

THE ROYAL EDICTS OF KING RAMA SHAH OF GORKHA

Theodore Riccardi, Jr.
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INTRODUCTION

In two significant articles, A. W. Macdonald has called our attention to the importance of traditional Nepali law for our understanding of the history and society of the central Himalayas.¹ This law was codified in the middle of the nineteenth century and was given the name of *Mukuli Ain*, or "Law of the Realm".² In this form, it consists of a large body of complex principles, mostly Hindu in inspiration, which attempt to regulate social intercourse between the various castes and ethnic groups inhabiting the country. Many of these principles are similar to those contained in the Hindu law books, and many of them may indeed be derived directly from them. Of even greater interest, however, is the independence from orthodox Hindu thought displayed in the Nepali code, for in this freedom from orthodoxy we can see how Hinduism changed in order to conform to the complicated ethnic situation prevailing in the mountains. Whatever the sources of the code, it is clear that it reflects the influence of the Nepali-speaking peoples of Western and Central Nepal and their rulers, the Shahas³ and

1 "La Hiérarchie Des Jat Inférieurs Dans le Mulukī Ain De 1955," in Jean Pouillon et Pierre Maranda (eds.) *Echanges et Communications: Mélanges Offerts à Claude Lévi-Strauss à l'Occasion de Son 60ème Anniversaire* (La Haye: Mouton, 1968) pp. 139-152; and "La sorcellerie dans le Code népalais de 1853", *L'Homme* VIII, I (Jan.-March, 1968), 64-69.

2 Except for passing references cited by Macdonald, the *Muluki Ain* or *le code Népalais*, as he calls it, has rarely been discussed elsewhere, in part because of ignorance of its existence, but also because of the great difficulty of its language. In the first article listed above, Macdonald cites its importance for the field of Himalayan anthropology: "L'étude ethnographique descriptive des diverses populations du Népal demeure nôtre tâche essentielle. Mais cette ethnographie en même temps qu'elle éclaire le Code, peut être éclairée par lui. C'est autour de cette double confrontation que l'on bâtira, un jour qui semble encore lointain, une véritable ethnologie structurale du Népal" (p. 152).

3 I have used the common English spelling of this name rather than the transliterated forms, Sāha or Śāha.

later the Ranas. It is through their conquests and rule that it eventually became the law of all of Nepal, and was to be so until the middle of this century.

A full discussion of the development of the *Muluki Ain* is beyond the scope of this paper. One of the most important links in its development, however, can be found in the edicts of King Rama Shah of Gorkha, and it is my purpose here to present both the text and translation of these legal maxims. Rama Shah has had little notice outside of Nepal, but he played a major role in strengthening the kingdom of Gorkha; it was his descendant, Prithvi Narayan Shah, who extended Gorkhali rule over all of Nepal a little more than a century later.⁴

1. RAMA SHAH (1606-1636)

According to traditional accounts, Rama Shah acceded to the throne of Gorkha in 1606 A. D. upon the death of his brother, Ksatra Shah, who reigned for only seven months. Their father, Purandara Shah, had ruled for thirty-five years, and had ascended the throne in 1570 upon the death of his father, Dravya Shah, who founded the dynasty in 1559 A. D.

While scholars still accept the traditional date of Rama Shah's accession, there is some uncertainty over the length of his reign. The traditional accounts state that he ruled for twenty-seven years, died in 1633 A. D. and was succeeded by his son Dambar Shah. More recently discovered evidence indicates that he was still ruling in 1636, however. According to Surya Bikram Gyevali, "recent findings make it necessary to revise this traditional chronology. According to a document published by Yogi Naraharinath in *Itihas Prakasha* (Book 1, p. 40), King Rama Shah had established a monastery in Shrawana 1558 Shaka (1636 A. D.) thus disproving the Vamshavali's claim that he reigned only until 1555 Shaka (1633 A.D.) We may now conclude that King Rama Shah reigned until 1558 Shaka (1636 A. D.)"⁵

Rama Shah is said to have extended the territory of his kingdom by conquering territory which extended to the Trisuli valley near Nepal proper. He is said to have

⁴ On the career of Prithvi Narayan, see L. S. Baral, *Life and Writings of Prthvinarayan Sah* (Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of London, 1964); L. F. Stiller, S. J. *Prithvinarayan Shah in the light of Dibya Upadesh*, Kathmandu, 1968.

⁵ Surya Bikram Gyevali, "Śāha Vamśakā Kehi Rājāharukā Vishayamā Vicāra" (Thoughts On the Regnal Years of Some Kings of the Shah Dynasty), *Ancient Nepal*, No. 9, October 1969, pp. 33-35; translated into English "Chronology of Shah Kings", *Regmi Research Series*, Year 4, No. 1 (1972) pp. 97-100. See also: Dinesh Raj Pant, "Rāmaśāha ko Rājyakāl-ek carcā," *Kailash*, I, 1, pp. 76-79.

sent missions to Delhi and to Udaipur, both of which were received cordially, and he established relations with the kingdom of Patan. ⁶

In addition to his skill in foreign relations, the tradition firmly establishes his reputation as a law-giver in west and central Nepal. Gorkha became the place where disputes were resolved, and in this regard, the *Gorkhāvamśāvalī* records the following incident:

tāhā-dekhin caubisi bāisi rājāharukā
mulukmā baḍā baḍā gāhrā jhagaḍā paryā.
vahā kasaile chinna sakyānan. jab
gorkhā śrī pānch mahārājā rāma sāha kā
kacaharimā jāu bhani jhagadiyā joḍi paṭhāi
dina lāgyā jhagadiyāko citta bujhāi sab ko
citta bujhāi jhagḍā toḍi baksanu hundā “vidyā
harāyā kāski jānu nisāph harāyā gorkhā jānu”
boliko nisāna po cha tyo pani śrī pānch mahārājā

⁶ Rama Shah is mentioned only briefly in western works on Nepal. In the early accounts of Kirkpatrick (*An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal*, Cambridge 1811), and Hamilton (*An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal*, London, 1819), he is barely noticed. Some of his edicts are summarized in Daniel Wright, *History of Nepal*, Cambridge 1877, pp. 278-9; and the traditional length of his reign given. Lévi (*Le Népal*, Vol. II, p. 262) mentions him as a law-giver, but provides no other information. More recently, D. R. Regmi, *Modern Nepal*, Calcutta, 1956, p. 19 has summarized portions of the edicts. Leo Rose and Bhuvan Lal Joshi, *Democratic Innovations in Nepal*, Berkeley, 1964, p. 12, have called attention to his importance, and to the fact that the edicts may have played an important role in strengthening Gorkha rule over the central tribes. In another work, *Nepal: Strategy for Survival*, Berkeley 1971, p. 13, Rose discusses briefly his campaigns against Tibet and his conflict with King Pratap Malla of Kathmandu. Bikrama Jit Hasrat (*History of Nepal*, Hoshiarpur, 1970) has translated sections of a *Gorkhāvamśāvalī* which deal with Rama Shah (pp. 106-120). Several court regulations are given (pp. 114-15) which are not included in the works used herein. See also: Naya Raj Pant, *Srī 5 Prthvi Nārāyaṇ Śāha ko Upadeśa* (401-600 prstha samma) for an interesting account of Rama Shah. The text of the edicts is given on pp, 561-79.

I have not seen the Nepal work of Gyevali, *Rāma śāha ko jivanī* (*Life of Rama Shah*), Darjeeling, 1933

rāma sāha dekhin caldo bhayo. 7

Then in the country of the Caubisi and Baisi kings, a very grave dispute arose. No one could resolve it. The parties to the dispute were sent to the court of King Rama Shah, where the arguments were settled and all, including the litigants, were satisfied. From the time of King Rama Shah, therefore, the following proverb has been current "If knowledge is lost, go to Kaski, if justice is lost, go to Gorkha."⁷

2. THE EDICTS

The edicts which have survived represent, in all probability, only a small portion of the number which Rama Shah promulgated. They do not form a code, but are, rather, single orders or proclamations.⁸ Unfortunately, they have not been preserved in their, original form, for the language in which they are cast has many characteristics of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Nepali.⁹ At some point, they were also preserved as *sūtra* that is, as very short maxims which indicate in abbreviated form the main intention of the edict. These are so brief that it is difficult to determine to which century they may belong. Possibly, they are anterior to the full forms of the edict, and may have been mnemonic devices used to recall the import of the edicts.

