

# BRAHMANICAL THEORIES OF THE GIFT

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- ❖ Indian economics
- ❖ Giving without reciprocity
- ❖ Cooperative approach
- ❖ *Śraddhā* and *śakti*
- ❖ Non-cooperative approaches
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- ❖ Selfserving Brahmins

When a person gives as a matter of routine obligation to worthy recipients independently of any specific purpose, it is called a Gift Based On Duty (*dharmadāna*).

Moreover a gift becomes greater and greater in accordance with the excellence of the recipient. Thus, one should know that when a gift is given to one's teacher, one's mother, one's father, and a Vedic savant, each time the resulting merit or sin becomes increasingly a hundred-thousand times greater.

Non-reciprocal gifts are like milking a cow whose calf has died and which is consumed with thirst. Worldly matters do not pertain to the law; a giver obtains an unseen gift and is not seen enjoying that gift, since he does not return to this world and his gift is endless.

# Cooperative game theory I

Gift from a player G (the giver) to another player R (the receiver). Coalition function  $v$  is given by

1.  $v(G) = 0$
2.  $v(R) = 0$  and
3.  $v(G, R) = m - c$

# Cooperative game theory II

The Shapley values:

1.  $Sh_G = \frac{m-c}{2}$  and

2.  $Sh_R = \frac{m-c}{2},$

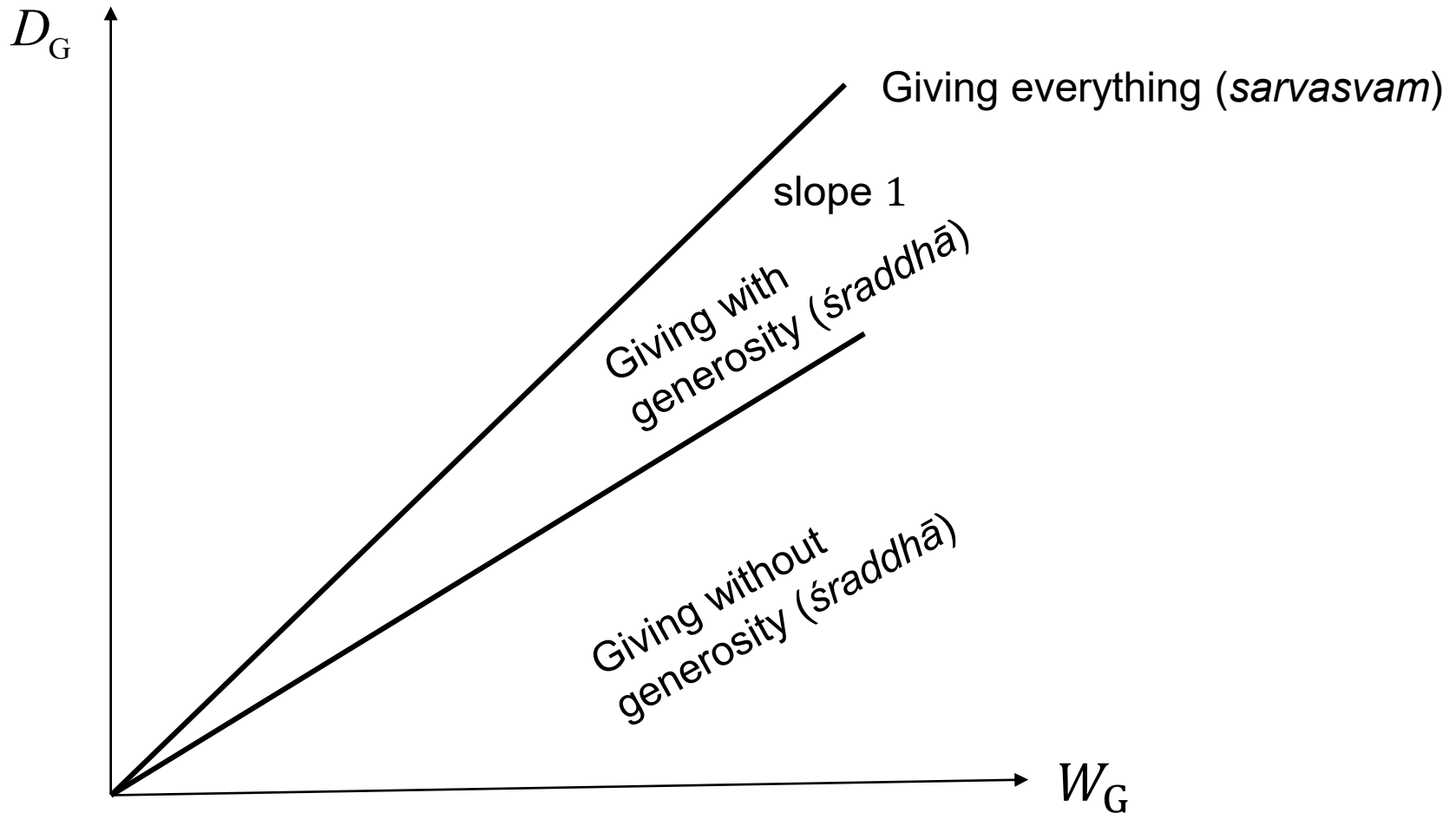
i.e., the players equally share the gain of  $m - c$ . To the Indian theoreticians on *dharmadāna*, the giver obtains merit  $m$  by giving up  $D$ . Thus, one can postulate

