



# GIFT PROTECTION IN SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

## DHARMA WORKSHOP

### 24–26 SEPTEMBER 2024

---

**A CARROT AND STICK APPROACH: A SURVEY OF THE LEXICAL  
FIELDS USED IN BENEDICTIVE AND EXHORTATORY STANZAS**

AMANDINE WATTELIER-BRICOUT

### INTRODUCTION

- ▶ widespread use and frequency of their quotations
- ▶ lack of study due to their stereotypical content
- ▶ need to define what is an "usual stanza"
- ▶ need to identify their functions justifying their intensive and lasting use

## FRAMEWORK

- ▶ Sircar, D.C. (1965). Stanzas on Bhūmi-dāna quoted in Rajaśāsanas, Appendix II, in *Indian Epigraphy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 170-201.
- ▶ Taylor, M. (2012). Heavenly carrots and earthly sticks: How *phalaśruti* paratexts empower purānic discourse. *Journal of Hindu Studies*, 5(1), 92-111. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhs/his012>

### METHODOLOGY

- ▶ analysis of the stanzas without historical and textual context (no study of the combination of several stanzas in one record)
- ▶ classification by value : positive, negative, both, other
- ▶ target audience : donor, recipient, protector, king, everyone?
- ▶ Tagging with a limit of 5 keywords per stanza
- ▶ Tagging a key idea / message

# PANORAMIC SHOT

### ▶ Colour carrots or sticks?

51,2% positive (84/164)

12,2% duo (20/164)

35,4% negative (58/164)

1,2% other (2/164)

### ▶ target audience:

29,1% Donor (64/220)

0 18,1% Protector (40/220)

27,8 % Robber or destructor (61/220)

14,5% King (32/220)

2,3% Recipient of the gift (5/220)

8,2% Everyone (18/220)



## EARTHLY OR HEAVENLY CARROTS?

- ▶ interpretative framework : *puruṣārtha*?
  - ▶ *artha* 109, 114 ; earthly fruits 18
  - ▶ *kāma* :
    - gift or protection as a parangon 26 43 78 101 157
    - gift or protection as equivalent or superior to certain brahmanical pillars (sacrifices, pilgrimages, expiation) 58
- 77

58

*gayā-godāvarī-gaṅgā-prayāgādiṣu dānataḥ*

*yat phalaṁ tat phalaṁ sarvaṁbhaved bhūmi-prapālanāt*

The fruit that returns to the giver in sacred places such as Gayā, Godāvarī, the Ganges, Prayāga etc. is identical in every way to the protection of the earth.

77

*koṭis tu vājapeyānāṁlakṣaṁ viśvajitāṁ tathā*

*sahasraṁ aśvamedhānāṁsva-hastaś caiva tat-samaḥ*

What I have signed is equivalent to ten million *vājapeyas*, a hundred thousand *viśvajit* and a thousand *aśvamedha*.



## EARTHLY OR HEAVENLY CARROTS?

- ▶ interpretative framework : *puruṣārtha*?
- ▶ *dharma* : polysemic meaning
- ▶ equivalent to truth 96
- ▶ absolute value, beyond enmity and universally recognised  
125
- ▶ remedy 92
- ▶ origin of every positive things 49

## FINAL STANZAS, A CARROT AND STICK APPROACH?

---

125

*śatruṅāpi kṛto dharmahpālanīyo mahīpate  
śatrur eva hi śatruḥ syāddharmaḥ śatrur na kasyacit*

*Dharma* is performed even by enemies and must be protected, O king. For while the enemy remains an enemy, the *dharma* has no enemy.

92

*mā pārthiva kadācit tvambrahma-svaṁ manasā api  
Āneṣa dharmabhaiṣajyametad dhalāhalaṁ viṣam*

You must never, ever covet a land-gift offered to a Brahmin, even in thought, as this would be a poison similar to venom whose remedy is *dharma*.

96

*nāsti bhūmi-samaṁ dānaṁnāsti rājñah samo guruḥ  
nāsti satya-samo dharmonāsti dāna-samo nidhiḥ*

There is nothing like a gift of land; no master like a king; no *dharma* like truth; no treasure like a gift.

