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Evolution of Hindu Marriage
with special reference to rituals
(C.1000 B.C.- A.D.500)

By

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Abstract

This thesis presents a chronological survey of the evolution of Hindu marriage down to circa A.D. 500. The rituals of marriage are discussed in the first two chapters. The first chapter deals with the marriage rituals in the time of the Rg-Veda and the Atharva-Veda. In the second chapter the marriage ceremonies of the Grhyasūtras are described in detail. These rituals have been compared to other Indo-European marriage rituals and those of the indigeneous tribes to show evidence of the fusion of cultures. An attempt has been made to establish significance of every ritual. In the third chapter the different forms of marriage as described in the Dharmasūtras and Smṛtis are discussed. The reason of the acceptance of the lower forms in the later text seems to be the growth of intermarriage with non-Aryans. The four inferior forms of marriage are suggested to be of later development. In the fourth chapter age of marriage, polygamy, polyandry and intercaste marriages are discussed. The gradual lowering of age is suggested to be the result of the reaction on the part of the high caste Aryans to non-Aryan sexual customs of which they did not approve of. The fifth chapter

deals with widowhood and Divorce. Satī ,widow-remarriage also Niyoga and their gradual evolution are discussed. The sixth chapter deals with the position of women in religion, public life, law and society. The gradual decline of their position in later days is pointed out and its causes are analysed.

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Abbreviation

Ait. Br	Aitareya Brāhmana
Āp.GR	Āpastamba Grhyasūtra
Āp. Dh.	Āpastamba Dharmasūtra
A.B.O.R.I.	Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute
Āśv. Gr.	Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra
A.V.	Atharva- \check{V} eda
A.I.O.C.	All India Oriental Conference
Āśv. Gr. Par.	Āśvalāyana Grhya Parisiṣṭa
Anu	Anuśasana Parva
Bhār. Gr.	Bhāradvaja Grhyasūtra
Baudh. Gr.	Baudhāyana Grhyasūtra
Baudh. Dh.	Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra
D.K.A.W.	Denkschriften Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften
D.N.	Dīgha Nikāya
D.F.B	Die Frau im Brahmanismus
E.R.E	Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics
Gaut. Dh.	Gautama Dharmasūtra
Gobh. Gr.	Gobhila Grhyasūtra
G.O.S.	Gaekwad Oriental Series
H.S.	Hindu Samskāras
H.H.M	History of Human Marriage
H.O.S	Harvard Oriental Series
H.L.C.	Hindu Law and Customs
Hir. Gr.	Hiranyakeśin Grhyasūtra

H.D.S.	History of Dharmasāstras
I.C.	Indian Culture
I.H.Q.	Indian Historical Quaterly
I.A.	Indian Antiquary
Ind. Stud.	Indische Studien
J.	Jātakas
J.A.O.S.	Journal of American Oriental Society
J.B.A.S.	Journal of Bengal Asiatic Society
J.B.O.R.S.	Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society
Kum.	Kumārasambhava
Kauṭ.	Kauṭilya Arthasāstra
Kama	Kāmasūtra
Kaus.	Kausika Sūtra
Mait. Sam	Maitrāyani Samhitā
Māl.	Mālavakāgnimitra
M.G.I.P.	Medicine in Grundress der Indo arischen Philologie
Medh.	Medhātithi
M.E.	Miscellaneous Essays
M.	Mantrapātha
Mahā	Mahābhārata
Man.Gr.	Mānava Grhyasūtra
Pār. Gr.	Pāraskara Grhyasūtra
P.W.H.C.	Position of Women in Hindu Civilization

- P.T.S. Pali Text Society
- R.V. R̥g-Veda
- R.B.M Ritual and Belief in Morocco
- Raghu Raghuvamsa
- Śat. Br. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
- Sankh.Gr. Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra
- S.E.W Symbolism of East and West
- Saku Śakuntalā
- S.L.A. Sexual Life in Ancient India
- S.A.E.S Some Aspects of Earliest Social History of India
- S.B.E. Sacred Book of the East
- Vas. Dh. Vasiṣṭha Dharmasūtra
- V.P. Vinaya Pitaka
- Yājñ. Smṛ. Yājñavalkya Smṛiti

INTRODUCTION

In the pages that follow we have made an attempt to trace the roots and evolution of Hindu marriage from the earliest times of which we have any record, down to 500 A.D. We have tried to present a systematic picture of the development of the institution of marriage and its rituals and the position of women affected by it.

The study of these rituals is interesting in as much as it reveals the fusion of the culture of the Indo-Aryans with that of the indigenous tribes and other inhabitants of India as also in that it seems as a pointer to the evolution of the status of women in home and society and the socio-cultural outlook on marital life throughout the ages.

The Aryans when they migrated to India had already a definite ideology regarding the institution of marriage as well as a set of rules and regulations with the corresponding rituals. Simple as these rituals were, those are enough to throw light on the status of women in home and society, as also on what was believed about the nature of the union of man and women.

In later days with the expansion of the Aryans in all directions over the country, much as they tried

to keep the purity of their stock intact, there was fusion of races and consequently of cultures, customs and rituals. Some of the indigenous races of India had a fairly developed civilization and culture and also their own social customs and institutions. With their expansion the Aryans absorbed the customs of the pre-Aryans and non-Aryans, as it is evident from a study of the gradual transformation of the simple Vedic rituals to the highly complicated forms of the later sutras.

The study is mainly based on literary sources the exact dating of which is a very difficult problem, as there are so many differences of opinion. We have generally accepted the dating of P.V. Kane¹ as this seems to be the most recent and correct. Although the texts belong to different periods down to the Guptas, the commentators are all of the medieval period and are often influenced by the ideas of their own times, as we have tried to point out. We have also brought to bear on the subject our personal knowledge of the local customs and practices prevalent in India. These have been referred to to throw light on the rites of the

1. P. V. Kane , History of Dharmasāstras , Vol. II. part 1. Chronological Table

early period, as have those of the indigenous tribes of India.

Among the earliest religious texts Rg-Veda and Atharva-Veda are most useful for our purpose. The period of Vedic Samhitās may go back to the period between 1500 and 1000 B.C.* But the parts used by us mostly belong to the end of that period. The Brāhmanas, belonging to different Vedas have also been used, and throw some light on the subject. The Grhyasūtras or domestic rituals are very useful as they contain the ceremonies of marriage in detail. The Grhyasūtras generally belong to the period of 800 to 400 B.C. But some of the Grhyasūtras are later, and belong to the Dharmasūtra period i.e. 600 - 300 B.C. There are a number of mantras quoted in the sutras, which do not occur in the samhitas and are quite separate from the sutra texts. These are the Mantra Brāhmaṇa quoted by Gobhila and Mantrapāṭha quoted by Āpastamba. The Dharma-sūtras are the oldest law books of the Indians and are the books of instruction on spiritual and secular law. The Arthasāstra of Kauṭilya, the most important early Indian manual of statecraft and secular law, belongs

* Here, and throughout this work we have adopted the chronology of P.V.Kane.

to 300 to 100 B.C. At a somewhat later date appeared the versified compendia of law and customs known as Dharmaśāstras or Smrtis, of which the oldest is Manu Smṛti, compiled between 200 B.C. and A.D. 200. Yājñavalkya, Viṣṇu, Nārada and Brhaspati Smṛtis relate to the period between A.D. 100 and 500. These sāstric texts extend up to the Gupta period. The Buddhist, Jaina and Hindu literature, inscriptions and the accounts of the foreign travellers down to that period have also been consulted. The great epics Mahābhārata and Rāmāyana, which were composed between the 4th century B.C. and the 4th A.D. also represent the social life of the period, and have been utilised.

In the nineteenth century the study of the Indian social order, as far as Indian scholars were concerned, was mainly inspired by the spirit of nationalism. They realised the ill effects of many current social practices and tried to reform society with the sanction of the sacred texts. The works of Raja Rammohan Ray¹ against Sati, Isvarchandra Vidyasagar's writings² on widow-marriage and Swami Dayanand Saraswati's text called 'Satyārtha Prakāsa' all belong to that group. As they

1. English Works of Raja Rammohan Ray.

2. Isvarchandra Vidyasagar - Marriage of Widows.

were mainly written from a nationalist spirit and are often by no means free from prejudice.

Some other works of recent Indian writers also represent more or less the same spirit. Altekar in his Position of Women in Hindu Civilization tries to give some suggestions for the future to bring about a harmony between the past and the present. Valavalkar in his Hindu Social Institutions declares that there are some intrinsic virtues of the old Hindu theory and conception of human life and organisation which can be recommended for adoption by the whole world.

S.C. Sarkar, on the other hand, in his 'Some Aspects of the Earliest Social History of India' gives a new approach to the study of social history. He emphasizes aspects of marriage and society, such as promiscuity, matriarchy etc. which were scarcely recognized as existing by earlier scholars. But he gives too much historical value to the myths, and bases his conclusions on materials which are not always very convincing. It would seem that Sarkar's work is prejudiced by strong opposition to the rigidity of conventional Hindu family life, and hence he has unduly stressed every hint at laxity in the Rg-Veda.

There are some other very valuable works on the subject, such as Kane's 'History of Dharmasāstras', Jolly's Hindu Law and Customs etc. These works, though giving the dates of the sources, have not made much distinction between the early Vedic and the later Vedic periods, which show quite remarkable differences as far as social changes and the position of women are concerned. Moreover they devote little attention to the marriage rituals which are so significant from many points of view. Westermarck in his 'History of Human Marriage' has dealt with marriage rituals and has made a comparative study of such rituals throughout the world. But his work has ~~but~~ few references to Hindu rituals.

The first detailed study of the marriage rituals was made by Winternitz in his commentaries on the Āpastambiya Grhyasūtras, where he makes many comparisons with the rituals of other Indo-European peoples. Prof. Pandey's 'Hindu Saṅskāra' deals with the Grhyasūtra rituals, but his work is almost entirely descriptive.

The present work is undertaken not only in an effort to trace the development of these rituals and forms from their Vedic roots down to the Smṛti and to

attempt to discover the traces of pre-Aryan and non-Aryan customs and usages, but also to establish as far as possible the significance of every ritual. The rituals have been described chronologically and also in sections, as religious, magical and symbolical. We have tried to indicate the meaning of the rituals by adopting the methods suggested by Radcliffe Brown in his 'Structure & Function of Primitive Society', by comparing the various uses of the symbol and trying to discover what the common element is.

In the Dharmasūtra period we find reference to eight forms of marriage. It is generally accepted by scholars that Rāksasa was the original form of marriage and Brāhma was the product of the most civilized condition of society. The Aryans might have gone through all these stages before finally accepting Brāhma form, but the Brāhma was surely the only legal form of marriage among all the branches of Aryan people before they entered India. The other inferior forms of marriage were assimilated late into Aryan society. These were taken from the people with whom Aryans came into contact. This also is proved by the fact that these lower forms of marriage were more willingly accepted by

the later law books than the earlier ones. We have also tried to trace the origin of these forms and to establish the trend of their development from the contradictory statements of the Manusamhitā, which is probably the compilation of the texts of different times.

As regards other problems connected with marriage, we have tried to present a systematic account of the various developments and of their effects on the status of women in the home and society, on the socio-cultural attitude to women, and on Indian marital life throughout the ages.

Chapter I

Marriage rituals in the R̥g-Veda and Atharva-Veda

The earliest references to the institution of marriage in India are to be found in the R̥g-Veda. The hymns show that the R̥g-Vedic marriage was considered to be a sacrament and that the whole basis of marriage was the spiritual unification of the couple by magic mantras. Not only was marriage well established in the Vedic ages, but it was also regarded as a social and religious duty and necessity. As regards the marriage rituals R.V.X.85 gives a detailed description of the marriage ceremony of the Sun-maiden Sūryā and Soma, the moon. It consists of groups of verses relating to marriage ceremonials, loosely strung together. These verses nearly all refer to the marriage rituals, and most of them are quoted in the manuals of domestic rituals or Gṛhya-Sūtras and were used also at the marriage of ordinary human beings. The hymn consists partly of narrative stanzas, partly of addresses to the Āsvins and Sūryā, and partly of mantras of benediction and incantation recited at the various stages of the marriage ceremony. The order

of verses in the R̥g-Veda and Atharva-Veda does not exactly reflect the order of events at the marriage ceremony, but with a little change in the order, we find in these verses a consistent picture of the whole marriage rite.

In the hymn in question the negotiations of marriage were made by the two Áśvins, who appear to have been the groomsmen, and who asked for the hand of Sūryā from her father on behalf of Soma.

"Sómo vadhūyúr abhavad |
 Áśvínās tām ubhā varā |
 Sūryāṃ yát pátye Śámsantīm
 mánasā Savitādādāt || "

(R.V.X.85.9)

"Soma was desirous of a bride and the two Áśvins were the two groomsmen. Then Savitā gave his willing Sūryā, who was approving it in her mind, to her husband."

Though Vara generally means the husband or suitor, it is evidently used here as a wooer, who asks for the bride on behalf of someone else.

When the two Áśvins started for the wooing of Sūryā the bridegroom uttered the following mantra invoking

the gods to make the journey successful:

Anṛkṣarā rjāvah santu pānthā
yébhiḥ sakhāyo yānti no vareyām
sām Aryamā sām Bhāgo no niniyāt
sām jāspatyām suyāmam astu devāḥ

(R.V. X.85.23.)

"Thornless and smooth be the paths by which our friends travel for the wooing. May the gods Aryamā and Bhaga lead us; O Gods, may the union of husband and wife be successful, and on their arrival at the bride's home all the gods gave them assent.

Yād Ásvinā pṛchāmanāv áyatam
tricakreṇa vahatūḥ Sūryāyāḥ
Viśve devā ānu tād vām ajānan
putrāḥ pitārāv avṛṇita Pūṣā

(R.V. X.85.14.)

" When on your three -wheeled chariot, O Ásvins you came as woosers to Sūryā's wedding, then all the gods agreed to your proposal, Pūṣan as son elected you as fathers. Pūṣan is a protector and multiplier of cattle(paśupā) and of human possessions in general. In character he is a solar deity and beholds the universe and is a guide on roads and journeys.

1. Puṣṭimbha- R.V.VI.3-7

2. R.V.I.42.1; X.17.16; X.85.26

He is connected with the marriage ceremonies¹, being besought to take the bride's hand and lead her away and bless her in her conjugal relations. So it seems that at the time of marriage the girl is partially given in charge of Pūṣan, who in his turn elects the Ásvins to arrange the marriage.

Griffith thinks that Pūṣan here means Savitṛ and interprets the last phrase as intended to express Savitr's close relationship and obligation to the Ásvins, who had arranged the marriage². This verse also shows that at the time of negotiation of marriage the approval of the relatives or friends was necessary.

Selecting the auspicious day

An auspicious day was always selected for every ceremony connected with marriage. Cows were slain in the Maghā nakṣatra and the bride was borne to her husband's home in the nakṣatra Phālguni.

"Sūryāyā vahatūḥ prāgāt Savitā yam avāsrjat
Aghāsu hanyante gāvo Árjunyoḥ páry uhyate "

(R.V.X.85.13)

"The bridal procession of Surya, which is started by

1. R.V.X.85.26 & 37

2. Griffith on Rg-Veda.X.85.14(note)

Savitā, has gone beforehand. The cows are slain in the Aghā (Maghā) and Sūryā is brought to her husband's home on Ārjuni (Phalguni)."

Sūryā's bridal procession here presumably means that the bearers of the bridal presents to Sūryā, given by her father had already advanced. In India even at the present day the presents given to the girl by the father are carried in procession to the bridegroom's house before the bride's departure from her father's home. Hanyante in this verse is translated by Sāyana as dandais tādyaṅte preranārtham. But hanyante generally means slay and no doubt Sāyana's forced interpretation was largely inspired by the general horror of cow-killing in later Hinduism. Moreover in the Vedas we find many references to the slaying of cows on festive occasions¹, so that it can be assumed that cows were slain on the occasion of marriage. If we cannot accept this interpretation we must assume that this verse is misplaced, and should appear towards the end of the hymn, referring to the procession of the bride to her new home after the ceremony.

1. Āp. Gr. II. 4. 8. 5-7; Āśv. Gr. I. 24, 31-33; Weber, Ind. Stud. X. 125
A guest is called goghna or cow-killer, because formerly a cow was to be killed on the arrival of a distinguished guest.

THE WEDDINGPāṇigrahana

Now comes the actual marriage ceremony. The marriage commences with the bridegroom taking the hand of the bride with the following mantra:

"Gr̥bhṇāmi te saubhagatvāya hāstaṃ
 māyā pātyā jarādaṣṭir yāthāsaḥ
 Bhāgo Aryamā Savitā Pūramdhir
 māhyaṃ tvā dur gārhapatyāya devāḥ "

(R.V.X.85.36)

"I take your hand in mine for happy fortune, that you may reach old age with me, your husband. The gods Āryaman, Bhago, Savitā, Purandhi have given you to me so that I may become a householder."¹

The rite of Pāṇigrahana symbolised a solemn contract and the gods were invoked to witness and strengthen it. This rite was found also in other spheres of life; for instance the guru took the student's hand at the time of initiation, as a symbol of a solemn promise, and uttered the following mantra:

"Bhagas te hastam agrabhit, Savitā hastam agrabhit | Pūṣā
 te hastam agrabhīd Aryamā hastam agrabhin, Mitras, tvam asi
 dharmanā'gnir ācāryas tava | asāv ahaṃ cōbhāv, Agna etaṃ te

1. For governing the household-Geldner

brahmacāriṇaṃ paṇi dadāmi 'ndrai' taṃ te brahmacāriṇaṃ
 pari dadāmi, Ādityai taṃ te brahmacāriṇaṃ pari dadāmi,
 Viśvedevā etam vo brahmacāriṇaṃ pari dadāmi dīrghāyutvāya
 suprajāstvāya survīryāya rāyas poṣyāya sarveṣāṃ vedānāṃ
 ādhipatyāya suśloka'yāya swastaye "(Śāṅkh.Gr.II.3.1)

"Bhaga has seized your hand, Savitar has seized your hand
 Pūṣan has seized your hand, Aryaman has seized your hand,
 Mitra are you by right. Agni is your teacher and I, both of
 us. Agni, I give this student in your charge, Indra, I give
 this student in your charge. Sun, I give this student in your
 charge, Viśvedeva, I give this student in your charge, for the
 sake of long life, of blessed offspring and strength, of
 increase of wealth, of mastery of all vedas, of renown,
 of bliss.

Walking round the fire

It is not explicitly stated in the Ṛg-Veda that the
 actual marriage ceremony was performed in front of the
 fire, nor do we find any reference to the bride's walking
 round the fire. That part of the ceremony, which is des-
 cribed in the Grhyasūtras, is not mentioned here. But the
 following verses prove the presence of a sacred fire at

the marriage ceremony:

"Túbhyam ágre páry avahant
 Sūryām vahatúnā sahá
 pūnaḥ pátibhyo jāyām dā
 Agne prajāyā saha "

(R.V.X.85.38)

"For you¹, in the beginning, (they) carried Sūryā together with the bridal train. O Agni give (us) husbands our wife back again, with offspring."

"pūnaḥ pátnīm Agnir adād
 āyuṣā saha vārcasā
 dīrghāyur asyā yāḥ patir
 jīvati sarādaḥ satām "

(R.V.x.85.39)

"Agni gave back the wife again with long life and splendour. May he who is her husband be long lived and live a hundred autumns."

1. You-Agni, representing the sacred fire in the house of the bride's father, round which she is now led by the bridegroom.-Griffith

This reference to the husband in the plural number is strange and it has been suggested that it gives evidence of polyandry¹. We believe however that such a non-Aryan custom could hardly be implied, and suggest that the plural is purely honorific; the strange word dārā meaning wife, which is grammatically masculine plural, is perhaps significant in this connection.

There are two other verses which are also significant:

"Sómaḥ prathamó vivide
Gandharvó vivida úttarah
tṛtíyo Agniḥ te pátiḥ
turiyas te manuṣyajāh "

(R.V.X.85.40)

"Sómo dadad Gandharváya,
Gandharvó dadad Agnáye
rayim ca putráns cā'dād
Agnír máhyam átho imām "

(R.V.X.85.41)

1. Sarkar, S.A.E.S. p 80.

"Soma obtained her first, the Gandharva obtained her next; Agni was your third husband, and your fourth husband is human born."

"Soma gave her to the Gandharva, the Gandharva gave her to Agni. Agni has given her to me, and wealth and sons."

The references to Soma as the first husband in the two verses last quoted show quite clearly that these are intrpolations, and have no original connexion with the main body of the hymn, in which Soma is himself the bridegroom. The verses evidently refer to human marriage. Dr. Sarkar¹ tries to interpret the last verse as a relic of a gradually disused custom of polyandry, which was transformed into an allegory. But this interpretation does not seem to be correct. These verses simply mean that the girl before her marriage belonged to the supernatural beings, from whom the human husband receives her. The references to the bridegroom's receiving the bride from Agni seems to imply that the husband received the bride after circumambulation of the fire and the oblation to the fire. This ceremony, along with the Pānigrahaṇa, constitute the actual marriage according to the Gr̥hya-sūtras.

The idea behind this ritual seems to be that the girl

1. Sarkar, -S. A. E. S. p 80.

was considered to be possessed by the gods mentioned before her marriage, and so the father had no right to make a gift of her. The husband gets her as a gift of the gods and not as one offered by her father.

This is confirmed by the fact that there is no mention of the rite of Sampradāna or bestowal in either the Rg-Veda or Atharva-Veda. On the other hand Sampradāna is a rite which today constitutes an important feature of Hindu marriage custom.

Releasing the bride from the father's house

There are mantras by which the bride was made free from the fetters of Varuṇa, with which the bride's father Savitṛ had bound her.

"Prá tvā muñcāmi Váruṇasya pásād
yéna tvā 'badhnāt Savitā́ susévaḥ
rtásya yónau Sukṛtásya loké

'riṣtām tvā sahā pátyā dadhāmi "

(R.V.X.85.24)

"I free you from the fetters of Varuṇa by which generous Savitṛ has bound you. In the cradle of law¹, in the world of the good deeds, I unite you, uninjured with your husband."

1. In the place of sacrifice-Sāyana

The same mantra was used in the Gr̥hyasūtras. The Āśvalāyana Gr̥hyasutra¹ lays down that the verse should be pronounced when the bridegroom loosened the two knots (śikhā) of the bride's hair, if she wore her hair thus, and two tufts of wool were bound round her hair on the two sides with the above mantras. This is of course symbolic of cutting the bond of Varuṇa who holds the maiden bound to her father's house.

In the Ṛg-Veda Varuṇa's fetters generally appear in the context of the punishment of wrong-doers, and as Varuṇa is considered to be the presiding deity of Rta or right, here he seems to have been conceived as tying the maid to her father's house, as it was the duty of the girl during maidenhood to be confined there. It would follow then that before she could be carried out of the house Varuṇa's bond must be unloosened by some symbolic ritual with this mantra.

By the next mantra the bride was released from her father's home, but bound to that of her husband's.

1. Āśv. Gr. 1.7.16

Pré tó muñcāmi nā mutah
 subaddhām amútas karam
 Yāthā iyām Indra mīdvaḥ
 suputrā subhāgāsati.

(R.V.X.85.25)

" I release you from here but not from there. I place you there firmly; O generous Indra, so that she may have excellent sons and be blessed with fortune."

There are three other verses in which Viśvāvasu was asked to leave the bride.

Úd irṣvātaḥ pátivatī hí eṣā
 Viśvāvasuṃ nāmasā gīrbhīr īle
 anyām iccha pitṛṣādaṃ viaktām
 sā te bhāgó januṣā tāsya viddhi.

(R.V.X.85. 21)

" Rise up from here, this girl has a husband, I worship you Viśvāvasu with reverence, look for another marriageable girl who is still dwelling in her father's house. This is your share from the birth." Be aware of it. "

Úd irsvā'to Viśvāvaso
 nāmaseḷāmahe tvā
 anyām iccha prapharvīaṃ
 sām jāyām pātiā srja

(R.V.X.85.22)

" Rise up from here Viśvāvasu, we worship you with reverence.

reverence. Look for another maiden , with excellent hips,¹
and leave her with husband. "

In the Atharva-Veda the same Viśvāvasu is referred to

Út tiṣṭhetó Viśvāvaso nāmaseḷāmahe tvā
Jāmiṁ iccha pitṛṣādam niaktāṁ
sá te bhāgó janúṣā tāsya viddhi .

(A.V.XIV.2.33)

" Rise and go from here, Viśvāvasu, I worship you with reverence. Look for her sister, who is dwelling with her father. This is your share from the birth. Be aware of it ."

²
Dr. Sarkar tries to interpret this verse as an evidence of brother and sister marriage. According to him in this mantra the union with an adorned jāmi (sister) sitting among the fathers, is regarded as Viśvāvasu's birthright, so he thinks that the context would suggest that the marriage being celebrated was also one between a jāmi and her brother.

1. Strong or robust - Geldner

2. Sarkar, *SOME E.S. p 74-75*

This interpretation seems to be far fetched . Viśvāvasu is the name of one of the Gandharvas. As the girl is conceived to belong to the Gandharvas before her marriage with her human husband ¹, it is quite probable that here he was told to leave the bride, who no longer required his care, and to transfer his guardianship to other maidens who were still in their father's house.

Carrying off the bride

Then the bride was carried to her new home, in a chariot made of śalmali wood , which was decorated with kiṃśuka flowers.

Sukiṃśukāṃ śalmaliṃ viśvārūpaṃ
 hiraṇyavarṇaṃ suvṛtaṃ sucakrāṃ
 ॐ roha Sūrye amṛtasya lokāṃ
 sionāṃ pātye vahatūṃ kṛṇuṣva

(R.V. 85.20)

" Mount this (chariot) adorned with kiṃśuka²(flowers)(and made of) śalmali (wood) , well shaped, of golden colour, turning easily and well -wheeled. O Surya, mount the world of immortality, make the journey happy for your husband."

1. R.V.X.85.40

2. Geldner. Śāyana believes that kiṃśuka wood is meant. The prefix su before kiṃśuka suggests that an adornment of the chariot is referred to.

Śalmali is a kind of silk cotton tree and kiṃśuka is a tree well adorned with flowers. It may be noticed that the flower is of blood red colour, which may have some significance, since in later times the red colour became increasingly associated with marriage rituals and sexual life.

Prayer to make safe the journey of the bridal pair

When the bridal pair started their journey to the new home prayers were uttered to make the journey safe from robbers and prevent accidents on the way.

Mā vidan paripanthīno
yā āsīdanti dāmpatī
Sugēbhir durgām ātitām
āpa drāntv ārātayah

(R.V. 85.32)

" Let not the robbers, who lie in the ambush find the husband and wife and reach them, let them easily pass by dangers and may the enemies depart."

Sumaṅgalīr iyām vadhūr
imām samēta pāsya
Saubhāgyam asyai dattvāya
āthā 'stam vi pāretana

(R.V.85.33)

" This bride has signs of good fortune. So all of you come and look at her . Having given her good wishes, return to

your homes."

The last verse is also mentioned in the Atharva- Veda¹ and according to Kauśika Sūtra² it is addressed to women who come to look at the bride on her journey.

The arrival

Then the bride was welcomed at her new home, to reign supreme over the whole household and all the members of the family.

Samrājñī svāsūre bhava
 Samrājñī svasrūam bhava
 nānāndari samrājñī bhava
 samrājñī ādhi devṛṣu

(R.V. X.85.46.)

"Be queen over your father-in-law, be queen over your mother-in-law. Be queen over your sister-in-law and queen over your husband's brothers."

Prayers were then made to all the gods for the union of the hearts of the bride and the groom.

1.A.V.XIV.2.28

2.Kauśika Sūtra-77.10

Sám añjantu víśve devāḥ
 sám āpo hr̥dayāni nau
 sám Mātariśvā sám Dhātā
 sám u Deṣṭrī dadhātu nau "

(R.V.X.85.47.)

" May all the gods unite our hearts, may the waters unite
 them. May Mātariśvan, Dhatṛ¹ and Deṣṭrī² unite us together."

Invocation to the gods for progeny, wealth and happiness

Prayers were made to the gods Prajāpati and Indra for
 the happiness, wealth and progeny of the newly couple.

Ā naḥ prajāṃ janayatu Prajāpatir
 ājarasāya sám anaktu Aryamā
 ādurmañgalīḥ patilokām āviśa
 sám no bhava dvipāde sám cātuspāde

(R.V.85.43.)

"Let Prajāpati bring children to us. Aryamā unite us
 until old age. Enter your husband's home, free from
 bad omens. Be auspicious towards our bipeds and quadru-
 peds. "

1. Creator- Geldner

2. Guide- Geldner

"Imāṃ tvám Indra mīdhuah
 Suputrām subhāgām kṛṇu
 Dāsāsyām putrān ā dhehi
 pātīm ekādaśām kṛdhi "

(R.V.X.85.45)

O, bounteous Indra, make this wife mother of good sons and fortunate. Give her ten sons, make her husband the eleventh."

Consummation

Last of all comes the consummation of the marriage. The effect of witchcraft in the bride's body and garment were removed.

"Nīlālohitām bhavati
 kṛtyāsaktīr viājyate
 ēdhante asyā jñātāyaḥ
 pātīr bandhēṣu badhyate " (R.V.X.85.28.)

"It is blue and red. The clinging of Kṛtyā is driven off. Her kinsmen thrive, her husband is tied in bonds."

This verse is very obscure. Nīlālohitam is interpreted by Griffith and Wilson and also by Sayana as the form of Kṛtyā. But this cannot be an epithet of Kṛtyā, as Kṛtyā is feminine, while nīlālohitam is neuter. Weber¹ translated

Weber, Ind. Stud. Studien. Vol. V. p 187

nilalohitam as dark red and thought that it referred to the stained bridal dress and that Kṛtyā was a female evil spirit which was attached to the garment and liable to do harm. So the bride is asked to put off the garment. The verse thus seems to refer to the deflowering of the bride. This interpretation seems to be borne out by the following verses, which clearly refer to the widespread primitive belief in the danger of sexual intercourse with a virgin:

"Pārā dehi Śāmulīam
brahmābhyo vi bhajā vāsu
Kṛtyāiṣā padvātī bhūtvī
ā jāyā visate pātīm "

(R.V.X.85.29)

"Put away the stained garment¹. Give wealth to the brāhmaṇas. This Kṛtyā, having become possessed of feet, approaches the husband as his wife."

"Āsrīrā tanūr bhavati
rūṣatī pāpāyā samuyā
Pātir yād vadhvō vāsasā
svām āngam abhidhītsate "

(R.V.X.85.30)

"His body becomes unlovely, shining with that wicked (Kṛtyā)

1. Śāmulyam according to Sāyana is an impure garment soiled by the body.

when the husband wishes to put on his own limbs the garment of his wife."

This verse evidently refers in a veiled way to the sexual act. It is clear from these verses that according to the Vedic belief evil spirits always accompanied the bridal pair and tried to do some harm at the time of intercourse. So the stained dress of the bride was put off and given to the priest for purification.

"Trṣṭám etát káṭukam etád
apāṣṭhāvad viṣávan náitad áttave
Sūryām yo brahmā vidyāt sa íd
sá íd vādhyam arhati "

(R.V.X.85.34)

"This (garment) is inflaming, it is bitter and biting, it is like poison, it is not fit to eat (fit for use), the Brāhmaṇa who knows Sūryā deserves the garment."¹

"āsásanam viśásanam
átho adhivikártanam
Sūryāyāḥ páśya rūpāni
tāni brahmā tú sundhati "

(R.V.X.85.35)

1. According to Weber & others, by Sūryā is meant the Sūryā-hymn. But there is no reason why it should not be Sūryā, the bride herself.

"It is cleaving, dividing, cutting. Behold the forms of Sūryā. The brāhman purifies them."

In this verse the meaning of āśasanam, visāsanam and adhikartanam is not very clear. Wilson basing his interpretation on Sāyana, translates these as 'border cloth', 'head cloth' and 'divided skirt' and Griffith translates them as the fringe, the cloth that decks her head, and triply parted robe. But Weber¹ and Geldner² see in this verse a comparison with that of the dismembered sacrificial victim, the priest having power to cleanse the stains of blood away in both cases. The latter seems the more likely interpretation, since the obscure words are evidently connected with roots meaning cutting or dividing.

Thus ends the marriage ceremony. So on marriage the wife was given a very honourable position in the household. She was in charge of the whole household, was looked upon as guardian of all the members of the family, and was charged to look after their welfare.

1. Weber-Indische Studien. vol. V. p. 190

2. Geldner, Der Rg-Veda p272. X. 85.35 (note)

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF THE ATHARVA VEDA

In the range of Sanskrit literature the Sāma and Yaḡur-Veda follow the Ṛg-Veda. But we find little evidence of the social conditions of that period in those texts. The Atharva-Veda therefore comes next to the Ṛg-Veda in importance, because from it we get plenty of material for the social history of the time.

Rituals

The fourteenth book of the Atharva-Veda deals with marriage rituals. In spite of small difference the kernel of the ritual of marriage in both the Ṛg-Veda and the Atharva-Veda is the same, but the ceremony as described in the Ṛg-Veda is much simpler.

Wooers going to the bride's home

The Atharva-Veda also describes the marriage of Sūryā and Soma. The first sixteen verses of the XVIth Book refer to the Aśvins serving as groomsmen, and going to the house of the bride to ask for her hand on behalf of Soma.

Ritual bath

One of the most important pre-nuptial ceremonies in the Atharva-Veda was that of the ritual bath of the bride, and the priests were requested to fetch the water for the bath so that it might be auspicious for the welfare of the future husband.

"Āsyai brāhmaṇāḥ snāpanīr harantu
 āvirāghnīr úd ajantu āpaḥ
 Aryamno Agniṃ pári etu Pūṣan
 prátiksante śvásuṛo deváraśca "

(A.V.XIV.1.39)

" Let the brāhmaṇas bring her bathing water. Let them draw up water that slays not a hero, let her go about the fire of Aryaman. O, Pūṣan, father-in-law and brother-in-law are looking on."

Dressing the bride after bath

The following verses refer to the dressing of the bride after her bath. Prayers were offered to the goddesses who had made the garment.

"Yā ákr̥ntann ávayan yāśca tatniré
 Yā devīr antān abhitódadanta

tás tuā jaráse sám vyayantu
 áyuṣmatī idám pári dhatsva vāsaḥ "

(A.V.XIV.1.45)

"They who spun, wove and extended, Goddesses who have drawn the ends together, let them wrap you in order that you may attain old age. (As) one long lived put about thee this garment."

In the Kauśika-Gr̥hyasūtra¹ this verse accompanies the putting of an usual garment upon the bride.

Pānigrahaṇa

Now came the actual marriage ceremony. The bridegroom took the hands of the bride². Then blessings were given to the bride, who was dressed in her bridal finery. The five verses describing this part of the ceremony are virtually the same as those of the Ṛg-Veda, which we have quoted above³.

Stepping on the stone

Then followed another ceremony peculiar to the Atharva-Veda and not mentioned in the Ṛg-Veda. The bride was made

1. Kaus. Gr. 76.4.

2. A.V.XIV.1.48-52

3. See above p6

to step on a stone by the bridegroom with the following verse:

"Syonám dhruvám prajāyāi dhārayāmi
 té'śmānaṃ devyāḥ pṛthivyā upāsthe
 tám ā tiṣṭh'ānumādiā suvārcā
 dīrghāṃ ta āyuhḥ Savitā kṛṇōtu "

(A.V.XIV.1.47)

"I place upon the lap of the divine earth, an auspicious and firm stone for you, for the sake of progeny. Stand on it, greeted with joy, of excellent glory, may Savitar give you long life."

According to Kausūka¹ the first half verse accompanies the setting of a stone in lump of dung, and the second accompanies the stepping of the bride upon it; the same ceremony is repeated² in the new home of the pair after their arrival. The stone is a symbol of firmness and strength. So this ceremony is intended to promote conjugal fidelity.

Removing the evil spirits

The evil spirits were then removed by the following mantra:

1. Kaus. .76.15-16

2. " " 77.17-19

Út tiṣṭhetáḥ kim icchántídám ágā
 ahám tveḍe abhibhūh svād grhāt
 Śūnya=ēśī Nirṛte yā jagāndha uttiṣṭha
 arāte prá pata méhá ramsthāh

(A.V.XIV.2.19.)

"Stand up from here, what desire has brought you here?
 I am your overcomer, O Idā, out of my house. You who have
 come here, seeking the empty, O evil spirit Nirṛti, get
 up and fly away, do not stay here."

The goddess Nirṛti (Dissolution) is a kind of evil spirit.
 The Maitrāyanī Saṁhitā (III, 6.3; I.10.11, 16) connects
 with her dice , women and sleep as the three most evil
 things. In the king's consecration the king's wife, who
 has failed to give him a child is connected with Nirṛti¹
 and oblations to that goddess are offered in her house.
 The fetters of Nirṛti are always evil and punish the wrong-
 doers. The brahmin student is under a duty of chastity.
 If he fails in his duty he is required to make an
 offering of an ass to Nirṛti. He has to clothe himself
 in the skin of that victim thereafter when he goes

1. Keith, The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and
 Upaniṣad p211

begging, and thereby proclaim his sin to everyone.¹

The occurrence of the name Idā as a malevolent spirit is surprising since this Vedic divinity is normally the personification of the sacrificial offering of milk and butter,² and is looked on as holy and benevolent. We can only suggest that this hymn emanated from circles which did not respect the vedic goddess Idā, but knew of an evil spirit of the same name.

