INTRODUCTION
Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The whole Sanskrit literature is generally classed into two broad divisions, namely, the Vedic-Literature and the Classical-Literature. The Vedic Literature is sub-divided into three periods, viz., the Mantra period, the Brahmāna period and the Sutra period.

The Sutra works form the connecting link between the Vedic and the Post-Vedic literature. The Sutra style of composition is peculiar and stands unrivalled in the history of all literatures of the world. Literally the Sanskrit word "Sutra" means "a thread". On the other hand, it means an aphorism which is as brief as possible. The term Sutra is used for a single Sutra as well as for a particular work where all such Sutras are collected. The most important works belonging to the Sutra period are the six Vedāngas. They are Sīkṣā, Chhandas, Vyākaraṇa, Nirukta, Jyotisa, and Kalpa.

In regard to the origin of Sutra treatises, the renowned Indologist Dr. A. Macdonell says: "The oldest of
them seems to go back to about the time when Buddhism came into being. Indeed it is quite possible that the rise of the rival religion gave the first impetus to the composition of systematic manuals of Brāhmanic worship. The Buddhists in their turn must have come to regard Sūtras as the type of treatise best adapted for the expression of religious doctrine, for the earliest Pāli texts are works of this character."

The Kalpasūtras, enumerated under the Vedāṅgas, have an important place in the vast and varied Vedic-Literature, because they give a very clear and graphic account of religious, social and other aspects of ancient Indian life. A complete corpus of Kalpasūtras consists of four types of Sūtras, namely, a Śrautasūtra, a Grihyasūtra, a Dharmasūtra and a Śulbasūtra. All these four categories of Kalpasūtras are closely allied to each other, but the scope of each type of Sūtra is distinct and separate from that of the others.

The Śrautasūtras deal with the description of Śrauta sacrifices which are known as Śrauta Yajñas, and are found discussed in the Brāhmaṇas. These sacrifices are to be performed with the help of some priests. The Grihya sacrifices dealing with the household ceremonies, such as marriage and Upanayana, etc., are to be performed by the householder with the single fire and the Mantras to be recited at the performance of domestic ceremonies are borrowed by the Grihyasūtras from their respective Vedic schools, but some of the Mantras cited in
the Grihyasūtras are not traceable to the extant Samhitas. The Dharmasūtras, which come after the Grihyasūtras, contain the rules for social usage, customary law, standard behaviour, and moral practices. The Dharmasūtras also discuss the duties of four castes and four stages of life. The Sulbasūtras, the last part of the Kalpasūtras, deal with the rules for the measurement of fire altars and sacrificial sheds etc., and are closely linked with the śrautasūtras.

The Dharmasūtras form an important part of the Kalpasūtras. The various types of Kalpasūtras number about forty, out of which nearly half a dozen are Dharmasūtras. The VDS which is under discussion here, is one of the important Dharmasūtras and it has been published in various editions in India. The earliest one was published in 1876 as part one (pages 70-176) in the Dharmasutra-Samgraha of Pandita Jivananda Vidyasagara. The Asiatic Society published in 1881 another edition prepared by Dr. Julius Jolly with extracts from the commentary called Vaijayanti. Dr. Jolly has also translated this Sūtra into English in the Sacred books of the East Volume VII with an introduction. The Dharmashastra texts published by Mr. M. N. Datt also include this work (Dharmashastras texts, Vol. II, pp. 541-566, Calcutta, 1909). Pandita V. Krishnamachārya has also edited this Sūtra in two Volumes, under the title 'Viṣṇu Smṛiti, with the commentary Kesava Vaijayanti of Nandapandita' which is published in 1964.
at the Vasant Press, the theosophical society, Adyar, Madras-20, under the Adyar library series volume ninety-three. For the purposes of discussion and references in this work Dr. Julius Jolly's edition has been mainly used for Chapters 2 and 3 of the thesis and Pandita. V. Krishnamacharya's edition for the remaining Chapters, i.e., 4-7 of the thesis.

Extent of the work

The VDS comprises one hundred Chapters or "Adhyāyās". The first Chapter is introductory and the last three deal with the eulogies of God Viṣṇu and Goddess Lakṣāmi and the importance of the work itself. The VDS is said to be proclaimed by God Viṣṇu himself to Goddess Earth. So it is unique in this respect. Although the number of Chapters in this work is one hundred, yet there are some Chapters, i.e., 34, 39, 40, 42 and 76 which consist of only two aphorisms (one in prose and one in verse) and have no special importance except to increase the number of Chapters up to one hundred with a view to equal the number of Viṣṇu's names enumerated in Chapter 98. With regard to the number of Chapters, the commentator Nandapandita says that four Chapters, i.e., Chapter one and Chapters 98-100, are later additions made by a Sage. Commenting on the last verse of Chapter 98, Nandapandita points out that the total number (96) of laudatory epithets of Śri Vasudeva in this Chapter correspond
to the number of Chapters in this work. Thus according to Nandapandita the text of the VDS contained originally only 96 Chapters omitting Chapter 1 and 98-100. There is no uniformity in the length of the Chapters in the VDS. Some Chapters of this Dharmasutra are very extensive containing a large number of aphorisms and verses. For instance, the number of aphorisms in Chapter 5 is 197 (183 in prose and 14 in verse) whereas Chapters 34th, 39th, 40th, 42nd and 76th consist of only one Sutra and one verse each.

Generally all the Chapters of the VDS have got one or more verses at the end except Chapters 17, 22, 28, 54 and 96 which contain a verse in the middle besides several verses at the end. The first and the last three Chapters (98-100) of the VDS. are wholly in verse, while Chapter 74 of this work is entirely in prose. Generally all these Chapters of the VDS., which are the mixture of prose and verse, have more Sutras than the verses, but Chapters 20 (which has 53 aphorisms, 21 in prose and 32 in verses), 55 (which has 21 aphorisms, 6 in Sutras and 15 in verses) and Chapter 93 (which has 14 aphorisms, 6 in prose and 8 in verses) contain more verses than prose Sutras.

