

CHAPTER : II

SOCIETY

The term 'Society' is used for the whole tissue of human relations whether organised or not. The essence of society is not just relations but beings in their mutual relationships. Thus the study of society takes into account the institutions of caste or class, those of the āśramas, marital laws, customs, etc. family life, position of women, food and drink, dress and decoration, customs and conventions, etc.

The social data from the LP are discussed under the following five heads viz. (1) social organisation (2) marriage (3) family (4) position of women and (4) social and religious life.

Section : 1

Social Organisation

Introduction :

The Indian social organisation is based on varna and āśrama systems. These two systems are interrelated and inter co-ordinated parts of a composite whole. The difference between the two lies in the manner of approach and emphasis in the organisation of man's life and activities with regard to his duties.

Varna and Jāti :

Varna and Jāti are the two central concepts of the caste system. Varna originally¹ meant 'colour', but as a social term it meant order or class. Its origin can be traced to the vedas. The four Varnas are mentioned in the Puruṣasūkta (RV.10.90.12), but the word Varna is absent there. With the passage of time, however, the word underwent a semantic change and came to signify "social division". Dr.Kane² states that "the idea of varna was based originally on race, culture, character and profession. It takes account mainly of the moral and intellectual worth of man and is a system of classes which appears more or less natural".

Historically "the word "Jati" in the sense of caste can be traced back at least to the times of Nirukta"³. It "hardly occurs in the sense of caste in the Vedic literature"⁴. The word 'Jati' implies the 'heredity connotation', while the word 'varna' implies 'the colour connotation' which was so strong that "when the classes came to be regularly described as varnas, four different colours were assigned to the four classes by which their members were supposed to be distinguished"⁵.

In the LP (I.23.26-27) Lord Śiva told Brahmā that these four who are of all kinds of forms will become his sons. Since, they are of different colours, their subjects too will be of different colours (Sarvavarnatvaṁ).

Varna System :

The LP (I.46.⁴⁶47-47) says that in the five continents beginning with plaksadvīpa and ending with śākadvīpa, the Dharma, was promulgated in accordance with the division of four varṇas and āśramas of life. These four varṇas are : Brāhmanas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras (I.52.29).

Brāhmanas :

They formed the first and the foremost order of the society.

The vedic studies, offering sacrifices and making gifts were the common duties of the twice-born i.e. Brāhmanas, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas. The special duty laid down for the Brāhmanas was the teaching of the vedas (I.40.5).

The Brāhmanas and learning had become indissolubly connected in the early vedic period⁶. That Brāhmanas studied the vedas and secured proficiency in them is evident from some of the epithets of Brāhmaṇa respected at Umā-Maheśvara vrata, e.g. Vidyāvinaya saṁpanna, Vedapārāga, etc. (I.84.42).

The periods of āśā^u (impurities due to death) are less in case of Brāhmanas viz. ten days of impurity due to death for Brāhmanas, twelve for Kṣatriyas, half a month for Vaiśyas and a month for Śūdras⁷. The LP (I.89.79) records that the āśā^u of the Brāhmanas is upto the collection of bones after cremation and they are purified merely by taking bath.

Since the Vedic period Brāhmanas had come to be eulogised as gods and were held superior merely on account of birth⁸.

In the LP (I.35.4-9) there is an episode of a dispute arising between king Kṣupa and Brāhmaṇa. ^{Dadhīca as to who was superior: a kṣatriya or a brāhmaṇa} Kṣupa said that the king holds the physical body of the eight quarters⁹. Hence, he was Īśvara and should not be dishonoured. On hearing the opinion of Kṣupa, Dadhīca struck Kṣupa on the head with his left fist, believing in his own supremacy as a Brāhmaṇa. But the powerful Kṣupa hit Dadhīca with his thunderbolt. Out of sorrow he remembered sage Bhārgava. Bhārgava, the best among the embodied beings, came there and by his yogic power he stitched the body of Dadhīca who had been struck by the thunderbolt and advised to worship Śiva. Dadhīca followed his instructions. King Kṣupa obtained the help of Lord Viṣṇu, but could not harass Dadhīca. Kṣupa was extremely afflicted and dejected. He honoured and adored Dadhīca. He told Dadhīca that such devotion is difficult of access to wicked persons, to base kṣatriyas like him. Dadhīca advised Kṣupa that the Brāhmanas should be worshipped by gods, kings and by the different groups of people. The Brāhmanas alone are strong and powerful (I.35.4-30 and I.36.69-75).

From this episode we can infer that as the LP is a śaivite Purāṇa, it suggests the superiority of Śiva over Viṣṇu.

While performing Umā-Maheśvaravratā the LP states that, in the month of Āśāḍha, a thousand Brāhmanas shall be duly fed. A Brāhmaṇa who is richly endowed with learning and humility and who has mastered the vedas and who is in the first āśrama,

shall be duly and devoutly worshipped. A virgin of good waist, accompanied by the necessary requisites for the whole life shall be offered to him. So also a piece of land, a cow and a bull and a house shall be offered to him alongwith the different kinds of divine perquisites as massive as the Meru mountain (I.84.41-44).