1.  $Sh_G = \frac{m-c}{2} = m - D$  () and hence

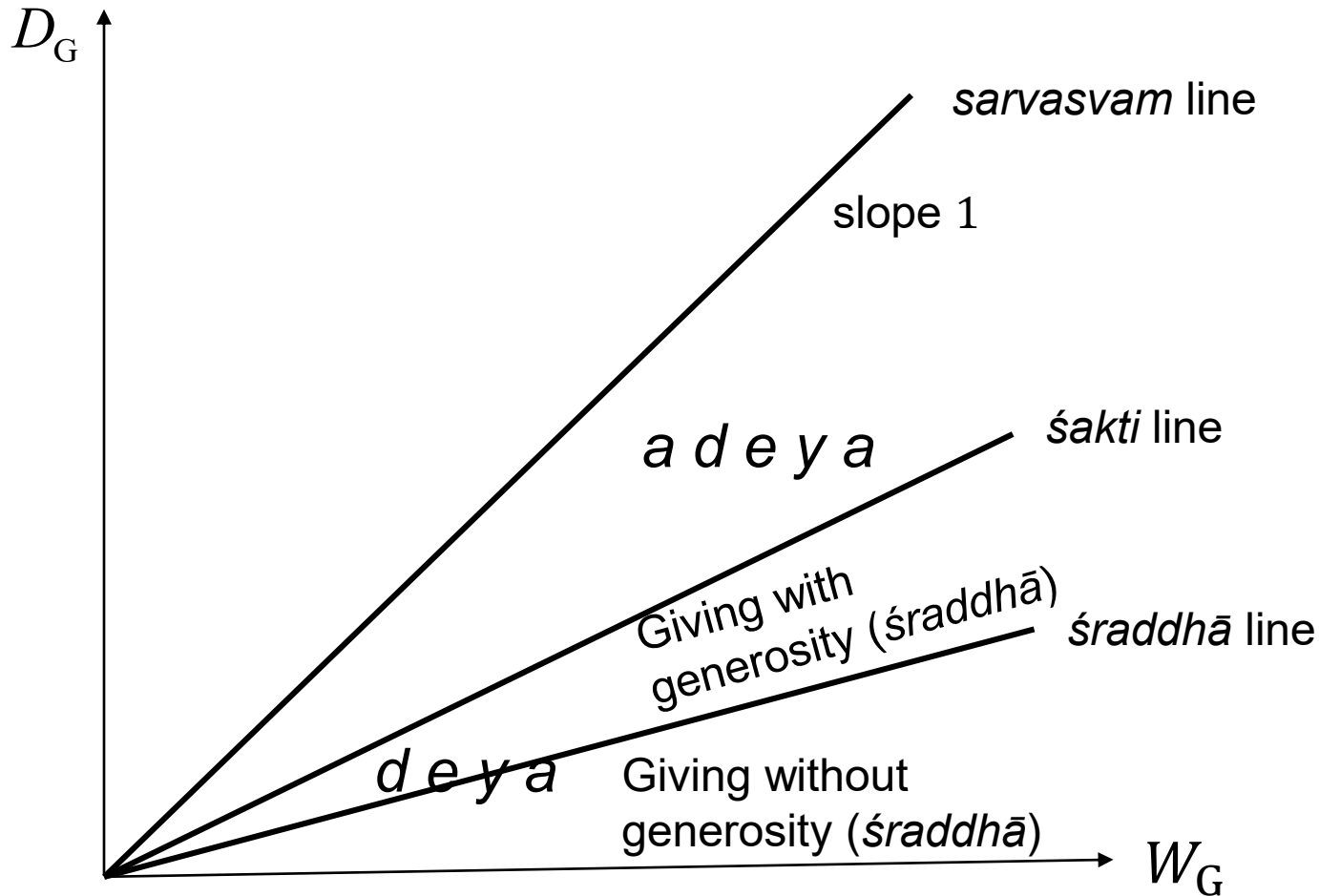
2.  $D^* = \frac{m+c}{2}$

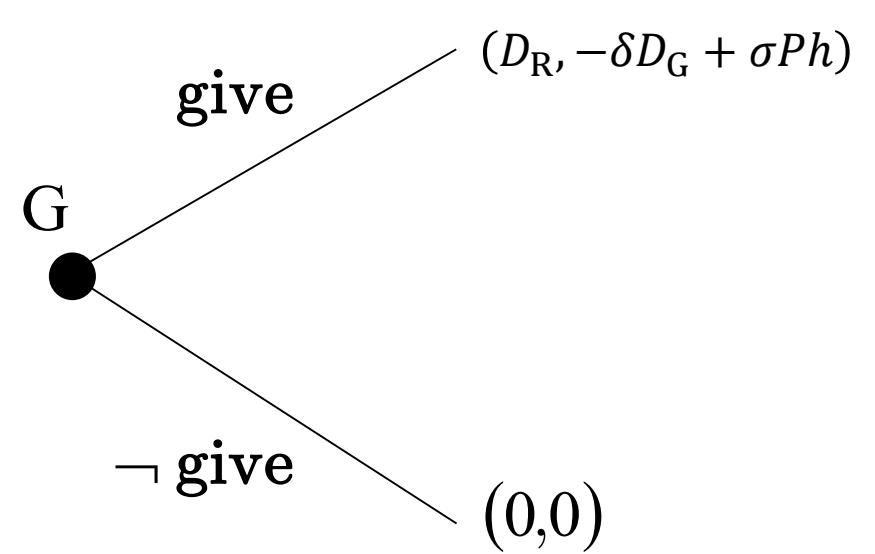
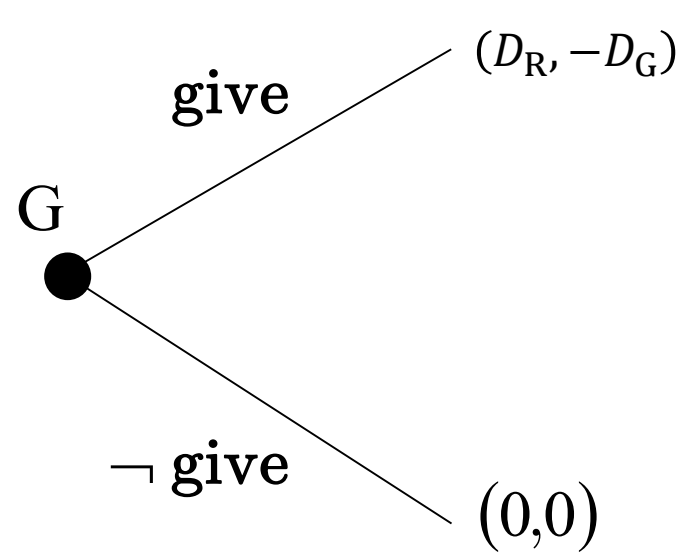
Similarly,  $Sh_R = \frac{m-c}{2} = D - c$

Whether small or large, the size of a gift does not bring about its benefits, but rather the spirit of generosity and the means available to the donor associated with a gift—indeed, only these two things cause prosperity or ruin.