Contents of the Visnu Dharmasutra

As pointed out above, the VDS. consists of one hundred Chapters known as Aṣṭhyāyas. In the first Chapter, which is
introductory in nature, divine authorship for this Sūtra is claimed in a legend which is briefly as follows:

At the end of the period of dissolution of the Universe, Visnu in the form of a Boar lifted up the Earth which was submerged under waters. Then he created both animate and inanimate beings. After creating animate and inanimate beings, Visnu disappeared. The Earth was worried about her sustenance. Therefore, she approached sage Kaśyapa and requested him to tell her as to who would sustain her. Kaśyapa directed the Earth to go to Visnu, who resides in Ksīroda (Milk ocean) and seek His guidance. When she approached Visnu and enquired from Him as to who would sustain her, Visnu told her that such people as righteously perform the duties of four castes, i.e., Brāhmaṇa, Ksatriya, Vaisya and Śūdra and the four stages of life (Āśramas, i.e., Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vānaprastha and Samnyasa), would sustain her. After that Earth requested God Visnu to tell her, concisely, the eternal laws ordained for the four Varnas and Āśramas. Then Visnu proclaimed the sacred laws which are laid down in Chapters 2-97 of the VDS.²

The last three Chapters deal with the praise of God Vāsudeva and Goddess Lakṣmi by goddess Earth and this Sūtra. An outline of the contents of all the Chapters of the VDS. is as follows: Chapter 2 of the VDS. prescribes the duties of the four Varnas. Chapter 3 of the VDS. deals with the duties...
of a king, appointment of officers in government, rates of taxation. Chapter 4 describes the weights (Kārṣāpanas) and measures. Chapter 5 describes criminal and civil law and prescribes punishment for various crimes such as forgery, murder, theft, reviling, immortal actions, injury to others, using false weights in trade, wrong medical treatment, bribery in official circles, offering invalid mortgage, etc. Chapters 6 and 7 prescribe the law of debt; i.e., the law governing creditors, debtors, rates of interest and sureties, etc. Chapters 7 and 8 deal with three kinds of documents and their validity with or without witness and the witnesses and their qualifications. General rules about different kinds of ordeals, i.e., ordeal by balance, fire, water, poison and sacred libation and for their performance have been laid down in Chapters 9-14 of the VDS. Visnu describes different kinds of sons, their shares in property, persons unfit for shares, sons born of mixed marriages, the rules for partition in property and the law of inheritance in Chapters 15-18. In Chapter 19 the VDS. deals with the Śaṁskāras concerning the cremation of the dead and pollution on death. The duration of four Yugas, Manvantaras, Kalpas, day and night of Brahmā (Creator), duration of the life of the Creator. Brahman, and Mahākalpa have been described in Chapter 20. Chapters 21-23 enjoin rules for obsequial ceremonies, pollution on birth and death of relations, and for purification of one's body and various substances. The description of marriage,
forms of marriage, guardians for marriage, duties of married women, and precedence among wives of different castes for taking part in religious ceremonies along with their husbands have been given in Chapters 24–26. Chapter 27 deals with various types of sacraments such as Niñekakarman, Puñsavana, Simantonnayana, Jñatakāman, Nāmadheya, Annaprāśana, Upanayana, etc., and prescribes the time and rules for their performance. Viñnu deals with the duties and conduct of a Brahmachārin, greatness of a teacher, definition of Āchārya, Upādhyāya and Ritvik, Upakarmana, Utasarga, list of holidays on which the Veda should not be studied, and the list of persons to be respected, in Chapters 28–32. The three sources of sin, i.e., passion (Kāma) anger (Krodha) and greed (Lobha) and different categories of sins, i.e., Atipātakas, Mahāpātakas, Anupātakas, Upapātakas, Jātibhrāmakar, Saṃkrikarna, Aпатrikarna, Malinkarna and Prakirnaka, have been described in Chapters 33–42. Enumeration of various types of hells is found in Chapter 43 of the Viñnu Dharmasūtra. Chapters 44 and 45 of the VDS. deal with transmigration of soul among animals and various diseases of sinners. Various types of penances, i.e., Aghamarsana, Prahāpatya, Taptakricchra, Sītākricchra etc., have been described in Chapters 46 and 47. Chapters 48 and 49 describe Yavakrāta and Viñnuvrata respectively. Different kinds of expiations for the sinners of different categories have been described by Viñnu in Chapters 50–55. Some purificatory Vedic hymns such as
Aghamarsana, Devakritam, Suddhavatya, Taratsamandiyam etc. are mentioned by Visnu in Chapter 56. In Chapter 57 Visnu mentions such categories of sinners who must be completely avoided, e.g., Vṛātyas, unrepentant sinners. In Chapter 59 Visnu describes three kinds of wealth viz., pure wealth, variegated (mixed) wealth and dark wealth. Chapters 59-70 deal with various types of rules and duties to be observed by a householder, e.g., rules for religious observances, for cleaning body and teeth, for daily bath, for Āchamana, in regard to good and bad omens at the time of commencing a journey, for offering of oblation to deities and manes for the daily worship of God Vāsudeva, about the time and manner of taking food, for sexual intercourse with a wife and for sleep. General rules of conduct for a Sanātaka have been given in Chapter 71 of the VDS. In Chapters 73-86, Visnu describes Śrāddhas, procedure of Śrāddhas, number of Brahmānas to be invited at Śrāddhas, hymns to be recited at Śrāddhas, performance of Astaka Śrāddha, manes to be worshipped in Śrāddhas, times of Śrāddhas, fruits of performing Śrāddhas on seven week days, on 27 Nakṣatras and on Tithis, material for Śrāddhas, Brahmānas unfit to be invited at Śrāddhas, Brahmānas who are Panktipāvana, countries unfit for the performance of a Śrāddha and sacred places for the performance of Śrāddhas and for letting loose of a bull. Chapters 89-93 deal with gifts of holy things such as gift of antelope skin or a cow, gifts to be given in the months of Mārgaśīrṣa and
Pausa, etc. gifts of land, horse, gold silver, food, bed, umbrella, etc., persons fit to receive gifts, sacred bath during the month of Kartika and construction of works for public utility such as wells, lakes, garden, temple, etc. In Chapters 94 and 95 of the VDS. rules for forest hermits (Vānaprastha) have been given. Chapters 96 and 97 of the VDS. deal with rules about Samnyāsa, and meditation of the Supreme Soul in various ways. Chapters 98 and 99 contain the eulogies done by Goddess Earth in the praise of God Vāsudeva and Goddess Laksami. The last chapter of the VDS., i.e. hundred (100) details the rewards of studying this Dharmāśāstra.

