

# A Characteristic Feature of the Sūtra Carāṇa

Shinye Iwasaki

## I

Each Gṛhyasūtra belongs to one of the four Vedic Śākhās as well as to the other Vedic Kalpa Sūtras and makes its own school or the *Sūtra Carāṇa* by itself together with the other Kalpa Sūtras. Treating with almost all the same Gṛhyakarman, each Sūtra or Sūtra Carāṇa has its own characteristics in the minute account of the prescription, which are supposed to be mainly attributed to the author of the Sūtra. There are, indeed, many characteristics of this order, of every category, from large one common to all the Carāṇas or the Śākhās, to small one confined to a Carāṇa.<sup>(1)</sup>

Two types of the caste-designation employed by the Gṛhyasūtras may be pointed out as one of these characteristics. The term *rājanya* and *kṣatriya* for the second caste are almost used with distinctions among the Sūtra Carāṇas and the Vedic Śākhās. That is, the Sūtras belonging to the Rgveda and the Sāmaveda employ the word *kṣatriya*, while the Sūtras belonging to the Yajurveda use the word *rājanya*, for the name of the second caste.

## II

In the age of the Sūtras, Indian society was divided into four principal castes, namely Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya or Rājanya, Vaiśya and Śūdra. To designate these castes the Gṛhyasūtras employ the term *varṇa* as well as the Dharmasūtras. In the Pār. GS (i, 4, 8) and the Āp. GS (iv, 10, 4) we find the word *varṇānupūrvyena*<sup>(2)</sup> 'in accordance with the order of the caste' connoecting with the first three classes, and in the Āp. GS (iv, 11, 17) the word *avarṇasamyogena* 'without any reference to caste'. The Khād.

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GS (i, 5, 1-5) prescribes that the fire used at his wedding, which is kept as his sacred domestic fire, he may get from the house of one who offers many sacrifices, be it a Brāhmaṇa, or a Vaiśya. The prescriptions referring to castes, however, are rather little to find in the Gṛhyasūtras.

The most important rituals referring to castes in thirteen Gṛhyasūtras are as follows;<sup>(3)</sup>

*Upanayana*<sup>(4)</sup> The Gṛhyasūtras of Āśvalāyana, Kauṣītaki, Śāṅkhāyana, Khādīra, Drāhyāyana, Gobhīliya, Pāraskara, Laugākṣi, Kāṭhaka, Bhāradvāja, Baudhāyana, Hiranyakeśin and Āpastamba prescribe the different ages, seasons and uniforms etc. for the boys of first three castes who are going to be a Brahmacārin, as we see in detail later.

*Gāyatriyupadeśasūtra* In the prescription of the Upanayana ceremony the Śāṅkh. GS (ii, 5, 4-6) and Pār. GS (ii, 3, 7-9) lay down the injunction that the teacher should recite the Sāvitrī verse in the Gāyatrī metre to a Brāhmaṇa, in the Tṛṣṭubh to a Kṣatriya, and in the Jagatī to a Vaiśya.<sup>(5)</sup>

*Cūḍākarman* The rite of cutting the hair of a child for the first time is described in many Gṛhyasūtras under different names, such as Cūḍā, Cūḍākarman, Cūḷākarman Cūḍākarāṇa, Caula and Cauḍa.<sup>(6)</sup> In its prescription of the time for performance, Śāṅkh. GS (i, 28, 1-4) only refers to castes and lays down that the rite should be performed after one year or in the third year for a Brāhmaṇa, in the fifth year for a Kṣatriya, and in the seventh year for a Vaiśya.

*Godāna* This rite is also called *Keśānta* in some Sūtras and consists mainly in shaving the beard of a boy for the first time, and on this occasion the hair on other parts of the body, such as armpits and head, is also shaven.<sup>(7)</sup> The caste-distinction are found in the prescriptions of the sacrificial fee for this rite in the Gobh. GS (iii, 1, 5-8) and Khād. GS (iv, 5, 3-4). They lay down that the sacrificial fee to be presented by a Brāhmaṇa at this rite should consist of an ox and a cow, that to be presented by a Kṣatriya should consist of a pair of horses, and that to be presented by a Vaiśya should consist of a pair of sheep, or a cow may be presented by pe-

rsons of all castes.

