



Daan

and Other Giving
Traditions in India

THE FORGOTTEN POT OF GOLD

SANJAY AGARWAL

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Published by AccountAid™ India
55-B, Pocket C, Siddharth Extension,
New Delhi - 110014, India
Phone No.: +91-11-2634 3852, +91-11-2634 3128
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www.accountaid.net

First Edition: Delhi, 2010
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Price: ₹500

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Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India
ISBN 978-81-910854-0-2

Design and Layout: Moushumi De
Illustrations: Mridula Sharma
Printed at: PRINTWORKS, F-25, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase 1, New Delhi

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Foreword

Priya Viswanath
Co-Founder, *dāna asia*

Writing a Foreword for *Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India* at a time when the world is abuzz with news of the billionaires who have signed up for the *Giving Pledge* is fortuitous! There is seemingly an overwhelming interest in philanthropic giving and attempts to compare and contrast, to capture trends of giving across regions, and to honour the diverse ways of giving throughout societies and among all social groups and classes.

When Sanjay Agarwal first mentioned he was planning to write a book on *Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India*, I was very excited for three reasons. As a philanthropy practitioner one of the gaps I have felt (and continue to feel) is the absence of credible research and writing on philanthropic giving in India. I felt Sanjay's research would contribute richly in bridging the gap. Secondly, having interacted with Sanjay for long years professionally and personally, I was certain his research and writing would be of the highest standards. Thirdly, the readers of the book would be treated to some great anecdotes and humour that is so uniquely Sanjay. He certainly has not disappointed on all three counts.

Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India at the onset is a work that takes the reader "back to the basics" in terms of understanding giving traditions as they were practiced in India by civil society in various milieus. While various scholars, academicians and philosophers have touched upon and reflected on giving traditions of majority religious groups in India - Hinduism, Islam, Christianity in the context of various social, anthropological, religious and philosophical studies - there has been little research on "Giving Traditions" *per se*. This book is therefore the first of its kind in tracing "traditions" as they have been practiced historically in India.

The importance of the book, in addition to the obvious "filling a gap," is that it is thought-provoking for two additional reasons, and therefore a must-read for fundraisers and practitioners. The book calls out to us the importance of reflecting and promoting age old traditions and practices. As Walter Rauschenbusch reminded us, "History is never antiquated, because humanity is always fundamentally the same." And as practitioners it is important to understand past practices of individuals and societies to develop the "next practice".

Sanjay also impresses upon the reader to look beyond the lens of

“institutionalized” giving. The response of the philanthropy sector in India over the last decade and a half has been to under-estimate the role of a key group of protagonists - the donors! This has been done by providing “accountable” platforms and mediums that focus on transparency, accountability and more credibility. Having spent the last ten years in that medium or in an intermediary space, I can say with a degree of conviction that transparency and accountability are essential aspects for donor retention. However, I have also seen that beyond companies, individuals operate on the basis of compassion, trust and sentiment. There are always individual motivations to give and we cannot, and should not, “second guess” that through an over-emphasis on our credibility measures. Rather, our work must give donors more tools to express their passions in giving.

Almost a decade ago, when I did my research on Diaspora giving, many Silicon Valley Indians indicated they gave to Ramakrishna Mission or Satya Sai Trust. When I queried them on their “motivations” and the “accountability” factor they were categorical in their response. They gave to these institutions not because of their religious bent, but because many of them had seen these institutions fulfilling social and community obligations. Religion was not a bad word to these educated Indians. And organizations publicly displaying their financials were not key “drivers” that influenced their giving.

Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India took me back to those conversations and the importance of remembering the “individual” as also “giving to individuals” vs. organizations. The more recent phenomena of the “Joy of Giving” week in India brings together common citizens from all walks of life including corporates, media, academic institutions, non-profits. Same with the Marathons! The Joy of Giving week and the Marathons have gone back to mass mobilization of simple, individual citizens and civil society around a common theme of “giving” and they have been hugely successful in their efforts.

Organised, westernized, tax effective philanthropy will always have a place in the developed and indeed some parts of the developing world. But around the world, and certainly in India and other Asian societies, the proclivity to practice giving that “alleviates poverty and suffering” at an individual level will continue to exist. While comments such as “Our social fabric leaves little for philanthropy outside our extended families” and “the able anyway are supporting the needy within the extended families, in their own way” often annoy me, the fact remains that a majority of middle class India does think that way. However that does not mean we give up on individuals. It means we reflect and develop on common sentiment and work it for the advantage of the masses. If we fail to do

that, I am afraid those with mass appeal - be it the political parties or other civil society groups - are likely to capitalize on this incredible resource.