Special features

The VDS. is the only Dharmasūtra which claims to be revealed by God Visnu to Goddess Earth. The word "Pustakam" is used twice (XVIII, 44; XXIII, 56) in the VDS. for a book. This word is not found in any other Dharmasūtra. The VDS. is also familiar with the custom of Sūttee, as this Sūtra states that a wife is allowed to follow her husband after death. It also enjoins that a woman should ascend the funeral pyre of her husband. Visnu enumerates twenty-one hells and gives their terrifying description. It also describes in full the torments to be suffered by sinners in all these hells. Visnu believes in the theory of transmigration of soul.
existence of Heaven and hells, and final emancipation (Moksa). Four methods of meditation and the different forms of the Supreme Soul have also been described in this Dharmasutra. This Sutra also prescribes the procedure and proper material for the worship of God Vāsudeva, and mentions the Vedic Mantras to be recited at the time of worship. This Sutra enumerates one hundred names of Vāsudeva. Charity also has an important place in the VDS., as it states that by giving various gifts to Brāhmaṇas on a particular day or occasion a man attains various types of Lokas such as Brahmanloka, Daivaloka, Agniloka, Gāndharvaloka etc. The VDS. is also acquainted with the Pancharātra system of worship as it prescribes an oblation for Vāsudeva, Samkarsana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Purusa, Satya, Achyuta and Vāsudeva incarnation of Visnu by giving more importance to Vāsudeva among the deities. The Varāha incarnation of Visnu has been described in detail in the first Chapter of this Dharmasutra and each organ of Varāha's body has been compared with Vedas, sacrificial stakes, offering etc. Visnu also mentions "Trimurti" or three gods, i.e., Brahma, Visnu and Siva of the Post-Vedic period. The VDS. also mentions the seven days of the week with their presiding deities twenty seven Naksatras with their presiding deities and fifteen luna[r] days in connection with the performance of Sraddha ceremonies. So many Tirthas situated on the bank of different rivers and mountains of India such as Gayā,
Kankhala, Paranasi, Mahāgangā, Prāyāga, Daksinapānchanada, Kuśavarta, Śripārvata, Ausaja, etc., have also been described in the VDS for the performance of śrāddhas. The novel definition of "Āryavarta" is also given in the VDS in Chapter (LXXXIV, 4), which says that the country where the system of four castes, i.e., Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śudra, does not exist is a Mlechchha country and the "Āryavarta" is beyond that. In other words, the country where the system of four castes prevails or exists is known as "Āryavarta". A long list of good and bad omens, not found in any other Dharmasūtra has been given in the VDS. Visnu contains quotations from all the Vedic Śaṁhitas, Vedāṅgas, Epics and Purāṇas. For instance, Chapters 21, 67, 86, 73 and 48 of the VDS. contain several Mantras, which are derived from different Vedic Śaṁhitas. It speaks of Vedāṅgas, of Vyākaraṇa, of Dharmaśastras, of Itiḥāsa and of Purāṇas. Visnu quotes verses which are designed as "Gāthas" and said to be sung by Pitris. These Gāthas of the VDS. closely agree with the Gāthas quoted in the Anuśāsanaparva of the Mahābhārata. The VDS. enumerates several purificatory Vedic hymns by their conventional names such as Aghamsāna, Devakritam, Suddhavatyaḥ, Taratsamandīya etc. The main tenets of the Sāňkhya system (24 entities i.e., Prakṛti and Puruṣa) and the Yoga system of Philosophy are also found described in Chapter 97 of the VDS., where it deals with the form of God Vāsudeva.
and the methods of Meditation on Supreme Spirit.

Authorship and Date of the Visnu Dharmasutra

There is no clear cut indication about the authorship of the VDS, in the printed text of this work except the last few verses of Chapter one in which it states that the sacred precepts which have been prescribed in Chapters 2-97 of this work, are communicated by God Visnu to Goddess Earth. For this reason the VDS claims divine authorship and it can be said that the claim of divine authorship has been advanced to impart authenticity and religiosity to this work. Some learned scholars hold different views in regard to the authorship of this Dharmasutra. For instance Dr. Bühler's view, cited by Dr. Jolly in his introduction to the Visnusmriti, is that "the bulk of the so-called Visnusmriti is really the ancient Dharmasutra of the Charayanīya Kāthaka Sākhā of the Black Yajurveda. It ranks, like other Dharmasūtras with the Grihya and Srautasūtras of its school, the latter of which though apparently lost now. The Kāthaka Grihyasūtra found in Kashmir closely agrees with the Dharmasūtra of Visnu and the Mantras in the later agree with the Kāthaka recension of the Yajurveda. But it does not seem likely that the Visnu Sūtra was composed by the same author who composed the Kāthaka Srauta and Grihyasūtra, and it also ever formed part of the Kāthaka Kalpa as the Dharmasūtras of the Āpastamba, the Baudhāyana, and the
Hiranyakasipu form part of Kalpasūtras of the respective schools to which they belong." Prof. Bühler further points out that "the whole work (Visnu Dharmasūtra) appears to have been recast by an adherent of Viṣṇu and that the final and introductory Chapters in particular are shown by their very style to have been composed by another author than the body of the work." Commenting on this work Prof. Max. Müller says that it is enlarged by modern additions written in Ślokas. Regarding the authorship of the VDS, Dr. Jolly opines: "The contents of Chapter XCVII, in which it is attempted to reconcile some of the main tenets of the Sāṅkhya system, as propounded in the Saṅkhya-kārikā, Saṅkhya-pravacanabhāṣya, and other works, with the Vaishnava creed and with the Yoga; the fact that the two Ślokas in XCVI (97, 98) and part of the Ślokas in XCVII (15-21) have their parallel in similar Ślokas of the Bhagavadgītā and of the Bhāgavata-purāṇa; the terms Mahatpati, Kapila, and Saṅkhya-chārya, used as epithets of Viṣṇu (XCVIII, 26, 85, 86); and some other passages in the Viṣṇuṇiti Chapters seem to favour the supposition that the editor may have been one of those members of the Viṣṇuṇiti sect of the Bhāgavatas, who were conspicuous for their leaning towards the Sāṅkhya and Yoga systems of philosophy. Therefore this work may be attributed to Viṣṇuṇiti editor. According to J. R. Gharpure, "Viṣṇu appears to be a generic name for the doctrines propounded by a particular school and the present work is only a particular
edition representative of that school. For, in addition to the fact that Visnu is one of the Smritikârs referred to by Yâjñavalkya, there are others referred to with the same generic name of Visnu but with a variety of prefixes such as Brihad Visnu, Vriddh Visnu, Laghu Visnu etc."

Dr. S. C. Banerji says that it may, however, be supposed to have been composed by a person or a group of persons, not acknowledged as authoritative on Dharma, so that in order to impart a stamp of antiquity and sacredness to it, the work was ascribed to a divine being a method which was found very effective in attracting the respectful attention of the credulous readers.

Therefore, by keeping in mind the above cited views of different scholars regarding the authorship of the VDS., it can be said that the author of this work is anonymous. On the other hand, the author of this work may be either a person or a group of persons devoted to God Visnu.

