

Listen how the wise one begins construction of a house for Viṣṇu:

vijānatā yathārabhyaṃ grhaṃ vaiṣṇavaṃ śṛṇv evaṃ

Chapters 1-14 of the *Hayasīrṣa Pañcarātra*

by

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Abstract

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This dissertation consists of a translation of the first fourteen chapters of *Hayasirṣa Pañcarātra* and a detailed analysis aiming at its contextualization in historical, cultural, and theological milieus. The *Hayasirṣa Pañcarātra* is a Sanskrit text from approximately the ninth century A.D. primarily dealing with rituals concerning the construction of a temple to the god Viṣṇu. The text is probably from Eastern India, most likely Bengal or Orissa. The *Hayasirṣa Pañcarātra* belongs to the Pāñcarātra tradition, a Viṣṇu centered movement within what we today call Hinduism. The *Hayasirṣa Pañcarātra* has incorporated older texts, most of which are no longer extant, and has also been a source-text for later works, most notably the *Agni Purāṇa* and the *Hari Bhakta Vilāsa*. The text is named after Hayasirṣa, the horse-headed incarnation of Viṣṇu, who represents Viṣṇu's divine character as revealer of *śruti*. This is the first time that the *Hayasirṣa Pañcarātra* has been translated. The text is important for Sanskrit textual history, art history, cultural history, religious history of the subcontinent, but unavailable to even most Sanskrit scholars because of a lack of access to the Sanskrit text. The translated chapters deal with preliminary work including choosing the participants for the undertaking. They list, therefore, prerequisites and qualifications, particularly of the *ācārya*, the specific qualities required of the site, and for digging the foundation. The *Hayasirṣa Pañcarātra* situates the temple at the center of the universe by means of the *vāstupuruṣamaṇḍala*. The *vāstupuruṣamaṇḍala* is, I argue, both a ritual and a practical diagram: it is used ritually to locate the temple at the center of the universe; and it is used practically to plan the layout of the temple. The rituals marking the beginning of temple construction, like ritual plowing, can be traced to Vedic ceremonial practice, including, but not limited to, ritual plowing in the Vedic fire altar. The text focuses on certain moments within the construction because of the ritual function of these moments. The text is primarily a ritual text, possibly written for the *ācārya*. The *Hayasirṣa Pañcarātra* is central to the understanding of temple construction and the rituals around it making the view of these more complete.

For

Mikko – born before the project started, and who learned to run in India.

Elias – born when the translation was on the way.

Noah – born when all that was left was edits.

and Rob – I could not have done it without you.

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