According to the official text, there are twenty-six, possibly twenty-seven, edicts. The number is artificial, however, since some which have been divided are

⁷ Yogi Naraharinath, *Gorkhāvamsāvalī*, Kashi, B. S. 2021, p. 39. (This work is hereafter referred to as G). The proverb as quoted here differs from the one in common use which refers to Kāśī i. e. Banaras, rather than Kaski.

⁸ Here I disagree with Rose's judgment, *op. cit.*, p. 13, which refers to Rama Shah's edicts as an organized code, comparing it to the thirteenth century attempt of Jayasthiti Malla to institute a caste system in Nepal. On the evidence available now, it does not appear that the edicts were originally a code, but rather a series of individual proclamations. The reference in one of the edicts to four *varṇas* and thirty-six castes is merely a traditional way of referring to the castes.

⁹ For a grammatical sketch of the Nepali of this period, see my *A Nepali Version of the Vetālapañcaviṃśati*, New Haven, 1971, pp. 15-48. For the language of the sixteenth century, see the important article by T. W. Clark, "The Rani Pokhari Inscription", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XX (1957), 167-187.

acutally single edicts. They cover many different subjects. In the order in which they are usually given, they cover the following topics:

1. The Royal Guru
2. On Measures
3. On Weights
4. On Debts of Grain
5. On Debts of Money
6. On Disputes Regarding Watering Places
7. On Disputes Regarding Oil Presses
8. On Disputes Regarding Irrigation Channels
9. On Endowing Land to Brahmans
10. On Endowing Land to Brahmans (cont.)
11. The Six Clans
12. On Pasture for Cattle
13. On the Preservation of Trees along the Road
14. On the Preservation of Trees at Watering Places
15. On Banishment of Brahmans and Kinsmen Who Commit Murder
16. On the Execution of the Members of Other Groups Who Commit Murder
17. On the Wearing of Gold
18. (Lost in the Original)
19. On the Duties of Brahmans
20. On the Duties of Pande Brahmans in Gorkha
21. On Worship in Talhā Kot and the Darbar
22. On the Appointments of *Dadā* etc.
23. On the Division of the Harvest
24. On the Twelve and Eighteen Thar
25. An Agreement with King Siddhi Narasimha Malla of the Kingdom of Patan
26. On Touching the Stone in Expiation
27. On Witches

Edicts 18 to 24 are the most problematic in the official version which I have used here. Edict 18 in the original is lost. Edict 19 is garbled, and Edicts 20, 21 and 24. are fragmentary; in the case of Edict 24, there seem to be contradictory versions.

Edict 27 does not occur in the official version of the edicts, but because it occurs in the other texts, I have added it at the end. In the other versions, it occurs much earlier in the list as number five. It is possible that it is the missing Edict 18, but this is not at all certain.

3. THE TEXT

The text of the edicts presented here is essentially the same as that contained in *Itihās Prakās* (IP in the notes.)¹⁰ and in the first appendix to the 1965 edition of the *Mulukī Ain of King Surendra* (MA in the notes).¹¹ The latter, while it is the official government version, is derived directly from the first.¹²

In addition, two other important works have been consulted. These are the *Gorkhāvamśāvalī* (G. in the notes) and a document in the *Itihās Prakāśmā Saṃdhipatra Saṃgraha* entitled “Rāma śāha kā Gorkhāle gareko kehi pragati” (SP in the notes).¹³ Both of these are narrative accounts of events in Gorkha, and both give versions of the edicts of Rama Shah. Neither of them contains all of the rules given in the first two works listed above, nor do the rules given differ in content. However, they are often worded differently, which in many cases has been helpful in preparing the translation. Edict 19, for example, which is confused in the official text, is much more clearly stated in these. In my notes, I have included the important variants between the various texts, and also, where available, the *śūtra* for each edict.

4. THE TRANSLATION

The language of the edicts is difficult for it is filled with rare vocabulary and obscure terminology. Where the translation is uncertain, I have tried to clarify my interpretation in the notes. Many points remain unclear, however.

The notes to the translation contain translations of each *śūtra*, and, where necessary, translations of parallel passages contained in G. and SP. Notes are numbered consecutively.

¹⁰ Yogi Naraharinath (ed.) *Itihās Prakās*, No. 2, Part III, Kathmandu, 2013 B.S., pp. 419-426.

¹¹ Śri Pāñc Surendra Bikram Shāh Devkā Śāsankālmā Baneko Mulukī Ain, Kathmandu: Śri Pāñc Ko Sarkār, Kānun Tathā Nyāy Mantrālaya, 2022 B.S., pp. 695-700.

¹² *Ibid*, p. 6.

¹³ Yogi Naraharinath (ed.) “Rāma Śāha Kā Gorkhāle gareko kehi pragati” in *Itihās Prakāśmā Saṃdhipatrasaṃgraha*, Kathmandu, 2022 B.S., pp. 674-702.

Mr. Mahesh Raj Pant reviewed the translation with me after it had been prepared
I am indebted to him for his many suggestions and improvements.

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Nepali Text and English Translation

pratham thiti // // śrī nandamīśrajūlāi guru tulyāi baksanu First Edict: ¹

bhai hāmṛā saṁtānle tapāikā saṁtānlāi guru tulyāunu arulāi ¹

na tulyāunu bhannyā dharmā bhayo

Having appointed Śrī Nanda Miśra guru, the law (dharma) ²

is proclaimed that our descendants will appoint your descendants guru. No others shall be so appointed.

1. Sūtra: none

G: no thiti, but the story of Nanda Miśra is told in detail, 1.

P. 21.

Sūtra: None

2. This is the only use of the word dharma in the edicts. The words used most frequently are hukum, "royal order, decree", and thiti, "order, regulation". Thiti is collocated with the verb bāndhnu, lit. "to bind", and baksanu, lit. "to give", but used only of royalty. hukum baksanu and thiti bāndhi baksanu both mean "to issue a royal order, edict, or decree." In the text given by Itihās Prakāś and the Muluki Ain, the expression thiti bāndhi baksanu is used most frequently.

dosro thiti // // pailhe bāmskā dhumgrāle dālāle āhrile
bharnyā bastu bhārikana linu dinu estā tarāhko linu dinu gardā
vithiti hunāle 10 muṭhiko 1 mānu 8 mānāko 1 pāthi 20 pāthiko 1
muri gari calan garnu bhani mānā pāthimā chāplāi baksanu
bhayo

Second Edict:

Formerly, it was the custom to use a vessel such as an earthen pot or a bamboo pipe or basket for filling. Because this has been without regulation, henceforward the following measures are to be used: 10 muṭhi = 1 mānu; 8 māna = 1 pāthi; 20 pāthi = 1 muri. The King has caused the māna and pāthi to be so stamped.

2. Sūtra: mānu pāthi muri
G: tesai belāmā pāthi mānu tulo esko sthiti hukum garnu bhayo. kyā arthale esko sthiti bhanyā bāskā dhumgrile dālāle āhrile estai tarāhsita calan garthyā. tasartha das muṭhiko mānu. āṭh mānāko pāthi. bis pāthi ko muri. es ritile calan gara.
Sp: aghi bāskā dhumgrāle kāthakā āhrile coyākā dālāle calan garthyā. ghatibadhimā vithiti bhayāko thiyo // tadartha das muṭhi annale bhārimā tabāko 1 mānu // āṭh mānāko ek pāthi // bis pāthiko ek muri // es ritile annaprabhiti bhārinā bastumā calan gara.

Second Edict

Sūtra: On māna, pāthi, and muri.

