1. Introduction

The study of the history of South Asian cartography has long been interpreted based on Western cartographic traditions. Maps of the South Asian subcontinent were assumed to be produced by foreigners–not by South Asians themselves. Maps actually produced in South Asia were neglected as a category in their own right, thereby supporting the assertion made in 1992 by Joseph E. Schwartzberg that "the study of the history of [South Asian, J. G.] cartography is still in its infancy." (Schwartzberg 1992: 509). The first monograph regarding South Asian cartography, entiteld *Indian Maps and Plans*, was published by Susan Gole in 1989. Besides a brief introduction, the book contains many maps never previously reproduced. In 1992, Joseph E. Schwartzberg (1992: 295–518) published an "Introduction to South Asian Cartography", which is partly based on Susan Gole's collections, and forms part of *The History of Cartography Project*, headed by the late J. B. Harley and David Woodward.[1] Since then a brief historical overview has been published by P. L. Madan (1997). The geographical and cartographical construction of British India in the context of colonialism has been studied by M. H. Edney (1997). Aiming at a "deconstruction of the map" J. B. Harley (1988, 1992) has greatly influenced and broadened the perspectives on cartography in general, and non-Western cartography in particular. Within the field of Critical Human Geography the theory of geographic visualization has bridged the way from the so-called single accurate topographical map to a view which emphasizes the importance of multiple perspectives and multiple maps; in other words, to perceive and study maps as social constructions (Crampton 2001). During the last decades the commonly held view that, aside from Western spatial and cartographical practice no independent indigenous traditions of South Asian cartography exist, has been called into question. As a result, Raj (2003) has criticized Edney for oversimplifying the processes involved in the construction of cartographical knowledge. Raj views these processes as a joint Indo-British venture that resulted in a type of hybrid culture, emerging from the "asymmetrical relationship" (2003: 53) between the colonizers and the colonized.

In spite of this broadened interest in research on cartography the available data on South Asian cartography remains scarce and even when cartographic material is

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1   In the series "The History of Cartography" four volumes have been published so far by Harley & Woodward (1987, 1992, 1994, 1998), and an additional four volumes are announced on the project's homepage (see *www.geography.wisc.edu/histcart*).

at our disposal its study has generally been neglected by the relevant academic disciplines. For the art historian the visual elements on the maps are not of artistic interest, the geographer misses the geographical similitude and topographical exactness, and for the indologist the number of inscribed texts is insufficient and lack originality.[2]

Bearing in mind this desideratum of interdisciplinary effort in the study of South Asian Cartography, the *Vārāṇasī Research Project* "Visualized Space–Constructions of Locality and Cartographic Representations in Banaras" at the South Asia Institute, in Heidelberg, has chosen the North Indian pilgrimage centre Banaras (Vārāṇasī, Kāśī) for a survey and case study concerning one specific local tradition of spatiality and cartography.[3] The present study is based on material collected in the sub-project, "Visualized Texts–Religious Maps and Divination Charts", headed by Axel Michaels. The research for this project revolves around the study of visualizations of space as represented by various kinds of "maps", including painted pictorial maps, printed pilgrimage maps and simple spatial charts. For the purpose of the present study, "maps" shall be defined as images of spatial knowledge. No clear cut distinction exists between spatial texts, maps that visualize spatial texts, and images. Any distinctions given are conventional and depend on specific social, cultural and religious constructions of spatiality.[4] The fluidity of the terms "map", "image", and "text" is also reflected by the names assigned to the studied material. In the words of D. C. Sircar:

> There is no special word in Sanskrit for "a map". The word *nakshā* (from Arabic *naqshah*) has been adopted in most modern Indian languages in this sense, although it also signifies "a picture, a plan, a general description, an official report". In Eastern India, the word *māna-chitra* has been coined to indicate the English word "map". (...) There is, however, reason to believe that in ancient India a map or chart was regarded as a *chitra* or *ālekhya*, i.e. "a painting, a picture, a delineation". It will be seen that the Sanskrit word chitra and its synonyms have practically the same meaning as the Arabic word *naqshah*. (Sircar 1971: 60)

Taking this fluidity of categories into account I have opted for a broad inter-pretation of the term "map", which will include pictorial maps, panoramic views of high aesthetic and artistic value, "word pictures", simple charts, along with topo-

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2   See Gole (1989: 65) and Toppsfield (2002: 97).

