

# HISTORY OF THE DHARMA ŚĀSTRA

(ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL LAW)

BY

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## VOL. II PART I

## PREFACE

It is a little over ten years since the first volume of my History of Dharma Śāstra was published. In the preface to that volume I expressed the hope that time and health permitting I might issue in a few years the second volume dealing with the development of the various subjects comprised in Dharma-śāstra. For several years thereafter whatever leisure I could secure from professional work was devoted to the collection and orderly assortment of the vast Literature on Dharma-śāstra. After my return from a few months' visit to Europe in 1937 I commenced the work of writing the second volume. It soon became apparent to me that to compress within the limits of a single volume the development of the thousand and one topics that fall within the purview of Dharma Śāstra would present only a scrappy and faint outline of the whole field. To add to the difficulties of my task my old painful complaint (duodenal ulcer) recurred with far greater virulence than before, so much so that, partly on medical advice and partly out of despair, in October 1938 I gave up the work altogether. When relief did not come even after six months' total abstinence from literary labours I resumed, in spite of my extremely painful complaint, the work of writing, for fear that otherwise the extensive materials that I had been collecting for nearly two decades might be entirely lost to the world of Sanskrit scholars and that my labours might be altogether wasted. Being afraid that my strength and resolution may not last till the completion of the rather ambitious undertaking, I decided upon bringing out in two volumes the development of the various subjects comprised in Dharma-śāstra. The present volume contains the treatment of *varṇa* and *āśrama*, the *saṃskāras*, *ahnika* and *acāra*, *dāna*, *pratiṣṭha* and *utsarga*, and *śrauta* (vedic) sacrifices. The next volume (the last) will deal with the following topics: *vyavahāra* (Law and procedure), *aśauca* (impurity on birth and death), *śrāddha*, *prāyaścitta*, *tīrtha*, *vrata*, *kāla*, *śānti*, the influence of the Purva mīmāṃsā and other śāstras on Dharma-śāstra, customs and usages modifying Dharma-śāstra, the philosophical background of Dharma-śāstra, and future developments in Dharma-śāstra. Looking to my past performance I am unwilling to make any promise about the time when the next volume may be History of Dharma-śāstra expected to be published. I may state, however, that in view of the fact that at present I am in much better health than I have been for several years I shall try to publish it in three years more.

Excellent works dealing with distinct topics of Dharma Śāstra have been given to the world by eminent scholars. But so far as I know no writer has yet attempted single-handed to survey the whole field of Dharma-śāstra. From that point of view this volume partakes of the nature of a pioneer undertaking. It is therefore to be expected that such an ambitious project will manifest the defects of all pioneer work. The circumstances (adverted to above) in which this work had to be written and the great hurry with which it had to be rushed through are other factors that are responsible for the awkward or obscure expressions and the errors that it may contain. I mention these matters for lessening the surprise that such blemishes might lead my friends to feel and not for blunting the edge of adverse criticism. The critic is certainly entitled to mercilessly criticize the work for its shortcomings and mistakes. Some readers may complain that the present work is prolix, while others may say that the space devoted to several topics is meagre. I have tried to pursue a middle course.

There was great temptation throughout this work to compare ancient and medieval Indian customs, usages and beliefs as disclosed by Dharma-śāstra works with those of other peoples and countries. But I have tried to omit, as far as possible, such comparisons. Whenever I indulge in them I do so for several reasons. It is the fashion among many writers, both European and Indian, to hold the caste system and the Dharma śāstra view of life responsible for most of the evils from which India suffers at present. To a very large extent I do not subscribe to that view. I have endeavoured to

show that human nature being the same in essentials throughout the world, the same tendencies and evils manifest themselves in all countries, the same abuses prevail and the same perversions of originally beneficent institutions take place everywhere and anywhere, whether particular countries or societies are within the grip of the caste system or any other casteless system. Undoubtedly the caste system has in fact produced certain evils, but it is not singular in this respect. No system is perfect and immune from evil effects. Though I have been brought up in the midst of the Brahmanical system, I hope it will be conceded by scholars that I have shown both sides of the picture and that I have endeavoured to write with detachment.

A few words must be said about the extensive quotations from Sanskrit works and the references to modern Indian Legislation and case-law. For those who cannot read English (most paṇḍits and śāstris do not) the quotations will be of great help in understanding at least the trend of the arguments. Besides Indian scholars are as a class poor and cannot afford to purchase numerous books. Nor are there many good libraries in India where all works of reference can be had. For all these reasons thousands of quotations have been cited in the footnotes. The quotations are mostly drawn from published works and references to mss. are few and far between. I hope that the numerous quotations will not intrude themselves on the attention of those who want to read only the English portion of the work. Legislative enactments and case-law have been referred to for showing that many regulations of Dharma-śāstra are still very much alive, that they govern the every-day life of Hindus and permeate all classes of Hindu society in spite of the fact that a considerable part of Dharma Śāstras become obsolete. Similar remarks apply to the numerous references to inscriptions on stone and copper. These latter serve to prove that rules laid down in the Dharma Śāstra were throughout two thousand years observed by the people and enforced by kings and that such rules were not mere precepts composed by dreamers or scholastic pedants.

I acknowledge with great pleasure that I am under deep obligations to many predecessors and workers in the same and other fields and to many friends. Among the works to which I had to refer constantly and from which I derived the greatest benefit I must specially refer to the following: Bloomfield's Vedic Concordance, the Vedic Index of Professors Macdonell and Keith, the Sacred Books of the East edited by Max Muller (vol. II, VII, XII, XIV, XXV, XXVI, XXIX, XXX, XXXIII, XLI, XLIII, XLIV).

Besides, assistance in various ways during the progress of the work for over three years was very kindly rendered by a host of friends, among whom I should like to make special mention of Prof. H. D. Velankar, Prof. Rangaswami Ayyangar Prof. P. P. S. Sāstrī, Dr. Alsdorf, Mr. Bhabatosh Bhattacharya, Mr. N. G. Chapekar, Mr. G. H. Khare, Mr. N. C. Bapat, Pandit Rangacharya Reddi, Mr. L. S. Dravid Pandit S. D. Satavlekar, Mr. P. K. Gode. Thanks are due to all these and other friends for their help and interest in this volume, I must state, however, that I alone am responsible for the views and mistakes contained in this work.

In a work containing thousands of quotations and references it is very likely that many slips have occurred. Besides it is very much to be regretted that several misprints have crept into the footnotes by the loss or displacement of dots and other loose parts of Sanskrit letters in the process of printing.

15th June 1941

P. V. KANE

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- A.I.R. = All India Reporter (edited by Mr. V. V. Chitaley of Nagpur).  
 Ait. Br. = Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.  
 All. = Indian Law Reports, Allahabad Series.  
 Anan. or Anand. = Anandaśrama Press edition, Poona.  
 Āp. Dh. S. = Āpastamba-Dharma Sūtra.  
 Āp. gr. = Āpastamba-gr̥hya-sūtra.  
 Āp. M. P. = Āpastamba-mantra-pāṭha.  
 Āp. śr. = Āpastamba-Srauta-sūtra.  
 Aśv. gr. = Āśvalāyana-gr̥hya-sūtra.  
 Aśv. Sr. = Āśvalāyana -śrauta-sūtra.  
 A.S.W.I. = Archaeological Survey of Western India Reports.  
 Baud. Dh. S. = Baudhāyana-dharma-sūtra.  
 Baud. gr. = Baudhāyana-gr̥hya-sūtra.  
 Baud. śr. = Baudhāyana-śrautasūtra.  
 Bhar. gr. = Bharadvāja-gr̥hya-sūtra.  
 B. I. = Bibliotheca Indica series, Calcutta.  
 Bom. = Indian Law Reports, Bombay Series.  
 Bom. H.C.R. = Bombay High Court Reports (vol. I-XII).  
 Bom. L.R. = Bombay Law Reporter (edited by Ratanlal and Dhirajlal).  
 B.O.R.I. = Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.  
 Br. Up. = Brhadaraṇyaka Upaniṣad.  
 Cal. Indian Law Reports, Calcutta Series.  
 Chan. Up. or Ch. Up. = Chāṇḍogya Upaniṣad.  
 C. I.I. = (Volumes of) Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.  
 C. L.J. = Calcutta Law Journal.  
 Com. = Commentator or Commentary (according to context).  
 Cr. ed. = Critical Edition of the Mahābharata, published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.  
 C.W.N. = Calcutta Weekly Notes (Law Reports).  
 D.C. = Deccan College Collection of Sanskrit Mas.  
 Dh.S. = Dharma Sūtra.  
 Die Frau = Die Frau im Brahmanismus by Dr. M. Winternitz (1920, Leipzig).  
 E.C. = Epigraphia Carnatica.  
 E.I. = Epigraphia Indica.  
 E.R.E. = Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (edited by James Hastings).  
 F. n. = Footnote.  
 Fick — The Social organization in North-east India in Buddha's time (translated from German by Dr. Shishirkumara Maitra, 1920).  
 Gaut. = Dharma Sūtra of Gautama.  
 Gr. R. = Gr̥hashta-ratnākara of Candeśvara.  
 G.S. = Gupta sarāvalī  
 H.A.S.L. = History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature by Prof. Max Muller (1859).  
 Hir. gr. = Hiraṇyakeśi-gr̥hya-sūtra.  
 I.A. = Indian Antiquary.  
 I.H.Q. = Indian Historical Quarterly.  
 I.L.R. = India Law Reports series.  
 Ins. = Inscription or inscriptions.  
 J.B.B.R.A.S. = a Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.  
 J.B.O.R.S. = Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.

- Jiv. = Pandit Jivananda's edition.  
 J. R.A.S. = Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London.  
 Kāthaka S. = Kāthaka Samhitā.  
 Kaut = Kauṭilya's Artha-śāstra.  
 L.R.I.A. = Law Reports, Indian Appeals (decided by the Privy Council) the number of the volume being inserted between L. R. and I. A.  
 Mait. S. = Maitrayanī-samhita.  
 Mānava gr. = Mānava-gr̥hyasūtra.  
 Mārkaṇḍeya, or Mārkaṇḍeya = Mārkaṇḍeya -Purāṇa.  
 Mit. = The commentary Mitākṣara on Yajñavalkya Smṛti.  
 Moo. I. A. = Moore's Indian Appeals.  
 Pan. = Panini's Aṣṭhādhyāyī.  
 P and M = Pollock and Maitland's History of English Law.  
 Par. gr. = Parāskara-gr̥hya-sūtra.  
 Par. M. = Parāśara-Madhavīya.  
 Pat. = Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya.  
 Q. = Quoted.  
 Rel. and Phil. = Prof. Keith's 'Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upaniṣads.'  
 Rig = Rig Veda.  
 Rit. Lit. = Hitlebrandt's 'Ritaal Litteratur Vedische Opfer und Zauber'.  
 Sam. K. = Samskāra-kaustubha of Anantadeva.  
 Sam. P. or Pr. = Saṃskāra-prakāśa of Mitrāmīśra.  
 S.R.M. = Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā of Gopīnatha.  
 San. Gr. = Saṅkhyāyana-gr̥hya-sūtra.  
 Śat. Br. = Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.  
 S.B.E. = Sacred Books of the East (ed. by Prof. Max Müller).  
 Sch. C. O. = Scheduled castes Order of 1936.  
 Sm. C. = Smṛti-candrika.  
 Sm. M. or Smr. M. = Smṛti-mukta-phala of Vaidyanātha.  
 Sr. P. N. = Srauta-padārtha-nirvacana.  
 S. V. = Sama Veda,  
 Tai. Ar. = Taittiriya Araṇyaka.  
 Tai. Br. = Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa.  
 Tai. S. or Sam. = Taittiriya Samhitā.  
 Tr. = Translation or translated (according to context).  
 Up. = Upaniṣad.  
 Vāj. S. = Vājasaneyya Saṃhitā.  
 Vaik. or Vaikhānasa = Vaikhānasa-smārta-sūtra.  
 Vas. or Vas. Dh. S. = Vasiṣṭha-dharma-sūtra.  
 Viṣṇu. Dh. S. = Viṣṇu-dharma-sūtra.  
 V. S. = Vedānta-sūtra.  
 Yaj. = Yajñavalkya-smṛti.  
 Yati. Dh. S. = Yati Dharma-sūtra  
 Z. D. M. G. = Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesselschnft.  
 H. D. S = History of Dharma-śāstra

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

(of important works and authors referred to in this volume)

N. B. Some dates, particularly of ancient works, are conjectural and only tentative.

4000 B.C.—1000 B.C.	The period of the Vedic Samhitas, Brāhmaṇas and Upanisads. It is possible that some hymns may go back to a period even earlier than 4000 B.C. and that some Upanisads (even out of those that are regarded as the principal and the earliest ones) are later than 1000 B.C.
800 B.C.— 500 B.C.	The Nirukta.
800 B.C. — 400 B.C.	The principal Srauta sūtras (of Āpastamba, Āśvalāyana, Baudhāyana, Katyāyana, Saṅkhyāyana, Latyāyana, Drahyāyana, Satyāśāḍha) and some of the gṛhya sūtras (Āśvalāyana, Āpastamba etc.).
600 B.C.— 300 B.C.	The Dharma Sūtras of Āpastamba, Gautama. Baudhāyana, Vasiṣṭha and the Gṛhya sūtras of Paraskara, Baudhāyana and some others.
600 B.C.— 300 B.C.	Panini.
500 B.C.— 200 B.C.	Jaimini's Purvamīmāṃsa-sūtra.
300 B.C.— 100 A.D.	Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra
150 B.C.	Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali.
200 B.C.— 200 A.D.	Manusmṛti.
100 A.D.—300 A.D.	Yajñavalkya-smṛti.
100 A.D.300 — A.D.	Visnu Dharma Sūtra.
100 A.D.400 — A.D.	Nārada-smṛti.
200 A.D. 500 — A.D.	Vaikhānasa-smārta-sūtra.
200 A.D.500 — A.D.	Sabara, Com. of Jaimini.
300 A.D.500 — A.D.	Brhaspati-smṛti (not yet found).
300 A.D. — 600 A.D.	Some of the extant Purāṇas viz. Vāyu, Viṣṇu, Mārkaṇḍeya, Kurma, Matsya.
400 A.D. — 600 A.D.	Kātyāyana-smṛti (not yet found).
505 A.D.— 587 A.D.	Varaha-mihira, author of Brhat-samhita.
650 A.D.750 A.D.	Tantra-vartika of Kumarila.
788 A.D.820 A.D.	Saṅkarācārya, the great Advaita philosopher,
600 A.D.900 A.D.	Most of the other smṛtis and some of the Purāṇas.
800 A.D.850 A.D.	Viśvarūpa, commentator of Yajñavalkya.
900 A.D.	Medhatithi, com. of Manu
1100 A.D.	Miṭākṣara of Vijñaneśvara.
1100 A.D.-1150 A.D.	Kalpataru of Lakṣmīdhara.
1100 A.D.-1150 A.D.	Jīmutavahana.

1125 A.D.	Aparārka.
1150 A.D.-1200 A.D.	Smṛtyārthasāra.
1200 A.D.-1225 A.D.	Smṛti-candrika.
1150 A.D.-1300 A.D.	Haradatta.
1150 A.D.-1300 A.D.	Kulluka.
1260 A.D.-1270 A.D.	Hemadri's Catur-varga-cintāmani.
1310 A.D.-1360 A.D.	Candēśvara, author of the Gṛhastha-ratna-kara and other Ratnakaras.
1300 A.D.-1380 A.D.	Madhavacarya, author of Purastira Madhavīya.
1360 A.D.-1390 A.D.	Madana-parijāta.
1425 A.D.-1450 A.D.	Madana-ratna.
1520 A.D.-1570 A.D.	Raghunandana.
1610 A.D.-1640 A.D.	Kamalākara Bhatt, author of Nirṇaya -sindhu and Śūdrakamalākara.
1615 A.D.-1645 A.D.	Nilakaṇṭha, author of Saṃskāra-mayūkha and other Mayūkhās.
1610 A.D.-1640 A.D.	Mitra Misra, author of Vīramitrodaya.
1650 A.D.-1680 A.D.	Anantadeva, author of Saṃskāra-kaustubha.
About 1686 A.D.	Smārta-mukta-phala of Vaidyanātha.
1700 A.D.-1750 A.D.	Nagojibhaṭṭa.
1750 A.D.-1820 A.D.	BālamBhaṭṭa, author of Bālabhāṭṭī
1790 A.D.	Dharma-sindhu (of Kāśinātha).

## SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS

### CHAP. I.

Topics of Dharma-śāstra. Various divisions of Dharma. Dharmas common to all (sādharana-dharma). Truth, love, charity, self-restraint. Standard of moral values. Four *puruṣārthas* (goals of human existence) and their gradation. Limits of Aryavarta. Bharata-varṣa.

### CHAP.2

High eulogy and condemnation of caste system. Characteristic features of modern caste system. History of the word *varṇa*. Arya and dāsa or dasyu. Viṣ in the RigVeda. Position of Śūdra in Vedic Literature. Position of the three higher *varṇas* inter se. Professions and crafts in Vedic Samhitas. Rathakāra and Niṣāda. Propositions deductible from Vedic Literature. List of various crafts and avocations culled from Vedic Literature. Ramifications of caste traced by Dharma Śāstra writers to mixed unions. Two postulates as to castes of Dharma Śāstra writers. *Anuloma* and *pratiloma* castes. Status of children of mixed castes. *Varna-saṅkara*. *Jātyutkarṣa* and *Jātyapakarṣa*. Professional castes and guilds. List of castes mentioned by works from 500 B.C. to 1000 A. D. Revolt against the caste system in the Mahābhārata. A few of the castes mentioned by medieval works.

### CHAP.3.

Duties, disabilities and privileges of *varṇas*. Brāhmaṇa's special privileges and duties study of Veda, teaching the Veda, officiating at and performing sacrifices, making and receiving gifts. Rules about receiving gifts. Special duty of śūdras to serve higher castes. Divisions of śūdras. Brāhmaṇa in distress may do the work specially meant for kṣatriyas and vaiśyas. Brāhmaṇa and money-lending, agriculture, sale and barter as means of livelihood in distress. Begging. High eulogy of Brāhmaṇas. Enumeration and discussion of special privileges claimed by Brāhmaṇas. Disabilities of Śūdras, viz. not authorized to study the Veda nor to perform Vedic sacrifices with Vedic mantras, liability to receive higher punishment for certain offences, not to hold high offices like that of judge.

#### CHAP.4.

Untouchability. Hardly any Vedic passage supports it. Antyājas according to the smṛtis. Rules about shadow of untouchables, Public roads and untouchables. Matters in which immediate relief required.

#### CHAP.5.

Slavery. Existence of slavery in Vedic times. Kinds of slaves in the smṛtis. Manumission of slaves.

#### CHAP.6.

Saṃskāras. Purpose of saṃskāras. Divisions of saṃskāras. Divergence as to number of saṃskāras. List of saṃskāras named by all or most of the smṛti writers. Saṃskāras of śūdras. Easy expiation provided for non-performance of saṃskāras. Garbhadhāna known from the times of the Atharva Veda. Procedure of Garbhadhāna in the Brhadaraṇyaka upanīśad and smṛtis. Whether it is a saṃskāra of the woman or of the child. Altar in gṛhya rites. Homa. Preliminary rites in all saṃskāras such as Ganapati-pūjāna, Puṇyāha-vācana, Matrka-pūjāna, Nandī-sraddha. Pumsavana. Anavalobhana. Sīmantonayana. Viṣṇubali. Śośyantikarma. Jātakarma and several component parts of it such as homa. Medhajanana. Nāmakaraṇa. How names were given at various periods; several names for the same person. Rules about names. Karṇa-vedha, Niṣkramana. Annaprāśana. Varṣa-wardhana, Caula. Vidyārambha.

#### CHAP.7.

Upanayana. Meaning of the word. Origin and development of this sacrament. It implies *gāyatrīūpadesa*. Ancient features of *upanayana*. Originally a simple ceremony. The proper age for upanayana for the three *varṇas*. The auspicious time for it. Rules about the skin, the garments, the girdle and the staff of the brahmacārin of different *varṇas*. The preliminary rites of Upanayana such as homa. The principal rites of upanayana. History of yajñopavīta from ancient times. Rules for manufacturing and wearing yajñopavīta. Whether women had upanayana performed and could wear yajñopavīta. Wearing of yajñopavīta given up by kṣatriyas in the first few centuries of the common era. Whether upanayana performed for the blind, the deaf and dumb, idiots etc. Upanayana of mixed castes and of the asvattha tree. Imparting of sacred Gāyatrī to the student. Vyahrtis and 'om'. Eulogy of Gāyatrī. The dharmas (duties) of brahmacarins. Bhikṣa (begging) for food by brahmacarin. Performance of Sandhyā twice daily and rules about the principal elements of sandhyā, such as *ācamana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *mārjana*, *aghamarṣana*, *arghya* to the sun, japa of Gāyatrī, *upasthāna* (worship). Nyāsas and Mudras. Study of the Veda, the first duty. Features of the ancient educational system, such as oral instruction, teaching without stipulating for a fee, student's stay with the teacher. Qualifications of a good teacher and the qualities of a good pupil. Students did work for the teacher. Rules about honouring the teacher and elders, bowing to them and about the return of greetings. Saluting women relatives and the wife of the teacher. Rules about show courtesy and precedence on public roads. Grounds of show respect. Duration of student-hood. Subjects of study at various periods. Corporal punishment of pupils. Education of kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, śūdras and of women. Merits and defects of the ancient system of education. The Veda-vratas.



Perpetual (*naiṣṭhika*) students. *Patita-sāvitrika* (whose upanayana had not been performed). Whether kṣatriyas and vaiśyas exist in the Kali age. The Vrātya-stoma for those whose upanayana had not been performed at all. Taking back those who had been forcibly converted or who belonged to other faiths. Tolerance in ancient India. Absorption of foreign elements. *Punar-upanayana* (performing upanayana again). Anadyāya (cessation of study) on various days and for various reasons. Keśānta or Godāna. Snāna or Samavartana (the student's return from the teacher after finishing Vedic study). Rules of conduct for snātakas.

#### CHAP.8.

Āśramas. Origin and development of the idea of āśramas (stages of life). Number of āśramas four from the times of the most ancient dhama-sūtras. Manu's theory. Brahmacharya and householder's stage well-known even to the Rig Veda. *Vaikhanasa* and *yati* in Vedic Literature. Three āśramas expressly mentioned in the Chāṇḍogya Upanisad. Idea of *mokṣa* (release from samsara). *Varṇa* and *āśrama* complementary. Three different points of view about the four āśramas.

#### CHAP.9.

Marriage. The most important saṃskāras of all. Texts do not point to a society where there was promiscuity and no marriage. Purposes of marriage. Qualifications of a desirable bridegroom. Rules for the selection of a bride. Lakṣanas (indicatory characteristics), *bāhya* (visible) and *abhyantara* (invisible or inferrible). Four or five grounds for preferring a particular girl. Selecting a girl by asking her to take one out of several lumps of clay gathered from various places. In ancient times brotherless maidens not accepted as brides. No unmarried woman was deemed in medieval times to go to heaven. Restrictions as to caste, gotra, pravara and sapinḍa relationship. Breach of these rules rendered a so-called marriage null and void. Age of marriage for men not fixed. Age of marriage for girls varied at different periods. In the ancient sūtras girls were married about the time of puberty. Reasons for insistence on pre-puberty marriages in Yajñavalkya-smṛti and other works not clear. Examples of inter-caste marriages in Vedic Literature, in dharma and gṛhya sūtras and smṛtis and in inscriptions. *Anuloma* marriages allowed till about the 9th century A. D. Sapinḍa relationship explained in the Mit. Rules about prohibition of marriage on the ground of sapinḍa relationship. Conflict of texts as to these rules. Marriage with one's maternal uncle's daughter. Conflict on this point among medieval writers and among several castes. Narrowing of sapinḍa relationship permitted by writers of digests only on the ground of usage. Meaning of 'viruddha-sambandha.' Sapinḍa relationship of the adopted son. Meaning of sapinḍa according to Dayabhaga and Raghunandana. Marriage between sagotras and sapravaras forbidden. Meaning of 'gotra' and 'pravara' in Vedic works. Gotra and pravara of importance in several matters. Gotra in the sūtras and digests. Divisions and sub-divisions of gotras. Each gotra has one or more pravaras. Gotras of kṣatriyas and vaiśyas. Names of kṣatriya kings among gotras and pravaras. Marriage of sagotras and sapravaras void according to the writers of digests. Persons that have power to give a girl in marriage. Sale of girls in marriage in ancient times. Taking monetary consideration for one's daughter condemned. Father's power over his children. Infanticide, medieval and modern. Auspicious time for marriage. Medieval works introduced difficulties on astrological grounds. Forms of marriage. Meaning of rakṣhasa and paiśāca marriages. Svayamvara. Only two forms of marriage in vogue in modern times. Procedure of marriage in the Rig Veda and in the gṛhya sūtras. List of the several elements in the marriage rite and their description. When marriage becomes complete and irrevocable. Marriage brought about by force or fraud.

#### CHAP.10.

*Madhuparka*. Procedure of it from the sūtras. *Arka-vivaha* (marriage with the arka plant). *Parivedana* (marrying before an elder brother or sister).

## CHAP.11.

Polygamy, polyandry, rights and duties on marriage. No evidence for polyandry in Sanskrit Literature except in the case of Draupadī. First duty of wife was to co-operate with the husband in all religious matters. Wife not authorised to perform religious rites independently or without husband's consent. Precedence among co-wives in religious matters. Theory of debts with which every man was supposed to be born, one being the debt to his ancestors and discharged by procreate sons. Duties of wife dwelt upon at great length in all smṛtis and digests. Foremost duty of wife is to obey her husband and honour him as god. Ideal of a pativrata. Wife's conduct when husband was away from home on a journey. Supernatural powers ascribed to pativrata. Wife's right of residence and maintenance. Husband's power of correction. Humane treatment even when wife guilty of adultery. No identity of husband and wife for secular or legal purposes, Position of women in ancient India. Estimate of the character of women in Sanskrit works. Passages condemning women's character. High eulogy of and reverence for the mother.

## CHAP.12.

Duties of widows. Rules of conduct for widows for one year after the death of the husband. In widowhood woman to lead an ascetic life, avoid luxuries like perfumes, flowers, chew betel-nut. Widow (except one's mother) declared to be most inauspicious. Her rights in a joint family, and as heir to husband's separate property. Widow's position improved by recent legislation. The practice of tonsure of Brāhmaṇa widows has no sanction in the Vedas and smṛtis (excepting one or two). Examination of texts relied upon in support of this practice. Only Skanda-Purāṇa and medieval digests insist on tonsure. Practice gradually evolved from about 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> century. Sentiment that a woman should not be killed on any account. Position of women became assimilated to that of śūdras in religious matters. Certain advantages conceded to women. Practice of purda did not exist for women except for queens and ladies of high or noble rank.

## CHAP.13.

*Niyoga*. Great divergence of views about the origin and purpose of this practice. Stringent conditions were laid down by smṛtikāras before niyoga could be resorted to. Breach of the conditions severely condemned and made punishable. Some even very ancient writers on dharma did not allow this practice. The Mahābhārata is full of examples of niyoga. Some writers held that texts permitting niyoga applied to śūdras or to girls who were only promised in marriage to a person but not actually married to him (as he died in the meantime). Three views upon the question 'to whom the child born of niyoga belonged.' Niyoga forbidden in the Kali age by Brhaspati and other smṛti writers.

## CHAP.14.

Remarriage of widows. The word '*punarbhū*' does not necessarily mean 'remarried widow'. Nārada on the kinds of punarbhū and svairinīs. Baudhāyana and Kaśyapa on 7 kinds of punarbhū. Smṛtis (except those of Vasiṣṭha, Nārada and one or two others) prohibit remarriage of widows. Rules for a wife whose husband is unheard of for many years, Hindu Widow's Remarriage Act of 1856. Appalling number of child widows. Verses of Rig Veda and Atharva Veda supposed to refer to remarriage of widows examined. Divorce unknown in Vedic or Dharma-śāstra Literature. Kauṭilya on divorce. Divorce law in England and Roman Catholic countries.

## CHAP.15.

Satī Forbidden in India from 1829. Practice of widow burning obtained in many countries. Practice of Satī very limited in ancient times. *Saha-gamana* and *anumarāṇa*. Brahmana widows were not allowed *anumarāṇa*. References to practice of Satī in classical Sanskrit Literature and epigraphic records. Rewards promised to Satī. Some commentators were opposed to this practice. Restrictions

imposed against widow burning by the smṛtis. Procedure of the rite of widow-burning. Widow-burning more prevalent in Bengal than anywhere else owing to the higher rights of succession granted to wives.

#### CHAP.16.

Prostitution. The institution existed from Vedic times. The rights of concubines to maintenance.

#### CHAP.18.

*Ahnikā* and *ācāra*. Importance of the stage of householder. Gr̥hasthas grouped into *Sālina* and *yāyāvara*. Duties of house-holders described in detail in many smṛtis and digests. Various ways of dividing the day. Smṛtis usually divide the day into eight parts. Actions to be done on getting up from bed, such as hymns of praise to God, repeating the names of famous personages like Nala and of persons that are supposed to be *cirajīvins*. Auspicious and inauspicious sights on getting up from bed. Rules about answering calls of nature. Cleanliness of body (*śauca*) in various ways. *Ācamana* (sipping water). *Dantadhavana* (brushing the teeth) existed from the most ancient times. What twigs to be used for it. Times when there is to be no brushing of teeth. *Snana* (-bath). *Kuśas* necessary in most religious acts. Rules about collecting *kuśas*. *Snana* twice a day or thrice according to some. No bath at night (except on rare occasions). Natural water preferred to water drawn from wells or hot water. Procedure of bathing. Rules about the clay to be employed for smearing and cleaning the body. Ten good results of a bath. Six varieties of bathing with water. How one who is ill is to be purified. *Tarpaṇa* as a constituent part of *snana*. Clothes to be worn by a house holder. Making marks on the forehead after bathing. *Urdhva pundra* and *Tripundra*. Saiva and Vaisnava sectarians condemning each other's marks. *Sandhya* after bath, *Homa*. Two views about performing it before or after sunrise. *Agni hotra* twice daily. Three or five or six fires. When to begin maintaining gr̥hya fire. Materials for *havis*. *Homa* to be offered by oneself or by one's son, pupil, brother, sister's son or a similar relative. Wife or unmarried daughter may offer *homa* in gr̥hya fire if householder be ill. *Japa* of Vedic texts. What are *mangala* (auspicious) objects. The matters described so far occupy first eighth part of the day. In 2nd part revision of Vedic texts, collecting fuel sticks, flowers, *kuśas* etc. In 3rd part one was to find out means of maintenance and to earn wealth. In 4th part mid-day bath. Then *tarpaṇa* of gods, sages and *pitṛs*. A brief *tarpaṇa* is also prescribed.

#### CHAP.18.

*Mahā-yajñas* (five daily observances or sacrifices). These are mentioned in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* and *Taittiriya Araṇyaka*. *Mahā-yajñas* distinguished from śrauta rites in two ways. Sentiments that prompted the five *yajñas* in very remote days. Later on purpose of *Mahā-yajñas* stated to be atonement for injury to life caused by daily acts. The five *yajñas* in order of performance are *brahma-yajña*, *deva-yajña*, *bhūta-yajña*, *pitṛ-yajña* and *manusya-yajña*. *Brahma-yajña*. Earliest description in *Satapatha Br.* and *Tai. Ar.* *Brahma-yajña* for *Rigvedins* described.

#### CHAP.19.

*Deva-yajña*. In sūtras *homa* is *Deva-yajña*. In medieval times *homa* receded into background and *devapūjā* took its place. Discussion whether images of gods were known in Vedic times. Meaning of *Sisnadeva*. Phallic emblems at *Mohenjo-daro*. *Linga* worship. Images known long before *Panini*. Erection of temples and worship of images, whether borrowed or indigenous. Substances from which images were made. Principal gods of whom images were worshipped. Ritual of image worship. Who are entitled to perform *deva-pūjā*, *Salagrama* and other sacred stones. *Pañcāyatana-pūjā*. Ten *avatāras* of *Viṣṇu*. Germs of the theory in Vedic Literature. When *Buddha* came to be looked upon as an *avatāra* of *Viṣṇu*. Why *Buddhism* disappeared from India. Evidence for religious persecution in India very meagre. *Siva* worship. Worship of *Ganesa* and *Dattatreya*. Earliest description of the worship of *Viṣṇu* and *Siva*. The 16 modes of worship (*upacāras*). Flowers in the

worship of different gods. Tāmbula. Namaskāras to the sun. Worship of Durga, Analysis of deva pūjā in modern times.

#### CHAP.20.

*Vaiśvadeva*. According to some it comprises three yajñas, viz. to gods, bhūtas and pitṛs. Deities of *Vaiśvadeva*. Usually performed only once in the noon. Procedure of *Vaiśvadeva*. Views about *Vaiśvadeva* in relation to Śrāddha. Bali-harana or bhūta-yajña. Daily pitṛ-yajña.

#### CHAP.21.

Nr-yajña or Manuṣya-yajña (honouring guests). Guests honoured from Rig Veda downwards. Who is an *atithi*. Modes of showing honour to guests. Motive of the injunction about guests was universal kindness. Taking leave of a guest.

#### CHAP.22.

*Bhojana* (taking meals). Importance attached to purity of food. Rules about bhojana in Vedic Literature. Direction in which to take food. Times of taking food. Vessels to be used in bhojana. Preliminaries before bhojana (such as ācamana, prāṇāhūtis etc.). Posture at time of eating. How much to eat. How pañktis (rows of dinners) were distinguished. Who are pañkti-pavana Brāhmaṇas. Etiquette at time of bhojana. Occasions (like eclipses) when abstaining from food was prescribed. What food should or should not be eaten. Various grounds on which food was forbidden. Flesh-eating in Vedic times. Sacredness of cow. Pañcagavya. Occasions when cow could be offered in sacrifices. Rules about the flesh of beasts, birds and fishes. Causes of the giving up of flesh-eating. Kṣatriyas have been meat-eaters from ancient times. Rules about taking milk and its products and about certain herbs and vegetables. Exhaustive list of persons whose food may not be taken. Great fluctuations about the rules as to whose food may not be taken by a brāhmaṇa. Laxity about food prepared with ghee, oil or milk. Food from five classes of Śūdras could be taken by Brāhmaṇas in the times of sūtras, but later on this was forbidden. Rules about persons who could cook and serve food for Brāhmaṇas. Drinking liquor in ancient times. All intoxicants forbidden to Brāhmaṇas from sūtra times, but some intoxicants allowed to kṣatriyas and others. *Madyas* of various kinds. Tāmbula after bhojana. Acts to be done after bhojana. Rules about sleeping. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife. Rules about Rājasvala (a woman in her menstruation). Rules about the distribution of the king's duties in the several parts of the day and night.

#### CHAP.23.

*Upakarma* (starting of the session of vedic studies) and *utsarjana* (cessation from vedic studies). Divergence about time of *upakarma*. Explanation of the importance attached to the month of Sravana and the Sravana constellation. Procedure of *upakarma* in ancient times. Analysis of the constituents of *upakarma* in modern times. Holiday after *upakarma*. Divergence about times of *utsarjana*. Description of modern *utsarjana*.

#### CHAP.24,

Minor gr̥hya and other rites. Pārvana sthālipāka. Gaitrī. Sītāyajña. Śrāvanī and Sarpa-bali. Serpent-worship from ancient times. Festival in honour of Indra. Aśvayuji. Agrayana iṣṭi. Agrahāyanī. Śūlagava or Īśāna-bali. Vāstu-pratiṣṭha, ancient and modern.

#### CHAP.25.

*Dāna* (gifts). Dāna is a special feature of householder's stage. Gifts highly extolled in the Rig Veda. Gift of horses censured in some works. Gifts of land were not favoured in very early times. Difference between *dāna*, *yāga* and *homa*. Meaning of *iṣṭapūrta*. All could make gifts (including women and śūdras). Persons fit and unfit to be donees. What things could be donated and what not. Three classes of things that could be given. Dānas of three kinds, viz. *nitya*, *naimittika* and *kāmya*.

Making gifts in secret eulogised. Certain gifts should not be spurned. Gifts of certain things forbidden. Proper times for making gifts. Generally gifts not to be made at night. Gifts at times of eclipses, *saṅkrānti* and on *ayana* days specially recommended. Proper places for gifts, Presiding deities of various articles of gift. General procedure of making gifts. Kings were required to make various kinds of gifts to Brāhmaṇas. Spending money for marriages of Brāhmaṇas and settling them in houses highly eulogised. Gifts of land the most meritorious. Smṛti rules about land-grants followed in epigraphic records. Verses deprecating the resumption of gifts made by earlier kings. Prior gifts to temples and Brāhmaṇas excepted in grants of villages. Taxes remitted in royal grants. The eight bhogas in relation to land grants. Discussion whether king is owner of all lands in the kingdom. Gifts called Mahādānas described in Purāṇas. Sixteen Mahā-dānas. Procedure of Tula-puruṣa and other Mahādānas. Gift of cows highly extolled. Gifts of ten kinds called *dhenus* such as of ghee, jaggery etc. Ten kinds of gifts called *parvata* or meru dānas viz. of heaps of corn, salt, sesame etc. Establishing a pavilion for distributing water. Gift of books. Gifts for propitiating planets. Founding of hospitals. Expiations for accepting gifts which should not have been accepted. When gift becomes irrevocable. Kinds of invalid gifts. Gifts to dharma held void by modern courts.

#### CHAP. 26.

*Pratiṣṭha* and *Utsarga* (founding of temples and dedication of wells etc.). Women and Śūdras also could spend on pūrta dharma, though not on ist (vedic sacrifices). Charitable works for the benefit of the public canie to be regarded as more meritorious than sacrifices. Procedure of dedicating a tank or well to the public in the sūtras. Procedure prescribed in Purāṇas gradually superseded the sūtra procedure. Meaning of dāna, pratiṣṭha and utsarga. Trees highly valued in ancient India. Trees supposed to save a man from hell just as a son did. Worship of trees. Consecration of images in temples. Image worship in a public temple or privately. Procedure of consecration of images according to the Matsya-Purāṇa. In later times other details added from Tantra works. Three kinds of Nyāsas viz , matrka-nyāsa, tattva-nyāsa and mantra-nyāsa. Consecration of the image of Viṣṇu from Vaikhanasa Smarta-sūtra. Practice of attaching dancing girls to temples is comparatively ancient. When re-consecration (*punah-pratiṣṭha*) becomes necessary. *Jīṛṇoddhāra* (repairing or re-constructing a dilapidated temple etc.), time and procedure of. Founding of *maṭhas* (monasteries or colleges for teachers and pupils). Distinction between a temple and a *maṭha*. *Maṭhas* said to have been established by the great teacher Śaṅkarācārya. The origin of *maṭhas* in general. How property of *maṭha* devolves. Appointment and powers of the head of a *maṭha*. How rulers and courts in ancient and medieval times controlled administration of temple and *maṭha* properties, Modern legislation dealing with religious and charitable endowments. *Yoga-kṣema* is impartible. Control of founder on work dedicated to the public. Powers of a *shebait* to remove an idol or to establish another.

#### CHAP. 27.

*Vānaprastha* (forest hermit). Vaikhanasa, ancient word for vānaprastha. An ancient work called Vaikhanasa sūtra or Śāstra. Time for becoming a vānaprastha. Principal points connected with being a vānaprastha. If he suffers from an incurable disease, he may start on the great journey till the body falls to rise no more. Intricate classification of *vānaprasthas* in Baudhāyana-dharma-sūtra and others. Members of all *varṇas* except Śūdras could become *vānaprasthas*. Members of princely houses as *vānaprasthas*. Ending one's life by starting on the great journey (*Mahāprasthāna*) or by fire or water or falling from a precipice when and why allowed. Historical examples of this practice. This practice prohibited in the Kali age. Most of the duties prescribed for *vānaprasthas* are the same as those for sannyasins. So *vānaprastha* stage forbidden in Kali age by the Nāradiya-purāna and other works.

## CHAP.28.

*Sannyāsa* (order of ascetics). Life of giving up worldy ties, of begging and contemplation on the Absolute known to the earliest Upanisads, Jabalopanisad prescribes rules for ascetics. The most salient features of *sannyāsa* gathered from the Dharma Sūtras and *smṛtis*. Tridaṇḍi and ekadaṇḍi ascetics. Four kinds of ascetics, *kuticaka*, *bahudaka*, *hamsa* and *parama hamsa* and their characteristics. Popular notion that the paramahāmsa is beyond all rules and prohibitions combated by ancient texts. *Vidvat-sannyāsa* and *vividisā-sannyāsa*. The *turiyatita* and *avadhuta* kinds of ascetics. Opinions as to whether *sannyāsa* was allowed only to brahman as or to all three *varṇas*. According to *smṛtis* and medieval works a *sūdra* could not become an ascetic. Women in rare cases adopted the ascetic mode of life. The word *sannyāsa* conveys two distinct ideas. Some held that *sannyāsa* was meant only for the blind and the cripple. Ascetics were to give up wife and home and were not to revert to householder's life. Ten orders of advaita sannyasins following Śaṅkarācārya's doctrines and their *maṭhas*. Disputes among the heads of these *maṭhas* as to properties and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. How successors to the pontiffs of the *maṭhas* are appointed. How and why sannyasins gave up doctrine of *ahiṃsā* in medieval times. A sannyasin is severed from his family and loses rights of property in it. By custom certain sannyasins called Gosavis were allowed to have wives and concubines. Procedure of *sannyāsa* according to the sūtras. Procedure of *sannyāsa* according to Dharma-sindhu. Principal elements are; eight *śāddhas*, *savitri-pravesa*, *virājahoma*, declaration of leaving home, all wealth and desires and taking vow of *ahiṃsā*, giving up of topknot and sacred thread, teaching by guru of panel' karaTta and Mahāvakyas (like *tat tvam-asi*), giving of anew name by the teacher, *yoga-paṭṭa* (p.962), *paryāṅka-sauca*. Sannyāsin *extremis* (*ātura-sannyāsa*). Controversies about giving up *śikha* and *yajnopavīta*. Daily duties of an ascetic. No impurity on his death for his relatives and vice versa. Ascetic heads of *maṭhas* claim in modern times jurisdiction in matters of caste, excommunication, expiations for lapses. In ancient times *pariṣads* (assemblies of learned men) exercised these functions and kings acted on their advice. The number of persons required to constitute a *pariṣad* for deciding a doubtful point about dharma. *Siṣṭas* constitute a *pariṣad*. Meaning of *iṣṭa*. The council of eight ministers established by Shivaji and the duties of the Pandit Rao, one of these eight. Pandit Rao took advice of the *pariṣads* of learned Brāhmaṇas on questions of re-admission of converts, expiations etc. Many features of asceticism are common to all religions. It is a partial truth that Indians have the highest regard for the ascetic.

## CHAP.29.

Śrauta (Vedic) sacrifices. Deep study of vedic sacrifices essential for the proper understanding of Vedic Literature, for appreciating the influence of that Literature on *varṇas*. Chronology uncertain. Works, ancient and modern, on Vedic sacrifices. Jaimini on interpretation of Vedic texts relating to sacrifices. Cult of *yajña* existed in Indo-Iranian period. Literary and epigraphic evidence for the performance of Vedic sacrifices by kings after the advent of Buddha. Grants made by kings for enabling Brāhmaṇas to perform *agnihotra* etc. The references to sacrificial matters in the Rig Veda. General rules applicable in all sūtras. Mantras of four kinds, *rk*, *yajus*, *saman* and *nigada*. Different kinds of ladles. Sacrificial utensils. The several fires. The five *bhū-saṃskāras*. *Agnyādheya*. Choosing the *deva-yajana* (place of worship). Procedure of *agnyādheya*. *Punarādheya*. *Agni-hotra* in the morning and evening. Rules about *agni-hotra* when the householder goes away from home either alone or with his wife.

## CHAP.30.

*Darśa-pūrṇamāsa* (New moon and Full moon sacrifices). Time for starting the performance of *Darśa-pūrṇamāsa*. *Anvarambhanīya iṣṭi*, *sakhāhārana*, *barhir-aharana* (bringing bundles of *kuśa* grass), *idmahārana* (bringing fuel-sticks), *Sāyamdoha*. *Uparasatha* day. *Sannayya*. *Brahma-varaṇa* (choosing the brahma priest). *Pranīta* waters. *Nirvāpa* (taking out sacrificial material).

*Prokṣana* (sprinkling) of sacrificial material, utensils &c, The *Haviskṛt* call. Beating the grains of rice. Baking cake (puroḍāśa) on potsherds. Construction of vedi (altar). *Patnī-samnahana* (girding up the sacrificer's wife). *Barhirastarana* (strewning the vedi with kuśas). Fifteen Samidhenī verses. *Pravara-mantra* (invocation of fire). The two āghāras (pouring of ājya in a continuous stream). Hotrvarana. The *Prayājas* (five offerings). *Vaṣatkāra*. *Ājyabhāgas* (two). The principal sacrifice of portions of the cake. Offering to Agni sviṣṭakṛt. Cutting off a portion of the cake called prāśitra (for brahma). Iḍa cut off from puroḍāśa. A thin long slice of puroḍāśa for yajamāna. Invocation of Iḍa by the hotr. Brahma eats prāśitra, hotr eats avāntareḍa, all priests together with the yajamāna partake of iḍa. Division of puroḍāśa for Agni into four parts and eating of the portions by the four priests. *Mārjana* thereafter. Cooking a mess of boiled rice (called *anvahārya*) as fee for the four priests. The three anuyāja offerings. Recitation of *sūkta-vāka*. Throwing of prastara bunch and sakha into fire. Samyuvaka. Throwing the paridhis on fire. Patni-samyājas. Phalikaraṇa homa. Samstha-japa by hotr. Samiṣṭayajus offerings. Adhvaryu and brahma leave the sacrificial hall. Yajamāna takes Viṣṇu strides. Final prayer by yajamāna. Piṇḍa-pitṛ-yajña.

#### CHAP.31.

*Cāturmāsya*s (seasonal sacrifices). Four Cāturmāsya each called a parvan, viz. *Vaiśvadeva*, *Varunapraghāsa*, *Śākamedha* and *Sunasīrīya*, respectively performed on Full moon days of Phālguna, Āṣāḍha, Kārtika and on the 5th full moon day from Śākamedha or two or three days before it. Observances on all parvan days such as shaving head and face, not using a bed, avoiding meat, honey, salt and sexual intercourse. Five offerings common to all Cāturmāsya. Cāturmāsya may be performed throughout life or for one year. Three special offerings in *Vaiśvadeva*-parva. Nine prayājas and nine anuyājas in *Vaiśvadeva*. *Varuna-praghāsa* performed in rainy season outside the house. Two vedis prepared, to north and south, respectively in charge of adhvaryu and pratiprasthatr. Procedure is like that of *Vaiśvadeva*. Four special offerings in this in addition to five common to all. Procedure of *Varuna-praghāsa*s. The wife has to declare or indicate if she has any paramour. Concluding *avabhṛtha* (bath) in a river or the like, Śākamedha requires two days. Three iṣṭis and a Mahā havis of eight offerings to eight deities. Then pitṛyajña (called Mahā-pitṛ-yajña) on a separate vedi. Also Trayambaka homa offered to Rudra. *Sunasīrīya*-parvan has three special offerings to Sunasirau, Vayu and Surya. Iṣṭi called Āgrāyana (offering of first fruits) in Sarad on Full moon day. Other iṣṭis performed for some *specific* objects e.g. putreṣṭi for son, Karīreṣṭi for rain etc.

#### CHAP.32.

*Nirūḍha-paśu-bandha* or *Paśu-bandha* (animal sacrifice). A victim is offered in *Soma-yāga* also, but as part of it. *Nirūḍha-paśu* is an independent sacrifice to be performed by an ahitagni every six months or once a year. Six priests required in this sacrifice. Procedure of animal sacrifice. Selecting a tree and making a *yūpa* (sacrificial post) and a head piece (*casala*) for the post. Preparing a vedi and a raised platform on it called *uttara-vedi* and a square hole thereon called *nabhi*. Animals sacrificed for Indra-Agni or Surya or Prajāpati, Eleven prayāja offerings. Verses from Aprī hymns employed. The eleven prayāja deities. Samitra fire for roasting omentum of the victim. Hotr's recitation of the *Adhrigu* formula. Choking to death or strangling of the he-goat. Omentum taken out and offered by the adhvaryu into Ahavanīya fire for Indra-Agni or Surya or Prajāpati. Six priests, sacrificer and his wife perform Marjana. The limbs of the victim that are cut off, and portions of which are offered as paśu-puroḍāśa. Heart of victim is roasted with a pike on samitra fire and offered as havis to Manota. Priests and sacrificer partake of ida constituted by remnants of the limbs of the victim. Upayāja offerings of a part of the entrails along with the Anuyāja offerings. The hotr repeats the formula called Suktavaka. Maitravaruna throws his staff into fire. Offerings of Patnī-sarhyājas with portions of the tail. *Kamyāḥ Paśavaḥ* (animal sacrifices from various desires). Ekadasina, a group sacrifice of eleven victims.

## CHAP.33.

Agniṣṭoma. Sacrifices are divided into *iṣṭi*, *paśu* and *soma*. Seven forms of soma sacrifices, Agniṣṭoma, Atyagniṣṭoma, Ukthya etc. Soma sacrifices divided into ekaha, ahīna and sattrā. Jyotiṣṭoma. often identified with Agniṣṭoma, usually lasts for five days. Chief rites performed on those five days. Time for perform Agniṣṭoma. Priests invited and honoured with *Madhuparka*. Requesting the king for sacrificial ground (devayajana). Sacrificer and his wife undergo apsu-dikṣa and subsist on milk or light food. Purification of both with bunches of darbhas. Procedure of dikṣanīya isti after which sacrificer comes to be called dikṣita. Even a kṣatriya sacrificer was announced as a Brāhmaṇa. Observances of the dikṣita and his wife and people's conduct towards him. Observance of silence by sacrificer twice daily. The prayaniya iṣṭi. Purchase of Soma and the drama of haggling about its price. Cow offered as its price is taken back. Bundle of Soma stalks placed on antelope skin spread on a cart, that is brought to the east of the pragvamsa. Recital of the Subrahmanya litany by the Subrahmanya priest. A goat is presented to king Soma. Oxen are released from the cart, soma bundle taken out of the cart, placed on a couch of udumbara wood and brought to the south of the ahavanīya. Atithyeṣṭi (iṣṭi for hospitably receiving king Soma) follows. Then comes Tanunaptra (a solemn covenant of the sacrificer and priests not to injure each other). Pravargya and Upasad follow. Pravargya was a sublime rite supposed to endow sacrificer with a new body. Not necessary in every Agniṣṭoma. The heated milk is called gharma and the pot of heated milk Mahāvīra or Samrat. Wife was not to look at it (at least in the beginning), nor sūdras. On 2nd, 3rd and 4th days Pravargya and Upasad performed twice. How pravargya apparatus is discharged (udvasana). Upasad is an iṣṭi. Mantras repeated in Upasad refer to sieges of iron, silver and gold castles. On 2nd day of upasads Mahāvedi is prepared, on which a quadrangular platform (called *uttaravedi*) is raised and a square hole called *nabhi* is made on which fire is brought on the 4th day from the original ahavanīya. Erection of the harvidhāna-maṇḍapa in which two carts are kept. Digging of four holes (called *uparavas*) below the forepart of the shafts of the southern cart. A mound (*khara*) to east of uparavas for keeping soma vessels on. Erection of sadas to the west of the havirdhana mandapa. Planting of an udumbara post in sadas. Preparing eight dhisnyas (seats), six in sadas, one in the agnīdhriya shed and the eighth in the marjallya shed. On uparavas kuśas are spread, over which two boards of udumbara are placed and a hide thereon. On the hide are stones for crushing soma stalks. Offering of an animal to Agni-Soma. Then follow offerings of ājya called Vaisarjina to Soma. Fire is carried to the uttaravedi, and established on agnīdhra dhiṣṇya. Bringing Vasatīvarī water in a jar and keeping it in agnīdhra shed. Last day is called 'sutya'. Repeating of a long prayer called Prataranuvaka by hotr long before daybreak to Agni, Usas and Asvins. Making ready of five offerings. Filling of ekadhana pitchers by adhvaryu and of pannejana vessel by the sacrificer's wife. Extracting Soma from a few stalks, filling the upamsugraha and offering its contents. Then comes Mahābhīṣava (principal pressing). Offering soma from various cups to several deities. Priests come creeping towards the north corner of the great vedi, where the Bahispavamāna laud is to be chanted by the udgatr, prastotr and the prati-hartr. Some of the other priests and the sacrificer become choristers. The nine verses of the Bahispavamāna stotra set out from the Rigveda and method of their manipulation when sung in the eama chant exhibited. Notes on the parts and svaras of sāmans. Rites of offering the savanīya animal. The five savanīya offerings of cake etc. Offerings of soma from *dvidevatya* grahas (cups), *Camasonnayana* (filling of nine camasas) for the priests called Camasadhvaryus. The offering of soma from the cups called śukra and manthin. Two chips of wood offered to the asuras, Śaṇḍa and Marka. Acchāvāka priest's request and filling his camasa with soma. Offer of rtagrahas. Kṣatriyas were not authorised to drink soma. The hotr performs japa, ahava (hotr's call) to which there is pratigara (response of adhvaryu), hotr offers prayer called tusnīm-samsa, twelve clauses of nivid, then hotr recites the ājyaśāstra. Enumeration and distribution of the twelve stotras and Śāstras of Agniṣṭoma. Explanation of stoma, stobha and stotra. Meaning of Rathantara and other sāmans. Chanting of stotras other than Bahispavamāna near audumbarī post in sadas. Four ājya-stotras in morning pressing. The 2nd śāstra



called Prauga recited by hotr and three more repeated by maitravaruna, Brāhmaṇacchamsin and acchāvāka. At the end of morning pressing priests go out of the sadas. For the mid-day pressing priests again enter sadas. Procedure of midday pressing similar to that of morning pressing. The priest gravastut wears the cloth, in which soma stalks were tied, as a turban and repeats many verses from the RigVeda. The chant of the Madhyandina-pavamāna-stotra. The dadhigharma rite, then the offering of puroḍaśa and the five savanīya offerings (cake etc.). Distribution of dakṣina to the several priests, sight-seers and others. The yajamāna throws antelope horn in catvala pit. Five offerings called Vaisvakarmana. The Marutvatīya Śāstra. Prstha-stotra and Niskevalya śāstra. Three more Prstha stotras and three Śāstras recited by maitravaruna and two others. Procedure of evening press similar to mid-day pressing. Ārbhava-pavamāna chanted. Rbhus connected with third pressing. Havis prepared from savanīya pasu offered. *Vaiśvadeva* Śāstra. The Patnī vata cup to Agni Patnīvat. Chanting of Yajñayajñīya stotra also called Agniṣṭoma-sāman. Wife of sacrificer pours pannejana water over her thigh and udgatr priest looks at her. Agnimaruta-Śāstra recited by hotr. Hari-yojana cup offered to Indra. All priests wait on ahavanīya with Mindā, mantras. Avabhrtha (final bath). All vessels except four sthalis are thrown into water. Yajamāna casts antelope skin in catvala pit. Avabhrtha sāman chanted. The nidhāna of the sāman is repeated by all priests, yajamāna and his wife at three places on their way to reservoir of water. Yajamāna and wife enter water, rub each other's back. Handful of kuśa thrown in avabhrtha iṣṭi. Puroḍaśa offered to Varuna and then to Agni and Varuna. The unnetr brings out yajamāna, wife and priests. They offer fuel sticks. The Udayanīya iṣṭi (concluding). Anubandhya rite (offering of a barren cow to Mitra and Varuna) or only payasya. Then five offerings called Devika to Dhātṛ, Anumati, Raka, Sinīvall and Kuhu. Udavasaniya iṣṭi like punaradheya. Theories about the identity of the soma plant and its relation to the moon. In the Deccan a substitute called 'ransera' is employed for soma.

#### CHAP.34.

Other soma sacrifices. Brief descriptions of Ukthya, Sodasin, Atyagniṣṭoma, Atiratra and Aptoryāma. Vājapeya may be regarded as an independent sacrifice. Number 17 predominant in it. 17 cups of soma and 17 cups of sura for Prajāpati. A race with 17 chariots and 17 drums beaten. Vājapeya to be performed only by a Brāhmaṇa or kṣatriya who desired super-eminence or overlordship. Horses of the chariots are made to smell ear of wild rice. When race starts brahma priest repeats Vāji-sāman. An udumbara post as the goal for the chariot race. Chariot of sacrificer is in front and the rest follow at a distance. Chariots go round udumbara post and return to sacrificial ground. The principal wine cup is held by the pratiprasthātṛ and other sixteen are held by those who joined in the race and they are drunk by those latter. Ladder raised against yūpa and the sacrificer climbs up and holds a dialogue with his wife. Animals for Prajāpati are offered at time of mid-day pressing. Adhvaryu declares yajamāna to be samrāt. Certain observances after Vājapeya. Fees distributed are 1700 cows, 17 chariots with four horses yoked to each, 17 dasls etc. After Vājapeya a king should perform Rājasūya and a Brāhmaṇa Brhaspatisava. Jaimini's conclusions about Vājapeya. Viśvajit, Gosava and Sarvasvara among Ekaha sacrifices briefly described. Ahīna sacrifices extending over two to twelve days of soma pressing. Description of the twelve days of the Dvadaśaha. Differences between Dvadaśaha as an ahīna and as a sattrā. Rājasūya. A very complex ceremony extending over a long period (over two years), and comprising many separate iṣṭis, soma sacrifices and animal sacrifices. Rājasūya to be performed only by kṣatriyas. Its relation to Vājapeya. Dīkṣa on first day of bright half of Phalguna. The Pavitra sacrifice which is like Agniṣṭoma. One year thereafter Abhisecanīya. Five offerings one on each day after Pavitra sacrifice. On Full moon of phalguna iṣṭi to Anumati. Caturmāsya performed for one year, between the parvans of which darśa and purnamāsa rites are celebrated. After Sunasīriya several rites. Twelve offerings called '*ratninam havīmsi*' on twelve days in the houses of the ratnas (viz. the king, his queens, state officers etc.) offered to different deities. Abhisecanīya (consecration) rite on first of Caitra and follows procedure of Ukthya. Eight offerings called Devasuhavīmsi. Waters of

seventeen kinds in seventeen vessels of udumbara from Sarasvatī river and other sources. *Partha* homas. Holy water taken in four vessels. Sacrificer recites *āvid* formulae. Four principal priests sprinkle him with water from four vessels and a kṣatrīya, vaiśya and a friend of the king do the same. Story of Sunahśepa recited by hotr for sacrificer's benefit King takes three strides called Viṣṇukramas. Remnants of anointing water handed by king to his son. Symbolic march for plunder of cows. Dice-play which is so arranged that best throw comes to the king. Avabhrtha follows. For ten days after Abhisecanīya offerings called 'Samsr̥pam havīmsi' are made to Savitr and other deities. The Vājapeya, in which each of the camasas of soma are drunk by ten Brāhmaṇas (i.e. in all 100). Very large dakṣiṇas prescribed e.g. some say 240000 cows should be presented. After Daśapeya some observances are kept by the sacrificer for one year. At the end of the year, the keśavaraniya ceremony took place. Then two rites called Vyuṣṭi-dvirātra at the interval of a month. One month after 2nd Vyuṣṭi-dvirātra the Kṣatradhrti rite. One month after that the Sautrāmanī iṣṭi.

#### CHAP.35.

Sautrāmanī and other sacrifices. Sautramanī is one of the seven Haviryajñas according to Gautama. Chief characteristic was offering of sura (wine) in it, in modern times milk being offered instead. Kokill and Caraka-sautramanī. Procedure of both. Sautramanī takes four days, during first three of which wine is prepared from various redients and on last day, v three cups of milk and three of wine were offered. Three goats were killed in this and fourth to Brhaspati. Method of preparing wine described. Remnants of the wine offered were not drunk by the priests, but a Brāhmaṇa was hired for drinking them or they were poured on an ant-hill. Persons for whom Sautramanī was offered. Avabhrtha and then amikṣa to Mitra Varuna and an animal to Indra. Aśvamedha. Horse-sacrifice in vogue even in Rig Veda. It was a sacrifice for three days, to be performed by a king. Time of commencement. The four queens accompanied by princesses and large retinue come near the king. Rules about colour and qualities of horse. Guards of the horse, when it is let off to roam over the country. During horse's absence for a year three iṣṭis every day to Savitr. Chants by a Brāhmaṇa after the iṣṭis every day and also by a kṣatriya lute-player. Hotr recites to the king surrounded by his sons and ministers the narrative called 'Pariplava.' Every day for a year four oblations called Dhrti made in the ahavanīya. At the end of the year horse was brought back and sacrificer took dīkṣa. 21 yūpas, each 21 aratnis high. Large number of animals tied to yūpas slaughtered. Horse taken to a lake, bathed in it, brought back and anointed by the queens on various parts of the body. Dialogue between hotr and brahma. When horse killed, queens go round horse, fan it with their garments, crowned queen lies by the side of the horse and both are covered with mantle. Abusive and obscene dialogues between hotr and crowned queen, between brahma and favourite wife, between four principal priests and chamber lain on one side and the queens and their attendants on the other. Fat and blood of the horse offered. Brahmodya (theological dialogue of questions and riddles). Mahiman offerings. Remnants of these sprinkled over the king and offering to 12 months. Avabhrtha on third pressing day. Offerings on the head of a bald man who dips into water to 'Jumbaka' (Varuna). When sacrificer comes out of water after avabhrtha bath, persons guilty of grave sins plunge into it and become free from sins. Large fees on first and third pressing days. Asvamedha rare even in ancient times. Description of Asvamedha in the Mahābhārata. Epigraphic references to Asvamedha. Sattras. Their duration is from twelve days to a year or more. Dvadāsaha is the archetype. Sattras divided into two classes, rātrisattras and samvatsarika. Gavamayana is model of all sattras of one year or more. Scheme of the parts of Gavam-ayana. When dīkṣa commenced. General rules applicable to all sattras. Though all are yajamānas and also priests in a sattra, one of them is called gṛhapati. Peculiar procedure followed as to dīkṣa. Brahmodya on 10th day or abuse of Prajāpati. Rules to be observed while dīkṣa lasts. Most interesting day is Mahāvratā, which is the last day but one in sattras. Harp with a hundred strings, Brāhmaṇa and Śūdra engage in praise and abuse of those engaged in sattra. Fight of ārya and śūdra for a white circular skin; abuse by harlot and brahmacārin of one another. Drums beaten on corners of vedi. Wives of sacrificers

become choristers for chanting. Dance round marjalīya by servants and slave-girls singing popular airs referring to cows. Sattras of a thousand years believed even by ancient writers to be mythical and Jaimini states that in such descriptions samvatsara means 'a day'.

*Agnicayana* (piling of the fire altar). This rite is the most complicated and recondite of all śrauta sacrifices. Satapatha Brāhmaṇa is leading work on it. Fundamental conceptions underlying it are costnological. Construction of fire altar in five layers is an anga of Somayaga. Five victims are first offered. Heads built up into altar. Clay for the bricks how brought, mixed and prepared. First brick called Asadha prepared by wife of sacrifices *Ukha* (pan) prepared from same clay, from which he prepares three bricks called Visvajyotis. Other bricks prepared. Description of the piling of the altar in five layers. Several forms of altar and of bricks. Bricks are of various sizes and have various names. Three bricks called svayamāṭṛnnāḥ. Ground measured and ploughed. Furrows sown with several corns. Several things such as a lotus leaf, golden ornament, golden image of a man are first placed, then a living tortoise is enveloped in moss and made motionless and then altar is constructed on it. Each of five layers contains 200 bricks according to Satyasadha, but others give larger numbers. Time required for piling varies. Peculiar mode of cooling altar. Numerous offerings. Procedure of Soma yaga followed with a few variations. Observances for a year after cayana.

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N. B. Works referred to only once or twice and most of those already set out on pp.19n, 179n, 195n, 321n, 624n, 713n have been omitted.

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# HISTORY OF DHARMA ŚĀSTRA



## CHAPTER I

### THE TOPICS OF DHARMA-ŚĀSTRA

**M**anifold are the topics that have been included under Dharma Śāstra from very ancient times. The Dharma-sūtras of Gautama, Baudhāyana, Apastamba and Vasiṣṭha deal in greater or less detail principally with the following subjects: the several *varṇas* (classes), *aśramas* (stages of life), their privileges, obligations and responsibilities; the *saṃskāras* performed on an individual (from *garbha-dhāna* to *antyeṣṭi*); the duties of the *brahmacārīn* (the first *āśrama*); *anadhyaīyas* (holidays on which Vedic study was stopped); the duties of a *snātaka* (one who has finished the first stage of life); *vivāha* (marriage) and all matters connected therewith; the duties of the *gṛhastha* (house-holder's stage); *śauca* (daily purification of body); the five daily *yajñas*; *dāna* (gifts); *bhakṣyābhakṣya* (what food should one partake of and what not); *śuddhi* (purification of persons, vessels, clothes etc.); *aśauca* (impurity on birth and death); *antyeṣṭi* (rites on death); *śrāddha* (rites performed for the deceased ancestors and relatives); *strī-dharma* (special duties of women) and *strīpūm-dharma* (duties of husband and wife); dharmas of *kṣatriyas* and of kings; *vyavāhara* (judicial procedure, and the sphere of substantive law such as crimes and punishments, contracts, partition and inheritance, adoption, gambling &c.); the four principal classes, mixed castes and their proper avocations; *apaddharma* (actions and avocations permitted to the several castes in extreme difficulties); *prāyaścitta* (sins and how to expiate them); *karmavipaka* (results of evil deeds done in past lives); *sānti* (rites on the happening of portents or for propitiating the planets etc.); duties of *vanaprastha* (forest hermit) and *samnyāsin* (ascetic). All these subjects are not treated in any fixed or settled order in the sūtra works.

To take only one example, the subject of partition and inheritance occurs at the end of the Dharma Sūtra of Gautama, while Vasiṣṭha places the same subject in the middle of his work (17th chapter) and Apastamba deals with those topics after finishing three-fourths of his work (in II.6.14). Further, some works on Dharma-śāstra give very elaborate treatment of certain topics of which only faint traces are found in the ancient Dharma Sūtras and metrical Smṛtis. Such topics are *vratas* (which may be looked upon as extensions of the subject of gifts), *utsarga* and *pratiṣṭha* (dedication of works of public utility and of temples and shrines), *tīrtha* (sacred places and pilgrimages to them), *kāla* (auspicious times, festivals etc.).

A glance at the above list will convince anyone how the conception of dharma was a far-reaching one, how it embraced the whole life of man. The writers on Dharma Śāstra meant by *dharma* not a creed or religion but a mode of life or a code of conduct, which regulated a person's work and activities as a member of society and as an individual and was intended to bring about the gradual development of a person and to enable him to reach what was deemed to be the goal of human existence.

From this standpoint various divisions of dharma were suggested. Dharma was divided into *śrauta* and *smārta*. The first comprised those rites and ceremonies with which the Vedic Saṃhitas and Brāhmanas were chiefly concerned, such as consecration of the three sacred fires, the Full moon and New moon sacrifices, the solemn soma rites etc. The *smārta* comprised those topics that were specially dealt with by the smṛtis and that concerned the various classes and stages of life. The present work will concern itself principally with *smārta dharma* and *śrauta dharma* will be dealt with concisely in an appendix. Some works divide dharma into *śrauta* (Vedic), *smārta* (based upon

smṛtis) and *śiṣṭācara* (the actions of the respected in society). This classification is based on the three sources of Dharma viz., *śruti*, *smṛti* and *śiṣṭācara*, as observed by Baudhāyana.' Another and more comprehensive classification says that Dharma is sixfold, viz. Dharma of *varṇas* (injunctions based on *varṇa* alone such as 'a brahṃaṇa should never drink wine' or 'a brāhṃaṇa should not be killed'), *aśrama-dharma*, *Sāmānya-dharma* (such rules as 'begging' and 'carrying a staff' enjoined on a brahmacārī), *varṇa-aśrama-dharma* (rules of conduct enjoined on a man because he belongs to a particular class and is in a particular stage of life, such as ' a brāhṃaṇa brahmacārī should carry a staff of palaśa tree), *guipadharma* (such as protection of subjects in the case of a crowned king), *naimittika dharma* (such as expiation on doing what is forbidden), *sadhāraṇa dharma* (what is common to all humanity viz., *ahiṃsa* and other virtues).

This classification appears to have been an ancient one. Medhatithi on Manu II.25 speaks of fivefold dharma (only omitting sadharana dharma from the above mentioned six) and quotes the explanations of them from the expounders of smṛtis. Hemādrī (*vrata-khāṇḍa* p.5) quotes 16 verses from the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa on the six-fold dharma. It will be noticed from the above that all matters (except sadharana or samanya dharma) have *varṇa* & *asrama* as the pivot around which the whole of Dharma Śāstra revolve. It is for this reason therefore that in ancient smṛtis like Manu and Yājñavalkya the sages are represented as asking the great expounders of those codes to impart to them instruction in the Dharmas of *varṇas* and *aśramas*.

Before embarking upon any treatment of *varṇas* it would not be out of place to say a few words about Dharmas common to all humanity. Our Dharma Śāstra works do not enter into any subtle or detailed examination of the principles of ethics or of the moral standard, nor are the concepts of duty, happiness or perfection subjected to any searching analysis.<sup>1</sup> But this does not at all mean that the principles of ethics were passed over by Dharma-sāstra works or were not highly thought of by them. From very ancient times truth is exalted above everything else, Rig Veda VII.104.12 says:–

' True speech and false speech run a race against each other, Soma protects out of the two what is true and what is very straight-forward and strikes down what is false'.

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<sup>1</sup> Reference may be made to the 'Ethics of India' by Prof Hopkins (1924) and 'Hindu Ethics' by Dr. John McKenzie in "Religious quest of India" series. The former work is marked by a detached and fair attitude towards the ideas of the ancient Indians and their writings. The latter, I am sorry to say, is marred by the unsympathetic and supercilious attitude of a Christian missionary. Its keynote is perverse inasmuch as the foundation of the author's criticism is the notion that one is not really moral unless one is engaged in active social service. There is very little warrant for this hypothesis in well-known works on Ethics. To expose the fallacies in Principal McKenzie's work would require a volume. But a few words must be said here. What particular brand of active social service the learned author has in view is difficult to follow. I would like to make him a present of the following lines from the Encyclopedia Britannica on Social Service 'The term social service is a comparatively new one in Great Britain. If it had been used previous to the 20th century it would have meant philanthropy and charity in the ordinary sense'. If the learned author means that ancient India never insisted on universal philanthropy and charity, he has read the Indian Literature in vain. Every house-holder was called upon by the Hindu Śāstras to offer food according to his ability to students, ascetics and to all beings including the untouchable *candālas* and even dogs and crows. Every brāhṃana who could teach had to do so without demanding any fee beforehand, *Maṭhs* were established in all parts of India for expounding religious books, feeding students and the poor. There are *annasatras* even now where hundreds are fed every day. No necessity arose throughout the ages for a Poor Law in India with its attendant evils well portrayed in Dickens' famous master-piece 'Oliver Twist'. The above were some of the different aspects of philanthropy and charity which are now dubbed social service. In the third century B. C. Aśoka had established hospitals not only for people but even for beasts and Yāj. I.209 equates the free nursing of sick persons with gifts of cows. The learned Professor asks with an air of triumph and condemnation of all Indian morality (p. 251) 'Is there anything comparable to the movement which St. Francis of Assist initiated and led?' The learned Professor has fallen into the frequent error of comparing a movement of the 13th century with Indian ideas over 2000 years old. Again I shall quote words from the Encyclopaedia Britannica. 'It would be an anachronism to think of Francis as a philanthropist or social worker or a revivalist preacher, though he fulfilled the functions of all these, Before every thing he was an ascetic and mystic'. The particular brands of Social Service that are now in vogue are mainly due to the ravages of Imperialism and extreme capitalistic tendencies. Besides he forgets that even the movement started by St. Francis had schisms and was guilty of all the moral evils that are associated with Western monastic institutions. Vide the recent and lucid book of Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer on ' Evolution of Hindu moral ideals ' (1935, Calcutta University).

The conception of *rta* in the Rig Veda is a sublime one and is the germ of the later doctrine of the rule of Dharma. The Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (S.B.E. vol.44 p.85) enjoins 'therefore let a man speak naught but truth'. In the Taittiriyaopanisad (I.II.1), the teacher when taking leave of his pupil at the end of the latter's studenthood places truth in the forefront of his exhortation and Dharma next. In the Chāṇḍogya (III.17) there is an allegory of a Soma sacrifice on life, where the dakṣiṇa (fee to be paid) is fivefold viz. the five virtues of *tapas* (asceticism), *dāna* (charity), *ārjava* (straightforwardness), *ahimsā* (non-injury to sentient beings), *satya-vacana* (truthfulness). The Br. Up. remarks that truth and Dharma are in practical life identical terms. One of the noblest prayers in all literature occurs in the Br. Up. (I.3.28) 'from falsehood lead me unto truth, from darkness lead me unto light, from death lead me unto immortality'. The Mundakopanisad says:—

'Only truth is victorious and not falsehood; the path of the gods is spread out by (the pursuit of) truth'.

The Br. Up. inculcates on all the great need of three cardinal virtues, viz. self-restraint, *dayā* (compassion or love for all sentient beings) and *dāna* (gifts or charity). The Chan. Up. says that the world of Brahman is free from all evil and only those who have lived as chaste students can enter the world of brahma. The Chan. Up. V.10 sternly condemns five sins, viz. theft of gold, drinking spirits, murder of a brāhmaṇa, defiling of one's guru's bed and association with these, as the greatest sins and in V.11.5 Asvapati exultantly declares that in his kingdom there were no grave sinners. The Kathopanisad (I.2.23) insists upon cessation from evil conduct, peace of mind and concentration as essential for the seeker after the Self. The Udyogaparva 43.20ff. speaks of the twelve vratas (vows or rules of conduct) for brāhmaṇas and verses 22-25 describe at great length the characteristics of one who is *dānta* (self-controlled). Śānti 160 contains an eulogy of *dama* (self-control). Śānti 162.7 describes how *satya* has 13 aspects and verse 21 says that non-injury to all beings in thought, word and deed, good will and charity are the eternal Dharma of the good. The Gautama-Dharma Sūtra (VIII.24-26) holds that *dayā* (compassion or love for all beings), *kṣānti* (forebearance), *anasūyā* (freedom from envy), *śauca* (purity of body, speech and thought), *anāyāsa* (absence of painful efforts or ambitions), *maṅgala* (doing what is commended), *akārpaṇya* (not demeaning oneself before others), *aspṛhā* (not hankering after sensual pleasures or the possessions of others) — are the 8 qualities of the soul and remarks that the person who has these 8 qualities realizes non-difference from Brahman and reaches the world of Brahma, though he may not have all the other forty saṃskāras, while he who has all the forty saṃskāras but is not possessed of these eight qualities does not reach the world of Brahma. Vasiṣṭha (X.30) says that avoiding back biting, jealousy, pride, egoism, unbelief, crookedness, self-praise, abuse of others, deceit, covetousness, delusion, anger and envy is the Dharma of all āśramas and further (XXX.1) he delivers a fine exhortation:—

'practise Dharma (righteousness) and not adharmā; speak the truth and not untruth; look far ahead, not near; look at what is highest, not at what is not highest'.

Apastamba Dh. S. (I.8.23.3-6) calls upon all āśramas to eradicate faults that tend to destruction and to cultivate the opposite virtues (and gives long lists of both). This shows that in the scale of values mere performance of sacrifices and purificatory and other religious ceremonies ranked according to Gautama and other writers very low and the highest value attached to the moral qualities of the soul.

There is no elaborate discussion of the questions as to why a man should tell the truth or abstain from *himsa* (injury to sentient beings) and cultivate other high moral qualities. But it should not be supposed that no indications whatever are given of the reasons why this should be done.

Two principles emerge if we closely examine the texts. In the midst of countless rules of outward conduct there is always insistence on the necessity to Satisfy the inner man (*antara-puruṣa*) or conscience. Manu IV.161 says 'assiduously do that which will give Satisfaction to the *antarātman*' (inner self); IV.239 says 'No parents, nor wife nor sons will be a man's friends in the next world; but

only righteousness.' 'Gods and the inner man mark the sinful acts' Vana-parva 207-54 and Manu VIII.85, 91-92.<sup>2</sup>

The reason given for cultivating such virtues as *dayā* & *ahiṃsā* is based upon the philosophical doctrine of the one Self being immanent in every individual as said in the words '*tat tvam-asi*'. This is the highest point reached in Indian metaphysics and combines morality and metaphysics. That doctrine requires us to regard the goodness or badness of one's actions from the standpoint of other individuals who will be affected by such actions. Dakṣa (III.22) declares that:—

'one who desires happiness should look upon another just as he looks upon himself. Happiness and misery affect one's self and others in the same way'.

Devala says that the quintessence of Dharma is that one should not do to others what would be disliked by one's self. Therefore our texts lay down two seats of authority in morals viz., the revealed truth (*śruti*) that 'All this is brahma' and the inner light of conscience.

Another reason for cultivating high moral qualities is found in the doctrine of the goals or ends of human existence (*puruṣārtha*). From very ancient times they are said to be four, *dharma* (right conduct), *artha* (economic interests), *kāma* (Satisfaction of sexual, emotional and artistic life), *mokṣa* (liberation of the spirit). The last is said to be the supreme end and to be attained only by the few and the vast majority can only place it as an ideal to be attained in the most distant future. As regards the other three, there is a gradation of values. *Kāma* is the lowest of all and only fools regard it as the only end. The Mahābhārata says:

'A wise man tries to secure all three, but if all three cannot be attained, he secures Dharma and *artha* or only Dharma if he has a choice of only one from among the three. A man of middling discipline prefers *artha* to the other two; *Dharma* is the source of both *artha* and *kāma*.'

The Dharma-śāstra writers did not condemn *kāma* altogether, they recognise that *kāma* has a place as a motive urging men to be active but they assigned it a low place. They recognised that a man shares with lower beings the impulses and emotions of sex, but that the Satisfaction of these impulses is of lower values than the moral and spiritual ends proper for a developed human personality and therefore insist that it should be subordinated to *artha* and *dharma*. Gautama (IX.46-47) says

'one should not allow the morning, midday and evening to remain fruitless so far as *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* are concerned. But among these three one should attach most importance to Dharma.'

Yāj. I.115 says practically the same thing. Āp. Dh. S. (II.8.20.22-23) declares that a man should enjoy all such pleasures as are not opposed to Dharma. In this way one secures both worlds.

In the Bhagavadgīta (VII.11) Kṛṣṇa identifies himself with *kāma* that is not opposed to *dharma*. Kauṭilya says:—

'one may enjoy *kāma* provided there is no conflict with *dharma* and *artha*, one should not lead a life of no pleasures.'

and then true to his role of a writer on *artha-śāstra*, he proclaims that his own opinion is that *artha* is the principal of the three, as *dharma* and *kāma* both spring from *artha*' Manu (II.224) after setting out several views about which of the three is principal states it as his own opinion that one should strive for all the three, but adds that if *artha* or *kāma* is in conflict with *dharma* one should give up *artha* or *kāma* as the case may be.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Vide also Adi parva 74.23-29, Manu VIII.86, Anuśāsana 2.73-74.

<sup>3</sup> Viṣṇu Dh. S. (71.84) and Bhagavata 1.2.9 say the same.

The Kāma-sūtra of Vatsyayana defines the three and says that out of *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* each preceding one is superior to each following one and that to the king *artha* should be the highest goal. This teaching shows that there are proximate ends or motives and ultimate ends or motives, that the ultimate ends are really the most valuable and that the whole teaching of Dharma Śāstra points to this that all higher life demands discipline both of body and mind and requires the subjection of lower aims to aims of higher value. Manu II.4 (like Aristotle in the first sentence of his Politics) says that the end of all activity is some presumed good. Manu further says (V.56) that the natural proclivity of all beings is to hanker after the Satisfaction of the common and lower desires of hunger, thirst and sexual gratification and therefore no stress is to be placed on them but on the cessation or curbing of these.

The Upanisads recognise the distinction between what is beneficial (*hita*) and what is most beneficial (*hitatama*). Śāntiparva (288.20 and 330.13) declares that what conduces to the greatest good of beings is 'satya.'

The Mitakṣara on Yāj.1.1. remarks that *ahiṃsā* and other qualities are the Dharmas common to all including even *caṇḍālas*. The qualities are variously enumerated and emphasis is laid upon different lists in different works. Saṅkha-smṛti (I.5) says that forbearance, truthfulness, self-restraint and purity are common to all *varṇas*.

The Mahābhārata says that three are the best qualities among all beings viz., absence of enmity, truthfulness and freedom from anger and in another place says that the best *vrata* (vow) for a man is threefold viz., he should feel no enmity (to others), should give generously and should speak the truth. Vasiṣṭha (IV.4) says that truthfulness, freedom from anger, generosity, *ahiṃsā* (non-injury) and procreation of offspring are (the common Dharma) of all (*varṇas*). Gautama (X.52) says that even the Śūdra has to submit himself to the Dharma of truthfulness, freedom from anger and purity (of body and mind). Manu says that *ahiṃsā*, truthfulness, no wrongful taking of another's possessions, purity and restraint of senses are in brief the common Dharmas of all *varṇas*. Manu (IV.175) calls upon all to take delight in truth, in Dharma, in conduct worthy of an ārya and in purity.

In the 3rd century B. C. the remarkable emperor Aśoka inscribed on stone in all parts of his empire the following list of virtues: compassion, liberality, truth, purity gentleness, peace, joyousness, saintliness, self-control; which bear a close resemblance to Gautama's list and even to a later list of St. Paul (vide Pillar Edicts II and VII in E. I. vol. II p.249 and p.272). Yāj. (1.122) mentions nine qualities as the means of securing Dharma for all (from the brāhmaṇa to the *caṇḍāla*).

The Mahābhārata says that freedom from anger, truthfulness, sharing one's wealth with others, forbearance, procreation (of children) from one's wife (alone), purity, absence of enmity, straightforwardness, maintaining persons dependent on one-self these nine are the duties of all *varṇas*. The Vamana-Purāṇa says that tenfold Dharma is common to all and names these ten as *ahiṃsā*, *satyaṃ*, *asteya*, *dāna*, forbearance, restraint, quiescence, not demeaning oneself, purity, *tapas*.<sup>2</sup> Hemādri (vratakhaṇḍa pp.7-8) quotes several passages from the Brahma, Brahmavaivarta and Visnu-dharmottara for several *sādhārana dharmas* (virtues common to all *varṇas* and *asramas*). The Visnu Dharma Sūtra enumerates fourteen qualities as *sāmanya-dharma*.

The foregoing discussion establishes that all Dharma Śāstra writers attached the highest importance to moral qualities and enjoined them upon all with all the emphasis they could command; but as their main purpose was a practical one, viz., to guide people to right acts in everyday life, they dealt more elaborately with the acts, rites and ceremonies that each person had to do with reference to his station in society. They are therefore found principally concerning themselves with *varṇāśrama* Dharma and not with *sādhārana dharmas* (i.e. duties common to all alike).



## Ārya-varta

One important question that is very much canvassed in works on Dharma Śāstra is about the country or territory which should be called āryavarta or which was a fit habitation for those who called themselves the followers of the Vedic religion. Therefore a few words on this subject would be quite relevant. The Rig Veda shows that the centre of Āryan culture in the times of the Rig Veda was the land of the seven rivers viz. North-west India and Punjab. We find that the rivers from Kubha (the Kabul river, in Rig V.53.9; x.76.6), Krumu (the modern Kurrum, Rig V.53.9, X.75.6), Suvāstu (modern Swat, in Rig VIII.19.37), the seven Sindhus<sup>4</sup> up to the Yamuna (Rig V.52.17, X.75.5), the Ganges (Rig VI.45.31, X.75.5) and Sarayu (probably in modern Oudh, in Rig IV.30.18 and V.53.9) figure in the Rig Veda. Among the rivers of the Punjab the following are individually mentioned: Sindhu (Rig II.15.6 'he made the Sindhu flow northwards', Rig V.53.9, Rig IV.30.12, Rig VIII.20.25 where reference is made to the medicine in the Sindhu, in the Asiknī, in the seas and on mountains), Asiknī (Rig VIII.20.25, X.75.5), Parusnī (Rig IV.22.2, V.52.9), Vipas and Sutudrī (Rig III.33.1 where their confluence is spoken of), Vipas alone in Rig IV.30.12, Sutudrī alone in Rig X.75.5, Drsadvatī, Apaya and Sarasvatī (as very holy in Rig III.23.4), Sarasvatī alone (Rig VII.95, the whole hymn is addressed to it of which verse 2 says it springs from the mountains; Rig VI.61 is another hymn addressed to it, v.10 of which says it has seven sisters), Gomatī (Rig VIII.24.30, X.75.6), Vitasta (Rig X.75.5). Gradually the Āryans spread southwards and eastwards. The Kanaka S. X.6 speaks of Kuru-Pañcalas. In the Brāhmaṇas the centre of Āryan activities and culture shifted to the countries of the Kurus and Pancalas and Kosala-Videhas. For example, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa remarks that in the lands of Kurupañcalas speech is at its best. In Sat. Br. XL 4.1.1 Uddalaka Aruni is called a Kuru-Pancala brāhmaṇa and contrasted with brāhmaṇas of the north (S. B. E. vol.44 p.51). Similarly the Kausītaki-br. (VII.6) remarks that those who want to learn (best) speech go northwards or wait upon him who comes from that direction. In the Śatapatha we have the story of Videgha Mahāva who went beyond the country of Kosala-Videha, crossed the river Sadanra that came down from the Himalaya, and settled to the east of that river, where the country was a cultivated and civilized one in the times of that work, while in former ages it had been uncultivated.

Even in the Buddhist Jātakas we see that; being an '*udicca brāhmano*' was a source of great pride (vide Fick's work p.40). The Tai. Br. speaks of the *vedi* of the gods as being in Kuru-kṣetra. Even in the Rig Veda itself the country through which the rivers Drsadvatī, Āpayā and Sarasvatī flowed is spoken of as the best spot (vide III.23.4). The Tai. Br. says that the Kurupancalas go east in the winter and westwards in the last month of summer. In the times of the Upanisads also the Kurupancala country appears to have occupied a pre-eminent place. The Br. Up. (III.1.1.) says that when Janaka, king of Videha, performed a sacrifice the brāhmaṇas of Kurupañcala flocked there in large numbers. Vide also Br. Up. III.9.19. The Br. Up. VI 2.1 and Chāṇḍogya V.3.1 say that Svetaketu went to the assembly of the Pancālas. Kausītaki Br. Up. (IV.1.) names the countries of Usīnara, Matsya, Kurupañcala and Kadivideha as centres of intellectual activity and in II.13 refers to two mountains one in the North and the other in the South (meaning probably Himavat and Vindhya). According to the Nirukta (II.2), the country of Kamboja was outside the limits of the country of Āryas, though the language spoken there seems to have been the same. The Mahābhāṣya lends support to this and adds that Surāṣṭra was not an Ārya country (vol.1, p.9). In the times of the Dharma Sūtras great divergence of opinion prevailed on the question of the location of Āryavarta.

The Vasiṣṭha Dharma-sūtra says:—

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<sup>4</sup> Rig II.12.12, IV.28.1, VIII.24.27, X.43.3

'Āryavarta is to the east of the disappearance (of Sarasvatī in the desert), to the west of Kālakavana, to the north of the mountains Pāriyātra and Vindhya and to the south of the Himalaya'.

It then refers to two more views held by other authors viz., 'Āryavarta is in the region between the Ganges and the Jumna' and 'where the black antelope roams about there is spiritual pre-eminence'. The Baud. D.S. (I.1.27) gives the same limits of Āryavarta as Vasiṣṭha substituting the word 'vinaśana' for 'ādarśa'.<sup>5</sup> Patanjali in his Mahābhāṣya defines Āryavarta several times in the same terms as Vasiṣṭha does. The Dharma Sūtra of Saṅkha-Likhita gives somewhat similar limits by remarking (spotless spiritual pre-eminence is to be found (in the country) to the east of the countries of Sindhu and Sauvīra, to the west of the city of Kāmpilī, to the south of Himalaya and to the north of Pāriyātra'.

The extant Manusmṛti (II.22) makes Aryāvarta coterminous with the whole of India north of the Vindhya by saying that the territory between the Himalaya and the Vindhya and extending up to the eastern and western oceans is known by the wise as Āryavarta. The second view (viz. Āryavarta is the region between the Ganges and the Jumna) occurs in Baud. Dh. S. (1.1.28). In the Tai. Ar.11,20 special honour is shown to those who dwell between the Ganga and the Yamuna. The third view (viz. Āryavarta is the country where the black antelope roams about naturally) is the one given in most smṛtis. Both Vasiṣṭha (I.14-15) and Baud. Dh. S. (1.1.29-30) quote an ancient *gatha* from the Nidāna work of the Bhāllavins to the effect that wherever the black antelope roams about in the country lying between the Sindhu in the west and the rising mountain in the east, there is spiritual pre-eminence. So this view is a very ancient one and probably arose from some mythological account as is indicated by the commentary of Viśvarupa on Yāj.1.2 which quotes a prose passage of the Svetasvataras:— 'Sacrifice became a black antelope and wandered over the earth; Dharma followed it in its wanderings'. This view of the limits of Āryavarta is maintained by Saṅkha (as quoted by Viśvarupa on Yāj. I.2), Visnudharma sūtra 814, Manu II.23, Yāj. I.2, Saṃvarta 4, Laghu-Hārīta (I. p.178), Veda-Vyāsa (I.3), Brhat-Parāśara (p.56) and several other smṛtis.

The Manusmṛti (II.17-24) defines Brahmavarta as the country between the holy rivers Sarasvatī and Drsadvatī, says that the traditional mode of conduct observed in that country is called *sadācāra*, that the countries of Kurukṣetra, Matsya, Pancala and Sūrasena are styled *Brahmaṛṣideśa* and are slightly less (in holiness) than Brahmāvarta, that Madhyadesa is between the Himalaya and the Vindhya and to the east of Vinaśana and to the west of Prayāga, that Āryavarta is the country between the Himalaya and Vindhya up to the eastern and western oceans, that that territory where the black antelope roams about naturally is the country fit for sacrifices and the countries beyond constitute *mleccha-deśa*, that men of the three higher *varṇas* should endeavour to live in these countries (viz. Brahmavarta, Brahmaṛṣideśa, Madhyadeśa, Āryavarta etc.) while a śūdra, when distressed for his livelihood, may stay in any country whatever. The Viṣṇu Dharma Sūtra (84.4) says that the country where the system of the four *varṇas* is not established is to be known as *Mleccha* country and Āryavarta is beyond that. This is explained by Aparārka (p.5) as follows: —

'One who desires to practise Vedic religion should live in one of the four countries viz. Brahmavarta and others; if that is not possible, then in a country where there is establishment of the four *varṇas* and the black antelope roams about naturally; if both these cannot be had, then one should dwell in a country where at least one of the two (cātur-varṇya and black antelope) is found.'

<sup>5</sup> Even so early as the Tāṇḍya Brāhmana we have the words *sarasvatyā vinaśane dīkṣante* (24.17.1). This shows that the Sarasvatī had disappeared by the time of the Tāṇḍya. According to the Vanaparva 82. III Vinaśana is the tirtha where the Sarasvatī disappeared and Vanaparva (130.3-5) says that the Sarasvatī disappeared at the entrance of Niśādarāṣṭra through fear of pollution from Niśādas tmd Salyaparva (37.1-2) tells us that Vinaśana is the sacred place where the Sarasvatī disappeared through hatred for Śūdras and Abhiras.

The above discussion shows that in very ancient times the country south of the Vindhya was looked upon as beyond the pale of Āryan culture. Baud. Dh.S. (1.1.31) says that the countries of Avanti, Anga, Magadha, Surāṣṭra, Dakṣiṇāpatha, Uprāvṛt, Sindhu and Sauvīra are of mixed origin (i.e. not of pure Āryan ancestry), that a person who goes to Āraṭṭaka, Kāraskara, Pundra, Sauvīra, Anga, Vanga, Kalinga and Prānūna (?) has to offer a solemn sacrifice like the Sarva-pṛṣṭha and that for going to Kalinga the *prāyascitta* is an offering to Vaiśvānara Agni. The Mit. on Yāj. III.292 quotes a verse of Devala to the effect that if a man goes to Sindhu, Sauvīra, Saurāṣṭra, the border lands (or Mleccha countries), Anga, Vanga, Kalinga and Andhra he has to perform the Upanayana saṃskāra over again. The Mit. adds a remark that this is so only if the man goes to these countries for some purpose other than pilgrimage.

Gradually however as Āryan culture spread over the whole of what is now called India the view of the sages about the countries pre-eminently Āryan had to be given up. Medhātithi on Manu II.22 explains that Āryavarta is so called 'because Āryas again and again spring up there and because the Mlecchas even if they overrun it from time to time do not abide there for long' and then makes the following very sensible observation (on II.23) 'if a kṣatriya king of excellent conduct were to conquer the Mlecchas, establish the system of four *varṇas* (in the Mleccha country) and assign to Mlecchas a position similar to that of *caṇḍālas* in Āryavarta, even that (Mleccha) country would be fit for the performance of sacrifices, since the earth is not by itself impure, but becomes impure through contact (of impure persons or things).' As a result of the spread of Āryan culture eastwards and southwards and the frequent invasions of non-Āryan tribes on the north west, the countries on the rivers of the Punjab came to be looked upon in the whirligig of time as unworthy of the Āryas to live in. Karna-parva 43.5-8 abuses those who live on the Sindhu and the five rivers of the Punjab as impure and *dharmabāhya*.

Another word which is very often used, particularly in the Purāṇas, to denote the territory where the ancient Vedic religion prevails is Bharata-varṣa. It occurs in the Hathigumpha Inscription of Kharavela (2nd century B.C.) as Bharadhavarsa. The Markandeya Purāṇa says that Bharata-varṣa has the ocean on the east, south and west and the Himalaya on the north. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa (II.3.1) says the same and Matsya (114-10) and Vāyu define Bharata-varṣa as stretching from Cape Comorin to the source of the Ganges. Sabara (not later than 5th century A. D.) in his bhasya on Jaimini (X.1-35 and 42) shows that to him there was unity of language and culture from the Himalaya to Cape Comorin. Paithīnasi as quoted in the Paribhasa-prakasa (p.58) says that Dharma is fully developed (lit. four-legged) in the country from the Himalaya to Cape Comorin.

According to Markandeya (53-41), Vāyu (vol. I chap.33-52) and other Purāṇas Bharata-varṣa is so called after Bharata, son of Ṛṣabha, descendant of Svayambhuva Manu; while Vāyu (vol. II. chap.37-130) appears to strike a different note by saying that Bharata-varṣa is so called after Bharata, the son of Dusyanta and Sakuntala. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa says that after thousands of births a person secures life as a human being in Bharata-varṣa and this land is called *Karma-bhūmi* (the land of religious actions) for those who want to secure heaven and final liberation. The Vāyu Purāṇa says almost the same and adds that in no land other than Bharata-varṣa is karma prescribed for mortals. It is somewhat amusing to find that many of the countries of India that in modern times pride themselves on being most orthodox are declared by the Aditya-Purāṇa (as quoted in the Smṛti-candrika) to be countries unfit for habitation and to be such that a stay in them except for pilgrim age entailed loss of caste and prayascittas. The Adi Purāṇa (Aditya Purāṇa ?) as quoted in the Paribhāṣāprakāśa (p.59) says 'no one, whether a dvija or not, born in Āryavarta should cross the three rivers, Sindhu, Karmadā (i.e. Karmanāśā) or Karatoyā except on a pilgrimage' and that if he does so, he should perform the penance of candrayana.

All smṛti writers and commentators generally restrict themselves to the duties of *varṇas* and *āśramas* as practised in Āryavarta or Bharata-varṣa, though in very rare cases (as in Yāj. II.192) they provide for the observance of the usages of even heretics (same verse as in n.42)

## CHAPTER 2

## VARNA — CASTE

**T**he number of works dealing with the origin and characteristics of the caste system in India is legion. Most of them, however, concern themselves with the detailed description of the bewildering variety of castes and subdivisions of castes in modern times and their present religious and social customs and usages.

The origin of caste has given rise to great speculation and several schools of thought have arisen. Generally individual authors lay undue emphasis on one element or attach far too much importance to one point in tracing the origin of the caste system and its ramifications, such as 'race' (Risley), 'tribe' (Ibbetson), 'occupation' (Nesfield). The study of the origin and development of caste in India is one of deep and absorbing interest to all students of sociology. A complete and critical examination of the several theories of caste advanced by distinguished authors and a detailed description of the hundreds of castes and sub-castes now found in India is far beyond the scope of the present work.

For those who want to make a thorough study of the most important works on caste a modest list is given in the footnote below.<sup>6</sup>

The caste system has been highly eulogised and also most severely condemned by Western writers. Sidney Low in his 'Vision of India' (pp.262-263, 2nd ed. of 1907) speaks of the beneficent aspect of the caste system in the following eloquent passage:—

'There is no doubt that it is the main cause of the fundamental stability and contentment by which Indian society has been braced up for centuries against the shocks of politics and the cataclysms of Nature. It provides every man with his place, his career, his occupation, his circle of friends. It makes him at the outset a member of a corporate body, it protects him through life from the canker of social jealousy and unfulfilled aspirations; it ensures him companionship and a sense of community with others in like case with himself. The caste organization is to the Hindu his club, his trade union, his benefit society, his philanthropic society. There are no work-houses in India and none are as yet needed.'

Abbe Dubois, who wrote about 130 years ago after being in close touch with Hindus of all castes for 15 years as a missionary, remarks (in his work on the character, manners and customs of the people of India, translated into English and published in London in 1817)

"I consider the institution of castes among the Hindu nations as the happiest effort of their legislation; and I am well convinced that, if the people of India never sunk into a state of barbarism, and if, when almost all Europe was plunged in that dreary gulf, India kept up her head, preserved and extended the sciences, the arts and civilization, it is wholly to the distinction of castes that she is indebted for that high celebrity." (p.14)

and he devotes several pages to the justification of this remark. Maine in his 'Ancient Law' (new edition of 1930 p.17) characterises it as 'the most disastrous and blighting of all human institutions.'

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<sup>6</sup> J.N. Bhattacharya's 'Hindu castes and sects' (1896); E.A.H. Blunt's 'Caste system of Northern India' (1931); W. Crooke's 'Tribes and castes of N. W. Provinces and Oudh' 4 Vol. (1896); N. K. Dutt's 'Origin and growth of caste in India' (1931) and 'Aryanization of India' (1925); E. B. Enthoven's 'Tribes and castes of Bombay' 3 Vol. (1920); R. Social Organisation in North-east India in Buddha's time, translation by Dr. S. K. Maitra 1920 (deals only with the Buddhist Jātaka materials); Dr. Ghuryo's 'Caste and race in India' (1932); Ibbetson's 'Punjab castes' (1881, reprint In 1916); S. V. Ketkar's 'History of caste in India' 2 Vol. (1909 and 1911); Kitt's 'Compendium of castes found in India' (1885); Nesfield's 'A brief review of the caste system of the North-west Provinces and Oudh' (1885); O'Malley's 'Indian caste customs' (1932) and 'India's social heritage' (1934); Hayavadan Rao's 'Indian Caste system' (1934); Risley's 'Tribes and castes of Bengal' 1891 (mostly anthropometric data) and 'People of India' 2nd ed. 1915; B. V. Russell's 'Tribes and castes of Central India'

Sherring in 'Hindu tribes and caste' vol.3 p.293 says 'it is the most baneful, hard-hearted and cruel social system that could possibly be invented for damning the human race'.

On the other hand Meredith Townsend in 'Europe and Asia' (edition of 1901 p.73) "wrote:—

"I firmly believe caste to be a marvellous discovery, a form of socialism which through ages protected Hindu Society from anarchy and from the worst evils of industrial and competitive life and is an automatic poor law to begin with and the strongest form known of Trades Union'.

E.g. Sherring in his "Hindu Tribes and castes" vol. III p.274 says:—

'It has been said with some truth that caste promotes cleanliness and order and is in a certain sense a bond of union among all classes of the Hindu community. Yet surely these ends might have been attained in a simpler manner and by a less antagonistic process. The invention of a project so wonderfully elaborate and intricate a project of bringing into absolute subjection two hundred millions of the human species by robbing them of their independence, the invention of a project like this, so prodigious and far-reaching was not needed to accomplish such useful and beneficent ends. That another and very different object was in view from the very first is abundantly manifest. This object was neither more nor less than to exalt the Brahman, to feed his pride and to minister to his self-will.'

There are several fallacies lurking in the above quoted passage of Sherring. In the first place, there is nothing to show that the caste system was invented by any body of persons who could impose their will on a continent. The system simply grew up in the lapse of ages. The population of Hindus when Sherring wrote may have been near two hundred millions, but it could not have been more than a small fraction of that colossal number during the thousands of years that the system has flourished. Besides writers like Sherring pass over the great achievements of Indians under the caste system in Literature, religion and philosophy, in handicrafts and in the fine arts and unduly exaggerate the defects of the system that have become glaring only in the machine-made civilization of the 19th and 20th centuries. These critics ignore the great adaptability of the system, whereby it preserved Indian society from social anarchy during ages of foreign invasions and internecine wars. While severely condemning the brāhmanas the critics altogether forget that the vast and varied Sanskrit Literature owes its production and preservation mostly to the sacrifice of the brāhmanas for ages. Under the caste system, no man was allowed to be useless to the commonwealth and his conduct was a question of honour with his group. When all work was turned out with the hands, the caste system tended to preserve and augment the skill of artisans. Moreover what social organization is to be substituted and how is not made clear by these critics. Most of these critics have the western social system based on wealth and the industrial revolution in view but that system also is as evil as or perhaps worse than the modern caste system.

There are others, though their number is small, that also believe that the caste system was an invention, an artificial product, due to the machinations of crafty brāhmanas. Every great institution has its extremes of good or evil. This work will endeavour to steer clear of downright and hypercritical condemnation of the caste system due to relying on modern stand points and conditions of society and unthinking adulation thereof. It will try to present and balance facts and though it cannot help passing judgments it will leave the reader free to judge for himself as far as possible.

In the present work the discussion will be mostly confined to the evidence of Sanskrit literary monuments, ancient and medieval. An attempt will be made to trace the origin of caste from Vedic times, to exhibit theories of the Dharma Sūtra-kāras, other smṛtikaras and commentators on the subject and to describe the peculiar ceremonies, privileges, duties and responsibilities of Hindu castes as gathered from these works in Sanskrit. To discuss the feasibility or desirability of totally destroying the caste system or the ways and means of attaining that end is deemed to be outside the legitimate limits of this volume. It may, however, be expressly stated as the authors opinion, in

order to avoid misunderstands or fruitless speculations about his personal views, that he does not think that the caste system was an artificial product due to the intrigues, greed and cunning of brāhmaṇas, nor does he hold that it is feasible to destroy the whole edifice of the caste system in the near future. In the cities we may find some people taking their food together but the real India is in the villages, where in spite of the loud denunciations of reformers for a hundred years, the restrictions on taking food and inter caste marriages are almost as rigid as they once were. Our efforts must be directed to wide and rapid spread of literacy among the village people, the diffusion of the idea of one people and one nationality and gradual fusion of small sub castes into larger similar units.

We in India have no doubt reached a critical stage in our history when old ideals, institutions and habits are being shattered by the impact of new ideas and by the onrush of global forces. We have to decide whether we shall make or be able to make a clean sweep of all old ideals and institutions as so much debris and rubbish or whether while keeping the old ideals and some of the old institutions as foundations we shall build up a new social order and create and foster new habits of thought and action. It is beyond the scope of the present work to write more on this point.

A sort of caste system based on birth and occupation did prevail in many countries In ancient times as in Persia, Rome and Japan. But in all these countries it hardly ever made any near approach in rigour and complexity to the caste system that we have in India and instead of ramifying into divisions and subdivisions, it dwindled and disappeared in the course of time. No unanimity seems possible as to the several causes and circumstances which led in India alone to the evolution of the stupendous structure of caste. Not only is it impossible to hold that the origin of the modern complexity of the caste system is to be traced back to one single cause, but it is difficult to accept that even all the origins that have been postulated by the several authors can adequately and Satisfactorily explain the modern caste system.

In most of the works on the castes in India a few features are pointed out as the characteristics of the caste system and as common to all castes and sub-castes. They are:—

- (1) heredity i.e., in theory a man is assigned to a particular caste by birth in that caste;
- (2) endogamy and exogamy i.e., restriction as to marrying in the same caste and not marrying certain relatives or other persons, though of the same caste;
- (3) restrictions as to food (i.e. what food and water may be taken or not taken and from whom);
- (4) occupation (i.e. members of most castes follow certain occupations and no others);
- (5) gradation of castes, some being at the top in the social scale and others being deemed to be so low that they are untouchable.

Some authors add another characteristic, viz. the caste council with its chief having in meeting assembled among other matters the power to regulate the conduct of its members, to impose the penalties of fine or excommunication for lapses. It may be said at once that this last is a feature that is not found among most of the brāhmaṇa and kṣatriya castes even in modern times and is not dealt with by Dharma-Shastra works.

Endogamy is now the most prominent characteristic of caste. The other four are more or less fluctuating from province to province and age to age).

In this work the first five characteristics of the caste system set out above will be subjected to a close critical examination on the basis of the Vedic Dharma-Shastra material, We must also remember that the attributes of caste have not been the same throughout the ages. There is great difference between the popular conceptions and what's embodied in the ancient and medieval

Dharma Shastra works. In the twentieth century caste in India is a matter of marriage and to a much lesser extent of food and drink.

As to avocations any one can at present follow any profession without fear of loss of caste excepting a few believed to be very impure and very degrading ones (like those of sweepers, butchers, tanners etc.). It is also not possible even now for any one to be generally accepted as a priest, unless he is or claims to be a brāhmaṇa. The old barriers that separated one caste or sub caste from another have been greatly shaken by the influx of modern ideas and the exigencies of the times and one may hope that in a few decades more caste will remain as a purely social institution regulating marriages and to a lesser extent commensality (and not a religious one).

Western scholars, in spite of their most commendable patience and industry, often present, through ignorance or lack of first-hand knowledge, the number of castes as larger than what it actually is. For example, Sherring (vol. II. Introduction pp. XXII-XLVI) gives an alphabetical list of brahmanical tribes and remarks:—

“Hundreds of these tribes, if not at enmity with one another, cherish mutual distrust and antipathy to such a degree that they are socially separated from one another as far as it is possible for them to be—as much as brāhmaṇas are from the lowest outcastes neither eating nor drinking together nor intermarrying”.

The list he gives is most misleading. To take only a few examples, he enumerates Athavle, Achwal, Abhyankara, Apte, Agashe, Bhanu, Bivalkar, Badye, Bhide, Bhagvat, Bhuskute, Bhat, Bodas as separate tribes; but it is well-known to people in Western India that these are the surnames (not Sub-castes) of the Kokanastha or Citpāvana brāhmaṇas, who not only inter-dine, but also inter-marry among themselves, provided there is no bar on the ground of sameness of gotra and pravara.

The word *varṇa* means ‘colour’ or ‘light’ in most passages of the Rig veda.<sup>7</sup> But in some verses of the Rig Veda<sup>8</sup> the word *varṇa* is associated with groups of people having a skin of a dark or fair colour.

For example, we read:—

in Rig II.12:4 (Indra) who placed low the dāsa colour in a cave (or darkness)';

in Rig I.179.6 ‘the fierce sage (Agastya) cherished both *varṇas*';

in Rig IX.71.2 ‘like one (a fighter) who strikes the people he (Soma) who is powerful goes giving out frequent roars; he exposes the Asura colour';

in Rig I.130.8 ‘Indra helped in battles the Ārya sacrificer ..... Indra punished for the sake of Manu (the dāsas) who do not observe the ordinances and subdued (or killed) the dark skin 'Indra having killed the dasyus protected the ārya *varṇa*' (Rig3:34.9);

You (Indra) subdued for Rjisvan, the son of Vidathin, Pipru and powerful Mrgaya; you mowed down fifty thousand dark (men), you shattered cities as old age does shatter good looks' Rig IV.16.13; ‘Somas, which strike away the dark skin’ Rig, IX, 41.1.

In Rig I.158.5 a certain dāsa is called Traitana which name has a Persian ring about it;

In Rig I.104.2 *varṇa* seems to be placed in opposition to dāsa.

These passages make it clear that the Āryas and dāsas were two opposing camps and both were designated ‘*varṇas*’ on account of the colour of their skins. The Tai. Br.1:2.6 (with reference to the

<sup>7</sup> e.g. I.73.7, v II.3.5, IX.97.15, IX, 104.4, IX.105.4, X, 124.7

<sup>8</sup> Here Sayana interprets ‘varṇau’ as ‘*kāma*’ and ‘*tapas*,’ but this is far-fetched and it appears better to take the passage as meaning that Agastya supported both Āryas and dāsas. The words cannot reasonably be taken to refer to Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya since there was no difference of colour between the two and since varṇas have been four and not two.



Mahāvratā in which there was a mock fight between a brāhmaṇa and a śūdra) says 'that the brāhmaṇa, is the divine *varṇa*, and śūdra is the *asurya varṇa*'. If we can interpret the Rig Veda verse by the help of the Tai. Br. then in Rig IX.71.2, the words '*asurya varṇa*' mean the 'Śūdra tribe'. There is no doubt that the word *asura* when applied to gods like Varuna has another meaning also in the Rig In numerous places in the Rig Veda the antagonism between the āryas and dāsas or dasyus is emphasized and prayers are offered to India and other gods for having subdued or for subduing the dāsa in favour of the Ārya.<sup>9</sup>

In Rig I.51.8 Indra is requested to mark who are *āryas* and who are *dasyus*. This does not mean that there was difference between the two in physical appearance only; on the contrary the antithesis between the ārya who is referred to as '*barhismat*' and the dasyu who is styled '*avrata*' clearly shows that the emphasis was rather on the difference of their cults. That *dasyu* and *dāsa* are identical in meaning follows from the same epithets being applied to both and from the fact that *dasyu* and *dāsa* occur in the same verses as applying to the same enemy.

In Rig X.22.8 *dasyu* and *dāsa* are used in the same verse as applicable to the same enemy. In Rig X.99.6 and 8 Indra is represented as killing both *dāsa* and *dasyu* respectively. The *dasyus* are described as '*avrata*' (not obeying the ordinances of the gods) in Rig I.51.8, I.175.3, VI, 14.3, '*akratu*' (who perform no sacrifice) in VII.6.3, '*mṛḍhravācaḥ*' (whose speech is in distinct or soft) in VII.6.3 and V.29.10, '*anāsaḥ*' (sunb-nosed or dumb) in Rig V.29.10. it appears that *dāsa* and *dasyu* are synonyms and were sometimes styled asuras. For example, Sambara is called *dasyu* and *dāsa* in Rig Veda VI.31.4 and *dāsa* in Rig VI.26.5 and is also associated with asuras like Pipru in VI.18.8; Pipru is spoken of as a *dāsa* in Rig VIII.32.2 and as an asura in X.138.3. Varcin is styled *dāsa* in Rig IV.30.15 and VI.47.21 and asura in VII.99.5. In Tai. S.57 (IV.3.11.3) also it seems that they are held to be identical. The enmity between *dāsa* and *ārya* is breathed in such verses as the following: Rig II.11.4 'vanquish the tribe of *dāsas* by the sun' (i.e. by the help of a brilliant weapon); Rig I.174-7 'You made the earth a pillow for the *dāsa*' (i.e. you laid him low on the ground); Rig III.12-6 'O Indra and Agni, by one effort together you shook ninety cities that had *dāsas* as overlords', It is not possible to say that *dāsas* or *dasyus* were some Āryan tribes that had fallen from the worship or culture of the Āryan singers of Vedic hymns. In many places the sage refers to the conquest for him by Indra and other gods of *dāsas* as well as Āryan foes. For example, 'Protectors of the good! you (two) killed Āryan foes and *dāsa* foes' Rig VI.60-6; 'O Indra and Varuna you killed *dāsa* foes and also Ārya foes and helped Budas with your protection' Rig VII.83.1.

This shows that though the Āryans had become divided and fought among themselves, they kept *āryas* and *dāsas* quite distinctly. foregoing shows that in the times of the Rig Veda there were two antagonistic camps, of the *āryas* and *dāsas* or *dasyus*, they differed in the colour of their skins and also in worship, speech and bodily appearance. Therefore, in the earliest period we find the word *varṇa* associated only with *dāsa* and with *ārya*. Though the words brāhmaṇa and kṣatriya occur frequently in the Rig Veda, the word *varṇa* is not used in connection with them. Even in the Puruṣa-sūkta (Rig Veda X.90) where the words brāhmaṇa, rājanya, vaiśya and śūdra occur the word *varṇa* is not used. Hence, one may reasonably say that the only water tight groups that are positively or expressly vouchsafed by the Rig Veda are *ārya* and *dāsa* or *dasyu*. It is often argued that as the word brāhmaṇa denotes a caste in later literature, in the Rig Veda also it must be presumed to have the same meaning. But this begs the whole question. No one denies that brāhmaṇa denotes a caste in later literature. But whether it has the same sense in the Rig Veda must be determined on the materials furnished by the Rig Veda itself. Some rely on the word 'brahma-putra' in Rig II.43.2 as showing that a brāhmaṇa became so only by birth in the Rig Veda. But the verse begins by saying

<sup>9</sup> Rig I.51.8; I.103.3; I.117.21; II.11.2, 4, 18, 19; III.29.9; V.70.3; VII.5.6; IX.88.4; VI.18.3; VI. 5.2.

that 'you sing a Sāma like the Udgatr priest' and so 'brahma-putra' must mean a *rtvij* whose duty it was to recite sāstras (the Brāhmaṇacchamsin as Sayana explains).; It is generally conceded that the Puruṣa-sūkta is a much later hymn than most of the hymns of the Rig Veda. In the whole of the Rig Veda the word vaiśya and śūdra do not occur except in the Puruṣa-sūkta, though both of them occur in the Atharva Veda (V.17-9 for vaiśya and IV.20.4 and 8 for śūdra and ārya) and very frequently in the Tai. S. Besides we cannot forget that the final redaction of the Rig Veda must be held to have been separated from the composition of the individual hymns by several hundred years (if not more) and that even if it be that at the time when the Puruṣa-sūkta was composed, the four *varṇas* had been constituted and had become castes, yet the same cannot be affirmed for the time of the original composition of the other hymns. The word brāhmaṇa occurs several times in the Rig Veda:—

'O brāhmaṇas, O pitṛs fond of soma! May the sinless Dyava-prthivī (Heaven and Earth) tend to our welfare'; 'Like brāhmaṇas in the Atiratra where soma is to be drunk, uttering (words) round a lake full of water you have, Oh frogs, gathered together on that day of the year on which the rains begin' (Rig VII.103.7); 'The brāhmaṇas, who drink soma, reciting prayers of the yearly sacrifice, have sent forth their speech' (Rig VII.103.8).

In this verse brāhmaṇas are expressly said to be getting '*brahma*' ready.

'May Agni who devours every thing make that (dead body) free from disease and (may) soma also (do the same) who entered into the brāhmaṇas.' (Rig X.16.6).

'When the brāhmaṇas worship together as friends in hymns (lit. speed of the mind) that are fabricated from their hearts' (Rig X.71.8). In Rig VI.75.10 brāhmaṇas are invoked for welfare along with pitṛs. This shows that the brāhmaṇas were highly venerated. The other verses establish that they were the reciters of hymns (brahma) and drank soma.

In Rig VIII.35.16-18 we read:—

'You (Asvins) urge on (or inspire) brahma, you urge on our thoughts (or actions), you kill the evil spirits and subdue diseases; (17) you urge kṣatra (valour) and also men, you kill evil spirits (same as 16); (18) you urge on the cows and also the Viś (the rest is same as 16).'

Here it seems that the groups of people (viz. those who think and make songs, those who show valour and lead men, and those common people who tend cattle) are clearly meant. These verses may be conceded as pointing to the existence of three groups (brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and viśah) but there is nothing in them to show that these three had crystallised into somewhat like the castes of later times.

In Rig VII.33.11 Vasiṣṭha is addressed as brahman, but that does not mean that he was a brāhmaṇa (by birth), as he is said to have been born of Urvasī from Mitra and Varuna.

Similarly, in Rig IX.96.6 (*Brahma devānām*) the word brahma does not certainly mean 'brāhmaṇa by birth', nor does '*viprāṇām*' mean 'brāhmaṇas by birth'. In that verse one who is super eminent among a group is specified, just as the buffalo among animals, the hawk among carnivorous birds etc.

In Rig VIII.33 19 'look down and not up; bring your feet close together; may thy kaśaplakas (legs?) be not seen, for though a brahma, thou wert born a woman,' it is impossible to hold that the last words mean — 'thou wert; a brāhmaṇa woman'. If it is only intended to refer to the fact that she is a brāhmaṇa woman, there is no reason why the Perfect tense (*babhūvitha*) is used and not the present. Here 'brahma' most probably means 'a priest of that name', as that is the meaning in Rig II. I.2 (*brahma cāsi grhapatis-ca no dame*).

The word '*brahmajāyā*' in Rig X.109.2, 3, 6 and 7 does not mean the wife of a brāhmaṇa by birth but rather 'wife of Brhaspati'. The whole hymn is obscure and more or less enigmatic or allegorical. In the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa 61 35.2-4 it is said that soma is the food of brāhmaṇas and that a kṣatriya

was to press the tendrils of the Nyagrodha tree and the fruits of Udumbara, Asvattha and Plakṣa and drink the juice so pressed instead of soma.

It appears, therefore, that the brāhmaṇas were a distinct group even in the earliest period of the, Rig Veda. Whether they were hereditary is certainly not clear; nor is there anything to show that there were restrictions as regards partaking of food from persons other than brāhmaṇas or as to marriage. That brāhmaṇas in the Rig Veda were a class by themselves may be conceded, but whether they had become a caste by birth is a matter of opinion dependent on the connotation given to the word caste. Dr. Ghurye ('Caste and race in India' p.42) thinks, probably following the Vedic Index (vol. I on Kṣatriya), that the reference in Rig X.71.9 to a false claim for being regarded as a brāhmaṇa points to the conclusion that brāhmaṇas had become a caste.

The verse literally translated means:— 'these (persons) who do not move below nor beyond, who are neither brāhmaṇas, nor engaged in pressing soma they being ignorant and having resorted to speech in sinful (or coarse) language take to ploughshares and engage in (agricultural) operations'.

It is difficult to see how there is here any false claim to be regarded as a brāhmaṇa. This verse means apparently that those who are not composers of prayers or drinkers of soma (because they are ignorant) are men of low speech and have to turn to agriculture. Even in the days of the Dharmasūtras restrictions as to food and marriage for brāhmaṇas were not at all as rigid as they became in medieval and modern times; but even when these restrictions were not rigid it was clearly laid down that a brāhmaṇa is so by birth alone.

The word 'brahma' generally means in the Rig Veda 'prayer' or 'hymn'.<sup>10</sup> "O Agni make our prayer and sacrifice prosper by your flames'. Rig III.53.12 says:— 'this brahma (prayer or spiritual power) of Viśvamitra protects the Bharata people'. In the Atharva Veda II.15.4 (as *brahma* and *kṣatra* entertain no fear, nor are they harmed) brahma seems to mean 'the class of brāhmaṇas'. The transition of meaning from 'brahma' (prayer) to Brahma' meaning the class of those who composed or recited prayers is natural and easy.

In the Rig Veda I.157.2 both *brahma* and *kṣatra* occur in the same verse where they probably mean 'prayer' and 'valour' respectively. In the Atharva Veda III.19.1 both words occur and probably mean the same thing as in Rig I.157.2. In some Vedic works brahma and kṣatra stand collectively for brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas (e.g. Tai. Br. II.7.18, Br.Up. I.4.11, Kāthopanisad I.2.24). The word kṣatriya is very frequently applied as an epithet to several gods; e.g. Rig VII: 64.2 and VIII.25.8 (in both to Mitra and Varuna), Rig VIII.67.1 (to Adityas), Rig X.66.8 (to gods in general).

In some verses *kṣatriya* means 'a king or a nobleman'; e.g. Rig IV.42.1 'The kingdom on both sides (heaven and earth) belongs to me, who am a *kṣatriya* and who holds sway over all living persons, so that all the immortals (gods) are ours (on my side)'; Rig X, 109.3 (=Atharva V:17.3) 'the domain of the kṣatriya has been protected (from the sight of enemies)'. (The word 'rājanya' occurs in the Rig Veda only in the Puruṣa Sūkta: in the sense of kṣatriya in the Atharvaveda V.17.9. remark applies kṣatriya as to brāhmaṇa. It is difficult to say whether kṣatriyas were so by birth in the times of the hymns of the Rig or were only a class more or less fluid. We find that the Rig speaks of Devāpi as the purohita of Santanu who became a king. The story is that both were sons of Rṣṭisena and that Santanu, though a younger brother, became king as Devāpi was not willing to be a king. The result was a famine due to Santanu's transgression and so Devāpi performed a sacrifice to induce rainfall. This shows that out of two brothers one became a king and the other a purohita. So kings and purohitas did not depend on birth.

A poet exclaims:—

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<sup>10</sup> Vide Rig IV.6.11, VI.52.2, X.105.8, X.141.5

'I am a reciter of hymns my father is a physician and my mother grinds (corn) with stones. We desire to obtain wealth in various actions.' (Rig IX.112.3)

In Rig III.44-5 the poet wistfully asks Indra:—

'Indra, fond of soma, would you make me the protector of people, or would you make me a king, would you make me a sage, that has drunk of soma, would you impart to me endless wealth?'

This shows that the same person could be a rsi or a noble or a king.

Dr. Ghurye (in 'Caste and race in India' p.44) thinks that the kṣatriyas had become a compact body and he particularly relies on Rig VII.104.13 (= AtharvaVeda VIII.4.13) which is cited in the Vedic Index (vol.1, p.207) for the same purpose. That verse literally means:—

'Soma does not urge on the crooked one, nor the kṣatriya who bears false. He strikes the rakṣas, and strikes him who speaks falsely; both lie in the bonds of Indra'.

The words '*kṣatriyam mithuyā dhārayantam*' are explained by Sayana as 'Kṣatriya who bears false words'. The 2nd half is only an expansion of the first half and so '*vrjina*' corresponds to '*rakṣas*' and '*asad vadantam*' is only a paraphrase of '*mithuyā dhārayantam*'. They may mean this that one who is a kṣatriya, but has no strength as a kṣatriya should have, is at the mercy of Indra. Unless we project our notions of the later state of society and the caste system when considering this verse, it is hardly possible to hold that this verse indicates that it refers to persons making a false claim for entrance into a compact body of kṣatriyas by birth.

Dr. Ghurye also says (p.44) 'The 2nd order in society, the kṣatriya, is known in the earlier portions of the Rig Veda as 'rājanya.' I have not been able to find the word rājanya in the Rig Veda any where except in the Puruṣa sūkta. In the Aitareya brāhmaṇa (chap.34.2) the word 'rājanya' stands for a member of the 2nd class in society, while kṣatriya means a king of whom land (for sacrifice to gods) is asked for by brāhmaṇa, rājanya or vaiśya.

Though the word vaiśya occurs in the Rig Veda only in the Puruṣa-sūkta, the word '*viś*' is very frequently employed in it. It generally means 'people' or 'group of people'. In a large number of cases we have the words *mānuṣīr-viśaḥ* or *mānuṣīṣu vikṣu* or *mānuṣīnām viśām*, e.g. Rig III.5.3, III.6.3, III.11.5 (invincible Agni goes in front of human groups), IV.6.7 and 8, IV.9.2, V.1.9, V.8.3, VI.48.8, VI.47.16 (*viso manusyau*), X.1.4, X.69.9. In some places we have '*dāsīr viśaḥ*' (the dāsa hordes) e.g. IV.28-4, VI.25-2.

In Rig III.34-2 we have 'Oh Indra, you are the leader of human hordes as well as of divine hordes' (where we have *daivīnām viśam*). Rig<sup>11</sup> VIII.63-7 (when loud invocations were sent towards Indra by the people consisting of five groups) shows that '*viś*' means all the Āryan people. In Rig V.32.11 Indra is styled '*pañcajanya*' (favourable to the five people) and in IX.66.20 Agni has the appellation '*pañcajanyaḥ purohitaḥ*' (the purohita of the five peoples). Sometimes *jana* and *viś* seem to be contradistinguished as in Rig II.26.3 (*sa ij-janena sa viśa sa janmanā sa putrair-vājam bharate dhanā nṛbhiḥ*), But the very fact that *viś* is qualified also as *pañcajanya* shows that there was hardly any distinction between *jana* and *viś*. In the RigVeda frequent reference is made to five people (*pañca janāḥ*). In the same way the words *kṛṣṭi* (II.2.10, IV.38.10), *kṣiti* (V.35.2, VI.48.7, VII.75.4), *carṣani* (V, 86.2, VII.15.2) are employed along with *pañca*. We have also '*pañcajanyaṣu kṛṣṭiṣu*' in Rig III.53-16. So it is clear that *viś* cannot in almost all hymns of the Rig mean 'vaiśya' but means the 'people' or 'āryan people' when no epithet like '*dāsīḥ*' or '*daivīḥ*' is prefixed. The

<sup>11</sup> Śāṅkara in his bhāṣya on Vedānta-sūtra I.4.12 says that the word *pañcajana* in R.V.VIII. 63;7 means '*prajā*' (people) and also notes that according to some 'pañca janāḥ' are devas, pitrs, asuras, gandharvas and rakṣases; while according to others they are the four varnas and nisādas as the fifth.

Ait. Br. (I.26) says that 'viśaḥ' means 'rāṣṭrāṇi' (countries) when explaining Rig IV.50-8 (*tasmai viśaḥ svayam-avānamante*).

The word "dāsa" in later literature means 'a serf or a slave.' It follows that the dāsa tribes that we see opposed to the Āryas in the Rig Veda were gradually vanquished and were then made to serve the Āryas. In the Manu-smṛti (VIII.413) the Śūdra is said to have been created by God for service (dasya) of the brāhmaṇa. We find in the Tai. S., the Tai. Br. And other Brāhmaṇa works that the śūdra occupies the same position that he does in the smṛtis. Therefore it is reasonable to infer that the dāsas or dasyus conquered by the Āryas were gradually transformed into the Śūdras. From being enemies they were brought into friendly relations and given a very subordinate position. Traces are visible even in the Rig Veda that friendly relations had begun to be established between certain dāsas and the priests. For example in Rig VIII, 46.32 we read 'the singer took a hundred (cows or other gifts) from the dāsa Balbūtha and from Tarukṣa. In the Puruṣa-sūkta (X.90.12) the brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya and śūdra are said to have sprung from the mouth, arms, thighs and feet of the supreme Puruṣa. In the very next verse the sun and the moon are said to have been born from the eye and mind of the Puruṣa. This shows that the composer of the hymn regarded the division of society into four classes to be very ancient and to be as natural and God-ordained as the sun and the moon. We shall now see what position was assigned to the śūdra in the Vedic Samhitas and Brāhmaṇas. In the Rig Veda the Ārya is contradistinguished from the men 'of dark skin.' In the Dharma Sūtras we find the śūdras spoken of as 'dark *varṇa*' which is the same as Baud. Dh. S. II.1.59. 'The Śūdra among men and the horse among beasts. Therefore those two, the horse and the śūdra, are the conveyances of beings; therefore the śūdra is not fit (or ordained) for sacrifice' (Tai. S, VII, 1.1.6). This shows that the śūdra could not perform the Vedic sacrifices and that he was employed for carrying person's in a palanquin or otherwise. In Tai. S.V.7.6.3-4 we have:—

'put light (glory) in our brāhmanas, put it in our chiefs (or kings), (put) light in vaiśyas and śūdras, put light in me by your light.'

This is a sure indication that the śūdra who took the place of the dāsa is here placed on the same level with the other three classes in the matter of the receipt of light from God and that far from being looked upon as an enemy, he had come to be looked upon as a member of the society (though the lowest in the scale).

'The Śūdra is a moving burial ground; therefore one should not study the Veda in the vicinity of a śūdra.' He created the brāhmaṇa with Gayatrī, the rājanya with Tristubh and the vaiśya with Jagatī; but he did not create the śūdra with any metre.'

The Tandya mahābrāhmaṇa says:—

'Therefore a śūdra, though he may have many cattle, is not entitled to perform sacrifice, he is godless as no deity was created after him (as in the case of the other *varṇas*); therefore he does not go beyond washing the feet (of the three other *varṇas*), since he was created from the feet'

(this last being an allusion to the Puruṣa-sūkta X.90.12 *padbhyām sudro ajāyata*). This shows that the śūdra, however rich in cattle he might be, had to perform the menial duty of washing the feet of dvijas. The Śatapatha Br. says that 'the śūdra is untruth' (S. B. E. vol.44. p.446), that 'the śūdra is toil' (S. B, BY Vol.44 p.410), and that a dīkṣita (one who was initiated for a Vedic sacrifice) was not to speak with a śūdra (S. B. E, vol.26 p.4). The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa remarks that 'the śūdra is at the beck and call of others (the three *varṇas*), he can be made to rise at will, he can be beaten at will.' When the father of Sunahsepa <sup>12</sup> (who had sold Sunahsepa for 100 coins and had shown himself ready to kill him as a pasu for another hundred coins) urged his son to come back to him

<sup>12</sup> The legend of Sunahsepa is referred to even in Rig, I. 24.12-13 and V. 2.7 (where it is expressly said that Sunahsepa was released by Varuna from the sacrificial post to which he had been tied).

after the boy had been taken into favour by Varuna and Viśvamitra, he contemptuously discards his father's proposal with the words:—

'one who commits an evil deed once may commit another sinful deed thereafter; you did not leave aside the śūdra's line of conduct; you did what leaves no door for reconciliation.'

These passages show that the śūdra, though he had ceased to be an enemy of the ārya and had been allowed to be within the pale of society, was looked down upon, was assigned a very low position, had to perform work of toil as a menial and was not allowed to perform Vedic sacrifices.

A clear line of demarcation was kept between the Ārya and the Śūdra in the times of the Brāhmaṇa works and even in the Dharma Sūtras. The Tandyā Brāhmaṇa (V:5:14) speaks of a mock fight 'the śūdra and Ārya fight on a hide, out of the two they so arrange that the ārya colour becomes the victor'. The Āp. Dh. S. (I.1.3.40-41) says that a brahmacārin, if he cannot himself eat all the food he has brought by begging, may keep it near an ārya (for his use) or he may give it to a śūdra who is a dāsa (of his teacher). The same Dharma-sūtra (II.2.3.1 and 4) says:— 'Āryas who are pure (by bath) should prepare the food for Vaiśvadeva; or Śūdras supervised by āryas should prepare it'. Similarly Gautama X.69 uses the word 'anārya' for śūdra and Gautama 12.3 prescribes heavy punishment for a śūdra having sexual intercourse with an ārya woman. Jaimini in his Pūrva-mīmāṃsā sūtra (VI.1.25-38) establishes after elaborate discussion that the śūdra has no *adhikāra* for the performance of Agnihotra and Vedic sacrifices. It is, however, somewhat gratifying to find that at least one ācārya, Bādari, espoused the cause of the śūdra and propounded the view that all (including śūdras) were entitled to perform Vedic sacrifices (VI.1.27). In the Vedānta-sūtras also (I.3.34-38) it is established that the śūdra has no *adhikāra* for brahma-vidya based on Veda study, though some śūdras like Vidura might have been endowed with the knowledge of brahma owing to saṃskāras of former births. In the smṛti literature, however, a few passages are found allowing marriages of āryas with śūdra women (which will be discussed later on). Similarly sexual relations (illicit) between a śūdra woman and a man of higher *varṇa* are alluded to even in the Samhitas e.g. Tai. S.<sup>13</sup> VII.4.19.3 'when a śūdra woman has an ārya as her paramour she does not seek wealth for the prosperity (of her relations)'. In Ait. Br. (8.1) there is the story of Kavasa Ailuṣa, who was driven out from the sacrifice on the Sarasvatī with the words: 'Oh, son of a female slave, you are a rogue and not a brāhmaṇa; how did you take the dīkṣa (initiation) as one of us', and they carried him off to a sandy desert with the idea that he might die of thirst there. He when tormented by thirst 'saw' the hymn Rig X.30 and Sarasvatī came rushing to him.<sup>14</sup> Further discussion about the śūdra and his disabilities will follow in another section later.

The position of the three *varṇas inter se* (called collectively ārya) now requires consideration. It is clear that the Samhitas other than the Rig Veda and Brāhmaṇa works show that the three classes of brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas had become differentiated and their privileges, duties and liabilities had become more or less fixed in those times.

In Rig IV.50.8 we read 'that king alone who places brahma first (i.e. honours him) dwells happy in his house, for him the earth always remains prosperous and to him all the people (or kingdoms) bow down of their own accord'. 'Brāhmaṇas are gods that are directly seen' (Tai. S. I.7.3.1); 'there are two kinds of gods; for indeed the gods are gods and the brāhmaṇas who have studied and teach the sacred lore are the human gods' Sat. Br. (S.B.E. vol.12 p.309, vol.26 p.341).; In the Atharva Veda V.17.19 there is an assertion of the pre-eminence of brāhmaṇas and the consequences of harming

<sup>13</sup> Vājasaneyā Saṃhita 23.30. 'Arya' may mean an Arya, or simply 'master' or 'vaiśya' (as in later literature). The words *na .... Yāti* may mean 'He (the father of the śūdra woman) does not desire wealth for his own prosperity' (as he is pained by the event).

<sup>14</sup> A similar story is told in the Saṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa XII. 3. The words '*dāsyah putrah*' may be only terms of abuse or they may mean that, though he posed to be a brāhmaṇa, he was the son of a brāhmaṇa from a dāsa.

them or their cows. 'Therefore the brāhmaṇa is the foremost' (Tai.S.II.6.2.5, V.2.7.1). 'Therefore the brāhmaṇa shows his might by his mouth, since he was created from the mouth.' (Tandya Br. XI.1.2). In the Ait. Br. (33.4) Varuna, when he was told that a brāhmaṇa boy would be offered in place of the son of the king Hariscandra, is made to say:— 'a brāhmaṇa is indeed preferable to a kṣatriya'. The mere fact of birth as brāhmaṇa's son is represented here as giving to the boy pre-eminence over a king's son. On the other hand the Sat. Br. says (V.1.1.12) 'a brāhmaṇa is not adequate to (competent to manage) a kingdom'. In the Tai.Br. it is said that playing on the vīna (in the Asvamedha) is to be done by a brāhmaṇa and a rājanya (and not by two brāhmaṇas), since wealth does not find delight in the brāhmaṇa. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (XL 5.7.1) lays emphasis on the four-peculiar attributes of brāhmaṇas viz. *brāhmaṇya* (purity of parentage as a Brāhmaṇa), *pratirūpacaryā* (befitting deportment or conduct), *yaśas* (glory) and *lokapakti* (the teaching or perfecting of people). 'When the people are being perfected or taught by him, people endow him with four privileges viz. *arcā* (honour), *dāna* (gifts) *ajyeyatā* (freedom from being harassed) and *avadhyatā* (freedom from being beaten).

The Śatapatha (V.4.6.9) expressly mentions that brāhmaṇa, rājanya, vaiśya and śūdra are the four *varṇas*. Teaching had become so much associated with the brāhmaṇas that when the brāhmaṇa Gārgya approached king Ajātasatru for the knowledge of brahma, the latter replied "this is contrary to the natural order that a brāhmaṇa should approach a kṣatriya with the idea 'he (kṣatriya) will propound to me brahma'. " In a separate section below all the privileges enjoyed by the brāhmaṇas will be set out at one place.

In the Tai. S. IV.5.11.9 — This literally means:—

'if a brāhmaṇa and a non-brāhmaṇa come (to a man) asking him a question, then he should speak to the brāhmaṇa first; that he speaks to the brahmaṇa first is really tantamount to speaking first to One-self; when he speaks away from the brāhmaṇa (i.e. he speaks to the non-brāhmaṇa first and then to the brāhmaṇa) that is really speaking away to oneself; therefore a brāhmaṇa should not be spoken away (i.e. postponed to non-brāhmaṇas).'

Manu VIII.24 says that a king should take up the causes of litigants in the order of the *varṇas* (i.e. if there are two plaintiffs coming with complaints at the same time the brāhmaṇa's complaint should be first attended to). Brhaspati says the same thing. Therefore the Tai.S. should be interpreted in the same way. Another meaning is possible viz. if a brāhmaṇa and a non-brāhmaṇa come to a person and ask him who is superior, the person should declare that the brāhmaṇa is the superior of the two (on account of his birth as brāhmaṇa probably or of his being a learned man). This sense of 'adhi' as meaning 'superior' is found in Manu I.99 'since brāhmaṇa when born becomes (or is born) superior (to all) on this wide earth.

Prof. Keith in his translation of Tai. S. (Harvard Oriental Series, vol.18 p.203) says in a footnote " it is not absolutely certain that *adhibru* means 'decide in favour of' rather than 'speak in favour of.'" Vide also Vedic Index (II. p.83). Dr. Ghurye (in 'Caste and race in India' p.43) says 'in a legal dispute between a brāhmaṇa or non-brāhmaṇa an arbitrator or witness must speak in favour of the former.' It appears that Dr. Ghurye simply follows the rather guardedly expressed view of the famous Professor, but makes the sense more emphatic than Prof. Keith puts it and does not think for himself whether any other meaning is possible or more appropriate. Any stick is good for beating the brāhmaṇa with. The brāhmaṇas were never ashamed in the smṛti texts of declaring the privileges they claimed. But they never claimed to be treated in a court of law as above truth and justice. If they had taken the Tai. S. passage in the sense in which Dr. Ghurye takes it they would never have scrupled to say so in smṛti works und would have quoted the Tai. S. in support. Hence the meaning is different. There is no question here of an arbitration or judicial decision. In Rig I.100.19 there is a similar expression 'May Indra speak in our favour on all days'. Vide Rig X.63.11 and Vāj. S.16.5 for the verb '*vac*' with '*adhi*' in the sense of 'speak in favour of' or 'bless.'

The position of kṣatriyas and their relation to the brāhmaṇas falls to be considered now. First of all with reference to the king several important passages may be cited. In some cases 'rājan' means only 'a noble' or 'chief' in Rig X.42.10, X.97.6. In many passages rājan means 'king'. The government often seems to have been tribal, such tribes as Yadus, Turvaśas, Druhyus, Anus and Purus (Rig I.108.8) being frequently mentioned (vide Rig VII.18.6 for Bhrgus and Druhyus and VII.18, 7 for Turvaśas, VIII.6.46 for Yādavas). Whether kingship was by election it is not necessary here to discuss. The king was regarded as keeping the people within bounds. When a king was crowned, it was thought that:— 'a kṣatriya was produced, a lord of all beings, the defender of brāhmaṇas (or of Holy Texts) and of Dharma.' The Sat. Br. Says 'for these two (srotriya and king) are the upholders of the sacred law among men' (S. B. E. vol.41 p.106)<sup>15</sup>. That the co-operation between brāhmaṇa and kṣatriya results in glory and success is frequently emphasized e.g.

'therefore a brāhmaṇa must certainly be approached by a kṣatriya who is about to perform some act, for indeed that act of a kṣatriya which is sped on by brāhmaṇa succeeds' (Śatapatha, S. B. E. vol.26 pp.270-271)

The purohita of a kṣatriya came to occupy a very high position, The Śatapatha (S. B. E. vol.26 p.270) lays emphasis on the importance of the purohita and cautions a brāhmaṇa against being the purohita of any king he meets with and adds that a brāhmaṇa may remain without a king, but a king should not be without a brāhmaṇa. Even the gods required a purohita, as the Tai. S. II.5.1.1. says 'Viśvarup' son of Tvastr was the purohita of gods. Śaṇḍa and Amarka were the purohitas of the Asuras (Kāṭhaka S. IV.4). Agni is often called purohita (Rig I.1.1., I.44.10, III.2.8). 'May we, purohitas, be awake in the kingdom (for its welfare)' says the Tai. S. (I.7.10.1). The Ait. Br. (chap.34.8) says:—

"the purohita is half the soul of the kṣatriya' and contains an eulogy of purohita in the following words (40.1) for indeed the gods do not eat the food of a king who has no purohita; therefore a king when about to offer a sacrifice should have a brāhmaṇa as his purohita with the idea 'may the gods eat my food.'"

The combination of the brāhmaṇa and the rājanya is said to be most desirable and that it is conducive to the premeinance of both. Tait Sam. 5.1.10.3

Therefore a brāhmaṇa who is supported by a rājanya is superior to another brāhmaṇa (not so supported), hence a rājanya who has a brāhmaṇa (to help him) is superior to another rājanya'. (Tait Sam. 5.1.10.3 )

The Śatapatha (V.4.4.15) declares:—

'that king indeed who is not powerful to the brāhmaṇas (i.e. who is humble before the brāhmaṇas) becomes more powerful than his foes.'

It is not to be supposed that this attainment of the supreme position by brāhmaṇas was an affair of plain sailing. Sometimes kṣatriyas claimed higher position and also paid scant respect to brāhmaṇas. In the Śatapatha we read 'whence the brāhmaṇa is an object of respect after the king ' (S. B. E. vol.41, p.96); ' hence the people here serve, from a lower position, the kṣatriya seated above them ' Śatapatha (S. B. E. vol.12 p.94); 'hence when a nobleman approaches, all these people, the subjects crouch down by him on the ground' Śatapatha (S. B. E. vol.26 p.228); 'therefore there is nothing higher than the kṣatra, therefore the brāhmaṇa sits down below the kṣatriya in the Rājasuya' (Śatapatha 14.4.1.23 = Br. Up. I.4.11).

In the Atharva Veda several verses occur which declare the harm that results from disrespecting or injuring a brāhmaṇa or from robbing him of his cow.

<sup>15</sup> Varuna is frequently called *dhṛta-vrata* (e.g. R.V. I.25.8 and 10 and once even the yajamana is so called (R.V.I.25.6);



'He who regards brāhmaṇa as food drinks of the poison of Taimāta; he who injures a brāhmaṇa, the relative of the gods, does not attain to the world of pitṛs' (Atharva Veda V.18.4 and 13).

'Those who spat on a brāhmaṇa or those who sent to him mucus remain biting the hair in the midst of a stream by their mouth; that kingdom sinks as water sinks a shattered vessel, where they injure a brāhmaṇa; that wicked act strikes that; kingdom (Atharva Veda V.19.3 and 8).

The stories of king Kartavīrya and Viśvāmītra who respectively carried off the cows of Jamadagni and Vasiṣṭha narrated in the Mahābhārata (śānti 49 for Kartavīrya; -Adi.175 for Viśvāmītra) and the Purāṇas show how several kings were high-handed and treated brāhmaṇas with no respect whatever. It appears that even the wives of brāhmaṇas were not quite safe at the hands of kings.

'The chamberlain (kṣatr) of that king in whose kingdom the wife of a brāhmaṇa is thoughtlessly put under restraint does not march in front of cooking vessels with a golden ornament on his neck.' (Atharva V.17.14).

The somewhat mystical hymn (Rig X.109) where 'brahmajāyā' figures prominently probably hints at the same fact (viz. the kidnapping of the wives of brāhmaṇas).

The Tai. S. says that 'the vaiśya indeed sacrifices, being desirous of cattle' and that the gods having been defeated were reduced to the condition of being the vaiśyas or 'viś of asuras'; 1

'the vaiśya among men, cows among beasts, therefore they are to be enjoyed (to be eaten, to be subsisted upon) by others; they were produced from the receptacle of food; therefore they exceed others in numbers'. (Tait. Sam. 7.1.1.5)

The Tai. Br. says 'the vaiśya class said to have been born from rk verses, they declare the Yajur Veda as the origin of the kṣatriya, the Sama Veda is indeed the source of brāhmaṇas.' The same Brāhmaṇa further says 'the viś go away from (reside separately from) the brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas'. The Tandya Br. Says:—

'Hence the vaiśya, though being eaten (i.e. subsisted upon) by others is not exhausted, since he was created from the *prajanana* (from the genitals of Prajāpati); therefore he has numerous cattle, he has all the gods (as his patrons) and was produced with the Jagatī metre, his season is the rains, therefore he is to be eaten by the brāhmaṇa and the rājanya, since he was created as lower (than those two classes)'.  
'

According to the Ait. Br.35.3 the vaiśya is one who is the food of others, who pays taxes to others. These passages show that vaiśyas were entitled to sacrifice, reared cattle, were far more numerous than the other two classes, they had to bear the brunt of taxation, they lived apart from brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas and were obedient to them. The system of the four *varṇas* had taken such deep roots in the period when the Brāhmaṇa works were composed, that we often meet with Vedic passages saying that it extended even to the gods, Agni and Brhaspati being the brāhmaṇas among gods; Indra, Varuna, Soma, Yama being the kṣatriyas; Vasus, Rudras, the Viśve Devas and Maruts being the vis, and Puṣan being the śūdra.

That there were other professions and crafts with specific names (which in later times at least became castes) even in the times of the Samhitas is quite clear. The Rig speaks of *vaptā* (barber) in X.142.4, *taṣṭā* (a carpenter or maker of chariots) in Rig I.61.4, VII.32.20, IX.112.1, X, 119.5; *tvaṣṭa* (a carpenter) in VIII.102.8; *bhiṣak* (medicine man) in IX.112.1 and 3, *karmāra* or *kārmāra* (iron-smith) in X.72.2 and IX.112.2, *carmanna* (tanner) in Rig VIII.5.38.

The Atharva Veda mentions *rathakāra* (III.5.6), *karmāra* (III.5.6) and *sūta* (III.5.7). In the Tai. S. (IV.5.4.2) 106 mention is made of *kṣatr* (royal chamberlain or doorkeeper), *samgrahītṛ* (treasurer), *takṣan* (carpenter) and *rathakāra* (maker of chariots), *kulāla* (potter), *karmāra*, *punjiṣṭa* (fowler), *niṣāda*, *iṣukṛt* (maker of arrows), *dhanvakṛt* (maker of bows), *mṛgayu* (hunter) and *śvani* (those who lead packs of hounds).

In the Tai. Br. (III.4.1 and the following anuvakas that deal with Puruṣamedha) we have *magadha* (bard), *sūta* (charioteer), *śailūṣa* (actor), *vapa* (sower or barber), *jakāra* (maker of bow-string), *rajjuṣarga* (rope-maker), *surākāra* (vintner), *ayastāpa* (heater of iron or copper), *kitava* (gambler), *bidalakāra* (worker in wicker-work).

The Tai. Sam 1.8.9.1-2 mentions among the '*ratnas*' (the jewels) of the *sūta*, *grāmaṇī*, *kṣatr*, *saṃgrahītr*, *bhāga-dugha* (collector of taxes), *akṣāvāpa* (superintendent of gambling).

In the Tandya Brāhmaṇa (19.1.4) it is said that eight brave persons hold up the kingdom viz. the king's brother, the king's son, the purohita, the crowned queen, the suta, the grāmaṇī, kṣatr and samgrahītr'. Therefore it looks likely that kṣatr and samgrahītr were high officers of state and not castes.

In the Sat. Br. XIII.4.1.5 among the guards of the horse let loose in the Aśvamedha there were 'a hundred sons of *kṣatra-samgrahītrs* carrying clubs'. As the word 'kṣatra' is prefixed to 'samgrahītr' it follows that '*samgrahītrs*' were officers who may have belonged to any *varṇa*. In the same passage mention is made of a hundred guardians who were the sons of *sūta-grāmaṇīs*. In another passage of the same brāhmaṇa (XIII.2.2, 18) the sutas and grāmaṇīs are said to be no kings and yet are *rājakrt* (i.e. king-makers). This means probably that they are the principal persons on whose support the king depends. The Sat. Br. V.4.4.15-19 arranges brāhmaṇa, king, king's brother, *sūta* or *sthapati*, *gramanī*, *sajāta* in a descending scale of powerfulness. So the *sūta* appears to have been originally an important officer. It is hardly possible to say with assurance that all these had become petrified into castes in the modern sense, particularly when several persons associated with these in the Vaj. S. and elsewhere were not castes such as the thief (*taskara*), the eunuchs (*klība*), humpbacked (*kubja*), dwarf (*vāmana*); but most of the avocations and crafts referred to above have corresponding castes and subcastes for hundreds of years. It is therefore possible to say that in the times of the Samhitas and Brāhmaṇas these were groups founded on occupations that had become castes or were in process of developing into castes.

The Tandya Br. speaks of Kiratas (who were and are non-Āryan and were aboriginal tribes). The Vaj. S. (30.17) speaks of Paulkasa in connection with *bībhatsa* (nauseating filth) and of *caṇḍāla* (in 30.21) in connection with *vayu* (wind). The paulkasa and *caṇḍāla* occur in Tai. Br. (III.4.14 and III.4.17 (respectively). In the Chāṇḍogya Up. (V.10.7)<sup>16</sup> the *caṇḍāla* is ranked with the dog and the boar.

'Therefore even if one knowing thus were to give the leavings of his food to a *caṇḍāla* that would in his case be an offering made into the Self as Fire', Chāṇḍogya V.24.4.

This shows that the *caṇḍāla* was the lowest in the social scale. In the Br. Up. IV.3.22 mention is made of both *caṇḍāla* and paulkasa and in IV.3.37 it is said that;

'just as when a king pays a visit, the *ugras*, *pratyenasas* (thief catchers), the *sūtas* and headmen of the village make arrangements for him with food and drink and with pavilions.'

Here *ugras* seem to be a group of nobles subordinate to the king. In later literature *ugra* is the offspring of a kṣatriya from a śūdra woman (Yāj. I.91). In the Rig X 97.12 the word *ugra* occurs 'You destroy disease just as an *ugra* who is a mediator or arbitrator (removes dispute).' What *ugra* means here cannot be said with certainty. It may only mean a 'formidable chief or king.'

The *rathakāra* and *niṣāda* deserve a passing notice. The Tai. Br. I.1.4 after stating that the brāhmaṇa should consecrate sacred fires in the spring, the kṣatriya in summer, the vaiśya in autumn, ordains

<sup>16</sup> There were strict rules about giving one's *ucchiṣṭa* (left-overs) to another. Āp. Dh. S. (I.11.31.25-26) did not allow a brahman to give his *ucchiṣṭa* to a non-brāhmaṇa, unless certain rather obnoxious things were done to it. Manu IV.80 forbids the giving of *ucchiṣṭa* to a śūdra (who is not a dependant) while Manu X.125 allows it to be given to a Śūdra who is a dependant.

that the rathakāra should consecrate sacred fires in the rainy season. The question arises whether the rathakāra is a member of the three higher castes who has taken in economic distress to the profession of making chariots or is a person belonging to a caste other than the three higher *varṇas*. Jaimini in his Pūrva-mīmāṃsā-sūtra (VI.1.44-50) discusses this question and establishes that the rathakāra is a member of a caste other than the three higher *varṇas*, that he has on account of the express words in the Śruti the privilege to consecrate sacred fires with vedic mantras, that the mantra for the consecration of rathakāras is '*rbhūnām tva*' (Tai. Br.1.1.4) and that the rathakāras are the caste called *Saudhanvana* which is neither śūdra nor one of the three higher ones, but is slightly inferior to the three higher *varṇas*. Viśvarūpa (on yāj. 1.10.) notices that in some smṛti the rathakāra though not belonging to the three higher *varṇas*, was allowed the privilege of upanayana, but adds that this dictum of the smṛti is due to mistake, it being misled by the fact that he is allowed the privilege of *ādhāna* (consecration of sacred fires). In modern times the members of the carpenter caste in certain parts of the Deccan at least are in the habit of performing the upanayana and wearing the sacred thread.

With reference to an *iṣṭi* offered to Rudra a Vedic text says; 'one should make a *niṣāda-sthapati* perform this *iṣṭi*.' The Pūrva-mīmāṃsā sūtra (VI.1.51-52) discusses the question whether this authorises a *niṣāda* who is himself a chieftain or a chieftain (who is a member of the three higher *varṇas*) of *niṣādas*. The established conclusion is that the *iṣṭi* is to be performed by a *niṣāda* who is a chieftain though he be beyond the pale of the three *varṇas*. The Ait. Br. (37.7) says 'just as the *niṣādas*, or *selagas* (thieves) or evil-doers seize a wealthy man in a forest and throwing him in a well run away with his wealth.' The Sāṅkhayana Br. (25.15) allows one who had performed the Viśvajit sacrifice (in which everything is given away) to stay in a settlement of *niṣādas* whose food is the lowest that he is allowed to take. The Kātyāyana-śrauta-sūtra (1.1.12-14) says that 'the chieftain who is a *niṣāda* can offer a caru of Gavedhuka corn to Rudra, but this offering is to be made in ordinary fire (and not in the fires consecrated with Vedic mantras) i.e. the permission to offer *Raudra iṣṭi* does not entitle him to perform Vedic consecration of fire (*ādhāna*). But according to Satyasadbha -kalpa III.1 both the *niṣāda* and the rathakāra are entitled to perform Agnihotra and Darśa-purnamāsaḥ

The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa 33:6 narrates that Viśvamitra cursed his senior fifty sons, when they did not agree to his proposal to treat Sunaḥsepa (Devarata) as his son, that they would associate with the lowest castes and that they became the Andhras, Pundras, Sabaras, Pulindas and Mūtibas who are among the lowest of society and are mostly composed of *dasyus*. It is probably owing to this legend that the Manusmṛti (X.43-45) is prepared to regard the Paundrakas, the Oḍras, Drāviḍas, Kambojas, Yāvanas, Sākas, Paradas, Pahlavas, Cīnas, Kirātas, Daradas and Khaśas as being originally kṣatriya castes, but later on reduced to the position of śūdras by the non performance of Vedic samskāras (like upanayana) and by the absence of contact with brāhmaṇas. Manu further adds that the various castes that are outside the (influence of the) four *varṇas* are all known as *dasyus* whether they speak the language of Mlecchas or of Āryas.

One very important question is whether the theory of the four *varṇas* with their peculiar privileges and duties described in the Dharma Sūtras and other smṛtis was merely a theory even in the most ancient times. When the Puruṣa-sūkta of the Rig Veda speaks of *Brāhmaṇa*, *Rājanya*, *Vaiśya* and *Śūdra* or when the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa expressly says that they are four *varṇas*, it appears to me that they speak of facts existing in their times and not merely of a theory which was to be striven for as an ideal.

Smṛti writers try to place all their dicta in the frame-work of the *varṇas* because the four *varṇas* and their duties and privileges had been more or less clearly defined in the times of the Vedas and Brāhmaṇas, which according to the authors of the smṛtis were Śruti, eternal and infallible. They tried to approximate the state of society existing in their times to the *varṇas* which they held were

of hoary antiquity. But there is nothing to show that the same difficulties were felt by the authors of the Vedic hymns and the Brāhmaṇas. The manner in which they refer to the privileges and disabilities of the several *varṇas* have such a deep ring of actuality that one must concede that the *varṇas* spoken of in them represented the real divisions of society at least to a very great extent, if not cent percent.

The preceding discussion renders the following propositions most probable;

- (1) That in the earliest times about which we have literary records there were only two *varṇas*, the āryas and their opponents the dasyus or dāsas, that the difference between the two was based on difference of colour and culture and was thus more or less racial and cultural;
- (2) That centuries before the samhita period closed the dasyus had been conquered and were given a position subservient to the āryas;
- (3) That the śūdras were the dasyus so subjugated and made subservient;
- (4) That the spirit of exclusiveness and pride of superiority existing among the Āryas with reference to dasyus soon extended to groups among the āryas themselves;
- (5) That by the time of the Brāhmaṇa Literature, brāhmaṇas (men supposed to be devoted to learning and priesthood), kṣatriyas (kings, noblemen and some warriors) and Vaiśyas (the artisans and common people) had become separated into groups more or less dependent on birth and that the brāhmaṇa<sup>17</sup> had come to be regarded as superior to the kṣatriya by the fact of birth;
- (6) That even such low castes as *caṇḍālas* and paulkasas had been evolved long before the end of the Vedic period;
- (7) That owing to cultural advance, division of labour arose and numerous arts and crafts had been developed and they were in process of contributing to the complexity of the system by creating numerous sub-castes based upon occupations;
- (8) That besides the four *varṇas* intermediate castes like the rathakāra had been evolved;
- (9) That there were certain non-Āryan tribes which were supposed to have been originally kṣatriyas but fallen later on.

The close of the Vedic period is here taken as being not later than about 1000 B.C.E. How much earlier it may be placed it is not possible to say.

Several centuries before the Christian era there were several castes. This follows not only from the Dharma Sūtras but also from the ancient Buddhist works and from the meagre existing fragments of the work of Megasthenes on India. Though Megasthenes was confused in his statements about the caste system as prevalent in his day, some propositions are clearly deducible therefrom. He states (pp.40 ff) that the whole population of India was divided into seven castes,

- (1) Philosophers,
- (2) husbandmen,
- (3) neatherds and shepherds,
- (4) artisans,
- (5) military,
- (6) overseers,

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<sup>17</sup> That this theory of four varnas was well-known to Buddhist literary works is shown by Fick chap. II. p.17 (the only difference being that in the Buddhist works the kṣatriya is put first and the brāhmaṇa after him).

(7) councillors and assessors.

Out of these 1 and 5 correspond to brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas, 2-3 to Vaiśyas, 4 to śūdras; 6th and 7th correspond to *adhyakṣas* and *āmātyas* (as in Kauṭilya's *Arthasastra*) and are not really castes but occupations. He probably regards them as castes because the offices of the *adhyakṣas* and *amatyas* were generally hereditary or at least he gathered that they were so. Megasthenes' further statement (pp.43-44) that; 'no one is allowed to marry out of his own caste or to exercise any calling or art except his own,' shows that the prevailing tendency was that caste had become exclusive and mostly occupational in his day, though there must have been exceptions of which he was not informed.