Date of the Visnu Dharmasūtra

There is a great controversy among scholars in regard to the date of the VDS. One is faced with preplex problems, when one goes through this work because there are several topics in the VDS., e.g., duties of a king and punishments, the rules about twelve sons and mixed castes, funeral rites and mournings, which have comparatively an archaic appearance
and on a level with the ancient Dharmasūtras of Gautama and Apastamba and the Grihyasūtras. On the other hand, a large portion of this Dharmasūtra appears to be of a later date. More than 160 verses of the VDS. are identical with those of Manusmriti. Besides this, a large number of Sūtras also closely agree in substance with the verses of the Manusmriti. Such a relationship between these works raises the question whether the VDS. has borrowed from Manu or Vice-versa or both drew upon a common source. But it is difficult to say anything definite in regard to the common source, for no such common source is available at present. Dr. Jolly mentions the following points to prove the posteriority of Manu to the VDS.:

1. Viśnu no where refers to South Indian people such as the Dravidas, Andharas or to the Yavanas.

2. It shows no distinct traces of an acquaintance with the tenets of any other school of philosophy except the Yoga and Sāṅkhya systems.

3. It does not mention female ascetics disparagingly, and in particular does not contain Manu's rule (VIII, 363) regarding the comparatively light punishment to be inflicted for violation of (Buddhist and other) female ascetics.

4. It does not inveigh against the custom of Niyoga or appointment of a widow to raise offspring to her deceased husband while Manu speaks of Niyoga.
But the above cited arguments of Dr. Jolly have been refuted by Prof. Ram Gopal who says that little weight can be attached to the argumentum-exsilentio, and that Manu's acquaintance with the peoples of the South does not prove his posteriority to the authors of the VDS. because the Ait. Brāhmaṇa (VII, 18) also betrays acquaintance with the people of the South. Moreover, in Chapter LXXXV, the VDS. mentions many Tīrthas situated in the South. So far as the non-condemnation of Niyoga by Visnu is concerned, Prof. Ram Gopal says that Yājñavalkya also, which is definitely later than the Manusmriti, does not censure the custom of Niyoga. Professor Ram Gopal further says that there is abundant evidence to show that the VDS. is later than the Manusmriti and has borrowed several verses from it. For example, the VDS. has appropriated Manu's famous verse (V, 41) by substituting "Kathāchana" for "Abravin Manu", in LI, 64; the verse (V, 131) by substituting "Parikīrtitam" for "Manurabravita" in XXIII, 50; and a hemistich of the verse (V, 122) by substituting "Proksanenacha Pustakam" for "Punaḥpākena Mrinmayam" in XXIII, 56. I have discussed several common verses in support of this view in Chapter III of my thesis.

In this context Dr. Kane says that the VDS. professes to be a direct revelation from Visnu and it is in keeping with this assumed role that not one human author is mentioned by name in the Sutra. Therefore, where the name of Manu occurred in any verse, it was purposely omitted. Another reason why
the Sūtra must be presumed to be the borrower is the character of the extent work itself. It is a kind of hotchpotch and contains several verses that are identical with those of the other works. ³⁷

There is some controversy about the mention of Visnu as an ancient law-giver in the YS. In this context Dr. Kane observes ³⁸ "As Yājñavalkya enumerates Visnu among the propounders of Dharmasāstras, it follows that a work of Visnu existed in comparatively early times. What matters that work embraced it is difficult to say. It probably contained the topics found in the works of Gautama, Āpastamba and others. It may have included portions borrowed from the Kāthaka Grihya". Similarly Dr. S. C. Banerji says ³⁹ "It is difficult to believe that the YS. refers to the extant Visnusmriti, it is equally difficult to account for the fact that certain verses are common to VDS and YS. the only conclusion that is warranted by the existing fact is that there was probably an earlier version of the work of Visnu to which Yājñavalkya refers and which, being too old, was forgotten and, therefore, adopted in the later version that exists today, the later redactor retaining some portions of the original work intact." But mere mention of Visnu as an ancient law-giver is not enough to prove that the present VDS. is intended by the author of the YS.

As pointed out above, that a large number of verses and Sūtras of the VDS. closely agree with those of Manu. There
are many verses in this work which agree with the contents of the Yājñavalkya Smriti. In this respect too, Dr. Jolly, has tried to prove that Yājñavalkya has borrowed so many ideas from the VDS. as he adduces the following arguments in support of his view. 40

1. Dr. Jolly says that the whole anatomical section (III, 84-104), has been shown by Prof. Max. Muller, including the smile of the soul which dwells in the heart like a lamp (III, 109, 111, 201), to have been borrowed by Yājñavalkya from the VDS. (XCVI, 46-96). But this argument of Dr. Jolly has been refuted by Dr. Kane 41 and Prof. Ram Gopal 42 by saying that there is nothing to say that the anatomical details were first given to the world by Viṣṇu. They must have first been embodied in works on medicine such as those of Ēharaka and Susţuta and were probably copied by the Dharmasūtra writers. Dr. Kane further adds that "If there is any borrowing between Viṣṇu and Yājñavalkya, I think, from the character of the VDS. that it is the Sūtra that must be regarded as borrowing from Yājñavalkya". In support of his view, Dr. Kane cites several matters which are found in the VDS. but are wanting in the Yājñavalkyaśārīrkiśriya such as the name "Jaiva" for Thursday, the long list of Tirthas, which include the Śrīparavata and the five rivers of the South called Southern
Pañchanada, the importance of conjunction of the Moon and Jupiter on a full moon day (VI, 49: 9-10), the vague definition of Āryavarta.

2. The allusions to the astrology and astronomy of the Greeks (Y, I, 80, 295), render it necessary to refer the metrical redaction of the YS. to a date later than the second century A.D.

3. The whole passage on the worship of Gāṇeśa and of the planets (I, 270-307), in which, a heterodox sect is mentioned, that has been identified with Buddhists, are not found in the VDS. In this context Prof. Ram Gopal says that the worship of Vināyakas described in the YS. is contained in the Man. G. S. which is one of the earliest Sūtras. The VDS. on the contrary, prescribes the image worship of Vāsudeva (Chap. XC) and mentions the days of the week (Chap. LXXVIII ) which were according to all indications, not introduced in India prior to the astronomy of the Greeks.\textsuperscript{43}

4. The philosophical doctrines propounded in the YS (I, 349-50) have no parallel in the VDS. As for the philosophical doctrines propounded in the YS., Prof. Ram Gopal says that the VDS. is not supposed to contain every thing that the YS. has.\textsuperscript{44}

5. The YS. while speaking of the number of wives which a member of the three castes may marry (I, 57), advocates
the "Puritan" view, that no *Sūdrā* wife must be among these and thus disallows a *Sūdrā* wife. As regards the above cited argument of Dr. Jolly, Prof. Ram Gopal observes that these *Sūtras* have been borrowed by the *VDS.* from the *BDS.* So no chronological conclusion can be drawn from these *Sūtras.*

6. The word "Nanaka" for coined money referred to in the *YS.* does not occur in the *VDS.* In this context Prof. Ram Gopal says that the date of introduction of the term *Nanaka* is not yet definite and its non-mention in the *VDS.* can hardly settle the chronology of this work. In regard to the word "Nanaka" Dr. Kane states that it has been shown that the *VDS.* professes to be a direct revelation by God *Visnu* to the Goddess Earth and therefore, the redactor of *Visnu* knowing that the *Nanaka* is of foreign origin omitted that word.

