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(Marathu)
BRÄHMÄN BELIEFS AND PRACTICES IN MAHÄRÄSTRÄ

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Abstract of Thesis

The thesis falls into four parts.

I. The Mahāraśtra Brāhmans. Firstly, their subdivision and in what parts of Mahāraśtra they are to be found; and secondly, their theological background — their Vedic Sākhās and Carāṇas, and the mass of Vedic and Saṃskṛta literature which the various Carāṇas have in their keeping.

2. The ritual practice of the orthodox Brāhman of Mahāraśtra. The Snāna-Sandhyā, the Pañcamahāyajña, the ritual of the morning meal. A chapter on the Hindu Calendar, and its bearing on ritual and observances. The Karma toward gods and toward ancestors, and the sixteen bodily Saṃskāras, the chief of which are the Sacred Thread Ceremony, and the Rite of Marriage, involving the horoscope calculations, and the rites and propitiations incidental to the wedding ceremony, and the carrying of the Grhyāgni (the domestic fire) from the wedding altar to the house of the bridegroom. Then a description of the Brāhman home, and the Brāhman woman as bride, wife, and mother. The last (sixteenth) Saṃskāra, the obsequial rite, ends this section.

3. The major deities — the Vedic gods, then the Purānic Triad, and Visnu's incarnations, and gods other than the
Triad. Vaiśnava and Śaiva Holy places in Mahārāṣṭra. Then a description of the Attendant celestial powers, beneficent, and demon, in air, earth, and the nether regions.

4. Modern Mahārāṣṭra. The decline in ritual practice, curtailment of the main rites to suit the speed of modern life, the critical outlook toward antiquity, the decline in Sāmīskṛta studies and the recommendations of the Sāmīskṛta Commission, the Tenancy Act, and effect on country Brāhmaṇa landowners, the revival of Vedic sacrifice for national motives, the removal of untouchability, and the new aim of cultivating the 'inner values and social service'.
THE STATE OF MAHĀRĀṢṬRA
BRAHMAN BELIEF AND PRACTICE IN MAHARASTRA
This thesis, beginning with the orthodox days of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, ends with the modern features of the new Mahārāṣṭra - the ritual she has dropped, the ritual she has telescoped and squeezed to a minimum in the rush and complexity of the modern world which has inundated her like a flood. Whereas the West (Europe) came slowly, through industrial revolution, through the processes of scientific development, into the new knowledge, new modes of travel and communication, of revolutionary turns in the world of thought, India has had it all handed over to her in one. Her transit from ancient to modern has been almost too rapid.

Actually, so far, the change has not permeated Indian life. As before in India's history, other civilisations have come, and have merely overlaid the ancient, so it is with India today. The new things are yet merely overlaid like a veneer on the old life of India.

As for the majority of the Brāhmans of Mahārāṣṭra, whose ritual and beliefs are the subject of this thesis, their mental attitude is still in the ancient mold. To them, the Visvedevas are very real - and the Mātrikās and the Maṇḍapa devatās - all these celestial beings that
attend and bless the rites. So indeed are all the major
gods, both Vedic and post-vedic; and the demons of air,
earth and the nether world. Yet in their lives, the ancier
thinking and their living in India's age of industrial
development and economic change, and educational expansion
on Western lines, go in harmony together.

Much of the material in this thesis is not available in
English. From the numberless rules and directions given
in Oriental fashion in the Dharmasastra, the Brahmān
Guide Book of ritual, I have picked out and presented that
which will give Western students a detailed, all-round
impression of the thoughts and ritual ways of the Brahmans
of Maharāstra.

A great deal of what is written is the result of
personal observation and of close relations with Brahmān
homes and Brahmān life generally over twenty years, eleven
of which were spent in Nasik, the Maharāstra Brahmān strong-
hold, in the old orthodox days before 1940; and a further
five years, from 1956 to the present time, living in the
new Maharāstra, with its interesting developments taking
place on all sides. The help given in my research by so
many important Brahmans is gratefully acknowledged in the
following pages.

The Maharāstra Brahmans are not going to be content to
lose Sanskṛta culture or Hindu belief, and are busy in plans for maintaining these ancient values, parallel with the new way of life which these modern times have brought to them.
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Corrigenda:

Page 167. After line 10. insert:

Lunar Days. 2nd., 10th., 6th., 13th., 12th., 5th., and 3rd.

Solar Days. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.

Lunar Asterisms. Puṣya, Punarvasū, Mṛga, the three Uttarās, Hasta, Citrā, Āśvini, Sravana, Revati, Dhanisthā.
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THE DISTRICTS OF MAHARĀSTRA
Chapter One

THE MAHĀRĀṢṬRA BRAHMANS

The Brāhmans, India's priestly class, are divided into two main groups. Those to the North of the Vindhyā Range are called Gauḍa Brāhmans, after the name of their chief division, the Gauḍa Brāhmans of Bengāl, while those to the South of the Vindhyās bear the name Drāvida, after their main division, the Dravidian Brāhmans of the Tamil-speaking country.

The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans are to be found in the Southern group. The name Drāvida, however, is applied to them merely in its widest sense, as the group's name given to the five great Brāhmanical tribes of the Southern half of India, in contradiction to the Gauḍas of the North.

The five tribes of the Drāvidian group are, beginning with the Southernmost, the Drāvidas, the Teliṅgas or Andhrās, the Karnāṭakas, the Mahārāṣṭras, and the Gūrgaras.

The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans are the Brāhman community of the country known as Mahārāṣṭra, which occupies the centre coastal portion of Western India, and extends far inward to include Nagpur. Its capital is Bombay, and its total population is approximately forty million, amongst whom the Brāhmans are a small minority, though of great religious leadership.
Since the abolition of caste distinction under the Constitution of India, the Census does not give population figures on the basis of caste. The last Census giving the figures by castes was the Census of 1941.

For the Brāhman population of Mahārāṣṭra, the publication Mahārāṣṭra Parichāya, in its most recent issue 1954, gives the Brahmāṇā in all their sub-divisions as having a total population of 306,196. This figure, however, does not include the additional population of those Brahmans who came into the State of Mahārāṣṭra with the alteration of Mahārāṣṭra's boundaries on a linguistic basis on May 1st, 1961, when the boundaries were extended to take in all the Marāṭhi-speaking areas, while some non-Marāṭhi areas were given over by Mahārāṣṭra to other states.

The Divisions of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans

The Mahārāṣṭra Parichāya records fourteen sub-divisions of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, of whom the most numerous are the Deśasthas, the Cittapāvanas, the Sarasvatas, and the Karhādes. The remaining divisions are small. They are the Devarūkhas, the Golakas or Govardhanas, the Tiragūlas or Trigarthas, the Jávāḷas or Khotas, the Palsīkaras, the Kiravantas or Kramavantas, the Kāstas, the

I. Cf. Thesis Appendices IX and X.
Sāmavedia, the Savāses or Sahavāsīs, the Kamvas, the Muneśtas.

For these last three, no figures are entered in the Maharāṣṭra paricaya. So it can be supposed that their numbers are few or else unobtainable.

Such surnames as are current among the Maharāṣṭra Brāhmans, e.g. Purohita, Vaiśampāyana, Śāstri, Pāṭhaka, Śrotṛi and others serve to show that the Brāhmans of Maharāṣṭra have preserved as close a connection as any of the Brāhmanical tribes with their early priestly traditions.

It does not, however, follow from this that they are of pure Āryan descent. It would appear that purity of Āryan descent can scarcely be claimed by any Brāhmanic tribe of the present day. According to the Laws of Manu, the union of a Brāhman with a woman of a lower caste was not considered a bar to the ultimate re-admission of the descendants of such a union into Brāhman rank. In the case of a Brāhman's marriage with a Ksatriya, or a Vaiśya, or even a Śūdra woman, the descendants attained Brāhman status after three, five, or seven generations, respectively.2

The addition of foreign blood, also, to the Hindu castes has been inevitable during the invasions which have taken place in the course of India's history, though this contact is likely to

1. i.e. of a non-Āryan caste. The Ksatriyas (warrior class) and Vaiśyas (trading and agricultural class) are, after the Brāhmans, the second and third of the three twice-born castes - the castes entitled to wear the sacred, or sacrificial, thread. The Śūdras, non-Āryans, held the place of the fourth caste.

have affected the Brāhmans to a much less degree than other castes. The Brāhmans themselves claim that their caste alone remains, while the others have been lost or degraded.1

Amongst the Maharāstra Brāhman sub-divisions, the Desāsthas appear to be the most typically Brāhman. They are described as "the earliest Brāhman settlers who migrated to the South of the Vindhyaś." 2 None of the other sub-divisions seem to have substantial claim to Brāhman origin.3 The Cittapāvanas, the Karhādes, and the Javajas are definitely believed to have been foreigners originally, though now strict Brāhmans; while the remaining sub-divisions either have records in their history of a mixed origin, or they are followers of non-Brāhmanic occupation.

A brief description of each of the sub-divisions may be given here - beginning with the coastal Brāhmans of the Koṅkaṇa.

The Cittapāvanas

The legend current concerning the Cittapāvana Brāhmans is that, when the Desāstha Brāhmans (i.e. the Brāhmans of the Desa ⁴) refused Brāhman rites to the god Parasurāma⁵ after he had defiled himself by his great slaughter of the Ksatriyas, Parasurāma took the dead bodies of fourteen ship-wrecked foreigners, which had been washed up from the sea on the Western coast, and, having first purified them by burning them on a

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3. Desa, the land, the country, i.e. the upland country above the Western Ghats, excluding the Koṅkaṇa or coastal strip.
4. Except perhaps the Sahavāsas (mentioned later).
A s a reward to the new Brāhmans, parāśurāma is said to have caused the ocean to recede for a certain number of miles, thus providing the coastal strip of land now known as the Koṅkana, on which the Cittapāvana Brāhmans, the supposed descendants of the fourteen Brāhman priests, now live. It has been suggested that their name Cittapāvana signifies ‘pure from the fire’.

The Cittapāvana Brāhmans themselves claim to have been originally of the Deśastha Brāhmans. All the sub-divisions of the Mahārāstra Brāhmans appear to make this claim. The features of the Cittapāvanas, however, do not bear any racial resemblance to the Deśasthas. They have, in numerous instances, grey eyes, and their fair skins betoken a possible foreign origin. Further, the Deśasthas hold them as inferior, because of another legend to the affect that, when the Cittapāvanas later incurred parāśurāma’s anger, he pronounced a curse of degradation upon them, which caused them to marry Sudra women.

They are therefore regarded, in the first instance, as

1. parāśurāma is called Koṅkaṇasūta, son of a Koṅkana, a term for a woman of the Koṅkana.
3. Cittā, a pyre; and Pāvana, pure. The name might, however, have the meaning of ‘clear-minded’, from Citta, the mind.
foreigners, and, secondly, as regraded. Desāstha Brahmans have no custom of dining with Cittapāvanas. "It is said that, when Bājirao, the last Pesava, was at Nasik, Mahārāstra's most holy Kṣetra, he was not allowed to go down to the water of the Godāvarī by the same flight of steps as the Desāstha Brāhmaṇ priests."  

The Cittapāvanas are often called Koṅkanastha Brahmans, as they adopted this name, when the Pesavās were in power in Mahārāstra, with Poona as their capital.

The Karhāḍes

A legend concerning the Karhāḍe Brahmans is that they were descended from the bones of an ass. This may be merely a play on their name, Karhāḍe, which bears a slight resemblance to the Marāthī words Kharā, an ass, and Hāda, a bone. The Karhāḍe Brahmans belong to Karhāḍa in Sātārā District, at the junction of the sacred river Kṛṣṇa with the Koinā. The town of Karhāḍa derives its name from Karahāṭa, the family seat of a Śaka leader from the North, whose exploits in the second centur led him as far South as Karhāḍa. The Karhāḍe Brahmans may therefore be of Northern origin and of Śaka strain.

1. The Pesavās were Cittapāvana Brāhman ministers at the court of the Marāthā rulers, up to 1750 A.D., and after that were themselves the rulers of Mahārāstra on behalf of the Marāthā king imprisoned in Sātārā Fort. Later they ruled Mahārāstra till 1803, when the last Pesava, Bājirao II, resigned his independence to Sir Arthur Wellesley. Cf. History of the Marathās. Kincaid.
non-Brahmanic origin appears very evident from the fact that, until the middle of the eighteenth century, the Karhādes offered human sacrifices to their household goddesses. This practice was severely repressed by the third Peśavā, Bālājī Bājīrāo, 1740–1761, and the custom is now extinct. Yet individual Brahmans appear to think that it still continues secretly. This rumour, in all probability without foundation, shows the attitude of the Desāstha Brahmans toward a people who, although calling themselves Brāhmans, were obviously, till two centuries ago, of such non-Brāhman habits.

The Jāvalas

The Jāvalas, or Khotas, who inhabit the district of Ratnagiri, are said to be the descendants of a ship-wrecked crew, who landed at Javāja Khera on the Ratnagiri coast. Enthoven gives the Konkani word 'Javāja', meaning 'storm' as a possible, but unlikely origin of the name. It is an interesting fact that the Jāvalas became recognised as Brāhmans in 1767, under the rule of the Peśavas, when Parasurāmachārvatavaḍhana, a relation of the ruling Peśavā, established them in the rank of Brāhman in return for services.

This late admission into the Brāhmanical tribes naturally accounts for the fact that the Jāvalas are not accepted on a basis of social equality by other Brāhmans, between whom and

them there is no interdining, chiefly for the above reason, and also because the Jávalas eat fish. ¹ In their social customs the Jávalas follow the Cittapāvanas.

The above three divisions of the Maharāstra Brāhmans are regarded as having a definitely foreign origin.

The Devarūkhas²

The Devarūkha Brāhmans are cultivators. This occupation is forbidden to Brāhmans in the Laws of Manu.³ The Devarūkhas, who appear to take their name from the town of Devarūkha in Saṅgam-esvara Talukā, Ratnagirī District, and who are found chiefly in Ratnagirī and Kolābā (Greater Bombay), claim to have been originally Desāsthā Brāhmans. However, they have a low position among the Maharāstra Brāhmans. The Desāsthas, Cittapāvanas, and Karhādes regard them as degraded, and have no interdining. Other Brāhman sub-divisions consider that dining with them brings ill luck.

The Golakas, or Govardhans

The word 'golaka' or 'golā' means a widow's (illigimate) son. This name may have been applied to the above sub-division because of their practice of widow re-marriage - which was possibly the reason for their expulsion from both the Deccan and from Gujarat. They are said to have belonged to Govardhan in Mathura, or to Govardhan near Nasik. They are also called by

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¹ Enthoven Vol. I. under Brāhmans.
² Enthoven Vol. I., under Brāhmans.
³ Manu I. 84. (S.B.E., Vol. XXV, p. 421. 'The wood implement with iron points injures the earth and the beings living in the earth.')
the name Gomukha (Mouth of the cow). They follow Desastha Brahmans, but other Brahmans will not take food or water from their hands. The Golakhas are inhabitants of Parbhani, Bhira, and Usmanabad Districts in Maharashtra. (Previously these districts were in the old Nizam's Dominions.)

The Tiragulas, or Trigarthas

The name of this sub-division, which is written, variously, Tiragula, Trigula, Trigarta, and Trigartha, may be a corruption of the word Trikula (Three Tribes), and used to denote origin from three Kulas or families. Some consider this tribe to be the descendants of three wives of one Brahman - the wives being of Brahman, Ksatriya, and Vaisya castes respectively. Another story is current that they are the descendants of illegitimate children of certain Brahman wives and widows, who were sent to Pandharpur during the time of the Pesavas.

The Tiragulas follow the occupation of betel growing, which in addition to the legends current concerning them, puts them on an inferior level, though, in religion and customs, they follow the Desastha Brahmans, and claim to have been originally Desasthas.

2. The Tiragulas are found also in Andhra State (the old name being the Nizam's Dominions) in the Marathavada, in Bidara, Gulbarga, and neighbouring districts. Cf. Castes and Tribes of H. E. The Nizam's Dominions. By Ul Hassan. Under Marathã Brahmans.
The Palsikaras

The Palsikaras, or the Palasis, are believed to have sprung from certain family priests, who came with Bimba in 1297 A.D., from Munji Paitham on the river Godāvarī, and to have first lived in Gujarat, before making their present home in Thānā.1 Their claims to Brāhmahood have only in recent times, however, been acknowledged by the Saṅkarācārya having religious jurisdiction in Western India.2

Though the Palsikaras claim to belong to the Yajurveda,3 the Desastha Brāhmans of the Yajurveda refuse to acknowledge them. The Cittapāvanas also refuse to acknowledge them. However, in some places, they are allowed to officiate in the priestly office with other Brāhmans.

The Kiravantas, or Kramavantas.

The Kiravantas, who inhabit the districts of Ratnagīrī, and Kolābā (Greater Bombay District), and the district of Savantvādī in South Ratnagīrī, are betel growers. Their degraded social status, due partly to this, is due further to the fact that they follow the occupation of conducting funeral ceremonies. Their name Kiravanta may be a corruption of Kriyavanta, from Kriya, a Rite, and Preta-kriya, a Funeral rite. Their alternative name Kramavanta may be a corruption of Karmavanta. Karma

2. Saṅkarācārya. Cf. This thesis Appendix VIII.
has the same meaning as Kṣīya. The Kīravanta Brāhmans of Kolāba appear to be not degraded. They intermarry with Desāstha, and in some cases with Cittapāvana Brāhmans.

The Kāstas

The Kāsta, or Kāstha, Brāhmans are found, in Mahārāstra, only in isolated families in the districts of Poona, Sātārā, and Naṣik. In Naṣik they are called Kāyasthas. They are cultivators and traders. Desāstha and other Brāhmans have no connection with them socially.

The Sāmavedis

The Sāmavedi Brāhmans, who are chiefly in Thāna District, are growers of crops, and are, for that reason, regarded by the Desāsthas as inferior. Their numbers are extremely small.

The Savāsēs

The Savāsē Brāhmans claim to be descended from those who accompanied Rāma (the seventh incarnation of Viṣṇu) in his exile, part of which is believed to have been spent in Mahārāstra. This claim, however, may rest merely on the similarity of their name with the word Sahavāsī (companion), of which word it may possibly be a corruption. If the claim had strong foundation, it would be expected that the Savāsē Brāhmans would be numerous in Pañjāvati, the sacred part of Naṣik, where Rāma and Sītā are believed to have

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1. They are also found, in very few numbers, in Andhrā State (the old Nizam's Dominions), and especially in the districts of Bhira and Parbhani, which have recently been taken into the State of Mahārāstra. They follow Desāstha customs. Cf. Ul Hassan on Mahārāstra Brāhmans. Castes and Tribes in Nizam's Dominions.
dwelt, and where Rama's chief temple in Maharastra is situated. But the home of the Savāsēs is in the South of Mahārāṣṭra in the districts of Kolhāpur and Sāngli, and in Bhārwar, Ratnagiri District.

In the face of adverse reports that they were Brāhmans who had lost caste, the Savāsēs have succeeded in establishing their claim to be recognised as Deśastha Brāhmans. Enthoven writes,¹ "Dining with other Deśasthas, in the same row, appears to have been allowed in the Raghunendra, Upadi, and other Mathas".

The Sārasvatas

The Sārasvata Brāhmans are numerically the third largest² Brāhman community of Mahārāṣṭra, the majority of whom are to be found in the South part of Ratnagiri, in Belgaum and Kārwār, and also large numbers in Goā. They are orthodox Brāhmans, and equal in social standing with the Deśasthas.

The Deśasthas

The Deśastha Brāhmans are, as has been said already, the recognised Brāhmans of the land. They are a body possessed of great solidarity and rigidity of custom, and are the largest, and most influential, Brāhman community in Mahārāṣṭra. They are spread throughout the Deccan and Karnāṭaka. Non-Brāhman influences have undoubtedly affected them. In feature and complexion they exhibit great variety and present no type, as in the case of classes of Northern Brāhmans, or Brāhman tribes in the further

South.

The great mass of Brähman tradition, however, which is their heritage, and in the practice of which they are the leading community in Mahārāstra, proclaims them to be, undoubtedly, Brāhmins of long descent. Their name, Desāstha, signifies that they belong to the Desā (country), and their language, the highest form of Marāthī is known as Desī Marāthī. The purest Desī Marāthī is spoken in the city of Poona, and in the ancient town of Nāsik on the Godāvari. These two places are, along with Bombay, the chief authentic centres of Mahārāstra Brāhman culture.

The influence exercised on Hindu society in Mahārāstra by the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans is similar to that which all Brāhmans exercise upon Hindu society everywhere. They maintain the position given to them originally in the Puruṣa Sūkta of the Rgveda, as the highest of the four Vārnas, or castes. Only a

I. "The language of the Desā is spoken by the cultivated classes of all Marāthā territory, and represents Marāthī in the rest of India - in Bijāpur, Tanjore, Tamil lands and at the courts of the ruling princes of Baroda and Indore." (La Langue Marathé. By J. Bloch. Preface, p. 35.) written in the days of princes. "The differing forms distinguishable in modern Marāthī are, the Marāthī of the Deccan or Desā, the Marāthī of Berar and Madhya Pradeśa, and the Marāthī of central and North-ern Konkana." Linguistic Survey of India. Vol. VII. p.1 under Dialects. (Cf. also the frontispiece map of this volume, which shows the distribution of dialects.)

2. Rgveda X.90.12. (Quoted in Thesis Appendix III-).
small percentage of them, however, in these modern days, follow the profession of an officiating priest. Great numbers are pleaders, government servants, writers, clerks, land-owners, and traders in certain commodities, as allowed by the Laws of Manu. They are among the foremost thinkers and leaders in the New India.

Those who act as priests officiate at the ceremonies of their own, and of the other two twice-born castes (Ksatriya and Vaiśya). There appears to be a movement, however, amongst some of the non-Brāhmans of the present day toward appointing priests of their own caste to officiate instead of Brāhmans. In the former State of Kolhāpur, the late Mahārāja had a priest of Marāṭhā caste; i.e. Ksatriya. The Sonāras or Goldsmiths (of Vaiśya caste) are making a similar movement, and other castes are following. Such appointed non-Brāhmans receive instruction in ritual procedure, and perform the rites for their own caste.

Another feature to be observed in modern India is the growing tendency amongst the Brāhmans themselves to minimise ritual, and to stress what they call the ‘inner virtues’.

I. Manu X.85-94 (S. B. E. Vol. XXV. PP 421, 422.)
2. In the Southern Marāṭhā Country Brāhmans sometimes officiate for Mahārās (i.e. Sūdras) Tribes and Castes. Enthoven Vol. II, p. 441. Also Village Brāhmans are sometimes priests to Māṅgas who are lower than Sūdras (Tribes and Castes. Vol. II, p. 440.) The Sūdra castes usually, however, have their own priests.
3. Enthoven (Tribes and Castes. Vol II, p.255) gives the example of the Mahādeva Kolīs, who are fishermen.
Chapter Two

THE BRAHMANIC SĀKHĀS IN MAHĀRĀSTRA

A description of Brahman belief and practice in Mahārāstra must necessarily be preceded by a brief survey of the origin and rise of their Sākhās, or Vedic branches.

The four Vedas form four divisions of religious tradition, from each of which branch out its peculiar Sākhās. Those Sākhās branch again into further hereditary Schools, or Gārasas. Every Brahman belongs by birth to one or other of these Schools.

The Rgveda, oldest, and the source from which the other three Vedas came into existence, is, of course, of great antiquity, and was in existence long before its first Samhita or recension was made. It was passed on from father to son in oral tradition for many centuries. Oral tradition was the main channel of conveying religious knowledge; and even today, old-fashioned Vedic Pāṭhasālās, or schools in which the text of the Veda is taught, are conducted on the ancient method of oral tradition, the words of the Veda being committed to memory in certain prescribed orders, such as would make certain that the ancient Vedic text could be reproduced exactly to a syllable, even if every copy in existence were destroyed.

Discussions or opinions, therefore, about the dates of
the recensions do not raise any question concerning the antiquity of the Ṛgveda itself, but merely concerning its Saṃhitā, or written compilation. The earliest written collection of the poems of the Ṛgveda is considered by some scholars to belong to the period between 1500 B.C. and 1000 B.C., though others place the date much earlier. However, the opinion appears to be general that the Canon of the Saṃhitā of the Ṛgveda, as known today, can be dated at about 600 B.C.

Brāhmanic Hereditary Families

In discussing the origin of the Brāhmanic hereditary families, it is necessary to recall the fact that the Āryans of those early days were, to begin with, a migratory people, who, having wandered from their earlier Asiatic home, were still unsettled in the land of their adoption. In the times when the Ṛgveda was in course of composition, the Āryans were in occupation of the country of the Indūs. But the centre of culture to which Brāmanas of the present day look back, as the basis of their social system and the source of their ideals of fixed practice and belief, is the land of Kurukṣetra, in which the Āryans, in the course of their early conquests of the land, subsequently established their first real Indian home.

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Kurukṣetra (the scene in a later day of the events narrated in the Mahābhiṣṭa) lay in the region between the rivers Sutlej and Jamana, far to the East of the regions occupied when the Rgveda came into existence. Kurukṣetra's social system developed side by side with the addition to the Rgveda of two other Vedas, namely, the Sāmaveda and the Yajurveda - all three Vedas supporting, as time went on, a dependent mass of literature, which took inspiration from them, or rather from the Rgveda, which was the source of them all.

The hereditary Brāhmanic Branches, or Schools of tradition, in existence today, and others that have become extinct, owe their origin to the different recensions of the different Vedas. Each particular recension of a Veda was a Śākha, and each Śākha had its branches or Caranas. The manuscripts were in the keeping of hereditary Brāhmanic families.

These Brāhmanic families, beginning thus with the recensions of the Vedas, became in time the guardians of innumerable Manuscripts of Vedic literature. They became later, also, during the age which followed the Vedic period, the keepers of the great mass of Śaṁskṛta literature - the Śāstras, the Purāṇas, and the great epic masterpieces, the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana, and

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I. The period between the fifth and the second centuries B. C. saw the gradual change from the Vedic to the Śaṁskṛta age.
much other lore—all of which form the basis of the belief of modern Hinduism.

The Fourth Veda

A fourth Veda, the Atharva Veda, extremely old, and most probably pre-Āryan, became recognised as a Veda, though it had no real connection with the sacrificial ceremonial of the first three Vedas. It has never been regarded universally among Brahmanas as of equal authority with the Trayī, or Trididyā, i.e. the Three-fold Knowledge, which is the name applied to the three Vedas. But its Sākhās have, nevertheless, spread over India, in the same way as the Sākhās of the others.

Its followers even call it the Brahmaidya (Knowledge of the Soul of the Universe), which was actually the name applied to the Rgveda. They even claim also, as the representatives of the Atharva, the fourth priest, i.e. the priest whose duty was to preside over the three priests of the three Vedas at the performance of the sacrificial ceremonies.

The recognition granted to the Atharva Veda, and the growth of its Sākhās and Caranās, are explained by the fact that, with its spells and magic, it represented the primitive beliefs of India; and kings and rulers of early times were very ready to

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2. i.e. the sacred knowledge in its three-fold form of religious poem, sacrificial formula, and chant—which forms are severally represented by the Rg, Yajur, and Sāma Vedas
appoint, as Purohitas or Chaplains, Brähmans who were possessed of the Atharvan arts. About ninety per cent of the Atharvaveda deals with magic. There is also some flavour of magic in the Rgveda, but only about ten per cent.

Manuals in the Keeping of the Hereditary Brähman Families.

The first manuals of Vedic ritual dependant on the Vedas were the Brähmanas. These connected the Vedic text with the ritual ceremonial. The Brähmanas of the Rgveda deal with the duties of the priest called the Hotā, who invoked the gods, and recited the prescribed prayers. His duties consisted in drawing up, by selecting from the verses of the Rgveda, the Śāstra or canon for each particular rite. The Brähmanas of the Sāmaveda describe the duties of the Udgatā, the priest who chanted the Sāmanas or chants, of the Sāmaveda at the time of Sacrifice; while the Brähmanas of the Yajurveda laid down the ritual for the Adhvaryu, the priest who performed the actual sacrifice.

Here one sees the beginnings of the growth of the priestly authority of the Brähmans. This authority, assumed by them in hereditary succession from the times when the earliest vedic liturgies were drawn up, has been maintained down the centuries, and is, perhaps, only now, if now, showing signs of decline. Macdonell writes that the early struggles of vedic times were

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1. The poems of the Rgveda are not arranged in ritual sequence, whereas those of the Sāma and Yajur are in the order for ritual usage. Cf. History of Samskṛta Literature. Macdonell. pp.32-39.
2. Public revival of Veda Sacrifice as described above is now one of the features of modern India. (Cf. Thesis last chapters.)
3. History of Samskṛta Literature, p. 34.
followed by "a period of physical inactivity or indolence in the plains", and he attributes to this circumstance the fact that the Brāhmans succeeded in concentrating upon "the supremacy of intellect over physical force".

The earliest Brāhmānas were followed by other Brāhmānas, which, on account of their nature, came to be called Aranyakas (i.e. appertaining to the forest, or Arāṇya). These works contained the reflections of sages leading lives of abstraction in jungle or forest. The Aranyakas are of a theosophic character.

In the final part of the Aranyakas there is a further development into philosophical speculation. Such speculations are recorded in the works known by the name of Upanisads. The Upanisads are called also Vedānta, or End of the Vedas. They close the canon of writings known as Śruti, i.e. Heard Revelation. Śruti, therefore, consists in (a) the Vedas, which Hindus believe to be absolute revelation, and (b) the Brāhmānas, the Aranyakas, and the Upanisads, which, though not originally regarded as Śruti in the sense that the Vedas are believed to be Śruti, came in course of time to be included under the head of Revelation.

The works of the Later Vedic Period.

The later writings of the Vedic period are known as Smṛtī, or Things Remembered. They represent tradition, as contrasted with Revelation. Under this head come the works called Śūtras.

I. Dowson's Classical Dictionary. pp. 3256 to 326.
Sutras are simply manuals, or guides, to systematic performance. There are six classes of Sutras, two of which contain threads or clues to the correct carrying out of the Vedic ceremonies. The remaining four Sutras have reference to the correct reciting and understanding of the Vedic text.

Under the first mentioned come the Kalpa Sutras. These are classified under Kalpa (Ordinances), and Dharma (Law).

Kalpa is again subdivided into (i) Śrāuta Kalpa and (ii) Grhya Kalpa. These deal with the Ordinances concerning (i) the sacrifices of the Śruti ritual, and (ii) the domestic ritual of the householder, who is considered to be the Yajamāna, or sacrificer, in his own home.

(b) Dharma. The Dharma Sutras have to do with social conduct and law. They are the Law books of ancient India. One of them, the Mānava Dharma Sutra, once belonging to one of the School of tradition of the Black Yajurveda, now lost, was, in all probability, the basis of India's great Law Book, the well-known Code of Manu.

2. The Sutras are called Vedāṅgas, or limbs of the Veda.
4. The word Yajamāna (Sacrificer) is in common use among the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans in the sense of 'head of the house'. And the Grhya Kalpa Sutras of the particular Sākhās or Caracas extant in Mahārāṣṭra are the basis of present day Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇa practice in domestic ritual.
The second of the above two Sūtras is the Jyotisa Sūtra.

The Jyotisa Sūtra contains āhāras concerning Astronomy and Astrology, and deals with the relation of the planets to the performance of religious rites.

The remaining four of the six classes of Sūtras give instruction for the correct reciting and understanding of the Veda text. They deal with the following subjects:

1. Śikṣa Sūtra. On phonetics. The earliest of these are editions of the Rgveda Samhita text, edited with phonetic rules. Later Śikṣa Sūtras divide the text in the manner known as Padpātha, or Word Text, giving each word separately. On these later works the grammarians, Yāska, Pāṇini, Patañjali, and others founded the science of Sāṃskṛta Grammar.

Amongst the Śikṣa Sūtras are the treatises on Vedic phonetics, known as the Prātisākhyaśas. The importance of these is that they connect the Veda text and the Padapātha, showing the relation between them.

2. Chandah Sūtra, on Metre (Chandas).

These sūtras consist simply in sections on Metre, taken from various Vedic sources.

3. Vyākaraṇa Sūtra, on Grammar (Vyākaraṇa).

Of the Sūtras on Grammar, Pāṇini's Sūtra is regarded as the definite starting point of the post-Vedic age.

I. They are in use in the Vedic Pāṭhasālās of Mahārāṣṭra at the present day.
4. Nirukta Sūtra, on Etymology (Nirukta).

The outstanding work in this class is the Nirukta Sūtra of the grammarian Yāska. It is founded on certain classifications of obscure Vedic words - such classifications being known by the name Nighantu, and prepared for the use of teachers. There are five such works, entitled Nighantu - three containing lists of synonyms, the fourth with specially difficult words, and the fifth with a classification of the Vedic gods. Yāska's Nirukta deals, in twelve books, with the material to be found in the Nighantus.

To sum up, the above Sūtra works deal with six subjects, namely, Kalpa, Jyotiṣa, Śikṣa, Chandas, Vyākaraṇa, and Nirukta, (or, Ritual, Astrology, Phonetics, Metre, Grammar, and Etymology. They are called the six Vedāṅgas - the six limbs of the Vedas.

Supplementary Vedic Works.

Certain supplementary works also belong to the body of Smṛti, or Tradition. Such are:

(1). The Parāśiṣṭas, or supplements belonging to the Sūtras.

(2). The Prayogas, or Guides to sacrificial practice.

(3). The Paddhatis, or Customs, consisting of outlines of the contents of the Sūtras.

(4). The Kārikās, or descriptions of ritual, in verse, attached to the Sūtras or to the Paddhatis - the oldest being the Kārikā of Kumārila, the date of which is about 700 A.D.

(5). The Anukramānikās, or Indices, in metre, giving lists
of deities of the Ṛgveda, of hymns, authors, and metres employed. These Anukramaṇikās are attributed to Śaunaka. Another work entitled Sarva-ānu-kramaṇīka, or General Index, is attributed to Kāṭyāyāna.

(6). The Ṛgvidhāna, a metrical work, describing the magical effect produced by reciting verses of the Ṛgveda.

Such is the briefest outline of the principal classes of Vedic works, which have come down in the keeping of the Brahmānic families, who are the guardians of the Manuscripts of the Caranās or Schools of Tradition.

The Brahmānic Schools of tradition which are known at the present day are those that have survived out of a very much larger number. The numbers of Sākhās originally were said to be these: Of the Ṛgveda, twenty-one Sākhās; Of the Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, eighty-five; Of the Suṅka Yajurveda, sixteen; Of the Sāmaveda, one thousand; But fifty Sākhās of the Atharva Veda.

Śaunaka, in his work entitled Caranavyuha records only the following numbers as in existence in his time: Of the Ṛgveda, five Sākhās; Of the Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, twenty-seven; Of the Suṅka Yajurveda, fifteen; Of the Sāmaveda, twelve; and of the Atharva Veda, nine Sākhās.

The Brahmanic Schools of tradition in Mahārāṣṭra.

Great numbers of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans belong to the Rgveda, and follow the Āśvalāyana Sūtra School of tradition. Their Carana or School is named after Āśvalāyana, the author of the Śrauta Sūtra and the Grhya Sūtra of the Rgveda. Āśvalāyana Sūtra Brāhmans are to be found in all parts of Mahārāṣṭra. The Deśastha Brāhmans, the largest community in Mahārāṣṭra, are mostly of this School.

Nearly all the remaining Brāhmans of Mahārāṣṭra belong to various Schools of the Yajurveda:

(a). Of the Black Yajurveda.

This Yajurveda is called 'black' (krāṇa), owing to the fact that its explanatory matter is interpolated in the text. Many Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans are of the Taittariya Sākhā of the Krāṇa Yajurveda, and their Carana or School of tradition is the Āpastamba Sūtra. These Brāhmans are to be found on the Western coast, and in Poona. They are mostly Cittapāvana Brāhmans.

(b). Other Cittapāvanas follow the Grhya Sūtra of Hiranyakesi of the Taittariya Sākhā of the Black Yajurveda.

(2). Others again are of the Maittrāyanīya. The seat of this Sākhā is at Nasik. From the Maittrāyanīya Upaniṣad have evolved the Mānava Srauta Sūtra and the Mānava Grhya Sūtra.

(2) The Sukla, or White Yajurveda.

This Veda is called White or Clear because explanatory matter is not inserted in the text. There are Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans of the Vājasaneyā Sākhā of this Veda, the chief seats of which are

I. Cf. Page 38 (b) for Mānava Dharma Sūtra.
at Poona and Nasik. Their manual of ritual, the Satapatha Brähmana is considered to be "the most important production in the whole range of Vedic literature." Their Sūtras are the Śrauta Sūtra of the sage Kātyāyana, and the Kātiya Ārhya Sūtra, whose author is Parāskara.

Belonging to the Śāmaveda:

Śākhās of the Śāmaveda are scarcely to be found among the Mahārāstra Brāhmans. The Śāmavedi community of Thānā consists of only a few families, whose Śākhā or Sūtras appear to be unrecorded.

Belonging to the Atharvaveda:

There is no recognised Śākhā of the Atharveveda in Mahārāstra, though there are, among the Deśastha Brāhmans, a number of Atharvevedins, to be found mostly in the Eastern part of the Sātārā District. Enquiries in Mahārāstra show that these attend the Rgveda Pāthāsālās, though nowadays there are very few boys that would be attending a Vedic school.

The Pāthāsālās of Mahārāstra.

The Pāthāsālās are the religious schools. They are of two kinds – the Veda Pāthāsālā, and the Saṁskṛta Pāthāsālā. The Veda Pāthāsālā teaches on the Veda and Vedic subject appertaining to the learning of the Veda. But the Saṁskṛta Pāthāsālā teaches the Śāstras and the subject of the Saṁskṛta period.
Sāmkṛta

Each पथासाला teaches its own particular सांस्कृतिक or Philosophy - the सांख्य, the योग, the पूर्व मिमांसा, the उत्तरा मिमांसा (Vedānta), the वैशेषिक, or the न्याय. And in addition to its peculiar philosophy the सामक्र्तपथासाला teaches the following subjects - rhetoric, literature, grammar, medicine, astrology, and commentaries on the Vedāc text and on the text of Brāhmaṇas.

There is also a type of वेदक पथासाला which teaches the subjects of both the वेदपथासाला and the सामक्र्तपथासाला. Such a school is called a वेद-सांस्कृतिक-पथासाला.

Vedic Schools are to be found all over महाराष्ट्र. Even in a village, a Brāhman who knows part of a वेद conducts a वेदपथासाला. Good वेदपथासालास are to be found in Bombay, Poona, Nasik, Wai, Dhūlia, Ahnednagar, Sātārā, Kedgāv, Rajapur, Dahisara, and lesser ones are everywhere.

The present day पथासालास use printed text books in place of the old manuscript volumes. The printed work is often beautifully executed to look like the old manuscripts.

The preservation of the Veda text.

The Veda is, of course, very much older than any of its Sanshitas; and before any Sanshita was written, the keeping of

I. MacDonell gives a very concise account of the Philosophical Systems in his History of Sanskrit Literature, pages 385-407.
the sacred text was the work of the Pāthasālav. Pātha (learning) was carried out in such a manner as to ensure exact preservation. From father to son, from Guru to disciple, the words were passed on. Today, even, if every copy of the Veda were to be destroyed, it could be rewritten syllable for syllable from the vocally learned Pāthas of the Veda Pāthasālās.

The Pāthas of the Pāthasālās

Padapātha, the 'Foot' text.

In this, the Vedic text is separated into its different words or 'feet', and the words are learned in their order as separate units, without the Sandhi, or 'joining' of one word to the next, characteristic of both Vedic and Sanskrit.

Kramapātha, the 'going forward' text. Opposing the order of the words to be represented by the letters a, b, c, d, etc., Kramapātha will be committing the words to memory in this way:

a b/ b c/ c d/ d e/ e f/ etc.

Jatapātha, the 'plaiting' text. The order of this is:

a b/ b a/ a b/ b c/ c b/ b c/ c d/ d c/ d d/ d e/ e d/ e e/ etc.

and so on.

Ghanapātha, the 'impenetrable' text. The order is:

a b/ b a/ a b/ b c/ c b/ b c/ c d/ d c/ d d/ d e/ e d/ e e/ etc.

This is the most difficult of all. The Brāhmaṇa who can recite the Veda in this manner is called a Ghanapāthī. It is an attainment in learning.
**Chapter Three**

**THE ORTHODOX MORNING RITUAL**

The orthodox Brahman in his daily ritual obeys the rules laid down in the *Grhya Sūtra* of his own Brahmanic Carana. Though, in modern India, there has been a steep decline from formal ritual on the part of a great percentage of the city Brāhmans, and of the Western-educated everywhere in Mahāraṣṭra, and also of the rising generation of Mahāraṣṭra Brāhman youth, there are still, among the half million Brāhmans in the State of Mahāraṣṭra, many thousands who observe the full ritual. In the villages and small towns, in the holy Kṣetras or places of pilgrimage, on the banks of "Ancient Ganga" which is the name given to the river Godāvari, and at Old Mahābalesvāra in the Western Ghats where rise five great rivers of India (all of whom are deities in the eyes of Hindūs), and, in particular, among the officiating Brāhman priests in the City temples, the domestic priests who perform the Samskāras and other rites in the homes, the village priests who have the care of souls and the guardianship of the village from inauspicious influences — all these are orthodox in the performance of ritual.

The great movement toward a rational and critical outlook, which one observes in Bombay, Poona, and other cities, and in
the colleges of Mahārāṣṭra, has not yet touched them. "In Nasik," recently stated the well-known Family Priest, Sakharāma Śāstri Śrīhdara Kheḍakara, who holds the learned title of Vedsāstraśampanna, "eighty per cent of the Brāhmans practise full orthodoxy, both in Pūjā, and in the Samskaras (the sixteen bodily rites), and in the Śrāddha ceremonies for the departed. In the big cities," he went on, "only twenty per cent!"

What will happen to the practice of ritual in the next generation - whether it will be further decline or revival - no one can forecast. Most thinkers, among the Brāhmans themselves, are of the opinion that the future will see further decline - that is, decline in the practice of formal ritual, but not decline in belief. Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans everywhere are emphatic about the continuance of Hindu belief.

In this chapter are the details of the orthodox Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans routine of daily ritual.

His daily ritual does not depend on his philosophical views or his sect. All follow the daily ritual in common, the sect of each being denoted by the sect mark made on the forehead after the daily morning worship has been performed. Procedure is, broadly speaking, the same for all the Carāṇas. The orthodox Brāhmans look upon the carrying out of religious practice as the means of obtaining merit, and thus of destroying the blame, or Doṣa, which comes to the individual soul from the evil influences of inauspicious attitudes of planets, or of
unseen powers, and also from the effects of its own Karma, or Conduct, in this and past lives. Obedience to ritual, therefore, is a way to attaining ultimate Moksa, or Freedom (Cessation of personal rebirth), just as abandonment of earthly ties, and the practice of meditation and austerity, is a means to the same end. The Grhastha (householder) and the Sannyasi (ascetic) are each striving to reach the goal of cessation of rebirth—the Sannyasi by the direct way of austerity, and the Grastha by the more common way of ritual practice.

Before discussing practice, it may be assumed that the Maharastra Brahman shares in common with his fellow Brahmans in all parts of India the great body of Hindu belief. This implies that he shares the general faith in the Vedic and later gods, the sanctity of the Sacrificial Thread, and all the authoritative doctrines in reference to duty toward deities, ancestors, and one’s own soul in its progress through this and other lives toward its ultimate end in mergence into the Mulatatva, or Primordial Essence from which creation sprang.

Daily Ritual.

Even the everyday acts of life are, for the Brahman, included in ritual. The Maharastra Brahman rises between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. His first act is to remember Sri Vissu,(or Siva), and any favourite tutelary deity, and to repeat Stotras (Stanzas) in reverence to them. He then bows to the earth with a set formula, after
which he allows his eyes to rest on a cow, or some holy object, and then turns to the *dātās* of the day.

I. *Souca* (Purity).

This refers to matutinal habits. *Souca*, or Cleantiness, is accomplished with the use of earth and water. A young *Brāhman* whose Thread Ceremony has taken place, and who is not yet married, (i.e. a *Brahmacāri*), should perform twice the cleansing appointed for a householder (*Grhastha*), while a *Sannyāsi* (an *Ascetic*), should perform four times that of a *Grhastha*.

The cleansing prescribed for night-time is half that of the day-time. For a *Brāhman* who is sick, it is half that of night-cleansings. For women and children, it is half the number of laid down for a sick *Brāhman*.

The penance for not performing *Souca* duly is to repeat the *Gayatri Mantra* I eight hundred times, and to perform *Prānāyāma* (Suppression of breath) three times, followed by certain numbers of washings of the hands, according to the degree of guilt.

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1. i.e. *Rgveda* III. 62. 10. The merit of reciting this holiest verse in the *Rgveda* is considered equal to the merit of reciting the whole *Veda*.

2. The *Dharmasindhu*, page 3138. The *Dharmasindhu* is the Manual of religious conduct for *Brāhmans*. It is a *Saṁskṛta* work. Nowadays it is obtainable in *Saṁskṛta* with *Marāṭhī* parallel translation.
2. Acamana (The Sipping of Water).

This act consists in rinsing the mouth, and sipping water. Acamana is performed in a sitting attitude, facing either East or North, with the Sacred Thread over the left shoulder (i.e. its usual position). Cold water is used, of which three sips are taken from the right hand, each sip with the mention of a deity, for instance, "Hail to Keśava!" "Hail to Nārāyana!" "Hail to Mādhava!"

The water is sipped only out of those parts of the hand that are sacred to deities, i.e. from near the root of the little finger sacred to Prajāpati, or Kā; or from near the root of the thumb, sacred to Brāhma; or else from the finger tips, sacred to the gods generally. 2

Having sipped the water, the Brāhmaṇa proceeds as follows:

With the Mantra (Religious formula) "Hail to Govinda", he washes his right hand. With "Hail to Viṣṇu" and "Hail to Madhusūdana", he washes his two lips. With "Hail to Trivikrama", he sprinkles his lips with water.

He then consecrates the water with the Mantra "Hail to Vāmana", and, with "Hail to Srīdharā", washes the left hand. With "Hail to Harikēsa", he washes the right foot, and, with "Hail to Padmanābha", the left foot. Then saying "Hail to Damodara", he sprinkles water

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1. The names of the deities mentioned in this rūtual are in some cases apprations of Viṣṇu or his incarnations; and in others, of Śiva. Some titles, e.g. Hari, apply to either deity.
2. The part of the hand between the index finger and thumb is believed to be sacred to the spirits of departed ancestors. Each part is called a Tīrtha, or Holy Place. (Tīrtha means Water - a place for sacred ceremonial bathing).
on his head, and again sprinkles his upper lip, saying "Hail to Śaṅkarśana". Then, with "Hail to Vāsudeva", and "Hail to Pradyūmna", he touches the right and left nostrils, respectively.

And so he proceeds to touch ceremonially different parts of the body, at each touch, hailing a deity. For the sake of brevity, the parts touched are the right eye, the left eye, the right ear, the left ear, the navel, the heart, the head, the right arm, and the left arm. The deities hailed, respectively, with the above touches are Aniruddha, Puruṣottama, Adhokṣaja, Narasiṁha, Acyūta, Janārādana, Upendra, Hari, and Śrīkṛṣṇa.

In the above rite, the upper lip is touched with the tips of the fingers only, the nostrils with the thumb and index finger, the eyes with the thumb and ring finger, ears and navel with the thumb and little finger, the heart with the hand outspread, and the arms with the finger tips.¹

The ceremony of touching the lips with water is called properly, Mantrācamana, or Sipping with Mantras.² When Ācamana is

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¹ According to the Dharmasindhu, different authorities give the order variously in the earliest part of this ritual, up to the washing of the hands. From then, onward, all give the same order of procedure. Cf. Dharmasindhu p. 326.43.
² Mantra, or Sacred Speech, is of three kinds:
   - (1) Rāc, which is spoken at religious rites or at sacrifices.
   - (2) Sāmana, which is sung at sacrifices.
   - (3) Yajju, a kind of verse, in some cases not metrical, and muttered in a peculiar manner.

performed without Mantras, it is called Laukikācamana (Common Sipping). Laukikācamana is performed on any occasion which seems to endanger ceremonial purity. It is also performed after bathing, after washing any article, after eating, and on rising after sleep.

3. Dantadhāvana (Cleaning of the teeth).

The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman cleans his teeth with a small wooden tooth-pick. But on days when the use of a wood pick is forbidden— for instance, a day when a Śrāddha (Obsequial Ceremony) is performed, or on a fast day, the teeth are cleaned with the fingers) excepting that the index finger is not used; or else, simply by rinsing the mouth with water.


Before performing the ceremony of bathing, extremely strict Brāhmans mark the body with coloured earth. Such a mark is called Tilaka. This old custom is, however, rarely observed in Mahāraṣṭra at the present day, even among the orthodox.

Snāna Vidhi consists in the washing of the body by immersion in water, if in a river or lake; or by washing with running water I poured on the body from a vessel, if the ceremony is performed at home.

I. "I will not bathe in a bath" is one of the Snātaka vows, which a young Brahman used to take in old times on leaving his Guru's hermitage at the end of his Vedic education. Brāhmans of today still have that rule. Dharmasindhu. p, 355.
At the river bank, the orthodox Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇa ties up the tuft of hair (Sikhā) which is allowed to remain on the crown of his head, which is otherwise clean-shaven, and steps into the water. If the water level is below his knees, he bathes sitting. Otherwise he stands. The ritual is as follows:

(a) Saṅkalpa (Resolution).

First performing Ācamana, he makes a resolution, in which he mentally declares his intention of performing Snāṇa (Bath), with the object of doing away with the guilt contracted by him inact, speech and thought.

(b) Namaskāra (Obeisance).

He then makes an obeisance to the water, before commencing Snāṇa.

(c) Snāṇa.

Turning toward the East, if in a lake or tank — or, if in running water, turning to face the current, he dips three times under the surface, and then laves his body. He is wearing during this performance his Dhotara, or lower garment which is a length of fine, white cotton cloth, draped from the waist. The dhotara is always white in colour, with a very narrow coloured border of about half an inch in width.

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1. The shaving of the head is one of the preliminary rites in the Sacred Thread Ceremony. 2. Saṅkalpa is the initial step in every rite. 3. Never to bathe unclothed is one of the Snātaka vows. 4. Another Snātaka vow is always to wear white. Cf. Snātaka Vows. Dharmasindhu. pp. 354, 355.
(d) Acamana (Water Sipping).

Snāna is followed by another performance Acamana, twice repeated, with Mantras.

(e) Aghamarṣana (Expiatory Prayer).

The recitation of certain prescribed R̄c, or Stanzas, is then performed three times.

(f) Jalatarpāna (Water Oblation).

The procedure then is to offer water oblations to the gods, and to the spirits of departed ancestors. This rite is, at the time of bathing, optional (i.e. Kāmya), and is performed only by the strict Mahārāṣtra. It consists first in saying a prescribed Mantra, with the Sacrificial Thread in its usual position over the left shoulder and under the right arm; then a Mantra with the thread pendent from the neck; and finally a Mantra with the Thread in the reverse, or mourning, position, i.e. over the right shoulder and under the left arm. The Mantras recited are in honour of gods, sages, and ancestors, and the object of the water oblations is for their satiety.

1. The Kātyāyana Sūtra Brāhmans (a branch of the Vājasaneyī Sakha of the White Yajurveda) are mentioned in the Dharmasindhu as having a peculiar Rc. Dharmasindhu. p. 324. 146
2. In the above position the thread is called Upavīta or Yajyopavīta. In the reverse position over the right shoulder, it is called Prācinavīta. When hanging straight from the neck, it is called Nivīta.
3. The Dharmasindhu gives the fact that the Taittārīya Sakha of the Black Yajurveda differs from others in the names of sages and gods used in the above rite. Dharmasindhu. P. 324 under Snānavidhi.
(g) Ācamana.

A repetition of Ācamana is performed at the close of the Snāna rite.

(h) Marjana (Sprinkling).

The body is then sprinkled with water. This ends the ceremony of Snāna.

The Ritual of Chāthing.

While the body is still wet, without wiping the water off with a towel or with the hand, the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman puts on Soṇvalēn, which is a length of purple silk cloth. He winds this about his body at the waist, unwinding the wet dhotara, in which he has bathed, while winding on the d dry silk, so that at no time he is unclothed. The drapery is arranged with a series of very fine pleats at the front, and is worn in a fashion known as Kaśtā. The lower edge of one of the front pleats is taken up toward the back between the feet, pulled tightly, and tucked into the centre back of the waist, thus giving a divided effect.