SP: es ritile annaprabhiti bhārinā bastumā calan gara: in this way use these vessels for measuring out grain etc.

1. Āhri, also spelled āri: a tray, trough, pot, water clock.
2. The vessels often bear the dated royal seal guaranteeing their accuracy.

tesro thiti // // tulo dhakko pani aghi vithiti hunāle 10
 lāl-ko 1 māsa 10 māsāko 1 tolā 18 lālko 1 pal 27 tolāko bodi
 108 tolāko 1 bisaulī 2 bisaulīko 1 dhārni tulyāi calan garnu bhani
 tulāmā amk kāṭi dhakmā chāplai baksanu bhayo³

Third Edict:

Because in the past weights and scales have not been according to rule, the following are to be used: 10 lāl = 1 mās; 10 mās = 1 tolā; 18 lāl = 1 pal; 27 tolā = 1 bodi; 108 tolā = 1 bisaulī; 2 bisaulī = 1 dhārni. The King has ordered the scales to be inscribed with numbers, and the weights so stamped.

3. Sūtra: bodi pal bisaulī dhārni
 G: tastai ritte bodi pal bisaulī dhārni estai tarahle tulāko pani byavasthā bādhi calan gara bhani hukum bhayo.
 Sp: tastai tula taraju kata prabhrtimā taulinyā bastumā // das lālko ek māsa // das māsāko ek tolā // athāra tolāko ek pal // sattāis tolāko ek bodi // car bodiko ek visauli // dui bisauliko yek dhārni // yas rit-le calan garnu //

Sūtra: On bodi, pal, bisaulī, dhārni

1. bodi: this term is not listed in the lexicons, but Turner (p. 328), in his definition of dhārni gives: 1 dh = 2 bisaulī = 4 bodi. These weights have slightly different values in Nepal today. For details, see M.G. Regmi, A Study in Nepali Economic History 1768 - 1846, New Delhi, 1971, p. 207.

Fourth Edict:

The following edict is proclaimed by the King: ¹

Formerly, interest on a loan of grain was calculated annually for as many years as the borrower was not able to repay the money lender. Because the interest could be calculated annually even if the period of time were very long, everyone in the country could become debt ridden and would never be free of the money lender because of his inability to repay his debts. For ² this reason, the following edict is proclaimed: Twenty per-cent interest per year in ten years is equivalent to triple the amount.

The money lender is to take this triple amount. No matter how many years over ten a debtor is not able to repay the loan, when he is again able to pay, the money lender is not to take annual interest, but only triple the amount.

cautho thiti // // annako pahile asāmile sāhucheu liyāko
karjā tirna nasaki jati sukai varṣa rahyā pani varṣai prati-ko
vyāj hisāb gari lidā dherai varṣamā rina tirna na saknyā bhayā
pani varṣa pratiko vyāj jamā hunāle kahile pani rina tirna nasakdā
mulukmā kohi ta kahile pani sāhudekhi chuti nahunyā bhai sabai
rinagrāhi bhayā taskāran 1 varsako pacaudakā hisāble das versamā
3 gun huncha sāhule tevar linu asāmile sāu vyāj kehi pani tirna
nasaki 10 varṣa dekhī ubho jati sukai varṣa rahyā pani pheri
saknyā bhai tirdākā belāmā varṣai pratiko vyāj sāhule nalinu ⁴
tevar mātra linu bhannyā thiti bāmdhi baksanu bhayo

4. Sūtra: annako tinu

G: tastai ritle annako stiti pani tebar linu bhani bāmdhi
baksanu bhayo.

Sp: varṣa pratiko vyāj das varṣa nāghyā pachi na linu tastai
annako tebar linu. bhani sthiti bāmdhi baksanu bhayo //

Sūtra: Three times the grain

1. This phrase occurs at the end of many of the edicts and is a late addition.

2. pacaud - one fifth. This in all probability means two hundred per cent interest in ten years plus the principle. This would be the maximum which a creditor could take. Wright, op. cit., p. 279, translates one fourth rather than one fifth: "He also made laws for debtors and creditors, fixing the rate of interest at ten percent for money, and one fourth of the quantity of grain. If the debtor was unable to pay within ten years, the creditor after that time might take twice the principal in money, and three times the amount in grain, but no more. He made many other laws." See also D.R. Regmi, Modern Nepal, Calcutta, 1961, pp. 18-22 for a brief summary of the edicts.

pāncāu thiti // // dāmkō pani pahile asāmile sāhuc̄heu

liyako karja tirna nasakī jati sukai varṣa rahya pani varṣai
 pratiko vyaj jama hunāle kahile pani rina tirna na sakdā mulukma
 kohita kaile pani sāhudekhi chutti na hunya bhai sabai ringrāhi
 bhayā taskāraṇ 1 varṣaka hisāble dasaudkā 10 varṣamā dobar huṃcha
 saḥule dobar linu asāmile saum pani vyaj pani tirna na saki 10
 varṣa dekhi ubho jati sukai varṣa rahyo bhanya pani pheri saknya
 bhai tirdākā belāmā varṣa pratiko vyaj saḥule na linu dobar mātrai
 5
 linu bhanya thiti bāndhi baksanu bhayo

Fifth Edict:

The following edict is proclaimed by the King:
 Formerly, interest on a loan of money was calculated annually
 for as many years as the borrower was not able to repay the
 money lender. Because the interest could be calculated annually
 even if the period of time were very long, everyone in the
 country could become debt ridden and would never be free of
 the money lender because of his inability to repay his debts.
 For this reason the following edict is proclaimed: Ten per-cent
 interest per year in ten years is equivalent to double the
 amount. The money lender is to take this double amount. No
 matter how many years over ten a debtor is not able to repay
 the loan, when he is again able to pay, the money lender is not
 to take annual interest, but only double the amount.

5. Sūtra: dāmkō dūnu

G: dāmkō dūnu bhanyāko kyā artha bhanyā. aghi ta asāmile
 karjā li dasauti vyāj tirna na saki jati sukai varṣa rahyā
 pani varṣai pratiko vyāj gari tirna saknyā bhayākā belāmā
 liṃdā ta. kailhe pani sāhudekhi chutti na paunya hunya bhai
 muluk dherai rṅagrāhi hunyā. taskāraṇ dasavaḍkā hisāble
 das varṣamā dobar huṃcha. dobar linu. asāmile sāu pani
 vyāj pani tirna sakena das varṣadekhi ubho jati sukai varṣa
 tirna na saki rahyo bhanyā pani. pheri saknyā bhai tirdākā
 belāmā. varṣai pratiko vyāj saḥule na linu. dobar mātrai linu.
 bhannyā esto thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo.

SP: dāmkō dūnu bhanyāko kyā artha ho bhanyā // aghi ta
 asāmile karjā liyāko dasaud vyāj kā hisāb bamojim prativarṣako
 byāj lidā ta kadācit tirna nasaki kehi varṣa rahyo // tirna
 saknyā belāmā tirna gayā pani sāhu dekhi chutti na paunya
 bhayara dherai muluk rṅagrāhi hudā vithiti bhayāko thiyo...
 tadarth dasaudkā hisāble das varṣamā dobar huṃcha dobar
 linu // asāmile sāu pani vyāj pani tirna na saki das varṣa
 ubho jatikusai varṣa rahyo bhanyā pani saḥule dobar mātrai
 linu //

Sūtra: Twice the money.

Sixth Edict:

chaitaṃ thiti // // padhyārāko thoro thoro jhagarā nasuṃnu
 bhanyā hukum bhayo kyā arthale bhanyā padhyārāmā bahut strījāti
 jānyā tāhā dekhī aru kohi cākar jānyā pāṇi na bhāi bhanyā kasaiko
 kām nacalnyā tasartha jo aghi padhyārāmā lina pugyo tasaile aghibāta
 lyāunu arkāle ma lai jāñchu' na bhānu tes pachikāle tesai pachi
 lai jānu yastai kramle pāni lyāunu tesmā pani kasaile alikati kurāmā
 jhagarā garyo bhanyā kacahari jori jhagarā nasuṃnu bhanyā thiti
 bāṃdhi baksanu bhayo

In order not to hear trivial disputes with regard to watering
 places, the following edict is proclaimed by the King: Many
 women go to the watering places and, besides this, servants
 go. If there is no water, no one's work will go forward.

