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Aspects of the Evolution and Cultural Integration of Hinduism: The Case of a Purāṇa from Kashmir

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INTRODUCTION

The most vexing problem to face us when we attempt to probe the history of the evolution of Hinduism in ancient India is that of how to appreciate in conjunction both the spatial expanse constituting the Indic world and the historical depth of its temporal axis. Hitherto there have not been many attempts to comprehend in a manner delimited both in time and space the diverse aspects of Hinduism, the development of which has not necessarily been uniform in the different regions of the vast Indian subcontinent. Yet it must be said that a major topic for future research on Indian culture and society will be the examination of the state of Hinduism in different parts of India, especially during the period between early centuries of the Christian era, when Hinduism is thought to have become established, and around the tenth century, by which time a framework such as that seen today had evolved.

In the present paper we wish to consider, with a view to furthering our understanding of this historical development of Hinduism and the diverse patterns of its basic evolution, various aspects of Hinduism in Kashmir. We shall proceed with our inquiry by focussing in particular on the movements of the intellectual elite as represented by the Brahmans who, while upholding on the one hand the orthodox aspect of Hinduism, or the so-called 'great tradition', also effected a form of cultural integration by incorporating into it local indigenous cultural elements as it spread throughout the provinces and bringing about a fusion of the two. Through an analysis of the structure of a religious text compiled by these Brahmans, we also wish to consider the orientation of the Hindu world that they consciously attempted to construct. What follows is no more than a congeries of tentative hypotheses and does not go so far as to present any comprehensive theory. We have nevertheless ventured to present these hypotheses in the belief that they will be able to provide some leads when undertaking similar inquiries in regard to various other parts of India in the future.

THE KASHMIRI PANDITS

The Brahmans residing in Kashmir are recognized as constituting a single integrated group and are known for the fact that this group does not possess any distinct internal divisions. According to Lawrence's account of Kashmiri Hindus in the second half of the nineteenth century, in the 1891 census Hindus accounted for less than seven percents of the population in contrast to the overwhelming number of Muslims, who accounted for more than ninety-three percents. (The percentage of Pandits in the population of present-day Jammu and Kashmir is less than five percents, and many Brahmans are said to have left Kashmir and moved to other areas as a result of the social upheavals in the valley in recent years.) The Hindus belong with few exceptions to the Brahman caste and are known as 'Pandits', while in other parts of India they are generally called 'Kashmiri Pandits'. These Kashmiri Brahmans are divided into three subcastes consisting, namely, of priests (*gor* or *bhasha* Bhatta), astrologers (*gyotishi*), and workers (*karkun*). The priests do not marry outside of their own subcaste, but intermarriage occurs between members of the other two groups. The majority of Pandits belong to the subcaste of workers, and most of them earn their living as civil servants in administrative or clerical positions in government employ¹).

According to their own testimony, these Pandits belong to the north Indian subdivision of Brahmans known as the Sarasvat Brahmans. Outside of Kashmir, these Sarasvat Brahmans appear to be found in the Punjab, Rajasthan and other parts of northwest and western India. Their appellation would seem to suggest that these Brahman groups had their origins in the district of Sarasvatī in Kurukṣetra (present-day Haryana) in Madhyadeśa or the 'middle region', regarded as the home of the Vedic traditions professing since ancient times to represent the roots of orthodoxy in Indian culture, and that in the subsequent course of history they migrated to various parts of India. Be that as it may, one characteristic common to these Brahman groups is the fact that the Vedic traditions that they uphold are those of the old school².

Frequent references to the influx and immigration of Brahman groups to Kashmir from other parts of India appearing in the *Rājataranginī* (Chronicle of Kings), Kalhana's history of Kashmir, and the coexistence of two calendrical systems among contemporary Brahmans would suggest a complex historical background. Yet it is a fact of considerable interest that this complex background does not appear to have cast any shadow over the social structure of Brahmans in present-day Kashmir. If we compare this state of affairs with, for example, the situation in Nepal, which is similarly located geographically on the periphery of the Indian cultural sphere and has a complex historical background, it becomes evident that there exists between these two Hindu worlds a clear-cut contrast in regard to their social composition, for in contrast to the extremely diverse social composition of the Hindus in Nepal, Kashmir evidences an almost unitary social structure³).

