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King Śibi in the *Vahnipurāṇa*

A critical edition & translation of the *śiber upākhyāna*

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Although the many extant Sanskrit versions of the story of King Śibi and the dove have been thoroughly studied, one version, from the *Vahnipurāṇa*, has so far escaped the attention of scholars. This paper presents a new, critical edition of the Sanskrit text, based on all available material — an existing edition, quotations, and a recently discovered Nepalese fragment — followed by a translation. This edition is open source; it includes diplomatic transcriptions of all witnesses, software used to collate the textual variants, the text alignments, and the stemmata used to examine certain verses. Connections to Buddhist and Jain versions of the story are discussed. The long afterlife of the text presents an opportunity to study how it has been reused and recast over the course of many centuries, quoted in dharmanibandhas and harvested for material for other stories.

Introduction

The story of King Śibi and the dove — or, more generically, *śyenakapotīya*,[1] the hawk and the dove — is one of the most widespread fables in Indian literature. In Sanskrit, a number of versions have survived intact, both in prose and in verse, along with some fragments of texts that were translated into Chinese.[2] Different versions have a slightly different cast of characters or place the emphasis on different values — not only is the story found in the *Mahābhārata*, but also in Jain and Buddhist story collections and in the Tamil *Puṟanāṉūṟu* anthology of poems; there are even ancient Greek parallels and later Islamic reframings.[3] But the basic narrative elements remain more or less intact: a dove, fleeing a hawk, goes to a king for shelter. The hawk demands its prey, and the king offers up his own flesh instead.

Although much has been written about this story, scholars have so far missed the version of it that is told in the *Vahnipurāṇa*. Until recently, this version was only available as snippets quoted in other texts, the longest extract being an abbreviation of the whole story found in Rādhākāntadeva's *Śabdakalpadruma,* a 19th-century Sanskrit lexicon, under the entry for 'śiviḥ' and attributed to the *Vahnipurāṇa.*[4] For a long time, the *Vahnipurāṇa* had been confused with the *Agnipurāṇa* — in which

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[1] In the chapter colophons of *Mahābhārata* manuscripts, it is also called *kapotopākhyāna* (Sukthankar 1942, 480).

[2] Meisig 1995, 47ff.

[3] Gaál 2017.

[4] Rādhākāntadeva 1848, 5393–5395; (1886) 1967, pt. 5, 105–106.

the *śyenakapotīya* story does not appear — until R. C. Hazra determined it to be a different, older text, which he thought had reached something approximating its current form by the 5th century.[5] Finally, in 2012, the *Vahnipurāṇa* was edited and published by Anasuya Bhowmik; the story of King Śibi, the *śiber upākhyāna*, is the sixty-fifth chapter in the edition.[6]

Bhowmik used four Devanāgarī manuscripts to edit the text, the oldest one dated to 1589 CE.[7] Unfortunately, they do not seem to have been very reliable; in many places, the text is incomprehensible. However, many of those verses can be emended based on quotations and parallels in other texts. In addition, a recently discovered fragment of a Nepalese manuscript has also aided in the reconstruction of part of the text. This manuscript, as well as most of the quotations of the text, are older than the Devanāgarī manuscripts used in Bhowmik's edition. Moreover, the *Vahnipurāṇa* itself quotes from other texts that go back as far as the second century CE, and a close examination of those sources — as well as Tibetan and Chinese translations thereof — has greatly aided in clarifying the text. In this new edition, the aim has been to present the text as a link between its sources and its testimonia, showing how it transformed and reused its sources, and then, in turn, was itself transformed and re-quoted by medieval writers. We will begin by discussing the manuscript fragment, and then move on to the textual parallels that are either earlier than or roughly contemporaneous with the *Vahnipurāṇa*: the *Vasudevahiṇḍi*, the *Mahābhārata*, and the *Śatapañcāśatka*. Finally, we will look at the later medieval texts that quote the *Vahnipurāṇa*: the lexicons, law digests, and story collections.

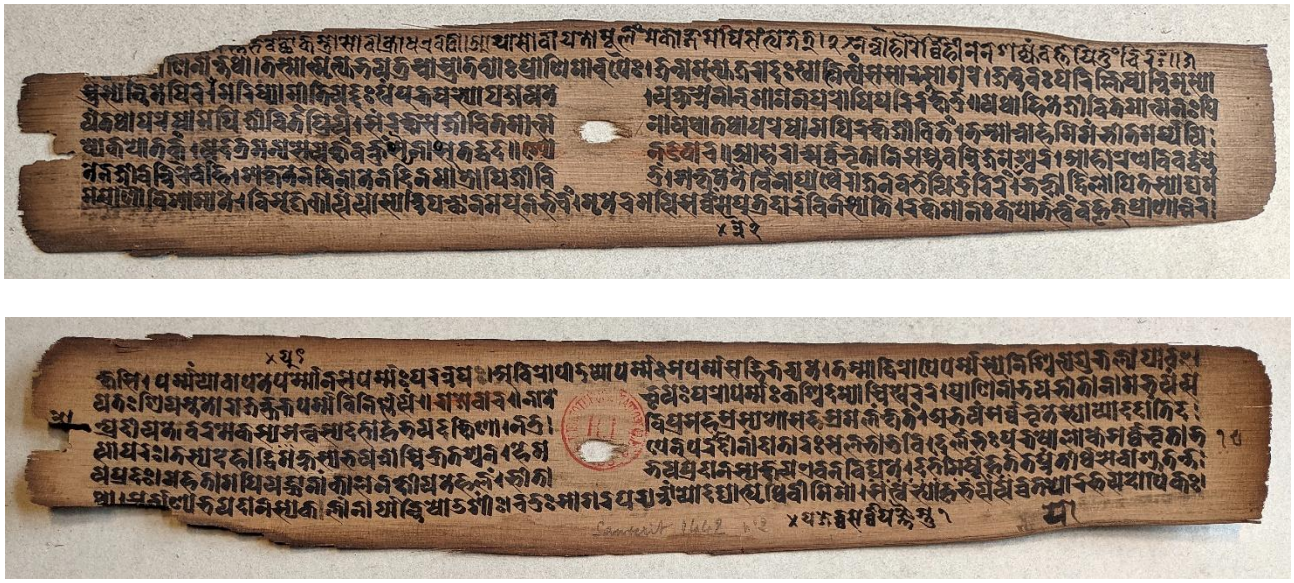


Figure 1: BnF Sanscrit 1442.2, recto and verso. Photographs by the author, courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France. See Li 2022a for a transcription of the fragment.

BnF Sanscrit 1442.2, the Nepalese fragment

This single talipot leaf comes from the Cordier collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France. It is part of a number of fragments found together with Sanscrit 1347, which contains an assortment of excerpts from the *Bṛhannāradīyapurāṇa* in Bengali script.

[5] Hazra 1954, 83; Hazra 1956, 516.

[6] This chapter title is given in the edition as well as in the *Śabdakalpadruma*. Hazra counted this as the 61st chapter, based on a manuscript from the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

[7] Bhowmik 2012, cxxv–cxxvi.

Palmyr Cordier (1871–1914) was a French doctor who served in the colonial medical corps and who studied Indian medicine. He spent over two years stationed in Chandernagor, from 1898 to 1900, where he collected a large number of manuscripts on both medical and non-medical topics. In addition, he was able to photograph a number of Nepalese manuscripts that had been obtained by Sylvain Lévi and Haraprasāda Śāstrī;[8] it seems likely that this fragment was given to Cordier by one of them. Cordier died at the beginning of the First World War, and his collection was rediscovered by Jean Filliozat in 1932, at an antiquarian bookseller's in Paris, and acquired by the Bibliothèque nationale shortly thereafter.[9] This fragment was later given its own shelfmark by Filliozat, as No. 2 of Sanscrit 1442, 'Fragments mutilés d'ouvrages divers, etc.'[10]

The folio is numbered 18, indicating that it was part of a larger collection of stories. Certainly, there are many other Sanskrit story collections, either unpublished or lost, which the fragment could have come from,[11] but the text is a close match with the *Vahnipurāṇa*. It covers verses 15 to 34 of the present story, written in an old Nepalese script, often described as Bhujimol. Although it is undated, it is visually similar to manuscripts produced in Nepal between the 12th and 15th centuries;[12] in fact, it bears a striking similarity to a manuscript of the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha* that Lévi obtained from Nepal in 1898 — around the same time as he was sharing manuscripts with Cordier — which Félix Lacôte surmised to be from the 12th century.[13] However, Lévi's manuscript was not reported to be missing a folio 18. Cordier is known to have created calques of Nepalese manuscripts,[14] but this does not seem to be the case here; at the very least, this folio was not copied from any known manuscript of the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha,* since its extant portions, which were edited and published by Lacôte, do not contain this story.

Jain parallels

But perhaps there remains the possibility of a link to the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha.* A portion of *Vahnipurāṇa* text in the manuscript matches the *śyenakapotīya* story of the *Vasudevahiṇḍi,* a Jain compendium of stories composed in Prakrit, possibly dating to the 3rd century.[15] The *Vasudevahiṇḍi* is known to be closely related to the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha* — since they are both related to the legendary *Bṛhatkathā* — and scholars have even used it to reconstruct lost parts of the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha.*[16] It is possible that the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha* also once contained a version of this story, although without further evidence, it is impossible to say more.

The *śyenakapotīya* story in the *Vasudevahiṇḍi,* where the protagonist is King Megharatha, is very short, and it is not similar overall to the *Vahnipurāṇa* story beyond the plot points that are common

[8] For example, see BnF Sanscrit 1154 (gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10091342g).
[9] Filliozat 2014, 275.
[10] Cabaton 1907, 317.
[11] For example, see the 17th-century *Kathāprakāśa* (Eggeling 1896; Eggeling 1904, 1571–1573).
[12] For examples, see MS Add.1686 (dated 1165 CE, cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-01686) and MS Add.2137 (dated 1407 CE, cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-02137) from Cambridge University Library.
[13] Lévi 1899, 78; Lacôte 1908a, i–iii, plate after x. H. P. Śāstrī was also collecting Nepalese manuscripts of the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha* around the same time (1893, 254).
[14] Li 2022c. See also BnF Sanscrit 1235.3 (tst-project.github.io/mss/Sanscrit_1235_3.xml).
[15] Ludwig Alsdorf considers the *Vasudevahiṇḍi* to be many centuries older than the 6th century (1936, 320), while Jagdishchandra Jain dates it to before the end of the 3rd century (1979, 167).
[16] Mayrhofer 1975a. See also Mayrhofer 1975b and Nelson 1974. See also Sarma 2006 on the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṃgraha* and the *Mahābhārata.*

to all versions. Nevertheless, it does contain a half-verse that matches one in the *Vahnipurāṇa* text. That verse is quoted fully in a later Jain *śyenakapotīya*, from Nemicandra's 12th-century *Ṭīkā* on the *Uttarādhyayanasūtra (Uttarajjhayaṇa Sutta)* that forms an even closer match.

BnF Sanscrit 1442.2[17]	***Uttarādhyayanaṭīkā***[18]
yathā hi te jīvitam ātmanaḥ priyaṃ tathā pareṣām api jīvitaṃ priyaṃ |	jahā jīviyaṃ tuha piyaṃ, niyayaṃ taha hoi savvajīvāṇaṃ |[19]
saṃrakṣase jīvitam ātmano yathā tathā pareṣām api rakṣa jīvitaṃ |	piyajīviyāṇaṃ jīvāṇaṃ rakkha jīvaṃ sajīvaṃ va || 2 ||
	...
tasmān nāham imaṃ bhītam avyayiṣye kapotakaṃ |	tamhā u na juttam iṇaṃ, caḍapphaḍaṃtaṃ[20] vivāeuṃ || 3 ||

Although the amount of text reused is not very large, this Sanskrit verse does not appear in any other extant version of the *śyenakapotīya* to date. It would seem that this verse, or at least some version of it, and its association with this story, goes back further than the 5th-century date that Hazra gives for the *Vahnipurāṇa* as a whole.

Buddhist leanings

Of the different extant Sanskrit versions of the *śyenakapotīya*, the *Vahnipurāṇa* text is closest to the version found in *Āraṇyakaparvan* 131 of the *Mahābhārata.* It uses the same frame story: King Śibi is about to perform a great sacrificial rite, and Indra and Agni decide to test him, in the guise of the hawk and the dove.[21] There are also many textual parallels — most notably, the speech of the hawk in verses 21 to 26 of the *Vahnipurāṇa* story match *Āraṇyakaparvan* 131.6 to 131.12, although the version of these verses in the *Āraṇyakaparvan* is closer to the Nepalese manuscript than to the Bhowmik edition.

However, the *Vahnipurāṇa* story is much longer than that of the *Āraṇyakaparvan*, having been elaborated mainly by the insertion of didactic subhāṣita verses and hymns of praise, usually spoken by either the hawk or the king. The result is a sort of extended debate on the morality of kindness and on the imperative to protect the weak. Some of these verses can be found in other purāṇas, but, surprisingly, six of them seem to come from the *Śatapañcāśatka*, a famous and widespread collection of Buddhist hymns composed by Mātṛceṭa sometime between the 2nd and 3rd centuries.[22]

[17] See verses 19–20 in the present edition.

[18] Ed. Vijayomaṅgasūri 1936, 244v. Oberlies translates: 'Wie dein Leben dir lieb ist, so ist allen Lebewesen ihr [Leben lieb]. Schütze das Leben der Wesen, denen ihr Leben lieb ist, wie dein eigenes Leben.... Und deshalb ist es nicht recht, diese [vor Furcht] zitternde [Taube] zu töten' (2009, 309). Meyer translates: 'As your own life is dear to thee so it is to all living beings; do thou preserve (spare) the life of life-loving beings and thy own life (i.e. in having regard for others you secure your own welfare).... Therefore it is not right to kill the one who trembles with fear' (1909, 301). The *Kahāvalī* also quotes verse 3 (ed. Kalyāṇakīrtivijaya 2012, 75). See Dundas 2013, 17 for further versions of this story and Jacobi 1895, xl–xli on other commentaries on the *Uttarādhyayanasūtra.*

[19] Cf. *Vasudevahiṇḍi*: *jaha jīviaṃ tubbhaṃ piyaṃ nissaṃsayaṃ tahā savvajīvāṇaṃ* (ed. Caturavijaya & Puṇyavijaya 1931, 337). See also Jain 1979, 170.

[20] Compare with *mṛtyubhayatrastāḥ* in verse 15 of the present text.

[21] See Parlier 1991 and Oberlies 2001 on the ritual context of the story.

[22] 'Mātṛceṭa... lived approximately either between A.D. 160 and 260 or else nearly a century earlier' (Shackleton Bailey 1951, 15); In an addendum, he presents evidence that Mātṛceṭa was posterior to Nāgārjuna (237).

Those verses, in praise of the Buddha, are here used in praise of King Śibi,[23] mostly clustered near the end of the story and spoken by Indra. In Buddhist tradition, Śibi is a previous incarnation of the Buddha, and the *Śatapañcāśatka* alludes to this: verse 12 of the *Śatapañcāśatka*, appearing here as verse 75, speaks of how the Buddha even gave his own flesh to protect others. As D. R. Shackleton Bailey points out, this verse is paralleled in Aśvaghoṣa's *Saundarānanda*, which explicitly mentions Śibi and the hawk.[24] Verse 13 of the *Śatapañcāśatka*, which does not appear here, again praises the Buddha for sacrificing his own body, and the Chinese translation — although inaccurate — renders it as 全軀救一鴿, 'your whole body to save one dove'.[25]

There are also structural parallels between the Śibi story in the *Vahnipurāṇa* and Chinese Buddhist versions of the tale, which were ostensibly translated from lost Sanskrit texts. The climactic episode, in which the king offers up his whole body to the hawk, is marked by heavenly drums and a rain of flowers; although this set piece is not exclusively Buddhist, it is very prevalent in Buddhist tales and is mirrored in one Chinese version of the Śibi story,[26] but not found in any other extant Sanskrit version. The end of the story, in which Indra and Agni return to heaven — in the *Vahnipurāṇa,* this is described as *tridaśālaya*, the abode of the 33 gods — is also found, apart from in a few manuscripts of the *Mahābhārata,* only in two Chinese versions.[27] So while the story in the *Vahnipurāṇa* starts out like the version in the *Āraṇyakaparvan*, it ends more like a Buddhist fable; it may have even been adapted from or inspired by a Buddhist text.