Lājahoma

There is another verse with which the wife prayed for her husband's long life, while she scattered grains.

" Iyám nārī úpa brūte pūlyāni āvapantikā
dīrghāyur astu me pátiḥ jīvāti sáradaḥ śatám"
(A.V.XIV.2.63.)

"This woman scattering shrivelled grains (pūlya) appeals 'long live my husband, may he live my husband, may he live hundred autumns'."

According to Kausika³ the verse is repeated while the bride stands firm upon the stone and scatters the grains.

1. Gaut. Dh. V. XXIII.17; Pār. Gr. III.12.8

2. Keith, The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and
Upaniṣad p200

3. Kauś. 76.17

It is not clear , however, that in the Atharva Veda the Lājahoma is in any way connected with the rite of standing on the stone, since it is mentioned in another hymn. It is quite probable that at this period the two ceremonies were not connected.

This ceremony of scattering fried rice or grain is found in all the Grhyasūtras, where it is described as Lājahoma . Even today this is considered to be one of the most important rituals of Hindu marriage. These fried grains are symbol of fruitfulness and prosperity.

Prayers when the bride sets out

Then followed the prayers to make the journey successful when the bridal procession started for the new house.

" Bhāgas tvetó nayatu hastagr̥hyā
 Ásvinā tvā prá vahatām ráthena
 gr̥hān gaccha gr̥hāpatnī yathāso
 vaśinī tvām vidátham á vadāsi "

(A.V.XIV.I.20.)

"Let Bhaga taking your hand, lead you. Let the Ásvins carry you in the chariot. Go to the house to be the household's mistress, and having control speak to the gathering. "

Accccording to Kaus̥ika¹ this verse accompanied a complete

spinkling of her new home by the bride, presumably to purify it from witchcraft and evil spirits.

Sitting on the hide

Another important ritual mentioned in the Atharva-Veda, but not in the Ṛg-Veda, which can be explained as a fertility rite, is the custom of the bride being seated on a hide, which apparently covered a heap of rushes. At a later period it was specified that the hide should be that of red bull, and the same may have been the case in this period.

" Yaṃ bálbajaṃ niásyatha
cárma copastrñithána
tadā rōhatu suprajā
yā kanyā vindáte pátim

(A.V. XIV.2.32.)

" When you throw down the rushes and spread the hide, then let her ,who will produce good progeny, mount it, the girl who finds her husband."

This ceremony is mentioned in all the Gṛhya-sūtras as taking place after arrival of the bride at the husband's home. According to Kausika¹ this verse accom-

panies the act of preparing a seat for the bride, that she may take a brāhmaṇa boy into her lap. The ceremony is mentioned in all other Gr̥hyasūtras, and was performed for obtaining male progeny.

Consummation

Then followed the ceremony when the bride ascended the nuptial bed.

"
 Ā roha tálpaṃ sumanasyámānā
 ihá prajám janāya pátye asmái
 Indrānīva subúdhā búdhyanānā

jyótiragrā uśásah práti jāgarāsi " (A.V.XIV.2.31)

" Mount the nuptial bed with favourable mind. Here give birth to children for the husband. Like Indrānī, waking with good awakening, may you awake to meet dawns tipped with light. "

"
 Devā ágre níapadyanta pátniḥ
 sām aspr̥santa tanúastanúbhiḥ
 Sūryéva nārī viśvárūpā mahitvā
 prajāvatī pátiā sām bhavehá. "

(A.V. XIV.2.32)

" The gods at first lay with their wives, they embraced (saṃ-spr̥s) bódies with bodies; like Sūryā, O woman, all-formed, with grandeur, having progeny, here unite with your husband "

Then comes the ceremony after the bridal night when the stained garment were given to the priests for purification.¹

Further features of the ceremonies

A few verses of the Atharva-Veda marriage hymns, refer to rites which cannot be definitely placed in the marriage ritual. For instance there are other two verses which are spoken to cows .

" Ihéd asātha ná paró gamātha
imám gāvaḥ prajāyā vardhayātha
śúbhaṃ yatirusriyāḥ śómavarcaso
viśve devāḥ krānn ihá vō mánāmsi. "

(A.V.XIV.I.32.)

" May you be here, may you not go away; may you, O cows increase this man with progeny, going in beauty, splendid, bright with Soma, may all gods turn your minds here. "

"Imám gāvaḥ prajāyā sám viśātha
ayám devānām ná mināti bhāgám
asmái vaḥ Pūṣā Marútaś ca sārve
asmái vō Dhātá Savitá suvāti "

(A.V.I.33.)

"Come, O kine, dwell around him with offspring; he does not diminish the god 's portion; for this man shall Pūṣan, all the Maruts, for him shall Dhātar, and Savitar, quicken(su) you."

In Kauśika¹ this verse is directed to be recited at the time of the paying (in kine) of the price demanded for the bride. That would point to the existence of the Arśa form of marriage in the Atharva Veda. But this does not seem to have been its original sense, because the second verse indicates distinctly that it refers to the wish for prosperity in respect of cattle.

There is another verse mentioned in the Atharva-Veda which is repeated in many other texts with a little variation.

Ámo 'hám asmi sá tvám sám 'ahám asmi r̥k tvám dyáur ahám
pr̥thivī tvám

Táv ihá sám bhavāva prajám á janayāvahai

(A.V.XIV.2.71.)

"He am I, she thou; chant am I, verse thou, heaven am I, earth thou; let us (two) come together here ; let us generate progeny."

1. Kauś. 79.17

According to Kauśika¹ this verse is uttered after the consummation of the union.

General conclusions on marriage in the time of the Rg-Veda and Atharva-Veda

It appears from the above, that the rites and rituals of the Rg-Veda and Atharva-Veda were comparatively simple. Vedic marriage appears to have been the union of two persons of full physical development. The ceremony commenced at the bride's house. Offerings were there made before the sacrificial fire. The bridegroom took the hands of the bride (pāṇigrahaṇa)

The festivities being over, the bride was carried to a chariot, which also carried the fire to which oblations had already been made. Mantras were uttered to keep away evil spirits and prevent accident on the way. The journey to the bridegroom's house was called vahatu,² which is also the name of the marriage ceremony itself in the Vedas. That the journey with the sacrificial fire was a feature of the ceremony of marriage seems also to be suggested by the terms udvāha and vivāha, both derived from the root vaha, to carry.

1. Kauś. 79.10.

2. Sat. Br. IV.6,9,20. Macdonal & Keith, Vedic Index. vol. II. p278

It is clear from the R̥g-vedic and Atharva-vedic verses that wifehood carried much respect and dignity. The wife was called the mistress of the home, partook of the domestic duties and religious rites along with her husband, and also took part in family councils¹.

In the Vedas there is no evidence of divorce. Marriage was considered not as a contract but as a sacrament, which brought about the spiritual union between the man and wife by magic mantras. The marriage was performed in the presence of the fire as a witness, it was beyond the power of human being to cancel the union, and so the marriage indissoluble. Even in the later period, when different forms of marriage were introduced into society, the presence of fire was often thought absolutely necessary even in the lower forms. Vātsyāyana² describes six different methods by which a girl can be abducted, according to all of which the man is advised to procure fire at the earliest opportunity, to sacrifice in it and with the girl to circumambulate it three times.

1. A. V. XIV. 1. 20. see p. 29.

2. Kāmi. III. 5,

In the Vedic mantras on marriage elements of both magic and religion are found. The gods Aryamā, Bhaga, Savitā etc. are invoked to make every step in marriage free from difficulty, but on the other hand there are mantras which seek to drive away evil spirits such as Kr̥tyā, Idā etc. The invocation of the gods shows that the people of Vedic India looked on marriage as a very solemn religious rite. At every step the married couple is susceptible to evil influences, which are prone to do mischief on the slightest occasion.

There is also another belief that the bride is liable to be dangerous and prayers are offered in order to make her harmless to human beings and to animals¹. That the relatives of the groom are afraid of the evil coming through the bride is clear at every step of the rituals. But side by side is the idea that all these evil influences could be averted by proper incantation and charm.

It is significant that most of the marriage

1. see R.V.X.85.43 above, p18

rites and rituals of the Ṛg-Veda and Atharva-Veda are similar to those of other Indo-European races. The actual ceremony of marriage in the Vedas commenced with the ceremonial Pānigrahana , literally taking of the hand. This rite is present in all the Indo-European races. In Rome the ceremony was dexterum iunctio ¹ . In Iran too the senior officiating priest joined the right hands of the pair, in the ceremony called hathvaro ² . It is a part of the Christian marriage ceremony also.

The ceremony of Vahatu ,i.e. carry-the bride to her husband's home in a chariot drawn by oxen, was practised also in ancient Greece ³ .

Rites for removing evil spirits were observed almost everywhere. There was a very general belief that the bride and the bridegroom were in a state of danger, being particularly exposed to other persons magical arts or evil looks or to the attacks of evil spirits.

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1. Roman Marriage by Warde Fowler in Hastings, E.R.E. VOL VIII p465
 2. Iranian Marriage by Jivanji Jamshedi Modi in E.R.E. VOL VIII p456
 3. Hans Licht, Sexual life in ancient Greece p45

In Russia, among Slavonic peoples, all doors windows and even the chimnies were closed at the wedding to prevent¹ malicious witches hurting the bride and the bridegroom. The firing of the guns is a frequent practice at country wedding both in Europe² and in India even today, and it is generally admitted that its purpose is to drive away evil spirits. Among Slavonic peoples again wedding guests made a terrific noise outside the bridal chamber while the marriage was being consummated, originally no doubt for the same purpose.³

Invocations to the gods for happiness , long life and progeny were very important in Rg-Vedic marriage. Similarly in Iranian marriages⁴ two priests stood before the bridal pair, whom the elder priest blessed, praying the Ahura Mazda might grant progeny of sons and grandsons abundant means, strong friendship, bodily strength, long life and an existence of 150 years.

1. Westermarck. H.H.M. Vol II. p497.
 2. " " " 498
 3. " " " 498-499
 4. Hastings, E.R.E. Vol VIII p456

One of the most important pre-nuptial ceremonies among ancient and modern Hindus as also among other Indo-European peoples is that of the ceremonial bath of the bride and frequently of the bridegroom also. In the Atharva-Veda there is reference to the bath of the bride, and priests are requested to fetch the water for the bath,¹ that it may be auspicious for the future husband. In Greece too, the bath of the bride was one of the most important pre-nuptial ceremonies. At Athens the water had to be fetched from the spring of Kallirrhoe, water jars² of peculiar shape being used for the purpose. In Rome it was the custom to receive the bride with water and fire.³ The ceremonial or ritual bath was indeed a very popular feature in marriage in many European countries and also in ancient and modern India.

There is also another marriage rite mentioned in the Atharva Veda, that of treading on the stone by the bride. Evidently the rite symbolises the

XIV.

1. A. V. I. 39-40

2. Hastings, E. R. E. Vol. VIII. p. 446 by W. G. Woodhouse

3. " " p. 465 by W. Warde Fowler

very natural desire of making the union firm and strong , and may have its origin in the very old custom of oath taking on a stone. The old Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus tells us that " the ancients, when they were to choose a king, were wont to stand on stones planted on the ground and to proclaim their votes in order to foreshadow, from steadfastness of the stones that the deed would be lasting."¹

The Atharva Vedic custom of the bride being seated on a hide is also practised among many of the Indo-European races. The hide may have been the hide of the same cow as was slain in Maghā for the marriage.

The Gṛhyasūtras state that both the bride and the bridegroom should sit on the hide. In Roman marriage a victim was offered to a deity and the couple had to sit on the skin of the victim.²

Among Slavonic peoples the couple used to sit on a fur.³ In Estonia the bride was seated on a blanket spread upon a fur.⁴

1. Frazer, Golden Bough VOL I part 1 p160

2. Hastings, E.R.E. VOL VIII p465

3. Westermarck, H.H.M. VOL II p490

4. " " " "

Hartland thinks that the rite was intended to promote fertility.¹ But Westermarck² suggests that this rite came into practice because it was considered dangerous for the bride to sit on the ground, because the ground was believed to be haunted by evil spirits.

Since we find that the essential marriage rituals of the R̥g-Veda and the Atharva-Veda are similar to those of the other Indo-European races we can reasonably assume that the rites and rituals connected with Vedic marriage had already become a common heritage before the Indo-European came and settled down in India.

1. Hartland, Primitive Paternity VOL I. p133
2. Westermarck, H.H.M. VOL II p470

Chapter II

Marriage rituals in the Grhyasūtras

There are various Grhyasūtras of different schools, and there are variations in rituals and mantras according to the custom of each śākhā, which may perhaps be accounted for by the variation in Vedic rites and rituals prevalent in different parts of the country.

To the Ṛg-Veda belongs

the Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra. Connected with the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa is the Grhyasūtra of Āśvalāyana. The chief Grhyasūtra of the Sāmaveda is that of Gobhila. Besides the texts of the Sāmaveda the latter presupposes the Mantra Brāhmaṇa, the collection of mantras in ritual order, which are quoted by Gobhila. The Grhyasūtra of Khādīra belong to the Drāhyāyana school and is very similar to that of Gobhila. The Grhyasūtra of the White Yajurveda is that of Pāraskara. It is closely connected with the Śrautasūtra of Kātyāyana¹. The later law books of Yājñavalkya bears evidence of the influence of Pāraskara's work.

The Āpastamba Grhyasūtra belongs to the

1. Macdonell. - History of Sanskrit literature. p. 244.

Black Yajurveda. This Gr̥hyasūtra forms two books(26-27) of the Āpastamba Kalpa-sūtra. The first of those books is a Mantrapāṭha of a collection of formulae accompanying the ceremonies.

The Kauśika Sūtra belongs to the Atharva-Veda. The Mānava Gr̥hyasūtra is closely connected with the Śrautasūtra attributed to the same author.¹

The development of the Sūtra literature is generally assigned to the period from 500 to 200 B.C.² The comparative study of the Vedic rituals and those of the Gr̥hyasūtras shows that the essential elements of the marriage ceremony of the Gr̥hyasūtras go back to the Vedic or Indo-European period. The ceremony is much the same in form as that described in the Vedas, but it is amplified analogy and ritualistic logic.

RITUALISM IN HINDU DOMESTIC LIFE

AT the same time the rituals prescribed and enunciated by the Gr̥hyasūtras are much more complex and are entirely dictated by a priestly and sacerdotal order. Even the minutest detail did not escape the attention of the

1Macdonell, History of Sanskrit literature; p 244-251

2. Kane, History of Dharmasāstras in the chronological table
Vol.II part 1

brāhmanas, who sought to rationalize the Hindu socio-religious system, long after the Vedic Aryans had laid its foundation. In course of centuries, the simple ideology and rituals of marriage of R̥g-vedic and Atharva-vedic times must have come into more or less close contact with those that prevailed among the indigenous peoples and other foreign tribes and peoples who entered India from time to time. The Aryan society was certainly more organised and intellectually on a higher level than that of the peoples whom it encountered; the priestly class were its recognised leaders, and they made it their task to integrate or incorporate the indigenous foreign elements, whenever they could, without disturbing the basic ideology and structure of the Vedic marriage system and its rites and rituals.

As one goes through the elaborate details of the ceremony, it becomes more and more unmistakable that the leaders of the Hindu socio-religious organisation were very anxious to retain this Vedic framework, and even to add to it by incorporating mantras, prayers and rituals that were no doubt Vedic and Brahmanical but not originally connected with marriage. Again and again the

appeal is made to the Vedas; verses are cited from these texts, and, on the whole, it seems that the rituals too are drawn from them. It also appears that the brāhmanas, who presumably took the lead in amplifying and rationalising the system, were keen on keeping their hold through such elaboration and amplification, at any rate on that section of society that had come within the orbit of their intellectual, cultural and religious influence, though admittedly their injunctions were more rigidly applied to their own class than to any other caste or class.

It is quite clear from the thorough studies of the Vedas and the Gr̥hyasūtras that the whole life of the Vedic Aryans was ritualistic in character. The lives of a man and his family were all regulated by rites and rituals from the birth of a child down to cremation.¹

The first ceremony, named Pumsavana aims at the obtaining of a son. At this rite a pounded shoot of a banyan tree is placed in the wife's right nostril.

After the Jātakarma (the birth-rite) the ceremony called Namakarma (giving the child its name) takes place,

1. Macdonell, History of Sanskrit literature p252-257

generally on the tenth day after birth.

In the third year takes place the ceremony of tonsure (Cudā-karana), when the boy's hair is cut.

The most important ceremony of boyhood is Upanayana , which takes place in the eighth year in the case of brāhmaṇas, and a few years later in the case of Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas. The spiritual significance of the initiation is that it fits the boy to study the Vedas. Besides his studies the daily duties of the student are also regulated in detail, and include collection of fuel, devotions at morning and evening, begging food, sleeping on the ground etc.

In the sixteenth year the rite of shaving the beard is performed, when a couple of cattle is offered as a fee, from which the ceremony derived its name, Godāna.

The conclusion of his studies, which last for about twelve years, is then ceremonially performed with a sacred bath, by which he becomes a snātaka.

Then comes the most important sacrament of life= marriage. The main elements of this ceremony belong rather to the sphere of magic than to the sacrificial cult, and are considered below in detail.

After marriage the duties of the new householder are ritually regulated. The five great sacrifices are to be daily offered by every householder. There are also minor sacrifices which are to be performed periodically, such as the various ceremonies connected with the building and entering of a new house. There are also agricultural ceremonies.

Finally funeral rites are prescribed, and the worship of manes. Detailed directions about cremation are given. After death, the relatives are looked on as impure for a period of up to three days. Generally after the tenth day the bones are collected and ceremonially placed in an urn with utterance of a R̥g-Vedic mantra. Then a śrāddha or offering given with reverence is presented to the soul, which is supposed to remain separated from the manes.

As regards marriage, the rites and rituals of the R̥g-Veda appear to have been very simple.¹ The actual marriage commenced with the act of Pānigrahana. Gods were invoked to make the newly married couple happy and prosperous in the newly established life.

1. Chapter 1

2. Chapter 2

3. Chapter 3

Evil spirits were removed by appropriate mantras. The bride was then carried away in a chariot to her new home.

The scheme of marriage is the same in the Atharva-Veda but the ceremonies are much amplified and elaborated. Some new rituals are added to the original R̥g-Vedic rituals. The pre-nuptial bath of the bride has been raised to a ritual, and priests are requested to fetch the water for the bath so that it may be auspicious for the future couple. Another important rite, the bride's sitting on the red bull's hide after the marriage, is a further addition in the Atharva- Veda.

In the Gr̥hyasūtras the rites and rituals of the R̥g-Veda and the Atharva-Veda are even more amplified by additions and adaptations. But the Sūtras maintain the general framework of Vedic rituals. In every phase of the marriage ceremonial, all the acts, even the most insignificant are considered to bring forth auspicious results and raised to ritual status. At every step gods are invoked and evil spirits dispersed, which shows the growing influence of magic.

Magical rites

Besides the main religious ceremony of marriage, the other ceremonies can be divided into two sections,

magical and symbolical rites. According to the Gr̥hyasūtras marriage is supposed to be open to danger at every stage, which can only be got rid of by magic formulae. The maiden is especially susceptible to evil influences. The idea of compulsion is inherent in magic-if one performs a ritual according to prescribed rules the evil spirits are forced to withdraw. In the Gr̥hyasūtras most of the rites are magical. But the peculiarity of the Gr̥hyasūtra rituals is that, as well as by the magic mantras, it was believed that evil influences could be averted by seeking the favour of beneficent spirits, who could be invoked by appropriate mantras or worship. So in the Gr̥hya ceremonies even the magic rituals are combined with religion. This kind of remedy differs from pure magic in that it invokes the grace of divine agency rather than charms away the evil by the force of spells. Once belief in magic became so dominant, magic rituals tended to increase and new rites were more and more absorbed into marriage rituals of the Gr̥hyasūtras, whereas in the R̥g-Veda the magical element of the marriage ceremony is much less in evidence. In ancient India magical practices entered largely into the sacred ritual, and many of the ceremonies performed by the priests at the great sacrifice are in no way to be distinguished from the practices of magicians. In all the rites connected with marriage it is

almost impossible to distinguish between magic and religion. To secure the welfare of the bride solemn services and prayers to the gods are prescribed, side by side with charms against evil spirits.

Magic is essentially connected with belief in demons or evil spirits. Its practices are invariably accompanied by spells which in early India were little distinguished from the prayers addressed to the gods. Thus the demons who cause diseases or other evils are constantly invoked, worshipped and propitiated. As the demons are enemies of mankind, it is natural that ^{they} should be more anxious to injure the new born infant, the embryo, or even the potential mother, before her child is conceived. Therefore there are numerous charms and rites concerned with protection of the mother and child against the attack of evil spirits.

There are two ways of removing these hostile influences. The first is to deceive and cheat them in every way. Actions such as fasting, or refraining from sexual intercourse, are intended to forbid their entrance. The use of water for washing away every kind of evil is common among all the branches of Indo-European races. Thus the bride is washed to rid her of all evil influences. According to Hiranyakesin Grhyasūtra ¹ the face is wiped after an

1. Hir. Gr. I. 16.5

evil dream.

One of the best known rites in all systems of magic is the transference of evil to some other person or thing. The bride's garment after marriage is hung up on a tree or post, so that the evil influences in it may be disposed of. Similarly the cloth with which she is wiped is given to the guardian of the maiden, who puts it in a cow-stall or hangs it up in a wood.¹

The idea of transference of the evil to some other thing is very familiar to the primitive mind. When a Moor has a headache, he starts beating a lamb or a goat, believing that the headache will thus be transferred to the animal. In Morocco most wealthy Moors used to keep a wild boar in their stables, in order that the Jinn or evil spirits might be diverted from the horses and enter into the boar.²

Examples of the transference of evil are common in many parts of Europe. In Rome the cure for fever was to pare the patient's nails, and stick the pairings with wax on a neighbour's door before sunrise; the fever then passed from the sick man to the neighbour.³ In Northamptonshire,

1. Kaus. I. XXVI. I, A. V. XIV

2. Frazer, Golden Bough, part VI. 3rd ed. p 31

3. " " " p 47

Devonshire and Wales a popular cure for cough was to put a hair of the patient's head between two slices of buttered bread and give the sandwich to a dog. The cough was thus transferred from the patient to the dog.¹ In the Greek island of Karpathos the priest would tie a red thread round the neck of a sick person. Next morning the thread was removed and the relatives tied the thread to the tree.² Fever was thus believed to be transferred to the tree.

Symbolic rites

There are certain rites in the Gr̥hyasūtras which are mainly symbolical. In ancient times symbolism played a very important part in human life. The rites are easily perceived to be symbolical and we may therefore investigate their meaning on this basis. If we compare the Indian symbolic rites with the rites of other Indo-European countries or primitive tribes we find some similarity of ideas. These rites, however, are not always performed to gain a definite result. The satisfaction is in having performed a ritual or a religious duty. In the

1. Frazer, Golden Bough, part VI, 3rd ed. p 51

2. " " " " p 55

performance of the rite the performer feels that he has made a small contribution, which it is both his privilege and his duty to do, to the maintenance of that order of the universe of which man and nature are interdependent parts.¹

Sometimes we find that the same symbol is used in different occasions. But there is a common element of meaning, and by comparing together the various uses of symbols we may be able to discover what that common element is.

To get good luck and happiness one method is to avoid the touch of anything dangerous. Another method is the touching of things which are beneficial. Thus the bride is placed on a bull's hide to ensure fertility. The placing of her (or, in the initiation ceremony, the student) on a stone is intended to attain firmness.

PRELIMINARY MARRIAGE CEREMONIES

Selection of the bride

In the selection of the bride some girls are to be avoided. According to Āpastamba² one

1. Radcliffe Brown, Structure and function of primitive society. p 144-145

2. Āp. Gr-I. 3. 12-13

should avoid girls with the name of a nakṣatra, river or tree, and also those the last consonant of whose names are r or l. Examples of these names are given by the commentator as Karā, Kaṭā, Suśīlā, Gaurī etc. In Kāmasūtra¹ we also find the advice to avoid women whose names have l or r as their last consonant.

It is not very clear why these names are avoided. But among primitive peoples we find that anything, such as a place, a word or name, an occasion, or even a day of the week or a period of the year, may be the object of ritual avoidance or taboo. It is hard to explain the objection to the use of words for rivers, trees, and nakṣatras as components of names on this basis however, though l or r are widely looked on as inauspicious letters.

The Grhyasūtra recommend the selection of the bride by means of earth clods². Such earth clods are to be gathered from an altar, a furrow, a pool, a cow stable, a gambling place^{a place}, where corpses are burnt, from sterile soil, and from a place where four roads meet. The ninth clod is a mixture of all. The girl is to pick up one of the earth

1. Kām. - III.1

2. Gobh. Gr. II. 5.3.9; Āsv. Gr. I. 5.1.4.

clods. If she chooses one of the ^{first} four clods or the mixed one she is considered to be lucky. If she chooses a lump of earth taken from the field that yields two crops in one year, her offspring will be rich in food; if from the earth of a vedī (altar), rich in holy lustre; if from the pool which does not dry up, rich in everything; if from a gambling place where four roads meet, wandering to different directions; if from a barren spot, poor; while if she chooses the earth from a cremation ground, she will bring death to her husband. Āpastamba Grhyasūtra ¹ prescribes a similar ceremony, but with some difference in the nature of the choice of objects. In the texts the girl is asked to take one of the following things: different kinds of seeds mixed together, loose earth from a sacrificial altar, earth clods from a field, cowdung, and earth clods from a cemetery. The former objects bring prosperity while the last is regarded as very inauspicious. Mānava - Grhyasūtra ² says that the bridegroom should test the girl with eight clods. One from the furrows of the field,

1. Āp.Gr. I.3.15-17

2. Mān. Gr. I.7.9-10

one from the altar, one from where durvā grass grows, one from cowdung, one from the foot of the fruit bearing tree, one from the cemetery, one from the road, and one from the saline soil. These he should lay down in front of the god's house(temple) and then ask the girl to choose one. If she takes the clod from the cemetery, the road, or the saline soil he should not marry her.

Among other Indo-European peoples there are also similar practices. In Norway, the bridegroom puts three bottles on the table at Christmas, one containing water, one beer, and one wine. Then the future bride comes before him. If she drinks water she will be poor. If she drinks beer, they will get on well together, and if she drinks wine they will be rich.

The custom of omen reading in connection with the selection of the bride is practised by some of the primitive tribes of India. Among the Mundas the ultimate selection of the bride rests not in human hands but on the reading of certain omens known as chenrè-uri.

1. Winternitz, D.K.A.W .Vol XL p 38

2. Sarat Ray, Mundas and their country p437-438

This is performed in the following manner. When the proposed match is considered desirable by the guardian of the girl and the go-between, they appointed a day for chenre-uri. On that day the go-between and the guardian of the bridegroom with two other relatives start for the girl's village. On the way the party mark every omen, good or bad. Among omens considered good may be mentioned the following:—a person carrying a fishing trap made of bamboo ; a person carrying an axe, a spade or a shovel; and a cow bellowing , but not in response to or followed by response from her calf. If the party happens to come across any bad omen on the way, they forthwith return home and negotiations fall through.

Selecting the auspicious day

All marriages at the first instant should take place on an auspicious day and propitious nakṣatra,¹ which is also mentioned in the Ṛg-Veda. According to the Śāṅkhāyana Gr̥hyasūtra² and also that of Āśvalāyana³ marriage should be celebrated on an auspicious day in the

1. See above p4

2. Śāṅkh. Gr̥. I.5.5

3. Āśv. Gr̥. I.4.1

time of increasing moon and during the northern course¹ of the sun. According to Bharadvāja one should get married during the northern course of the sun, as this is sanctified to the gods. Even so one can also marry during the southern course of the sun, which is sanctified to the manes, as the wedding has also a connection with the household spirits. One can marry at midday, which is sanctified to the Ṛsis, or in the afternoon, which is sanctified to the Pitrs and Bhaga.

²
Baudhāyana says-

"suci tapas tapasya varjam ity eke"

"some exclude Suci, Tapas, and Tapasya (as auspicious months for marriage)"

The months of Tapas and Tapasya are identical with Māgha and Phālguna, while Suci is the summer month of Āṣādhā.

³
Similarly Āpastamba says that all seasons are fit for marriage with the exception of the two months of the season of Śiśira and the last summer month.⁴ Āpastamba again says that all the nakṣatras which are otherwise stated to be auspicious are fit for marriage

1. Bhār. Gr. 1.11

2. Baudh. Gr. 1.1.18-20

3. Āp. Gr. 1.2.12

4. " 1.2.13

The choosing of an auspicious day among the Indians is very important even now. In almost all parts of India the wedding begins with the bride and bridegroom having their horoscopes cast and going to the astrologer for him to decide an auspicious day for the wedding.

The choosing of the day for the wedding also plays a great part among other Indo-European peoples. Indians, Greeks, Germanic peoples and Estonians all agreed that getting married when the moon is on the wane was¹ bad, as it led to want and scarcity in the new household. Among modern Parsis both betrothal and marriage take place on an auspicious day, the day of the full moon being chosen for betrothal.² Curiously enough, this belief is also found in some of the primitive tribes. The Kachins of Burma fear their lives will be shortened if the marriage takes place in the waning moon. The Saorias of Rajmahal hills believe that consummation during the waning or darkening moon results in general bad luck and the barrenness of the wife.³

1. Winternitz, D.K.A.W. Vol XL p30

2. Hastings, E.R.E. Vol. VIII p455.

3. Westermarck, H.H.M. Vol. II. p568

It seems that the custom originally grew out of a belief in sympathetic magic, and on very widespread and unexplained belief in some relation between human life and the moon, perhaps also the sun and the stars.

Celebration of marriage during the time of the waxing moon cannot always be traced to this belief however. In Dukkala in Morocco marriage is said to be held in the full moon in order to be safe from robbers.¹ Such very practical considerations may have had some influence in the choice of the bright half of the month and especially the full moon as the auspicious time for marriages. In a community without street lighting and with very inadequate domestic illumination the advantages of such a choice are very obvious.

Negotiation

At the next stage, wooers are sent to the bride's father to negotiate the match. According to the Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra² the bridegroom sends the wooers on their journey to the bride's home. They take with them fruits, flowers, barley and a pot of water which are evidently symbols of fertility. When the negotiations are

1. Westermarck, H.H.M. Vol II. p. 579.

2. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 6. 1-6

concluded and the matter pleases both the parties they touch the full vessels into which have been put flowers, fried grains, fruits and barley. The priest of the girl's family puts the vessel on her head with the R̥g-Vedic verse \bar{a} nah¹ prajām etc. The fertility motive is clear not only in the symbolical objects, but also in the mantra quoted above.

Sacrifice made by the bridegroom

The bridegroom makes sacrifices after the bride's father has declared his assent. For this purpose, he besmears a quadrangular space with cowdung. The southern side of the quadrangular space is recommended to be used for the rites which belong to the manes and the northern side for those devoted to the gods. Also, water is to be sprinkled into a middle line² drawn from south to north. Here Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra differs from the Śrauta Sūtra attributed to the same author, which says that the ceremonies sacred to the Manes are directed towards the south.³ The worshipper should consider the south-

1. R.V.X.85.43 cf. Chap.1 p18

2. Śāṅkh.Gr. I.7.1-8

3. Śāṅkh.Śraut. I.1.14.

eastern direction , sacred to Agni, also as that to which the ceremonies are to be directed which are sacred to the Manes. The Śrauta Sūtras prescribe that the ceremonies sacred to the gods should be directed towards the east. ¹

The commentary on Viṣṇu Smṛti, which is later than our period, mentions that a wedding ceremony is said actually to have begun when the Nāndimukha, or Śrāddha preliminary to marriage, has taken place. ²

The Ritual Bath

At the beginning of the wedding we find the purificatory bath of the bride prescribed in all the Gṛhyasūtras. The girl is supposed to be under the influence of an evil spirit that is to be washed away with water. This ceremony is first attested in the Atharva Veda, but though not mentioned in the Ṛg-Veda it is quite possible that a similar ceremony took place in the earlier period, since the marriage hymn of the Ṛg-Veda does not, as far as we know, give a comprehensive picture of the rites, and

1. Śāṅkh. Śraut. I.1.13

2. Viṣṇu XXII.53 (Nand) S.B.E.VOL 7 note

and similar practices are attested among other Indo-European peoples. The basis idea behind it is that there is some dangerous influence in the bride that is to be washed away with water. ¹ Āpastamba mentions that the bridegroom sends the brāhmanas to fetch the water for the bride with the following verse :-

"Vyūksat krūrām údacantv ápa
 ásaí brāhmanāḥ snápanam harantu
 ávīraghnīr údacantv ápaḥ " (M.1.1.7)

"They are to draw water, the brāhmanas are to fetch the bath water in order to away evil, water that should not bring bad luck to the husband is to be drawn."

The explanation of Vyūksat krūrām is doubtful. ² Winternitz translates the first word as a participle depending on snanam. Haradatta explains it as yad apām krūrām tad apagacchatāt" ; may what is harmful in water depart ! We have ³ already found in the Atharva Veda that the priests bring the bath water. The Gobhila Grhyasūtra deviates from

1. Āp. Gr. IV.7;

2. Winternitz, D.K.A.W. VOL XL. p43

3. A.V. XIV.1.31 see Chap. I p. 24.

the other sūtras in stating that the girl is to be washed with klītaka,¹ barley and beans². The Śāṅkhāyana Gr̥hya-sūtra³ recommends that the girl is to be washed up to her head with water that has been made fragrant by all sorts of herbs and choicest fruits together with scents. All these were evidently used as symbols of fertility. The water is sprinkled by a friend three times over her head, so that her whole body is drenched.

This rite is mentioned in all the Gr̥hyasūtras, but different Gr̥hyasūtras specify it at different stages of marriage. In Āpastamba it is presumably performed after the arrival of the bridegroom at the bride's home. According to Śāṅkhāyana Gr̥hyasūtra⁴ the bath of the bride takes place on the eve of the departure for her husband's home.

Āpastamba⁵ describes the ceremony as follows. The bride sits in the courtyard after a ring of darbha grass has been placed on the head. A carriage is brought and the semicircular opening of the yoke, which is intended for the

1. Klītaka- (grains) prepared as dough or paste-Gobh II.1.10 prepared from sweet root-Āśv. Gr. III.8.8.
 2. Plant with a poisonous root-Āp. Śraut. XV.3.16 (Monier Williams)
 (Monier Williams)

2. Gobh. Gr. II.1.10

3. Śāṅkh. Gr. I.11.2.

4. Śāṅkh. Gr. I.11.

5. Āp. Gr. II. IV.8.

the neck of the ox, is placed into the hole, probably in such a manner that it is held by the head within the opening of the wooden framework. Thereupon the bridegroom pours the bath water, which is brought by the brāhmaṇa,¹ over the bride. In the Mānava Gr̥hyasūtra the ceremony is described in the following way. After having kindled the fire in the stable, the bridegroom leads the bride towards the fire, holding the seam of the dress, saying the verse aghoracakṣu etc.² He embraces her and leads her to the fire. Then they circumambulate a carriage. This, presumably, refers to the carriage destined to take the bride to her new home. Then they walk between the fire and the carriage, and thus he places her below the left yoke-hole in the right pole; he then pulls out the pin, puts a piece of gold therein and pours water on her through the hole.

The peculiar ceremony of the hole of the yoke is connected by Haradatta with the Apāla hymns in the R̥g-³Veda. The story of Apāla is related by Haradatta in the

1. Mān. Gr̥. I. 10. 5-7

2. R. V. X. 85. 44. cf. p 144-5

3. R. V. VIII. 91. 7

following manner. There was a girl named Apālā. She was afflicted with white leprosy and no one would marry her. Then, to pay reverence to Indra, she stepped into the river in order to bathe. She was carried away by the current, and saw the soma plant. This she chewed with her teeth and presented the juice to Indra. Indra drank it and let the water flow through the three holes of the yoke of the carriage, drenched her three times with the water, and made her as bright as the sun.

The use of the yoke in different contexts in the Gr̥hyasūtras at first seems to be a reminder of this story. The result, which it was imagined could be obtained by these acts is not quite clear. They may have been done for the purpose of protecting the woman against sickness in her married state, if we accept the explanation of Haradatta. But this connection of the Apālā story may well be later development, and this does not seem to be the only purpose of the use of the yoke in the marriage ceremonies. It must also have had a deeper magical significance, and have indicated the bride's subjugation to her husband.

That the bath of the bride is the most important wedding preparation among most of the Indo-European

peoples has been seen in the previous chapter¹. Even in the India of today the bath preceding a wedding plays a very important part in the ceremony.

In most parts of India both the bride and the bridegroom take a bath before the wedding. In many parts of eastern Bengal the ceremony of fetching water for the bride and bridegroom is called Jalabharana². Married women of the house fill their pitchers from the nearest stream. Musicians accompany them, and appropriate songs are sung. An open space in the house is decorated with mango leaves and vermilion spots. The bride and the bridegroom in their respective houses change dresses and are seated on the decorated platform where they are anointed with turmeric paste and bathed in water brought by the women.

Clothing and anointing the bride

After the bath the bridegroom gives the bride a new garment. Then he anoints her, repeating prayers to the Viśvedeva³. He gives the quill of a porcupine, a string of three twisted threads, and a mirror into her right hand with the follow-

1. See above p 39

2. literally water-filling

3. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 12. R.V. 8. 47, cf. ch. 1. P 18

ing verse:-

Rūpām rūpam prátirūpo babhūva
 tādasya rupam praticáksanāya
 Indro māyābhiḥ puru rūpa iyate
 yuktā hyasya hārayah śatā dáśa

(R.V.VI.47.18)

"Indra, has assumed various forms, and such is his forms for us to look on. Indra, multiform by his illusions, proceeds (to his worshippers), for the horses yoked to his car are a thousand."

