

Ascetics in Administrative Affairs: Documents on the Central Overseers of Jogīs and Saṃnyāsīs in Nepal¹

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The ascetic as portrayed in Brahmanical literature, as in the ancient law books or in the later and more descriptive Saṃnyāsa-Upaniṣads, is a lone renouncer (often called a *saṃnyāsīn*) who has given up worldly life and the ritual obligations of a householder in order to obtain liberation (*mokṣa*). He wears a loincloth made of cast-off clothing, wanders around to collect his food from (Brahmanical) households, maintains his celibacy and undertakes austerities. These practices are meant to purify him, and they are said to cause *tapas*, lit. “heat”, a special power or energy that—according to cosmological accounts—was effective in the creative activities of the gods.

The lone but powerful *saṃnyāsīn*, as he is found in such literature, is an ideal figure and a stereotype, if admittedly a very influential one. (Brahmanical) householders may refer to it when judging who is a true ascetic (and who is not),² and Hindu ascetics down to the present day at least the more orthodox ones, may project themselves into this image in order to link up to the ancient Vedic tradition. Probably there have been and still are people who come close to this ideal but, as Matthew Clark (2006: 27) in his monograph on the Saṃnyāsīs³ of the Daśanāmī order aptly observes, these individuals have left little, if any, trace of

- 1 My thanks are to Véronique Bouillier for her comments on an earlier draft of this paper and to Philip Pierce for correcting the English.
- 2 Conformity to the traditional image of the *saṃnyāsīn* or some other ideal of an ascetic is, however, not the sole criterion. Supernatural powers (*siddhis*) are often asked for as proof of genuineness (Zotter 2016a: 61).
- 3 In order to distinguish the ideal type *saṃnyāsīn* (Skt.) from real-life ascetics of the Daśanāmī order, I use for the latter “Saṃnyāsī”, the form commonly found in New Indo-Aryan languages (sometimes besides other spellings, such as Sannyāsī).

themselves in history. Thus “[t]he true history of *saṃnyāsa* would be simply an almost empty account” (ibid.).

If one considers ascetics who have left traces, one is presented with a different, much more vibrant and multifaceted picture. One enters a world of diverse (and often competing) lineages and orders, each with its own form of communal life.⁴ One may encounter wealthy monasteries or caste-like communities, in either case sometimes engaged in activities one might not expect.

Ascetics whose whereabouts are ascertainable are not automatically considered to be ‘false’. The lone Brahmanical *saṃnyāsin* described above is not the only role model of ‘true’ ascetic prominence in India and Nepal. Tantric literature, for instance, knows of the ascetic *vīra*, or “hero”, who performs complicated, often transgressive rituals and whose main concern is (as Sanderson 1985 has argued) not purity but power, whereas in the vernacular literature yet another type of true ascetic—which might be labelled “devotional”—prevails. Such “devotional ascetics” may be married (see e.g. Burghart 1983: 643) and may even continue to engage in their caste professions, but in their spiritual practice they are ready (or expected to be ready) to resist all worldly attachment in order to establish a personal relation with their deity.

These few examples should suffice to indicate that Indian asceticism is a complex phenomenon and not easily defined—and all the more complex because ascetical ideas of self-restraint suffuse the ritual world of Hindu householders, too.⁵

The main sources of the present paper are not ancient doctrinal texts or other literary genres but historical documents of a certain region and time, namely the Kingdom of Nepal in the 18th and 19th centuries, the formative period of the new state. The material examined here attests that at least some ascetics did leave traces in history, for all that they were thought of as living close to the ideal of a ‘true’ ascetic, which is, in real life, often a blend of the different types distinguished above,

4 For the notion of community amongst Hindu ascetics, see Zotter 2016b.

5 Building on this observation, Patrick Olivelle (2006) has suggested differentiating three levels or grades of asceticism and distinguishing what he calls “elite asceticism”—an extraordinary, more radical form of self-restraint practised by a small group of religious virtuosi—from a “root” and a “cultural asceticism”, i.e. a more general form of self-control underlying human existence and the culture-specific exercise of it. This terminology is by way of emphasizing that “the ascetic is at the very root of the cultural, and it is this deep association with culture that gives the extraordinary forms of asceticism their extraordinary power over human society and over human imagination” (ibid.: 40); see also Zotter (2016b: 242) with further references.

and—as hinted at—is associated with extraordinary, often supernatural powers. These powers play an important role in the interaction of ascetics and householders, but there are many more facets to their lives. The documents presented here substantiate how bureaucratisation enters the relations between ascetics and their own institutions, on the one hand, and the state, on the other. However, before taking up the documentary material it might be helpful to have a brief look at the different kinds of traces those extraordinary people left behind for posterity, and to describe the regional and temporal contexts of the documents to be discussed.

Traces Left Behind by Ascetics

Accounts of ascetics interacting with rulers have been a popular motif of legends and hagiographies down through the centuries. As religious and moral authorities, ascetics may chastise unjust kings,⁶ but more often than not they entertain good relations with worldly powers. Taking the example of Bhagavantanātha, who will be the focus of much attention in the present paper, Véronique Bouillier speaks of this interaction as a symbiotic collaboration and a “process of mutual legitimation” (Bouillier 1991a: 151). Ascetics, wielders of otherworldly powers, advise kings in matters both spiritual and political, bless royals and their actions (family affairs, diplomacy, war campaigns etc.). In return, they may be granted enormous material wealth in the form of donations or else land for building temples or monasteries centred on the worship of their tutelary deities, the maintenance and ritual costs being covered in part by the produce of the land. Gifts allowed ascetics to establish institutions and thereby to perpetuate the spiritual lineages that constituted the backbone of their orders (see Zotter 2016b: 249f.). Such accumulated wealth and estates also provided other freedoms for the donees or their successors. The money could be reinvested, the land rented out to tenants, etc. There were many ways that ascetics became involved, sometimes deeply, in administrative affairs.

Abbots of rich monasteries, functioning as bankers, lent money not only to tenants (who could not pay their allotted share of the crop) but

6 E.g. Kīnārāma, a prominent Aghorī saint travelling through North India in the 17th and 18th centuries, is said to have encountered several rulers of his time and, depending on their behaviour, either blessed or cursed them; see Zotter 2016a: esp. 62.

also to kings and princes.⁷ It is, for instance, known that in the conflict between Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa Śāha, the king of Gorkha, and the Malla kings of the Kathmandu Valley, the rich Gosāīs⁸ of Bhaktapur, at least temporarily, financed both sides.⁹

By tradition ascetics of the different orders not only wandered from one pilgrimage site to another, they also established and maintained institutions there and collected fees from other pilgrims.¹⁰ In fact, it is not a rare instance that pilgrimage sites turned into arenas of rivalry among different lineages and orders.¹¹

Ascetics also travelled as traders, using their capital and network of *maṭhas* (“monasteries”), especially for long-distance trading. During the 18th and 19th centuries trading ascetics seemingly were a common phenomenon in India¹² and in the Himalaya region.¹³ Illustrative of this is the story of William Moorcroft and Captain William Hearsey who, in order to travel more freely through Nepal and visit Tibet, pretended to be *mahantas* (“abbots”), financing their pilgrimage to Lake Manasarovar by engaging in business on the way.¹⁴

Furthermore, ascetics travelled as dispensers and collectors of information. They not only entertained villagers in the localities they

7 See e.g. Sarkar n.d.: 278–280.

8 For the term, here given as written in the *Nepālī Bṛhat Śabdakośa* (Parājuḷī et al. 1995) but occurring in various spellings, see Clark 2006: 14. In Nepalese documents it is used as a title for members of all major ascetical traditions, i.e. the Nāthas, the Bairāgīs and the Daśanāmīs. The Gosāīs of Bhaktapur mentioned above were Samnyāsīs belonging to the Daśanāmī order.

9 Bouillier 1991a: 161 n. 21; Clark 2006: 258; both based on D.R. Regmi 1975: 117, 119, 201; see also Baral 1964: 77 n. 7.

10 Captain Thomas Hardwicke reports from his visits of the *melā* in Haridvar in 1796 CE, for instance, that the “party of *Fakeers*, who prove themselves most powerful” collected “a very considerable sum” by levying taxes on pilgrims, cattle and “all species of merchandize” (Hardwicke 1801: 315; cf. Clark 2006: 63 and Lochtefeld 2008: 32).

11 For examples, see Clark 2006: 61–65; Lochtefeld 2008: 33; Farquhar 1925; Lorenzen 1978. For further references, see Zotter 2016b: 248 n. 65.

12 See e.g. Clark 2006: 256–262; Cohn 1964; Kolff 1971.

13 Alongside Newar and Muslim traders from Kashmir, the Gosāīs played an important role in the trade passing through the Kathmandu Valley (see e.g. Acharya 1979: 49; M.C. Regmi 1979: 186). According to Markham (1876: 127) the Gosāīs who “had formerly very extensive establishments in Nepal ... were driven out of the kingdom” by Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa Śāha (see also Clarke 1998: 56). For evidence that the king of Gorkha, even after his conquest of the Valley, was on good terms with at least a few Gosāīs, see M.C. Regmi 1978c.

14 Their guns wrapped in saffron cloth, they were accompanied by more than two dozen porters, an Afghan warrior and a pundit who was counting his steps in order to prepare maps of territories till then unknown to the British (see Moorcroft 1816: esp. 423, 515; Pant 1973: esp. 155f.).

passed through with news from distant regions, but also worked as spies¹⁵ and diplomats for the ruler in the capital.¹⁶

Finally, it should be mentioned that some ascetics travelled with weapons, and not just to protect themselves. They formed military units to defend the interests of their order, and in some cases some even hired themselves out as mercenary warriors. One of the most prominent examples in the discussion of the “fighting ascetics” (Farquhar 1925) or “warrior ascetics” (Lorenzen 1978; Pinch 2006) is the so called “Sannyasi-Fakir rebellion” in Bengal.¹⁷ Nepal, too, was drawn into this affair. The bands of ascetics who almost annually intruded into Bengal during the last four decades of the 18th century habitually escaped persecution by entering Nepal’s territory. To stop the raids, the officials of the East India Company repeatedly approached Prthvīnārāyaṇa Śāha who, more mindful of his own interests, attempted to negotiate the line of his southern border on this occasion.¹⁸ Furthermore, there are indications that ascetics were involved in military activities further north, in the Himalaya region.¹⁹

These different spheres of ascetics’ activities often appear inter-linked²⁰ and are all indicative of their complex interaction with worldly powers. For Nepal, pioneering research on this topic has been done by Richard Burghart and Véronique Bouillier, but much of the material on ascetics stored in Nepalese archives has not been studied yet.

Based on at least partly new documentary findings, the present paper will add some details to the still fragmentary picture of the past of ascetics in Nepal by looking at two series of documents, both regarding the appointment of the central overseer of an ascetic tradition by the king. Given the content of the material presented, the focus will be less on the activities of the ascetics themselves. Nonetheless, the traces

15 This motif is already found in Kauṭilya’s *Arthasāstra*; see e.g. Clark 2006: 11; Pinch 2006: 46.

16 A prominent example is “Purungir”, the guide of George Bogle (and other British travellers) on his way to Tibet. He was mediating in the negotiation of a trade treaty between British Bengal and Tibet, and later travelled all the way to Peking to visit the Chinese emperor (for references, see Clarke 1998: 65f.).

17 See e.g. Clark 2006: 251–256; Ghosh 2010 [1930]; Pinch 2006: 82–101.

18 Stiller 1989: 51–52; Naraharinātha 1966: 6–7.

19 For the enlistment of ascetics in a military conflict in Kumaon, see Clark 2006: 248. Another battle involving 500 “naked” (*nāga*) ascetics, supposedly disciples of an ascetic known as Bastī Bairāgī or Gulābarāma, took place in 1763 CE in Sāgā, a village on the perimeter of the Kathmandu Valley (see e.g. Ācārya 1972: 165; Baral 1964: 234f.; Clark 2006: 248). The background to and details of this event, however, remain obscure.

20 Clark, for instance, speaks of a “very thin line ... between tax-collection, dacoity, and money-lending” (2006: 257).

left by them in historical paperwork can enhance our understanding of how ascetics appeared in the affairs of a kingdom in the making, how they interacted with an evolving administrative apparatus, and how arrangements made between the spiritual and worldly powers underwent historical change.