When we stop reading or learning, closing our minds to history we in effect die. Sanjay's scholarly research is sure to ignite a passion in readers to delve deeper into societies and traditions and religious and civil practices and develop an “**inclusive**” model of giving for the future.

I look forward to reading more on traditional as well as new practices of giving from a plethora of scholars and practitioners in the coming years and to an inspiring time ahead.

Foreword

Mark Sidel

Professor of Law and Lauridsen Research Fellow, University of Iowa
President, International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR)

In recent years the scholarly study of philanthropic practices in India has focused on secular giving and secular institutions, amidst a rapid increase in the number of philanthropic institutions, the range of their activities, and the activism of their donors. That is important work, but the rich history and current practice of philanthropy in India cannot be fully told by the practice of secular giving. Faith-based giving, a critically important part of Indian charity and philanthropy, needs to be better understood on its own terms, and in the diverse and changing forms in which it is practiced today in India, if we are to have even the hope of a comprehensive understanding of the complex tapestry that is giving and philanthropy in India.

Sanjay Agarwal states this problem clearly in the introduction to his exceptional volume, *Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India*. “During the research that was required for this [book], I found that traditional giving in India was immensely creative and complex. There were many forms, rituals, themes, ways, times, and methods through which people gave. These cultural forms were supported by an extremely rich literature and lore. The literature also showed systematic thought, as well as use of psychology and communication techniques. I also found that most of this never featured in the conversations on fund-raising in India.....”

Mr. Agarwal set out to fill this crucially important gap in the scholarly and practitioner literature on giving and philanthropy in India, and he has succeeded admirably. In great detail and through the explication of doctrine, history and stories, his fine book discusses giving in the Hindu, Islamic, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Bahai traditions. Mr. Agarwal's volume is of exceptional value for its discussion of the doctrine and history underlying these faith-based motivations for charity and philanthropy, as well as for the detail of the research presented. *Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India* will serve as the standard guide to these giving traditions in India for a long time to come. It belongs on the bookshelves of any person interested in philanthropy and charity in India and anyone working on charitable and philanthropic giving, and of any library that is collecting any materials in the area.

Mr. Agarwal's fine work is not alone in this field. In recent years we have also seen superb publications on religious giving and the fascinat-

ing interplay between religious and secular giving in specific communities by others who are listed in the detailed and useful bibliography in Mr. Agarwal's volume. Many of those works are guides to giving in specific traditions. Mr. Agarwal's work goes further, providing rich detail on all the major giving traditions in India and a comparative basis for understanding, research, and encouragement of giving.

This highly detailed and informative discussion of giving traditions in India has a practical purpose as well. Mr. Agarwal puts it clearly toward the end of *Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India*: "The corporate sector spends enormous amounts of money contextualising its products and marketing strategies, so that these appeal to local needs and sensibilities. Indian NGOs have similarly made enormous efforts to understand the needs of rural or deprived communities that they work with. Similar effort needs to go into working with Indians who have the capacity to contribute funds and resources, but hold back for one reason or the other. As India grows economically, financial support from foreign shores will start shrinking.... It makes sense then to turn to the wealthy in India, including those who are steeped in tradition. The resulting engagements will not only help Indian NGOs expand their work, it will also help change perceptions on both sides."

In telling us about the giving traditions of India, and how those traditions encourage private giving for public purposes - a modern definition of the philanthropic enterprise - Mr. Agarwal has himself contributed to the public and to philanthropy in important ways. It is an honor to help to welcome this exceptional volume to the world, and to recommend it in the highest terms to readers.

Preface

In the early 90's, when I started working closely with NGOs, I noticed that people found it easier to give money for building temples than schools. As time went on, I heard this often from my colleagues, many of whom were fund-raising professionals. I found this curious - how was a simple person like a priest able to motivate people to give relatively large amounts of money, without any plan or campaign. Then in 2004, I realised that most Indians looked at giving in ways which were significantly different from people in other countries. For instance, they were relatively less concerned with what happened to the money after they had given it away. This led to a series of AccountAble™ issues on alternative views of accountability which helped underscore the different expectations of traditional faith-based donors and modern purpose-driven donors, when it came to financial accountability.