The word Soṇvalēn, which is a neuter noun, and also the neuter form of the adjective Soṇvala, is applied (I) to the purple silk cloth, when it is said, "The Brāhman has put on Soṇvalēn"; (2) to the Brāhman himself, when it is said, "He is soṇvalā" (i.e. ceremonially pure); and (3) to the state of purity in which the

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I. This wet cloth, after discarding, must be folded into four and wrung out – the fringe or unfinished end being held downwards if the bath is performed at home, or upward if the bath is performed at the river. The cloth is never folded into three.
Brāhmaṇ is considered to be, when it is said, "He is in Sonvalen."

Sonvalen describes the state of ceremonial holiness of the Maharāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ, while he is wearing the purāṇe silk, which time extends from after his performance of Snāna till after his morning meal. All his religious acts of worship are performed while the Brāhmaṇ is in this state of ceremonial purity. The upper part of his body is bare, except for the sacred thread across his chest.

5. Bhasma Tripūndra (The Marking with Ashes)3

After the performance of Snāna, the Maharāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ makes a sign on his forehead in the shape of three parallel lines, drawn simultaneously with the three middle fingers of his right hand. Hence the name Tripūndra, the three-fold mark.

This mark denotes the sect. The Smārta, or Saiva, sect (the worshippers of Śiva) draw the three lines horizontally on the forehead, using ashes; while the Vaiṣṇava sect (worshippers of Visnu) draw them vertically with chalk (Gopicandana4).

1. In contrast with Sonvālēn is the state of Onvālēn, described later in Kṛṣṇā the next chapter.
2. Sometimes a shoulder cloth, usually a small, coloured Kashmir shawl, is worn; but only by a Brāhmaṇ who is senior—never by one whose father, or elder brother, is living.
3. The sect mark is commonly worn also by Brāhmaṇs who are not orthodox in respect of ritual worship.
4. Gopicandana is a special kind of white clay said to be brought from Dvārakā, the reputed capital of Krṣṇa, the eighth of Visnu's incarnations. Cf. Thesis Appendix IV.
The three-fold sign is made also on the following parts of
the body in addition to the forehead: the heart, the navel, the
throat, the shoulder, the joint of the arm, the back, and the
head*. It is put on with prescribed Mantras.


The orthodox Brāhmaṇ has already finished his Snāna, and is
waiting in a state of purity for the morning twilight. The
Sanskrit word Sandhyā means Conjunction. The joining of night
with day (at dawn) is called Pratahaṃsandhyākāla (the time of the
Dawn Conjunction). The joining of morning with afternoon is the
Madhyāḥsandhyākāla (the time of Conjunction at the Meridian).
The joining of day with night is called Sayamṣandhyākāla (the
time of the Dusk Conjunction). The above three times are laid
down for the practiçe of abstraction, meditation, repetition of
Mantras, performance of Ācamana, and certain other rites,
including chiefly the utterance of the Gāyatri, the most sacred
and secret part of the morning worship at time of Sandhyā.

Owing to modern conditions of life, the orthodox Mahāraṣṭra
Brāhmaṇ observes Sandhyā ritual usually only in the morning;
some observe it also in the evening. Aged Orthodox Brahmans,
who have retired from their calling, perform Sandhyā at the
three prescribed times.

I. Dharmasindhu. p. 440, under Bhasma Tripūṇḍra.
The performance of the Sandhyā worship, which follows immediately on Snāna and Bhasma, takes place, most generally, on the bank of a river, or at the edge of a lake. But if Sandhyā is observed at home, the Maharāṣṭra Brahmān uses a round, flat, shallow bowl to hold the water required. Such a bowl is called a Tamhaṇa. Its sides slope outward from the base, or else are curved in again at the upper rim.

Observance of the Ritual of Sandhyā worship.

In observance, the Carāṇas or Traditional Schools have some slight differences. The Dharmasindhu gives the procedure in detail for the Brahmans of the Rgveda Carāṇas, and then compares with it the practices of those of the other Vedas. In the main, the ritual is similar. The Rgveda Brahmān proceeds as follows:

(a) Ācamana.

Ācamana is performed with two rings of the sacred Darbha grass (the rings called Pavitraka) on each hand, either knotted, or without knots. The sipping of water is performed twice.

(b) Prānāyāma.

With a certain preliminary Mantra (which mentions the names of sages, the Gāyatrī goddess, the deity Prajāpaṭi and others),

I. Drawings to illustrate the Tamhaṇa:

3. These grasses are Poa Cynosurocides (Kuśa grass), Saccharum Spontaneum and Saccharum Cylindricum, the first held most sacred.
4. The Gāyatrī verse (Rgveda III. 62. 10) personified as a goddess This verse is also known as Savitri, being addressed to Sāvitrī, the sun. The name Gāyatri refers to the metre in which it is composed.
the Ṛgvedin presses the nostrils with four fingers, or else with two fingers, excluding the index and middle finger, and inhales through the right nostril. Then reciting mentally, with breath suspended, certain sacred utterances, which include the Gayātri, repeated three times, he exhalates through the left nostril.

(c) Saṅkalpa.

He then makes the Saṅkalpa, or mental declaration, of his intention to perform Sandhyā worship, and sprinkles his body with water by means of the Darbha grass - first the head nine times, and then the body, accompanying this act with sacred utterances. The water used for this rite is lifted, with Darbha grass, or with the third finger, out of the river water; or else, if the rite is being performed at home, out of the special vessel (Tāṃhana), which is placed on the ground, or out of the water held in the hollow of the left hand. But use is not made of water dropping down in a cascade, or poured out from a higher level.2

(d) Mantrācamana.

The worshipper recites a prescribed formula, and drinks water with the object of purifying himself, after which he performs Marjana, or Sprinkling, four times, with prescribed Mantras.

(e) Aghamārṣaṇa.

Then, uttering certain expiatory Mantras, and reciting prescribed stanzas, the Brahmāna takes water in his right hand, and, breathing on it through the right nostril, throws it away out of his hand (without looking at it) on the ground at his left side, in the belief that he has expelled his sinful nature by means of the exhalation.

(f) Arghyapradāna (Water Offering).

Again he performs Ācamana, and then, standing up, offers Arghyapradāna, or a water oblation, to the sun, with the recitation of the Gāyatrī verse and its accompanying mystical words, the Prāṇava² and the Vyāhrti.³ The water oblation is offered in both hands, which are held together in the form of a bowl. This bowl-shaped cavity formed by the hands is called an Anjali. Three such Anjali s of water are offered in this fashion, the offerer being careful that his thumbs do not touch the index fingers. If the proper time for Sandhyā worship has passed, the worshipper offers a fourth oblation as an atonement. Finally, with a Mantra in praise of Brahmā, the Brāhman performs Pradakṣīṇa, or circumambulation, and sprinkles himself with water.

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I. Or, more probably, an imaginary personification of sin, which he expels from himself. The word used in the Dharmasindhu is Papapurusa (Man of sin). Dharmasindhu p. 325. "whose head is Brahmanide, whose arms are Theft, whose heart is Wine-drinking, etc." Cf. M.W. Sanskrit Dictionary, p. 565. Col. 3.
2. The mystical sound "Om". Thesis Appendix I.
3. The words "Bhūr, Bhūvaḥ, Svāh" (Earth, atmosphere, heaven) Cf. Appendix I.
Those Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans who regularly perform the full Sandhyā Ritual perform it in the belief, which they hold in common with all strict Brāhmans, that, by so doing they will pass to Brāhma-loka I after death. The omission of Sandhyā worship is believed to deprive the twice-born (i.e. the initiated Brāhman) of the reward of all his other religious acts, however zealously he may perform them, and to degrade him to the uninitiated state, and to cause his next incarnation to be that of a dog. 2

The penance for one omission of Sandhyā worship is to repeat the Gāyatrī ten thousand, or else one thousand and eight, times. If omitted for a long period, the atonement called krochra is required.

7. Devapūjā (Worship of gods).

The seventh act in the Mahārāṣtra Brāhman's ritual is the worship of gods in the form of idols. Each morning, after his Sandhyā worship, he worships the deity in one of the larger temples near the bathing place; and afterwards, the idols in his own home. The full rite of Devapūjā consists in adoring the idol by means of the sixteen acts of worship known as the Šodasōpacāra. 4

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2. Dharmaśindhu. p. 328.448
4. Appendix III. The sixteen means, quoted from the Rgveda. Also Thesis Chapter on Daiva Karma. Section on Pūjā.
A room in the Mahārāstra Brāhmaṇ's house is set apart for the daily performance of Pūjā. In this room, the idols are placed, when not set up for worship, in a Tamhāna, or flat copper vessel which rests on a polished, and neatly finished, board, called a Pāṭa, on the floor. Otherwise, the idols are kept in a small shrine, with shelves, and a pointed, or tapering, roof. This shrine, no larger than a large doll's house — for the idols are only a few inches in height — is called a Devhāra. The performance of Pūjā is described fully in the later chapter on Daiva Karma.

Devapūjā is followed, usually, by the reading of some religious book.

I. Cf. P. 58. Footnote I.

2. Illustration of a Devhāra:

3. The Bhagavadgītā is read by all, especially by devotees of Kṛṣṇa. The Rāmāyana is specially loved by devotees of Rāma. The Gṛucarittra for worshippers of the Trimūrti (Pattātṛgya), etc. The Purāṇas also. The Vedāntists would study one of the treatises of Saṅkaracārya.
Chapter Four

THE FIVE GREAT SACRIFICES

Having performed his daily Snāna Sandhyā, and his worship of the gods by the sixteen means, the Maharāṣṭra Brahman is now ready to offer the five great sacrifices, called the Pañca Mahā-yajña, which precede his morning meal — a meal which also is taken as a religious rite.

Pañca Mahāyajña.

These five sacrifices are, according to the Laws of Manu,¹ Brahmayajña, Devayajña, Pitryajña, Bhūtayajña, and Manusyayajña, i.e. the sacrifices in homonmr of the Veda, the gods, the ancestor ghosts and all spirit-creatures, and beings in human form.²

1. Brahmayajña. (The sacrifice to the Veda).

The Rgveda, or Veda, is called Brahmvidyā, or the Knowledge (Vidyā) of Brahma (Supreme Spirit). Hence the name Brahmayajña is given to the reading or revitation of the Veda, and such recitation is called a sacrifice to the Veda. For this ritual, the Maharāṣṭra Brahman wears a new, unwashed garment (length of white cloth); or, if the cloth has been washed, he shakes it three times. The preliminary acts of ritual are Acamana,

² The Sacrifices are not offered during a period of defilement.
Prāṇāyāma, Saṅkalpa, and Tarpana - the last (Water Offering) being in honour of gods and sages. A Brāhmaṇa whose father is not living, offers, in addition, oblations in honour of his Pitṛs, or Ancestors.

The position for Brahmayajña is with the face toward the East, the worshipper being seated on Darbha grass, the right foot resting on the left thigh, close to the body; or else the great toe of the right foot being placed over the great toe of the left foot. Two Pavitrakas, or rings of Darbha grass, are worn on the fourth finger of the right hand, which the worshipper places on the left hand, resting both hands on the right knee, in such a position that the tips of the Darbha grass of the Pavitraka, and the finger tips of the left hand are pointing toward the East.

In this position, either gazing at the horizon, or else with the eyes closed, the Brāhmaṇa recites the Prāṇava, Vyāhṛti, and the Gāyatrī verse, in its metre, its meaning, and its entirety, three times. He then recites the first Sūkta, or poem, of the Rgveda; after which he studies, reads, or recites one chapter, or one poem, or even one verse, of the Saṁhita (Veda text), or one of the Brāhmaṇas, or a Sūtra.

I. Dharmasindhu Page 475.
2. Devayajña. called also Vaisvadevayajña.

This sacrifice which is an offering to the gods, is a burnt oblation, or Homa. Homa is the act of casting clarified butter, or certain prescribed food offerings, into the fire, to the accompaniment of invocations addressed to the gods. The oblations are offered in the belief that Agni, the deity Fire, will hear them to the deities named in the invocations.

In orthodox houses where the custom is still observed, the father of the family, as the Yajamāna, or Sacrificer, performs the rite for the family. In this Devayajña, or Vaisvadevayajña, a particular class of deities, called the Viśve Devas, are included in the worship. The procedure, where it is observed, is as follows:

The Yajamāna first makes the Saṅkalpa, or Resolution, to perform the sacrifice, and then takes live charcoal from the

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1. Vaiśva Deva. Literally, All gods. The term specially includes the Viśve Devas, a class of twelve attendant celestial beings or powers, or Devatās. They are believed to preside over the rites. For the names and description of these twelve Devatās, plus one extra Devatā peculiar to Mahārāṣṭra, see this thesis Chapter 16, section A (ii).

For the rules concerning the conditions under which several Vaiśvadeva offerings are to be made in one house, where married sons and their families reside under the parental roof, see Dharmasindhu pp. 483 - 484.

2. Most of the following descriptive details are from notes made personally in Nasik, the information being given by the now Late B. P. Paṭavardhana, a Deṣastha Brahman, who was in the habit of offering this sacrifice daily.
cooking, or common, fire\textsuperscript{1}, and, in prescribed Mantras calling the fire by the name Pāvakāgni,\textsuperscript{2} or Cleansing Fire, places the burning charcoal in a small, copper Kunda, or Brazier, in shape rectangular, with sides sloping toward the base in the fashion of an inverted pyramid. The inverted apex of the Kunda is rounded, and slightly flattened, to form a base on which the Kunda stands upright; and on opposite sides of the rectangular rim, copper rings are attached for the convenience of carrying it.\textsuperscript{3}

The Yajamāna fans the charcoal till it glows red, and then puts sandal paste (Gandha) in eight places on the rim – at each corner, and at the centre point of each side. Having done this, he takes a portion of cooked rice (Aksata) from that prepared on the cooking fire in the Svayamāpāka Ghara, or Kitchen, and places it in front of the Kunda, a little to the right side.

I. i. e. Laukika Agni(Laukikāgni), in contrast to the Grhyāgni, the Domestic Fire, lit at the marriage ceremony of the Householder or Yajamāna, and kept perpetually alight – a practice now obsolete, except in extremely rare instances.

3. Illustration of a Vaisvadevayayajna Kunda used by Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans:
Then immediately in front of the Kunda he offers worship in the form of flowers, the act called Puṣpa (from Puṣpa, a flower). The above three acts of ritual – Gandha, Aksata, and Puṣpa – are accompanied with the recitation of prescribed Mantras.

The Homa, or Burnt Oblation, is then prepared. The sacrificer pours Gṛṭa, or Clarified Butter, over the heap of rice, and, taking up a little of the butter and rice, holds it for a moment over the fire in the Kunda as a symbol of the act of cooking, after which he sprinkles the heap of rice with water, and then divides it into three equal parts, accompanying the act with the proper Mantras, and holding his left hand over his heart. The three heaps into which the rice has now been divided are the sacrificial materials for the oblations in this, and in the following two other sacrifices; that is to say in this Vaiśnava Yajñā, and in the Bhūtayajñā, and Pitryajñā respectively.

Homa. Out of the first heap of rice, the sacrificer offers ten oblations to ten deities, or groups of deities, invoking each, as he casts the oblation into the Kunda fire. The names of the gods invoked are Sūrya, Brahmā, Candra, Vanaspati, Agni-Candra, Indra-Agni, Heaven and Earth, Dhanvantari, Indra, and the Viṣve Devas. The Viṣve Devas are particularly associated in Hindu belief with departed ancestors.

1. Worshippers of Viṣṇu offer in the above sacrifice the remains of the food offering used in the Pūjā of Viṣṇu. They believe that Viṣṇu's leavings should be offered to other gods, and to spirits and ancestors, and that the act of offering such oblations brings eternal merit.
In very orthodox places where the Vaiśvadeva Yajña is offered both in the morning and in the evening, Sūrya, the Sun, is invoked in the morning, and Agni, Fire, is invoked in the evening. Twenty oblations, ten in the evening and ten in the morning are offered.¹

The belief in reference to the Vaiśvadeva² offering is that the cooking of food is for the gods, and that the Brāhman who eats the food is merely the Pākabhogī, or User of the Pāka (the simple or ordinary, domestic sacrifice of cooked substances, as contrasted with the elaborate Śrauta Sacrifices).³

The Pañcasūna.⁴

The act of offering the Vaiśvadeva Sacrifice is believed to do away with any guilt that may have been incurred through the accidental destruction of any form of life during the process of cooking. The five things whereby life might be destroyed are the curry-stone, the grinding mill, the water vessel, the fire, and the broom.

¹. This applies to Brāhmans of the Rgveda Sākhā, and of the Taittirīya Sākhā of the of the Black Yajurveda. But other Sākhās are enjoined to offer Vaiśvadewayajña in the mornings only, with double oblations and including both Sūrya and Agni. D. S. p. 484
³. The rice left over from the oblations is given usually to the children or to some member of the family, to avert evil dreams. Manus. III. 83 states that no Brāhman guest should be fed on the occasion of the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice.
3. Bhūtayajñā (the Sacrifice to Spirit-Beings).

Of the three heaps of rice made at the time of the Vaisvadeva offering, the second heap is now taken for the Bhūtayajñā or the offering to spirits. This offering is also called Balihaṛana, or the Giving of Bali Offerings.

In a clean place on the ground outside, the offerings are placed with the utterings of Mantras, in certain prescribed directions - ten offerings in a row toward the East for the same deities as in the Vaisvadeva sacrifice; and, parallel to them, a similar row of oblations offered to the deity of trees, or the house pillars, i.e. the deity Vanaspati; to the house and the house attendant deities (the Devatās), and the deity of the foundation (Vastupati). Other oblations are offered also to Indra, Puruṣa, Yama, Brahmā, Varuṇa, Soma, the Visvedevas, and and all spirits.

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1. Both the Dharmasindhu (pp. 486-7) and information gathered locally show that the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans observe Bhūtayajñā before Pitryajñā.
4. The Dharmasindhu describes the spirits as 'all spirits that wander by day or by night - the last words to be alternated when offering the sacrifice, according to whether the time is evening or morning'. Dharmasindhu p. 486.

For all the above mentioned deities, see Thesis Chapter 15 for the major deities, and Ch. 16 for the lesser attendant powers.
The offerings to the gods are placed in the directions of the different cardinal points, as enjoined in the Sūtras,1 those to Yama, god of death, being placed to the South.

4. Pitṛyajña (the Oblation to the Ancestors)

"After the Bhūtayajña is finished",2 the Mahārāṣtra Brāhman puts his Sacrificial Thread in the position for ancestor worship, i.e. Prācināvīti, in which the thread is over the right shoulder and under the left arm; and, with Mantras, places the oblations for the ancestors to the South of the offerings placed in honour of the deity Yama (in the Bhūtayajña already described). He then washes his hands and feet and performs Ācamana, after which he enters the house, and, having recited a prescribed Mantra, performs Meditation on Viṣṇu, to whom he offers all his acts or Karmas.

5. Manusyayajña (The Sacrifice to human beings).

The fifth of the daily Sacrifices consists in giving alms of food to the Bhiksus, or religious mendicants, who pay daily calls on Brāhman houses, and, in this way, procure their livelihood. The amount prescribed to be given in alms is as much as

2. Dharmasindhu. p. 487. The order here is as above - first the Bhūtayajña, then Pitṛyajña. But in the ritual of the four sacrifices shown above, when they are offered together in a shortened form (Cf. p. 488), the ordār is Pitṛyajña, followed by Bhūtayajña.
would make a meal, or else sixteen mouthfuls, or four, or even only one mouthful, to be given with the recitation of a prescribed Mantra. If it is beyond the ability of the Yajamāna to give to all the Bhiksus who may come to the door, he is required to give three mouthfuls to three mendicants only.¹

Having offered the above five great sacrifices, the Brähman is entitled to eat that which remains. "He who cooks food for himself only, eats nothing but sin; for that alone is considered as fit food for the virtuous, which is left after the oblations have been offered." ²

Gandha Tilaka (The Forehead Sign).

Before partaking of food, the Mahārāṣṭra Brähman puts on his forehead a sign which is his sect mark. The word Gandha strictly means Fragrance. The mark is made with saffron paste, or with sandal-wood, according to which of the two is available.

In the case of saffron (Keśara), the wood is powdered extremely finely, so that it can be strained through muslin. It is made then into a stick, which, when rubbed in the palm each day, gives the saffron powder. To this a little water is added, making it into a stiff paste, which adheres to the forehead. Sandal-wood powder, called Candana, is prepared in

¹. Dharmasindhu. p. 488.

². Viṣṇu Sūtra LXVII. 43. or Sacred Books of the East. Vol. VII.
small quantities, freshly each day, by rubbing the sandal-wood on a stone, and by working it into a paste with a little water. The Maharāstra Brāhmaṇa puts this paste into a brass or copper tray called a Tabakādi, and makes the forehead mark from it.

The forehead mark is made either with the finger, or with a copper mold or stamp, which can be dipped into the paste, and pressed against the forehead. I

The Maharāstra Brāhmaṇa Vaisnavas (Vishnu worshippers) use any one of the following signs: 2

\[ U V V V \]

The Śaiva Maharāstra Brāhmans (worshippers of Śiva) use the following forehead signs:

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{\text{\text{}}} & \text{\text{\text{}}} \\
\text{\text{\text{}}} & \text{\text{\text{}}} \\
\text{\text{\text{}}} & \text{\text{\text{}}} \\
\end{align*} \]

I. It is the modern fashion among the Westernised Hindus to use a forehead mark merely as a conventional sign, showing that the person has bathed. It is the remnant of the old ritual among those who have abandoned it.

2. The last of the above Vaisnava marks is said to denote the cult of Rāmānuja, the Vedānta teacher and writer of the twelfth century in South India. He is believed to have been an incarnation of Śeṣa, Vishnu’s serpent. M.W. Skrta Dict. p. 843 Col. 3

Also Cf. Āpte’s Sāmskṛta Dictionary, Vol. 3. p. 1567. Col. 1 last line, and Col. 2.
Bhojana Vidhi (The Rite of Partaking of Food).

Only the initiated Brāhmans of the house partake of food together. Uninitiated boys, whose Thread Ceremonies have not yet taken place, have their meals later with the women.

A polished wooden board, called a pāṇa, is set flat on the floor as a seat for each diner, the seats being arranged so that the diners face East and West, and sometimes South. In front of each seat, on the clean, smooth surface of the floor (which is hard-beaten earth), a square enclosure is marked off, either with a line of scattered water, or with powdered chalk filtered through the fingers, the object being to bar the progress of ants toward the food. Within this square enclosure is placed either a portion of a large plantain leaf, neatly cut to make a square plate, or a large, round, flat, bell-metal plate, called

I. Under the patriarchal system of family life, the male members of the home include the married sons and their sons.

2. Facing the North is considered to be Nindya (i.e. bringing reproach on the person); and facing a corner (sitting in a diagonal line) is forbidden. Dharmasindhu. p. 494.

3. This square of powdered chalk, which often has designs at the corners, and at the centre of the front, is drawn by the women, and is called a Rāṅgolī. Cf. Thesis Chapter 12. Brāhman Home Life. Daily routine, under Rāṅgolī, Section (c).

4. A Brāhman should eat out of a gold or a silver dish, or off a plantain leaf, or from a plate of bell-metal. If he use the last, the plate should never be used by others. If others use it, it becomes Uṣṭa - that is, Ucchīṣṭa, another's leavings. The use of a bell-metal plate is forbidden to a Brahmacārī, a Sannyāsī, or a widow. These should/leaves of Palasa (Butea Frondosa), which are forbidden to a Gṛhaṣṭha. The wood of the Palasa is forbidden also as material for the wooden seat used for meals. For rules concerning other trees whose leaves are forbidden, and others whose leaves are allowed for dining, see Dharmasindhu. p. 492.
a Parāta, at the side of which, on the diner's left, are placed
a cylindrical, brass vessel with water, and a brass cup, and, on
the diner's right, two or three small shallow brass vessels (each
called a Vātī) to hold the various side dishes, such as Catni
(chutney), Dahi (curds), Bhāji (vegetables), and Sri khaṇḍa (a
sweet dish which looks like lemon curd). The chief dish served on
the large bell-metal plate is of rice and ḍāla (curry), or else
Dāla (Pulse of various kinds), with a small hepling of salt, a
piece of lemon, and large biscuit-like Pāpāda, or purī, and on
festive occasions, Puramapoli, which is a large pancake stuffed
with Gāla (molasses).

A Brāhman's procedure in the Bhojana Vidhi is, first, to
utter a Mantra, which, translated, means, "May we always have
that which is left over (from the five sacrifices), rice, and
clarified butter." He then puts a Pavitraka (a ring of Darbha
glass with knots in it) on his right hand; and, tapping the
floor with one foot or both feet, performs Abhimantrana, which is
the consecration of the food, with the utterance of the Vyāhṛti
and Gāyatrī, after which he sprinkles the food with water, and
utters a prescribed Mantra.

He then puts on the right side of his plate, on the floor,
three Āhutis (Oblations), with the Mantras, "Hail to the Lord of
the Earth", "Hail to the Lord of the Atmosphere", and "Hail to
the Lord of Bhūtas (spirits)"; or else he offers five Āhutis,
hailing Ditra,\textsuperscript{1} Citrāguptā,\textsuperscript{2} Yama (god of death), Yamadharma,\textsuperscript{3} and all Ghosts (Bhūtas). Or, instead, he offers the three oblations mentioned in the first place, and, making five, two others to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama Dharma), and Citrāgupta.

The act following this is \textit{Āpośana},\textsuperscript{4} or \textit{Aposni,} which consists in taking water in the right hand, and drinking it, with Mantras.

The meal then begins with five mouthfuls eaten in silence, each mouthful with a mentally recited Mantra, hailing one of the five vital airs in the body, which are called Prāna, and are believed to constitute physical life. The act of eating the five mouthfuls is called Prānāhuti, or the oblations to the Prānas. While performing Prānāhuti, the Brahman touches the plate with his left hand.\textsuperscript{5} After this, the meal proceeds.\textsuperscript{6}

\begin{itemize}
\item[I.] A form of Yama, the god of death.
\item[2.] Citrāgupta, the Recorder of man's deeds, in Yama's world.
\item[3.] Yamadharma, i.e. Yama as the god of justice.
\item[5.] The use of the left hand, except for such occasions as the above, is usually avoided. The left hand is used however, for pouring the drinking water from the Pañcapatṛī (water vessel) into the Pelā (cup). The cup is lifted to the lips with the left hand, and touched underneath with the back of the right hand, while the Brahman drinks. But the left hand never actually touches the food.
\item[6.] The appointed amount to be eaten is at most thirty-two mouthfuls. The rule is that a Sannyāsī (a finished ascetic) should eat eight mouthfuls only; a Vanaprastha (hermit), sixteen; a Grhastha sixteen or thirty-two; and a Brahmacārī (a young boy) to satisfaction. Dharmasindhu P. 495.
\end{itemize}
At the end of the meal, the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ takes water in the cup, drinks half of it, and throws half on the earthen floor. He then takes off the Darbha Grass rings, and washes mouth and hands. The mouth is rinsed, and the water ejected, sixteen times. This is followed by a performance of Acamana, or sipping of water, which act, called Uttarāposāna, if omitted, is believed to bring guilt, which can be remitted by a performance of Snāna.

The state of Onvalen (Neither purity nor defilement).

The secular day now begins. In these modern times, the Brāhmaṇ does not keep his ceremonial purity all day, as in ancient times. Keeping on his sacred Thread, he changes his purple silk for the state of dress known as Onvalen, a state of neither purity nor defilement. Onvalen is the ordinary state of a Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ, in which he carries out his ordinary occupations of the day. It consists in wearing a Dhotara, a length of about nine yards of very fine cotton cloth, draped from the waist to touch the ground in front, and arranged in the Kāṣṭha style already described (page 55). The colour of the

I. For further detailed rules concerning eating, Cf. Dharmasindhu pp. 493 - 497. During meals, the sacrificial thread is worn in the Yajnopavita position. Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇs, when seated, at meals, raise the left knee to an upright position, so that the left foot is flat on the board. The left hand is usually clasped round the left knee. Only the right hand is used for taking up the food.
Dhotara is always white, in accordance with the Brähman's vow as a Snātaka. A white or faintly striped cotton shirt is worn over the Dhotara, and a suit coat of white or cream cotton cloth, or tussore silk, or black alpaca. The old stately fashion in Brähman dress has entirely disappeared out of modern Maharāstra. Even European dress is worn by many Brahmans instead of Onwaleh. In the state of Onwaleh, the modern Maharāstra Brähman touches non-Brähmans and people of any class without contracting guilt. For instance, if he should be a doctor, touching patients of all classes; or a pleader, taking documents from the hands of non-Brähman clients.

Evening ritual.

On returning home each evening from his occupation of the day, the orthodox Maharāstra Brähman resumes the state of Onwaleh by a change of garments, having first washed his feet and hands in running water from the tap, or poured on from a higher level by one of the family.

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1. For the list of the Snātaka's vows, cf. Thesis Ch. 10 the last page. The Brähman is a Snātaka when he bathes off his celibate youth vows and is about to enter the married state.

2. The older generation of Brähmans used to wear, until the nineteen thirties or so, a tussore silk coat of three quarter length over the dhotara, a pair of red shoes, the toes of which were made to curl backward on the uppers in a picturesque fashion. There being no welt round the heel, the shoes could be discarded easily at a shrine, or at the door of a temple, or on entering a house. The headgear was a made-up turban of crimson and gold, and the whole ensemble was very dignified.

The present headgear of the modern Brähman, and of the other classes is the white and attractive Gāndhi cap.
Evening Ritual.

Orthodox evening ritual includes the performance of Sandhyā worship, and the eating of the evening meal. If the lamp should go out while the meal is in progress, the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman takes his plate in his hand, and performs Smaraṇa (Meditation or Remembrance) of the Sun, and, when the lamp is again lighted, looks at it continually, while finishing the food in his plate. He takes no further helping of food.

The ritual of night rest involves sleeping with the head toward the East, or West, or South, but never toward the North. The reciting of a Sūkta (sacred verse), an obeisance to Viṣṇu, and meditation on Rṣis or Sages, are the acts preparatory to sleep. The sect mark is removed from the forehead, before retiring to rest.

1. The attitude at the time of the evening Sandhyā worship is sitting, facing the West, with the knees drawn up.

2. Either evening, or morning, food, or both, may be periodically replaced by a fast, for reasons of ritual, or for a penance.

3. Vedic study may occupy part of a Brāhman's time during the first Prahara of the night (i.e. 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.). The second and third Praharas (9 p.m. to 3 a.m.) are those strictly appointed for sleep. The fourth Prahara (3 a.m. to 6 a.m.) is for rising, bathing, and worship.
Chapter Five

THE CALENDAR AND ITS BEARING ON RITUAL

Before proceeding to discuss the particular religious rites of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, it is very necessary to point out that a great factor in those rites is the consideration of auspicious and inauspicious times, and the powers that preside over those times, to render efficacious, or inefficacious, as the case may be, the acts performed in them. There is a definite time in which a rite, or a religious act, may be auspiciously performed, and there is a definite time which must be avoided in reference to its performance.

There are also degrees of auspicious performance — a time most highly auspicious, a time mediumly auspicious, and a time least auspicious. Such times are determined, in respect of each rite and observance, by an elaborate Calendar, to the institution of which have gone many contributions, not only from Hindu astrology and astronomy, but also from foreign science.

The Āryans of the Rgveda appear to have had only slight knowledge of astronomy. No astronomical work of those days has

I. i.e. other than daily.
survived. The earliest Vedic Calendar, called Jyotiṣa, of which there are two recensions - one belonging to one of the Rgveda branches of tradition, and the other to a Yajurveda branch - appears to be a work of late post-vedic date.¹

Macdonell, in his History of Saṁskṛta Literature² gives expression to the general opinion that the Ṛyans in India derived their astronomical knowledge from external sources.

Their twenty-eight divisions of the moon's orbit, for instance were borrowed from the Chaldaans, with whom they came into touch through their trading relations with the Phoenicians. Their knowledge of the Zodiacal signs was derived from the Greeks. The Greek names of the zodiacal signs were used in Hindu astronomy, and Hindu astronomical works sometimes bore Western titles, as, for instance, Hora Śāstra, and Romaka Siddhānta. Having thus borrowed from the West, the Indians themselves progressed in astronomical research beyond the Greeks, and in the eighth and ninth centuries, Hindu astronomy, through the Arabs, influenced Europe.

In the twelfth century, however, after the days of the famous Hindu astronomer, Bhāskarācārya, Hindu astronomy suffered a decline, and lapsed again into the old astrology - reviving

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¹ History of Saṁskṛta Literature. Macdonell. p.265.
² Page 425.
later, however, when Hindūs took to the study of Arab works on their own Hindū astronomical science.

Hence, the present Hindu Calendar is a surprisingly interesting combination of astronomy with astrology, to which mythology also adds a contribution.

The Year

The present day Mahārāstra Brāhman knows five kinds of years, namely:

1. The Cāndra year of twelve lunar months, or 354 lunar days.

2. The Saurs year of the sun's passage through the twelve signs of the zodiac, i.e. 365 days.

3. The Sāvana year of Twelve Sāvanas, or twelve months of thirty solar days, i.e. 360 days.

4. The Nāksatra year of twelve passages of the moon through the twenty-seven lunar asterisms, or Nāksatras, i.e. 324 days.

5. The Bārhaspatya year, or the passage of the planet Jupiter through the twelve zodiacal signs, i.e. 361 days.
The terminology of the Candra year is used in all religious rites and ceremonies, and in all śaṅkalpas (Resolutions), which form the initial step in any Karma or religious act. The Nāksatra year is in use in determining auspicious and inauspicious times for performance of rites, and also for determining the nāksatra name of a Brāhman. The other three kinds of years modify the times of rites and ceremonies, from the point of view of convenience (as to time of day, etc.). They determine also periodical observances, as for instance, the observance of the sun's entry into a new sign, the observance of the Kapila-Śaṣṭi (at the end of the cycle of Jupiter); and also the twelve yearly pilgrimage called the Simhastha Yātra, at Nāsik, when Jupiter is in Leo (Simha).

Divisiones of the year.

1. Ayana. The eliptic is divided into two Ayanas — literally, Comings, or Movements:
   
   (a) Uttarāyana, which is the return of the sun to the Northern hemisphere (his entry into Capricorn).

   (b) Daksināyana, which is the return of the sun to the Southern hemisphere (his entry into Cancer).

I. The utterance of Desaṅgāla (i.e. time and place) forms part of a śaṅkalpa.

2. A Brāhman has four names. His Nāksatra name is the one which he uses (secretly spoken) at the time of performing śnāna-Sandhyā. This name is known only to his parents, his spiritual teacher, and himself. He first learns it at his Thread Ceremony.

3. Every sixty years.
2. **Rtu.** The year's seasons or **Rtu** are of two kinds:

(a) **the Saura Rtu,** which are six, each of two months duration, beginning with Vasanta, or Spring, at the sun's entry into Aries, i.e. at the Vernal Equinox.

(b) **the Candra Rtu,** which also are six, each of two months duration, beginning from the New Moon immediately preceding the sun's entry into Aries.

3. **Months.** The year's months are of four kinds:

(a) **the Candra Month,** regarded by Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans as beginning from the day after New Moon, and ending on the day of the next New Moon.

(b) **the Saura Month,** from the sun's entry into a zodiacal sign to his departure into the subsequent sign.

(c) **the Sāvana month,** of thirty risings and settings of the sun.

(d) **the Nāksatra month,** consisting of one lunation, i.e. the moon's passage through the twenty-seven (or, in later mythology, twenty-eight) lunar asterisms, or Nāksatras.

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1. The old era, called the Saivat era, founded by King **Vikramaditya** of Ujjain, and commencing from 57 B.C., counted the New Year from the autumnal **equinox.** The Spring equinox is the New Year of the later system, known as the Saka era, and founded by King **Salivāhana** of Paithān in Maharāṣṭra in 78 A. D.

2. Another reckoning is from the day after Full Moon to the following Full Moon. But this is not the practice among the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans. The Dharmasindhu (page 2) states that the month beginning after Full Moon is observed by the people North of the Vindhyā Range.

Divisions of the Month.

The lunar month is divided into two Paksas, or Halves, (literally 'Wings'), which are

(a) the Sukla Pakṣa, or Light Half of the month during the waxing moon, i.e. from the day after New Moon to the day of Full Moon.

(b) the Kṛṣṇa Pakṣa, or Dark Half of the Month, during the waning Moon, i.e. from the day after Full Moon to the day of New Moon.

4. Days. Days are of two kinds:

(a) the Divasa, or Solar day, beginning at 6 a.m., and lasting twenty-four hours.

(b) the Tithi, or Lunar day, the duration of which is one thirtieth part of the moon's orbit, i.e. one thirtieth of 360 degrees, which is 12°. Owing to the Moon's not travelling every twelve degrees in uniform time, the lunar days vary in length, the variation amounting to as much as, approximately, four and a half hours between the shortest and the longest lunar day.

1. The week, though in use in India, with the days named after planets, has no intrinsic value from the point of the Hindu Calendar. The Indian names for the days of the week are the equivalent of the Greek names - each solar day being sacred to the planet after which it is called.

Half of each month, there are fourteen Tithis (lunar days) plus Full Moon Day (Paurnima), while in the Dark Half there are fourteen Tithis Plus New Moon Day (Āmāvāsyā).
Divisions of a day.

(a) The Prahara. The solar day is divided into eight equal parts, called Praharas, the length of a Prahara, or watch, being three hours. The day Praharas are four, beginning from 6 a.m., and the night Praharas are four, beginning from 6 p.m.. The Japse of each Prahara is announced in temples and hermitages by the beating of a drum, or the sounding of a gong.

(b) The Ghaṭikā. The sixtieth part of the solar day is called a Ghaṭikā. The duration, therefore, of a Ghaṭikā is twenty-four minutes. The Ghaṭikā is divided into sixty palas, or Straws; the Pala into sixty Vipalas; the Vipala into sixty Prati-vipalas.

These measurements are used for timing the Muhūrta, or the Auspicious Moment, for the consumation of any religious rite, such as the Sacrificial Thread Ceremony, the Marriage Ceremony, etc..

(c) The Karana. The Karana is an astrological division of the lunar day. There are eleven Karanas, seven of which are movable, or Adhruvāni — each occupying six degrees, or half of a lunar day; and when repeated eight times, occupy the lunar month from the second half of the first day of the Light Half of the month, to the first Half of the fourteenth day of the Dark Half of the month. The other four Karanas are fixed, and are called Dhruvāni. They occupy the following four half days in each lunar month: — the latter half of the Dark Fourteenth,
the two halves of the New Moon Day, and the first half of the Light First. For a statement of this paragraph in tabulated form, see Appendix IX.

The Samvatsara

The Samvatsara is a luni-solar year, the months of which have both lunar and solar names— the solar names being those of the signs of the zodiac, and the lunar names being derived from the names of the Naksatras, or lunar asterisms in which the Moon was full, during the year when the Samvatsara was first employed.

I. The names of the eleven astrological divisions are:-

2. The twentyeight names of the lunar asterisms:

| 1. Dhanisthā | II. Ardrā | 21. Viśākhā |
| 10. Mrgashirṣa | 20. Svāti | (* or, Rādhā ) |

Mythologically, the lunar asterisms are the wives of the Moon, and daughters of Dakṣa. (Dowson's Classical Dictionary, p.464. Cols. I, 2.)
The names of the months of the Samvatsar year are, accordingly as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solar Names</th>
<th>Corresponding Lunar Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meṣa (Aries)</td>
<td>Caitra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vṛṣabha (Taurus)</td>
<td>Vaiśākha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mithuna (Gemini)</td>
<td>Jyeṣṭha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karka (Cancer)</td>
<td>Āṣāḍha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simha (Leo)</td>
<td>Śrāvaṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanyā (Virgo)</td>
<td>Bhādrapada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tūlā (Libra)</td>
<td>Āsvina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vṛuscika (Scorpion)</td>
<td>Kārttika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhamu (Sagittarius)</td>
<td>Mārgasirāṣa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makara (Capricorn)</td>
<td>Pausa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumbha (Aquarius)</td>
<td>Māgha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mīna (Pisces)</td>
<td>Phālguna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans most usually employ the lunar names for all purposes, religious and secular. But the solar names are in occasional use, e.g. Makara Saṅkrānti (the festival at the time of the sun's entry into Makara): Simhastha, or Simhastha Guru, (the name given to the pilgrimage period coinciding with the stay of the planet Guru (Bṛhaśpati or Jupiter) in Simha (Leo).
Adjustments of Lunar to Solar time-measurements.

The combination of the lunar and the solar year entails certain adjustments of the lunar to the solar time, as follows:

I. Intercalary and Deleted Months.

(a) Vṛddhi. The lunar and solar months are obviously of different lengths. Each solar month is ushered in by a Sāṅkrānti, or the entry of the sun into a zodiacal sign. But it is possible for a lunar month to pass without the occurrence of a Sāṅkrānti. Such a month is, for purposes of ritual, unsuitable. It is called Vṛddhi Māsa, or Adhika Māsa (i.e. Extra month), or Mala Māsa (Month of uncleanness).

Such intercalary months occur with frequency, the intervening period between one and the next being of any duration from three to eight or nine months. Having no Sāṅkrānti, and, consequently no name of its own corresponding to a solar month, it takes the name of the subsequent month. For instance, the Mala Māsa preceding the month of Vaiśākha (extra to Vaiśākha) is called Adhika Vaiśākha., while the month Vaiśākha proper is called Suddha Vaiśākha, or pure Vaiśākha.

I. For full details of Observances which may, and which may not, be performed in a Mala Māsa, see Dharmasindhu. p. II. Generally speaking, only urgent rites may be performed in the Mala Māsa. Śrāddha ceremonies in honour of the beginning of a Yuga (Age), or of a Manvantara (Period), are to be observed in the Mala Māsa and also in the clean month which follows it.
(b) Kṣaya. When it happens that a lunar month extends over two Saṅkrāntis, that month is also rejected as far as ritual is concerned, and is called Kṣaya Māsa (a consumed or deleted month). Like the Adhika Month, it also is considered as a Mala Māsa or Month of Uncleaness.

The interval between one deleted month and the next following is either 141 years or 19 years. The deleted month never occurs in a month other than a Kārttika, or a Mārgasirṣa, or a pausa.

A year in which a Kṣaya month occurs has always two Adhika months, one occurring at some time before, and one after, the Kṣaya month. The former of these, known as the Samaarpa, or Creeping month is an exception to the general rule, it not being counted unclean, but being accepted for the performance of religious rites.

2. Intercalary and Deleted Lunar Days.

The Tithis or Lunar days are classified into Vṛddhi and Kṣaya on the following principle.

(a) Vṛddhi. When a Tithi is longer than a solar day, and has in it two sunrises, it is reckoned as corresponding

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1. The Dharmasindhu p.9 gives the Karmas which may, and which may not, be performed in the Kṣaya Māsa.
2. For an illustration of this, see Thesis Appendix II.
to two solar days, and the part of it which contains the first solar day is called the Adhika Tithi, or Vṛddhi Tithi.

(b) Kṣaya. A Tithi which begins and ends between two sunrises is called Kṣaya, and is deleted, i.e. not used at all for religious purposes.

3. The duration of the lunar days with reference to sunrise and sunset.

(a) Pūrṇa. A lunar day which covers sixty ghatikas after sunrise is called Pūrṇa, i.e. a Full Tithi.

(b) Sakhaṇḍa. A Tithi of any other description is known as a Sakhaṇḍa, or a Deficient Tithi. The Sakhaṇḍa Tithis are again subdivided into (i) Suddha or Clear. A Sakhaṇḍa Tithi beginning with sunrise, and ending with sunset, is a Suddha or Clear Sakhaṇḍa. (ii) Viddha, or Pierced. All other Sakhaṇḍas are called Viddha, or pierced, and are of two kinds, namely those that terminate within the six Ghaṭikās after sunrise, which are called the Dawn-divided Tithis (Prātar-viddha Tithi), and those the terminate within the six Ghaṭikās before sunset, which are called the Dusk-divided (Sayamviddha Tithis).

1. A Tithi that lasts till midnight on such occasions as the nocturnal festival of Mahāśivarātṛa, is also called Suddha, i.e. Clear, or convenient for a religious purpose.

2. Of the above, the Pūrṇa and the Suddha Sakhaṇḍa are acceptable for the observance of religious rites, but the Viddha is subject to exceptions. Dharmasindhu p. 9.
Brhaspati-Cakra (The Cycle of Jupiter).

Vedic astronomy considers a five year cycle of the sun and moon, in which the sun completes five times 366 solar days (= 1830 days), while the moon completes five times 12 months of 30 Tithis plus two Adhika months, i.e. 62 months of 30 Tithis each. A lunar month of thirty Tithis being equal to $29\frac{16}{31}$ solar days, the moon consequently completes in the above period 62 times $29\frac{16}{31}$, or 1830 solar days.

This five year cycle of sun and moon is called a five-year Yuga; and this Yuga, combined again with Brhaspati's (Jupiter's) progress through the zodiac (approximately twelve years-), makes a sixty year cycle, which is known as Brhaspati-Cakra, or the Cycle of Brhaspati or Jupiter.


Mythologically, the sixty years are believed to be the sixty sons of the sage Nārada, who was turned into a woman for the sin of coveting one of Kṛṣṇa's 16, 108 wives, and who subsequently became the mother of sixty sons. In compensation to the sons, Viśnū later gave them the rule over the world for a year each, in turn - i.e. a sixty year cycle. The sacred day on which Nārāḍī, the woman, was turned again into Nārada, the sage, is observed at the end of each Brhaspati-Cakra, the observance being known as Kapila Ṣaṭṭi.
Mythological Time Measurements.

To find the further measures of time used in the Hindu Calendar, and by Mahāraṣṭra Brāhmans, one must now turn to the realm of mythology. The Mahāraṣṭra Brāhman believes that one solar year is one day of the gods, their daytime being the six months from Magha to Asādha (i.e. during the Uttarāyana, or the sun's stay in the Northern hemisphere), and their night-time lasting from Sravāṇa to Pauṣa (i.e. during the Daksīṇāyana, or the sun's stay in the Southern hemisphere). Three hundred and sixty solar years are, then, equal to one year of the gods. The span of creation is believed to stretch as far as twelve thousand years of the gods.

The span of creation is divided into four periods, known as Yugas - the names of which are, Kṛta Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvāpara Yuga, and Kali Yuga. These are of 4000, 3000, 2000, and 1000 years of the gods, respectively; each being preceded by a period called Sandhyā, which is a period of twilight; and followed by another period of twilight called Sandhyaṁsa, the twilight periods each being equal in duration to one tenth part of its Yuga.

Thus, the four Yugas, with their preceding and following twilights, cover respectively 4,800, 3,600, 2,400, and 1,200 years of the gods, making the total of 12,000 divine years, as stated above.

The above period of 12,000 divine years, which is called a Mahāyuga, is believed to be one age of the gods. When one thousand of such ages have passed, one day-time of Brahmā, the Creator, is complete. On the completion of Brahmā's day, the creation in existence is dissolved. Its dissolution is called Pralaya.

A day of Brahmā is called a Kalpa. Two Kalpas are a month of Brahmā. Twelve times thirty Kalpas complete his year, and, after existing one hundred of his years, Brahmā's dissolution takes place, and all creation with him. This great dissolution is known as Mahāpralaya.

The present Creation is believed to be in the Svetāvarāha Kalpa of the fifty-first year of Brahmā, and in its fourth Yuga, which is Kaliyuga.

1. Brahmā's night-time, which follows, is also of one thousand ages of the gods in duration. When Brahmā's next day begins, the process of creation is repeated.


The Manvantara.

Each day of Brahmā is believed to comprise fourteen periods known as Manvantaras. Each Manvantara is believed to be presided over by a great law-giver, or Manu. Hence its name Manvantara. (Manu + Antara (period)). The first Manu of this present day of Brahmā is Manu Svāyambhuva, who is believed to have sprung from Svayambhuva, the Self Existent, and to have produced the ten Prajāpatis, who became the progenitors of the human race.

The Manu of this present creation is the seventh Manu, called Manu Vaivasvata, son of Vivasvat, the Sun.

The above Calendar must have been devised between the age of the Rgveda and that of the Mahābhārata. There is no trace of such a system of chronology in the Rgveda, while Hanumat's speech in the Mahābhārata shows it fully developed. ²

Application of the Calendar to Ritual

The connection between the Calendar and the religious rites


2. The synopsis of Hanumat's speech, describing conditions in each of the four Yugas, is given in Dowson's Classical Dict. p. 382.
and observances of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans will become more apparent as these religious observances are considered in detail. The following are some general rules.

I. Period of universal defilement at the time of an eclipse.

Ceremonial defilement of all the four castes is believed to occur at each time of an eclipse. Although the cause of eclipse has been scientifically understood in India from the sixth century, when the great Hindu astronomer, Varahamihira, lived, the general belief of the masses, including the Brāhmans, is that, during a solar or a lunar eclipse, the sun, or moon, is being swallowed by the demon Rāhū. I

While an eclipse is in progress, all lakes and rivers are believed to become endowed with the virtue of the river Ganges (the goddess Gānāṭa), and the defilement caused to the four castes by the eclipse is believed to be removed by the performance of Snāna (bathing) at the moment of the first contact, and again, when the eclipse is over.

I. This belief is connected with an incident to do with the Tortoise incarnation of Viṣṇu. (Cf. Ch. 15 of Thesis, section 2, under Incarnations of Viṣṇu). Rāhū was the name of the demon who stole the nectar, and whose act was discovered by the sun and moon.
2. The Daily Meretricious Period at the time of Sandhyā

The Sandhyā period is regarded as lasting for one Ganda¹ (which consists of a Ghaṭikā, or twenty-four minutes) before, and one Ganda after, sunrise, noon,² and sunset.

Each time of Sandhyā is divided into Uttama (Best), Madhyama (Medium), and Kaniṣṭha (Least) times of merit, signifying that the act of Sandhyā worship acquires the best, medium, or least merit, according to the time at which it is performed. In the morning, the best merit is believed to be obtainable when the stars are still visible; the medium merit when the stars are disappearing; and the least merit after sunrise. In the evening the time of best merit is when the sun is above the horizon; the time of medium merit when the sun is setting, or has just set; the time of least merit when the stars appear.³

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1. Ganda, literally a 'cheek', i.e. a raised part, or chief part; hence, best, excellent.
3. Cf. Sandhyā Kala. Dharmasindhu page 323.441

The Dharmasindhu, however, gives the Noon Sandhyā time as lasting from four and a half hours after sunrise until the beginning of the Evening Sandhyā.
3. The monthly Meratricious period in connection with the Sankrāntis.

Certain moments before and after, or in certain cases, only before, or only after, the Sun's, or a planetary body's entry into a zodiacal sign, are called the Punyakāla, or Time of Merit, and are efficacious for the performance of śrāna and certain observances. The Dharmasindhu gives the meritricious moments in the case of each zodiacal sign; and for convenience they are written here in tabulated form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun's or Planet's entry into the sign below</th>
<th>Number of Meratricious Ghatikas before the transit</th>
<th>Number of Meratricious Ghatikas after the transit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meṣa²</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vṛsabha</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mithuna</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karka</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śimha</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanyā</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tula²</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vṛscika</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhanu</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makara</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumbha</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Dharmasindhu p. 3 under Sankrānti Parvakāla.
2. In the cases of Meṣa and Tula, some take the period to be ten, and not fifteen Ghatikas.
In the five cases above, where the time of Merit is considered to occur only after the planet's transit, if, at the moment of transit, there are less than two ghatikas of the solar day remaining, then the time of Merit, as stated above in each case, is counted as occurring before, instead of after, the transit.

Similarly, in the five cases above, where the time of Merit is believed to be only before the transit, if the transit occurs before the solar day is two ghatikas old, then the time of Merit in each case is considered as occurring after, instead of before.

The rule for night-time Sankrāntis.

If a Sankrānti occurs before midnight, the time of Merit is the last part of the preceding day; if after midnight, it is the first part of the following day; if exactly at midnight, the time of Merit covers both the above periods.

In the case, however, of Makara Sankrānti at night, the time of Merit is, in all the above circumstances, on the next day. Similarly, in the case of Karka Sankrānti, occurring at night, the time of Merit is on the previous day.