[23] See, for example, verse 69 of the present text, where the vocative *nātha* in the *Śatapañcāśatka* has been replaced by *rājan* in the *Vahnipurāṇa.* In verse 70, the Buddhist term *kleśa* has also been replaced by the generic *duḥkha*.
[24] Shackleton Bailey 1951, 155.
[25] Shackleton Bailey 1951, 42.
[26] See note to the translation of verse 64.
[27] See note to the translation of verse 82.

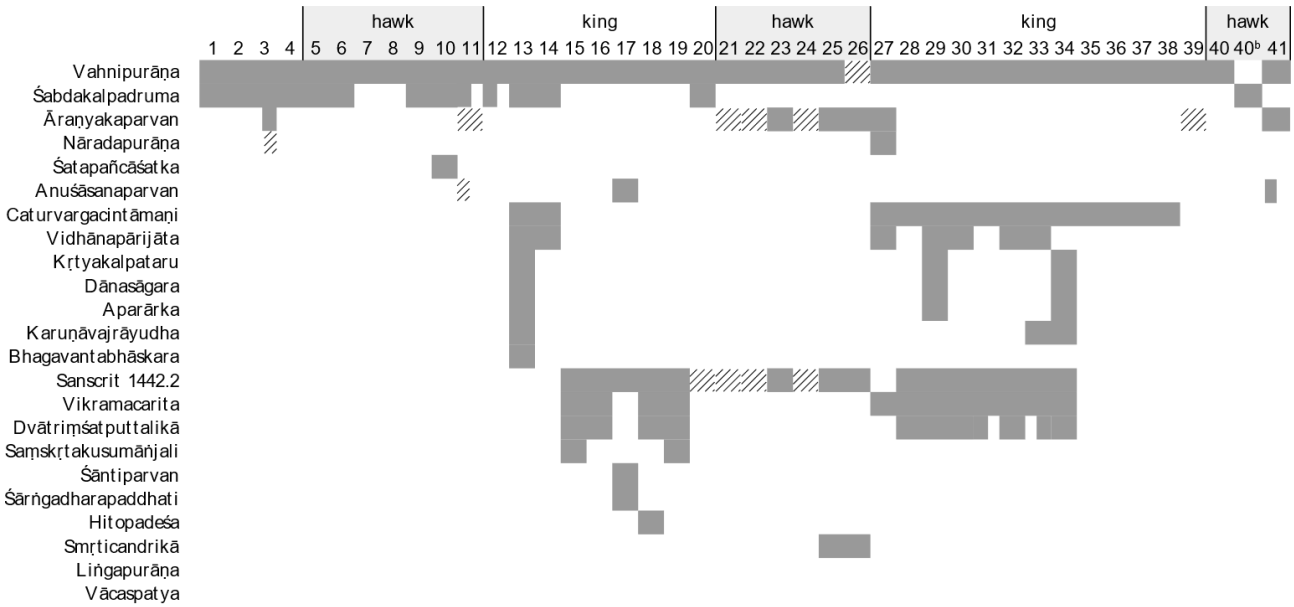


Figure 2: Extent of the witnesses, including quotations & parallels. In order of appearance. Hatched lines represent significantly different readings. Sanscrit 1442.2 and the Vikramacarita/Dvātriṃśat-puttalikā place verse 32 before verse 30.

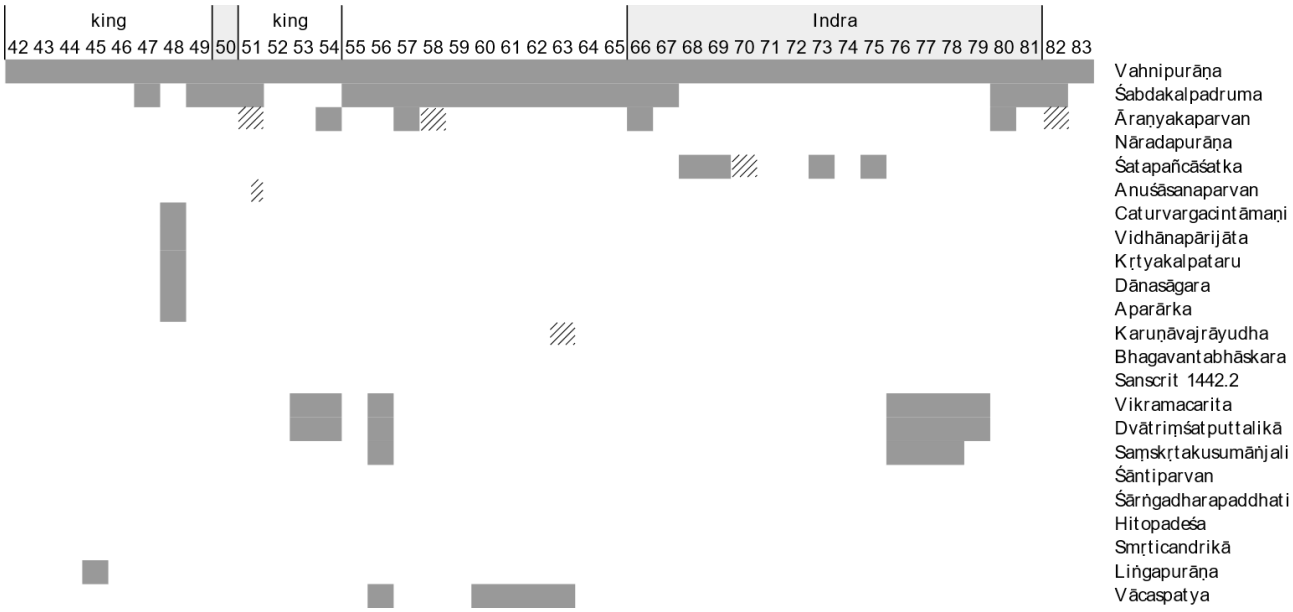
A text with a split personality

Given its Buddhist influences, the parallels from the Jain *Vasudevahiṇḍi* and the *Uttarādhyayanaṭīkā*, as well as further quotations found in the *Karuṇāvajrāyudha* — a 13th-century Jain dramatic rendering of the *śyenakapotīya* —, the story of King Śibi in the *Vahnipurāṇa* is uniquely situated at the nexus of Buddhist, Jain, and brahmanical traditions. This is perhaps unsurprising, giving the agglomerative quality of the text, being a mashup of narrative and subhāṣita verses culled from various sources. Some of the subhāṣita verses seem out of place, breaking up the flow of the narration;[28] the text bears the hallmark of the kind of additive composition that so characterizes purāṇic stories. And by looking at parallels of these verses in other texts, we can get a better idea of how the story evolved over time, and how it was transformed and mined for content by later writers.

Despite the text having been neglected by scholars, it seems to have been very well known, appearing in the *Śabdakalpadruma* as the definitive telling of the story of King Śibi. But as seen in the figure above, the *Śabdakalpadruma* presents a significantly abbreviated version of the story; it is mainly concerned with the narrative elements, cutting out many of the subhāṣitas and sometimes omitting entire speeches.[29] On the other hand, the many quotations found in medieval dharmanibandhas, or law digests — the *Aparārka*, the *Bhagavantabhāskara*, the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, the *Dānasāgara*, the *Kṛtyakalpataru*, and the *Vidhānapārijāta* — do the very opposite: in fact, they are mainly interested in the subhāṣita verses spoken by King Śibi, especially those that extoll abhayadāna, the gift of

[28] For example, see verse 56.

[29] A similar phenomenon can be seen in the *Saṃskṛtakusumāñjali*, which abbreviates story 11 from the *Vikramacarita*. As seen in the figure above, it hollows out the speech between verses 15 and 19, retaining the beginning and the end, while removing the middle.



safety.[30] Similarly, the *Vikramacarita* also reuses the subhāṣita verses, since they are the most amenable to being taken out of context and inserted into a different story altogether. Consequently, the quotations in the *Śabdakalpadruma*, on the one hand, and in the dharmanibandhas and the *Vikramacarita*, on the other, almost never overlap.

It is possible that the *Śabdakalpadruma* preserves a different, shorter recension of the *Vahnipurāṇa* text; however, some of the subhāṣitas excluded from that abbreviated version are found quoted in the definitions for other words. In fact, one verse, quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma* definition for 'siddhiḥ', and supposedly from this story, is not found in Bhowmik's edition of the story at all.[31] Perhaps the subhāṣitas were not so skillfully integrated into the story of King Śibi; it is as if this additive text was, in the medieval period, deconstructed again, with later writers untangling the narrative threads from the pithy maxims inserted within it, each taking from the story whatever suited their own purposes.

The ironic afterlife of King Śibi

While the dharmanibandhas quote the subhāṣitas in earnest, casting King Śibi as the epitome of a just and generous ruler, later texts, perhaps inevitably, reuse the king's words ironically. For example, verse 18, in which the king urges the hawk not to hurt the dove, is recast in the *Hitopadeśa*, spoken by a cat who feigns non-violence so that he can get into a bird's nest to eat all the hatchlings.[32]

In another story collection, the *Vikramacarita*,[33] 19 verses have been taken from the Śibi story and reused, split between two episodes chronicling the exploits of the legendary King Vikrama. Some of

[30] The *Smṛticandrikā* seems to be the only dharmanibandha to quote from the speech of the hawk (verses 25–26). On *abhayadāna*, see Heim 2004, 122ff. Commenting on verse 12, Bhowmik records a marginal note in manuscript C — *abhayadānasamaye* (2012, 530).

[31] See verse 40bis.

[32] See parallel in the present edition. Trans. Haskar 1998, 33–34.

[33] Ludwik Sternbach has placed the composition of the *Vikramacarita* between the 'first decade of the fourteenth century' and 'the first half of the sixteenth century' (1964, 414). As part of his evidence, Sternbach mentions quotations

these verses are, perhaps, borrowed via the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi,* whose author, Hemādri, the *Vikramacarita* quotes by name.[34] In story 11 of the *Vikramacarita*, the verses are used without irony.[35] This story is, interestingly, also about self-sacrifice and also involves friendship between birds and humans: a village is forced to sacrifice one person each day to a rākṣasa who eats humans, and the next sacrifice will be a certain brāhmaṇa's son, who, in a previous life, was the friend of a certain bird — perhaps a sly reference to the *śyenakapotīya*. While that bird is telling his father — the king of birds — about the rākṣasa, Vikrama is sitting nearby and, overhearing their conversation, decides to go and offer himself to the rākṣasa in place of the brāhmaṇa's son. When the rākṣasa arrives, he praises Vikrama in verse, using lines borrowed from the speech of Śibi in the *Vahnipurāṇa.* Vikrama, in turn, recites a series of subhāṣitas to him, again borrowed from the *Vahnipurāṇa*, convincing him to stop eating humans. These are the final verses in the story; thereafter, the rākṣasa commits himself to non-violence.[36] But in the story of King Śibi, these pithy maxims are not enough to sate the hunger of the hawk (it is unclear what the rākṣasa in the *Vikramacarita* eats thereafter). In fact, the hawk counters the king's subhāṣitas with solid legal reasoning, which is later quoted in the *Smṛti-candrikā*, a 13th-century legal digest, as the conclusion to a chapter on how to deal with scriptural laws that contradict one another.[37]

On the other hand, in story 13 of the *Vikramacarita*, ten verses borrowed from King Śibi are used ironically, recited by a sage to an audience in a shrine which Vikrama is visiting.[38] The sage extols the virtue of putting one's life on the line for the sake of others, as well as the merit accrued in providing safety for all creatures. But when a brāhmaṇa and his wife fall into the river, neither the sage nor anyone else in the crowd rushes to help them; Vikrama, on the other hand, saves the couple by pulling them out of the river. In that story, a contrast is created between merely reciting subhāṣitas and actually taking action, putting one's own life at risk. Perhaps there is some of that contrast in the *Vahnipurāṇa śiber upākhyāna* as well; while King Śibi is well versed in the dharmaśāstras, as he himself declares, none of his words can persuade the hawk to give up its prey. In fact, the extended debate between king and hawk serves to heighten the tension between action and speech, filled as it is with didactic verses intoned by the king, which later became standard reference material incorporated into legal digests. But eventually, the king must offer up his own flesh; his words are not enough.

from the *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha*, which he places in the 13th century (413). Scholars now believe that it was composed in the 14th century (Yamashita 1998, 31), but this does not change Sternbach's overall argument.

[34] Ed. Edgerton 1926, II, 79.

[35] See verses 15, 16, 18, & 19, as well as 76–79 of the present edition, spoken by Indra. Verse 56, although not attributed to a speaker, may be imagined to have been spoken by King Śibi. These correspond to verses 7–15 in story 11 of the *Vikramacarita.*

[36] Edgerton 1926, I, 109–113. See also the Buddhist story of Maitrībala, in which the Buddha, in a previous life, offers his flesh to a yakṣa.

[37] See verses 25–26 of the present edition.

[38] See verses 27–34 & 53–54 of the present edition, corresponding to verses 4–13 of story 13 in the *Vikramacarita.*

Critical edition & translation

The question of how to edit a purāṇic story, or whether it is practical or even possible to do so, has been debated since at least the mid-twentieth century, especially following the publication of the critical edition of the *Mahābhārata*.[39] When some scholars began to produce critical editions of purāṇas, using the same principles that V. S. Sukthankar developed for the *Mahābhārata*, other scholars objected; in particular, Madeleine Biardeau rejected the attempt to reconstruct an archetype from multiple recensions, declaring that 'such a text never existed.... for this reason the main concern of the editors should be to publish not only the different recensions as they are, but also, when necessary, the different versions of each recension'.[40] In the case of the present edition, there is currently not enough material evidence to speak of different recensions of the *Vahnipurāṇa śiber upākhyāna*, let alone an archetype with any sort of historical relevance. The oldest manuscript — the Nepalese one — dates, speculatively, to the 12th century; the oldest quotations of the text, similarly, are also found in 12th-century dharmanibandhas, such as the *Kṛtyakalpataru*. But these witnesses do not cover even half of the text. Thus, it has not been possible to create a stemma for the entire text, with every witness represented; for example, it would be impossible to infer a relationship between the *Śatapañcāśatka* and the *Liṅgapurāṇa*, since they never overlap. Moreover, since many verses are attested in only a couple of witnesses with very little variation, it has not been necessary to take recourse to a stemma. However, there are a number of verses for which there are a large number of attestations, and, in those cases, an individual stemma has been created for each of those verses.

Methodology

In the spirit of Biardeau's assertion that every version of the text is important, the starting point for this edition has been the diplomatic transcription of each and every available source — the Nepalese manuscript, Bhowmik's edition with all its variant readings, as well as all excerpts quoted in later texts, also with variant readings if they are given. These transcriptions — alongside digital images, where possible — are included in the supplementary material. For published texts, information about the edition which has been transcribed — the location of the physical copy, as well as the provenance of the digital facsimile — has been provided where available.

[39] Bakker 2019, 178ff.
[40] Biardeau 1968, 123.