*Saptapadī* The Saptapadī (walking together seven steps) is considered as the most important among all the essential rites of Aryan marriage. The Pār. GS(i, 8, 15-17) and the Śāṅkh. GS (i, 14, 13-15) lay down that a cow should be presented by a Brāhmaṇa, a village (*grāma*) by a Rājanya, and a horse by a Vaiśya, as a sacrificial gift of this rite.

*Vivāhasūtra* Among the various prescriptions of marriage in the Gṛhyasūtras, the Pār. GS (i, 4, 8-11) only allows three wives to a Brāhmaṇa, two to a Rājanya, one to a Vaiśya, and a Śūdra woman to all according to some teacher.

*Nāmakaraṇa*<sup>(9)</sup> In almost of all the prescriptions of Nāmakaraṇa, the Pār. GS (i, 4, 8-10) only characteristically refers to castes and lays down that the name of a Brāhmaṇa should be ending in *śarman*, a Kṣatriya in *varman*, and a Vaiśya in *gupta*.

*Vāstuparikṣā* or *Śālākarmaṇ* The Gṛhyasūtras observe some rules for the construction of a house, such as selection of ground, surroundings of the house, direction of the door and time for construction etc. Some Sūtras prescribe grounds of different qualities for the persons of first three castes respectively. The Āśv. GS (ii, 8, 6-8) and the Gobh. GS (iv, 7, 5-7) lay down that a ground for a Brāhmaṇa should be of white color (*śveta*, *gaura*), for a Kṣatriya of red color (*rohita*), and for a Vaiśya of yellow color (*pita*, in Āśv, GS) or of black color (*kṛṣṇa*, in Gobh. GS).

### III

As we see above, their principal objects in the Gṛhyasūtras were members of the three higher classes, the Dviyas or the Indo-Aryans, and the Śūdras, the non-Dviyas, were nearly neglected. But the Śūdras are referred to as servants in their households in some prescriptions, such as in the Arghya reception of the Āp. GS (v, 13, 5) and the Hir. GS (i, 12, 19). In the following, we try to analyze and compare prescriptions of Upanayana, one of the most important Gṛhya rituals, to see some

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characteristics of the Carāṇas or of the Śākhās.

Out of the substances demanded in the rite of Upanayana, we are able to pick up four principal elements available, namely the age for Upanayan, a kind of skin (*ajina*, *carma*) worn by a student as one of the stuffs of the uniform of a Brahmacārin, the material of a girdle (*mekhalā*, *raśanā*) and the material of a staff (*daṇḍa*). These elements are prescribed differently for the three higher castes respectively. The following are results of the analysis.

SUTRA	1. CASTE DESIGNATION	2. AGE	3. SKIN	4. GIRDLE	5. STAFF
RV					
<sup>(11)</sup> Āśv.	BKV	8 11 12 vg	era	mdā	pubH
<sup>(12)</sup> Śāṅkh.	BKV	8, 10 11 12 g	erg	mdā	pnuH
<sup>(13)</sup> Kauṣ.	BKV	8, 10 11 12 g	erg	mdū	p-b n-k uH
SV					
<sup>(14)</sup> Khād.	BKV	8 11 12 v			
<sup>(15)</sup> Drāh.	BKV	8 11 12 v			
<sup>(16)</sup> Gobh.	BKV	8 11 12 g	era	mkt	p' va
ŚYV					
<sup>(17)</sup> Pār.	BRV	8 11 12 vg	era-g	mdm' kab	pbu (H)
KYV					
<sup>(18)</sup> Laug.	BRV	7 9 11 v	evr	mmds	pan
<sup>(19)</sup> =Kāṭh.					
<sup>(20)</sup> Bhār.	BRV (R)	8 11 12 gS	erb	mm's	b-p nu
<sup>(21)</sup> Baudh.	BRV (R)	8 11 12 gS	era	mds	b-p nu
<sup>(22)</sup> Hir.	BRV	7 11 12 vS	krb	md ās	b-p nu
<sup>(23)</sup> Āp.	BRV	8 11 12 gS			pnb'-u

