

CHAPTER II

S O C I E T YI. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.Introduction.

In the study of cultural history, social structure is important and for it, one studies the caste-system, the behaviour of the different units of the society in their inter-relationship, their belief, superstitions, customs, conventions, systems of marriage, family etc.

In the study of the Indian social structure, the study of the caste is very important.¹ The terms used to denote the caste are generally Varṇa, Jāti and Jñāti. The word Varṇa occurs as early as the RV, wherein most of the passages² it means³ 'colour' or 'complexion' or 'light'. The four Varṇas viz. Brāhmaṇa, Rājanya, Vaiśya and Śūdra are mentioned in the puruṣasūkta,⁴ but the word Varṇa does not occur therein.

It is significant to note that the word Varṇa does not occur in the BVP, to denote a Varṇa system. It, however, occurs in the word Varṇasaṃkarāḥ (1.10.14). The word used in the BVP (1.10.16) to denote the main four castes viz. Varṇas - is 'Jāti'. The word Jāti in the sense of caste can be traced back at least to the time of

Nirūkta (12.13) and that it hardly occurs in the sense of caste in the Vedic literature.⁵

The word Jāti implies the heridity connotation while the word Varṇa implies the colour connotation, which was so strong that when the classes came to regularly described as Varṇas, four different colours were assigned to the four classes, viz. white to the Brāhmaṇ, red to the Kṣatriya, yellow to the Vaiśya and black to the Sūdra by which their members were supposed to be distinguished.⁶ The BVP does not refer to the idea of the ascription of colour to the castes.

THEORY OF THE ORIGIN OF THE FOUR SOCIAL ORDERS.

Various theories have been propounded by the scholars regarding the origin of the caste-system, viz. Risley's Racial Theory.⁷ Nesfield's Occupational Theory.⁸ etc.

According to the Indian tradition⁹ the oldest reference about the origin of the four Varṇas, as noted above, is found to the puruṣasūkta, which is regarded on the ground of language and matter to be one of the late hymn of the RV.¹⁰ It states that "the Brāhmaṇa was his mouth, his arms were made into the Rājanya, his thighs were the Vaiśya, from his feet the Sūdra was born". The same account is repeated in later works with slight modifications. The BVP uses the word Jāti instead of the word Varṇa.

VARNA-SYSTEM.

BRĀHMINS:-

The Brāhmīns formed the first and the foremost

order of the Hindu society. They not only claim almost divine honours as their birth-right, but also in general the other three classes submit readily to their authority, and hence the Brāhmins claim superiority over all.¹¹ And states that the four Jātis proceeded from the limbs of Brahmā that is to say from Brahmā's mouth Brāhmaṇa, from his arms Kṣatriya, from his thighs Vaiśya and from his feet Śūdra was born, and the intermingling of these four main Jātis led to the formation of the Varṇasamkarajātis (1.10.14-16).

The early Hindu literature dwells much on the pre-eminence of the Brāhmins.¹²

On the earth all holy-places are said to dwell in the feet of the Brāhmins (1.11.26). The BVP directs that not only among all the Varṇas but also among all the gods the Brāhmin should be considered as the high respectable man (1.11.13-15, 2.26.24, 4.21.54, 4.83.33, 4.85.210) and hence a Brāhmin whether literate or illiterate is respected as Viṣṇu (1.11.30). The Brāhmins are further glorified by observing that the Brāhmins are the very life breath of Kṛṣṇa (4.83.40). The Brāhmins are said to have a birth in the divine family. The BVP states that they were born in the family of Brahmā and his sons (1.11.36). The duties and privileges of the Varṇas are dealt with at length in the works on Dharmaśāstras. The study of the Vedas, performing sacrifices, are enjoined on all the first three Varṇas¹³, whereas teaching of the Vedas, officiating as priests at sacrifice and receiving the gifts are the special privileges

of the Brahmins.

The BVP emphasises the importance of not only the Vedic studies but also of Snāna, tarpaṇa, Śrāddha, worship of gods, āhnikā and saṁdhyā (2.41.4-6).

The Brahmin lost his social status under certain circumstances. In this connection the comparison of a Brahmin with a poisonless serpent is very significant, because nobody fears it and hence it gets no recognition from the people; the same applies to a Brahmin if he follows the following mode of life:- if he does not perform saṁdhyā takes dinner from a washerman and Śūdra, cooks for Śūdra, is asijīvi or masijīvi is kanyāvikrayin¹⁴ or vidyāvikrayin, eats fish and takes dinner at the time of rising the sun (1.11.40, 2.23.23-36). The Brahmins also observe some vratas like Ekādaśī, Janmāṣṭamī, Śivarātri and Rāmanavamī (4.59.71-72).

The BVP states that the Brahmins should not eat fish and meat in their food (4.85.25). They should take haviṣyānma (4.83.53). They should not use milk, curd, ghee and navaṇita got from buffalo (4.85.20). If one Brahmin take pādodaka of another one he gets religious merit of Rājasūya sacrifice (1.14.32). A Brahmin may accept gift from a Kṣatriya but he can not give it to a Kṣatriya (3.24.43). A Brahmin who acts badly and eats the food of Śūdra becomes a Śūdra (1.26.4) and also if he marries with a Śūdra woman, he becomes a cāṇḍāla (1.20.28).

KṢATRIYAS:-

They form the next order of the society. The BVP provides the following information regarding the Kṣatriyas. A Kṣatriya should give a gift to the Brahmins and should worship Nārāyaṇa. He should take care of the people of his state like his own son. He should not return from the battle field and should either win or die (4.83.68-73; 4.59.54). The BVP defines the concept of the king as follows :- if a Kṣatriya performs his duty with 'rāga' (love), he is called a rājā (King). The BVP directs the king that he should look upon women of his state as his mother (4.59.75). This idiology is inconsonance with that of the MS (7.35). The BVP gives the definitions of the rājan, maṇḍaleśvara and rājendra as follows :-

A king is who has a kingdom having an extent of four yojanas. A king who possesses a kingdom hundredfold more in extent than that of the king is called a maṇḍaleśvara (4.86.18). The king Caitra was a maṇḍaleśvara (2.61.94). A man who has a kingdom tenfold more in extent than that of a maṇḍaleśvara is called a rājendra. In the assembly of Kedāra who was a son of Nandasāvarṇi who was the grand son's grandson of Brahmā, there were five lacs of such rājendras (4.86.18-20).

Army is necessary for the king to protect the state from enemies. The BVP mentions that the Kṣatriyas should maintain elephant-army, cavalry, chariots and foot soldiers (4.83.72). Saṅkhacūḍa had three lacs of horses, five lacs of elephants, one crore of chariots and three crores of

foot soldiers in his army (2.17.10-14).

VAISYAS:-

The BVP. mentions only the functions of the Vaiśyas who constitute the third order of the society. It states that trade, agriculture, worship of the Brahmins and god and observing of the vows are the functions of the Vaiśyas (4.83.74). This is in accordance with the rules of Dharmaśāstras.¹⁵ The BVP permits a co-dinner of a Kṣatriya and a Vaiśya, and this reflects upon the flexibility in the caste-rules about the joint dinner (4.115.85).

SŪDRAS:-

They ~~form~~ form the fourth order of the society and their special duty is the service of the Brahmins (3.35.73, 3.35.87, 4.59.66, 4.83.75). This is also in accordance with the rules of the Dharmaśāstras.¹⁶

SUB-CASTES:-

There were other professions and crafts even in the times of the Saṃhitās. MM.Dr. P.V. Kane observes that owing to the cultural development, division of labour arose and numerous arts and crafts came to be developed and they were in process of contributing to the complexity of the system by creating numerous sub-castes based upon such occupations and in the times of the Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas there were groups founded on occupations that had become castes or were in the process of developing into castes.¹⁷ The BVP gives a list of such groups based on the occupations and moreover, sometimes, it also throws light upon their evolution.

As numerous professions developed and as it became difficult to assign any particular origin for such groups of people, Manu¹⁸ and the Mbh (13.148.29) laid down that men's sub-caste was to be known from their actions and occupations. This shows, as MM. Dr. P.V.Kane observes, that according to writers, castes in the times of the Smrtis were predominantly occupational¹⁹.

Some of the occupational castes as noted in the BVP are the progeny of Viśvakarman and a Śūdra-woman whereas the other castes owe their origin to inter-caste relations. The names of the castes mentioned in the BVP are as follows in alphabatical order :-

1. Ambaṣṭha - He is the offspring of a Vaiśya from a Śūdra woman (1.10.48). In the MS (10.8) and YS (1.90) it is said that Ambaṣṭha is an anuloma child sprung from the marriage of a Brahmin with a Vaiśya woman. Manu²⁰ prescribes the profession of medicine for him.
2. Asijīvi - They followed the occupation of sword making. He could sanctify himself by seeing Kṛṣṇa's devotee (2.6.97).
3. Atṭālikākāra - He is the offspring of a citrakāra from a Śūdra harlot. He is degraded for his parentage (1.10.96). According to John Wilson, he is an architect.²¹

4. Āgari - He is the offspring of a Karaṇa from a Rājaputra woman(1.10.110). John Wilson explains him as a maker of salt²². In the census report of India of 1931, it is mentioned thattheir claim is to be returned as Kṣatriya or Ugrakṣatriya²³.
5. Bhaṇḍa - He is the offspring of a Leṭa man from a Tīvara woman (1.10.101).
6. Bhaṭa - He is the offspring of a Sūtaman and a Vaiśya woman (1.10.136).
7. Bhilāa - It is a hybrid caste and considered as a Sat-
Sūdra (1.10.17-18) but according to Dharma-
śāstras²⁴ he is one of the antyajas.
8. Carmakāra - He is the offspring of a Tīvaraman and a
Cāṇḍāla woman (1.10.103). According to
several smṛtis he is one of the antyajas.²⁵
9. Cāṇḍāla - In accordance with the Dharmaśāstras and
several smṛtis²⁶, the BVP states that he is
the offspring of a Sūdra from a Brahmin woman
and he is considered as low and impure
(1.10.102). He is classed with dogs and
drows.²⁷
10. Citrakāra - He is a painter. He is the offspring of
Viśvakarman and a Sūdra woman. He is said
to be degraded by the curse of a Brahmin
for drawing Brahmin's caricatures(1.10.21).
11. Dasyu - He is the offspring of a Tīvara man and a
Tailakāra woman (1.10.100, 114).