## EARTHLY OR HEAVENLY CARROTS?

- ▶ puruṣārtha?
- ▶ dharma : polysemic meaning
- ▶ new definition: act of donation 50 89, the donation itself 70 86 or the object of the donation 73, the protection itself 56, the deeds of men 2, the only firm thing 24 25

## EARTHLY OR HEAVENLY CARROTS?

- ▶ mokṣa ? only one occurrence 63
- ▶ heaven :
  - divam* 30 17 102 *tridivam* 31
  - paratra* 104 69 *śubhā gatiḥ* 111
  - paramaṁ padam* 8 *acyutam padam* 40\_01
  - svarga* 22 27 29 106 115 123 161 164
  - svarga-loka* 16 *trailoka* 5 52 84 *paraloka* 36 146
  - brahmaloka* 73 112 *brahma-sadanam* 134
  - rudraloka* 130 160
  - pitṛloka devaloka* 173
- ▶ complete absence of the word *nirvāṇa*

17

*Ārya-saṅghāya dattām yo vṛttiṁ rakṣati mānavaḥ  
sa divaṁ prāpya divyātmākālpa-koṭiṣu modate*

The man who protects the support given to a noble *saṅgha*, having obtained the heaven, rejoices [there] with a divine soul for millions *kalpas*.

## EARTHLY OR HEAVENLY CARROTS?

- ▶ Paradise imagery
- ▶ *devaloka* riding a divine chariot 62 golden palaces 127
- ▶ *Brahmaloka* with no return 134
- ▶ Śaiva world 130 160
- ▶ salvation of the ancestors 32 42 82 102 142
- ▶ Conclusion : A consensual heaven

## EARTHLY OR HEAVENLY STICKS?

- ▶ Less stanzas but more detailed
- ▶ Hell : *naraka* generic word 30 40 47 48 54 55 65 68 83  
113 120 123 143 154 164  
Raurava 41 Kumbhīpāka 61 *durgatim kaṣṭām* 108
- ▶ Dreadful description : a jar of boiling oil 62, immersed in purulent blood 103, roasted in the hell 83, covered in darkness 84, tied up by Varuṇa's lace and tortured by his servants 93 94 103

## BASE OF THE CARROT AND STICK APPROACH

- ▶ Common beliefs : karmic maturation, sin, expiation, rebirth, hell as a purifying place, possibility to fall from heaven....
- ▶ Blanket carrots and blanket sticks
- ▶ Consequences: good and bad behaviours , code of conduct, new hierarchisation of acts
- ▶ Gift and Protection are the best ones and stealing or destroying a land donation is the worst



## IMPLICIT REFLECT OF THE GIFT THEORY

- ▶ a win-win relationship for the donor and the protector 29  
85
- ▶ brahmin as the best recipient : gifts to the gods and the  
brahmins are all the same 46 47 48 / only one glorifying  
generosity to poor people 78

52

*dvijāś ca nāvamantavyāstrailokya-miti-hetavaḥ  
devavat pūjanīyāś cadāna-mānārcanādibhiḥ*

The twice-born are not contemptible since they are the source of knowledge in the triple world : one should honoured them like a god with gifts, respect and praises etc.

78

*kṛśāya kṛśa-vṛttāyavṛtti-kṣīṇāya sīdate  
bhūmiṃ vṛttikarīm dattvā sukhī bhavati kāmadaḥ*

A man who gives a plot of land as a livelihood to a miserable, to someone become poor, to someone emaciated by his way of life, to someone who is dying, by this conduct, he becomes happy and obtains all his desires.