Varṇa and castes derived therefrom

The ancient writers on Dharma-śāstra strive very hard to account for the bewildering ramifications of the caste system from the four *varṇas* that were spoken of in the śruti (revelation). There is unanimity on the theory that the numerous castes actually found in the country arose from the unions of males of different *varṇas* with women belonging to *varṇas* differing from their own. The divergences (and they are many) among the several *smṛti-kāras* relate only to details. The *smṛti* writers had before them the hoary theory of four *varṇas* vouched for by infallible Vedic authority, but they were at the same time quite cognisant of the realities in society viz. the separate existence of numerous castes and sub-castes that had varying claims as regards social status and that were based in popular estimation on birth alone. Therefore, when one criticizes the *smṛti* view of the derivation of numerous castes from the mixture or confusion (*saṅkara*) of the four *varṇas* as purely hypothetical and imaginary, the criticism is true only partially. The *smṛtis* were composed in different parts of India at different times and they were meant to supply a popular want, to guide the people and to reflect the prevailing state of society and popular feeling. Therefore, it must be admitted that the numerous castes mentioned in the *smṛtis* did exist at the time of the *smṛtis*, that the social status of the several castes might have varied from country to country or from epoch to epoch, that the peculiar avocations and means of livelihood assigned to the various castes reflected the real state of things. The element of hypothesis and speculation lies only in the theory of a particular sub-caste having sprung from the union of two persons belonging to two particular *varṇas* or castes.

This description of the origin of the several castes was only indicative of the author's view or of the accepted view about the social status of those castes in particular localities. There is here, as a matter of fact, great divergence of views among the several authors. In the first place all writers on Dharma Śāstra start with the propositions viz.

- (1) that the four *varṇas*, brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, Vaiśya and śūdra, are arranged in a descending scale of social status; and
- (2) that marriage is or was permissible between a male of a higher *varṇa* with a woman of a lower *varṇa*, but the union of a woman of a higher *varṇa* with a male of *varṇa* lower than her own is reprehensible and not permitted.
- (3) There is a third proposition advanced by many writers that a man belongs to a particular *varṇa* or *jāti* by birth only i.e. if born in lawful wedlock of parents both of whom belong to that *varṇa* or *jāti*.

This is the view held by all medieval writers and digests and it is expressly said that a man belongs to a caste by birth and no actions of his can alter that fact, that several castes are like the species of animals and that caste attaches to the body and not to the soul (vide Suta-samhita). When a male of a higher *varṇa* marries a woman of a lower *varṇa*, the marriage is said to be *anuloma* (lit. with the hair, in the natural order) and the offspring is said to be *anuloma*; when there is a union of a woman of a higher *varṇa* with a male of a lower *varṇa*, it is said to be *pratiloma* (against the hair, i.e.

against the natural or proper order) and the children of the union are said to be *pratiloma*. These two words *anuloma* and *pratiloma* (as applied to marriage or progeny) hardly ever occur in the vedic literature. In the Br. Up. (II.1.15) and Kausītaki Br. Up. IV.18 (quoted in note 89 above) the word '*pratiloma*' is applied to the procedure adopted by a brāhmaṇa of going to a kṣatriya for knowledge about Brahman. From this it may possibly be inferred that *pratiloma* and *anuloma* might have been employed with reference to marriages also (in the days of the Upanisad).

One important question is whether the theory of *anuloma* or *pratiloma* castes presupposes a marriage or only a union (outside marriage) of a man and a woman. The Āp. Dh. S. (II.6.13.1, 3-4) lays down that a man must marry a virgin of his own *varṇa* with the rites prescribed by the śāstras and only the son born of such a marriage is entitled to the privileges and occupation of his father, that sexual intercourse with a woman who has been married by another or on whom the proper ceremonies of marriage are not performed or who belongs to another caste is condemned and that the son (and not the daughter) born of such an union is condemned (through the sin of the parents). So Apastamba looked with disfavour even on marriages called *anuloma*. He is entirely silent about *anuloma* and *pratiloma* castes. It is no doubt true that most ancient writers like Gautama (IV.1), Vasiṣṭha (I.24), Manu (III.12-13), Yāj. (I.55 and 57) prescribe that a person should by preference marry a girl of his own *varṇa* but also allow the marriage of a person with a girl of another *varṇa* lower than his own. Yāj. (I.92) expressly says that the six *anuloma* castes, *mūrdhāvasikta*, *ambastha*, *niṣāda*, *mahiṣya*, *ugra*, and *karaṇa* are so called only when they are the offspring of women married by men of higher *varṇas*. Manu (X.41) says that the six *anuloma* castes are entitled to the rites (saṃskāras like upanayana) performed for dvijas, but that the *pratiloma* castes are like śūdras (i.e. even when a *pratiloma* caste springs from a brāhmaṇa woman and a kṣatriya or Vaiśya male they cannot have upanayana and other rites of dvijas performed for them, though both parents are dvijas).

Kauṭilya 184 (III.7) also says that all *pratilomas* except *caṇḍālas* are like śūdras; Viṣṇu says that they are condemned by all Āryas. Devala (quoted by Paraśara madhavīya I.2. p.122) says that *pratilomas* are outside the pale of the system of *varṇas* and are *patita* (fallen).

Commentators like Kullūka (on Manu X.11) say that, as no marriage is legally possible between a woman of a higher *varṇa* and a male of a lower *varṇa*, all the *pratilomas* are born outside lawful wedlock. Vasiṣṭha, Baudhāyana and several others do not make it clear whether, when they speak of *pratilomas*, they contemplate offspring of legal marriages or only of illegitimate and adulterous unions. But it will be seen from the list appended below that Uśanas and Vaikhānasa almost always make a distinction between the caste assigned to the offspring of the union of parents of different *varṇas*, according as there is a marriage between the two or it is only a clandestine, illegitimate or adulterous union. For example, Uśanas, says (55:2-5) that when there is a marriage between a kṣatriya male and a brāhmaṇa female, the offspring is called *sūta*, while the offspring of a clandestine union between a brāhmaṇa woman and a kṣatriya male was called *rathakāra*.

So these two authors held that there could be a legal marriage when a woman of a higher *varṇa* married a male of a lower *varṇa*. There were several other works like the Suta-samhita (Sivamahātmya-khāṇḍa chap.12.12-48) where a similar distinction is made between the children of marriages and clandestine unions. The Mit. on Yāj. I.90 says that such progeny as *kuṇḍa* and *golaka* (Manu III, 174), *kanīna*, *sahodhaja* (who are all not due to intercourse in wedlock) are different from *savarṇa*, *anuloma* and *pratiloma* and are to be treated as śūdras and that the ksetraja son is to be treated as in a different category (since *niyoga* is allowed by the smṛtis and by the usage of *siṣṭas*) and belongs to the caste of his mother. Aparārka (on Yāj. I.92 p.118) does not accept this view and holds that even *kanīna* and *sahodha* may be held to be brāhmaṇas (if the begetter can be proved to have been a brāhmaṇa); while Viśvarupa on Yāj. II.133 says that *kanīna* and *gūḍhaja* must be deemed to belong to the mother's caste as the begetter may not be known and that

sahodhaja (II.135) is also to be so treated. These several kinds of secondary sons will be treated under inheritance.

A few words must be said about the word *jāti*. The idea of *varṇa* was as we have seen based originally on race, culture, character and profession. It takes account mainly of the moral and intellectual worth of man and is a system of classes which appears more or less natural. The ideal of *varṇa* even in the *smṛtis* lays far more emphasis on duties, on a high standard of effort for the community or society rather than on the rights and privileges of birth. The system of *jātis* (castes) lays all emphasis on birth and heredity and tends to create the mentality of clinging to privileges without trying to fulfil the obligations correspond to such privileges. The word '*jāti*' in the sense of caste hardly ever occurs in the vedic literature. In the Nirukta (XII.13) it is said 'after agnicayana (the building of the fire altar), a man should not approach a *rāmā* (for sexual intercourse); *rāmā* is so called because she is approached only for pleasure and not for (accumulation of) merit; she is of a dark caste'. Here the word *kṛṣṇa-jatīya* occurs with reference to a woman of the *sūdra* caste. Almost these very words occur in Vasiṣṭha (18' 17-18) 189 where for *kṛṣṇa-jatīya* the word *kṛṣṇa-varṇa* is substituted. Therefore, the use of the word *jāti* in the sense of caste can be traced back at least to the times of the Nirukta.<sup>18</sup>

*Varṇa* and *jāti* are sometimes clearly distinguished as in Yāj II.69 and 206. But very often they are confounded. In Manu X.27, 31 the word *varṇa* is used in the sense of mixed castes (*jātis*). Conversely the word *jāti* often appears to be used to indicate '*varṇa*'.<sup>19</sup>

Even when *anuloma* marriages were allowed there is no unanimity among the sages and the *smṛtis* as to the status of the progeny of such unions. Three different views are found.

1. The first view is that if a male of one *varṇa* married a female of the *varṇa* immediately after it, the progeny belonged to the *varṇa* of the father; e.g. Baud. Dh. S.188 (I 8.6 and I.9.3) says that sons born to a person of a *savarṇa* wife or a wife of the *varṇa* next to his own are *savarṇa* i.e. the son of a brāhmaṇa from a wife of the *kṣatriya varṇa* is a brāhmaṇa. The Anuśāsana parva 48.4, Nārada (*strīpumsa* 106) and Kautilya (III.7) say the same. Gautama IV.15 as interpreted by Haradatta appears to say that the off-spring of a brāhmaṇa from a *kṣatriya* wife is called *savarṇa*, but not the offspring of a *kṣatriya* male from a Vaiśya wife or of a Vaiśya male from a *śūdra* wife. Fick (pp.54-57) shows that even according to the Bhaddasāla Jātaka 'the family of the mother does not matter; the family of the father alone is important'.

2. The second view is that the progeny of *anuloma* unions is in status lower than the father, but higher than the mother; e.g. Manu X.6 'sages declare the sons begotten by *dvijas* on wives of *varṇas* immediately next to theirs as similar (to the fathers, but not of the same *varṇa* with the fathers) but tainted by the inferiority of their mothers.'

3. The third view (and this is the common view) is that the progeny of *anuloma* marriages is of the same *varṇa* as regards its privileges and obligations as the mother's; e.g. vide Viṣṇu Dh. S.16.2 and Saṅkha (prose) quoted by the Mit. on Yāj I.91 and Aparārka (p.118). A classical echo of this view is found in the Sakuntala of Kalidāsa where king Dusyanta exclaims aside to himself 'would that this girl were born of the sage from a wife who was not *savarṇa*'. Medhatithi on Manu X.6 says that Pandu, Dhrtarastra and Vidura being *ksetraja* sons took the caste of their mothers. The *pratilomas* as said above, are lower in status than any of the two parents.

The ancient Dharma Sūtras mention only a few mixed castes. Āp. Dh. S. mentions only *caṇḍāla*, *paulkasa* and *vaina*. Gautama names five *anuloma* castes, six *pratiloma*, one and eight others

<sup>18</sup> The expression '*jāti-dharma*' (rules of castes) occurs in Gautama XL 20, Vasiṣṭha I.17 and XIX.7, Manu 1.118 and VIII.41 and the word *jāti* (caste) occurs also in Āp. Dh. S. II.3.6.1, II.1.2.3, Manu (IV.141, X.11, 18, 40, 97), Yaj. (I.95, 361, II.69, 206, III.213) and in the *vartika* on Panini IV.1.137.

<sup>19</sup> Vide Manu III.15, VIII.177, IX.86 and 335, X.41 and Yaj. I 89 (in which latter *sajāti* appears to mean '*savarṇa*').

according to the view of some. Baudhāyana adds to those mentioned by Gautama a few more viz. rathakāra, svapaka, vaina and kukkuta. Vasiṣṭha names even a smaller number than Gautama and Baudhāyana. It is Manu (X) and Viṣṇu Dh. S. (XVI) that for the first time dilate upon the avocations of the mixed castes. Manu refers to 6 *anuloma*, 6 *pratiloma* and 20 doubly mixed castes and states the avocations of about 23; Yāj. names only 13 castes (other than the four *varṇas*). Uśanas names about 40 and gives their peculiar avocations. All the smṛtis taken together hardly mention more than about one hundred castes.

The number of primary *anulomas* is only six (vide Manu X.10, Yāj I.91-92), but Manu names only three of them, viz. *ambastha*, *niṣāda* and *ugra*. The primary *pratilomas* also are six (vide Manu X.11-12 and 16-17 and Yāj. I.93-94) viz. *suta*, *vaidehaka*, *caṇḍāla*, *magadha*, *kṣatr*, and *ayogava*. Further sub-castes are said to arise from the unions of the *anulomas* and *pratilomas* with the four *varṇas* and of the male of one *anuloma* and the female of another, from the union of *pratilomas* among themselves and from the union of a male or female of an *anuloma* caste and the female or mate of a *pratiloma* caste.

Viṣṇu Dh. S.16.7 says that the further mixed castes arising from the unions of mixed castes are numberless. This shows that before the time of the Viṣṇu-Dharma Sūtra (i.e. at least about 2000 years ago) numberless castes and sub-castes had been formed and the writers on dharma-Sāstra practically gave up in despair the task of deriving them, even though mediately, from the primary *varṇas*. The same state of things was continued and was rather aggravated by the time of the *nibandhakāras*. Medhatithi on Manu X.31 speaks of 60 mixed castes along with the four *varṇas* and adds that by the inter mingling of these endless sub castes are formed. The Mitākṣara 158 on Yāj. I.95 observes that since the castes spring from the double intermingling of *varṇas* are innumerable, it is impossible to describe or enumerate them. Medieval writers on Dharma Śāstra usually ignore the treatment in detail of the numerous sub-castes and content themselves with dilating upon the duties of the four *varṇas*.

There was great diversity of opinion among the smṛtikāras about the derivation and status of the several sub castes. We find that the same sub-caste is known under five or six different names even so early as the present Manu-smṛti. Manu X.22 gives seven names for the same caste and Manu X, 23 gives five for another. There is another difficulty. The same name given to a caste is differently derived by different writers (vide under *niṣāda* and *pāraśava* below). For the same sub-caste different names are given in different smṛtis (vide under *kṛta* and *ramaka*). It became difficult to assign any peculiar derivation for groups of people and so Manu (X.40), Vasiṣṭha 141 (18.7) and Anusāsana parva 148.29 laid down that men's sub-caste was to be known from their actions and occupations. This shows that according to most writers castes in the times of the smṛtis were predominantly occupational.



## CHAPTER 3

## THE DUTIES, DISABILITIES AND PRIVILEGES OF THE VARṆAS

The duties and privileges of *varṇas* occupy a very prominent place in all works on Dharmaśāstra. The study (of the Vedas), offering sacrifices and giving gifts are said to be the duties absolutely enjoined on the brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya and Vaiśya, while each of these three *varṇas* has certain peculiar privileges, which are its principal means of livelihood. Teach Vedas, officiating at sacrifices and receiving gifts these are the privileges of brāhmaṇas; the profession of arms and protection of the people are the peculiar privileges of kṣatriyas; agriculture, rearing cattle, trade and money-lending are the peculiar privileges of vaiśyas. The first three viz. study, sacrifices and charity are said to be the dharmas of all dvijas and the other actions such as teaching the Veda are said to be the *vṛtti* or *jivika* (means of livelihood) of the dvijas. The consequence of this bifurcation is that if the first three are not performed or are neglected, the person concerned was deemed to incur sin, while a brāhmaṇa is not bound necessarily to earn his livelihood by all or any one of the three viz. teaching, officiating at a sacrifice or receiving gifts. A few words on each of these duties and privileges must be said at this stage.

**Study of Vedas.**

It has been already stated that brāhmaṇa and learning had become indissolubly connected even in early Vedic periods. We see in the Satapatha Br. and in the Upanisads that certain kings had attained eminence as philosophers or students of brahma-vidyā and then even learned brāhmaṇas came to them as pupils. For example, Yājñavalkya learnt from Janaka (Sat. Br. XL 6.21.5), Bālaki Gargya from Ajātaśatru, king of Kaśī (Br. Up. II.1 and Kausītaki Up. IV), Svetaketu Aruneya from Pravahana Jaivali (Chan. Up. V.3), five brāhmaṇas from Aśvapati, king of Kekaya (Chan. V.11). In Br. Up. (IV.2.1) Janaka is described by Yājñavalkya as one who had studied the Vedas and Upanisads. From this it may be inferred that some kṣatriyas at least spent a good deal of time in the study of religious and philosophical doctrines. The conclusion<sup>20</sup> that is sometimes drawn by certain writers that kṣatriyas or kings were the pioneers in Brahma-vidyā cannot be accepted as correct. The germs of the philosophy of the Upanisads are seen in the later hymns of the Rig Veda, in the Atharva Veda and in some of the Brāhmaṇa treatises. The Upanisads are full of brāhmaṇas who independently propounded various aspects of Brahma-vidyā and there is no reason to suppose that

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<sup>20</sup> Vide Deussen's 'Das System des Vedānta', 1883, (pp.18-19) (the real cherisher of those thoughts was originally the caste of the kṣatriyas, rather than the caste of the priests. Over and over again we come across the situation that the brāhmaṇa asks the kṣatriya for information and Deussen refers only to six passages ( Br. Up. II.1, VI.2, Ch. Up. V.3 and V.11 and Kausītaki Up. I.1 and IV.1 X Vide also 'Philosophy of the Upanishads ' (translated by Geden, 1905, pp.17-19). In the first place these are too few passages out of the vast Upanisad literature to found the sweeping generalization in which the German savant indulges. In the second place in Br. Up. II.1 and Kausītaki Up. IV. there is no statement that brahmavidyā was known only to kṣatriyas; on the contrary Ajātaśatru expresses surprise that a brāhmaṇa should approach a kṣatriya for the expounding of brahma-vidyā and says that this is opposed to the natural (or usual) order of affairs. This shows that Ajātaśatru was an exception and that brāhmaṇas usually taught brahma-vidyā. In Kausītaki I.1. and Ch. Up. V.11 all that is narrated is that Gautama Svetaketu learnt from Citra Gargyāyāni and certain śrotṛiyas like Aupamanyava learnt Vaiśvānaravidyā from Asvapati Kaikeya. But nothing is said here about brahma-vidyā being first known to kṣatriyas only. In Br. Up. VI.2 and Ch. Up. V.11 it is no doubt stated that 'this Vidyā ' was not known to any brāhmaṇa till then; but 'this vidyā' does not mean the whole of the philosophy of brahma, but only that particular doctrine which bears the name of *pancāgnividyā*. This vidyā no doubt propounds the doctrine of transmigration in a figurative and somewhat picturesque way. But that doctrine is elsewhere elaborated by brāhmaṇas like Yājñavalkya to the brāhmaṇas in king Janaka's court and to Janaka himself (vide Br. Up. III.2.13 and IV.4.3-4). Nor can it be said that the doctrine of transmigration was not at all known before the Upanisads. The same views are echoed by Sir B. GL Bhandarkar in 'Verhandlungen des (Internationalen Orientalisten Congresses zu Wien (Arische Sec. pp.108-109) and in 'Vaisnavism and Saivism' p.9 'Kṣatriyas engaged themselves in active speculation on religious matters about the time of the Upanisads and are mentioned as the original possessors of the new knowledge,' and the learned Doctor refers only to Ch. Up. V.3 and V.11. It may be stated that Hopkins (in 'Ethics of India' 1924 p.63), Barth (Religions of India p.65) and Vedic Index (vol. II p.206) do not subscribe to these views of Detissen and Bhandarkar.

the few kṣatriyas referred to as masters of the vidyā were the only persons who first attained to that position. There are hardly any ancient passages to show that vaiśyas devoted any portion of their time to Veda study. The Kāthaka-Samhita (IX.16) indicates that all *varṇas* studied the Veda since it speaks of a person not a brāhmaṇa, having studied (Vedic) lores and yet not shining (by his learning). As to brāhmaṇas the matter stands thus. The Nirukta (II.4) contains four verses (which are called Vidyā-sūkta), the first of which says that vidyā came to the brāhmaṇa and requested him to guard her as his treasure. The Mahābhāṣya of Patanjali quotes as an āgama (Vedic passage) the words ‘abrāhmaṇa should study and understand without any motive (of profit) dharma, the Veda with its six subsidiary lores (viz. phonetics etc.)’. Manu IV.147 says:—

‘a brāhmaṇa should always and assiduously study the Veda alone; that (Veda study) is his highest dharma; everything else is inferior dharma.’

Yāj. (1.198) observes:—

‘the Creator created brāhmaṇas for the preservation of the Vedas, for the Satisfaction of the gods and pitṛs, for the safeguarding of dharma.’

Atrī (25) contains the same idea. Other sages say that he in whose family Veda (Vedic study) and vedī (consecration of fires for śrauta rites) are given up for three generations becomes a *dur-brāhmaṇa* (an unworthy or bad brāhmaṇa). The Tai. S. (II.1.10. i) prescribes a rite for a *dur-brāhmaṇa* in whose family cessation of drinking soma occurred for generations and who himself desired to drink soma.

### Teaching the Veda

It is probable that in very remote times the son was taught the Veda by his father. The story of Svetaketu Aruneya (Chāṇḍogya V.3.1. and VI.1.1-2 and Br. Up. VI.2, 1) shows that he learnt all the Vedas from his father and the legend in the Br. Up. (V.2.1) that the gods, men and asuras learnt from their father Prajāpati points in the same direction. Rig VII.103.5 shows that instruction was oral and consisted in the pupil repeating the words uttered by the teacher. Whatever may have been the case in very remote times, from the times of the Brāhmaṇa literature and in the times of the Dharma-śāstras teaching Vedic literature was almost universally in the hands of brāhmaṇas. Some kṣatriya teachers or philosophers are referred to in the Satapatha (VIII.1.4.10 and XT.6.2) and elsewhere, but they are generally held in low esteem. The Āp. Dh.S.229 (II.2.4.25-28) lays down that the brāhmaṇa alone can be the teacher (of a brāhmaṇa), but in distress (i.e. in the absence of a brāhmaṇa teacher), a brāhmaṇa may learn from a kṣatriya or vaiśya, but the only service (which as a pupil) he should render to a kṣatriya or vaiśya teacher is to go after him (and not shampooing his feet etc.) and after the brāhmaṇa finishes his study, the brāhmaṇa may go in front (of his kṣatriya teacher). Gaut, (VII.1-3) and Manu (X.1,II.241) lay down the same rules. Manu (II.242) adds that a perpetual student (naiṣṭhika brahmacarī) should not stay as a pupil with a teacher who is not a brāhmaṇa and that a brāhmaṇa may learn even from a śūdra a useful or efficacious craft (II.238).

The profession of teaching the Veda could not have brought much money or wealth to brāhmaṇas, since very great emphasis was laid, as we shall see later, on teaching without any prior agreement about payment. It was the privilege of a brāhmaṇa alone to officiate as a priest. Jaimini says that, as the kṣatriya and vaiśya cannot be priests (rtviks), the *sattra* (a sacrifice extending over many days or years) could be performed only by brāhmaṇas. The Kātyāyana Śrauta sūtra uses a similar argument. When Viśvamitra agreed to perform a sacrifice for Trisaṅku who had been cursed to be a *caṇḍāla*, the Rāmāyana (Balakāṇḍa 59:13-14) says that the gods and sages would not accept the oblations. It is doubtful whether the same rigid rule prevailed in ancient Vedic days. In Rig X.98.7 it is said that Devapi was the purohita of Santanu and the Nirukta (II.10) adds that Devapi and Santanu were brothers and descendants of Kuru. So, according to the Nirukta at least, a kṣatriya could be a

purohita in Vedic times. It may be admitted that the Rig Veda itself does not expressly say that they were brothers.

In modern times many writers often speak of brāhmaṇas as the priestly caste or as priests. But this is not a very accurate statement. All brāhmaṇas never *were* nor *are* priests; besides even in modern times when caste is so rigid all priests in all temples and shrines are not brāhmaṇas. Some brāhmaṇas became the family priests (*purohitas*) of kings, many engaged as *rtviks* at solemn śrauta sacrifices or at domestic rites and ceremonies. Temple priests are comparatively a later institution and they were generally looked down upon in olden times and are regarded as inferior even in modern times. Manu (III.152) says that a *devalaka* i.e. a brāhmaṇa who took remuneration to perform service before the image in a temple for three years continuously was unfit to be invited at a Sraddha or to officiate in a sacrifice for gods.

### Accepting Gifts

The third means of livelihood permitted to brāhmaṇas was receiving gifts from a worthy or unblemished person. Accord to Yama quoted in the Sm. C. (I. p.179) *pratigraha* (receiving gifts) from a worthy person of the three higher *varṇas* is superior to the acquisition of wealth by officiating as a priest or by teaching. But Manu (X.109-11) says that *pratigraha* from an unworthy person (or a śūdra) is worse than the act of teaching him or officiating as a priest for him. Very elaborate rules were laid down about gifts i.e. who should receive gifts, from whom gifts may be received and on what occasions and what things were proper subjects of gift. The latter two matters will be discussed in detail later on. Here the rules about the persons to whom gifts should be made and from whom they were to be accepted will be set out. It appears from the Br. Up. (IV.1.3) that even in those ancient times there were prohibitions against receiving gifts from unworthy persons and officiating as priests for the unworthy. And the Br. Up. (V.14.5-6) suggests that it is only the learned who could properly accept large gifts.

In the first place, the ideal set before brāhmaṇas was one of poverty, of plain living and high thinking, of forsaking the active pursuit of riches and cherishing cultural preservation and advancement. Manu lays down the general rule that when not in distress a brāhmaṇa should acquire wealth only just sufficient to maintain himself and his family, and to enable him to perform his religious duties without causing any harm to others or by as little harm to others as possible and without unduly worrying his own body (IV.2-3) and then Manu (IV.7-8) says that a brāhmaṇa householder may either accumulate so much grain (but not more) as would fill a *kusūla* (a granary), or a *kumbhi* <sup>21</sup> or he may have as much corn as would satisfy all his needs for three days or as much as will suffice for the day that is on and that out of these four each succeeding one was superior to each preceding one i.e. one who had no more accumulation of material goods than for the day itself (and who did not care for the morrow) was the best brāhmaṇa. Yāj. I, 128 speaks of a fifth grade viz. a brāhmaṇa should subsist by collecting the ears of corn that are left in the field after the crops are gathered or the single grains of corn so left and Manu (X.112) says that if a brāhmaṇa cannot maintain himself he may prefer to live on the collection of fallen ears of corn or grains rather than receive gifts. This last mode is designated *ṛta* by Manu (IV.5). Manu (IV.12, 15, 17) lays down that a brāhmaṇa should cultivate supreme contentment and though desirous of happiness should restrain himself (in the pursuit of wealth), he should not, even when in distress, hanker after the acquisition of wealth by excessive attachment or by doing what is forbidden or by accepting gifts from any

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<sup>21</sup> The words '*kusūla*' and '*kumbhī*' have been variously explained by the commentators; Accord to Kulluka one who has corn sufficient for three years is called '*kusūladhānya*' as suggested by Manu X.7; while '*kumbhīdhānya*' is one who has a store of corn for one year. Medhātithi says that there is no restriction to corn only; one who has wealth either in corn or money to satisfy his needs for three years is '*kusūladhānya*'; according to Govindarāja, '*kusūladhānya*' and '*kumbhīdhānya*' are respectively those who have corn for 12 and 6 days. The Mit. on Yāj. I.128 accepts Govindarāja's explanation.

person whatever (of blemished character etc.) and he should give up pursuits that are opposed to (cause obstacles in) his devotion to Vedic study. Yāj. (I.129) says the same thing in more concise language.

Vyāsa prescribes that a brāhmaṇa should seek to narrow down his means of livelihood and should not hanker after excess of wealth; if he sets about accumulation of wealth he loses the (glorious) status of brāhmaṇya. The Mahābhārata says that when a brāhmaṇa has more corn than he would require to satisfy his needs for three years, then he should offer a sacrifice with that wealth and he should not go on accumulating wealth in vain and that accumulation of vast wealth is a calamity for a brāhmaṇa. Gautama (IX.63), Yāj. (I.100), Viṣṇu Dh. S. (63, 1), and Laghu-Vyasa (II.8) say that a brāhmaṇa should approach a king (or a rich man) for his *yoga-kṣema* (i.e. for his livelihood and support). Manu (IV.33), Yāj. (I.130), and Vas. Dh. S. (XII, 2) declare that a brāhmaṇa when oppressed by hunger should seek for help (or money) from a king, from his pupil or from one who is able and willing to offer a sacrifice. But a brāhmaṇa should not receive a gift from an irreligious king or other irreligious donor. This implies that if the brāhmaṇa is not hungry and has sufficient wealth either obtained by inheritance or partition or in any other way he should not go about seeking for wealth and should not receive gifts (Manu IV.34).

If a brāhmaṇa cannot secure gifts from the above three, then he may do so from any other worthy *dvijāti*. When even that is not possible and the brāhmaṇa is in difficulties he was allowed to take a gift from anybody including a śūdra (Manu X.102-103, Yāj. III.41); but a brāhmaṇa should not seek gifts from a śūdra for the performance of a sacrifice or for agnihotra, as thereby he becomes a *caṇḍāla* in another birth (Manu XI.24 and 42, Yāj. I.127). A brāhmaṇa trying to support his hungry elders (parents etc.), his dependants (wife, servants etc.), and about to worship gods and honour guests may accept a gift from anybody (except a *patita*), but should not satisfy his own hunger with that wealth (Manu IV.251, Vas.14.13, Viṣṇu Dh. S.57.13, Yāj. I.216). Yāj., however, allowed this even for one's own livelihood. Gaut.239 (18.24-25) allows a brāhmaṇa to receive even from a śūdra as much as would enable him to finish marriage ceremonies on which he has embarked or to get materials for a sacrifice when he has begun it. One may take gifts from a śūdra or ugra for paying a fee to one's guru at the end of the period of brahmachārya (Āp. Dh. S. I.2.7.20-21).

A brāhmaṇa was not to seek gifts from a king who was not of kṣatriya lineage nor from butchers, oilmen, keepers of liquor shops and of brothels nor from courtesans (Manu IV.84), nor from a king who is avaricious and transgresses the rules of the Sastras 24 (Yāj. I.140, Manu IV.87).

### Proper donees

The Smṛtis lay down that it is the duty of the king to support śrotriyas (brāhmanas learned in the Veda) and brāhmaṇas who are incapable of struggling for their maintenance (Gaut. X.9-10, Yāj. III' 44, Atrī 24) and that if a srotriya perishes through hunger in the domains of a king, that country would suffer from famine and disease (Manu VII.134). Yāj. III.44 lays down that it is the duty of a king to assign a proper means of livelihood to a brāhmaṇa in distress, having regard to the brāhmaṇa's conduct, descent, learning, Vedic study, tapas, the members in his family.<sup>22</sup> The ideal set before brāhmaṇas in the matter of *pratigraha* (receiving gifts) was that he, who though entitled to accept a gift (on account of his Vedic learning and tapas) does not take it, attains to the highest worlds (Yāj. I.213); and Manu (IV.186) says that though entitled to accept gifts a brāhmaṇa should

<sup>22</sup> We find that kings followed these directions from very ancient times. In Karle Inscription No.13 (E. I. vol. VII. p.57) and Nasik cave Inscription No.12 King Usavadāta (Rṣabhadata) proclaims that he gave one lakh of cows and 16 villages to brāhmaṇas at Prabhāsa and got some of them married at his expense and that he also fed every year a lakh of brāhmaṇas. In numerous grants of lands and villages the purpose of the grants is said to be to enable the donees to perform the five Mahāyajñas, Agnihotra, Vaiśvadeva, the offering of bali and caru

not again and again resort to that method, since the spiritual power (due to Vedic study) that he acquires is lost by accepting gifts. Another rule about gifts is laid down in many works as follows. When a donor himself goes to the place of a worthy donee and makes a gift that is the best gift, when a donor calls a donee to his place and makes a gift it is middling and when a donor gives if begged by a donee it is inferior. Manu (IV.188-191) prescribes that a man, who is not learned, is reduced to ashes like fuel if he accepts a gift of gold, land, horses, cows, food, clothes, śeṣame and ghee, that a brāhmaṇa who, being devoid of learning and tapas (regulated life), desires to accept gifts sinks (into Hell) as one who sits in a stone boat sinks in water; and that therefore a brāhmaṇa who is not learned should be afraid of receiving gifts.

Just as a brāhmaṇa who was not learned was enjoined not to accept a gift, so conversely, people were asked to make gifts only to learned and worthy men. Even so early as the Sat. Br. this is emphasized as in IV.3.4.15 (S. B. E. vol.26 p.344) "thus those cows of his are given to him who is fit to receive a daksina and not to him who is unfit'. The Āp. Dh. S. (II.6.15.9-10) prescribes:—

‘one should invite for dinner in all religious acts brāhmaṇas who are pure and who have studied the Veda and one should distribute gifts at a proper time and place and on occasions of purificatory rites and when there is a worthy acceptor.’<sup>23</sup>

The smṛtis say that gifts given to a brāhmaṇa who has not studied the Veda or who is avaricious and deceitful are fruitless and lead the donor to hell (Manu IV.192-194, Atrī 152, Dakṣa III.29). Manu (XI.1-3) says that nine kinds of *snātaka* brāhmaṇas who are poor are the primary objects of the gift of food and fees inside the sacrificial altar; while to others food and wealth may be given outside the altar (*bahir-vedi*).

An exception was made in the case of gifts made without request from the donee. What has been offered unasked may be accepted even from one who is guilty of bad actions, except from unchaste women, *klības* (transsexuals) and *patita* (outcastes or persons guilty of *mahā-patakas*).<sup>24</sup> Many persons are mentioned in the smṛtis from whom gifts (particularly of food) were not to be accepted (vide Manu IV.205-224, Vas. Dh. S. XIV.2-11).

Another rule about gifts was that a person should prefer a learned brāhmaṇa who is his neighbour for making a gift, to one who is not near; if he did not do so, he incurred sin; but there was no blame in passing over an ignorant or foolish brāhmaṇa who stays near in favour of a worthy but distant learned brāhmaṇa.

Devala quoted by Aparārka p.288 and Par. M. I. part 1 p.181 say that that brāhmaṇa is a *pātra* (worthy to receive a gift) who is pure in three respects (viz. as to his parents and his guru), whose means of livelihood are slender, who is tender-hearted and of restrained senses. Vas. Dh. S. VI.26 and Yāj. I.200 also define *pātra* similarly.

It is not to be supposed that the ideal of poverty and non acceptance of gifts except under compelling circumstances was only an ideal hardly ever acted upon at any time or in any part of the country. Even in the 20th century rural India has villages with a considerable population of brāhmaṇas where many *śrotṛiyas* (learned in the Veda) and pandits (those who study sastras like grammar, logic, mīmāṃsā) are still found who are content with what little patrimony they have got, who engage in the profession of teaching the Veda and sastras in accordance with ancient rules and who do not go about seeking gifts nor accept invitations for dinner at *sraddhas*.

<sup>23</sup> To the same effect are Vas. Dh. S. III, 8 and VI.30, Manu (III.128, 132 and IV.31), Yaj. (L 201), Dakṣa III.26 and 31.844

<sup>24</sup> Yaj. I.215, Manu IV.248-49, Āp. Dh. S. I.6.19.11-14 (where two verses are quoted from a Purāna which are almost the same as Manu IV.248-249), Viṣṇu Dh. S.57.11.

In the *śāntiparva* *brāhmaṇas* are divided into two sorts, viz. those who are *pravṛtta* (i.e. engage in all sorts of activities for acquiring wealth) and those who are *nivṛtta* and verse 40 defines these latter as those who do not resort to *pratigraha* (acceptance of gifts).

Though *pratigraha* was a special privilege of *brāhmaṇas*, gifts could be made by anybody to anybody. *Yāj.* I.6 says that giving to a worthy person at a proper time is the complete definition of *dharma* and *Viśvarūpa* adds that gifts could be made by anybody; but the merit secured by making a gift depended upon the worth and caste of the donee. *Gaut.* (V.18), 846 *Manu* VII.85. *Veda-Vyasa* IV.42, *Dakṣa* III say that a gift given to a *brāhmaṇa* (who is only so by caste, but is not learned), to a *śrotriya* (or *ācārya*) and to one who has completely mastered all the Vedas (with their subsidiary lores) respectively confers merit which is twice, a hundred thousand times or an infinite number of times more than the merit conferred by a gift to a non-*brāhmaṇa*. *Gautama* (V.19-20) and *Baudhāyana* II.3.24 further make it obligatory to give outside the sacrificial altar according to one's ability a portion of one's wealth to a *brāhmaṇa*, *śrotriya* and *Veda-pāraga* when they seek help for giving a *dakṣina* to their teacher (at the end of the period of studenthood), for their own marriage, for medicine, for their own maintenance (that day), for a sacrifice, for their own study or journey, and when everything has been given in a *Viśvajit* sacrifice and that one must give cooked food to all others who beg for it (except *brāhmaṇa*, *śrotriya* and *Vedapāraga*).

In the *Vaiśvadeva* the householder was enjoined to give food to every one including even dogs and *caṇḍalas*, as we shall see later on (under *Vaiśvadeva*). *Medhatithi* on *Manu* IV.5 says that when a person makes a gift through compassion it is not the *dāna* and *pratigraha* spoken of by the *Sastra*; just as when a man gives instruction as to what is beneficial he does not care to see what the caste of the person to be benefitted by the advice is, so a gift made through compassion is made irrespective of caste; and that when non-*brāhmaṇas* reduced to a helpless condition take what is given by others, it cannot be said that they are assuming to themselves the livelihood by *pratigraha* which is a peculiar means of livelihood for *brāhmaṇas*.

In spite of the noble ideal set before *brāhmanas* it appears that, owing to the growth of the *Brāhmaṇa* population and the paucity of gifts and invitations to officiate as priests, the strict rules about *dāna* and *pratigraha* had to be relaxed and in course of time it came to be said that a *brāhmaṇa*, whether learned or ignorant, was to be a donee and may accept gifts without any scruples. The first inroad was made by the rule that in rites meant for gods the character and learning of *brāhmaṇas* need not be deeply inquired into,<sup>25</sup> but that such enquiry was proper only when they were to be invited for *śraddha* and, other rites for the dead, the only exceptions being that a *brāhmaṇa*, who is a thief or is guilty of a *mahāpātaka*, or is impotent or an atheist was not to be invited even in rites for the gods (vide *Manu* III.149-150). Gradually such views as the following came to be recommended.

The *Skanda-Purāṇa* as quoted by *Aparārka* (p.455) makes *Siva* say to *Parvatī*:—

‘the Vedic revelation is that *śraddha* (food) should be given (to a *brāhmaṇa*) after inquiry (into his learning and character), but straightforward action is better than scrutiny. When one offers *śraddha* straightforwardly without scrutiny, his *pitṛs* are satisfied and also gods.’

The *Vṛddha-Gautama smṛti* (chap. III pp.512-513 and 518, *Jiv.*) says:—

‘*Brāhmaṇas*, whether well conducted or of bad conduct, whether vulgar or of polished intellect, should not be disrespected like fires covered with ashes. Just as fire in whatever condition it may be, is a great deity, so a *brāhmana* is a great deity in whatever condition he may be.’

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<sup>25</sup> An instructive parallel may be found in Article XXVI of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican Church, where by sacraments administered by a priest who is sinful do not suffer in efficacy.

'The wise should not despise brāhmaṇas, whether they be squint eyed, humpbacked, dwarfs, indigent or diseased, since they are my forms (i.e. of Kṛṣṇa)'.

The Anuśāsana-parva (152.19) says:—

'a brāhmaṇa who is not learned is a god and he is a worthy object for gifts and is a great purifier; a learned brāhmaṇa is a greater god (than an unlearned one).'

As already said above teaching could have brought very little wealth. There was no state educational system as in modern times with stability of tenure and graded rates of salary. Nor was there any Copyright Act under which a learned man could make money by writing books for students and the general public. The brāhmaṇas had no organised corporate body like the Anglican Church with its hierarchy of Archbishops, Bishops and other divines, nor was there in ancient India any practice of making wills whereby large estates came to the Church as in England (where statutes of Mortmain had to be passed to prevent enormous estates from going to the Church). The emoluments of officiating priests and gifts given by charitably disposed persons must have been fitful and offered only a precarious means of livelihood, as they depended upon the volition of others and as the smṛtis recommended that even in śraddha too many brāhmaṇas should not be invited. Besides all brāhmaṇas could not have possessed the memory, intelligence and patience required to master the Vedic Literature after intensive study for decades of years. Therefore, there is no wonder that many brāhmaṇas were compelled by the force of circumstances to pursue for their livelihood avocations other than the three prescribed ones. From ancient times this was recognised by the Dharma Śāstra. Gaut. (VII.6 and 7) says that if a brahman cannot maintain himself by means of the three peculiar modes of livelihood viz. teaching or officiating as a priest for even an unworthy person or by receiving gifts, then he should maintain himself by doing the work peculiar to a kṣatriya (i.e. by fighting and protecting people) and if even that is not possible then by following the avocations of a vaiśya and Gaut. VII.26 ordains that a kṣatriya may resort to the profession of the vaiśya in similar circumstances. Baudhāyana says the same and then it adds that Gautama says that it should not be so as the duties of a kṣatriya would be too terrific for a brāhmaṇa and that he should pursue the avocation of a vaiśya. Baudhāyana (1.1.20) notes that the profession of arms was practised by the brāhmaṇas of the north. Vas. Dh. S. (II.22) lays down that persons (of the three higher *varṇas*) should, if they cannot maintain themselves by the peculiar avocations of their *varṇa*, resort to the means of livelihood prescribed for the *varṇa* which is immediately below their own.

It is further laid down by the same works<sup>26</sup> that a person belonging to a lower *varṇa* should not resort to the modes of livelihood peculiar to a higher *varṇa*. The smṛtis further ordain that when the calamity or distress ceases, the person who has taken to the avocations of another *varṇa* should perform *prayaścitta*, should resume his proper avocations and abandon the wealth acquired by him by resorting to improper avocations.<sup>27</sup> Manu (X.96) prescribes that, if a person of a lower *varṇa* maintains himself through greed by the avocation peculiar to a higher *varṇa*, the king should confiscate the wealth and should at once banish him from the country. A classical example of the keenness with which good kings were expected to prevent persons of lower *varṇas* doing the actions allowed only to higher *varṇas* is furnished by the story of Sambuka narrated in the Rāmāyana (VII.73-76.) The Uttararamacarita of Bhavabhūti echoes the same sentiments. A Śūdra who engaged in japa, homa, tapas or became an ascetic or repeated (Vedic) mantras was to be punished (or killed) by the king and was also guilty of mortal sin. Manu (X.98) allows a vaiśya, if unable to maintain himself by the pursuits peculiar to his *varṇa*, to live by means of the actions proper for a śūdra viz. serving members of the twice-born classes. It is also said by Gaut. (VII. 22-24) that a brāhmaṇa may maintain himself in any way if unable to maintain himself (by the three

<sup>26</sup> vide Vas. Dh. S. II.23, Manu X.95

<sup>27</sup> vide Manu XL 192-193; Viṣṇu Dh. S. (54.27-28), Yaj. III.35, Nārada (rṇadāna 59-60).

means specially prescribed for him), but he should not resort to the actions peculiar to a Śūdra, that according to some ācāryas he may do even those actions when life itself is in danger, but that when he stoops to the actions peculiar to śūdras for maintenance he should not mix himself up with members of that *varṇa* (by sitting on the same seat with them etc.) or eat articles forbidden to brāhmaṇas (such as leek and garlic) and should not be a mere menial servant.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Vide Manu (IV.4 and 6) and Nārada (ṛnadāna 57).



## Position of Śūdras

According to all ancient authorities the special duty of the śūdra was to render service to the twice-born classes, to obtain his livelihood from them and serving a brāhmaṇa conferred greater happiness or benefit on the śūdra than serving a kṣatriya and serving a kṣatriya conferred greater good than serving a vaiśya. According to Gaut. (X.60-61), Manu (X.124-125) and others, the śūdra was to wear the old or cast-off clothes, umbrellas, sandals, mattress etc. of his patron and the leavings of food (*ucchiṣṭa*) were to be given to him. If he became old and unable to do work while serving anyone of the higher *varṇas* he was to be fed by him whom he had formerly served (Gaut. X.63). In course of time the position of the śūdra improved. If a śūdra was unable to maintain himself and his family by serving dvijas, he was allowed to maintain himself by having recourse to crafts like carpentry or drawing or painting pictures etc. Nārada (rnadāna 58) allowed him to perform the work of kṣatriyas and vaiśyas in times of distress. Yāj. (I.120) also says that, if unable to maintain himself by the service of dvijas, the śūdra may carry on the profession of a vaiśya or may take to the various crafts. The Mahā-bhārata allowed a śūdra who could not maintain himself by the service of higher *varṇas* to resort to the avocations of a vaidya, to rearing cattle and to crafts. Others like Laghu-Aśvalayana (22.5), Vrddha-Harīta (VII.189, 192) allowed agriculture to the śūdra. The Kalika-Purāṇa quoted in the Gr. R. (p.479) allowed the śūdra to sell all commodities except honey, skins, *lakṣa* (lac), wines and flesh, while Brhat-Parasara (p.101) prohibited the śūdra from selling wine and flesh. Devala quoted in the Mit. (on Yāj. I.120) prescribes that the śūdra should serve the twice-born and may engage in agriculture, rearing cattle, carrying loads, sale of commodities, drawing and painting, dancing, singing and playing on musical instruments like the flute, lute, drums and tabors.

The foregoing will show that the śūdra gradually rose in social status so far as occupation was concerned and could follow all occupations except those specially reserved for the brāhmaṇa, so much so that śūdras became even kings and Manu (IV.61) had expressly to enjoin upon brāhmaṇas not to dwell in the kingdom of a śūdra.<sup>29</sup>

The smṛtis however did not like that wealth should be accumulated in the hands of the śūdra (though they were quite willing that kṣatriyas and vaiśyas should command all wealth). Gaut. (X.64-65) says that the śūdra's accumulation of wealth should be for the support and benefit of the other *varṇas*. Manu (X.129) says that a śūdra, even though able to accumulate wealth, should not do so, as (on account of his pride of wealth and his ignorance) he may cause obstructions and trouble to brāhmaṇas.

Śūdras were divided into numerous sub-castes. But there were two main divisions. One was *aniravasita śūdras* ('included' — such as carpenters and blacksmiths) and the other *niravasita śūdras* ('excluded' — like *caṇḍalas*). Another division of śūdras was into those who were *bhojyanna* (i.e. food prepared by whom could be partaken by brāhmaṇas) and *abhoyanna*. In the first were included one's slave, one's cowherd, barber, family friend and one who shared with one the crop reared on one's land (vide Yāj. I.166). It is worthy of note that even the Mit. adds the potter to the above list. All the other śūdras were such that a brāhmaṇa could not take his food. A third and well-known division was into *sacchudra* (well-conducted) and *asac-chudra*. The former class included those śūdras who followed good occupations or trade, served dvijas and had given up meat and drinking or selling liquor. The Śūdrakāmalakara (p.60) says that *asat-śūdras* do not incur sin

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<sup>29</sup> This dictum of Manu must have been pronounced at a time when Śūdra kings were rare; otherwise it would have no meaning and brāhmaṇas would have been compelled to leave India. So it follows that Manu did not hold the view propounded in certain Purānas that after the Nandas there would be no kṣatriya kings and only will be kings.

even if they partake of meat and liquor, provided they do not eat forbidden meat and that there is no lapse if one comes in contact with a śūdra that drinks liquor.

A few words may now be said about brāhmaṇas being allowed to follow the occupations of kṣatriyas and vaiśyas. From very ancient times brāhmaṇas appear to have followed the profession of arms. Pān. (V.2.71) teaches the formation of the word 'brāhmaṇaka' as applied to a country, which means 'in which Brāhmaṇas follow the profession of arms.' Kau.866 (IX.2) quotes the view of the ācāryas that when there are armies composed of brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras each preceding one is better for enlistment than each subsequent, but Kaut. himself is against this and adds that the enemy may win over the army of brāhmaṇas by prostration before them. Apastamba was against the idea of brāhmaṇas following the profession of arms. He says (I.10.29.7) 267 'a brāhmaṇa should not catch hold of a weapon even for examining it (much less for attacking others with it)'. Gaut. (VII, 6) allowed a brāhmaṇa to follow kṣatriya's profession in case of distress (*āpad*) and adds (in VII.25) that even a brāhmaṇa while still following the peculiar avocation of a brāhmaṇa may wield weapons when his life is in danger. The Baud. Dh. S. (II.2.80) quotes a verse:—

'for saving cows and brāhmaṇas, for preventing the mixture of *varṇas*, the brāhmaṇa and vaiśya may take to arms from their concern for dharma.'

Manu(VIII.3 48-349) allows all *dvijātis* to resort to weapons where the observance of dharma (or of the duties of *varṇas* and āśramas) is obstructed (by violent men), when there is a disturbance (due to invasion etc.) involving the twice-born classes, in evil times for protect one's self, when there is an attack for carrying away cows or other wealth (given as fees) and in order to protect women and brāhmaṇas and he incurs no sin if he kills (for these purposes). Among the heroes of the Mahābhārata there are great warriors and commanders like Drona, his son Asvatthaman, Kripa (the maternal uncle of Asvatthaman) who were brāhmaṇas. The Mahābhārata says that a brāhmaṇa should fight at the order of the king. The śāntiparva (78.18) calls upon persons of all *varṇas* to wield arms when the rules for holding society together are broken and when dasyus (robbers or low persons) cause confusion.

From ancient times we find brāhmaṇas as commanders and founders of royal dynasties. The famous Senapati Puṣyamitra belonged to the Sunga gotra and wrested an empire from the last of the Mauryas about 184 B.C.E. His line was followed by the Kāṇvāyanas, the founder being minister Vāsudeva, a brāhmaṇa, who killed the last Sunga about 72 B.C.E. We learn from the Talagunda pillar inscription of Kakusthavarman (E. I. Vol. VIII, p.24) that the founder of the Kadambas, Mayura-sarman, was a brāhmaṇa. In Maratha history there were the Peshwas and other brāhmaṇa warriors and commanders.

Though it is said that a brāhmaṇa in distress may follow the occupation of a vaiśya, there were several restrictions imposed upon brāhmaṇas following the occupations of money lending, agriculture, trade, and the rearing of cattle, which were prescribed as the privileged occupations of vaiśyas.

As to money-lending, Gaut.269 (X.5-6) allowed a brāhmaṇa to maintain himself and his family by agriculture, sale of commodities and money-lending only if he did not engage in these personally, but through the agency of others. Vas. Dh. S. (II.40) enjoins upon brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas not to lend money like usurers and quotes two verses which define usury and say that a userer is a greater sinner than even one who is guilty of brāhmaṇa-murder. Manu (X.117) also forbids usury to brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas, but allows them to charge a low rate of interest to persons engaged in low actions. Nārada (ṛnadāna 111) forbids usury to brāhmaṇas even in the direst calamities. Āp. Dh. S. (I.9.27.10) prescribes a *prayaścitta* for a brāhmaṇa lending money at usurious rates. Brhaspati as quoted 271 in the Gr. R. has a rather amusing verse:—

'sages have enumerated numerous means of livelihood, but out of all of them money-lending is pre-eminent. There is loss in agriculture due to draught, to the fear of the exactions of the king and the ravages of rats and others, but there is no such loss in money-lending.'

It appears that this is only a general or Satirical statement and does not recommend money lending to brāhmaṇas. The obvious reasons and motives underlying these restrictions on brāhmaṇas were to make them live simple lives, to insist on the necessity and high value to themselves and to society of studying, preserving and augmenting the ancient literature and culture, to emphasize the fact that a highly spiritual life should not be given up for a mere secular life, to prevent the coarsening and hardening of the heart and emotions in a relentless and continuous pursuit of wealth or martial glory.

### Agriculture and brāhmaṇas

In the Dharma Śāstras there is a great conflict of views about agriculture as an occupation for brāhmaṇas. The Vedic Literature does not condemn agriculture in the case of brāhmaṇas. The gambler's song (Rig X.34) winds up with the exhortation:—

'do not play with dice, do engage in agriculture, thinking highly of my words (or of wealth), do find joy in wealth, in that (in agriculture) there are cows, there is your wife etc.'

There are frequent references in Vedic Literature to fields, ploughshares and tilling the soil.<sup>30</sup> Baudhāyana (1.5.101) says:—

'The study of the Veda tends to the destruction of agriculture and (devotion to) agriculture tends to the loss (of the study) of the Veda. One who has the capacity (to look after both) may resort to both, but he who is unable (to look after both) should give up agriculture'.

Baudhāyana further says (II.2.82-83)

'a brāhmaṇa should engage in agriculture before his morning meal and he should only coax again and again his oxen whose noses have not been pierced and whose testicles are not removed and without prodding them with a pointed awl'.

The Vas. Dh. S. (II.32-34) has a similar sūtra, adds that in summer he shall water his beasts (in the morning) and quotes Vaj. S. XII.71. Manu (X.83-84) says:—

'a brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya compelled to follow the avocations of a vaiśya (owing to difficulty of maintenance otherwise) should by all means avoid agriculture which is full of injury to sentient beings and dependent on others (labourers, oxen &c.). Some regard agriculture as a good mode of livelihood but it is condemned by the good, (as) wood having an iron tip (i.e. the plough) strikes the earth and (the insects and germs) imbedded in the earth.'

Manu IV.5 designated agriculture by the word '*pramṛta*' (pre-eminent in loss of life). Hārīta quoted in Gr. R. p.429 declares:—

'the ploughshare (i.e. agriculture) carries with it destruction of life, therefore it is not for brāhmaṇas; but if he were to follow it (agriculture) in distress he should pursue it only till his object (of tiding over distress) is accomplished'.

Parasara (II, 2-4, 7, 14) allows a brāhmaṇa to engage in agriculture, but lays down certain restrictions.

'The proper number of oxen to be yoked to the plough is eight, six being middling, four are yoked only by the cruel and two by those who sacrifice the lives of their oxen; he should not yoke an ox that is hungry, thirsty or tired, he should make the oxen work only for half the day and then bathe

<sup>30</sup> vide Rig X.101.3 = Tai.S.IV.2.5.5, Vaj. S. XII.67, Rig I.110.5, I.176.2, X.117.7).

them in water, he should offer the five mahā-yajnas and other sacrifices with corn raised by himself engaging in agriculture, the sin of ploughing the earth for a day with an iron-tipped ploughshare is equal to that incurred by a fisherman fishing for a year; he should give 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the corn to the king, offer 1/21 to gods and 1/30<sup>th</sup> to brāhmaṇas and then he may not be smeared with sin'.

Harīta quoted by Aparārka (p.937) has a long prose passage on the treat ment to be given to oxen by brāhmaṇas and also Vrddha-Gautama (Jiv. part 2 p.571). Vrddha-Harīta 876 (VII, 179 and 182) says that agriculture is common to all *varṇas* and agriculture, rearing cattle and service are not forbidden to any. The above discussion shows how agriculture was viewed at different times and by different writers from different points of view.

### Sale and Barter

We have seen above that a brāhmaṇa is allowed to maintain himself by trade in distress or difficulties (apad). But there were very great restrictions as to what things could be sold by a brāhmaṇa, According to Gaut. (VII.8-14) a brāhmaṇa should not engage in the sale of fragrant things (like sandal-wood), fluids (like oils, ghee etc.), cooked food, śeṣame, hemp (and hempen articles like bags), *kṣauma* (linen), deer-skin, dyed and cleanly washed clothes, milk and its products (like curds etc.), roots, flowers, fruits, herbs (used as drugs), honey, meat, grass, water, deleterious drugs (like opium, poison), animals (for being killed), men (as slaves), barren cows, heifers and cows liable to abortion. He adds (Gautama VII.15) that according to some a brāhmaṇa could not sell land, rice, yava, goats and sheep, horses, bulls, freshly delivered cows and oxen that are yoked to carts. These restrictions did not apply to a kṣatriya engaging in trade. Āp. Dh. S.1.7.20.12-13 877 has a similar list but adds among forbidden articles of sale weapons, sticky things (*slesma*, like lac), young stalks (*tokma*), fermented liquids (*kiṇva*), the expectation of merit (*sukrtāśā*) and says that among corns śeṣame and rice are on no account to be sold. Baud. Dh. S. II.1.77-78 condemns the sale of śeṣame and rice by saying that he who sells them sells respectively his pitṛs (dead ancestors) and his prāṇas. This arose probably from the close connection of śeṣame with *śraddha* and *tarpaṇa*. Vas. Dh. S. (II.24-29) gives a similar list and adds a prohibition against the sale of stones, salt, silk, iron, tin, lead, all wild animals, all tame animals with uncloven hoofs and those that have a mane, birds and animals having fangs. It quotes a verse at II.27 (which is the same as Manu X.92)

' a brāhmaṇa immediately becomes a sinner by the sale of meat, lac and salt and he becomes a śūdra by selling milk for three days '.

About śeṣame, Baud, Dh. S.878 (II.1.76), Manu (X.91) and Vas. Dh. S. (II.30) present the same verse:—

'If a man deals with śeṣame in any way other than eating them or using them for bathing (i.e. applying śeṣamum oil to the body before a bath) and making a gift of them, becomes a worm and sinks together with his pitṛs in the ordure of a dog'.

But it appears that Vasiṣṭha 279 (II.31), Manu (X.90) allow the sale of śeṣame if a man engages in agriculture and himself produces them (but sale must be only for purposes of religious duties, according to Manu). Yāj. (III.39) and Nārada (rnadāna 66) say that śeṣame may be bartered for an equal measure of othar corn to raise means for religious purposes (and for medicine also according to Nārada). Manu (X.86-89), Yāj. (III.36-38), Nārada (rnadāna 61-63) give long lists of articles that Brāhmaṇas were forbidden to sell and that include a few more than those specified above. For example, Manu forbids the sale of bee's wax, kuśa, indigo, while Yāj. adds soma, mud, blankets made of goat wool, hair (of camarī deer) and oilcakes (pinyaka) to things forbidden to be sold.

Apart from these negative rules, there are some that are positive and prescribe what may be sold. For example, the Baud. Dh.S. (II.1.81-82) prescribes the sale of grass and wood in their natural state and quotes a verse;—

'O! Brāhmaṇa, these are the articles you may sell, viz., domestic animals that have only one row of teeth, minerals except salt and threads (i.e. cloth) that are not coloured with some dye.'

Nārada (rñadāna 64-65) states:—

'a brāhmaṇa may sell dried wood and grass, except fragrant articles, eraka (a kind of grass), rattan, cotton, roots, kuśa grass; cereals that get split up of their own accord, *badara* and *inguda* among fruits, cords and threads of cotton provided they are not coloured'.

Saṅkha-Likhita also (as quoted by Aparārka p.933) have the same rules as Nārada and further enjoin upon the brāhmaṇa not to haggle for the price but to have a fixed price.

Manu (XL 62), Viṣṇu Dh. S. (37.14) and Yāj. (III.234) include the sale of forbidden articles among *upapātakas* and Yāj. (III.265) prescribes *candrayana* and other *prayaścittas* for it. Harīta (quoted by Aparārka p.1113 and Mit. on Yāj. III.265) prescribes various *prayaścittas* for the sale of various forbidden articles. Laghu Satatapa prescribes (v.87) *candrayana* for the sale of honey, meat, wine, soma, lac, salt. Nārada (rñadāna 67) calls upon the king to inflict a heavy fine upon a brāhmaṇa who engages in the sale of articles forbidden to be sold and strays from the path (proper for brāhmaṇas) in the absence of distress. Āp. Dh. S. (I.7.20.14-15) states the general rule that exchange or barter also of those articles that are forbidden to be sold cannot be resorted to, but adds that barter is allowed of foods with foods, of slaves with slaves, of fragrant things with other fragrant things, of one kind of learning with another. Gaut.285 (VII.16-21) allows the exchange of *rasas* with *rasas*, of domestic animals with other domestic animals, of cooked food with an equal measure of uncooked food for immediate use, but forbids the barter of salt, cooked food and śeṣame with other articles. Manu (X.94) allows the exchange of one *rasa* (liquid like molasses) with another (like ghee), of cooked food with uncooked food, of śeṣame with an equal quantity of other corn, but does not allow the barter of salt for any *rasa*. Vas. Dh. S. (II.37-39) has rules similar to Manu and Āp.

Manu (X.116) enumerates ten means of maintaining oneself in *āpad* (distress) viz. learning, arts and crafts, work for wages, service (i.e. carrying out another's orders), rearing cattle, sale of commodities, agriculture, contentment, alms, money-lending. Out of these some cannot be followed by a brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya when there is no distress (e.g. a brāhmaṇa cannot engage in service). Yāj. III.42 enumerates seven of these and adds 'cart' (i.e. working as a driver), mountain (subsisting on the price of grass and fuel taken from hills), a country full of water, trees and shrubs, king (i.e. resorting to or begging from a king). Chāgaleya quoted in Gr. R. p.449 speaks of nine means of livelihood in a season of drought, viz. cart, plot of vegetables, cows, fishing, *asyandana* (maintaining oneself by the slightest effort possible?), forest, a country full of water, trees and shrubs, a mountain, king. Nārada (rñadāna 50-55) says that three modes of acquiring wealth are common to all, viz. inheritance, a gift of friendliness or affection and what comes to a man with a wife (at the time of marriage); that each of the three *varṇas* has three special modes of acquiring wealth, viz., receiving gifts, fees as priest and fees for teaching in the case of brāhmaṇas; booty in war, taxes and fines in judicial trials in the case of kṣatriyas; agriculture, rearing cattle and sale of commodities in the case of vaiśyas.

Nārada (rñadāna verses 44-47) divides wealth into *śukla* (white, pure), *śabala* (dark-white, mixed) and *kṛṣṇa* (dark) and each of these into seven varieties. The Viṣṇu Dh. S, chap.58 also divides the wealth of householders into these three varieties and says that what is earned by the special modes prescribed for each *varṇa*, inherited wealth, gifts of affection and what comes with the wife — these are *śukla* (pure); what is obtained by following the special avocation of the *varṇa* immediately lower than one's own *varṇa* and what is acquired by giving bribes or by sale of forbidden articles or from one who is under one's obligations is *śabala*; what is obtained by following the avocations of a

*varṇa* other than the immediately lower one and what is acquired by gambling, theft, violence or fraud is called *kṛṣṇa*. Baud. Dh. S. (III. L 5-6) speaks of ten kinds of vṛttis (means of livelihood) and III.2 explains them at length. Manu (IV.4-6) speaks of five ways of livelihood viz. ṛta (i.e. gleaning), *amṛta* (what comes without begging), *mṛta* (alms obtained by begging), *pramṛta* (agriculture), *satyānṛta* (sale of commodities) and forbids *śvavṛtti* (service, lit. living like a dog). Manu (IV.9) further says that some brāhmaṇas live by six means (i.e. *adhyāpana*, *yājana*, *pratigraha*, agriculture, rearing cattle and trade), some by three (viz. the first three), some by two (*yājana* and *adhyāpana*) and others again only by one (*adhyāpana*).

### Classification of Brāhmaṇas

The avocations practised by brāhmaṇas in the pursuit of wealth were many and varied, so much so that from very ancient times the lists of brāhmaṇas not eligible for invitation at sṛaddhas because they followed unworthy callings were formidable. Atrī (Anan. ed.) verses 373-383 names ten kinds of brāhmaṇas and briefly defines them, viz.

1. *deva-brāhmaṇa* (who daily performs bath, sandhya, japa, homa, worship of gods and honouring of guests and vaiśvadeva),
2. *muni-br.* (who is given up to staying in a forest, subsists on roots, fruits and vegetables and performs daily sṛaddhas),
3. *dvija-br.* (who studies the Vedānta, gives up all attachments and is engaged in reflecting over Sāṅkhya and Yoga),
4. *kṣatra-br.* (who fights),
5. *vaiśya-br.* (who engages in agriculture, rearing cattle and trade),
6. *śūdra-br.* (who sells lac, salt, dyes like kusumbha, milk, ghee, honey, meat),
7. *niṣāda-br.* (who is a thief and robber, a backbiter and always fond of fish and meat),
8. *pasu-br.* (who knows nothing about brahman and is only proud of his wearing the sacred thread),
9. *mleccha-br.* (who obstructs or destroys wells, tanks, gardens, without any qualm)
10. *caṇḍāla-br.* (who is a fool, devoid of prescribed rites, beyond the pale of all dharma and cruel).

Atrī (384) rather humorously adds 'those who are devoid of Vedic lore, study the sastras (like grammar, logic etc.), those devoid of sastric lore study Purāṇas (and earn money by reciting them), those who are devoid even of Purāṇa reading become cultivators, those who are devoid even of that become *bhāgavatas* (pose as great devotees of Siva or Viṣṇu i.e. become what is called in modern Marathi 'buvā')

Devala quoted by Aparārka (pp.284-285) speaks of eight kinds of brāhmaṇas (of whom each succeeding one is superior to each preceding one) viz.

1. *mātra* — (one who is only born in a brāhmaṇa family but has not studied any part of the Veda nor performs the actions appropriate to brāhmaṇas),
2. *brāhmaṇa* — (who has studied a portion of the Veda),
3. *śrotriya* — (who has studied one vedic śākha with the six angas and performs the six duties of brāhmaṇas),
4. *anūcāna* — (who knows the meaning of the Veda and the Vedangas, is of pure heart and has kindled the sacred fires),

5. *bhruṇa* — (who besides being *anūcāna* always performs yajñas and eats what is left after performing yajñas),
6. *ṛṣikalpa* — (who has gained all worldly and Vedic knowledge, and has his mind under control),
7. *ṛṣi* — (one who is celibate, of austere life, of truthful speech and able to curse or favour),
8. *muni* — (to whom a clod of earth and gold are the same, who has ceased from all activity, is devoid of desires and anger etc.).

Śātātapa quoted by Aparārka (pp.286-287) speaks of six classes of persons who, though born brāhmaṇas, are really not brāhmaṇas viz.

1. one who has taken service with a king,
2. one who engages in sale and purchase (of commodities),
3. one who officiates for many yajamanas,
4. one who is the officiating priest for the whole village,
5. one who is in the service of a village or town,
6. one who does not perform sandhya adoration in the morning and evening at the proper time.

The Anuśāsanaparva (33.11 ff) shows that some brāhmaṇas were great rogues, others engaged in austerities, some resorted to agriculture and rearing cattle, others subsisted by begging, some were thieves and others were false, some were acrobats and dancers (but it yet recommends that brāhmaṇas must be honoured).

The smṛtis teach that brāhmaṇas doing certain things are to be treated as śūdras. For example, Baud. Dh. S. (II.4.20) requires a religious king to employ brāhmaṇas who do not perform the morning and evening adoration (sandhya) in doing work appropriate to śūdras. Vas. Dh. S. J(III.1-2) says that brāhmaṇas who are not srotriyas (learned in the Veda), who do not teach the Veda or who do not kindle the sacred fires become reduced to the status of śūdras and quotes a Manava sloka (Manu II.168)

‘that a brāhmaṇa who without studying the Veda works hard to master something else is quickly reduced while still living to the status of a śūdra together with his family.’

Manu (VIII.102 = Baud. Dh. S. I. 5.95) asks the king to treat as śūdras brāhmaṇas who engage in rearing cattle, in the sale of commodities, who are artisans and actors, who are mere servants and money-lenders. Parasara (VIII, 24) says that a brāhmaṇa who does not repeat the Gayatri mantra is more impure than even a śūdra and that brāhmaṇas who do not offer oblations to sacred fires, who are bereft of *sandhya* adoration and who do not study the Veda are all śūdras and that therefore one should study at least a portion of the Veda if he cannot study the whole. Manu (V.4) 295 sums up in one place the reasons why brāhmaṇas are seized by Death before the allotted span of human life 'on account of not studying the Vedas, on account of giving up the rules of conduct prescribed for them, through idleness and through the faults arising from (partaking forbidden) food, Death desires to kill brāhmaṇas.'

A few words must be said about begging, The smṛtis prescribe begging as specially appropriate to brahmacarins (Vedic students) and ascetics (yatis), which will be dealt with at length later on. Begging was not allowed to others except under considerable restrictions. The king of Kekaya is made to boast in the Mahābhārata (śānti 77.22) that no one who is not a brahmacarin begs in his kingdom. Gifts of food were to be made daily while performing the five mahāyajñas (this will be treated under vaiśvadeva). Āp. Dh. S. II.5.10.1-4 recognizes that begging can properly be resorted to for the following reasons, viz. for the teacher, for (one's first) marriage, for a sacrifice, in anxiety to support one's parents, for warding off the non-observance of the duties of a worthy person; he enjoins that on these occasions there is a duty to give according to one's ability and according to the worth of the person begging and that if a man begs only for the

gratification of his senses (and not for pressing wants) one should pay no heed to such begging. Vas. Dh. S. XII.2-3 says that:—

'a man oppressed by hunger may beg for a little viz. a cultivated or uncultivated plot, a cow, a sheep or ewe, and at last gold, corn or cooked food; but a snātaka should not faint through hunger; this is the instruction'.

Baud Dh. S. II.1.64 includes begging by one who has finished his course of studenthood among actions that make a man impure (*aśucikara*). Manu XL 16-17 says that when a person has had no food for three days he may take away (by theft even) from one who is lower than himself in class as much corn as will be enough for one day, either from the threshing floor or from the field or from his house or from whatever place he can get it, but he should announce his action when the owner asks.<sup>31</sup> Angiras quoted in Gr. R. (p.450.) allows begging to the diseased, the indigent, to one who is torn away from his family and who is on a journey. Sāṅkha-Likhita as quoted in Gr.R. (p.457) says:—

'when a man begs he should state the purpose (such as marriage, completion of sacrifice) of his begging; he should not beg of a woman or of those who are minors or unable to conduct their affairs, nor when the donor is not in a proper place or at a proper time. He should apply the alms to the purpose for which he begged. He should give that portion of the alms which remains unused to priests or any other excellent person'.

Vas. Dh. S. (III.4) and Parasara 20 (I.60) call upon the king to fine that village where persons of the higher classes wander about begging though they are not observers of vows (like brahmacarins) and are not studying the Veda.

The foregoing will show that indiscriminate begging was never allowed or encouraged by the smṛtis even for brāhmaṇas, much less for others. It has been seen above how even during the Vedic period brāhmaṇas had come to be highly eulogised as if they were gods and held superior merely on account of birth. The Tai. Br, III.73 says 'One should sacrifice in the right hand of a brāhmaṇa; the brāhmaṇa indeed is Agni-vaiśvanara'.<sup>32</sup> The same ideas of the sacredness and the superiority of brāhmaṇas were carried forward and further emphasized by the dharma-śāstras. Most exaggerated and hyperbolic descriptions of the greatness of brāhmaṇas are sown broadcast over all the smṛtis and the Purāṇas. It is not possible to set out even a small fraction of them. But a few passages may usefully be cited here by way of samples:—

'the gods are invisible deities, but brāhmaṇas are visible deities; the worlds are supported by brāhmaṇas; the gods stay in heaven by the favour of brāhmaṇas; words spoken by brāhmaṇas never come to be untrue'. (Viṣṇu Dh. S.19.20-22)

'whatever wealth exists on this earth all that belongs to the brāhmaṇa;<sup>33</sup> the brāhmaṇa deserves everything on account of his superiority due to his descent (from the mouth of the Creator).' (Manu (I.100) )

'who would prosper if he oppresses brāhmaṇas that, when angered, might create other worlds and other guardians of the worlds and that might deprive the deities of their position as deities' (Manu IX.313-321 )

('a brāhmaṇa, whether learned or not, is a great deity' (verse 317).

<sup>31</sup> Gaut. (18.28-30) and Yaj. III.43 are to the same effect.

<sup>32</sup> Vide śāntiparva 343.13-14, 'Manu IV.117, Likhita 31, Vas. Dh.8.30.2-5.

<sup>33</sup> This is a mere *arthavāda*. It means "it is as if his", for Manu himself (in VIII.338) prescribes for brāhmaṇas who knowing everything are guilty of theft 64 or 100 or 128 times as much fine, as a śūdra guilty of the same theft has to pay if he unknowingly commits it, while the latter pays eight times as much if he knowingly commits it.



'a brāhmaṇa by the very fact of his birth is an object of honour even to the deities. ' (Manu XI.84)

'whatever defects there may be in vratas, in austerities, or in sacrificial rites, they all vanish when brāhmaṇas support them. Whatever words are spoken by brāhmaṇas are spoken by the gods; brāhmaṇas have all the gods in them and therefore their words do not fail.' (Parasara VI.52-53)

The Mahābhārata indulges in frequent eulogies of brāhmaṇas. says:—

'a brāhmaṇa, when provoked, becomes fire, the sun, poison, and weapon; a brāhmaṇa is declared to be the guru of all beings.' (Adiparva 28.3-4)

'a brāhmaṇa is the highest light, he is the highest tapas; the sun shines in heaven on account of the salutations made by the brāhmaṇas'. (Vanaparva 303.16)

This and similar dicta closely follow what was expressed in the Vedic period long before e.g. "the sun would not rise if the brāhmaṇa did not make sacrifice" (Satapatha II.3.1.5); the refrain of Rig Veda II.15.2-9 is that Indra performed his great and heroic works under the intoxication of the soma (offered by the priests in sacrifices). Rig IV.50.7-9 say that a king and others for whom the purohita offers prayers win battles, secure booty and help from gods.

It should not be supposed that the brāhmaṇas inserted these eulogies solely for the purpose of increasing their importance and tightening their hold on the other classes. If the other classes had not themselves more or less shared these ideas, no amount of iteration on the part of brāhmaṇas would have given them the influence which they as a matter of fact wielded. Their influence was a growth of centuries and they themselves were as much parts of the huge edifice of the caste system as the other *varṇas*. Besides the brāhmaṇas had no military force behind them. They could only succeed in influencing the other *varṇas* by persuasion and their own worth. The brāhmaṇas were the creators and custodians of the vast literature that had grown up, they were the guardians of the culture of ages, they were expected to shoulder the burdens of teaching and preserving the vast literature on such gifts as were voluntarily made. Though many among them did live up to the high ideals set up for their order, there must have been not a few who made as near an approach to the fulfilment of the ideal as possible. It was the greatness of these latter that led to the glorification of the whole order to which they belonged. Learning and tapas are more or less elusive and impalpable, while birth from brāhmaṇa parents was quite an apparent and palpable thing. Therefore that was seized upon by some writers as the principal reason for the respect to be given to brāhmaṇas. For centuries human societies have everywhere acquiesced in the government and control exercised by small coterie of the elite, generally the elite of birth, who have guided the destinies of their societies on traditional lines of religious and social order. It must be remembered that the smṛti works also extol the office of the king (which was generally hereditary and is so even now) to the skies. Manu (VII.4-11) propounds the theory that the king has in him the parts of such gods as Indra and that a king is a great deity in human form.

The theory of *varṇas* as conceived by Manu and other smṛtikāras was based upon the idea of the division of labour, on the idea of balancing the rival claims of various sections of the community; it laid greatest emphasis upon the duties of the *varṇas* rather than upon their rights and privileges. It raised the brāhmaṇa to the highest pinnacle of reverence, but at the same time it placed before him the ideal of not hankering after temporal power, of leading a life of comparative poverty and of making his knowledge available to the other classes for a scanty and precarious return. It made the military caste feel that they were not all-in-all, but had to look up to some other class as superior to themselves. European writers severely condemn brāhmaṇas for their greed, selfishness and constant praises of gifts to themselves. But they forget to take account of the circumstances under which the brāhmaṇas were forced to sing the praises of gifts

to them. The ideal before brāhmaṇas was to lead a life of comparative poverty; they were forbidden to follow many worldly pursuits and depended on the generosity of their patrons. They did not live in monasteries as Buddhist and Christian monks did nor were they entitled to fixed and fat salaries like the bishops in some Christian countries. They had further to bring up their own families and pupils and had themselves also to make gifts to others. In modern capitalist societies those who have brains and knowledge tend to become financiers and capitalists, all wealth is centred in their hands, they reduce most other men to mere wage-earners who are often hardly better than helots. While finding fault with the brāhmaṇa writers of over two thousand years ago for the eulogies they bestowed upon themselves, one should not forget that even in the 20th century when the pursuit of scientific studies is professed to have reached its zenith, we hear ecstatic and arrogant eulogies of the white man's burden, of the great and glorious achievements of the Nordic race and the greater and more glorious future it is destined to attain (vide the very first sentence in Spengler's 'The Decline of the West', English translation by C. F. Atkinson). The brāhmaṇas never arrogated to themselves the authority to depose kings and to hand over vast territories forever to whomsoever they liked, as Pope Alexander VI by his Bull of 1493 made over the New World to Isabella of Castille and Ferdinand of Aragon (vide Deane's 'Christian Ethics' 1930 p.160 where this astounding Bull is set out).

It has been seen already that brāhmaṇas had the special privileges of teaching, officiating as priests and accepting gifts made as a religious duty. It is desirable that a comprehensive list of all the privileges claimed by brāhmaṇas (though not always conceded as the sequel will show) should be set out once for all.

(1) The brāhmaṇa was to be guru (object of reverence) to all *varṇas* by the mere fact of birth. Āp. Dh. & (I.1.1.5) says so. Vas. Dh. S. (IV.1) says:— 'the system of four *varṇas* is distinguished by its origin and by the special features of the sacraments (each of them undergoes)' and quotes Rig X, 90.12 in support. Manu (I.31 and 94) says that the Creator produced the four *varṇas* respectively from his mouth, arms, thighs and feet, that (I.93) the brāhmaṇa is by right the master of this whole world on account of his birth from the best limb (i.e. the mouth) of the Creator, on account of his priority (in birth to the kṣatriya and others) and on account of possessing Vedic lore. Manu (X,3) uses almost the same words as Vasiṣṭha 'the brāhmaṇa is the master of the *varṇas* on account of the peculiar excellence (of his caste), on account of his superiority of origin (from the mouth of the Creator), on account of his submitting himself to discipline (or holding up Vedic lore) and on account of the eminence of the sacraments (saṃskāras) in his case . This sense of superiority was carried so far that Apastamba (1.4.14.23), Manu (11.135) and Viṣṇu Dh. S. (32.17) say that a brāhmaṇa only ten years old was to be honoured as a father by a kṣatriya 100 years old.

(2) The brāhmaṇa was to expound the duties of all other classes, to indicate to them proper conduct and their means of livelihood and they were to abide by his directions and the king was to rule in accordance with such directions (Vas. Dh. S. I.39-41, Manu VII.37, X.2). This is supported by the words of the Kāthaka-saṃhita (IX.16) and the Tai. Br. that the brāhmaṇa is indeed the supervisor over the people. The Ait. Br. (37.5) declares that where the might of kṣatriyas is under the control (or direction) of brāhmaṇas that kingdom becomes prosperous, that kingdom is full of heroes etc. This idea is somewhat similar to the teaching of Plato who held that philosophers that had undergone a special training were to rule and were to be politicians, that the government of the best (aristocracy) was the ideal system. The problem is how to find out the best. Ancient India solved it by leaving the decision of knotty points to the learned brāhmaṇas and the execution of the decisions arrived at by them to the king and the kṣatriyas.

(3) 'The king was the ruler of all, except brāhmaṇas' (Gautama XI.1.) The Mit. on Yāj. II.4 explains that these words were only laudatory of the greatness of brāhmaṇas and were not to be taken literally and that the king could punish brāhmaṇas in appropriate cases. These words of Gautama are a mere echo of certain passages like those in the Vaj. S. (IX.40) and the Sat. Br. (V.4.2.3 and IX.4.3.16), where it is said:— 'Soma is the king of us brāhmaṇas'. The idea was that brāhmaṇas had to prepare soma and offer it in sacrifices to the gods i.e. they held all wealth for Soma and owed all allegiance to Soma, while other people owed allegiance only to the king. The brāhmaṇas alone were to eat the sacrificial food and drink Soma (and kṣatriyas were to drink only a substitute for Soma). Vide Ait. Br. (chap.35 khāṇḍa 4). In the Mahābhārata, however, many kings are described as Somapās. So the practice of not allowing the kṣatriyas to drink soma was not universally accepted. Further it was probably not a privilege at all, but only indicates that Soma sacrifices had been mostly neglected by all except brāhmaṇas.

(4) 'The king should exonerate (the brāhmaṇa) in the six matters, viz. (a brāhmaṇa) should not be beaten (whipped), he should not have fetters put on him, he should not be mulcted in fines of money, he should not be driven out (of the village or country), he should not be censured, he should not be abandoned' (Gaut. VIII. 12-13.) The Mit. on Yāj. II, 4 explains that these words are not applicable to every brāhmaṇa, but only to deeply learned brāhmaṇas described in the preceding sūtras (Gaut. VIII.4-11). Haradatta adds that even a learned brāhmaṇa is treated in this way only if he commits an offence without pre-meditation but only through ignorance or oversight. As to corporal punishment for brāhmaṇa offenders, the matter stands thus. Gaut XII.43 says that there is no corporal punishment for a brāhmaṇa (even when he being a thief comes to the king confessing his guilt and asking the king to beat him with a heavy club on the head). Baud. Dh. S. (I.10.18-19) first lays down that a brāhmaṇa is to undergo no beating for any offence but allows for a brāhmaṇa guilty of the mortal sins (of brāhmaṇa-murder, incest, drinking liquor, theft of gold) the punishment of branding on the forehead with red hot iron and banishment from the country. Manu IX.237 (= MatsyaPurāṇa 227.163-164), Viṣṇu Dh. S. V.4-7 prescribe the various figures that were to be branded on the forehead of a brāhmaṇa in the case of various offences. Manu (VIII.379-380) prescribes shaving of the head for brāhmaṇa offenders where others would have had to suffer the extreme penalty of death and adds that a brāhmaṇa was not to be sentenced to death whatever offence he might have committed and that he is to be banished from the country taking with him all his possessions. Even on this the Mit. (on Yāj. II.81) observes that it applies only when it is the brāhmaṇa's first offence (i.e. he may be fined for repeating an offence). Yāj. (II.270), Nārada (sahasa, verse 10) and Saṅkha 315 prescribe branding and banishment as punishment for brāhmaṇas (particularly in fche case of theft). The brāhmaṇa was never above being fined. Manu (VIII.123) prescribes fine and banishment for a perjured brāhmaṇa witness, while Manu VIII.378 prescribes heavy fines for a brāhmaṇa guilty of rape or adultery. The Mit. on 316 Yāj. II.302 quotes a verse of Manu (not found in the extant Manusmṛti) that in the case of the brāhmaṇa corporal punishment takes the form of complete shaving of the head, he is liable to banishment from the town, he may be branded on the forehead and he may be made to ride through the town on the back of an ass (looked upon at all times as the highest form of indignity). Kaut also IV (IV.8) forbids corporal punishment for brāhmaṇas in all offences but prescribes branding on the forehead in the same way as Manu (IX.237) and also banishment and labour on mines. But Kau. makes an exception, viz. he allows a brāhmaṇa to be drowned in water if he is guilty of high treason, or of forcible entry in the king's harem or of inciting the enemies of the king etc. Kātyāyana (quoted by Viśvarupa on Yāj. II.281) prescribes death sentence even for a brāhmaṇa when the latter is guilty of the destruction of a foetus, of theft, of striking a brāhmaṇa woman with a weapon and of killing an innocent woman. The Mit. on Yāj. III.257 thinks it possible that kings sentenced brāhmaṇas to death in spite of the prohibition of corporal punishment and we have a classical

illustration in the death sentence passed on the brāhmaṇa Cārudatta by king Palaka in the *Mrcchakaṭika* (IX).

The foregoing discussion shows that the only special privilege claimed for the brāhmaṇa in the law courts of the land was freedom from death sentence or other corporal punishment like whipping, though rarely he was liable to be sentenced to death also. He was subject to the indignities of branding and being paraded on the back of an ass, to fines and banishment. These claims were very moderate as compared with the absurd lengths to which the doctrine of 'benefit of clergy' was carried in England and other western countries.<sup>34</sup> The clergyman in England was not by birth, he had to be ordained. Yet clergymen claimed that an ordained clerk, a monk or nun charged with serious offences called felonies could be tried only by an ecclesiastical court and this was conceded by the ordinary courts; this privilege was gradually extended to persons not ordained viz. to doorkeepers, readers, exorcists (all of whom merely assisted the clergy) and finally to all who could read or pretended to read a few words from the Bible. Holdsworth, Pollock and Maitland admit that the procedure in the ecclesiastical courts was little better than a farce (P and M vol. I. p.426, Holdsworth vol. III p.296).

The ecclesiastic courts never pronounced a judgment of blood, the bishop only deprived the offending clerk of orders, and relegated him to a monastery, or kept him in prison for life or a shorter period and very rarely whipping and branding were ordered. Even in the first quarter of the 20th century, European British subjects and Europeans and Americans in general could claim in British India some startling privileges when charged with criminal offences which even the brāhmaṇas of over two thousand years ago did not claim. For example, under Sec.443 of the Criminal Procedure Code of India (as it existed before 1923) they could not be tried by any Indian Magistrate (however senior and experienced) and that in serious cases like murder, even a Sessions Judge who was himself an European British subject could not sentence an European British subject to more than one year's imprisonment (Section 449).

Any European or American could claim to be tried by a mixed jury of which not less than one half had to be Europeans or Americans, while an Indian offender could not claim the privilege in his own country that not less than one half of the jury that tried him must be Indians. In England even now a peer indicted for treason or felony must be tried by his peers and not by the tribunals that try ordinary men (vide Halsbury's Laws of England, 2nd Ed. vol.25 p.46). The brāhmaṇas had to submit to trial in the ordinary courts and the smṛtis do not generally provide for trial of brāhmaṇas in special ecclesiastical courts of their own class. The only approach to this western doctrine of benefit of clergy is to be found in the Āp. Dh. S (II.5.10;14-18) where it is said that the teacher and others who have authority over a brāhmaṇa guilty of transgressions should prescribe prāyaścittas for him: if he does not abide by their orders, he should be taken to the king who should hand him over to his own purohita; the latter was to prescribe prayaścittas (penances for atonement) for brāhmaṇa offenders. If the latter did not carry out the penances then he was to break them by disciplines according to their ability except that he (the purohita) was not to prescribe corporal punishment and slavery for brāhmaṇa offenders.

(5) Most smṛtis<sup>35</sup> lay down that a srotriya (a brāhmaṇa learned in the Veda) was to be free from taxes. Certain passages of the Sat. Br. suggest that even in those times brāhmaṇas were not taxed. Some claimed this exemption for all brāhmaṇas e.g. Vas. Dh. S. (I.42-43) says that a king ruling over his subjects according to the rules of the sastra should take the sixth part of all

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<sup>34</sup> Vide Pollock and Maitland's 'History of English Law' (1895) vol. I.pp.424-440 and Holdsworth's 'History of English Law' 4th Ed.) vol. I. pp.615-616, vol. III. pp.294-302 for the history of the doctrine.

<sup>35</sup> Āp.Dh.S. II.10.26.10, Vas.Dh.S.19.23, Manu VII.133, Viṣṇu Dh.S.III.27. Manu VII.136, Manu 8.305.

wealth except from brāhmaṇas. Kaut. (II.1) requires the king to make gifts of *brahmadeya* lands to rtviks (who officiate at solemn sacrifices), teachers, purohitas, srotriyas, that will yield substantial produce and on which no fines and taxes will be levied. The reason assigned was the belief that the king shared in the religious merit accumulated by the brāhmaṇas. Vas. (I.44-46) explains:—

'(freedom from taxation is there) because he (the king) secures the sixth part of the *iṣṭāpūrta* (the merit due to sacrifices and performing charitable works of public utility) and it is declared (in a Brāhmaṇa text) that the brāhmaṇa enriches the Veda, he relieves (others) from calamities and therefore the brāhmaṇa is not a source of subsistence (i.e. should not be taxed by the king) since Soma is his king; and it is further declared that bliss awaits after death (the king who does not tax brāhmaṇas).

This sentiment is expressed even by a great poet like Kalidāsa' 'forest-dwellers give a sixth part of their tapas (merit due to austerities) to the king and that is an inexhaustible treasure '. It is further to be noted that not only *srotriyas*, but also many other persons were free from taxation. Āp.Dh.S. (II.10.26.11-17) exempts from taxation all women of the four *varṇas*, all boys before they show signs of manhood (i.e. before they attain majority), those who stay with their teachers for learning (even though they may be grown up), those engaged in austerities and devoted to right practices, a śūdra who washes the feet (of men of the three higher classes), the blind, the dumb and the diseased, those who are forbidden to possess wealth (i.e. ascetics etc.).

The Vas. Dh. S. (19.23.) exempts from taxation the king's servants, helpless persons, ascetics, minors, senile men (above 70), young men, and women who are recently delivered, Manu VIII.394 contains a similar provision. Brhat-Paraśara (chap. III, Jiv. part II p.113) says 'a brāhmaṇa engaged in agriculture had to pay nothing to anybody '. It is extremely doubtful whether in actual practice kings respected all these rules. Note 275 shows that a brāhmaṇa engaging in agriculture had to pay 1/8th of the produce just as others did. An inscription of Vikramaditya V. found near Gadag dated sake 934 (1012 A. D.) refers to taxes levied even on *upanayana*, marriages and vedic sacrifices (E. I. vol. XX. pp.64 and 70). The *sāntiparva* (76.2-10) contains an interesting disquisition on the taxation of brāhmaṇas. Those brāhmaṇas who have mastered all the lores and who treat all equally well are called *brahmasama*. Those brāhmaṇas who have studied the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda and Sama Veda and who stick to the peculiar duties of their class are styled *devasama* (verses 2 and 3). A religious king should make those who are not srotriyas and who do not kindle the sacred fires render taxes and forced labour (verse 5). Then certain brāhmaṇas are described as *kṣatrasama* and *vaiśyasama*. A king whose treasury is empty should levy taxes from all brāhmaṇas except those that are described as *brahmasama* and *devasama*.

Even if these rules were honoured, the claim was not very excessive. The brāhmaṇas who ministered to the religious wants of the people and who were to conserve the religious literature and spiritual inheritance of the country and to teach without the liberty to make a contract for fees were never entitled to raise taxes from the people for their benefit. According to the practice of the Roman Catholic Church:— 'the clergy owed no allegiance to the secular power; they were not under the laws of the land, they paid no taxes to the State. All benefices were put under the Holy See and the Roman chancery compiled a tariff of prices for which each might be bought'. It would take too long to enumerate the other exactions of the same kind the Tithes, Annates, Procurations, Subsidies and Dispensations.<sup>36</sup>

(6) In the matter of treasure trove the brāhmaṇa was more favourably treated than members of other classes. If a treasure was found by a learned brāhmaṇa he was entitled to keep the whole

<sup>36</sup> Vide Deane in 'Christian Ethics' chap. IV pp.160-161 for the enormous greed of the Catholic Church.

of it; in other cases the treasure belonged to the king, except a sixth part which was given to the finder if he honestly informed the king about the finding of the treasure. If a king himself found buried treasure, he was to distribute half of it among brāhmaṇas and was to keep for himself the other half.<sup>37</sup>

(7) The general rule about the property of one dying heir less is that it escheats to the king, but there was an exception in the case of an heirless brāhmaṇa. Such property was to be distributed among srotriyas or brāhmaṇas.<sup>38</sup>

(8) The rule of the road was in favour of brāhmaṇas even as against the king. If on a road there was a crowd or obstruction, precedence was to be given to the cartman, to a very old man, to one suffering from a disease, to a woman, to a snataka, to the king; but a king was to give precedence to a srotriya — Gaut. VI.21-22. Apastamba adds that one carrying a burden should be given precedence and all who desire their own welfare should give precedence to fools, *patita*, the intoxicated and lunatics and a person of a lower *varṇa* should give precedence to one of a higher *varṇa*. The Mahābhārata (Vanaparva 133.1) adds the blind and the deaf, (Anusasana 104.25-26) cows, a pregnant woman and a weak man. Vas. Dh. S. (13.58-60) enumerates the same persons, but says that the snataka (one who has just returned from his stay with his guru) has precedence over the king and that the bride has precedence over all when being taken in a procession (to the house of the bridegroom). Manu II.138-139 has the same list and prefers the snataka to the king; Saṅkha (quoted in the Mit. on Yāj I.117) mentions the view of some that the king has precedence over the brāhmaṇa, but disapproves of it.<sup>39</sup> The MarkandeyaPurāṇa (34.39-41) has a long list which includes a prostitute and one who is an enemy. The Viṣṇu Dh. S. (V.91) prescribes a fine of 25 karsapanas for him who does not give precedence on the road to one who deserves it.

It will be conceded by every one that the above rules (except the one about the precedence of brāhmaṇas over even the king) are quite reasonable and are informed by a spirit of humanity and chivalry. The rule about learned brāhmaṇas probably owes its origin to the emphasis laid on the importance of the diffusion of learning (which was not the direct concern of the state in those days, but of the brāhmaṇas) and the superiority of knowledge over mere brute force or military achievements.

(9) The person of the brāhmaṇa was regarded as very sacred from ancient times and so *brahma-hatya* (killing a brāhmaṇa) was looked upon as the greatest sin. The Tai. S. m (V.3.12.1-2) says that he who performs the horse-sacrifice goes beyond (i.e.gets rid of) all sins, even the sin of brāhmaṇa murder. The Tai. S. II.5.1.1 narrates how Indra incurred the sin of brahmahātya by killing Viśvarūpa and how all beings traduced him as '*brahma-han*'. In the Sat. Br. XIII.3.1.1 we read (S. B. E. vol.44 p.328)

‘ thereby the gods redeem all sin, yea, even the slaying of a brāhmaṇa they thereby redeem’ and

‘whosoever kills a human brāhmaṇa here he forsooth is deemed guilty, how much more so who strikes him (Soma), for Soma is god ‘ (S. B. E. vol.26 p.243).

The Chāṇḍogya Up. V.10.9 quotes a verse declaring brāhmaṇa murder as one of the five mortal sins (mahāpatakas). Gauḥ. (21.1) places the murderer of a brāhmaṇa at the head of his list of *patitas* (persons guilty of mortal sins) Vas. Dh. S. (I 20) uses the word *bhrūna-hatyā*<sup>40</sup> Manu

<sup>37</sup> Vide Gautama' (X.43-45), Vas Dh. S. (III.13-14), Manu (VIII.37-38), Yaj. II.34-35, Viṣṇu Dh. S. (III.56-64), Nārada (asvainivikraya verses 7-8).

<sup>38</sup> Vide Gautama 28.39-40, Vas. Dh.S.17.84-87, Baud.Dh.S. I.5.118-122, Manu IX.188-189, Viṣṇu Dh. S.17.13-14, Saṅkha.

<sup>39</sup> Vide Brahma-Purāṇa 113.39 for a list.

<sup>40</sup> The word *bhrūna* has several meanings. Baud. Gr. (I.4.8) says that *bhrūna* is one who knows the whole Vedic lore of his sākha up to sūtra and pravacana (*bhāṣya* ?); Vaik. (I.1) says that *bhrūna* is a brāhmaṇa learned in the Veda who has performed soma sacrifices.

XL 54, Viṣṇu Dh. S.35.1, Yāj. III.227 enumerate five *mahāpatakas* of which brāhmaṇa-murder is one. Manu VIII.381 declares that there is no worse sin in the world than brāhmaṇa-murder.

A question that very much exercised the minds of all smṛtikāras and writers of digests was whether a brāhmaṇa who was himself guilty of violence or serious offences could be killed in self-defence by one attacked. The dicta of the smṛtis are somewhat conflicting. Manu IV.162 lays down a general rule prohibiting *himsa* (death or injury) of one's teacher (of Veda), expounder (of the meaning of the Veda), one's parents, one's other teachers (or elders), brāhmaṇas, cows and all persons engaged in austerities. Manu XL 89 lays down that there is no expiation (*prayaścitta*) that will wipe off the sin of intentionally killing a brāhmaṇa. But Manu himself<sup>41</sup> says 'one may surely kill without hesitation a man who comes down upon one as an *ātatāyin* (a desperate character or violent man<sup>42</sup>), whether he be a teacher, a child or an old man or a learned brāhmaṇa. In killing an *ātatāyin*, the killer incurs no sin (or fault), whether he kills him in the presence of people or alone; (in such a case) wrath meets wrath'. Vas. Dh. S. (III.15-18) expressly says by killing an *ātatāyin* they say the killer incurs no sin whatever ' and quotes three verses

'An incendiary, a poisoner, one armed with a weapon, a robber, one who wrests a field or carries away one's wife these six are called *ātatāyin*. When an *ātatāyin* comes (to attack) with the desire to kill (or harm), one may kill him even though he be a complete master of Vedānta; by so doing one does not become a brāhmaṇa murderer. If a person kills one who has studied the Veda and who is born of a good family, because the latter is an *ātatāyin*, he does not thereby become a brāhmaṇa-murderer as in that case fury meets fury.'

In the *śāntiparva* (34, 17 and 19) m we have similar verses ' If a brāhmaṇa approaches wielding a weapon in a battle and desirous of killing a person, the latter may kill him even if the former be a complete master of the Veda. If a person kills a brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* who has swerved from right conduct, he does not thereby ..... fury'. Udyoga parva (178.51-52) says that, if a man kills in a battle a brāhmaṇa who fights like a *ṣatriya*, it is a settled rule that he does not incur the sin of brāhmaṇa-murder. The Viṣṇu Dh. S. (V.191-192) speaks of seven persons as *ātatāyin* viz. 'one who has a weapon ready to strike, one who is about to set fire or administer poison, one who has raised his hand to give a curse, who sets about to kill by the magic rites mentioned in the AtharvaVeda<sup>43</sup> one who is a back-biter and informs the king, one who violates or assaults another's wife.' Sumantu as quoted by the Mit. (on Yāj. II.21) and by Aparārka (p.1043) "says 'there is no sin in killing an *ātatāyin* except a cow or a brāhmaṇa'. SS9 This implies that a brāhmaṇa even if an *ātatāyin* should not be killed, but if he be killed sin is incurred. Kātyāyana (quoted in the Sm. C. and other digests) declares that one should not kill a brāhmaṇa who is eminent by reason of his tapas, Vedic study and birth, even though he be an *ātatāyin*; Bhṛgu allows killing when the offender is of a lower caste than that of brāhmaṇa. Brhaspati also says that he who would not kill a brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* deserving to be killed for his violence would obtain the merit of an Aśvamedha sacrifice.

Commentators and writers of digests differ in their interpretations. Viśvarupa (on Yāj. III.222) remarks that he is guilty of brāhmaṇa-murder who kills a brāhmaṇa except in battle or except when the latter is an *ātatāyin*, or who kills a brāhmaṇa (not an *ātatāyin* nor fighting) on his own account without being employed by another or who brings about the death of such a brāhmaṇa

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Gaut.21.9 uses the word in the sense of garbha (foetus), while in Gaut.17.9 *bhrūna -ha* is equal to *brahma-ha*. Both Baud. Dh. S. I.5.94 and Vas. Dh. S. II.42 quote a verse where *bhrūnaha* means *brahmahā*, while Vas. Dh.8.20.23 gives two meanings to it.

<sup>41</sup> (VIII.350-351= Viṣṇu Dh. S. V.189-190 =MatsyaPurāṇa 227.115-117 = Vrddha-Harita IX.349-350)

<sup>42</sup> *Ātatāyin* literally means 'one who goes with his bow strung (i.e. ready to kill or fight). Siva is called *ātatāyin* in Vaj. S.16.18 and Kāṭhaka-samhita 17.12.

<sup>43</sup> e.g. such sūktas as 1.19, II.19, III.1-2, VII.108.

by hiring another to perpetrate the murder for money. He further adds that the man who kills a brāhmaṇa at the instigation of another for money is not guilty of the sin of brāhmaṇa-murder, but it is the instigator who is so guilty on the analogy of the rule that the merit or fruit of a sacrifice belongs to him on whose behalf the rtviks perform it. The Mit.3 43 on Yāj. (II.21) says that the real purport of Manu VIII.350-351 is not to ordain that a brāhmaṇa must be killed if he is an *ātatāyin*, but those two verses are only an *arthavada* (laudatory or recommendatory dicta), the real meaning being that even a guru and a brāhmaṇa who are most highly honoured and who are not fit to be killed at all, may have to be killed if *ātatāyin* (then what of others?). The final conclusion of the Mit. is that if a brāhmaṇa who is an *ātatāyin* is being opposed in self-defence without any desire to kill him and if he dies through mistake or inattention, then the killer incurs no punishment at the hand of the king and has to undergo a slight *prayaścitta* i.e. there is really a prohibition to kill an *ātatāyin* brāhmaṇa and verses like Manu VIII.351 refer to an *ātatāyin* who is not a brāhmaṇa.

Kulluka explains Manu VIII.350 as meaning that 'a guru or a brāhmaṇa or others coming as *ātatāyin* may be killed when it is impossible to save oneself even by fleeing from them'. Aparārka is of opinion that where an *ātatāyin* brāhmaṇa cannot be prevented from his wicked intent except by killing him, there only the śāstras allow the killing of a brāhmaṇa but where it is possible to ward him off by a mere blow (i.e. without actually killing him) there would be the sin of brāhmaṇa-murder if he were actually killed. The Sm.C. in a long note appears to hold that an *ātatāyin* brāhmaṇa rushing upon a man to kill him may be killed by the person attacked (there is no sin and no punishment nor penance for it), that a brāhmaṇa *ātatāyin* (who does not come to kill but) who only siezes one's fields or wife should not be killed (but lesser harm may be done to him with impunity) and that kṣatriyas and others if *ātatāyin* may be killed outright.

The Vyavahara-Mayukha adds a rider that, on account of the prescription contained in the section on *kalivarjya* (actions forbidden in the Kali age) viz. 'the killing in a properly conducted fight of brāhmaṇas that are *ātatāyin* ' (is forbidden in Kali), an *ātatāyin* brāhmaṇa even when about to kill a person should not be killed by that person in the Kali age, that such a brāhmaṇa was allowed to be killed in former ages, that an *ātatāyin* brāhmaṇa other than one bent upon killing another was not be killed in all ages. It will have been noticed how the sacredness of the brāhmaṇa's person went on increasing in later ages.

(10) Even threatening a brāhmaṇa with assault, or striking him or drawing blood from his body drew the severest condemnation from very ancient times. The Tai.S. (II.6.10.1-2) contains these words:—

'He who threatens a brāhmaṇa should be fined a hundred, he who strikes a brāhmaṇa should be fined a thousand, he who draws blood would not reach (or find) the abode of pitṛs for as many years as the dust particles that may be made into a paste by the quantity of blood drawn. Therefore one should not threaten a brāhmaṇa with assault, nor strike him nor draw his blood'.

(11) For certain offences a brāhmaṇa received lesser punishment than members of other classes. For example, Gaut. Says:—

'if a kṣatriya reviled a brāhmaṇa the fine was one hundred (karsapanas), if a vaiśya did so it was 150; but if a brāhmaṇa reviled a kṣatriya the fine was 50; if he reviled a vaiśya it was only 25, and if a brāhmaṇa reviled a śūdra he was not to be fined.'

Vide Manu VIII.267-268 (but Manu prescribes a fine of twelve for a brāhmaṇa reviling a Śūdra) which are the same as Nārada (vāk-pāruṣya verses 15-16), Yāj. II.206-207. But in the case of certain crimes the brāhmaṇa was to receive heavier punishment. For example, in the case of



theft, if a Śūdra thief was fined eight, a vaiśya 16 and a kṣatriya 32, a brāhmaṇa was fined 64, 100 or 128.<sup>44</sup>

(12) According to Gaut. S5 (XIII.4) a brāhmaṇa could not be cited as a witness by a litigant who was not a brāhmaṇa and the king would not summon him, provided he (the brāhmaṇa) was not an attesting witness on a document. Nārada (rnodāna verse 158) lays down that 'śrotriyas, those engaged in austerities, old men, those who have become ascetics, are not to be witnesses because the authoritative texts so prescribe but there is no cause assigned for this rule.' So Nārada's view was that a srotriya could never be cited as a witness by any litigant (even by a brāhmaṇa litigant). Gaut. impliedly shows that even a śrotriya could be cited as a witness by a brāhmaṇa. Manu VIII.65, Viṣṇu Dh. S. VIII.2 also forbid citing a śrotriya as a witness.

(13) Only certain brāhmaṇas were to be invited for dinner in sraddhas and in rites for gods.<sup>45</sup>

(14) Certain sacrifices could be performed only by brāhmaṇas. For example, the Sautramaṇī sacrifice and the sacrifices called *sattras* could be performed only by brāhmaṇas. But it has to be noted that the Rājasuya sacrifice could be performed only by kṣatriyas and that according to Jaimini VI.6.24-26 even brāhmaṇas of Bhṛgu, Sunaka and Vasiṣṭha gotras could not perform a *sattra*.

(15) The periods of mourning were less in the case of brāhmaṇas. Gaut.14.1-4 prescribes ten days of mourning for brāhmaṇas, eleven for kṣatriyas, twelve for vaiśyas and a month for śūdras.<sup>46</sup> Later on ten days' mourning came to be prescribed for all castes.<sup>47</sup>

Several other lesser privileges are enumerated by Nārada (prakīrnaka, verses 35-39). The king shall show his face in the morning before brāhmaṇas first of all and shall salute them all. When nine or seven persons (of different rank) meet, they shall first make room for the brāhmaṇa to pass by. Further privileges assigned to brāhmaṇas are:— free access to the houses of other people for the purpose of begging alms; the right to collect fuel, flowers, water and the like without its being regarded as a theft and to converse with other men's wives without being restrained (in such conversation) by others; and the right to cross rivers without paying any fare for the ferry-boat and to be conveyed (to the other bank) before other people. When engaged in trading and using a ferry boat, they shall have to pay no toll, A brāhmaṇa who is engaged in travelling, who is tired and has nothing to eat, commits no wrong by taking two canes of sugar or two esculent roots. There were some disabilities also in the case of brāhmaṇas which have been indicated in the above discussion (viz. as to avocations, selling articles etc.).

It may be convenient to bring together the disabilities of the Śūdra:

(1) He was not allowed to study the Veda. Many of the smṛtikāras and writers of digests quote several Vedic passages on this point. A śruti text reads:—

'(The Creator) created the brāhmaṇa with Gāyatrī (metre), the Rājanya with Tristubh, the vaiśya with Jagatī, but he did not create the śūdra with any metre; therefore the śūdra is known to be unfit for the saṃskāra (of upanayana) '.

The study of the Veda follows after Upanayana and the Veda speaks of the Upanayana of only three classes:—

'one should perform upanayana for a brahmana in spring, for a rajanya in summer and in autumn for a vaiśya.'

<sup>44</sup> Vide Gaut.21.12-14 and Manu VIII.337-338.

<sup>45</sup> Vide Gaut.15.5 and 9, Āp. Dh. S. II.7.17.4, Manu III.124 and 128, Yaj. I.217, 219, 221.

<sup>46</sup> Vide Vas. Dh. S. IV.27-30, Viṣṇu Dh. S.22.1-4, Manu V.83, Yaj. III.22

<sup>47</sup> *Sarveṣam eva varṇānām sūtaka mṛtake tathā | Daśāhāccudhdir eteṣām iti śātātap'bravīt* || Āṅgīrasa in Mit. on Yāj II.22

Not only was the śūdra not to study the Veda, but Veda study was not to be carried on in his presence (vide note 75 above). This attitude need not cause wonder. The sacred Vedic literature was largely created and preserved entirely by the brāhmaṇas (the kṣatriyas contributing if at all a very small share in that task). If the brāhmaṇas desired to keep their sacred treasure for the twice born classes in these circumstances, it is understandable and for those ages even excusable. In the 20th century there are vast majorities who are not allowed by small minorities of imperialistic and capitalistic tendencies to control the just and equitable distribution of the material goods produced mostly by the labour and co-operation of those majorities and doctrines are being openly professed that certain races alone should be imparted higher and scientific knowledge while other so-called inferior races should be only hewers of wood and drawers of water.

There are however faint traces that in ancient times this prohibition of Veda study was not so absolute and universal as the smṛtis make it. In the Chāṇḍogya Upanisad IV.1-2, we have the story of Janaśruti Pautrayana and Raikva where the latter addresses Janaśruti as śūdra and imparts to him the *Samvarga* (absorption) vidyā? It appears that Janaśruti was a Śūdra to whom the vidyā embodied in the Chāṇḍogya (which is also Veda) was imparted. It is no doubt true that in the Vedānta-sūtra (I.3.34) the word Śūdra is explained not as referring to the class, but as meaning that sorrow (*suc*) arose in Janaśruti on hearing the contemptuous talk of the flamingoes about himself and he was overcome (from *dru*) by that (i.e. śūdra is derived from *suc* and *dru*). But this far-fetched explanation had to be given because of the practice current in the times of the Vedānta-sūtras that the Śūdra is not entitled to study the Veda.

Gaut. XII.4 went so far as to prescribe:—

‘if the śūdra intentionally listens for committing to memory the Veda, then his ears should be filled with (molten) lead and lac; if he utters the Veda, then his tongue may be cut off; if he has mastered the Veda his body should be hacked’

Though the śūdra could not study the Veda, he was not debarred from hearing the itihāsas (like the Mahābhārata) and the Purāṇas. The Mahābhārata (śānti 328.49) expressly says that the four *varṇas* should hear the Mahābhārata through a brāhmaṇa as reader. The Bhagavata-Purāṇa says that as the three Vedas cannot be learnt by women, śūdras and brāhmaṇas (who are so only by birth), the sage (Vyāsa) composed the story of the Bharata out of compassion for them. The Śūdrakamalākāra m (pp.13-14) cites several passages from the Purāṇas to the effect that the śūdra could not study the smṛtis and purāṇas by himself. Even Manu II.16 seems to suggest that only the *dvijātis* had the privilege to listen to the Manusmṛti (and not śūdras). The only privilege conceded by the Śūdrakāmalākara to the śūdra is that he can acquire knowledge by listening to the Purāṇas read by a brāhmaṇa (p.17); the Kalpataru and other works allowed the śūdra to read and repeat Purāṇa mantras. Śāṅkarācārya on Vedāntasūtra (I.3.38) quotes śānti 328.49 and says that the śūdra has no *adhikāra* (eligibility) for brahmavidyā based upon a study of the Veda, but that a śūdra can attain spiritual development (just as Vidura and Dharma vyadha mentioned in the Mahābhārata did) and that he may attain to mokṣa, the fruit of correct knowledge. In certain digests we find a smṛti quotation to the effect that śūdras are Vājasaneyins. This is explained as meaning that the śūdra should follow the procedure prescribed in the gṛhyasūtra of the Vajasaneya Śākha and a brāhmaṇa should repeat the mantra for him. This is probably based on the Harivamsa (Bhaviṣyat-parva, chap. III.13) "all will expound brahma; all will be Vājasaneyins; when the yuga comes to a close śūdras will make use of the word 'bhoh' in address" (*sarve brahma vadiṣyanti sarve Vājasaneyinaḥ*).

(2) The śūdras were not to consecrate sacred fires and to perform the solemn Vedic sacrifices. Vide note 73 above. Jaimini (I.3.25-38) elaborately discusses this question and arrives at the conclusion that the śūdra cannot consecrate the three sacred fires and so cannot perform Vedic

rites. Among the reasons given are that in several Vedic passages only the three higher classes are referred to in the case of the consecration of fires, about the samans to be sung, about the food to be taken when observing vrata. It is however interesting to note that at least one ancient teacher (Bādari) was found who advocated that even śūdras could perform Vedic sacrifices. The Bhāradvāja Śrauta sūtra (V.2.8) states the opinion of some that the śūdra can consecrate the three sacred Vedic fires. The Kātyāyana śrauta-sūtra (I.4.5) prescribes that all can perform Vedic rites except those who are deficient in a limb, who are not learned in the Veda, who are impotent and śūdras; but the commentary thereon states by way of *pūrva-pakṣa* that there are certain Vedic texts which lead to the inference that the Śūdra had the *adhikāra* for Vedic rites e.g. in Sat.Br. I.1.4.12 (S. B. E. vol. XII. p.28) it is said with reference to the Haviskrt call "Now there are four different forms of this call, viz. 'Come hither' (*ehi*) in the case of a brāhmaṇa; 'approach' (*āgāhi*) and 'hasten hither' (*adrava*) in the case of a vaiśya and a member of the military caste and 'run hither' (*ādrava*) in that of a śūdra,"

Similarly in the Somayaga in place of the *payovrata* (vow to drink milk only) *mastu* (whey) is prescribed for śūdra (indicating thereby that the śūdra could perform Somayaga) and in Sat. Br. (XIII 8.3.11, S. B. E. vol.44, p.435) with reference to sepulchral mounds it is said:

'for the kṣatriya he may make as high as a man with up stretched arms, for a brāhmaṇa reaching up to the mouth, for a woman up to the hips, for a vaiśya up to the thighs, for a śūdra up to the knee '.

The commentary on the Kātyāyana Śrauta I.1.6 says that the word 'Śūdra' here stands for rathakāra because (acc. to Yāj, I.91) his mother's mother is a śūdra woman.

Though the śūdra was not authorized to perform Vedic rites, he was entitled to perform what is called *pūrta-dharma* i.e. the building of wells, tanks, temples, parks and distribution of food as works of charity and gifts on such occasions as eclipses and the Sun's passage from one zodiacal sign into another and on the 12th and other tithis. He was allowed to perform the five daily sacrifices called Mahāyajnas in the ordinary fire, he could perform Sraddha, he was to think of the devatas and utter loudly the word 'namah' which was to be the only mantra in his case (i.e. he was not to say 'Agnaye svāhā' but to think of Agni and say 'namah'<sup>48</sup>.

Manu X.127 prescribes that all religious rites for the śūdra are without (Vedic) mantras. According to some the Śūdra could also have what is called Vaivahika fire (i.e. fire kindled at the time of marriage) in Manu III 67 and Yāj. I.97, but Medhatithi (on the same verse), the Mit. (on Yāj, I.121), the Madānapārijāta (p.231) and other works say that he should offer oblations in the ordinary fire and that there is no Vaivahika fire for the śūdra. All persons including the Śūdras and even *caṇḍalas* were authorized to repeat the Rama-mantra of 13 letters (*Srī Rama jaya Rama jaya Rama*) and the Siva mantra of five letters (*namaḥ Sivaya*), while *dvijātis* could repeat the Siva mantra of six letters (*Om namaḥ Sivaya*).<sup>49</sup>

(3) As to Saṃskāras, there is some apparent conflict among the authorities. Manu X.126 says:—

'The śūdra incurs no sin (by eating forbidden articles like onions and garlic or alcohol), he is not fit for saṃskāras, he has no *adhikāra* for (authority to perform) dharma nor is he forbidden from performing dharma.'

and in IV.80 (which is the same as Vas. Dh. S.18.14 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.71.48-52) we see

<sup>48</sup> The Viṣṇu Dh.S.21.20 says about sapindikaraṇa śrāddha that it may be performed for śūdras on the 12th day (from death) without mantras

<sup>49</sup> Vide Śūdrakāmalakara pp.30-31, where passages of Varaha, Vamana and Bhavisya Purāṇas are cited to show that śūdras are entitled to learn and repeat mantras of Viṣṇu from the Pañcaratra texts and of Siva, the Sun, Sakti and Vinayaka. The Varaha-Purāṇa (128.22-31) describes the initiation (dīkṣa) of a Śūdra as a devotee of Viṣṇu (as a bhagavata).

'one should not give advice to a śūdra, nor give him leavings of food nor of sacrificial oblations, one should not impart religious instruction to him nor ask him to perform vratas'.

Laghuvīṣṇu (1.15) contains the dictum that the Śūdra is devoid of any saṃskāra. The Mit. on Yāj. III.262 explains the words of Manu IV.80 about vratas in the case of śūdras as applicable only to those śūdras who are not in attendance upon members of the three higher castes and establishes that śūdras can perform vratas (but without homa and muttering of mantras). Aparārka on the same verse (Manu IV.80) explains that the śūdra cannot perform vratas in person, but only through the medium of a brāhmana. The Śūdra-kāmalakara (p.38) holds that śūdras are entitled to perform vratas, fasts, mahādānas and prayasācittas, but without homa and japa. Manu X.127 allows religious śūdras to perform all religious acts which *dvijātis* perform, provided they do not use Vedic mantras. On the other hand Sankha (as quoted by Viśvarūpa on Yāj. I.13) opines that saṃskaras may be performed for śūdras but without Vedic mantras. Veda-Vyasa (I.17) prescribes that ten saṃskāras (viz. *garbhadhāna*, *pumsavana*, *sīmantonayana*, *jātakarma*, *nāmakarana*, *niskramana*, *anna-prāśana*, *caula*, *karnavedha* and *vivāha*) can be performed in the case of śūdras, but without Vedic mantras. Haradatta (on Gautama X.51) quotes a ḡhyakāra to the effect that even in the case of the śūdra the rites of *niseka*, *pumsavana*, *sīmantonayana*, *jatakarma*, *namakarana*, *annaprasana* and *caula* are allowed but without Vedic mantras. When Manu prescribes (II.32) that the śūdra should be given a name connected with service, he indicates that the śūdra could perform the ceremony of namakarana. So when Manu (IV.80) states that he deserves no saṃskāra, what he means is that no saṃskāra with Vedic mantras was to be performed in his case.

Medhatithi on Manu IV.80 says that the prohibition to give advice and impart instruction in dharma applies only when these are done for making one's livelihood, but if a śūdra is a friend of the family of a brāhmaṇa friendly advice or instruction can be given.<sup>50</sup>

(4) Liability to higher punishment for certain offences. If a Śūdra committed adultery with a woman of the higher castes, Gaut. (XII.1-2)<sup>51</sup> prescribed the cutting off of his penis and forfeiture of all his property and if he was guilty of this offence when entrusted with the duty of protecting her, he was to suffer death in addition. Vas. Dh. S.21.1, Manu VIII.366 prescribe death in the case of a śūdra having intercourse with a brāhmaṇa woman whether she was willing or unwilling, On the other hand, if a brāhmaṇa committed rape on a brāhmaṇa woman he was fined a thousand and five hundred if he was guilty of adultery with her (Manu VIII, 378) and if a brāhmana had intercourse with a kṣatriya, vaiśya or śūdra woman, who was not guarded, he was fined five hundred (Manu VIII.385). Similarly in the case of *Vāk-paruśya* (slander and libel) if a śūdra reviled a brāhmaṇa he received corporal punishment or his tongue was cut off (Manu VIII.270), but if a kṣatriya or vaiśya did so they were respectively fined 100 or 150 (Manu VIII.267) and if a brāhmaṇa reviled a śūdra, the brāhmaṇa was fined only 12 (Manu VIII.268) or nothing (acc. to Gaut. XII.10). In the case of theft, how ever, the śūdra was fined much less.

(5) In the matter of the period for impurity on death or birth the śūdra was held to be impure for a month, while a brāhmaṇa had to observe ten days' period only.

<sup>50</sup> Vide Śūdrakāmalakara p.47 for several views about the saṃskāras allowed to śūdras.

<sup>51</sup> In parts of America the penalty for an attempt to commit a rape on a white woman is burning alive, but only if the offender has a black skin. As to Rome vide Westermarck's 'The Origin and Development of moral Ideas' (1912) vol. I. p.433 "from the beginning of Empire the citizens were divided into privileged classes and commonalty *uterque ordo* and *pleba* and whilst a commoner who was guilty of murder was punished with death, a murderer belonging to the privileged classes was generally punished with deportation only."

(6) A śūdra could not be a judge or propound what dharma was. Manu (VIII.9) and Yāj. I.3 lay down that when the king does not himself look into the litigation of people owing to pressure of other business, he should appoint a learned brāhmaṇa as a judge. Manu (VIII.20) further says that a king may appoint as his judge even a brāhmaṇa who is so by birth only (i.e. who does not perform the peculiar duties of brāhmaṇas), but never a śūdra. Katyāyana (as quoted in the Mit. on Yāj. I.3) says that when a brāhmaṇa is not available (as a judge) the king may appoint as judge a kṣatriya or a vaiśya who is proficient in Dharma-śāstra, but he should carefully avoid appointing a śūdra as judge.

(7) A brāhmaṇa was not allowed to receive gifts from a śūdra except under great restrictions.

(8) A brāhmaṇa could take food at the houses of members of the three classes who performed the duties prescribed for them by the sastras (according to Gaut.), but he could not take food from a śūdra except when the śūdra was his own cowherd, tilled his field or was a hereditary friend of the family, or his own barber or his dāsa.<sup>52</sup>

Āp. Dh. S. I.5.16.22 says 'that food which is brought by an impure śūdra should not be eaten by a brāhmaṇa;' but Apastamba allows śūdras to be cooks in brāhmaṇa households provided they were supervised by a member of the three higher classes and observed certain hygienic rules about paring nails, the cutting of hair. Manu IV.211 forbade in general the food of a śūdra to a brāhmaṇa and by IV.223 he laid down that a learned brāhmaṇa should not take cooked food from a śūdra who did not perform sraddha and other daily rites (mahā-yajñas) but that he may take from such a śūdra uncooked grain for one night, if he cannot get food from anywhere else. Baud. Dh. S. (II.2.1) requires a brāhmaṇa to avoid the food of *vṛśalas* (śūdras). Gradually rules about taking food from śūdras became stricter. The Saṅkha-smṛti (13.4) remarks that brāhmaṇas fattened on the food given by śūdras are *Pankti-duṣaka*. Parasara XI.13 ordains that a brāhmaṇa may take from a śūdra ghee, oil, milk, molasses and food fried in oil or ghee, but should eat it on a river bank and not in the śūdra's house and that this permission is meant to apply only when the brāhmaṇa is tired by travelling and no food from a member of another class is available. Haradatta on Gaut. XVII.6 remarks that a brāhmaṇa could take food from a Śūdra who was a cowherd etc. only in the case of very extreme calamities. Aparārka also (p.244 on Yāj. I.168) says the same. In the *kalivarjya* (actions forbidden in the kali age) the old practice of eating the food of cowherds, barber etc. was forbidden.

(9) The śūdra gradually came to be so much looked down upon that he could not touch a brāhmaṇa, though at one time he could be a cook in a brāhmaṇa household and a brāhmaṇa could eat food from his house. In the Anusāsana-parva (59.33) it is said:—

'a brāhmaṇa should be served by a śūdra from a distance like blazing fire while he may be waited upon by a kṣatriya or vaiśya after touching him.'

Aparārka (p.1196) quotes two smṛti texts:—

'a brāhmaṇa on touching a śūdra or niṣāda becomes pure by ācāmana (ceremonial sipping of water); on touching persons lower than these, he becomes pure by bathing, pranayama and the strength of tapas on seeing a ram, a cock, a crow, a dog, a śūdra and an antyavasāyin (an antyaja), one should stop the rite that is being performed and on touching them one should take a bath'.

On this Aparārka explains that if a man who touched a Śūdra cannot bathe then he may resort to sipping water, but if able he must take a bath or that on touching a sat-śūdra one may have recourse to ācamana and on touching an asat-śūdra one must take a bath.

We find from the Gṛhya-sūtras that in Madhuparka offered to a snātaka the feet of the guest (even if he was a brāhmaṇa) were washed by a śūdra male or female. So there could have been no ban against a śūdra touching a brāhmaṇa then. The Āp. Dh. S. (II.3.6.9-10) says that two śūdras should wash the feet of a guest, according to some teachers (in the case of a householder who has several dāsas), while Apastamba himself says that one śūdra should wash the guest's feet and another should sprinkle him with water, 281

(10) As the śūdra could not be initiated into Vedic study, the only asrama out of the four that he was entitled to was that of the householder. In the Anuśāsanaparva (165.10) we read:— 'I am a śūdra and so I have no right to resort to the four āśramas'. In the śāntiparva (63.12-14) it is said:—

'in the case of a śūdra who performs service (of the higher classes), who has done his duty, who has raised offspring, who has only a short span of life left or is reduced to the 10th stage (i.e. is above 90 years of age), the fruits of all āśramas are laid down (as obtained by him) except of the fourth.'

Medhatithi on Manu VI.97 explains these words as meaning that the śūdra by serving brāhmaṇas and procreating offspring as a house-holder acquires the merit of all āśramas except mokṣa which is the reward of the proper observance of the duties of the fourth asrama.

(11) The life of a śūdra was esteemed rather low. Yāj. III.236 and Manu XL 66 include the killing of a woman, a śūdra, a vaiśya and a kṣatriya among upapatakas; but the prayaścittas and gifts prescribed for killing these show that the life of the śūdra was not worth much. On killing a kṣatriya, the prāyaścitta prescribed was brahmacārya for six years, gift of 1000 cows and a bull; for killing a vaiśya, brahmacārya for three years and gift of 100 cows and a bull; for killing a śūdra brahmacārya for one year, gift of 10 cows and a bull.<sup>53</sup> Āp.Dh.S. (I.9.25.14-1.9.26.1) says that on killing a crow, a chameleon, a peacock, a cakravaka, flamingo, bhāsa, a frog, ichneumon, musk-rat, a dog, a cow and draught ox the prayaścitta is the same as that for killing a śūdra. Manu (XL 131) says 'on killing a cat, an ichneumon, a frog, a dog, iguana, owl and crow, the prāyaścitta is the same as that for killing a śūdra.'<sup>54</sup>

If the śūdra laboured under certain grave disabilities, he had certain compensating advantages. He could follow almost any profession except; the few specially reserved for brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas. Even as to the latter many śūdras became kings and Kaut, in his *Artha-sastra* (IX.2) speaks of armies of śūdra. The śūdra was free from the round of countless daily rites. He was compelled to undergo no samskāra (except marriage), he could indulge in any kind of food and drink wine, he had to undergo no penances for lapses from the rules of the sastras, he had to observe no restrictions of gotra and pravara in marriage.

Those western writers who turn up their nose at the position of the śūdras in ancient and medieval India conveniently forget the abject conditions and inhuman laws under which their own serfs lived<sup>55</sup> and what atrocious crimes were perpetrated by their people in the institution of slavery and in their dealings with the Red Indians and other 'backward' coloured races; how nations of Europe out of false pride of race have passed in the 20th century laws prohibiting marriages between the so-called Āryans and non-Āryans and preventing the latter from holding state offices and carrying on several occupations and how discrimination is made against

<sup>53</sup> Gaut. XXII.14-16, Manu XI, 126-130, Yaj III.266-267

<sup>54</sup> Those who are familiar with the cases decided in India in which Indian servants or coolies were kicked by European employers and died as a result and in which the offenders were either acquitted or let off on a small fine (on the ground that the deceased had an enlarged spleen) need not feel surprised at the above statement of affairs in India over two thousand years ago.

<sup>55</sup> The condition of the European serfs during the middle ages was far worse than the śūdras of India. They were forbidden from wearing other than coarse cloth of brown, black or grey colours, most of their produce was expropriated by their lords, they could be sold or killed at will, they could not own property, they were executed for stealing food or for poaching in the forests etc. etc.

coloured people on railways, in hotels and other places of public resort and how even in India separate third class compartments were reserved on railways for Europeans, for entering which Indians were prosecuted and sentenced in their own country. Vide *Emperor vs Narayan* 25 Bom. L. R.26 for such a case.

## CHAPTER 4

### UNTOUCHABILITY

Those who have written on the Indian caste system have always been struck by the fact of the existence of certain castes that are treated as untouchables. But it should not be supposed that this is something confined only to India. Even nations that have no caste system at all have often carried out complete segregation of certain people dwelling in their midst, which in essentials is the same as the system of untouchability in India. The Encyclopaedia of social sciences vol. XI. p.339 says that in the southern States of U.S.A. discrimination against Negroes took the form of:—

'Residential segregation, separation of the races in public conveyances and places of amusement, exclusion of Negroes from public institutions and educational discrimination. Disenfranchisement and social discrimination had their economic counterpart in all branches of industry except agriculture and domestic and personal service,<sup>56</sup> occupations to which Negroes had been habituated under the slave regime.'

It is also within living memory that Mahātma Gandhi had to lead a movement of *satyagraha* in South Africa against the discriminating treatment of Indians and even now in Natal and other parts of British Africa there is legislation restricting Indians in the matter of residence and purchases of land.

In the early Vedic literature several of the names of castes that are spoken of in the smṛtis as *antyajas* occur. We have *carmama* (a tanner of hides?) in the Rig Veda (VIII.5.38), the *Caṇḍāla* and *Paulkasa* occur in the Vāj.S., the *Vapa* or *Vaptā* (barber) even in the Rig, the *Vidalakāra* or *Bidalakāra* (corresponding to the *buruḍa* of the smṛtis) occurs in the Vaj. S. and the Tai. Br., *Vāsaḥ-palpūli* (washerwoman) correspond to the *Rajaka* of the smṛtis in the Vāj. S. But there is no indication in these passages whether these, even if they formed castes, were at all untouchables. The utmost that can be said is that as the *Paulkasa* is assigned to *bībhatsa* (in Vaj. S.30.17) and *Caṇḍāla* to *Vāyu* (in the *Puruṣa-medha*), the *Paulkasa* lived in such a way as to cause disgust and the *Caṇḍāla* lived in the wind (i.e. probably in the open or in a cemetery). The only passage of Vedic literature on which reliance can be placed for some definite statement about *caṇḍālas* is in the *Chāṇḍogya* Up.388 V.10.7. where while describing the fate of those souls that went to the world of the moon for enjoying the rewards of some of their actions it is stated:—

'Those who did praiseworthy actions here, quickly acquire birth in a good condition, viz. in the condition of a brāhmaṇa, a kṣatriya or vaiśya, while those whose actions were low (reprehensible) quickly acquire birth in a low condition i.e. as a dog, or a boar or a *caṇḍāla*.'

This occurs in *Pañcagni-vidya*, the purpose of which is to teach *vairāgya* and disgust with the transmigratory world. This passage does not enjoin anything, it is a bare statement by way of explanation or elucidation. All that can be legitimately inferred from this is that the first three *varṇas* were commended and that *caṇḍālas* were looked upon as the lowest in the social scale. It is to be noticed that the *Śūdra varṇa* does not occur in this passage at all. So probably even in the times of the *Chāṇḍogya* the *caṇḍāla* was looked upon as a *śūdra*, though lowest among the several *Śūdra* subcastes. The *caṇḍāla* is equated with the dog and the boar in this passage, but this leads hardly anywhere. It is no doubt stated in the *Sat. Br.* XII.4.1.4 that 'three beasts are unclean in relation to a sacrifice viz. the vicious (filthy) boar, the ram and the dog.' Here it is clear that every boar is not unclean, but probably only that variety that subsists on the village offal. On the other

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<sup>56</sup> Vide Westermarck's 'The Origin and Development of the moral ideas' vol. I. pp.370-371 for the treatment of Bushmen in Africa, of the aborigines in Australia and of Negroes in America. Vide 'Satyagraha in South Africa' by Mahātma Gandhi translated by Mr. Valji Govindji Desaj (published by 8. Ganesan, 1928).



hand the flesh of boars was said to cause great delight to the Pitṛs when offered in sraddha (vide Manu III.270 and Yāj. I.259).

Therefore this Upanisad passage does not say anything on the point whether the *Caṇḍāla* was in its day untouchable. This passage may be compared with another in which the śūdra is said to be a walking cemetery. If the Śūdra was not untouchable in the Vedic literature, and if he was allowed to be a cook for brāhmaṇas and to wash the feet of brāhmaṇa guests in spite of that passage (as stated in the Dharma Sūtras quoted above pp.161-162), there is no reason to suppose that the Chāndogya passage indicates that the *caṇḍāla* was untouchable in the remote ages. Another passage is relied upon by orthodox writers to support the theory that untouchability of *caṇḍālas* is declared in Vedic writings. In the Br. Up. 13 the story is narrated that gods and asuras had a strife and the gods thought that they might rise superior to the asuras by the Udgītha. In this vidya occurs the passage:—

‘This devata (Prāṇa) throwing aside the sin that was death to these devatās (vak etc.) sent it to the ends of these quarters and he put down the sin of these devatas there; therefore one should not go to people (outside the Āryan pale) nor to the ends (of the quarters) thinking ' otherwise I may fall in with *pāpman* i.e. death’.

In the first place there are no peoples expressly named here. *Sanikara* explains that by 'end of the quarters' are meant regions where people opposed to Vedic culture dwell. This description can only apply to people like the *mlecchas* and not to *caṇḍālas* who are not opposed to Vedic knowledge (but who have no *adhikāra* to learn it). Besides *caṇḍālas* might stay outside the village, but they do not stay at the end of the quarters (or at the end of the ārya territory). Hence this passage does not help in establishing the theory of untouchability for Vedic times. Next comes the consideration of the evidence derived from the sūtras and smṛtis. But certain preliminary observations must be made to clarify the position. The theory of the early smṛtis was that there were only four *varṇas* and there was no fifth *varṇa*<sup>57</sup>. Vide Manu X.4 and Anuśāsana-parva 47.18.890. When in modern times the so-called untouchables are referred to as the *pañcamas* that is something against the smṛti tradition. Pan. II 4.10 and Patañjali say that a *Samāhāra dvandva* compound can be formed from several subdivisions of śūdras that are not *niravasita* e.g. we can have the compound 'taksāyaskāram' meaning carpenters and blacksmiths, but not '*caṇḍāla-mṛtapam*' because *caṇḍālas* and *mṛtapas* are *niravasita* Śūdras (and so the compound will be '*caṇḍālamṛtapāḥ*'). Therefore it follows that Pan. and Patañjali included *caṇḍālas* and *mṛtapas* among śūdras.

When Angiras (note 171 above) includes *kṣatr*, *suta*, *vaidehika*, *magadha* and *ayogava* (that are *pratiloma* castes) among *antyavasayins* along with *caṇḍāla* and *śvapaca*, he makes it clear that he regarded *caṇḍālas* as included among śūdras, for Manu X.41 declares that all *pratiloma* castes are similar to śūdras in their dharma and because the śāntiparva 297.2S 393 expressly says that the *vaidehika* is called Śūdra by learned dvijas. Gradually how ever, a distinction was made between Śūdras and castes like *caṇḍālas*. Fresh castes were then added to the list of untouchables by custom and usage and the spirit of exclusiveness, though there is no warrant of the Śāstras for such a procedure.

## Untouchability

Untouchability did not and does not arise by birth alone. It arises in various ways.

1. In the first place, persons become out-casted and untouchable by being guilty of certain acts that amount to grave sins. For example, Manu IX.235-239 prescribes that those who are guilty of

<sup>57</sup> N. P. Dutt in 'Origin and growth of caste in India' vol. I. p.105, (1931) speaks of 'Nishadas, chandalas and paulkasas as the fifth *varṇa*.'

brāhmaṇa-murder, theft of brāhmaṇa's gold or drinkers of spirituous liquors should be excommunicated, no one should dine with them or teach them, or officiate as priests for them, nor should marriage relationship be entered into with them and they should wander over the world excluded from all Vedic dharmas. But if they perform the proper prāyaścitta they are restored to caste and become touchable.

2. Secondly, persons were treated as untouchables simply through religious hatred and abhorrence because they belonged to a different sect or religion. For example, Aparārka quotes verses from the Sat-triṃṣanmata and Brahmāṇḍa-Purāṇa that:–

‘On touching Bauddhas, Pāsupatas, Jainas, Lokayatikas, Kapilas (Sāmkhyas) and brāhmanas guilty of doing actions inconsistent with their caste one should enter water with the clothes on and also on touching Saivas and atheists.’

It is worthy of note that Aparārka m p.923 quotes a verse of Vrddha-Yājñavalkya that on touching *caṇḍālas*, pukkasas, mlecchas, Bhillas and Parasīkas and persons guilty of mahāpatakas one should bathe with the clothes on.

3. Thirdly, certain persons, though not untouchable ordinarily, became so, if they followed certain occupations, e.g. if a person touches a brāhmaṇa who is *devalaka* (i.e. has been doing worship to an image for money for three years) or who is a priest for the whole village, or a person who sells a soma plant, then he has to bathe with his clothes on.

4. Fourthly, persons become untouchable when in certain conditions e.g. a person if he touches even his wife in her monthly period or during the first ten days after delivery or if he touches a person during the period of mourning on the death of some relative or a person who has carried a corpse to the cemetery and has not yet bathed, he then has to take a bath with his clothes on (vide Manu V.85).

5. Fifthly, certain races such as mlecchas and persons from certain countries and the countries themselves were regarded as impure (vide notes 40, 42, 49). Further the smṛtis say that persons following certain filthy, low and disapproved avocations were untouchable e.g. Samvarta quoted by Aparārka p.1196 says:–

‘On touching a fisherman, a deer-hunter, a hunter, a butcher, a bird-catcher, and a washerman one must first bathe and then take one's meal’.

It is to be remarked that such texts do not expressly make a man of those castes untouchable even if he does not pursue the occupation stated, but they have rather the occupation in view. Such occupations were thought impure, as it was believed that if one was to secure the final goal of liberation, one must cultivate purity of mind as well as body, and as great importance came to be attached to cleanliness and the ceremonial purity of the body for spiritual purposes; and emphasis was laid upon not coming in contact with persons carrying on filthy or impure pursuits, but also with animals and even inanimate objects. These restrictions were not inspired by any hardness of heart or any racial or caste pride as is often said, but they were due to psychological or religious views and the requirements of hygiene. Āp. Dh.S.I.5.15,16 says ‘a person touched by a dog should take a bath with his clothes on’.<sup>58</sup> Vrddha-Harīta (chap.11.99-102) enumerates certain vegetables and herbs (such as leek) and other articles on touching which one was to bathe. Āp. Dh. S. (II.4.9.5) requires every householder to give food after Vaiśvadeva to all including *caṇḍālas*, dogs and crows. And this practice is followed even now by those who perform Vaiśvadeva.

## Purity and Impurity

<sup>58</sup> Vide also Vas.Dh.S.23.33, Viṣṇu Dh.S.22.69.

The ancient Hindus had a horror of uncleanness and they desired to segregate those who followed unclean professions like those of sweepers, workers in hide, tanners, guardians of cemeteries etc. This segregation cannot be said to have been quite unjustifiable. Besides those who are not familiar with ancient or even modern Hindu notions must be warned against being carried away by the horror naturally felt at first sight when certain classes are treated as untouchable. The underlying notions of untouchability are religious and ceremonial purity and impurity. A man's nearest and dearest women relatives such as his own mother and wife or daughter are untouchable to him during their monthly periods. To him the most affectionate friend is untouchable for several days when the latter is in mourning due to death in the latter's family. A person cannot touch his own son (whose thread ceremony has been performed) at the time of taking meals. In this latter case there is no idea of impurity and in most of these cases there is no idea of superiority or inferiority. As many professions and crafts were in ancient times hereditary, gradually the idea arose that a man who belonged to a caste pursuing certain filthy or abhorred avocations or crafts was by birth untouchable. Medieval and modern usage had no doubt reached the stage that if a man belonged by birth to a caste deemed by custom to be untouchable he remained an untouchable whatever profession or craft he may pursue or even if he pursued no profession. But ancient and medieval writers thought otherwise and there was also great divergence of view as to who were untouchables and to what extent.

The only caste that is said by the most ancient Dharma sūtras to be untouchable by birth is that of *caṇḍālas* and the word *caṇḍāla* has a technical meaning in these works as stated above (p.81) under *caṇḍāla*. Gaut. (IV.15 and 23) says that the *caṇḍāla* is the offspring of a śūdra from a brāhmaṇa woman and that he is the most reprehensible among the *pratilomas*. Āp. Dh. S. II.1.2.8-9 898 states that on touching a *caṇḍāla* one should plunge into water, on talking to him one should converse with a brāhmaṇa (for purification), on seeing him one should look at the luminaries (either the Sun or moon or stars). We have seen above that there were three kinds of *caṇḍālas* and they were all so by virtue of the circumstances of their birth. Manu (X.36, 51) makes only the *andhra*, *meda*, *caṇḍāla* and *śvapaca* stay outside the village and makes the *antyavasayin* (X.39) stay in a cemetery. That leads to the inference that other men even of the lowest castes could stay in the village itself. Harīta 399 quoted by Aparārka (p.279) states 'if a *dvijāti*'s limb other than the head is touched by a dyer, a shoemaker, a hunter, a fisherman, a washerman, a butcher, a dancer (*nata*), a man of actor caste, oilman, vintner, hangman, village cock or dog, he becomes pure by washing that particular limb and by sipping water (i.e. he need not bathe)'. Here most of the seven *antyajas* are included and it is expressly said that their touch is not so impure as to require a bath. Angiras (verse 17) states that a *dvija* when he comes in contact with a washerman, a shoemaker, a dancer (*nata*), a fisherman or a worker in bamboo becomes pure by merely *ācamana* (by sipping water). The Nityācārapaddhati (p.130) quotes a verse to the effect that even on coming in contact with *caṇḍālas* and *pukkāsas* one need not bathe, if the latter stand near a temple of Viṣṇu and have come for the worship of Viṣṇu. Alberuni in his work on India (tr. by Sachau vol. 1 chap. IX) refers to two classes of *antyajas*, the first of which had eight guilds (seven of which were practically the same as the seven above, the eighth being the weaver) and a second group of four viz, Hadi, Doma, Caṇḍāla and Bhadatau. As to the first group he says that they intermarried except the fuller, shoemaker and weaver. Alberuni seems to have been misinformed as to this and what caste he means by Bhadatau is not clear. Medhatithi in his commentary on Manu X.13 is positive that the only *pratiloma* who is untouchable is the *caṇḍāla* and no bath is necessary on coming in contact with the other *pratilomas* (viz. suta, magadha, āyogava, vaidehika and kṣatr). Kulluka also says the same. Therefore it follows that in spite of the smṛti texts including the *pratilomas* among *antyajas* along with the *caṇḍālas*, such authoritative and comparatively early commentators as Medhatithi (about 900 A. D.) were firmly of opinion that they were not untouchable.

Manu V.85 and Angiras prescribe a bath for coming in bodily contact with a *divākīrti* (a *caṇḍāla*), *udakyā* (a woman in her monthly period), *patita* (one out-casted for sin &c.), *sūtika* (a woman after delivery), a corpse, one who has touched a corpse. It follows therefore that the only antyaja who was *aspr̥sya* according to Manu was the *caṇḍāla*. But gradually the spirit of exclusiveness and ideas of ritual purity were carried to extremes and more and more castes became untouchable. Some very orthodox writers of *smṛtis* went so far as to hold that on touching even a Śūdra a *dvijāti* had to bathe. Among the earliest; occurrences of the word *aspr̥sya* (as meaning untouchables in general) is that in Viṣṇu Dh. S. V.104; Katyāyana also uses the word in that sense. It will have been seen from the quotations above that *caṇḍālas*, *mlecchas* and *Parasīkas* are placed on the same level as regards being *aspr̥sya*. Atrī ‘ (267-269) says:—

‘If a *dvija* comes in contact with a *caṇḍāla*, *patita*, *mleccha*, a vessel containing intoxicating drink, a woman in her monthly course, he should not take his meals (without first bathing) and if he comes in contact; with these while taking his meal, he should stop, throw away the food and bathe’.

Vide Viṣṇu Dh, S.22.76 about talking with *mlecchas* and *caṇḍālas*. But so far as *mlecchas* are concerned these restrictions of untouchability have been given up long ago at least in public. Similarly the washerman, the worker in bamboo, the fisherman, the *nata*, among the seven well-known *antyajas*, are no longer untouchable in several provinces (though not in all) and were not so even in the times of Medhatithi and Kulluka.

Once the spirit of exclusiveness and exaggerated notions of ceremonial purity got the upper hand they were carried to extremes. It does not appear from the ancient *smṛtis* that the shadow of even the *caṇḍāla* was deemed to be polluting. Manu V.133 (which is nearly the same as Visnu Dh. S.23.52) declares:—

‘flies, spray from a reservoir, the shadow (of a man), the cow, the horse, the sun's rays, dust, the earth, the wind and fire should be regarded as pure.’<sup>59</sup>

Manu IV.130 prescribes that one should not knowingly cross the shadow of the image of a deity, of one's guru, of the king, of a *snātaka*, of one's teacher, of a brown cow or of a man who has been initiated for a Vedic sacrifice. Here no reference is made to the shadow of a *caṇḍāla*. Medhatithi on Manu V.133 expressly says that ‘shadow’ means ‘shadow of a *caṇḍāla* and the like’. Kulluka, however, adds on Manu IV.130 that on account of the word ‘*ca*’ in that verse the shadow of *caṇḍālas* was included in the injunction of that verse.

Therefore it is legitimate to infer that Manu and Yāj. did not prescribe that even the shadow of a *caṇḍāla* was impure and caused pollution. Not only so, Aparārka quotes a verse ‘the shadow of a *caṇḍāla* or *patita*, if it falls on a man, is not impure’. But Aparārka himself adds on this verse the comment that this favourable rule about the shadow of a *caṇḍāla* or *patita* is applicable only if he is at a greater distance from a man than the length of a cow's tail. Bana in his *Kadambarī* (para 8) describes how the *caṇḍāla* girl entered the assembly-hall though she was untouchable and stood at some distance from the king. It appears that there was no difficulty about her entering the hall of audience or polluting the assembly by her shadow. Gradually some *smṛtis* prescribed a bath for a *brāhmaṇa* coming under the shadow of a *caṇḍāla*. The Mit. on Yāj. III.30 quotes a verse of Vyaghrapada that if a *caṇḍāla* or *patita* comes nearer to a person than the length of a cow's tail, then the latter must take a bath and another verse of Brhaspati to the effect:

‘a *patita*, a woman in her monthly period, a woman freshly delivered and a *caṇḍāla* should be kept respectively at a distance of one yuga, two, three and four’.

<sup>59</sup> Yāj. I.193 is a similar verse (Mark. Purāna 35.21 is almost the same).

As yuga is four cubits, this means that a *caṇḍāla* cannot approach within 16 cubits of a caste Hindu. As regards public roads Yāj. I.194 says that they become pure by the rays of the sun and the moon and by the wind even when they are trodden by *caṇḍālas*. In Yāj. I.197 it is stated that the mud and water on public roads and on houses built of baked bricks, though touched by *caṇḍālas*, dogs and crows, are rendered pure by the mere blowing of the wind over them.

These rules show that the smṛtis followed a reasonable rule about the public roads and do not countenance the restrictions maintained in some parts of South India, particularly in Malabar, about the use of public roads by the untouchables viz. that an untouchable must not approach within a certain distance of a high caste Hindu, must leave the road to allow him passage or must shout to give warning of his presence in order to avoid pollution to the caste Hindu. Vide Wilson's 'Indian Castes' vol. II p.74 (footnote) for details of the distance. In South India also there are various grades of distances within which members of the several lowest castes cannot approach high caste Hindus.

Certain provisions were made in the smṛtis by way of exceptions to the general rules about the untouchability of certain castes. Atrī (verse 249) says:—

‘There is no taint of untouchability when a person is touched by an untouchable in a temple, religious processions and marriages, in sacrifices, and in all festivals’.

Sātātapa quoted in the Sm. C. declares that there is no *doṣa* (lapse) in touching (untouchables) in a village (i.e. on the public road), or in a religious procession or in an affray and the like, and also when the whole village is involved in a calamity. Brhaspati also remarks that there is no fault (and so no *prāyaścitta*) if one comes in contact (with untouchables) at a sacred place, in marriage processions and religious processions, in battle, when the country is invaded, or when the town or village is on fire. The Sm. C. adds that these verses were variously interpreted; some saying that they apply only where one does not know that the man who has touched him is an untouchable, while others hold that they apply to the touch of impure persons who are not *ucchiṣṭa* (i.e. risen from meals without washing their hands etc). The Smṛtyārthasāra summarises the places where no blame is incurred on the ground of mixing with untouchables viz. in battle, on public roads leading to a market, in religious processions, in temples, in festivals, in sacrifices, at sacred places, in calamities or invasions of the country or village, on the banks of large sheets of water, in the presence of great persons, when there is a sudden fire or other great calamity. It is somewhat remarkable that the Smṛtyārthasāra speaks of untouchables entering temples. The Par. M. (vol. II part I p.115) says that there is no *doṣa* when *caṇḍālas* take water from a large tank (used by higher castes), but as regards small reservoirs the same rules apply to them that apply to the purification of wells touched by untouchables.<sup>60</sup>

The Viṣṇu Dh. S. (V.104) prescribed that if an untouchable deliberately touched a man of the three higher castes he should be punished with beating, while Yāj. II.234 prescribes that if a *caṇḍāla* (deliberately) touches any one of the higher castes the *caṇḍāla* should be fined one hundred panas. Elaborate rules are laid down about the penance for drinking from the wells or vessels of untouchables, for partaking of their food (either cooked or uncooked), for staying with them and for having sexual intercourse with untouchable women. These matters will be briefly dealt with under *prāyaścitta*,

The so-called untouchables were not entirely excluded from worship. When it is said (as in Yāj. I.93 or Gaut. IV.20) that the *caṇḍāla* is outside all dharma, the meaning is that he is outside such Vedic rites as *upanayana*, not that he cannot worship the Hindu deities nor that he is not bound by the moral code. He could worship images of the avatāras of Viṣṇu (vide note 364 above), The

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<sup>60</sup> Vide Vrddha-Harīta IX.405-406 for the purification of a well.

Nirnaya-sindhu quotes a passage of the Devī-Purāṇa that expressly authorizes *antyajas* to establish a temple of Bhairava. The Bhāgavata-Purāṇa 418 X.70.43 says:—

‘Even the *antyavasāyins* are purified by listening to the praises or names of Hari, by repeating the names of Harī and by contemplation on Him, much more therefore will those (be purified) who can see or touch your images’.

This however shows that to the author of the Bhāgavata it never occurred that an untouchable could see or touch the image of Viṣṇu enshrined in a temple of caste Hindus. In south India among the famous Vaiṣṇava saints called Alvars, Tiruppāna Alvar was a member of the depressed classes and Nammalvar was a Vellāla. The Mit. on Yāj. III.262 remarks that the *pratiloma* castes (which include *caṇḍāla*) have the right to perform vratas.

In modern times the eradication of the system of untouchability is engaging the minds of great leaders like Mahātmā Gandhi whose fast for 21 days for effecting a change of heart among caste Hindus is famous throughout the world. The principal matters of concern to the so-called untouchables or depressed classes are facility for education in schools, removal of restrictions about places of public resort such as public wells, roads, restaurants and eating houses and entry in public temples. A good deal has been done by a few zealous workers from among the higher castes in these respects.

The Christian missionaries have been doing good work among the untouchables, but their efforts are mainly devoted to direct or indirect proselytization. The conscience of the educated among the higher castes has been roused. But the total removal of untouchability is yet a matter of the distant future. The greatest draw-back is illiteracy among the masses of India. Hardly twelve per cent of the population are literate. The diffusion of literacy and the spread of the idea of the equality of all men before the law and in public are the only sure solvents of the evils associated with untouchability which have existed for ages. Popular Governments in the provinces are doing what they with their limited resources can do to ameliorate the condition of the untouchables. The Government of India Act (of 1935) has given special representation to the Scheduled Castes (the name given to the depressed classes or untouchables) in the Provincial and Federal Legislatures of India. The Government of India Scheduled Castes Order of 1936 sets out the names of the numerous scheduled castes in the several provinces of British India. The Provincial Governments have issued circulars to enforce the rule that no discrimination be made against the scheduled castes in places of public resort and have tackled to some extent the question of the entry of untouchables in temples by passing such acts as the Bombay Act XI of 1938 viz. Bombay Harijan Temple Worship (Removal of disabilities Act) and the Madras Temple Entry Authorisation and Indemnity Act of 1939. Much will depend upon the untouchables themselves.

As among the caste Hindus, the Untouchables also have *inter se* numerous divisions and subdivisions each of which regards itself as superior to several others of them and will not condescend to mix with them in the public or dine with them. They must also throw up from among themselves selfless and capable leaders. This is a vast problem and the appalling evils which have been growing for ages can not be wholly removed in a day. The leaders of the so-called untouchables also should not make exaggerated claims. For the present they should rest content with equality in public places, public services and before the law and at the most entry into public temples. But if they indulge in the tall talk of destroying the caste system at one stroke and requiring that all caste Hindus should dine with them and inter-marry with them, they may find that at least two hundred millions of caste Hindus will be dead opposed to them, and the cause of the removal of the evils of untouchability is bound to suffer a set-back. Besides it should not be forgotten that the amelioration of the condition of untouchables is bound up with the problem of the poverty of the entire rural population of India. It should not be supposed that all the untouchables are the poorest of the poor. I know from personal knowledge that many among certain classes of

untouchables like the Mahārs and Chambhars of the Deccan are economically better off than the ordinary cultivators in many villages. The mahārs are hereditary village servants in the Deccan and they recover from every householder bread every day as part of their remuneration or a certain measure of corn from the threshing floor.<sup>61</sup>

The population of untouchables in India has been estimated at various figures from three to six crores. The Simon Commission Report (1930) vol. I. p.40 estimated that there were about 43 millions of untouchables in the whole of India, the criterion adopted being whether pollution by touch or approach within a certain distance is caused. The ratio of untouchables to the total population of India or to the Hindu population varies greatly in different parts of India. The total *Harijan* (the name given to untouchables by Mahātmā Gandhi) population is 14 per cent of the whole population of India. In the Bombay Presidency the ratio of Harijans to Hindus is only about eleven per cent being the lowest of all provinces and States in India, while in Bengal the ratio is about 32 per cent which is the highest in India except in Assam. The High Courts in India have held that the untouchables are included among *sūdras* for purposes of marriage.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Vide Grant Duff's 'History of the Marathas' (ed. of 1863 vol. I p.23) for the *balutedars* (village servants) among whom the mahār occupies an important place and Hereditary Offices Act (Bombay Act III of 1874, section 18) for Legislative recognition of their ancient rights.

<sup>62</sup> Vide *Sohan Singh vs. Kabla Singh* 10 Lahore 372, *Muthusami vs. Masilamani* 33 Mad.342.419 418. Vide Census of India (1931), vol. I part 1, p.494.419. Several books and papers have been recently published on the question of untouchables in India. Vide "The Psychology of a suppressed people" (1937) by Rev. J. O. Heinrich; 'Untouchable Classes of Mahārashtra' by M. GK Bhagat.

## CHAPTER 5

## SLAVERY

Slavery has existed as a constant element in the social and economical life of all nations of antiquity such as Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome and also of many nations of Europe.<sup>63</sup> “It was however left to such Christian nations of the West as England and the United States of America to carry on the institution of slavery in the most horrible manner possible never dreamt of by any nation of antiquity, viz. by sending out kidnapping expeditions to Africa to collect slaves, to huddle them in ships in such unspeakably filthy conditions that half of them died on the voyage, to sell them to plantation owners and others like chattel. Westermarck in his ‘Origin and Development of the moral ideas’ vol. I (1912) p.711 was constrained to observe:—

‘This system of slavery, which at least in the British colonies and slave states surpassed in cruelty the slavery of any pagan country ancient and modern, was not only recognised by Christian Governments but was supported by the large bulk of the clergy, Catholic and Protestant alike.’

Slavery was abolished in the British Dominions only in 1833 and in British India by Act V of 1843.

It has been seen above (pp.26-27) that the word *dāsa* in the Rig Veda generally stands for the opponents of the *āryas*. It is possible that when the *dāsas* were vanquished in battle and taken prisoners they were treated as slaves. In the Rig Veda, however, there are not many passages where the word ‘*dāsa*’ can be said to have been used in the sense of slave. In Rig VIII.56.3 421 we read ‘thou madest a gift to me of one hundred donkeys, of one hundred fleece-bearing ewes and one hundred *dāsas*’. It appears that here *dāsa* means slaves or serfs. In Rig VIII.5.38 the sage praises his patron Caidya Kaśu:

‘The common people sit down at the feet of Caidya Kaśu like men crowding round tanners of hides, (Caidya) who honoured me by giving me ten noblemen that were like gold in appearance’.

Hare probably there is an allusion to the gift of ten captured nobles made to the sage by Caidya Kaśu, the victor. A sage declares in Rig VIII.19.36 ‘Trasadasyu, son of Purukutsa, gave me fifty young women’. This probably refers to the gift of female slaves (*dāsīs*). The Tai. S. VII.5.10.1 says ‘*dāsīs* (girl slaves) place on their heads jars full of water and singing this song and beating their feet against the ground dance round the *mārjālīya*’ &c. The Tai. S. II.2.6.3. refers to the gift of a horse or a male (slave).

‘He obtains a portion of himself who accepts (in gift) a being with two rows of teeth, (such as) a horse or a human male; on accepting an animal with two rows of teeth one should offer to Vaiśvānara a mess cooked on twelve potsherds.’

The Ait. Br.39.8 mentions large gifts such as 10,000 girls (*dāsīs*) and 10,000 elephants made by a king to his purohita performing coronation. When the God of Death, Yama tries to dissuade Naciketas from his curiosity to know the destiny of a person after death, he tempts the inquirer (Katha Up.1.1.25);\_

‘Here are such handsome women with chariots and musical instruments as cannot be secured (ordinarily) by men; make them, when gifted by me, serve you; do not ask me what happens after death’.

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<sup>63</sup> Vide Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, vol. XIV, p.74:— “To the ancient mind slavery was a fixed and accepted element of life and no moral problem was involved. That slavery already was established as a recognized institution in the Sumerian culture of the Babylonian area in the 4<sup>th</sup> millenium B.C.E. may be confidently assumed from the fragments of Sumerian legislation upon slaves which date from the first half of the 3rd millennium”.



The women referred to were probably meant to be serving (or slave) girls who attended on a man as maids and who could dance and sing. In the Br. Up. IV.4.23 Janaka after receiving instruction in Brahma-vidya from Yājñavalkya exclaims:–

‘I make a gift to your honour of the Videhas together with myself for being your slave’.

We read in the Chan. Up.1:–

‘In this world they speak of cows and horses, elephants and gold, wives and slaves, fields and houses as *mahimā* (greatness).’<sup>64</sup>

These passages show that in the Vedic period men and women had become the subjects of gifts and so were in the condition of slaves.

Though Manu ordained (I.91, VIII.413, 414) that the principal duty of the Śūdra was to wait upon the three higher castes or that the śūdra was created by the Creator for the service of brāhmaṇas, the Śūdra who thus served a *dvijāti* as a duty was *not* his slave. Jaimini (VI.7.6) 424 makes this perfectly clear by saying that when a man makes a gift in the Viśvajit sacrifice of everything belonging to himself he cannot make a gift of the Śūdra who waits upon him as his duty. Sabara in his bhāṣya adds:–

‘The Śūdra may not desire to serve the man to whom the sacrificer gives his all and the latter has no power over him if he is unwilling.’

We have seen how the Gṛhya Sūtras speak of *dāsas* being employed to wash the feet of honoured guests. It appears that the ideal placed before the masters was to treat the slave humanely. Āp. Dh. S. II.4.9. II 485 says that one may indeed stint oneself, one's wife or son (as to food) if guests come, but never a *dāsa* who does menial work (a *dāsa* and hired servants). In the Anuśāsana 45:23 it is stated:–

‘One should not sell a human being who is a stranger; how much more one's own children’.

