
MARKETING FOR GURUS

GLEANNED FROM PREMODERN INDIAN TEXTS

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- Introduction
- The instruments
 - Product
 - Distribution
 - Price
 - Communication
- Conclusion

INTRODUCTION: ORIGINAL MEANINGS

- *guru*:
 - heavy, weighty,
 - as in Latin *vir gravis*:
 - a weighty man,
 - i.e. a man of importance and dignity
- *ācārya*:
 - the man who teaches the right conduct
 - the man who must be approached

INTRODUCTION: TARGET GROUPS

- (young) students (so that the *guru* is an *ācārya*)
- followers in a “sect” (with the *guru* as the leader or founder)
- the king whom the *guru* turns to for patronage

INTRODUCTION: DID *GURUS* WANT SUCCESS?

- Taittirīya Upanisad (6. to 5. centuries BCE): The teacher's prayer

Students, may they come to me!

Students, may they flock to me!

...

May I be famous among men!

More affluent than the very rich!

- Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (7. to 6. centuries BCE):

Once when Janaka, the king of Videha, was formally seated, Yājñavalkya came up to him.

Janaka asked him: “Yājñavalkya, why have you come? Are you after cows or subtle disquisitions?”

He replied: “Both, your majesty.”

INTRODUCTION: MARKETING MIX

- product instruments
configuration of something valued
- distribution instruments
placing the offer at the disposal
- price instruments
determination of the compensation and sacrifices
- communication instruments
bringing the offer to the attention and
influencing the feelings and
preferences about it

PRODUCT INSTRUMENTS: TEACHING OF THE VEDA

- Āpastamba-Dharmasūtra (3. to 2. centuries BCE) or
- Vaiṣṇava-Dharmaśāstra (7. century CE):

The period of study begins before the pupil is

- 8 years (for a Brahmin)
 - 11 years (for a Kṣatriya)
 - 12 years (for Vaiśya)
- Three *Vedas* (composition started before 1000 BCE)
= 3 times 12 years = 36 years
 - Mānava-Dharmaśāstra (2. to 3. centuries CE):

After he has learnt in the proper order the three Vedas or two of them, or at least one, without violating his chastity, he should undertake the householder's order of life.

PRODUCT INSTRUMENTS: EDUCATIONAL SAṂSKĀRAS

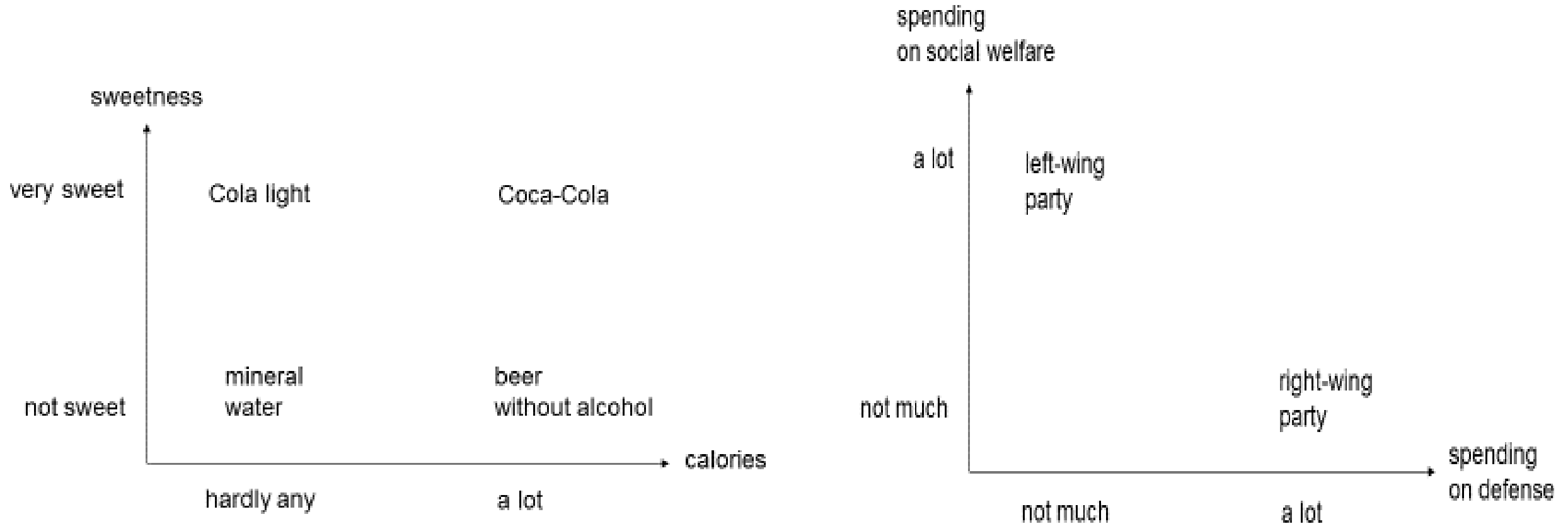
- *Veda* teaching occurs in the framework of well-established rituals.
- The beginning of the student's stay in the teacher's house is called *upanayana* (leading [the student] near [the teacher by his guardians]).
- Vaiṣṇava-Dharmaśāstra:
 - His first birth is from his mother,
while the second takes place at the tying of the Muñja-grass girdle [part of upanayana ceremony, HW].
At his birth, the Sāvitrī verse is his mother, and the teacher is his father.
By this alone do they attain the status of twice-born.
- The end of studies is often marked by the ceremony called
 - *snāna* (bath) and/or
 - *samāvartana* (returning).