During the research that was required for this, I found that traditional giving in India was immensely creative and complex. There were many forms, rituals, themes, ways, times, and methods through which people gave. These cultural forms were supported by an extremely rich literature and lore. The literature also showed systematic thought, as well as use of psychology and communication techniques. I also found that most of this never featured in the conversations on fund-raising in India. That's when AccountAid decided to take up this book, with encouragement and support of the Ford Foundation in Delhi.

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The power of traditions remains strong in India. As much as 14 tons of gold¹ was purchased in Mumbai alone on *Akshay Teej*, despite frenzied prices,² which were partly caused by the festival itself. As we worked on collecting the material for the book, I also noticed that many successful product campaigns were designed around Indian cultural traditions, and connected immediately with the viewers. For instance, the use of *sindoor* and *deepdaan* in the insurance campaigns was highly evocative. On the other hand, some campaigns ('Dumb, dumb, dumb...'; The Fastest Indian) failed to engage the viewers, as these were using symbols or cultural practices which most Indians were not familiar with.

Similarly, many high-powered fund-raising campaigns in India were modified versions of campaigns designed for an Anglo Saxon culture. On the other hand, there were isolated examples of people using Indian cultural symbols to raise funds³ or sell products⁴ with less effort and greater effect. One of the most spectacular examples of this was the *Bhoodaan Andolan* (1951) of Vinoba Bhave, which tapped into an ancient tradition and mobilized 5 million acres⁵ of land in donations.

I also found that there was no literature or reference material on this

topic which fund-raisers or NGOs could use. Though several books have been written, for instance, on *daan*, *zakaat* or tithe, these are mostly intended for use by the believers,⁶ or tend to be scholarly studies.⁷ The material on *daan*, though extensive, is mostly found in Sanskrit hand-books⁸ or in the *Puran* where it is highly scattered. This book tries to bring this material together in one place, so that it can be used for reference.

The primary objective of writing this book is to help Indian NGOs and fund-raisers understand and appreciate the rich indigenous giving traditions, as also learn from the literature and thinking that support these. It is also hoped that this will lead them to think about whether and how some of these elements can be used in their own search for resources among Indian communities.

This book comes with an important caveat. I believe that each tradition has its own language and can be interpreted in many different ways, from the most gross to the most sublime. Further, there are meanings within each meaning, which are not apparent to most, especially to an outsider like me. Therefore, only a practitioner of the faith, working with a spiritual master, can truly understand and interpret these traditions satisfactorily. This enumeration of different traditions is, therefore, bound to contain many omissions and errors of fact and interpretation. I will, therefore, be grateful if learned scholars and practitioners would be kind enough to bring these to my notice.

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To the extent possible, sources for each of the references included in the book have been provided. This is intended to help practitioners and scholars look up the relevant material, should they need more details in designing their fund-raising ideas or in pursuing their study. To keep the layout simple and uncluttered for the general reader, all the references have been given as end-notes.

Roman spelling of Sanskrit, Hindi, Pali, Urdu or Persian words poses a peculiar problem. Orthodox etiquette demands that diacritical marks be used to ensure correct pronunciation. However, these are difficult to follow for most people. Similarly, using an extra 'a' (as in Yoga) leads to misreading and mispronunciation of words. The book, therefore, follows a simple expedient of using two a's (or o's) to signify a longer vowel in many places, and drops the extra 'a' at the end altogether, except where it is distinctly heard. To help Indian readers, *Devnagari* spelling has also been given alongside. Terms occurring in languages other than English have been italicised, unless these happen to be proper names. Titles of books and Scriptures have been italicised.

Acknowledgements

Writing of this book has been a long journey, along which I have been helped by many people and to whom I owe the deepest gratitude. Particularly noteworthy is the encouragement from Prof. Mark Sidel of the University of Iowa, who first helped me look at religious giving as a valuable form of charity and later helped review the manuscript, apart from writing a generous Foreword. I would also like to thank the Ford Foundation, and Vanita Nayak Mukherjee, Program Officer at the Foundation for supporting my passion for research in this area. Her suggestion that I extend the study of giving in India beyond *Daan* among Hindus and include other religious traditions has enriched both the research as also my understanding of charity.