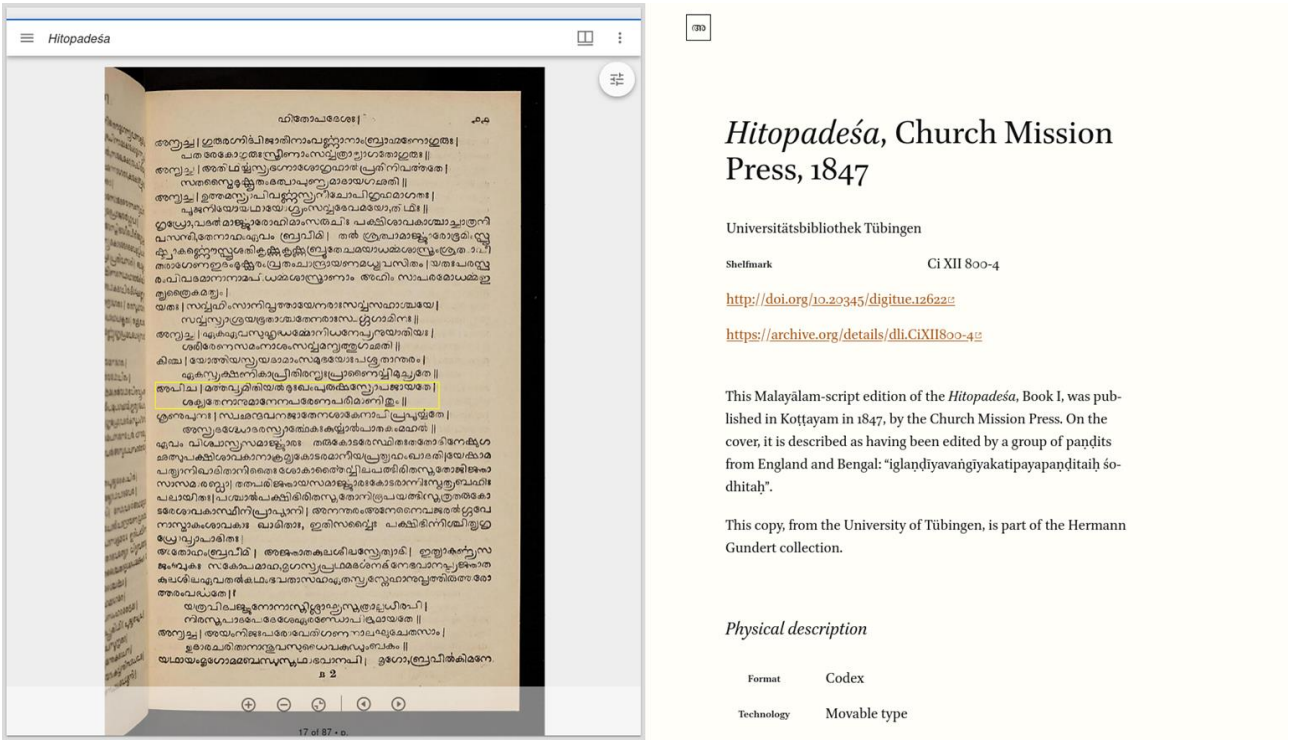


Figure 3: Diplomatic transcription of the textual parallel in witness HP^{C}. Photographs in the public domain, courtesy of the Universitätsbibliothek Tübingen.

The transcriptions of each verse were normalized and aligned with the help of computer software,[41] and then a critical text was produced from that alignment. For the majority of the verses, this involved correcting scribal errors that obscured the meaning of the text. But for each verse that had a large degree of variation, the alignment was used to create a phylogenetic tree, using the neighbour joining algorithm.[42] The tree was rooted by taking a branch that encompassed all witnesses of the *Vahnipurāṇa* — including quotations attributed to it — as an ingroup, and this rooted tree was used as a stemma. The text at the root was then reconstructed using the Fitch algorithm.[43] If there was a split, i.e., two viable readings for a given lemma, one from the *Vahnipurāṇa* branch and one from the other branch (the outgroup), the reading from the *Vahnipurāṇa* branch was favoured, since, when a verse is used outside of the *Vahnipurāṇa śiber upākhyāna*, it often bears contextual differences: for example, vocatives are changed, since the addressee of a speech is different. In the instance of multiple viable readings even within the *Vahnipurāṇa* branch, the readings from VP^{BH} and VP$_{N}$ were favoured. Using this as a starting point, grammar, syntax, and context were then taken into consideration, which may have resulted in a different variant being chosen. In a few cases — verses 44, 58, 64, and 68 — the text was emended.

[41] Li 2022b. See Li 2017 for details on the normalization of Sanskrit texts.
[42] As implemented in SplitsTree (Huson & Bryant 2006).
[43] Fitch 1971. See the documentation in Li 2022b for a more detailed treatment of the procedure as well as further bibliography.

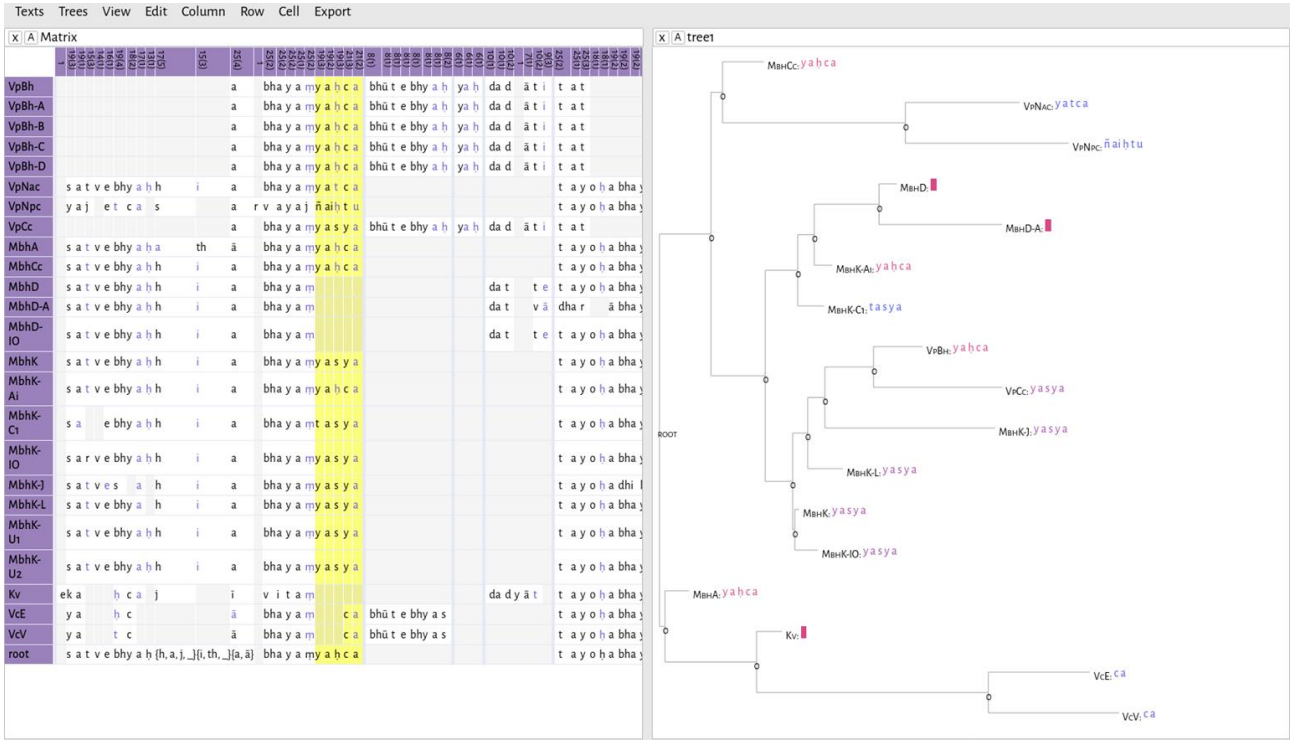


Figure 4: Alignment of verse 34, showing an automatically reconstructed and normalized lemma, 'yaḥ ca', at the root. The alignment and tree depicted are available in the supplementary material, in the file alignments/VP65.34.xml. See Li 2022b for instructions on using the file.

The effective result of this method is thus: if the reading from the *Vahnipurāṇa* ingroup[44] agreed with the reading from more distant sources, that reading was accepted. Otherwise, among the sources of the *Vahnipurāṇa* itself, preference was given to Bhowmik's edition and the Nepalese manuscript over the quotations found in medieval dharmanibandhas. The text that emerges, then, is a text in transition: it brings into focus the *Vahnipurāṇa śiber upākhyāna* as it reuses older sources and is in turn quoted and reused by later writers, highlighting its influence on medieval and early modern Sanskrit literature and beyond.

The fully positive critical apparatus presents variant readings from Sanskrit printed editions, manuscripts, quotations, and parallels.[45] A Pali parallel is given for verse 7. For the *Mahābhārata,* variants have mainly been taken from the text of the critical edition and the southern recension; some verses which appear only in the apparatus of the critical edition have also been collated. Commentarial glosses, as well as Prakrit, Tibetan, and Chinese parallels have been noted in the translation, on the page facing the text edition. In the online supplementary material, a digital edition has been included, which was the basis for the critical text in this article. In addition, all transcriptions, alignments, and trees used in the process of its creation have also been provided. The aim has been to present the critical edition as a fully open and reproducible procedure: an interested reader may examine each step in the process and critique or modify any element of it.[46] It is hoped that this will also make it easier to reuse the work in future scholarship, whether on this text specifically or on a larger corpus.

[44] As seen in the figure above, selecting all *Vahnipurāṇa* sources to use as an ingroup usually results in other closely aligned sources, such as from the *Mahābhārata*, being included in the ingroup.

[45] Many of these parallels were discovered thanks to the Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages (GRETIL) and the Resource Library for Dharmaśāstra Studies of the University of Texas at Austin.

[46] The present work forms part of an effort toward creating digital editions that are, at once, critical, diplomatic, and documentary; see Li 2020 for a discussion on the topic.

Metre

The text is mostly composed in anuṣṭubh ślokas,[47] with the occasional verse expanded to three lines. The following vipulās are found:

- na-vipulā (⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏓): 38c, 72c
- bha-vipulā (– ⏑ ⏑ ⏓): 35a, 70a, 79a
- ma-vipulā (– – – ⏓): 6a, 23c, 26a, 66c, 77a

Verses 19-20 are in jagatī, and a variant reading in 19 renders it in vaṃśasthā metre.

Structural differences from the Bhowmik edition

The verse numbering in the present edition is identical to the numbering found in the Bhowmik edition, with the following exceptions:

- in verse 64, pādas b and d have been switched
- verse 58 now encompasses 3 lines, and verses 59–73 have shifted up one line
- an extra verse, 40bis, has been inserted between 40 and 41

Sources & abbreviations

Vahnipurāṇa, and quotations thereof

VP^{BH}	*Vahnipurāṇa* (ed. Bhowmik 2012, 530–537)
VP^{BH}-A	manuscript A (B, C, D) variants from apparatus
VP_N	Nepalese manuscript (BnF Sanscrit 1442.2)
VP_{NAC}	ante correctionem
VP_{NPC}	post correctionem
VP_{CC}	*Caturvargacintāmaṇi* (ed. Śiromaṇi 1871, 948–949)
$VP_Ś$, $VP_{Ś2}$	*Śabdakalpadruma,* quoting the *śiber upākhyāna* chapter[48] (Rādhākāntadeva)
	‘duḥkhī’ (1857, 962; 1886, pt. 2, 723)
	‘śiviḥ’ (1848, 5393–5395; 1886, pt. 5, 105–106)
	‘siddhiḥ’ (1848, 6151; 1886, pt. 5, 351)
$VP_{Ś(D)}$	*Śabdakalpadruma,* quoting the *dānāvasthānirṇaya* chapter[49]
	‘śaraṇāgataḥ’ (1848, 5155; 1886, pt. 5, 28)
	‘sādhuḥ’ (1848, 6081; 1886, pt. 5, 329)
VP_V	*Vācaspatya* (Tarkavachaspati 1962, 5279)
VP_{VP}	*Vidhānapārijāta* (ed. Śāstrī 1951, vol. 3, 423)

Mahābhārata, and quotations thereof[50]

MBH^C	*Mahābhārata* critical edition (ed. Sukthankar et al. 1942–1966)
	Āraṇyakaparvan (vol. 3, 427)

[47] For an explanation of anuṣṭubh metre and its variations, as well as their distribution in the *Mahābhārata*, see Ingalls & Ingalls 1991 and Tokunaga 1995. See Shackleton Bailey 1951, 19 for the distribution of vipulās in the *Śatapañcāśatka*.

[48] $VP_{Ś2}$ is only used to indicate readings in the 1886 edition that differ from the older edition.

[49] This is not found in the Bhowmik edition.

[50] Quotations attributed to the *Mahābhārata* may not appear in any edition of the *Mahābhārata* itself.

MBH^{C+} *Āraṇyakaparvan* verses found only in the critical apparatus
Śāntiparvan (vol. 13, 95–96; vol. 15, 957)
Anuśāsanaparvan (vol. 17, 855, 1014)
MBH^{S} *Mahābhārata* southern recension (ed. Śāstrī 1933–1936)
Āraṇyakaparvan (vol. 4, 651–653)
Śāntiparvan (vol. 14, 905)
MBH$_{A}$ *Aparārka* (ed. Āpaṭe 1903, 375)
MBH$_{BH}$ *Bhagavantabhāskara — Dānamayūkha* (ed. Bhaṭṭa 1909, 250)
MBH$_{CC}$ *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* (ed. Śiromaṇi 1871, 947)
MBH$_{D}$ *Dānasāgara* (ed. Bhattacarya 1956, 562)
MBH$_{D}$-A witness A (or IO) variants from apparatus
MBH$_{K}$ *Kṛtyakalpataru — Dānakāṇḍa* (ed. Brick 2009, 490)
MBH$_{K}$-J witness J (A$_{I}$, C^{1}, etc.) variants from apparatus
MBH$_{SM}$ *Smṛticandrikā* (ed. Srinivasacharya 1914, 17)[51]
MBH$_{VP}$ *Vidhānapārijāta* (ed. Śāstrī 1951, vol. 3, 423)

Nandipurāṇa quotations[52]
NP$_{A}$ *Aparārka* (ed. Āpaṭe 1903, 375)
NP$_{CC}$ *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* (ed. Śiromaṇi 1871, 946)
NP$_{D}$ *Dānasāgara* (ed. Bhattacarya 1956, 563)
NP$_{K}$ *Kṛtyakalpataru — Dānakāṇḍa* (ed. Brick 2009, 490)
NP$_{K}$-A$_{I}$ witness A$_{I}$ (C^{1}, J, etc.) variants from apparatus

Vikramacarita, editions and quotations thereof
VC^{E} *Vikramacarita* (ed. Edgerton 1926, 101–102, 115)
VC^{V} *Dvātriṃśatputtalikāsiṃhāsana* (ed. Vidyāsāgara 1936, 118–121, 130–131)
VC$_{K}$ *Saṃskṛtakusumāñjali,* abbreviation of story 11 (Śāstrī 1958, 159)[53]

Hitopadeśa
HP^{C} *Hitopadeśa* (ed. Church Mission Press 1847, 11)
HP^{J} *Hitopadeśa* (ed. Johnson 1840, 19)
HP^{K} *Hitopadeśa* (ed. Kale 1967, 14)
HP^{K}-I variant reading in footnote

other parallels
KV *Karuṇāvajrāyudha* (ed. Caturavijaya 1916, 23, 38)
LP *Liṅgapurāṇa* (ed. Bhaṭṭācārya 1885, 418)
NMP *Nāradīyamahāpurāṇa* (ed. Kṛṣṇadāsa 1867, 24v)
ŚP *Śārṅgadharapaddhati* (ed. Peterson 1888, 231)
ŚPŚ *Śatapañcāśatka* (ed. Shackleton Bailey 1951, 42, 46, 54, 77, 81, 125)
ŚPŚ-A witness A (B, D, etc.) variants from apparatus
T Taishō Tripiṭaka (SAT Daizōkyō Text Database)

em. emendation

[51] Quotation is attributed to ‘Vyāsa’.
[52] See Hazra 1954, 108ff. on a certain ‘Nāndīpurāṇa’ and its relation to the *Vahnipurāṇa.*
[53] The same abbreviated story can be found in the *Saṃskṛtamuktāvalī* (Candra 1986, 36–37).