PRODUCT INSTRUMENTS: BED AND BOARD

- The students obtain lodging and food at the *guru's* house.
- In return, the students had to beg for food and to provide personal services to the guru.
 - product instrument (teaches humility)
 - price instrument (compensation and sacrifices)
- Āpastamba-Dharmasūtra specify rules of conduct:

He shall promote his teacher's welfare, never contradict him, and occupy a lower seat and bed.

PRODUCT INSTRUMENTS: COMMODITY SPACE, POLITICAL SPACE



PRODUCT INSTRUMENTS: RELIGIOUS SPACE

- Durkheim:

Les phénomènes religieux se rangent tout naturellement en deux catégories fondamentales: les croyances et les rites.

- Here: doctrines (rather than beliefs) because the guru as an actor

- cannot offer beliefs
- but teaches doctrines



PRODUCT INSTRUMENTS: INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL AND RELIGIOUS SPACE

- *astika* (accepting the authority of the Veda, believing in world beyond, etc.) versus *nāstika* (not doing some or any of the above)
- accepting different means of proof
- different conceptions (if any) of *saṃsāra*
- different conceptions (if any) of *karma*
- the six schools:
 - Nyāya – the School of Logic
 - Vaiśeṣika – the School of Atomism
 - Sāṃkhya – the School of dualistic Determination
 - Yoga – the School of classical Yoga
 - Mīmāṃsā – the School of Vedic Exegesis
 - Vedānta – the School based upon the Upaniṣads

PRODUCT INSTRUMENTS: RELIGIOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- If a religious entrepreneur founds a new “religion”, he needs to differ from others.
- However, he has to offer something that people can relate to. This is done
 - by claiming to build on a tradition
 - by claiming to correct a distorted view and/or practice.

DISTRIBUTION INSTRUMENTS

- Kings have called teachers into their palaces. For example, Droṇa was asked to teach Bhīṣma's nephews in the Mahābhārata.
- Wandering teachers (Buddhist and others) offered their services.
- Inversely, itinerant students may also have roamed India.

- The standard teaching model for many centuries is the *ācārya-guru* who offers his services in his own house, the so-called *ācāryakula* or *gurukula*.

PRICE INSTRUMENTS: BEGGING FOR ALMS

- Āpastamba-Dharmasūtra (3. to 2. centuries BCE) :

Morning and evening he shall go out to beg with a bowl, soliciting from those who are not degraded or heinous sinners, and bringing all he receives to his teacher.

- Mānava-Dharmaśāstra (2. to 3. centuries CE):

If the student is not successful, it is the teacher's duty to give him food. Thus, alms begged by the student are an uncertain income for the teacher.

- Kāṭhaka-Gṛhya-Sūtra (before 500 BCE):

If the student went to other teachers on top of the one who initiated him, it is the initiating teacher who obtains the alms.