An enormous amount of work was done by my young colleagues, including Arnika Singh and Manika Mittal, who located the material on Sikh giving. Ratikant Patra, Amit Dubey and Rajkishore Saxena worked very hard wading through a bewildering amount of material on Hindu *daan*, and helped me make sense out of it. Charu Malhotra helped coordinate the research in early stages, and visited temples in Mathura and Delhi to understand actual giving practices. Mafazzul Hoque and CA Irshad Alam visited *Dargah*, went through Islamic sources, and prepared early drafts on *Zakaat*. Aditya Agarwal was a great help in finding stories on Islamic charity and researching Christian and Baha'i giving, as was Chetan Agarwal in locating references and sprucing up the bibliography. Manish Jain located a valuable text on Jain *daan*, and also reviewed the section on Jain *daan*. Moitree Chatterjee helped collate the material required for illustrating the book. Prerna Bajaj worked hard on editing the book and compiling the index on an almost impossible deadline. Moushumi De delivered the layout and final design, working late nights. Mridula Sharma came up with elegant illustrations to help convey a sense of the ritual and ceremony that surrounds traditional giving.

Noshir Dadrawala, an expert on philanthropy and a great friend, shared valuable material on Parsi traditions. Dr. Neena Gupta lent me her treasured collection of Bauddh texts, which were invaluable in researching Bauddh traditions. Dr. Alka Agarwal spent many evenings helping me locate historical references, sprucing up the sources, and adding valuable material. I would not have been able to write the section on Bauddh *daan* without her knowledgeable help. Renu Agarwal was a pillar of support throughout the writing of this book, helping build the bibliography, coming up with invaluable nuggets of information, locating material on Jain, Sikh, Hindu and Parsi traditions, finding a path through deadlocked research avenues, and keeping an eye on the deadline!

Aditya, Chetan, and the team at Pyramid Cyber Security were a great help in recovering parts of the manuscript when it was accidentally deleted.

Firdaus Gandavia, Noshir Dadrawala, Shantum Seth, Jagwant Gill, Gurjeet Singh Kohli, Salam Khan, CAs Hafez Dalal, Martin Pinto, and Kavita Nathan, all read sections of the book and provided valuable feedback and reassurance. Priya Viswanath, who has written extensively on diaspora giving, helped me overcome the writer's block, read through the draft, gave me valuable advice, and wrote a kind Foreword. Nathan Jackson, research assistant at University of Iowa, proof-read the entire manuscript and pointed out many intractable errors.

A book on traditional giving cannot, by definition, contain anything new, and this book is no exception! I am eternally grateful to the Monks, *Rishi*, Sages, Gurus, Seers, and Prophets, who devoted their lives to nurturing this wondrous cultural and spiritual heritage for us. Closer in time, Dr. Pushpa Gupta's meticulously researched book (*Daan Utsarg ki Dharmshastreeya Avadharana*) was a constant beacon to my work, as was Hemadri's encyclopaedic *Chaturvarg Chintamani*.

My clients, who graciously put up with my absence while I was working on this book deserve a special word of thanks, as does my family which saw many weekends and vacations go up in smoke while this book was being written.

I. Introduction

Legend has it that the *Moghul* court was considered to be the wealthiest of its time in the entire world. Whether true or not, India certainly excited the imagination of a large number of European explorers during the renaissance, in search for a trade route to the source of spices. Columbus was searching for India, when he ended up in the Americas in 1492 CE. Eventually Vasco da Gama landed in Calicut in 1498 CE. With this began the story of India's colonization, which ended some 450 years later with a unified, but impoverished India. Most Indians spent their lives on the edge of poverty through the rest of the century. A very large number still do (28%),⁹ though there is some glimmer of hope for them now.

This also means that most would consider the forms of *daan* described here as flights of *pauranik* fancy. Imagine people giving away mountains of gold, and pots of gems. This appears to come straight from a fable or an epic, something like Timbuktu, commonly thought to be a nowhere place.¹⁰ Actually Timbuktu is a real¹¹ but forgotten city of West Africa, which at one time was immensely wealthy, being a centre of the gold-for-salt trade.

18 Another forgotten town on the other side of the continent was called Berenice.¹² During the Roman period, for close to 550 years, this was a busy port, connecting directly to Karachi and Kerala. Kerala was the land of spices, particularly pepper, much in demand in Rome, and worth its weight in gold. According to Strabo, an average of 120 ships made the journey from Kerala to Red Sea each year. Each is likely to have carried about 75 tonnes of cargo on an average.¹³ The value of goods (ivory, spices, cloth) transported from India to Egypt is estimated at 18 billion *drachmas* per year, or about 540 billion dollars per year.¹⁴ What flowed back to India was Roman gold, much of it excavated from its colonies such as those in Egypt. According to Prof. Sidebottom, over 550 years, about 10.5 trillion dollars worth of gold may have flowed back into India.