Regarding the style and composition of both the *VDS.* and the *YS.* Prof. Ram Gopal points out that the *YS.* is throughout consistent in the use of compact and concise verses, while the *VDS* has no style of its own. In some places the *VDS* employs the terse style of the *YS.* and in others it uses very loose *Sūtras* to express the ideas contained in the verses of the *YS.* For instance, the rules of the *VDS* (XVII, 4-21) = the verses of the *YS.* (I, 135-38; 143-45). It appears that *VDS.* has borrowed verbatim some verses of the *YS.* and merely
paraphrased others. At last the learned scholar says that the balance of probability is in favour of the view that the VDS. has copiously borrowed rules from the YS. As regards the antiquity of the VDS. it can be said that this work has also borrowed some topics from the other Sutras. Visnu agrees very closely with the Gaut. DS. for a dozen of Sutras. As pointed out in Chapter III of this work; the VDS. has sixteen verses common with those of Bhagavadgîtâ; and some verses with Mahâbhârata. Sometimes Visnu modifies the words to be used in Bhagavadgîtâ for the sake of its own composition. For instance, Visnu substitutes "Vasudhe" for Kaunteya and Bhavini for Bharata. So many Sutras and the ideas are identical with those of Samkh. GS., Par. GS., Gobh. GS and ASV. GS. The VDS. generally, resembles with the Vasistha Dharmasutra in style and in the treatment of the subject. Chapter 56 of the VDS. is identical with the VAS.DS. (XXVIII, 10-15). Similarly there are several verses of the VDS. which are common to those of Vas.DS. as discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis. Chapter 48 nowhere has any parallel except in the sixth Chapter of the third Prañâ of the BDS., as shown in Chapter 3 of this thesis, where it occurs almost word for word.

So far as the relationship of the VDS. with Kâthaka-school of Krisna Yajurveda is concerned, a large number of Mantras which occur in Chapter XXI, LXVII, LXXIII and LXXXVI, of the VDS. dealing with obsequial ceremonies, daily oblations,
Srāddhas and ceremony of setting a bull at liberty, are derived from the Kāthaka Saṁhitā. Some Mantras which are not found in any Vedic Saṁhitā even in the KS. but, are quoted by their Pratikas in the Kāthaka Grihyasūtra and in full in the Laugāksi Grihyasūtra, as discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis. It is important to note that Kāthaka Grihyasūtra does not contain those Mantras only but also the Sūtras in which they are quoted. About forty Sūtras of the VDS. closely agree with those of the KGS.; nineteen of them deal with the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice, fifteen of them are concerned with the Srāddha and six of them describe the Vṛiṣotasarga. Dr. Jolly has tried to establish the close agreement between the VDS. and the KGS. and says that where they differ, it is generally due to the false reading or to enlargement in the part of the Viṣṇu Sūtra. Believing that the version of the VDS. is in a few cases more genuine than that of the KGS. Dr. Jolly advances the conjecture that the author of the VDS. cannot have borrowed his rules for the performance of Sraddha etc. from the KGS., but that both must have drawn from a common source, i.e., the tradition current in the Katha school; to which this work is indebted for so many of its Mantras as well, And thus scholar Dr. Jolly seeks to confirm Dr. Buhler's hypothesis that the bulk of so-called Viṣṇusmṛiti is really the ancient Dharmasūtra of the Charyanaiya-Kāthaka Sākhā of the black Yajurveda.

Dr. Kane, too, endorses the view of Dr. Jolly and opines that the VDS. used the Kāthaka Mantras and borrowed from the KGS.
It may have been a text-book of Kātha school and probably originated in Kashmir and Panjab which is the home of the Kathas. 51

Pandita Nandapandita in his commentary on the Visnu Dharmasūtra LXVII, 3 (where twelve deities are named) expressly states that the description of Vāiśvadeva in that Chapter follows the procedure adopted in the Kathaśākha 'Kathaśākhanusārena Vaiśvadevam āha-Agnyādibhyo dvādaśahu- tīrajuhuyāt. The VDS Chapter 73 provides about Amaśrāddhas (Śrāddhas with uncooked grains) and Kāmyāsrāddhas (Śrāddhas performed on certain Tithis, Nakṣatras and week days for securing certain desired objects specified in the VDS. Chapter 78) a certain procedure, in these Śrāddhas during the recitation of the first Paṃchaka, after having offered an oblation into fire; in Śrāddhas where meat is offered during the recitation of the second Paṃchaka; at a Śrāddha on Amāvasā during the recitation of the last Panchaka; on the Āstākas of the three dark halves following Agrahayāni during the recitation of the first, second and last Paṃchaka respectively and likewise on the Anvāstākas he must invite the Manes etc. The Kṛtyakalpataru on Śrāddha (pp. 164 - 65) quotes the VDS. LXXIII, 5-14 and remarks that the words first Paṃchaka etc. have in view, according to Laugkṣi Gṛihya, the Anuvāka of 15 Riks, where the first Paṃchaka begins with the Rik. "iyam-eva" (which is the first of the pentad) the second pentad begins
with 'Panchvyustih' and the third pentad begins with 'Ritasya Dhama'. These fifteen verses form the 10th Anuvaka of 39th Sthanaka (called "Yadakranda from first two words) of the Kathakasamhita. The first verse of the pentad of this Anuvaka in Kāṭhaka-Saṁhitā is 'Iyameva sa etc.', the first verse of the second pentad is "Paṁch-Vyustir-anu and the first verse of the third Panchaka is 'Ritasya dhama'. The above discussion makes it clear that the VDS. took the Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā and the Kāṭhaka Grihyasūtra (or Laugakṣi) as its basis. The words Prathama-Panchakena, Madhyama-panchakena are vague and could have been understood only by those who know their relation to Kāṭhak Grihya and Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā. It follows that at least some chapters of the VDS. i.e., 21, 64, 65, 67, 73 were certainly based on the Kāṭhaka Grihya, and the VDS. was originally intended to be a Dharmasūtra for the student of the Kāṭhaka, though in course of time it grew and included elements not connected with Kāṭhaka-Sākha. 52

It is also noteworthy that on commenting VDS. XXI, 17 Nandapandita connects it with the Kāṭhaka Grihya and refers VDS. LXIV, 21 (Drupadāṁ Sāvitrīṁ vā) to the KS. XXXVIII, 63 (Drupadavivenmumuchan iti). Similarly Viṣṇu LXV, 2 (Asvinoh Prāṇastāute iti Jīvačānām dattvā) is connected with KS. XI, 17. On Viṣṇu LXV, 7 Nandapandita remarks that its four Mantras belong to the Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā. XXXVI, 29-32. Similarly the Mantra of Viṣṇu LXV, 11 (Tejoāsisukramiti dīpam) is from the
Kāṭhaka Sāṁhitā I, 33. In this way the commentator Nandapandita tries to establish the relationship between the VDS. and the Kāṭhaka school of Kṛiṣṇa Yajurveda.