Therefore, he who reaches the watering place first is to take
 water first. No one is to claim priority without right. Each
 one in turn is to take water; in this way water is to be taken.
 This edict is proclaimed by the King so that if some one causes
 such a trivial dispute, such (conflicting) arguments shall
 not be heard in court.

6. Sūtra: padhyāro jhagarā na sunnu
 G: substantially the same.

Sp:

Sutra: On not hearing disputes regarding watering places
 1. padhyāro = padero = panero, watering place, spring, public well.
 This and the following two edicts are approximately the same
 in wording, and appear to be directed toward keeping servant
 disputes out of the courts. D.R. Regmi, op. cit. states that
 Rāma Shāh intended that these disputes be settled by village
 councils, but none of the texts of the edicts indicates any
 such intention.

Seventh Edict:

satau thiti // // kolako pani thoro thoro jhagarā nasumnu
 bhanyā hukum bhayo kina bhanyā dherai gharko kol yakai humcha
 āphnā āphnā pālāle pelnu arkāle ma aghibāṭa pelchu na bhannu tasmā
 pani dherai strījāti aru kōhi cākar bākarāi humchaṃ kadācit thoro
 jhagarā bhayo bhanyā kacaharimā lyāi jhagarā na sumnu bhannyā
 thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo

In order not to hear trivial disputes with regard to oil presses, the following edict is proclaimed by the King: For many houses there is but one oil press. Therefore, each person is to take his turn in pressing. No one is to claim priority without right. Moreover many women and servants go to the presses. If there is some trivial dispute, this edict is proclaimed to avoid hearing it in court.

7. Sūtra: kolāko jhagarā na sumnu
 G: Same
 Sp: omitted

Sūtra: Disputes regarding oil presses will not be heard.

Eighth Edict:

In order not to hear trivial disputes with regard to irrigation channels, the following order is proclaimed by the King: Often bondsmen, slaves, and servants go to the irrigation channels. Each one is to take in turn his share of water according to the extent of his fields. No one shall take water out of turn or more than his allotment. This edict has been proclaimed so that if there occurs a trivial dispute, it shall not be heard in court.

āṭhaṃ thiti // // kulāko pani jhagarā nasumnu bhāṃnyā hukum
bhayo kyā nimitta bhanyā kulāmā pani bahudhā bādḥā kamārā
cākarai jāṃchan tasaṭṭha āphnā āphnā khetko hisābmā āyāko
pāniko bhāg pālīpālāsita lāunu āphnā pālā bāhik ra āphnā hisāb
bāhek arkāle pani na lāunu tasmā pani thoro jhagarā bhayo bhanyā
kacaharimā jori jhagarā nasumnu bhanyā yastai sthiti bādhi
baksanu bhayo

8. Sūtra: kulako jhagarā na sunnu
G: substantially the same.
Sp:

Sūtra: Disputes regarding irrigation channels will not be heard.

Ninth Edict:

navaṃ thiti // // aghi brāhmaṇlāi birtā didāma pani phalānu
 dādo phalānu kholo phalānu paharo phalānu kāmlo bhitrako jagā
 virtā dīnyu bhanyāko mātraī eti muri yeti ropani yeti khet
 bhanyā thegānā kehi na hunāle brāhmaṅko birtāko ra raikar jagākā
 sādḥ kilako baṃdej na bhayāko najar hudā kasto hukum bhayo bhanyā
 aba uprānta brāhmaṇlāi birtā samkalp pari baksadā śrī 5 mahārājako
 bhumi cautariyāko jhāri kājiko biṃti brāhmaṅko hāt dān garnāle
 yeti khet yeti ropani yeti muri bhani samkalp garnu, samkalp
 garāunyāle pani samkalp vākye yahi yeti khet yeti ropani yeti muri
 bhanyā vākye pari samkalp garāunu birtā linu arulāi dilāunu śrī
 5 mahārājākā hukumle thar ghar pāc-haru gai sād lāi 4 killā gādi
 yeti khet yeti ropani bhani sādhlāi śrī 5 mahārājākā bāhulibāṭa
 samkalp bhayāmā ghaṭi baḥhi katti napāri jati samkalp bhayāko cha
 tati sādhlāi ānu bhanyā thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo

Formerly, in giving land to a Brahman, because there was
 no regularity in indicating the number of ropani and muri, or
 khet¹, one simply said: "I give the land between
 such and such a hill, such and such a stream, such and such
 a bluff, such and such a boundary."² Observing, therefore, that
 there are no boundary markers for Brahman birtā³ and raikar land,⁴
 the following edict is proclaimed by the King: Henceforward,

when reading the samkalpa of the land for a Brahman, the number of
 ropani and muri shall be given by the [authority of] the king's
 realm (bhumi), the water jug (jhāri) of the king's kinsmen
 (cautariya), the word (biṃti)⁵ of the judge (kāji), and
 the hand (hāt) of the Brahman. The agent of the king shall give
 a statement indicating the size of the land.⁶ In taking⁷
 birtā from one and having it given to another, surveyors shall
 go by order of the king and bury four pegs as boundary markers
 indicating the amount of land and the number of ropani. Within
 the boundary,⁸ there should be no more no less than the amount
 awarded by the king's hand.⁹ As much as is given, so much
 should be within the borders.

9. Sūtra: rājako bhumi // cautariyāko jhāri // kajiko biṃti //
 brāhmaṅko hāt // pācḥko sādḥ
 aghi brāhmaṇlāi birtā didāma pani. phalānu dādo. phalāno kholo.
 phalānu paharo kāmlo bhitrako jagā. birtā dīnyuṃ. bhanyāko
 mātraī. yeti muri yeti khet bhanyā thegānā na hunāle. brāhmaṅkā
 birtāko ra raikar jaggāko. sādḥ killāko baṃdej na bhayāko dekhdā.
 yo thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo. śrīrājako bhumi. cautariyāko
 jhāri. kājiko biṃti. brāhmaṅko hāt. pācḥko sādḥ. kasto
 sādḥ bhanyā. cār killā gādi yeti muri eti saya bhanyā
 sādḥ garnu hukum bhayo. yasta tarahle dān garnyāle pani
 dān garnu. dān linyāle pani dān linu bhanyā hukum bhayo.
 p: Substantially the same.

Sūtra: the bhumi of the mahārāja, the jhāri of the cautariya,
 the biṃti of the kāji, the hand of the Brahman, the border
 of the pāc.

1. Ropani, muri and khet are measures of land. According to M.C. Regmi, op. cit., p. 205, the muri, the smallest of these units, was an area yielding 1 muri of grain (a muri of grain being equal to two maunds of 160 lbs.). "If the land was of high productivity, a smaller area was required to produce 1 muri of grain than if it was of low productivity. Accordingly, 1 muri of land of the lowest grade of productivity was larger in area than 1 muri of the highest grade. Irrespective of the grade, 4 muris of land made one ropani," and twenty ropani = one khet. These units were generally used to measure khet or rice lands, dry lands, (pākho) seldom being measured, according to Regmi.
2. kāmlho = kānlo: Turner, p. 87, gives: "A boundary of stones or earth (less frequently of bamboo or shrubs) dividing two fields."
3. birtā, "freehold land," usually granted to a Brahman without rent, in which case it is called kus birtā, or to a chieftain with a small rent, in which case it is called sunā-birta.
4. raikar, or raikar jaggā, is leasehold land owned by the state. For complete discussions of the various kinds of land in the Nepalese economy, see the works of M.C. Regmi, A Study of Nepali Economic History (1768 - 1846), New Delhi, 1971, and his earlier, Land Tenure and Taxation in Nepal, Berkeley, 3 vol., 1963-65.
5. tharghar: Turner gives "surveyor", a meaning confirmed by the Nepali lexicons. M.C. Regmi, however, defines it as "chiefs of selected castes who were in charge of such functions as demarcation of Birta boundaries." (op. cit., p. 229.) The word appears to have originally referred to the leaders of the thirty-six clans in which the nobility of Gorkha was divided. See Edicts 11 and 24.
6. sādh = sāmdh, "border" (Skt. sandhi)
7. bahuli, lit. "sleeve", a royal honorific for "hand".