So long as it does not hurt his family, a man can give away any of his property except for his wife and his sons, but not the entirety of his wealth if he has descendants, nor anything he has promised to another.

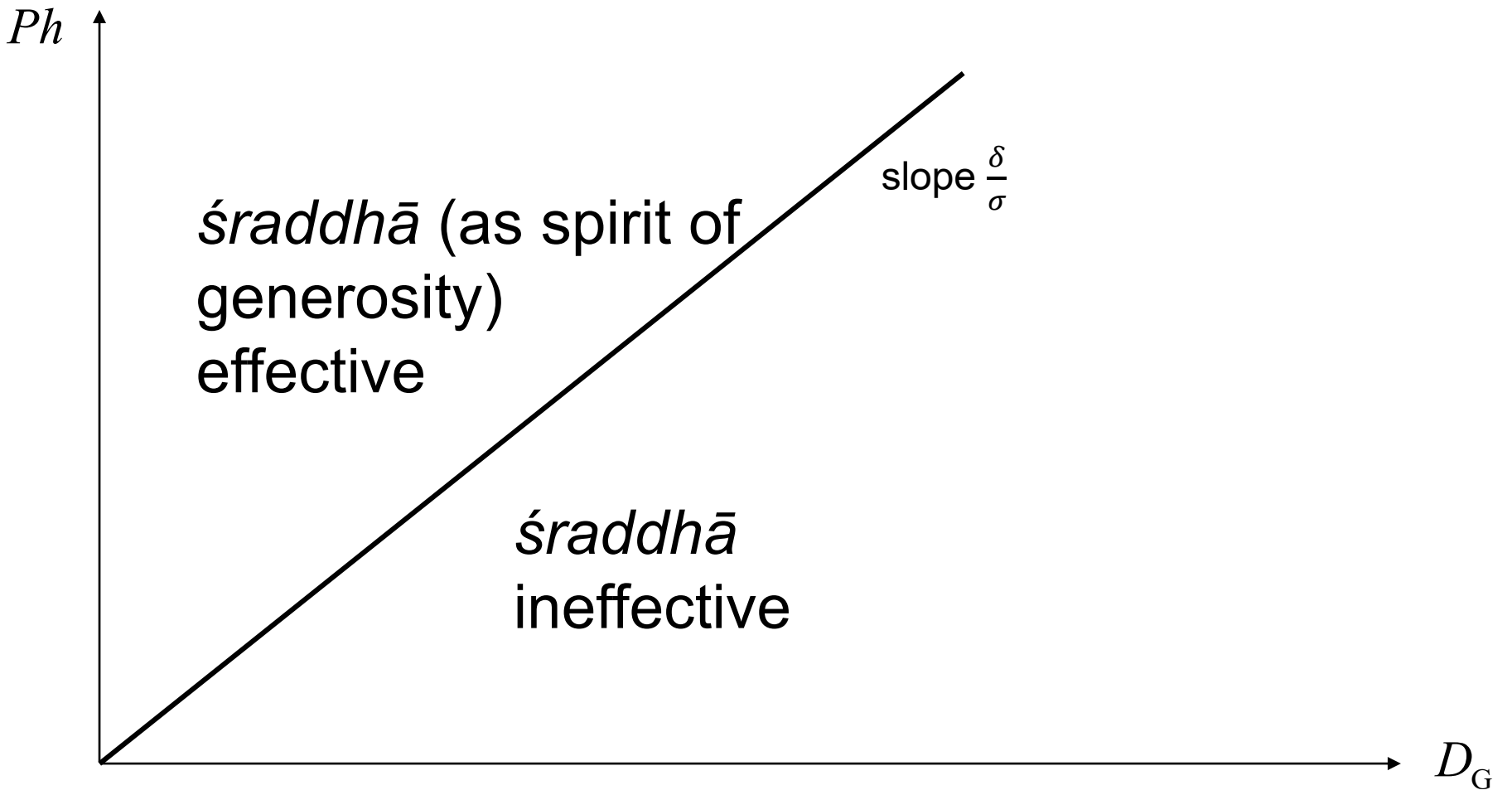




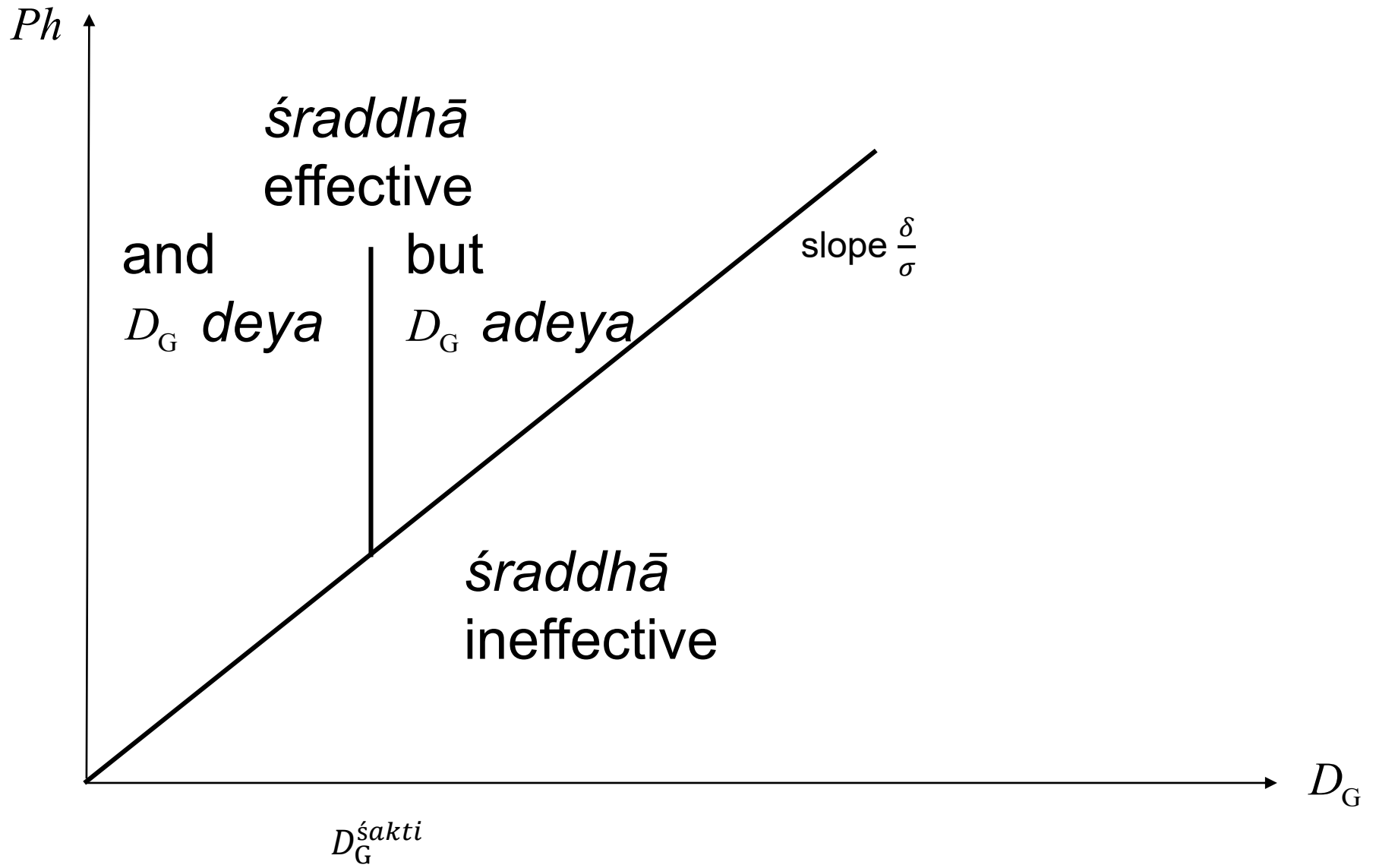
An owner's wealth is what he gives and what he eats, for others fool around with the wife and wealth of a dead man.