- Notes: 1. Caste designation:- B=Brāhmaṇa. K=Kṣatriya V=Vaiśya. R=Rājanya. (R)=Rathakāra.
2. Age:- vg=v or g. g=garbha (aṣṭameṣu etc.). v=(aṣṭame etc.) varṣe. 8, 10=8 or 10. S=indication of the season for Upanayana. <sup>(24)</sup>
3. Skin:- e=aiṇeya. r=raurava. a=āja. g=gavya. a-g=a or g. v=va-iyāghra. b=bastājina. k=kṣṇājina.
4. Girdle:- m=mauñji. d=dhanurjyā. ā=āvī=ū. ū=ūrṇasūtra. k=kāśa.

t=tāmbalī. m'=maurvī. k'=kuśa. a=aśmantaka. b=balvaja. md=maurvī dhanurjyā. s=sautrī. ās=āvisūtra.

5. Staff:- p=palāśa. u=audumbara. b=bailva. n=naiyagrodha. p-b=p or b. n-k=n or k. k=khādira. p'=pārṇa. v=vailba (=vailva=b) a=āśva<sup>(26)</sup> ttha. b'=bādara. H=indication of height or long of these staffs.

In the analysis many characteristics of every category appear. For example, we may point out a certain position of a Brāhmaṇa, as a common quality in all the Caraṇas and the Śākhās, in the Indo-Aryan of those times. For all the Sūtras lay down that a Brāhmaṇa should take with him the upper garment made of the skin of an antelope, the girdle of Muñja grass and the staff of palāśa wood at the rite of Upanayana. The position and quality of a Kṣatriya or a Rājanya also are particularly shown by the girdle made of a bowstring prescribed in all the Sūtras except the Gobh. GS. one of the most interesting characteristics is the caste-designation. In the prescription of Upanayana, people of the second caste are called and identified by terms such as Kṣatriya and Rājanya respectively according to schools, in spite of being no difference in the materials of skin, girdle and staff to be used at the ceremony and thereafter.

Generally speaking, the term *rājanya* is older than *kṣatriya*. The term *rājanya* appears more frequently in earlier Vedic works, namely in Saṃh., Br., ŚrS., GrS., MnS. and MBh, especially in the Saṃhitās.<sup>(26)</sup> It may be said that the Kṣatriya was a class of warriors headed by a king. In the Vedic age when a ecclesiastical authority and a sovereignty were intimately interwoven this caste was universally called Rājanya, but in the age when the caste system was established it was called Kṣatriya.<sup>(27)</sup> In the age of the Upaniṣads great kings appeared and taught the Brāhmaṇas their new doctrines, such as Pravāhana and Ajātaśatru.<sup>(28)</sup> But there is no word *rājanya* in the Upaniṣads. We can hardly find out two words connecting with this term, *rājan* (Kauṣ. Up., ii, 9. *brāhmaṇa*, *rājan*, *viś*) and *rājanyabandhu* 'fellow of the princely class' (Chānd. Up., v, 3, 5). In the Upaniṣads, the words *kṣatra* and *kṣatriya* are used for this class.<sup>(29)</sup>

It has not been clarified why the two terms, *rājanya* and *kṣatriya*, had been used distinctively for a caste by the Sūtra Carāṇas, as evidently appeared in the analysis of the Upanayana. It is probable from another adjustment<sup>(30)</sup> that the Gṛhyasūtras generally have a characteristic as such. But it is quite impossible to assert that the Sūtras employing the term *rājanya* are older than others. However the prescriptions bearing the term *rājanya* might be older than others. After all, for the present, we cannot but saying it is a characteristic feature of the Sūtra Carāṇa, perhaps originating from the Sūtrakāra's home and school.