Ksatriyas :

They form the next order of the society. The term ksatriya is used in the RV frequently as an epithet of gods¹⁰ and in some stanzas it means a king or a noble man¹¹. But its use in the sense of a 'varna' (i.e. one of the four varnas), is observable particularly in the later Vedic literature¹². The LP says that only Ksatriyas become rulers (I.40.12). The king holds the physical body of the eight guardians of the quarters, hence he is Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirṛti, Varuṇa, Vāyu, Soma and Dhanad; so he should not be dishonoured (I.35.5-6). The king is greater than the greatest¹³. (I.35.7).

The special function of Ksatriyas was to protect the people¹⁴ (I.40,24).

The LP throws light on the duties of the king. The king Trayyāruṇa, the father of satvyavrata, abandoned his son (satyavrata) because he was defiled by the evil. The father told him to go and live among the Cāṇḍālas. Satyavrata went to the Cāṇḍāla colony, while the father went to the forest (I.ch.66). This incident suggests the following points :-

(i) The king wanted to teach a lesson in the society that everybody is equal in the eye of law.

(ii) When a son did something wrong, the father considered it as his own fault and suffered a voluntarily punishment.

Vaiśyas :

The LP does not give much information about the Vaiśyas who constitute the third order of the society. The word "Vaiśya" is used in I.52.29.

Sūdras :

They constitute the fourth order of the society. The word "Sūdra" is used in I.52.29.

The term "Sūdra" occurs in the Puruṣasūkta (RV.10.90.12). The RV knows the Dasyas and Dāsas both as aborigines and as subjected slaves and Sūdras of the later vedic texts were certainly aborigines who were reduced to subjection by the Aryans. The term mostly indicated those who were beyond the pale of the Aryan state¹⁵.

The special duty of the Sūdras was the service of the twice-born and their means of subsistence were handicraft and by buying and selling¹⁶.

The above stated condition of Sūdras in changed in the kali age. While narrating the kali age, the LP states that in kali age Sūdras claim kinship with the Brāhmanas through their learning,

through interdining and sharing seats and beds. Kings become mostly 'sūdras and they harass the Brāhmanas. 'Sūdras adopt the conduct of life prescribed for the Brāhmanas and the Brāhmanas adopt the ways of 'Sūdras. (I.40.6-8). 'Sūdras acquire knowledge and are honoured by the Brāhmanas. The Brāhmanas depend on 'sūdras. The 'sūdras proud of their intellect remain sitting in their seats and do not stir on seeing the Brāhmanas. The petty-minded 'sūdras strike the leading Brāhmanas. Out of humility, the Brāhmanas keep their hand over their mouth and whisper into the ears of base 'sūdras. Knowing that 'sūdras are seated on lofty seats amidst Brāhmanas, the king does not punish them. People of meagre learning, fortune and strength worship 'sūdras with flowers, scents and other auspicious things. Arrogant 'sūdras do not even glance at the excellent Brāhmanas. Waiting for their opportunity to serve them, the Brāhmanas stand at their thresholds. The Brāhmanas depending upon 'sūdras serve them when they return seated in their vehicles and enlogise them by means of eulogies and prayers (I.40.11-18). They (the 'sūdras) begin the practice of dharma with white teeth, deerskin and Rudrākṣa beads, with shaven heads and ochre-coloured robes (I.40.34). They learn the Vedas and become experts in the meaning of dharma. Kings born of 'sūdra wombs perform horse-sacrifices (I.40. 41-42).

The above stated behaviour of 'sūdras in the kali age suggests that the Brāhmanas did not enjoy their ancient glories and powers, while 'sūdras were getting in much power. Secondly, this also shows that the condition is something

against the canon of Dharmaśāstras.

Āsrama system :

Next to the varna-system the āsrama-system constitutes one of the important features of Indian social organisation.

The word "āsrama" is derived from (ā + 'sram) 'to: exert¹⁷ oneself, therefore it may mean by derivation (i) a place where austerities are performed, a hermitage and (ii) the action of performing such austerities¹⁸.

Literarily, an āsrama is a 'halting or 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 āśramas, then, are to be regarded as resting places during one's journey on the way to final beatitude, the final aim of life. The Mbh (Cr.ed.12.234.15) says that the four stages of life form a ladder or flight or four steps. That flight attaches to Brahman.

The āśramas are four in number :

- (i) Brahmacharya, that of a student.
- (ii) The Grhastha, that of a married man, the house-holder.
- (iii) Vānaprastha, that of retired life in the forest,
after abandoning the home preparatory to complete
renouncement of worldly relations and
- (iv) Samnyāsa, the life of complete renunciation of worldly
relations and attachments.

The LP records that in the Kṛtayuga, there was a well-defined arrangement of castes and stages of life (I.29.18-19). Manu expounds the theory of the four āśramas¹⁹. From the times of the most ancient Dharmasāstra, the number of āśramas has been four, though there are slight differences in the nomenclature and in their sequence²⁰.

The nomenclature as found in the LP (I.10.11) to denote the persons in the different stage of life is as follows :

- (i) Brahmācārī = A student
- (ii) Gṛhastha = A house-holder
- (iii) Vānaprastha = A forest-hermit
- (iv) Yati = An ascetic

The salient features of the different stages of life as outlined in the LP are as follows :

(i) The stage of a student :

An individual enters upon the ^{first} finest stage of life with the performance of the upanayan ceremony, with which is inaugurated the era of discipline and regulated life. This ceremony marked the commencement of the Vedic studies at the teacher's house where he had to lead disciplined and celebrate life and help and co-ordinate with the teacher in the discharge of various duties—menial and intellectual²¹. Of course, there is no information regarding apanayana ceremony in the LP.