In the Mahābharata gifts of *dāsas* and *dāsīs* are very frequently mentioned. In Sabhāparva 52.45, Vanaparva 233.43 and Virata 18.21 gifts of 30 *dāsīs* to each of 88000 snataka brāhmaṇas are spoken of. In Vanaparva 185.34 Vainya is said to have given a thousand handsome *dāsīs* with ornaments on to Atri. Manu (VIII, 299-300) places a slave on the same level as one's son in the matter of corporal punishment:—

‘The wife, the son, the slave, a menial servant, one's full brother these when guilty of wrong may be beaten with a rope or a thin piece of split bamboo, but only on the back and never on the head and if a person beat them otherwise he would be punished as a thief.’

Slavery was probably not much<sup>65</sup> in evidence in India in the 4th century B.C.E. or the treatment of slaves in India was so good that a foreign observer like Megasthenes accustomed to the treatment of slaves in Greece thought that there was no slavery, Megasthenes (Mac Crindle, p.71) states that none of the Indians employs slaves (vide Strabo XV.1.54). That slavery existed then admits of no doubt. The Emperor Asoka when proclaiming his Law of Piety enjoins in his 9th Rock Edict that the Law of Piety consists (among other things) in the kind (or proper) treatment of slaves (*dāsas*) and hired servants. In the *Artha-sastra* (III.13) Kauṭilya gives very important provisions about slaves. He says that the *mlecchas* are not punishable if they sell or pledge their children, but an *ārya* cannot be reduced to slavery. He then prescribes that if a relative sells or pledges a śūdra (who is not born as a slave) or a vaiśya or kṣatriya or a brāhmaṇa (all being minors), he should be respectively fined 12, 24, 36 and 48 panas and that if a stranger sells or pledges the above then the vendor, the vendee and the abettors will be liable to the first, middle and highest amercements and

<sup>64</sup> Vide also Chan. Up. V.13.2 and Br. Up. VL 2.7 for references to *dāsīs*.

<sup>65</sup> Vide Rhys Davids in ‘Buddhist India’ (1903) p.263.

whipping respectively (i.e. first amercement for sale of a śūdra by a stranger and whipping for the sale of a brāhmaṇa). But he allows the pledge of even an ārya in family distress.

He refers to several kinds of slaves viz. *dhvajāhṛta* (captured in battle), *ātmavikrayin* (who sells himself), *udaradāsa* (or *garbhadāsa*, one who is born to a dāsī from a slave) or those so made for a debt (*āhitika*), or for a fine or court's decree (*daṇḍa-pranīta*). He then prescribes how they are set free from slavery. One who sells himself or is pledged or is born a slave becomes a free man by paying off respectively the amount for which he was purchased or pledged or what would be a proper price. One who is made a slave for a fine may pay off the fine by doing work. One captured in war may become free by paying according to the time he has been in bondage and the work he did or by paying half of it. The child of one who sells himself remains an ārya (free man). He prescribes that if a master makes a pledged slave carry a corpse or sweep feces, urine or leavings of food, or keeps him naked, beats him or abuses him or violates the chastity of a female slave, he forfeits the price paid by him. He prescribes the first amercement for a master having intercourse with a pledged slave girl against her will and middle amercement for a stranger doing so.

Manu (VIII.415) speaks of seven kinds of dāsas, viz. one captured in battle, one who becomes so for food (i.e. in scarcity or in a famine), one born in the house (i.e. of a female slave), one bought, one given (by his parents or relatives), one inherited (as part of the patrimony), one who becomes so for paying off a fine or judicial decree. He states the general rule:

“That the wife, the son and the slave have no wealth and whatever they earn belongs to him whose wife, son or slave they are.”

Manu prescribes a fine of 600 panas for a brāhmaṇa making a member of the *dvijāti* castes after his *upanayana* a slave against his will.

Nārada (*abhyupetyāśuśrūṣā*) and Katyāyana among the smṛtikāras contain the most elaborate treatment on slavery. Nārada first says that a *śuśrūṣaka* (one who serves another) is of five kinds viz. a Vedic student, an *antevāsin* (an apprentice who is learning a craft), *adhikarmakṛt* (a supervisor over workmen), *bhṛtaka* (hired servant) and *dāsa*. The first four are called *karmakāra*. They can be called upon to do only work that is pure, while a *dāsa* may have to do unclean work such as cleaning the entrances to the house, filthy pits (for leavings of food), the road, dunghill heaps, touching (or scratching) private parts, taking up and throwing away feces and urine (verses 6-7), doing bodily service to the master if he so desires. Nārada mentions 15 kinds of slaves viz. one born in the house, one bought, one acquired (by gift or other means), one Inherited, one saved in a time of famine, one pledged by the master, one discharged from a large debt, one captured in a battle, one vanquished in a bet, one who accepts slavery by saying ‘I am yours’, an apostate from the order of asceticism, one who stipulates to be a slave (for a certain time), one who is a slave for food (as long as food is given to him), one who is tempted to become a slave out of love for a female slave, and one who sells himself.

Nārada says that the first four of these are not freed from slavery except by the favour of the master (v.29), while one who sells himself is the worst kind of slave and he also does not become free from slavery (v.37). Nārada (v.30) and Yāj. (II.182) state a rule applicable to all slaves, viz. that when a slave saves a master from imminent danger to the latter's life the slave becomes a free man and (Nārada adds) that he gets a share in the inheritance as a son. One who is an apostate from the order of ascetics is a slave of the king till the former's death (Yāj. II.183). One saved in a famine becomes free by giving a pair of cows, one pledged<sup>66</sup> if the master who pledged him repays the debt, the slave *in lieu* of discharge of debt by paying off the debt with interest, one who accepted slavery or who was captured in battle or became so under a bet is freed by giving a substitute who is equal to

<sup>66</sup> A slave who is pledged becomes the slave of two till the pledge is redeemed

him in work, one for a stipulated period by the lapse of the period, one who is a *bhakta-dāsa* becomes free by the master ceasing to give food, one who is 'vaḍavāhṛta' (tempted by a female slave) by abandoning his intercourse with her (Nārada vv.31-34, 36). Yāj. (II.182) and Nārada (v.38) say that one who was made a slave by force or was carried away by raiders and sold should be set free by the king. Yāj. (II.183) and Nārada (v.39) prescribe that a man can be a slave to a master only in the proper order of *varṇas* i.e. the three *varṇas* next to a brāhmaṇa may be slaves to a brāhmaṇa, a vaiśya or a śūdra may be a slave to a kṣatriya but a kṣatriya cannot be the slave of a vaiśya or a Śūdra, nor a vaiśya of a śūdra. There is one exception viz. an apostate from asceticism may be the slave of a vaiśya or a Śūdra king. Kātyāyana emphasizes that a brāhmaṇa cannot be made a slave even to a brāhmaṇa, but if he himself chooses, he may do pure work for a brāhmaṇa endowed with character and Vedic learning, but no impure work. Kātyāyana (v.721) says that when a brāhmaṇa becomes an apostate from the order of asceticism he should be banished from the kingdom and the kṣatriya or vaiśya apostate may become a slave to the king. Dakṣa (VII.33) quoted by Aparārka (p.787) adds that the apostate's head should be branded with the mark of dog's foot.

Kauṭilya 484 and Kātyāyana (v.723) both declare that if a master has sexual intercourse with a female slave and she is delivered of a child, both the slave and the child should be given freedom by the master.

Kauṭilya declared that the heirs to the wealth of a slave are his relatives and if none of them exist then the master, while Kātyāyana (v.724) says that the only wealth that; the slave can call his own is the price he received for selling himself or what the master gave as a gift through favour. Nārada (vv.42-43) describes the ceremony of the manumission of a slave :—

"When a master being pleased with a slave desires to make him a free man, he should take, from the slave's shoulder, a jar full of water and break it, he should sprinkle water mixed with whole grains of rice and flowers on the slave's head and thrice uttering the words 'you are no longer a slave' he should dismiss him with the (slave's) face to the east."

The Vyavahāra-māyukha quotes a verse from the Kālīka-Purāṇa about an adopted son, which is very interesting:—

'Persons adopted and the like on whom the samskāras of caula (tonsure) and Upanayana are performed by the gotra of the adopter, become sons of (the adopter) otherwise the person (on whom such ceremonies are not performed) is held to be a slave.'" (of the adopter).

The Vyavahāra-māyukha remarks that this passage is not reliable as it is not found in several mss. of the Kalika-Purāṇa, Nārada mentions 15 kinds of slaves, but this is not one of them. All that the Kalika-Purāṇa probably means is that when a boy is adopted into another family after his *cūḍa* and upanayana are performed in the family of birth, he is not fully affiliated in the family of adoption, he does not become a son and so does not take the inheritance but is only entitled to maintenance in the family of adoption, just as a slave is to be fed. No digests have recognised such a person as a slave proper.

Nārada (rnadāna 12) and Kātyāyana declare that a debt contracted by a Vedic pupil, an apprentice, a slave, the wife, a menial servant and a workman for the benefit of the family even though it was incurred in his absence, was bind on the owner of the house. Ordinarily a slave was not a competent witness, but Manu VIII.70 and Uśanas (quoted in Vyavahāra-mayukha p.37) say that when no other witness is available, a minor, an old man, a woman, a pupil, a relative, a slave or a hired servant may be a witness.

There are numerous works dealing with slavery in its various aspects. Mr. D. R. Banaji has published a very painstaking and interesting study on 'Slavery in British India' from 1772 to 1843 (2nd ed.1937) The Carnegie Institution of Washington has published studies on several aspects such as 'Judicial Cases' (by Mrs. Catterall in 1926) and 'Documents of the history of the Slave Trade to

America, 1930' by Prof. Elizabeth Donnan. Dr. H. J. Nieboer's 'Slavery as an Industrial System' (1910) is a well documented study of slavery in various countries and at various times.

## CHAPTER 6

### SAMSKĀRAS

**G**autama (II.1) says that before *upanayana*, a boy may act, speak and eat as and what he likes (i.e. may follow his inclinations). Haradatta explains that this does not mean that he can kill a brāhmaṇa or drink liquor, but that there is no restriction, although he be a brāhmaṇa's son, to his selling what is forbidden to a brāhmaṇa to sell, or he may eat onions and garlic or stale food or may eat four or five times a day. Āp. Dh. S.428 (II.1.6.15.17-20) states several views on this point:—

'Up to the time when they begin to take cooked food infants do not become impure (by the touch of a *rajasvala* etc.); according to some (teachers) up till they are one year old; or till they are not able to distinguish the cardinal points; another view is that till *upanayana* (they do not become impure)'.

Aparārka (p.28) also explains that a boy may (before *upanayana*) eat the leavings of the food of his parents, but he cannot eat or drink what would cause loss of caste as in that case he may become unfit to have the saṃskāra of *upanayana* performed on him. The Smṛtyārtha-sāra gives the view of some that in case an infant touches a caṇḍāla before it reaches the age of taking cooked food, only water need be sprinkled on it, before *cauḷa* ācamana need be done by it and after *cauḷa* (and before *upanayana*) a bath would be necessary. Vas. Dh. S. (II.6) quotes a verse of Hārīta to the effect:—

'up till investiture with the girdle of muñja grass (i.e. till *upanayana*) there is no action that is obligatory on him, as long as he is not born again for Vedic study he may be in his conduct like a śūdra'.

This verse occurs also in Baud. Dh. S. I.2.6 and Manu II.171 and 172. Dakṣa I.3-4 says:

'Till a boy is eight years old he is like one newly born and only indicates the caste in which he is born. As long as his *upanayana* is not performed the boy incurs no blame as to what is allowed or forbidden to be eaten, as to what should (or should not) be drunk, as to what he should or should not speak, as to telling a falsehood'.

But this does not hold good as to *mahāpātakas*. As to *prāyaścitta* when a child is guilty of the commission of a *mahāpātaka*, see under *prāyaścitta* later on and the Mit. on Yāj. III.253. The smṛtis look upon *upanayana* as the second birth of a boy (the first being his physical birth). Gaut. (X.1 and 51) says that the three higher classes are called *dvijātis* (having two births), while the Śūdra is only *ekajāti*. Āp. Dh. S. says (1.1.1.16-18):—

'the teacher causes him (the boy who is initiated into Vedic study) to be born from vidya (i.e. by imparting Vedic knowledge), that birth is superior, the parents produce only the body'.

Manu (II 169) speaks of three births in the case of a male the first from his mother, the second when the girdle is tied (on *upanayana*) and the third when he is initiated for a Vedic sacrifice.

*Upanayana* is the foremost of the saṃskāras. Atri (141 – 142) says:—

'a person is known as a brāhmaṇa by birth, he is said to be a *dvija* (twice-born) on account of saṃskāras, he reaches the position of *vipra* by learning (study of the Veda); he is called *srotriya* on account of all these three'.

Parāśara (VIII.19) contains a fine image to illustrate this:—

‘just as a work of painting gradually unfolds itself on account of the several colours (with which it is drawn), so brāhmaṇya (the status of a brāhmaṇa) is similarly brought out by saṃskāras performed according to prescribed rite’.

‘Therefore it is now time to speak of saṃskāras. The word saṃskāra hardly ever occurs in the ancient Vedic literature, but the root ‘kr’ with ‘sam’ and the past passive participle ‘samskrta’ occur often enough. In Rig. V.76.2 the word saṃskāra is applied to ‘gharma’ (vessel) ‘the two Āśvins do not harm the gharma that has been purified.’ In Rig. VI 28.4 we have the word ‘samskrtaḥ’ and Rig. VIII.33.9 has ‘raṇāya samskrtaḥ.’ Sat, 445 Br.1.1.4.10 speaks of preparing (or purifying) offering (havis) for the gods. So in Sat. Br. III.2.1.22 ‘therefore a woman approaches a man who stands in a well-trimmed (samskrta) house.’<sup>67</sup>

In Chan. Up. IV.16.2, we read:—

"of that sacrifice there are two ways, by mind, by speech; the Brahmā (priest) prepares (or polishes) one of them by his mind."<sup>68</sup>

The word *saṃskāra* is used several times in the sūtras of Jaimini.<sup>69</sup> It generally means some purificatory act in a sacrifice e.g. in Jaimini III.8.3 the word is applied to the actions of shaving the head, washing the teeth and paring the nails on the part of the sacrificer in Jyotiṣṭoma; in IX 3.25 the word *saṃskāra* is applied to *prokṣana* (sprinkling with water), in X 2.49 it is applied to the shaving of the head and face. In Jaimini VI.1.35 the word saṃskāra stands for *upanayana*. Sabara explains *saṃskāra* as that which being effected makes a certain thing or person fit for a certain purpose and the Tantra-vārtika says that saṃskāras are those actions and rites that impart fitness and it further says that fitness is of two kinds;

- (a) It arises by the removal of taints (sins) or
- (b) by the generation of fresh qualities.

Saṃskāras generate fresh qualities, while *tapas* brings about the removal of taints. He who performs such sacrifices as Jyotiṣṭoma and others has certain blemishes in him due to not doing in this life or a previous life duties laid down for him or doing what is forbidden. If they (blemishes) are not removed they obstruct the (acquisition of the) reward of the sacrifice even if it be entirely free from any defects whatever, as they (blemishes) produce (for the sacrificer) the experience of their own fruits that are opposed to the (fruit of the) sacrifice. The Vīramitrodaya defines ‘*saṃskāra*’ as ‘a peculiar excellence due to the performance of rites ordained (by the śāstra) which resides either in the soul or the body’ and says that it is of two kinds, one kind making a person eligible for performing other actions (e.g. *upanayana* renders a person eligible for Vedic study), while another kind removes the evil taint that may have been generated (e.g. *Jātakarma* removes the taint due to seed and uterus).

The word saṃskāra does not occur in most of the Gṛhya-sūtras (it occurs in Vaik.), but it occurs in the Dharma-sūtras.<sup>70</sup> The principal matters that fall to be discussed under saṃskāras are:

- ❖ the purpose of saṃskāras,
- ❖ the classification of saṃskāras,
- ❖ the number of saṃskāras,
- ❖ the procedure of each of the saṃskāras
- ❖ the persons authorized to perform them

<sup>67</sup> Vide Vaj. S. IV.34 for a similar use of samskrta.

<sup>68</sup> The Brahmā priest remains silent and watches the whole sacrifice to see if there be any mistake, which he corrects by prayascitta.

<sup>69</sup> as in III.1.3, III.2.15 and 17, III.8.3, IX.2.9, 42, 44, IX.3.25, IX.4.33, IX.4.50 and 54, X, 1.2 and 11 etc.

<sup>70</sup> vide Gaut. VIII.8, Āp. Dh.1.1.1.9, Vas. IV.1

❖ the persons for whom they are to be performed.

First as to the purpose of saṃskāras. Manu (II.27-28) says ‘In the case of *dvijātis*, the taints (or sins) due to seed and the uterus (i.e. derived from parents) are erased by the homas (burnt oblations) performed during pregnancy and by *jātakarma* (ceremonies on birth), *cauḷa* (tonsure) and the tying of the girdle of muñja grass. This (human) body is rendered fit for the attainment of Brahma by the study of the Veda, by (observance of) *vratas*, *homas* (oblations in fire), by the *vrata* called *traividya*, by worship (of gods, sages and manes), by generation of sons, by the performance of the five daily sacrifices and by (solemn Vedic) sacrifices. The view of Yāj. (1.13) is that by the performance of saṃskāras, the taint arising from the seed and uterus (i.e. from the physical defects of parents) is removed. These words of Manu and Yāj. are variously interpreted by the commentators. Medhātithi says:— ‘seed and uterus are not the causes of sin and therefore all that is meant by *enas* (in Manu II.27) is impurity.’ Kulluka explains that blemishes of seed are those arising from intercourse in a prohibited manner and the ‘*gārbhika*’ blemish is what arises from having to stay in the womb of an impure mother. The Mit. on Yāj. I.13 makes it clear that saṃskāras are deemed to remove bodily defects transmitted from parents (such as defective limbs, diseases etc.) and are not intended to remove the taint of being born of sinful parents. Manu II.66 also states that all the saṃskāras are performed on a woman also for the purification of the body. Harita as quoted in the Saṃskāra-tattva says:

‘when a person has intercourse according to the procedure of *garbha-dhāna* he establishes in the wife a foetus that becomes fit for the reception of the Veda, by the rite of *pūṃsavana* he makes the foetus become a male, by the ceremony of *Sīmantonayana* he removes from the foetus the taint derived from the parents and the accumulated taints (which are five) due to seed, blood and womb are removed by *jātakarma*, *nāma-karaṇa*, *Anna-prāśana*, *cūḍā-karaṇa* and *samāvartana*. By these eight saṃskāras (from *garbha-dhāna*) purity arises.’

The exact significance of saṃskāras in the development of higher human personality was left rather vague in our authorities and their treatment of the purpose of saṃskāras is not very elaborate or exhaustive. The saṃskāras had been treated from very ancient times as necessary for unfolding the latent capacities for development and as being the outward symbols or signs of the inner change which would fit human beings for corporate life and they also tended to confer a certain status on those who underwent them.

If we look at the list of saṃskāras we shall find that the purposes of saṃskāras were manifold. Some, like *Upanayana* served spiritual and cultural purposes, they brought the unredeemed person into the company of the noble, they opened the door to Vedic study and thus conferred special privileges and exacted duties. They have also psychological values impressing on the mind of the person that he has assumed a new role and must strive to observe its rules. Other saṃskāras like *nāma-karaṇa*, *Anna-prāśana*, and *niṣkramaṇa* were more or less of a popular nature. They afforded opportunities for the expression of love and affection and for festivities. Other saṃskāras like *garbha-dhāna*, *pūṃsavana*, *sīmantonayana* had also mystical and symbolical elements. *Vivāha* (marriage) was a sacrament which brought about a union of two personalities into one for the purpose of the continuance of society and for the uplift of the two by self-restraint, by self-sacrifice and mutual co-operation.

The saṃskāras were divided by Harita into two kinds, *brahma* and *daiva*. The saṃskāras of *garbha-dhāna* and others which are described only in the smṛtis are called *brahma* and the person who is purified by performing them attains equality with sages, stays in the same world with them and is joined with them; *pākayajñas* (offerings of cooked food), *yajñas* with burnt offerings and sacrifices in which soma is offered are called *daiva* (saṃskāras). The last two varieties, viz. those in which there is burnt offering and those in which soma is offered, are dealt with in the śrauta-sūtras, which have been left outside the purview of this work (except in the note at the end of this volume).

There is a great divergence of views among the writers on *smṛtis* as to the number of *saṃskāras*. Gaut. (VIII.14-24) speaks of forty *saṃskāras* and eight virtues of the soul. The forty *saṃskāras* are: *garbha-dhāna*, *pūṃsavana*, *sīmantonayana*, *jātakarma*, *nāma-karaṇa*, *Anna-prāśana*, *cauḷa*, *upanayana* (8 in all) *saṃskāras* of the Veda, *snāna* (or *samāvartana*), *vivāha*, five daily *mahā-yajñas* (for *deva*, *pitṛ*, *manuṣya*, *bhūta* and *brahma*); seven *pākayajñas*<sup>71</sup> (viz. *aṣṭaka*, *pārvana-sthālī-pāka*, *śrāddha*, *śrāvaṇī*, *agrahayani*, *caitri*, *Āśva-yujī*); seven *havir-yajñas* (in which there is burnt offering but no soma) viz. *Agniyadheya*, *Agnihotra*, *Darśa-purnamāsa*, *Agrayana*, *Caturmāsya*, *Nirūḍha-paśu-bandha* and *Sautrāmaṇi*); seven soma sacrifices (*Agniṣṭoma*, *Atyagniṣṭoma*, *Ukthya*, *Ṣoḍasin*, *Vājapeya*, *Atirātra*, *Āptoryama*). Gautama uses the word *saṃskāra* in the most extended sense. Saṅkha as quoted by the Sm. C. (I. p.13) and the Subodhinī on Mit. II.4 follow Gautama. Vaik. speaks of 18 *śarīra saṃskāras* (in which he includes *utthāna*, *pravāsāgamana*, *pindavardhana*, which are seen nowhere else as *saṃskāras*) and 22 *yajñas* (i.e. 5 daily *yajñas* as one and 7 *pākayajñas*, 7 *havir-yajñas*, and 7 soma *yajñas*).

Most *Gṛhya-sūtras*, *Dharma-sūtras* and *smṛtis* do not enumerate so many. Angiras (quoted in the *Saṃskāra-mayukha*, *Saṃskāra-prakāśa* p.135 and other digests) mentions twenty-five *saṃskāras*. They include all *saṃskāras* of Gautama from *garbha-dhāna* to the five daily *yajñas* (which latter are reckoned as one *saṃskāra* by Angiras) and after *nāma-karaṇa* & *niṣkramaṇa* is added. Besides, *Viṣṇubali*, *Agrayana*, *Aṣṭaka*, *Sravanī*, *Āśvayujī*, *Margaśīrṣī* (same as *Agrahayanī*), *Pārvana*, *Utsarga* and *Upākarma* are enumerated as the remaining *saṃskāras* by Angiras. Veda-Vyasa I.14-15 enumerates 16 *saṃskāras*. Manu, Yāj., Viṣṇu Dh. S, do not give the number of *saṃskāras* but simply say that they are those from *niṣeka* (*garbha-dhāna*) to *śmaśāna* (i.e. *antyeṣṭi*). This last one is not treated of in Gautama and several *Gṛhya-sūtras*.

In most of the digests the principal *saṃskāras* are said to be 16; but there is some difference of opinion even as to these 16. For example, Jatūkarṇya as quoted in Sam. Pr. (p.135) enumerates the 16 as *garbha-dhāna*, *pūṃsavana*, *sīmanta*, *jātakarma*, *nāma-karaṇa*, *Anna-prāśana*, *cauḷa*, *mauñji* (*upanayana*), *vratas* (four), *godāna*, *samāvartana*, *vivāha* and *antyeṣṭi*. These slightly differ from the sixteen of Veda-Vyasa.

The *Gṛhya-sūtras* deal with *saṃskāras* in two different sequences. Many of them begin with *vivāha* (marriage) and then proceed up to *samāvartana*. Some like the *Hiranyakesi-Gṛhya*, *Bharadvaja-Gṛhya* and *Mānava-Gṛhya* begin with *upanayana*.<sup>72</sup> Some *saṃskāras* like *Karṇa-vedha* and *Vidyārambha* are conspicuous by their absence in the *Gṛhya-sūtras*, but are added by later *smṛtis* and *Purāṇas*. The following is the list of all the *saṃskāras* usually so called in most of the *smṛti* works together with a few remarks against each as to the work or works in which each is mentioned or described. The *saṃskāras* are arranged in the sequence of the times at which in a man's life they are performed beginning from *garbha-dhāna*:

<sup>71</sup> According to some the seven *pākayajñas* are: *aupasana-homa*, *vaiśvadeva*, *parvana* (*sthali-pāka*), *astataka*, *sarpabali* and *isanabali*. Vide Sm. C. I. p.13. The Baud. gr. I.1. gives the seven *pākayajñas* as *huta*, *prahuta*, *ahuta*, *sulagava*, *baliharana*, *pratyavarohana* and *astaka homa*. Vide S. B. E. Vol.30 p.358 for several differing enumerations of *pākayajñas*.

<sup>72</sup> For detailed treatment of some of the *saṃskāras*, vide Dr. (Mrs.) Kāmālabai Deshpande's work 'the Child in ancient India.' (with copious references to the *gṛhya sūtras*); Mrs. Stevenson's 'the Rites of the twice-born' (1920), which exhaustively reviews in the minutest details the rites of *brāhmaṇas* (particularly in Kathiawar and Gujarat) as observed at present. This work however gives hardly any references to original Sanskrit authorities, is permeated by the spirit of a Christian missionary and commits the mistake, usual with most Western writers, of comparing hoary Indian customs, usages and the position of women with those of the West only in the latter half of the 19th century, altogether ignoring what existed in Europe over a few hundred years ago, though it is generally written with sympathy and understanding. Colebrooke's *Miscellaneous Essays*, Vol. I. pp.123-226 (London, 1837), Monier Williams' 'Religious thought and life in India' part I (1883), Vidyānava's 'on daily practices' in the 20th volume of 'the Sacred Books of the Hindus' may also be consulted.

1. **Ṛtu-saṅgamana** — mentioned in Vaik.I:1 as **distinct** from *garbha-dhāna*; it calls it *niṣeka* also (VI.2) and describes it in III.9 and *garbha-dhāna* in III.10. The Vaik. commence' the saṃskāras with *niṣeka*.
2. **Garbha-dhāna**: — *Niṣeka*: *Caturthī-karma* or-*homa*: — Manu (II.16 and 26), Yāj.1.10-11, Viṣṇu Dh.S. (2.3 and 27.1) employ the word *niṣeka* as equivalent to *garbha-dhāna*. In the Sāṅkhāyana Gṛhya (1.18-19), Par. gr. I:11, and Āp. gr. (8.10-11) the rite called *caturthīkarma* or *caturthī-homa* takes the place of the rite called *garbha-dhāna* elsewhere and there is no separate description of *garbha-dhāna* in these and some similar Gṛhya-sūtras. The Baud. gr. (IV.6.1), the Kāṭhaka-Gṛhya (30.8), Gaut. (VIII.14), Yāj. I:11 employ the word *garbhā-dhāna*. According to Vaik. (III.10) the *garbha-dhāna* rite follows *niṣeka* or *ṛtu-saṅgamana* (union of married pair after menstruation) and consists in ensuring conception.
3. **Puṃsavana**:— occurs in almost all the Gṛhya-sūtras, in Gaut., in Yāj. (I.11).
4. **Garbha-rakṣana**:— mentioned in the Sāṅkhāyana gr. (I.21). It seems to be the same as the *Anavalobhana* which according to the Āśvalayana gr. (1.13.1) occurs in the Upanisad and which is described in Āśv.gr. (I.13.5-7).
5. **Sīmantonayana**:— This occurs almost everywhere. Yāj. I.11 uses the word *sīmanta*.
6. **Viṣṇu-bali**:— mentioned in Baud. gr. (I.10.13-17 and 1.11.2), Vaik. (III.13), Angiras. It is not mentioned by Gautama and several other ancient sūtra-kāras.
7. **Śoṣyanti-karma** or-*homa*:— described in Khadira and Gobhila. It is called *Soṣyanti-savana* in Kāṭhaka-Gṛhya and *Kṣipra-savana* in Āp. gr., Bharadvaja gr. and *Kṣipra-prasavana* in Hir. gr. (S. B. E. vol.30, p.210). It occurs in Budha-smṛti (as quoted in Saṃskāra-prakāśa p.139).
8. **Jātakarma**:— This is described in all sūtras and smṛtis. *Utthāna*: rising from child-bed, mentioned only in the Vaik. (III.18) and in ah. gr. I.25 (S. B. E. vol.29, pp.51-52).
9. **Nāma-karaṇa**:— mentioned in all smṛtis. *Niṣkramaṇa* or *Upaniṣkramaṇa* or *Aditya-darśana* or *Nirnayana*: Gaut., Āp. gr. and several other sūtras omit it.
10. **Karna-vedha**:— omitted in almost all ancient smṛtis; mentioned in Veda-Vyasa smṛti (I.19), Baud. gr. śeṣa-sūtra (I.12.1), Katyayana-sūtra (a supplement to Par. gr.)
11. **Anna-prāśana**:— mentioned by almost every smṛti.
12. **Varṣa-vardhana** — or *Abda-purti*: -mentioned in Gobhila, San. Par., Baud.
13. **Caṭṭa** or *Cūḍākarma* or *Cūḍā-karaṇa* 'mentioned by all smṛtis.
14. **Vidyarambha**:— not mentioned in any smṛti but only in Markandeya-Purāṇa quoted by Aparārka (p.30) and Sm. 0. (I. p.26').
15. **Upanayana**:— mentioned by all. It is called *vratādeśa* in Veda-Vyasa I, 14.
16. **Vratas** (four):— mentioned by most of the Gṛhya-sūtras.
17. **Kesanta** or *Godāna*:— Mentioned by almost all.
18. **Samavartana** or *Snāna*:— there is great divergence about these two. Manu (III.4) seems to keep *snāna* (ceremonial bath after the period of studentship is over) as distinct from *samāvartana*. Gaut., Āp. gr. V.12-13, Hir. gr. I.9.1, Yāj. I.51, Par. gr. (II, 6-7) employ the word *snāna* for both the ceremonial bath and the rites of return from the teacher's house on finishing one's studies, while Āśv. gr. (III.8.1), Baud. gr. (II.6.1), San. gr. III.1, Āp. Dh. S. (I.2.7.15 and 31) employ the word *Samavartana*.
19. **Vivaha**:— Mentioned by all as a *saṃskāra*.



**20. Mahā-yajñas:**— five daily yajñas; mentioned by Gaut, Aṅgiras and others.

**21. Utsarga:**— (seasonal giving up of Veda studies) is mentioned as a *saṃskāra* in Vaik (I.I) and by Aṅgiras.

**22. Upākarma:**— (yearly commencement of Veda study) mentioned as a *saṃskāra* by Vaik. (I.I) and by Aṅgiras.

**23. Antyesti:**— (funeral) mentioned by Manu II.16 and Yaj 1.10.

It is laid down that the *saṃskāras* from *jātakarma* to *cūḍākarma* were to be performed in the case of the twice-born classes with Vedic mantras when the child was a male and that in the case of girls the ceremonies were to be performed but without Vedic mantras;<sup>73</sup> but marriage in the case of the girls of the three higher classes was to be performed with Vedic mantras (Manu II, 67. Yāj. I.13).

The *saṃskāras* from *garbha-dhāna* to *upanayana* alone were absolutely necessary in the case of all twice-born persons; the *saṃskāras* of *snāna* and *vivāha* were not obligatory, as a man was allowed to become a *saṃnyāsin* (ascetic) immediately after finishing the period of studentship (according to the Jabalopanisad). The *Saṃskāra-prakāśa* enters upon an elaborate discussion as to whether *jātakarma* could be performed for a child that is neither a male nor a female (pp.195-197) and arrives at the conclusion that *jātakarma* and other *saṃskāras* cannot be performed for a *kīlba* (hermaphrodite) child. Another question was as to what *saṃskāras* could be performed for the *śūdra*. The view of Veda-vyasa that he could have ten *saṃskāras* performed (but without Vedic mantras) has been stated above (p.159). The Baijavapa Ṛṣya says that seven *saṃskāras* are allowed to the *śūdra* viz. from *garbha-dhāna* (or *niṣeka*) to *cauḷa*. The view of Aparārka appears to be that the eight *saṃskāras* from *garbha-dhāna* to *cauḷa* (in Yāj.1.11-12) were meant for all *varṇas* (including the *Śūdra*). According to the Madana-ratna, Rupa-Nārāyaṇa and the bhāṣya of Harihara as quoted in the Nirnaya-sindhu, the *śūdras* were entitled to perform six *saṃskāras* viz. *jātakarma*, *nāma-karaṇa*, *niṣkramaṇa*, *Anna-prāśana*, *cūḍā* and *vivāha* and the five daily *mahā-yajñas*. The *Śūdra-krtya-tattva* of Raghunandāna (p.634) quotes a verse from the Varaha-Purāṇa:

‘this very procedure (about *śrāddha*) has been declared in the case of *śūdras* but without mantras; for the *śūdra* who is not entitled to repeat a mantra, a *brāhmaṇa* repeats the mantra’

and then remarks that for a *Śūdra* a mantra from the Purāṇas is to be repeated by the *brāhmaṇa* priest employed, that the *śūdra* is not to repeat even the Purāṇa mantras but has only to say ‘*namah*’. The Nirnaya-sindhu mentions with approval the same view of Sulapāni that in all religious ceremonies for *śūdras* the mantras are to be taken from the Purāṇas and that they are to be repeated by the *brāhmaṇa* priest. The Brahma-Purāṇa quoted in the Sm.C. and other digests states that no other *saṃskāra* than *vivāha* is allowed to the *śūdra*. On this the Nirnaya-sindhu remarks that these conflicting views are to be reconciled by holding that the liberal ones apply to good (*sat*) *śūdras* and the stricter ones to low (*asat*) *śūdras* or that the rules are different in different countries.

It is to be noted that in modern times most of the *saṃskāras* (except *garbha-dhāna*, *upanayana* and *vivāha*) have fallen into oblivion and are hardly ever performed even by *brāhmaṇas* in the manner and at the times prescribed by the *smṛtis*. Owing to the rapid rise in the marriageable age of *brāhmaṇa* girls, even the *saṃskāra* of *garbha-dhāna* is falling into abeyance. *Nāma-karaṇa*, *annaprāśana* are performed in a popular way but without Vedic mantras or without calling a priest to officiate. In most cases *cauḷa* is performed on the day of the *upanayana* and *samāvartana* is also performed a few days after *upanayana*. *Jātakarma* and *Anna-prāśana* are performed on the same day in some parts (e.g. in Bengal). It appears that this state of things has continued for centuries. The *Smṛty- artha-sara* (p.3) says:

<sup>73</sup> vide Āśv. gr. (1.15.12, I.16.6, I.17.18), Manu II.66, Yaj 1, 13.

‘if the saṃskāras (except *upanayana*) are not performed at the prescribed times, the *Vyāhṛti* homa should be offered<sup>74</sup> and then the saṃskāras should be performed (though late). For each saṃskāra that is not performed the penance called *pāda-krcchra* should be performed (if the non performance is due to some difficulty or distress), and for non performance of *cauḷa* the penance is *ardha-krcchra*. If the saṃskāras were knowingly omitted or if there was no distress then the penance is double of this.’”

The Nirnaya-sindhu quotes verses of Saunaka to this effect and then remarks that there was a conflict of views, some holding that after the penance the saṃskāras passed over should be performed all at one time, while others held that they should not be performed at all after undergoing penance and a third view was that if *cauḷa* was left unperformed it may be performed on the same day as *upanayana*. The Dharma-sindhu (3rd pariccheda, pūrvardha) states various substitutes (which are comparatively easy) for these penances. For example, one *prajāpatya* penance is equal to three *Padakrcchras*. In place of *prajāpatya* the person guilty of the lapse may make the gift of a cow or (in the absence of a cow) may give one *niska* (320 *guñjas*) of gold or one half or one-fourth of if one who is very poor may give one-eighth of a silver *niska* or corn of that value. There being these easy substitutes (*pratyāmnāya* as they were called) people gradually left off performing the several saṃskāras and concentrated themselves only on *upanayana* and *vivāha*.

The whole life of a person was so very minutely worked out and overlaid with so much ritual in the *Gṛhya-sūtras* and *smṛtis* that the tendency to neglect and change became insistent and inevitable. This tendency was helped by the accommodating spirit of the *brāhmaṇa* authors of later *smṛtis* and digests that were ready to prescribe easier and easier substitutes for non-observance of the elaborate sacraments, pre-natal and post-natal. Haradatta in commenting on *Gaut. I.6 (upanayanam brāhmaṇasya aṣṭame)* remarks 'the teacher (Gautama) expounding *upanayana* first and passing over the saṃskāras like *garbha-dhāna* that precede *upanayana* in time conveys that *upanayana* is the principal saṃskāra. Therefore even if the saṃskāras like *garbha-dhāna* did not take place owing to adverseness of fate, *upanayana* can be performed, but it follows that if *upanayana* be not performed there is no *adhikāra* (eligibility) for marriage which follows only after *upanayana*. In modern times in undergoing *prāyaścitta* for non-performance of the saṃskāras up to *cauḷa* rupees two have to be paid to the priest (annas four for each of the saṃskāras not performed up to *cauḷa* and annas eight for *cauḷa*).<sup>75</sup>

The saṃskāras will now be described in detail. The material contained in the *sūtras*, *smṛtis* and *nibandhas* is so vast that only very concise statements can be made here. The method followed will be as follows. Each saṃskāra will be described from a few representative *Gṛhya* and *Dharma-sūtras* such as the *Āśv.gr.*, *Āp.gr.*, and references will be given to other important works. Only important parts of procedure can be noted, minute divergences among the several works being passed over. Greater details will be given in the case of the two chief saṃskāras viz. *upanayana* and *vivāha* which are in vogue even now.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup> The *Vyāhṛtihoma* consists in offering clarified butter with the mystic syllables, *bhuh, bhuvah, svaḥ* (or *suvah*) uttered separately and then together. Vide *Hir. gr. I.3.4 (S.B.E.' Vol.30 p.144)*.

<sup>75</sup> The modern *samkalpa* at the time of *upanayana* for late performance or non-performance of saṃskāras is:

*Amuka śarmanah mama putrasya garbhadhāna, puṣṣavan, sīmantonnayana, jātakarma, nāmakaraṇa annaprāśana caulāntānām saṃskārānām kālātīpattijanita (lopa-janita) pratyavāya parihārartham prati-saṃskāraṃ pāda-kṛcchrātmaka prāyaścittam cūḍāya ardha-kṛcchrātmakaṃ gomūlya rajata niṣka pāda pāda pratyāmnāya dvārāhaṃ cariṣye ||*

<sup>76</sup> Besides the *gṛhya sūtras*, the *dharma-sūtras*, *Manu*, *Yajñavalkya* and other *smṛtis*, the principal digests on *samakaras* relied upon here are the *Saṃskāra-tattva* of *Raghunandana*, the *Saṃskāra-mayukba* of *Nīla kantha*, the *Saṃskāra-prakāśaa* of *Mitramidra*, *tlio Saihskarakauṣṭubha* of *Anantadeva* and the *Saraskara-ratna-mālā* of *Gopinatha*. Further, one should never lose sight of the fact that in a vast continent like India the various items in daily rites and ceremonies have always varied from age to age, from province to province and from caste to caste. Innumerable modifications were introduced and usages cropped up among the people, particularly owing to the influence of women, of which *smṛtis* and digests take no notice. This was the state of things even several centuries before Christ. The *Āp. Dh. S. (II.11.20.15)* closes with the aphorism 'some teachers hold that the rest of the dharmas (not described here) may be understood from (the usages of) women and of all *varṇas*'. The *Āśv. gr. (I.7.1)* states:— 'various indeed are the usages

**Garbha-dhāna:** The beginnings of this ceremony are found very early. Atharva Veda V.25 appears to be a hymn intended for the *garbha-dhāna* rite. Atharva V.25.3 and 5 are verses which occur in the Br. Up. VI.4.21; the passage of the Br. Up. VI.4.13, 19-22 may be rendered thus: —

‘At the end of three days (after menstruation first appears) when she (wife) has bathed, the husband should make her pound rice (which is then boiled and eaten with various other things according as he desires a fair, brown or dark son or a learned son or a learned daughter) ... and then towards morning, after having according to the rule of the Sthālipāka performed the preparation of the clarified butter, he sacrifices from the Sthālipāka little by little.’ saying ‘This is for Agni, svāhā; this is for Anumati, this is for divine Savitar the true creator, svāhā! Having sacrificed he takes out the rest of the rice, eats it and after having eaten he gives some of it to his wife. Then he washes his hands, fills a water jar and sprinkles her thrice with water saying ‘Rise, oh Viśvavasu, seek another blooming girl, a wife with her husband Then he embraces her and says ‘I am That (puruṣa) you are this (Prakṛti). I am the Saman, you are the Rk. I am the sky, you are the earth. Come, let us strive together that a male child may be begotten.’

(VI.4, 21-22 cannot be literally translated for reasons of decency). Briefly the husband has intercourse with her and repeats certain mantras:—

‘may Viṣṇu make ready your uterus, may Tvaṣṭa frame your beauty, may Prajāpati sprinkle and may Dhāta implant an embryo into you; Oh Sinivālī! Oh Pṛthuṣṭuka! implant embryo (in her), may the two Āśvins who wear a garland of lotuses plant in you an embryo ..... As the earth has fire inside it, as heaven has Indra inside it, as the wind is inside (as the embryo of) the quarters, so I plant an embryo in you, oh, so and so (the name of the woman being taken)’.<sup>77</sup>

In the Āśv.gr. (I.13, 1) it is expressly stated that in the Upanishad the ceremonies of *Garbhāmbhana* (conceiving a child), *Puṃsavana* (securing a male child) and *Anavalobhana* (guarding against dangers to the embryo) are mentioned. Evidently this is a reference to the Br.Up. quoted above (where four mantras used in the *garbha-dhāna* saṃskāra by Hir. and other Gṛhya-sūtras occur).

The rite called *caturthī-karma* is described in the Sāṅkhāyana gr. (I.18-19, S. B. E. vol.29, pp.44-46) as follows:—

" Three nights after marriage having elapsed, on the fourth the husband makes into fire eight offerings of cooked food to Agni, Vāyu, Sūrya (the mantra being the same for all three except the name of the deity), Aryaman, Varuna, Pusan (mantras being the same for these three), Prajāpati (the mantra is Rig. X.121.10), to (Agni) Sviṣṭakṛt. Then he pounds the root of Adhyanda plant and sprinkles it into the wife's nostril with two verses (śg. X.85.21-22) with svāhā at the end of each. He should then touch her, when about to cohabit, with the words ‘the mouth of the Gandharva Vivavasu are you’. Then he should murmur ‘into the breath I put the sperm, Oh ! so and so (the name of the wife) or he repeats the verse ‘as the earth has fire inside etc. (quoted above from Br. Up. VI.4.22) or several other verses in this strain ‘may a male

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of the different countries and of the different villages; one should observe them in marriage ceremonies.’ This work does not profess to give the bewildering differences of the several śākha's and the several provinces of Modern India, but will restrict itself principally to Western India and the Āśv. sūtra, though important variations have been pointed out in many places.

<sup>77</sup> Vide Appendix for text and S.B.E. vol 15, pp.220-221 for the translation of the passage. Max Muller notes that the passage ‘*amohasmi*’ occurs in the Atharva Veda XIV.71, that a similar passage (where instead of ‘*sa tvam*’ there is ‘*sā tvam*’) occurs in Ait. Br. VIII.27 and that in the Chāndogya Up.1.6.1 *sā* is explained as earth and ‘*ama*’ as fire. The mantra ‘may Viṣṇu.. embryo into you’ is Rig. X.184.1= Atharva Veda V.25.5, and the mantra ‘oh Sinivālī...an embryo’ is Rig. X.184.2= Atharva V.25.3 (where ‘Sarasvatī’ is read for *Pṛthuṣṭuka*. The Nirukta (XI.32. on Rig. II.32.6 where we have an invocation to Sinivālī in the words ‘give us progeny’) explains ‘*Pṛthuṣṭuka*’ as ‘*pṛthu-jaghane*’ (having large buttocks or large mass of hair). The words ‘*garbham dadhātu*’ probably suggested the name ‘*garbhādhāna*’ given to this rite. The Hir. gr. I.7.25.1. has the above two mantras and also the mantra ‘as the earth et’ (and another mantra also) which four occur in Br. Up. VI.4.21-22; vide S. B. B. vol.30 p.199,

embryo enter your womb as an arrow into the quiver; may a man be born here, a son, after ten months".<sup>78</sup>

To modern minds it appears strange that intercourse should have been surrounded by so much of mysticism and religion in the ancient sūtras. But in ancient times every act was sought to be invested with a religious halo; so much so that according to Hir. Gr. I.7.25.3. (S.B.E. vol.30, p.200) Ātreya held that mantras were to be repeated at each cohabitation throughout life, while Bādarāyana prescribed that this was necessary only at the first cohabitation and after each monthly course. The Hir. Gr. (I.7, 23.11 to 7, 25, S. B. E. vol.30 pp.197-200) gives a very elaborate rite, but on the same lines as the above Gṛhya-sūtras. One of the mantras is interesting on account of its reference to the cakravāka birds (I.7.24.6),

‘The concord that belongs to the cakravaka birds, that is brought out of the rivers of which the divine Gandharva is possessed, thereby we are concordant.’ (S. B. E. vol.30, p.198).

The Vaik. (III.9) calls this ceremony *ṛtu-saṅgamana* and is similar to Āp. Gr. and Hir. Gr. It will be seen that the *caturthī-karma* is treated by the Gṛhya writers as part of the marriage rites and the rite was performed irrespective of the question whether it was the first appearance of menses or whether the wife had just before the marriage come out of her monthly illness. This indicates that it was taken for granted that the wife had generally attained the age of puberty at the time of marriage. As the marriageable age of girls came down it appears that the rite of *caturthī-karma* was discontinued and the rite was performed long after the ritual of marriage and appropriately named *garbha-dhāna*.

The smṛtis and nibandhas add many details some of which will have to be noticed. Manu (III.46) and Yāj. I.79 say that the natural period (for conception) is sixteen nights from the appearance of menses. Āp. Gr.9.1 says that each of the even nights from the 4th to 16th (after the beginning of the monthly illness) are more and more suited for excellence of (male) offspring. Harīta also says the same. These two appear to allow *garbha-dhāna* on the fourth night, but Manu (III.47), Yāj. (I.79) lay down that the first four nights must be omitted. Kātyāyana, Parāśara (VII.17) and others say that a woman in her menses is purified by bathing on the 4th day. Laghu-Āśvalayana (III.1) says that the *garbha-dhāna* ceremony should be performed on the first appearance of menses after the 4th day has elapsed. The Sm. C. suggests that the 4th may be allowed if there is entire cessation of the flow. Manu (IV.128) and Yāj. I.79 added further restrictions viz. that new moon and full moon days and the 8th and 14th tithis of the month were also to be omitted. Astrological details were added by Yāj. I.80 (that the Mūla and Magha constellations must be avoided and the moon must be auspiciously placed) and other later smṛtis, which it is unnecessary to dwell upon. In the later smṛtis like Laghu-Āśvalayana III, 14-19 and in nibandhas like the Nirṇaya-sindhu and Dharma-sindhu elaborate discussions are held about the months, tithis, weekdays, nakṣatras, colour of clothes, that were deemed to be inauspicious for the first appearance of menses and about the śāntis (propitiatory rites) for averting their evil effects. Āp. Gr., Manu (III.48), Yāj. (I.79), Vaik. III.9 hold that a man desirous of male issue should cohabit on the even days from the 4th day after the appearance of menses and if he cohabits on uneven days a female child is born. Hir. Gr. I.7.24.8 (S.B.E. vol.30 p.199) and Bharadvaja gr. (I.20) prescribe that a woman in her menses who takes a bath on the 4th day should attire herself in white (or pure) clothes, should ornament herself and talk with (worthy) brāhmaṇas (only). The Vaik. (III.9) further adds that she should anoint herself with unguents, should not converse with a woman, or a Śūdra, should see no one else except her husband, since the child born becomes like the male whom a woman taking a bath after the period looks at. Saṅkha-Likhita convey a similar eugenic suggestion, viz. — ‘Women give birth to a child similar in qualities to him on whomsoever their heart is set in their periods.’

<sup>78</sup> The Par. gr. (I.11, S. B. E. vol.29, pp.288-290) also has a similar procedure. Āp. gr. (8.10-11, S. B. E. vol.30, pp. 267-268), Gobhila II.5 (S. B. E. vol.30, pp.51-52) give briefly a similar procedure, but refer to mantras given in the Mantrapatha (e.g. Āp. M. P.1.10.1. to I.11.11).

A debatable question is whether *garbha-dhāna* is a *saṃskāra* of the *garbha* (the child in the womb) or of the woman. Gaut. VIII.24, Manu.1.16, and Yāj.1.10 indicate that it is a *saṃskāra* of the *garbha* and not of the woman. Viśvarupa on Yāj. I.11 expressly asserts that all *saṃskāras* except *Sīmantonnyana* have to be performed again and again (as they are the *saṃskāras* of the *garbha*), while *Sīmantonnyana* being a *saṃskāra* of the woman has to be performed only once and this opinion was in consonance with the usage in his days. Laghu-Āśvalayana (IV.17) also holds the same view. Medhātithi on Manu II.16 says that the *garbha-dhāna* rite with mantras was performed after marriage only once at the time of the first cohabitation according to some, while according to others it was to be performed after every menstruation till conception. Later works like the Mit. (on Yftj.1.11), the Sm. C., the *Saṃskāra-tattva* (p.909) hold that *garbha-dhāna*, *pūṃsavana* 479 and *sīmantonnyana* are *saṃskāras* of the woman and are to be performed only once and quote Harīta in support. Aparārka holds that *sīmantonnyana* is performed only once at the first conception, while *pūṃsavana* is repeated at each conception. He relies on Par. gr. I.15; and the *Saṃskāra-mayukha* and the *Saṃskāra-prakāśa* (pp.170-171) hold the same opinion. Sm. C. (I. p.17) quotes a verse of Viṣṇu that according to some even *sīmantonnyana* is repeated at each conception. About the rules for women who are *rajasvala* (in their monthly course) vide later on. According to Kulluka (on Manu II.27), the Sm. 0. (I. p.14) and other works *garbha-dhāna* is not of the nature of *homa*. The Dharmasindhu says that when *garbha-dhāna* takes place on the first appearance of menses, *homa* for *garbha-dhāna* is to be performed in the *Gr̥hya* fire, but there is no *homa* when the cohabitation takes place on the second or later appearance of menses; that those in whose *sūtra* no *homa* is prescribed should perform the *garbha-dhāna* rite on the proper day after the first appearance of menses by reciting the mantras but without *homa*. The *Saṃskāra-kaustubha* (p.59) relying on *Gr̥hyaparīśiṣṭa* prescribes *homa* in which cooked food is to be offered to *Prajāpati* and seven offerings of *ājya* are to be offered in fire, three with the verses ‘*Viṣṇur-yonim* ‘ (Rig. X.184.1-3), three with ‘*nejamesa* ‘ (Āp. L\_ i.1 12.7-9) and one with Rig. X.121.10 (*prajāpate na*). All *saṃskāras* other than *garbha-dhāna* can be performed by any agnate in the absence of the husband (vide *Saṃskāra prakāśa* 48 p.165).

As *homa* is necessary in numerous ceremonies and rites, the *Gr̥hya-sūtras* give a description of a model *homa*. Therefore here also it would be well to set out the description from the *Āśvalayana Gr̥hya-sūtra* (I.3, S.B.E. vol 29 pp.162-163), a few important points of difference being added from other *Gr̥hya-sūtras* and other works.

(1) Now wherever (a person) intends to offer a sacrifice he should besmear (with cowdung) a *sthaṇḍila* (a slightly raised square surface of sand or loose earth) of the dimension at least of an arrow on all (four) sides; let him then draw six lines (in all) on it, one to the west (of that part of the *sthaṇḍila* on which the fire is to be placed) but turned northwards, two lines turned towards the east but separately at the two ends (of the line first drawn); (then he should draw) three lines in the middle (of the two); let him then sprinkle (the sacred *sthaṇḍila*) with water, establish the (sacred) fire (on the *sthaṇḍila*), put (two or three *samidhs*) on the fire; then he should perform *parisamūhana* (i.e. wiping or sweeping the ground round the fire), then *paristarana* (i.e. strewing *darbha* grass round) to the east to the south, to the west, to the north (in order); in this way (all acts like *parisamuhana*, *paristarana* etc.) should end in the north. Then silently he should sprinkle (water) round (the fire).

(2) With two (*kuśa* blades used as) strainers (*pavitra*) the purifying of the *ājya* is done.

(3) Having taken two *kuśa* blades with unbroken ends, which do not bear a young shoot in them, of the measure of a span, at their ends with his thumb and fourth finger, with hands turned the inside being upwards, he purifies the *ājya* (from the west) towards the east with (the words) ‘by the urging of *Savitṛ* I purify you with this uninjured *pavitra*, with the rays of the *Vasu* (i, e. rich or good) sun ‘, once with this mantra, twice silently.

(4) The strewing of kuśa grass (*paristarana*) round the fire may or may not be done in the ājya homas (i.e. sacrifices in which clarified butter alone is to be offered into the fire).

(5) So also the two ājya portions (may optionally be offered) in the Pākayajñas.

(6) And (the employment in all Pākayajñas) of the brahmā priest is optional except in the Dhanvantarī sacrifice and Sulagava sacrifice.

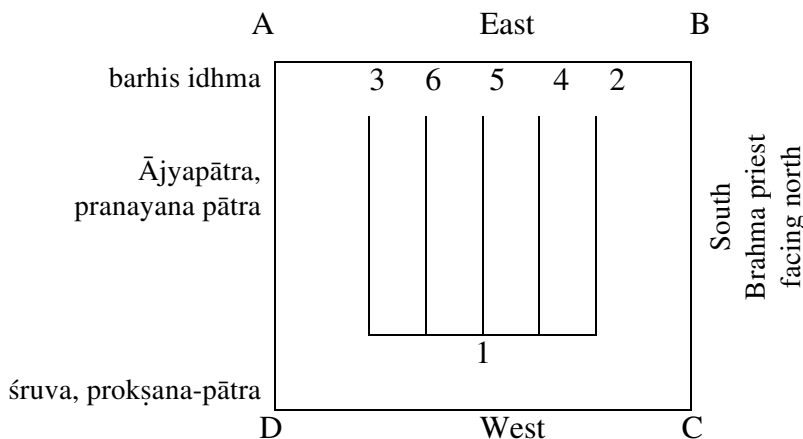
(7) He should offer the sacrifice with the words 'to such and such a deity, svāhā'.

(8) If there is no *specific* direction (as to the deities to whom the offerings are to be made), the deities are Agni, Indra, Prajāpati, Viśve Devas (all gods), Brahma.<sup>79</sup> At the end there is an offering to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt. (vide Appendix under note 481 for the mantra).

In the Saṅkhāyana gr. I.7 (S.B.E. vol.29 pp.22-31) the procedure described is more elaborate and contains some important differences. The performer (I.7.6-7) draws one line in the middle of the sacrificial surface from south to north and from this line only three lines are drawn upwards, one to the south of it, one in the middle, and one to the north (i.e. there are only four lines and not six as in Āśvalayana). Further it (I.8.6-7) says that the seat of the brahmā priest is to the south of the *sthaṇḍila* and he is honoured with flowers. Saṅkhāyana adds (I.8.8.) the detail that the *pranita* waters are carried forward on the north side and (I.8.9-11) that *paristarana* follows after the carrying forward of the *pranita* waters. It also adds (I.8.24-25) that waters in the *sruva* spoon are purified just as ājya is purified and then a portion of the water in the *sruva* is poured on to the *pranita* water and the rest of the water in the *sruva* is called the *prokṣanī* water with which the havis, the idhma (fuel) and barhis (kuśas) are sprinkled. Saṅkhāyana I.9.1 lays down that *sruva* spoon is the vessel in all Grhya rites (and not *juhu* as in śrauta rites) except where a special rule to the contrary is stated.<sup>80</sup> The *sthaṇḍila* should be prepared on a level spot or on a spot that slopes towards the east or north or north-east (vide Hir. Gr.1.1.9, S. B. E. vol.30, p.133). The *sthaṇḍila* should be raised to the height of two or four finger breadths or as much as the sand or loose earth that one has brought will allow; and the *sthaṇḍila* is to be a square, each side of which is given variously as being an arrow (18 Aṅgulas) in length, or 32 finger breadths (according to Vaik.), or one *aratni* (=21 Aṅgulas according to Baud. gr. paribhasa I.5.3).

The Āp. gr. describes at length the procedure common to all homas.

The following figures would illustrate the position of the *sthaṇḍila*, the lines drawn thereon, the position of the sacrificer and of the various articles required at the time of homa etc.

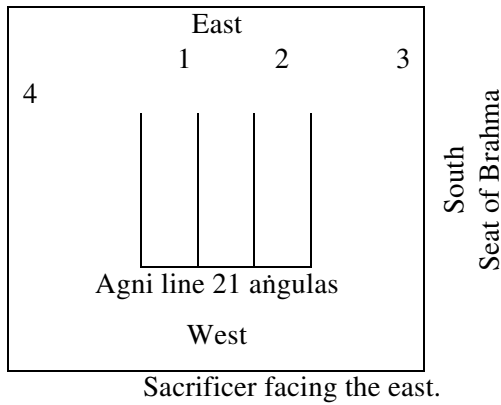


<sup>79</sup> In the grhya rites ordinarily no brahmā priest is present, but he is represented by a bundle of kuśa grass (50 blades).

<sup>80</sup> The Par. gr. I.1 (S. B. E. vol.29, pp.269-270) and the Khadira gr. I.2 (S. B. E. vol.29, pp.376-378) describe the model homa in a very concise manner. The Gobhila gr. (I.1.9-11, and I.5.13-20, I.7.9, 1.8.21), Hir. gr. (1.1.9-1.3, 7 S. B. E. vol.30pp.138-145) describe it at great length.

Sacrificer facing the east.

ABCD is the *sthaṇḍila* of sand or loose earth; 1-6 are the lines drawn with a samidh on which the fire is to be placed. The above figure represents the position of all materials in an ājya homa (i.e. offering of clarified butter) only; but when there is darvi-homa (offering of boiled food in a darvi or ladle) the materials on the north side are *carusthāli* and *prokṣana-pātra*, *darvi* and *sruva*, *camasa* and *ājyapātra*, *idhma* and *barhis* (according to Āśvalayana-Gṛhya-pariśiṣṭa 14) and Kumarila kārīka 1 2.20.)



- 1 – Soma line 12 aṅgulas
- 2 – Indra line 1 span
- 3 – Prajāpati line 1 span
- 4 – Pṛthivī line 12 aṅgulas

The above is the figure of the *sthaṇḍila* and the lines there on in all ḡṛhya rites according to Baudhāyana-Ḡṛhya-saṅgraha-pariśiṣṭa (Z.D.M.G. vol.35 p.540) I.52-58. The distance between the lines running towards the east is six Aṅgulas and it will be noted that all the lines are only five.

The brahma is the only priest (out of the four ṛtviks) in sacrifices that are offered in one fire (in ḡṛhya fire) and are called pāka-yajñas and the yajamāna (sacrificer) is himself the hotṛ priest.

The order of the several parts in the homa is as follows:—

1. *upalepana* (smearing with cowdung),
2. arranging of *sthaṇḍila* with sand or earth;
3. drawing lines on the *sthaṇḍila* with a samidh (fuel stick),
4. keeping the samidh on the lines with its end towards the east,
5. sprinkling *sthaṇḍila* with water on its north or east,
6. keeping the samidh (with which lines were drawn) outside the *sthaṇḍila* towards the north-east,
7. *ācamana* (by the sacrificer),
8. placing fire (either produced by attrition or brought from the house of a srotriya or the ordinary one) on the *sthaṇḍila* facing the performer,
9. placing two or three samidhs on the fire,
10. keep ready of idhma (15 samidhs) and a bunch of darbha grass.
11. *parisamūhana* (wiping the ground round the fire from north-east with the hand that has water in it),
12. *paristarāṇa* (strewing darbha grass round the altar first to the east, then to the south, then to the west and lastly to the north),
13. silent *paryukṣana* (sprinkling of water thrice round the fire, each time taking water in the hand separately),



14. *apah-praṇayana* (carrying forward the water to the north of the fire) in a vessel of bell-metal or earthenware,
15. *ajyotpavana* (purification of the clarified butter with two kuśa blades as strainers thrice, once with mantra and twice silently),<sup>81</sup>
16. the two *āghāras*<sup>82</sup> and the two oblations of ājya.
17. the principal oblations as directed in the various sūtras,
18. finally an oblation to Agni Sviṣṭakṛte.

The method of offering an oblation is to repeat the mantra preceded by *om* and to add *svāhā* at the end, to put the *ahuti* (oblation) on fire and to say:— ‘this is for such and such a god and not mine’.

The Āśv. gr̥hya-sūtra (I.4) further adds that in *cauḷa*, *upanayana*, *godāna* and marriage there are (as part of these ceremonies) first four oblations of clarified butter to be made with the three mantras (Rig. IX.66.10-12):— ‘O Agni, you purify life &c’, and with the one verse:— ‘Prajāpati no other than you etc’, (Rig. X.121.10) or with the vyāhṛtis, or according to some teachers with a combination (of the rk verses and vyāhṛtis<sup>83</sup>), while according to others there are no such special oblations.<sup>84</sup>

In modern times, after the *sthaṇḍila* is sprinkled with water, fire is established on it under various names depending on the rite to be performed e.g. in *upanayana* and marriage respectively the fire is called ‘*Samudbhava*’ and ‘*Yojaka*’. Then fuel sticks already sprinkled with holy water are placed on the fire and it is fanned into a flame and prayer is offered to it in the words:— ‘*agne Vaiśvanara Sāṇḍilya meṣa-dhvaja mama sammukho varado bhava*’. Then follow *parisamuhana* and other acts stated above.

Just as homa is required in most gr̥hya rites there are certain matters common to almost all rites. One is that in all saṃskāras one has to feed brāhmaṇas learned in the Vedas. All rites begin with ācamana by the performer, pranayama by him, reference to the desa (place) and kala (time) and a saṅkalpa (a declaration of what rite he is performing and for what purpose). After these, according to medieval works, follow in all auspicious sacrites the worship of Gaṇapati, Puṇyāha-vacana, the worship of Mātr̥s (mother goddess) and Nandī-śrāddha. According to some there is only one saṅkalpa for all these; according to others there is a separate saṅkalpa for each of Puṇyāha-vacana, matrkapūjana and Nāndī-śrāddha. In all auspicious rites the performer takes a bath first, ties his topknot, has a piece of ground cowdunged and lines with coloured materials are drawn on a portion of the ground, two auspicious *kalaśas* (jars) filled with water are placed on such ornamented ground with their mouths covered with a pot, all articles necessary for worship are placed to the north of the spot, two wooden low stools or planks are arranged to the west of the spot so decorated, the performer sits on one plank facing the east, his wife sits to his right and if the ceremony is meant;

<sup>81</sup> In some works *pātra-sādana* is taught after *paristarāna* and *paryuksana* (vide Nārāyana on Āśv. gr. I.3.3.). It consists in placing the several vessels to the north of the fire on darbha grass in pairs with both hands, the faces of the vessels being turned down. Then he takes two blades (as described in Āśv. gr. I.3.4) as *pavitras* and places them in the *proksana-pātra* the face of which is turned up and pours water in the *proksana-pātra* and thrice purifies the water with them, then the other vessels are turned upwards, the bundle of idhma is loosened and all vessels are sprinkled with water, then the *pranīta-pātra* is placed to the west of the fire, the two *pavitras* (kuśa blades used as strainers are placed inside it and water is poured into the *pranīta-pātra* and sandalwood paste is mixed with it, the vessel is raised level with one's nose and placed to the north of the fire on darbhās, and covered with darbhās. This is *pātrasādana*. Nārāyana mentions also other acts not specified by Āśvalāyana which may be done even by a person following that sūtra viz. carrying a firebrand (burning blade of darbha) round the clarified butter and cleansing of *sruk* and *sruva*, and throwing of the string that tied together idhma into the fire at the end of the oblation to Svistakṛt.

<sup>82</sup> *āghāra* consists in pouring in a continuous stream clarified butter for Prajāpati on the fire from the north-west to the south-east once and then from the south-west to the north-east for Indra.

<sup>83</sup> i.e. there will be eight oblations (4 with rks and 4 with vyāhṛtis).

<sup>84</sup> i.e. there are no oblations with the 4 verses nor with the four vyāhṛtis, but oblations will have to be offered to those deities that are prescribed as the deities where no special rule exists (vide Āśv. gr. I.3.8 set out above at p.208).

for his son, the latter sits to the right of the wife; the brāhmaṇas are seated a little away to the right of the wife, facing the north and the performer sips water (takes ācamana). Except where a religious rite is to be performed on a fixed day (e.g, anniversary śrāddha etc.) all saṃskāras and other auspicious rites are to be performed at certain auspicious times only.

### 1. Gaṇapati-pūjana:

The well-known mantra ('*gaṇanām tva gaṇapatim havāmahe*' Rig. II.23.1) which is used to invoke Gaṇeśa is addressed to Brahmaṇaspati. Indra is addressed as Gaṇapati in Rig. X.112.9. In the Tai. S. IV.1.2.2 and Vaj.S. paśus (and the horse specially) are said to be the Gaṇapatya of Rudra. The Ait. Br. IV.4 495 expressly says that the mantra '*gaṇanam tvā .....*' is addressed to Brāhmaṇaspati. In the Vaj. S.16.25 we have the plural (*Gaṇapatibhyaśca vo namo*') and in 22.30 we have the singular '*Gaṇapataye svaha*'. The peculiar features of Gaṇeśa as described in the medieval works, viz. the head of an elephant, pot-belly, mouse as vāhana (conveyance) are entirely wanting in the Vedic literature. In Vaj. S. III.57 the mouse is said to be the paśu (animal to be offered to) of Rudra. In the Tai. Ar. (X.15) there is a verse;- 'We contemplate Vakratunda, therefore may the tusked (god) impel us'. In the Gṛhya and Dharma-sūtras there is no reference to the worship of Gaṇeśa at the beginning of all auspicious rites. That is comparatively a later cult. In the Baud.Dh.S. (II.5.83-90, S.B.E. vol.14. p.254) the Deva-tarpana includes the propitiation of Vighna, Vināyaka, Vīra, Sthula, Varada, Hastimukha, Vakratunda, Ekadanta and Lambodara. But this part of the Baud Dh.S. is of doubtful authenticity. All the above are the appellations of Vināyaka (vide Baud. Gṛhya-śeṣa-sūtra III.10.6). In the Mānava Gṛhya II.14 it is said that the Vināyakas are four viz. Śālakaṭaṅkaṭa, Kuṣmāṇḍa-rāja-putra, Usmita and Deva-yajana. They are evil spirits and people when seized by them have bad dreams and see in them inauspicious sights such as shaved persons, persons with matted hair or wearing yellowish garments, camels, hogs, asses, caṇḍalas. When seized by them, princes, though capable, do not get their king doms; maidens, though endowed with all accomplishments, cannot secure husbands; married women have no children or even virtuous wives lose their children in infancy; husbandmen lose their crops etc. The Mānava-Gṛhya then prescribes propitiatory rites to remove the effects of Vināyaka seizure. The Baijavāpa-Gṛhya (quoted by Aparārka p.563 on Yāj. I.275) says that there are four Vināyakas:— Mita, Sammita, Śālakaṭaṅkaṭa and Kuṣmāṇḍa-rāja-putra and describes seizure by them and its effects in the same way as the Mānava-Gṛhya. These two show the first stage in the development of the cult of Vināyaka. Vināyakas are at this stage malevolent spirits who cause dangers and obstacles of various kinds. In this cult various elements from the terrific aspects of Rudra were probably first drawn upon and amalgamated with other elements drawn from aboriginal cults.

The next stage is indicated by the Yāj. smṛti (I.271-294). Here Vināyaka (I.271) is said to be one appointed by Brahma and Budra to the over-lordship of the Gaṇas, he is represented not only as causing obstacles, but also as bring success in the actions and rites undertaken by men. Yāj. enumerates the results of the seizure by Vināyaka in the same way as the Mānava-Gṛhya. Yāj. I.285 says that Mita, Sammita, Śālakaṭaṅkaṭa, Kuṣmāṇḍa-rāja-putra, are the four names of the *one* Vināyaka and that Ambika is the mother of Vināyaka. It is noteworthy that Yāj. does not employ any one of the well-known epithets of Vināyaka, viz. Ekadanta, Heramba, Gajanana, Lambodara etc.

The Baud.gr. śeṣa-sūtra III.10 prescribes a somewhat different procedure for propitiating Vināyaka and styles him 'the lord of bhūtas', and also 'hastimukha' and 'vighneśvara' and prescribes the offerings of *apūpa* and *modaka* to him. Thus Baudhāyana is nearer to the medieval conception of Gaṇeśa than even Yajñavalkya. The Adiparva makes Gaṇeśa write the Mahābharata to the dictation of Vyasa; but this part is apocryphal as many mss. altogether omit this episode. The other

references in Vanaparva 65.23 and Anuśāsana 150.25 bear affinity to the description of Vināyaka in the Mānava-Gr̥hya.

The Gobhila-smṛti (in verse) 1.13 prescribes that at the beginning of all rites, the Matr̥s together with Gaṇādhipa (the lord of Gaṇas) should be worshipped. The well-known characteristics of Gaṇesa and his worship had become fixed before the 5th or 6th century of the Common era. Kalidāsa does not refer to Gaṇesa. The Gāthasaptasatī has references to Gaṇesa. In that work (IV.72) an image of Gaṇesa is referred to as made use of as a pillow and the tip of his trunk is mentioned in V.3. In Codrington's 'Ancient India' plate XXXIX there is an image of Gaṇesa referable to about 500 A.D. Vide Dr. Bhandarkar in 'Vaisnavism and Saivism' p.147. Bana in his Harṣacarite (IV Ucchvasa verse 2) speaks of the large tusk of Gaṇadhipa' and in describing Bhairavācārya (Harṣacaritra III) associates Vināyaka with obstacles and learning and also indicates that he had the head of an elephant. In the Vamana-Pūraṇa (chap.54) there is a fantastic legend about the birth of Vināyaka.

The Mahāvīracarita (II.38) speaks of the tusk of Heramba. The Matsya-Pūraṇa (chap. 260.52-55) describes how the images of Vināyaka are to be made. Aparārka (p.343) quotes a passage from the Matsya-Pūraṇa (289.7) on the *mahādāna* called *Mahā-bhūta-ghaṭa*, in which it is said that Vināyaka should be shown as riding a mouse. The Kṛtya-ratnakara p.271 quotes passage from the Bhaviṣya-Pūraṇa for the worship of Gaṇesa or the 4th day of Bhadrapada. In modern times a verse is repeated in which the shrines of the eight Vināyakas in the Deccan are enumerated. Among the earliest epigraphic references to Gaṇapati is the one in the Nidhanpur plate of Bhāskar-varman (middle of 7th century). The Gaṇapati pūjana consists in the performer repeating the mantra Rig. II.23.1 (*'gaṇānam tva gaṇapatim'*) as a prayer and then bowing to Gaṇeśa with the words '*Om Mahā gaṇapataye namo namaḥ nirvighnam kuru*' (salutations to the great Gaṇapati, make (this rite) free from obstacles'.

## 2. Puṇyāha-vācana:

Although many elaborate descriptions of this are given in later digests like the Saṃskāra-ratnamālā, this was originally in ancient times a very simple and brief rite. The Āp.Dh S. (I.4.13.8) says that in ordinary life in all auspicious rites (such as marriage) all sentences begin with Om 'as in saying '*puṇyāham*', '*svasti*' and '*rddhim*'. The performer of a religious rite honours the assembled brāhmaṇas with gandha (sandal wood paste), flowers and tāmbūla (betel) and requests with folded hands:— 'may you declare the day to be auspicious for such and such a ceremony which I, by name so and so, am about to perform', and then the brāhmaṇas respond by saying:— 'Om, may it be auspicious'. Each of these three sentences (with *svasti*, *puṇyāham* and *rddhim*) is to be repeated thrice according to Baud. gr. śeṣa-sūtra 1,10.

## 3. Mātṛka pūjana:

The Mātṛs (the Mother Goddesses) do not figure in the sūtras. But that their worship was prevalent certainly in the first centuries of the Common era throughout India can be proved from several sources. In the drama Mrcchakatika (I) Carudatta asks his friend Maitreya to offer bali to the Mātṛs. The Gobhila-smṛti (in verse 1.11-12) names 14 matr̥s viz. Gaurī, Padmā, Sacī, Medhā, Savitrī, Vijayā, Jayā, Devasenā, Svadhā, Svaha, Dhṛti, Puṣṭi, Tuṣṭi and one's own deity (abhīṣṭa-devatā). In the Markandeya (chap.88.11-20 and 38) seven matr̥s have been named as Matrgaṇa. The Matsya-Pūraṇa (chap.179.9-32) names over a hundred mother goddesses (like Maheśvarī, Brahmī, Kaumarī, Cāmuṇḍa), while in chap.261 (24-36), there is a description of the images of some of the matr̥s like Brahmanī etc. The Bṛhat-Saṃhita of Varahamihira (chap.58.56) refers to the images of the mother goddesses. Bana in his Kādambarī frequently refers to the matr̥s, to their worship and to

dilapidated temples of these goddesses. The Kṛtyaratnākara quotes a passage from the Bhaviṣya-Pūraṇa at p.261 about the images of the seven matrs and pp.305 and 307 quote the Devī-Pūraṇa about the worship of matrs and the flowers dear to them. The worship of matrs is mentioned in the Bihar Stone Pillar Inscription of Skandagupta (Gupta Inscriptions pp.47, 49). The Calukyas are often described as 'cherished by the seven matrs' (I. A. vol. VI. p.73 in 535 A.D. and E. I. vol. IX. p.100 in 660 A. D.). The Kadambas are described as meditating on Kartikeya-Svamī and on the group of matrs (I. A. vol. VI. p.25) 5 6 . Similarly a temple to the Matrs is said to have been erected by Mayūrakṣa, the minister of Viśva-varman in 480 of the Mālava Era i.e .423-24 C.E. (Gupta Inscriptions p.74). Whence the cult of matrs, which was not described in the Gṛhya-sūtras, was derived it is difficult to say. Sir John Marshall in his famous work on Mohenjo-Daro (vol. I. p. VII and pp.49-52) shows how figurines of mother goddesses are common at Mohenjo-Daro. That shows that the cult prevailed in the remotest antiquity and was probably taken up by the followers of the Vedic religion and affiliated to the worship of Durga, the spouse of Siva. In Rig. IX.102.4 the seven mothers are said to regulate soma when it is being prepared (the seven mothers are probably the seven metres or the seven rivers).

#### 4. Nāndi śrāddha:

This will be dealt with under Śrāddhas later on.

### 1. Puṃsavana

This rite is so called because in virtue of it a male is born. The word 'puṃsavana' occurs in the Atharva Veda VI.11.1 where it appears to be used literally (in the sense of 'giving birth to a male child') — 'The Āśvattha tree is on top of the Samī tree, there the birth of a male has been effected'. The Āśv. gr.1.13.2-7 describes the rite as follows: —

'he should in the third month of pregnancy, under the constellation Tisya (i.e. Puṣya) give (thrice) to eat to the wife, after she has fasted, (on the preceding Punarvasu constellation) in the curds of a cow which has a calf of the same colour (with the cow) two beans and one grain of barley for each handful of curds. On his asking (the woman) — 'what dost you drink? What dost you drink?', she should thrice reply — 'puṃsavana', (generation of a male), 'puṃsavana'. In this way (he) should make her take three handfuls (of curds with two beans and barley).'

There is some difference of view as to details. The Āp. gr., Hir. gr. and Bharadvaja gr. place puṃsavana after *sīmantonayana* and Āp. says it may be performed when pregnancy becomes apparent. Instead of two beans and a barley grain in curds<sup>85</sup>, he requires the bringing of a shoot of the branch of a nyagrodha tree which (tree) points eastward or northward and which has two (fruits that look like) testicles and the pounding of the shoot and fruits by a girl who has not attained puberty between two upper stones of (two mills) with water. He then prescribes that the wife should lie down on her back to the west of the fire herself facing the east and that the husband should insert in her right nostril the pounded substance with his thumb with the formula (*puṃsavanam-asi*) found in Āp. M. P. (II.11.14). San.gr. (I.20, S.B.E. vol. 29. p.46) says that the rite may be performed on Tisya or Sravana, while the Bharadvāja gr. (I.22) says that it may be performed on Tisya or Hasta or Anuradha or Uttara or Proṣṭhapada; Pāraskara and Baijavapa say it should be performed when the moon is in conjunction with a male nakṣatra. Par. gr.1.14 and Jātukarṇya (Sam.Pr. p.167) and

<sup>85</sup> Nārāyaṇa says that in this rite one has to perform at first the sthalipāka intended for Prajāpato up to the offering of the two ājya-bhāgas and then one should perform what is specially prescribed here. He further notes that the curds may be of a cow the calf of which is of a different colour, if one of the same colour could not be had. The curds are to be poured from the vessel of curds on to the woman's hand thrice, she is to lick the curds every time with two beans and a grain of barley; the beans and barley grain are suggestive. This is made clear by Āp. gr. 14. 10

Baijavapa (ibid.) say that the rite should be performed in the 2nd or 3rd month of pregnancy, Āśv., Hir., San., Gobhila, Khadira prescribe the 3rd month. Yāj. I.11, Par. gr. (I.14), Viṣṇu Dh. S.27.2 and Br̥haspati (quoted in the Sin. C.) say that puṃsavana should be performed before the foetus begins to move or throb in the womb. In the Kāṭhaka gr.32.2 the proper time is said to be when the greater number of months of pregnancy are past (i.e. after the 5th ) and the Mānava gr. says that it should be performed in the 8th month of pregnancy. Devapala (com. of Kāṭhaka gr.) says the usage is to perform it in the 8th month and Brahmabala (another com.) says that the usage is to perform it in the 7th or 8th month of pregnancy. Most of the Gr̥hya-sūtras refer to the pounding of the shoot of the Nyagrodha tree (or some other plant) and inserting the pounded substance in the wife's right nostril. The mantras repeated when inserting the substance in her nostril are different according to most sūtras.<sup>86</sup>

The several sūtras of the Black Yajur Veda show the greatest divergence among themselves. It would be clear that the puṃsavana rite has several elements, religious (homa and son's importance from ancient times), symbolical or suggestive (the drinking of curds with beans and grain of barley) and medical (inserting some substance in the woman's nostrils). For what purpose the placing of the bile of a tortoise on the woman's lap was prescribed by Pāraskara alone (1.14) it is difficult to say. Later works like the Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā prescribe a homa for puṃsavana also and remark that when in the absence of the husband, the husband's brother or other relative performs the rite, it should be performed in ordinary kitchen fire. This latter rule applies to *Sīmantonayana* also.

## 2. Anavalobhana or Garbha-rakṣana:

This rite was apparently part of Puṃsavana. Āśv. gr., as already said, separately mentions puṃsavana and anavalobhana as referred to in the Upanisad. The Baijavapa gr. (quoted in the Saṃskāra-prakāśa p.171) says:—

'He performs the *puṃsavana* and *anavalobhana* in the fortnight of the waxing moon on an auspicious day when the moon is in conjunction with a nakṣatra (deemed to be) a male'.

This shows that both were performed on the same day. Another sūtra of Baijavapa quoted in the Saṃskāra-mayukha says that the two are to be performed in the 2nd or 3rd month This rite is so called because by virtue of its performance the foetus does not miscarry or is not destroyed (i.e. it is really *anavalopana* from the root *lup* with *ava*). Āśv. gr. (I.13.5-7) describes it as follows:—

'He then inserts in her right nostril in the shade of a round apartment the (sap) of an herb which is not faded; according to some (teachers), with the Prajāvat and Jivaputra mantras. Having offered a sacrifice of cooked food to Prajāpati he should touch the region of her heart with the verse 'Oh you whose hair is well parted, what is hidden in thy heart, in Prajāpati, that I understand, (may you understand) me who know that; may I not endure injury to my son'.

It will be seen that the inserting of *dūrva-rasa* in the woman's nostril, touching her heart and prayers to the gods for the safety of the foetus are the principal features of this rite in Āśv.

According to Saunaka-kārika that rite is called *anavalobhana* whereby the foetus remains undisturbed or does not miscarry. According to the Smṛtyarthasara it is to be performed in the 4th month. According to Laghu-Āśvalayana *anavalobhana* and *sīmantonayana* were to be performed in the 4th, 6th or 8th month of pregnancy and verses 6-7 give the same details as in Āśv. gr. The

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<sup>86</sup> Saṅkhayana (S.B.E. vol.29,p.46) prescribes the four verses Rig. I, 1.3, III.4.9., V.37 .2 and IX 3.9. with svāhā at the end of each verse.Paraskara (S.B.E. vol.29, p.292) prescribes Vaj. S. XIII 4 (Rig. X.121.1) and XXXI.17;Khadira gr. (S.B.E. vol.29. p.394) mentions Mantra-Brahmana I.4.8, the Kāṭhaka gr. quotes Kāṭhaka Samhita.

Śān.gr. (I.21.1-3, S.B.E. vol.29, p.47) speaks of a ceremony called *Garbha-rakṣana* (protection of the foetus): —

"In the fourth month the *garbha-rakṣana*; offering six oblations into fire from a mess of cooked food with the six verses of the hymn 'brāhmaṇagnih' (Rig. X.162) with svaha uttered at the end of each verse, with the verses:— 'from thy eyes, thy nose' (Rig. X, 163.1-6), besmearing her limbs with clarified butter at each verse".

This seems to be another version of *anavalobhana*. According to Āśv.gr. karikas of Kumarila (I.6.5) this rite is to be repeated on every conception. Most other writers would hold that like *pūṃsavana* it is to be performed only once.

### 3. Sīmantonayana<sup>87</sup>

This word literally means 'parting of the hair (of a woman) upwards,' Yāj. (1.11), Veda-Vyasa (1.18) call this saṃskāra simply 'sīmanta', while Gobhila (II.7.1), Mānava gr. (1.12.2), Kāṭhaka gr. (31.1) call it *sīmanta-karaṇa*. Āp.gr. and Bharadvaja gr. (I.21) describe it before *pūṃsavana*. The Āśv.gr. (1.14.1-9) describes it as follows:—

"In the fourth month of pregnancy the *Sīmantonayana* (should be performed). In the fortnight of the waxing moon, when the moon may be in conjunction with a nakṣatra that is (regarded as) male (or the name of which is of the masculine gender, according to Nārāyaṇa); then he establishes fire (i.e. performs the details of homa up to offering of ājyabhagas) and having spread to the west of the fire a bull's hide with its neck to the east and the hair outside, he makes eight oblations (of ājya, clarified butter), while his wife sits on it (hide) and takes hold (of his hand), with the two (verses) — 'may Dhātṛ give to his worshipper' (Atharva Veda VII.17.2-3), with the two verses, 'I invoke Raka' (Rig. II.32.4-5), with the three (verses) called 'nejamesa' (a khilasukta after Rig. X.184 and Āp.M.P.1.12.7-9) and with the verse:— 'O Prajāpati, no one other than you' (Rig. X.121.10). He then three times parts her hair upwards (beginning from the front and proceeding backwards) with a bunch of an even number of unripe fruits with a porcupine quill that has three white spots (or rings) and with three bunches of kuśa grass, with the words 'bhur, bhuvah, svah, om' or he does so four times. He gives orders to two lute players 'sing (praise of) king soma.' (They sing this gātha) 'may soma, our king, bless the human race. Fixed is the wheel (dominion) of this (river); (here they take the name in the vocative) of the river near which they dwell. And let them do whatever aged brāhmaṇa women whose husbands and children are alive direct. A bull is the fee (for the sacrifice)".

In the Āp. Mantra-pāṭha thirteen verses are devoted to this saṃskāra in all, some of which occur in the Rig and the Atharva Veda and Tai. S. We have here first the religious part of homa and oblations with mantras. But this rite is mainly of a social and festival nature intended to keep the pregnant woman in good cheer. The Samskāra-prakāśa (pp.172-173) quotes some verses from an Āśvalyana stating that this rite serves the purpose of driving certain female goblins that thirst for the destruction of the foetus; the parting of the hair by the husband with the quill, bunch of unripe fruits and darbhas and tying a garland round her neck, giving her boiled rice mixed with mung and ghee and asking lute players to sing indicate its festive character. There is a great divergence among the Gṛhya-sūtras about the several details of this saṃskāra and the order in which they take place. The Sm.C. after pointing out a few divergences remarks that one should follow the rules of one's own Gṛhya-sūtra.

A few important divergences are pointed out below. This saṃskāra was to be performed in the 3rd month according to Kāṭhaka gr., in 3rd, 6th or 8th according to the Mānava; in the 4th month

<sup>87</sup> This is treated in the following gr. sūtras: Āśv. I.14.1-9; San. I.22, Āp.14.1-8, Hir. II.1, Baud I.10, Bharadvaja I.21, Gobhila II.7.1-12, Khadira II.2.24-28, Par.1.15, Kathaka 31.1-5, Vaikhanasa III.12.

according to Āśv., Āp., Hir. (II.1), in 4th or 6th according to Gobhila (II.7.2) and in the 4th 6th or 8th according to Khadira, in 6th or 8th according to Pāraskara, Yāj. (I.11), Viṣṇu Dh. S. (27.3), Saṅkha; in the 7th according to San. gr, (I. '22.1), in the 8th according to Vaik. and Veda-Vyasa (I.18). Saṅkha as quoted in the Smṛticandrika (I. p.17) says that it should be performed on the foetus beginning to move and up to the time of delivery. Āśv M San. and Hir. require that the moon must be in conjunction with a male nakṣatra. Hir. gr. alone prescribes that the saṃskāra should take place in a round apartment.

It is remarkable that Āśv. alone requires that the woman should be seated on a bull's hide, which shows that till his day such a hide was not treated (as is done in modern times) as a very unholy thing. Pāraskara makes her sit on a soft chair or seat, while Gobhila prescribes a seat of northward pointed darbhas.

There is great divergence as to the number of oblations and the verses to be repeated even in sūtras of the same Veda, e.g. Āśvalāyana prescribes eight oblations and eight mantras, but Sāṅkhāyana prescribes only six (by omitting the verses Rig.11.32.4-5). Gobhila, Khadira, Bharadvaja, Pāraskara and Sāṅkhāyana prescribe the preparation of boiled rice with ghee thereon or śeṣame and the first three of these say that the woman should be asked to look at the ghee on the mass of rice and be questioned 'what do you see ' and she should be made to reply 'I see progeny' (Bharadvaja has the reply 'sons and cattle'). Almost all Gṛhya-sūtras agree that in parting the hair the husband is to use a bunch of unripe fruit (Gobhila, Par. and San. specifying that it was to be Udumbara fruit), a porcupine quill with three white spots and three bunches of kuśa grass. Pāraskara and Gobhila add the use of a Vīratara stick and a full spindle. Some like Āśv. prescribe that the parting must be done thrice, Gobhila seems to prescribe it six times, while Khadira (II.2.25) expressly says that it is to be done only once. San. says that the unripe fruits are to be tied to a string of three twisted threads and the string is to be suspended from her neck as a garland. Par. also seems to suggest the same. Āp. also says that the husband should (by way of ornament) tie a string of barley grains with young shoots on the woman's head (14.7) and Vaikhānasa says that the woman is to wear a garland and have fragrant unguents applied to her body.

Many of the Gṛhya-sūtras direct that lute players should sing a verse or verses. Gobhila, Khadira, Vaik. are silent on this point, but Gobhila prescribes that brāhmaṇa women should address auspicious words to her 'Be you the mother of a valiant son.' There is divergence as to whose praise is to be sung. San and Par. say that the ballad sung must be in praise of the (ruling) king or any one else who is very valiant. Āśv., Hir., Baud., Bharadvaja and Par. prescribe a gātha in honour of king Soma (the plant). Apastamba refers to two verses, one of which praises king Yaugandharī and the other king Soma and prescribes that the first is to be sung for all varṇas residing in the Salva countries, while the second is to be recited by brāhmaṇas. Some of the sūtras like Āśv, Par., Bharadvaja allow that in the ballad to be sung by the lute players the river on which the woman and her husband dwell is to be invoked.

Āśv. and San. expressly state that a bull is the fee in this saṃskāra for the officiating priest;. Āp., Par. and Bharadvaja say that brāhmaṇas are to be fed in this rite. Sāṅkha, says that the woman is to sing merrily and wear gold ornaments if she likes. The Āp. and Bhāradvaja gr. say that the husband is to observe silence that day till the stars begin to appear and then after going out of the house from the east or north, he should first touch a calf and then mutter the vyāhrtis (bhuh, bhuvah, svah) and give up his silence.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> The S. B. B. vol. XXX p. 280 translates: — "he ties barley grains with young shoots to the head of the wife ; then she keeps silence until the stars appear '. But this is wrong. Throughout this section the performer (kartā) is the husband ; even in the 7th sūtra grammar requires that if the kartā of tying the garland ('*abadhya*') is the husband then the karts of '*visrjet*' also must be the husband. Sudarśana notes (in his com. ) that some read the sūtras as '*vācam yacchata ā-nakṣatrebhyaḥ visṛjatah*' (in the dual); then both husband and wife have to observe silence. He also notes that according to some the actions from tying the yava onwards

The Mānava-Gr̥hya (1.12.2) speaks of parting of hair in the marriage rite also. Laghu-Āśvalayana (IV. verses 8-16) gives a faithful summary of the Āśv. gr, Apastamba, Baud., Bharadvaja and Par. expressly say that this saṃskāra is to be performed only once at the first conception. For the difference of view among nibandhakāras vide above on *garbha-dhāna*. Viṣṇu was of opinion that *sīmantonnyana* is a saṃskāra of the woman, but that according to some it is a saṃskāra of the foetus and so was to be repeated at each conception. On account of the great divergence of details one may conjecture that this saṃskāra was not very ancient in the times of the Gr̥hya-sūtras. It appears however that gradually this picturesque rite receded in the background, so much so that Manu does not even mention it by name, though Yāj. names it.

In modern times in Western India some people perform a rite in the 8th month of pregnancy (called in Marathi *āṭhaṅgulem*) which retains some vestiges of the ancient rite (such as the garland of udumbara fruit).

#### 4. Viṣṇubali

According to Vasistha quoted in the Saṃskāra-prakāśa (p.178) this ceremony was to be performed in the 8th month of pregnancy, on the 2nd 7th or 12th tithi of the bright fortnight and when the moon was in the Sravana, Rohinī or Puṣya constellation. The same work quotes verses of Āśvalāyana describing the ceremony and stating its purpose viz. to remove harm to the foetus and for easy delivery of the woman and that it was to be performed during every conception. On the preceding day Nandī-śrāddha was to be performed and then homa to fire was to be performed up to the offering of ājya-bhagas. To the south of the fire another sthaṇḍila of the shape of a lotus or svastika was to be drawn on which 64 oblations of boiled rice with ghee thereon were to be offered to Viṣṇu (some offer them on the fire itself) with the verses of Rig. I.22.16-21, Rig. I.154.1-6, Rig. VI.69.1-8, Rig. VII.104.11, Rig. X.90, 1-16, Rig. X.184.1-3. Then to the north-east of the fire, a square plot should be smeared with cowdung and be divided into 64 squares with white dust and 64 offerings of boiled rice should be offered with the same mantras and in their midst one ball of rice should be offered to Viṣṇu with the mantra loudly uttered 'namo Narāyanāya' and the husband and wife should partake separately of two balls of the same rice. Then the offering to Agni Sviṣṭakṛt should be made, dakṣiṇa should be distributed and brāhmaṇas should be fed.

The Vaik. (III.13) describes Viṣṇubali differently. The gods with Agni as the first are invoked unto the northern pranidhi vessel and then at the end Puruṣa is invoked four times with 'om bhuh', 'om bhuvah', 'om suvah', 'om bhur-bhuvah-suvah', then to the east of the fire he invokes Viṣṇu on seats of darbha grass with the names, Kesava, Nārāyaṇa, Madhava, Govinda, Viṣṇu, Madhusudana, Trivikrama, Vamana, Srīdhara, Hrsikesa, Padmanabha, Damodara; then he bathes Viṣṇu, with mantras 'āpaḥ (Tai. S. IV.1.5.11 =Rig. X, 9.1-3), 'Hiranyavarṇah' (Tai. S. V.6.1) and the chapter beginning 'pavamānah' (Tai. Br. I.4.8); he does worship (with sandal paste, flowers etc.) by each of Viṣṇu's twelve names, then he offers 12 oblations of clarified butter with the mantras:—

- 'atho deva .....' (Rig, I.22.16-21),
- 'visnor-nu kam.....' (Rig. I 154.1-7= Tai S.I.2.13),
- 'tad-asya priyam.....' (Tai. Br. II.4.6 = Rig. I 154.5),
- 'pratad viṣṇuh.....' (Tai. Br. II.4.3 = Rig. I.154.2),
- 'paro matraya.....' (Tai. Br. II.8.3),
- 'vicakrame trir-devah.....' (Tai. Br. II.8.3).

Then he announces as offering a mess of rice cooked in milk on which ājya has been poured to the god and sacrifices it to him with the twelve names repeating the twelve mantras (Rig. I.22.16-21,



and Rig. I.154.1-6). Having praised the god with mantras from the four Vedas he should prostrate himself before the god after taking twelve names with the word 'namah' at the end of each (i.e. by saying 'Keśavāya namah.' &c.). What remains of the rice cooked in milk is eaten by the wife.

### 5. Soṣyantikarma<sup>89</sup>

This seems to be a very ancient rite. It means 'a rite for a woman who is about to be delivered of a child'. Rig. V.78.7-9 gives the earliest indications of this rite:—

'Just as the wind moves a lake on all sides, so may the foetus move and come out, being (now) in the tenth month. Just as the wind, the forest and the sea are in movement, so may you (foetus) that art; (now) in the tenth month, come out together with the after-birth, may the male child having been sleeping ten months inside his mother, come out a living being, unharmed, from his mother, herself being alive.'

Br. Up. VI.4.23 also refers to this rite:—

"He sprinkles with water the woman who is about to be delivered (with the mantras) 'just as the wind ..... , may it come out with the after-birth' (same as Rig. V.78.7 except the last pāda). This is a pen of Indra with a bolt and with a chamber for rest: O Indra, leave it and come out; with the foetus and after-birth."

Āp. gr. describes the ceremony as follows:—

'Now is described the rite to secure a rapid delivery. With a cup that has not been dipped in water before he draws water in the direction of the current (of a river or spring); he places Turyantī plant at his wife's feet; he should then touch on the head (with both hands) the woman who is in child-birth with the verse (Āp. mantra-pāṭha II, 11.15), should sprinkle her with the waters (brought as above) with the next three verses (Āp. mantra-pāṭha II.11.16-18). If the after-birth does not come out, he should sprinkle her with the water (brought) as directed above with the mantra —Āp. mantra-pāṭha II.11 19-20). Bharadvaja is similar to Āp., but gives verses that are slightly different from those of the Āp. M.P. Gobhila and Khadira are very brief and say that a homa with two oblations of clarified butter is to be performed with the verses of the Mantra-brāhmaṇa I 5.6-7. Pāraskara also speaks of the sprinkling of the woman with two verses of Vaj. S. VIII.28-29 (the first being almost like Rig. V.78.7) and prescribes the recital of Atharva Veda I.11.4 for the falling of the after-birth.

Aditya-darśana on Kāthaka gr. (33.1) remarks that this rite is not really a saṃskāra and Devapala says that this is a rite which has a seen result (while saṃskāras are deemed to have an unseen result).

### 6. Jātakarma

This appears to have been a rite of hoary antiquity. In the Tai. S.525 II.2.5.3-4 we read:—

'one should offer a cake cooked on twelve potsherds to Vaiśvanara, when a son is born (to a man) ..... That son, for whom when born they perform this 'iṣṭi ', does become pure, glorious, substantial in (abundant) food, full of vigour and possessed of cattle'.

This shows that Vaiśvanareṣṭi was performed on the birth of a son. Jaimini (IV.3.38) holds a discussion on this passage and establishes the conclusion that this *iṣṭi* is for the benefit of the son

<sup>89</sup> Vide Āp. gr.14.13-15; Hir. gr. II.2.8 II.3.1, Bharadvaja gr. 1.23, Gobhila gr. II.7.13-14, Khadira gr. II 2.29-30, Par. gr.1.16, Kathaka gr.33.1-3.

and not of the father and the bhāṣya of Śābara gives the further propositions that this *iṣṭi* is to be performed after the *jāta-karma* rites are finished (and not immediately at birth) and that it is to be performed on a full moon day or a new moon day following ten days after birth. The Sat. Br. (S.B.E. vol.44 p.129) prescribes a certain rite before the navel string is cut:—

"regarding a new born son let him say to five brāhmaṇas before the navel string has been cut 'breathe over him in this way But if he should be unable to obtain them, he may even himself breathe over him while walking round him".

The Br. Up. I.5.2 contains the following interesting passage —

"when a boy is born they first make him lick clarified butter, and they make him take the breast (of the mother) after that."

At the end of the Br. Up. (VI.4.24-28) there is an elaborate description of the *jātakarma*:—

"When (a son) is born, having kindled the fire, having placed the son on one's lap, having poured curds mixed with ghee in a bell-metal vessel he offers oblations of the curds mixed with ghee with the mantras 'may I maintain a thousand, prospering in my house; may there be no break with regard to progeny and cattle; svaha! I offer to these in my mind my pranas, svaha! Whatever I have done in excess in my work or whatever I may have left deficient in this (rite), may the wise (Agni) (called) Svisakrt make that well sacrificed and well offered for us, svaha ! Then after bringing down his mouth up to the right ear of the son he should recite thrice the word 'speech', then having poured together curds, honey and clarified butter, he makes the (son) eat it by means of (a spoon of) gold not covered with anything else with the mantras 'I place in you *bhuh*, I place in you *bhuvah*, I place in you *svah*, I place in you *bhur-bhuvah svah*, I place in you all'. Then he gives him (the boy that is born) a name with the words 'you ark the Veda'. That becomes his secret name. Then he hands the boy over to his mother and gives him the breast of the mother with the mantra (Rig. I.164.49) 'Oh, Sarasvatī! make that breast ready for being sucked, which lies on thy body, which engenders happiness, by which you nourishest all blessings, which bestows gems, that wins wealth and is a generous donor'. Then he solemnly addresses the mother of the child with the following mantras 'O Maitravarunī!<sup>90</sup> O strong one! you are Ila, she (the mother) has given birth to a valiant (boy); may you be endowed with valiant sons, since you hast made us possessed of a valiant son. They say to him (the newly born son) 'you indeed excellest thy father, excellest thy grand father; he may attain the highest station by his prosperity, glory and spiritual eminence, who is born as a son of such a brāhmaṇa that knows this ".

It will be clear from the above passages of the Br. Up. that the *jātakarma* rite contained the following parts:—

- (1) homa of curds with ghee to the accompaniment of mantras;
- (2) repeat in the child's right ear the word 'speech' thrice;
- (3) making the child lick curds, honey and ghee by means of a golden ladle (or ring);
- (4) addressing the child with a name which was to be his secret name (*nāma-karaṇa*);
- (5) putting the child to the breast;
- (6) addressing the mother with mantras.

The Satapatha adds another detail viz. asking five brāhmaṇas if available to breathe on the child (from four quarters, east, south, west, north and one immediately above him) or the father himself may do so.

<sup>90</sup> Maitrāvaruṇa is Vasiṣṭha and so Maitrāvaruṇī may be Arundhatī, his wife. Iḷā means earth or food'.

There is great divergence in the Gṛhya-sūtras on the different details that go to make up the jāta-karma. Some give almost all the above seven details, while others omit some of them. The order of these components differs in the Gṛhya-sūtras and according to the Veda to which each sūtra is attached the mantras differ. It would be impossible to give in a brief compass the details from all Gṛhya-sūtras. Some description, however, of the details from important Gṛhya-sūtras is given below.

The ceremony has to be performed by the very necessities of the case immediately after birth. But different sūtras express it in different ways, e.g:— Āśv. I.15.2 says the rite should be done before any other person (than the mother and nurse) touches the child. Par. gr. 1.16 says it is performed before the navel string is cut off. Gobhila II.7.17 and Khādira II.2.32 say that it is to be performed before the navel string is cut off and the breast is given to the child.

In the Āśv gr. (I.15.1-4) the ceremony is described as follows:—

"When a son has been born, he (the father) should, before other persons touch him, give to the child to eat honey and clarified butter in which gold has been rubbed by means of a golden (spoon) with the verse:— 'I give unto you the Veda (wisdom or knowledge) of honey and ghee, (Veda) which is produced by the god Savitṛ (who urges on) the bountiful; may you have long life and may you live in this world for a hundred autumns being protected by the gods'. Bringing near the child's two ears (his mouth) the father mutters *medha-janana* mantra:— 'may god Savitṛ bestow on you intelligence; may the goddess Sarasvatī bestow on you intelligence and may the two gods Āśvins wearing wreaths of lotus give to you intelligence'<sup>91</sup>. He touches the (son's) two shoulders (with the mantra) 'be a stone, be an axe, be indestructible gold; you are indeed Veda, called son; so live a hundred autumns' and (with the mantra) 'O Indra, bestow the best wealth' (Rig. II.21.6) and 'O Maghavan (bountiful Indra)', 'O (Indra) partaker of ṛjīṣa!<sup>92</sup> bestow on us' (Rig. III.36.10). And let them give him a name".

The following sūtras (I.15.5-10) lay down rules about the name, which will be considered under Nāma-karaṇa. It will be noticed that out of the several components of the rite described in the Br. Up. and the Sat. Br., Āśv. omits express mention of homa, of putting the child to the breast (*stana-dāna*), the address to the mother (*mātrābhimantrana*), and the breathing over the child by five brāhmaṇas or the father. The San. gr. (I.24.1-12) also omits *homa*, the *stana-dāna* and *mātrābhimantrana*, but refers to the father breathing over the new born child thrice.

Instead of ghee and honey served with a golden spoon, San. prescribes mixing of curds, honey, ghee and water or grinding together of rice and barley. It adds the tying of gold to a hempen string and fixing it on the right hand of the child till the mother gets up from child-bed.

It will have been noticed that Āśv. and San. both prescribe giving a secret name to the child on the day of birth and do not prescribe a separate Nāma-karaṇa ceremony. San. gr. (I.24.6) adds that a *vyavahārika* (calling-name) name may be given on the 10th day from birth. The Gobhila gr. (II.7.13-15) and Khādira gr. II.2.28-31 say that a secret name for the child that is to be born is to be uttered in the Soṣyanti-karma. So Āśv. probably carries on that tradition.

We shall now take the several components of the rite and show how they are dealt with by the several Gṛhya-sūtras.

<sup>91</sup> Nārāyaṇa ( on Āśv. gr. I. 15. 2 ) notes that some say that the mantra is muttered only once, when the mouth is brought near each ear one after another, others say that the mantra is recited twice.

<sup>92</sup> *ṛjīṣa* - is Soma from which the essence is removed (i.e. the dregs of Soma ). The com. Nārāyaṇa says that as to those mantras (1) some hold that the three mantras should be repeated continuously, while the shoulder is are touched one after the other ; (2) others hold that the mantra *aśmā bhava* should be uttered when touching the right shoulder, while the two *indra-śreṣṭhāni* & *asme prayandi* should be uttered while touching the left ; (3) the three mantras should be repeated together and the shoulders touched simultaneously. Nārāyaṇa prefers this last because the bhāṣyakāra who went before did so.

(1) *Homa*: This is prescribed by the Br. Up., the Mānava, the Kanaka gr. at the time of birth. The Āśv. gr. pariśiṣṭa (1.26) says that homa should be performed to Agni and other gods as stated above; then the child should be made to eat honey and ghee and then the offering be made to Agni. It is prescribed before birth (in the Soṣyanti-karma) by Gobhila and Khadira. It is prescribed after the whole rite by Baud. gr. II.1.13. It is omitted by Āśv. and San. The Par. gr. (1.16), Hir, gr., Bharadvaja gr. (I.26) say that the Aupāsana (i.e. Gr̥hya) fire is taken away and a sūtikāgni set up (which is also called Uttapanīya) near the door of the lying-in chamber. The Vaik. (III, 15) calls it jātakāgni (and also Uttapanīya). These say that in this fire white mustard seed with small grains of rice are offered at the time of birth and at the morning and evening twilights for ten days after birth with certain mantras. Āp. prescribes that mustard seeds and rice chaff are to be offered in the fire when ever any body enters the lying-in chamber for ten days.

(2) *Medha-janana*: Two meanings are given to this. This word does not occur in the Br. Up. But it speaks of muttering in the right ear of the boy the word 'vāk' thrice and making the boy lick from a golden spoon or ring curds, honey and ghee. The first of these viz. muttering in the right ear of the boy some words or a mantra is called *medha-janana* in Āśv. and San. (L 24.9 which prescribes 'vāk'); while most of the other sūtras viz. Vaik., Hir., Gobhila say that *medha-janana* is the action of making the child eat honey, ghee, curds or pounded barley and rice, to the accompaniment of mantras (like 'bhūs-tvayi dadhāmi' in Par. or 'Bhūr ṛcah' as in Vaikhānasa, or 'medhām te devah' as in Āp.). The Baud. gr. (II.1.7) prescribes the giving of curds, honey and ghee ten times with each of the ten mantras (Tai. Br. II.5.1) of the anuvaka beginning with 'prāno rakṣati viśvam-ajat.' The Vaik. expressly says that the Vacā plant, Pathyā plant, gold, honey and clarified butter become *medha-janana*. Manu II.29 seizes upon the making the child eat gold (dust), honey and clarified butter to the accompaniment of mantras as the central part of the rite. Later works like the Saṃskāra-mayukha regard this eating of honey and ghee as the principal part of jātakarma.

(3) *Ayuṣya*: Some of the sūtras speak of a rite called *āyuṣya* in the jātakarma. This consists in muttering over the navel (as in Par.) or in the right ear of the boy some mantra or mantras invoking the bestowal of long life on the boy. Āśv. (vide p.231) has such an invocation in conjunction with the eating of honey and ghee. Bharadvaja also does the same. Mānava gr. prescribes the anuvaka 'Agne ayur-asi' (Kahaka Sam. XI.7) for 21 oblations (this anuvaka is full of the word 'āyuṣmat').

(4) *Aṃsābhimarśana*:— (touching the child on the shoulder or shoulders). Vide Āśv. above. Āp. begins his treatment with the direction that the father touches the boy with the Vātsapra anuvaka. Par., Bharadvaja speak of touching the boy twice, once with Vātsapra anuvaka (Vaj. S. XII.18-29 or Tai. S. IV.2.2) and again with:— 'be a stone, be an axe' (in Par. and with the mantra 'may he grow' in Bhar.). Some sūtras like San, omit this.

(5) *Mātrabhimantrana*:— (addressing the mother). The mother is addressed by the father with the verse:— 'You are Ilā &c' (vide Br. Up. above), which occurs in Par. Many sūtras omit this. Hir. has a different verse.

(6) *Pañca-brāhmaṇa-sthāpana*:— We saw above that the Satapatha prescribes the breathing over the child by five brāhmaṇas or the father himself. Par. prescribes the same and gives an option (the five brāhmaṇas are to repeat in order from the east *prana*, *vyana*, *apana*, *udāna* and *samana*). San. asks the father himself to breathe thrice over the boy with a verse referring to the three Vedas. Several sūtras omit this.

(7) *Stana-pratidhāna* or *stana-pradāna*:— giving the baby the breast. The Br. Up. and many of the sūtras prescribe this, together with the recitation of a mantra or mantras e.g. Par. prescribes Vaj. S.17.87 and 38.5 for the two breasts, Āp. and Bhar. prescribe Āp. mantrapāṭha II.13.2 only for the right breast; Hir. and Vaik. prescribe the same verse for both.

(8) *Deśābhimantraṇa* (or-*marśana*):— touching the ground where the son is born and addressing the earth (with one or two mantras). Par., Bhar., Āp., Hir. do this. (9)

(9) *Nāma-karaṇa* (Naming Ceremony). The Br Up., Āśv., San., Gobhila, Khadira and several others speak of giving a name to the boy on the day of birth. Āśv. (I.15.4 and 10) prescribes the giving of two names on that date, one for common use (for which he gives elaborate rules) and the other a secret one which his parents only know till the boy's *upanayana*. San. reverses this and says the name for which similar elaborate rules are laid down by him is the secret name and a name for common use is to be given on the 10th day Āp. gr. (15.2-3 and 8) says on the day of birth a name derived from the nakṣatra (lunar mansion) on which the boy is born is given, which is the secret name and then on the 10th another name is to be given. According to Gobhila and Khadira a name is to be given in the Soṣyanti-karma which is to be kept secret.

(10) *bhūtotsādana*. Keeping away evil spirits: —Though Āśv. and San. are entirely silent on this point several sūtras devote large space to this topic and are full of mantras which are more or less magic. Āp. prescribes the offering of mustard seed and rice chaff in fire three times with each of eight mantras (Āp. mantra pāṭha II.13.7-14). Bhar. gr. (I.23) also prescribes similar offerings with several verses. Hir. gr. requires the throwing of mustard seeds eleven times in the sutikagni with eleven mantras some of which are almost the same as in Bharadvaja. Par. gr. recites two of such mantras.

It would not be out of place to mention a few other subsidiary matters. Baud., Āp., Hir. and Vaik. expressly say that the boy is to have a bath. The Hir. and Vaik.<sup>93</sup> say that the axe is to be placed on a stone and gold is to be placed on the axe, then these are to be turned upside down (so that gold lies at the bottom and the stone is on top) and then the boy is to be held head eastwards above the stone by a female in her two hands, while the father repeats the two mantras:— 'be a stone etc.' and the mantra:— 'you are produced from (my) limb by limb... &c.' This shows how what was once only symbolical (viz. uttering the mantras — 'be a stone ' etc. indicating the desire that the boy should be strong, sharp and worthy like a stone, axe and gold) became transformed into a rite requiring physical presence of these things.

Par. Āp., Hir., Bhar. and Vaik. prescribe that a pot full of water should be placed towards the head (of the woman and her child) with a mantra:— 'O waters watch while (people are asleep)'.

None of the sūtras (except Vaikhānasa) refers to any astrological details. Vaik. (III.14) says that when the child's nose appears, the position of the planets should be observed and his future welfare or otherwise should be examined, since the boy is to be so brought up as to enhance his good qualities. Both Āp. and Baud. say that the remnants of honey, curds and ghee should be mixed with water and poured out in a cowstable (and not thrown about in an impure place).

This ceremony is comparatively brief in Āp., San. and a few others, but in Hir., Par. and Bharadvaja it is most elaborate and would require an unduly long time considering the state of the newly born baby and the woman in child-bed. There is no wonder, therefore, that this ceremony gradually went out of vogue. In modern times a few well-to-do families in Western India sometimes perform what is called '*putrāvaṇa*' (in Marathi) and make the baby lick honey and ghee by means of a golden piece or ring. The dangers to the baby of an elaborate ritual must have been apparent to all people even in ancient times.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Āp. Gr. (15:12) prescribes that when a father returns from a journey he should take in his hands his son's head, should smell (or kiss) the top of it thrice and then mutter this verse. Nir. III. 4. quotes this verse as a rk in support of the view that sons and daughters equally partake of the inheritance. The formula *asmā bhava* etc. occurs in Āśv. gr. and in others also. Vaik. says that the jar is to be to the south of the woman's head; Āp. employs the word '*śirastah*' which Sudarśana explains as 'near the head of the child'.

<sup>94</sup> The author knows of an instance where an old man jubilant over the birth of a son from his third wife entered upon the performance of the jatakarma according to his gṛhya-sūtra and by the time the ceremony was over, the helpless child that had

The Sm. C. (I. p.19) 539 cites Harīta, Saṅkha, Jaimini to the effect that till the navel cord is cut there is no impurity, that the saṃskāra may be performed till then and that gifts of jaggery, śeṣame, gold, clothes, cows and corn may be made and accepted. The same work quotes Samvarta and other smṛtis to the effect that the father must bathe before he can perform the jātakarma rite. This would involve some further loss of time and it is remarkable that the Gṛhya-sūtras observe silence about this, though Manu V.77 prescribes a bath on hearing of the birth of a son. The Sm. C. quotes Pracetas, Vyasa and others to the effect that a nāndi-śrāddha (which will be explained under Śrāddha) should be performed in jātakarma (brāhmaṇas are not to eat cooked food in this śrāddha, but to receive rice or only money payment). Later works like the Dharma-sindhu say that in jātakarma as in other rights, svasti-vacana, Puṇyāha-vacana and matrka-pūjana are necessary.

Medieval writers of digests give extensive descriptions of śānti rites performed to counteract the inauspicious effects of birth on the 14th tithi of the dark half of a month or on the amāvāsyā or on Mūla, Aślesa and Jyeṣṭha nakṣatras and certain astrological conjunctions like Vyatīpata, Vaidhṛti, Samkrānti (sun's passage from one sign of the zodiac into another). These matters are passed over here for want of space, as of little importance in modern times and as new departures introduced in the ancient sūtra rites by later works. A few general remarks will be made on these matters in the section on śānti and Muhurta.

In modern times on the 5th and 6th days after birth certain ceremonies are performed for which there is no warrant in the sūtras. These probably arose in the times of the Pūraṇas, since the only verses quoted on this point in the Nirṇaya-sindhu, the Samskāra-mayūkha and other works are the Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāna, Vyāsa and Nārada. On these days the father or other male relative bathes in the first part of the night, then invokes Gaṇesa, and certain minor deities called *Janmadā* on handfuls of rice and also Sasthīdevī and Bhagavatī (i.e. Durga) and worships them with sixteen upācāras. Then tambula and dakṣiṇa are offered to one or more brāhmaṇas and the members of the family keep awake that night with songs (in order to ward off evil spirits). One text from the Markandeya-Pūraṇa says :—'men fully armed should keep watch the whole night '. It must be noted here that fear springing from astrological considerations got better of even natural love and affection to such an extent that some writers advised that the child when born on certain inauspicious conjunctions should be abandoned and its face should not be seen till at least its eighth year.<sup>95</sup>

### 7. Utthāna (getting up from child-bed).

According to Vaik. III.18 on the 10th or 12th day after birth, the father shaves, bathes, purifies the house, performs in the jātakagni (or in the ordinary fire, according to some) a sacrifice to the earth through some person belonging to another gotra. Then he brings back the aupāsana (Gṛhya fire), offers oblations to Dhātṛ and others (as in 1.16), five oblations to Varuna (1.17), the mūla-homa (I.18) and feeds the brāhmaṇas. San. gr. (I.25) is more elaborate. It prescribes that a mess of cooked food is prepared in the sutikagni and oblations are made to the tithi of the child's birth, and to three nakṣatras and to their presiding deities, two to Agni and then one (i.e.10th) to Soma with Rig. I.91.7. Hir. gr. II.4.6-9 (S.B.E. vol.30 p.214) and Bharadvaja (I.26) also refer to utthana. Both say that the sutikagni is taken away and the Aupāsana fire is brought in and oblations of ghee (12 or 8) are offered in that fire with the mantras beginning with '*dhāta dadātu no rayim*'.

### 8. Nāma-karaṇa (Naming Ceremony).

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already little vitality was dead owing to exposure and cold.

<sup>95</sup> Vide Nityācāra-paddhati pp.244-255.

There is great divergence of view as to the time when the child was named.<sup>96</sup> Several times are suggested in the ancient literature and in the sūtras and smṛtis.

(a) We have already seen (p.232) that a child was addressed by a name, according to Gobhila and Khadira, even in the Soṣyanti-karma.

(b) According to the Br. Up., Āśv. and San., Kāṭhaka gr. (34.1) a name was given to the child on the day of birth. This practice is supported by a passage of the Sat. Br.:— 'therefore when a son is born (the father) should bestow on him a name; thereby he drives away the evil that might attach to the boy; (the father gives him) even a second, even a third (name)',

(c) Āp., Baud., Bhar., and Par. prescribe the 10th day after birth for nāma-karaṇa.

(d) Yāj. 1.12 prescribes it on the 11th day after birth.

(e) Baud. gr. (II.1.23) says that Nāma-karaṇa may be performed on the 10th or 12th, while Hir. gr. says that it should be on the 12th. As Vaik. prescribes that the mother should get up from child-bed on the 10th or 12th and then speaks of nāma-karaṇa, it follows that the ceremony was performed accord to it on the 10th or 12th. Manu II.30 says it may be performed on the 10th or 12th day after birth or on an auspicious tithi, muhurta and nakṣatra thereafter.

(f) Gobhila (II 8.8, S.B.E. vol.30. p.57) and Khadira say that it should be on any day after ten nights, one hundred nights or a year from birth. Laghu-Āśvalāyana (VI.1) allows it on 11th, 12th or 16th day. Aparārka (p.26) quotes Gṛhya-pariśiṣṭa to the effect that it may be performed after the 10th night is passed or after 100 nights or a year and the Bhaviṣyat-Pūraṇa to the effect that it may be performed after 10 or 12 nights or on the 18th day or after a month.

The commentators were bewildered by these differences. Viśvarupa explains Manu II.30 as 'when the 10th night is past' and Kulluka does the same (i.e. according to him it is performed on the eleventh day). Medhatithi does not like the addition of 'past' (*atītayam*) after '*dāsamyam*' in Manu II.30 and says just as jātakarma can be performed even when there is impurity due to birth, so nāma-karaṇa may be performed on the 10th and that the only essential thing is that it is not to be performed before the 10th or 12th. Aparārka says that there is an option and one may follow one's own Gṛhya-sūtra. In modern times nāma-karaṇa generally takes place on the 12th day after birth and no Vedic ceremony as prescribed in the sūtras is gone through, but women assemble and after consulting the male members of the family beforehand announce the name and place the child in the cradle. In Rig. VIII.80.9 we read:—

'when you give us a fourth name connected with (the performance of) a sacrifice, we long for it; immediately afterwards, you, our master, take us' (forward to glory).

This shows that a man could have a fourth name even in the times of Rig. and the fourth was a name due to the performance of a yajña. Sayana explains that the four names are:—

1. *nakṣatra-nāma* (derived from the nakṣatra on which a person was born),
2. a secret name,
3. a publicly known name and
4. a fourth name like Somayājī (due to having performed a Somayāga).

In Rig. IX.75.2 there is reference to a third name:— 'the son has a third name unknown to the parents and which is in the bright part of heaven'. The two names are the nakṣatra name and the ordinary name, while the third would be the name due to the performance of a sacrifice (which the

<sup>96</sup> Vide Āp. gr. 15. 8-11 ( S.B.E. vol. 30, pp. 282-283 ), Asv. gr. 1. 15. 4-10), S.B.E. vol. 29, p. 183), Baud. gr. II. 1. 23-31, Bhar. gr. 1. 26, Gobhila gr. II. 8. 8-18 (S.B.E, vol. 30 pp. 57-53), Hir. gr. II. 4. 6-15 ( S. B. E. vol. 30, pp. 214-215 ), Kathaka gr. 34. 1-2 and 36. 3-4, Kausika-sūtra 58. 13-17, Manava gr. 1. 18, 1, San. gr. I. 24. 4-6 S.B.E. vol. 50 Vaik. III. Varaha 2.

parents could not foresee at his birth). We saw above (note 541a) that the Sat. Br. speaks of a second or even a third name for a person given to him by his parents. The same Brāhmaṇa recommends— 'Therefore a brāhmaṇa when he does not prosper should give himself a second name'. But how these names were formed is not stated anywhere in the Vedic literature. In the Tai. S. VI.3.1.3 it is said 'therefore a brāhmaṇa who has two names prosper'. The Sat. Br. (II.1.2.11) says 'Arjuna is the secret name of Indra and the constellation of Phalgunis being presided over by Indra they are really Arjūnyah, but are called Phalguṇyaḥ in an indirect way'. Hardly any secret names are expressly mentioned in the Vedic literature except the name of Arjuna given to Indra (and being secret they cannot be expected to be mentioned). How the secret name was given is not clear from the Vedic literature.

A few examples of the three names of a person from the Vedic literature may be given here. These are generally:— the ordinary name, a name derived from his father a third from his gotra (or from the name of some remote ancestor). In Rig. V.33.8 we find Trasadasyu (his own name), Paurukutsya (son of Purukutsa), Gairikṣita (descendant of Girikṣita). In the Ait. Br. (33.5) Sunahsepa is spoken of as Ajīgarti (son of Ajīgarta) and also as Angirasa (a gotra name). King Hariścandra is mentioned (Ait. Br.33.1) as Vaidhasa (son of Vedhas) and Aikṣvāka (descendant of Ikṣvaku). In the Sat. Br. (XIII.5.4.i) Indrota Daivāpa (son of Devapi) Saunaka (a gotra name) is said to have been the priest of Janamejaya. In the Chan. Up. (V.3.1 and 7) Svetaketu Āruṇeya (son of Āruṇi) is styled Gautama (a gotra name). In the Kaṭhupanisad (1.1.1 and 11) Nāciketas is the son of Vājaśravasa and is addressed as Gautama (a gotra name).

Usually however a person is referred to in the Vedic literature by two names. In some cases it is his own name and a gotra name e.g. Medhyātithi Kāṇva (Rig. VIII.2.40), Hiraṇyastūpa Āngirasa (Rig. X.149.5), Vatsapri Bhālandana (Tai. S. V.2.1.6), Bālāki Gārgya (Br. Up. II.1.1), Cyavana Bhārgava (Ait. Br.39.7). In other cases a man is referred to by his own name and another name derived from a country or locality e.g. Kaśu Caidya (Rig. VIII.5.37), Bhīma Vaidarbha (Ait. Br. 35.8), Durmukha Pāñcāla (Ait. Br.39.23), Janaka Vaideha (Br. Up. III.1.1), Ajātaśatru Kāśya (Br. Up. II.1.1). In some cases a matronymic is added to a person's name e.g. Dīrghatams Māmateya (Rig. I.158.6), Kutsa Ārjuneya (son of Arjunī, Rig. IV.26, 1, VII.19.2, VIII.1.11), Kakṣīvat Auśija (son of a woman called Usik, Rig. I.18.1, Vaj. S, III.28), Prahlāda Kāyādhava (son of Kāyadhu, Tai. Br. I, 5.10), Mahidāsa Aitareya (son of Itara, Chan. Up. III.16.7).

In the vamsa added at the end of the Br. Up. there are about forty sages with matronymic names. The practice of mentioning a man by reference to his mother's name or to his mother's father's gotra was continued till later times, as will be shown later on. The most usual method, however, of referring to a person in the Rig. and also in other Vedic works was to state his name along with another derived from his father's name.

The principal rules about names may now be set out from the Gr̥hya-sūtras. Āśv. (1.15.4-10, S.B.E. vol.29, pp.182-183) says:—

'Let (them) give the boy a name beginning with a sonant, having a semivowel in it, with a visarga at the end, consisting of two syllables or of four syllables, of two syllables if (the father) is desirous of firm (worldly) position (for his son), of four syllables if he is desirous of spiritual eminence (for his son); but (in all cases) with an even number of syllables in the case of males and with an uneven number of syllables in the case of women. And let him find out (for the boy) a name to be employed at respectful salutations (at *Upanayana* etc.); that name (the boy's) mother and father alone should know till his *upanayana*'.

It should be noticed that Āśv. and San. differ on one very important point. According to Āśv. the name for which elaborate rules are laid down is to be the ordinary name and he lays down no rule about the formation of the secret name; while San. lays down for the secret name the same rules as Āśv. does for the public one and San. says about the public name that it should be pleasing. Instead



of quoting Gṛhya-sūtras at length the principal rules about names deducible from them may be stated in the form of propositions with a few illustrations for each.

(1) The first rule in almost all sūtras is that the name for males should contain two or four syllables or an even number. This rule is deduced from Vedic literature where most of the names contain either two syllables (e.g. Baka, Trita, Kutsa, Bhrigu) or four syllables (Trasadasyu, Purukutsa, Medhyatithi, Brahmadata etc.), though names of three syllables (like Kavasa, Cyavana, Bharata) and of five syllables (like Nabhanedistha, Hiranyastupa) are not; wanting. Baijavapa Gṛhya allowed the name to be of one, two, three, four or any number of syllables. San. allowed a name even of six syllables and Baud. gr. (II.1.25) of six or even eight.

(2) Almost all Gṛhya-sūtras contain the rule that the name should begin with a sonant and contain in the middle a semivowel. This is stated also in the ancient quotation from Yajñikas in the Mahābhāṣya.

(3) Some sūtras prescribe that the name should end in a visarga preceded by a long vowel (e.g. Āp., Bhar., Hir.,Par.). Āśv. only mentions that it should end in a visarga, while Vaik. and Gobhila say that it may end in a long vowel or in a visarga. These rules were probably based on such Vedic names as Sudas, Dīrghatamas, Prthusravas (that occur in the Rig Veda) and such names as Vatsapri (Tai, 8. V.2.1.6).

(4) Āp. prescribes that the name should have two parts, the first being a noun and the second a verbal formation (generally a past passive participle). This rule is probably based on such ancient names as Brahmadata (which occurs in Br. Up, I.3.24 and figures very much in Pali works), Devadata, Yajñadata etc.

(5) Many Gṛhya-sūtras (like Par., Gobhila, San., Baijavapa, Vāraha) say that the name should be formed from a root by a kṛt affix and should not be a taddhita (i.e. formed from a noun by an affix).

(6) Āp. and Hir. say that the name should have the *upasarga* 'su' in it as a Brāhmaṇa passage says that such a name has stability in it. Examples are Sujāta, Sudarśana, Sukesas (Prasna Up.1.1).

(7) Baud. gr. prescribes that, the name may be derived from a sage or a deity or an ancestor. The Mānava Gṛhya, however, forbids the giving of a name of a deity itself, but allows the giving of a name derived from the name of a deity or a nakṣatra. Examples of names derived from sages would be Vasistha, Nārada etc. and of names taken from deities would be Viṣṇu, Siva etc. The Mit. on Yāj. I.12 quotes a passage of Saṅkha that the name should be connected with one's family deity. It should be noticed that in modern times most names in many parts of India are the names of deities or of heroes supposed to be avatars of deities. In Vedic literature hardly any human being bears the name of any of the Vedic gods (Indra, Mitra, Pusan etc). There are only a few exceptions such as that of Bhrigu (in Tai. Up, III.1) who is said to have learnt from his father called Varuna and in the Prasna Up. (II) there is Sauryayani Gargya whose name is derived from Surya. But in the Vedic Literature persons have names derived from the names of gods, such as Indrota (Indra + uta, protected), Indradyumna. The names that occur in the Mahābhāṣya such as Devadata, Yajñadata, Vāyudatta (vol. II. p.296), Viṣṇu-mitra (vol. I. pp.41 and 359), Bṛhaspati-dattaka (or Bṛhaspatika), Prajāpati dattaka (or-patika), Bhānu-dattaka (or Bhanuka) and others set out in the Mahābhāṣya (vol. II. p.425) exemplify the rule of the MānavaGṛhya. It is difficult to say when the very names of deities began generally to be borne by human beings. Probably the practice began in the first centuries of the Christian era. From the fifth century onwards we have historic examples of such names, e.g. in the Eran stone inscriptions of Budha gupta dated in the Gupta samvat 165 i.e.484-5 A. D. (Gupta Inscriptions No.19) there is a brāhmaṇa Indra-Viṣṇu, son of Varuna-Viṣṇu, son of Hari-Viṣṇu.

(8) Baud., Par., Gobhila (and the Yajñikas quoted by the Mahābhāṣya) prescribe that the name of the boy may be the same as that of any of the ancestors of the father. The Mānava gr. (1,18)

expressly says that the father's own name should not be given. This practice was observed in ancient times and continues even today, when the child is often given his grand father's name. Vide I. A. vol. VI. p.73 where we see that Pulakesi II was grandson of Pulakesi I.

(9) The Gr̥hya-sūtras (except Par. and Mānava) are agreed that a secret name is to be given to the boy by the parents, in the *Soṣyanti-karma* according to Gobhila and Khadira, at birth accord to some (like Āśv. and Kāṭhaka) and according to others (like Ap., Baud., Bhar.) at the time of Nāma-karaṇa on 10th or 12th day. We saw above that San. and Kāṭhaka give elaborate rules about the secret name, which rules are those of the *Vyavahārika*<sup>97</sup> name according to Āśv, and many other sūtrakaras. Gobhila and Khadira give no rules about the secret name. Āp., Hir. and Vaik. only say that the secret name should be derived from the nakṣatra of birth, but give no further rules. Bharadvaja speaks of the giving of two names in Nāma-karaṇa, one being derived by applying the intricate rules described above and the other being a nakṣatra name; but it is not quite clear which was to be the secret name; it is probable, however, that the nakṣatra name was to be the secret one. According to Āśvalāyana the secret name was called *Abhivādanīya* (which was to be known to the parents only till the boy's *upanayana* and which was to be used by the boy for announcing himself in respectful salutations); but he does not say how it was to be derived. Gobhila prescribes that this *Abhivādanīya* name was to be given to the boy at the time of *upanayana* by the acarya and was to be derived from the nakṣatra of birth or from the presiding deity of that nakṣatra. Gobhila further adds that according to some teachers the *Abhivādanīya* name was derived from the gotra of the boy (as e.g. Gārgya, Sāndilya, Gautama &c.). But if the *Abhivādanīya* was a gotra name there could have been no secrecy. From Gobhila it appears that the acarya told the boy his *Abhivādanīya* name, but the Khadira suggests that the boy already knew it (from his father or mother) and informed the teacher.

The nakṣatra-nāma was of importance in the performance of Vedic sacrifices. The Vedangajyotisa (of the Rig) in verses 25-28 enumerates 28 nakṣatras (adding Abhijit after Uttarasadha and before Sravana) and their presiding deities and adds that in sacrifices the sacrificer is to bear a name derived from the name of the presiding deity of his nakṣatra. The object of keeping the nakṣatra name secret seems to have been to prevent rites of *abhicāra* (magical practices) against a person, for the effective employment of which it was necessary to know a person's name. Hundreds of names occur in the Vedic Literature, but there are hardly any names directly derived from a nakṣatra. It appears therefore that in the times of the brāhmanas nakṣatra names were secret and so are not met with. Gradually however nakṣatra names ceased to be secret and became common. For several centuries before the Christian era nakṣatra names were very common. Panini (who cannot be placed later than 300 B.C. and may have flourished some centuries earlier still) gives several rules (IV.3.34-37 and VII.3.18) for deriving names of males and females from nakṣatras. In IV.3.34 he says that names are derived from Sravistha, Phalgunī, Anurādha, Śvati, Tiṣya, Punarvasu, Hasta, Āṣāḍha and Bahula (Kṛtika) without adding any termination signifying 'born on' (e.g. we have the names Sravisthah, Phalgunah etc.). In VII.3.18 he derives the name Prosthapadaḥ from Prosthapada. The Mahābhāṣya (vol. I. p.231) speaks of boys named Tiṣya and Punarvasu and cites; Citra, Revatī, Rohinī as names of women born on these nakṣatras (vol. II. p.307) and of Caitra as a male (vol. II. p.128). The Mahābhāṣya speaks of Puṣyamitra, the founder of the Sunga dynasty (vol. I. p.177, vol. II. pp.34 and 123). Buddhists also had nakṣatra names e.g. Moggaliputta Tissa (where a gotra name and a nakṣatra name from Tiṣya are combined), a parivrājaka Potthapada in Dīrgha I. p.187 and III. p.1 (from the nakṣatra Prosthapada), Asada, Phaguna,

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<sup>97</sup> According to Kāṭhaka gr̥hya (34:1-3 and 36 only one is given (on the day of birth) and the same is used in Nāma-karaṇa (36.3), but it mentions that it was the view of some that another name was to be given in Nāma-karaṇa.

Śvatiguta, Pusara khita and in the SanCI inscriptions of 3rd century B. C. (E, I, (vol. II. p.95). The giving of nakṣatra names continued for centuries after the Christian era.

Another way of deriving names from nakṣatras was to form them from the presiding deity of the nakṣatra on which a person was born. A man was called Agneya, if he was born on Kṛttika (Agni being its devata), Maitra (from being born on Anuradha). In modern times this round-about way is given up and persons are named directly from the names of gods and avataras (like Rama).

There is another way of deriving names from nakṣatras set forth in medieval works on Dharma Śāstra and Jyotisa. Each of the 27 nakṣatras is divided into four padas and to each pada a specific letter is assigned (e.g., cu, ce, co and la for the padas of Āśvinī) from which names are derived for persons born in those padas (e.g. Cūḍāmani, Cedīsa, Coleśa and Lakṣmana for the four padas of Āśvinī). These names are secret and are even now muttered into the ear of the brahmacaṛī in *upanayana* and are known as the name in the daily sandhya prayer.

Modern works like the Saṃskāra-prakāśa (p.237) say that four kinds of names may be given viz. *devata-nāma*, *māsa-nāma*, *nakṣatra-nāma* and *vyavahārika-nāma*. The first shows that the bearer is the devotee of that devatā. The Nirnaya-sindhu quotes a verse about twelve names derived from the month in which a man was born and adds that the Madana-ratna laid down that the names specified in the verse were to be given to the months from Margasīrsa or Caitra. Such names (of Viṣṇu) are being given now, particularly in Western India, but without regard to the month of birth. So early as in the Bṛhatsamhita of Varahamihira the twelve names of Viṣṇu are associated with the twelve months.

As to the names of girls, some special rules were laid down. Many Gṛhya-sūtras say that the names of girls should contain an 'uneven number of syllables and the Mānava gr. (1.18) expressly says that the names of girls should be of three syllables. Par. and Varaha-Gṛhya further say that the names of girls should end in 'ā', Gobhila and Mānava say they should end in 'dā' (as in Satyadā, Vasudā, Yasodā, Narmadā), Saṅkha-likhita Dharma-sūtra and Baijavāpa require that it should end in 'ī', while the Baud. gr. Śeṣa-sūtra says that it should end in a long vowel. The Varaha-Gṛhya adds an intricate rule that the name of a girl should have an 'ā' vowel in it and should not be after a river, a nakṣatra or should not be the name of the sun or moon or Pusan and should not be one having the idea of 'given by god' as in Deva-datta or having the word '*rakṣita*' (as in Buddharakṣita).

Manu II.33 prescribes that the names of women should end in a long vowel, should be easy to pronounce, should not suggest any harsh acts, should be perspicuous, should be pleasing to the ear, auspicious and should convey some blessing and in III.9 Manu and Āp. gr. III.13 say that one should not marry a girl named after nakṣatras, trees, rivers. In modern times girls frequently bear the names of the great rivers of India (Sindhu, Jahnavī, Yamunā, Tapī, Narmadā, Godā, Kṛsnā, Kaverī etc.).

It is remarkable that Manu altogether omits the involved rules given by the Gṛhya-sūtras about naming a boy and prescribes (II.31-32) two simple rules viz. that the names of all the members of the four varṇas should suggest respectively auspiciousness, vigour, wealth and lowness (or contempt) and that the names of brāhmaṇas and the other varṇas should have an addition (*upapāda*) suggestive of *śarman* (happiness), *rakṣa* (protection), *pusti* (prosperity) and *preṣya* (service or dependence on others). It is significant that none of the Gṛhya-sūtras except Pāraskara makes any reference to these additions (Sarman and the like) to the names of brāhmaṇas and others. Therefore this was comparatively a later development, though such additions must have been in vogue at least two centuries before the Christian era.

The Mahābhāṣya (vol. III. p.416) cites Indra-varman and Indra-pālita as the names of a rajanya and a vaiśya. Yama quoted by Aparārka (p.27) says that the names of brāhmaṇas should have the addition of *śarma* or *deva*, of kṣatriyas *varma* or *trāta*, of vaiśyas *bhūti* or *datta*, and of Sudras

*dāsa*. Similar rules are given in the Pūraṇas. These rules were sometime observed, but were often broken from very ancient times as inscriptions show. Saṅkhāyana Gṛhya (I.25.2-9, S.B.E. vol.29, p.52) prescribes that the father and mother (having bathed themselves and the child) should put on new clothes, that the father should cook a mess of food in the sutikagni, that he is to offer oblations to the tithi of the boy's birth and to three constellations with their presiding deities, that he is to place in the middle the oblation to the nakṣatra of birth and he should make two other oblations to fire with two mantras and then the 10th oblation is made to Soma with Rig. I.91.7. The father pronounces aloud the child's name and causes the brāhmaṇas to say auspicious words,

The Āśv. gr. does not describe Nāma-karaṇa. Many of the other Gṛhya-sūtras prescribe that the sutikagni is to be removed and the homa for nāma-karaṇa is to be performed in the Aupāsana (Gṛhya) fire. The Bhāradvaja gr. prescribes the repetition of the Jaya, Abhyātana and Rāstrabhrt mantras and the offering of eight oblations of ghee with the eight mantras:— 'may Dhātṛ bestow on us wealth' (Āp.M.P. II.11.1ff). The Hir. gr. (II.4.6-14, S.B.E. vol.30 pp.214-215) contains similar rules. It prescribes twelve oblations with the mantras:— 'may Dhātṛ bestow on us wealt ' and gives two names (a secret naskatra name and an ordinary name) to the boy.

The twelve oblations are as follows:— four to Dhātṛ, four to Anumati, two to Raka, two to Sinīvalī. According to some a thirteenth oblation to Kuhu was to be offered.

### 9. Karna-vedha. (Ear-piercing).

In modern times this is generally done on the 12th day after birth. In the Baud. gr. śeṣa-sūtra (1.12) karna-vedha is prescribed in the 7th or 8th month, while Brhaspati quoted in Saṃskāra-prakāśa (p.258) says that it may be performed on the 10th, 12th or 16th day from birth or in the 7th or 10th month from birth. The Sm. C. has a brief note on karna-vedha. The Gṛhya pariśiṣṭa says that the father sits facing the east in the first half of the day and first addresses the right ear of the boy with the mantra:— 'O gods, may we hear glad tidings with our ears' (Rig. I.89.8) and then also the left ear. If the baby cries honey is to be given to him; after the rite brāhmaṇas are to be fed. In modern times, generally a goldsmith is called who pierces the lower lobes of the ears with a pointed golden wire and turns it into a ring round the lobes. In the case of girls the left ear is pierced first. That ears of boys were pierced even in ancient times is suggested by a mantra quoted in the Nirukta. 'He (the teacher) who pierces the ear with truth, without causing pain and yet bestowing ambrosia, should be regarded as one's father and mother'.

## 10. Niṣkramaṇa

(Taking the child out of the house in the open).

This is a minor rite. Par. gr. I.17 gives the briefest description. This was done according to most authorities in the 4th month after birth. Aparārka (p.28) quotes a Pūraṇa that the going out of the house may be done on the 12th day or in the 4th month. According to Par. gr. the father makes the child look at the sun pronouncing the verse:— 'that eye' (Vaj. S.36.24). The Mānava-Gṛhya prescribes that the father cooks rice in milk and offers oblations thereof to the sun with the verses:— 'the brilliant sun has risen in the east' (Mait. S.4.14.4), 'he is the hamsa sitting in pure worlds' (Rig. IV.40.5= Mait. S. II.6.12= Tai. S. I.8.15.2), 'whenever him' (Rig. X.88.11) and then he worships the sun with the verse 'that Jātavedas' (Rig. I.50.1, it occurs in all Samhitas) and then he should present the child turning its face towards the sun with the verse:—

'salutation to you, Oh divine (sun) who hast hundreds of rays and who dispellest darkness,  
remove the misfortune of my lot and endow me with blessings';

then brāhmaṇas are to be fed and the fee is to be a bull. Baud. prescribes a hotra with eight oblations. Gobhila speaks of candradarśana. It says that on the 3rd tithi of the third bright fortnight after birth, the father bathes the child in the morning, worships in the evening the moon with folded hands, then the mother, having dressed the child, hands it with its face to the north from the south to north to the father and herself passes behind the back of the father and stands to the north of him, who worships with the three verses:— 'O you whose hair is well parted, thy heart', (Mantra-brāhmaṇa I.5, 10-12), then the father hands back the son to the mother with the words:— 'that this son may not come to harm and be torn from his mother'. Then in the following bright fortnights, the father filling his joined hands with water and turning his face towards the moon, lets the water flow out of his joined hands once with the Yajus:— 'what is the moon,' (Mantra-brāhmaṇa I.5.13) and twice silently.

Laghu-Āśvalāyana VII.1-3 speaks of the performance of abhyudayika śrāddha, then reciting the sukta from (Rig. V.51.11) and 'āsu śiśānah' (Rig. X.103.1), showing the boy to the sun in the courtyard of one's father-in-law or in that of another and then repeating the verse:— 'that eye' (Vaj. S.36.24). The Sm. C. remarks that those in whose sakha this rite is not mentioned need not perform it. The Saṃskāra-prakaśa pp.250-256 and Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā pp.886-888 give an extensive description and make of this saṃskāra a matter of great pomp, festivity and rejoicing. Yama quoted in Sam. Pr. says that seeing the sun and seeing the moon should be done respectively in the 3rd and 4th months from birth.

## 11. Anna-prāśana (Weaning ceremony).

The Gobhila and Khadira gr. omit this saṃskāra. Most smṛtis prescribe the 6th month from birth as the time for this saṃskāra; but Mānava gr. says it may be the 5th or 6th; while Saṅkha quoted by Aparārka says it should be performed at the end of a year or at the end of six months, according to some. The procedure is very brief in all except San. and Par. San. says that the father should prepare food of goat's flesh, or flesh of partridge, or of fish or boiled rice, if he is desirous of nourishment, holy lustre, swiftness or splendour respectively and mix one of them with curds, honey and ghee and should give it to the child to eat with the reciting of the Mahāvyaḥṛtis (bhuh, bhuvah, svah). Then the father is to offer oblations to fire with four verses:— 'Annapate', Rig. IV.12.4-5 and 'him, O Agni, lead to long life and splendour etc'. The father recites over the child the verse Rig. IX.66.19 and then sets down the child on northward pointed kuśa grass with Rig. I.22.15. The mother is to eat the remnant of the food thus prepared. Āśv. has almost the same rules as to food (omitting fish) but prescribes only one versa 'Annapata'. Āp. gr.589 prescribes feeding of brāhmaṇas, making them give benedictions to the child and then making the child eat only once

a dish of curds, honey, ghee and boiled rice mixed together, with the recitation of a mantra joined to the three vyāhrtis singly and collectively and says that according to some the flesh of partridge may also be added. Bhar. says that the method of making a child eat is the same as in *Medhajana* and is silent about the food. Par. gr. (I.19) prescribes the cooking of sthalīpāka and offering the two ājyabhagas and then two offerings of ghee with the mantras:— 'the gods generated the goddess of speech etc ' (Rig, VIII.100.11) and the verse;— 'may vigour to-day produce for us gifts etc' (Vaj. S.18, 33). Mānava, and Vaik. are entirely silent about flesh. Kanaka prescribes the cooking of all haviṣya food and the other two works prescribe food cooked in milk. It will be seen from the above that the principal part of the saṃskāra is making the child taste food.

Some writers add homa, feeding of brāhmaṇas, and benedictions. The Saṃskāra-prakāśa (pp.267-279) and Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā (pp.891-895) have very detailed notes on this saṃskāra. One interesting matter quoted by Aparārka (p.28) from Markandeya is that on the day of this ceremony, in front of the gods worshipped in the house, tools and utensils required in various arts and crafts, weapons and śāstras should be spread about and the child should be allowed to crawl among them and what the child seizes at first should be noted and it should be deemed that he is destined to follow that profession for his livelihood which is represented by the thing first touched by him.

## 12. Varśa-varḍhana or abda-purti

In some of the sūtras provision is made for some ceremonies every month on the day of the birth of the child for one year and on every anniversary of the day of birth throughout life. For example, Gobhila gr. (II.8.19-20) says:—

‘Every month of the boy's birth for one year or on the parva days of the year he should sacrifice to Agni and Indra, to Heaven and Earth and to the Viśvedevas. Having sacrificed to these deities he should sacrifice to the tithi and nakṣatra.’

Baud. gr. III.7 59 prescribes an offering of cooked rice for life (*ayuṣya-caru*) every year, every six months, every four months, every season or every month on the nakṣatra of birth. Kāṭhaka gr. (36.12 and 14) prescribes a homa every month after nāma-karaṇa for a year in the same way as in nāma-karaṇa or jātakarma and at the end of the year an offering of flesh of a goat and sheep to Agni and Dhanvantarī and feeding the brāhmaṇas with food mixed with plenty of ghee.

Vaik. III.20-21 speaks at great length of the ceremony called '*Varśa-varḍhana*' (increase of the years of a person) to be performed on the anniversary of the birth-day every year and lays down that in this rite the deity of the nakṣatra on which a child is born is the principal one, that oblations of ghee are to be offered to that deity and nakṣatra and then to the other presiding deities of the nakṣatras and to the nakṣatras them selves, then an oblation with the vyāhrti (*bhuh svaha*), then offering to Dhāta. It describes in detail how different ceremonies are to be performed up to *Upanayana*, then up to finishing of Veda study, how ceremonies are to be performed on the anniversary day of one's marriage, on the nakṣatra on which a person performed solemn sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma and that if he thus lives till 80 years and 8 months he becomes one who has seen a thousand (full) moons and is called '*brahma-śarīra*', in celebration of which several ceremonies are prescribed (which for want of space are not set out here).

In connection with the anniversary of the marriage day, Vaik. specially prescribes that whatever ceremonies women direct as done traditionally should be performed. Aparārka (p.29) quotes verses of Markandeya to the effect that all should every year on the day of birth celebrate a festival (mahotsava) in which one should honour and worship one's elders, Agni, gods, Prajāpati, the pitṛs, one's nakṣatra of birth and brāhmaṇas. The Kṛtya-ratnakara (p.540), the Nityācāra-paddhati (pp.621-624) quote the same verses (as Aparārka does) and add that on that day one should worship Markandeya (who is believed to be immortal) and the seven other cirañjivins.

The Nityācāra-paddhati (p.621) quotes a verse that in the case of kings the anniversary of the day on which they were crowned should be celebrated. The Nirnaya-sindhu, the Saṃskāra-prakāśa (which in pp.281-294 gives the most elaborate treatment) call this festival 'abda-purti'. The Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā contains a very extensive discourse on this rite (pp, 877-886) and calls this festival 'ayur-varḍhapana'. The Nirnaya-sindhu and the Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā set out the verses that are addressed to Markandeya and others.

In modern times women do celebrate every month the birthday of a child and the first anniversary of birth. They make the child cling to the principal house-post or to the post used for churning out butter from the pail of curds and water.

### 13. Cauḷa or Cūḍā-karma or Cūḍā-karaṇa

(the first hair-cut).

This saṃskāra is mentioned by every writer. 'Cūḍā' means the 'lock or tuft of hair' kept on the head when the remaining part is shaved (i.e. the śikhā); so *cūḍā-karma* or *cūḍā-karaṇa* means that rite in which a lock of hair is kept (for the first time after birth). According to many writers *cauḷa* was performed in the third year from birth. Baud. gr. (II.4), Par. gr. (II.1), Manu II.35, Vaik. III.23 say that it may be performed in the 1st or 3rd year; Āśv. gr. and Varaha gr. say it may be performed in the 3rd year or in the year in which it is the custom of the family to perform it. Par. also refers to family usage. Yāj. specifies no year, but mentions only family usage. Yama quoted by Aparārka (p.29) allowed it in the first, 2nd or 3rd year, while Saṅkha-Likhita allowed it in the 3rd or 5th (Aparārka p.29), Sad-guru-siṣya quoted in the Saṃskāra-prakāśa (p.296) and Nārāyaṇa (on Āśv. gr. I.17.1) say that some performed it at the time of *upanayana*. Whether such a ceremony was performed in the Vedic ages cannot be ascertained with certainty. Bhar. gr. I.28 expressly refers to the Vedic verse (Rig IV.75.17 or Tai. S. IV.6.4.5) as indicative of the practice of *Cauḷa* in Vedic times:— 'where arrows fall together like boys having many tufts of hair'. Manu II.35 also has in view this Vedic verse. The principal act in this ceremony is the cutting of the hair of the child. The other subsidiary matters are the performance of homa, feeding of brāhmaṇas, receiving of their benedictions and giving of dakṣiṇa, the disposal of cut hair in such a way that no one can find them. The ceremony is to be performed on an auspicious day as set out in note above. Āp. gr.16.3 says it should be performed when the moon is in conjunction with Punarvasu nakṣatra, while Mānava gr. says that it should not be done on the 9th tithi of a month. Later works like the Saṃskāra-prakāśa (pp.299-315) give very intricate rules about the auspicious times, which rules are passed over here.

The most exhaustive treatment of this ceremony in the sūtra works is to be found in Āśv., Gobhila, Varaha and Par. II.1. The materials required in this ceremony are stated as follows: —

(1) To the north of the fire are placed four vessels each of which is separately filled with rice, barley, masa beans and śeṣame respectively (Āśv. gr.1.17.2), but Gobhila (II.9.6-7) says that they are to be placed to the east and Gobhila and San. say that these are to be given to the barber at the end of the rite;

(2) to the west of the fire the mother with the boy on her lap is to be seated and two vessels one filled with the dung of a bull and the other with sami leaves are to be also placed to the west (Gobhila II.9.5 and Khadira II.3.18 place the dung to the north of the fire and Khadira says that she sits to the north);

(3) to the right of the mother the father sits holding 21 bunches of kuśa grass or the brahmā priest (if there be any) may hold them;

(4) warm and cold water or only warm water;

(5) an ordinary razor or one made of Udumbara wood (according to Khadira II.3.17 and Gobhila II.9.4);

(6) a mirror (Gobhila and Khadira). According to Gobhila and Khadira the barber, hot water, mirror, razor and bunches of kuśa grass are to the south of the fire and bull's dung and a mess of rice mixed with śeṣame are to the north of the fire.

Āśv., Par., Kāṭhaka and Mānava say that the razor is to be of *loha* (which the commentator Nārāyaṇa explains as copper). After homa is performed, the principal matter (of cutting the hair) is to be begun. According to Gobhila and Khadira the father, having contemplated Savitṛ, looks at the barber with the mantra:— 'here comes Savitṛ' (Mantra-br. I.6.1) and contemplating on Vayu looks at the warm water with the mantra:— 'with warm water, O Vayu, come hither ' (Mantra-Br. I.6.2). The father then mixes the hot and cold water and may put, in a part of the water, butter or drops of curds and apply the water to moisten three times the boy's head with the mantra:— 'may Aditi cut thy hair; may the waters moisten (thy hair) for vigour'. Then on the right portion of the boy's hair the father puts three kuśa blades with the points towards the boy with the formula:— 'herb, protect him' (Tai. S. L 2.1.1). With the words:— 'Axe, do not harm him' (Tai. S. I.2.1.1) he presses a copper razor (on the kuśa blades). The hair is cut with the mantra:—

'with that razor with which Savitṛ, the wise, cut (the hair) of king Soma and of Varuna, cut now his (the boy's hair), O brāhmaṇas, so that he may be endowed with long life and (reach) old age '.

Each time the hair is cut, he gives the cut hair with their ends turned towards the east together with sami leaves to the mother, who puts them down on the bull dung. Cutting is done a second time with the mantra:—

'with what Dhata shaved (the head) of Bṛhaspati, Agni and Indra for the sake of their long life, with that I shave thy (head) for the sake of long life, fame and happiness'.

The cutting is done a third time with the mantra:—

'with what he may after night (is past) see the sun again and again, with that I shave thy (head) for the sake of long life, fame and happiness'.

The cutting is done for the fourth time with all the three mantras together. Then the hair is cut three times on the left side similarly. The edge of the razor is then wiped off with the mantra:—

'when you shavest as a shaver the hair (of the boy) with the razor that wounds and is well-shaped purify his head, but do not deprive him of life '.

Then he gives orders to the barber:—

'doing with lukewarm water what has to be done with water, arrange his hair (well) without causing him (the boy) any wound'.

Let him have the hair of the boy arranged according to the custom of the family. The rite only (without the mantras) is performed for a girl.

According to several sūtras, the cut hair placed in the dung of a bull is buried in a cow stable or is thrown in a pond or in the vicinity of water (Par., Bhar.) or is buried at the root of the Udumbara tree (Bhar.) or in a bunch of darbha grass (Baud., Bhar., Gobhila) or in the forest (Gobhila). The Mānava gr. prescribes that as the hair fall down when cut they are gathered by some friendly person. The Kāṭhaka gr. and Mānava gr. say that the barber gets a śeṣame cake and a fine piece of cloth, while Vaik. says food is given to him. A bath for the boy is expressly prescribed by Baud, and some others.

There is a great divergence of views about the number of locks of hair to be left on the head and the portion of the head where they are to be left. Baud. gr. says that one or three or five locks may be left on the head or according to family usage and he further says that some sages say that the



locks should be as many as the pravaras invoked by the father. Āśv. gr., and Par. gr. say that locks may be kept according to family usage. Āp. Gr. says that the locks may in number follow the pravara or they may be kept according to family usage. Gobhila and Khadira say that the locks should be arranged according to gotra and family usage. Whether they mean by 'gotra' the number of pravaras of the gotra or some rule such as the Kāthaka gives is not clear. The Kāthaka gr. says that the Vasisthas keep a lock on the right, that persons of Atrī and Kaśyapa gotra (or pravara) keep locks both on the right and the left, that the Bhrgus shaves the entire head, that the Angiras gotra keeps five locks or only a line of hair, while persons of other gotras (like Agastya, Viśvamitra etc.) keep a śikhā (without any particular number of locks) simply because it is an auspicious sign or one may follow the usage of one's family. Vaik. says that the locks may be one, two, three, five or seven according to the pravaras. RigVeda VII.33.1 refers to the fact that Vasisthas had a lock of hair on the right side of the head and so the rule of the Kāthaka has a very hoary antiquity behind it.

Up to modern times one of the characteristic outward signs of all Hindus was the śikhā (the top-knot). A verse of Devala says that whatever religious act a man does without the yajñopavīta or without śikhā is as good as undone and Harīta rules that a person who cuts off his śikhā through hate or ignorance or foolishness becomes pure only after performing the *tapta-krcchra* penance. Sabara (on Jaimini I.3.2) remarks that the śikhā (its position and locks) is a sign to indicate the gotra and quotes Rig, VI.75.17. Vasistha (II.21) prescribes that members of all varṇas (including the Sudra) should arrange their hair according to the fixed usage (of their family) or should shave the whole head except the śikhā. For rules about the śikhā of students vide later on under *upanayana*.

During recent times men, particularly those receiving English education in towns and cities, are forsaking the ancient practice of keeping a śikhā and follow the western method of allowing the hair to grow on the whole head.

In modern times the rite of cūḍā-karaṇa generally takes place if at all on the day of *Upanayana*. Āśv. gr. (I.17.18) expressly says that the ceremony of cūḍā-karaṇa was to be performed for girls also, but no Vedic mantras were to be repeated. Manu (II.66) says that all the ceremonies from *jāta-karma* to *cauḷa* must be performed at the proper times for girls also in order to purify their bodies but without mantras and Yāj. (I.13) is to the same effect. Even such late writers as Mitramisra say that the *cauḷa* of girls may be performed according to the usage of the family and that their hair may be entirely shaved or a śikhā may be kept or there should be no shaving at all.

In some castes even in modern times girls when mere children are shaved once, it being supposed that the first hair are impure.

#### 14. Vidyārambha (starting Education)

The Gṛhya-sūtras and Dharma-sūtras are entirely silent as to what was done for the child's education between the third year when usually *cauḷa* was performed and the 8th year (from conception) when the *upanayana* usually took place (in the case of brāhmaṇas). Some faint light is thrown on this matter by the Artha-śāstra of Kauṭilya, which says that the prince after the performance of *cauḷa* is to engage in the study of the alphabet and of arithmetic, and after his *upanayana* he is to study the Vedas, *ānvīkṣikī* (metaphysics), *vārtā* (agriculture and the science of wealth) and *daṇḍa-nīti* (the art of government) up till the 16th year when the *godāna* ceremony is to be performed and after which year he may marry. In the Uttararamacarita (Act II) it is said that Kuśa and Lava were taught *vidyās* other than the Veda after their *cauḷa* and before *upanayana*. It appears that at least from the early centuries of the Christian era, a ceremony called Vidyārambha (commencement of learning the alphabet) was celebrated. Aparārka (pp.30-31) and the Sm. C. (I. p 26) cite verses from the Markandeya-Pūraṇa about vidyārambha as follows:—

'In the fifth year of the child on some day from the 12th of the bright half of Kartika to the 11th of the bright half of Asadha, but excluding the 1st, 6th, 8th, 15th tithi or rikta tithis '(i.e. 4th, 9th and 14th) and Saturday and Tuesday, the ceremony of beginning to learn should be performed. Having worshipped Harī (Viṣṇu), Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, the sūtra writers of one's sakha and the lore peculiar to one's family, one should offer in the fire oblations of clarified butter to the above mentioned deities and should honour brāhmaṇas by the payment of dakṣina. The teacher should sit facing the east and the boy should face the West and the teacher should begin to teach the first lesson to the boy who should receive the benedictions of brāhmaṇas. Thereafter teaching should be stopped on the days of anadhyaya (which will be specified later on).'

The Saṃskāra-prakāśa (pp.321-325) and Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā (pp.904-907) have an extensive note, a considerable part of which is devoted to astrological matters. The Saṃskāra-prakāśa quotes passages from Viśvamisra, Devala and other sages and works that vidyārambha is performed in the 5th year or in any case before *upanayana*. It also quotes a verse from Nrsimha that Sarasvatī and Gaṇapati should be worshipped and then the teacher should be honoured.

The modern practice is to begin learning the alphabet on an auspicious day, generally the 10th of the bright half of Āśvina, Sarasvatī and Gaṇapati are worshipped, the teacher is honoured and the boy is asked to repeat the words '*om namaḥ siddham*' and to write them on a slate and then he is taught the letters of the alphabet.

## CHAPTER 7. UPANAYANA

**T**his word literally means 'leading or bringing near'. But the important question is 'near what'? It appears that it originally meant — 'taking near the ācārya' (for instruction); it may have also meant 'introducing the' novice to the stage of student-hood. Some of the Gṛhya-sūtras bring out this sense clearly e.g. the Hir. Gr. I.5.2 says "The teacher then makes the boy say:—

'I have come unto brahmacārya. Lead me near (initiate me into it). Let me be a student, impelled by the god Savitr'".