3   The interdisciplinary approach was achieved through the participation of the following members and disciplines of the *Vārāṇasī Research Project*: Anthropology (Martin Gaenszle), Architecture (Niels Gutschow), Art History (Joachim K. Bautze), Geography (Hans-Georg Bohle, Stephen Lemcke, Stefan Schütte, Rana P. B. Singh,), and Indology (Axel Michaels, Jörg Gengnagel). The project was funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft during the years 2000–2002.

4   See Michaels (2000: 187): "Religiöse Karten sind Texte von religiösen Räumen. (...) Der Unterschied zwischen Bildern, einschließlich Karten, und Texten ist ein konventioneller, (...) ich lese Raumtexte als Karten und Karten als Texte von religiösen Räumen."

graphical, revenue and pilgrimage maps. In accordance with Harley and Woodward maps are understood as "graphic representations that facilitate a spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes or events in the human world (...)" (1987: XVI).

The number and variety of cartographic material on Banaras far exceeds the data given in the available publications. In his appendix 17.6 "Maps, plans, and maplike oblique views of sacred places or serving religious purposes", Joseph Schwartzberg has listed five "maplike" views of Banaras (1992: 489–91). Susan Gole reproduced four maps of the city (Gole 1989: 65–6, 198). Taking overlapping into account, seven religious maps of Banaras were catalogued and analysed in these two publications.[5] As a result of the research conducted through the *Vārāṇasī Research Project* the number of catalogued historical maps of Banaras rose to 40 by the end of 2004, exclusive of the collected topographical maps of the 19th and early 20th centuries.[6]

To study religious maps within the sacred space of Banaras it is necessary to look at both ritual practice as reflected in processions, as well as textual practice found in spatial texts. The present study takes this into account, beginning in chapter two, by looking at "Kāśī in texts". It will become evident that the puranic literature, and digests of puranic verses (*nibandhas*), compiled by medieval scholars are essential points of reference regarding the mapping of Banaras. This extends from direct quotations of textual sources on various maps (e.g. the map *Pilgrims in Banaras*), to the "echoing" of passages in slightly altered or corrupted forms (e.g. *Kāśīdarpaṇa*). In order to study and analyse the relationship of the collected religious maps to these textual sources; electronic indices of the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*, *Kāśīrahasya* and *Tīrthavivecanakāṇḍa* have been produced. The *Index of Kāśīkhaṇḍa*, compiled previously by my colleague Michaela Dimmers and myself (Dimmers & Gengnagel 2003), with more than 3200 entries of proper names of gods, sacred places and processions, was used extensively to assist in deciphering the map captions and to locate the spatial clusters that the legends reflect. Another important reference tool utilized for the study of the spatial patterns of the maps is the list of 57 processions found in Kedarnāth Vyās' Hindi monograph on processions in Banaras (Vyās 1987).[7] In both quantity and enumeration of localizations this list is the most detailed that I am aware of. The

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5   See Schwartzberg (1992: 489–491, entries qq.–uu.) and Gole (1989: 65–66, Fig. 25–27; 198, Fig. 111). These items correspond to the numbers 2, 10, 11, 15, 20, 22, and 38 in the "List of religious and topographical maps of Banaras" in appendix 1.

6   See the "List of religious and topographical maps of Banaras" in appendix 1 and the "Descriptive Catalogue of Visual Material on Varanasi kept in the Banaras Archives of the South Asia Institute" on the internet (*www.benares.uni-hd.de/ben-archive.pdf*).