Consider also a more contemporary account:¹⁵

“India, China and the Arabian peninsula take one hundred million sesterces from our empire per annum at a conservative estimate: that is what our luxuries and women cost us. For what percentage of these imports is intended for sacrifices to the gods or the spirits of the dead?”

If these stories sound like sailors' tales,¹⁶ consider the relatively more sober views of Angus Maddison, who spent an entire lifetime collecting numbers and conjuring¹⁷ economic figures out of them. According to his estimates, in AD 1, India's share of world GDP was 32%, coming down gradually to 24% in 1700 AD. After this the share fell rapidly, as the industrial revolution built up momentum in Europe. In 1950 India's

share was just 4.2%. It fell further to 3.1% by 1973.¹⁸

This enormous wealth appears to have been deployed in a variety of ways: for constructing splendid buildings, for luxurious living, for public works, as well as for munificent giving. Giving by Indian Rajahs and Sultans is the stuff on which legends are built. But as this book shows, the giving did not end with them. Merchants, courtesans, ordinary householders as well as the poorest appear to have participated in giving.

This book explores ways in which giving took place in traditional communities, with the object of assessing whether any of these channels, forms or symbols can be used to enhance modern giving. The discussion is peppered with stories from scriptures to help the reader understand the imagery that motivates traditional giving. All major faiths present in India have been considered, with the material arranged according to numbers belonging to different traditions.

Of these, the largest amount of material is available on Hindu *daan*. It must be noted that practice of *daan* amongst Hindus lags far, far behind the ideals described in the scriptures. Hindu *daan* is, thus, a little like the famous Angkor Wat temple, the largest known manmade place of worship in the world, with a cosmic design, precise engineering and exquisite workmanship. At some point of time, it must have been a glorious, living entity, sustaining the material and spiritual needs of millions of people. Today it lies in ruins, overtaken by the jungle. And yet it evokes rapturous admiration of thousands of tourists who flock to Cambodia each year just to view the temple.

The twin concepts of *daan* and *utsarg* have been described, followed by a discussion of the motives and principles. There has been considerable debate on types of *daan*, the various methods and attitudes in *daan*, and the likely benefits. Thought has also been given to what enhances the benefit, and what reduces the impact of *daan*. Of particular interest are the prescriptions on giving as a percentage of one's income or wealth. Various categories of persons to whom *daan* can be made have also been discussed. Hindus have also devoted considerable time and effort to designing specific forms of *daan*, tailored to the needs of the donors, and the desired benefit. The material on forms of *daan*, though extremely rich and interesting, has been moved to Appendices, primarily for ease of reading and reference.

Utsarg, which refers to giving for public benefit, is directly relevant in today's context. This includes planting of trees, digging of ponds and wells, setting up of rest houses, schools, etc. The forms of *utsarg* and dedication ceremonies involved in *utsarg* have been described in some detail.

This is followed by a discussion of *zakaat*, *khums* and *sadaqa*, which

are Islamic forms of charity, and practised widely in the Muslim community. The Quranic injunctions and guidance provided by the *Sunnah* on the amount and the use of *zakaat* funds are included, as are some inspiring stories from Islamic traditions.

The next chapter is devoted to tithe and charity, which are Christian terms for giving. The religious ethic behind Christian charity is described, as are the Biblical prescriptions for tithing.

The Sikh concept of *daswandh* (a tenth part), is somewhat similar to the Christian tithing, and is discussed in the chapter on Sikh giving. This chapter also describes the Sikh *langar* (a universal feature of all Gurudwaras) and *Sewa*, an essential part of voluntary work in the Sikh community.

Bauddh *daan* is significantly different from Hindu *daan*, and is discussed in a separate chapter, which describes the Bauddh recommendations on *daan*. *Daan Paramita*, which is the first step to becoming a Buddha, is discussed and then liberally illustrated through various *Jaatak* (जातक) stories. The *Jaatak* stories, first narrated by Lord Buddha himself to his followers, are rich in symbolism and weave a very special magic over the listener, transporting him to another world.

Similarly, the Jain concept of *daan* is distinct from other *daan* traditions. This forms the subject matter of a separate chapter.