The Mānava and Kāṭhaka Gr. (41.1) also use the word upāyana for upanayana and Āditya-darśana on Kāṭhaka Gr. (41.1) says that *upanāya*, *upanayana*, *mauñjī-bandhana*, *batu-karaṇa*, *vrata-bandha* are synonyms.

A few words about the origin and development of this most important saṃskāra would not be out of place here. Comparison with the ancient Zoroastrian scriptures (vide S.B.E. vol. V. pp.285-290 about the sacred girdle and shirt) and the modern practices among the Parsis of India tend to show that Upanayana goes back to an Indo-Iranian origin. But that subject is outside the scope of this work. Confining ourselves to Indian Literature, we find that already in the Rig. X.109.5 the word '*brahmacāri*' occurs:—

'O gods! he (Brhaspati), all pervading one, moves as a brahmacārī pervading all (sacrifices); he is only one part of the gods (i.e. of sacrifices); Brhaspati secured by that (i.e. by his service to the gods) a wife (me who am named) Juhu, who was (formerly) taken by Soma'.<sup>98</sup>

The word 'upanayana' can be derived and explained in two ways:—

- (1) taking (the boy) near the ācārya,
- (2) that rite by which the boy is taken to the ācārya.

The first sense appears to have been the original one and when an extensive ritual came to be associated with upanayana the second came to be the sense of the word. Such an ancient work as the Āpastamba Dh. S.1.1.1.19 says that upanayana is a saṃskāra (purificatory rite) laid down by revelation for him who seeks learning (i.e. it accepts the second explanation) or this sūtra may mean

'it is a saṃskāra brought about by imparting the śruti (viz. Gāyatrī mantra) to him who seeks learning'.

This would mean that upanayana principally is gāyatrī-upadeśa (the imparting of the sacred Gāyatrī mantra). This appears to be suggested by the Vedic passage quoted above (p.154 . n.356) 'he created the brāhmaṇa with Gāyatrī, the kṣatriya with Triṣṭubh, the vaiśya with Jagati', and by Kātyāyana Srauta – 'one should initiate the brāhmaṇa with Gāyatrī'. Jaimini also (in VI.1.35) propounds the view that upanayana is a saṃskāra and has a seen result viz. thereby the boy is brought near the teacher for learning Veda.

Rig. III.8.4 68 is a verse that clearly indicates that some of the characteristics of upanayana described in the Gṛhya-sūtras were well known even then. There the sacrificial post (yupa) is

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<sup>98</sup> Every girl was supposed to have been under the protection of Soma, Gandharva and Agni before her marriage with a human bridegroom. Soma supervises the growth, Gandharva the development of the physical form and beauty, and Agni brings to sexual maturity.

praised as a young person (i.e. in the language of the later classical rhetoricians there is the first kind of the figure *Atiśayokti*) –

'here comes the youth, well dressed and encircled (the boy by his mekhala and the post by its rasanā); he, when born, attains eminence; wise sages, full of devotion to the gods in their hearts and entertaining happy thoughts, raise him up'.

Here in '*un-nayanti*' we have the same root that we have in upanayana. This mantra is employed in the upanayana by several Gṛhya-sūtras –

e.g. Aśv. I.20.8 (who employs it for making the boy circumambulate) and Par. II.2. (prescribe that the mantra is to be recited when tying the girdle round the boy's waist).

In the Tai.S. VI.681 3.10.5 we have the famous passage referring to the three debts where the words '*brahmacārī*' and '*brahmacārya*' occur.

'Every brāhmaṇa when born is indebted in three debts viz. in brahmacārya to the sages, in sacrifice to the gods and in offspring to the manes; he indeed becomes free from debts who has a son, who sacrifices and who dwells (with the teacher) as a brahmacārī.'

In the other Vedas and in the Brāhmaṇa literature there is ample material to show what the characteristic features of upanayana and brahmacārya were. The whole of Atharva-veda XI.7 (26 verses) is a hymn containing hyperbolic laudation of the brahmacārī (Vedic student) and brahmacārya. The very first verse may be cited as a sample:–

'The brahmacārī incessantly covering (the world by his glory) roams in the two worlds; the gods have the same thoughts (of grace and favour about him; he fills his teacher by his austerities'.

Verse 3 says:– 'the teacher leading (the boy) near him makes the brahmacārī like unto a foetus', (here the word '*upanayamānaḥ*' occurs) Verse 4 states that the heaven and the earth are the '*samidh*' (the fuel stick) of the brahmacārī and that the brahmacārī by his *mekhala* (girdle), by his *samidh* and by his life of hard work fill the world with austerities. Verse 6 tells us that the brahmacārī wears the skin of a black antelope and has a long beard; verse 11 says that the brahmacārī offers *samidh* into fire (or if fire is no available) to the sun, to the moon, to the wind or into waters. This hymn thus brings out most of the characteristic features of the brahmacārī and of upanayana (viz. deerskin, mekhala, offering of *samidh*, begging and a life of hard work and restraint). From the reference to the beard and from the words 'this man (*ayaṃ puruṣaḥ*)' occurring in the Atharva Veda VIII.1.1 and elsewhere it appears probable that upanayana was performed rather late in those ancient days than in the days of the sūtras.

In the Tai. Br. III.683 10.11 there is the story of Bharadvaja who remained a brahmacārī for three parts of his life (i.e. till 75) and to whom Indra said that in all that long period of brahmacārya he had mastered only an insignificant portion (three handfuls out of three mountains) of the Vedas, which were endless in extent. The story of Nabha-nediṣṭha, son of Manu, who was excluded from ancestral property at a partition made by his brothers, narrated in the Ait. Br. shows 684 that he was a brahmacārī staying with a teacher away from his father's place. The Sat. Br. XL 5.4. contains many and almost complete details about the life of *brahmacārins* which bear a very close similarity to those taught in the Gṛhya -sūtras, A brief summary is set out below.

The boy says:–

'I have come unto brahmacārya' and 'let me be a brahmacārī'.

Then the teacher asks him – 'what is your name'; then the teacher takes him near (*upanayati*); the teacher takes hold of the boy's hand with the words:–

'you are the brahmacārī of Indra; Agni is your teacher, I am your teacher, N. N. (addressing the boy by his name)'.

Then he consigns the boy to (the care of) the elements. The teacher instructs him:–

'drink water, do work (in the teacher's house), put a fuel stick (on the fire), do not sleep (by day).'

He repeats the Savitrī (mantra sacred to Savitr). Formerly it was repeated a year (after the boy came as a brahmacārī), then at the end of six months, 24 days, 12 days, 3 days; but one should repeat to the brahmana boy the verse at once (on the very day of upanayana); the teacher repeats it to him first each *pada* separately, then the half and then the whole. Being a brahmacārī one should not eat honey.

The word '*antevasi*' (lit one who dwells near a teacher) occurs in the Sat. Br. V.1.5.17 and in the Tai. Up.1.11. The Sat. Br. (XL 3.3.2) says:–

'he who takes to brahmacārya indeed takes upon himself a sacrificial session of long duration.'

It further says (XL 3.3.3-6) that the boy when entering upon studentship approaches giving a fourth part of himself to Agni, Death, the teacher and himself and that by the offering of samidh (to fire), by begging and by doing work in the teacher's house respectively he secures freedom from the action of the first three. It also says that after one finishes studentship and takes the ceremonial bath one should not beg. Vide Gopatha Br. (ed. by Gastra) 2.3 and Baud. Dh. S. I.2.53. The Sat. Br. (III.6.2.15) further says –

'therefore *brahmacārins* protect the teacher, his house and his cattle, with the idea that otherwise he might be taken away from them'.

Janamejaya Parikṣita asks the *hamsas* (who were the Ahavanīya and Dakṣina fires) – 'what is holy', and the latter reply – 'It is brahmacārya' (vide Gopatha Br.2, 5). Gopatha (2.5) further says –

'the period of studentship for the mastery of all Vedas is 48 years, which, being distributed among the Vedas in four parts, makes brahmacārya last for 12 years, which is the lowest limit; one should practise brahmacārya according to one's ability before taking the ceremonial bath.'

The same work says that the brahmacārī should fetch *samidhs* every day for worshipping fire and beg and that if he does not do so continuously for seven days he has to undergo upanayana again (2.6) and that the lady of the house should daily give alms to a *brahmacārin* with the idea that he may not deprive her of her wealth, of merit due to *iṣṭa-pūrta*. It also says that a brahmacārī should not sleep on a cot, should not engage in singing and dancing, should not roam about, should not spit about nor go to a cemetery.

It appears from the above and from the Upanishad passages set out immediately below that originally Upanayana was a very simple matter. The would-be student came to the teacher with a samidh in his hand and told the teacher that he desired to enter the stage of studentship and begged to be allowed to be a brahmacārī living with the teacher. There were no elaborate ceremonies like those described in the Gṛhya-sūtras. The word brahmacārya occurs in the Kaṭha. Up.1.1.15, Muṇḍaka II.1.7, Chāṇḍogya VI.1.1 and other Upanishads. The Chāṇḍogya and the Br. Up., probably the oldest among the Upanishads, furnish very valuable information. That some ceremonies were required before a young boy was admitted as a student even in Upanisadic times is clear from the statement in the Chāṇḍogya V.11.7 63 that when Aśvapati Kekaya was approached by Prācīnaśala Aupamanyava and four others who carried fuel in their hands (like young students) and who were grown-up householders and theologians,

'he (Aśvapati) without submitting them to the rites of Upanayana began the discourse'.

When Satyakāma Jabala tells the truth about his gotra to Gautama Haridrumata, the latter says:–

'fetch, dear boy, fuel, I shall initiate you. You have not swerved from the truth' (Chāṇḍogya IV.4.5).

Similarly in the Br. Up. VI.2.7. it is said that former students (i.e. students in former ages)

approached (the teacher for brahmacārya) only in words (i.e. without any further solemn rite or ceremony).

In the most ancient times it is probable that the father himself always taught his son. But it appears that from the times of the Tai. S. and the Brāhmaṇas the student generally went to a guru and stayed in his house. Uddalaka Aruni who was himself a profound philosopher of Brahma-vidyā asks his son Śvetaketu to enter upon brahmacārya and sends him to a teacher to learn the Vedas.

The age when upanayana was performed is not expressly stated in the Upanishads except in the case of Śvetaketu who was 12. The period of student-hood was usually twelve (Chāṇḍogya II.23.1, IV.10.1, VL1.2), though the Chāṇḍogya (VIII.11.3) speaks of Indra's brahmacārya for 101 years and Chāṇḍogya II.23.1; speaks of brahmacārya for life.

### 1. The proper age for Upanayana

The Aśv. Gr. (I.19.1-6) says that a brāhmaṇa boy should undergo upanayana in the 8th year from birth or from conception, a kṣatriya in the 11th year, a vaiśya in the 12th and that to the 16th, 22nd and 24th years respectively for the three varṇas it cannot be said that the time for upanayana has passed.

Āpastamba (10.2), San. (II.1), Baud. (II.5.2) and Bhar. (1.1), Gobhila (II.10.1) Gṛhya-sūtras, Yāj.1.14. Āpastamba Dh. S.1.1.1.19 expressly say that the respective years are calculated from conception. The Mahābhāṣya also refers to the rule that a brāhmaṇa's upanayana is to be performed in the 8th year from conception.

Par. Gr. (II.2) allows upanayana in the 8th year from birth or conception and adds that in the case of all varṇas family usage may be followed. Yāj.1.14 also refers to family usage.

San. Gr. (II.1.1) allows upanayana in the 8th or 10th year from conception, the Mānava Gr. (I.22.1) allows it in the 7th or 9th year, the Kāṭhaka Gr. (41, 1-3) prescribes 7th, 9th and 11th years for the upanayana of the three varṇas respectively.

In some smṛtis upanayana is allowed to be performed even earlier or at different ages, e.g. Gautama (I.6-8) prescribes that upanayana for a brāhmaṇa is in the 8th year from conception but it may be in the 5th or 9th according to the result desired; and Manu. II.37 says that if spiritual eminence (for the boy) is desired (by his father) then upanayana may be performed in the 5th year for a brāhmaṇa, in the 6th year for a kṣatriya if there is a desire for military power, in the 8th for a vaiśya if there is desire for endeavour to accumulate wealth. Vaik. (II.3) also prescribes the 5th, 8th, 9th years from conception for a brāhmaṇa if there is a desire respectively for spiritual eminence, long life and wealth.

The Āpastamba Dh. S. I.1.1.21 and Baud. Gr. (II.5) prescribe 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th years respectively for one desiring spiritual eminence, long life, brilliance, abundant food, physical vigour and cattle. Therefore, the 8th, 11th and 12th years from birth of all three varṇas are the principal time for upanayana; while the years from 5th onwards up to 11th are the secondary time (*gauna*) for a brāhmaṇa, 9th to 16th are secondary for kṣatriya and so on. From 12th to 16 is *gaunatarā* for brāhmaṇas and after 16 *gaunatarā* for them.

The auspicious times according to the Āpastamba Gr. and Āpastamba Dh. S.1.1.1.19, Hir. Gr. (I.1) and Vaik. are *vasanta* (spring), *grīṣma* (summer), and *śarad* (autumn) for the three varṇas. The Bhar. Gr. (I.1) says that upanayana for a brāhmaṇa should be performed in *vasanta*, for a kṣatriya in summer or *hemanta*, for a vaiśya in *śarad*, in the rainy season for a carpenter (rathakāra) or in *śiśira* for all. Sabara in his bhāṣya on Jaimini VI.1.33 where upanayana is denied to Śūdras, quotes '*vasante brāhmaṇam upanayīta*' as a Vedic text. Aśv. Gr. I.4.1, Hir. Gr. (I.1.5, S.B.E. vol.30 p.1 37) and Bhar. Gr. (1.1) say that upanayana should be performed in the bright half of a month, on an

auspicious nakṣatra, particularly under a nakṣatra the name of which is masculine.

Later works introduced very intricate rules about the proper months, tithis, days and times for upanayana. It is neither possible nor very necessary to go into these astrological details. But a few words must be said as in modern times upanayana is performed only in accordance with these rules. Vrddhagargya laid down that six months from Magha were the proper months for upanayana, while others say that five months from Magha are the proper ones. Then 1st, 4th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 13th, 14th, 15th i.e. (full moon and new moon) tithis are generally avoided (though there are some counter exceptions which are not set out here). It is stated that upanayana should not be performed when Venus is so near the sun that it cannot be seen, when the sun is in the first degree of any zodiacal sign, on *anadhyāya* days and on '*galagraha*' (the tithis specified above).

Jupiter, Venus, Mars and Mercury are respectively the presiding deities of the Rig Veda and the other Vedas. Therefore the upanayana of those who have to study these Vedas should be performed on the week days presided over by these planets. Among week days Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are the best, Sunday is middling, Monday is the least suitable, but Tuesday and Saturday are prohibited (except that for students of the Sama Veda and kṣatriyas Tuesday is allowed).

Among the nakṣatras the proper ones are Hasta, Citra, Svati, Pusa, Dhaniṣṭha, Aśvinī, Mrigaśiras, Punarvasu, Sravana and Revatī. There are other rules about nakṣatras with respect to those who follow a particular Veda (which are passed over). One rule is that all nakṣatras except Bharanī, Kṛttika, Magha, Viśakha, Jyeṣṭha, Satataraka are good for all.

The Moon and Jupiter must be astrologically strong with reference to the boy's horoscope. The rule about Jupiter probably arose from the fact that Jupiter was supposed to rule over knowledge and happiness and as upanayana was meant to be the entrance for Veda-study, Jupiter's benevolent aspect was thought to be necessary. If Jupiter and Venus are not to be seen owing to nearness to the sun, upanayana cannot be performed. Jupiter when in the 2nd, 5th, 7th, 9th, 11th zodiacal sign from the sign of birth (calculation to be made inclusive of the sign of birth) is auspicious, when in the 1st, 3rd, 6th, 10th place from the sign of birth it is auspicious after the performance of a propitiatory homa and when it is in the 4th, 8th, 12th place from birth, it is inauspicious. The moon is supposed to be malefic when she is in the 2nd, 4th, 5th, 8th, 9th or 12th place from the sign of birth.

Four hours from sunrise is the best for upanayana, from that time to noon is middling and afternoon is prohibited.

Some said that a person's upanayana should not be performed in the month in which he was born, others restricted the prohibition to the pakṣa (the half) of the month in which he was born. There are other rules about the Lagna (the rising zodiacal sign at the time of upanayana) which are not set out here. There are other prohibited astrological conjunctions like Vyatīpata, Vaidhṛti &c. For detailed rules on these, works like the Sam. Pr. (pp.355-385), Nirṇaya-sindhu and Dharma-sindhu may be consulted.

## 2. Garments worn at Upanayana

A brahmacārī had to wear two garments, one for the lower part of the body (*vāsas*), another for covering the upper part of the body (*uttarīya*). Āpastamba Dh.S. (1.1.2.39-1.1.3.1-2) says that:—

'the garment (*vāsas*) for a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya or vaiśya brahmacārī is respectively to be made of hemp, flax, ajina (deerskin), some teachers prescribe that the lower garment should be of cotton but coloured reddish-yellow for brāhmaṇas; dyed with madder for kṣatriyas, dyed with turmeric for vaiśyas.'

Par. Gr. (II.5), Manu (II.41) speak of '*avika*' (made of wool) for vaiśya instead of '*ajina*'. Vas.Dh.S. (XL 64-67) says that a brāhmaṇa (brahmacārī) should wear a (lower) garment which is white and unblemished (or new) and for a kṣatriya or vaiśya it should be the same as in Āpastamba Dh., but

for vaiśya Vas. prescribes also one made of kuśa grass or he says that all should wear cotton cloth that is undyed. Gaut (1.17-20) on the other hand says that for all, the lower garment may be made of hemp, flax or kuśa grass (*cīra*) or of the hair of the mountainous goat (*kutapa*); other teachers prescribe coloured garments, one coloured with the juice of trees for brāhmaṇas and madder-red and yellow for kṣatriya and vaiśya. Aśv. Gr. (I.19.8), Par. Gr. (II.5), Vas. Dh. S. (XI.61-63), Baud. Gr. (II.5.16) say that the upper garment for a brāhmaṇa should be the skin of a black deer, for kṣatriya the skin of ruru deer and for a vaiśya of cow-skin or of goat skin. Baud, and Aśv. prescribe only goat skin. Par. Gr. adds that if any one cannot secure a skin suited to one's varṇa, he may wear an upper garment of cow-hide as the cow is the chief among animals.

Āpastamba Dh. S. (1.1.3.7-8) gives the option to all varṇas to use a sheep skin (as upper garment) or a woollen plaid (*kambala*). Aśv. Gr. (1.19.8-9) appears to suggest that the lower and upper garments may be of the same skin or that the lower garment may be white or coloured (as stated above by Āpastamba Dh. &).

The Kāṭhaka Gr. (41.13) says that the upper garment for the three varṇas should be respectively of the skins of black deer, tiger and ruru deer.

A vestige of these rules survives in the modern practice of tying a small piece of deer skin to the *yajñopavīta* of the boy when his *upanayana* is performed. That the rules about the lower and upper garments go back to great antiquity is shown by a reference to a Brāhmaṇa passage in the Āpastamba Dh. S.648 1.1.3.9 –

'one should wear only deer skin (as lower and upper garments) if one desires the increase of Vedic lore, only (cotton) garments if one desires the increase of martial valour and both if one desires both'.

### 3. Daṇḍa (staff).

There is some divergence of view about the trees of which the staff was to be made. Aśv. Gr. (I.19.13 and I.20.1) says:–

'a staff of the *palāśa* wood for a brāhmaṇa, of *udumbara* for a kṣatriya and of *bilva* for a vaiśya or all the varṇas may employ a staff of any of these trees.'

The Āpastamba Gr.11.15 - 16 (this is the same as Āpastamba Dh. S.1.1.2.38) says that the staff should be of *palāśa* wood for a brāhmaṇa, of the branch of the *nyagrodha* tree (so that the downward end of the branch forms the tip of the staff) for a kṣatriya, of *badara* or *udumbara* wood for a vaiśya; while some teachers say that the staff should be made of a tree (which is used in sacrifices) without reference to any varṇa. Gaut. (I 21) and Baud. Dh. S. (II.5.17) say that the staff of *palāśa* or *bilva* should be used for brāhmaṇa and Gaut, (I.22-23) says that *Aśvattha* and *palāśa* wood staff should be used respectively for kṣatriya and vaiśya or of any sacrificial tree for all varṇas.

Baud. Gr. prescribes *nyagrodha* or *rauhitaka* for kṣatriya, and *badara* or *udumbara* for vaiśya. Par. Gr. recommends a staff of *palāśa*, *bilva* and *udumbara* respectively for the three varṇas (or any of these for all). *Kanaka* Gr.(41.22) recommends *palāśa*, *aśvattha* and *nyagrodha* respectively for the three. *Manu* (11.45) prescribes *bilva* and *palāśa* for brāhmaṇa, *khadira* for kṣatriya, *udumbara* for vaiśya, and *Kulluka* adds that two staffs should be used by the boy, as two are recommended in a compound.

The staff was required for support, for controlling the cattle of the teacher (which the student was to tend), for protection when going out at night and for guidance when entering a river or the like.

The length of the staff varied according to the varṇa of the boy. Aśv. Gr.1.19.13, Gaut. I.25, Vas. Dh. S. (XI.55-57), Par. Gr. (II.5), *Manu* (II.46) prescribe that in the case of the brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya



or vaiśya boy respectively the staff should be as high as his head, forehead or the tip of the nose. The San.Gr. (IL 1.21-23, S.B.E. vol.29. p.260) on the other hand reverses this (the brāhmaṇa having the shortest staff and the vaiśya the longest), Gaut. I.26 says that the staff should be one not eaten by termites, should have the bark attached to it, and should have a curved tip, while Manu II.47 adds that the staff should be straight, pleasing to look at and should not have come into contact with fire. The San. Gr. (II.13.2-3) prescribes that the brahmacārī should not allow any one to pass between himself and his staff and that if the staff, girdle or the yajñopavīta break or rend, he has to undergo a penance (same as the one for the breaking of a chariot at a wedding procession) and that at the end of the period of brahmacārya, he should sacrifice in water the yajñopavīta, staff, the girdle and the skin with a mantra to Varuna (Rig. I.24.6) or with the sacred syllable 'om'.

#### 4. Mekhala (girdle):

Gaut. (1.15), Aśv. Gr. (1.19.11), Baud. Gr. (II.5.13), Manu II.42, Kāṭhaka Gr. (41.12), Bhar. Gr. (I.2) and others prescribe that a girdle made of muñja grass should be tied round a brāhmaṇa boy's waist, one made of muñja grass (which is used for making a bowstring) for a kṣatriya and one of hemp cords for a vaiśya. Pāraskara says that the string of a bow should be used for a kṣatriya and of muñja grass for a vaiśya and adds that in the absence of these the girdle should respectively be made of kuśa, asmantaka and balvaja grass (for brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya and vaiśya). Manu (II.42-43) gives the same rules as Par. Gr. Āpastamba Dh. S. (1.1.2.35-37) optionally allows a girdle of muñja grass with an iron piece intertwined in it for kṣatriyas and woollen string or the yoke-string or a string of tamālā bark for vaiśyas (according to some).

Some of the sūtras (e.g. Baud. Gr. Āpastamba Dh. S.) further prescribe that the girdle of muñja grass should have three strings to it and the grass should have its ends turned to the right and the knot of the girdle should be brought near the navel. Manu (II.43) says that there may be one knot or three or five (according to family usage, says Kulluka).

#### 5. Procedure of Upanayana

In order to convey an idea of the rites of upanayana in the days of the Gṛhya -sūtras the ceremony as contained in the Aśv. Gr. sūtra (which is among the shortest) is set out in full.

Let him initiate the boy who is well-decked, whose hair (on the head) is shaved (and arranged), who wears a new garment or an antelope skin if a brāhmaṇa, ruru skin if a kṣatriya, goat's skin if a vaiśya; if they put on garments they should put on dyed ones, reddish-yellow, red and yellow (for a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya respectively), they should have girdles and staffs (as described above). While the boy takes hold of (the hand of) his teacher, the latter offers (a homa of clarified butter oblations) in the fire (as described above) and seats himself to the north of the fire with his face turned to the east, while the other one (the boy) stations himself in front (of the teacher) with his face turned to the west.

The teacher then fills the folded hands of both himself and of the boy with water and with the verse;— 'we choose that of Savitr' (Rig. V.82.1) the teacher drops down the water in his own folded hands on to the water in the folded hands of the boy; having thus poured the water, he should seize with his own hand the boy's hand together with the thumb (of the boy) with the formula 'by the urge (or order) of the god Savitr, with the arms of the two Aśvins, with the hands of Pusan, I seize thy hand, O! so and so'; a with the words 'Savitr has seized thy hand, O! so and so' a second time (the teacher seizes the boy's hand); with the words 'Agni is thy teacher, O! so and so' a third time.

The teacher should cause (the boy) to look at the sun, while the teacher repeats:— 'God Savitr! this is thy brahmacārī, protect him, may he not die' and (the teacher should further) say:— 'Whose brahmacārī art thou? thou art the brahmacārī of Prana. Who does initiate thee and whom

(does he initiate)? I give thee to Ka (to Prajāpati)'. With the half verse;– (Rig. III 8.4.) 'the young man, well attired and dressed, came hither' he (the teacher) should cause him to turn round to the right and with his two bands placed over (the boy's) shoulders he should touch the place of the boy's heart repeating the latter half (of Rig. III.8.4).

Having wiped the ground round the fire the brahmacārī should put (on the fire) a fuel stick silently, since it is known (from śruti) 'what belongs to Prajāpati is silently (done)', and the brahmacārī belongs to Prajāpati. Some do this (offering of a fuel stick) with a mantra to Agni I have brought a fuel stick, to the great Jata-Vedas; by the fuel stick mayst thou increase, Oh Agni and may we (increase) through Brahman (prayer or spiritual lore), svaha'. Having put the fuel stick (on the fire) and having touched the fire, he (the student) thrice wipes off his face with the words– 'I anoint myself with lustre'; it is known (from śruti) 'for he does anoint himself with lustre'. 'May Agni bestow on me, insight, offspring and lustre; on me may Indra bestow insight, offspring and vigour (indriya); on me may the sun bestow insight, offspring and radiance; what thy lustre is, O Agni! may I thereby become lustrous; what thy strength is, Agni may I thereby become strong; what thy consuming power is Agni, may I thereby acquire consuming power'.

Having waited upon (worshipped) Agni with these formulas, (the student) should bend his knees, embrace (the teacher's feet) and say to him:– 'recite, Sir, recite, Sir, the Savitrī'. Seizing the student's hands with the upper garment (of the student) and his own hands the teacher recites the Savitrī, first *pada* by *pada*, then hemistich by hemistich (and lastly) the whole verse. He (the teacher) should make him (the student) recite (the Savitrī) as much as he is able.

On the place of the student's heart the teacher lays his hand with the fingers upturned with the formula 'I place thy heart, unto duty to me; may thy mind follow my mind; may you attend on my words single-minded; may Brhaspati appoint thee unto me'.

Having tied the girdle round him (the boy) and having given him the staff, the teacher should instruct him in the observances of a brahmacārī with the words – ' a brahmacārī art thou, sip water, do service, do not sleep by day, depending (completely) on the teacher learn the Veda'.

He (the student) should beg (food) in the evening and the morning; he should put a fuel stick (on fire) in the evening and the morning. That (which he has received by begging) he should announce to the teacher; he should not sit down (but should be standing) the rest of the day."

The whole procedure of upanayana is more elaborately described in the Āpastamba Gr., in Hir. Gr. and Gobhila.

A few points of interest and divergence may be noted here briefly. It is remarkable that Aśv., Āpastamba and several other sūtrakāras do not say a word about the sacred thread, while a few like Hir.Gr. (I.2.6), Bhar.Gr. (I.3) and Mānava Gr. (I.22.2) say that the boy already wears the yajñopavīta before the homa begins; while Baud.Gr. (II.5.7) says that the boy is given the yajñopavīta and then made to recite the well-known mantra:– 'the Yajñopavīta is extremely sacred' and the Vaik. smārta (II.5) says that the teacher gives the upper garment to the boy with the verse;– '*parīdam vāsah*', the sacred thread with the mantra – '*Yajñopavītam paramam pavitram etc.*' and the black antelope skin with the mantra – 'the eye of Mitra'.

Sudarsana on Āpastamba Gr.10.5 says that the boy puts on the yajñopavīta with the mantra before he takes his meal (according to some) or (according to others) before he puts the fuel stick on the fire, and relies on Āpastamba Dh. S. I.5.15.1 for support.

According to Karka and Harihara (on Pāraskara) the yajñopavīta was given to the student by the teacher after the tying of the girdle. The Saṃskāra-tattva p.934 says the same. Late works like the Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā (p.202) prescribe the wearing of the sacred thread before the homa. The origin and development of the ideas about yajñopavīta will be dealt with separately later on.

Āpastamba Gr. (X.5), Baud Gr. (II.5.7) and Par. Gr. (II.2) prescribe a dinner to brāhmaṇas before the ceremonies begin and receiving their benedictions. Āpastamba Gr. (X.5), Bhar. Gr. (1.1), Baud.

Gr. (II.5.7) say that the boy also is made to take food; according to later works (e.g. Samskāra-ratna-mālā) the boy takes his meal in the same dish with his mother (for the last time) and other *brahmacārins* (eight in number) are also invited at the same time for meals in the company of the boy. This practice is observed even in modern times. Almost all prescribe that the boy is shaved on this day (as in caula); this also is done in modern times. But in ancient times the shaving was done by the ācārya himself as stated by Sudarśana on Āpastamba Gr.10.6-8. There are several other matters detailed in Āpastamba and others, on which Aśv. and some others are silent. The important ones are mentioned below.

(a) Āpastamba Gr. (10.9), Mānava Gr. (1.23.12), Baud. Gr. (II.5, 10), Khadira Gr. (II.4) and Bhar. Gr. (I.8) make the boy tread on a stone to the north of the fire with his right foot after homa. The mantras repeated in the several sūtras are significant asking the boy to be firm like a stone.

(b) Mānava Gr. (1.22.3) and Kāṭhaka Gr. (41.10) prescribe after homa the tasting of curds thrice after repeating the verse;– '*Dadhikrāvino akāriṣam*' (Rig. IV.39.6 = Tai. S. I.5.4.11).

(c) Par. Gr. (II.2), Bhār. Gr. (1.7), Āpastamba Gr. (11.1-4,), Āpastamba Mantra-pāṭhaḥ (II.3.27-30), Baud. Gr. II.5.25 (quoting Sātyāyanaka), Mānava Gr. I, 22.4-5, and Khadira Gr. II.4.12 refer to the fact that the teacher asks the boy his name and the latter pronounces his name. The teacher also asks whose brahmacārī the boy is.

A person was given (as shown above at pp.246-247) an *abhivadanīya* name either derived from the nakṣatra of birth or from a deity name or the gotra name. This was necessary for several purposes. The teacher had to know that the boy came from a good family, he had also to address him by name (as there might be several pupils). It is wrong to suppose from the story of Satyakama Jabala (where the teacher asked him his gotra) that only brāhmaṇas were admitted to brahmacārya. All smṛtis, even the latest, contemplated that the three castes had the right to learn the Veda. It is one thing to have a right and another to exercise it. Probably very few kṣatriyas cared to submit their sons to the rigorous discipline of brahmacārya as laid down in the smṛtis and cared much less for Veda studies. In the Mahābhārata and in the Kadambarī it is said that the princes were taught in a special house constructed for the purpose and teachers were paid handsomely and brought there to teach instead of the princes going to the teachers.

It is not possible for want of space to show how the greatest possible confusion prevails as to the order of the various components of the ceremony of upanayana, But a few striking examples may be given.

Aśvalayana Gr. treats of the tying of the girdle and the giving of the staff almost at the end of the ceremony, while Āpastamba Gr. puts this after homa and immediately before añjali-pūraṇa (filling the folded hands of both with water); Aśvalayana puts aditya-darśana after the boy's hand is held by the teacher and before *paridāna* (handing the boy over to the deities), but Bhar. (I.9) puts it after the instruction in the observances of brahmacārya. The Bhar. Gr. (I.9) treats of *aditya-darśana* almost at the end of the rites, while, Aśv. places it among the earlier ones after homa.

Besides the same mantras are employed by different sūtras for different purposes; for example, the mantra '*suśravali* etc.' is employed by Āpastamba at the time of taking the staff by the boy (XI.14 and Mantra-pāṭha II.5.1), while Aśv. Gr. (I.22.19), Bhar. Gr. (I.10), Mānava Gr. (I.23, 17) employ it in '*medhajanana*' (on the 4th day after upanayana) and Par. Gr. (II.4) employs it at the time of putting a fuel stick on fire. Aśv. employs the verse;– '*yuvā suvāsaḥ*' (Rig. III.8.4) for making the boy turn round (first half) and for touching the region of the boy's heart (latter half), while the same verse is employed at the time of tying the girdle round the boy's waist by the Mānava Gr.(I, 22.8) and Par. Gr.(II.2).

Later writers went on adding mantras and details. On the day prior to upanayana the *Nandi-śrāddha* was performed as said by Haradatta on Āpastamba Gr.10.5. *Graha-makha* (a sacrifice to

the planets) also may be performed the previous day or on any day within 7 or 10 days of the upanayana. Then before the actual upanayana, there is the worship of Ganapati and of Kuladevatas, puṇyāha-vācana, the worship of Manes and the consecration of the mandapa-devatas. Up to the act of making the boy dine with his mother it is the father who does everything; thereafter it is the ācārya who does the rest. The saṅkalpa of upanayana is given below.

## 6. Yajñopavīta:

A few words must be said on the history of yajñopavīta from ancient times. Among the earliest references is one from the Tai. S. II.5.11.1:–

'the *nivīta* is (used in actions) for men, the *pracīnavīta* (is used in rites) for pitṛs, the *upavīta* (in rites) for gods; he wears it in the *upavīta* mode (i.e. slung from the left shoulder), thereby he makes a distinguishing sign of the gods'.

In the Tai. Br. (I.6.8.) we read –

'wearing in the *pracīnavīta* form he offers towards the south; for in the case of pitṛs, acts are performed towards the south. Disregarding that one should wear in the *upavīta* form and offer in the north only, since both gods and pitṛs are worshipped (in this rite) '.

The three words *nivīta*, *pracīnavīta* and *upavīta* are explained in the Gobhila Gr. (I.2.2-4) which says:–

'raising his right arm, putting the head into (the *upavīta*) he suspends (the cord) over his left shoulder in such a way that it hangs down on his right side; thus lie becomes yajñopavītin. Passing his left arm, putting the head (into the *upavīta*) he suspends it over his right shoulder, so that it hangs down along his left side; in this way he becomes pracīnavītin; a person becomes pracīnavītin only in the sacrifice offered to the Manes'

The Baud 74 Gr. Paribhāṣa-sūtra II.2.3 says:–

'when it is carried over the neck, both shoulders and the chest and is held with both the thumbs (of the two hands) lower than the region of the heart and above the navel, that is *nivīta*; (when the śruti says it is) for men, what it means is that it is for sages. The occasions when *nivīta* mode is used are: rsi-tarpaṇa, sexual intercourse, saṃskāras of one's children except when homa is to be performed, answering the calls of nature, carrying a corpse and whatever other actions are meant only for men; *nivīta* is what hangs from the neck '.

The Sat. Br. (II.4.2.1, S.B.E. vol.12, p.361) says:–

"the gods being yajñopavītins approached near, bending their right knee; he (Prajāpati) said to them:– 'the sacrifice is your food, immortality is your strength, the sun is your light'; then the pitṛs approached him, being pracīnavītins and bending their left knee and then men approached him covered with a garment and bending their bodies" etc

It is important to note here that men are said to have been covered only with a garment and there is no reference in their case to any mode of wearing either as yajñopavīta or *nivīta* or *pracīnavīta*. This rather suggests that men wore only garments when approaching gods and not necessarily a cord of threads. In the Tai. Br. III.10.9. it is said that when *vāk* (speech) appeared to Devabhaga Gautama he put on the yajñopavīta and fell down with the words '*namo namaḥ*'. It seems to follow from a passage in the Tai. A. (II.1) that a strip of black antelope skin or of cloth was used in ancient times as *upavīta*.

'the sacrifice of him who wears a yajñopavīta becomes spread out (prosperous, famous), while the sacrifice of him who does not wear it does not spread; whatever a brāhmaṇa studies, wearing a yajñopavīta, he really (therein) performs a sacrifice. Therefore one should study, sacrifice or officiate at a sacrifice which the yajñopavīta on for securing the spreading of sacrifice; having worn an antelope skin or a garment on the right side, he raises the right hand and keeps the left

down; this is *yajñopavīta*; when this position is reversed it is *pracīnavīta*; the position called *samvīta* is for men.'

It is remarkable that here at any rate no cord of threads is meant by *upavīta*, but only a piece of skin or cloth. The Par. M. (I. part 1 p.173) quotes a portion of the above passage and remarks that the Tai. Ar. lays down that a man becomes an *upavītin* by wearing one of the two, viz. antelope skin and (cotton) garment.

In the Purva-mīmamsa-sūtra (III.1.21) it is established (with reference to the words) in the Tai. S. II.5.11.1 (*upavyayate* etc. quoted in, n.671) that one has to be an *upavītin* throughout all the actions, prescribed in the sections on the *Darśa-Purnamāsa* sacrifice and not only when the Samidhenī verses are recited. The first part of the same passage is discussed by Jaimini (III.4.1-9) and it is established that the passage enjoins the wearing of *upavīta* in *Darśa-Purnamāsa* which is deva karma and that the reference to *pracīnavīta* and *nivīta* is only an anuvāda intended to emphasize the desirability of the wearing of *upavīta* in sacrifices to gods.

The Tantra-vartika explains that *nivīta* is tying the *upavīta* round the throat like a braid of hair (according to some), while according to others it is tying it round the waist as if for girding up the loins and that the first is not done except in battle, while the latter has to be resorted to in all acts in order to devote sole attention to them. So according to the Tantravartika, the Tai. S. is not referring (in II.5.11.1) to a cord of threads but to a piece of cloth.

Some of the sūtrakāras and commentators drop hints that garments were used or could be used as *upavīta*. Āpastamba Dh.5. (II.2.4.22-23) says that a householder should always wear an upper garment and then adds— 'or the sacred thread may serve the purpose of an upper garment ' This shows that originally *upavīta* meant an upper garment and not merely a cord of threads. In another place the same sūtra says (II.8.19.12) –

'One (who partakes of śrāddha dinner) should eat covered with an upper garment slung over the left shoulder and passing under the right arm'.

Haradatta gives two explanations of this, viz., that one should wear an upper garment (while dining at a śrāddha) like a *yajñopavīta* i.e. under the right arm and over the left shoulder, that is, a brāhmaṇa cannot rely on Āpastamba Dh. S. II.4.23 and wear at śrāddha repast only the sacred thread (but he must wear the garment in that fashion) and give up the sacred thread for the time. While another view is that he must wear the sacred thread and the upper garment both in the fashion of *upavīta*. Āpastamba Dh. S. (I.2.6.18-19) prescribes that when a student wears two garments he should wear one of them (i.e. the upper one) in the *yajñopavīta* mode, but when he wears only one garment then he should wear it round the lower part of the body (and should not cover the upper body with a portion of the garment though it may be long enough for that).

Āpastamba Dh. S. I.5.15.1 prescribes that a man must be *yajñopavītin* at the time of waiting upon teachers, elders, guests, at the time of homa, japa (murmuring prayer), at meals and in taking ācamana and at the time of daily Vedic study. On this Haradatta says:—

'*Yajñopavīta* means a particular mode of wearing the (upper) garment; if one has no upper garment, then there is another (but inferior) mode stated in Āpastamba Dh. S. II.2.4.23 and that at other times it is not necessary to have the *yajñopavīta*'.

The Gobhila Gr. (I.2.1) in treating of upanayana says – 'the student takes as *yajñopavīta* a cord of threads, a garment or a rope of kuśa grass'. This indicates that though a cord of threads was considered in Gobhila's days as the appropriate *yajñopavīta*, that was not an invariable rule in his day and that a garment could be employed instead. The commentator, being brought up in the latter day tradition explains by saying that if the thread was lost in a forest then a garment may be worn like the sacred thread and if even that was lost a rope of kuśa. But this appears to be rather far-fetched as an explanation of Gobhila's unqualified words.

Manu (11.44) says that – 'the *upavīta* of a brāhmaṇa should be made of cotton, its strands should be twined with the right hand moved over them (or the twist of the strands must be upwards) and it should have three threads'. Medhātithi comments on this that '*upavīta*' means a particular mode of wearing a garment or a particular position of it and therefore here by *upavīta* is meant that which can be worn in that mode.

The Sm.C. quotes a prose passage from ṛṣyaśṛṅga:–

'Or one may carry out all the purposes for which yajñopavīta is required by means of a garment and in its absence by a string of three threads'.

From the above passages, from the fact that many of the Gr̥hya-sūtras are entirely silent about the giving or wearing of the sacred thread in upanayana and from the fact that no mantra is cited from the Vedic Literature for the act of giving the yajñopavīta<sup>99</sup> (which is now the centre of the upanayana rites), while scores of Vedic mantras are cited for the several component parts of the ceremony of upanayana, it is most probable, if not certain, that the sacred thread was not invariably used in the older times as in the times of the later smṛtis and in modern times, that originally the upper garment was used in various positions for certain acts, that it could be laid aside altogether in the most ancient times and that the cord of threads came to be used first as an option and later on exclusively for the upper garment.

A few rules about yajñopavīta may now be stated here.

The yajñopavīta is to have three threads of nine strands well twisted (for each thread). Vide Baud. Dh.S.I.5.5., Devala quoted in the Sm. C.884. The nine devatas of the nine *tantus* (strands) are given by Devala viz. Omkāra, Agni, Naga, Soma, Pitṛs, Prajāpati, Vayu, Surya, all gods. Medhātithi on Manu 11.44 says that in iṣṭis, animal sacrifices and soma sacrifices, the yajñopavīta was to have only one thread of three *tantus*, but it was three-fold in three classes of *ahīna*, *ekaha*, and *sattra* sacrifices as they required three fires and in the seven *somasamsthas* seven-fold and five-fold when viewed with reference to the three *savanas* and two *sandhyās*.

The yajñopavīta should reach as far as the navel, should not reach beyond the navel, nor should it be above the chest.

Manu II.44 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.27.19 prescribe that the yajñopavīta for brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya and vaiśya should respectively be of cotton, hemp and sheep wool. Baud. Dh. S. (I.5.5), Gobhila Gr. (1.2.1) say that it may be of cotton thread or of kuśa grass and Devala as quoted in Sm. 0. says that all twice-born persons should make their yajñopavīta of cotton, of kṣauma, hair of cow's tail, hemp, tree bark or kuśa according to the availability of the material.

The remarks of the Saṃskāra-mayukha after quoting Manu II.44 are interesting:–

'we do not know the origin of (or authority for) the practice of present-day kṣatriyas and vaiśyas, viz. of wearing cotton yajñopavīta'.

This shows that in the 17th century A.D. many kṣatriyas and vaiśyas put on yajñopavīta. Kumarila also says that wearing yajñopavīta and studying Vedas is common to all the three varṇas.

The number of yajñopavitas to be worn differed according to circumstances. A brahmacārī was to wear only one yajñopavīta and samnyasins, when they kept yajñopavīta at all, also wore only one. A snātaka (i.e. one who has returned from the teacher's house after brahmacārya) and a householder were to wear two while one who desired long life may wear more than two.

Vas. Dh. S. XII.14 says:–

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<sup>99</sup> The mantra *yajñopavītam paramam pavitram* ..... which is generally used, is cited only in Baud. Gr. (note 662 above) and in Vaik. (II.5), has certainly a comparatively modern ring about it and is not cited in any well-known ancient work.

'snātakas should always wear a lower garment and an upper one, two yajñopavītas, should have a stick and a pot filled with water'.

Kaśyapa allowed a householder to wear any number up to ten, Whether yajñopavīta as worn in modern times was worn from the most ancient times or not, it is certain that long before the Christian era it had come to be so worn and it had become an inflexible rule that a brāhmaṇa must always wear a yajñopavīta and have his top-knot (of hair) always tied up; if he did any act without observing this rule, it was inefficacious. Vas. and Baud. Dh. S. (II.2.1) both say that a man must always wear yajñopavīta. If a brāhmaṇa took his meals without wearing yajñopavīta, he had to undergo prayaścitta viz. to bathe, to mutter prayers and fast. The Mit. on Yāj. III.292 prescribes prayaścitta for answering calls of nature without having the yajñopavīta placed on the right ear (as Yāj. I.16 prescribes). Manu IV.66 forbids the wearing of another's yajñopavīta along with several other things (such as shoes, ornament, garland and kamaṇḍalu). In Yāj. (I.16 and 133) and other smṛtis the yajñopavīta is called brahma-sūtra.

## 7. Women and Upanayana

An interesting question is whether women ever had upanayana performed or whether they had to wear the yajñopavīta. Several smṛtis contain instructive dicta on this point. The Hārīta Dharma Sūtra as quoted in the Sm.C. and other digests says:—

'there are two sorts of women, those that are *brahma-vadinīs* (i.e. students of sacred lore) and those that are *sadyovadhūs* (i.e. who straightway marry). Out of these *brahma-vadinīs* have to go through upanayana, keeping fire, Vedic study and begging in one's house (i.e. under the parental roof), but in the case of *sadyovadhūs* when their marriage is drawing near, the mere ceremony of upanayana should somehow be performed and then their marriage should be celebrated.'

In the Gobhila Gr. II.1.19 it is said:—

"leading forward towards the sacred fire (from the house) the bride who is wrapped in a robe and wears the sacred thread (slung from her left shoulder, in the yajñopavīta mode) he (the husband) should murmur the verse;— 'Soma gave her to Gandharva' (Rig. X.85.41)".

It is clear that the girl, according to Gobhila, wore the yajñopavīta as a symbol of the rite of upanayana. The commentator to whom this procedure naturally seemed strange explains '*yajñopavītinīm*' as meaning 'whose upper garment is worn in the fashion of the sacred thread'. In the Saṃskāra-tattva of Raghunandana it is stated that Harisharma held that according to Gobhila the bride was to wear a yajñopavīta, though Raghunandana himself does not approve of this explanation. In the ceremony of Samāvartana, Aśv. Gr. III.8, m on the subject of applying ointment says:—

'After having smeared the two hands with ointment a brāhmaṇa should salve his face first, a kṣatriya his two arms, a vaiśya his belly, a woman her private parts and persons who gain their livelihood by running, their thighs'.

It is improper to say, as some do, that as to women this is a general rule interpolated in the treatment of samāvartana and has nothing to do with the latter. We should rather hold that Aśv. knew of women undertaking Vedic study and so prescribed what they should do in their samāvartana. In the Mahābhārata (Vanaparva 305.20) a brāhmaṇa is said to have taught to the mother of the Pāṇḍava heroes a number of mantras from the Atharvasiras. Harīta prescribes that in the case of women samāvartana took place before the appearance of menses. Therefore brahmavadinī women had upanayana performed in the 8th year from conception, then they studied Vedic lore and finished student-hood at the age of puberty. Yama says:—

'In former ages, tying of the girdle of muñja (i.e. upanayana) was desired in the case of maidens, they were taught the Vedas and made to recite the Savitrī (the sacred Gāyatrī verse), either their

father, uncle or brother taught them and not a stranger and begging was prescribed for a maiden in the house itself and she was not to wear deer-skin or bark garment and was not to have matted hair '.

Manu seems to have been aware of this usage as prevalent in ancient times, if not his own. Having spoken of the saṃskāras from jatakarma to upanayana, Manu winds up (II.66):– 'these ceremonies were to be performed in their entirety for women also, but without mantras' and adds (II.67)

'The ceremony of marriage is the only saṃskāra performed with Vedic mantras in the case of women; (in their case) attendance on the husband amounts to serving a guru (which a student had to do) and performance of domestic duties to worship of fire ' (which the student had to perform by offering a fuel-stick in the evening every day).

This shows that in the day of the Manu-smṛti, upanayana for women had gone out of practice, though there were faint glimmerings of its performance for women in former days. Relying on the words – 'in former ages' – occurring in the verses of Yama quoted above medieval digests like the Sm.C., the Nirnaya-sindhu and others say that this practice belonged to another yuga.

In Bana Bhaṭṭa's Kadambarī, Mahāśveta (who was practising tapas) is described as – 'one whose body was rendered pure by (wearing) a brahma-sūtra (i.e. yajñopavīta)'. The yajñopavīta came to have superhuman virtues attributed to it and so probably even women who were practising austerities wore it.

The Sam. Pr. quotes a verse saying that the Supreme Being is called yajña and yajñopavīta is so called because it belongs to the Supreme Being (or is used in sacrifices for Him).

Though kṣatriyas and vaiśyas also were entitled to have the upanayana performed, it appears that they often neglected it or at least neglected the constant wearing of yajñopavīta, so much so that from comparatively early times the yajñopavīta came to be regarded as the peculiar indicator of the wearer's being of the brāhmaṇa caste.

The Baudhāyana-sūtra quoted in the Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā (p.188) says that yarn spun by a brāhmaṇa or his maiden daughter is to be brought, then one is to measure first 96 aṅgulas of it with the syllable *bhuh*, then another 96 with *bhuvah* and a third 96 with *svah*, then the yarn so measured is to be kept on a leaf of palāśa and is to be sprinkled with water to the accompaniment of the three mantras '*apo hi ṣṭha*' (Jig. X.9.1-3), with the four verses '*Hiranyavarṇah*' (Tai, S. V.6.1 and Atharva I.33.1-4) and with the anuvāka beginning with '*pavamaṇah suvarjanaḥ*' (Tai. Br.1.4.8) and with the Gāyatrī, then the yarn is to be taken in the left hand and there is to be a clapping of the two hands thrice, the yarn is to be twisted with the three verses – '*bhuragnim ca*' (Tai. Br. III.10.2) and then the knot is to be tied with the formula '*Bhurbhuvah evas candramasam ca*' (Tai. Br. III, 10.2) and the nine deities– omkāra, Agni (quoted above in note 685) have to be invoked on the nine strands, then the *upavīta* is to be taken with the mantra – '*devasya tva*' and then it is to be shown to the sun with the verse;– '*ud vayam tamasasparī*' (Rig. I.50.10) and then the yajñopavīta is to be put on with the verse;– '*yajñopavītam* etc.' Then there is to be a japa of the gayatrī verse and then ācamana. For a brief statement of the mode of putting on a fresh sacred thread vide note below.<sup>100</sup>

## 8. Upanayana for the Disabled

The next important question is as to whether upanayana was performed in the case of the blind, the deaf and dumb, the retarded etc. Jaimini has established that those who are devoid of a limb are not

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100 In modern times whenever a new yajñopavīta has to be worn (because the one worn is lost or cut etc.) the ceremony briefly consists in repeating the three verses '*apo hiṣṭhā ...*' (Rig. X.9.1-3) over water with which the yajñopavīta is to be sprinkled; then there is the repetition of the Gāyatrī ten times (each time preceded by the vyāhṛtis, as '*om bhur bhuvah svah*') and then the yajñopavīta is to be put on with the mantra '*yajñopavītam paramam*'



eligible for agnihotra, but this inability arises only when the defect is incurable. Similarly the Āpastamba Dh. S. II.6.14.1, Gaut.28.41-42, Vas.17.52-54, Manu 9.201, Yāj. II.140-141, Viṣṇu. Dh. S.15.32 ff. lay down that persons who are impotent, *patita*, congenially blind or deaf, cripple and those who suffer from incurable diseases are not entitled to share property on a partition, but are only entitled to be maintained. But they all allow even these to marry. As marriage is not possible for *dvijātis* unless upanayana precedes it, it appears that the ceremony of upanayana was gone through as far as it could be carried out in the case of the blind, the deaf and dumb etc. The Baud. Gr. śeṣa-sūtra (II.9) prescribes a special procedure for the upanayana of the deaf and dumb and idiots. The principal points in which their upanayana differs from that of others are that the offering of samidh, treading on a stone, putting on a garment, the tying of mekhala, the giving of deer skin and staff are done silently, that the boy does not mention his name, it is the ācārya himself who makes offerings of cooked food or of clarified butter, all the mantras are muttered softly by the ācārya himself.

The sūtra says that according to some the same procedure is followed as to other persons who are impotent, blind, lunatics, or suffering from such diseases as epilepsy, white leprosy or black leprosy etc. The Nirṇaya-sindhu quotes a passage from the Brahma-Purāṇa cited in the Prayoga-parijāta about the upanayana of the impotent, the deaf and others which contains rules similar to Baudhāyana's. The Sam. Pr. (pp.399-401) and S.B.E. (pp.273-274) also quote the passage and explain it. The Purāṇa says that those who cannot repeat the Gāyatrī (such as the deaf and dumb) should be brought near the teacher or fire and that the teacher should then touch them and then mutter the Gāyatrī himself, but that in other cases such as lunatics, they should be made to repeat the Gāyatrī at least if possible and if that too is not possible, then on touching them the ācārya should repeat it. The same Purāṇa prescribes that kunda and golaka (the first being the offspring of an adulterous intercourse when the husband of the woman is living and the second when the husband is dead) should have upanayana performed in the same way as for the deaf and dumb, if it is known that the adulterer and the woman were both of the brāhmaṇa caste.

There is some difference of opinion as to kunda and golaka. Manu (II.174) defined them as above. Āpastamba Dh. S. II.6.13.1, Manu (10.5) and Yāj. (I.90, 92) expressly say that a person born of a brāhmaṇa from a brāhmaṇa woman belongs to the same caste only if he is born in lawful wedlock and that even the *anuloma* sons must be born in wedlock. The kunda and golaka being the offspring of adultery would not really be brāhmaṇas even though both parents were brāhmaṇas. Thus, though these two are not strict brāhmaṇas, upanayana of a secondary kind is allowed to them. Manu (III.156) included the kunda and golaka among brāhmaṇas not to be invited at śrāddha. Elaborate discussions have been held why they were so specially mentioned, when they were not on Manu's own dictum brāhmaṇas.

Some like the author of the Saṅgraha held that the *kunda* and *golaka* forbidden by Manu in śrāddha were those born under the ancient practice of *niyoga*; while others repudiated the idea that those born under the practice of *niyoga* had any taint attaching to them.

## 9. Upanayana for Mixed Castes

Manu (X.41) says that the six anulomas are eligible for the rites of *dvijas* (and so for upanayana) and the Mīt. on Yāj. I.92 and 95 says that the anulomas have upanayana performed according to the rules of the caste of the mother and further mixed castes arising from the six anuloma castes in the anuloma order are also eligible for upanayana. The Baud. Gr. śeṣa-sūtra II.8 gives rules for the upanayana of kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and of mixed castes like rathakāra, ambasha etc. Gaut. IV.21 made an exception in the case of the son of a brāhmaṇa from a śūdra woman. All pratilomas were like śūdra according to Manu (IV.41) and the offspring of a brāhmaṇa from a śūdra woman, though anuloma, was like pratilomas. A śūdra is only *ekajāti* and not *dvijāti* (Gaut. X.51) and for the pratilomas (as well as for the śūdra) there was no upanayana.

Upanayana was so highly thought of that some of the ancient texts prescribe a method of upanayana for the Aśvattha tree. Vide Baud. Gr. śeṣa-sūtra 11.10. In modern times also rarely this upanayana is performed. To the west of the Aśvattha tree homa is performed, the saṃskāras from *pumsavana* are imitated but with the vyāhrtis only, the tree being touched with Rig. III. 8.11 '*vanaspate*'. A piece of cloth is held between the tree and the performer, then eight auspicious verses are repeated (*maṅgalaṣṭaka*), the cloth is removed and then the hymn called Dhruva sukta (Rig. X.72.1-9) is repeated. Other mantras (like Rig. X.62-63) are also recited. Then a piece of cloth, yajñopavīta, girdle, staff and deer-skin are given with appropriate mantras and lastly after touching the tree, the Gāyatrī is repeated.

In E.C. vol. III. Mālāvalli No.22 there is a reference to the upanayana of Aśvattha trees performed by one Bachappa in 1358 A. D.

### 10. Savitrī -upadeśa:

It will be seen from the passage of the Sat. Br. that the sacred Gāyatrī verse was imparted in very ancient times to the student by the teacher a year, or six months, 24, 12 or 3 days after upanayana and that the Sat. Br. prescribes that in the case of brāhmaṇa students this must be done immediately. This ancient rule was probably due to the fact that students in those far-off times when they came to the teacher at the age of seven or eight had hardly any previous instruction and so must have found it difficult to pronounce properly and correctly the sacred verse immediately on initiation. It is for this reason that so modern a work as the S.R.M. (p.194) says that such mantras as – '*San-no devīrabhiṣṭaye*' (Rig. X.9.4) which have to be repeated by the brahmācārī in the rites of upanayana should be taught to him even before upanayana, just as the wife (who being a woman had no upanayana performed) was taught the Vedic mantras accompanying such acts as that of examining ajya in sacrifices. The same rule of postponing the instruction in Gāyatrī is stated in San. Gr. II.5, Mānava Gr. I.22.15, Bhar. Gr.1.9, Par. Gr. II.3. The general practice however seems to have been to impart the Gāyatrī that very day.

According to most of the sūtras the teacher sits to the north of the fire facing the east and in front of him the student sits facing the west and then the student requests the teacher to recite to him the verse sacred to Savitrī and the teacher imparts to him first one *pada* at a time, then two *padas* and then the whole. According to Baud. Gr. II.5.34-37 the student places on the fire four fuel sticks of the palāśa or other sacrificial tree anointed with clarified butter and repeats mantras to Agni, Vayu, Aditya and the lord of vratas with 'svaha' when offering them.

Various intricate modes occur in the sūtras and the commentaries thereon about how this first instruction in Gayatrī is to be carried out. The differences are due to the place assigned to the vyāhrtis<sup>101</sup> (*bhuḥ, bhuvah, svah*). Two illustrations are set out below from Sudarsana on Āpastamba Gr. II.11. The syllable 'om' has been looked upon as very sacred from ancient times and is a symbol of the Supreme Being. The Tai. Br. II.11 contains a eulogy of 'om-kāra' and quotes Rig.1.164.39 in support '*ico akṣare parama &c.*' taking the word '*akṣara*' to mean the '*omkāra*'. The Tai. Up. I.8. says— '(syllable) om is Brahma; om is all this (universe)'. A brāhmaṇa about to begin the teaching (of the Veda) says 'om' with the idea that he may reach near brahmā. 'Om' is called pranava. Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.13.6 says '*omkāra* is the door to heaven; therefore one who is about to study the Veda, should start his study by first repeating OM.' Manu (II.74) prescribes the repetition of

101 The mystic words *bhuḥ bhuvah svah* are sometimes called *Mahā-vyāhrtis* (vide Gobhila Gr. II.10.40, Mann II.81). They are also called simply *vyāhrtis* vide, Tait. Up, where *Mahāḥ* is said to be the 4th. The number of vyāhrtis is usually seven, with the addition of — *Mahāḥ, janah, tapah, satyam*. (Vasiṣṭha 25.9 f Vaik. VII.9). Gautama (1.52. and 25.8) speaks of only five, viz *bhuḥ, bhuvah, svah, puruṣah, satyam*.

pranava at the beginning and at the end of daily Vedic study and further on (II.76) says that the three letters 'a', 'u', 'm' (in om) and the three vyahrtis were distilled from the three Vedas by Prajāpati as the essence. Medhātithi on Manu (II.74) says that 'om' must be uttered at the beginning of the daily Vedic study by the student or by the house holder (when performing brahmajñā), but it is not necessary in japa &c. In the Markandeya-Purāna chap.42, Vayu chap.20, Vrddha-Harīta-smṛti VI.59-62 and in numerous other places there are hyperbolic or esoteric identifications of the three letters of om with Viṣṇu, Lakṣmī and the jīva, with the three Vedas, with the three worlds, with three fires &c. In the Kāthopaniṣad I.2, 15-17 om is said to be the end of all Vedas, the source of the knowledge of Brahma and also its symbol.

The sacred Gāyatrī verse is Rig. III.62.10 and occurs in the other Vedas also. It is addressed to Savitr (the sun) and may also be interpreted as a prayer to the Source and Inspirer of everything. It literally means:— 'we contemplate that esteemed (longed for) refulgence (glory) of the divine Savitr who may inspire our intellects (or actions)'. Some Gr̥hya sūtras prescribe the same verse for all students, whether brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas or vaiśyas. But others say that for brāhmaṇa the Savitrī verse is the Gāyatrī, but for kṣatriyas and vaiśyas, a savitrī (verse addressed to Savitr) in the Triṣṭubh (having 11 syllables in each quarter) or Jagatī (12 syllables in each quarter) should be the proper one. Here again there is difference. According to the commentators on the Kāthaka Gr. (41.20), the verse;— '*adabdhebbih savitā*' (Kāthakam IV.10) and the verse;— '*Viśva rupani*' (Kāthakam XVI.8) are cited as the Savitrī for a kṣatriya and a vaiśya respectively; while the commentator on San. Gr. (II.5.4-6) says that the Triṣṭubh which is to be taught as the Savitrī to the kṣatriya students is '*ā kṛṣṇena rajasā*' Rig. I.35.2) and the Jagatī Savitrī for the vaiśya is:— '*Hiranya panih savita*' (Rig. I.35.9) or '*hamsaḥ sucisad*' (Rig. IV.40.5).

According to the Varaha-Gr̥hya (5) '*devo yāti savita*' and '*yuñjate manaḥ*' (Rig. V.81.1) are the Triṣṭubh and Jagatī meant as Savitrī for the kṣatriya and vaiśya respectively.

According to Satatapa quoted in the Madanapārijāta (p.23) the verse;— '*Deva savitaḥ*' (Tai. S. I.7.7.1, Kāthakam XIII.14) is the savitrī for the kṣatriya.

According to Medhātithi on Manu II.38 '*ā kṛṣṇena*' (Rig. I.35.2) and '*viśva rūpāni*' (Kāthakam XVI.8) are the two Savitrīs respectively for kṣatriya and vaiśya. That all these rules about the Savitrī being in the Gāyatrī, Tristubh and Jagatī metres for the three varṇas respectively are probably vary ancient follows from the text:— '*gayatrya brāhmaṇam asrajata tristubha rajanyam* etc.' (quoted in note 356 above). The Aśv. Gr., Āpastamba gr., and some other sūtras are entirely silent on the point, while Par. Gr. II. 3 allows an option viz., all varṇas may learn the Gāyatrī or the Savitrī verses in the Gāyatrī, Tristubh and Jagatī respectively.

Why the Gāyatrī verse (Rig. III.62.10) came to be famous it is difficult to say. Its fame was probably due to its grand simplicity and to its adaptability to an idealistic conception of the world as emanating from an all-pervading Intelligence. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa (I.32-33) explains the Gayatrī in various ways. In the Tai. Ar. (II.11) it is stated that the mystic words 'bhuh, bhuvaḥ, svaḥ' are the truth (essence) of speech and that Savita in the Gāyatrī means 'one who engenders glory'. Atharva Veda 19.71.1 calls it 'Veda-mātā' and prays that it may confer long life, glory, children, cattle etc. on the singer.

The Br. Up. V.14, 1-6 contains a sublime eulogy of Gāyatrī which word is there derived from '*gaya*' meaning '*prana*', and the root '*trai*' (to save) and it is said that when the teacher repeats the Gāyatrī for the benefit of the young student he thereby saves the boy's life (from ignorance and the effects of sin).

The Āpastamba Dh. S. I.1.1.10 mentions a brāhmaṇa text to the effect that the Savitrī is recited for all the Vedas (i.e. by its recital all Vedas become recited as it is their essence). Manu II.77 (= Viṣṇu Dh. S.55.14) says that each *pada* of the Savitrī was as if extracted from each of the three Vedas and

that (II.81= Viṣṇu Dh. S.55.15) the Savitrī together with om and the three mystic syllables (bhu. etc.) is the mouth of Vedic lore (since Vedic study starts with it, or 'brahma' may mean 'the Supreme Being '). Manu II.77-83, Viṣṇu Dh. S.55.11-17, Saṅkha-smṛti XII, Samvarta (verses 216-223),

The words:— '*Apo jyotī raso'mṛtaṃ brahma bhūr-bhuvahḥ svarom'* are said to be the *śiras* (head) of the Gayatrī (vide Saṅkha-smṛti XII.12). Manu (II.104) and others prescribe that every day a brahmacārī (as well as others) must perform japa of Gāyatrī. Baud. Dh. S. II 4.7-9 prescribes that in the evening sandhyā adoration one should murmur the Gāyatrī a thousand times, or a hundred times with Prāṇāyāma each time or ten times with 'om' and the seven vyahrtis.

Vas. Dh. S.26.15 prescribes that a man desirous of purifying himself from sin should repeat the divine Gāyatrī 1000 times (daily) as the maximum or 100 times (as the middle way) or at least ten times. There are mantras for invoking the Gāyatrī and for taking leave of it.

### 11. Brahmacāri-Dharmaḥ:

Certain rules and observances are prescribed for all *brahmacārins*. They are of two kinds, some are prescribed for a very short time and some have to be observed for all the years of studentship. The Aśv. Gr.1.22.17 7?3 says:—

"for three nights, or twelve nights or a year after upanayana the brahmacārī should not eat 'kṣara' and 'lavana' and should sleep on the ground".

The same rule is stated by Baud. Gr. II.5.55 (adding the maintenance of the fire kindled at the upanayana for three days), Bhār. Gr.1.10, Par. Gr. II.5, Khadira Gr. II.4.33 (adding avoidance of milk also for three days). Hir. Gr. (I.8.2) specially prescribes for the first three days the avoidance of kṣara, of lavana and vegetables, and the duty of sleeping on the ground, of not drinking out of an earthen vessel, of not giving the remnants of his food to śūdras and several other observances which he has to continue throughout the period of student-hood.

These latter are briefly indicated in Manu II.108 and 176 viz. offering samidhs into fire, begging for food, not using a cot, working for the teacher, daily bath, tarpaṇa of gods, sages and pitṛs etc.

The observances that last throughout the period of student hood are first seen in the passage of the Sat. Br. (quoted above in note 625). These are principally *ācamana*, *guru-śuśruṣā*, *vāk-samyama* (silence), *samida-dhāna*. But the sūtras and smṛtis lay down many rules about these and other observances. The rules centre principally round *agni-paricārya* (worshipping fire), *bhikṣa* (begging for food), *sandhyopāsana*, study of Veda and its methods and duration, avoidance of certain foods and drinks and other matters like singing etc., *guru-śuśruṣa* (including honouring him and his family and other elders), and the special vratas of the brahmacārī.

These principal topics will be dealt with in some detail now. Before doing so some other matters will have to be briefly disposed off. On the 4th day after upanayana a rite was performed called *Medhajanana* (generation of intelligence) by virtue of which it was supposed that the student's intellect was made capable of mastering Vedic lore. Aśv. Gr. I, 22.18-1,9 deals with this. The teacher makes the student sprinkle water in an unobjectionable direction<sup>102</sup> thrice from the left to the right with a pot of water round about a palāśa tree that has one root, or round a bunch of kuśa grass if there is no palāśa, and makes him repeat the mantra:—

'O glorious one, you are glorious. As you, glorious one, are glorious, thus, glorious one, make me full of glory. As you are the preserver of the treasure of sacrifice for the gods, thus may I

102 Three directions viz, south, south-east and south-west are objectionable (*ninditā*) the rest are unobjectionable.

become the preserver of the treasure of Veda among men'.<sup>103</sup>

The Bhar. Gr. (I.10) also prescribes this rite on the fourth day after upanayana and says that a palāśa tree with one root is to be anointed with ājya and the mantra 'suśravaḥ' (the same as in Aśv.) is to be muttered.

The Sam. Pr. (pp.444-446) gives a more elaborate description. In addition to what is stated in Aśv. Gr. it quotes from Saunaka and adds a few more details, viz. the student deposits at the root of the palāśa his garments already worn, the staff and (he girdle and then wears new ones and then when the boy returns to the house, a stream of water is poured before him. The teacher takes the garments etc. left by the boy.

The Āpastamba Gr.11.24 says that on the fourth day the teacher takes the garments worn on the day of upanayana by the student and the boy wears new ones. Sudarsana on Āpastamba 11.24 speaks of palāśa-karma on the fourth day. The boy goes out with his ācārya to the east or north and three sthaṇḍīlas are prepared to the north or east of a palāśa tree and on these three pranava (om), śrāddha and medhā are invoked, are worshipped with unguents, flowers, lamp etc. (as in the regular worship of an image), then the pranava is worshipped with the formula:— '*yas-chandāsam ..... srutam me gopaya*' (Tai. Up. I.4.1), śrāddha with the hymn:— '*sraddhayagnih*' Rig. X.151 and Medha with the anuvaka:— '*Medha devī*' (Tai. Ar. X.39). Then the staff is deposited at the foot of the palāśa, another staff is taken and the student returns to the house with the ācārya.

We have seen above that the student has to offer samidh (fuel stick) into the fire on the day of upanayana. The fire kindled at the time of upanayana was to be kept up for three days and the fuel-sticks were offered in that fire during those days. Afterwards samidh was to be offered in the ordinary fire (vide Baud. Gr. II.5.55-57, Āpastamba Gr.11.22). The student is required to offer every day after upanayana a samidh into fire in the evening and in the morning. Aśv. Gr. I.22.6 prescribes this and the commentator Narayana adds that in so doing he has to observe the procedure prescribed in Aśv. Gr. I.20.10-1.21.4 for the putting on of samidh on the first day. San. Gr. II.10, Manu II.186, Yāj. I.25 and almost all others prescribe the offering of samidh into fire in the evening as well as in the morning; but Āpastamba Dh. S. I.1.4.17 notes that according to some '*agnipūjā*' was to be performed in the evening only.

Āpastamba Dh. S. (1.1.4.14-20) lays down the following rules:

'the student should always bring fuel from the forest and heap it on a low place (otherwise if placed high it may fall on anybody's head), one should not go out after sunset for bringing fuel-sticks. Having kindled fire, having swept round it he should offer fuel-sticks in the evening and the morning as already directed (in the Gṛhya-sūtra One should sweep round the fire that is burning red-hot with the hand and not with a broom (of kuśa grass)).'

The Āpastamba Dh.S. I.5.15.12 further prescribes that no fuel is to be placed on fire (in srauta and smārta rites) unless water has been sprinkled over it. The student had not only to offer samidhs on his own account into the fire, but he had to help his ācārya in the latter's worship of fire by bringing fuel and by offering oblations for his ācārya when the latter was away on a journey or was ill. The Aśv. Gr. I.9.1 says:—

'beginning from marriage a householder should worship Gṛhya fire himself or his wife or son or maiden daughter or pupil may do so.'

The Chāṇḍogya Up. IV.10 contains the story of Upakosala Kāmalāyana who was a student of Satyakāma Jabala and looked after his teacher's fires for twelve years and whom Satyakāma did not teach anything, though the wife of Satyakāma interceded on behalf of the dejected pupil.

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103 *Suśruvāḥ* — has two meanings (1) 'glorious', (2) 'who hears well' (i.e. who learns the Veda well by hearing it from the teacher).

A few words about samidhs may be said here. The samidh must be of palāśa or some other yajñīya tree (used in sacrifices). Such trees are palāśa, aśvattha, nyagrodha, plakṣa, vaikankata, udumbara, bilva, candana, sarala, sala, devadāru and khadira. The Vayu-Purāṇa quoted by Aparārka (p.51) says that palāśa samidhs should be preferred, in their absence samidhs of khadira, in the absence of the first two, of damī, rohitaka and Aśvattha and in the absence of all these of arka and vetasa. The Trikanda-mandana (II.82-84) has several rules on this point. The principal trees for fuelsticks (samidh) are palāśa and khadira, but samidhs of kovidara, bibhītaka, kapittha, kārabha, rājavrkṣa, Śākadruma, nīpa, nimba, karañja, tilaka, slesmātaka or salmali are not to be employed.

The samidh was not to be thicker than the thumb, was to have its bark on it, was not to be worm-eaten nor divided, nor longer nor shorter than the span (*pradeśa*) nor having two branches, it was to be without leaves and was to be strong. According to Harīta – 'when death wanted to seize the brahmacārī formerly, Agni saved him from death and so a brahmacārī should serve fire.'

The number of samidhs varied as shown above and not only in the worship of Agni by the brahmacārī, but also else where.

## 12. Bhikṣa:

The Aśv. Gr. after prescribing begging for food states (I.22.7-8) that the student should first beg of a man who would not refuse or of a woman who would not refuse and that in begging he should say:– 'sir, give food'. More detailed rules are laid down by others.

The Hir. Gr. (S.B.E, vol.30 p.157) says:–

"after giving the student the staff the teacher gives him a bowl (for collecting alms) and says to him 'go out for alms'. Let him beg of his mother first, then in other families which are generously disposed; he brings the food to his guru and announces it to him with the words ' (these are) the alms ' and then the teacher accepts with the words 'these are good alms.'"

The Baud. Gr. II.5.47-53 gives the same rules and adds 731 that a brāhmaṇa student should beg with the words:– '*bhavati bhikṣām dehi*' (lady, give me food), a kṣatriya with the words:– '*bhikṣām bhavati dehi*' and a vaiśya with the words:– '*dehi bhikṣām bhavati*'

Par. Gr. II.5 says that the student should first beg of three women who would not refuse or of six, of twelve or of an unlimited number and that according to some he should first beg of his mother.

Manu II.50 says that he should first beg of his mother, sister or mother's sister.

Āpastamba Dh. S. I.1.3.26 says that if women refuse to give alms to a devout brahmacārī he snatches away or destroys their merit arising from sacrifices, gifts and burnt offerings, progeny, cattle, spiritual glory (of their families) and food and quotes a Brāhmaṇa passage:–

"Therefore indeed one should not refuse to give food to a crowd of students moving about (for alms) for fear that among them there may be some one who is like this (a devout student), and who has carried out all the observances for students.'

## 13. Persons from whom one may beg.

If a brahmacārī cannot get food elsewhere he may beg from his own family, from his elders (like maternal uncles), his relatives and lastly from his ācārya himself. As to the persons from whom to beg for food, one sees how the growing strictness of caste rules about food during the lapse of centuries affected the brahmacārī.

Āpastamba Dh. S.734 1.1.3.25 prescribes that he could beg food from anybody except *apapātras* (persons like *caṇḍālas*) and *abhisastas* (i.e. those who are guilty of or suspected of grave sins.)<sup>104</sup>

Gaut. II.41 expressly says that a brahmacārī may beg food from all the varṇas except from those who are *abhisasta* and *patita*.

Manu (II.183 and 185) says a brahmacārī should beg for food at the houses of those who study the Veda and perform sacrifices, who are devoted to their duties and are virtuous in their conduct; if from such persons food cannot be had he may go about the whole village, but should avoid those who are *abhisasta*.

Yāj. I.29 says:– 'for his own maintenance a brahmacārī should beg food from brāhmaṇas who are blameless', and the ancient commentator Viśvarūpa says that the best way is to beg at brāhmaṇa houses, the next best is to beg of kṣatriya and vaiśya houses and to beg of śūdras is allowed only in *āpad* (time of distress or difficulty).

Ausanasa (Jiv. ed I. p.505) says that a brahmacārī should beg only from houses of his own caste (as the best way probably) or he may beg at the houses of all varṇas.

Angiras quoted in the Par. M. (I.2, p.41) says that even in a season of distress a brahmacārī should not beg for cooked food from śūdras.

The Madana-pārijāta p.33 quotes a passage from the Bhaviṣya-purāna to the effect that a brahmacārī may beg food from anybody except a śūdra.

Food obtained by begging was supposed to be pure as said by Manu II.189, Baud. Dh. S. I.5.56 and Yāj. I.187. It was further said that a brahmacārī who subsists on food obtained by begging is like one observing a fast (Manu II.183 and Brhat-Parasara p.130). The brahmacārī was to eat food collected from several houses and was not to take food at a single person's house, except that when he was requested to dinner in honour of gods or the Manes he might do so by partaking of such food at such dinners as would not violate his vows.

#### 14. The Duty of householders to offer alms.

Corresponding to the duty of the student to beg was the obligation on householders to serve food according to their ability to *brahmacārins* and *yatis* (ascetics). Gautama V.16 prescribes that after performing the daily yajñas to gods (*vaiśvadeva*) and offering bali to bhūtas, the householder should offer alms (of food) preceded by the word '*svasti*' and by water.

Manu III.94, Yāj. I.108 and others say that alms should be given to ascetics and *brahmacārins* with honour and welcome.

The Mit. on Yāj. I.108 says that alms should be ordinarily one morsel of food as large as the egg of a pea-hen and quotes a verse of Satatapa saying that '*bhikṣa* is as much as one morsel, that *puṣkala* is equal to four morsels, *hanta* is equal to four *puṣkalas* and *agra* is equal to three *hantas*'.

The idea that a brahmacārī must beg for his food and offer fuel-sticks every day was sorained in ancient times that the Baud. Dh. S. I.2.54 and Manu II.187 (= Viṣṇu Dh. S.28.52) prescribe that if for seven days continuously a brahmacārī who was not ill failed to offer fuel-sticks and to beg for food he violated his vow and had to undergo the same penance as was prescribed for a brahmacārī

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104 Haradatta explains *caṇḍālas* etc.; as persons with whom no social intercourse was possible. The word *apapātra* literally means those who cannot be allowed to use the vessels out of which members of other castes are to take food (i.e. those vessels when used by them have to be broken or thrown away). Aparārka explains *apapātra* as 'one who has lost caste through the commission of some mortal sin'. According to Āp. Dh.S. I.9.24.7-9 an *abhisasta* is one that kills any brahmana or kills a brahmana woman who is Atreyī.

having sexual intercourse. Even in modern times many brāhmaṇa students (not only those who study the Veda from orthodox teachers but even those learning English) begged for their daily food and by dint of hard discipline, patient industry and integrity rose to high positions in public life. However the practice of poor begging students attending English schools in this way is dying out, since English education does not now ensure for the poor brāhmaṇa students even a bare maintenance.

Other important rules about the begging of food are that the student should not beg for his sake alone, should announce to the teacher all that he has brought and eat only that which the teacher directs him to take; if the teacher is gone on a journey then he should announce it to the teacher's family (wife, son); if even these are absent, then to other learned brāhmaṇas and eat with their permission.<sup>105</sup> He should leave no residue in his dish and wash it after taking his meal therein. If he is not able to eat the whole that he has brought he should bury it underground or consign it to water or place that which is more than he can eat near an arya or give it to a sūdra who works for his teacher (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.1.3.37-41). Āpastamba Dh.S. (1.1.3.43-44) says that alms are held to be equal to sacrificial food, the teacher holds the place of the deity and of the ahavanīya fire.

Other miscellaneous acts that the students had to do were bringing water for the ācārya in pots, collecting flowers, cow-dung, earth, kuśa -grass etc. (vide Manu II.182).

### 15. Sandhyā:

On the day of upanayana there is no morning *sandhyā*. Jaimini says:— 'as long as there is no imparting of the Gāyatrī there is no *sandhyā*.' So the student begins his *sandhyā* in the noon of the day of upanayana. As however on that day he knows no Vedic text except the Gāyatrī, his whole *sandhyā* worship consists of the Gāyatrī.

The word '*sandhyā*' literally means 'twilight', but also indicates the action of prayer performed in the morning and evening twilight. This act is generally styled '*sandhyopāsana*' or '*sandhyā-vandana*' or simply '*sandhyā*.' This act of adoration is sometimes prescribed as necessary thrice a day viz. at day-break, in the noon and at sun-set e.g. Atrī says 'a twice born person possessed of the knowledge of the Self should perform three sandhyā adorations These are respectively named Gāyatrī (morning one), Savitrī (noon) and Sarasvatī (evening one) by Yoga-yajñavalkya. Generally however the sandhyā prayers is prescribed twice.

All prescribe that the morning prayer is to be begun before sunrise and should be carried on till the disc of the sun is seen on the horizon and the evening prayer begins when the disc of the sun is about to set and goes on up to the appearance of stars. This is the most proper time; but a secondary time was allowed up to three *ghaṭikas* after sunrise and sun-set. The duration of the prayer each time was to be one muhurta (i.e. two ghatikas, according to Yoga-yajñavalkya) whatever the length of the day may be. Manu (IV.93-94) however recommends the prayer to extend as long as one could afford, since the ancient sages secured long life, intelligence, glory, fame and spiritual eminence by long *sandhyā* prayers.

According to most writers japa of Gāyatrī and other sacred mantras is the principal thing in sandhyā and other things such as *mārjana* are merely subsidiary, but Medhātithi on Manu II.101 (where the words are '*japan-stisthet*' and not '*tiṣṭhan japet*') says that japa is subsidiary or secondary and the place of the prayer and the posture of the praying person are the principal items. When it is said — 'one should perform the sandhyā', what is meant is that one should contemplate the deity called Aditya represented by the orb of the sun and should also contemplate on the fact that the same

<sup>105</sup> Vide Āpastamba Dh. S.1.1.3.31-35, Manu II.51.



Intelligence dwells in his heart.

The proper place for sandhyā prayer is outside the village<sup>106</sup>, in a lonely place (San.Gr. II 9.1 'aranye') or on a river or other sacred spot (Baud. Gr. II.4.1). But this does not apply to the agnihotrin, who has to perform Vedic rites and repeat homa mantras at sun-rise and who therefore may perform sandhyā adoration in his house.<sup>107</sup> Vasishtha quoted by Aparārka says that sandhyā performed in a cow pen or on a river or near the shrine of Viṣṇu (or other deity) respectively is ten times, 100000 of times or numberless times better than sandhyā-vandana in the house. All prescribe that the morning sandhyā is to be performed standing and the evening one in a sitting posture (Aśv. Gr. III.7.6, San. Gr. II.9.1 and 3, Manu II.102) and the morning sandhyā is to be performed facing the east and the evening one facing the north-west (Aśv. Gr. III.7.4, San. Gr. II.9.1). He is to bathe, to sit in a pure spot on a seat of kuśa grass, should have the sacred cord in the usual position and restrain his speech (i.e. should be silent and not talk in the midst of sandhyā).

The principal constituents of *sandhyopāsana* are these:

1. *ācamanas* (sipping of water),
2. *prānāyāma*,
3. *mārjana* thrice (sprinkling himself with water to the accompaniment of several mantras),
4. *aghamarṣana*,
5. *arghya* — offering of water to the sun,
6. *japa* of Gāyatrī, and
7. *upasthāna* (reciting mantras by way of worship of the sun in the morning and generally of Varuna in the evening).

Among the earliest references to Sandhyopāsana is the one in the Tai.Ar. II.2 t 747 where it is said that when brahmavādins facing the east throw up water consecrated by the Gāyatrī, the evil spirits that fight with the sun are sent tumbling into the country (called) Mandeha Aruna (of the evil spirits). This shows that in ancient times sandhyā consisted principally of offering water (*arghya*) to the sun in worship and japa of Gāyatrī. Aśv. Gr. III.7.3-6, San. Gr. II.9.1-3 and others refer only to the japa of the Gāyatrī mantra in Sandhyopāsana, Mānava Gr. (L 2.1-5) refers only to the arghya offering to the sun and japa of Gāyatrī. It is in the Baud.Dh.S. II.4 that we find an elaboration of sandhyopāsana into various components such as ācamana, *mārjana*, japa of Gāyatrī and *upasthāna* (worship) of Mitra and Varuna (respectively in the morning and evening with only two verses in each case).

Modern writers went on adding details e.g. it is now the practice in the Deccan to repeat the 24 names of Viṣṇu at the very beginning of the sandhyopāsana, but this is hardly anywhere prescribed by any smṛti or early commentator. Similarly elaborate rules are laid down about mystic nyāsas with the sixteen verses of the Puruṣa-sukta (vide Aparārka p.140), of the nyāsa of the Narayana-mantra of 25 letters on 25 parts of the body (Vrddha-Harīta VI.16-19) and of the letters of the Gāyatrī Brhatparāśara chap. V. p.83). In modern times ācamana is performed with the three names of Viṣṇu, viz. Keśava, Narayana and Madhava in the form 'om Kesavaya namah.'

A few words on each of the principal components of sandhyā may be said here.

**1. ācamana;** Elaborate rules about ācamana are laid down in several smṛtis. Such rules must have been elaborated from very ancient times. The Tai.Br. (I.5.10) prescribes that one should not perform ācamana with water that is in a cleft of the earth.

Āpastamba Dh.S. (1.5.15.5) says the same thing. One should perform facing the north or east, one should sip water thrice with water that is not hot and that is free from foam or bubbles, one should

<sup>106</sup> Āpastamba Dh. S.1.11.30.8, Gaut. II.16, Mānava Gr. I.2.2

<sup>107</sup> Warriors, when engaged in battle performed only the *upasthāna* and omitted all else.

after sipping water wipe the lips twice (thrice according to Āpastamba ) and should touch with the wet right hand one's eyes, ears, nose, heart and head. The water for ācamana should be as much as would penetrate (or reach) to the heart in the case of brāhmaṇas, to the throat in the case of kṣatriyas, to the palate in the case of vaiśyas; women and Śūdras should sip on occasions of ācamana only once as much water as would reach the palate.

Manu (II.18) and Yāj. (I.18) say that water should be sipped by the *brahma-tīrtha* (i.e. from the root of the thumb)<sup>108</sup>. The further elaborate rules laid down in such smṛtis as Gobhila Gr. (I.2.5-6), Saṅkha-smṛti 10 are not set out here. The occasions for ācamana are many. According to Gobhila Gr.1.1.2 one must do every Gr̥hya rite with yajñopavīta worn in the usual way and after ācamana. Haradatta on Āpastamba Dh. S. I.5.15.1 says that ācamana is a subsidiary matter in all religious acts. There are several occasions when the sipping of water twice is necessary, the principal being before and after *bhojana* (meals). Madana-pārijāta p.57, Par. M. L part 1. pp.241-243. Both the Br. Up. (VI.1.14) and Chan. Up. V.2.2 refer to the practice of sipping water before and after meals and the Vedānta-sūtra III.3.18 is based on these Upanishad passages and says that water is looked upon as the garment of *prana*. Numerous occasions when ācamana is necessary are stated in Āpastamba Dh.S. I.5.16.15-16, Manu V.138 and 145, Yāj.1.196, Kurma-Purāṇa I.2.13.1-8 etc.

**2. Prāṇāyāma** (restraint of breath) is defined by the Yoga sūtra (II.49) as the regulation of inhalation and exhalation of air. Gaut. I, 50 prescribes three Prāṇāyāmas, each of which lasts for 15 matras (*moras*). Baud. Dh. S. IV.1.30 (= Vas. Dh. S.25.13=Saṅkha-smṛti VII.14) and Yāj. I.23 say that the siras of Gāyatrī, the three vyāhrtis each preceded by 'om' and the Gāyatrī verse are to be rehearsed mentally during the time of pranayāma. According to Yoga-yajñavalkya, one should first revolve in the mind the seven vyāhrtis, each preceded by 'om' then the Gāyatrī and then the siras of Gāyatrī. Pranayāma has three components, *puraka* (inhaling the outside air), *kumbhaka* (keeping in the inhaled air i.e. neither taking in air nor giving it out) and *recaka* (exhaling air from the lungs). Manu VI.70-71 highly praises the utility of Prāṇāyāma in purifying the mind of sin.

*mārjana* is performed by means of kuśa grass dipped in water kept in a vessel of copper or udumbara wood or earthen ware and while doing so one is to repeat 'om' the vyāhrtis, Gāyatrī and the three verses:— '*apo hi ṣṭha*' (Rig. X, 9.1-3). Baud. Dh. S. II.4.2 adds more Vedic mantras for *mārjana*. Mānava Gr.1.1.24, Yāj. I.22 and others prescribe *mārjana* only with the three verses — '*apo hi ṣṭha*' (Rig. X.9.1-3).

**3. Aghamarṣaṇa** (driving out sin) consists in taking water in the right hand formed in the shape of a cow's ear, holding it near one's nose, breathing out from the nose on the water (with the idea of driving away sin from oneself) to the accompaniment of the three verses — '*rtam ca*' (Rig. X.190.1-3) and then casting the water away to one's left on the ground.

**4. Arghya** (offering water out of respect to the sun) consists in taking water in one's joined hands, repeating the Gāyatrī verse over it and standing facing the sun and casting it up thrice. If a man cannot have water (being at the time of sandhyā on a road or in jail &c.) he could use dust for water. The Tai. Ar. II.2 says that a brahman contemplating the rising and setting sun and doing obeisance to it by going from left to right attains all bliss, since this Aditya is Brahma.

**5. Japa of Gāyatrī.** There is an extensive literature about the greatness of the japa of Gāyatrī and of other holy Vedic mantras which are passed over here and for which reference may be made to

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108 The roots of the smallest finger, the index finger and of the thumb and the tips of the fingers of the hand are respectively called the *prajāpatya* (*kāya*), *pitrya*, *brahma* and *daiva* tirthas. Vide Yāj.1.19. Viṣṇu Dh. S.62.1-4, Vas. Dh. S. III.64-68, Baud. Dh. I.5.14-18. As everywhere, there are differences here also. Vas. holds that *pitrya* is between the forefinger and the thumb, and that *mānuṣa tirtha* is at the tips of the fingers. Others say that the roots of the four fingers constitute *ṛṣi tirtha* (Baud. Dh. S. I.5.18). Vaik I.5. and Par. Gr. Pariṣiṣṭa mentions five tirthas (the 5th being in the palm is called āgneya). *Agneya* is also styled *Saumya* by others.

Aparārka pp. 46-48, Sm. C. I. pp.143-152, Gr. R. pp.241-250, Ahnika-prakasa pp.311-316. A few details will be given under *ahnika*.

**6. Surya-upasthāna** (Worship of the Sun) According to Baud, the worship of the sun is done with the verse;– '*udvayam*' (Rig. I.50.10), '*Udu tvam*' (Rig.1.50. 1), '*citram*' (Rig.I.115.1), '*tac-cakṣur*' (Rig. VII.66.16), '*ya udagāt*' (Tai, Ar. IV.42.5).

## 16. Importance of sandhyā

Manu II. 103 prescribes that he who does not perform the Sandhyopāsana in the morning and evening should be excluded from all actions meant for the benefit or honour of dvijas.

Gobhila smṛti II.1 says the same and adds that *brahmaṇya* resides in the three sandhyās and that he who has no concern for sandhyopāsana is not a brāhmaṇa.

Baud. Dh. S. II.4.20 calls upon the religious king to make brāhmaṇas, who do not engage in sandhyopāsana thrice a day, perform the work peculiar to sūdras.

The Kurma-Purāṇa goes so far as to say that even if a person engages in other actions which are religious but gives up the performance of sandhyopāsana, in so doing he falls into numerous hells.

Manu declares (II.102) that sins committed at night through ignorance (or oversight) are removed by the performance of morning sandhyā and the sins committed in the day are removed by the evening sandhyā.

When a person is impure owing to mourning or birth in the family, he is to perform sandhyā only up to arghya to the sun but not japa nor *upasthāna*.

In modern times the sandhyopāsana has become a lengthy business by the addition of materials from Purāṇas and the tantras. But as observed by the Saṃskāra-ratna-mālā rituals like nyāsa are non-Vedic and many do not perform them. For various nyāsas and mudras (postures of the fingers, hands etc.) one may consult the Smṛti-muktaphala (ahnika pp.328-333), Sm. C. I. pp.146-148.<sup>109</sup>

Nyāsa means – 'mentally invoking god and holy texts to come to occupy certain parts of the body to render it a pure and fit receptacle for worship and contemplation.' The sixteen verses of the Puruṣa-sukta (Rig. X, 90) are respectively invoked to reside in the left and right hands, the left foot, the right foot, the left and right knees, the left and right sides, the navel, the heart, the throat, the left and right arms, the mouth, the eyes and the head (vide Aparārka p.140). The Bhagavata (VI.8.4-5) recommends that one should perform nyāsa on the hands and limbs of one's own body with the two mantras of Nārāyana and thus make Nārāyana one's armour when some danger arises and that one should perform nyāsa with 'om' and other syllables on one's feet, knees, thighs, belly, heart, chest, mouth and head. The Sm. C. I. p.144 quotes verses from Vyasa and Brahma as to the nyāsa of the letters of the Gāyatrī with 'om' and 'namah' on the several parts of the body. Vrddha-Harīta VJ.16-19 speaks of the nyāsa of the twenty-five letters of the mantra about Narayana on the twenty-five parts of the body. The Nitya-acāra-paddhati (pp.578-579) describes the nyāsa of the letters of the alphabet (51 in all) from '*om Kesavāya namah*' to '*kṣam Nrsimhaya namah*.' One well-known mode is to assign Govinda, Mahīdhara, Hrsīkesa, Trivikrama, Viṣṇu, Madhava respectively on the tips of the thumb, the index finger, the middle finger, the ring finger, the small finger and the middle of the palm. Manu II.60 enjoining the touching of the limbs and head with water appears to contain the germ of this practice of nyāsa. The Sm. C. I. (pp.146-148) quotes long passages about the mudras

109 For the influence of Tantra rites on the śrutis and Indian practice, the following may be consulted: 'The Introduction to Sādhana mālā', vol.2 (Gaekwad's Oriental Series), Indian Historical Quarterly vol.6. p.114, vol.9. p.678, vol.10 pp.486-492, Sylvain Levi's Introduction to 'Sanskrit texts from Bali', Modern Review for August 1934 pp.150-156.762.

(hand poses) to be made in the sandhyā adoration.

The Samgraha quoted in the Pūjā-prakasa (p.123) states that the mudras are to be made in worship, at the time of japa, dhyāna (contemplation) and when starting on kamyā rites (performed for securing some desired object) and that they tend to bring the deity worshipped near to the worshipper.

The names and number of mudras differ considerably. For example, the Sm. C. and Smr. Mu. (ahnika pp.331-332) quote passages defining the following mudras viz. *sammukha*, *samputa*, *vitata*, *vistīrna*, *dvimukha*, *trimukha*, *adhomukha*, *vyāpakāñjalika*, *yama-pāśa*, *grathita*, *sammukhonmukha*, *vilamba*, *mustika*, *mīna*, *kurma*, *varāha*, *simha-krānta*, *mahā-krānta*, *mudgara* and *pallava*.

The Nityācāra-paddhati p.533 derives the word mudra from 'mud' (joy) and the root 'ra' (to give) or 'dravay' (causal of *dru*, to put to flight) and says that "mudra" is so called because it gives delight to the gods and also puts to flight asuras (evil beings).

That work and the Pūjā-prakasa (pp.123-126) give the names of mudras. They are:— *āvāhanī*, *sthāpinī*, *sannidhapanī*, *sanirodhinī*, *prasāda-mudra*, *avagunthana-mudra*, *sammukha*, *prārthana*, *sañkha*, *cakra*, *gadā*, *abja*, (or *padma*), *musala*, *khadga*, *dhanuṣ*, *bāṇa*, *narāca*, *kumbha*, *vighna* (for Vighneśvara), *saura*, *pustaka*, *lakṣmī*, *sapta-jihva* (for Agni Vaiśvanara), *durga*, *namaskāra* (bringing together both hands from the wrist to the tips of the fingers), *añjali*, *samhara* (in all 32).

The Nityācāra-paddhati (p.536) says that sankha, cakra, gada, padma, musala, khadga, srīvatsa and kaustubha are the eight mudras of Viṣṇu. The Sm. C. quotes a work called Mahāsaṃhita that the mudras are not to be performed in the presence of a crowd and if so performed the deities become angry and the mudras become fruitless.

The Saradatilaka (23.106) states that all deities are gladdened by the mudras and in verses 107-114 describes the following mudras, viz. *avahanī*, *sthapanī*, *sannidhāpanī*, *samrodhinī*, *sammukha*, *sakala*, *avagunthana*, *dhenu*, *mahāmudra*.

The Acāra-dinakara of Vardhamana-surī composed in samvat 1468 (1411-12 A. D.) for Jainas enumerates 42 mudras and defines them (1923, part II. pp.385-386).

The influence of these mudras spread outside India and they are still practised in the island of Bali. Miss Tyra de Kleen has brought out a very interesting book on the 'mudras (the hand poses) practised by Buddhist and Saiva priests' (called pedandas) in Bali, with 60 full page drawings (1924, New York).

## 17. Study of the Veda:

A detailed examination of the educational system from ancient times onwards, together with its methods, courses of study and kindred topics will require a volume by itself. The works mentioned in the note below may be read for that purpose.<sup>110</sup> Here a few salient features alone can be set out.

The pivot of the whole educational system of ancient India was the teacher (variously called ācārya, guru, upadhyāya). The instruction was oral. Rig. VII.103.5 (speaking of frogs) says; when one of these frogs follows another in making noise just as a learner repeats the words of the teacher.

In the beginning the father alone may have taught his son. The story narrated in the Br.Up. V.2.1 and the story of Śvetaketu Aruneya who was taught by his father everything he knew (Br.Up.

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110 Vide Rev. F. E. Keay's 'Ancient Indian Education' (1918), Dr. A. S. Altekar's 'Education in Ancient India' (1934), S. K. Das on 'Educational system of the ancient Hindus' (1930) and Dr. S. C. Sarkar's 'Educational ideas and institutions in ancient India' (1928). The last work is based entirely on the Atharva Veda and the Rāmāyana.

VI.2.1 and 4) illustrate this (vide, n.633). But even from very ancient times the practice of sending boys to learn from an ācārya had become usual. The Chan. Up. itself says in one passage (VI.1) that Śvetaketu Aruneya was placed by his father for twelve years as a student with a teacher. The same upanisad (III.11.5) says that the father should impart the '*madhuvidyā*' to his eldest son or to a worthy pupil only. As the boy stayed with the teacher in the latter's house and all instruction was oral, the teacher's position assumed the greatest importance. Satyakāma Jabala says to his teacher (in Chan. IV.9.3):- 'I have heard from persons like your revered self that knowledge when learnt from an ācārya reaches the highest excellence'. The Śvetavataropanisad (VI.23) places the guru almost on a level with God and inculcates the highest devotion to him.

The Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.6.13 says:- 'the pupil should wait upon the ācārya as if he were God.' The story of Ekalavya, whom Drona refused to take as a pupil because he was a niṣāda and who by worshipping the image of Drona is alleged to have become an adept in archery, illustrates two points viz. the prevailing notion of the greatness of a guru and the necessity of single minded devotion to him for attaining proficiency (vide *Adi-parva* 132 for the story and also *Drona-parva* 181.17). The *Mahābhārata* condemns him who learns the Vedas at home and says that Raibhya became superior to Yavakrīta because the former learnt from a guru, while the other did not do so.

In *Manu* and other smṛtis there is some divergence about the greatness of the ācārya. *Manu* II.146 (= *Viṣṇu Dh. S.*30.44) says that both the father (*janaka*) and the teacher are called father (*pita*) but the father (i.e. ācārya) who imparts the sacred Veda is superior to the father that gives (physical) birth, since the birth in spiritual learning is for a brāhmaṇa of eternal benefit here and hereafter. But in 11.145 *Manu* 771 says that an ācārya is ten times superior to an upadhyāya, the father is superior to a hundred ācāryas, while the mother is thousand-fold superior to the father. *Gaut.* II.56 declares that the ācārya is the highest among all gurus while according to some the mother is the highest. *Yāj.* I.35 also places the mother higher than the ācārya. *Gaut.*1.10-11, *Vas, Dh. S.* III.21, *Manu* II.140, *Yāj.* I.34 define the ācārya as one who performs the upanayana of the student and imparts the whole Veda to him. The *Nirukta* (I.4) derives ācārya as follows:-

'He makes the student understand the proper course of conduct, or he collects wealth (i.e. fee) from the student (or gathers together the meanings of words), or he increases the intelligence (of the student).'

Āpastamba Dh, S.1.1.1.14 says:- 'The ācārya is so called since the student gathers his duties from him.' *Manu* II.69 says that the teacher, after performing upanayana, teaches his pupil the rules about *śauca* (bodily purity), *ācāra* (rules of conduct in every day life), the offering (of fuel-stick) in fire and sandhyā adoration.

Though the words *ācārya*, *guru* and *upadhyāya* are very often used as synonyms, ancient writers made a distinction between them. According to *Manu* II.141 and 142, an upadhyāya is one who teaches to a student a portion of the Veda or the Vedaṅgas (subsidiary lores of the Veda) as a means of his own livelihood and a guru is one who performs the saṃskāras and who maintains the child. This latter definition shows that guru means the father here. *Vas.Dh. S.* (III.22-23), *Viṣṇu Dh.*8.29.2, and *Yāj.* I.35 define upadhyāya in the same way as *Manu*. According to *Yāj.*1.34 the guru is one who performs the saṃskāras and imparts the Veda. This corroborates the statement made above that originally the father himself taught the Veda to his son. The word guru is often used in the sense of any elderly person, male or female, who is entitled to respect.

*Viṣṇu Dh. S.* (32.1-2) says that the father, the mother and the ācārya are the three highest gurus of a person and *Manu* II.227-237 contain the most sublime glorification of these three, *Devala* says:-

'among gurus five deserve special honour, viz. father, mother, ācārya, eldest brother and husband (in the case of women).'

*Manu* (II.149) says that whoever confers on another the benefit of knowledge, whether great or

small, is the latter's guru. A great deal is said about the qualifications of the ācārya who is to perform the upanayana of a person and to teach him the Veda. Āpastamba Dh. S.778 1.1.1.11 refers to a Brāhmaṇa text to the effect:–

'he whom a teacher devoid of learning initiates enters from darkness into darkness and he also (i.e. an ācārya) who is himself unlearned (enters into darkness).'

Āpastamba Dh. S. (I.1.1.12-13) further provides that one should desire a performer of one's upanayana who is endowed with learning and whose family is hereditarily learned and who is serene in mind and that one should study Vedic lore under him up to the end (of brahmacārya) as long as the teacher does not fall off from the path of Dharma. Vyasa (quoted in Sam. P. p.408) says that the ācārya should be a brāhmaṇa who is solely devoted to the Veda, who knows Dharma, is born of a good family, who is pure, is a śrotriya that has studied his Vedic Sakha and who is not lazy.

Āpastamba Dh. S. II.3.6.4 and Baud. Gr. I.7, 3 define a śrotriya as one who has studied one sakha of a Veda.

The ācārya in upanayana must be a brāhmaṇa; as to the study of Veda one should ordinarily learn the Veda from a brāhmaṇa teacher; in times of difficulty (i, e. when a brāhmaṇa is not available) one may learn the Veda from a kṣatriya or vaiśya teacher; but in such circumstances the only service that a brāhmaṇa student rendered to the guru would be following after the non-brāhmaṇa teacher; he had not to render bodily service (such as shampooing or washing the feet etc.) Manu II.238 allows even a brāhmaṇa to learn subha-vidyā (visibly beneficial knowledge) even from a sūdra. Śānti-parva 165, 31 does the same. The Mit. on Yāj.1.118 remarks that a kṣatriya or vaiśya should teach a brāhmaṇa only when urged by him and not at his sweet will. Aparārka (p.160) says that Manu II.241 allows only teaching to a kṣatriya, but does not allow him to make it a means of his livelihood.

## 18. Method of Teaching.

We saw above (p.321) that the instruction was entirely oral The first thing that was taught to the boy was the pranava and the vyahrtis and the Gāyatrī. Then the boy was to be taught other parts of the Veda. It is desirable to set out briefly the method of teaching the Veda followed in ancient times. The San. Gr. (IV.8) describes the method as follows:– the teacher sits facing the east or north, while the other (i.e. the strident) sits to his right facing the north or two students may sit in that way; but if there are more than two they should sit as the available space will allow. The student should not sit on a high seat before the teacher nor on the same seat with him; he should not stretch out his feet, nor should he sit seizing his knees with his arm, nor should he lean against a support, nor should he place his feet on his lap nor should he hold his feet like an axe.

After the student utters – 'Recite, Sir,' the teacher should urge him to pronounce 'om'; the other (i.e. the student) should reply 'om'. Thereafter he (the student) should recite continuously. After reciting he should clasp the teacher's feet and say 'we have finished, Sir' and go away to his business, Some teachers say that the teacher should say – 'Leave, let us stop'.

In the Rik Pratisakhya, 15th patala, there is a description of the method of teaching the Veda, which closely agrees with the above quotation from the San. Gr. It adds that the teacher may also sit facing the north-east. When the teacher recites two words or more, the first pupil (to the right of the teacher) repeats the first of the two or more words and the other pupils repeat the rest afterwards, The teacher recites one word if it is a compound, two words if they are un-compounded; the teacher also clearly explains how to recite the words if there is any difficulty; in this way the whole prasa is finished and all the pupils repeat again the whole of it. A prasa generally has three mantras and each adhyāya has about sixty prasnas.

Manu (II.70-74) also prescribes certain rules: the student should sip water (*ācamana*) when about to begin Vedic study, should face the north, should fold both hands together (and place them on his knee)<sup>111</sup>, should wear light (pure) clothes, should at the beginning and end of Vedic study clasp the feet of the teacher with crossed hands and should touch the right foot of the teacher with his own right hand and left foot with the left hand, should repeat 'om' at the beginning and at the end of Vedic study. The teacher should say to the pupil 'repeat' and should stop from teaching with the words 'let there be a pause'.

The Gopatha Br. I.31 uses the expression – '*sarve Veda mukhato gṛhītāh.*', which is current even in modern times (it means all Vedas were committed to memory by word of mouth).

The study of the Veda was the first duty of every twice born person (*dvijāti*). Vedic Literature had grown to vast proportions even in the times of the Tai.Br. (III.10.11), as the story of Indra and Bharadvaja cited above (p.271) shows. The ideal was set up by Manu II.165, viz., that the whole Veda together with secret doctrines (Upanishads) was to be learnt by every *dvijāti*. The Sat.Br. XI. 5.7 contains a eulogy of Veda study (*svadhyāya*) and the injunction '*svadhyāyo'dhyetavyah.*' (one must study the Veda) occurs there very frequently.

The Mahābhārata says that a brāhmaṇa may be deemed to have completely accomplished his duty by the study of the Veda. Yāj. I.40 says that it is Veda alone that confers the highest bliss upon *dvijātis* by enabling them to understand and perform sacrifices, austerities and auspicious acts (like *saṃskāras*).

The Mahābhāṣya (vol. I. p.9) contains the traditional extent of the four Vedas, viz. that there were 101 śākhās of the Yajur Veda, 1000 of the Sama Veda, 21 of the Rig Veda and nine of the Atharva Veda. Concessions had to be made to the shortness of human life and the weakness of the human mind. Therefore Gaut. II.51, Vas. Dh. S. VII.3, Manu III.2, Yāj. I.52 and others allowed a person to study only one Veda. After a man studied his own Veda, he could if so minded study another śākha of another Veda or other Vedas. The rule laid down by many *smṛtis* is that one should study the śākha of the Veda which his ancestors studied and should perform religious rites with mantras derived from that śākha.

That person who does not study a Vedic śākha studied by his ancestors and studies another śākha altogether was called '*śākhāraṇḍa*'. Whatever religious rites a man did with the procedure and mantras of another śākha giving up his own śākha becomes fruitless. But an exception was made to the effect that if some religious rite was omitted in one's śākha, but was dealt with in another śākha and was not opposed to the teaching of one's śākha, it may be performed as in the case of Agnihotra (which is not dealt with in all śākhās, but is to be performed by all).

Teachers mostly confined themselves to one place. But we find that even in ancient times there were teachers who wandered from one country to another. In the Kaus.Br. Up. IV.1 we find that the famous Balaki Gargya moved about in the countries of Usīnara, Matsya, Kuru-Pancala and Kāśīvideha. In the Br. Up. III.3.1 Bhujyu Lāhyāyani tells Yajñavalkya that he and others wandered about in the country of Madra for study. Students generally stuck to one teacher; but it appears that they sometimes flocked to renowned teachers as waters flow down a slope (Tai. Up. I.4.3). There were also students who wandered from teacher to teacher and were therefore derisively called '*tīrtha-kāka*' (crows at a sacred place), as the Mahābhāṣya states.

As the study of the Veda was a duty enjoined upon a brāhmaṇa, so teaching Veda to another was a duty. Medhātithi on Manu (II.113) quotes a Vedic text –

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<sup>111</sup> *Brahmāñjali* — is explained differently from Manu by Apastamba *Smṛti* viz. the left hand should be turned upwards, the right hand should be placed on it with the palm turned downwards, and the fingers of the two hands should firmly hold the backs of the hands.

'He who having studied the Veda would not teach one who requests him to do so would be one who destroys his own good acts (i.e. would lose the benefit thereof), would shut the door leading to happiness; therefore he should teach; it leads to great glory'.

When Satyakama Jabala did not teach his pupil Upakosala anything for twelve years, though the latter served assiduously by attending to the sacred fires of the teacher, the teacher's wife remonstrated with the husband by saying:—

'this student has worked hard and attended the fires, may the fires not censure you and order you to teach him the vidyā he desires ' (Chan. Up. IV.10.1-2).

The Prasna Up.VI.1 gives expression to the view that if a teacher keeps back anything he knows he dries up entirely. The Āpastamba Dh.S. I.4.14.2-3 expressly proscribes:— 'the teacher whom a student asks for instruction should not refuse him, if he finds no defect in the student.' Āpastamba Dh. S. (I.2.8.25-28) lays down certain excellent rules for the teacher:—

'the teacher, anxious for the welfare of the student as if he were his son, should attentively impart learning to the student without hiding anything from him in all matters of duty; nor should the teacher restrain the student for his own work in such a way as to cause obstacles in his study except in seasons of distress. A teacher becomes no teacher if he avoids giving instruction ' (i.e. he may be abandoned).

The Drona-parva (50.21) says that a pupil comes only after the son according to the idea of those who know Dharma. If a teacher does not teach a pupil any thing even after his pupil has stayed with him for a year, the former receives all the sins of the pupil. A teacher who did not teach or was sinful was to be abandoned. Similarly a teacher, who became puffed up, did not care for what should or should not be done and took to a sinful path was to be abandoned. Āpastamba 1.1.1.13 lays down that a student must stay with his teacher who performs his upanayana till he completes his study, unless the teacher himself swerved from the path of Dharma and became a sinner and (I.2.7.26) that if the teacher cannot teach the subject, the pupil may resort to another teacher. The smṛtis lay down rules about the qualifications of a student who deserves to be taught. In the Vidyā-sukta quoted in the Nirukta 800 (II.4) we see that the teacher was not to impart vidyā (knowledge) to one who was jealous (or who treated vidyā with contempt), was crooked and was non self-restrained and that learning was to be imparted to one who was pure, attentive, intelligent and endowed with brahmacārya (celibacy), who would never prove false (to his teacher) and who would guard what he learnt as a treasure, Manu (II.109 and 112 also) says that ten persons deserve to be taught viz. the son of the teacher, a student who serves his guru, one who gives some knowledge in exchange, one who knows Dharma or who is pure (in body and mind), who is truthful, who is able to study and retain it, who gives money (for teaching), who is well-disposed and who is one's near relative (agnate). Yāj. I.28 mentions all these and adds that the student must be grateful, not inclined to hate or prove false to the teacher, healthy and not disposed to find fault. The student should always be dependent on and under the control of the teacher (as Āpastamba Dh. S.801 1.2.19 and Nārada say) and should stay with no one but the teacher.

We saw above (p.274) that from ancient times the student had to serve the teacher by tending his cattle (Chāndogya IV.4.5), had to beg for food and announce it to the teacher (ibid. IV.3.5) and to look after his sacred fires and to learn the Veda only in the time that would be left after doing work for the guru. Besides these, the rules concerning his conduct towards the teacher, the teacher's wife and son, concerning the method of salutation and showing respect, the food, drinks, and actions allowed or prohibited to students are too numerous to be set out in detail. A few important ones from Gautama, Āpastamba Dh. S., Manu II and Yaj I.33 are stated below.

Gaut. (II.13, 14, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25) says that the student should speak the truth, bathe everyday, should not look at the sun; should avoid honey, flesh, perfumes, the wearing of flowers, sleeping by day, rubbing oil on the body, putting collyrium in the eyes, going in a cart, wearing shoes and



holding an umbrella, love affairs, anger, covetousness, infatuation, vain discussions, playing on musical instruments, luxurious baths with hot water, meticulous cleans of the teeth, ecstatic states of mind, dancing, singing, calumny of others, dangerous places, gazing at women or touching young women, gambling, serving a low person (or doing very low work), injury to animals, obscene or harsh talk, wine.

Manu (II.198 and 180-181) prescribes that he should not sleep on a cot and should observe complete celibacy, but if he suffers from night emissions he should bathe, worship the sun and repeat thrice the mantra – '*punar mām*' (Tai. Ar. I.30).

The Āpastamba Dh. S. (1.1.2.21-30, 1.1.3.11-24) contains similar rules of conduct. Āpastamba says (I.1.2, 28-30) that the student should not wash his limbs with hot water (generally), but he may do so if they are smeared with dirty and impure matter provided he does it out of the sight of the teacher and that he should not bathe in water in a sportive manner, but should bathe in it motionless like a stick. Āpastamba not only prohibits for him sexual intercourse (I.1.2.26) but ordains that he should speak with women only as much as is absolutely necessary. The student was not to laugh, but if he could not help laughing he should do so covering his face with his hands (says Āpastamba).

Gautama and Baud.Dh. S. (I.2.34 and 37) say that the student is to serve his teacher by following after him when he goes anywhere, he should help the teacher in his toilet and bath and should shampoo his body and take food left by him (*ucchiṣṭa*)<sup>112</sup>; he should be diligent in doing work that would be pleasing and beneficial to the teacher; he was to study when the teacher called him, he was not to cover his throat with a piece of cloth, or was not to sit in the presence of his teacher with his feet on his lap, was not to stretch his feet, he was not to clear loudly his throat, nor to laugh, yawn or crack the knuckles; he was when called by the teacher to reply at once leaving his seat or bed and was to approach the teacher even when he called from a distance; he should always occupy a seat lower than that of his teacher and should go to sleep after his teacher and rise before him (Gautama II.20-21, 30-32).

Manu II.194-198 and Āpastamba Dh. S. I 2.5.26 and L 2, 6.1-12 contain similar rules. Manu (II.199) says that a pupil should not mimic the gait, the manner of speech and the actions of the teacher. Manu (II.200-201) calls upon the pupil to close his ears (with his hands or fingers) or to leave the place where somebody indulges in calumnies about the teacher or points out the faults in him, and states that if the pupil himself finds fault with his teacher or calumniates him, the pupil (in the next life) is born as an ass or a dog.

Some rules are laid down as to how the *brahmacārin* is to deal with the hair on his head. Even the Rig speaks of boys with several śikhās (topknot). Gaut. I.26 and Manu II.219 say that a *brahmacārin* may either shave his entire head, or may allow all the hair to grow as matted or should keep only a tuft of hair on the head (and shave the rest).

Āpastamba Dh. S, 1.1.2.31-32, Vas. VII.11 allow only two alternatives viz. growing all the hair or keeping a tuft of hair, while Viṣṇu Dh.8.28.41 says that a student may either shave the entire head or grow matted hair. One was not to untie one's śikha, while on the public road.

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112 The word '*ucchiṣṭa*' is used, as exhaustively pointed out by Medhātithi on Manu VI.80, in several senses. It literally means 'what is left out.' The most usual senses are three, viz. (1) food left in the plate from which one has eaten, (2) food taken out in a vessel for serv to a person but not exhausted by being served in his plate, and (as applied to a person), (3) one who has not washed his hands, and mouth after eating food (or as applied to a plate) the plate (not yet cleaned) from which one has taken his, meal. Vide Manu IV.211 for the 2nd meaning. Another meaning is: (4) one who has answered a call of nature and not yet performed the purificatory acts like ācamana is said to be *ucchiṣṭa*. Vide Manu IV.142 (for this and the 3rd meaning) and V. U3(for3). Sometimes the word is used in its literal sense (vide Āp. Dh.8.1.1.4, 2). Vide Manu V.141 for another application of the word.

## 19. Methods of address

One of the rules for the student was that he was not to pronounce the name of his teacher even when the teacher was not present without prefixing or affixing an honorific addition (such as *śrī*, *bhaṭṭa*, *ācārya*). Gaut. ordains that the student should not speak of his teacher, the teacher's son or wife or of a man who has been initiated for a *śrauta* sacrifice by their bare names and then says that when it is absolutely necessary to refer to these by name the student should not pronounce the name and gotra of his teacher as they are, but by means of a synonym (e.g. if the teacher's name is Haradatta or Deveśvara the pupil should respectively say Devarāta or Sureśvara). Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.8.15 says that even after returning home a *snātaka* should avoid touching his former teacher with his fingers (to call his attention), frequent muttering of something in his ears, laughing into his face, calling him out loudly, taking his name, ordering him about. Manu II.128 and Gaut. VI.19 say that a man who has been initiated for a *śrauta* sacrifice should not be addressed by his name, even though he be younger than the person addressing, but that one should use the words '*bhoḥ*' and '*bhavat*' when addressing him or speak about him and may refer to him by words like *dīkṣita* etc.

There are other rules about addressing or referring by name which may be set out here for the sake of completeness. The Sm. C. (I. p.45) and Haradatta on Gaut. II.29 quote a *smṛti* that one should not mention by name only one's teacher, teacher's son and wife, a *dīkṣita*, any other guru, father, mother, paternal and maternal uncles, one's benefactor, a learned person, one's father-in-law, one's husband, one's mother's sister. The Mahābhārata says that one should not mention by name or address as '*tvam*' (thou) one's elders, but one may speak of one's contemporaries or those who are younger by their names. Another verse says that one should not mention one's own name, the name of one's guru, the name of a mean person, of one's wife and one's eldest child.

## 20. Upasaṅgrahaṇa – formal salutation

This consists in repeating one's gotra and name, saying 'I salute', touching one's ears, clasping the feet (as stated above) and bending one's head while so doing. In *abhivādana* there is no clasping of the feet with the hands; one may or may not touch the feet of the person to be honoured. *Abhivādana* must always be preceded by *pratyutthāna*. Very detailed rules were laid down about *pratyutthāna* (rising from one's seat to receive a person), *abhivādana* (salutation), *upasaṅgrahaṇa* (saluting by clasping the feet of the teacher or another with one's hands), *pratyabhivāda* (returning a salutation), and *namaskāra* (bowing with the word '*namah*').

According to Āpastamba Dh.S.1.2.5, 19 and I.3.10.17 the student must, when he meets his teacher after sunrise, clasp his teacher's feet and also before beginning the day's lesson of Vedic study and also after finishing it, Manu II.71 says the same. Gaut. (1.52-54) prescribes the clasping of the feet every day in the morning and at the beginning and at the end of a lesson in the Veda. According to Āpastamba Dh. S.1.2.5.20 on other occasions whenever the student meets the teacher only *abhivādana* is sufficient, though according to some teachers (Āpastamba I.2.5.21) clasping the teacher's feet is necessary on each occasion. Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.5.23 states that in *upasaṅgrahaṇa* the teacher's right foot is to be stroked below and above with the student's right hand and the foot and ankle are both to be taken hold of, while according to some teachers, the student must press each foot of the teacher with both hands and clasp them. Manu II.72, Viṣṇu Dh. S.28.15, and Baud. Dh. S. I.2.24 say that the student is to clasp the feet of the teacher with crossed hands, touching the right foot with the right hand and the left foot with the left hand.

Kulluka on Manu II.72 quotes Paithīnasi that the student should clasp the teacher's feet with his hands turned upwards. Baud. Dh. S. I.2.28 adds that clasping should not be done when either the teacher or the pupil is seated, or is lying down or impure. According to Gaut. VI.1-3 one must clasp every day on the first meeting and particularly on his or their return from a journey, the feet of one's

parents, of the blood relations of parents (e.g. paternal and maternal uncles), of the elder brother, of the guru (i.e. *ācārya*, *upadhyāya*) and of persons venerated by one's gurus. Āpastamba Dh.S. (I.4.14.7-9) says that even after finishing one's studies and returning home a man must every day clasp the feet of gurus (father, mother, teacher and other venerable persons) and of elder brothers and sisters according to their seniority.

*Abhivādana* is of three kinds, viz. *nitya* (obligatory every day), *naimittika* (to be done only on certain occasions) and *kāmya* (to be done only if a person has certain rewards in view). As examples of *nitya* *abhivādana* one may instance the rules of Āpastamba Dh. S.813 (I.2.5.12-13)

"Every day a student should get up from bed in the last watch of the night and standing near his teacher salute him with the words:– 'I so and so, ho' (salute thee); and the student should also salute other very aged (and learned brāhmanas) who may reside in the same village before his morning meal."

The occasional *abhivādana* is done on certain occasions such as return from a journey (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.5.14). A person may salute elderly persons whenever he chooses, if he is desirous of long life or (bliss in) heaven (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.5.15 and Baud. Dh. S. I.2.26). Manu (II.120 and 121) says the *prānas* (vital breaths) of a young man mount upwards when an old man approaches; but by rising to meet him and salutation (to him), he (the young man) recovers them. He who habitually salutes and constantly pays reverence to the aged obtains an increase of four things viz. length of life, knowledge, fame and strength. Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.14. II, 815 Baud. Dh. S. I.2.44, Manu II.130 and Vas. Dh. S.13.41 prescribe that a person must honour by rising and mentioning one's name an officiating priest, one's father-in-law, paternal and maternal uncles, even though these may be younger than oneself in years.

Gaut. (VI 9) however says that in the case of these one need only rise from his seat to receive them; but it is not necessary to salute them (*abhivādana* is not necessary). Viṣṇu Dh. S.32.4 expressly says that in the case of officiating priests and others specified by Āpastamba and Gaut. and who are younger, rising from one's seat is tantamount to *abhivādana*. Manu II.117 says that one must perform *abhivādana* to a person from whom one learns secular, Vedic or spiritual knowledge of any kind.

There is some difference in the words used at the time of *abhivādana*. Usually the words are:– '*abhivādaye devadatta sarma'ham asmi bhoh'* (vide Āpastamba I.2.5.12, Gaut. VI, 5, Baud. Dh. S. I.2.27, Vas. XIII.44, Manu II.122 and 124). But this mode is appropriate only if the person addressed knows how to return the salutation.

Manu II.123 and 126 and Vas. Dh.8.13.45 declare that in the case of those who do not know how to return a salutation (*pratyabhivādana*, and according to Manu in the case of women also) one should omit the word '*bhoh'* and simply say:– '*abhivādaye aham'* (omitting one's name). Āpastamba Dh.S. I.4.14.20 similarly says that in saluting women, a *kṣatriya* or a *vaiśya* one should use a pronoun and omit one's name.

The manner of *abhivādana* was as follows: –

'A brāhmaṇa shall salute stretching forward his right arm on a level with his ear, a *kṣatriya* holding it on a level with the chest, a *vaiśya* holding it on a level with the waist and a *sūdra* holding it low (up to his feet) and that the salutation shall be by joining one's hands'. (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.5.16-17).

The Madana-pārijāta adds that *abhivādana* is with both hands when the person to be saluted is learned, but with one hand only if he is not learned (p.27) and the Sm. C. (I. p.36) quotes Viṣṇu and Atrī to the same effect. The stretching of the hands up to the ear etc. indicates how far the head is to be bent in each case.

There were also other rules about honouring one's elders In the presence of one's teacher or

honouring the teacher's teacher or about one's behaviour when a gentleman comes to see one's ācārya and leaves him, which are here passed over for want of space.

A brāhmaṇa who does not know the form of returning a salutation must not be saluted by a learned man; he is like a Śūdra (Manu II.126). Similarly a brāhmaṇa was not to perform abhivādana to a kṣatriya or a vaiśya however learned the latter may be, but one should simply say 'svasti'; those who are of the same caste should do abhivādana. The Mit. on Yāj. III.292 and Aparārka p.1188 quote sūtras of Harīta prescribing a prayaścitta a fast of one, two or three days respectively for a brāhmaṇa saluting a kṣatriya, vaiśya or Śūdra and also for saluting when the persons saluted or the man saluting are in such a condition as to make them unfit for abhivādana.

One should not salute with the shoes on or when one's head is wrapped up or one's hands are full (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.14.19); or if one carries a load of fuel-sticks or holds a pot of flowers or food in one's hands one shall not salute, nor shall one salute on occasions similar to the preceding (such as one being engaged in worship of manes, of fire or other gods or when one's teacher is so engaged), nor should one salute a teacher standing very close to him (Baud. Dh. S. I.2.31-32). When one is impure or the person he meets is impure (owing to *aśauca* or other causes) no salutation is to be made or returned (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.14.17). Gaut. IX.45 says that one should not occupy a seat or perform abhivādana and namaskāra with shoes on. One need not salute a person who is not a guru or who stands in a lower or higher place than oneself (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.14.14). Sp. Dh. S. I.4.14.23, Manu II.135 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.32.17 say that a brāhmaṇa ten years old is like a father to a kṣatriya even 100 years old and so deserves salutation from the kṣatriya.

Āpastamba Dh. S. (I.4.14.12) gives a special rule that a friendship kept for ten years as fellow citizens, a friendship contracted at school for five years, the fact of a Śrotriya being three years older entitles the friend or śrotriya to a salutation. But Gaut. (VI.14-17) and Manu II.134 give somewhat different rules viz. contemporaries who are born in the same year are to be addressed with the word '*bhoh*' or '*bhavat*' and a fellow citizen who is ten years older than oneself and an artist who is five years older than oneself and a Śrotriya studying the same Vedic school as oneself who is three years older are to be addressed similarly. Manu adds blood relations to the list when the difference in age is very small.

The Smṛtyarthasara p.7 gives a long list of persons whom one should never salute viz. an heretic, a person guilty of grave sins, an atheist, gamblers, thieves, ungrateful persons, drunkards. Vide also Manu IV.30 and Yāj.1.130 (as to showing no respect even by words to heretics etc). In the case of certain persons one was to show honour only by rising from his seat and not by abhivādana.

Gaut. adds that (VI.10-11) even a śūdra of eighty years or more must be honoured by rising by one (even though the latter be of a higher varṇa) young enough to be his son (but there will be no abhivādana) and that an arya (i.e. one belonging to the three higher castes) must be honoured by rising by a Śūdra even if the latter be older (and so a vaiśya must honour a kṣatriya though the latter be younger). Haradatta explains that the word śūdra in Gaut. VI, 10 is only illustrative and that an old vaiśya must be honoured by a young kṣatriya or brāhmaṇa by simply rising from his seat and an old kṣatriya by a young brāhmaṇa in the same way.

Āpastamba Dh. S. (II.2.4.16-18) lays down that if a brāhmaṇa who has not studied the Veda comes as a guest one may give him a seat, water and food but one should not rise to receive him, but should rise to receive him if he is entitled to abhivādana on account of age (as stated in Āpastamba I.4.14.12, and Manu II.134); similarly a brāhmaṇa need not rise to receive a kṣatriya or vaiśya (except on the same ground of age).

The rules about returning a salutation (about *pratyabhivāda*) are made somewhat intricate and obscure by the varying interpretations of commentators. *Pratyabhivāda* consists in pronouncing a benediction in the proper form given by a guru or other person who has been saluted. Among the

oldest is the rule in Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.5.18:–

'when returning the salute of one belonging to the first three castes, the (last syllable of the) name (of the person whose salutation is to be returned) shall be lengthened to three moras',

Vasiṣṭha's rule (XIII.46) is that when the salute is returned, the last vowel (of the noun standing) in the vocative is protracted to the length of three moras and if it is a diphthong (i.e. 'e' or 'o' but not of the dual number) it becomes 'ay' or 'av' e.g. 'bho' becomes 'bhāv'.

Manu II.125 prescribes:–

"A brāhmaṇa should be thus saluted in return, 'mayst thou be long-lived, O gentle one!' and the vowel 'a' or any other vowel at the end of the name (of the person addressed) should be made *pluta* (i.e. lengthened to three moras) and if the name ends in a consonant, the preceding vowel is made *pluta*."

That these rules are very ancient follows from Panini's sūtra (VIII.2.83) – 'when the salutation of a person who is not a śūdra is returned by the person saluted, the final vowel in the name (that occurs at the end of the sentence of pratyabhivada) becomes pluta.

The Mahābhāṣya comments on this and two vartikas thereon say that this rule does not apply when it is a woman to whom the salutation is returned and it applies optionally when the person whose salutation is returned is a kṣatriya or vaiśya.

The ancient commentator Medhātithi interprets Manu so as to agree with Panini and says:–

'In the realm of the use of words and their senses Panini has higher authority than Manu, that the *pratyabhivāda* words containing the benediction about long life are not stereotyped, that when a kṣatriya returns the salutation of a kṣatriya or a vaiśya of a vaiśya, the same rules hold good'.

As a person of a higher varṇa was not to do abhivādana to one of lower varṇa there would be no occasion for *pratyabhivāda* from the side of the latter.

What great importance was attached to the correct utterance of the return salutation can be seen from the fact that one of the miscellaneous reasons assigned for the necessity of grammatical studies in the Mahābhāṣya is that (as stated in a verse) a person who returns from a journey will perform salutation to ignorant persons (who do not know how to utter *pratyabhivāda*) as if to women with the words – '*abhivādaye ayam aham*', (i.e. grammar is to be learnt by men for fear that they may be treated as women when a person salutes them).

Āpastamba Dh. S. (I.2.7.27) prescribes that the student shall be have towards his teacher's wife as towards the teacher himself but he shall not clasp her feet or eat the residue of her food. Gaut. (II.31-32) also says the same thing and adds that the student shall not assist the wives of the teacher at their toilet or bath nor wash their feet nor shampoo them. Manu II.211, Baud. Dh. S. I.2.37, Viṣṇu Dh. S.32.6 have the same rule. But Gaut. II.33 states an exception that on return from a journey the student shall clasp the feet of the wives of his teacher (also Manu II.217 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.32.15). Manu (II.210) gives special directions 'the wives of the teacher who belong to the same caste must be treated as respectfully as the teacher but in the case of those who belong to a different caste he need only rise from his seat and salute ' (Viṣṇu Dh. S.32.5 also is similar), and a student who is full twenty years old shall not honour the young wife of a teacher by clasping her feet (Manu II.212 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.32.13); but even a young student may prostrate himself on the ground for honouring the young wife of his teacher without clasping her feet (with the words – '*abhivādaye amuka śarma-ham bhoh*').

As regards women who are not wives of the teacher, the following rules deserve attention. The first rule is that married women, whatever their age may be, deserve honour (and so he must salute etc.) according to the ages of their husbands (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.14.18 and Vas. Dh. S.13.42) Viṣṇu

Dh. S.32.2 gives the same rule, but restricts it to wives of the same caste. Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.14.6 prescribes that the same honour must be shown to the mother and father as to a teacher i.e. their feet must be clasped on those occasions on which a teacher's feet are to be clasped and Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.14.9 extends the rule to elder sisters. Gaut. (VI.7-8) states that the feet of the wives of (elder) brothers or of one's mother-in-law need not be clasped on any occasion; and the feet of a paternal uncle's wife or of elder sisters need not be clasped except when one returns from a journey. But Manu (II.131-132) gives different rules. A maternal or paternal aunt, a maternal uncle's wife, a mother-in-law are equal to one's teacher's wife and must be honoured like her; one's elder brother's wife's feet must be clasped every day if she is of the same caste, but the feet of the wives of one's other paternal and maternal relatives need only be clasped on one's return from a journey. Viṣṇu Dh. S.32.3 places a maternal or paternal aunt and the eldest sister on an equality with the teacher's wife. As already stated above in the case of all women the salutation is simply 'I salute' (*abhivādaye aham*) without mentioning one's name. Devala says:—

'The mother, mother's mother, teacher's wife and the full brothers and sisters of one's parents, paternal grand-mother, mother-in-law, elder sister and the foster mother are women who are (to be honoured like) gurus'.

Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.7.30, Vas. Dh. S. XIII.54, Viṣṇu Dh. S.28.31, Manu II.207 require that the student will behave towards the teacher's son as towards his teacher. That this rule is very ancient follows from a passage in the Mahābhāṣya where it is stated and a proviso is added that the student will not however clasp the son's feet nor eat the leavings of his food.

Āpastamba Dh. S.1.2.7.30 only mentions as prohibited the eating of the leavings of food, but Viṣṇu Dh. S. (28.32-33) prohibits also the washing of the son's feet. Manu (II.208) gives a restrictive rule that the son of the teacher deserves the same honour as a teacher, if he imparts instruction in place of the teacher (because the latter is otherwise engaged), whether the son be younger or of the same age as the student, but that the student in any case must not shampoo the limbs of the son nor assist him in his bath nor wash his feet nor eat the leavings of his food.

From Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.7.28 and I.4.13. it appears that the system of pupil teachers (who were called '*samādiṣṭa*') obtained in ancient times and Āpastamba prescribes that the student shall behave towards a pupil teacher who teaches him at the teacher's command as towards the teacher and shall honour him also by clasping his feet, as long as he is giving instruction.

Further rules are laid down about showing courtesy to a person who is not a relative or who is not a teacher etc. Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.14.26-29 and Manu II, 127 lay down that one should, on meeting a brāhmaṇa, ask after his health with the word '*kuśala*', a kṣatriya about his health using the word '*anāmaya*', a vaiśya by using the word '*kṣema*' (or *anasta* according to Āpastamba) and a śūdra by employing the word '*ārogya*'. Thus one who is older (according to the rule in Manu II.134 cited above on p.339) should be saluted, while one who is of the same age or younger should simply be asked '*kuśala*' etc.

Manu (II.129) enjoins that one should address a woman who is the wife of another man and who is not a blood relation as 'lady' (*bhavatī*) or 'beloved sister' and (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.14.30) that one should not pass a learned brāhmaṇa without addressing him nor a woman whom he meets in a forest or other lonely place and Viṣṇu Dh. S.32.7 says that in such circumstances he must address her (in order to assure her) as 'sister' (if she is of the same age as himself) or 'daughter' (if she is younger) and 'mother' (if she is older than himself).

It is stated in the Udvāha-tattva (p.144).that the word '*srī*' is to be prefixed when referring by name to a deity or a teacher, to the place of one's teacher, to a holy place or to the presiding deity of a holy place, to one who has secured Yogic siddhis or to those who have secured by sacrifices the worlds of bliss; and Raghunandana adds that according to the usage of respectable people '*srī*' is

prefixed to names of such persons while they are alive. The same work also tells us that women of the dvijātis were to have the honorific suffix 'devī' added their names and of the śūdra caste the word 'dāsī'. This is the practice particularly in Bengal and Northern India. The works on Dharma śāstra give very interesting rules about the grounds on which respect was to be shown to a person. Honour consists in saluting a person, or rising to meet him or allowing him to walk in front of one or giving him a garland, sandalwood paste on festive occasions and the like.

Manu (II.130) and Viṣṇu Dh. S. (32.16) say that wealth, kindred, age, (performance of) religious rites and sacred knowledge confer title to respect, but each succeeding one out of these five is superior to each preceding one.

Gaut. (VI.18-20) is slightly different; he says:– 'wealth, relations, occupation, birth, learning and age must be honoured; each later named is more important than each preceding one; but Vedic learning is more important than all (the rest)'.

Vas. Dh. S.13.56-57 also says that learning, wealth, age, relationship and religious actions are titles to respect, but each preceding one is more important than each succeeding one.

Yāj. I.116 puts the order as vidyā, karma, age, relationship and wealth (i.e. wealth is the least ground for giving honour). Viśvarupa on Yāj. I.35 says that if respect is not paid to guru (parents), ācārya, upadhyāya and rtvik (they are arranged in descending order) one incurs sin, but if honour is not shown on the ground of learning, wealth etc. there is no sin but one loses happiness and success.

Manu II.137 says that a śūdra who is beyond 90 years is still a child to a learned brāhmaṇa. In order to show that Vedic learning is superior to seniority of age Manu (II.151-153) narrates the story of a young scion of the Angiras gotra who taught his pitṛs and addressed the, as 'little sons' and whose action was supported by the gods with the remark that a man destitute of knowledge was a child and he who taught him the Veda was his father. This story is referred to expressly by Baud. Dh. S.1.4.47 and tacitly by Gaut. VI.20. It is borrowed from the Tandya Mahā-brāhmaṇa (13.3.24). Manu II.155 clinches the argument by saying:– 'the seniority of brāhmaṇas springs from (sacred) knowledge, of kṣatriyas from valour, of vaiśyas from (the possession) of corn and other wealth and only among śūdras is age a ground of seniority'.

Kaut. says that men deserve honour according to their learning, intelligence, valour, high birth and eminent deeds.

One has to distinguish between *abhivādana* and *namaskāra*. In the former one not only bows but utters words like 'abhivādaye &c.' while in the latter one only bows and folds one's hands. The latter is done only to images of gods, brāhmanas, samnyasins and the like. The Smṛtyarthasara p.8 prescribes a fast for one day as a penance for not bowing to images of gods, samnyasins etc. Viṣṇu (quoted in the Sm.C.) says that one should not salute (*abhivādana*) a brāhmaṇa, but should only perform *namaskāra* in all public assemblies, in sacrifices or in palaces or royal courts. The posture of the hands in *namaskāra* is stated as follows:–

'One should join the hands in the shape of a she-goat's ear in *namaskāra* to a learned man, one should fold the hands together in bowing to an ascetic, one should salute an ignorant man with one hand and should not perform *abhivādana* to one who is younger.'

One had to show respect by circum-ambulating from left to right temples or images of gods, bulls, cow-pens, cows, ghee, honey, sacred trees that had brick or stone platforms built round them (like Aśvattha) and squares (where four roads meet), a teacher who is very learned, a learned and religious brāhmaṇa, clay from sacred places.

One was not to approach empty-handed one's parents, ācārya, sacred fires, houses and the king, if the latter has not heard of him before.

A matter closely connected with the showing of respect is that of the rules about the preference to

be given on the road. This has already been dealt with in speaking of the privileges of brāhmaṇas.

## 21. Learning from Books

One striking point about the imparting of knowledge (particularly Vedic) in the ancient educational system of India was the great prejudice against learning from books. The greatest importance was attached to handing down the Veda intact and various devices were discovered and employed for securing this end, such as the various modes of repeating the Veda only in *padas*, in the *krama*, *jaṭa* and other combinations. Great care was taken to preserve the proper accentuation of the Vedic texts. There is a well known story how Tvastr̥ repeating the words:— '*Indraśatrur-varḍhaśva*' in wrong accents caused the fire to be extinguished instead of inflaming it against Indra as he intended. This story is alluded to in the Pāṇinīyasikṣa. The same work (in verse 32) condemns one who learns from a manuscript as among the worst of learners. The Veda was to be recited not only with proper modulation of the voice to convey the accents, but the accents were indicated also by the movements of the. All these intricate matters could be learnt only by oral instruction.

Great controversies have raged round the question whether the art of writing was known in India in very ancient times, whether it was used for literary purposes in the times of Panini and whether the Brahmī alphabet was an indigenous product or whether it was imported into India from some foreign land. Max Muller in his— '*History of ancient Sanskrit Literature*' started the astounding and absurd theory that writing for literary purposes was unknown to Panini (p.507). Later on that position was given up. Then Buhler wrote his famous work — '*on the origin of the Brahmī alphabet*' mainly relying on the resemblances of a few letters of the Asokan script with an ancient Semitic alphabet and came to the conclusion that the Brahmī alphabet was derived from a Semitic script sometimes about 800 B.C.E. It never occurred to that learned scholar to advance and carefully examine the other possible hypotheses which any unbiased and cautious scholar should have ordinarily advanced viz. that the Semitic script might have been derived from the Brahmī alphabet and was later on developed or both might have been derived from some unknown ancient script. All these theories are now in the melting pot on account of the seals bearing writing in some undeciphered script found at Mohenjodaro and Harappa, some of which are at least 5000 years old. So if the Brahmī alphabet was at all borrowed, it is clear now that it was not necessary for Indians to travel so far as Westernmost Asia for that purpose.

Oral instruction was the cheapest and most accurate method of imparting learning. In ancient times writing materials were not easily available and written texts could not be handled easily and would have been extremely costly. Therefore the method of oral instruction was resorted to and having been hallowed by the lapse of thousands of years it has been persisted in to the present day. Even in the 20th century after writing has been known for not less than 3000 years according to scholars like Buhler there are hundreds of brāhmaṇas who learn not only the whole of the Rig Veda (about 10580 verses) by heart, but also commit to memory the pada text of the Rig Veda, the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Araṇyaka and the six Vedāṅgas (which include the 4000 aphorisms of Panini and the extensive Nirukta of Yaska) without caring to understand a word of this enormous material.

Par. M. (1.1. p.154) quotes a verse of Nārada to the effect 'what is learnt from reliance on books and is not learnt from a teacher does not shine in an assembly'. Vrddha-Gautama condemns to hell those who sell the Veda, who condemn the Veda and those who write it down'. Aparārka (p.1114 on Yāj. III.267-268) quotes verses from the Caturvimśati-mata which prescribe various prayaścittas for selling the Vedas, the aṅgas (of the Veda), the smṛtis, Itihāsa and Purāṇa, the secret Pañcarātra (system), gāthas, nīti-sastras etc. The prejudice against using books for learning was carried so far that among the six obstacles in the path of the acquirer of knowledge, reliance on books is mentioned as one. Aparārka (p.390) quotes a long passage from the Bhavisyottara-Purāṇa about the rewards of gifts of books of the epics and Purāṇas to a brāhmaṇa or to a maṭha for the use of the



public. A grant of the Valabhi king Guhasena I dated 559 A.D. refers to a collection of books on the true Dharma. In the Kadambarī (para 88) the queen Vilasavatī is described as surrounded by ascetic women who held books in their hands and read Itihāsa. Vide under *dāna* and *maṭha-pratiṣṭha*.

The teacher was expected to make the student understand by explanations in Sanskrit or in the prākṛits or even by employing the current languages of the various countries.

## 22. The Duration of studentship (brahmacārya):

It appears from certain passages of the Upanishads that the usual duration of brahmacārya was 12 years. Śvetaketu Aruneya is said to have become a brahmacārī when he was twelve and to have mastered all the Vedas at the age of 24 (vide Chan. Up. VI, 1.2 quoted in, n.634). Similarly Chān. IV.10.1 appears to suggest that students left their teacher after twelve years of study. But a long period of brahmacārya was not unknown to the sages of the Upanishads. Chāṇḍogya (VIII.11.3) declares that Indra remained as a student with Prajāpati for 101 years (three periods of 32 years plus five). The story of Bharadvaja narrated in the Tai.Br. quoted above (at p.271) states that Bharadvaja studied the Vedas three parts of his life (at least till 75 years). The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa (II.5) states that the period of studentship for learning all the Vedas is 48 years; that distributing that period in four portions among the Vedas student-hood is for 12 years (for mastering one Veda), that period (12 years) is the shortest (for brahmacārya) and that one should learn of the Veda as much as one can before he is about to return from his teacher. Some of the Gṛhya and Dharma sūtras contain these very words of the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa e.g. Par. Gr. II.5 says:—

'one should observe brahmacārya forty-eight years for the (four) Vedas, or twelve years for each Veda or until one has learnt one or more Veda'.

The Baud. Gr. (I.2.1-5) has a very suggestive passage:—

"the ancient period of studentship was forty-eight years for (the four Vedas) or 24 years, or 12 years for each Veda or at least one year for each kanda (section of the Vedic samhitas like the Tai. S.) or until the student learnt (one Veda), as life is fleeting and as there is a Vedic text 'one should consecrate (the three) sacred fires, while his hair is still dark'".

On Jaimini I.3.3 Sabara states the objection (among other similar matters) that the smṛtis speaking of brahmacārya for 48 years are opposed to the Vedic injunction that 'a man who has a son and whose hair is still dark should consecrate the (three srauta) fires' (i.e. he must do so in middle life, not when his hair is turning grey). Sabara gives his opinion that such smṛtis being opposed to śruti are to be disregarded and makes fun of them by saying that some persons desirous of concealing their lack of manhood observed brahmacārya for forty-eight years and the prescriptions in these smṛtis to that effect are due to this fact.

The very orthodox Kumārila-Bhaṭṭa could not tolerate this light-hearted statement of Sabara and rebukes the latter by saying that there is really no contradiction between the śruti text and the smṛti passage, since the smṛtis themselves prescribe other lesser and alternative periods, since it is possible to hold that smṛtis speak of brahmacārya for 48 years only with reference to him who wants to become a sannyasin immediately after brahmacārya or who desires to become a perpetual student.

As the Vedic literature had grown to vast proportions and as it was thought necessary to preserve this ancient heritage, the ancient sages hit upon the plan of enlisting the whole population of the three varṇas in the task of preservation by making it as their duty to devote as much time as they could to the study and conservation of the Vedic literature. Therefore various alternatives were proposed viz. studying all the four Vedas for 48 years, three of them for 36 or if a man was very clever he may finish the study of three Vedas in 18 years or in 9 years or he should devote as much time as he would require for learning one Veda or more. Vide Manu III.1-2 and Yāj. I.36 and 52 for

the various alternatives. Spending 12 years for Vedic study must have been found even in ancient times impossible for many among the brāhmaṇas and therefore the Bharadvāja Gṛhya (quoted above in note 850) allowed the alternative that one should study the Veda till the Godāna ceremony (which as we shall see later on) took place in the 16th year. Adv. Gr. sūtra I.22.3-4 also prescribes only two alternatives for brahmacārya viz. for 12 years or as long as one could learn the Veda (so Aśv. contemplated brahmacārya for less than 12 years), Haradatta remarks on Āpastamba Dh. S. I.1.2.16 'that reading Āpastamba I, 1.2.12-16, 1.11.3.1 and Manu III.1 together it follows that every one must observe brahmacārya for three years at least for each Veda and when it is said that one may observe brahmacārya till one learns the Veda, that means beyond three years for each Veda. This appears somewhat opposed to the words of Aśv. and Bhāradvāja. Not only was the study of the Veda made an absolute duty for all persons belonging to the three higher varṇas, but the study of Veda was essential for the performance of the solemn Vedic sacrifices. Jaimini lays down that it is only he who knows the Vedic portion necessary for a Vedic sacrifice, that is entitled to perform that sacrifice.

### 23. Subjects of Study:

The study of the Veda means the study of the Mantras and the Brāhmaṇa portion of the particular śākha or śākhās. The Veda was deemed to be eternal and not composed by any human author (i.e. it is apauruṣeya). Jaimini in 1.1.6-23 establishes that the relation of word and sense is eternal and that (in 1.1.27-32) the Vedas are *apauruṣeya*. This is not the place to set out or examine the arguments. All Dharma-śāstra writers proceed on this axiom of the eternity of the Veda.

The Vedānta-sūtra (L 3.28-29) says that the Vedas are eternal and the whole universe (including the gods) emanates from the Veda and reliance is placed on certain Upanishad passages and on Manu I.21, śānti-parva 233.24 and other smṛtis. The Br. Up. IV.5.11 says that the Vedas are the breath of the great Being (i.e. the Supreme Spirit, God); in Br. Up. I.2.5 the Creator (Prajāpati) is said to have evolved all this viz. Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, yajñas and so forth.

The Śvetaśvatara Up. VI.18 says that the Supreme Being evolved Brahma and imparted the Vedas to him. The śānti-parva 857 says that speech in the form of Veda is without beginning and without end, from which all activities and creation proceed, and that the Vedas become latent at the periodical dissolution of the world and become manifest to the great sages again when the world is recreated. But the eternity of the Veda and *apauruṣeyatva* of the Veda were interpreted in various ways e.g. the Mahābhāṣya says that, though the purport of the Veda is eternal, yet the arrangement of words is non-eternal and therefore there are various śākhās (branches or recensions) of the Veda, named Kāṭhaka, Kalapaka etc.

From very ancient times the literature to be studied appears to have been vast. Vide Tai.Br. quoted above (at p.271) where the Vedas have been declared to be endless. In the Rig Veda itself (X.71.11) reference is made to the verses learnt by the four principal priests (*hota, adhvaryu, udgāta* and *brahma*), it is also said that persons who studied together showed great disparity in their mental advancement (Rig. X.71.7) and that co-students feel elation when their friend wins in a debate in an assembly. The Sat.Br. (XI. 5.7.4-8, S.B.E. vol.44, pp.97-98) enumerates under '*svadhyāya*' r̥kṣ, yajus formulae, sāmans, Atharvaṅgirasah (Atharva Veda), Itihāsa-purāna, gāthas in praise of heroes (called Nārāsamsīs)'. The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa II.10 also says— 'in this way all these Vedas were created together with kalpa, rahasya (secret doctrines), Brahman as, Upanishads, Itihāsa, anvākyāna, Purāṇa, anuśāsanas, vākovakya etc'. In the Upanishads frequent mention is made of the literature studied by persons before they became seekers for the knowledge of brahma. For example, in Chan. Up. VII.1.2 Nārada tells Sanatkumara that he had studied the four Vedas, Itihāsa-Purāṇa as the fifth Veda, the Veda of Vedas (grammar), pitṛya (treatise on sraddhas), rāśi (arithmetic), daiva (portents), nidhi (finding out hidden treasures), vākovākya (dialogue or

dialectic), ekāyana (politics), devāvidyā (Nirukta), brahma-vidyā (metres and phonetics), bhūta-vidyā (exorcising ghosts), kṣatra-vidyā (dhanurVeda), nakṣatra-vidyā (astronomy), sarpa-vidyā (snake charms), devajana-vidyā (arts like dancing, singing, preparing unguents etc.).

Panini shows acquaintance not only with the Veda and Brāhmaṇas but he knew ancient Kalpa-sūtras, Bhikṣu-sūtras and Nata-sūtras, secular works on various subjects (IV.3.87-88, 105, lio.III, 116). Patañjali (2nd century B. C.) mentions how vast the field of Sanskrit literature had become. Yāj. I.44-45 calls upon the student to study every day according to his ability also Vakovakya, Purana, Narasamsī, gathas, Itihāsa, vidyās if he desired to please the gods and manes. Fourteen vidyās are generally enumerated as in Yāj. I.3 (= Matsya 53.5-6), Vayu-Purāṇa vol.1.61.78, Vrddha-Gautama (p.632) and other works, viz. four Vedas, 6 aṅgas, -Purāṇas, nyaya (logic), mīmamsa and Dharma-śāstra. Some added four more to these, viz. the Upa-Vedas of Ayur Veda, Dhanur Veda, Gandharva Veda and Arthaśāstra (which were affiliated respectively to the four Vedas) and thus the vidyās are also spoken of as 18.862 Kalidāsa in the Raghuvamśa (V.21) expressly says that Varatantu taught his pupil 14 vidyās.

The Varaha Gṛhya (6) refers to different preparations for different people, viz. a yajñika had to study mantra and Brāhmaṇa, kalpa (Vedic ritual) and mīmamsa and one could study at his option grammar, the smṛtis and vaktra (?) and the Śrotriya only committed to memory the Veda; the first two were called snātakas. Numerous grants and inscriptions testify to the provision made by kings and well-to-do donors for all branches of study.

In E.C. vol. III. T N.27 there is a grant made by the minister Perumal under the Hoysala king Vīranarasimhadeva in 1290 A. D. which provided that each teacher of the Rig Veda and the other Vedas was to receive a salary of six gāḍyanakas of gold a year and the teacher who taught the boys to read Nagara, Kannada, Tigula (Tamil) and Arya (Marathi) was to receive the same salary.

Even in early times a very extensive literature on Dharma śāstra had come into existence. The literature of the epics, of kavyas, drama, fables and romances, astrology, medicine and several brandies of speculation had grown to an enormous extent. On account of this vast literature many portions of which appealed more to the emotions and intellect than the Vedas could, the study of the Veda receded in the background and the study of subsidiary works became more popular. Therefore the smṛtis again and again raise their voice and try to impress it upon all that the first duty of a dvijāti is to study the Veda. The Maitrī Up. VII.10, though comparatively a late work, inveighs against brāhmaṇas studying non-Vedic texts. Manu (II.168) says that the dvija who, without study the Veda, bestows labour upon another lore, is quickly reduced to the status of a śūdra in this very life together with his descendants.

The Tai. Up. I.9 speaks of *svadhyāya* (study of the Veda) and *pravacana* (teaching it or daily repeating it) as *tapas* and joins these two with *rta*, *satya*, *tapas*, *dama*, *śama*, fires, agnihotra and progeny in order to emphasize that these two are the most important and it also exhorts the student on the eve of his return home not to neglect his study of the Veda.

The study of the Veda did not merely consist in learning the mantras by heart. Saṅkara in his bhasya on Vedanta-sūtra I.3.30 quotes a Brāhmaṇa text to the effect that he who teaches a mantra or officiates at a sacrifice with mantras of which he does not know the seer, the deity or the Brāhmaṇa (i.e. *viniyoga* – employment or use) falls on a stump or in a pit.

Not only was the Veda to be committed to memory (i.e. not only was there to be *pāṭha*) but one had also to understand the meaning. The Nirukta (I.18) quotes two verses which condemn in very strong language one who only commits to memory the Veda and does not know the meaning:—

'that man, who having studied the Veda, does not know its meaning, is indeed a tree, a stump, a mere carrier of a load; he alone who knows the meaning secures all happiness; his sins being shaken off by knowledge, he reaches heaven'.

Dakṣa II.34 says that the study of Veda involves five things viz. first committing to memory the Veda, then reflection over its meaning, keeping it fresh by repeating it again and again, japa (inaudibly muttering by way of prayer) and imparting it to pupils.

Manu XII.103 says:–

'those who have committed to memory the Veda are superior to those who are ignorant of it those who retain their Veda (i.e. who do not allow it to be forgotten) are superior to those who only studied it (and then forgot it), those who know its meaning are superior to those who simply retain it in memory, those who perform what the meaning of the Veda dictates are superior to those who know its meaning'.

Sabara says that the real purpose of the study of the Veda is the knowledge about religious actions that it conveys and that from the mere memorizing of the Veda, no rewards are promised by those who know the lore of the sacrifices. Aparārka (p.74) quotes a long passage from Vyasa condemning the mere memorizing of the Veda.

In spite of these excellent precepts it appears that from very ancient times the Veda was only committed to memory and most men learned in the Veda never cared to know its meaning. The Mahābhārata speaks disparagingly of the śrotriya as having an intellect dulled by the constant repetition of the anuvakas of the Veda. Further there was always an under current of the belief that the mere memorizing of the Vedic texts conferred great sanctity on the memorizer and removed all sins. As time went on these ideas became supreme and the neglect of the meaning of the Veda has gone so far that among many modern orthodox brāhmaṇas there is a belief that the meaning of the Veda cannot be known and it is futile to try to find its meaning. The Tai. Br. says that a man's sins are destroyed by the Veda and by svadhyāya. In Vas. Dh. S.27.1, Manu XL 245, Yāj. III.310 and in numerous other places it is said that sins do not affect a man who studies the Veda and that the study of Veda destroys sin.

Vas. Dh. S.28.10-15 speaks of about 35 groups of Vedic hymns (like the Aghamarsana, Rig. X.190) by silently muttering which a man is purified of his sins; but Vas. Dh. S.27.4 is careful to add that Veda study only removes such sins as are committed through ignorance or carelessness. Similar provision for removal of sins by the muttering of the Vedic mantras is made in Viṣṇu Dh. S.56.1-27, Yāj. III.307-309, Manu XI, 248-260 etc.

Not only was the Veda to be committed to memory, but when learnt it was not allowed to slip from one's mind. Āpastamba Dh. S. I.7.21.8 makes '*brahmojjha*' (i.e. abandoning what is learnt) a grave sin along with drinking wine and others. Similarly Manu XL 56 and Yāj. III.228 also treat it as equal to drinking wine or the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

Similarly Manu IV.163 forbids *nāstikya*<sup>113</sup> (holding that there is no Hereafter) and the reviling of the Veda and in XI.56 regards the latter as a grave sin equal to drinking wine, while Yāj. III.288 treats it as grave as *brahmahātya*. Gaut.21.1 mentions the *nāstika* among *patitas* along with brāhmaṇa murderer and alcoholics. Viṣṇu Dh. S.37.4 includes the reviling of Veda among upapātakas (lesser sins). Manu II.11 says that he who disrespects Veda and smṛti by relying on syllogistic reasoning is a reviler of Veda and a *nāstika* (atheist) and should be excluded from social intercourse by good men, Vas. Dh. S. XII, 41 says 'to hold the Vedas as unauthoritative, to carp at the words of the sages, and to be wavering on all points lead to one's destruction'.

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113 Even in the RigVeda reference is made to people who did not look upon Indra as a god '*nendraṃ devamamaṃsata* X.86.1. We saw above (p.26) that the dasyus are often spoken of as 'avrata, ayajña and aśraddha' (vide Rig. I.61.8, 1.75.3, VII.6.3). In the Kathopanisad (I.20 Naciketas says that people existed who thought that there was no survival of the soul after death and Yama declares that he who does not believe in the world hereafter again and again comes within his grasp (2.6). The word *nāstika* is derived by Panini in *astināstidiṣṭam matih*: IV.4.60 (the meaning being *nāsti paraloka iti matir yasya* = one who does not believe in the after-life).

## 24. Dakṣina – Student Fees.

Another striking feature of the ancient educational system was the total absence of any prior agreement about fees for teaching students. So early as Br. Up. IV.1.2 we find Yajñavalkya saying to king Janaka who offered to give him a thousand cows, an elephant and a bull (or as Saṅkara explains an elephant like bull), 'my father was of opinion that without fully teaching a pupil one should not receive any reward from him'. Gaut. (II.54-55) says that at the end of his studies the student should request the teacher to accept the wealth that he could offer or ask the teacher what should be given and after paying or doing what the teacher wants or if the teacher allowed him to go without demanding anything, the student should take the ceremonial bath (i.e. return home).

The Aśv. Gr. (III.9.4) has almost the same words. The Āpastamba Dh. S.878 (1.2.7.19-23) requires the student to offer at the end of his studies, whatever their extent may be, a dakṣina obtained from proper sources to his teacher according to his abilities and that if the teacher is in straightened circumstances, to offer him a fee even by begging from a person who is of the ugra caste or from a śūdra and that after offering a fee or doing even a very strikingly good turn to his teacher he should not boast of it to others nor should he ever dwell in his mind over it.