The Kashmir Brahmans call themselves 'Pandits' and constitute a single

homogeneous social group. They speak Kashmiri as their everyday language, and until the nineteenth century they used the Śāradā script to copy the Sanskrit texts preserved by them. They are also more or less uniform in regard to their customs, thus indicating that the Brahman groups of differing backgrounds that entered and settled in Kashmir at different times in the course of history were completely assimilated by the Brahman groups that preceded them. The period of Muslim rule (1380–1819), of course, saw the birth of occupational differentiation, with many Brahmans being employed as clerks and government bureaucrats by the Muslim rulers and coming to be distinguished from the other minority group (a distinction that was probably originally born of their varying degrees of close contact with the alien culture of Islam), and intermarriage between the two groups came to be forbidden.

KASHMIR AND HINDU LITERATURE

For quite a long period in ancient times Kashmir was, as is evident from the records of Hsüan-tsang 玄奘 and other Buddhist pilgrims from China, first renowned as a centre of Buddhist learning and then, as is demonstrated by the literary works of Kṣemendra and other natives of Kashmir and also by the eleventh-century Alberuni's *Tahkīk-i Hind* (Enquiry into India), came to be regarded as a centre of traditional Hindu learning on a par with Vārāṇasī.

The first clear reference to the geographical name of Kashmir in Sanskrit literature appears in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, a grammar dating from the second century B.C., but it provides little concrete information. The author or compiler of the *Mānava-dharmaśāstra* (Code of Manu), who apperceived consciously for the first time the shift from the Vedic period to the Hindu period and attempted to reorganize contemporary society on the basis of brahmanical values, does also not appear to have been clearly aware of Kashmir as a region to be included within his purview. The *Mahābhārata*, the great epic thought to provide information on roughly the same period, also contains scattered references to Kashmir, but in each case it is given only a peripheral position, and it is obvious that within the 'Indian cultural sphere' as conceived of by the compiler of this work the land of Kashmir was no more than a border region and was not recognized as occupying a position of any importance.

The conditions necessary for the framework of orthodox Hindu rituals to take root here and for this region to be regarded by the Hindus of both Kashmir and other regions as a centre of traditional Hindu learning would have been fulfilled no earlier than the seventh century A.D., and in the history of Kashmir this coincides with the period during which the Hindu Kārkoṭa dynasty was established and flourished. This may also be considered to tally, for example, with the account of the Chinese Buddhist monk Hsüan-tsang who visited this region in the first half of the seventh century and, in describing the coexistence of Buddhism and heresy

(namely, Hinduism) in Kashmir, noted that Buddhism was gradually declining in the face of the growing influence of the indigenous religion or Hinduism⁴).

We shall now take up for consideration the oldest extant Hindu text of Kashmir and, by examining its structural characteristics and speculating on the process by which it came to be compiled in its final form, point out a number of aspects of the circumstances leading to the establishment of Hinduism in Kashmir. Our immediate aim will be to ascertain on the basis of this operation various aspects of the evolution of Hinduism in a particular region.

The text that we shall be considering is a short work entitled *Nīlamata* and also known as the *Nīlamata-purāna*. Among the genres of traditional Indian literature, it belongs to the category of Purāṇas or "ancient tales". The Purāṇas are divided into those counted among the "great Purāṇas" (*mahāpurāṇa*), which enjoy a relatively widespread distribution throughout India and cover in content too a wide range of topics, and the "secondary Purāṇas" (*upapurāṇa*), which are comparatively limited in regard to both their content and the localities with which they deal. In addition there is also a genre of minor works known as 'māhātmya', which deal primarily with the holy places of a particular region and consist mainly of eulogies of these places and tales relating to their history. The character of our *Nīlamata* is such that, according to this classification, it may be understood to belong to the category of *upapurāṇa* or *māhātmya*. Rocher writes that "The *Nīlamata* is, for all practical purposes, a *māhātmya* of Kashmir⁵".

This text, composed in verse of mainly *śloka* stanzas ($8 \times 4 = 32$ syllables), consists of approximately 1,400 verses and, in view of its subject matter, may be broadly divided into three parts dealing respectively with myth, ritual and holy places. The subject matter is all treated as relating to the valley of Kashmir or as being required to be performed in Kashmir. We shall first give an outline of its content. (The numbers are the verse numbers.)⁶

SYNOPSIS OF THE NĪLAMATA

- 1- 11: Reason for the failure of the Kashmir king to participate in the Bhārata war.
- 12- 26: Eulogy of the land of Kashmir.
- 27- 70: Creation of the valley of Kashmir from a lake (1); migration of the Nāgas.
- 71-187: Creation of the valley of Kashmir from a lake (2); slaying of the demon Jalodbhava and draining of the lake.
- 188- 227: Migration of humans to Kashmir and their settlement for half a year (mediation by the seer Kaśyapa).
- 227- 323: Creation of main rivers in the valley of Kashmir.
- 324- 371: Tale of Nīla-nāga and the brahman Candradeva; start of human settlement throughout the whole year.
- 373- 877: Teachings of Nīla-nāga; annual rites of Kashmir.