The student at first learns the Vedas with great devotion

from his - preceptor. He had always to ponder over their meanings and understand the Dharma (I.29.70-71).

A very high degree of reverence to the teacher was expected of the student. He had to carry out the behests of his preceptor, whether he was with or without good qualities (I.85.166). Whatever he does in the presence of the preceptor was to be done with the permission of the preceptor viz. going, standing, sleeping, eating, etc.²² Neither in front of the preceptor nor in the presence of the deity, he was to be complacently seated as it pleased him, since the preceptor is the lord himself and his house is the temple of lord (I.85.167-169). If one comes into contact with the preceptor one shall incur the benefit of his holy rites. A man eschews sins due to his contact with the preceptor. The contented preceptor burns sins by means of the power of his mantra. If the preceptor is satisfied Brahmā, Rudra, Viṣṇu, Devas and sages are also satisfied and they bless the student. One shall never infuriate the preceptor physically, mentally or verbally²³. By his wrath are burned the longevity, fortune, wisdom and good holy rites. The sacrifices of those who infuriate him are futile. His japas and other observances are also futile. The LP declares that no doubt need be entertained in this respect. One shall assiduously refrain from making any statement against the preceptor²⁴. If out of great delusion he speaks it out, he will fall into Raurava hell. Never should one falsely cheat the preceptor mentally, or verbally or physically or monetarily. If he proclaims the ^{good} ~~wicked~~ qualities of his preceptor, he will

have the benefit of all good qualities. Whether directed or not, he shall always do what is beneficent and pleasing to the preceptor. If he does anything against him, he goes down and revolves there itself. Hence, he should be worshipped and saluted always. The disciple shall speak to the preceptor only after getting permission from him even when he is nearby, otherwise he shall not look at him straight in the face²⁵. The disciple who adheres to all these rules, who is devout, engaged in japa and who does everything pleasing to his preceptor deserves to be a disciple (I.85.170-183) He shall remain a disciple till he completes all learning or upto twelve years (I.29.70). After obtaining the preceptor's permission along with the excellent path of knowledge he shall move round the world (I.89.6). He shall then take the sacred ablution at the conclusion of his student life (I.29.71-72).

The stage of a House-holder :

After finishing the student life, he enters into the stage of a house-holder. The stage of house holder is natural and inevitable for most of people. Kantawala showing its importance stages that, "The Hindu sages of great sagacity provided a healthy checking to this disturbing instincts and provided a chanel for the healthy development of body and intellect by laying down the brilliant scheme of the āsramas"²⁶.

The LP says that the shall marry a wife, and procreate thereafter sons of holy rites. He shall then allot befitting means of livelihood to his sons. Then he shall perform the rites

of worship to the lord by performing Agnistom and other sacrifices²⁷ (I.29.72-73).

The stage of a Forest-hermit :

The man entered the stage of a forest hermit after having seen the offspring of his sons and the stoop of his body for the purpose of purifying his soul. The LP says that after going to the forest²⁸ he shall worship the great soul. Maintaining a diet of milk and controlling his senses, he shall worship gods in the fire, for a period of twelve years, or twelve months or twelve fortnights or twelve days. Then he shall offer in the same fire all vessels used for the sacrifice. He shall consign all the earthen and wooden vessels to the waters and the metallic ones, to his belongings to the Brāhmanas without any hesitation. He shall prostrate on the ground and make obeisance to the preceptor (I.29.74-75).

The LP presents the instance of king Ambarīṣa, who entrusted the kingdom to the care of ministers and became a sage. He performed a severe penance repeating the names of lord Nārāyaṇa for a thousand years (II.5.22).

The stage of an Ascetic :

The individual entered the last āsrama viz. that of an ascetic casting off all attachments with the world²⁹. The LP states that becoming detached he shall then renounce everything³⁰ and become an ascetic. He shall have off his hairs along with tuft, and cast off his sacred thread. He shall perform five offerings

in the water saying "Bhūh svāhā" (I.29.76-77). One who has refrained from all attachments is glorified as a yogin³¹ (I.10.24).

The detached state is nicely described in the LP. That the person is neither excited when calamities occur nor is he overjoyed when he has pleasant results³². Absolute cessation of joyousness, affliction and despondency is detachment. Renunciation of the fruits of all activities committed or omitted is called samnyāsa³³ (I.10.26-27).

There are certain rules for ascetic (Yogin or bhikṣu).

He shall traverse the path sanctified by the eyes; shall drink the water rendered pure by a cloth; shall speak out words sanctified by truth and shall practise those things that are purified by the mind³⁴. He shall not go anywhere to receive hospitality as a guest or to partake of śrāddhas and yajñas. It is thought that a yogin will be non-violent only in this manner. He will go for alms to a house where all people have taken food but still there is a plenty of fire without smoke³⁵. But he shall not go the same house everyday. In that case people will insult him and the enemies will disgrace and humiliate him; so one shall beg for alms in the proper manner. He shall not defile the dharma of good men. One shall beg for alms in the houses of vagrant mendicants and in the houses situated in the forests. The latter shall be the better mode of sustenance. Thereafter he shall go in for alms at places of humble house holders who have faith, who have control over the sense-organs

and who are noble-souled scholars of the vedas. Thereafter he shall go in for alms in the houses of the non-defiled and non-fallen. The practice of begging for alms from people of other castes is considered the meanest of all modes. Any of the following things can be received in the form of alms, viz. gruel, butter milk, milk, barley water, ripe-fruits and roots, bits of grains, oil-cakes and powdered fried grains. Of these two persons, viz. one who begs for alms by means that are justifiable and the other who (by way of penance) drinks a drop of water by means of the tip of darbha grass once in a month, the former excels the latter. Bhaikṣya is so called because it removes the sins of one who is afraid of old age, death, re-birth, residence in hells, etc. (I.89.7-20).