This verse is rather misplaced here. Originally it was presumably uttered at the time of the bride's departure from the father's house. Neither the quill of the porcupine nor the string of three twisted threads of the mirror have anything to do with the Rg-Vedic mantra just cited, yet it seems that they are supposed to have some significance, perhaps magical.

In an Assyrian incantation we find directions for removing a disease from a man, by binding to his limbs a double cord of black and white threads, which is tied on the patient's limbs and then cut off and thrown away¹.

1. Thomson, Semitic Magic Pl64-165

It is possible that the twisted thread in the Grhyasūtras has the same significance. If so, the purpose or result which it was imagined could be obtained by his act was to protect the woman against sickness in her married state. This practice was presumably taken from indigenous tribal customs.

The looking glass was also probably used as a charm against the evil eyes, because it was supposed to throw back the malignant glance. Among the Hiaina of Morocco wild rue and rock-salt are tied to the swaddling cloth of the infant and to the belt of the mother, while alum and a few shells are tied to the swaddled child to safeguard it against the evil eye, and for both purposes a looking glass, is put underneath its head and left there until the child is old enough to eat ordinary food. Among the Ait Yusi, also of Morocco, a looking glass, together with some salt and the knife with which the navel-string was cut, is similarly placed underneath the head of the infant. The looking glass, which is left there for forty days, is said to protect the child from the evil eye¹. In the marriage ceremony even today in some parts of Bengal the bride and bridegroom each hold a brass mirror

1. Westermarck, R.B.M., vol. II. p 381-382

in their hands on the day of marriage, and the bridegroom puts the vermilion on the parting of the bride's hair with the aid of this mirror, whereon it has been placed in a line down the centre of the disc, by rubbing it upon her head. The bride's mirror plays no active part in the ritual, but is held all the time¹.

Returning to the ceremony as described in the sūtras, at the next stage the bride's relations tie to her body a red and black woollen or linen cord with three amulet gems, repeating the Ṛg-Vedic verse, 'Nilalohitam'². These are also magical rites. This is a charm against the evil spirit Kṛtyā, who is already mentioned in the Ṛg-Veda. In the Gṛhyasūtras the special magical rite is performed to avert this evil female spirit. But whereas this verse apparently originally referred to rites performed after consummation, it is here used in the course of the ceremony. It would seem that the rite, using the red and black cord, developed on the basis of the verse, which was misunderstood by the time the sūtras were composed.

1. From personal knowledge

2. R. V. X. 85. 28. cf. Ch. I. p 19

The covering with the new garment, which is already indicated in the Atharva-Veda is connected directly with the bath and accompanied by mantras and appropriate rituals. According to Āpastamba¹ just after the bath the bridegroom wraps the bride in the new dress.

Śāṅkhāyana² mentions this ceremony as follows: With the permission of the young girl who escorted the bridegroom to the girl's house the bridegroom gives her the garment with the following verse:-

Rāibhy āsīd anudéyī nārāsāmsī nyócānī
Sūryāyā bhadram idivāso gāthayāti páriṣkṛtam

(R.v.X.85.6)

"Raibhi³ was the bridal friend, and Nārāsāmsī led her home Sūryā's robe was lovely to see; by a hymn beautified she moves."

This verse is also rather misplaced here. Originally it was presumably uttered at the time of the bride's departure from the father's house.

The custom of using colours to distract attention from the thing to be protected is very common in India.

1. Āp.Gr. IV.8

2. Śāṅkh.Gr. I.12

3. The words Raibhi, Nārāsāmsī and Gāthā are taken as personifications of song & praise-Wilson, Rg-veda translation Vol VI. note on p355

In various parts of India one sees all kinds of strange things painted in gaudy colours on the exterior of many of the houses, so that if any unlucky glance fall upon any dwelling it may be attracted to and rest upon these representations, rather than on the house or its inmates.

To wear amulets on the person has always appealed to the simple mind. The English peasantry in some places still believe in so called lucky stones as a protection against the evil eye¹ and the use of amulets has far from vanished even in modern city civilizations.

After the Pānigrahana ceremony also the eyes of both the bride and bridegroom are anointed with collyrium. Then little arrows are shot in all the directions. Arrows are also used among many tribes to expel evil spirits. Among the Oraons the father of the bride puts an iron headed arrow into her hands at the time of her departure to the husband's home to expel the evil spirits of her father's village². Among high class Hindus of the Punjab the bridegroom always carries an iron

1. Mrs. Murray Aynsley, S.E.W. pl40-141

2. Westermarck H.H.M. Vol. II p499

weapon with him to drive away evil influences.

Among the Bhils of central India the bridegroom touches the "marriage-shed" ¹ with a sword².

The anointment with collyrium is also presumably done to protect the couple against the evil eye. The belief in the ill effects of the evil eye is fully held in India at the present day. Even now Hindu mothers put a black spot of collyrium on the foreheads of their children as a protection against nazar or the evil eye.³ The Hindustani word nazar is much more comprehensive than the English expression by which it is usually translated. It implies the ill effects which may result from the gaze of any one, even the most benevolent and affectionate. Here in the marriage ceremony bride and bridegroom are protected from the nazar of all the people, good or bad, by anointment with collyrium.

Anointment is an important ceremony in the Gr̥hyasūtras. The bride's father anoints the pair while the bridegroom recites the verse:—"May the Vis̥vedevas,

1. In India marriage ceremonies are always performed in an enclosed place, generally in the courtyard

2. Westermarck, H.H.M. Vol. II p 500

3. Personal knowledge.

may the waters unite our hearts. May Mātariśvan, may Dhātr, may Deṣṭr join us"¹.

Prof. Pandey thinks that this anointment is symbolical of sneha or love and consequently of uniting the pair².

But this anointment may also be practised as a preventive against the evil eye, as well as against other influences. Amongst the Ait Waryager of Morocco, when an infant is forty days old, its crown is smeared with henna as a protection against fleas, lice and the evil eye, and this is frequently repeated until it grows older; and the same colouring matter is applied to the chests and feet of their greyhounds, which they are more anxious to preserve from envious looks as they have not many of them³.

At Moorish weddings the custom prevails of painting the bride and bridegroom with henna, which is considered to contain much virtue and is therefore used as a means of purification or protection on occasions when people think they are exposed supernatural dangers, as for example, at religious feasts. The henna is applied

1. R.V. X. 85.47, see above p18

2. Pandey, H.S. p371

3. Westermarck, R.B.M., Vol. II. 443

to the bride's hands and feet.¹

In the present day Bengal there is a ceremony of anointment with turmeric. On the day of the marriage the relatives smear and anoint the body of the bride with a paste made of turmeric and oil and bathe her. In West Bengal this ceremony, called Gātraharidrā, is performed on both the bride and bridegroom one or two days before marriage. In some districts the bride is anointed with the remains of the turmeric used to anoint the bridegroom.²

Similar ceremonies are practised among the many primitive tribes of India. Among the Mundas some female relatives of the bridegroom come to the bride's home to anoint her with oil and turmeric. The bride then goes to the home of the bridegroom and anoints him similarly³. Among the Godavars of Vishākhāpatam the bridegroom is smeared all over his body with turmeric and then bathed⁴.

1. Westermānek, H. M. Vol. II. p 502 .

2. Personal Knowledge

3. Sarat Ray- Mundas and their Country p 447-48.

4. G. Ramdas- The Godavar of Vizagapattam, ^{in India,} Max Vol. XI

Dance of Girls

After that four or eight young women other than widows are entertained with vegetable, food and ¹ surā. The attendant girls perform a dance four times. This rite seems to be the survival of a primitive custom. Dance and music have always been and still are important elements of marriage ceremony among many primitive and civilized tribes and peoples of the world. In Indian villages, they are still very common. Among the Oraons, dancing girls along with other persons including an old man who carries a small wooden disc on his head, a woman with a baby, a woman with a pot of water and others, start for the bride's village in a procession from the bridegroom's village. When the bridegroom's party reach the bride's village, the girls from the boy's side form lines and join up with the girls on the bride's side. The songs and music that accompany the dance on such occasion are often erotic in meaning and even frankly ² suggestive.

This ceremony is prescribed only in one text, the sūtra of Śāṅkhāyana. It is noteworthy for the

1. Śāṅkh. Gr. I.11.5

2. Notes on two Oraon Marriages by W.G.Archer, ^{Man in India Vol. XX.} p258-260

fact that, despite the rigid ban generally placed on alcoholic liquor in the sūtra literature, it is definitely prescribed here. We can only conclude that the dancers who were to be entertained with food and liquor were not women of the bride's caste but low caste professional entertainers, for whom there was no taboo on alcoholic drinks. There seems in the text to be no suggestion of the bride and bridegroom or the families themselves partaking of surā. The professional entertainer is still much in demand at Indian wedding.

Arghya reception

Some Grhyasūtras describe the madhuparka or arghya reception as a part of the marriage rite and others mention it independently. This is generally offered by way of honour to the distinguished guest. The arghya reception of the bridegroom is offered when the bridegroom arrives at the bride's house. It should again be offered when the newly married couple have arrived at their own house. ¹ The word madhuparka literally means ' a ceremony in which honey is shed or poured.' There are differences of opinion as regards the substances mixed in offering madhuparka. ² Āpastamba Grhyasūtra

1. Śāṅkh. Gr. I.12.10

2. Āp. Gr. V.13.10

prescribes a mixture of honey and curd or of clarified butter and curd. Hiranyakeśin¹ lays down a mixture of curds, honey, ghee, water and ground grain. Mānava² says that the Veda declares that the madhuparka must not be without flesh, and so it recommends that at the ceremony of the releasing of a cow to wander at will, the flesh of goat or ram may be offered. Śāṅkhāyana³ also mentions that the arghya reception should always be offered with flesh, especially at sacrifices and weddings. The use of meat in the madhuparka was evidently not approved of in many brahmanical circles even in early times, and has now long been given up.

THE MAIN MARRIAGE CEREMONY

After these preliminary observances there are certain essential marriage ceremonies, which are common to all the Gr̥hyasūtras. The main ceremonies are performed as follows.

At the beginning of the ceremony the bride should be ceremonially given by the bride's father to the bridegroom. This is called the Kanyādāna ceremony. Then having placed a millstone at the west of the

1. Hir.Gr. I.12.10-12

2. Mān.Gr. I.9.22

3. Śāṅkh.Gr. II.15

the fire, the bridegroom should offer sacrifices while the girl takes hold of his hand. Then he takes hold of her hand (pānigrahana) with appropriate mantras. Then he leads her thrice round the fire, each time making her tread on the stone. After that they sacrifice fried grains (lājahoma) on the fire. Then he causes her to take seven steps forward in a north-eastern direction with seven appropriate mantras. There is great divergence of opinion among sūtrakāras as regards the order of the rituals. For example, the Āśvalāyana Gr̥hyasūtra¹ describes going round the fire before Saptapadī while Āpastamba Gr̥hyasūtras² describes **Saptapadī** before going round the fire. The Gobhila, Khādīra and Baudhāyana Gr̥hyasūtra³ describes Pānigrahana after Saptapadī, while many other sūtrakāras⁴ describe it before Saptapadī.

Kanyādāna

The actual marriage starts from the ceremony of Kanyādāna. This ceremony is described in detail in the Mānava Gr̥hyasūtra.⁵ The groom is led into the place where

1. Āśv. Gr. I. 7. 7.

2. Āp. Gr. IV. 16

3. Gobh. I. 3. 31; Khād. Gr. I. 3. 3; Baudh. Gr. I. 4. 10

4. For a comparative table of the rite according to different sūtras, see *at the end of the book*

5. Mān. Gr. I. 8. 6-8

the Sampradāna is due to be performed. Either the father or the brother is competent to give away the girl. To the west of the fire four seats are to be prepared. The bridegroom sits on the western side facing east and the Sampradātā (he who makes Sampradāna) sits on the southern side facing north. The giver should give away, if she is to be married according to the Brāhma rite, saying the words:—"I give" thrice, while the receiver repeats the words "I accept" thrice. This Kanyādāna ceremony is also mentioned in the Pāraskara Grhyasūtra¹. Among other Grhyasūtras, Āśvalāyana² does not clearly describe the ceremony but uses the word dadyāt while defining the first four forms. It is very strange that this Kanyādāna, which is considered to be one of the essential ceremonies of the later period, is not mentioned by most of the Grhyasūtras. The Vedic references and those in the Grhyasūtras show that it was believed that the bridegroom received the girl as a gift from the gods and not from the father. The rite of Sampradāna evidently became an essential ceremony only in the later period; we may connect its introduction with the development of different forms of marriage in Hindu society and with the deterioration of the position of women, who became to be looked on more as in the nature of property.

1. Pār. Gr. I. 4

2. Āśv. Gr. I. 6

vivāha homa

The putting of wood on the fire is performed with appropriate ceremonies and Ājyabhāga oblations are offered to the fire ¹. Then the bridegroom leads the bride round the fire. After the circumambulation of the fire the bride and bridegroom sit down to the west of the fire on a mat ², The bridegroom takes hold of the bride's hands while he offers the oblations, ³ with the following verses: ⁴

Sómāya janivíde sváhā || 1

Gandharvāya janivíde sváhā || 2

Agnāye janivíde sváhā || 3

Kanyalā pitṛbhyo yati patilokam āva dikṣam adāstha sváhā || 4

Pré tó muñcāti māmútaḥ subaddhām amūtutas karat

yáthéyam Indra mīdhvaḥ suputrā subhágāsati || 5

imām tvām Indra mīdhvaḥ suputrām subhágām kuru

dásāsmām putrān ā dhehi pátim ekādaśam kṛdhi || 6 ||

Agnír aitu prathamó devátānām

só syai prajām muñcatu mṛtyupāsāt

tád áyam rájā várūno'nu manyatām

yátheyām strī pautram aghām ná ródāt || 7

1. Āp. Gr. II. IV. 10

2. Āp. Gr. II. IV. 9.

3. Āp. Gr. II. 5. 2; Bhār. Gr. I. 13.

imám Agnis trāyatām gārhapatyah
 prajām asyai nayatu dīrghām āyuk
 āśūnyopasthā jīvatam astu mātā
 pautram ānandām abhi prā budhyatā iyam ॥8
 mā te grhē niśi ghoṣa utthād
 anyātra tvād rudatyāḥ sām viśantu |
 mā tvām vikēśy ūru ā vadhiṣṭhā
 jīvāpatnī patilokē vi rāja
 pāśyanti prajām sumanasyāmānām ॥9
 Dyaus te pṛsthām rakṣatu vāyūr ūrū
 Āsvīnau ca stānam dhāyantam savitābhī rakṣatu |
 ā vāsasaḥ paridhānād Brhaspatir
 Viśve devā abhi rakṣantu pāścāt ॥10
 aprajastām pautramṛtyūṃ pāpmānam ūta vāghām
 śirṣnāḥ srājam ivonmūcya
 dviṣādbhyaḥ prāti muñcāmi pāsam ॥11
 imām me Varuṇa śrudhī hāvam adyā ca mṛdaya |
 tvām avasyūr ā cake ॥12
 tāt tvā yāmi brāhmaṇā vādamānas
 tād ā śāste yājamāno havīrbhiḥ |
 āhedamāno Varuṇehā bodhy ūruśamsa
 mā na āyuh prā moṣih ॥13

tvám no'gne Várunasya vidvān
 devásya hédó'va yāsisīṣṭhāh |
 yājiṣṭho váhniṭamaś sósucāno
 viśvā dvēsāmsi prá mumugdhy asmát || 14
 sa tvám no agne'vamó bhavotí
 nédiṣṭho asyā uśaso vyūṣtau
 áva yakṣava no Várunam ráraño
 vīhí mṛḍikām suhávo na edhi || 15
 tvám Agne ayāsy ayāsán mánansā hitāh |
 ayāsan havyam ūhise'yā no dhehi bheṣajám || 16

1. To Soma, finder of woman svāhā |
2. To Gandharva, the finder of woman svāhā.
3. To Agni, the finder of woman svāhā.
4. The virgin who from her father's house steps into the husband's world has completed the virgin initiation.
5. He releases you from here, but not from there. He places you here firmly. O generous Indra, may she have excellent sons and be blessed with fortune.
6. O Indra, make this wife mother of good sons and fortunate. Give her ten sons, and make her husband the eleventh.
7. May Agni come as the first of the gods, may he liberate her children from the fetters of death and may he, King Varuna, grant that, this woman should not weep over a guilt connected with her son.

8. May Agni Gārhapatya (the house fire) protect her. May he grant her children and long life. May not her womb be empty; may she be the mother of living children. May she take delight in her children.
9. May there never be wailing at night in your house, may the(hired) female mourners go elsewhere. May you never beat your breast with loosened hair. No, as the wife of a living husband, radiate light at the house of the husband, looking upon the happy crowd of children.
10. May Dyaus protect your back, Vāyu your thigh, and the Asvins your breasts, may Savitr protect your suckling. Until the putting on the garment, may Brhaspati protect you, afterwards all the gods.
11. Childlessness, death of children, misfortune or blame, I take away from you, just as the garland is removed from the head, and attach them as chains to the enemy.
12. O hear my prayer, O Varuṇa be gracious to-day, intreating your help I long for you.
13. Thereupon I approach you, Honouring you with prayer. This is what the sacrificer desires through his offerings. Do not be angry with us, O Varuṇa, who are praised (known) far and wide. Do not take our life.
14. O Agni, you have cleverly turned away the scorn of the god Varuṇa. You, who sacrifices best, you, who bring

the gods near best, shining brightly, remove from us all hostile acts.

15. When the morning sun rises may you, O Agni, you, who are lowest be nearest to us as a helper. Reconcile us with Varuṇa through sacrifice; come, giving us your grace respond readily to our call.

16. You Agni are tireless and you are kind as you are tireless. Tirelessly conduct the sacrificial food. Tirelessly give us medicine.

This Vivāha homa is described in different ways in Gr̥hya-sūtras. Hiranyakeśin¹ prescribes that only the verses 8 to 16 should be uttered on this occasion. Pāraskara² mentions the homa in the following way. It is to be performed after the bridegroom has led the bride round the fire. He sits to the west of the fire and offers oblations while the bride touches him. As well as ājya and Mahā-Vyāhṛti, which are mentioned in all the Gr̥hyasūtras³, he also makes Gaya and Abhyātāna oblations, which are intended to procure royal power and victory.

1. Hir. Gr. I.19.7.

2. Pār. Gr. I.5.

3 See below p 123-127

The bridegroom then offers other oblations with the following mantras.

Agniretu prāthamo devatabhyaḥ
 so sye prajāṃ muñcatu mṛtyupāsāt
 tadayaṃ rājā Varuṇonu manyatām
 yatheyam strī pautram edhanna rōdāt svāhā ॥

M.B. I.19.

imam Agnis trāyatām gārhapatyah
 prajāṃ asyai jaradaṣṭim kṛnotu
 aśunyopasthā jivatām astu mātā
 pautram ānandaṃ abhi vibuddhatam iyam svāhā ॥

M.B. I.I.10

'May Agni come here, the first of gods. May he release the offspring of the wife from the fetters of death. That may this king Varuṇa grant, that this wife may not weep over distress through her sons. svāhā .'

8 'May Agni Gārhapatya protect this woman. May he lead her offspring to old age. With fertile womb may she be the mother of living children. May she experience delight in her sons, svāhā .'

1
 Khādira also mentions the similar mantras at this oblation

After the mantra is recited, the rite of Agni-parinaya follows; here the bridegroom leads the bride three times round the fire, keeping the right side towards it. At the end of each round the rite of stepping upon the stone is performed by the bride, with the help of the bridegroom.

Pānigrahana

Panigrahana is also one of the essential ceremonies constituting the marriage and it is looked on as so important that the term Pānigrahana is often used synonymously with Vivāha or another word explicitly meaning marriage. The seizing of the hand can be done in one of the three ways, according to the Gr̥hyasūtras. The bridegroom can take hold of the fingers of the bride's right hand only without the thumb, if he wishes for sons only. If he wishes to procreate children of both sexes he should take hold of her hand and the little hairs ¹ on the back.

Lāja-homa

After this the bridegroom twice pours sacrificial ghee on the roasted grain held in her hands; this she sacrifices in the fire while she utters the following verse:-

1. Āp. Gr. 1.6.1.

iyám nāry úpa brute gūlpāny āvapantikā
 dīrghāyūr astu me pátir jīvātu śarādaḥ śatām

(M.I.5.2.)

' This woman, srewing grains prays:may my husband have
 a long life; may he live for a hundred autumns.'

The ceremonies of circumambulation of the fire
 and treading on the stone follow twice more after this.

According to Bhāradyaġa¹ the sacrifice
 precedes Pānigrahaṇa. After the bride has bathed and
 is dressed, the sacrificial fire which has been taken
 from the house of the relations (it is not said whether
 the relations of the bride or the bridegroom but probably
 probably the latter in view of the patriarchal nature of
 Aryan society), is placed before them. Then the bride-
 groom puts butter into the fire, with the verses:-
 'Soma the finder of woman svāhā etc. '²

Then follows the seizing of the hand, the
 stepping on the stone, the circumambulation round the
 fire and the lājahoma .

According to Hiranyakeśin³ the Vivāha homa
 as well as the stepping on the stone precede the grasping

^{Gr}
 Bhār. I.13

2.M.I.1-16

^{Gr}
 3.Hir. I.19.7-9

of the hand and the seven steps . The bridegroom makes the bride sit down, pours into her joined hands sacrificial ghee, and strews roasted grains upon it.¹ After she has sacrificed these grains into the fire he makes her get up and walk round the fire. Then he strews roasted grains on the fire, they circumambulate a second time, and again he strews roasted grains. After having circumambulated for the third time makes an offering to Agni Svistakṛt.²

According to Pāraskara³ after she is led round the fire by the bridegroom and after the sacrifices with the Mahāvyaḥrtis and other formulas, the bride, standing, sacrifices with the fried grains mixed with sami leaves, which the bride's brother pours out into her joined palms.

According to Gobhila⁴ and Khādira⁵ after the sacrifice with Mahāvyaḥrtis⁶ the bridegroom

1. Hir. Gr. I. 20. 3-7

2. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 13. 1-4; Pār.^{Gr} II 27. 10. ; Gobh. Gr. II. 1. 24, 2, ¹⁰ ; Kaus'. 76. 4, 5

3. Pār. Gr. I. 5.

4. Gobh. Gr. II. 1. 25-26;

5. Khād. Gr. I. 3. 11-13; I. 3. 16

6. See below p 126.

makes the girl tread on the stone. Then her brother, fills her joined hands with fried grains, which she sacrifices in the fire after ghee has been spread under and is poured over them.

After this sacrifice the husband leads her round the fire so that their right sides are turned towards it, or the brāhmaṇa, versed in the mantras, does the same.

All the ceremonies beginning with the treading on the stone are thrice repeated in the same way.

The order of the ceremony according to Mānava Gr̥hyasūtra¹ is somewhat different. The bridegroom stirs up the fire and offers oblations to the current nakṣatra and the deity of the nakṣatra, to the tithi and the deity of the tithi, to the season and the deity of the season. Thereupon he sacrifices eight gifts of ghee into the fire.

The Pānigrahaṇa, which takes place after the sacrifice, is followed by the Aśmārohaṇa or stepping on the stone. Here both the bridegroom and bride are made to step on the stone with the right foot, while according to other Gr̥hyasūtras the bride only steps upon it. The 'stepping of the stone' is done twice. Four times they are led

round the fire; at each circle the brāhmaṇa says the following Brahma Japa: "Be united, be harmonious, being friendly to each other, radiant with kind thoughts, clothing yourself in food and strength"¹.

In Mānava Ṛ̥hyasūtra the Lājahoma follows after this. After having strewn rice and barley and having sprinkled water for Aryaman, Puṣan, Agni and Vāruṇa, we are told that " he roasts the grain and gives it to the mother (of the bride) or to a woman who is related to her² and who is not a widow". It is she who sacrifices it in the fire. It seems hardly likely that the ceremony was interrupted while the bridegroom roasted the grains to be used for sacrifice, and thus it seems probable that this operation was performed by the officiating priest, while the Lājahoma was being offered by the bridegroom.

According to Śāṅkhāyana³ and Āśvalāyana⁴ Ṛ̥hyasūtras the bride offers the sacrifices of fried grain,

1. Samitaṃ Saṅkapethāṃ iti paryāye paryāye

brahmā brahmajapaṃ japat. (Mān. Gr. I. 11.)

2. Sajātā according to Winternitz means a woman, who has living children. Winternitz, D. K. A. W. Vol. XL. P 60.

3. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 13. 15-17

4. Āśv. Gr. I. 7. 8-16

which is poured into her hands by her brother, to the gods Aryaman, Varuṇa, and Pūṣan, with Agni as the intercessor on her behalf.

Saptapadi

Saptapadi, or taking the seven steps together, is another essential ceremony to be performed in marriage. This ceremony occurs in different sequence according to different Gr̥hyasūtras. According to Śāṅkhāyana¹, after the sacrifice with fried grains, the Ācārya makes the couple take seven steps forward in a north-eastern direction. According to Āpastamba² this ceremony takes place after the Pānigrahana but before the sacrifices to the fire, the stepping on the stone, and the Lājahoma. After the Pānigrahana the bridegroom makes the bride take seven steps with the following verse:-³

Ékam iṣé Viṣṇus tvānvetu
 dvé ūrjé Viṣṇus tvānvetu
 tríṇi vratāya Viṣṇus tvānvetu
 catvāri māyobhavāya Viṣṇus tvānvetu
 pāñca paśúbhyo Viṣṇus tvānvetu

1. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 14. 5

2. Āp. Gr. II. 4. 16 seq.

3. M. 1. 3. 7-13

śáḍ ṛtúbhyo Viṣṇus tvānvetu
 saptá saptábhyo hótrābhyo Viṣṇus tvānvetu

"One for sap, may Viṣṇu speed you
 two for strength, may Viṣṇu speed you
 three for duty, " " " "
 four for welfare " " " "
 five for animals " " " "
 six for seasons " " " "
 seven for seven hotras " " " "

Baudhāyana, Bharadvāja and Hiranyakeśin¹ give the same text, but instead of 'six for seasons' they have 'six for prosperity of wealth'. Baudhāyana² differs considerably from the other Gr̥hyasūtras when he mentions the rite of seven steps as to be carried out at the beginning of the wedding and before the grasping of the hand. After the seventh step the bridegroom recites the following verse:³

Śákhā saptápadā bhava śákhāyau saptápadā babhūva |
 sakhyám te gameyaṃ sakhyát te mā yoṣaṃ sakhyān me mā
 yoṣthāḥ ||

1. Baudh. Gr̥. I. 1; Bhār. Gr̥. I. 16; Hir. Gr̥. I. 21

2. " " I. 1

3. M. I. 3. 14

sám aṣṭāva, sám kalpāvahai sámpriyau

rocishñú samanasyámānau

Íṣam úrjam abhí samvásānau ॥

sám nau mánāṃsi sám vratā

sám u cittāny ā karam ॥

sā tvám asy amūhām |

amūhām asmi sā tvám |

dyaúr ahám pṛthivīḥ tvám |

réto'ham retobhṛt tvám |

mánó'hám asmi vāk tvám |

sāmāhám **asmi** r̥k tvám | *śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ*

sā mām ānurvratā bhava
pumse putraya vēttavāi |

śriyāi putrāya vēttavāi éhi sūnrte ॥

"Be a friend with the seven steps; friends we were after
the seven steps. May I attain to your friendship. May I
not be separated from your friendship. May you not be
separated from my friendship. May we be united. May we
live harmoniously together for strength and energy;
may I join together our thoughts. This am I, that are you.
That am I, this are you. Heaven I, earth you. The seed I

the seed contained in you. Sāmana am I, Rk you. So be devoted to me, so that you may have a male child, so that you may have handsome sons, O happy one."

Among all these ceremonies the offerings are primarily religious acts essential in a marriage ceremony to gain the favour of the gods.

The rite of Saptapadī is also symbolical of a solemn promise. As the couple walk together the seven steps, they make several promises and bind themselves to each other in friendship and understanding. At every step the gods are invoked to strengthen the union.

These essential ceremonies of the Gṛhya-sūtras are common to many Indo-European races. The custom of circumambulation round the fire is found in ancient Rome. After the ceremony of dexterum iunctio a sacrifice was made, and the bride and bridegroom walked round the sacrificial altar, likewise from left to right¹. In many parts of Germany² the bride is led three times round the fire by the bridegroom or his mother³. The circumambulation always takes place round the hearth. Among

1. Westermarck, H. H. M. Vol. II. p512

2. In this and following citations we employ the present tense, basing our statements on Westermarck & Winternitz etc. It is probable however that many of the customs described by these authorities are now extinct or practically so.

3. Westermarck, H. H. M. Vol. II. p513

some of the southern Slavs¹ the bride is led three times round the church before she is allowed to enter it. In Greece the bride and bridegroom are led three times round the altar. Winternitz² suggests that the circumambulation of the church is the survival of the old custom of leading the wife round the fire, and the great antiquity of this rite and its prevalence among all the Indo-European races seem to support his theory. Apart from the purifying nature of the place or object round which the circumambulation is performed it may also have been performed as a safeguard against evil influences, and it evidently had much magical significance.

The ceremony of Saptapadi or seven steps is considered to be one of the most essential part of the Hindu marriage ceremony even today. No marriage is thought to be complete without the ceremony of Saptapadi. In Bengal the ceremony is performed in the following way. It takes place before the sacrificial fire. Seven rings are drawn with rice paste on the floor. The bride

1. Westermarck, H. H. M. Vol. p 514

2. Winternitz, D. K. A. W. Vol XL. p 62

is placed in front of the bridegroom and the bridegroom touches her right foot, leading her from one ring to another, till the seventh ring is reached; at each step mantras are uttered.

These seven circles are not mentioned by the Grhyasūtras, but according to Kauśika¹ seven lines are marked on which the steps are to be taken. Colebrooke² connects this ceremony with the fire ordeal³, where seven leaves of the Aśvattha tree are tied to the hands of the accused and he is made to hold a red iron ball. But the mantras connected with the seven steps show this ceremony is intended to unite the couple in friendship and indicate their eternal bond and the union of hearts. There seems no connection between the two rites but the number seven.

So we find that throughout the whole period the basic Vedic ideology has been maintained in the Hindu marriage rituals, and nearly all the essential ceremonies can be traced back to the Indo-European period.

1. Kauś. 76.6

2. Colebrooke, M.E. 2nd ed. Vol. I. p21

3. Yājñ. II. 106, Viṣṇu XI. 2

upon these husbands the wives (bestow) happiness in order to be embraced."

Āsvalāyana and Śāṅkhāyana apparently look on the bride's tears as part of the ritual, and no doubt when the above mantra was uttered she pretended to weep, even if tears did not come spontaneously. Āpastamba, on the other hand, evidently envisages natural tears, not necessarily part of the ceremony.

Similar ceremonies are also found in other countries. Among the Greeks, the bride at the time of her departure bursts into lamentations and struggles against the procession. When the leader says 'leave her alone because she weeps,' her conventional answer is 'take me away from here, but let me weep¹'.

In the Karnal district a similar ceremony is also performed. As the bridal procession leaves, the girl starts crying bitterly and bewails some near relative who has recently died².

Winternitz³ thinks that this obligatory weeping of the bride is a survival of rape. But it is

1. Rossbach, Untersuchungen über die römische Ehe. p329 referred to in Winternitz. D.K.A.W. Vol. 40, p42

2. Punjab Gazeteer, Karnal dist, Lahore 1885. p77, 78.

3. Winternitz, D.K.A.W. Vol. ~~40~~, p41-43

also possible that the very natural act of weeping of the bride at the time of her departure from her father's home has been raised into a ritual. The rite is particularly emphasised by all the Gr̥hyasūtras. From the point of view of the Gr̥hyasūtras the whole life of the Aryan was ritualistic in character. So it is quite natural that the simple act of weeping should be raised to a ritual to be performed with all the formalities.

Journey of the bride to her husband's home

On their way to her husband's home, if they pass cross-roads, posts(sthānu)¹ or bathing places, the bridegroom utters the following verse :-

"Produce joyfully in the husband's home wealth and ten heroic sons. Cause the drinks to be agreeable, O lord of splendour. Drive away² the post that is standing by the way, the scoundrel.

1. It seems hardly likely that all kinds of post were looked on as so inauspicious as to necessitate the utterance of a special mantra. Possibly the word sthānu here refers to the trunk of a dead tree.

2. Āp. Gr. II.5.25. cf. A.V. XIV.2.6

Rudra is invoked if one comes to a cross-road. Cross-roads are considered only second to temples in sanctity by Gautama¹ and Baudhāyana²; they are revered by turning the right side towards them. The reason for this superstition in Europe seems to be that in the old days the dead were buried at the cross-roads and therefore these places were looked upon as ghostly, as we find among the Slavonic peoples, whose burial grounds were traditionally sited near cross-roads.³

When the couple cross a river by a boat the groom recites the following verse:-

"
 ayám no mahyáh pāram svastí' neṣad vānaspátih.
 śirā naḥ sutārā bhava dīrghāyutvāya vārcase "

(M.I.6.13)

" May this tree (perhaps wooden boat) take us to the bank of the river and to our welfare. May you be a river easily crossed for a long life and for splendour."

The wife should not look at the crew when she is crossing. When they have crossed the bridegroom murmurs the following verse:-

1. Gaut. Dh. XXIII.17.

2. Baudh. Dh. IV.7.7

3. Winternitz, D.K.A.W. Vol.40, p68

asyá pāré nirrthasya jīvā jyótir asímahi
mahyá Indra svastáya ॥

(M.I.6.14)

"On the other side of this destroyer, may we arrive at the light, alive to our welfare, O Indra."

The crossing of rivers is considered to be dangerous in many other countries. In Scandinavia great danger from evil influences threatens the bride if she has to cross a river on her way home from church. The reason for the wife's avoiding to look at the crew while crossing, may also be due to the belief in nazar, which may obstruct the journey. The glance of the bride is considered to be injurious to others in other places too. The Tsui and Ait Nder of Morocco maintained that if a bride looked at anyone on her way to the bridegroom's home, there would be fighting and manslaughter at the wedding feast that same day.

If something breaks in the carriage the bridegroom performs a burnt sacrifice. They enter the

1. Düringsfeld, Hochzeitbuch 1, referred to in Winternitz, D.K.A.W. Vol. 40 p69

2. Westermarck, R. B. M. vol. 1. p 420

3. Ap. Gr. II. VI. 4

village at sunset or at the command of the brāhmaṇa¹ (probably the purohita). Āpastamba mentions that if any article which they are carrying with them or their chariot is damaged, sacrifices are to be performed. The common belief in Germany, and indeed probably throughout Europe and America, is that the marriage will be unhappy if an accident happens on the wedding day or on the day near the wedding day.²

According to Gobhila³, and Khādīra⁴ and Āśvalāyana⁵ Gr̥hyasūtras the bride should spend that day and night in the house of a brāhmaṇa. There certain ceremonies are to be performed. According to Khādīra and Āśvalāyana only the ceremony of looking at the pole star is performed there. But according to Gobhila other ceremonies such as 'sitting on the bull's hide' and 'eating together' are to be performed. While according to other Gr̥hyasūtras the later ceremonies are to be performed at the house of the bridegroom when the young couple arrive there.

1. Āp. Gr. II. VI. 4

2. Winternitz, D.K.A.W. Vol. 40, p10

3. Gobh. Gr. II. 3.

4. Khād. Gr. I. 4.

5. Āśv. Gr. I. 7. 21

Looking at the pole-star

According to Khādira and Āśvalāyana the ceremony of looking at the pole star is performed at the house of the brāhmaṇa where they break their journey. The bridegroom shows her the pole star and the star Arundhatī¹, which are considered to be the symbols of firmness. Then she breaks her silence by respectfully calling her guru by his gotra name. According to the commentator 'her guru' means her husband ; but it may also clearly mean the brāhmaṇa in whose house they have their temporary sojourn. From this time ,they are to avoid eating saline or pungent food and sleep on the ground without having conjugal intercourse through a period of three nights. Then an arghya² reception is offered to the young husband.

According to some authorities this arghya reception is offered when the bridegroom and his companions arrive at the house of the bride's father. There is one interesting point to be noted in this. The bride is taken so far from her native village and the journey lasts so long, that it has to be broken in a

1. Arundhatī is the morning star, personified as the wife of Vasīṣṭha one of the seven Ṛṣis ; also one of the Pleiades. Vasīṣṭha is one of the seven Ṛṣis or stars in the Great Bear

2. See above p77-78

brāhmaṇa's house on the way. These facts indicate that the marriage was generally exogamous as may be gathered from many other sources, and that normally the couple belonged to different villages, often a considerable distance apart. Such is still usually the case at the present time.

Reception of the bride at her new home

According to Śāṅkhāyana ¹, the arghya reception, with the killing of a cow, is to be performed on two different occasions, first when the bridegroom is received in the house of the bride's father before the wedding; second, when the newly married couple arrives at their own home and the arghya is to be offered by the ācārya.