878– 953: Enumeration of Kashmir's Nāgas (serpents/holy places).

954–1365: Kashmir's holy places.

- a. Legend of Lake Mahāpadma.
- b. Holy places related to Śiva.
- c. Holy places related to Viṣṇu.
- d. Neighbouring holy places.
- e. Reiteration of the main holy places.

1366–1394: Eulogy of the river Vitastā.

1395–1396: Reason that this work was not incorporated in the *Mahābhārata*.

The work begins with a mythical legend relating how the land of Kashmir, originally a lake, was created. It describes the course of events whereby the Nāgas (serpent-gods) migrated to this region and how the demon living at the bottom of the lake was overcome with the help of the gods, leading to the draining of the lake's waters. Then the story moves on to describe how man came to settle here permanently throughout the whole year.

This myth of the creation of Kashmir does not, however, commence from the very start of the text. A short section corresponding to a prologue to the work as a whole has been added to the beginning of the work. There is a series of verses in praise of the wonders of the land of Kashmir, but the text as a whole begins, following a verse of salutation to the gods, with a seemingly strange dialogue between the sage Vaiśampāyana and King Janamejaya.

Janamejaya speaks as follows: "In the great Bhārata war of our illustrious forebears there gathered kings of great valour from various regions. Explain why the king of Kashmir did not come to this war. Why was he not chosen [as an ally] either by the sons of Pāṇḍu or by the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra [who were pitted against one another in the Bhārata war], even though the region of Kashmir has always been a land of worldwide importance?.....⁷⁾"

The first point to which we here wish to draw attention is the assertion that the author (or compiler) of this text is deliberately attempting to put forward, namely, that the former king of Kashmir and the legendary heroes of ancient India who took part in the Bhārata war were contemporaries. The great epic *Mahābhārata* is centred on the tale of the war among the Bharatas for succession to the throne of Kurukṣetra, the centre of northern India in ancient times, but during the course of the transmission of this work over a long period of time many diverse cultural traditions of Indian culture were added to it, and it has become a treasury of ancient lore, also described as a veritable encyclopaedia of Indian culture, winning a position equal to that of the Vedas as an authoritative corpus of the traditions of ancient India. The war of succession to the throne recorded in the *Mahābhārata* is of great importance, particularly when considering the historical consciousness of the people of ancient India. According to the seventh-century astronomer Āryabhaṭa, for example, the present age, known as the *kaliyuga*, began with the Bhārata war, and he uses this as the starting point for his chronological calculations. According

to the calculations of astronomers such as Āryabhaṭa, the first day of the *kaliyuga* fell on Friday, the eighteenth of the second month, 3,102 B.C., and the history of India is considered to have begun on this day. Hence, when works of history were composed in ancient India, a premise common to all authors was the belief that the starting point of history must be placed at this point in time. A typical example is the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, a work invariably referred to when discussing the historical literature of India. In this dynastic history composed by the Kashmiri Kalhaṇa in the mid-twelfth century, the reign of the first king in the history of Kashmir is made to coincide with the above-mentioned period described in the *Mahābhārata*, namely, the age of the Bhārata war. This means, in other words, that in order to advocate the antiquity of Kashmir's history it was necessary to make its first king a contemporary of the renowned kings who fought in the battles of the *Mahābhārata*. The strange question found at the start of the *Nilamata*, namely, the query as to why the king of Kashmir did not participate in the Bhārata war, must also be understood in such a context. Conscious of the fact that the valley of Kashmir, an isolated border district cut off from the Punjab by the rugged Lesser Himalayas, was considered to have not originally formed part of the region constituting the home of classical Indian culture and the centre of Indian civilization (Madhyadeśa) where the *Mahābhārata* unfolds, the Hindus of Kashmir felt compelled to make some sort of comment, even if it had to assume an indirect form such as this. The reference to the Bhārata war at the start of the *Nilamata* expresses in a somewhat roundabout way the assertion of the Hindus of Kashmir that the culture of the land where they lived was by nature linked to the orthodoxy of Indian culture and that Kashmir had originally formed part of the sphere of India's orthodox culture.