20 Last, but not the least, is a chapter devoted to two other significant traditions: among the Parsi and the Baha'i. Parsi giving, though anchored in traditional ethics, is quite modern in its outlook. It is also legendary for its munificence. Similarly, giving among the Baha'i (the youngest tradition in India) has a very modern structure, while deriving its inspiration from the Baha'i scriptures.

The final chapter is devoted to a consideration of how these traditions could connect with modern fund-raising. The chapter discusses how this can happen by stripping down the various forms of traditional giving to their essential concepts, and matching these with modern needs. Similarly, important psychological concepts associated with traditional giving can be used to enhance availability of resources, while at the same time engaging orthodox communities with modern development work.

II. *Daan* and *Utsarg* (Hindu)

On 27th July 2009,¹⁹ the priest at a Ganapati temple in Khajrana (Indore) called up the police to say that a person had put some gold in the temple's donation box. When the box was opened in the presence of witnesses, it turned out to be about two kilograms of gold biscuits, worth about ₹38 lakh. The donor remains unidentified. His or her motives can only be speculated upon.

Obviously this kind of giving is rare enough to make news in regional papers. There are many more examples, on a larger scale, where people have donated gem-encrusted ornaments, gold crowns, silver thrones, at temples. Some of these are reported because of their size or because a celebrity is involved. But a larger stream of smaller giving continues to flow through temples across India and abroad unreported. Consider some statistics:²⁰

- Shri Tirupathi Temple's annual collection from donations is estimated at more than ₹900 crore.²¹ This includes about ₹30 crore raised from sale of donated hair, which is then used to make wigs for the domestic and foreign market.
- Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine annually receives about ₹75 crore.
- Shri Vinayak Temple in Mumbai received ₹25 crore in 2007.

To understand this, assume that there are 10,000 active shrines in Delhi. Assume further that each receives ₹500, on an average, each day. That comes to ₹50 lakh per day. Add it up for a year, and the figure jumps to ₹182 crore. And this is an estimate for just one type of giving - dropping coins in a donation box at the temple, in one city. It does not, for instance, consider occasional *bhandara* (भण्डारा), or donations in kind.

And thereby hangs a story. The giving tradition among practising Hindus is actually immensely diverse and rich. It has also made very effective use of donor psychology and has built up a logical structure. There is an enormous amount of literature, tales, folklore, which informs and

Hindu *daan*?

There has been considerable argument over the term Hindu, and the matter has even gone to courts. The term Hindu is not found in early local sources, but was initially more a term used by foreigners to describe people living in the region. Gradually it has gained wide acceptance for people who might identify themselves as *Arya Samajis*, *Brahmo Samajis*, *Sanatanis*, *Smart*, *Shaiv*, *Shakt*, and *Vaishnav* etc. In 2001, about 82.8 crore (80.5%) people identified themselves as Hindus.²²

This chapter draws material primarily from *Pauranik* sources and *Smriti*, which may not be treated as authoritative by some of the Sects.

sustains this tradition. In this chapter, we look at this in some detail.

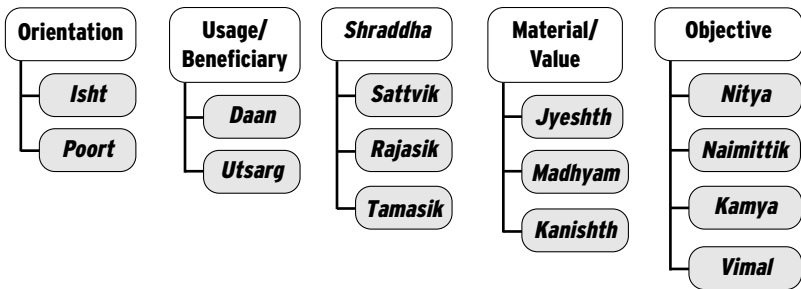
Daan

Traditionally,²³ Indian political wisdom²⁴ lists four methods of dealing with conflict: *saam* (साम, conciliation, true or false praise), *daan*²⁵ (दान, placating with gifts), *dand* (दण्ड, use of force) and *bhaid* (भेद, sowing dissension). These recur again and again in various ancient political lectures.

However, *daan* is not limited to statecraft. It appears to have been widely practised on a regular basis among ordinary people, at some point of time. As a result, an enormous amount of literature has come down to us. To begin with, classification of *daan* in Hindu traditions is complex and variegated, as discussed below.