12. Dhanurdhara :- It is a mixed caste by the union of a Kṣatriya man and a Vaiśya woman on the first day of menstruation (1.10.117).
13. Dhīvara - He is the offspring of a Tivara man and a Vaiśya woman (1.10.111). According to MM. Dr. P.V. Kane he is same as Kaivarta and dāsa²⁸.
14. Gaṇaka - A man who takes wealth belonging to a god or to a Brahmin is known as Gaṇaka after having his births in animal and bird creation (2.31.56). He is a Brahmin reborn as a Gaṇaka because of his counting the money (1.10.132).
15. Gaṅgāputra - A son born on the bank of the river Gaṅgā by a Leṭa man and a Tivara woman is known as a Gaṅgāputra (1.10.107).
16. Gopa - He is a hybrid caste known as Satsūdra (1.10.117). It is one of the castes of Bengal and the claim of the Gopa is to be returned as Yādava²⁹.
17. Haḍḍi - He is a sweeper. He is the offspring of a Leṭa man from a cāṇḍāla woman (1.10.105). The claim of the Haḍḍi is to be returned as Haiheya-kṣatriya³⁰.
18. Jolā - He is a weaver. He is the offspring of a Mleccha and a Kuvindaka woman (1.10.121). In Bengal he is returned as a sheduled caste.³¹ According to Baladev Upadhyay the word Jolā is

a Bengali form of the word Julāhā.³²

19. Kaivarta - He is a fisherman. He is the offspring of a Kṣatriya man from a Vaiśya woman (1.10.111). According to Śaṅkara the dāsas and kaivartas are the same.³³
20. Kalandara - He is the offspring of a Leṭa man from a Tīvara woman (1.10.101).
21. Karaṇa - He is the offspring of a Vaiśya man from a Śūdra woman. He denotes a group of officers like kāyasthas and Adhyakṣas.³⁴
22. Karmakāra - He is the offspring of Viśvakarman from a Śūdra woman (1.10.20). He is a blacksmith.³⁵
23. Kartāra - He is the offspring of a Kaivarta man from a Koṇca woman (1.10.104). It may be noted that John Wilson³⁶ reads Kandāra instead of Kartāra, as a lection of the BVP but no edition of the BVP has this reading.
24. Kāṁsyakāra - (V.1. Kāṁsakāra-Ga). He is the offspring of Viśvakarman from a Śūdra woman (1.10.20). John Wilson explains him as a braizer.³⁷
25. Kumbhakāra - He is the offspring of Viśvakarman from a Śūdra woman (1.10.20). Uśanas³⁸ says that he is the offspring of the clandestine union of a Brahmin man with a Vaiśya woman.
26. Kuvindaka - He is a weaver. He is the offspring of Viśvakarman from a Śūdra woman (1.10.20).

27. Kūbara - It is a hybrid caste and designated as Sat-sūdra (1.10.17).
28. Kūdara - He was born of ṛsi from a Brahmin woman, as a result of the sexual relation on the first day of the menstrual period (1.10.115).
29. Kola - He is the offspring of a Leṭa man from a Tivara woman (1.10.101). According to Monier Williams, this is a mixed caste, a barbarian tribe inhabiting the hills.³⁹ It is an aboriginal race.⁴⁰
30. Koṇca - He is the offspring of a fisherman and a flesher woman (1.10.104). John Wilson reads it as Koca.⁴¹ They are found mostly in Northern Bengal.⁴²
31. Koyālī - He is a coarse weaver. He is the offspring of a Tivara man and a Rajaka woman (1.10.112). John Wilson reads the word as Kāpālī.⁴³
32. Koṭaka - He is a house-builder.⁴⁴ He is the offspring of an Atṭālikākāra and a Kumbhakāra woman (1.10.97).
33. Leṭa - It is a hybrid caste by the union of a Tivara man and a Tailakāra woman (1.10.100). John Wilson reads Leṭa as Naṭa.⁴⁵ MM. Dr. P.V. Kane⁴⁶ mentions as Naṭa and states that he is a scheduled caste in Bengal, but he does not note Leṭa.
34. Malla - He is a wrestler. He is the offspring of a Leṭa man from a Tivara woman (1.10.101). It

is a another name of Jhalla.⁴⁷

35. Mantra - He is the offspring of a Letā man from a Tīvara woman (1.10.101).
36. Mālākāra - He is a gardener. He is the offspring of Viśvakarman from a Śūdra woman (1.10.20).
37. Māmsaccheda - He is a flesher. It is a mixed caste by the union of a Cāṇḍāla man and a Carmakāra woman (1.10.103).
38. Mātara - He is the offspring of a Letā man from a Tīvara woman (1.10.101).
39. Mleccha - He is the offspring of a Kṣatriya man from a Śūdra woman. The BVP informs that Mlecchas has unbored ears, are fearless invincible in fight and do not observe the rules of purification and religious observances (1.10.119-120). According to the Rāmāyaṇa (1.55.3) he is the offspring of the clandestine union of a Brahmin woman and a Vaiśya man.
40. Nāpita - He is a barber. It is a hybrid caste and considered as Sat-Śūdra (1.10.17-18). Uśanas⁴⁸ says that he is the offspring of a clandestine affair between a Brahmin male and a Vaiśya female. Further Uśanas remarks that he is so called because he shaves the body above the navel of a person. The claim of the Nāpita is to be returned as "Nāibrahmin".⁴⁹

41. Paunḍraka - He is the offspring of a Vaiśya man from
 a Śūndī woman (1.10.109).
42. Rajaka - He is a washerman. He is the offspring of a
 Dhīvara man and a Tīvara woman (1.10.112).
 Dhobī is a scheduled caste in Bengal, called
 Dhobā.⁵⁰
43. Rājaputra - He is the offspring of a Kṣatriya man and
 a Karaṇa woman (1.10.110).
44. Sarvasvī - He is the offspring of a Nāpita man and a
 Gopa woman (1.10.113).
45. Svarṇakāra - He is a gold-smith. He is the offspring of
 Viśvakarman and a Śūdra woman and is said
 to be degraded for stealing Brahmins' gold
 (1.10.19-20). The claim of the Svarṇakāra
 is to be returned as Viśvakarmābrahmin.⁵¹
46. Śabara - The BVP mentions them (2.31.55). It is an
 aboriginal jungle tribe like the Bhilla⁵².
 In the Mbh (13.53.17) the Śabaras are
 mentioned.
47. Śaṅkhakāra - (V.1. raṅgakāra - Ka). He is a shell-
 dresser. He is the offspring of Viśva-
 karman from a Śūdra woman (1.10.19-20).
48. Śarāṅka :- He is the offspring of a Jolā man from a
 Kuvindaka woman (1.10.122).
49. Sūtradhāra - (V.1. Sūtrakāra-Kha). He is a carpenter.
 He is the offspring of Viśvakarman from a
 Śūdra woman (1.10.19-20). The claim of
 the Sūtradhāra is to be returned as a

50. Sūta - The BVP mentions that he was born from a Yajña. (1.10.134). Kauṭilya is carefull to add that the Sūta who figures in the Purāṇas as the reciter is different from this⁵⁴.
51. Sūṇḍī - He is the offspring of a Vaiśya man and a Tīvara woman (1.10.109).
52. Tailakāra - He is an oilman. He is the offspring of a Kumbhakāra man and a Koṭaka woman (1.10.98).
53. Tambulī - It is a hybrid caste and considered as a baniyacaste (1.10.17).
54. Tīvara - He is a fisherman. He is the offspring of a Kṣatriya and a Rājaputra woman (1.10.99).
55. Yuṅgī - He is the offspring of a Veṣadhārī man from a Gaṅgāputra woman (1.10.108). John Wilson⁵⁵ reads it as Yogī. N.K. Dutta remarks that "a peculiar caste is the Yogī, which is neither functional nor tribal. It is sectarian caste. They are believed to be the degraded descendant, of a class of Buddhist ascetics, followers of Gorakhanath, many of their local costumes, their divergence from Brahmanical rites, their adoption of priests from their own caste, their worship of the Buddhist deity Dharma confirm this view".⁵⁶
56. Vanacara - He is the offspring of a cāṇḍāla man and a Haḍḍi woman (1.10.106).

