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## ON INDIAN HISTORICAL WRITING

### The role of the Vamçâvalîs

#### 1. The alleged absence of historiography in India.

It has long been held in modern Indological and in more general and popular writing that India has no (sense of) history, and this view has frequently been justified by the observation that indigenous historical writing has been almost completely absent until fairly recent times.<sup>1</sup> This is even maintained by firmly nationalistic writers such as R.C.Majumdar: "It is a well-known fact that with the single exception of Râjataranginî (History of Kashmir), there is no historical text in Sanskrit dealing with the whole or even parts of India."<sup>2</sup>

Both contentions are, however, somewhat rash statements, arrived at by the *prima facie* observation that continuous histories or chronicles, such as first attempted by Herodotos in the West, are absent in South Asia, while compiling long historical chronicles has been a tradition kept alive since Antiquity in Europe and, to a greater degree, has been ingrained in East

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1 See the beginning words of Sir Marc Aurel Stein's introduction to his translation of the Râjataranginî: "It has often been said of the India of the Hindus that it possessed no history."

2 R.C. Majumdar, *The history and culture of the Indian people, The Vedic Age*, Bombay, (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan), p. 47; similarly, in the same series, *The Classical Age*, p. 131: "Kashmir alone has the advantage of possessing a written history from the earliest times." - When writing such statements he forgot about the well-known Dîpavamsa, Mahâvamsa and the many consecutive chronicles of medieval Sri Lanka, treated in the same volume by D.C. Sircar, p. 284 sqq. He also forgot, e.g. about Nepalese sources, also treated in the volume -- by himself, p. 136 sqq., and well known since Bendall's and Sylvain Levi's studies of Nepal, about one hundred years ago (see below). - This small sample alone serves to show the deeply ingrained preconceptions, current then and often still current now, about Indian historical writing.

Asian cultural tradition. In Japan, actually, written literature begins with two chronicles of its earliest period, the Kojiki and the Nihongi.

Nor were the early western Indologists the only ones who stressed the alleged ahistorical attitude of the Indians. Already about eight or nine hundred years earlier, Albiruni had the same impression when he did his "fieldwork" in the Panjab and in neighboring areas that lead to his "India" in 1030 A.D. He expresses his frustration with words that - unknowingly - have been echoed by many other students of the subcontinent. "Unfortunately the Hindus do not pay much attention to the historical order of things, they are very careless in relating the chronological succession of their kings, and when they are pressed for information and are at a loss, not knowing what to say, they invariably take to tale-telling."<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Legendary history (Purâna).

India possesses, it is true, a class of texts that proclaims to be a history of the subcontinent, the Purânas.<sup>4</sup> These texts were redacted, and to a large extent also composed, by Brahmins over a span of perhaps a thousand years (in the first millennium A.D. and partly even later), and long after the facts they pretend to describe (i.e. creation up to the Guptas, more or less). Naturally, they contain much legendary material and are, even if taken at face value, mutually contradictory. It can be shown, and indeed this has been done to some extent already,<sup>5</sup> that they represent a patchwork of data gleaned from other texts, such as the Vedas and the Epics (Mahâbhârata, Râmâyana).

Nevertheless, they have been used uncritically, e.g. by some historians, such as R.Thapar, and by modern archaeologists as materials to establish their identifications of particular pre-historic cultures.

## 3. The idea of genealogical history.

It has long been recognized that the Purânas are based on a framework of a genealogical nature.<sup>6</sup> One would suppose that such genealogies are basically

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<sup>3</sup> India, vol. II p. 10-11.

<sup>4</sup> And a few others, like Râjatar., Dîpavamsa, etc. see below

<sup>5</sup> For example by Renate Soehnen in her lecture at the 6th World Sanskrit Conference at Philadelphia 1984, published separately later on. - Cf. also the Purânic parallels quoted by Horsch in his book Die vedische Gâtha- and Çlokaliteratur, Bern 1966. The parallels in the Mahâbhârata, Râmâyana and in the Puranâs indicate, by their linguistic form, that they are dependent on Vedic texts; cf. below, note 8

<sup>6</sup> See Pargiter, Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, 1922, repr. Delhi 1962; see now R. Thapar, Ancient Indian Social History, Hyderabad 1978

sound as they represent the dynastic history of the region in question. Such a view is firmly held by Pargiter, see Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, p.119 sqq. He maintains the superiority of the "ksatriya tradition" (preserved, according to him, more or less, in the Mahâbhârata and the Purânas) above the Vedic evidence and has failed to recognize that much of the genealogies of the Purânas were extracted from the Vedas.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, he maintains that the Purânic accounts are proved by whatever scraps of evidence we can find in the various Vedic texts. It is well known that much of historical information in the Vedic texts is contemporaneous and that these text have been unaltered for more than 2000 years (and have, in fact, transmitted word by word, including the otherwise long lost tonal accents of early Sanskrit) while bardic tradition, such as finally recorded in the Mahâbhârata and the Purânas was prone to constant re-creation by the reciting poet/bard, - a feature that has been well studied in the Homeric and other epics by M. Parry and Albert Lord. However, even in this more specific case, it can easily be shown that the Purânas have made use of disjuncted bits and pieces in Vedic and Epic literature to construct their genealogies. To mention just the most obvious case: early priests and Rsis such as Cyavana, Viçvâmitra (Gâthin/Gâdhi,<sup>8</sup> Jahnu) were fit into these genealogies as early kings, or Triçanku is made the father of Hariçandra while he (Çunahçepa, connected via his RV hymns with Triçanku) was offered by Hariçandra as substitute for his own son Rohita.

In addition, it can safely be said that virtually no such genealogy, in India or elsewhere, is free from tinkering, interpolation etc. Instead, they have frequently been used to bolster the claims of minor local chiefs and kings to a high rank, and if no such prestigious link was in sight, it has been manufactured.<sup>9</sup> All of this seems to create some problems for R. Thapar's idea the general acceptibility of lineage history. Though she admits that the genealogies have often been "improved" or tampered with she thinks the *idea* of genealogy is important. This is, as the following deliberations will again indicate, certainly correct. But the ancient lineages as reported in the Epics and the Purânas just do not work at all. Even if one subsumes that they were

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7 Cf. R. Soehnen's article, mentioned above, and note 5. The process is visible in a comparison of Aitareya Brâhmana 7 and 8 and Bhâgavad Purâna, see below.

8 The texts (such as Bhâg.Pur 9.16.35) still try to gloss over this well-known fact (see the Aitareya-Brâhmana 7.17.6 sqq.) by saying that Viçvâmitra at first was a king called Viçvaratha, see Pargiter, p.151. - Actually, even these Gâthâs of this AB section differ in style (as priestly creation) from others in AB 8.21 sqq. which give historical facts about earlier kings, perhaps our earliest surviving specimens of bardic lore; see author, Studies in Vedic dialects (forthc.)

9 To give a European example, once I have seen an inscription of the local duke of Carinthia, in S. Austria, traced back his origins via Rome to the Homeric heroes of the Battle of Troy, in the footsteps of the Roman poet Ovid, who had done the same for his nation. Cf. also the origins of the various noble Japanese families in the Kojiki, and their connections with the imperial family.

originally based on correct lineage lists, they have been used from early on, for "secondary justification" of origin and the social prestige going with it. We can witness politically motivated adoptions, both of kings as well as of important poets and priests, already in the early Vedic texts. In fact, they are reported even from the oldest surviving Indian text, the Rgveda, in the cases of some poet's families<sup>10</sup> and they are to be suspected in the case of some kings.<sup>11</sup>

Nor is the procedure of tampering with the family line limited to India. In the closely related Iranian civilization, Darius and his successors used the same principle extensively to secure their claim to the throne of Persia. They simply had to be descended from Haxâmaniç, to be Achaemenids. One can also compare the long lists of early Zoroastrian families in the Avesta. And we know such pedigrees from texts such as the Bible (Old testament) and can observe to what extremes, the writers of the New Testament had to go to show the descent of Jesus from King David, in spite of the fact, that his father Joseph is reported, by the same texts, not to have been his actual, somatic father... In all civilizations which stress the patrilinear descent such pedigrees are of great importance.<sup>12</sup>

In the Purânas these pedigrees (*vamça*) have been systematized as to trace back every local dynasty of the subcontinent to they mythical Sun (Sûryavamça) or the Moon (Candravamça) lineages. Even newcomers, such as the Huns, or the local dynasties of Nepal or Kashmir, simply 'must' go back to the beginning of mankind, or, at least to a well known ancient dynasty. This is what the Nepalese Licchavis (c. 300-750 A.D.) chose to do: they are traced, by their very name, back to the contemporaries of the Buddha, the Licchavis of Vaiçâli,<sup>13</sup> and they have simply invented the necessary link - interestingly not in their oldest surviving inscription of 467 A.D.,<sup>14</sup> but in their chronicle and in their later, official lineage.<sup>15</sup> In the late Middle Ages, the Later Malla, such as Pratâpa Malla of Kathmandu (in an

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10 Most of the clans belong to the Bhrgu or Aangirasa. The others tend to get adopted into these two clans: see the case of Viçvâmitra, RV 3.62.16-18, who acquires the lore of the Jamadagnis (themselves adopted by the Bhrgus); or Çunahotra/Grtsamâda, adopted by the Bhrgus, though originally an Aangirasa.

11 Such as Trasadasyu who is said to have been a demi-god (*ardhadeva*), or later, AB 7, Viçvâmitra adopts Çunahçepa, the son of the Brahmin Ajîgarta, a the substitute for King Hariçcandra Aiksvâkava's son Rohita.

12 The examples, are, of course, legion. One may point to early Japan, or to a civilization without script, that of Polynesia, where remarkably similar genealogies are found in places as far a part as Hawaii and New Zealand.

13 Just as their contemporaneous (and later medieval) Western neighbors, the Mallas, did, with the help of their very name.

14 This points to the local origin (viz. to one in the neighborhood of the Kathmandu valley, say in the Terai lowlands) of this dynasty.

15 Paçupatinâth inscr. of Jayadeva II whose reign is attested by inscriptions, 713-733 A.D.

inscription of NS 778 = 1657/6 A.D.), trace back their origin to the famous Karnâta king Nândyadeva, who - only according to later tradition, not yet contained in the Gopâlarâja-Vamçâvalî (written about NS 509, 1388/9 A.D.), became a king of Nepal.<sup>16</sup>

Newcomers can also resort to other tactics: they can claim descent from one or the other semi-divine nymph, a Nâginî, - again nothing out of the way, as some of the earliest descendants of Manu, the first man, are reported to have had nymphs as their mothers (such as Purûravas' son Aayu.) So did the Kârkotas of Kashmir who took over the country in c. 600 A.D., and so did many local dynasties such as those of Bhadrâvakâça, Chota Nagpur, Manipur, Bastar, and even the Sâlivahana king of Pratisthâna, the Pallavas, and especially also in the newly brahmanized countries of South-East Asia.<sup>17</sup> The genealogies thus frequently serve for the limited purpose of political justification.<sup>18</sup>

#### 4. Historical poetry.

As has been briefly indicated above, there are, in addition to the texts described above, several other types of Indian historical writing. They include the well known, so-called historical Kâvyas, such as Kalhana's Râjataranginî, Bâna's Harsacarita, Bilhana's Vikramânkadevacarita, and many more, often less well known works of this type.<sup>19</sup> The introductory *praçasti* portions of royal inscriptions are written in the same, elaborate Kâvya style. The genealogies used in such writings usually are legendary, except for the most recent periods preceding the date of the text in question, and have been concocted to serve the dynastic goals of the patron of the poet or the composer of the inscription in question.

In addition, even where these texts treat the more or less immediate past - or the deeds of the reigning monarch - such descriptions are flawed by two factors: one the well-known hyperbolic character of Indian *kâvya* style descriptions, and secondly, the flattery inherent in such texts. Most petty kings of India thus are said to have conquered the whole subcontinent or "the world" at one time or the other. Even after this quite superficial survey<sup>20</sup> it is

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16 See the Gorkha vamçâvalî, facs., ed. GRV p. 227 or the Kaiser vamçâvalî, in an added portion (see the facs., ed. GRV p.212 transliteration p. 222) with dates such as Çâka 1019 (1096/78 A.D.).

17 See J.Ph. Vogel, Indian Serpent Lore, or the Nâgas in Hindu Legend and Art, London 1926, p. 250 sqq.

18 Stressed also by K.P. Malla, GRV p. xxii and R. Thapar, Ancient Indian Social History: some Interpretations, Delhi 1978, p. 259

19 See below, note 42 for a list of hist. kâvyas

20 More materials are detailed at the end of the article.

obvious, thus, that there are more historical texts than the legendary Purânas. We will, however, have to come back to this question below.

## 5. Indian Ideas of history.

Turning to the second question put at the beginning, the absence of a historical sense in India. This is a more serious charge. And to defend it by pointing to the genealogical trend in India history, has, as indicated above, no salvatory effect, on the contrary, this scheme is simply based on traditional political rights of inheritance. Do the Indians indeed have no interest in the changing world around them, as experienced over time? And if so, was this always the case? Or was this a product of their alleged "pessimistic" view of the world, as some 19th century / early 20th century Indologists claimed?

The idea of the passage of time is, of course, not absent. Even a brief look at the structure of the various Indian languages, ever since Vedic Sanskrit, could convince of the contrary. They all have quite involved systems of expressing various stages in the past, and thus a whole array of forms relating to several past "tenses". Some have alleged, in more recent times, that the Indians indeed were not interested in, for example, the historical changes in their language(s). This again, is a rather limited view, instigated by the Brahmanical interest in the unchangeability (*aksara*) of Sanskrit. Sanskrit as the sacred language, the language of the gods, simply "cannot" change. The gods speak the same Sanskrit as we indeed should, nowadays, instead of Prakrit or Hindi. Pânini, when using *chandâs*, thus refers to the sacred language, not to the *laukika* Sanskrit of his area and time (*bhâsâ*). The beginnings of this attitude can be seen already in the authors of the Vedic texts. They have put such changes as they noticed into a social framework. The language of the gods has a socially higher status than that of men. Thus the gods used the higher, more correct form *râtrîm* "the night" while men (and thus the author of the text) used *râtrim*.<sup>21</sup> (Linguistically speaking, the gods' form is the older one). This attitude towards linguistic changes has been perpetuated in the Dramas, where Brahmins and the king speak Sanskrit, but his wife and the servants various degrees of (the historically younger) colloquial Middle Indian Prâkrts.

On the other hand, the Vedic poets were keenly aware of past kings and dynasties and of their obligation of always creating new songs, praising gods and kings. They speak of a new *yuga* which would follow them... and in which they want to *preserve* their poetry (Rgveda 7.87.4) and which they indeed did until today, by the *chandâs - rsi - devatâ* scheme latched on to the recitation of every hymn. They live in a later *yuga* already (similar to the

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21 See Maitrâyanî Samhitâ 1.5.12 = ed. L.v. Schroeder, p. 81.3-4

concept known from classical antiquity), and they expect another one to follow theirs.