The above mentioned hypothesis of Dr. Jolly, Nandapandita and Dr. Kane, regarding the close affinity of the VDS with the Kāṭhaka school of black Yajurveda is not fully acceptable to Prof. Ram Gopal, who advances the following arguments in support of his view. Prof. Ram Gopal says that though the VDS. shares some Sūtras with the KGS. in the description of the Śrāddha and Vaiśvadeva, it is very important to note that the description of these rites in the VBS. is not confined to the common Sūtras and is much more comprehensive than that contained in the KGS. So far as the Vṛisotāsarga is concerned, the common Sūtras occur in the Par. G.S., the Sāṅkh. G.S. the Kaush. G.S. as well. It is really significant to note in this connection that one rule of the VDS (LXXXVI, 2), which is missing in the KGS, and the Par. G.S., is found in the Sankh. G.S. (III, 11, 10) and the Kaush, G.S. (III, 6, 4); and that another expression Āsvayujām of the VDS. (LXXXVI, 2) is met with in the Kaush G.S. (III, 6, 2) only. The learned scholar further observes that when the VDS. is found to share several Sūtras with the other Grihyasūtras also as shown above, and differs from the KGS. on many points, it is unsafe to assume that the VDS. was originally a Dharmasūtra of the Kathas.

There are also some other points on which the VDS. and
KGS. differ from each other. For instance, Visnu (XXX, 1) speaks of Vedic studies for 4½ months only in a year when once they are started on full-moon day of Śrāvana or Bhādrapada, while the KGS. (I, 9, 10) gives three alternatives, viz., 4½, 5 or 5½ months. Visnu prescribes that the proper year for the Upanayana of a Kṣatriya is the 11th from conception (XXVII, 16), while the KGS. prescribes the 9th year without specifying whether it is to be counted from conception or birth (IV, 1, 2).

Visnu enumerates eight forms of marriage (XXIV, 18), while the KGS. (II, 3 and 4) speaks of only two, Brāhma and Asura, and is silent about the rest. Visnu (XLVI, 19-20) defines Santāpana and Mahāsantāpana penances differently from the KGS. (I, 7, 3-4), but agrees with the YS. (III, 315-316) in this respect.

As for the Mantras employed by the VDS. Prof. Ram Gopal states that the largest number of the Mantras prescribed in the VDS. belong to the Rigveda. He further says that the version of the VDS. is not more genuine than that of the Kathaka Grihya Sūtras. The VDS. has borrowed rules from the KGS. in the same way as it has borrowed from the other Grihya and Dharmasūtras and Smritis, and no special relationship between the VDS. and the KGS. can be proved on the basis of the evidence available at present.

As it has been stated above that numerous verses, Sūtras and rules of the VDS. closely agree with those of the other works on Dharma, the question arises as to who is the borrower.
One of the two alternatives is possible. Either all the other works borrowed from the VDS. or the VDS. has borrowed from other works. It is difficult to assume the first alternative that all the authorities on Dharma from Gautama to Yājñavalkya, have borrowed anything from Viṣṇu. It may be possible that the VDS. has borrowed from the other Dharmaśāstras. Prof. Ram Gopal, too, supporting the second alternative rightly says that it appears that a devotee of Viṣṇu picked up Sutras and verses from the earlier works on Dharma and rehashed them into the so-called Viṣṇu Smriti. If all those rules which are common to all the works on Dharma are taken away from the VDS. it is left with almost nothing of importance.  

Accepting the hypothesis regarding the antiquity of the VDS. advanced by Professors Bühler and Jolly, Dr. Kane observes that, although the extant VDS. is a late recast it contains a few doctrines that were held in ancient times; and in support of this view, Dr. Kane cites the view of Dr. Jolly that the VDS. allows a Brāhmaṇa to marry a girl of any of the four castes and does not inveigh against Niyoga as Manu does. Both the above-mentioned views of Dr. Kane, regarding the antiquity of the VDS. have been rejected by Prof. Ram Gopal who states that the Sutras of the VDS., which allow a Śudra wife to the three higher castes, have been borrowed from the VDS. (I, 8, 16, 2-5), and that the YS., too, which is definitely later than the Manu Smriti, does not condemn "Niyoga". Therefore, according to
Prof. Ram Gopal, the VDS. can scarcely be credited with any doctrines of antiquity on the basis of these two instances.\footnote{57}

Dr. Kane further places some Chapters such as Chapters relating to Rājadharma and punishment (III and V), the number of twelve sons and mixed castes (XV, and XVI) and funeral rites and mourning (XXI and XXII) on a par with the ancient Dharmasūtras of Gautama and Āpastamba and tries to prove Visnu’s priority to Manu and Yājñavalkya\footnote{58}. But Prof. Ram Gopal, after having critically examined the above mentioned Chapters of the VDS. proves that there is very little in these Chapters that is more ancient than the rules of Vas. D.S., the Manusmriti and the YS. Prof. Ram Gopal observes, "In Chapter III, three verses and forty odd Sūtras closely agree with the verses of Manu; nearly ten Sūtras are in agreement with the precepts of the Yaj; about two dozen Sūtras are in perfect accord with the rules of both Manu and Yāj; and approximately half a dozen Sūtras are found to agree with the Sūtras of Gautama. And if all such Sūtras and verses are removed from this Chapter, nothing of importance is left over. Similarly in Chapter V, three verses and fifty odd Sūtras closely agree with the verses of Manu; nearly seventy Sūtras contain the same rules as are laid down in the Yāj; and over two dozen Sūtras agree in substance with the precepts of both Manu and Yāj. It is also a remarkable feature that numerous expressions in the fifth Chapter are exactly identical with those of Manu and Yaj. Similarly Chapter XV is also found to possess little originality;
its rules about twelve sons, which have been especially mentioned by Dr. Kane to prove its antiquity, have nearly all been borrowed from the Vas. D.S. (XVII, 13-38); one verse and many expressions have been borrowed verbatim from the Vas. D.S.; and this Chapter owes two verses to the Manusmriti. Similar is the case with Chapter XVI which has one verse and many rules common with the Manusmriti and a few rules common with the Yaj. As regards Chapter XXI, which has nearly half a dozen sūtras common with the Kath. G.S., one verse (XXI, 23) fully agrees with the Yaj. (I, 254) and the other verse and some sūtras agree in substance with the precepts of the Yaj. So far as Chapter XXII is concerned, most of its rules agree in substance with those of Manu; a dozen verses are almost identical with those of Manu; and some of its expressions fully coincide with those found in the Manusmriti and the Yaj."^{59}