57. Vaidya - He is a physician. He is the offspring of Aśvinikumāra from a Brahmin woman (1.10.123). N.K. Dutta remarks that "it is difficult to say when Vaidya which was at first a - functional name became the name of a caste, but it is certain that the caste was not formed in the same way and at the same time in different parts of India. Even now a Vaidya caste as we find it in Bengal does not exist in upper India but the tendency towards the formation of a medical caste, can be traced as early as the time of the Mbh (13.49.9). There is a mention of a caste by name Vaidya, which is said to be formed by the union of a Sūdra male and a Vaiśya female".⁵⁷ Dr. Baladeva Upadhyay informs that the Vaidya caste is believed to be socially some what lower than the Brahmins in Bengal.⁵⁸
58. Vaiṣṇava - The BVP states that there is one independent and separate caste on this earth named ~~Vaiśya~~ Vaiṣṇava over and above the main four Varnas viz. Brahmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, and Sūdra (1.11.43). The claim of the Vaiṣṇavas is to be returned as Sātvatabrahmins.⁵⁹
59. Vāgatīta - He is the offspring of a Kṣatriya man and a Vaiśya woman "begotten without the consent of the mother and forbidden by the voice."⁶⁰

60. Vyādha - He is a hunter. He is the offspring of a Kṣatriya man and a Sarvasvī woman (1.10.113).

61. Vyālagrāhī - He is a serpent-seizer. He is the offspring of a Vaidya man and a Śūdra woman (1.10.124)

The above mentioned description regarding the origin of castes and sub-castes can be shown in a tabular form as below :-

Resultant's Caste	Father's Caste	Mother's Caste
1. Ambaṣṭha	Vaiśya	Śūdra
2. Asijivī	-	-
3. Aṭṭālikākāra	Citrakāra	Śūdra
4. Āgari	Karaṇa	Rājaputra
5. Bhaṇḍa	Leṭa	Tīvara
6. Bhaṭa	Sūta	Vaiśya
7. Bhilla	-	-
8. Carmakāra	Tīvara	Cāṇḍāla
9. Cāṇḍāla	Śūdra	Brahmin
10. Citrakāra	Viśvakarman	Śūdra
11. Dasyu	Tīvara	Tailakāra
12. Dhanurdhara	Kṣatriya	Vaiśya
13. Dhīvara	Tīvara	Vaiśya
14. Gaṇaka	-	-
15. Gaṅgāputra	Leṭa	Tīvara
16. Gopa	-	-
17. Haḍḍi	Leṭa	Cāṇḍāla
18. Jolā	Mleccha	Kuvindaka
19. Kaivarta	Kṣatriya	Vaiśya

Resultant's Caste	Father's Caste	Mother's Caste
20. Kalandara	Leṭa	Tīvara
21. Karaṇa	Vaiśya	Śūdra
22. Karmakāra	Viśvakarman	Śūdra
23. Kartāra	Kaivarta	Koñca
24. Kāmsyakāra	Viśvakarman	Śūdra
25. Kumbhakāra	Viśvakarman	Śūdra
26. Kuvindaka	Viśvakarman	Śūdra
27. Kūbara	-	-
28. Kūdara	Rṣi	Brahmin
29. Kola	Leṭa	Tīvara
30. Koñca	Dhīvara	Māmsaccheda
31. Koyālī	Tīvara	Rajaka
32. Koṭaka	Aṭṭalikākāra	Kumbhakāra
33. Leṭa	Tīvara	Tailakāra
34. Malla	Leṭa	Tīvara
35. Mantra	Leṭa	Tīvara
36. Mālākāra	Viśvakarman	Śūdra
37. Māmsaccheda	Cāṇḍāla	Carmakāra
38. Mātara	Leṭa	Tīvara
39. Mleccha	Kṣatriya	Śūdra
40. Nāpita	-	-
41. Paundraka	Vaiśya	Śūṇḍī
42. Rajaka	Dhīvara	Tīvara
43. Rājaputra	Kṣatriya	Karaṇa
44. Sarvasvī	Nāpita	Gopa
45. Svarṇakāra	Viśvakarman	Śūdra
46. Śabara	-	-

Resultant's Caste	Father's Caste	Mother's Caste
47. Śaṅkhakāra	Viśvakarman	Śūdra
48. Śarāṅka	Jolā	Kuvindaka
49. Sūtradhāra	Viśvakarman	Śūdra
50. Sūta	-	-
51. Śūṇḍī	Vaiśya	Tīvara
52. Tailakāra	Kumbhakāra	Koṭaka
53. Tāmbulī	-	-
54. Tīvara	Kṣatriya	Rājaputra
55. Yūngī	Veśadhārī	Gaṅgāputra
56. Vanacara	Cāṇḍāla	Haḍḍi
57. Vaidya	Aśvinikumāra	Brahmin
58. Vaiṣṇava	-	-
59. Vāgatīta	Kṣatriya	Vaiśya
60. Vyādha	Kṣatriya	Sarvasvī
61. Vyālgrāhī	Vaidya	Śūdra

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ĀŚRAMA-SYSTEM

Varṇa as well as āśrama systems are also the important features of Indian social organization. The word āśrama is derived from the root ~~śram~~ śram 'to exert oneself' and therefore it may mean a place where

exertions are performed and the action of performing such exertion.⁶¹ Literally an āśrama is a halting or a resting place; the word, therefore, denotes a halt, a stoppage or a stage in the journey of life, just for the sake of rest, just for preparing oneself for further journey. The Mbh (12.234.15) says that the four stages of life from a

ladder or a flight of four steps. Such a scheme of āśrama organization helps towards the realisation of Brāhman. The āśramas are four in number, and each of the āśramas constituting a stage of life in which the individual has to train himself for a certain period, and exert himself within the circuit of the same to qualify himself for the next.⁶²

Different views have been held regarding the number of āśramas in the initial stages of its development. Dr. P.M. Modi quoting the CHU (2.23.1) and the MS (2.230, 7.78) says that in the beginning there were three āśramas⁶³ MM. Dr. P.V. Kane⁶⁴ finds a somewhat obscure reference to the four āśramas in the AB (33.11) and Prof. Deussen⁶⁵ states that the oldest passage which names all the four āśramas in their correct order is Jābāla-upaniṣad(4). Prof. Altekar concludes that "the system of the four āśramas, Brahmacharya, Gr̥hastha, Vānaprastha and Sanyāsa, is no doubt now regarded as a very early and ancient feature of Hinduism but its early history is shrouded in mystery. It is extremely doubtful whether the system was developed in the Vedic age."⁶⁶ According to Dr. N.N. Law who substantiated Dr. Jacobi's view, 'the four stages of life were well developed at the time of the older Upaniṣadas and the mutual relations between them had been fixed before that period.'⁶⁷

Likewise the dharmaśāstra writers, the BVP. also mentions the four-fold system of the āśramas. The nomenclature as found in the BVP to denote the persons in

~~per in~~ the different stages of life is as follows :-

1. Brahmācārīn - A student.
2. Gr̥hastha - A householder.
3. Vānaprastha - A forest hermit.
4. Sanyāsin or Yatī - An ascetic.

THE STAGE OF A STUDENT:-

The performance of the upanayana ceremony provides an entrance to the first stage of life. The upanayana ceremony marked the beginning of his Vedic studies at the teacher's home where he had to lead quite a disciplined and regulated life engaging himself in attendance on fire, bathing and wandering about for alms and always eating food after informing his teacher and obtaining his permission.⁶⁸

The BVP does not mention in detail the rules and regulations governing the life of a brahmācārīn. It is interesting to note that according to the BVP Kṛṣṇa's Vedic studies were started before the performance of his Upanayana ceremony by his teacher Sāndipani. (1.24.7, 4.102.3-5).⁶⁹

The BVP. states that first of all a student should get Viṣṇumantra from his teacher and then he should serve his teacher to gain knowledge.(4.83.9), and he should obey his teacher's order (1.23.6). The brahmācārīn should observe the purificatory rules for four-times more than those observed by the Gr̥hastha (1.26.32).

It is in the brahmācaryāśrama especially and in general, that a teacher plays a great role in the life of a pupil and the BVP has some eulogistic stanzas in honour of a teacher.

Since the earliest times, India has attached great importance to the teacher. Before starting any work one should pray to his teacher, because the teacher is more respectable than any deity. The teacher symbolises in him Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa, Prakṛti, Candra, Ravi and Anala (1.26.6-12). If anyone worships any deity without worshipping his teacher, he incurs a sin of hundred brahmanicide (1.26.16) because the teacher is respected a hundred times more than one's own mother (2.30.193, 3.40.88).

The worship of a teacher is capable of destroying sin, removing disease and giving good things and joy (2.61.25). If the teacher is satisfied, all deities are satisfied (2.61.26, 3.40.88).

In case of one's own deity becomes angry with one, one's teacher can save one, but if a teacher becomes angry with one, none can save one (1.26.14-15, 4.35.62, 4.59.153). The teacher on his part was under the sacred obligation to fulfil his duties towards the pupils. He was to love his students as his own son and should not withhold any part of the teaching of the sacred lore from him.⁷⁰

The teacher should impart knowledge to the student whether he is asked or not, and such a teacher is styled in the BVP as a "Sadguru" (1.1.39).

A teacher who shows a right path to his son, daughter student and servant obtains a permanent Sadgati. If he shows a wrong path to them he goes to a hell called Kumbhīpāka (1.8.59-60).

THE STAGE OF A HOUSE HOLDER.

After completing the period of studentship and giving fees to his teacher, the man entered upon the stage of a house-holder (1.24.8-9). The BVP states that among four āśramas, the Gr̥hasthāśrama is the best, because, a wife, a son or a grandson are the fruit of penance (1.23.8). All the manes and deities remain at the home of a householder (1.23.9).

A householder should marry a good girl and he should procreate a son from her and then he leaves for practising penance (1.24.14). A man should be first a householder and then a forest hermit (1.24.20), because a householder gets fame, wealth and religious merit (1.23.11). Pleasure and happiness of intercourse with a woman are equivalent with those of heaven so the Gr̥hasthāśrama is the best (1.24.25).