Bhagavantanātha and the *Maṇḍalāi* of Jogīs

Bhagavantanātha, or Śrī Gosāi Bhagavantanātha, as he is called in the documents, is an ascetic of the Nātha tradition who appeared on the scene in 1763 CE in the kingdom of Salyan, West Nepal, whereafter he went on to have a stellar career. Following typical narrative patterns, hagiographical accounts portray him as a *siddha*, a perfected being who impressed the rulers of his time by working miracles.²¹ In the following two decades, he received land grants, not only from Kṛṣṇa Śāha, the king of Salyan, but also from the king of Chilli and the Nawab of Awadh, the latter of whom he supposedly met as the envoy of yet another king,²² namely Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa Śāha, the expansionist ruler of Gorkha.²³

As is known from the correspondence between the *siddha* and the Gorkhālī ruler, Bhagavantanātha became one of the most trusted political advisers of Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa.²⁴ He was active in the negotiations with the small states surrounding Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa's steadily growing realm,²⁵ and an important role was assigned to him in the conquest of Kirtipur,²⁶ a location of pivotal importance for the planned conquest of the Kathmandu Valley.²⁷

21 Bouillier 1991a: 155 and 1991b: 7–8; Unbescheid 1980: 27–28.

22 Bouillier 1991a: 157 n. 19.

23 It was seemingly Śūrapratāpa, Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa's brother, who introduced Bhagavantanātha to the Gorkhālī ruler in 1763 CE—according to Baral (1964: 232) in Nuvakot, but according to Unbescheid (1980: 25 [referring to N.R. Panta et al. 1969: 1070]) in Gorkha. Hagiographic accounts tell a different story (see Bouillier 1991a: 155; 1991b: 9–10).

24 For the letters, see Acharya 1969; Baral 1964: 72–78, 339–343; Bouillier 1991b: 10, 13–15; Naraharinātha 1966: 6–7; N.R. Panta et al. 1969: 1085–1089; D.R. Regmi 1975: 12, 232–233, 236–237, 252, 266.

25 Bouillier 1991a: 155 and 1991b: 10; Unbescheid 1980: 27.

26 Baral 1964: 237; Bouillier 1991a: 155 and 1991b: 10f.; Unbescheid 1980: 25, 26.

27 See e.g. Stiller 1989: 30–34.

Bhagavantānātha was rewarded with increased status. He was presented the royal insignia of the defeated king of Kirtipur,²⁸ which then were displayed in the annual procession of the Nāthas in Salyan during the Dasañ festival (Bouillier 1991a: 158). Furthermore, in 1770 CE, he was appointed by Prthvīnārāyaṇa as central overseer (*maṇḍalāi*) of Jogīs, or Jogīs, as the Nāthas are more often called in the Nepalese sources. According to Véronique Bouillier, this made him the “leader of the Nath community” (ibid.: 156).²⁹

The text of this royal edict was published by Yogī Naraharinātha (1966: 459) and Naya Rāja Panta et al. (1969: 1069).³⁰ A copy is kept in the Guṭhī Saṁsthāna³¹ (see Doc. 1 in the Appendix). Although the record presented here is an attested copy only, it reproduces a formal feature of the original *lālamohara* that is noteworthy, for it bears testimony to the high respect shown towards the ascetic by the king. The name of the addressee (Śrī Bhagavantānātha)³² is not written, as usual, at the beginning of the main text just after the *praśasti* of the king³³ but, as in case of a deity or a member of the royal family, in the blank space above.³⁴

The document offers the *maṇḍalāi* of the Jogīs “throughout our realm” and authorises the appointee to receive one *ānā* as yearly customary fee (*dastura*) from each household of a number of ethnic and professional groups (*jātas*)—namely the Mājhis, Kumālas, Danuvāras, Darāis (text: *daroi*), Thārūs, Paharis, Kusaharis, Thāmīs, Hāyūs, Sunuvāras, Cepsāns (text: *cevēṅga*), Julāhās, Kusles, and Nevārakumālas.³⁵ Furthermore, the

28 His banner (*niśāna*), sceptre (*āsā gurjā*), fly-whisk (*caurī paṅkha*), and drum (*naḡāḍā*) along with slaves and even a daughter of the king were presented to him (Bouillier 1991b: 12; Unbescheid 1980: 25). It is also reported that Bhagavantānātha received the enormous sum of 125,000 rupees and became the *rājaguru* of Prthvīnārāyaṇa (for references, see ibid.).

29 See also Bouillier 1991b: 12, 15. Similarly, N.R. Panta et al. (1969: 1069) write concerning the document in question: *yasamā bhagavantānāthalāi prthvīnārāyaṇa śāhakā adhīnakā sārā pradeśakā jogīharūkā nāike banāidieko kurā pareko cha*.

30 For an English translation based on Naraharinātha’s edition, see Bouillier 1991b: 11f.; for a German summary, see Unbescheid 1980: 26.

31 No. 10, po. no. 15 Gu. Bam., microfilmed by the NGMPP as K 469/9.

32 In the letters where his full title is used, his name (Śrīmad Bhagavantānātha) is prefixed by five Śrīs, while the king uses only three Śrīs for himself (Naraharinātha 1966: 6).

33 See e.g. the royal orders addressing officials (Docs. 3 and 4 in the Appendix) and the documents regarding the appointment of Raṁjīta Giri (Docs. 5–8).

34 Bouillier (1991b: 15) errs in this detail. Cf. the *lālamohara* by King Pratāpa-siṁha (Doc. 2 in the Appendix).

35 These groups are of rather low caste status, and most of them, according to the classification of the *Mulukī Ain* of 1854 (70 years later), “enslavable

king orders them to feed [the Jogīs] mornings and evenings³⁶ and assigns to Bhagavantānātha both the judiciary fines (*daṇḍakuṇḍa*) paid by Jogīs for illicit sexual behaviour (text: *khatchūko*)³⁷ and their escheated property (*moro aputālī*), that is, the property of Jogīs who die heirless.³⁸

In discussing the *manamahanta*, the central overseer of the Bairāgīs and other Vaiṣṇavas in Nepal, Richard Burghart (1984: 167, 174) argues that the issue of escheated property was in fact one of the two reasons why the office of the central overseer was created. The king, who gave land in the form of *kuśa* (in documents often *kusa*) *birtā* as a religious gift (*dāna*) to ascetics, had to ensure “that defunct *kusa birtā* rights did not lapse to the state” (ibid.: 174).³⁹ According to Burghart, it is only in the Rāṇā period that this attitude changed.⁴⁰

The second issue invoked by Burghart as a reason for the installations of central overseers is related to the administration of justice, as is evident in the above document. As Bouillier stresses, the royal order of Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa not only provides Bhagavantānātha the right to keep the mentioned judiciary revenues⁴¹ but also “gives him judicial author-

alcohol-drinkers” (see Höfer 2004: 115, 117–120). Another common characteristic, at least of the ethnic groups mentioned, is that they retained a customary form of communal landownership known as *kipata* (see M.C. Regmi 1976: 7, 88 and *passim*). In N.R. Panta et al. (1969: 1070) it is commented that—with the exception of some (higher-ranking) groups (mentioned are the Bāhuns, Chetrīs, Guruṅs, Magars, and Tāmāns)—the households of all other subjects had to pay the annual *dastura* to the *maṇḍalāi* (see also the commentary of D.R. Panta [1968: 35] on a later document touching on the same subject [Doc. 2, see below]). For a complaint of the Mājhis in 1838 CE (VS 1894 Māgha) which the administration reacted to by exempting them from unpaid labour services and the “Jogi-mandali levy”, see M.C. Regmi 1978b: 95f. (referring to RRC 34, pp. 516f.).

36 According to Bouillier (1991b: 11) and Unbescheid (1980: 26) this burden was laid upon the aforementioned *jātas*.

37 On the term *khatchūt* or *khatachūta*, see Gaborieau 1977: 253 n. 59. The follow-up documents do not use the genitive marker *-ko* after *khat(a)chūt(a)*. There the corresponding passage could be therefore understood as “[levies collected relating to] *khatchūt*, *daṇḍakuṇḍa* ...” (cf. M.R. Pant 2002: 80, 88). Furthermore, they add other categories of levies (see below). In later records, not edited here, the term *cākacākū* is repeatedly mentioned along with the word under discussion (see e.g. Naraharinātha 1966: 456f.).

38 On escheat in Nepalese law, see Fezas 1986; on the term *moḍ/moro/maryo aputālī*, see ibid.: 171.

39 For the non-reciprocal character of *dāna*, see Bouillier 1998: 228f. and the discussion in Michaels 2004: 68–72.

40 Discussing a letter from King Pṛthvī to the *manamahanta* issued in VS 1943 (1886 CE), Burghart speaks of “a complete *volte face* in government policy” (1984: 174), in that now the *manamahanta* became the “assurance that the Government would not lose any potential source of revenue from the ascetics with whom it had a tenurial relationship” (ibid.; see also Bouillier 1991a: 163f. n. 27).

41 For the administration of justice as a source of income, see Bouillier 1998: 229f. (with reference to Stiller 1976: 179f.).

ity on the Yogis” (Bouillier 1991a: 156). Burghart argues that such a delegation of authority “was not based upon the king’s respect for the spiritual status of Hindu renouncers” (Burghart 1984: 167) but rather follows the general policy of dividing the king’s subjects into different “species” (*jāti*) whose members were expected to behave according to the customary law of their own “species” and deal with breaches of such law according to their customary procedures (*ibid.*). As will be touched upon below, in this respect, too, the situation changed during the Rāṇā rule as the government progressively interfered in the internal affairs of the ascetics. Their judicial autonomy under customary law did not prove open-ended.

With regard to the interaction of ascetics with the state administration, another detail of the *lālamohara* to Bhagavantanātha is of interest. The document mentions two types of officials who “shall arrange for [the money] to be paid” (*tīrādīnu*); that is, they were to collect the mentioned *dastura* and see to it that what belonged to Bhagavantanātha as overseer was given to him.⁴² The first official mentioned is the *dvāre* (text: *dvāryā*, *duvāryā*). According to M.C. Regmi (1971a: 126) the term denotes a local official who was responsible for the collection of revenue and the administration of justice “in the areas which did not command much military importance” (Regmi gives Lamjung, Manang and Salyan as examples), and who “was remunerated by a commission amounting to one-sixth of the total collection” (*ibid.*).⁴³ The second type of official involved in the collection of money for the *maṇḍalāi* is the *umarāu* (text: *ūmarāū*). At that time he would have been the commander of a military post (M.R. Pant 2002: 136) who raised and maintained his own troops (Edwards 1975: 107),⁴⁴ and, as seen in the document, exercised a function similar to that of a *dvāre* in the territory under his control. Thus, depending on the region, different types of officials were involved in collecting the overseer’s share.

There are several follow-up documents which, on the one hand, attest that Bhagavantanātha remained in high repute after his patron Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa died in 1775 CE but, on the other, also indicate changes in the administrative treatment of the *maṇḍalāi*.

42 See N.R. Panta et al. 1969: 1070 and the commentary on a later document relating to the same issue (Doc. 2, below) by D.R. Panta 1968: 35.

43 The term *dvāre* was also used for the gatekeepers at the royal palace (see Edwards 1975: 106; M.C. Regmi 1971a: 226) and the village headmen in the Kathmandu Valley (see M.C. Regmi 1970: 149).

44 Later the word was also used as a general term for senior military commanders (Whelpton 1991: 287).

In 1776 CE (VS 1833) Prthvīnārāyaṇa's son and successor, Pratāpa-siṃha, reconfirmed the appointment of Bhagavantānātha as *maṇḍalāi* of the Jogīs through a *lālamohara* (see Doc. 2 in the Appendix).⁴⁵ Now, besides the *dvāre* and *umarāu*, another state official is mentioned and ordered to collect the *dastura* of one *ānā* from the aforementioned *jātas*;⁴⁶ namely the *amālidāra*, also known as *amāli* or *amālī*, a local functionary whose role “changed considerably over the years 1775–1839” (Stiller 1976: 70 n. 26).⁴⁷ According to the reconfirmation, he (not, as formerly, the *dvāres* and *umarāus*) was to arrange the payment of the *maṇḍalāi* in the way specified.