1. An exception is that if it occurs during the three ghaṭikās after sunset, the meritorious period is on the previous day.
2. The exception here is that, if the transit into Karka occurs during the three ghaṭikās before sunrise, the meritorious period is on the subsequent day. (For both these notes cf. Dharmasindhu p. 4.)
4. Periods to be avoided at a Sānkṛānti with reference to certain Karmas, or Religious Acts.

(a) With reference to auspicious rites.

Generally speaking, all Sānkṛāntis, whether of the Sun, or of the planetary bodies, are considered to be times of danger. Religious ceremonies of an auspicious nature are, therefore, not performed within the period of a certain number of Ghaṭiκās of the Sānkṛānti. The number of Ghaṭiκās to be avoided varies in the case of different planets, as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planet</th>
<th>Ghaṭiκās</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sūrya Sānkṛānti (Sun)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candra (Moon)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maṅgala (Mars)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budha (Mercury)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bṛhaspati (Jupiter)</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śukra (Venus)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sani (Saturn)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These numbers are to be taken as half before, and half after, the moment of Sānkṛānti.

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I. In particular, for each individual, the entry of a planet into the sign under which he was born is considered inauspicious. To destroy evil influences, Śnāna, with lotus leaves in the water, is appointed.

Others, universal, times of danger are the stay of the planet Guru (Bṛhaspati) in the sign Simha - and the setting of Guru, and of Śukra.
(b) With reference to Vedic Study.

Study of the Veda is suspended for a period of thirty-six hours in the case of certain classes of Śaṁkrāntis. The Śaṁkrāntis are spoken of as belonging to four Saṁjña, or Classes, namely, Viṣṇupada, Śaṁśiti, Viṣuva, and Ayana, as shown in the diagram prepared below. Vedic study is suspended during periods of Śaṁkrānti of the Viṣuva and Ayana classes. The period of suspension is called Anādhyāya, i.e., Non-study, as opposed to Ādhyāya (Study). Anādhyāya extends over thirty-six hours, the rule being that, if the Śaṁkrānti in question takes place in the daytime, that day, with its preceding and following nights, is the period of non-study; or, if the Śaṁkrānti occurs at night, the period of Non-study is that night, with its preceding and following day.

The more particular application of the Calendar to Karma, or the practice of ritual, will become apparent in the following chapters, after the nature of Karma has been discussed.

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I. The four classes are in an ascending degree of Merit. That is to say that bathing, offering gifts, etc., bring more or less merit, according to the class of the Śaṁkrānti. The following table shows the twelve zodiacal signs, and the class in which the Śaṁkrānti into each is placed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Meṣa</th>
<th>Vṛ.</th>
<th>Mit</th>
<th>Kar</th>
<th>Sim</th>
<th>Kan</th>
<th>Tu</th>
<th>Vṛsc</th>
<th>Dh</th>
<th>Mak</th>
<th>Ku</th>
<th>Mina</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ayana</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viṣuva</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śaṁśiti</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viṣṇupada</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Six

DAIVA KARMA - THE PŪJĀ RITES

The conception of Karma held by the Hindūs is, in the first sense, that of activity of any kind, as opposed to non-activity. Karma is unavoidable by the spirit which has come into contact with matter - that is to say, unavoidable by a mortal creature. In the second sense, Karma implies, in the case of a human being, acts to which a moral value attaches, and from which the soul's destiny is determined. Narrowing the meaning further still, in its application to the Brāhman, the Brāhman believes that Karma is the moral duty imposed by the peculiarities of his class or caste, and that the working out of Karma in the acts of life, as life is lived by Brāhmans, is the way for the ordinary Brāhman, i.e. the non-ascetic, to attain ultimately to Mokṣa, or Freedom, from personal existence.¹

A second doctrine, that of Re-incarnation, goes hand in hand with the doctrine of Karma. The Brāhman believes that the Karma of the present life will affect the destiny of the next - just as the happiness or misery of this life is the result

¹ The Gṛhastha, or Householder Brāhman, proceeds toward the goal by way of the due performances of Karma, while the ascetic follows the way of prasānti, or nonactivity, suppressing all natural desire.
Karma of the sum total of his in lives that he has already lived. The Brahmans share also the common Hindu belief that all Karma is unreal, that misery and happiness also are unreal, and that the process of Karma and Re-incarnation, is merely the effect of illusion, or Maya, which has resulted from the desire of the Atma (spirit) to seek and establish contact with prakriti, or Pradhana, i.e. material appearance.

The Maharashtra Brahmans - even those of the villages, who are the equal of the others in their meditative characteristics hold firmly this Sankhya conception of Karma. They believe that the object of the present life is to perform all Karma with a view to its affect on future incarnation, and that, if well done, Karma leads the more speedily to the escape from Maya, and cessation of rebirth. Karma, then, from the Maharashtra viewpoint, comprises all the acts of life - the daily religious ceremonial acts, the occasional ceremonial acts, the prescribed bodily rites or Samskaras, and the worship of gods and ancestors. It is to the last-mentioned - the worship of gods and ancestors, that the word Karma in its narrowest sense applies. In this sense, the word means an observance in honour of an object of worship.

The performance of any Karma must take place at the moment appointed as being auspicious in destiny. This is to say, it must take place at a moment that has the favour of planets and
gods. If the Chief time has been missed, the Secondary time must be used; and if the secondary time also has been missed, atonement must be made.

Karmas are considered as divided into three classes according to their frequency of performance: (1) Nitya Karma, the daily or regularly recurrent acts, (2) Naimittika Karmas, special acts, and (3) Nityanaimittika Karmas, periodically recurrent acts.

Examples of these are, in the case of acts in honour of the gods:

1. Nitya. The daily worship of images.

2. Naimittika. Fulfilment of some special vow to worship a certain god for a definite time.


Under acts in honour of ancestors would come the following:

1. Nitya. The daily water offering to the ancestors.

2. Naimittika. The observance of the first obsequial offering to a dead relative.


The Puja Rites.

Acts in honour of the gods consist in Vratas, or Observances of worship in the form known as Murtipujă, or adoration of idols. Subsidiary to this are two kinds of Karma, namely, Dāna (the offering of gifts), and Upavāsa (Fasting). In aic
addition to their subsidiary uses in connection with worship, the acts of Dāna and Upavāsa are also practised independently as separate Vratas or observances.

The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ worships material symbols of the various gods in his own home, in the temples, and in the shrines on public roads, on the river banks, and at the bathing ghats. At the small public shrines, his acts of pūjā consist merely in ringing the bell in front of the image, in making Namaskāra (an obeisance), in offering Dāna (perhaps a little rice or a flower), in Pradaksinā (the walking five times round the shrine), and, finally, in another obeisance in front of the image, before he steps again into his shoes, which have been discarded for the act of worship, and passes on his way.

The full ritual of worship as observed in the proper ceremony of pūjā, consists of sixteen acts, which are preceded and followed by certain prescribed ceremonials.

Certain differences are to be observed between the pūjā ritual of the Vaiṣṇavas (worshippers of Viṣṇu), and that of the Śaivas (worshippers of Śiva). Every Brāhmaṇ in Mahārāṣṭra belongs to one or other of these two sects. Mostly, the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇs are Vaiṣṇavas.

1. Dāna to the planets as propitiations. House gifts. Cf. p. 221 in the Dharmasindhu; at time of Sāhkrānti, Dharmasindhu p.5.
2. Upavāsa. Fasts are of four degrees: Upavāsa for twenty-four hours: Ekabhukta, eating at noon only: Nakta Bhojana, eating at night only; and Ayācita, eating only unsolicited alms. As a separate vow, many Brāhmaṇs fast regularly on the 11th lunar day (Ekādasi), etc.
Vaiṣṇava Pūjā.

The procedure amongst the Mahārashṭra Brāhmans who worship Visnu and his Incarnations is as follows:

The preparatory acts are

To remove the Nirmālya, or faded flowers that have been used in previous worship, from the god, before sunrise.

With a Mantra, to ring the bell before the idol; to perform Ācamana, and Prānāyāma, and to utter Desa-kāla (place and time).

Then to make the Saṅkalpa, or Resolution, to perform the pūjā.

To perform Nyāsa, or the placing of the fingers in certain positions on various parts of the body, while repeating certain Stanzas.

To worship the Kalāśa (Vessel), Śankha (Conch shell), and the Ghanṭā (Bell), and also the water to be used, and to sprinkle the body, and the utensils for pūjā.

To perform Dhyāna, or Meditation on the god, and then to proceed with the sixteen acts of Pūjā.

The Sixteen Means (The Śodasopacāra). The famous poem called the Puruṣa Śūkta in the Rgveda, which describes the distribution of the parts of the Puruṣa to form the creation, has sixteen verses or stanzas, one of which is recited with each of the sixteen acts of Pūjā.

I. The Rgveda 10. 90. Quoted in Thesis Appendix III.
The sixteen means in the Puja are:

1. Avahana, the summoning of the deity into the idol, is the first step, accompanied by the recitation of the first Rg or Stanza of the Rgveda poem. In the case of the worship of the Salagrama stone, there is no invocation of the deity.

2. Asana. Offering the idol its seat for worship.

3. Padya. Washing the idol's feet.

4. Arghya. Offering a water oblation.

5. Ācamana. Offering the idol water to sip.

6. Snāna. Bathing the idol, after which comes the ringing of the bell.

7. A second offering of water for the idol to sip.

8. Pañcamrta Snāna. A bath with milk, curds, butter, honey and sugar, after which the idol is sprinkled with powdered sandal wood, scented grass, camphor, saffron and aloe wood.

9. Vastra. The offering of a garment, or of cloth.

---

1. The Saalagrama is a stone of black ammonite, believed to represent Visnu himself, and regarded as very sacred. The circular, or spiral, formations, thought to be made by insects, are believed to have a mystical significance. Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman belief is that "a Brāhman who, even in the grip of lust or anger, either with or without devotion, performs the pūja of the Sālagrāma stone, will attain Liberation (Mokṣa)." Cf. Devapūja, Dharmasindhu. p. 346.

2. The same cloth may be offered daily to the image by the worshipper, provided that it is offered newly washed each time. This applies also to the offering of the sacrificial Thread to the idol, immediately after Vastra.
10. **Yajñopavīta.** The offering of the sacred thread.

11. **Gandha.** The offering of fragrant pigment for the forehead.

12. **Puṣpa.** Offering of flowers.

13. **Dhūpa.** The offering of Incense, with the tinkling of a bell.

14. **Dīpa.** Offering a lighted lamp, accompanied again with the sound of the bell.

15. **Naivedya.** The offering of some eatable, followed by an offering of water for Acamana.

16. **Namaskāra.** An obeisance before the feet of the idol.

On completion of the above sixteen acts of Puja, the worshipper circumambulates the idol, and then performs the rite of Visarjana, which is the dismissing of the deity from the image. It is done with the citing of a Mantra. In the case of the Salagrama, he only offers Puṣpānjali i.e. flowers offered in the two hands, held together to form a bowl, or Āṇjali.

The water which has been used in the Puja rite is removed in a vessel, and is, as an act of devotion, swallowed by the worshipper, in the belief that the water used for Viṣṇu is an atonement, during Kaliyuga, for sins.

The Nirmālya from Viṣṇu's head may not be worn on the head of the worshipper, though flowers taken from the heads of symbols of his incarnations are worn by the worshipper as a kind of prasāda, or favour, from the deity.1

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1. The sixteen in Puja are in general practice throughout India.
Saiva Puja.

The object of the worship of the Saiva Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans is, as everywhere, the Liṅga, or Phallic symbol. It is made of stone, or of earth, or, on occasions such as the observance of Mahāśivarātrī, of jewels. The Liṅgas seen in wayside shrines, and on the river banks and bathing ghats, are of stone, or of marble. The worship at public shrines like these consists only in the main acts of Puja.2

In the detailed ritual, the worship has the same main features as the Vaiṣṇava worship of images. Nyāsa (the placing of the fingers in prescribed positions), the worshipping of the utensils to be used in the Puja rite, and Jñāna or Meditation, are the preparatory steps, leading up to the culminating act of Prānapratiṣṭhā, the bringing of life into the Liṅga, by the recitation of prescribed Mantras.

The Sixteen Means.

The sixteen acts of Puja are observed almost similarly to those of the Vaiṣṇavas, with the following exceptions:

Instead of the Vastra offering of clothing, the Saiva devotees perform Tarpana, which is the refreshing of the Liṅga with water mixed with rice.

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1. The Dharmasindhu, on page 106, gives the reward of merit acquired, according to the kind and number of jewels given for the making of a Liṅga.

Also the act of Sumanas (Puspa) consists in offering a garland of Bilva-leaves - one hundred and eight, or else one thousand, in number.

Then, at the end of the Pūjā, the Puspanjali, or handful of flowers offered are twelve in number, and are offered with the recital of the following twelve names of Śiva: "Hail to Śiva", "Hail to Rudra", and to each of these - to Paśupati (Lord of creatures), to Nilakantha (the Blue-throated One), to Māheśvara (the great lord), to Harikesa (the Golden-haired as of the Sun), to Nirupākṣaya (the eternal), to Pīnāka (the god armed with a club), to Tripurāntaka (Destroyer of three cities), to Sambhu (creator of happiness and welfare), to Śūlin (the one who holds a trident or Śūla) and to Mahādeva (great god).

General Rules applying to Pūjā.

The general rules concerning the materials of which idols should be made according to tradition, and the manner of their

2. Tripura, or the Three cities, were, in epic poetry, three cities of gold, silver, and iron, in sky, air, and earth, belonging to a celebrated Asūra or Demon named Tripuras, who was destroyed by Śiva. Apte’s Sanskrit Dictionary. Vol.2 p.790. Col. 2.
3. For the Prahara Pūjā, offered at every Prahara in the ūrata or festival of Mahāśivarātri, cf. Dharmasindhypp. 153-156.
setting up and their worship are given in the Guide Book, the Dharmasindhu. Some main points, selected from the Dharmasindhu are the following:

The setting up of an idol (Arcā).

An idol set up without regard to auspicious circumstances, and the proper rules concerning its erection, destroys the person who has it erected. If set up without due Mantras, it destroys the priest. If set up without the special marks indicative of the deity which it represents, it destroys the wife of the person who erects it.

Images of Brahmā, and others.

Images of Brahmā should be erected in their place by Brāhmans. Viṣṇu may be set up by any person of one of the three castes i.e. the twice-born, the Thread wearers. The Mātrkās, who are the protective mother-deities, and also Bhairava (Śiva in his terrible form as Destroyer), may be set up by any person of the four castes (i.e. including the Śūdras). The Śiva-linga may be set up by a Sannyāsi (an ascetic of the Fourth Asrama).

Images of Śiva and of Viṣṇu may not be touched by any of the following: a Śūdra, an uninitiated Brāhman, a woman, or a person degraded from caste (Patita, Fallen).

1. Dharmasindhu. PP. 506 and onward.

2. The deities and the Mātrkās etc. mentioned above are described in Chapters 15 and 16 of this thesis.
Materials and Measurements for idols.

An idol may be made of gold, silver, copper, bell-metal, brass, earth, stone, jewels, etc. An idol made for home worship should be from seven to twelve finger breadths in height. In making a Śivalinga, five rules for its dimensions should be observed, namely, the height, breadth, depth, the throne on which it is to be seated, and the size of the gutter, or channel — all of which should be in relative proportions one to another.*

General Rules in reference to worship.

In performing Puja, in the case of an immovable idol that faces the East, the worshipper must face the West. But in the case of a movable idol, the worshipper should face the East, placing the idol to face the West.

More than one Linga, or more than one idol of any god, may not be worshipped in the one house. Idols of all of Viṣṇu's incarnations may not be kept in the one house. Cracked or broken or burnt idols may not be worshipped, with the exception that a cracked Śalagrāma stone is worthy of worship.

Idols representing gods, and also a Linga, made of jewels may be worshipped by the initiated and by the uninitiated. But a stone Linga, and a Śalagrāma, may not be worshipped by any except

I. For details of measurements, cf. the Dharmasindhu p. 507, under Pañcasūtra Nirṇaya.
an initiated person of the twice-born castes.

A Śalagrama stone that has been inherited from generation to generation of the family is of the highest degree of efficiency in respect of the merit conferred on the worshipper. A bought Śalagrama is of medium, and a Śalagrama begged as alms is of the least, efficiency.¹

Nirmālya. Nirmālya, or used flowers, should be removed from an idol with the tips of the thumb and first finger. The flowers when offered in Pūja should be lifted with the middle and ring fingers.

Home-grown flowers, perfect and free from insects, should be not offered in Pūja.² Bought flowers should be used unless a great number are being offered. Some authorities, however, allow that flowers may be bought from a gardener (of Vaisya Caste). Flowers for use in Pūja should not be begged as alms.

I. For further details about the special holiness of the Śalagrama stone, cf. Dharmasindhu. p. 509.


3. If flowers are not available, fruit; or if fruit is not to be had, then sacred grass should be offered. Flowers, fruit or grass — and also fuel for any occasion when burnt oblations are to be offered — should all be bought by the Brāhman himself. Dharmasindhu. p. 533

While bringing the flowers for Puja, the carrier of them should not bow to anyone. Nor should anyone make a Namaskāra to the flowers. In either of these cases, the flowers which are being carried become Nirmālya (i.e. already used in worship, and therefore unacceptable for the Puja rite).

The following circumstances cause flowers to become Nirmālya:
- if offered to a god, if held only in the left hand, if wrapt in a cloth that has been worn as apparel, or if put in water for the purpose of refreshing them.

Each kind of flower and leaf picked for use in Puja has a prescribed period after the expiration of which it is considered stale, and therefore unfit for use. The jasmine flower becomes unacceptable after the lapse of one prahara (three hours) from the time of its being picked; jasmine leaves after the lapse lapse of one day; tulsi leaves (holy Basil) after six days; sámi leaves after six days; dūrva after eight days; darbha grass after thirty days, etc. etc.

Certain flowers are dear to Viṣṇu, certain are dear to Śiva, certain to Durgā, wife of Śiva. Others again are forbidden as offerings to the above and other deities.

1. Ocimum Sanctum. 2. Acacia Suma. 3. Panic grass, Panicum Dactylon. 4. Kusa grass, Poa Cynosuroides. 5. To Viṣṇu the dearest leaves are of the tulsi plant, and the dearest flower the jasmine, while Śiva loves the Bilva leaves and the blue lotus. To offer a garland of one thousand of their favourite flowers to Viṣṇu or to Śiva confers on the worshipper millions of years millions of years in the paradise of the god who is thus adored. For many details cf. Dharmasindhup. 535. 6. Dharmasindhu. p. 536-537.
Chapter Seven

DATVA KARMA - ANNUAL VRATAS

The whole of the Mahārāṣtra Brāhmaṇ's calendar year is occupied with the observances of Vratas in honour of the gods, or in commemoration and worship of ancestors, or in the worship of planets at seasonal epochs, or in the performance of personal Karmas, as appointed for definite months or days.

The Mahārāṣtra Brāhmaṇ refers to his Karmas in terms of the Calendar, for instance, Āsādi Ekādaśi, the particular kind of fast required on the eleventh lunar day of the month Āsāha; Śrāvaṇī Somavāṇa, in reference to Karmas to be performed on the Mondays of the month Śrāvaṇa, and so on. To the Brāhmaṇ mind, each month brings with it a responsibility with regard to one or another Vrata. A review, therefore, of the Daiva Karmas of these kinds is best made according to the months of the Calendar, rather than according to a consideration of the deities honoured. The following account gives the chief celebrations observed during the year by the Mahārāṣtra Brāhmaṇ.

1. The Month Caitra.

Varṣapratipadā.

The first lunar day in the Light Half of the month Caitra is New Year's Day in Mahārāṣtra. It is called by the name of
Varsa Pratipada (the First of the Year). Maharashtra Brāhmans observe this festival by erecting a bamboo pole outside the house, decorating it with gaily coloured cloth, and placing an inverted metal bowl on the point of it. Some say that the pole represents the standard of the god Indra; others that its erection proclaims the victory of the god Rāma over the demon Rāvana. The above festival is also called Dhvajāropana (Dhvaja, a flag; Ropana, planting); also Gudhipadavā (Gudhi, a pole; Pādavā, the first day of a lunar month). Leaves of the Nimba tree, believed to be sacred to Śitalā, goddess of smallpox, are eaten to ensure good health.

Rāmanavami.

The birth of Rāma, the seventh incarnation of Viṣṇu, is celebrated on the 9th of the Light Half of Caitra, and is called Rāmanavami (Navami, ninth). A morning fast is observed, and in the temples the Rāmāyana is read. Readings are given every four hours, from the First of the month till the Ninth. The birth of Rāma is proclaimed from the temples at noon on the Ninth, and an image of the baby Rāma is displayed. In the homes, small idols of the god Rāma, with Śītā his wife, and Laksmana his brother, are worshipped. The fast is broken in the evening of the Ninth, and all night a vigil is kept. The following day is one of great rejoicing, and gifts and feasts are given to Brāhmans.

I. Nimba. (Azadirachta Indica).

2. The month Vaisākha

Aksaya Trtiya.

On the third of the Light Half of this month the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans observe the Vrata of Aksaya Trtiya, or Eternal Third. This festival commemorates the beginning of the Treta Yuga — though in some parts of India, and by some authorities in Mahārāṣṭra, this day is regarded as celebrating the commencement of the Satya (Kṛta) Yuga.

Parasurāma Jayanti.

On the above day, also, is celebrated the birth of Parasurāma, sixth incarnation of Viṣṇu. This deity is worshipped more especially by the Cittapāvana Brāhmans in the Koṅkaṇa, where his battles are believed to have been fought, and where his chief centre of worship in Mahārāṣṭra is found, at Chiplun. The time when the birth is celebrated is evening. Merit acquired by Karmas performed on this day is believed to be imperishable; and of the very highest degree, if the Trtiya (3rd. lunar day) occurs on a Wednesday, with the moon in the lunar asterism Rohinī.

Narasimha Jayanti.

The Thirteenth of the Light Half of this month is the day of the birth of Narasimha, fourth incarnation of Viṣṇu. The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans eat only once. Before the performance of Snāna, they apply a mixture of sesamum and 'Avalen' (Leaves of the Phyllanthus Emblica) to the body. Gifts are given to Brāhmans, and an image

I. Dhamasindhu. p. 5481
Cf Feasts and Holidays of the Hindus. (Imperial Record Dept. of Calcutta) P. 84
of the deity is worshipped in the evening.

Sītā Navami.

The Ninth of the Dark Half of this month is the anniversary of the incarnation of Sītā, wife of Rāma, seventh incarnation of Viśṇu, when she is specially worshipped.

During this month Vaiśākha, the offering of Dāna (Gifts) is believed to bring great merit. Fans and umbrellas are presented to Brāhmans, and vessels through which water can filtrate are erected over idols in the temples, thus providing the gods with cooling refreshment during this, the hottest, season.

3. The Month Jyeṣṭha.

During the month Jyeṣṭha, images of Brahmadeva, or Brahmā, made in dough of flour and water, are worshipped.

The Light Fourth is the observance of the incarnation of Pārvati, wife of Śiva. The observance is called Umāpūjā, or the puja of Umā (a name of Pārvatī).

The Light Eighth. On this day, Śukladevī, i.e. Sarasvati, wife or female energy of Brahmā, is worshipped.

The Light Ninth is observed as a fast, followed by the worship of Devī i.e. Lakṣmī, wife of Viśṇu.

The Light Tenth of Jyeṣṭha is the birthday of the River Ganges — the incarnation of the goddess Gāṇgā. The observance consists in Snāna and Pūjā, called Gāṅgāpūjana.
Jyeṣṭha Paurṇima (Full Moon). On the Full Moon of Jyeṣṭha, the Vrata known as Vata-Śāvitri is observed by women, who worship the goddess Śāvitri in the Vata tree, i.e. the Indian fig tree.¹

4. The Month Āṣāḍha.

ĀŚĀDHĪ EKĀDASI occurs on the Light Eleventh. The eleventh of each month are always observed as strict fasts. But, in particular, the Eleventh of the Light Half of Āṣāḍha is a very special fast, being the first fast-day of the rainy season, which is considered to begin on the Light Tenth of Āṣāḍha, and to last four months, ending on the Light Tenth of Kāṛttika. This period is called the Caturmāṣya (the four month period); and, during it, Viṣṇu is believed to retire to the bottom of the ocean for a four months sleep. In observance of the above fast, the Vaiṣṇavas refrain from food strictly, from the noon of the Light Tenth til the dawn of the 12th., spending the two intervening nights in meditating on the deity Viṣṇu. On the Eleventh after performing the Fūjā of Viṣṇu, the worshipper lays the image on its side in an attitude of sleep, and worships it in this attitude on three successive days, the 11th., 12th., and 13th.. This Karma is called Ṣayānī Vrata, or the Sleeping Worship. The Ekādasi (11th. day) is called Ṣayānī Ekādasi, or Sleeping Eleventh. It is also called the Mahāikādasi (Mahā + Ekādasi), the Great Eleventh.

¹. For the above Vratas in Jyeṣṭha, cf. Feasts and Holidays p73.
Puja of Vamana

The Light Twelfth of Asadha is the observance of the Puja of Vamana, fifth incarnation of Visnu. (I. Appendix iv.)

Asadha Full Moon.

Kokilavrata. The Kokila Vrata is a form of the worship of Durga, wife of Siva.

5. The month Sravana.

Sraavana Somavara (Sraavana Mondays).

Every Monday is believed to be sacred to Siva throughout the year. But the Mondays of the month Sraavana are more specially observed as Vratas in his honour. The fasts kept are either Ekabhukta (eating only one meal in the day), or Nakga (eating at night only), during the whole of the month. Also the Karma called Abhiseka (Anointing) is performed, by dropping consecrated water, drop by drop, on idols of Visnu and Siva.

Pavitraropana.

The worship known as Pavitraropana takes place during this month, when consecrated threads or necklaces, of a certain number of strands of cotton thread, twisted and knotted a prescribed number of times, are presented to Siva, to Visnu, to the priest, and to Brhaman friends. A necklace of the above description is called Pavatane. The prescribed days for offering Pavatane to Visnu are the Light Twelfth or Thirteenth, or when the Moon is in the lunar Asterism Sraavana, or on the Full
Moon Day in the month Srāvana. Pūjāvataḥ may be presented to Śiva on the Fourteenth or Eighth, or Full Moon; and to other deities (Devi, Gaṇapati, Durgā, etc.) on the Fourteenth, Fourth, Third, Ninth, or on the day of Full Moon.

Nāgapaścami.

The Fifth light day of Śrāvana is dedicated to the worship of the Snake (Nāga). A fast is observed from Noon on the 4th. On the Fifth morning, Puja is offered to the Nāga, which is represented by an image of a cobra made in clay, or else by a coloured picture. Bowls of milk are placed near snakes' holes, and cultivators refrain from digging or ploughing on this day, in case they should injure a worm. In the homes, women refrain from cutting vegetables, and from grinding. In the villages, an image of a snake is set up in the market-place, and Puja is performed before it. Probably, the chief centre of snake-worship in Mahārāṣṭra is Śirāle, where live snakes are caught, worshipped and afterwards set free.

Nāralī Paurnimā.

The Full Moon of Śrāvana is known as Nāralī Paurnimā, or Coconut Full Moon. This Vrata is observed completely, in Mahārāṣṭra, only among the people of the Konkana, as it consists in worshipping the sea with offerings of coconuts. It is a propitiatory rite, preparatory to the re-opening of the seaports of Mahārāṣṭra, after the first violence of the Monsoon has abated. Some believe that the offerings are made to Varuṇa,
the Vedic god of the sky, but in later Mythology regarded as god of the ocean.

**Vyāsa Puja.**

On the above day, also, is observed the worship of Vyāsa, the reputed compiler of the Vedas, and the name also of the reputed author of the Mahābhārata. Puja is offered to the Brāhmans who teach the Purāṇas and other religious books.

**Gokulāśṭami.**

On the Dark Eighth of Srāvana, the birth of the god Kṛṣṇa is celebrated, in the observance or Vrata known as Gokulāśṭami, that is the Gokula Eighth — Gokula being the name of the village and district on the river Yamuna, where the god Kṛṣṇa is believed to have spent his youth. The observance includes Upavāsa (Fasting for twenty-four hours), and the Puja of images of Kṛṣṇa, and of pictures representing scenes in his life. An all night vigil is kept on the Ninth, and on the Dark Tenth the fast is broken, and Brāhmans are feasted. On the breaking of the fast, the images of Kṛṣṇa are put away; or, if of clay, they are thrown into the river.

6. The month Bhādrapada.

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1. Vyāsa means simply Compiler, Arranger.
2. Kṛṣṇa means 'Black'. He is the eighth incarnation, and the only incarnation of Viṣṇu celebrated in the Dark Half of the lunar month.
3. The Bhāgavat Purāṇa is the great accepted authority on the life of Kṛṣṇa. But the Marāṭhī work 'Harivijaya', by the poet Sridhar, gives the popular Mahārāṣṭra version of Kṛṣṇa’s life.
6. The month Bhādrapada.

The Light Fourth of this month is called Ganeśācaturthī.

Ganeśā Caturthī, literally, Ganeśa Fourth, is the celebration of the deity Ganeśa, or Gaṇapati, the elephant-headed god, son of Śiva and Pārvatī. Owing to this god's having cursed the Moon for having laughed at him, and having made the curse permanently effective on this particular night, the Light Fourth of Bhādrapada, Marāṭhā Brahmans strictly avoid looking at the moon on this fourth lunar day. Gaṇapati is worshipped in the form of clay images, artistically coloured. These are thrown away on the first, third, seventh, or tenth day after the Ganeśācaturthī observance.

7. The month Āśvina.

Devināvarātra.

The Vrata of Devināvarātra (the nine nights of Devī, or Durgā) is observed from the Light First to the morning of the Tenth. During this period, pūjā of the goddess is performed three times, each day, especially by women who go in companies

1. Cf. Ganeśa. Thesis Ch. 15, under Section 'Deities other than the Triad'.
2. The Marāṭhā phrase "Caturthica candra pāhaṇē" (to look at the moon of the fourth) signifies "to meet with disaster". To do away with the Dosa or Guilt attaching to a sight of the moon on this date, Japa (repeated recitations of a Mantra) is required.
3. Durgā, in her mild form Gaurī, is the protective deity of the young wife, who performs Gaurīpūjana (worship of Gaurī) regularly for the first five years after marriage.
to the temple of the goddess.¹ The fast kept as a subsidiary
Vrata in this festival is either Ekabhukta, or else Nakta. The
other observances are the feasting of married women, and the
worship of a young, unmarried girl, in which the girl is taken
to represent the goddess.

Sarasvati Pūjana.

The Pūjā of the goddess Sarasvati, wife, or female energy
of Brahmā, is held during the above nine days, on the lunar
days coinciding with the following four lunar asterisms²:
Mūla, Purvāsādha, Uttarāśadha, and Śrāvana. When the moon
is in the Mūla Nakṣatra, Mahārāṣṭra Brahmans collect all the
sacred books in the house, and make a pile of them, as a throne
or pedestal, for the idol of Sarasvatī, which is placed on the
top of the pile, and worshipped during the above days.

Dasahara.³

On the Tenth Lunar day of Āśvina, the culmination of the
observance of the Nine Nights of Durgā is reached, in the

¹. The goddess Devī is called also Kālikādevī, or Kālakāi,
also Mahākālī. This goddess, wife or female energy of Śiva,
is manifested, as Mahākālī, in her most dread form. The mild
form of Śiva's female energy is Pārvati. Ch. 15. Deities.
³. Literally, 'doing away with ten'. A title of the River Ganges
as the remover of ten sins. Dasahara was held originally in hon-
our of Gangā on the Tenth of Jyeṣṭha, but is now held in honour
Col. 2.
celebration known popularly in Mahārāṣṭra as Daśara. This Tenth is called also Vijayī Daśāmi (the victorious one's Tenth). The occasion celebrates Durgā's victory over a certain demon in buffalo form, of the name of Maheśāsura. According to other Mahārāṣṭra belief, it celebrates the victory of Rāma, by the favour of Durgā, over the ten-headed demon king Rāvana of Lahka (Ceylon).1

In Mahārāṣṭra, up to about 1930 or so, the Dasara celebration took the form of a buffalo sacrifice. The victim was first mutilated, and, with its blood dripping, was led round the town or village (for every place had its victim). The procession halted before Durgā's temple, and the Headman had the right to be the first to strike the animal across the neck with a sword. After that it was hacked to death by the crowd. Its head was then buried in the town gateway to keep away demons. Happily, this custom is now obsolete. The above ceremony was never attended by the Brāhmans. But the origin of it is, of course, part of their mythology.

Sāmi worship. The only part taken in this festival by the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans is the worship of the Sāmi tree,2 from which hiding place the Pāṇḍavas were believed to have taken their

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2. Sāmi, Acacia Suma.
Dīpāvalī. The Festival of Lights.

From the Dark Thirteenth of Āsvina to the Light Second of the following month, the festival of Dīpāvalī (Rows of Lights) is celebrated. It is believed to be the time when the departed can come back to earth for a few days; and every home is lit up with many rows of small lamps to light the way for them. It is perhaps the most beautiful festival of the whole year. As it is one of the Karmas for the ancestors (the Pitṛs), more will be said of it in the next Chapter.

Dhana Trayodasi.

The first of the above days, the Dark Thirteenth is called Dhana Trayodasi, or Wealth Thirteenth, and is the occasion when Brāhmans, Ksatriyas and Vaiśyas worship their account books, pens, papers, ledgers, and their money. All are collected together, and smeared with turmeric and red lead, and, with them, the image of Lakṣmī, goddess of wealth, is honoured with Pūja rites. This ceremony marks the closing of the year's accounts, and the beginning of the new commercial year.

1. The subject of the great epic, the Mahābhārata.
2. Wife of Viṣṇu.
8. The month Kārttika.

Gopāstami.

The worship of the cow is observed on the Light Eighth of Kārttika. This Pūjā is believed to bring the worshipper the fulfilment of his greatest desire.

Prabodhini Ekādasī.

The Light Eleventh of this month ends the Caturmāsya period which began on the Light Eleventh of Āsādha. The Monsoon season is now over, and the ceremony of waking Viṣṇu, who is believed to have been asleep in the ocean during the last four months, now takes place. The day is called Prabodhini Ekādasī, the Awakening Eleventh. Some perform this ceremony on the Twelfth. The image of Viṣṇu is restored to its upright position, and Pūjā is performed.

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I. The Brāhman observance of Gopāstami is distinct from the agricultural festival observed by the farmers and cultivator who worship their plough bullocks and cart bullocks, washing them, painting their horns red, and adorning the tips with brass ornaments and tassels, and offering, in worship, garlands of marigolds to adorn their necks. This festival is observed in the Deccan on the New Moon of Śrāvaṇa, and is called by the Mahārāṣṭrians Polā. In the branches Koṅkaṇa, a similar festival, called Bendūra, is held on the Light First of Kārttika.

Tulasi Vivāha.

On the above occasion, the ceremony of Viṣṇu's marriage with the Tulasi plant is performed. Puja is offered to both Viṣṇu and Tulasi, the special feature of the rite being Maṅgalasāna, a bath with oil and saffron, followed by Pañcāmṛta-snāna, a bath with the five immortal things, which are believed to be milk, curds, clarified butter, honey, and sugar. Saffron and red powder are sprinkled over the Tulasi, as if the plant were a bride, and a wedding necklace is hung on it. An idol of Viṣṇu is placed before it, and a curtain hung between the two, as in the wedding rite. The marriage Mantras are said, and the curtain is then withdrawn. Feasts, and gifts of money (Bhūyasi), are given to Brāhmans.

9. The month Maṅgasīrṣa.

Datta Jayanti.

The birth of Datta, Dattātreya, is celebrated on the Full Moon Day of Maṅgasīrṣa, with the worship of Datta's image. In Mahārāṣtra, Datta is represented with three heads, and is considered to be a manifestation of the Triad.

I. For the legend of Tulasi, cf. Chapter 15. Section 'Deities other than the Triad'.

2. Cf. Appendix VII. Also Chapter 15. Major Deities.
10. The month Pausa.

Makara Šaṅkrānti.

The observance known as Makara Šaṅkrānti consists in the worship of the sun on his entry into Capricorn (Makara). It is the winter solstice, and is one of the four chief times at which the sun is specially worshipped. The above observance marks the sun's turning back in the direction of the Northern hemisphere, and the commencement of the six months "day" of the gods. It is a time of general rejoicing, of alms-giving, feasting, and family union. Mahārāstra Brāhmans have a pretty custom of offering little packets of the auspicious sesamum seed coated with sugar, to their friends (including non-Brāhmans — indeed, it is a custom of all the twiceborn castes — and also including Europeans and any other friends. With the presentation of the packet, they say a little rhyme requesting continuation of friendship. They have the superstition that, if a seed drops out of the packet as it is being received, the friendship will be broken.

1. The four times when the sun is specially worshipped are his entry into the signs Meṣa, Karka, Tula, and Makara(Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn respectively), i.e. the vernal equinox, the summer solstice, the autumnal equinox and the winter solstice.
2. The festival is therefore called Uttarāyana Šaṅkrānti.
3. Cf. Chapter Five. The Calendar (p.82) Ayanas.
4. Tīla-gula ghyā, Godagoda bōlā!
   Mazkā tīla sāṇḍu nākā, mājkāsē bhāṇḍū nākā!
   (Receive my gift of sesamum, speak me always fair!
   Spill not one tiny seed of Til, nor feel toward me ill!)
The festive time lasts during the three days subsequent to the sun's entry into Makara. On the second day, no cooking is done, fuel being on that day the appointed Dāna (Gift) for the Sānkrānti observance. Vedic study is suspended for thirty-six hours.

II. The month Māgha.

(The whole of the month Māgha is generally, throughout India, devoted to the worship of Viṣṇu, and the Sun.)

MahāŚivarātrī.

The chief festival of Śiva worship also takes place in this month, on the Dark Thirteenth. The festival is known as MahāŚivarātrī - the Great Night of Śiva. Fasts in connection with this observance are, on the Thirteenth Ekabhukta, or else Nakta; and on the Fourteenth, Upavāsa. The Puja of Śiva is performed four times during the day of the Fourteenth. On the following morning, the worshipper performs Abhyanga Snāna (bath with perfumed oil), after which he performs the Puja rites of Śiva, with the recitation of his names, and then breaks his fast.

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1. Cf. Dharmasindhu. p. 5 under Sānkrānti Dāneñ (Sānkrānti Gift
2. Chapter 5. p.100. Suspension of Vedic study during Sānkrānti
3. The Kumbha Mela at Prayāga (Allahabad) at the junction of the Jamanā with the Ganges takes place at the beginning of Māgha. Also the Tamil New Year is celebrated at this time.
4. In every month, the Dark Thirteenth is sacred to Śiva.
The Lingas worshipped on the above occasion may be of earth, but they are often of jewels - Lingas of different kinds of jewels being believed to confer on the donor of them some very special reward. For instance, the donor of a Linga composed of diamonds obtains long life. A Linga of rubies brings wealth; of pearls gives cure of disease; of crystal grants the donor's desires; and so on.

I2.

The Month Phālguna.

Neit. Holi.

The ten days previous to the Full Moon of Phālguna are dedicated, in Mahārāṣṭra, as throughout India, to the worship of Kṛṣṇa (eighth incarnation of Viṣṇu), and the Gopīs or shepherdesses, who were the mistresses of this deity. This festival is more properly called Holākā, and is in celebration — so it is said — of the vernal equinox.

The actual celebration of the Vernal Equinox is held on the Dark First of Phālguna as part of the commemoration of Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs, and it follows on the above festival of Holi, or Holākā. As it celebrates the arrival of Spring, it is known as Vasanta-ārāmbha-otsava, (Spring rejoicing).

With reference to the Festival of Holākā, the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans and other castes associate it with the worship of a demoness called Holikā, or Dhumārṣtra, who is believed to be personified in the Bonfire which is lighted when the climax of

the revelling is reached. To propitiate the demoness the fuel for the bonfire must be stolen, and to light the fire the torch must be brought from the house of a lowcaste person, or from a house defiled through the occurrence of a birth.\(^1\) Holikā is of the Rāksasa type of demons, who are still believed to haunt the earth. She is believed to be appeased by obscene language. Men and boys go about the streets, greeting passers-by with abusive and obscene words, and throwing red powder or red-coloured water over them. Women, and the more respectable classes stay at home as far as possible during the final three or four days of the festival, especially on the night of Full Moon when the bonfire is lit, and round which the celebrants dance and sing. During the day of Full Moon, the carrying of Kṛṣṇa’s image through the streets in a palanquin forms part of the procedure.

At night, when lighting the bonfire, the spirit of the demoness is summoned into it by the usual means of reciting prescribed Mantras. The Pūjā of the bonfire, as the personification of the demoness Holikā, is then performed, with offerings of milk and clarified butter. Coconuts are afterwards distributed, and the night is spent in singing and dancing, and shouting obscene words. "With these obscene words, the sim-incarnate demoness, Dhumādā, is satisfied." \(^3\)

\(^1\) and \(^3\). Dharmasindhu p.158. \(^2\). Cf. Rāksasa. Ch.15.B.(ii).
This ends the yearly programme of the Daiva Karma of Vratas of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans. It does not, however, by any means exhaust the list of their observances; but has given merely each an outline of the chief Vratas in each month of the Hindu Calendar.
In addition to the worship in honour of the gods, described in the two previous chapters, the Brahmans' Karmas comprise acts in honour of ancestors. The latter are known as Pitrya Karmas, or Karmas performed for the benefit of the Pitrs.

The Pitrs, or ancestors, (literally, "Fathers"), are of two classes - firstly, ancestors in general, or, more especially, the ancient Rais, or sages, and their sons, from whom the present-day Brāhmans count their descent; and, secondly, the particular ancestors of each individual Brāhman. The particular ancestors may be considered first.

**Particular Ancestors.**

The particular ancestors of an individual Brāhman, who are counted as the Pitrs to whom he owes, personally, the performance of certain Karmas, comprise, in the first rank, three generations of his departed, namely, his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. In the second rank come the three generations further remote than the above. The responsibility of the individual Brāhman toward these six generations of his departed, is that of sustaining them with food. Food is
believed to be supplied to the ancestors through the oblations offered in the rites known as Śrāddha Ceremonies, or Pitrya Karmas.

In present-day practice, the food oblations offered to the ancestors in the Sraddha ceremonies, consist simply of meal mixed with water into a kind of dough. A lump of such dough is called a pinda. The relative who offers it is called a Sapinda, and stands in the relationship of Sāpiṇḍya to his ancestors.

This animistic belief in the necessity for feeding the departed is universal among Hindus, and the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans share the common creed concerning the progress of the spirit after its leaving the body, and the need for nourishment. They believe that, during the first ten days after death, the newly departed spirit is obliged to acquire a new body which will carry it on. The new body is called a preta-sarīra, or Ghostly body, and is believed to depend for its growth on the Pindaśas, which the Sapiṇḍa relative offers during the ten days.

I. In addition to the son, who is the nearest Sapiṇḍa, or next of kin, the relationship of Sāpiṇḍya includes the relatives who are in certain degrees of descent from a man's great-grandfather, down to seven generations, i.e. down to a man's own great-grandson - the side branches of this relationship including endless nephews and cousins of certain degrees. (For further details Cf. Dharmasindhu pp. 750 to 854.)
This offering is called *Navaśrāddha*, New *Śrāddha*, and should be made, according to the *Viṣṇu Sūtra*,¹ on all the odd days up to the eleventh day after death. *Mahārāṣṭra* *Brāhmans* believe that omission to offer the *Navaśrāddha* rites causes the departed spirit to remain in the near atmosphere as a ghost (*preta*), and to trouble the family,² who by their neglect, are detaining him in the region near earth, amongst demons and evil spirits, and depriving him of the ability to journey on to join the Fathers.

*Navaśrāddha*.

The chief of the above *Nava Śrāddha* rites is that of the eleventh day after death. It is offered universally among the *Mahārāṣṭra* *Brahmans*. The *pīṇḍas* and the *Mantras* used in the rite are believed to be the two means of nourishing the *preta-śarīra*.³

*Preta Śrāddha*.

Clad in its newly acquired ghostly body, or *preta-śarīra*, the departed spirit is believed to start out, on the eleventh day after death.

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². Cf. The rite called *Nārāyana Bali*, performed to propitiate *Preta* which thought to be preventing the procreation of offspring. Thesis Chapter 13. part two. *Brāhman* wife. Under Propitiations.

³. For the performance of *Śrāddha*, the *Sacrificial Thread* is in the reverse or mourning position, over the right shoulder across under the left arm.
day, on its journey to the Pitrloka\textsuperscript{1} or Region of the Fathers. The journey is accomplished in successive stages, each stage taking one lunation (one lunar month). So, each month, on the lunar date of the person’s decease, a Śrāddha offering called preta Śrāddha is made, until the journey to the Pitrloka is believed to be safely over. The journey is spoken of as occupying one solar year, and fifteen preta Śrāddhas are believed to be required, allowing for the occurrence of the Intercalary and deleted months.\textsuperscript{2} The Pinda offerings made at the monthly Śrāddha rites must be supplied till the soul has reached its destination.

\textit{Sapindikarana.}

At the end of one full year,\textsuperscript{3} the important Śrāddha rite

\begin{enumerate}
\item Some believe that the Fathers inhabit the air, Bhuvas, or Bhūvarloka. It is one of the seven Lokas of which three are named by the Brāhmans in the daily Sandhyā worship. Others, that the Fathers’ sphere is in the orbit of the Moon. In contrast to the Purānic doctrine of the seven Lokas mentioned above (M.W. Samskrta Dict. p.871. Col.2) are the eight Lokas of the philosophical schools\textsuperscript{6}(Cf. Dowson’s Classical Dist. pp. 179-180.)
\item Some authorities give sixteen as the necessary number.
\item Cf. Feasts and Holidays of the Hindūs. p. 53. note 2.
\item This needs the following qualification: It is offered at end of one full year, if both the offerer and the dead person are not keepers of a perpetual fire (Śrauta sacrificial fire). If both are keepers of Śrauta fire, the day for observing Sapindikarana is the Twelfth day after death. (Perpetual Fire will be explained later, in connection with the marriage rite) For further details, Dharmasindhub 75.}

\end{enumerate}
As Sapindkarana is performed, as a sign of the departed spirit's admission into the Pitrs, in the place of the most recent of the three generations of the foremost rank.

Normally it is the son of the dead Brâhman, who, when the year has elapsed, performs this rite. Its observance is as follows: An elongated lump of dough, made of meal and water, is divided by the Sapinda into three portions. These portions, for convenience of description, may be referred to as A, B, and C, of which A represents the spirit of the newly dead, B of his father, and C of his grandfather. The Sapinda who is performing the rite takes lump C, and, forming it into the shape of a cup, places B inside it, and kneads the two together into one lump. Then, taking this joint lump CB, he again forms it into a cup, and taking up A, places it in the CB cup. Then, having kneaded all together, he throws the whole lump into the river. The ceremony takes place on the river bank.

It will be noticed that this rite, while admitting the recently departed into the class of the three ancestral generations, namely, father, grand-father, and great grand-father, naturally at the same time, excludes the great-great-grand-father, who, till the recent decease, was the remotest in the above class of three. His spirit is now considered as removed into the class further remote, viz., that of the fourth, fifth and sixth degrees of ancestor worship. This remoter class is to be sustained with

I. The performance of it gives the right to inherit property.
the remains of food wiped off the hands, after offering the Piṅḍa oblations to the class of the first three. For this reason the remoter ancestral class is called the Lepabhūj, or Lepabhāgina. The furthest remote of the Lepabhāginas is now cut off altogether from nourishment, when a Sapīṇḍikaraṇa ceremony admits a new member into the ancestral classes.

When the departed soul has reached the pitrloka after its journey, the preta-sārīra is believed to be dissolved; and the soul becomes a pitṛ, or a father (i.e. Ancestor), when it then assumes a body adapted to its new experiences. In this body, it appears for judgment before the pitṛpati—that is say, the Lord of the Ancestors, who is Yama. Having received its sentence, the soul is believed to proceed either to heaven, to enjoy the bliss which is the result of the merit accumulated through its karma in the life recently lived, or else to hell, to suffer there the tortures which its karma on earth has merited. When the reward of this karma has been experienced, the soul is believed to become incarnate once more, and, in the flesh, to proceed with further karma—which process continues till after thousands of incarnations, liberation is attained.

I. Lepa—smearings (from ṿep, to smear). Lepabhūj—eating the smearings; Lepabhāgina—sharing the smearings.

2. The first mortal who died, and who in later times came to be regarded as judge of the dead. A Purānic development. Cf. Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Cantos X—XV.
The observance of the Srāddha rite on the arrival of the soul in Pitrloka is considered of extreme importance, and very minute rules are given in the Dharmasindhu concerning the performance of the first annual or VarsikaSrāddha. This must take place at once on the expiry of the twelve months - and this even though the time should happen in one of the unclean months. The general rule in reference to the intercalary month is that, if the death occurred in an interdalar month, then the annual Srāddha rite also may be performed in an intercalary month. But the annual Srāddha for a person who died in a clean month (Suddha Māsa) may not be performed in an intercalary, but in the corresponding Suddha Māsa - except in the case of the first annual Srāddha, which must be performed on the expiry of the year, whether in an intercalary, or a clean month.

In the case of a person who has died in a deleted month, the annual Srāddha may be performed in a deleted month; and the usual rule by which the tithis (lunar days) of the subsequent month are divided, and made to serve for two months, does not apply in the case of the Srāddha rite.

Annual Srāddha is offered perpetually to the departed kinsman on the lunar anniversary of his death, and he is regarded as deified amongst the Pitrās.

All the above rites are known as Ekoddiṣṭa Srāddha, i.e.

Cf. for all the above, Dharmasindhu, p.596.
offered for the individual, in contradistinction to those Srāddhas offered in honour of the ancestors in general.

Ancestors in General.

The ancestors in general are known as the Pitṛgaṇas, or Groups of Fathers. The word Pitṛgaṇa is employed, in the wide sense, as signifying all ancestors; and in the more special sense, as signifying definite tribes of Brāhmans, described variously as descendants of the ten Prajāpatis, i.e. the ten progenitors of the human race; or as descendants of the seven Śrīśis, or Sages, belonging to the first Manvantara of the present creation.1 The seven Sages are Visvāmitra, Jamadagni (or Bhṛgū), Arñirasa, Gotama, Atri, Vasistha, and Kaśyapa. To these seven, Agastya is often added, as in the Dharmasindhu.2

The descendants of each one of these seven, or eight, Śrīs form a Gana. Branches of each Gana are distinguished by the manes of their most ancient ancestors, who are known as pravaras, on account of their function of summoning the Brāhmans to the priestly sacrifices — the word pravara signifying a summons,

1. The fourteen Manus of each period of creation are regarded as progenitors as well as law-givers. Their names are Svāyambhu, Svārociṣa, Aṭṭama, Tamasa, Raivata, Caksusa, Vaivasvata, Savarni, Daksasavarni, Prabhava-Dīivasavarni, Dharmasavarni, Rudrasavarni, Raucya-Daivasvarṇi, and Īdārasavarni. The Manu of this present existence is the seventh, Manu Vaivasvata. Cf. Apte’s Sāmāskṛta Dictionary. Vol.2. p.1235. Col.2
or a call. The present-day Brāhman, in offering sacrifices, follows the custom of addressing invocations to Agni (Fire) in the name of his Prāvaras, beseeching Agni to bear the oblations to the gods, as he did for the sacrificer’s ancestors. In the vocation, the names of the Prāvaras — either one, or three, or five — are definitely stated. Branches of Brāhmans are therefore called Ekapravārī, Tripravārī, or Paścapravārī, according to the number, one, three, or five, of the prāvaras whom it is their custom to mention in the invocations.

The word Prāvara has come also to mean a Branch, or subdivision, of a Gāna. A further subdivision is that of Gotra. Gotra is the general word signifying a Brāhmanic tribe. The words Gotra and Prāvara are sometimes used synonymously. The Gotras, however, are “a thousand, a million, a hundred million in number,” but the prāvaras are definitely forty-nine tribes which can be distinguished as springing from separate and distinct Prāvaras or Priestly Leaders.

The forty-nine Prāvaras as distinct Gotras are believed to have originated as follows: From each of the seven ancient Ṛṣis — from Bhrugugama, seven Prāvaras or sub-tribes; from the Gāna of Angirasa, seventeen Prāvaras; from the Atrigana, f

1. Literally, a Cow-pen, or enclosure.

2. Dharmasindhu. pp. 372 to 380, giving information as to which Gātras should, and which should not, intermarry.
four; from the Vāśvāmitragāna, ten; from the Kāśyapagāna, three; from the Vasisthagāna, four; and from the Āgastyaagāna, four. These all together make the total of forty-nine pravaras, or subdivisions. The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans recognize the above forty-nine, all of which divisions are found among them.