The nature of this prologue to the *Nilamata*, which thus takes account of the fact that the remainder of the work differs in content from the lore of the so-called great tradition and has a strong local coloration giving considerable emphasis to the regionality of Kashmir, is reflected in various forms throughout the rest of the work. In order to shed further light on this point, we shall now consider the above synopsis from a different perspective by re-presenting it with a focus on the interlocutors.

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE INTERLOCUTORS

A. The sage Vaiśampāyana and King Janamejaya

1- 11: Reason for the failure of the Kashmir king to participate in the Bhārata war.

12- 26: Eulogy of the land of Kashmir.

B. 1 The sage Br̥hadaśva and Gonanda (king of Kashmir)

27- 70: Creation of the valley of Kashmir from a lake (1); migration of the Nāgas.

- 71–187: Creation of the valley of Kashmir from a lake (2); slaying of the demon Jalodbhava and draining of the lake.
- 188–227: Migration of humans to Kashmir and their settlement for half a year (mediation by the seer Kaśyapa).
- 227–323: Creation of rivers in the valley of Kashmir.
- C. 1 Candradeva (Kashmiri brahman) and Nīla (king of Kashmiri Nāgas)
324–371: Tale of Nīla-nāga and the brahman Candradeva; start of human settlement throughout the whole year.
- B. 2 The sage Bṛhadaśva and Gonanda (king of Kashmir)
- C. 2 Candradeva (Kashmiri brahman) and Nīla (king of Kashmiri Nāgas)
373–877: Teachings of Nīla-nāga; annual rites of Kashmir.
- B. 3 The sage Bṛhadaśva and Gonanda (king of Kashmir)
878–953: Enumeration of Kashmir's Nāgas (serpents/holy places).
954–1365: Kashmir's holy places.
- a. Legend of Lake Mahāpadma.
 - b. Holy places related to Śiva.
 - c. Holy places related to Viṣṇu.
 - d. Neighbouring holy places.
 - e. Reiteration of the main holy places.
- A. The sage Vaiśampāyana and King Janamejaya
1366–1394: Eulogy of the river Vitastā.
1395–1396: Reason that this work was not incorporated in the *Mahābhārata*.

The above diagram involves some simplification for the sake of convenience. The work as a whole consists of a number of interconnected dialogues that fit into one another as it were. The outer frame of the work as a whole develops in the form of Dialogue A between the sage Vaiśampāyana and King Janamejaya, and in response to the latter's questions Vaiśampāyana introduces further dialogues in the form of hearsay, resulting in the format A > B. Such is the composition of the basic format, but there are also instances in which these newly introduced interlocutors introduce yet another dialogue, giving the format A > B > C.

The sage Vaiśampāyana and King Janamejaya, who figure in Dialogue A, are also in fact the interlocutors in the frame story of the *Mahābhārata*. The tale of the Bhārata war was related for the first time by the sage Vaiśampāyana to King Janamejaya, a descendant of the Bhāratas, on the occasion of a ritual performed in the forest of Naimiṣa. The question at the start of the *Nilamata* about the absence of the king of Kashmir in the Bhārata war, alluded to earlier, was posed by King Janamejaya. It is thus evident that the final compiler of the *Nilamata* followed the model of the *Mahābhārata* in introducing the interlocutors for the frame story of the work as a whole. By placing the framework of the dialogue of the *Nilamata* on the same level as that of the *Mahābhārata*, he sought to ensure that his work, dealing as it does with the local myths, rites and holy places of the region of Kashmir, would share in the great tradition of the *Mahābhārata* with its authority already

well-established. This technique of employing the interlocutors of the frame story of the *Mahābhārata* may be regarded as the compiler's method of linking to the great tradition the local little tradition of Kashmir.