Classification

Daan has been classified in several overlapping ways, depending on one's perspective:



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Orientation

Depending on the orientation (internal or external), acts of charity can be divided into two broad categories:²⁶

1. *Isht* (इष्ट)

Acts which are primarily religious in nature (*yagn* - यज्ञ, *hom* - होम, *tap* - तप, hospitality etc.), and are turned inwards, are called *Isht*. The rewards of such acts are invisible in this life and will be enjoyed in paradise.

2. *Poort* (पूर्त)

Acts which are primarily charitable in nature (construction of public utilities, ponds, schools, rest houses, gardens, *ann-kshetra*, etc.) are called *poort*. The benefits of *poort* are visible in this life, and include

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Notes

- ¹ Valued at about ₹2500 crore. Buying gold on Akshaya Teej is considered auspicious, and harbinger of prosperity.
- ² Bombay Bullion Association (ENS Economic Bureau, 2010, p. 15).
- ³ See, for instance, Narayan Sewa Sansthan, Udaipur's highly successful TV campaign. http://www.narayanseva.org/Content.aspx?Page=Sewa_Ethos; Last accessed: 17th August 2010.
- ⁴ In a recent interview Ms. Ashni Biyani, scion of Biyani family (which owns the Future Group, India's largest retailer and the Pantaloon brand), emphasized how Future Group taps into the power and wisdom of Indian mythology to figure out how things work in India. The Group, for instance, learned from 'people who publish *Kalnirnay* almanac, that captures every single religious or communal festival or dates of every large community'. This information is being used by the group to 'understand the significance and meaning of every festival or religious event for different communities and align [its] promotional campaign with them.' (Phadnis, 2010, p. 24).
- ⁵ ~20,000 square kilometres.
- ⁶ See, for instance, *Charity in Islam* (Senturk, 2007), *Zakah* (Ansari), *Charity - Even with a Trifle* (Al-Qasim, 1999), *The Zakat Handbook* (Zakat Foundation of America, 2007), *Beyond Tithes & Offerings* (Webb & Webb, 1998), *Bring the Full Tithe* (Watley, 1995), *As You Tithe, So You Prosper* (Meyer, 1948).
- ⁷ See, for instance, Dr. Vijay Nath's socio-economic study of *Daan* (Nath, 1987), and Dr. Kala Acharya's exploration of *pauranik* concept of *daan* (Acharya, 1993). Dr. Pushpa Gupta's exhaustive and meticulous research on *daan* and *utsarg* is a departure from this trend (Gupta, 2004).
- ⁸ See, for instance, *Daan Mayukh*, of Neelkanth Bhatt (Bhatt N. K., 2007), *Daan Khand* of Hemadri (Hemadri, 1985) and *Daanchandrika* of Pt. Diwakar (Diwakar, 1998).
- ⁹ Planning Commission's estimate for 2004-05. A World Bank report for 2005 pegs this figure at 42%.
- ¹⁰ In a survey of 150 young Britons, 34% said the place did not exist. The other 66% said it was a mythical place. "Search on for Timbuktu's Twin" BBC News, 18 October 2006. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6062360.stm>. Accessed 29-Jun-10.
- ¹¹ 16° 46' 33" N, 3° 0' 34" W.

- ¹² In Egypt.
- ¹³ *When Rome Ruled Egypt* (Sidebottom, 2008).
- ¹⁴ Estimate by Prof. Steven Sidebottom, University of Delaware, based on a 2nd Century AD document, indicating the value of 3.5 ton cargo as 7 million *drachmas*, or 210 million dollars.
- ¹⁵ Pliny, *Historia Naturae* 12.41.84.
- ¹⁶ The extrapolation made by Prof. Sidebottom may be problematic, being based on a single cargo document (3.5 tons, valued at 7 million *drachmas*), and several diverse estimates. At current prices, the flow of Roman gold to India would come to about 14,000 metric tonnes per year. This should be compared with present world gold stock of ~165,000 metric tonnes (World Gold Council).
- ¹⁷ Estimates made by Mr. Maddison are controversial, being, at best, complex guesses. These should not be viewed as validated history.
- ¹⁸ Table A.6. Share of world GDP: 20 countries and Regional Totals, 1-2003 AD (Maddison, *Contours of the World Economy, 1-2030 AD*, 2007, p. 381); See also Table B-20. Shares of World GDP, 20 Countries and Regional Totals, 0-1998 AD (Maddison, *A Millennial Perspective*, 2006, p. 263).
- ¹⁹ '*Khajrana Mandir mein Do Kilo Sone ka Guptdaan*' (Bureau, 2009).
- ²⁰ These are mostly based on media stories, and may not be reliable or accurate.
- ²¹ 'Ahead of wedding, big B does charity', Times of India, 16-Apr-2007.
- ²² Census of India (Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner).
- ²³ *Mahabharat*: Shanti Parv, Chapter 103, verse 36. (Ved Vyas, 2001, p. V:4690).
- ²⁴ *The Kautiliya Arthashastra*, 9.6.21-73. (Kangle, 2000, pp. I:227-29). The verses on *daan* (23-25) list five methods of making the *daan* to a financially weak king. Also see *Ramcharit Manas*, Lanka Kaand, 6.37.9 (Sharan, 2001, p. 223).
- ²⁵ Commonly mis-called *daam* (price). *Daam* actually means a rope in Sanskrit.
- ²⁶ Entry under *Ishtapoort* (Pandeya, 1988, pp. 103-04); also see Varadachari's comments on the recognition of these terms under local laws (Varadachari, 2005, pp. 159-60).
- ²⁷ Varadachari, 2005, p. 330.
- ²⁸ Family members, dependents, servants, etc.