However, was it really important to record the events of the human past correctly or were they just variations on the constant theme of a repetitive *yuga* cycle? Time was regarded as cyclical,<sup>22</sup> a concept diametrically opposed to the linear concept of time we are used to in science. Telling sequential history, was not limited to cultures with a sequential concept of time, such as the Hebrew one,<sup>23</sup> but also found in others, such as that of Greece, where "the father of history" Herodotos, in turn often recalls the example of Egyptian records. Such writings of sequential history are, of course, different from the Rgvedic concept of creating new songs, of incidental telling about former deeds of the gods, of earlier (*Sādhyâh*, *Pûrve Devâh*) and later gods (*Devâh*), of ancient learned persons (*pûrve çrotriyâh*, *VâdhBr.*) or of semi-historical processes such as the colonization (Brahmanization) of Eastern India (Videha) under Videgha Mâthava and Gotama Râhûgana (Çatapatha Brâhmana).

After all these *caveats* we will see, in the sequel, that such a sequential view of history indeed also existed in India. Actually, both views, the sequential one and the cyclical one, are not mutually exclusive -- if only a segment of the cycle is regarded or described. *Sub specie aeternitatis*, of course, time was regarded as cyclical.

## 6. Actual sources of history and of historical writing.

If we now turn our attention to the actual sources of ancient Indian history, we find the following early materials for historical writing.

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22 Though the origin of the universe is somewhat shrouded in mystery, time never began nor will it ever end: instead, it moves in cycles: The first cycle of creation of this world and the following cycles, called *yugas*, lead up to still later ones (already hinted at in RV 8.87.4). -- Just like the *yugas* follow each other in endless succession, so behave the sun, the moon and the stars: the succession of dawn and dusk, day and night, new moon and full moon, the 3 to 6 seasons of the year, the bright half of the year "when the sun moves northwards" and dark half of the year, the return of the new year as such at Winter solstice, the counter-clockwise turning of the Milky Way around the north pole during the course of the year, --- as well as a five year cycle (originally called *dyumna*, i.e. the period after which solar and lunar months can be made to start over again at the same point in time) all point to the cyclical nature of time. The dangerous transition points in this process are clearly marked by Vedic rituals, as well as the human rites of passage do so, in the cycle birth, death and rebirth.

23 The Bible begins with creation by Yahwe, out of nothing, and then proceeds with elaborate genealogical lists down to the time of David and later kings of Israel, and in the New Testament, of Jesus.

-- In pre-literary times, the bardic and poetical family traditions. These contain contemporary, originally Vedic fragments of historical information (such as the famous battle of the 10 kings, *dâçarâjña*), and in the case of the Epic, a bardic re-working of events of an already rather distant past.<sup>24</sup> Purânic scholars often take the mentioning of *itihâsa* and *purâna* in the late Vedic texts as proof of an original, unified Purâna. This, however, goes against everything we now know of bardic traditions<sup>25</sup> and, ironically, rather unwittingly regards the ancient bardic Purânic texts through the eyes of Brâhmanical or even Vedic traditions, characterized by their fixed textual corpus that was no longer altered after the redaction in the first millennium B.C.

The old Vedic texts were composed, often by inspired poets who, nevertheless, worked in the tradition of Indo-Iranian (Aryan) and even of Indo-European poetry. They did not only adhere to the metrical forms of their tradition but also to well-established *kennings* or *kakekotoba*, stereotyped ends of lines, etc. This has to be taken into account when studying the historical fragments in the Rgveda. We have to go back this far in Indian history as much of the information contained in the RV has been taken over, first of all into the later Yajurveda Samhitâs and the Brâhmanas, and later on, into the Mahâbhârata and the Purânas. To give just one example: In the Rgveda, we find a brief reference to a battle of 20 kings,<sup>26</sup> and another one to the famous Dâçarâjña, the battle of the ten kings of the Five Peoples of the Panjab (Yadu, Turvaça, Anu, Druhyu, Pûru) against the Bharata king Sudâs. This is also found in a Brâhmana text such as the Jaiminîya Brâhmana,<sup>27</sup> and has become the core of the Mahâbhârata, which, however, does not mention Sudâs at all and instead substitutes the five Pândava brothers.<sup>28</sup>

The various Vedic fragments were worked into the new grand design of a battle between the Kurus of Vedic fame and their relatives, the Pândava. These, however, are unknown newcomers to the historical tradition preceding the Mahâbhârata; they often were taken as representing the Pañcâlas; I would prefer to identify them with the (Iranian?) Salvâs who, according to a still little

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24 I will deal with the prehistory of the Mahâbhârata separately.

25 Cf. above, on the studies of Milton Parry and Albert Lord on Homeric and (living) South Slave bardic poetry.

26 Only mentioned at RV 1.53.9; this quite isolated mentioning, nevertheless, indicates by its very existence that, already by the time of the RV, the 10/20 king's battle was a famous topic of bardic/poets' lore.

27 JB 3.244-247, ed. and transl. W. Caland, par. 205

28 Other examples in the Vedic texts would include: the crossing of the Bharatas over the Sindhu, followed by the Iksvâkus, at JB 3.238. Further, the historical tradition contained in the Yajñâgâthâs and Çlokas should be compared; this is easily accessible now in Horsch, Die vedische Gâthâ- und Çlokaliteratur, Bern 1966.



read Vedic text, the Jaiminîya Brâhmana 2.208, invaded Kuruksetra and destroyed the Kuru realm, so that a later text (Brhad-Aaranyaka Upanisad 3.3.1), can ask about the Kuru kings "where have the Pârîksitas gone? *kva pârîksitâ abhavan*" A. Parpola may not be so far off the track with his guess of a new Aryan or Iranian invasion which he, however, tries to trace down to South India, to the Pândyas.<sup>29</sup> The Rgvedic battle of the 20 Kings, however, never re-appears, is completely forgotten in post-Rgvedic history.

The various bardic authors and later redactors thus have reworked such bits and pieces of old historical information into the great Epic, which, as is well known, was at first a more "modest" text of 20.000 verses, in size comparable to the combined Iliad and Odyssey. How this reworking took place can be closely studied if we compare the Rgvedic form of such a popular tale as that of Purûravas and Urvaçî (RV 10.95), with its form in the Çatapatha Brâhmana 11.5.1 or the Baudhâyana Çrautasûtra 18.44, in the Mahâbhârata 1.70, and in Kâlidâsa's Kâvya. Here, just as in the treatment of the major historical fragments we see popular and bardic imagination at work. We are, of course well aware of how easily such data get confused in oral tradition even after a few generations.<sup>30</sup> Thus even if we suppose that the pre-Bharata already had many of these traits and maybe still the original name of king Sudâs as fighting in the battle, then it could have been changed within a few generations to that of this long later successor/descendant, Dhrtarâstra Vaicitravîrya, who, interestingly, occurs in somewhat later Vedic text, Katha Samhita 10.6, simply as a king of the Kurus.<sup>31</sup>

The ancient "historical" tradition of India, as found in the Mahâbhârata and the Purânas, thus is flawed from the beginnings: It is not history but the bardic reworking of an old Epic tradition, often based on Vedic tradition itself.<sup>32</sup>

It is quite misleading to believe the Mahâbhârata account and find the reason for the destruction of the Kuru realm in a flood washing away its capital at

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29 On the Jaiminîya and Vâdhûla traditions of South India and the Pându/Pândava problem, *Studia Orientalia* 55, 1985, 429-468.

30 Compare, e.g. the historically well known case of the Gothic king Theoderic of Ravenna (Italy was invaded by the Goths after 454 A.D.), who was confused in Germanic bardic lore with Ermanric, his ancestor who still was a king of the Goths when these lived in Southern Russia and were invaded by the Huns (375 A.D.).

31 Undergoing some harassment by the Naimisya *vrâtyas*.

32 The parallels provided by Horsch (*Die vedische Gâthâ- und Çlokaliteratur*, Bern 1966) clearly indicate that the Epic and Purânîc texts were based on the Vedic ones, cf. for example such evident cases as the substitution of a Vedic verb form AB 7.18.3 *vayam smasi* by BhâgPur 9.16.35b *vayam sma hi* (Horsch p. 95); Horsch concludes that BhâgPur. is based on AB, via oral tradition; Râm. 1.62.1 differs. -- Similarly, cf. AB 8.21.14 sqq., with parallels in Mbhâr., BhâgP., ViP., MârKP, etc., see Horsch p. 101 sqq. "these Gâthâs were transmitted orally and expanded." -- Cf. also the parallels in ÇB 13.5.4.3 sqq. and in the Epic.

Hastinapura when Vedic texts tell of a contemporaneous invasion of Salva tribe which effected it - much more plausibly. Little value can be put on these Epic and Purânic data,-- at least, they should not be taken at face value but rather as a general outline of some historical processes.

-- Another, and indeed the major source for Indian history used since the mid of the last century, have been the thousands of inscriptions on rocks and copper plates. They are so well known that I merely mention the category here. To them, of course, applies the factor, mentioned above, of hyperbole as well. In the *praçastis*, constituting the first, non-technical parts of inscriptions, the poets tried to praise the local king "to the heavens".

-- A little used source of history have been the colophons of manuscripts which often mention the name of the reigning monarch and other historically interesting details. This is due to the fact that in India proper most mss. are only of relative late date. Except for the desert areas of Gujarat/Rajasthan, mss. have not survived much more than 500 years, and Hindus in general did not care much for their preservation as only the living, recited word, in the mouth of the teacher, poet or priest was important. Fortunately, the Jainas<sup>33</sup> and Buddhists preserved their texts much better. And so did the Nepalese. Here we have mss. going back as far as the early ninth century A.D. (in dated form), and a few older undated ones, so much so that when Bendall first made use of their colophons for historical purposes at the Berlin congress about a hundred years ago,<sup>34</sup> he was simply not believed at first. In Nepal the temperate climate and the almost complete absence of Muslim incursions<sup>35</sup> worked together to preserve these old mss. Such ms. colophons, which also contain much of other valuable and so far unused information, such as on local personal and geographical names, religious trends,<sup>36</sup> etc., should be used

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33 The oldest in Indian mss. of the subcontinent, outside of Nepal, are those of the Jaina Bhandars of Gujarat and Rajasthan. At Jaisalmer, for example, as my friend A. Wezler told me (1974), the mss. are kept in a cave under the temple in large steel cases that must have been welded inside the cave as they are bigger than the small entrance of the room.

34 See the volumes of the Berlin Oriental Congress of 1888.

35 There was only one brief Muslim invasion, in November 1349 A.D. The Sultan burnt (*Nepâla smasta bhâsmî bhavân*) the towns for seven days (GRV fol.28b, 52a). Luckily enough mss. have survived this and similar destructions (due to earthquakes and fires). - Unfortunately the same cannot be said of medieval Kashmir from which no mss. older than c. 1500 A.D. remain. Local Hindu and Muslim chroniclers agree in blaming the reigns of the Sultans Sikandar and Ali (1389-1419/20) for their wholesale destruction by burning and dumping them into the Dal Lake, see author, *The Veda in Kashmir*, ch. II (forthcoming).

36 It has not been noticed, that we can date with great accuracy, for example the sudden spread of Râma worship in (e.g.) Gujarat and Nepal in the 16th century by simply studying the sudden occurrence and spread of Vaisnava names in the colophons.

for the elucidation of "dark spots" in the history of particular local areas and their political history, say for parts of Orissa, Kerala, and Gujarat.

-- For the more recent history, there also are documents of all sorts. Again, the oldest surviving ones come from medieval Nepal where land sale and mortgage documents dating back even to 982/3 A.D. have remained in the possession of monasteries and in private ownership.<sup>37</sup> The various archives in private possession (Râjas, etc.) and in public administration are still underutilized.<sup>38</sup>

-- Other sources include, as is well known, the coins, and more or less accidental remarks in literary texts or a few "historical" *kâvyas*. The well known ones among them are Açvaghosa's *Buddhacarita* or Bâna's *Harsacarita*, Vâkpatirâja's *Gaudavâho*, and immediately preceding Kalhana, the *Vikramankadevacarita* by his compatriot Bilhana, all of which inspired or influenced him. Sir M.A. Stein has made a collection of some expressions agreeing in the *Harsacarita* and in Kalhana's *Râjataranginî*.<sup>39</sup> In addition, there are such *kâvyas* as the largely unpublished ones from medieval Nepal (see below). Similar *kâvyas* come from Râjasthân, some of them going back to Chauhan times,<sup>40</sup> from 16th century Garhwal,<sup>41</sup> or from South India.<sup>42</sup>

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37 B. Kölver and H. Çâkya, *Documents from the Rudravarnamahâvihâra*, (Nepalica), St. Augustin (VGH Wissenschaftsverlag) 1985

38 For a (not quite complete) listing see the several volumes of: S.P. Sen, *Sources for the History of India*, Calcutta, Inst. of Historical Studies, 1978 sqq. --- How little understanding still exists for such materials I once witnessed myself: The old Hanuman Dhoka palace at Kathmandu contained a large collection of documents, lying on the floor in a room of c. 15 x 4 meters, to a height of about a meter. They dated from c. 1830 to 1960 and contained financial administration but also documents, as I saw, detailing which officials from all over the valley should take part in one of the festivals and how much remuneration they should get. As the palace was under restoration by UNESCO before the coronation of the king in 1975, the workmen and women used this strong paper as wrappings to protect their clothing or as head cushions for carrying loads, as well as for less describable purposes. After a UNESCO specialist and I had drawn the attention of the Director of Archaeology to this fact, the documents were carried and trucked away to some unknown location. They have not been heard of since and the story is that they have been destroyed. Only 2000 of them now are in the Tribhuvan University at Kirtipur/Kathmandu. - Another collection, of a small Orissa Râja is said to lie on a verandah of his old palace, open to termites, rats and rain. Another similar collection, from Gujarat, is said to have, luckily, found its way to Europe.

39 See M.A. Stein, transl., *Râjataranginî*, vol.I, p. 133

40 See G.N. Sharma, *Sources for the history of medieval Râjasthân*, in S.P. Sen, *Sources for the History of India*, Calcutta, Inst. of Historical Studies) 1970, p. 27 sqq. and cf. his book, *A Bibliography of Medieval Rajasthan*, p.61-87

41 *Manodaya Kâvya* of Bhârata Kavi Jyotirâi, living at the time of Akbar and Jahangir, which presents the history of the Panwars as going back to Ajayapâla, a Candravâmçî king, but is of much use for the contemporaneous history.

42 A list of the less known or less studied historical *Kâvyas* has been made by Ratna Dutta, in her Calcutta PhD thesis, *The development of historical and literary styles in Sanskrit inscriptions*, (1988), p. 14 sqq. It includes: the Paramâra king Sindhurâja's

-- Finally, there are the foreign accounts (Chinese pilgrims and diplomats, old Greek and more recent European travelers; Arab and Persian writers) -- with all their imperfections and inherent cultural bias, but on the other hand, their keen observation of what was new, strange, and exciting to them.