The ideal was that the dakṣina (fee) offered to the teacher at the end of study was simply for pleasing or propitiating the teacher and was not a complete equivalent of or compensation for the knowledge imparted. Manu (II.245-246) says that the student need not give anything to the teacher till his *snāna*; when he is about to return home, he may offer to his guru some wealth; that the gift of a field, gold, a cow, or a horse, of even shoes or an umbrella, of a seat, corn, vegetables and clothes (either singly or together) may engender pleasure in the teacher. The Chan. Up. III.11.6 eulogises brahmavidyā by declaring it to be more valuable than the gift of the whole earth together with all its wealth. The smṛtis declare that even if the guru teaches a single letter to the pupil, there is nothing in this world by giving which the pupil can get rid of the debt he owes. The Mahābhārata says (Aśvamedhika 56.21) that the teacher's satisfaction with the student's work and conduct is indeed the proper dakṣina.

Yāj. I.51 says that one should give to his teacher what he chooses to ask as dakṣina and Katyāyana quoted by Aparārka (p.76) prescribes that a brāhmaṇa pupil may give a cow, a princely one a village, a vaiśya a horse (if able to do so). It has been shown above (p.355) how kings and others made gifts of lands or provided for salaries to teachers.

One of the earliest record about university scholarships is contained in the Bahur (near Pondichery) plates of Nṛpatunga-varman in which we find a grant to a Vidyāsthāna (a seat of learning) for promotion of learning (E. I. vol.18 p.5). In E. I. vol.15 p.83 there is provision of 30 mattars of land for professors lecturing to ascetics and of eight *mattars* to teachers giving lessons to the youths in a monastery (in the times of Calukya Someśvara I at Sūdi Dharwar District in sake 981). The Peshwa distributed to learned brāhmaṇas every year dakṣina which rose to 4 lakhs of rupees a short time before 1818 A. D. It may be stated that even in the 20th century there are numerous, brāhmaṇa teachers of the Veda and the sastras who teach pupils for years without stipulating for any fee or even receiving any thing from them.

According to Manu II.141, Saṅkha-smṛti III.2 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.29.2 a teacher who teaches the Veda or the Vedaṅgas for money or for his livelihood is called an Upadhyāya. Yāj. III.235 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.37.20 and others include teaching for money (and also learning from a paid teacher) among upapatakas (lesser sins). Manu III.156, Anusasana 23.17 and Yāj. I.223 say that he who is a hired teacher (*bhṛtakādhyāpaka*) and he who learns from such a teacher are not fit to be invited at a śrāddha. But Medhātithi (on Manu II.112 and III.146), the Mit. (on Yāj. III.235), the Sm. C. and others say that a person does not become a hired teacher by accepting something from a pupil, but

that what is condemned is making a stipulation before hand that one would teach only if a certain sum or if so much were paid or delivered. In distress, Manu X.116 and Yāj. III.42 allow even such stipulations for the purpose of securing one's livelihood.

The Mahābhārata (Adi.133.2-3) shows that when Bhīṣma appointed Drona as the teacher of the Pāṇḍava and Kaurava princes he bestowed on him wealth and a well-furnished house full of corn; but there was no stipulation.

It has been shown above (p.113) that it was the king's duty to support learned men and students and to see that no brāhmaṇa died of hunger in his kingdom. So a student, when the teacher demanded a heavy fee at the end of studies, could theoretically at least approach a king for the fee. Kalidasa draws in Raghuvamsa a graphic picture how Varatantu demanded a dakṣiṇa of 14 crores from his pupil Kautsa who approached Raghu for the same and would not take more than his requirements.

Sometimes the teacher or his wife, according to legends, demanded fanciful dakinas. For example, Uttanka was asked by his teacher's wife, when he urged her to take something, to bring the ear-rings of the queen of the reigning king (vide Adiparva chap.3 and Aśvamedhika-parva 56).

## 25. Corporal Punishment

It would be interesting to see how far corporal punishment of pupils was allowed in ancient India. Gaut.(II.48-50) lays down that pupils are to be regulated (ordinarily) without beating; but if it is not possible to control the pupil (by words &) then he may be struck with a slender rope or with a split bamboo; that if the teacher struck (the pupil) in any other way (e.g. with the hand etc) the teacher should be punished by the king.

The Āpastamba Dh. S. I.2.8.29-30 calls upon the teacher to censure (by words) a pupil when he commits a fault and to employ according to the gravity of the offence any one or more of the following punishments till the pupil desists, viz. threatening (the pupil), refusing to give him food, drenching him in cold water and not allowing him to come in his presence.

The Mahābhāṣya (vol. I. p.41) refers to the fact that when a pupil pronounced a wrong accent (e.g. anudātta in place of udātta) the upadhyāya slapped him (on the back probably).

Manu VIII.299-300, Viṣṇu Dh. S.71.81-82, Nārada (abhyūpetyā śuśrusa, verses 13-14) follow Gautama as to corporal punishment, but add that beating should be on the back only and never on the head nor on the chest, while Nārada further rules that the beating should not be excessive. Manu (VIII.300) says that the punishment in case of violation of these rules by the teacher is that for a thief and (VIII.299) extends the same rules to the son and the wife. Manu II.159 recommends that in imparting instruction about the right path of conduct, one should use sweet persuasive (not high-toned) words.

## 26. Education of Non-Brāhmins

A few words must now be said about the education of kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras. According to Gaut. XI.3 a king should be well-grounded in the three Vedas and in Anvīkṣiki (i.e. metaphysics) and in XI.19 Gaut. says that the king has to rely for carrying out his duties on the Veda, the Dharma-śāstras, the subsidiary lores of the Veda, the upa-Vedas and Purāṇas. Manu VII.43 and Yāj. I.311 say that a king should be proficient in the three Vedas, in metaphysics, in dandanīti (the art of government and statecraft) and in varta (economic life and production of wealth). These directions were probably meant to be an ideal and very few kings ever went through all this. If any conclusions are to be drawn from the stories in the Mahābhārata, we may say that princes at least hardly ever went to a guru's home, but teachers were engaged to teach them (as Drona was engaged by Bhīṣma) and they became proficient in military skill. Alberuni (tr. by Sachau 1888, vol. I p.125)

says that brāhmaṇas taught the Veda to kṣatriyas, but he is probably drawing only on the rules given in the smṛtis. Kings left ecclesiastical matters to their purohita and were always to rely on him for advice. Gaut. XI.12-13 and Āpastamba Dh. S. II.5.10.16 require that the purohita was to be a learned man of good birth, endowed with polished speech, a fine form, middle age and high character and that he was to be well versed in Dharma and artha. Aśv. Gr. III.12 describes how the purohita is to prepare the king for battle. Kaut. in his Arthasastra after stating several views gives his own opinion that the vidyās for a prince are four (the same as those of Manu and Yāj. above), that after the caula is performed the prince should learn the alphabet and arithmetic and when upanayana is performed he should learn the four vidyās till he is 16 years old and may then marry (I.5), that in the first part of the day he should have instruction in elephant riding and horse riding, riding in chariots and in arms and the latter part of the day he should devote to hearing Purāṇas, stories, Dharma-śāstra and artha-sastra (politics).

As to the education of kṣatriyas in general we have hardly any directions in the Dharma śāstras. But that there were several learned kṣatriyas and vaiśyas who sometimes became teachers cannot be denied. Kumarila-Bhaṭṭa says (on Jaimini I.2.2) that adhyāpana is not a special characteristic for recognising that a man is a brāhmaṇa, since certain kṣatriyas and vaiśyas who have given up the observation of the caste rules also do so.

About the education of vaiśyas there is still less material. Manu X.1 lays down generally that the three varṇas (including vaiśyas) are to learn the Veda, (X.79) that trade, cattle rearing and agriculture are the means of the vaiśya's livelihood and that (IX.328-332) the vaiśya should never think of giving up cattle rearing, that he should know the prices of jewels, coral and pearls, of metals and clothes, of perfumes and salt, the sowing of seed, the qualities and defects of soils, measures and weights, the different grades of qualities of goods, the profit and loss in trade, the rates of pay for servants, various alphabets and the places where saleable articles are produced or manufactured.

Yāj. II.184, Nārada (abhyupetyāśuśruṣā 16-20) indicates that boys were apprenticed with master artisans to learn several śilpās (crafts) like preparing ornaments of gold or for learning dancing, singing etc. An apprentice was to stipulate how long he would stay with the master craftsman, that even if he learnt the craft earlier than the stipulated time he was still to stay with the teacher and work for him till the period was over, that the teacher was to give food and lodging to the apprentice and to appropriate the proceeds from his work, that if the apprentice left the teacher before the time fixed even though the teacher was ready to teach him, he was to be compelled to stay with the teacher and to be imprisoned or sentenced to whipping by the king if he would not stay.

As for the education of the śūdra, there are hardly any rules in the Dharma-sastras. He gradually, as stated above (at pp.120-121), rose in status and was allowed to engage in crafts and agriculture and so the same rules might have been applied to him as to vaiśya apprentices. The śūdra could listen to the recitation of the Mahābhārata and the purānas as shown above (at pp.155-156).

## 27. Education of Women.

It appears that in very ancient times the status of Indian women as to education was much higher than in medieval and modern times in India. Several women are stated to have been the composers of Vedic hymns; e.g. Rig. V.28 is ascribed to Viśvavārā of the Atrī family; Rig. VIII.91 to Apalā of the same family and Rig. X.39 to Ghosa Kākṣivati. The Br. Up. II.4.1. shows that Maitreyī, one of the two wives of Yājñavalkya, the great philosopher of ancient India, was herself a very earnest seeker after true knowledge and she prayed to Yājñavalkya that he should impart to her such knowledge as would make her immortal. In the same Upanisad (III.6 and 8) we find that among the

several interlocutors in the court of Janaka, king of Videha, who propounded several questions for solution before Yājñavalkya, Gargī Vacaknavī occupies a very prominent position. She pursued Yājñavalkya with subtle and searching questions till ultimately he was forced to warn her not to probe too much into the nature of the First Principle which was beyond mere human reason and logical questioning or otherwise she might die by the fall of her head. Then she desisted, but her unquenchable thirst for philosophical knowledge again swelled up and she put two questions to Yājñavalkya hoping to confound him. In the same Up. (Br. Up. VI.4.17) there is a rite prescribed for one who desires to have a learned daughter. As in the very preceding sentence a prescription is given for one desirous of having a son who would master the three Vedas, it naturally follows that the learning of the daughter must refer to the same topic. But Śaṅkara, in whose day women were debarred from learning the Vedas, could not but explain the word 'pandita' as referring to proficiency in domestic work. It has been shown above (p.294) that upanayana and Veda study were allowed to women by Harīta.

In the daily ṛṣi-tarpaṇa (Aśv. Gr. III.4) among a host of sages water is offered to three women as teachers viz. Gargī Vacaknavī, Vadava Pratitheyī and Sulabha Maitreyī. The very fact that the Kasika on Panini IV.1.59 and III.3.21 teaches the formation of ācaryā and upadhyāyā as meaning a woman who is herself a teacher (and not merely the wife of a teacher) establishes that the ancient grammarians were familiar with women teachers. Patañjali teaches how and why a brāhmaṇa woman is called Aipisalā (one who studies the grammar of Aṭṭisali) and Kāśakṛtsna (one who studies the mīmamsā work of Kakakṛtsna). He also states the formation of the appellation 'Audameghaḥ' (meaning the pupils of a woman teacher called Audameghya).

Gobhila Gr. II.1.19-20 prescribes that when the bride pushes forward with her foot a mat the bridegroom should make her repeat the mantra:– 'may the way which my husband goes by be also assigned to me' and that if she does not repeat this mantra (through bashfulness etc.) he should repeat it substituting the words 'to her' for 'to me'. In the Kāthaka Gr. 25.23 it is said that the Anuvaka beginning with '*sarasvati predam-ava*' (of 21 verses) was to be recited both by the bride and the bridegroom according to some teachers. All this shows that women could recite Vedic mantras in the sūtra period.

The Kāma-sūtra of Vatsyayana, a remarkable though in some places a filthy work, prescribes that women should study the Kāma-sūtra and its subsidiary angas (viz, the 64 kalas such as singing, dancing, painting etc.) before they attain youth (i.e. in their father's house) and after marriage with the husband's consent. In the 64 kalas enumerated in that work (I.3.16) are included *prahelikas* (riddles of words), *pustakavacana* (chanting from books), *kāvya-samasyā-Purāṇa* (composing a suitable portion of a verse to fit in with a portion given), knowledge of lexicons and metres etc. We read in the epics and the dramas like the Sakuntala of women writing messages to their lovers. In the Mālātīmadhava Bhavabhūti tells his readers that the fathers of the hero and the heroine studied in their youth together with Kāmandakī at the feet of the same master. From anthologies like Rajaśekhara's Sakti-muktāvali we learn that there were poetesses like Vijjā Sīta etc. All these facts tend to indicate that literary attainments among women were not totally unheard of in ancient India.



But gradually the position of women became worse and worse. In the Dharma Sūtras and Manu, woman is assigned a position of dependence and even women of higher classes came to be looked upon as equal to śūdras so far as Vedic study and several other matters were concerned. Gaut.18.1, Vas. Dh. S. VI. li Baud. Dh. S. II.2, 45 and Manu IX, 3 say that women have no independence and in all stages depend upon men. We have seen also that all the saṃskāras (except marriage) were performed in the case of girls without Vedic mantras. Though according to the Purva-mīmamsa the husband and wife were to perform Vedic sacrifices together (Jaimini VI.1.17-21) still women were only associated with their husbands and all the actions to be done by the sacrificer (Yājamana) were to be done only by the husband except where the texts expressly requested the wife to do certain things such as examining the ājya or repeat certain mantras (VI.1.24). Jaimini says that the husband and wife were not equal and Sabara explains that the Yājamana is a male and is learned, while the patnī is a woman and has no *vidyā*.

Medhātithi on Manu II.49 raises the interesting question why *brahmacārins* when begging for alms used a Sanskrit formula (*bhavati bhikṣām dehi*) which language ladies do not know. He replies that women can understand that vernacular words which they use being similar to Sanskrit words must be derived from them and that these few well known Sanskrit words they can easily grasp. Besides even in Vedic times there was a tendency as in many other countries to make sarcastic references to women. The Rig Veda says:—

"Even Indra said 'the mind of woman cannot be controlled; and also her intellect (or power) is slight"; (VIII.33.17)

'There is no truth in the friendship of women; they have the hearts of hyaenas'. Rig. X.95.15

The Sat.Br. XIV.1.1.3 exhorts a person studying the Madhu-vidyā not to look at 'woman, Śūdra, the dog and the black bird that are all untruth'. In Manu II 213-214, Anuśāsana-parva chap.19.91-94, chap. 38 and 39 there is severe condemnation of woman. Such ideas, and ideas about pollution and the early marriage of girls are probably responsible for the great lack of literacy among women in medieval and modern times.

As literary education among women was in a languishing state or almost nil, the question of co-education hardly arises. There are no doubt faint indications that when women could at all devote themselves to learning, they must have been taught with male pupils. Poets like Bhavabhūti (in the Mālātī madhava) envisage a state of society in which a woman (like Kāmandakī) learnt at the feet of the same master along with male students (like Bhurivasu and Devarata, who later on became ministers of states).

## 28. Institutes of Learning

The house of the ācārya where the student learnt was called *ācārya-kula*.<sup>114</sup> The teacher who presided over a large establishment of pupils was called *kulapati* (e.g. Kanva is so referred to in the Sakuntala, vide note 134 above).

It is outside the scope of this work to show from the numerous inscriptions and copper-plate grants that have been published so far, how ancient kings and rich private persons made substantial grants to famous schools, colleges and universities. There were famous universities at Takṣasila (modern Taxila), Valabhi, Benares, Nalanda, Vikramasila &c. For an account of the university of Nalanda in the 7th century reference may be made to the accounts given by the two Chinese travellers Yuan Chwang (vide Watters vol. II. pp.109, 246) and Itsing ('Records of the Buddhist Religion' by Dr. Takakusu pp.154, 177 &c.). Most of those seats of learning were endowed. One of the earliest of

<sup>114</sup> vide Chan, Up. II.23.2, IV.5.1., IV.9.1, VIII.15.1

such grants is that of the Pallava Nṛpatunga-varman (Bahur Plates, E.1.18 p.5) whereby three villages were bestowed as a source of revenue (vidyābhoga) for the promotion of learning to the residents of a seat of learning (vidyāsthana, a college) at Vagur. The Kāvya mīmāṃsā of Rājasekhara (in chap.10) calls upon the king to hold assemblies of poets and learned men, to arrange for their examination and to distribute rewards to them in the manner of such ancient kings as Vasudeva, Satavahana, Śūdraka, Sahasanka. It also says that in Ujjayinī such poets as Kalidāsa, Merrtha, Bharavi, Haricandra were examined and in Pataliputra (modern Patna) such famous sastrakāras as Panini, Vyadī, Vararuci, Patañjali, Varsa, Upavarsa, and Pingala were examined.

The salient features of the educational system outlined in the Dharma śāstras are the high and honourable position assigned to the teacher, the close personal contact of the pupil with the teacher and individual attention, the pupil's stay with the teacher as a member of his family, oral instruction and the absence of books, stern discipline and control of emotions and the will, cheapness (as no fees were stipulated for). The Indian system compares most favourably with any system of education of the West, whether in Greece or Rome or any other country. It gave to the students a more or less literary education, particularly of the Vedic literature and of philosophy, grammar and other subjects ancillary thereto, The principal effort was directed towards the conservation of the ancient literature rather than to the creation of fresh literature. In these respects it was similar to the Grammar Schools of England and to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge as they were till about the middle of the 19th century. The defects of the Indian system were that it was too literary, there was too much memorizing, boys under it had hardly any instruction in useful manual arts and crafts, the studies were not brought in contact with practical life. The discipline was rigorous and joyless. Many of these defects were due to the exigencies of the caste system which assigned particular avocations to particular castes. We cannot and should not compare the system with the systems of education prevalent in the 20th century, when several subjects such as literature, music and the fine arts, handicrafts, mathematics, science, history and geography are taught in the schools to all boys and when it has been recognised that education is a prime concern of the State.

### 29. The four Veda-vratas:

Among the saṃskāras enumerated by Gautama there are four *Veda-vratas* (Gaut. VIII.15). These four are also included in the 16 saṃskāras by several smṛtis. Their names and procedure differ considerably in the several Gṛhya-sūtras. Some Gṛhya-sūtras like Par. do not describe them. A brief reference will be made to them here.

The Aśv. Gr. I.22.20 90 says in general words that in the vratas all the ceremonies beginning from shaving the head up to *paridāna* (i.e. Aśv. Gr. L 19.8 to I.20.7) that are performed at the upanayana are repeated each time with each vrata. And the four vratas according to the Aśvalayana smṛti (in verse) were Mahānamnī vrata, Mahāvratā (Ait. Ar. I. and V), Upanisad vrata and Godāna. Each vrata is to be performed for a year. Vide Laghu Aśvalayana 11th section (Anan. Ed).

The San. Gr. (II.11-12) describes, after the student is instructed in the sacred Gāyatrī, four vratas (observances) called Sukriya (which precedes the study of the main part of the Rig Veda), the *Sakvara*, *Vratika* and *Aupaniṣāda* vratas (which three precede the study of the different sections of the Aitareya Aranyaka). The observance of the first of these (viz. Sukriya) lasted for three days or twelve days or one year or as long as the teacher liked and the observances of the other three were to be kept for one year each.<sup>115</sup> At the beginning of each of these three vratas there is a separate upanayana, followed by a ceremony called Uddikṣaṇika (giving up the preparatory observances) and then the vrata is to be performed for one year. The Aranyaka is to be studied in the forest out of the village.

<sup>115</sup> San. Gr. II.11.10-12, S, B, E. vol.29 p.77

Manu II.174 prescribes that at the time of the beginning of each of these vratas the student had to put on a new deer skin, a new Yājñopavīta and a new girdle. The Gobhila Gṛhya III 1.26-31 (which is connected with the Sama Veda) mentions the vratas as Godanika, Vratika, Aditya, Aupaniṣāda, Jyestha-samika, each lasting for one year. It adds that some do not observe the Aditya-vrata. The godāna vrata is connected by the Gobhīliya with the saṃskāra of godāna (to be described below) and it prescribes certain observances for it such as removing all hair on the head, chin and lips; avoiding false-hood, anger, sexual intercourse, perfumes, dancing and singing, collyrium, honey and meat; not wearing shoes in the village. It also prescribes that wearing the girdle, begging for food, carrying a staff, daily bath, offering a fuel-stick, and clasping the teacher's feet in the morning are common to all vratas. The Godānika enabled the student to study the Pūrvārcika of the Sama Veda (i.e. the collection of verses sacred to Agni, Indra and Soma Pavamana). The Vratika was introductory to the study of the Aranyaka (excluding Sukriya sections); the Aditya vrata to the study of the Sukriya sections; the Aupaniṣāda-vrata to the study of the Upanisad-brāhmaṇa; the Jyestha-samika to the study of the Ajya-dohas.

Those who observe the Adityavrata wore one garment, did not allow anything to come between them and the sun (except trees and the roofs of houses) and did not descend into water more than knee-deep. The Sakvara vrata was kept for one year, or for three or six or nine. Those who observe this vrata study the Sakvarī or Mahānatnī verses. Vartika on Panini V.1.94. (*tadasya brahmacāryam*) mentions the Mahānamnīs and teaches the derivation of Mahānamnikam (as the period of brahmacārya devoted to the vrata of the Mahānamnīs). There were certain peculiar observances for this such as bathing thrice a day (Gobhila III.2.7-46, Kh. Gr. II.5.23 ff.), wearing dark clothes, partaking of dark food, standing by day, sitting by night, not seeking shelter when it is raining, not crossing a river without bathing in it (the virtue of the Mahānamnīs is centred in water). After the student has kept his vow for one-third of the time prescribed the teacher is to sing to the student the first stotriya of the Mahānamnīs (viz. the three mantras, *vidā māghavan, abhistvam, evāhi śakro*) and in the same way the two other stotriyas (each consisting of three mantras). They are to be sung to the student who has fasted, has closed his eyes, has dipped his hand in a brass vessel full of water in which all sorts of herbs are thrown and whose eyes are veiled with a new piece of cloth, the student is to keep silent and abstain from food for one day and night (or three), to stand in the forest till sunset (and return to the village in the night), should sacrifice with Mahāvyahtis; look at fire, clarified butter, the sun, a brāhmaṇa, a bull, food, water and curds; then salute the teacher, break his silence and give a fee to the teacher and offer a mess of cooked food to Indra and give a dinner to the teacher and all co-students.

The same rules apply to the Jyeṣṭhasamika vrata (introductory to the study of the three ājyadohas viz. *'murdhanam divah, tvam viśve, nabhim Yājñanam*). The student who undergoes this has to observe certain rules throughout his life viz. he cannot marry or have sexual intercourse with a śūdra woman, cannot eat bird's flesh, he should not restrict himself to one kind of corn or one country and should always wear two garments, should bathe in water drawn with a vessel and should not eat in an earthen pot or drink water from it. The Baud. Gr. III.2.4 ff says that there are vratas of one year each which precede the study of certain brāhmaṇa texts (of the Kṛsna Yajur Veda); they are *hotarah, sukriyas, upaniṣādah, godānam* and *sammitam* and it describes them in detail.

The Samskāra-kaustubha (pp.571-580) gives in some detail the procedure of the Mahā-namnī-vrata, Mahā-vrata, Upanisad-vrata and Godāna-vrata. It states that the Mahānamnī-vrata is performed in the 13th year from birth and Godāna-vrata in the 16th. It appears, however, that these vratas gradually fell into desuetude and medieval writers often pass them over altogether or barely mention them and emphasize only the general observances of *brahmacārins* viz. celibacy, begging for food, avoiding honey, wine and singing etc. For example, the Smṛtyarthasara 905 (p.6) refers to Savitrī-vrata, then the vrata for Vedic study and then the Aranyaka vratas. The Mit. on Yāj. I.52

(*Vedam vratani va param nīva*) explains '*vratam*' as simply the duties of the student already enumerated by Yāj. (among which the specific vratas of Mahānaranī etc. do not figure). If the student failed in observing the specific vratas, he had to perform piayaścitta by undergoing the prajāpatya penance thrice or six times or twelve times. If the brahmacārī is guilty of failing in his daily duties of observing sauca and ācamana, of the performance of sandhyā prayer, of using darbhas, of begging for food, of offering fuel stick to fire, of avoiding the touch of sūdras and the like, of wearing the cloth (for covering his private parts), the loin thread, the yajñopavīta, the girdle and the staff and deerskin, of not sleeping by day, of not holding an umbrella over his head or of not wear shoes, or not putting on garlands, of avoiding luxurious bath, sandal paste, collyrium, of not sporting in water, of avoiding gambling, and addiction to dancing, singing and music, of not engaging in conversation with heretics, he had to undergo the penance of three krcchras (according to Baudhāyana) and to perform a homa with the vyahrtis separately and together (i.e. four oblations of clarified butter were to be offered). If he was guilty of other more serious lapses he had to undergo heavier penance. The most reprehensible act in a *brahmacārin* was to have sexual intercourse with a woman. The Tai. Ar. II.18 speaks of the prayaścitta for such a *brahmacārin* who is called avakīrṇin. Gaut.25.1-2 quotes the Tai. Ar. " they (the sages) m say ' in how many (deities) the avakīrṇin enters; (the answer is) he enters the Maruts with his breath, Indra with his strength, Brhaspati with his spiritual eminence and fire with the rest (of his senses) ' " and Gautama further provides that he should kindle fire at midnight on a new moon day and then offer two ajya oblations by way of penance with the two mantras '*kāmava*' and '*Kāmavadrugdhosmi*' etc., place a fuel stick on fire, sprinkle water round the fire, offer the yajñavastu oblation (for which see Gobhila Gr. I.8.26-29) and standing near the fire should worship fire thrice with the verse '*sam ma sincantu*'. Jaimini 908 (VI.8.22) prescribes that ordinary (laukika) fire is to be used for the pasu to be sacrificed (viz. ass to Nirrti, which is symbolic of the stupid lapse the student is guilty of) and Sabara quotes a Vedic passage that 'a *brahmacārin* who has become avakīrṇin should sacrifice an ass to Nirrti '.

Āpastamba Dh. S. L 9.26.8, Vas.23.1-3, Manu XI.118-121, Yāj. III.280 contain similar provisions (Vasiṣṭha allowing in the absence of an ass oblations of boiled rice with the mantras mentioned by Gautama). Manu XI. 122-123 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.28.49-50 prescribe that the brahmacārī so guilty should for one year wear the skin of the ass, should beg for food at seven houses announcing to them his lapse, should take food only once, should bathe thrice and then only he becomes pure. Manu II.187 (= Viṣṇu Dh. S.28.52) prescribes similar penance for a brahmacārī who without being ill gives up begging for food and offering fuel to fire continuously for seven days. Prayaścitta is prescribed for loss of yajñopavīta or its being torn, or its being polluted by impure things like blood etc. It consists in offering homa and wearing a new one. Vide Samskāra-ratna-mālā pp.365-367 for details.

### 30. Naisthika brahmacārin (perpetual student).

*brahmacārins* were of two kinds, *upakurvana* (the student who offered some return to the teacher, vide Manu II.245, for the word *upakurvīta*) and the *naisthika* (the student who remains so till his death). These two names occur in Harīta Dh. S., Dakṣa I.7 and in several smṛtis. The word '*naisthika*' occurs in Viṣṇu Dh.S.28.46, Yāj.I.49, Veda-Vyasa I.41. The idea of perpetual studentship is very ancient. In the Chāṇḍogya Up. II.23.1 we read that the third branch of Dharma is the (status of a) student who stays with his teacher's family and who wears out his body to the end in the family of the teacher.

Gaut. III.4-8, Āpastamba Dh. S, L 1.4.29, Harīta Dh. S., Vas. VII.4-6, Manu II.243, 244, 247-249, and Yāj. I.49-50 say that if the student likes he may stay with his teacher till life lasts and should serve his guru and in the rest of the time repeat the Veda; that if the teacher be dead he may stay

with and serve the teacher's son if he is worthy or the teacher's wife or he may worship the fire kindled by his deceased guru; he should thus wear out his body; he obtains the highest worlds of bliss and is not born again. He has to perform throughout his life the duties of offering fuel sticks, Veda study, begging for food, sleeping on the ground (not on a bed), and of self-restraint (Brhaspati quoted in Sm. C. I. p.62). According to Viṣṇu quoted in Aparārka (p.72) and the Sm. C.918 (I. p.63) quoting the Samgraha persons who are dwarfs, misshapen, congenitally blind, impotent, cripples and those suffering from incurable diseases should become perpetual students, as they are not entitled to perform the Vedic rites and are not entitled to inherit. We saw above that Kumarila-Bhaṭṭa accepted this view (vide note 852a). But this does not mean that the blind and other partially handicapped people could not marry at all. They could marry if they had sufficient wealth. For example, Dhrtarastra, though congenitally blind, married and had sons. Aparārka (p.72), the Sm. C., the Madanapārijāta (p. III), the Par. M. (I.2. p.51 ff) and others say that perpetual student-hood is not restricted only to the blind and the cripple, but it may be resorted to by even able-bodied men at their choice (vide Manu II.243-44).

Atrī (VIII.16) says that if a person undertakes to be a perpetual student, but falls from that ideal, there is no prayaścitta for that lapse. Some interpret this as applying to one who becomes a samnyasin and then gives up that mode of life; while others like the Samskāra-prakasa (p.564) interpret it as meaning that the prayaścitta is double of what the *upakurvana* would have to undergo.

### 31. Patita-sāvitṛika

These are those for whom there has been no upanayana and therefore no instruction in Gāyatrī and who are therefore sinful and outside the pale of Aryan society. The Gṛhya and Dharma sūtras are agreed that the time for upanayana has not passed till the 16th, 22nd and the 24th year in the case of brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas respectively, but that after these years are past without upanayana taking place they become incompetent thereafter for learning the Savitrī (the sacred Gāyatrī verse).<sup>116</sup> Such persons are then called *patita-sāvitṛika* or *sāvitṛi-patita* and also *vrātya* (Manu II.39 and Yāj. I.38 call them so). These works also declare that the consequences of this are that no upanayana is to be thereafter performed for them, they are not to be taught the Veda, nor is any one to officiate at their sacrifices and there is to be no social intercourse with them (i.e. no marriage takes place with them).

Āpastamba Dh. S. (1.1.1.24-27) prescribes that after the 16th or 24th year, the person should undergo the rules of student-hood two months just as those who meant to study the three Vedas and whose upanayana has been performed observe (viz. begging for food etc.), then his upanayana should be performed, then for one year he should bathe (thrice if possible) every day and then he should be taught the Veda. This is a somewhat easy penance. But others prescribe heavier penalties. Vas. Dh. S. XI.76-79 and the Vaik. smārta II.3 prescribe that one who is *patita-sāvitṛika* should either perform the Uddalaka vrata or should take a bath along with the performer of an Aśvamedha sacrifice or should perform the Vrātyastoma sacrifice. Both Vasiṣṭha and the Vaik. smārta explain that the Uddālaka vrata consists in subsisting on barley gruel for two months, for one month on milk, for half a month on *amikṣā* (the whey that arises by pouring curds in hot milk), for eight days on ghee, for six days on alms obtained without begging, for three days on water and in observing a total fast for one whole day. The Sm.C. (I. p.28) says that this vrata is so called because it was promulgated by Uddālaka.

Manu XI. 191 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.54.26 prescribe a mild praysacitta for *patita-sāvitṛika*, viz. three

116 Vide Aśv. Gr. I.19, 5-7, Baud. gr t III.13.5-6, Āp. Dh. S.1.1.1.22, Vas. XL 71-75, Manu II.38-39, Yāj. I.37-38.

*prajāpatya* penances<sup>117</sup>; while Yāj. I.38, Baud. Gr. III.13.7, Veda-Vyasa I.21 and several others prescribe only the Vratyastoma for those who are *patita-sāvitṛika*. Viśvarupa (on Yāj. III.262) tries to reconcile these contradictions by saying that the easy penance prescribed by Manu applies to a brāhmaṇa whose upanayana is not performed before the 16th year, but whose upanayana is sought to be performed before the 22nd year, while the Vratyastoma is to be performed for him whose upanayana is not performed for forty-eight years from the first prescribed period (viz. 8th year, 11th year or 12<sup>th</sup>). The Mit. on Yāj. III.262 also tries to introduce vyavasthā (order) in the contradictory dicta of the smṛtis. According to Gaut.21.11, Yāj. III.234 and others *vrātyatā* (being *patita-sāvitṛika*) is only an *upapātaka* and Manu XI.117 prescribes an easy penance for all *upapātakas*.

Āpastamba Dh. S.918 says:—

'If a person's father and grandfather also had not the upanayana performed for them, then they (i.e. the three generations) are called slayers of brahma (holy prayers or lore); people should have no intercourse with them, should not take their food nor should enter into marriage alliances with them; but if they desire then penance should be administered to them'.

It then prescribes that they have to perform the penance (observing rules of student-hood) one year for each generation (that had not the upanayana performed), then there is upanayana and then they have to bathe (thrice or once) every day for a year with certain mantras viz. the seven *Pāvamānī* verses beginning with '*yad anti yacca dūrake*' (Rig. IX.67.21-27), with the Yajus *pavitra* (Tai. S. I.2.1. i=Rig. X.17.10), with the *sāmapavitra* and with the mantra called *Angirasa* (Rig. IV.40.5) or one may pour water only with the vyahrtis. After all this is done, one may be taught the Veda.

Āpastamba Dh. S. goes further (I.1.2.5-10) and says:—

'If the generations beginning with the great-grand father had not the upanayana performed for them, they are called the cemetery and that if there is desire they may observe the rules of student-hood for twelve years, then upanayana may be performed and then the person so desirous of upanayana will have to bathe with the Pāvamānī and other verses (as stated above), then instruction in the duties of the householder may be imparted to him (i.e. to the 4<sup>th</sup>); he cannot, however, be taught the Veda; but his son may have the saṃskāra performed as in the case of one who is him self *patita-sāvitṛika* and then his son will be one like other arya's'.

Haradatta remarks that Āpastamba does not declare the prayaścitta for him whose great-grandfather's father also was without upanayana, but that those who know the Dharma Śāstra should find out a proper prayaścitta even in such cases. It is clear that Āpastamba contemplates cases where for three generations there had been no upanayana and the fourth generation also had not the upanayana performed at the right time and desired to have it performed for him.

Par. gives a brief rule — 'when three generations are *patita-sāvitṛika*, their offspring (i.e. the fourth generation) is excluded from the sacrament of upanayana and he cannot be taught the Veda.' So Par. is more restrictive than Āpastamba.

There is a famous historical example of the application of these rules. Gāgābhaṭṭa, a profound scholar of Benares, officiated at the coronation of Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Empire, in 1674 and performed the upanayana of Shivaji before the coronation, when Shivaji was about 45 years old and had even two sons. Some eminent scholars like the late Mr. Justice Telang<sup>118</sup> have

117 The *prajāpatya* vrata lasts for 12 days and consists in taking only one morning meal for 3 days, only one meal in the evening for three days, subsisting on alms obtained without begging for three days and total fast for three days.

118 In 'Gleanings from Maratha Chronicles' appended to the late Mr. Justice Ranade's 'Rise of the Maratha Power', Mr. Justice Telang observes (p.286) 'they had also to strain a point, when as a preliminary to the installation, the thread ceremony essential for a ksatriya was performed on Shivaji at a time when he was forty-six or fifty years old and had already had two sons, an irregularity which also was, we are told, expressly assented to by all the brahmanas and pandits. How the brahmanas and pandits worked their way to this decision, none of our authorities state'; and further on (p.288) he casts undeserved aspersions — 'taking

found fault with GagaBhaṭṭa and the other brāhmaṇas of that time; but these scholars are wrong and GagaBhaṭṭa had behind him weighty and ancient authorities like Āpastamba, Pāraskara, Viśvarupa and Haradatta as shown above. The Vaik. sūtra (II.37) adds that in the case of the man who is himself *patita-sāvitrīka* the saṃskāras (from Garbhadhāna) have to be again performed (with Vedic mantras) and then the upanayana is performed.

One very important question that exercised the minds of some writers in medieval times was whether kṣatriyas and vaiśyas existed in the kali age. In some of the Purāṇas it is said in a prophetic vein that Mahāpadma Nanda will destroy the kṣatriyas and thereafter rulers will be of the śūdra caste. For example, the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa IV.23.4-5 says:—

'Mahāpadma Nanda, the son of Mahānandī, born of a śūdra woman would be extremely greedy (of power) and will destroy the whole kṣatriya race as if he were another Parasurama; thereafter śūdras will be kings'.

The Matsya 272.18-19 and the Bhagavata-Purāṇa XII.1.6-9 declare the same prophecies. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa IV.24.44 remarks that Devapi, descendant of Puru, and Manu, descendant of Ikṣvaku, stay in Kalapagrama, are endowed with great yogic powers, will revive the kṣatriya race when the kṛta age will start again after the present kali age comes to an end and that some kṣatriyas exist on the earth like seed even in the kali age.

Relying on such passages some medieval writers stated that there were no kṣatriyas in their times. The Suddhi-tattva of Raghunandana (p.268) after quoting the Viṣṇu Purāṇa IV.23.4 and Manu X.43 declares that kṣatriyas existed till Mahānandī, that the so-called kṣatriyas of his day were śūdras and that similarly there were no vaiśyas also. In the Śūdra-Kāmālākara occurs this verse:—

'The *varṇas* are brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras, the first three being twice-born; all these exist in the several yugas; but in the kali age only the first and the last remain'.

NageśaBhaṭṭa (first half of 18th century 92Sb) in his Vrātyata-prayaścitta-nirnaya (Chaukhamba Series) examines all the relevant Purana passages and states as his conclusion that real kṣatriyas do not exist and so those, in whose families no upanayana had been performed for ten or twenty generations, are not kṣatriyas even though they rule over kingdoms and no upanayana can be performed for such kings. It must be stated that such views, though held by some rigidly orthodox writers of extreme views, were not shared by most writers. All the smṛtis speak of the duties of the four *varṇas* even in the kali age.

Parāśara-smṛti which is said to be the smṛti *par excellence* for the kali age (as stated in I.24) does so. Almost all nibandhakāras (authors of digests and commentaries) discuss the privileges and duties of all *varṇas*. The author of the Mitakṣara, who is rightly described as the best of all nibandhakāras, nowhere says that kṣatriyas do not exist in the kali age. Numerous kings claimed to be descended from the Sun and the Moon. Hemadrī in his Catur-varga-cintamani states that his

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the whole evidence together it looks like a case of a more or less deliberate manipulation of facts and religious rites in aid of a foregone conclusion adopted for a purely political purpose 1. Mr. Justice Telang writes rather like a judge than like a scholar or a historian. The judge has to give a decision on the evidence adduced by the parties before him; it is no part of his business to collect evidence for himself. But the role of a historian is entirely different. He must not only try to read all evidence available till the time he writes but he must himself ferret out all possible evidence and make searches in places where evidence is likely to be found. Above all he must be cautious in his condemnations of persons long dead on the strength of the meagre evidence read by him. Mr. Telang wrote the paper above referred to in 1892, but long before that Pāraskara (in 1886) and Apastamba (in 1885) had been translated and published in 'the Sacred Books of the East' series. But he, though a great judge and also a great Sanskrit scholar, nowhere shows that he cared to see whether sastric rules allowed the upanayana of a man himself at any age whatever (after some penance). If he had seen those rules he would not have unjustly taken to task pandits that flourished two hundred years before him and attributed irregular motives to them. It does not appear that he made any search in the archives of the Udaipur Durbar to see how Shivaji traced his descent from the Sisodia clan, nor does it appear that he even went to Mudhol and other places in Mahārāstra where ancient Maratha families have been holding sway for centuries. The papers recently published from the records of the Mudhol State amply establish Shivaji's claim to a Rajput lineage.

patron was a scion of Soma-vamsa (vide H. Dh. vol. I p.356 for quotations). The princes of Rajputana and Central India claimed to have sprung from the Agnikunda on Mount Abu, viz. of the four clans of Chohan, Parmar (or Paramāra), Solanki (or Cālukya), Paḍihar (or Pratīhāra).<sup>119</sup>

This question is now largely of academic interest. Whether a person is a śūdra or a member of the regenerate classes assumes great importance in adoption, inheritance and succession. Therefore the question, whether kṣatriyas exist in modern times, came before the British Indian courts over a hundred years ago. In *Chouturya Run Murdun Syn v. Sahub Purhulad Syn* 7 Moore's Indian Appeals 18 this question was argued and the Privy Council citing the authorities on both sides set the question at rest by remarking (p, 46):—

‘Their Lordships have nevertheless no doubt that the existence of the Khatrī caste as one of the regenerate tribes is fully recognised throughout India and also that Rajputs in central India ..... are considered to be of that class ..... The courts in all cases assume that the four great classes remain’.

The only question that is now permissible is whether a particular caste belongs to the regenerate classes or to the Śūdra class. On this the courts often differ. In *Mahārāja of Kolhapur v. Sundaram Ayyar* 48 Mad.1— it was held (in an exhaustive judgement extending over 229 pages) that the Tanjore Maratha princes descended from Venkaji, the step-brother of the founder of the Maratha Empire, were Śūdras and not kṣatriyas. The learned judges (at p.51) quote Telang's dictum criticized by me above (note 923), but refrain from expressing any decided opinion about the claim of Shivaji to be of kṣatriya descent.

In *Subrao v Radha* 52 Bom, 497 it was held after a careful examination of authorities that the Marathas of Mahārasra are sub-divided into three groups, viz.

1. the five families,
2. the ninety-six families and
3. the rest

and that the first two groups are kṣatriyas.

It was further held that the tests to be applied in determining the class (*varṇa*) of a particular caste are three viz. (a) the consciousness of the caste itself, (b) the acceptance of that consciousness by other castes, and lastly (c) its customs and usages.

## 32. Mlecchas

We have already seen (in note 118) how even in the Vedic age there were non-Aryan tribes like the Kirātas, Andhras, Pulindras, Mūtibas, that were described as *dasyus* by the Ait. Br.. One word that is of striking importance is *mleccha*. The Sat. Br. (III.2.1.23-24, S. B. E. vol.26 p.32) states that the asuras were defeated because they spoke an incorrect and corrupt dialect and that a brāhmaṇa should not, therefore, utter such a corrupt speech and so should not become a *mleccha* and an asura. Gaut. IX.17 enjoins that one should not speak with *mlecchas*, impure or irreligious persons and Haradatta explains that *mleccha* are the inhabitants of Ceylon and similar countries where there is no system of *varṇas* and *āśramas*. Viṣṇu Dh. S.64.15 is to the same effect. Viṣṇu Dh. S.84.1-2 and Saṅkha 14.30 prescribe that one should not perform sradhha in a *mleccha* country nor should one visit such a country (except on a pilgrimage). Viṣṇu Dh. S.84.4 states that that country where the system of the four *varṇas* is not in vogue is *mleccha* territory and Aryavarta is beyond it, while Manu II.23 states that the *mleccha* country is beyond Aryavarta which land is fit for sacrifices and in which the black deer wanders naturally. Viśvarupa on Yāj.1.15 quotes Bharadvaja to the effect — 'one should not study the language of the *mleccha*, for it is declared (in the Brāhmaṇas) that a

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<sup>119</sup> Vide Tod's Rajasthan (Madras ed. of 1873) vol. I chap. VII pp.82 ff. .



corrupt word is indeed *mleccha*'. Vas. Dh. S. VI.41 also enjoins that one should not learn the *mleccha* dialect. Manu X, 43-44 knew that many of the tribes called Pundrakas, Yāvanas, Śākas spoke *mleccha* languages and also the language of the Aryas.

In Parasara IX.36 *mleccha* are referred to as eaters of cow's flesh. That the *mleccha* had affected the Sanskrit language by lending to it certain words follows from the discussion in Jaimini I.3.10 whether words like *pika* (a cuckoo), *nema* (half), *sata* (a wooden vessel), *tamarasa* (a red lotus) are to be understood in the sense in which *mleccha* use them or certain meanings are to be assigned to them by deriving them from some root according to the rules of grammar.

Patañjali speaks of the siege of Saketa and Madhyāmikā by the Yāvana by whom scholars generally understand Menander the Greek. Asoka in his Rock Edict No.13 refers to Yona (Greek) kings and it appears from his reference that brāhmaṇas and sramanas were not found in the Yona country. A Yāvanarāja Tusāspha is mentioned as the governor of Kathiawar under Asoka in the inscription of Rudradaman at Junagadh (E.I. vol. VIII. at p.43). In the Prakrit Inscriptions the Yāvanas are referred to as Yāvana (vide E.I. vol. VII. pp.53-55 at Karle No.7 and 10) or Yona or Yonaka (E. I. VIII.90 Nasik cave No.18). In Kharavela's inscription also the form is Yāvana (E. I.20 p.79).

In the Mahābhārata the words Yāvana and Śāka occur very frequently. In the Dronaparva 119.45-46 Yāvana, Kamboja, Śāka, Sabara, Kirāta and Barbara are mentioned as one group fighting against Satyaki. In Drona 119.47-48 they are referred to as dasyus and as having long and flowing beards. In the Strī-parva 22.11 Jayadratha is said to have had Kamboja and Yāvana women in his harem.

The word Yāvana is generally taken as referring to the Greeks. But there are dissenting voices also. Dr. Otto Stein in 'Indian Culture' denies that the word ever means Greeks and Dr. Tarn in his recent work on 'Greeks in Bactria and India' p.254 argues that the Yāvanas in the Nasik inscriptions were not Greeks but only Indian citizens of a Greek *polis*. The śāntiparva 65.17-22 prescribes for Yāvanas, Śākas and similar tribes only the duties of obedience to parents and attendance on teachers and tending cattle and looking after agriculture, dedication of wells and making gifts to dvijas, *ahimsa*, *satya*, absence of fury, *Sauca*, *adroha*, maintenance of wife and child. Atrī VII.2 puts the receiving of gifts from or eating the food of or having sexual intercourse with the women of Śākas, Yāvanas, Kambojas, Bahlikas, Khasas, Dravidas on the same level with doing the same things with reference to nata, nartaka, śvapaka etc.

Aparārka p.923 quotes Vrddha Yajñavalkya to the effect that the touch of *mlecchas* is on the same level with that of candala, Bhilla and Parasīka. Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar in a very learned and scholarly paper in Indian Antiquary vol.40 pp.7-37 endeavours to establish that many non-Aryan persons belonging to tribes like the Yāvanas, the Śākas became absorbed in the general mass of Hindu society, that even several of the princely families such as those of the Guhilots were not of pure Aryan descent and that the pride of the purity of caste shown by many castes is not justified by history. He, therefore, appeals to modern Indians to forget all caste-exclusiveness and pride. But this appeal will be in vain. Merely showing that non-Aryan elements were absorbed in the body of the Aryan community several thousands or hundreds of years ago will not probably lessen that pride. Such people may retort that, whatever may have happened centuries ago, for about a thousand years there has been no such fusion. Therefore the appeal should rather be based on the futility of caste exclusiveness in the 20th century when owing to the exigencies of the times any one can pursue any occupation, when a sense of one nation and one people is absolutely necessary for securing to Indians their proper place in the society of nations.

The question of the re-conversion or re-entry of people converted to other faiths willingly or against their wishes will be briefly dealt with immediately below.

A few words may first be said about the *Vrātyastoma*. The Tandya-Mahā-brāhmaṇa (or the Panca-vimsa, as it is called from the number of Adhyāyas) describes four *Vrātyastomas* in chap.17.1-4

(khandas). The meaning of many words and passages in that chapter of the brāhmana is uncertain and some what cryptic. The four *Vrātyastomas* were ekahas (i.e. sacrifices taking one day only). Tandyā 17.1.1 begins with the story that when the gods went to the heavenly world some dependants of theirs who lived the *vrātya* life were left behind on the earth. Then through the favour of the gods the dependants got at the hands of Maruts the Sodāsastomas (containing 16 stotras) and the metre (viz. anustubh) and then the dependants secured heaven. The Sodāsastoma is employed in each of the four *Vrātyastoma*, the first of which (17.1) is meant for all *vrātyas*, the 2nd is meant for those who are abhisasta (who are wicked or guilty of heavy sins and so censured) and lead a *vrātya* life, the third for those who are youngest and lead a *vrātya* life, and the fourth who are very old and yet lead a *vrātya* life.

Some of the passages convey a tolerably clear idea of what the *vrātya* were like. Those who lead the *vrātya* life are base and are reduced to a baser state, since they do not observe student-hood (brahmacārya) nor do they till the soil nor engage in trade. It is by the Sodāsastoma that they can attain this (superior status). This shows that the *vrātyas* did not perform upanayana and did not study the Veda, nor did they do even what vaiśyas do. Another passage says:—

'those swallow poison who eat food of the common people as food fit for brāhmanas, -who call good words bad, who strike with a stick him who does not deserve to be beaten (or punished), who, though not initiated, speak the speech of the initiated, The Sodasastoma has the power to remove the guilt of these. That (in this rite) there are four Sodasastomas, thereby they are freed from guilt.'

This passage indicates that the *vrātyas* spoke the same language as the orthodox people, but were rough in their ways and lax as regards the food they partook of. They were thus outside the pale of orthodox Aryan society and they were brought within it by the *Vrātyastoma* described in the Tandyā. The origin of the word *vrātya* is lost in the mists of antiquity. The 15th Kanda of the Atharva Veda glorifies the *vrātya* and identifies him with the Creator and Supreme Being. The word is probably derived from *vrāta* (group) and means 'he who belongs to or moves in a group.' It is possible to derive the word from *vrata*. Originally *vrātyas* appear to have been groups of people who spoke the same language as orthodox āryas, but did not follow their discipline and habits.

Sayana also perceived the difficulty raised by the glorification of the *vrātya* in the Atharva Veda 15.1.1 and his note is interesting, since he says that the description does not apply to all *vrātyas*, but only to some very powerful, universally respected and holy *vrātya* who was, however, not in the good books of the brāhmaṇas that were solely devoted to their own rites and sacrifices.

Kātyāyana describes the four *Vrātyastoma* and adds:—

'By performing the *Vrātyastoma* sacrifice, they should cease to be *vrātyas* and become eligible for social intercourse with the orthodox aryas.'

The Par. Gr. II.5 quotes the last sūtra of Kātyāyana with the remark:—

"for such persons he who desires to have the sacrament (saṃskāra of upanayana) performed on them should perform the sacrifice of *Vrātyastoma* and then may indeed study the Veda for a text says 'they become eligible for (social) intercourse'."

In the *Vrātyata-suddhi-samgraha* provision is made for the purification of *vrātyas* even after twelve generations (vide pp.7 and 22-24) and that work adds (p.42) that the *Vrātyastoma* like the penance for an avakīrnin is to be performed in the ordinary fire (laukika agni). It also suggests easy substitutes for the lengthy and trying penance of twelve years prescribed by Āpastamba

Hinduism has not been an avowedly proselytizing religion. In theory it could not be so. For about two thousand years the caste system has reigned supreme and no one can in theory be admitted to the Hindu fold who is not born in it. A Hindu may lose caste, be excommunicated and driven out of the fold of Hinduism, if he be guilty of very serious lapses and refuses to undergo the prayaścittas

prescribed by the *smṛtis*. Gaut.20.15 states that he who was guilty of a misdeed for which death was prescribed as a penance became purified only by dying. But Gaut. himself prescribed death (21.7) as penance only for the sins of brāhmaṇa-murder, drinking spirituous liquor and incest. Even as regards these three, lesser penances were prescribed by some *smṛtis* as alternatives (e.g. vide Manu XI.72, 74-8, 92, 108). When the sinner performed the *prayaścitta* prescribed by the *sastras*, he was to be welcomed by his relatives, who took a bath along with him in a holy river or the like and threw therein an unused jar filled with water; they were not to find fault with him and were to completely associate with him in all ways.<sup>120</sup>

Vas.15.17 says that those who were *patita* were to be re-admitted to all social intercourse when they performed the prescribed penances (*patitānām tu caritavratānām pratyuddhārah.*). But if the sinner refused to undergo the prescribed *prayaścitta*, then a peculiar procedure called *ghaṭa-sphota* (breaking a jar) was prescribed. In such a case the sinner's relatives (*sapindas*) made a slave girl whose face was turned to the south thrust aside with her foot an earthen jar full of water so that all water flowed out of it, then the relatives were to observe mourning for one day and night (as he was deemed to be dead to them) and from that day they were to stop speaking or sitting with him, and all other social intercourse and he was to be given no inheritance<sup>121</sup>. In this way the obstinate sinner went out of the Hindu fold.

### 33. Absorption of non-Aryans

The ancient *smṛtis* do not expressly prescribe any rites for bringing into the brahmanic or Hindu fold a person who or whose ancestors did not belong to it. But as Hinduism has been extremely tolerant<sup>122</sup> (barring a few exceptional instances) it had a wonderful power of quiet and unobtrusive absorption. If a person, though of foreign ancestry, conformed to Hindu social usages in outward behaviour, in course of time his descendants became absorbed into the vast Hindu community.

This process has gone on for at least two thousand years. The beginnings of it are found in the *Santi-parva* chap.65 where Indra tells the Emperor Mandhatṛ to bring all foreign people like the *Yāvanas* under brahmanical influence. The *Besnagar* column inscription shows that the *Yona* (*Yāvana*) *Heliodora* (*Heliodorus*) son of *Diya* (*Dion*) was a *bhagavata* (devotee of *Vasudeva*).

In the caves at *Nasik*, *Karle* and other places many of the donors are said to have been *Yāvanas* (vide E.I.vol. VII, pp.53-54, 55, E.I. vol. VIII, p.90, E.I. vol. XVIII, p.325). Several inscriptions state that Indian kings married *Huna* princesses, e.g. *Allata* of the *Guhila* dynasty married a *Huna* princess named *Hariyadevi* (L A. vol.39 p.191), king *Yasah-karna-deva* of the *Kalacurī* dynasty is said to have been the son of *Karnadeva* and *Āvalla devī*, a *Huna* princess. These and similar examples show that persons of foreign descent and their children were absorbed into the Hindu community from time to time.

This absorption is illustrated in modern times by the case of *Fanindra Deb v. Bajeshwar* (L. R.12 I.

120 (Manu XI.186-187, *Yāj.* III.295, Vas.15, 20, Gaut.20.10-14).

121 vide Manu XI.183-185, *Yāj.* III.294, Gaut.20.2-7

122 A few striking instances of religious tolerance among kings and common people may be cited with advantage. The *Pāla* king *Mahīpāla I* granted a village to a brahmana of the *Vājasaneyasākhā* in honour of Lord Buddha (E.I. vol.14 p.324). Similarly the king *Subhakaradeva* who was a great devotee of Buddha (*paramasaugata*) granted two villages to 200 brahmanas (*Neulpur* grant in E. I. vol.15 p.1); vide also E.I. Tol.15 p.293. The famous Emperor *Harga*, whose father was a great devotee of the Sun, and who was himself a great devotee of *Siva*, pays the highest honour to his elder brother *Rājya-varadhana* who was a very devout Buddhist (*paramasaugata*). *Uṣavadāta* makes large gifts to brahmanas as well as to communities of Buddhist monks (vide *Nasik* Inscriptions No.10 and No.12 in E.I. vol. VIII p.78 and p.82). The *Valabhi* king *Guhasena*-who was himself a *Māheśvara* (a *Saivite*) made a grant of four villages to a *bhikku-saṅgha*. From the *Paharpur* plate of the *Gupta* year 159 (478-79 A. D.) it appears that a brahmana and his wife deposited three *dināras* with a city council for the maintenance of the worship of arhats at a *vihāra* (E. I. Vol. XX. p.59). The *Mulgund* inscription of the time of *Rāṣṭra-kūṭa Kṛṣṇa II.* (of 902-3 A. D.) shows that to a temple of *Jina* at *Mulgund* a field was given by a brahman of the *Bellāla* family (E. I. vol. XIII. p.190). Vide *Rice's 'Mysore and Coorg from Inscriptions'* pp.113 and 207 for an account how a *Vijayanagar* king settled the dispute between *Jainas* and *Srivaisnavas* in 1368 A.D.

A.72) in which it was found that a family in Kooch Behar not originally Hindu had adopted certain Hindu usages and it was held that it had not taken over the practice of adoption. How Hindu customs and incidents persist even after conversion to Islam is strikingly shown by the Khojas and Kutchi Memons of the Bombay Presidency, who though made converts to Islam several centuries ago, were held by the courts in India to have retained the ancient Hindu Law of succession and inheritance.

### 34. Reabsorption into the Hindu Fold.

The problem of taking back into the Hindu fold persons who were forcibly converted to other faiths has engaged the attention of smṛtis. Moslems first attacked India in the 8th century from the direction of the province of Sindh. This invasion led to the enslavement and forcible conversion of many people. It appears that Devala and other smṛtikāras tackled with the problem of taking back such people. The Devala smṛti opens with a question by the sages put to Devala who was sitting on the banks of the Sindhu at ease as to how brāhmaṇas and members of the other *varṇas* when carried off by Mlecchas were to be purified and restored to caste. The following verses of the Devala-smṛti are very instructive on this point.

Verses 7-10 declare that when a brāhmaṇa is carried off by Mlecchas and he eats or drinks forbidden food or drink or has sexual intercourse with women he should not have approached, he becomes purified by doing the penance of *candrayana* and *paraka*, that a kṣatriya becomes pure by under going *paraka* and *padakrcchra*, a vaiśya by half of *paraka* and a śūdra by the penance of *paraka* for five days.

Then verses 17-22 are most important:—

'When persons are forcibly made slaves by Mlecchas, candalas and robbers, are compelled to do dirty acts, such as killing cows and other animals or sweeping the leavings of the food (of Mlecchas) creating the leavings of the food of Mlecchas or partaking of the flesh of asses, camels and village pigs, or having intercourse with their women, or are forced to dine with them, then the penance for purifying a *dvijāti* that has stayed for a month in this way is *prājapatya*, for one who had consecrated Vedic fires (and stayed one month or less) it is *cāndrāyana* or *parāka*; for one who stays a year (with Mlecchas in this condition of things) it is both *cāndrāyana* and *parāka*; a śūdra who stays (in this condition) for a month becomes pure by *krchrapāda*; a Śūdra who stays a year should drink *yāvaka* for half a month. The appropriate *prāyaścitta* should be determined by learned brāhmaṇas when a person has stayed (in the above circumstances among Mlecchas) for over a year; in four years the person (who stays in the above circumstances among Mlecchas) is reduced to their condition (i.e. becomes a mleccha and there is no *prāyaścitta* for him).'

The *Prāyaścitta-viveka* states that after four years death is the only purifier for him. Three more verses of Devala (53-55) also deserve consideration:—

'One who was forcibly seized by Mlecchas for five, six or seven years or from ten to twenty years, is purified by under going two *Prajāpatyas*. Beyond this there is no purification; these penances are meant only for him who has simply stayed among Mlecchas. He who had stayed with Mlecchas from 5 to 20 years is purified by undergoing two *Candrayanas*'.

These verses are apparently inconsistent with the verses cited above (17-22), but they most probably mean this that if a man only stayed among Mlecchas for 5 to 20 years, but has not done any of the forbidden things such as eating *ucchiṣṭa* or the flesh of asses &c., then he can be taken back even after so many years. This would be an exception to the rule contained in verse 22. There is no reason why the reason of Devala should not be extended to persons who have been in the condition stated in verses 17-22 for over four years.

In the *Pañcadaśī* (*Trptidīpa* v.239) we have the following very significant passage:—

'Just as a brāhmaṇa seized by Mlecchas and afterwards undergoing the appropriate *prāyaścitta*

does not become confounded with Mlecchas (but returns to his original status of being a brāhmaṇa) so the Intelligent Soul is not really to be confounded with the body and other material adjuncts.'

This establishes that the great Vidyanāyana, who after Saṅkarācārya, is the greatest figure among ācāryas, approved of the view that a brāhmaṇa even though enslaved by Mlecchas could be restored to his original status.

Under Shivaji and the Peshwas it appears that several persons that had been forcibly made Moslems were restored to caste after under-going prayaścitta. But this was done in only a few instances.

In modern times there is a movement among Hindus called *śuddhi* or *patita-parāvartana* (purification or bringing back into the Hindu fold those who had fallen away from it). In a very few cases persons born in western countries have been taken into the Hindu fold by the performance of *vrātyastoma* and other rites. But such instances are very rare and are not yet supported by the vast majority of Hindus. It has been shown above that for taking back a man who was once a Hindu but had left Hinduism, there is *smṛti* authority in Devala and others and the authority of the Nibandhakāras.

### 35. Punar-upanayana (performing upanayana again).

In certain cases an upanayana has to be performed again. The Aśv. Gr. (I.22.22-26) prescribes that in *punar-upanayana* the cutting of the hair and production of intelligence (*medhājanana*) are optional, there are no rules about *paridāna* (giving in charge of deities) and about the time (i.e. it may be performed at any time and no *paridāna* is necessary) and instead of the usual Gāyatrī, he should recite:— '*tat savitur vrnīmahe*' (Rig. V.82.1.).

When a person in whose family one Veda is studied (e.g. the Rig Veda) wants to study another Veda (e.g. Yajur Veda), he had to undergo a fresh upanayana. The Aśv. Gr. sūtra is interpreted in this way by some. Haradatta on Āpastamba Dh.S. I.1.1.10 says that as the Savitrī (i.e. Gāyatrī, Rig. III.62.10) is recited for all Vedas according to the Brāhmaṇa passage quoted by Āpastamba one upanayana is sufficient for the study of the three Vedas in succession, but if a person wants to study the Atharva Veda after studying another Veda, then a fresh upanayana is necessary. This is one kind of *punar-upanayana*. Another kind of *punar-upanayana* takes place when in the first upanayana the principal rite viz., placing his hands on the boy's shoulders and bringing the student near the teacher is left off through oversight or the first upanayana takes place in a season other than *vasanta* (spring) or in the dark half of a month or on a day which was *anadhyāya* (unfit for Vedic study) or on a *gala-graha* (vide note 642 above) or in the latter part of the day. A third kind of *punar-upanayana* is one which is by way of prayaścitta for certain sins or lapses from good conduct. Gaut.23.2-5 prescribes the penance called *Taptakrcchra* and *punar-upanayana* for one guilty of drinking wine (*sura*) in ignorance or partaking of human urine, faeces and semen and the flesh of wild beasts, camels, asses, village cocks, and village hogs. Vas. (23.30) also has a similar sūtra. Baud. Dh. S. II.1.25 quotes a verse —

'If a person belonging to the three *varṇas* unknowingly consumes *sura* (wine) or faeces, he has to undergo *punar-upanayana*'

and says (II.1, 29) that if a brahmacārī carries a corpse (other than that of his parents or teacher) he has to undergo *punar-upanayana*. Manu V.91 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.22.86 prescribe the same.

In the Baud. Gr. Paribhāṣasūtra (1.12.4-6) it is said that on partaking of honey, or flesh, śrāddha food or food from those in impurity on birth, or the milk of a cow before the lapse of ten days or the milk of a *sandhinī* cow, mushrooms or the resin exuded from trees, *vilayana* (a product of milk?), the food prepared for a number of people in common or the food of prostitutes, a man has to undergo *punar-upanayana* and, according to some, also if he goes to a forbidden country, viz.

Saurashtra (Kathiawar), Sindhu, and Sauvīra (Sind and the territory to its south and east), Avanti (Ujjain), Dakṣiṇapatha (Deccan), a brāhmaṇa has to undergo punar-upanayana (except when he goes on a pilgrimage). It then sets out the procedure (such as a homa, putting a fuel stick of palāśa on the fire and oblations of cooked food and ajya) and adds that in punar-upanayana shaving, dakṣiṇa, girdle, staff, deer-skin, begging for food and vratas do not take place.

The Vaik. smarta (VI.9-10) contains similar rules for punar-upanayana. Aparārka (p.1160) quotes Paithīnāsi to the effect that if a grown-up person drinks the milk of sheep or of a she-ass, she-camel or of a woman, he has to undergo punar-upanayana and also the penance called prajāpatya.

### 36. **Anadhyāya**: (cessation from Vedic study; holiday).

It appears that from very early times Vedic studies were stopped on various grounds. The Tai. Ar. II. 15 has a very important statement on this subject:—

'Indeed as to this yajña (brahma-yajña) there are two cases in which the study of the Veda ceases, namely, when the man himself is impure or when the place is impure'.<sup>123</sup>

The Sat. Br. has a passage in which several occasions when Vedic study was ordinarily stopped are mentioned and it is added that those occasions do not prevent the repetition of Vedic texts as Brahma-yajña.

'Therefore one knowing this should certainly repeat the Veda as Brahma-yajña when the wind blows, when lightning flashes, when it thunders or when there is a fall of thunderbolt, in order that vaṣaṭ-kāras may not be fruitless'.

The Āpastamba Dh. S. (I.4.12.3.) quotes the Vajasaneyi Brāhmaṇa (the Satapatha) to the effect that:—

" Vedic study is Brahma-yajña; when it thunders, when lightning flashes, when there is a fall of the thunderbolt, when the wind blows, these are its vaṣaṭ-kāras,<sup>124</sup> therefore when ..... fruitless".

The Ait. Ar. (V.3.3) notes that if there be rain when it is not the season of rainfall, he should make a break by observing cessation of Vedic study for three nights.

The subject of anadhyāya is discussed in the Gṛhya and Dharma-sūtras and in almost all smṛtis. It is not possible to give for want of space the differences between the several works.<sup>125</sup>

In the following an attempt is made to present a tolerably exhaustive list of *anadhyāyas* together with a few references to the original sources.

Among tithis the following are *anadhyāyas*. On the first, the 8th, the 14th, 15th tithis (Purnamāsī and Amavasya), there was to be cessation of Vedic Study for the whole day; vide Manu IV.113-114, Yaj I.146 (in both *pratipad* is not expressly mentioned) and Harīta.

Gaut. says that there was no holiday on the full moon days of the twelve months, but only on the full moon days of Asadha, Kartika and Phalguna.

The Baud. Dh. S. I.11.42-43 quotes a verse — '(Vedic study on) the 8 tithi kills the teacher, 14

123 Manu IV.127 conveys the same sense in almost the same words. A man may be impure on account of births or deaths in his family or on account of *mala* (dirt on his body) and a place may be so because it is in contact with some impure thing (such as *ucchiṣṭa*).

124 The word 'vaṣaṭ' or 'svāhā' is uttered when making an offering to a deity. Thunder and lightning are said to be the vaṣaṭ-kāras of brahma-yajña. Just as when the word vaṣaṭ is uttered some offering follows, so, when it thunders some Vedic text by way of brahma-yajña should be repeated.

125 Among sūtras and smṛtis the most exhaustive and lengthy treatment is found in Āp.Dh. S. (I.3.9.4. to I.3.11), Gaut.16.5-49, Saṅkhayana Gr. IV.7 (S.B.E. vol.29 pp.115-118), Manu IV.102-128, Yāj. I.144-151. And also at length in the Sm.C., Smṛtyarthasara, the Saṃskāra-kaustubha (pp.564-570), the Saṃskāra-ratnamala (pp.327-339) and other Nibandha works.

kills the pupil, 15 kills learning'. Manu (IV.114) has a similar verse.

Aparārka (p.189) quotes from the Nrsimha-Purāṇa verses to the effect that there is to be no teaching (of the Veda) on Mahānavamī (9th of Aśvina, bright half), on Bharani (i.e. the tithi when the moon is in Bharanī nakṣatra after Bhādrapada full moon), Akṣaya-trtīya (3rd of Vaisakha, bright half) and Ratha-saptamī (7th of Magha, bright half).

Similarly there is to be *anadhyāya* on what are called Yugadi and Manvantaradi tithis. Yugadi tithis according to Viṣṇu-Purāṇa and Brahma-Purāṇa quoted by Aparārka (p.425) are Vaisakha śukla-tritīya, Kārtika śukla navamī, Bhādrapada kṛṣṇa trayodasī and Magha Purnima (they are respectively the beginnings of the four yugas, kṛta, treta, dvāpara and kali).

Sometimes on the same day there are two tithis; the rule laid down is that if on any day a particular tithi (which is declared to be *anadhyāya*) is shown in the calendar as extending for three muhurtas at sunrise or at sunset, then the whole of that day is *anadhyāya*.

Yāj. (I.148-151) speaks of 37 tatkālīka anadhyāyas (i.e. where Veda study is suspended only as long as the occasion or disturbance stated lasts). They are:—

when there is noise created by a dog, jackal, ass, owl, singing of saman, playing on a flute and the cries of the distressed (these are 7); in the vicinity or presence of impure things, of a corpse, or a śūdra or antya (i.e. one of the untouchables), cemetery, a *patita* (one guilty of mahāpataka); when the place (of study) has become impure or when the man himself is impure; when there is continuous flashing of lightning or continuous peals of thunder; while one's hands are wet after taking one's meals; in the midst of water; at midnight; when a violent wind is blowing; when there is a rainfall of dust, when the quarters are lit up by sudden (and strange) lights; at the two twilights; when there is fog; when there is a fright (caused by robbers etc.); when one is running; when the smell of something rotten or impure spreads; when a distinguished visitor comes to the house; when one rides an ass, a camel, a conveyance (like a chariot), an elephant, a horse, a boat, or climbs a tree or is in a desert (or barren) place.

A few explanatory words may be added. According to Āpastamba Dh. S. I.3.10.19 when wolves howl, or when there is the sound of any musical instrument, or of weeping, singing or of the recitation of a Saman there is *anadhyāya*.

Gaut.16.7 mentions the sound of *bāṇa* (a kind of vīna), *bherī* (a drum), *mrdāṅga*, *garta* (a chariot) and the distressed.

Manu (IV.123-124) explains that when a sāman is heard, one should not study any portion of the Rig Veda or Yajur Veda, because the gods are the devatas of Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda deals with humans (it enjoins actions to be done by humans), Sama Veda has the pitṛs as its deities; hence its sound has something of the impure or uncanny about it.

Āpastamba Dh. S. I.3.11.27 prescribes that there should be no Vedic study as long as there are clouds when it is not the season for clouds, when there is a halo round the sun or moon, when there is a rainbow, or when there is perihelion or a star with a tail (like a fish).

Gaut.16.19, Āpastamba Dh. I.3.9.14-15, Vas.13.11 say that there is *anadhyāya* as long as a corpse or a *caṇḍāla* is in the village or town. Gaut.16, 45 states the view of some that the Veda can never be studied in a city; there is no Veda study as long as there is an assembly of people (Manu IV.108) or while the student is lying down or has stretched his feet or placed them on a cot or stool, or while he sits on his haunches winding round his knees and hips a piece of cloth (Manu IV.112., Vas. Dh. S.13.23, Viṣṇu Dh. S.30.17).

There is to be *anadhyāya* when one is answering the calls of nature (Manu IV.109), or when one has not yet sipped water (*ācamana*) after taking food, or after partaking of meat (Manu IV.112), when there is wordy argument or there is an affray or a fight or when one is wounded or when

blood flows from the body (Manu IV.122) or when one suffers from indigestion or vomits or has sour eructations (Manu IV.121).

In certain cases *anadhyāya* lasts only for a portion of the day. When the wind blows by day strong enough to carry off clouds of dust (Gaut.16.5) there is *anadhyāya* during the day (but not at night even if the wind is still strong) or when on a festive occasion like upanayana there is *anadhyāya* after dinner that day (Gaut.16.43); when in the morning twilight fire has been kindled for homa and there are flashes of lightning and thunder (not accompanied by rain) there is *anadhyāya* till the sun sets.

Gaut. (16.32) prescribes *anadhyāya* for the rest of the day when the king of the country dies; when a strong wind that was blow stops, there is *anadhyāya* for a muhurta i.e. two ghatikas (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.3.11.28) or when there is the howling of salavrka (hyaena?) or a jackal moving about alone there is *anadhyāya* till one gets up from sleep (ibid I.3.11.29). In some cases there is *anadhyāya* for the whole day and night.

According to Yāj. I.145-147 there is such an *anadhyāya* when there is thunder at the twilight time, there is a fall of the thunderbolt or earth-quake or the fall of a meteor, when one finishes Samhita or Brāhmaṇa (of the śākha one is studying) or when one finishes the study of the Aranyaka portion of one's Veda; when there is an eclipse of the sun or moon, or when it is the first day after the season changes or when a person partakes of śrāddha food or accepts a gift on śrāddha (except in Ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha); when a beast, frog, mongoose, dog, snake, cat or mouse passes between the teacher and pupil (Manu IV.126 also) or when the banner of Indra is raised or taken down.<sup>126</sup>

Manu IV.110 lays down *anadhyāya* for three days when one accepts invitation for an Ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha or when the king dies or when there is an eclipse. This last refers to an eclipse where the sun or the moon sets while still eclipsed.

Gaut.1.60 prescribes cessation for three days when dogs and others come between. This is explained as referring to the first lesson in Veda, while the words of Manu and Yāj. are held to refer to repetition. Manu (IV119) prescribes *anadhyāya* for a day and night on the Astaka days<sup>127</sup> and on the last day of each of the six rtus (seasons). In a few cases the *anadhyāya* was *ākālīka* i.e.. lasted for one day (60 ghatikas) from the time when the cause began to operate up to the same hour next day.

Āpastamba Dh. S. (I.3. II 25-26) lays down this kind of *anadhyāya* if out of three viz. flashing of lightning, thunder and rain, one or two occur at a time when it is no season for rain; there is this *anadhyāya* for all vidyās at all times, when there is an eclipse of the sun or the moon or there is an earthquake or a whirlwind or fall of meteors. Manu IV.103-105 and Gautama 16.22-23 are similar to Āpastamba Dh.8.1.3.11.25-26 and Manu IV.118 prescribes *ākālīka anadhyāya* when a village is thrown into confusion by robbers or there is a commotion due to a conflagration and in the case of all portentous phenomena (such as rain of unusual things or hail; vide Vas.13.35). Gaut. (16.47-48) adds that the performer of a śrāddha (whether he actually serves cooked food to brāhmaṇas or only makes gifts of money and corn etc.) has to observe this *anadhyāya* (vide Manu IV.117 also).

*anadhyāya* for three days was prescribed in a few cases. If lightning, thunder and rain all appear together when it is not the proper season for them, there is *anadhyāya* for three days (Āpastamba

126 Raising the banner in honour of Indra was a festival prescribed for kings in the Kausika-sūtra and other works. The banner was raised usually in Bhādrapada (or sometimes in Aśvina) on the 12<sup>th</sup> of the bright half when the moon was in conjunction with uttarasādhā, śravana or dhaniṣṭhā constellation and it was taken down in the same month on the bharanī constellation (vide Sm. C, I. p.59). According to the Brhat-Samhita (chap.43) of Varaha this festival lasted from the 8th to the 12th day of Bhādrapada sukla.

127 The astaka homa was performed on the 8th of the dark half of the four months from Mṛgasīrṣā (according to Aśv. Gr. II.4.1) or (according to others) of three months of Pauśa, Māgha and Phālguna. Gaut.16.38-39 prescribed three days' *anadhyāya* on each of (he three Astakās or according to some only on the last Astakā.



Dh. I.3.11.23). In the *utsarga* and *upakarana* of the Vedas, on the death of gurus (persons worthy of respect like the father-in-law), on the Astakas and on the death of near agnates (like brother, nephew etc.) there is *anadhyāya* for three days (Āpastamba Dh. S. I.3.10.2-3). Gaut. (6.38-41) is similar to Āpastamba The Harīta Dharma Sūtra 949 prescribes *anadhyāya* for three days on the death of one's upadhyāya, or of the king or of a śrotriya or fellow pupil, on eclipses of the sun and the moon, on the taking down of the banner of Indra and on the death of one's ācārya.

Manu (IV.110 and 119) prescribes *anadhyāya* for three days on accepting invitation for ekoddiṣṭa śrāddha, on the death of the king, on eclipses and on *upakarma* or *utsarga*, Yāj. I.144 contains similar rules.

Āpastamba Dh. S. (I.3.10.4) prescribes 12 days' *anadhyāya* on the death of one's parents and ācārya. Baud. Dh. S. I.11.32 prescribes three days' *anadhyāya* on the death of one's father. This rule must be taken as referring only to a brahmacārī. Vas. (13.39-40) prescribes three days' *anadhyāya* on the death of one's ācārya and one day's on the death of the son or wife of the ācārya.

The Smṛtyarthasara (p.10) mentions some occasions when *anadhyāya* may extend to a month, to six months, or a year. ĀpastambaD.S. I.3.9.1. prescribes that, when upakarma is performed on the full moon day of Sravana, for a month thereafter one should not study Veda in the first part of the night (he may do so after that at night or in the day).

Aparārka (p.192) quotes a verse from Yama that there can be no Vedic study under the shade of certain trees like Sleşmātaka, Sālmali (silk-cotton), Madhuka, Kovidāra and Kapitthaka.

Both Gaut. (16.49) and Āpastamba Dh. S. I.3.11.34 state that besides the *anadhyāyas* expressly mentioned by them there are others which may be learnt from the several smṛtis and from the assemblies of learned men.

It would be noticed how the number of *anadhyāyas* is rather too numerous for rapid and effective study. Therefore certain rules are laid down to explain what is that is forbidden on those days.

In the first place *anadhyāya* may be *vācika* (concerned with the loud utterance of Vedic words), *mānasa* (reflecting upon the Veda in the mind). Baud. Dh. S. I.952 11.40-41 says that the rule about *anadhyāya* on portentous happenings for a day and night does not apply to *mānasa* study; but even *mānasa* study is forbidden when there is impurity due to birth or death. Gaut.16.46 says the same. Āpastamba Dh. S. I.3.11.20 allows (in general) mental study (not vocal) on *anadhyāya* days. Vide also Āpastamba Dh. S. I.11.32.12-13.

The Āpastamba Srauta-sūtra 954 (24.1.37) says that the rules about *anadhyāya* apply only to the learning of Vedic mantras, but have no application to their employment in various rites. Jaimini 955 (XII.3.18-19) establishes the proposition that the rules about *anadhyāya* being prescribed for acquisition of the Vedic mantras have no application to their employment in sacrifices. The Āpastamba Dh. S. I.4.12.9 has a sūtra which shows remarkable agreement with the words of Jaimini.

We saw above that according to the Tai.Ar. the rules of *anadhyāya* do not apply to the daily performance of Brahma-yajña (i.e. to the repetition of the Vedic texts already learnt). Manu II.105 says that there is no concern about *anadhyāya* as to the lores (the aṅgas like grammar, Nirukta etc.) helpful to (understanding of) the Veda, the obligatory *svadhyāya* (i.e. brahma-yajña) and the mantras to be used in homa. Saunaka quoted in the Sm. C. says there is no *anadhyāya* as to repeating the Vedic texts in the obligatory rites and in japa nor in kāmya rites, in sacrifices or in the parāyana (repeating the Veda already learnt); the *anadhyāya* rules apply only to the first learning of Vedic mantras and to their teaching. The Smṛtyarthasara (p.10) says that those who have a slippery memory or those who have to commit to memory extensive Vedic texts should study the Vedaṅgas, nyāya (logic), Mīmamsa and Dharma-śāstras on all *anadhyāyas* except on 1st, 8th, 14th and full

moon and new moon days. Some digests quote a verse from the Kurma-Purāṇa that there is no *anadhyāya* for the study of Vedaṅgas, of Itihāsa, Purāṇas, Dharma-śāstras and other sastras; but on parva days the study of even these should be dropped. This shows that these tithis were the only close holidays on which there was complete cessation of all study, whether Vedic or non-Vedic. That is, these were what are called nitya holidays while the rest are naimittika *anadhyāyas*. Even now these nitya *anadhyāyas* are observed by vaidikas and by Pandits in their Sanskrit schools (particularly amavasya).

It will be seen that though some of the occasions for *anadhyāya* are somewhat strange and bizarre, underlying most of them there are reasonable and understandable principles. Vedic study depended in the first place on memorizing. Committing sacred texts to memory (without in most cases understanding their meaning) required close attention and concentration. Therefore, all occasions which caused disturbance or distraction of mind were held to be *anadhyāyas*. But the same concentration was not necessary for reciting in sacrifices or japa or brahma-yajña what had already been committed to memory. Hence such occasions were not *anadhyāyas* for those purposes. It was believed that if a person taught the Vedic lore or studied it on *anadhyāya* days, he incurred loss as to (long) life, offspring, cattle, intelligence and the merit accumulated by him.

### 37. Keśānta or godāna:

This saṃskāra consists in shaving the head and also the hair on the other parts of the body (such as arm-pits, chin). Par. Gr., Yāj. (I.36) and Manu (II.65) employ the word *keśānta*, while Aśv. Gr., San. Gr., Gobhila and other Gṛhyasūtras employ the word *godāna*. In the Sat. Br. while speaking of the *dikṣa* (consecration of the performer of a sacrifice) the word *godāna* is used in the sense of a portion of the hair (on the head) near the top of the ear. Most smṛtikāras say that this saṃskāra was performed in the 16th year. According to San.Gr. (I.28.20, S. B. E. vol.29, p.57) it may be performed in the 16th or 18th year. According to Manu II.65 *keśānta* is performed in the 16th, 22nd or 24th year respectively for a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya or vaiśya. The Laghu-Aśvalayana smṛti XIV.1 says that *Godāna* may be performed in the 16th year or at the time of marriage. This last view seems to have been known to Bhavabhūti who in his Uttara-rāmacārīta (Act. I) makes the heroine Sīta say that Rama and his three brothers had the *godāna* ceremony performed immediately before their marriage. It is somewhat strange that according to the Kausika sūtra (54.15) *godāna* precedes *cūda karma* and the commentator Kesava remarks that *godāna* takes place at the end of the first or 2nd year (from birth).

There is great divergence of views about the starting point from which 16 years are to be calculated. The Baud. Dh. S. (I.2.7) has stated the rule in general terms that the number of years is to be calculated from the time of conception. Following this rule the Mīt. on Yāj. I.36 and Kulluka on Man II.65 say that *godāna* should be performed in the 16th year from conception in the case of brāhmaṇas, while Aparārka says that it is to be performed in the 16th year from birth. Viśvarūpa on Yāj. I.36 says that whatever the period of brahmacārya that a student was going to observe (whether 12, 24, 36, 48 etc.) *keśānta* must be performed in the 16th year and if any one had his upanayana performed later than the 16th year, then *keśānta* will not take place at all. Narayana on Aśv. Gr. I.22.3 notes that according to some *godāna* takes place in the 16th year from upanayana, while others celebrate it in the 16th year from birth.

All sūtra-kāras are agreed that *godāna* or *keśānta* follows the procedure of *cūdarkarana* with a few differences. The Aśv. Gr. (1.18.1-9) points these out. *Caula* is performed in the 3rd year, while *godāna* is performed in the 16th. Aśv. Gr. further says:—

"wherever the word *keśa* occurs (in the mantras or procedure of *caula*) he should employ the word *śmaśru* (beard). He moistens the beard here. (The mantra is) 'purify his head and face, but do not deprive him of life'. He gives orders (to the barber) 'arrange his beard, the hair of his body and his nails, ending in the north'. Having bathed and stood up silently during the rest of the day, he should break his silence in the presence of his teacher (saying to the teacher) ' I give a gift'. The fee is a pair of cows. Let the teacher instruct him to keep the observances for a year".

Narayana notes that being grown up he should not sit on his mothers lap as in *caula* (but sit to her right) and that the instruction is to be on the next day. Narayana says that the instruction referred to is the one mentioned in Aśv. Gr. I.22.20 from ' cutting the hair 'to' giving in charge ' i.e. from Aśv. Gr. I.19.8. to I.20.7. It is better to hold as Par. and Bhar, Gr. ordain that the instruction is as to brahmacārya-vrata (mentioned in Aśv. Gr. I.22.17) or that he is not to shave himself for a year, 12 days, 6 days or at least 3 days. Par. Gr., Saṅkhayana and several others allowed the fee of only one cow. Gobhila (III.1.5) and Khadira (II.5.3) allowed optionally the gift of a pair of horses or a pair of sheep for kṣatriyas or vaiśyas respectively. According to Gobhila and Khadira shaving the beard precedes a vrata called *godanika* for one year and both state at length the observances of that vrata (Gobhila III.1.11-29, Khadira II.5.7-16).

San. Gr. (I.28.22) expressly says that the *keśānta* ceremony is performed for girls but silently. Āpastamba Gr.16.15, Hir. Gr.6.16, Bharadvaja Gr., I.10, Baud.Gr. III, 2.55 prescribe in *godāna* the removal of all the hair on the head (including the *sikha* top-knot), while in *caula* it is not so. This saṃskāra gradually went out of vogue, so much so that most of the medieval digests like the Sm.C.

the Samskāra-prakasa, and the Nirnay-asindhu contain hardly anything about it.

### 38. Snāna or Samāvartana:

(Taking the ceremonial bath after finishing Vedic study and returning from the teacher's house).

Some sūtra-kāras such as Gaut. (VIII.16), Āpastamba Gr. XII.1, Hir. Gr.9.1 and Yāj. I.51 employ the word '*snāna*' for this saṃskāra, while Aśv., Baud., Āpastamba and Bhar. employ the word *samāvartana*. The Khadira Gr. (I.3.2-3, III.1.1) and Gobhila III.4.7 use the word '*aplavana*' (which means *snāna*). Manu (III.4) uses both '*snana*' and '*samāvartana*' in:—

“A dvija being permitted by his teacher, may take the ceremonial bath and return from his teacher according to the rules laid down (in his own Gṛhyasūtra) and then marry a girl etc”.

Aparārka (p.76) explains this verse by saying that it makes a distinction between *snāna* and *samāvartana*. The distinction consists in this: *snāna* or ceremonial bath indicates the completion of the period of student-hood. A man who wants to remain a *brahmacārin* all his life need not undergo this saṃskāra. *Samāvartana* literally means 'return from the teacher's house to one's home'. If a boy learns under his own father, then literally speaking there will be no return in his case from a teacher's house. Medhātithi (on Manu III.4) puts this position forcibly. *Samāvartana* is not a necessary aṅga (adjunct) of marriage and therefore he who learnt the Veda in his father's house may, though there is no return (to the father's house from the teacher's house), enter on matrimony. Some hold that *Samāvartana* is an aṅga of marriage and consists in the ceremonial bath, If it be said that the gerundial termination (*tva* in *snatva* in Manu III.4) conveys distinction between *snāna* and *samāvartana*, the reply is that Manu will later on speak of *samāvartana* as the saṃskāra of *snāna*.

Āpastamba Gr.12.1 begins its treatment with the words '*Vedam adhītya snāsyān*' (after learning the Veda and when about to undergo the ceremonial bath) Having these words in mind Baud. Gr.97 (II 6.1) remarks that in the words '*Vedam adhītya snāsyān*' it is *samāvartana* that has been described. Hence the essence of *samāvartana* is the ceremonial bath and return to the parental home is a subsidiary matter (which may or may not occur in the case of a student). The Mahābhāṣya (vol. I. p.384) says that a person after he has studied the Veda and taken the ceremonial bath with the permission of the teacher should begin to use a cot (for sleeping on).

In the Vedic Literature both words are used. In the Chāṇḍogya Upanishad IV.10, 1 we read that Upakosala Kāmālāyana became a student of Satyakama Jabala and tended his teacher's fires for twelve years; the teacher while making his other pupils return (to their parental home) did not make Upakosala return. Here it is clear that the Upanishad knew the term '*samāvartana*'. Similarly in Chāṇḍogya VIII.15 it is stated that — 'having studied the Veda according to the rules in the time that was left after doing work for the teacher and having returned from the teacher's house to his own family'. On the other hand the Sat. Br. (XI.3.3.7) says:— 'that one should not beg after taking the ceremonial bath'. The Sat. Br. (XII.1.1.10) distinguishes a *snātaka* from a *brahmacārin* (S.B.E. vol.44 p.137). Similarly the ĀpastambaDh.S. II.6.14.13 quotes a Brāhmaṇa passage:— 'therefore the face of the *snātaka* is as if resplendent with fire'. The Ait. Ar. V.3.3. remarks that one who has not studied this (Mahāvratā) does not become a (true) *snātaka*, even though he may have learnt a good deal else. The Aśv. Gr. III.9.8 summarises a Brāhmaṇa passage to the effect that a *snātaka* is indeed a great being.

*Snana* (the ceremonial bath) was ordained by the sūtrakāras after a student finished his Vedic study. The Aśv. Gr. (III.9.4) remarks:—

‘after having finished (the task of learning) vidya, they should invite his teacher to name the gift (of wealth or other wise) he desired or when the pupil has been permitted by the teacher, the pupil may take a ceremonial bath.’

This shows that one may perform *snāna* either when he had finished his Vedic and other studies or he may do so even without finishing his intended studies, if the teacher permitted him to do so. The Par. Gr. II.6 is more explicit:—

'The student should take the ceremonial bath after finishing (the study of) the Veda or when he has gone through the period of student-hood for 48 years, or for 12 years according to some (teachers); (he should) take the bath when permitted by the teacher.'

A person who has taken the ceremonial bath is called a *snātaka*. A *snātaka* is said by the Par. Gr. (II.5), 976 Gobhila (III.5.21-22), Baud. gr Paribhāṣa sūtra I.15, Harīta and others to be of three kinds, viz *vidyā-snātaka* (or *Veda-snātaka* as Baud. Gr. paribhāṣa has it), *vrata-snātaka* and *vidya-vrata-snātaka* (or *Veda vrata- snātaka* as in Baud.). One who has finished Veda study, but has not gone through the *vratas* (described above) is called *vidya-snātaka*; one who has finished the *vratas*, but has not finished his Veda study is styled *vrata-snātaka*; while one who has finished both is named *vidya-vrata- snātaka*. Yāj. I.51 in saying that a student:—

'after finishing Veda (study) or the *vratas* (observances of brahmacārya) or both, and after giving to the teacher what the latter chooses to ask should take the ceremonial bath with the teacher's permission.'

implies the three-fold division of *snātakas*. These three alternatives are due to the fact that a student may not have the ability or the time to go through the full Vedic curriculum and the *vratas*. Medhātithi on Manu IV.31 notices that according to some, *vrata- snātaka* are those who without finishing Veda study take the ceremonial bath three years after upanayana.

Gobhila (III.5.23) says that of these, *vidya-vrata- snātaka* is the best, the other two being equal to each other. Āpastamba Dh. S. (I.11.30.1-5) refers to this three-fold division and adds that all three are to be honoured as *snātakas*, but that great reward follows by honouring *vidyā-vrata-ātakas*.

A good deal of time may conceivably elapse between a man's taking the ceremonial bath and actually marrying a woman. During that period he is called a *snātaka*; while after marriage he comes to be called a *gṛhastha*. As long as a person is not married after he takes the bath, he has to follow the observances prescribed for *snātakas* and *gṛhasthas* so far as applicable to his position but not those of a student. Gaut. m (IX.1-2) makes the position quite clear by prescribing the same rules of conduct for *gṛhasthas* and for *snātakas*. He also states (in III.9) that whatever rules laid down for *brahmacārins* are not opposed to the special rules for other āśramas are to be observed by all, The latter means that the special observances of a brahmacārī are not applicable to him (such as avoiding honey and flesh, living on alms, offering fuel-sticks to fire).

The most elaborate procedure of *samāvartana* is found in Hir. Gr. I.9-13, Baud. Gr. Paribhāṣa I.14, Par. Gr. II.6 and Gobhila Gr. III.4-5. A concise statement is given below from As v. Gr. (III.8 and 9). The student who is about to return home from his teacher should get ready (eleven) things, viz. a jewel (to be suspended round his neck), two ear-rings, a pair of garments, an umbrella, a pair of shoes, a staff, a wreath, (powder) for rubbing his body with, ointment, eye-salve, a turban, (all these) being meant for the teacher and for himself. If he cannot afford to have these materials for both of them, then he should prepare them only for the teacher. He should procure a fuel-stick from the north-east side of a sacrificial tree (like *palāśa*); the fuel-stick may be green if he wishes for the enjoyment of food or for prosperity or for splendour; it may be dry if he wishes for spiritual lustre; or both dry (in part) and green in the remaining part if he desires both. Having placed the fuel-stick on high (not on the ground) and having made gifts of food and of a cow to *brāhmaṇas*, he should perform the actions prescribed in *godāna* ceremony (and not the observances like remaining silent). He should alter the mantras (of *godāna*) so that they refer to himself. (He should rub himself) with the powder of *Ekaklītaka*. Having bathed himself in lukewarm water and having put on two garments which have not yet been washed (or used) with the mantra — 'You two (Mitra and Varuna) put on garments with fat splendour' (Rig.1.152.1); he should apply eye-salve to his eyes

with the words — 'thou art the lustre of stone, protect my eye.' He should fasten the two ear-rings with the words — 'thou art the lustre of stone; protect my ear.' After having smeared his two hands with ointment (saffron paste etc.) a brāhmaṇa should first anoint his face with it (and then the limbs), a Rajanya his two arms first, a vaiśya his belly first, a woman her private parts, persons, who maintain themselves by running, their thighs. With the words:— free from distress art thou, may I become free from distress', he should put on the wreath, but not such a wreath as would be called a mālā (garland). If some call it *mālā* (through ignorance of what to say) he should cause them to speak of it as *sraj* (wreath). He steps into the shoes with the words:— 'you two are the supports of the gods, protect me from all sides', and with the words:— 'heaven's covering art thou', he takes the umbrella. He takes the bamboo staff with the words:— 'bamboo art thou, thou art the child of a tree, protect me from all sides.' Having tied round his neck the jewel with the hymn beginning with:— '*āyusyam*' and having arranged the turban (on his head) he should in a standing posture put a fuel-stick (on the fire), and should say at that time:—

'memory and reproach, knowledge, faith, wisdom as the fifth, what is sacrificed, what is given (as gift), what is studied and what is done, truth, learning, observances. O Agni, the vow (of thee) together with Indra, with Prajāpati, with the sages, with the sages that are kṣatriyas, with the Fathers, with the kings among Fathers, with men and with the kings among men, with the glow, with the super-glow, with the after-glow, with the counter-glow, with gods and men, with Gandharvas and Apsarases, with wild and domestic animals, the vow be longing to my own self, dwelling in my own self, that is my entire vow. O Agni! I shall on all sides become this vow, svaha'.

With the hymn— 'mine, O Agni, be the glory' (Rig. X, 128.1) he should put fuel-sticks on fire one for each verse. He should stay for the night at a place where the people will do honour to him (by offering Madhuparka). (Madhuparka will be dealt with under marriage).

The Baud. Gr. Paribhāṣa says (1.14.1) that the samāvartana rite for him who is only a vrata-snātaka (and has not studied the Veda) is performed silently (i.e. without the mantras prescribed). The other Gṛhya sūtras have a similar procedure in samāvartana, only the mantras sometimes differ and a few details are added.

For example, San. Gr. (III.1.2) makes the student sit on bull's hide. Par. Gr., (II.6) prescribes that eight jars full of water are to be placed on kuśa grass and water there from is to be poured over the head and the body of the student with certain mantras, that he is to worship the rising sun, to partake of curds or śeṣame seeds, to cleanse his teeth with an udumbara twig, he sees himself in a mirror (after adorning himself). Both Par. and Gobhila (III.4.23) say that in this rite the girdle is taken off. Gobhila (III.4.31-34) says that at the end of the rite the student should mount a chariot drawn by oxen, drive some distance in an eastern or northern direction, should then come back to the teacher who honours him with *madhuparka*. Hir. Gr., (I.9.10) says that the girdle, the staff and the black antelope skin that he wore as *brahmacārin* are to be thrown into water. The Laghu-Aśvalayana smṛti (14th section) appears to suggest that godāna and samāvartana take place on the same day and that at the end of the homa in samāvartana a student of the Rig Veda should loosen the girdle of muñja grass with the mantra — '*ud uttamam mumugdhi*'. (Rig. I, 25.21). It is for this reason that in the Maratha country samāvartana is called '*soḍmuñja*' (rite in which the muñja girdle is taken away). The sūtras more or less prescribe expressly or imply the same materials that are required by Aśvalayana.

Some of the sūtras specify the auspicious times when this rite is to be performed. Hir. Gr., I.9.3 lays down that the proper time for *snāna* is during the northern course of the sun, in the bright half of a month when the moon is in conjunction with Rohinī, Mrgasiras, Tisya (Pusya), Uttarā Phalgunī, Hasta, Citra, or Visakha. The Baud. Gr. Paribhāṣa (L 13.3-9) omits Mrgasiras out of these, while Bhar. Gr. (II.18) omits Rohinī and Mrgasiras and adds Svati. Medieval and modern digests add elaborate rules about the astrological details for the proper day of samāvartana.



### 39. Snātaka-Dharma

Numerous rules are laid down in the smṛtis and digests about snātakas (snātaka-Dharmah). Many of these rules are applicable to gr̥hasthas also (i.e. snātakas who have married). Some idea of the guidelines may be conveyed by quoting in full the rules in Aśv. (III.9.6-7) which has the shortest treatment and adding a few interesting items from other works. Aśv. Gr. (III.9.6-7) says:—

'He (the snātaka) should not bathe at night, nor bathe naked, nor lie down naked, he should not look at a naked woman except during intercourse, he shall not run when it rains, he should not climb up a tree, nor descend into a well, should not cross a river (by swimming) with his arms, he should not expose himself to a danger. A great being indeed is a snātaka so it is known (from the Śruti)'.  
'

Some of the sūtras<sup>128</sup> contain an exhaustive treatment of snātaka vratas. Some of these are concerned with the rules about *anadhyāyas*, about answering calls of nature, about persons whose food should not be taken, about sexual intercourse, about ācamana, about daily observances like the five Mahāyajñas, about *upakarma* and *utsarjana*. These have been or will be dealt with in the appropriate places. A few of the other important rules of conduct are:— a snātaka should always be pure (in body), should daily bathe and should apply fragrant unguents (like sandal-wood paste) to his body, should be always patient, persistent in his undertakings, self-restrained, generous and not disposed to cause injury to others<sup>129</sup>; he should speak the truth and also speak what is agreeable, but should not tell disagreeable truths, nor should he tell agreeable lies<sup>130</sup>; he should according to his ability try to make his day fruitful as regards the performance of meritorious acts, satisfaction of (legitimate) desires and acquisition of wealth, but he should look upon Dharma as the principal of the three *puruṣārthas*<sup>131</sup>, though he should avoid even what is allowed by the śāstras if it is hateful to the people; he should not beg (for his livelihood) of anybody except the king or his pupils, but when oppressed by hunger he may beg a little such as a cultivated or uncultivated field, a cow, goats and sheep, or gold, corn, food<sup>132</sup>; but he should not beg of a king who is not of kṣatriya descent or who sets at naught the dictates of the sastras (Manu IV.84, 87) nor should he stay in the kingdom of a śūdra king (Manu IV.61); he should not talk with the mlecchas, impure persons and irreligious persons (Gaut. IX.17); he should not dwell in contact with sinners, *caṇḍalas* and other untouchables, with fools or persons puffed up with the pride of wealth etc, (Manu IV.79); he should not step over a rope by which a calf is tied<sup>133</sup>; he is not to point out the rainbow to another when he sees it in the sky (Maim IV.59) nor is he to employ the word — '*Indra-dhanuh*' for it, but the word '*mani-dhanuh*'<sup>134</sup>.

He should not inform a person when a cow does some damage or allows her calf to have milk without the owner knowing it<sup>135</sup>; he should enter or leave his village from the east or north<sup>136</sup>; and should not enter a village or a guarded house by a by-path<sup>137</sup>; at the two twilights he should be seated outside the village and should be silent<sup>138</sup>; he should not wander about by day with the head covered, but he may do so at night or when answering calls of nature<sup>139</sup>; he should avoid finding

128 Āp. Dh. S. (L 11.30.6-L 11.32.29), Vas. XII.1-47, Gaut. IX, Yāj. I.129-166, Manu IV.13ff, Viṣṇu Dh. S.71, Par. Gr. II.1

129 (Gaut.9.7 and 73)

130 (Manu IV.138 and Gaut. IX.68)

131 (Gaut. IX.46-47, Manu IV.176, Yāj. I.156)

132 (Vas. XII.2-3, Gaut. IX 63-64, Manu IV.33-34, Yāj. I.130)

133 (Vas. XII.8-9, Gaut. IX.52-53, Manu IV.38)

134 (Vas. XII.32-33, Gaut. IX.23, & p. Dh. S. I.11.31, 18)

135 (Āp. Dh. S. I.11.31.9-10, Gaut. IX.24-25)

136 (Āp. Dh. S. I.11.30.7)

137 (Manu IV.73, Yāj. I.140, Āp. Dh. S. I.11.32.23)

138 (Āp. Dh. S. I.11, 30.8)

139 (Gaut. IX.35-37; Āp. Dh. S. I.11.30.14)



fault with a cow, a fee given or a maiden<sup>140</sup>; he should not resort to inferior men or to countries in which such persons abound nor should he frequent gambling houses or meetings of clubs<sup>141</sup>; he should try to dwell in a place that abounds in fuel, water and grass, kuśas, flowers, that has a courtyard, and is mostly peopled by Aryas, that has industrious and religious people (Gaut. IX.65); he should take his food, answer calls of nature, engage in dalliance with his wife, engage in yoga in a place screened from public view and he should guard his speech, intellect and strength and should keep his wealth and age very secret; but he should make public the repayment of a debt, a gift, mortgage or sale, the gift of his daughter in marriage, the letting loose of a bull (in srāddha) and a sin done in secret.

Manu (XI.203) says that the *prayaścitta* for not observing the rules of conduct laid down for *snātakas* is fasting for a day. Haradatta on Gautama IX.2 says that the rules for *snātakas* are meant for *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya snātakas* only, that the *prayaścitta* for non-observance is also to be undergone by them and that the *vaiśya snātakas* are not obliged to observe these rules.

In modern times *samāvartana* often takes place a short time after *upanayana* and sometimes on the 4th day thereafter or even the next day. As many *brāhmanas* do not learn any part of the Veda, *samāvartana* has become a mere matter of form in their case. Even the *Samskāra-kaustubha* (p, 607) prescribes a very brief procedure for *samāvartana* when the *brahmacārī* is ill. It consists in the *brahmacārī* giving up his girdle etc., in shaving the boy silently, in silently bathing at a holy place, putting on another garment, then sipping water twice, bringing fire from the house of a *śrotriya* and placing it on some place according to the rules, then contemplating on *Prajāpati* and putting the *samidh* (fuel-stick) on fire.

As a *brahmacārī* is not affected by the mourning due to the death of relatives (except his parents), on *samāvartana* he has to observe impurity for three days (if there have been deaths of relatives in the interval, but not for births).

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140 (Āp. Dh. S. I.11.31.8)

141 (Āp. Dh. S. I.11.32.18-20, Vas. XII.40)

## CHAPTER 8

## ĀŚRAMAS

In the preceding pages several questions connected with *brahmacārya* have been dealt with. *Brahmacārya* is, according to the theory of the Dharma-Sūtras and smṛtis, the first of the four āśramas. Therefore, before proceeding to the next saṃskāra, viz. *vivāha* (marriage) which is the starting point of the second āśrama, it is necessary to discuss the origin and development of the idea of āśramas.

From the times of the most ancient Dharma Sūtras the number of āśramas has been four, though there are slight differences in the nomenclature and in their sequence. Āp. Dh. S. II.9.21.1 says:—

'there are four āśramas, viz. the stage of householder, (staying in) the teacher's house, stage of being a *muni*, the stage of being a forest dweller.'

That here *mauna* stands for the āśrama of *Sannyāsa* is clear from Āpastamba's own words in II.9.21.7 (*atha parivrājah*) where he employs the word '*parivrājah*' to indicate '*mauna*.' Āp. places the householder first among the āśramas, probably on account of the importance of that stage to all other āśramas. Why he should mention the stage of forest hermit last is not clear. (Gaut. also (III.2) enumerates the four āśramas as *brahmacārī*, *gṛhastha*, *bhikṣu* and *vaikhānasa*. Here also Gaut. speaks of *bhikṣu* before *vaikhānasa* and Haradatta explains this departure from the usual sequence of āśramas as due to the words in Gaut.28.47 where we read '*prag-uttamād traya āśramiṇaḥ*' (persons belonging to the three āśramas except the last may constitute a *pariṣad*), i.e. to exclude *vaikhānasa* from the *pariṣad* he is mentioned last. Why the *vānaprastha* is called *vaikhānasa* will be discussed later on under the former word.

Vas. Dh. S. (VII.1-2) names the four āśramas as *brahmacārī*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *parivrājaka*. Vas. Dh. S. (in XL 34) employs the word *yati* to denote a person in the fourth āśrama. Baud. Dh. S. (II.6.17) names the four āśramas in the same way as Vasistha and vouchsafes the interesting information that it was the asura Kapila, son of Prahlada, who in his rivalry with the gods, made these distinctions to which a wise man should pay no heed. What Baud. means appears to be that there is really one āśrama viz. that of the householder, that Kapila devised the scheme of four āśramas, so that those who became *vānaprasthas* and *parivrājakas* would perform no *yajñas* and thereby the gods would lose the offers they received from men and become less powerful. Manu VI.87 speaks of the four āśramas, the last being called *yati* by him and also '*sannyāsa*' (in VI.96).

It would thus be seen that a person who belongs to the last āśrama is variously called *parivrāt* or *parivrājaka* (one who does not stay in one place but wanders from place to place), *bhikṣu* (one who begs for his livelihood), *muni* (one who ponders over the mysteries of life and death), *yati* (one who controls his senses). These words suggest the various characteristics of the man who undertakes the fourth āśrama.

The theory of Manu about these āśramas is as follows. The span of human life is one hundred years (*śatyur vai puruṣaḥ*). All do not live to that age, but that is the maximum age one can expect to reach. This should be divided into four parts. As one cannot know beforehand what age one is going to reach, it is not to be supposed that these four parts are each of 25 years. They may be more or less. As stated in Manu IV.1 the first part of man's life is *brahmacārya* in which he learns at his teacher's house and after he has finished his study, in the second part of his life he marries and becomes an house holder, discharges his debts to his ancestors by begetting sons and to the gods by performing *yajñas* (Manu V.169). When he sees that his head has grey hair and that there are wrinkles on his body he resorts to the forest i.e. becomes a *vānaprastha* (Manu VI.1-2). After spending the third part of his life in the forest for some time he spends the rest of his life as a

*sannyāsin* (Manu VI.33). Similar rules are found in many other *smṛtis*. Baud. (Dh. S. II.10.5) states as his own opinion that the sages prescribe *sannyāsa* after the 70th year.

The word *āśrama* does not occur in the *Samhitās* or *Brāhmaṇas*. But this cannot be stretched to mean that the stages of life denoted by this word in the *sūtras* were unknown throughout the Vedic period. It has been shown above (p.268) that the word *brahmacārī* occurs in the Rig Veda and the Atharva Veda and that *brahmacārya* is mentioned in the Tai. S. the Sat. Br. and other ancient Vedic works. So the stage of *brahmacārya* was well known in the remotest past. The fact that Agni is said to be 'the *gṛhapati* in our house' (Rig. II.1.2) and the fact that in the famous verse (Rig. X.85.36) which is employed even to day in the marriage ceremony the husband says to the bride when taking hold of her hand that the gods gave her to him for *gārhapatya* (for attaining the position of a house-owner or householder) establish that the second stage of the householder was well-known to the Rig Veda. There is nothing in the Vedic Literature expressly corresponding to the *vānaprastha*. It may however be stated that the Tandyā Maha-brahmana 14.4.7 says that *vaikhānasa* sages were the favourites of Indra and that one Rahasya Devamalimluc killed them in a place called Muni-maraṇa.

*Vaikhānasa* means 'vānaprastha' in the *sūtras* and it is possible that this is the germ of the idea of vānaprastha. 'Yati' used in the *sūtras* and *smṛtis* to indicate the fourth *āśrama* of *sannyāsa* does occur in the oldest Vedic texts. But there the meaning appears to be different. In the Rig. the word 'yati' occurs several times. But the sense is doubtful.

'whereby when wealth was bestowed on Bhrgu and on *yatis* (or 'on Bhrgu from *yatis*') you protected Praskanva'. (Rig. VIII.3.9)

'Indra, the *yatis* and those who were Bhrgus praised thee'; (Rig. VIII.6.18)

'O gods, when you filled the worlds as the *yatis* (did) you brought the sun hidden in the sea'. (Rig. X.72.7)

'Indra threw *yatis* to the *sālāvṛkas* (hyaenas or wolves), they devoured them to the south of the Uttaravedi.' (Tai.S. VI.2.7.5)

The same words and story occur in the Kāthaka *Samhita* VIII.5, the Ait. Br.35.2 (*prādāt*) and the Kausītaki Up. III.1; in the last Indra said to Pratārdana:—

'Do know me only; I regard this as the most beneficial thing to man that he should know me. I killed the three-headed Tvastra, I gave to the *sālāvṛkas* the Arunmukha *yatis*.'

In the Kāthaka *Samhita* (IV.10) and the Tai. S. II.4, 9.2 it is stated that the heads of the *yatis* when they were being devoured fell aside and they (the heads) became the *kharjuras* (date palms). Atharva Veda II 5.3. says:—

'Indra, who is quick in his attack, who is Mitra and who killed Vrtra as he did the *yatis*.'

In the Tandyā Maha-brahmana VIII.1.4 Brhadgirī is said to be one of the three *yatis* who escaped from slaughter and who were then taken under his protection by Indra. All these passages taken together suggest that the *yatis* were people who had incurred the hostility of Indra, the patron of the Aryas, that they were slaughtered by the Aryas with the help of Indra and their bodies were thrown to the wolves and that they seem to have something to do with a country where the date-palm grew and that a few of them who escaped slaughter subsequently were won over and became the worshippers of Indra (and therefore in Rig. VIII.6.18 they are described as praising Indra). So originally they were probably beyond the pale of the Vedic Aryans. If there is any connection between *yati* and *yātu* (sorcery) which seems possible, the *yatis* were probably non-vedic sorcerers.

In the Rig. X, 136.2, there is a reference to munis, who are wind-girt and who put on brownish dirt (dirty garments). In Rig. VIII. 17.14 Indra is said to be the friend of munis (*Indro muninām sakha*) and in Rig.X.136.4 muni is said to be the friend of all gods. So it appears that even in the times of the Rig Veda persons who led a life of poverty, contemplation and mortification were known, and

were honoured and called *munis*, while persons corresponding to them among non-vedic people were probably called *yatis*. But in both these words there is no idea of a certain stage in a well-knit scheme of life. Perhaps the earliest reference to the four āśramas, though somewhat obscure, occurs in the Ait. Br.33.11:—

'what (use is there) of dirt, what use of antelope skin, what use of (growing) the beard, what is the use of tapas ? O ! brahmanas ! desire a son, he is a world that is to be highly praised.'

Here it is clear that *ajina* refers to *brahmacārya*, *śmaśruni* to *vānaprasthas* (since accord to Manu VI.6 and Gaut III.33 (the *vānaprastha* had to grow his hair, beard and nails). Therefore '*malam*' and '*tapas*' must be taken respectively as indicating the householder and the *sannyāsin*.<sup>142</sup> A much clearer reference to three āśramas occurs in the Chandogya Up. II.23.1:—

'there are three branches of dharma, the first (is constituted by) sacrifice, study and charity (i.e. by the stage of householder), the second is (constituted by the performance of) tapas (i.e. the *vānaprastha*), the third is the *brahmacārī* staying in the house of his teacher and wearing himself out till death in the teacher's house; all these attain to the worlds of the meritorious; but one who (has correctly understood brahma) and abides in it attains immortality'.

*Tapas* is a characteristic of both *vānaprastha* and *parivrājaka*. Therefore in this passage it is possible to hold that the three āśramas (of student, householder and *vānaprastha*) are mentioned. The last clause about '*brahmasamstha*' differentiates the three āśramas from him who has knowledge of Brahman and holds fast by it. That portion says that the consequence of the knowledge of Brahman is immortality; but it does not say expressly or by implication that the stage of *parivrājaka* is a means of attaining the knowledge of Brahman. So one may doubt whether *sannyāsa* as an āśrama is spoken of here, but there can be no doubt that the other three are clearly indicated here. Probably in the time of the Chandogya there was no clear line of demarcation between the āśramas of *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa* and they rather coalesced into each other.) Chan. Up. V.10.1 and Br ill). VI.2.15 support this conclusion.

In the Br. Up. III.5.1 there is a reference to brahmanas who on apprehending correctly the Supreme Spirit turn away from the desires of progeny, wealth and of securing holy worlds and practise begging. Begging is a characteristic of *sannyāsa* in the sūtras. Yājñavalkya in the Br. Up. IV.5.2. tells his wife Maitreyī that he was going into a life of *pravrajyā* from being a householder. Mundaka Up. 1:2:11 refers to begging for him who has knowledge of Brahman and Mundaka III.2.6 mentions '*sannyāsa*'. In the Jābālopaniṣad (4) it is said that Janaka asked Yājñavalkya to expound *sannyāsa* and then the four āśramas are distinctly set out:—

'After finishing the stage of student-hood, one should become a householder; after becoming a householder one should become a forest-dweller, after being a forest-dweller, one should renounce the world; or he may do otherwise viz. he may renounce the world after the stage of student-hood itself or after being an householder or from the forest. (The very day on which he becomes desireless, he should renounce the world (become a *sannyāsin*)'.

Probably this passage was not before the author of the Vedānta-sūtra or he did not regard the Jābālopaniṣad as very authoritative; otherwise there would hardly have been any need for the Vedānta-sūtrakāra (in the Vedānta-sūtra III.4.18-20) to hold a discussion on Chāṇḍogya II.23.1.

It is clear that in the times of the earliest Upaniṣads at least three (if not four) āśramas were known and that all four were known by their *specific* names to the Jābālopaniṣad. In the Svetāśvataropaniṣad (VI.21) we have the word '*atyāśramibhyaḥ*'. It is said there that the sage Svetāśvataropaniṣad, who acquired knowledge of Brahma, proclaimed the knowledge to those who had risen above the mere observances of āśramas.

142 *malam* probably refers to sexual intercourse, *tapas*: may indicate the *vānaprastha* (Gaut. III.25) or *sannyāsin* (Manu VI.75 requires a *sannyāsin* to undergo severe *tapas*).

No scholar Eastern or Western places Panini later than 300 B.C.E. He knew Bhikṣu-sūtras composed by Pārāśarya and Karmanda and he tells us that the word 'maskarin' means *parivrājaka*. As sūtra works about 'bhikṣus' were composed before Panini, this āśrama of *bhikṣus* must have been an established institution centuries before Panini. Buddhism took over this mode of life (*pabbajjā* as the Pali works say) from the brahmanical system.

It has been already stated that the goals of existence were deemed to be four, viz, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. The highest goal was *mokṣa*. All ancient Indian philosophy (whether Vedānta, Sāṅkhya or Nyāya) held that liberation from the never-ending cycle of births and deaths, and escape from the three kinds of suffering — *duhkha* were the highest good. The *summum bonum* consisted in non-return (*anāvṛttih*) to the world of pleasures and sorrows. The Chan. Up. VIII.15.1 winds up with the words 'and he does not return'.<sup>143</sup> This supreme goal had fascinated all noble minds in whatever sphere of life they might have been working. The greatest poet and dramatist of classical Sanskrit ends his most famous drama (the *śakuntala*) with the prayer:— 'may self-existent God Siva destroy for me rebirth!'

This state of liberation or release is variously called *mokṣa* or *mukti*, *amṛtatva*, *niḥśreyasa*, *kaivalya* (by the Sāṅkhyas) or *apavarga* (Nyāya-sūtra I.1.2). For attaining this state one must know and realize that there is only one Reality underlying all existence (and no plurality) and become disgusted with the passions and temptations of the world i.e. he must have *nirveda* and *vairāgya* (as stated in the Br. Up. III.5.1 or Mundaka I.2.12). Merely reading from the books that desirelessness is necessary for release and immediately giving up the world would not serve the purpose. The person would be hankering, as the Bhagavadgīta says, after pleasures that have been renounced. Therefore the ancient Indian writers devised according their their lights a scheme which is embodied in the theory and practice of the āśramas.

In *brahmacārya* the individual goes through the discipline of the will and the emotions, makes himself acquainted with the literary treasure's of the past and learns obedience, respect, plain living and high thinking. Then he marries, becomes a householder, tastes the pleasures of the world, enjoys life, has offspring, discharges his duties to his children, to his friends, relatives and neighbours and becomes a useful, industrious and worthy citizen, the founder of a family. It is supposed that by the time he is fifty years or so he has become convinced of the futility of human appetites and the pleasures of the world and is, therefore, called upon to resort to a forest life for pondering over the great problem of the life hereafter and to accustom himself to self-abnegation, austerities and a harmless life. This would lead on to the last stage, viz. *sannyāsa*. He may succeed in this very life in realizing the supreme goal of *mokṣa* or he may have to continue to rise in spiritual height until after several births and deaths the goal is in view.

The theory of *varṇa* dealt with a person as a member of the Aryan society and laid down what his rights, functions, privileges, responsibilities and duties were as a member of that society. The theory of *āśramas* addressed itself to the individual. It tells him what his spiritual goal is, how he is to order his life and what preparations are required to attain that goal. The theory of *āśramas* was truly a sublime conception and if owing to the exigencies of the times, the conflicts of interests and distractions of life, the scheme could not even in ancient times be carried out fully by every individual and seems to have failed in modern times, the fault does not lie with the originators of this conception. Deussen was constrained to say (in E.R.E. under *aśrama*):—

'how far the practice corresponded to this theory given, in Manu and other law books, we do not know; but we are free to confess that in our opinion the whole history of mankind has not much that equals the grandeur of this thought '

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143 The Br. Up. VI.2.15, Prasna Up. I.10 and others say the same.

and again in 'The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads' (tr. by Geden, 1906) p.367:— 'the entire history of mankind does not produce much that approaches in grandeur to this thought'.

The three āśramas of householder, forest hermit and *sannyāsa* will be dealt with in detail hereafter. Only one question about āśramas in general remains to be discussed. With reference to the four āśramas, there are three different points of view (*pakṣas*) viz. *Samuccaya* (orderly co-ordination), *vikalpa* (option) and *bādha* (annulment or contradiction).

Those who hold the first view (*samuccaya*) say that a person can resort to the four āśramas one after another in order and that he cannot drop any one or more and pass on to the next nor can he resort to the householder's life after becoming a *sannyāsin* (vide Dakṣa I.8-9, Vedānta-sūtra III.4.40) e.g. a man cannot take *sannyāsa* immediately after *brahmacārya*. Manu (IV.1, VI.1.33-37, 87-88) is the prime supporter of this view. The first part of the Jābālopaniṣad quoted above refers to this view. This view does not regard marriage and sexual life as impure or inferior to asceticism and on the contrary places it on a higher plane than asceticism. On the whole the tendency of most of the Dharma Śāstras is to glorify the status of an house-holder and push into the background the two āśramas of *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*, so much so that certain works say that these are forbidden in the Kali age.

The second view *vikalpa*, is that there is an option after *brahmacārya* i.e. one may be come a *parivrājaka* immediately after he finishes his study or immediately after the householder's way of life. This view is put forward by the Jābālopaniṣad as an alternative to the first view of *samuccaya*. This is the view also of Vasistha VII.3, Laghu Viṣṇu III.1, and Yaj. III.56. Āp. Dh. S. (II.9.21.7-8 and II.9.22.7-8) seems to favour this view.

The third view of *bādha* is held by the ancient Dharma Sūtras of Gautama and Baudhāyana. They hold that there is really one āśrama viz. that of the householder (*brahmacārya* being only preparatory to it) and that the other āśramas are inferior to that of the householder.<sup>144</sup>

Many other sūtrakāras<sup>145</sup> praise the āśrama of householder as the highest. Baud. Dh. S. (II.6.29 ff) says the same as Gautama and it relies upon the fact that the āśramas other than that of householder do not beget offspring and quotes Vedic passages viz.— 'may we, O Agni, attain immortality through progeny' (Rig. V.4.10 = Tai. S. I.4.46.1) and — 'a brahmana when born is born involved in three debts, viz. he owes *brahmacārya* to the sages, sacrifice to the gods, and progeny to pitṛs' (Tai. S. VI.3.10.5). According to Brahma-sūtra III.4.18 Jaimini held this view, while Badarayana seems to have been of the opinion that all āśramas are enjoined (ibid. III.4.19-20). Those who hold this view (*bādha*) rely on such Vedic passages such as:—

'one should offer agnihotra as long as life lasts' or

'indeed Agnihotra is a satra (sacrificial session) that lasts till one dies by old age' (Sat. Br. XII.4.1.1), 'one should desire to live a hundred years performing religious acts' (Vaj. S.40.2),

'after bringing to the teacher wealth desired by him, do not cut off the thread of progeny' (Tai. Up. I.11.1).

The Mit. on Yaj. III.56 sets out these three views and says that each is supported by Vedic texts and one may follow any one of the three. Āp. Dh.S. (II.9.21.2) held the view that whatever āśrama out of the four one followed, one attained happiness if one performed its duties according to the sastra and after a lengthy discussion Āp. arrives at the conclusion that there is no distinction due to superiority among the four āśramas.

There were some who thought that the householder's life was the rule and the other āśramas were

144 Vide Gautama (III.1 and 35) where he first refers to the view about *vikalpa* (option) and emphatically says that there is only one āśrama.

145 Manu VI.89-90, III.77-80, Vas. Dh. S. VIII.14-17, Dakṣa II.57-60, Viṣṇu Dh. S.59.29

for the blind and other incapable persons. The Mit. on Yaj. III.56 refutes this view.

The word āśrama is derived from '*śram*' to exert, to labour and etymologically means 'a stage in which one exerts oneself'.<sup>146</sup>

Commentators like Sarvajna-Narāyana on Manu VI.35 endeavour to bring about reconciliation between the three views set out above as follows: the view that a man may pass on to *sannyāsa* immediately after the period of student-hood (without being a householder) applies only to those persons who are, owing to the impressions and effects of restrained conduct in past lives, entirely free from desires and whose tongue, sexual appetites, belly and words are thoroughly under control; the prescriptions of Manu enjoining on men not to resort to *sannyāsa* without paying off the three debts are concerned with those whose appetites have not yet thoroughly been brought under control and the words of Gautama that there is only one āśrama (that of the house-holder) relate only to those whose appetites for worldly pleasures and pursuits are quite keen.

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<sup>146</sup> *āśramyanti asmin iti āśramaḥ*. From this sense arose the meaning of 'hermitage'.

## CHAPTER 9

### MARRIAGE

This is the most important of all *saṃskāras*. Throughout the ages for which literary tradition is available in India marriage has been highly thought of. The several words that are employed to denote the idea of marriage indicate one or more of the elements of the *saṃskāra* of marriage. Such words are *udvāha* (taking the girl out of her parental home), *vivāha* (taking the girl away in a special way or for a special purpose i.e. for making her one's wife), *pariṇaya* or *pariṇayana* (going round i.e. making a pradakṣiṇā to fire), *upayama* (to bring near and make one's own), and *pāṇigrahaṇa* (taking the hand of the girl). Though these words express only one component element of the rite of marriage they are all used in the Śāstras to indicate the totality of the several acts that go to make up the ceremony of marriage. The word 'vivāha' occurs in the Tai. S. VII.2.87 and Ait. Br. (27.5). In the Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa VII.10.1 it is said that:—

"heaven and earth were once together but they became separate", then they said "let us bring about a marriage, let there be a co-operation between us."

Before dwelling upon the various aspects of marriage, the question, whether our authorities point to a state of society when there was no institution of marriage, but there was only promiscuity, requires to be considered. The Vedic works contain no indications about a society in which the relations of the sexes were promiscuous and unregulated. In the Mahābhārata, however, Pāṇḍu is made to state to his queen Kunti that women in former ages were under no control, indulged themselves as they liked and that they left off one man and went after another, and that this state of things continued to his (Pāṇḍu's) day in the country of Uttara Kuru, that it was Śvetaketu, son of Uddālaka, who for the first time stopped all this license and laid down the rule that if a woman proved false to her husband or if a husband was false to a chaste wife, very grave sin would be incurred. In the Sabhāparva (31.37-38) it is said that through the favour of Agnī women in Māhiṣmatī did what they liked and could not be restrained. These passages cannot be relied upon for proving promiscuity of intercourse. In the first place, the country of Uttara Kuru is more or less mythical. This passage rather gives expression to what the poet imagined about remotest ages and not what he knew was the real state of society thousands of years before him. The theory of an original state of promiscuity once advanced by several sociologists has now ceased to be respectable (vide Mrs. M. Cole in 'Marriage, past and present' p.10.)

The purpose of marriage, even according to the Rig Veda, was to enable a man, by becoming a householder, to perform sacrifices to the gods and to procreate sons. The verse in Rig Veda X.85.36 shows that the husband took a woman as a wife for '*gārhapatya*'. Rig Veda V.3.2, V.28.3 speak of the co-operation of husband and wife in the worship of gods. Rig Veda III.53.4 contains the emphatic assertion 'the wife herself is the home' (*jāyed-astam*). In later literature also the same statement occurs. A wife was called '*jāya*', because the husband was born in the wife as a son (Ait. Br. 33.1). The Sat. Br. V.2.1.10 says:—

'The wife is indeed half of one's self; therefore as long as a man does not secure a wife so long he does not beget a son and so he is till then not complete (or whole); but when he secures a wife he gets progeny and then he becomes complete'.

The Ait. Ar. (I.2.4) says:— 'therefore a man, after securing a wife, regards himself as more complete'. When Āp. Dh. S. II.5.11.12 forbids taking a second wife if the first is endowed with progeny and the performance of religious rites, it indicates that the main purposes of marriage are two, viz. the wife enables a man to perform religious rites and is the mother of a son or sons who were supposed to save a man from hell. Manu (IX.28) states that on the wife depend the procreation of sons, the performance of religious rites, service, highest pleasure, heaven for oneself and for one's ancestors. So these three viz; *dharma-sampatti*, *prajā* (and consequent freedom from falling



into hell) and *rati* (sexual and other pleasures) are the principal purposes of marriage according to the *smṛtis* and *nibandhas*. Yāj. I.78 is to the same effect. Jaimini (VI.1.17) establishes that husband and wife have to perform sacrifices together and not separately and Āp. Dh. S.1017 II.6.13.16-17 emphatically says that there can be no separation between husband and wife, for since marriage they have to perform religious acts jointly.

Marriage is a composite rite comprising several subordinate elements which have to be done in a certain order, and the last of which is seeing the constellation of the seven sages; it (the rite) brings about the status of a woman as a person's wife.

### Qualities of the Groom

The first consideration is: how to choose a bridegroom and what qualifications make a person a very desirable bridegroom. Asv. gr. (I.5.2) says:– ‘one should give a maiden (in marriage) to a man endowed with intelligence’. The Āp. gr. (3.20) remarks:–

"The accomplishments of a bridegroom are that he must be endowed with good family, a good character, auspicious characteristics, learning and good health".

Baud. Dh. S. IV.1.12 states:–

‘A maiden should be given in marriage to one who is endowed with good qualities and who is a celibate (till then)’.

Even the Śākuntala (IV) echoes the words of Baudhāyana:–

‘the best idea is to give one's daughter to a man endowed with good qualities’.

Yama quoted in the Sm. C. (I. p.78) says:–

‘One should seek for seven qualities in a bridegroom viz. good family, good character, bodily appearance, fame, learning, wealth and support (of relatives and friends); the other matters need not be considered’.

Bṛhat-parāśara (p.118) enumerates eight qualities in a bridegroom viz. caste, learning, youth, strength, health, support of many (friends etc.), ambitions (*arthitva*), and possession of wealth. Aśv.gr. (I.5.1) and others place *kula* (a good family) in the forefront in the case of both the bride and the bridegroom. ‘One should first examine the family (of the intended bride or bridegroom) as it has been said above (in the Aśv. Śrauta sūtra IX.3)’. The Aśv. Śrauta reads:–

‘Those who on their mother's as well as their father's side through ten generations are endowed with learning, austerity and meritorious works or whose pure brāhmaṇa lineage can be traced on both sides (for ten generations) or according to some on the father's side.’

Manu regarded a good family as the most important from the eugenic point of view. In IV.244 he says ‘one who desires to raise his family to excellence and eminence should always enter into marriage alliances with the best and avoid alliance with the low’; and adds (III.6-7) :–

‘That ten kinds of families even though richly endowed with cattle, wealth etc. should be avoided in marriage, viz., in which the *saṃskāras* are not performed, in which there is no male progeny, which are devoid of Veda (study), which have hairy members, that suffer from piles or consumption or indigestion or epilepsy, white or black leprosy.’

Manu (III.63-65) explains under what circumstances good families are reduced to a bad state. Hārīta states that the offspring is in accordance with the (qualities of the) family of the parents. The Harṣacarita (IV) gives expression to the view that generally the wise look to good family first even though there may be other qualities in the bridegroom. Manu II.238, however, allows a man to marry a girl even from an inferior or bad family provided she is a jewel among women.

Yāj. (I.54-55) emphasizes the importance of a good family famed for ten generations and freedom from diseases that are hereditarily transmitted and adds that the bride groom must be young, intelligent, a favourite among the people and his virility must be carefully tested. The Mitākṣara on Yāj. 1.55 quotes Nārada (*strīpūṃsa*) who mentions some characteristics of the virile man and enumerates fourteen varieties of impotent persons (verses 11-13).

Kātyāyana mentions what defective bridegrooms are to be avoided, viz., the lunatic, one guilty of grave sins, leprous, impotent, one of the same *gotra*, one bereft of eyesight or hearing, an epileptic and adds that these defects are to be avoided even among brides. The Mahābhārata observes:–

'friendship and marriage should take place between those alone whose wealth is similar and whose learning (i.e. the learning in whose families) is of equal status, not between opulent (well-off) and the poverty-stricken'.

Though Manu and Yāj indicate that impotent persons are not eligible for marriage, yet such persons rarely married. Their marriages were held valid by Manu, Yāj and others and their sons (by *niyoga*) took property as if they were *aurasa* sons.<sup>147</sup>

The Saṃskāra-prakāśa (pp.752-754) contains a long discussion on the question how from bodily characteristics one can find whether a man will live long or what his prospects would be. These are passed over for want of space.

### Qualities of the Bride

Rules for the selection of the bride are far more elaborate than those for selecting a bridegroom, though in some respects they are the same (such as about the necessity of good family, about the absence of diseases, etc.)<sup>148</sup> Even the Śat. Br. (I.2.5.16) gives expression to the then view that broad hips and slender waists make women attractive. Aśv. gr. I.5.3 says:–

'one should marry a girl who is endowed with intelligence, beauty, a good character and auspicious characteristics and who is healthy'.

Śān. gr. I.5.6 and Manu III.4 and Yāj I.52 also require that the girl should be possessed of auspicious characteristics (or indications). These (*lakṣaṇas*) are of two kinds, *bāhya* (visible or bodily characteristics) and *ābhyantara* (invisible). Āp.gr. (III.21) states a commonsense rule:–

'a girl on whom his mind and eyes are riveted will bring him happiness (or prosperity), he should pay no heed to other things; this is the view of some'.

The Kāmasūtra quotes the view of Ghotakamukha:–

'He should proceed to marry a girl on taking whom as his wife he would regard himself as blessed and would not be blamed by his friends (or persons in a similar station in life)'.

Manu III.8 and 10, Viṣṇu Dh. S.24.12-16 say that one should not marry a girl having tawny hair or having an excessive limb (such as a sixth finger) or a deficient limb, who is hairless or very hairy, who is talkative and has yellowish eyes; but should marry a girl who has limbs void of any defect, whose gait is like that of a swan or an elephant, the hair on whose head or body is of slight growth and whose teeth are small, whose body is delicate. The Viṣṇu purāṇa (III.10.18-22) adds that the girl must not have a marked growth of hair on her chin or lip, her voice must not be hoarse or like that of a crow; her legs and ankles must not be very hairy, there should be no dimples on her cheeks when she laughs, she should not be very dwarfish or very tall etc.

Manu III.9 and Āp. gr. (III.13) say that the girl to be married must not bear names of the lunar mansions (such as Revatī, Ardra etc.), trees or rivers, she must not bear a *mleccha* name or that of a

<sup>147</sup> Vide Manu IX.203 and Yāj II.141-142.

<sup>148</sup> Vide Vas I.38, Viṣṇu Dh. S.24.11, Kāmasūtra III.1.2.

mountain, of a bird, of a snake or of a slave or a name that is terrific. Āp. gr. (III.14) and Kāmasūtra III.1.13 mention that a girl should not be chosen, the penultimate letter of whose name is r or l (such as Gaurī, Śālī, Kamalū). Nārada (*strī puṃsayoga* 36) says that defects of girls are as follows:—

‘When they suffer from long-standing or disgusting diseases, when they are devoid of a limb or have already had connection with an other man, when they are wicked or have their minds fixed on another.’

and Āp. gr. (III.11-12) states other defects of girls, viz., one should not choose a girl who is asleep or weeps or has left the house when persons come to see whether she can be chosen. (Vide Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa 34.76-77 for *guṇas* and defects of girls as 'brides').

Bhār. gr. 1.11 says that there are four inducing reasons for marrying a particular girl, viz., wealth, beauty, intelligence and family. If all four cannot be secured, wealth may be neglected (as the least important of all); then beauty may be neglected if there is intelligence and good family, but there is a difference of view as to the latter two, some preferring intelligence to family and others family to intelligence. Mānava gr. (I.7.6-7) adds a fifth inducement for marriage, viz., *vidya* (learning) after beauty and before *prajñā*. (Vide also Varaha gr.10.)

### Choosing a Bride

Some of the *grhyasūtras* propose a peculiar mystical method of selecting a bride. The Āśv. gr. (I.5.3), after stating that one should select a girl endowed with good characteristics (*lakṣaṇas*), proceeds '*lakṣaṇas* are very difficult to discern' and therefore prescribes (I.5.5-6) that eight lumps of different kinds of earth should be taken respectively from a field that yields two crops a year, from a cow-stable, from a *vedī* (sacrificial altar, after sacrifice is performed), from a pool of water that does not dry up, from a gambling place, from a place where four roads meet, from a barren spot, and from a burial ground; then he should recite over the lumps the formula:—

'*ṛta* (right) has been born first in the beginning; truth is founded (or fixed) in *ṛta*; may this girl attain here that for which she is born; may what is true be visible;'

then he says to the girl, 'take one of these'. According as she chooses the lump, it may respectively be deemed that she will have offspring rich in food (if she chooses the lump of the earth taken from the field of two crops a year etc.), or rich in cattle, or rich in spiritual lustre or rich in everything, or addicted to gambling, or wandering in different directions or poor, or that she will bring death to her husband (if she takes the lump of the earth from the burial ground).

The Gobhila gr. II.1.4-9 speaks of these lumps and adds that a ninth lump may be formed by mixing up the earths of all eight varieties and that if she takes up any one of the four lumps of earth from an altar, furrow, a pool or a cow-stable or (according to some) the ninth lump, she may be selected. The Laugākṣi gr.14.4-7 contains the same rules as in Gobhila.

Āp. gr. (HI. 15-18) prescribes a somewhat different method. If both sides agree, the bridegroom (or his friends) should place in one lump of earth several kinds of seeds (such as rice, barley etc.); he should take (a lump having in it) the dust from an altar, a third having a clod from a ploughed field, a lump having cowdung inside and (a fifth having) a clod of earth from a cemetery and keep them before the girl ask her to touch one of them (the five). If she touches any one of the first four, that is an indication of future prosperity (of the nature of the object touched), but the last (viz., a clod of earth from the cemetery) is objectionable.

The Varaha gr. 10 and Bhar. gr. 1. 11 speak of only four lumps of earth viz. from a field, from an altar, from a cow-stable, and from a cemetery and say that one should not marry a girl who takes up the lump of cemetery earth. Mānava gr. (I.7.9-10) speaks of eight lumps but substitutes a lump of

earth where *dūrvā* grows and a lump from under a tree filled with fruit for earth from a pool of water and one from a gambling place and adds that the eight lumps should be placed in a temple and if the girl takes up the lump from a cemetery or from a barren spot or from where four roads meet she should not be married. Many digests like the Gr. R. (pp.13-22) contain long quotations which dilate upon the indications about the auspiciousness or otherwise of girls from their several physical features.

Gaut. IV.1, Vas. 8.1, Manava gr. I.7.8, Yāj. I.52 and several others say that the girl must be younger than the bridegroom by at least three years. The Mitākṣara on Yāj. I.52 explains '*yavīyasī*' as meaning 'younger in age and smaller in stature' (than the bridegroom). What the age of marriage was will be discussed a little below.

Gaut. IV.1, Vas.8.1, Yāj I.52, Manu (III.4 and 12) and others say that one should marry only a girl who is a virgin and of the same caste. How far widow-marriages and intercaste marriages were allowed would be discussed later on.

### Brotherless Brides

The Manava. gr. 1. 7. 8, Manu III 11 and Yāj. 1, 53 require that the girl to be chosen must not be brotherless. This requirement, which has been not in force for centuries, has a long history behind it. In Rig I. 124. 7 it is said:-

'As a brotherless maiden comes back towards her male relations (her father's family), so the dawn reveals objects (or her beauty).'

In the Atharva Veda I.17.1 we read:-

'Like brotherless women let them sit still with their splendour gone'.

Both these passages are quoted and explained in the Nirukta III.4-5. In ancient times when a man had no son, he could make his daughter do for a son (i.e. she herself became *putrikā*) and stipulate with the person marrying her that the son born of her would be his (i.e. the girl's father's) son and would offer *piṇḍas* as a son to his maternal grandfather. The result would be that the son of such a girl would not offer *piṇḍas* to his father and would not continue the line of his father. Rig. III.31.1 (a very obscure and difficult verse) has been explained by the Nirukta (III. 4) as referring to the practice of declaring a daughter to be one's son. Therefore, brotherless maidens were not chosen as brides, and the Rig Veda speaks of spinsters growing old in their parental home (Rig Veda II. 17. 7).

Vas. Dh. S.17.16 refers to Rig Veda 1.124.7 and quotes a verse about a brotherless girl. Such a daughter at whose marriage the father made the stipulation stated above was called *putrikā* and according to Gaut.28.17 some teachers went so far as to say that a daughter became a *putrikā* by the mental resolve of the father alone (without there being an express agreement with the bridegroom). It is therefore that Manu (3.11) ordains that one should not marry a girl that has no brother, as there is the danger of her being a *putrikā*. The Nirukta (III.5) quotes another Vedic passage:-

'One should not marry a brotherless woman, for she becomes the son of him (her father)'

and remarks that in this passage there is a direct prohibition against marrying a brotherless maiden (while in the passage of the Atharva Veda it is indirect, being involved in a simile) and it is also expressly said that she becomes the son of her father. In medieval times this prohibition against marrying a brotherless girl gradually was ignored and in modern times the pendulum has swung the other way; a brotherless girl being a coveted prize if her father be rich.

In course of time popular feeling changed and no girl could remain unmarried if she wanted heavenly worlds. There is an interesting story in the Śalya-parva chap.52 of the daughter of

Kuṅigarga who, when told by Nārada that an unmarried woman could not secure heaven, married for one day Śṛṅgavat and then went to heaven.

### Endogamy & Exogamy

There are further restrictions about choosing a girl for marriage. The rule was that a man should marry a girl of the same caste. So far there is what is called endogamy (i.e. rule requiring marriage within a certain large community). But within this large community there were certain groups which were prohibited for marriage to a person belonging to another group of the same caste or community (i.e. the principle of exogamy operated within the large community itself). The Hir. gr.1.19.2, Gobhila gr. III. 4.4, Āp. Dh. S. II. 5.11.15 require that the bride to be chosen must not belong to the same *gotra* as that of the bridegroom. They are all silent about the sameness of *pravara*. Gaut IV.2., Vas. Db. S. VIII.1, Mānava gr. I.7.8, Varāha gr. 9, Śaṅkha<sup>1036</sup> Dh. S. forbid marriage with a girl whose *pravara* (or *ārṣeya*) is the same as that of the bridegroom; but they say nothing about the prohibition against the sameness of *gotra*.

It is somewhat remarkable that some of the *gṛhyasūtras* like Aśvalāyana and Par. say not a word about sameness of *gotra* and *pravara*. Viṣṇu Dh. S.24.9, Vaik. III, 2, Yāj I.53, Nārada (*strīpumsa*, verse 7), Vedavyasa II.2 and many others prohibit sameness of *gotra* as well as of *pravara*.

Gobhila gr. III. 4.5, Manu III. 5, Vaik, III. 2 and Āp. Dh. S. II. 5.11.16 require that the bride must not be a *sapiṇḍa* or blood relation of the mother of the bridegroom; while Grant IV.2, Vas. VIII.2, Viṣṇu Dh. S. 24.10, Vārāha gr. 9, Śaṅkha Dh. (quoted above), Yāj, I. 53 and others restrict the prohibition against marrying a *sapiṇḍa* girl to seven degrees on the father's side and five degrees on the mother's side.

There were others like the Vedavyāsa-smṛti which not only prohibited marriage with a girl who had the same *gotra* as the bride groom's, but prohibited marriage with a girl whose mother's *gotra* was the same as the bridegroom's.

All these prohibitions against marrying a *sagotra*, *sappravara* or *sapiṇḍa* girl are extremely important, as the following considerations will show. It is a canon of the Pūrva-mīmāṃsā that if there is a seen (*drṣṭa*) or easily perceptible reason for a rule stated in the sacred texts, it is only recommendatory and a breach of such a rule does not nullify the principal act. But if there is an unseen (*adrṣṭa*) reason for a rule and there is a breach of such rule, the principal act itself is rendered invalid and nugatory thereby. The rule about not marrying a woman who is diseased or who has superfluous or deficient limbs has a seen reason, viz., marriage with such a girl causes unhappiness (if she is diseased) or comment (if she has deficient limbs). Therefore, if a person marries such a girl the marriage is perfectly valid. But there is no seen or easily perceptible reason for the prohibition against marrying a *sagotra* or *sappravara* girl. Therefore, such rules go to the root of the matter and are obligatory and, if there is a breach of them, the marriage is no marriage; it is null and void. So even if a person goes through a ceremony of marriage with a girl who is a *sagotra* or *sappravara* or *sapiṇḍa* (within prohibited degrees) she does not in law become his wife at all.

These principles are very lucidly set forth by Medhātithī on Manu III.11, by the Mitākṣara on Yāj I.53, the Madanapārijāta and other works. Therefore, these questions of *sagotra*, *sappravara* and *sapiṇḍa* will be dealt with at some length later on.

### Marrigeable Age

The question of the age of marriage for men and women will now be considered. This is a very interesting and instructive study. The age of marriage for both sexes has varied considerably from age to age, from province to province and also from caste to caste even at the same time. As regards

men there is no special rule as to the age before which a man was obliged to marry. A man could remain celibate all his life, while at least in medieval and modern times marriage has been absolutely necessary for every girl. A man was to marry after he had finished his Vedic studies; but the period of Vedic study was fluctuating (i.e. it could be 12, 24, 36, 48 years or as much time as was necessary to master one Veda or a portion of it). Usually twelve years were devoted to brahmacharya in ancient times and as upanayana ordinarily took place in the 8<sup>th</sup> year (for *brāhmaṇas*) a man would ordinarily be 20 years old or more at the time of marriage. It is therefore that Manu (IX.94) remarks that a man of 30 may marry a girl of 12 years or a man of 24 who is in a hurry to become a house holder may marry a girl of 8. Basing on this the Viṣṇu purāṇa (III, 10.16) says that the ages of the bride and bridegroom should be in the ratio of 1 to 3. Āṅgīras says that the bride should be two, three, five or more years younger. In the Mahābhārata Gāutama is prepared to give his daughter in marriage to Uttanka if he could be a youth of 16 years. In another place the Mahābhārata (Sabha 64.14 and Vanaparva 5.15) uses the simile of a maiden not liking a husband of 60 years. That shows that girls were sometimes married to even old men of 60 in those days as rarely in modern times also. In the Mahābhārata (Anuśāsana 44.14) the respective ages of the bridegroom and bride are recommended as 30 and 10 or 21 and 7; while the Udvāha-tattva (p.123) and S. Pr. p.766 quote a verse from the Mahābhārata that a man of 30 should marry a girl of 16 (but from the metre and context; it appears that '*śoḍaśa-varṣam*' as printed should be '*daśa-varṣam*').

In the Rig Veda there are no clear statements about the exact age when girls were married. But there are indications that many girls were married at a sufficiently mature age (at least they were not married at the tender age of 8). We have already seen (p.435) that brotherless girls often remained unmarried till old age. One of the benevolent deeds of the Āśvins is that they bestowed a husband on Ghoṣā who was growing old in her father's house.<sup>149</sup>

In Rig Veda X.27.12 it is said:—

'when a bride is fine looking and well adorned, she by herself seeks her friend from among men'.

That shows that girls were grown-up enough to select their husbands. Some of the verses in the marriage hymn (such as Rig Veda X. 85. 26-27, 46) indicate that married girls could not have been child-wives, but must have been grown-up. On the other hand in Rig Veda 1.116.1 it is said that the Nāsatyas (Āśvins) bestowed a wife on Vimada who was an *arbhaga* (of tender age). But all that is meant seems to be that Vimada was a mere boy as compared with his rival kings who had come as suitors. The two verses Rig Veda I. 126. 6-7 (which are rather too naive) indicate that girls were married before they had attained puberty. In Rig I. 51. 13 Indra is said to have given to old Kakṣīvat a wife named Vṛcayā who is styled '*arbhā*' (young). But that word is only used in contradistinction to the word '*mahate*' (grown old) applied to Kakṣīvat and conveys no idea of her exact age. On the whole one may conclude that in the period of the R̥g Veda girls were probably married at any age (either before puberty or after puberty) and sometimes remained spinsters all their life. The other Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas do not shed much light on the question of the age of marriage for girls. In the Chan. Up. Uṣasti Cakrāyaṇa is described as dwelling in the Kuru country with his wife, who is said to have been '*āṭikī*' which Śaṃkara explains as 'a mere undeveloped girl'.

Coming to the ancient *gṛhya* and *dharma sūtras*, it will be seen from several considerations that girls were married just before the time of puberty or immediately after it. Among the several requirements of the bride to be chosen several *gṛhya sūtras* lay down that she must be a '*nagnikā*'.<sup>150</sup> The word '*nagnikā*' is variously explained by the commentators. Māṭṛdatta on Hir. gr. explains that '*nagnikā*' means 'one whose menstrual period is near', i.e. one who is fit for intercourse. Aṣṭāvakra, the commentator of the Mānava gr., explains '*nagnikā*' as 'one who has not yet experienced the

<sup>149</sup> Vide also Rig Veda I. 124.7, II.17.7, and Atharva Veda 1.17.1.

<sup>150</sup> Vide Hir. gr.1.19.2, Gobhila gr. III.4.6, Manava gr. I.7.8, Vaik. VI.12.

impulses and emotions of youth' or 'one who looks pretty even without clothes' (taking the word along with '*śreṣṭhām*' that follows). The *Gr̥hyāsamgraha* (which is much later than the *Gobhila gr.*) explains '*nagnikā*' as one who has not yet reached puberty. These varying explanations of the word '*nagnikā*' are due to the fact that when some *smṛtis* and commentators wrote child marriages were not in vogue, while they were in vogue when and where others flourished. *Vas. Dh. S. 17. 70* says:—

'The father should give away his daughter while she is still '*nagnikā*' through fear of her attaining puberty (while unmarried).'

This shows that according to *Vas.* '*nagnikā*' must have been a girl of tender years or one that had not attained puberty.

There is another very important indication. Most of the *gr̥hyasūtras* prescribe that the married couple should be celibate for at least three nights after marriage (if not for a longer period). For example, the *Par. gr. (I.8)* says:—

'The married pair should (after marriage) not partake of *kṣāra* and *lavaṇa* for three nights, should sleep on the ground (and not on a cot, for the same period) and should not have intercourse for a year, twelve nights, six nights, or three nights in the last resort'.<sup>151</sup>

Such an injunction against intercourse for three nights after marriage would have been uncalled for and extremely inappropriate if girls had been usually married when they were only eight to ten years old. Such injunctions, by so many authors presuppose that girls must have generally been very near puberty or past puberty at the time of marriage. *Haradatta*, who belongs to about the 12th century A.D., expressly says that (in his days) in certain countries intercourse was commenced immediately after marriage and that such a usage being opposed to *Āśv. gr. I .8. 10* should not be followed (but continence should be observed at least for three days after marriage). This shows that so late as 1200 A. D. in several countries the marriageable age of girls must have been at least about 14.

In most of the *gr̥hyasūtras* there is a rite called '*caturthi karma*' (rite on 4th day after marriage).<sup>152</sup> This rite has been described above (pp.203-204) and corresponds to the *garbhādhāna* of later writers (e.g. *Yāj I.11*). As cohabitation is expressly mentioned in connection with this rite performed on the fourth day after marriage it follows that girls must have generally been quite grown-up at the time of marriage.

In some of the *gr̥hyasūtras* and *smṛtis* a slight *prāyaścitta* (purificatory ceremony) is prescribed if the bride has menstruation during the progress of the marriage ceremonies.<sup>153</sup> *Gaut. (18.20-23)* says:—

'A girl should be given in marriage before she attains the age of puberty. He who neglects it commits sin. Some declare that she should be given in marriage before she begins to wear clothes. A marriageable girl (who is not given in marriage by her father etc..) should allow three monthly periods to pass and afterwards unite herself to a blameless man of her own will and give up the ornaments received from her father (or her family).'

This passage establishes that even before *Gāutama* (i.e., 500 or 600 B.C.) there were people who advocated marriages of infant girls that did not care to put on clothes (i.e. who had no sense of shame if they went about without clothes), that *Gāutama* disapproved of this view, that he only prescribed that the marriage of girls should take place before puberty and he was not horrified if girls got themselves married sometime after puberty. But it is clear that no blame attached to the

<sup>151</sup> Vide for a similar rule *Āśv. gr. I .8. 10*, *Āp. gr. 8. 8-9*, *Śān. gr. I. 17.5*, *Mānava gr. I. 14.14*, *Kāṭhaka gr. 30.1*, *Khādīra gr. I. 4.9* and others.

<sup>152</sup> Vide *Gobhila II. 5*, *Śān. gr. I, 18-19*, *Khādīra gr. I. 4. 12-16*, *Par. gr. I.11*, *Āp. gr 8.10-11*, *Kir. gr. I. 23-24* etc..

<sup>153</sup> Vide *Baud. gr. IV.1.10*, *Kausika sūtra 79.16*, *Vaik. VI.13*, *Atrī (ed. by Jiv. part I. p.11)*.

girl married after puberty or to the husband; the idea, however, had arisen even then that the father or guardian incurred blame or sin by not getting a girl married before puberty. Manu (IX.89-90) goes so far as to say:—

‘A maiden may rather stay in her father's house even till her death, though she may have attained puberty; but the father should never give her to one who is devoid of good qualities. A maiden after attaining puberty may wait for three years (to see if she is given away by her father or brother etc..) but after this period she should seek a husband who is similar to her.’

Anuśāsana-parva 44.16 is to the same effect. Baud. Dh. S. IV.1.14 and Vas. V. Dh. S. 17 .67-68 give the same rule as in Manu IX. 90. But both add (Vas. 17. 70-71 and Baud. Dh. S. IV. 1.12) that the father or guardian incurs the sin of destroying an embryo at each appearance of menses as long as the girl is unmarried. Yāj I. 64 and Nārada (*strīpuṃsa*, verses 25-27) state the same rule.

On account of this change in popular beliefs and sentiments it came to be recommended that a girl must be married early and may be given even to one who is devoid of qualities (in spite of Manu IX 89).<sup>154</sup>

So we see that from about 600 B.C. to about the beginning of the Christian Era it did not matter at all if a girl was married a few months or few years after puberty. But by about 200 A.D. (when the Yāj smṛti was composed) popular feeling had become insistent on pre-puberty marriages. The reasons for this change are not quite clear. But it is possible to hold that it was due to the following circumstances. Buddhism had spread far and wide during these centuries with its encouragement of the institution of monks and nuns. There was laxity of morals among nuns. A further reason may be adduced viz. that girls had generally ceased to study any thing, though some of them certainly did study in the times of Pāṇini and Patāñjali, and so society did not like girls to remain doing nothing.

From the times of the Rig Veda (X. 85. 40-41) there was a mystical belief that Soma, Gandharva and Agnī were the divine guardians of a girl and the Gṛhyāsaṃgraha (quoted in the com. on Gobhila gr. III. 4. 6) says that Soma enjoys a girl first, then Gandharva enjoys her when her breasts develop and fire when she menstruates. Therefore, a feeling arose that a girl must be married even before she develops any distinct signs of femininity. Saṃvarta (verses 64 and 67) gives expression to this idea. Further, since marriage came to be looked upon as the upanayana in the case of women, naturally the age for upanayana (8th year) came to be looked upon as the proper age for marriage. Vide Saṃskāra-kaustubha quoted below. It came to be believed that there was no hope of heaven for a woman who died unmarried.

In the Śalyaparva chap. 52 we have the story of a girl, daughter of Kuṇi Garga, who practised severe penance till she reached old age and yet was told by Nārada that if she died unmarried she would not go to heaven. The woman induced Śṛṅgavat of the Gālava family for a day previous to her death to marry her by the promise of giving him half of her merit (*punya*). The Vaik. (V.9), while describing the ceremony of funeral rites in cases of distress, mentions the curious practice of find out a male of the same caste for a girl, who dies unmarried though of the age of puberty, with whom a sort of marriage is gone through and the girl is then cremated. Whatever the reasons may be, this tendency to bring down the age of marriage for girls was accentuated in the first five or six centuries of the Christian era. The Laugākṣi gr. (19. 2) says *brahmacarya* for girls lasts till the 10th or 12th year. The Vaik. (VI. 12) says that a *brāhmaṇa* should marry a *brāhmaṇa* girl who is a *nagnikā* or *gaurī* and defines *nagnikā* as a girl over eight years but less than ten and *gaurī* as one who is between ten and twelve and has not had menstruation. Aparārka (p. 85) quotes the Bhaviṣya-purāṇa to the effect that *nagnikā* is one who is ten years old. Vide Sm. C. quoting Saṃgraha. Parāśara, Yāj. and Saṃvarta go even beyond this. Parāśara (VII. 6-9) says:—

<sup>154</sup> Vide Baud. Dh. S. IV. 1.12 and 15.



‘a girl of eight is called *gaurī*, but one who is nine years old is a *rohinī*; one who is ten years old is a *kanyā*; beyond this (i.e. after 10 years) she is a *rajasvalā*.

If a person does not give away a maiden when she has reached her 12th year, his *pitṛs* have to drink every month her menstrual discharge. The parents and also the eldest brother go to hell on seeing (an unmarried) girl reaching the state of a *rajasvalā*. Parāśara adds that the *brāhmaṇa* who marries such a girl should not be spoken to or admitted to dinner in the same row (as other *brāhmaṇas*) and that he becomes the husband of a *vṛṣalī*.

On the other hand the Vāyupurāṇa (83.44) extols the marriage of a *gaurī* by remarking that her son purifies 21 ancestors on his father's side and 6 male ancestors on his mother's side. Saṃvarta (verse 65-66) has the same two verses as Parāśara (VII.6 and 8) and winds up (verse 67) by saying that the marriage of a girl of eight is highly commended. The same four verses (Parāśara VII 6-9) occur in Bṛhad-Yama (Ānan. ed.) chap. 3. 19-22, but the order is different. Āngiras (vv. 126-128, Anan. ed.) has the same verses. Kaśyapa as quoted in the Gr. R. (p. 46) says that a girl is called *gaurī* when she is seven, a *kanyakā* when she is ten and *kumarī* when she is twelve. It will be noticed that the *smṛtis* of Vaikhānasa and Kaśyapa differed from Parāśara as to the definition of *gaurī*. Further the three *smṛtis* make marriage of a girl after puberty an extremely sinful act and condemn not only the parents but also the husband, while Baudāyana prescribed only a slight *prāyaścitta* for the father alone even if there was menstruation during the marriage rites. Marīci (quoted in Par. M. I.2. p. 177) said that choosing a bride who was five years old was best. Even Manu (9. 88) recommended an early marriage if a very desirable bridegroom was available. Rāma and Sīta are said to have been respectively 13 and 6 at the time of marriage (Aranyakāṇḍa 47. 10-11). But this passage appears to be an interpolation. In the Bālakāṇḍa it is expressly stated that Sīta and her sisters enjoyed in private dalliance with their respective husbands immediately after marriage. If this is true then Sīta could not have been only 6 at the time of marriage.

The rule that *brāhmaṇa* girls were to be married between 8 to 10 years became general from about the 6th or 7th century and continued down to modern times. During the last two or three decades the marriageable age of girls owing to several causes, particularly the ravages of plague and the economic condition of the middle classes, has risen very high and marriages of girls even of poor *brāhmaṇas* hardly ever take place before 16 and have to be postponed to the age of 20 and beyond. Besides the Child Marriage Restraint Act (XIX of 1929, as amended by Act 19 of 1938) has fixed the minimum age limit for girls at 14 and persons getting their daughters married before the completion of 14 years are liable to be punished in a criminal court under the Act.

There is no reason to laugh at ancient Indian writers for the low age of marriage they advocated. Child marriages were common in all countries of Europe. Even in England the age limits for boys and girls were recognised by the law only at 14 and 12 respectively until 1929, when the lowest marriageable age for both was fixed at 16 (19 and 20 Geo. V. Chap. 36). Besides it must be remembered that when marriages of girls of tender years took place they were purely a sacrament. There was no question of consummation, which took place only after puberty. Sages condemned intercourse even with one's wife before she attained puberty. Winternitz in ‘Die Frau.’ p.135 refers to a work of F. J. Furnivall on ‘Child Marriages, Divorces etc.’ between 1560-66 A. D. in England from which it is clear that marriages of children of 9 or 10 (and rarely of even 2 or 3 years) took place in England only about 300 years ago.

These rules about the proper age for the marriage of girls affected only *brāhmaṇas*. Sanskrit poets and dramatists always depict that the heroines in their works are grown-up at the time of marriage and even Bhavabhūti imagines that Mālatī, the heroine of his romantic drama of Mālatīmādhava, was so grown-up that it was practically a case of love at first sight. Vaik. (VI.12) requires a *brāhmaṇa* bride to be a *nagnikā* or *gaurī*, but does not prescribe the same qualification for a *kṣatriya* or *vaiśya* bride. In the Harṣacarita princess Rājyaśrī is described as quite grown-up at the

time of her marriage which was consummated on the very day of marriage (vide the last para, of the 4th Uchhvāsa). The Saṃskāra-prakāśa expressly says that there is no prohibition against marrying a girl who has passed the age of puberty for *kṣatriyas* and others. Even in Paurāṇic times grown-up unmarried girls must not have been unheard of. The Gr. R. p.83 quotes a passage from the Brahma-purāṇa where the injunction to observe complete celibacy for one year, 12 days, 6 days or 3 days is construed as respectively referring to girls whose ages were 8, 12, 16 or 20 at the time of marriage.