Dr. Bühler, Dr. Jolly and Dr. Kane believe that there are two forms of the VDS: (1) the oldest form of this work which was mostly in prose, dealing with such rules as are laid down in the Kathaka school of Yajurveda and the oldest Dharmasūtras of Āpastamba and Gautama and (2) the present form of the work, which is in prose and verses, is said to be recast from the Vaiṣṇavite point of view by a person devoted to Viṣṇu, and which contains the oldest ideas and rules laid down in the Smrities of Manu and Yājñavalkya. These scholars place both
the above-mentioned versions of this work in different periods. Accepting the view of Dr. Jolly and Dr. Buhler, Dr. Kane says that the VDS. was originally the Dharmasūtras of Kāthaka school of Yajurveda and was prior to all the Dharmasūtras and Smrīties, and he places the older portion of the VDS between 300 B.C. to 100 A.D. But nothing definite can be said about the date of this version of the VDS, because there is little evidence to prove that the VDS. was ever a Dharmasūtra of the Kāthaka school.

In addition to the above discussed points of the VDS which prove its priority to that of the Smrītis of Vasiṣṭha, Manu and Yājñavalkya there are also some such matters which prove its posteriority to the Manuśrīti and the YS, and separate it from the Dharmasūtras of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana etc. by an interval of many centuries as discussed below:

1. As it has been pointed out above, the first chapter of the VDS. which begins with a legend about the lifting of Goddess Earth by the divine Boar (Yājñavrāha incarnation of Viṣṇu) claims divine authorship and thus this legend leads this Dharmasūtra nearer to the Purānic literature. There is also mention of different incarnations of God Vāsudeva in the VDS, such as Varāha, Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha etc., which are not found discussed in any other Dharmasūtra of the same class. Therefore, the divine authorship of the VDS. and its acquaintance with different incarnations make this
Dharmasutra later than the other Dharmasutras as well as the Smritis of Manu and Yājñavalkya.

2. A lengthy description of twenty-one hells, which is not found in any other Dharmasutra, is found in full details in the VDS. The description of hells is also found in the Manusmriti and the Yājñavalkya-smriti.

3. The mention of the week days in Visnu, which is wanting in any ancient Sanskrit work, makes this Dharmasutra comparatively a later work. The YS, which is definitely later than the Manusmriti does not mention the seven days of the week. It only enumerates seven planets in the same order as given in the VDS. In this context, Dr. Jolly observes that if the introduction of the week of the Greeks into the ancient Dharmasutra has been justly attributed to the Visnuitic revision of the VDS. then it cannot be placed earlier than the third or fourth century A.D. Dr. Kane points out that the earliest epigraphic evidence of a week day is in the Eran inscription of 484 A.D. (vide-fleet’s Gupta inscriptions pp. 88-89) and Varahamihira (6th century) knew the week days well. The Brahmapurāṇa (28, 55) mentions Sunday and the Pandampurāṇa mentions Thursday (Brahmakanda Chapter, 11, 34). The Sūrya-Siddhanta (XII, 69 and 78) speaks of the lords of week days. So the mention of the week days proves the posteriority of the VDS. to the ancient Dharmaśāstras.
4. The VDS. is acquainted with the custom of Suttee or the self immolation of widows, which is in direct opposition to the law concerning a widow's right to inheritance and to other precepts regarding widows. None of the Dharmasūtras and the important Smritis like Manu, Yājñavalkya etc. mention the custom of Suttee. It is interesting to note that at one place Visnu speaks of the custom of Suttee and on the other hand he includes the widow in the property of a person who dies without a son. So when the writer of this work was collecting the Sūtras, verses, and the ideas from different works on Dharma, he forgot about such contradictory points. Therefore, it may be said that the VDS is a collection of different rules and ideas found in various Dharmasastras.

5. The word "Pustaka", which is used in the sense of a book in two verses (XVIII, 44 and XVIII, 56) of the VDS., is not found in any other Dharmasūtra and the Smritis of Manu and Yājñavalkya. This word is used for the first time in the VDS. or in the Harvamsa.

6. Visnu deals with the description of "Kala" 'time', in full details in some of its verses, while such description is not found in any ancient work and the commentator Nandapaṇḍita identifies the term "Kālā" with Visnu. This character of the VDS. is of Purānic style.

7. The vague location or the definition of the Aryavarta as a country where the system of four castes, i.e., Brāhmaṇa,
Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śudra exists found in the VDS. It is somewhat different from that given in the Śāstras of Baudhāyana (I, 1, 2, 10-11) and Manu (II, 22).

8. Enumeration of numerous Tīrthas sacred to God Viṣṇu and Śiva belonging to all parts of India, among which Gayā, Kedāra, Kankhala, Gaṅgādvāra, Binduka, Śrīparvata, Saptarṣi, Godāvari and Southern Panchaṁada are included, deserves special mention. No other Dharmasūtra or Smriti contains such a long list of Tīrthas. The enumeration of various Tīrthas situated on the banks of rivers and on mountains for the performance of Śrāddhas brings this Dharmasūtra nearer to the Purāṇas.

9. Idol-worship of God Vāsudeva is also found discussed in the VDS. Viṣṇu also prescribes particular methods for the worship of God Vāsudeva and mentions the prohibited and recommended material to be used in the worship. The form of God Viṣṇu is also described in full details in the VDS. for meditation. The VDS. is also acquainted with different kinds of idols as it states in one of its Sūtras that the impurity caused to the images of God should be cleansed by the same material of which they are made. Similarly the ceremonies described in Chapter 70 which deal with different kinds of gifts to be given in the months of Mārgaśīraṣa and Pauṣa are not found in any other Dharmasūtra and the Smritis of Manu and Yājñavalkya.
10. The description of good and bad omens at the time of starting on a long journey is also found in the VDS, while this subject is not treated in any other Dharmasutra.