Thus the importance of the Gr̥hasthāśrama is emphasised with an accent on sex by the BVP. in the scheme of the āśrama organization. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the Mbh (13.11.2, 21) also states the superiority of the Gr̥hasthāśram over all. The Smṛtis also bestow the highest praise upon this āśrama and states that all the āśramas subsists by receiving support from the householder and since men in the three other āśramas are daily supported by the householder with sacred knowledge and food, his is the leading āśrama.⁷¹

Some rules are laid down in Smṛtis for the householder, among these the concept of the pañcamahāyajñas is very important. According to the MS (3.70) these five

mahāyajñas were offered to sages, manes, gods, beings and men, and sages were satisfied by the Vedic studies, manes by offering tarpaṇa or Śrāddha, gods by the burnt oblations, beings by bali offerings and men by reception of guests. This concept of the pañcamahāyajña widened the field of Social duties by reorienting the purpose of Yajña and incorporating new yajñas to men and to the beings in the older concept of three debts viz. that to sages, gods and manes.⁷²

The BVP does not mention~~ed~~ these pañcamahāyajñas but it states some duties for a householder. In response to Nanda's query as to the rules and regulations governing the life of a householder Kṛṣṇa informed him as detailed below:-

One should take one's bath in early morning, after the bath one should observe saṁdhyā and then one should worship Śālagrāma-maṇi, Yantra and image of devaṣaṭka and then one can do one's daily routine work (4.75.5-19). A householder should take his meals after his dependents have taken it (4.84.9).

The BVP also states the duties of a householder's wife as follows :-

She should get up in early morning, after doing her obeisance to her husband, she should take a bath. She should worship the domestic duties. She should take her meals after her husband and guest have taken it (4.84.15-17).

THE STAGE OF A FOREST HERMIT:-

The man entered upon the stage of a forest hermit for securing the liberation of the soul after having seen the offspring of his sons and the stooping of his body. In this stage of life, as the name itself suggests he has to go to the forest and live on wild fruits.⁷³ In accordance with the dharmaśāstra rules⁷⁴ the BVP states that a person should go to the forest after he has a son to whom he should hand-over his wife (2.53.26).

THE STAGE OF AN ASCETIC:-

The person entered upon the last stage, viz. that of an ascetic casting of all attachments to the world.⁷⁵

He had to lead a celibate life and practise abstinence from anger and pleasures of the senses.⁷⁶ He should have an equal mental attitude towards dust and gold etc. He should carry with him a staff and a water pot, and wear red clothes. He should pray to Nārāyaṇa and not touch any woman. He should not live longer period and abandon all the actions.⁷⁷ He should not sit on any vehicle and not possess a house. He should recite merely the name of Nārāyaṇa (2.36.116-124, 4.41.18, 4.59.78-82, 4.83.91-92). If anybody offers food to an ascetic he achieves the fruit of the Aśvamedha Sacrifice (4.83.85).

SLAVERY:-

Slavery has existed as a constant element in the social and economical life of all nations of antiquity such as Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Rome and many other nations of Europe.⁷⁸

The word 'dāsa' which is of R̥gvedic antiquity, is met with in the BVP. The R̥gvedic passages⁷⁹ make it clear that the dāsas or dasyus formed the opposite camp against the āryans. The CHU (5.13.2) and the Brup (6.2.7) and other Vedic passages refer to dāsīs and on these passages MM. Dr. P.V. Kane comments that 'these passages show that in the Vedic period men and women had become the subjects of gifts and so were in the conditions of slaves.'⁸⁰

The Mbh frequently refers to the gifts of dāsas and dāsīs.⁸¹ In the BVP the male and female slaves are referred to. Drumila gave one lac of dāsas and dāsīs to the Brahmins as gift (1.20.54).

At the time of the marriage of Vasudeva and Devakī, Śiva and Pārvatī, Baladeva and Revatī and Kṛṣṇa and R̥kmiṇī, Devaka, Himālaya, Kakudmī and Bhīṣmaka gave elephants, horses, chariots, cows, camels, many male and female slaves, clothes, ornaments and other vessels in their dowery. This suggests that male and female slaves were also items of gifts. (1.20.51-54, 4.7.10, 4.44.59-60, 4.106.5, 4.109,39).

II. MARRIAGE.

INTRODUCTION.

The institution of marriage is very important for the study of society. Married life covers one of the important periods of one's life and it has significant influence on the society. Hence the study of the institution of marriage and married life enables one to understand and appreciate the spirit of its culture and civilization in as much as repercussions and percolations of it are very felt on the various facets of the social organization.⁸²

Westermarck defines marriage as "a relation of one or more men to one or more women which is recognised by custom or law and involves certain rites and duties both in the case of the parties entering the union and in the case of the child born of it."⁸³

The following terms are used in the BVP to denote the idea of marriage viz. vivāha, var and grh. (4.105.12, 4.44.55, 2.12.18, 2.16.113, 2.61.93) out of several terms like Udvāha, Vivāha, pariṇaya, pariṇayana, pāṇigrahaṇa etc.⁸⁴

PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE.

From the vedic times marriage was considered as obligatory for man as it enables him to become a householder, to perform sacrifices in honour of the gods and to procreate sons. According to smṛits and Digests, dharmasāmpatti, prajā

and rati.

The importance and necessity of the marriage in one's life is beautifully pointed out in the BVP by bringing out the importance and the need of a son as follows :-

The house is bereft of its beauty without a son, in short, it is no house without a son. The penance of an ascetic who has no son is futile like the water in trinkling out from the seive. Briefly, the childrenlessness is indeed a great misery (3.2.23, 3.5.5, 2.46.58). Thus the BVP brings out the prajā aspect connected with marriage.

The rati-aspect is pointed out when it is said that the pleasures of sexual intercourse with a rasikā (lustful woman) are difficult to be had. (4.30.75). The Dharmaśāstras also supports the rati - aspect of marriage.⁸⁶

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE BRIDE AND THE BRIDEGROOM.

The ancient law-givers enumerated the following necessary qualifications of a bridegroom, viz. good family, good character, bodily appearance, fame, learning wealth, support of relatives and friends caste, youth, strength, health, and ambition.⁸⁷

One should marry one's daughter with a man having a peaceful mind, who is virtuous, young, learned, wealthy, vaiṣṇava, jolly, beautiful and amicable (2.16.95, 3.20.40, 4.23.57-60). He should not marry his daughter with a man having a bad character, who is vicious, old, weak, diseased, illiterate, poor, stupid, deaf, blind, dumb, lame, sinful, undiscerning blameworthy, devoid of good qualities, short tempered, extremely ugly, defective in limb, dull, impotent and miserly (2.16.92-94, 3.20.41, 4.41.48-50).

Himālaya denied to marry his daughter pārvatī with Śiva, because Śiva was unwealthy, brotherless and friendless. A person who married his daughter with a man, devoid of the above mentioned qualifications, goes to hell (4.41.48).

The BVP states that one should marry a girl coming from a noble family (1.24.14). The B/p (167.25) also supports the above view of the BVP.

MARRIAGEABLE AGE.

According to VSD (8.1), GDS (4.1), and YS (1.52) the bride should be younger than the bridegroom,. As stated in the B/p (107.47) a young maiden for an old man is as dangerous as poison and a younger man for an old woman is as beautiful ^{as} and nectar.

The BVP gives some glimpses of the marriageable ages by some cases. Budha married, Kubera's daughter, Retasā who was sixteen years old (2.61.93), Rādhā married at the age of twelve with Rāyaṇa (2.49.37), Sāvitrī also married at the age of twelve (2.26.2). As stated another place, one gets Durgādānaphala by giving one's eight years old daughter to a Brahmin (4.76.54, 4.77.58).

Thus according to the BVP the age limit for marriage in the case of a girl was from eight years to sixteen years. But the BVP does not throw any light on the age limit of the bridegroom.

TYPES OF MARRIAGE.

There are various types of marriage based on a numeric variation in the partners, while others the traditional eight ones are distinguished from each other from the point of view of ritual and mode.⁸⁸

MONOGAMY.

"Monogamy is not only the most important form of marriage, not only that which predominates in most communities, and which occurs, statistically speaking in an overwhelming majority of instances, but it is also the pattern and proto type of marriage".⁸⁹

The BVP provides the following instances of monogamy.

- | | | |
|---------------|---|-----------|
| 1. Upabarhaṇa | - | Mālāvātī. |
| 2. Maṅgala | - | Medhā. |
| 3. Kubera | - | Manoramā. |
| 4. Kāma | - | Ratī. |
| 5. Agni | - | Svāhā. |
| 6. Vāyu | - | Vāyavī. |
| 7. Satyavān | - | Sāvitṛī. |
| 8. Manu | - | Satarupā. |
| 9. Ākūti | - | Ruci. |
| 10. Dakṣa | - | Prasūti. |
| 11. Kardama | - | Devahūti. |
| 12. Śiva | - | Satī. |

POLYGyny.⁹⁰

"Monogamy has been the cherished ideal and also the legalised form of the Indian institute of marriage and this form also seems to have been the ideal and was probably the rule, in the vedic period but the vedic literature is full of references to polygamy."⁹¹

The following is the list of polygamists as mentioned in the BVP.