Crossing the threshold

The bride should not stand on the threshold while entering the house of her husband. Hiranyakeśin Gr̥hyasūtra ² mentions that she should cross the threshold with the help of the groomsmen, and the priest should remind them that the threshold was not to be touched by the foot. In Rome the bride was lifted

1. Śāṅkh. Gr. I.12.10

2. Hir. Gr. I.7.22.6.

across the threshold to avoid a bad omen through touch-
 ing the threshold with the foot.¹ In French Switzerland
 the young husband embraced his bride, lifted her up²
 lightly, and so let her jump across the threshold .
 According to German popular belief the threshold is a
 place of magic. The custom of burying the dead under the
 threshold is found among many primitive races; so it is
 quite clear that the purpose of avoiding the threshold
 could only be to avoid the magic that attaches to it.
 The custom of the bridegroom carrying the bride over the
 threshold is widely observed in contemporary England.

Sitting on the red bull's hide

After arriving at the
 husband's home, and having placed the nuptial fire in
 the house, the bridegroom makes the bride sit on a bull's
 hide. and performs sacrifices.³ According to Gobhila,

1. Hastings, E.R.E. Vol. VIII, p465

2. Winternitz, D.K.A.W. Vol. 40 p71

3. Śāṅkh. Gr. I.16.

Khādīra and ¹Āśvālāyama the bride should spend that night in the house of a brāhmaṇa where wood is put into the nuptial fire and a red bull's hide is spread out with the neck side on the east. The bride is made to sit down on the hide and keep silent. According to Mānava ² the bride sits down on a red oxhide immediately after the seven steps, in the course of the central ceremony at her old home. As has been shown in the previous chapter, this rite seem to be connected with fertility. ³

Placing a boy in the Bride's lap

After making the wife sit down on a red oxhide a little boy is placed in her lap ⁴, and is given fruit. The custom of placing a male child in the lap of the bride so that she may give birth to a boy is widely spread among many Indo-European peoples. With the Yugoslavs the general custom is to put the boy

1. Gobh. Gr. II. 3. ; Khad. Gr. I. 4. ; Āśv. Gr. I. 7. 21

2. Mān. Gr. I. 11.

3. See above p 30

4. Āp. Gr. I. 6. 11; Gobh. Gr. II. 4, 7-10; Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 16. 8-11

into the lap of the bride; she then hugs him to her heart and gives him presents. ¹ The desire for male children occurs again and again in the Vedic wedding texts; similarly in Yugoslavian proverbs it is repeatedly emphasised that the son is the foundation of the house, the daughter on the other hand is the evening meal of a stranger. The custom is also found in the Punjab. The bridegroom's elder brother's wife sits down, open her legs, and takes the bridegroom between her thighs. The bride similarly sits between the bridegroom's thighs and ² takes a little boy into her lap.

Cohabitation

The couple is to refrain from conjugal intercourse for a period of three nights after the marriage, preserving chastity, sleeping on the ground, eating no saline or pungent food, and drinking milk only. ³ By the expression 'preserving chastity', according to the commentator, not only is cohabitation prohibited but everything relating to it, such as thinking of

1Krauss, Sitte and Brauch der Südslaven, 394, 428, 430, 431
referred to in Winternitz, D.K.A.W. Vol. 40
p79

2. Punjab Gazetteer, Karnal dist. p77

3. Āp. Gr. ^{III} VII.8; Śāṅkh. Gr. I.17.5ff; Gobh. Gr. II.3.15

cohabitation, joking, talking secretly etc.¹ Āśvalāyana Grhya sūtra² says that they should practise continence for three or twelve nights or even for one year, because after one year's chastity a Ṛṣi will be born to them. Pāraskara³ differs slightly from Āśvalāyana on the point. He says that for three nights they should not eat anything strongly spiced or salt and sleep on the floor, but they should refrain from conjugal intercourse for one year, or twelve nights,⁴ or at least for three nights. According to Baudhāyana continence is to be practised for three nights, twelve nights, four months, six months or for one year, according to whether they wish to beget Śrotriya (one learned in Vedas), an Anucāna (knower of the Veda), a still higher brāhmaṇa (Bhrūṇa), a Ṛṣi or even a Deva. The commentary reads as follows:—" whoever is begotten by a brāhmaṇa or brāhmaṇī is called a child until he is introduced to a teacher. As soon as he has been

1. Sudarsanārcarya's commentary on Āp. Gr.

2. Āśv. Gr. I.8. 10-11

3. Pār. Gr. I.8.21

4. Baudh. Gr. I.11

introduced, has taken a vow and has studied the Vedas somewhat, he is called Brāhmana. After having studied a śākhā he is called a Śrotriya, he who has also studied Āngas is called Anucāna; he who has studied the Kalpas is called Rṣikalpa; he who has studied the sūtras and pravacanas is called Bhrūna. He who has studied the four Vedas is called a Rṣi and he who goes on studying is called a Dava. Thus if he wishes to beget a Śrotriya he performs all the ceremonies upto the worship of Arundhatī, and for three nights they should not eat anything strongly spiced or anything salt, should sleep on the floor, and preserve continence. They wear new clothes and decorate themselves in the morning and evening. On the fourth night a burnt offering of food is sacrificed. But if he wishes to beget an Anucāna he should observe that vow for twelve nights. At the end of this follows the burnt sacrifices and cohabitation. If he wishes to beget a Bhrūna he should observe the vow for four months. If he wishes to beget a Rṣi he observes the vow for six months. If he wishes to beget a Dava he should observe the vow for a whole year.

Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra¹ ordains that

1. Kāmā. III.1

the couple are to sleep on the floor for three nights, avoiding spices and salt and wearing new clothes . Then throughout seven days they bathe with accompaniment of music, decorate themselves, eat together and honour their guests.

The same kind of continence, which is prescribed after the wedding ceremony, is also observed at other times according to Gr̥hyasūtras. After a funeral the relations are not eat anything spiced or salt and to sleep on the ground and observe continence.¹ The practice of continence may have been followed for fear of the evil sprits who, in the act of copulation, might slip into the woman and endanger the offspring.

According to Āpastamba² either a staff anointed with perfume is wrapped round with a garment, or a thread is placed between the couple on their bed. According to Haradatta the staff is taken from a lactiferous tree and its purpose is to avoid contact. Sudrsanācarya thinks that the staff represents the Gandharva

1. Manu, V. 73

2. Āp. Gr. III. 8. 9.

Viśvāvasu and for this reason it is to be made of Udumbara, Aśvattha or Plākṣa wood, since these are thought to be the dwelling of the Gandharva and Apsarās. According to Śāṅkhāyana when the three nights have elapsed the groom makes an offering of cooked food with prayers to Agni, Vāyu, Sūrya, Aryaman, Varuṇa, Pūsan and also to Prajāpati and to Agni Svistakṛt¹. This rule is called Cathurthikarma because it is performed on the fourth day after the wedding.

Gobhila² says that the bridegroom should make the ājya oblations to Agni, Vāyu, Candra and Sūrya, and the fifth oblation with the names of the four gods together. The remnant of each oblation should be poured out into a water pot. The wife's body, including her hair and nails, is besmeared with ājya and she is washed. Cohabitation follows after three nights, or after her three monthly illness " according to some ."

1. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 18. 19

2. Gobh. Gr. . II. 5

According to Baudhāyana ¹, after the sacrifices are over he sacrifices the remainder on her head, after having placed a piece of gold underneath. Then he leads her round the fire with her right side towards it, after which he takes her to the nuptial chamber.

The frequent use of gold also seems to be of some magical effect. The gold ^{is} placed on the bride's head before putting the sacrifice. These may be intended to protect her from evil eye. In certain parts of Greece mothers frequently decorate their infant's cap with coins or other bright ornaments, in order to divert ² attention from the child to these objects.

Rtugamana ^{is} the technical expression for cohabitation. ³ Āpastamba thinks that union on each following night with an even number from the fourth after the beginning of the wife's monthly illness to the sixteenth, brings more and more excellent offspring.

1. Baudh. Gr. I.1.1.

2. H. Murray Aynsley, S.W.E. p144

3. Āp. Gr. IX.1

Just as the Indians, so the Greeks and Roman considered the time after menstruation to be particularly favourable for the production of offspring.¹

The Common Meal

At the end of the Caturthīkarma, which took place at the house of the bridegroom, the husband made the wife eat a meal of cooked food.² Later this was turned into a conjugal feast and it is performed now after the second day of marriage. On the Pāraskara Grhya sūtra, Gadādhara observes, "here the husband dines with the wife according to custom." Eating with the wife is normally prohibited in the Hindu Dharmasāstra,³ but this is an exceptional case entailing no sin. The ceremony symbolises the union of the persons of both the husband and the wife, and is accompanied by a feast for relatives of both parties.

The wedding feast does not merely serve the object of making the marriage public, but it brings

1. Winternitz, D.K.A.W. Vol. XL. p 95

2. Pār. Gr. I.11.5.

3. Manu IV.43; Vas' Dh. XII.31

together the families of the bride and bridegroom and makes them more friendly to each other; in this respect its social importance is particularly great.

The common meal is an extremely widespread marriage custom. It has been found among some American tribes. Among the Navaho the marriage ceremony merely consisted in eating maize pudding from the same plate, and among the Pawnee the girl took a dish containing food, which she placed before the bridegroom; they both ate and then she became his wife. In Morocco it is a very common custom for the pair to partake of some food together before they have intercourse. Sometimes the bridegroom eats first and then each puts some food into the other's mouth¹.

In ancient Rome² the couple partook of a cake. The cake made of the old Italian grain called far, from which the patrician marriage in ancient Rome received its name, confarreatio, was offered to Jupiter Farreus and partaken of by bride and bridegroom in the presence of witnesses. At the present day the custom of eating together - usually from the same plate or dish, or of the

1. Westermarck, H. H. M. Vol. II. p448

2. Hastings, E. R. E. Vol. VIII. p463

same loaf of bread, or with the same spoon at the betrothal or, more often, at the wedding, is found in many parts of Europe. Yet in spite of its occurrence among so many people of Indo-European race we cannot be certain that it was a primitive Indo-European custom. As Winternitz points out, it is possible that it originated among different branches of that race independently. "It would be different," he says, "if we found exactly the same kind of dish—say, the wedding cake—used among all the Indo-European peoples, or if the ceremony had its fixed place in the marriage ritual, like the joining of hands, and some other customs¹.

LOCAL CUSTOMS AND WOMANLY RITES.

Our detailed analysis of the marriage rituals makes it clear that the basic marriage ceremony in the *Gṛhya-sūtras* is similar to that of the *R̥g-Veda* and *Atharva-Veda*. Some minor non-Vedic rituals may have been integrated with the Vedic marriage rites, but they do not seem to have affected its main scheme. Some of these

1. Winternitz, *D.K.A.W.* Vol. 40. p 80

minor rituals were no doubt incorporated in the Vedic scheme of things owing to the persistence of older customs and presumably also of rites practised by women, who usually cling more steadfastly than men to traditional practices of old. The Pāraskara¹ and Āśvalāyana² Gr̥hyasūtra expressly says that the customs of the village (grāmavacanam) are to be observed at the wedding. Similar injunctions are found in Āpaṣṭamba Gr̥hyasūtra³, where it is said that one should learn from women the customs which are to be observed. Gadādhara explained grāmavacana as follows:-"Though not given in the sūtra, the tying of auspicious yarns, wearing garlands, the tying of the garments of bride and bridegroom, touching the vessel made of banyan leaf⁴, touching the nose at the arrival of the bridegroom, besmearing the chest of the bridegroom with curd etc., and many other things which the women of the place remember, should be done." Though

1. Pār. Gr. I. 8. 11

2. Āśv. Gr. I. 7. 1

3. Āp. Gr. I. 2. 15.

4. nyagrodhaputikadharanam

Gadādhara does not describe these rituals further they can be explained by reference to modern practices in the wedding rituals of many parts of India.

Hindu marriage even today consists of two distinct parts: one part is sacramental and follows the injunctions laid down by the brahmanical lawgivers and their commentators; the other part is popular and is known as lokācāra, which varies from region to region in form as well as in the intensity and extension of its practice and persistence. In the sacramental part, a priest is essential; it is he who is the master of the ceremony; the popular part does not call for the services of any priest. It is very interesting to note the important part that lokācāra plays in the Hindu marriage of today, especially in the villages and on the fringes of the outlying tribal regions of India.

Lokācāra has a distinct place for what has come to be known as strī-ācara, the customary rites and rituals practised particularly by the women-folk. These ācāras are followed in addition to the usual śāstric rites, but they have nevertheless a deep and

abiding meaning and significance for the common folk and add to the colour and romance of the ceremony itself. In most cases, these customs have a magical origin or are linked with fertility cults.

In the Grhyasūtras also, we find that, even at this early period, an attempt was made at the partial secularisation of Hindu marriage. While insisting on obedience to śāstric injunctions, the authors of the Grhyasūtras had to make concessions to both the lokācāra and strī-ācāra of different regions of India. All the grāhavacanas mentioned by Godādhara, which we consider below are found in modern India.

Tying of Maṅgalasūtra or auspicious thread:-

A piece of durvā grass is tied to a thread soaked with oil and turmeric and tied to the left hand of the bride and the right hand of the groom. The thread is called Maṅgalasūtra, auspicious thread¹.

A somewhat similar custom is practised by some of the primitive tribes. Among the Birhors, blood is drawn from the little finger of the bride's right

1. Personal knowledge

hand, and a thread with a betel-nut tied to it is soaked with the blood and is slung across her left shoulder. The bridegroom also does the same, but he slings the thread across his right shoulder¹.

Wearing the garland

Wearing the garland is also common in all parts of India. The bride and bridegroom both wear garlands and at the auspicious moment they look at each other and exchange garlands three times².

Tying the garments

The garments of the bride and bridegroom are tied together after the marriage. All the ceremonies on the following day, such as offering of arghya to the sun-god followed by their going seven times round the rectangle formed by the four banana trees at the four corners of the courtyard where the ceremony is performed, are done with their upper garments tied together at the ends³. This popular rite, not mentioned in any sūtra, is still performed in modern Bengal, in addition to the

1. Sarat Ray - The Births p182-183

2. Personal Knowledge

3. "

circumambulation of the fire.

Touching the nose at the arrival of the bridegroom

The ceremonial reception of the bridegroom is a very popular ritual with the women of Bengal. The ceremony, which is called varana, is performed just at the arrival of the groom at the gate and then again before the bridegroom arrives at the marriage pandal. The women come forward with a bamboo tray, full of auspicious articles such as betel, a lamp, durvā grass etc. They pick up two articles in two hands, touch the bridegroom's forehead or nose with them one by one, and scatter them in all directions. This little ceremony appears to be a form of Vasīkarana or a charm placed upon the groom to ensure his love and faithfulness to the wife. The magical element is present in many of the striācāras connected with the groom's reception at the gate by the women.

The custom of greeting and welcoming the bridegroom with a special ceremony by the women of the bride's house is also found in many primitive tribes. Among the Sabaras of Orissa, on the arrival of the bridegroom at the bride's house, the female relatives come to to greet him with ghee, betel-nut, turmeric etc. This is

followed by a practice called senka, in which the women warm over a lamp the tips of their fingers and press them on both the cheeks of the bridegroom.¹ An exactly similar ritual is followed in present day Bengali marriage.

Besmearing the chest of the bridegroom with curd

This ceremony is called Dadhimaṅgala in Bengal and is practised even now. The bride and groom at their respective houses are awakened before sunrise on the marriage day and are given curd and rice to eat. Curd or Dadhi is also put on their forehead and chest, and this function is called Dadhimangala. The bride and groom are to fast on their marriage day and also are fed early, before the day begins, and curd is supposed to be an auspicious food for commencing the journey,² or for eating before any important event in one's life.

Thus it is clear that, while maintaining the general Vedic scheme, the Grhyasūtras had to make certain concessions to the local customs and womanly rites which were slowly and gradually integrated into the Aryan and brahmanical ritual of marriage.

1. Satindra Narayan Ray, Sabaras of Orissa p309-313

2. Personal Knowledge

in Man in India vol. VII

Appendix NOTES ON CERTAIN FEATURES OF THE RITUAL

Ājya and Mahāvyāhrti sacrifices

Ājya and Mahāvyāhrti were the two beneficial sacrifices, which were performed at different stages of the marriage ceremony to obtain auspicious results.

Preparation of the Ājya is made in the following way. Having put the mess of cooked food on the Barhis¹ and put wood on the fire, the sacrificer prepares the Ājya as follows. He takes ghee or sesamum oil or failing these, curds, milk, rice gruel. Any of the latter substances can be technically considered as Ājya. From the same Barhis, he takes two blades of darbha grass of the length of one span, to use as purifiers. Putting a herb between them, he cuts them off with the words "purifiers are you, sacred to Viṣṇu". He then wipes them with water with the words "by Viṣṇu's mind, you are purified." Having purified the Ājya, he pours it into the Ājya pot

1. a bed or a layer of kuśa grass usually strewn over the sacrificial ground and especially over the vedī, to serve as a sacred surface on which to present the oblation and as a seat for the gods and for the sacrificers.

over which he has led a darbha purifier. Holding the blades of darbha with his two thumbs and fourth fingers he purifies the Ājya three times, by waving the blades of grass above it, from west to east, once with the Yajus: "may the god Savitr̥ purify thee with this uninjured purifier, with the rays of the good sun," and twice silently. He then sprinkles the purifiers with water and throws them into the fire. He then puts the pot of Ājya on the fire and takes it from the fire towards the north. Thus the Ājya is prepared.

At Ājya oblations whenever they are prescribed he only prepares the Ājya and sacrifices it, taking out parts of it, by this presumably implies ladling spoonfuls of Ājya on the fire. The text further states that he does not sacrifice two parts or the Svistakṛt oblation; by the two portions we infer that two spoonful are to be left in the pot.

Mahāvyāhṛti is the great Vyāhṛti of the utterance of mystical words; according to brahmanic terminology the three words Bhūr, Bhuvah, Svar, pronounced after the pranava, Om, are known as Vyāhṛtis or Mahāvyāhṛtis. Whenever no special rule is given, one should sacrifice with Mahāvyāhṛtis before and after the chief

ceremonies.¹

According to Śāṅkhāyana Gr̥hyasūtra, after the bath of the bride, she puts on a newly dyed garment and the preceptor (ācārya) of the bride's family makes the girl sit down behind the fire. While she takes hold of him he sacrifices with Mahāvyāhrtis and makes Ājya oblations to Agni, Soma, Prajāpati, Mitra, Indra, Gandharva, Bhaga, Pūṣan Tvāṣṭr², and Br̥haspati. We are told that the Mahāvyāhrti is to be repeated three times after all the sacrifices to Agni, Sūrya and Candra. Śāṅkhāyana prescribes that all sacrifices that procure happiness, one is to sacrifice before and afterwards with these same Mahāvyāhrtis. The Āśvalāyana Gr̥hyasūtra is substantially in agreement, mentioning that the bridegroom should sacrifice four Ājya oblations or Vyāhrtis before the wedding after this preliminary sacrifice; the bride sacrifices Ājya along with fried grains in the fire.³

According to Gobhila Gr̥hyasūtra the bride, after putting on the garment, pushes forward with

1. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 12.13

2. " I.11.4

3. Āśv. Gr. 1

her foot a rushmat or something else of that kind veiled with clothes. She sits down on the east end of the rushmat to the right of the bridegroom. While she touches his right shoulder with her right hand, he sacrifices six oblations of $\bar{A}jya$. $\bar{A}jya$ is again offered in the fire, later with a sacrifice of fried grains¹. In the concluding ceremonies of the marriage, before pointing out the Pole Star, the bridegroom sacrifices six oblations of $\bar{A}jya$ and pours the remnant of each oblation over the head of the bride, who keeps silence. The $\bar{A}jya$ is again offered and the Mahāvyaḥrtis again repeated if the axle of the chariot is overturned or if some accident happens, in which case the travellers are instructed to put new wood into the fire, besmearing it with the remnant of the $\bar{A}jya$ ². When the bride goes to the bridegroom's house a little boy is placed on her lap and she sacrifices six $\bar{A}jya$ oblations³.

$\bar{A}jya$ oblations are offered again on the fourth day of marriage. Having put wood into the fire the bridegroom sacrifices four expiatory $\bar{A}jya$ oblations

1. Gobh. Gr. III. 3

2. " " IV. 10

3. " " IV. 10

to Agni, Vāyu, Candra and Sūrya, and the fifth oblation to the four gods together. The remnant of each oblation should be poured into the water pot. With the contents of this pot the relatives besmear the bride's hair and nails and remove the water by rubbing and washing her.

According to Khādīra Gr̥hyasūtra¹, after the bath of the bride the bridegroom gives her a garment. Then they both sit down, and while she touches him the bridegroom makes oblations of Ājya with the sruva or ritual spoon, taking up a portion of the ghee with the Mahāvyaḥrtis, and then he makes a fourth oblation with the three Mahāvyaḥrtis together. The Mahāvyaḥrtis should always be repeated after the chief oblation.

Pāraskara Gr̥hyasūtra² says that after the circumambulation of the fire the bridegroom should offer two Ājya portions and repeat the Mahāvyaḥrtis, and then offer the general expiation, the Prājāpatya oblation and the Sviṣṭakṛt. These are the regular oblations at every sacrifice.

1. Khād. Gr. I. 3.

2. Pār. Gr. I. 5.

Rite of throwing grains

The practice frequently mentioned in the sūtras of throwing grains and other articles is presumably a fertility rite.

When the wooers come to the bride's home they bring with them flowers, fruits, barley and a pot of water. When the matter pleases both the parties they touch the full vessel, into which has been put flowers, fruit, fried grain, barley and gold, and the priest of the family puts the full vessel on the bride's head¹. Then the priest blesses the girl with the following verse:-

Prajāṃ tvayi dadhāmi

Paśūms tvayi dadhāmi

tejo brahmavarcanam tvayi dadhāmi

"Offspring I put into you, cattle I put into you, splendour and holy lustre I put into you."

The fertility motive is clear not only in the symbolic objects but also in the mantra quoted above.

1. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 6.

The throwing of different kinds of cereals or fruits by the bride and the bridegroom is also found in the later stages of the marriage ritual:

The bath water of the bride is mixed with Klītaka, barley and beans, according to Gobhila Gr̥hyasūtra¹. According to Śāṅkhāyana Gr̥hyasūtra² the bath of the bride takes place on the eve of her departure for her husband's home. The same recommends that the girl is to be washed upto head with water that has been made fragrant by all sorts of herbs and choicest fruits together with scents. All these seeds and herbs were evidently used as symbols of fertility.

The Lājahoma, or sacrifice with fried grains, is also symbolical of fertility and prosperity. The brother of the bride pours out of his joined hands into her joined hands fried grains mixed with śami leaves. The bride sacrifices them in the sacred fire with firmly joined hands. Again after the rite of taking the seven steps before their departure, the relations pour seeds of rice etc. on the heads of the bridegroom and bride.³

1. Gobh. Gr. II.1.10

2. Śāṅkh. Gr. I.11.12

3. Hir. Gr. I.6.20.6

This marriage rite can be closely traced to all primitive Indo-Europeans. The custom of throwing grains or fruits on the bride and bridegroom is very well known and practised throughout South-East Asia and Far East¹, and is well known in modern Europe and America, where the grain is usually replaced by paper 'confetti'.

According to Mannhardt such practices originated from a feeling of sympathetic connection between mankind and seed-bearing grasses and the comparison between the fruit of the body and of corn.² They are evidently intended to promote fertility.³ Among the Mundas the bridegroom throws three handfuls of rice at the forehead of the bride and the bride next throws three handfuls of rice at the forehead of the bridegroom⁴. In Tibet, when the bride arrives at the bridegroom's house, his mother receives her with some barley flour mixed with butter in the right hand and with a jar full of milk in her left hand⁵.

1. Westermarck, H. H. M. Vol. II. p 471

2. Mannhardt, Mythologische Forschungen, p 365, ref. to in Westermarck, H. H. M. Vol. II. p 478

3. Winternitz, D. K. A. W. Vol. ~~675~~ 1075

4. Westermarck, H. H. M. Vol. II p 472

5. " " " Vol. II. p 502

In ancient Rome¹ nuts were thrown by the bridegroom for the boys present at the wedding ceremony.

In modern Greece coins, rice sweetmeats and also nuts are thrown over the couple and the marriage procession². Westermarck suggests that the purpose of throwing these articles on the bridal pair is also to secure prosperity to the couple after their marriage, especially with regard to the bearing of children in the family in successive generations³, and the idea of promoting the material welfare of the couple must have been present in the minds of those who initiated the rite.

In Syria and Palestine the throwing of grains and salt on the people at a wedding is said to be a charm against the evil eye⁴. In ancient Greece dried fruits were thrown not only over the bride but also over a newly bought slave, and this too suggests the idea of protection against evil influences⁵. According to Crawley " the practice of throwing rice originated in

1. Hastings, E. R. E. Vol. VIII. p465

2. " " " p467

3. Westermarck, H. H. M., Vol. II. p480

4. " " " p482

5. " " " p483

the idea of giving food to the evil influences to induce them to be propitious and depart."¹

There may be another reason for this practice .Often the soul is conceived as a bird ready to take flight.The Bororos of Brazil fancy that the human soul has the shape of a bird, and passes in that shape out of the body in dreams.There is a popular opinion in Bohemia that the parting soul comes forth from the mouth like a white bird. If the soul is a bird on the wing,it may be attracted by rice and so either prevented from taking wing or lured back again from its perilous flight². So it is quite possible that the purpose of this rite of throwing grains on the bride and bridegroom was also to prevent the soul from flying away.

There must have been more than one purpose of this custom,for it is observed on different occasions for different purposes.Sometimes the same ceremony in a given case may be intended to serve more than one purpose and there may have been mixed motives for it. Among the Battas of Sumatra, when a man returns from

1.Crawley,Mystic Rose p325.ref. to in Westermarck,Vol.II
p483

Frazer,
2.Golden Bough pt II p33-35

dangerous enterprise, grains of rice are placed on his head, and these grains are called padirum tonidi, that is "means to make the soul (tondi) stay at home".¹

In Java also rice is placed on the head of a person who returns home unexpectedly after he has been taken for lost².

In present day Bengal on the day before that fixed for the marriage ceremony an important ritual named Adhibāsa has to be gone through. On this occasion a number of articles, namely paddy, fried rice, durva grass, sandal wood paste, turmeric, fruits, flowers, ghee, curd, gold, silver and copper pieces, conch-shells etc. are placed on a bamboo winnowing fan or Kulā which is called Varana dālā. The respective priests bless the bride and the bridegroom in their respective homes by anointing their foreheads with sandal woodpaste and by touching the Varana dālā on their forehead. This action no doubt is thought to have the same effect as if the objects on the fan were scattered over the bride's head. A piece of durva grass is then tied on a thread, soaked with oil and turmeric, and tied to the left hand of the

1. Frazer, Golden Bough, pt II. p34-35

2. Frazer, Golden Bough, pt II p34-35

bride and right hand of the groom. This thread is called Maṅgalaśūtra or auspicious thread¹.

In many parts of Bengal gifts are sent on this occasion, to the bride's house from the house of the bridegroom. Some of the people of the bridegroom's house carry oil, turmeric, betelnut, vermilion, clothes, ornaments curd, sweets, and a pair of fish and a coconut with them to the bride's house. Sometimes musicians also accompany them.

There is also another similar ceremony practised in some parts of Bengal. Early in the morning on the wedding day women of the village, accompanied by the parents of the bride, go to the nearest pond or stream to fetch water. The father takes with him an axe or some other instrument of the kind and the mother takes a pitcher with her. In the absence of the bride's parents any married couple may take their place for the purpose. Arriving at the stream, the father with his axe gives a stroke into the water, and the mother immediately fills her pitcher from that place and brings it home. Then five fruits and five garlands are placed in the pitcher and

1. personal knowledge

the opening is carefully covered up. On the wedding night the bridegroom is made to open the cover of the pitcher and pick up the fruits as advised by the women present. These fruits are symbols of future offspring. This rite shows the use of fruits as fertility symbols in common with those earlier mentioned, but here they are not scattered over the bride or brought in contact with her. Similar customs of fetching water are followed by many primitive tribes of India. Among the Birhors two pitchers full of water are similarly fetched from some nearby stream, pond or spring, by two girls. The girls, while going to draw water, are accompanied by some married woman, one of whom carries an axe or, if available a sword, and another, a bow and a arrow. Arriving at the tank, one of the women puts three marks of vermilion somewhere on the bank, and gives three strokes with axe or sword into the water where the pitchers are filled. When the bridegroom and the female relatives of the bride have been ceremonially introduced to one another, two girls come out with these pitchers of water, and with small mango twigs sprinkle the water all over the

bridegroom's body. The bridegroom's father gives two pieces of money to each of the two girls¹.

There is a somewhat similar practice among the Mundas. The bride goes to the stram with her pitcher and having filled it raises it aloft on her head, steadying it with the hand. The bridegroom comes behind as she turns homewards, and resting his hands on her shoulders, shoots an arrow along the path in front of her, through the loop formed by her uplifted arm. She picks up the arrow with her foot, still balancing the pitcher on her head. Taking it in her hand she gives it to the bridegroom. He again shoots the arrow in front of her, thus showing his ability to protect her.²

The use of the arrow in marriage ceremonies seems to very significant. Not unoften is it used as a symbol of the embryo. According to Śāṅkhayana Gr̥hyasūtra³ the bridegroom utters the following verse just before cohabitation;-

1. Sarat Ray, The Birhors p132-183

2. " ", The Mundas and their Countries. p449-450

3. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 19. 6

Vṛṣāṇam vṛsann ā dehi prajāyai tvā havāmahe
 yasya yoniṃ patireto grbhāya puṃn putro dhiyatam garbhe
 antah tam piprhi daśamāsyo'ntar udare sa jāyatām
 śraisthyatamaḥ svanam:iti vā

"May a male embryo enter your womb ,as an arrow the
 quiver; may a man be born here , a son after ten months!"

Throwing of ashes

A peculiar popular ceremony, involving the scattering of substances less auspicious than grain, is mentioned in the Digha Nikāya. In the Agañña Sutta it is said that, when the world was young and pure, and sexual passion first began to arise in men and women, people reproached them for their unseemly behaviour, and threw sand, ashes or cowdung at them as a sign of contempt. The text further states that the reviling of the bride and bridegroom and the throwing of these things are still practised at weddings, but that people have forgotten their true significance. The puritanical Buddhist author here evidently tries to give a moral explanation of a widespread popular custom of his own time. It is likely that the actual purpose of the custom was to remove evil spirits, by deceiving them into thinking that the bride and bridegroom, instead of being

the centre of interest and admiration, were in fact scorned and disapproved of .In India even today the mother who has lost many children will give a particularly nasty name to her surviving child, in order to cheat the spirits into thinking that it is worthless or repulsive, and thereby save its life.In any case it is quite evident that this custom had no connection with the auspicious scattering of rice. We have no knowledge of such a rite taking place in India at the present time.

Silence observed in marriage

In the rituals, we find that rites are performed either with or without formulae, and the oblations are offered either vocally or silently.

Śāṅkhāyana Gr̥hyasūtra¹ mentions that after the girl's father declares his assent, the bridegroom offers sacrifice. He carries forward the fire either with the verse "into thy womb" or silently .The bride should

1. Śāṅkh. Gr̥.

sit silently when the sun has set, until the Pole Star appears. She breaks the silence when the Pole Star, Arundhatī, and the seven Ṛsis appear, and utters the following verse;: "May my husband live and I get offspring"¹.

At the marriage a brāhmaṇa with water-pot wrapped in his robe, keeping silence, should step in front of the fire should station himself to the south of it with his face to the north. This brāhmaṇa is presumably normally the purohita who performs the marriage ceremony. At the time of seven steps a man who holds water pot in his shoulder stands silent to the south, or according to some to the north, of the fire. From that pot, he sprinkles the bride's head with water².

The significance of the silence in the performance of religious rites is explained in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa³ in connection with the preparation of the fire-altar. Certain furrows are ploughed and certain libations made with an accompaniment of spoken words, and others silently, for "what is silent is undetermined

1. Āśv. Gr. I. 7. 22 .

2. Khād. Gr. I. 3. 5.

3. Śat. Br. VII. 2. 2. 13-14

and the undetermined is everything.'

In the Gr̥hyasūtra some of the mantras are uttered by the bridegroom or the purohita on behalf of the bride. At the time of the sacrifice with the fried grains the husband murmurs the following text on behalf of his wife, presumably because she was observing silence:- " This woman, strewing grain prays thus, 'May I bring bliss to my relations, may my husband live long svaha!' " ¹.

Silence is also often imposed on the bride at the wedding ceremony in other parts of the world. For instance a Moorish bride must not speak at the wedding, or, if she has something to ^{say to} any of the women attending her, she must speak in a whisper, and she should not be spoken to in the presence of others ². In Persia the bride must not speak to anyone and in Korea, she is expected to keep absolute silence on the wedding day and in the nuptial chamber ³. Among various peoples women are forbidden to speak with anyone but their husband for some time after marriage. In some African tribes young wives are even forbidden to speak with their husbands

1. Śāṅkh. Gr. I. 16. 3

2. Westermarck, R. B. M. Vol. ¹ p 253

3. " H. H. M. Vol. II. p 596

until the birth of a child. These taboos arise from different motives. Sir James Frazer believes that the silence of the wife till their first child is born rests on the superstitious belief that she is specially liable to the attentions of evil spirits until after her first pregnancy.¹ It is probable that the insistence on the bride's silence in several parts of the Hindu ceremony, was originally, she should attract these evil spirits.

Unloosing^{er} knots and locks

It has been already pointed out in the first chapter² that the two knots of the bride's hair should be loosened by the bride^{groom} after the rite of stepping on the stone and walking round the fire. In the Mānava Gr̥hyasūtra³ the bridegroom after having drawn together the ends of the bride's garment with a rope of darbha grass, the bridegroom makes a knot. The rope with which the bride is girdled is loosened, and is fastened again when she is made to sit on the red bull's hide.

1. Frazer, Totemism and Exogamy Vol. IV. p236 seq.

2. See above p 12

3. Mān. Gr̥ .I. 11.5

The magical effect of knots in trammelling and obstructing human activity was believed to be manifested at marriage. During the Middle Ages and down to the eighteenth century it seems to have been commonly held in Europe that consummation of marriage could be prevented by any one who, while the wedding ceremony was taking place, threw either a locked padlock or a knotted cord into water; until this had been found and unlocked or united, as the case might be, no union of the married couple was possible. ¹

A curious use is made of knots at marriage in the little Indonesian island of Rotti;. When the man has paid the price of his bride, a cord is fastened round her waist, if she is a maiden, but not otherwise. Nine knots are tied in the cord, and in order to make them harder to unloose they are smeared with wax. Bride and bridegroom are then secluded in a chamber, where he has to untie the knots with the thumb and forefinger of his left hand only. It may be from one to twelve months before he succeeds in undoing them all. Until he has done so he may not look on the woman as his

1. Frazer, Golden Bough. pt. II. ed. III. p299

wife. The meaning of this custom is not clear, but can be conjectured that the nine knots refer to the nine months of pregnancy.¹

Fire kindled² by attrition

According to the Gr̥hyasūtras there should be fire on the following five occasions- the wedding, the tonsure of the child's head, the initiation of the brahmacārin, the cutting of the beard, and the parting of the hair. According to some teachers the fire used in the marriages should be kindled by the bridegroom by rubbing.²

Many primitive peoples see in the working of the fire drill an analogy to the intercourse of the sexes, and accordingly they identify the upright pointed stick with the male. This symbolism is common among many African tribes. In Laongo public fires were kept perpetually burning during the king's reign and were extinguished at his death. When the new king came to the throne the new public fire was kindled by the friction

1. Frazer, Golden Bough, pt II ed III. p301

2. Pār. Gr. I. 5. I. 7-22

of two sticks, regarded as male as male and female respectively, which were manipulated by a youth and a maiden. After performing this solemn function they were compelled to complete the analogy with the fire sticks by cohabiting with each other in public, after which they were buried alive.¹

In India the Birhors, a primitive tribe of Chotanagpur, still produce fire by the old method of the fire-drill, the sticks of which they recognise as male and female respectively.

Looking at each other

The rite of looking at each other is mentioned in only one of the Gr̥hyasūtras. According to Pāraskara Gr̥hyasūtra² the bride and bridegroom are made to look at each other by the bride's father. The bridegroom recites the following verse:-

Āghoraçakṣur á patīghny edhi sívā paśúbhyaḥ sumánāḥ
 vīrasūr devákāmā syoná sám no dvipáde sám
 suvárcāḥ
 cātuṣpade

(R.V.X.85.44.)

1. Frazer, Golden Bough , Vol. II.pt.1.p208

2 Pār. Gr. I.4.

" With no evil eye, not bringing death to your husband, bring luck to the cattle, be full of joy and vigour. Give birth to heroes ; be godly and friendly. Bring us luck, to men and animals."

According to Āpastamba¹ with this verse the bridegroom should look at the bride. From the expression aghoracaksur in this verse it seems that the bridegroom looks at her eyes. But Haradatta says that with this verse he looks at her eyes. But Haradatta says that with this verse he looks at the bride limb by limb. As he looks at her, he murmurs 'do not look with terrible eyes' etc.

The purpose of the sūtra is a kind of exorcism of the bride in order to make her harmless to human beings and animals. The fear of evil coming through women is evident from the verses of Pāraskara², where it is laid down that the husband should offer sacrifices on the fourth day after the wedding to Agni, Vāyu, Sūrya, Candra and Gandharva respectively to protect the cattle and the house from destruction of fame caused by the magic substance which dwells in the wife.

1. Āp. Gr. IV. 4.