As regards the relationship between Kaut. and Visnu, it may be said that the VDS. has so many ideas and rules identical with those of Kaut. But it appears that in the description of some topics the VDS. is more detailed than the Kaut. For instance, in regard to the constituent elements of the State, i.e., the minister, the fort, the treasury, the army, the subjects along with the territory, and the allies, Visnu and Kaut. both contain almost the same order and the nomenclature except the element "Rāstra" (the subjects along with the territory). Visnu uses the word "Rāstra" for "Janapada" of Kaut. and places it at the sixth place. It is also noteworthy that both Visnu and Kaut. use the term "Prakritayah" to denote these seven constituent elements of the State, while Manu and Yājñavalkya use the term "Aṅgas" in the same sense. So it can be said that the VDS. has taken this idea from Kaut. Similarly, Kaut. states four types of forts for the protection of the king, i.e., Audaka, Parvata, Dhanva and Vana, while Visnu adds two more i.e., Nri and Mahi", and increases these forts up to six. So there are several topics on which this Dharmasutra and Kaut. have the same idea. It goes without saying that the VDS. represents a far too advanced stage of juristic principles than the Kaut. But in the context of six stratagems of war, i.e., truce, war, marching, encamping alliance with more
powerful kings, and duplicity, Kaut. is more exhaustive than VDS. Visnu simply names out these stratagems whereas Kaut. devotes one full chapter (VII, 1) to the subject.

There are also some such points as are different in both the VDS. and the Kaut. For instance, in the law of inheritance Kautilya does not recognise a widow or a mother as heir to a sonless man while Visnu clearly mentions a widow's part in inheritance. Kautilya divides the StrIdhana of a woman dying during her husband's life time among her sons and daughters, while Visnu prefers daughters to the sons. Similarly Kaut. does not mention the Bandhus as heirs and does not say anything about reunion in this context, while Visnu includes these two in inheritance and gives full details about this subject. Kautilya does not contain distinct directions about the three-folds aspects of proof under the title of evidence, i.e., documents, witnesses and ordeals, while the VDS. goes into all these matters. So many other examples can be cited in this connection. Therefore, it can be concluded from the above discussion that the VDS. is later than Kaut. by several centuries.

Besides, the following points also support this view:

Commenting on the posteriority of the VDS. to Manu and Yajn., Dr. Kane cites the external evidence: "the Manusmriti has been quoted with utmost reverence by a host of writers from at least the 4th century downwards, such as Sabara, Kumarila and
Śankarāchārya. Yājñavalkaya was commented upon by Viśvarūpa in the first half of the 9th century. Viśvarūpa in his commentary quotes scores of Sūtras from Gautama, Āpastamba, Baudhāyana, Vasiṣṭha, Śāṅkha and Hārīta. But it is significant that Viśvarūpa in his commentary on Yājñavalkya does not quote even a single Sūtra of Viṣṇu by name. It is true Viśvarūpa on Yājñavalkya (III, 66) says that four forms of asceticism (Pārivrājya) should be understood from the other Smritis like those of Viṣṇu. This probably refers to Chapter 97 of the extant Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra. Dr. S. C. Benarji says that Viṣṇu is not mentioned by Kumārila who, in his Tantravartikā enumerates the Dharmasūtra.

Establishing the lower limit in the matter of date of the VDS., Dr. Jolly opines that the VDS must be put before the eleventh century in which this Sūtra is quoted in the Mitāksara of Vijnāneśvara. From that time downwards it is quoted in nearly every law digest, and particularly a large number of quotations occur in Apararaka's commentary on Yājñavalkya, which was composed in the twelfth century. In this context Dr. Kane points out that quotations from the VDS. in the Krityakalpatāru are made hundred of times, e.g., 132 times on Vyavahārakanda, 39 times of Śrāddha, 38 times on Niyatākāla, 35 times in Grihasthakānda, 30 times in Brahmachārikānda, 10 times on Rājadharma, 15 times on Dānakanda. One great advantage is that the Kalpatāru often states that the same verse or passage occurs in Viṣṇu and other ancient writers, e.g., in Vyavahārakānda.
on pp. 270, 613, 627, 652, 676, 678 etc. verses are cited as 
Manu-Viṣṇu and cited as Viṣṇu and Yājñavalkya on pp. 150, 213, 
289. Chapter 49 (on Dvādaśīvrata) and 89 of the VDS are quoted 
in Vratakānda of Kalpataru on pp. 310, 418 respectively.91 A 
large number of passages have been quoted by the commentators 
Vijnanesvara (A. D. 1050) Apararka (A. D. 1115), Devanabhata 
(A. D. 1200) and Madhavacharya (A. D. 1350).

Therefore, it is clear from the above discussion that the 
subject of the authorship and date of the VDS. is a matter of 
mere conjecture. Neither its authorship can be clearly 
decided nor can a definite date be assigned to it. But 
keeping in view the above discussion about these two subjects 
it may be said that the VDS. is the collection of such precepts 
as are found in various Grihyas and Dharmaśutras as well as in 
the Smritis of Manu and Yājñavalkya. The author of this work 
have been a devotee of God Viṣṇu. He has not mentioned his 
name to prove the authenticity and religiosity of this work. 
We can at the best say that the VDS. in its present form was 
composed after the Smritis of Manu and Yājñavalkya and prior 
to the completion of the Krityakalpataru of Laksmandhara Bhaṭṭ. 
It is impossible to assign any definite date to its composition.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. H.S.L., pp. 246.
2. VDS. I, 1-61.
4. VDS. XX, 39.
5. VDS. XXV, 14.
6. VDS. Chapter XLIII.
7. VDS. Chapter XLIV.
8. VDS. For Heaven, XC, 13; XCI, 9; XCII, 5; C, 1; II, 45; III, 98 etc. and for hells chapter XLIII and XCI, 10.
9. VDS. XCVII, 14.
10. VDS. XCVII, 1-10.
11. VDS. Chapters LXV and LXVI.
13. VDS. Chapters LXXXVII and XCI.
14. VDS. LXVII, 2.
15. VDS. I, 3-9.
16. VDS. XXXI, 7.
17. VDS. LXXVIII, 1-50.
18. VDS. LXXXV, 1-63.
20. VDS. I, 16, I, 53; XXX, 3, 38; XXVIII, 35; LXXXIII, 6.
21. VDS. LXXXIII, 7.
22. VDS. III, 70; XXX, 38; VIII, 8; LXXIII, 16; LXXXIII, 8.
23. VDS. III, 70; XXX, 38; LXXIII, 16; LXXXIII, 7.
24. VDS. XXX, 38; LXXIII, 16; LXXXIII, 7.
25. VDS. LXXVIII, 52, 53; LXXX, 14; LXXXIII, 21; LXXXV, 65-67.
27. VDS. LVI, 3-27.
38. H.D.S. page 122.
42. I.V.K.S. pp. 62.
44. I.V.K.S., pp. 63.
45. Ibid. pp. 63.
46. Ibid.
49. S.B.E. Vol. VII, pp. XII.
53. I.V.K.S. pp. 64.
57. I.V.K.S. pp. 65.
61. VDS. LXVII, 2.
62. VDS. XLIII, 1-22.
63. VDS. LXXVIII, 1-7.
64. YS. I, 296.
67. VDS. XX, 39 and XXV, 14.
68. VDS. XVII, 4.
69. VDS. XX, 21, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 43.
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