The foregoing review of the āśrama system suggests that "the theory of varṇa dealt with man as a member of the Aryan society and laid down what his rights, functions, privileges, responsibilities and duties were as a member of that society. It was addressed to man in the mass. The theory of āśramas addressed itself to the individual. It tells him what his spiritual goal is, how he is to order his life and what preparations are required to attain that goal. The theory of āśramas was truly a sublime conception"³⁶ and it has won the admiration of Deussen who remarks that "the whole history of mankind has not much that equals the grandeur of this thought"³⁷.

Section : II

MARRIAGE

Introduction :

"Marriage is one of the fundamental institutions of the human society and its study enables one to understand and appreciate the spirit of its culture and civilisation in as much as its repercussions and percolations are felt on the varied aspects of the social organisation"³⁸. Several words were employed in ancient India to denote the idea of marriage³⁹.

Forms of marriage :

Polyandry, Polygamy and monogamy are the various forms of marriage having a variation in the number of partners, while in the traditional eight forms of marriage, there is a difference in ritual and mode. The LP provides no information about polyandry.

Polygyny :

Polygyny is that form of union in which a man has more than one wife at a time.

Some cases of polygymists are met with in the LP. Prācetas Dakṣa Prajāpati and Vīriṇi had sixty daughters out of which, ten were given to Dharma, thirteen to Kaśyapa, twenty seven to Soma, two to Bhṛguputra, two to Kṛśāśva and two to Aṅgiras⁴⁰. (I.63.12-14).

Vṛṣṇi had two wives : Gāndhārī and Mādri (I.69.10).

The following is the list of Polygynists.

<u>Name of the Polygymist</u>	<u>Name/number of the consorts</u>
1. Dharma	Ten daughters of Dakṣa, viz. Marutvatī, Vāsu, Yāmi, Lambā, Bhānu, Arundhatī, Saṅkalpā, Muhūrtā, Sādhyā and Viśvā (I.63.13-15).
2. Kāśyapa	Thirteen daughters of Dakṣa viz. Aditi, Diti, Ariṣṭā, Surasā, Muni, Surabhi, Vinatā, Tāmbṛā, Krodhavaśā, Ilā, Kadrū, Tviṣā and Danu. (I.63.23-24).
3. Soma	Twenty seven daughters of Dakṣa. All of them had the names of Nakṣatras but their names are not given.
4. Āditya	Four wives : Saṁjñā, Rājñī, Prabhā and Chāyā (I.65.2-3).
5. Vāsudeva	Nine wives : Vṛṣadevā, Upadevā, Devarakṣitā, Śrīdevā, Śāntidevā, Sahadevā, Devaki, Rohiṇī, and Pauravī. (I.69.40-41) and (I.69.44).
6. Viśravas	Four wives : Devavarṇiṇī, Puṣpotakatā, Balākā and Kaikaśī (I.63.59-61).

7. Kṛṣṇa

Sixteen thousand and one hundred wives (ṣoḍaśa strīśahasrāṇi śatamekaṁ tathādhikam); out of them Rukminī and Jambuvatī are mentioned (I.69.66-70).

The following is the list of bigamists :

1. Sagara

Prabhā and Bhānumatī (I.66.15).

2. Yayāti

Devayānī, the daughter of śukra and śarmiṣṭhā, the daughter of Vṛṣāparvan (I.66.64).

3. Vṛṣṇi

Gāndhārī and Mādri (I.69.10).

Name of the bigamis

Name of consorts

4. Akrūra

Ratnā, the daughter of Śaiva (I.69.25) and Ugrasenī, the daughter of Ugrasena (I.69.29).

5. Uttānapāda

Sunīti and Suruci. (I.62.4).

The LP states that the Prajāpati Dakṣa, begot sixty daughters of Viriṇi (they are mentioned in the list of polygymists) (I.63.11) and begot twenty four daughters of Prasūti (I.70.282). Lord Dharma took as his wives thirteen of the daughters of Dakṣa, viz. Śraddhā, Lakṣmī, Dhṛti, Tuṣṭi, Puṣṭi, Medhā, Kriyā, Buddhi, Lajjā, Vapuḥ, Śānti, Siddhi and Kīrti. (I.70.284-285). The remaining eleven daughters were taken as wives by eleven sages, viz. Dakṣa, gave satī to Bhava, Khyāti to Bhṛgu; Sambhūti

to Marīci; Smṛti to Aṅgiras; Prīti to Pulastya; Kṣamā to Pulaha; Sannati to Kratu; Anasūyā to Atri; Ūrjā to Vasistha, Svāhā to Agni and Svadhā to Pitṛs. (I.70.286-292).

Monogamy :

Monogamy is that type of marriage in which there is an union of one man with one woman. This is not only the most important type of marriage, but also a commonly preferred one. The ideal monogamous unions are exemplified in the LP by Himavān and Mēṇā (I.ch.102), Lord Śiva and Umā (I.ch.103).