7   See Appendix 2 "Kāśīyātrā according to Kedarnāth Vyās" based on the unpublished manuscript "Processions in Banaras as given in *Kāśīkhaṇḍokta Paṃcakrośātmaka Jyotirliṅga Kāśī Māhātmya* by Paṇḍit Kedārnāth Vyās" compiled and translated by Dimmers & Gengnagel (2003).

author is a member of the Vyās family that lives in the Viśvanātha temple area near the Jñānavāpī Well. In the vicinity, at the Vyāspīṭha, pilgrims take a vow to perform a given pilgrimage and subsequently return to this place after the vow is fulfilled. A member of the Vyās family recites this formal declaration of intention (*saṃkalpa*), and lists the names of places to be visited during the course of the procession.[8] Once the pilgrimage has been completed, the list of places visited is read aloud once again by the same person. The list of places given in Vyās' book, and their locations mirror the performance of pilgrimages in Banaras during the 20th century, and is based on actual pilgrimage practice, textual sources, and the spatial knowledge of the Vyās family. One should therefore bear in mind that the list could be read as an attempt to prescribe pilgrimage practice in order to enhance the interests of the Vyās family.

1.1 Survey of the Collected Cartographic Material

The collected cartographic representations of Banaras can be classified in the following five categories:

    a. Pictorial maps
    b. Printed maps
    c. Charts
    d. Panoramic views
    e. Topographical maps

The diversity and plurality of the studied items are, however, apparent, even within the context of the above categories. The material in question does not present a uniform visualization of the pilgrimage centre Banaras. Instead, it illustrates the multiplicity of images of sacred space, which form part of this urban "cultural production".[9] Each of these historical maps must therefore be analysed as a specific cartographical representation in its own right.[10]

Among the *pictorial maps* (a.) of the 18th and early 19th centuries, three coloured, painted maps are presented and studied here for the first time in detail. The unpublished 18th century *Stylised Map of Vārāṇasī* (no. 1[11], Plate 4) is most

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8 See Michaels (2005), who analyzes *saṃkalpa* as a ritual which both contextualizes as well as transcends the concrete context of the performer.

9 See Freitag (2006) for the concept of "cultural production".

10 This statement holds true for the sources presently known. Unexpected discoveries in recent years have reminded us that future research will most likely uncover new items that could well highlight presently unknown traditions of visualizations. A detailed study of the evolution of modern printed pilgrim maps published in the 20th century is beyond the scope of the presented study.

11 Numbers refer to the catalogue given in the Appendix 1 "List of religious and topographical maps of Banaras". References to publications on the mentioned maps are given in the last column.

likely of Rājasthānī origin. The imagined, ideal circular shape of the Pañcakrośīyātrā (the procession with a radius of five *krośas* that defines the boundaries of the *kāśīkṣetra)*–is represented as the outer frame of the rectangular image. The contents within this frame are symmetrically structured, with Viśvanātha and the surrounding temple cluster forming the centre of the map. The map, *Pilgrims in Banaras* (no. 2, Plate 2), although similar in its representation of the Viśvanātha temple and the Antargṛhayātrā, is much more complex and vivid. This map is populated by gods and goddesses, along with hundreds of pilgrims on their way along the five procession roads. The *Tīrthayātrāpaṭṭa* (no. 3) highlights a tradition of artistic visualizations of pilgrimage centres. All three items fall into the category of paintings of pilgrimage sites on cloth, called *tīrthapaṭas* or "sacred hangings". These paintings on cloth have been used as objects of veneration, either in temples or for private use. They are generally of Rājasthānī origin, and are linked to royal patronage of the artists. In the context of Jaina pilgrimages these *tīrthapaṭas* are widespread:

> *Tirtha patas* are not pilgrimage momentos but sacred hangings which are kept in Jain *bhandaras.* Devotees gain religious merit by having *darshana* of the *patas.* (...) All who can, travel to Shatrunjaya or visit other *tirthas* for the festival. For the rest, Shatrunjaya *patas* are displayed in open areas so they might have darshana of the holy site. Even the refreshments similar to those served at the pilgrimage spot are distributed among the devotees. (Talwar & Krishna 1979: 83)

The studied pictorial maps lack titles, dates and any information about the people involved in the process of their production, and their respective purposes. An additional set of pictorial maps preserved in the collections of the City Palace of Jaipur (no. 4, 5, 7–9) was not accessible for the present study.[12]