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- (1) For example cf. S. Iwasaki, Nāma in Nāmakaraṇa, Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies, Vol. XI, No. 1, p. 41.
- (2) Cf. Ram Gopal, India of Vedic Kalpasūtras, Nes Delhi 1959, p. 114.
- (3) Āśvalāyana GS, ed. by V. S. S. Ranade with Nār. comm., 1936, AnSS 59-  
Kauṣītaka GS, ed. by T. R. Cintāmaṇi with Bhav. comm., Madras 1944-  
Śāṅkhāyana GS, English translation in SBE xxix.  
Drāhyāyana GS-Vṛtti, AnSS 74. 1914.  
Gobhiliya GS, ed. by C. Tarkāraṅkāra with a comm., 2nd ed. Calcutta 1908.  
Pāraskara GS, ed. by G. Kṛṣṇadāsa with Har. comm., Bombay 1938.  
Laugākṣi GS, ed. by M. K. Śāstrī with Dev. comm., Srinagar 1928, '34.  
Kāṭhaka GS, ed. by W. Caland, Lahore 1925.  
Bhāradvāja GS, ed. by H. J. W. Salomons, Leiden 1913.  
Baudhāyana GS, R. Gopal's op. cit., pp. 291-295.  
Hiraṇyakeśin GS, ed. by Kirste, Vienna 1889.  
Āpastamba GS, ed. by C. Śāstrī with two comm., Benares 1928, KSS 59.
- (4) *Upāyana* in the Laug. GS (41,1) and Kāṭh. GS (41, 1), cf. the Man. GS (1, 22, 1)
- (5) See the note on the Śāṅkh. GS, ii, 5, 4-6; ii, 7, 10 in SBE xxix, pp. 66, 70.
- (6) Kāṭh. 40, 1-19: Laug. 40, 1-19: Hir. ii. 6, 1, 19: Kauṣ. i, 21, 1-22: Gobh. ii, 9, 1-29; Pār. ii, 1, 1-6: Drāh. ii, 3, 14-30; Khād. ii, 3, 16-33; Āp. vi, 16, 3-16; Āśv. i, 17, 1-18.
- (7) *Godāna*; Āśv. i, 18, 1-9; Hir. i, 9, 11-18; Bhār. i, 28; Laug. 44, 1-6; Kāṭh. 44, 1-4. *Keśānta*: Pār. ii, 1, 7-25; cf. Laug. 40, 11 and Kāṭh. 40, 11. Most of the Gṛhyas set the time for performance of this rite in the sixteenth year of the boy's age.