The following is the list of monogamous unions :

1. Asita	Ekaparna (I.63.53)	
2. Bhṛgu	Khyāti (I.70.289)	
3. Marīci	Sambhūti	I.70.290
4. Angiras	Smṛti	
5. Pulastya	Prīti	
6. Pulaha	Kṣamā	
7. Kratu	Sannati	I.70.291
8. Atri	Anasūyā	
9. Vasistha	Ūrjā	
10. Agni	Svāhā	
11. Pitṛs	Svadhā	(I.70.292)
12. Haryasva	Drasadvatī	(I.65.45)

13.	Asmaka	Uttarā (I.66.49)
14.	Balarāma	Revatī (I.66.49)
15.	Jyamagha	Śaibyā (I.68.34)
16.	Purutvan	Bhadrāvatī (I.68.48)
17.	Śvaphalka	Gāndinī (I.69.20)
18.	Āhuka	The daughter of the king of Kāśī (I.69.38).

Eight forms of Marriage :

From the times of the Grhasūtras, Dharma-sūtras and Smṛtis,⁴¹ the ancient Indian Law has recognised the eight forms of marriage viz. Brāhma⁴², Daiva⁴³, Ārṣa,⁴⁴ Prājāpatya⁴⁵, Āsura⁴⁶, Gāndharva,⁴⁷ Rākṣasa⁴⁸ and Paisāca⁴⁹.

The first three, four or six forms of marriage are approved by different law-givers⁵⁰, whereas the last one is universally condemned. There is, however, a great divergence of opinion as to which of these are the approved ones for the members of the different varnas.⁵¹

The LP contains one instance which resembles the Brāhma form of marriage.

In performing Umā-Maheśvaravrata, a Brāhmaṇa who is richly endowed with learning and humility and who has mastered the Vedas and who is in the first āśrama, shall be duly and devoutly worshipped. A virgin of good waist, accompanied by the necessary requisites for the whole life shall be offered to him (I.84.42-43).

In the LP we do not have an instance of the Paisāca type of marriage as laid down in the *Adharmasāstra*, but there is this following example which has some points in common with this type wedding.

King Trayyārūṇa had an extremely powerful son named Satyavrata. He killed the king of Vidarbha and abducted his wife before the mantras of the wedding - celebrations were brought to a close. The king Trayyārūṇa abandoned him because he was defiled by that evil. When abandoned, he asked his father where he would go. The father told him to go and live amongst the cāṇḍālas. On being ordered thus, he went out of the city. At the instance of his father, the intelligent Satyavrata went to the Cāṇḍāla colony. On being abandoned by his father, thus he stayed near the slum while his father went to the forest (I.66.3-7).

The smṛtis do not recognise a form of marriage which plays a great part in the Purāṇas, viz. the svayamvara or self-choice, a ceremony at which a princess chooses for herself a suitor at a great assembly held for the purpose. The act of choice might be preceded by a trial of strength on the part of the suitors, the victor being rewarded with the hand of the maiden or it might be an unconditioned ^{at} choice of the bride.

The LP provides some references to the svayamvara form of marriage. Ambarīṣa's daughter Śrīmatī chose youngman at her Svayamvara ((II.5.116). Umā chose lord Siva at her svayamvara (I.103.48).

Marriage Ceremony :

Among all people, savage as well as civilised, legal marriage is usually accompanied by some form of ceremony which expresses the sanction of the group to the union. This ceremony is of a magical or religious character, though, in a few people it is apparently purely social⁵². All the texts concerning the ceremonies and rituals connected with vivāha refer to the bride as being given away by the father in the family who invites the bridegroom. The bridegroom goes to the bride's home where the vivāha takes place.

The Āsvalāyan Gr̥hyasūtra (I.7) deals with the following rites of marriage ceremony, viz. Kanyādāna, Vivāha-homa, pāṇigrahaṇa, agni parinayana, aśmārohaṇa, lajāhoma and saptapadī. The LP refers to the following rites :

(1) Agnisthāpana and Homa :

It means establishing the fire and offering of ghee oblations into fire. Having placed a mile-stone to the west on the fire which is kindled symbolically as a divine witness and sanctifier of the saṃskāra and having deposited a water-pot to the north-east^{east} of the fire, the bride-groom offers oblations, the bride participating in the offering by grasping the hand of the groom that makes the offering.

The LP states that Lord Brahmā took the place of Upādhyāya in the marriage of Śiva with Devī and offered oblation (I.103.56).⁵⁴

(ii) Pānigrahana :

It means taking hold of the bride's hand. Here the bridegroom stands facing the west, while the bride sits in front of him with her face to the east and seizes her hand reciting the vedic mantra. The LP states that Brahmā joined the hand of the goddess to the hand of the lord (I.103.59).

(iii) Lājāhoma :

In this the bride offers a sacrifice of friend grain, which is poured in her hands by her brother or a person acting in her brother's place to the gods Aryamān, Varuna, Pusan, with Agni as the intercesor on her behalf in order that these four may be pleased to release her from the bonds. The LP states that the ceremony of lajāhoma was performed by Brahmā in Devi's marriage (I.103.60).

(iv) Agniparinayaha :

The bridegroom walking in front takes the bride round the fire and water jar reciting the mantras.⁵⁵ The LP states that after lājāhoma, Śiva circumambulated the holy fire thrice (I.103.61).