2 Pār. Gr. II. 2-4

According to Āpastamba, after looking at the bride, the bridegroom seizes with his thumb and fourth finger a darbha blade, strokes the space between her eyebrows with it, and then throws it away.

Āśvalayana Grhya Parisīṣṭa¹ says that first of all a length of cloth is held between the bridegroom and the bride and that at the proper astrological moment it is removed and then the two see each other.

This practice is even observed now. There are slight differences in the details of the ceremony in different societies and different localities. In some places the bridegroom stands on a decorated wooden seat; the bride is also made to sit on another seat and is carried by her relatives or led by them seven times round the bridegroom. This being done, the bride is carried before the bridegroom and raised up and put face to face with him, and both are covered by a common veil thrown over them. At the auspicious moment, they look at each other and exchange garlands three times. Women present scatter flowers and fried grains over the veil²

1. Āśv. Gr. Par. I. 23

2. Personal Knowledge

Anniversary of the wedding day

There is a doubtful reference to the celebration of the anniversary of the wedding day in the Āpastamba Dharmasūtra, which mentions that "on that day" the bride and bridegroom may eat that food of which they are fond. Haradatta holds that the words "on that day" do not refer to the days of the new and full moon, the Parva-days, mentioned in a previous sūtra¹. He has given two reasons for this views. Firstly the permission to eat food of which the householder may be particularly fond is already referred to in sūtra 6 by the term tr̥ptih or satisfaction. Secondly the singular 'on that day' does not agree with the plural 'on the parva days'. Basing his argument on these grounds, he comes to the conclusion that the words 'on that day' must refer to the wedding day, mentioned in sūtra 1, as well as to its anniversary. Certain special rules are kept on that day. The husband and wife should sleep on the ground on the raised heap of earth and should avoid connubial intercourse; and on the next day a shālipāka² must be offered. The offering of shālipāka has been described in detail by

1. Āp.Dh. II.1.1.4.

2. a dish of whole rice boiled in milk

Āpastambā Gr̥hyasūtra¹ .It is performed in the following way: The wife husks the rice grains out of which this Sthātipāka is prepared. Then the husband sprinkled ājya over it, take it from the fire towards the east or the north, and again sprinkles it with ājya. Then he sacrifices the Sthātipāka, while the wife takes hold of him. Agni is the deity of the first oblation. Agni Svistakṛt is the second deity. At the Svistakṛt oblation the 'spreading under' of the ājya and taking an avadāna (cut-off portion) are done once, and the sprinkling over of the ājya twice .The avadana of the first deity is taken out of the middle of the Sthātipāka and offered to the centre of the fire. The avadāna for the second deity is taken from the northern part of the Sthātipāka, which is offered over the easterly part of the fire. The husband silently anoints the Barhis by dipping it into the remains of the Sthātipāka and the ājya. Then he throws the part of the Barhis called Prastara into the fire. He gives the remains of that sacrificial food with butter to a brāhmaṇa to eat. He also presents a bull to that brāhmaṇa .

1. Āp. Gr. III.

Chapter III

Forms of Marriage

Marriage by capture

The different forms of marriage, which are very commonly referred to in the later period, are not mentioned in the Ṛg-Veda. In the Ṛg-Veda there are no traces of marriage by capture or purchase as regular institutions. Occasional instances of marriage by capture are to be found even in the Ṛg-Veda, for instance the reference to Vimada carrying away the daughter of Purumitra without her parents' consent, but possibly with her own consent¹. But these occasional instances are perhaps mere knightly feats, or unions as a result of mutual attraction.

Svayamvara

There is one doubtful reference to marriage of the Svayamvara type in the Ṛg-Veda. In Ṛg-Veda² we find a reference to Suryā's ascending the chariot of the Aśvins after gaining the approval of the gods. The explanation given by Sāyana is as follows. There were many

1. R. V. I. 116.1

2. R. V. I. 16.7.

suitors of Sūryā, and it was agreed that the competitors had to run up to the sun, and that Sūryā should be given to the victor as his bride. In this contest the Aśvins won, and so Sūryā ascended their chariot. But we have only the word of Sāyana for this interpretation, and the phrase may merely be a reflection of a normal tribal marriage, with the approval of the tribal elders.

In the above two references we do not find any mention of ritual accompanying the marriage and they do not seem to reflect the usual marriage customs of the Ṛg-Vedic age. There is, as we have seen, only one hymn in the Ṛg-Veda, used later in the regular wedding ritual, which throws light on the actual character of the marriage rite of the times. In this hymn we have definite proof of the existence of marriage as a social institution. By the performance of rituals the girl was raised to the status of dharmapatnī and was allowed to address the family council (vidatha). Though not explicitly stated in the hymn the concept of marriage according to the vedic marriage rituals appears to have been one of undying spiritual union of the couple by magic mantras.

Marriage was considered desirable and even imperative for a girl. There are prayers and incantations for securing a husband for a woman.

Iyám agne nāri pátiṃ videṣṭa sómo hi rājā subhāgām
 Suvānā putrān mahiṣī bhavati gatvā pátiṃ subhāgā vi rājatu
 krnoti

(A.V.II.36.3.)

"May this woman, O Agni, find a husband, for king Soma makes her for good fortune; giving birth to sons, may she become chief queen (mahiṣī) having gone to a husband, let her, having good fortune, bear rule."

A detailed study of the rituals of the Grhyasūtras shows in most cases the absence of the ceremony of gift of the girl. The ritual Pānigrahana is universal among all the Indo-European races¹. But neither in the Vedas nor among any Indo-European race is this preceded by a ceremonial gift of the girl, though this forms one of the most essential ceremonies in Hindu marriage at the present day.

1. See above p 37.

So it seems that even the first four forms of marriage Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa and Prājāpatya, the essential element of which is the gift of the girl, were not yet recognised at the time of the Gr̥hyasūtras.

Among all the Gr̥hyasūtras Mānava Gr̥hyasūtra¹ mentions only the Brāhma and Śaulka forms. The other texts, with the exception of Āśvalāyana, allow only one form of marriage, which has no special appellation. Manava is however later in date than the major Gr̥hyasūtras.

The eight different kinds of marriage were described for the first time in the Āśvalāyana Gr̥hyasūtra². But the relevant chapter is wholly out of tune with the rest of the Gr̥hyasūtras, and so seems to be a later interpolation³. Therefore we must conclude that the eight forms of marriage were only introduced at the time of the Dharmasūtras, and were gaining acceptance at the time of the Dharmasūtras, all of which mention at least some of them.

1. Mān. Gr. 1.7.11-12.

2. Āśv. Gr. 1.6.

3. N. C. Sengupta, Evolution of ancient Indian law. p 83

The eight forms of marriage analysed

Brāhma

Brāhma is the form of marriage in which the bridegroom is invited by the father of the bride, who, decked with ornament, is given to him as a gift after the father¹ having enquired regarding the bridegroom's family, character, learning and health. The essential aspect of this form of marriage is that the bride is a gift from the father. Vaśiṣṭha and Āśvalāyana mention that the gift is to be made by pouring out a libation of water. Baudhāyana² mentions that in this form the bridegroom asks for the hand of the bride.

In this form of marriage all the lawgivers³ mention that the girl should be decked with ornaments. The ornaments are to be given according to the best of the ability of the father of the girl.⁴ This is one of the orthodox and approved forms of marriage. In this form of marriage, as with the three other orthodox forms, the father has the obligation to give a dowry to the

1. Vaś.Dh. I.30; Āśv.Gr. I.6.1

2. Baudh.Dh. I.II.2

3. Āp.Dh. I.II.5.; Āśv.Gr. I.6.1; Gaut.Dh. IV.6; Kām. III.8

4. Āp.Dh. II.5.11.17.

daughter.

In this form of marriage, the girl has no part in the choice of her husband, which depends entirely on the father or the guardian of the girl.

Daiva

In the Daiva form of marriage the girl is given to the officiating priest, who performs sacrifice for her father. According to this form the girl is given as part of the sacrificial fee.

Govinda's commentary on Baudhāyana¹ says that the recipient has to accept the gift. Govinda adds that in this case the regular marriage ceremony must be performed later.

According to Jolly³ the sacrificial priest is, as is often the case, inferior in position to the virtuous and learned Brāhmaṇa.

In the Daiva vivāha also the girl has no choice of her husband, which depends on the will of the father or guardian. The participation of the priest is probably not necessary because the priest is himself the bridegroom

Dh.

1. Baudh., I. 11. 20. 5

2. Jolly, Hindu Law & Customs. p116

in this form of marriage.

The Prājāpatya

The Prājāpatya form of marriage implies the gift of the girl to the bridegroom with the injunction that they should never cease to perform Dharma together.

According to the Mitākṣarā of Haradatta on Gautama, though in the Brāhma form they are also supposed to perform Dharma together¹, the injunction that they should 'perform dharma together' is the peculiarity of this form. The commentator¹ adds that in this form the bridegroom cannot enter into another Āśrama and should not take another wife. This is the difference between the Brāhma and Prājāpatya forms of marriage. According to Goorōdas Banerjee² in this form of marriage the bridegroom asked for the bride's hand, and that factor distinguishes it from the Brāhma form and makes it inferior to the latter, in which the bridegroom is invited by the father to accept the bride. Altekar³ thinks that as Brāhma and Prājāpatya are virtually synonymous words possibly Brāhma marriage was originally identical with the Prājāpatya. He

1. Haradatta on Gaut.^{dk} IV. 7.

2. Goorōdas Banerjee, The Hindu Law of Marriage and Stridhana

3. Altekar, P. W. H. C. p 46

bases his argument on the fact that two of the early law writers, Vaśiṣṭha and Āpastamba, do not mention Prājāpatya marriage at all, but refer only to three approved forms, Brāhma, Daiva and Ārṣa. Prājāpatya was added later, probably to make the number of the forms of marriage eight.

The more probable explanation seems to be the suggestion made by Dr. N. C. Sengupta. We find that Vaśiṣṭha and Āpastamba mention Gāndharva in the place of Prājāpatya marriage. So it may be possible that Prājāpatya is only a rationalised form of Gāndharva form of marriage. The essential elements of both the Gāndharva and the Prājāpatya is more or less the same, only in the Prājāpatya form the parents' consent is necessary. Dr. Sengupta¹ thinks that the Prājāpatya form is the outcome of the reaction of the sacred law. The sacred law did not approve of the Gāndharva or love marriage but had to accept it as it was popular in the society. So the law-givers added the injunction that they should never cease to perform Dharma together. So in some of Dharmasūtras we find the mention of Prājāpatya but not of the Gāndharva

1. N. C. Sengupta, Evolution of Ancient Indian Law. p. 92-93

form of marriage.

Ārṣa

At the Ārṣa form of marriage the bridegroom presents the bride's father, or any other person who has authority over the girl, with a bull and a cow.¹ Manu¹ tries to prove that the receipt of a pair of cattle does not constitute the sale of the bride. The commentators say that the price that was given was returned, probably in the form of dowry, and therefore cannot be considered as a price but only as a means of honouring the girl.

In this kind of marriage, like the others, the girl does not have any choice in the selection of the bridegroom, which entirely depends on the father or the guardian of the girl. The difference between this and the other forms of marriage lies in the fact that the choice is made first by the suitor, who gives the gift of a cow and a bull, after which the parents' consent is needed.

These are the four orthodox forms of marriage and universally approved by the lawgiver. The essential element of these four forms of marriage is the gift of the girl with the libation of water. It would seem that the lawgivers intended that the full marriage ritual should be performed in these forms. Though this is not

1. Manu. III. 54.

explicitly stated the sūtra writers evidently looked on the ceremony as essential for higher class people at least, and it can hardly be believed that they intended that any of these approved forms of marriage should be performed without a religious ceremony. The other four forms are independent of any gift. In these forms the wife is acquired by the same method as that by which other property is acquired. These four are called Rāksasa, Āsura, Gāndharva and Paisāca.

Rāksasa

Rāksasa is the form of marriage in which the girl is forcibly carried away against her will from her father's house. The essential element of this form is the forcible abduction. Vaśiṣṭha¹ is of opinion that the guardians had to be destroyed by force of arms. The Kāmasūtra² says that they are to be attacked or wounded, while according to Manu³ they are slain or wounded and their house broken open. This form of marriage was not approved by the Dharma-sūtra writers, though they had to make some provision for

1. Vaśiṣṭha^{Dh.}. I. 34.

2. Kām . III. 2. 31

3. Manu. III. 33.

it in society. Vaśiṣṭha¹ mentions this as a Kṣātra rite, which means that this form of marriage was common among Kṣatriyas, who must have found it suitable on certain occasions.

Evidently by this institution of Rākṣasa marriage the girl carried away by the enemy raiders was given some legal status, and the lawgivers may well have admitted it on account of the unsettled conditions which prevailed from time to time in many parts of India.

Āsura is the marriage by purchase, where the girl is acquired by paying a suitable price to her parents.

Vaśiṣṭha mentions it as a Mānuṣa rite², presumably meaning that it was common among the ordinary human beings such as Vaiśyas and Śūdras.

The texts are not very specific about the exact amount of money to be paid. Āpastamba³ says that one should pay according to his ability; similarly Manu⁴ says that the suitor has to pay as much as he can afford.

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1. Vaś. ^{Dh.} 1.35.
 2. " " "
 3. Āp. Dh. II.5.12
 4. Manu. III.31

Vaśiṣṭha¹ lays down the exact amount to be paid .

"If a gift of one thousand oxen fit to draw a carriage (has been bestowed) according to the rule on a perfectly worthy man, that is equal to giving a maiden."

But the same Dharmasūtra in another place says that one thousand cows besides a carriage should be given². This figure seems exorbitant, and perhaps only applied to the very small circle of wealthy people for whom the sūtras were primarily composed. In so far as the sūtras were followed by ordinary people we may be sure that the number of oxen paid to the bride's father was much less.

This form of marriage was also disapproved by the Dharmasūtra writers and considered one of the inferior forms. The general disapproval of the selling off daughters is expressed in all the Dharmasūtras. Baudhāyana³ mentions that those who give away their daughter for a fee commit a great crime, fall into a dreadful place of punishment after death, and destroy their family down to the seventh generation. But in spite of the general

1. Vaś. Dh. XXIX. 21

2. Vaś. Dh. I. 36

3. Baudh. I. 11. 21. 3. cf. Āp. Dh. I. 6. 13. 11. & Manu. III. 51

dislike felt for the sale of girls the Āsura form of marriage had to be accepted in society, but the girl who had been purchased was not considered eligible to take part in sacrifices offered to the gods of the manes¹.

Gāndharva

The reference to Gāndharva vivāha have been interpreted in different ways by different scholars. P.V.Kane² says that "in the Gāndharva form the principal object was the gratification of carnal desires". Jolly³ describes it as "the love-marriage without the consent of the parents." Gooroodas Banerjee⁴ says that marriage in this form, which depends merely upon the agreement of the contracting parties, resemble to some extent what are called Gretna-Green marriages, that is runaway marriages by persons governed by English law at Gretna Green and elsewhere in Scotland, to evade the provision of law against ill-advised and clandestine marriage." Mayne⁵ says that the Gāndharva marriage "springs from

1. Baudh. Dh. I. 11. 21. 2

2. Kane, History of Dharmaśāstra. vol. II pt. 1. p 519

3. Jolly, Hindu law & customs. p 111

4. G. Banerjee, Hindu law of marriage and sridhana. p. 81

5. John. D. Mayne, A treatise of Hindu Law and Usage. pl 21

desire and has sexual intercourse for it's purpose."

It seems that the definitions of Kane and Mayne are based on the following verse of Manu:

"Ichhayānyonya-samyogah kanyāyāśca varasya ca

Gāndharvah sa tu vijñeyo maithunyah kāmasambhavaḥ

(Manu.III.32)

"The voluntary union of a maiden and her lover one must know (to be) the Gāndharva rite, which springs from desire and has sexual intercourse for its purpose."

We have plenty of evidence that Gāndharva was a love marriage, but the expressions maithunyah and Kāmasambhavaḥ in Manu are to be specially noted. Though it is not mentioned in other Dharmasūtras, from Manu's words it seems clear that sexual intercourse is preceded by the Gāndharva form of marriage. From the point of view of this source at any rate it is not the mere legalisation of a liason or casual sexual encounter, but a solemn agreement between two parties before sexual relations have taken place.

Vaśiṣṭha mentions that the lover has to take a girl of

equal caste in this form of marriage. But this does not seem to be natural rule, and in the numerous references to Gāndharva forms of marriage in the epic we find that marriage took place between young men and young women of different castes. Vaśiṣṭha must have laid down this rule to restrict the scope of Gāndharva marriage.

Paiśāca

Only Gautama and Baudhāyana mention the Paiśāca marriage. Paisaca form of marriage is the seduction of or sexual intercourse of a maiden while she is asleep or intoxicated. The difference between Rākṣasa vivāha and Paiśāca vivāha is not very great. In the Rākṣasa vivāha the girl is taken away by force while in the Paiśāca vivāha she is taken by deception and fraud. As this is based on fraud it is always considered to be the worst type of marriage. Āpastamba and Vaśiṣṭha do not mention this form at all.

Approved forms of marriage

There is widest diversity of opinion among the different Dharmasūtra writers about the description or

definition of the various forms and their acceptibility. According to Gautama¹ the first four forms are lawful, and he adds that " in the opinion of some "² the Gāndharva and Āsura forms are also lawful. It seems that these two forms were yet struggling for recognition in society. Gautama does not recognise the Rākṣasa and Paisāca at all. He says that a son born of a wife married according to the Brāhma rite saves ten ancestors, ten descendants and himself. Gautama is known to be the oldest Dharmasūtra and it has even been suggested that its date is as early as 500.B.C.³. It seems that at that period all the eight forms of marriage of the later period was not recognised. Only the first four were legally accepted and Gāndharva and Āsura were only partially accepted. At the time of Vaśiṣṭha the same six forms are recognised, he only replaces the terms Rākṣasa and Āsura by Kṣātra and Mānuṣa respectively. This probably indicate that in

1. Gaut. Dh. IV

2. " IV.15

3. Macdonell, History of sanskrit literature. p 258-259

his society the Rākṣasa form of marriage had become very common among the Kṣatriyas and Āsura among the Vaiśyas and Paisāca for the Śūdras.

Āpastamba¹ recognises six forms only and excludes Prājāpatya and Paisāca forms. This probably implies that these two forms were not in practice in society at this time, which is thought to be about 400 B.C.² Moreover Āpastamba belonged to the south of India. So it is possible that the Prājāpatya form may not have been prevalent in the south while it was in practice in northern India earlier, as it has been referred to in the Gautama Dharmasūtra.

Baudhāyana³ lists all the eight forms of marriage and says that the first four alone, namely the Brāhma, Prājāpatya, Ārṣa and Daiva are lawful for the Brāhmaṇas and each earlier is preferable to the next. The fifth and seventh, the Rākṣasa and Gāndharva are lawful for the Kṣatriyas, the Āsura for the Vaiśyas and the Paisāca for the Śūdras.

1. Āp. Dh. II. 5. 11-12

2. Baudh., I. 11. 20. p. 20.

2. Bühler, S. B. E. Vol. II. Introduction liv-lvi;

Kane, H. D. S. Vol. II. pt 1. Chronological table.

From the account of different Dharmasūtras it appears that on the beginning only the first three forms, namely Brāhma, Daiva, and Ārṣa, were approved and Rākṣasa came to be recognised only to a limited circle of Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas. As has been pointed out above Prājāpatya seems to be a later addition and just the rationalised form of Gāndharva marriage. Paiśāca never received the whole hearted sanction of the lawgivers.

It is probable that the recognition of these lower forms of marriage was due to the prevalence of rape, seduction and liason in some sections of society at least. By giving them recognition thus the right of the woman and children were to some extent safeguarded.

The Grhyasūtras give no instructions on the rituals to be performed in the lower forms of marriage. It seems probable from the fact that the brāhmanas generally disapproved of them, that they were looked on as secular marriages, and no religious rites were performed in connection with them.

Only in a later period do we find that the marriage rituals are performed after the actual marriage, to raise its status

Forms of marriage in Vinaya Pitaka

Different ways of acquiring wives are referred to in the Vinaya Pitaka. There are ten kinds of wife mentioned as follows: "One bought with money, one kept for passion, a kept woman, one who receives clothes, one who provides water, one who takes off the pad (for the burden she carries on the head), the slave and wife, the servant and wife, the flag-brought, the wife for the moment." In the next sloka these kinds are explained. "Bought with money means having bought her with money he makes her stay. Kept for passion means the dear one makes the dear one stay. A kept woman means giving her wealth he makes her stay. One who receives clothes means, giving a garment, he makes her stay. One who provides water means, having handled a bowl of water, he makes her stay. One who takes off pad means taking down the pad he makes her stay. A slave means she is a slave and a wife. A servant means she is a servant and a wife. Flag brought means a woman taken in a raid. A temporary wife means a wife for a moment!" The commentary on the Vinaya tries to explain these forms

1.V.P. V.4.1-5

L. vol. III p. 139

1. Vinaya Pitaka

still more clearly. In the case of 'the kept woman' it is said that in this case a country woman comes to be a wife, having received the household implements. 'The one who receives clothes' has been explained as that receiving as much as a garment or a cloak, a vagabond woman is raised to be a wife. 'One who provides water' has been explained by the commentary as - in this type of marriage the couple plunge their two hands into one pot of water, and the man says- "joined like this water, so let them not be divided". A slave woman is explained by the commentary as one ^{who} works in the house for wages, someone lives a household life with her, not satisfied with his own life. "Flag-brought is explained as follows: Having gone with army erecting the flag, plundering another district, she is brought back. If anyone makes her his wife, she is called "flag brought".

We find from the above passage that many of these forms are similar to those of the Dharmasūtras. The wife bought with money is similar to the bride in the Āsura form of marriage. The one who is kept for passion may be similar to the bride in the Gāndharva form of marriage. The "flag-brought" wives may possibly be equivalent to those of the Rākṣasa marriage.

The description given by the commentators of the kind where "one who provides water" is similar to the ceremony of libation of water in the sūtras, which is considered to be one of the most important ceremonies of marriage. The other types do not seem to be wives in the proper sense of the term but mere concubines. Similar types of marriage are mentioned in both the Dharmasutras and the Vinaya texts, probably because they refer to more or less the same period, 600 B.C. to 300 B.C.

Kauṭilya¹ and Smṛitis mention the same eight forms of marriage. In the Manu saṃhitā the eight forms are enumerated in the following order- Brāhma, Daiva, Prājāpatya, Āsura, Gāndharva, Rākṣasa and Paisāca. All the forms are more or less the same as in the sūtras. But in Manu² the Gāndharva form has two sub-divisions combined with the Rākṣasa vivāha, and not combined with this form. Medhātithi's commentary on this śloka of Manu explains the former type as occurring when a girl, while living in her father's house, falls in love with a man, and, as she is not her own mistress, requests her lover to take her away by some means or other. The bridegroom being very strong carries her away after having killed and wounded her guardian. Manu mentions that this form of marriage, whether mixed

1. Kauṭ. III. 2

2. Manu. III. 26

or separate, is lawful for the kṣatriyas.

We find various instances of this form of this mixture of Rākṣasa and Gāndharva marriage in the epic. Arjuna's marriage with Subhadra¹ is an example of mixed Gāndharva marriage, while Śakuntalā's marriage with Duṣyanta² is an example of the Gāndharva marriage in pure form.

Sale of girl

Like the Dharmasūtras Manu speaks against the sale of girls. He considers this to be one of the greatest sins and the father who takes even the smallest gratuity for his daughter is considered to be seller of his offspring.³ But in another place Manu lays down rules which assumes the sale of girls as an accepted fact. He says that, if one girl is shown and another is given to the bridegroom, the bridegroom has the right to marry both the girls for the same price, and the father is bound to give both of them to the bridegroom.⁴ Ludwig Sternbach⁵ tries

1. See below p188

2. " "

3.3 Manu.III.51-52

4. Manu VIII.204

5. Ludwig Sternbach, Bharadīyā Vidyā vol. XII. p72

to explain this contradiction by saying that this rule of purchase, like other rules in Manu concerning Āsura vivaha, is archaic. But this does not seem to be correct. It is true that the general opinion of the lawgivers was against the sale of a girl¹, but it is evident that this was practised quite frequently. The very strength of the lawgivers' opposition strongly suggests that these forms were by no means extinct. Āsura and other lower forms of marriage are more readily accepted in the Smṛtis than in the Dharmasūtras; we find that Āpastamba, Gautama and others recognise the Āsura marriage, but only for the vaiśya caste, and it is never considered to be praiseworthy², while Manu³ permits Āsura marriage even for the brāhmaṇas. So it seems that, in spite of the general dislike, this form had to be accepted in society owing to the intermixture of races.

Svayamvara

The Svayamvara of the epics is not mentioned in the Smṛtis, which, however, recognise the Gāndharva form of marriage. It should be pointed out that Gāndharva and Svayamvara marriage are not one and the same; but the

1. Manu. IX.98, 100

3. Manu. III.23

2. Āp. Dh. II.5.11-12; Gaut. IV.15

independence of the girl in her choice of the groom is recognised in both and perhaps this is why the Svayaṃvara is not included in the usual list of the eight forms of marriage. Moreover there is provision in Manu for girls to choose their own husbands if they are not given in marriage by their parents after three years from their attaining puberty¹. So it seems that though Svayaṃvara is not specially mentioned in the Smṛtis, the father loses his authority over the daughter by not fulfilling his duty of marrying her at the proper time. But such girls, on leaving home, are not allowed to take with them any ornaments given by father, mother or brother. If they take them it will be considered as theft².

In the Buddhist Jātakas, we find that the girls, who married at the mature age used to choose their own husbands. Princess Kanhā asked her mother to persuade her father to hold an assembly to choose her husband³. In the Kulāvaka Jātaka, Sujātā, the daughter of the Asura king selects her husband from a great assembly of Asuras⁴.

1. Manu. IX. 90-91

2. " IX. 92

3. J. V. 426-7

4. J. I. 206-6

This is evidently a Svayaṃvara of the type well known in the epics.

Caste and marriage

These different forms of marriage are mentioned in connection with different castes. Baudhāyana is supposed to be one of the earliest Dharmasūtras, but among all the sūtrakāras he and Vaśiṣṭha accepted most willingly the inferior forms of marriage. Yet even Baudhāyana recommends Gāndharva and Paisāca only for Vaiśyas and Śūdras. He describes Rakṣasa as Kṣātra and Āsura as Mānuṣa, which shows that the Rākṣasa form was common among the Kṣatriyas and the Āsura among the ordinary men of the two lower classes.

Baudhāyana allows considerable liberty to the lower castes in respect of the rules of marriage, but he restricts the brāhmanas, and allows them to enter into marriage only according to the first four forms—Brāhma, Daiva, Ārsa and Prājāpatya—among which the earlier is preferable to those which follow.

The reason for the leniency allowed to the Vaiśyas and Śūdras is perhaps that they were looked down upon in society, and social mortality did not depend upon them. So they were allowed to marry as they chose.

But the brāhmaṇas, who were supposed to be the religious heads of society, were allowed to marry only according to the first four forms. All the other sūttas agree with Baudhāyana about this rule.

But even in the time of Baudhāyana we find that the Gāndharva marriage is recommended for all the castes, according to the "opinion of some",¹ as it is based on mutual affection. This means that, despite the strict rules of the law givers, society had to make some provision for love marriage, even for the brāhmaṇas.

There are also numerous references to the acceptance of local customs in the Mahābhārata. Bhīṣma was a Kṣatriya, but he had to pay bride-price to Śalya, the king of the Madras, for his sister Mādri, who was to be given in marriage to Pāṇḍu, since this was regarded as a family custom of the Madras².

Similarly R̥cika, the offspring of Bhṛgu, sought the daughter of Gādhi, the king of Kānya-kubja, in marriage. But the king said that according to the family customs the purchase price of the bride was

1. Baudh. I. 11. 20. 16

2. Mahā. Ādi. 103.

a thousand strong horses, each with one black ear.

Ṛcika promised him the horses, got them from Varuṇa, and was then given to Gādhi's daughter in marriage.¹

Manu distinguishes these forms of marriage according to their appropriateness for different classes of persons. His opinions on the admissibility of different forms of marriage to different castes are rather confusing. In one śloka of the relevant passages he says that the first six are legal for the brāhmaṇas, the last four, excepting the Rākṣasa rite for the Vaiśyas and Sūdras.² In the very next śloka he mentions that the first four are approved in the case of a brāhmaṇa, while for the Kṣatriyas the only approved form is Rākṣasa, and for the Vaiśyas and Sūdras, the Āsura form³. In the next śloka he mentions that from among the last five, i.e., Prājāpatya, Rākṣasa, Āsura, Gāndharva and Paiśāca, only the first three are declared to be lawful. The Paiśāca

1. Anu. 4

2. Manu. III. 23

3. Manu. III. 24

and Āsura must never be used¹. So it seems that ,Āsura having been prescribed for the vaiśyas only and Paisāca being disapproved for all, the remaining three, the Prājāpatya, Gāndharva and Rākṣasa, are lawful for brāhmaṇas.

As these verses are very contradictory the commentaries have tried to reconcile them in their interpretation.

In the first verse² Manu prescribes the first six forms namely Brāhma, Daiva, Ārsa, Prājāpatya, Āsura and Gāndharva for the brāhmaṇas, but in the next śloka³ he prescribes only the first four .In the same śloka he prescribes only Rākṣasa for the kṣātrīya. Āsura, Gāndharva and Paisāca are recommended for the vaiśyas and sūdras in the first śloka but in the next only the Āsura form of marriage is recommended for these classes. In the third śloka it is stated that Āsura marriage may be performed by any of the four classes.

The Madanapārijātā⁴ adds the following note. The first four are approved for the brāhmaṇa

1. Manu. III.25

2. Manu. III.23

3. Manu. III.24

4. Madanapārijāta p154

but the Rākṣasa must have been a secondary substitute for them, as it is lawful for the next lower caste i.e. kṣatriyas. Aparārka¹ tries to explain the verse in the following way. He says that though in the second verse the first four forms are recommended for the brāhmaṇas, the Āsura and Gāndharva are neither commended nor forbidden. The same applies to the kṣatriyas, for whom the Rākṣasa is prescribed but Āsura and Gāndharva are neither commended nor forbidden. The Smṛticandrikā² says that though these four are recommended, that does not mean that the other two are forbidden. Perhaps they are not so much approved as the others. The Smṛtitattva³ tries to explain the admissibility of the Āsura form of marriage as that when the bride's father receives wealth from the bridegroom, it must be understood to sanction the payment of so much wealth as may be required for the decking of the bride.

The Vīramitrodaya⁴ quotes the last verse⁵ in

1. Aparārka p91

2. Smṛticandrikā Saṃskāra p 190-231

3. Smṛtitattva III. p 140

4. Vīramitrodaya Saṃskāra p860

5. Manu III.25

support of the view that certain forms of marriage are permissible for the brāhmaṇas under abnormal circumstances

At the end of this confusing list Manu mentions that the first four forms with libation of water are approved for the brāhmaṇa, but for the other castes they may be performed itaretarakāmyaya, 'in consequence of mutual desire of the bride and bridegroom.'

This may mean that the Gāndharva form of marriage is approved for all castes, or that the castes other than brāhmaṇas can marry in any form they choose.

Though the commentators attempt to explain these contradictions by various means, it would seem that all these rules were not practised at the same time. Manusamhitā is a compilation of all known texts which from the most ancient times had been attributed to Manu.¹ Thus these contradictions can be easily explained. It is possible that all these rules were practised in society in different times and regions, and are combined together in a single text, without any real attempt at harmonising them.

In the beginning the four inferior forms were

1. N. C. Sengupta, Evolution of Law, p. 15

presumably disapproved in society. Then gradually they came to be recognised for the castes other than brāhmaṇas. As these lower forms became popular, the Gāndharva and Āsura were also recognised for the brāhmaṇas. In certain times and regions the Rākṣasa was recommended for the kṣatriyas and Āsura for the vaiśyas and śūdras.

Among all these stages the last seems to be the acceptance of the first six forms, Brāhma, Daiva, Ārsa, Prājāpatya, Gāndharva and Āsura, as legitimate for the brāhmaṇas, though the last two are not looked on as praiseworthy. It would seem that at the period of the compilation of Manu the rules with regard to the marriage of brāhmaṇas had been gradually growing more lax, for the Dharmasūtras allow them more liberty in this respect than does Manu.

Yājñavalkya also mentions the same eight forms of marriage in the following order- Brāhma, Daiva, Ārsa, Kāya (called also Prājāpatya by Vijñāneśvara), Āsura, Gāndharva, Rākṣasa and Paiśāca. Yājñavalkya¹ does not say anything about the admissibility of these forms to

1. Yājñ, I. 58-61

different castes .But it seems that they are thought preferable according to order, and Paisāca is considered to be the lowest form of marriage since he mentions it last of all.

Nārada¹ mentions them in the following order- Brāhma, Prājāpatya, Ārṣa, Daiva, Gāndharva, Āsura, Rākṣasa, and Paisāca. The first four are declared to be lawful, the Gāndharva form to be common to all castes and the three other forms to be unlawful. Kauṭilya² also mentions these forms in the same order.

According to Kauṭilya the first four of these forms of marriage are ancient ancestral customs and they are valid when they are approved by the father. In the case of other forms the sanction of both the father and mother is necessary. This rule requiring the sanction of both the parents may show the survival of the traces of matriarchy. It is quite possible that originally these lower forms of marriage were practised by the matriarchal tribes and when they were incorporated into the Aryan marriage the rule of mother's consent still prevailed as a survival of the matriarchal custom.

1. Nārada, XII. 40-44

2. Kaut., III. ch. 2-3.

It will be shown later that the love marriage or a type of the Gāndharva form of marriage was very common among the early Tamils who we know were originally matriarchal tribes.

It seems from the Greek accounts that in the Mauryan period love marriage or Gāndharva marriage was quite popular. Diodorus¹ says that it was the ancient law among the Indians that when young men and maidens decided to marry, they did not marry according to the judgement of their parents but by mutual consent. Strabo² also says that among Kathaians the husband and wife chose each other. But as these decisions were made in immature age, mistakes of judgement were of frequent occurrence; and the wives became repentent and fell in love with other men. At last when they wanted to leave their husbands, they got rid of them by poison. This he refers to as of frequent occurrence in the past. In fact this is a fanciful explanation of the origin of Sati and is not reliable. Moreover it refers to one tribe in the north west and not to India as a whole. It is evident that there were some instances of marriage by mutual consent but the general opinion presumably was not in

1. Diodorus ,XIX.30

2. Strabo, XV. 1-30

favour of this practice and it was believed that young people were liable to commit mistakes when they chose for themselves. This practice of marriage by mutual consent, however is not mentioned by Megasthenes,. Timmer¹ thinks that perhaps this form of marriage was not popular in the society in which he moved, probably brahmanical. But we find frequent examples of this type of marriage in the epics, which represent different classes of society especially kṣatriyas.

Another form of marriage was also referred to by the Greek writers, that is marriage by purchase. It is stated that a woman was very much honoured who received from her lover the present of an elephant.²

Another form of marriage mentioned in the Greek account is similar to the *Ārṣa* form of the Smṛtis. Strabo³ says that in India some wives are purchased from their parents in exchange for a yoke of oxen. In the Dharmasūtras this form of marriage is not considered to be a purchase.

We find figurative references to some form of marriage

Megasthenes en de Indische maatschappij. /

1. Timmer, p268ff

2. Strabo. XV.43

3. " ~~XV~~ 54

in the inscriptions of the Gupta period. The Eran stone inscription¹ of Samudra Gupta describes how he "married a virtuous and faithful wife (Dattādevī) whose dower (dattaśulka) was provided by his manliness and prowess. The Udayagiri cave inscription² of Candragupta II mentions marriage by purchase. It reads as follows:- "bought with money of (whose) prowess, (the earth), in which (all others) princes are humiliated by the slavery (imposed on them by him)."

The practice of giving of a dowry at that time is clear from the Apsad stone inscription of Ādityasena³ of the family of the Guptas of Magadha. Here it says that while Dāmodaragupta was king he gave away in marriage a hundred daughters of virtuous brahmanas endowed with many ornaments and with youth and dowered with agrahara grants.

In the works of Kālidāsa also we find reference to different types of marriage prevailing in Gupta times. The Prājāpatya⁴ form is described by Kālidāsa in detail.

1. Fleet Corpus Inscriptional Indicarum Vol.3(2) p21

2. " " " " Vol.3(6)p35

3. " " " " Vol.3(42)p206 text

p203

4. Kumārasambhava, VI.84.

In this form of marriage the father of the bride adorned his daughter with ornaments and gave her away to the bridegroom after the completion of the necessary rites as is enjoined by the codes of Manu.

The Gāndharva form is also described in detail in Śakuntalā. But Upādhyāya¹ rightly says that Hindu rules of matrimony do not in fact approve explicitly of courtship. This is why Kālidāsa says : "a discreet daughter, waiting for the consent of her father , in the event of her marriage who does not rush to contract a marital agreement of her own free will."² Again in Śakuntalā Kālidāsa says: "a union, especially when in private, should be formed after careful examination. Friendship towards those whose hearts are unknown, thus turns into hostility."³

The Āsura form of marriage is perhaps indirectly mentioned by Kālidāsa in the expression Duhitrśūlkasamsthāya⁴, i.e. "by the condition of the sulka or bride money of the daughter." Śūlka could also mean dowry.