Purānic doctrine gives also another classification of the Pitrs, dividing them into seven classes, namely, the great Ascetics, the ancestors of gods, the ancestors of demons - which three classes are without form; and four classes which are corporeal, and are the Pitrs of the four castes.

The Code of Manu gives the seven different classes of Pitrs descended from the seven Sages, and, in addition, the AgniDagdhas, or Pitrs who, on earth, maintained the sacred Fire, and were burnt on the pyre lighted from it; next, the Agnidagdhas who did not maintain the Fire (and were called Anāgnidagdhas), and were buried; also the Kāvyas, who were sons of certain Sages called Kavis (poets or Seers), who are believed to exist now as spirits surrounding the sun; and,

I. It will be noted that, in the above account, the name of Gotama is omitted, and the name of Āgasthya included. Cf. Dharmasimhaku pp. 373 and 374, where Goṭātama appears to be included in the Āṅgiras Gapa as one of three subdivisions (Gautama, Bhradvāja, and Kevalaṅgirasa).
4. Seven Sages, whose names are given as Virāja, Marici, Bhrigu Āṅgirasa, Pulastya, and Vasīṣṭha.
lastly, the Saumyas, a class of Pitṛ having to do with Soma, the Moon, or possibly connected with the Soma Ritual of Vedāc Sacrifices.

General Śrāddha Rites appointed according to the Calendar.

In offering the Śrāddha oblations to the ancestors in general, the Mahārāstra Brāhman bears in mind the pravaras of his own Brāhmanic division, and, in a wider sense the Rṣis and Pitṛs of all classes. The Śrāddha rites offered in honour of the ancestors collectively are called by different names, according to the time and object of their performance. The following are typical examples:

Pitṛpāksa Śrāddha.

Pitṛpāksa Śrāddha is the Śrāddha rite offered during the Dark Half (Pitṛ Pakṣa) of each month. All Hindūs believe that the Dark Half of the month is "day" to the ancestors—a complete lunar month being their period corresponding to the twenty-four hour period in human life. During their day-time, the ancestors are believed to have power over those who are living. The Śrāddha offerings in the Pitṛ Pakṣa are made, therefore, with the object of appeasing and satisfying them.

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I. Cf. Mahālaya Śrāddha later in this chapter—a special Śrāddha in the month Bhādrapada.
Aṣṭaka Śrāddha.

During the Dark Half of a month a Śrāddha is particularly offered on the Eighth Lunar Day, or Aṣṭaka.

Ekādaśī Śrāddha.

This is the offering to the Ancestors on Ekādaśī, the Eleventh lunar day. The Eleventh, which is believed to be Viṣṇu himself in the form of a Lunar Day, is kept as a strict fast; and Ekādaśī Śrāddha is considered particularly important.

Anvāhārya Śrāddha.

Anvāhārya Śrāddha is offered in each month on Amāvaśya, the day of New Moon. Anvāhārya, the gift offered to the officiating priest, give this rite its name. The New Moon Śrāddha is also called Darsā Śrāddha, Darsā being the time of New Moon.

Parvāna Śrāddha.

A general Śrāddha is offered at the time known as Parvāna. This name is applied to the days of the Moon’s changes, also to the time of conjunction of sun and moon, and to the time of the sun’s entry into each zodiacal sign, i.e. times of Saṅkrānti. At the winter and summer solstice (Karka and Makara Saṅkrāntis), Śrāddha rites, performed without Piṇḍa offerings, are obligatory. At Makara Saṅkrānti, sesamum seed is offered in the water oblation. This act is called Tīla-Tarpana.

Grahana- Nimittaka Śrāddha.

This Śrāddha is performed on account of eclipse.

1. Grahana, eclipse. Nimittaka, for the reason of.
At times of eclipse, the Sraddha offerings are of uncooked food, called Amanna.¹

Yugadi Sraddha.

Yugadi Sraddha is offered to the ancestors in general on the anniversary of the beginning (Adi) of each of the four Yugas², or Ages, namely on the Light Third of Vaisākha, the Light Ninth of Kārttika, the Dark Thirteenth of Bhādrapada, and the Full Moon of Māgha. The rite is performed without the Pinda offerings.³ Tīla-Tarpāṇa is performed, that is to say, the offerings are made with water and sesamum seed (Tīla).

Mahālaya Sraddha.

A type of Sraddha of special note is the Mahālaya Sraddha, offered during the Dark Half of Bhādrapada. This rite is enjoined to be offered daily for all degrees of individual ancestorship, from the Dark First to the New Moon, i.e. on

¹ Ama = unripe, uncooked. Anna = food. Amanna Sraddha is offered at times of defilement, when cooked offerings are believed to be unacceptable — e.g. at an eclipse when all the castes are defiled, or at times of impurity such as Janana-souca (Janana-souca), the impurity attaching to a family on account of a birth.
² Cf. Appendix IV. The dates of the Yugas.
³ A Sraddha without Pindas is called Pinda-rahitā Sraddha.
⁴ Mahālaya is the name of the day of the Moon's change in the month Bhādrapada.
fifteen consecutive days. If a Ksaya Tithi (a deleted lunar
day) occurs, fourteen Srāddhas only are to be offered. Those
who are unable to offer Srāddha on all the above days are en-
joined to begin their offerings from the Sixth, Eighth, Tenth,
or Eleventh, and to continue them daily till the New Moon.

Typical Domestic Srāddha Rites.

Srāddha offerings are made to the ancestors on joyous occa-
occasions also, as the following examples illustrate:

Vṛddhi Srāddha.

Vṛddhi Srāddha is the Srāddha rite performed on the occasion
of any increase (Vṛddhi) of prosperity or blessing, such as, for
instance, the birth of a son.

Nāndi Srāddha.

Nāndi Srāddha, or Auspicious or Joyful Sraddha is performed
as one of the preliminary rites at the time of auspicious
celebrations, such as the Sacred Thread Ceremony, the rite of
Marriage, etc.. In the NāndiSrāddha, nine Pindas are offered
to three sets of ancestors, three being in each set - one's
own father, grandfather, and great grandfather; one's
mother's father, grandfather and great grandfather; one's
father's wife, one's grandfather's wife, and one's great
grandfather's wife.

1. Dharmasindhu. p. 133 and onward.
2. The rules for the offering of NāndiSrāddha by one whose
father is living are given in the Dharmasindhu. pp. 136, 137.
Various other śrāddha Rites are:

Śuddhi śrāddha.

Śuddhi śrāddha or Purity śrāddha consists in a śrāddha feast given to Brāhmans at the cost of a person who needs purification from some defilement.

Daiva śrāddha.

Daiva śrāddha is offered to Devas or deities, called the Viśvedevas, who are a special class of attendant gods. They are one of the groups belonging to the type of deities known as the Gaṇadevataḥ, or Troop Deities, and are believed to be the special attendants in all the śrāddha rites. It is to these deities that the daily Viśvadeva sacrifice is offered.

Kāmya śrāddha.

Kāmya śrāddha, or Optional śrāddha, is the name given to any extra or voluntary śrāddha rite, performed over and above that which is prescribed. It is done with the desire of accumulating merit. Hence its name Kāmya (from Kāma, Desire).

Each day of the Lunar Sāgradh Fortnight is believed to have its particular 'fruit' of merit, to be accredited to any who offer voluntary śrāddha in it. The fruits vary. Some are for the future beyond death (e.g. attainment of Brahma-loka), and others are for this world (health, happiness, money, etc.).

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2. Chapter 4. The second of the Five Great Sacrifices.
3. The fruits of the Kāmya śrāddha have been the subject of a modern Maharāstra Brāhman poet, the Late V. V. Sathe.
Rules for offering Kamya śrāddha.

Kamya śrāddha offered to the gods may be offered only before noon, and within the Light Half of the Lunar month, and only in the Uttarāyana (when the sun is in the Northern hemisphere).

Kamya śrāddha to the pitṛs should be offered in the afternoon, in the Dark Half of the lunar month, and only in the Daksināyana (when the sun is South of the equator).

A yearly śrāddha can be offered in either Ayana, but must be in the time after the Sun has passed the meridian.

Tirtha śrāddha.

Tirtha śrāddha is the śrāddha rite performed at a holy place (Tirtha), such as Kāśi (Benares), Nāsik, (in Mahārāṣtra), or Prayāga (Allahabad). This śrāddha is one of the first kāyās performed by the pilgrim on his arrival.

The Ancestral Observances in the Dīpāvalī Vrata.

One of the greatest vratas in the Calendar year is observed in connection with the ancestors. The festival known as Dīpāvalī has as its main feature the illuminating of houses and streets, for the purpose of showing the Pitṛs the way from Naraka, or Pātāla (i.e. Hell), to the abode or paradise of the deity Indra.


2. Gāyā in Bengal is believed to be the most highly meritorious Tirtha for offering śrāddha to male ancestors, and Siddhāpur for offerings to female ancestors. Cf. Rites of the Twiceborn. Stevenson. p. 125. Note.
This custom is observed from the Thirteenth of the Dark Half of \( \text{Aśvina} \) to the Second of the Light Half of \( \text{Kārttika} \) (i.e. five days).

The proper days for the lighting of the lamps to show the Pitṛs the way are the three chief days of the festival, namely, the Dark Fourteenth, the New Moon Day, (of \( \text{Aśvina} \)), and the First of the Month \( \text{Kārttika} \). The first of these three days is observed as Naraka Caturdāśi, or Hell Fourteenth, when certain ceremonies are performed with the object of averting the punishment of hell. These are firstly the performance of Abhyāṅga Snāna (anointing the body with sesamum and oil and then performing Snāna), and secondly the offering of Yama-Tarpana, or a water offering to Yama, lord of the Pitṛs and god of death. During the performance of Yamatarpana, the sacrificial Thread is worn in either the usual or the \( śrāddha \) position.

On the second day, the New Moon of \( \text{Aśvina} \), the ritual is repeated, and Parvāṇa \( śrāddha \) is offered. On the third day, the First of \( \text{Kārttika} \), the Pūjā of Bālī, king of the nether regions, is celebrated, Bālī being honoured with offerings of fruit and flowers.

The belief in which this ceremony appears to have originated has to do with the Yamana incarnation of Viṣṇu. Bālī, the demon king having grown so powerful that his kingdom extended over heaven, earth, and hell, Viṣṇu became incarnate as a dwarf, and begged from Bālī as much ground as he could cover in three steps.

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strides. The dwarf's petition being granted, he covered in
two strides earth and heaven, and, with his third, he hurled
Bali into hell, which region has since been his only kingdom.
Repenting, however, Viṣṇu granted Bali permission to reign on
earth for three days in each year, wherever darkness is found.
The three days are believed to be those which are observed
at the time of Dipāvalī. During the absence of Bali from hell,
the Pitṛs are believed to escape.

A further observance, indirectly connected with ancestor
worship, follows on the Second of Kārttika, and is called
Yama Dvitiya, or Yama's Second. It is held in Yama's honour,2
and has reference to the relationship between Yama and his sister
Yamunā. This occasion is called in Marāhiya Bhaubija, and is
celebrated by sisters offering presents to their brothers.

Before leaving the subject of Pitrya Karma, some general
customs in reference to all Śrāddha Rites may be noted:

The Sacrificial Thread during the performance of a Śrāddha
is worn over the right, instead of the left, shoulder. The
attendant deities are the Visvedevas. The gifts to be offered
to Brāhmans at a Śrāddha feast are sixteen in number, and are
therefore called Śoḍasādāna (Sixteen Gifts). Some, or all, of
the sixteen may be offered. They are:— a place, a seat, water

I. Bali. cf. Ch. 15. Under deities other than the Triad.
2. Yama. cf. Ch. 15. Deities of vedic origin.
clothing, a lamp, food, betel nut, an umbrella, perfume, a garland, fruit, a bed, shoes, cows, gold, silver.

The fast observed in connection with a Śrāddha rite is Ekabhukta (Eating only one meal in the day). No evening meal is taken either on a Śrāddha day or the day preceding it.

The Pitrya Karmas are gravely observed in present day India though there are curtailments in parts of the ritual, which will be spoken of later in this thesis. Also the position of the Brāhmaṇ Purohit is undergoing a change. The giving of the elaborate gifts mentioned above belongs to the old days, the former days of ease and careless wealth. Also the new view of life that India is taking points rather to a change in the office of her religious teachers. Here is an opinion expressed in Poona recently by a Śānvadī Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ - "Priests who adapt themselves to the awakening conditions of today are highly honoured."
Chapter Nine

THE ŚĀRIRIKĀ ŚAṂSKĀRAS

The bodily Rites or Śāririka Śaṃskāras of the orthodox Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇa are sixteen in number, and the large majority of Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmins observe them, even under the impact of new thought. In the earliest traditions, the total number of Śaṃskāras was considered to be forty-eight. Dr. P. V. Kāne, in his Dharmaśāstra Vicāra, enumerates them under the following heads: (1). Eight Ātmagunas or spiritual qualities (Mercy, Forgiveness, Freedom, (from envy), Ceremonial purity, Non-activity, Auspiciousness, Generosity, and Indifference); (2). Seven Pākayajñās, or Simple Offerings in sacrifice, such as certain Śrāddhas; (3) Seven Havirya jñās, or clarified butter offerings, such as Agnihotra (oblations to the deity Agni, i.e. Fire); (4). Seven Somayajñās, or spirituous liquor offerings of the Śruti (Vedic) ritual:, and (5). Nineteen Śāririka (or bodily ) Śaṃskāras. These total forty-eight.

Of the above nineteen Śaṃskāras, five are those known as the Pañca Mahāyajñā (the five great daily scarifices). Of the fourteen remaining rites, four are the Vedic vows of a celibate
youth (Brahmacāri) on the day of his becoming a Snātaka, and performing the cermonial bath which ended his discipleship and his vedic education. Only one of these Snātaka vows, namely Kesānta (the cutting of the hair in Brāhman ritual) is retained amongst the sixteen Saṃskāras of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans.

The above list of Saṃskāras is reduced therefore to eleven. The other five which are in observance in Mahārāṣṭra in addition to the eleven, and which make up the total of their sixteen bodily rites, comprise four which are not, apparently, of universal practice, and a fifth which, though not mentioned in the above traditional lists, is, nevertheless, a Saṃskāra, namely the rendering of the body finally to the fire of cremation — which fire, in an orthodox family, was lighted at the wedding rite, and kept continually alight for all the domestic burnt pūlations through the years, and finally carried by the eldest son to light his father's pyre. This Sixteenth Saṃskāra is called Antya Karma (the Last Karma).

I. The above four Saṃskāras are:

The third Saṃskāra Anavalobhana (Protection from desirelessness).
The Seventh Niskramana (The first time of taking the child out.)
The Eighth Sūryāvalokana (The child's first look at the sun)
The Tenth: Piercing the ears for ear-rings. (Either sex). Karnavedhana.
I. Garbhādhāna (Impregnation).

This first paragraph is entirely orthodox, and has become now entirely obsolete according to law, since marriage of a girl under sixteen is forbidden. But the orthodox rituals are still carried out in many instances, chiefly among the non-Brahman twice-born classes. The Mahārāṣṭra Brahmans themselves marry their daughters after high school or college. Here, however is the orthodox ritual:—

The rite of Garbhādhāna takes place after the fourth day from the commencement of Rajodarśana (the girl’s attaining to puberty). Neither the setting of Guru and Śukra (Jupiter and Venus), usually inauspicious for festive occasions, nor an intercalary month, are counted inauspicious for the carrying out of the Garbhādhāna Samskāra — provided that any Blemish (Dosa) attaching to the time of Rajodarśana has been duly removed by the prescribed propitiations. Garbhādhāna performed for the first time is required to be preceded by either a fire sacrifice or the reciting of Mantras according to the practice of the particular Śākhā. Also in those Śākhās whose ritual requires

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1. The Samskaras in this and in the two subsequent chapters are from information gathered from the Ritual guide book, the Dharmasindhu, and from direct sources in Mahārāṣṭra.
2. Cf. The beginning of the Marriage Śaṃskāra, Chapter Eleven.
3. The deity of the Garbhādhāna rite is Brahmā. Agni (the deity Fire), Śūrya (the sun) and Prajāpati (the first progenitor of the race) are also included in the deities honoured by oblations.
the observance of Nāndīsrāddha, the Nāndīsrāddha must include the worship of the mother-goddess Gaurī (wife of Śiva) and others.

The Viśvedevas to be worshipped in the Nāndīsrāddha are Satya and Vasu.

The auspicious times for the Ceremony of Garbhādhāna are:

Lunar Days:— Any, except the 4th., 6th., 8th., 14th., New Moon, and Full Moon.

Solar Days:— Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Lunar Asterismas (Naksatras):— Any are auspicious except Mūla, Maghā, Revati, and Jyesthā. Of the others, eight are of medium merit, and the rest are fully auspicious.

The Moon:— The moon's effect also has to be considered. With reference to the lunar days, the moon is favourable on the 2nd., 5th., and 10th., of the Light Half of each month.

Zodiacal Signs:— With reference to the Zodiacal Signs, the Moon in each sign after a man's birth, gives certain 'fruit' or result, in the following order — the blessings of food, destruction of wealth, happiness, disease, failure of the purpose in hand, wealth, blessings through one's wife, death, danger from those in authority, happiness, wealth, destruction of wealth.

For a son:— A further consideration is that, to obtain a son, Garbhādhāna should take place on an even day, counting from the

I. For the names of the Viśvedevas, cf. Ch. 16. A. ii.
commencement of Rajodarśana, excepting the first four days, and not after the sixteenth day.

II. Pumśavāna (the rite of creating a male). I

The purpose of performing the rite of pumśavāna is to ensure that the child shall be a male. This is the first essential purificatory act, or Śārīrika Śaṃskāra, performed for the child. It is considered to be the first act of Hindu initiation. The deity of this rite is Prajāpati, and the Viśvedeva honoured is Vasu. The rite is carried out by the father, or if he is absent, by his brother, or by the next of kin. It is usually performed in the second or third month of pregnancy. The auspicious times are:

Lunar Days:— Any except the 4th., 9th., and 14th., which are the void (rikta) days of the Light Fortnight. Also Full Moon.

Solar Days:— A Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, in the period beginning from the 5th. of the light Fortnight, and ending with the 5th. of the subsequent Dark fortnight.

Lunar Asterisms:— The Puruṣa or Male Nakṣatras, which are Pusya, Śrāvaṇa, Hasta, Pūnarvasū, Mṛga, Abhijit, Mūla, Anurādhā and Āśvini. Of these, the chief is Pusya, the second Śrāvaṇa, and the third Hasta. One of these three should be chosen if the other conditions agree.

I. Pum = a male. Savana = bringing into existence.
III. Anavalobhana (the rite to protect against Desirelessness)

This is one of the rites that are not in universal practice. Only the Asvalayana Sutra of the Rgveda has this ritual. It is, however, almost universal among the Maharāstra Brahmans, the great majority of whom are Asvalayana Rgvedis.

The rite is included in the puhsavana ceremony, its object being to ensure that the seed coming into existence should be protected from lack of desire. The explanation given in Maharāstra is that the rite of Anavalobhana is performed with the purpose of warding off Asubha (inauspicious) influences in connection with the Santati (Seed or Progeny), and in order that the foetus should in its turn become fruitful.

IV. Simantonnayana (The Rite of parting the Hair). 2

The Rite of Simanta, or Simantonnayana, consists in ceremonially parting the hair of the pregnant woman. The chief Purohit of Nasik explained that it was to give a sense of well-being, blessedness, happiness, auspiciousness to the mother, in order that the child should be conceived and grow in that influence.

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1. The rites of Puhsavana and Anavalobhana belong to the child, and are, therefore, to be performed with each conception; whereas the rites of Garbhādhāna and according to general tradition, Simantonnayana belong to the mother, and are to be performed only at the first time of pregnancy. Dharmasindhu p.194.

2. Simanta = a parting, a boundary line. Unnayana = making straight.
The Dharmasindhu lays down, for the observance of this rite, the Fourth, Sixth, or Eighth, or else the Fifth, or the Ninth month. But it must take place some time before birth. The Maharāstra Brāhmans usually observe the rite in the fourth or fifth or sixth month. The auspicious times are the same as those laid down for the puhsavana rite, with the following differences and additions:

Lunar Days:— Certain lunar days are forbidden. These are the 6th., 8th., and 10th., the Rikta, and Full Moon, except that in great necessity two of the Rikta (the 4th. or the 14th) or Full Moon may be chosen.

Lunar Asterisms. In addition to the Puruṣa Nakṣatras which are the most auspicious, Rohinī, Revati, or one of the three Uttarās may be selected, in which case the first and fourth quarter (Carana) of the Nakṣatra should not be taken, but only the second and third.

The two previously mentioned rites, namely puhsavana and Anavalobhana Simantonnayana, which are the child's ceremonies are sometimes performed with the rite of Simantonnayana, which is generally considered to be for the mother. The following special

I. An exception to the general tradition is the doctrine of the Kātyāyana Śutra of the Vājasaneyī Śākhā of the Śukla (White) Yajurveda, that Simantonnayana appertains to the child, and therefore is to be repeated with each conception. Cf. Dharma-Sindhu, under Simantonnayana. pp. 194, 195.
directions are given in the Dharmasindhu:—1 If the three rites are performed together, the Fire is to be set up with the deity Agni (Fire) invoked under the name Maṅgala. If Puṁsavatana is performed separately, Agni is to be invoked under the name Pāvamāna (the Purifier). ²

V. Jātakarma. (The Rite performed at Birth).

The Rite of Jātakarma consists in feeding the newly born infant with Gṛhya, or clarified butter, out of a gold spoon, before the umbilical cord is cut. The law that a birth causes a ten days' period of defilement to the whole household does not have effect until after the severance.

Subsidiary to the ceremony of Jātakarma is the procedure known as Pūtrāyana, which is the Karma connected with the receiving of the news of the birth of a son. On hearing that a son is born, the father makes obeisance to the Kuladevā, or tutelary deity of the family, and to his parents; after which, having seen the child, he goes to the river or bathing ghat, and performs Snāna, facing the North. ³ If he is away

1. Dharma Sindhu p. 195.²⁴⁷
2. The deity to be worshipped in Simantonnayana is Viṣṇu, and, for the other rites, Prajāpati. The Viśvedevas are Kṛṣṇa and Daksā, and the Devikās are Dhaṭr and Rākā. (Cf. Chapter I6. Section A—under Saktis, Mātrikās, Devatās, Devikās.)
3. If the son is born in an untoward attitude of the planets, or in the Jyeṣṭha or the Müla naksatras, the father bathes without seeing the child.
from home, Me performs Snāna on receiving the news. Until he has done this, he touches no one.  

As part of the Putrāyana Karma, a Nāndisrāddha is offered at the actual time of the birth. It is a separate śrāddha from that offered with the Jātakarma rite.

The procedure in the Jātakarma Sāmskāra.

1. The first step is to enquire from a Brāhman astrologer, who is learned in the Jyotiṣa Sūtras, and is a Jyotiṣi, which of the planets in the birth constellation are favourable (Anukūla) and which unfavourable (Pratikūla).

2. Next is the giving of Dāna (Gifts), to win the favour of the unfavourable planets. The alternative to performing Dāna is to appoint a Brāhman to do Japa, of Repetition of certain propitiatory stanzas, for the same end.

3. The act of Jātakarma, as described in the first sentence of this section, is then performed, thus making the child a "born" Brāhman. This is his physical birth ceremony, his second birth as son of the Gōyatī taking place later at his

1. Defilement lasting for ten days, and affecting all the household, is caused by two things only - birth, and death.
2. Fire oblations are not necessary, but are sometimes offered.
3. On the 5th. or 6th. day after birth, the birth deities are worshipping in the first prahara of the night, with pūjā honouring ratri (the goddess who writes the child's fate), and she (Saśthi) is invoked with full pūjā for the protection of the child. In the homes in Mahārāstra, a picture of Saśthi is drawn on paper and placed on a curystone. It is then fanned with pomegranate leaves, fans, etc., and incense is burnt before it. Saśthi is really Gaurī, one of the Mātrkās, but is called Saśthi in this case because she comes on the 6th. Day. Cf. Ch. 16, (c).
initiation, or Sacrificial Thread Ceremony.

If the Jātakarma rite is not performed at the proper time, there is a secondary time when an astrologer can be consulted, and the attitude of the planets ascertained.

Auspicious times for this occasion are:

Lunar Days:— Any except the Rikta, Full Moon, and New Moon.
Solar Days:— Any except Tuesday and Saturday.
Lunar Asterismas. Any except Rohini, the three Uttarās, Āsvini, Hasta, Pusya, Anurādhā, Revāti, Mrṣa, Citrā, Sravaṇā, Dhanisthā, Śatārakā, Svātī and Punarvasū.

VI. Nāmakaraṇa. (The Giving of the Name).

Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans observe the Nāmakaraṇa on the Eleventh or the Twelfth day, without consideration of lunar or solar days or Naksatras. No blemish is considered to attach to its performance in an intercalary month, or at the setting of the planets Guru and Sukra (Jupiter and Venus). The times

1. A secondary time is called a Gauṇa Kala.

2. Girl babies have no right to any of the Brāhman ceremonies up to Marriage. At marriage there is an atonement made for their having omitted the previous ceremonies. However, there is a Naming Ceremony for girl babies in the home. It is called Bārasā. Friends are invited and entertained to refreshments. The baby is passed under and over its cradle (which hangs from a beam) several times, and its name is pronounced. There are no Mantras.

3. except that it is not performed on the day of an eclipse, or a Śaniṣṭānti, or any special time of danger.
avoided are afternoon and night.

The Gaṇḍa Kāla, or secondary time, for Ṛmakaṇa, if not performed on the proper day, is one month after birth. In this case, an auspicious day has to be sought. The auspicious times in the Gaṇḍa Kāla for the ceremony are:


Solar Days:– Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Lunar Asterism:– Āśvini, the three Uttarāṣ, Rohini, Mrīga, Punarvasu, Puṣya, Hasta, Svātī, Anurāḍhā, Śravaṇa, Dhanistha, Sātatarakā, and Revati.

All the four names given by Vedic custom to a Brāhman are bestowed on the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman boy. These are:

1. The Devatā name, or deity name by which the boy is called after one of the gods, e.g. Haribhakta (devotee of Hari).

2. The lunar month name, chosen according to the lunar month of the boy’s birth. The twelve names for this purpose which correspond to the twelve lunar months are (beginning from the commencement of the Light Half of Caitra):– Vaikuṇṭha, Janārdhana, Upendra, Yajña-puruṣa, Vāsudeva, Hari, Yogīsa, Pundrikakṣa, Kṛṣṇa, Ananta, Acyuta, and Cakrī.

3. The Naksatra name, given according to the Naksatra under which the boy was born, e.g. Rauhinī for a child born
under Rohini. The Maharashtra Brahmans follow the custom of dividing the Naksatra into four quarters called Carânas, and having the initial syllable of the boy’s name indicative of the Naksatra and the Carana, e.g. Khemadeva; the syllable Kha, Khi, Khu, Khe representing respectively the the first, second, third and fourth Carânas of the Naksatra Sravana. Consequently the name Khemadeva shows that birth took place under the fourth Carana of Sravana Naksatra. Altogether there are one hundred and twenty-eight syllables (i.e. twenty seven letters, each having four modifications, as above) representing the twenty-seven Naksatras in their different quarters.¹ The Dharma-Sindhu states that this method of naming the child after the Carana instead of after the Naksatra, though adopted by astrologers in various Jyotisa Sutras, is not in accordance with Srauta ritual, (i.e. with śrutī or Vedic revelation).²

The Naksatra name is kept secret, and is known only to the parents and the Guruji, or Vedic teacher, or Family priest, till the day of the boy’s Sacrificial Thread Ceremony, when

¹. The Naksatra name is used at the time of Sandhya worship. The prayer is uttered aloud, but the voice drops at the worshipper’s own name, which is never said aloud. With the name, the worshipper gives the time significance, astronomically stated, as, the position of the sun, the moon, the planet Guru, and at times, Sani (Saturn), at the time of Sandhya.
it is revealed to the boy himself, and he, in his Nāksatra name makes an obeisance to his parents, and his Guru, the family priest who performs his Thread ceremony.

4. The fourth name of a Brāhman is his Vyavahāra Nāma, or name for public use. The Dharmasindhu gives rules for the initial syllable of the Vyavahāra name, but rather from the consideration of euphony than of ritual significance.

The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans follow the universal Brāhman custom of adding the termination Sarma to the name of a boy.2

The child's father, or if he is absent, then the grandfather is responsible for the performing of the Nāmakarana ceremony.4


2. The affix Sarma denote the Brāhman; Varma denotes the Ksatriya; and Gupta denotes the Vaisya. These names are still used, though in modern India, with the abolition of caste, they are likely to disappear. The latest India Census of 1961 gives no caste statistics, but only population figures.

3. For the omission of this rite a Kṛcchra atonement is required; if unavoidably omitted, a quarter Kṛcchra, or if deliberately neglected a half Kṛcchra. Cf. Appendix V. p. I. Atonements are becoming obsolete, but many still perform them.

4. The deity worshipped is Sāvitā, the Sun. The minor deity honoured with oblations is Anadesa. (Minor deities. Ch. 16)
VII. Niṣkramana. (Ceremonially taking the child out).

The Dharmasindhu gives the time for this rite as being in the fourth month. The auspicious times are:

Lunar Days:— Any in the Light Half, and any in the Dark Half of the month, except the last five days.

Solar Days:— Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Lunar Asterisms:— Āśvini, Rohini, Mriga, Pushya, the three Uttarās, Hasta, Dhanisthā, Sravana, Revati, Punarvasū, and Anurādhā.

VIII. Suryavalokana. (Showing the child the Sun).

This and the previous one are necessary rites, according to Manu. The Dharmasindhu groups the two together, giving the favourable days only for Niṣkramana. Maharāṣṭra Brāhmans perform these rites in the third or fourth month. The deity is Sāvitā, the Sun, the same for both rites, and the attendant worshipped in the Nāndīsrāddha are the Viṣvedevas, Satya, and Vasu. The offering at Nāndīsrāddha is optional, however, for both these rites.

IX. Annaprāśana (The Rite of Feeding the Child).

This rite consists in ceremonially feeding the child for the first time with food, while, in the case of a boy, Mantras are recited. Maharāṣṭra Brāhmans observe this rite in the sixth

2. Manu. II. 34.
month. The auspicious times are:

Lunar Days. The 2nd., 3rd., 5th., 7th., 10th., and 13th.

Solar Days. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.

Lunar Asterisms. Āśvini, Rohini, Mr̥gā, Punarvasū, Puṣya, the three Uttarās, Hasta, Ātrā, Svāti, Anurādhā, Śravaṇa, Dhanistha, Satatārakā, Revatī, and the Naksatras under which the child was born.

There is no Doṣa (Blemish) from the intercalary or the deleted months in connection with this rite.

The three ceremonies are often performed in the one rite, i.e. Niskramana, Suryavalokana, and Annaprasana. The food for Annaprasana is the sacrificial food - milk, curds, honey and clarified butter, the vessel being of gold or of bell-metal, and the hand feeding the child to be wearing gold.

The deities worshipped previously to the feeding of the child are Viṣṇu, Śiva, Candra, Sūrya, the eight Dikpālas (Regents of the quarters), the aarth, the cardinal points, and Brāhmans. The Viṣvedevas of the Nāndisrāddha are Satya and Vāsu.

I. Nor with the preceding rites. The Doṣa of a Malamāsa (or unclean month) applies only after Annapraśāṇa.

2. Dharma Sīndhu p. 308.
3. " " " " .
X. Karnavedha (The Piercing of the Mars).

Piercing the ears for the wearing of ear-rings is a rite performed among the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, usually during the first year. The Dharma Śiṁdu gives the rule that the rite should not be performed in an even year, either in the case of a boy or a girl. The times, during the first year, for its performance are the Tenth, Twelfth, or Sixteenth day after birth or else in the sixth, seventh, eighth, tenth, or twelfth month. Many Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans consider that it should be performed after Nāmakaraṇa and before Niṣkramaṇa.

If performed in the third or subsequent years, the auspicious months are Kārttika, Pauṣa, Caitra, and Phālguna, in the Light Half of each.

The Performance of the Rite.

The rite begins with the worship of Viṣṇu, Rudra, Brahmā, Sūrya, Candra, the Eight Dikpālas, Nāsatya (Aśvinikumāra), and Sarasvati; and also of cows, Brāhmans and Gurus. The ear is then pierced, having first been marked with the juice of Alatā (lac), red in colour. In the case of a boy, the right ear is pierced first; the left ear first in the case of a girl. The opening in the ear must be made large enough for a ray of the sun to shine through. A gold needle is required, according to the Dharmasindhu; but Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans perform the piercing with an ordinary needle, first touching the spot with a needle made of gold. I. For full description Cf. Dharma śiṁdu, p. 398.
XI. Cudākarma (The Rite of Shaving the Head).

This rite is called also Vapankāya, the Act of Shaving. In Mahārāstra it is commonly called Caula, and is performed in the second, third, or fifth year. The rite consists in shaving the boy's head quite cleanly, except that a tuft of hair is left above the centre of the forehead.

The best months for the observance of the rite are believed to be Māgha, Phālguna, Vaisākha, and Jyeṣṭha. The last mentioned is forbidden, however, in the case of an eldest son (who is a Jyeṣṭha Putra, the word Jyeṣṭha signifying eldest). The intercalary and deleted months, and also the month in which the anniversary of the child's birth occurs, are also forbidden.

If the mother of the child is pregnant, the Caula Rite is not performed unless the child is over five years of age.

The auspicious times are:

Lunar Days:— The 2nd., 3rd., 5th., 7th., 10th., 11th., and 13th
Solar Days:— Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and also

I. From Cula, or Cuda, (Shaving).
2. The custom of performing Caula (except in preparation for boy's Sacrificial Thread ceremony) is largely dying out. The young boys and school boys nowadays adopt the Western fashion. Among the orthodox, there are prejudices against performing the Caula or Cuda Rite in certain Naksatras or Lunar Asterisms because of the belief that to do so takes away the child's physical strength. These asterisms in question are Anurādhā, Kārttika, the three Uttarās, Rohini and Māghā. None of these however, seem to be recommended in the Dharmasindhu.
Monday in a Light Half of a month.

Lunar Asterisms:— Āsvini, Mrga, Punarvasu, Pusya, Hasta, Citra, Svati, Jyestha, Sravana, Dhanistha, Satataraka and Revati.

A pavilion or tent (Mandapa) is erected close to the house for the performance of the Caula Rite. A feast is often provided, though the holding of a feast in connection with Caula requires the performance of the atonement known as Santapana Krurcha.

1. A Mandapa is required for the Rites of Simantonnayana, Cudakarma or Caula, and the greater rites — the Sacred Thread ceremony, and the Marriage Ceremony.

2. The "Torment" Atonement. Cf. Appendix V. Second page. Atonements, however, are practically obsolete at the present day. Each makes his own way of atoning or of penance, by visiting a sacred Ksetra (Holy place), or by giving gifts to temples of charities or alms.
Chapter Ten

THE SACRED THREAD CEREMONY. UPANAYANA.

Upanayana is the rite of bringing the boy to his Vedic Guru. It is his initiation into Brahmanhood. It is his second birth, as one of the twice-born. He has now to be invested with the Sacrificial Thread of the twice-born castes, and instructed in the Gāyatrī Mantra. By virtue of Upanayana Rite, the young Kumāra (boy) is believed to become a son of the Gāyatrī, initiated into the Vedic community of the three twice-born castes.

1. Investiture with a thread is a custom dating from Indo-Iranian times. Thread investiture in the initiation into the Kṣatriyan community, as it is into the twice-born Hindu castes.
2. The other twice-born castes in Mahārāṣṭra, namely the Marāṭhās, who hold themselves to be Kṣatriyas with ninety-six tribes, and the third caste, the Vaiśyas, who have no definitely fixed number of tribes, do not practice the above rite generally.
3. The most sacred verse of the Veda, used daily in Śaṅkhyā worship.
4. The child is a Sīru till the Annaprāśana rite; a Bāla from Annaprāśana to Caula; and a Kumāra from Caula to Upanayana.
5. "From the mother is the first birth; the second from the girding with the Sacrificial Thread. In this rite, the Śaṅkhyā hymn (the Gāyatrī) is his mother, and the Teacher (the Guru, or Purohita) is his father."

Viṣṇu Smṛti. XXVIII. 37. 38.

Till the performance of Upanayana, the boy is not, strictly speaking, a Brāhman at all. In fact, he is counted a Sūdra, as far as any Brāhmanic rights are concerned. It is at the time of Upanayana that he enters into his heritage. The knowledge of Brāhma is believed to be imparted to him in the form of the Gāyatrī verse, the acquisition of which is considered equal to acquisition of the whole Veda. The girding with the thread invests him with the authority of the Brāhman, as priest and sacrificer, entitled to offer the sacrifices of the twice-born in the first order or stage of life, namely, that of Brahmacārya or celibate studentship.

His responsibilities, too, begin from now. The celebration of the Upanayana rite brings the boy under the Law of Doṣa—the Law of Guilt, or Blemish, with reference to all his Karma (his acts), and Dharma (principles of moral conduct). Up to this time, he has followed the Karma-dharma of a Kumāra, which may be briefly reviewed here in order to point out the significance of the Upanayana rite to the young boy himself.

He has hitherto been allowed to enter where he wishes, and to speak to whom he wishes, without contracting Blemish. He has been free from such rules of moral conduct as the obligation to perform Ācamana after certain acts. (Ācamana is the religious rinsing of the mouth, or sipping of water.) The blemish or Doṣa attaching to "small sons" (Alpa pātaka), as, for instance,
eating garlic or food from the previous day, or leavings from another's plate, or drinking water in a state forbidden to the initiated, or telling untruths, or uttering inauspicious words, has not so far applied to him. There are certain things which even an uninitiated boy may not do. He contracts Doṣa of Blemish if he is guilty of any of the great sins (Mahāpātaka), as, eating meat, or eating food that has been touched by a Śūdra, or by a woman who is 'Rajasvalā' (in a period of defilement), or by drinking spirituous liquor.

Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans who are orthodox perform the Upanayana Rite when the boy is five, or seven, or eight years of age. The Viṣṇu Śūtra enjoins the performance of Upanayana in the eighth year after conception. The Dharma Śāntu gives the year as depending on the result desired, as follows: Those wishing for wealth should perform the boy's Upanayana in the sixth year, for learning in the seventh, for both wealth and learning in the eighth, and for comeliness in the ninth years respectively.

I. A Kumāra, if touched by a Rajasvalā, performs Snāna. A Bala performs only Acamana; and a Śiśu is purified simply by sprinkling with water. (Dharmasindhu. p. 314, under Anupanīta)
2. Gauṇa Kāla or secondary time is at sixteen. Dharma.
4. These times apply to the three castes, but the sixth year should not be chosen by Brāhmans. (Dharmasindhu. p. 316, under Upanayana Time).
The persons responsible for the celebration of the rite are the boy's relations, in the following order of precedence: his father, his father's father, his father's brother, his own mother's son, a Sāpinda of his father's family, a Sāpinda of his mother's family. If the boy have not of the above relations living, a member of his family who is not a Sāpinda may act. The one assuming the responsibility must be senior in age to the boy himself.

If, however, there should be none of the above relations, some Śrotri must make himself responsible. The one who undertakes the duty, and the boy himself, must each perform three Kṛcchra atonements. The responsible person acquires the authority to perform the rite by repeating the Gāyatrī one thousand and twelve, or else twelve thousand, times.

I. A Śrotri is an initiated Brahman who has completed a course of Vedic study.

2. A Kṛcchra atonement is a very rigorous fast of twelve days in this manner: 1st day, eat only thirty-six mouthfuls of rice and clarified butter (i.e. sacrificial food); 2nd day, eat the same but only twenty-two mouthfuls, at night; 3rd. day, eat twenty-four mouthfuls of food that is given as alms (unsolicited alms only); 4th. day, fast for twenty-four hours. This four-day process, repeated three times, making twelve days, is one Kṛcchra atonement.

Atonements are practically obsolete nowadays, but it is done according to rule by those who take the Upanayana seriously. For Atonements and Substitutes, cf Appendix V. of this thesis.

The auspicious times for performing the Upanayana rite are:

Months: - The Uśtarāyana Months, except in Pauṣa and Ṛsāḍha.

Lunar Days: - The 2nd., 3rd., 5th., 6th., 11th., and 12th.¹

Solar Days: - Any solar days except a Pradosā Divasa², a Saturday and the last five solar days in each Dark Half, and also a Tuesday.³

The time of day should be either morning or middle day, but not the third part of the day.⁴ The morning is the best or chief time.⁵

Lunar Asterisms: - For Brāhmans of the Rgveda Śakhās,⁶ Pūrvā, Pūrvāśāḍhā, Pūrvābhadrpadha, Hasta, Citrā, Svātī, Mūlā, Āślesā, Ārdrā and Śravāṇa.⁷

Or, for all the twice-born castes in general, any lunar asterism, except Bharani, Karṇika, Māgha, Visākhā, Jyeṣṭha,⁸ and Śatatāraka.

¹. With exceptions under certain astronomical conditions, or during suspension of Vedic study. Dharmasindhu, pp. 318-319.
². A day unsuitable for a religious purpose. D.S. p. 320, 1st. para.
³. The Dharmasindhu p. 352, under Samāvantana Kāla (preparatory to Upanayana) mentions the above forbidden days.
⁴. The three parts of the solar day are Sakāla, Madhyāmākāla, and Aparāhna-kāla (early morning, Mid-day period and afternoon).
⁵. The Rgveda Brāhmans are by far the largest community in Maharāstra.
⁶. For the favourable lunar asterisms for the Śāmaṇḍari, Yajurvedi, and Atharvaṇvedi Brāhmans, see Dharmasindhu, p. 317.
⁷. Except that Jyeṣṭha is not taken for a Jyeṣṭha Putra (an eldest (=jyeṣṭha) son).
Forbidden times in general: An eclipse, and a Yoga (conjunction of planets).

PREPARATIONS for the Upanayana Rite.

I. The equipment of the Neophyte.

The articles required by the young disciple are:

A small loin-cloth.

A white cotton garment, or Vastra. It consists of a length of cloth, either new or slightly washed, and having a fringe of the unwoven threads at its end.

A sacrificial thread. The sacrificial thread is a length of cotton thread which has been spun by Brāhmans. The length required is as much as will go round four finger-breadths together, ninety-six times. This length is folded into three, and that three-fold strand is folded again into three, making a nine-stranded thread, which is again coiled three times, to form a three-fold circle, and is made fast in this fashion by a firm knot. Thus there are twenty-seven strands in the circle-shaped thread which is put on at the time of Upanayana, and which is known as the Yajnopavīta, or Sacrificial Thread. In Maharāṣṭra, the name for it in Marāthī is Jānaven.

1. Possibly symbolic of the three twice-born castes.
2. The Brāhman changes his worn Sacrificial Thread annually in the temple in the month of Śrāvana. Cf. Thesis Appendix VI.
A girdle is the fourth requirement of the neophyte. The girdle is of Muñja grass, formed by twisting three, fine Muñja grasses of equal length together to form a grass string, called a Mekhalā. This girdle is symbolic of the bond of discipleship. It must be long enough to go five times round the boy's waist, knots being tied in it at the first, third, and fifth encircling.

A staff. A stick of Palasa, the length of which in the case of a Brāhman, is equal to his own height. It is the symbol of the wandering scholar, who, in early times, went about, begging alms, and collecting fuel for the sacred fire in his guru's Āśrama, or hermitage.

2. Other preparations.

On the day previous to the performance of the Upanayana rite, a temporary pavilion, or Mandapa, of cloth, is erected on poles in a place adjacent to the house.

If the boy's previous Sāṃskāras have not been duly performed, they are now observed as far as Annaprāśana - the Caula ceremony (of shaving the head) being kept for observance on the morning of the chief day.

I. If Muñja, which is a rushlike grass growing to a height of about ten feet, (Saccharum Muñja), is not available, the alternatives are Huṣa grass (Poa Cynosuroides), or Asmāntaka (Bauhinea Tomentosa), or else Valavāja (Eleusine Indica).

2. Butea Frondosa.
The Nandiśrāddha is performed \textsuperscript{1}, after which the Matrkās or protective mother-goddesses, and also the deities called the Mandapa devatās\textsuperscript{2}, whose function is to preside over the pavilion, are set up.

Finally the altar is erected. It is quadrangular in shape, the sides measuring four cubits, and the height one cubit - the cubit being reckoned by the boy's own arm. The altar has steps on the North and East sides, and is decorated with plantain leaves.

THE DAY of the Ceremony.

On the actual day of the Upanayana Rite, the Caulakarma, if it has not been observed at its due time, is now performed, after which follows Abhyanga Snāna, the bath with water and perfumed oil.

This accomplished, the boy and his mother have their last meal together, he being seated on her left, facing the left side of her plate, and she feeding him with her right hand. The meal is called Matṛbhōjana (the Mother repast), and is symbolical of farewell - the boy being now about to enter the Brahmacāri stage of life, and to become a son of the Gāyatrī. He will not again ever eat with a woman.

\textsuperscript{1} The Viśvedevas are Satya and Vasu. The Nandiśrāddha is a joyous offering to the ancestors.

\textsuperscript{2} Cf. Ch. 16. Hosts of attendant powers. Devatās - Matrkās and Mandapa devatās.
In an orthodox Brahman family the male members eat always separately from the women. In a house of the patriarchal type, where the sons with their families live under the parental roof, as many as thirty or so males—all the thread wearers of the family, men and boys—sit down to meals together. The women eat later separately.

After the last meal with his mother, the young boy's Vapankriya—another shaving ceremony—takes place. In this, the boyish crest of hair over the forehead (the Caula coiffure) is shaved off, and hair which has been purposely allowed to remain on the crown of the head for his Upanayana is tied together in a tuft (called a Śikhā).

Snāna with water only is then performed, the apparel for the ceremony is put on, and festive marks are made on the boy's forehead with coloured earth (Tilaka).

1. The patriarchal system is in these days disappearing as the sons go away from home to salaried posts, and the manner of living is according to convenience.

2. Mahārāstra Brāhmans who follow the Hiranyakesī Śūtra of the Kṛṣṇa (Black) Yajurveda, put on the grass girdle at this juncture; but those of the Āsvalāyana Śūtra (of the Rgveda) do not put on the girdle until after the boy has been presented to his Guru, the Purohita.
The Twelfth Samskāra - UPANAYANA.

The young Bātu or Brahmacārī is now placed before a curtain, on which the sign of the Svastika is drawn, and on the far side of the curtain, beside the altar, the Guru, or Acārya, or Purohitā, is seated, facing the East. The young Bātu does not see his Teacher, till the exact, auspicious moment, the Muhūrta, is announced by the astrologer in attendance. At the moment when the sign is given, the curtain is drawn aside. Then upon the boy's making his obeisance before him, the Guru draws him near, and lifts him onto his knee. Rice is then sprinkled by the Brāhmans over the heads of both, to the accompaniment of Mantras.

The Upanayana, in the sense of bringing near, which is the meaning of the word, is now accomplished. The second part of the ceremony, which is in reality the chief part (Mukhya Āṅga), is the imitation. This consists in, firstly, the offering of the Pradhāna Homa, or chief Fire Oblation, on the altar, then in investing the boy with the Sacred Thread and instructing him in the Gāyatrī. The instruction, or the Gāyatryopadesa, is given on the North side of the altar, the teacher facing East, and the boy West.

1. The deities are Indra, Śrāddhā, Medhā, and at the end, Suśravā.
2. When the boy has been invested, his father resolves, in the form of a Saṅkalpa, to give a feast to a certain, definite stated number of Brāhmans. He then gives the money gift, the Bhūyasi, to the Brāhmans present.
It is followed by Agnikārya, or the rite of feeding the sacrificial Fire with clarified butter; after which the young Brahmacāri performs the ritual of Mātrabhikṣā, in which he assumes the character of the begging student of olden times, and begs an alms of rice from his mother, and then from other relatives. In begging from his mother and other ladies, he uses the Sāṃskṛta honorific pronoun 'Bhavati', equivalent to 'O, lady', in the formula, 'Bhiṃkṣā Bhavati dadātu'. Similarly, in addressing his father, he says, 'Bhavān' (O, Sir), in the formula 'Bhavān bhikṣā dadātu'.

The alms that he begs are for the fire oblation called the Anupravacaniya Homa. If rain or thunder should be likely to occur at this juncture, the above ritual is carried out only as far as the collecting of the rice (i.e. Carusrapana), the actual offering of the oblation being celebrated after sunset. If thunder occurs before the rice is collected, a propitiatory rite is first performed, accompanied by repeated recitations of a certain stanza called the Brhaspati-sūkta, and Carusrapana (the collecting of the alms of rice) is then carried out.

The new disciple now performs his first Sandhyā worship, using the newly acquired Gāyatrī (or Sāvitrī) verse. He spends the remainder of the day in his Guru's company, performing the disciple's tasks.

Part of the Upanayana Rite is the vow called Upanayana-Vrata. The Brahmacāri vows for three days to eat ashes, and such things as are indicative of asceticism, and for three nights to sleep on the ground without a mattress; and on the fourth day to offer the sacrifice called Medhājanana, the purpose of which is to produce mental vigour, or bodily vigour, in the Brahmacāri.

The Medhājanana sacrifice, is considered to be of equal importance with the Gāyatrī instruction and the Anupravacaniya fire oblation.

I. Some authorities say that he should not use the Gāyatrī till the following day. Dharmasindhu p. 336.

2. The Gāyatrī verse (Rgveda III.62.10- is called also Sāvitrī, as addressed to Sāvitrī, the Sun. Its name Gāyatrī is the name of the metre in which it is composed.

3. The Upanayana-vrata may be taken for three, or twelve nights, or for a year. Dharma Sindhu p.338, under Baṭu-Vrata.

4. Medhā, intelligence, wisdom. Medhā, personified, is the wife of Dharma, and daughter of Dākṣa.

5 Dharma Sindhu. p. 337.
PROPITIATIONS in connection with the Upanayana.

Certain propitiatory rites accompany the Upanayana ceremony. Such are:

I. Grahamakha, or Grahayajña, i.e. sacrifices to the planets.¹ These are offered a few days, seven at the most, before the Upanayana Rite is celebrated. The number of officiating priests (Ṛtvija) employed depends on the number of propitiatory Fire oblations which the attitude of the planets demands. The Rtvijas offer the oblations to the Moon and the planets, and the Ācārya or Guru himself offers those to the Sun. The altar is a cavity dug in the ground, and the sacrifices are of rice and clarified butter.² The fuel sacred to each particular planet is used in each case.³

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I. The nine planets, or Navagraha, are, Sun, Moon, Maṅgala, (or Mars), Budha (Mercury), Guru (Jupiter), Śukra (Venus), Śani (Saturn), and Rāhu, and Ketu (the head and tail, respectively, of the demon who swallowed the nectar and ambrosia (Amṛta), — an incident in Viṣṇu's Tortoise incarnation. Rāhu and Ketu are the names given respectively to the ascending and descending node (of the Moon's changes). Apte. Vol.3. p.I34I. Col. I.

2. For oblations, measurements, Cf. Dharmasindhu.p.330-33I.

3. Dharmasindhu.p.33I. Ten kinds of fuel are given.
2. Vināyakāsañti. At the approaching time of the Upanayan rite, Vināyaka (i.e. Gaṇapati, or Ganesa) must be offered propitiation. Vināyaka is believed to be the "Obstacle Remover". He is propitiated in the belief that, by this means, the merit, or 'fruit', that should come through the correct performance of the ceremony, may not be caused to perish because of any unknown or unforeseen obstacle, or any inauspicious influences. The second object in the propitiation is the removal of what is called pratikula Doṣa, i.e. adverse defect, such as the death of a Sapinda, at, or about, the time of the Upanayana Rite.

3. Brhaspatisānti. This is the Propitiation of the planet Brhaspati, or Jupiter (Guru). A gold image of Brhaspati is placed on a square-shaped pile of yellow rice, and worshipped with the sixteen means of Pūjā. All the things for worship are gold in colour for this Pūjā – two yellow garments, a yellow sacrificial thread, yellow sandalwood, yellow rice (cāhmāred with saffron), yellow flowers, a lamp with clarified butter, etc. After the Pūjā, the ceremonial sprinkling of water over the heads of the father, the Kumāra, and family members is performed. Brāhmans are also feasted.