Marriage Celebration :

The graphic description of Śiva's marriage with Pārvatī is a witness to the fact that the occasion of marriage was then even as how an occasion of great joy and festivity. The LP states all these came to attend the svayamvara celebration of the

daughter of the mountain lord. They ^ewere Brahmā, lord Viṣṇu, Indra, the fire-god, the Sun, Bhaga, Tvaṣṭr, Aryaman, Vivasvat Yama, Varuna, Vāyu, Soma, Īśāna, the Rudras, Sages, Asvins, twelve Ādityas, Gandharvas, etc. (I.103.17-22). Pārvatī (Devī) was accompanied by the Apsarases who bedecked in ornaments were singing and dancing. She was enlogised by the bards, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Kinnaras. Mālinī held the white umbrella interspersed with the rays of jewels, in honour of the bride, Sandhyā held the disc of full moon. She was surrounded by divine ladies holding chowries in their hands. Jayā stood there holding the garland of flowers of divine trees. Vijayā held a fan and stood near the goddess. (I.103.24-27).

Though here the description pertains to the realm of mythology, the human elements are still easily discernible.

Section : III

FAMILY

Introduction :

"The family was the starting point of the social evolution, the most fundamental and basic unit of all human institutions and its study is of an absorbing interest from the sociological point of view. There is a vast literature on family and researches are being conducted still with regard to the different problems connected with it"⁵⁶.

Whether the family be elementary, compound or joint, it plays a vital role in the human life.

In this section, the information collected from the LP regarding the status, relation and position of the father and son; the relations of the husband and wife and the mores of relation of the daughter-in-law and parents-in-law are discovered.

Concept of family :

The LP does not state directly the concept of family but it can be reconstructed from the sentiments expressed therein. It appears that a man felt miserable and unhappy if his child is not intelligent (II.7.16b-17).

Status and position of the father :

The RV refers to the father as the type of all that is good and kind⁵⁷. The LP also considers the father as the cause of his children's happiness and joy. Vasistha's son said to his own son that the attributes and the prosperities have been attained by him on getting heirs. (I.64.100).

Ideas on birth :

The LP states that when a man and a woman indulge in intercourse and the semen gets mixed with the blood, in due course, the sperm becomes the foetus. In due course, the foetus becomes a bubble. The physical body is evolved, endowed with organic matter and filled with vital airs. The foetus becomes a human being according to the pre-ordained form and age. Wind originates from the firmament, from wind water is evolved. From water originate the vital air and the semen is generated and it flourishes through the vital airs. Thirty three parts of blood are mixed with fourteen parts of semen. When halves of these parts mix together the foetus is evolved. Then the child in womb is encircled by the five vital airs. The child's form is evolved limb by limb from the physical body of the father. Through the umbilical region the child is sustained by the food taken in by the mother, by the liquid drink and by the lambatives licked. For nine months the child undergoes the pain and strain; his neck is encircled by the umbilical cord. His body is curled up as the space within the womb is not sufficient. After

spending nine months in the womb the child falls down through the vaginal passage with his head downwards. (I.88.47-58).

Status and position of the son :

The primary object of marriage in ancient India was the propagation of the family; hence a son who acted as the continuer of one's family-line, was the primary craving of every wedded couple. (II.7.16-17). This is even the feeling now-a-days. The necessity of having a son was also emphasised from the religious point of view. The son was believed to rescue his ancestors from the hell 'put' into which they might otherwise fall without his birth⁵⁸.

It was believed that a man cannot attain the desired goal without begetting son. While choosing a boon high expectations were expressed regarding a son. Padmāvatī chose boon from lord Viṣṇu that may her son be a Vaiṣṇava and be an emperor of great refulgence pure and engrossed in his duties. (II.5.16-17). Secondly, among the four sons of Sattvata, king Devavrddha performed a great penance desiring that he would have a son endowed with good qualities. (I.69.4).

Mothers were proud of learned sons, but they felt miserable, if sons were otherwise. This is illustrated by an example Aitreyī in the LP. Aitreyī said that richly accomplished sons who have mastered the vedas and ancilliary subjects and who are honoured and worshipped by Brāhmanas delight their mother. But a shapeless son was born to her, a woman devoid

of good luck, so her death would have been far better. On being told thus, Aitreya went out to the sacrificial hall. (II.7.21-23).

Ideal of family relations :

The strength and excellence of the Aryan culture lay in the domestic virtues of its adherents. The LP contains glimpses of a many a happy house-hold, and of love and harmony prevailing throughout the family circle. Friendly relations among the different members of the family like the children, the aged ones, wife and husband and other kinsmen were highly esteemed. Seniority of age and relation were the matters of high respect as it is also found in modern times in good and cultured families.

Husband and wife :

The husband is considered as the wife's supreme bliss and deity. The LP states that really it is husband who is mother, father, kinsman, ^ocomrade, friend and relative unto the women. There is no doubt about this. Really the woman who has love towards her husband shall attain the greatest heaven even after committing a great sin. She who does contrary to this attains hell. Formerly, chaste ladies forsook all dharmas, all devas and other preceptors of the universe and worshipped their husbands always. After attaining the heavenly world they became free from ailments and rejoiced. Hence, it is the husband who is the greatest goal. (I.71.85-88). The holy rites, japa, dāna, penance and everything else should be performed by women, ~~only~~

~~else should be performed by women~~, only at the behest of their husbands, since women are never independent. (I.84.16-17).