## 7. Kalhana's Rājataranginī

If we now, after briefly reviewing the para-historical texts and the various materials available for a study of Indian history, turn our view to the major example of Indian "historical writing", the Rājataranginī of Kalhana, and then, some other medieval histories. Even a brief survey at such texts reveals that they survive only at the rims of the continent: the Rājataranginī of Kashmir, the *vamçavalīs* of Nepal, the Dīpavamsa and Mahāvamsa of Ćrī Lankā. The question may be asked, as it has been from time to time, whether their composition was due to foreign influences. In the case of Ceylon, e.g., this can roundly be denied. It did not take Arab traders to get the Singhalese interested in composing their many chronicles. The oldest date back to pre-B.C. times... As we will see, the situation is not different in other parts of South Asia.<sup>43</sup>

Kalhana, when setting out in mid-11th century, to rewrite and update the history of his country, wanted to write a *kāvya*, and in *çānta rasa* (Rājataranginī 1.23). He was probably influenced by the fate of his family around 1100 A.D. His father Canpaka had held high office, but was ousted after the downfall of king Harsa in 1101 A.D.<sup>44</sup> He thus writes critically above the kings of the past, even of the reigning Lohara dynasty, but he had to be more careful<sup>45</sup> with the reigning monarch, Jayasimha, to whom he devoted about 26% of his work, i.e. 2058 verses of in total 7826 verses. It is

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Navasahasānkhacarita, ed. E.S. Islampurkar, (BSS 53), Bombay 1895; Sandhyākaranandi's Rāmacarita (Pāla time Bengal); Hemacandra's Kumārapālacarita (Cālukya dynasty, ed. BSS 60), Jayanāga's (or Jayanik, reported to be a Kashmirian,) Prthīvijaya (BSS 69), Someçvara's Kīrtikaumudi and Surathotsava (Vāghela dynasty, BSS 76); Jagaducarita, celebrating a local merchant of Gujarat; the Jain works Prabhavakacarita of Prabhācandra and Sthavīracalīcarita which mention many facts about king Bhoja and the Cālukya king Bhīma. The list can, of course, be continued, see below, at the end on medieval Nepalese Kāvya.

43 H. Bechert has recently dealt with the beginnings of Indian historical writing in an article which is not available to me here, at present.

44 Did he engage in a piece of psychological writing, revenge for his father? Cf. Stein, Rājataranginī, tr. I p.17. Note that Kalhana changed his account, see immediately.

45 See Stein, p. 17 f.: "outspoken manner with which he judges the king's character... comparatively few passages in which Kalhana praises Jayasimha... inserted... possibly with a view to avoiding denunciation and its probable consequences."

little known that Kalhana even changed the text of his account, while he was redacting it. An inkling of this was felt already by M.A. Stein who pointed out the lack of revision in book 8.<sup>46</sup> The earlier version, more critical of the king, has indeed survived in a single ms., which has been published in facsimile;<sup>47</sup> it was earlier treated by its former owner, E. Hultzsch<sup>48</sup> who did, however, not yet notice that this manuscript represents a different recension. This was discovered by B. Kölver.<sup>49</sup> A detailed study of this unique case enable him to judge more competently the working methods of a medieval court poet, writing a conventional historical *kāvya*, even if he was not a member of the court, as Kalhana indeed was not. - In addition, we have another incidental advantage in judging him, i.e. the study of some of the sources he used, as well as an additional source, the *Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî* described below.

## 8. Kalhana's description of sources

It is not always remembered, in spite of G. Bühler<sup>50</sup> and M.A. Stein,<sup>51</sup> and now B. Kölver (p. 2,113, 125 sqq.) that Kalhana, unlike his predecessors Bâna and Bilhana, gives a quite good description of his own sources (Stein, transl. vol.I, p. 24-26). They are found in the verses *Râjataranginî* 1.8-18 and include the following points (some additional ones not mentioned at this instance but clear from the text have been added in brackets):

- inscriptions on stone <and on copper plates>, made by kings for land grants, temple foundations etc.<sup>52</sup>
- praçastis of royal inscriptions
- <manuscript colophons? -- not mentioned but may be included under the heading "written works" (*çâstra*) 1.15>
- <*vamçâvalîs*, not directly mentioned>

46 Stein, tr. *Râjataranginî*, p. 43 sq. He characterizes books 7 and 8 as occasionally lacking in final revision, especially so in the last 600 verses of book 8.

47 In K.L. Janert's catalogue of Indian Mss. in Germany, in *Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland*, ed. W. Voigt, Wiesbaden.

48 Extracts from Kalhana's *Râjataranginî*, *Indian Antiquary* 18, 1889, p. 65 sqq., 97 sqq., 19, 1890, p. 261 sqq. Critical notes on Kalhana's Seventh Taranga, *Indian Antiquary* 40,1911, p. 97 sqq.; Critical notes on Kalhana's Eighth Taranga, *Indian Antiquary* 42, 1913, p. 301 sqq.; *Kritische Bemerkungen zur Râjataranginî*, *ZDMG* 69, 1915, p. 129 sqq.

49 B. Kölver, *Textkritische und philologische Untersuchungen zur Râjataranginî des Kalhana*, Wiesbaden 1971, see. pp. 20, 61, and esp. p. 79 sqq.

50 Detailed Report of a tour in search of Sanskrit MSS in Kaçmîr, *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Extra number 1877.

51 See *Râjataranginî*, transl. vol. I, p. 4-5, and especially p.24-27

52 On the following points see Stein, ad *Râjataranginî* 1.11-18 and transl., introd. p. 24-27

- <old coins, occasionally mentioned in the text>
- the local Purâna, the Nîlamata[*purâna*]<sup>53</sup>
- <local traditions, not mentioned here but evident everywhere throughout the work<sup>54</sup>>
- 10 earlier (lost) historical writings by some (partly) unknown authors, Suvrata, Ksemendra (Nrpâvali), the *pâçupata* Helarâja (Pârthivâvali in 12000 *çlokas*<sup>55</sup>), by Padmamihira, and by Chavillâkara
- written works (*çâstra*)
- <eye witness accounts for more recent events not directly mentioned but evident from the accounts Kalhana gives of the last few decades before him.>

In addition to the Nîlamatapurâna, which occasionally has been referred to in the Râjataranginî, though only here, in the introduction, once by name, we now have one more<sup>56</sup> of such sources readily available, though unfortunately not from Kashmir, but from neighboring Nepal. This is the so-called Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî. Studying it we will be in a better position to judge his method - and again from an additional point of view.

## 9. A 'New' Source: The Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî

The *Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî* (GRV), which had already been discovered by Bendall<sup>57</sup> about a hundred years ago, is valuable as it shows us clearly the

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53 See Stein, ad Râjataranginî 1.14, and Bühler's opinion (Report p. 38) on Kalhana's use of this source: "K. took over some portions of this narrative almost literally from the Purâna." See now B. Kölver, Untersuchungen

54 See Stein, tr. Râj. I, p.26

55 In the 9th or 10th century, according to Stein, transl. Râj. ad 1.17-18; he wrote a comm. on Vâkyapadîya, see Kielhorn IA 3, 285

56 The Nrpâvali of Ksemendra is lost, as M.A.Stein states, Râjataranginî 1.13, tr. p. 3, cf. note 3; but when he first came to Kashmir in 1888 he was misled, just as Bühler in 1875, into believing that such texts still existed: "Then, while chasing for mss., there also are phantoms which can never be captured. An otherwise trustworthy Pandit spoke mysteriously about a still older royal chronicle" in his travelogue in a German newspaper, the Allgemeine Zeitung (Cotta, München n. 184 sqq., 1889).

57 It was discovered in 1898/99 in the Durbâr or Bîr Library the mss. of which now are in the National Archives of Nepal (ms. No. 1.1583, filmed in 1970 as B 18/23 by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project), see Bendall, The history of Nepal and surrounding kingdoms (A.D. 1000-1600) JSAB LXII (1903). The text has been printed only in 1959 by Yogî Naraharinâth, Gopâlavamçâvalî, in Himavatsamskrîh, vol. 1, p. 9-34, and more readily available, but with many mistakes, by D.R. Regmi in his Medieval Nepal, Calcutta/Patna 1965-6. Some local Nepalese scholars, united in the Itihâsa Samçodhana Mandala founded by Naya Raj Pant, have studied the text in detail. It has now been edited by a former member, Dhanabajra Bajracharya, with a Nepali translation which, in turn has

process of collection, re-adjustment, compilation etc. such texts went through in their textual history.

The present text begins at the very beginning of time, or rather with the present *yuga*, and ends with a large number of dates and entries relating to the reigning king at the time of the "author", better: the last contributor to this *vamçâvalî*, living under the famous king Jayasthiti Malla (official reign, Nepal<sup>58</sup> Samvat 502-515 = 1382-1395 A.D., but the de facto ruler since, at least, a decade earlier). It ends in the year Nepal Samvat 509 = 1389 A.D. and was copied in one stretch on consecutively numbered folios at about his time. Accordingly, the ms. was written in the script of this period, the so-called hooked version (*bhumijo*) of early Newari script, which went out of use soon after this period, to give way to the common Newari script.<sup>59</sup>

The text consists of two parts,<sup>60</sup> V<sub>1</sub> and V<sub>2</sub>. The first part (fol. 17a-30a)<sup>61</sup> treats the reign of the early kings of Nepal, some of which are purely legendary, in a brief fashion, merely mentioning the numbers of years, months and days they reigned and a few important features from their reign, such as the founding of a temple, etc. The most first prominent and detailed description of a particular reign is that of king Çivadeva (NS 219 = 1098 A.D.) and the text basically ends with the description of the only short Muslim invasion of the Valley under Çâms ud-Dîn in November 1349. Only a brief summary up of the period up to c. 1389 A.D. follows, with the words "King Jayasthiti Malla became victorious..." (fol. 29a); then come some

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been translated into English by K.P. Malla: Dhanavajra Vajrâcârya and Kamal P. Malla, *The Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî*, Nepal Research Centre Publications No. 9, Wiesbaden (F.Steiner) 1985, pp. 238, (with facsimile of the text and of two other older *vamçâvalîs*). - The much quoted *vamçâvalî* of D. Wright, (*History of Nepal* translated from the Parbatiya, Cambridge 1877, repr. Kathmandu 1972), is based on a much later version of the ancient chronicles, which includes many legendary materials added in the later Malla period, and many of them only at the time of composition for Wright, as a check of the original in the India Office Library will show (thus, T. Riccardi, oral communication, 1985). Another late *vamçâvalî*, of 1825 A.D., has been published by B. Hazrat (*History of Nepal as Told by Its Own and Contemporary Chroniclers*, Hoshiarpur, 1970). The original ms. of this text (in English!) also is in the Indian Office Library. There are several more late *vamçâvalîs*, written in Nepali, for which see Vajracraya and Malla, p. XXIII sqq.

58 This era begins on October 20, 879 A.D.

59 A variety of which still is used today and which is closer in general appearance to Devanâgari

60 Earlier authors has supposed three parts, but see immediately

61 The initial portion of the ms. (fol. 1-16b) is lost. It may have contained a Buddhist version of the history of Nepal, which is presupposed by the late medieval Buddhist versions of the early history of Nepal, as preserved in the Svayambhûpurâna. In this text it is Mañjuçrî who plays the role of primordial cultural hero. Formerly, one divided the text into three portions, following Bendall, see ed. p. iii. However, I disagree with Vajracharya-Malla's division after fol. 30b and include the whole page of 30b in V<sub>2</sub>, see below.

additions in old Newari (fol. 29a-30a), consisting of various entries, not always in proper sequential order, from the reign of King Jayasthiti.

The second chronicle (V<sub>2</sub>, fol. 30a-63b), is also written in Sanskrit, but has, from the beginning, occasional entries in old Newari as well. From fol. 33a (NS 339 = 1219 A.D.) onwards, it is entirely written in old Newari.<sup>62</sup> At the very beginning of this *vamçâvalî* on fol. 30a, there is a short description of the four main Visnu shrines of the Valley, in Newari.<sup>63</sup> It only covers the period from NS 177 (1057 A.D., the year of birth of king Çivadeva) to NS 508 (1388 A.D.); in fact it begins with NS 219, the year king Çivadeva took over the government from the local magnate of Lalitapura (Pâtan). It ends a few years before the death of king Jayasthiti (NS 515). Both chronicles thus have a rather abrupt end. (For an explanation, see below.) The second chronicle does not show the confusion of dates under king Jayasthiti Malla as seen in V<sub>1</sub>. It appears to be a compilation by a single person, ending his text in NS 508, thus about the same time as V<sub>1</sub> (NS 509).<sup>64</sup>

On the surface, we thus have two chronicles of medieval; Nepal, one running from the beginning of times to NS 508, and the other one only from the beginning of the reign of Çivadeva (1098 A.D.) to NS 509. The matter is, however much more complicated, and a study of some of the peculiarities and intricacies of these two *vamçâvalîs* serves well to understand how such chronicles were composed, and on what kind of data they are based. This, in turn will enhance our understanding of the materials used by such writers as Kalhana and his successors Jonarâja, Çrîvara, Çuka, etc.

#### 10. Description of a dynastic *vamçâvalî*, GRV.

These chronicles are not just a simple list of dates of the line of descent (*vamça*) of a dynasty, as their much earlier predecessors, the *vamça* lists of the Brahmanical teachers in at the end of the Çatapatha Brâhmana, Brhadâran'yaka Upanisad, or Jaiminîya Upanisad-Brâhmana are indeed. They also contain the exact data for the reign of each successive king: at least the number of years they ruled, but often also the months, and in later cases the

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62 With only a few genitives of reigning monarchs left in Sanskrit.

63 This portion has so far been included in V<sub>2</sub>, see ed. p. iii. However, V<sub>2</sub>, clearly begins with *op* before the description of the 4 Visnu temples of the Kathmandu Valley (as a counterpart to the description of the Çaiva sanctuary Paçupatinâth, at the beginning of V<sub>1</sub>), and then, with *svasti* at the start of the actual text. In any case, the break on fol. 30 indicates that the ms. was copied by the compiler of the GRV or by a scribe in *one* stretch (probably including another *vamçâvalî* on fol. 1-16b).

64 This is an entry added by mistake well before the end of the ms., on fol. 58a).



exact dates in terms of the luni-solar calendar. The first completely dated entry in V<sub>1</sub> is Vaiçâkha Çukla Pûrnimâ NS 239 (1127 A.D.), the date for the inauguration ceremony of a tank, and in V<sub>2</sub> the first date even includes the weekday: Wednesday, Aasâdha Krsna Prtatipadâ, uttarâsâdha-naksatra çuddhi-yoga, NS 177 (1065 A.D.). Especially V<sub>2</sub> has many such dates. - The chronicles also contain many 'incidental' data: a fire, an earthquake, the establishment or repair of temple, etc. However, apart from the vagaries of nature, such data are significant: especially in the earlier parts of the *vamçâvalîs* with few entries beyond the reigns of the kings, they are clustered around important kings.