The early *printed maps* (b.) are examined in the context of the emergence of local print culture and the spread of lithography in Banaras during the latter half of the 19th century. The earliest known printed maps are the three lithographs *Sapta-purīyātrādiprakāśapatra* (1873; no. 10.2[13]), *Kāśīdarpaṇa* (1876; no. 11.1, Plate 5), and *Kāśīdarpaṇapūrti* (1877, no. 12**)**. Although each of the maps were edited and printed by Banarsis within a short time span they differ greatly in their respective representations of Banaras' sacred spaces. The case study presented in the section on processions in Banaras examines some of the factors in their production as a reflection of historic events in mid-19th century Banaras which link contestations of pilgrimage practice to religious revivalism and the distribution of printed maps. By

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12 In 2003, however, I was able to examine a map of Amber/Āmer (Rājasthān) preserved at the National Museum, New Delhi (acc. no. 56.92/4) which supports the notion of an early carto-graphic tradition in the Jaipur region. Savai Jaisingh ordered it to be made in 1711 (*saṃvat* 1768, inscription on the map). This makes it one of the oldest and the largest (645 x 661 cm) map that I have examined to date. See also Gole (1989: 170, Fig. 91). Gole mentions the date 1711, but was not aware of the content of the inscription on the map.

13 See Plate 2 for a detail of the coloured version of this map.

the end of the 19th century a type of printed map emerged that reflected the circular shape of the *Kāśīdarpaṇa,* and was later printed during the 20th century in slightly varied forms, with differing printing techniques (no. 14–20). The map *Kāśī Pañcakoshi and its temples* is a modern example of these maps, and is still available in Banaras today (no. 20, see Plate 6). Rectangular-shaped coloured prints of pilgrimage maps are still produced and sold as part of the paraphernalia of pilgrimage in Banaras. Several variants of these pilgrimage maps were printed in the second half of the 20th century (no. 21–26). The rectangular shaped *Kāśīkṣetra* is shown with a central axis reaching from Śiva's *triśūla* at the bottom to the Viśvanātha temple in the centre of the map. This rectangular structure is usually surrounded by a row of circular vignettes depicting various Indian pilgrimage sites.[14]

To date, only two diagrams or *charts* (c.) of Banaras have been found (nos. 28, 29). Examples of cosmological or divinatory charts showing Banaras in the centre of the diagram have not been found.[15] The two charts show the 56 Vināyakas of the *Kāśīkṣetra* in their respective directions. The unpublished *Saptāvaraṇavināyaka-yātrāpatram* depicts the 56 Vināyakas, in rough sketch form, in a spatial order occupying seven "shields", or circles. The Vināyakas themselves are distributed throughout the eight cardinal and intermediate directions.

The collection and comparative study of *panoramic views* of Banaras (d.) has only recently become an area of interest.[16] The first known panoramic view with a section of the riverfront of Banaras was produced by the Jesuit Joseph Tieffenthaler and published in Berlin (no. 30) in 1786. Five unpublished panoramas have been catalogued by the *Vārāṇasī Research Project* during the last years (no. 33–36, 38). The panoramas *All Benares* (no. 36), and *A Complete View of the Benares City* (no. 38), which were printed and hand-coloured in Allahabad and Banaras around 1900, transform the 18th century tradition of pictorial maps and strive to be both panoramic view and map, simultaneously. Behind the buildings at the riverfront one can see the hinterland significantly reduced in size, and the five resting places on the Pañcakrośī pilgrimage route are marked at the horizon by buildings and captions. Between the river and the horizon one can see stylized temples, houses, wells, and trees.

Two early plans of Banaras preserved in the holdings of the Jaipur City Palace (nos. 39, 40) document a tradition of drawing plans for construction works or purchasing land. These plans date back to the 17th and early 18th centuries.[17] The emergence of modern *topographical mapping* (e.) began with the map *The City of Bunarus* lithographed in 1822 for James Prinsep by Charles Hullmandel (no. 41,

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14 See Michaels (2000) for a study of the *Map of Kashi* (no. 22).

15 See Gole (1989: 50–53) for examples of such charts.

16 See Krishna (2003) and Gutschow (2006b) for recent studies of panoramas of Banaras.

17 Our efforts to obtain these plans, in order to photograph and study them, were unsuccessful. Hence, the dates given by Bahura & Singh (1990) could not be verified. Many thanks to Joachim K. Bautze for his efforts to obtain permission to study items in the Jaipur collection.