Tenth Edict:

The following edict is proclaimed:

In endowing land for a god, or a dharamsala, or giving birta land to a Brahman, the purpose of [recognizing] the water jug (jhāri) of the cautariyā is this: The cautariyā is one's own brother. A brother is one's most important limb. If one makes one's limbs strong and gives gifts, one receives the fruits according to what has been said (in the sāstras). This is the reason for the water jug of the cautariyā.¹

The meaning of [recognizing] the word (biṃti) of the kāji is this: The kāji beseeches the King without partiality for what is right and what is not right. This is the meaning of the biṃti of the kāji. The meaning of the paṃcas of the boundary is this: Members of the six clans and paṃcas from other families,² having witnessed a field of a certain extent, of so many ropani and muri, with so much hillside land, having determined the entrance way and the exit, and the thoroughfare between the fields,³ sink four pegs, thereby giving the borders. This is the meaning of the paṃcas of the boundary.

10. Sūtra: Same as above.
G: and Sp. same

Sūtra: None

1. Here, as in the following edict, is a recognition of the political power of the cautariyā and the necessity of authority.
2. aru pāc sādḥ bhāi basi...the sense is not clear here.
3. saṃdhi sarpan, a thoroughfare where two pieces of land come together.

dasauṃ thiti // // śrī devatāko guṭh dharmasālāko guṭh
brāhmaṇharulāi birtā saṃkalp gari baksadā cautariyāko jhāri bhanyāko
kyā nīmitta ho bhanyā cautariyā bhanyākā āphnā bhāi bhāi bhanyākā mukhe
aṃg hun aṃg pūrṇa gari dān garyā āphulāi yathokta phal buṅcha bhāni.
cautariyāko jhāri bhanyāko karaṇ yeti ho kājiko biṃti bhanyāko kyā
artha bhanyā panapakṣe na gari yogyāyogya bicār gari kājile biṃti garnu
kājiko biṃti bhanyāko yeti ho. pāṃcko sādḥ bhanyāko kyā artha ho bhanyā
cha thar prabhṛti aru pāṃc sādḥ bhāi basi yeti khet yeti ropani yeti
muri yeti khetko ghaḍyāri yeti pākho bhāni nikās paisār saṃdhi sarpaṅko
bicār rākhi cār killā gāḍi sādḥlāidinu pāṃcko sādḥ bhanyāko yo ho bhanyā
thiti badhi baksanu bhayo¹⁰

yeghāraṃ tithi // // pāṃḍe paṃth arjyāl khanāl rānā bohorā
 timiharu cha thar bhayau timiharulāi cha thar bhanyāko bādhyāko
 kyā arthale ho bhanyā cautariyā kāji sardār i prabhṛti aru jo kōhi
 anyāy anritimā lāgi gādiko bigārnāmā ra nisāph bigārnāmā pasnan
 tinko katti mohabad molāhijā na rākhi jo bhayāko bistār biṃti garna
 ānu bhani marji bhai cha thar bhāṃnyā vyavastā bādhi baksanu bhayo
 timiharukā saṃtān darsantānlāi hāmṛā saṃtān darsantānle gādiko
 sojho garamjyālsamma thāmi baksaulā bhani hukum bhai thiti bādhi
 baksanu bhayo
 11

Eleventh Edict:

The following edict is proclaimed:

To you of the pāṃḍe, Panth, Arjyāl, Khanāl, Rānā, and Bohorā
 clans, is given the title of Six Clans, for the following
 reasons: If a cautariyā, kāji, or sardār, etc., should
 enter into an unjust or unlawful act in order to destroy
 the throne or impair justice, then the Six Clans should
 come (to the court) and explain the details to the King
 without bias or compassion. This order is given to you,
 your descendants, and their descendants, by us, our
 descendants, and their descendants, in order to preserve
 the throne upright.

11. Sūtra: cha thar

G: pāṃḍe panth arjyāl khanāl rānā bohorā timiharu cha thar
 bhayau. timiharulāi cha thar bādhyāko kyā arthale ho bhanyā.
 cautariyā kāji sardār i prabhṛti aru jo kōhi anyāy anritimā
 lāgi gādiko ra prajāko bigārna pasnan bhani mero aṃg
 tulyāi cha thar ko bandhyān garyāko kāraṇ yehi ho. timiharule
 gādiko sojho ra prajāko hit garinjyal hāmṛā saṃtān darsantānle
 timiharukā saṃtān darsantānlāi na phernu. bhani bandhyānko
 hukum bhayo.

Sp: Substantially the same.

Sutra: None

1. In these statements is the recognition of the power of the
cautariyā and kāji. Hence the necessity for a permanent
 alliance with the Six Clans. The ancestors of these groups
 were supposedly the allies who helped Drabya Shah take the
 throne of Gorkha from its Tibeto-Burman kings in 1559.
 See Wright, op. cit., p. 278.

bāhram thiti // // gaucar rākhnu bhanyā hukum bhayo brāhmaṇlāi
 khāna kana duḥkh huṅcha ra rājālāi pratyavay lāgcha bhanna nimitta
 gāu gāumā nikās paisār kṛ cāldo mildo pari gaucar rākhnu bhanyā
 thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo
 12.

Twelfth Edict:

A royal order is given to preserve pasture for cattle. It is difficult for Brahmins to get food and because of this the king may incur guilt; therefore, the edict is proclaimed by the King to establish entrances and exits in every village and to preserve pasture for cattle.

12. Sūtra: gocar rākhnu
 G: gāu-brāhmaṇko rakṣā rājāibāta huṅcha. gaucar na rahyā
 rājālāi pratyavay lāgcha. bhani gāuṃ gāuṃ nikās....bhani
 hukum bhayo.
 Sp: Same as G.

Sūtra: Preserve cow pastures.

G: Protection of cows and Brahmins is the king's responsibility.
 If there are no meadows, the king incurs guilt.

1. paisār? entrance? possibly a derivative from pasnu, "to enter".
2. nikās = exit.

Thirteenth Edict:

tehraum thiti // // bātākā rukh rākhnu bhamnyā hukum bhayo
 kyā arthale bhanyā dukhī garīb kāj kām gari thāki ānyā bojhā boki
 hidhyā aru jo kōhi bātāmā hidhyā mānis pani garmi huncha bhani
 chāhāri basna khojchan bhamnā nimitta bātākā rukh pālno bātākā rukh
 jo kattacha 5 rupaiyām damd gari linu bhanyā marji bhai thiti
 13
 bādhi baksanu bhayo

A royal order is given to preserve trees along roads for this reason: the wretched poor who work become tired, those who carry loads, and everyone else who walks along the road become hot. They all search for shade in which to sit. Therefore, trees are to be preserved along the roads. He who cuts down a tree will receive a fine of five rupees.

13. Sūtra: bātā-mā rukh pālno
 G: Same
 Sp: Same

Sūtra: Preserve trees along roads.

Fourteenth Edict:

caudaṃ thiti // // padhyārāmā ban pālno rukh na bhayā
 dekhi jaile khojyo taile pāni rahadaina sukī jāncha ban
 dherai phāḍiyā paio pani jāncha dherai paio gayā upadhāhā
 calcha upadhāle khet pani lai jāncha ban na bhayā gṛhastiko
 kaunai kām pani caldaina tassartha padhyārāko ban jo kāṭlā teslāi
 pani 5 rupaiyām daṃḍ gari linu bhanyā thiti bādhi baksanu
 bhayo
 14

The following edict is proclaimed: Forests are to be preserved near watering places. If there are no trees, there will be no water whenever one looks for it. The watering places will become dry. If forests are cut down, there will be avalanches. If there are many avalanches, there will be great accidents. Accidents also destroy the fields. Without forests, the

householders' work cannot be accomplished. Therefore, he who cuts down the forest near a watering place will be fined five rupees.