### Inter-caste Marriages

Another important question is inter-caste marriages. It has already been shown (pp. 50-58) how *anuloma* marriages were allowed, while *pratiloma* unions were condemned and how it was supposed that numerous sub-castes arose from such mixed marriages. It is the contention of several eminent scholars (e.g. Senart in his 'Caste in India' translated by Ross p. 124) that caste as implied in modern usage and in its strict sense did not exist in the times of the Ṛig Veda and the other Vedic Saṃhitās. We have seen, however, that the four *varṇas* had been recognised in the times of the Saṃhitās and that ideas of superiority and inferiority due to being of a particular *varṇa* had become quite prevalent. But the practices as to marrying outside one's *varṇa* and taking food had not become as rigid and cast-iron as they became in medieval times. A few clear examples of inter-caste marriages may be cited from the Vedic Literature. The Sat. Br. (IV. 1. 5, S.B.E. vol. 26, pp. 272-275) narrates the story of the old and decrepit sage Cyavana who was a Bhārgava (descendant of Bhṛigu) or Āṅgīrasa to Sukanyā, the daughter of king Śaryāta, a descendant of Manu. The Sat. Br. (XIII. 2. 9. 8. S.B.E. vol. 44, p. 326) quotes a half verse from the Vaj. S. (26. 30) and then remarks:— 'therefore he does not anoint (as king) the son of the *vaiśya* woman.' This suggests that a king might marry a *vaiśya* girl, but her son would not have the Vedic coronation ceremony performed on him. Verses 17-19 of the Ṛig Veda V. 61 are interpreted by the Bṛhad-devatā (V. 50) as referring to the marriage of the *brāhmaṇa* sage Śyāvāśva to the daughter of king Rathavīti Dārbhya. The story of Kavaṣa Ailūsa who was styled '*dāsyāḥ putra*' (either meaning the son of a *dasī* or used as a term of abuse) by the sages has been mentioned above (at p. 36).

Turning to the *dharma* and *gṛhya sūtras*, the matter stands thus. Some of the *gṛhya sūtras* (like Āśv., Āp.) do not expressly say anything about the *varṇa* of the bride. The Āp. Dh. S. 1063 (II. 6. 13. 1 and 3) requires that one should marry a girl of the same *varṇa*, who was not given before to another and marriage with whom is in accordance with *śāstra* and says that by contravening these rules sin is incurred. So he condemns mixed marriages. The Mānava gr. 1. 7. 8 and Gaut. IV. 1 require that one should marry a girl of the same *varṇa* and are silent about marriages with a bride of another *varṇa*. But Gāutama knew of such marriages and enumerates the names of several sub-castes due to mixed marriages (IV. 14-17) and he includes among those who are unfit to be invited at a *śrāddha* dinner a *brāhmaṇa* who is the husband of a woman of the *sūdra* caste (15. 18). Manu (III. 12), Śaṅkha and Nārada (strīpuṃsa, v. 4) say that the best course is to marry a girl of one's own caste. This is said to be *pūrva kalpa* (the foremost or the best procedure). Many also speak of a less advisable course (anukalpa as it is called) viz, that a *brāhmaṇa* may take as wife a woman of any caste, a *kṣatriya* may marry a woman of his own caste or a *vaiśya* or a *sūdra* woman, a *vaiśya* may marry a *vaiśya* or *sūdra* woman and a *sūdra* only a *sūdra* woman. This is stated by Baud. Dh. S. I. 8. 2, Śaṅkha, Manu III. 13, Viṣṇu Dh. S. 24. 1-4. Par. gr. I 4 and Vas. Dh. S. I .25 inform us that some teachers allowed a *dvija* to marry a *sūdra* woman but without Vedic *mantras*. But Vasiṣṭha himself condemns it severely by saying:—

'One should not do so (i.e. marry a *sūdra* girl), for by doing so the degradation of the family is certain and loss of heaven after death'.

Though the Viṣṇu Dh. S. and Manusmṛti state that a *dvijāti* may marry a *sūdra* girl, that is not their own view, but they simply voice practices and sentiments prevalent in their time, since both

denounce the marriage of a *brāhmaṇa* with a *sūdra* girl in the most un-measured terms. Viṣṇu Dh. S. 26. 5-6 (S, B. E. vol.7 p.112) says that the union of a *dvijāti* with a *sūdra* woman can never produce religious merit; it is from carnal desire alone that he marries her being blinded by lust; and that *dvijāti* men who thus marry *sūdra* women quickly degrade their families and progeny to the status of *sūdras*'. The ancient editor of the Manusmṛti did not tolerate such marriages (though he gave expression to the common trend of view in III.12-13) and condemns a *dvijāti's* marriage with a *sūdra* woman in the strongest language (III. 15-19, Manu III. 15 being the same as Viṣṇu Dh. S. 26. 5) 'a *brāhmaṇa* by having intercourse with a *sūdra* woman goes to hell and by procreating a son on her he loses his status as a *brāhmaṇa*.' Yāj, I. 57 allowed a *brāhmaṇa* or *kṣatriya* to marry a girl of his own *varṇa* or of the *varṇas* next in order, but laid it down as his emphatic opinion that 'a *dvijāti* should not marry a *sūdra* girl'. It appears however, that prevailing public opinion and practice was too much for both Manu and Yāj.; for, both declare (Yāj. II. 125 and Manu IX. 152-153) that when a *brāhmaṇa* has sons from wives of the four varnas, the son of a *brāhmaṇa* wife takes four shares (out of 10 in which his wealth is to be divided), the son of a *kṣatriya* wife takes three, of a *vaiśya* wife two and of a *sūdra* wife one. Yāj (I. 91-92) recognises the marriage of a *brāhmaṇa* with a *sūdra* and says that the son of such a union is a *pāraśava* '. Manu III. 44 also recognises the marriage of a *sūdra* girl with one of a higher class by saying that she holds the hem of the garment of a bridegroom of a higher class. This shows that the ancient *smṛtis* ungrudgingly recognised marriages between a *brāhmaṇa* and a *kṣatriya* or a *vaiśya* girl. But opinion was not unanimous about the marriage of a *dvijāti* with a *sūdra* woman. Such marriages took place, but were looked upon with disfavour and often condemned with severity. *Anuloma* marriages were frequent enough till the 9th or 10th century A.D., but became rare later and for the last several hundred years they hardly ever took place or they were not at all recognized as valid by the communities concerned.

The epigraphic records furnish well authenticated instances of inter-caste marriages. The Vākāṭakas were *brāhmaṇa* (their *gotra* being Viṣṇuvṛddha). The Poona plates of Prabhāvatīguptā (E. I. vol. 15 p. 39) establish that she was a daughter of Candragupta II. (first quarter of 5th century A. D.) of the Imperial Gupta dynasty and became the chief queen of the king Rudrasena II of the Vākāṭaka line. The Talagunḍa pillar inscription of the Kadamba king Kakustha-varman (E. I. vol.8 p.24) recites that the founder of the Kadamba family was Mayūra-śarman, a *brāhmaṇa*, who being exasperated with the Pallavas of Kañcī took up the sword. His descendants have names ending in Varman (as *kṣatriyas* should have, according to Manu II. 32). The inscription mentions that Kakustha-varman (who was 4th in descent from Mayūra-śarman) got his daughters married to Gupta and other kings. In the Ghaṭotkaca Inscription of Yaśodharman and Viṣṇuvardhana (A. S. W. I. vol. 4, p. 140) we are told that Soma, a *brāhmaṇa* and ancestor of Hastibhoja, minister of the Vākāṭaka king Devasena, gave his heart to wives born in *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya* families, The Tipperah copper-plate grant of a chieftain called Lokanātha (E. I. vol. 15, p. 301) dated in the 44th year (probably of the Hārṣa era i.e. about 650 A. D.) says that Lokanātha's ancestors belonged to the Bharadvāja *gotra* (p. 306) and that the maternal grand-father of Lokanātha was Keśava who is said to have been a *pāraśava* (p. 307), while Keśava's father Vīra was a *brāhmaṇa* (*dvijasattama*).

Virūpādevī, a daughter of the famous Vijayanāgara king Bukka I (1268-1298 A. D.), was married to a *brāhmaṇa* named Brahma or Bomaṇṇa Wodeya, who was the Governor of the Araga province (E. I. vol.15, p.12). Vide also E. I. vol.18, p.87 (dated 894 of the Vikrama era) for Pratīhara kings being descended from a *brāhmaṇa* Harīcandra and the latter's *kṣatriya* wife; the Ātpur Inscription of Śaktikumāra dated in *saṃvat* 1034 (977 A. D.) which states that the founder of the Guhila dynasty was a *brāhmaṇa* Guhadatta whose descendant Bhartṛpaṭṭa married a Rāṣṭrakūṭa princess. Classical Sanskrit Literature also yields certain well known instances of inter-caste marriages. The Mālavikāgnimitra of Kālidāsa shows that Agnīmitra, a son of Senāpati Puṣya-mitra of the Śuṅga dynasty and a *brāhmaṇa*, married Mālavikā who was a *kṣatriya* princess. In the Harṣacarita of Bāṇa (Ucchvāsa I towards end) we are told by Bāṇa himself that among the friends and companions of

his wanderings there were his two pāraśava brothers Candrasena and Mātrṣeṇa (i.e. step-brothers from a *śudra* wife of his father). Rājaśekhara, teacher of king Mahendrapāla of Kanoj, says in his Karpūra Mañjarī (1.11) that his accomplished wife Avantisundarī was descended from the Cāhuaṇa (modern Chavan) family (i.e. from a *kṣatriya* family).

It is extremely difficult to say when exactly inter-caste marriages even between *dvijātis* came to be prohibited by the smṛtis and writers of digests. Viśvarūpa on Yāj. III. 283 (not later than first half of 9th century) clearly suggests that in his day a *brāhmaṇa* could marry a *kṣatriya* girl. Medhātithi on Manu III. 14 suggests that about 900 A.D. at the latest marriages of *brāhmaṇas* with *kṣatriya* and *vaiśya* girls took place rarely in his day, but not with *śudra* women; and the Mitākṣara on Yāj. does not at all say that though marriages among *dvijātis* (anuloma ones) were allowed by Manu and Yāj. they had entirely ceased to be regarded as valid by its time. Many of the medieval digests and writers like the Sm. C. and Hemādri quote verses stated to be from the Āditya-purāṇa or Brahma-purāṇa on matters forbidden in the Kali age (and so called Kalivarjya) among which inter-caste marriages are included.

The Āpastamba smṛti (in verse ed. by Jivananda I, p. 549, chap. IX) says that by marrying a girl of another caste a man incurred the sin of *mahāpātaka* and had to undergo the penance of 24 *kr̥chras*. The Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa (113. 34-36) narrates the story of king Nābhāga who married a *vaiśya* girl by the *rākṣasa* form of marriage and who consequently incurred sin.

### Inter-caste Marriages under the British

The state of the law as to inter-caste marriages in British Indian courts may be briefly indicated here. By the Special Marriage Act (III of 1872 as amended by Act XXX of 1923) both *anuloma* and *pratiloma* marriages are validated if they are registered and solemnized according to the procedure prescribed by the Act. But if a marriage is not so solemnized under that Act, but under the general rules of Hindu Law, then all *pratiloma* marriages are invalid throughout British India.

But *anuloma* marriages have been recognised as valid by some High Courts in India; the Allahabad High Court, however regards all *anuloma* marriages even as invalid.

### Sapiṇḍa Relationships

The next restriction that the girl to be married must not be a *sapiṇḍa* of the bride-groom has now to be considered. *Sapiṇḍa* relationship is of special importance in three matters, viz. marriage, inheritance and *āśauca* (impurity on birth and death). The prohibition against marriage with a *sapiṇḍa* girl applies to all *varṇas* including the *śūdra*. There are two schools about the meaning of *sapiṇḍa*, one represented by the Mitākṣarā and the other by Jīmūtavāhana (author of the Dāyabhāga). Both are agreed that a *sapiṇḍa* girl cannot be married, but they differ as to the meaning of the word. We shall first understand one interpretation of *sapiṇḍa*.

The *locus classicus* is the commentary of Viṅṇaneśvara on Yāj. I.52-53 a substantial portion of which is translated here: '*asapiṇḍām*' (in Yāj I.52) means a woman who is not a *sapiṇḍa* and *sapiṇḍa* means one who has the same *piṇḍa*, i.e. body (or particles of the body). *Sapiṇḍa* relationship (between two persons) arises from (their) being connected by having particles of the same body. Thus, the son has *sapiṇḍa* relationship with his father by reason of the (fact that) particles of the father's body continue in him (the son). Similarly (there is *sapiṇḍa* relationship) with the paternal grandfather and the like (of the grandson and the like) because through his (the grandson's) father particles of the body of the grandfather continue in (or are connected with) him (the grandson). Similarly (the son has *sapiṇḍa* relationship) with his mother because particles of the mother's body continue in him. Thus (a person has *sapiṇḍa* relationship) with his mother's father

through his mother; so (one has *sapiṇḍatā*) with one's mother's sister or mother's brother also by reason of the connection with (or continuity of) particles of the same body (viz. the body of the maternal grandfather). So also (a person has *sapiṇḍatā*) with the paternal uncle, the paternal aunt and the like. Similarly the wife has *sapiṇḍa* relationship with the husband because she produces (with the husband) one body (viz. their son).<sup>155</sup> In the same way, brother's wives (are *sapiṇḍas*) of each other, because they produce one body (viz. their respective sons) with their respective husbands who are produced from one body (viz. their husbands' father).

In this manner wherever the word *sapiṇḍa* occurs, there one has to understand connection with (or continuity of) particles of the same body either directly or mediately.<sup>156</sup> On the word '*āsapiṇḍam*' it was explained that *sapiṇḍa* relationship arises immediately or mediately by reason of the connection with particles of the same body; this may prove to be too wide a statement, since in this beginningless *samsāra*, such a relationship might exist in some way or other between all men; therefore (the sage Yājñavalkya) states:— 'after the 5<sup>th</sup> on the mother's side and after the 7<sup>th</sup> on the father's side'. After the 5<sup>th</sup> on the mother's side, i.e. in the mother's line and after the 7<sup>th</sup> on the father's side, i.e. in the father's line *sapiṇḍa* relationship ceases. These words (viz. *sapiṇḍa* ceases) are to be taken as understood (in the text of Yāj.). Therefore the word '*sapiṇḍa*' though it applies everywhere (i.e. to a very wide circle of persons) by the expressive (i.e. literal) power of its component parts, is restricted to a certain definite sphere, like the words '*nirmanthya*' and '*pañkaja*'.<sup>157</sup> And so the six (ascendants) beginning with the father and the six descendants beginning with the son and the man himself as the 7<sup>th</sup> (in each case) are *sapiṇḍas*; wherever there is a divergence of the line, the counting shall be made until the 7<sup>th</sup> in descent is reached including him (i.e. the ancestor) from whom the line diverges; in this way the computation is to be made everywhere. And so the 5<sup>th</sup> (if a girl), who stands in the 5<sup>th</sup> generation when a computation is made beginning with the mother and going up to her (mother's) father, mother's paternal grandfather etc., is styled in an indirect way '5<sup>th</sup> from the mother's side' (by *Yāj.*). In the same way, 'the 7<sup>th</sup> from the father's side' (in *Yāj.*) is she who is the 7<sup>th</sup> in degree (from an ancestor) when computation is made beginning from the father and proceeding up to the father's father and so on.

According to this explanation of the *Mitākṣarā* the following rules about prohibition based on *sāpiṇḍya* follow:—

- (1) In computing degrees the common ancestor is to be included;
- (2) regard is to be had to the father and mother of the bride and bridegroom both;

<sup>155</sup> The words '*tathā patnyā saha patnyā eka śarīrām bhakatayā*' are translated differently by Golap Chandra Sarkar in his 'Hindu Law' (7th ed. of 1936 pp 81-82) as similarly arises the sapinda relationship of the husband with the lawfully wedded wife by reason of ( their together ) forming one body. (i.e. one person, hence the wife is called half the body of the husband.) The learned author thinks that his translation is the correct one and others went wrong in translating as in the passage above. His translation cannot be accepted for several reasons. In the first place, it is opposed to the explanation of the Bāḷambhāṭī — '*ārambhakateti ubhayārabdhe eka-śarīrāe svāvayavānvayādityarthaḥ*'. (i.e. particles of the bodies of the husband and wife continue in or are concerned with one body, the son, that is produced by them both). That husband and wife are one is a pleasant fiction but here Viṣṇūśeṣvara is stressing the physical continuity of particles. The husband and wife though said to be one are still two bodies. No one says that their bodies become physically one. Besides the objection that if they do not beget a son, the husband and wife will not be *sapiṇḍas* is not sound. Rules and principles are laid down for generality of cases and regard is to be had to their capacity to produce a son. The *Nirṇaya-sindhu* III pūrvārtha.280) shows that G.C. Sarkar is wrong — "A woman's husband's brother's wife is the receptacle (*ādhāra*) for who is procreated by the husband's brother and his wife, the former of whom has particles of his father whose particles continue in the husband of the woman."

<sup>156</sup> There is direct continuity of particles of the bodies of the parents in the son and there is mediate connection of particles between grandparents and grandchildren and so on.

<sup>157</sup> The word '*pañkaja*' literally means 'springing from mud' and may apply to every water plant, but it is restricted by usage (*rūḍhi*) to a lotus plant i. e. the wide literal or etymological (*yaugika*) meaning of the two parts *panka* (mud) and *ja* (springing from) is restricted by popular usage to a single plant springing from mud. '*Nirmanthya*' is the word used for producing fire by friction. Literally the word means 'what is to be churned'.

(3) if computation is made from the mother's side of either the proposed bride or bride groom, they must be beyond the 5<sup>th</sup> degree (i.e. they must be 6<sup>th</sup> or further on) from the common ancestor and if it is made through the father of either, they must be beyond the 7<sup>th</sup> from the common ancestor (i.e. they must be 8<sup>th</sup> etc.).

This last postulates four different classes of cases, viz.

- (1) descent from a common ancestor may be traced through the fathers of both bride and bridegroom
- (2) or through the mother of both,
- (3) or through the mother of the bridegroom and the father of the bride
- (4) or through the father of the bride groom and the mother of the bride.

The method of computing degrees is entirely different from the English method as is made clear by the remarks of the Mitākṣara translated above. The rules require that both must be beyond *sapiṇḍa* relationship as defined and limited above. For example, tracing descent through the fathers of both bride and bridegroom, if the bride is 8<sup>th</sup> from the common ancestor (called *kūtastha* in Dharmasāstra works) and the bridegroom is 6<sup>th</sup>, there can be no marriage, as though the bride is beyond the limits of *sapiṇḍa* relationship to the common ancestor, the bridegroom being 6<sup>th</sup> from the *kūtastha* has *sapiṇḍa* relationship with the *kūtastha*. These rules apply according to the Mitākṣara only where the ancestors married women of their own *varṇa*. But if an ancestor married a *brāhmaṇa* girl and also a *kṣatriya* girl and a question arose about the eligibility of marriage among descendants of these two wives, then prohibition based on *sapiṇḍa* relationship extends up to only 3 degrees (and not 7 or 5).

It should not be supposed that these rules of the Mitākṣara are universally observed. The texts themselves are in conflict. Further, the customs and usages as to prohibited degrees for marriage are so divergent in the various parts of India and among the hundreds of castes and sub-castes that it is impossible to state any rule as universally or even generally applicable. A few examples of conflict among the *smṛtis* are cited by the Mitākṣara itself. Vas. Dh. S. (8.2) says '(he may marry) the 5<sup>th</sup> on the mother's side and 7<sup>th</sup> on the father's side', while Yāj. as interpreted by the Mitākṣara makes it necessary that the girl to be eligible must be 6<sup>th</sup> from the common ancestor traced through the mother and 8<sup>th</sup> when traced through the father. Paithīnasi says:— 'the girl must be beyond three degrees on the mother's side and five degrees on the father's side'. These two are explained away by the Mitākṣara by saying that these texts do not authorise a marriage with a girl who is distant from the common ancestor by a lesser number of degrees than those propounded by Yāj. but they only prohibit marriage with girls who are nearer in degrees than those stated in those texts. But this reconciliation of the conflict among the *smṛtis* is not at all satisfactory.

The following diagrams illustrate the application of the rules of *sapiṇḍa* relationship according to the Mitākṣarā. In all of them **A** represents the common ancestor and the letters **S** and **D** represent respectively sons and daughters. According to the Mitākṣarā computation has to be made from (and inclusive of) the common ancestor in all cases and both the bride and bride groom have to be beyond the prohibited degrees.

	No.1 A			No.2 A	
D (2)		D(2)		S (2)	S (2)
S (3)		S (3)		S (3)	S (3)
S (4)		S (4)		S (4)	S (4)
S (5)		D (5)		D (5)	D (5)
S (6)		S (6)		S (6)	D (6)
S (7)		S (7)			
D (8)		S (8)			
Here a valid marriage might take place			Here a valid marriage may take place between		

between S(8) and D(8) because <i>sapiṇḍa</i> relationship for both is traced through their fathers and both are removed from the common ancestor A by more than seven degrees or generations.	S (6) and D (6) because <i>sapiṇḍa</i> relationship of both is in this case traced through their mothers and they are both removed from the common ancestor by more than five degrees.
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	No.3 A		No.4 A	
S (2)		S (2)	S (2)	S (2)
S (3)		S (3)	S (3)	S (3)
S (4)		S (4)	S (4)	S (4)
D (5)		D (5)	D (5)	S (5)
D (6)		D (6)	D (6)	S (6)
D (7)		S (7)	Here a marriage cannot take place between D (6) and S (6) as the <i>sapinda</i> relationship in the latter's case is to be traced through his father and he is not more than seven degrees removed from the common ancestor, though D (6) whose <i>sapinda</i> relationship is to be traced through her mother is more than five degrees from the common ancestor. According to Bālabhāṭṭa and some others marriage will take place as D(6) is beyond five degrees (tracing through her mother), though 8(6) is within 7 degrees (tracing descent through his father) and so is not outside <i>sapinda</i> limits.	
Here a marriage may take place between S (6) and D (6) because their <i>sapinda</i> relationship is to be traced through their mothers and both are removed from the common ancestors by more than five degrees. But a marriage cannot take place between S (7) and D (7) as the <i>sapinda</i> relationship of D (7) is to be traced through her father and she is not more than 7 degrees from the common ancestor.				

All these four examples are taken from the Dharma-sindhu (III Purvārdha p.226-227). No.3 illustrates what is called *sapinda* relationship by 'frog's leap'. Just as a frog leaps from one spot to another leaving intervening objects untouched, so in this example No.3, there is *sapinda* between D (5) and D (5), but S (6) and D (6) are left unaffected by *sapinda* (as relationship is traced through the mothers of both), while *sapinda* reverts to affect D (7) and S (7). The maxim of 'frog's leap' is a very ancient one, being exemplified by the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali.

### The Marriage of Cousins

The rules about prohibition of marriage on the ground of *sapinda* relationship, particularly where *cognates* (persons connected through females) were concerned, have not been observed in numerous instances over wide areas from very ancient times. One striking illustration is the question whether a man can marry his maternal uncle's or his paternal aunt's daughter, particularly the former. On this point opinion has been sharply divided from ancient times. Āp. Dh. S. I. 7.21.8 includes among *patanīya* actions (mortal sins) sexual intercourse with the uterine relations (mothers and sisters) of one's parents and their children. This would prohibit marriage with one's maternal uncle's or paternal aunt's daughter. Baud. Dh. S. I. 1.19-26 notes that there were five practices peculiar to the south, viz. (1) eating in the company of one whose upanayana has not been performed, (2) to eat in the company of one's wife, (3) to eat stale food, (4) to marry the daughter of the maternal uncle or (5) of a paternal aunt and there were five practices peculiar to the north. Then he proceeds to state the argument that those who follow the practices mentioned by him in countries other than those where they prevail incur sin, that Gāutama (XI.20) holds this last argument to be wrong and then Baudāyana states his view that one should pay no heed to either set of practices, as both are opposed to *smṛtis* and the views of *śiṣṭas*. From this it is clear that a marriage with one's maternal uncle's daughter or paternal aunt's daughter was in vogue in the south (below the Narmadā probably) long before the Baudāyana Dh. S. (i.e. several centuries before the Christian era) and that North India did not go in for such marriages and that orthodox *sūtra* writers like Gāutama and Baudhāyana reprobated such practices. Manu (XI.172-173) forbids such marriages:—

'On approaching (for carnal intercourse) the daughter of one's father's sister or of one's mother's sister or of mother's full brother, a man must undergo the penance called '*cāndrāyaṇa*'. A wise



man should not take as his wife (any one of) these; they are not fit to be wedded because they are (*sapiṇḍa*) relatives, for by wedding them one sinks low (i.e. falls into hell or loses caste)".

Haradatta on Āp. Dh. S. II. 5.11.16 quotes a verse from Śātātapa prescribing the penance of *cāndrāyaṇa* for marrying one's maternal uncle's daughter or a girl having the same *gotra* as one's mother's *gotra* (i.e. maternal grandfather's *gotra*) or a *sapṛavara* girl and a text of Sumantu forbidding marriage with the daughter of the brother of one's mother or step-mother. It would be seen that all these relatives are third from the common ancestor and so are very much within the prohibition against marrying a *sapiṇḍa*, whatever be the number of prohibited degrees for marriage that are accepted.

Kumārila in his Tantravārtika while discussing the scope and validity of *sadācāra* (on Jaimini 1.3.7) enumerates many lapses from good conduct attributed to great men and heroes of the past and tries to explain away those violations of good conduct. The charge brought against Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa) and Arjuna, the central heroes of the Mahābhārata, is that they respectively married Rukminī and Subhadra who were their maternal uncle's daughters (this being forbidden). Kumārila makes very scathing remarks against this practice prevalent among southerners and then refutes this charge by saying that although in the Mahābhārata (Ādiparva 219.17-18) Subhadrā is described as the daughter of Vasudeva and sister of Kṛṣṇa, she was really not so, but that she was Vāsudeva's mother's sister's daughter or was the daughter's daughter of the sister of the father of Vāsudeva's mother (or step-mother Rohinī). Kumārila argues that such female cousins one degree or several degrees removed are often spoken of as sisters.<sup>158</sup> This reply of Kumārila well illustrates the method of dealing with inconvenient texts adopted by *mīmāṃsakas* like Kumārila when the texts run counter to their cherished views. Viśvarūpa on Yāj. III.254 quotes Manu XI.172 and verses of Saṃvarta prescribing the penance of Parāka for carnal intercourse with one's maternal uncle's daughter. Medhātithi on Manu II.18 refers to this practice as prevalent in some countries, and says it is opposed to the rule of Gāutama (IV.3) about prohibition on the ground of *sāpiṇḍya* and explains how such practices might have arisen. Persons making love to the handsome daughters of their maternal uncles married them for fear that they might otherwise be punished by the king; it may be that others literally following the words of Manu IV.178 held by the practice which their fore fathers resorted to for fear of punishment. Among medieval writers, some condemn this practice, others justify it. Aparārka (pp.82-84) after a lengthy discussion condemns marriage with maternal uncle's daughter. The Nirṇayasindhu also does the same (p.286).

Among those who support marriage with a maternal uncle's daughter the most prominent are the Sm. C. (I. pp.70-74) and the Par. M. (I.2. pp.63-68). They both admit that there are passages of Manu, Śātātapa, Sumantu (all quoted above) and others condemning marriage with a maternal uncle's daughter, yet they say that there are passages of the Veda and some *smṛtis* in support of it and *śiṣṭas* (learned and respect able persons) observe this practice and so such marriages are *sadācāra* and not forbidden. They rely upon two Vedic passages; one is from the Sat. Br. I.8.3.6 (S.B.E. vol. XII. p.238):—

“thus the separation (of the eater and the eaten) is effected in one and the same act; hence from one and the same man spring both the enjoyer (the husband) and the enjoyed (the wife); for now kinsfolk live sporting and rejoicing together saying 'in the fourth or third man (generation) we shall unite'. And this is so in accordance with that (separation of the spoons).”

The mention of the union in the third generation is understood by the Sm. C. as referring to the marriage of a person with his maternal uncle's or paternal aunt's daughter. Viśvarūpa also refers to this passage (on Yāj.1.53), but he does not draw the inference that such marriages are authorized by

<sup>158</sup> Vide my notes to the Vyavahāramayūkha pp.200-202 where this matter is fully explained.

the Veda. Another Vedic verse is relied upon by the Sm. C. and Par. M and other works. It is a verse from a Khila sūkta:—

'Come, O Indra, by commended paths to this our sacrifice and partake of your portion. They (the priests) have offered the fat seasoned with ghee that is thy portion, as the maternal uncle's daughter or the paternal aunt's daughter (is one's lot in marriage).'

This verse is referred to by Viśvarūpa on Yāj.(I.53) but his explanation of it is different, viz. that it really indicates one out of four different alternatives as regards prohibited degrees for marriage. Aparārka (p.83) on Yāj. I.53 reads the latter half somewhat differently and so interprets it as to spell out of it a prohibition against marrying a maternal uncle's daughter.

This text is quoted in I.L.R.7 Mad. 548 at p.550. The Smṛticandrikā relies upon a passage of the Caturviṃśatimata that allows a marriage of persons who are third or fourth in descent from a common ancestor on both sides (on the mother's or father's side). There is also a text of Bṛhaspati which prescribes that the practices of the countries, castes and families should be guarded (or enforced) by the king as they have been in vogue from past times, otherwise the subjects become inflamed and among such practices he instances:—

'Brāhmaṇas in the south marry the maternal uncle's daughter.

So there is *smṛti* authority for such marriages. Besides southern *śiṣṭas* deeply read in the Vedas and acting according to the meaning of the Veda practise marriage with a maternal uncle's daughter. Here both Sm. C. and Par M. are on very firm ground. The Smṛtimuktāphala of Vaidyanātha says:—

'Among the Āndhras *śiṣṭas* deeply read in the Vedas follow the practice of *mātulasutā-pariṇayana* and among the Drāviḍas respectable people allow marriage of a person with a girl who is fourth in descent from the common ancestor.'

Among several castes in the Deccan and the Madras Presidency, not only is marriage with a maternal uncle's daughter allowed, but it is highly commended. Even certain *brāhmaṇa* castes like the Desastha *brāhmaṇas* of the Karnāṭaka and Karhāḍā *brāhmaṇas* observe this practice in modern times. The Saṃskārakaustubha (pp.616-620) and the Dharma-sindhu support *mātulasutā-pariṇayana*.

Both the Sm. C. and Par. M. say that though the Vedic passage from the Śatapatha is a mere *arthavāda* (a laudatory statement) in praise of a Vedic act, yet on the analogy of the words — 'he holds (the *samidh*) above (the *sruk*) for gods', which are construed by Jaimini (III.4.15) as a *vidhi* (as a positive rule) on account of their *apūrvatva* (not being known from any other source), these words of the Śatapatha are also to be construed as a *vidhi* (of the marriage with maternal uncles daughter). The Sm. C. also presses into service the Vedic verse (Rig Veda X.16.5) addressed by Yamī to Yama. But that *mantra* does not clearly refer to cross-cousin marriages.

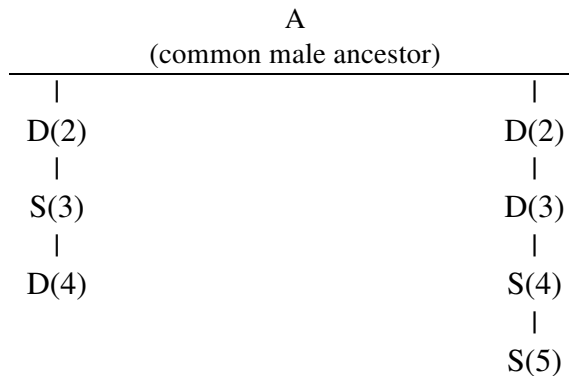
The *smṛti* passages that condemn cross-cousin marriages are explained in a peculiar manner by the Sm. C. and the Par. M. When a woman is married in one of the four forms, *brāhma* etc., she passes into the *gotra* of her husband, becomes a *sapiṇḍa* in the husband's family and so she is severed from her father's family (as to *gotra* and *sapiṇḍa* relationship); but when a woman is married in the *āsura*, *gāndharva* and other forms she does not pass over into the *gotra* of her husband, but remains in the *gotra* of the father and her *sapiṇḍa* relationship with her father and brother continues. Therefore the son of such a woman, if he marries the daughter of his mother's brother, would be marrying a girl who is a *sagotra* and *sapiṇḍa* of his mother. The Sm. C. and the Par. M. and other works say that the *smṛti* texts forbidding marriage with maternal uncle's daughter refer to a person, whose mother was married in the *Gāndharva*, *āsura* and the other two forms, but not to a person whose mother was married in the *brāhma* and the three other approved forms. This is the reasoning of the Sm. C. and the Par. M.

These rules about prohibition on the ground of *sapiṇḍa* relationship cause great difficulties in modern times, when owing to the rapid spread of co-education and the rise in the marriageable age of girls, love marriages have become some what frequent. Lovers do not stop to consider such (to them) trivial matters as *sapiṇḍa* relationship, but the law is often inexorable. The narrowing of the limits of *sapiṇḍa* relationship is permitted by the authors of commentaries and digests only on the ground of immemorial family, caste or local usage. For example, the same authors, who hold that marriage with the maternal uncle's daughter is sanctioned by Vedic texts and custom, condemn and forbid marriage with one's paternal aunt's daughter or with one's maternal aunt's daughter (vide below). There are a few verses cited from the *smṛtis* which favour the narrowing down of *sapiṇḍa* relationship. For example, the Caturviṃśatimata states 'According to Śākatāyana there is no blame in marrying a girl who is 7th or 6th or 5th (from the common ancestor); similarly Manu, Pārāśarya, Yama and Aṅgiras say that one may marry a girl who is third or fourth (from the common ancestor) on both sides (i.e. from her father's side or mother's side). Whoever enters into such marriage alliances by relying on the usage of his country or of his family is always entitled to associate with people and this is seen from the Veda'. Parāśara (as quoted in the Nīrṇayasindhu and other works) says:—

'a man who is himself fourth or fifth (from the common ancestor) may according to Parāśara's view marry a girl who is 4th or 6th (from the common ancestor), but one who is himself fifth cannot marry a girl who is also fifth (from the common ancestor).'

The Saṃskāra-kaustubha, the Sāpiṇḍya-dīpikā and a few digests hold these verses authoritative and allow such marriages provided they are in accordance with local or family usage. As against this the following facts have to be remembered. One of the maxims of interpretation is that where there is conflict between *smṛti* texts, the preferable rule is to follow the opinion of the majority. Gaut., Manu, *Yāj*, Marīci and numerous other *smṛtikāras* are opposed to these dicta.

The second rule is that Manu has the highest authority among *smṛtis* and that *smṛti* which is opposed to the dicta of Manu is not commended. The above passages are opposed to the words of Manu on *sapiṇḍa* relationship and about marrying a maternal uncle's daughter (Manu V.60, III.5, XL 171 172). A third point about the above texts is that several eminent works like the Nīrṇayasindhu and the Dharma-sindhu hold that some of these verses are baseless and not genuine and that they really refer to persons adopted or persons descended from wives of different castes of the same common ancestor; and lastly even those works that support such narrow of *sapiṇḍa* relationship for marriage do not advocate it for all and sundry, but only where there is a local or family usage to that effect. Therefore, marriages among persons who are 3rd or 4th or 5th from the common ancestor cannot be regarded as valid in general, but only on the ground of usage. The following diagram will furnish some examples of the narrowing down of *sapiṇḍa* relationship.



Here ordinarily there can be no valid marriage between D (4) and S (4) or S (5) because they are both not beyond even the fifth degree from the common ancestor; but if the verses of the Caturviṃśatimata and Parāśara be followed the marriages are valid. It should be noted that even

under the Special Marriage Act (III of 1872) marriage between D (4) and S (4) or S (5) will not be valid according to the 2nd proviso to sec. 2. The Nīrṇayasindhu was not prepared to concede that such marriages, though not the best, were at least allowable as inferior (*anukalpa*). The Dharmasindhu stated that only in calamities when one is unable to secure a girl one may enter into a marriage where *sapiṇḍa* relationship is narrowed down, but that those who can secure another girl should not go in for it, as the sin of incest would be incurred. Such marriages did not take place except during the last few years and so the courts have not yet pronounced on their validity. The preceding remarks are made by way of caution only and it is quite possible that courts may find out some way to uphold the marriages when they come before them many years after their celebration. But it is well to remember that the validity of such marriages in castes that have no usage to that effect is, to say the least, doubtful.

There is a great deal of discussion in the *smṛtis* and *nibandhas* on the *gotra* of a woman. Aśv. gr. S. I.8.12 is interpreted by some as laying down that husband and wife become of one *gotra* one year after marriage. Laghu Hārīta appears to refer to this and also proposes an option that she takes up the husband's *gotra* immediately after marriage. Yama 86 and Likhita 25 say that after marriage on the 4th night a bride becomes one with her husband as to *gotra*, *piṇḍa* and *āśauca*; while Yama 78 and Likhita 26 state that she loses her father's *gotra* on taking the seventh step. The Mitākṣara on Yāj. I.254 has a long note on this subject, and states that there are two views and finally reaches the conclusion that a woman retains her father's *gotra* even after marriage for *piṇḍadāna*, if she was a *putrikā* or was married in the *āsura* and the following forms; but if she was married in the *brāhma* and other approved forms, there was an option, viz. *piṇḍa* may be offered to one's mother by one's father's *gotra* or by her father's *gotra* according to family usage. Vide also Aparārka pp.432, 542, Sm. C. I. p.69.

Both of them allow a person's marriage with his paternal aunt's daughter. Certain inscriptions at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa (of about the 3rd century A. D.) establish that the king Siri Virapurisadata, son of Siri Chāntamūla who had performed the Vājapeya, Aśvamedha and other sacrifices, married a daughter of his paternal aunt (E. I. vol.20 at p.4). There are other authors, however, who, while allowing marriage with a maternal uncle's daughter, disallow it with a paternal aunt's daughter. For example, the Nīrṇayasindhu says that, though it follows from the same Vedic passages that one's paternal aunt's daughter may be married, yet such a marriage should not be contracted as it is hateful to the people, as there are no other passages laying down the advisability of such marriages. Similarly the Sm. C. (I. p.71) and Par. M. (I.2. p.65) say that though marriage with one's mother's sister or mother's sister's daughter also should be allowed on the same grounds as those urged in favour of the marriage with the maternal uncle's daughter, yet it is forbidden since it is condemned by *śiṣṭas* and hateful to the people and both again rely on Yāj. I.156.

Another and a very striking instance of the limits of *sapiṇḍa* relationship not being observed is the practice among certain sections of even *brāhmaṇas* (such as some Deśasthas in Karnāṭaka and Mysore) marrying their own sister's daughter (i.e. their own niece).<sup>159</sup>

On account of these divergences about the limits of prohibited degrees for marriage it appears that the remarks of the Saṃskāra-kaustubha (p.620) and of the Dharmasindhu (p.228) are most sensible and practical. They say that even in the Kali age those, in whose families or countries the limits of *sapiṇḍa* relationship are narrowed down and marriage with the maternal uncle's daughter has been in vogue for ages, may do so, that they incur no blame by such marriages, that others (among whom there is no such custom) may without blame invite such persons for *śrāddhas* and may take girls from their families in marriage and that the passages quoted by Hemādri forbidding their being

<sup>159</sup> Vide Mandlik's Hindu Law p.425. In *Ramangavda v. Shivaji*, the Bombay High Court held that marriage with one's sister's daughter was invalid among *brāhmaṇas*; but in that case no custom as to the validity such marriages was alleged. In *Vellanki Ramakrishna v. Kotagirī Subbamma* 43 Mad. 830 at p. 834 it is stated that in the Velama caste a man may marry his sister's daughter.

invited at *śrāddhas* only apply to those who marry a maternal uncle's daughter even though they have no such family or local usage.

Another question is how far *sapinda* relationship holds good in the case of girls belonging to the family from which one's step-mother comes. The *Udvāhatattva* (p.118), the *Nirṇayasindhu* (p.289), the *Sam. Pr.* (pp.695-699), *Samskāra Kaustubha* (pp.621-630) and the *Dharmasindhu* (p.230) deal with this matter. They all rely on a text of Sumantu:—

‘all the wives of one's father are mothers, the brothers of these are one's maternal uncles, their sisters are one's mother's sisters, the daughters of these are one's sisters and the children of these latter are one's sister's children; otherwise there would be *saṃkara* (confusion).’

Two interpretations are placed on this, one view (and that is held by most) is that this lays down *sāpinda* only with the persons specifically mentioned, while another view (this is held by the *Sam. Pr.*) is that there is *sāpinda* for four generations from the father of one's step mother. According to the first view a man cannot marry the daughter or grand-daughter of his step-mother's brother or sister, but his own daughter can marry the son of his step mother's brother; while according to the second view the latter marriage also would contravene the rule about this extension (*atideśa*) of *sāpinda*.

### Proscribed Relationships

Marriages with certain girls were forbidden by certain writers on the ground of what is called ‘*viruddha-sambandha*’, although there is no question of *sapinda* relationship in such cases. The *Grhya-pariśiṣṭa* (quoted in the *Nirṇayasindhu* p.289) prescribes ‘one should marry a girl with whom there is no *viruddha-sambandha*, e.g. the daughter of one's wife's sister or the sister of one's paternal uncle's wife (these should not be married). *Viruddha-sambandha* (incompatible relation) occurs where the standing of the proposed bridegroom and the bride would resemble that of father or mother to the other (or of brother and sister). In modern times such marriages take place as a matter of course and no court would declare them to be invalid.<sup>160</sup>

About the *sapinda* relationship of the adopted son as regards marriage, *āśauca* and *śrāddha* a good deal is said in many works such as *Sam. K.* (pp.182-186), *Nirṇayasindhu* (pp.290-291), the *Vyavahāra-mayūkha*, the *Sam. Pr.* (pp. 688-694), *Sam. R. M.* (pp. 453-456), *Sāpinda* for *āśauca* and *śrāddha* will be dealt with later on. As to *sāpinda* for marriage in the case of adoption there is great divergence of views, The *Sam. Pr.* (p.690) says that the son given in adoption has *sāpinda* for seven generations with his genitive father and for three generations with the adoptive father (pp.693-694). The *Sam. K.* appears to hold, after quoting several views, that if the *upanayana* of the adopted boy was performed in the family of birth, then he has *sāpinda* with the genitive family for seven generations. But if the ceremonies from *jātakarma* to *upanayana* are performed in the adoptive family then he has *sāpinda* in the adoptive family for seven generations, but only for five generations if only *upanayana* is performed in the family of adoption. The *Nirṇayasindhu* gives its own view that there is *sāpinda* in both families for seven generations. The *Vyavahāra-mayūkha* holds (following *Gāutama IV.3*) that in the case of *kevala dattaka* (the ordinary adopted son) *sapinda* relationship extends to seven degrees in the adoptive father's family and five degrees in the adoptive mother's family. The *Dharma-sindhu* follows the *Sam. K.* generally but it makes one

<sup>160</sup> Vide I. L. R.20 Mad.283 and I. L. R.43 Mad.830 where marriage with one's wife's sister's daughter was held to be valid, among *brāhmaṇas* as well as *śūdras* in the Telugu and Tamil districts, relying on Mandlik's Hindu Law pp.484-485 and other authorities. In *Ramchandra v. Gopal* 32 Bom. 619 at pp.630-631 the court approves of the decision in 20 Mad. 283 and holds that the dicta as to *viruddha-sambandha* are only recommendatory.

significant remark. It says that several writers hold that in the case of *dattaka*, *sāpiṇḍya* is to be observed for a lesser number of degrees (than seven or five) in both families.

The Sam. R. M. (p. 454) says that the limits of *sāpiṇḍya* spoken of as applying to an adopted person extend to his children also. As the limits of *sāpiṇḍya* for marriage are very much narrowed down when marriage with one's maternal uncle's daughter or one's niece is allowed, on the other hand certain communities extend such limits too much. The Deśastha *brāhmaṇas* of the Mādhyandina *śākhā* in the Deccan do not marry a girl whose father's *gotra* is the same as the *gotra* of the bridegroom's maternal grandfather. Manu III.5 lays down:—

‘that girl who is not a *sapiṇḍa* of the mother (of the bridegroom) and who is not a *sagotra* of the father (of the bridegroom) is commended in the case of twice-born classes’.

Many commentators and digests like Kullūka, the Madana-pārijāta (p.132), the Dīpakalikā, the Udvāhatattva (p.107) understand the word *asagotra* (in Manu III.5) after ‘*mātuḥ*’ also, and thus forbid marriage with a girl whose *gotra* is the same as that of one's mother (i.e. of one's maternal grandfather). Medhātithi on Manu III.5 quotes a text of Vasiṣṭha which prescribes the penance of *cāndrāyaṇa* for marrying a girl who has the same *gotra* as the bridegroom's mother (i.e. his mother's father) and abandonment of her. Haradatta on Āp. Dh. S. II.5.11.16 quotes a similar verse from Śātātapa. Kulluka, the Sm. C. (I. p.69), Haradatta on Āp. Dh. S. II.5.11.16, the Gr. R. (p.10), Udvāhatattva p.107 and other digests quote a verse of Vyāsa:—

‘some do not desire for marriage a girl who has the same *gotra* as one's mother; but one may marry without question (or fear) a girl when her birth and name (as connected with one's mother's original *gotra*) are unknown’.

A woman on marriage loses her original *gotra* and passes over into the *gotra* of her husband; so the words ‘*sagotra*’ of the mother simply mean ‘having the same *gotra* as one's mother once had in her maiden state’. The Sm. C. (I. p.69) takes this verse to refer only to a woman who was made an appointed daughter (*putrikā*) by her father. Halāyudha also held the same view. But other writers do not approve of this (vide the Gr. R, p.10). The Nirṇayasindhu (III. purvardha p.302) forbids marriage with a girl who is *sagotra* of one's mother, but the Sam. K. (p. 693) and the Dharmasindhu both say, after quoting a text of Satyāśāḍha, that this restriction applies only to those who study the Mādhyandina *śākhā*.

The Bengal school represented by the Dāyabhāga and Raghunandana differ from the Mitākṣarā in the interpretation of the word ‘*sapiṇḍa*’. In this system the word ‘*piṇḍa*’ is taken to mean ‘the ball of rice’ that is offered in śrāddhas to deceased ancestors etc. (while under the Mitākṣara interpretation ‘*piṇḍa*’ means body or particles of body). *Sapiṇḍa* means ‘one who is connected with another through oblations of food’. The author of the Dāyabhāga propounds his theory with reference to inheritance and he himself says that with reference to *āśauca sapiṇḍa* relationship is to be differently understood. Further Jīmūtavāhana does not set forth his theory of *sapiṇḍa* relationship with reference to marriage. His theory is that in matters of inheritance the guiding principle is the spiritual benefit (*upakāra*) conferred on the deceased through oblations of food, and he relies on Manu (IX.106) for this proposition. For his *sapiṇḍa* theory he principally relies on two passages, Baud. Dh. S. I.5.113-115 and Manu IX.186-187. Baudhāyana's words are:—

‘the paternal great-grand-father, the paternal grand father, the father, the man himself, his full brothers, his son, grandson and son's son from a woman of the same *varṇa*: all these participating in undivided *dāya* (heritage) are called *sapiṇḍas*. Those who participate in divided *dāya* are called *sakulyas*. Thus issue of the body existing, wealth goes to them; on failure of *sapiṇḍas*, the *sakulyas*’.

The text of Manu (IX.186-187) is:—

'To three, libations of water must be given; towards three *piṇḍa* proceeds; the fourth is the giver of these (of water and *piṇḍas*), there is no fifth properly (concerned in this). Whoever is the nearest among *sapiṇḍas*, his becomes the wealth of him (who dies). After him the *sakulya* be comes (the heir) etc.'

Jīmutavāhana's explanation of this text is as follows:—

'A man when living offers *piṇḍas* to his three male ancestors; but when he himself dies, his son performs the *sapiṇḍikaraṇa śrāddha*<sup>161</sup> is made one with the *pitṛs* and he then begins to participate along with his father and grandfather in the three *piṇḍas* offered by his son to the latter's three ancestors. Thus those to whom he offers *piṇḍas* and those who offer *piṇḍas* to him are called, since they share in undivided oblations, *avibhaktadāyāda sapiṇḍas*.'

Several objections can be raised against the theory of Jīmutavāhana. In the first place he assigns the meaning of *piṇḍa* to the word *dāya* in Baudhāyana's passage for which there is no warrant. Baudhāyana really means that those enumerated by him are called *sapiṇḍas* who take undivided wealth i.e. who constitute an undivided family. In the next place on his interpretation the word *sapiṇḍa* has to be interpreted in entirely different ways for *āśauca* and marriage. Besides he himself is not sure of his ground, since he says that although learned men may not approve of his theory that spiritual benefit is the guiding principle in taking property by inheritance they must admit that the order of heirs as stated by him relying on Manu IX.186-187 is the proper one.

The following table illustrates the *sapiṇḍas* expressly so stated by the Dāyabhāga where **P** stands for the *propositus* **S** for son and **F** for father:

GGF12	— S13	— S14	— S15
	— S9	— S10	— S11
GF8			
	— S5	— S6	— S7
F (4)			
	— S1	— S3	— S3
P			

Śrīkr̥ṣṇa, a commentator of the Dāyabhāga and author of Dāyakrama-saṅgraha, and Raghunandana, author of Smṛtitattva, and others elaborate these rules.

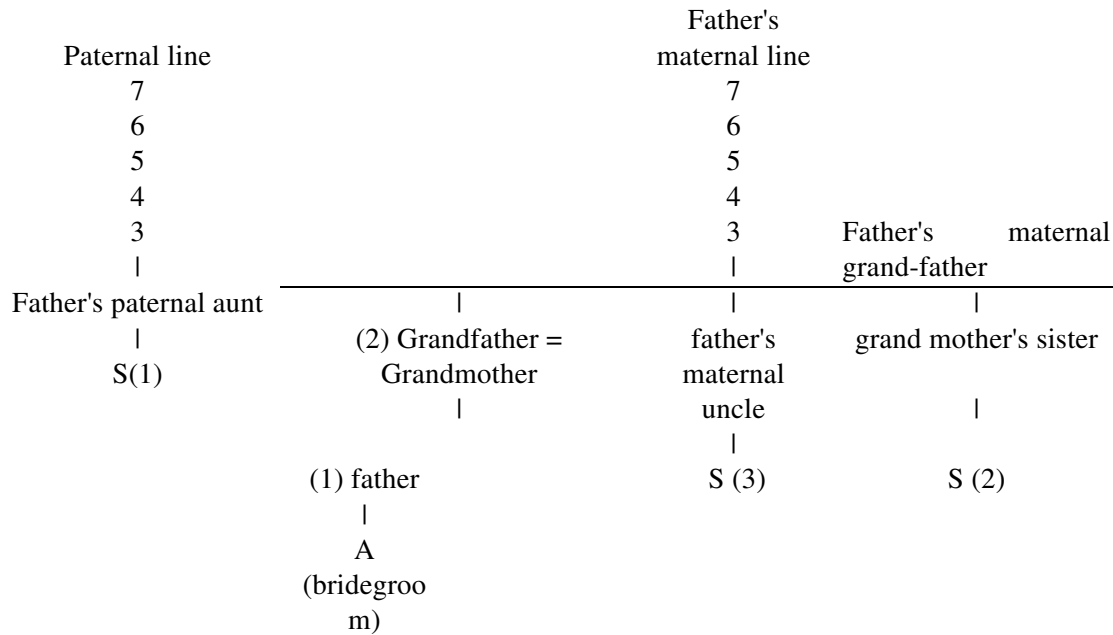
Raghunandana in his work on marriage called Udvāhatattva quotes the famous verse of the Matsya-purāna:—

'The fourth and (two beyond him) among ascendants are partakers of *lepa* (the leavings of the boiled rice that become attached to the hand of him who offers *piṇḍas*), the father and the rest (i.e. two more beyond him) are partakers of the *piṇḍa*; he who offers the *piṇḍa* to them is the seventh; *sāpiṇḍya* extends to seven generations'

and refers the readers to his Śuddhitattva for elucidation. Raghunandana does not give any definition of *sapiṇḍas* for marriage, but discusses the conflict about the several texts such as '7th on the father's side and 5th on the mother's side'. He expressly says (p.110 of Udvāhatattva) that the words 'who is not a *sapiṇḍa* of one's mother' are still applicable even if several females intervene between the common ancestor and the girl proposed to be married. He then adds a special rule that descendants of what are called *pitṛbandhus* and *matṛbandhus* also are forbidden if they are within 7 degrees and 5 degrees respectively from these *bandhus*. The *pitṛbandhus* of a person are his paternal grand-father's sister's sons, his paternal grandmother's sister's sons and his father's maternal uncle's sons; while *matṛbandhus* are a person's mother's father's sister's sons, mother's mother's sister's sons, mother's maternal uncle's sons, These two latter may be illustrated by two diagrams.

<sup>161</sup> In the Sapiṇḍikaraṇa rite four pindas are made, one for the deceased person whose sapindikarana is to be effected and three for that person's three paternal ancestors and the pindas are mixed up, thereby indicating that from being a more *preta* (one belonging to the region of the unredeemed dead) he becomes one of the *pitṛs* and dwells in *pitṛloka*.

## No. I



N.B. Here S1, S2 and S3 are the three *pitṛbandhus* of A, the bridegroom, and they are the starting points for calculating prohibited degrees among paternal cognates. In the ascending line only the descendants of the common ancestors are excluded. For example, S1 is a *pitṛbandhu* and his descendants up to 7 degrees are excluded; but S1's father is not a bandhu of the bridegroom; therefore S1's father's sister may be married by the bridegroom. Under this rule the 6th descendant (a girl) of S1 will be ineligible for marriage with A: but she will be 9th from A's grandfather's father who is the common ancestor. So it will be seen that this goes far beyond the limits of *sāpiṇḍya* generally prescribed and there is no valid reason assigned for this.

Another rule propounded by Raghunandana is that even within prohibited degrees a valid marriage may be contracted if three *gotras* intervene. In the case of girls descended from *pitṛbandhus* and *matṛbandhus* the computation of *gotra* must be made from them. For want of space it is not thought advisable to illustrate this by citing several examples.

The Dāyabhaga does not rely upon any Vedic passages for its theory of *sapiṇḍa* relationship. The Mitākṣara (on Yāj. I.52) relies upon three Vedic passages only in propounding the theory of *sapiṇḍa* relationship viz.

- 'indeed the man himself is born from himself (as son, Ait. Br.33.1)';
- 'thou art born again (or reproduced) in the offspring' (Tai. Br. I.5.5) and
- 'this body is made of six *kośas* (sheaths); three are derived from the father, three from the mother; bones, muscles and marrow from the mother' (Garbhopaniṣad).

These passages at the most say that particles of the bodies of the parents continue in their offspring; but they do not say anything about the meaning of *sapiṇḍa* or the limits of the *sapiṇḍa* relationship for marriage or in heritance. Even in the Rig Veda the words *jñāti* and *bandhu* which occur in the *dharmasūtras*<sup>162</sup> frequently occur.<sup>163</sup> All that we can say is that both meanings of *sapiṇḍa* were implicit in the word *piṇḍa* from the earliest times and that the *sūtra* writers were conscious of both meanings.

<sup>162</sup> e.g. Āp. Dh. S. I.3.10.3, I.5.11 17. and Gaut. II.44, IV.3 and 5, VI.3

<sup>163</sup> vide Rig Veda VII.55.5 and X.85.28 for *jñāti* and Rig I.113.2, V.73.4, VII.72.2, VII.67.9 for *bandhu*



As to the grounds on which marriages between near *sapiṇḍas* were prohibited various theories have been advanced by anthropologists.<sup>164</sup> Some think that the prohibition was due to the abhorrence which men in the primitive times felt for incest. To me it appears more probable that in India at least the prohibition was due to two causes; firstly, the observed fact that, if near relatives marry, their defects are transmitted with aggravation to their offspring and secondly the fear that, if marriages between near relatives by blood were allowed, there may be clandestine love affairs and consequent loss of morals and it would be difficult to secure husbands for girls who would be living under the same roof with several near or distant cousins.

The Par. M. I. part 2, p.59 expressly says that only such a girl who is not a *sapiṇḍa* of the bridegroom within the prohibited degrees on any of the two theories of *sapiṇḍa* (viz. by connection with particles of the body or with the balls of rice) is eligible for marriage. The question what support Vedic Literature lends to the two interpretations of the word *sapiṇḍa* may now be briefly discussed here.

The word *piṇḍa* occurs in the Rig Veda (I.162.19) and the Tai. S. IV.6. 9.3 where it seems to mean:– ‘a part of the body of the sacrificial animal thrown into fire as an offering’. Here it is clear that the word *piṇḍa* is not used in the sense of ‘ball of rice’. But in the Tai. S. II.3.8.2 and in the Sat. Br. II.4.2.24 the word *piṇḍa* means ‘ball of rice’ offered to the Manes. The Nirukta III.4 and 5 twice employs the words ‘*piṇḍadānāya*’ (for offering balls of rice). But the word *sapiṇḍa* hardly ever occurs in the Vedic literature and we have no means of judging in what sense it was used in the Vedic literature. In the *dharmasūtras* the word *sapiṇḍa* occurs frequently and the *dharmasūtras* show a close connection between offering *piṇḍa* and the taking of inheritance (vide Gaut.14.13, 28.21, Āp. Dh. S. II.6.14.2, Vasiṣṭha IV.16-18, Viṣṇu Dh. S.15.40).

### The arrangement of Gotra

It was shown above (pp.436-37) that some sages prohibit marriage with a *sagotra* girl while others prohibit it with a *sapravara* girl. A number of sages and works like Viṣṇu Dh. S.24.9, Yāj. I.53, Nārada (strīpuṃsa, verse 7) require that the girl to be married must not be a *sa-gotra* nor a *sapravara*. Therefore it is necessary to understand the meaning of *gotra* and *pravara*. A detailed treatment of the topics of *gotra* and *pravara* would extend to a large treatise. Only a few salient points can be gone into here.

The word *gotra* in the Rig means ‘cow-stable’ or ‘herd of cows’ in a few passages (I.51.3, II.17.1, III.39.4, III.43.7, IX.86.23, X.48.2, X.120.8). By a natural metaphor ‘*gotra*’ was applied to a cloud (in which waters are pent up as cows in a cow-stable) or to a cloud demon and also to a mountain range or peak which conceals water-yielding clouds. Vide Rig Veda II.23.3 (where Brhaspati's car is styled '*gotra-bhid*'), Rig Veda X 103.7 (=Tai. S. IV.6.4.2, Atharva-Veda V.2.8. and Vaj. S.17.39), Rig Veda VI.17.2, X.103.6. In some of these verses it is possible to take '*gotra*' in the sense of 'fort'. In some cases '*gotra*' probably means only ‘assemblage’ (*samuha*) e.g. Rig Veda II.23.18, VI.65.5. From this last sense of 'assemblage' the transition to the meaning of ‘a group of persons’ is both easy and quick. There is no positive instance of the word ‘*gotra*’ being unchallengeably used in the sense ‘descendants of a common patriarchal ancestor’ in the Rig Veda; but the conception underlying the idea of *gotra* was, it is plain, quite familiar even in the age of the Rig Veda. In the Atharva Veda V.21.3 1118 the word ‘*viśvagotryaḥ*’ (belonging to all families) occurs. Here the word ‘*gotra*’ clearly means ‘a group of men connected together’ (by blood). The Kauśika Sūtra IV.2 quotes a *mantra* in which *gotra* undoubtedly means ‘a group of persons’.

<sup>164</sup> Vide Westermarck in his ‘History of Human marriage’ (ed. of 1921, vol. II. pp.71-81) and Rivers on ‘Marriage of cousins in India’ in J. R. A. S. for 1907 pp.611-640.

Several passages of the Tai. S. show that descendants of great sages were called after those sages. In Tai. S. I.8.18.1 it is said 'the Hotṛ is a Bhārgava' (descendant of Bhṛigu). The commentator explains that this is so only in the Rājasūya. It is quite possible that in those days descent was traced through teacher and pupil as well as through father and son. But there being a very few occupations only it is most probable that the son generally learnt from his father the lore of the latter. In Tai. S. VII.1.9.1 we read 'therefore one does not find (or know) two Jāmadagnīyas (in succession) who are poor (or grey haired)'. From this it is clear that in the times of the Tai. S. Jamadagnī was regarded as a very ancient sage, that several generations of Jamadagnī's descendants had passed away by that time, that they were all known as Jāmadagnyas (or-gnyas) and that no two descendants were found to be poor (or grey haired) in succession.

In numerous *mantras* of the Rig Veda the descendants of well-known sages are denoted by the plural form of the names of those sages. In Rig X.66.14 we read:— 'the Vasiṣṭhas have raised their voices like their father'. In Rig Veda VI.35.5 the Bharadvājas are referred to as Āngirases. According to Aśv. Srauta *sūtra* Bharadvāja is a *gotra* falling under the Āngirogaṇa. In the Brāhmaṇa Literature there are ample indications that priestly families had come to be formed into several groups named after their (real or supposed) founders and that such families differed in details of worship according to the group they belonged to. The Tai. Br. (1.1.4) prescribes that the consecration (*ādhāna*) of the sacred Vedic fires is to be performed for Bhṛigus or Agnīs with the *mantra* '*bhṛigūṇām* (or *Agnīnām*) *tvādevānām vratapate vratenā-dadhāmi*,' that for other *brāhmaṇas* with the words '*ādityānām tvā devānām vratapate*' etc.. The Tai. Br. II.2.3 speaks of the '*Āngirasī prajā*' (people of the Āngiras group). The Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa prescribes that the *camasa* (cup) made of *udumbara* was to be given as *dakṣiṇā* to a *sagotra brāhmaṇa*.' The Kauṣītaki Br. (25.15) says that one who has performed the Viśvajit sacrifice (in which everything that the sacrificer owned was gifted away) should stay for a year with a *brāhmaṇa* of the same *gotra*. The Ait. Br. (30.7) contains the story of Aitaśa and his son Abhyagnī and it is stated that the Aitaśāyanas Abhyagnīs are the most sinful of the Aurvas. In the Kauṣītaki Br. where the same story occurs it is said that the Aitaśāyanas became lowest among Bhṛigus, as they were cursed by their father. According to Baudhāyana-śrauta-sūtra the Aitaśāyanas are a sub-section of Bhṛigugaṇa. Śunaḥśepa, when he was accepted as a son by Viśvāmitra, came to be called Devarāta and the Ait. Br. (33.5) says that the Kāpileyas and Bābhnavas were affiliated to Devarāta. According to Baudhāyanaśrauta-sūtra Devarāta and Babhru are sub-sections of Viśvāmitra *gotra*. Śunaḥśepa is said to have been an Āngirasa by birth (Ait. Br.33.5). So this makes it clear that *gotra* relationship was by birth in the times of the Ait. Br. (and not from teacher to pupil). In the Upaniṣads the sages when expounding the knowledge of *brahma* addressed their pupils by the *gotra* names e.g. by the Bharadvāja, Gārgya, Aśvalāyana, Bhārgava and Kātyāyana *gotras* in Praśna 1.1, Vaiyāghrapadya and Gāutama in Chāndogya V.14.1 and V.16.1; Gāutama and Bharadvāja, Viśvāmitra and Jamadagnī, Vasiṣṭha and Kaśyapa in Br. Up. II.2.4.

All this shows that the system of *gotras* with several sub-sections was well established in the times of the Brāhmaṇas and the ancient Upaniṣads. But the *gotras* are in these works referred to in connection with sacrifices or education. There is hardly any distinct reference in these to *gotra* or *sagotra* in relation to marriage. In the Lātyāyana-śrauta-sūtra VIII.2.8 and 10 it is prescribed that one who has given away everything in the Viśvajit sacrifice should stay three nights with *niṣādas* and may partake of their jungle diet and then again three nights with '*jana*' and then the *sūtra* gives several views about the meaning of '*jana*' one of which, that of Dhānañjapya, is that '*jana*' means a person with whom (i.e. with whose daughter) marriage is possible while one who is *sagotra* is called '*samāna jana*'. This clearly proves that long before the Lātyāyana-srauta-sūtra marriage with a *sagotra* had been forbidden. Besides several of the *gṛhya* and *dharmasūtras* prohibit marriage with a *sagotra* girl. It is impossible to hold that this was a new conception that arose only about the time of these *sūtras*. Therefore, it must be supposed that prohibition as to sameness of *gotra* in

marriage had its origin long before the period of the *sūtras* in the times of the Brāhmaṇa works (if not earlier).

*Gotra* was of supreme importance in several fundamental matters and it largely entered into several practices of the ancient Aryans. A few examples may be given here.

(1) In marriage *sa-gotra* girls were forbidden, vide above pp.436-37. In the Lājā-homa at marriage two offerings were to be made by all except Jāmadagnyas, who had to make three (Asv. gr. I.7.8-9).

(2) In matters of inheritance the wealth of one dying without issue went to his near *sa-gotras* (Gaut.28.19).

(3) In *śrāddha* the *brāhmaṇas* to be invited should not belong as far as possible to the same *gotra* as the person inviting (Āp. Dh. S. II.7.17.4, Gaut.15.20).

(4) In *pārvaṇa sthālīpāka* and other *pāka Yājñas*, all were to cut off oblations from the middle and fore-half of the *havis*, but for Jāmadagnyas (who are *pañcāvattins*) they were to be cut off from the middle, the fore-part and the hind part (vide Aśv. gr.1.10.18-19).

(5) In offering water to a *preta* (a person recently dead) his *gotra* and name were to be repeated (Asv. gr. IV.4.10).

(6) In the *caula* ceremony tufts of hair were to be left in accordance with the *gotra* and practice of the family (Khadira gr. II.3.30).

(7) At the time of performing one's daily *sandhyā* prayer, one has to repeat even in modern times one's *gotra* and *pravara*, the Vedaśākhā and *sūtra* which one studies.

As regards *śrauta* sacrifices a few interesting examples may be given. Jaimini establishes that *sattras* (sacrificial sessions extending over 12 days and more) could be performed only by *brāhmaṇas* and that among *brāhmaṇas* the Bhṛigus, Śunakas and Vasiṣṭhas are not entitled to perform them (VI.6.24-26). Those of the Atri, Vadhyasva, Vasiṣṭha, Vaiśya (Vainya ?), Śaunaka, Kanva, Kaśyapa and Saṃkṛti *gotras* took Nārāśaṃsa as the second *prayāja* while others took Tanūnapāt as the second (vide Śabara on Jaimini VI.6.1).

## Pravaras

The conception of *pravara* is closely interwoven with that of *gotra* from very ancient times. The two have to be studied together. 'Pravara' literally means 'choosing' or 'invoking' (*prārthanā*). As Agnī was invoked to carry the offerings of a sacrificer to the gods by taking the names of the illustrious *ṛṣīs* (his remote ancestors) who in former times had invoked Agnī, the word *pravara* came to denote one or more illustrious *ṛṣīs*, ancestors of a sacrificer. A synonym of *pravara* is *ārṣeya* or *ārṣa* (as in Yāj. I.52). *Pravara* entered into several domestic ceremonies and practices according to the *gṛhya* and *dharmasūtras*. For example:

(1) a bride was to be chosen whose father's *pravara* was not the same as that of the bridegroom's father. Vide above p.437

(2) in *upanayana* the girdle (*mekhalā*) was to have one, three or five knots according to the number of *ṛṣīs* constituting the boy's *pravara* (vide San. gr. II.2).

(3) In *Caula* the tufts of hair to be left on the head depended on the number of sages constituting the *pravara* of the boy's family (Āp. gr.16.6).

The mass of material on *gotra* and *pravara* in the *sūtras*, the *purāṇas* and digests is so vast and so full of contradictions that it is almost an impossible task to reduce it to order and coherence. The learned author of the *Pravara-manjarī* (which is the leading work on the subject) wrote in despair:—

‘Here, in the parts of *sūtras* that have been quoted there is a great divergence in the order (of the names of *pravaras*) of the texts of the several *sūtrakāras*, this being specially so in the text of Āśvalāyana (śrauta)-sūtra. Thus, though divergence is clearly established, yet following the order of the texts of the majority of writers such as Baudhāyana, Āpastamba and Kātyāyana we shall declare (the rules) about marriage or no marriage’.

We have first to understand what *gotra* in the *sūtras* and digests means and how it is inter-related to *pravara*. Among the *sūtras* that treat of *gotra* and *pravara* the *śrauta sūtras* of Āśvalāyana (Uttaraśatka VI, khandas 10-15), Āpastamba (24th praśna) and *Baudhāyana* (B. I.ed. vol. III *pravarādhyāya* at end) are the most important. The *Pravaramaṅjarī* (p.5) has a verse to the effect that *Baudhāyana's pravarādhyāya* is the best on the subject.

The Śrautasūtra of Satyāśāḍha Hiranyakeśi (21st praśna) has a section on this subject, which is the same as Āpastamba-srauta with a few omissions and variations. The *Baudhāyana-srauta-sūtra* says:—

‘Viśvāmitra, Jamadagnī, Bharadvāja, Gāutama, Atri, Vasiṣṭha and Kaśyapa are the seven sages and Āgastya is the eighth; the progeny of these eight sages is declared to be *gotra*’.

These seven sages are probably derived from what is stated in the Br. Up. II.2.3-4 (=Sat. Br. XIV.5.2.6) where these very seven sages are enumerated as those intended in the śloka ‘*arvāgbilaścamasa* etc.’<sup>165</sup> quoted there. The same work, (*Baudhāyana śrauta*) states that there are thousands, tens of thousands and *arbudas* (millions of millions) of *gotras*, but the *pravaras* are only 49. Besides the *sūtra* works, some *purāṇas* like the *Matsya* (chap.195-202), the *Vāyu* (chap.88 and 99, Anan. ed.), *Skanda III.2 (Dharmāranya kaṇḍa)* contain elaborate enumerations of *gotras* and *pravaras*. The *Mahābharata* sets out at length the subdivisions (such as *Madhuc-chandas*, *Devarāta*) of Viśvāmitra-*gotra* in *Anuśāsanaparva* 4.49-59. Digests like the *Smṛtyarthasāra* (pp.14-17), the *Sam. Pr.* (pp.59L-680), the *Sam. K.* (pp.637-692), the *Nirṇaya-sindhu*, the *Dharma-sindhu*, the *Bālabhaṭṭī* contain a vast material on this topic. There are also special works like the *Pravaramaṅjarī* on this topic.

### Gotras and common ancestors

The general conception about *gotra* is that it denotes all persons who trace descent in an unbroken male line from a common male ancestor. When a person says ‘I am *Jamadagnī-gotra*’ he means that he traces his descent from the ancient sage *Jamadagnī* by unbroken male descent. As stated by *Baudhāyana* cited above, from very ancient times these male founders were supposed to be eight. This enumeration of eight primary *gotras* seems to have been known to Pāṇini. *Patañjali* says ‘there were eighty thousand sages who observed celibacy.’ The accepted opinion is that the spread of progeny was due to eight sages including Āgastya. The offspring (*apatya*) of these eight are *gotras* and others than these are called *gotrāvayava*. Pāṇini defines *gotra* for grammatical purposes as ‘*apatyam pauṭra prabhṛti gotram*’ (IV.1.162), which means ‘the word *gotra* denotes (in my work on grammar) the progeny (of a sage) beginning with the son's son’. For example, the son of *Garga* would be called *Gargi*, but the grandson would be called *Gārgyaḥ* and the plural *Gargāḥ* would denote all descendants of *Garga* (downwards from *Garga's* grand-son). But this definition is a technical one in grammar and is meant to indicate how derived (*taddhita*) words are to be formed by means of terminations. Even Pāṇini makes use of this technical sense only in the *apatyādhikāra*, but elsewhere in his work he uses the word *gotra* in the popular sense as comprehending all

<sup>165</sup> Vide *Nirukta* XII.38 for another interpretation of the verse *arvāgbilaścamasa* &c. In the *Nirukta* ‘the seven sages’ are explained either as ‘seven rays of the Sun’ or as ‘the seven indriyas’. The *Br. Up.* explains the ‘seven sages’ as the *prāṇas* (the two ears, eyes, the two holes of the nose and the tongue) and identifies them with the seven sages, Viśvāmitra and others.

descendants of a common male ancestor.<sup>166</sup> The Sam Pr. (pp.591-592) lucidly explains this. That a man belongs to a particular *gotra* is known by him only from tradition, from his father and other elders or from people about him, just as he knows that he is a *brāhmaṇa* from the same source. Medhātithi on Manu III.5.194 has a very lucid and interesting discussion on this topic. His argument is: just as, though all persons are men, some are called *brāhmaṇas*, so among *brāhmaṇas* certain persons are known by immemorial usage (or convention) as belonging to certain *gotras* like Vasiṣṭha and the *sūtra-karas* lay down that a certain *gotra* has certain *pravaras*; so the word *gotra* is applied to Vasiṣṭha and other sages by *rūḍhi* (by convention or long-standing usage). It cannot be supposed that a person called Parāśara was born at a certain time and then his descendants came to be called Parāśaras. In that case the Veda would not be *anādi* (beginningless), as it is supposed to be, since it mentions Parāśara, Vasiṣṭha etc. So *gotra* is *anādi* like the *brāhmaṇas* caste and the Veda.

The word is also secondarily used to denote a person, who is very illustrious on account of his learning, wealth, valour or generosity, who thereby gives a name to his descendants and then becomes the founder of the family. This is *laukika gotra*. But this is not the meaning of *gotras* which *brāhmaṇas* have. The secondary meaning may apply to the word *gotra* when used in the case of *kṣatriyas*. The Mitākṣara on Yāj I.53 says ‘*gotra* is that which is known from tradition handed down in the family.’ Each *gotra* is associated with one, two, three or five sages (but never four or more than five) that constitute the *pravara* of that *gotra*.

The *gotras* are arranged in groups, e.g. there are according to the Aśvalāyana-śrauta-sūtra four sub divisions of the *Vasiṣṭha gaṇa*, viz. Upamanyu, Parāśara, Kuṇḍina and Vasiṣṭha (other than the first three). Each of these four again has numerous sub-sections, each being called *gotra*. So the arrangement is first into *gaṇas*, then into *pakṣas*, then into individual *gotras*. The first has survived in the Bhṛgu and Āṅgīrasa *gaṇa*. According to Baud, the principal eight *gotras* were divided into *pakṣas*. The *pravara* of Upamanyu is Vasiṣṭha, Bharadvasu, Indrapramada; the *pravara* of the Parāśara *gotra* is Vasiṣṭha, Śāktya, Pārāśarya; the *pravara* of the Kuṇḍina *gotra* is Vasiṣṭha, Maitrāvaruṇa, Kauṇḍinya and the *pravara* of Vasiṣṭhas other than these three is simply Vasiṣṭha. It is therefore that some define *pravara* as ‘the group of sages that distinguishes the founder (lit. the starter) of one *gotra* from another’.

Though the word *pravara* does not occur in the Rig Veda, the word ‘*ārṣeya*’ occurs therein and the system of *pravara* goes back almost to the Rig Veda. Rig Veda IX.97.51 has ‘thereby may we acquire wealth and *ārṣeya* resembling Jamadagnī’s.’ Sometimes the idea of invoking Agnī is conveyed without using the word *pravara* or *ārṣeya*. In Rig Veda VIII.102.4 it is said ‘I invoke Agnī just as Aurva, Bhṛgu and Apnavāna did.’ It is remarkable that these are three of the five *pravara* sages of the Vatsa-Bhṛigus according to Baudhāyana Rig Veda 1.45.3 has ‘O Jatavedas (Agnī), give heed to the summons of Praskaṇva, as in the case of Priyamedha, Atri, Virūpa and Āṅgīras.’ In Rig Veda VII.18.21 it is said ‘they who from house to house gladdened thee, being desirous of thee, viz. Parāśara, Śatayātu and Vasiṣṭha, will not forget the friendship of a liberal patron (like thee). It deserves to be noted that this *mantra* mentions Parāśara (who in later mythology is the grandson of Vasiṣṭha and son of Śakti), Śatayātu (who is Śakti according to Sāyaṇa), and Vasiṣṭha. Parāśara, Śakti and Vasiṣṭha constitute the *pravara* of Parāśara *gotra* (according to Asv. and Baud). In the Atharvaveda (XL 1.16, XL 1.25,26, 32,33,35, XII.4.2 and 12, XVI.8.12-13) *ārṣeya* means ‘descendants of sages or those who are related to sages’. In the Tai. S. both *ārṣeya* and *pravara* occur in the sense of the *sūtras*. In the Tai. S. II.5.8.7 (which refers to the recitation of the Sāmīdhenī verses) we read:– he says ‘choose (or invoke) ye the fire called *havyavāhana*’; he chooses him (the fire) of the gods; he chooses the *ārṣeya*; in so doing he does not

<sup>166</sup> Vide the Kāśikā on Panini II.4.63, IV.2.39 and IV.3.80.

depart from the relationship (by blood) and doing so serves for continuity. He chooses the later ones beginning from the remoter ones". In this passage 'ārṣeyam' appears to be used in the sense of 'one or more illustrious ancestors of the sacrificer' and reference is made to one of the two modes of mentioning the sages constituting the *pravara*. 'Ārṣeya' may also be taken here as an adjective (qualifying Agnī), the meaning being 'he invokes Agnī by the names of the illustrious ancestor sages of the *yajamāna*'. In one mode the remotest ancestor is named first in a *taddhita* (derivative) formation, then his descendant and so on, the sage nearest the sacrificer being mentioned last. For example, the *pravara* of Bhṛgu Vatsa is 'Bhargava-cyavana apnavānaurva-jamadagnyeti'. This method is employed by the Hotṛ priest when he invokes fire as the divine Hotṛ with the *pravara-mantra* 'agne mahān-asi brāhmaṇa bharata deveddha manviddha ṛṣīstuta etc.' (vide Tai. S. II.5.9. and Sat, Br. I.4, 2, Asv. Sr. I.2.27-1.3.6). In the other mode the affix 'vat' is used after the name of each *pravara* sage and the remotest one is mentioned last (e.g. Jamadagnivat, Urvavat, Apnavānavat, Cyavanavat, Bhṛguvat). This mode is employed by the *adhvaryu* when he chooses the Hotṛ priest. The Tai. S. II.5.11.9 appears to refer to one (i.e. 2nd) mode. The Kausītaki Brāhmaṇa explains the purpose of taking the names of ancestors 'as the gods do not partake of the offering of him who has no list of (illustrious) ancestors, therefore he pronounces the *ārṣeya* of the sacrificer'. The Ait. Br. (34.7) has an interesting passage on *pravara*. When a *brāhmaṇa* is initiated for a sacrifice, that fact is announced in these words 'a *brāhmaṇa* has been initiated for a sacrifice.' How is the initiation of the *kṣatriya* to be announced? The reply of the Ait. Br. is 'even in the case of the *kṣatriya* the announcement is to be in the same form (viz. a *brāhmaṇa* has been initiated); but with the *pravara* of the family priest. Therefore they should proclaim the *kṣatriya*'s initiation as a sacrificer with the *ārṣeya* of his family priest and should invoke Agnī with the *pravara* of his family priest. The Asv. Sr. (Uttara ṣaṭka VI.15.4-5) and Baud. Sr. (*pravara-praśna* 54) say that in the case of *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* the *pravara* of their purohita was to be employed or the *pravara* 'Mānava-Aila Paurūravasa' or simply 'Manuvar'. The origin of that rule is to be found in the above passage of the Ait. Br. There is another similar passage in the Ait. Br. (35.5). The Sat. Br. I.4.2.3-4 shows that the illustrious ancestors to be invoked were supposed to be related as father and son and not by apostolic succession.

The Mahābhārata says that the original *gotras* were only four viz.; Agnī, Kaśyapa, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu. The verses are rather abruptly introduced in the epic and there is nothing to show on what this statement was based and it appears that it is due to the imagination of the writer. Baudāyana as shown above states that the original *gotras* are eight. But it is remarkable that Bhṛgu and Agnī (whose divisions and sub-divisions are many) are not included by him in these eight. Therefore, it appears that even *Baudhāyana* is not correctly stating the number of original *gotras*. Gāutama and Bharadvāja are stated to be two out of the original eight, but both of them instead of being separately dealt with are grouped under the comprehensive Āṅgirasagaṇa. So even Baudāyana is not to be implicitly followed. The Bālabhaṭṭī mentions eighteen principal *gotras* (eight as in Baudhāyana plus ten more some of which are names of mythical kings). Baudāyana himself says that there are millions of *gotras* and in the Baudāyana *Pravarādhyāya* there are over 500 names of *gotra* and *pravara* sages; while the *Pravaramaṅjarī* quotes a verse that 'there are three crores of them and so the *gotra* system is difficult to comprehend', and it mentions about 5000 *gotras*. Therefore, as the Smṛtyarthasāra says the *nibandhas* endeavour to place the innumerable *gotras* under groups and distribute them among 49 *pravaras* (mentioned by Baudhāyana) Some idea of these *gotras* and their distribution among the *pravaras* is given below. The appendix under note No.1144 collects together the 49 *pravara* groups.

The Bhṛgugaṇa and the Āṅgirogaṇa are very extensive. The Bhṛigus are of two sorts, Jāmadagnya and non-Jāmadagnya. The Jāmadagnya Bhṛigus are again twofold, Vatsas and Bidas (or Vidas); the non-Jāmadagnya Bhṛigus are fivefold viz. Arṣiṣenas, Yāskas, Mitrayus, Vainyas and Śunakas (these latter five are called *kevala Bhṛigus*). Under each of these sub-divisions there are many

*gotras*, on the names and number of which the *sūtrakaras* are not agreed. The *pravara* of Jāmadagnya Vatsas is constituted by five sages according to Baudhāyana and by three according to Kātyāyana. The *pravara* of the Bidas and the Arṣiṣenas also has five sages. These three (viz. Vatsas, Bidas and Arṣiṣenas) are styled *pāncāvattin* (Baudhāyana 5) and they cannot inter-marry (the reason will be explained below). The five non-Jāmadagnya Bhrigus have each of them numerous sub-divisions. These divisions of Bhrigus are given here according to Baudhāyana. Āpastamba has only six of them (and not seven as he excludes Bidas from this group). According to Kātyāyana, Bhrigus have twelve sub divisions (vide Sam. Pr. p.625).

The Aṅgīrogaṇa has three divisions, Gāutamas, Bharadvājas and Kevala-Āṅgīrasas; out of whom Gāutamas have seven sub-divisions, Bharadvājas have four (Rauṣyaṇas, Gargas, Kapis and Kevala-Bharadvājas), and Kevala-Agnīes have six sub-divisions and each of these again is sub-divided into numerous *gotras*. This is according to Baudhāyana Other *sūtrakaras* differ as to the subdivisions. Atrī (one of the eight primary *gotras*) is subdivided into four (Atris proper, Vādbhūtakas, Gaviṣṭiras, Mudgalas). Viśvāmītra is sub-divided into ten, which are further subdivided into 72 *gotras*. Kaśyapas are sub divided into Kaśyapas, Nidhruvas, Rebhas, and Śaṅḍilas. Vasiṣṭha has four sub-divisions (Vasiṣṭhas with one *pravara* only, Kuṇḍinas, Upamanyus and Parāśaras) which are further sub divided into 105 *gotras*. Āgastya has three sub-divisions (Āgastyas, Somavahas and Yājñavahas), the first of which is further sub-divided into twenty *gotras*.

When it is said that marriage with a *sagotra* or a *sappravara* girl is forbidden, each of these is separately an obstacle to marriage. Therefore, a girl, though not *sappravara*, may be yet *sagotra* and so ineligible for marriage or though not *sagotra* may yet be *sappravara* and not eligible. For example, the *gotras* of Yāska, Vādhūla, Mauna, Mauka are different, yet a marriage between persons belonging to these *gotras* is not possible, because the *pravara* of all these is the same, viz. 'bhārgava-vaitahavya-savetasa-it'. So also though the *gotras* Saṃkṛti, Pūtimāṣa, Taṇḍi, Śambu and Śaṅgava are different, there can be no marriage bet ween them as the *pravara* is the same, viz. 'Āṅgīrasa, Gaurivīta, Sarhkrtya ' (aco. to Asv. Sruta). When it is said that *samāna pravaras* cannot marry, sameness may be due to only one sage being the same in the *pravaras* of two *gotras* or there may be two or three or more sages that are common. The general rule is that if even one sage is the same in the *pravaras* of two different *gotras*, then they are *sappravara*, except in the case of the Bhrigu group and the group of Aṅgīrasas. In these two latter unless there are at least three sages common (when the *pravara* is constituted by five sages) or at least two sages are common (when *pravara* consists of only three sages), there is no *sappravaratva* and no bar to marriage. It will be noticed that among the five *pravara* sages of the Vatsas, Bidas and Arṣiṣenas quoted above there are three sages that are common and so they cannot inter-marry.

Though the vast majority of *gotras* have three *pravara* sages, a few have only one *pravara* sage or two sages or five. Those who have only one sage are Mitrayus (*pravara* Vādhryaśva according to Āśv.), the Vasiṣṭhas (other than Kuṇḍina, Parāśara and Upamanyu) have only one *pravara* Vasiṣṭha, the Śunakas have one *pravara* Gr̥tsamada (according to Asv.) or Śaunaka or Gār̥tsamada (according to Baudhāyana9); the Agastis have one *pravara* Āgastya (according to Āp. Sr. 24. 10. 9); Āśv. optionally allows three *pravaras* to Mitrayus (Bhārgava Daivodāsa-Vādhryaśva) and to Śunakas (viz. Bhārgava-Śaunahotra-Gār̥tsamada) and Āp. also allows to Agastis three *pravaras* (Viz. Āgastya-Dārdhacyuta-Aidmavāha-iti). Accord to Ap, and the *purāṇas*, Dhāpayantas have two *pravaras* (Vaiśvāmītra-Pauraṇa-iti), Aṣṭakas Lohitas have two (Vaiśvāmītra-Aṣṭaka-iti), and Śaṅḍilas also have two (Daivala-Asita-iti). But he says that according to some the latter have three *pravaras* also (Kāśyapa-Daivala-Asita-iti), while *Baudhāyana* gives four optional groups of three sages each for Śaṅḍilas (Baudhāyana43). For Vāri-Dhāpayantas Aśvalāyana prescribes three only (Vaiśvāmītra-Devarāta-Pauraṇa) and also for the Aṣṭakas, According to Baudhāyana the Vatsas, Bidas and Arṣiṣenas (among the Bhrigus) have five *pravara* sages; so also among Aṅgīrasas, the

Kaumaṇḍas, Dīrghatamasas, Raukṣāyanas and Gargas have five *pravara* sages, though the last have optionally three also.

The Āp. śr. (24. 5 6) says 'the sages to be invoked were to be three and they were to be seers of *mantras*'. It is therefore that the number of *pravara* sages is limited; there was no such requirement for a *gotra* and so *gotras* multiplied to an unlimited extent.

There are certain families that are *dvigotras* (i.e. have two *gotras*). Āśv. uses the word '*dvipravācanāḥ*' for them. They are principally three, viz. Śauṅga-śaiśiris, Saṃkṛtis and Laugākṣis. From a Śuṅga, a sub-division of Bharadvāja *gotra*, was born a son to the wife of a Śaiśiri, a sub-division of Viśvamitra (by *niyoya*); the son, therefore, came to be called Śauṅga Śaiśiri. Therefore Saunga-Śaiśiris cannot marry in both Bharadvāja and Viśvamitra *gotras*. Their *pravaras* are given below. They have to select one *pravara* sage from one *gotra* and two from the other *gotra* or two from the first and three from the other. A *pravara* of four sages is not allowed nor of one beyond five. For the other *dvigotras*, the Sam. K. (pp. 682, 686), Nirṇayasindhu p. 300 may be consulted. In the case of the adopted son also, on the analogy of the Śauṅga-Śaiśiris both *gotras* and the *pravaras* of both *gotras* have to be considered and the dictum of Manu (IX.142) that 'the son given does not share the *gotra* and inheritance of the genitive father and the *svadhā* (*śrāddhas* etc.) of the giver ceases', is restricted only to matters of inheritance, *śrāddha* and the like and does not apply to marriage.

A few words must be said about the *gotra* and *pravara* of kings and other *kṣatriyas*. It appears from the Ait.Br. quoted above (p.488) that in the case of *kṣatriyas* the *pravara* of their purohita was employed in religious acts where *pravara* had to be recited. This leads to the inference that most *kṣatriyas* had forgotten their *gotras* and *pravaras* by that time. The Śrauta *sūtras* allow an option to *kṣatriyas* (to kings according to Aiv.). 'They may employ the *pravara* of their purohitas or all *kṣatriyas* may employ the same *pravara* viz. Mānava-Aila-Paurūravasa-iti'. Medhātithi on Manu III.5 states that the distinctions of *gotras* and *pravaras* concern primarily *brāhmaṇas* alone and not *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* and quotes ASv. Sr. (I.3) in support. The Mitākṣara and other *nibandhākaras* rely on the first alternative mentioned in the *sūtras* and say that in marriages of *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* the *gotras* and *pravaras* of their purohitas should be considered, as they have no specific *gotras* of their own. This is carrying the doctrine of *atideśa* (extension) too far or with a vengeance. The Sam. K. (pp. 689-690) assigns reasons for this attitude of the Mitākṣara but they are not satisfactory. Ancient literature and epigraphic records show that kings had *gotras* of their own. In the Mahābhārata it is said that when Yudhisthira went to the court of Virāṭa in the guise of a *brāhmaṇa* and was asked by the king to state his *gotra* he said that he was of the Vaiyāghrapadya *gotra* (Virāṭa-parva 7.8-12). That this was the *gotra* of the Pāṇḍavas also follows from the fact that in the Bhīsmatarpaṇa that is performed on the eighth day of the bright half of Māgha, Bhīsmata's *gotra* is given as Vaiyāghrapāda or -padya and *pravara* as Saṃkṛti. Jaimini (VI.6.12-15) establishes that the KulayaYājña was to be performed jointly by a king and his purohita (and so they could use different *pravaras* it appears).

The Pallavas of Kancī had Bharadvāja as their *gotra* (vide B. I. vol. I p.5). The Calukyas are often described as 'manavya-*gotra*' (vide E. I. vol. VI. p.337). In a copper-plate grant of Jayacandradeva (dated saṃvat 1233 i.e.1176 A. D.) the donee was a *kṣatriya* described as Rauta-srī-Rajyadharavarman of the Vatsa *gotra* and of five *pravaras* viz. Bhargava-Cyavana Apnavana-Aurva-Jāmadagnya. In the Garra (Bundelkhand) plate of the Candella king Trailokyavarman of Kalanjara a village is granted to Rauta Samanta of the Bharadvāja *gotra* in recognition of his father's death in battle with the Turuskas (E. I. vol.16, p.274).

In many inscriptions and copper-plate grants hundreds of donees with their *gotras* and *pravaras* occur and it would be an interesting study to compare the latter with the material derived from the



*sūtras* and *nibandhas*.<sup>167</sup> Even the Buddhists kept the system of *gotras* (vide E. I. vol, 10, Luder's list, No.158).

According to Āp. Sr. the *vaiśyas* had a single *pravara* 'Vātsapra', while according to Baud, they had three, viz. Bhālandana-Vātsapra-Mānktīla'. They could also employ the *pravara* of their *purohitas*. The Sam. Pr. (p.659) says that Bhālandana is the *gotra* of *vaiśyas*.

If a person does not know his own *gotra* and *pravara* he should take those of his *ācārya* (teacher of Veda), according to Āpastamba Though he takes his teacher's *gotra*, it is only the teacher's daughter that is forbidden to him in marriage and not other girls of the same *gotra* as the *ācārya*'s. Both Sam. K. and Sam. Pr. (p.650) quote a verse that when one does not know one's *gotra* one should call oneself of Kaśyapa *gotra*. This is so when he does not know even his teacher's *gotra*. The Sm. G. (*śrāddha* section p.481) says that this is so even when one does not know the *gotra* of one's maternal grand-father (i.e. he should offer *piṇḍa* with Kaśyapa *gotra* to his maternal grand-father).

The word *gotra* also came to mean any family name (surname). In the inscriptions we find this usage very often. For example, in the Bannahalli plate of the Kadamba king Kṛṣṇavarman II (E. I, vol. VI, p.18) a *śreṣṭhin* (a merchant) is said to have been of the Tutfnyalla *gotra* and *pravara*. The Redḍi king (a *śūdra*) Allaya Vema of Rajahmundry was said to have been of the Polvola *gotra* (E. L vol, XIII, p.237, of śake 1356).

A few interesting matters about *pravaras* are noted below. It is noteworthy that even as to the same *gotra*, there is great divergence among the *sūtrakaras* about the sages constituting the *pravara* e.g. as to Śāṅḍilya-*gotra*. Aśvalāyana gives two groups of the sages 'Sandīla-Asita-Daivala-iti' or 'Kaśyapa-Asita-Daivala iti ', but Āpastamba states his own view that there are only two sages in the *pravara* viz. ' Daivala-Asita iti ' and that some say they are three, Kaśyapa-Daivala-Asita-iti; while Baud, states four groups, 'Kaśyapa-Avatsara-Daivala-iti, Kaśyapa-Ayatsara-Asita-iti; Sandīla-Asita-Daivala-iti; Kaśyapa-Avatsara-Sandīla iti.' No adequate reasons can be given why even at so early an age as the *sūtras*, not only the order of the names in the *pravara*, but the very names in the *pravara* and their number should have varied so much. Baudhāyana (*pravara*dhyāya sec, 44) notes that the Laugākṣis (or Laukākṣis) are *Vasiṣṭhas* by day and *Kaśyapas* by night and their *pravaras* also show this double relationship. The *Smṛtyarthasara* says that this picturesque description of them has reference to the *prayājas* and the like i.e. by day they follow the procedure of *prayājas* peculiar to *Vasiṣṭhas* and by night that peculiar to the *Kaśyapas*.

Among the *gotras* there are names of mythical *kṣatriyas* and kings like Vītahavya and Vainya and among the names of *pravara* sages many legendary kings like Māndhātṛ, Ambarīṣa, Yuvanāśva, Divodāsa appear. Vītahavya figures even in the Rig Veda as closely connected with the Bṛhigus (Rig, VI.15, 2-3). In the Mahābhārata it is narrated that Vītahavya, being a king, attacked Divodāsa, whose son Pratardana pursued Vītahavya, whereupon Vītahavya took shelter with Bṛgu and that when Pratardana asked Bṛgu whether there was any *kṣatriya* in the hermitage, Bṛgu replied that there were all *brāhmaṇas* and that by this Vītahavya became a *brāhmaṇa* (Anuśāsana chap, 30).

Similarly the *pravara* of the Hārītas is either Āṅgīrasa-Ambarīṣa-Yuvanāśva or Mandhātṛ-Ambarīṣa-Yanvanāśva. These are mythical royal Sages. Among the Bṛhigus is a sub-division called Vainya which is further subdivided into Pārthas and Bāskalas. The story of Prthu who milked the earth is well-known (Drona-parva 69); he is called 'ādirāja ' in Anuśāsana 166.55. The Vāyu-

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<sup>167</sup> For example, vide E. I. vol.19, pp.115-117 and 248-250 for about 205 donees and their *gotras* in the plates of Bhaskaravarman, E. I. vol.14, p.202ff (500 donees with *gotras* in the time of Candradeva Gahadavala, samvat 1150), E. I vol.13 p.237, E. I. vol.8 pp.316-317 (sake 1346), E. I. vol.9 p.103 (32 donees with *gotras*, *pravaras*, *sakhas* etc..), E. I. vol 12 pp.163-167 (120 donees with *gotras*, sake 1508), Gupta Ins. No.55 Chatmnak plate of *Pravarasena* etc..

purāṇa in several places narrates that some *kṣatriyas* became the *pravaras* of *brāhmaṇas*.<sup>168</sup> How and why *kṣatriya* names were adopted as brahmanical *pravaras* is obscure and difficult to understand. If one may hazard a guess, it is probably due to the fact that the *purāṇas* retain very ancient traditions of times when there were no water-tight varnas and that ancient kings were learned in the Vedic lore and maintained *srauta* fires also, became famous as Sages in whose name fire was to be invoked to carry offerings to Gods oven by *brāhmaṇas* who came ages after them.

The connection of *gotra* and *pravara* may be stated thus: *Gotra* is the latest ancestor or one of the latest ancestors of a person by whose name his family has been known for generations; while *pravara* is constituted by the sage or sages who lived in the remotest past, who were most illustrious and who are generally the ancestors of the *gotra* sages or in some cases the remotest ancestor alone.

It has been seen that marriage between parties that are *sagotra* or *sappravara* is no marriage and the woman does not become the man's wife. What were the consequences of such a void union? Baudhāyana (*pravarādhyāya* 54) says that if a man has intercourse with a *sagotra* girl he should undergo the penance of *candrāyana*, after that he should not abandon the woman, but should only maintain her as if she were a mother or a sister; if a child is born it does not incur sin and it should take the *gotra* of Kaśyapa. Aparārka quotes (p.80) Sumantu and another *smṛti* to the effect that if a person inadvertently marries a *sagotra* or *samāna-pravara* woman he should give up intercourse with her, should maintain her and undergo *candrāyana*. But if he knowingly marries a *sagotra* or *sappravara* girl the penance was heavier (*viz.* that for incest) and if he has intercourse with her or begets a child from her he loses his caste and the child will be a *caṇḍāla*. The rule of Baud, that there would be no blemish and the child will be of Kaśyapa *gotra* is restricted to inadvertently marrying such a girl. The Sam. Pr. quotes a verse of Kātyāyana to the effect that if a marriage is gone through with a *sagotra*, the girl may be again given in marriage to another. But the Sam. Pr. gets rid of that inconvenient text by saying that it does not apply to the present age. So the poor girl for no fault of hers had to pass her whole life in enforced celibacy, being neither an unmarried woman nor a widow.

Questions about the validity of *sagotra* or *sappravara* marriages have not yet come before the courts; but it is likely that in the near future courts will have to deal with such cases. If a marriage takes place under the Special Marriage Act of 1872 (as amended in 1923) no difficulty will arise; but recently several marriages have been celebrated under the old Śāstric procedure between persons who are *sagotra* or *sappravara*. Upon the strict letter of the *Dharma Śāstra* texts such marriages are absolutely void. But it seems that the legislature should intervene and declare *sagotra* and *sappravara* marriages valid. Whatever may have been the case thousands of years ago when there were no means of communication and when there were small communities, the prohibition of *sagotra* relationship had some plausibility and real feeling of close kinship about it; but now the prohibition has become meaningless. A man from Kashmir may marry a girl from Madras and the parents of both may have the same *gotra*. Granting for argument that the *gotra* sage was a common ancestor, one does not know how many generations have intervened between that remote ancestor and the intending spouses and particles of the ancestor's body, if they have survived at all in the intending spouses of the same *gotra*, must be in the present generation in the most attenuated state.

The prohibitions based upon *gotra* and *pravara* are said by orthodox people to be prescribed upon unseen (*adr̥ṣṭa*) grounds and so they argue that they must be held to be absolute and not admitting of any evasion by any one calling himself a Vedic Hindu. One may be permitted to reply to these people that when almost every-body has given up the ancient cult of the *śrauta* and *gr̥hya* fires and

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<sup>168</sup> Vide chap.88.72-79, (about Viṣṇuvrddha, who was descended from Purukutsa, whose son was Trasadasyu), chap.88.6-7, 92.6, 99.158-161, 99.169-170 (Anan, ed.) for other examples.

when hundreds of other innovations in ancient practices have been accepted without demur, there is hardly any justification for sticking to this one remnant of ancient practices. As a matter of fact many *brāhmaṇas* now do not remember their *pravara* themselves but have to be told by the priests what their *pravara* is. Certain prohibitions against marriage between near *sapiṇḍa* relations may be respected on account of their universal acceptance. Even the Special Marriage Act of 1872 prescribes that there can be no marriage between parties when they trace descent to a common ancestor who is the great-grandfather or great-grandmother (or who is nearer even than these) of any one of them.

*Sagotra* relationship is in one direction wider than *sapiṇḍa* relationship and narrower than it in another so far as marriage is concerned. A man cannot marry the daughter of any *sagotra*, however distant the *sagotra* may be. Similarly even an adopted man cannot marry the daughter of a *sagotra* of his genitive father for two reasons, firstly because, though on adoption he becomes severed from his natural family for inheritance and offering of *piṇḍa* (vide Manu IX.142), his other relationships with the natural family remain intact; and secondly because Manu (III.5) says that the girl must not be a *sagotra* of the bridegroom's father (and so even if by adoption a man goes into another *gotra*, it is the father's *gotra* that is to be considered). *Sapiṇḍa* relationship prohibiting marriage extends only to seven or five generations, but prohibitions on the ground of *sagotra* relationship extend to any number of generations. On the other hand *sapiṇḍas* may be either of the same *gotra* (i.e. *sagotra*) or of a different *gotra* (i.e. *bhinna-gotra*). Thus up to a certain limit *sapiṇḍas* include both *sagotras* and *bhinna-gotras*. The latter are called *bandhus* by the Mitākṣara; they are all cognate relations and have an important place in inheritance.

We have seen (p.436-37) that *sagotra* marriages were totally forbidden in the *sūtras* (in the *srauta sūtras* like *Latyāyana srauta* and in *gṛhya* and *dharma sūtras*). A passage of the Sat. Br. (quoted above at p.461) is relied upon by Professors Macdonell and Keith (Vedic Index vol. I. p.236) for holding that marriages within the third and fourth degrees on both maternal and paternal sides were allowed in the days of the Śatapatha and that therefore a man could marry in those days his paternal uncle's daughter. This latter is a startling proposition. The passage in the Sat. Br. is no doubt expressed in general words ('one may be united in the third or fourth generation'). But that passage is generally applicable even if only a marriage with a maternal uncle's daughter or paternal aunt's daughter is meant. The passage does not expressly allow paternal cousins' marriages. The *dharma-sūtras* prohibit *sagotra* marriages. Both the learned Professors, as most western scholars do, probably hold that the Śatapatha is not separated from the *sūtras* by more than a few centuries. If a paternal uncle's daughter had been eligible for marriage in the times of the Śatapatha, but became forbidden in the times of the *sūtras* we shall have to suppose that an usage died out from one end of the country to another and an opposite usage became prevalent throughout within a few centuries. The *smṛtis* are not afraid of stating ancient practices which they themselves do not accept (i.e. *niyoga*). The *smṛtis* do not say that marriages with paternal uncle's daughters were ever allowed anywhere. So it appears that the Śatapatha is not referring to marriage with paternal uncle's daughter, but to marriage with maternal uncle's or paternal aunt's daughter.

It must however be pointed out that Aparārka (pp.15.63), the Sm. C. (I. p.12), Par. M. I. part 1 p.133 and other digests quote a passage from the Brahma-purāṇa 1167 that *sagotra* and *sapiṇḍa* marriages are forbidden in the Kali age. It may be argued with some force that this implies that *sagotra* marriages once took place. But there are various ways of explaining this. It is possible that in the Purāṇa the word *gotra* is not used in the technical sense, but only in the sense of family or surname. Among *sūdras* there is no *gotra* in the strict sense, but they also do not marry a girl who is believed to be of the same family, though the exact relationships or generations are not known. Besides it has been shown above that if a woman was a *putrika* or married in the Gāndharva or Asura form she retained the *gotra* of her father and the son of the *putrika* would have the *gotra* of his maternal grand-father and yet being of a different family his marriage with the daughter of a

*sagotra* of the maternal grand-father might have taken place in ancient times and was forbidden in the Kali age by the Purāṇa. Similarly the implied reference to marriages of *sapinḍas* as taking place in former ages has probably marriage with maternal uncle's daughter in view. When in the *kalivarjya* texts it is said ' these *dharma*s are declared to be prohibited by the eages in the Kali age ' (vide Vyavahāra-mayukha p.242), it is not proper to argue that everyone of the practices forbidden in the kali age was valid in former ages. All that is meant seems to be that most of them were allowed in former ages and these along with others enumerated are not to be practised in the Kali age, just as when in a crowd many have umbrellas and a few have not, a speaker still says with reference to the whole crowd '*chatrino gacchanti*' (here go persons with umbrellas).

There are certain other prohibitions about marriage. The Smṛti-muktaphala<sup>169</sup> quotes a verse of Hārīta that one should not give one's daughter in exchange to another's son and receive that other's daughter in marriage for one's son, one should not give two daughters to the same man (at the same time), nor should one give one's two daughters to two persons who are brothers. But these dicta will now certainly be held as merely recommendatory. Besides there is no objection in India in modern times to marrying the deceased wife's sister, though even in England the deceased wife's sister could not be married until 1907 (when the Deceased Wife's Sister's Marriage Act, 1907, Edw.7 chap.47 legalised such marriages).

### Authority to Arrange Marriages

The next question is as to who have power to arrange for the marriage of a girl and to give her away. The Viṣṇu Dh. S. (24.38-39) specifies the order of persons who are entitled to exercise this right of guardianship in marriage:—

‘the father, the paternal grand-father, a brother, a kinsman, a maternal grand-father and the mother are the persons, by whom the girl may be given away in marriage. In the absence of the preceding one (the right) devolves upon the next in order, in case he is able’.

Yāj (1.63-64) gives a slightly different order viz. he omits the maternal grand-father and adds that the right can be exercised only when the guardian is not affected by lunacy and similar defects and that in the absence of these the girl should perform *svayamvara* (i.e. choose a husband herself).

Nārada (strīpuṃsa verses 20-22) gives the order as father, brother (with father's consent), paternal grand-father, maternal uncle, agnates, cognates, mother (if sound in mind and body), then distant relation, then the maiden may perform *svayamvara* with the king's permission.

To give away a girl in marriage was not only a right but was rather a heavy responsibility, as (Yāj I.64) and others declare that if a girl is not got married by the guardian at the proper time the latter incurs the sin of the murder of an embryo. The practice of *svayamvara* is well known from the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata, but it was confined mostly to the princely families. Manu (IX.90-91) required a girl to wait for three years after she became marriageable before she could choose her husband herself. But Viṣṇu Dh. S.24.40 says that a girl should wait only for three monthly periods after she attains puberty and that after that period she has full power to dispose of herself in marriage as she thinks best.

There are no rules in the smṛtis as to who is to arrange the marriage of a male, since in ancient times they did not contemplate the marriages of minor males.

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<sup>169</sup> We know from the Mahābhārata Ādiparva that Bhīṣma carried off the three daughters of the king of Kāśī for his protege Vicitravirya and got two of them married to him. Similarly the Sinda chief Cāvunḍa appears to have married Lakṣmādevī and Siriyādevī, the two daughters of Kalacurya Bijjala, at the same time (K. I. vol.20 pp.109, 111, dated take 1109).

The mother has been put low in the order of guardians probably because of the dependent status assigned to women and because of the fact that in the ceremony of *kanya-dāna* she cannot personally engage but has to get it done through some male relative. The courts in modern India, however, have held that the mother is entitled to select a husband for her daughter even when the girl's paternal grand-father is living, though the actual gift may be made by a male.<sup>170</sup> The Dharmasindhu states the important proposition that when the girl performs *svayamvara* or when the mother is to give away the girl in marriage, the girl or mother should perform the *Nāndī-śrāddha* and the principal saṅkalpa is to be pronounced by her and the rest of the rite is to be performed through a *brāhmaṇa*.

Nārada states the general rule that if anything is done by one who is afflicted with lunacy or similar defects, what he does is as if not done. So a marriage settled even by the father if he is a lunatic need not be performed. If an unauthorized person (like a maternal uncle) were to give away a girl in marriage though her father is alive and fit, what is the result? The digests state that if the marriage has been completed by the performance of *saptapadi*, it cannot be set aside merely on the ground of the want of authority in the giver, since marriage rites are the principal matter and the authority to give is a very subsidiary matter, the absence of which cannot affect the principal matter. But before the marriage takes place a person who wants to give away a girl, though persons better qualified exist, can be prevented from doing so. Courts in modern India have followed these rules, relying on the doctrine of '*factum valet quod fieri non debuit*' (what ought not to be done when done is valid) and holding that when once a marriage is duly solemnized and is otherwise valid, it is not rendered invalid because it was brought about without the consent of the proper guardian for marriage or in contravention of an express order of the court.<sup>171</sup>

### Sale of Girls in Marriage

A few words must be said about the sale of girls in marriage. We read in the Maitrayanīya S. I.10.11:—

'she indeed commits falsehood (or sin) who being purchased by her husband roams about with other males.'

There is another passage of the Veda relied upon along with the above by the *pūrvapakṣa* (the plausible view-point) in Jaimini (VI.1.10-11) which denies that women have a right to take part in Vedic sacrifices, viz.

'one should give to the daughter's father a hundred (cows) plus a chariot.'

Jaimini replies (VI.1.15) that the giving of a hundred with a chariot is *not* for purchasing a bride, but it is only a duty and a hundred must be offered as a present (whether the girl is beautiful or not). This shows that, even if some girls were purchased for marriage in the times of the Maitrayanīya S. there was a popular revulsion of sentiment about this practice and the sale of girls was severely condemned by the time of the *sūtrakaras*.

The Āp. Dh. S. (II.6.13.10-11)<sup>172</sup> also makes interesting remarks on this point:—

“There is no gift and the incidents of purchase regarding one's children; in marriage the gift ordained by Veda to be made to the daughter's father in the words — ‘therefore one should give a

<sup>170</sup> Vide Bai Ramkore v. Jamnadas, I. L. R.37 Bom.18, where Yāj I.63 is interpreted as only laying down who are to make a gift of the girl and as not intended to take away altogether the mother's right of selecting a bridegroom in favour of even distant relations. Vide also Indi v. Ohania (I. L. R.1 Lahore 146), Jawani v. Mula Ram (I. L. R.3 Lahore 29, where it was held that, after the father, the mother of a girl has the preferential right to select a bride groom for her and that she is under no obligation to consult the girl's paternal kindred such as a paternal uncle), Ranga naiki v. Ramanuja I. L. R.35 Mad.728, (where all the authorities are examined).

<sup>171</sup> Vide Khushalchand v. Bai Mani (I. L. R.11 Bombay 247) and Bai Liwan v. Moti (I. L. R.22 Bom.509).

<sup>172</sup> The words *tan mithuyā kuryāt* translated in S.B.B. II. p.132 as 'that gift he should make bootless (by returning it to the giver)'

hundred (cows) besides a chariot to the girl's father and that (gift) should be made to belong to the (married) couple', is due to the desire (of the father to give a status to the daughter and her sons) and is meant as a fulfilment of duty (and not as a sale transaction). The word 'purchase' applied to such a transaction is merely figurative, since the relationship (as husband and wife) arises (not from the so called purchase but) from *dharma*.'

Vas. Dh. S. (I.36-37) quotes the two passages of the Veda (from Mait. S. and the other about the gift of one hundred cows) in support of the Mānuṣa (i.e. Asura) form of marriage. The Nirukta VI.9 while explaining Rig Veda I.109.2 ('O Indra and Agnī, I have heard you to be greater donors than a partially fit son-in-law or a brother-in-law') remarks that —

“the word ‘vijāmātā’ means among the southerners the husband of a woman who is purchased; what is meant is that he is a bridegroom who is deficient and not endowed with all good qualities.”

So Yāska implies that in the south girls were sold for substantial sums of money to persons who (either because they were old or wanting in some qualities desirable in a good bridegroom) were therefore really deficient as bridegrooms. In the Nirukta (III.4) while discussing the several views about the obscure verse of the Rig Veda III 31.1 (*śāsad-vahnir* etc.) one of the reasons assigned for the view that women do not inherit is that gift, sale and abandonment in the case of women exist, but not in the case of men, to which some reply that these (gift, sale &c.) can be made of males also as is seen in the story of Śunaḥśepa.<sup>173</sup>

These passages lead to the inference that in ancient times girls were sometimes purchased for marriage, as was the case in many other countries. But gradually public feeling entirely changed and not only was the sale of daughters by the father or brother severely condemned, but even taking of presents by them was looked down upon. Āp. Dh. S. has already been quoted above (note 1174). The Baud. Dh. S. (1.11.20-21) 117 quotes two verses:—

‘That woman who is purchased with wealth is not declared to be a legally wedded wife (a patni); she is not (to be associated with the husband) in rites for the gods or manes and Kaśyapa declares that she is a dāsī (slave girl). Those, who, blinded by greed, give their daughters in marriage for a fee (śulka), are sinners, sellers of their own selves and perpetrators of great sin and they fall into hell etc..’

In another place Baudhāyana Says:—

‘He who gives his daughter (in marriage) by sale (as a chattel) sells his merit (punya)’

Manu (III.51, 54-55) strikes a tender note about daughters when he says:—

‘A father should not take even the smallest gratuity for his daughter; if he takes a gratuity through greed he becomes the seller of his child; when relations do not take for themselves wealth given by the bridegroom as gratuity (but hand it over to the girl) there is no sale (of the girl); the wealth so taken is for honouring the maidens and is only taken from the bridegroom out of loving concern for them. Fathers, brothers, husbands and brothers-in-law desiring their own welfare should honour women and should give them ornaments’.

Manu (IX.98) further recommends that:—

‘Even a śūdra should not take a gratuity when giving his daughter (in marriage), since in taking a gratuity he clandestinely sells his daughter’.

Yāj III.236, Manu XI.61 include the sale of children among *upapātakas*. The Mahābhārata (Anuśāsana 93, 133 and 94.3) condemns the taking of a gratuity for giving a girl and Anuśāsana (45.18-19) speaks of gāthas of Yama contained in dharma-sastras:—

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Vide I. A. vol. IV, pp.255-256 and also Atrī v.389 and Āp. (in verse) IX.25 (ed. by Jivananda). in the Ait. Br, 33, Tai S. V.2.1.3, Tai. Br. I.7.10.

'Whoever sells his son for a price, or gives a daughter for the sake of his own livelihood in return for a gratuity, would fall into a most horrible hell called Kālasūtra'.

Verse 23 of the same chapter says:—

'even a stranger cannot be sold, what of one's own children'.

Verse 20 (= Manu III.53) condemns even the arṣa form of marriage as a sale because a pair of cattle is therein taken by the girl's father. In Kerala or Malabar it is believed that the great teacher Śaṅkara laid down 64 ācāras, among which are prohibition of the sale of girls, prohibition of sail etc. This practice, however, persisted till modern times. For example, in an inscription dated about 1425 A.D. from Paḍaiviḍu (North Arcot District) we find an agreement signed by the representatives of Karnata, Tamil, Telugu and Lāṭa (South Gujarat) *brāhmaṇas* that they would give up taking gold for their daughters and get them married by the simple *kanyadāna* (the Brahma form) and that the father who accepted gold and the bridegroom who paid gold were to be punished by the king and were to be excommunicated from the *brāhmaṇa* caste. The Peshwa issued orders (about 1800 A.D.) addressed to the *brāhmaṇas* of Wai (in the Satara District) forbidding them to take money for giving their daughters in marriage and prescribing fines for the father who took money, for the giver and the intermediary who brought about the marriage.

Among certain castes and among the *sūdras* even now money or money's worth is often taken when a daughter is married, but generally the money is meant as a provision for the girl and for defraying the expenses of the girl's father.

The question of the sale of girls in marriage has been from the remotest ages bound up with the question of the father's power over his children Rig Veda I.116.16 and I.117.17 refer to the story of Rjrasva who was deprived of his eye-sight by his father because the former gave a hundred rams to a she-wolf. The verses refer to some natural phenomena under a metaphorical garb and cannot be used for drawing the inference that a father could in law deprive his son of eye-sight at his will. The story of Śunaḥśepa (Ait. Br.33) shows that in rare cases the father did sell his son. The passage of the Nirukta about the power to sell, to gift away or to abandon daughters has been already cited (p.505). The Vas. Dh. S.1 181 (XVII.30-31) says — 'Śunaḥśepa is an example of the son bought' (one of the twelve kinds of sons). The same *sūtra* (XVII.36-37) defines the *apaviddha* kind of son as one, who being cast off by his parents, is accepted (as a son) by another. Manu IX.171 also defines the '*apaviddha*' in the same way. Vas. Dh. S. (XV.1-3) propounds the absolute power of the parents over their children in the words:—

'Man produced from seed and uterine blood springs from the father and the mother; (therefore) the parents have power to give, to sell or to abandon him; but one should not give nor accept an only son'.

Here Vas. states the right of *patria potestas* several centuries before Justinian, who makes the vain boast (Institutes' Lib. I. Tit. IX.2) that — 'no other people have a power over their children such as we have over ours'. Manu (VIII.416) and the Mahābhārata (Udyoga 33.64) both state that the wife, the son and the slave are without wealth and that what ever they acquire belongs to him whose they are. Manu (in V.152) says that 'gift (by the father of the bride) is the source of (the husband's) ownership (over her)'. But gradually the rigour of the father's power was decreased by other competing considerations such as the ideas that the son was the father himself born again, and that the son conferred great spiritual benefit on the souls of the father and his ancestors by the balls of rice offered in *śrāddha*. So gradually the father's power over the son became restricted. Kauṭilya (III.13) gives the interesting information that mleccchas incur no blame by selling or pledging their children, but an *ārya* cannot be reduced to the state of slavery. Yāj, II.175 and Nārada (data-pradanika 4) both forbid the gift of one's son or wife. Kātyāyana 1183 says that though the father has powers of control over the wife and the son, he has not the power to sell or make a gift of his son. Yāj (II.118-119) modified the rule about the son's acquisitions also. Manu VIII.389 prescribes

a fine of 600 panas for abandoning one's mother, father, wife or son when they are not sinners<sup>174</sup>. Manu (VIII.299-300) restricted a man's power to award corporal punishment for misconduct to his wife, son or slave to striking with a rope or a thin piece of bamboo.

One question discussed by *Dharma* Sūtra writers is whether one has ownership over one's wife and children. In Jaimini (VI.7.1-2) it is decided that in the Viśvajit sacrifice where one is to give away all that one has, one cannot give away one's parents and other relatives as one can make a gift only of what one is master of. The Mitākṣara on Yāj II.175 says — 'though one cannot make a gift of one's wife or child to another, one is still owner of them.' The Vīramitrodāya (vyavahāra p.567) is of the same opinion. On the other hand the Tantra-ratna (of Pārthasārathi-miśra) says that the word *gift* with reference to the son and the like is used only in a secondary sense viz. that of passing to another the power of control over the son or the daughter. The Vyavahāra-mayukha is also of the same opinion.

### Female Infanticide

Afew words may be said about infanticide. Westermarck in his 'Origin and Development of Moral Ideas' vol. I. (1906) pp.393-413 furnishes an exhaustive account of this practice in ancient and modern times among barbarous and civilised communities from various countries, e.g. in Sparta (for the purpose of securing strong and healthy fighters), among the Rajputs (from family pride and fear of the crushing burden of expenses at marriage).<sup>175</sup> He is wrong in saying that in the Vedic times infanticide or exposure of children was practised. Rig Veda II.29.1 is of no use on this point; it says:— 'cast off from me sin as a woman who secretly gives birth to a child (casts it off).' This is not a reference to infanticide of children born in wedlock, but refers to the exposure of a child by an unmarried woman which is clandestinely practised everywhere and as regards which even in England a very lenient attitude is shown as manifested by the passing of the Infanticide Act (12 and 13 Geo. V. Chap.18). The most important passage on which some European scholars like Zimmer and Delbruck<sup>176</sup> rely upon for this proposition is Tai. S. VI.5.10.3:—

'They go to the *avabhṛta* (the final sacrificial bath); they keep aside the *sthālis* (pots) and take up the vessels for vāyu; therefore they (the people) keep aside the girl when she is born and lift up (i.e. greet with pride and joy) the son.'

This simply refers to the fact that a daughter was not greeted as much as the son. It has nothing to do with exposure or infanticide. That passage only expresses the sentiment contained in the Ait. Br.(33.1):—

'the wife is indeed a friend, the daughter is distress (or humiliation), the son is light in the highest heaven'.

The Mahabharata (Adi.159.11) in a similar vein says:—

'the son is one's self, the wife is one's friend, but the daughter is indeed a difficulty'.

But all the same the *Grhyasūtras* like Āpastamba (15.13) call upon the father to greet his daughter also with a *mantra* when he returned from a journey, the difference being that in the case of the son there is kissing of the son's head and muttering of certain *mantras* in his right ear. Manu (IX.232) advises the king to award death sentence to him who kills a woman, a child or a *brāhmaṇa*. Manu IX.130 (=Anuśāsana 45.11) expressly says that:—

<sup>174</sup> Vide Yāj II.237, Visrm Dh.8. V.113-114, Kauṭilya III.20 (p.199) for a similar provision.

<sup>175</sup> Vide Tod's 'Annals and antiquities of Rajasthan' (Calcutta edition) vol. I. pp.659-665 (for infanticide among Rajputs), 'Indian Infanticide' by J. C. Browne (1857), Dr. John Wilson's 'History of the suppression of infanticide in Western India' (1855) in which he refers at length to a prize-essay of Dr. Bhau Daji, written in 1844. Winternitz 'Die Frau' pp.24-25. Vide the Female Infanticide Prevention Act VIII. of 1873 (in India)

<sup>176</sup> Vide Vedic Index, vol. I. p.487 for references to the views of Zimmer and others.



‘just as the son is one's own self, so is the daughter like the son; how can another person take the wealth (of the deceased) when his daughter who is his own self is there to take it’?

Nārada (dayabhaga v.50) reasons that both the son and the daughter continue the line of the father and therefore in the absence of the son the daughter succeeds as heir. Brhaspati exclaims:–

‘The daughter is born from the limbs of the parents as much as the son; when she is alive how can another take her father's estate’?

Bāṇa, who as a great poet had unparalleled sympathy with the emotions and feelings of the average man, makes even the king Prabhākara Vardhana say about his daughter what every Indian father has felt for thousands of years:–

‘This rule of law laid down by some one viz. that one's own children (daughters) sprung from one's body, fondled on one's knees and whom one would never forsake, are taken away all of a sudden by persons (husbands) who till then were quite unfamiliar. It is on account of this sorrow that although both (son and daughter) are one's own children the good feel sorrow when a daughter is born and who offer water in the form of tears to their daughters at the very time of their birth.’

A daughter was not greeted at birth, not because the father had no love for her, but because he felt that a daughter meant a source of anxiety all her life to him. It was the great concern felt for a daughter's well-being in life and her character that made the parents anxious that no daughter be born to them. Society expected a very high moral rectitude from women and treated lapses of men with leniency. This is finely expressed in the Rāmāyana (Uttara-kāṇḍa 9.10-11).

Ancient literature did not everywhere treat women with scorn and contempt. It has already been shown how highly the wife was regarded even in the most ancient days as a man's half. Rig III.53.4 speaks of the wife as a haven of rest (*jāyed-astam*). The Chan. Up. looks upon the sight of a woman in a dream as very auspicious and as prognosticating success in religious rites already undertaken. Manu (III.56 = Anuśāsana 46.5), though he has said, as will be shown later on, some very hard things about women, was not unmindful of the honour due to them and says in a chivalrous spirit:–

‘Where women are honoured there the gods love to reside; where they are not honoured, there all religious acts come to nought.’

Maidens were regarded as pure and auspicious. When the king passed through his capital it was customary to greet him with fried grain showered by maidens (Raghu-vaṃśa II.10). The Saunaka-kārika (ms. in Bombay University Library folio 22 b) includes a maiden among the eight objects which were auspicious. The Drona-parva (82, 20-22) mentions numerous objects which Arjuna looked at and touched as auspicious when starting for battle, among which well-decked maidens are mentioned. Gobhila-smṛti II.163 says that one that sees on rising from bed in the morning among others a woman whose husband is living is free from all difficulties. The Vāmana-Purāṇa (14.35-36) mentions several objects which are auspicious when one is about to leave home, among which figure *brāhmaṇa* maidens.

### **Auspicious Times for Marriage**

Some remarks must be made about the times auspicious for marriage. In the marriage hymn (Rig Veda 1193 X.85.13) the words occur:— ‘the cows are killed on the Aghās and (the bride) is carried away (from her father's house) on the Phalgunīs’. The cow was killed in Madhuparka which was offered to the bridegroom on the day of marriage. Or this may be a reference to the giving of cows by the bridegroom to the bride's father (as in the form later called arṣa). So it appears probable that this is a reference to marriage being performed on the day when the moon was in conjunction with the constellation of Aghās (i.e. Magha). The two Phalgunīs follow immediately after the Magha nakṣatra. There is an echo of this in the Āp. gr. III.1-2 which says:–

'cows are accepted on the Maghās and (the bride) is carried (to the bridegroom's house) on the Phalgunīs'.

This means that the marriage (probably in the Ārṣa form) is celebrated on the Maghas and the bride goes from her father's house on the next day after marriage or after one day more. The Aśv. gr. (I.4. I) says that:

'In the northward passage of the sun, in the bright half of a month and on an auspicious lunar mansion, caula, upanayana, godāna and marriage are to be performed and that according to some teachers marriage may be celebrated at all times' (not necessarily in northward passage etc.).

The Āp. gr. (2.12-13) prescribes that all seasons except the two months of Śiśira (i.e. Magha and Phalguna) and the last of the two months of summer (viz. Āṣāḍha) are fit for marriage and all nakṣatras which are declared to be auspicious (or holy). Āp. gr. (3.3) further adds:—

'A father who desires that his daughter should be dear (to her husband) should give her in marriage on the Niṣṭya (i.e. Svāti constellation); thus she becomes dear (to her husband), she does not return (to her parent's house); this is a procedure based upon the Brāhmaṇa passage.'

The *Brāhmaṇa* passage is Tai. Br. I.5, 2. The Baud. gr. (I.1.18-19) is the same as Āp. gr. about months and adds that the nakṣatras for marriage are Rohinī, Mṛgaśīrṣa, Uttara Phalgunī, Svāti; while Punarvasu, Tiṣya (Puṣya), Hasta, Śrāvaṇa and Revatī are suitable for other ceremonies of an auspicious character. The Manava gr. (I.7.5) says that the nakṣatras Rohinī, Mṛgaśīras, Śrāvaṇa' Sravistfia (Dhanistha) and the Uttaras (L e. Uttarasadha, Uttara Phālgunī and Uttara Bhādrapada) are fit for marriage and for taking the bride from her parent's house and whatever other (nakṣatra) is declared to be auspicious. Kāthaka gr.14.9-10 and Vāraha gr.10 are similar. The Rāmāyana (Bala-kanda 72.13 and 71.24) speaks of marriage being performed on Uttara Phālgunī, of which Bhaga is the deity. The Mahābhārata also speaks of marriage on a nakṣatra presided over by Bhaga (Adiparva 8.16). The Kauśika sūtra (75.2-4) makes an approach to modern practice when it prescribes that marriage should be celebrated after the full moon of Kārtika and up to the full moon of Vaiśākha or one may do as one likes but should avoid the month or half month of Caitra.

Medieval digests introduce many detailed rules derived from astrology which it is not possible to set out here. A few only will be indicated. The *Udvāhatattva* (p.124) quotes Raja-martanda and Bhuja-balabhīma to the effect that all months are auspicious for marriage except Caitra and Pauṣa and that when a girl is very much grown-up one should not wait for auspicious seasons, but she should be given away on any day when the moon and the zodiacal sign rising at the moment of marriage are favourable, and that one should go into questions of auspicious ayana, month, day etc.. up to only the tenth year of girls.

The Saṃskāra-ratnamala (p.460) says that as there is conflict among the dicta of *sūtra* and *smṛti* writers about months one should follow the usage of one's country. One should not celebrate the marriage of the eldest son with the eldest daughter of a man in the month of Jyeṣṭha (or on Jyeṣṭha nakṣatra) nor should one celebrate a marriage in the month of birth or on the day of birth or nakṣatra of birth (of the eldest son or daughter).

Wednesday, Monday, Friday and Thursday are the best days of the week, but the Madana parijāta says that any day is good if the marriage is celebrated at night. In marriage the moon must be in a strong position for girls. One should avoid Jupiter being the 4th, 8th or 12th from one's rāśi (zodiacal sign in which the moon was at the time of birth). The Nirṇaya-sindhu quotes a verse that when the girl has reached puberty, then one should not wait till Jupiter is favourable, but marriage should be performed even when Jupiter is 8th from the zodiacal sign of birth, propitiatory rites however being performed for Jupiter. Upanayana and marriage cannot be performed when Jupiter

is in the zodiacal sign called Leo (Siṃha), but this applies only to the tract between the river Godavarī and the Ganges.

### Astrological rules about Marriage

From the nakṣatra and zodiacal sign at the time of birth (in the case of both the girl and the bridegroom) certain astrological calculations were made in eight ways called kūṭas. They were Varna, Vaśya, Nakṣatra, Yoni, Graha (planets governing the 12 rāśis), Gaṇa, Rāśi, and Nāḍī, each later one of which was more powerful than each preceding one and marks (guṇa) from 1 to 8 were respectively assigned to each of these if the conditions laid down were Satisfied. Two of these viz. gaṇa and nāḍī are attached great importance even now among brāhmanas and other classes also and so they may be illustrated here, though very briefly. The 27 nakṣatras are arranged in three groups of nine each, each group being assigned to Deva-gaṇa (celestial), Manuṣya-gaṇa (human) and Rākṣasa-gaṇa (Titan) as follows:

Deva-gaṇa	Manuṣya-gaṇa	Rākṣasa-gaṇa
Aśvinī	Bharanī	Kṛttika
Mṛgaśiras	Rohinī	Aslesa
Punarvasu	Ardra	Magha
Puṣya	Purva	Citra
Hasta	Uttara	Visakha
Svāti	Purvasadha	Jyestha
Anurādha	Uttarasadha	Mula
Śrāvaṇa	Purvabhadrapada	Dhanistha
Revatī	Uttarabhadrapada	Satataraka

If the bride and bridegroom are born on nakṣatras that belong to the same class out of these three groups it is the best thing, but if their nakṣatras of birth belong to different groups, then the rules are:— it is middling if their nakṣatras belong to the deva group or the human group respectively, or if the bride groom's nakṣatra being of the deva-gaṇa or Rākṣasa-gaṇa, the bride's is of the manuṣya-gaṇa, while if the nakṣatra of the bride is of the Rākṣasa group and the bridegroom's of the manuṣya type, then death would result. Similarly if the nakṣatras of the pair respectively belong to the deva and Rākṣasa groups, there would be quarrels and enmity between the two.

For the purpose of nāḍī the nakṣatras are divided into three groups of nine each, adyanāḍī, madhyanāḍī and antyanāḍī, as follows:—

Adyanāḍī	Madhyanāḍī	Antyanāḍī
Aśvinī	Bharanī	Kṛttika
Ardrā	Mṛgaśiras	Rohinī
Punarvasu	Puṣya	Aslesa
Uttara	Purva	Magha
Hasta	Citra	Svāti
Jyestha	Anurādha	Viśākha
Mula	Purvasadha	Uttarasadha
Satataraka	Dhanistha	Śrāvaṇa
Purvabhadrapada	Uttarabhadrapada	Revatī

If the nakṣatras of the intended pair belong to the same nāḍī, then that portends death and so there is to be no marriage in such a case. The respective nakṣatras of birth in the case of the two should belong to different nāḍīs.

The anxieties of the girls' father did not end here. If after the marriage was settled but before it actually took place any relative in any of the two families died, then the marriage agreement was to be broken off according to some writers, but Saunaka mercifully states a more sensible and reasonable rule viz, if the father or mother or paternal grand-father paternal grand-mother or

paternal uncle, brother or unmarried sister of the intended bride or bridegroom dies, or the bride groom's first wife or his son from another wife dies, then only it is *pratikūla* and the marriage should not be performed but the death of any one else presents no obstacle.

If before the rites of marriage begin (i.e. before the performance of *nāndīśrāddha*), the mother of the bride or of the bride-groom has her period then the marriage has to be postponed till she becomes pure (till the 5<sup>th</sup> day afterwards).

### Forms of marriage:

From the times of the Gr̥hya sūtras, Dharma Sūtras and Smṛtis the forms of marriage are said to be eight, viz. Brāhma, Prajāpatya, Ārṣa, Daiva, Gāndharva, Āsura, Rākṣasa and Paiśāca;<sup>177</sup> some of these arrange the first four differently e.g. Aśv. gr. arranges them as Brāhma, Daiva, Prajāpatya and Ārṣa, while Viṣṇu arranges them as Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa am Prajāpatya; Aśv. gr. I.6 places Paiśāca before Rākṣasa. The Mānava gr. speaks of only two Brāhma and Śaulka (i.e. Āsura) probably because these two were the forms most current. Āp. Dh. S. (II.5.11.17-2011.5.12.1-2) speaks of only six omitting Prajāpatya and Paiśāca; while Vas. Dh. S. I.28-29 expressly says that there are only six forms of marriage viz, Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa, Gāndharva, Kṣatra and Manusa (the last two being the same as Rākṣasa and Āsura).

It is impossible for want of space to set out the various definitions of the several forms given by the several authors. There is general agreement on the special characteristics of each and it is sufficient to point out these as given in Manu III.27-34,

1. **Brāhma** — The gift of a daughter, after decking her (with valuable garments) and honouring her (with jewels etc.), to a man learned in the Vedas and of good conduct, whom the father of the girl himself invites.
2. **Daiva** — When the father gives away his daughter after decking her (with ornaments etc..) to a priest, who duly officiates at a sacrifice, during the course of its performed.<sup>178</sup>
3. **Ārṣa** — When there is a gift of one's daughter, after taking one pair of cattle (a cow and a bull) or two pairs only as a matter of fulfilling the law (and not as a sale of the girl).
4. **Prajāpatya** — The gift of a daughter, after the father has addressed (the couple with the words:— 'may both of you perform your religious duties together') and after he has honoured the bride-groom (with Madhuparka etc..). Yāj I.60 calls this '*kāya*', because in the *Brāhmaṇa* works '*ka*' means 'Prajāpati'.
5. **Āsura** — When the girl is given away at the father's will after the bride-groom gives as much wealth as he can afford to pay to the relatives of the girl and to the girl herself.
6. **Gāndharva** — The union of a girl and the bride-groom by their mutual consent, which springs from the passion of love and has intercourse as its purpose.
7. **Rākṣasa** — The forcible abduction of a maiden from her house, while she weeps and cries aloud, after her kinsmen have been slain (or beaten), wounded and (their houses or fortresses) are broken open.

<sup>177</sup> vide Aśv. gr. I.6, Gaut. IV.6-13, Baud Dh. S. I.11, Manu III.21 = Adi-parva 73.8-9), Viṣṇu Dh. S 24.18-19, Yāj.158, Nārada (strīpumsa, verses 38-39), Kauṭilya III.1, 59th prakarana, Adi-parva 102.12-15 (they are described but not named)

<sup>178</sup> Baud. Dh. I.11.5 According to him the girl becomes part of the daksinā (fee) for officiating. But in the Vedus and Srāuta sūtras a bride is nowhere spoken of as daksinā. Medhātithi on Manu III.28 is against the idea of the bride being part of the sacrificial fee. Viśvarūpa also says so; but Aparārka p.89 holds that the girl is given as fee.

8. **Paiśāca** — When a man has intercourse with a girl stealthily while she is asleep or intoxicated or disordered in mind (or unconscious), this is the basest and the most sinful of all forms.

In the first four forms there is the gift of the girl (*kanyadāna*) by the father or other guardian to the bride-groom. The word 'dāna' here is used in a secondary sense (as stated above) viz, in the sense of transfer of the father's right of guardianship and control of the maiden to the husband. All gifts are to be made with water in the case of brāhmanas as stated by Manu (III.35) and Gaut. V.16-17.1208 Similarly in all the four forms where there is kanyadana the girl is to be well dressed and decked with ornaments. The essence of the brāhma form is that the girl is given without; receiving anything from the bride-groom, who is invited and honoured by the girl's father. It is called brāhma either because brāhma means the holy Veda and this mode being sanctioned by the most ancient texts it is the holiest and best form, or brāhma means *dharma* and being the best of all forms it is called brāhma (vide Smṛti-muktāphala part I p.140).

In the Ārṣa form a pair of cattle is received from the bride-groom and it is somewhat inferior to the brāhma form. But the pair is given not as a price (i.e. there is no purchase), but because that is one way of effecting a marriage laid down by the śāstras (vide the passage quoted above at p.504 'therefore one should give a hundred cows etc.' and Āp. Dh. S. II.6.13.11, which is opposed to Vas. Dh. S. I.36) and the gift is made to show one's regard for the girl (vide Manu III.53-54).

The daiva form is only appropriate to *brāhmaṇas* as only a *brāhmaṇa* could officiate at a sacrifice. It is so called because the bridegroom is engaged at the time in rites for the gods and it is inferior to the brāhma inasmuch as in it there is some trace of benefit to the father (that the priest may do his best in the rite for the gods). Govindasvamin on Baud. Dh. S. says:— 'the bride is in this form part of the sacrificial fee'.

In all forms of marriage the husband and wife have to perform all religious acts together, as forcibly put by Āp. Dh. S. (there is no separation between husband and wife, since from the time of taking the hand of the wife there is joint performance of all religious actions). But in the Prajāpatya the words used indicate according to the commentators (vide Sam. Pr. p.852 and Haradatta on Gaut. IV.5) one or more of several things, viz. that the husband will remain a house-holder all his life and will not become a recluse while the wife is living or that he will not marry another wife i.e. it will be a strictly monogamous marriage which is defined in Hyde v. Hyde (1866), P. and M. p.130 as— 'the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others' (p.133), or that he will associate the wife with himself not only in sacrifices but also in works of charity (like building tanks, wells etc.). This form is inferior to brāhma in that the father, as it were, makes a special stipulation with the bride-groom, while in the brāhma there is no such special stipulation, but the bride-groom promises that he will not break faith with his wife in the matter of the three *puruṣarthas*, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*.

In the Āsura form there is practically a sale of the girl for money or money's worth and so it is not approved. The Ārṣa is distinguished from Āsura in this that in the latter there is no limit to what is taken from the bride-groom, while in the former a pair of cattle is offered as a matter of form.

In the Gāndharva there is no gift by the father; on the contrary the father's authority is set at naught by the girl for the time being. Marriage was a sacrament according to ancient sages, and its principal purposes as stated above (pp, 428-29) were the acquisition of merit by the performance of religious duty and of progeny. In the Gāndharva form the principal object was gratification of carnal desires and so it is held inferior to the first four forms and is disapproved. This kind of marriage is so called because it is prompted by mutual love and the Gandharvas were known to be libidinous, as the Tai. S. VI.1.6.5 (*strīkāma vai Gandharvāt*) and Ait. Br. V.1 state. In this form at least the girl's feelings are consulted.

In the Rākṣasa and the Paiśāca, there is no gift by the father and both are or may be against the wish of the girl. The forcible carrying of the girl is the essence of the Rākṣasa (even if there is no fight because the girl's father takes no retaliatory steps in fear of the abductor's strength). It is called Rākṣasa because Rākṣasas (demons) are known from legends to have been addicted to cruel and forceful methods.

The Paiśāca is so called because in it there is action like that of piśācas (goblins) that are supposed to act stealthily by night

It is not to be supposed that when ancient sages held that Rākṣasa and Paiśāca were forms of marriage, they legalized marriage by capture or stealth. What they meant was that these were the means of securing wives and that there are not really eight kinds of *vivāhas*, but rather there are eight ways in which wives may be secured. It is for this reason that Vatsa says that if a fine girl cannot be secured by any means she may be approached even in private by stealth and married. The sages condemned in no measured terms the Paiśāca. From the fact that Āpastamba and Vasiṣṭha both ignore the Paiśāca and Prajāpatya it may be inferred that these two had ceased to be recognised by their time and that the other sages enumerated them only because they appeared in ancient works and for the sake of completeness of treatment. Vasiṣṭha (17.73) expressly repudiates the idea that legal wifehood can arise by forcible seizure of a girl:—

‘If a damsel has been abducted by force and not wedded with sacred texts she may lawfully be given to another man (in marriage); she is just as good as a maiden.’

The smṛtis out of regard for the future welfare of the girl preferred to blink at the wrong done, but insisted upon the abductor or stealthy seducer performing the rites of homa and *saptapadi* in order to confer on the girl wronged the status of a legally married wife. But if the wrong-doer was unwilling to do this they recommended that the girl may be given to another in marriage and pronounced very heavy punishments for the abductor or seducer of a girl.<sup>179</sup> Sir Gooroodas Banerjee<sup>180</sup> rightly expresses surprise at Macnaughten's saying that fraud was legalised by the Hindu Law in the case of the Paiśāca form. Manu VIII.366 says that if a man has intercourse with a girl of his own caste with her consent, he will have to give a fee to the father if the latter so desires and Medhātithi adds that if the father does not desire money the lover will have to pay a fine to the king, that the girl may be given to him or if she has lost her love for him, she may be given to another and if the lover himself wants to discard her he should be forced to accept her (as a wife), Nārada (strīpuṃsa, verse 72) similarly says that if a man has sexual intercourse with a maiden who is a consenting party, then there is no offence, but he must marry her after decking her (with ornaments) and treating her with honour.

The Sm. C. and other digests state that in the Gāndharva, Āsura, Rākṣasa and Paiśāca homa and saptapadī are necessary and they quote Devala and the Gṛhya-pariśiṣṭa in support. The Mahābhārata (Adi.195.7) 1214 expressly says that even after svayamvara religious rites had to be performed. Kālidasa in Raghuvāśsa VII describes how after the svayamvara of Indumatī the principal religious rites of madhuparka, homa, going round the fire, pāṇigrahana took place. Since Āśvalāyana first speaks of eight forms and then prescribes the performance of homa and saptapadī, he implies that these are necessary in all forms.

The smṛtis contain several views about the suitability of these eight to various varnas. All are agreed that the first four, Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa and Prajāpatya, are the approved forms (*praśasta* or *dhārmya*).<sup>181</sup> Most say that each preceding one out of the first four is superior to each succeeding

<sup>179</sup> vide Manu VIII.366 and Yāj II.287-288).

<sup>180</sup> Vide ‘Marriage and strīdhana’ (5th ed. of 1923 p.94). Macnaughten in his ‘Principles and Precedents of Hindu Law’ p.60 said so in a note.

<sup>181</sup> Vide Gaut. IV.12, Āp. Dh. S II.5.12.3, Manu III.24, Nārada (strīpuṃsa, verse 44) etc..

one and that thus Brāhma is the best.<sup>182</sup> Almost all are agreed that Paiśāca is the worst. Manu III.23-26 refers to several views. One view is that the first four (Brāhma etc..) are the proper forms for *brāhmaṇas*.<sup>183</sup> Another view was that the first six (out of the eight i.e. all except Rākṣasa and Paiśāca) are allowed to *brāhmaṇas* and the last four to *kṣatriyas*, and the Gāndharva, Āsura and Paiśāca to vaiśyas and śūdras (Manu III.23). A third view was that Prajāpatya, Gāndharva and Āsura may be resorted to by all varnas and Paiśāca and Āsura should not be resorted to by any one of any varna (Manu III.25 = Anuśāsana 44.9-10), but in another verse (III.24) Manu allows Āsura to vaiśyas and śūdras. Manu mentions the view that the Gāndharva and Rākṣasa are proper (*dharma*) for a *kṣatriya* or a mixture of these two viz, where the girl loves the bride-groom, but her parents or guardians disapprove or cause obstacles and the lover takes away the girl after a fight with her relations.<sup>184</sup> Baud. Dh.S.(1.11.14-16) recommends asura and Paiśāca to vaiśyas and śūdras and assigns the interesting reason:—

‘for the vaiśyas and śūdras do not keep their wives under restraints, they having to do the work of ploughing and waiting upon (the other varnas)’.

Nārada (strīpumsa, verse 40) says that Gāndharva is common to all varnas. The Kāmasūtra (III.5.28) first speaks of the Brāhma as the best (following the view of the Dharma Śāstra writers) and then, true to its own particular subject, gives its own opinion that Gāndharva is the best (Kāmasūtra III.5.29-30).

The Gāndharva form was very much in vogue among royal families. In the Sakuntala, Kalidasa gives expression to this practice. In the Mahābhārata Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna who was in love with Subhadra that carrying away by force one's lady-love is commended in the case of valiant *kṣatriyas*. In the Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa (dated Saka 793) it is stated that Indraraja married the daughter of the Calukya king at Kaira by the Rākṣasa form of marriage (E. I. vol.18, p.235 at p.243). Another and a very famous historic example of the Rākṣasa form is the forcible abduction after a most dashing and valiant fight by Prthvīraja Cohan of the daughter of Jayacandra, the king of Kanoj. It is said that the daughter of Jayacandra was a consenting party; in that case this would be a mixture of the two forms of Gāndharva and Rākṣasa (compare Manu III.26).

### Svayamvara

The *svayamvara* very often spoken of in the Dharma-śāstras was practically the Gāndharva as stated by the commentary Vīramitrodāya. It had several varieties. The simplest form of *svayamvara*<sup>185</sup> occurs when a girl, who attains puberty and whose father does not find a proper husband for three years, herself seeks her husband (or after three months from puberty according to Gaut.18.20, Viṣṇu Dh. S.25.40-41). Yāj I.64 also recommends *svayamvara* to every girl when there is no parent or other guardian who can find out a worthy husband for her. When a girl chose her own husband as above she had to return all ornaments given to her by her parents or brother and the husband who married her had to pay no *Sulka* (dowry) to the father as the latter lost his power over her by not giving her away in time (vide Gaut.18.20 and Manu IX.92). This simple *svayamvara* was applicable to girls of all castes. Savitrī indulged in this kind of *svayamvara*, when she went about in a chariot to find out a suitable husband for herself. But the *svayamvaras* described in the two great epics are often most elaborate and spectacular affairs and were confined to royal families. The Adiparva says that *kṣatriyas* commend *svayamvara* and resort to it, but they prefer a girl who is carried off after subduing her relatives. Bhīṣma carried off the three daughters of the king of Kāśī and got two of them (Ambika and Ambalika) married to his ward Vicitravīrya. The *svayamvara* of

<sup>182</sup> vide Āp. Dh. S. II.5.12.4, Baud. Dh. S. I.11.11

<sup>183</sup> Baud, Dh. S. I.11.10, Manu III.24

<sup>184</sup> Manu III.26 and Baud. Dh. S. I.11.13

<sup>185</sup> as described by Vas, Dh. S.17.67-68, Manu IX.90, Baud. Dh. S. IV.1.13

Sītā or Draupadī did not depend upon the will of the bride, but the bride was to be given in marriage to whomsoever showed a certain skill as a warrior. In the case of Damayantī it was a real choice of her husband by her (Vanaparva 54 ff.) though she chose Nala in a vast and splendid assemble of royal suitors. Kalidasa also gives us a fine description of the *svayamvara* of Indumatī in the Raghuvamṣa. Bilhana in his Vikramanka-devacarita (canto IX) gives a description of the historic *svayamvara* of Candralekha (or Candaladevī) daughter of the Silahara prince of Karahata (modern Karad), when she chose Ahavamalla or Vikramanka, the Calukya king of Kalyana (latter half of 11<sup>th</sup> century). Such a *svayamvara*, it appears, was thought to be unsuitable to *brāhmaṇas* according to the Adiparva.1221 In the Kadambarī (Purvabhaga, penultimate para) Pattralekha says that *svayamvara* is ordained in the Dharma-śāstras.

The Āp. Dh. S. II.5.12.4 makes a general statement that the progeny of a couple partakes of the character of the form in which they were married (i.e. if the marriage is in the best or in an approved form the son is good; if the marriage is in a condemned form, the son bears a low character). Maim (III.39-42) expands the same idea by stating that sons born of marriages in the brahma and other three forms are full of spiritual eminence and are endowed with beauty, virtues, wealth, fame and very long life, while sons of marriages of the other four forms are cruel, are liars, haters of the Veda and of *dharma*. Some *sūtras* and *smṛtis* state how many generations are rendered holy by a son born in one of the first four forms. For example, Asv. gr. (I.6) says that a son born of parents married in the Brāhma, Daiva, Prajāpatya or Ārṣa forms respectively brings purification to twelve descendants and twelve ancestors on both sides (i.e. his father's and mother's), to ten descendants and ten ancestors on both sides, to eight descendants and ascendants on both sides and to seven descendants and ascendants. Manu (III.37-38) and Yāj (1:58-80) put the matter somewhat differently. According to them the son of a Brāhma marriage brings purification to ten paternal ancestors, to ten male descendants and to himself (in all 21), of the Daiva marriage to seven paternal ancestors and seven male descendants, of the Prajāpatya marriage to six male ancestors, to six male descendants and to himself (in all 13), of the Ārṣa marriage to three male ancestors and three male descendants. Gaut. has similar provisions. Commentators like Viśvarupa and Medhātithi explain that these verses are not to be taken literally. They merely praise the extreme desirability of the Brāhma form. Viśvarupa, however, alternatively proposes that one may accept the texts of the holy sages as literally true, following the dictum of Sabara that there is nothing too heavy (or impossible) for a holy text. One may laugh at these texts about the virtues of the several forms of marriage, but they are really intended to emphasize the high importance to the future of the race and to society of noble ideals of marriage, of morals and of a decent and peaceful mode of life.

The forms of marriage have their roots deep down in the Vedic Literature. Rig Veda X.85 gives expression to a marriage in the Brāhma form (there is *kanyadāna* and so forth). The Āsura form (by payment of money) is referred to in Rig Veda I.109.2 and Nirukta VI.9 (quoted above in note 1175). The Gāndharva form or *svayamvara* is indicated by Rig Veda X.27.12 (quoted above p.439) and Rig Veda I.119.5. The story of Syāvāśva narrated in the Brhaddevata (V.50) in connection with Rig Veda V.61 makes an approach to the Daiva form. It is related in the Brhad-devata that Atreya Arcananas who officiated as a priest at a sacrifice for king Rathaviti asked for his son Syāvāśva the hand of the king's daughter.

In modern times two forms are in vogue, the Brāhma and Āsura. In the Brāhma form it is a gift of the girl pure and simple; in the Āsura form it is like the sale of the bride for pecuniary consideration paid to the father or other guardian for his benefit. If this element of pecuniary consideration paid to the guardian -exists, its effects cannot be undone by the form of a gift being gone through. The Gāndharva form is said to be obsolete now, yet in some cases before the courts it has been held that it is still in vogue. There can be no Gāndharva if the girl is a minor. Further if a widow remarries, that marriage will be ordinarily regarded as Gāndharva, because there will be no gift of a *kanyā* (as she is a widow) and because she herself will generally arrange such a marriage.



## Marriage Ceremonies

Before proceeding to set out in detail the ceremonies of marriage, it would be best to analyse the contents of Rig Veda X.85, which is a marriage hymn redolent of the highest ideal of marriage and conjugal felicity and several verses of which are recited even now in the marriage rites. The hymn refers to a mythical marriage of Sūryā, daughter of Savitr, with Soma and the important features of the marriage, though not arranged in a regular sequence in the hymn, are:— the two Aśvins went to ask for Sūryā as a bride for Soma<sup>186</sup> (verses 8-9); Savitr agreed to give her (v.9), the bride-groom was treated with honour, presents were made to him and cows were killed for (or presented to) him; Soma took hold of her hand with the verse (36)

‘I take thy hand for prosperity (or love) so that you may grow to old age with me thy husband; the gods, Bhaga, Aryaman, Savitr, the wise Pusan have given thee to me for performing the duties of a house-holder.’

— the bride is a gift by her father in the presence of gods and the fire (v.40-41); the girl passes from the dominion and control of her father and becomes united with her husband (v.24); the bride is blest as follows:—

‘May you stay here together, may you not be separated, may you compass all life (long life), happy in your own house and playing with your sons and grandsons; O Indra! make her endowed with worthy sons and prosperity; bestow on her ten sons and make her husband the eleventh (male); may you be queen over your father-in-law, mother-in-law, over the husband's brother and sister (vv.42, 45-46)’.

Among subordinate items it is noteworthy that Raibhya was sent along with Sūryā as her friend (*anudeyī*) to make her time not hang heavy on her hands (v.6) when she first went to her husband's family (just as in modern times in Western India some woman accompanies the bride for a few days as *pātharākhin* 'one who guards'), that even a female servant accompanied Sūryā.

In connection with the rites of marriage it is necessary to observe that the greatest divergence prevailed from very ancient times. Aśv. gr. (1.7.1-2) says:—

‘Various indeed are the observances of (different) countries and villages; one should follow those in marriages; what, however, is common (to all or most) that we shall declare’.

Similarly Āp. gr. (2.15) declares:—

‘People should learn from women (and others) what procedure is (to be observed according to custom).’

and the commentator Sudarśanācārya notes that certain rites like the worship of planets, *ankurāropana* and the tying of *pratisara* (the marriage string or ribbon round the wrist) are usual and are performed with Vedic mantras, while others like Nāgabali, Yakṣabali and the worship of Indranī are performed without Vedic mantras. The Kāthaka-ḡṛhya 25.7 allows usages of countries and families to be observed in marriage and the commentators mention several such usages. As the ḡṛhya-sūtra of Āśvalāyana contains perhaps the shortest account of marriage rites and as that sūtra is probably the most ancient among the ḡṛhya sūtras, I shall set out below the entire ceremony of marriage from that sūtra. Then a few important details from other ḡṛhya sūtras will be added and it will be pointed out how in modern times a marriage is celebrated, particularly among higher classes. It must be remembered that there is not only great divergence as to the number of separate ceremonies that constitute the saṃskāra of marriage, but the sequence of even the most important ceremonies is different in the several sūtras and the mantras also are different (though some like Rig Veda X.185.36 are common to all). It is remarkable that out of the 47 verses of Rig Veda X.85,

<sup>186</sup> The word *vara* here and in some of the ḡṛhya-sūtras also (e.g. Āp. gr. II.16) means those who ask for the girl on behalf of the bride-groom.

the Āp. Mantrapāṭha employs as many as 29 (most of which are quoted in connection with marriage). The main outlines of the marriage saṃskāra show a remarkable continuity for several thousand years from the times of the Rig Veda down to modern times.

The Aśv. gr. (I.7.3-1.8.) deals with all the marriage rites as follows:—

Having placed to the west of the fire (that is kindled on the altar as described already) a mill-stone and to the north-east (of the fire) a water jar, he should offer sacrifice (with the sruva), while the bride takes hold of him (touches his right hand). Standing with his face turned to the west, while the bride is sitting and has her face turned to the east, he should seize only her thumb with the mantra:— ‘I take hold of thy hand for happiness’ (Rig Veda X.85.36), if he desires that only male children be born to him; he may seize her other fingers if he is desirous of female children; he may seize her hand on the hair side together with the thumb if he be desirous of both (male and female children). Leading her thrice round the fire and the water jar so that their right sides are turned towards (the fire etc.,) he murmurs:—

‘I am *ama* (this), thou art *sa* (she), thou art this, I am that; I am heaven, thou art the earth; I am the melody, thou art the words. Let us both marry here. Let us beget offspring. Dear to each other, bright, having well disposed minds, may we live for a hundred years.’<sup>187</sup>

Each time he leads her round (the fire) he makes her tread on the stone with (the words):—

‘tread on this stone; be firm like a stone; overcome the enemies; trample down the foes.’

Having first poured clarified butter over her joined hands, the bride's brother or some one who is in the place of brother pours fried grain twice over the bride's joined hands, three times in the case of those whose *gotra* is Jamadagnī (i.e. if the bridegroom is of that *gotra*). Then he pours clarified butter over what has been left of the grains (sacrificial material or offering) and over what has been cut off (separated from the aggregate). This is the rule about the portions to be cut off (in every case where there is *avadāna*).<sup>188</sup>

With the following verses (recited by the bride-groom) viz.

‘to god Aryaman the girls offered sacrifice; may he the god Aryaman loosen her from this (i.e. her father's) and not from that place (the bride-groom's), *svāhā!* to god Varuna the girls have offered sacrifice; may he, god Varuna etc.. To god Pusan the girls have offered sacrifice, to Agnī; may he, god Pusan etc.’

with these (the bride) should sacrifice (the fried grain) without opening her joined hands, as if they were the spoon called *sruca*. Without going round the fire the bride sacrifices fried grain a fourth time silently with the *neb* of the *śūrpa* (winnowing basket) towards herself. Some lead the bride round each time after fried grain has been poured out, so that the two last oblations do not follow immediately after each other.<sup>189</sup> Then he loosens her two locks of hair if they are made up (that is if her hair has been bound round on two sides with two tufts of wool), (the right one) with the *mantra* — ‘I release thee from the fetter of Varuna’ (Rig Veda X.85.24) and the left one with the following

<sup>187</sup> Vide the same passage with slight differences quoted on p.202 in the Garbhādāna ceremony from the Br. Up. VI.4.20;

<sup>188</sup> The two portions of *lāja* (fried grain) poured into the bride's hands together with the first pouring of *ājya* (called *upastaraṇa*) and the subsequent pouring of *ājya* (called *pratyabhighāraṇa*) constitute the four *avattas* or portions cut off from the material for Havis. The descendants of Jamadagnī are *paścāvattinaḥ* (vide above p.490); therefore three portions of *lāja* are to be poured out (in order to make with *upastaraṇa* and *pratyabhighāraṇa* five *avattas*).

<sup>189</sup> The first view requires that leading the bride round the fire, making her tread on the stone and the offering of fried grain are each repeated thrice; so that when the offering prescribed here for the 4th time is made, it follows immediately on the third offering of *lājas*. Other teachers made the bride first offer *lājas*, then she was led round the fire. When this was done the 4th oblation of *lājas* would not come immediately after the third oblation of *lājas*, but after she went round the fire the third time. The Gobhila gr. II.1.14 prescribes that the fried grain to be offered into fire is mixed with tendrils of the *śami* plant and *Kālidāsa* (in Raghuvamśa VII.25-26) refers to *śamī* and *lājas*.