Another passage of this *lālamohara* contains still other new features. Besides the *khatchit*, *daṇḍakuṇḍa* and *moro aputāli* imposed upon Jogīs, now *mahākhatchit(?)*⁴⁸ and *ṭiko(?)*⁴⁹ are similarly mentioned. Furthermore, the document specifies that tenants of *bitalapa* land⁵⁰ should be also made to pay (the *dastura*), and finally it warns that “whoever obstructs [this arrangement] will be [considered] a rebel (*apsariyā*)”, that is, will be fined.

When Pratāpasīṃha died in 1777 CE in the age of 26 years, after ruling for only 36 months, his two-year-old son Raṇabahādura was installed on the throne. This king, too, issued documents reconfirming the *maṇḍalāi* of Bhagavantānātha. The Guṭhī Saṃsthāna has a copy of one such royal order (*rukka*) issued in 1782 CE (VS 1839), which has been edited and translated in the Appendix (Doc. 3).⁵¹ It addresses “all *umarāus*, *dvāres* [and] *amālidāras* throughout our realm (*muluka*)” and informs them that

45 The original is kept in the National Archives (ms. no. 471) and was microfilmed by the NGMPP as DNA 14/50. An edition and Nepali summary is available in D.R. Panta 1968: 34f.

46 The text enumerates the same groups as the *lālamohara* of 1770 CE but in a slightly different order.

47 According to Vajracharya/Shrestha (1981: 18), the powers of the *umarāus* were early on curtailed in Dolakha by the Kantipur king Jagajjaya Malla. Prthvīnārāyaṇa in turn altered the administrative system by introducing the *amālīs* (as a replacement for the *pramānas*) and making the *dvāres* more active (ibid.: 20).

48 For a discussion of this term, see n. 91.

49 See n. 92.

50 *Bitalapa*, or *bitalaba*, is a land grant made by the state which obliges the beneficiary—the *bitalapyā* or *birtābitalapyā*—to work for the state when called upon to do so (M.R. Pant 2002: 132).

51 No. 9, Po. no. 15 Gu. Bam.; NGMPP K 469/8.

like the Venerable Grandfather (i.e. Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa) and the Venerable Father (i.e. Pratāpasimha), we (i.e. Raṇabahādura), too, have offered the *maṇḍalāi* of Jogīs to the Venerable Bhagavantanātha.

The document contains the same information as the *lālamohara* of Pratāpasimha, but it specifies in addition that payment should be solicited from the *bitalapa* tenants by the *bitalapa* holder (*bitalapya*) himself. Finally, another *rukkā* with an almost identical text⁵² was issued in Phālguna VS 1843 (February/March 1787 CE).⁵³

According to Unbescheid (1980: 28) and Bouillier (1991a: 157; 1991b: 15) Bhagavantanātha took *samādhi* (i.e. passed away) that very same year, and the question arose what would become of the privileges assigned to him. While Unbescheid (1980: 28) considers the available document material too meagre to reconstruct the history of the cult in Dang Deukheri and argues that up to now one can speculate only on the basis of legend, Bouillier uses the documents published by Naraharinātha to sketch the later development of Bhagavantanātha's tradition in the region. She relates how, after some initial struggles, Bhagavantanātha's successors (Bhuvaneśvaranātha, Rūpanātha, Lokanātha etc.) managed to establish prosperous monastic institutions by gathering property, cultivating new land etc. (Bouillier 1991a: 159–163). But the same documents also substantiate that, later on, this process went into reverse and the influence of Bhagavantanātha's lineages declined (ibid.: 163–169).

Of special interest for the present context is a conflict that is addressed in a document issued in 1883 CE (VS 1940), inasmuch as it affected the *maṇḍalāi* and led to a splitting of the office and the related revenues. Khīmanātha from Rānāgāū, a disputatious successor of Bhagavantanātha, was accused of debauchery by Haṃsanātha, the *mahanta* of the Mṛgasthalī monastery near Paśupatinātha temple in Deopatan. In order to settle the dispute between the two *mahantas* the prime minister, Raṇa Udīpa Siṃha, instructed that Khīmanātha and his successors should receive the *daṇḍakuṇḍa*, *moro aputāli* and the fines for illicit sexual relations (text: *cākha cakhui khatachīta*) from the householder (*gharabārī*) Jogīs in the kingdom, while Haṃsanātha,

52 The variants are discussed in notes to the translation of Doc. 3.

53 For the copy available in the Guṭhī Saṃsthāna (no. 11, in Po. no. 15 Gu. Bam.; NGMPP K 469/10), see Doc. 4 in the Appendix.

addressed as Ramatā Pīra, was assigned the corresponding levies from the wandering (*ramatā*) Jogīs (ibid.: 166; Naraharinātha 1966: 456f.).⁵⁴

This instance was only one sign of the decline of Bhagavantanātha's lineage, which paved the way for the Mṛgasthalī monastery to become the "leading power" of the Nātha tradition in Nepal (Bouillier 1991a: 167). At the beginning of the 20th century, Prime Minister Candra Śamśera Jaṅga Bahādura Rāṇā took advantage of an internal struggle over the succession in Śrīgāū to expropriate *guthī* land belonging to the monastery and to appoint a *mahanta* of his choice, one untouched by the conflict (ibid.: 168).⁵⁵ The Rāṇā government thus interfered in the succession of abbots, a matter formerly settled autonomously according to the Jogīs' customary law.

One could, following Bouillier's approach, continue to reconstruct the life-history of Bhagavantanātha and the history of his monasteries and his *maṇḍalāi* by studying further documentary material.⁵⁶ There are still many open questions to be answered (e.g. what happened to the *dastura* after the split of the *maṇḍalāi*?). The present paper will instead compare the documents presented so far with another set of royal orders relating to the appointment of Raṁjīta Giri as central overseer of the Saṁnyāsīs in 1841 CE, just a few years before the rise of the Rāṇās to power.

The *Mahantamaṇḍalāi* of the Saṁnyāsīs

The Nāthas were not the only ascetical tradition with a central overseer appointed by the king. The *manamahanta* of the Bairāgīs and

54 Khīmanātha, who became the *mahanta* of Bhagavantanātha's monastery in Śrīgāū, also quarrelled with Lakṣīmananātha Jogī, the *pūjārī* of the temple in Phalabang. Lakṣīmananātha complained that Khīmanātha had troubled guiltless Kānphaṭā and Kāvāra Jogīs, and furthermore that he had claimed to have the right to issue for Jogīs the *bhātako patiyā*, i.e. the certificate of caste re-admission. Khīmanātha lost the case and was from then on not allowed to exercise the office of *maṇḍalāi* in Phalabang (Bouillier 1991a: 164–166; Naraharinātha 1966: 450f.). Such release from the jurisdiction of a central overseer is also known in the case of *manamahantas* among the Vaiṣṇava sects (see Burghart 1976: 84; 1984: 173).

55 Bouillier (1991a: 168 n. 32) refers to Burghart (1976: 84f.), who tells of a very similar action taken by Candra Śamśera against the *manamahanta* in 1913 CE (VS 1970).

56 E.g. NGMPP K 468 and 469 contain some 40 records (including attested copies of royal edicts, letters, contracts etc.) relating to the affairs of the Siddha Bhagavantanātha Guthī and awaiting further study.

other Vaiṣṇavas has already been mentioned. According to the available documents, this post was held, at least since the early 19th century (but probably even earlier),⁵⁷ by the abbot of Matihani, an influential Rāmānandī monastery in Mahottari District near the Indian border. Burghart (1984) has shown how different holders of this office adjusted their strategies to changes in the tenurial system in order to acquire further estates and how they abused their authority to appoint new *mahantas* to increase their own influence and wealth.⁵⁸ Such activities of the *manamahanta* caused a number of belligerent responses amongst the Rāmānandī ascetics under his jurisdiction. For instance, an alternative circle (*maṇḍalī*) was founded whose members got involved in an armed conflict with the private police forces of the *manamahanta* (ibid.: 173) and then appealed to the prime minister to be placed outside the jurisdiction of the central overseer (ibid.: 171); an attempt which was only temporarily successful (ibid.: 173).

Much less is known about the central overseer of the Saṃnyāsīs, the members of the Śaivite order of the “ten names” (*daśanāmī*). As proof that there was such an office, Burghart (1984: 178 n. 5) and Bouillier (1991a: 156 n. 14) refer to a document published by Naraharinātha (1956/57: 20f.). In contrast to the *lālamoharas* regarding the *maṇḍalāi* of Bhagavantanātha, this (appointment) letter (*patra*) to Jāmādāra Jogāra Bhārti, dated VS 1865, Māgha sudi 8, Monday (January 1809 CE), was not issued by the king but by a *sardāra*,⁵⁹ namely Pūraṇa Śāha. It grants the *maṇḍalāi* of “*sanyasi dasnāma*” for a certain part of the kingdom only, the region west of the Bherī and east of the Mahākālī. The addressee is not shown the same respect as Bhagavantanātha had been; instead he is repeatedly addressed—as any ordinary subject—with the middle grade honorific form *timī*. He is ordered to collect the “*khata pata*” (for *khatacita*?), *daidastura* and *daṇḍakuṇḍa* of the year VS 1866, present this revenue to the royal treasury (*toṣakhānā*) and take the *phārakha*, which means probably the “difference” or surplus compared to the sum stipulated beforehand (see below).

This *patra* is not the first document regarding the overseer of the Saṃnyāsīs, a person, who in other documents is often called

57 Burghart 1976: 83 and 1984: 167 and 170.

58 Burghart reports, for instance, that the *manamahanta* forcibly emptied monasteries and then appointed a new *mahanta* who was subservient to him and rewarded his appointment with an under-the-table payment (1976: 84 and 1984: 173).

59 On this high-ranking civil and military officer, see Edwards 1975: 105.

mahantamaṇḍalāi (or °*maṇḍalī*) rather than *maṇḍalāi*.⁶⁰ I will concentrate here on the case of Raṁjīta Giri (or Girī), a Daśanāmī living in Byāsebhu Ṭola, Kathmandu, who was appointed as *mahantamaṇḍalāi* of the Saṁnyāsīs by King Rājendra in 1841 CE (VS 1898). I will thereby restrict myself to pointing out some fundamental differences to the documents discussed in the last section.

The National Archives in Kathmandu have four documents relating to the *mahantamaṇḍalāi* of Raṁjīta Giri, three royal orders (*rukkā*) and one edict containing the full *praśasti* of the king. One of the *rukkās*⁶¹ informs officials throughout the kingdom east of the Sunakoṣī and west of the Mecī about the appointment, and orders them to collect the pertinent revenue (*rakamakalama*). It warns: “No one shall engage in anything in the way of favouritism, obstructive activity [or] altercation”. Except for some orthographic variants the same order was sent to officials in the “Kathmandu Valley (text: *nepālakhalaṭā*), [i.e.] the city of Kathmandu, the city of Bhaktapur, the city of Patan etc.”⁶² and to officials “[in the region] east of the Trisūlagaṅgā and west of the Mecī”.⁶³ In the case of the last-mentioned document (dated some days earlier than the other documents of the series) a photo of the backside, bearing a signature, is available, testifying that the matter was channelled through (*mārphaṭ*) Kājī Abhimāna Siṁha Rānā.⁶⁴

More information is available in the *lālamohara*, which addresses the appointee himself.⁶⁵ Like Bhagavantanātha, Raṁjīta Giri was granted the right to collect a customary fee (here called *daidastura*) from a number of ethnic groups as well as the escheated property and juridical fines of the members of his order. However, in a number of

60 M.C. Regmi (1971b: 131 with reference to RRC 25: 171), mentions e.g. an “Assignment of Mahanta Mandali Revenues to Mahanta Jayakrishan in Newly-Conquered Hill Areas, Ashadh Sudi 1, 1843”, i.e. 1786 CE. In December 1800 CE (VS [1857], Pauṣa vadi 14) Mahanta Gaṁgāprasāda Gosāi was appointed as *mahantamaṇḍalāi* for the “whole country of ours” (see RRC 19: 25f.), etc.