After a brief listing of the more legendary kings of the earliest parts of the present *yuga*, the GRV begins in earnest with the first historically attested king, with Vrsadeva. He was the great-grandfather of Mânadeva who has left us the first inscription of Nepal, in A.D. 467 (Çaka 386)<sup>65</sup> and who mentions him by name. The *vamçâvalî* describes him as follows: "He established completely the Caitya Bhannâraka in Sinagum Vihâra (Svayambhûnâtha, W. of Kathmandu). A water-conduit was also constructed there. On the northern side of the (sacred place, temple) of Çrî-Paçupati, a big trident was established. He was [unknowingly] killed by his own son, at night at the place of the water conduit, by order of the father (himself)" (f. 20b):

*tena krta Sînagu-vihâra-caitya-bhanârîka pratisthita sampûrna krtam  
| tatreva panâlikâ ca<sup>a</sup> | puna Çrî-paçupati-sthâne utra brhatrîsula  
pratisthitam. tasya mrttî svaputrena râtre panâlikâsthâne çiraç chitvâ  
pitâjñâ krtam |*

This passage gives a good idea of the sort of ungrammatical Sanskrit that was used in these chronicles. Even in this brief passage it can be noticed that the underlying language is Newari, for example in the use of instrumental for the ergative case<sup>66</sup> and the absolute lack of a distinction between the genders.

About Mânadeva, his son (i.e. only according to the *vamçâvalî*), we hear even more: he is regarded as the real founder of the dynasty and is credited by the text with the introduction of land-measurement (that means, he regulated

<sup>65</sup> In this connection it should be repeated that the early kings, the Licchavis used two sets of eras: the early inscriptions up to 592 A.D. (Ç. 535) are in the Çaka era, then, from 605 onwards the Mânadeva Samvat is used by Amçvarman and his successors. It was founded already in A.D. 576 and lasted until c. 879 when Nepal Samvat was introduced in October. But one manuscript colophon still has a date 3/4 years into NS, with a MS date. In India, scholars such as D.C. Sircar still thought that M.S. was identical with Harsa S.; Majumdar had his own identification (MS 1 = Çaka 300), see below, n.78.

<sup>66</sup> This could also be attributed to Prâkrt, but there are enough indications of Newari usage in the text, as also occasional Newari case endings in the Sanskrit text, see below.

agriculture and taxes.)<sup>67</sup> If we follow this lead and regard other early kings with a long entry, the one which stands out is Çivadeva (NS 219 - spring 246, 1098 - 1126 A.D.). In V<sub>1</sub> merely his foundations are enumerated in detail: he built a temple for Paçupatinâth, with a copperplate roof, constructed water channels, a palace with 5 courtyards, minted gold and a silver *dramma* coins, etc. - In the parallel text of V<sub>2</sub> which starts with Çivadeva, his reign is presented both more dramatically, in terms of a god-king. In addition, the exact dates of his birth and the age at the time of his death, 69 years, are given. "He was an incarnation of the Bharaiva of Kâmarûpa." (*kâmarûpa bherava avatârah*). The deeds of his crown prince, too, are described in detail in both texts.

Now it is clear from V<sub>2</sub> that Çivadeva began his reign a few months before the death of the "grand old man" of Lalitapura (Pâtan), a local magnate (*pradhâna*). The *vamçâvalî* describes him, in the same type of corrupt Sanskrit which a few times glides imperceptibly into Old Newari,<sup>68</sup> as follows: "On Mâgha, krsnâ âstâmî mûla naksatra, NS 219 (that is about 4 months after Çivadeva had become king), Nâyaka Varapâla Bhâro of Yarham (Lalitapura, Pâtan), Yetho Bahâla (Vihâra), a well-known (*\*vikhyâta*) person of Nepal, and a very influential man, capable of destroying or preserving both the royal houses (of Nepal) died at the age of 87."

*samvat 219 mâgha krsna astamyâ mûlanaksatra yarham yethobahâra  
varapâla bhâro.no<sup>a</sup> nâyaka nepâla.yâ viksâta mahâprabhûta<sup>a</sup>  
ubhayarâjyakula udharana dhâranasamartha<sup>a</sup> || asta varsâ 87 ||*

It is obvious that Çivadeva seized the opportunity and established a strong reign of his own, probably keeping Lalitapura as his capital.<sup>69</sup> He probably established his own quarter and settled Brahmins in the area, northwest of the older town.<sup>70</sup> - Against this background, the introduction of the *vamçâvalî* with its detailed description of the four Visnus also gains importance. Though

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67 This contrasts with Hsüan Ts'ang's statement that the Nepalese at the time were artisans and merchants. - Notable are the attempts at colonization under the early Licchavi kings which were concentrated around several villages "led by Brahmins" in the western side Valley, near Thankot. I suspect that this was done, as this part of the Valley lies a little higher than the rest and was not prone to flooding but, at the same time, well irrigated by a number of small streams which enabled well planned rice cultivation. In addition, Thankot is the first place (even today) on the old (or the modern) road to India and in fact still is a police checkpoint, a *dranga* guarding the *dvâra* of the country, as Kalhana would formulate.

68 With the suffixes *.tom* and *.yâ*

69 The Pâtan royal line was founded by king Vijayadeva, next to the older kingdom with Gvala (= Deopatan) as its center, about 86 years earlier, according to the *vamçâvalî*.

70 I am led to this conjecture by a study (forthcoming) of the origins of the old royal Agnihotra at Thambu, in SW Pâtan and the old, attested locations of the Agnihotras in the area and north of it, in present North-West Pâtan.

Çivadeva is described as Bhairava (Çiva),<sup>71</sup> the country had, since Licchavi times, as its four main guardians, the 4 Visnus situated in the four directions of the Valley.

The first *vamçâvalî* begins in a similar vein: it relates the legendary story of the discovery of the major Çivalinga of Nepal, the one at Paçupatinâtha, and thus reverses the roles both gods play. Interestingly, it is the Gopâlas, a mythical dynasty at the beginning of times (in this text) who discovered the Çivalinga. Their names may point to a Vaisnava connection.<sup>72</sup>

This legendary dynasty and the 3 Mahisâpâla kings are followed by a long list of non-Sanskritic names of the Kirâta kings which, as a whole, is no doubt as little trustworthy as the long immediately following list of Licchavis who are supposed to have reigned in Nepal and in India before the first historically attested king Mânadeva, of 465- A.D.<sup>73</sup> However, we know from non-Sanskritic place names<sup>74</sup> and some loanwords in the Licchavi inscriptions, all written in Sanskrit, which refer to separate divisions of government (*çollam-adhikâra*, etc.) that the kings preceding the Licchavi dynasty must have had a well-established administration using local, non-Sanskritic terms. The list of Kirâta kings therefore has some credibility, if not in every detail. In a recently discovered Licchavi inscription at the old Hanuman Dhoka royal palace of Kathmandu, the Kirâta are actually referred to in a brief, unfortunately enigmatic fragment. As their names have so far not drawn the attention of scholars of Tibeto-Burmese linguistics, I give them here:<sup>75</sup>

Elam, Pelam, Melam, Cammim, Dhaskem, Valumca, Humtim, Huramâ, Tuske, Prasaphum, Pavam, Dâstî, Camba, Kamkam, Svananda, Phukom, Çimghu, Julam, Lukam, Thoram, Thuko, Varmma, Gumjam, Puska, Tyapami, Mugamam, Çasaru, Gumnam, Khimum, Girijam, Khurâmja, Khigu.

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71 Cf. the semi-divine ancestry of the Kârkotâs in Kashmir, from a nymph

72 However, then immediately following Mahisâpâla, buffalo herders, are to be put into the reign of legend as well (but see below), as they are followed, in turn, by the Kirâta dynasty which can claim more historicity.

73 Unfortunately neither dynasty is mentioned by name in Samudragupta's Allahabad inscription.

74 These are Tibeto-Burmese. K.P. Malla regards them as old Newari (Linguistic Archeology of the Nepal Valley, Kailash, VIII p. 5-23; River Names of the Nepal Valley. A Study in Cultural annexation. Contributions to Nepalese studies x, p. 57-68); but they can as well represent another Tibeto-Burm. language since the earliest sentences of Old Newari, first attested in Old Newari documents of NS 103 = 982 A.D., show remarkable differences already which can only with great difficulty be imagined to have occurred between the forms attested in the later Licchavi inscriptions of c. 730 and the documents of 982 A.D. This question is in need of a more detailed study which I hope to carry out in the future.

75 A discussion of the onomastic evidence will be attempted in another article (forthcoming).

They are all prefixed with *çrî-* and a few of them seem to bear Sanskritic names already: Varmma (*varmâ*) Svananda (*sv-ânanda*), Girijam (*giri-*). The *vamçâvalî* adds: *ete dvâtrimsa kirâtarâjâh tâmarjjuna-koçakî-nanâd bhavâ yeh //*.<sup>76</sup> This is understood by Vajrâcârya and Malla as "now occupy the land between the Tâmbâ Koçî and Aruna Koçî / jun kirâta.harû (ahile) tâmbâkoçî ra arunakoçî.ko bîc.ko bhûbhâg.mâ bastachan." However, the Sanskrit text has "who live (westwards / eastwards, viewed) from the bank of the Tâmbâ-Arjuna-Koçikî (rivers)," i.e. probably eastwards of the Tâmbâ and Arjuna ('white' = Dudh) Kosî rivers. This would include the present settlement areas of the Sunwar and Rai tribes. The Rai have been referred to as Kiranti during the past few some centuries.<sup>77</sup>

Returning to other long descriptions of monarchs in the GRV, we find them clustered again precisely around the founders of new dynasties: As is well known, Amçubarman wrested the reign of the country from the Licchavis in 605 A.D.<sup>78</sup> after having been Mahâsamânta for some decades. In the

<sup>76</sup> The ed. has *tâmarjjanakoçakî* (uncorrected in the attached *çuddhipattra*) but the facsimile clearly has *tâmarjjakoçakî* with a small *na* superimposed between *rjja* and *ko*; an *-u* seems to have been added between the lower parts of *rjja* and *ko*. This *-u*, however, could also be taken as the mark indicating the inserted letter, as can be seen for similar cases on fol. 26a, cf. also fol. 29a.

<sup>77</sup> Malla takes this as referring to the Rais and Limbus, whose land is called Kirânt and who, in his and in Hodgson's opinion, have been "banished" from the Kathmandu Valley. (Brian Hodgson, *Miscellaneous Essays*, Vol. 1, p. 397, London 1880). The case rests, however, not so much on the later, 19th century chronicles but on the correct interpretation of *bhavâ*. Does it mean they "were living" or "are living (now)"? Note that the translators smuggle in "now" / "*ahile*" to justify their translation. The Kirâtas were succeeded by the Licchavis in the Valley of Nepal but this does not, of course, mean that the population was killed or left the valley. Indeed, even the physical appearance shows of the present day Newars shows various mixtures of proto-Negroid (Veddoid), various Mongoloid and of Indian (Caucasian) features. Nor did the people in the Valley change their language to some form of Middle Indian imported from the plains. Instead, the inhabitants at some unknown time adopted the Newari language (in any case, by 982 A.D.). Since we do not know whether the Licchavi time Tibeto-Burmese place names in the Kathmandu Valley represent the Kirâta or an archaic form of the Newari language, one can understand the above sentence as "The Kirâtas originate(d) from the (west) bank of the Tâmbâ and Dudh Kosî." This sentence is similar to the earlier statement in GRV (fol. 17a) about the immigration of the Gopâlas: *Gopâla babhûvuh tata paççât mâlâkhâtah gogrâmasya âgamena...* "There were the Gopâlas. Then, later, by their approach from Mâlâkhâ to(?), of) Gogrâma ..." (this is, basically the translation of Vajrâcârya, followed, with a paraphrase, by Malla: "... gopâla bhae. tyas pacchi Mâlâkhâ.bâna Gogrâma.ko âgamana bhayo.") Nepali scholars take Mâlâkhâ as an old Name of Kîrtipur, and Malla refers to Gopâla Çresthas in the South West of the Valley.

<sup>78</sup> This date rests on the identification first year of the Mânadeva Samvat in 576 A.D. which has been noticed by Nepalese scholars, notably those of the Itihâsa Samçodhana Mandâla (cf. below, on the Sumatitantra). This has long remained unknown outside Nepal, see e.g. Majumdar's treatment of Nepal in: *The Classical Age*, p. 81 sqq., p. 86, who operates with his own identification of Çaka year 501 = Mânadeva Samvat 1 = 578/579 A.D., or even in

*vamçâvalî* his successors, probably Aabhîra insurgents,<sup>79</sup> Jîvaguṇṇa, Visnuguṇṇa, Bhûmigupta are placed before him. From the inscriptions we actually know only<sup>80</sup> of Jisnuguṇṇa and Visnuguṇṇa so far. Jisnuguṇṇa has inscriptions of the years MS 48-49/57 but his namesake Jîvaguṇṇa<sup>81</sup> is said to have reigned 74 years in V<sub>1</sub>, while Visnuguṇṇa is attested in MS 64-65, but credited with 71 years of reign in the *vamçâvalî*). Both reigned, next to nominal Licchavi kings who take over again with Narendradeva (attested 643-649 A.D.). Especially Visnuguṇṇa receives a long list of deeds in V<sub>1</sub>, and Amçavarman himself is also allotted a few sentences, including the establishment of land rent<sup>82</sup> and the introduction of grammatical studies.<sup>83</sup> - The divergent figures for the reigns of these kings are an indication of the confusion of later chroniclers, which must have been due an overlap of *vamçâvalîs*, that of the (Aabhîra) Guṇṇas, the usurpator Amçavarman, and the older one of the Licchavis (see further, below). The inscriptions show clearly that both Jisnuguṇṇa and Visnuguṇṇa reigned together with the older, nominal dynasty of the Licchavis. If there had been a *single*, contemporaneous *vamçâvalî*, this confusion could not have arisen.

Another long description is that of the early Licchavi king Supuspadeva, who is the fifth Licchavi credited to have ruled in Nepal.<sup>84</sup> But it is this king to whom the introductory chapter of V<sub>2</sub> attributes the special worship of Cangûm Nârâyanâ, the eastern one of the four important Visnu temples of the Valley (completed by Haridattavarman, a few generations later). He is, indeed, described as the typical founder monarch. "He made the country of

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D.C. Sircar's Indian Epigraphy, who still follows the older identification with the Harsa era. - Cf. also my article dealing with Amçavarman in a discussion of "On the location of the Licchavi capital of Nepal", Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik, 5/6 p.311 sqq.

79 Lévi, Le Népal II, p. 157 identifies Jisnuguṇṇa with the Aabhîra Kishnoogupta of the later, British lists. - Malla, following other Nepali scholars, identifies the Gopâlas with the Gvâ(la) and Nanda Gopâla Çresthas of the South-West of the Valley, see ed. p. vi.

80 Ravi-gupta, who is not found in the lists, can be added now, see ed. GRV p. vi; this brings the attested span of the Aabhîra Guṇṇas to A.D. 512-642. K.P. Malla, though noting their dates in the inscriptions and in India failed to understand the doubling of the Gopâlas at the beginning of the texts and in the 6/7th centuries. He simply regards the tradition as dubious.