I. Gaṇapati is always propitiated before every rite, or on any fresh undertaking, to ensure success. Cf. Ch. 15. Part 2. under Deities other than the Triad.

PROCEDURE AFTER the Rite.

Utthāpana. The awning or pavilion erected for the celebration of the Upanayana Rite is taken down immediately after the removal (Utthāpana) of the presiding deities, i.e. the Mātrkās and the Maṇḍapa Devatās previously mentioned. Their removal is effected on any even day – second, fourth, etc., except the sixth, counting from the day of their erection. It is also considered auspicious to remove them on the fifth or the seventh day. But other odd days, and the sixth, are believed to be inauspicious.

During the time between the erecting of the pavilion on the day previous to Upanayana, and the removal of the presiding deities on one of the above mentioned days, those Brāhmans who are Sapindas do not perform a New Moon Śrāddha, Śrāddha. Nor do they hold a Śrāddha feast, or wear the perpetual Śrāddha. Nor do they hold a Śrāddha feast, or wear the sacrificial thread over the right shoulder. In other words, no act in connection with the dead, except the festive Nāndi-Śrāddha, which is performed at the beginning of all festive rites, is observed, while the Maṇḍapa Devatās are believed to be presiding. In houses where the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice is offered daily it is suspended during the above days.

I. Their setting up is called Sthāpana, and their removal is Utthāpana.
Vedic study is also suspended, and fasting is avoided. Relatives refrain from using Gopicanda and Bhasma in their daily ritual. Crossing a river, or a boundary, and bathing in cold water, are also considered inauspicious.

In orthodox Hinduism, the Upanayana Rite admits the young boy to the state of Brahmacarya (that of the celibate student). The intention is that he should begin Vedic Study with the rite called Upakarma, or Vedārambhkārīyā (Act of beginning the Veda). In his thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth year respectively, he is to take four vows or Vrata - namely, the Mahānāmni Vrata, the Maha Vrata, the Upanisāna Vrata, and the Godāna Vrata. There are those who take this course of study, but they are exceedingly rare in modern India.

The fourth of the above Vrata is kept in the India of today among the sixteen bodily rites, or Sāmskāras. This is the Vrata called Go-dāna, or Kesānta. It follows after the Upanayan rite, and is therefore the thirteenth Sāmskāra.

XIII. Go-dāna or Kesānta. (The rite of cutting the hair.)

Go-dāna means giving a cow as a gift to one’s Guru. This is rarely done nowadays. Kesānta is the removing of the hair; and the rite consists in shaving the head, which act is performed with prescribed Mantras. I

I. It need scarcely be said that no modernised Maharāstra Brāhman observes this rite. It has become a matter of form, even for the mediumly orthodox.
The time for the rite of Kasánta is during the Uttarāyana period of the year (when the sun is in the Northern hemisphere) — from Makara Saṅkrānti for six months. The auspicious times are the same as those observed for the Cudakarma (Caula) rite, namely:

Lunar Days:— The 2nd., 3rd., 5th., 7th., 10th., 11th., and 13th.

Solar Days:— Sunday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. Also a Monday in a Light Half of a month.

Lunar Asterisms:— Āśvinī, Mṛga, Punarvasū, Puṣya, Hasta, Citrā, Svātī, Jjēṣṭhā, Śrāvāna, Dhanisthā, Śatatarakā, and Revatī.

XIV. Samāvartana. The Rite of Returning.

This refers to the ancient rite of returning home on leaving the hermitage of the Vedic Teacher. The rite is also called Snāna, because the performance of Snāna is the chief act in it. This Snāna ends the first period of his life. Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans call this rite also by the name of Sodamunja, meaning the Loosing of the girdle of Munja Grass, because this act also is part of the rite.

Many Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans perform the above rite not at the age of sixteen, but on the fourth day after the rite of Upanayana, counting the instruction in the Gāyatri to be symbolic of the whole course of Vedic study. Professor Kāne
gives, as the origin of this practice, the foolish superstition, prevalent among Mahārāṣṭra Brahmans, that a Brahmacāri in the event of his death, becomes a Piśāca or evil ghost—such a superstition accounting, naturally, for the desire to hasten the termination of the Brahmacāri period. ¹

Many Mahārāṣṭra Brahmans, however, follow the ancient usage, and do not perform Samāvartana till the youth is actually about to enter the second stage of Twice-born life, which is that of the Householder, or Grhastha.

The main acts in the rite of Samāvartana are the untying of the gīndle of Muñja grass (the Makhalā), which is the sign of the disciples bondage to the teacher, and the performance of Snāna, as the symbol of washing away the obligations of the Brahmacārya stage of life. In the celebration of this rite, the deity is Indra, and the Visvedevas of the Māndūrāddha are Satya and Vasu.

Times for Celebrating the Rite. Authorities differ as to auspicious times. The Dharmasindhu gives as the most generally accepted, the following:

Lunar Days:— Any except the three Riktas (4th., 9th., and 14th.), Full Moon, New Moon, 8th., and 1st.

Solar Days:— Any auspicious day, even including a Tuesday or a Saturday.

¹ Dharmasastra Vicāra. Kane. p.74.
2. There are a few, but very few, who do take up the Brahmacāri student's vows seriously.
Lunar Asterisms: - Pūrya, Punarvasū, Mṛga, Revati, Hasta, Anurādhā, the three Uttarās, Rohini, Sravana, Visākha and Citrā. These are the most auspicious. Instead of the above, the Nakṣatras favourably for the Upanayana rite may be chosen.

On completion of the rite of Samāvartana, the youth observes a period of three days Aśouca (defilement on account of death), if, during his student period, he has lost any Sapinda of his family. In that case, marriage may not be performed till the three days of Aśouca have expired.

The Śnātaka takes certain vows with reference to his moral conduct. These vows are taken from the Sūtras, and from the later Smṛti writings. They are, as the Dharmasindhu points out, not part of the Samāvartana rite, but have reference to conduct as a Brāhman man. The Brāhman householder's etiquette in manners is modelled on them.

For example, he will not run in order to avoid a heavy shower of rain; he will not climb a tree, or go down a well, or swim in a river. The above habits are examples of the Sūtra vows (Sūtrokta Vrata). Other rules of conduct kept by the Maharāstra Brāhman are such as the following, and are Smarta vows (Smṛtyukta Vrata), e.g. never to be clean-shaven; except for a sign of mourning. The chin is always clean-shaven. But the moustache is shaved off only on the death of a near relative.

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3. Except for a sign of mourning. The chin is always clean-shaven. But the moustache is shaved off only on the death of a near relative.
to use flowers or sandal paste on one's person a second time; always to use Sugandha (Fragrant pigment), and to be acceptable to behold; always to wear white; never to wear either torn or patched garments, or any garment that another (except one's guru) has worn, or another's sacred thread; never to look at one's reflection in water; never to perform Ācamana standing, except when standing in water knee-deep or deeper (i.e. at worship in the river at Sandhyā time); never to wash the feet except in running water; never to eat food with shoes on, or to make an obeisance with shoes on; Never to eat with a woman; never to give teaching on law or morality, or ceremonial rites, to one who is not a wearer of the Sacrificial Thread.
Chapter Eleven

THE MARRIAGE RITE. VIVĀHA.

The basic conception of the rite of marriage has been from Vedic times the union of bride and bridegroom, and the setting up of a new Domestic Fire (Gṛyāgni), which should be kept alight perpetually, and on which all the Šāririka Sāmskāras of the coming family, and the daily sacrifices of the householder, should be offered. It is in this sense that the Grhastha, or Householder, is called Yajamāna, i.e. Sacrificer. Among Mahāraśtra Brāhmans of the present day, though the ritual of keeping alight a perpetual Domestic Fire has, broadly speaking, fallen into abeyance, the head of the house is still called the Yajamāna, and the sacrifices and bodily rites are observed, but with Fire set up afresh for each occasion, the rule being simply that live coals must be from the common fire (Laulikāgni that is in use for the day's cooking.

The rite of Marriage is the initiation into the second stage of Brāhman life, or the second Āśrama, as it is called.

I. Brāhman life has four Āśramas - (i) the Celibate student, (ii) the Householder, (iii) the wandering Forest Dweller, and (iv) the complete Ascetic; i.e. Brahmacāri, Grhastha, Vanaprastha, and Sannyāsi.
The Rite of Vivāha takes place, in the case of the majority of Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, at the age of about twenty or later. The manner of its observance dates back not only to Vedic, but even to Indo-European times. The nuptial Fire round which the pair walk was also a Roman custom, and the throwing of rice was the symbol of prosperity.

In the actual performance of Vedic ritual, the Marriage rite of the present day is practically identical with the early Aryan rite. The choice of the bride is determined by the same considerations as in the Vedic age — namely, suitability of Gotra-Pravara, degree of Sāpindya relationship, amity of Horoscope, etc. The bride herself in the personal sense, is not of so great consideration, though, according to the Dharmasindhu, she should be "possessed of auspicious signs, sound of limb, gentle of name, and beautiful in body."}

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1. The age of marriage in Vedic times was twenty — after a twelve year course of Vedic study, following upon the Upanayana Rite at the age of eight. The bride's age about twelve, not having yet reached puberty, so that the consumation of the marriage did not take place till later. But the young husband was to care for and to teach his wife — passing on to her something suitable to her understanding — reading, writing perhaps, and some knowledge of history and literature. That was the ideal.


DECISIONS respecting a proposed marriage.¹

Proposals with respect to marriage between a Mahārajāstra Brāhman youth and a girl are usually, in the case of orthodox Brāhmans, made to the youth's family, by some intermediate person; and if the suggestion is acceptable to the youth's family, the matters which determine suitability or unsuitability of marriage in the particular case are investigated. Such investigation involves the following considerations.

I. Consideration of Gotra-Pravara

A Gotra is a tribe descended from one of the eight Sages, or Ūṛṣis, of olden times. The origin of Gotras and Pravaras has been discussed in an earlier chapter.² Here, it may be recalled that the Mahārajāstra Brāhmans count their descent from forty-nine Pravaras, and call their Gotras or distinct ancestral lines Ekapravari, or Trippravari, or Pañca-pravari, after the recognised number of their original Pravaras or priestly ancestors.

Marriage is not allowed between a pair who have the same Gotra and same Pravara. This rule applies, generally speaking, in the case of the Ekapravari Gotras, i.e. tribes who have only one Ūṛṣi, or Pravara. In other cases, marriage is debarred if two out of three Pravaras, or if three out of

¹. It should be understood that this chapter describes the fully orthodox manner of Matrimony rites. This is all at the back of the mental attitude of modern Brāhmans, who, orthodox or not, observe the main ritual.

². Ch. 8. pp. 141-142
Five pravaras, are common to the youth and the girl.

The Dharmasindhu records the Gaṇas (Classes or tribes) of the original sages, and the branchings into pravaras, and the further branchings of those pravaras, or Brahmanic tribes, into hundreds of subdivisions, commonly called Gotras. The names of the ancestral pravaras (Leaders, or Summoners to the sacrifices) are given in each case, or in each group, with the rulings as to which subdivisions among them may, and which may not, intermarry.

If a youth’s Gotra is not known, he is allowed to take the Gotra of his Ācārya, i.e. the religious teacher who performed his Thread Investiture Ceremony. The Gotra to which one’s mother belongs is not considered among the Brāhmans.

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I. Dharmasindhu. pp. 370 to 382. as follows: Bhṛgu Gaṇa p.372; Adi Gira Gaṇa (with Gautama as one of its divisions); p. 373; Atri Gaṇa p.376; Viśvamitra Gaṇa p.378; Kaśyapa Gaṇa p. 379; Vaśiṣṭha Gaṇa p.380; Agastya Gaṇa p.380; and mixed Gotras (rules concerning) p.381 to 382.

II. Cf. Rule forbidding mother’s Gotra (Dharmasindhu p.383—). Marrying according to the mother’s tribe appears to be the practice of the primitive peoples of Southern Mahārāṣṭra, whose customs are akin to those of the neighbouring Kanaresā tribes. Enthoven states that the custom of taking the mother’s totem (tribe-sign) has been replaced in many cases by the custom of marrying according to the father’s. (Tribes and Castes of Bombay, Intro. pp X, XI). As tribes rise in the social scale, they pass from totemistic organisation, through gradual steps of development, to the Brāhmanical system of Gotras. Cf. for instance, the case of the Gavāda, a subcaste of cultivators (Tribes and Castes of Bombay) who claim the Kaśyapa Gotra.
2. Consideration of the degree of Sāpindya.

Bride and bridegroom may not be in a position of Sāpindya relationship to one another. In its widest sense, the Sāpindya relationship, stretching, as it does, over seven generations, with various side-branch connections, must include some hundreds of individuals, all of whom are Sāpindas to the one ancestor, and stand in the relationship of Sāpindya to one another. From this point of view, the Sāpindya relationship is practically unending.

For decisions in respect of marriage, therefore, the consideration of the Sāpindya relationship between bride and bridegroom is narrowed down to the simple question of the remoteness of their nearest common ancestor in the direct line. Their relationship to that ancestor, who is called their Mūlapuruṣa, or Original Male Ancestor, is naturally, in each case, traced through either parent. The rule is that if the line is traced through the father, the father must be at least in the seventh generation from the Mūlapuruṣa; if through the mother, the mother must be at least in the fifth generation. If seven generations on the father's, or five generations on the mother's side are not completed, the bride or the bridegroom, as the case may be, is not free from the Sāpindya connection with the Mūlapuruṣa, and therefore the degree of
relationship is considered to be not sufficiently remote for marriage.

3. Consideration of Amity of Horoscope.

There being no bar to the marriage, so far as the questions of Gotra-Pravara, and of Śāpindya, are concerned, the horoscopes of the youth and the proposed bride are investigated, and the Good Qualities (Gunas) attributable to the case in question are reckoned. The main points according to which the reckoning is made are the following:

(a) The attitude of their Rasisvāmis.

The Rasisvāmi of bride, or of bridegroom, is the regent, or ruling planet, of the zodiacal sign under which she, or he, was born. The suitability of a proposed union between any couple is considered as depending on the attitude of their Rasisvāmis, one toward the other. For instance, if the bride’s Rasisvāmi is entirely inimical to that of the bridegroom, or vice versa, no Guṇas can be attributed to the case for the proposed marriage, as far as the Rasisvāmis are concerned.

The twelve Svāmis (Regents) of the twelve Rasis or Signs of the Zodiac, are, beginning with Meṣa (Aries) are as follows:

I. For examples illustrating this cf. Dharmasindhu p. 361.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>Regent</th>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>Regent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mēṣa</td>
<td>Maṅgala</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vṛṣabha</td>
<td>Śukra</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mithuna</td>
<td>Budha</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Karka</td>
<td>Candra</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Simha</td>
<td>Śūrya</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kanyā</td>
<td>Budha</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These Regent-planets are believed to stand to one another in the relation of friends, or enemies, or neutrals as below:

**Sūrya.** Friends are Brhaspati (Guru), Maṅgala, Candra.  
Enemies Śani, Šukra.  
Neutral Budha.

**Candra.** Friends Śūrya, Budha.  
Enemies None.  
Neutral Maṅgala, Guru, Śukra, Śani.

**Maṅgala.** Friends Śūrya, Guru, Candra.  
Enemies Budha.  
Neutral Śani, Šukra.

**Budha.** Friends Ravi (i.e. Śūrya), Šukra.  
Enemies Candra.  
Neutral Śani, Maṅgala, Guru.

**Brhaspati.** Friends Śūrya, Maṅgala, Candra.  
Enemies Šukra, Budha.  
Neutral Śani.
Sukra. Friends are Śani, Budha.
Enemies Sūrya, Candra.
Neutral Maṅgala, Guru.

Śani. Friends Śukra, Budha.
Enemies Maṅgala, Sūrya, Candra.
Neutral Guru.

The award of Gunas, or quality marks, for the case of marriage is made from the above premises, as follows:

If the respective Rasisvamis of bride and bridegroom are the one, or if they are mutually friendly (e.g. Sūrya and Brhaspati), the case is awarded five Gunas. If they are neutral in the one case, and inimical in the other (e.g. Buddha inimical to Maṅgala, and Maṅgala indifferent to Buddha), it is counted half a Guna. If they are indifferent on the one hand, and friendly on the other, (e.g. Buddha and Sūrya), it is counted as four Gunas. If they are inimical in the one case and friendly in the other (e.g. Candra and Buddha), it is counted one Guna. If the Svāmis are mutually indifferent (e.g. Brhaspati and Śani), it is counted as three Gunas. If both are inimical one to the other (e.g. Sūrya and Śani), it is counted as zero.

One of the above awards is given to the case in question, from the above point of view.
(b) The nature of their lunar asterisms.

The next point considered under amity of Horoscope is the suitability of the proposed pair, according to the nature of the lunar asterism under which each was born. The Nakṣatras, or lunar asterisms, are believed to be in three groups, or Gaṇas, known respectively as the human, divine, and demon classes, called Manusya Gaṇa, Deva Gaṇa and Rāksasa Gaṇa.

If bride and bridegroom are, by virtue of their birth Nakṣatra, of the one class, or if the bridegroom is of the Deva and the bride of the Manusya class, it is counted six Gunas in favour of the marriage. If the bridegroom is of the Manusya and the bride of the Deva class, five Gunas are credited. If the bridegroom is of the Rāksasa, and the bride of the Deva class, the case receives only one Guna. No Gunas at all are given, if the bride is of the Rāksasa, and the bridegroom of the Deva class, or if one of them is of the Manusya, and the other of the Rāksasa class.

An award of so many Gunas is made according to the above consideration under the head of Nakṣatra Guna, and is added to the award already given in respect of the Rāgisvāmis.

(c) The degree of proximity of their zodiacal signs.

The Raśikūṭa, i.e. the plot, or plan of the zodiacal signs, is the next point for consideration. The place in which the respective Raśis of bride and bridegroom stand to
each other is considered auspicious, or inauspicious, under the following conditions:

In general, if the zodiacal sign of the one is either the second, or the twelfth, from that of the other, it augurs poverty; if the ninth, or the fifth, it shows that the couple in question will be sonless; if the sixth, or the eighth, the result of marriage will be either death, or calamity. If the signs are in the third, fourth, seventh, tenth or eleventh place one from the other, it is auspicious.

The above conditions are affected by the question of Naksatra and Carana. In a case where bride and bridegroom were born under the same Naksatra (Lunar Asterism), but in a different quarter (Carana), there is no Doṣa (Blemish) from adverse indications in the position of their zodiacal signs, because the above circumstance is, in itself auspicious.

In a case where the bride and bridegroom were born in the same quarter of the same lunar asterism, if their zodiacal signs are in the sixth, or in the eighth, place from each other, it is a forbidden circumstance in respect of the proposed union. If under the above circumstances, the one sign is second or twelfth, from the other, it is considered mediumly auspicious; if in the fifth, or the ninth, also mediumly auspicious. The remaining positions in the above case are believed to be auspicious.
The count for Gunas or quality marks, according to the above, is as follows: For an auspicious condition, seven Gunas; for an inauspicious condition, with mutual friendliness of bride's and Bridegroom's respective planets, four Gunas; or, if one planet out of the two is friendly to the other, one Guna. In the case where bride's and bridegroom's Nakṣatras and Carana are the same, no Gunas are awarded.

(d) Sameness or difference according to Nādi.

The lunar asterisms, in addition to their classification under the three types of nature previously mentioned, are divided into three groups under the name Nādi. These groups are Prathama, Madhyama, and Antya - or, First, Middle, and End Nādi.

The word Nādi signifies an artery, or a tube, or stem. The accompanying diagram shows the course that an artery would take, passing through the lunar asterisms in their numerical order, but arrayed under the three Nādi sections.

Diagram on next page.
If the proposed bride and bridegroom were born under Naksatras belonging to the same section it is extremely inauspicious, and augurs death. The wedding is forbidden. If their Naksatras are of different sections, it is auspicious and eight Guṇas are awarded.

If the total number of Guṇas awarded under the four heads described above, when added together, should be less than twenty, the marriage is considered inauspicious. A total of twenty Guṇas is believed to be of a medium degree, and a total in excess of twenty of the definitely acceptable degree of auspiciousness. ¹

¹. For all the above methods of calculating the horoscope, cf. Dharmasindhu. pp. 357-362. Page 361 gives a table showing acceptable and forbidden distances from the Mula-purusa.
MARRIAGE.

The auspicious times for the performance of the rite of Marriage, the Fifteenth Samskara, are as below:

XV. VIVĀHA.

Months:— Māgha, Phālguna, Vaisākha, Jyeṣṭha are auspicious; Mārgaśirṣa is medium; and, according to some, Āṣāḍha and Kārttika; also the month Pauṣa, if the Sun is in the sign Makara; and the month Caitra, if the Sun is in Meṣa.

Lunar Days:— The Riktas, 8th., and 6th., are medium. All others except New Moon are auspicious. The days of the Light Half of a month are best. Those of the Dark Half as far as the Thirteenth are medium.

Solar Days:— Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday are auspicious. Other days are medium.

Lunar Asterisms:— Rohini, Mrīga, Maghā, the three Uttaras, Hasta, Svātī, Mūla, Anuradha, Revati. Citrā, Śravaṇa, Dhanisthā and Āśvini the last four being the most auspicious.

There are also many considerations with reference to the position of the planets, e.g. Guru's influence on the bride,

I. A bride who is an eldest (Jyeṣṭha) daughter, and a bridegroom who is an eldest son should not be married in the month Jyeṣṭha. Also the birth month and the birth Naksatra are forbidden for the marriage of an eldest child.
and Ravi's (the Sun's) influence on the bridegroom, are important. 1

Forbidden times for the Marriage Rite are:

(a) A Ksrayapaksa 2 - i.e. a fortnight of only thirteen days, owing to the occurrence of two deleted Tithiis.

(b) A deleted month.

(c) An intercalary month.

(d) The time of the setting of Guru and Sukra.

(e) When the planet Guru (Jupiter) is in the Sign Simha (Leo)

(f) A deleted year (Ksaya Samvatsara) 3

The Dharmasindhu, however, states that, according to some authorities, a deleted year has no adverse effect in the country South of the River Godāvari. 4

PREPARATIONS for the celebration of the Rite.

The auspicious days for the setting up of the pavilion, or Mandapa, are considered to be the same Naksatras and lunar days as those auspicious for the Upanayana Rite, 5 with the exception of the ninth, sixth, and third days previous to the wedding.

1. Dharmasindhu. p. 396. paragraph I.
2. This applies also to the Caula and Upanayana Ceremonies.
4. Cf. for the Vivāha Rite guidance, Dharmasindhu pp395 to 406
The pavilion has four entrances, the altar being made on the left side of the entrance approached from the house. The altar is rectangular in shape, sloping toward the East, erected with steps leading to it, and decorated with large shoots of plantain trees. The length of the sides of the altar is four cubits if measured by the bridegroom’s, and five cubits if measured by the bride’s, arm.

Possible necessity for performance of Kumbha Vivaha.

If the conjunction of planets in the bride’s horoscope suggests widowhood as being in her future, the ceremony known as Kumbha Vivaha is performed, whereby the girl is married to Kumbha (the sign Aquarius) in the form of a water-jar (Khumta). The image of Varuna is placed on the jar and worshipped; after which, the girl is tied to the jar with thread. This rite having been performed, the vessel is thrown away, and water is sprinkled over the girl with a spring of foliage, consisting of the leaves of five different kinds of trees, and known by the name of Paḍcapallava.²

1. The platform of the altar is built of sundried bricks, and is made by a Kumbhara (of Vaiśya caste, third of the twice-born classes). The Kundā, or central part, is made by a Brāhman. In this Kundā the fire oblations are offered.

2. Cf. Thesis Appendix. Paḍcapallava. It appears to be an emblem of totemistic character, and is the Devaka, or protective deity of certain of the Marāthā tribes of primitive origin.
Similarly, if the horoscope of the bridegroom should forecast widowerhood, his duty is to perform three Prajāpatya, and three Cāndrayana atonements, followed by the worship of all the deities with fire oblations of rice and clarified butter, and to give a feast to Brāhmans.

Vanganiścaya (Betrothal).

At some time previous to the above, the actual first step in the Marriage Rite has been taken, in the form of the Betrothal Ceremony, or the Vanganiścaya — called popularly in Mahārāstra by the name of Vāgdāna. The bridegroom and his party come to the bride's father's house on an auspicious day. The ceremony includes on their part a Saṅkalpa (Resolution) to perform the worship of Kanyā, Gaṅpati, and Varuna; and on the girl's father's part, to worship Gaṅpati and Varuna.

PREPARATIONS immediately previous to the Marriage Rite.

On the day previous to the marriage, the ceremony of Maṅgala Snāna is performed by the bride, in which she bathes and anoints her body with Halada (saffron) and oil. The remainder of the Halada is used by the bridegroom, who also performs Maṅgala Snana. In the houses in Maharāstra, a square, four-legged stool, called a Caurāṅga, may be seen. Its only use is for the auspicious bathing of the bride and bridegroom.

Atonement, or prāyaścitta, is then made for the omission of the performance of previous Sāmskāras, in the case of the girl, who, being a girl, is not allowed to have the rites of the Sāmskāras, but must make atonement for their omission, at the time of her marriage, from the Jātakarma Sāmskāra to the Caula Sāmskāra inclusive.

Further acts of preparation include the festive offering of Nandīsraddha to the ancestors, the setting up of the pavilion deities (the Mandapa Devatās who are believed to preside over and protect the pavilion), the worship of the protecting Mātrkās (mother deities), and the propitiation of the planets.

I. The procedure differs according to whether the bridegroom's father is living, whether the bridegroom is an adopted son, etc. etc. etc. (Cf. Dharmasindhu p. 389). The offering of Nandīsraddha is the rite which entitles the ceremony to be carried through, regardless of defilement occurring through a birth or a death subsequent to the Nandīsraddha performance. Nandīsraddha is the "beginning" of the ceremony of Vivāha from the viewpoint of auspicious continuity.

Similar "beginning points" in the cases of other ceremonies are: In a Śrauta sacrifice, the choosing of the Rtvija (priest); in a Vrata, the pronouncing of the Śaṅkalpa; in Śrāddha rites, the Pākaproksana, or the mixing of the ingredients for the food offerings. In all the sixteen Sāmskāras which are bodily rites it is the Nandīsraddha. After the above "beginning" in each case, the occurrence of Asūca (defilement through a birth or a death) is believed to have no inauspicious effect, though, if possible, it is considered better to postpone the rite, and choose another auspicious moment (Muhūrtma).
The observances on the day of the wedding are as follows:

The giver of the bride goes to the Bridegroom's father's house, and, in accordance with the resolution made at the betrothal ceremony, worships Ganapati and Varuna. He then washes the feet of the bridegroom, and worships him, offering gifts of clothing, sandalpowder, flowers, etc., after which, the bridegroom is mounted on a pony, and the wedding procession, called Miravineh, proceeds to the bride's father's house.

Meanwhile, the Maharāstra Brāhman bride is occupied with the worship of the joint deities Gaurīhara, i.e. the goddess Gaurī, or Pārvati, and the god Hara (or Ḍṛ), who is Śiva, the husband of Gaurī. A square space in a corner of one of the rooms is marked off as a shrine, and the image of the above deities in the act of mutual embrace is placed on a heap of husked rice. The attendant images are those of Kātyāyani, Mahālakṣmī, and Saci (wives of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Indra).

In front of these, engaged in their worship, the bride is seated on the floor, her forehead smeared with saffron, and her brow bound with a chaplet of flowers, from which strings of blossoms hang down over her face and neck. Covering her wedding sārī, which is of yellow or saffron colour, she wears a large squareshawl of Kashmir cloth, embroidered round the edges. She is adorned with jewelry — necklaces, bangles,
anklets, ear-rings, nose-ring and hair ornaments. In addition, the Mahārāṣṭra Brähman bride wears on each wrist a number of green bangles (one wrist having one green bangle more than the other).

Her worship consists in a meditation Mantra, then the Puja Mantras and rites, and finally the lighting of a lamp, the wick of which is made of twenty-seven strands of cotton thread, in length equal to the bride's own height. The wick is called Thānavāta.

After this Puja, Suvāsinīs (married Brähman women) are feasted. Brahmans also are feasted (separately).

THE CHIEF RITE.

The rite proper of the ceremony of Vivāha consists in seven acts of ritual, which are:— Vāgdāna (or Betrothal), previous to the wedding day; On the wedding day, Madhuparka, the honouring of the bridegroom; Kanyādāna, the giving of the bride; Pānigrahaṇa, the accepting of the girl's hand by the bridegroom; Vivāhahoma, the wedding fire oblation; Saptapadi, the seven steps taken round the nuptial fire; and finally, Grhapravesāniya-Homa, the fire oblation on the bride's

1. The above description is an actual description of a Nasik Brähman bride. Five green bangles on one hand and six on the other.
2. The Sacred Thread at a boy's Upanayana Rite is also of twenty seven strands. Marriage for the girl is initiation into Brähmanhood.
3. सुवासिनी = of auspicious fragrance.
entry into her father-in-law's house — this last only in extremely orthodox cases, and not usually performed in Mahārāstra.

Madhuparka.

Madhuparka is a mixture of curds and honey, used as an offering in the act of worshipping the bridegroom, who is considered to be a deity. The procedure followed in this rite is in accordance with the Gṛhyasūtras of the bridegroom's Vedic Sākhā, irrespective of the Sūtras of the bride's father. Guests of honourable position, and the Rtvija, or priest who is to offer the fire oblations, are also worshipped, in each case according to the person's own Gṛhyasūtra ritual. The worship consists in offering sandal paste, flowers, and incense, and in waving lamps and so on, as for a deity. The bridegroom is given Lādu, or balls of pulse, made with water, to eat.

Kanyādāna.

The propitious moment for this Giving of the Bride is decided by the astrologer who is present. Bride and bridegroom are caused to stand each on a heap of rice, the bridegroom facing West, and the bride facing East, the distance

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I. The setting of the time-measure for the exact horoscopic moment of the union is called Lagna-ghatikā-sthāpana. The ghatikā, or small brass bowl, pierced at the centre of the base with a small hole, is set to float in a vessel of water, at the moment when the sun's disc is half risen or half set, with the worship of Ganapati and Varuṇa. The moment is determined at the second of its filling and sinking. This is entirely oldfashioned and extremely orthodox.
between them being one Rāta, or cubit. Between the two, a curtain is hung, its fringed end being toward the North. The curtain is marked in the centre of both sides with a Svastika drawn in saffron powder (\[\text{Svastika symbol}\]).

As bride and bridegroom stand waiting for the propitious moment of union, each regards the Svastika and meditates on his or her Kūladevatā, or family tutelary deity. Mangalaśṭakas or stanzas of blessing are recited up to the propitious moment, when, on the giving of the sign by the astrologer, the curtain is withdrawn, and bride and bridegroom are revealed each to the other.

The astrologer's signal is greeted with a great beating of drums, and a show of joy. Grains of rice - one at a time on this occasion now described, and apt to sting, though the bride bore it calmly, even on the face - are thrown by friends who stand around. Bride and bridegroom each put rice on the other's head.

Pāṇigrahaṇa.

The father and mother of the bride then take their place on the South side of the bride and bridegroom, having with them

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1. From Marriage onward, the bride is believed to come under her husband's family's deity's protection, and worships it instead of the tutelary deity of her own father's house.
2. At this point, in some castes of the Māhārāṣṭra Brāhmans, the bride bows down at her husband's feet.
presents of clothing and ornaments (Jewelry). The father makes the Sañkalpa to give his daughter, whereupon the hands of bride and bridegroom are held over a vessel of bell-metal, called a Kanka - the bride's hands forming a hollow, in which the bridegroom's hands, also in the form of a hollow, rest. The bride's father repeats Mantras, while the mother, standing at his right side, pours a stream of pure water into the hollowed hands of the pair. The gifts are then presented to the bridegroom by the bride's father, after which the pair are sprinkled with scented water, and feed each other with consecrated rice. Then each puts Tilaka (the mark on the forehead with coloured earth) on each other, and each garlands the other with a flower garland.

The bridegroom now presents the bride with the apparel significant of wedded life. This consists of a silk Lugadeñ nine yards of ornamental silk cloth, called at this moment of giving, Astaputri, i.e. woman of eight sons, and with it a Coli, or bodice tight fitting, and finally, that which is equivalent to the wedding ring of the West, a necklace called a Mangalasutra, made of small black beads with a centrepiece of gold. Ganapati is then worshipped, and the bride and

I. For the Mantras accompanying gifts, Cf. Dharmasindhu p.421.
2. The gold centrepiece on the necklace is a representation of the phallus.
bridegroom are tied together, the corner of their borders of their flowing garments being tied in a knot. The worship of Laksmi, goddess of wealth and wife of Visnu, ends this part of the ceremony.

Vivāha Homa.

Now comes the climax of the rite - the kindling of the Grhyaṅgni, the sacred domestic Fire. For this Vivāhahoma or Lajāhoma, the pair ascend the altar platform and take their seats, the bride being on her bridegroom's right. The offerings made by the Ṛtvija in the fire are of unhusked, parched rice. The domestic fire, or Grhyaṅgni (Grhya + Agni), of the newly wedded pair is lighted from this sacrificial marriage fire. The deity honoured in the Marriage oblation is Agni, the god Fire.

Saptapadi.

After the above fire-offering, the bride and bridegroom walk together round the fire, taking seven steps - a Mantra being recited with each step. Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans consider the union to be indissoluble after the rite of the Seven Steps.

Grāhapravesānīya Homa.

The offering of a fire oblation at the time of a bride's entry into the father-in-law's house is not observed among
Mahārāstra Brāhmans, even the orthodox; but in extremely orthodox priestly families it may yet be the custom, though rare.¹

Procedure after the Rite.

The Utthāpana, or Dismantling, of the Devakās and Mātrkās, the protective, attendants deities, which have been set up in the house, and also of the Maṇḍapa Devatās, the pavilion deities, is accomplished on the fourth day after the ceremony. The taking down of the pavilion is subject to the same rules as those to be observed in connection with the Upanayana Rite.²

¹. The interesting, orthodox rules for the Entrance of the Bride into her Father-in-law's house are given in Chapter Thirteen, after considering the Grhastha's home life in this next chapter.

Chapter Twelve

BRAHMAN HOME LIFE IN MAHARASTRA

This is an appropriate moment to consider the domestic life of the Mahārāṣṭra Brahmāṇ, as he enters his second Āśrama—that of the married state. Marriage is the Brahmāṇ's fifteenth Śaṁskāra.

Concerning the rite of marriage, the ancient Vedic ideal was the lighting of a fire. The centre of the home was the fire on which the daily domestic sacrifices could be offered; and Agni, the deity Fire, was the god in their midst, who would be the agent to carry their prayers and their sacrifices to those deities for whom they were intended. The householder himself, the Grhaṭha, was the sacrificer, the Yajamāna. The wives of Brāhmans to this day call their husbands the Yajamāṇa. It is a common word in Mahārāṣṭra.

In Vedic doctrine there are three kinds of Agni or fire. They are, according to the Sūtras, the Śrauta Fire for the offering of the religious sacrifices, for the king's prosperity, for national safety, for protection from calamity and epidemic, and floods and famines, and for all sacrifices needed to propitiate the gods. The second is the Grhya
Fire. This is the fire that, in the orthodox Vivāha Rite (the Rite of Marriage), is lighted from the altar fire, and carried to the home of the newly married pair. This fire in olden days was never let go out, but was kept alight perpetually, and on it the five great daily sacrifices were offered, the rites of the family that needed burnt oblations were offered on it. It was used for the Upanayana Rite and the Vivāha Rite and the end of the Yajamāna's life, the torch for his funeral pyre would be lighted from it, and carried by his eldest son, following his father's dead body in the procession to the burning ground on the river bank. That was the ideal in the reason for the perpetual continuance of the Grhyāgni, the Domestic Fire.

The third Fire is the Laukika Fire, the common fire — the fire which is used for the daily cooking and all kitchen purposes. The modern Brāhmaṇ is allowed by his religious authorities to use the fire of the Laukika Agni for his religious sacrifices. But only hot, glowing charcoal or coal may be taken from it and put into the sacrificial vessel for religious use. For instance, into the Kunda, the copper vessel, used in the Pañcamahayajñā worship, offered daily in very orthodox homes.

The Mahārāṣtra Brāhmans of today use only the Laukika Fire

from which to take their religious fire. There are, of course, still many wives who keep a Gṛhyagni burning perpetually. These are most likely to be the priestly families who are actually engaged constantly in the observance of religious ritual, according to their Gṛhya Sūtra.

One has to bear in mind that the fact of the disappearance of this ancient custom of perpetual religious fire in the great majority of Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ homes does not at all mean that the faith in the old ideals has gone. Modern life has crowded ritual out. But faith is there, and forms a great background to the modern Hindu mentality.

This present chapter describes the ordinary, orthodox home of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ from an eye-witness's standpoint.

The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ's wife has her share in the observance of ritual. In the daily religious routine, in acts of worship, in the performance of all the Karmas, she has a place with her husband. Whereas, however, the husband, who is the sacrificer, performs his daily and other ritual with the utterance of Mantras (i.e., Vedic sentences), hers is without Mantras, because in the present age of Kaliyuga, women are not allowed to know the Veda. The only woman's

I. A Brāhmaṇ woman in the absence of her husband may offer a domestic sacrifice, but without Mantras. For instance, if offering the Vaiśvadeva, she merely throws oblations on the fire. If she uses Mantras she contracts guilt (Doṣa).

Cf. Dharmasindhu p.348. 1st. paragraph.
ceremony in which Mantras are used is that of Marriage, which is to her what Upanayana is to the Brāhman boy - initiation.

As mistress of the home and wife of the householder, the Mahārāśtra Brahman woman bears the same title - Grhapatni, or Grhini, that belonged to her Vedic ancestress. She adorns herself similarly with necklaces, bracelets, ear-rings, and anklets. She uses the same kinds of food substances in religious ritual, with the exception of flesh foods, and her household vessels are also of copper, or of earthen ware.

The Mahārāśtra Tambats, or copper workers, work in brass as well as copper, and brass vessels, or, chiefly, bell-metal, are in use, in addition to copper, in the kitchens of the Mahārāśtra Brāhmans.

The Grhastha or householder, himself, has a sphere of life and of thinking apart from his wife, who is not her husband's equal or companion in the Western sense. His world and her world are not the same. He is perhaps a doctor, a pleader, a college professor, a business man, and she just a wife. He has his Vedic study in a room with perhaps picturesquely carved window frames, and white covered, scrupulously clean cushions to rest on while he thinks on philosophy, or the problems of his daily work. She on the other hand has her kitchen, which to her is a world in itself.

I. Lady of the house.
And the spirit of the home seems always to be one of content.

Ritual in cooking.

Cooking is in a Brāhman home a religious Karma, and may be considered under three heads:

(a) The Brāhman way. Food is not religiously acceptable to a Brāhman, unless it is cooked by a Brāhman, either woman or man. Dry grain may be cleaned and ground, or raw vegetable prepared, by a Marātha (Ksatriya) or a Vaiśya cook-woman, or man-servant, but the actual cooking must be done by a Brāhman, and only by a Brāhman who is ceremonially pure. That is to say, she, or he, must have performed Snāna, and thus be in the state of Sohvalen, or Ceremonial Purity.

During the operation of cooking, the state of Sohvalen must not be interrupted, either by personally performing acts which are considered as terminating it, or by coming into contact either directly, through actual touch, or indirectly, through touching a common object with a fellow Brāhman, who has not yet performed the ritual of the morning bath (Snāna), and who is therefore not yet ceremonially pure.

Disturbance of the state of Sohvalen by indirect touch, mentioned above, applies to movable objects only. If a Brāhman who is ceremonially pure touches a carpet, a table, a chair, or even any small object such as a key, which an unbathed Brāhman is touching or holding, his state of purity
ceases with the touch. To avoid this, if one desires to give a key, or any article, to another, it is either placed on the floor for the other to take, or the receiver holds his hands together, while the giver drops it into them from a little distance above, avoiding any contact. If the two were commonly to touch a wall, a pillar, a stair-rail, or any permanent fixture in the house, the purity of the one is not impaired by the common touch. This law applies both to men and women.

To restore her Sohvalen, if accidentally lost while busy in the kitchen, if the contact has been with an unbathed member of the family, the Mahārāstra Brāhman woman performs Snāna a second time. If the contact has been with one who is in the state of Onvalen, she needs only to change her lagāqen for one of silk — because a silk lagāqen is counted as not liable to be defiled by contact.

(b) Periodical defilement.

Cooking may not be done by a Brāhman woman during the days, in each month, when she is considered to be defiled. During this period she follows the law that she should touch no one for three days, and that she should avoid taking a journey, the wearing of flowers in the hair, the eating of betel nut and of Gorasa (the produce of the cow), and the use of the polished wooden board, or Pataj, employed as a  

I. Chapter 4. The state of Onvalen. p. 76.
seat when at meals. She takes her food apart, and others in
the house refrain from touching her, or any object which she
is touching. Anyone coming into contact with her, either
directly or indirectly, becomes defiled. The only exception
is that a small child may run to and fro from her to others,
provided that it is wearing no clothes.

A woman during this period is spoken of as Rajasvalā. In
conversational Marāthi she is called Vitālasi (defiled). On
the fourth day she washes her head, and performs Snāna, and
may then do certain parts of food preparation, namely those
involving the touching of dry things only, such as grain. On
the morning of the fifth day, after the performance of Snāna,
she is permitted to resume the cooking, and to perform ritual
duties in connection with gods and ancestors in the normal way.

(c) The law of Doṣa.

Doṣa signifies Guilt, or Blemish. The word is used
in a general sense. It applies to a rite improperly perform-
ed, or to a person who has some Blemish, such as inauspicious
time of birth, etc.. In the present sense, the word has
reference to particular kinds of food, and signifies, not so
much Guilt, as liability to contract Guilt or ceremonial
defilement if touched by a non-Brāhman.

The law of Doṣa applies to foods which are prepared with
flour, or with water. Hence, food of which either or both
of these is an ingredient cannot be eaten by a Brāhman unless
it has been cooked by a Brahman, and has not been touched during the cooking or the serving by a non-Brahman. The touch of a non-Brahman renders unacceptable any food which has the quality of Dosa. A non-Brahman servant may touch the fruit, the milk, the dry grain, the clarified butter, the oil, the sugar, but not food in the process of cooking, or of serving, if its ingredients include flour, or water; and not the water for drinking or for cooking purposes.

Ritual in dress.

The Mahārāstra Brahman woman recognises three states of purity in dress, namely Sohvalēn, Onvalēn, and Koreh. The first two states have already been mentioned in relation to the Brahman's daily ritual.

1. The application of the above law is interesting. A Mahārāstra Brahman will accept fruit from a non-Brahman, even from a European, and will eat it. But he will not accept a cup of tea. He will drink a glass of milk offered by a non-Brahman or European, but not a glass of water. He will eat fruit, and sweetmeats made with sugar and milk, but not jelabi from a non-Brahman's hand, because the ingredient flour renders it subject to Dosa. By a strange contradiction, however, soda water and tinned biscuits have become, in these times, exceptions to the above law. A Brahman will accept these when offered by a non-Brahman. The women follow the above custom also, but are more conservative. One has seen a Brahman lady faint in one's bungalow, and on recovery be regaled, not with a glass of water, but of milk.

2. Cf. Ch. 3 (thesis) p. 55. under Sohvalēn.
3. Cf. Ch. 4 under The state of Onvalēn. p. 76.
Ritual in dress (continued).

(a) Sonvalen. From the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman woman's point of view, Sonvalen is the state of ceremonial purity which she puts on after the daily rite of Snāna (Bathing, in her case without Mantras). Sonvalen consists in the wearing of a clean (washed) Lugaden - a length of nine yards of cloth of either cotton or silk, or else an unwashed (i.e. new) Lugaden. This garment is arranged in Kṣatā fashion, in the same style as that described in the case of the Brāhman man. But in the woman's case, the Padara, or end of the lugaden - which is finished artistically with several bread stripes of various coloured silk thread, or of real gold thread, woven in - is wound, after making the waist pleats (called Miṅā) at the front, round to the back and under the right arm, then across the chest and over the right shoulder, the wide border of the end of the Lugaden being allowed to fall down the back, to reach below the waist. A tightly fitting bodice, with silk border to the sleeves, reaching to the elbow, completes her attire. The divided style of the Kṣatā does away with the need for underwear.

(b) Gōvalen. Like her husband, the Grhini observes Sonvalen till after the morning meal at about ten o'clock,

1. The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman woman performs Snāna either at the river or lake, or else at home, not of course with Sandhyā.
2. The Lugaden has a narrow border of silk or gold running the whole length of the nine yards. The lugaden is usually of fine Indian cotton, cool for wear.
when she serves the men of the family, she herself not eating with them, but later with her daughters and the small children. For the rest of the day, she keeps the state of Onvalen, which is neither purity nor defilement, and in which she has no objection to touching a non-Brāhman woman or child, or to taking any object from the hands of a non-Brāhman servant. (It is understood that at no time, ever, will she touch a Śūdra; not that essentially she despises a Śūdra, for the Rgveda gives the Śūdra his place in the scheme of creation. But she is bound by the limitations of orthodoxy, whose laws she regards as divine.) The old generation of Brāhman women will keep the state of Sonvalen all day.

(c) Koren. The wearing of a new, unwashed lugadeṃ is regarded as equal to the state of Sonvalen. While a new garment remains unwashed, it is called Koren, and brings no Doṣa, but at its first wash, it comes under the law of Doṣa (unless it is of silk). A white lugadeṃ is also considered to be in the class of Koren, whether it has been washed, or whether it is new. If there is any likelihood of unavoidable contact, the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman Grhini wears Koren—either a new lugadeṃ, or else a white one.

Silk, also, which has no Doṣa, may be used as Koren. Koren in the form of a silk garment, is worn on such occasions as

afternoon social functions, and enables the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ lady to be on the same carpet with non-Brāhmaṇ Hindu or Muslim ladies, Parsee or European, without losing ceremonial purity.

Ritual in adornment.

(a) The Kuṅkū sign. Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ women and unmarried girls wear a small, round, red spot marked in the centre of the forehead. It is made with a paste called Kuṅkumā, or Kuṅkū, composed of a powder prepared from termeric with the addition of lemon juice, and is kept in a small, round brass box (Karandi), about two inches in diameter, with a mirror inside the lid, so that it can be used somewhat like a powder compact. The Kuṅkū sign is symbolic of married prosperity. The unmarried girl also wears Kuṅkū, because it would be inauspicious for her not to do so, the absence of the Kuṅkū sign denoting the widow.

(b) The Maṅgalasutra. The auspicious necklace called the Maṅgalasūtra is the equivalent of the wedding ring. It is of very small black beads, with the phallic symbol in gold as its centre piece. It must always be worn.

(c) Other Jewellery. The rest of a Brāhmaṇ woman’s jewellery has no ritual significance, except that a bride must be presented to her husband adorned with jewels.

The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ woman’s hair ornaments

I. But she cannot partake of refreshments unless all present are Brāhmaṇs, or unless the refreshments are free from Doṣa.
are of gold. They are hairpins with ornamental tops in such designs as a flower, or a fig leaf. A gold knob, representing a lump of boiled rice is also common as an ornamental hairpin. Ear-rings and noserings are mostly of pearls. Necklaces are of gold - strings of plain gold beads, a collar of gold filigree or fine work, a garland of coin-shaped ornaments, and a rope of gold to which small, hanging ornaments are attached. Bangles also are of gold in various patterns which have names to the different designs, and, in addition, bangles of coloured spun glass are worn. Anklets are of silver - except in the case of the wife or daughter of a ruling prince or chief, whose anklets are of gold. Even now in the Sovereign Republic of India, though the princes and the titles are gone, there is no law against retired royalties wearing gold anklets.

Daily ritual in the home.

The old-fashioned, patriarchal homes of the Maharāṣṭrī Brāhmans are extremely secluded. In modern India, the former patriarchal system of family life is fast disappearing under the changes that the new ways are bringing. More will be said of this in a later chapter. In the present pages is described an old-fashioned Wādhā, or family house, though nowadays, many of these Wādās are let out in tenements.

The solid outer wall has no windows on the ground floor, but merely an occasional barred grating at a fair
height from the ground. Windows that look outward are always on the upper storeys. The house is usually approached by a flight of four or five stone steps. A two-winged door, very massive, with heavy cross pieces, and studded with iron knobs, gives entrance into a rectangular courtyard, the floor level of which is usually about three feet lower than the verandah which surrounds it. On to this surrounding verandah, the rooms on the ground floor open. They are somewhat dark, being lighted only from an outer grating or from the courtyard. Standing in the courtyard, one can look up at the sky.

The rooms on the three or four upper storeys are built to extend over the verandah, and are supported by thick, square, wooden pillars, whose bases rest on the stone coping of the verandah below. The upper rooms have light enough. Their windows overlook the courtyard. In some, the windows look outward onto the street. These windows are often most beautifully framed with carved woodwork. In some Wādās, the whole façade is carved, and the courtyard pillars have often ornamental work on their capitals. Very large Wādās have several courtyards, built round with numberless rooms.

The Home Ritual.

(a) Snāna. The floor of the courtyard is flagged.

I. The magnificent carved façade and other of its inner carved woodwork was bought and removed to the U.S.A. many years ago, and Hingane's Wada, Nasik, stood like a skeleton till finally its grounds have been covered with new buildings.
with stone, and a gutter runs round the sides to drain off the rain water in monsoon. Nowadays a tap is to be seen in almost every courtyard. If no tap, water is brought from a common pipe in a public place in the bazaar. The Brāhmaṇ women fetch water themselves. The water vessel is called a Ghāgari, and is carried on the left hip, supported by the left arm. To purify the water from the tap, the Brāhmaṇ woman throws a few handfuls of water over the tap before drawing what she requires. The Dosa from a non-Brāhmaṇ touch is thus removed.

Having perfomed Snāna, the Gṛhini observes the same rules as her husband in the Snāna rite. She bathes in her Lugadēn, then, using no towel, she unwinds the wet, and at the same time winds on the clean, dry Lugadēn.

(b) Devapūjā. Image worship.

She worship the idols with the some or all of the Sixteen Means (the Ṣodasopacāra) but without Mantras. Her deities are usually the Tulasī plant, Gaṇapati, Bālkṛṣṇa (the child Kṛṣṇa), Lakṣmi, or Durgā. Her worship is separate from that of her husband. Occasionally, and only with his permission, she may worship the idols in the Devaghara or Devhārā.

(c) Superstitions.

Whether she lives in a Wāḍā, or in a small tenement, the

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2. But never the Sālagrāma stone, or the Lingā. (Stones which represent Viṣṇu (Sālagrāma) and Śiva.
Brahman Grhini of Maharashtra has many superstitions.

She puts rice offerings in the corners of the room for the propitiation of the ghosts. If a lizard falls of the ceiling and alights on her, she believes it is a sign of death. If her glass bangles break, she speaks of them as having 'increase' — not broken. For broken bangles are the sign of widowhood. She will not lose a moment before going to the bangle-seller, and having new bangles worked on over her hand — a rather painful process, as the hand has to be massaged and squeezed to the width of the wrist. A bed must never be put under a beam of the ceiling, because of evil spirits roosting there. She obeys the Dharmasindhu rule that the bed should never be placed diagonally, nor should it face the South, for fear of death. And more than all, she fears the evil demons traditional in Hinduism — for these have power to cause calamity, such as lock-jaw, loss of memory, miscarriage, or the alluring of one's husband away to another woman.

(D) Rāngoliā. (Auspicious floor designs).

Connected with, and in a sense preparatory to, Devapūja, is the drawing of Rāngoliā, floor patterns, which have an auspicious significance. The custom is to mark one or more auspicious signs on the floor of each room in the house, after

I. These are described in Chapter 16. Section vii. Evil deities
its earthen surface has been cleansed by the application of a thin layer of 
Saowdung mixed with water (which application lays the dust, and prevents the earthen surface from crumbling away).

The room where the cooking is done, the rooms which are the women's apartments, the room where the men assemble, the room which is set apart for the puja of the gods, and the part of the house where the Mahāyajña (the five great daily sacrifices) are offered are marked daily with auspicious patterns. The motive is simply to bring good fortune on the house, and to indicate a state of ceremonial purity. The designs usually made are the Svastika, the Vilva (Bel) leaf, a drawing representing a rectangular-shaped well, a tortoise, the cow's hoof, and so forth.

The Svastika, in particular, is worshipped by many Brahman women of Mahārastra every day during the four months of the rainy season. The Svastika is believed to bring blessing. Sometimes they make a special Vrata or vow to worship it for a certain period in order to procure prosperity. A young wife for the first five years of her married life draws the Nava-Graha (the Nine Planets) and worships them, as well as the cow's hoof, the elephant etc. At times of sacrifice, sometimes the names of gods are worked into the Rāhgolī drawings.