<u>Name of the polygamists</u>	<u>Name/Number of the consorts</u>
1. Kṛṣṇa	- 1. Rādhā 2. Rukmiṇī 3. Kālindī 4. Lakṣmaṇā 5. Nāgnajitī 6. Satyabhāmā 7. Saibyā 8. Mitravindā 9. Ratnamālā 10. Suśilā 11. Jāmbavatī. and sixteen thousand one hundred daughters of Mūra. (4.112.33-35).
2. Nanda	- 1. Yaśodā, 2. Rohiṇī (4.14.27).
3. Nārāyaṇa	- 1. Lakṣmī, 2. Gaṅgā, 3. Tulasī, 4. Sarsvatī (2.10.1).
4. Dharma	- 1. Śānti 2. Puṣṭi 3. Dhṛti, 4. Tuṣṭi 5. Kṣamā

5. Kaśyapa

- 6. Śraddhā,
- 7. Mati
- 8. Smṛti,
- 9. Mūrti
- (1.78.9-10)

- 1. Aditi,
- 2. Diti
- 3. Kadru
- 4. Vinatā,
- 5. Surabhi
- 6. Saramā
- 7. Danu
- (1.21.16-18)

6. Candra

- 1. Aśvinī
- 2. Bharanī
- 3. Kṛtikā
- 4. Rohinī
- 5. Mṛgaśirṣa
- 6. Ādrā
- 7. Punarvasu
- 8. Puṣya,
- 9. Aśleṣā
- 10. Maghā,
- 11. Pūrvāphālgunī
- 12. Uttarāphālgunī
- 13. Hasta
- 14. Citrā
- 15. Svāti

16. Viśākhā
17. Anurādhikā
18. Jyeṣṭhā
19. Mūla
20. Pūrvāṣādhā
21. Uttarāṣādhā
22. Śravaṇa
23. Dhaniṣṭhā
24. Śatabhiṣā
25. Pūrvābhādra
26. Uttarābhādra
27. Revatī.

(1.13.48-50)

7. Upabarhaṇa. - 50 women (4.130.3).

These are the examples of sororal polygyny i.e. marriage with two or more sisters.

POLYANDRY.⁹²

There is a difference of opinion regarding the existence of polyandry in vedic times. MM. Dr.P.V. Kane⁹³ and Dr. A.S. Altekar⁹⁴ deny the existence of polyandry in the vedic Society while Dr. B.S.Upadhyay⁹⁵ mentions that it existed in the Vedic society.

The most glaring example of polyandry in Sanskrit literature is that of Draupadī as the wife of five Pāṇḍavas. In the BVP there is also a reference to the Polyandrous marriage of Draupadī (2.14.60). The BVP also mentions one more instance of polyandry. It is the instance of Svadhā who was the wife of manes (2.1.103).

It may be noted that these are the instances from the mythological domain.

Thus it is clear that the BVP favours monogamy and disapproves polygamy. It has nothing to say about polyandry. Nārāyaṇa said to Gaṅgā, Lakṣmī and Sarsvatī that the monogamists are happy and polygamists are never happy. The BVP further also observes that many cowives cannot have dignified together (2.6.56, 2.6.64).

FORMS OF MARRIAGE.

From the times of GS, DS, and Smrtis the ancient Indian law recognised the eight forms of marriage which differ in ritual and mode.⁹⁶

1. Brāhma - In this form, the father gives his daughter decked with ornaments and jewels to a learned man of good conduct invited by him.
2. Daiva - In this, the father gives his daughter with ornaments to a priest who duly officiates at a sacrifice during the course of its performance.
3. Ārṣa - In this form, the father gives his daughter after receiving from the bridegroom a cow or a bull or a pair.
4. Prājāpatya - In this the father gives his daughter after addressing the couple with the text - Sahobhau caratam.
5. Āsura - In this the bridegroom receives a maiden after having given as much wealth, as he

can afford to give to the kinsmen and the bride herself.

6. Gāndharva - In this form, the union of the girl and the bridegroom is by mutual consent.
7. Rākṣasa - This form of marriage involves the forcible abduction of a maiden from her home, while she cries out and weeps after her kinsmen have been slain and wounded and their houses and fortresses have been broken upon.
8. Paisāca - In this a man by stealth seduces a girl who is sleeping intoxicated or intellectually disordered.⁹⁷

As regards the first four forms all the law-givers approves of them and agree also to the fact that the last is the worst but opinion is divided as to which of these are the approved ones for the members of the different varṇas.⁹⁸

The BVP has the following instances of the Brāhmavivāha as well as the Gāndharvavivāha.

Brāhmavivāha -

- Vasudeva - Devakī (4.7.9).
 Vṛṣabhānu - Kalāvatī (4.17.141).
 Śiva - Pārvatī (4.44.57).
 Baladeva - Revatī (4.106.4).
 Kṛṣṇa - Rukmiṇī (4.109.38).

Gāndharvavivāha -

- Hari - Gaṅgā (2.16.113).
 Budha - Retasā (2.61.93).

Kṛṣṇa - Rādhā (4.15.118).

Aniruddha - Uṣā (4.114.90).

It may be noted that the marriage of Aniruddha and Uṣā shows the features of the Rākṣasa and Gāndharva forms of marriage. It has the feature of the Rākṣasa type of marriage to the extent that the sleeping Aniruddha was kidnapped and taken to the abode of Uṣā. The condition of the Rākṣasavivāha is reversely fulfilled here that the bridegroom is kidnapped and not the bride (4.114.79-80).⁹⁹

The BVP does not mention any case of either an intercaste marriage or a Svayamvara form of marriage. It is silent on the question of the limitations of marriage.

ART OF SEXUAL LIFE.

"As the practical side of life is never rigidly excluded in the glory of spiritual exaltation, there is an early and frank recognition of the sex impulse as one of the most powerful impulses of the human mind".¹⁰⁰ The knowledge of sex-psychology was considered as an important science in ancient India.¹⁰¹ The Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana is the best and an authentic work on the sex-psychology¹⁰² and the BVP also throws a flood of light on this problem.

The Kāmasūtra describes various techniques for sexual pleasure e.g. kissing, embracing, nail marking and teeth marking etc.¹⁰³ but the BVP mentions kissing, embracing, nail marking and teeth marking.

Kṛṣṇa gave four types of kisses to Rādhā in their Śṛṅgārakrīḍā (4.15.149) and he gave eight types of kisses to Gopies (4.28.111). Nalakūbara, the son of Kūbera saw Rambhā

and he gave to her six types of kisses (4.14.33). Thus the BVP states some number of kisses that were given but it does not name them. Vātsyāyana mentions seven types of kisses amongst them the first four are main.¹⁰⁴ The four types of the kisses mentioned here in the BVP may probably refer to its four main varieties as given in the Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra. Kokkoka, the author of the Ratirahasya mentions thirteen types of kisses amongst them the seven types mentioned by Vātsyāyana are included therein.¹⁰⁵ Likewise kissing, embracing is also important in Kāmakrīdā.¹⁰⁶ Kṛṣṇa had embraced in nine different ways the gopīs in his Kṛīdā (4.28.111). Nalakūbara gave three ~~ways~~ types of embracing to Rambhā (4.14.33). The twelve types of embracing mentioned here in the BVP may probably refer to those twelve types mentioned in the Ratirahasya.¹⁰⁷

Over and above kissing and embracing, nail marking and teeth marking are included in the Kāmakrīdā.¹⁰⁸ The BVP refers to the nail marks and teeth marks also (4.14.33-34, 4.28.111-112) in the context of Rādhā, Gopīs and Kṛṣṇa. Generally in copulation posture the man is more active than the woman. Vātsyāyana states that to achieve sexual pleasure a woman should also take part as the man and it is for this reason, he mentions a posture called "Viparītarati" and this technique is necessary to achieve highest pleasure from intercourse.¹⁰⁹ Jayadeva also, in his Ratimañjarī mentions the Viparītarati.¹¹⁰ He has described the Viparītarati śṛṅgāra between kṛṣṇa and Rādhā in his Gītagovinda.¹¹¹

The BVP also notes the following instances of

Viparītaratī between -

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. Śiva | - Pārvatī (3.1.16). |
| 2. Indra | - Rambhā (3.20.46). |
| 3. Kṛṣṇa | - Virajā (4.3.16). |
| 4. Kṛṣṇa | - Rādhā (4.28.73). |
| 5. Nalakūbara | - Rambhā (4.14.33). |

KANYĀVIKRAYA.

The practice of the Kanyāvikraya is a very ancient one, going back to the Vedic period.¹¹² Such pieces of evidence show that in ancient times girls were purchased for marriage as was the case in many other countries.¹¹³

Gradually the public feeling changed and the sale of daughter by the father or brother was not only severally condemned but even taking of a present by them was looked down.

Thus inspite of such an unfavourable attitude towards Kanyāvikraya, the practice has not died out entirely even in modern times.

The BVP has a reference with this practice when it lays down a proscriptive statement that one should not take any sum of money from the husband of one's daughter, and further adds that if anyone takes money from one's daughter's husband, one goes to hell (2.16.96, 4.83.64).

MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

"Among all people, savage as well as civilized, the legal marriage is usually accompanised by some form of ceremony which expresses the sanction of the group on the act of the couple concerned. This ceremony is of a magical or

religious character though in a few people it is apparently purely social".¹¹⁴

The BVP gives in detail the account of the marriage ceremony mainly in the cases of the following ones.

1. Marriage of Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā (4.15).
2. Marriage of Kṛṣṇa with Rukmiṇī (4.108).
3. Marriage of Śiva with Pārvatī (4.44).

Out of these three, the marriage of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā is a case of the Gāndharvavivāha and Brahmā only was present at that time as a purohita. The marriage of Kṛṣṇa with Rukmiṇī and Śiva with Pārvatī are the cases of the Brāhma-vivāha. At the time of the marriage ceremony of Kṛṣṇa with Rukmiṇī and Śiva with Pārvatī all relatives of the concerned were present. The bridegroom goes to the bride's house where the marriage takes place (4.44, 56.4, 108.7).

The BVP refers to the following rites.

AGNISTHĀPANA AND HOMA.

It means establishing the fire and offering of ājya oblation in the fire. Brahmā, who was a purohita at the time of the marriage of Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā, he kindled the sacred fire and then he performed homa (4.15.121). The fire was enkindled according to Vedic injunctions and the sacrifice was performed at the time of marriage of Śiva with Pārvatī (4.45.1-4).