81 There are quite a number of similar mistakes in the representation of royal names in the text, see below, the list of kings

82 Cf. documents c. 350 years later, by Kôlver and Çâkya

83 On this point see the monograph by Mahes R. Pant, Çabdânuçâsana, Kathmandu 1985

84 His (probable) ancestors are located at Ayodhya and Vimalanâgari (probably Vaiçâlî). The connection of the long list of these strictly mythological kings (beginning with Manu, etc.) with the Licchavis is not made explicit in the GRV. - Already according to a Licchavi inscription at the Paçupati temple (ed. R. Gnoli, no.LXXXI), Supuspa is regarded as the remote ancestor of Licchavi, the first ruling monarch of this dynasty; he was born at Puspapura, perhaps Pânaliputra. This agrees with the *vamçâvalî* which makes a distinction between an early Supuspadeva and a Puspavarman who immediately precedes the attested Licchavi in Nepal, Vrsadeva/Viçvadeva.

Nepal into one with the four castes (*varna*). He built the temple of Çrî-  
Paçupati Bhannârika, and covered it with a roof. He then (built) a well-  
constructed, beautiful town and made laws for the whole realm, and the  
subjects were protected (by him) in the right manner (with justice); the  
practice of personal ownership of land was set up."

*tena hi nepâlabhûmiç câturvvarnna krta // çrîpaçupati-bhannârikasya  
devâlaya krtam sankhalîsa<sup>a</sup>châdanam // tata sundaranirmmata-  
nagaram sakalarâjya-marjjâdâ krtya<sup>a</sup> nyâyena prajâ<sup>a</sup> samasta  
pratipâlitâni<sup>a</sup> svasva-svakîyena bhumi - - samstha - - vyavahâra  
pravartate //*

We can thus see that, with the establishment of each new dynasty, there is a  
larger amount of information - often referring to the "correct" establishment  
of a proper Hindu country, or at least, of the foundation of the temples of the  
most important gods of the country (and, in the case of Mânadeva, also of  
Buddhist monasteries).

In both Vamçâvalîs, we find the following dynasties:

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Gopâla	505 years, 3 months	
Mahisapâla	161 years, 2 months	
Kirâta	1958 years, 8 months	
early Licchavi	942 years (until Vrsadeva)	
attested Licchavi	1301 years, 1 month	c.350/465 A.D. -
Thâkuri	360 years, 3 months	Oct. 879 A.D. -
Early Malla	382 years	Oct. 1200 A.D. -
Jayasthiti Malla	NS 502, Mâgha -	Jan. 1382 A.D. -

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A closer study of the GRV thus shows that even  $V_1$  already is a combination  
of several *vamçâvalîs*, as has been indicated above in the case of  
Amçuvarman and the Gupta kings in relation to the Licchavis. The breaks  
are visible at these instances, namely, where a long and detailed description of  
the reign of a king sets in.<sup>85</sup> In such cases there is an overlap in the lists,  
usually caused by times of unrest linked with the establishment of a new  
dynasty or with a foreign invasion. Thus, the introduction of the Guptas after

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<sup>85</sup> This has not been recognized by K.P. Malla, who merely recorded the unreliability,  
overlong reigns, etc. of the older parts of GRV, see ed. p. viii.

Amçucarman has caused a great confusion in the lists and extension of the reigning dates beyond normal limit. Again, a "*Gavuda*" and a Tibetan invasion had similar effects. The Gauda invasion might refer to King Harsa<sup>86</sup> and the Tibetan one is the famous incursion of a Tibetan army through Nepal, to the Ganges made in order to help the Chinese ambassador Wang Hsuan-Tse and the successor of the Indian king Harsa (in 647/8 A.D.)<sup>87</sup> There was another Tibetan invasion in 702 A.D.

The case of the Gupta dynasty, called Gopâla in the Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî but named Aabhîra in its later versions, is most instructive. Not only has it created confusion with regard to the correct length of the reigns but it also has led to the insertion of a separate Gopâla dynasty at the very beginning of the text (after which the text has conventionally been named Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî). Even the names of the individual Gopâla and Gupta kings overlap: we have a Jîvaguṇḍa, Viṣṇuguṇḍa, Bhûmigupta, counted as "the three Gopâla kings" *before* Çivadeva and Amçucarma (605 A.D.), while they, in fact, succeeded him as *Bhûmigupta*, Yayaguṇḍa (= Jayaguṇḍa), Dharmaguṇḍa, Harsâguṇḍa, Bhîmagupta, Maniguṇḍa, *Viçṇuguṇḍa*, *Jinaguṇḍa* as the kings of the "primordial" Gopâlas, before the Mahisapâlas (Vara-, Jaya-, Bhuvana-Simha), and the Kirâtas.

It is obvious that this confusion is due to the redactional activity of a later compiler who had several lists before him and had to adjust them to whatever he knew of the period in question from other sources. This case is not isolated in South Asian history. The same process of making a contemporaneous dynasty precede the list is also seen in the doubling, actually even a trebling of the Gonanda dynasty in early Kashmir (see below).

The question as to what happened if two *vamçâvalîs* were combined can thus be answered in a general way. The older lists, dealing with past dynasties, were not regarded as that important as the one contemporaneous with the compiler of the new *vamçâvalî*. But the important facts from the older dynasties are kept, especially those of their "founding fathers" with their deeds of (re-)establishing Hinduism in the country.<sup>88</sup> -- The scarcity of data in the older parts of the *vamçâvalîs*, whether in Nepal or in Kashmir, however, is also due to the problems of transmission: complete *vamçâvalîs* were not always available after the passage of many decades or centuries. Merely the

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86 Perhaps referring to Harsadeva of Gauda, Odra, Kalinga and Kosala whose daughter Râjyamati married Jayadeva II of Nepal (attested 713-733 A.D.)

87 Summed up by Majumdar, *The Classical Age*, p. 124 sqq., who can, of course, not accept a Tibetan victory over the king of Kanauj.

88 K.P. Malla, following R.Thapar speaks of "pruning" and "telescoping".

bare data are usually left in short lists or transmitted orally, especially such important events, as setting up a major Visnu statue, founding a temple, the invasion of a foreign king, etc. Such events are often transmitted in memorial verses. One can therefore formulate:

Juxtaposition of contemporaneous dynasties is replaced by consecutive position, that is: by interpolation or by positioning at the head of the list.

This last point is very important. It not only explains the confusion in many dynastic lists but also can be adduced to explain those of the Purânas - which we can *not* control. A close study and a good comprehension of the Vamçâvalîs therefore can help to understand the structure of such lists in the Purânas.<sup>89</sup>

#### 11. The vamçâvalî as the text of one particular dynasty

Another outcome of this observation is a point which, actually, should be a rather obvious one. As the name of such dynastic lists, *vamçâvalî*, implies they are lists containing the *vamça* of *one* particular dynasty. This is a rather old trait, which can be traced back to the Vedic, Buddhist or Jaina lists of teachers (*vamça, paramparâ*), or to the old Ceylonese Dîpavamça and Mahâvamça which also were based on such *vamça* lists.

It was, a priori, not intended to give the names of other dynasties, or even the one of a contemporaneous dynasty reigning in the same or a neighboring territory, or of the names of a joint kingship, as has been the case in Nepal from time to time.<sup>90</sup> A *vamçâvalî* is the dynastic list of *one* family only. That this practice is quite old can be seen in Albiruni's 'India'. He refers<sup>91</sup> to a long list of the Turkî kings of Gandhâra (Udabhânda/Wahind/Und) which was still kept in his time in the fortress of Kangra, after the Islamic Turks under Muhammad of Ghazni had destroyed the successor state of the Turkî Çâhis, the Hindu Çâhi, by 1020 A.D. The scroll had apparently been brought to Kangra by fleeing Hindu Çâhis. In any case it indicates that this dynastic *vamçâvalî* was actually kept and honored by a successive dynasty. This certainly cannot have been the norm -- otherwise we would have much better

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89 Even though some of them, as also in the Mahâbhârata, originally may have been the oral property of bards only. Their texts underwent compilation and redaction by Brahmin writers at a later stage. These, as always, tried to smooth the text...

90 This has not been understood by L.Petech and K.P. Malla who both complain that their respective *vamçâvalîs* regard the world from the point of view of Patan viz. Bhakatpur only, see ed. GRV p. xiv..

91 Albiruni, India, transl. Sachau , vol. II p. 11.



historical materials at our disposal nowadays. At some time during the following 900 years, the Turki scroll has unfortunately disappeared and with it all detailed information not contained in Albiruni's India, the Râjataranginî, and the rare inscriptions of this dynasty and those of their successors, the Hindu Çâhis.

Clearly, the outcome of the process described just now was: when one dynasty was defeated and disappeared from the face of India as if it had been a dream, as Kalhana says about the disappearance of the Çâhi realm,<sup>92</sup> its history could very easily disappear as well -- and this all too often is the state of things today. If we would not have had access to the thousands of copper plates and the many inscriptions on stone, we would know very little indeed about the actual history of medieval India. - The situation in South Asia thus is materially different from that in, e.g., China, where the history of a dynasty was compiled only after its defeat, disappearance and replacement by the new dynasty. It was, of course, based on many more records than we have ever had for India, but this is quite another question. - Also, as has been pointed out above, a *vamçâvalî* did not only contain strictly royal data but included many other events, such as important data on foundations, etc. This practice, too, seems to be old. It is already referred to by the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan Ts'ang: "with respect to the records of events, each province has its own official for preserving them in writing. The record of these events in their full character is called Ni-lo-pi-ch'a (Nîlapina, [*sic*] blue deposit).<sup>93</sup> In these records, are mentioned good and evil events, with calamities and fortunate occurrences."<sup>94</sup> The description closely matches the nature of the GRV and other chronicles, and we may therefore take his word for granted.

In sum, we can therefore expect fairly good data for a particular dynasty from their own history in *vamçâvalî* form. A good example is the one of the early Malla kings up to and including Jayasthiti Malla. To paraphrase K.P. Malla, the translator into English of the text: without the *Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî* we would simply have no idea of how complicated the pattern of internal struggles was that preceded the usurpation of power, after a century of unrest and invasions, by Jayasthiti Malla. This situation closely resembles that of

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92 Râjataranginî 7.66-69: "Now one asks oneself, whether, with its kings, ministers and its court, it ever was or not"

93 S.Beal, Si-yu-ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World, London, I p.78.- This might refer to a blue painted cardboard type book as later on in use in Nepal and Tibet (*nîlapattra*). It is written with silver or gold letters. However, as paper was introduced into India only after 1000 A.D. The *nîlapattra* of Hsuan Ts'ang's time must have consisted of another material, perhaps also silk, as reported by Albiruni in case of the scroll of the Turkî Çâhis.

94 Though written by a Chinese traveler with his own cultural background this might well represent the Indian pre-occupation with good and bad omina. In the mid-seventies I saw many 'news-worthy' items in the Government newspaper (The Rising Nepal/Gorkhapattra), such as the auspicious one of "a white crow has been sighted in such-and-such a town".

Kashmir. The authors of the various Râjataranginîs warn time and again: "whenever Kashmir is internally divided and weak, there are invasions from outside." These incursions were, in fact, often guided by the leader of one particular Kashmiri faction.- We now have to turn to the later use made of and the final fate of such dynastic histories.

## 12. Use of *vamçâvalî* sources by later scribes and compilers

When the dynastic history of one particular royal family was used by later writers or compilers, this was prone to give rise to a number of changes and ensuing problems. Some have been mentioned already:

- The overlap of reigns, resulting in pre-position of two dynasties (Gopâlas/Amçûvarman/Licchavis), by putting one of them in front of the other. The re-arranging of contemporary dynasties (sometimes reigning only in one part of the country), one before each other, automatically led to a lengthening of the "historical time span" reported in the new, combined chronicle. In this way, historically fairly late kings will become such of a much more remote past.

- Filling in data from several separate *vamçâvalîs* of the same dynasty. A very good example is the later V<sub>2</sub> containing materials about the early Mallas, where all data are in a great confusion, not by a mere misplacement of a page while copying but quite generally so. The data seem to have been added from various slips or books lying in front of the compiler who started off in the good direction but then, more often than not, overlooked one or the other date and got things confused in his text. The most obvious example is provided by the existence of an extra folio, without number, which has entries from the year N.S. 466 which is missing on fol. 51b. One may ask, of course: why did the author not make a draft first? Our present Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî thus seems to be the rough copy of one or two compilers, which perhaps was later copied once more by someone else who, by this process, combined V<sub>1</sub> and V<sub>2</sub> in one manuscript.<sup>95</sup> - A good example of a similar procedure of a from another area are the Râjataranginîs continuing the work of Kalhana from 1149/50 A.D. onwards.<sup>96</sup> They contain a large amount of interpolations, the origins of which are not traceable but often seem to contain genuine information from the period described. In this case, we know why: a

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<sup>95</sup> Note that it probably was preceded by another *vamçâvalî* text on fol.1- 16b. The extra unnumbered folio may have been forgotten to copy by the scribe and was supplied by him on a extra leaf.

<sup>96</sup> I.e. those of Jonarâja, Çrîvara, Prâjyabhatta and Çuka, ed. S. Kaul, Hoshiarpur 1966-67, transl. by Jogesh Chunder Dutt, Kings of Kashmîra, vol. III, Calcutta 1898. There also is a Hindi translation.

combined text was prepared for a translation into Persian for the Moghul emperor Akbar in 1589 A.D. The Brahmins ordered to do so collected all they could in order to present him a good and complete history, stressing the beneficial aspects of those Muslim (and also Hindu) kings benevolent to them. The same process can be detected in V<sub>2</sub> as well. It also explains why Jayasthiti is praised as an incarnation of the *vamsa* of the Buddha and of the eight *lokapâlas*, V<sub>1</sub> f. 29a, or why Çivadeva, is presented as an incarnation of the Bhairava of Kâmarûpa in V<sub>2</sub>, f. 31a.<sup>97</sup>

-- Repetition of same dynasty at different locations in the *vamçâvalî*, a process probably based on several separate *vamçâvalîs*. This is a variation of the topic just dealt with. In the Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî, the dynasty of the Gopâlas (Gupta) is doubled at the beginning of the text, while in the Râjataranginî it is the Gonandas, who appear three times at different points in time at the beginning of Kalhana's work.-- The following table presents a list of the early kings of Kashmir and Nepal and Kashmir (where kings related to each other by blood relationship are separated from others by a line ---).

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97 Note that many of the Muslim kings of medieval Kashmir are praised by their chroniclers as incarnations of Çiva or of Visnu.