1. Upādhyāya, India in Kālidāsa, p. 181

2. Raghu, V. 38.

3. Śaku, V. 24

4. Raghu. XI. 38

Origin of the lower forms of marriage

We have already seen that there are very few references in the Rg. Veda to marriage by capture or purchase, or to marriage by capture or purchase, or to marriage resulting from love. These were merely different methods of acquiring wives, and were not considered recognised forms of marriage until the time of the Dharmasūtras. These different forms of marriage seem to be of non-Aryan origin. Even today we find that such marriages are practised in some form or other by many of the primitive tribes of India.

Among the Godavars of Vishakhapatnam the bridegroom puts an iron ring on the arm of the bride and drags her away with him towards his home. The bride's party try to prevent him and mock fight ensues between the bride's party and that of the bridegroom. After both parties are tired, the bride is led away to the bridegroom's house with the beating of drums.

Even now, in some parts of India a Hindu bride puts on her left wrist an iron bracelet, which she never removes unless she becomes a widow. The iron ring of the Godavar has the same significance. Both customs seem to be reminiscent of the ancient practice of marriage by capture, and the iron ring must have been originally the symbol of the bride being kept in chains.

Among a number of social groups in Orissa and the Tamil land there is a custom called the stealing frolic. On the last night but one before the actual ceremony the bridegroom goes to the house of the bride and offers an oblation to the fire. When he comes out, a silver cup with a cake in it is placed on the gateway that leads out of the house. The relations of the bride try to obstruct him, but he has to escape. The nuptial ceremony comes immediately after this 'stealing frolic'. The custom must be the symbolic survival of the ancient practice of the abducting the girl from her home.

Marriage by purchase is followed by many of the Tibetan tribes, the Bhuiyas of Orissa and a number of Chittagong hill tribes.

Marriage by purchase is found among many of the aboriginal tribes of India. Among the Morans of Assam a price between Rs. 20 and 100 was paid to the bride's parents and a pearl was given to both of them and to other relatives of the girl. Among the Kunnuvans, a hill tribe of the Patnis in South India, the bride price was fixed at Rs. 10 in all cases, irrespective of the parties being rich and poor.¹

Marriage by purchase was also prevalent among many civilised people. In China a price amounting to 25 to 40 Chinese dollars was given to the parents of the bride by the father of the bridegroom. In Japan marriage by purchase is also prevalent in more than one branch of the Semites.² In Babylonia and among the ancient Arabs a bride price was paid by the bridegroom. This bride price has survived in Muhammadan law.³ The lower forms of Hindu marriage must thus have been borrowed from the pre-Aryans and non-Aryans, with whom the Aryans came into intimate contact both in enmity and friendship.

1. Westermarck, H.H.M. Vol II. p381

2. " " " p406

3. " " " p407

Unaryan marriage forms and customs came therefore to be gradually integrated into and adopted by Aryan society. The stories of Mahābhārata furnish many examples of such contacts and of the sources of such inferior marriages.

That the Aryan warriors must often have found marriage by capture to be most suitable and acceptable form is shown by the various stories of Mahābhārata. The capture of the three daughters of the king of Kasi by Bhiṣma is one of the most important examples of this form of marriage among the ksatriyas.¹ Arjuna fell in love with Subhadra, Kṛṣṇa's sister, when he was living in exile, supposedly in a state of brahmacarya. Arjuna did not however wait for her Svayamvara, but carried her away when she was coming back after offering worship to the mountain Raivataka.²

The Gāndharva or love marriage probably in part grew spontaneously in society, and in part was borrowed from non-Aryan peoples. The marriage of Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā is one of the most important traditional examples of the Gāndharva form. When king Duṣyanta was

1. Adi. 102

2. Adi. 221-222

hunting he saw Śakuntalā in the hermitage of the Ṛṣi Kanva, fell in love with her, and induced her to accept him in the Gandharva form of marriage.¹

From the earliest Tamil literature,² which probably refers to the early centuries of the Christian era, we get references to union by love. The characteristics of this poetry are that Sanskrit words are very little used in it, and that the customs referred to are generally pure Tamil ones. The most important poems for our purposes belong to the class Kuriñji i.e. those that deal with pre-nuptial love, characteristic of the hill-country. Poems of the Mullai class, referring to the wooded region, deal with the intense longing caused by the temporary separation of the lovers. There are also poems describing the mother's lament when her daughter eloped with her lover.³

1. Ādi. 73.

2. P.T.Srinivas Iyengar, History of the Tamils p162-171

3. " " p169

The Tamil poems suggest that pre-nuptial love was very common indeed, especially among the hill people and inhabitants of outlying districts. This would lead us to infer that the growth of Gandharva marriage in Aryan society was at least partly due to the absorption of non-Aryan element.

We know that the Āsura marriage or marriage by purchase was prevalent among the Assyrians, the Jews, and other Semitic races.¹ Like the Dharmasūtras the Mahābhārata condemns it on principle but seems to allow it in practice. Much mixture of culture and races had been taking place at that time and different forms of marriage unknown to the Vedic Aryans were gradually being assimilated into society along with other rites, rituals and social customs. The Paiśāca marriage never received the whole hearted sanction of the Dharmasūtras. It is very difficult to trace the origin of the Paiśāca form of marriage. It may have been borrowed from the people of the Chītral district whose language is called Paiśācā. But this is also a very doubtful assumption, as we do not find any reference to the existence in this remote region of this form of marriage, to force the man to take as his legal wife the woman he has violated.

1. Hastings. E.R.E. Vol VIII. p470

The name Piśāca is possibly given to this form of marriage because of its crudity. In some of the African tribes, a marriage does not become definite until a child is born, in other cases sexual relations which lead to pregnancy or child-birth make marriage obligatory or render the seducer liable to punishment,¹ if he does not marry the woman.

According to Ludwig Sternback² the lower forms of marriage, Rākṣasa and Paiśāca, are only relics in the Dharmasūtras of certain forms of marriage, existing in primitive times. He supports his argument by referring to the Dharmasūtras, which consider these acts as crimes but still allow them. According to him these rules are archaic, as the forcible abduction was only a sham abduction and the robbery became legalised through a solemn act, that is the wedding ceremony.

But this does not seem to be the correct explanation. From the evidence we have gathered it seems more probable that the Brāhma was the only legal form of marriage among all the branches of Aryan people before they entered India and the other inferior forms of marriage.

1. Westermarck, R.B.M. Vol I p287

2. Ludwig Sternbach, The Rākṣasa Vivāha and Paiśāca Vivāha in N.I.A. 1943 Vol VI pp 182-88

were assimilated later into Aryan society. These were taken from the people with whom the Aryans came into contact, as is indicated by the fact that these lower forms of marriage were more willingly accepted by the later lawgivers or Smrtis than the earlier ones.

In the Brāhma form as described in the Grhya-sūtras, we find the ideal of Hindu marriage, which is purely religious. Comparing this with the early marriage customs of other branches of Indo-European races we find much the same ideas. From this we can conclude that religious marriage resulting in spiritual relationship was common among the original Indo-Europeans before they were divided. In course of time when the Aryans came into contact with other races, they had to accept the forms practised by them.

MARRIAGE CEREMONIES IN THE DHARMAŚŪTRA PERIOD

In the lower forms of marriage no ceremonies were performed, or at least Manu does not mention them. But he states elsewhere that the nuptial marriage mantras are

to be uttered only by brides who have not^{lost} their virginity.¹ But the commentaries recommend the recitation of nuptial texts even in the lower forms of marriage. Govindarāja and Nārāyana prescribe offering and wedding ceremonies to be performed in the case of the Gāndharva, Rākṣasa and Paisāca forms of marriage, but they declare that no ~~Vedic~~ ^{Vedic} mantras should be recited at these weddings. The latter restriction must be based on the verse of Manu referred to above because at least in the Gāndharva and Paisāca form the girl loses her virginity before marriage.² But Medhātithi says that as regards the Paisāca form, there is a difference of opinion. Some held that in this form the wedding with recitation of mantras was permissible. In support of this Medhātithi cites the case of Kuntī, who was married to Pāṇḍu after she had given birth to Karna. Medhātithi thinks that these sacramental rites are necessary for two purposes- firstly to give the wife the right to share in the religious acts of her husband, and secondly to avoid the sin of repeating the act of having intercourse with a maiden.

1. Manu VIII.226

2. Medh. on Manu III.34

The Arthasāstra¹ mentions that the first four forms, Brāhma, Prājāpatya, Ārṣa and Daiva are called dharma-vivāha or marriage completed by sacrament. In them, Kauṭilya says, the father alone is the authority. The others are not accompanied by sacred rites, and only became lawful when both father and mother agree to the proposal.

So it seems that originally the sacrament before the fire was confined to the first four forms of marriage. But in course of time the ritual before the fire were permitted to the brāhmanas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas who had already married according to the other forms of marriage. As these lower forms of marriage became popular even the higher castes adopted them. As a result, to sanctify these unions the sacred rite before the fire is recommended. Medhatithi says that these different forms are just the means of acquiring wives. The marriage is completed only after the sacrament are performed.²

Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra³ also mentions the necessity of fire. It is stated that in marriage by capture and other forms the bridegroom should quickly procure some fire for the sacrament to be performed, in order to legalize the union.

1. Arthasāstra, III. II. 152

2. Medh., III. 34

3. Kām. III. 5

Chapter IV

SOME ASPECTS OF EARLY HINDU MARRIAGE

Age of marriage

In the Ṛg-Veda and Atharva-Veda we find no mention of child marriage. On the other hand there are clear indications that girls were married at a mature age, and there are references to girls growing old in their father's house¹.

Also from the vedic marriage rituals of the Gr̥hyasūtras we know that normally adult girls and young men were given in marriage. In some of the Gr̥hyasūtras, however, we find definite references to child marriage. These advise that at the time of choosing a bride a nagnikā should be chosen². The commentators give different meanings of nagnikā. Matr̥datta on Hiranyakeśin says that nagnikā really refers to a woman who is fit to welcome her husband in privacy immediately after her marriage. So Altekār³ thinks that when child marriage came into practice the meaning of the term was changed and it was maintained that it denotes a little

1. R.V. I. 117.7

2. Hir. Gr̥. I. 19.2., Gobh. Gr̥., III. 4.6

3. Altekār, P.W.H.C p 59

girl, playing in the dust without properly clothing herself.

Astāvakra, the commentator on Mānava Gr̥hyasūtra¹ says that the nagnikā is the girl who has not yet experienced the impulses and emotions of youth, or one who looks pretty even without clothes.² The Gr̥hyasaṃgraha explains nagnikā as one who has not yet reached puberty. There is no doubt that nagnikā is mentioned in this sense in the later period. Vaśiṣṭha Dharmasūtra³ says that the father should give away this daughter in marriage while she is still a nagnikā for fear of her attaining puberty before marriage. This shows that nagnikā means a girl who had not yet attained puberty. But this may not have been the original meaning of nagnikā because the Hiranyakeśin Gr̥hyasūtra⁴ mentions that the girl should be both nagnikā and a virgin. If nagnikā meant a girl who had not yet attained puberty the mention of virginity would be unnecessary.

However Matr̥datta's alternative explanation is quite unconvincing, and we suggest no more probable

1. Mān.^{Gr} I. 7. 8.

2. Gr̥hyasaṃgraha quoted in Gobhila comm. III. 4. 6.

3. Vaś. Dh. 17. 70

4. Hir. Gr. I. 19. 2.

meaning, therefore ^{we} must be provisionally accept the fact that child marriage was known at the time of the three sutras which use the term nagnikā. These Gr̥hyasūtras were composed at different periods, and those of Gobhila, Mānava and Hiranyakeśin appear to be among the latest.

Evidently by this time later marriages, though still practised, had fallen into discredit among many of the stricter brāhmanas. But Matr̥datta's attempt to find an alternative meaning for the word nagnikā shows that even the brāhmanas sometimes had misgivings about the rightness of child marriage even in later period. The marriage of grown up girls was still the general practice at the time of the Gr̥hyasūtras, since all recommend the consummation or the rite called Cathurthikarma on the fourth day of marriage; though Āśvalāyana and others mention the period of chastity as three days, twelve days, six months or even one year.¹

That a period of a year should elapse between the marriage ceremony and the consummation does not prove the existence of child marriage, for it is explicitly stated that the long period of chastity was only observed to ensure the birth of noble offspring. Gobhila gives

1. Āśv. Gr. I. 8. 10-11

as the 'opinion of some' the instruction of three night's chastity, but himself mentions the consummation only after the third monthly illness.¹

This might refer to child marriage because Gobhila in another place recommends a nagnikā to be chosen. But it might simply imply that a long period of chastity was advisable for the production of better offspring, as has been referred to in other Grhyasūtras. Moreover the mantras that the bride has to recite during the marriage ceremony presuppose a mature mind and body and the power of understanding their significance on her part.

The Indian medical works say that a twenty-one year old boy should marry a girl of sixteen. Then their son will be strong and will procreate strong descendants. But if the father is twenty-five years old and the mother is less than sixteen the embryo dies in the mother's womb and even if he lives it becomes sickly.²

In the Dharmasūtra period it appears that child marriage was very common. Different Dharmasūtras³ recommend

1. Gobh. Gr. 5.7.

2. Jolly, M. G. I. P. III. 10. p 49

3. Gaut. XVIII. 20-23; Vas. XVII. 67; Baudh. Dh. IV. I. I.

that a girl should be given in marriage before she attains puberty and the father or guardian of the girl who neglects this duty commits sin. Baudhāyana¹ goes to the extreme and says that the girl should be given even to a man who is destitute of good qualities rather than be kept at her father's house after she has attained the age of puberty. In the Pañcatantra² we find the mention of this. In the tale of the mouse-maiden who is to wed a mouse, the father gets anxious about the daughter when she has reached the age of twelve, because it would be considered a sin on his part if the daughter were to attain puberty in her father's house.

In the Smṛtis we find the further lowering of the age of the bride. The later the law books are the earlier they prescribe that the maiden should be married. The first stage of the development of child marriage in the brahmanical religion was that the father was thought to be committing a sin if he did not marry the girl before her menstruation. But the sin was not committed if

1. Baudh. Dh. IV. I. 11.

2. Pañcatantra, III. 9.

the girl was given in marriage at the age of twelve.

¹
Manu says that a man aged thirty years should marry a girl of eight years of age. Medhātithi and Kullūka comment that this verse is not intended to lay down any hard and fast rule, but merely to give suitable ages. A man should always marry earlier if he can finish his studentship earlier. After studentship the ceremony of Samāvartana is performed before marriage. The period of studentship is indefinite, as it commences with the ceremony of investiture of the sacred thread (upanayana) and may last for thirty-six years or half of the time, or for a quarter, or until the student has perfectly learnt the Vedas. But the fact that the highest age of girls mentioned here is twelve, shows that even if the man marries at an older age for whatever reason, the girls' age should never exceed twelve.

But Manu's provision elsewhere are quite rational. He says that after reaching puberty, a girl should wait for three years for her father to get her married; after that time she has the right to choose her

1. Manu, IX.94. .

own husband.¹ The girl should be given in marriage to a distinguished and handsome suitor of equal caste, even when she has not attained the proper age. But if no man with good qualities is found, the maiden should rather stop in the father's house until death than be given to a man destitute of good qualities. This is contrary to the statement of Baudhāyana, who says that the girl should even be given to a man destitute of good qualities, rather than remain unmarried.

Ehrenfels thinks that this growing popularity of child marriage is due to the struggle between the patriarchal order of the invaders and the matriarchal order of the indigenous Indian civilisation. He infers that infant marriage was introduced as a means against mother right, because it never appeared in the mother-right area of the Malabar coast. We know that the matriarchal communities of India young girls were given much sexual freedom and were allowed to marry many husbands at the same time.² Thus it seems only natural that the invading nomadic Aryan herdsmen had to overcome strong

1. Manu, IX.90. comp. Baudh. Dh. IX.1.12; Vas.^{Dh.} XVII.67 but Gaut.^{Dh.} mentions three monthly periods instead of three years.

2. Ehrenfels, Mother-right in India, p58-65, among Nāyārs

opposition on the part of the more advanced indigenous peoples, when they attempted to force upon the latter the typical nomadic herdsmen's patriarchal ideals of chastity, subordination and obedience of women. Moreover the rule of patrilocal marriage must have been revolting to a girl who believed that she owed obedience to her mother only. But child marriage served as a means to overcome this opposition.

This may have been one of the reasons of child marriage but there must be some other reasons for it. As we have seen, there is no very good evidence to show that child marriage was practised when the Aryans were still uncivilized. If the custom is due to the conflict of patriarchy and matriarchy it must have been a question rather of the developed patriarchal culture of early Hinduism than of that of the Aryans of the Rg-veda. A few centuries ago child marriage was not unusual even in Europe. In the sixteenth and seventeenth century many little children of two or three, not to speak of boys and girls of nine to eleven, were betrothed by priests in the chapels and churches. The marriage was

consummated after puberty, that is when the girl was twelve and the boy fourteen years old. The parents wanted to give their daughters and sons in marriage at an early age mainly because of economic conditions. In India early marriages became prevalent owing to various circumstances. In this period we find a great deterioration of the position of women, who lost their high position in society. So they were looked upon as a burden and were given in marriage as early as possible.

It may also be suggested that the growth of child marriage was a reaction on the part of the high caste Aryans to non-Aryan sexual customs of which they disapproved. Even now we find the existence of pre-marital promiscuity among the wild tribes of India. When the Aryans settled down in India there must have been many such promiscuous primitive tribes living around the Aryan settlements. In course of time the Aryans had to come into contact with them. So, to avoid these promiscuous relationship, child marriage may have been introduced into society.

Polygamy

From the marriage ceremony and from the various references to home-life it is evident that monogamy generally prevailed. But it is evident that polygamy

was also practised among the ruling classes at that time. We find reference to two kinds of wife of the king in the R̥g-Veda - Mahis̄i¹ and the Parivr̥kti.² There are other references to kings or gods having more than one wife in the R̥g-Veda.³

One verse⁴ describes the rivalry between different wives in the song of exultation by Śacī over her rivals. Wilson thinks that this hymn is metaphorically the praise of Indra's glorious acts as Śacī means also an act or exploit. But even if we accept this metaphorical interpretation, the figure of speech used by the poet certainly implies polygamy. Cases of polygamy amongst ṛ̥sis, princes, and non-Aryan chiefs are often found in the R̥g-Veda. The circumstances of conquest and settlement and consequent prosperity of the priesthood must have made polygamy more common. Thus in the R̥g-Veda⁵ female slaves were presented to the ṛ̥sis by the patron princes. King Trasadasyu gave fifty of them as vadhus to Śobhari Kānva:

1. R. V. V. 2. 2; 37. 3

2. R. V. X. 102. 11

3. R. V. VII. 18. 2.

4. R. V. X. 159

5. R. V. VIII. 19. 36

But even though polygamy existed in R̥g-Vedic society there is no evidence that it was generally practised; if it existed at all in the early Vedic period it was confined to a very small section of people, presumably chiefs. But there are a few references to polygamy even among ordinary householder in the later hymns. There is a whole hymn in the R̥g-Veda which refers to a jealous wife, performing a spell over her rival with the help of a plant.

" imāṃ khaṇāmi óśadhīṃ vīrūdhāṃ bālevattamāṃ,
yáyaṃ sapátñīṃ bādhate yáyaṃ saṃvīdāte patīm

(R.V.X.145.1)

Úttānaparṇe súbhage dévajūte sáhasvati
sapátñīṃ me páraṇdhama patīm me kévalaṃ kuru

(R.V.X.145.2)

I dig this well-grown, most potent herb by which (one) oppresses the rival wife, by which one secures to herself her husband.

O herb, with upturned leaves, auspicious, sent by the gods, powerful, blow away my rival and make my husband mine alone.

A man with two wives is also mentioned in the R̥g-Veda.

It is very doubtful whether these very few references

can be regarded as enough evidence for the existence of polygamy as a regular custom among the ordinary people. Moreover in style these verses are more akin to later sanskrit than to Vedic.

Hymn X.145 was evidently not originally intended for use in the Vedic ritual, but is rather an incantation, and is more akin to Atharva Veda in spirit. It appears that the hymn is appreciably later than the main body of the R̥g-Veda. Moreover the whole of Book X is much later in date than the rest of the collection. So it can be assumed that polygamy became more and more common in society in the later Vedic period.

Change of economic condition may have been a cause of the growth of polygamy among the ordinary people in the later period. In the earlier period the average Vedic householder appears to have depended mainly on his own exertions. He worked on his field and supplied the family requirements. Life was simple. In the later period conquest brought wealth and thereby society was changed. Wealth came to be accumulated in the hands of a few. So polygamy may have been introduced in this section of the community as a result of the improvement of their economic condition. But even if polygamy existed in R̥g-Vedic

society there is no evidence that it was generally practised, and monogamy was evidently approved.

Polygamy was certainly prevalent at the time of the Atharva-Veda, and an entire hymn is devoted to a spell by which a wife tries to get rid of her rival. But in spite of the existence of polygamy, even in Atharva Veda the hymn referring to marriage rituals show that monogamy was the ideal and constancy of conjugal affection was always sought for. The Atharva-Veda mentions a charm pronounced by both the bride and the bridegroom which shows this clearly

Akṣvāu nau mādhu¹samkāśe ānikam nau samañjanam
antāḥ kṛṇuṣva mām hr̥dī māna in nau saḥāsati

(A.V.VII.36.)

Our glances are sweet, our faces are as smooth as balm.
Put me within your heart, may there be one spirit in
both of our hearts.

The wedded pair were compared to the Cakravāka, the bird and his mate who are regarded as an emblem of conjugal love and constancy.

Ihe māv Indra sām nuda cakravākēva dāmpatī
prajāyainau svastakāu vāsvam āyur vyāsnutām

(A.V.XIV.2.64.)

O Indra, join the couple like the cakravāka and his mate. Let them with their children live out all their life in their happy home.

So it seems that though polygamy was prevalent in the age of the Atharva-Veda, if not in that of the Ṛg-Veda, monogamy was still the general practice, as indeed it was in India at all times. There are very few references to polygamy in the Gr̥hyasūtras.

The Pāraṣkara Gr̥hyasūtra¹ only, in sanctioning the anuloma system of intercaste marriage, says that three wives are allowed to brāhmaṇa, to be taken from the brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya and vaiśya classes in order. Two wives are allowed to a kṣatriya namely a kṣatriya and a vaiśya, and one to a vaiśya, who must be of the vaiśya class. In addition a Śūdra wife is allowed to the man of the higher classes, but she is to be married without the Vedic mantras in the marriage ceremony. The rules mentioned above seems evidently somewhat artificial, and though they may be broadly based on practices prevailing at the time, we can not believe that brāhmaṇas regularly took second and third wives from the lower classes in regularly descending order. There are certain

1. Pār. Gr. I. 4. 8. 11.

rituals mentioned in the Āpastamba Gr̥hyasūtra¹ to be performed by the wife for averting co-wives. Moreover there are a few references in which the wives are referred to in the plural number, and which are considered by some scholars to be evidences of polygamy².

But in spite of these very few references the general tenor of the sūtras shows that monogamy was the general practice and constancy of conjugal affection was always sought for.

According to the Buddhist sources the people were no doubt generally monogamous as in the Vedas. But there was no rule against polygamy or condemnation of it, and it was quite common among kings, nobles and merchants.

In Mahāpadma Jātaka³, the king is said to have sixteen wives. In Daśaratha Jātaka⁴, king Daśaratha has sixteen thousand wives. The most important reason for taking a second wife seems to have been the barrenness of the first wife. The Dhammapada commentary, in repeating a story in the Vinaya⁵, appears to

1. Āp. Gr. III. 9.

2. I. V. XIV. 2. 52., Sarkar, S. A. E. S., p88

3. J. 472

4. Daśaratha Jātaka. IV. 125

5. Vin. P. V. IV. 79

suggest that a husband might honourably take a second wife if his first wife was found to be barren, but that in normal circumstances polygamy was looked upon improper.

Polyandry

Polyandry was not practised in the Ṛg-Vedic age. But Dr. Sarkar tries to find traces of polyandry from the Ṛg-Vedic verses¹, where a maiden was referred to in connection with husbands in plural number. But that is not enough proof of polyandry.

The plural number is probably used here honorifically. On the other hand we find a definite instance of polyandry in the marriage of Draupadī with the five Pāṇḍava brothers in the Mahābhārata.

There is only one reference to polyandry in the Jātakas². Princess Kanhā, in the SVayaṃvara chose the five Pāṇḍavas as her husbands. She was allowed to have these five men in spite of her father's vexation. But this is surely the trait of an anterior period and only the remnant of epic story of Draupadī's marriage with the Pāṇḍava brothers.

1. Sarkar, S.A..E.S.p 80, R.V.X. 85.37.38

2. Kuṇāla Jātaka j.V. pp426-7

According to Meyer¹ polyandry must have been a non-aryan practice and Pāṇḍavas were certainly non-aryans. They may have belonged to some aboriginal tribes which dwelt in India, such as still dwell in India or on its boundaries. Dr Meyer thinks that the Kauravas were the original heroes and the Pāṇḍavas were certainly not their cousins. He finds confirmation of his statement in the fact that when the five brothers tell Draupadī's father of their intentions, he feels very much shocked and wounded and protests against what is contradictory to all worldly customs and also to the prescription of the Vedas. Yudhīṣṭhira however replies, "we take the path which our forefathers followed one after the other" Prof. Jolly² thinks that it cannot be proved that polyandry of ancient times was confined to non-Aryan tribes alone. All that can be suggested, in his opinion, is that "brāhmanas were jealously antagonistic to it". He refers to the well known law of Manu³ as a proof of polyandry, where it is stated that the son of several

1 Meyer, S.L.A.I. Vol. II. p108

2. Jolly, H.L.C. p104

3. Manu. IX. 182

brothers may be regarded as the common son of all. This may have some reference to the custom of group marriage prevalent in many ancient societies.

Intercaste marriage

At the time of Ṛg-Veda and the Saṃhitās we do not find very strict rules dividing the different castes. We find that the four varṇas were recognised, but the rules about intermarriage with different varṇas or taking food outside the varṇa were not so rigid at that time as they later became. We find several examples of intercaste marriages from the Vedic literature. In the Ṛg-Veda¹ we get the reference of the brāhmaṇa sage Śvāvāśva marrying the daughter of king Rathavīti Dārbhya. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa² we get the story of the sage Śyavana, who was a descendent of Bhṛgu, marrying the daughter of king Śaryāta. From another verse of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa³ we learn that a king was allowed to marry a vaiśya woman but her son would not have the Vedic coronation ceremony performed on him.

1. R.V.V. 61

2. Śat. Br. IV. 1. 5. 3.

3. Śat. Br. XIII. 2. 9. 8.

Coming to the Gr̥hyasūtras we find that some of the Gr̥hyasūtras¹ do not mention anything about the varṇa of the bride, while others² say that one should marry a girl of the same varṇa.

The necessity of equality of birth is already mentioned in the Gr̥hyasūtras. In the Dharmasūtra and Smṛti period it is more emphasised. The rule became more and more rigid as time went on, and we find many conflicting opinions among the law-givers regarding this matter.

Baudhāyana³, as well as Vasiṣṭha,⁴ say that a brāhmaṇa is allowed to marry one wife from his own caste and another three from the lower castes. Similarly kṣatriyas are allowed to marry three wives, vaiśyas two and śūdras one. Viṣṇu⁵ says that among these wives the ceremony of Pāṇigrahaṇa should be performed only with the wife of his own caste. We have already pointed out that the ceremony of Pāṇigrahaṇa symbolizes the solemn contract by which the wife becomes the dharmapatnī or equal partner of the husband.

1. Āśv. Āp.

2. Mān. Gr. I. 7. 8; Hir. Gr. I. 19. 2.

3. Baudh. Dh. I. 8. 16. 2-5

4. Vas. I. 24-25

5. viṣṇu. XXIV. 5

So it seems quite clear that, though intercaste marriages were allowed according to these sūtras, they were surely not very much approved of and the wives of lower castes did not hold the same dignified position as the wives of the same caste. This is supported by the statement of the same Dharmasūtras and Smṛtis, where these intercaste marriages are disapproved. Baudhāyana¹, while discussing the penances for different crimes, mentions the cohabiting with a śūdra female as one of them and the punishment is mentioned as seven suppressions of breath on each day for seven days. Similarly Āpastamba² prescribes the penances of bathing and sprinkling oneself with water and reciting the seven verses addressed to Varuṇa, in the case of crimes of different kinds, one of which is connection with women of the śūdra caste. Viṣṇu³ says that a union of a twice-born man with a śūdra wife can never produce religious merit; it is from carnal desire only that he marries the woman of the lower caste, being blinded by lust. Those who marry the women of lowest caste, degrade

1. Baudh. Dh. IV. 1. 5.

2. Āp. Dh. I. 26. 7.

3. Viṣṇu. XXVI. 5-7

their families and progeny to the state of śūdras; the gods and manes and guests will not eat the offering from the hands of such a wife and the husband will not go to heaven.

Vaśiṣṭha¹ allows the brahmana to marry even a śūdra wife, but without the recitation of the sacred texts. But he advises him not to act thus, because that will lead to the degradation of family and after death the loss of heaven.

So it seems clear that though the marriage of brāhmaṇa men to śūdra women was permitted in society it was never approved. The law-givers are more tolerant towards the marriage of kṣatriya women and brāhmaṇas and generally towards mixed marriages where the female is only one step lower than the male. Thus Viṣṇu² says that on failure to find a wife his own caste, the husband should perform the religious duties with the one belonging to the caste next below his own; so also in cases of distress, when the wife who is equal in caste to him happens to be absent or when she has met with calamity;

Vaś.Dh. I. 2-27

Viṣṇu. XXVI. 3.

but he should never perform them with a śūdra wife. Moreover there are stray references to the general attitudes towards the marriage with śūdra women in the Dharmasūtras. Āpastamba¹ says that the food must not be eaten of a brāhmaṇa whose wife is of śūdra caste. Gautama² asks that the person whose wife is a śūdra should not be fed at the time of funeral oblation. In Manu³ as usual we find contradictions even in the matter of admitting the validity of this kind of marriage. While discussing intercaste marriage Manu says that a śūdra woman alone can be the wife of a śūdra, she and a vaiśya woman can be the wives of a vaiśya; kṣatriya can have three wives, namely kṣatriya, vaiśya, and śūdra and brāhmaṇa can have those three wives and also one of their own caste.

But immediately afterwards, in the next śloka he declares that "a śūdra woman is not mentioned even in any story as the wife of a brāhmaṇa or of a kṣatriya, though they lived in distress." In the

1. Āp. Dh. I. 16. XI 8. 33

2. Gaut. Dh. XV. 18. cf Manu. III. 156

3. Manu. III. 13

4. Manu. III. 14.

next verse ¹, he says that the twice born men who marry śūdra girls are always responsible for degrading their family and children. In the next verse he quotes the authority of different scholars regarding this kind of marriage and mentions that the person so married becomes outcaste on the following conditions:-According to Atri, he who weds a śūdra woman immediately becomes an outcaste, according to Śaunaka, on the birth of a son, and according to Bhṛgu only when he has made offspring from a śūdra female alone. Sacrifices and offerings should never be offered to the gods and manes with the assistance of the śūdra wife². This verse is explained by different authorities in different ways. Medhātithi, Govindarāja, Nandana and Rāghavānanda interpret it in the following way. According to Nārāyana's explanation, the translation will be as follows: "A śūdra man of family of Atri who weds a śūdra female becomes an outcaste; one of the race of Utathya's son, on the birth of a son; and one of Śaunaka's of Bhṛgu's race, by having no other than śūdra offspring"³.

1. Manu. III. 15

2. Manu. III. 16-17

Śūdrā vedī pataty atrer utathya tanayasya ca
 Śaunakasya sutotpattya tadatyā tayā Bhṛgoḥ

3. translated by Bühler

Aparārka,¹ commenting on the first śloka, say that this type of marriage is permissible only in the people moved by lust, and not of those who are righteous.² Madanapārijata mentions that this prohibition refers only to the first marriage and not at the time when no girl of the same caste is found.³ Aparārka says that this prohibition also applies to vaiśyas, though that is not specifically mentioned in the verse.

From all these opinions, it is quite clear that the brāhmana's marriage with the sudras was legal at the time of Manu but was not very much approved.

Yājñavalkya⁴ says that though marriage of a brāhmana with the śūdra women is legal, it is not approved by him because a man is born himself in his son.

Inheritance of the sons of these intercaste marriages

It seems from the opinion of different Dharmasūtras that the sons of these mixed marriages, especially with kṣatriya and vaiśya, get more or less the same share of inheritance

1. Aparārka p88

2. Madanapārijata p144

3. Aparārka p87

4. Yājñ., 56

as that of the sons of equal caste. The son of a brāhmana by a kṣatriya wife, if he is the eldest and endowed with good qualities, should share equally with the younger brother born of a brāhmana mother. But he shall not be entitled to receive the additional share of the eldest son, which consists of the twelfth part of the estate, a male and a female animal with one row of front teeth such as cows, a carriage yoked with animals that have two rows of front teeth, and a bull.¹ As regards the sons of a śūdra wife of a brāhmana, Gautama prescribes only the provision of maintenance if the father dies without any other issue,² and the son has been obedient to him.

According to Kautilya the sons born of a brāhmana woman shall take ^{the son born of a kṣatriya woman three} four shares; the son of a vaiśya woman two shares, and the son of a śūdra woman one share.³ The same rule applies in the case of kṣatriya and vaiśya father begetting sons in three or two castes in order. The sons of the brāhmana father and kṣatriya mother is called Savarnas, the sons of a kṣatriya father and vaiśya mother Ambasthas, of a vaiśya father and a śūdra mother Ugras, of a brāhmana father and a vaiśya mother Nisādas; of a kṣatriya father and a śūdra mother Dauśyantas and of a brāhmana father and a śūdra mother

1. Gaut. ^{Dh.} XXVIII. 5.

2. Gaut. ^{Dh.} XXVIII. 39

3. kau.t. III. 163; Viśnu 181-5; yājñ. I. 91-95

¹
Parāsavas. Children born in the inverted order of wives of higher castes became Sūtas (kṣatriya father and brāhmana mother), Māgadhas (vaiśya father and kṣatriya mother), Āyogavas (śūdra father and vaiśya mother), Kṣattris (vaiśya father and brāhmana mother), Vaidehakas (śūdra father and kṣatriya mother) and Caṇḍāla (śūdra father and brāhmana mother). In the seventh generation the man obtains a change in caste, either being raised ² to a higher or being degraded to a lower one. Haradatta explains this as follows. If a Savarna female, born of a kṣatriya wife of a brāhmana, is married to a brāhmana and her female descendant down to the seventh generation likewise, then the offspring which the seventh female descendant bears to her brāhmana husband is equal in caste to a kṣatriya. The same principle is applied ^{as well as to vaiśyas and wives of lower caste.} to the offspring of kṣatriyas and wives of vaiśya castes. The children born from the father of a lower caste and mothers of higher castes are considered to be outside ³ the pale of sacred law. The sons begotten by a śūdra father are treated like outcastes and among these sons

1. Gaut. Dh. IV.16; Manu X.6-18

2. Gaut. Dh. IV.22; Āp.Dh. II.5,11,10-11

3. Gaut.Dh. IV.25; Manu X.41,67-68

the Caṇḍālas are said to be the foulest.¹

According to Kauṭilya in case of the mixed castes such as Sūta, Māgadha, Vrātya and Rathakāra, the inheritance will go to the most capable and the others are provided with mere subsistence.² In case of the absence of any capable sons, all will have equal shares.³

Intermarriage with outcastes

Dharmasūtras universally advise the avoidance of intermarriage with outcastes. Vasīṣṭha⁴ says that the property received from the outcastes after forming alliance with them either by teaching the Veda and by sacrificing or by marriage must be given up, and the association with the person who does such things should be avoided.⁵ Manu says that no brāhmaṇa should have any connection either through the Veda or through marriage with such a man, who has not been purified.⁶ Āpastamba thinks that the expression vivāyeyuh or 'let them not form matrimonial alliances' indicates that the orthodox brāhmaṇa must neither give his

1. Gaut. Dh. IV. 28; Manu. X. 51-56

2. Kaut. III. VI. 163; Ap. Dh. II. 13, 3, 4

3. Manu. IX. 105

4. Vas. Dh. XI. 75; Ap. Dh. I. I. 28

5. Manu. II. 40

6. Ap. Dh. I. I. I. 28

daughter to Patitasāvitrikas¹ nor take daughter of such person.

But Vaśiṣṭha elsewhere makes some exceptions to this rule in case of female. He says that the male offspring of outcastes are also outcastes but not females, because females enter the family of a stranger. Those girls could be married without dowry.²

Wives of different castes, their standing

Though twice-born men could legally marry the wives of lower castes the latter did not have the same standing as that of the wives of their husbands' own castes. Among all the wives only the wife of equal caste could personally attend³ to her husband and assist him in his daily sacred rites.

Those who do not abide by this rule and allow wives of lower castes to perform those duties, while the wife of

1. The time of initiation of the brāhmaṇa is after the completion of the sixteenth year; the kṣatriyas after the twenty second year and vaiśyas after the twentyfourth year. After those periods men of these three castes, who have not received sacrament at the proper time, become vrātyas or outcastes and excluded from the right to repeat the Sāvitrī and despised by Aryans (Manu. II. 39)

2. Vas. Dh. XIII. 51-53. cf. Ar.

3. Manu. X. 41

equal caste is living, are degraded in his social position and considered to be equal to Caṇḍāla.