61 NAK Ms. no. 368; filmed by the NGMPP as DNA 13/59; Doc. 5 in the Appendix.

62 NAK Ms. no. 568; NGMPP DNA 15/31; Doc. 6 in the Appendix.

63 NAK Ms. no. 725; NGMPP DNA 16/75; Doc. 7 in the Appendix.

64 The signee was an influential person at the court of Kathmandu. In a letter to the British governor (dated 1st August 1841, just a couple of days before the present document was issued), the British resident in Nepal, Brian H. Hodgson, refers to him as: “[h]ead of Ranas and in chief charge of the army and of the Causi” (quoted in Stiller 1981: 115). It was probably in his function as head of the government treasury (*kausī*)—an office he took over in January of the same year (ibid.: 75)—that he was authorised to follow through on the present royal order.

65 NAK Ms. no. 570; NGMPP DNA 15/33; Doc. 8 in the Appendix.

details the two cases differ significantly. To start with some general differences: Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa granted the *maṇḍalāi* of the Jogīs explicitly for the “whole country of ours” (*hāmrā bhara mulukako*) which—as N.R. Panta et al. (1969: 1069f.) and Unbescheid (1980: 26) comment—extended from Gorkha to the Dūdhkośī at that time. The reconfirmations by Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa’s successors, who continued the policy of expanding the kingdom, use the same phrase. Thus Bhagavantanātha had *carte blanche* of a sort for the still growing realm.⁶⁶ In the case of Raṃjīta Giri, 35 years after the end of the Anglo-Nepalese War and the resulting massive loss of territory to the East India Company, *rukkās* were sent to officials in certain named regions of the country. Compared to the above-mentioned *maṇḍalāi* of Jogāra Bhārti, which was granted only for a part of the kingdom in West Nepal,⁶⁷ the territory assigned to Raṃjīta Giri was much bigger, but it had defined borders⁶⁸ and was not extendable, unlike in Bhagavantanātha’s case.

Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa’s edict to Bhagavantanātha mentions the *umarāus* and *dvāres*. Pratāpasimha’s reconfirmation adds the *amālidāras*, and finally Raṇabahādura also explicitly involves the *bitalapyās* in the collection of the money. The *rukkās* informing about the *mahantamaṇḍalāi* of Raṃjīta Giri address a much longer list of officials, ranging from the district governor (the *subbā*), different military ranks (*subedāra*, *jamādāra*) and different types of landholders (*birtāvāra*, *bitalapyā*, *chāpachapyālī* and *mohariyā*) to the local revenue officer, the *amālidāra*.⁶⁹ The administrative apparatus involved appears much more complex. There is some hierarchical arrangement in the order of the officers mentioned, but the long list does not reflect an unified administrative machinery. It is rather a symptom of the manifold different local settings in a time marked by “a series of experiments made in the field of revenue administration” (M.C. Regmi 1971a: 173). In

66 The same holds true for the *mahantamaṇḍalāi* of the Saṃnyāsīs granted in 1800 CE (see n. 60).

67 Note also the appointment of the *mahantamaṇḍalāi* for the “newly-conquered territories” mentioned by M.C. Regmi 1971b: 131 (cf. n. 60). On ascetics as “agents of diffusion of the Hindu culture and of the Hindu concept of kingship”, see Bouillier 1991a: 169.

68 Note in particular the *lālamohara* appointing Raṃjīta Giri (Doc. 8) wherein the northern and southern borders are defined as well.

69 According to the *lālamohara* to Giri himself (Doc. 8 in Appendix) other officials, too, are involved in collecting the *daidastura*, e.g. the “*umyrālī*” (for *umarāu*?) or the *dvāre*. In the warning at the end of the document that no one should engage in favouritism, furthermore, *bhārādāras* (lit. “burden-bearer”, a generic term for high-level functionaries) and *jāgiradāras* (a government employee who is remunerated for his services by the assignment of land) are mentioned.

some territories the *subbā* was now responsible for the collection of revenues, in others a military officer or a landholder, and in yet others the *amālidāra*, or still the *umarāu* and *dvāre*.⁷⁰

There are also differences regarding the *dastura* or *daidastura*, the customary fee of —in the case of the Jogīs—one *ānā* per household. The Giri documents do not specify any sum, but there are apparent overlaps as regards the people who had to pay the fee (or fees) for ascetics. The *lālamohara* to Raṃjīta Giri enumerates the same ethnic groups (with the exception that the Sunuvāras are missing) but makes no mention of three professional groups burdened with the levy for the Jogīs, namely the weavers, the Newar potters and the Kusles, a group of householder Jogīs who traditionally supported the Nāthas.⁷¹ By contrast, the *mahantamaṇḍalāi* includes “the Saṃnyāsīs living amongst the 36 *jātas*” (*chatisai jātabhitra basnyā saṃnyāsi*), that is, householder Saṃnyāsīs.⁷²

Like the *maṇḍalāi* of the Jogīs, the *mahantamaṇḍalāi* of the Saṃnyāsīs is assigned the judiciary fines and the escheated property of the members of his ascetic order, but again the two cases differ in details. The *lālamohara* to Giri mentions the *daṇḍakuṇḍa* and the *pañcakhat* (i.e. fines for heinous crimes), but says nothing about the *khatchit*.⁷³ Furthermore, it explicitly rules out houses and fields from the escheated property (*maryo aputāli*) falling to the *mahantamaṇḍalāi*. Thus Burghart’s explanation regarding the original purpose of the office of central overseer (see p. 452) does not hold up here.

The most fundamental difference, however, still needs to be addressed. The *maṇḍalāi* granted to Bhagavantanātha was not only effective in the “whole country”; there was also no temporal limit specified. As seen above, it was in need of reconfirmation after a change to the country’s or Jogīs’ throne-holder (cf. Bouillier 1991a: 158). As in case of the *manamahanta* held for generations by the *mahanta* of Matihani, the early *maṇḍalāi* of Jogīs was seemingly given to a direct disciple after the death of the former holder of the office. It is not known who the successor of Raṃjīta Giri was, but the arrangement made in his case is obviously different. The *lālamohara* to Raṃjīta Giri grants him the *mahantamaṇḍalāi* for a period of one year only, from Vaiśākha vadi 1 to Caitra sudi 15 VS 1898. Furthermore, the privilege

70 Cf. Doc. 8.

71 See Bouillier 1991b: 19 n. 14.

72 On householder Saṃnyāsīs, see e.g. Bouillier 1985.

73 See n. 91.

was based on a contract (*ijārā*); that is, Raṃjīta Giri, like any other contractor (*ijārādāra*), “made a stipulated payment to the government and appropriated any amount that he could raise in addition from the sources ... assigned to him” (M.C. Regmi 1971a: 124). In the present case, 207½ rupees (including an increase of 20 rupees from the year VS 1897 on) had to be presented to the palace (see Doc. 8). According to M.C. Regmi (1975: 62, with reference to RRC 44: 97) in 1830 CE (VS 1887), a decade before the appointment of Giri, the “Jogi-Mandali levy”, too, was based on a one-year *ijārā*.⁷⁴

As M.C. Regmi argued elsewhere (1971a: 124–141, 173–175 and *passim*), the *ijārā* system was the government’s favourite model for the organisation of revenue collection because it ensured a regular income stream, sometimes even coming as payment in advance. But along with this advantage, it also came with a built-in problem of massive proportions. Contractors who bought or won bids on⁷⁵ the right to collect taxes or other revenues for a short-term period usually tried to maximise their profit, and since the government did not have the means to control them, they had more or less a free hand. Complaints about overtaxation and reports that tenants escaped the oppression by leaving the country were frequent and forced the government to make modifications to the system of revenue collection, but these, as Regmi argues, were more stopgap measures than stable arrangements.

There are several indications that also in the case of the revenues for the different overseers of ascetics (whether granted as *ijārā* or not) the collection process did not always follow the rules. From the time of Pratāpasimha on the documents issued in this regard regularly contain warnings not to obstruct the royal order. In the case of the *lālamohara* to Raṃjīta Giri, not less than three sentences address the issue of favouritism (*hemāyeta*). The state reacted to such irregularities. A regulation (*bandobasta*) of 1806 CE (VS 1862) explicitly mentions amongst a number of other levies the revenue (*āmadanī*) of the *mahantamaṇḍalī* and defines the fines for misappropriation.⁷⁶ Examples

74 As in the case of Raṃjīta Giri, the order was promulgated for different parts of the country. According to M.C. Regmi’s abstract the appointee, one “Haranath Joshi”, was authorised to collect one *ānā* from the Mājhi, Kumhala, etc. households and to enjoy the escheated property, fines etc. “collected from them” (1975: 62). This is probably not correct.

75 Regmi 1971a: 135, 138. On the bidding on *ijārās* for gambling licenses, see the contribution by S. Cubelic in this volume.

76 The *bandobasta* specifies in *savāla* 9: “Ascertain how much has been collected, how much has been misappropriated, and how many tenant farmers have been dispossessed. Obtain a confession if misappropriations have occurred or

of how the overseers themselves misused their authority by, for example, troubling guiltless ascetics under their jurisdiction, have been given above.⁷⁷ Finally, it seems that even the government misused the *maṇḍalī* fee, at least temporarily. Usually not only the revenues directly collected for the palace (such as the *rāja-anika*) but also the fees for ascetics are excluded in other tax collection contracts or assignments of emoluments. However, in 1797 CE (VS 1853 Phālguna sudi 1) the government, chronically lacking money, allowed the *subedāra* of a newly recruited company stationed in Musikot to use for the period of three years, among other taxes, the income from the *maṇḍalī* of the Jogīs and Saṃnyāsīs to pay the troops (M.C. Regmi 1989: 105 with reference to RRC 25: 327–328). Further research on the available document material could probably clarify details and might bring other such cases to light.

Conclusion

As illustrated above, ascetics did not necessarily live cut off from the outside world. They left behind not only traces of their religious practice but sometimes became actively involved also in worldly affairs. Indeed, as the example of Bhagavantānātha shows, they could have a great impact on the affairs of state. The king and his government for their part interacted with ascetics not only as individuals. Ascetics were also considered as members of a group that needed to be administered, especially if landowning institutions were involved.

Following a model that existed already in Malla times,⁷⁸ the Śāha kings appointed central overseers for this purpose. The two series of documents presented in this paper are related to different ascetical traditions and different stages in the history of the Nepalese state, but they have a number of features in common. They grant judicial authority and assign revenues to an office that, although originally foreign to

collections have been concealed. Collect and send the misappropriated sums to the palace, and fine the offender triple the amount involved” (tr. by M.C. Regmi 1971b: 131; see also Stiller 1976: 81; for the Nepali text, see D.R. Panta 1971: 240).

77 See e.g. n. 54.

78 Both Burghart (1984: 178 n. 7) and Bouillier (1991a: 156 n. 14) refer to a document published by Gaborieau (1977: 36) which grants a person named Ghāsi Phakīra the position as chief (*sarddārī*) of Sūfī fakirs (*sophī fakīr*); it was issued in 1738 CE (Śāka Saṃvat 1660) by King Jayaprakāśa Malla.

the ascetical traditions, was meant to uphold their customary law. Thus ascetics placed in this position by official decree not only received alms or were granted rights over donated land and the people cultivating it; they could even accumulate tax revenues from subjects of the state—according to some,⁷⁹ the whole population with the exception of some privileged groups in the religious and military service of the kings.

The differences between the two series of documents discussed here demonstrate that the arrangements made between the two parties were subject to historical changes. While Bhagavantānātha was granted a kind of *carte blanche*, Raṃjīta Giri was appointed in his office under a contract (*ijārā*) involving a stipulated payment to the palace and having temporal and local limitations. The responsibilities of the overseer vis-à-vis the administration of the state increased.

As Burghart and Bouillier have shown, further changes took place during the period of Rāṇā rule. The government started to interfere in the internal affairs of ascetics and attempted to increase control. This process was continued and led to the foundation of the Guṭhī Bandobasta, the governmental department in charge of religious and charitable endowments, and later the Guṭhī Saṃsthāna, the institution that nowadays appoints the *mahantas* after announcing the post in the government newspaper (Burghart 1984: 177).

