

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-55690

Title: Partition of Inheritance for the Four Castes in the Agni Purāṇa, Vāmana Purāṇa and Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa

Recommendation:

Accept after minor revision.....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality			✓	
Clarity			✓	
Significance		✓		

Reviewer Name: Faheem Abdul Muneeb

Reviewer's Comment

This manuscript offers a detailed and textually grounded examination of inheritance and partition norms as articulated in major Purāṇic sources, with specific focus on the Agni Purāṇa, Vāmana Purāṇa and Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa. The study stands out for its intensive engagement with classical Hindu legal and religious literature and for bringing Purāṇic material into conversation with the Mitākṣarā and Dāyabhāga traditions. By tracing concepts such as dāya, strīdhana, putra classifications, and ownership across varṇas, the author highlights the complexity and internal differentiation of pre-modern Hindu inheritance regimes. The paper makes a meaningful contribution to the fields of Indology, dharmaśāstra studies, and legal history, particularly in its effort to foreground gendered and caste-based dimensions of property rights. With some refinement in analytical framing and methodological clarity, this article has strong potential for publication.

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Detailed Review Report

Thematic Relevance and Conceptual Framing

The manuscript addresses a foundational yet underexplored dimension of Hindu legal tradition: the normative structuring of inheritance and partition across the four varṇas within Purāṇic literature. This focus is highly relevant, as most existing scholarship privileges smṛti texts and later commentaries, often marginalising the Purāṇas as juridical sources. By centring the Agni, Vāmana and Bhāgavata Purāṇas, the author broadens the evidentiary base for understanding classical property regimes and demonstrates that Purāṇic discourse is not merely mythological but deeply engaged with social regulation. The discussion of janmasvattva and uparivattva, as well as the contrast between Mitākṣarā and Dāyabhāga positions, is accurate and conceptually sound. However, the manuscript would benefit from a more explicit articulation of its central analytical purpose. At present, the study moves between description, doctrinal exposition, and social implication without clearly stating whether its primary aim is historical reconstruction, normative analysis, or socio-legal critique. A sharper conceptual framing in the introduction would significantly strengthen the coherence of the argument.

Literature Review and Contextualization

The manuscript demonstrates strong familiarity with classical sources, including Vedic references, smṛti texts, and traditional interpretations. The author's engagement with Yājñavalkya Smṛti, Gautama Dharmasūtra, and related materials is particularly commendable and lends textual authority to the discussion. The treatment of the evolution of inheritance concepts from Vedic to Purāṇic periods is insightful and suggests an awareness of historical layering within the tradition. That said, the literature review is heavily weighted toward primary and traditional sources, with relatively limited engagement with contemporary secondary scholarship in English. Incorporating works by modern Indologists, legal historians, and gender scholars would help situate the paper within current academic debates and enhance its critical depth. This would also allow the author to engage more explicitly with questions of interpretation, anachronism, and ideological function.

Methodology and Study Design

The manuscript is essentially a qualitative, text-based study grounded in close reading of Sanskrit and Hindi sources. While this is appropriate for the subject matter, the methodology is not explicitly articulated. The paper would benefit from a short methodological note explaining the criteria for source

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selection, the principles guiding translation and interpretation, and the scope of textual analysis. At present, the reader is left to infer these elements, which weakens the academic transparency of the study. Clarifying whether the approach is philological, doctrinal, or socio-historical would also help readers better understand the author's analytical stance. Despite this, the internal consistency of the textual discussion suggests a careful and informed reading of the sources.

Analysis of Inheritance, Caste, and Gender

One of the strongest aspects of the manuscript is its detailed treatment of caste-differentiated inheritance rules and the classification of sons. The discussion of aurasa, kṣetrāja, dattaka, kṛtrima, and other categories is thorough and demonstrates the author's command of classical classifications. Similarly, the section on strīdhana is valuable, as it brings out the nuanced and conditional nature of women's property rights within the tradition. The author rightly notes that while women's access to property was recognised, it was often mediated through marital status, lineage, and ritual considerations. This analysis has clear contemporary relevance, particularly in debates on gender justice and legal reform, even if the manuscript does not explicitly frame it in these terms. However, the paper sometimes remains at the level of enumeration of rules rather than moving toward analytical synthesis. Greater interpretive commentary on why such distinctions existed and what social functions they served would deepen the contribution.

Discussion and Interpretive Depth

The later sections of the manuscript gesture toward broader philosophical and ethical dimensions of property, labour, and social responsibility, particularly through references to Bhāgavata Purāṇa and notions of dharma and social welfare. This is an important and promising direction, as it situates inheritance not merely as a legal mechanism but as part of a moral economy. The reflections on social harmony, restraint, and the limits of private ownership add depth to the discussion and open space for normative interpretation. Nevertheless, these insights could be more systematically integrated with the earlier doctrinal analysis. At present, the transition from legal rules to ethical reflection is somewhat abrupt. A more structured synthesis linking juridical norms, caste hierarchy, gender relations, and moral philosophy would greatly enhance the analytical strength of the paper.

Writing Quality and Structure

The manuscript is generally well organised, moving from conceptual foundations to specific rules and then to broader reflections. The language is formal and appropriate for an academic audience, and the

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author's familiarity with technical terminology is evident. However, there are issues of typographical consistency, formatting, and occasional repetition that require editorial attention. Long paragraphs listing multiple rules or categories could be streamlined for better readability. Standardising references and ensuring consistency in transliteration and citation style will also improve the professional presentation of the paper.

Recommendation

Accept with minor revisions.

This manuscript is a serious, textually rich, and intellectually committed study of inheritance and partition in Purāṇic literature. Its strength lies in its deep engagement with classical sources and its attention to caste and gender dimensions of property rights. Minor revisions focusing on clearer conceptual framing, explicit methodological articulation, stronger analytical synthesis, and light editorial refinement will significantly enhance its clarity and scholarly impact. Once revised, the paper will make a valuable contribution to the study of dharmaśāstra, Hindu legal tradition, and South Asian social history.