PRICE INSTRUMENTS: SERVICES IN THE GURU'S HOUSE

- Āpastamba-Dharmasūtra:

he should say when he goes to sleep: 'I have taken care of the man who takes care of the Law.'

Every night he should get his teacher ready for bed by washing and pressing his feet, and, when permitted, lie down to sleep himself.

PRICE INSTRUMENTS: DAKṢIṆĀ (FEE FOR VEDIC STUDY)

- Taittirīya Upanisad (gift differentiation):

After the completion of vedic study, the teacher admonishes his resident pupil:

“Speak the truth. Follow the Law.

Do not neglect your private recitation of the Veda.

After you have given a valuable gift to the teacher, do not cut off your family line.”

Treat your mother like a god. Treat your father like a god.

Treat your teacher like a god. Treat your guests like gods.”

- Āpastamba-Dharmasūtra:

After learning as much as he can, he should present the fee for vedic study, a fee that is procured righteously and according to his ability.

If his teacher has fallen into hardship, however, he may seize it from an Ugra or a Śūdra.

[An Ugra has a Kṣatriya father and a Śūdra mother.]

PRICE INSTRUMENTS: KING'S REWARD FOR PERSONAL TEACHING

- Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad:

Yājñavalkya amazes the king of Videha with his wisdom.

King: I'll give you a thousand cows together with the bulls and elephants!

Yājñavalkya: My father believed that one should never accept a gift before giving instruction. Let's hear what else they have told you.

Yājñavalkya disproves assertions such as “*Brahman* is breath”.

Yājñavalkya: About this self (*ātman*) one cannot say ‘not–, not–.’ He is ungraspable, for he cannot be grasped. ...
He is not bound; yet he neither trembles in fear nor suffers injury.
Truly, Janaka, you have attained freedom from fear.

King: May that freedom be yours too, Yājñavalkya, you who have taught us that freedom from fear.
Homage to you! These people of Videha and I myself—here we are at your service.

PRICE INSTRUMENTS: PHILOSOPHICAL COMPETITION

- Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad:

Janaka, the king of Videha, once set out to perform a sacrifice at which he intended to give lavish gifts to the officiating priests. ... So he corralled a thousand cows; to the horn of each cow were tied ten pieces of gold. He then addressed those Brahmins:

“Distinguish Brahmins! Let the most learned man among you drive away those cows.”

Yājñavalkya is challenged by eight Brahmins and manages to silence each of them.

COMMUNICATION INSTRUMENTS: ATTENTION

- Philosophical competition
- Asking questions (Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad)

Jaivali asks Śvetaketu: Did your father teach you?

Śvetaketu: Yes.

Jaivali: Do you know how people, when they die, go by different paths?

Śvetaketu: No.

Jaivali asks Śvetaketu to stay, but the latter runs to his father. Finally, Jaivali does not win the boy as student, but his father instead, presumably for a generous remuneration.

COMMUNICATION INSTRUMENTS: PREFERENCES

- Mānava-Dharmaśāstra (the value of knowledge and learning):

Wealth, kin, age, ritual life, and the fifth, knowledge-these are the grounds for respect; and each subsequent one carries greater weight than each preceding.

- Vaiṣṇava-Dharmaśāstra (ancestor worship):

At the beginning and at the end of a vedic lesson, the pupil should clasp his teacher's feet and recite the sacred syllable OM.

And within this context, when he recites Ṛg-verses, by that his ancestors become sated with ghee; when he recites Yajus-formulas, with honey; when he recites Sāman-chants, with milk; when he recites Atharvan-formulas, with meat; and when he recites Purāṇas, Itihāsas, Vedic Supplements, and Legal Treatises, with rice.

CONCLUSION

- Gurus aspire to become *yaujanaśatika*, i.e., a guru for whom students travel a long distance -- hundred *yojanas*.
- Some instruments serve several purposes, contributing to the guru's success.
- Our approach is ahistoric. We adduce examples from Old Indian texts but do not check whether these procedures were actually used in a given time and place. The reader interested in the history of Ancient Indian education, is referred to Mookerji (1951) and Scharfe (2002).