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NEPAL

KASHMIR

Gopâla

Gonanda:

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(-gupta)

Gonanda I  
Dâmodara I

Bhûmi-  
Jaya-  
Dharma-

Yaçovatî  
Gonanda II

Harsa-  
Bhîma-  
Mani-  
Visnu-  
Jina-

35 lost kings  
  
(‘restored’ kings)

Lava  
Kuça  
Khagendra

Mahisapâla

Surendra

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(-simha)

Godhara  
Suvarna  
Janaka  
Çacînara  
Açoka  
Jalauka

Vara-  
Jaya-  
Bhuvana-

(32 Kirâta kings)

Dâmodara II

Licchavi

Huska  
Juska  
Kaniska

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(-varmâ)

Nimittakâla-  
Makarâtta-  
Kâkavarmâ-  
Supuspa-deva  
Bhâskara-deva  
Bhûmi-gupta

Abhimanyu  
(last of ‘restored kings’)

Candra-

Gonanda:

Jaya-

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Varsa-

Gonanda III

Kubera-	Vibhîsana I	
Hari-	Indrajit	
Siddhi-	Râvana	
Haridatta-	Vibhîsana II	
Vasudatta-	Nara I (Kimnara)	
Çrîpati-	Siddha	
Çivavrddhi-	Utpalâksa	
Vasanta-	Hiranyâksa	
Supuspa-		
Viçva-deva (attested)		c. 500 A.D.
Mâna-deva (467 A.D.)		
Çankara	Hiranyakula	
Dharma	Vasukula	
Mahî	Mihirakula	
Vasanta	Baka	
Udaya	Ksitinanda	
Gana	Vasunanda	
Gunakâmana	Nara II	
Çiva	Aksa	
Çampâ	Gopâditya	
Narendra	Gokarna	
Bhîma	Khinkila-Narendrâditya	
Jîvagupta	Yuddhisthira	
Visnugupta	(Andha-Y.)	
Bhumigupta		
Çiva	----	
Âmçuvarmâ		
Mânnavarmâ	Pratâpâditya	
Krtavarmâ	Jalaukas	
Mahîpâla	Tuñjina I	
Gavudeçvara	----	
Devala	Vijaya	
Bhîmârjuna	Jayendra	
Narendra	----	
Çiva	Samdhimati-Aaryarâja	
Narendra		
Bala	----	
Vardhamâna		
Çankara	Gonanda:	
Vasanta	-----	
Rudra		
Jaya	Yudhisthira	

Bala	Gopâditya
Balârjuna	Meghavâhana
Mâna	Çresthasena-
(879 A.D.)	Pravarasena I
	(Tuñjina II)
	Hiranya and Toramâna
	Matrgupta
	Pravarasena II
	Yuddhisthira II
	Lahkhana-Narendrâditya
	Ranâditya (Tuñjina III)
	Vikramâditya
	Bâlâditya
	Kârkotas... (600 A.D.)

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To deal with the Nepalese chronicle first: In the GRV we have the long list of early Licchavis. They represent the 12 kings lost before Vrsadeva, as mentioned in the earliest inscription of Nepal, by king Mânadeva, 467 A.D. They are all surnamed *varmâ* in the GRV. The first is supposed to have been Jayadeva, and indeed we find a Jayavarmâ as the 11th king before Viçvadeva (Vrsadeva) in the GRV. Six more early Licchavis are left for unaccounted in GRV: Nimittakâla, Makarâta, Kâkavarmâ, *Suspaspadeva*, Bhâskaradeva, *Bhûmigupta*. Of them, Supuspadeva has been doubled as the last king before Vrsadeva, Supuspavarmâ. Similarly Bhûmigupta also appears as a Gopâla (and in the list of Amçvarman's successors, wrongly placed before him). - The change from *-varman* to *-deva* is also not without significance: it coincides with the shift from unattested kings to kings actually found in inscriptions. This can be interpreted, in the absence of other sources, in several ways. Either it may indicate the rise to power by the Licchavis in the Valley of Kathmandu or it may mark their immigration into the Valley, if they had been (minor) kings somewhere else, for example in the lowlands, the Tarai.<sup>98</sup> Perhaps they are a totally different dynasty, - if the list was not made up altogether.

In addition to these features, the names Bhûmigupta, Jayavarmâ, Varsâvarmâ are suspiciously close to the names of the 3 Mahîsâpala kings, put as the second dynasty of Nepal: Varasimha, Jayasimha, Bhuvanasimha. It may therefore be speculated that the Mahîsâpalas have been extracted from this list or, *vice versa*, that they have contributed to the long Licchavi list. Again, the Mahîsâpalas may well have been a parallel "dynasty": they are, after all,

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<sup>98</sup> Note that there also were Malla king(let)s somewhere West of the Valley, at the time of Mânadeva I, in 467 A.D.

described as 'buffalo hearers' and may well have been nothing more than a hill tribe, -- as the Gopâlas of later (Amçuvarma's) date; these were Aabhîras, immigrants from North-West India that are otherwise found in Gujarat, Central India near Bhilsa and Jhânsi, and even further South.<sup>99</sup>

The confusion described above thus is most probably due to the interpolation and pre-position of partly contemporaneous dynasties in the lists, just as has happened in the case of Amçuvarman. One can even posit that the "famous" Gopâla dynasty really represents the ancestors of the Gopâlas succeeding Amçuvarman. In that case, they have intentionally been inserted in the GRV in front of all others to show their eminence, and then, the early part of V<sub>1</sub> was made up by order of one of these Gopâlas, before the line reverted to the Licchavis. -- (In the following list relations between certain names have been indicated by bold print and by arrangement.)

#### INSCRIPTIONS

Gopâla	Mahisâpâla		Licchavi		Gopâla
<i>(deva)</i>	<i>(gupta)</i>	<i>(simha)</i>	<i>(varmâ, gupta, deva)</i>		
			Licchavi		
			Nimittakâla		
			Makarâtta		
			Kâkavarmâ		
			Supuspadeva		
			Bhâskaradeva		
			Bhûmigupta		
			-----		
	Bhûmi	Vara	Candra		Jîva
Jaya	Jaya	Jaya	Jaya		Visnu
x	Dharma	Bhuvana	Varsa		Bhûmi x
Harsa	Kubera		-----		
x	Bhûma		Hari		Amçuvarmâ
x	Mani		Siddhi		Mânavarmâ
x	Visnu		Haridatta		Krtavarmâ
x	Jina		Vasudatta		(these 3=
x			Çrîpati		"vamsân-
x			Çivavrddhi		tara" )
x			Vasanta		
x			Supuspa		
x					
x					
x	(12 lost kings)				

<sup>99</sup> Just as the Gurjara/Gujara are met with from Kashmir (Gujara tribe in the Kashmir hills) and the Panjab (Gujranwala) to modern Gujarat.

(Vrsa)	Viçva	Vrsa
	vvv Mâna	----
(Çankara)	Çankara	=
(Dharma)	Dharma	=
Mâna	^^^ ---	Mâna
(Mahî)	Mahî	=
Vasanta	Vasanta	=
Vâmana	Udaya	=
Râma	---( cf Campa vvv)	Mâna
Gana	Gana vvv	---
Gangâ	<i>Gunakâmana</i>	Sunakâma
(Mâna	--- NB ^^	---
Çiva	Çiva	=
	Campâ ^^	---
	vvv Narendra	=
	vvv Bhîma	=
605 AMSUVARMA	---vvv-	-----
Udaya	---	-----
Dhruva/	---	-----
Jisnugupta	JîvaGUPTA	VisnuGUPTA
Bhîmârjuna/	^^	
Jisnugupta		
Bhîmârjuna/	^^	
Visnugupta	VisnuGUPTA	VisnuGUPTA
	BhumiGUPTA	BhûmiGUPTA
Narendra	^^	-----
Çiva	Çiva	=
	AMÇUVARMA	=
750 Jaya	---	-----
Mâna DEVA	MânaVARMA	---
	KrtaVARMAa	=
Balirâja	Mahîpâla	
	(= Mahisapâla???)	
	= Gavudeçvara --	
Bala	Devala	--- (the following nearly
	Bhîmârjuna	= all repeated names
	Narendra	Nanda from earlier
	Çiva	= kings..)
	Narendra	Narîndra
	Bala	=
		Çankara



	Vardhamâna	=
	Çankara	=
	Vasanta	---
		Bhîmârjuna
		Jaya
		Bala
	Rudra	[Rudrade]va
	Jaya	=
	Bala	=
	Balârjuna	=
Mâna	Mâna	=

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--- Redaction, with rearrangements, as treated above, and a filling of the gaps in the *vamçâvalîs* by assigning long reigns to certain kings, if the total number of reigning years of the dynasty was known. This actually was the case for several ancient dynasties, i.e. for the Nandas, Mauryas, etc., in the Purânas, cf. also the Sumatitantra (see below). Such memorial verses have been part of the oral tradition of a certain area. Several examples are known from Kashmir and Nepal. Their dates mostly given in the Çaka era, see, for example, the short *vamçâvalî* of the spurious Kârñâta dynasty of Nepal in the Kaiser *Vamçâvalî*, ed. GRV p. 212, 222, or on the "invasion" of Harisimha of Mithilâ in Ç.S. 1245.<sup>101</sup> Kalhana also uses the Çaka era, differently from his employing the Laukika era for the dates of the various Kashmiri kings, for a general statement and correspondence, see Râj. 1. 56. -- In addition to the factors described so far, there also is a number of more technical ones which also have influenced the compilation of a combined *vamçâvalî*.

--- The problem of different eras. These were often changed, especially with incoming new dynasties. Later compilers have difficulty with the proper conversion.

For example, the 25 year difference between Kalhana's dates for the Kârkota dynasty and the dates of its kings that can be confirmed from other sources, e.g. that of Chinese travelers,<sup>102</sup> seems to be due to such a confusion. It can easily be resolved if we take into account the beginning date of Laukika Samvat of Kashmir which corresponds to Kali Samvat 25 (expired).<sup>103</sup> It is

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101 See Regmi, Medieval Nepal I, p. 276 ff. and more materials in the author's article: Zur Geschichte der Râjopadhyâya von Bhaktapur, Folia Rara, ed. H. Franke, et al., Wiesbaden 1976, p. 172.

102 See already Cunningham, Ancient Geography, p. 91; cf. Stein, Râjataranginî, tr. I, 67

103 See Bühler, Report p. 59 sqq.; and Stein, Râjataranginî, transl. I, p. 58; and note ad 1.48-49. The discrepancy extends throughout the Kârkota reign, see for example, Stein tr. p. 96 (par. 91) on Cippanajayapîda. @

curious that Stein did not notice the reason for this confusion.<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, the introduction of a new era, such as the Mânadeva Samvat in Nepal in 576 A.D., was sometimes made retro-actively<sup>105</sup> or was not accepted by everybody at once. We thus have a colophon which still uses the MS era early in the new Nepâla Samvat era that begun on Oct.20, 879.

-- Furthermore, the calendar system using *amânta* viz. *pûrnimânta* months also changed frequently. This makes exact calculation of exact dates very difficult unless the compiler knew which system had been used. They all can add to the aberrant dates contained in our sources.<sup>106</sup> Further, there is the insertion of the intercalary (*adhika*) month. For example the Jonarâja-Râjataranginî 85 clearly states:<sup>107</sup>

*tad eva vimalâcâryah çâke khesunavânkite  
sadadrinandamâsasya malabhramam avâraya4*

"At this time, namely in the year 950 of the Çaka era Vimalâcârya, corrected the mistake that every 976th month would be considered an unclean month." (Dutta) In most cases, however, due to the lack such information, we have to reconstruct the astronomical pattern from the often lacuneous data of inscriptions which do not always mention the weekdays.

--- Finally, the concept of Kaliyuga, as the period we live in, plays a great role that has not been appreciated in the evaluation of chronicles such as the *vamçâvalîs*. - We have already seen that the author of the GRV traces the history of Nepal back to the beginning of the Kaliyuga. The same is done by Kalhana in his history of Kashmir. In both cases the tendency to go back that far necessitated a filling in of the gaps that were left in the traditional lists and other materials accessible to both authors, until the beginning of Kaliyuga. If the compiler viz. author started to calculate the aggregated numbers of years of the kings in his lists and saw it fit, to introduce 'corrections' the results could only be worse.

In the case of Kalhana we can follow the process of deliberation and correction quite well. He expresses his wish to correct both the descriptions

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104 Tr. I p. 69, he speculates about an "error in the record of several reigns attributed to this dynasty." Majumdar, The Classical age p. 132 has no comments either, except for repeating Stein.

105 As indeed, seems to have been the case with the MS era. No inscriptions have been found yet which predate MS 29. This may very well be due to the accession of Amçvarman to the throne in MS 29 = 605 A.D. Even Mânadeva's successor Çivadeva still used the Çâka era prevalent throughout the earlier Licchavi period.

106 Cf. L. Petech's complaint that no Siddhânta fits the Licchavi dates.

107 Apparently an interpolation as the date ÇS 950 = 1027 A.D., does not fit the time scheme of the narrative which tells of the reign of Râjadeva, 1213-1236 A.D.

and calculations of his predecessors quite clearly in the introduction to his work. In addition he stresses the necessity to arrive at the beginning of the Kaliyuga and to fill in the gap, from any sort of materials available to him, of the fixed number of "52 lost kings" of the traditional accounts (Râj. 1.16, 44). It must be stressed that Kalhana was conscientious in so far as he based his 'additions and corrections' on written testimony available to him from accounts of other writers on Kashmirian history and from other texts. He did not, as others have done, simply invent a string of names to fill the gap but stopped short, after exhausting his materials, and left a gap of 35 unknown kings.

The pressure to fill even this remaining gap must have been considerable. Indeed, later Muslim chroniclers have done so by a string of Hindu and Muslim names.<sup>108</sup> We can see the same process at work in the GRV with the introduction of the Kirâtas reigning in Nepal, parallel to the kings of the solar line (from Brahmâ to Râma, Lava and Kuça) at Ayodhya,<sup>109</sup> and a third parallel line, that of the (solar) Ikṣvâku line from Viçâla to Vikuksi,<sup>110</sup> before abruptly switching to the Nepalese Licchavis. This abrupt change, that mystified Sylvain Lévi,<sup>111</sup> has been closed already in the early 8th century by the Licchavi king Jayadeva II who made Licchavi, the ancestor of the (Nepalese) Licchavis the 9th king after Daçaratha<sup>112</sup> and thus effectively linked the Viçâla (Vimalanagarî) line with that of the Licchavis.

Both Kalhanâ and the GRV also close the gaps existing between the period of the *vamçâvalî* materials at their hands, and the beginning of the Kaliyuga. How easily this could be done, and for which, namely political, reasons, is aptly illustrated by the "continuation" of the Râjataranginî in Stein's time:<sup>113</sup>

"...the author of a genealogy of the Dogrâ rulers of Jammu which was shown to me some years ago at Jammu, had boldly identified thirty-five of the early ancestors of that family figuring in his table with the missing Kaçmîr kings of the Râjataranginî. The author when questioned by me regarding this remarkable discovery, was loath to

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108 See Stein, Râj.tr. I p. 73

109 The list contains most of the Epic and Purânic names listed by Pargiter, *Ancient Historical Tradition*, repr. Delhi 1962, p. 145 sqq., - but in a widely different order, usually by rearrangement of small sections of the lineage.

110 More or less agreeing with the later part of Pargiter's list of the Vaiçâlî kings, p. 147

111 *Le Népal*, Paris 1905-08, vol. II p. 89; the case is interesting though, as it indicates the archaic character of GRV; Jayadeva's text is more advanced than the much later GRV, a feature speaking for the reliability of the original Licchavi *vamçâvalî* underlying the present V<sub>1</sub> of GRV!