Moving now on to Dialogues B and C, which are introduced into Dialogue A, let us next consider the points that come to light at these levels. As is evident from our above synopsis, dialogue B more or less covers the real content of the *Nilamata*. The creation myth of the first part and the account of the holy places of Kashmir in the third part are introduced in the form of stories related by the sage Bṛhadaśva to King Gonanda of Kashmir. The description of Kashmir's annual rites in the second part, moreover, although assuming a type of dual structure, also has its outer frame provided by Dialogue B. The sole exception is the eulogy, towards the end of the work (1366–1394), of the sacred river Vitastā (the present-day Jhelum), which flows through the middle of the valley of Kashmir, and this section alone is introduced at the level of the interlocutors of Dialogue A. The purpose of this section may be considered to have been to place the Vitastā, Kashmir's sacred river, on the same level as the other great sacred rivers of India, and for this reason its exposition would have been especially entrusted to Vaiśampāyana, the narrator of the *Mahābhārata*. Bṛhadaśva, one of the two interlocutors in Dialogue B, is a sage who also makes an appearance in the *Mahābhārata*. Here he visits Kashmir in the course of his pilgrimage to holy places throughout India and relates various stories in response to questions posed by Gonanda, king of Kashmir. This format of a dialogue between a secular king and an itinerant sage is one that is frequently used in the frame stories of the epics and Purāṇas. This same technique is employed in the *Nilamata*, with a sage on a pilgrimage of all India, representing as it were an embodiment of the universal culture of the Hindus, expounding the truth to a local personage in the form of a regional king, and we may assume that by means of this tale here too an attempt is being made to create a bridge between the great tradition and one of the little traditions.

Of considerable interest is the treatment at the level of Dialogue C, placed at the innermost part of the framework of dialogues. This level may be regarded as the most local level, for it is the part in which are related the events that led to the permanent human settlement of Kashmir, and the interlocutors, the brahman Candradeva and the Nāga Nīla, the tutelary deity of Kashmir, are both native to Kashmir. Nīla-nāga appears to have been a serpent-god revered in Kashmir from early times. It is a well-known fact attested to by the accounts of, for example, Chinese Buddhists pilgrims such as Hsüan-tsang and Hui-ch'ao 慧超 that serpent-gods who had resided here from times of yore played an active role in legends preserved by Buddhists and relating to the dissemination of Buddhism in Kashmir. In the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* there is also a passage according to which, once Buddhism began to flourish, the people neglected the rites for the Nāgas, and so the angry Nāgas tormented the people by causing heavy snow to fall annually; here too the name of the lord of the Nāgas is given as Nīla (1.177–184). As is also repeatedly

stated in the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, this Nīla expounds the various rites that must be performed during the course of the year for the prosperity of Kashmir. This section of the *Nīlamata* probably constitutes the core of the whole work, and the title *Nīlamata* signifies nothing other than the teachings expounded by this Nīla-nāga.

Although we have analyzed only the dialogic format of the *Nīlamata*, it will have been seen that the technique employed in the composition of this work is one that places at its centre the teachings of the serpent-god Nīla, which enjoy the greatest local authority, and then, with a double exterior frame, attempts to link the traditions of the little tradition of Kashmir to the authority of the traditions of the great tradition and to integrate the two. This represents on the one hand the incorporation of indigenous elements on the part of the great tradition, while on the other hand it may be regarded as an attempt on the part of the indigenous elements to lend authority to and justify themselves by introducing the framework of the great tradition.

When taken on their own, however, the above considerations may tend to invite some loose generalizations about the formation and development of Hindu culture. We are, however, of the view that the process whereby the great tradition and the little traditions became intertwined and integrated in the course of the evolution of Hinduism is one the techniques and patterns of which will be gradually elucidated only through cumulative analyses of individual myths and rituals. At the same time, the comprehensive analysis of aspects such as the style and metre of the texts that give expression to these techniques and patterns is indispensable for the prerequisite task of determining the different strata in the composition of the constituent parts of texts of this type. In the present paper, in which we have directed our attention to the structural framework of only one text, we have had to restrict ourselves to presenting a perspective on only the general nature of the points at issue⁸).

NOTES

- 1) W. Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir* (London, 1895; repr.: Srinagar, 1967), pp. 304–305. The reason for the virtual absence in Kashmir of any castes other than Brahmans may probably be sought in the enforced conversion of Hindus under Muslim rule. It is clear from the accounts found in such works as the *Nīlamata* and the *Kuṭṭānimata* (Views of a Courtesan) by Dāmodaragupta that, prior to the Muslim invasion, various Hindu castes were to be found in Kashmir too, as in other parts of India. A major turning point was the persecution of Hindus under Sikandar at the start of the fifteenth century, which forced upon Hindus a choice between Islam, exile or the sword. This resulted in large-scale conversions to Islam, but there were also many Hindus who chose the path of emigrating elsewhere. It is to be surmised that under the rule of this sultan all the Hindu inhabitants other than Brahmans adopted Islam, and tradition has it that in the year of Sikandar's death there remained only eleven Brahman families in Kashmir. But his second successor, Zain-ul 'Abidin, adopted a policy favourable

towards the Brahmans, and many of those who had earlier fled are said to have returned to Kashmir during his reign. The majority of present-day Kashmiri Pandits are said to be the descendants of these Brahmans. There is, however, a difference in calendrical practice (concerning intercalary calculations) between the Brahmans who survived Sikan-dar's reign and those who fled and later returned, and this distinction lives on today in the two different appellations 'malamāsi' and 'banamāsi'. (Cf. Lawrence, *ibid.*, pp. 190-191; T.N. Madan, *Family and Kinship: A Study of the Pandits of Rural Kashmir*, Bombay, 1965, pp. 17-20.)