14. Sutra: padhyārāmā ban pālno
 G: padhyārāmā ban na bhaya jailhe kailhe pani rahadaina sukcha. tassartha ban pālno. padhārāko ban jo kāṭlā. taslāi pani 5 rupaiyām daṃḍ linu...etc.
 Sp: tyastai ritle padhyārāko ban kaṭṭhāle jailhe kailhe pani pām rahadaina tassartha padhyārāko ban kaṭṭhāle pani pām rupaiyā dān linu...etc.

Sūtra: Preserve trees at watering places.

1. upadhāhā? cf. upadyaha = hardship, misfortune, accidents. Sharma 118/1 gives "upadhā, chai, kapat," i.e. deception, deceit, identical with Skt. upadha. Possibly the word is derived from upa + dah, "to set fire, burn.

pamhraum thiti// // cautariyā bhāi gotiyā inharule jiy
 sambandhī thulo birāu garyā muḍi bides garāunu samnyāsī vairāgi
 bhāt inle pani thulo birāu garyā bhanyā muḍi bides nikālā garāunu
 bhāi cautariyā gotiyālāi bides garāunu bhanyāko kyā artha bhanyā
 jiu mārinyā pirāu garyo bhanyā jiu linyāko jiy linu bhannyā
 sāstramā pani kahyāko cha jiu mārinyā bhanyā gotrahatyā lāgnā
 namārnyā
 dekhī bhanyā rājālāi pratyavāy lāgnā tasārtha des nikālā garnu
 pari mārinyā tulya cha bhani bides garāunu bhanyāko ho brāhmaṇlāi
 pani mārinyā brahmahatyā lāgnā na mārinyā rājālāi pratyavāy lāgnā
 taskāran mudnu pani mārinyā tulya cha bhani muḍi bides garāunu
 bhanyāko
 ho vairāgi samnyāsī bhekh liyākā hunale avadhya chan bhāt pani
 avadhya chan bhani des nikālā garnu bhanyāko ho tasārth yasai
 garnu
 thiti bāchi baksanu bhayo

Fifteenth Edict:

The following edict is proclaimed: If a cautariyā, brother, or gotiyā, should commit a great crime pertaining to life or body, he shall be shaven and banished. If a samnyāsī, vairāgi, or Bhāt should kill someone, he shall be shaven and banished. The reason for the first rule is this: it is written in the sastras that if a person kills someone, he shall be killed. However, in this case, if one executes the murderer, one is guilty of killing a kinsman; if one does not kill him, the king incurs sin. Therefore, it has been written that banishment is the same as death. If one kills a Brahman, one is guilty of murdering a Brahman; if he is not killed, the king incurs guilt. Therefore, shaving is said to be the equivalent to death, and so the Brahman is to be banished. Because vairāgi and samnyāsī have taken on the clothes of holy men, they are not to be killed; the Bhāts are also not to be killed, so that they too must be banished. And so it should be done thus.

15. Sūtra: gotra samnyāsī bairāgi bāhun bhāt kā jiu na linu muḍi bides garnu.
 G: cautariyā bhāi gotiyā inle jiy sambandhiko thulo birāu garyā bhanyā bides garāunu. brāhmaṇle jiy sambandhiko thulo birāu garyā bhanyā muḍi bides garāunu. samnyāsī vairāgi bhāt...etc.

Sp: the same as above, except bhikṣuk bhekh is used instead of only bhekh.

Sūtra: Kinsmen, holy men, ascetics, Brahmins, and bards, are not to be killed but shaved and exiled.
 1. These three refer to relations of the king. G. states that they shall be banished but does not state that they should be shaved.
 2. Samnyāsī and vairāgi refer to holy ascetics. Bhāts are bards. The term also designates Jaisi Brahmins and offspring of Brahman and samnyāsī women marriages.

sohrauṃ thiti // // khas magar nevār prabhṛti jāt madhyamā
 jiye sambandhi birāu garyā bhanyā jasle birāyāko cha usaiko mātra Sixteenth Edict:
 jiye mānu jasko pap usko gardhan bhanyā thiti bādhi baksanu
 bhayo
 16

The following edict is proclaimed by the King:

If there occurs a murder among the Khas, Magar, Newar, castes
 (jat)etc., then he who has committed such a crime is to be
 killed in accordance with the edict: Of whom there is guilt,
 of him the neck.

16. Sūtra: aru jasko pāp usko gardhan
 G: Khas magar prabhṛti aru sab jātmā jiy sambandhiko birāu
 garyā bhanya. jasle birāyāko cha....etc.
 Sp: Same as above.

Sūtra: For others (aru), he who commits sin shall pay with his
 life (lit. whose sin, his neck).
 G: This text does not include the Newars, which may indicate that its
 formulation is an earlier one written before the Gorkhalis came
 in full contact with the Newars of Kathmandu.
 1. The distinction made in Edicts Fifteen and Sixteen, between
 collaterals of the king, Brahmans, and holy men on the one hand,
 and the Khas, Magars, Newars, etc., on the other, presages one
 of the major legal caste distinctions of the Muluki Ain: those
 who are tāgādhāri (wear the sacred thread), and matvāli (lit.
 those who drink alcohol), a group which now includes most
 Tibeto-Burman speaking peoples, but not the Khas, who are
 tāgādhāri.

thiti // // suvarṇakā gahanā śrī pātbaṁdi mahārānile
 āumā paihranu kyā arthale bhanyā suvarṇa bhanyāko nārāyaṅko
 jā bhanyākā pani nārāyaṅkā aṁśa huṁ pātbaṁdi mahārāni
 ā lakṣmīkā aṁśa hunāle pātbaṁdi mahārānile suvarṇakā gahanā
 aihranu bhaiyāt cautariyāharukā cautārniharule tā śrī 5
 ā śrīmahārānibāṭa bakṣyā mātraī pāmā na lāunu bakṣī ta
 k mātramā lāunu bhāi cautariyākā rautelā rautelī lāi bālakhkālā
 āumā lāunu brāhmaṇ khas magar prabhṛti aru jātile ta
 rājabāṭa bakṣyā mātra hātmā lāunu bhani thiti bādhi baksanu
 17

Seventeenth Edict:

The following edict is proclaimed: the Queen alone is allowed
 by the King to wear gold ornaments on her feet. This is
 for the following reason: Because gold is a part of Nārāyaṇa,
 and the king is a part of Nārāyaṇa, the Queen is a part of
 Lakṣmī, and therefore is to wear gold on her feet. Brothers,
 cautariyās and their wives, are allowed to wear gold on the
 feet only if the king and queen give permission; if it is
 not granted, they may wear it only up to the feet. The
 sons and daughters of the King's brothers and the cautariyā
 are allowed to wear it on their feet only during childhood.
 Other castes, Brahmins, Khas, Magar, etc., are allowed to
 wear it on the hands only if the king so grants.

Sutra: None

Sp: Only Her Highness the Queen is to wear gold ornaments down
 to her feet. The reason for this is the following: By the
 earth (wife?) of Śrī Vishnu, through the delusion of the
 Golden Mountain, gold was worn from head to toe. Vishnu
 is the lord of the three worlds. The kings are incarnations
 of Śrī Vishnu. So that they will have complete lordship over
 the earth, it is appropriate that gold be worn down to the
 feet by Her Majesty the Queen. The person who has no authority
 in the kingdom, if he wears gold on his feet, he incurs guilt.
 Brothers and the wives (rāni) of cautariyā may wear it if it
 is so granted by the king; if it is not so granted, then it
 may be worn everywhere except the feet. Their children may
 wear it in childhood only. Brahmins, Khas, Magars, and other
 castes, if permitted by the king, may wear it on their arms;
 if not so granted, they may wear it everywhere except on the
 arms.