PĀNIGRAHANA.

The BVP states that Kṛṣṇa took Rādhā's hand in his hand and then Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā recited the Vedic mantras (4.15.25-27).

ABHIṢEKA.

During the marriage ceremony of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī, they both did the abhiṣeka with water on each other's head (4.108.7-8).

SAPTAPADĪ.

This is the most important rite in the whole saṁskāra. This is done to the north of the sacred fire. There are seven small heaps of rice and the bridegroom makes the bride step on each of these seven with his right foot beginning from the west.¹¹⁵

The BVP states that Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā (4.15.123) and Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī (4.108.7) had this Saptapadī rite performed during this marriage ceremony.

MARRIAGE CELEBRATION.

The graphic description of the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī evidences the fact that the occasion of marriage was then even as now an occasion of great joy and festivity. This description gives an idea of the great pomp with which the ceremony was celebrated.

Himālaya had invited all the gods, demons and Siddhas for the marriage - ceremony of his daughter. Several dishes were prepared. Pārvatī and other ladies had put on new clothes and ornaments. The front portion of the house of Himālaya was decorated with banana trees and paṭṭasūtras. Śiva was received by Himālaya, his wife Menakā and their other relatives. Himālaya gave many gifts to Śiva after his marriage. Śiva and Pārvatī entered the Vāsagrha¹¹⁶ for their honey-moon.

They passed their first night at Himālaya's place and on the next day Śiva and Pārvatī went to Kailāsa where both of them were received by Śiva's attendants, and other gods, demons and Siddhas (4.44 & 45). Here, the discription pertains to the mythological domain still the human elements are easily discernible.

PROMISCUITY.

The BVP notes the instances of monogamy, polygamy and polyandry as well as the instances in which sexual laxity was taken. They are as follows :-

CANDRA AND TĀRĀ.

Candra saw Tārā, Brhaspati's wife, on the bank of the river gaṅgā and he raped her. Candra got the shelter of Śukrācārya with Tārā. Brahmā, Brhaspati and other demons requested Śukra to get back, Tārā. After their request, Śukra returned them Tārā enceinte. Brahmā asked her to disclose the name of the impregnator. After much hesitation, she declared that Candra was the impregnator and at the same time she gave a birth to a son who was Budha (2.61).

INDRA AND AHALYĀ.

Once Indra came to take a bath at the bank of the river, where he saw Ahalyā, the wife of Gautama. He raped her. The sage Gautama came there, saw them and cursed Indra to be a "Sahasrayonī" which afterwards were converted into "Sahasrākṣa" (4.47.6-31).

UPENDRA AND VASUNDHARĀ.

Once, the wife of Hari, Vasundharā attracted Upendra. Upendra had intercourse with her and she gave a birth to

Maṅgala (1.9.23-34).

VISVAKARMAN AND GHṚTĀCI.

Visvakaraman saw Ghṛtāci, a Śūdra woman and he carried away her on the bank of the river Sarasvatī where he had intercourse with her and she gave birth to nine sons as follows :-

1. Mālākāra.
2. Karmakāra.
3. Saṁkhakāra.
4. Kumbhakāra.
5. Sūtrakāra.
6. Svarṇakāra.
7. Citrakāra.
8. Kāṁsyakāra.
9. Kuvindaka.

(1.10.18-20).

KĀŚYAPA AND KALĀVATĪ.

The king Drumila and his wife Kalāvati were living in Kānyakubja. They had no child and Drumila was unable to procreate a child, so he permitted his wife to have sex-relation with the sage Kāśyapa, but Kāśyapa denied. At that time Menakā happened to pass by that way. Kāśyapa saw Menakā and his semen fell down on the earth. Kalāvati ate it and then she was pregnant (1.20.13-46).

III. FAMILY.

INTRODUCTION.

"The family is the backbone of the society. It provides a background and furnishes opportunities for a healthy and all-round development of an individual. It designates that portion of human experience which has resulted from the enlarging, refining and lengthening of the behaviour that among the higher animals gathers about reproduction and care of offspring".¹¹⁷

In this section the information of the BVP about the concept of the family, the different members of the family, the status and position of the father and the son are examined.

THE CONCEPT OF THE FAMILY.

The BVP does not state directly the concept of the family, but it can be reconstructed by piecing together various sentiments expressed about it.

It is observed in the BVP that a man or a woman felt miserable and unhappy if he/she had no issue (3.2.23, 3.5.5) and this incidentally reminds one of the sociological concept of family, viz. that even an elementary family is said to be complete, if there is a child.

KINSHIP TERMS.

The BVP does not throw more light on the mutual relations amongst the different members of the family but it

notes only the terms of kinship. According to the BVP there are three types of relations. viz. Vidyāja, Yonīja, and prītiya (1.10.164).

In the society one has relations with others in different ways and these are designated as -

1. Vidyāja - a relationship by learning or teaching some one.
2. Yonīja - a relationship which is obtained by birth.
It is the principal relation.
3. Prītiya - an ordinary relationship with others.

The BVP also states one more type of relationship, viz. "nāmasaṁbandha" which denotes a man's sexual relationship with a woman other than his wife or a woman's sexual relationship with a man other than her husband (1.10.166).

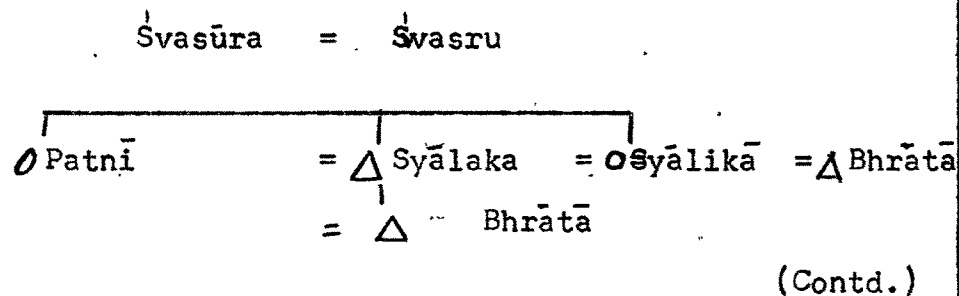
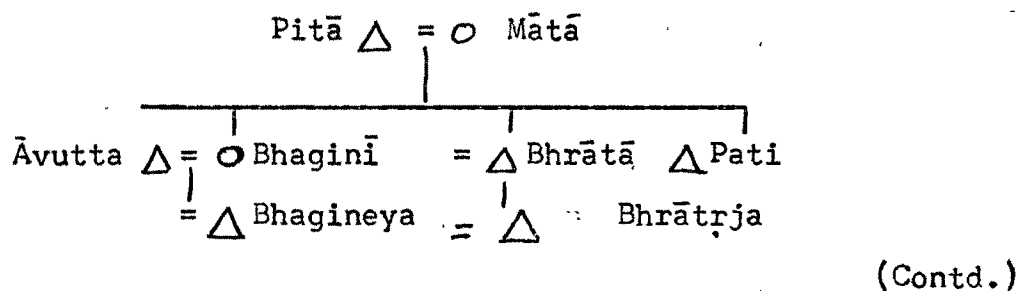
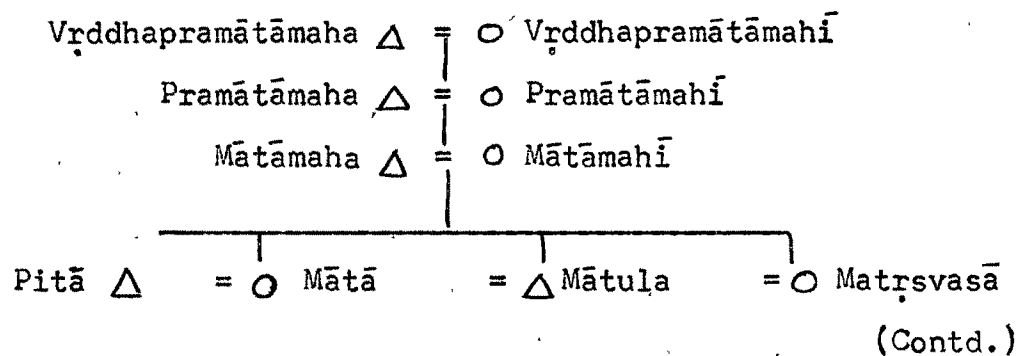
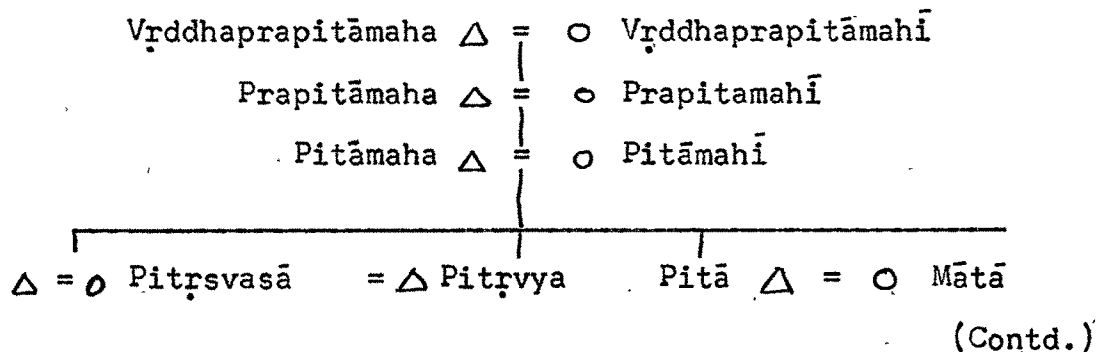
The BVP mentions the terms of kinship as follows :-

<u>Term of kinship</u>	<u>Description.</u>
1. Pitā, Tāta, Janaka.	- Father.
2. Amba, Mātā, Jananī.	- Mother.
3. Pitāmaha	- Father's father.
4. Prāpitāmaha	- Grandfather's father.
5. Mātāmaha	- Mother's father.
6. Pramātāmaha	- Mother's Grandfather.
7. Vṛddhapramātāmaha	- Mother's Grandfather's father.
8. Vṛddhaprapitāmahī	- Father's Grandfather's mother.
9. Pitāmahī	- Father's mother.
10. Prapitāmahī	- Grandfather's mother.
11. Mātāmahī	- Mother's mother.
12. Pramātāmahī	- Pramataamaha's wife.