The relations between the husband and the wife were regarded as highly sacred. Even for intercourse also, they had to abide by the rules. The LP states that the husband shall not indulge in sexual intercourse on the fourth night after the monthly discharge has started. If he indulges thus, the child born will be short lived. The son born of this sexual contact will be devoid of learning, depraved, deviating from the observance of holy rites, violating the chastity of other men's wives and immersed in the ocean of penury. The woman should be approached on the fifth night if he seeks a daughter. If the blood is predominant, the child will be a girl; if the ^e semen is predominant the child will be a boy; if both are equal the child will be an eunuch; if the sexual intercourse is on the fifth night the child will be a girl. The blessed lady shall be approached on the sixth night; she will be the mother of a good son. The son will be excessively brilliant and he will remain dutiful as a son. (I.89.109-112).

The word "Pum" means "hell" and they say that hell is miserable. She will give birth to a son who will save his parents from Pum (i.e.hell)⁵⁹. The husband who seeks a daughter shall approach her on the seventh night. She will give birth to a daughter. If approached on the eighth night she will give birth to a son equipped with everything. He who seeks a daughter shall approach his wife on the ninth night; if approached on the tenth night a scholarly son will be born; if approached on the

eleventh night she will give birth to a girl as before. If approached on the twelfth night, she will give birth to a son who is conversant with the principle of dharma and who will observe the holy rites laid down in Śrutis and Smṛtis. If approached on the thirteenth night she will give birth to a sluggish girl who will bring to a sluggish girl who will bring about mixture of castes. Hence, one shall assiduously avoid her on that night. If he approaches her on the fourteenth night she will be the mother of a son. If approached on the fifteenth night she will give birth to a virtuous daughter^{ex}; if approached on the sixteenth night, she will give birth to a son who will be a master of perfect knowledge. If at the time of the sexual intercourse the air passes through the left side of the woman, she will give birth to a daughter; if it passes through the right side, she will give birth to a boy. The time of sexual intercourse shall be free from the influence of evil planets. At the time mentioned thus the husband shall remain clean and approach the pure and smiling wife joyously. (I.89.113-120).

It is a happy house where there is no mutual quarrel among the inmates. (II.6.39)⁶⁰.

Father and Son :

In the LP there is a pen-picture of cordial relations between the father and the son. On hearing that the most powerful śakti had been devoured by the demon alongwith his brothers, Vasistha repeatedly lamented "hā my son, hā my son".

The wailing sage fell down on the ground along with Arundhatī. Remembering his hundred sons, the eldest of whom was śakti, and knowing that the family was extinct, the powerful sage decided to die. Coming to this conclusion that he will not remain alive without his sons, he felt all the more miserable. Vasistha climbed to the top of a mountain along with his wife. With tears welling up in the eyes he suddenly fell down on the ground. As he fell down on the ground, the earth (assuming the form of a lady), caught him up with her hands and as he cried she too bewailed with him. At that time, his daughter-in-law, the wife of śakti, cried in great fright and spoke to Vasistha, to preserve that excellent body of his, to see his grand son, that was her son (I.64.4-11).

The father was consulted in every important matter. His anger may create troubles in the life of a son. The LP states that king Trayyārūṇa had a son named Satyavrata. Satyavrata killed the king of Vidarbha of unmeasured prowess and abducted his wife before the mantras of the wedding celebrations were brought to a close. The king Trayyārūṇa abandoned him because he was defiled by that evil. When abandoned, he asked his father where he would go. The father told him to go and live among the cāṇḍālas. On being ordered thus, he went out of the city. At the instance of his father, the intelligent Satyavrata went to the Cāṇḍala colony. On being abandoned by his father, he stayed near the slum, while his father went to the forest. The valiant (son) and meritorious king Satyavrata became famous in all the worlds under the name Trisanku. (I.66.2-7).

Mores of relation of the Daughter-in-law and Parents-in-law :

Early in the history of our civilisation brides received affectionate and respected treatment in their new homes as they were grown up and educated at the time of their marriage. The elders of the Vedic age treated the wives with very great consideration, regard and affection. They on their part, used to observe proper decorum and treat their elders with utmost defence and reverence⁶¹.

The LP contains a decent instance of a daughter-in-law honouring her parents-in-law. Arundhatī said Adr'syanti that since the life of Vasistha and that of her depended her, she should preserve her life, and should behave as a nurse. Adr'syanti replied that if the sage had decided to preserve his life, she would some how preserve his life, she would some how preserve her body pure or impure. (I.64.34-35).

Thus it is seen that the honour and respect for the parents, love for the children, regard for father-in-law's relations, etc. were the common bonds that held the members of the family together.



Section : IV

POSITION OF WOMEN

Introduction :

The attitude of a community towards woman has a great social significance in any society. Some of the aspects of their position have already been treated under the discussion on "marriage" and "family". Some further aspects are discussed here.

The choice of the mate :

In early times, maidens appear to have had more or less effective voice in the selection of their partners in life. Ksatriya-circles in society even conceded to grown up brides the exclusive right of selecting their own consorts as is proved by the custom of svayamvara on self-choice⁶². The instances of svayamvara in the royal families in the LP are already noted under the discussion of the forms of marriage.

Woman as wife :

The ideal of relations between the husband and wife is already noted. The LP states that it is a happy house where there is no mutual quarrel among the inmates⁶³. (II.6.39).