*mantra* (Rig Veda X.85.25). Then he causes her to step forward in a north-eastern direction seven steps with the words:–

‘May you take one step for food, second step for vigour, third step for the thriving of wealth, fourth step for sexual-comfort, fifth step for offspring, sixth step for seasonal enjoyments, may you be my friend with your seventh step! May you be devoted to me; let us have many sons, may they reach old age.’<sup>190</sup>

Bringing the heads of the two (bride and bride-groom) together, he (the acarya) sprinkles their heads with water from the water jar. And the bride should dwell that night in the house of an old *brāhmaṇa* woman whose husband and children are alive.<sup>191</sup>

When she (the bride) has seen the Pole star, the star Arundhati and the seven sages (the constellation of Ursa Major), let her break her silence and say:– ‘may my husband live and may I secure offspring.’<sup>192</sup> If (the newly married couple) have to make a journey (to their home in another village), let him cause the bride to mount a chariot with the verse:– ‘may Pusan lead thee from here holding thy hand’ (Rig Veda X.85.26); he should make her ascend into a boat with the hemiṣṭich:– ‘carrying stones (or the river called Asmanvatī) flows; get ready’ (Rig Veda X.53.8) and let him make her descend from the boat with the following hemiṣṭich; if she weeps let him pronounce the verse:– ‘they weep for the living’ (Rig Veda X.40.10). They constantly carry the nuptial fire in front. At pleasing places, trees and cross roads, let him mutter:– ‘may no way-layers meet us’ (Rig Veda X.85.32). At every dwelling place (on the way) let him look at the onlookers with the *mantra*:– ‘this newly married bride brings good luck’. (Rig Veda X.85.33). He should make her enter his house with the verse:– ‘here may happiness increase unto you through offspring.’ (Rig Veda X.85.27). Having kindled with fuel sticks the nuptial fire and having spread to the west of it a bull’s hide with the neck turned towards the east and the hair outside he makes oblations, while she (the bride) is sitting (on that hide) and takes hold of him, with the four verses (one oblation with each verse):– ‘may Prajāpati create offspring to us’ (Rig Veda X, 85.43-46); and then he partakes of curds with the verse:– ‘may all the gods unite our hearts’ (Rig Veda X.85.47) and gives (the remaining curds) to her or he besmears the heart (of both) with the rest of the ājya (with part of which he had already sacrificed). From that time they should not eat *kṣāra-lavana*,<sup>193</sup> should observe celibacy, wear ornaments and sleep on the ground (not on cots) for three nights or twelve nights or for a year according to some (teachers); thus (those teachers say) a ṛṣi will be born as a son (to them). When he has fulfilled these observances he should give the bride’s shift to a *brāhmaṇa* who knows the Sūryā hymn (Rig Veda X, 85) and food to *brāhmaṇas*. Then he should cause the *brāhmaṇas* to pronounce auspicious words.”

In this description of the saṃskāra of marriage there are three parts. There are certain rites that are preliminary, there are then a few rites that are of the essence of the saṃskāra viz. pāṇi-grahaṇa, homa, going round the fire and the saptapadī, and there are certain rites like the seeing of the Pole star etc., that are subsequent to the central rites. The essential rites are mentioned by all sūtrakaras, but as to the preceding and subsequent rites there is a great divergence in the details. Even as regards the essential rites the sequence in which they take place differs. For example, the Aśv. gr. (I.7.7) describes going round the fire before saptapadī, while the Āp. gr. describes saptapadī (IV.16)

<sup>190</sup> This (the taking seven steps together) is the most important rite in the marriage saṃskāra. We have to understand ‘bhava’ after each sentence ‘iṣe eka-pada bhava’ These words occur in all *gr̥hyasūtras*, e.g. vide Āp. M. P. I.3.7-14 and Āp. gr.4.15-16, Sañ. gr. I.14.6, Par. gr. I.8, Gobhila gr. II.2.11, Hir. gr. I.21.1 etc.. But there are slight variations as well. For example Pāraskara, Bharadvāja, Hiranyakeśin and śaṅkhyāyana substitute *paśubhya*: for *prajābhya*., while the first three of these and Mānava and Baudhāyana add ‘viṣṇustvān vetu’ after each of the seven clauses

<sup>191</sup> This rule has no application if the bride and the bride-groom belong to the same village. But if they belong to different villages and the newly married couple have to stay somewhere for the night on their journey then this rule applies.

<sup>192</sup> This indicates that after the homa is finished, the bride is to observe silence till she sees the Pole star.

<sup>193</sup> manufactured salt

before the act of going round the fire (V.I). The Gobhila gr̥hya (II, 2.16), the Khadira gr. (1.3.31), and Baud, gr. (I.4.10) describe *pāṇi-grahana* after saptapadī while many other sūtrakaras describe it before saptapadī. Then again there are many acts reference to which is altogether omitted in the Aśv. gr., e.g. there is no reference to *madhuparka* (which is mentioned in Āp. gr. III.8, Baud. gr. I.2.1, Manava gr. I.9) nor to *kanyadāna* (which is referred to in Par. gr. I.4 and described in detail in Mānava gr. I.8.6-9). Aśvalāyana probably omitted express mention of *kanyadāna*, because in defining the first four forms he uses the word '*dadyāt*' while in the last four there is no *kanyadāna* and Aśvalāyana wanted to describe ceremonies that were common to all forms.

Taking as many *gr̥hya sūtras* as I could read, the following is a fairly exhaustive list of the different matters described in the saṃskāra of marriage. A few notes are added against those that are deemed important.<sup>194</sup>

**1. Vadhuvara-guṇa-parīkṣa:** (examining the suitability of a girl or a bride-groom). This has been dealt with already above.

**2. Vara-preśana:** (sending persons to negotiate for the hand of the girl). The ancient custom seems to have been to send some person or persons (Rig Veda X.85.8-9) to the father of the girl for asking her in marriage. The same was the practice in the *sūtras*.<sup>195</sup> Even in medieval times, particularly among *kṣatriyas*, the bride-groom was the first to seek for the hand of a girl. In modern times among the *brāhmaṇas* and many other castes, the girl's father has to seek a bride-groom, though among the *śūdras* and several other castes the old practice is retained.

**3. Vāgdāna or Vañ-nīscaya;** (settling the marriage). This is described by San. gr. I.6.5-6. Medieval works like th(S. R. M. pp.529-533 describe this ceremony at great length.

**4. Maṇḍapa-karaṇa** — Erecting a *paṇḍal* (canopy) where the ceremonies are to be performed. Par. gr. I.4 says that marriage, caula, upanayana, kesanta and sīmanta are to be performed outside the house in a *paṇḍal*. Vide Sam Pr. pp.817-818.

**5. Nāndi-śrāddha and Puṇyāha-vācana:** These are referred to by Baud, gr, I.1.24; most of the *gr̥hyasūtras* are silent about these.

**6. Vadhu-gr̥hāgamana:** (bride-groom's going to the bride's house). Vide San. gr. I.12.1.

**7. Madhuparka:** (reception of the bride-groom at the bride's house). Āp. gr. III. 8, Baud. gr. I.2.1, Mānava gr. I.9 and Kathaka gr.24.1-3 prescribe this. Vide the following chap. X for *madhuparka*. San. gr.1.12.10 appears to refer to two *madhuparkas*, one before marriage and one after marriage (when the bride-groom returned to his own house). The commentator Ādityadarśana on Kāṭhaka gr.24.1 refers to the opinion of some that *madhuparka* should be offered at the close of the marriage, but states his own view that in all countries it is offered before marriage.

**8. Snapana, Paridhāpana and Saṃnahana:** (making the bride bathe, put on new clothes and girding her with a string or rope of darbha.)<sup>196</sup> Par. gr I.4 refers only to the putting on of two garments, Gobhila gr. (IT.1.17-18) refers to bathing and putting on a garment, Manava gr. (1.11.4-6) refers to *paridhāpana* and *samnahana*. Strangely enough Gobhila gr. II.1.10 speaks of the sprinkling of the girl's head with the best of sura (wine), which the commentator explains as water.

<sup>194</sup> Among the principal ceremonies in marriage described by Kālidāsa in the Raghuvamśa VII are madhuparka, homa, going round the fire, pānigrahana, lāja-homa and ādrākṣata-ropana.

<sup>195</sup> Vide San, gr. I.6.1-4 (where Rig Veda X.85.23 is the mantra recited when sending them), Baud. gr. I.1.14-15, Ap gr. II.16 and IV.1-2 and 7

<sup>196</sup> Vide Āp. gr, IV.8 and Kāṭhaka gr.25.4.

9. **Samañjana:** (anointing the bride and bride-groom). Vide San. gr. I.12.5, Gobhila gr. II.2.15, Par. gr. I.4, in all of which Rig Veda X.85.47 is cited as the *mantra* with which anointing or sprinkling is done.
10. **Pratisarabandha:** (tying an amulet string on the bride's hand). Vide San. gr. I.1 2, 6-8; Kausika sūtra 76.8.
11. **Vadhu-vara-ñiskramaṇa:** (the coming out into the paṇḍal of the bride and bride-groom from the inner part of the house). Par. gr. I.4.
12. **Paraspara-samīkṣana:** (looking at each other).<sup>197</sup> Par. gr. I.4 says that the bride-groom recites Rig Veda X.85.44, 40, 41 and 37 at this time. Āp. gr. IV.4 and Baud. gr. say he recites Rig Veda X.85.44. The Aśv. gr. pariśiṣṭa I.23 says that first of all a piece of cloth is held between the bride-groom and bride and that at the proper astrological moment it is removed and then the two see each other. Laghu-Āśvalāyana-smṛti (15.20) also says the same. This practice is observed even now. When the interposed cloth is held between the bride and bride-groom verses called *mangalaṣṭakas* are repeated by *brāhmaṇas*, the last of which verses is '*tad-eva lagnam sudinam tad-eva*' etc..
13. **Kanyādāna:** (the gift of the bride).<sup>198</sup> The Aśv. gr. pariśiṣṭa sets out the procedure about the *kanyādāna* which is the same even now. The Sam. K. p.779 notes about half a dozen different methods of uttering the formula in *kanyādāna*. It is in this rite that the father of the girl says that the bride-groom should not prove false to the bride in *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* and he responds with the words:– 'I shall not do so' (*naticarāmi*). This is done even now.
14. **Agnīsthapana and homa:** (establishing the fire and offering of ghee oblations into fire). Here there is great divergence about the number of *āhutis* and the *mantras* to be recited. Vide Aśv. gr. I.7.3 and I.4.3-7, Āp. gr. V.1 (16 *āhutis* with 16 *mantras*), Gobhila gr. II.1.24-26, Manava gr. I.8, Bharadvaja I.13 etc..
15. **Pāñi-grahaṇa:** (Taking hold of the bride's hand).
16. **Lāja-homa:** (Offering of fried grain into fire by the bride).<sup>199</sup> Asv. gr. says that the bride makes three offerings of fried grain when *mantras* are repeated by the bridegroom and a fourth is made of the remaining lājas by the bride silently. Some others speak of only three offerings by the bride.
17. **Agnī-pariṇayana:** (the bride-groom going in front takes the bride round the fire and water jar). It is while doing this that he utters the words:– '*amohasmi*' etc.<sup>200</sup>
18. **Aśmarohana:** (making the bride tread on a mill-stone). These three are done thrice viz. *lājahoma*, then *Agnīparinayana* and *aśmārohaṇa*, one after another.
19. **Saptapadi:** (taking seven steps together). This is done to the north of the fire; there are seven small heaps of rice and the bride-groom makes the bride step on each of these seven with her right foot beginning from the west.
20. **Mūrdhābhīṣeka:** (sprinkling holy water on the head of the bride and of the bride-groom according to some and on the head of the bride only according to others).<sup>201</sup>
21. **Sūryodīkṣana:** (making the bride look towards the sun). Par. gr. I.8 speaks of this and employs the mantra:– '*tac-cakṣur*' (Rig Veda VII.65.16 = Vaj. S.36.24).

<sup>197</sup> Vide Par. gr. I.4, Āp. gr. IV.4, Baud. gr. I.1.24-25.

<sup>198</sup> Vide Par. gr. I.4, Manava gr. I.8.6-9, Varaha gr.13.

<sup>199</sup> Vide Aśv. gr. I.7.7-13, Par. gr. I.6, Āp. gr. V.3-5, San. gr. I.13.15-17, Gobhila gr. II.2.5, Mānava gr. I.11.11, Baud. gr. I.4.25. etc..

<sup>200</sup> vide San. gr. I.13.4, Hir. gr. I.20.2 etc.

<sup>201</sup> Asv. gr. I.7.20, Par. gr. I.8, Gobhila gr. II.2.15-16 etc..

- 22. Hrdaya-sparsā:** (touching the bride's heart with a mantra). Par. gr. I.8, Bhar. gr.1.17, Baud. gr. I.4.1.
- 23. Prekṣakānumantraṇa:** (addressing the spectators with reference to the newly married bride). Manava gr. I.12.1 (which employs Rig Veda X.85.33). Par. I.8 employs that verse for reciting over the bride.
- 24. Dakṣinādāna:** (gifts to the acarya). Par. gr. I.8, San. gr.1.14.13-17 (both prescribe a cow as the fee in the case of *brāhmaṇas*, a village in marriages of kings and nobles, a horse in marriages of vaiśyas etc.). Gobhila gr. II.3.23, Baud. gr. I.4.38 speak of only a cow.
- 25. Gṛha-praveśa:** (entering the bride-groom's house.)
- 26. Gṛhapraveśanīya homa:** (sacrifice on entering the bride groom's house).<sup>202</sup>
- 27. Dhruvārundhatī-darśana:** (pointing out the Pole star and Arundhatī to the bride at night on the day of marriage). Aśv. gr. I.7.22 speaks of the seven sages in addition, Mānava gr. I.14.9 speaks of the same three and adds Jīvantī, Bhar. gr.1.19 speaks of Dhruva, Arundhatī and other nakṣatras, Āp. gr. VI.12 (only Dhruva and Arundhatī), Par. I.8 (only Dhruva). According to San. gr.1.17.2, Hir. gr. I.22.10 both the bride and the bride-groom remain silent till night. According to Aśv. gr. only the bride does so. Gobhila gr. II.3.8-12 describes Dhruvarundhatī-darśana before gṛha-praveśa.
- 28. Āgneya Sthāli-pāka:** (mess of cooked food offered to Agnī).<sup>203</sup>
- 29. Tri-rātra-vrata:** (keeping for three nights after marriage certain observances). Vide Aśvalāyana above p.530 for the observances which are enumerated by almost all sūtrakaras. Āp. gr. VIII.8-10, Baud. gr. I.5.16-17 contain the interesting injunction that the newly married pair should sleep on the ground on the same bed for three nights, but should interpose between them a staff of udumbara wood anointed with perfumes and wrapped round with a garment or a thread and that on the fourth night it should be removed with the verses Rig Veda X.85.21-22 and thrown into water.
- 30. Caturthī-karma:** (rite on the fourth night after marriage). This has been described above (pp.202-204). In the medieval digests certain other ceremonies are mentioned and they are observed in modern times also. A few of them will be noted below. Here again the order is not the same in all works. The *Dharmasindhu* p.265 refers to this divergence.
- 31. Sīmanta-pājana:** (honouring the bride-groom and his party on their arrival at the bride's village). This is done before vāṅniścaya in modern times. Vide Sam. K. p.768; *Dharma* sindhu III, p.261.
- 32. Gauri-Hara-puja:** (worship of Siva and his consort Gaurī). Sam. K. p.766, S. R. M. p.534 and 544, *Dharma-sindhu* p.261 (notes that there are several views as to when *kanyādāna* takes place) describe this. Images of Gaurī and Hara are to be made of gold or silver or pictures of them on a wall etc.. or on a piece of cloth or stone are to be drawn and worshipped by the intending bride after *punyāhavācana* and before *kanyādāna*. Vide Laghu-Āśvalāyana 15.35.
- 33. Indrāṇi-puja:** (worship of Indrāṇī, the consort of god Indra). Vide Sam. K. p.756, S. R. M. p.545. This seems to have been comparatively an ancient practice as Kalidasa in *Raghuvamśa* VII.3 seems to refer to it ('there was absence of disturbers of *svayamvara* on account of the presence of Śacī) Probably Śacī was worshipped before the *svayamvara* began.
- 34. Taila-haridrāropana:** (Applying turmeric powder to the bride-groom's body from what is left after the bride's body has been so treated). Vide Sam.K. p.757, *Dharmasindhu* III. p.257.

<sup>202</sup> San. gr.1.16.1-12, Gobhila gr. II.3.8-12, Āp. gr. VI.6-10.

<sup>203</sup> Vide Āp. gr. VII.1-5, Gobhila II.3.19-21, Bhar. gr. I.18, Hir. gr. I.23.1-6.

**35. Ārdrākṣataropana:** (mutual showering of wet unbroken rice grains by the bride and bride-groom). In a vessel of some metal like silver a little milk is poured and clarified butter is sprinkled over it and unbroken wet rice grains are poured therein. The bridegroom applies milk and ghee to the joined hands of the bride twice and thrice places rice grains in the joined hands of the bride so that her añjali becomes filled up and twice sprinkles ghee over her joined hands. Some other person does the same to the joined hands of the bride-groom and the bride's father places a golden piece on the joined hands of both. Then the bride-groom places his joined hands on those of the bride whose father then repeats a *mantra* and raises her up; she then pours the rice over the head of the bridegroom who follows her in the same way. This is done thrice by each and then lastly by the bride (i.e. seven times in all). Then the priest sprinkles on their heads water with an udumbara twig together with durva grass after reciting verses '*Apo hi ṣṭha* etc.. (Rig Veda X, 9.1-3)'. Then the couple make a tilaka mark on each other's forehead, garland each other and tie a thread with a turmeric piece on each other's hand (which is variously called '*kankana-bandhana*' or '*kautuka-bandhana*'). Vide Sam. Pr. pp.828-829, S. R. M. p.556. Kalidasa in Raghuvamsa VII describes ārdrākṣata-ropana as the last of the rites of marriage and in VIII.1 speaks of the *kautuka*.

**36. Mangala-sūtra-bandhana:** (tying a string having golden and other beads on it round the neck of the bride). This is now regarded as the most important ornament which no woman will part with as long as her husband is alive. But the *sūtras* are entirely silent about it. Among the earliest references is one from Śaunaka smṛti (ms. in Bombay University Library, folio 39 b). The Laghu-Āśvalāyana smṛti 15.33 also prescribes it and the *mantra* to be employed when doing so. Gadādhara on Par. gr.1.8 says that mangala-sūtra should be worn and garlands be placed round their necks by the bride and bride-groom, though the sūtra of Paraskara is silent on the point. The Baud. gr. ṣeṣa sūtra V.5 in describing '*arka-vivaha*' speaks of mangalya sūtra to be tied to the plant. It is not clear whether it means the same as the mangala-sūtra now tied by married women, round their necks. About the nose-ring or nose ornament to which all women whose husbands are living attach the greatest importance in modern times, the *sūtras*, smṛtis and even the early digests are entirely silent. Dr. Altekar in his recent work 'Position of Hindu women in Hindu Civilization' pp.362-64 holds from the evidence of the sculptures throughout India-that the 'nose-ring was unknown throughout the whole of India during the entire Hindu period' (i.e. till about 1000 A. D.). Mr. P. K. Gode in Annals of B.O.R.I. vol. XIX (for 1939) pp.313-34 adduces evidence to show that a nose ornament was known to literary works from at least about 1000 A.D.

**37. Uttariya-prānta-bandhana:** (Tying turmeric pieces and betelnut on to the end of the upper garments of both and making a knot of their two garments together). Vide Sam. K, p.799, S, Pr. p.829.

**38. Airinīdāna:** (Presenting the mother of the bride-groom with several gifts in a large wicker-work basket with lamps lighted and requesting her and the relatives of the bride-groom to treat the bride affectionately). Vide Sam. K. p.811, Dharmasindhu p.267. A basket of bamboo (*vamśa*) is used probably to symbolize the continuity of the family (*vamśa*) of the bride-groom. This is done when the bride is about to leave the father's place to go to the bride-groom's place after marriage.

**39. Devakotthāpana and Maṇḍapodvāsana** (taking leave of the deities that had been invoked before the ceremonies began and taking down the paṇḍal). Sam. K. pp.532-533, S. R, M, pp.555-556.

### Finality of Marriage

Two interesting questions arise viz. when can a marriage be said to be final and irrevocable and what would happen if a marriage is brought about by force or fraud. Manu says (VIII.168):—

‘What is given by force, what is enjoyed by force, also what has been caused to be written by force and all other transactions done by force, Manu has declared void.’

— and in VIII.165 he places fraudulent transactions on the same footing as those brought about by force. There is great difficulty in applying these dicta to marriages. We saw above that Vas. Dh. S. (17.73) and Baud. Dh. S. declare that if a girl has been carried off by force and has not been wedded with the repetition of sacred texts she may be given to another man in marriage. Viśvarupa (p.74) and Aparārka (p.79) add a gloss that this can be done only after she has undergone a *prāyaścitta*. From this it appears that if the marriage rites (like *saptapadī*) have been performed the ancient law-givers would not have declared the marriage null and void even if the girl had been carried away by force or married by fraud.

In modern works on Hindu Law the proposition is stated that ‘a marriage, though performed with the necessary ceremonies, may be set aside by the court, if it was brought about by force or fraud.’ This opinion is based on what was said in some decided cases.<sup>204</sup> But in none of these cases was a marriage duly solemnized by the performance of the rites of *pāṇi-grahaṇa*, going round the fire and *saptapadī*, set aside. There are mere *obiter dicta* in these cases to the effect that a marriage may be set aside by the court for force or fraud.

The Vas. Dh. S. (17.72) goes so far as to observe:—

‘when a girl has been promised in marriage (and the promise has been confirmed) with water, if the intended bride-groom dies, but the Vedic *mantras* have not been recited, that girl still belongs to her father (and may be given to another).’

Kātyāyana 1845 . has a similar verse:—

‘if after choosing a girl as his bride, a man dies (or is unheard of) the girl after the lapse of three monthly periods may marry another’.

And another verse of the same author says that if a person after giving a gratuity for a girl and *strīdhana* to her goes abroad, the girl may be kept unmarried for a year and then may be given to another. Manu (VIII.227) says:—

‘The Vedic *mantras* recited in the marriage rite are a sure indication of wife-hood; but their completion should be understood by the wise as occurring on taking the seventh step’.

Aparārka p.94 (on Yāj I.65) quotes a similar verse from Nārada (*strīpumsa* v.3). The *Udvāhatattva* p.129 quotes Yama to the same effect. So it follows that the marriage becomes complete and irrevocable the moment the *saptapadī* rite is performed, but before that rite is gone through there is a *locus paenitentiae* or a power to resile from what has been undertaken. Before the *saptapadī* is performed, if the bride-groom dies, the bride is still a maiden and not a widow and can be married again. The most essential ceremonies of marriage are the *homa* and *saptapadī*. The Dronaparva says that promise of a daughter and giving a daughter with water are not certain means of knowing wife-hood but *saptapadī* is known to be the completion of marriage. If any of the other ceremonies are wanting that would not vitiate the marriage. In I. L. R.12 Cal.140, it has been held that the *vrddhi-śrāddha* is not an essential ceremony and its absence would not vitiate marriage.

Even the Kāmasūtra quotes the unanimous opinion of the ācaryas that marriages celebrated before fire as a witness cannot be revoked. In the case of *śūdras* there are no Vedic mantras and so in their case the completion of marriage will be determined according to custom. The digests like Gr. R say (p.57) that In the case of *śūdras* the marriage will be complete when the *śūdra* girl holds the fringe of the garment of the bride-groom. Manu (IX.47) declares— ‘once is the partition of inheritance made, once is a maiden given in marriage’. This rule really means that once the ceremony of

<sup>204</sup> e.g. Aunjona Dasi v. Prahlada Chandra (6 Bengal L. R.243 at p.254), Venkatacharyulu v. Rangacharyulu I. L. R.14 Mad.316 at p.320, Mulchand v. Bhudhia I. L. R.22 Bom.812.



marriage is completed by *saptapadi*, the marriage is irrevocable and the girl cannot thereafter be given to any one else. But if a girl is only promised in marriage and if a more worthy suitor subsequently presents himself, then the father may commit breach of promise and give her in marriage to another.<sup>205</sup> Yāj I.65 states the rule and the exception:—

‘A girl is given only once; a person who after having promised to give, deprives that man of her, is liable to the punishment of a thief; but if a more worthy suitor approaches, the father may deprive the former (suitor) of her (hand) though promised.’

The Mahābhārata (Anuśāsana 44.35) says that up to *pāṇi-grahaṇa* any one may ask for the hand of a maiden (even though promised before to another). Nārada (strīpumsa vv.30 and 32) contains similar provisions. Conversely, if a man agrees to marry a girl and subsequently discovers defects in her or if she is diseased or already deflowered or given by practising fraud he may refuse to marry her.<sup>206</sup> If a guardian gives away a girl without declaring the defects of a girl (and they are subsequently discovered) the guardian should be fined in the highest amercement (according to Yāj I.66 and the lowest, according to Nārada, strīpumsa v.33). Aparārka 125 (p.95) and others add that the defects referred to must be latent and not apparent or patent to view. If a suitor repudiates a girl who is free from defects he should be fined in the highest amercement and if he falsely accuses her of defects he should be fined one hundred panas (Yāj I.66 and Nārada, strīpumsa v.34). Nārada adds that he who abandons a faultless girl should be punished and should be made to marry the same girl.

Some of the smṛtis and digests are very much exercised over the question of the bride having menstruation while the marriage ceremonies are in progress and homa is about to be performed. Atrī (Jīvananda part 1, p.11, chap. V) prescribes that having made the girl bathe with the Havismatī (with a verse in which the word havis occurs, probably Rig Veda X.88.1 or VIII.72.1) and to put on other garments and having offered an āhuti of clarified butter with the verse '*Yuñjate manah*' (Rig V.81.1) the ceremonies should be proceeded with. The Smṛtyārthasāra (p.17) first quotes two verses (the same as Atri's) and proposes an alternative method viz. that the bride and the bride-groom should stay separate from each other for three days and on the fourth day after ceremonially bathing themselves should perform the homa in the same fire.

## CHAPTER 10

### MADHU-PARKA AND OTHER USAGES

*Madhu-parka*: (offering of honey by way of honour to a distinguished guest).

**T**he word literally means — 'a ceremony in which honey is shed or poured' (on the hand of a person). The word occurs in the Jaiminīya Upanisad-Brāhmaṇa 18.4. The Nirukta (I.16) also refers to the usage of offering *madhu-parka* with the word *madhu-parka* repeated thrice. It appears that the Ait. Br. III.4 when it says that:— 'if the ruler of men comes as a guest or any one else deserving of honour comes, people kill a bull or a cow (that has contracted a habit of abortion)' refers to *madhu-parka*, though that word is not actually used. In all gṛhya sutras it is described at length. Most of the details are the same, the principal difference being that often different mantras are prescribed, though some (like the verse '*mātā rudrānām*') are the same. The *madhu-parka*<sup>207</sup> is offered to ṛtviks (priests officiating at sacrifices) when they are chosen for a sacrifice, to a snātaka

<sup>205</sup> Vide also Manu (IX.71 and VIII.98)

<sup>206</sup> Vide Manu IX.72

<sup>207</sup> The bride-groom, when he comes to the bride's house, is to be honoured with *madhu-parka* because he also is generally a snātaka. The ācārya is one who performs one's upanayana and teaches the Veda

who has come to one's house, to the king (who rules one's country, when he comes to one's house), to one's acarya, father-in-law, paternal and maternal uncles.

The Manava gr. (I.9.1), Khadira gr. IV.4.21, Yaj. I.110 say that six persons deserve arghya (*madhu-parka*) viz. rtvik, acarya, the bride-groom, the king, the snataka and a person who is dear to one.<sup>208</sup>

Some like Baud. gr. I.2.65 add 'atithi' (guest). Gobhila gr. IV.10.23-24. It is laid down that if the persons enumerated come to one's house within a year after *madhu-parka* has been once offered, then it need not be offered again (in the same year), but when a marriage is being celebrated in one's house or a yajña is being performed, then *madhu-parka* must be offered to those persons (even if one year has not elapsed since the *madhu-parka* was previously offered).<sup>209</sup>

Rtviks are to be honoured in each yajña, even though several yajñas are performed in the same year (Yaj. I.110). Manu (III.120) says that a king and a snataka are to be honoured with *madhu-parka* only when they visit one's house in a yajña. Viśvarupa (on Yaj. I, 109) says that *madhu-parka* is to be offered to the king only and not to any kṣatriya. Medhatithi on Manu III.119 says that when a king, whether a kṣatriya or not, comes to one's place *madhu-parka* was to be offered, but not to a śūdra king. According to grhya-parisiṣṭa the *madhu-parka* is to be performed according to the rites prescribed in the sakha of the receiver and not of the giver.

The procedure of *madhu-parka* is set out from the Aśv. gr. (I.24.5-26):—

"He pours honey into curds or clarified butter if no honey can be had. A seat<sup>210</sup>, water for washing the feet, arghya water (i.e. water perfumed with flowers etc.)<sup>211</sup>, water for acamana, honey mixture, a cow; every one of these they announce three times (to the person who has arrived). The person (to be honoured) should sit down on the seat made of northward pointed darbha grass with the verse:—'I am the highest one among my kindred, as the sun among lights' (lightnings). Here I tread on whomsoever bears enmity to me.' Or he should repeat this verse after he has trodden on it. He should make (the host) wash his feet; the right foot he should hold out first to a Brāhmaṇa (for washing) and the left to a śūdra. When his feet have been washed, he receives the arghya water in his joined hands and then he performs *ācamana* with the water for sipping with the formula:— 'thou art the seat (or first layer) of ambrosia'. He should look at the *madhu-parka*, when it is being brought to him, with the mantra:— 'I look at thee with the eye of Mitra'. He accepts it (the *madhu-parka*) in the joined hands with the formula:— 'by the command (urging) of god Savitr, by the arms of Asvins and the hands of Pusan, I accept thee' (Vaj S. I.24). He looks at it with the three rk verses 1862 'the winds blow honey to the righteous man' (Rig. I.90.6-8). He (takes it into his left hand), stirs it about thrice from left to right with the thumb and the finger next to the smallest and wipes (his fingers) towards the east with the formula:— 'may the Vasus eat thee with the Gāyatrī metre'; with the formula:— 'may the Rudras eat thee with the Tristubh metre', (he wipes fingers) towards the south; with the formula:— 'may the Adityas eat thee with the Jagatī metre', towards the west; with the formula:— 'may Visve Devas eat thee with the Anustubh metre', towards the north; with the formula:— 'to the bhūtas (beings) thee', he three times takes (some of the *madhu-parka* materials) from out of the middle of it (and throws it up). He should partake of it for the first time with the formula:— 'the milk of Viraj art thou', for the second time with:— 'may I obtain the milk of Viraj', the third time with:— 'in me may the milk of Padyā Viraj dwell'. He should not eat the whole *madhu-parka* and should not eat to Satiety. He should give the remainder (out of the *madhu-parka* materials) to a Brāhmaṇa towards the north;

<sup>208</sup> Vide Gaut. V.25, Āp. gr.13.19-20, Āp. Dh. S. II.3.8.5-6, Baud. Dh. S. II.3.63-64, Manu III.119, Sabha-parva 36.23-24

<sup>209</sup> Vide Gaut. V.26-27, Āp. Dh. S. II.3.8.6, Yaj. I.110, Khadira gr. IV.4.26, Gobhila gr. IV.10.26.

<sup>210</sup> A *viṣṭara* is a seat with 25 blades of darbha grass.

<sup>211</sup> *Arghya* is water for washing the hands in which flowers and perfume (like sandal-wood paste) have been mixed up.

but if no Brāhmaṇa is available he should throw it into water; or he may eat the whole. He then takes ācamana with the water intended for it with the formula:— 'them art the cover of ambrosia,' He sips water a second time with the formula:— 'truth ! fame ! fortune ! may Fortune resort to me.' When he has sipped water, they announce to him the cow. Having muttered the words:— 'destroyed is my sin, my sin is destroyed he says om, do it ' if he desires to have the cow killed; if he is desirous of letting her go, he mutters the verse:— 'the mother of Rudras and daughter of Vasus'. (Rig. VIII.101, 15) and says 'let her go'. Let the *madhu-parka* not be without flesh."

A few small matters may be noted. Several gṛhya-sutras (such as the Manava) describe *madhu-parka* as a part of the marriage rite, while others like Aśv. describe it independently. Others like Hir, gr. (I.12-13) describe it as part of Samavartana.

There is divergence about the substances mixed in offering *madhu-parka*. Aśv. gr, and Āp. gr. (13.10) prescribe a mixture of honey and curds or clarified butter and curds. Others like Par. gr. I.3 prescribe a mixture of three (curds, honey and butter). Āp. gr. (13.11-12) states the view of some that those three may be mixed or five (those three with fried yava grain and barley). Hir. gr. I.12.10-12 gives the option of mixing three or five (curds, honey, ghee, water and ground grain). The Kausika sutra (92) speaks of nine kinds of mixtures viz. *Brahma* (honey and curds), *Aindra* (of *payasā*), *Saumya* (curds and ghee), *Paṣṇa* (ghee and *mantha*), *Sārasvata* (milk and ghee), *Mausala* (wine and ghee, this being used only in Sautramanī and Rajasuya sacrifices), *Vāruṇa* (water and ghee), *Śrāvana* (śeṣame oil and ghee), *Pārivrajaka* (śeṣame oil and oil cake).

The Manava gr. I, 9.22 says that the Veda declares that the *madhu-parka* must not be without flesh and so it recommends that if the cow is let loose, goat's meat or *payasā* (rice cooked in milk) may be offered; the Hir. gr. I.13.14 says that other meat should be offered; Baud. gr. says (I.2.51-54) that when the cow is let off, the flesh of a goat or ram may be offered or some forest flesh (of a deer etc.) may be offered, as there can be no *madhu-parka* without flesh or if one is unable to offer flesh one may cook ground grains. As the cow became sacred, it became unthinkable to kill her and so other flesh was offered. When even flesh-eating came to be abhorred, then only *payasā* and such other things were recommended. The Adiparva (60.13-14) refers to Janamejaya's reception of Vyāsa with *madhu-parka* and Vyāsa's letting the cow loose. This abhorrence of flesh-eating will be dealt with later on, In modern times there is generally no *madhu-parka* except in marriage and then too it is a simple matter and the elaborate procedure prescribed in some of the gṛhya sutras is hardly ever followed.

Certain peculiar ceremonies relating to marriage may now be described very briefly. In order to avert early widowhood (which was judged from her horoscope) for the girl to be married, a ceremony called *kumbha-vivaha* was performed. It is described in Sam. Pr. (p.868), Nirṇaya-sindhu p.310, Sam. K. (p, 746), S. R. M. (p.528) and other works. On the day previous to the marriage a jar of water in which a golden image of Viṣṇu is dipped is decked with flowers etc, and the girl is surrounded in a network of threads, Varuna and Viṣṇu are worshipped and prayed to give long life to the intended bride-groom. Then the jar is taken out and broken in a pool of water and then water is sprinkled over the girl with five twigs and to the accompaniment of Rig. VII.49 and then Brāhmaṇas are fed.

The Sam.Pr. (pp.868-869) speaks of *Aśvattha-vivaha* which is like *kumbha-vivaha* and performed for good luck to the bride and averting widowhood. Here the Aśvattha tree is substituted for the jar and a golden image of Viṣṇu is worshipped. The image is then given to a Brāhmaṇa.

### **Arka-vivaha**

When a man has the misfortune to lose by death two wives one after another, before marrying a

third wife he goes through a ceremony of marriage with the arka plant. This is described in Sam. Pr. pp.876-889, Sam. K. p.819, Nirnaya-sindhu, p.328. It is described in Baud. gr. Śeṣa-sutra V.5 also.

### Parivedana

Another question which takes up much space in ancient works but which is now of hardly any importance is *parivedana*. When a male got married before his elder brother or where a person married a younger girl before her elder sister was married, this act was called *parivedana* and was severely condemned as a serious encroachment on the rights of seniority and as a sin. Gaut.15.18 and Āp. Dh, S, (II.5.12.22) declare that a younger brother married before an elder brother, and an elder brother married after a younger brother are sinners, and should not be invited at a Srāddha. Āp. adds that one who marries a younger sister before her elder sister is married, one who marries an elder sister after the younger sister has been married, one whose younger brother has kindled the sacred fires or offered a soma sacrifice before him (and a younger brother who kindles the sacred fires or offers soma sacrifice before his elder brother) are also equally sinful. Vas. Dh. S.1.18, Viṣṇu Dh, S.37.15-17 also have similar provisions and Vas. Dh. S. (20.7-10) prescribes krcchra penance of twenty days for the husband of the younger sister married before her elder sister and for the husband of the elder sister married after the younger one, requires each of them to offer his wife to the other for the sake of form (to remove the slur) and then to wed her again with his assent.<sup>212</sup>

### Legal nomenclature

1. The younger brother who marries before the elder brother is called *parivetta* or *parivindaka* (Yaj. I.223).
2. The elder brother before whom the younger brother marries is called *parivitta* or *parivinna* or *parivitti* (Manu III.171).
3. The younger sister who marries before the elder sister is called *agredidhisu* (Gaut.15.15, Vas.1.18) or *parivedini*.
4. The elder sister before whom her younger sister marries is called *didhisu*.
5. The husbands of these two last respectively bear the appellations *agre-didhisu-pati* and *didhisu-pati*.
6. The father or other guardian who gives away the girl in any of these cases of *parivedana* is called *paridayā* or *paridāta*.
7. The younger brother who kindles the sacred fire before the elder is styled '*panjadhātr*' and the elder brother who is so treated is called '*paryahita*' (Gaut.15.18).

Manu III.172 (which is almost the same as Baud. Dh. S. II.1.30 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.54.16) says that the *parivetta*, the *parivitta*, the girl whom the younger brother marries before the elder, the man who gives away the girl in marriage and the officiating priest these five all fall into hell 1866 (and must perform the penance of Candrayana according to Viṣṇu).

Aparārka p.446 quotes Uśanas that a person may kindle sacred fires even before his father or grandfather with the latter's consent. The Trikamandana (I.76-77) says that there is no sin in taking agnihotra and performing a sacrifice before an elder brother and the incurring of sin is only restricted to marriage, while the Smṛtyarthasara (p.13) holds the opposite view that one should not kindle the Vedic fires before one's father even with the latter's consent. The Viṣṇu Dh. S. (37.15-17) enumerates *parivedana* among *upapātakas*. Gaut. (18.18-19) prescribes that if an elder brother has gone to a foreign country his younger brother must wait twelve years before he takes a wife or kindles sacred fires or six years according to some.<sup>1267</sup> There is a similar text of Vas. quoted by Aparārka p.445. In certain cases marrying or kindling sacred fires before an elder brother is not

<sup>212</sup> Vide Baud. Dh. S. II.1.40 also.

condemned. Medhatithi on Manu III.171 quotes a verse:—

'One need not wait where the elder brother is a lunatic, or is a sinner, or leprous, impotent, or suffering from tuberculosis'

and remarks that this is only illustrative (i.e. one need not wait where the elder brother has no *adhikāra* for marriage or for kindling fires). Vide Atrī v.105 (Anan. ed) for a similar verse. Another verse of Atrī (v.106) says that there is no blemish in marrying before the elder brother, if the latter is impotent or gone abroad, or patita or has become a recluse or is devoted to Yoga-śāstra.

The ideas about the wrong committed by a younger brother or sister marrying before an older one reach far back into Vedic antiquity. In the Tai. Br. (III.2.9) there is a story that the gods transferred (rubbed off) their sin to the Apyas and then there is a succession of persons who are all guilty of blame or sin and each preceding one among whom is said to have passed it on to each succeeding one viz. *suryabhyudita*, *suryabhinim rukta*, *kunakhin*, *syavadat*, *agredidhisu*, *parivitta*, *vīrahan*, *brahmahan*. The Vas. Dh.S.1.18 arranges persons called sinners (*enasun*) almost in the same order as in the Tai. Br. Here (in Tai. Br.) we have *parivitta* and *agredidhisu*. In another passage of the Tai. Br. (III.4.4) while speaking of Puruṣa-medha, it is said that the *parivitta* is consigned as a victim to ill-luck (*nairṛti*), the *parivividana* to distress (*arti*) and the *didhisupati* to non-success (*araddhi*).

CHAPTER 11  
POLYGAMY, POLYANDRY AND  
RIGHTS AND DUTIES ON MARRIAGE

**T**hough monogamy seems to have been the ideal and was probably the rule, the Vedic literature is full of references to polygamy,<sup>213</sup> Rig. X.145 (same as Atharva Veda III.18) is a hymn meant as a charm for weaning the husband's affections from a co-wife. It occurs in the Āp. M. P. (I.15) and Āp. gr. IX.6-8 prescribes it for winning over the husband to oneself and for causing estrangement between him and one's co-wife. Rig. X.127a 159 is a hymn attributed to Saci, wife of Indra, who claims to have vanquished and killed her co-wives and to rule supreme over Indra and all men. This hymn also occurs in Āp. M. P. (I.16) and is prescribed by the Āp. gr. (IX.9) as a charm always to be repeated by a wife for sup pressing her co-wives. In a verse (Rig. I.105.8) Trita who had fallen into a well declares:—

‘the rib-like sides (of the well) cause me pain all round as co-wives make it too hot (for the husband or for themselves)’.

The Tai. S. (VI.6.4.3) gives a dogmatic and somewhat picturesque explanation of polygamy that:—

‘On one sacrificial post he passes round two girdles, so one man secures two wives; that he does not pass one girdle round two posts, so one wife does not obtain two husbands’.

The Ait. Br. (12.11) similarly declares:—

‘Therefore one man has many wives, but one wife has not many husbands at the same 1274 time’.

The Tai. Br. (III.8.4.) when speaking of the Aśvamedha says:—

‘The wives anoint (the horse); wives are indeed a form of prosperity.’

The Sat. Br. (XIII.4.1.9., S.B.E. vol.44, p.349) it is said:—

‘Four wives are in attendance viz. the consecrated queen (mahisī), the favorite wife (vavata), the discarded wife (parivṛkta or parivṛkti) and the palagali (who is low-born)’.

The Tai. S. I.8.9 refers to the mahisī and parivṛkti, In the Vaj. S. (23.24, 26, 28) there are verses which are addressed to the mahisī, vavata and parivṛkti by the brahma, udgāta and hotā priests respectively. Hariscandra is said to have had a hundred wives (Ait. Br.33.1). It is not to be supposed that polygamy was confined only to kings and nobles. The great philosopher Yajñavalkya had two wives, Kātyāyanī who was worldly-minded and Maitreyī who thirsted for the knowledge of Brahman and immortality (Br. Up. IV.5.1-2 and II.4.1). In the times of the sutras, some sages wanted to hold up a high ideal. The Āp. Dh.8. (II.5.11.12-13) declares that when a man has a wife who is endowed with dharma and progeny, he shall not marry another wife; but if any one of the two (dharma and progeny) is wanting (in the case of the wife), he may marry another before he has consecrated the sacred śrauta fires. In another place Āp. (I.10.28.19) prescribes that one who abandons his (faultless) wife should put on the skin of an ass with the hair outside and should beg for alms at seven houses for six months. Nārada (strīpumaṣa v.95) recommends that the king should bring round to the proper path by inflicting heavy fines a husband who abandons a wife that is obedient, not harsh of tongue, vigilant (in household work), chaste and endowed with sons.

Even Kaut. (III.2) prescribes that a husband should wait for eight years (before marrying another) if his wife gives birth to no child after one delivery or is sonless or is barren; he should wait for ten if

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<sup>213</sup> The word *dampati* (which occurs very frequently in the Rig.) conveys in several places the idea of a monogamous marriage. Vide Rig. V.3.2, VIII.31.5, X.68.2, 1272.

she bears only still-born children, twelve years if she gives birth to daughters only.<sup>214</sup> Then if he is anxious for a son he may marry another. If he violates these rules he must pay her gratuity, some wealth as *strīdhana* and money (prescribed to be given) on supersession and besides a fine (to the king) of 24 panas. So far Kauṭilya appears to have only stated the ideal, because he follows up this remark by another statement which probably represented the commonly held popular view:—

‘A man may marry several wives after giving *śulka* and *strīdhana* to those to whom nothing had been given at the time of marriage and money on supersession (*adhivedanika*)<sup>215</sup> and suitable provision for livelihood; for women are (married) for procreating sons.’

Though Āp. and others held up the ideal of monogamy and Nārada and others prescribed a fine for marrying a second wife without sufficient cause, it is extremely doubtful whether a man was ever punished by the king for so doing. Manu V.80 and Yaj. I.80 both say that a husband may supersede a wife (and marry another) if she drinks wine, suffers from a disease (of long standing), is deceitful, is extravagant in expenditure, speaks harsh words, and gives birth to female children only. Manu V.81 and Baud. Dh. S. II, 2.65 allow a husband to marry another woman at once if the first is harsh of tongue.

Devala quoted in the Gr.R. says that the *śūdra* may have only one wife, a *vaiśya* two, a *kṣatriya* three and a *brāhmaṇa* four, but a king may have as many as he desires. This only reflected the prevailing practice of kings.

The Adiparva gravely remarks:—

‘To have many wives is no *adharmā* on the part of men, but to violate the duty owed to the first husband would be a great *adharmā* in the case of women.’

The Mahābharata (Mausala-parva V.6) tells us that Vasudeva (Kṛṣṇa) had sixteen thousand wives. Several kings had in historic times as many as a hundred wives. For example, the Cedi king Gangeyadeva alias Vikramaditya is said to have obtained *mukti* (liberation) at Prayāga with his hundred wives.<sup>216</sup>

In Bengal the evils of Kulinism are well known. The reasons for this treatment of women were many, such as the great spiritual importance of sons, early marriages and consequent illiteracy of women, the spread of the idea of the ceremonial impurity of women and their being equated with *śūdras* and lastly the idea of the complete dependence of women on men.

One must not be carried away, however, by the notion that marrying many wives was either very common or was not looked down upon. Steele (in 'Law and Custom of Hindoo Castes,' first published in 1826) who had the most unique opportunities for observing the practices of numerous castes in the Deccan in the first decades of the 19th century writes (p.168, ed. of 1868):—

‘A man may marry as many wives as his inclination or circumstances allow. Marriages in succession, in consequence of the death of a former wife, are very common; but polygamy is not usual except on account of the barrenness of the first wife. It is practiced in the Koonbee castes’.

Vide also Imperial Gazetteer of India, vol. I (ed. of 1907) p.482:—

‘Although in theory polygamy is allowed, in practice a second wife is rarely taken while the first is alive and in India as a whole there are only 1011 wives to every 1000 husbands so that even if no husbands have more than two wives all but 11 per thousand must be monogamous’.

<sup>214</sup> Vide Manu IX.81 and Baud. Dh. S. II.2.65 for similar periods of waiting.

<sup>215</sup> Vide Yāj. II.148 for the amount of *adhivedanika* to be given by the husband.

<sup>216</sup> vide Jabalpur plate of Yaśaḥkarnadeva dated 1122 A. D. in E. I. vol. II. p.4 and the Khaira plates of the same king in E. I. vol. XII. p.205

The state of the modern case law is unsatisfactory. The Bombay High Court has held that the mere fact that the husband has married a second wife would not entitle the first wife to refuse to stay with the husband. Vide *Motilal v. Chanchal*, 4 Bom. L. R.107. In *Virasami v. Appasami*, 1 Madras High Court Reports, p.375, the court held that a Hindu may marry any number of wives, although he may have a wife or wives living. It is submitted with great respect that that is not the ideal or the view of the best; writers, nor is such a view held by the majority of Indian jurists of ancient and medieval times. Modern opinion of educated people is most favorable to making marriages monogamous and efforts are being made to secure absolute monogamy by legislative action. For example, the Madras Nambudrī Act (Madras Act XXI of 1933) forbids a Nambudrī brāhmaṇa from marrying a second wife when the first is living except in three cases viz.

- (1) when the first wife is afflicted with an incurable disease for over five years,
- (2) when she has not borne a child within ten years of marriage, and
- (3) when she becomes an outcast.

### Polyandry

The passages cited above from the Ait. Br. and the Tai. S. that a woman cannot have several husbands at the same time make it clear that in those ancient times polyandry was unheard of. Not a single Vedic passage can be cited which clearly refers to the practice of polyandry. The most glaring example of polyandry in Sanskrit literature is that of Draupadī as the wife of the five Pāṇḍavas. Probably the tradition was too firmly rooted to allow the author to ignore it. The Mahābhārata shows that all were shocked by the resolve of Yudhiṣṭhira to make Draupadī the wife of the five brothers. Dhṛṣṭadyumna (Adiparva<sup>217</sup> 195.27-29) tries vehemently to dissuade Yudhiṣṭhira, who tries to justify his action on the ground of ancient practice and the agreement of the brothers to share everything that any one of them may secure. But Yudhiṣṭhira could ferret out (Adi. chap.196) only two instances (rather mythical) in support of the practice viz. of Jātila Gautamī (who had seven sages as husbands) and of Vārksī who had ten Pracetasā brothers as husbands. It is this fact that has led many scholars to regard the Pāṇḍus as a non-Aryan tribe somehow grafted on the Aryan stock and represented as relatives of the Kauravas by the editor of the Mahābhārata. This too also sounds somewhat far-fetched.

KumarilaBhaṭṭa in his Tantravārtika cuts this Gordian knot by putting forward three explanations, one of which boldly asserts that there were many Draupadīs very similar to each other and so the epic figuratively speaks of one Draupadī only. There were really five Draupadīs (and not one) married separately to the five Pāṇḍavas. In the Dharma Śāstra works there are traces of the knowledge of the practice of polyandry. Āp. Dh. S (II.10.27.2-4) refers to it:—

‘One shall not make over (his wife) to strangers (for a son by *niyoga* but only to one who is a sagotra; for they declare that a bride is given to the family (of brothers' and not to one brother alone); that (*niyoga*) is forbidden on account of the weakness of men's senses.’

Similarly Bṛhaspati, while illustrating the proposition that the king should not disturb popular usages even though they may be improper, cites several such practices among which he mentions:

‘In some other countries there is the most reprehensible practice of a brother taking (as wife) the widow of his deceased brother, and the practice of delivering a maiden to a family; similarly among the Pārasikas (Persians) matches with a mother are seen’.

Dr. Jolly is wrong in thinking that Bṛhaspati refers to polyandry as practised in the south. Bṛhaspati first referred to the practice of marrying a maternal uncle's daughter as prevalent amongst the

<sup>217</sup> Vide Sabha-parva 68.35 where Karna speaks of Draupadi ‘bandhaktī’ (a harlot), because she had many men as her husbands.



southerners (dākṣiṇātyas) in his day and then adds that a practice of giving a girl to the family is in vogue in other countries. So he clearly means countries other than those of the dākṣiṇātyas. Prof. Keith appears to follow Dr. Jolly without any independent examination of the original passage (in E.R.E. vol.8 on marriage, p.453). Just as Brhaspati refers to the Pārasīkas, he speaks of polyandry as current among other countries (but not Aryan India).

There are two types of polyandry, one matriarchal (where a woman forms simultaneous alliances with two or more men who are not necessarily relations of each other and therefore succession is traced through the female) and the other fraternal, where a woman becomes the wife of several brothers. The former practice once prevailed among the Nairs on the Malabar coast, but it has now died out. The latter form of polyandry is still to some extent found in Kumaon, Garhwal and among peoples in the Himalayan area up to Assam.

Pandit Bhagwanlal Indrajī (I. A. vol.8, p.88) says that in Kumaon between the Tons and Jumna river about Kalsi, Rajputs, brāhmaṇas and śūdras all practise polyandry and the children are attributed to the eldest brother who is alive.

Nīlakantha, the commentator of the Mahābhārata, raises (on Adiparva 104.35) the question about Draupadī's marrying five husbands and refers to the practice among very low castes in his day of one woman having two or three husbands.

### **Mutual rights and duties of husband and wife**

Manu (IX.101-102) lays down in a concise form the obligations of husband and wife viz.

‘They should not prove false to each other till death (as regards *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*) and that their constant endeavour should be not to be separate from each other and not to break faith with each other (as to those three goals of human life)’.

The detailed rights and duties of the husband and wife will be unfolded as we proceed. The first; duty of the husband and the privilege of the wife was to require and to give respectively her co-operation in all religious acts. This has been so from the most ancient times. In Rig. I.72.5 it is said 1891 that:—

‘They, accompanied by their wives, worshipped the fire who is worthy of worship’.

In another place it is said:—

‘When you make the husband and wife of one mind, they anoint thee with ghee like a well-placed friend’.

In the Tai. Br. III.7.5 occurs a passage:—

‘May the wife unite with her husband by means of the good deeds (done by both), they two became yoked like oxen to the sacrifice; may the two be of one mind and destroy their foes; may they attain non-aging light in heaven’.

The same verse with slight variations occurs in the Kāthaka Sam. V.4 and is relied upon by Sabara on Jaimini VI.1.21. This indicates that they were supposed to enjoy the fruits of their actions together. We saw above (p.551) how in the Aśvamedha the wife anoints the horse, how in marriage the bride offers handfuls of fried grain into fire. It has already been seen (note 1208) that the Āp. Dh. S. (II.6.13.17-19) requires that from the time of marriage the husband and wife work together in religious acts, that they share the reward of such acts together and that they both have dominion over the wealth of the family and that the wife can make gifts in the absence of the husband if occasion necessitates. The Aśv. gr. (1.8.5) prescribes that:—

‘The fire kindled at marriage is carried by the married pair to their home (in a vessel) and that (I.9.1-8) since the day of marriage, the husband should worship the domestic fire himself or his wife or his son or his daughter or pupil (may offer worship in his absence), that if fire goes out,

some teachers say that the wife should observe a fast, the domestic fire should be worshipped in the evening with an *āhuti* and the formula '*agnaye svāhā*' and in the morning with an *āhuti* and the formula '*suryāya svāhā*' and there is to be a second oblation each time silently (to Prajāpati)'.<sup>218</sup>

According to the commentator some said that the wife and daughter could not perform the homa as they had no privilege to learn mantras, that they could only kindle the fire, while others said they could do so. In the gr̥hya fire kindled at marriage one was to offer the daily mahāyajñas (Gaut.5.6-8) and as regards *bali-haraṇa*.

Gobhila gr. (I.4.16-19) says that both husband and wife should offer balis, or a brāhmaṇa may offer for them, or the wife may offer in the evening and the husband in the morning.<sup>218</sup> Maim (III.121) says that from food cooked in the evening the wife should offer balis, but without mantras. This shows that though gradually women began to lose the right to repeat Vedic mantras (as shown by Manu), still she had a hand in the religious rites. She had to perform many acts in sacrifices, such as unhusking grain in sthālīpāka (vide Hir. gr. I.23.3), washing the slaughtered animal (compare Sat. Br. III.8.2 and Gobhila gr III.10.29), looking at the ājya in śrauta sacrifices.

The Purva-mīmamsa (VI.1.17-21) establishes that both husband and wife own property and should join together in performing sacrifices, but that the male sacrificer alone is ordinarily to do every act in all religious ceremonies except such matters as are expressly declared to be performed by the wife also or alone (as e.g. observing celibacy, uttering benediction etc.).

It is on account of the necessity of associating the wife in all religious acts that the hero Rama was compelled to celebrate sacrifices with a golden image of Sīta by his side. Panini (IV.1.33) derives the word *patnī* and says that it can be only applied to a wife who shares in the sacrifice (and its reward). It follows that wives who are not or cannot join with their husbands in yajñas are only *jāyas* or *bhāryas* (but not *patnīs*). The Mahābhāṣya says that the wife of a śūdra is called *patnī* only by analogy (as a śūdra himself has no *adhikāra* for yajña, his wife can much less have it). It is on account of this close association of the wife in all sacrifices (either śrauta or smārta) that the wife if she dies before her husband is burnt with the sacred fire or fires and with the sacrificial vessels and implements (Manu V.167-168, Yaj. I.89).

The Tai. Br. III.7.1 says:—

'Half of the sacrifice is destroyed in the case of that sacrificer whose wife is (in her monthly course and therefore) unavailable on the sacrificial day.'

But the wife is not authorized to do religious acts independently of her husband or without his consent. Manu (V.155 = Viṣṇu Dh. S.25.15) ordains:—

'there is no separate yajña for women (independently of the husband) nor vrata (vows) nor fasts (without his consent).'

Similarly Kātyāyana propounds 1891 a sweeping rule:—

'Whatever a woman does to secure spiritual benefit after death without the consent of her father (when she is unmarried), or her husband or her son, becomes fruitless for the purpose intended.'

Vide also Veda-Vyasa smṛti II.19. The Nityācāra-paddhati (p.329) quotes Manu V.155 and remarks that Manu's words are not to be taken literally but are only meant to extol the eminence of the husband.

Very detailed rules were laid down as to precedence among wives, if a man married several women. Viṣṇu Dh. S. (26.1-1) concisely gives all the rules. If all the wives are of the same caste, then the wife whose marriage took place first was to be associated with the husband in all religious acts; if a

<sup>218</sup> Āpastamba was against allowing women to perform homa even in gr̥hya fire except in the case of kama rites and bali,

man had wives of different varṇas (when inter-caste marriages were allowed) the wife of the same varṇa with the husband had precedence, though her marriage might have been later in date. If there is no wife of the same varṇa as himself, the husband may associate with himself in religious rites even a wife of the varṇa immediately next to his own; but a dvijāti should never associate a śūdra wife with himself in religious ceremonies.<sup>219</sup> Vas. Dh. S, 18.18 expressly says:—

‘A woman belonging to the dark varṇa (i.e. śūdra) is meant only for pleasure and not for performance of religious rites.’

Gobhila smṛti (1.103-104) contains rules similar to those in Viṣṇu Dh. S., Yaj. I.88 and Veda-Vyasa II.12 are to the same effect. Viśvarupa on Yaj. remarks that though the eldest wife alone is entitled to take part in religious rites, all wives (except a śūdra wife) may be cremated with the śrauta fire. Vide Sm. C. I. p.165. In the Purvamīmamsa (IX.3.20-21) Jaimini discusses the question whether the direction in the Darsa-purnamasa ‘*patnīm samnahya*’ (having girt up the wife) which employs the singular number should be modified into the dual or plural when the sacrificer (in a model sacrifice or its modifications) has two or more wives and establishes that no change is required. The Trikandamandana (I.43-44) says that there were three views when a man had several wives viz. some said that all should be associated with him in religious rites, others held that only the eldest wife of the same varṇa should be associated and the third view was that the husband should never associate with himself a wife whom he married for pleasure after he kindled the sacred fires. Manu (IX.86-87) lays down that the wife of the same caste with the husband should always have precedence not only in the obligatory religious rites, but also in ministering to the physical comfort of the husband and if a brāhmaṇa husband gets these done by a wife of another caste when the wife of the same caste is near, he becomes like a caṇḍāla.

From very ancient times one of the articles of faith was that a person was born with debts, that he owed three debts to sages, gods and pitṛs and that by brahmacārya (student-hood), by performing yajñas and by procreating sons he freed himself from those three debts respectively.<sup>220</sup> The last very succinctly states the purposes served by a son viz. payment of the debt to ancestors, the securing of immortality and heaven. Rig V.4.10 (*prajābhir agne amṛtatvam-aśyām*) prays — ‘may I obtain immortality through progeny.’ Vas. Dh. S.17.1-4 quotes these passages of the Tai. S., Ait. Br. and Rig. The Rig X.85.45 invokes the blessing of ten sons on the newly married bride and the Rig is full of the yearning for a son at every step.<sup>221</sup> Jaimini (VI.2.31) discusses the passage of the Tai S. and arrives at the conclusion that the duties laid down in it are obligatory and not left to choice and Sabara adds another explanation that these duties are obligatory on all dvijātis and the word ‘brāhmaṇa’ is used in the Tai. S. as illustrative only.

Manu (VI.35) enjoins upon a man that he should not think of mokṣa (release from samsāra) before he has paid off the three debts and (IX.106) further says that by the very birth of the eldest son a man becomes free from the debt owed to ancestors. Manu (IX.137), Vas.17.5, Viṣṇu Dh. S.15.46 contain the same verse proclaiming that a man attains all (heavenly) worlds by means of a son and Manu IX.138, Adi.129.14, Viṣṇu Dh. S.15.44 declare that a *putra* is so called because he saves his father from the hell called *put*. The Nirukta II.11 1204 also derives the word *putra* similarly. Further the water and piṇḍas (balls of cooked rice) offered by the son to his father and other deceased ancestors were supposed to be of great efficacy for the peace of the souls of the departed. The Viṣṇu Dh. S.85.70, Vanaparva 84.97, MatsyaPurāṇa 207.39 contain a verse:—

‘One should desire to have many sons in the hope that one of them may repair to Gayā.’

<sup>219</sup> Vide Madanaparijata p.134 for similar rules.

<sup>220</sup> Vide Tai. S. VI.3.10.5, Sat. Br. I.7.2.11, Ait. Br.33.1.

<sup>221</sup> Vide Rig I.91.20, I.92.13, III.1.23 etc

On account of these several benefits conferred by a son, the highest importance was attached to the birth of a son. The wife helped a man to discharge two of his debts, to the gods by associating with him in sacrifices and to the pitrs by procreating a son or sons. Therefore the goal of the life of women was declared to be to get married and procreate sons. This was so much the case from very ancient times that even the Sat. Br. (V.3.2.2, S.B.E. vol.41, p.65) says that the sonless wife is possessed with Niṛṭi (ill luck or Destruction). Manu (IX.96) says:–

‘Women are created for procreation and men have to propagate (the race): therefore in the Veda it is declared that the wife shares in common (with the husband) the performance of religious duties’.

Nārada (strīpuṃsa v.19) also declares that women are created for (procreating) children. It was on account of these ideas about the goal of woman's life and the supreme importance of a son that the smṛtis and dharma-sutra works recommended or allowed the husband to marry a second time even when the first wife was living.

All the smṛtis, purāṇas and the digests devote a great deal of space to the duties of a wife.<sup>222</sup> It would be impossible to set them out in detail. A few striking passages alone will be cited. All are agreed that the foremost duty of a wife is to obey her husband and to honour him as her god. In the Sat Br. princess Sukanyā when married to the old and decrepit sage Cyavana to mollify the sage who had been wronged by her brothers says:– ‘I shall not forsake my husband, while he is alive, to whom my Father gave me’ (17.1.5.9). Saṅkha-Likhita says:–

‘A wife should not hate her husband even if he be impotent (or have swollen testicles), *patita* (guilty of mahāpataka and so an outcast), devoid of a limb or diseased, since the husband is the god of women’.

Manu declares (V.154):–

‘A virtuous wife should serve her husband as if he were a god, whether he be of evil character or lustful (loving another woman) or devoid of good qualities’.

Yāj. 1:77 enjoins upon women:–

‘This is the highest duty (dharma) of women that they should obey their husband's words if he is guilty of some mortal sin, they should wait till he is purified (and thereafter be dependent on his words)’.

The Rāmāyana (Ayodhya-kanda 24.26-27) remarks:–

‘The husband is the god and the master of the wife, while she is alive and she obtains the highest heaven by serving her husband.’

The Mahābhārata very frequently harps upon the duties of wives.<sup>223</sup> The Anuśāsana parva 146.55 says:– ‘the husband is the god of a woman, her (sole) relative, her goal’; the Aśvamedhika parva 90.51 declares:– ‘The husband is the highest deity’.

‘The father gives only what is limited, the brother and the son do the same; what woman would not worship the husband who gives what is unlimited or immeasurable.’ (śāntiparva 148.6-7).

The Matsya-purāṇa 210;18 contains this last verse and adds:–

<sup>222</sup> Manu V.150-156, Yaj. I.83-87, Viṣṇu Dh. S.25.2 ff, Vana-parva 233:19-58 (Draupadī as the speaker), Anuśāsana 123 (Śāṅḍilī declares the conduct of virtuous wives), Veda-Vyasa-smṛti II.20-32 (wife's duties from morning till night), Vrddha-Harīta XI. 84 ff (wife's duties from morning), Sm.C. (vyavahāra section) p.249 ff, Madanapārijāta pp.192-195 and other nibandhas dwell at length upon the duties of the wife.

<sup>223</sup> Compare St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians V.22-24 ‘wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.’

‘the husband is the god for women and is their highest goal.’

This idea of the wife's complete submission to the husband is voiced even by poets like Kālidāsa, who makes one of the pupils of Kanva say about Sakuntala – ‘this is your wife, abandon her or accept her, since all-round domination of the husband over the wife is proper.’

### Duties of the Wife

A few of such duties may be indicated here. According to Manu V, 150:–

‘A wife should always present a smiling face, should be alert and clever in her domestic duties, should keep domestic vessels well burnished and clean and should not be extravagant in spending.’

Manu IX:11 asks the husband to set to his wife the task of conserving the wealth acquired and looking to its expenditure, of keeping things clean, of the performance of religious acts, of cooking food and of taking care of household paraphernalia. Manu (IX 13) adds that drinking wine, company of bad people, staying away from the husband, wandering about (to *tīrthas* or elsewhere), sleep (by day), staying in the house of strangers these six spoil married women. Adiparva 74.12 gives expression to the popular notion that people do not like married women staying with their paternal relatives for a long time away from their husbands, since such a stay leads to loss of good name and character. The same sentiment is echoed by Kalidasa in the Sakuntala (V.17). The Markandeya-purāna 77.19 is to the same effect. Yāj. (I.83 and 87) requires the wife to keep household utensils and furniture in their proper place, to be clever, to have a smiling face, to be unextravagant, to be devoted to doing what is agreeable and beneficial to the husband, to show respect to her father-in-law and mother-in-law by clasping their feet; to conduct herself decently, to restrain her senses. Saṅkha lays down what is decent conduct for a wife:–

‘she should not go out of the house unless she is asked (by her husband or elders) nor without putting on an upper garment; she should not walk fast; she should not speak with a male who is unrelated to her, except a trader, a sannyasin, an old man or a physician; she should not allow her navel to be seen; she should wear her garment (or sari) in such a way that it may reach down to her ankles; she should not expose her breasts, she should not laugh loudly without covering her mouth (with her hand or her garment); she should not hate her husband or his relatives; she should not be in the company of dancing girls, gambling women, women who make assignments to meet lovers, female ascetics, female fortune-tellers, women who live by tricks, magical and secret rites and who are of bad character; since (the wise declare that) the character of women of good family is spoilt by the company (they keep).’

The Viṣṇu Dh. S.25.1-6 ordains:–

‘Now then the duties of wives (are declared); they should perform the same vratas (observances and vows) which the husband undertakes; they should honour the mother-in-law, the father-in-law, other elders, gods, guests and keep the house hold utensils well arranged; they should not be extravagant in giving to others; should keep the goods well guarded; they should have no liking for magical practices (to win love) and should be devoted to auspicious conduct.’<sup>224</sup>

Draupadī (Vanaparva chap.233) states:–

‘Whatever my husband does not eat, drink or partake of, I avoid. I know the total wealth, the income and expenditure of the Pāṇḍavas’.

The Kāma-sutra directs the wife to make expenditure that will be commensurate with the yearly income of the husband. Manu (VIII.361) prescribes the fine of a *suvarṇa* for a man speaking with a woman with whom he is forbidden to speak and Yaj. II.285 prescribes a fine of one hundred *paṇas*

<sup>224</sup> Vide also Viṣṇu Dh. S. chap.99 last two verses (quoted by Aparārka p.107).

in the case of a woman who is forbidden to speak with a man (by her husband or father &c.) and a fine of two hundred *paṇas* in the case of the man who speaks with a woman with whom he is forbidden to speak.

Brhaspati says that a wife should get up from bed before her husband and elders, should partake of food and condiments after they have eaten, should occupy a seat lower than that of the husband or elders. 'A wife can engage in vratas, fasts, observances and worship (of god etc.) with the permission of her husband' says Saṅkha-Likhita. The Puranas frequently descant on strīdharmā. A few specimens may be noted here. The Bhāgavata VII.11.29 says that the wife who looks upon her husband as the god Harī dwells in the world of Harī and revels with her husband. The Skanda Purāṇa (Brahma-khanda, Dharmaranyā section, chap.7) has a long description of a *pativrata* —

'She should not repeat the name of her husband, as such conduct leads to the increase of the husband's life and should never take the name of another male (v.18), even when she is loudly blamed (by the husband) she does not cry loudly, even when beaten she is smiling (v.19). A *pativrata* should always use turmeric, kuṃkuma, sindūra, lamp black (for the eye), a bodice, tāmbula, auspicious ornaments, and should braid her hair.' (vv.28-29).

The Padma-Purāṇa (Srsti-khanda chap.47, v.55) says that that wife is *pati-vrata* who in doing work is like a slave, like a whore in affording sexual pleasure, like a mother in offering food and like a counsellor in adversity.

Special rules of conduct were laid down for a wife whose husband was away from home on a journey. Saṅkha-Likhita (quoted by Aparārka p.108, Sm. C., vyavahara p.253) contain a long statement about what such a wife should not do:—

'Women whose husbands are away from home should avoid amusements of swing and dance, seeing pictures, applying unguents to the body, walking in parks, sleeping in open places (or uncovered) partaking of sumptuous food and drink, playing with a ball, fragrant resins and perfumes, flowers, ornaments, ceremonial brushing of the teeth, collyrium (in the eyes).'

Yaj. (I.84) puts these briefly:—

'A woman whose husband is gone to another country should give up play, the adornment of the body, visiting *samājas* and festivals, laughing, going to the house of a stranger.'

The Anuśāsana-parva 1315 (123.17) indicates that a wife whose husband is gone abroad does not apply eye-liner or *rocana* (yellow pigment) to her body, does not take a ceremonial bath and does not use flowers, unguents or ornaments. Manu (IX.74-75) requires the husband when going abroad to make provision for the wife's maintenance, since a woman without some means of livelihood, though originally virtuous, may go astray and adds:—

'When the husband goes abroad after providing for maintenance, the wife should live thereby and abide by the restrictions (laid down for such wives); if he goes away without making provision for her maintenance she should maintain herself by crafts (such as spinning) which are unblamable.'

The Viṣṇu Dh. S. (25.9-10) contains similar rules. The Veda-Vyāsa-smṛti (II.52) enjoins upon a wife whose husband is gone abroad:—

'Her face should look pale and distressed, she should not embellish her body, she should be devoted to her husband, should be without (full) meal, and should emaciate her body.'

The Trikāṇḍamandana 1317 (I.80-81 and 85) says that when the husband is gone abroad the wife may with the help of a priest perform the daily duties of agnihotra, the obligatory iṣṭis and pitryajna, but should not perform soma sacrifices.

The rewards of the wife's single-minded devotion to her husband and her rigid observance of the rules of conduct prescribed for her are stated at great length in smṛti works. Manu (IX.29-30 = Manu V.165 and 164) says:–

‘That woman who does not prove faithless to her husband in thought, word and deed (lit. body) secures the (heavenly) worlds together with her husband and is spoken of as a *sādhvī* (a virtuous woman, a *pati-vratā*); but by proving faithless to her husband a woman incurs censure in this world, is born as a female jackal (in the next life) and is afflicted with very bad diseases.’

Yaj. (I.75 and 87) declares that the woman, who does not approach another while the husband is living or after his death and who is intent on doing what is agreeable and beneficial to her husband, who is of good conduct and has restrained her senses, attains glory in this world and plays with Uma (the wife of Siva) in heaven. Brhaspati defines a *pati-vratā* as one who is distressed when her husband is distressed, who is delighted when her husband is in delight, who is emaciated and wears dirty clothes when her husband has gone on a journey and who dies on the death of her husband.

In the Mahābharata and the Purāṇas hyperbolic descriptions of the power of the *pati-vratā* occur at every step. Vide Vana-parva where we are told (vv.38-39) that when Damayantī cursed by her faithfulness to her husband the young hunter who had evil designs on her, he fell down a dead man. In the Anuśāsana-parva 123 Śāṇḍilī who had attained heavenly worlds tells Sumana Kaikeyī how she reached that state with out wearing *kaśayas* (dyed garments worn by samnyasins) or bark garments and without having matted hair or without tonsuring her head (as ascetics do), but by strictly following the rules laid down for virtuous wives, such as not addressing harsh words to their husband, abandoning all food that the husband did not like. Anuśāsana (146.4-6) names several *pati-vratās* of ancient times and the following verses dilate upon the rules of conduct for virtuous wives. The story of Sāvitrī in the Vanaparva (293-299) illustrates the power of a *pati-vratā*, who wrung back even from Yama, the dread god of Death, the life of her husband. Sāvitrī and Sītā have been held by the women of India for thousands of years as the highest ideals of womanly virtue, to which they have always endeavoured to aspire and one may say that Indian women generally have most successfully lived up to that high and ennobling ideal that was set before them.

Vanaparva (205-206) tells the story of a learned brāhmaṇa, who by his mere angry look made a female crane die when the latter voided its faeces on to the head of the brāhmaṇa and who was rebuked by a *pati-vratā* that the latter was not a crane, when the brāhmaṇa tried to frighten the virtuous woman for her tardiness in welcoming him as a guest and for looking only after her husband. The Salyaparva (63) narrates how awful the power of a *pati-vratā* like Gandharī is in that she can, if she chose, burn the world, she can stop even the motions of the sun and the moon. The Skanda-Purāṇa III (Brahma-khanda, Brahmaranya section chap.7) first names (verses 14-15) several *pati-vratās* like Arundhatī, Anasūya, Savitrī, Sandilyā, Satyā, Mena and then waxes eloquent over the tremendous spiritual power of a *pati-vratā*:–

‘Just as a snake-charmer forcibly draws out from a hole a snake, so a *pati-vratā* snatches away her husband's life from the messengers of Death and reaches heaven with her husband and the messengers of Death, on seeing the *pati-vratā*, beat a hasty retreat.’

As the foremost duty of the wife was to honour and serve the husband, she must always stay with him and she had a right of residence in the house. A wife was further entitled to be maintained in the house by the husband. A verse quoted by Medhatithi on Manu III.62 and IV.251 and by the Mit. on Yaj. I.224 and II.175 and which occurs in some Mss. as a spurious verse after Manu XI.10 says:–

‘Manu declares that one must maintain one's aged parents, a virtuous wife and a minor son by doing even a hundred bad acts’.

Dakṣa II.36-37<sup>225</sup> (= Laghu-Asvalayana I.74) defines *poṣya-varga* (persons whom every one, however poor, is bound to maintain) as follows:—

‘The parents, the guru, the wife, children and a helpless man who has taken shelter with one, a guest and fire constitute *poṣya-varga*.’

Manu VIII.389 prescribes that the man who abandons and does not maintain his parents, wife, and son, when they are not out-casted, should be fined 600 panas by the king. Yaj. I.74 requires the husband to maintain a wife whom he has superseded in the same way as before, otherwise he would be guilty of great sin. Yaj. I.76 says that if a man abandoned a wife who was obedient, diligent, the mother of a son, and agreeable in speech, he was to be made to give one-third of his property to the wife, but if he had no property he had to maintain her. Nārada (strīpumsa 95) has a similar provision. The Viṣṇu Dh. S. V.163 made the husband punishable like a thief, if he abandoned his wife. The husband was required by Yaj. I.81 to be devoted to his wife, since women are to be guarded (against falling into error). Vide Yaj. I.78 also. Manu IV.133 forbids adultery with another's wife and Manu IV.134 (= Anuśāsana 104.21 and Markandeya-Purāṇa 34.62-63) observes that there is nothing that harms one's life as much as adultery. Viśvarūpa on Yaj.1.80 points out that the guarding of a wife from evil can be secured only by being devoted to her and not by beating her, as, if the husband were to beat her, it might endanger her life. Manu (IX.5-9) also calls upon men to guard women, and (in IX.10-12) says that they cannot be guarded by imprisonment or force, but by engaging them in looking to the income and expenditure, the furniture, beauty and purity of the house and the cooking and by inculcating on them the value of a virtuous life. In spite of this the husband possessed certain powers of physical correction over the wife which were the same as those possessed by a teacher over a pupil or a father over a son, viz, he could administer beating with a rope or a thin piece of bamboo on the back but never on the head. Vide Manu VIII.299-300 (cited above on p.363) which are the same as Matsya Purāṇa 227.152-154. It will be seen that about two thousand years ago Manu did not confer greater powers of correction and restraint of the wife on the husband than the Common Law of England allowed to husbands even in the 18th century.<sup>226</sup>

As it was the husband's duty to provide residence and maintenance for the wife and as the wife was bound to stay with the husband, it follows that either party could after marriage enforce his or her rights in a court of law if the other party refused to perform her or his duties. In modern times a suit for restitution of conjugal rights can be brought and the decree can be executed against the wife by the attachment and sale of her property (if she has any), but not by detention in civil jail and against the husband by the court ordering the husband to make periodical payments of money for the maintenance of the wife and securing such payments by creating a charge on his property (vide Civil Procedure Code of 1908 Order 21 rules 32 and 33). To such a suit by the husband Indian Courts have recognised certain valid defences, such as desertion, cruelty or such conduct as endangers the health of the wife, change of religion, or keeping a concubine in the house or the husband's being afflicted with a loathsome disease (like leprosy).<sup>227</sup>

<sup>225</sup> *Mātā pitā gurur bhāryā prajā dīnaḥ samāśritaḥ |  
Abhyāgato 'tithiścāgniḥ poṣya-varga udāhṛtaḥ ||*

<sup>226</sup> Vide Blackstone's commentaries on the laws of England (ed. of 1765, Oxford) Book I. chap.15 pp.432-433 'The husband also (by the old law) might give his wife moderate correction the law thought it reasonable to entrust him with this power of restraining her by domestic chastisement in the same moderation that a man is allowed to correct his servants or children. Yet the lower rank of people still claim and exert their ancient privilege; and the courts of law will still permit a husband to restrain a wife of her liberty in case of any gross behaviour'. Vide also Lush on the law of ' Husband and Wife.' (4th ed.1933) pp.24-29 about the husband's power to beat his wife and restrain her in the past and now.

<sup>227</sup> Vide *Bai Premkunvar v. Bhika* 5 Bom. H. C. R. (A. C. J.) p, 209 (leprosy), *Yamunabai v. Narayan* 1 Bom.164 (cruelty), *Paigi v. Sheo Narain* 8 All, 78, *Dular Koer v. Dwarkanath* 34 Cal.971, *Bai Jivi v. Narsingh* 51 Bom.329. Where the courts make the husband pay maintenance, they are in principle following Yaj. I.76 and Nārada (p.569). Vide *Binda v. Kaunsilia* 13 All.126 where many original Sanskrit texts are cited.



Not only was the husband bound to maintain the wife, but he was called upon to cohabit with the wife and was supposed to incur the sin of embryo-murder if he refused without good cause to do so. On the other hand the husband had a right of *consortium* i.e. the wife was not to refuse herself to the husband and if she did so her delinquency was to be proclaimed in the village and she was to be driven from the house.

### Adultery

The humane character of the legislation of the Indian sages is seen by the fact that even for adultery they do not allow the husband to drive the wife out of the house and to abandon her. Gaut.22.35 prescribes that a wife who violates her duty of chastity must undergo a penance, but she should be kept under guard and be given food. Yaj. (I.70, 72) declares:—

‘An adulterous woman should be deprived of her authority (over servants etc.), should be made to wear dirty clothes, should be given food just sufficient to enable her to live, should be treated with scorn and made to lie on the ground (not on a cot); a woman becomes pure from adultery when she has her monthly period after that, but if she conceives in adulterous intercourse she may be abandoned and also when she is guilty of the murder of her foetus or of her husband or of some sin that makes her an outcast’.

The Mit. on Yaj. I.72 draws attention to the text of Vasistha XXI. 12:—

‘The wives of brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas who commit adultery with a śūdra may be purified by a penance in case no child is born (of the inter course), but not otherwise’

and remarks that the words of Yajñavalkya are to be understood in the same sense i.e. a wife is to be abandoned only if she be in adultery with a Śūdra; and further that the abandonment consists in not allowing her to participate in religious rites and conjugal matters, but she is not to be cast onto the streets; she is to be kept apart guarded in a room and to be given food and raiment (as stated in Yaj. III.297). Vasistha XXI. 10 says that only four (types of) wives are to be abandoned viz. one who has intercourse with the husband's pupil and with the husband's guru, and especially one who attempts to kill her husband and who commits adultery with a man of degraded caste (like a leather-worker), Nārada<sup>228</sup> (strīpumsa v.91) says:—

‘When a woman commits adultery her hair shall be shaven, she shall have to lie on a low bed, shall receive bad food and clothing and her occupation will be the removal of sweepings of the husband's house’.

Gaut.23.14, Santi-parva 165.64 and Manu VIII.371 are more harsh on a woman who has intercourse with a low-caste man, i.e. she is to be punished by the king with being devoured by dogs. Veda-Vyāsa (II.49-50) says:—

‘A wife who is guilty of adultery should be kept in the house but void of her rights of associating in religious and conjugal matters and of her rights over property, and should be treated with scorn; but when she has had monthly course after the act of adultery (and does not repeat it), the husband should allow her the usual rights of a wife as before.’

Manu XI.177 asks the husband to confine an exceedingly corrupt wife to one room and compel her to perform the penance prescribed for males in cases of adultery. Vide Atrī V.1-5, Parāśara IV.20 and XI.87 and Brhad-Yama IV.36.

Under the English law, if the wife commits adultery the husband's obligation to maintain her ceases altogether unless he had connived at it or condoned it.<sup>229</sup>

<sup>228</sup> Penance will be lighter or heavier according to the caste of the adulterer. According to Manu XI.60 adultery is an *upapātaka* and the ordinary penance for it is *govrata* or *cāndrāyaṇa* (Manu XI.118).

<sup>229</sup> Vide Halsbury's Laws of England vol.16 (Hailsham ed.) pp.609-610.

The following propositions can be deduced from the texts cited above.

- (1) There is no absolute right of abandonment of wife in the husband on the ground of adultery;
- (2) Adultery is ordinarily an *upapātaka* (a minor sin) and can be atoned for by appropriate penance undergone by the wife;
- (3) the wife who has committed adultery but has undergone penance is to be restored to all the ordinary rights of wives (vide Vas. XXI.12, Yaj. I.72, Mit. thereon and Aparārka p.98);
- (4) as long as the adulteress has not undergone penance, she is to be given in the house itself starving maintenance and to be deprived of all her rights as wife (Yaj. I.70, śāntiparva 165.63);
- (5) a wife, who commits adultery with a Śūdra or has had a child thereby, who is guilty of killing her foetus or of attempt to kill the husband or guilty of one of the deadly sins (*mahā pātakas*), is to be deprived of her right to participation in religious rites or conjugal matters and is to be kept confined in a room or in a hut near the house and to be given starving maintenance and poor apparel, even after she undergoes penance (Vas. XXL 10, Manu XL 177, Yaj. III.297-98 and Mit. thereon);
- (6) that wives who are not guilty of acts mentioned in Yaj. I.72, III, 297-298, Vas.21.10 or 28.7 are to be given starving maintenance and residence near the house even if they do not perform penance (vide Mit. on Yaj. III.298);
- (7) wives who are guilty of the acts mentioned in Yaj. I.72, III.297-298, if they refuse to perform penance, are to be refused even starving maintenance and residence near the husband's house (Mit. on Yaj. III.298). The propositions about maintenance set out here are accepted as the modern Hindu Law by the courts in India.

### Couples and Litigation

It has been shown above (p.518) that Āp. postulated the identity of husband and wife in religious matters and Manu IX.45 declares that the husband is one with his wife. But this identity of husband and wife was not accepted by the ancient sages for secular or legal purposes. The rights of husband and wife as to each other's property and the liability of each for the debts of the other will be dealt with later on in detail. It may suffice here to point out that the wife was not ordinarily liable for the debts contracted by the husband nor was the husband liable for the debts contracted by the wife alone, unless the debt was for family purposes (Yāj. II.46). Similarly the husband could exercise no dominion over the wife's own property (her *strīdhana* or peculium) except in a famine or for a necessary religious purpose, or in disease or when he was imprisoned (Yaj. II.147). These rules prescribed centuries ago compare in their fairness or reasonableness most favourably with the rules of the English law<sup>230</sup> (as they prevailed before the Married Women's Property Act of 1882, 45 and 46 Viet, chap.75), whereby the husband by the mere fact of marriage acquired free-hold interest, during the joint lives of himself and his wife, in all estates of inheritance and life estates of which she was seised at the marriage or became seised during coverture, and an absolute interest in all the wife's personal chattels.

Nārada (strīpuṃsa, v.89) does not allow the husband or wife to lodge a complaint against one another with their relations or with the king. The Mit. on Yaj, II.294 remarks:—

‘Though a judicial proceeding between husband and wife as plaintiff and defendant before the king is forbidden, still, if the king comes to know personally or indirectly of wrong done by the

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<sup>230</sup> Vide Halsbury's Laws of England (Hailsham ed.) vol.16 pp.613-614.

one to the other, the king must bring round the husband or the wife to the path of duty by appropriate punishment, other wise the king incurs sin'.

There were certain matters of which the king could take cognisance without the complaint of anybody: they were called *aparādhas* (they are ten) among which were included the murder of a woman, *varṇa-saṅkara*, adultery, pregnancy of a widow from some person other than the husband, abortion etc. We have seen (p.569) that Yaj.1.76, Nārada (strīpumsa, v.95) make the husband liable to pay one-third of his estate or a fine for deserting a virtuous wife and there are many such provisions about the matters affecting the husband and wife in which the king interfered. In England at Common Law a wife could not sue her husband in tort<sup>231</sup> (till the Married Women's Property Act) nor could a husband sue the wife in tort.

### Position of Women in General

We must now turn to the position of women in general and wives in particular and the estimate of their character and worth made by ancient India. It has already been seen (p.428) how the wife was looked upon as half of the husband, how in Vedic times women composed hymns and learnt the Vedas and how they co-operated with their husbands in all religious acts. On the whole their social position was much better (except as to rights of property) than what it became in later times. But even in the Vedic times there was an under-current of opinion which was hostile to women, sneered at them and treated them with scorn. Some of the-passages from Vedic and classical Sanskrit literature eulogising women and the wife have been set out above (pp.428ff). The passages noted below may be read in this connection.<sup>232</sup>

The Kāma-sutra III.2 says that women are like flowers (*kusuma sadharmāṇo hi yoṣitaḥ*). It has been seen how way was to be made by all for the bride and the pregnant woman and it will be shown that the general opinion was that no woman was to be killed on any account (with one or two exceptions in ancient writers<sup>233</sup>). Some of the smṛtikāras like Atrī and Devala were so liberal as to say that women who had intercourse with one not of the same caste or who had conceived by such intercourse did not become outcasts, but only impure till delivery or next period when they became pure again and could be associated with, the child born of the adulterous connection being handed over to some one else for being raised. If a woman was raped she was not to be abandoned, but she became impure only till her next period (Atrī 197-198) and Devala (48-49) prescribes purifications for a woman raped by *mlecchas* and conceiving thereby. In the śāntiparva 267.38 it is said that it is not the woman who is at fault, but it is the man who is at fault (when the woman goes astray).

In the Varunapraghāsa (one of the cāturmāsya) the sacrificer's wife had to confess if she had a lover and even when she confessed she was allowed to co-operate with her husband in the sacrifice.<sup>234</sup>

As against the high eulogy and considerate treatment of women a few passages unfavourable to women may be cited. We have already seen (p.503) how woman was said to be 'falsehood' incarnate (Maitrayanīya S.1 10.11). Rig. VIII.33.17 says;- 'the mind of woman is uncontrollable'; Rig. X.95.15 and Satapatha XI.5.1.9 declare:- 'there is no friendship with women and they have the hearts of hyaenas' (addressed to Pururavas about Urvasī); Rig. V.30.9:- 'women are the weapons and army of the dāsa'. The Tai. S. VI.5.8.2 says:- 'therefore women are without strength, take no dāya (portion) and speak more weakly than even a wretched man'. This passage (which really refers

<sup>231</sup> Vide Salmond's Law of Torts, 9th ed. pp.71-72.

<sup>232</sup> Vide Baud. Dh. S. II.2.63-64, Manu III.55-62, Yaj. I.71, 74, 78, 82, Vas. Dh. S.28.1-9, Atrī vv.140 141 and 193-198, Adiparva 74.140-152, śāntiparva 144.6 and 12-17, Anuśāsana 46, Mārkaṇḍeyapurana 21.69-76.

<sup>233</sup> Vide Gaut. 23.14 and Manu VIII.371 (both prescribe that a woman should be devoured by dogs if she had intercourse with a male of a lower varṇa), Vas. Dh. S.21.1-5. Even this was modified later and only divorce was allowed; vide Vas.21.10, Yāj. I.72.

<sup>234</sup> Vide Tai. Br. I.6.5, Sat Br. II.5.2.20, Katyayana Sr. V.5.6-10.

to women not being entitled to a portion of Soma drink) is relied upon by Baud. Dh. S. (II.2.53) and by Manu IX.18 for prescribing the entire dependence of women on men, for depriving them of a share on partition or inheritance and of the privilege of Vedic mantras.

The Tait. Br. (S.B.E. vol.44. p.446) says that woman, *sūdra*, a dog and a crow embody untruth, sin and darkness (XIV.1.1.31). The same Brāhmaṇa (IV.4.2.13, S.B.E. vol.26, p.366) remarks:– ‘the wives being smitten (with ghee-the thunderbolt) and unmanned neither rule over themselves nor over *dāya* (share of property). Another passage of the Satapatha (S.B.E. vol.44, p.300) says:– ‘He thereby makes women to be dependent, whence women are sure to be attendant upon man’ (XIII.2.2.4). (These passages establish that even in Vedic times women were often looked down upon, had no share in property and were dependent. The passages about the character of women contain no more than what male cynics and critics of all times and in all countries have attributed to women such as — ‘frailty, thy name is woman!’.

In the Dharma-śāstra literature the position of women became worse and worse as time went on, except as to rights of property. Gaut.18.1, Vas. Dh.S. V.1 and 3, Manu 146-148 and IX.2-3, Baud. Dh. S. II.2.50-52, Nārada (*dāyabhāga* 31) all declare that women are not independent, but dependent in all matters on men and that in childhood, after marriage and in old age they are to be guarded by the father, the husband and the son respectively. Manu (IX, 2-3) refers to *raksa* (i.e. protection against harm or calamity), while Manu V.146-148 declare a woman's dependence even in all domestic matters at all stages of her life on some male. Nārada (*dāyabhāga* vv.28-30) adds:

‘When a widow is sonless, her husband's relatives are the controlling authority as regards her maintenance, the application (of the husband's property) and guarding her against harm; if there be no relative or *sapiṇḍas* of the husband, then a woman's father's family has control of her; the creator assigned dependence to women as women even of good family fall into ruin by independence’.

It has been seen above (pp.561-562) that a woman's only concern was to serve her husband, and that she could perform other observances or under take fasts and pilgrimages only with her husband's permission. Vide Hemadrī (Vrata-khanda, part i. p, 362 where several texts are quoted including Markandeya-Purāṇa 16.61).

In the Mahābharata, in the Manu-smṛti, in other smṛtis and the Puranas women are charged with serious moral lapses. The Sutakāra concludes that women are ‘untruth’ (Anuśāsana 19.6);

‘There is nothing more wicked than women, who are the edge of a razor, poison, snake and fire in one’ (Anuśāsana 38.12 and 29); there may be at most one *pati-vratā* in hundreds of thousands of women’ (Anuśāsana 19.93);

‘Women are really uncontrollable but remain within bounds as regards their husbands simply because other men do not woo them and because they are afraid of servants’ (Anuśāsana 38.16);

vide also Anuśāsana chap.38.24-25, chap.39.6-7 (women have the tricks of the demons Sambara, Namuci and others).

The Ramāyana is not behind the Great Epic in condemning women:–

‘This is the character of women seen in the three worlds viz. they are renegades from Dharma, fickle, cruel and create estrangement.’ (Aranya kanda 1350 45.29-30).

In an uncharitable mood Manu (IX.14-15) gives to women the following character:–

‘They are lascivious, fickle-minded, devoid of love and come to dislike their husbands and resort to another man, whether handsome or ugly, simply because he is a man.’

‘It is the nature of women to tempt men; therefore the wise do not act heedlessly with young women, who are able to lead a man astray whether he be learned or not’ (Manu II.213-214 = Anuśāsana 48.37-38).

Brhat-Paraśara (Jivānanda's Collection, part 2, p.121) says that the passion of women is eightfold of that of men. In modern times old men, though they might not know much of the śāstras, are often in the habit of repeating a verse which contains a list of the faults of women — 'falsehood, thoughtless action, trickery, folly, great greed, impurity, cruelty these are the natural faults of women.'

There are some writers who even in ancient times could not bear the undeserved censure of women and most vigorously protested against the injustice of these accusations. Varahamihira (6th century A. D.) in his Brhat-Samhita chap.74 (ed. by Kern) makes a spirited defence of women and eulogises them highly. He first says that on women depend *dharma* and *artha* and from them man derives the pleasures of sense and the blessing of sons, that they are the Laksmī (goddess of Prosperity) of the house and should be always given honour and wealth. He then condemns those who following the path of asceticism and other-worldliness proclaim the demerits of women and are silent about their virtues and pertinently asks:—

'Tell me truly, what faults attributed to women have not been also practised by men? Men in their audacity treat women with contempt, but they really possess more virtues (than men).'

He then cites the dicta of Manu in support (verses 7-10).

"One's mother or one's wife is a woman; men owe their birth to women; O ungrateful wretches, how can happiness be your lot when you condemn them ? The śāstras declare that both husband and wife are equally sinful if they prove faithless to the marriage vow; men care very little for that śāstra (while women do care); therefore women are superior to men. Oh I how great is the audacity of wicked men who heap abuse on women that are pure and blameless, like robbers who while themselves stealing raise a hue and cry 'stop, O thief !.' Man in privacy utters words of cajolry to woman, but there are no such words after the woman dies; while women, in gratitude, clasp the corpses of their husbands and enter the fire."

It may be said that, barring great poets like Kalidāsa, Bana and Bhavabhūti, in the classical period Varahamihira's was rather a solitary voice raised in defence, of women and in the appreciation of their worth.

### The Status of the Mother

In the midst of this dark picture and undeserved condemnation of woman there is one very bright spot, viz. the high eulogy of and the reverence for the mother in all smṛti works. Gaut. (II.56) first says that the acarya (one's teacher of the Veda) is the highest among gurus, while some teachers hold that the mother is the highest. The Āp. Dh. S. I.10.28.9 prescribes that a son must always serve his mother even if she has been an outcast (for some great sin), since the mother undertakes for her son numerous (troublesome) actions. Baud. Dh. S. (II.2.48) requires the son to maintain his mother, even though an outcast, without speaking to her. Vas. Dh. S.13.47 says — 'a father who is an outcast may be abandoned, but a mother (though *patita*) is never an outcast to the son.' 'The acarya exceeds by his greatness ten upadhyayas, the father exceeds a hundred acaryas, a mother exceeds a thousand fathers' says Manu II.145 (= Vas. Dh. S.13.48). Saṅkha-Likhita give a very salutary piece of advice:—

'The son should not take sides (in a quarrel) between his father and mother: indeed he may (if he chooses) speak on the side of the mother alone, since the mother bore him (in her womb) and nourished him; the son, while living, would never be free from the debt he owes to his mother except by the performance of the Sautramani sacrifice.'

Yaj. I.35 holds that the mother is superior to the guru, acarya and upadhyaya. The Anuśāsana parva 1357 (105.14-16) says that 'the mother excels in her greatness ten fathers or even the whole earth; there is no guru like the mother.' Santiparva chap.267 contains a very high eulogy of the mother. Atrī 151 says that there is no guru higher than the mother. The great Pāṇḍava heroes pay the highest

honour to their mother Kuntī. The Adiparva chap.37 says that one may avert the consequences of all curses, but a mother's curse can never be averted.

Reading all that has been said in favour of and against women in ancient Sanskrit Literature it may be said that the higher minds of Hindu Society were quite aware of the worth of women, that they insisted on chastity as the highest virtue for them, that there was no doubt an undercurrent among common people of poor opinion about women, that those who valued an ascetic life and wanted to wean people away from worldly ties and attachments looked down upon women (*'vairāgya-mārgena'* as Varahamihira happily puts it) and exaggerated their faults. It has to be borne in mind that many of the passages condemning women are put in the mouth of persons who were for some reason or other angry with women or wronged by them or dissatisfied with their conduct. Further in assessing passages disparaging the character of women one maxim of the Purva-mīmamsa system must not be lost sight of. The maxim is stated by Sabara (on Jairaini II.4.21) as follows:

‘the purpose of a text censuring anything is not censure pure and simple, but the purpose is to enjoin the performance of the opposite of what is censured and to praise such performance’.

The object therefore of the authors that censured women was to inculcate the great value of chastity and obedience for women and not merely to paint a dark picture of them.

The rights of woman as regards partition and inheritance will be discussed in detail later on. But a brief statement about them may be made here. Ap., Manu, and Nārada do not allow the widow of a sonless male to succeed as heir, while Gaut.28.19 appears to contemplate that she is an heir along with *sapiṇḍas* or *sagotras*. That the widow's right to succeed as heir to her deceased husband was not recognised in ancient times is clear from the *Sakuntala* (Act VI) where the minister writes to the king that the estate of a merchant dying at sea will escheat to the crown and will not go to his widow. Yaj. II.135. mentions the widow as the first heir of a sonless man dying separate; Viṣṇu, Katyayana and others say the same. So in medieval times the rights of widows to property were better recognized than in the times of the early sutra writers. In this respect the position of women improved in medieval times, though in the religious and other spheres their position became worse, as they were equated with *sūdras*. Yaska while explaining Rig. I.124.7 states that in the southern countries the widow of a sonless man goes to an assembly hall, stands upon a stool and when the members strike her with dice she gets the property of her deceased husband. This implies that in Northern India widows did not succeed to their husband's property in Yaska's time.

CHAPTER 12  
THE DUTIES OF A WIDOW,  
SOME PRIVILEGES OF WOMEN AND THE PURDA SYSTEM

Vidhava-dharmah

**S**o far the social position and the duties and rights of a wife during her husband's life-time have been considered. We shall now consider the rules laid down for a wife if she has the heavy misfortune to become a widow.<sup>235</sup>

The word *vidhavā* occurs several times in the Rig Veda (e.g. IV.18.12, X.18.7, X.40.2 and 8); but these passages contain very little that is indicative of their condition in society except Rig. X.40.2 (vide under *niyoga*). Rig. I.87.3 says:—

‘in the rapid movements of the Maruts the earth trembles like a woman deprived of her husband’.

That shows that widows trembled either from sorrow or from fear of molestation and ill-treatment.

### Duties of Widows

The Baud. Dh. S. II.2.66-68 prescribes that the widow of the departed should give up for one year honey, meat, wine and salt and should sleep on the ground; according to Maugalya (she should so act) for six months; after that period, if she is sonless, she may procreate a son from her brother-in-law if the elders consent Vas. Dh. S. (17.55-56) contains similar provisions. Manu (V.157-160) contains rules that have been repeated in almost all *smṛtis*:—

‘a woman, when her husband is dead, may, if she chooses, emaciate her body by subsisting on flowers, roots and fruits, but she should not even take the name of a stranger male. Till her death she should be forbearing, observe vows, should be celibate and should hanker after that super-eminent code of conduct that is prescribed for women devoted to their husbands. On her husband's death, if a virtuous woman abides by the rule of celibacy, she goes to heaven though she be sonless, as the ancient perpetual students (like Sanaka) did’.

Katyayana similarly provides:—

‘a sonless widow preserving the bed of her husband (unsullied) and residing with her elders and being self-controlled (or forbearing) should enjoy her husband's property till her death; after her the heirs of her husband would get it. A widow engrossed in religious observances and fasts, abiding by the vow of celibacy, always bent on restraining her senses and making gifts would go to heaven even though sonless.’

Parasara IV.31 is almost the same as Manu V.160. Bhaspati says:—

‘the wife is declared to be half of a man's body, she participates equally in the husband's merit and sin; a virtuous wife, whether she burns herself on her husband's funeral fire or lives after him, tends to the (spiritual) benefit of her husband’.

Vṛddha-Hārīta (XL 205-210) prescribes what a widow should do all her life:—

‘She should give up adorning her hair, chewing betel-nut, wearing perfumes, flowers, ornaments and dyed clothes, taking food from a vessel of bronze, taking two meals a day, applying collyrium to her eyes; she should wear a white garment, should curb her senses and anger, she should not resort to deceits and tricks, should be free from laziness and sleep, should be pure and of good conduct, should always worship Hari, should sleep on the ground at night on a mat of kuśa grass,

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<sup>235</sup> Vide Colebrooke's Digest of Hindu Law, vol. II. chap. 3 pp.158-161 for duties of widows who choose to survive their husbands; vide ‘Die Frau’ pp. 86-88 where Winternitz draws a dismal and somewhat exaggerated picture of the condition of the Hindu widow.

she should be intent on concentration of mind and on the company of the good.'

Bana in his Harsacarita (VI, last para) indicates that widows did not apply eye-liner to their eyes nor *rocana* (yellow pigment) to their face and simply tied their hair. Pracetas forbids to an ascetic and a widow the chewing of betel leaves, ceremonial bath (with oil etc.) and taking meal in a vessel of bell-metal. The Adiparva (160.12) says:—

'just as birds flock to a piece of flesh left on the ground, so all men woo (or try to seduce) a woman whose husband is dead';

while the śāntiparva (148.2) remarks:—

'all widows are in sorrow even if they have many sons,'<sup>236</sup>

A few striking verses from other texts may be translated here. The Skanda-Purāṇa (III, Brahmaranya section chap.7, verses 50-51) says:—

'The widow is more inauspicious than all other inauspicious things; at the sight of a widow no success can be had in any undertaking; excepting one's (widowed) mother all widows are void of auspiciousness; a wise man should avoid even their blessings like the poison of a snake'.

The Kaśīkhanda of the same Purāṇa, chap. 4, delivers itself thus:—

'the tying up into a braid of the hair by the widow leads to the bondage of the husband; therefore a widow should always shave her head. She should always take one meal a day and never a second; or she may perform the observance of fast for a month or undergo the penance of *candrayana*. A widow who sleeps on a cot would make her husband fall (in hell). A widow should never wash her body with fragrant unguents nor should enjoy the fragrance of sweet smelling things; she should everyday perform *tarpaṇa* with śeṣame, water and kuśa grass for her husband, his father and grandfather after repeating their names and gotra; she should not sit in a bullock cart even when about to die, she should not put on a bodice, should not wear dyed garments and should observe special vows in the months of Vaisakha, Kartika and Magha.'

The verse '*vidhavā-kabarī-bandho* etc' (Skanda, Kāśī-khanda 4.74) is the only verse on which the medieval writers rely for prescribing continual tonsure of widows. That chapter begins by extolling the *pati-vratā* (Brhaspati does it with regard to Lopāmudra, the wife of Agastya). It passes one's understanding why when a *pati-vratā* whose husband is living is before Brhaspati he should wax eloquent over the duties of widows (verses 71-106). Therefore this portion appears to be an interpolation in the Skanda-Purāṇa itself. In *Lakshmibai v. Ramchandra* I. L: R.22 Bom. 590, it was held that the text '*vidhavā-kabarī-bandho*' is of doubtful validity (p.594). Besides 69 verses of this chapter 4 are common to chap. 7 of the Dharmaranya section of the Skanda-Purāṇa (III) which precedes it. There is no reason why they should have been repeated. The Nirnaya-sindhu quotes a passage from the Brahma-Purāṇa as cited in the Prthvīcandrodaya to the effect that sraddha food should not be got prepared by a widow belonging to another gotra.

### The social position of widows

The position of the Hindu widow was miserable and her lot was most unenviable. She was looked upon as inauspicious and so could take part in no festivities, such as those on marriage. She had not only to lead a life of perfect celibacy, even if she was a child widow, but she had to act like an ascetic, being poorly fed (only once a day) and poorly clad. Her rights to property were negligible. Even if the husband died sonless she did not originally succeed as shown above (p.582). Later on her position as an heir was improved; but even then she could ordinarily enjoy only the income of

<sup>236</sup> The Skanda-purana (Kaśīkhanda, chap.4, vv.71-106 and III Brahmaranya section chap.7, vv.67-81) has long passages on the duties of widows, many verses from which are quoted in the Madanaparijaka (pp.202-203), the Nirnaya-sindhu, Dharma Sindhu and other nibandhas.



the property and could transfer it only for the legal necessities of the family (including herself) or for the spiritual benefit of her husband. In a joint Hindu family a widow had only the right of maintenance (except in Bengal where she had more rights), which would be forfeited if she became unchaste and persisted in that course. If she returned to a moral life then she may be entitled to bare starving maintenance (vide above p.573). If her husband had separate property and left a son or sons, the widow was only entitled to maintenance. This was the law in British India till very recently. Recently the position of the widow of a member in a joint Hindu family and of the widow of a person who leaves separate property has been improved by Act XVIII of 1937 as amended by Act XI of 1938.

### The Tonsuring of Widows

One subject that arouses bitter controversies is the practice of tonsuring widows among brahmanas and certain other castes. A few words must be said on this. It is clear from the verse ('*vidhavā-kabarī-bandho* etc.) of the Skanda-Purāṇa quoted in the Madanapārijāta and other nibandhas that for some time at least before the 14th century C.E., (when the Madanapārijāta was composed) tonsure of widows was in vogue. How and exactly when this practice arose cannot be established with certainty. That it is comparatively a later innovation can, however, be demonstrated. Two distinct propositions have to be made out, first, that widows were tonsured on the death of their husbands, just as sons were tonsured and secondly, that widows were required by the texts to tonsure themselves continually from time to time till their death, though sons who had to tonsure themselves on their father's death are not required to do so afterwards. The advocates of this practice rely upon three Vedic passages, viz. Rig. X.40.2, Āp.M. Patha I.4.9, and Atharva Veda 14.2.60, Rig X.40.2 (cited below p.606) refers to *vidhava* only and probably to *niyoga*, but there is nothing about tonsure in that verse. Some modern orthodox Pandits ingeniously argue from the explanation of the word 'vidhava' in the Nirukta (III.15 *vidhāvanād-vā iti carma-śīrah*). Carmaśiras is the name of a former teacher according to all commentators of the Nirukta, but these pandits interpret it by a *tour de force* as a synonym of *vidhava* ('having only the bare skin on her head'). About this interpretation the less said the better. Āp.M. P.1.5.9 contains the word '*vikeśī*' which is translated as the appellation of a female goblin in S.B.E. vol.30 p.187 'mayst thou not be beaten at thy breast by she goblin, the rough haired one'. Even taking '*vikeśī*' as referring to the maiden who is being married the meaning is 'mayst thou, with dishevelled hair, not beat thy breast (through grief)'. The word '*vikeśī*' does not mean — 'a widow whose hair is tonsured'; it ordinarily means — 'a woman with dishevelled hair'. The third passage is Atharva Veda 14.2.60, that is a verse in a marriage hymn which means —

'If this daughter of thine has bewailed with loosened hair in thy house, doing evil by her wailing,  
from that sin let Agni and Savitr release thee'.

Here it is impossible to hold that '*vikeśī*' means tonsured, as this mantra is part of the marriage hymn and Agni is asked to remove the blemish due to the girl's weeping at the approaching prospect of separation from her parents, There is no comment of Sayana on this passage but elsewhere in the Atharva Veda when that word occurs as in Atharva XI.9.14 he paraphrases it by '*vikīrnakeśī*' which does not mean 'with tonsured hair' but only 'having dishevelled hair'. Therefore there is no reference whatever to the tonsure of widows in the Veda, much less an injunction as to it.

In the Baud. Piṭṛmedha-sutra elaborate rules are laid down about the cremation of one who had kindled the sacred Vedic fires. In I.4.3 it is said— 'his wives led by the youngest should follow the cortege with dishevelled hair and throwing dust on their shoulders', and this they have to repeat

several times<sup>237</sup> on the way to the cemetery. It is also said that they go round (the corpse) thrice with their hair gathered together (I.4.13). Then in I.127 shaving of the hair and moustache is prescribed for the close relatives of the deceased (*amātyas*) who are present, his wives are not mentioned in this connection and II.3.17 expressly forbids tonsure of wives.

Manu and Yaj. dilate on the duties of widows, but they are entirely silent about tonsure. Nor does any other ancient *smṛti* refer to it. On the contrary *Vrddha-Harīta* (XI.206 quoted above p.584) asks the widow not to deck her hair, among other things which she is not to do. This makes it clear that the widows kept their hair. The compound word '*keśarañjanam*' is to be dissolved as *keśānām rañjanam*' and not as; - '*keśāśca rañjanam ca*'; - (as *Vrddha-Harīta* XL 103 makes it clear by employing *keśānām rañjanārtham vā*'). It can be shown that at least *kṣatriya* widows never tonsured their head. In the *Mahābhārata* whenever the widows of the fallen warriors are described they are always referred to as 'having dishevelled hair' and there is not a single reference to tonsure of widows. In the *Harsacarita*, Harsa in his soliloquy on the death of his father Prabhakara-varadhana says:— 'may the Glory of super-eminent man-hood tie up her hair in the way in which widows tie up their hair'. In the *Pehoa praśasti* of king Mahendrapala of Kanoj (E.I. vol.1. p.246 verse 16) the widows of his enemies are spoken of as shedding tears on their cheeks and having long (not braided) and profuse tresses.

The orthodox pandits rely on a verse in *Veda-vyasa-smṛti* II.53:—

'A *brāhmana* woman should enter fire, clasping the dead body of her husband; if she lives (does not become *satī*) she being *tyakta-keśā* should emaciate her body by *tapas*'.

The reading '*brāhmanī*' for '*jīvantī*' is not good, as the word *brāhmanī* is redundant having occurred in the first half and as the second half refers to the fact of her surviving after her husband. In this verse the injunction relates only to the emaciation of the body (*śoṣayet*), the word '*tyakta-keśā*' being only an attribute of the subject is no part of the predicate, which alone is enjoined. The general rule laid down by the *Mīmamsa* is (III.1.13-15, the *grahaikatva-nyāya*<sup>238</sup>) that the attributes of a subject are no part of the injunction. There is no injunction about *keśa* (hair) in the *Veda-vyasa* passage. Besides the word '*tyakta-keśā*' (who has given up hair) may possibly be made to yield three meanings, viz.

- (1) one who has given up or is unmindful of dressing or decking her hair,
- (2) one whose hair is given up in accordance with the prescription of some *smṛtis* that only two finger-breadths of tresses are to be cut off when doing penance for *govadha* etc. in the case of women.<sup>239</sup>
- (3) one whose head is tonsured.

For the first meaning vide *Raghuvamsa* IX.14 (where '*analakam*' is explained by *Mallinatha* as 'who have given up ornamenting the hair'), For this meaning of '*tyakta*' vide *Bhagavadgīta* I.33 '*tyakta-jīvitah*'. '*Tyakta*' by itself never means tonsured. The third meaning will be only implied if at all, while the first two are the usual meanings. Further, the interpretation of the *Veda-Vyasa smṛti* II.53 given by the pandits is liable to the fault called *vākya-bheda* (i.e. it lays down two injunctions in one and the same sentence), as they say that *Veda-Vyasa* calls upon widows to tonsure themselves

<sup>237</sup> vide I.4.12-13, 1.5, 5-7, 1.5.12-14

<sup>238</sup> The *grahaikatva-nyāya* is as follows: The text *grahaṃ sammāṣṭi* does not mean that a single sacrificial vessel is to be cleansed, but rather that all are to be cleansed. The singular number (in *grahaṃ*) is an attribute of the subject about which cleansing is predicated and so it is no part of the injunction. Vide my notes to the *Vyavahāra-mayūkha* pp.83-84, 121-122, where examples of the application of this maxim are given. The Pandits try to apply the rules in *Jaimini* III.3.34-46, but those rules are inapplicable, since in the passage of *Veda-Vyāsa* there is a verb in the potential mood, while in the *vedic* sentence interpreted in *Jaimini* III.3.34-46 there is no verb in the potential mood, of the injunction.

<sup>239</sup> vide *Parasara* IX.54-55, *Angiras* 163, *Yama* 54);

and to emaciate their body. Besides, if Veda-Vyasa really meant to enjoin tonsure, the verse could easily have been made to read '*jīvantī ced vapet keśān tapasā &c.*' Lastly assuming that Veda-Vyasa refers to tonsure, there is conflict among smṛtis, since Vrddha-Harīta (quoted above) allows her to keep her hair, and since an option results when two texts of equal authority conflict.<sup>240</sup>

The Mit. on Yaj. III.325 quotes a text of Manu (not found in the printed Manu):—

'Shaving of the hair is not desired in the case of learned men, the king and women, except in the case of one guilty of *mahāpātaka* or the killer of a cow and a brahmachārī guilty of sexual intercourse.'

The Mit. nowhere refers to tonsure as one of the obligatory matters for widows. The orthodox pandits further rely upon Āp.Dh.S. I.3.10.6, its explanation in the Mit. on Yaj. III.17 and the explanation of the Mit. in the commentary, Bālabhāṭṭī. Apastamba's sutra is delivered when the context is about cessation of Veda study (*anadhyaḃya*). Āp. Says:—

'(the student) shall cease studying Veda for 12 days if his mother, father or teacher dies. In the case of the death of these he must also bathe for the same number of days. Persons who are younger than (the relation deceased) must shave their hair. Some declare that students who have returned home on completion of brahmacharya shall never shave except when engaged in a śrauta sacrifice. In sattras even the top-lock must be shaved'.

In this there is no reference to women, much less to widows and lesser still to the tonsure of widows. The reference to *śrauta* sacrifices, *sattra*, and *śikha* indicates that only males are in view. The Mit. on Yaj. III.17 explains at length Āp. Dh. S. I.3.10.6. It gives two senses of '*anubhāvin*' viz. those who experience sorrow on the death of a person i.e. his sapindas (from the root '*bhū*' with '*anu*,' to experience) and those who are born after the deceased i.e. who are younger than the deceased (from '*bhū*' with '*anu*' to be born after). The Mit. then combines these and remarks:— 'those sapindas of the deceased who are younger than the latter have to shave themselves on the death of a relative'. This is its own view. It then refers to the view of some that '*anubhāvin*' in Āp. means 'son' and those latter rely on a restrictive text:—

'shaving is declared on seven occasions only, viz. on the Ganges, in the Bhāskara-ksetra, on the death of one's parents or teacher, at the time of consecrating Srauta fires, and at the time of a soma sacrifice'.

It is clear that the Mit. does not expressly mention the wife or widow here. Supposing that she is impliedly referred to as a sapinda and as younger than her husband, this will at the most come to the requirement that on the death of the husband the wife had to undergo shaving, just as her son would have to do. But this passage cannot be used to support continual shaving of widows throughout life. Really '*anubhāvinām*' in Ap cannot include the wife; since if women were to be included by the rule of *ekaśeṣa* (vide Panini I.2, 67) the absurd conclusion would follow that the daughters of the deceased and his younger brother's wives (who are all sapindas and younger) would have to be shaved.

The Nirṇaya-sindhu (composed in 1612 C.E.) and the Bālabhāṭṭī (composed towards the end of the 18th century) were both familiar with the tonsure of widows and so they interpret Āp. and the Mit. as requiring shaving for the wife on the 10th day after the death of the husband and rely on a text of Vyasa, quoted in Aparārka. The Bālabhāṭṭī says:— "the words; 'on the death of the mother and father' are only illustrative and so the same rule applies to the husband's death." Even conceding all this far-fetched interpretation, there is no authority for the continual tonsure of widows throughout their lives in these passages. It may be noted that the Madanapārijāta which

<sup>240</sup> *tulya-bala-virodhe-vikalpaḥ* (Gautama 1:5)

contains the verse ('*vidhavā-kabarī-bandho* etc. quoted above) does not include the widow among '*anubhāvinām*', but only male sapindas and sons.

The foregoing discussion leads to the following conclusions. There is no express Vedic authority for the tonsure of widows. The *gṛhya* or *dharma* sutras do not refer to it; nor do important *smṛtis* like those of Manu and Yaj. If one or two *smṛti* verses of doubtful import seem to refer to it, other *smṛtis* like *Vrddha-Harīta* are to an opposite effect. Some of the *smṛti* texts only refer, if at all, to one shaving on the husband's death, but there is no *smṛti* passage prescribing continual shaving for widows. There is only the *Skanda-Purāṇa* passage expressly requiring tonsure of widows. The *Mit.* and *Aparārka* are silent about it. It appears that the practice was gradually evolved after the 10th or 11th century. As widows were equated with *yatis* (renunciates) for several injunctions and as the latter shaved themselves, widows were gradually required to do so. By rendering them ugly it might have been intended to keep them chaste. Probably the example of Buddhist and Jaina nuns may have also suggested the cruel practice.<sup>241</sup> We find from the *Cullavagga* that Buddhist nuns cut off their hair and put on orange-coloured robes. In *Mahārāstra* *brāhmaṇa* widows a few years ago wore a garment that was reddish (and even now a few old widows do wear it). At all events the practice is not very old and hardly any digest before the *Madana-pārijāta* (14th century) quotes the *Skanda-Purāṇa* text. The practice is dying out and deserves to be suppressed at once, though strange insistence on it sometimes obtains public notoriety. Recently the worshippers in the famous shrine of *Vithoba* at *Pandharpur* in *Maharashtra* prevented an untonsured *brahmana* widow from having *darśana* of the deity in the customary way i.e. by placing the head on the feet of the deity, while they were prepared to allow untonsured widows of all castes (except the so called untouchables), and even Hindu prostitutes in the keeping of Christians or Mahomedans to have *darśana* in that way. The matter came before a civil court, where it was decided in favour of the widow that no such discrimination could be allowed to prevail, but owing to certain unforeseen circumstances the case did not come before the *Bombay High Court*.

It would be of interest to many to learn that among one sect (the *Tengalai*) of the *Srī-vaiṣṇavas* (followers of *Ramanuja*) tonsure of widows has been forbidden for centuries, though that sect is most orthodox in other matters.<sup>242</sup> The *Sūdrakamalākara* remarks that widows in *Gauda* keep their hair.

### Harming of Women

From very ancient times, it appears the idea was that women should not be killed on any account. The *Sat Br.* (XI.4.3.2, S.B.E. vol.44, p.62) says:— 'people do not kill a woman, but rather take (anything) from her (leaving her) alive'. It was only the king who was authorised, according to *Viśvarupa*, to punish a woman to death for adultery with a man of a very low caste (vide *Gaut.* and *Manu VIII.371* quoted above on p.572), but the king had to undergo a slight penance for doing this (vide *Yaj.* III.268). *Manu XI.190* ordains that one who killed a woman was not to be associated with, even after he performed the requisite penance. *Manu IX, 232* calls upon the king to punish with death those who murder women, children and *brahmanas*. The *Mahābhārata* frequently refers to this chivalrous rule. *Adiparva 158.31* says:— 'those who know *dharma* declare that women are not to be killed'. The *Sabhaparva 41.13* prescribes:— 'one's weapons should not be directed against women, cows, *brahmanas*, against one who gave livelihood or shelter'. In the *śāntiparva (135.14)* even thieves are instructed not to kill women.<sup>243</sup> The *Rāmāyana (Balakanda)* also breathes this

<sup>241</sup> Vide S.B.E. vol.20 (*Vinaya* texts) p.321. For Jaina nuns cutting off their tresses or plucking their hair, vide *Uttarādhyayana XXII.30.* (S.B.E vol.45, p.116).

<sup>242</sup> Vide *Indian Antiquary* vol. III pp.136-137 for passages quoted from many works forbidding the tonsure of widows.

<sup>243</sup> Vide also *Adi.155.2, 217.4, Vanaparva 206.4G.*

sentiment, when Rama was called upon to kill the ogress Tāṭaka.

Even for the most serious offence of adultery with a man of a low caste Yaj. II.286 prescribes for the woman the punishment of cutting the ear etc. Similarly Vrddha-Harīta VII.192 prescribes the cutting of the nose, ear and lip for attempt to murder the husband or her foetus. Vide Yaj. II.278-279 for the sentence of death in the case of women for certain offences.

### **Diminishing Status of Women.**

It has been seen how women gradually lost the privilege of upanayana, of studying the Veda, of having all the samskāras performed with Vedic mantras and how they came to be regarded as entirely dependent on men. Their position became assimilated to that of the śūdras 1392 in many matters. A few examples will be cited here. All *dvijātis* were to sip water thrice (acamana) for purifying their body, but women and śūdras were to sip water only once for that purpose (Manu V.139, Yaj. I.21). The *dvijātis* were to take their bath to the accompaniment of Vedic mantras, while women and śūdras were to bathe silently. Śūdras and women were to perform what is called *āmaśrāddha* (i.e. śrāddha without cooked food). The same penance was prescribed for killing a śūdra or a woman (Baud. Dh. S. II, 1.11-13, Parasara VI.16). Ordinarily women, children and very old men could not be witnesses (Yaj. II.70, Nārada, ṛṇadāna, vv.178, 190, 191), but Manu VIII.68, 70, Yaj. II.72, and Nārada, ṛnadana 155 allowed women to be witnesses in disputes between women or when no other witness could be had or in the cases of theft, adultery and other offences in which force was an element.

Documents taken from or transactions (particularly gift, sale and mortgage of lands or houses) made with women were ordinarily to be treated as voidable like those brought about by force or fraud (vide Nārada, ṛṇadāna 26, 137, Yaj. II.31). But this instead of being regarded as a disability was rather a boon owing to the general illiteracy of women. The Tristhalisetu (of Narayana) quotes a passage of the Brhan-Naradīya Purāṇa to the effect that women, those whose upanayana has not been performed and śūdras have no right to establish the images of Viṣṇu or Siva.

### **Privileges of Women**

If there were many and heavy disabilities on women in certain matters, they enjoyed in certain directions more privileges than men. It has been already seen that women were not to be killed nor were they to be abandoned even when guilty of adultery. They also enjoyed the right of precedence on the road (vide p.146 above). The daughter of a *patita* was not regarded as *patita*, though the son of a *patita* was regarded as *patita* (vide Vas.13.51-53, Āp. Dh. S. II.6.13.4, Yaj. III.261). Women had to undergo only half of the *prāyaścitta* that men had to undergo for the same lapse (Viṣṇu Dh. S.54.33, Devala 30, etc). Women received honour according to the ages of their husbands, whatever their own ages may be (Āp. Dh. S. I.4.14, 18). Just as brahmanas learned in the Vedas were to be free from taxes, the women of all varṇas (except those of *pratiloma* castes) had to pay no taxes, according to Ap, Dh.S. II.10.26.10-11. Vas. Dh. S.19.23 limits this exemption to women who are young or just delivered of a child. Pregnant women from the third month of pregnancy, forest hermits, sannyasins and brahmanas and brahmacarins had to pay no tax at a ferry (Manu VIII.407 and Viṣṇu V.132). According to Gaut. V, 23 and Yaj. I.105 children, the daughters and sisters who are married and yet stay with their parents or brothers, pregnant women, unmarried daughters, guests and servants are to be fed before the master and mistress of the house; while Manu III.114 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.67.39 go a step further and say that freshly married girls of the family, unmarried girls, pregnant women are to be fed even before guests.

A judicial proceeding in which a woman was a party, or which was heard at night or outside the

village or inside a house (i.e. not in public) or before enemies was liable to be reviewed (Nārada I.43). Ordinarily trial by ordeal did not apply to a woman, whether she was plaintiff or defendant, but if at all a woman had to prove her case by ordeal, only the ordeal of *tula* (balance) was prescribed for her (Yaj. II.98 and Mit. thereon). In succession to *strī-dhana* property, daughters were preferred to sons. Women did not lose their *strī-dhana* by adverse possession (Yaj. II.25, Nārada, madana 82-83).

Women were always to be consulted about *ācāra*, Āp. Dh. S. II.11.29.15 cites the view that rules not stated in the sutra are, according to some teachers, to be understood from women and from men of all castes. Āp. gr. II.15 prescribes that in marriage the usages to be followed are to be learnt from women.<sup>244</sup>

### Veiling of Women

One interesting question is whether the practice of purda now in vogue among Moslems and also among Hindus in certain provinces of India prevailed in ancient times. Rig. X.85.33 (used in the marriage rite) expressly calls upon people to look at the bride:—

'This bride is endowed with great auspiciousness; assemble together and see her, having given her blessings of good luck you may go to your house'.<sup>245</sup>

The Aśv. gr. I.8.7 prescribes that at each halting place when the bride-groom is returning to his village with his bride he should look at the spectators with the verse Rig. X.85.33.1402 This shows that no veil was worn by the bride and she appeared in public without one. Though in the marriage hymn there is a blessing (Rig. X.85.46) that the bride was to dominate over her father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law and brother-in-law, it appears that that was only a blessing and the heart's wish, but the reality was somewhat different.

The Ait. Br. (12.11) says that the daughter-in-law is abashed in the presence of the father-in-law and goes away concealing herself from him. This indicates that there was some restraint for younger women when they were in the presence of elders. But in the gr̥hya and dharma-sutras there is no reference to any veil for women when moving in public. Panini III.2.36 teaches the formation of 'asūryampaśyā' (who do not see the sun) applied to queens. That only shows that royal ladies did not leave the precincts of the palace and come under public gaze. In the Ayodhya-kanda (33, 8) it is said:—

'People walking on the public road see to-day Sita who could not formerly be seen even by aerial beings'.

Similarly it is stated in the same kanda (116.28):—

'The appearance of a woman in public is not blamable in misfortunes, difficulties, in wars, in *svayamvara*, in a sacrifice, and in a marriage'.

In the Sabhaparva 1405 69.9 Draupadī exclaims:—

'We have heard that ancient people did not take married women to the public assembly-hall; that ancient and long-standing practice has been contravened by the Kauravas'.

She says this after referring to the fact that, since she was seen at her *svayamvara* by the kings, she

<sup>244</sup> Vide also Aśv. gr. I.14.8, Manu II.223, Vaik. III.21.

<sup>245</sup> This occurs in Āp.M.P. 1.9.5. and is prescribed in Āp.Gr.S. 6.11 for japa after a boy is seated on the bride's lap. In Kāṭhaka gr.25.46 the verse '*sumangalīr-iyam*' is to be repeated when the bride sees the pole star and Arundhati and is addressed to these latter. In Hir. Gr. I.19.4 this verse is repeated by the bridegroom when the bride is brought to him before the fire, which is about to be kindled.

was never seen again by them till the day she was brought to the assemble-hall when Yudhishthira gambled and lost everything. This shows that women, particularly high born ladies, did not appear in public except on certain occasions, but it does not follow that they always wore the veil. When the Kauravas were routed the Salya-parva (29.74) laments that their ladies whom even the sun did not see in their palaces were seen by the common people who had come to the capital.<sup>246</sup>

In the Harṣacarita (IV) princess Rajyaśrī, whom the intended bride-groom Graha-varma came to see just before marriage, is described as having her face covered with a veil of fine red cloth. In another place, while describing the country of Sthānviśvara (modern Thanesar) Bāna says:—

‘Where bees drawn by the fragrance of the breaths of the ladies (and hovering round their faces) served as a charming veil for their faces and the veil actually worn by them became a mere redundancy worn because it was the practice of high-born ladies to wear one’.

In the Kadambarī also (para 99) Bana describes Patralekha as covering her face with a veil of red cloth. In the Sakuntala when Sakuntala is taken to the court of Dusyanta she is described as wearing a veil. So it must be conceded that ladies of high rank did not appear in public without a veil, but ordinarily women did not wear any veil. It is probably after the advent of the Moslems that the wearing of a veil, which was not quite unknown, became general among Hindu women in Northern and Eastern India.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Vide also Sabha-parva 97.4-7, Salya-parva 19.63, Strī-parva 9.9-10, Āśrama-vasi-parva 15.13.

<sup>247</sup> Vide Indian Antiquary for 1933 p.5, where a passage is quoted from the Saṅkhya-tattva-kaumudi of Vacaspati (9th century A. D.) referring to ladies of good family not appearing in public without a veil and Pathak Commemoration vol. p.72 for references from Buddhist works about the practice of purda.

## CHAPTER 13

## NIYOGA

*Niyoga* — appointment of a wife or widow to procreate a son from intercourse with an appointed male.

Great divergence of views prevails about the origin and purpose of this practice. It will be best first to begin by examining the most ancient smṛtis that permitted this practice. Gaut.1407 18.4-14 have great bearing on this point. Gaut.18.4-8 are:

'A woman whose husband is dead and who desires offspring may secure a son from her brother-in-law. She should obtain the permission of the elders<sup>248</sup> and have intercourse only during the menstrual period (excluding the first four days). She may obtain a son from a *sapinda*, a *sagotra*, a *sapravara* or one who belongs to the same caste (when there is no brother-in law). Some (hold that this practice is allowed) with nobody except a brother-in-law. She shall not bear more than two sons (by this practice).'

Gaut.18.11 says that a child begotten at the request of a living husband on his wife belongs to the husband. Gaut. (28.32) says that such a son is called *kṣetraja*. The wife is called *kṣetra* (field), the husband of the wife or widow is called *kṣetrin* or *kṣetrika* (to whom the wife or widow belongs) and the person appointed to produce offspring is called *bījin* (one who sows the seed) or *niyogin* (Vas.17.64, one who is appointed).

The Vas. Dh.S. (17.56-65) similarly prescribes:—

'The father or brother of the widow (or widow's husband) shall assemble the gurus who taught or sacrificed for the deceased husband and his relatives and shall appoint her (to raise issue for the deceased husband). Let him not appoint a widow who is mad, not master of herself (through grief etc.) or is diseased or is very old, (Up to) sixteen years (after puberty is the period for appointing a widow) nor shall an appointment be made if the person who is to approach her is sickly. Let him approach the widow in the *muhurta* sacred to Prajāpati<sup>249</sup> like a husband, without dallying with her and without abusing or ill-treating her. No appointment shall be made through a desire to obtain<sup>250</sup> the estate.'

Baud. Dh. S. II.2, 17 (S.B.E. vol.14, p.226) defines a *kṣetraja* son as one who is begotten by another man after receiving permission, on the wife of a deceased person or of an impotent or of one who is suffering from (an incurable disease). Manu (IX.59-61) says that a widow who is properly appointed may obtain offspring, in case there is total failure of issue, from her brother-in-law or a *sapinda* of her husband, that the person appointed should approach her in the dark and should be anointed with ghee and should procreate only one son and never two, while some say that he may procreate two.<sup>251</sup>

Kauṭilya (1.17, p.35) says that a king who is old or suffering from (incurable) disease should procreate a son on his queen through a *mātr-bandhu* or a feudatory chief endowed with qualities similar to his. In another place he says that if a brāhmaṇa dies without leaving a near heir, then a *sagotra* or *mātr-bandhu* may be appointed to procreate a *kṣetraja* son, who should get the inheritance. The conditions necessary to allow *niyoga* were:

<sup>248</sup> The word *guru* means only the relatives of the husband and not the father of the widow. Manu (IX.60-61) shows that some said that only one son could be had by *niyoga*, while others held that two could be had.

<sup>249</sup> *Prajāpati muhūrta* is the same as *brahma-muhūrta* viz. the last watch of the night (i.e. 45 minutes before sunrise).

<sup>250</sup> The idea is that the widow must not be moved to the act by a mercenary motive. According to Dhāreśvara whose views are cited in the *Vīramitrodaya* of Mitra-miśra (p.633) the widow of a separated sonless man could get the property of her husband only if she submitted to *niyoga* otherwise she was to get only maintenance. Dhāreśvara apparently based his view on some ancient texts. Vas. in the last sentence negatives such a motive.

<sup>251</sup> Baud. Dh. S. II.2.68-70, Yaj. I.68-69 and Nārada (*strīpumsa*, 80-83) lay down similar rules.



- (1) the husband, whether living or dead, must have no son;
- (2) the gurus in a family council should decide to appoint the widow to raise issue for the husband; (3) the person appointed must be either the husband's brother, or a sapinda or sagotra of the husband or (according to Gautama, a sapravara or a person of the same caste);
- (4) the person appointed and the widow must be actuated by no lust but only by a sense of duty;
- (5) the person appointed must; be anointed with ghee or oil (Nārada, 'strīpumsa, 82), must not speak with or kiss her or engage in erotic dalliance with the woman;
- (6) this relationship was to last till one son was born (or two according to some);
- (7) the widow must be comparatively young, she should not be old or sterile or past child-bearing or sickly or unwilling or pregnant (Baud. Dh. S. II, 2.70, Nārada, strīpumsa 83-84);
- (8) after the birth of a son they were to regard themselves as father-in-law and daughter-in-law (Manu IX.62).

It is further made clear by the texts that if a brother-in-law has intercourse with his sister-in-law without appointment by elders or if he does so even when appointed by elders but the other circumstances do not exist (e.g. if the husband has a son), he would be guilty of the sin of incest (vide Manu IX, 58, 63, 143, 144 and Nārada, strīpumsa 85-86) and a son, born of such intercourse, would be a bastard and not entitled to any wealth (Nārada, strīpumsa 84-85) and that he would belong to the begotter (Vas. Dh. S.17.63). Nārada says that if a widow or a male acts contrary to the stringent provisions about *niyoga*, he or she should be severely punished by the king or otherwise there would be confusion. Yaj. II.234 makes such a person liable to be sentenced to a fine of one hundred panas.

It will be seen from the above that even in the times of the Dharma Sūtras, the practice of *niyoga* was hedged round with so many restrictions that it must not have been very much prevalent and instances must have been rather rare.

While ancient Dharma Sūtras like Gautama allowed *niyoga*, there were other dharma-sutras and writers almost as old as Gautama that condemned the practice and forbade it. Āp. Dh. S.1416 II.10.27.5-7 after referring to the view of some that a girl is given to a family in marriage and declaring that that practice (of polyandry) is forbidden adds a condemnation of *niyoga* —

‘the hand (of a sagotra is considered to be) that of a stranger; that if (the marriage vow) is transgressed, both (husband and wife) certainly go to hell and that the reward obtained from observing the restrictions of the law is preferable to offspring obtained in this manner (by *niyoga*).’

Baud. Dh. S. II.2.38 refers to the view of Aupajaṅghani that it is only the *aurasa* son that is to be recognized as a son and then quotes three verses (probably of the same ancient sage), which are also cited as quotations by Āp. Dh. S. (II.6.13.6) and which call upon husbands to guard their wives and not allow others to procreate sons on the latter, as the sons so procreated will benefit only the begetter. Manu, though at first he describes *niyoga*, ultimately condemns it in the strongest terms possible (IX.64-68). He says that among *dvijātis* a widow should never be appointed to raise issue from another, for by doing so ancient dharma would be violated, that in the mantras relating to marriage there is no reference to *niyoga* nor is the remarriage of a widow spoken of in the procedure about marriage, that *niyoga* is a beastly way and was first brought into vogue by king Vena who thereby caused varṇa-saṅkara, and that since that time good men condemn him who through ignorance appoints a widow to produce offspring. Manu (IX.69-70) explains the meaning

of *niyoga* by saying that the rules and the ancient texts about *niyoga* apply or refer to that case only where, after a girl is promised as a bride, the intended bridegroom dies, the brother of the latter is called upon to marry the girl and to have intercourse with her only once during each period till she gives birth to a son who would be the son of the deceased. Though Manu condemned the ancient practice of *niyoga*, he had to make provision for the *kṣetraja* son as regards partition (IX.120-121,145).

It should be noticed that if the interpretation of Manu IX.69-70 be accepted, the word ‘*vidhavā*’ would have to be taken in two different senses in Manu and other texts e.g. in IX.60 where Manu speaks of *niyoga*, the word means a girl promised to a bridegroom who died before the marriage ceremony was gone through, while in Manu IX.64 ‘*vidhavā*’ means ‘a widow whose husband died after marriage was completed.’ To say the least, this contravenes the canon of Mīmamsa interpretation that the same word in the same passage or context should have only one meaning.

Brhaspati refers to the fact that the Manu smṛti first described the ancient *niyoga* and then forbade it and adds that in former ages men possessed *tapas* and knowledge and could strictly carry out the rules while in dvāpara and kali ages there is great deterioration of power and so men of these times cannot now practise *niyoga*.

The several kinds of sons will be dealt with under *vyavahāra*.

The Viṣṇu Dh. S. (15.3) contains an innovation which is not found in the sutras of Gautama and Vasistha viz, the ‘*kṣetraja*’ is one who is procreated on an appointed wife or widow by a sapinda of the husband or by a brāhmaṇa.

The Mahābhārata is replete with cases of *niyoga*. Adiparva (95 and 103) narrates how Satyavatī pressed Bhīṣma to procreate sons for his younger brother Vicitravīrya (who was dead) from his queens and how (Adi, 105) when Bhīṣma refused Vyāsa ultimately was appointed by Vyāsa's mother Satyavatī and procreated Dhrtarastra and Pandu. Kumārilabhaṭṭa replies to the objector finding fault with Vyāsa by saying that Vyāsa followed Gaut. (18.4-5) and the urgent request of his mother and besides his *tapas* saved him from the effects of violation of dharma. Pandu himself is said to have asked Kuntī to procreate sons for him by *niyoga* from a brāhmaṇa endowed with great *tapas* (Adi.120) and tells her certain stories of *niyoga* (Adi.120-123) and winds up by saying that three sons is the limit and that if a fourth or a fifth were procreated the woman would be *svairinī* (a wanton woman) and *bandhakī* (harlot). Adi-parva (chap.64 and 104) states that when Paraśurama tried to exterminate the kṣatriyas thousands of kṣatriya widows approached brāhmaṇas for the procreation of sons.<sup>252</sup>

Owing to the bewildering and often conflicting rules about *niyoga* in the smṛtis, commentators like Viśvarūpa, Medhatithi, who wrote at a time when *niyoga* was almost unheard of, made heroic though unsatisfactory efforts to bring order out of chaos. Viśvarūpa on Yaj. I.69 states several views on the point. The first is that *niyoga* is bad in the present age as opposed to smṛti texts (like Manu IX.64 and 68) and to the usage of the *śiṣṭas* (respectable people). The second view was the same as Manu IX, 69 set out above. A third view was that there was an option (as *niyoga* was both forbidden and allowed). A fourth view (which seems to be the view of Viśvarūpa himself) was that the smṛti texts about *niyoga* refer to Śūdras (Manu IX.64 uses the word ‘*dvijāti*’) and it was also allowed to royal families, when there was no male to succeed (and only a brāhmaṇa was to be appointed) and Viśvarūpa relies upon two verses of Vṛddhamanu and a gātha of Vāyu. Viśvarūpa further says that the procreation of sons by Vyāsa from the queens of Vicitravīrya should be paid no heed (i.e. is not to be relied on) like the marriage of Draupadī (to the five Pāṇḍavas), The Mahābhārata probably reflects what happened owing to the incessant Internecine wars among the

<sup>252</sup> Vide Adiparva, chap.104 and 177, Anuśāsana, chap.44.52-53, śānti 72.12 for other references and examples of *niyoga*.

princes of India. Whole princely houses must have been slaughtered. If *niyoga* was prevalent among them, the males appointed, when they had to be of the same caste, would have been ordinary soldiers (*kṣatrīyas*). The proud princely families very likely thought it below their dignity to associate widowed queens with ordinary *kṣatriyas*. It is possible to hold that they chose *brāhmaṇas* for appointment, as the latter were deemed to be higher than even kings in the spiritual domain. It is impossible to believe that *brāhmaṇas*, who had no temporal power, could coerce the proud and warlike caste into choosing *brāhmaṇas* for *niyoga*, unless the teaching of the *smṛtis* fell in with the notions of the ruling houses themselves to some extent at least.

There was difference of opinion as to whom the child of *niyoga* belonged. Vas. Dh. S.17.6 expressly refers to this divergence. The first view was that the child belonged to the begetter; this view would cut at the very root of the purpose for which *niyoga* was recommended. Nirukta III.1-3 supports this view and relies on Rig. VII.4.7-8. Gaut.18.9 and Manu IX.181 state the same rule. Āp. Dh.S. II.6.13.5 says that according to a *Brāhmaṇa* text the son belongs to the begetter. The second view was that if there was an agreement between the elders of a widow and the person appointed or between the husband himself and the begetter that the child should belong to the husband, then the son belonged to the latter.<sup>253</sup> A third view was that the son belonged to both the begetter and the owner of the wife. This is the view of Nārada (*strīpumsa*, 58), Yaj. II.127, Manu IX, 53, Gaut.18.13

As shown above *niyoga* was forbidden in the Kali age by Brhaspati and it was included among practices forbidden in the Kali age by several works.<sup>254</sup>

The practice of raising issue from the widow of one's brother or marrying her was a widespread one. Vide Wester marck's 'History of Human Marriage' (1921) vol. III. pp.207-220. In the Rig Veda X.40, 2 we read:—

‘what sacrificer invites you (Asvins) in his house as a widow invites a brother-in-law to her bed or as a young damsel her lover’.

But it is not clear whether this refers to marrying the widow of a deceased brother or to the practice of *niyoga*. Viśvarūpa (on Yaj. I.69) thinks that this refers to *niyoga*. The Nirukta (III.15) explains Rig. X.40.2, where in some mss. the word ‘*devara*’ is explained as ‘a second husband’ (*dvitīyo varah*). Medhatithi on Manu IX.66 explains Rig. X.40.2 as applying to *niyoga*. According to the sutras and *smṛtis* *niyoga* was entirely different from marriage. In many ancient societies, women were inherited like property. On the death of the eldest brother, his younger brother took the family property as well as his widow. But the Rig Veda had reached a stage much beyond that. Mac Lennan thought that the practice of *niyoga* was due to polyandry. Westermarck combats this view and rightly so. When *niyoga* was allowed in the sutras, polyandry had been either unheard of or forbidden. Jolly in ‘*Recht und Sitte*’ (English translation, pp.156-157) thinks that apart from the religious importance of a son economic motives were at the bottom of the long list of secondary sons, including the *kṣetraja*. This appears to be quite wrong. The practice of *niyoga* was a relic from the past and probably owed its origin to several causes, which are now obscure, but one of which was the great hankering for a son evinced by all in Vedic times. Vas.Dh.S. (17.1-6) lends support to this view, since after quoting Vedic passages about the importance of a son for paying off the debt to ancestors and for securing heavenly worlds, he at once proceeds to the description of the *kṣetraja*. But the economic motive was never put forward by any of the sages, nor could it possibly have been the reason and main-spring of the practice. If many secondary sons were desired for economic reasons, then the same man could have had any number of secondary sons. But the dharma-sastra texts do not allow this. A man who has an *aurasa* son can have no *kṣetraja* or

<sup>253</sup> Vide Gaut.18.10-11, Vas.17.8, Adiparva 104.6.

<sup>254</sup> Vide the Mit. on Yaj. II.117 and Apararka p.97 quoting Brahma-purana.1487

adopted son. If one kind of son was adopted, then another kind of son could not be adopted. So economic motives did not at all form the origin of this practice. Winternitz in J. R. A. S. for 1897 at p.758 puts forward poverty, paucity of women and the joint family system as the causes of *niyoga*. There are no data to prove that there was paucity of women in India during historic times. There might have been a paucity of men owing to wars. Nor do the other two reasons bear close examination. It is better to say that *niyoga* was a survival from the remote past, that gradually it became rarer and rarer till in the first centuries of the Christian era it came to be totally prohibited.

## CHAPTER 14

### REMARRIAGE OF WIDOWS

The word *punarbhū* is generally applied to a widow that has remarried. Before going into the detailed history of the remarriage of widows it is desirable to probe into the meaning of the word “*punarbhū*”. Nārada (*strīpumsa*, v.45) says that there are seven sorts of wives (mentioned in order) who have been previously married to another man (*para-pūrvā*); among them, the *punarbhū* is of three kinds and the *svairinī* (wanton woman) is of four kinds.

The three *punarbhū*s are:

1. a maiden whose hand was taken in marriage but whose marriage was not consummated; in her case the marriage ceremony has to be performed once more;
2. a woman who first deserts the husband of her youth, betakes herself to another man and then returns to the house of her husband;
3. a woman who is given by the husband's relatives (when the husband dies) to a sapinda of the deceased husband or a person of the same caste, on failure of brothers-in-law (this is *niyoga* and no ceremony is to be performed).

The four *svairinīs* are:

1. a woman, whether childless or not, who goes to live with another man through love while the husband is alive;
2. a woman who rejects after her husband's death his brothers and the like and unites herself with another through passion for him;
3. a woman, coming from a foreign country or purchased with money or oppressed by hunger or thirst, gives herself to a man saying ‘ I am yours’;
4. a woman who is given to a stranger by the elders relying on the usages of the country, but who incurs the blame of wantonness (as the *smṛti* rules about *niyoga* are not observed by them or her).

Nārada says that each preceding one of the *punarbhū*s and *svairinīs* enumerated is inferior to the next in order. Yaj. (I.67) does not give this elaborate classification; all he says is that a *punarbhū* is of two kinds, one whose marriage had not been consummated and another who has had sexual intercourse and that both have the marriage ceremony performed again (i.e. *punarbhū* is one who is ‘*punaḥ samskrta*’; a *svairinī* is one who forsakes the husband whom she married when a maiden and lives with another man of the same caste through love for the latter. Viśvarūpa on Yaj. L 67 remarks that the elaborate classification of Nārada and Saṅkha (3 *punarbhū*s and 4 *svairinīs*) is not of much use, that it only indicates the various degrees of blame (or sin) attaching to them and is also meant to discriminate among *prāyaścittas* to be performed by those women. It is the second husband and the son of the second marriage that bear the appellation ‘*paunarbhava*’ (*pati* or *putra* respectively) and not the first husband. Vide Sam. Pr. pp.740-741. The Sm. C. (I. p.75) quotes a passage from Baudhāyana and certain verses of Kasyapa. According to Kasyapa the seven kinds of *punarbhū* are:—

1. the girl who had been promised in marriage,
2. one who was intended to be given;
3. one on whose wrist the auspicious band was tied by the bride-groom,
4. whose gift had been made with water (by the father),

5. whose hand was held by the bridegroom,
6. who went round the fire,
7. who had given birth to a child after marriage.

In the first five cases it is to be supposed that the bride-groom either immediately died or left the further prosecution of the marriage rites. Even such girls would be styled *punarbhū*, when they married another person later on, though the first marriage was not complete because the *saptapadī* had not been performed. The sixth case is one of completed marriage (though it refers to only going round fire). Baudhāyana's seven varieties are slightly different, the first two being the same as Kasyapa's: the others are:—

1. one who went round the fire (with the bridegroom);
2. one who took the seventh step;
3. one who has had sexual intercourse (either after marriage or even without it)
4. one who has conceived;
5. one who has borne a child.

These meanings of the word *punarbhū* must be borne in mind when one meets with the word *punarbhū* in Vedic texts. That even the promise to give in marriage without the performance of any ceremonies was looked upon as tantamount in its consequences to marriage follows from the words of Sukanyā quoted above (in note 1306) from the Sat. Br., where she had been only offered to the sage Cyavana by her father, but where no ceremonies had been performed as none are described or referred to therein. Manu (IX.69-70) confines the rules of *niyoga* to a girl who was only promised (*vagdatta*); while Vas. Dh. S. XVII.72 speaks of the *vagdatta* and one given with water as still a maiden, if no Vedic mantras have been repeated. Vas. Dh. S. XVII.74 refers to the 4th variety of Baudhāyana. Yaj. I.67 when he speaks of '*kṣatā*' refers to all the six varieties of Kasyapa or the first four varieties of Baudhāyana and when he speaks of '*kṣata*' he refers to the seventh variety of Kasyapa and the last three of Baudhāyana. Vas. Dh. S. 17 19-20 describes *paunarbhava* as the son of a woman, who leaves the husband of her youth and after having lived with another person, re-enters the house of the husband or as the son of a woman who takes another husband after leaving an impotent, outcast or lunatic husband or after the death of the first husband. Baud. Dh. S. II.2.31 describes *paunarbhava* as the son of a woman who after abandoning an impotent or outcast husband goes to another husband.

Nārada (strīpumsa, v.97), Parasara IV.30 and Agni Purāṇa 154.5-6 have the same verse:—

'Another husband is ordained for women in five calamities viz. when the husband is lost (unheard of), is dead, has become a sannyasin, is impotent or is patita'

Great controversies have raged round this verse. Some like the Par. M. (II. part I, p.53) give the easy explanation (always given about inconvenient texts) that this verse refers to the state of society in another yuga (age) and has no application to the Kali age. Others like Medhatithi (on Manu V.157) explain that the word *pati* means only '*pālaka*' (guardian). Medhatithi (on Manu III.10 and V.163) is not dead against *niyoga*, but he is opposed to the remarriage of widows. Even the Smṛtyārthasāra (which belongs to about 1150 to 1200 C.E.) mentions several views viz. some hold that a girl may be married to another if the bride-groom dies before *saptapadī*, others hold that she may be remarried if the first husband dies before consummating the marriage, while still others are of opinion that if after marriage the husband dies before she begins to menstruate she may be remarried and some hold that remarriage is allowed before conception.

Āp. Dh. S. II.6.13.3-4 condemns remarriage:—

'If one has intercourse with a woman who had already another husband, or with a woman on whom no marriage saṃskāra has taken place or who is of a different varṇa, then sin is incurred; in that case the son also is sinful'.

Haradatta quotes Manu III.174 and says that the son procreated on another's wife is called *kunda* if the husband is living, and *golaka* if the husband is dead. Manu V.162 is opposed to the remarriage of widows:— 'nowhere is a second husband declared for virtuous women'; so also Manu IX. 65 — 'in the procedure of marriage there is no declaration about the remarriage of widows. Manu IX.47— 'a maiden can be given only once', and Manu VIII.226— 'the Vedic mantras used in *panigrahana* are applicable to maidens only,' are opposed to the remarriage of widows. The Brahma-Purāṇa and other Purāṇas forbid remarriage of widows in the Kali age. The Sam. Pr. quotes a text of Katyayana to the effect that a girl, who has gone through the ceremony of marriage with a sagotra, may be married again and remarks that the text refers to the state of society in another yuga. This is the view of all the commentators and nibandha writers. Manu himself (in IX.176) expressly allows the saṃskāra of remarriage in the case of a girl, whose first marriage has not been consummated or who left the husband of her youth, went to live with another and returned to the first husband. In this the author of the Manusmṛti probably only reiterates popular usage which was too much for him in spite of his own view (in V.162) denouncing remarriages. So it may be taken that Manu does not forbid the use of mantras in remarriage, but holds that even after the mantras are recited the remarriage of a widow is not *dharmya* (approved). It is said in the Mahābhārata (Adiparva 104.34-37) that Dīrghatamas forbade remarriage and also niyoga. Manu himself speaks of the saṃskāra of a pregnant girl (IX.172-173). Baud. Dh. S. IV.1.18, Vas. Dh. S.17.74, Yaj. I.167 speak of the saṃskāra of remarriage (*paunarbhava saṃskāra*). Manu III.155 and Yaj. I.222 include the *paunarbhava* (the son of a *punarbhu*) among brāhmaṇas that are not to be invited at a sraddha. Aparārka (p.97) quotes a passage from the Brahma-Purāṇa itself which speaks of a fresh saṃskāra of marriage for a child widow or for one who was forcibly abandoned or carried away by somebody.

Several smṛtis contain certain rules about what the wife was to do when the husband had gone abroad for many years after marriage. Nārada (strīpumsa, verses 98-101) gives the following directions.

'If the husband has gone to a foreign country a brāhmaṇa wife should wait for eight years, but four years if she has not given birth to a child; after that period (of 8 or 4 years) she may resort to another man' (then Nārada lays down lesser number of years for kṣatriya and vaiśya wives).

If the husband is known to be living then the periods are double of those stated above; this is the view of Prajapati when no news can be had of persons and hence there is no sin if a woman resorts to another man (in such cases).' Manu (IX 76) says:

'If a man has gone to a foreign land for doing some religious duty the wife should wait for him for eight years, six years if he has gone for acquiring knowledge or fame, or three years if he has gone on a love affair (or for another wife).'

Manu does not state what the wife is to do after these years of waiting. Vas. (17.75-76) requires that:—

'the wife of one who has gone to a foreign land should wait for five years and after five years she should go near her husband.'

This may be all right as far as it will go. But if the husband is unheard of, how is she to reach him? Vasistha says nothing on that point. Viśvarūpa on Yaj. I.69 says that the periods of waiting prescribed for the wife of an emigrant are meant not for permitting niyoga thereafter, but for calling upon her to repair to her husband. Kautilya (III.4) prescribes some interesting rules:—

'the wife of one, who has long gone abroad, or who has become a recluse or who is dead, should wait for seven menstrual periods and for a year if she has a child already. Thereafter she may marry the full brother of her husband. If there be many brothers she should marry one who is near in age (to the first husband), who is virtuous, capable of maintaining her or who is the youngest or unmarried. If no such brother exists she may marry a sapinda of the husband or one of the same caste.'

The story of Damayantī suggests that when the husband was not heard of for many years, a wife could marry again. Damayantī is said to have sent a message to Rtuparna that, as Nala was not heard of for many years, Damayantī was going to celebrate a svayamvara and Rtuparna hurries for it and does not think it a strange thing (Vanaparva 70.24).

One question<sup>255</sup> raised by Dr. Banerjee is: what is to be regarded as the gotra of a widow when she is to be remarried (is it to be her father's gotra or of the first husband's?). There are hardly any indications in the ancient smṛtis or commentaries on this point. Viśvarūpa commenting on Yaj. I, 63 (on the word '*kanyāprada*') observes that according to some, the father gives away the bride even if she is not a virgin. So it appears that the father's gotra should be looked to in the remarriage of a widow. Vidyāsagar, whom Dr. Banerjee follows, held the same opinion.

Certain passages of the Atharva Veda may be considered in connection with the question of the remarriage of widows. Atharva-Veda V.17.8-9 are:—

'When a woman has at first even ten husbands, who are not brāhmaṇas, if a brāhmaṇa takes hold of her hand (i.e. marries her), he alone is her (real) husband.

A brāhmaṇa alone is (a real) husband, not a kṣatriya or a vaiśya the sun goes proclaiming this to the five (tribes of) men'.

The first verse is not to be taken literally in the sense that a woman married ten persons in succession and that the 11th was a brāhmaṇa; the first verse contains rather what is called '*praudhivāda*' (pompous assertion or boast) and this is indicated by the word '*uta*'. The verse may at the most mean that if a woman has first a kṣatriya or vaiśya as husband, and she marries on his death a brāhmaṇa, then the brāhmaṇa is the real husband. The word '*pati*' may also have been used loosely and all that is meant may be that if a girl is promised to ten persons one after another and then lastly to a brāhmaṇa, the latter is to be accepted as the best. Another passage of the Atharva Veda (IX.5.27-28) is:—

'whatever woman, having first married one husband, marries another, if they (two) offer a goat with five rice dishes they would not be separated (from each other). The second husband secures the same world with his remarried wife, when he offers a goat accompanied with five rice dishes and with the light of fees'.

Here the word *punarbhū* occurs. It is possible to hold that this may refer to the promise of a girl in marriage, subsequent death of the intended bridegroom before the marriage ceremonies take place and then the bestowal of her on another. Whatever the meaning of *punarbhū* here may be, it is clear that some sort of sin or inferiority attached to her and that such sin or opprobrium had to be removed by sacrifices. Other passages are discussed later on. But it must be admitted that remarriage of women was not prohibited in the times of the Atharva Veda. In the Tai. S. III, 2.4.4 '*daidhiṣavya*' (widow's son) occurs.

The gṛhya-sūtras are silent about remarriage; so probably by that time it had come to be prohibited generally, though sporadic instances might have occurred. Among the brāhmaṇas and castes similar

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<sup>255</sup> Vide 'Marriage and Stridhana' (5th ed.) p.309 'one of these rules of selection requires that the parties to marriage should be of different gotras; but what is to be regarded as the gotra of a widow - the gotra of her father in which she was born or that of her deceased husband to which she has been transferred by marriage?'



to them and holding or endeavouring to hold a high place in the hierarchy of castes widow remarriage has been forbidden for centuries. One of the earliest historical instances is the remarriage of Dhruvadevī, queen of Kāmāgupta, who was after Ratnagupta's death, married by her brother-in-law Candragupta<sup>256</sup>.

Among sūdras and other lower castes widow remarriage has been allowed by custom, though it is held to be somewhat inferior to the marriage of a maiden.<sup>257</sup> Among these castes remarriage is allowed after the death of the husband or during his life-time with the consent of the husband who gives a writing called *farkhat* or *sod'chitti* (a deed of release). Such marriages are called *pat* in Maharashtra, *natra* in Gujarat, *udki* in Karnataka. In some cases the caste in a meeting assembled takes upon itself to bring to an end a marriage and allows the wife to re-marry. But the Bombay High Court does not recognize the authority of a caste to declare a marriage void or to permit a woman to remarry another person without the consent of the husband and have convicted of bigamy women re-marrying without the consent of the first husband but with the permission of the caste.

In modern times, the Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act (XV of 1856) has been passed mainly through the efforts of Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyāsagar. That Act legalises the marriages of widows notwithstanding any custom or interpretation of the Hindu Law to the contrary and declares that the children of such marriages are legitimate. Owing to the sentiment of centuries widow remarriage is still looked down upon and during more than eighty years since the Act was passed not many widows have taken advantage of it. The Census of India for 1931<sup>258</sup> discloses certain appalling figures. Among infants of less than one year old there were in the whole of India as many as 796 males who were widowers and 1515 females who were widows, among children up to 5 years there were 12799 widowers and 30880 widows (out of these last the Hindus contributed 10266 as widowers and 23667 as widows). It is true that amongst the castes to which most of these must have belonged widow remarriage is allowed by custom, but there must be a certain number of females who are widows before five, who cannot remarry by the custom of the caste and who would not dare to take advantage of the Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act Between the ages of 5-10, 11-15, 16-20 the numbers of Hindu widows for the whole of India are respectively 83920, 145449, 404167.

The age of marriage for girls is rapidly rising owing to economic causes, the spread of literacy among the masses, and the operation of the Child Marriage Restraint Act (XIX of 1929) and it may be hoped that these high figures of child widows will be substantially reduced in the near future. Persons finding fault with Hindu society for large numbers of child widows should not forget one thing. According to Hindu notions every girl must be married at any cost. Hence people rush into child marriages. But there has been no problem of old spinsters in Hindu society, as there is in Western countries, though it appears that in the near future that problem will arise even in India. Apart from the considerations as to religious texts prohibiting widow remarriage and the great concern among women for preserving a high ideal of chastity and single-minded devotion to the husband, many Hindus feel that, each girl having been given one chance of marriage, if she becomes a widow, that is her ill-luck, but she should not be allowed to compete with unmarried girls in the marriage market, which is already overcrowded with girls waiting to be married.

Certain verses of the Rig Veda and the Atharva Veda have given rise to various explanations and opinion is divided as to whether they refer to *niyoga*, to the remarriage of widows or to the practice of the immolation of widows. First the two verses Rig. X.18.7-8 I45 which are part of a funeral hymn will be set out:—

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<sup>256</sup> vide Journal Asiatique for 1923, pp.201-208, Sanjan Places in E, I. vol.18, p.255, ' Indian Culture ' vol.4, p.216, Harsacarita VI, penultimate para

<sup>257</sup> Vide Steele's 'Law and Custom of Hindu Castes' pp.26, 168-169.