- 2) M. Witzel, "Regionale und überregionale Faktoren in der Entwicklung vedischer Brahmangruppen im Mittelalter," in H. Kulke and D. Rothermund (eds.), *Regionale Tradition in Südasien*, Wiesbaden, 1985 (Beiträge zur Südasienforschung, Südasien-Institut, Universität Heidelberg, 104), pp. 53-55, 62.
- 3) See, for example, Witzel's summary of Vedic traditions in Kashmir and Nepal (*ibid.*, pp. 53-57).
- 4) The approximate dates of the reigns of the first kings of the Kārkoṭa dynasty are as follows: Durlabhavardhana, ca. 626-661; Durlabhaka (Pratāpāditya), ca. 662-711; Candrāpīḍa (Vajrāditya), ca. 712-720; Tārāpīḍa (Udayāditya), ca. 720-724; and Muktāpīḍa (Lalitāditya), ca. 724-760. (Although there are various views on the dates of these kings, we have given only our own conclusions.) Kashmir reached the height of its prosperity under Muktāpīḍa (Lalitāditya), the last king in the above list. In regard to Hsüan-tsang's account, see Mizutani Shinjō 水谷真成 (tr.), *Daitō Saiiki Ki* 『大唐西域記』 (T'a-T'ang hsi-yü chi [Record of the Western Regions during the Greater T'ang]; Heibonsha 平凡社 [Chūgoku Koten Bungaku Taikai 中国古典文学大系 (Chinese Classics), No. 22], 1971), pp. 125-126 (legend on the propagation of Buddhism in Kashmir by the Arhat Mo-t'ien-ti-chia 末田地迦 [Madhyāntika]). For a historical survey of the Hindu literature of Kashmir and the settlement of Brahman groups in Kashmir, see M. Witzel, "The Brahmins of Kashmir," in Y. Ikari (ed.), *A Study of Nīlamata—Aspects of Hinduism in Ancient Kashmir*—(Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University, 1993).
- 5) L. Rocher, *The Purānas*, Wiesbaden, 1986 (History of Indian Literature, Vol. 2, Fasc. 3), p. 204.
- 6) There are, broadly speaking, two recensions of this text, referred to as the shorter recension and longer recension respectively. According to G. Bühler, the nineteenth-century Kashmiri scholar Paṇḍit Saheb Ram compiled the longer recension by royal command in order to supplement the numerous lacunae of the shorter recension. Our following account is based, unless otherwise stated, on de Vreese's edition of the shorter recension: K. de Vreese, *The Nīlamata or Teachings of Nīla* (Leiden, 1936); Ved Kumari, *The Nīlamata Purāna*, Vol. 2 (A Critical Edition and English Translation, Srinagar, 1973). cf. G. Bühler, "Detailed Report of a Tour in Search of Sanskrit MSS. Made in Kaśmīr, Rajputana, and Central India," *JRAS (Bombay)*, Extra Number (1877), pp. 37-41.
- 7) There is a lacuna in the shorter recension following this passage, and the remainder of King Janamejaya's question and the greater part of Vaiśampāyana's reply are missing. If we supplement it with the account found in Kalhaṇa's *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, based on the *Nīlamata*, and the longer recension, which was probably compiled with reference to the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, the purport of the rest of the passage in question may be reconstructed as follows: Gonanda, the king of Kashmir at the time of the Bhārata war, and his son Dāmodara were both killed in battles with the hero Kṛṣṇa (who is also the god Viṣṇu) and his younger brother. In order to maintain the legitimate line of succession in

Kashmir, Kṛṣṇa installed on the throne Dāmodara's consort, who was with child by Dāmodara. Eventually Gonanda II was born, but because he was still an infant, he was summoned by neither side in the great Bhārata war, which is said to have divided all of India into two camps.

- 8) Owing to restrictions of space, we have been unable to undertake any such detailed analyses, but for further discussion of a number of perspectives alluded to here reference may be made to Y. Ikari (ed.), *op. cit.*