Nonetheless, the available documentary material also reveals continuities between the early Śāha and the Rāṇā periods. In her conclusion, Bouillier writes that it was the Rāṇā administration which

introduced an administrative system whose aim was to suit their financial interests. It was not of their primary concern to legitimate the power of the Sah rulers whom they were bypassing. (Bouillier 1991a: 170)

But while the Rāṇās certainly had a different agenda, and for all that the Śāha kings, whose tutelary deity was Gorakhanātha, accorded the Nātha Jogīs special consideration as powerful transmitters of the god's blessings, it would be going too far to say that using their and other ascetics' *maṇḍalīs* to fill the state treasury was the unique invention of the Rāṇās.

79 See n. 35.

Appendix

In the editions presented below the original spelling is largely retained, with the exception that for the convenience of the reader v/b, ṣ/kh and certain graphical features, such as line fillers, are regularised. For technical reasons, the so-called "eyelash-ra" is transcribed as र̣.

Note: Follow-up or parallel documents addressing officials in other regions often have more or less the same wording (although the orthography may differ). Therefore translations are only provided for Docs. 1, 2, 3, 5, and 8. Meaningful variants in the other documents are discussed in notes to the translations.

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Editorial Symbols

[रा]	editorial addition or correction
⟨रा⟩	scribal addition
{...}	editorial deletion
र̣	uncertain reading

Edition:

«10»

श्री भगवंतनाथ

«रुजु दुरुस्त

ले भीम्लाल»

[«सकल वमोर्जी नकल दुरुस्त छ भनी सहीछाप गर्ने रा-
नागाउं मठका डीठा तीलक बाहादुर चं»]

- 1 स्वस्ति श्रीगिरिराजचक्रचूडामणिनरनारायणेत्या[दिविवि]ध[विरु]-
दाव[लिवि]राजमानमानोन्नतश्रीमन्महाराजा[धि]राजश्रीश्रीश्री-
मत्पृथ्वीनारायणसाहदेवानां सदा समरविजयीनाम् । ---
आगे गोसाँई --- जीके । हाप्रा मुलुकभरिको जोगीहरूको
- 5 मंडलाई चर्हाज्यु । माझी कुमाल दनुवार दरोई थारू पहरि कुस-
हरि थामी हायु सुनुवार चेवांग ज्वलाहा कुसल्या नेवार्या-
कुमाल एती जातका घरही ऐक् एक् १|१ आना दस्तुर दीनु । सा-
ज बीहान खान दिनु । जोगीका खत्छीत्को दंडकुंड मोरोअ-
पुताली महामंडलीको खानु मंडलीले लीनु । दुवार्या ऊमराऊ-
- 10 को खानु द्वार्या ऊमराऊले लीनु । येस हीसाबले द्वारे ऊमराऊले तीरा-
ईदीनु । ईती सम्वत् १८२७ कार्तिक सुदी १५ रोज ७ मुकाम कांतीपू-
र राजधानी । शुभम् । ---

Translation:

Venerable Bhagavantanātha

[...]⁸⁰

Hail! [A decree] of him who is shining with manifold rows of eulogy [such as] “The venerable crest-jewel of the multitude of mountain kings” and Naranārāyaṇa (an epithet of Kṛṣṇa) etc., high in honour, the venerable supreme king of great kings, the thrice venerable great king, Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa Śāha, the divine king always triumphant in war.⁸¹

Āge:⁸² To Gosāī [Venerable Bhagavantanātha]jī:⁸³ We have offered [you] the office of central overseer (*maṇḍalāi*) of the Jogīs throughout our country. Every house of the [following] groups (*jāta*): Mājhīs, Kumāles,⁸⁴ Danuvāras, Darāis (text: *daroi*), Thārūs, Paharis, Kusaharis, Thāmīs, Hāyus, Sunuvāras, Cepaṅs (text: *cevāṅga*), Julāhās, Kusles [and] Nevārakumāles shall give one, [in figures] 1,

80 According to Naraharinātha (1966: 459) the original also contains the invocations *śrīdurgā bhavāni* and *śrīdurgāsahāyaḥ*. The present copy contains several archival notes. The number at the left upper corner corresponds to the running number inside the document bundle (*pokā*) 15 of the Gu[ṭhī] Ba[ndobasta] the record belongs to. A note, written in the blank space above the main text of the document, specifies that the record was “attested as correct” (*ruju durusta*) by a person named Bhīmalāla. The name is hardly readable here but is more clearly written in a number of other documents in the same bundle. The syllable *le* is followed elsewhere by a middle dot (yielding an abbreviation of a name or title?). Another note, at the left margin, is hardly readable, too, but can be reconstructed by the help of other records in *pokā* 15 which bear the same note (see Doc. 3 and 4). It says that the *ḍiṭhā* of Rānāgāū *matha*, Tīlaka Bāhādura Cā, approved that the copy is in accordance with the original. The note probably was accompanied by at least one seal (cf. e.g. NGMPP K 469/1, 3–6 etc.) but the available photo shows only fair traces of it. The *matha* in Rānāgāū is Bhagavantanātha’s first monastic settlement (Bouillier 1991a: 155) which is, in contrast to his second monastery in Śrīgāū, deserted nowadays (ibid.: 157, 158).

81 The *praṣasti* does not yet contain the phrase *bahādūrasamserjanī* (“brave swordsman”), later on standard in the *praṣastis* of the Śāha kings, although Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa had this title bestowed on him in the year of the present document, i.e. 1770 CE (D.R. Regmi 1975: 221–223; Pant/Pierce 1989: 13).

82 Lit. “henceforward;” used in documents to mark the beginning of a text or paragraph.

83 The name of the addressee has been inserted from the space above.

84 Occurring in various spellings, the term is the general denomination for potters (Parājulī et. al. 1995: s.v. *kumāle* and *kumhāla/kumhāle*). In the present context the word may refer more specifically to a certain group of potters living close to Mājhīs, Danuvāras and Darāis (for which, see Bista 1996: 140).

ānā [to you] as a customary fee (*dastura*) [and] offer food [to the Jogīs] mornings and evenings. The fines for illicit sexual relation (*khatchūtiko daṇḍakuṇḍa*)⁸⁵ of the Jogīs [and the] escheated property (i.e. the property of Jogīs who die childless), [which] are to be enjoyed (lit. eaten) by the *mahāmaṇḍalī*, shall be taken by the *maṇḍalīs*.⁸⁶ [What] is to be enjoyed by *dvāres* and *umarāus* shall be taken by *dvāres* and *umarāus*. In this way, have the *dvāres* and *umarāus* arrange [the money] to be paid.

Saturday, the 15th of the bright fortnight of Kārttika of the [Vikrama] era [year] 1827 (1770 CE), residence: Kathmandu, the capital. Auspiciousness.

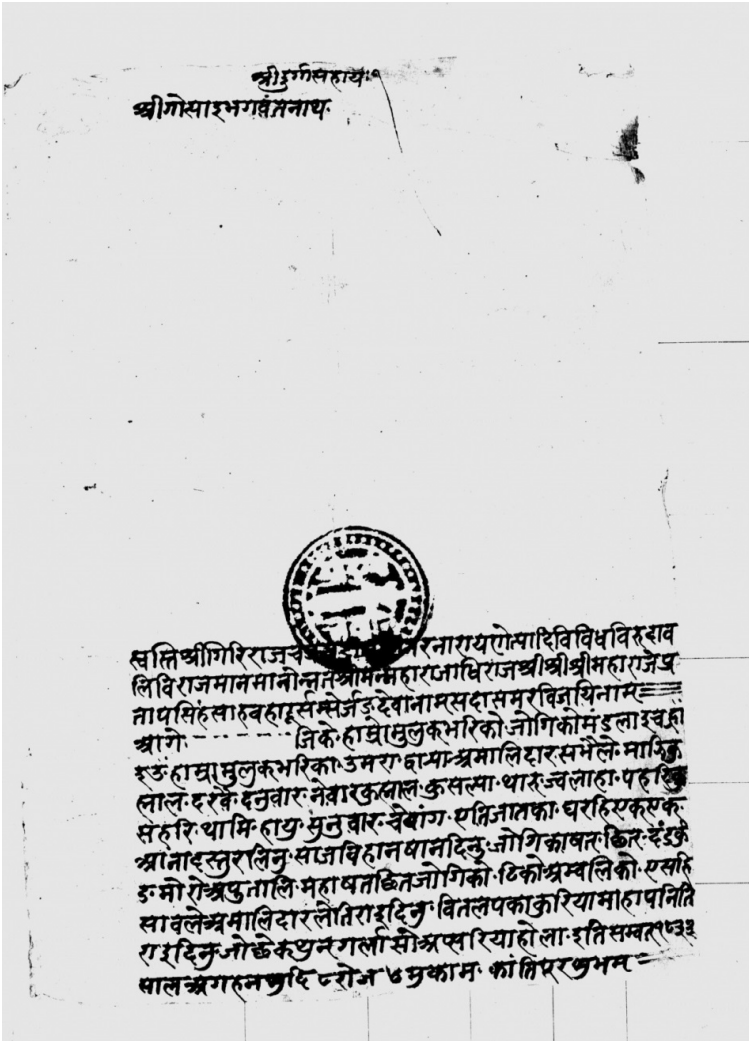
85 See n. 37.

86 The meaning of the terminology used in this passage is not entirely clear. Is the *mahāmaṇḍalī* a synonym of *maṇḍalī* (cf. Doc. 8, where the *mahantamaṇḍalī*, the central overseer of Sannyāsīs, occurs as °*maṇḍalī*), or does it denote, as Unbescheid (1980: 26) interprets, the order or sect, i.e. the community of all Jogīs under the jurisdiction of the *maṇḍalī*; the Jogī “class”—or as Burghart (1984: 167) calls it “species”—(*jāta*) mentioned in other documents (see e.g. Naraharinātha 1966: 456, 457, 465 and *passim*)? Similarly, the word *maṇḍalī* is ambiguous. It can denote a (small) community or “circle,” or else—more probable in the present context—its leader (Parājulī et al. 1995 s.v. *maṇḍalī*), which in the case of a local community of Jogīs would equate to a *mahanta* or *pīra*.

**Document 2: Lālamohara from King Pratāpasimha
Reconfirming Gosāī Bhagavantātha as Central
Overseer of Jogīs**

Date: VS 1833 (1776 CE), Agahana (i.e. Mārgaśirṣa) sudi 8, Wednesday;
National Archives, Kathmandu, ms. no. 471; NGMPP DNA 14/50; for
a digital edition, see: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.30307>.

Facsimile:



Edition:

श्रीदुर्गासहायः \

श्री गोसाइ भगवंतनाथ

[royal seal]

- 1 स्वस्ति श्रीगिरिराजचक्रचुडामणिनरनारायणेत्यादिविधिविरुदाव-
लिविराजमानमानोन्नतश्रीमन्महाराजाधिराजश्रीश्रीमहाराजेप्र-
तापसिंहसाहबहादूर्सम्सेर्जइदेवानाम् सदा समरविजयिनाम् । ---
आगे --- जिके । हाप्रो मुलुकभरिको जोगिको मंडलाइ चर्हाँ-
- 5 इउं । हाप्रो मुलुकभरिका उमरा द्वार्या अमालिदार [सबैले]⁸⁷ माझि कु-
ह्याल दरवै दनुवार नेवारकुह्याल कुसल्या थारु ज्वलाहा पहरि कु-
सहरि थामि हायु सुनुवार चेपांग एति जातका घरहि एक् एक्
आना दस्तुर लिनु । साज बिहान खान दिनु । जोगिका खत्छित् दंडकुं-
ड मोरोअपुतालि महाखतछित जोगिको टिको अम्बलिको एस हि-
- 10 साबले अमालिदारले तिराइदिनु । ब्रितलपका कुरियामाहा पनि ति-
राइदिनु । जो छेक्थुन् गर्ला सो अफसरिया होला । इति सम्वत् १८३३
साल अगहन शुदि ८ रोज ४ मुकाम् कांतिपूर । शुभम् । ---

Translation:

[May] venerable Durgā help.