Mixed castes

According to Manu sons begotten by Aryans on women of equal and next lower castes have the duties of twice-born men but all those born in consequence of a violation of the law are equal to sūdras.¹

When a Daśyu² begets on an Āyogava woman the son is called Sairandhra and he lives like a slave by attending to his master and subsists by snaring animals. Kuṇḍika says that the Sairandhra resorts to this profession in order to support himself in times of distress.

When the Vaideha begets with the same, a Maitreyaka is born, whose duty is to praise great men at the appearance of dawn by ringing bell. When a Niṣāda begets on a Āyogavo woman, the son is called Mārgava, who subsists by working as a boatman. From the Niṣāda and a woman of the Vaideha caste springs the Kārāvāra,

1. Manu. X. 41

2. Daśyu:—All those tribes, which are excluded from the regular castes such as brāhmanas, ksatriya, vaisya, and sūdras:—Manu. ~~XV~~. 32

who works in leathery and from Vaidehas and the women of Kārāvaranād Niśāda castes springs the Andhra and Meda, who have to live outside the village. The Pāṇḍusopāka is born from a Caṇḍāla man and Vaideha woman, and deals with cane. When a Niśāda woman bears to a Caṇḍāla, the son is called an Antyāvasāyin, and is employed in the burial grounds; he is despised even by those who are excluded from Aryan community. These mixed castes, even if they conceal themselves, are always recognised by their occupation.¹

Origin of these mixed castes

The origin of these mixed castes as described by Manu does not seem to be based on any sound foundation. It has been pointed out by Senart² that the code of Manu is an interpretation in terms of varṇa, that is, in terms of an Indo-European social system of an existing social order which the terms could not, at any rate at the time of application be made to fit satisfactorily. The lists given by law-

1 Manu. X

2. Senart, des castes dans l'Indich. II

givers of the origin and functions of the various mixed castes do not always agree among themselves and provide a formalist interpretation of a state of society the origin of which were already obscure when these treatises were composed.

Even at the present time, as has been shown by Jackson¹, we find that a large number of sub-castes bear geographical names. It may be possible that these names are derived from the names of historical kingdoms. Similarly, in the list of sub-castes in Manu we find the place names such as Vaideha, Andhra and others, which may have originally come from these places.

Occupation of the mixed castes

The occupation of these mixed castes, born of anuloma and pratiloma marriages are mentioned by Manu. To the Sūtas belonged the management of horses and chariots. The occupation of Ambaṣṭhas was healing. To the Vaidehakas belonged the service of woman, which probably means that they were in charge of the harems. Niṣādas used to kill fish, and carpenter's work was done by the Āyogava. Occupation of the Meda, Andhra, Kuñcu and Madgu was the slaughter of wild animals. The Kṣattris, Ugras and Pukkakas subsisted by killing animals living

1. Jackson, J.B.A.S. Vol III. 57-115

in holes. Dhigvanas worked with leather and Venas played drums.

Dwelling of the mixed castes

The dwellings of the mixed castes were also fixed by the Dharmasūtras. They should live near well known trees and burial grounds, on mountains, and in groves. But the dwelling of Candālas and Svapāka should be always outside the village and the possessions should be only dogs and donkeys. They should take their food from the broken dishes and they should wander from place to place at night. They are not allowed to walk in villages and towns. During the day time they are only allowed to go about for the purpose of their work. They should always execute criminals by the command of the king and they can possess legally the clothes, beds and ornaments of these criminals.

Hutton tries to explain the reason for the comparatively lower status of the pratiloma marriage than the anuloma in the following way. According to him the explanation is found in the results of the impact of patrilineal invaders on an ^{invading} indigenous population.

1. Manu. X

2. Hutton, Caste in India p156

matrilineal population. In the case of the offspring of patrilineal father and matrilineal mother the child would inherit from both and would have status and kinship with both. But the child of an immigrant patrilineal woman by an indigenous matrilineal male would have no place with either. In that case he could not claim his kinship through his mother with her exogamous patrilineal clan, nor through his father with his exogamous matrilineal family. Naturally his position will be degraded, the exact cause of which would be forgotten when both the societies adopted patrilineal system. He supports his argument by the following passages of Gautama¹ and Viṣṇu. Gautama¹ says that those who are born of a father of lower and a mother of a higher caste stand outside the pale of sacred law. Viṣṇu² says that the children born on women of higher caste have no right to inherit and the sons do not even receive a share of the wealth of their paternal grandfather.

Lower castes attaining the rank of the higher castes

Even the member of lower castes could attain the status of higher castes under certain circumstances. The man

1. Gaut. Dh. IV. 25. 26.

2. Viṣṇu. XV. 37-38

who was otherwise excluded from the Aryan community secured beatitude if he died without expectation of a reward for the sake of brāhmanas or of cows, or in the defence of women and children. It is declared that the son born of an Aryan man on a non-Aryan woman may become like an Aryan by his virtuous deeds. But the son begotten by a non-Aryan man on an Aryan woman can never be like ¹ Aryans and is always unworthy of praise and respect. We find many references to intercaste marriages in the Jātakas, for instance in the story of a king's marrying a fruiterer's daughter, who was raised to the dignity of the chief queen. ² In another Jātaka ³ the king marries an ordinary country woman, finding her strong and neat, and makes her the chief queen.

1. Manu X.62-67; Visnu XV.18

2. J.t. 306

3. J.t. 108

Marriage expenses

Though the general opinion was against marriage by purchase, such marriage must have been prevalent in society, as one of the eight forms of marriage is Āsura or marriage by purchase. The Rg-Veda and the Grhyasūtras do not mention the sale of daughters, but from the marriage rituals we understand that the daughters were given ornaments and presents as dowry. Even provisions are made in different Dharmasūtras as regards the defraying of the marriage expenses. Begging is allowed to defray expenses of marriage. Presents of money must be given according to one's ability to the deserving¹ father of the girl to meet the expenses of marriage¹.
²Manu recommends the gifts of money to those who want to marry to have offspring. But he does not recommend begging to finance the marriage of a man who marries for the second time, while he has still a wife, when the purpose of the marriage is nothing² but sensual enjoyment. If alms are taken in these cases, the issues of such marriages belong to the giver of the money.

To defray expenses of marriage the taking of money from the sūdras even by fraud and force is

1. Baudh. Dh. II.3.5.; Gaut. Dh. V.21

2. Manu. XI. 195.

recommended.¹ The taking of money by these means are also recommended from a man rich in small cattle, who neglects the religious duties, though he does not belong to the śūdra caste. This presumably refers to the vaiśya caste. The money can also be taken from the possessor of a hundred cows, who does not kindle the sacred fire; this probably refers to the kṣatriya caste. Lastly the money can be taken by force or fraud from the possessor of a thousand cows, who does not drink soma; this may refer to the brahmana, who does not perform sacrifices properly.

Similar methods of acquiring money by fraud or force from all the castes, are also recommended by Manu for the sake of sacrifices². If the materials of the sacrifice remain incomplete except for a few articles, those may be acquired even by force or fraud from the house of any vaiśya who possesses a large number of cattle, but neither performs the minor sacrifices nor drinks the soma juice, or from a sudra, who has no business with sacrifice. Or if a man possessing one hundred cows does not kindle the sacred fire or one possessing

1. Gaut. Dh. XVIII. 24

2. Manu. XI. 12-15

a thousand cows does not drink the soma juice, the sacrificer may take what he requires from the houses of those two, even though they be brāhmanas or kṣatriyas .

So it seems there is no sin in acquiring money even by force or fraud from wealthy men, who do not observe their religious duties, even if they are brāhmanas, in order to perform the expensive and lengthy marriage ceremony, which was thought to be absolutely necessary to preserve the family.

Chapter V

WIDOWHOOD AND DIVORCE

Sati and Widow-remarriage

The funeral hymns of the R̥g-Veda and Atharva-Veda show that widow burning was a defunct custom at this time, but was represented only by a symbolic ritual.

Ud īrṣva nāry abhijivalokam gatāsum etam upaśeṣa ēhi
hastagrābhāsya didhiśos tavedam patyur janitvam abhi
sam babhūtha

The exact meaning of this verse is very doubtful and scholars translated it in different ways. From Sāyana's explanation it seems that the widow was to be married to the brother of the deceased. Sāyana says that the woman is addressed thus: "O woman, get up from here with a view to enter the place of your sons and grandsons, which is now your house. Get up from this place." Geldner's translation also agrees with Sāyana, which says :- "Rise, come to the world of life, O woman, he is lifeless by whose side you are lying. You have entered into wifhood with your husband, who takes your hand and desires to possess you."

According to Wilson the meaning of the second part will be as follows:- thou hast enjoyed this state of being the wife of thy husband, the suitor who took thee by the hand." Griffith also agrees with this. So according to them there is no suggestion of re-marriage in this verse. This same verse is quoted in Āśvalāyana Gr̥hyasūtra¹, where it is mentioned that when the wife used to lie down by the side of her husband, her brother-in-law (devarah), being a representative of her husband (pati-²sthāniyah), or a pupil(of her husband), or an aged servant should cause her rise with the same R̥g-Ṽedic verse. This does not suggest any remarriage.

Thus it is not very certain whether there is any suggestion to remarriage in this verse. But it is quite sure that the widow was asked to rise up from the funeral pyre and brought back home. It seems probable that the widow's second marriage was not obligatory but there was no restriction to it and child marriages very often used to take place, which is clear from the later evidences.

1. Āśv. Gr. IV. 3. 16-18

2. Oldenberg, S. B. E. Vol. XXIX.

The burning of widows does not appear here at all, though one of the verse was used with the slightest change of a single syllable as justification of the custom:

Imā nārīr avidhavāḥ supātnīr āñjanena sarpiṣā sam
visantu

Anaśrávo 'namivāḥ surātnā ā rohantu jānayo yónim ágre

(R.V.X.18.7.)

'Let these women, who are not widows, who have good husbands, enter (anointed) with unguent and butter. Let women without tears, without sorrows and decorated with jewels, first proceed to the house."

In the above, an alteration was made by the priesthood of later times, reading agneh for agre . This would imply that widows are called on to enter the fire with their husbands.

But from the following verse, which we have quoted, and which calls on the widow to arise from the pyre, this reading cannot be maintained; it is now universally accepted that agre is correct.

In the Atharva-Veda reference to widowhood are found especially in A. V.XVIII.3.1-2, which

are similar to the Rg-Vedic verses X.18.7 and X.18.8. These do not describe the custom by which a widow was made to lie down by the side of her husband, but this is distinctly mentioned in the next verse, which also refers to the wife being led forth to the husband's funeral by the side of his corpse.

" Apāśyaṃ yuvatīm nīyāmānām jivām mṛtébhyaḥ pariniyāmānām
andhēna yāt tāmāsā prāvṛtāsīt prāktó āpācīm anayaṃ tād
enām "

(A.V.XVIII.31.31)

"I saw the maiden being led alive for the dead; as she was enclosed with blinding darkness. Then did I turn her back from in front."

Most probably the reference to her being 'enclosed with blinding darkness' implies that she was covered with a veil while she was being led to the funeral pyre. Both Sāyana and Kauśika¹ say that the verse is used as the cow is led to the funeral pyre and around the fire. But that does not seem to be the original meaning of the verse.

1. Kauś. 81.20.

We do not find any reference to Satī either in the Dha Dharmasātr̄as or in the Buddhist texts. So it is clear that the Vedic hymns speak of the remarriage of widows rather than their self-immolation. Widow -burning was evidently a defunct custom at this time, represented only by a the symbolic ritual of the lying beside her husband on the funeral pyre until she was asked to rise up.

Though widow burning was so widespread in the brahmanical religion, its origin is not to be found in the Vedas but in the primitive belief that man after death needs the things which he had when he was living, including his wife.

In the Solomon and Fiji island widows were killed after the husband's death.¹ Widow burning was practised among the Scythians², and it seems to have become more prevalent in India after the invasion of Śakas, Kuṣānas and Hūnas. Among the early Slavonic peoples widow-burning was well known. With the Scandinavians and Germans it was a popular custom.³

1. Winternitz, D.F.B. p56

2. Herodotus IV. 71 & 57

3. Winternitz, D.F.B. P 56-57

Thus it seems that the Indo-European custom of widow-burning was already extinct when the Aryans entered India, and had become only a symbolic ceremony, which looked back to actual widow-burning in the days before the Indo-Aryans left their original home.

We have reference to the widow -burning in the Greek accounts of India. Thus Strabo quotes ¹ Aristoboulos referring to the customs existing in Taxila, that "the custom of having many wives prevails here, and is common among other races." He says that he had heard from some persons of wives, ^{who} refused to burn themselves were held on disgrace.

Strabo also quotes Diodorus, who says that among the Kathaians it was the custom for the widows to be burned along with the husband. But exception was made in the case of women with child.

In the Smṛtis of Viṣṇu ³ and Bṛhaspati ⁴ however are generally believed to be belonging to the

1. Strabo XV.62

2. Diodorus XVII.91 and XIX.33

3. Viṣṇu XXV.14

4. Bṛhaspati XXIV.11

¹
Gupta period, we find that, though they allow the widow to lead a life of virtue and asceticism, they prescribe the practice of Sati as an alternative course of action.

In the dramas of Kālidāsa wives following their husbands in death are mentioned by the poet as an ordinary matter of course.² In the Kumārasambhava we find that Rati was prepared to throw herself upon the burning remains of her husband.³ But many allusions to widows prove their existence in society.

In the Sūtra period the widow was allowed to marry any near kinsmen. The later Dharmasūtras prescribe ascetic practice for widows for a limited period only.⁴ Later on, at the time of Manu and Yājñavalkya, the asceticism was to be practised by the widow all her life.⁵ Later still, however, at the time of Viṣṇu and Brhaspati, the practice of Sati was held up as an ideal, but was not compulsory.

1. Kane, H.D.S. Vol. II. pt. 1. Chronological table

2. Kum. IV. 33

3. Kum. VII. 20

4. Vaś. Dh. XVII. 55

5. Manu V. 156-158; Yājñ. I. 75, 87

Widow remarriage

Even if we do not accept the suggestion of remarriage of widows from the funeral hymns, it is quite certain that remarriage of widows used to take place in Vedic times. In the following verse we get a reference to the widow-remarriage.

Kúha svid doṣā kúha vastor Áśvinā ^{manabhipitan}
 kúhābhipitvāṃ karataḥ ^{kuh}úṣatuh
 kó vāṃ śayútrā vidháveva deváram ^{manyam}
 ná yóṣā kṛnute sadhástha á

mānyam

(R.V.X.40.2.)

"Where are you Áśvins, in the evening, where at morning? Who brings you homewards to the place (of sacrifice), as the widow brings her husband's brother on her bed as ^{the} woman brings her husband (to her)."

This does not clearly refer to the remarriage of widows, but forms the basis of the system of niyoga of later times. It can be inferred that marriage of the widow with the brother of the deceased was not insisted upon. On the other hand , there was also no restriction to such an union placed on the widow.

In the Sūtra period the widow was allowed to marry any near kinsmen. Vaśiṣṭha¹ says that the wife of an emigrant, who has lost touch with her husband, should wait five years before re-marriage. Even the brāhmana woman with children should wait for five years, and the woman with no children four years; the wife of a kṣatriya caste with no children should also wait for five years, but those without children three years. The wife of a vaiśya caste with children should wait for four years, but with no children two years only. The wife of a śūdra caste with children should wait for three years, but with no children should wait for one year only. After that she should marry a eligible person but should not marry outside her husband's if any one in the family is living.

Kauṭilya² also lays down more or less similar rules. He even allows remarriage of those women who are married according to the first four approved forms of marriage, because according to him the neglect of intercourse with the wife after her monthly

1. Vaś. Dh. XVII.75-80

2. Kaut. III.IV.

ablution is a violation of a husband's duty.

Since Kautilya, who is generally more liberal than the orthodox lawgivers, specially states that the provisions do not apply to the first four types of marriage, we can assume the conclusion that Vaśiṣṭha and other Dharmasūtras did not allow re-marriage in cases of the first four types of marriage, and that there was normally no remarriage for the wife who had been wed by religious rites.

Baudhāyana and Gautama speak of niyoga but not remarriage. In the Dharmasūtras we get very few instances of remarriage of widows, probably because the niyoga was getting popular at that time.

In these earlier law books we find only a short period of abstinence and asceticism on the part of the widows, but in the later period the lawgivers prescribe life long asceticism. Thus Manu¹ says that the widow should emaciate her body by living on pure roots and fruits, but never should mention the name of another man after her husband's death, otherwise

1. Manu. 157.160-161

she loses her place with her husband in heaven.

Yājñavalkya¹ says that "she who does not go to another (man), whether her husband is living or dead, attains fame here and rejoices with Umā."

Niyoga

The institution of niyoga is not found in the Vedic texts. In the Ṛg-Veda we find reference to the widow being married to the brother-in-law,² but there is no reference to his appointment to produce an heir to his dead brother.

In the Gṛhyasūtras we do not find any ritual connected with niyoga. The Vedic Indians always had rituals connected with every important acts of life. So if niyoga had been in practice at that time, we should have found appropriate rituals connected with it.

It is only at the time of Dharmasūtras that we first meet the institution of niyoga. But there is wide divergence of opinion among different Dharmasūtras

1. Yājñ. I. 75.

2. R.V: X. 40.2

about the practice. Gautama says that the inheritance of a sonless man should go to the sapindas , sagotras or those connected by descent from the same R̥ṣi or the wife.¹ But the wife may also seek to raise issue to her dead husband.² This clearly refers to niyoga . The rules of niyoga are also given in detail, and it is stated that the woman whose husband is dead should raise offspring to her brother-in-law³ or she may obtain offspring by a sapinda,⁴ a sagotra, a samānapravara or one of the same caste.

The intercourse is only for the purpose of raising issue and not more than two sons should be begotten thus.⁵ But there is some controversy about the paternity of the child. Gautama mentions that the child belongs to the begetter,⁶ in the absence of previous

1. Gaut. Dh. XXVIII. 21

2. " " 22

3. " " 4

4. " " 5

5. " " 8

6. " " 9

agreement. But if the son is begotten when the husband is living, and at his request, then the son is begotten by a stranger, and he should belong to both the natural father and the husband, but to the husband only if the child is brought up by him.¹ From all these statements it is clear that niyoga was legally recognized, but that the paternity of the child depended upon an agreement between both parties.

The Vasīṣṭha Dharmasūtra prescribes similar rules with some rigidity.² Here the widow, after the completion of six months from her husband's death, can raise offspring. The paternity depends upon agreement, as in Gautama. But there is a specific limitation that no issue should be begotten through a desire to obtain an inheritance.³ Kṛṣṇapandita thinks that this is forbidden with the intention of preventing a son born of niyoga from obtaining the estate or a share of the estate of the natural father; such a son was according to other

1. Gaut. Dh. XVIII.10-14

2. Vas. Dh. XVII.56-57

3. " " 65

texts entitled to inherit from his natural father, but Vaśiṣṭha evidently disapproves of this. But it is also probable that this provision was intended to stop the widow from inheriting her husband's estate. In another part of the Gautama Dharmasūtra, niyoga is strongly opposed altogether, and it is recommended that the wife should be watched carefully so that others cannot approach her.¹

In the following verse Vaśiṣṭha mentions that if among many brothers one gets a son the others should also consider him to be their own son. Thus the nephew was thought to be equivalent to the son, and this made niyoga hardly necessary. So it seems that though niyoga came to be recognised in society it was not much approved of .

²
Baudhāyana mentions that the widow should abstain from honey, meat, and spirituous liquor, and sleep on the ground for one year; after the expiration of that year she can raise offspring by her brother-in-law, with the permission of the Gurus.³ Again he

1. Āp.Dh. II.6.13.7; Gaut.Dh. XVIII.9

2. Baudh. Dh. II.2.4.9.

3. The gurus intended are the teachers (upādhyāyas) and officiating priests - Gaut. XVIII.4-7, who taught or sacrificed for the deceased and his relatives. - Vaś.Dh. XVII.56

mentions that a son, begotten by another man, has two fathers, and as he belongs to two families he has a right to perform the funeral oblation and to inherit the property of both his fathers.¹

² Āpastamba states that the wife should not be given for raising issue to anyone except a sagotra, because she is given to the family and not to the husband alone, but in the next sloka this practice is also prohibited, because at the time of the Sūtra's composition man's senses were considered weak.³ This shows that at the time when Āpastamba was writing the institution of niyoga had become thoroughly unpopular in some brahmanic circles.

These different provisions for the institution of niyoga show that it was not yet an established institution, but that it was gradually being introduced into society and hence the sacred law had to accept it and make some provision for it. Gautama allows the greatest laxity in this matter and gives the widest

1. Baudh. Dh. II. 2. 3. 17-18

2. Āp. Dh. II. 10. 2-3

3. Āp. Dh. II. 10. 4.

sanction for the use of wives to bear sons for the dead husband.

Vaśiṣṭha¹ and Baudhāyana² give rules for niyoga, but speak against the institution and refer to it as against tradition. Āpastamba³ forbids the practise altogether.

So it can be assumed that the institution of niyoga came into Aryan society from some non-Aryan source. Throughout a long period the sacred law was inclined to adopt the growing custom, although with misgiving. For this reason we find such differences of opinion among the Dharmasūtras, which differ in respect of the time and place of their composition.

The rules of the institution of niyoga are given in detail in various verses of the Manu-Samhitā. As in many other cases, contradictions are found in this text on the question. In the relevant passage Manu first recommends niyoga and says that the owner of the seed has got no claim over the son, but the son belongs to

1. Vaś.Dh. XVII.15.

2. Baudh.Dh. II.2.3.34

3. Āp.Dh. II.6.13

to the husband of the woman,¹ who is the field(kṣetra), and is therefore called a kṣetrāja son. Only when there was a previous contract between the two parties, did the child born belong to both of them, and was called dvyāmusyāyana²

Immediately afterwards Manu disapproves of niyoga and says that to appoint a wife of a twice born man to another means the violation of the eternal law³ and mentions the name of the wicked king Vena,⁴ in whose time this institution was in practice.

Verses 64-68 contradict the rules given in the preceding ones. Hopkins does not think them to be later additions, because the same view is also expressed in Āpastamba II.27.2-6. The commentators have tried to explain this contradiction. It is quoted in Viramitrodaya,⁵ which says that vidhavā here refers to

1. Manu. IX. 51-52

2. Manu. IX. 53

3. Manu. IX. 64.

4. Manu, IX. 66, according to epic and puranic tradition Vena was the father of Prthu and a godless king, who demanded that the sacrifices should be offered to himself and not to the gods. He was therefore cut to pieces by the brāhmanas with blades of kuśa grass.

5. Viramitrodaya Samskara 737

a woman whose husband has died before the marriage ceremony has been performed. Assuming this, he tries to reconcile the apparent contradictions between verses 51-60, permitting niyoga, and verses 64-68, which oppose such a practice. According to him the sanction is given to the girl who is widowed after the verbal betrothal but before the proper marriage ceremony, while the prohibition applies to those who are widowed after the proper marriage ceremony. He seeks confirmation of this statement from verse 65, which states that the appointment of widows is nowhere mentioned in the sacred texts.

But this does not seem to be the correct explanation. It is quite evidently that niyoga was not a system included in the sacred law.

We do not find any reference to niyoga in the R̥g-Veda and the Atharva -Veda nor in the Gr̥hyasūtras. Manu himself refers to this in verse 65. The practice of niyoga is approved for the first time in the Dharma-sūtras. Even at that time there was diversity of opinion

about the practice. Manu disapproves of it in one place and disapproves of it in another. If we accept the fact that the Manu Śamhitā is a compilation of different texts, this contradiction can be easily explained. A similar custom of levirate is found among the Hebrews, as mentioned in the Book of Ruth.¹ The Aryans may have borrowed it from people in contact with the Semitic races. We find different opinions about the system in different Dharmasūtras, which only reflects the varied reaction of the sacred law regarding the acceptance of the custom. In another place Manu speaks strongly against the practice of niyoga, while he discusses the qualities of an ideal wife.² Here he mentions that the wife should always be true to her ~~dear~~ husband. He says that the brāhmanas who are chaste go to heaven even without continuing the race. So a sonless woman should never try to raise offspring by some other man. But the woman who violates this rule out of a desire to have offspring is disgraced and loses her place with

1.E.R.E. Vol.VIII. p469 by G.A.Boston, S.S.

2.Manu V.158-162

her husband in heaven. The offspring begotten by another man is not lawful. It seems that this portion of Manu was written when the institution of niyoga became very unpopular. The ManuSamhitā is evidently the compilation of many conflicting opinions prevalent in society at different times.

Though niyoga was disapproved by the later Dharmasūtras and the later parts of Manu Samhitā it was not altogether discarded from society, because even at the time of Nārada and Brhaspati we find this custom in practice, Nārada¹ prescribes niyoga with the brother-in-law only for the purpose of raising issue. The brother-in-law is allowed to have intercourse with the widow only until the child is born, and there should not be any intercourse through amorous desire. Moreover if they unite without authorization, the son is considered to be illegitimate and incapable of inheritance. If the man and woman behave otherwise than in accordance with the strict rules laid down in the text, they shall be severely punished by the king.

1. Nārada XII. 84-88

¹
In Brhaspati niyoga is mentioned but not approved. The text states that in the Krta, Tretā and Dvāpara ages men were imbued with devotion and sacred knowledge, so there was no such custom as niyoga. But in the Kali age, when men have deriorated, this system has to be accepted.

We find various instances of the practice of niyoga in the Mahābhārata. All the sons of Pāṇḍu were raised by niyoga. But still Pāṇḍu had to justify his argument based on a tradition of utter laxity which was stopped for the first time by ²Śvetaketu. Bhiṣma also had to find justification at the time of the niyoga of the wife of Vicitravīrya. ³This fact shows that the custom was not common in Aryan society at the time of the Epic as it existed at present, and hence it needed justification.

Divorce

In the Vedic literature we do not find any reference to divorce, and there is not much evidence

1. Brhaspati XXIV.12-14

2. Mahā.Ādi .103-104

3. " "

of it in post-Vedic literature. In the Smṛtis also we find that marriage is considered to be indissoluble and is regarded as a sacrament. ¹Manu says "let mutual fidelity continue till death, this may be considered as the summary of the highest dharma of husband and wife."

²Manu and Nārada also says that when a man, after having made a solemn promise of marrying his daughter, refuses to give her, he shall be punished by the king like a thief if the suitor is free from defects. *not mentioned?*

But we find contradictions of this idea in the same Dharmasūtras. In another verse, ³Nārada says that when a bridegroom goes abroad after having espoused a maiden, the maiden should wait till three menses have passed and then choose another bridegroom, and when a respectable suitor, who is more eligible in point of religious merit, fortune and amiability present himself, even when the nuptial gift has already been presented to the parents by the first suitor, the verbal engagement previously made shall be annulled.

1. Manu IX.101

2. Manu. IX.47; Nārada XII.32

3. Nārada, XII.24

But Nārada¹ himself says that this rule of the indissolubility of marriage applies only to the first five forms of marriage-Brāhma, Prājāpatya, Daiva, Ārṣa and Gāndharva, and as regards the other three forms, Āsura, Rākṣasa and Paisāca this irrevocable gift of a maiden to a particular suitor depends on the qualification of the suitor.

There is also another rule laid down by Nārada² that the marriage as well as betrothal should be dissoluble on the discovery of a blemish. In that case the bride shall be enjoined to repair to another man by her relatives, or in their absence she shall go to live with another man of her own accord.

In the stories of Pañcatantra³ also we find the same idea. In the tale of the girl who married a snake, we find the following śloka, which corresponds to Manu's sloka mentioned above.

"sakṛj jalpanti rājānaḥ sakṛj jalpanti sādḥavaḥ
sakṛj kanyāḥ pradīyante trīny etāni sakṛt sakṛt."

"kings speak only once; saints speak(only) once. Girls are given (only) once; each of these three things (is done) once (only).

1. Nārada XII. 29

2. " " 36

3. Pañcatantra I. 23

Yājñavalkya¹ says that ordinarily the father of the girl who is given once and taken away is to be punished like a thief. But , when a better bridegroom is available, even the given maiden may be taken away. Vijñāneśvara says that this can only be done before the walking of the seven steps, because the Saptapadī is considered to be the final rite, which concludes the marriage.

But unlike the Smṛtis Kātyāyana gives much importance to the betrothal. He says that if, after betrothal, the bridegroom is lost, the girl shall wait for three months and then select another man. If the girl is betrothed to one and married to another, she should be given back to the person to whom she had been promised even after the performance of the wedding rite ceremony.

It seems clear from all these statement that the union could be considered dissoluble only before the performance of the final ceremonies of marriage, or in other words before the couple became real husband and wife. Manu² says that if a girl is given in marriage

1. Yājñ. I. 65

2. Manu VIII. 205

before announcing her blemishes, and she is a leper, mad, or has already lost her virginity, then the giver shall be liable to punishment. Yājñavalkya¹ says that 'if a man gives his daughter in marriage, without mentioning her defects, he should be fined the highest amercement'. Nārada² says that the betrothal is dissoluble on the discovery of blemish, but is indissoluble after the act of joining the bride and bridegroom's hands. But there is no mention of divorce. Manu even goes so far as to say that the wife cannot be released from her husband even if the husband were to sell or abandon her.³

According to Altekar's⁴ view divorces were permitted before the beginning of the Christian era. He supports his argument from the statement of Manu which says that a wife is not to be blamed if she

1. Yājñ. I. 66

2. Nār. XII. 3

3. Manu IX. 46

4. Altekar, P. W. H. C. p 83

abandons a husband who is impotent, insane, or suffering from an incurable or contagious disease. But this abandonment does not necessarily imply divorce, for it does not allow the wife to marry afterwards. According to Manu women are allowed to contract a second marriage when they are abandoned by her husband only if the previous marriage is not consummated.¹ Altekar thinks that this second marriage presupposes divorce. But the condition of virginity shows that the marriage was not considered to be complete before the consummation, and remarriage can only be contracted in those cases. Once the marriage is consummated the union of husband and wife is considered to be indissoluble. Manu describes various occasions when the wife is to be superseded. The husband is asked to bear with a hating wife for one year. After that year the husband should appropriate her property and cease to cohabit with her.² Medhātithi in his commentary says that the woman is not to be turned away even in the case of grievous sins. If the wife disregards her husband owing to her madness, disease or int^{er}
intoxication

1. Manu IX.176

2. Manu IX.77

intoxication, she should be deprived of ornaments and abandoned for three months. Drunken, false, rebellious,¹ diseased or mischievous wives are to be superseded.

Another cause of supersession is the barrenness of the wife. The barren wife is to be superseded in the eighth year after marriage, in the tenth year, if her children die,² and in the eleventh year if she bears only daughters.

All these refer only to supersession, but we do not find any reference to actual divorce in the Smrtis.

Unlike the Smrtis the Arthśāstra³ recognises divorce very clearly. Neither the man nor the woman can dissolve the marriage without each other's consent. But divorce may be obtained from mutual enmity. If the husband apprehends danger from his wife and wants to divorce then he has to return to her all which was given to her at the time of marriage. If the woman does

1. Manu. IX. 80

Dh.

2. Manu IX. 81; Baudh. II, 4, 6; Yājñ. I, 73

3. Kaut. III. ch. 3

the same she shall give up her claim to her property. But marriage of the first four kinds-Brāhma, Daiva, Ārṣa and Prājāpatya cannot be dissolved.

The difference between the Smṛtis and the Arthaśāstra is due to the fact that the Dharma school or Smṛtis considered marriage as a sacrament and the Artha school regarded it as a contract. So consequently the contractual view of finds expression in the Artha laws. There could be divorce between the parties. Marriage according to Dharmaśāstra ideal was a sacrament and could never be dissolved by human agencies. But even Kauṭilya does not permit divorce in the first four forms of marriage, which are called dharma-vivāha. Evidently the circles for which the Arthaśāstra was written were aware of the brahmanic views on marriage, but had not fully accepted them. If we can apply this text to the Mauryan period we may suggest that the growth of brahmanism which followed this period was responsible for the strengthening of the orthodox view, until it became almost universal, and the possibility of divorce was forgotten.

We do not find any specific reference to divorce in the Buddhist texts. But from some of the

stories of the Jātakas we get the reference to supersession. In the Ruhaka Jātaka¹, the brāhmana chaplain of the king, had a wicked wife. She made her husband a laughing -stock to everyone by forcing him to put the horse's trappings on himself and to walk like a horse. When he realised her wickedness he superseded his wife,² and took another woman. In Takkala Jātaka² a man called Vasitthaka supported his old father. But his wife was a wicked woman and advised him to kill his father. But his own son held him back from patricide by recounting the goodness of parents. When the man realised his fault,³ he turned his wife out of the house. In Godha- Jātaka³ the Bodhisatta advised the wife, who had been neglected by her husband to forsake him as the bird forsakes⁴ the barren tree. In the Suttubhastā Jātaka⁴ a beautiful wife left her ugly husband with the intention of marrying again.

1.J II p115

2.J IV.pp45-49

3.J.III.p108

4.J.IIIp351

Chapter VI

The Position of Women

Women and Religion

Marriage in the Rg-Veda and Atharva-Veda was considered to be a religious sacrament which gave the wife a very high status in society. The position of the wife was honoured in the family. After marriage she was looked upon as guardian of all the members of the family. Among the blessings bestowed on her at the marriage ceremony was the hope that she might be the queen among her parents-in-law.¹ Women held more or less equal rights with the men in matters of religion. A man could not become a spiritual whole unless he was accompanied by his wife.² The Gods were thought not to accept the oblation offered by a bachelor.³ The wife pounded the sacrificial rice, bathed the sacrificial animals and laid the bricks for the altar.⁴ Her participation with her husband is referred to in the consecrating of the fire, in the preparation of the offering, in the offering of the oblation, and in the concluding ceremonies.⁵

1. R.V.X. 85. 45

2. Ait. Br. I. 2.5.

3. Śat. Br. V.1.6.10

4. Śat.Br.VI.5.3.1;
III.8,2,1-6

5. Altekar.P.W. + IC rev ed. pl97-98

So it is quite evident that the participation of the wife with her husband is absolutely necessary in the matter of sacrifice. A wife who assists the husband at the kindling of the fires for any sacrificial rite, becomes connected with that rite like a priest, and no other woman can take part in the performance of that rite. And the performer cannot take any other principal wife after he once has begun his sacrifice. ¹

The wife's share in religious life is also mentioned in other passages where it is mentioned that the Vedas are the highest authority, and those who are well versed in Veda consider that the rites, which are to be carried out with rice, yava, animals, clarified butter, milk and pots are to be performed with a wife and accompanied by mantras. ²

1. Āp. Dh. II.5.11.14 ; Manu. V.167, 168; Yājñ. I.89

2. Āp. Dh. II.9.23. .

So it is quite evident that the participation of the wife with her husband is absolutely necessary in the matter of sacrifice. Sometimes wives performed the sacrifices independently of their husbands. In the Rāmāyana Kausalyā is seen performing all alone the Svastiyāga for her son.¹ Moreover there were some sacrifices where a woman's presence was absolutely necessary. *h*

Polygamy was not regularly practised in those days²; there was no Satī, and widows could contract another marriage.³

Public life

In public life also women took an important part. It is generally assumed that women did not take part in the Sabhā and Samiti, which were the tribal councils. In the Rg-Veda⁴ there is only one reference to women in connection with the Sabhā and there is no mention of their going to the Samiti. But even as regards the Sabhā it is evident from the Maitrāyani Saṃhitā that they ceased to attend it at later times.⁵

1. II.20.15

2. See above p 203-204

3. See above p 237

4. R.V.I.167.3.

5. Mait.Sam.IV.7.40.

By citing certain passages of the Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā¹ and Aitareya Brāhmaṇa², Bloomfield tries to prove that women did not take part in public life or assemblies and did not attend the Sabhā.³ But these passages are later compositions and we must distinguish between the age of the Rg-Veda and the Atharva-Veda and that of the later Vedic period. There had been a great change in the position of women from the earlier time to that of the later vedic period. At the later period all evidence points to the fact that the comparatively free tribal society was giving place to a more developed one, and women were losing their position in the process.

Women are specially mentioned in connection with a gathering known as Vidatha. There are differences of opinion regarding the interpretation of this word. Jayaswal⁴ thinks that Vidatha was the 'parent folk assembly from which Sabhā, Samiti and Senā differentiated.'

1. Mait. Sam. IV.7,40.

2. III. 27.7.

3. J.A.O.S. vol XXIX- pt.II p.14

4. Jayaswal - Hindu Polity, old edition pt.I. p20

In the R̥g-Veda Sūryā is instructed to speak to the assembled people in the Vidatha¹. We learn from the Atharva-Veda that women took part in the deliberations of the Vidatha². A desire is expressed in the marriage hymn that the bride might speak to the Vidatha in the advanced age³. From the above references it is clear Vidatha was attended by women as well as men and that it was a popular tribal assembly of some sort.

" In this respect the Vidatha was completely different from the earliest known popular assemblies of the Greeks, Romans and Germans, in which women did not find any place. But the old Welsh laws, not later than the eleventh century, show that women had the right to vote at the popular assembly³. Basing his arguments on these facts and assuming the facts that matriarchy preceded patriarchy among the Indo-European, Dr. Sharma⁴ tries to prove that the Vidatha is of highest antiquity. From the fact of the association of women with the Vidatha, which is not found in other

1. R.V.X.85.26

2. A.V.

3. " " XIV.1.20-21

3. Engels- Origin of private property etc. pl26. *158?*

4. R.S. Sharma, 'Vidatha, The Earliest Folk Assembly of the Indo-Aryans' - The Journal of the Bihar Research Society. Vol. XXXVIII (1952) pp 429-448 *addition?*

branches of the Indo-European peoples, he suggested that this body had been a common tribal organisation of the Indo-European before they separated into different branches.