Sutra: None

Sp: Only Her Highness the Queen is to wear gold ornaments down
 to her feet. The reason for this is the following: By the
 earth (wife?) of Śrī Vishnu, through the delusion of the
 Golden Mountain, gold was worn from head to toe. Vishnu
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 Brothers and the wives (rāni) of cautariyā may wear it if it
 is so granted by the king; if it is not so granted, then it
 may be worn everywhere except the feet. Their children may
 wear it in childhood only. Brahmins, Khas, Magars, and other
 castes, if permitted by the king, may wear it on their arms;
 if not so granted, they may wear it everywhere except on the
 arms.

pātbamdi, lit. "she who wears the royal turban," or patta. There are several variations used in Nepalese documents, pattabandhi, pattabandha, pattamahārāni, patarājñi, and pattadevi. amś = amśavatār = partial incarnation. Kings are said to be partial incarnations of Vishnu; the present king of Nepal is still considered to be an incarnation of Vishnu. bakṣyā mātrai pāmā na lānu baksi ta paubāhek mātramā lānu -- na and lānu should be reversed in order to preserve the sense. bhaiyād = bhaiyāt = brothers, brothers and nephews. For an interesting article dealing with the use of gold ornaments in Nepal from Licchavi times, see D.R. Pant, "Sunko Gahanā," ABHA, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 5-8 and 64.

athārauṃ thiti // (omitted)

Eighteenth Edict¹ (Omitted)

unisaṃ thiti // // cār purohit tulyāi baksanu bhayo
 arjyāllāi arjyāli hotu acārja bagālyā lāi hotu bihāryā lāi
 arjyāli ācārye khanāl lāi brāhmaṇ bhāṭṭarāi lāi gaṇeś ti cār
 purohitkā vyavasthāko thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo¹⁹

Nineteenth Edict:

The King has appointed four purohīts: to the Arjyāls he gives the office of hotu and the office of Ācārya which is specifically for Arjyāls. To the Bagālyā Arjyāl he gives the office of hotu; to the Bihāre Arjyāl the Ācārya, which is specifically for Arjyāls; to the Khanāl is granted the office of Brahma; to the Bhāṭṭarai the Gaṇeśa. This is the arrangement of the four purohīts.

19. Sūtra: pāmc puret
 G: Substantially the same.
 Sp: gaṇapati brahmā bhāṭṭarāilāi baksanu bhayo // tasma bagālyā arjyāl khanāl bhāṭṭarāilāi baksanu bhayo // tasma bagālyā arjyāllāi hottu karma // bihāryā arjyāllāi ācārya karma // bhāṭṭarāilāi gaṇapati karma // khanālāi brahmāko karma bhamnyā yo vyavasthā // inkā bhāgko vyavasthā ... pātha japkā dakṣiṇāko pani vyavasthā gari baksanu bhayo //

1. This edict is not preserved in any of the documents, though it may correspond to Edict 27, which I have added to the main text.

Sutra: The five priests

Sp: There are four karmas: Gaṇapati, Brahma, Hotu, and Ācārya. The following arrangement of them is made: The office of priest (purohit) is given to the Arjyāl, Khanāl, and Bhāṭṭarai clans. To the Bagāle Arjyāl is given the Hotu karma; to the Bihāre Arjyāl is granted the Ācārya karma; to the Bhāṭṭarai is granted the Gaṇapati karma; and to the Khanāl is given the Brahma karma. These are their shares. Arrangement for patha, japa, and daksina is also made. (This last sentence leads directly into the next two edicts which are not separated from this one in Sp.)
 1. The text of IP and MA is confused. They list five purohīts, but state that there are four. The sūtra indicates that there are five. Sp is at least consistent in giving four.
 2. bagāle? = baṅgāle?, "Bengali." Bagāle and Bihāre (Bihari) are two sub groups of Arjyāl Brahmins.

bisaum thiti // // gorkhama praves hudā palle tallā kotmā
 gādī puryākā hunāle pāṇḍe brāhmaṇ lāī purohityāim baksanu bhayo
 aryet paryet (adya paryanta) pani pāṇḍe brāhmaṇharu tallā
 kotmā purohit chadai chan

Twentieth Edict:

The following edict is proclaimed by the King: when entering
 Gorkha at first, because the throne was reached in the Talla
 kot, to the Pāṇḍe Brahmins was given the work of purohit. Even
 today the Pāṇḍe Brahmins are priests in the Talla kot...

20. Sūtra:
 G: Same
 Sp: Same

Sūtra: None

yakaisaṃ thiti // // tallā koṭṃā śrīdevatā sthāpanā gari Twenty-first Edict:

balidān gari māthi darbārmā balidān garnu tallā koṭṃā devtā
sthāpanā gari balidān garikana māthi darbārmā balidanādi bidhi²¹
garnu bhanyā thiti bāṃdhi baksanu bhayo

The following edict is proclaimed by the King: Having consecrated the god Śrī Devatā in the Tallā Kot, having offered her sacrifice, sacrifice is to be done above in the palace. Having consecrated the god in Tallā Kot, and having sacrificed to her above in the palace, sacrifice and other rites are to be performed.¹

21. Sūtra:

G: tallā koṭṃā śrīdevatā sthāpanā na gari balidān na gari yahāG: darbārmā balidān na garnu. bhani hukum bhayo.

Sp: Same as above.

Sūtra: None

Because there is no god established nor worship done in Tallā Kot, worship is not to be done in the palace.

1. Here G. and Sp. appear to contradict IP and MA, neither of which is clear.

baisaṃ thiti // // grāmjā thāpā lāi dadāngi mān baksanu
 bhayo turukakṣāki āle grāmjā thāpā gyāmi rānā i tin tharle ālo
 pālo gari rākhnu bhani kapardāri mān baksanu bhayo pāṃḍe panth
 arjyāl i tin tharlāi ālo pālo gari rāknu bhani khajānāko kām
 baksanu
 bhayo dharmādhikār sardāri bhānsyā yeti mākā pani arjyālāi lāi
 baksanu bhayo bhanyā thiti, bādhi baksanu bhayo

Twenty-second Edict:

The following order is proclaimed by the King: The Grāmjā Thāpā¹
 are given the office of dadā.² The three clans, Turukṣaki Āle,
 Grāmjā Thāpā, and Gyami Rana, are to be appointed kapardar⁴
 in turn. To the Pāṃḍe, Panth, and Aryāl clans in turn is given
 the position of khajāmci. The positions of dharmādhikār, sardār,
 and bhānsyā, are also given just to the Aryal.

22. Sūtra: grāmjā gyāmi āle lāi dadāngi
 G: grāmjā thāpā lāi dadāngi mān baksanu bhayo. trokakṣāki
 āle grāmjā thāpā grāmjā rānā i tin tharle ālo pālo gari
 khānu bhani kapardāri mān baksanu bhayo. pāṃḍe panth
 arjyāl i tin thar lāi ālo pālo gari khajānāko mān baksi
 khajānāko kām calāuthyā. dharmādhikār khardāri bhānsyā
 eti mān kām pani arjyālāilāi baksanu bhayo.
 Sp: Same as above.

Sutra: To the Grāmjā, Gyāmi, and Āle the post of Dadā
 G: Gives the name of the clans as Torkakṣaki Āle, Grāmjā Thāpā, and
 Grāmjā Rānā.

1. Grāmjā Thāpā is the name of a Magar clan.
2. dadā usually refers to one who cares for the royal children. It may also refer to the royal huke or huka preparer.
3. turukṣaki āle, a clan of the Magar tribe. D.B. Bista, People of Nepal, 1967, lists a clan known as Torchaki Āle (p. 59). The names Āle, Rānā, and Thāpā, are the names of clans (thars). These are further subdivided into exogamous lineage groups called Torchaki, Gyami, etc.
4. These are all high administrative officials or part of the court: a. kapardār, head of the king's wardrobe; b. khajāmci, the royal treasurer; c. dharmādhikār, the highest criminal judge; d. sardār, a high military official; e. bhānsyā, the royal cook.