I. The rooms mentioned are called respectively the Svayampākaghara, Māzaghara, Bāṅgalā, Devhāra, and Yajāsālā.
Rāngoli designs are also drawn round each person's place at the time of a meal. These take the form of a square, or round, or fancy shape, drawn on the floor in double outline. They are drawn with flour, which is held in the hand and allowed to leak out between the fingers. The purpose of the Rāngoli at meals is to keep away ants from the food, just as the purpose of burning an ādabatti (Incense stick) during the meal is to keep away mosquitoes or flying insects.

On festive occasions, Rāngoli are drawn in two colours, always white and red. For the drawing of these, the modern method is to use a roller-shaped brass box, called a Rāngoleh, which has a perforated pattern, so that the powdered flour leaks out, and the pattern is formed as the roller is drawn.

I. The Cittapāvana Brahmans and others of the Kohkana use the chaff of rice, burnt till it is fine, white ash. In some parts of Mahārastra, powdered white stone is used.

Examples of simple, hand-drawn rangoli:

Svastika

Tortoise
1st. stage

Cow's hoof

2nd. stage

Some tortoise designs are much more elaborate.

Cf. Double tortoise design in Dā A. Barve's Rangoli book, p.95 with thirty-seven dots in the centre row. Also single tortoises with twenty-five dots. p.107. The same book gives Rangolis for Surya Narayana, the Linga, snake patterns, conch shell, lotus flower, etc., etc.
over the floor. Designs in double colours are drawn with a Rāngoleṭ with twin rollers. The width of such designs is usually from three or four to six inches.

THE MEAL. Bhojana.

Whereas the Brāhmaṇ man takes his food as that which is left over from the Sacrificial offerings, the Brāhmaṇ woman takes her food as that which is left over to her from her husband's meal. No orthodox Maharāstra Brahmaṇ wife will eat until her husband has dined, even if he is detained and the meal is postponed for several hours. She eats after she has served him and after his meal is finished.

No ritual acts accompany the wife's meal, except that, at the end, she has the custom of tapping the centre of the empty plate with the tips of the fingers and the knuckles three times, holding the palm of the hand downward, upward, and downward, respectively, with the three taps. The Brāhma women explain this as the act of thanking the gods.

Festive meals in Brahmaṇ (and other) houses are often accompanied by singing on the part of one or more of the diners, as the meal progresses.

AFTERNOON WORSHIP.

At some time between two and four o'clock, the Maharāstra Brahmaṇ gṛhini with her daughters and women friends will visit one of the temples, and there make some
offering, such as rice, cloth, flowers, a few coppers, or often merely an obeisance before the idol in one of the shrines.

The Evening Lamp Prayer.

In many of the Brahman homes in Mahārāstra, before the serving of the evening meal, it is the custom of the Grhini, or one of the younger women, to light the seven-wicked lamp called the Samai. It is a brass lamp of ancient shape, standing usually about twelve or fifteen inches in height, having a wide circular base, and its top forming a flat lake of oil with seven outlets or grooves, each of which holds a small, cotton wick, fed from the oil, and lighted at the end which overhangs the lamp's edge. The women and children gather round, and a prayer, in Sanskrit, is said as the lamp is being lighted, those present bowing to the lamp — the deity Agni. The prayer asks for merit, prosperity, health, wealth, and destruction of enemies and all evil. And in the light of the lamp comes supper.
Chapter Thirteen

BRĀHMĀN BRAHDE, WIFE, AND MOTHER

The Bride. Vadhūpravesā.

The arrival of the bride at her father-in-law's house after the performance of the wedding rite is called Vadhū Pravesā (The entry of the bride). According to the Sūtras and Brāhmānic tradition generally, there is much ritual about it; and it will be described in this chapter according to the religious tradition that was prevalent before the passing of the Sārada Act in 1929. This Act raised the girl's marriage age to fourteen; and since 1929, it has again been raised to the minimum of sixteen.

In orthodox tradition, the most auspicious age was considered to be from six to eight years of age; and the mediumly auspicious age, eleven. If parents married their daughters at twelve, they had to perform atonement.

The reason for these rules was that it was held most important that the girl's attaining puberty should come after marriage, not before. It was a matter of safeguarding the young girl. It should be understood that, though the Marriage

I. The belief is that for the first six years of life the girl belongs to the gods. (Cf. Detailed rule on next page Note I)
ceremony might be performed at a very early age, the consummation of marriage did not take place till she had attained puberty.

It is thus obvious that the Śarada Act cut across Hindu traditional practice. Professor P. V. Kane, in his book entitled "Dharmaśāstravicāra", published in Marāthī in 1935, discussing the Act mentions the great difficulties created, in the case of some castes, in view of their peculiar religious regulations; and states that thousands of marriages took place, though against the law. It is still a fact that marriages take place against the law. K. M. Pāṇḍikkar's book "Hindū Society at the Cross-Roads" defends the principle that legal legislation should have power to change religious law. But the masses have a great preference for religious tradition.

The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans obey the Act, realising that it is good. Modern, educated Brāhmans have long been marrying their daughters at high school or college age; and orthodox Brāhmans stand by the Act, though they find it inconvenient from the point of view of orthodoxy. Because of it, they are forced to

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I. Even the age of twelve was considered too late. The atonement for allowing a daughter to remain unmarried till the time of puberty (Rajodarsana) are given in the Dharmasindhu, p. 395.


4. Published in 1955.
abandon the observances connected with the time of a girl's Rajodarsana. Traditionally it should come after marriage. According to the Sarada Act, it now comes some years previously; and the observance of it is practically meaningless.

For the purpose of the present thesis, which is to describe orthodoxy in belief and practice, before discussing modern changes, it is to be assumed that the bride, on her entry into her father's husband's house (under the patriarchal system), is an immature young girl, perhaps eleven years of age. She has just become a bride (Vadhū), and her entry (Pravesā) into her father-in-law's house will bring blessing or catastrophe, according to which lunar days, solar days and lunar asterisms her arrival takes place. The same laws apply to her return home to visit her parents. To them she can be a harbinger of good or ill luck.

Auspicious days for Vadhūpravesā.

The days auspicious for the bride to enter the bridegroom's house are — up to a period of sixteen days after the Marriage celebration — any even day, and also the 5th., 7th., and 9th. odd days. With reference to these days, there is no Dosa accruing from the setting of the planets Guru and Sukra (Jupiter and Venus) — usually an inauspicious sign.
If the bride does not enter the house till after the expiry of sixteen days, the entry should be made on an odd day only, up to one month. If the entry is after a month, then it should be in an odd month. If for any reason it should be after one year, then it should be in an odd year.

If after the expiry of the first sixteen days after the marriage ceremony, a bride enters her father-in-law’s house, on an even day or month or year, the Doṣa or Blemish of widowhood comes into her fate.

The above rules apply during the first five years of married life, after which there is no need to consider them.

After the expiry of the first sixteen days, auspicious Nakṣatras, Tithis and Solar days have to be considered for her entry according to the following rules:-

Auspicious Nakṣatras:— Āsvini, Rohini, Mrgā, Ēṛṣya, Maghā, Uttarā, Uttarāsādha, Uttarābhādrapāda, Hasta, Citrā, Svātī, Amurādha, Mulā, Dhanisthā and Revatī.

Auspicious Tithis:— Any except the 4th., 9th., and 14th., and Full Moon (Paurnima) and New Moon (Amāvāṣya).

Auspicious solar Days:— Any except Rāvivāra (Sunday), and Bhauravāra or Maggalavāra (Tuesday, day of the planet Mars.).

I. As a rule the little bride is accompanied by one of her friends, who goes in the capacity of Pāṭharākhiṇa, which means Protector of the back. She stays till the bride has become used to her new family—sometimes two or three months.
A second entry of the bride to her father-in-law's house, after a visit to her parents,¹ is spoken of as Dvīragamana, or Second Coming. The auspicious times for this occasion are the following:

Dvīragamana.

Auspicious months:— Māgha, Phālguna, and Vaikāsha — the Bright Halves or Sukla Pakṣa of each.²

Auspicious Naksatras:— Āsvini, Rohini, Punarvasu, Pushya, the three Uttāras,³ Anurādhā, Jyeṣṭha, Māsta, Svāti, Citrā, Śravāna, and Śatataraka.

Auspicious Solar Days:— Mondays, Wednesday, Thursday.

Fateful months concerning the bride’s movements.

The Mahārāstra Brāhmans believe that, during the first year after marriage, the bride’s residence in (a) her father-in-law’s house, and (b) her parents’ house, during certain months will bring certain calamities as follows:

(a) A bride’s presence during the month Asadha will bring death to her mother-in-law. Her presence during a deleted

¹ The father-in-law’s house is called in Marāṭhī, 'Sāsara'; and the mother’s house is called 'Māhera'. There is a hymn in Marāṭhī, which calls heaven our 'Māhera'.
² Inauspicious times are an Adhika, or intercalary month, (Cf. Ch. 5); the four months when Viśnu is asleep; the even years; and times when Doṣa comes from the planet Venus (Sukra,
³ i.e. Uttarāphālguna, Uttarāṣadha, Uttarābhādraṣṭapada. (Cf. Ch. 5. p. 86)
month (Kṣayamāsa) will cause her own death; in the month Jyeṣṭha, her eldest brother-in-law's death; in Pauṣa, her father-in-law's death; and in an adhika or intercalary month, her husband's death.

(b) In her own father's house:

If she stays in her own father's house during the month Caitra, her presence there will cause her father's death.

The bride's visits between the two houses during the first year are arranged therefore to ensure the avoidance of disaster.

Rajodarsāna Observances.

In the case of the orthodox young girl, she has already been with her mother-in-law some years, perhaps two or three, or even more, when the day comes when she attains puberty. It is an occasion of rejoicing. At the commencement she is made to sit apart from others. A shrine of bamboo framework is erected, and decorated in a festive manner, with mirrors hung round it. This frame is called a Makhara.

Inside it the girl is seated, and her meals are brought to her there. Dainties of various kinds, spoken of as Gada Jevana (Sweet, festive food), are presented to her by friends and relatives — especially by married women who have sons. Auspicious gifts are given to her, as, for instance, saffron, safflower, and rice.
red powder, sandalwood, garlands of flowers, and rolls of betel leaf in which are wrapped areca nut, lime, and cardamoms.

The women worship her, also, by waving round her head lamps of a flat plate-like shape, containing lighted wicks. These celebrations are continued on three successive days. The plate, cup, bowl, and water vessel, which the girl uses for her food, are kept separate for her use only.

Caturthī Karma.

On the fourth day she performs Caturthī Karma (the acts of the Fourth), i.e., she washes her hair, performs Snāna, and may help with the preparations for the cooking, such as cleaning the rice or dry grain, but she may not do cooking.

The Temple Procession.

On the following day there is a procession to one of the temples. The girl is attired in a new silk garment (of any colour chosen), and her head is adorned with a chaplet of flowers. As she dresses for the procession, women and girl-friends sprinkle her with saffron powder, and mark her forehead with Kuṅkū, or Kuṅkumā, as the sign of the Saubhāgyavatī — the married woman, the possessor of blessedness (Saubhāgya).

In the procession the women carry on brass trays, presents with which to honour her. Usually a carpet is spread on the road for her to walk on. There are two or three small carpets or rugs, and as she walks, the Hindu washerman is called a Māla. (The wedding chaplet is called a Mandalavali).
kept running back and forth continually, spreading the rugs before her as the procession makes its way though the streets. At the temple, she makes some small offering to the deity. The main object, however, of the procession is simply proclamation that she has become of age.

Ritual tradition attaches great importance to the circumstance of a bride's Rajodarśana. The following times are laid down as inauspicious for its commencement:

Inauspicious months:— Caitra, Jyeṣṭha, Āśāḍha, Bhādra-pada, Kārttika, and Pauṣa. The effect of coming of age in these months is of the highest degree of inauspiciousness, and is called Duṣṭa (wicked, bad). In such a case, a propitiation ceremony known as Duṣṭa Rajodarśana Śānti is required. This Śānti, or propitiation, is called also Bhūvanesvarī Śānti, the goddess Bhūvanesvarī (a form of Durgā, wife of Śiva) being the deity propitiated.

Inauspicious Tithis:— The Pratipada, (first of the lunar fortnight of a month), the 4th., 9th., and 14th., the 8th., 6th., 12th., and Full Moon. The effect of coming of age in these lunar days is Nindya, i.e. Culpable, but not so inauspicious as Duṣṭa.

I. The 4th., 9th., and 14th., are each called Rikta, which void or empty. They are believed empty of fortune, bringing no auspicious result or fruit.
Inauspicious Solar Days:— Sunday, Tuesday, Saturday — the effect of these being Mindya.

Inauspicious Naksatras:— Bharani, Krśttikā, Ārdṛā, Āśleṣā, Maghā, Purvā, Purvāsāḥā, Purvābhāḍrapaḍā, Visākhā and Jyeṣṭhā.

Inauspicious casual occasions:— If wearing worn-out clothing; if wearing red or blue or of variegated colours; if in another’s house; Or of on a visit to another town or place. The effect of these is Mindya.

If during a solar or lunar eclipse, the effect is Dusta, and propitiation is required.

Rajodārsana in the old ritualistic tradition was followed by the rite of Impregnation, which is the first of the sixteen bodily rites or Samskāras. But under the new conditions imposed by the Sarada Act, Rajodārsana takes place while the girl is yet unmarried.
The Wife. Saubhāgyavati.

The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ wife is believed to be, during the first five years of her married life, under the influence of the goddess Maṅgalā Gaurī (a form of Durgā). On each Tuesday (Mahgalavāra) in the month Śrāvani these years, she invites her friends who are also under Gaurī to join her in the worship of the goddess. The occasion is partly social with games and feasting. The Bhaṭṭaṭajī (priest) is present and conducts the worship, chanting verses, and allowing the young wives to adorn the image of the goddess with Patrī (garlands of leaves), or garlands of the sacred Darbha grass, or flowers.

If within a year after the consummation of marriage has taken place, there is no evidence of pregnancy, the family into which the girl has married begin to feel that there is some Doṣa or Blemish in her fate. Failure to produce offspring — particularly male offspring — is attributed among the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, as everywhere among Hindus of all castes, to some sin in a former birth, or births. They believe it is the result of the Karma of the past. This reasoning naturally leads to the conclusion that offspring will result, when the Blemish of the former Karma has been removed by suitable propitiations of deities.

I. In the case of pregnancy, the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ wife follows the Dharma laid down in the Dharmasindhu. (Cf. Page 268 of the Dharmasindhu). Her husband also has Dharma to follow. He may not go on a pilgrimage, or attend a Śrāddha feast, etc. after the seventh month of his wife’s pregnancy.
The propitiations laid down for this purpose are Narāyana Bali (Oblation to the deity Narāyana), Nāga Bali (oblation to the snake deity), and Harivamsa Śrāvana, which is the hearing a reading of the life of Kṛṣṇa, which is considered part of the Mahābhārata. Among the Mahārāstra Brāhmans, the husband and wife are supposed to attend these readings at the temple.

The Narāyana Bali is performed with the object of propitiating the Preta (ghost, spirit or goblin) that is believed to be preventing the procreation of offspring. The Mahārāstra Brāhmans, among others, believe that the Preta in the above case is that of some ancestor, whose obsequial rites have been neglected. They propitiate Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Yama, and the Preta.

In the Nāga Bali, an image of a snake is presented with oblations. The purpose of performing Nāga Bali is to wipe out any Blemish or Doṣa which may have come through the killing of a snake in any former incarnation. The appointed times for propitiation are:

For Narāyana Bali:— the eleventh day of a light lunar fortnight, or the fifthe lunar day, or during the lunar asterism Śrāvana.

For Nāga Bali:— New Moon day 7, Full Moon day, the 5th., the 9th., or during the lunar asterism Āśleṣā.

For the hearing of the Harivamsa:— any good day.

In addition to the above, offerings are made to Brāhmans.
in the hope of winning the favour of deities, e.g. offering
gifts of gold, or defraying the expenses of a Brāhmaṇa's
marriage.

Dattavidhāṇa. The Rite of Adoption.

If all efforts to propitiate the gods still result in no
offspring, the only procedure for the orthodox Brāhmaṇa grhastha
is to perform the ceremony of Dattavidhāṇa, by which he adopts
a son. This course is binding on him because of his obligation
to his departed fathers, and his duty to his own spirit in the
state after death. The ceremony is performed by an Upādhyāya
(priest who does the domestic propitiation, etc.), the
adoption being according to a prescribed order of relationship,
brother's son having first preference, then a sapinda of one's
own gotra, or a step-brother's son, then further remote persons.
The Dharmasindhu gives the rules in detail. The rite is a
fire sacrifice, and the oblations are offered on the wedding
fire, i.e., the Grahyāgni lit from the wedding fire.

In modern Maharāstra, however, there being extremely few
homes where the perpetual Grahyāgni is kept alight, the common
fire (Laukikāgni) is used. After invoking the deity Fire,
i.e. Agni, prayers are offered, and oblations of clarified

I. For the Narāyana Bali, Nāga Bali and Harivamsa Śravēṇa,
cf. Dharmasindhu, p.244 to P.249.
butter with rice are cast into the fire, with Mantras said according to the Dattavidhāna ritual.

Among the Mahārāstra Brahmans, the adoption of a son is usually not performed until ten years or more of married life have passed, and there are either no children, or else only daughters. An alternative to adoption is for the husband to take a second wife. Scarcely one Mahārāstra Brahmān in a hundred, however, marries a second wife while his first wife is living. The object of a second marriage would be to beget a son, in a case, for instance, where there is no suitable relative to adopt. A second wife is allowed by Hindu law, Adhividhāna.

Such a second marriage is called Adhividhāna. An interesting point is that the second marriage has no separate fire of its own for the ritual. The fire oblations are offered on the fire lighted at the first marriage, or, if that has not been kept alight, then the common Laukika fire from the house cooking room is used. It is lawful for the two wives to live in the home, in which case the senior wife has the honorable position in any ritual performance. But in cases where the senior wife leaves, or if she should be discarded by her husband for no fault of her own, Annavastra is considered due. Annavastra is a separation allowance. It means literally food and clothing.
The Mother. Matośīrī.

Through all the earlier years of her married life, certain causes for anxiety trouble the Brāhmaṇ mother. Even when the fear of the Blemish or Doṣa od childlessness has proved groundless, there is still the anxiety lest all her children should be daughters, whose wedding dowries had to be found (under the old ritual), and then there would be the expense, in addition, of adopting a son.

There are other worrying considerations, too. If, after the births of three daughters in succession, a son should be born, or of after three sons, a daughter should arrive, this is believed to be inauspicious for the families of both the parents. For this, the propitiatory rite called Triprasava-Śānti is required — atonement for three births.¹

A child born with a tooth already formed requires the atonement called Dantajananaśānti.² — propitiation for a birth with tooth (Danta). A child born deformed needs the atonement of Prasava-vaiśrāta-śānti.³ (Vaiśrāta, deformed). Even twins need to be atoned for. This propitiation is called Yamala-janana-śānti.⁴ Even in the desired event of the birth of a son, planets, lunar days, solar days, asterisms and caranaṇas — all are considered with a view to the possible need for conciliatory rites. So the orthodox Brāhmaṇ mother's life is not an easy one.

¹, ², ³ and ⁴. Cf. Dharmasindhu pp.299, 300, 301 and 296.
The Maharāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ mother is the first religious teacher of her children. Their earliest lessons in Brāhmaṇ ways, and Brāhmaṇ doctrines, and tales from the Purāṇas are learnt from her. One interesting method of combining theology with a lesson in counting may be illustrated here by the following, which Brāhmaṇ mothers use:

"One Brāhma; Two Brāhma-prakṛti;
Three Satya, Raja, Tama,
Four Vedas; Five elements; Six philosophies;
Seven sages; Eight Vasūs; Nine planets; Ten Avatāras;
Eleven Rudras; Twelve Adityas;
Thirteen good Tāmbūlas (betel leaf wrapt round nuts and spices)
Fourteen kinds of knowledge (Vigyā);
Fifteen lunar days;
Sixteen digits of the moon;
Seventeen solids;
Eighteen kinds of Dhrūti metre;
Nineteen kinds of Atidhrūti metre;
Twenty fingers and toes."

The Mother's position in the family.

The Maharāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ mother has the same share as the father in the rites that concern her children. At the Sacred Thread Ceremony of her son, she stands at her husband's
right side, and, as he performs the ritual at the direction of the officiating priest, she places her right hand on his right elbow, thus signifying that they both share in the acts of ritual. The only difference is that she does not know the sacred verse calle the Gāyatrī, which is secretly imparted to her son by the priest, and which, in the present yuga, is hid from the knowledge of women.

The same practice is observed at the son’s marriage rite. On both the above occasions, also, the mother superintends all the domestic arrangements connected with the celebrations.

The mother is treated by her son with reverence akin to that owed to his father. The son makes an obeisance to his mother when starting on a journey, and again on his return. He makes obeisance to father and mother, or if they are not living, to any elderly relations in the house, on the moment previous to the commencement of his own son’s Thread ceremony, his son’s marriage rite, and any other important occasion.

When a younger person greets parents, or an elder, a blessing is always given in return. The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman mother, in acknowledgment of a son’s, or young male relation’s, obeisance, blesses him in the traditional words, “Ayuṣyamāna bhava;” or her daughter, or any young girl unmarried, in the words “Ayuṣyamatā Bhava” — blessings which mean “Be thou long lived”. To a young married girl, the blessing is “Āṣṭaputri Saubhāgyavati bhava” (Be a blessed mother of eight sons). These are the old traditional ways.
Widowhood.

The Brāhmaṇwife dreads widowhood, and spends her time in accumulating merit against that day. But the state of widowhood amongst the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans is showing signs of emerging from its old terrors. The days of sati - the burning to death on one's husband's funeral pyre - are gone. The days of Bhāgirathī also are gone - when the widow, having performed the Gaṅgābhāgirathī rite at some holy Kṣetra returned home with shaven head and the widow's garb, a red sari, or if paying a vow, a white one. No ornaments, no invitations, and only one meal a day.

Today, the Brāhman widow of Mahārāṣṭra, except for wearing no Maṅgalasūtra (wedding necklace), and no jewelry, follows practically the normal routine of life. One even comes occasionally, across a remarried Brāhman widow. Very poor widows go to Brāhman houses to do the cooking when the mistress of the house is unable to do it. But some get education, and take up that line. Others can take up nursing or other work.

The Śrāddha rites are performed with equal precision for the mother and wife, as for the Gṛhastha himself. Indeed, if this were not considered to be Kaliyuga, when the Veda is closed to women, both sexes would have, as they had in former Jugas, all the Śāmśkāras, without any differentiation between man and woman.
Chapter Fourteen

THE LAST SAMSKĀRA   ANTYA KRĪYĀ

XVI. The last Samskāra, the sixteenth, is observed at death, and is the rite of the disposal of the body by burning. This rite is variously called Dehānta (End of the Flesh), or Antyeṣṭi, or Antya Kriyā, or Uttara Kriyā (the Last act, or the last Karma). Reference is also made to this rite as Pretakarma, or the act performed in connection with the preta, i.e. the dead, or the disembodied soul. From the above name, the dead body itself is also called a preta.

To the Maharāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ mind, more significant than the actual burning of the body in the rite of Antyeṣṭi, are the observances which the occasion of death demands — namely, the keeping of Āśouca (the law regarding impurity), and the subsequent offering of the śrāddha rite, in a new relationship to the ancestors. Death should come, in the Vedic order, at the end of the Fourth Āśrama, the Brāhmaṇ having passed through the stages of the Brahmacāri, Grahaṇa, Vanaprastha and Sannyāsī. I The third and fourth Āśramas are

I. Cf. Visnuamṛti. Sections XCIV-XCVII.  
(Sacred Books of the East Vol. VII)
not now, however, entered by Maharāṣṭra Brahmans, except in individual instances, which are few. The present-day strict Brāhman of elderly years, without leaving home, or taking up the life of a hermit, practices many habits of self-repression. He is most sparing in the amount of food which he eats, and in the hours of sleep which he allows himself to take. He sleeps only in the second and third praharas of the night, reserving the first and fourth for religious karma. Before daybreak he is at the river, performing Śmāna, and is ready for Sandhyā worship at the moment when the sun’s disc appears.

The Marāthi language is rich in its ways of conveying the news of a person’s death. “He has received the five elements” “He has let go his vital breath” “The command of the gods

1. The first and fourth Praharas of the night should be spent in studying the Veda. He who sleeps in the second and third Praharas only, is fit for Brahmātva. (Identification with Brahm.
2. The belief is that regular and efficient performance of Sandhyā admits to Brahmāloka after death.
3. i.e. Pāncatanmātra, the five subtle rudiments of the five grosser elements (called Mahābhūtas), which are ether, air, light, water and solid matter, which again are believed to be the cause of the five organs of sense. The Marāthi is “To prapañca pāvalā”
4. i.e. Prāna. Marāthi – “Tyane prāna sodilā"
In the case of a Sannyāsi (of the fourth Āśrama), death is referred to as have become Samādhīstha, i.e. having entered the state of Samādhi, or absorption into Brahma, or identification with the object of his meditation. It may be mentioned here, in passing, that the soul, in the case of a Sannyāsi, a Yogi, and a Philosopher (Tatvajñāni), is believed to pass out of the body by way of the Brahmarandhra, or aperture in the apex of the skull; and the skull is broken with a conch shell to allow the soul to pass out. In the case of a Grhastha, and others, the soul is believed to vacate the body by way of the nostrils or the eyes. For the higher orders (Sannyāsi, Yogi, and Tatvajñāni), the final rite is burial. For the Grhastha and others, cremation.

Death of a Grhastha.

The dying Grhastha is usually brought into a room downstairs and when death approaches, is lifted from his mattress on to the earthen floor. Within a very short time after death, the Antya Samakāra takes place, the rule being that if death occurs in the daytime, the Dahana, or Burning, must be performed in the same day; if at night, the burning must be the same night.
For taking to the burning ground, the dead Gṛhastha is bathed and placed on a bamboo bier which had been hastily put together. No mark is put on the forehead. 1 A new cloth is spread over the bier, and, with face covered, and head toward the East the dead householder is carried from his home and out of the town through the Western gate. 2 In front of the procession, the dead man's son walks, carrying the fire, which is to be applied by him to his father's funeral pyre. Those who attend the funeral rite wear their sacred threads in the reverse (mourning) position, over the right shoulder.

The Dahana or burning is truly an Antya (final) Karma. The Brāhman who all his Gṛhastha life has offered the domestic sacrifices through Agni, now offers the last oblation, his own body. This somewhat romantic view was expressed by a learned Maharāstra Brāhman recently, and seems to be an accepted idea.

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1. In the case of a Brāhman woman whose husband is living, the brow is marked with saffron and turmeric.
2. A Śūdra's funeral goes out through the Southern gate.
3. The fire, in the case of the present-day average Maharāstra Brāhman, is taken from the Laukikāgni of cooking fire; or else it is the Kapalāgni (fire kindled with dried cowdung in a yellow vessel). If a very orthodox house-holder has kept a perpetual Śṛyāgni, his funeral torch is lighted from it. If a Brāhman priest has kept alight perpetually the Śrāutāgni (the Vedic sacrificial fire), his funeral torch is lighted from that. Dharma Śindhu pp. 724, 725. No one at the time of the procession to the burning ground should go between the Fire and the person of the dead. (Dharmaśindhu p. 728.)
The Upādhyāya (officiating Brāhman) goes with the procession and, on arrival at the burning ground (the śmaśāna), he recites the prescribed Mantras. The pyre having been erected, the dead body is placed on it, and is worshipped with offerings of pounded sandalwood and flowers, after which ceremony, the son lights the pyre, thus performing Putradharma, the duty of a son to a father.¹

After the burning, the mourners perform Pradaksīna, i.e. they walk round the pyre, and then they perform śmāna, and then Ācamana, and offer water oblations. A fast is observed for the twenty-four hours.

Some few days after the cremation, the bones which remain are collected in the ceremony called Asthisāncayana, in which Bali offerings are placed where the pyre was, and the place sprinkled with milk. The main bones, which are collected in silence, are first bathed with Pāñcagavya, the five products of the cow, and then wrapt in a silk cloth, and placed in a

¹. The injunctions in the Dharmasindhu are that the dead body must be burnt, swathed in a cloth, and that the body must not totally destroyed. Some bones must remain. Dharmasindhu, page 728.

². On the first, second, third, fourth, seventh., or ninth day, avoiding certain Lunar asterisms, and certain days of the week. Cf. Dharmasindhu p. 730 under Asthisāncayana.
new earthen vessel, the lid of which is closed down. This urn is then buried in the ground outside the town, or at the foot of a suitable tree. Any small bones or particles still left on the ground are taken and thrown into the river, and the ground of the pyre is sprinkled with water mixed with cow dung and then worshipped with flowers, incense and Bali offerings.

The buried bones, some considerable time later, are disinterred, and taken, by the son, or daughter's son, or the brother, or a friend, to a Ksetra or place of pilgrimage, where they are committed to the waters of the Ganges, or other sacred river. This act is believed to ensure the attainment of Brahmaloka for the one who is dead.

Amongst the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans at the time of cremation four oblations are offered - one to Yama, god of death, one to the Pṛetā (the newly disembodied soul), one to the ancestor, and one to the crows as representing Bhūtasā, or created being in general. Some among the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans worship Viṣṇu in connection with the obsequial rite.

The observances which follow the funeral rite fall into

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1. The remains should not be cast into the Ganges during an unclean month, or at the setting of Guru and Sūkra. (Dharmasindhu. p. 735)
2. Information from Poona.
3. Information from Nasik.
three divisions:

1. **Pūrvakriyā**, or **First Karmas** - the observances between the time of the cremation and the end of the ten days which follow. This period is one of ceremonial defilement through the occurrence of death, and is therefore Aśouca.¹

2. **Madhyamakriyā**, or **Middle Karmas** - these are the observances from the morning of the eleventh day to the end of Sāpiṇḍikaraṇa, the ceremony of joining the newly departed soul to the ancestors.

3. **Uttarakriyā**, or **Last Karmas** - those from the Sāpiṇḍikaraṇa ceremony onward, and comprise the various regularly appointed Śrāddha rites².

The second and third of the above three classes have been discussed already under the head of the Pitṛya Karmas.³ The first class may be particularly noted here.

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¹ Aśouca is the defilement of the ten days, caused by a death of a birth.

² The one who is to inherit the property performs the Karmas of the second and third classes. Some authorities appear to forbid the performance of Sāpiṇḍikaraṇa in the case of the obsequies of a woman. But the Dharmasindhu enjoins the performance of the Ekoddīṣṭa Śrāddhas (i.e. Individual ancestral offerings), even if the Sāpiṇḍikaraṇa ceremony is omitted. Dharmasindhu. p. 586.

³ Thesis Chapter Eight.
Pūrvakriyā

The period which covers the Pūrvakriyā, or the period called Aśouca, is subject to many rules, of which the following are typical:

The daily and other ritual undergo certain modifications. For instance, Prānāyāma is performed without Mantras, and Marjana with the Mantras repeated inaudibly; the Gayatri in the regular way, with water oblations to the sun. The five daily sacrifices are discontinued, or else are performed through a Brāhman who is not a Sagotra (or kinsman of the same Gotra). Dāna (the giving or taking of gifts), and Vedic Study, are not performed during this period.

With reference to food, the moment that Aśouca is known (i.e. with the news of death), food that has been cooked is not acceptable. If a meal is in progress when news of death arrives, the food in the mouth is ejected. If it is swallowed then one day's fast — and if the whole meal is taken, then three days' fast — is required. Water, milk, curds, clarified butter, fruit, salt, and parched food, which are in the house, may, however, be used without Doṣa, or Blemish — except that they must not be taken from the hand of the bereaved person.

1. Certain rules of Aśouca do not apply during eclipse or Saṁkrānti, when Śnāna, Dāna, and Sraddha may be performed. Nor do they apply after the starting point of a ceremony. Cf. Thesis Chapter Eleven. p.206 Note.

The Brāhman's practice of Mundana, the shaving of the head and clean shaving of the face, is part of Aṣouca. Its performance is obligatory.1 If death occurs within a period of six months after any festive occasion, the performance of Mundana is a necessary exception to the rule that a Mundana (shaving) ceremony should not follow a Mandana (decorative) or festive ceremony within six months. In the usual application of this rule, a boy's Caula Saṃskāra, for instance, should not follow on Upanayana, or Vivāha within six months.

The exceptions to this rule are, the Nundana which is part of the obsequial rite, the Mundana necessary in performing certain atonements, and the Mundana of a man lying at death's door - performed by way of atonement. These incur no Blemish.

The period of Aṣouca is terminated on the eleventh morning by the performance of Snāna with water and perfumed oil. This act is considered to restore purity, and, after it, the Brāhman may perform his daily and other rituals as usual. Only the son of the deceased, or the one responsible,4 observes Aṣouca till

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1. A son who is away from home, on receiving the news, performs Mundana, Snāna, and the Śrāddhas, unless an elder brother is performing the Śrāddhas. (Dharma Sindhu p. 788.)
3. The period, which is ten days in the case of a Grhastha's death, varies in other circumstances. Cf Dharmasindhu p. 676.
4. For the rules concerning which relation is responsible in which cases, cf. Dharmasindhu p. 580 onward. In case of a woman's death, p. 582.
the twelfth day, because of his obligation to perform Sāpindikarana.

With the occurrence of death, the Brāhman is believed to have completed another cycle in his series of incarnations, the stages of this cycle having been, firstly, the pre-natal stage, in which the first four Sām-skāras were observed; then the stage of Dharma or Religious duty, i.e. from Játa Karma (birth, the fifth Sām-skāra) to the Sacrificial Thread rite (the twelfth Sām-skāra); next, the stage called Artha, or Purpose, comprising the religious practice of the Brahmacāri, from the Thread ceremony to the rite of Sāmāvartana (the fourteenth Sām-skāra); and lastly, the stage of Kāma, or pursuit of activity, from Vānganiścaya (Betrothal) in preparation for the fifteenth Sām-skāra which is Vivāha or Marriage; then through the Gṛhoṣṭha's (House-holder's) life, to the end, and the last Sām-skāra, the sixteenth, which is Antyesṭi, the finish and completion of the cycle. From this last point, Dehānta, the end of the flesh, the rites of Antyesṭi, Sāpindikarana, and the Śrāddhas are believed to help the departed soul ultimately to return to the point of birth, when, for him, the next cycle will begin.

I. Cf. Chapter Eight. Footnotes on Sāpindikarana, etc.
2. A book entitled "Dharmaśiksanācā Onāma" by K.V. Vajhe, a Mahārāstra Brāhman, has an interesting diagram illustrating the above. Cf. Onāma Bāsk III, fromtispiece.
In ancient times, keeping to the religious tradition, the Grhastra, after the birth of his first grandson, used to leave family life, and enter the third Asrama - a life of constant meditation in the forest. He was a Vanaprastha, a forest ascetic. Later he would go into the fourth Asrama, and be a wandering Sannyasi, never staying more than three days in any place except a Ksetra (place of pilgrimage), eating only that given in alms, killing out all desire, even by self-torture, with Nirvana as his goal. But hardly any Grhastra nowadays goes beyond the second Asrama.

For the ascetic, who has remained celibate, practising and progressing in austerity all his life, and who has become Siddha, i.e. perfected or 'ready', the advent of death is believed to open up for him the avenue of Moksa, whereby there is no further turn of the wheel of life for him. Personal soul existence is not renewed. He is free from reincarnation. His soul is believed to merge into the MulaTatva, the root-principle, or primordial essence of the universe.
Chapter Fifteen

LIST OF MAJOR DEITIES

The deities worshipped by the Mahārāṣṭra Brahmans may be listed under the following three heads:

1. The deities which belong more especially to the rites of the Brāhmans, and have come down from early Āryan times and from Indo-Iranian sources.

2. The deities worshipped by the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans in common with other castes, and are of the postvedic period or Vedic deities with added characteristics.

3. The hosts of Attendant Powers. These are in two main classes:— (a) beneficent semi-celestial beings, and (b) demons and evil powers.

The present chapter deals with the first two of the above classes.

I. Deities celebrated in the Rites of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans.

Varuṇa. Varuṇa was, to the early Āryans, the god of the sky. The sun was his eye, the storm his breath. He was
omniscient, merciful and forgiving. The Vedic Aryans invoked him in company with Mitra, the sun (Mitra-Varuṇa), and, at times, with Indra (Indra-Mitra-Varuṇa). Varuṇa's early title, Sindhupati (Lord of Sindhu or Lord of Waters) no doubt prepared the way for his later position as god of the ocean, in which capacity he is now regarded.

Agni. Agni, the god of fire, was believed by the Vedic Aryans to have been born in three worlds — heaven, air, and earth. He was believed to have been given to the Sage Bṛhgu and his descendants. His birth on earth is the sacrificial Fire, which is kindled by the friction of two sticks of wood, and his function is held to be the conveying of men's sacrifices to the gods.

Indra. Indra, god of war, was conceived when the early Aryans were engaged in the conquest of the aborigines, i.e. after they had left the hills, and were making their home in the Gangetic plain. Their need for a god who could be supplicated to slay tribal gods and chiefs led to the displacement of the pacific Varuṇa by Indra, the mighty. Indra became greater than either Agni or Varuṇa. In Vedic mythology, Indra's sphere was the air, his weapon was the thunderbolt, and he the mighty slayer of demons.

1. Later, he was subordinate to the Triad. This is his position in present day domestic rites. His wife, Sañjī, is also worshipped in the Samskaras.
Sūrya. Sūrya, the sun, is an alternative name for deity Mitra, already mentioned with Varuṇa. Sūrya is called also Āditya, son of Aditi, and brother of Varuṇa. Another name by which he is described is Dinapāla (Protector of the day). The name Sāvitr (name of one of the early solar deities of the Ṛgveda, to whom prayers for forgiveness were addressed, as they were to Varuṇa) is also applied to him, and he is worshipped under this name, Sāvitr, or Sāvita, in the Gāyatrī verse, used daily in the Sandhyā ritual. He is the deity of several of the Śaṅskāras.

Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu, the all-pervading; or Trivikrama, the god of the three strides, was the deity who, by taking three strides, compassed the three worlds. He was held to be a form of Sūrya, his three steps being descriptive, probably, of the sun's rising, culminating, and setting. Viṣṇu's position in the Ṛgveda is not prominent, but the basis of the later Vaiṣṇavism is to be found there. His character of Trivikrama is seen in later mythology in the fifth Viṣṇu incarnation – that of the dwarf, Vāmana. In the Grhya rites of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, he is worshipped under both Vedic and Purānic names.

I. His names are many: – Viṣṇu, Trivikrama, Govinda, Vāmana, Kṛṣṇa, Keśava, Mādhava, Brīdhara, Hṛṣikeśa, Dāmodara, Saṅkarṣapa, Padmanātha, Madhusudana, Puruṣottama, Pradyūnma, Adhokṣaja, Narasimha, Acyūta, Janārdana, Hari, Narāyana, etc.
Rudra. The Vedic deity Rudra, the Howler, is the origin of the present day powerful deity Sivam third god of the Purānic Triad. Rudra was believed to hold the thunderbolt, and to fling the lightning across the sky. His origin was from the forehead of Brahma. His office was akin to that of the Maruts, or storm-gods, who were considered to be his sons, and as such were called Rudras. The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans believe in eleven Rudras, after a Purānic version. They also worship the deity Rudra as Śiva.

Śiva. The deity Śiva is not known in the Rgveda. The adjective Śiva, which means 'auspicious', was used in propitiatory invocations of Rudra in the name 'Śiva Rudra', and one might suppose that in this way the deity Rudra came to be called Śiva. Or, Śiva might be the name of an aboriginal god, whose functions resembled those of Rudra, and the two became identified — the aboriginal god bringing into Hinduism the phallic worship, which was not known in the Veda, but was an accepted feature in the Mahābhārata. In the

1. They are one of the class of Gaṇadevata. (later)
3. The name Rudra used as meaning Śiva, is invoked with Brahma and Viṣṇu in the tenth Śaṃskāra (Karnavedha). Cf. also under Mahābhārata, Vol. VIII p.327 of E. R. E. (Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics).
Grhya (domestic) rites, the Maharāstra Brāhmans worship Śiva under the later conception of him as given in the Purāṇas, i.e., as the third god of the Hindu Triad — the Śaivas (the Śiva worshippers) regarding him as Creator, and above all other gods. The names used for Śiva in the Grhya rites of the Maharāstra Brāhmans are Śiva, Aniruddha, Gaurīhara (including his wife Gaurī), etc. His wife, or female energy, is worshipped under the names Gaurī, Kātyāyani, Durgā, Pārvati, etc.

Brahmā. The name Brahmā is not found in the Ṛgveda. The deity Brahmā, who developed later into the first god of the Purānic Triad I is seen, however, in the Veda in the form of Hiranyagarbha, or the Golden Embryo. This Hiranyagarbha was believed to have been produced from an egg resulting from the seed placed by Brahma (neuter), the supreme, impersonal, and attributeless being, on the surface of the waters. In this golden egg, the self-existent Brahma (neuter) was born as Brahmā (masculine), the creator of the universe.2

Brāhmans of the Vaiṣṇava and the Śaiva sects hold opposing views concerning this deity. The Vaiṣṇavas (Viṣṇu worshippers) identify him Viṣṇu, and consider Brahmā's incarnations — the fish, the tortoise, and the boar — to be those of Viṣṇu.3 They give Brahmā superiority over Rudra,

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whom they believe to have sprung from Brahmā's forehead, and to have separated himself into various forms.\(^1\) The Śāivas, on the other hand, make Rudra to be the creator of Brahmā, and they give Brahmā the position of charioteer to Rudra, or Mahādeva.\(^2\) Both Śiva, and Viṣṇu, then, have taken the position of Creator, and Brahmā's position in the Triad is merely nominal. Brahmā remains as one of the deities of the Grhya rites. He is also worshipped under the name Nārāyaṇa, though the name now belongs to Viṣṇu.

Prajāpati. The name Prajāpati, Lord of subjects, or Creator, is, in the Rgveda, synonymous with Hiranyagarbha, the cosmic golden egg, and with Puruṣa, the primeval male, who was cut up to form the different parts of the universe,\(^4\) and with Viśvakarman, the architect of the universe. These deities are representative of the cosmogonic theory of the origin of creation. It is significant that Prajāpati is supplicated as the deity of the Puṇḍavana Saṃskāra to cause that the foetus should be male, or should have procreative power. He is also the deity of the Anavalobhana Saṃskāra. Both of these are prenatal Saṃskāras.

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1. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa. I. 8. gives eight of these Rudras as the eight names of Śiva.
3. Nara = the first man (created from the cosmic golden egg)
Yama. The Vedic conception is that Yama and his sister Yamunā are the two from whom the human race descended, and that Yama was the first mortal to die. Hence he is regarded as the greatest of the pitṛs — the one who was the first to tread the Pātryāna, or the path trodden since by the departed. He was called Pitṛpati, Lord of the Fathers. In post-vedic times Yama came to be regarded as judge and dread king of the dead — in charge of the hells of Purānic tradition. His names became Dharmarāja (King of Justice), Dandadhāra (Bearer of the Rod of punishment), and Mrtyurāja (King of death); and his appearance came to be described as terrifying — his garments blood-red, his eyes glittering, his hands holding a noose and a club, his steed a fierce buffalo. His abode is believed to be twelve hundred and thirty-five leagues (Yojanas) to the East of Ceylon. He is believed to be a tempter or tester of man. Vedic literature has presented him also as a teacher of philosophical ideas on the after-life.

The Maharāstra Brāhmans worship Yama on Naraka Caturdāsi (Hell Fourteenth), on the 14th. of the Dark half of the month Āśvina. The observance of Bhāubīja, when brothers are presented with gifts by their sisters, has some possible reference to the legend of Yama and Yamunā. Both of these occur in Dipāvalī, which also has reference to Yama.

I. e.g. the Markandeya Purāṇa. Cantos X - XV.
The Āśvina. The two twilights, dawn and dusk, personified, are the two Āśvins. These were believed to be the physicians of gods and men - bright, shining, and swift, like riders. They are the Gemini, in astronomy. Their parentage is ascribed to the Sun and his wife Sājñā. Sājñā disguised herself in the form of a mare called Āśvini. Hence the name Āsvins given to the two sons. Their separate names are Nāsatya and Dasra. The former is one of the deities of the Karpavavedha Sāmskāra of the Maharāṣṭra Brāhmans.

Dhanvantari. The Vedic deity Dhanvantari, was the Physician of the gods. He is invoked with other deities in the daily Vaīśvadeva sacrifice. According to post-vedic mythology, Dhanvantari is believed to have been discovered at the churning of the ocean, at the time of the tortoise incarnation of Viṣṇu.

Vanaspati. Vanaspati, Lord of the Forest, was, in the Rgveda, the deity of large trees. The sacrificial posts to which victims were tied, were deified under this name, and are still among the twelve deified objects to which prayers are addressed at the introduction of the śrauta animal sacrifices. The twelve objects are:— the fuel, the saarifical fire, the sacred grass, the doors of the sacrificial hall, the sacrificial posts, and the deities who
are called to preside. In Mahrāstra, Vanaspati is worshipped in the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice, where offered, and in the Śrauta rites.

Brahmaṇaspati. Brahmaṇaspati, Lord of sacred knowledge, called also Brhaspati, is one of the late Vedic gods. His office was that of chief offerer of prayers, and intercessor with the gods for martals. But it gradually became changed into the office of chief priest, or Purohita, offerer of sacrifices. Another title is Brāhman, i.e. the one who has knowledge of Brahma. Brhaspati came into prominence as chief sacrificer, in that later part of the Vedic period, when sacrificial ritual began to be more and more elaborate. Brahmaṇaspati, or Brḥaspati is regarded as the Preceptor of the gods.

Vināyaka. The Vedic deity Vināyaka, the Remover of inauspicious influences, is the deity Gaṇapati, or Ganeśa, son of Śiva and Pārvati. He is not only worshipped at every rite of the Brāhmans, but is also one of the most popular deities of all the castes. The rite of the worship of the Vināyakas (plural) is peculiar to the Mānava Grhya Sūtra (of the Black Yajurveda), Maitrayaniya Śakha), there being four Vināyakas, who were transformed into one Vināyaka, regarded as identical with the god Ganeśa.

I. See later in chapter, under Deities other than the Triad.
Vāstu, or Vāstoṣpati. Vāstoṣpati, Lord of the foundation, was one of the minor Ṛgveda deities, whose function was to protect the site and foundation of a dwelling place. He is propitiated by Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, in a rite called Vāstusānti (propitiation of Vāstu), on commencing residence in a new house, or building. There is also, among the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, a belief, based on popular tradition, that a Vāstusarpa, a protective snake, connected with Vāstu, lives in the foundation. If a snake is seen to leave a house, its occupants almost invariably move to another dwelling.

For a brief summing up of this first section of the chapter, all the deities mentioned so far are the Vedic deities who are worshipped by the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans: Varuṇa, Agni, Īndra, Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Śiva, Brahmā, Prajāpati, Yama, the Āśvinas, Dhanvantari, Vanaspati, Brahmaṇaspati, Vīṇāyaka, Vāstoṣpati.
2. Deities worshipped by the Mahārāṣṭra Brahmans in common with other castes. These are of the post-vedic period, which succeeded the decline of Buddhism, and amongst them are some of the Vedic deities, changed, or with new characteristics. Hindus of the present day look to this, the Purāṇic Period, as their authority.

The Trimūrti. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva.

The gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are known as the Purāṇic Triad — the triple image.

Brahmā. Brahmā, who sprang from the cosmic golden egg in Rgveda tradition, is now to be found at the head of a Triad of Vedic deities, with, however, a position merely nominal; the other two, Viṣṇu and Śiva, having each usurped his place. The functions of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva were, respectively, those of Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer. But the Śaivas have claimed for Śiva, and,

I. The Purāṇas belong to the period which succeeded the decline of buddhism. A systematisation of the "huge overgrown fabric made up of complicated polytheism" is to be found in the Purāṇas, a body of Scripture "as authoritative for the later religion of India, as the Veda is for the era prior to the rise of Buddhism." History of Indian Literature. Gowen. p.452.
similarly, the Vaisñavas for Viñnu, all the three functions; each cult making its own god supreme, and the others subordinate.

The worship of Brahmā separately from the Trimūrti is as obsolete in Mahārāstra as in other parts of India. Brahmā receives worship with Viñnu and Śiva in the form of Datta, or Dattātreya, a joint image of the three deities. The legend of Dattātreya, the son of the sage Atri and his wife Anasūya, given in Purānic literature, shows how, by her virtue, Anasūya, wife of the sage Atri caused the three gods, Brahmā, Viñnu, and Śiva, to be born as her sons.

Dattātreya’s temples are common in Mahārāstra, the chief being in Bombay - Narsābhāvādi, and Gāṇagāpura. The image has three heads, the centre one marked with the Vaisnava sign (ʊ), and the other two with the Śaiva sign (≡). The three left hands hold Śiva’s trident, Viñnu’s discus, and Viñnu’s mace; while the three right hands hold Śiva’s war horn, Viñnu’s lotus, and Śiva’s water-pot. The

I. Cf. Dowson’a Classical Dictionary. p. 320
For the names of the eighteen Purāṇas, see Thesis Appendix VII.
six arms of Dattātreya are considered to be symbolic of the six Śāstras (philosophic systems). The places of pilgrimage in Mahārāṣṭra which are sacred to Datta are Narsobhāvädi and Gānagāpura, near Solāpura. The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman poet, Jñānadeva, called also Jñānesvara (born 1275 A.D.), and his brothers, Nivṛtti and Sopana, who all three buried themselves alive in different places in Mahārāṣṭra, were believed to be incarnations of Viṣṇu, Śiva, and Brahmādeva (Brahmā) respectively. They were the sons of a Brāhman of Apegaon whose name was Vīthobā. He had been put out of caste for the sin of returning to the Črastha life, after taking up the life of a Vanapraṣṭha. But the miracles worked by his son Jñānadeva induced the Brāhmans to take him back into caste. The places in Mahārāṣṭra where the three brothers buried themselves, attaining the state of Samādhi, are in the above order, Ālandī, Tryambakesvara, and Sāsavada—all of which, but chiefly Ālandī, are sacred to their worship.

Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu, the second god in the Hindu Triad, is worshipped in Mahārāṣṭra, as everywhere, both as Viṣṇu himself, with his wife Lakṣmī, and also under the forms of

I. Their sister Muktābai is revered as a goddess. There is a temple to her honour at Ālandī.
the incarnations, or Avatāras, which became his 274 distinguishing characteristic in post-vedic Mythology. His incarnations, usually held to be ten, are the following:

1. The Fish. (Matsya). During the reign of the seventh Manu, when the earth was destroyed by a flood, Viṣṇu, in the form of a fish, guided Manu’s ship to safety.1

2. The Tortoise (Kūrma). When the gods were searching for the immortality-giving nectar called ṁṛta, Viṣṇu in the form of a tortoise, formed a firm base at the bottom of the ocean, which supported Mount Mundara, while it was used as a churn-handle by the gods to churn up the nectar from the water.

3. The Boar (Varāha). Viṣṇu became incarnate as a boar, for the purpose of restoring the earth from the bed of the ocean, where it had been flung by the demon Hiranyakāśa.

4. The Man-lion. (Nara-simha). Viṣṇu burst forth from the interior of a pillar, in the form of a man-lion, and slew the infidel demon Hiranyakāśipu, brother to the above Hiranyakāśa.

5. The Dwarf named Vāmana. In order to depose King Bali, grandson of Hiranyakāśipu, whose kingdom had spread into heaven, earth, and hell, Viṣṇu, in dwarf’s form, begged

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I. The Matsya Purāṇa I. 27-33. contains the substance of the dialogue between the Fish (Viṣṇu) and Manu Vaivasvata, the seventh Manu. The first account of such a dialogue is to be found in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa of the White Yajurveda. Book I. 8.1. 176 (Anandāśrama edition).
from him as much ground as he could cover in three strides. The request was granted by Bali, and in three strides Yāmāna the dwarf covered all the three regions, robbing Bali of his kingdom. Out of pity he allowed Bali to retain hell, and for three days in each year to reign on earth in all dark places.