112 He should have been the 14th, according to the GRV.

113 Stein, Râj., tr. I p. 73, note 5

offer any proof of it, but seemed not a little proud of having thus by an ingeniously simple device demonstrated the antiquity of the Jammu family's claim to the rule of the Kaçmîr Valley."

There is, thus, a "system in the madness." Exactly the same procedure must have been followed by earlier genealogists in the case of the Gonandas and the Nepalese Gopâlas of Amçucvarman's time. Just like the Dogras, they were relatively late arrivals to their respective Valley kingdoms and had to prove their claims by a fictitious genealogy. It is notable that a flowering of *vamçâvalî* writing sets in, after the conquest of the Kathmandu Valley by the Gorkha dynasty in 1769. Though these new *vamçâvalîs*, mostly written in the 19th century, do not link the Çâha dynasty of Gorkha with the earlier ones,<sup>114</sup> they often continue the writing of history down to these kings. -- Naturally, such attempts must lead to inaccurate data which are characteristic of the first three books of the Râjataranginî. They have, therefore, generally been discarded, since Bühler and Stein, as completely unreliable and useless for purposes of historical writing.<sup>115</sup>

### 13. Kalhana's use of *vamçâvalîs*

After what has been said about the GRV and the way of arranging the data available to its author(s) it appears that Kalhana indeed made similar use of his materials, and especially of the various *vamçâvalîs* before him. He - rearranged certain lists of kings in front of others.

Even a brief look at the early "dynasties" of Kashmir shows that the Gonandas are repeated in books 1 and 2, and that the Huns appear both in books 1 and 3, widely out of historical context. Thus, Mihirakula is a king in book 1.289 ff. where he is reported to be the son of Vasukula, and the grandson of Hiranyakula, while history tells us that Mihirakula was the son of Toramâna who succeeded his father in c. 515 A.D. But Kalhana has another Toramâna in book 3.102, who is reported, together with his brother Hiranya (cf. Hiranyakula, above!) to be the son of a Çresthasena. He coined, according to Kalhana the famous (copper) *dînnâra* which were common until the time of the Muslim king Hassan (1472 -1485 A.D.), who, according to Çrîvara's Râjataranginî (3.211), made new coins<sup>116</sup> "as those of Toramâna had ceased

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114 This would have been impossible due to the perceived superiority of the Gorkhas over the Newars, cemented later on in the Mulukî Ain of the Rânâs. The situation thus is similar to that in the Islamic period of Kashmir.

115 Stein, Râj. tr. I p.69 sq., Bühler, Report, p. 58 sq. Cf. for example, Majumdar, The Classical Age, p. 132 sq., who merely recapitulates Stein and fails, just like Stein, to see the real value of the lists provided by Kalhana.

116 *dvidînnarî nâgamayî*, with the sign of a snake, reminding of the Nâga cult of the Valley (cf. Stein, tr. II, p.320) and his long note at Râjataranginî 3.103; Stein reports that Toramâna's copper coins "even to this day are common in all the Bazârs of Kâçmîr."

to be current." -- Also, the repetition of the Narendrâdityas and Yuddhisthiras towards the end of both the lists in books one and three should be noted. It becomes clear, thus, that Kalhana really had only a few "stepping stones" at his disposal, famous names, such as:

MAURYA: Açoka, well known from Buddhist texts 1.101  
c. 250 B.C.

KUSAaNA: Kaniska, with Huska and Juska, *ditto*, 1.168  
c. 100 AD?

HUNS: Hiranyakula, Vasukula, Mihirakula, 1.288  
c. 500 AD; and repeated at: 3.102.

Needless to say, most of these kings are regarded as Kashmiri kings and are made sons of local kings... It is around these data Kalhana had to build his scheme. Note that such a famous person as the Kusâna emperor Vâsudeva is missing, - apparently as his name did not fit the scheme of 'dynastic' names in -ska. That Kalhana confused the few notes on early history at his disposal, even as late as some 600 years before his time in case of the Huns, is clear by the repetition of their names in books 1 and 3. In the same way, Jalauka, the alleged son of Açoka, is repeated as Jalaukas, the son of the foreign-arrived king Pratâpaditya (a relative of Vikramâditya) in book 2 (Râj. 2.9). But Vikramâditya re-appears later with the poet Mâtregupta, who came from Harsa Vikramâditya (3.125).-- We thus get the following scheme:

book 1	book 2	book 3
-----		
Gonanda I		
Damodara I		
Gonanda II		
---		
240 B.C.	(c. 57 B.C.)	(c. 380-413 A.D.)
=====	relative of	poet at court of
AÇOKA	Vikramâditya, ...	Vikramâditya, (=
	Pratâpâditya	Candragupta II),
		Mâtrgupta
		(3.125)
Jalauka .....		Jalaukas
Damodara II		
c.100 A.D.		
=====		
HUSKA		
JUSKA		
KANISKA		
Gonanda III		
---		
c.500 A.D.		
=====		
Hiranyakula .....		Hiranya, Toramâna
		(3.102)
Vasukula	Matrgupta	
Mihirakula		Pravarasena <sup>117</sup>
...		
Gokarna		Yuddhisthira
		(3.379-382)

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117 Note that coins of a king Gokarna and Narendra (as well as of a Pravarasena) exist, see Stein, tr. II, p.319 par. 17; on Gokarna, however, cf. Stein p. 65 n. 12; coins of Kusâna type and belonging to the 4th century, with the name Sena, Sena have been found in the Panjab, see Majumdar, The Classical Age, p. 53

Khinkhila-118  
Narendrâditya  
(1.347-349)

Lamkhana-119  
Narendrâditya  
(3.383-385)

Yuddhisthira (1.350-373)

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The above examples thus are both cases of telescoping of certain dynasties, as well as of re-arrangement, due to lack of proper knowledge about the correct arrangement of dynasties one after the other. Another case, that of accidental(?) padding is evident in the long reign of Ranâditya's 300 years of reign shortly before 600 A.D., that is before we enter more securely attested Kashmiri history. Such a procedure of Kalhana must be due to his possessing some information about the aggregate length of the reign of the so-called "restored Gonandîya dynasty" - which, of course, neither was a dynasty at all, nor a single one, nor could it be restored: it contains such figures as Açoka, the Kusânas, Hiranyakula, Vasukula and Mihirakula (some of whom, as we have seen above, partly even twice)!

Kalhana probably had access to a verse stating the aggregate length of the reign of various early dynasties, such as the well-known verse from the Purânas giving the aggregate length of the reigns of the Nandas, Mauryas, of Çûdraka etc. Or he could use some (fragments of) early *vamçâvalîs*. The latter is hinted at be Râjataranginî 1.11 which mentions the *chinnâh* "fragmentary" older record, superseded by the first literary composition by Suvrata on the history of Kashmir (followed by those of Chavillâkara, Helarâja, Padmamihira, Ksemendra). There was a distinct tradition of 52 early lost kings which can be compared with the Nepalese tradition of 12 lost kings in Mânadeva's inscription of 467 A.D. Many of the round figures of the Gonandîya dynasty (and even of the long reign of 50 years by Durlabhaka of the Kârkota dynasty) belong to this category. - The traditions of a known number of kings and the aggregate number of years of their reign goes back

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118 There is a coin of the type of the White Huns in India, which has the inscription Khingila, see Stein, tr. Introd. p. 65, attributed to the fifth or sixth century A.D..

119 Stein, introd. p.66, identifies Lahkhana-Narendrâditya with a Râja Lahkhana-Udayâditya found on coins of White Hun type (see p. 85) which closely resemble those of Khinkhila-Narendrâditya. He points out the time difference existing between both of them, some 500 years, according to Kalhana but, curiously, he does not draw the conclusion that books 1 and 3 are to be intermeshed when re-considering the text. - As Stein brings this king into close contact with the White Hun kings, and regards him as an "Ephtalite prince" he has to regard the name Lahkhana as "curious and thoroughly un-Indian" and fails to see that it represents a local Prakrit form of Laks(m)ana, cf. similar names such as Lakkana-candra, Su-lakkana, Lakkaka, etc., and Bhihkha-râja next to Bhiksa-âcara.

much further. we have Arrianus' testimony, copied from Megasthenes, the Seleucid ambassador to Candragupta (Sandrokottos) Maurya's court at c. 300 B.C. which speaks of 153 kings with a combined reign of 6042 years before Sandrokottos (Indika 9.9).

The gap between Kalhana's materials and 3101 B.C. is most elaborately filled by his and earlier writers' device of the '52 lost kings'. Kalhana could reduce it to 35 by padding his history with the kings known to him from the Nîlamata, and from eleven earlier historians. The combined number of years they were supposed to have reigned is explained by Kalhana in detail at 1.48-56, from which it becomes clear that the whole argument is based on Varâhamihira's retro-active calculation, made about 650 years earlier, of the beginning of the Kaliyuga in 3102 B.C. (This is thus a new tradition, superseding the an earlier one, mentioned by Megasthenes, with a beginning of the royal lines at c. 6500 B.C.!) )

It is at this moment that the writer's decision-making process started. Kalhana had to fill the gap until the beginning of the *yuga*, of time. How he arranged the materials he had "rescued from other writers" is mostly beyond our control now, except for the dynasties of the Mauryas, Kusâna, and Huns mentioned. Luckily, Kalhana has left some indications in his introduction, he accounts for the 52 lost kings as follows:

kings "rescued"	source:
Gonanda and three successors: (Gonanda, Damodara, Yaçovatî, Gonanda)	Nîlamata, 1.16
35 lost kings	- left unrestored
from Lava to Açoka: Lava Kuça Khagendra Surendra	Padmamihira, based on Helarâjâ's Pârthivâvali) 1.17-18
----- Godhara <sup>120</sup> Suvarna Janaka Çacînara Açoka	

---

120 "from another family", see Râjataranginî 8.3410, cf. 1.95



5 kings, beginning with Açoka, Chavillâkara, 1.19-20  
up to Abhimanyu:

Açoka  
Jalauka  
Dâmodara  
Huska  
Juska  
Kaniska  
Abhimanyu

---

We can thus use the raw materials of Kalhana better, and we can try to countercheck them with the little that we have of outside information in the case of Kashmir, that is especially coins, as the surviving inscriptions hardly date back so early. -- If a tentative arrangement of the various materials provided by Kalhana may be hazarded I would propose a possible reconstruction, in great lines, of the following early dynasties (indicated by bold letters and arrows):

book 1	book 2	book 3
<hr/>		
Gonanda III		
Vibhîsana I		
Indrajit		
Râvana		
Vibhîsana II		
Nara I (Kimnara)		
Siddha		
Utpalâksa		
Hiranyâksa		
		Meghavâhana
		Çresthasena-
		Pravarasena
		(Tuñjina III)
500 A.D.		
=====		
Hiranyakula .....	Hiranya, Toramâna	
	(3.102)-----	
Vasukula	Mâtrgupta	
	Pravarasena II	
Mihirakula	-----	
Baka		

Ksitinanda	
Vasunanda	
Nara II	
Aksa	
Gopâditya	
Gokarna	Yuddhisthira II
-----	
Khinkila-	Lamkhana-
Narendrâditya .....	Narendrâditya
-----	-----
Yuddhisthira	
(Andha-Y°)	
	Ranâditya (300 ys)
	(Tuñjina III)
	Vikramâditya
	Balâditya
	(Kârkota )

Probably a Sena, Nanda, Aaditya 'dynasty' can be *rescued* (to use Kalhana's term) from the above comparison though the mere occurrence of a set of names - and their change to another set - does not always indicate a separate dynasty or the change of dynasty. However, the number of 300 years assigned to Ranâditya, whose reign can be calculated to have ended in 523 A.D., remains a puzzle. Kalhana probably knew the complete number of years of the dynasty preceding that of the Kârkotas and had to provide Ranâditya with 300 years as he probably was short this number of years in his scheme. It has been indicated above that Kalhana had put together several separate *vamçâvalîs* in his scheme, viz. that he split up a probable, reconstructable single one characterized by the overlaps described above, into books 1 and 3. Secondly, the ascription of an extra-ordinary long reign to a king living immediately before the well-attested history of Kashmir was furthered by the legends told about his reign, his not dying but passing on to a life in the netherworld, see Râjataranginî 3.465 sqq.

The correspondences detailed above provide some guidelines. It has to be asked, however: who are the intervening kings? Are they the remnants of older *vamçâvalî* type information, or have they been gleaned (by Kalhana) from inscriptions viz. from local traditions? (We have to discard, of course, the Epic figures such as Yuddhisthira, Lava and Kuça; interestingly, their father Râma, the mythical king *par excellence*, is absent.) Furthermore, we

have to ask: How to treat the rest of the evidence in Kalhana, such as the stories about founding a particular *agrahâras* at the time of the - mythical - kings Kuça and Lava. Such information was obviously based on local traditions of Brahmins who wanted to make their claims to certain stretches of land go back to the golden age of Râma.

#### 14. An evaluation of the Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî

After this investigation of Kalhana's *vamçâvalî* and other early materials and the way he treated them, we can now return to the GRV once more. Here we see the same process of re-arrangement of dynasties and of padding it with inflated numbers of regal years. The reason is even more obvious than in Kalhana's work: The author of the early Nepalese *vamçâvalî* wanted to reach back to Kaliyuga as well. In this aim, he could make use of a long local "dynasty" of non-Sanskritic kings, the Kirâtas. Though there actually was, differently from the case of Kalhana, no gap of a few hundred years he nevertheless padded this *vamçâvalî* with the - quite unnecessary - repetition of the Gopâlas and Mahisâpâlas, for political reasons (see above). This procedure agrees well with that followed by others in his time: The Purânas often have a scheme which gives the aggregated regal years of such dynasties as the Nandas, Mauryas and that of Çûdraka. The Sumatitantra, a mathematical text written after the Licchavi period, has a calculation which includes the regal years of the following dynasties (compared with those in the GRV):

Sumatitantra	GRV			
			<Gopâla dyn.	505.3 >
			<Mahisapâla	161.2 >
			-----	
Yuddhisthira	2000 years		Kirâta dynasty	1958.8
Nanda dyn.	800			
Maurya dyn.	132	=*302 B.C.	Early Licchavi	942
			(up to Vrsadeva)	
Çûdraka samvat	247	=*170 B.C.	Licchavi	1301.1
Çaka samvat	498	= 77 A.D.		
Mânadeva samvat	303	= 576 A.D.		
Nepal samvat		= 879 A.D.		
<hr/>				
	3980 years			4201 y.

Thâkuri dynasty 356 y.