śiber upākhyāna

maitreya uvāca —

śṛṇu rājan pravakṣyāmi svamāṃsaṃ śibinā yathā |
samāṃśaṃ dattavān satyaṃ purā hy auśīnaro yuvā || 1 ||

satyadānarataṃ jñātvā śibim indrāśuśukṣaṇī |
jijñāsārthaṃ sameyātāṃ vartamāne mahādhvare || 2 ||

vahnir bhūtvā kapotas tu hariśyenāt puraḥsaraḥ |
śaraṇārthī mahīpālaṃ nililye bhayavihvalaḥ || 3 ||

trāhi māṃ pṛthivīpālety avadac chyenajād bhayāt |
sa tam āśvāsayāmāsa kapotaṃ śaraṇāgatam || 4 ||

rājānam upagamyātha śyenaḥ provāca saṃsadi |
vacanaṃ śṛṇu me rājan kṣudhārtasya kuṭumbinaḥ || 5 ||

dharmātmānaṃ tvām āhur vai pṛthivyāṃ sarvapārthivāḥ |
tadviruddhaṃ kathaṃ karma kartum icchasi pārthiva || 6 ||

1cd **samāṃśaṃ dattavān]** VP$_{Ś}$; svamāṃsaṃ dattavān VP^{BH}; datta svamāṃsaṃ VP^{BH}-A; samāṃśaṃ dattvavān VP$_{Ś2}$. **satyaṃ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; satyaṃ vai VP^{BH}-A. **auśīnaro]** VP$_{Ś}$; auśīnareṇa VP^{BH}; aumātareṇa VP^{BH}-A. **yuvā]** VP$_{Ś}$; vā VP^{BH}.

2ab **indrāśuśukṣaṇī]** VP$_{Ś}$; indrā śuśukṣaṇī VP^{BH}.

2cd **sameyātāṃ]** VP$_{Ś}$; same yātāṃ VP^{BH}.

3ab **hariśyenāt puraḥsaraḥ]** VP$_{Ś}$; hariḥ śyenā puraḥsaram VP^{BH}; hariśyenapuraḥsaraḥ VP$_{Ś2}$.

3cd **śaraṇārthī]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$ MBH^{C} MBH^{S}; śaraṇārtho VP$_{Ś2}$; saṃrakṣati NMP. **mahīpālaṃ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; mahīpāla NMP; tadā rājan MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **nililye]** MBH^{C} MBH^{S}; nililpe VP^{BH}; nininye VP$_{Ś}$; yo vipraṃ NMP. **bhayavihvalaḥ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; bhayavihvalam NMP; bhayapīḍitaḥ MBH^{C} MBH^{S}.

4ab **pṛthivīpālety]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; pṛthivīpaliny VP^{BH}-A.

4cd **śaraṇāgatam]** VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D VP$_{Ś}$; śaraṇārthinam VP^{BH}.

5ab **saṃsadi]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; saṃvidam VP^{BH}-A.

6ab **vai]** VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D VP$_{Ś}$; ye VP^{BH}.

The story of King Śibi

Maitreya said:

Listen King! I will speak of how Śibi truly gave an equal share of his own flesh! 1
For once upon a time, there was a prince of the Uśīnaras:

Knowing that Śibi was devoted to truth and giving, Indra and Agni, 2
wanting to test him, went to him while a great sacrifice was taking place.

A dove, who had been Agni — pursued by Indra as a hawk —, 3
overcome with fear and seeking shelter, alighted on the king.

‘Help me, Protector of the Earth!’ it said, in fear of the hawk; 4
and so the king comforted the shelter-seeking dove.

Then the hawk reached the king, and it said, in distress: 5
‘Listen to me, King, I am a householder sick with hunger!

All the lords of the earth say you are a just person; 6
would you commit this act, contradicting them, Ruler?

kṛtaghnā bhavatā dānaiḥ sādhunāsādhavo jitāḥ |
kṣamayā krūrakarmāṇaḥ satyenānṛtavādinaḥ || 7 ||

sarāgā vītarāgeṇa tathākopena kopinaḥ |
satṛṣṇā vītatṛṣṇena tvayā lokāḥ parājitāḥ || 8 ||

sarvasya sampadaḥ svārthāḥ svaparārthās tu kasyacit |
parārthā bhavato nityaṃ saphalasya taror iva || 9 ||

nopakārapare 'py evam upakāraparo janaḥ |
apakārapare 'pi tvam upakāraparaḥ sadā || 10 ||

mamaiva vihito dhātrā bhakṣo 'yaṃ taṃ samutsṛja |
rakṣantam ātmano dharmaṃ kṣudhitasya kapotakam || 11 ||

sa śyenam āha saṃprāptas trāṇārthī sannidhau mama |
khago 'syāsmin kathaṃ kuryāṃ tyāgaṃ sadbhir vigarhitam || 12 ||

[7ab] **kṛtaghnā]** VP^{BH}; ghṛtaghnā VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D. **sādhunāsādhavo]** sādhunā sādhavo VP^{BH}.

[7cd] Cf. MBH^{C}, *Āraṇyakaparvan* appendix I, 21.45–46: ...auśīnaraḥ sādhuśīlo bhavato vai mahīpatiḥ || jayet kadaryaṃ dānena satyenānṛtavādinam | kṣamayā krūrakarmāṇam asādhuṃ sādhunā jayet || (vol. 4, 1071); *Dhammapada* 223: akkodhena jite kodhaṃ asādhuṃ sādhunā jine | jine kadariyaṃ dānena saccenālikavādinaṃ || (ed. Sumangala 1914, 33).

[8ab] **tathākopena]** tathā kopena VP^{BH}. **kopinaḥ]** VP^{BH}; kopayaḥ VP^{BH}-A.

[9ab] **svārthāḥ svaparārthās]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; svārthāniparārthās VP^{BH}-A.

[10ab] **nopakārapare]** VP$_{Ś}$ ŚP$_{Ś}$; nopakāraparo VP^{BH}; nāpakāraparo VP^{BH}-A. **upakāraparo]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$ ŚP$_{Ś}$; upakāravase VP^{BH}-A. **janaḥ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$ ŚP$_{Ś}$; tataḥ VP^{BH}-A.

[10cd] **apakārapare]** VP$_{Ś}$ ŚP$_{Ś}$; apakāraparo VP^{BH}. **sadā]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; yathā ŚP$_{Ś}$.

[11ab] **mamaiva]** VP^{BH}-A VP$_{Ś}$; mamaiṣa VP^{BH}; yas tu me MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **vihito dhātrā]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; daivavihito MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **bhakṣo 'yaṃ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; bhakṣyo 'yaṃ VP$_{Ś2}$; bhakṣaḥ MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **taṃ samutsṛja]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; tvaṃ samutsṛja VP$_{Ś2}$; kṣatriyapuṅgava MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. Cf. also MBH^{C} *Anuśāsaṇaparvan*, appendix I, 8.41: yas tu me vihito bhakṣaḥ svayaṃ devaiḥ sanātanaḥ (vol. 17, 855).

[11cd] **rakṣantam]** VP^{BH}-A; svaṃ rakṣam VP^{BH}. For the second half of the verse, MBH^{C} reads: tam utsṛja mahīpāla kapotam imam eva me. MBH^{S} reads mahārāja in place of mahīpāla.

[12ab] **trāṇārthī]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; trāṇārtho VP$_{Ś2}$. **sannidhau]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; sannidhā VP$_{Ś2}$.

[12cd] **khago]** VP^{BH}; tyāgo VP^{BH}-A. **'syāsmin]** VP^{BH}; syama VP^{BH}-A. **kathaṃ]** VP^{BH}; kathāṃ VP^{BH}-A.

You conquer the ungrateful by generosity, the evil by good, 7
cruelty by forgiveness, liars by truth.

The raging by detachment, the angry by calm, 8
the lustful by dispassion, — so are the people conquered by you.

Everyone is concerned with their own benefit, while some aim to benefit others too. 9
You aim always to benefit others, like a fruiting tree.

People don't even help others who help them; 10
you, even when others intend to harm you, are always there to help.

That food has been furnished by the maker, just for me! 11
Release the dove — protecting your own dharma — to the one who hungers'.[54]

He said to the hawk: 'This bird which has arrived at my side for protection — 12
how could I abandon it, an act reviled by the wise?

[54] The syntax of this verse is unclear. Grammatically, it seems to read, 'the dove, which is protecting its own dharma', but that does not seem to make sense in this context. The parallel in the *Mahābhārata* reads: 'That food which has been divinely appointed to me, Chief of Warriors, is this very dove; release it to me, Protector of the Earth!' Cf. also the hawk's response in the *Uttarādhyayanaṭīkā*: *bhukkhito haṃ, na mahaṃ dhammo maṇe thāi* (ed. Vijayomaṅgasūri 1936, 244v), 'Ich bin hungrig. Da denke ich nicht an den Dharma' (Oberlies 2009, 309).

lobhād dveṣād bhayād vāpi yas tyajec charaṇāgatam |
brahmahatyāsamaṃ tasya pāpam āhur manīṣiṇaḥ || 13 ||

śāstreṣu niṣkṛtir dṛṣṭā mahāpātakinām api |
śaraṇāgatahātus tu na dṛṣṭā niṣkṛtiḥ kvacit || 14 ||

yathātmanaḥ priyāḥ prāṇāḥ sarveṣāṃ prāṇināṃ tathā |
tasmān mṛtyubhayatrastā trātavyāḥ prāṇino budhaiḥ || 15 ||

janmamṛtyujarāduḥkhair nityaṃ saṃsārasāgare |
jantavaḥ parikliśyante mṛtyos trasyanti te yataḥ || 16 ||

yannimittaṃ bhavec chokas trāso vā krodha eva vā |
āyāso vā yato mūlam ekāṅgam api taṃ tyajet || 17 ||

mariṣyāmīti yad duḥkhaṃ puruṣasyopajāyate |
śakyas tenānumānena paro 'pi parirakṣitum || 18 ||

13ab **lobhād dveṣād]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś(D)}$ MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{BH}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ KV; lobhān mohād MBH$_{D}$-A; lobhād deṣād MBH$_{D}$-IO; lobhā dveṣād MBH$_{K}$-J MBH$_{K}$-L MBH$_{K}$-U^{2} MBH$_{VP}$. **bhayād]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś(D)}$ MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{BH}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ MBH$_{VP}$ KV; upād MBH$_{K}$-J. **tyajec]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś(D)}$ MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{BH}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ KV; tyajeś MBH$_{VP}$.

13cd **brahmahatyāsamaṃ tasya]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś(D)}$ MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{BH}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ MBH$_{VP}$; brahmahatyāsahasrasya MBH$_{K}$-J MBH$_{K}$-L; brahmahatyāphalaṃ tasya KV. **manīṣiṇaḥ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś(D)}$ MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{BH}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ MBH$_{VP}$ KV; manīṣiṇa MBH$_{CC}$.

14ab **dṛṣṭā]** VP$_{Ś(D)}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{VP}$; dṛṣṭvā VP^{BH}.

14cd **śaraṇāgatahātus tu]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś(D)}$; śaraṇāgatahīnasya VP^{BH}-A; śaraṇāgatahantṛṇāṃ MBH$_{CC}$; śaraṇāgata-hantṝṇāṃ MBH$_{VP}$. **dṛṣṭā]** VP$_{Ś(D)}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{VP}$; dṛṣṭvā VP^{BH}.

15cd **mṛtyubhayatrastā]** VP^{BH} VP$_{N}$; mṛtyubhayāt te 'pi VC^{E} VC^{V}. **trātavyāḥ prāṇino budhaiḥ]** VP$_{N}$ VC^{E} VC^{V}; rakṣitavyāḥ prayatnataḥ VP^{BH}.

16ab **janmamṛtyujarāduḥkhair]** VP^{BH} VC^{E} VC^{V}; janmamṛtyujarāduḥkhāt VP$_{N}$. **nityaṃ]** VP$_{N}$ VC^{E} VC^{V}; magnāḥ VP^{BH}. **saṃsārasāgare]** VP^{BH} VC^{E} VC^{V}; sasārasāgare VP$_{N}$.

16cd **jantavaḥ parikliśyante]** VP^{BH}; jantavaḥ parikliṣyanti VP$_{N}$; kliśyanti jantavo ghore VC^{E} VC^{V}. **mṛtyos]** VP^{BH} VP$_{N}$ VC^{E}; martyās VC^{V}. **trasyanti te yataḥ]** VC^{E}; trastaṃ tv ime tataḥ VP^{BH}; trasyanti te pi ca VP$_{N}$; trasyanti mṛtyutaḥ VC^{V}.

17ab **yannimittaṃ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{NPC}$ MBH^{C} ŚP; yannimitto MBH^{S}. **chokas]** VP^{BH} VP$_{NPC}$ MBH^{C} MBH^{S} ŚP; yekas VP^{BH}-A. **trāso vā]** VP$_{NPC}$ MBH^{C} MBH^{S} ŚP; trāsaḥ VP^{BH}. **krodha]** VP$_{NPC}$ MBH^{S}; krodho bhayaṃ VP^{BH}; duḥkham MBH^{C} ŚP. **eva vā]** VP$_{NPC}$ MBH^{C} MBH^{S} ŚP; tathā VP^{BH}.

17cd **āyāso]** VP^{BH} VP$_{NPC}$ MBH^{C} MBH^{S} ŚP; āyāśe VP^{BH}-A. **vā yato]** VP$_{NPC}$ MBH^{C} MBH^{S} ŚP; vāyaso VP^{BH}; cāpi tan VP^{BH}-A. **mūlam]** VP^{BH} VP$_{NPC}$ MBH^{S}; mūlas MBH^{C} ŚP. **ekāṅgam]** VP^{BH} VP$_{NPC}$; tad ekāṅgam MBH^{C} MBH^{S} ŚP. **taṃ tyajet]** VP^{BH}; saṃtjayet VP$_{NPC}$; tyajet MBH^{C} MBH^{S} ŚP. *Mahābhārata* readings taken from *Śāntiparvan* 168.34 (MBH^{C}, vol. 15, 957; MBH^{S}, vol. 14, 105–106). This verse is also attested in *Śāntiparvan* 26.25 (MBH^{C}, vol. 13, 95–96) & *Anuśāsanaparvan* appendix 1, 15.3959–3960 (MBH^{C}, vol. 17, 1014).

18ab **mariṣyāmīti]** VP^{BH} VP$_{N}$ VC^{E} VC^{V}; martavyam iti HP^{C} HP^{J} HP^{K}.

18cd **śakyas tenānumānena]** VC^{E}; śakyante nānumānena VP^{BH}; śakyate nānumānena HP^{C} HP^{J} HP^{K} VC^{V}; yuktas tenānumānena VP$_{N}$ HP^{K}-I. **paro 'pi]** VP^{BH} VP$_{N}$ HP^{J} HP^{K}-I VC^{E}; pareṇa HP^{C} HP^{K}; tad VC^{V}. **parirakṣitum]** VP^{BH} VP$_{N}$ HP^{K}-I VC^{E}; parimāṇituṃ HP^{C}; parivarṇitum HP^{J} HP^{K}; vaktuṃ kenacit kvacit VC^{V}.

Whether from greed, enmity, or fear, if one abandons a seeker of shelter, 13
the learned say his crime is equal to killing a brāhmaṇa.

In the Śāstras, you see even great criminals being pardoned, 14
but someone who abandons a shelter-seeker nowhere finds pardon.

Just as your own life is dear to you, so it is the same for all creatures. 15
Thus the wise say, you should protect those creatures trembling from fear of death.

In the ocean of saṃsāra, mortals are forever tormented by the pain 16
of birth, death, and old age, since they tremble before mortality.[55]

The cause of distress, fear, or anger, that root of misery 17
should be renounced, even if it is a part of the body.[56]

From the suffering that arises when a man realizes, 'I will die', 18
it can be inferred that others should be protected as well:

[55] See the wordplay in the variant reading in V_C^V: *marttyās trasyanti mṛtyutaḥ,* 'mortals tremble before mortality'.