Donating is worthwhile if the fruit-gift ratio is sufficiently large, i.e., if

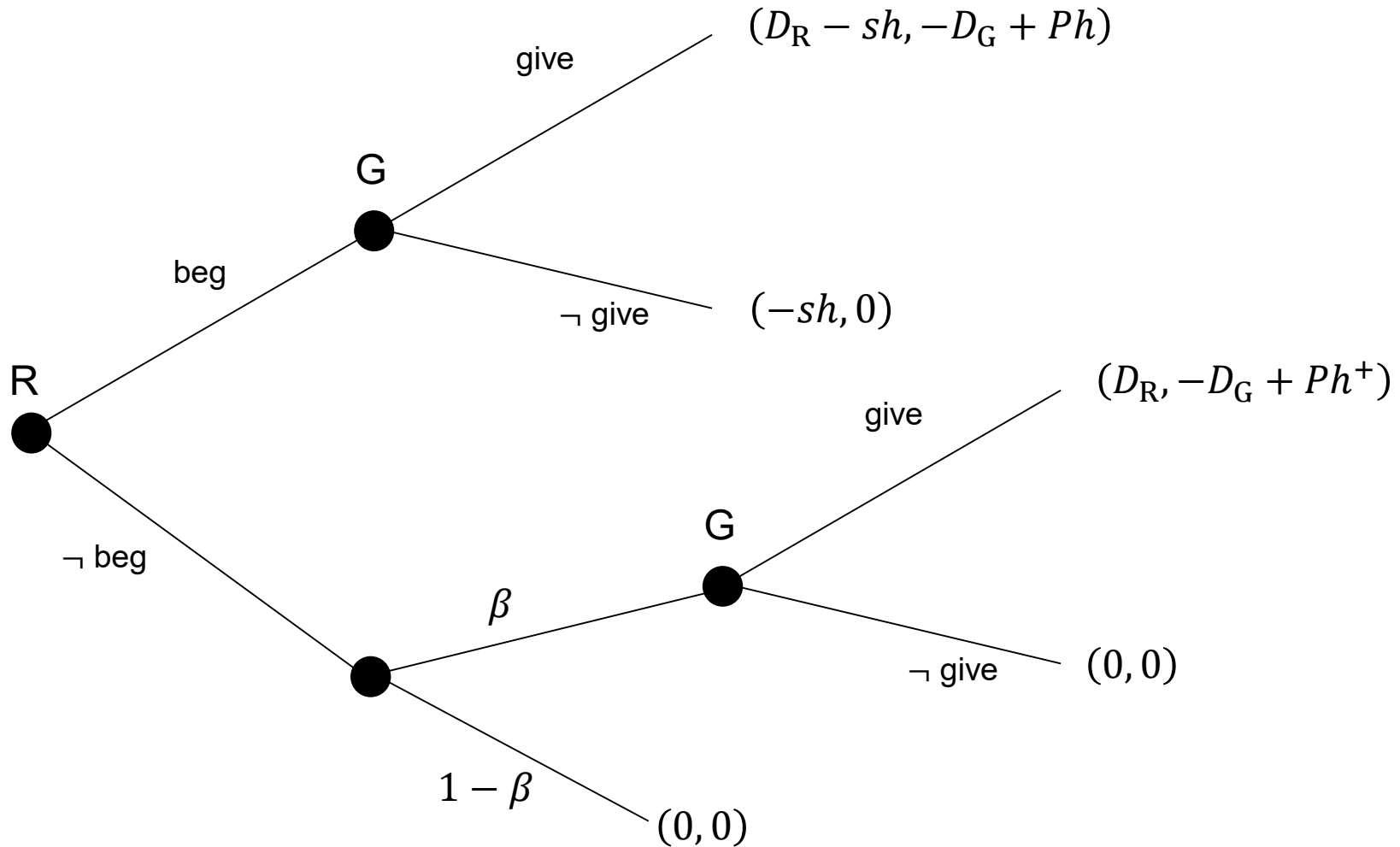
$$\frac{Ph}{D_G} > \frac{\delta}{\sigma}$$