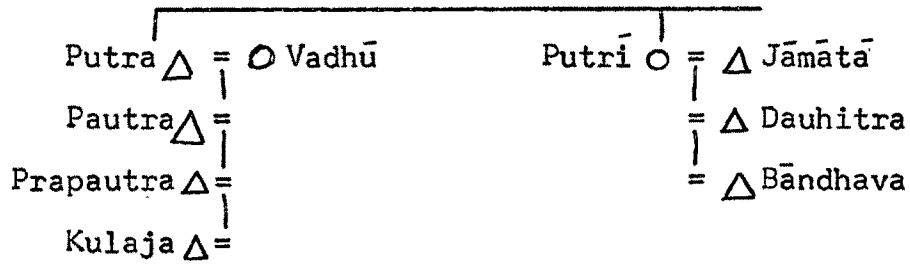
13. Vṛddhapramātāmāhī	- Vṛddhapramatamaha's wife.
14. Pitṛvya	- Father's brother.
15. Mātula	- Mother's brother.
16. Pitṛśvasā	- Father's sister.
17. Matr̥śvasā	- Mother's sister.
18. Putra	- Son.
19. Vadhū	- Son's wife.
20. Jāmātā	- Daughter's husband.
21. Devara	- Husband's brother.
22. Nanāndr̥	- Husband's sister.
23. Śvaśūra	- Husband's/wife's father.
24. Śvaśrū	- Husband's/wife's mother.
25. Bhāryā, Jāyā, Priyā, Kāntā, Patnī	- Wife.
26. Bhartā, Svāmī, Priyā, Kānta, Pati	- Husband.
27. Śyālaka	- Wife's brother.
28. Śyālikā	- Wife's sister.
29. Bhrātā	- Brother.
30. Bhaginī	- Sister.
31. Bhrātā	- Wife's sister's husband.
32. Bhṛātr̥ja	- Brother's son.
33. Bhāgineya, Bhaginīja	- Sister's son.
34. Āvutta	- Sister's husband.
35. Pautra	- Grand son.
36. Prapautra	- Grand son's son.
27. Kulaja	- Grand son's Grandson.
38. Dauhitra	- Daughter's son.

39. Bāndhava - Daughter's Grandson, Sister's son.
40. Bandhu - Son's/daughter's father-in-law (1.10.139-160).

The genealogy of kinship can be shown as follows :-



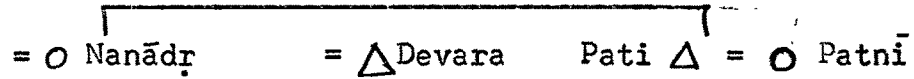
Bhartā Δ = \circ Bhāryā



The above mentioned description is given considering a man as Ego.

A woman as Ego

Śvaśura Δ = \circ Śvaśru



KINDS OF SON.

The ancient Indian law recognised thirteen kinds of sonship. viz. 1. Aurasa

2. Putrikāputra
3. Kṣetraja
4. Datta
5. Kṛita
6. Kṛtrima
7. Gudhotpanna
8. Apavidhha
9. Kāmīna
10. Sahodha
11. Paunarbhava
12. Svayāmdatta
13. Śaudra. 118

The BVP mentions with the different terminology, following seven kinds of sonship (2.59.70, 3.8.49).

1. Varaja
2. Vīryaja
3. Kṣetraja
4. Pālaka
5. Vidyāja
6. Mantraja
7. Grhita.

These may be identified as follows :-

1. Vīryaja = Aurasa
2. Kṣetraja = Kṣetraja
3. Grhita = Datta
4. Pālaka = A son who is dependent on some other person who treats him as his own son.
5. Vidyāja = A student,
6. Mantraja = A son who can be got by a mantra of any deity. As stated another place, a servant, a pupil and a man who comes to shelter were also treated as a son.
7. Varaja = A son who is obtained by practising penance to please any deity.
Brhaspati was the Varajaputra.
(2.59.69).

STATUS AND POSITION OF THE SON.

The yearning for a son especially the valient ones is as old as the Rgveda.¹¹⁹ In the BVP the yearning for the son is also heard of the sons are said to be saviours from pum

hell.¹²⁰

The birth of a son was an event of joy and welcome in glaring contradiction to that of a daughter which was an event of sorrow and misery. A son is equated to a hundred sacrifices.

One should not go to practise penance without having a son; if he goes his penance becomes fruitless and he goes to hell (2.46.58, 4.113.6).

A son was compared love as that of hundred wives combined (1.24.28). It was considered as an event of joy for the father who desired that his son should surpass him (1.24.29).

FATHER.

The BVP does not throw any special light on the status and position of the father but according to it the following ones; viz. Janmadātā, Annadātā, Vidyādātā, Kanyādātā, Bhayatrātā; are to be looked upon as a father. And also one's elder brother is looked upon as one's father (1.10.153, 1.23.4, 3.8.47, 4.35.57).

Thus the word "pitā" has an extension in meaning from the point of view of the social conditions and the familiar one reflecting thereby the reverential position held by the elder brother in the family.

IV. POSITION OF WOMEN.

The attitude of a community to women has a great social significance in any society some of the aspects of their position have already been discussed under "marriage" and "family". Some further aspects are discussed here.

WOMEN AND HIGHER STUDIES.

Women were permitted for higher studies in the Vedic times, but with the lapse of time the situation changed. The cause of women's education suffered a good deal after 300 B.C. when the practice of early marriage came into vogue. Even the Upanayana ceremony was now reduced to a mere formality and then it was dropped altogether putting an end to her education.¹²¹ Lopāmudrā, Viśvavārā, Siktānivāvarī and Ghoṣā are the renowned Vedic poetesses.¹²²

The names of Maitreyī and Gārgī of the Upaniṣadas are too well known to need any mention. The ancient grammarians were also familiar with woman teacher.¹²³

The BVP throws light neither on their education nor on their educational system of women. It does not record any instance regarding education in their case, but it notes the following instances regarding women and Yogic practice:-

Vedavatī gave up her life by Yoga when Rāvaṇa tried to molest her (2.14.19). Manoramā the wife of Kārtavīrya also gave up her life by Yoga (3.35.5) and the wives of Gandharvas

also gave up their life by Yoga (1.13.4). Mahālakṣmī assumed various forms by the power of Yoga (2.35.16).

WOMEN AS WIFE.

The dignity of a woman as a wife which was survived in the mother, the progenitor of the Ārya and a member of unique importance in the Āryan family, was recognised as early as the Rgvedic Society.¹²⁴

She symbolised to her everything i.e. to say she was the friend, philosopher and guide to her husband.¹²⁵ Manu¹²⁶ states that continuation of the family depends on her and for this she was called the Jāyā.¹²⁷ The BVP also expresses the same sentiment when it says the function of the wife is to beget sons (1.24.28).

According to ancient Indian ideals, the wife is the better half (ardhāṅganā) of man and he completed himself by taking a wife and continued the thread of the family through her.¹²⁸ The BVP expresses the similar feelings when it states the very function of a wife is to procreate a child (1.24.28).

The BVP has an eulogy of the husband when it states that to a woman, her husband is her very eyes, path, life, wealth, God, religious merit, penance, duties, author, creator, ruler, wisher and protector in short, the husband is every thing (1.15.13-15, 1.9.63-65, 2.42.21-23, 4.57.18).

A wife should consider her husband more than a hundred sons (1.9.68, 2.46.82, 3.44.11). A wife should not insult her husband, if she does; her penance, religious gifts and vows bear no reward (2.46.33), even if a woman has her husband who is blameworthy degraded, stupid, poor, imbecile she

should consider him as Visnu (3.44.11-13). If the husband was satisfied with her, all the gods were satisfied. For a wife, the husband is Janārdana. The gods even wish to touch a woman who eats the remnant of her husband's meal (4.57.20-21).

For a wife, 'patisevā' is all in all (4.57.10). All the vows, gifts, penance, muttering, worshipping and offerings do not form even one sixteenth part of the 'patisevā' (4.17.70-73, 4.24.34-36). If a husband is at fault, his wife should tolerate it, if she can not tolerate she should die (4.57.17).
PATIVRATĀ.

The Mbh and the Purāṇas contain hyperbolical descriptions of the power of the pativrata.¹²⁹

The BVP has some references bringing out the importance of a pativrata woman. The power of a pativrata is the highest among all the powers (1.13.77). To have a pativrata wife is to have the happiness of heaven (2.6.66). The pativrata woman should not talk him with anger. All the holy places are said to reside in the feet of the pativrata and the earth is sacred with the feet of the pativrata. Pativrata can burn the three worlds also (4.83.117-130). The pativrata is the penance for a pativrata woman (4.59.73). Fire and not even the sun can be compared with the pativrata (3.44.14).

WOMAN AS MOTHER.

Motherhood has been the cherished ideal of every Hindu woman and the apotheosis of the mother has reached a greater height in India than anywhere else.

The MS (2.145) says that one ācārya excels ten upādhyāyas in glory a father excels a hundred ācāryas in

glory, but a mother excels even a thousand fathers in glory.