[56] Many slight variations of this verse are found in different chapters and versions of the *Mahābhārata*, as well as in later quotations. Most editions have *yatomūla* in compound; however, Nīlakaṇṭha comments: *yataḥ āyāsas tan mūlaṃ kāraṇaṃ āyāsādeḥ ekāṅgaṃ śarīraikadeśabhūtam api tyajet kim uta dhanadārādi* (ed. Kinjawadekar 1932, 296). In V_{PN}, this verse has been added in the margin.

yathā ca te jīvitam ātmanaḥ priyaṃ
tathā pareṣām api jīvitaṃ priyam |
saṃrakṣase jīvitam ātmano yathā
tathā pareṣām api rakṣa jīvitam || 19 ||

tasmāt tavāhaṃ na samarpayiṣye
kapotakaṃ śyena yad atra yuktam |
tvaṃ manyase tat karavāṇi sarvam
ṛte kapotāt khalu satyam atra || 20 ||

śyena uvāca —

āhārāt sarvabhūtāni sambhavanti janeśvara |
āhāreṇa vivardhante tena jīvanti caiva hi || 21 ||

āhāraṃ puṣkalaṃ kurvan ciraṃ jīvati prāṇabhṛt |
na tv āhāravihīno 'pi śakyaṃ varttayituṃ ciraṃ || 22 ||

bhakṣyād vilopitasyādya mama prāṇā viśāṃ pate
visṛjya kāyaṃ yāsyanti panthānam apunarbhavam || 23 ||

19ab **yathā]** V_P^{BH} V_{PN} V_C^E V_C^V; tathā V_P^{BH}-A. **ca te]** V_P^{BH} V_C^E; hi te V_{PN}; bhavej V_C^V; bhavaj V_C^K. **ātmanaḥ priyaṃ]** V_{PN} V_C^E V_C^V; ātmani priyaṃ V_P^{BH}; ātmanapriyaṃ V_P^{BH}-A.

19cd **saṃrakṣase]** V_{PN}; saṃrakṣa me V_P^{BH}; saṃrakṣate V_P^{BH}-A; saṃrakṣyate V_C^E; nirīkṣyate V_C^V V_{CK}. The reading nirīkṣyate results in 4 uniform pādas, in vaṃśasthā metre.

20ab **tavāhaṃ na samarpayiṣye]** $V_{PŚ}$; tavāhaṃ na samarthayiṣye V_P^{BH}; nāham imaṃ bhītam avyayiṣye V_{PN}. **śyena yad atra yuktam]** $V_{PŚ}$; na yad atra yuktam V_P^{BH}; vāyabhīti yuktam V_P^{BH}-A; yad atra V_{PN}.

20cd **tvaṃ manyase tat karavāṇi sarvam]** V_P^{BH} $V_{PŚ}$; manyase yuktaṃ vaktuṃ senāsu tad vada || V_{PNAC}; manyase yuktaṃ vaktuṃ śyenāśu tad vada || V_{PNPC}. **satyam]** V_P^{BH} $V_{PŚ}$; satyāv V_P^{BH}-A. V_{PN} renders this verse in anuṣṭubh metre, making it significantly shorter.

21ab **āhārāt]** V_{PN} M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S; bhavanti V_P^{BH}. **sambhavanti]** V_{PN} M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S; āhāreṇa V_P^{BH}. **janeśvara]** V_P^{BH} V_{PN}; mahīpate M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S.

21cd **āhāreṇa vivardhante]** V_{PN} M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S; jīvanti parivarddhante V_P^{BH}; jīvanti ca vivarddhaṃte V_P^{BH}-B V_P^{BH}-C V_P^{BH}-D. **tena jīvanti caiva hi]** V_{PN}; tena jīvanti jantavaḥ M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S; āhāreṇa na saṃśayaḥ V_P^{BH}.

22ab **āhāraṃ puṣkalaṃ kurvan]** V_P^{BH}; āhāraṃ duṣkaraṃ kurvan V_P^{BH}-B V_P^{BH}-C V_P^{BH}-D; śakyate na vinā tena V_{PN}; śakyate dustyaje 'py arthe M_{BH}^C; śakyate puṣkalasyārthe M_{BH}^S. **ciraṃ jīvati prāṇabhṛt]** V_P^{BH}; ciraṃ jīvati mānabhṛt V_P^{BH}-A; dinamātro pi jīvituṃ V_{PN}; cirarātrāya jīvitum M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S.

22cd **na tv āhāravihīno 'pi]** V_P^{BH}; na tv āhārair vihīnena V_{PNPC}; na tu bhojanam utsṛjya M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S; śakyate tair vinā py arthai V_{PNAC}. **śakyaṃ varttayituṃ ciraṃ]** V_{PNPC} M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S; śaknoti jīvituṃ ciram V_P^{BH}; rājan varttayituṃ ciraṃ V_{PNAC}.

23ab **bhakṣyād]** V_P^{BH} M_{BH}^C; bhakṣād V_{PN} M_{BH}^S.

23cd **yāsyanti]** V_P^{BH} V_{PN}; eṣyanti M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S.

For just as your life is dear to you, 19
the lives of others are dear to them.
Since you protect your own life,
so protect the lives of others too.[57]

Therefore, I will not yield 20
this dove to you. Hawk — whatever
you deem appropriate,
I will do it all, truly; but please, not the dove!'

The hawk said:

'Lord of Humans — it is because of food that all beings exist. 21
Through food they prosper; really, it is through food that they live.

Stocked up with food, a creature lives for a long time, 22
but deprived of food, it could not live long.

If food is withheld from me today, Sovereign of the People, 23
my vital breaths will leave my body and go the path of no return.

[57] See the discussion in the introduction on parallels in the *Vasudevahiṇḍi* and the *Uttarādhyayanaṭīkā*.

mṛte ca mayi sarvaṃ me putradāraṃ vinaśyati |
rakṣamānaḥ kapotaṃ tvaṃ bahūn prāṇān na rakṣasi || 24 ||

dharmaṃ yo bādhate dharmo na sa dharmaḥ parantapa |
avirodhī tu yo dharmaḥ sa dharmaḥ sadbhir ucyate || 25 ||

tasmād virodhe dharmasya niścitya gurulāghavam |
yataḥ śriyas tato rājan kuru dharmavinirṇayam || 26 ||

rājovāca —*

ekataḥ kratavaḥ sarve samagravaradakṣiṇāḥ |
ekato bhayabhītasya prāṇinaḥ prāṇarakṣaṇam || 27 ||

nāto gurutaro dharmaḥ kaścid anyo 'sti khecara |
prāṇināṃ bhayabhītānām abhayaṃ yat pradīyate || 28 ||

[24ab] **mṛte ca mayi sarvaṃ me]** V_{P_N}; mṛte mayi nṛpaśreṣṭha $V_{P^{BH}}$; pramṛte mayi dharmātman MBH^{C}; pramṛte mayi sarvaṃ me MBH^{S}. **putradāraṃ vinaśyati]** V_{P_N} MBH^{S}; putradārādikaṃ kulam $V_{P^{BH}}$; putradāraṃ mariṣyati MBH^{C}; yatra dārādikaṃ kulam $V_{P^{BH}}$-A.

[24cd] **rakṣamānaḥ kapotaṃ tvaṃ]** V_{P_N} MBH^{C}; vinaśyati kathaṃ dharmo $V_{P^{BH}}$; rakṣan kapotaṃ rājaṃs tvaṃ MBH^{S}. **bahūn prāṇān na rakṣasi]** V_{P_N}; bhavitā te nṛpottama $V_{P^{BH}}$; bahūn prāṇān naśiṣyasi MBH^{C}; bahūn prāṇān haniṣyasi MBH^{S}. Witnesses N T_1 G_1 M of MBH^{C} also read na rakṣasi.

[25ab] **dharmaṃ]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ V_{P_N} MBH^{C} MBH_{SM}; bahūn MBH^{S}. **dharmo]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ V_{P_N} MBH^{C} MBH^{S} MBH_{SM}; martyo $V_{P^{BH}}$-A. **parantapa]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ V_{P_N}; kudharma tat MBH^{C}; kuvartma tat MBH^{S}; kathaṃcana MBH_{SM}.

[25cd] **dharmaḥ]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ MBH^{C} MBH^{S} MBH_{SM}; dharmma V_{P_N}. **sadbhir ucyate]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ V_{P_N}; satyavikrama MBH^{C} MBH^{S}; siddhir ucyate MBH_{SM}. Witnesses $D_{1,2,5}$ of MBH^{C} also read sadbhir ucyate.

[26ab] **tasmād virodhe dharmasya]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ V_{P_N} MBH_{SM}; virodhiṣu mahīpāla MBH^{C} MBH^{S}.

[26cd] **yataḥ śriyas tato rājan]** V_{P_N}; manyase gauravaṃ yatra tat $V_{P^{BH}}$; yato bhūyas tato rājan MBH^{S}; yato bhūyāṃs tato rājan MBH^{C}; yato bhūyas tato vidvān MBH_{SM}. **kuru]** V_{P_N} MBH^{C} MBH^{S} MBH_{SM}; kuruṣva $V_{P^{BH}}$. On kuruṣva dharmaniścayaṃ, MBH^{C} comments, 'unepic cadence!' **dharmavinirṇayam]** V_{P_N} MBH_{SM}; dharmaviniścayam MBH^{C} MBH^{S}; ṇṛpottama $V_{P^{BH}}$. Between the two halves of this verse, MBH^{C} inserts: na bādhā vidyate yatra taṃ dharmaṃ samudācaret || gurulāghavam ājñāya dharmādharmaviniścaye | MBH^{S} reads samupācaret for samudācaret.

* **rājovāca]** V_{P_N} MBH^{C}; śibir uvāca $V_{P^{BH}}$; śivir uvāca $V_{P_{CC}}$; rājā MBH^{S}.

[27ab] **samagravaradakṣiṇāḥ]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ N_{MP} VC^{E}; samāptavaradakṣiṇāḥ $V_{P_{CC}}$ MBH^{C+}; samagrā varadakṣiṇāḥ $V_{P_{VP}}$.

[27cd] **ekato bhayabhītasya]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ $V_{P_{CC}}$ MBH^{C+} N_{MP} VC^{E}; ekato bhavabhītasya $V_{P^{BH}}$-A; bhītasya $V_{P_{VP}}$. **prāṇarakṣaṇam]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ $V_{P_{CC}}$ N_{MP} VC^{E}; caiva rakṣaṇaṃ varam ekataḥ $V_{P_{VP}}$; prāṇadhāraṇam MBH^{C+}.

[28ab] **nāto]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{CC}}$ VC^{E}; jāne VC^{V}. **gurutaro]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ $V_{P_{CC}}$; gurudharo $V_{P^{BH}}$-B $V_{P^{BH}}$-C; bhūyaḥ paro V_{P_N}; bhūyāṃs tato VC^{E} VC^{V}. **kaścid anyo]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{CC}}$ VC^{E}; kaścin nānyo VC^{V}. **khecara]** V_{P_N}; khecare $V_{P^{BH}}$; bhūtale $V_{P_{CC}}$; dehinām VC^{E}; dehinaḥ VC^{V}.

[28cd] **abhayaṃ]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{CC}}$ VC^{E} VC^{V}; akṣayaṃ $V_{P^{BH}}$-A. **yat pradīyate]** $V_{P^{BH}}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{CC}}$; yaḥ prayacchati VC^{E} VC^{V}.

And with my death, all my family will be destroyed. 24
You, while protecting the dove, fail to protect many other creatures.

Conqueror — a law which obstructs another law is no law; 25
but, the virtuous say, a law which is non-contradictory is really law.

Therefore, having ascertained which is weightier in a contradiction among laws, 26
on the basis of prosperity,[58] King, make a determination on the law!'[59]

The king said:

'On the one hand are all the sacrifices with all their precious offerings, 27
on the other, protecting the life of a creature in fear.

Bird — there is no weightier law at all 28
than safety given to creatures in fear.

[58] On *yataḥ śriyaḥ*, cf. *Nāradasmṛti* 1.25cd: *bhūtam eva prapadyeta dharmamūlā yataḥ śriyaḥ*, '[The king] should resort to fact alone since dharma is the root of his prosperity' (ed. & trans. Lariviere 1989, I, 15; II, 9).

[59] The *Mahābhārata* expands this to two verses, but the quote in the *Smṛticandrikā*, attributed to Vyāsa, uses this version here.

varam ekasya sattvasya pradattaṃ jīvitābhayam |
na ca viprasahasrasya gosahasram alaṅkṛtam || 29 ||

hemadhenudharādīnāṃ dātāraḥ sulabhā bhuvi |
durlabhaḥ puruṣo loke sarvabhūtābhayapradaḥ || 30 ||

mahatām api yajñānāṃ kālena kṣīyate phalam |
bhītābhayapradānasya kṣaya eva na vidyate || 31 ||

abhayaṃ sarvabhūtebhyo yo dadāti dayāparaḥ |
tasya dehād vimuktasya kṣayo nāsti kutaścana || 32 ||

dattam iṣṭaṃ tapas taptaṃ tīrthasevā śrutaṃ tathā |
sarvāṇy abhayadānasya kalāṃ nārhanti ṣoḍaśīm || 33 ||

29ab **varam ekasya]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{V_P}}$ V_C^V N_{P_A} $N_{P_{C_C}}$ N_{P_D} N_{P_K}; carātmakasya $V_{P_{C_C}}$; param ekasya V_C^E. **sattvasya]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$ V_C^E N_{P_A} $N_{P_{C_C}}$ N_{P_D} N_{P_K}; trastasya V_C^V. **pradattaṃ jīvitābhayam]** $V_P^{B_H}$ $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$; dattā hy abhayadakṣiṇā V_{P_N}; pradātur jīvitaṃ varam V_C^E; pradātur jīvitaṃ phalam V_C^V; jīvitābhayarakṣaṇam N_{P_A} $N_{P_{C_C}}$ N_{P_K}; jīvitābhayadakṣiṇā N_{P_D}.

29cd **na ca]** $V_P^{B_H}$ $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$ V_C^E V_C^V; na tu V_{P_N} N_{P_A} $N_{P_{C_C}}$ N_{P_D} N_{P_K}. **viprasahasrasya]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ N_{P_A} $N_{P_{C_C}}$ N_{P_D} N_{P_K}; visya dattaṃ tu $V_P^{B_H}$-A; viprasahasrāṇāṃ $V_{P_{V_P}}$; viprasahasrebhyo V_C^E V_C^V N_{P_K}-IO. **gosahasram alaṅkṛtam]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$; hemādibhir alaṅkataṃ $V_{P_{V_P}}$; gosahasraṃ dine-dine V_C^E; gosahasraṃ phalaṃ bhavet V_C^V; gosahasraṃ sadakṣiṇam N_{P_A} N_{P_D} N_{P_K} $N_{P_{C_C}}$; rakṣāṃ mānuṣyadehinaḥ N_{P_D}-A; dadyād dānam sadakṣiṇam N_{P_K}-IO; gosahasraṃ sadākṣaṇam N_{P_K}-U1 N_{P_K}-U2.

30ab **hemadhenudharādīnāṃ dātāraḥ]** V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ V_C^E V_C^V; hemadhenucarādīnāṃ dātāraḥ $V_P^{B_H}$; kāmadhenugavādīnāṃ dātāraḥ $V_P^{B_H}$-A; hema-dhenu-dharā-dātā $V_{P_{V_P}}$. **sulabhā bhuvi]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ V_C^E V_C^V; sulabho jagatī tale $V_{P_{V_P}}$.

30cd **sarvabhūtābhayapradaḥ]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$; sarvajīvadayāparaḥ V_C^E; sarvvajīve dayāparaḥ V_C^V.

31cd **bhītābhayapradānasya]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$; dattvā'bhayaṃ pradānasya V_C^E. **kṣaya]** V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ V_C^E; kṣayam $V_P^{B_H}$.

32ab **sarvabhūtebhyo]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} V_C^E V_C^V; sarvasattvebhyo $V_P^{B_H}$-B $V_P^{B_H}$-C $V_P^{B_H}$-D $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$.

32cd **dehād vimuktasya]** $V_P^{B_H}$ $V_{P_{N_{AC}}}$ $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$; dehād viyuktasya $V_{P_{N_{PC}}}$; dehavimuktasya V_C^E; puṇyasya kalpānte V_C^V. **kṣayo nāsti]** $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$; kṣayaṃ nāsti $V_P^{B_H}$; bhayan nāsti V_{P_N}; kṣaya eva na V_C^E V_C^V. **kutaścana]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$; vidyate V_C^E V_C^V.