The dates up to the beginning of the Maurya era reflect the historical truth remarkably well, even though a Çûdraka Samvat is, of course, not traceable anywhere in inscriptions. The Nanda reign, however, is much too long, and the 2000 years for Yuddhisthira, too, simply are intended to fill the gap existing in a perfect chronology going back to the beginning of the Kaliyuga. - A comparison of the lists of the Sumatitantra with that of the GRV also indicates that both are largely parallel in their structure. Both attribute a time span of c. 2000 years to the initial dynasty, be it that of Yudhisthira or that of the Kirâtas. Then, the succeeding dynasty of the early Licchavis (before the first attested king Vrsadeva) is credited with almost the same amount of time (942 years) as the combined eras of the Nandas and Mauryas (together 932 years). As both texts were written in Nepal, the earlier testimony of the Sumatitantra can be used as an indirect testimony for the general correctness of the calculations of the GRV in its present late medieval form.<sup>121</sup>

It is important to stress that the general time scheme of GRV, just as that of Kalhana, go back to Varâhamihira's calculation of the beginning of the Kaliyuga. This serves with a date post quem for all such speculations: c. 500 A.D. Even the predecessors of the present GRV, a probable Amçucarman or Gopâla (Gupta), or a (later) Licchavi *vamçâvalî*, must have been composed well after this date when Varâhamihira's influence was already felt in Nepal.<sup>122</sup> The same applies to the sources of Kalhana. They too, with their theory of 52 lost kings, and the earlier calculation by some Kashmiri authors, as reported by Kalhana, must have been based on Varâhamihira's fixation of the beginning of the Kaliyuga.<sup>123</sup>

## 15. Other *vamçâvalîs* and similar texts

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121 Some Licchavi kings are missing in GRV, such as Vâmanadeva (attested Çaka S. 460), Râmadeva (ÇS 467), Gangâdeva (ÇS 489), Dhruvaveda (MS 48-49, co-regent with Jisnugupta), and the important king Jayadeva II (MS 137-157= 713-733 A.D.) Taking them into account, we would get a Licchavi reign, longer by c. 50 years; this is balanced by the inclusion of the Gopâla Bhûmigupta and by assigning 190 years to these three Gopâlas while only some 20 years are attested in inscriptions (excluding Ravigupta about 100 years earlier). The dates given to Licchavi kings also differ frequently from those of their actual reigns attested in inscriptions. -- GRV misses a few kings, such as Çankaradeva (attested in NS 40), Nirbhayadeva (NS 125), Bhojadeva-Rudradeva (NS 132).

122 It would be interesting to check which Siddhânta was used in Nepal at what times. The Sumatitantra of the early post-Licchavi period can provide a partial answer. Questions of this sort have often been discussed in the Nepali language journal *Pûrnimâ*, edited by the Itihâsa Samçodhana Mandala, Kathmandu.

123 An indication of the early influence of Varâhamihira in Kashmir can perhaps be gleaned from the observation of the similarities in his description of the Râjâbhiseka (Yogayâtra, Brhadyâtra and Brhadsamhitâ 59.8 sqq.) and the account given in the *Nîlamatapurâna*, ed. Ved Kumari Ghai vs. 834-865 (ed. de Vreese vs. 802-831).

In conclusion, we return to the genus of *vamçâvalî* as such.

The GRV certainly is not the only text of its sort. There are more, ... perhaps many more than we might expect. The *vamçâvalîs* from Himachal Pradesh are comparatively well known due to Atkinsons' work.<sup>124</sup> They cover the Katyuris of Kangra, the Chands of Kumaon (c.1150- A.D.) and the Panwars of Garhwal.<sup>125</sup> In Rajasthân, there are large number of *vamçâvalîs* dealing both with the royal houses as well as some high cast persons. In this region they were maintained by special classes of people.<sup>126</sup>

Some other examples include texts such as the recently published Gangavamçâvalî of the southern Orissa Ganga kings, and another Orissa *vamçâvalî*, edited by G.N. Tripathi and H. Kulke. The longest in existence must have been the Chamba *vamçâvalî*.<sup>127</sup> In addition, there must have existed many more *vamçâvalîs* from the various corners of India, such as the one of the Câlukyias of Gujarat. Certainly many others remain unpublished, and it is important to get access to this source of Indian history to complete the often fragmentary picture supplied by inscriptions and other (early) medieval materials.

At this instance, it may be useful to also draw attention to some other little noticed sources: The so-called *thyâsaphus*, usually known only to Nepalese specialists. These private chronicles were kept by Nepalese priests and some other high caste men. They are called *thyâsaphu* "folded books", as they are written on leporello-form cardboard type books. They are invariably written in medieval or more modern Newari and are very detailed... Reading them, one gets an inkling of what kind of materials the authors of the GRV and Kalhana may have had at their disposal, in addition to the materials he clearly

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124 E.T. Atkinson, Himalayan Gazetteer, 1881-84, repr. Delhi 1972; for the earlier Katoch (Katyuri) kings of Kangra, see also Stein, Râjataranginî, tr. I p.81 ad Râj. 3.100

125 Both going back, traditionally, to 685 and 699 A.D., see G.N. Dwivedi, Source materials for the history of Kumaon (in: S.P. Sen, Sources for the History of India, Calcutta, Inst. of Historical Studies, 1970, p.334-342) who describes these *vamçâvalîs* as "traditional, often inflated and partly fabricated ... yet these lists cannot be rejected straightaway." Similarly, D. Dwivedi, Sources for the history of Medieval Garhwal (in the same volume, p. 371-383): "The *vamçâvalîs* are made to order and wholly unreliable" (p.373), cf. also p.379 f. - This, however, mostly can be said of their earliest, more or less legendary parts only.

126 The Badve Bhats, Carans (the actual genealogists), and the Jage Caste. (V.S. Bhargava, Sources for the history of medieval Rajasthan, p. 49, in: S.P. Sen, Sources for the History of India, Calcutta, Inst. of Historical Studies, 1970, p. 42-51). An enlarged form of a *vamçâvalî* is the Râjasthânî Khyat which also contains, like the Nepalese *vamçâvalîs*, large prose sections dealing with particular kings. In addition, Rajasthân has a special class of poems, called Raso (and later, popular songs), which were composed by bards (bhat, bhajak, motisar, ranimanga) and commemorate the deeds of famous kings, starting with Prthvîrâja's defeat at Tarain in 1192 A.D.

127 See J.Ph. Vogel, Antiquities of the Chamba State, Calcutta 1911

mentioned by name in the introduction to the Râjataranginî. Indeed, similar notes, though of a much more limited size, have been noticed by me in some Kashmiri priestly manuals, and it would be worthwhile to locate and publish such materials in India as well.<sup>128</sup>

Better known, certainly, are the temple histories, such as the Madalâ Pañji of Orissa, or the recent collection of temple inscriptions of the Tirupati temples. But medieval historical Kâvyas, again, have been very little used so far though attention has already been drawn to them by Bühler.<sup>129</sup> There are quite a number of them in South India where the court ladies of the Vijayanagara empire have composed some of them. Julie Hiebert has, in her recent Harvard dissertation (1988), studied some of them. In addition there exists quite a number of medieval dramas from Nepal which contain a lot of local historical information. Due to the particularly good situation with regard to historical documentation in Nepal we do not only know who composed them and when, but we even know when they were first performed and by whom.<sup>130</sup>

"In NS 503, on Pausa *krsna edâdaçî*, the drama Bhairavânanda was inaugurated. After 24 days of rehearsal and practice, on the day of Mâgha *krsna daçamî*, the *siddhi phaye* ceremony was completed in Çrî Kothochem. This drama was written by Manaku Bhâ (Manikya Vardhana) of Yambanunam Vihâra, by consulting the work written in the Doya (Deva, Sanskrit) language. The brother of Manaku Bhâ, Ujhâjîva Bhâro's head was decorated with a *gajura* and a head dress for dance. (The crown prince)

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128 A well-known but little used source are the pilgrim lists of the Pandas at various pilgrimage places such as Kuruksetra or Benares. -- A similar neglected source of information are the often elaborate colophons of some mss., see above.

129 See his introduction to his edition of the Vikramânkadevacarita, cf. Stein, Râj., transl. (introd.), p. 4; for a list, see above, note 42

130 Earlier notices read: (Under the - unattested - Licchavi king Campâdeva, 6th/7th cent. A.D.) a four-act Râmâyana dance (drama) was performed." (fol. 21b.3) (*Cavu-anka-râmâyana nrtya krtâñ ca*) (Note the NIA numeral; these occur sporadically in the text.) "In NS 487, on Jyestha *krsna pañcamî*, the play Caturanka Râmâyana (the Râmâyanâ in four acts) was staged. On the day of @Kvayaçâ (?), the propitiation ceremony for the actors was performed at Kvâthchem. Twelve chariots were erected. The author of this play was Yarha's Pandit Bâlasarasvatî. The managers were Çrî Upâdhyaju and Jayata Mûlami. This play was staged during the reign of Çrîçrî Jayasthitimalladeva." (fol. 54), (following K.P. Malla's translation); or in the first *vamçâvalî* (fol. 29): "to celebrate the birthday ceremony [of the crown prince, Dharmamalla, the son of Jayasthitmalla], Cauranka Râmâyana - a play in four acts, was staged. At the same time on Wednesday, Jyestha çukla pañcamî, NS 497, the drama Bâlarâmâyana was staged in the midst of great celebrations. The director of the stage was Pandit Manaku Bhâro (Mânikya Vardhana), the preceptor of King Çrî Jayârjunadeva." "In NS 497, on Wednesday, Jyestha çukla pañcamî pusya nakshatra dhruva yoga, the Vanukarana ceremony [Upanayana] of Çrî Dharmamalla [the crown prince] was completed. On the eighth day, the day of *sampârna* a new Mahâtha was installed...The play Bâlarâmâyana was staged [then]" (fol. 57a).

Çrîçrî-Dharmamalladeva Thâkur a had contributed to this work. This play was written for the Thâkura's marriage. The marriage took place on Thursday, Phâlguna çukla trîya, evening. The persons in charge of staging the play were Çrî Dvijarâja Bhâro, Jyoti Kasta Bhâ, and Gajâ Mulâmi. The play was staged all over the three principalities. All participated in the dance." (transl. Malla, fol.62)

Many of these dramas survive. They are written in a mixture of Sanskrit, Old Newari and Old Maithili. The latter two languages replace the Prâkrts of the classical dramas. This new tradition was carried on during the later Malla period as well, and Pratâpa Malla of Kathmandu (1641-74) called himself a Kavîndra. Accordingly, he set up an inscription at the royal palace at Vasantapur (Kathmandu) which shows his supreme knowledge of "all languages". Indeed, the inscription also contains the two French words, incised in the florid Roman letters of the period " L'AUTOMNE L'HIVERE." These dramas still are occasionally performed today. One of them has been has now been edited and studied in detail by H.Brinkhaus.

Further, we now have such materials as a very rare biography<sup>131</sup> at our disposal. The one now published has been written by a 17th century Jain businessman, Banârasîdâs, hailing from Jaunpur but living at Agra.<sup>132</sup> -- The inclusion of such little used texts in the study of the surviving medieval sources would certainly widen our view of Indian history, even if these sources do not always go back as far as the Nepalese Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî and Kalhana's Râjataranginî.

## 16. Conclusion

Returning to the question, put initially, about Indian historical writing, it can be safely said now that there exist many more sources for - at least the medieval - history than it was thought even half a century ago. Many of the newly discovered materials, however, have not yet been used properly, due to lack of access.<sup>133</sup> Taken together, these sources represent a bulk of material

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131 There are, of course, quite a number of auto-biographies by Muslim writers, such as the history of Babur etc.

132 The Ardhakathânak, written in 1647 A.D. and consisting of 675 dohâs and caupâis in Hindi; edited by Nathuram Premi, Bombay 1957; translated by R.C. Sharma, Indica vol. 7, no. 1 (1970), p. 49-73 and no. 2 p. 105-120. - See R.C. Sharma, A little known work of people's history of Mughal India, in S.P. Sen, Sources for the History of India, Calcutta, Inst. of Historical Studies, 1979, p.355-363

133 Catalogues of manuscripts are notoriously summarily put together and are often incorrect (if they indeed exist; even several of the European and American collections have not yet been catalogued); most of the collections of documents are even less accessible. In addition, libraries and archives in South Asia are notoriously difficult of access, due to

perhaps as large as that found in other civilizations. Even historical writing in the older, medieval European sense, can be found, albeit restricted to genealogical (*vamçâvalî*) type sources of various sizes and to poetical compositions, usually written in the interest of a particular monarch.

Historiography as a separate, impartial science, however, largely remains a lacuna in traditional Indian civilization. The reason is not far to look for. Historical writing has usually been tied to one particular dynasty, the history of which was neglected after its downfall.<sup>134</sup> The appearance of texts such as the Râjataranginî, Dîpavamsa, Mahâvamsa, Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî therefore represents more an exception than the norm. This is, however, difficult to judge, as in most cases, the possibility for a continuous historical tradition has been disrupted by intervening Muslim periods of government. The picture of a tradition of historical writing as found only at the rims of the subcontinent therefore may be misleading. It is precisely these areas that have (with the exception of Kashmir<sup>135</sup>) been spared disruptions by Muslim domination. In cases where one Hindu or Buddhist government was followed by another, such as in Nepal, Orissa, or Çrî Lankâ, the tradition has not been disrupted and we have, in consequence, texts such as the Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî, the Madalâ Panji temple chronicle, and the Mahâvamsa and Dîpavamsa with their successor chronicles.

Finally, we return to the second question put at the beginning, regarding the alleged absence of "historical sense" in India. The materials presented above, especially the *vamçâvalîs*, should have made it clear that, in spite of a cyclical concept of time, expressed by the eternal revolvment of *yugas* and *kalpas*, it was important to record the history of certain sections of a *yuga*, --- if not of the whole *yuga* we live in, the Kaliyuga, since 3102 B.C. (as calculated by Varâhamihira in c. 500 A.D.). However, the stress was - not unlike medieval Europe - on the political history, and especially so on the dynastic and genealogical history of the royal families involved. This was recorded with great detail, and such rare sources as the Gopâlarâjavamçâvalî and the medieval Nepalese *thiyasaphus* indicate that a large number of data was

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bureaucratic and other restraints. Instead of complaining about the "theft" of mss. during the colonial period action should be taken to save the many private collections of manuscripts and documents in the subcontinent from destruction by the forces of nature and their all too often ignorant proprietors. Those mss. that had been brought to European and other non-Indian libraries have survived just because of this fact and are easily accessible to research.

134 Even though the *vamçâvalî* of a former dynasty might occasionally have been kept well-preserved, as the one of the Turki Çâhis, mentioned above.

135 Kashmir is a special case as the tradition of historical writing had been firmly established when the country turned to Islam in the 14th century. In addition, the Kashmiri Brahmins, the bearers of historical tradition continued to be court officials, and since the 15th century became instrumental in translating and effectively transposing their earlier traditions into Persian, see author, The Veda in Kashmir, (forthcoming).



indeed recorded, relating to all aspects of life deemed important to the local civilization in question. The early testimony of Hsüan Ts'ang indicates that this tradition reached back, at least, into the Gupta period, and, if we can trust Megasthenes, recorded and remembered dynastic history reached back much beyond 300 B.C.

This stress on local dynastic history and the size of the area involved have prevented the composition of a "universal" history of South Asia. However, even this is not altogether absent. It has been attempted in the Purânas, interestingly again in the brahmanical guise of dynastic history, through the linking of all royal families of the subcontinent with their first mythical ancestors, Manu and his sons.

In short, the lack of historical writings and the alleged lack of historical sense is due, in large measure, more to the accidents of medieval history than to the religious and philosophical tenets of Indian civilization.

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