Venerable Gosāī Bhagavantānātha

[royal seal]

praśasti of the king⁸⁸

Āge: to [Venerable Gosāī Bhagavantānātha]ji⁸⁹

We have offered you the office of central overseer (*maṇḍalāi*) of the
Jogīs throughout our country. [Have] all *umarāus*, *dvāres*, *amālidāras*

87 Text: *sabhaile*.

88 See Doc. 1. The *praśasti* now includes also the phrase “*bahādūrasamserajan*”,
see n. 81.

89 The name of the addressee has been inserted from the space above.

throughout our country collect [for you] one *ānā* from every household of the [following] groups (*jāta*): Mājhiṣ, Kumhāles,⁹⁰ Darāis, Danuvāras, Nevāraikumhāles, Kusles, Thārūs, Julāhās, Paharis, Kusaharis, Thāmīs, Hāyus, Sunuvāras [and] Cepaṅs. [Have them] offer food [to the Jogīs] mornings and evenings. Have the *amālidāras* arrange [the money] to be paid [to you relating to] the Jogīs' illicit sexual relations (*khatachita*), [other] fines, escheated property, the *mahākhatachita* (?)⁹¹ [and] the Jogīs' *ṭiko* (?)⁹² according to the *amāli* (text: *aṃvali*) rates for these.⁹³ [Have] the tenants (*kuriyā*) of *bitalapa* land also made to pay.⁹⁴ Who obstructs [this arrangement] will be [considered] a rebel (*apsariyā*).

Wednesday, the 8th of the bright fortnight of Agahana (i.e. Mārgaśiṣa) of the [Vikrama] era year 1833 (1776 CE), residence: Kathmandu. Auspiciousness.

90 D.R. Panta (1968: 34), in his edition, has *Mājhihikumhāla* (because the document also mentions the *Nevāraikumhālas*, i.e. the Newar potters?) See n. 84.

91 The term *mahākhatachita*, although it occurs (in orthographic variants) in other documents relating to the *maṅḍalāi* of Jogīs (see Doc. 3 and 4), has not been found in other contexts so far. Similar lists of judicial revenues assigned to officeholders may feature the *pañcakhata* instead, the fine for heinous crimes (see e.g. Pant 2002: 77 and 86; for different definitions of *pañcakhata* found in the literature, see *ibid.*: 134f.) The latter term is also used in a *lālamohara* appointing Raṃjīta Giri as *mahantamaṅḍalī* of Saṃnyāsīs (see Doc. 8). Given such parallels, I tend to assume that *pañcakhata* is meant in the present context, too.

92 The word *ṭiko* or *ṭikā*, lit. a mark, was used for a fee (also known as *ṭikābheṭi* or °*bheṭa*) levied during the autumnal Dasaī festival (for a description of the *ṭikā* ceremony in the Rāmānandī monasteries in Janakpur, see Burghart 2016: 210–212). Is the “*jogiko ṭiko*”, which is elsewhere (see Doc. 4) called “*maṅḍaliko ṭiko*”, such a fee paid by the Jogīs to their *maṅḍalāi*?

93 While D.R. Panta simply paraphrases that the document was issued to grant the right to enjoy, among other things, the escheated property of Jogīs who died (*jogīharū mare tinako aputālī khāna pāune ādī adhikāra dīi*, D.R. Panta 1968: 35; cf. N.R. Panta et al. 1969: 1070), I have tried to provide a complete translation of the sentence which, however, given the uncertain meaning of some of the items mentioned, is still tentative.

94 *Bitalaba* (or *bitalapa*) is a category of *birtā*, granted instead of *talaba* (pay, wages), which obliges its beneficiary to work for the state when called upon to do so (M.R. Pant 2002: 132; M.C. Regmi 1978a: 855). It is often exempted from taxes and this might be the reason why it is specially mentioned here. In two later documents confirming Bhagavantanātha's privilege, the respective sentence is rephrased, mentions no *kuriyā*, but specifies that in the *bitalapa* (text: *bitalapamāhā*) the *bitalapyā*, the holder of the *bitalapa*, shall cause the money to be paid (see Doc. 3 and 4).

Edition:

«9»

श्री ज्यूज्यूबाबा श्री बुवाज्यू श्री भगवन्तनाथ

«रुजु दुरुस्त ले [भीमलाल]»

«सकल वमोजीं नकल दुरुस्त छ भनी सहीछाप गर्ने
रानागाऊ मटका डीट्टा तीलक बाहादुर चं»

- 1 स्वस्ति श्रीमन्महाराजा[धि]राजकस्य रुक्का । ---
आगे हाम्रा मुलुकभरका उमरा द्वार्या अमालीदार [सब]⁹⁵ प्रति । {...}⁹⁶
हाम्रा मुलुकभरिमा-
हा जोगीको मंडलाई «---»जीकन --- ले चर्हायाको रहेछ ।
- 5 सोही बमोजीम हामीले पनी चर्हाईउ । तसर्थ माझी कुम्हाल दरवै
दनुवार नेवार्याकुम्हाल कुसल्या थारू जोलाहा पहरि कुसह-
रि थामी हायु सुनुवार चेवाइ एती जातका घरही ऐक एक् आना
दस्तुर दीनु । साँज बीहान खान दीनु । जोगीका खतछीत दंडकुंड मोरो-
अपुताली महाखतछीतको जोगीको टीको अंबलीको एस हीसा-
- 10 बसग अंबलीले तीराइदीनु । बीतलपमाहा पनी बीतलप्याले तिरा-
ईदिनु । जो छेकथुन् गर्ला सो अप्सरीया होला । ईती सम्मत १८३९ साल
ज्येष्ठ वदी ३० रोज १ मुकाम कांतीपुर । शुभम् । ---

Translation:

Venerable Grandfather, Venerable Father

Venerable Bhagavantānātha

[...]⁹⁷

Hail! [This is] an executive order of the supreme king of great kings.

Age: To all *umarāus*, *dvāres* [and] *amālidāras* throughout our realm
(*muluka*)

95 Text: *sabha*.

96 The scribe erroneously repeated the phrase from *hāmṛā to prati*.

97 For the different archival notes, see n. 80.

The office of central overseer (*maṅḍalāi*) of Jogīs was offered⁹⁸ to [Venerable Bhagavantanātha]jī⁹⁹ by [our] [Venerable Grandfather, Venerable Father].¹⁰⁰ Accordingly, we, too, have offered [him the office]. Therefore, every house of the [following] groups (*jāta*): Mājhiś, Kumāles, Darāis (text: *daravai*), Danuvāras, Nevārakumāles, Kusles, Thārūs, Julāhās, Paharis, Kusaharis, Thāmīs, Hāyus, Sunuvāras [and] Cepsāns (text: *cevāñ*) shall give one *ānā* as a customary fee (*dastura*) [and] offer food [to the Jogīs] mornings and evenings. Have the *amālidāras* arrange [the money] to be paid [to you relating to] the Jogīs' illicit sexual relations (*khatachīta*), [other] fines, escheated property, the *mahākhatachīta* (?)¹⁰¹ [and] the Jogīs' *ṭiko* (?)¹⁰² according to the *amāli* (text: *aṃvali*) rates¹⁰³ for these.¹⁰⁴ In the *bitalapa* (*bītalapamāhā*), too, [the tenants]¹⁰⁵ should be made to pay by the *bitalapyā* (i.e. the holder of the *bitalapa*). Who obstructs [this arrangement] will be [considered] a rebel (*apsariyā*).

Sunday, the 30th of the dark fortnight of Jyeṣṭha of the [Vikrama] era year 1839 (1782 CE), residence: Kathmandu. Auspiciousness.

98 The sentence ends with *rahecha*, a second perfect tense of the verb *rahanu* (“to remain”), which implies a sense of realisation that has no exact equivalent in English. To record this peculiarity of the Nepali language one could begin the translation of the sentence with: “We have come to learn that ...” (see Pant 2002: 77 n. 4).

99 The name has been inserted from the right side in the blank space above.

100 The names have been inserted from the left side in the blank space above.

101 As in Doc. 4 the genitive marker *-ko* is used here. For a discussion of this doubtful term, see n. 91.

102 Doc. 4 has *maṅḍalīko ṭiko* instead of *jogīko ṭiko*, see n. 92.

103 As in the follow-up document (Doc. 4) the postposition *-saga* (mod. Nep. *-sāga*) is used after *hisāba* instead of *-le* of the older documents (see Docs. 1 and 2).

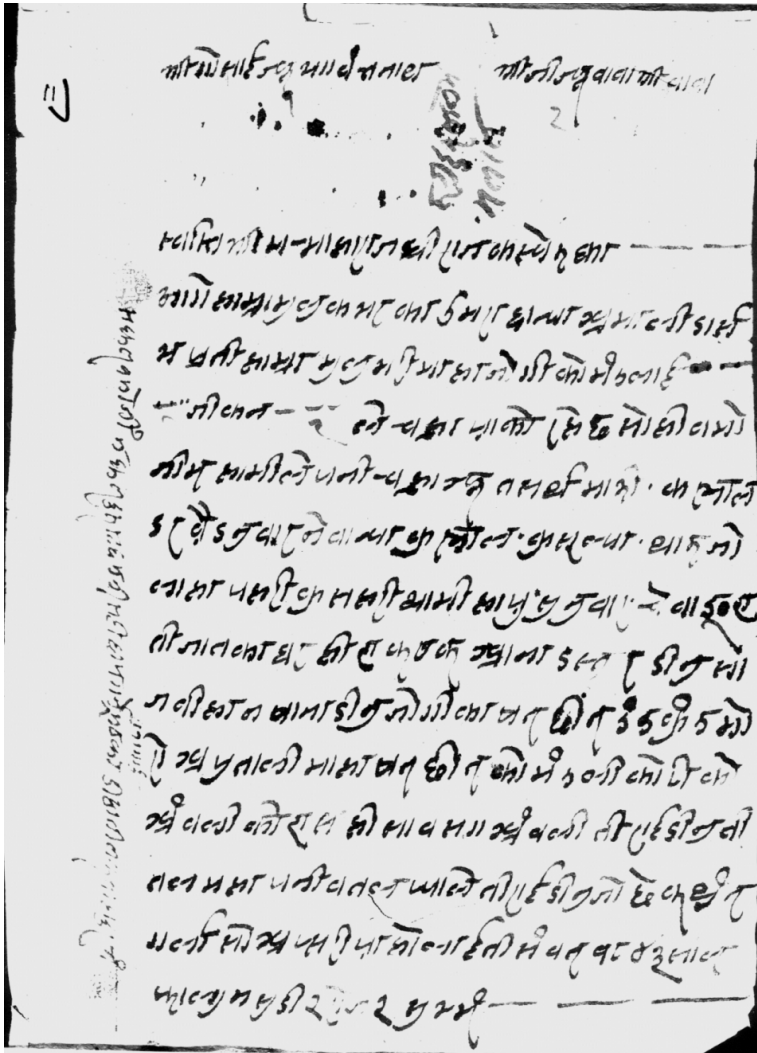
104 The translation of this sentence is tentative (see n. 93).

105 See n. 94.

Document 4: Copy of a Rukkā from King Raṇabahādura Reconfirming Gosāi Bhagavantātha as Central Overseer of Jogīs

Date (of the original): VS 1843 (1787 CE), Phālguna sudi 2, Monday
Guṭhī Saṃsthāna: card no. 11 in Po. no. 15 Gu. Bam.; NGMPP K 469/10;
for a digital edition, see: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/digit.36832>.