33ab **dattam]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ V_C^E; [om.] $V_{P_{V_P}}$; hutam K_V. **tapas taptaṃ]** $V_P^{B_H}$-B $V_P^{B_H}$-C $V_P^{B_H}$-D $V_{P_{C_C}}$ V_C^E; tapaḥ satyaṃ $V_P^{B_H}$; hutaṃ taptaṃ V_{P_N}; tapo japo dānaṃ $V_{P_{V_P}}$; ca taptaṃ ca K_V. **tīrthasevā]** $V_P^{B_H}$-B $V_P^{B_H}$-C $V_P^{B_H}$-D V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ K_V; tīrthavāsā $V_P^{B_H}$; arthasebā $V_{P_{V_P}}$; tīrthayātrā V_C^E. **śrutaṃ tathā]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{V_P}}$ V_C^E; śrayaṃ tathā $V_{P_{C_C}}$; phalaṃ śrutam K_V.

33cd **sarvāṇy abhayadānasya]** $V_P^{B_H}$ V_{P_N} $V_{P_{C_C}}$ V_C^E K_V; sarvvasyābhayadānasya $V_{P_{V_P}}$; tac cābhayapradānasya V_C^V. **kalāṃ]** $V_P^{B_H}$ $V_{P_{N_{PC}}}$ $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$ V_C^E V_C^V K_V; kālāṃ $V_{P_{N_{AC}}}$. **nārhanti]** $V_P^{B_H}$ $V_{P_{C_C}}$ $V_{P_{V_P}}$ V_C^E K_V; nārpānti V_{P_N}; nārhati V_C^V.

It is better that a single being be granted life safety 29
than a thousand adorned cattle granted to a thousand priests.[60]

On the earth, it is easy to find givers of gold, cattle, land, and such; 30
hard to find in the world is a man who gives safety to all beings.

The merit of even great sacrifices diminishes with time; 31
there is absolutely no diminishing of the gift of safety to the terrified.

For he who, filled with compassion, gives safety to all beings, 32
when he is sundered from his body, there is no diminishing[61] at all.

Something offered, or sacrificed, a religious austerity performed, a pilgrimage, 33
and even scripture — all together are not worth a sixteenth of the gift of safety.

[60] Cf. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* 3.1.1: *sa ha gavāṃ sahasram avarurodha | daśadaśa pādā ekaikasyāḥ śṛṅgayor ābaddhā babhūvuḥ*, 'So he corralled a thousand cows; to the horns of each cow were tied ten pieces of gold' (ed. & trans. Olivelle 1998, 76–77). Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out this passage. The variant reading *go-sahasrąṃ sadakṣiṇam,* 'a thousand cows accompanied by offerings', also bolsters this interpretation.

[61] Here, as in the preceeding verse, *kṣaya* seems to refer to the diminishing of merit.

catuḥsāgaraparyantāṃ yo dadyāt pṛthivīm imām |
sattvebhyo hy abhayaṃ yaś ca tayor abhayado 'dhikaḥ || 34 ||

api tyaje rājyam ahaṃ śarīraṃ vāpi dustyajam |
na tv enaṃ bhayasantrastaṃ tyaje dīnaṃ kapotakam || 35 ||

yan mamāsti śubhaṃ kiñcit tena janmani janmani |
bhavet trātā mahārtānām ārtināśāya dehinām || 36 ||

na hy ahaṃ kāmaye rājyaṃ na svargaṃ nāpunarbhavam |
prāṇināṃ duḥkhataptānāṃ kāmaye duḥkhanāśanam || 37 ||

yathā tv anānṛtaṃ vāṇīm aham etām udāhare |
satyena tena bhagavān prasīdatu maheśvara || 38 ||

āhārārthe samārambhas tava cāyaṃ vihaṅgama |
tad yathaiva tavāhāraṃ manyase tad dadāmy aham || 39 ||

śyenaḥ prāha mamāhāro na ṛte 'tra kapotakam |
tat tyaktvā kāmaye nānyam āhāraṃ rājasattama || 40 ||

tasmāt tvam api bhūpāla dehi nyāyārjitaṃ dhanam |
dānāj jñānaṃ tataḥ prāpya jñānāt siddhim avāpsyasi || 40bis ||*

34ab **pṛthivīm]** VP^{BH} VP$_{N}$ VP$_{Cc}$ MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{Cc}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ KV; vasudhām VC^{E} VC^{V}.

34cd **sattvebhyo hy abhayaṃ yaś ca]** MBH$_{Cc}$ MBH$_{K}$-AI; abhayaṃ yaś ca bhūtebhyo VP^{BH}; satvebhyo hy abhayaṃ yac ca VP$_{NAc}$; yajec ca sarvvayajñais tu VP$_{NPc}$; abhayaṃ yasya bhūtebhyo VP$_{Cc}$; sattvebhyo 'thābhayaṃ yaś ca MBH$_{A}$; sattvebhyo hy abhayaṃ yasya MBH$_{K}$; sattvebhyo hy abhayaṃ datte MBH$_{D}$; sattvebhyo hy abhayaṃ dattvā MBH$_{D}$-A; sa -ebhyo hy abhayaṃ tasya MBH$_{K}$-C^{1}; sarvebhyo hy abhayaṃ yasya MBH$_{K}$-IO; sattve sa hy abhayaṃ yasya MBH$_{K}$-J; sattvebhya hy abhayaṃ yasya MBH$_{K}$-L; yaś cā'bhayaṃ ca bhūtebhyas VC^{E}; yac cābhayañ ca bhūtebhyas VC^{V}; ekaś ca jīvitaṃ dadyāt KV. **tayor abhayado 'dhikaḥ]** VP$_{N}$ MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{Cc}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ VC^{E} VC^{V} KV; yo dadāti tato 'dhikaḥ VP^{BH}; yo dadāti tato 'dhikaṃ VP$_{Cc}$; dharābhayaprado 'dhikaḥ MBH$_{D}$-A; tayor adhikadehikaḥ MBH$_{K}$-J.

35ab **tyaje]** VP$_{Cc}$; tyajet VP^{BH}.

35cd **tyaje]** VP$_{Cc}$; tyajed VP^{BH}.

36ab **yan mamāsti]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Cc}$; janmanāsti VP^{BH}-B; janmamo sti VP^{BH}-C; janmano sti VP^{BH}-D.

36cd **bhavet trātā]** VP^{BH}; bhavetrātā VP$_{Cc}$. **mahārtānām]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Cc}$; mahātmānām VP^{BH}-A.

37ab **nāpunarbhavam]** VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D VP$_{Cc}$; nāyur na bhavam VP^{BH}.

38ab **yathā tv anānṛtaṃ]** VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D; yathā stutibhṛtāṃ VP^{BH}; yathātra nānṛtāṃ VP$_{Cc}$.

38cd **satyena tena]** VP^{BH}; satyenānena VP$_{Cc}$. **maheśvara]** VP^{BH}; maheśvaraḥ VP$_{Cc}$.

39ab **āhārārthe]** VP^{BH}; āhārārthaṃ MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **vihaṅgama]** MBH^{C} MBH^{S}; vihaṅgamaḥ VP^{BH}.

39cd **tad yathaiva tavāhāraṃ]** VP^{BH}; śakyaś cāpy anyathā kartum MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **manyase tad dadāmy aham]** VP^{BH}; āhāro 'py adhikas tvayā MBH^{C} MBH^{S}.

40ab **ṛte 'tra]** VP^{BH}; tv anyatra VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D. On ‘na ṛte’, see Oberlies 2003, 9–12.

40cd **āhāraṃ]** VP^{BH}; āhari VP^{BH}-A.

* This verse is only present, isolated, in VP$_{Ś}$, under the entry for ‘siddhiḥ’, but attributed to the *śiber upākhyāna*. It has been tentatively inserted here.

Between the one who gives the earth bounded by the four oceans, 34
and the one who gives safety to all beings,[62] the safety-giver is greater.[63]

I would surrender even my kingdom, or even my body, so hard to give up, 35
but I will not abandon this pitiful dove, trembling with fear.

By whatever good fortune I have accrued, in birth after birth, 36
let there be a protector of beings in great pain, to destroy their suffering.

For I do not desire kingdom, nor heaven, nor liberation; 37
I desire the destruction of suffering for suffering-stricken creatures.

As I have presented a valid explanation, 38
please let this truth be to your satisfaction, Great Lord![64]

This mission of yours is just for the sake of food, Bird, 39
so whatever food you wish, I will get it for you!'

The hawk declared: 'My food is none other than the dove. 40
I want no other food apart from that, Your Majesty!

Therefore, Protector of the Earth, give me this deserved prize! 40 bis
From giving you will obtain knowledge, and from knowledge attain fulfillment.

[62] In VP_N, a scribal addition reads, 'and who performs all the sacrifices'.

[63] There are many variations on this verse; in particular, the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* has two versions, one attributed to the *Mahābhārata* (MBH_{Cc}) which is closer to VP_{NAc}, and the other attributed to the *Vahnipurāṇa* (VP_{Cc}) which is closer to VP^{BH}. It is not found in MBH^{C} or MBH^{S}.

[64] The vocative *maheśvara* and the polite *bhagavān* here suggests the king is speaking to a god, which contrasts with the vocative *vihaṅgama* and the second-person *tava* in the next verse. The quotation from the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* ends here, at verse 38; verse 39 is only found, loosely paralleled, in the *Āraṇyakaparvan*.

śyenaḥ kapotakān hanti sthitir eṣā sanātanī |
mā rājan mārgam ajñātvā kadalīskandham āruha || 41 ||

rājāvocad amārgeṇa varte nāhaṃ kvacit khaga |
dharmaśāstropadiṣṭo 'yaṃ dharmaḥ sattvadayāparaḥ || 42 ||

sarvasattveṣu yad dānam ekasattve tu yā dayā |
sarvasattvapradānāc ca dayaikātra viśiṣyate || 43 ||

sarvavedā na tat kuryuḥ sarvaśāstrāṇi khecara |
sarvatīrthābhiṣekaś ca yaḥ kuryāt prāṇināṃ dayām || 44 ||

vāṅmanaḥkarmabhir ye tu sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ |
dayādarśitapanthāno brahmalokaṃ vrajanti te || 45 ||

gacchaṃs tiṣṭhan svapan jāgrad yo hitaṃ na samācaret |
narebhyaḥ sa paśur jñeya ātmano 'py ahitaḥ sa vai || 46 ||

duḥkhino 'duḥkhino vāpi prāṇino labdhacakṣuṣaḥ |
ātmavat paripaśyanti te yānti paramāṃ gatim || 47 ||

41ab **śyenaḥ kapotakān hanti]** VP^{BH}; śyenaḥ kapomaśnāyaṃti VP^{BH}-A; śyenāḥ kapotān khādanti MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **sthitir]** VP^{BH} MBH^{C}; sthir VP^{BH}-A; śrūtir MBH^{S}. Cf. also MBH^{C} *Anuśāsanaparvan*, appendix I, 8.42 (vol. 17, 855), which has the same reading as in the *Āraṇyakaparvan*.

41cd **mārgam]** MBH^{C} MBH^{S}; sāram VP^{BH}. **ajñātvā]** VP^{BH}; ājñāya MBH^{C}; ajñāya MBH^{S}. **kadalīskandham]** VP^{BH} MBH^{C}; kadalāstambha VP^{BH}-A; kadalīstambham MBH^{S}.

42ab **rājāvocad amārgeṇa]** VP^{BH}; rājāpy avocad avyagro VP^{BH}-A.

42cd **sattva]** VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C; satya VP^{BH}.

43ab **sattveṣu]** VP^{BH}; sarveṣu VP^{BH}-A. **sattve tu]** VP^{BH}-A; bhūteṣu VP^{BH}.

44ab **tat kuryuḥ]** VP^{BH}; saṃsturyu VP^{BH}-A. **khecara]** em.; khecaraḥ VP^{BH}.

44cd **yaḥ]** VP^{BH}-A; yat VP^{BH}. Cf. MBH^{C} *Anuśāsanaparvan* 116.18: sarve vedā na tat kuryuḥ sarvayajñās ca bhārata | yo bhakṣayitvā māṃsāni paścād api nivartate || (vol. 17, 627); *Viṣṇudharma* 62.4: sarvavedā na tat kuryuḥ sarvadānāni caiva hi | yo māṃsarasam āsvādya sarvamāṃsāni varjayet || (ed. Grünendahl 1984, 101). On the relationship between the *Viṣṇudharma* and the *Vahnipurāṇa*, see Hazra 1954, 79ff.

45ab **vāṅmanaḥkarmabhir ye tu]** VP^{BH}; manasā karmmaṇā vācā LP.

45cd **darśita]** VP^{BH} LP; dāśita VP^{BH}-A. **brahmalokaṃ]** VP^{BH}; rudralokaṃ LP. In the *Vahnipurāṇa*, Rudra is identified with Agni (Hazra 1954, 79). **te]** VP^{BH}; ca LP.

46ab **tiṣṭhan svapan]** VP^{BH}; tiṣṭhat svayaṃ VP^{BH}-A.

46cd **narebhyaḥ]** VP^{BH}; parebhyaḥ VP^{BH}-A. **jñeya]** jñeyaḥ VP^{BH}.

47ab **duḥkhino 'duḥkhino]** VPś; duḥkhinaḥ sukhino VP^{BH}; duḥkhināduḥkhino VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C.

A hawk kill doves; this has been established forever, 41
King — if you can't find the path, don't go climbing a plantain tree!'[65]

The king said: 'Bird — nowhere have I taken the wrong path; 42
this dharma, whose aim is compassion for all beings, is prescribed in the Dharmaśāstras.

Between a gift given to all beings and compassion for a single being, 43
it is compassion which is greater than a gift to all beings.

All the Vedas and all the Śāstras, Bird, and bathing at every pilgrimage site, 44
do not cause someone to have compassion for living beings.

But those who devote their speech, thought, & action to the well-being of all, 45
those whose path is guided by compassion — they proceed to the Brahma world.

Moving, standing, sleeping, or awake, he who does not work toward the benefit 46
of humans is known as a beast, and he is of no benefit even to himself.

Those creatures endowed with eyes, who see others — suffering 47
or not — as themselves, proceed to the ultimate path.

[65] Nīlakaṇṭha, reading *sāram ajñātva kadalīskandham āsaja*, comments: *kadalīskandham āsajeti kadalīskandhatulye niḥsāro 'smin dharme mā sajjo bhavety arthaḥ* (ed. Kinjawadekar 1930, 203). The simile of the trunk of the plantain tree (Pali *kadalīkkhandha*) being insubstantial is common in Buddhist literature (Bronkhorst 2007, 102; Cone 2001, 629; Lindtner 1981, 170). In fact, the plantain is not a tree, and its trunk is a pseudostem, formed of tightly packed leaves. Cf. also *dharmaskandha* (Pali *dhammakkhandha*).

prāṇinaṃ vadhyamānaṃ tu yaḥ śaktaḥ samupekṣate |
sa yāti narakaṃ ghoram iti prāhur manīṣiṇaḥ || 48 ||

tubhyaṃ hi sumahad rājyaṃ prayacchāmi vihaṅgama |
yathā kāmayase vānyad varjayitvā kapotakam || 49 ||

śyenaḥ prāha kim etat te prītir āsīt khage dṛḍhā |
kathaṃ ced asya tulyāni svamāṃsāni prayaccha me || 50 ||

rājā tam abravīd dhṛṣṭo yan me māṃsāni yācase |
etad yacchāmi te sadyaḥ svamāṃsaṃ tulayā dhṛtam || 51 ||

yat prārthito 'smi bhadraṃ te priyam etad dadāmi te |
satyadharmaratasyātha sataḥ sumahad apriyam || 52 ||

adhruveṇa śarīreṇa pratikṣaṇavināśinā |
dhruvaṃ yo nārjayed dharmaṃ śocyo 'sau mūḍhacetanaḥ || 53 ||

yadi prāṇyupakārāya deho 'yaṃ nopayujyate |
tataḥ kim upakāro 'sya pratyahaṃ kriyate vṛthā || 54 ||

48ab **prāṇinaṃ]** VP^{BH} MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ MBH$_{VP}$; prāṇināṃ MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{K}$-J MBH$_{K}$-L. **vadhyamānaṃ]** VP^{BH} MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$; badhyamānaṃ MBH$_{VP}$; radhyamānaṃ MBH$_{K}$-U^{1} MBH$_{K}$-U^{2}. **tu]** VP^{BH}; hi MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ MBH$_{VP}$. **śaktaḥ]** VP^{BH} MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ MBH$_{VP}$; śakraḥ MBH$_{K}$-L. **samupekṣate]** VP^{BH} MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$ MBH$_{VP}$; samupekṣyate MBH$_{D}$-A MBH$_{K}$-C^{1}.