- (8) Pār. i, 8, 1-21; Śāṅkh. i, 14, 1-17; Āp. ii, 14, 16-17; Hir. i, 20, 9-10; 21, 1-2; Āśv. i, 17, 19; Bhār. i, 17; Gobh. ii, 2, 10-12, cf. Khād. i, 3, 26; Kāṭh. 25, 42; Laug. 25, 37.
- (9) Cf. note 1.
- (10) Āśv. ii, 7; ii, 8; ii, 9: Pār. iii, 4, 1-9; Hir. i, 27; i, 28; Baudh. ii, 3: Gobh. iv, 7, 1-43; Kāṭh. 11, 1-4; Laug. 11, 1-4 (vāstunirmāṇam); Āp. vii, 17, 1-4 (gṛhanirmāṇam)
- (11) Āśv. i, 19, 1-13.
- (12) Śāṅkh. ii, 1, 1-19, cf. Ram Gopal's op. cit., pp. 291-295 and SBE xxix.
- (13) Kauṣ. ii, 1, 1-19.
- (14) Khād. ii, 4, 1-6, cf. SBE xxix and R. Gopal's op. cit.
- (15) Drāh. ii, 4, 1-6, cf. Drāhyāyana GS-Vṛtti.
- (16) Gobh. ii, 10, 1-12.
- (17) Pār. ii, 2, 1-4; ii, 5, 17-27: ii, 5, 1-3. Compare ii, 5, 16; 28 with its English translation in SBE xxx.
- (18) Laug. 41, 1-4; 16-17; 32-34.
- (19) Kāṭh. 41, 1-4; 12-13; 22.
- (20) Bhār. i, 1-2.
- (21) Baudh. ii, 5, 2; 6; 13; 16-17, cf. R. Gopal's op. cit.
- (22) Hir. i, 1, 1-4; 17; i, 4, 7.
- (23) Āp. iv, 10, 1-4; iv, 11, 15.
- (24) The Bhār., Hir. and Āp. GS belonging to KYV prescribe the seasons to initiate the boys of different castes as follows;
- |        | <i>brahmaṇa</i> | <i>rajanya</i> | <i>vaiśya</i> | <i>rathakāra</i>    | <i>sarva</i> |                    |
|--------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Bhār.  | vasante         | griṣme vā      | śaradi        | varṣāsu             | śiśire       | i, 1.              |
| Baudh. | in spring       | hemante        | in autumn     | in the rainy season | —            | Ved. Kalp. p. 293. |
| Hir.   | vasante         | griṣme         | śaradi        | —                   | —            | i. 1. 4.           |
| Āp.    | vasante         | griṣme         | śaradi        | —                   | —            | iv, 10. 4.         |
- (25) The Āśv.' Śāṅkh. and Kauṣ. belonging to RV prescribe as follows;
- |        | <i>brahmaṇa</i>     | <i>kṣatriya</i> | <i>vaiśya</i> |                   |
|--------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Āśv.   | keśasammitaḥ        | lalāṭas°        | prāṇas°       | i, 19, 13.        |
| Śāṅkh. | the tip of the nose | the foreheas    | the hair      | ii, 1, 21-23(SBE) |
| Kauṣ.  | ghrāṇāntikaḥ        | lalāṭa°         | keśa°         | ii, 1, 20-21.     |
| (Pār.  | (keśasammitaḥ       | lalāṭas°        | ghrāṇas°)     | ii,, 5, 28.)      |
- (26) Cf. Böhtlmgk, O. und R. Roth., Sanskrit-Wörterbuch, St. Petersburg.
- (27) Cf. J. Takakusu and T. Kimura, History of Indian Philorophy and Religion (Indo Testugaku Shukyo Shi) 5th ed., 1948, p. 401.
- (28) Chāndogya Upaniṣad v, 3, 7.
- (29) Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad iv, 19.

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(30) *brahmaṇa, rājanya, vaiśya* : *brahmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya*

ṚV

Āśv.	iii, 8, 11-13. samāvartana	i, 19, 1-13. ii, 8, 6-8. upanayana vāstuparikṣā
Śaṅkh.	i, 14, 13-15. (saptapadī)	i, 28, 1-4. ii, 1, 1-23. cūḍākarmaṇ upanayana ii, 5, 4-6. (=gāyatriyupadeśa)
Kauṣ.		ii, 1, 1-24. upanayana

SV

Khād.		ii, 4, 1-5. upanayana
Drāh.		ii, 4, 1-5. upanayana
Gobh.	i, 1, 16.	ii, 10, 1-12. iii, 1, 5-7. upanayana godāna iv, 7, 5-7. (=vāstuparikṣā)

ŚYV

Pār.	i, 4, 8-12. i, 8, 15-17. vivāha saptapadī ii, 3, 1-3. ii, 3, 7-9 upanayana gāyatriyupadeśa ii, 5, 2-4; 17-27; 36-38. bhikṣācarya
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KYV

Laug.	xxxxi, 1-4; 8-10; 16-17; 32-34. upāyana
Kāth.	xxxxi, 1-4; 7; 12-13; 22. upāyana
Bhār.	i, 1-2. ii, 21 upanayana snāna
Baudh.	ii, 5, 2-17. upanayana
Hir.	i, 1, 1-4; 17. i, 4, 7-8. upanayana
Āp.	iv, 10, 2-3. iv, 11, 15. upanayana