr. Sant Singh Khalsa. Easily accessible online: <http://www.srigranth.org> (accessed 11 Aug 2012).

²¹ It is not well known as the *Vipati* mantra in modern times. The most fruitful search term is simply “garuda mantra” within quotes.

²² Ed. Sathakopan 2006.

²³ Ed. Ramanujam 2006.

²⁴ Ed. Sampathkumaramuni 1933.

²⁵ See, for example, verses 1.10–15, where Kāśyapa says that he is going to teach what was previously taught by Śiva: *pravakṣyāmi śrutam pūrvam mahādevena bhāṣitam / śṛṇu sarvaṃ muniśreṣṭha sāvadhānena cetasā // nirvikalpasamādhānacetaso yoginah sadā / antaḥ paśyanti yaj jyotis tan namāmi sadāśivam // purā kailāsaśikhare harārādhanaatparaḥ / dharaḥ sarvātmanā tatra tapyate suciraṃ tapaḥ // prasanna tapasā tasya purastād vṛṣabhadhvajaḥ / praṇatārtiharaḥ śambhur āvir āsīd umāsakhaḥ // taṃ drṣṭvā devadeveṣaṃ dharaḥ suravarārcitam / praṇipatya yathānyāyaṃ pṛṣṭavān idam eva hi // prasannaḥ śubhayā vācā yad avocad umāpatih / tad ahaṃ sampravakṣyāmi śṛṇu gautama suvrata //*

²⁶ Many manuscripts are preserved in Nepal, e.g. NAK manuscripts 5-4650, 5-1975, and 1-1468.

²⁷ I am grateful to Alexis Sanderson for bringing these passages to my attention, and Olga Serbaeva for sharing her unpublished work on the text with me.

²⁸ *Ekavīra* is described in *Jayadrathayāmala* 4.49 (*melāpakālyāvidhiḥ paṭalaḥ*), *Khageśvarī* in 4.38 (*nāgāśanīvidhipaṭalaḥ*), and *Meghakālī* in 4.39 (*meghakālīvidhipaṭalaḥ*).

²⁹ *Ekatarā* is described in *Jayadrathayāmala* 2.17.322–333.

³⁰ Fausbøll 1877, vol. 6: 157–219.

³¹ *yāvantaḥ gāruḍe tantre kathitāḥ kalpavistarāḥ / te mayaivoditāḥ sarve sattvānām hitakāraṇāt // garutmā bodhisattvas tu vaineyārtham* (em. *vainateyārtham* codd.) *iḥāgataḥ /* (Sastri 1920: 34–35) The use of the word *vaineya*, religious conversion, is surely a play on *Vainateya*, a common epithet of *Garuḍa*.

³² Sastri 1920: 454.

³³ In an e-mail exchange on the similarity of *Chepu* and *Garuḍa*, Daniel Martin (Jerusalem University) and I agreed that, in general, if the figure has a beak and wings, it is not *Kīrtimukha*.

³⁴ See the image in Rhie, Thurman, and Taylor 1996: 254.

³⁵ Pal et al. 2003: 132.

³⁶ Ibid. 245.

³⁷ E.g. *Haramekhalā* verse 243 and *Gāruḍa Purāṇa* 191.2.

³⁸ See Slouber 2011: 53–54.

³⁹ <http://www.himalayanart.org/image.cfm/50096.html> (accessed 11 Aug 2012)

⁴⁰ Lokesh Chandra 1986: 259.

⁴¹ Yamashita 2007: 50.

⁴² Verse 3.45. More precisely, I am quoting Śānti Dāsī's English translation from Mahārāja's Hindi translation.

⁴³ *Putraka* refers to the second of four categories of tantric initiates, the others being *samayin*, *sādhaka*, and *ācārya*. Since these categories are not clearly distinguished here, I am uncertain about what *putraka* entails in this text.

⁴⁴ From Slouber 2011: 25–26. The edited Prakrit for this verse is: *je thirañtā gurukulavivaḍḍhiā suddhamaggasaṃlaggā / te hoṃti ṇarā saaaṃ siddhibhāṇā salakammesu // 3 //* And the edited Sanskrit translation: *ye sthiracittā gurukulavivardhitāḥ śuddhamārgasaṃlagnāḥ / te bhavanti narāḥ sadā siddhibhājanam sarvakarmasu // 3 //* The edited text of the commentary: *anena prakaraṇapratipāditasādhyaphalaviṣayādhikāriṇam nirūpayati / tathā hi ye sthiracittā ity anena samyagvrtaśaktipātataṃ pratipādyate / na hi parameśvaraprakṛṣṭaśaktipātam antareṇa sarvasiddhibhājanam sthiracittatvaṃ saṃśayādivikalpaśūnyatvaṃ jāyate / gurukulapravardhitā ity anena gurucaraṇaśivārādhanasāstrāśrayaṇasamādhisamācārasampannatvaṃ pratipādyate / tathā śuddhamārgasaṃlagnā ity anena dīkṣālābhasamanantaraṃ samyaganuṣṭhitaputrakādīkriyākālāpatvaṃ pratipādyate / yato niṣkāmatayā nityanaimittikakriyānuṣṭhānaniṣṭhatvaṃ mantrārādhanaṃātraparatayā gurucaraṇādīkarm ca putrakasādhakādīkarma ca śuddhamārgaḥ / phalābhisandhinā vaśīkaraṇādyarthitayā vānuṣṭhīyamānam etad aśuddho mārgaḥ / evaṃvidhās tu narāḥ sadā sarvakarmasu siddhibhājanam bhavanti ity anena sampūrṇādhikārilakṣaṇayukta eva sarvakālam sarveṣu prakaraṇapratipādyeṣu kriyāviśeṣeṣu yathoktaphalapātraṃ nara bhavati uktam / asampūrṇalakṣaṇo hy adhikārī kadācit kasmimś cit karmaṇi paṭhitasiddhavidyāgadādisādhye phalabhāg bhaved iti //*

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