According to the BVP a mother excels a hundred fathers in glory (2.30.193, 4.59.144, 4.72.10). The mother is the form of ~~earth~~ earth (4.72.11).

The BVP states that the following should be looked upon as one's mother:-

1. A food-giver's wife
2. A sister,
3. A wife of one's teacher,
4. One's own mother,
5. A step mother,
6. A daughter,
7. A son's wife,
8. Mother's mother,
9. Father's mother,
10. Mother-in-law,
11. Father's sister,
12. Uncle's wife,
13. Maternal uncle's wife,
14. Father's wife,
15. A pregnant woman,
16. The female counterpart of one's favourite deity (3.15.41-43, 3.8.48, 1.10.154-155, 4.35.53-56, 4.59.55-57).

POSITION OF THE WIDOW.

The attitude towards a widow was very pitiable.¹³⁰ The BVP is silent about the remarriage of a widow. It directs that a widow should take her meal only once a day; she should avoid fragrant substances, oil and extremely beautiful clothes, vehicle, pilgrimage, dance, song, cot, tobacco and fried food. She should observe Ekādaśī and Janmāṣṭamī Vratas (4.83.93-104) and should do double the purification than that done by any other Brahmin (1.26.31).

THE CUSTOM OF SUTTEE.

The custom of suttee was widely prevalent in ancient times and the custom existed among the Āryanas in the Indo-European period. The Vedic period, however, shows that the custom of suttee had died down long ago.

There are stray references to the custom of suttee from about 300 B.C. by about 400 A.D. the custom gradually came into general vogue and began to become popular in Kṣatriya circles and from about 700 A.D. Fiery advocates began to come forward to extol the custom of suttee in increasing of numbers.¹³¹

The BVP records an instance of Reṇukā being a suttee, Jamadagni died in battle, fighting with Kārtavīrya. At that time Bhṛgu advised Reṇukā to become suttee, after her husband, and further added that if a woman became a Sūttee after her husband she got religious merit and if her dead husband was a vaiṣṇava, she went to the Vaikuṇṭha(3.28.15-17).

Parśurāma, the son of Reṇukā, enkindled the fire and thereby Reṇukā went to the Vaikuṇṭha by becoming suttee after

her husband (3.28.42-48). Bhṛgu said that if any one of the following i.e. girl, child, pregnant woman, pre-menstruated woman, unchaste, diseased lady, becomes a suttee, she cannot gain her husband after becoming suttee (3.28.11-12).

PROSTITUTION.

From early times prostitution has existed in all the countries.¹³² The RV refers to woman who were common to many men and in the Mbh it is an established institution.¹³³ In the BVP, while defining a prostitute Kṛṣṇa said to Nanda that a woman who enjoys - goes for intercourse with four men, is a prostitute (4.75.64). Mohinī was the prostitute (4.33.17). A prostitute was considered as ~~not~~ a good omen (3.16.23).

ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMEN IN GENERAL.

"The degree of freedom given to women to move about in society and to take part in public life gives an idea of the nature of its administration and enables us to know how far it had realised the difficult truth that women too have a contribution of their own to make to its development and progress.¹³⁴

The BVP states that all the women are the parts of primordial matter (Prakṛti) (2.1.146, 4.84.24). Women have a very soft heart (2.11.44). Manu (9.3) as well as the BVP also state that a woman do not deserve freedom. In her childhood the father should protect her, in the young age her husband should do it whereas in old age her son should do it (3.4.6, 4.17.81).

The BVP gives three fold classification based on their moral conduct viz. - Sādhvī, bhogyā and Kulatā (1.23.21).

Among these a Sādhvī serves her husband because she gets fame by serving him (1.23.22, 1.24.10), while a bhogyā serves him because of clothes, ornaments, sexual-pleasures and symptions-dinner (1.23.23-24) and a kulaṭā serves her husband with a fraud and not through genuine devotion. Moreover she destroys her husband's family and she is a burning charcoal to the family (1.23.25-27) (4.84.31-32).

At another place the BVP states that asādhvī women are of three kinds viz :- Mukhaduṣṭā, Yonīduṣṭā and Kalahapriyā (3.2.27). Ladies of these types are said not to make a happy home, because the husband is advised to resort to the forest (2.6.68).

Once Kṛṣṇa M told Nanda that none should trust upon women because they destroy the path of salvation (4.75.20); Brahmā also told Nārada that women should not be trusted, because they destroy men. The girls born in an ignoble family, spoiled because of some paternal fault and immodest in nature are naturally free i.e. uncontrolled in all their actions and hence a man should not marry such a girl but he should marry a girl born in a good family (1.24.11-14).

If a man insults a woman he insults the prakṛti. If he worships a woman who is having a husband and a son or if he worships a girl eight years old, with clothes and ornaments, he worships the prakṛti (2.1.143-145).

If a woman approaches anybody for intercourse, he should not deny it (4.30.88). None can know a character of a woman (4.23.83) and a woman is a basket of all the faults (4.18.109). Women's heart is like an edge of a sword,¹³⁵ her face is like

a lotus and her speech like nectar. Women have eight times more sex urge, double the hunger, four times more cruelty and six times more anger than the those of men.¹³⁶(1.23.29-33).

A man can control a woman so far he has wealth (1.23.36) so wealth is a controlling factor for woman according to the BVP. If a woman controls a man, i.e. if he is a henpecked one, he is trustless i.e. miserable. Manes and gods do not accept offering from such a man (2.16.85-89). If a person gives his handsome and servicable wife with ornaments to any Brahmin, he is said to go to candraloka (2.27.27).

The BVP has some deprecatory stanzas for women, when Nārada points out the superiority of devotion over the married life. Once Śaṅkara said that woman's nature is fidele and wavering and exciter and increaser of passion, obstructive to religious devotion, a brahmāstra of Kāmadeva, destroyer of indifference to worldly objects, a bunch of fault, a fraud incarnate (1.6.6-9) and a bolt to the gateway to liberation (3.6.54-59).

Elsewhere Gaṇeśa and Durvāsas also express a similar sentiment that marriage is hardship and misery, destroyer of penance, noose of the worldly bondage, a bunch of several faults and destroyer of knowledge and wisdom (3.46.23-26, 4.24.17-18).

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90. Polygyny is that form of Union in which a man has more than one wife at a time. Cf. Kapadia K.M. Marriage and Family in India. P.97.
91. Kane P.V. Op. Cit. P. 550.
92. Polyandry is a form of Union in which a woman has more than one husband at a time or in which brothers share a wife or wives in common. Kapadia K.M. Op. Cit. P.52.

93. Kane P.V. Op. Cit. P.554.
94. Altekar A.S. Position of women in Hindu civilization.
P.132-134.
95. Upadhyay B.S. Women in Rgveda P.112.
96. Kane P.V. Op. Cit.P.516.
97. Pande R.B. Hindu Saṁskāra P.204.
98. Kane P.V. Op. Cit. P.521.
99. Dr. Ludwik sternbach opines that there are eleven forms of marriage. In addition to the above eight forms there are two special forms named Svayaṁvara (1) in which there was the absolute freedom of the bride to choose her husband e.g. Sāvitrī and Damayantī.
(ii) The bride is won by a feat of prowess as in the case of Sītā and Draupadī (Vīryaśulka). The Gandharva-vivāha is to be divided into two forms. i.e. Gandharvavivāha combined with the Rākṣasavivāha and the Gandharvavivāha not combined with the Rākṣasavivāha. From the legal point of view he categorises the first four as orthodox forms of marriage, while the last four as unorthodox ones. He brings also out the sociological implications of the different forms of marriage from the customs prevalent amongst the primitive tribes and communities. Vide his article "Forms of Marriage in ancient India and their development". Bharatiya Vidya Vol.XII 1951 Pp. 62-138.
100. De.S.K. "Indian Erotics in its origin and Development"
P.K. Gode Com. Vol. Part II P.75.
101. Kāmasūtra. 1.3.1.

102. De.S.K. Op. Cit.P.75.
103. Kāmasūtra 2.2.3-5.
104. Ibid. 2.3.11.
105. Ratirahasya P.64 ff.
106. Kāmasūtra 2.2.
107. Ratirahasya P. 58 ff.
108. Kāmasūtra 2.3-5.
109. Kāmasūtra 2.8-32, 39.
110. Ratimañjarī P.18.
111. Gītagovinda 2.1.7.
112. Mys. 1.10.11.
113. Kane P.V. Op. Cit.P.505.
114. Ellwood Charles. A. "Marriage" E.A. Vol.XVIII.
115. Kane P.V. Op. Cit. P.534.
116. Agrawala V.S.Harsacharita Eka Sāmskrāika Adhyāna
P.85-86.
117. Mac Iver Robert. A Text book of Society P.196.
118. Kapadia K.M. Hindu Kinship. P.112.
119. Kantawala S.G.Op. Cit. P.87.
120. Cf. MS 9.138.
121. Altekar A.S. Op. Cit. P.18-19.
122. Swami Madhavananda - Great Women of India. P.26.
123. Kane P.V. Op. Cit. P.366.
124. Upadhyay B.S. Op. Cit.P.129.
125. Raghuvamśa 8.67.
126. MS 9.28.
127. Cf. AB 33.1.
128. SB. 5.1.6.10.

129. Kane P.V. Op. Cit. P.567.
130. Bhp. 92.5.
131. Altekar A.S. Op. Cit.P.140 ff.
132. Shadwell Arthur 'Prostitution' EB Vol. XVIII P.518.
133. Kane P.V. Op. Cit. P.637.
134. Altekar A.S. Op. Cit.P.2.
135. Cf. RV. 10.95.15.
136. Cf. MS. 9.14.