## IMPLICIT REFLECT OF THE GIFT THEORY

- ▶ a win-win relationship for the donor and the protector
- ▶ brahmin as the best recipient
- ▶ ritual process : proper manner 13 actors of the gift – the person who makes the gift, the one who authorises it, the one who protects it – 42
- ▶ proper time for giving 124
- ▶ Approval 19 148 151
- ▶ Witnesses 2 37 38
- ▶ acceptance with respect 164 rules edited by Veda, smṛti, sages 147
- ▶ Tax system 8 90
- ▶ Social exclusion women 133 caṇḍāla 70 74

## FINAL STANZAS, A CARROT AND STICK APPROACH?

---

### 124 Time

*śatam indu-kṣaye dānaṁsahasraṁ tu dina-kṣaye  
viṣuve śata-sāhasraṁvyatīpāteṣv anantakam*

*The gift is [worth] a hundred if it is performed at the new moon, a thousand at the nightfall, a hundred thousand at the equinox and an infinite number during eclipses.*

### 151 Approval

*yaḥ kriyāṁ dharma-saṁyutāṁ manasāpy abhinandati  
vardhate sa yaṭheṣṭena śukla-pakṣa ivamśumān*

The man who, even in mind, approves a deed endowed with dharma, he increases [his own merit] according to which has been given (yaṭheṣṭena) as the moon during the bright fortnight.

### 8 Tax system

*A-karasya karādānaṁ go-koṭi-vadha ucyate*

*sa-karasya kara-cchedī prāpnoti paramaṁ padam*

Taxing a tax-exempt land is equal to the slaughter of ten million cows, but exempting a taxable resource from taxes allows us to reach the ultimate goal.

## IMPLICIT REFLECT OF THE GIFT THEORY

- ▶ a win-win relationship for the donor and the protector
- ▶ brahmin as the best recipient
- ▶ ritual process : proper manner / actors / proper time / approval / witnesses / laws and rules / tax system / social exclusion
- ▶ Implementation of a "brahminical economy"

## ROYAL PROTECTION

- ▶ Direct address to the kings or kings as the target audience:  
24 30 40 43 86 118 87 (homage) 89 (homage) 162 (order)
- ▶ persuasion discourse : superiority of protection and  
impermanence of everything except dharma 10 24 35 36  
71 72 79 141 148 146
- ▶ Emblematic models and famous kings 23 51 117 131 145

39 Protection is the best deed

*dānād viśiṣṭam̐ paripālanajam̐ purāṇā dharmeṣu niścita-dhiyaḥ pravadanti dharmam  
tasmād dvijāya suviśuddha-kula-śrutāya dattām bhuvam̐ bhavatu vo matir eṣā goptum*

The purāṇas whose wisdom is undoubtful, tell that what is born from the protection is really superior to the gift, it is the best dharmic act among the dharmic ones! Hence, may that the earth be given to a twice born knowing the *śruti* and born in a very pious lineage and may your unique thought be to protect it !

51 Royal models

*dharmāt paijavano rājā cirāya bubhuje bhuvam  
adharmāc caiva nahuṣaḥ pratipede rasātalam*

Thanks to *dharmā*, the king Paijana enjoyed the earth for ever, and on the contrary, because of his *adharmā*, Nahuṣa was precipitated into the underworld

### CARROT AND STICK APPROACH / GIFT THEORY / BRAHMANICAL ECONOMY / ROYAL PROTECTION

- ▶ Blanket carrots and sticks : strategies to give importance to the gift and its preservation; inducing behaviours
- ▶ elaboration of a nomenclature of gifts : proper manner, proper acceptance, proper approval, proper time...
- ▶ establishment of a virtuous circle in favour of brahmins : inducement of gift and its protection
- ▶ Creation of a win-win relationship between brahmins and royalty : reinforcement of political authority and brahmanical status
- ▶ Lexical fields as a way to define an "usual stanza"



### GO FURTHER

- ▶ Exploring other lexical fields (epigraphical and legal vocabulary ; hierarchy of rebirth and varṇa; hierarchy of sins...)
- ▶ Exploring the “unusual” lexical fields or statements within final stanzas
- ▶ Compare with the śāstric discourse and theory of gift in the Dharmanibandha literature
- ▶ Compare hell imagery with the iconography found in some stone or copperplate inscriptions
- ▶ Contextualisation of the discourse in place and time
- ▶ Analysis of the authorship attributed to the stanzas...