Plate 3).[18] Prinsep (1799–1840), during his time as Assay Master of the local Mint in Banaras attempted, in his own words, with this "stupendous work of labour, just for my amusement", to produce "an accurate map of this Holy City, a work never yet undertaken".[19] On this map Prinsep placed tanks and wells, markets, police stations, the names and the localisation of more than 90 Hindu temples as well as mosques, Muslim tombs, and *satī* memorial stones. The map contains a list of 20 religious festivals and includes lines that mark the route of the Avimuktayātrā and depicts therefore the first mapping of a procession in Banaras that is known to us (Plate 3.1).[20] It was not, however, until the latter half of the 19th century that the first map of Banaras was actually commissioned by the colonial administration. In terms of surveying techniques, the map *Cantonments of Sikrol and Pandypoor, also the Civil Station & City of Benares*, surveyed in 1867–8 (no. 42, 6 inches to 1 mile) was more advanced than Prinsep's map, but the information contained was less varied and focused primarily on the needs of the colonial administrators. It also displays wells, temples and Muslim shrines, but instead of markets, festivals and ritual practices, encampments of regiments and their possible accommodation are shown.[21] Among the later topographical maps, the sheets of the revenue maps produced by the Survey of India in 1883–84 (no. 43–46, 32 inches to a mile) and those of the map surveyed in 1928–29 (no. 48, 64 inches to a mile), are the most detailed available maps. They focus on information concerning administrative units and infrastructure, e.g. electric power and telephone lines, sewage channels, lamp posts, letter boxes, hydrants and latrines.[22] In 1909, the map *Benares and Environs* was included among other city maps in the atlas of the Imperial Gazetteer of India as plate 57 (no. 53, 2 inches to a mile). Together with this map, the *Benares Guide Map* (no. 47, 4 inches to a mile) printed in three editions in 1920, 1928 and 1933, is one of the first topographical maps that belongs to the genre of tourist maps.

Another medium of visualizations of the sacred spaces of Banaras has yet to be mentioned; namely, illustrations found in the numerous manuscripts on sacred topography. Our knowledge of manuscripts with illustrations of the sacred topography of Banaras is still rudimentary, and a systematic search could not be carried out. Andrew Topsfield has aptly pointed out, in his monograph regarding the *Court Painting at Udaipur* (Topsfield 2002), that research on illustrated manuscripts has yet to lead to a systematic cataloguing of the visualizations found in these materials as this would require a combined effort on the part of several different disciplines:

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18 See Appendix 1 for more details of the described cartographical maps.

19 See Nair (1999: 118) quoting from a letter by James Prinsep to his father dated 27th December 1821.

20 See Gengnagel (2003) for a short description of *The City of Bunaras* and a detail of Prinsep's map with the central section and the Antargṛhayātrā (p. 262, Fig. 2).

21 A legend on the map reads: "The Cantonment of Sikrol contains a wing of European Regt, one Regiment of Native Infantry, a Battery of Royal Artillery, and some Native Cavalry, and that of Pandypoor has accommodation for a Regiment of Drageons."

22 See Gutschow (2006a) for drawings and reproductions based on these maps.

"The scholars who first catalogued them [the illustrated manuscripts J.G.] were concerned with their texts not illustrations." (Topsfield 2002: 7). This is an area that demands further research in order to ascertain whether a specific tradition of representations of the sacred spaces of Banaras can be found in illustrated manuscripts which might be linked to the early religious maps of Banaras.