6. Paraśurāma, or Rāma with the axe. Viṣṇu became incarnate as Paraśurāma, youngest son of the sage Jamadagni, son of Satyavati, daughter of Gacī, incarnation of the Vedic Indra. Paraśurāma slew with his axe King Kārtavirya (or Arjuna), and also all those living who belonged to the Kṣatriy caste.

7. Rāmacandra (more usually called Rāma). Viṣṇu's seventh incarnation is Rāmacandra, son of King Daśaratha of Āyodhya, a descendant of the solar king Ikṣvāku, son of Manu Vaivasvata, the Manu of this present creation. Rāma's great achievement was the conquest over the demons (Rāksasa) and their expulsion from India, including specially the region of Daṇḍakāranya, or Mahārāstra, where Rāma lived in exile at Pañcavati, the most sacred part of Nasik. Rāma also with the aid of Hanumāma, the monkey chief, and by the favour of the

2. One object of the lamps lighted at the Dipāvali vrata is to keep Bali away. cf. Chapter 7, Daiva Karma, p. 125.
3. Daṇḍakāranya, the forest of Daṇḍaka - the district in the West of the Deccan, between the Narmada and Godāvari rivers.
goddess Durga, defeated and slew the demon Ravana, who was king of Lahka (Ceylon). The adventures of Rama and his wife Sita, the furrow-born goddess, and of Rama's younger brother Lakshmana, form the theme of the great epic, the Ramayana.

8. Krsna. According to Vaishnava belief, Krsna was the very essence of Visnu himself. Krsna became incarnate as the eighth son of Vasudeva, a descendent of Yadu, son of Yayati, king of the lunar dynasty. Krsna's mother's name was Devaki. She was cousin to King Kamsa of Mathura, who kept her and her husband prisoners, and killed each of their offspring at birth because of a prediction that one of Devaki's sons would cause his (Kamsa's) death. The Mahabharata tells how the seventh son Balarama, and later, the eighth, Krsna, were saved.

Krsna was brought up in disguise as a shepherd boy, in the neighbourhood of Gokula, a pastoral district, where in course of time, one thousand of the Gopis or Shepherdesses, became his mistresses, the favourite being Radha. Krsna had also several wives, the chief of whom was Rukmini. Krsna's great

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I. Sita was the adopted daughter of King Janaka, whose plough brought her up out of the earth, as Janaka was in the act of ploughing a piece of ground in preparation for a sacrifice.

2. An incident in the Ramayana - the visit of Surpanakha, the demoness sister of Ravana - is portrayed in stone, near Tapovana, a sacred grove about a mile from Pañcavati (Nasik), on the spot where it is supposed to have occurred.

3. A Maharasthra version of the life of Krsna is the poetical work in Marathi language, entitled Harivijaya, by Sridhara.
popularity amongst the masses rests on the incidents in his life, while, for the learned, his attraction lies in the highly elevated thought contained in the Bhagavadgītā, an episode in the Mahābhārata, in the form of a dialogue between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. Kṛṣṇa died of an arrow wound in the foot, through the wrath of the sage Viśvāmitra.

9. Buddha.² The inclusion of Buddha (the founder of Buddhism) among Viṣṇu's incarnations effected a compromise between the doctrine of Buddha and the doctrine of Brahmanism. Buddha, the Enlightened, was the title of this ascetic son of King Sañcāda of the Sākya dynasty of Kapilavastu. Buddha's own name was Sañjasimha, and his tribe name was Gautama. He was a Ksatriya by caste. He is said to have died in 543 B.C.

10. Kalkī. More commonly in Mahārāstrā, Kalaṅkī. This incarnation is yet to come.

Temples
VAISNAVA holy places in Mahārāstrā.

Well known temples in Mahārāstrā, in which the worship of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmi is celebrated, are, the temple of Lakṣmi-

I. The Holi Vrata held at the beginning of Spring is said to be dedicated to Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs.
2. Buddha has given to the Brāhmans the habit of Non-violence (Ahimsa) which they practice even today in refraining from taking the life of any creature. (This doctrine is found in earlier literature also.) Buddhist cave-temples in M'rasṭra are the Elephanta (Bombay), Kārle (Poona) and Paṇḍava (Nāsik) caves. But the image of Buddha is now worshipped as Yuddhīsthīra, eldest of the Paṇḍavas (heroes of the Mahābhārata).
Nārāyana, Bombay), the Thākuradvāra Temple (Bombay), the Belabāga Temple (Poona), the Temple of Sundara Nārāyana (Nāsik), Bālaji's Temple (Nāsik), Bālaji's Temple (Poona). The name Bālaji stands for Balamukunda (Giver of Liberation). Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans believe also that Bālaji is the Giver of wealth.

Images of Viṣṇu wear a crown, and over it appear the several heads of the serpent Saṣa, on which Viṣṇu is believed to recline as on a couch. One leg of the idol is folded under the other, and in his four hands Viṣṇu holds a club, a lotus, a discus, and a conch shell, the name of which is Pancajanyā, after the demon Pancajana who lived in the shell in the ocean, and whom Viṣṇu's incarnation Kṛṣṇa slew. The image of Lākṣmī, wife of Viṣṇu, and goddess of wealth and fortune, is always in the shrine with Viṣṇu, and the shrine is faced by Viṣṇu's eagle, Garuḍa — a man's form with an eagle's face and wings.

Of the incarnations of Viṣṇu, two, Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, share the chief position in the Vaiṣṇava worship of Mahārāṣṭra. A third, Parasurāma, is also worshipped to a less extent, while others are celebrated in minor Vratas (festivals, etc.). Parasurāma

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I. The image of Bālaji in his temple at Nāsik is adorned with thousand of rupees worth of diamonds and pearls. The Peśavā Government gave a large grant for this temple's maintenance. Most of the temples have grants which the Government of India administers in trust. The Judge of the District Court in each area is responsible. Private owners of temples are required to register, and to account for revenue from donations, land, etc.
chief centre is Cipaluna in the Koṅkaṇa, and his Brāhmaṇ worshippers are mostly the Cittapāvana Brāhmaṇs. The Deccan Brāhmaṇs i.e. the Desasthas and others worship chiefly Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The best known of Rāma’s Temples are the Temple of Kālārāma in Paṅcavati, the holiest part of Nāsik, and Gorārāma in Nāsik city; the Tulsībāga Temple in Poona, and the Temple of Kālārāma in Bombay. The words Kālā and Gorā (Black and Fair) describe the colour of the idol in each case.

The idol of Rāma represents a normal human figure, and is accompanied by the images of Sītā his wife, and also Lākṣmaṇa his half-brother, who shared their exile. Near the image of Rāma can always be seen that of Mārūti, i.e. Hanumāna, the commander-in-chief of the host of semi-divine apes, which helped Rāma to conquer Rāvaṇa.

Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa’s idol is worshipped in the Temple of Muralīdhara at Nāsik, and Khunya Muralīdhara in Poona, in his child form as Muralīdhara, the fluteplayer. His adult image shows a normal figure, and is accompanied by his two of his wives – Rukmīni, his chief queen, and Satyabhāmā.

I. Much of the Ramāyana story was enacted at Nāsik. Sītā Gumphā, the cave in which Sītā is said to have lived is near the five banyan trees (Paṅca Wāḍ) from which Paṅcavati took its name. Near them is the present great temple of Kālārāma, mentioned above.

2. Khunya, from Khura (Murder), so called because of a murder that took place near the temple in a serious riot in the eighteenth century.
VAISNAVA holy places in Mahārāstra.

Of Mahārāstra's places of pilgrimage, the following are devoted chiefly to the worship of Viśnu or his incarnations.

Nāsik. Nāsik is famous over all India as the scene of Rāma's fourteen years of exile, and sacred also on account of its river, the Godāvari, held by Mahārāstra Brāhmans to have existed before the Ganges.1 The Godāvari is, on this account called Vṛddha Gaṅga, or Ancient Ganges. At Nasik, the river is only eighteen miles from its source at Tryambakesvara, but it is a considerable river, with many temples on its banks. The temple in which the River is worshipped is Gaṅgāmandira. The twelve yearly pilgrimage at Nāsik, called the Simhastha Yātra, has to do with the Cycle of Jupiter,2 and occurs when Jupiter is in Leo (Sīvha). Hence its name.

Wāi (in the hills going up to Mahābalesvara) sacred to the goddess Kṛṣṇābāī.

Cipaluna in the Koṅkaṇa. Sacred to Pāraśurāma.

Dehu and Pandharapura. Sacred to Mahārāstra's own manifestation of Viṣṇu, namely the god Vīthobā, a Mahārāstra Kṛṣṇa. The legend concerning the deity, Vīthobā, is that Kṛṣṇa came to Pandharapura in order to watch the devotion of

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1. For the origin of the Ganges, see Feasts and Holidays of the Hindūs. p. 15. Note 2.
2. Cf. Thesis. p. 91. Cycle of Jupiter. (Bṛhaspati Cakra) The time of the above pilgrimage is from the beginning of Śrāvana to the end of the Śrāvana of the following year.
a certain son named Pundalika to his aged parents, and was requested by him to remain there. The deity stands on a brick foundation. Hence his name Vithobā; since Vithā means a brick.

The poet Tukārama, a Marātha (i.e. a Mahārāstra Ksatriya) of the seventeenth century, so celebrated Vithobā with his poetic genius as to draw to his feet millions, both of high caste and outcaste. (It seems that Tukārama's ancestor, by name, Vāsvamabhara, by his great devotion to the idol of Vithobā at Pandharapura, is believed to have caused Kṛṣṇa to come and reside also at Dehu, the native town of Vāsvamabhara's family, and, later, the birthplace of the poet).

The image of Vithobā is that of Kṛṣṇa with his two wives, Siva. The third god in the Hindu Triad.

The eight forms of Siva, the third god of the Triad, are believed to be Rudra, Bhava, Sarva, Isāna, Paśupati, Bhima, Ugra, and Mahādeva. The material forms which represent the


2. Vithobā's temples and shrines are many in Mahārāstra, and the pilgrimages to Pandharapura are crowded especially by the common people. One of the chief temples to Vithobā is in Poona; the temple of Upāśi Vithobā, or Fasting Vithobā, so called in memory of a devotee who fasted there.
above eight are, respectively, the Sun, Water, Earth, Air, Fire, Ether, the officiating Brahman, and the Moon. The Saiva Puranas exalt Siva to the highest place in the Triad, regarding him as every power in Nature.

The Linga, or phallic symbol, however, is the form in which Siva is worshipped in the temples and public shrines in Mahārāstra, though images of Siva are common in private worship. Such images portray Siva as holding a trident, a war horn, and an ascetic’s bowl, his hair arranged in a coil, within which is the goddess Gāṅgā (the Ganges). Prayer and worship are offered to Siva under some of the names of his eight forms, as, for instance, Mahādeva, Paśupati, and Bhīmaśāṅkara.

ŚAIVA temples in Mahārāstra.

Śiva's best known temples in Mahārāstra are the Temple of Sāṅkara near Poona, one of the ten chief temples in India, where the greater merit is believed to be acquired through performing puja during the Mahāśivarātra festival. Also the temples at

I. Viṣṇu Purāṇa. I. 8.
2. The special sectarian cults are unknown in the Mahābhārata. They are advocated in the Purāṇas. (E. R. E. Vol. VIII. p.327). Of the eighteen recognised Purāṇas, six exalt Siva. Six exalt Viṣṇu. The remaining ones exalt Brahma. For particulars cf. Thesis Appendix VII.
Bagulanatha, Kanakesvara, Bhalesvara, and Bhalakesvara, in the city of Bombay; those of Omkaresvara, Vrddhesvara, and Amritesvara in Poona; the temples of Kapalesvara and of TIlabhandesvara, in Nasik.

The Parvati Temple, or mountain Temple, in Poona, or rather a mile or more outside Poona, is dedicated to the following deities in common – Saṅkara (Śiva), Visnu, Mārttikeya (son of Śiva), and Devi (Parvatī, wife of Śiva).

Śiva's spouse, who is Parvati when in her milder form, and Durgā or Bhavānī when in her terribly aspect, has separate temples dedicated to her worship. Of these temples, some of the chief in Mahārāṣṭra are, the Temple of Bhadrakālī at Näṣik, for the worship of Durgā; the Temple of Jogēsvari in Poona, the Catuḥṣarngī Temple in Poona, the Temple of Bhavānī at Tulajāpura, and others.

1. This temple is peculiar in having no stone bull in front of the Linga. (There is always a bull in Śiva's temples.)
2. It is believed by the people of Näṣik that the Śiva Linga in this temple grows gradually — a tila or sesamum seed increase at a time.
3. Called also Kāli and Mahākālī. Her image is that of a woman with four arms, having a necklace of human skulls, and a girdle of dead men's hands. Corresponding to Bhavānī or Kāli is the god Bhairava, or Bahiroba, who is Śiva in his terrible form, when dancing the Tandva measure, wrapt in his tiger skin. The goddess Kāli was the deity from whom Śivājī, the leader of the Marāṭhās from 1646 till his death in 1680, sought inspiration, and to whom he attributed his success in freeing Mahārāṣṭra from the Mughul rule.
SAIVA holy places in Mahārāṣṭra.

The following of Mahārāṣṭra’s places of pilgrimage are devoted chiefly to Śaiva worship:— Tryambakesvāra, Mahābalesvāra, Bhīmsāṅkara, Tulajāpura, and Jejurī. At the last mentioned, the god is Khandobā. This deity appears to be a local manifestation of Śiva. The worship has the features of the Śākta cult—male and female children being dedicated to the service of the temple. A male devotee child is called a Vāghya, and a girl is called a Mūralī. The worshippers are mostly of the lower people. Some Brāhmans might go in and do some pūjā, but no Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans have the practice of giving their children to the temple. In Mahārāṣṭra, Brāhmans who follow Śākta worship are only one, or even less than one, per cent, if any.

The above Śaiva holy place, Tryambakesvāra, is of great interest. It is the only place in Mahārāṣṭra where an image of Śiva in human form is to be found. Tryambakesvāra is at the very source of the River Godāvari, as it comes out of the mountain side, just a humble little waterfall. In the village below, is the Temple of Tyrambakesvara, and Śiva, in human form, has an extra eye in the centre of his forehead. He seldom opens it, and even then only for righteous judgment, so it is said. There was the incident called Madana Dahana. Mythology records that when the god Madana, god of love, tried to tempt Śiva, Śiva opened his third eye and burnt him to a cinder. In all other places, Śiva is in the form of the Linga.
Deities other than the Triad.

Ganapati. In addition to the deities of the Triad, several others are very largely worshipped by the Maharāstra people, of all Hindu castes. Foremost among them is Ganapati — the Vināyaka of Vedic mythology. Ganapati, or Gaṇeśa (Commander of troops) is believed to be in charge of the hosts of inferior, semi-celestial beings who are in the service of Śiva. Gaṇapati image has an elephant’s head, and four arms. He is portrayed also as Ekaḍanta, i.e. One-tusked — a blow from the axe of the deity Parasurāma having deprived him of the other. The two wives of Gaṇapati are Siddhi and Riddhi. His steed is a rat.

Gaṇapati is regarded as the protective deity of learning. Maharāstra Hindu children begin the learning of the alphabet with the syllables of his name — G, N, P, T, (ग न प त ), and with pūjā of the god. New subjects also in school higher classes are quite often begun with an invocation to Gaṇapati.

1. Gaṇapati’s own head vanished, owing to his mother’s having carelessly exposed him to the evil gaze of the planet Saturn.

2. Gaṇapati is believed to have cursed the Moon for laughing when he fell off his steed, and to have said that all who ever looked at her would be cursed. He relented later, and withdrew the curse, except for one night in the year, namely the Fourth of the Light Half of Bhādrapada. So on that night Hindus will not look at the Moon for fear of ill luck.

3. He is said to have written down the Mahābhārata at Vyās’s dictation.
written on the blackboard. Gānapati is invoked on taking up any fresh enterprise, in business, in travelling, in domestic rites, in sacrifices, in entertainments and festivities. The birthday of Gānapati, which is called Gāñesa Fourth (Gāñesa-Caturthī), is observed as a great festival. Gaily coloured images of the deity are made and worshipped.

Māruti. Māruti or Hanumāna, the monkey general whose forces helped Viṣṇu’s seventh incarnation, Rāma, to conquer Rāvana, has, in addition to his position in Rāma’s temples, his own separate shrines of worship, as, for instance, Gavatya Māruti (Grass Māruti) near the grass market in Poona; and also Bhikārā-dāsa Maruti, Poona, so named after its founder, Bhikāradāsa, a Gujarātī merchant; also Kārttya Māruti at Pañcavati, Nāsik. The Grāma Devatā, or Village deity at the entrance to a village is quite often an image of Hanumāna or Māruti.

Kārttikeya. Kārttikeya or Skanda, son of Śiva, and called Kārttikasvāmi, god of war, though honoured by Mahārāṣtra Brāhmans, is more particularly, a god of the Marātha ( Kısatriya) people, and of Kısatriyas in general. There is a large temple to his honour on the Parvati Hill, near Poona. His image has six heads, twelve arms, and twelve feet.
Tulasi. The Tulasi shrub, or holy Basil (Ocymum Sanctum) is worshipped daily, especially by the women. The shrine is usually on the verandah outside the house, or in the garden or courtyard. It is a rectangular-shaped flower pot, called a Vrndavana. In it, Vrnda, called in her later incarnation Tulasi, the holy basil shrub, is planted. The worship of the Tulasi plant is often performed with desire for a son.

Bali. Bali, the king of hell, to whom reference has been made in connection with the Yamana incarnation of Visnu, is worshipped annually on the first Lunar day of the Light half of the month Kārttika during the festival of Dipavali.

Yama. Yama also, whose Vedic aspect has undergone a change during the Purānic period, is propitiated, as Judge of the dead, and king of the abode of departed spirits, with water offerings during the Dipavali festival, on the day previous to the above, namely, the Fourteenth of the Dark Half of Āśvina. This day is called Naraka Caturdasi, or Hell Fourteenth, when after anointing the body with sesamum and oil, Snana is performed after moon-rise, and the water-

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1. Literally, the forest of Vrnda. Vrnda was a chaste wife whom Visṇu, appearing in the guise of her husband, seduced. She, on discovering his identity, immolated herself on a burning pyre. At the request of Visṇu, the gods caused her to become again incarnate in the Tulasi plant, the twigs and leaves of which are believed to be her hair. The ceremony of marrying Tulasi to Visṇu is celebrated annually.
offering (Tarpana) is made to Yama, the sacred thread being worn in either its usual position or the mourning position as for a Srāddha. From this fact, it will be seen that Yama is regarded by the Maharāstra Brahmans in both his Vedic and his Purānic aspects.

The above are the chief Major Deities to whom temples are erected in Maharāstra.

There are also minor temples and shrines to local saints or donors to charities, and so forth, in many places.

The deities in wayside shrines, which are merely large enough to hold the idol, and are open, having no door or gate or grating, are approached and touched by members of any of the twiceborn castes (Brahman, Ksatriya, Vaisya). But in the temples, only the Brahman pujārī, the pūjā offerer to the deity, enters the inner place where the deity is erected. He fills the oil, lights the lamps, bathes the idol, removes the Nirmālya or used flowers, and in every way performs the service of the god. The lighting of lamps and the various duties in other parts of the temple, are performed by the temple servant who is one of the twiceborn — usually a Marātha Kunbī, a peasant or cultivator.

By permission, a Brahman worshipper may go inside the shrine and touch the idol. Such a request is sometimes made

I. In the constitution of India, there is no differentiation of caste. Sudras may enter temples. But the movement is gradual, so far.
by some very devoted pilgrim, who gives, perhaps, a large
donation, perhaps five hundred rupees, if he is rich, to the
temple. A rich Bātya or merchant, not being a Brahman, would
not even ask to go inside the shrine, but would make his
offering at the grating, with a bowing or a prostration - the
Brahman priest performing the actual presentation of the gift
before the god.

Worship in Hindu temples is always individual, not
congregational. Worshippers come and go, each performing his or
her obeisance to the deity, and probably sitting in the
temple courtyard under the shelter of a roofed pavilion, to
listen to a Sāstri or Brahman teacher, who is reading
passages from the Hindu scriptures. Each listener departs at
his own time, putting a few coins, or if he is well-to-do, a
rupee, on the Sāstri's desk as he goes. The Sāstri's only pay
is probably the people's offerings.

The deity of a temple is never moved from the shrine.
For the ceremony of putting the god to sleep, or for taking
the deity out of the temple in procession on occasions, a
substitute, such as a pair of brass shoes, as belonging to the
god, is used.  

1. E.g. the procession known as Rāma's Chariot (Rāmaratha),
when his substitute is taken in a chariot drawn by the Brahman
across the river Godāvari, and back to Paṇḍavati to the Temple
of Kālārāma.

2. It will be remembered how the Rāmāyana narrates that, during
Rāma's fourteen years of exile, his loyal stepbrother would not
ascend the throne, but put Rāma's shoes on the seat as an emblem
of Rāma's authority.
The interior of the Hindu temples is always severely plain, while the exterior is extremely ornate. Mountain cave temples, however, which have been originally Buddhist, and, with the passing of Buddhism from India, have become Hindu places of worship, have the interior carved elaborately out of the solid rock.1

1. The most elaborate in Māhārastra are the cave temples at Elephānta near Bombay, the Kārle caves at Kārle near Poona, the Paṇḍava Caves at Nasik on the Godāvari.
Chapter Sixteen

THE HOSTS OF ATTENDANT POWERS

The Hosts of attendant powers, whom the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans worship in addition to the greater deities, are of two kinds. I. Beneficent and semi-celestial beings who are pleased to be summoned to attend the rites, and to bless. II. Demons and evil powers, who are always vigilant, with the intent to render void the efficacy of ritual, and, in other ways, to harm mortals.

I. Under this head — Beneficent Beings are three kinds:

They are:—
A. The Group Deities (Gana Devatā).
B. The Ṣaṃskārakās, the 'mother' deities (29 in all)
C. The Devikās, minor attendants.

These are defined in Vedic and later mythology as in groups.

A. The Gana Devatā.

This first group includes nine distinct classes of celestial beings. They are:

(i). The Ādityas. The Ādityas of Vedic times were seven in number, and belonged to Āditya, the Sun, their chief being Varuṇa, the brother of the sun (Mitra). In later mythology, their number was increased to twelve, representing the twelve months of the sun's passage through the heavens.
The Maharastra Brahmans acknowledge the twelve.

(ii). The Visvedevas. The traditional number is ten and sometimes twelve. They are believed to be the sons of Viśva, a daughter of Dakṣa. Their names are Satya, Vasu, Kṛtu, Dakṣa, Kāla, Kāma, Dhṛti, Kuru, Pururavasā, and Mādravas; with two others added sometimes, viz. Locana and Dhūri.

Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans believe in thirteen Visvedevas, and give the name Kutsa, in addition to the above. Also, instead of the name Mādravas, they use the name Ādravā.

Certain of the Visvedevas are worshipped in the Śāririka Samskaras (Chs. 9 to II) - Kṛtu and Dakṣa in Śimantonnayana, and Satya and Vasu in all the others as far as Marriage. All the Visvedevas together are worshipped, along with the major gods, by those Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans who still offer the Vaiśvadeva sacrifice in the daily ritual. The concrete forms in which the Visvedevas are represented in the rites are knots of Darbha grass, tied in a special fashion. Such a knot is called in Marāṭhī, Caṭa. The Visvedevas are specially connected also with the rites performed in honour of ancestors.

I. Āpte’s Samskṛta Dictionary gives the tem traditional names Āpte, Vol III. p. 1474. Col.2
2. Āpte. Vol. II. p.797. Col. I. Also p. 796. Col. 2 saya that Dakṣa had many daughters, twenty-seven of whom became wives of the Moon, and are the twentyseven lunar asterisms. (Thesis P. 86.)
(iii) The Vasudevas. These, eight in number, are peculiarly Vedic in character, in their relationship to fire. One of the is Agni, under the name Pavaka (the Purifier). Their names are:— Āpa (from Ap, water); Dhruva (the pole star); Soma (the Moon); Dhāva or Dhāra (a water torrent); Anila (the wind); Pavaka (fire); Pratyuṣa (dawn); and Prabhāsa (light). Thus they are all personifications of natural phenomena, and belong to Vedic rather than Purānic tradition. They with the twelve Ādityas and the eleven Rudras already mentioned among the deities of the previous chapter (p. 264) constitute, along with the two principal Vedic deities, Indra and Prajāpati (or, soma say Heaven and Earth, or the two Āśvinas, dawn and eveninf twilight), the 'thirty-three gods' with which proverb the Maharāstra Brāhmans are familiar.

The remaining classes of the Ganadevata or Group deities are not of such prominent interest to the Maharāstra Brāhmans as the three groups mentioned above. They do, however, form part of their belief.

(iv). The Tuṣitas (the Satisfied) who number thirty-six
(vii). The Maharājikās (Sovereigns). Two hundred and thirty-six.
(viii). The Sādhyas, or exquisitely refined beings, who
have attained the world above that of the gods. Their numbers in Vedic mythology are sometimes twelve, and sometimes seventeen. This class is represented in Maharāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ belief by the Siddhas, who are of Purāṇic origin, and are believed to number eighty-eight thousand. They are said to occupy the region North of the sun, and South of the seven Rsis (the Great Bear), and to be immortal till the end of a Kalpa. The practice of Siddhi, the attainment of supernatural powers believed to lead to the status of a Siddha, is part of the Yoga system, and is open to those who remain Brahmacāri and practice severe austerities; and also to Sannyāsis.

(ix). The Rudras. The Rudras, or Storm deities, of whom there are eleven, according to Purāṇic tradition. They are identical with the Maṁuts, who are believed to be the sons of the Vedic deity Rudra (p. 264).

B. The Maṁrakās.

These are of very great importance to the Maharāṣṭra Brāhmaṇs, who call on them to be present at the Samskāras, and have a special class who guard the pavilion or tent that has to be set up for several of the sixteen rites.

In all, the Matrkas number twenty-nine. They are described in three paragraphs, as below:

(i) The Saktis, or Matrkas. The Saktis are a class of female deities, who are believed to be the personified energies of the principal gods. They are, in the earliest mythology seven in number, and their names are, Brahmani, the Sakti of Brahma; Indrani, the Sakti of Indra; Mahesvari, the Sakti of Siva; Vaishnavi, the Sakti of Visnu; Kaumari, the Sakti of Kumara or Kārttikeya; Varahi, the Sakti of Visnu's (originally Brahma's) Boar incarnation, Varaha; Camunda, a form of Durga, Sakti of Siva.

These seven were the Matrkas of the earliest mythology, and were attendants upon the god Kārttikeya, or Skanda, son of Siva, who was brought up under the care of the Pleiades.

(ii) In later mythology there appear the following sixteen Matrkas, or motherly deities:— Gauri, Padma, Saci, Medha, Savitri, Vijaya, Jayaa, Devasena, Svadha, Avahaa, Santi, Pusha, Dhriti, Tuasti, Atmadevata, and Kuladevata.

Both the above classes are Matrkas, and their function is to be present at the rites and to bless the performance of them. Altogether they are twenty-three.

But the Mahārāṣṭra Brahmans believe in twenty-nine Matrkas. These include the above lists, with the addition
of six more, who are invoked to preside over the awning or pavilion which is set up always for the important rites. These Mātrkās are called Maṇḍapa Devalās. The Maṇḍapa is the awning. The names of the six are: - Māndini, Nalini, Maitra, Uma, Pasuvardini, and Bhāgavati.

The Mahaśāstra Brahmans have the belief that one of these Mātrkās, Gaurī (i.e. Kātyāyani, or Durgā), on the sixth day after a child’s birth, writes its fate. The worship of this Mātrkā, called Sāsthi, because she comes on Śaṣtī, which is the sixth lunar day after the birth, is connected with the Jātakarṇa rite.

C. The Devikās or Devakās. The Devikās are goddesses of an inferior order. Their names are: - Anumati, Rākā, Simī, Sinivali, Kuhu, and Dhatr. In the Bodily rite of Simanjronnayana, the Mahaśāstra Brahmans call Dhatr, and Rākā to be present. They believe that Sinivali and Kuhu, which are the names given respectively to the first and the last two praharas of New Moon, are inauspicious times in which to be born. Birth in either of these times requires propitiation.

I. The rites of Simanta, Cuḍakarma, Upanayana, Kesānta, and Vivaha, are the rites for which the Mahaśāstra Brahmans consider a pavilion to be necessary.

2. Cf. Rgveda Brahmakarma Samuccayaya, Section 126 under the heading Maṇḍapa Devala Pratistha p. 193. (I am much indebted to Bhataji Kashikar of the Vedic Research Mandala in Poona for these names of the six Maṇḍapa Devalās.)

Certain other female divinities, known as Apsarās, are recognised by the Maharashtra Brāhmans, though rather characters in mythology than as objects of worship in the rites. The Apsarās somewhat resemble fairies. They are believed to have been produced at the churning of the ocean (at the time of the Tortoise incarnation), and are considered to be fond of bathing, and to be able to change their shape. They live in the sky, are under the control of the Moon (Soma), and are said to be the wives of the demons known as the Gandharvas.

II.

Demons and Evil Powers. These can be classed under five heads:

A. Demons of the air. The Āsūras.

The Āsūras in Vedic mythology were the aerial enemies of the gods. At first the combats were between single opponents, but later accounts, in the Brāhmaṇas, show them fighting in hosts. The name Āsūra (= Possessor of occult power) was applied at first to Varuṇa as highest gādā. But later, when

I. Cf. Last section in this chapter.
Asūra began to signify demons possessed of occult power, the grammarians coined the word Sūra, as its opposite— to mean a beneficent power, a god. Thus the word Asūra came to be applied only to demons.

The Asūras of the Rgveda are:—Vyātra, the Serpent; Vālā, the cave (personified) in which the celestial cows were detained; Svarbhānu, a demon who covered the sun with darkness; and others. The Purānic successor to Svarbhānu is Rāgu, who is regarded in the Asūra class of demon.

The Asūras were believed to be children of Kaśyapa, one of the seven sages, and Diti, a daughter of Dakṣa. Hence their matronymic, Daitya (=sprung from Dakṣa). The sage Kaśyapa's progeny through Danu, another daughter of Dakṣa, are called Dānavas, and are also of demon nature. The Asūras, both Daityas and Dānavas, are the Titans of Hindu mythology.

B. Demons that infest the earth.

(i). The Rāksasa type. Demons of the name Rāksasa are believed to infest the earth, as the Asūras infest the air, in innumerable hosts. Rāksasa are the enemies of mankind. In ancient times, Dandakāranya — the Dandaka Forest, which is the Modern Mahārāṣṭra, was infested with Rāksasas and

Rākṣasis (female demons). It was with one of the latter - Surpanakhā, sister of Rāvana, demon king of Ceylon, - that Rāma is believed to have come into contact and conflict, at Pañcavati, Nāsik, during his exile. The incident is recorded in the Rāmāyana. Rāma’s great mission, which forms the theme of the Rāmāyana, was to set Āryavarta (India) free from the devastating Rāksasas.

They were believed to be deformed, discoloured, repulsive beings, able to assume attractive shapes to deceive mortals. They entered into men and horses, and ate their flesh; and they had the power to interfere with the performance and efficacy of sacrificial rites. They are believed to be the progeny of the sage Pulastya. Their parentage is variously given. Rāvana was their King, and Lāṅka (Ceylon) their chief abode. The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans believe that Rāma set India free from the Rāksasas of his day. They believe that Rākṣasa still exist, wandering at night, haunting cemeteries, and ready to do men harm. One form of insanity is called, in Mahārāṣṭra, Rāksagraha.

Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans believe also that Rākṣasis (female demons) haunt the corners of houses.

(ii). Pīsācas. Demons of the Pīsāca type, in their activities, resemble those of the Rākṣasa class. In Mahārāṣṭra a Pīsāca is held to be, in some cases, the ghost of a Brāhmaṇ.
whose obsequial rites have not been duly performed.

But the more general meaning of piṣaca is a fiend or demon.

In the Veda, the piśac̣a are the class of beings next in order to the Rāksasa, the order of beings enumerated as gods, men, ancestors, asūras, rāksasa, piśac̣a. In Purānic times, the piśac̣a are considered to be the children of Krodhā, another daughter of Dakṣa, and wife of the sage Kaśyapa.

(iii). The Yaksas. The Yaksas were another class of demon, whose king was Kuvera, son of the sage Pulastya¹, and half-brother to Rāvana. Kuvera is king both of the Yaksas and the Guhyakas, both of which classes of demon are held to be sometimes malignant, and sometimes harmless and merely terrifying. They are of insubstantial, fabulous appearance. The name Yakṣa was given to them from the incident related in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa², which says that they were produced by Brahmā in an amaciated state, hideous and long-bearded, and crying, "Let us eat!". Hence their name Yakṣa(from yaks, to eat). The name Guhyaka signifies secret, unseen beings (from Guhya, secret).

Kuvera and his host are believed to feed on the Bali, or offerings of rice that are thrown into the air at the time of morning and evening meal, with the utterance of Mantras. This act is Bhūṣayajña (one of the five great sacrifices).

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2. Viṣṇu Purāṇa. 1. 5
bhūta

Thāi daily āstāya jna is intended for inferior deities, such as Indra and the Mārutas, Kuvera and the Guhyakas, spirits of trees, waters, etc. In this sense bhūta means all beings.

(iv). Bhūtas in particular. In addition to the above general sense, the idea of bhūta is that of a spirit, imp, or goblin, who haunts places and eats flesh. They are believed to be attendants of Śiva. The mother of the Bhūtas in this sense is Krodhā. The Mārkandeya Purāṇa describes how, from the various bodies of Brahma, in which the qualities of Tamas (darkness), and Rajas mixed with Tamas (passion and darkness) predominated, the different classes of demons—Asūra, Rāksasa, Bhūta, Yakṣa, Piśāca—were produced, along with other classes of creation.

Belief in Bhūtas is universal in Mahārāṣṭra, especially in the villages. Mahārāṣṭra has its own demon shrines. The worshippers are the great mass of the people, but village Brāhmans sometimes honour these goblin deities.

The Bhūtas of Mahārāṣṭra.

The chief Bhūta worshipped in Mahārāṣṭra is Vetāla—the name is pronounced in Marāṭhi with the big "l" at the back of the throat. It is connected with the Samskṛta Vetāla. The Vetālas, or goblin beings, were believed in post-vedic tradition to inhabit corpses, or at other times, in the form of a corpse.

of vampires to suck men's blood.

The brother of Vētalā, in Mahārāṣṭra belief, is the demon Mhāsobhā. The worship is extremely primitive. A ring of white-washed stones represents Vētalā's mounted guard, a larger stone being the lieutenant, and in the centre two white-washed stones, larger still, represent Vētalā and Mhāsobhā. These goblin deities appear to be connected with Śiva. Vētalā's chief power is believed to be exercised on the night of Mahāśivarātra.² He is believed also to ride abroad in diabolical guise, equipped with horns, at New Moon and Full Moon, in a mood to grant favours to mortals who are bold enough to meet him.

Mhāsobhā has also separate shrines. Both gods are supplicated by sorcerers, and devotees who desire the success of some magic spell, or of some evil plan.²

Though the large Majority of Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, as has been said above, do not have any connection with these two ghost deities, they have, nevertheless, a very firm belief in ghosts and demons. The following beliefs are common, especially among the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman women:— that spirit haunt bedsteads, that they roost on rafters, and that a bedstead should not be placed immediately under a rafter; that evil powers can work through an owl, a pair of crows, for the notes and comments, please see the next page.
a pair of snakes, or through the fall of a lizard on a person's body, or through the evil eye. Wrist charms are commonly worn by Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ women - men, too, at times. They are made of copper, silver, gold, beads, silk, or wool; or sometimes a very small brass box is seen tied on the wrist with black thread.

C. Demons of the nether regions.

The Nāgas. As the Asūras, the aerial enemies of the gods, are believed to inhabit the higher regions, and the Rāksasas and other demons of their kind infest earth, disturbing sacrifices and troubling human beings, so the Nāgas, or serpent demons inhabit the nether regions.

The Nāgas, who have a human face and the tail of a serpent, are a race of demons said to be the progeny of the

Previous page.

2. Bhūtānaviṃśa Mahāśivarātra festival comes on the 14th lunar day of the Dark Half of the month Magha.
3. Evil plan. Kincaid, in his 'Hindu Gods' (p. 33), states that a murderer confessed to him as Judge of Poona that, before her crime, she had invoked the aid of Mhasobhā at one of his shrines in Poona.
4. Evil eye. The Marāṭhi word Drṣṭa (also Sāṁskṛta) is the state of havāṅg been looked on by the evil eye. In the case of a child who is believed to have become Drṣṭa, the remedy is to smear its body, head forehead and limbs, with ashes, over which Mantras have been recited; or else to tie a written Mantra on the child's arm.
sage Kaśyapa, and his wife Kadrū, who was another of Dakṣa's daughters. The purpose of their creation was to people Pātāla, one of the seven regions or hells below the earth. The names of these seven hells (or pits, or planes) are, in descending order from earth:—Atāla, Vītāla, Sutāla, Rasātāla, Talātāla, Mahātāla, and Pātāla. Their chief city is called Bhogavati. Pātāla is used as a general name for the region below earth, and the Mahāraṣṭra Brahmans employ it as signifying hell, a place of ruin or downfall.

D. Evil qualities personified.

Added to the demons inhabiting the three regions particularly, there is a further class of evil deities who appear to be evil qualities personified. These are believed to have sprung from Adharma (Irreligion), one of the Prajāpati-patis, the sons of Brahmā. Agharma's wife was Himṣa (Violence). One of the sons of Adharma and Himṣa was Māyā (Illusion). His son was Mrtyu (Death); and the sons of Mrtyu were Vyādhi (Disease), Sōka (Grief), Krodha (Anger), Duṣaha (Unbearable), etc.1

Duṣaha was given by Brahmā the task of creating social dissension, and spoiling the food in the houses of those

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negligent of the rites; and Duḥsaha's whole family - eight sons, eight daughters, and thirty-eight grandchildren - have the office of bringing various kinds of evil on men and women. The Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans believe in their power to interfere in the lives of mortals. The following are the main deities of this class:

Alakṣmī, wife of Maya, who causes ill-fortune. The Brāhma women of Mahārāṣṭra expel Alakṣmī annually from their homes by carrying lamps round at the time of the Dīpāvalī observances, and by worshipping Laksī, goddess of fortune.

Dantakṛṣṭi, son of Duḥsaha, who causes lockjaw.
Parivartaka, who changes the words in a person's mouth.
Garbhahānti, who causes miscarriage.
Niyojikā (female), who incites men to be attracted toward other men's wives.
Smṛtiḥārikā (female), who causes women to lose their memory.
Śītalā, also, is the goddess who inflicts smallpox on children and others. She is regarded as presiding over, as well as inflicting, the sickness, and is propitiated. The Nimba tree is sacred to her., and on the lunar day 1st, in the Light Half of the Month Caitra, which is New Year's Day in Mahārāṣṭra, leaves of the Nimba trees as part of the festivities are eaten to ensure good health.

I. The Nimba is Azadirachta Indica. (Thesis P. II5)
The chief means of warding off evil deities has always been believed to be the regular practice of religious ritual; and the fact that the practice of religious ritual is on the decline in Mahārāṣṭra, would seem to infer that Mahārāṣṭra is outgrowing her fear of evil spirits. This may be so. But tradition has a strong hold yet. From older times, the greatest destroyer of evil deities and demons has been held to be Āgni, the deity Fire. Macdonell writes that the belief that the deity Fire expels evil spirits and hostile magic is older than the Rgveda. The Dīpāvalī lamps, the bonfire at Holi, and the custom of lighting up dark places, are the evidence of this belief still existent in Mahārāṣṭra.

E. The Gandharvas.

One further class of divinities, requiring separate and special notice is that of the Gandharvas.

The Gandharvas are of peculiar significance, for the reason that, though they are feared as evil, amulets being worn as a protection against them, they are, at the same time, believed to be the keepers of the sacred Soma, or Nectar, from which the gods derive immortality.
In Vedic belief there was a single Gandharva, called sometimes Vāśvāvasu, whose sphere was the air and the heavenly waters, and who had the guardianship of the sacred Soma. This Gandharva may have been conceived originally as the tutelary deity of the Moon (Soma), with whom he is sometimes identified. He was believed to have knowledge of the secrets of heaven, and to be the preceptor of the sages.

Indra, conquering the Gandharva, took the Soma from him by force, in order that mortals might have access to it. Such access is believed to be gained through the performance of the Soma sacrifice in the Śrauta ritual, the ritual observances enjoined by the Vedas.

Ecstatic states of mind, and possession of evil spirits are supposed to be derived from the heavenly Gaṇḍharva. The ecstatic state of mind produced by the use of the Soma juice is in the present day believed to come from this source and to be an experience of immortality.1

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1. The original Gandharva, as tutelary deity of the Moon (Soma), sends the Soma, apparently, in the moon's rays, the power to extract the immortal medicinal qualities of which, lies in a certain creeper called the Soma, or Moon, plant. By distilling the juice of this creeper, the nectar is obtained by mortals. This appears to be the belief, in existence today also, connecting Soma the Moon with Soma the plant. (Asclepias Acida).

Cf. Pamphlet by Śrautācārya D G. Diksita, entitled Vaidika Śastra-dharma. pp. 25 and 26. Pub. in Marāṭhī. The modern Maharāṣṭra Brāhmans are attempting to revive certain Śrauta sacrifices for national and social welfare; of which more in the following chapter. Distilling Soma is part of the ritual.
The class of Gandharvas in later mythology are believed to possess the characteristic features of the original Gandharvas. They live in the sky, guard the Soma, know the best medicines, regulate the courses of the lunar asterisms, and follow after women with a desire to possess them. They are feared as evil. Yet, strangely, the general belief is that a female child belongs to the Gandharvas for two years, to Soma for the next two years, and to Agni for the following two years. And in former days in Maharashtra as elsewhere it was considered forbidden that she should be married before attaining the age of six, when the ownership of the gods came to an end. (Of course things are different nowadays.)

The Gandharvas are believed to be the husbands of the class of female divinities known as the Apsaras already mentioned. The Gandharvas were once the attendants of the deity Varuna; and later were believed to be under Indra, in whose court they are described in Epic Literature as heavenly musicians, and attendants, with the Apsaras, on the deities there. They are also Indra's assistants in battle.

In systematic theology, they are regarded as one of the distinct classes of creation - gods, asuras, Gandharvas, etc., and are considered to be in eleven divisions.

1. Page 297.
Chapter Seventeen

THE BRAHMANS OF PRESENT DAY MAHARASTRA

Under the impact of the West, the Maharastra Brahmins have, during the last thirty years or more, dropped much of their ancient ritual practice, though their beliefs in Hindu theology and philosophy have remained practically unchanged. Being an intellectual people, they have been greatly attracted toward the new knowledge of the West. New and attractive careers are open to them, and India is developing along Western lines.

Then too, in India’s new constitution, the levelling of all castes, and the sense of the brotherhood of all, that the Late Svargavasi Mahatma Gandhi, and now, after him, Sri Acarya Vinoba Bhave, have preached so insistently and effectively, have set on fire the imagination of Indian youth. Acarya Vinoba’s preaching is the doctrine of the three gifts that India stands in need of - Bhudana, Dharmadana, Sramadana. The gifts of Land, Love, and Labour. This ideology has attracted, and is attracting many of the youth of India to devote themselves to social work. The attitude is not now, "I am a Brahman", but "I am an Indian, and I am for India."

The decline in ritual practice, apart from the above
two considerations, is caused by the speed of modern life. Just as in other countries, the leisurely days, and the old-world content and peace, have gone, and in their place is social upheaval and the world's unrest, so it is with India. Ancient ritual is being given up because there is not the time for it. And, moreover, the new critical attitude toward the old things is pushing ritual practices out.

Here are some opinions given by Maharashtra Brāhmans themselves on the decline in ritual practice. The following are from notes taken down in interviews with research authorities, professors in Saṃskṛta and Sociology; and also in interviews with Ācāryas of the old Vedic school.

These various opinions were taken down at dictation:

"The majority of the educated have the outer forms, but not the same orthodox faith. The younger generation have given up all superstitions, such as believing in periods of defilement at times of eclipse, and so on. The tendency is toward rationalism."

"Among present day Brahmans there are two classes — those who are still orthodox, and are to be found in great numbers, even in the cities; and those who have abandoned all ritual, and are intent on philosophical meditation, and who retain a belief in present personal existence, and ultimate impersonal emergence into Nirvāṇa. These Brāhmans perform Dhyāna (Meditation) in their own homes."
"The old practice of Vedādhayana, the daily study of the Veda, is now, in the case of many modern Brāhmans replaced by devotional reading of such books as Gurucaritra, a fifteenth century book of guidance and practice. They read also the Life of Sripada Srī Vallabha and Narasimha Sarasvati - the great deeds of these two and other heroes. However, the Vedas and the Grhya Sūtras are in the background, and their thinking is founded on them. They read selections from the poets, Rāmadasa, Jyāanasāvra and Tukārama and others. Their mental make-up is not modern. They have only discarded the old ritual, and changed over to something new. They still believe in the doctrines and in the gods, though they have dropped the ritual of Brāhmanism."

"The departure from ritual means this - The elaborate ritual of the morning Snāna is entirely omitted. Not even one Namah (Hail) to any god. When the bath is finished, some Brāhmans ejaculate the śārt invocation, "Hara! Hara! Gange!" i.e. Śiva! Śiva! Gaṅgā - Gangā being the river Ganges, or rather, the Godāvari who is called "Ancient Ganges". Likewise the ritual of the morning Sandhyā worship, including the Brāhm secret invocation to the sun (the Gāyatrī) is abandoned by many. The ritual of the morning meal is also gone. The inner values and social work - this is the new religion. And priests who are willing to adapt themselves to the awakening condition of today are highly honoured."
"Four or five centuries ago, all the three twice-born classes (Brāhman, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya) took the rite of initiation, and wore the sacred thread. Now, only Brāhmans, and, in Mahārāṣṭra, perhaps one or two rich Marāṭhā families, observe the Thread Ceremony. Within the last thirty years, Brāhmans themselves have discarded it to a large extent. Among those modern Brāhmans who do observe it, it is often a mere formality. The Brāhman boy, after his ceremony of initiation and his donning of the sacred thread, will perform Śnāna-Sandhyā, and utter the Gāyatrī for a week only. The modern Brāhman boy does no pūjā. He dines in his ordinary clothes. He wears the Thread only as a matter of form."

"Many families amongst modern Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans have their sons initiated, though the responsibility and religious importance attaching to the ancient rite is disregarded."

Those are the opinions of learned Brāhmans on the lapse of ritual practice amongst their modernised fellow Brāhmans.

To turn now to the sphere of the Sāṃskṛta-educated and ritually orthodox, here are the opinions of two Ācāryas—one, the head of the Māmbādevī Sāṃskṛta Mahāvidyālaya in the Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan of Bombay; and the other the famous Puromīta of Nasik, who is consulted even by Benares Puromītas on points of ritual.

In Bombay, in three interviews kindly given by the Ācārya
of the above Mumbādevī Saṃskṛta Mahāvidyālāya, the following information was obtained:—The curriculum was on the modern plan of present day schools, with a timetable and subjects set out— not following the traditional Saṃskṛta system and the old Pāṭha Method of learning by rote.

Also the motive in learning is now changed, as the Ācārya pointed out. What he said was that the study was not undertaken from the devotional standpoint, but the critical approach to the study of the Vedic subjects was the method. Four of the Śāstras are taught in this Pāṭhasālā—Vedānta (philosophy), Jyotiṣa (Astronomy), Saḥitya (Literature), and Vyākaraṇa (Grammar). Conversation in Saṃskṛta was encouraged. In fact a student coming in on some enquiry during the above interview speaking in Tamil, was answered by the Ācārya in Saṃskṛta.

Saṃskṛta, however, he explained, was on the decline, and some Pāṭhasālās are closing down for lack of students. The new outlook, said the Ācārya, means that India's youth are requiring modern education with an aim toward a career. This Mahāvidyālāya has only fifty-five students attending for lectures, though it is an examining centre for a good number of affiliated institutions.

The Pāṭhasālā does not necessarily require that its students should have been initiated into Brāhmaṇism by the Sacrificial Thread Ceremony. Non-Brāhmans are taken, and the there at present include Kṣatriyas, Vaisyas, and Banyās (the trading class of Gujarat). Also there are three or four
women students - a striking illustration of modern conditions.

No Harijans, however, attend. On the question put, as to whether, if applying, they would be received as students, the answer was a hesitating consent, summed up by the remark, "That remains to be seen".

The examination for which students are prepared is the All India Saṃskṛta Examination. There are many pāṭhasālās, both Veda and Saṃskṛta, all over India, of which a fair number are in Mahārāṣṭra, whose examinations are recognised by the Central and the States Governments. The Saṃskṛta Commission of 1958, having conducted research in the pāṭhasālās and Saṃskṛta institutions throughout India, recommends an apex university of Saṃskṛta learning, and a thorough training of pandits with a theological hallmark - after the manner, says the Commission's report, of the clergy of the Christian Communion or the trained theologians in the Muslim faith.

To return to the Ācārya, his kindly given information can be summed up in this way - The modern note in the present-pathasālās is the different attitude toward the ancient religious culture. The study is from the historical and social standpoint. It is a critical approach - not the devotional attitude of the past. There are some pāṭhasālās, however, that still adhere to the old, devotional way of learning. One is the Brahmacāryāśrama in Poona, which takes boys at the age of eight after their Upanayana, following the old Vedic custom.
In the interview with the Purohita at Nasik, one was plunged immediately into an atmosphere of strict orthodoxy. The day happened to be Vyāṣajayanti, the birth of the compiler of the Veda. Elderly citizens — clients of the Purohita who is their family priest — were coming to do him pūjaḥ and to offer gifts; and the few first who had arrived sat listening while the Purohita, seated in his state of Soṁvalaṇ, with his purple silk, and the sacred thread across his chest, his hands in the attitude of the teacher, was kindly giving his opinion on the situation regarding ritual practices today.

Eighty per cent, he maintained, of the Brāhmans of Nasik were fully orthodox, and observed all the rites. And the same was true of all the country towns and villages. In the city about twenty per cent would be orthodox.

The Purohita then explained the telescoping or shortening of the Rites, to suit these modern days. For the minor ceremonies two days would be sufficient. For the major ceremonies such as Upanayana and Vivāha, (and of course the Śrāddha Rites) four days. The first day was needed for the Sthapana or setting up of the pavilion and the invoking of the Mandapa devatas and the Mātrkās to be present and preside. The fourth day was for the Uttāpana, which is the dismissal of the deities and the dismantling of the Pavilion. The two intervening days were for the celebration of the rite itself. These forms were for the Thread and the Marriage rites. For the Śrāddha, when the ten days defilement after the death
were over, the eleventh and twelfth day would be enough in which to finish completely the year's offerings of Sraddha and the Sapindikarana ceremony.

From the above review of conditions of ritual, from the standpoint of the Mahārāṣṭra Brahmans themselves, a fair idea of the modern and the traditional Brahman religious life in Mahārāṣṭra today can be conceived. The modern and the orthodox are wonderfully mingled. Compared with South India where extreme orthodoxy holds with quite a strong grip, Mahārāṣṭra is a free, open land.

Shortened Rites.

Vivāha. The rite of marriage is now only required to have its essentials, namely Kanyādāna (the giving of the bride), and Saptapadi (the taking of the seven steps round the sacrificial fire). All the accompanying orthodox procedure is more or less optional. Much of it is, of course, yet in fashion, even among the moderns. Horoscopes are still in universal use, and in the case of the modern marriage, are (to use the phrase of a Brahman who explained the curtailing) "got round, and even changed" to suit the wishes of the family regarding the marriage. Some even modern families, however, insist that the wedding shall depend on the true reading of the horoscopes.
The Obsequial Rite.

Ten days defilement to the whole family always follow the occurrence of a death. During those ten days, if desired, the family priest (the Purohita) will say all the sixteen bodily rites for the departed in case he should not have had them done properly. But on the eleventh day an individual Srāddha offering is made for the departed soul. It is called Ekoddīṭa Srāddha. On the twelfth day, the whole year's Srāddha and the Sapindikarana rite, joining the departed to his ancestors, are carried out.

In a house in Poona last year, a Srāddha ceremony was performed exactly as here described: The śīndas (rice balls) for feeding the astral body of the departed soul were all laid out with great precision on the earth floor by the Purohita. There were fifteen in all — one for each month on the lunar date of death, and three extra to cover any contingency caused through the occurrence of a deleted or an intercalary month. The prescribed Mantras were said for each, and the Sapindikarana also was performed. These rites were formerly spread out over a year.