48cd **iti prāhur manīṣiṇaḥ]** VP^{BH} MBH$_{A}$ MBH$_{CC}$ MBH$_{K}$; iti hy āhur manīṣiṇaḥ VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C; idam āhur manīṣiṇaḥ MBH$_{D}$ MBH$_{K}$-AI MBH$_{K}$-C^{1}; itim āhur manīṣiṇaḥ MBH$_{K}$-J MBH$_{K}$-L; idam ākur manīṣiṇaḥ MBH$_{K}$-U^{1} MBH$_{K}$-U^{2}; yāvad indrāś caturddaśa MBH$_{VP}$.

49ab **tubhyaṃ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; tulyaṃ VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C.

49cd **vānyad]** VP^{BH}; cānyad VP$_{Ś}$.

50cd **ced]** VP^{BH}; cid VP$_{Ś}$.

51ab **rājā tam abravīd dhṛṣṭo]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; anugraham imaṃ manye MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **yan me māṃsāni yācase]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; śyena yan mābhiyācase MBH^{C}; yan māṃ śyenābhibhāṣase MBH^{S}.

51cd **etad yacchāmi te sadyaḥ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; tasmāt te 'dya pradāsyāmi MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. Cf. also MBH^{C} *Anuśāsanaparvan*, appendix I, 8.44: tatas tvaṃ me prayacchādya svamāṃsaṃ tulayā dhṛtam (vol. 17, 855).

52ab **dadāmi]** VP^{BH}; vadāmi VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D.

52cd **syātha]** VP^{BH}; syāsya VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D.

53cd **nārjayed]** VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D VC^{E} VC^{V}; nārpayed VP^{BH}. **śocyo 'sau]** VP^{BH}; sa śocyo VC^{E} VC^{V}.

54cd **upakāro 'sya]** VP^{BH} VC^{E}; upacāro 'sya MBH^{C+}; poṣaṇaṃ tasya VC^{V}. **pratyahaṃ]** VP^{BH} VC^{E} VC^{V}; pratyahe MBH^{C+}. **vṛthā]** VP^{BH} MBH^{C+}; nṛbhiḥ VC^{E} VC^{V}.

But the powerful one, who neglects a creature being slain, 48
goes to a terrible hell — so declare the wise.

I offer you my marvellous kingdom, Bird, 49
or whatever else you desire, apart from the dove!'

The hawk said: 'Why is your favour so stuck on that bird? 50
How about if you offer me an equal amount of your own flesh?'

The king replied: 'I am pleased that you ask for my flesh! 51
I offer you my flesh right away, weighed to measure.

I will give what is asked of me, Sir,[66] this which is of worth to you; 52
since for one who is devoted to the law of truth, it is utterly worthless.

With his perishable body in continual decay, 53
he who does not strive for imperishable dharma is deplorable, a fool.

If this body is not employed in the service of living beings, 54
then why serve it every day, in vain?'

[66] See note to verse 66 below.

evam uktvā svamāṃsāni kapotena samaṃ nṛpaḥ |
utkṛtya tolayāmāsa prahṛṣṭamanasā tataḥ || 55 ||

tyaktvātmasukhabhogecchāṃ sarvasattvasukhaiṣiṇaḥ |
bhavanti paraduḥkhena sādhavo nityaduḥkhitāḥ || 56 ||

tulayā dhriyamāṇas tu kapoto vyatiricyate |
punaś cotkṛtya māṃsāni tataḥ prādāt sa pārthivaḥ || 57 ||

na vidyate yadā māṃsaṃ kapotena samaṃ kvacit |
tataḥ prakṣīṇamāṃso 'pi sādhuḥ sukhāyate param |
yadā tena na tulyaṃ tat sa tulām āruhat svayam || 58 ||

antaḥpuravarastrīṣu na rājye na ca jīvite |
karuṇāsaktacittena tenāpekṣā kṛtā kvacit || 59 ||

paraduḥkhāturā nityaṃ svasukhāni mahānty api |
nāpekṣante mahātmānaḥ sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ || 60 ||

parārtham udyatāḥ santaḥ santaḥ kiṃ kiṃ na kurvate |
tādṛg apy ambudher vāri jaladais tat prapīyate || 61 ||

eka eva satāṃ mārgo yad aṅgīkṛtapālanam |
dahantam akarot kroḍe pāvakaṃ yad apāṃpatiḥ || 62 ||

55ab **uktvā]** VP^{BH} VPś; uktā VPś$_2$.
55cd **prahṛṣṭamanasā]** VP^{BH}; prahṛṣṭo manasā VPś.
56ab **tyaktvātmasukhabhogecchāṃ]** VPś VC^{E}; tyattkātmasukhabhogecchāṃ VP^{BH}; tyaktātmasukhabhogecchāḥ VPś$_{(D)}$; tyaktātmasukhabhogecchaḥ VP$_V$; tyaktvātmasukhaduḥkhecchāṃ VC^{V} VC$_K$. **sarvasattvasukhaiṣiṇaḥ]** VP^{BH} VPś VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$ VC^{E} VC$_K$; sarvalokasukhaiṣiṇaḥ VP^{BH}-A; sarvvasattvaguṇaiṣiṇaḥ VC^{V}.
56cd **nityaduḥkhitāḥ]** VP^{BH} VPś VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$; 'tyantaduḥkhitāḥ VC^{E}; 'tyantaduḥkhinaḥ VC^{V} VC$_K$.
57ab **tulayā dhriyamāṇas tu]** VP^{BH} VPś; dhriyamāṇas tu tulayā MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **vyatiricyate]** VP^{BH} VPś MBH^{C}; 'tyatiricyate MBH^{S}.
57cd **tataḥ]** VP^{BH} VPś; rājā MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **sa pārthivaḥ]** VP^{BH} VPś; uśīnaraḥ MBH^{C} MBH^{S}.
58ab **kvacit]** VP^{BH} VPś; dhṛtam MBH^{C} MBH^{S}.
58cd **prakṣīṇamāṃso]** VP^{BH} VPś MBH^{S}; utkṛttamāṃso MBH^{C}. **'pi]** VP^{BH} VPś; 'sāv MBH^{C} MBH^{S}. **sukhāyate]** em.; sukhayate VP^{BH} VPś. See verse 63 below.
58ef MBH^{C} & MBH^{S} omit **sādhuḥ**... **tat sa**. **tulām āruhat svayam]** VP^{BH} VPś; āruroha svayaṃ tulām MBH^{C}; āruroha tulāṃ svayam MBH^{S}.
59ab **antaḥpuravarastrīṣu]** VP^{BH} VPś; antaḥpurastrīṣu VPś$_2$.
59cd **saktacittena]** VP^{BH} VPś; śiktavittena VP^{BH}-A. **kvacit]** VP^{BH} VPś; na ca VP^{BH}-A.
60ab **svasukhāni]** VPś VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$; sasukhāni VP^{BH}. **mahānty]** VP^{BH} VPś VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$; mahanty VPś$_2$.
60cd **mahātmānaḥ]** VP^{BH} VPś VPś$_{(D)}$; mahātmanaḥ VP$_V$.
61cd **vāri]** VP^{BH} VPś VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$; ttāri VP^{BH}-A. **prapīyate]** VP^{BH} VPś VPś$_{(D)}$; pradīyate VP$_V$.
62ab **pālanam]** VP^{BH} VPś VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$; pālanī VP^{BH}-A.
62cd **kroḍe]** VP^{BH} VPś VPś$_{(D)}$; kāḍhe VP^{BH}-A; krāḍe VP$_V$.

Having said this, the king tore off his flesh, and weighed an amount 55
equal to the dove, with delight.

The noble, having abandoned their desire for their own happiness and pleasure, who tend to- 56
ward the happiness of all beings, constantly suffer from the suffering of others.

But the dove weighed more on the scale, 57
so again, the ruler tore off more flesh and gave it up.

When no amount of flesh equalled the dove 58
the noble one, even bereft of flesh, experienced the highest joy;
when it did not weigh enough, he himself climbed onto the scale.

Not among the excellent women of the palace, nor in the kingdom, not among the living, 59
no one could compare to him, whose mind was devoted to compassion.

Perpetually pained by the suffering of others, the great-souled do not expect 60
their own pleasures to abound; they are devoted to the welfare of all beings.

Striving for the sake of others, there is nothing the virtuous could not achieve, 61
just as the water of the ocean is drunk by the clouds.[67]

There is only one path for the virtuous: keeping one's promises, 62
as the lord of the waters made a burning fire in his chest.[68]

[67] Verses 61–63 seem to be about water and fire, the ocean and the sun. Although *jalada,* 'rain-giver', is typically a cloud, in the *Ṛgveda*, Agni is also associated with rain because he is identified with lightning (Jamison & Brereton 2014, 204). The underwater fire (see the next verse) is also said to drink the ocean and let it out again. These verses may also pertain to the worship of Agni, since this story is part of the *Vahnipurāṇa*.

[68] This seems to be a reference to *vaḍavāgni*, the 'submarine doomsday fire' that is held at the bottom of the ocean (Doniger O'Flaherty 1971, 13). It may also be a reference to Varuṇa creating fire on the waters in *Ṛgveda* V.85, or to Agni as Apām napāt, the child of the waters who 'shines without kindling wood within the waters' (X.30, trans. Jamison & Brereton 2014, 1423). Śibi is also currently sheltering Agni (as a dove) in the story, although there does not seem to be a version of the story in which he holds the dove to his chest (Meisig 1995, 115–116). Jayadāl Śarmā, seemingly quoting from the *Śabdakalpadruma* entry for 'sādhuḥ', comments: *sādhu janoṃ kā eka yahī mārga hai ki ve aṅgīkṛta (svīkṛta) kā pālana karate haiṃ, dekho! samudra ne prajvalita agni ko goda meṃ dhāraṇa kara rakkhā hai* (1920, 231).

ātmānaṃ pīḍayitvāpi sādhuḥ sukhāyate param |
hlādayaty āśritān vṛkṣo duḥkhaṃ ca sahate svayam || 63 ||

atha tasmin samārūḍhe tulām auśīnare nṛpe |
devadundubhayo neduḥ puṣpavarṣaṃ papāta ca || 64 ||

tatas tasya tadā jñātvā vākyaṃ caitad abhāṣata |
śakraḥ svarūpam āsthāya dharme rājñaḥ parāṃ sthitim || 65 ||

indro 'ham asmi bhadraṃ te kapoto havyavāhanaḥ |
jijñāsamānau tvāṃ rājann imaṃ yajñam upāgatau || 66 ||

mahākāruṇikeneha yat kṛtaṃ tat suduṣkaram |
naiva pūrve nṛpāś cakrur na kariṣyanti cāpare || 67 ||

parārthe tyajataḥ prāṇān yā prītir abhavat tava |
prāṇasaṃkṣayalabdheṣu na sā prāṇeṣu dehinām || 68 ||

parārthaikāntakalyāṇī svāśrayārthārthaniṣṭhurā |
tvayy eva kevalaṃ rājan karuṇākaruṇābhavat || 69 ||

63ab **sukhāyate]** VP^{BH}; sukhayate VPś VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$.

63cd **hlādayaty]** VP^{BH}; hlādayann VPś VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$. **āśritān]** VP^{BH} VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$; āyitā VP^{BH}-A; tāpitān VPś. **sahate]** VP^{BH} VPś VPś$_{(D)}$ VP$_V$; vasate VP^{BH}-A. Cf. K$_V$ 104: aṅgīkṛtyātmano duḥkhaṃ sukhayaty aparān mahān | ātapād ātapastho 'yaṃ pathikān avati drumaḥ ||

64cd **ca]** VP^{BH} VPś; vā VP^{BH}-A. Pādas b and d have been switched here.

65ab **jñātvā vākyaṃ caitad abhāṣata]** VP^{BH} VPś; dṛṣṭvā vākyavedam abhāṣata VP^{BH}-A.

65cd **dharme rājñaḥ]** VP^{BH} VPś; dharmarajñe VP^{BH}-A. **parāṃ sthitim]** VP^{BH}; paristhitim VPś.

66ab **bhadraṃ te]** VP^{BH} VPś; dharmajña MBH^C MBH^S. **havyavāhanaḥ]** VP^{BH} VPś; havyavāḍ ayam MBH^C MBH^S.

66cd **tvāṃ rājann]** VP^{BH} VPś; dharme tvāṃ MBH^C; dharmaṃ svam MBH^S. **imaṃ yajñam]** VP^{BH} VPś MBH^S; imaṃ deśaṃ VP^{BH}-A; yajñavāṭam MBH^C.

67ab **yat kṛtaṃ tat suduṣkaram]** VP^{BH} VPś; makṛtam etat supuṣkalam VP^{BH}-A. Cf. *Suvarṇavarṇāvadāna* 77.6cd: mahā-kāruṇikeneva yat sattvārthaṃ mahat kṛtaṃ (ed. Rajapatiratna 1974, vol. 1, 80).

67cd **cakrur na]** VP^{BH} VPś; cakrunaṃ VP$_{Ś2}$.

68cd **prāṇasaṃkṣayalabdheṣu]** em.; prāṇasaṃśayalubdheṣu VP^{BH}; na sā naṣṭopalabdheṣu ŚPś. **na sā prāṇeṣu dehinām]** VP^{BH}; prāṇeṣu prāṇināṃ bhavet ŚPś; prāṇiṣu prāṇināṃ bhavet ŚPś-A.

69ab **parārthaikāntakalyāṇī]** VP^{BH} ŚPś; parārthe yān na kalyāṇī VP^{BH}-A; parārthaikāntakalyāṇi ŚPś-A. **svāśrayārthārthanişṭhurā]** VP^{BH}; kāmaṃ svāśrayaniṣṭhurā ŚPś.

69cd **kevalaṃ]** ŚPś; kevalā VP^{BH}. **rājan]** VP^{BH}; nātha ŚPś. **karuṇākaruṇābhavat]** ŚPś; karuṇā karuṇāpara VP^{BH}; karuṇā bhavet ŚPś-S.

The noble one who even neglects himself experiences the highest joy, 63
as a tree delights those sheltering under it, while it endures its own suffering.[69]

When the king of the Uśīnaras had mounted the scale, 64
heavenly drums sounded, and there was a rain of flowers.[70]

From this, Śakra had understood enough, and, taking his own form, 65
he said this to the paragon of a lawful king:

'I am Indra, Sir,[71] and the dove is fire. 66
Wanting to test you, King, we came to this sacrifice.

Here, you performed something difficult, with great compassion. 67
Never before have kings done this, nor will others do it again.

Your joy from abandoning your vital breaths in the service of another 68
exceeds[72] the joy of creatures whose lives were lost and gained again.[73]

Kind exclusively to others, cruel to the interests of the one in which she resides,[74] 69
only toward yourself, King, was compassion uncompassionate![75]

[69] In the parallel from the *Karuṇāvajrāyudha*, the tree causes joy (*sukhayati*) by protecting travellers from the heat. Here, on the other hand, *sukhāyate* must mean 'experiences joy' according to *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 3.1.18, *sukhādibhyaḥ kartṛvedanāyām.* As the *Kāśikāvṛtti* explains, *sukhaṃ vedayate sukhāyate*, '*sukhāyate* means "experiences joy"' (ed. Shastri & Shukla 1965, 374). For metrical reasons, it would be impossible to read *sukhayati* in this verse. See also verse 58.