I am only aware of two references to an illustrated manuscript described by Andrew Topsfield. The illustrated manuscript of the *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*, a work "of slight artistic interest" (Topsfield 2002: 97), is described as a Hindi version of the *tīrtha-māhātmya* that forms part of the *Skandapurāṇa*.[23] It is dated c. 1690 "extolling the sacred sites of Kasi (Benares), which Raj Singh had visited as a prince in 1648 (...). The scenes of Kasi and the Ganges are flatly conventional and in no way topographical." (Topsfield 2002: 97). The reproduction of folio 99 shows two men performing *pūjā* in front of an unidentified shrine with a *liṅga,* along with a scene depicting bazaar trade and dancers (Topsfield 2002: 97, Fig. 64). In another publication Topsfield has reproduced folio 97 from the same manuscript. Here, the Viś-veśvara temple is located on the Gaṅgā, and is surrounded by several other small shrines containing *liṅgas* along with bathing scenes and performers of the Pañca-tīrthayātrā at the *ghāṭs* (Topsfield 2000: 39, Fig. 16). Topsfield sums up with critical remarks on the artistic value of the illustration: "here the subject has become a simple assemblage of stock elements: the *liṅga* shrines, priests, sadhus, and pilgrims standing in a now streaky and formulaic Ganga." (Topsfield 2002: 39).[24]

To conclude, I would like to refer to the booklet *Śrī Kāśī Dhyāna Mālā* ("Garland of Meditations on Kāśī") published in 1929 by Gaurī Śaṃkara Dīkṣita.[25] More than ten of Kāśī's most renowned processions are listed over the course of 104 pages. This is accomplished by printing the images of all gods, goddesses, pavilions, wells and tanks, which the pilgrims pay homage to during their journey, rather than by simply describing the sequence of the respective processions. The images are identified by captions in Hindi, English, Urdu, and Tamil, and short localizations are given in Hindi. Although these images have even lesser artistic merit than the aforementioned *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* illustrations, they underline an important tradition of mental visualizations (*bhāvanā, dhyāna*), which link ritual practice and textual sources to the religious practice of internal and external visualizations of gods and sacred places. The sacred space of Banaras is inhabited by countless sacred beings either residing or temporarily invoked at their respec-tive locations in temples, shrines, fords, tanks, wells etc. The devotee can either

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23 "Kasikhanda, Government Museum, Udaipur, 1097/16, 337 pages, circa 1690. Gouache on paper" (Topsfield 2002: 104, n. 69).

24 In a personal communication Andrew Topsfield stated that he is not aware of any other illustrated manuscripts depicting the sacred topography of Banaras.

25 The title page refers to a second edition ("*dvitīya vāra* 2000"); the date of the original publication is unknown.

visit these sacred places directly, or follow one of the itineraries of the many processions that visit the sacred spaces of the *kāśīkṣetra*. He might circumambulate the condensed space of Kāśī and view the 271 niches with figurative images, located on the outer wall of the small Pañcakrośī temple, which was studied by Niels Gutschow in his project on "built maps".[26] Or he might visualize these images mentally by looking at the pages of the *Kāśī Dhyāna Mālā*. The religious maps in question are situated at this junction between outer and inner space. These sometimes idealized and abstract, sometimes highly sophisticated maps visualize the "outer" space of Banaras and, at the same time, serve as internal visualizations (*dhyāna, darśana*)[27] of the *kāśīkṣetra* and its various sacred places and sites. The studied tradition of religious cartography thus questions the reduction of space to its exterior, physical extension. In the words of Raimundo Panikkar:

> (...) inner space and outer space are the two faces of one and the same Reality. Inner space is not a metaphor taken from the outer space. This primacy given to exteriority is a feature of some cultures, but represents already a split in human consciousness if not balanced with interiority. (...) It is characteristic of modern western culture to have reduced Space practically to physical extension. (...) In brief, the separation between inner and outer space, identified respectively with spiritual and material, is a rather modern conception. Space may be conceived as the continent that makes any contents possible because it is as much container as content. Space is 'that' within which 'things' happen and are because Space is equally within 'things'. (Panikkar 1991: 9–10)

It will be the task of the following study to highlight specific aspects of these representations of spatiality, in the context of ritual and textual practice, by looking at examples of the religious cartography of Banaras from the 18th and 19th centuries.

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26 There appears to be a close link between the images given in the *Kāśī Dhyāna Mālā* and the statues in the niches of the Pañcakrośī temple. For a detailed study see Niels Gutschow (2006a).

27 See the discussion of the usage of the term *darśana* on Sukula's map *Kāśīdarpaṇa* in chapter 4.4.