dition is not relevant as elephants are endangered and trade in ivory is prohibited / regulated under Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the Indian Wild Life (Protection) Act (1972).

⁹³² *Daan Mayukh* (Bhatt N. K., 2007, pp. 242-43).

⁹³³ The Hindu Lunar Calendar is adjusted every three years to reconcile with the Solar movement. This is done by adding an extra month (*Mal Maas* or *Adhi Maas*) to the Lunar Calendar. Therefore, the Gregorian dates could vary significantly, though the Lunar *Tithi* remains unchanged.

⁹³⁴ Pancakes.

⁹³⁵ See *Til Dhenu* (तिल धेनु) on page 125.

⁹³⁶ *Poorv* (Indra), *Agneya* (Agni), *Dakshin* (Yam), *Nairritya* (Nairiti), *Paschim* (Varun), *Eeshan* (Eesh), *Oordhva* (Brahma), *Adho* (Anant). (Bahri, *Pracheen Bharatiya Sanskriti Kosh*, 1994, p. 154).

⁹³⁷ *Nishpav*.

⁹³⁸ Seven types of grains.

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In a fast-modernizing society, are the old giving traditions doomed to die? Or can these also be modernized and revived, helping fund the financial needs of a vibrant development sector?

This question is especially relevant in India where the Government is committed to ensuring that 'foreign money does not dominate social and political discourse'. *Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India*, therefore, takes a close look at the varied traditions of charity among the orthodox.

This book is intended to help Indian NGOs and fund-raisers understand and appreciate the rich indigenous giving traditions, as also learn from the literature and thinking that support these. It is hoped that this will lead them to think about whether, and how, some of these elements can be used in their own search for resources among Indian communities.

'*Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India* at the onset is a work that takes the reader 'back to the basics' in terms of understanding giving traditions as they were practiced in India by civil society in various milieus. While various scholars, academicians and philosophers have touched upon and reflected on giving traditions of majority religious groups in India - Hinduism, Islam, Christianity in the context of various social, anthropological, religious and philosophical studies - there has been little research on 'Giving Traditions' per se. This book is therefore the first of its kind in tracing 'traditions' as they have been practiced historically in India.'

- Priya Viswanath, Co-Founder, *dāna asia*

Author: *Diaspora Indians: On the Philanthropy Fast Track*

Faith-based giving, a critically important part of Indian charity and philanthropy, needs to be better understood on its own terms, and in the diverse and changing forms in which it is practiced today in India, if we are to have even the hope of a comprehensive understanding of the complex tapestry that is giving and philanthropy in India. [This] volume is of exceptional value for its discussion of the doctrine and history underlying these faith-based motivations for charity and philanthropy, as well as for the detail of the research presented. *Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India* will serve as the standard guide to these giving traditions in India for a long time to come. It belongs on the bookshelves of any person interested in philanthropy and charity in India and anyone working on charitable and philanthropic giving, and of any library that is collecting any materials in the area.

- Mark Sidel, Prof. of Law and Lauridsen Research Fellow,
Univ. of Iowa; President, International Society
for Third Sector Research (ISTR)

Front cover: Ken Reid/Taxi/Getty Images



55-B, Pocket C, Siddharth Extension
New Delhi

₹500

ISBN 978-81-910854-0-2



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