[70] This verse has been rearranged. Cf. the Śibi story in the Chinese 大莊嚴論經 (dà Zhuāngyán lùn jīng), thought to be the *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā*: 諸天作音樂　空中雨香花　鍾鼓等衆音 (T201, 343b10-11), 'All the gods made music / fragrant flowers rained from the sky / bells, drums, etc. sounded together'. See also Meisig 1995, 94; Huber 1908, 240. For the extant Sanskrit fragments of the Śibi story in the *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā,* see Lüders 1926, 181.

[71] Here *bhadraṃ te* is translated as a vocative, analogous to Pali *bhadante*. The *Mahābhārata* reads *dharmajña* here, also in the vocative.

[72] On 'exceeds', cf. the Chinese translation: 此喜過於彼 (ed. Shackleton Bailey 1951, 45), 'this joy exceeds the other'. Shackleton Bailey translates the Sanskrit more literally: 'not such could be the delight... as was yours' (155).

[73] *prāṇasaṃśayalubdheṣu* has been emended to *prāṇasaṃkṣayalabdheṣu,* following the *Śatapañcāśatka* which reads *naṣṭopalabdheṣu* (Tibetan *'gum pa las bsos pa rnams*, Chinese 死忽重蘇).

[74] Although his edition reads *svāśrayaniṣṭhurā* here, Shackleton Bailey hypothesizes a possible *svārtha* based on the Chinese translation, 自利 (1951, 164). This is also supported by a variant reading in the Tibetan translation, *ñid kyi don* (1951, 82). V_P^{BH} reads *svāśrayārthārthaniṣṭhurā*.

[75] In the *Śatapañcāśatka*, this verse is one in a series which personifies *karuṇā*, compassion.

svakarmapāśaiḥ sudṛḍhair baddhaṃ kṛtsnam idaṃ jagat |
tvaṃ jagadduḥkhamokṣārthaṃ baddhaḥ karuṇayā nṛpa || 70 ||

anāthe vikale dīne nirdhane 'rthini rogiṇi |
adṛṣṭe dṛṣṭapūrve vā tulye ca karuṇā tava || 71 ||

yathābhibhūya sarvāṇi jyotīṃṣy arko 'vatiṣṭhate |
tathābhibhūya karuṇā tava dharmān avasthitā || 72 ||

akṛtverṣyāṃ viśiṣṭeṣu hīnān anavamanya ca |
agatvā sadṛśaiḥ spardhāṃ tvaṃ lokottamatāṃ gataḥ || 73 ||

ātmaprāṇaiḥ paraprāṇān yo naraḥ parirakṣati |
sa yāti paramaṃ sthānaṃ yasmān nāvartate punaḥ || 74 ||

prāṇair api tvayā rājan rakṣitaḥ kṛpaṇo janaḥ |
svamāṃsāny api dattāni dravyeṣv anyeṣu kā kathā || 75 ||

paśavo 'pi hi jīvanti kevalātmodaraṃbharāḥ |
tasyaiva jīvitaṃ ślāghyaṃ parārthaṃ yas tu jīvati || 76 ||

kiṃ cātra citraṃ yat santaḥ parānugrahatatparāḥ |
na hi svadehaśaityārthaṃ jāyante candanadrumāḥ || 77 ||

70ab **svakarmapāśaiḥ sudṛḍhair]** VP^{BH}; sarvam evāviśeṣeṇa ŚPś; sarvam evāśeṣeṇa ŚPś-S. **baddhaṃ kṛtsnam]** VP^{BH}; baddhaṃ kṛcchra VP^{BH}-A; kleśair baddhaṃ ŚPś.

70cd **jagadduḥkha]** VP^{BH}; jagatkleśa ŚPś. **mokṣārthaṃ baddhaḥ]** VP^{BH} ŚPś; mokṣārthe yataḥ ŚPś-S. **nṛpa]** VP^{BH}; ciram ŚPś.

72ab **jyotīṃṣy arko]** VP^{BH}; jotīṃṣiṣo VP^{BH}-A; jyotīṣy arkyo VP^{BH}-D.

72cd **bhūya]** VP^{BH}; bhuta VP^{BH}-A.

73ab **akṛtverṣyāṃ viśiṣṭeṣu]** VP^{BH} ŚPś; akṛtve py āviśiṣṭeṣu VP^{BH}-A. **hīnān]** VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C ŚPś; dīnān VP^{BH}. **anavamanya]** VP^{BH} ŚPś-D ŚPś-Ψ2; anavamatya ŚPś ŚPś-A ŚPś-H.

73cd **sadṛśaiḥ]** VP^{BH} ŚPś; sadṛśai ŚPś-Ψ2 ŚPś-H; sadṛśe ŚPś-D. **spardhāṃ]** ŚPś; sārddhaṃ VP^{BH}; sparddhā VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D. **lokottamatāṃ]** VP^{BH}; loke śreṣṭhatāṃ ŚPś.

74cd **paramaṃ]** VP^{BH}; tatparaṃ VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D.

75ab **rājan]** VP^{BH}; sādho ŚPś; nāthā ŚPś-A. **rakṣitaḥ kṛpaṇo]** VP^{BH}; mānitaḥ praṇayī ŚPś.

75cd **dravyeṣv]** VP^{BH}; dravye VP^{BH}-A; vastuṣv ŚPś. ŚPś reverses the two lines.

76ab **kevalātmodaraṃbharāḥ]** VP^{BH} VC^{E}; kevalān sodaraṃbharāḥ VP^{BH}-A; kevalaṃ svodarambharāḥ VC^{V} VC$_{K}$.

76cd **tasyaiva jīvitaṃ]** VC^{E} VC^{V}; sa jīvati punaḥ VP^{BH}. **parārthaṃ yas tu]** VP^{BH}; yaḥ parārthaṃ hi VC^{E}; yaḥ parārthe tu VC^{V} VC$_{K}$.

77ab **cātra]** VP^{BH}; atra VC^{E} VC^{V}. **citraṃ]** VP^{BH} VC^{E} VC^{V}; satyaṃ VP^{BH}-A. **yat]** VP^{BH} VC^{E} VC^{V}; ye VP^{BH}-A. **parānugrahatatparāḥ]** VP^{BH} VC^{E} VC^{V}; parānagrahatatparāḥ VC$_{K}$.

77cd **svadehaśaityārthaṃ]** VC^{E}; svadehaśāntyarthaṃ VP^{BH}; svadehaśaityāya VC^{V} VC$_{K}$.

This whole world is bound firm by the snares of its own karma; 70
you, for the sake of liberating the world from suffering, are bound by compassion, King!

Helpless, frightened, distressed, poor, begging, diseased, 71
whether seen before or not, they receive your kindness equally.

Just as the sun abides, surpassing all the stars, 72
so your kindness abides, surpassing the laws.

Not envying the distinguished, nor spurning the low, 73
not competing with equals, you became the best of the world.

The one who protects the lives of others with his own life 74
goes to the highest place, from which there is no return.

Even with your life, King, you protected helpless people, 75
you gave even your own flesh, not to speak of other things.[76]

For even animals live to fill only their own belly, 76
but he who lives for the sake of others — his life alone is praiseworthy.

And how wonderful, that the virtuous are devoted to helping others! 77
For sandalwood trees are not born to cool their own body.[77]

[76] In the *Śatapañcāśatka,* this verse seems to refer to the Buddha as King Śibi in a past life; see the discussion in the introduction.

[77] This simile is unclear, but cf. verse 63 above. This verse may also be referring to the cooling properties of sandalwood paste; in the *Arthaśāstra*, sandalwood is said to be 'able to bear heat' and 'absorbing heat': *uṣṇasahaṃ dāhagrahi... iti candanaguṇāḥ* (2.11.56, ed. Kangle 1960, 53; trans. Olivelle 2013, 124).

paropakāravyāpāraparo yaḥ puruṣaḥ sadā |
sa paraṃ padam āpnoti parād api hi yat param || 78 ||

paropakāraikamanāḥ svasukhāya gataspṛhaḥ |
jagaddhitāya jāyante sādhavas tv īdṛśā bhuvi || 79 ||

yat te māṃsāni gātrebhyaḥ samutkṛtāni pārthiva |
eṣā te śāśvatī kīrtir lokān anu bhaviṣyati || 80 ||

divyarūpadharaś caiva pālayitvā mahīṃ ciram |
sarvāṃl lokān atikramya brahmalokaṃ gamiṣyasi || 81 ||

evam uktvā tam indrāgnī jagmatus tridaśālayam |
rājā tu kratum iṣṭvā taṃ mumude devavat tadā || 82 ||

ya idaṃ śṛṇuyān nityaṃ śibeś caritam uttamam |
vimuktaḥ sarvapāpebhyaḥ svargalokaṃ sa gacchati || 83 ||

iti vahnipurāṇe śiber upākhyānaṃ nāma ||*

78ab **paropakāravyāpāraparo]** VP^{BH} VC^{E}; paropakāravyāpāraḥ VC^{V} VC$_{K}$. **yaḥ puruṣaḥ sadā]** VP^{BH}; yaḥ puruṣo bhuvi VC^{E}; puruṣo yaḥ prajāyate VC^{V} VC$_{K}$.

78cd **sa paraṃ padam āpnoti]** VP^{BH}; sa saṃpadaṃ samāpnoti VC^{E}; sampadaṃ sa samāpnoti VC^{V} VC$_{K}$. **parād api]** VP^{BH} VC^{E}; paratrā'pi VC^{V} VC$_{K}$. **hi yat param]** VP^{BH}; ca yat param VC^{E}; paraṃ padam VC^{V} VC$_{K}$.

79ab **paropakāraikamanāḥ]** VP^{BH}; paropakāraikadhanāḥ VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D; paropakāraniratā ye VC^{E} VC^{V}. **svasukhāya gataspṛhaḥ]** VP^{BH}; svargasukhaniḥspṛhāḥ VC^{E}; svārthasukhanispṛhāḥ VC^{V}.

79cd **jāyante]** VP^{BH}; janitāḥ VC^{E} VC^{V}. **īdṛśā]** VC^{E} VC^{V}; ādṛśā VP^{BH}.

80ab **samutkṛtāni]** VP$_{Ś}$ MBH^{S}; samutkṛttvāni VP^{BH}; samuktaṃ tāni VP^{BH}-A; uktṛttāni MBH^{C}. **pārthiva]** VP$_{Ś}$ MBH^{S}; pārthivaḥ VP^{BH}; viśāṃ pate MBH^{C}.

80cd **śāśvatī]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$ MBH^{S}; bhāsvarī MBH^{C}. **anu bhaviṣyati]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; abhibhaviṣyati MBH^{C} MBH^{S}.

81cd **gamiṣyasi]** VP^{BH}; gamiṣyati VP^{BH}-A VP$_{Ś}$.

82cd **kratum iṣṭvā taṃ]** VP^{BH} VP$_{Ś}$; ṛtubhiḥ syātaṃ VP^{BH}-A; kratum iṣṭā taṃ VP$_{Śs}$. **devavat]** VP^{BH}; devatāt VP^{BH}-D; devatāṃ VP$_{Ś}$. Cf. MBH^{C+}: ity uktvā taṃ dānapatim indrāgnī tau tadā nṛpa | pūrṇadehaṃ svakaṃ kṛtvā jagmatus tridaśālayam || A variant reading for pāda c reads svarṇadehatvacaṃ(!) kṛtvā.

83cd **sa]** VP^{BH}; ca VP^{BH}-B VP^{BH}-C VP^{BH}-D.

* **vahnipurāṇe]** VP$_{Ś}$; ādye vahnipurāṇe VP^{BH}. **śiber upākhyānaṃ nāma]** VP^{BH}; śiver upākhyānanāmādhyāyaḥ VP$_{Ś}$.

The man who is devoted to the work of helping others 78
obtains the highest position, even higher than the highest.

Minds bent on helping others, without desire for their own happiness, 79
such noble men are born on the earth for the welfare of the world.

That you cut flesh from your own limbs, King — 80
this will be your eternal glory, encompassing the worlds.

And, bearing your divine form,[78] you will protect the earth for a long time, 81
and then, surpassing all the worlds, ascend to the Brahma world'.

Having said this to him, Indra and Agni left for the abode of the thirty-three gods[79] 82
while the king, after performing his sacrifice, rejoiced like a god.

He who listens repeatedly to this story of the supreme conduct of Śibi, 83
released from all evils, will go to heaven.

Thus ends the story of Śibi in the *Vahnipurāṇa.*

[78] This 'divine form' seems to refer to Indra restoring Śibi's missing flesh with a newly divine body. A parallel from the *Mahābhārata* to verse 82 reads *pūrṇadehaṃ svakaṃ kṛtvā*, 'having made his own body whole [again]'; a variant reading gives *svarṇadeha*, 'golden body' (see critical apparatus).

[79] Cf. the ending of two Chinese versions: 還于天宮 (T201, 343c.2–3), 'returned to the heavenly palace'; 還天上 (T1509, 88c26), 'returned to heaven'.

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Supplementary material

The online version of the critical edition can be found at tst-project.github.io/siberupakhyana. It contains the critical text as well as all diplomatically transcribed witnesses. The transcriptions are linked to digital images from institutional repositories, where available. These files, as well as the text alignments, can be found in the code repository: github.com/TST-Project/siberupakhyana. The alignment files also include phylogenetic trees, if they were used in the reconstruction of a particular verse. The repository is archived by Zenodo (doi:10.5281/zenodo.7446515). For the software used to create the alignments, see Li 2022a.


maitreya uvāca —

śṛṇu rājan pravakṣyāmi svamāṃsaṃ śibinā yathā |
samāṃśaṃ dattavān satyaṃ purā hy auśīnaro yuvā || 1 ||

satyadānarataṃ jñātvā śibiṃ indrāśuśukṣaṇī |
jijñāsārthaṃ sameyātāṃ vartamāne mahādhvare || 2 ||

vahnir bhūtvā kapotas tu hariśyenāt puraḥsaraḥ |
śaraṇārthī mahīpālaṃ nililye bhayavihvalaḥ || 3 ||

trāhi māṃ pṛthivīpālety avadac chyenajād bhayāt |
sa tam āśvāsayāmāsa kapotaṃ śaraṇāgatam || 4 ||

rājānam upagamyātha śyenaḥ provāca saṃsadi |
vacanaṃ śṛṇu me rājan kṣudhārtasya kuṭumbinaḥ || 5 ||

samāṃśaṃ dattavān] V_P; svamāṃsaṃ dattavān V_P^{Bh}; datta svamāṃsaṃ V_P^{Bh}-A; samāṃśaṃ dattvavān $V_{P\hat{S}_2}$. **satyaṃ**] V_P^{Bh} V_P; satyaṃ vai V_P^{Bh}-A. **auśīnaro**] V_P; auśīnareṇa V_P^{Bh}; aumātareṇa V_P^{Bh}-A. **yuvā**] V_P; vā V_P^{Bh}.

indrāśuśukṣaṇī] V_P; indrā śuśukṣaṇī V_P^{Bh}. **sameyātāṃ**] V_P; same yātāṃ V_P^{Bh}.

hariśyenāt puraḥsaraḥ] V_P; hariḥ śyenā puraḥsaram V_P^{Bh}; hariśyenapuraḥsaraḥ $V_{P\hat{S}_2}$. **śaraṇārthī**] V_P^{Bh} V_P M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S; śaraṇārtho $V_{P\hat{S}_2}$; saṃrakṣati N_{MP}. **mahīpālaṃ**] V_P^{Bh} V_P; mahīpāla N_{MP}; tadā rājan M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S. **nililye**] M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S; nililpe V_P^{Bh}; nininye V_P; yo vipraṃ N_{MP}. **bhayavihvalaḥ**] V_P^{Bh} V_P; bhayavihvalam N_{MP}; bhayapīḍitaḥ M_{BH}^C M_{BH}^S.

pṛthivīpālety] V_P^{Bh} V_P; pṛthivīpaliny V_P^{Bh}-A. **śaraṇāgatam**] V_P^{Bh}-B V_P^{Bh}-C V_P^{Bh}-D V_P; śaraṇārthinam V_P^{Bh}.

saṃsadi] V_P^{Bh} V_P; saṃvidam V_P^{Bh}-A.

Figure 5: The online edition, with one lemma highlighted. Witness sigla are linked to diplomatic transcriptions and images, where available.