Facsimile:



Edition:

《11》

श्री गोसाईज्यू भगवंतनाथ श्री जीज्यूबाबा श्री बाबा
१ २

《रुजु दुरुस्त ले [भी]-
मलाल》

[seal] 《सकल वमोजी नकल दुरुस्त छ भनी सहीछाप गर्ने
रानागाऊ मठका डीठ्ठा तीलक् बाहादुर चं》 [seal]

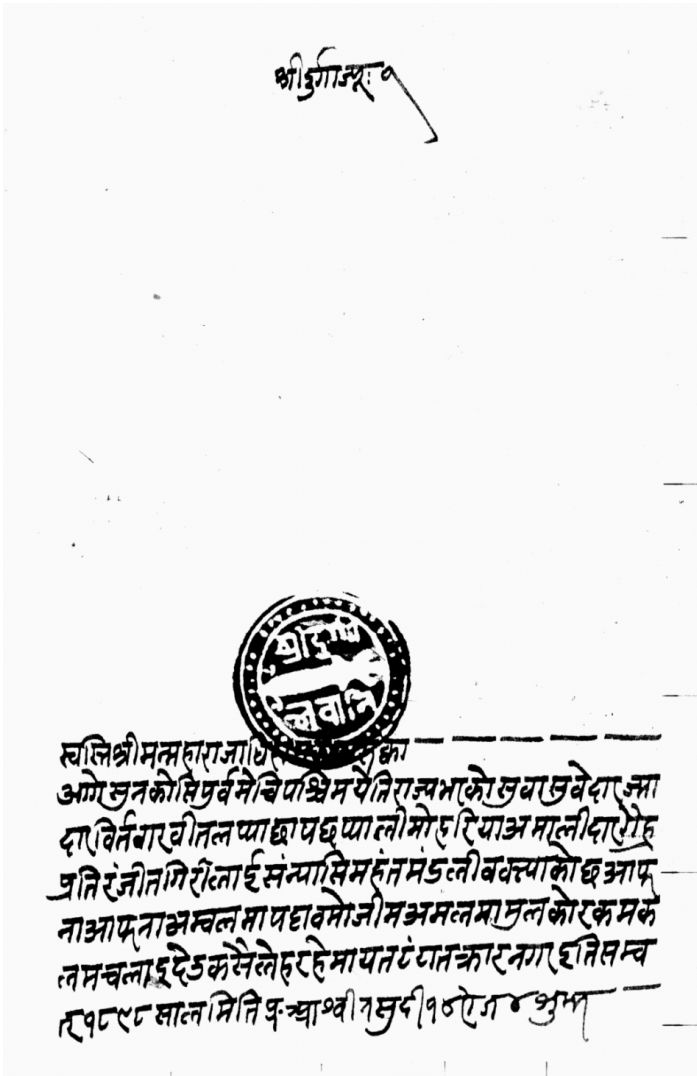
- 1 स्वस्ति श्रीमन्महारा[जाधि]राजक[स्य] रुक्का । ---
आगे हाप्रा मुलुकभरका ऊमरा द्वार्या अमालीदार् [स-
ब]¹⁰⁶ प्रती । हाप्रा मुलु[क]भरिमाहा जोगीको मंडलाई ---
-१- जीकन -२- ले चर्हायाको रहेछ । सोही बमो-
- 5 जीम् हामीले पनी चर्हाय्यू । तसर्थ माझी [कु]म्हाल
दरवै दनुवार नेवार्याकुह्याल कुसल्या थारू जो-
लाहा पहरी कुसहरी थामी हायु सुनुवार चेवाङ् ए-
ती जातका घरही एक एक आना दस्तुर दीनु । सा-
ज बीहान खाना दिनु । जोगीका खत्छीत् दंडकुंड मो-
- 10 रोअपुताली माहाखत्छीत्को मंडलीको टीको
अंबलीको एस हीसाबसग अंबली तीराईदीनु । बी-
तल[प]महा पनी [बि]तलप्याले तीराईदीनु । जो छेक्थुंन्
गर्ला सो अप्सरीया होला । ईती संवत १८४३ साल्
फाल्गुन सुदी २ रोज २ । शुभम् । ---

Because the text is almost identical with Doc. 3 no separate translation is provided here. For the meaningful variants in the present document, see notes to the translation of Doc. 3.

**Document 5: A Rukkā from King Rājendra to Officials
Appointing Ramjīta Giri as Central Overseer of Saṃnyāsīs**

Date: VS 1898 (1841 CE), First Āśvina sudi 14, Wednesday; National Archives, Kathmandu, Ms. no. 368; NGMPP DNA 13/59; for a digital edition, see: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.27187>.

Facsimile:



Edition:

श्रीदुर्गाज्युः\

[royal seal]

- 1 स्वस्ति श्रीमन्महाराजाधि[राजकस्य] [रु]क्का । ---
आगे सुनकोसि पुर्व मेचि पश्चिम येति राज्यभरको सुबा सुबेदार ज्मा-
दार बिर्तवार बीतलप्या छापछप्याली मोहरिया अमालीदार गैरूह
प्रति । रंजीत गिरीलाई संन्यासि महंतमंडली बक्स्याको छ । आफ्-
- 5 ना आफुना अम्बलमा पट्टा बमोजीम अमलमामुलको रकमक-
लम चलाइदेउ । कसैले हर हेमायत टंटा तक्रार नगर । इति सम्ब-
त् १८९८ साल मिति प्र• आश्वीन सुदी १४ रोज ४ शुभम् । ---

Translation:

Venerable Durgājyū

Hail! [This is] a missive of the supreme king of great kings.

Āge: To the *subbās*, *subedāras*, *jamādāras*, *birtāvāras*, *bitalapyās*, *chāpachapyālīs*, *mohariyās*, *amālidāras* etc. throughout the kingdom (*yeti rājyabharako*) east of the Sunakosi and west of the Meci.¹⁰⁷

The [office of] central overseer (text: *mahantamaṇḍalī*) [of] Saṃnyā-sīs¹⁰⁸ is granted to Raṃjīta Giri. Collect [for him] the revenue (*rakamakalama*) of the *amalamāmula*¹⁰⁹ according to the contract (*paṭṭā*) [each] in your own territory. No one shall engage in anything in the way of favouritism, obstructive activity [or] altercation.

Wednesday, the 14th of the bright fortnight of First Āśvina, [Vikrama] era year 1898. Auspiciousness.¹¹⁰

107 Doc. 6 and 7 address the same officials, but in “the Kathmandu Valley, [i.e.] the city of Kathmandu, the city of Bhaktapur, the city of Patan etc.” and in the region “east of the Trisūlagaṅgā and west of the Meci” respectively.

108 The present translation takes into account both parallel documents, which read *saṃnyāsiko* (see Doc. 6 and 7).

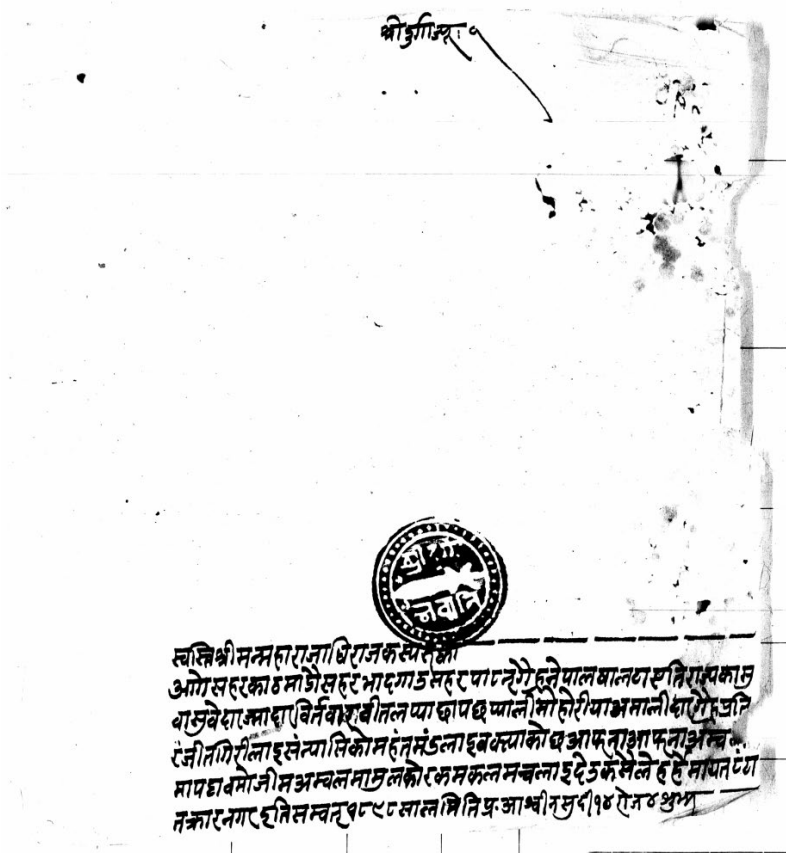
109 The parallel passages in Doc. 6 and 7 have *ambalamāmula* but the variant *amalamāmula* seems to occur elsewhere, too (see M.C. Regmi 1973: 51: “Amal-Mamul [?]”). The first part of the compound (*ambala* or *amala*) denotes a dependent subdivision of a larger territorial unit (Parājuli et al. 1995: s.v. *ambala*). Regmi explains “mamuli” in some contexts as a levy for religious functions (see e.g. M.C. Regmi 1978a: 861, on “Kot-mamuli”). Is *amalamāmula*, then, such a tax collected within a particular administrative area?

110 While Doc. 6 and 8 have been issued on the same date, Doc. 7 is dated a few days earlier. For the signature found on the backside of Doc. 7, see p. 458.

**Document 6: A Rukkā from King Rājendra to Officials
Appointing Raṃjīta Giri as Central Overseer of Saṃnyāsīs**

Date: VS 1898 (1841 CE), First Āśvina sudi 14, Wednesday; National Archives, Kathmandu, Ms. no. 568; NGMPP DNA 15/31; for a digital edition, see: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.32501>.

Facsimile:



Edition:

श्रीदुर्गाज्यः \

[royal seal]

- 1 स्वस्ति श्रीमन्महाराजाधिराजकस्य रुक्मा । ---
आगे सहर काठमाडौं सहर भादगाउ सहर पाटन् गैरूह नेपालखालटा एति राज्यका सु-
बा सुबेदार ज्मादार बिर्तवारा बीतलप्या छापछप्याली मोहोरीया अमालीदार गैरूह प्रति ।
रंजीत गिरीलाइ संन्यासिको महंतमंडलाइ बकस्याको छ । आफ्ना आफ्ना अम्बल-
- 5 मा पट्टा बमोजीम अम्बलमामुलको रकमकलम चलाइदेउ । कसैले हर् हेमायेत टंटा
तक्रार नगर । इति संवत् १८९८ साल मिति प्र• आश्वीन सुदी १४ रोज ४ । शुभम् । ---

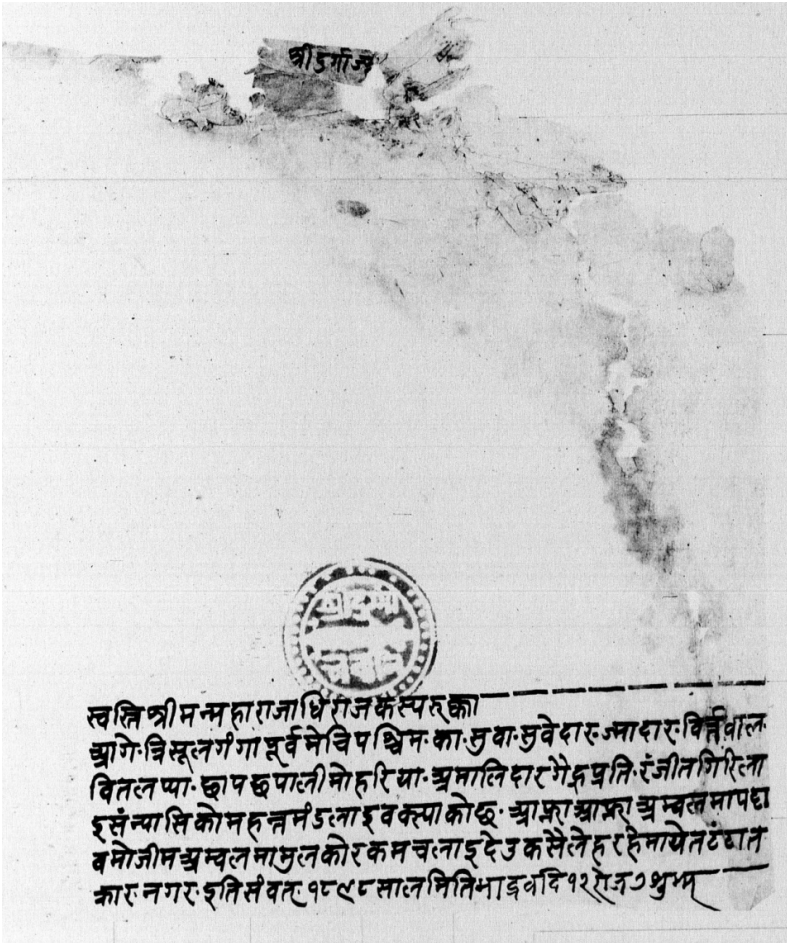
For a translation of the text, see Doc. 5. The peculiarities of the present document are mentioned in notes there.