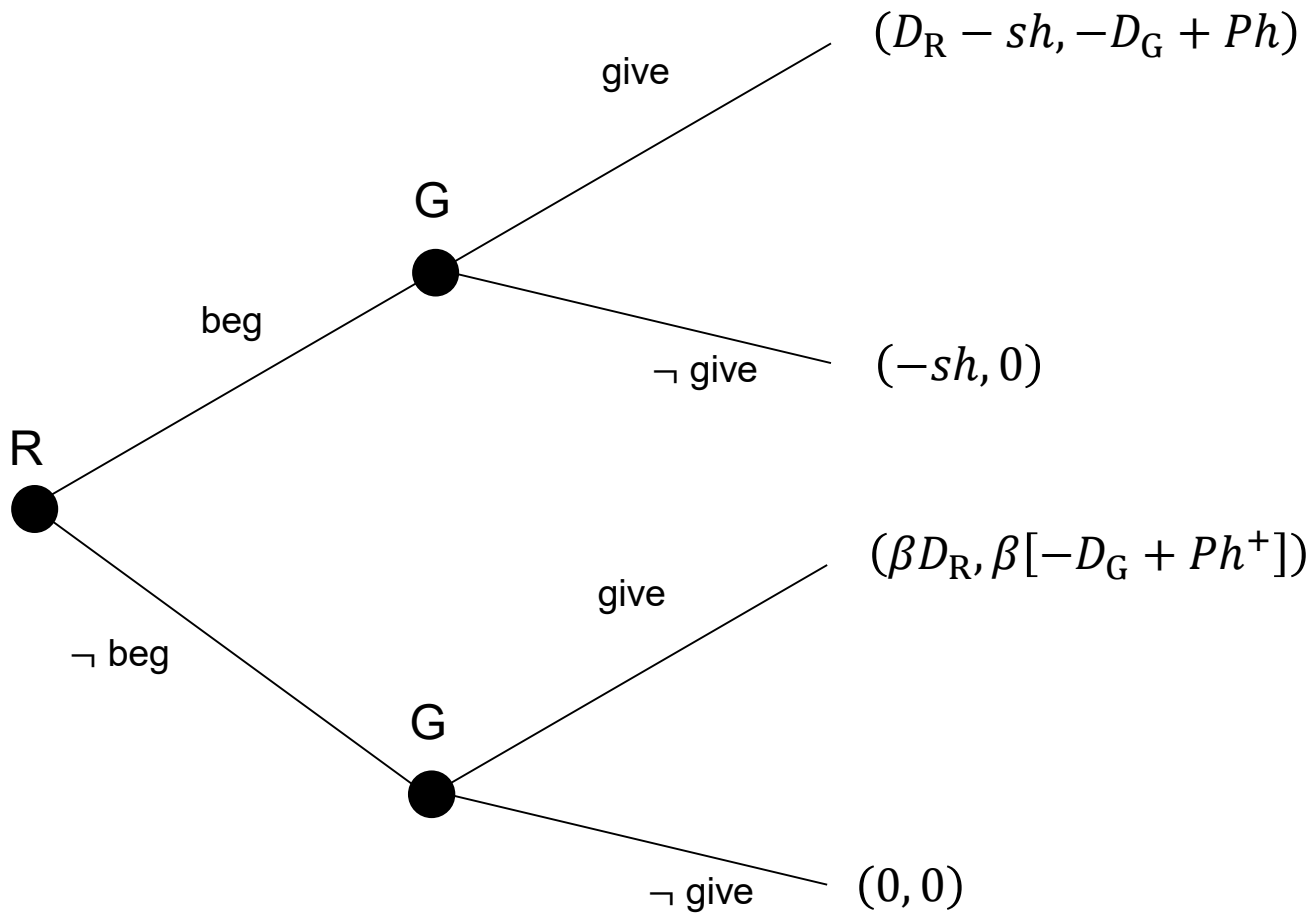


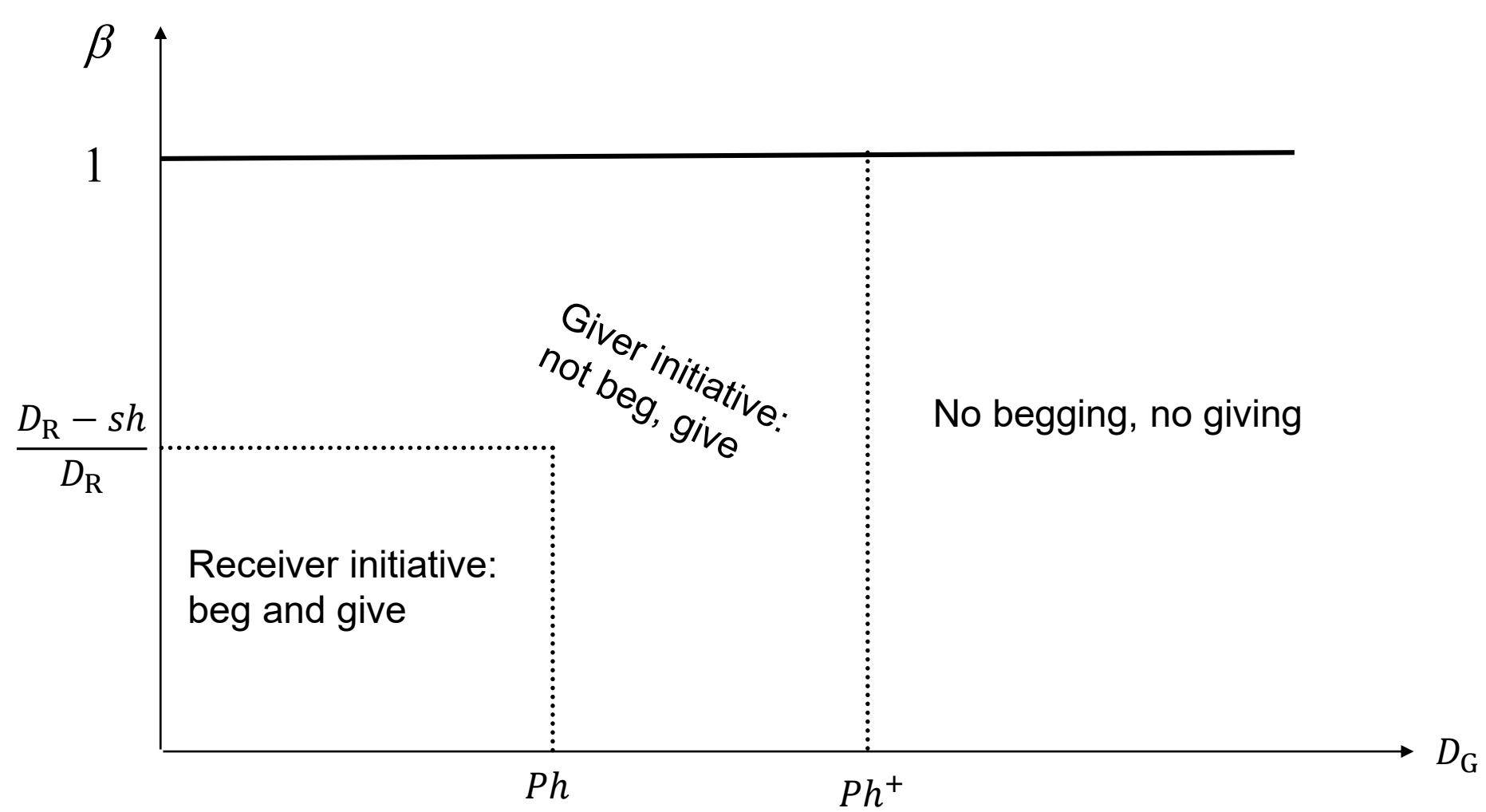




If someone approaches a recipient and gives him a gift or gives a gift that has not been asked for, the merit from this gift will never end, though the ocean will.







# Selfserving Brahmins?

Well, but

1. Tough requirements for a worthy recipient (c in the cooperative model)
2. Functional theory of the gift

1. Discipline, austerity, self-control, liberality, truthfulness, purity, vedic learning, compassion, erudition, intelligence, and religious faith—these are the characteristics of a Brahmin.

One can know a person's virtue by living with him, his purity by interacting with him, and his wisdom by talking with him. A recipient [*pātra*, HW] should be tested in these three things.

2. Brahma, after performing ascetic toil, created Brahmans to protect the Veda, to bring satisfaction to ancestors and gods, and to safeguard dharma.