<sup>258</sup> Vide Census of India 1931 vol. I. part 2, Imperial Tables, pp.120-122.

'Let these women, who are not widows and who have good husbands, sit down with clarified butter used as collyrium; may the wives who are tearless, free from disease and wearing fine jewels (or clothes) occupy the seat in front (first). O woman ! raise yourself towards the world of the living; you lie down near this departed (husband); come, this your wifeness of the husband who (formerly) held your hand and who loved you has (now) been fulfilled '.

It is somewhat strange that Sayana understands the latter half as an invitation by the husband's brother to the wife of the departed to remarry him. But that meaning is far-fetched and does not bring out the proper force of '*hastagrābhasya*', '*patyuh*' and '*babhūtha*'.

The Aśv. gr.<sup>259</sup> (IV.6.11-12) prescribes that (in the expiatory rite performed on the death of an elder) the young women relatives should salve their eyes with butter with their thumb and fourth finger and with tender darbha blades and then throw the blades away, when the performer of the rite should look at them while they are salving their eyes with the verse:— '*imā narīr* etc '. The same sutra (IV.2.16-18) says that:—

"(when a dead body is to be cremated) they should place the wife to the north of the body and a bow for a kṣatriya (if he be the dead person) and then her brother-in-law or some one else who can be the representative of her husband or a pupil or an old servant should make her rise up with the mantra:— '*udīrsva*' "

The San. Sr. S. IV.16.16 also directs that the verse Rig. X.18.7 is repeated when the eyes of women are touched with blades of kuśa grass and XVI 13.13 says that Rig. X.18.8 and Rig. X, 85.21-22 are called '*utthāpinyah*' (verses addressed for making one rise). There is another mantra in the Atharva Veda (18.3.1) and Tai. Ar. VI.1:—

'O (dead) man! this woman choosing the world of the husband lies down by thee, the deceased, observing the old universal custom; bestow on her in this world offspring and wealth'.

The first verse (i.e. Rig. X.18.7) contains nothing about *niyoga* or remarriage. It has been made use of for giving Vedic authority to the practice of *satī* (which will be dealt with in the next chapter). That verse refers to the practice that young women of the household of the departed used to go to the cemetery and applied clarified butter to their eyes (by way of purification and *śanti*); this practice continued to the days of the Aśv. gr , the Brhad-devata (VII 12) and the Baud, pitṛmedha-sutra (1.21.11). The two verses '*iyam nārī*' and Rig. X.18.8 are employed by the Baudhāyana-Pitṛmedha-sutra in the funeral rites, the first to be repeated when the wife is made to sit near the corpse and the next for making her rise. It is to be noted that Baud. directs that the corpse is placed on the funeral pile after the wife is made to rise from the vicinity of the corpse; while the Brhad-devata appears to suggest that the wife ascends the funeral pile after the corpse is placed thereon and then the younger brother forbids her with the verse '*udīrsva*' etc. But the Brhad-devata does not mean that the wife burns herself on the funeral pyre and the brother-in-law contents himself with only repeating a verse to dissuade her. The Rig-vidhana (III.8.4) says that the brother-in-law should call back the wife of his sonless brother when she is about to ascend the funeral pyre for procreating a son on her with Rig. X.18.8. It appears that the verse Rig X.18.8 symbolically describes what even in the days of the Rig Veda was probably only a tradition viz, that in hoary antiquity a wife burnt herself with her husband. In the times of the Rig Veda this practice had altogether ceased, but a symbolical imitation of it had come into vogue, viz. that the wife lay near the corpse in the cemetery and then she was asked to get up and was told that by following her husband to the very doors of death she had fulfilled all that was expected of her and that she should return. The same idea is referred to by the verse '*iyam nārī*', but the latter half appears to refer to the practice of *niyoga* when it calls upon the departed to bestow on the wife offspring and wealth. It is possible to

<sup>259</sup> The com. on Tai. Ar. holds that the latter half calls upon the wife of the deceased to remarry.

argue that Rig. X.18.8 also impliedly has *niyoga* in view. But both these verses do not expressly refer to the practice of Satī at all. They at the most might lead to the inference that the woman had either to marry the deceased husband's brother or go in for *niyoga* because the husband died sonless. The latter appears to me to be the more probable of the two hypotheses, if those are the only explanations. The symbolic use made in the gr̥hya-sutras and in the Brhad-devata of Rig. X.18.8 shows that they practically are against the burning of widows. It is probable that these authors knew of the custom of *niyoga*, that it was not then much approved of and so they are silent about it, while the Rig-vidhana which appears to be comparatively a late work takes the verse 'udīrsva' as referring to *niyoga* (which is most probably referred to in Rig. X.40.2 *ko vam śayutrā vidhaveva devaram*). The consideration of the practice of widow burning naturally arises here from the above discussion and will be dealt with in a separate chapter.

## Divorce

In the Vedic literature there are at least some texts capable of being interpreted as relating to the remarriage of widows and we have the word 'punarbhu'. But as regards divorce there is absolutely nothing in the Vedic texts nor is there much in post-vedic literature. The theory of dharma-sastra writers is that marriage when completed by homa and saptapadī is indissoluble. Manu IX, 101 says:—

'Let mutual fidelity (between husband and wife) continue till death; this in brief maybe understood to be the highest Dharma of husband and wife.'

In another place Manu (IX.46) declares:—

'neither by sale nor by desertion is the wife released from the husband; we understand that this is the law ordained by the Creator in former times.'

The position of the writers on Dharma Śāstra is that marriage is a saṃskāra, that the status of wife-hood arises from that saṃskāra, that even if the husband or wife became *patita*, the saṃskāra already performed is not annulled by that fact, that even if a wife committed adultery she still remains a wife and that when she performs a penance for her lapse, it is not necessary to have a fresh saṃskāra of marriage performed on her.

We have seen (pp.552-553) that a man was allowed to supersede a wife and marry another or others or to abandon his wife altogether in certain circumstances, But that does not amount to divorce (i.e. dissolution of the marriage tie); the marriage is still there intact. It was also shown (at pp.610-611) that according to Nārada, Parasara and a few others a woman was allowed to remarry in case the husband died, or was unheard of etc.; but according to the digests and commentaries these rules apply to a former yuga (age). Therefore divorce in the ordinary sense of the word (i.e. divorce *a vinculo matrimonii*) has been unknown to the Dharma-śāstras and to Hindu society for about two thousand years (except on the ground of custom among the lower castes). Even when the husband was allowed to abandon the wife for her lapse, still she was in most cases entitled to at least starving maintenance. Therefore *tyāga* (abandonment) was not only no divorce *a vinculo* at all but was not even a divorce *a mensa et thoro* (divorce from board and bed). Later smṛtis and medieval digests could hardly conceive of any ground for which the wife could desert her husband altogether, though Nārada and a few others allowed her to desert one husband and marry another if he was impotent, or became a samnyasin or an outcast. The Mit. on Yaj. I.77 says that a wife is not under the control of her husband as long as he remains *patita* (outcast or excommunicated) and that she should wait till he is purified by penance and restored to caste and that thereafter she again becomes dependent on him. The gravest sins can be expiated by penance (vide Manu XL 89, 92, 101, 105-106); therefore it follows that a wife could not for ever desert even a *patita* husband.

In modern times the Indian courts have held that mere change of faith or apostasy by a Hindu wife

or husband does not *ipso facto* dissolve the marriage and that if the wife changes her religion and then marries another while the first husband is still living, she would be guilty of bigamy. Mere desertion or separation for many years or even adultery does not dissolve a Hindu marriage (vide 42 Madras Law Journal 276). Only in cases where the husband or wife becomes a convert to Christianity, a special procedure is prescribed for the dissolution of the original Hindu marriage by the Native Converts' Marriage Dissolution Act (XXI of 1866), which is not set out here as it is beyond the scope of this work to do so. Further, those Hindus who marry under the Special Marriage Act (III of 1872 as amended by Act XXX of 1923) can secure divorce under the Indian Divorce Act (IV of 1869), The Malabar Marriage Act (Madras Act IV of 1896) forbids polygamy if the first marriage is registered and allows divorce (sec.19) among those who are governed by the *Marumakkatayam* or *Aliyasantana* Law prevalent in Malabar.

The Artha-sastra of Kauilya contains some interesting observations bearing on divorce.

'A wife hating her husband cannot be released from the husband if he is unwilling (to let her go), nor can the husband release himself from the wife (if she is unwilling); but if there is mutual hatred then release is possible. If a man fearing danger (or injury) from his wife desires release from her, he shall return to her whatever was given to her (at the time of marriage). If a woman out of fear of danger (or injury) from the husband desires release, the latter need not return to her what was given to her (at the time of marriage); marriages in the approved form cannot be dissolved.'

Kauṭilya himself says (in III.2) that the first four forms viz. *brahma*, *prajapatya*, *arsa* and *daiva* are *dharmya* (approved), since they are brought about under the authority of the father. Therefore according to Kauṭilya there can be no dissolution of the marriage tie if the marriage was celebrated in one of the first four forms. But if the marriage was in the *gandharva*, *asura* or *raksasa* form, then the tie may be dissolved by mutual consent, if both have come to hate each other. But he seems to hold that there can be no release at the instance of only one party to the marriage who has begun to feel aversion to the other party in whatever form the marriage may have been performed. Even in this latter case he apparently makes an exception, where physical danger is apprehended by one party from the other.

It is beyond the scope of this work to compare the law of divorce in other countries or under other religious systems. It may be stated, however, that according to the strict theory of the Roman Catholic Church the marriage tie is indissoluble, though decrees of nullity of marriage were sometimes granted by that Church to those who could pay for them. In England after the Restoration divorce could be secured through the Parliament by a private Bill where a divorce *a vinculo matrimonii* was desired. But this method could be resorted to only by the rich, as the passage of a private Bill for divorce cost at least 500 pounds. The Ecclesiastical courts in England granted divorces *a mensa et thoro* on the ground of adultery, cruelty or unnatural offences, though such a divorce did not dissolve the marriage. But this procedure also was costly, as even an undefended suit for divorce *a mensa et thoro* would ordinarily cost from 300 to 500 pounds. Then came the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 (20 and 21 Vic. chap.85) by sec.27 of which a wife could petition for divorce only if she proved that since the celebration of marriage the husband was guilty of incestuous adultery, or of bigamy with adultery, or of adultery coupled with such cruelty as, without adultery, would have entitled her to a divorce *a mensa et thoro* or of adultery coupled with desertion. The Matrimonial Causes Act of 1923 (13 and 14 Geo.5 chap.19) placed women on an equality with men by allowing them to apply for divorce merely on the ground of adultery by the husband without having to prove anything more. Then the Act of 1937 known as A. P. Herbert's Act (1Edw.8 and 1 Geo.6 chap.57) allows the husband or wife to petition for divorce on four grounds. It will be noticed from this that the absence of divorce and rigorous restrictions thereon are not a peculiarity of the Brahmanical religion or of the caste system, but existed even in so-called progressive, casteless and Christian countries up to very recent times. In modern times even in

Roman Catholic countries divorce is allowed on various grounds; and in India too efforts are being made to enact legislation permitting divorce among Hindus for various reasons. And it may be admitted that some legal provision is necessary for securing divorce in hard cases even as to marriages celebrated under the ancient gastric system on grounds similar to those in the English Act of 1937,

## CHAPTER 15

## SATI

(Self-immolation of widows)

**T**he word is often written as '*suttee*' in English works and papers. This subject is now of academic interest in India, since for over a hundred years (i.e. from 1829) self-immolation of widows has been prohibited by law in British India and has been declared to be a crime. A portion of sec.1 of the Regulation XVII of 1829 passed by the Governor-General Lord William Bentinck is as follows:—

Section 1 of Regulation XVII of 1829 which declared the practice of *satī* illegal and a crime punishable in the courts (and passed by the Governor-General in Council on 4th December 1829) is: The practice of *Suttee* or of burning or burying alive the widows of Hindoos is revolt to the feelings of human nature; it is nowhere enjoined by the religion of the Hindoos as an imperative duty; on the contrary a life of purity and retirement on the part of the widow is more especially and preferably inculcated and by a vast majority of that people throughout India the practice is not kept up or observed; in some extensive districts it does not exist; in those in which it has been most frequent, it is notorious that, in many instances, acts of atrocity have been perpetrated, which have been shocking to the Hindoos themselves, and in their eyes unlawful and wicked ..... Actuated by these considerations the Governor-General in Council, without intending to depart from one of the first and most important principles of the system of British Government in India that all classes of the people be secure in the observance of their religious usages, so long as that system can be adhered to without violation of the paramount dictates of justice and humanity, has deemed it right to establish the following rules etc.

We are now in a position to take a dispassionate view of the practice, to trace its origin and follow its working down to the date of its being declared illegal. It is not possible in the space available here to go into all details. Those interested may read the latest book on the subject by Mr. Edward Thomson<sup>260</sup>.

The burning of widows was not; peculiar to Brahmanism, as many are prone to believe, but the custom owes its origin to the oldest religious views and superstitious practices of mankind in general. The practice of widow burning obtained among ancient Greeks, Germans, Slavs and other races (vide 'Die Frau' pp.56, 82-83 and Schrader's 'Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan People,' English Translation of 1890, p.391 and Westermarck's 'Origin and Development of Moral Ideas f', 1906, vol. I, pp.472-476), but was generally confined to the great ones, the princes and nobles.

There is no Vedic passage which can be cited as incontrovertibly referring to widow-burning as then current, nor is there any mantra which could be said to have been repeated in very ancient times<sup>261</sup> at such burning nor do the ancient *gr̥hya*-sutras contain any direction prescribing the

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<sup>260</sup> '*Suttee*' (1928), which gives an account of it from the most ancient times, of the efforts made to suppress it by Raja Rama Mohan Roy and the British Government. In an appendix the author gives extracts from the accounts reported by those "who witnessed widow burning from 317 B C. to 1845 A. D. Vide also Max Muller's H. A. S. L. p.48 for references to the custom of widow-burning among Greeks and Scythians; 'Die Frau' pp.74-79 for accounts of travelers and eye witnesses; Colebrooke's Miscellaneous "Essays vol. I (ed. of 1837) pp.114-116 (for description of the rite), vol. II. chap. III. pp.153-158; Annals of the Bharidarkar O. R. Institute vol.14. p.219. In the 'Travels of Peter Mundy' (1608-1669) published by the Hakluyt Society in 1914 vol. II. pp.34-36, the author gives an account of the burning of a widow at Surat in 1630 with a sketch showing the widow having on her lap the head of her deceased husband. That writer also notes that the practice had in his time become rare, as under the Mogul rulers a special license from the Ruler or Governor was required. Similarly Barbosa (a Portuguese) describes the burning of a *satī* in the Vijayanagar kingdom (vide translation by M. L. Dames, vol. I. pp.213-216).

<sup>261</sup> Raja Radhakant Deva relied upon two verses which he found in the Aukhya śākhā of the Tai. S. quoted in the 84th Anuvāka of the Nārāyaṇīya Upanisad as the most explicit authority for widow burning; vide Prof. H. H. Wilson's Works vol. II. pp.293-305. These, to say the least, are of doubtful authenticity.

procedure of widow burning. It therefore appears probable that the practice arose in Brahmanical India a few centuries before Christ. Whether it was indigenous or was copied from some non-Aryan or non Indian tribes cannot be demonstrated. None of the Dharma Sūtras except Viṣṇu contains any reference to it. The Manusmṛti is entirely silent about it.

It is stated in Strabo (XV.1.30 and 62) that the Greeks under Alexander found sati practiced among the Cathaei in the Punjab and that that practice arose from the apprehension that wives would desert or poison their husbands (Hamilton and Falconer's Translation vol. III). The Visnu-Dharma Sūtra 25;14 says:—

'On her husband's death the widow should observe celibacy or should ascend the funeral pyre after him.'

The Mahābharata, though it is profuse in the descriptions of sanguinary fights, is very sparing in its references to widow burning. Madrī, the favourite wife of Pandu, burnt herself with her husband's body. In the Virata-parva Sairandhī is ordered to be burnt with Kīcaka, just as in ancient times it is said there was a custom to bury a slave or slaves along with the deceased ruler. The Mausala parva (7.18) says that four wives of Vasudeva, viz. Devakī, Bhadrā, Rohinī and Madira burnt themselves with him and (chap.7.73-74) that Rukminī, Gandhātrī, Saibya, Haimavatī, Jambavatī among the consorts of Kṛṣṇa burnt themselves along with his body and other queens like Satyabhāma went to a forest for tapas.

The Viṣṇu-Purāṇa V:38:2 also says that eight queens of Kṛṣṇa, Rukminī and others, entered fire on the death of Kṛṣṇa. In the Strīparva (chap.26) the Great Epic describes the death ceremonies performed for the fallen Kauravas, but no mention is made of any widow immolating herself on the funeral pyre though the chariots, clothes and weapons of the warriors are said to have been consigned to fire. From the above it appears that the practice was originally confined to royal families and great warriors even in India and that cases of widow burning were rare. Several texts are cited by Aparārka from Paithīnasi, Angiras, Vyāghrapād which apparently forbid self-immolation to brāhmaṇa widows. The authors of digests explain away these passages by saying that they only prohibit self-immolation by a brāhmaṇa widow on a funeral pyre different from that of the husband i.e. a brāhmaṇa widow can burn herself only on the funeral pyre of her husband and if his body is cremated elsewhere in a foreign land, his widow cannot, on hearing of his death, burn herself later. They rely on the text of Uśanas that a brāhmaṇa widow should not follow her husband on a separate funeral pyre.

The Veda-Vyāsa-smṛti (II.53) says that a brāhmaṇa wife should enter fire, clasping the dead body of her husband; if she lives (after her husband) she should give up adorning her hair and emaciate her body by austerities. In the Rāmāyana, (Uttarakanda 17.15) there is a reference to the self-immolation of a brāhmaṇa woman (the wife of a brahmarsi and mother of Vedavatī, who when molested by Havana burnt herself in fire).

The Mahābharata (Strī parva 23.34 ff.) on the other hand describes how Kṛpī, the wife of Drona, the brāhmaṇa commander-in-chief of the Kauravas, appeared with dishevelled hair on the battle-field on the death of her husband, but does not say that she burnt herself. It appears therefore that the burning of brāhmaṇa widows began much later than that of kṣatriya widows.

The burning of a widow on the death of her husband is called *saha-marāṇa* or *saha-gamana* or *anvārohaṇa* (when she ascends the funeral pyre of her husband and is burnt along with his corpse), but *anumaraṇa* occurs when, after her husband is cremated elsewhere and she learns of his death, the widow resolves upon death and is burnt with the husband's ashes or his pāḍukas (sandals) or even without any memento of his if none be available (vide Aparārka p. III and Madana pārijāta p.198). In the Kumara-sambhava (IV.34) of Kalidāsa, Rati, the wife of Kāma who was burnt by Siva, speaks of throwing herself into fire, but is held back by a heavenly voice. In the Gātha-

saptaśatī (VII.33) there is a reference to a woman being decked for *anumarana* (Nirn. ed.). The Kāma-sutra VI.3.53 speaks of *anumarana*.

It has been shown (at p.579) how Varāha mihira admires women for their courage in being burnt with their husbands. The Harsacarita (Ucchvāsa 5) describes how Yasomatī, the chief queen of king Prabhakara-varadhana and mother of Harsa, consigned herself to fire when the king was dying. But this is not a proper case of *satī*, as she burnt herself even before her husband died. In another passage of the Harsacarita (V, in the description of night) the glory of moon-lotuses is said to be laughing like a woman intent on *anumarana*, who is decked with ear ornaments and wears garlands on her head. Bana in his Kadambarī in a most eloquent and well-reasoned passage condemns *anumarana*. The Bhāgavata-Purāṇa I.13.57 speaks of Gandharī's burning herself on the death of her husband, Dhrtarāṣṭra.

In numerous epigraphic records reference is made to the practice of *satī*. Among the earliest is the one in 191 of the Gupta era (510 A. D.) in the Gupta Inscriptions (ed. by Fleet) p.91. Vide also the Eran posthumous stone pillar Inscription of Goparaja which says that his wife accompanied him on the funeral pyre when he was killed in battle; I. A. vol. IX. p.164 ('Nepal Inscription of 705 A. D., where Rajyavatī, widow of Dharmadeva, bids her son Mahādeva to take up the reins of government that she may follow her husband); the Belaturu Inscription of saka 979 of the time of Rajendradeva Cola (E. I. vol. VI, p.213) where a Śūdra woman Dekabbe, on hearing of her husband's death, burnt herself in spite of the strong opposition of her parents who then erected a stone monument to her; E. I. vol.14 p.265, 267 where a grant is made in śaka 1103 to a temple by Sindu Mahā-mandalesvara Rācamalla on a request by two *satīs*, widows of his general Beciraja; E. I. vol.20, p.168 (of Cedi samvat 919) which refers to three queens that became *satīs*; E. I. vol X, p.39 where the Temara gate stone inscription of saka 1246 speaks of Mānikyadevī as *Satī* on the death of her husband Āmana who was an officer of king Hariscandra; E. I. vol.20 p.58 (Mistra Deoli Inscription in Jodhpur when two queens of a Gohila Rāṇā became *satīs*); E. I. vol.16, p.10, n.4 and p.11, n.2 for *Satī* records of śaka 1365 and 1362. In an article on 'Satī memorial stone ' in J.B.O.R.S. vol.23, p, 435 ff. it is shown how the memorial stones usually bear the figure of the upraised arm and of the sun and the moon on either side and a group of stars. Among the well-known latest historical examples of *Satī* is that of Ramābai, wife of the Peshwa Madhavrao I, in 1772 A. D. The *Jauhar* practised by the Rajput ladies of Chitor and other places for saving themselves from unspeakable atrocities at the hands of the victorious Moslems are too well-known to need any lengthy notice.

In the Indian Antiquary vol.35 p.129 there is a paper on:— '*Satī* immolation which is not *satī*', where several examples of men who killed themselves out of devotion to their masters or for other causes are cited and it is pointed out how stone monuments (called *māstikkal* i.e. stone monument for *mahāsatī* a great sati, and '*vīrakkal*' for brave and devoted men) are erected in memory of female *satīs* and males who committ suicide for worthy causes. The Harsacarita (V.3rd para from end) describes how many of the king's friends, ministers, servants and favourites killed themselves on the death of Prabhākara-varadhana. The Rajataranginī VII.481 narrates how when the queen of king Ananta became a *satī* on her husband's death, her litter carrier and some other men and three of her dasīs followed her in death. There is the example of a mother burning herself on the funeral pyre of her son (vide Rajataranginī VII.1380).

We shall see later on that suicide at holy places like Prayaga was practiced for attaining heavenly worlds and bliss. Life seems to have been deemed of small account in those ages and though the death of women or men on the funeral pyre of the husband or for their masters appears to us sophisticated people of modern days as very horrible, it did not so appear to the ancients.

*Satī* was not in historic times a practice imposed by priests or men on unwilling women. It somehow grew and it is improper to say that men imposed it on women. It may be that examples of sail occurred because of the force of popular sentiment. It was first confined to kings and nobles,



because the lot of the wives of conquered kings and warriors was most miserable in all countries as well as in India. Vengeance for the truculence of their husbands was wreaked on the poor wives by carrying them as captives and making them work as slaves. Manu (VII.96) allows a soldier to retain women (probably 'slaves') conquered by him along with other booty. When queen Yaśomatī narrates to her son Harṣa the great honour and glory that was hers during the reign of her husband king Prabhakara-varḍhana, she refers to the fact that the wives of the enemies defeated by her husband waved chowries over her. From kings the practice spread among brāhmaṇas, though as shown above, several smṛtikāras disapproved of the practice among brāhmaṇa wives. Once it took root learned commentators and digest writers were found to support it with arguments and promises of future rewards. Even in modern times we can secure learned writers to support any pet theory of a coterie or clique. When Manchester and Liverpool were prosperous, English economists preached the doctrine of free trade and laissez-faire to all nations, but in more difficult times we have now the apotheosis of Empire Preference and discriminating preference for home-made goods.

The rewards promised to a *satī* were as follows:— Sāṅkha and Angiras say:—

'she who follows her husband in death dwells in heaven for as many years as there are hair on the human body, viz. 3 crores of years. Just as a snake-catcher draws out a snake from a hole by force, so such a woman draws her husband from (wherever he may be) and enjoys bliss together with him. In heaven she being solely devoted to her husband and praised by bevy of heavenly damsels sports with her husband for as long as fourteen Indras rule. Even if the husband be guilty of the murder of a brāhmaṇa or of a friend or be guilty of ingratitude, the wife who dies (in fire) clasping his body, purifies him (of the sin). That woman, who ascends (the funeral pyre) when the husband dies, is equal to Arundhatī in her character and is praised in heaven. As long as a woman does not burn herself in fire on the death of her husband she is never free from being born as a woman (in successive births).'

Harīta says:— 'that woman who follows her husband in death purifies three families, viz. of her mother, of her father and of her husband'. The Mit. after quoting the above passages adds that this duty of *anvarohana* is common to the women of all castes from the brāhmaṇa to the caṇḍāla, provided they are not pregnant or they have no young children (at the husband's death).

There were old commentators who were opposed to the practice of *satī*. Medhatithi on Manu V.157 (*Kāmam tu* etc.) compares this practice to *syenayāga* which a man performed by way of black magic to kill his enemy. He says that though Angiras allowed '*anumarana*' it is suicide and is really forbidden to women. Just as the Veda allows the syena yāga — '*syenenābhicaran yajet*' and yet *syenayāga* is not considered as dharmic, but rather as adharma (vide Sabara on Jaimini 1.1.2), so, though Angiras speaks of it, it is really adharma; and that a woman who is in a hurry and extremely anxious to secure heaven quickly for herself and her husband might act according to Angiras, still her action is *aśastrīya* (not in accordance with the sastras); besides *anvarohana* is opposed to the Vedic text that 'one should not leave this world before one has finished one's allotted span of life'. The Mit. on Yaj. L 86 combats these arguments. It says that *syenayāga* is no doubt undesirable and therefore adharma, but that is so because the object of *syenayāga* is injury to another. *Anugamana* on the other hand is not so; there the result promised is heaven which is a desirable result and which is enjoined by Sruti in such sentences as — 'one should sacrifice a white goat to Vāyu if one desires prosperity'. Similarly the smṛti about *anugamana* is not opposed to the Sruti quoted, the meaning of which is different; that śruti means— 'one should not waste one's life for securing heavenly bliss which is fleeting and insignificant as compared with the supreme bliss of Brahma knowledge'. As the woman in *anumarana* desires only heaven, she is not doing anything contrary to the śruti texts. This is the reasoning of the Mitāksara which looks like special pleading.

Aparārka p. III, the Madana-pārijāta p.199, Par. M. II. part I pp.55-56 follow the reasoning of the Mit. and add that the Vedic text about the allotted span of life is a general rule, while the smṛti about *anumarana* is a special or exceptional *sastra* and so there is no contradiction as the rule

applies to all cases outside the excepted one. The Madana-pārijāta (p.200) further explains that the texts about purifying a husband guilty of brāhmaṇa murder are not to be taken literally but only as hyperbolically (*arthavāda*) extolling *anvarohana*.

The Sm. C. also expressly says that *anvarohana*, though recommended by the Viṣṇu Dh.S. (25.14) and Angiras, is inferior to brahmacarya (leading a celibate life), since the rewards of *anvarohana* are inferior to those of brahmacarya. As against this may be cited the extreme view of Angiras:— 'for all women there is no other duty except falling into the funeral pyre, when the husband dies.' The Suddhi-tattva remarks that this extreme or sweeping statement is made by way of belauding *saha-marana*.

We saw above that brāhmaṇa widows were only allowed *anvarohana*, but not *anumarana*. There were other restrictions enjoined by the smṛtis on all widows:—

'wives who have a child of tender years, who are pregnant, who have not attained puberty and who are in their monthly course do not mount the funeral pyre of their husbands' (Brhan-Naradīya Purāṇa)

There is a similar verse of Brhaspati. The wife who was in her course was allowed to burn herself after she bathed on the fourth day.

Apastamba (verse) prescribes the Prajapatya penance for a woman who having first resolved to burn herself on the funeral pyre turns back from it at the last moment. The Rajatarnginī (VI.196) refers to a queen who having pretended to have resolved on becoming satī ultimately regretted the step and turned back.

The Suddhi-tattva sets out the procedure of widow burning. The widow bathes and puts on two white garments, takes kuśa blades in her hands, faces the east or north, performs acamana (sipping water); when the brāhmaṇas say 'om, tat sat' she remembers the God Narayana and refers to the time (month, fortnight, tithi) and then makes the saṅkalpa (..declaration of resolve) set out below. She then calls upon the eight lokapalas (guardians of the quarters), the sun, the moon, the fire etc. to become witnesses to her act of following her husband on the funeral pyre, she then goes round the fire thrice, then the brāhmaṇa recites the Vedic verse:— '*ima narīr* etc.' (Rig. X.18.7) and a Puranic verse:— 'may these very good and holy women who are devoted to their husbands enter fire together with the body of the husband'. The woman utters '*namo namaḥ*' and ascends the kindled pyre. The long-winded preamble of the samkalpa '*arundhatī...patiputatva-kāma*' is based upon the verses of Angiras quoted above. The Suddhi-tattva as printed is corrupt but it appears that it read the last quarter of Rig. X.18.7 as:— '*ārohantu jalayonira-agne*' (let them ascend the watery seat or origin, O fire !) meaning probably 'may fire be to them as cool as water'. Some writers have charged the brāhmaṇa priest-hood (or Raghunandana) with having purposely changed the reading of the verse Rig. X.18.7 in order to make it suit the rite of immolating oneself in fire (i.e. '*agne*' or '*agneh*' was substituted for '*agre*'). But this charge is not sustainable. That the verse Rig. X.18.7 as it actually is was held to refer to widow burning centuries before Raghunandana follows from the fact that even the Brahma-Purāṇa and Aparārka (quoted above on p.628) take it in that sense. It was therefore not necessary to alter the reading. Further even if some priests or Raghunandana had changed it that fact would have been detected in no time, as in those days there were thousands of people who knew every syllable of the Rig Veda by heart. Therefore it must be admitted that either the MSS. are corrupt or Raghunandana committed an innocent slip. That mantra was not addressed to widows at all, but to ladies of the deceased man's household whose husbands were living and the gṛhya-sutra of Aśv. made use of it with that meaning. Raghunandana, a profound student of Dharma-śāstras and smṛtis (and often styled Smarta-Bhṛṭṭacarya), could not have been ignorant of what Aśv. said. The procedure as prescribed in the Nirṇaya-sindhu of Kāmalakarabhata, whose mother became a satī and who pays a very tender and touching reverence to her memory in his works, is somewhat different and it is followed by the Dharma-sindhu.

It appears from all accounts of travelers and others that widow-burning prevailed more in Bengal during the centuries immediately preceding its abolition than anywhere else in India.<sup>262</sup> If that was so, there were certain good reasons for that state of things. In the whole of India, except Bengal, the widows of members in a joint Hindu family are only entitled to maintenance and have no other rights over the property of the family. In Bengal, wherever the *Dāyabhāga* prevails, the widow of a sonless member even in a joint Hindu family is entitled to practically the same rights over joint family property which her deceased husband would have had. This must have frequently induced the surviving members to get rid of the widow by appealing at a most distressing hour to her devotion to and love for her husband. This rule of the widow's right was not for the first time propounded by *Jīmūtavāhana*; he makes it clear that he followed a predecessor called *Jitendriya*. The figures given above lend support to the view expressed here, since Benares, where the rights of widows were insignificant, was responsible for a small number of *Satis* only. It is impossible, however, to believe that the number of widows in ordinary stations of life burning themselves was very large at any time or that most of the widows that did so were coerced into doing it. There is a good deal of epigraphic and other evidence particularly in other parts of India that relatives tried to dissuade the widow from taking the step. Even in Bengal the number of *Satis* must never have been very large. Colebrooke, who had spent the best part of his life in Bengal and who was a profound Sanskrit scholar, observes in a paper written about 1795 A. D. ' Happily the martyrs of this superstition have never been numerous. It is certain that the instances of the widow's sacrifices are now rare'.<sup>263</sup> The very fact that there was no disturbance of peace or ebullition of popular feeling or even any great verbal protest from the vast Hindu population (except a petition to the Privy Council) against Bentinck's sweeping measure indicates two things, viz. that the burning of widows was a rare occurrence and that people were not very keen on observing the practice nor had they any very deep-seated convictions about its absolute religious necessity.<sup>264</sup>

Modern India does not justify the practice of *Satī*, but it is a warped mentality that rebukes modern Indians for expressing admiration and reverence for the cool and unfaltering courage of Indian women in becoming *Satis* or performing the *jauhar* for cherishing their ideals of womanly conduct. If Englishmen can feel pride in their ancestors who grabbed one fourth of the world's surface or if Frenchmen can feel pride in the deeds of their Emperor Napoleon who tried to enslave the whole of Europe and yet are not held up to ridicule or rebuke, there is no reason why poor Indians cannot express admiration for the sacrifices which their women made in the past, though they may condemn the institution itself which demanded such terrible sacrifice and suffering.

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<sup>262</sup> Thomson in his book on '*Suttee*' (pp.69,72) gives the figures for *Satis* reported from the Bengal Presidency (which then included Bihar and extended up to Benares) during 1815-1828. The lowest figure was 378 in 1815 and the highest 839 in 1818. Out of the total of 2366 cases during the four years 1815-1818, the Calcutta division alone contributed 1485, the Benares division, the seat of orthodoxy, contributed only 343. Vide H. H. Wilson's 'History of India' (ed. of 1858), vol. III (for 1805-1835 A.1.), pp 185-192. At p.189 a table of the number of *Satis* for 1815-1828 is given, from which it appears that in 1828 there were 463 cases of *Satis* out of whom 420 came from Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, out of which 287 were from the Calcutta division alone.

<sup>263</sup> Vide Colebrooke's *Miscellaneous Essays* (ed. of 1837) vol. I. p.122.1490.

<sup>264</sup> Vide Fitz-Edward Hall's paper in *J.R.A.S.* vol.III New Series (1868) pp.190-191, footnote, where he quotes extracts from the writings of Prof. Wilson, Marshman and others that show how fears of violent resistance to Bentinck's measure were singularly falsified.

## CHAPTER 16

## VEŚYA — Courtesans

This work dealing among other matters with the position of women and marriage in India would be incomplete if nothing were said about prostitutes and concubines. Prostitution has existed from the dawn of history in all countries and in the absence of statistics it is difficult to say whether it flourished more in one country than in another or whether it existed to a greater or lesser extent in ancient days as compared with modern times. The article in the Encyclopaedia Britannica on prostitution will be an eye-opener to many who will be inclined to turn their nose at Indian conditions.

From the Rig Veda we find that there were women who were common to several men i.e. who were courtesans or prostitutes. In Rig. I.167.4 the bright Maruts (storm gods) are said to have become associated with the young (lightning), just as men become associated with a young courtesan.

It has already been seen how in Rig. II.29.1 reference is made to a woman who gives birth in secret to a child and leaves it aside. In Rig. I.66.4 & I.117.18, 1.134.3 and other places *jāra* (paramour or secret lover) is spoken of. In Gaut. XXII.27 it is said that for killing a woman who is a brahmanī by birth only and who subsists by harlotry no *prāyaścitta* is necessary but eight handfuls of corn may be gifted. Manu IV.209 forbids a brāhmaṇa from taking food offered by harlots (vide also IV.219); and Manu IX.259 requires the king to punish clever (or deceitful) harlots.

In the Mahābharata courtesans are an established institution. The Adi-parva (115.39) narrates how a *veśya* waited upon Dhrtarastra when his wife Gandharī was pregnant. In the Udyoga-parva (30.38) Yudhisthira sends greetings to the *veśyas* of the Kauravas. Courtesans are described as going out to welcome Kṛṣṇa when he came on a mission of peace to the Kaurava court (Udyoga 86.15). When the Pāṇḍava armies are described as about to start for battle it is said that carts, markets and courtesans also accompanied them (Udyoga 151.58).<sup>265</sup>

Yaj. II.290 divides concubines into two sorts, *avaruddhā* (one who is kept in the house itself and forbidden to have intercourse with any other male) and *bhujīṣyā* (concubine who is not kept in the house, but elsewhere and is in the special keeping of a person) and prescribes a fine of fifty panas against another person having intercourse with them.

Nārada (strīpumsa, 78-79) says:—

'Intercourse is permitted with wanton women (*svairinī*) who are not brāhmaṇa by caste, with a prostitute, a female slave, or a female not restrained by her master, if these belong to a caste lower than oneself; but it is forbidden with women of superior caste. But when these very women are the kept mistresses (of a person) intercourse with them by a stranger is as much a crime as intercourse with another's wife. Such women must not be approached, though intercourse with them is not forbidden (on the ground of caste etc), since they belong to another.'

On Yāj. II.290 the Mit., after quoting the Skanda-Purāṇa to the effect that prostitutes constitute a separate caste being sprung from certain Apsarases (heavenly nymphs) called *pancacūdās*, states that such courtesans as are not kept specially by a person do not incur any sin, nor punishment at the hands of the king, if they have intercourse with men of the same or a superior caste, nor do men approaching them incur any penalty if they are not *avaruddhā*. But the men who visit them incur sin (which is an unseen result), since the smṛtis ordain that men should be devoted to their wives (vide

<sup>265</sup> Vide also Vana-parva 239.37, Karna-parva 94.26.

Yaj. I.81) and the prajapatya penance is prescribed for him who has intercourse with a *veśya* (vide Atrī v.271).

Nārada (*vetanasyānapākarma* 18) lays down that if a public woman after getting her fee refuses to receive the customer, she shall pay twice the amount of the fee and the same fine shall be imposed on a man who does not pay the (stipulated) fee, after having had intercourse with a *veśya*. Vide Yaj. II.292 and Matsya-Purāṇa 227.144-145 for similar provisions.

The Matsya-purāṇa chap.70 dilates upon *veśya*-dharma. The Kāma-sutra I.3.20 defines a *gaṇika* as a *veśya* who is most accomplished and proficient in the 64 kalās, Aparārka (p.800, on Yaj. II.198) quotes Nārada (cited above) and several verses of the Matsya-Purāṇa about *veśyas*.

Concubines being recognized by society, the *smṛtis* provided for their maintenance. During the life-time of a person keeping a concubine, the latter has no legal right to proceed against the former. Nārada (*dāyabhāga* 52) and Katyayana lay down that even when the property of a deceased person escheats to the king for want of heirs (except in the case of the deceased being a *brāhmaṇa*) the king has first; to provide for the maintenance of the concubines of the deceased, of his slaves and for his *śrāddhas*. The *Mit.* says that the concubines here referred to are those called *avaruddhā* (and not *bhujīṣyā*) and that even the kept mistresses of a deceased *brāhmaṇa* are entitled to maintenance from his property. The Privy Council in *Bai Nagubai v. Bai Monghibai* have gone beyond the *Mit.* and have held that all concubines (whether kept in the house practically as members of the family i.e. *avaruddhā* or not so kept i.e. *bhujīṣyā*) within the exclusive keeping of a Hindu till his death are entitled to maintenance from his property after his death, provided they are continuously chaste thereafter.

The rights of the illegitimate children of concubines to inheritance or maintenance will be dealt with later on under inheritance.

## CHAPTER 17

## AHNIKA AND ĀCĀRA

(Daily and periodical duties and ceremonies)

This forms a very important topic of Dharma-śāstra. The daily duties of the brahmacārin have been already described above and those of the vānaprastha and yati will be spoken of later on. Under this section we are concerned principally with the duties of the snātaka (the would-be householder) and the gṛhastha (the householder).

Before the ahnika duties are described a few remarks about the importance of the stage of householder would not be out of place. It has already been shown (pp.424-425) how one school of Dharma Śāstra writers represented by Gautama and Baudhāyana looked upon the stage of householder as the only āśrama. The eulogies of the householder are sung in numerous passages of the Dharma Śāstras. Gaut. U98 (III.3) declares that the house holder is the source (support) of all the other āśramas, because the other three do not produce offspring. Manu (III.77-78) states that as all creatures live by receiving support from the air, so other āśramas subsist by relying for support on the householder and that as men belonging to all the three other orders (āśramas) are supported from day to day by the house holder alone with (gifts of) food and sacred knowledge, the householder's is therefore the most excellent āśrama. Manu (VI.89-90) reiterates the same sentiments under a different figure:—

'just as all big and small rivers find a resting place in the ocean, so men of all āśramas find support in the householder and the householder is declared to be the most excellent of all the āśramas by the precepts of the Veda and smṛtis, since he supports the other three'.<sup>266</sup>

Several texts say that a house holder observing the rules laid down for him does not fall away from the world of Brahma.<sup>267</sup> In the Mahābhārata also the eulogy of the order of householder is frequent.<sup>268</sup> Śānti-parva 270.6-7 states:—

'as all beings live on the support given by their mothers, so other āśramas subsist on the support of the order of householders'.

In the same chapter (verses 10-11) Kapila condemns those who hold that mokṣa (final release from saṃsāra) is not possible for him who remains a householder. Śānti 12.12 holds that, if weighed in the balance, the order of householders is equal to all the other three put together.<sup>269</sup> The Ayodhya-kanda 106.22 also says that the stage of householder is the most excellent of all āśramas.

The brāhmaṇa householder is again divided into several varieties from different points of view. Baud. Dh. S. III.1.1, Devala (quoted in the Mit. on Yaj. I.128) and other works divide a householder into two varieties viz. *śālīna* and *yāyāvāra*,<sup>270</sup> the latter being superior to the former.

- The *śālīna* is one who dwells in a house, is possessed of servants and cattle, has a fixed place and a fixed village and has grain and wealth and follows the life of worldly people.
- the *yāyāvāra* is one who subsists by the best of livelihood, viz. picking up grains that fall down when the corn that is reaped is taken to the house or threshing floor by the owner and who does not accumulate wealth or who does not earn his livelihood by officiating as priest, or by teaching or by accepting gifts.

<sup>266</sup> Viṣṇu Dh. S. (59.27-29) contains almost the same remarks as Manu. Vide Vas. VIII.14-16 (15 being identical with Manu VI.90).

<sup>267</sup> Vas. VII.17 (and X.31), Baud. Dh. S. II.2.1, Udyoga-parva 40.25

<sup>268</sup> śāntiparva 296.39 is the same as Manu VI.90.

<sup>269</sup> Vide also śānti 11.15, 23.2-5, Vanaparva. Chap 2.

<sup>270</sup> The word 'yāyāvāra' occurs in the Tai, S. V.2.1.7 — 'therefore the active man lords it over one who is easy going'; but here the word has not probably any technical sense.

Manu (IV.7) appears to divide brāhmaṇa householders into four varieties, viz. one who possesses enough to fill a granary or a store filling a corn jar, one who collects as much as will satisfy his needs for three days, or one who makes no provision for the morrow.<sup>271</sup> The Mit on Yaj. I, 128 says that 'śālīna' is of four varieties<sup>272</sup> viz.

- (1) one who maintains himself by officiating as a priest, teaching Veda, accepting gifts, agriculture, trade and breeding cattle,
- (2) one who subsists by the first three out of the above six
- (3) one who subsists by officiating as a priest and by teaching,
- (4) one who subsists by teaching alone.

In the Vaik. VIII.5 (=Vaik. Dh. S. I.5) householders are divided into four classes.<sup>273</sup>

- ❖ The first class (called *vārtā-vṛtti*) maintains itself by agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade.
- ❖ The second (*śālīna*) observes various *niyamas* (vide Yaj. III.313), offers *pāka-yajñas* (sacrifices of cooked food), kindles the śrauta fires, offers the *darśa* and *purnamāsa* sacrifices each half month, offers *cāturmāsya*s, in each half year offers an animal sacrifice and each year the soma sacrifice.
- ❖ The third (*yāyāvara*) is engaged in the six actions viz. offering sacrifices of havis and soma, officiating as priest at such sacrifices, studying the Veda and teaching it, making gifts and receiving them, constantly attends his fires (śrauta and smārta), and gives food to guests that come to him.
- ❖ The fourth (called *ghorācārika*, one whose rules are awfully difficult to observe) is observant of *niyamas*, offers sacrifices but does not officiate at others' sacrifices, studies the Veda but does not teach it, makes gifts but does not receive them, maintains himself on corn fallen in the fields etc., is absorbed in Nārāyaṇa, performs agnihotra in the morning and evening, in Margasīrsa and Jyeṣṭha performs observances that are like the edge of a sword and attends upon his fires with herbs from a forest.

It would be impossible to present in the space at our disposal all the details of the duties of the householder contained in the vast sources indicated below. Some of the usual, out standing or important matters alone can be dealt with here. Some of the works contain moral exhortations to the householder. For example, the Anuśāsana-parva (141.25-26) says:—

Non-violence, truthfulness, compassion towards all beings, quiescence, charity according to one's ability this is the best dharma for a grhastha (householder). Non-contact with the wives of others, guarding one's wife and deposit (made by another), abstaining from taking what is not given (by the owner), avoiding honey and meat this five-fold dharma has many branches and gives rise to happiness.'

Dakṣa (II.66-67) also has similar provisions. But such moral exhortations (called *sādhāraṇa dharmas*) have already been discussed above (pp.3-11).

<sup>271</sup> Vide śāntiparva 244.1-4 and Laghu-Viṣṇu II, 17 for similar statements.

<sup>272</sup> Manu IV.9 (as interpreted by the Mit.) refers to these four varieties. The Āp.Sr. (V.3.22) distinguishes between *śālīna* and *yāyāvara*. The Baud. gr. III.5.4 refers to *yāyāvara*.

<sup>273</sup> These four names occur also in Brhat-Parasara p.290 (Jivananda's ed.). In numerous smṛtis, Purāṇas and digests the duties of householders have been described in detail. For example, vide Gaut. V and IX, Āp. Dh. S. II.1. 1-II.4.9, Vas. Dh. S. VIII.1-17 and XL 1-48, Manu IV, Yaj. I.96-127, Viṣṇu Dh. S.60-71, Dakṣa II, Vedavyasa III, Markandeya-Purāṇa 29-30 and 34, Nrsimha-Purāṇa 58.45-106, Kurma Purāṇa (uttarardha chap.15-16), Lahu-Harīta IV. p.183 ff (Jiva nanda), Dronaparva 82, Vana-parva 2.53-63, Asvamedhika 45.16-25, Anuśāsana-parva 97. Among the digests may be mentioned the Sm. 0. (I. pp.88-232), the Smṛtyarthasara (pp.18-48), the Madanaparijata (pp.204-345), the Grhastha-ratnakara, the Ahnikatattva of Raghunandana, the Vīramitrodaya (Ahnika-prakasa), the Smṛti-muktaphala (Ahnika-kanda).

From very ancient times there were several ways of dividing the day. Sometimes the word 'ahaḥ' is distinguished from night and sometimes it stands for the period from sunrise to sunrise (and includes day and night). For example, in Rig. VI.9.1 we have the dark day (i.e. night) and the bright day (i.e. the period when there is light). This part (viz. the period of sunlight) is divided some times into two parts viz. *pūrvahṇa* (period before noon) and *aparāhṇa* (the time after noon).<sup>274</sup>

Day-time is also divided into three parts, morning, midday and evening, which correspond to the three libations of Soma juice in *prataḥ-savana*, *mādhyandina-savana* and *trīya-savana*.<sup>275</sup>

The day (of 12 hours) was often divided into five parts<sup>276</sup>, viz. *prātaḥ* or *udaya* (sunrise), *saṅgava*,<sup>277</sup> *mādhyandina* or *madhyahna* (mid-day), *aparāhna* (afternoon) and *sāyāhna* or *asta-gamana* or *sāyam* (evening). Each of these five parts of day time will be equal to three muhūrtas. In some smṛtis and Purānas these five parts are mentioned and defined; e.g. in the Prajāpati-smṛti, vv.156-157, Matsya Purāṇa 22.82-84, 124.88-90, Vayu 50.170-174.

The whole day of twenty-four hours was divided into 30 *muhūrtas*.<sup>278</sup> The Tai. Br. III.10.1 gives the names of the 15 muhūrtas of day-time, such as Citra, Ketu &c. The Madanapārijāta p.496 quotes Vyasa for the fifteen parts of the day.

The smṛtis however generally divide day-time into 8 parts. Dakṣa II.4-5 divides the day into 8 parts and then treats at length about the duties to be performed during those 8 parts. Katyayana divides day-time into eight parts and asks the king to assign three parts after the first to the investigation of judicial proceedings. That this was a very ancient division follows from several considerations. Kauṭilya divides the day and night each into eight parts and prescribes what the king is to do in the eight parts of the day and also in the eight parts of the night.

The principal matters to be discussed under *āhnikā* are:—

1. *utthāpana* (getting up from bed),
2. *śauca* (bodily purity),
3. *danta-dhāvana* (brushing the teeth),
4. *snāna* (bath), *sandhya* (morning prayers),
5. *tarpaṇa*, (libations)
6. the five *mahā-yajñas* (Great Sacrifices — including *brahma-yajña* and honouring guests),
7. *homa* (attending on fire),
8. *bhojana* (mid-day meal),
9. obtaining wealth, studying and teaching,
10. evening sandhya,
11. charity,
12. going to bed,
13. performing sacrifices at certain stated times.

The Parāśara smṛti I.39 summarises the most important six (principal) daily duties as:—

1. bathing,
2. performing the sandhya prayers,
3. japa & homa,
4. puja —worship of gods

<sup>274</sup> Vide Rig. X.34.11, Manu III.278.

<sup>275</sup> Vide Rig. III.53.8 where these three parts of the day are mentioned when Indra comes to drink Soma for a muhūrta each time and III.28.1, 4 and 5 (where all three savanas are named) and III.32.1, III.52.5-6.

<sup>276</sup> Vide Aparārka p.465 (on Yaj. I.226) where a śruti passage and verses from Vyasa are quoted about these five parts.

<sup>277</sup> *saṅgava* is the time of milking the cows after they return from grazing pastures to which they were taken at dawn.

<sup>278</sup> vide Sat. Br. XII.3.2.5, S, B. E. vol.44, p.169 where the year is said to have 10800 muhūrtas (360x30).



5. atithi satkāra —honouring of guests,
6. vaiśvadeva

Manu (IV.152=Anuśāsana parva 104.23) also enumerates in one place the principal daily actions that must be got through in the morning viz. answering calls of nature, toilet, bathing, brushing the teeth, applying eye-liner to the eyes and worship of the gods.

### 1. Getting up from bed.

Although as stated in the Surya-siddhanta the day was calculated from sunrise, daytime for practical purposes was extended for a short time before sunrise and after sunrise. According to the Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa the four *naḍīs* (or ghatikas) before sunrise and the four *naḍīs* after sunset are included in daytime (*dina*) i.e. when a man takes his bath before sunrise on a particular day that bath is one for the day that is to begin after he takes his bath. Several smṛtis like Manu IV.92, Yaj. I.115 enjoin that a man should get up from bed at the *brāhma-muhūrta*, should reflect over dharma and *artha* that he would seek to attain that day and over the bodily efforts that he would have to undergo for securing his object and think out the real meaning of Vedic injunctions.

Kulluka and others say that the word *muhūrta* in Manu IV.92 means only time generally and not a period of two *ghaṭikas* and that it is called *brāhma* because that is a time when one's intelligence and one's power to compose a literary work are at their best. The Par. M. (1.1. p.220) 182 says that there are two *muhūrtas* in the half watch before sunrise, the first of the two is called *brāhma* and the second *raudra*. Pitāmaha quoted in the Sm. 0, (I. p.88) says that the last watch of the night is called '*brāhma muhūrta*'.

From very early times getting up before sunrise was prescribed specially for a student and generally for everyone. Gaut.23.21 says that if the sun rose while a brahmacārin was asleep he should stand up the whole day without food and mutter the Gāyatrī throughout the day (as a penance) and if the sun set while he was asleep he should sit up the whole night engaged in muttering the Gāyatrī. Āp. Dh. S. II 5.12.13-14 and Manu II, 220-221 contain similar rules and they employ the word '*abhinirmukta*' (or *abhinimrukta*) to denote one who is asleep when the sun sets.

The Gobhila smṛti (in verse) 1.139 says that on getting up one should wash one's eyes. In the Rig vidhāna it is ordained that on getting up one should wipe one's eyes with water after reciting Rig, X.73.11 the latter half of which says:— 'remove away from us darkness, fulfil our eyes and release us who are as if bound with snares'. The Sm. C. (I. p.88) quotes the Kurma Purāṇa to the effect that on getting up from sleep some time before sunrise one should contemplate on God. The Ahnika-prakasa (p.16) quotes five verses from the Vamana Purāṇa (14.23-27) which are to be recited on getting up as a morning hymn, one of which is quoted below.1522 These verses are repeated even now by some old people. Some works say that he who repeats the four verses called Bharata-savitṛī in the morning obtains the reward of hearing the whole Mahābhārata and attains the highest Brahma.

The Ahnika-tattva (p.327) quotes a verse to be repeated on getting up from bed in which the serpent Karkotaka, Damayanti, kings Nala and Rtuparna are remembered for removing the effects of Kali, and the Smṛtimuktaphala quotes a verse about Nala, Yudhisthira, Sita and Kṛṣṇa as *punya-śloka* (singing of whose glory is holy). The Ācāra-ratna (p.10 a) states that one should repeat the names of certain famous and long-lived (*cirajīvins*) personages viz. Aśvatthaman, Bali, Vyasa, Hanuman, Vibhīšana, Kṛpa, Paraurama and Markandeya and also the names of five holy women, Ahalya, Draupadī, Sita, Tara and Mandodarī. Even now old men brought up in the orthodox ways repeat these names on getting up.

In some works it is said that if on getting up a man sees a brāhmaṇa learned in the Veda, a lady

whose husband is living, a cow, an altar where fire is kindled, he becomes free from adversities and that if a man sees on getting up in the morning a very sinful man, a widow, an untouchable, one naked, one whose nose is cut off, that is an indication of kali (misfortune or strife).

Paraśara XII.47 says that one who has built the fire altar (for Vedic sacrifices), a dark-brown cow, one who is engaged in a sattra (or performed it), the king, an ascetic, the ocean these purify a man the moment they are seen, so one should see them always.

## 2. Morning ablutions. (mūtra-puriṣotsarga)

Then the next act is to answer the calls of nature. Very detailed rules are laid down about these even in the most ancient sūtras and smṛtis. Many of the rules are simply hygienic, but as religion, rules of law, of morality, of health and hygiene are mixed up in the ancient works, they are given in works on dharma. Even in the Atharva Veda (XIII.1.56) it is said:– 'I cut off thy root who kick a cow with the foot or who urinate opposite the sun (facing the sun); thou shall not further cast a shadow.' Urinating while standing seems to have been condemned in the time of the Atharva Veda; vide VII.102 (107):– 'I shall urinate standing erect; let not the lords harm me.'

The rules regarding answering the call so nature may be summarised as follows:<sup>279</sup> one should not pass urine or faeces on the road, on ashes, on cow dung, in ploughed or sown fields, under the shade of trees, in rivers or water, on grassy or beautiful spots, on bricks made ready for erecting altars, on mountain-tops, near dilapidated shrines or cow-pens, on ant-hills, in cemeteries or in holes, on threshing floors, on sandy shores. Nor should one answer calls of nature looking at or facing fire, the sun, the moon, a brāhmaṇa, water, the image of some god, cow, wind. Nor should one do these acts on the bare ground, but on ground covered with dry twigs or leaves or grass or loose earth. One should cover one's head and should face the north by day or when there is twilight and face the south at night, but when there is a danger one may face any direction, One should not urinate while standing or walking (Manu. IV.47) nor should one speak while doing so. One should answer calls of nature away from a human habitation towards the south or south-west. After answering calls of nature, one should perform cleansing the parts with water held in a pot and lumps of earth to such an extent that no smell or filth will stick.<sup>280</sup>

One lump of earth is to be applied to the penis, three to the arms, ten to the left hand and seven to both hands, three to both feet together.<sup>281</sup> This is the extent of śauca required for householders, and for brahmacārin, forest hermit and sannyāsin, twice, thrice and four times as much is required. The Mit. on Yaj. I.17 remarks that for all āśramas the cleansing required is only as much as will remove foul smell and filth and the several numbers of lumps of earth prescribed in different smṛtis are only prescribed for unseen (or spiritual) results. Gaut. I.45-46, Vas. III.48 and Manu V.134 say that cleansing of the body is to be so effected first with water and then with earth that foul smell and filth will be totally removed. Devala (quoted in the Gr. E. p.147) says that respectable people do not emphasize the number of times mentioned in the smṛtis, but they say that cleansing should be carried on till one feels that it is alright.

The Smṛtyārthasāra (p.19) following Dakṣa V.12 says that at night only half of the śauca prescribed for the day is required, only one-fourth of it is prescribed for the ailing and only one-eighth when a person is on a journey and that no special number of lumps of earth are prescribed for women, Śūdras, boys whose upanayana has not been performed. In cleansing one is not to employ stones,

<sup>279</sup> Gaut. IX.13, 15, 37-43, Āp. Dh. S. I.11.30.15-30 and I.11, 31.1-3, Vas. Dh. S. VI.10-19 and XII.11-13, Manu IV.45-52, 56, 151, Yaj. L 16-17, 134, 154, Viṣṇu Dh. S.60.1-26, Saṅkha, 1528 Vayu Purāṇa 78.59-64 and 79.25-31, Vamana Purāṇa 14.30-32

<sup>280</sup> Manu V.126 and Yaj. I.17

<sup>281</sup> According to Manu V.136 and 137 and Viṣṇu Dh. S.60.25-26

clods of earth, and green twigs cut off for the purpose from herbs and trees,<sup>282</sup> nor is one to use earth from inside a river or water reservoir or from a temple, from an ant-hill or from the hiding places of rats or from dung-hills or what is left after being used for a prior cleansing (Vas. Dh. S. VI.17) nor what is taken from a road or cemetery, nor should one use earth that has worms, coals, or bones or gravel in it. Dakṣa V.7 prescribes that for the first time as much earth as will fill half of the outstretched hand and for the second time half of that is to be taken and so on. The lump of earth should not be bigger than a myrobalan fruit (Kurma Purāṇa in Sm. C. I. p.182). One is not to answer calls of nature with the shoes on (Āp. Dh. S. I.11.30.18) and one's yajñopavīta should be suspended from the right ear or he should throw it on his back in the *nivīta* form. According to Yaj.1.16 the yajñopavīta should be suspended from the right ear only. Vanaparva 59.2 describes that kali (the principle of evil and strife) entered Nala when the latter did not wash his feet after urinating.

This cleansing of the body in the morning is only a part of general *śauca*. Śauca is according to Gaut. VIII.24 one of the ātma-gunas. Even the Rig. (in VII.56.12 and other verses) appears to emphasize cleanliness (*śucitva*).<sup>1554</sup> According to Harīta:—

'*śauca* is the first path to dharma, it is the resting place of brahma (Veda), the abode of śrī (prosperity), the means of clearing (or soothing) the mind, the favourite of gods, the means of realizing the Atman and the awakener of intelligence.'

Śauca is of two kinds,<sup>283</sup> *bāhya* (outward) and *antara* or *abhyantara* (inward), the first being effected by water and sand, and the latter is the purity of one's sentiments. Harīta divides the first into three, that of:—

1. *kula* (being free from impurity due to birth or death in the family),
2. *artha* (i.e. of the vessels and things to be used in all matters) and of
3. *śarīra* (of one's body);

Harīta divides *abhyantara* into five :—

- (1) *manasā* (mental),
- (2) *cakṣuṣā* (of the eye i.e. not looking at things that should not be looked at),
- (3) *ghrāṇya* (of the nose),
- (4) *vācya* (of speech),
- (5) *svādya* (of the tongue).

According to a verse quoted by Haradatta on Gaut. VIII.24 śauca is of four kinds:

- (1) of *dravya* (the vessels and things employed by one),
- (2) of the mind,
- (3) of speech and
- (4) of the body.

There are twelve *malas* (filthy exudations or impurities) of the human body,<sup>284</sup> viz. fat, semen, blood, marrow, urine, faeces, mucus of the nose, ear-wax, phlegm, tears, rheum of eyes, and sweat; and the first six of these are removed by water and sand and the latter six by water (Atrī v.32).

After performing śauca one has to rinse the mouth with twelve mouthfuls (*gaṇḍūṣa*) of water (vide Smṛtimuktaphala, ahnika p.220). When one finishes the purification of the body by washing the hands and feet and by rinsing the mouth one has to engage in *ācamana*. A good deal has been said about *ācamana* under upanayana. Ācamana (sipping water) is to be done after tying the top-knot

<sup>282</sup> Ap, Dh. S. I.11.30.30, Gaut. IX.15

<sup>283</sup> Baud. Dh. S. III.1.26, Harīta, Dakṣa V.3 and Vyaghrapada (quoted in Sm. C. I. p.93)

<sup>284</sup> According to Manu V.135, Viṣṇu Dh. S.22.81, Atrī v.31

and tucking up the garment from behind; the water is to be poured in the hollowed palm of the hand in such a quantity that a grain of *māṣa* (bean) will be plunged in it and the three fingers except the thumb and the small one are to be joined together and the water is to be drunk from that part of the hand which is called *brahma-tīrtha*.

When there is difficulty of getting water and an occasion for purification by *ācamana* arises,<sup>285</sup> one should touch one's right ear. One matter to be noticed is that according to the Apastamba-smṛti (in verse) the procedure of *ācamana* is of four kinds, viz. *paurānika* (in which each sipping of water is accompanied by the names, Kesava, Narāyana, Madhava etc.); *smārta* (as laid down in the smṛtis like Manu II.60 ff), *āgama* (i.e. taught in the Tantric digests of Saiva and Vaisnava sects) and *śrauta* (laid down in the Śrauta-sūtras for Vedic sacrifices. The first of these four is the method usually followed now by most brāhmaṇas.

### 3. Danta-dhāvana (brushing the teeth).

*Danta-dhāvana* comes after *śauca* and *ācamana* and before *snāna* (bath).<sup>286</sup> The practice of daily *danta-dhāvana* has existed in India from the most ancient times. The Tai. S. (II.5.1.7) when enumerating the actions which a *rajasvalā* (a menstruating woman) was to avoid mentions *danta-dhāvana* among them and remarks that if she indulges in it during that period, she gives birth to a son whose teeth are naturally black. *danta-dhāvana* is an independent act by itself performed for rendering the body (here the mouth) clean and it is not an *aṅga* (a subordinate constituent part) of bath or morning prayer.

Āp. Dh. S. I.2.8.5 forbids one who has returned from his teacher's home after finishing his studies to engage in the sight of his teacher in such acts of pleasure as cleansing the teeth, shampoo the body and combing the hair and also forbids the study of the Veda while such actions are going on (ibid. I.3.11.10-12). The brahmacārin was not to engage in the leisurely actions of brushing the teeth (but was to rinse his mouth) according to Gaut. II.19 and Vas. Dh. S. VII.15.

In *danta-dhāvana* one has to take the twig (with its bark) of certain trees, crush the end of the twig with his teeth so as to make a brush of it and then to cleanse his teeth with the brush-like end. According to Gobhila-smṛti (which is also called Chandoga-parisiṣṭa in some works) if a man only rinses his mouth with river water or at home, he has not to repeat a mantra, but if he uses a twig he has to repeat a mantra:— 'Oh tree, bestow on me long life, strength, fame, brilliance, offspring, cattle, wealth, brahma (Veda), memory and intelligence.'

In the Par. gr. II.6 and Āp. gr.12.6 brushing of the teeth with an udumbara twig is prescribed in Samavartana with a mantra:—

'may you be ready for food; here comes the king Soma; may he clean my mouth with glory and good luck.'

Therefore the same mantra is to be employed every day after samavartana. In some of the digests (like the Ahnika-prakasa pp.121-122) it is stated that that mantra may be employed by the students of the Sukla Yajur Veda, while those who study the Gobhila gṛhya may use the mantra '*āyurbalam* etc'.

Very detailed rules are laid down about the length of the twig, about the trees the twigs of which are allowed or forbidden, about the days or occasions or times on which there is to be no *danta-dhāvana*. A few of these details are given below.

<sup>285</sup> Very elaborate rules are laid down in the digests on the subject of *ācamana* (e.g. Sm. C. I. pp.95-104), Smṛti-mukte-phala, Ahnika-prakasa pp.221-240, Ahnika-tattva pp.333-344. Gr. K. pp.150-172 etc., which have to be all passed over for want of space.

<sup>286</sup> Vide Yaj.1.98 and Dakṣa II.6.

Trees having thorns on their trunk or from which a milky fluid oozes out when a twig is broken off are allowed and so are vaṭa, asana, arka, khadira, karañja, badara, sarja, nimba (lemon), arimeda, apamarga, malatī, kakubha, bilva, āmra (mango), punnaga, sirīṣa and further the twig must be astringent, pungent or bitter in taste and not sweet or sour.<sup>287</sup>

Before the advent of the modern toothpastes people in India followed these directions and even now many even in the cities still follow them and brush their teeth with twigs of various trees. Among the trees which are not to be used for *danta-dhāvana* are palaśa, slesmataka, ariṣṭa, vibbītaka, dhava, bandhuka, nirguḍī, Sigru, tilva, tinduka, inguda, guggulu, samī, pilu, pippala, kovidara etc. (Viṣṇu Dh. S.61.1-5).

The twig may be undried or dried, but one dried on the tree itself is not to be taken (Viṣṇu Dh. S.61.8, Nrsimha Purāṇa 58.46). One must brush the teeth facing north or east, but not west or south (Viṣṇu Dh. S.61.12-13). Viṣṇu Dh. S. (61.16-17) prescribes that the twig should be as big as the end of one's small finger and twelve aṅgulas in length and it should be washed before its use and after using it, it should not be cast off in an impure place. There are various opinions about the length of the twig employed. The Nrsimha Purāṇa (58.49.50) says that it may be of eight aṅgulas in length or a span in length (*prādesa*); Garga (quoted in Sm.C.I. p.105) says that the twig should be 10, 9, 8, 7 or 4 aṅgulas in length respectively for the four varṇas and women. One was not to cleanse one's teeth with pieces of brick or with clods of earth or with stones or with the bare fingers (except the thumb and the finger next to the small finger).

According to Laghu-Harīta (Jivananda I. p.183) and Nrsimha Purāṇa 58.50-52 there is to be no brushing of the teeth with a twig on the 1st tithi, the parva tithis (i. e. new moon, full moon, 8th day, 14th day and the day on which the Sun enters a new zodiacal sign, according to Viṣṇu-Purāṇa III.11, 118), on the 6th tithi and 9th tithi and on those days when twigs are not available one may rinse one's mouth with twelve mouthfuls of water. Paithīnasi (quoted in the Sm. 0. I. p.106) says 'one may brush one's teeth with grass, leaves and water and with the fingers except the 4th finger.' One may also cleanse with mouthfuls of water when one has no teeth (Ahnika-prakasa, p.127). One may also rub one's tongue with these or with a twig on the days on which it is allowed. There is to be no *danta-dhāvana* on srāddha day (for the performer), on the day of a sacrifice, when one is observing *niyama* or when the husband has gone to another country, when there is indigestion, on marriage day, on a fast or a vrata (Smṛtyārthasāra p.25). Viṣṇu 155a Dh. S.61.16 prescribes *danta-dhāvana* not only in the morning but also after taking one's meal. This, as stated by Devala, is intended for removing particles of food sticking to the teeth or the gums.

#### 4. Snāna — Bathing

After *danta-dhāvana* comes snāna. As ācamana, snāna (bath), japa (muttering of holy Vedic texts), homa and other rites are to be performed after holding kuśa grass in the right hand some remarks must be offered on kuśas, The Kurma Purāṇa says:—

'Whatever action is done without *darbha* or without *yajñopavīta*, it becomes useless and brings no reward here or in the next world' (quoted in Kṛtya-ratnakara p.47).

Śātatāpa says:—

'in *japa*, *homa*, *dāna*, *svadhyāya* (study of the Veda) or in *pitṛ-tarpaṇa* one should have in his hand gold, silver and kuśas'.

One should have at the time of ācamana etc. a *pavitra* (a ring-like loop) of *darbhas* in his right hand

<sup>287</sup> Vide Brhat Samhita of Varahamihira chap.85, Laghu-Harīta (Jivananda part 1, p.183), Laghu-Vyasa I 17-18, NrsimhaPurāṇa 58.47.

or in both his hands on the finger next to the small one or have kuśa in his right hand. There were several views about wearing a *pavitra* or *darbhas*, as stated in note. The *darbha* grass is to be collected on the darśa day (new moon) in the month of Srāvana and the *darbhas* so collected are never stale and may be used again and again. The *pavitra* of the four varṇas should be made with 4 *darbhas* or with 3, 2, or 1 respectively or it should be made with two *darbhas* for all (Smṛtyārthasāra pp.36-37).

Those *darbha* blades from which no further blades shoot forth are called simply *darbhas*, blades from which fresh ones sprout forth are called *kuśas*, blades with their roots are called *kutapas* and those the tips of which are cut off are called *tṛṇa* (grass). The *darbha* grass growing in a field of śeṣame and having seven blades is very auspicious. The *darbhas* to be used in yajñas should be green in colour, yellowish for use in pāka-yajñas they should be with roots when used in rites for the pitṛs and variegated when used in vaiśvadeva. Those *darbhas* that were held in the hand at the time of offering pindas to the dead or in sraddhas or in pitṛtarpaṇa or at the time of urination or voiding faeces should be thrown away (Smṛtyārthasāra p.37). If kuśa grass is not available, then kāśa or dūrva may be employed instead.

The subject of snāna can be treated from various points of view. Snāna is either *mukhya* (principal) or *gauna* (secondary), the first being a bath with water and the second being without water. Each of these is again subdivided into various kinds. According to Dakṣa II.48 *snāna* is *nitya* (obligatory every day), *naimittika* (to be performed on certain occasions), and *kāmya* (to be performed only if one desires certain rewards). All the varṇas have to bathe in or with water every day the whole body together with the head also<sup>288</sup> and *dvijātis* have to do it with Vedic mantras. This is *nitya* which is required to be done daily, because a person who has not bathed is not entitled to perform homa, japa and other rites.<sup>289</sup> The body is dirty and from it ooze various exudations day and night and a bath in the morning cleanses and purifies the body. In this way snāna has seen and unseen (i.e. spiritual) results.

Some works<sup>290</sup>, prescribe two baths a day for brāhmaṇa house-holder, one before day-break and another at noon. There is only one bath a day for brahmacārins, two for forest hermits (Manu VI.6). According to Manu VI.22 and Yaj. III.48 the forest hermit has to bathe thrice (in the morning, at noon and in the evening) and a *yati* has also to bathe thrice. Though even now some orthodox brāhmaṇa householders do have two baths a day, the usual rule for all Hindus (including even the so called ‘untouchables’) is to bathe once a day, which also has been the general rule for centuries (vide Smṛtyārthasāra p.26 ‘*sarve vāpi sakṛt kuryur*’). Snāna is usually done now before noon, that in the early morning being done only by a *yati*, one observing a vrata, a brahmacārin, sacrificial priests, students of the Veda and those engaged in austerities (Smṛtyārthasāra p.27).

The morning bath is to be taken immediately after brushing the teeth before day-break when one sees the eastern direction lit up by the morning rays of the rising sun (Viṣṇu 1581 Dh. S.64.8). Gobhila-smṛti (II.24) says that one should not drag out the process of taking the morning bath (by repeating too many mantras) as it would come in the way of performing the morning homa at the proper time, which is between the first appearance of light and the sun's reaching about one cubit above the eastern horizon.<sup>291</sup>

The madhyāhna (midday) bath is to be taken in the fourth part of the day-time divided into eight parts<sup>292</sup> and one has to bring together loose earth, cow-dung, flowers, whole rice grains, kuśas, śeṣame and sandal wood paste. This midday bath is not to be performed by one who is ill. The third

<sup>288</sup> Baud. Dh. S. II.4.4, Manu II.176 and IV.82

<sup>289</sup> Saṅkha VIII.2, Dakṣa II.9

<sup>290</sup> Yaj. I.95, 100, Laghu-Asvalayana I.16, 75, Dakṣa II.9 and 43 etc

<sup>291</sup> Gobhila I.122-123). Vide Manu II.15 also

<sup>292</sup> Dakṣa II.43, Laghu-Vyasa II.9

bath (in the case of forest hermits and yatis) is to be performed before sunset, but not after sun-set or at night. No bathing is allowed for any one at night except when there is an eclipse or the sun passes into the zodiacal signs of Cancer and Capricorn (at night), a marriage, a birth or death or when a vrata is undertaken with some object. Night means specially the two middle watches.<sup>293</sup>

The obligatory (*nitya*) bath is to be taken with cold water and ordinarily hot water is not allowed. Saṅkha (VIII. 9-10) says that if one bathes with heated water or in water belonging to another individual, he may effect the cleansing of the body but he would not secure the unseen spiritual result of a bath. *Naimittika* and *kāmya* baths must be performed with cold water, there is an option only as to *nitya* (daily obligatory) bath.<sup>294</sup>

Most *smṛtikāras*<sup>295</sup> say that one must daily bathe in natural water, i.e. in rivers, in tanks connected with temples, in lakes, in deep reservoirs and in mountain springs. One should not bathe in water belonging to an individual (i.e. a well or reservoir dug or dammed by him etc.) but if no water is other wise available one may bathe with such water after removing three or five lumps of clay (from the bottom of the reservoir) or three or five jars from the well. The idea is that either the private owner would participate in the merit of the bath (as Baud, Dh. S. II.3.7 remarks) or that the bather incurs a fourth part of the sin of the owner of the water (Manu IV.201-202). If no such water is available or one is unable to go to a river etc. for a bath one may bathe in the court-yard of one's house with water drawn in a vessel (from a well etc.) till his clothes are wetted. The words '*nadī*' and '*garta*' (used in Manu IV.203) are defined as follows: a *nadī*' (river) is one that has a stream of water at least 8000 bows in length, while all other streams are called *garta* (a pool). As in the months of Sravana and Bhadrapada all rivers are full of mud (*rajasvalā* is used in a double sense) one should not bathe in them in those months, except in rivers that directly reach the sea. But even in these months one may bathe in muddy rivers at the time of *upakarma* or *utsarga*, or on the death of a person or on the eclipse of the sun or the moon. Viṣṇu Dh. S.64.17 says that out of water drawn in a pot, water standing in a reservoir, a spring, a river, water in which noble men of the past bathed, Ganges water, each succeeding one is holier than each preceding one for a bath.

The actual bath is described differently in different sūtras, *smṛtis* and digests. Gobhila-*smṛti* (1.137) says that the morning bath contains the same procedure as the mid-day bath. The morning bath has to be brief, as already stated, in the case of one who has consecrated the śrauta fires. The procedure of bathing will be indicated by a few brief extracts. The Viṣṇu Dh. S. (64.18-22) says:—

'having removed the dirt from his body with water and loose earth, he should plunge in water, he should invoke the water with the three verses '*āpo hi ṣṭha*' (Rig. X.9.1-3), with the four verses '*hiranyavarṇaḥ*' (Tai. S. V.6.1.1-2) and with the verse '*idam āpaḥ pravahata*' (Rig. I.23.22 or X, 9.8). Then while still plunged in water he should thrice mutter the Aghamaṣana hymn (Rig. X.190.1-3, *ṛtam ca satyam* etc.) or he may mutter '*tad visnoḥ paramam padam*' (Rig. I.22.20) or the Drupada Savitrī verse (Yaj. S.20.20) or the anuvāka beginning with '*yuñjate mana*' (Rig. V.81.1-5) or the *Puruṣa-sukta* (Rig. X.90.1-16). 1 Having bathed he should, with his garment still wet, perform tarpaṇa of gods and Manes while still in the water, But if he has changed his clothes, then he may do it (*tarpaṇa*) after coming out of the water'.

Even now many brāhmaṇas mutter the *Puruṣa-sukta* while bathing. Saṅkha-*smṛti* (IX) has a brief description of snāna which consists in invoking water, then mārjana with the three verses ('*āpo hi ṣṭha*'), then repeating certain Vedic verses like '*hiranya-varṇaḥ*', '*śanno devīr*', '*sam na apah*' (Atharva Veda I.6.1 and 4) and thrice repeating *Aghamaṣana*.<sup>296</sup>

The Snāna-sūtra of Katyayana says:—

<sup>293</sup> Manu IV.129, Kulluka thereon and Parāśara XII.27

<sup>294</sup> Garga quoted in the Sm. C. I. p.123

<sup>295</sup> Manu IV.203, Viṣṇu Dh. S.64.1-2 and 15-16, Yaj. I.159, Dakṣa II.43, Veda-Vyasa-*smṛti* III.7-8, Saṅkha VIII. 11 and others

<sup>296</sup> Vide Madanaparījata pp.270-271, Gr. R. pp.206-208 and Par. M. I.1. pp.274-275 where the whole of Saṅkha (IX) is quoted.

"Now then will be treated the daily obligatory bath in a river and the like. Having fetched loose earth, cow-dung, śeṣame, kuśas and flowers, having approached the water side, having placed (the above) materials on a pure spot, having washed one's hands and feet, holding kuśa blades (or *pavitra*) in his hand, tying up his top knot and wearing the *yajñopavīta*, he should perform *ācamana* and invoke the water with the verse '*urum hi*' (Rig. I.24.8= Vaj. B.8.23), stir it (with his thumb) with the verses '*ye te śatam*' (vide Par. gr. I.2). He should fill his joined hands with water with the verse '*sumitriya nah*' (Vaj. S. VI.22) and should cast it on the ground with the verse '*durmitriya*' (Vaj. S. VI.22) in the direction of his enemy. He should apply loose earth thrice to each of the limbs, viz, the waist, the abdomen, thighs, feet and hands, then perform *ācamana*, should do obeisance to the water and should smear his body with loose earth. Facing the sun with the verse – '*idam visnur*' (Rig. I.22.17 = Vaj. S.5.15), he should dive into the water and bathe with the verse – '*apo asmān*' (Rig. X.17.10 = Vaj. S. IV.2), then raise up his body with the mantra – '*ud-id-ābhyah*' (Vaj. S. IV.2), again dip into water and again raise his head out of the water, perform *ācamana* and smear his body with cow-dung with the mantra – '*mā nastoke*.' (Rig. I.114.1 = Vaj. S.16.16). Then he should bathe with the four mantras – '*imam me Varuna*' (Vaj. S.21, 1-4), and with the verses – '*mā āpo*', '*uduttamam*' (Vaj. S.12.12), '*muñcantu*', (Rig. X.97.16 = Vaj. S.12.90), '*avabhrtha*' (Vaj. S. III.48). At the end of these mantras he should dive into the water and then rise up out of it, perform *ācamana* and sprinkle with *darbha* blades his body with the nine verses, viz. the three beginning with '*apo hi stha*' (Rig. X.9.1-3 = Vaj. S.11.50-52), '*idam-apah*' (Vaj. S. VI.17), with the two verses '*havismatīr*' (Vaj. S. VI.23) and '*devīrāpah*' (Vaj. S.1.12), '*āpo devah*' (Vaj. S. X.1), '*drupadad-iva*' (Vaj. S.20.20), '*śan-no devīr*' (Vaj. S.35.12), '*apām rasam*' (Vaj. S.9.3), '*apo devīh*', and '*punantu mā*'. Then he should repeat thrice, while diving in water, the *Aghamarsana* hymn (Rig. X.190.1-3) preceded by the mantra '*cit patir-mā*' (Vaj. S.4.4), by the syllable om, by the *vyāhrtis*, by the *Gāyatrī* and followed by the same; or he may repeat the verse '*drupadad-iva*' (Vaj. S.20.20) or the three verses '*ayam gauh*' (Rig. X.189.1-3 = Vaj. S.3.6) or he should perform *pṛāṇyāma* with the *Śiras* (viz, *āpo jyotī raso mṛtam brahma* etc. cited above on p.304 from Tai. A. X.15) or he should repeat simply 'om' thrice or he should only contemplate on *Viṣṇu*. Having come out of the water, he should put on two washed garments, should wash his hands and thighs with loose earth, should perform *ācamana* and then *pranayama* thrice".

Yogi-Yajñavalkya quoted by Aparārka and other works says that when a man is unable to perform the elaborate *snāna* described by himself and others, he should engage only in this; he should invoke the water, then perform *ācamana*, then *mārjana* (sprinkling water on body with kuśa blades) and then *snāna* and muttering of *Aghamarsana* Rig, X, 190.1-3) thrice. The Gr.R. (pp.215-217) quotes the method of *snāna* according to the *Padma Purāṇa* and the *Nrsimha Purāṇa* and remarks that the procedure in the *Padma Purāṇa* may be observed by all *varṇas* and by men following all the different Vedic schools (except the Vedic mantras in the case of *Śūdras*). The *Smṛtyārthasāra* (p.28) also gives a brief procedure of *snāna*.

There are certain rules to be observed when bathing. One was not to bathe naked<sup>297</sup>, nor with all clothes on (but only with the lower garment) nor after taking one's meal (Manu 4.29); one was not to rub the body in water but outside on the bank, one should not strike the water with one's foot or hand or dash a portion of the water against the rest. The earth to be employed (like soap) for cleansing the body was to be obtained from a pure place and not from an ant-hill or from places infested by mice, nor from under water, nor from the public road, nor from the bottom of a tree, nor from near temples, nor out of what was left by some person after using a portion for his own *śauca* and is to be invoked with two verses – '*aśvagrānte*' &c. 'Laghu-Harīta (v.70-71) says:–

'Earth secured after digging eight angulas from the surface should be used, all earth is pure which is taken from a place not frequented by people and that ten kinds of earth should not be used at the time of bathing' (verses 72-73).

<sup>297</sup> Gaut. IX.61 and Manu IV.45



The brahmacārin was not to bathe in a leisurely or sporting manner but to dive in water motionless like a stick.

The Mahābhārata, Dakṣa and others say that ten good consequences follow from snāna viz, strength, beauty, clearness of complexion and voice, (pleasant) touch and odour (of the body), purity, prosperity, delicacy and fine women.

Bathing with water is divided into six varieties by Saṅkha smṛti (VIII.1-11), Agni Purāṇa 155, 3-4 and others, viz. *nitya*, *naimittika*, *kāmya*, *kriyāṅga*, *malapakarṣana* (or *abhyaṅga-snāna*), *kriya-snāna*.

Nitya snāna (daily bath) has been described above. A few observations are made below on each of the others. On certain occasions or on coming in contact with certain persons or things one has to bathe, although one may have already bathed that day. This is called *naimittika* (due to some occasion or cause) snāna. For example, on the birth of a son, in a sacrifice (at the end), on the passing away of a relative, in eclipses, one has to bathe and even at night.<sup>298</sup> Similarly a man has to bathe with all his clothes on if he touches an outcast (who is guilty of one of the mortal sins), a caṇḍāla, a woman who has recently delivered, a woman in her monthly course, a corpse, or one who has touched a corpse or one who has touched another that has come in contact with a corpse or when a man follows a corpse.<sup>299</sup> According to some<sup>300</sup>, if a man vomits or has many purges (ten or more), if he has a shave or has a bad dream, has had sexual intercourse, if he visits a cemetery, or is covered with smoke from a funeral pyre or touches a sacrificial post or a human bone, he has to undergo a bath to purify himself. Āp. Dh. S. I 5.15.16 prescribes a bath if a man is bitten by a dog and Gaut. I 4.30 prescribes it even for touching it.

If a man touches Bauddhas, Paśupātas, Jainas, Lokāyatikas, atheists, dvijātis living by condemned actions and Śūdras he should bathe with his clothes on. The Mit. on Yaj. III.30, the Sm.C.I. pp.117-119 and other digests speak of snāna being necessary on coming in contact with several birds (like the crow) and animals (like the cock and village hog), which are passed over for want of space.

*Kāmya-snāna* (bath for some desired object) is that which is taken when one goes to a tīrtha (a sacred place) or when there is some astrological conjunction like the moon being in the constellation of *puṣya* (vide Saṅkha-smṛti VIII.4) or when one bathes in the morning in the two months of Magha and Phalguṇa for securing abundant pleasures.<sup>301</sup> When a man has to take a bath as a part of the religious rite such as the rite of dedicating a well, a temple, a park to the public, that is called *kriyāṅga-snāna*.

When a man applies oil to his body, uses myrobalans and engages in a bath solely for cleaning the body (and with no idea of performing an obligatory duty or securing religious merit) that is called *mala-pakarṣaka* or *abhyaṅga-snāna*. The Sm.C. I. p.125, Aparārka pp.195-196 and other works lay down elaborate rules about this snāna. One rule is that on certain tithis like parva (vide Manu IV 128 and Yaj I.79) there is to be no bath with oil etc. It is said that one desiring prosperity should use dried myrobalan (*āmalaka*) at the time of bath except on the 7th and 9th tithis and on parva days.<sup>302</sup>

When a man regards bathing at a sacred place the reward of his pilgrimage and engages in the procedure prescribed by Saṅkha-smṛti IX that is called *Kriya-snāna*.

A person who is ill may bathe with hot water or he may, if he cannot bear that, only wash his body except the head or his body may be rubbed with a wet piece of cloth. This last method is called

<sup>298</sup> Parāśara XII.26 and Devala quoted above

<sup>299</sup> Gaut.14.28-29, Vas.4.38, Manu V.85 and 103, Yaj. III.30, Laghu-Aśvalāyana 20.24

<sup>300</sup> Manu V.144, Saṅkha-smṛti VIII.3, Mark. purāna 34.82-83, Brahma Purāṇa 113.79, Parāśara XII.28

<sup>301</sup> Vide Sm. C. I. pp.122-123 for numerous examples

<sup>302</sup> Vide Vamana Purāṇa 14.49 ff. (quoted in Sm. C. I, p.125) for astrological rules.

*kapila-snāna*. There is another method where a man is ill and something happens on which it is absolutely necessary for him to bathe; in this case one who is not ill should touch him and then bathe himself and then again touch him and bathe; when this is repeated ten times the person who is ill is deemed to have become pure as if he had bathed.

In the case of a woman in her monthly course, if on the fourth day she has high fever, she is not to be bathed, but another woman is to touch her and bathe with all her clothes on and perform *ācamana* and touch her and bathe again; this is to be carried out ten or twelve times and in the end the clothes worn by the ailing woman are to be taken off and new ones to be given to her and she becomes clean.

The bath with water is called *Vārūna* (as Varuna is the lord of waters, according to Rig. VII.49.3 '*yāsām rāja Varuṇo*' etc.) and *Vārūna* is the principal kind of bath. There are six kinds of *gauna snānas* which may be employed when one is either ill and so unable as to undergo a regular bath or when there is no time or room to take a regular bath. These six (with *Vārūna* as the seventh) are enumerated and defined in *Yoga-yajñavalkya* and other works and they are: *mantra-snāna*, *bhauma*, *agneya*, *vāyavya*, *divya*, *mānasa*. Dakṣa II.15-16 and Parasara XII.9-11 mention these except *bhauma* and *mānasa* and employ the word *brāhma* in place of *mantra-snāna*. The Vaik. gr. (I.2 and 5) employs both words '*mantra*' and '*gurvanujñā*' as synonymous. Garga and Brhaspati omit *bhauma* and *mānasa* and speak of *sarasvata-snāna* instead, which consists in the blessing pronounced by a learned man in the case of a *dvijāti*, or a pupil or his son – 'may you have a bath with golden jars of Ganges water and of other sacred waters'.<sup>303</sup>

The *mantra-snāna* consists in sprinkling water with the verses '*āpo hi ṣṭha*' (Rig. X.9.1-3), the *bhauma* (or *pārthiva*) in smearing the body with loose earth, *agneya* in smearing the body with holy ashes, *vāyavya* in taking on the body the dust raised by the hoofs of cows, *divya* in wetting one's body with a shower of rain accompanied with sunshine and *mānasa* in reflecting on God Viṣṇu.

**Tarpaṇa** — (offering water to gods, sages and Manes)

*Tarpaṇa* is an *aṅga* (a subsidiary constituent part) of *snāna*, just as it is an *aṅga* in *brahma-yajña*. When a person plunges his whole body in water including the head, he has to perform *tarpaṇa* while still standing in the water.<sup>304</sup> He joins his two hands together, takes water in the joined hands and oasts the water into the stream in which he is standing. If he changes his clothes, then he may perform the *tarpaṇa* on the bank of the river. There was a difference of opinion about *tarpaṇa*. Some said 1590 that a man had to perform *tarpaṇa* as an *aṅga* of *snāna* immediately after it and before *sandhyā* prayer and then again the same day as an *aṅga* of *brahmayaajña*; while others held that *tarpaṇa* was to be performed only once in the day after *sandhya* prayer. One has to perform *tarpaṇa* according to the procedure prescribed in one's *Sākha* (Vedic school) but *Saṅkha* prescribes a brief *tarpaṇa* which consists in the words – 'may the universe from *Brahma* down to a bunch of grass be Satisfied' (or Satiated) and offering three *añjalis* (joined hands) of water. When he performs *tarpaṇa* standing in water, he should not wring the water from the ends of his garment until he has finished it. He should then wring the ends of his garment and the water so falling down is deemed to be meant for the sonless deceased persons born in the family of the bather and he has to repeat a verse to that effect. Further details of *tarpaṇa* are set out under *brahma-yajña* below.

After one takes a bath one was not to shake one's head (for getting rid of the water), nor should one rub off the water on one's body with one's hand or with the garment already worn by one; one has to cover one's head with a turban (to dry the hair) and wear two fresh garments already washed and dried (Viṣṇu Dh. S.64.9-13).

<sup>303</sup> vide *Ahnika-prakāśa* pp, 196-197

<sup>304</sup> Vide *Manu* II.176, *Viṣṇu Dh. S.*, 64.23-24, *Parasara* XII.12-13 for this.

## 5. Clothing

A few words must be said about the clothes to be worn by a householder. Weaving and woven cloth are frequently referred to in the Veda, generally in a metaphorical sense or in similes.<sup>305</sup> In Rig. VI.9.2-3, both warp (*tantu*) and woof (*otu*) are mentioned. The words used for garment are 'vāsas' or 'Vastra'. In the Tai. S. (VI.1.1.3) it is said that *kṣauma* (linen) cloth is worn when a person takes the *dīkṣa* (initiatory rite) for a Vedic sacrifice. In the Kanaka Sam. XV.1 *kṣauma* cloth is said to be the fee in a certain rite. In the Atharva Veda VIII.2.16 we have the two words 'vāsah' (outer garment) and 'nīvi' (under garment) used with reference to the same man. In the Rig the word 'adhivāsa' is also used with reference to a garment which must have been somewhat like a mantle or toga (Rig. I.162.16). In the Tai. S. II.4.9.2. the skin of the black deer is mentioned. In the Sat. Br. V.2.1.8 it is said that when the Nestr̥ priest is about to lead up the sacrificer's wife he makes her put on a kuśa upper garment (*vāsas*) or a kuśa skirt next to the cloth that one who is initiated for the sacrifice wears.

In the Br. Up. II.3.6. there is a reference to cloth dyed red with safflower or woollen cloth that is whitish in colour. Rig. IV.22.2 and Rig. V.52.9 are interpreted by Western scholars as referring to wool on the Parusnī river being the best, but the sense is rather obscure. It appears from the above that cloth was either woollen or linen, that silken (or kuśa) cloth was worn on very solemn occasions, that deer-skin was also employed as covering and that cloth was also dyed red. Whether cotton cloth was known in the earliest Vedic period is not certain. It is clear that in the sūtras (Viṣṇu Dh. S.71.15 and 63.24) and in Manu (S.326 and 12.64) cotton cloth is known and so its use must have reached several centuries before the times of the sūtras. Arrian (tr. by MacCrimdell) says that Indian dress was made of cotton (p.219).

The Āp. Dh. S. (II.2.4.22-23) requires that a householder should always wear an upper garment (besides the lower one) but allows him to have only the sacred thread instead (if he be poor etc.). Vas. Dh. S. XII.14 says that snātakas (those who have returned from the stage of student-hood) should always wear a lower garment and an upper one, two yajñopavītas etc. The Baud. Dh. S. I.3.2. says the same and adds that a snātaka should wear a turban, a deer-skin as upper garment, shoes and have an umbrella. Aparārka (pp 133-134) quotes verses from Vyāghra and Yoga-yājñavalkya to the same effect, the latter remarking that if one cannot procure a second washed garment one may wear a blanket of wool, or hempen or linen cloth. Baud. Dh. S. (1.6.5-6, 10-11) says that among garments the one that has not been worn is pure and therefore everything connected with sacrifice and worship should be done with fresh (or unblemished) clothes. The sacrificer, his wife and the priests should wear garments that have been washed,<sup>306</sup> dried in the wind and are not worn out by use; but in sacrifices performed for *abhicāra* (harm to one's enemies) the priests should wear clothes and turbans dyed red. In consecrating the Vedic fires one should wear clothes made of flax or if they are not available cotton or woollen ones. Sabara on Jaimini X.4.13 quotes sruti passages to the effect that the sacrificer and his wife wear fresh unused clothes in the model sacrifice and in the Maha-vrata the sacrificer wears in addition a *tārpya* (silk garment) and his wife wears one made of kuśa grass.

Baud. Dh. S. II.3.66 requires that one must wear an upper garment in five acts viz. study of the Veda, dedication of a well or a tank &c. to the public, making gifts, taking one's meal or ācamana. Similarly the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (III.12.20) requires that a man must not, with only one garment on,

<sup>305</sup> Vide Rig.1.115.4, II.3.6, V.29.15, X, 106.1.

<sup>306</sup> The word *ahata* has two meanings; (1) cloth fresh from the loom (to be worn in marriages and similar *maṅgala* ceremonies); (2) garment that is washed, but not used for many days, that is virtually new and has its fringes intact.

begin homa, the worship of gods and similar rites, study of the Veda, ācamana and japa. A snātaka and a householder should wear white garments and they must not be worn out or dirty if he has enough (means) and should not wear dyed garments or garments of high price (or gaudy ones) or those worn by another.<sup>307</sup> Baud. Dh. S. II.8.24 remarks:—

'What a man, while wearing reddish garments, does such as japa, homa, receiving gifts, offerings made to gods and Manes, does not reach the gods.'

Cloth dyed in indigo is also forbidden and a male has to undergo a fast and take pancagavya for wearing such cloth. The Āpastamba smṛti (in verse) chap. VI has several verses on cloth dyed in indigo.<sup>308</sup> One should not wear the shoes, garments, yajñopavīta, ornament, garland, or water-jar used by another but if a man is unable to secure one for himself, he may wear another's garment or shoes or garland after cleansing it.<sup>309</sup>

According to Garga quoted in the Sm. C. (I. p.113) a brāhmaṇa should wear white garments, a kṣatriya red and brilliant ones, a vaiśya yellow ones, a Śūdra should wear a dark one that is dirty.

The Mahābhārata says that one has to wear garments at the time of worshipping gods that are different from those that one wears while walking on a road or when one is in bed. Prajāpati quoted by Par. M. states that in tarpaṇa one should wear silk cloth having a hem or one that is orange-coloured, but never one that is gaudy. Probably it is requirements like these that led to the practice of wearing silken garments at the time of meals and worship, which practice is observed even now in many parts of India.

Manu IV.18 and Viṣṇu Dh, S.71.5-6 prescribe that one must dress, speak and entertain thoughts that would be in keeping with one's age, occupation, monetary affairs, learning, family and country. The garments to be worn by the vanaprastha and sannyasin will be discussed below. The smṛtis contain rules about tucking up the lower garment. A garment should be tucked in three places i.e. when it is tucked near the navel, on the left side and behind on the back. A brāhmaṇa is said to be a Śūdra as long as he has not tucked his garment behind or allows one corner of it to hang down from behind like a tail, or has tucked it in the wrong way or side, or has wound part of it round his waist or has covered the upper part of the body with a portion of the lower garment. Vide Sm. M. (ahnika pp.351-353) and Sm. C. I. pp.113-114 for these and other rules about wearing garments.

## 6. Sectarian Marks

After one bathes, one has to sip water (Dakṣa II.20. ff) and make marks on his forehead (variously called tilaka, urdhvapundra, tripundra etc.) according to one's caste or sect. In the Ahnika-prakaśa (pp.248-252), in the Smṛti-muktaphala (ahnika pp.292-310) elaborate rules are laid down on this subject. In the Brahmanda Purāṇa it is stated that for making urdhvapundra (vertical mark of a line or lines on the forehead) one may select clay from the top of mountains or from banks of holy rivers like the Indus and the Ganges, from places sacred to Viṣṇu, from ant-hills and from the root of the tulasī plant. The thumb, the middle finger and the finger next to the small finger are to be used in making the mark, but the nails should not come in contact with the clay employed. The mark may be of the form of a lamp and its wick, or of the form of bamboo leaves or a lotus bud, or of a fish or tortoise or a conch and the mark may be in length from two to ten fingers.

The marks are to be made on the forehead, the chest, the throat and its pit, on the abdomen, the right and left sides, the arms, the ears, the back, the back of the neck, after taking the twelve names of

<sup>307</sup> Gaut.9.4-5, Āp. Dh. S. I, 11.30.10-13, Manu IV.34-35, Yaj. I.131 and others

<sup>308</sup> The Mit. on Yaj. III.292 quotes verses 1-5 of Apastamba. Vide Aparārka p.1186 for quotation of the same verses and also of Angiras, verses 32-39 (which are almost the same as Apastamba's).

<sup>309</sup> Gaut, 9.5 -7, Manu IV.66, Viṣṇu Dh. S.71.47, Mark, Purāṇa 34 , 42-43

Visau (viz. Kesava, Narayana etc.) for each of the above twelve parts of the body. The trīpundra mark (three oblique lines) is to be made with holy ashes (bhasman) and the tilaka with sandal wood paste.

According to the Brahmanda Purāṇa, the urdhvapundra is made after a bath with loose clay in such a way that it resembles the outline of the foot (of Hari), the tripundra with holy ashes after homa, and the tilaka (a circular mark) with sandal wood paste on worshipping gods (*devapuja*). The Sm. M. (ahnika p.292) quotes Vasudevopaniṣad for making the urdhvapundra mark on the forehead and other places with Gopicandana (magnesian or calcareous clay) or in its absence with earth from the roots of the tulasī plant.

Sacrifice, gifts, japa, homa, study of the Veda, *tarpaṇa* of the Manes, if done without the urdhvapundra mark, become fruitless (according to Viṣṇu quoted in Sm. M. ahnika p.292). The Vrddha-Harīta smṛti (II.58-72) has a long note on urdhvapundra. The Sm. M. (ahnika p.296) notes that some texts of the Pasupata and other Saiva sectarians run down urdhvapundra and highly extol the tripundra mark, while Pancaratra texts enjoin the marking of the body with saṅkha, cakra and other weapons of Viṣṇu and condemn tripundra.

Devout worshippers of Viṣṇu who are followers of Madhvacharya brand the weapons of Viṣṇu such as the conch on their arms and bodies with heated metal pieces, just as early Christians stamped the cross on the forehead with red-hot iron (vide Wilson's 'Religious Sects of the Hindus', vol. I. p.42). Works like Vrddha-Harīta II.44-45, the Prthvīcandrodaya condemn the practice of branding the body with marks of the conch etc. with red-hot iron as fit only for Sudras. The Smṛtyartha-sagara of Chalārī quotes passages of the Vayu Purāṇa and Viṣṇu Purāṇa supporting branding.

In the Kalāgnirudropaniṣad the procedure of the tripundra mark is laid down. Holy ashes are taken from the sacred fire with the five mantras '*sadyo jātam*' (Tai.Ar.10.43-47) and they are then invoked with the mantras '*agniriti bhasma*'; part of the ashes is then taken in the palm of one's hand with the mantra '*mā nastoke*', (Rig. I.114.8) and mixed with water and therewith lines are made on the head, the forehead up to the (middle of the) eyebrows and eyes, on the chest and shoulders, after repeating – '*tryāyusam Jamadagner*' when applying the ashes to the forehead, '*kasyapasya tryāyusam*' when applying to the navel (or chest) and so on (the head coming last). The Sāṅkhyayana gr. Says:–

" He makes the tripundra mark with ashes with the five formulas '*tryayusam*' etc, on his forehead, chest, right and left shoulders and then on the back; (by doing this) he studies these Vedas, one, two, three or all."

The Smṛtimuktaphala (ahnika p.301) quotes a passage from Baudhāyana in which the words of the exhortation to the pupil returning home;– '*bhūtyai na pramaditavyam*' occurring in the Tai. Up. I.11 are interpreted as referring to the making of the tripundra mark with ashes (*bhūti*). This is a fine example of how sectarians twist the words of ancient texts to bolster up their practices and dogmas. In the Kādambārī (para 34) Harīta is described as ornamented by the tripundra mark of ashes. The Ācāramayūkha quotes a verse from the Bhavisya Purāṇa:–

'Of him who does not bear the tripundra mark, truthfulness, śauca, japa, homa, pilgrimage and worship of gods all this becomes futile '

and a verse from the Smṛti-ratnavali as to the parts of the body that are to be smeared with holy ashes, viz. the forehead, the region of the heart, navel, throat, shoulders, the joints of the arms, the back and the head.

The Smṛtimuktāphala (ahnika p.310) gives the following sage advice to the Saiva and Vaisnava sectarian writers that were guilty of running down the practices of each other

'As one God appears in the form of various deities, all should worship their (favourite) god, whether Siva, Viṣṇu or any other, without indulging in the calumny of other deities and they

should wear the pundra mark that is deemed to be pleasing to any deity without calumniating other sect marks.'

The Nirnaya-sindhu (II pariccheda) when dealing with the 11<sup>th</sup> day of Asadha sets out from the Ramārcana-candrika passages about the marking of the body with conch figure by means of heated metal pieces and also quotes the Pṛthvīcandrodaya and other works that condemn such practices and remarks that one may follow the śiṣṭas. The ācāra-ratna (p.37 a) states that votaries are of several kinds, viz. Saivas and Vaisnavas who are purely followers of the Vedic cult, śaivas and Vaisnavas who follow both Vaidika and Tantrika practices and the same two following purely the Tantric cult.

After bath comes sandhya (Yaj. I.98). This subject has been dealt with above (pp.312-321) under Upanayana.

## 7. Homa

After sandhya comes homa.<sup>310</sup> If a brāhmaṇa took a bath in the early morning and engaged in a lengthy sandhya prayer he may not be able to perform homa in the morning at the proper time. Homa was performed in the morning before sunrise according to one view (*anudite juhoti*) and after sunrise, according to another (*udite-juhoti*) but even on the latter view, homa must be performed before the sun rises one cubit above the horizon (Gobhila-smṛti I, 123). The evening homa is to be performed at a time when the stars clearly appear in the sky and the ruddy colour has left the western horizon (Gobhila-smṛti 1.124). Aśv. Sr. II.2 and aśv. gr. I.9.5 state the time for morning homa to be up to the end of the period of *saṅgava* (i.e. the second of the five periods of day time). Therefore some said that in order to perform homa in time one may perform the morning sandhya prayer even after homa.

It has been shown above (p.425) that the belief was that a person owed three debts one of which, viz. that to the gods, was discharged by performance of sacrifices and that one had to perform *agnihotra* (fire worship) to the end of his life. The fire to be tended was either śrauta or smārta. As to the first there were certain rules. Only a person that had attained a certain age was to kindle the śrauta fires, viz. one who had a son or had reached an age when he could have a son and whose hair was still black (i.e. who had not become middle-aged or old).

There were two views on the necessity of kindling the Śrauta fires. Vas. Dh. S. XI.45-48<sup>311</sup> says:–

"a brāhmaṇa must necessarily kindle the three śrauta fires and offer (in them) the Darśa-Purnamasa (new moon and full moon sacrifices), the Agrayana isti, the Caturmasyas, the animal and soma sacrifices. For this is enjoined as an observance and has been lauded as a debt. For it is declared (in the Veda) ' a brāhmaṇa is born indebted in three debts, in sacrifice to the gods &c."

Sabara on Jaimini V.4.16 expressly says that there is no particular time fixed for kindling the sacred fires and that a person may do so the very day on which the pious desire to do so arises in his mind. The Trikandamandana I.6-7 refers to the two views that *ādhāna* (kindling of śrauta fires) is *nitya* (obligatory) and the other view (discussed by Baudha yana) that it is merely *kāmya* (to be performed only if one desires the fulfilment of certain objects). The person who had kindled the sacred fires offered his daily oblations in them. It is clear that even in very ancient times not many kindled the sacred Vedic fires. The Gṛhya and Dharma sūtras often contain rules referring to those who had kindled the sacred fires and to those who had not. For example, the Aśv. gr. I.1.4 quotes

<sup>310</sup> Dakṣa II.28 and Yaj. I.98-99

<sup>311</sup> Manu IV.26 explains that the Agrayana isti is to be performed with the new grain that is brought in at the end of the rainy season (in sarad) after the old grain is consumed, that an animal sacrifice is to be performed at the beginning of the uttarāyana and of dakṣiṇāyana (i.e. twice a year) and a Soma sacrifice once a year at its beginning. Vide also *Yaj.* I.125-126.

## Rig. VIII.19.5

'the person who lays a fuel stick on fire, or throws an oblation on it or offers it the study of the Veda, or who pays adoration to Agni, (in substance) offers a good sacrifice.'

Aśv. gr. then quotes a brāhmaṇa passage explaining Rig, VIII.19.5 in which reliance is also placed on two more Rk verses (viz. Rig. VIII.24.20 and VI.16.47). The purpose of all this is to show that even the study of the Veda, the performing of *namaskāra* and offering of a samidh in the fire are equivalent to a real sacrifice. That shows that it was not obligatory on every-body to-kindle the three sacred fires. But it must be said that agnihotra was highly thought of in ancient India. Vide Chandogya Up. V.24.5 for a verse extolling it.

The three fires (often called Treta) are the *Āhavanīya*, *Gārhapatya* and *Dakṣiṇāgni*. The *Āhavanīya* fire-place is a square, *Gārhapatya* is round (as the earth is round) and *Dakṣiṇāgni* is in the form of half the orb of the moon<sup>312</sup>. In the Brāhmaṇas and Śrauta-sūtras elaborate discussions are held about the kindling of fires (*agnyādhāna*), about the several sacrifices and the various details connected therewith. It has been decided, in view of the vastness of the subject of śrauta rites and the academic nature for modern times of the treatment of most of those rites, to pass them over in this work and to give in a separate chapter at the end of this volume only some information about the śrauta sacrifices. For about two thousand years hardly any animal or soma sacrifices have been performed (except rarely by kings, nobles and rich people). In medieval times there were many brāhmaṇas who performed the New and Full moon sacrifices, the Agrayana iṣṭi and the Caturmāsya. But in modern times even such agnihotras have become very rare and in certain parts of India one can hardly find a single agnihotrin keeping śrauta fires even among thousands of brāhmaṇas.

Every one who has kindled the sacred fires has to offer every morning and evening the Agnihotra (oblations of clarified butter) in the śrauta fires. Not only has one who has consecrated the three sacred fires to offer agnihotra everyday, but also every householder has to do so every day twice, in the morning and in the evening.<sup>313</sup>

'For when a man is married, there are daily observances declared for him such as agnihotra, (honouring) guests and such other proper actions ' (Āp. Dh. S. I.4.14.1).

The rules about the proper time of kindling fire and offering oblations and about the material of the oblations are the same for gṛhya rites as in Śrauta agnihotra (aśv. gr. I.9.4-6). The fire in which these daily offerings are made by one who has not kindled the three śrauta fires is called *aupāsana*, *āvasathya*, *aupasada*, *vaivāhika* or (*-hana*), smārta or gṛhya or salagni.

There are various views about the time from which this fire is to be maintained. The view of the vast majority of writers is that the gṛhya fire is the nuptial fire which is kindled on the day of marriage by the newly married pair. We saw above (pp.530, 557) that the Aśv. gr. (I.8.5) directs that when the bridegroom starts after marriage from the bride's house for his own house (whether in the same village or in another village) the nuptial fire is continually carried in a vessel (called *ūkha*) in front till he reaches his house.<sup>314</sup> The aśv. gr. I.9.1-3 says:—

'Beginning From the holding of the hand (i.e. marriage) he should worship the domestic fire himself or his wife, also his son or his daughter or pupil. The worship of fire should be constantly kept up'.

A man's nuptial fire may go out and he may not re-instate it through neglect or other cause or his wife may be dead and he may remain a widower. In such cases he has to offer his daily offerings in the ordinary fire on which he cooks his food (*laukika* or *pacana agniḥ*); so that so far five kinds of

<sup>312</sup> vide Vrddha-Gautama p.604, Jivananda

<sup>313</sup> Vide Manu IV.25, Yaj. I.99, Āp. Dh. S. I.4.13.22 and I.4.14.1

<sup>314</sup> Vide also Āp. gr. V.14-15.

fires (viz. the three *śrauta* ones, *aupasana* or *gr̥hya* and the *laukika*) are spoken of.

There is another fire called 'sabhya' (which is the sixth). According to Medhātithi on Manu III.185 the *sabhya* fire is that which is kept burning in the hall of a rich man for the removal of cold and for the diffusion of warmth.<sup>315</sup> The Katyayana Śrauta sūtra IV.9.20 prescribes that the *sabhya* fire also is generated by friction like the Garhapatya fire. Āp. Sr. sūtra IV.4.7 says that the *sabhya* fire is to be kindled in the hall (of gambling, according to the com.) to the east of the place of the *ahavanīya* fire. The Smṛtyarthasāra (p.14) says that a householder should maintain six fires, five, four, three, two or one, but should never remain without fire. When he keeps the *treta* – *aupasana*, *sabhya* and *laukika* or ordinary fire he will have six; when he maintains the *treta*, *aupasana* and *sabhya* he is called pancagni, who is among the brāhmaṇas that are *pankti pāvanas* (i.e. that sanctify the company at dinner).<sup>316</sup> He who maintains *treta* and *aupasana* will have only four, he who maintains only *treta* will have three, he who maintains *aupasana* and the ordinary fire will have two and one may only maintain the ordinary fire.

The rites prescribed in the *gr̥hya* sūtra of a person's sakha were to be performed in the *aupasana*; other rites prescribed in the *smṛtis* were to be performed in the ordinary fire. But if one has no fire other than the ordinary one, every rite has to be performed in it. The under-lying idea of this emphasis on the worship of Agni seems to be that the oblations thrown into the fire reach the sun, that sends rain, from which springs corn, that is the sustenance of all beings.<sup>317</sup>

There were other views about the time from which one was to begin keeping one's *gr̥hya* fire. Some<sup>318</sup> refer to an optional course viz. setting up the *gr̥hya* fire at the time when one separates from other members of the family. The San. gr. I.1.2-5 refers to four alternatives in all (including the two already referred to); the other two are: When a pupil is about to return from his teacher's home, he may keep as his *gr̥hya* fire that fire on which he puts the last *samidh*; or a person may, if he is the eldest son, keep the fire of his father on the latter's death or of his eldest brother on the latter's death (if there is no division and the family continues joint). Baud. gr. II.6.17 says that the *gr̥hya* fire for a person is one by which his upanayana is performed, that from upanayana to samavartana the homa is performed only by uttering the *vyāhrtis* and with fuel sticks, from samavartana to marriage with *vyāhrtis* and clarified butter, and from marriage onwards with offerings of boiled rice or barley

The deities to whom agnihotra is offered in the morning and evening are Agni and Prajāpati (to the latter inaudibly) According to some in the morning the sun takes the place of Agni.<sup>319</sup>

The oblations are to be made in the morning and evening of cooked food, but only such corn as is fit to be offered to fire as havis is to be used (Aśv. gr. I.2.1). It is either boiled rice or barley (Āp. gr. VII.19). Gobhila-smṛti (1.131 and III.114) says that among *haviṣyas* the foremost are *yavas* (barley), then comes rice, but one should eschew *māṣa*, *kodrava* and *gaura* among grains even if nothing else is available, that if rice and barley are not available one may employ curds or milk or in their absence, *yavagu* (gruel) or water. According to a verse quoted by Narayana on Aśv. gr. I.9.6 ten materials can be offered as havis into fire viz. milk, curds, *yavagu*, clarified butter, boiled rice, husked rice, soma, flesh, *śeṣame* oil and water. Manu III, 257 specifies some articles as naturally fit for being employed as havis.<sup>320</sup> Though flesh is allowed as offering in some sacrifices it cannot be employed in the morning and evening homa (vide Aśv. gr. I.9.6).

The general rule is that when no particular material is specified for homa into fire, clarified butter is

<sup>315</sup> Vide Sat. Br. (S.B.E. vol.12, p.302 n 1)

<sup>316</sup> Vide 3-aut.15.29, Āp. Dh. S. II.7.17.22, Vas. Dh. S. III.19, Manu III.185, Yaj. I, 221.

<sup>317</sup> Vide Manu III.76 (= Santi-parva 264.11) and Sm. C. I. p.155, Par. M. I, part I, p.130 for the eulogy of agnihotra.

<sup>318</sup> Gaut. V.6, Yaj. I.97, Par. gr. I.2 and others

<sup>319</sup> vide Baud. gr. II.7.21 quoted in Hir, gr. I.26.9, Bhar. gr. III.3, Āp. gr. VII.21

<sup>320</sup> Vide also Āp. Dh. S. II.6.15.12-14.



to be used as offering, and when no particular deity is mentioned, then the deity is to be Prajāpati. There is another rule that fluid materials are to be offered into fire with the sruva ladle, while solid havis is to be offered with the right hand.

The Gobhila gr. (1.1.15-19) lays down<sup>321</sup> that:–

'one is to kindle one's grhya fire (originally or if it goes out) by bringing it from the house of a vaiśya or from the sun (magnifying glass) or he may bring it from the house of a person who performs many sacrifices, whether he be a brāhmaṇa or rajanya or vaiśya or one may produce it by attrition; this last is holy, but does not bring prosperity. One may do as one likes'.

If the grhya fire goes out, the husband or the wife has to observe a fast that day as a penance (Āp. gr. V.19). The fire in which oblations are to be offered must be fed by plenty of dry wood, must be well kindled and smokeless, the cinders must be red-hot and it must be flaming up. The Chan. Up. V.24.1 indicates that oblations were to be offered only on red hot coals.

The smṛtikāras<sup>322</sup> lay down that one should not come very near fire when one is not pure, one should not blow on fire with the mouth (to kindle it), nor should one place it under a cot etc., one should not throw anything impure in fire, nor should one warm one's feet over it, nor should one place it towards one's feet (when one is sleeping). Gobhila smṛti I.135-136 says that one should not blow on fire with the hand or a winnowing basket or a darvi (ladle), but one may use a fan; some blow on fire with the mouth because fire was produced from the mouth and construe the words (of Manu IV.53) :– 'one should not blow on fire with the mouth', as applicable to ordinary fire (i.e. one may blow with the mouth on śrauta fires).

The daily homa must be offered by the man himself and Dakṣa says that the merit secured by performing homa by one self cannot be secured by getting it performed through another, but he adds that homa performed on one's behalf by a priest, by one's son, teacher, brother, sister's son, or son-in-law is equivalent to homa made by oneself.

We saw above (n.1617) that the Aśv. gr. (1.9.1) allows the wife, a son, an unmarried daughter or a pupil of the householder to attend to the worship of the householder's grhya fire. San, gr. II.17.3 is to the same effect. The Smṛtyārthasāra (p.34) adds that the wife and the daughter should perform all the acts in homa except paryukṣana. Āp. Dh. S. II.6.15.15-16 and Manu XI.36-37 lay down that the wife, an unmarried daughter, a young married daughter, one who has studied little, a stupid person, a diseased person or one whose upanayana has not been performed should not offer agnihotra (on behalf of the householder); if they do so, they and he both fall into hell; therefore the person to offer agni hotra for another should be one proficient in śrauta sacrifices and master of the Vedas. These passages have been explained by the Sm. C. (I. p.161) and other writers as applicable to the performance of śrauta sacrifices only; while as regards the daily homa in the grhya fire the wife and others specified by Aśv. are held to be competent if the sacrificer is ill or has gone abroad.

Haradatta (on Aśv. gr. I.9.1-2) says that either the husband or the wife must always be near the grhya fire. Laghu-Aśvalayana (I.69) says that one who has kindled the grhya fire should not leave the boundary of his village without his wife, as the texts lay down that homa is to be performed in the place where the wife stays. A brāhmaṇa may go abroad on business, leaving his fire in charge of his wife and after appointing a priest; but he should not stay away long without cause. A priest should not offer homa on behalf of a householder, when both the spouses are absent, because such homa by him in the absence of both is useless.

If an householder has several wives of the same caste or wives of different castes, the texts lay down who is to be associated with him in religious rites These rules have already been set out above

<sup>321</sup> There are similar provisions in San. gr.1.1.8, Par, gr.1, 2, Āp. gr. V.16-17.

<sup>322</sup> Āp. Dh. S. (I.5.15.18-21), Manu IV.53

(pp.559-60).

‘When a householder's wife dies he should not give up his Vedic fires, but that (i.e. the Agnihotra) should be performed till one's life by means of an *upādhi* (i.e. by marrying another savarna wife or by associating with himself an asavarna wife)’. (Gobhila smṛti 1636 III.9)

Gobhila then refers to the story of Rama, who performed sacrifices with a golden image of his discarded wife Sīta kept by his side. In spite of Gobhila's dictum, allowing a golden image or a kuśa representative of an absent or dead wife, Aparārka condemns the practice as opposed to the rule laid down by Satyāśāḍha in his śrauta sūtra there is no *pratinidhi* (representative or substitute) in the case of the owner (i.e. yajamana), the wife, the son, the (proper) place and time (for an act), fire, the deity (to be invoked), of a rite and of a text (directed to be employed in a rite). His argument is that the wife's co-operation is required in such actions as looking at the clarified butter, in unhusking grains etc. and as an image of kuśa or gold cannot perform these acts, the image cannot be employed in place of the wife. The Sm.C. replies to this argument by saying that the words of Satyāśāḍha have reference only to a human substitute for a wife and that other smṛtis allow a substitute made of gold or kuśa. For example, Vrddha-Harīta expressly prescribes that a man may perform agni-hotra and the offering of the five daily sacrifices throughout his life in the company of his wife's image made of kuśa grass (if the wife be dead etc.). If a person loses his wife or if he goes abroad or becomes *patita* his agni-hotra may be continued by his son. (Atri, verse 108). The Ait. Br. (32.8) also says that even one who has lost his wife (or who has no wife) should perform agni-hotra, as the Veda orders a man to offer sacrifice.

Not kindling Vedic fires when one was competent to do so and giving up śrauta and smārta fires were looked upon as upapatakas.<sup>323</sup> The Vas. Dh. S. III 1 says that those who do not study or teach the Veda or who do not maintain the sacred fires become equal to Śūdras. Gargya as quoted in the Sm. C. (I. p.156) avers that if a dvīja remains after marriage without fires even for a moment (when he has the power and authority to maintain them) he becomes a *vrātya* and *patita*. The Mundaka Up. I.2.3 declares that if a person fails to perform the Darsa-Purnamasa and other sacrifices and Vaiśvadeva, his seven holy worlds are destroyed. The Tai. S. I.5.2.1 and the Kathaka S. IX.2, declares:—

‘He who makes the (sacred) fires go out (be extinguished) is indeed a killer of a hero in the eyes of the gods and brāhmaṇas who are anxiously devoted to *rta* (righteousness or correct order) did not formerly eat food at his house’.

## 8. Japa — recitation of sacred texts

The texts (such as Yaj. I.99) prescribe japa (recitation of Gāyatrī and other holy Vedic mantras) as part of sandhya prayer. This has been already referred to above (p.313). Yaj. I.99 speaks of japa (of verses addressed to the Sun) after morning homa and then in 1.101 again prescribes japa after the midday bath of philosophical texts (like the Upanisads, as stated in Gaut.19.12 and Vas. Dh. S.22.9). Vas. Dh. S.28.10-15 are verses which mention several hymns principally of the Rig Veda, by reciting which (inaudibly) several times a man becomes pure. These verses occur in Saṅkhasmṛti chap. XI (with some variations) and in Viṣṇu Dh. S.56 (in prose). Some of these Vedic texts are well known, such as Aghamarṣana (Rig. X.190.1-3), Pavamanī verses (Rig. IX), Satarudriya (Tai. S. IV.5.1-11), Trisupara (Tai. Ar. X.48-50) &c. Manu II.87, Vas.26. if, Saṅkhasmṛti XII.28.

Viṣṇu Dh. S.55.21 say that a brāhmaṇa attains the highest perfection by japa alone, even if he does not do anything else. Gobhila smṛti II.17 says that one should inaudibly repeat as much of the Veda from the beginning as one can and that japa may be performed before tarpaṇa or after the morning

<sup>323</sup> Yaj. III.234, 239, Viṣṇu Dh. S.37, 28 and 54.13.

homa or at the end of vaiśvadeva and that it constitutes brahmayajña (II.28-29). Viṣṇu Dh. S. (64.36-39) avers that japa should comprise sacred hymns, particularly the Gāyatrī and Puruṣa-sukta, as nothing else is superior to these.

Japa is of three kinds, *vācika* (audibly uttered), *upāṃsu* (inaudibly uttered) and *mānasa* (mentally repeated), each succeeding one being ten times superior to each preceding one.<sup>324</sup> Japa is one of the removers of sin (Gaut.19.11). Japa is to be performed sitting on a seat of kuśa grass, either in the house, or on a river bank, or in a cow-pen, or in a fire room or at tīrthas or before images of gods or before an image of Viṣṇu, each succeeding place being many times superior to each preceding one. One is not to speak while engaged in japa. A brahmacārī or a householder who has consecrated sacred fires should repeat the Gāyatrī 108 times, while a vānaprastha and yati should repeat it more than 1000 times. Vide Manu II.101 also about the extent of the time to be devoted to japa.

When in the middle ages Vedic learning declined and Purāṇas came to the fore, the writers of the digests stated that one who has studied the whole Veda should repeat daily from the beginning of the Veda as much as he could; if one has studied only a portion of the Veda, then one should recite in his japa the Puruṣa-sukta (Rig. X 90) and similar hymns and a brāhmaṇa who knows only the Gāyatrī should repeat the texts of the Purāṇas.

Vrddha Harīta(VI.33,45, 163, 213) prescribes that the mantra of 6 letters (*om namo Viṣṇave*), eight letters (*om namo Vāsudevāya*) or of twelve letters (*om namo bhagavate Vāsudevāya*) should be repeated 1008 or 108 times. The counting of the mantra as repeated so many times has to be done by means of one's fingers (except the thumb) or by drawing lines (on the ground or walls etc.), or by telling the beads of a rosary, as japa without counting the number is fruitless.

Saṅkha-smṛti (chap. XII. in prose) lays down that the rosary should have beads of gold or precious stones or pearls or crystal or rudrākṣa, padmākṣa (lotus seed) or putrajīvakā or a man may count by knots of kuśa grass or by bending the fingers of the left hand. Brhat-Paraśara V. p.85 and Laghu-Vyāsa (Jivananda part II. p.375) contain similar provisions about akṣa-māla and counting of japa. They add '*indrākṣa*' to the different kinds of beads. The rosary should have 108 beads (this is the best) or 54 (middling) or 27 (this is the lowest number of beads in a rosary). Kalidāsa (in his Raghuvama XI.66) mentions that the hero Paraśurāma had on his right ear a rosary of akṣa seeds. Bana (Kadambarī para 37) speaks of counting by means of rings of rudrākṣas.<sup>325</sup>

## 9. Generating Auspiciousness

After homa and japa one may spend some time in attending to or looking at auspicious things, such as seeing one's elders, looking at a mirror or in clarified butter, arranging and decorating his hair, applying collyrium to the eye, touching dūrvā etc.<sup>326</sup> What objects a man should see on getting up has already been stated. According to Nārada (prakīrnaka vv.54-55) there are eight *maṅgala* objects viz. a brāhmaṇa, a cow, fire, gold, clarified butter, the sun, water and the king and if one sees, bows to or circumambulates these, one's life is lengthened. The Vamana-Purāṇa (14.35-37) mentions numerous objects that are auspicious and that one should touch or see before going out. The Matsya-purāṇa 243 enumerates in 26 verses numerous auspicious and inauspicious objects (these are quoted in Gr. B. pp.553-554). Viṣṇu Dh. S.23.58 enumerates six objects derived from the cow as auspicious.<sup>327</sup> According to the Viṣṇu Dh. S.63.26 one should start on a journey after seeing such objects as fire, a brāhmaṇa, courtesan, a jar full of water, a mirror, a banner, a parasol, palaces, fans,

<sup>324</sup> Laghu-Harīta chap. IV, p.186, Jivananda I). Vide Manu II, 85 (= Vas.26.9, Saṅkha XII.29

<sup>325</sup> Vide Sm. C. I. pp.152-153, Par. M. I. part I, pp.308-311, Madanaparijata p.80, Ahnika-prakasa pp.326-328 for further details about the rosary.

<sup>326</sup> Vide Manu IV.152 quoted above

<sup>327</sup> Vide Adi-parva 29.34, Drona-parva 127.14 (for touching eight *maṅgalas*), śānti 40.7, Anuśāsana 126.18 and 131.8.

chowries etc. Viṣṇu Dh. S.63.27-31 states that when, on leaving one's house, one goes certain persons or objects one should return to the house and then restart viz. a drunkard, a lunatic, a cripple, one who has vomited or has undergone a purge, one who is completely shaved, one with dirty clothes, one having matted hair, a dwarf, one wearing orange-coloured clothes, an ascetic &c.

## 10. Vedic Study

The performance of the duties of *sauca*, *danta-dhāvana*, *snāna*, *sandhya*, *homa*, *japa* would occupy the first of the eight parts of the day. In the second part of the day a brāhmaṇa householder was to go over and to revise his Vedic studies and to collect fuel sticks, flowers, kuśa etc.<sup>328</sup> This subject of Veda study has already been dealt with above (pp.351-354).

## 11. Livelihood.

In the third part of the day the householder was to work and find out the means of maintaining those dependent on him (Dakṣa II.35). The different ways of maintaining oneself in the case of brāhmaṇas have already been spoken of previously. Some say<sup>329</sup> that a brāhmaṇa householder should approach a king or other rich person for the wherewithal to maintain his family. The persons whom every one must maintain have already been pointed out on p.569 (Dakṣa II.36)

“In the case of the well-to-do, there are other persons who should be maintained viz. agnates and cognates, one who is without means, helpless or has taken shelter. In this world only that man may be said to live, on whom many depend for their livelihood; other men who only fill their own belly are really dead, though living”. (Dakṣa II.40).

## Noon Duties

In the fourth part of the day (i.e. before noon) one was to have the mid-day bath (with *tarpaṇa*) and then the mid-day *sandhya* prayer and *devapuja* etc. (Dakṣa II.43 and Yaj. I.100). Those who bathe twice (in the morning and at noon) will strictly follow the routine sketched above in Dakṣa, Yaj. and others. But most of the brāhmaṇas bathe only once either in the morning or before noon. The principal matters to be described in connection with the bath before noon are *tarpaṇa* of gods, sages and *pitṛs*; *deva-puja* and the five daily *yajñas*. These will now be described in detail.

## 12. Tarpaṇa — libations

*Tarpaṇa* (Satiating by offering water). As stated in Manu II.176, every day one has to perform *tarpaṇa* of gods, sages and *pitṛs*. The water to be offered to gods is poured by that part of the right hand which is called *deva-tīrtha* and that for the *pitṛs* by the *pitṛ-tīrtha*. A person was to perform *tarpaṇa* according to the *gṛhya-sūtra* of the Vedic *sakha* which he or his ancestors studied. There is a good deal of divergence among the several *gṛhya-sūtras*. Here the procedure of *tarpaṇa* prescribed by the Aśv. gr. (III.4.1-5) will be first set out. In the *Devata-tarpaṇa* the following deities are enumerated and one has to add the words ‘*trpyatu*’, ‘*trpyetām*’, or ‘*trpyantu*’ with each *devata* according as it is one deity, two deities or more and offer water to each (e.g. ‘*Prajāpati-trpyatu*, ‘*Brahma trpyatu*, ‘*Dyava-prthivī trpyetam*’ etc.). The deities are 31 viz. *Prajāpati*, *Brahma*, *Vedas*, *devas*, *rsis*, all metres, *omkāra*, *vasat̥kara*, *vyahrtis*, the *Gāyatrī*, sacrifices (*yajñas*), heaven and earth, the air (*antarikṣa*), days and nights, the *Saṅkhyas*, *siddhas*, oceans, the rivers, the

<sup>328</sup> Dakṣa II.33, 35, Yaj. I.99

<sup>329</sup> Gaut. IX.63, Yaj. I.100, Manu IV.33, Viṣṇu 63.1

mountains, the fields, herbs, trees, Gandharvas and Apsarases, snakes, birds, cows, sadhyas, vipras, yakṣas, the rakṣases, the bhūtas (beings) that have these (rakṣas) at the end. In modern times the fields, herbs, trees, Gandharvas and Apsarases are put in one compound word and form only one devata, while after bhūtas there is a separate deity 'evam-antāni trpyantu'. Haradatta on Aśv. gr. III.3.2 refers to the view of some that take 'evam-antāni' as a separate mantra but his opinion was that the phrase 'evam-antāni' only described the preceding devatas and that the devatas stopped at 'rakṣāmsi'. He further adds that the *tarpaṇa* to these was done by the prajapatya tīrtha (of the hand).

The sages to whom water is offered are divided into two groups.

1. The first group contains 12 sages and when offer water to these the sacred thread is worn in the *nivīta* form. The twelve sages are those of the hundred rks, the middle rsis (i.e. of mandalas 2 to 9 of the Rig Veda), *Gr̥tsamada*, *Viśvāmitra*, *Vāmadeva*, *Atri*, *Bharadvāja*, *Vasiṣṭha*, *Pragāthas*, the *Pāvamānī* hymns, sages of the short hymns and those of the long hymns (the *tarpaṇa* formula will be:— '*satarcinas-trpyantu*, *mādhyamās-trpyantu*, *Gr̥tsamadas-trpyantu* &c.). It will be noticed that the sages from *Gr̥tsamada* to *Vasiṣṭha* are the seers of mandalas 2 to 7 of the Rig Veda. The *Pragāthas* stand for the 8<sup>th</sup> mandala of which the first hymn is ascribed in the Anukramaṇī to Pragātha of the Kaṇva gotra and the rest of the eighth mandala is ascribed to various scions of the Kaṇva gotra, The verses of the 9<sup>th</sup> mandala are called *Pāvamāṇyah*; but as it is a *tarpaṇa* of sages, we rather expect the form *pāvamānāh* as in the Sāṅkhyāyana gṛhya IV:10. '*Satarśinah*' refers to the sages of the first mandala, and 'kṣudra-sūktāḥ' and 'mahā- sūktāḥ' to sages of the 10<sup>th</sup> mandala. Water is offered to these sages by the daiva tīrtha.
2. Then there is a second group of sages to whom water is offered by a person who wears his sacred thread in the *prācīnāvīta* form (i.e. it is suspended over the right shoulder and under the left; arm). There are two sub-groups here. In the first the verbal forms '*trpyantu*' or '*trpyatu*' are used with the nominative of the words for the sage; i.e. '*Sumantu Jaimini-Vaiśampāyana-Paila-sūtra-bhāṣya-Bhārata-Mahābhārata-Dharmācāryas trpyantu*'; '*Jānanti-Bāhavi-Gārgya-Gautama-Śākalya-Bābhavya-Māṇḍavya-Māṇḍukeyās trpyantu*'; '*Gārgī-Vācakanvī trpyatu*, *Vaḍavā-Prātithēyī trpyatu*, *Sulabhā-Maitreyī trpyatu*'. These together are five sentences.

It is remarkable that in this list three women are mentioned as sages (Gargī, Vaḍavā and Sulabhā). Among the other sages the first four are frequently mentioned in the Mahābhārata as the pupils of Vyasa who taught them the Vedas (vide Sabha-parva 4.11 and śānti-parva 328.26-27 where all four are named). For chronological purposes it is important to note that the Aśv. gr. knew teachers of sūtras, bhasyas, of the Bharata and also the Mahābhārata and of Dharma.

In the second sub-group there are 17 single sages and the 18th is a miscellaneous offering to all other acaryas. The names of the 17 sages occur in the accusative and after each the word '*tarpayāmi*' is to be uttered (i.e. *Kaholam tarpayāmi*, *Kausītakam tarpayāmi* *Āśvalāyanam tarpayāmi*). These 17 sages are: *Kahola*, *Kausītaka*, *Mahā-kausītaka*, *Paingya*, *Mahāpaingya*, *Suyajña*, *Sāṅkhyāyana*, *Aitareya*, *Mahaitareya*, *Sākala*, *Bāskala*, *Sujātavakra*, *Audavāhi*, *Mahaudavāhi*, *Saujāmi*, *Saunaka*, *Āśvalāyana*. The 18th is 'may all the other acaryas be satiated' (*ye canye acaryas-te sarve trpyantu*).

All these sages are connected with the Rig Veda, its Brāhmaṇas, its Aranyakas and other related works like the Pratiśakhya sūtra (of which Saunaka is said to be the author). It is interesting to note that Āśvalāyana himself is named as the last teacher in *tarpaṇa*. Saunaka is said to be the teacher of Āśvalāyana. In modern times in the Deccan water is offered twice to each sage or group of sages.

Aśv. gr. III.4.5 is very brief as to pitṛ-*tarpaṇa*:—

'After satiating the pitṛs with water, each generation separately, he returns to his house and

whatever he gives then becomes the fee' (of the Brahmajajña of which *tarpaṇa* is a constituent part).

In modern times the deceased ancestors and relatives to whom water is offered are stated below. Water is offered to each thrice (except to women ancestors other than the mother, grand-mother and the great-grandmother) by the pitṛ-tūrtha and the relationship, the gotra and the name of each are recited when doing so. For example, water is offered to the deceased father in the form:—

'I offer svadhā and bow to and satiate my father, so and so by name, whose gotra was so and so and who has attained the form of Vasu' (*asmat pitaram amuka śarmanam amuka-gotram vasurūpam svadhānamas tarpayāmi*).

The ancestors and relatives to whom water is offered, if they are dead, are in order:— father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather; mother, paternal grand-mother and great-grandmother; step mother; maternal grand-father (with maternal grand-mother, *sapatnīkam* being used with 'matāmaham'), maternal great grand-father and maternal great-great-grand-father (with their wives); one's wife; one's son (or sons, if several are dead already and with his wife or their wives that are dead); daughter (with her husband, if both are dead); uncle (with his wife, if dead); maternal uncle (with his wife, if dead); brother (with wife); paternal aunt (with husband); maternal aunt (with husband); sister (with husband); father-in-law (with his wife and son, if they are dead); guru (father as teacher of the Gayatrī and Veda); pupil.

In the case of grand-fathers and grand-mothers they are described as '*rudra-rūpa*' and the great grand-fathers and great-grand-mothers as '*āditya-rūpa*'. The three ancestors of the mother with their wives are respectively *vasu-rūpa*, *rudra-rūpa* and *aditya-rūpa*. The names of women ancestors have the affix '*dā*' added and all persons both male and female other than those specified above are described as '*vasu-rūpa*'.

A few points of divergence will be noticed. Haradatta on Aśv. gr. III.3.6 notes that some do not include the mother and maternal relations in the daily *tarpaṇa*, and that according to the established practice in his day the *tarpaṇa* formulae did not include the names and the gotra of the relatives. Most sūtras do not say that the names and gotras of the relatives are to be repeated in daily *tarpaṇa*. The words '*svadhā namas*' do not occur in many sūtras, but some do contain them.<sup>330</sup> The devatās of *tarpaṇa* differ in each sūtra. The San. gr. (IV.9) which belongs to the Rig Veda just as Aśvalayana's does, enumerates the deities differently in the beginning (it has *Agni, Vāyu, Surya, Viṣṇu, Prajāpati, Virūpākṣa, Sahasrākṣa* etc.). Its order of sages is somewhat different and it adds some names such as *Sākapūni, Gautami* etc.

The Baud. Dh. S. II.5 contains the most elaborate *tarpaṇa* of all sūtras. It puts 'om' before each devata, rsi and pitṛ. It includes not only many more deities than elsewhere, but includes several names of the same deity (e.g. *Vināyaka, Vakratuṅḍa, Hastimukha, Ekadānta; Yama, Yamarāja, Dharma, Dharmarāja, Kala, Nīla, Vaivasvata* etc.). Among rsis it includes many sūtrakāras like Kaṇva, Baudhāyana, Āpastamba, Satyāśāḍha, and also Yājñavalkya, Vyāsa.<sup>331</sup>

If a man has no time for this lengthy *tarpaṇa* the Dharma-sindhu and other digests prescribe an extremely brief one, viz. he repeats two verses and offers water thrice. The verses are:—

'May the gods, sages, pitṛs, human beings, from Brahma up to a blade of grass, be Satiated and also all the pitṛs, the mother and the maternal grand-father and the rest, may this water mixed with śeṣame be for the crores of families of bygone ages residing in the seven dvīpas from the world of Brahma downwards'.

The Snāna-sūtra (3rd kandika) of Katyayana attached to the Par. gr. contains a description of

<sup>330</sup> e.g. Baud. Dh. S. II.5.1 84 ff., Vaik.1, 4

<sup>331</sup> The Hir. gr. II.19.20, Baud. gr. III.9, Bharadvāja gr. III.9-11 contain long and interesting lists of deities and particularly of sages.

*tarpaṇa*. Like the Baud. Dh. S. it lays down that 'om' is to be uttered before the name of every deity (*devatā*) and 'trpyatām' (or *trpyantām* if the word denoting the deity is in the plural) is the verbal form employed. The deities are only 28 and slightly differ from those of Āśvalāyana. The group of sages is made up of only *Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana, Kapila, Asuri, Voḍhu,* and *Pañcaśikha* (Kapila, Asurī and Pañcaśikha are according to the Sāṅkhya karika the names of the founders of the Sāṅkhya philosophy and stand in the relation of teacher and pupil).

Then (after the *rsitarpaṇa*), the householder is to mix śeṣame in water and wear the sacred thread under the left arm and suspend it from the right shoulder and offer the water to *Kavyavāḍ Anala* (fire), *Soma, Yama, Aryaman, Agniśvattas, Somapas, Barhiṣads*. Offerings of water mixed with śeṣame are to be made thrice to each of the above with joined hands (*jalāñjali*) and this is to be done by all householders even if the father be living. The remaining part of *tarpaṇa* (viz. *pitṛ-tarpaṇa*) is to be done only by him whose father is dead.

Gobhila-smṛti II.18-20, Matsya Purāṇa 102.14-21 are very similar to the Snāna sūtra. According to Āśvalāyana and others water is offered with the right hand only while according to Katyayana and others water is offered with both hands. Kārṣṇājini prescribes that in śrāddha and marriage only the right hand is employed in making an offering or gift, but in *tarpaṇa* both hands (made into an añjali) are employed. One añjali of water is offered to each of the gods, two to Sanaka and other sages and three to each of the pitṛs.

When *tarpaṇa* is performed while the householder is still in the water with his wet clothes on, he offers the water in the stream itself; but when he wears dry clothes and performs *tarpaṇa*, then he is to let fall the handfuls of water in a pure vessel of gold, silver, copper, bronze, but not in an earthen one; or he may let the water fall on the round covered with kuśas (Sm. C, I. p.192).

In modern times daily *tarpaṇa* has become very rare. Only a few even among the orthodox or priestly brāhmaṇas and among those who have studied the several Śāstras (such as grammar etc.) do it daily, but generally most brāhmaṇas perform *tarpaṇa* as part of brahma-yajña on one day in the year in the month of Śrāvana.

A special *tarpaṇa* was offered to Yama on the 14th of the dark half of a month if it was a Tuesday or on the 14th of the dark half. Vide Sm. C. I. pp.197-198, Madanapārijāta p.296, Par. M. I. part 1, p.361. Dakṣa (II.52-55) prescribes that *Yama-tarpaṇa* is specially performed in the Jumna on the days specified above and gives the several names under which Yama is invoked. Vide also Matsya Purāṇa 213.2-8. The Tai. Ar. VI.5 speaks of a yajña or bali (offering) in honour of Yama every month. There is also *tarpaṇa* in honour of the great epic hero Bhīṣma offered on the 8th of the bright half of Magha.<sup>332</sup>

Gobhila-smṛti (II.22-23) emphasizes the importance of *tarpaṇa* by remarking that, as all beings, animate or inanimate, desire water from the brāhmaṇa who brings prosperity to all, *tarpaṇa* should always be done by him and that if he does not do it he would incur great sin and that if he does it he would support this world. The idea underlying *tarpaṇa* seems to be indicated even by the Tai. S. V.4.4.1. It has already been seen (at pp.668-669) that *tarpaṇa* was prescribed as an appendage of the early morning bath and that some required it to be done twice daily while others said that it was to be done only once. As Aśv. gr. places *tarpaṇa* immediately after svadhyāya (or brahmajajña) it follows that he treated it as a constituent though subordinate part of it. The Gobhila-smṛti (II.29) says that brahmajajña which consists in inaudibly muttering Vedic texts (japa) should be performed before *tarpaṇa* or after the morning homa or at the end of Vaiśvadeva and at no other time unless there is some special reason.

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<sup>332</sup> Vide Sm. C. I. p.198.

## CHAPTER 18

### PAÑCA MAHĀ-YAJÑAS

(The five daily great observances or sacrifices).

From early Vedic times five daily observances called mahā-yajñas were prescribed. The Sat. Br. (XI 5.6. I.) says:—

‘there are only five mahā-yajñas, they are like great sacrificial sessions, viz. the sacrifice to beings, the sacrifice to men, the sacrifice to the Fathers, the sacrifice to the gods, the sacrifice to brahman (Veda)’.

These are then briefly defined. In the Tai. Ar. II.10 we read:—

‘These five mahā-yajñas indeed are spread out continuously, viz. *deva-yajña*, *pitṛ-yajña*, *bhūta-yajña*, *manuṣya-yajña*, *brahma-yajña*. That is fulfilled as *deva-yajña* when one makes an offering in fire, even if it be a mere fuel-stick; when one offers *svadhā* (śrāddha repast) to the fathers, even if it be mere water, that becomes *pitṛ-yajña*; when a man offers a ball (a ball of food) to the beings it becomes *bhūta-yajña*, when he gives food to brāhmaṇas that becomes *manuṣya-yajña*. When one studies *svādhyāya* even if it be a single rk or yajus formula or a sāman, it becomes *brahma-yajña*’.

The Aśv.gr. (III 1.1-4) speaks of the five mahā-yajñas and defines them in practically the same words as the Tai. Ar. II.10 and enjoins that those yajñas must be performed every day. Nārāyaṇa on Aśv. gr. III.1.2 expressly asserts that the basis of the five yajñas is the Tai. Ar. The Āp. Dh.8. (I.4.12.13-15 and I 4.13.1) names and explains them similarly and states that they are called (in the Tai, Ar. II.10) ‘great yajñas’ and ‘great sacrificial sessions’ by way of laudation.

The word ‘yajña’ applied to these five daily duties is figurative and the adjective ‘great’ is applied only for praising them.<sup>333</sup> It will be noticed from the description of the five yajñas given below that they are distinguished from the solemn śrauta sacrifices in two respects.

- a. In these five the chief agent is the householder himself, he does not need the help and ministrations of a professional priest, while in the śrauta sacrifices the priests occupy the most prominent place and the householder is more or less a passive spectator or agent in the hands of the priests who direct everything.
- b. In the second place, in the five yajñas the central point is the discharge of duties to the Creator, to the ancient sages, to the Manes, and to the whole universe with myriads of creatures of various grades of intelligence. In the śrauta sacrifices the main-spring of action is the desire to secure Heaven or some object such as prosperity, a son etc.

Therefore the institution of the five sacrifices is morally and spiritually more progressive and more ennobling than that of the Śrauta sacrifices.

The sentiments that prompted the performance of these five observances appear to have been as follows:— Every man could not afford to celebrate the solemn śrauta rites prescribed in the Brahmanas and Śrauta sutras. But every one could offer a fuel-stick to fire that was deemed to be the mouth of the great Gods of Heaven and thus show his reverence and devotion to them. Similarly everyone could show his reverence for and gratitude to the great sages that had bequeathed a glorious heritage of sacred literature by repeating at least one verse and one could propitiate his deceased ancestors by offering in loving memory and filial devotion a mere handful or vessel-full of water (which costs nothing). The whole world human and non-human is one creation and there must be a spirit of live and let live or give and take. Therefore one must offer what one can afford to

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<sup>333</sup> Gaut. V.8 and VIII.17, Baud. Dh. S. II.6.1-8, Gobhila-smṛti II.26 and numerous smṛti texts speak of the same five yajñas.



a guest and also have something for all beings (including even such shunned animals as dogs, crows and insects). These feelings of devotion, gratitude, reverence, loving memory, kindness and tolerance seem to have been the springs that prompted the Aryans of old to emphasize the importance of the five daily yajñas and to have led sutra writers like Gautama and legislators like Manu (11.28) to look upon them as samskāras, as ennobling the soul by freeing it from mere selfishness and elevating the body to become a fit vehicle for higher things.

Later on it appears that other purposes came to be attributed to the institution of the five daily yajñas. According to some,<sup>334</sup> every householder causes injury or death to sentient beings every day in five places, viz. the hearth, the grinding mill, broom, winnowing basket and similar household gear, mortar and pestle, and water-jar. The five daily yajñas were devised by the great sages as atonements for the sins arising from these five sources of injury to life. These five are: *brahma-yajña* which consists in the study and teaching of the Veda, *pitṛ-yajña* which consists of tarpaṇa, *daiva-yajña* which consists in offerings made into fire, *bhūta-yajña* which is offering oblations to beings and *manuṣya-yajña* which consists in honouring guests. He who performs these daily according to his means is never tainted by the sin of the injuries arising from the five places mentioned above.

Manu (III.73-74) further says that former sages had a different nomenclature for the five yajñas i.e. *ahuta*, *huta*, *prahuta*, *brāhmya-huta* and which were the same respectively as *japa* (or *brahma-yajña*), *homa* (*deva-yajña*), *bhūta-yajña*, *manuṣya-yajña* and *pitṛ-tarpaṇa* (*pitṛ-yajña*). In the Atharva Veda VI.71.2 four out of these seem to be alluded to:— 'what came to me as *huta* or *ahuta* or given by pitṛs and assented to by men'.

*Huta* and *prahuta* in the sense of *homa* to gods and *bali* to bhūtas occur in Br.Up. I.5.2. But in some gr̥hya-sutras different meanings are attached to these very words e.g, San. gr. I.5 and Par. gr. I.4 say that there are four *pāka-yajñas* viz. *huta*, *ahuta*, *prahuta* and *prāsita* and San. gr.1.10.7 explains that they are respectively the same as *agni-hotra* (or *daiva-yajña*), *bali* (*bhūta-yajña*), *pitṛ-yajña* and *brāhmya-huta* (or *manuṣya-yajña*). The Harīta dharma-sutra has a very interesting passage on this point:—

'We shall now explain the *sūnās* (places of injury) which are so called because they kill moving and immovable sentient beings. They are five.

- ❖ The first (*sūnā*) is caused by actions like sudden entrance in water, plunging into water, whirling water, splashing it in various directions, taking water without straining it through a piece of cloth and driving vehicles;
- ❖ the second by walking about in the dark or away from the beaten path or in quick jerks or by treading upon insects etc.;
- ❖ the third by striking (a tree with an axe etc.), by plucking flowers etc. by tying with a rope etc., by crushing (in a mortar), by splitting (wood etc.);
- ❖ the fourth by cutting crops, by rubbing or grinding; and
- ❖ the fifth by ignition (of fire-wood), heating (of water), by roasting, frying and cooking.

These five injuries that lead to Hell are committed every day by people. Brahmācārins get rid of the first three by attending on fire and on their teacher and by the study of the Veda; householders and forest hermits purify themselves from these five by performing the five yajñas; ascetics get rid of the first two injuries by sacred knowledge and contemplation, but the injury caused by crushing cooked seeds between the teeth cannot be removed by any of these '.

<sup>334</sup> Manu III.68-71, Viṣṇu Dh. S.59.19-20, Saṅkha V.1-2, Harīta, Matsya Purāṇa 52.15-16

Although in the Āp. Dh. S. and others the five yajñas are enumerated in the order of *bhūta-yajña*, *manuṣya-yajña*, *deva-yajña*, *pitṛ-yajña* and *svādhyāya*, still the proper order from the point of view of the times of performance is first brahma-yajña (japa etc.), then deva-yajña, then bhūta-yajña, then pitṛ-yajña, and lastly manuṣya-yajña. Therefore they will be dealt with in the same order here. But some matters have first to be noted. Various views were entertained about the time and nature of brahma-yajña and pitṛ-yajña. According to Gobhila-smṛti II.28-29, japa prescribed in sandhyā adoration may be looked upon as brahma-yajña, that the latter may be performed before tarpaṇa and after the morning homa or after vaiśvadeva. Nārāyaṇa on Aśv. gr. III.2.1 says that brahma-yajña may be performed before or after vaiśvadeva. According to the Snana-sutra of Katyayana, brahma-yajña precedes tarpaṇa and Aśv. gr. as stated above (p.695) appears to regard tarpaṇa as part of it. Manu III.82 (Viṣṇu Dh. S.67.23-25) enjoins upon a man the performance of daily śraddha with food or water or with milk, roots and fruits and thus to propitiate and please the Manes of his deceased ancestors; while Manu (III.70 and 283) says that tarpaṇa (done after bath) constitutes pitṛ-yajña. Therefore Gobhila says that śraddha, tarpaṇa and the bali offered to pitṛs constitute pitṛ-yajña and even when one of them is gone through, the performance of pitṛ-yajña is effected and it is not necessary to perform all three. In the *bali-harana* (described below) the remnants of bali are offered to pitṛs (Aśv. gr. I.2.11, Manu III.91).

### 1. Brahma-yajña.

Probably the earliest description of this is to be found in the Sat. Br. XI.5.6.3-8. That Brāhmana, after stating that brahma-yajña is one's own daily study of the Veda, compares several elements required in the ordinary sacrifice to certain elements of brahma-yajña, viz. the *juhu* spoon, upabhr̥t, dhruva, sruva, avabhr̥tha (the solemn bath at the end of a sacrifice) and heaven are said to be represented by the speech, the mind, the eye, mental power, truth and the conclusion (that are present in brahma-yajña). Then it says that whoever studies day by day his Vedic lessons gains an imperishable world which is thrice or more of the world that one may secure by making a gift to priests of the whole earth replete with wealth. Then 4-7 compare rk, yajus, saman and Atharvaṅgiras (Atharva Veda) texts respectively to offerings to gods of milk, ghee, soma and fat and it is stated that the gods being delighted and Satisfied with these, bestow on the man who performs brahma-yajña affluence and security, life-breath, seed, his whole self and all auspicious blessings and streams of ghee and honey flow for his departed pitṛs. The Sat. Br. XL 5.6.8 enumerates other works that may be recited in brahma-yajña, the recital of which is like honey offerings to gods who being delighted and gratified bestow on the reciter the boons stated above, the works being Anuśanas (Vedaṅgas), vidyas (such as *sarpa* and *devajana* vidyā mentioned in Chandogya VII.1.1), *vākovākya* (theological discourses called brahmodya, as in Vaj. S.23.9-12 and 45-62), Itihāsa Purāṇa (traditional history and legends), Gāthas, Narasamsis (i.e. stanzas in praise of heroes). The Tai. Ar. (II.10-13) has a more lengthy passage on brahma-yajña; Tai. Ar. II.10 is almost the same as Sat. Br. except in two respects, viz. in the Tai. Ar. Atharvaṅgirasas are said to be honey offerings and Brāhmana texts, Itihāsas, Purāṇas, kalpas (works on Śrauta ritual) and Gatha Narasamsis are said to be fat offerings and the rewards, bestowed by the gods when delighted by the brahma-yajña, are long life, brilliance, lustre, prosperity, glory, spiritual eminence and food. Tai. Ar. II.11 describes how and where brahma-yajña is to be performed:—

'One who desires to offer brahma-yajña should repair to a place so far away to the east, north or north-east of his village that the thatch covering houses is not visible and when the sun rises he should wear his sacred thread (in the *upavīta* form) under his right arm, should sit down (on a pure spot), should wash both his hands with water, should sip water thrice, should wipe his hand twice with water, should once sprinkle his lips with water, and touch his head, eyes, nostrils, ears and heart; he should spread out a large seat of darbhas, should be seated facing the east with his legs crossed over each other (the left foot being underneath and the right foot on the left thigh)

and then should repeat his Veda; (it is said that) the darbhas are indeed the flavour (or sweetness) of waters and herbs; he (by sitting on darbhas) makes his Veda full of sweetness. Placing his left hand on the right knee with the palm turned up and covering it with the right hand the palm of which is turned down and placing *pavitrās* (blades of darbha) between both hands, he should begin with the syllable 'om' which is a yajus, which is the representative of the three Vedas, which is all speech, and is the highest syllable; this has been declared by a rk (Rig, 1.164.39 is quoted). He recites the syllables bhuh, bhuvah, svah; he thereby (by repeating the vyahrtis) employs the three Vedas. This is the truth (quintessence) of speech; he thereby has employed the truth of speech. Then he recites thrice the Gāyatrī verse, which is addressed to Savitr, by its feet separately, then by half of it, then the whole verse without stopping. The sun is the creator of glory, he secures glory itself; then he begins (the next day) the repetition of the Vedic texts from that point which he had noted (the previous day).<sup>335</sup>

Tai.Ar. II.12 states that if a man is unable to go out of the village he may perform brahma-yajña by revolving in his mind in the village itself the Veda by day or even by night; or if he cannot seat himself, then he may perform the brahma-yajña even standing or lying down, since the principal matter is the recitation of the Veda (time and place being quite subordinate).

Tai. Ar. II.13 says that he should conclude the brahma-yajña by repeating thrice the verse:—

'Adoration to Brahma (Veda or Prajāpati), to Agni, to the Earth, to herbs, to speech, to the Lord of speech (Brhaspati), I offer adoration to the great Viṣṇu'.

Then he should sip water and return home; thereafter whatever he gives becomes the fee of the sacrifice (i.e. of brahma-yajña).

The procedure of *svadhyāya* (or brahma-yajña) in Aśv. gr. III.2.2-III.3.4 is practically in the same words as in the Tai. Ar. quoted above. One or two points may be noted. The Aśv. gr. prescribes that one should recite gazing at the horizon or one may close one's eyes or one may look in such a way that one feels that one can concentrate one's mind. According to the Aśv. gr. the shortest brahma-yajña would be:—

*om bhur bhuvah svah*; the Gāyatrī verse repeated thrice; then at least one rk verse and then the verse '*namo brahmane....*' (quoted above) repeated thrice.

The Ahnika-prakasa p.329 says that one who knows only a portion of the Veda should recite as brahma-yajña the Puruṣa-sukta (Rig. X.90) and other hymns and one who knows only the Gāyatrī should repeat 'om' as brahma-yajña every day. Aśv. gr. (III.3.1) mentions the following works for svadhyaya:— Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharvāngirasah, Brahmanas, Kalpas, Gathas Narasamsīs, Itihāsas, and Purāṇas, But it adds that one may recite only as much as one feels that one can afford to do with a concentrated mind.

The San. gr. I.4 prescribes several hymns and verses of the Rig Veda for reciting in brahma-yajña. Others following different Vedas and Śākhās differ as to the content of the brahma-yajña.<sup>336</sup> Yaj. I.101 prescribes that as time and ability allow one may include in brahma-yajña the Vedas together with the Atharva Veda, Itihāsa and philosophical texts.

Brahma-yajña is very rarely performed every day (except by the most orthodox vaidikas and śāstris) in modern times and a fixed formula of brahma-yajña has been decided upon, which is recited once a year in Śrāvana by most brahmanas in the Deccan. The formula for students of the Rig Veda is as

<sup>335</sup> The idea is that one is not to begin to recite Vedic texts at random. When a man has recited a portion of any Veda one day, he should note where he stopped and continue his recitation next day from that point. The Āp. Dh. S. I.3.11.19 also prescribes that one should go every day to the water-side before taking his morning meal and recite in a pure place a portion of the Veda in succession (i.e. one day he should begin where he stopped the previous day and so on). Vide Aśv.gr. III.4.6 where the Tai. gr. allowing recitation of the Veda even while standing or lying down is quoted.

<sup>336</sup> Vide Ahnika-prakāśa pp.328-336 for brahma-yajña according to Katyayana and according to the followers of Sāma Veda.

follows:—

After reciting 'om bhur bhuvah svaḥ and the sacred Gāyatrī, he recites Rig.1.1.1-9, then the first sentence of the Ait. Br., the first sentences of the five sections of the Ait. Ar.; the first sentences of the Black and White Yajur Veda, of the Sama Veda, of the Atharva Veda; the first sentences of the Nighānu and the six Vedaṅgas viz. aśv. Śrauta, Nirukta, Chandas, Nighantu, Jyotisa, Siksa, Panini's grammar in order; the first 'pāda' of Yaj, I.1 and of the Mahābharata (1.1.1), the first sutra of the Nyāya, Pūrvamīmamsa and Uttaramīmamsa; then a benedictory formula ('*tacchamyor... catuspade*') and lastly the verse '*namo brahmane .....*' is repeated thrice. After this brahma-yajña, tarpaṇa of devas, sages and piṭṛs follows.

The Dharma-sindhu (III. purvārdha p.299) says that brahma-yajña is to be performed once either after morning homa or after midday sandhyā or after Vaiśvadeva, but those who study the Āśvalayāna-sutra should perform it only after midday sandhyā. After ācamana and pranayama one should make the saṅkalpa:— (*Srī-parameśvara prītyartham brahma-yajñam kariṣye tadaṅgataya devāṅśyācārya-tarpaṇam kariṣye*) and if one's father is dead one should add in the saṅkalpa (*piṭṛ-tarpaṇam ca kariṣye*). It then sets out how it is to be performed by various people, such as those who have studied all Vedas or one Veda or only a portion or when one has no time. It says that the followers of the Taittiriya śākha repeat the words:— '*vidyud-asi vidyā me pāpmānamṛtāt satyaṃ-upāimi*' at the commencement and the words '*vṛṣṭirasi vṛṣca me pāpmānam-rtāt satyam upāgām*' at the end. If a man is unable to repeat brahma-yajña sitting he may do it even when lying down.

The Dharma-sindhu notes that according to the followers of the Taittiriya śākha and of the Vājasaneyā Samhita, tarpaṇa is not a part of brahma-yajña and so tarpaṇa may be performed by them either before brahma-yajña or even some time after brahma-yajña.