**Document 7: A Rukkā from King Rājendra to Officials
Appointing Raṃjīta Giri as Central Overseer of Saṃnyāsīs**

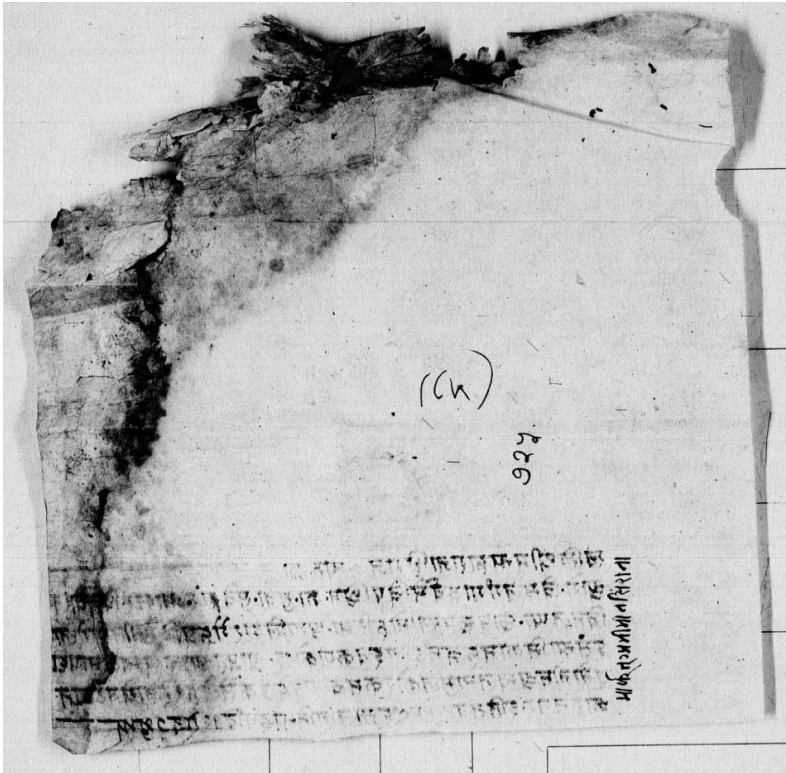
Date: VS 1898 (1841 CE), First Āśvina sudi 14, Wednesday; National Archives, Kathmandu, Ms. no. 725; NGMPP DNA 16/75; for a digital edition, see: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.32506>.

Facsimile:

Recto:



Verso:



Edition:

[Recto]

श्रीदुर्गाज्युः

[royal seal]

- 1 स्वस्ति श्रीमन्महाराजाधिराजकस्य रुक्का --- ।
आगे त्रिसूलगंगा पूर्व मेचि पश्चिमका सुबा सुबेदार जमादार बिर्त्तवाल
बितलप्या छापछपाली मोहरिया अमालिदार गैरह प्रति । रंजीत गिरिला-
इ संन्यासिको महन्तमंडलाइ बक्स्याको छ । आफ्ना आफ्ना अम्बलमा पट्टा
- 5 बमोजीम अम्बलमामुलको रकम चलाइदेउ । कसैले हर हेमायेत टंटा त-
क्रार नगर । इति संवत् १८९८ साल मिति भाद्र वदि १२ रोज ७ शुभम् --- ।

[Verso]

(५७)

७२५

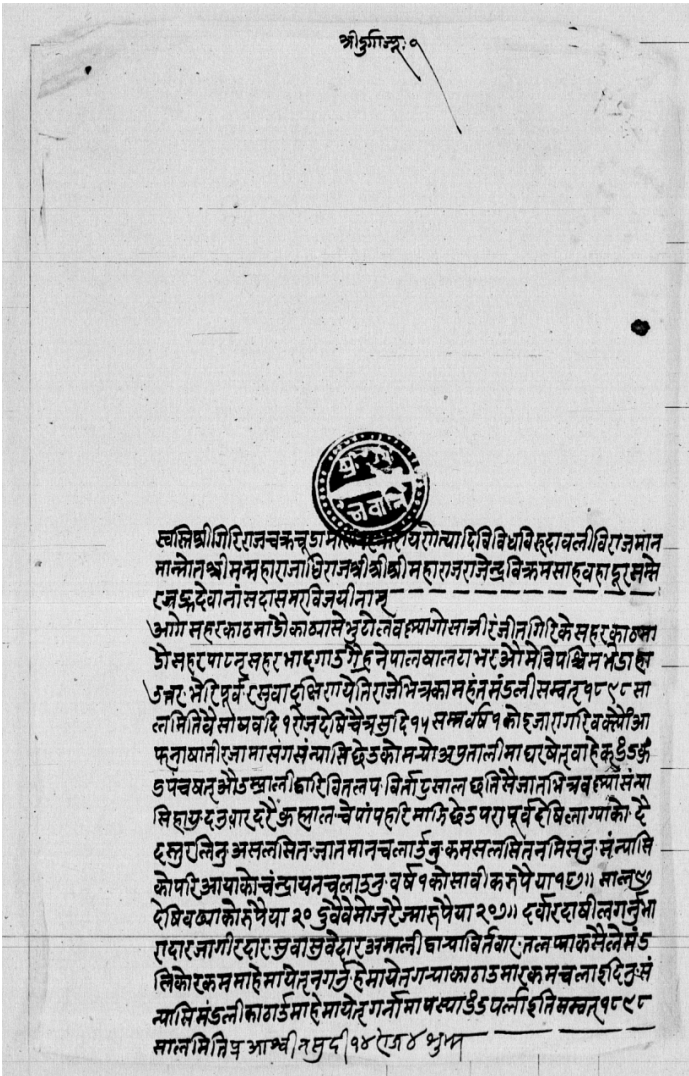
मार्फत् अभीमान सिं राना

For a translation of the text, see Doc. 5. The peculiarities of the present document are mentioned in notes there.

Document 8: A Rukkā from King Rājendra Appointing Ramjīta Giri as Central Overseer of Saṃnyāsīs

Date: VS 1898 (1841 CE), First Āśvina sudi 14, Wednesday; National Archives, Kathmandu, Ms. no. 570; NGMPP DNA 15/33; for a digital edition, see: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.32505>.

Facsimile:



Edition:

श्रीदुर्गाज्युः\

[royal seal]

- 1 स्वस्ति श्रीगिरिराजचक्रचूडामणिनरनारायणेत्यादिविविधविरुदावलीविराजमान-
मात्रोतश्रीमन्महाराजाधिराजश्रीश्रीश्रीमहाराजराजेन्द्रविक्रमसाहबहादूरसम्से-
रजङ्गदेवानां सदा समरविजयीनाम् । ---

- आगे सहर काठमाडौंका व्यासेभुटोल बस्न्या गोसात्री रंजीत गिरिके । सहर काठमा-
5 डौ सहर पाटन् सहर भादगाउ गैरूह नेपालखालटाभर औ मेच्चि पश्चिम भेडाहा
उत्तर भेरि पूर्व रसुवा दक्षिण येति राजे भित्रका महंतमंडली सम्बत् १८९८ सा-
ल मिति वैसाख वदि १ रोजदेखि चैत्र सुदि १५ सम्म वर्ष १को इजारा गरिबकस्यौ । आ-
फना खातीरजामासंग संन्यासिछेउको मर्योअपुतालीमा घर खेत बाहेक् डंडकुं-
ड पंचखत् औ उम्याली द्वारि बितलप बिर्ताटुसाल छतिसै जातभित्र बस्न्या संन्या-
10 सि हायु दनुवार दरै कुह्याल चेपां पहरि माझिछेउ परापूवदिखि लाग्याको दै-
दस्तुर लिनु । असलसित जातमान चलाऊनु । कमसलसित नमिसनु । संन्यासि-
को परिआयाको चन्द्रायन चलाउनु । वर्ष १को साबीकरूपैया १८७। साल ९७
देखि बढ्याको रूपैया २० दुबै बेमोजरै ज्मा रूपैया २०७। दबरि दाखील गर्नु । भा-
रादार जागीरदार सुबा सुबेदार अमाली द्वार्या बिर्तवार तलप्या कसैले मंड-
15 लिको रकममा हेमायेत् नगर्नु । हेमायेत गर्याका ठाउमा रकम चलाइदिनु । सं-
न्यासिमंडलीका ठाऊमा हेमायेत् गर्नामा पस्या डंड पर्ला । इति सम्बत् १८९८
साल मिति प्र आश्वीन सुदी १४ रोज ४ । शुभम् । ---

Translation:

Venerable Durgājyū

praśasti of the king (cf. Doc. 1)

Āge: To the Gosāī Raṃjīta Giri living in Byāsebhu Ṭola of the city of Kathmandu.

We [hereby] execute a one-year contract (*ijārā*) as central overseer (*mahantamaṇḍalī*) [of the Saṃnyāsīs] from the first day of the dark half of Vaiśākha, Saṃvat year 1898 to the 15th of the bright half of Caitra in the whole Kathmandu Valley (*nepālakhalatābhara*), [i.e.] the city of Kathmandu, the city of Patan, the city of Bhaktapur etc., and

in [that part of] the kingdom (*yeti rāje*) west of the Meci, north of the Bheḍāhā, east of the Bheri [and] south of the Rasuvā. Collect (*linu*) with content (*āphnā khāṭirajāmāsaṅga*) the Saṃnyāsīs' escheated property (*maryoaputālī*), except for houses and fields, the judicial fines (*daṇḍakuṇḍa*) [and the penalties for] the five heinous crimes (*pañca-khata*), and [with the help of] the *umyrālīs* (for *umarāu?*), *dvāres*, *bitalapa* (for *bitalapyā?*) and *birtāṭusāla* (?)¹¹¹ from the Saṃnyāsīs living amongst the 36 *jātas* (i.e. householder Saṃnyāsīs), the Hāyūs, Danuvāras, Darāis, Kumāles, Cepāns, Paharis [and] Mājhīs the customary fee (*daidastura*) prevalent from olden times (*parāpūrvadeṣi lāgyāko*). Truly uphold caste and creed (*asalasita jātamāna calāunu*). Do not intermingle with the bad. Uphold the traditional (*pariāyeko candrāyana* (for *cāndrāyaṇa?*)).¹¹² Present to the palace 187 and a half customary (*sābika*) rupees for one year [and] the increase of 20 rupees [valid] since the year [VS 18]97, both in total 207 and a half rupees. No *bhārādāra*, *jāgīradāra*, *subbā*, *subedāra*, *amālī*, *dvāre*, *birtāvāra*, *talapya* (for *bitalapyā?*) [or] anyone [else] shall do [any] favoritism in [collecting] the money of the *maṇḍalī*. If it comes to favoritism in a place of the *maṇḍalī* of Saṃnyāsīs it will be punished.

Wednesday, the 14th of the bright fortnight of the First Āśvina of the [Vikrama] era year 1898 (1841 CE). Auspiciousness.

Abbreviations

NGMPP	<i>Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project</i>
RRC	<i>Regmi Research Collection</i> , 90 Vols.
VS	Vikrama Saṃvat

111 The meaning of the term in the present context is unclear. There was an office in Kathmandu known as *ṭusāla* that was “responsible for settlement of land disputes, registration of (Birta) land transactions, demarcation of land boundaries, irrigation, damage to lands by floods and landslides and other functions. It also handled procurement of copper on behalf of the Mint” (M.C. Regmi 1970: 275; see also M.C. Regmi 1971a: 229 and Edwards 1975: 114). If this office is meant here the document would indicate that its officers have been also involved in revenues affairs, at least in Kathmandu Valley.

112 *Cāndrāyana*, lit. “belonging to the course of the moon”, is a special way of fasting prescribed as expiation (*prāyaścitta*). The term *cāndrāyana* or *sarva cāndrāyana* also denoted a special levy that had to be paid to the *dharmādhikārī*, the supreme religious judge in the court (For references and further details, see n. 3 in the digital edition: <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.32505>).

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