Vārṣika Srāddha.

When a year has passed, the first Annual Srāddha is offered. Here is a modern account. The Sapindas, i.e. those who are in a sāpingya relationship to the departed are invited, along with two or more Brāhmans. The Vaisvadeva worship is observed, as the Visvedevas are believed to be in close connection with
the ancestors. Then pindadāna follows. Three rice balls or Pindas are prepared to represent three sets of ancestors, manely, deceased father, grandfather, and great-grandfather; or on the female side, deceased mother, father's mother, and grandfather's mother; Then Puspadana is observed. The three Pindas are worshipped with offerings of flowers, water, food, and Mantras spoken in Saṃskṛta. White, not coloured, flowers are preferred, though coloured flowers may be used. Also Makā leaves (Indian corn) and Tulsi leaves (holy basil).

Rice and Yava and Tīla and also Pindas are then offered to the officiating priest. After the Brāhmans have fed and have perhaps departed, the family Sapindas sit down to a meal - about twenty or so.

The curtailment of ritual is made with a desire to make continuation possible in these modern times. There is evident a keen desire to make it possible for the old traditions to be continued in some form that commends itself as convenient. The daily Sandhyā worship, it is thought, should be preserved, and there should be belief in Vedic religion and philosophy.

The R. S. S. S. (Rātriya Svayamā Sevaka Saṅgha), and all-India movement, promotes this by means of meetings and lectures. Other general India movements are in this direction, e.g. the Rāmakṛṣṇa Mission and the rejuvenated Ārya Samāja.
The decline in ritual that is certainly gathering momentum may open the way for a simpler Hinduism with a definite faith. This is the vision of some of the religiously minded. But in the opposite direction comes the critical approach to religious and the increasingly rational outlook due to Western education and the impact generally of the West.

The position of the Purohita.

In modern Mahārāṣṭra, the income from fees has declined to such an extent that the sons of family priests no longer care to succeed to so poor a living, and are seeking employment in the professions or in business.

Horoscopes, however, in the India of today, are still drawn up at the birth of a child, and are regarded by the mass of the Brāhman people as being important for the greater rites of the sacred thread ceremony and for marriage. There will be the need of priests. But their numbers will inevitably be greatly diminished.

The priests who survive will be obliged to be widely learned beyond the particular Mantras which they use. And they must be well-spoken. In former days every word of the Guruji, as family priest is called, was held in great respect. Even the priest whose pronunciation was not so good in the Saṁskṛta Mantras had the respect of his clients. But it is different now. In fact in Poona last year, a Brāhman father having
his son initiated, and not being satisfied with his usual purohita's Sanskrit pronunciation, took a tape record of a very first class Upanayana ceremony, and used it for his own son's initiation rite - the family priest performing the acts, and the tape record saying the Mantras! This is true, but unusual.


The decline of the study of Sanskrit is a matter of concern to the States and the Central Government. The Sanskrit Commission report issued in 1956 pleads for more care in the protection of the traditional Pathasalas and the richness of the old Sanskrit heritage. It deplores the 'falling off of the soil and background that has sustained this traditional mode of learning in the Mathas and Asramas and Gurukulas, and the gradual disappearance of Sanskrit tradition in the families of Pandits, caused by the younger generation's steadily opting for modern education.' . . . . The problem had been realised by at least some of the States, and they had taken up the question of reorganising Pathasala education (Report, p. 31).

Coming on their tour through India, reporting on the Pathasalas in all the States, the Commission says concerning Maharashtra:- In Maharashtra there was once a good number of
traditional pathasalas, for samskṛta learning had flourished very well under the pesavas. In Poona city there were good pathasalas, but today there are only a few students who are studying the Sāstras in the traditional way. At Poona, the Īlak Mahārāṣṭra Vidya Pītha conducts a samskṛta mahāvidyālay which provides for instruction up to the Ācārya standard. But on the whole, the condition of traditional pandit learning in Mahārāṣṭra today cannot be said to be at all satisfactory. There are only about one hundred old-type pandits in the Bombay State. There is no Government examination for traditional pathasalas.

"But the Government has recognised the examinations which are conducted by certain well-known institutions like the Vedāśṭrottejaka Sabha, and the Īlak Mahārāṣṭra Vidya Pītha of Poona, and the Bhāratīya Vidya Bhavana of Bombay. From the very beginnings of modern education, Bombay has concentrated on the study of samskṛta in modern schools and colleges. The dualism between the traditional and the modern systems of samskṛta education has not been very prominent in this State. To a certain extent this fact explains the higher standard of samskṛta in the schools and colleges, and the greater interest in research which characterises Bombay and Mahārāṣṭra in particular.

"The Bhāratīya Vidya Bhavana conducts one of the biggest samskṛta examinations in Bombay. It comprises five grades - pravesika, madhyama, sāstri, ācārya, and vacaspati - and
the total duration of the entire course is of ten years. Students are admitted after they pass the Ninth class of the secondary school. The course is taught in the Bhavana's own college, the Mumbādevī Saṁskṛta Mahāvidyāalaya, where both Pandits (Traditional) and Professors (Modern) teach. It provides for the old syllabus, for which seventeen institutions are affiliated; and also for the new syllabus in which some modern subjects are also taught, and for which thirty-two colleges and twelve Pāthsālās are affiliated. The Śāstras generally taught are Vedānta, Vyākaraṇa, Saṁhitā, and Jyotis (Saṁskṛta Commission Report PP40-

On page 240, the Report speaks of the need to improve the status of Pandit teachers. "In universities and colleges there should be equality in station and salary between Professors and Pandits; and the courses in the traditional type of learning should be made into Degree courses."

It also suggests (page 244) the creation of a Ministry of Culture, as this would be a right step in the direction of the cultivation and growth of Saṁskṛta Studies.

It remains, however, to be said that, keen though able Saṁskṛta scholars may be on the development and higher status for traditional Saṁskṛta education, on the whole, the youth of India from which the students are drawn looks to the modern rather than the traditional. And even among these
modern students, the vernacular languages are a rival of the Sāṃskṛta. In the Colleges and Universities, Marathi, Ardha-Maghdi, Pali, and Hindi are ousting Sāṃskṛta in some large measure from its place. These are chosen by students, who know that it is easier to get high marks in these subjects in their examinations, with not too much trouble. Sāṃskṛta has the drawback of being difficult.

Still, Sāṃskṛta is very widely known among the intelligentsia of Mahārāṣṭra. "The orientation of Sāṃskṛta" was a term used by one of the Sāṃskṛta professors in an interview. Sāṃskṛta is now being used more and more as a medium for lecturing. Śrī Gaḍagira, and Dr. Vātave in Poona, and Śrī Varnaṅkara in Nāgpur, and many others, are using Sāṃskṛta for their lectures. The knowledge of Sāṃskṛta is a much wider field than the boundaries of the college or the Pāṭhasālā. And after all, Sāṃskṛta is the very Mother tongue of India.

To go back again to the Sāṃskṛta Commission's report, it has suggested that Sāṃskṛta would be more agreeable to all India as her lingua franca rather than Hindi. The Commission takes the stand that the policy of enforcing Hindi on some parts of India, especially the Dravidian areas, is not at all popular, whereas Sāṃskṛta has been the lingua franca of Indian scholars for many centuries.
Basic Saṁskṛtā

The Commission turned down the suggestion of a basic Saṁskṛtā as being inadvisable. "The Commission believes that as the ultimate purpose of learning Saṁskṛtā is to be able to understand and appreciate all the poetry, drama, and philosophy in Saṁskṛtā, the teaching of a mere basic Saṁskṛtā will be useless. . . So long as the character of Saṁskṛtā is not tampered with, all attempts to simplify the teaching of it by restricting the use of certain forms in the early stages should be encouraged." Commission's Report pp 218-219.

The Commission also calls for a Saṁskṛtā University; and it lays great emphasis on the fact that "In view of the cultural importance and pan-Indian character of Saṁskṛtā", "and with a view to arresting the growth of fissiparous and tendencies, and linguistic parochialism, which are at present threatening the Unity of India", Saṁskṛtā which has been a great unifying force through the ages should be declared as an Additional Official Language (by the side of Hindi and English for the time being) to be used for such public purposes as may be feasible. The Commission gives a list of ceremonial occasions when Saṁskṛtā would add dignity and solemnity. (Report -pp268-269.)

Manuscripts.

The Commission's report deals at length with the tragic fact that valuable Saṁskṛtā Manuscripts in the private keepi
of Brahmanic Carāṇas and in other places were in danger of
deterioration; and in danger also of being carried off by
foreign scholars who recognised their worth. The Commission's
Report deals a some length with the subject of conservation
of these Manuscripts, and pleads for greater diligence and more
lasting patience in the work of searching for and classifying
these precious things of antiquity. (Report pp 172-176).

National Professorships.

The present Government of India takes interest in giving
rich reward to the author of any greatly outstanding work.
The bestowed award is spread over a period of five years at the
rate of two thousand rupees per month. So far only one of these
awards has been won, and that by a Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ, in the
faculty of Indology. He is M.M. Dr. P. V. Kane, author of the
great work in five volumes written on the subject of Dharma-
Śāstra. His title M. M. means Mahāmahopādhyaya, a very high
title in the religious world of Hinduism; and he is known as
a National Professor. There are five awards for national
pre-eminence. Four of them are for scientific achievement, so it is
said. But none has yet been awarded.

Present day country Brāhmans.

Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans who in former times derived income in
kind or in money from the cultivation of their lands which were
let out to tenants, have been put to some great disadvantage through the passing of the Tenancy
disadvantage through the passing of the Tenancy Act in 1948, which protects tenants from being dislodged from their tenancy. Now that a tenant has a firm hold and a permanent one, the owners in many cases do not receive the produce or the rent due. Often they cannot get redress, even in the Māmalatadāra’s Court (District Court). Forcible compensation is now being arranged, and legislation has yet to be passed. But many Brāhmans have moved away because necessity from their villages to the towns. When the Brāhman Wādā (the Brahman quarter of the village) goes empty, the old social unity of vedic times is demolished.

Removal of Untouchability

The fourth caste, the Śūdras, who, till the recent reform were regarded as Aspṛśya (untouchable), have now acquired equality with all other citizens, and have had bestowed upon them a new name — Harijans. This really is a misnomer. And it would have been better if the old vedic name used in the Puruṣa Sūkta, which declares that the Śūdras came out of God’s feet, had been kept. It is by no means a dishonour to have come out of God’s feet!

The Harijans were a pre-dravidian people who worshipped Rāvana, and were against the Āryan gods. The Śūdras on the other hand were in olden times recognised as within the social system. When the organisation of the village system was formed in the time of the earliest Āryans, the Harijans
were put outside, but the Sudras were inside the village walls.

(To a Brahman, the meaning of Sudra is one who does not wear the sacred thread. A Brahman boy is considered no more than a Sudra till his sacred thread rite has been performed. Even the great chieftain Sivaji (born in 1630), who freed Maharashtra from the Moghuls, though his caste was Ksatriya, was in Brahman eyes a Sudra because he had not been initiated by the Upanayana rite. This rite, making him a true Ksatriya and a twice-born, was performed just before his coronation in 1674 to make him a fit king of Maharashtra - and, moreover, he had to be re-married by vedic rite to his wives, of whom, incidentally, there were six living out of his original eight.

So, actually, the Sudra was part of Hindu society, and the Harijans never were. The Harijans of the South of India claim to be of Raksasa caste (demon caste), whose king was the Raksasa demon Ravana, king of Lanka (Ceylon) whom Rama slew. The South India Harijans worship Ravana and are opposed to Rama. The choice of that name for the good Sudras is quite incomprehensible.

However, caste is gone. Nor even mentioned in the Census of India. All men are equal and all have a vote. The Harijan vote was indeed valuable in the struggle for a Maharashtra State. It was a linguistic issue. The Marathi tongue bound Brahman and Harijan together in the one great interest of an all-Marathi speaking State.
Horoscopes

With reference to the brief mention of horoscopes in the last lines of page 316, one may realise the fact that a very definite belief in the influence of the planets in human lives persists in the minds of the great majority of the Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans of today. A young Brāhman of Nasik, a ṛṣi of the Āśvalāyana Śūtra Carana, but yet an Honours B. A., and shortly to take his M. A., Arts, in giving his explanation of the frequent failure of events in a man's life to tally with the forecast of his horoscope, said:—

"Bad luck follows on an unscientific horoscope. Even a minute mistake of one minute in reporting the time of birth can be the cause of an unscientific horoscope. If the fate foretold in the horoscope does not coincide with the actual happenings in life, then the horoscope must have been unscientifically calculated, owing to the exact moment of birth not having been correctly recorded, and reported to the astrologer."

This young man is just a typical modern Mahārāṣṭra Brāhman student; and a statement like this lifts the veil covering the inner consciousness of many a young, modern, educated Brāhman youth in the Mahārāṣṭra of today.
Chapter Eighteen.

VEDIC SACRIFICE IN MODERN MAHĀRĀSTRĀ

The performance of a Śrauta Yāga, a Vedic sacrifice, which is now likely to become one of the features of public life in modern Mahārāstrā, can scarcely be called a revival or a new feature. During the Buddhist period, when the performance of any Yāga (blood sacrifice) enjoined in the Veda was forbidden as being a violation of the law of Ahīṃsa (non-violence), the offering of the Śrauta Yāga went underground, and continued to be performed in individual Āśramas. Its purpose was to hold together in one bond the three twice-born castes. This was called the bond of Āśramadharma; and secondly, to hold together in one bond the whole body politic. This was the bond of Rastradhūma, by which religious defence and economy were in the hands of the Brāhmans, the Kṣatriyas, and the Vaisyās respectively. Thus, the Śrauta fires were kept alight, and the Śrauta Yāga was offered continually, but in secret.

Later, when Śaṅkarācārya, born in 788 A. D., displaced Buddhism, Brāhmanism came up again. Śaṅkarācārya established Mathas, or Āśramas, at Badrinātha, Purī, Dvārakā, and Sringerī.

1. Cf. Appendix VIII. The Śaṅkarācārya and Brahman Priesthood
to revive the Vedic religion. The doctrine of *Ahimsa*, however, foreshadowed in the *Sāntapatha* *Brahmana*, and developed into one of the main doctrines of Buddha's teaching, had, during the twelve centuries of Buddhism, taken such hold on the imagination of the *Brāhmans*, that it had become part of their very soul. So even after the restoration of *Brāhmanism* due to Śāṅkarācārya, the practice of the *Śrauta Yāga* was not resumed as before, because of the prominent *Brāhmanic* doctrine of *Non-Violence*.

About the year 1930, when the suggestion to encourage the spirit of nationalism by restoring public performance of the Yāga *Śrauta* was made by the *Śrauta* priestly authorities, the pros and cons were fiercely and keenly debated in public meetings by the *Mahārāṣṭra* *Brāhmans*.

The various views taken at that time by the different sections of the *Brāhman* priesthood were briefly as below:

The *Śrotri* priests were convinced that killing was according to *Vedic Law*, and part of religious practice; but were in favour of substituting an oblation in order to avoid taking life; while followers of the old school felt that *Śrauta Yāga* should be fully performed, or not at all. On the whole, the *Karmas* for gods and *ancestors*, and the performance of the sixteen *Samskāras* were sufficient.

The opposite view to this was expressed by other *Śrotrīs*
who felt that the influence of Buddhism had destroyed the Vedic conception of Arya society. The conversion of Kings (Ksatriyas) to Buddhism had caused the Ksatriyas to cease from sacrifice, and their attitude had affected the Vaisyas also, with the result that national unity had lapsed.

The Arya Samaj Brahmins maintained that killing was not enjoined in the Vedas, but that Piṣṭapasu, i.e. animals represented by animal shapes in kneaded dough are required in the ritual of sacrifice.

Another view, put forward by a Śrotṛiya Sastrī of Pañcavaḍa in Satara District, who had formerly himself performed the sacrifice with a living victim, was now that the sacrifice should be performed with its Mantras up to the actual point of killing, but the victim should then be let go free, and the remaining ritual be completed with a substitute of Clarified butter offering.

This proposed innovation was seriously considered by officiating Brahmins from the standpoint of Vedic sacrificial law, and was supported by two eminent Sastris, one of Poona, and the other of Wai in Satara District.

Apparently, this proposed innovation brought matters to a head. The suggestion was criticised as feeble and compromising, and the priestly authorities at Kurundavada in South

I. The summary of these opinions expressed in the debates is from notes taken personally from articles in the Kesari, Brāhman newspaper of Poona, at the time.
Mahārāṣṭra took action. They sacrificed a living victim in a public celebration of the Śrauta Yāga. This took place at Kurundavāda in 1934.

Thereupon, on the 12th. of February, 1935, a public indignation meeting of Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans met in the Gokhle Hall in Poona, and a strong protest, and a request for discontinuance of the practice was drawn up. It was followed on the 15th. of February by a counter meeting at the Ānanda-Āśrama in Poona, when a resolution was passed commending the authorities at Kurundavāda for their action.

On the 24th. of March, in the Tilak Memorial Hall, Poona, the Śrāutayāgī priest who had performed the sacrifice at Kurundavāda spoke on the subject before a public gathering of Mahārāṣṭra Brāhmans, defending his action on the following grounds - (a) that slaying in sacrifice is not Hiṃsā, and (b) that Hiṃsā in pursuance of duty is not a breach of righteousness; (c) that no substitution was allowable unless enjoined in the Veda, and that no such substitution was enjoined.

The Śāstri's speech, however, and his answers to question failed entirely to convince the audience that Hiṃsā could be justified.

An eminent Śāstri, in a forty-eight page pamphlet, explained the Śrauta Yāga and its purpose clearly; and his pamphlet with an appeal to the Śroṭrīyas, urging them, in
view of the grave possibility of the Śrauta rites being discontinued solely on the question of animal sacrifice, to give up insisting on it, and to adopt the solution which he suggests, of letting the victim go free at a certain point in the ritual, thus bringing Śrauta ritual into repute among the Brāhman public.

The present day situation.

The above views expressed in 1935 still hold today, and history is repeating itself. A Śrauta sacrifice — a Vājapeya Yāga for the sake of Rāstradharma, was held publicly in Poona, lasting one week, from the 31st. of October to the 6th. of November, 1955.

From the announcements from of the Arrangements Committee, published in Marāthī, the following is quoted:

"The victim of the Yāga will not be killed; but after the rite has been observed up to a prescribed point, it will be set free, and the rite will be completed with substituted oblations of clarified butter." 2

This decision was a departure from ancient Vedic practice, and a concession to the feelings of the Brāhman public who were averse to the slaying of a living victim, as being a violation of the doctrine of Non-violence. A statement was issued

I. Vaidika Dharmaśāstra. By Śrautācārya Dhundirāja Gāneśa Dīksita Bāpaṭa, Somayāgi.
2. Ghrta, or clarified butter, is one of the sacrificial oblations in the Gṛhya and other rites.
by the Srimanj jagadguru Sri Sankarácārya from his Pitha at Sánkṣesvara near the South border of Māhārāṣṭra. The Sāṅkaracārya disapproved of the proposal to let the victim be set free. He judged it as 'un-Vedic', and supported this view by quotations from the Veda and from six other Vedic manuals. By performing the rite properly, 'fruit' will come. The parts of the victim must be sacrificed according to the Veda rules for the Vājapeya Yāga.

The Sri Sāṅkaracārya ends by saying that because the people are in doubt on the matter and have asked for guidance, the PITHA (the Sāṅkaracārya's Seat) has issued this dictum.

However, notwithstanding the Śāṅkaracārya Gurusvāmī's dictum, the Vājapeya Yāga Committee decided, at Dīksita Sāstrī urgent plea, to let the sacrifice be performed his way (i.e. releasing the victim, and using the sacrificial butter oblation in its stead), and so to let the people see how the Vedic rite really was carried out.

Accordingly, the Poona sacrifice was performed with the animal victim released, and the sacrifice continued with the substituted oblation. But apparently this did not satisfy the Śrotṛiya priests of the opposite view, who, in 1957, offered on the outskirts of Poona beyond the Svāra Gate a Vājapeya in which animals were sacrificed. According to report, there was

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1. Other kinds of Yāga beside Vājapeya are Somayāga (distilling liquor), Viṣṇuyāga, Asvamedha Yāga (horse sacrifice), Rajasuya Yāga (sacrifice by a ruling prince), etc. This last has ended with the discontinuation of the Prince States.
a strong police guard in case of demonstrations.

All the four orders of priests required by Vedic ritual took part in the sacrifice. The Hotā summoned the deities Savitr, Varuna, Mārata, Indra, and the attendant powers; the Udgātā recited the Mantras; the Rtvija performed the killing; the Brahmā supervised the ceremony.

After suffocation, the Śrauta victim was dismembered, and its various members offered, with certain preparation and with the recitation of Mantras in the sacrificial fire, in the prescribed order — first the heart, then the tongue, then the breast, etc., eleven oblations in all. The rest of the victim's carcass was buried deep in the ground, to ensure of its not being consumed by beast or man.

Here are extracts from a letter of one of the officiating priests at the above Vajapeya sacrifice, in which he kindly answers enquiries made for the purpose of this thesis. (The explanatory remarks in brackets are not his but are added).

"So far as the traditional ritual practice is concerned, th

I. For the three priests, cf. P. 36.
2. For the fourth priest, cf. Page 35.
3. Vedic Sacrificial Law forbids the use of a metal weapon. Victims are thrown and held to the ground while, to the accompaniment of Mantras, the sacrificing priest stops its breathing by holding firmly the nose and mouth. The priests seem to be under the impression that this method of killing causes no 'Hāla-Hāla' — no agony! The victims are usually goats.
custom of immolating the sacrificial animals is strictly followed in general, in conformity with the scriptural injunctions (i.e. of the Veda). There is a sect of the Vaisnavas in Karnataka which follows the practice of taking an animal made of kneaded flour (dough) for the purpose of the sacrifice.

"The sacrificer of our Vājapeya (i.e. in Mahārāstra in 1955) was perhaps the first person who believed in the scriptural injunction of immolating the animal, but, in the light of modern thought and conditions, preferred not to immolate the animal, and tried to find some defence for this reform in the scripture. In 1932, he performed a Soma sacrifice by letting loose the animal. In 1955, he observed the same practice at the Vājapeya. This was imitated recently at a sacrifice performed in Karnataka."

"The dates of sacrificial performances at Wai (a Brāhman stronghold in Satārā District, about which enquiry for this thesis had been made) were May 1949 and March 1952. These were not the Vājapeya, but Soma sacrifices. In May, 1957, a Vājapeya sacrifice was performed at Poona itself, where the animals were immolated."

It would appear, then, that public performances of Vedic sacrifices, both Soma and Vājapeya, are now a feature of Brāhma priestly practice in modern Mahārāstra — without apparently the desire or consent of the mass of the Brāhmins of Mahārāstra. Whether it will remain a permanent feature, the future alone can tell. A new generation of Mahārāstra Brāhmān may have a
new view on the subject of the Vajapeya sacrifice.

They may think that the bond of the three twice-born castes, for the strength of whose unity the Vajapeya sacrifice is offered, is now, with New India's awakening, merged into a much greater bond of the brotherhood of all.

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**THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA**

**Act 15 (1).**
The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth, or any of them.

**Act 17.**
"Untouchability" is abolished, and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of "untouchability" shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.

**Act 38.**
The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic, and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX I

The Sandhya Invocation.

The Sandhya invocation, uttered by the Brahman at the twilight times known as Sandhya, is a prayer addressed to the sun (Savitṛ), and preceded by certain mystic utterances called the Prānava, and the Vyāhṛti.

The Prānava is the mystic sound OM, understood to be composed of the three letters A, U, and M, and to represent the three Vedas. The Vyāhṛti consists of the three words Bhūḥ, Bhūvāḥ, and Svāḥ, i.e. earth, atmosphere, and heaven. The prayer addressed to Savitr, the Sun is called the Savitri Mantra, or the Gāyatri (Gāyatri being the metre in which it is composed). The Gāyatri is found in the Rgveda (III. 62. 10) of which it is believed to be the most sacred verse. It is always recited with the Prānava and the Vyāhṛti as a preface; so that the Sandhya invocation runs thus: "OM, Bhūṛ Bhūvāḥ Svāḥ Tad saviturvareṇyam bhārgo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah pracodayāt." (We meditate on that exceeding glory of the deity Savitā. May he direct our minds.) The Gāyatri verse is personified as a goddess. She is believed to be the wife of Dharma and mother of the four Vedas - the mother also of wearer of the sacrificial thread.

The Prānava.

The word OM has various meanings attributed to it. The letters ॐ ॐ ॐ of which OM is the expression are
thought to stand for the three Vedic gods Agni (Fire), Vayu (Wind), and Mitra (Sun) respectively. Purānic belief naturally supposes the Triad (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva). In the Markandeya Purāṇa, Dattatreya, discoursing to Alarka, interprets OM as the three Vedas, the three worlds (earth, air, and heaven), the three fires of the Śrauta ritual, and the three gods Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

The Vyāhṛti.

The three regions, earth, air, and heaven, are believed to have been the three words uttered by Prajāpati, the Creator, and to have become the three regions, as he uttered them, or they are supposed to be "three luminous essences" which Prajāpati produced out of the three Vedas, by heating them.

The above three regions are the first three out of the seven Lokas or Regions which are believed to be existent from earth upwards. The names are:- Bhūrloka, the earth; Bhūvarloka, the region between earth and sun; inhabited by sages (Munis) and Siādhas; Svarloka, the heaven of Indra; between the sun and the polar star; Maharloka, the abode of

I. Markandeya Purāṇa, Canto 42.
2. The Śrauta fires are Gārhapatya (the perpetual Śrauta fire handed down from father to son), Ahavanīya (the fire for the oblations, on the east side at a rite), and Dakṣiṇa (the fire on the South).
Bhṛgu and other patriarchs, extending ten million leagues above the polar star; Janarloka, the abode of Brahmā's sons; Taparloka the region of deified ascetics; and Brahmaloka or Satyaloka (abode of Knowledge or Truth), the heaven of Brahma.

Translation to Brahmaloka, with exemption from reincarnation is believed to be the reward of the merit acquired by a regular performance of Sandhīyā worship. Concerning Sandhya worship, the Viṣṇu Smṛti enjoins the following:—Let a twice-born man stop his breath to rid himself of all sin. It is called a Prāhāyāma if a man, stopping his breath, recites the Gayātrī three times together with the Vyāhrti with the sacred syllable OM, and with the text called Śīras.¹ (Apo jyoti rasomṛtam Brahmā Bhū Bhūrvah suvaroma). This Mantra is used only by the Brāhmans of the Black Yajurveda. "The light waters, light, liquid, ambrosia, prayers and the three regions — all these belong to OM."

The merit of OM is considered imperishable. "All religious acts ordained in the Veda perosh after their merit is exhausted, but OM is imperishable, as it is identical with Brahman, Lord of creatures. Reciting OM, the "words" (Vyāhrti), and the Gayātrī is ten times better than Vedic sacrifice, one hundred times better when muttered in a low voice, one thousand times better when repeated mentally only." ²

¹. The Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, Taittirīya Aranyaka, 10. 15. 1.
². Viṣṇu Smṛti, IV. 8-12, and I8-I9. (Sacred Books of the East. Vol. VII.)
The Deleted Month

The following illustration of a year in which a Ksaya (deleted) month occurs, is taken from the Dharmasindhu, (p. 8)

Sankrantis
1. Meṣa Saṅkrānti.
2. Vṛṣabha Saṅkrānti.
3. Mithuna Saṅkrānti.
5. Siṁha Saṅkrānti.
6. Kanyā Saṅkrānti
7. Tula Saṅkrānti.
8. Vṛścika Saṅkrānti.
9. Dhanu Saṅkrānti
10. Makara Saṅkrānti
II. Kumbha Saṅkrānti
12. Mīna Saṅkrānti

Corresponding lunar months
1. Caitra.
2. Vaiśākha.
4. Āṣāḍha.
5. Śrāvaṇa.
6. Bhādrapada (New Moon i.e. the last day of the month).
7. Āśvina Adhika (intercalary).
8. Āśvina Sudha (First of the month).
9. Kṛṣṇa (First day of the month).
10. Maṛgaśirṣa (First day of the Maṛgaśirṣa month)
(on the last day of the month - i.e. New Moon).
11. Maṛgaśirṣa (Last, or New Moon Day).
12. Phālguna Adhika (intercalary).
13. Phālguna Sudha (on the first of the month).

In the above illustration, the seventh lunar month passes entirely without a corresponding Saṅkrānti, and is therefore called intercalary or Adhika; while the tenth month is deleted or Ksaya, because two Saṅkrāntis occur in it. The deleted month is followed by another intercalary. (Cf. the twelfth, Phālguna).

The first of these intercalary months, called the Sāmsarpa, may be used for all purposes of ritual. But the deleted month and the following intercalary month, are unclean.

It will be observed that the Makara Saṅkrānti, which usual

The Deleted Month

The following illustration of a year in which a Ksaya (deleted) month occurs, is taken from the Dharmasindhu, (p. 8)

Sankrantis
1. Meṣa Saṅkrānti.
2. Vṛṣabha Saṅkrānti.
3. Mithuna Saṅkrānti.
5. Siṁha Saṅkrānti.
6. Kanyā Saṅkrānti
7. Tula Saṅkrānti.
8. Vṛścika Saṅkrānti.
9. Dhanu Saṅkrānti
10. Makara Saṅkrānti
II. Kumbha Saṅkrānti
12. Mīna Saṅkrānti

Corresponding lunar months
1. Caitra.
2. Vaiśākha.
4. Āṣāḍha.
5. Śrāvaṇa.
6. Bhādrapada (New Moon i.e. the last day of the month).
7. Āśvina Adhika (intercalary).
8. Āśvina Sudha (First of the month).
9. Kṛṣṇa (First day of the month).
10. Maṛgaśirṣa (First day of the Maṛgaśirṣa month)
(on the last day of the month - i.e. New Moon).
11. Maṛgaśirṣa (Last, or New Moon Day).
12. Phālguna Adhika (intercalary).
13. Phālguna Sudha (on the first of the month).

In the above illustration, the seventh lunar month passes entirely without a corresponding Saṅkrānti, and is therefore called intercalary or Adhika; while the tenth month is deleted or Ksaya, because two Saṅkrāntis occur in it. The deleted month is followed by another intercalary. (Cf. the twelfth, Phālguna).

The first of these intercalary months, called the Sāmsarpa, may be used for all purposes of ritual. But the deleted month and the following intercalary month, are unclean.

It will be observed that the Makara Saṅkrānti, which usual
above year, occurred on the last day of Margasirṣa. Pausa, in this case, is considered to be, as it were, coincident with Margasirṣa. That is to say, that Karmas, or religious acts, which fall due for performance in Pausa, are performed in Margasirṣa, on the corresponding date. Each Tithi or lunar day, in this deleted month, belongs to the two months, the rule being that rites belonging to the month of Margasirṣa are to be performed in the first half of the lunar day, while rites belonging to Pausa are performed in the latter half.

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I. This applies only to acts which are to be performed in an unclean month, being exceptions to the general rule - an annual Śrāddha, or the rite on the anniversary of a person's birth.
APPENDIX III

The Purusa Sūkta  Rgveda X. 90.

This poem, the ninetieth of the tenth Mandala of the Rgveda, describing the fashioning of creation out of different parts of the Purusa, or primeval male, is recited as an accompaniment to the acts of Puja. It has sixteen rṣis or verses.

The Purusa Sūkta

1. Thousand-headed was the Purusa, thousand-eyed, thousand-footed. He embraced the earth on all sides, and stood beyond the breadth of ten fingers.

2. The Purusa is this all - that which was, and which shall be. He is the Lord of immortality, which he grows beyond, through (sacrificial) food.

3. Such is his greatness, and still greater than that is the Purusa. One fourth of him is all beings. The three fourths of him is the immortal in heaven.

4. Three fourths on high rose the Purusa. One fourth of him rose again here (on the earth). Thence in all directions he spread abroad as that which eats, and that which eats not.

5. From him Viraj was born, from Viraj the Purusa. He, when born, reached beyond the earth, behind as well as
6. When the gods spread out the sacrifice with the Puruṣa as oblation, Spring was its clarified butter, Summer the fuel, Autumn the oblation.

7. As the sacrifice on the strewn grass, the besprinkle the Puruṣa, born in the beginning. With him the gods sacrificed — the Śādhyas and the Sages.

8. From that sacrifice, completely offered, was the sprinkled clarified butter collected. He made it the beasts of the air, of the forest, and those of the village.

9. From that Sacrifice, completely offered, were born the verses (the Ṛgveda) and the Sāman melodies (the Sāmaveda). The metres were born from it. From it was born the sacrificing formula (the Yajurveda).

10. From it were born horses, and they that have two rows of teeth. Cattle were born from it. From it were born goats and sheep.

II. When they divided the Puruṣa, into how many parts did they arrange him? What was his mouth? What his two arms? What were his thighs and feet called?

12. The Brāhmaṇa was his mouth, his two arms were made the Rājanya (warrior), his two thighs the Vaiśya (trader and agriculturist), from his feet the Śūdra (servile class) was born.

13. The Moon was born from his spirit (Manas), from his
eye was born the sun, from his mouth Indra and Agni, from his breath Vāyu (the wind) was born.

14. From his navel rose the middle sky, from his head the heavens originated, from his feet the earth, the quarter from his ear. Thus did they fashion the worlds.

15. Seven were his sticks that enclose (the fire), thrice seven were made the faggots. When the gods spread out the sacrifice, they bound the Puruṣa as a victim.

16. With the sacrifice the gods sacrificed the sacrific These were the first ordinances. These great powers reach to the firmament, where are the ancient Sādhyas, the gods.

Notes.
1. Verse 5. Virāj. Thomas, in his Vedic Hymns, from which the above translation is taken, states that some explain Virāj as the female principle. Manu I. 32, and other authorities, show Virāj to be the male principle. Then, again, Virāj is given as female, according to Atharva Veda VIII. 10. 24

APPENDIX IV

The Dates of the Ten Incarnations.

The lunar dates and times of the solar day appointed for observances in honour of the ten Incarnations are, according to the Dharmasindhu, (p. 48), as follows:

1. Matsya Jayanti (Birth of the Fish Incarnation). Caitra Śū. 3, in the afternoon.
5. Vāmana Jayanti (Birth of Vāmana, the Dwarf Incarnation). Bhādrapada Śū. 12, at noon.
7. Rāma Jayanti, or Daśarathi Rāma Jayanti (Birth of Rāma, son of King Daśaratha), Caitra Śū. 9, at noon.
8. Krṣṇa Jayanti (Birth of Krṣṇa Incarnation). Srāvana Kr. 8, at midnight.
9. Buddha Jayanti (Birth of Buddha), Āvina Śū. 10, in the evening.
IO. Kalkī Jayanti (Birth of Kalaki or Kalaṅki, the incarnation yet to come) is, nevertheless, celebrated on a definite date, viz. Śrāvana Su. 6, in the evening.

YUGAS.

The Yugas in which the above incarnations are believed to have taken place are:

In Satya Yuga (of which the commencement is celebrated on each Vaiśākha Su. 3) - Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Man-lion.

In Treta Yuga (Commencement celebrated on each Karttika Su. 9) - Vāmana, Parasūrāma, and Dasārathī Rāma (also called Rañacandra).

In Dvāpara Yuga (Commencement celebrated on Bhādrapada Kr. 13) - Kṛṣṇa and Buddha.

In Kali Yuga (Commencement celebrated on Māgha Pūrṇima, Full Moon) - Kalaki, yet to come.
APPENDIX V

Penance and Substitutes.

This ancient manner of penance is obsolete nowadays except in the most extreme cases of asceticism. It is given here for academic interest only.

The fasts are Ekabhukta, eating at noon only.
Nakta Bhijana, eating at night only.
Ayācita Bhōjana, eating unsolicited alms or
Upavāsa, fasting for twenty-four hours.
Havisya is sacrificial food, i.e. rice and clarified butter only.

Names of the penances:

Krochra penance: 1st day, Ekabhukta, Havisya 36 mouthfuls.
2nd day, Nakta Bhōjana, 22 mouthfuls. 3rd day, Ayācita Bhōjana
24 mouthfuls. 4th day, upavāsa.

The above course, repeated three times equals one Krochra.

Pādakrochra is the above four days course.

Ardha Krochra: 1st day Ekabhukta; 2nd day Nakta; 3rd and
4th days Ayācita bhōjana; 5th, and 6th, days Upavāsa.

Or else 3 days ayācita, and three days Upavāsa.

Note. Thirty Krochras equal one Abda (Year of penance).
Lapses in religious duty requiring one year of penance can be expiated by performing one Prajāpatya Krochra. Cf. Substitu
Pādonakrocchra: 1st. day Ekabhukta; 2nd day Ayācita; 3rd. day Upavāsa. Repeat three times on nine consecutive days.

Atīkracchra: For nine days eat only one handful per day.

Krocchratīkracchra: For twenty-one days eat only one mouthful, per day, or only enough to keep one alive.

Dvairātīsantāpanakrocchra: 1st day eat Pañcagavya (the five products of the cow) i.e. milk, curds, butter, urine, and dung. These to be mixed with water with kusāgrass in it 2nd. day Upavāsa.

Mahāsantāpanakrocchra: 1st. day Pañcagavya (as above); 2nd. day drink only kusāgrass and water. Continue this for seven days.

Yatisantāpanakrocchra: For three continuous days eat food mixed with Pañcagavya.

Taptakrocchra: 1st. day hot milk only; 2nd day drink hot clarified butter; 3rd. day drink hot water; 4th day, or 4th, 5th., and 6th., days observe Upavāsa.

Śitakrocchra: The same as above, but everything cold.

Parākakrocchra: For twelve days observe Upavāsa (complete fast)

The Candrayana Krocchras i.e. penances of one lunation period

Yavamadhyacandrayana: Yava is a barley corn, thick in the middle. On 1st lunar day of the Light Half of month, eat one mouthful the size only of a peahen's egg. Increase the number mouthfuls by one daily, so that on Full Moon day the mouthfuls are fifteen. Then decrease the mouthfuls daily by one till end of the month and end with Upavāsa.

Pipilikā madhya Candrayana: (pipilikā = an ant). Begin from the Dark First day with fourteen mouthfuls. Decrease daily by one mouthful till New Moon Day, then increase daily by one mouthful till the last day of the Light Half of the month.
The Substitutes:

The following substitutes are allowed to take the place of penance or atonement. These are recorded in the Dharmasindhu under ćcchraprati Nidhi. (p.251).

**Upavāsa.** This twenty-four hour fast may be replaced by:

(a) providing a meal for one Brāhman; or (b) Gāyatrī Japa (repetition) one thousand times; or (c) Prānāyāma (suppressing the breath) twelve times; the last two in the case of inability to provide food for a Brāhman's meal.

**Kṛcchra, or Prajāpātya** may be replaced by any one of the following:

(a) Eating barley-corn mixed with cow's urine for one day; or (b) performing recitation of a certain Mantra called Rudra Ekādaśini; or (c) performing certain sacrificial rites for purification, known as Pāvakeṣṭi, or Pāvamānaṣṭi; or (d) repeating the Gāyatrī three thousand times; or (e) offering one thousand sesamum seed oblations with the utterance of the Vyāhṛti; or (f) performing Prānāyāma two hundred times, or one hundred and thirty-two times, followed by standing facing the East; or (g) feasting twelve Brāhmans; or (h) performing Snāna twelve times waiting between the times till the Śikha (hair tuft) is dry; (i) Performing Parāyana, i.e. reading the Veda Śamhita from beginning to end; or (j) performing a pilgrimage of eight miles; or (k) making Namaskāra to a god twelve thousand times or (l) observing Upavāsa for one, or six days.
Gifts of cows as Substitutes.

Gifts of cows made to Brahmans are allowed to take the place of due penances, as follows:

Prajapatya is replaced by giving one milch cow; Atikrochra by the gift of two cows; Paraka Krocchra, or also Tapta Krocchra, by giving three cows; Krocchratikrocchra by either three or four cows; Candrayana Krocchras are replaced by the gift of eight, or five, or four or three cows.

For Vows such as abstaining for one month from drinking water, or to eat only barley corn for a month, or to fast for a month etc., the substitute is a gift of five cows.

A Vow to eat only barleycorn and drink cow's urine for one month can be replaced by a gift of six cows.

Substitutes for a Cow.

Few can afford to give cows, and substitutes are accepted in small pieces of gold or silver, reckoned according to the following table:

80 Gunjas = 1 karsha (smallest of jeweller's weights).
4 karshas = 1 niska.

One Niska is considered to be the substitute for one cow. But again, half a Niska, or one quarter of a Niska, can be substituted as the price of a cow, and the penance paid accordingly.
APPENDIX VI

The Changing of the Sacrificial Thread

Every Brāhmaṇ must annually perform the rite of Upākarma, or Upakaraṇa, in which he changes his worn sacrificial thread for a new one. The usual time for this ceremony is during the month Srāvana, and the rite is, for this reason, often called Srāvani.

Each Brāhmaṇ, having performed Snāna Sandhyā, proceeds to the temple, or to some appointed place, having purchased a new thread in readiness for the occasion. The deity of the rite is naturally the Sun, Savitā. The rite opens with the supplication of the deity Ganeśa, the god of new undertakings, after which, the officiating Brāhmaṇ offers oblations on the altar, the Homavedī. The worship of the Seven Sages is then celebrated with Pūjā rites. The Sages are represented in this ceremony by seven nuts (betel nuts), beside one of which an eighth nut is placed, in the belief that it represents Arundhatī, the wife of the Sage Vasiṣṭha.

Two cakes, made with wheat flour and milk are then given to each Brāhmaṇ present, who, after eating them, takes off his

I. The Seven Sages, or the Saptarṣi, are believed to be the constellation Ursa Major. Vasiṣṭha is the central star of the three that form the 'tail' of the Great Bear, and the fainter star visible in close proximity to it said to be Arundhatī.
year-old thread, and casts it into the fire. The new thread are then put on, with the recitation of the Gayatri Mantra, repeated ten times. Rice oblations and flowers are offered to Brahmā and Agni.

The Calendar times appointed.

The times appointed for the rite of Upakaraṇa are different for Brahmans of the different Vedas. The chief rules are:

Rgvedi Brahmans should change the thread during the Light Half of the month Srāvāṇa at the following times, in order of preference—during Srāvāṇa Naksatra, or on the fifth lunar day, or during Hasta Naksatra.

For Yajurveda Brahmans the chief appointed time is the Full Moon of Srāvāṇa; or Hasta Naksatra; or else in the month Bhādrapada. Also for certain Śākhās the Full Moon of Āśācha, and for other Śākhās again, the fifth lunar day.

For Samavedins, the chief time is Hasta Naksatra in the Light Half of Bhādrapada; or failing this, Hasta Naksatra in the month Srāvāṇa; or the Full Moon of Bhādrapada Srāvāṇa.

For Atharvaveda Brahmans, the Full Moon of Srāvāṇa, or Full Moon of Bhādrapada.

General rule.

If, through adverse position of planets, or on account of a eclipse, or through observance of Asouca (during the ten days after a birth or a death in the family), the prescribed times have to be abandoned, the time enjoined for the Śākhās of oth
Vedas may be chosen instead. I

Upakarana (the putting on of a new thread), and Utsarjana (the discarding of the old thread), must be performed by Brahmans in the following stages of life:—Brahmacārī, Snātaka, Gṛhastha and Vanaprastha. Omission of this annual rite requires the performance of the Prajāpātya penance.

If the ceremony of Upakaraṇa is performed in company with other Brahmans, the fire may be taken from the Laukika Agni (common fire). But if a Brāhman performs Upakarana alone, the ceremony must be with his Grhyāgni (i. e. the perpetual Grhyāgni or marriage fire).

On the occasion of a youth's first observance of the ceremony, the setting of the planets Guru and Sukra, and Guru's stay in the sign Simha, and an intercalary or a delayed lunar month must be avoided. For the second and all future occasions this is not necessary.

A young Brāhman should wear his Upanayana equipment—staff, girdle, etc.—for the performance of Upakaraṇa each year, so long as he is in the Brahmacārī Stage. 2

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2. For a first celebration, Punyabhavacana (proclamation ceremony, and also Nandisrāddha (joyous offerings to the ancestors) is required.
APPENDIX VII

The Purānic Triad

The Purāṇas belong to the post-Buddhic period, when Brahmānism revived. The Purāṇas are "a body of Scripture as authoritative for the later religion of India as the Veda was for the era prior to the rise of Buddhism." 1

In the Purāṇas, instead of the Karmamarga and the Jñānamarga (the way of religious duties and knowledge) of the Upaniṣadās, is substituted the religion of emotion and adoration. Gowen writes (p. 453) that the Purāṇas differ from the Itihāsa, i.e. History, in that they are "Compiled to catch the ear of the people concerned with things divine". They are eighteen in number, and are in three series. (i.e. the main Purāṇas)

1. Devoted to Viṣṇu, and expressing the quality of Satva (purity, reality), six Puranas: - Viṣṇu, Naradiya, Bhāgavat, Garuḍa, Padma, and Varāha Purāṇas.

2. For the honour of Śiva, and expressing the quality of Tamas (gloom) are these ŚxI - the Matsya, Kurma, Śiva, Linga, Agni Purāṇas.

3. To honour Brahmā, and expressing the quality of Rajas (passion) are the following: - the Brahmā, Brahmānanda,

I. History of Indian Literature M. H. Gowen p. 452.
Brahmā Vaivarta, Markandeya, and Vāmana Purāṇas and Bhavisya Purānas.

Though in theory the three gods are equal, Brahmā, whose creative work for the time being is over, is worshipped only in the Trimūrti. Separate temples to Brahmā are rare throughout India. I. Apparently there are none in Mahāraṣṭra, though there are one or two images of Brahmā to be found, e.g. at Ambaranātha, and also one at Kheda-Brahmā toward the Koṅkana coast.

1. Temples to Brahmā are to be found at Dudāhi and at Khajuvāha in Maḍhya Pradeśa; also at Vasanyagarha in Rājasthāna; and at Unkāla in Karnāṭaka; also at Puṣkara, about six miles from Ajmīra in Rājasthāna; but the worship Brahmā separately from the Trimūrti (when he shares worship with Viṣṇu and Śiva as one of the Triad deities) is practically obsolete. His position at the head of the Triad is merely nominal, since both Viṣṇu and Śiva have usurped his place as Creator in the worship of the Śaivites and the Vaishnavites.

(Cf. Thesis p. 271-272)
APPENDIX VIII

The Śaṅkarācārya and Brāhmaṇ Priesthood

Among the Brāhmans there is no hierarchy of priesthood. The Śaṅkarācārya alone is the head, and his seat of authority is called a Pīṭha. There used to be only four Pīṭhas in all India. These were, in the North at Badrinātha; in the West end of the Himalaya; in the East at Puri on the seacoast; in the West at Dvārakā on the coast of Saurāstra; and in the South at Śrīnegerī in Mysore State.

These four particular Pīṭhas were set up by Śaṅkara, born 788 A.D., rallied Brāhmanism together again after the expulsion of Buddhism, and established these centres for the propagation of the revival of the Hindu faith. Every year now, Śaṅkarācārya Jayanti (the birth of Śaṅkarācārya) is celebrated on Vaiśākha Sukla Triṇīya (3rd of the Light Half of the month Vaiśākha).

Since his ṛima the numbers of the Pīṭhas have been increased. Saṅkṣesvara, near Belgaun, close to the boundary of the State of Maharashtra on the South, is a Pīṭha; and also Nasik, as one might expect, Nasik being considered the ‘Benares’ of Western India. These two Pīṭhas give the law to the Brāhmans of

I. The Jagadguru Śaṅkarācārya Mahasvāmi from his Pīṭha at Saṅkṣesvara gave his dictum concerning the Vedic sacrifice which was to be held at Poona in 1955. (See next chapter).
Maharāstra. Each village is a self-sufficient unit with an Upādhyāya, the priest who sees to the religious duties of the village or a group of villages. Any discussion that requires guidance is referred to the Sānkarācārya of the Pītha of the region.

The Priesthood and its Titles.

The titles that are given to learning are not in order of ascending superiority, but are parallel, being indicative of the particular learning acquired; e.g. Ghanapāṭhī is one who has learned the Vedic text in the manner taught in the Veda Pāthasālā and can recite it in the most complicated 'Patha called Ghanapāṭhā. He is therefore called a Ghanapāṭhī. Dāsagranthī (literally Ten Scriptures) is one who has learned the four Vedas and the six Sāstras. Vedamūrti is one who can recite the whole of the Rgveda. Vedasāstrasampanna is one who is perfect in the learning of the Veda and Sāstras. Sāstrī is a professor in one or more of the six Sāstras. Bhātaji is one who performs the Samskāras. He is also called a Pūrṇahita, or Ācārya. Ādhyāya also. Often some of these titles are used in an honorary capacity, showing respect to an elderly Brahmān. Tarka-tīrtha is a title. The title that is really indicative of great learning is the title of

Mahāmahopādhyāya (i.e. Mahā Mahā Upādyāya, great great religious exponent). This is really a title of great merit and is given to scholars of distinction.
### APPENDIX IX

#### The Astrological Division of the Lunar Month

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<th>Sukla Paksa (Light Half)</th>
<th>Kṛṣṇa Pakṣa (Dark Half)</th>
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<tr>
<td>latter</td>
<td>latter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 degrees</td>
<td>6 degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th day</td>
<td>12th day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latter</td>
<td>latter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 degrees</td>
<td>6 degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th day</td>
<td>13th day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latter</td>
<td>latter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 degrees</td>
<td>6 degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th day</td>
<td>14th day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latter</td>
<td>latter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 degrees</td>
<td>6 degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Moon</td>
<td>Dhruvāni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early</td>
<td>14th day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latter</td>
<td>latter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 degrees</td>
<td>6 degrees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each Karanāśa Astrological division occupies half a lunarday i.e. 6 degrees. Repeated 8 times equals 48 degrees.

7 Adhruvanis = 7 times 48 = 336 degrees
4 Dhruvanis = 4 times 6 = 24 degrees

Total 360 degrees.
APPENDIX X

Population of Brahman Sub-divisions

The Maharashtra Paricaya gives the latest population figures as under:


The Brahman Subdivisions in order of population:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subdivision</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Observing Samskāras?</th>
<th>Whereabouts in State of Maharashtra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deśastha</td>
<td>155,305</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>All over Maharashtra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cittapāvana</td>
<td>113,605</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Main part Maharashtra chiefly in Konkana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarasvata</td>
<td>76,482</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ratnagiri and distributaries near Satāra, Poona, Kolaba.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karhade</td>
<td>32,426</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ratnagiri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devarukha</td>
<td>9,047</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Kolaba, Ratnagiri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golaka</td>
<td>5,417</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Khāndesa, Thana, and Satāra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiragula</td>
<td>1,905</td>
<td></td>
<td>Poona, Sāngli.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jāvala</td>
<td>1,324</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ratnagiri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palsikara</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Thana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiravanta</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Kolaba, Ratnagiri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kāsta</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Poona, Nasik.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sāmavedi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Thana (a few families only).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savase</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Kolhapur, Sāngli, and Ratnagiri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kānva</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Poona, Kolhapur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huseni</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ahmednagar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 396,186

1. Sarasvata. Also large numbers in Belgaum, Kārwār, Goa.
2. Savaše Brāhmans are counted as being Desastha.
APPENDIX XI

The State of Mahārāṣṭra

The State of Mahārāṣṭra, which came into being on the 1st of May, 1961, has been carved out of the old Bombay State, with the addition of portions of Andhra Pradesh, formerly known as the Nizam's Dominions, and portions ceded by the former Central Provinces, now called Madhya Pradesh, (using the vernacular for Central Provinces; and portions of Mahārāṣṭra that were non-Marathi speaking have been ceded by Mahārāṣṭra to their own linguistic areas.

Mahārāṣṭra State now has twenty-six Districts — that is, twenty-five Districts, plus Greater Bombay. And on 1st March 1961, the provisional estimate of the population of the new State of Mahārāṣṭra was counted as 39,504,294 approximate forty millions. This is an increase of 23.44% on the 1951 Census count, as figured out for the present boundaries of the new State of Mahārāṣṭra, including Greater Bombay with the city and suburbs.

A few interesting facts:— The total population is composed of 20,419,059 males, and 19,085,235 females. Literates. Male 418 in the 1000; females 137 in the 1000. Crude density for the whole State 332 persons per sq. mile. Greatest density Bombay city and suburbs 22,293 persons per mile. Lowest density Chanda, 135 persons per mile.
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(for particulars re areas transferred to the State of Mahārāstra from Andhrā State).