The position of women in general

From the repeated statements which show the preference for sons, it is clear that the birth of daughters was not very welcome even in the Vedic period. Not only were there special sacraments for the purpose of ensuring male children¹, but also prayers were offered at all the great sacrifices for the birth of a son who could continue the cult of the spirits of the ancestors². This was due to the belief that the spirits of the dead would wander on earth until offerings were made by the son. As there was a growing preference for sons, daughters came to be looked upon as burdens and we find reference to ceremonies for avoiding the birth of girls³.

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1. The Pumsavana ceremony. The embryo begins to move in the fourth month of pregnancy, and the Pumsavana must be performed in the second and third month of every pregnancy.
 2. Brhadāranyaka. Upaniṣad. VI.4.19.
 3. A.V. VI.II.3

The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa after explaining the utility of a son, remarks that :-

"A wife is a comrade, a daughter a misery, and a son a light in the highest heaven.¹ "

Passages such as this show clearly the comparatively inferior position of women in society. During the marriage ceremony we find repeated mention of the participation of women who are not widows. This proves that widows were already considered unlucky, and that there were restrictions on their participation in any auspicious ceremony , a taboo which is common even in modern India.

The position of wives seems to have been better than the position of daughters or widows. The wife was considered to be the half of her husband² . She was in charge of the whole household and participated with her husband in religious duties. But the ideal wife should be always obedient. The wife who did not answer back was considered praiseworthy³.

1. Ait. Br. VII.13; Winternitz-D.F.B. p 21

2. Śat. Br. V.2.1.10

3. Ait. Br. III.24.7

Dr. Sharma cites certain passages of the Vedas to prove the similar social status of women and śūdras¹. The punishments for killing both śūdras and women were the same, which shows that their position in society was also similar². There are other passages from which it can be assumed that women and śūdras did not generally have access to education and culture. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa says that the teacher at the time of teaching should not look at women and sudras, dogs or black birds, because they are untrue (asatya)³. According to the Śāṅkhāyana Grhyasūtra⁴ śūdras and menstruating women did not have the right to read the Veda. But the Āpastamba Dharmasutra⁵ says that women and śūdras had the right to take advice from the Atharva-Veda. The reference in Śāṅkhāyana does not necessarily imply the humble status of women, in normal conditions, but the passage in Āpastamba shows that women like sudras, were not allowed to hear the three chief Vedas. This ban does not occur in the Vedas themselves, and the socially degraded classes originally had the right to get knowledge from them.

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1. R.S.Sharma- J.B.R.S. 1950 p 183-191
 2. Gaut. XXII.16,17; Āp.Dh. I.9.2,3,4,5
 3. Śat. Br. XIV.I.I.31; Par.Gr.II.8.3.
 4. Śāṅkh.Gr.IV.7.47
 5. Āp.Dh. II.11.29.11-12.

From the above reference it is quite clear that the social position of women and śūdra was similar. Altekar¹ thinks that the reason for the comparatively better position of women in early times was partly political and partly religious. As the men were engaged most of the time in military activities, they had to a great extent to depend on women for the activities of family life. At that time the Aryans were greatly in need of warriors and so the custom of Sati was abolished. In religion, as a result of this state of things, the idea grew that maidens and bachelors had no admission to heaven, and the Gods received no oblations offered by them. So a wife was an absolute necessity in the matter of religious service.

The comparatively lower position of women in the later Vedic period was accompanied by a decline in their education. Where in the Ṛg-Veda we have reference to women ṛsis, skilled in Vedic lore, it would appear that now women learnt only from near relatives and did not go out to famous teachers or centres of learning. Whether the decline in education

1. Altekar - P.W.R. C. new ed. p 340-343

caused the decline in the social status of women or was caused by it, there is little doubt that the two would work together in the same direction. A lowering of the intellectual standards expected of an Aryan woman would lead to her decline in the social scale, and this would lower her standards still further. This process, which began in the later Vedic period, has perhaps been going on down to the early 19th century, when even the wealthiest and most well-born Indian women were illiterate.

The joint mention of śūdras and women seems to be due to the admission of non-Aryan brides into Aryan society. Naturally non-Aryan girls would not have any Vedic teaching, and would thus be excluded from religious performances. So they were grouped together with the śūdras, who similarly did not have any right to Vedic studies and were looked down upon. But the contempt for women had just started in this period; it became even more widespread in the later period, as non-Aryans more and more came into contact with the Aryans. But the general idealism of marriage and close mutual relationship of the husband and wife continued to be emphasized in the later Vedic period as in the time of the Rg Veda .

Women in Zoroastrianism held more or less the same position as that of the women in India in the Vedic period. A woman was fit to perform priestly duties for other women, and those women who were not feeble-minded could perform them for children ¹. Those women were worshipped who had many sons ². Women were considered holy if they were well-principled and obedient to her husband. ³

Thus though bound to be strictly obedient to their husbands or guardians they used to occupy a very honourable position in the community. The passages on which these statements are based come from texts which are considerably later than the time of the Vedas, but it seems probable that they represent the state of affairs in earlier Persia, as well as in Sasanian times. It would seem that the Persian women retained the high status of the pre-historic Indo-Iranian tribal society while those in India gradually lost it. It may be suggested that this was due to the fact that the Persians did not come in contact with dark skinned aboriginals, whom

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1. Pahlavi texts (S.B.E.) Shāyast Lā-Shāyast Ch.X.35
 2. " Yast and Sirozala Ch.XXV.143
 3. Yast XXII.I.18

they looked down on, and thus the status of their women was not lowered by concubinage and marriage with such low class indigenous girls. The Persians, who from the 6th century B.C. ruled a multinational Empire, do not appear to have had quite the same sense of racial superiority as their kinsmen in India.

Position of women affected by the eight forms of marriage:

In the Dharmasūtra period, with the introduction of different forms of marriage, the status of women underwent a great deterioration, in spite of the fact that we find in the Epics many outstanding characters among women as well as men. In the Dharmasūtras there is a definite sanction of the domination of the husband over the wife. The idea of spiritual union of the man and wife by magic mantras gave place to the idea of transference of the ownership of the girl. Though the Gandharva marriage and the Svayamvara implied the independent choice of the girl, in the Rāksasa and Asura forms girls could be carried away by force or sold like chattels with the sanction of society. Even in cases of forceful abduction, the hero of the occasion would often make a gift of the bride to a friend, which was apparently quite legitimate, and in that case even

the satisfaction of being married to a hero was denied to the girl. With the introduction of these lower types of marriage the wife lost the position and dignity of Grhapatnī, and was not allowed to take part in the religious rituals of the husband ¹. In marriage by capture or purchase the wife is treated as a chattel and the husband is considered to be the master. Baudhāyana² refers to such wives as Dasī and does not allow them to participate in the religious rituals of the husband.

Once a girl is looked upon as a chattel, she is considered capable of being acquired like other property by purchase or by force. But none of these lower forms of marriage were recognised as leading to the dignified position of Grhapatnī for the wife. We find reactions on the part of the exponents of the sacred law to the introduction of these inferior forms of marriage. One school did not recognise these marriages as carrying religious validity and tried to sanctify them by religious ceremonies afterwards. The Vaśiṣṭha Dharmasūtra says that if a girl is abducted by force but is not married with the recitation of sacred texts then she can be regarded as a maiden and can be given away to another man ³.

1. Baud. Dh. I.11.21.2.

2. Baud. Dh. I.11.21.2.

3. Vas. Dh. XVII.73

Position of Women in Indian law

We find in the Dharmasūtras that the duties of the wife are described in detail. A woman is always considered to be dependent. Her father protects her in childhood, her husband protects her in youth, and her sons protect her in old age¹. Women must be guarded particularly against evil inclinations, for, if they are not so guarded, they will bring sorrow on two families, because they are not trustworthy and they easily attach themselves to sensual enjoyment². Even weak husbands should always be careful in guarding the wives³.

Manu says that the husband must always be worshipped, even if he is destitute of virtue, or seeks pleasure elsewhere, or is devoid of good qualities⁴. The wife must be always cheerful, clever in household management, economical in expenditure and careful in cleaning her utensils⁵.

1. Manu. IX.3.

2. " "2-5

3. " " 6

4. " " V.154; Nār. XVIII.22

5. Manu. V.150

The husband receives the authority to dominate his wife by virtue of the betrothal arranged by the father and guardian of the bride¹. So the wife must obey the husband as long as he lives, and after his death she should always respect his memory. Viṣṇu says that when her husband is away from home the wife should not decorate herself with ornaments or take part in amusements, should not live in the houses of strangers, should not stand near the doorway or by the windows of her house, and not act independently in any matter².

According to our texts the main reason for the guarding of the wife is to preserve the purity of the offspring. Women should not be guarded by force, but they are to be employed in the collection and expenditure of their husband's wealth, in keeping everything clean, in fulfilment of religious duties, in preparation of the husband's food, and in looking after the household utensils.

1. Manu - V.152

2. Viṣṇu- XXV.9-11

There are punishments laid down for the wives who do not perform their duties towards their husbands. According to Medhātithi, Govinda and Kulluka¹ the duties of husband and wife are placed in the section on civil and criminal law, because the king can and even is bound to enforce their observance by punishment, if either of the two raises a complaint. Manu says that the duties of man and wife form one of the topics which gave rise to lawsuits². Viṣṇu³ even goes so far as to include the class of women who violate their duties towards their husbands among criminals, to be put to death by the king.

There are also references to very severe punishment for adultery. Men who commit adultery with the wives of others shall be punished by the king in such a way as to cause terror, and afterwards banished. It is believed that the mixture of castes is caused among men by this and therefore it is considered as a great sin⁴. Medhātithi, Govinda and Kullūka say that by mixture of caste the sacrifices cannot be offered properly because duly qualified sacrificers are wanting. If sacrifices are not duly offered there will be no rain and everything will perish.

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1. On Manu IX.1
 2. Manu. VIII.7
 3. Viṣṇu.V.163
 4. Manu. VIII.352

Vaśiṣṭha¹ says that the person who abducts another man's wife may also be slain and will not be considered as a crime. Manu considers the slaying of adulterous women as a minor offence. Not only is adultery considered to be a serious crime by most of the lawgivers² but from the religious point of view it is a mortal sin. Brhaspati suggests the following punishments for the adulterous women : when a woman has been enjoyed against her will, she should be kept in the house well guarded, smeared with ashes, lying on a low couch and receiving bare maintenance only; as an atonement for her sin she is to be caused to perform the Krcchra or Paraka penance in case she had intercourse by a man of her equal caste; if she has been enjoyed by a man of inferior caste, she is abandoned and put to death; but when the woman takes the initiative and excites the man, her nose, lips and ears having been cut off, she is paraded in the streets and plunged into water or is torn to pieces by dogs in a public place³. Vaśiṣṭha⁴ says that the food given by the paramour of a married woman or by a husband who allows a paramour to his wife should not be

1. Vaś. Dh. III.16

2. Manu. IX.235; Baudh.Dh. I.18; Viṣṇu.V.3-5

3. Brhaspati. XXIII. 13-16

4. Vaś.Dh. XIV.6

eaten. Manu ¹ says that even the food given by those who knowingly tolerate a paramour of their wives should not be eaten. All the lawgivers are universally of the opinion that the adulteress and he who eats food given by persons born through adultery are excluded from Śrāddha ². In consequence of this crime are born idiots, dumb, blind, deaf and deformed men, who are all despised by the virtuous. The sinful acts committed with his body a man becomes something inanimate in the next birth³. Therefore penances are always to be performed for the sake of purification⁴.

Viṣṇu⁵ says that such mortal sinners are purified by a horse sacrifice and by visiting all Tirtha. According to Baudhāyana⁶ for this sin one must perform a Kṛcchra and an Atikṛcchra and a Cāndrāyana penances. Violating the Guru's bed is one of the greatest crimes. Manu says that the punishment for

1. Manu. VIII. 352

2. Ap.Dh. II.7.17.21; Gaut.Dh.XV.17; Manu. III.156.

3. Manu. XII.7-8.

4. Manu. XI. 53-54

5. Viṣṇu. XXXV.6

6. Baudh. Dh. II.2.4.12

this crime should be the mark of a female part impressed on the forehead with a hot iron. The Dhammapada¹ mentions the following stages of suffering for the adulterous man : firstly demerit, then an uncomfortable bed, thirdly punishment and last of all hell. In the Cullavagga², adultery is considered to be an Amagandha i.e. what defiles one.

But women are also protected by the law. Manu prescribes specially light punishments for a woman. He says that on women, infants, men of disordered mind, the poor and the sick, serious torture should not be inflicted, but blows from a cane, whip (siphā)³ or rope and the like may be given. Women without guardians are to be protected by the king⁴. The king should protect wives and widows who are faithful to their husbands, when the latter are absent or dead; he should also care for women who are barren, or afflicted with disease, or whose family is extinct⁵. According to the commentators the king's protection is only to be given in cases where the woman's relatives are either dead or unable to provide for her or when they try to oppress her⁶.

1. Dhammapada Ch. XVIII.S.B.E. Vol X pt.1

2. Cullavagga, Amagandhasutta

3. siphā—a whip is explained by Rāgh. as a rod measuring five fingers, or the pendent root of the fig tree according to Nār. and Nand.

4. Manu.VIII.28. 5. Manu.VIII.28. 6. Gov. & Rāgh. & Medh.on Manu.

According to Viṣṇu¹, abandoning one's wife is a crime of the fourth degree, which can be purified by the performance of Cāndrāyana or Paraka sacrifices or by the sacrifices of the cow. Nārada² says that a person who abandons his wife cannot be a witness in the lawcourt. Viṣṇu³ again mentions that the suitor who abandons a faultless girl and the husband who foresakes a blameless wife are to have the same punishment as the thief. So it is evident that the mutual duty of the husband and wife might be the subject of a lawsuit. Though the position of the wife was much lower in society and she was supposed to be dominated by her husband, the wife's rights were also protected by law, and the king himself would interfere when necessary to safeguard them.

Manu on the position of women

As with other topics we find most conflicting opinions in Manu regarding the position of woman in society. We find statements to the effect that women are naturally wicked. They are so passionate that they do not care for beauty or age in the choice of lovers. They are naturally heartless, and disloyal by nature. So they should be always guarded⁴. While discussing

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1. Viṣṇu. XXXVII.60.35
 2. Nārada. I.180
 3. Viṣṇu. V.160-163
 4. Manu. IX.14-17

the duties of students Manu asks the student who has attained his twentieth year of age to avoid all connections with women. He should not even salute his teacher's wife by touching her feet. Women can lead astray not only fools but also learned men, so men shall always protect themselves from them. Manu even goes so far as to prohibit a young man from sitting in a lonely place with his mother, sister or daughter.¹

There is confirmation of these statements in later texts also. In Dakṣa² the following view is expressed. "Women are like the leech; but while the poor leech draws blood only, the woman draws your riches, your property, your flesh, your vitality and your strength. During adolescence, she is in fear of the man, during youth, she demands excessive pleasure, and when her husband becomes old, she does not care a straw for him. In the Rāmāyana³ it is mentioned that 'for women there is no one loved or hated, they

1. Manu. II.215

2. Quoted in Vivādaratnākara p.413

3. Quoted in Vivādaratnākara p.414

betake themselves to all men; just as creepers growing in a thick forest hang themselves on all trees. 'Women are impure on the birth of child. A Snātaka should not eat the food prepared for a woman in child-bed or by a woman whose ten days of impurity have not elapsed¹. A Snātaka should not look at the naked woman, nor should he converse with a menstruating woman.

A man while performing penance should on no account talk to women, sudras and outcastes². Medhātithi however remarks that the penitent is allowed to talk to the female members of his household if occasion arises. Women should not perform any sacrifice or vow, no fast must be performed by women apart from their husbands, and no girl or young woman has the right to offer an Agnihotra³.

But women are highly honoured and praised in some other passages by Manu⁴. The husband is said to have received his wife from the gods and he should not think that he has married her according to his own will. So he should always do what is agreeable

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1. Manu. IV. 212
 2. Manu. XI. 224
 3. Manu. XI. 36
 4. Manu. IX. 95

to the gods, always support her while she is faithful. According to the interpretation of Medhātithi, Kullūka and Rāghava, this implies that a wife must be supported even if she does not love her husband, because she is the gift of the gods Soma, Gandharva and Agni¹. The same idea is also found in Mahābhārata. That man obtains his wife as a gift from the gods is the teaching of the law, he who does not treat her well falsifies the word of men and gods alike². According to Manu the mouth of a woman is always pure³. Manu again says that where women are honoured the gods are pleased, but no sacred rites yield rewards if they are not honoured. The family where the female relations are happy always prospers, but the family where they live in grief wholly perishes. So men should always honour women for their own welfare⁴. The Mahābhārata has similar passages. There we find the statements like : 'Women are like the goddess of wealth - they should be respected by the man desiring his own welfare; when loved woman becomes the veritable goddess of prosperity⁵. Yājñavalkya says that

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1. Medh. Kull. Rāgh. on Manu IX.95
 2. Mahā. Anu. 44.27
 3. Manu. V.130
 4. Manu. III.56-59
 5. Mahā. Anu. 46.15

women should be honoured with ornaments, clothes and food by their husbands, brothers, fathers, parents, relations, mothers-in-law, brothers-in-law and maternal relations¹. The Mahābhārata similarly says that women should be honoured by their fathers, brothers, fathers-in-law and brothers-in-law if they are desirous of their own welfare².

According to Viṣṇu the person who is ready to die for the sake of a woman gets heavenly blessings³. Special privileges were given to the newly married and pregnant women. They were allowed to eat even before the guests⁴.

If we examine all the relevant passages of Manu carefully it becomes evident that all these contradictory statements cannot be the view of single author. As we have already pointed out, the Manusamhitā is the compilation of the works of different authors in different times. If that is true then these contradictions can easily be explained. The passages of Manu, which speak highly of women are in conformity with the Vedic ideology which gives the wife a very high and

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1. Yājñ. I. 82
 2. Mahā-Anu. 46. 5-6
 3. Viṣṇu. XXII. 32
 4. Manu. III. 114

dignified position in society. But at last the idea of the subjugation of woman came to stay and we find evidence of the gradual decline of their status in all the lawbooks of the later period.

Cruelty to women

If we compare Kautilya and Manu we find that the position assigned by Manu to women was not so high as that accorded in Kautilya's laws. According to Kautilya the wife had the right to claim maintenance from her husband, but if she decided to take the protection of anyone of her father-in-law's family or began to live independently, then her husband should not be sued for maintenance¹. Again when women are ill-treated beyond mild abuse or three blows either with a piece of bamboo¹ or with a rope or with the hand, they may bring an action for defamation or assault, but the punishment, presumably in the form of a fine, will be half of the punishment levied for ordinary defamation and criminal hurt. According to Manu the punishment in this case will be same as that of theft, that is, imprisonment, putting in fetters, and various kinds of corporal punishment².

1. Kautilya Arthasāstra III.3. p155 Shama Shastry's translation of venu-dala as "bamboo bark" is quite meaningless.

2. Manu. VIII.299,300

Transgression

According to Kauṭilya¹ if a woman drinks spirtuous liquor or engages in amorous sports she shall be fined three panas, and she shall be fined six panas for going out in the day-time to sports, or to see another woman, or to public spectacles. It seems to be implicitly understood that these provisions refer to acts of the woman without her husband's permission.

According to Manu women shall be fined six Krsnālas in these cases². According to Kauṭilya a woman shall be also fined in certain other cases, such as when she shuts the door against the husband, or if a man and woman make signs to each other with a view to sensual enjoyment. A woman is to be whipped by a caṇḍāla five times on each side of the body, when she is seen holding conversation in suspicious places³.

These fines were perhaps paid from the woman's strīdhana as that was the only property which she had. Or this rule may have applied only to lowclass women who had their own income, as we find in the Viṣṇu Smṛti⁴ that debt contracted by the wife of a herdsman, distiller

1. Kauṭ. III.
3. Kauṭ. III.

2. Manu. IX.84
4. Viṣṇu. VI.37

of spirits, public dancer, washer, or hunter shall be discharged by the husband because he is supported by his wife. We must not overlook the possibility, however, that payment of these fines was incumbent on the husband who by his lack of control might be thought to endanger the varnāsramadharmā laid down in the Arthśāstra.

In the Buddhist texts we find that the position of women is more or less the same as in the Smṛtis. Women held a very dependent position in the household and they were considered to be most unfaithful by nature and so never to be trusted. But there we do not find such strictness in grading the women or in the punishments inflicted on them as is described in the Smṛti literature.

It is said that the passions of woman are insatiate, and she does not but act according to her inborn nature.¹ There are many stories in the Jātakas describing the unfaithful wife. As this lack of faithfulness is considered to be inborn in women we find many instances of tolerance on the part of the husband. Once a courtier of a king intrigued with the queen. When he knew of it the king was in a dilemma, because the queen was very dear to him and the courtier was very useful. The king asked advice from a councillor, describing the courtier as a jackal, himself as a lion and the queen as

a happy lake. The advice of the councillor was : "Out of the mighty river all creatures drink at will. If she is dear, have patience, the river is river still ¹.

In another Jātaka² the following story is told. A king went abroad because of disturbances on the borders of the kingdom. At the request of the queen he used to send messengers to enquire about her health. He sent sixty-four messengers thus, and the queen misconducted herself with all of them. At last, when she attempted to do the same with the royal chaplain, he refused and reported the matter to the king. But the queen was pardoned on the advice of the chaplain, as such conduct was considered to be inborn in women.

It seems that in the royal families where polygamy was very common it was not possible to keep a high moral standard, and the king's harem was especially corrupt and immoral. But the general attitude of the Jātaka is that even among ordinary people women do not find delight in their own houses, and no woman is wholly faithful to one man alone. The Jātakas give many stories to prove this ³. These recall the passage of Manu where he mentions that the women through their natural temper and heartlessness become disloyal towards their husbands, however carefully they may be guarded in the world. ⁴

1. J.III.126 2. J.121 3. J.II.p323; J.Vp940. 4. Manu ^{IX} 14-15

The Dhammapada mentions¹ that bad conduct is the taint of women. In the Vinaya pitaka² ten kinds of women are mentioned namely protected by the mother, protected by the father, protected by the parents, protected by the brother, protected by the sister, protected by the relations, protected by their lineage, protected by Dhamma, and protected by a stick. This passage represents the same idea as that of the Dharmasūtras, which say that the women are never independent and always to be guarded and protected.

We get a description of an ideal wife in the Buddhist literature. She is considered to be equal to her husband in respect of age, temperament and virtue. She should be obedient to her husband³. In the Aṅguttara Nikāya⁴ the good wife is described as she who resembles a mother, a sister, or a slave. This classification is expanded in the Sujātā Jātaka⁵. Where seven kinds of wives are mentioned, of which the following four are praised and attain bliss. The first is the motherly type who is compassionate to the good, cares for husband just like a mother, and guards his wealth. Second is

1. Dhammapada. Ch. XVIII.
3. J. IV. 76
5. J. III. 348-349

2. Vinaya-pitaka V.4.1-2
4. Anguttara IV.92

the sisterly type, who respects her husband in the way a younger sister does, is modest, and is obedient to her husband's will. Next is the type resembling a friend, who is always pleasing to the sight of her husband, well-bred and virtuous, who gives up her life for him. The last is the slave type, who is always calm even when abused, afraid of violence, true hearted, and bending to her husband's will. Of these the slave type is considered to be the best and praised most highly. The three bad types are as follows. The first is the one who is bad hearted and not compassionate. The one who loves others but hates her husband and one who destroys all the wealth of her husband. The second type is the one who always tries to steal something which her husband brings home. The third type is the one who is careless of duty, lazy passionate, greedy, full of wrath and hate and tyrannical to all underlings.

A similar idea is also expressed in the Anguttara Nikāya¹ where are described the various classes of persons that a wife may resemble. If she resembles a murderess, a thief or a master, she is said to be bad and to go to hell. The mutual duties of

1. Anguttara Nikāya J. V. p940

husband and wife are described in the Digha Nikāya¹. The wife should show her affection for her husband in the following ways: by doing her duties thoroughly, by good treatment of the household, by not committing adultery, by taking care of what he earns, and by skill and zeal in all she has to do. The husband also has corresponding duties to his wife: he should show her respect and compliance, not commit adultery, leave her in charge of the home and supply her with finery.

We find that, as well as these stories illustrating the unfaithful character of women, there are various stories depicting women of exemplary character, full of wisdom and chastity², for instance that of Sambulā who followed her leprosy-stricken husband to the forest, served him with devotion, remained faithful to him, though tempted by a demon, and finally by her virtue and purity saved her husband from the disease³.

We get the same picture of the position of women from the Jaina texts. They warn the monks against women. Women are said to be very clever and always to

1. D.N. III.190

2. Sambulā- J. V.p89. Udaya. J.IV. J.458

3. J. V. 92.

approach the monks very meekly and politely in the beginning. But when they have control over them they make them do whatever they like¹. A monk is advised not to have any contact with his daughter or daughter-in-law, with nurses or female slaves, or with grown-up girls². This is similar to the passage of Manu where he says that the Brahmācārin should not sit in a lonely place with even his mother, sister or daughter, for the senses are powerful and master even a learned man.

A section of the Sutrakṛtāṅga describes the nature of women in detail. Here the women are depicted as treating their husbands as if they were slaves and sending them on all sorts of errands. They are looked on by their wives as equals of slaves, animals, servants and beast of burden³.

We can also get some idea of the position of women from the Greek accounts. It is quite clear from that polygamy prevailed at that time. Strabo⁴ basing his statement on Megasthenes, says that Indians used to marry many wives. Some of them they married to find

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1. Sutrakṛtāṅga I.4.7
 2. " I.4.13
 3. " I.4. ch. II
 4. Strabo XV, 1, 54, 57

in them obedient attendants, and others for pleasure and to fill their houses with children. The wives used to prostitute themselves unless their chastity was enforced by compulsion. We can assume from this statement that the position of women was very low in Mauryan times, and wives were considered as objects of pleasure and instrument for bearing children. The position of some wives was that of slaves. It can be assumed that they were not very honoured and were considered to be so naturally unfaithful that their chastity could only be preserved by force. The same idea is also expressed elsewhere, where it is said that the institution of Sati was introduced to suppress the practice of administering poison to the husband.

CONCLUSION

The main phases in the development of the institution of marriage from the earliest times to A.D.500 may now be roughly indicated. In the early Vedic period the rituals were very simple and consisted of the bridegroom's taking the hand of the bride (pānigrahana)¹, which may be considered a symbol of a solemn contract, and his placing her in a chariot and carrying her away (vahatu)². Offerings were made to Agni, the sacred fire³, gods were invoked to give their blessings on the newly married couple to give them health, wealth and offspring. Mantras were uttered to drive away the evil spirits from every path of their life. Gradually in course of time rituals became more complicated. A study of the rituals as prescribed by the Grhyasūtras shows that many indigenous rites had already been absorbed. The compulsion of circumstances obliged the Aryans to admit and assimilate the indigenous customs and hence also associated cultures.

1. See above p 6

2. " " p 15-16

This power of assimilation is an unique characteristic of Hindu civilization, which has from time to time absorbed and made a part and parcel of itself various manners, customs and religious practices without losing its own identity. The impact of other civilizations and cultures, from both inside and outside India, has not destroyed it, but revitalized it, giving it a wider and broader outlook with immense possibilities of growth.

The Marriage mantras laid down the principles for the sort of life the married couple were to lead, in the future, defined their attitude towards each other and towards their relatives and also allocated their socio-religious duties. It was thus made clear to the bridal pair that the life of a householder was not for his own pleasures only, but that he was a member of the large family and a larger society which he was enjoined to serve. That their life together was to be of a high moral order was also indicated in the mantras.

In the early Vedic period it would appear that only one form of marriage was normally followed - an early type of the Brāhma-vivāha. Gradually in the

Dharmasūtra period we find the eight forms of marriage becoming well established, though there is the widest diversity of opinion among the lawgivers about their acceptability¹. This again shows the Hindu genius of assimilation and adaptability to circumstances, which accepted hard facts and would rather bring newer acquisitions within its fold than reject them by being too strict. Society was expanding, and expansion means fusion, assimilation and further acquisition. In the early period Brāhma was the only recognised form of marriage among the Aryans. But gradually others were accepted by them as they came more and more into contact with the indigenous peoples. As this was inevitable, the lawgivers also had to make some provisions for it.

We do not find any reference to child marriage in the early vedic period; but in the later period² it became quite popular. In the Smrtis³ we find further lowering of the age of marriage. The later the books are, the earlier do they prescribe that the girl should be married. Various causes were

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1. See above p 163-166
 2. " " p 196-199
 3. " " p 199ff.

responsible for this lowering of the age of marriage. It was in part the result of the general deterioration of the position of women. It may also have been a reaction on the part of the high caste Aryans to non-Aryan sexual customs of which they disapproved.

The rules of intermarriage with different varnas were not very much discussed in the early vedic period. Later, there were various conflicting opinions among lawgivers on this matter¹. The necessity of equality of birth is already mentioned in the Grhya-sūtras and in the period of the Dharmasūtras and Smrtis it became more strict. In the Dharmasūtras though we find that intermarriage was allowed, it was not much approved of and the wives of lower caste could not attain the same position as the wife of equal caste; moreover a high caste man's cohabiting with a śūdra female was considered to be a serious crime. But in spite of disapproval these intercaste marriages had to be accepted in the society. Sons begotten by the Aryans on women of the lower caste were considered to be mixed castes and different occupations were assigned to them according to their

1. See above p 212 ff.

status. The dwellings of the mixed castes were also fixed¹. In all respect they were never to be included in the Aryan community. But despite these strict rules we find that a man of lower caste could attain the status of an Aryan by his virtuous deeds.

Satī was evidently a defunct custom² in the Rg-Vedic times and was only represented by a symbolic ritual. In the sūtra period³ widows were allowed to marry. The later Dharmasūtras prescribe ascetic practices for them only for a limited period. Manu and Yājñavalkya prescribe life-long asceticism. But later still Viṣṇu and Brhaspati⁴ definitely approve of Sati and hold this as an ideal for women. Satī was evidently of foreign origin. The Indo-European custom of widow-burning was already extinct when the Aryans entered India. It must have been reintroduced into society with the general lowering of the position of women.

As regards the institution of niyoga we do not find any mention of it in the Vedas or Grhyasūtras.

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1. See above p 226
 2. " " p 232-236
 3. " " p 236
 4. " " p 237-38

It appears for the first time in Dharmasūtras. In the later Smṛtis¹ we find both approval and disapproval of it, which shows that conflicting opinions prevailed in society at that time. All these facts show that the custom must have been borrowed from outside, perhaps from the people in contact with the semitic races. In the Mahābhārata we find frequent references to the practice of niyoga but even there we find that it was not much approved and therefore needed justification.

The general ideology of Vedic marriage did not leave any scope for divorce. The same doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage is also found in the Dharmasūtras and Smṛtis². But in the Smṛtis there are certain conditions in which supersession is allowed³. Unlike the Smṛtis the Arthasāstra⁴ recognises divorce very clearly, though it does not permit divorce for the first four forms of marriage, which are called 'dharma-vivāha'. The ideal of marriage according to the

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1. See above p 247-49
 2. " " p 252-55
 3. " " p 255-58
 4. " " p 258-59.

Smrtis and the Arthasāstra is basically different. While Dharmasūtras and Smrtis considered marriage as a sacrament and hence indissoluble, the Arthasāstra regarded it as a contract.

The position of women underwent a great deterioration during this process of integration. In the early Vedic age women used to accompany their husbands in their religious duties. In public life also women took an important part. The position of women gradually became lower, probably owing to the introduction of non-Aryan brides into Aryan society. The non-Aryan girls naturally did not have the Vedic teaching and were thus excluded from the religious performances.

With the introduction of different forms of marriage the wives who were married according to the lower forms could not rise to the status of dignity of the Grhapatnī. In marriage by capture or purchase the wife was treated as a chattel and the husband was considered to be her master. In the Dharmasūtra, domination of the man over the wife is definitely prescribed. The idea of the spiritual union of man and wife

gave place to the idea of transference of ownership of the girl. In the work of Br̥haspati we even find the wife referred to by the word dasi. With the lowering of the position of women they came to be considered unfaithful by nature.

With the vast and hurried changes of modern times, old structures are tumbling on all sides and a change in the ideals and forms of Hindu marriage and its rituals is already taking place. The basic ideal of Hindu marriage-its sacramental character as an indissoluble spiritual union- is being questioned in the present day context of rationalism and changed environment and atmosphere. In the past those who wanted to marry outside the prohibited sphere left the folds of the Hindu society and religion, and contracted marriages by other forms, not Hindu. But today Hindu marriage itself has been changed by legislation and still faces rationalism and reorganisation. With the gradual realisation of this goal, it may be presupposed that the status of women will be raised and the rites and rituals will be much more simplified. Already many rites are being forgotten and dropped.

Peeping into the future, it may not be very

wrong to predict, that these hoary rites and rituals which owe their origin to the Vedas, which have stood the test of ages, and which have been multiplied a hundredfold cultures are faced with the threat of gradual lapse. But the study of rituals will remain fascinating nonetheless, as long as the institution of human marriage survives.

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THE ORDER OF THE MARRIAGE

RITUAL ACCORDING TO SŪTRAS

ŚANKEṬYANA

1. Fire kindled by attrition
2. Selection of auspicious day
3. Selection of the bride
4. Negotiation
5. Sacrifice made by the bridegroom
6. Ājya and Mahāvyaṅṛti
7. Dance of women
8. Clothing
9. Arghya at the reception of the bridegroom
10. Mahāvyaṅṛti
11. Paṅḍigrahaṇa
12. Stepping on the stone
13. Walking round the fire
14. Lājahoma
15. Saptapadi
16. Bath of the bride
17. Journey to the husband's home
18. Sitting on the bull's hide
19. Placing a boy in the bride's lap
20. Looking at the pole-star
21. Drinking of curd etc. together
22. Cohabitation

TSVĀTYANA

1. Selection of auspicious day
2. Ājya and Mahāvyaṅṛti
3. Selection of the bride
4. Stepping on the stone
5. Paṅḍigrahaṇa
6. Walking round the fire
7. Lājahoma
8. Seven steps
9. Breaking the journey at the house of a Brāhmaṇa
10. Looking at the pole-star
11. Journey of the bride
12. Reception of the bride at her husband's home
13. Sitting on the bull's hide
14. Cohabitation

GOBHILA

1. Selection of an auspicious day
2. Selection of the bride
3. Ritual bath
4. Clothing
5. Ājya and Mahāvyaṅṛti sacrifices
6. Stepping on the stone
7. Lājahoma
8. Walking round the fire
9. Saptapadi
10. Paṅḍigrahaṇa
11. Journey of the bride
12. Breaking the journey at the house of a Brāhmaṇa
13. Sitting on the red bull's hide
14. Looking at the pole-star
15. Ājya oblation
16. Eating together
17. Mounting on the chariot
18. Sitting on the bull's hide again
19. Placing a boy in the bride's lap
20. Ājya oblation
21. Cohabitation

PĀRSKARA

1. Kindling the fire by attrition
2. Selection of auspicious day
3. Anointing by the bride's father
4. Kanyādāna
5. Looking at each other
6. Walking round the fire
7. Mahāvyaṅṛti and Ājya sacrifices
8. Lājahoma
9. Stepping on the stone
10. Sitting on the bull's hide
11. Looking at the pole-star
12. Journey to the husband's home
13. Cohabitation

ĀPASTAMBA

1. Selection of an auspicious day
2. Negotiation
3. Selection of the bride
4. Weeping of the bride
5. Ritual bath
6. Paṅḍigrahaṇa
7. Saptapadi
8. Walking round the fire
9. Vivāhahoma
10. Stepping on the stone
11. Lājahoma
12. Walking round the fire
13. Journey of the bride to her husband's home
14. Crossing the threshold
15. Sitting on the red bull's hide
16. Placing a boy in her lap
17. Looking at the pole-star and Arundhati
18. Cohabitation

KHĀDIRA

1. Kindling fire by attrition
2. Ritual bath
3. Clothing
4. Ājya and Mahāvyaṅṛti sacrifices
5. Stepping on the stone
6. Walking round the fire
7. Lājahoma
8. Saptapadi
9. Paṅḍigrahaṇa
10. Breaking the journey to a Brāhmaṇa's house
11. Looking at the pole-star
12. Arghya ceremony
13. Sacrifice after three nights and washing the bride
14. Cohabitation

MĀNVA

1. Selection of an auspicious day
2. Selection of the bride
3. Prādāna
4. Arghya reception of the bridegroom
5. Alamkaraṇa
6. Kindling of fire
7. Bathing and clothing
8. Homa
9. Looking at each other
10. Paṅḍigrahaṇa
11. Āśmavohana
12. Lājahoma
13. Saptapadi
14. Prayana (Departure of the bride to the bridegroom's house)
15. Placing a brahmachārin in the lap of the bride
16. Cohabitation

HIRANYAKESIN

1. Selection of the bride
2. Selection of an auspicious day
3. Mahāvyaṅṛti homa
4. VāvahaKoma
5. Treading on the stone
6. Paṅḍigrahaṇa
7. Walking round the fire
8. Lājahoma
9. Saptapadi
10. Journey of the bride
11. Crossing the threshold
12. Sitting on the red bull's hide
13. Looking at the pole-star and Arundhati
14. Sacrifices with mess of cooked food
15. Cohabitation