Twenty-third Edict:

teisaum thiti // // birautāko trisālā kamāi bālī āphaile khānu
 cauthā sāl dekhī dhani boṭi talsimlāf dinu bani boṭi kamāunyāle
 23
 khānu bhāmyā thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo

The following edict is proclaimed by the King with regard to landlord and tenant shares of the crop: the harvest of the first three years on freshly tilled land is to be given to the worker. From the fourth year, the owner gets his share¹ and the tenant his wages.²

23. Sūtra: bihrautāko trisālā āphai khānu cauthā sāl baniboti
 dhaniboti chuttānu
 G. and Sp: omit

Sūtra: One takes (lit. eats) the first three years' crop oneself. From the fourth year one releases (chuttānu) dhaniboti and baniboti.

1. dhaniboti, Dhungana, p. 224, gives: jagādhanile pāune rakam vā bhāg, "i.e. the share to be received by the land owner."
2. baniboti, for bani, Dhungana, p. 290, gives: "jyālā, majduri," i.e., wages. The expression baniboti is not given in the lexicons. Sharma, p. 768, glosses it as bhāg, "share".

caubisaum̐ thiti // // bāhra thar athār thar bhanyā caubisaum̐
 24
 thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo

Twenty-fourth Edict:

The twenty-fourth edict proclaims the twelve clans and the
 1
 eighteen clans.

24. Sūtra: none
 G: and Sp: omit

Sūtra: none

1. This is a mere fragment, or is possibly the sūtra itself. The reference is fairly clear, however. In the nobility of Gorkha, thirty-six clans were enumerated, and these were divided into a hierarchy of three groups. The first six, or Six Clans, have been referred to previously. They formed the highest level. The next two groups, the bāhra thar (twelve clans) and the athāra thar (eighteen clans) formed the remainder. Whether this edict established these divisions or was merely commenting upon them is not known. For a description of them in the time of Prithvi Nārāyan, see Lévi, I, p. 286.

pacisaum thiti // // pātānkā rājā siddhinarsimha malla hāmā
 samtān
 na bhayā tamrā samtānle tamrā samtān na bhayā hāmā samtānle
 rājye garnu bhanyā hukum bhāi yasto bamdōbastā gari baksi pāṭān
 bāta caubis koṭhi jhikāi in lāi sāt khat māph gari baksanu bhayo
 bhanyā thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo²⁵

Twenty-fifth Edict:

The following edict is proclaimed by the King: ¹
 With the King of Patan, Siddhi Narasiṃha Malla, the (following
 agreement is made): if we have no descendants, your descendants
 are to take our throne; if you have none, ours are to rule in their
 place. We have arranged for twenty-four merchants ² to come from
 Patan. They are exempted from the seven punishments. ³

25. Sūtra: None

G: omits

Sp: tāhām pachi cha thar prabhṛti aru manisharulāi pani
 nepālkā rājāharu sitako ghā bamdōbast ra nepal taraphko
 hal surāt bujhā nimitta sarsaugat khalta patra samet vakil
 pan...ghaya hāmā samtānle rājya garnu // hāmā samtān
 nabhayā timrā samtānle rājya garnu bhanyā ghā saltānko
 khalta patra jādā // sri 5 mahārājādhirāj rāmsāhka hajurmā
 jāu bhāni caubis koṭhi mahājanharulāi sarsaugat khalta patra
 samet gari pathayā ra // tinheru pani gorkhā sri 5
 mahārājādhirājaka hajurmā dakhil bhāi sarsaugat khalta patra
 cahrāi darsān garyā ra // timiharū yahi bas bāni hukum bhāi
 jagā jamin baksanu bhayo // sāt harāu birāu pani māph gari
 baksanu bhayo //

Sutra: None

Sp: After that, in order to understand the conditions of Nepal
 and the treaty agreement with the kings of Nepal, representatives
 welcome.../(the text is interrupted here)...(If you
 have no descendants) ours shall rule. If we have none, yours
 shall rule. He sent to the king Ram Shah twenty-four merchants
 with a letter of greetings. They arrived in the presence of
 His Majesty and presented the letters of greeting. The king
 ordered them to remain there and gave them land. He exempted
 them from the seven punishments.

chavisauṃ thiti // // śrī 6 mahārāja rāmsāhabāṭa maile bādhyākā

thitimā choṭā baḍā prajā prāṇi cār varṇ chatiṣ jāṭ jo lambhan
gariā

taslāi ma merā saṃtān mā jo rājā holā usle dhumgā chuvāi khat

anusārko rājāle daṃḍa garnu bhanyā thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo ..

yo dhumgā chuvāunu bhanyāko kasto ho bhanyā śrīlakṣmīnārāyaṇ
devtā

ko pākā pratidinhi dhumgo ho. so jāni pān phul dravya tasai

silāmā caḍhāi anyāya garyāko pāp chutnyā upāye yehi ho bhani

26

yasto thiti bādhi baksanu bhayo

Twenty-Sixth Edict

The following edict is proclaimed by the King:

Whoever, be he great or small, a living subject and member of
the four varṇas or thirty-six castes, violates one of the rules

proclaimed by me, King Rāma Shāh, is to be punished by me or by

my descendants and made to touch the stone. The purpose of

touching the stone is this: The stone is the representative of

the foot of Śrī Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇ. Knowing this, one should offer

betal nut, flowers, and coins to the stone. Having made offerings

in this way, one who has committed an injustice frees himself of

guilt.

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26. Sutra: dhumgā chuvāunu

G: vahāṃ dekhi śrī 5 mahārāj rāmsāhabāṭa bāṃdhi baksanu

bhayāko sthiti ra aru anriti anrah anyāy gari choto baḍo

prajā prāṇi jo hiḍlā taslāi śrī rājāle daṃḍ garnu. dhumgo

chuvāunu. tyo dhumgo chuvāunu. kasto ho bhanyā. śrī

lakṣmīnārāyaṇkā pratidinhi dhumgo ho. so jāni pān phul

dravya tasai silāma caḍhāi anyāy garyāko pāṭak chutnyā upay

ehi ho.

Sp: Substantially the same as above.

Sutra: Touching the Stone

G: Then, His Majesty Rām Shah proclaimed the order that whoever among

his subjects, great or small, commits an injustice or evil

shall be punished by the king. He shall be made to touch the

stone. The meaning of this is the following: The representative

stone is that of Lakṣmīnārāyaṇ. Knowing this, the way for someone

to become free of guilt for a crime is to offer betal nut, flowers,

and money to the stone.

1. The four varṇas and thirty-six castes are traditional numbers and

the use of the terms here does not imply that they were created

during the time of Rām Shāh.

2. Cf. Turner, p. 267, dhungā-chuwāi, "A ceremony among Rais, in

which on his decision a magistrate orders a stone to be brought.

Upon this grass (dubo or dubho) is laid. The loser of the case

has to place one rupee and four dams on it and to touch it in

acknowledgment of his offence, after which he is said to be

dubho dhungo garera cokhyāeko."

Twenty-Seventh Edict:

The following edict is proclaimed by the King:

The reason for not providing a plaintiff¹ against a witch is this: Because a witch can only be punished by execution, her destructive power cannot be stopped and witnesses are not obtained. Justice, therefore, is to be administered without argument.² If the witch wins, she is to receive a five rupee reward; if she loses, she is to be banished from the village.

Sūtra: boksīlāi bādi na dinu //
boksīlāi bādi na dinu bhanyāko kyā artha bhanyā. boksīko
bigo jiy saṃbandhi hunāle bigo bādhnu sakdina ra bādi paunna.
ekoharo nyāy dinu ra boksīle jityo bhanyā pāmc rupaiyāko pagari
dinu. hāri bhanyā gāuṃ bāṭa nikāli dinu. bhannyā yasto sthiti
bāmdhi baksanu bhayo.

Sutra: No witness for the witch (Boksi)

1. bādi, plaintiff. I have taken it in the sense of witness.
2. ekoharo, lit. "one-sided", i.e. without legal procedure which would involve argument for and against her.