A person does not behave equally in all the circumstances. Even the chaste ladies could behave in different way is seen in the LP. In the LP we find an episode of Dāruvana. Lord Śiva wanted to test the sincerity of the dwellers of the Dāru forest

in respect of their sacrificial rites. He wanted to turn their minds from the observance of sacrificial rites to the path of renunciation. Thus in order to test their faith, and sportively too, he assumed a deformed but attractive appearance. He had three eyes and two hands. He was nude and dark in complexion. Even in this form he was extremely handsome. He was smiling and singing, with seductive play of his eye brows, thereby creating feelings of love in the hearts of women. He increased their sexual feelings. Even the chaste women followed him with great enthusiasm. On receiving the gesture of a smile from his lotus - like face the women who had gathered at the threshold of huts in the forest or who stayed on the huts above trees, stopped all other activities and followed him not caring for their loosened garments and ornaments. Some of these women, on seeing him felt their eyes reeling due to excitement. Even the old women who were beyond the age of seductive charms of the eye-brow began to display their amorous gestures. On seeing him some women wore smiling faces. With their garments loosened a little, and with their waist bands dislodged, they began to sing. Some Brāhmaṇa ladies on seeing him in forest found that their own fresh silken garments had got loosened. They cast off their bangles of diverse colours and went to their kinsmen. One of them, on seeing him, did not know that her upper and lower garments had stripped off. Others in their excitement could not distinguish between their kinsmen and the multibranched trees though they were familiar. Some sang; some danced; some fell and rolled down on the ground. Another lady sat on the

ground like an elephant and began to talk aloud^d. Looking smilingly they began to embrace one another all round. After stopping Rudra on his way they began to show all shrewd gestures. Due to the Māyā of Rudra even the chaste ladies fell down in awkward posture with their clothes loosened and their tresses disbevelled, in the very presence of their husbands. (I.29.7-21).

Woman as mother :

Motherhood has been the cherished idea of every Hindu woman and the apotheosis of the mother has reached a greater height in India than any where 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. The MS (5.19) also declares that women are created for procreating children.

In both men and women there is a deep desire to have sons. The LP state that Padmāvatī chose boon from lord Viṣṇu that may her son be a Vaiṣṇava, may be an Emperor of great refulgence, pure and engrossed in his duties. (II.5.16-17).

Women and Religion :

Women were eligible to participate in sacrifices independent-ly and jointly with the husband upto C.300 B.C.⁶⁴

The LP states~~x~~ that in the month of Kārtika, the woman shall make a splendid image of goddess Umā fully bedecked in all ornaments and marked with all auspicious characteristics. The image may be made in gold, copper, etc., and shall be duly

installed. The image of the lord of devas shall be equipped with all characteristics. In front the fire-god shall be depicted. Brahmā shall be depicted holding the sacrificial ladle. Nārāyaṇa the munificent shall be depicted bedecked in all ornaments and surrounded by the guardians of quarters and siddhas. The vrata shall be offered in the temple of Rudra with devotion. By observing this vrata she will attain the body of Bhavānī and rejoice with Bhava. (I.84.66-70).

Women not to be killed :

Since the vedic times, it is enjoined that a woman ought not to be killed⁶⁵. The MS (9.232) says that a person killing a woman or a Brāhmaṇa or an infant is to be meted out a capital punishment. The LP states that women are holy ones as they are born of the family of Atri. Even when they are engaged in sinful acts, they should not be killed. They are to be worshipped always. By killing Ātreya's one incurs a sin equal to the slaughter of a Brāhmaṇa. Women from any caste should not be taken up for the Yajñas at any time, by any one or in any place. Women engaged in sinful activities, whether they be dirty or beautiful, ugly or raved in ugly clothes should never be killed by men due to the suspicion that they may be Siva. (I.78.17b-20); they should neither be seen nor touched. After seeing them one should look at the sun. Still they should not be killed by kings or other creatures. (I.78.22).

Section : V

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

In this chapter the following topics are discussed :

(i) Food and drinks (ii) Dress and decoration (iii) Customs and conventions (iv) Daily and periodical duties and ceremonies (Āhnikā and ācāra) (v) Rules of Purity (Suddhi) (vi) Superstitions and Beliefs (vii) Pastimes (viii) Measurement of time.

1. Food and Drinks :

General :

Various articles of food are referred to in the LP as objects of worship and gifts to Brāhmaṇas on certain occasions.

Food-grains :

With regard to the origin of the vegetable kingdom we have a reference to many types of grāmyausādhis, which probably mean cultivated grains. They are Vṛīhi, Yava, Tila, etc. Some of these might have been used as food-grains. (For their identification see under Eatables below).

Eatables :

Fruits constitute one of the articles of eatables⁶⁶ and in the LP they are mentioned as the food of persons practising penance. Dhruva sustained himself on vegetables, roots and

fruits. (I.62.24).

The following is an alphabetical list of the edible substances with the details of their occurrences in the LP. They are generally recommended or ^tabood in Śraddhā, or are referred to as night food for yogins. The LP does not give details about the shape, preparation, taste etc. of the various dishes but merely mentions them.

Ājya : (ghee)

It is used in the worship of the Liṅga. (I.27.15).

Aksata : (Unbroken rice grains)

It is used in the worship of the Liṅga (I.27.15).

Kṣīra : (milk : Guj. Dūdha)

It is a drink as well as one of the ritual articles. The kurus in kuruvarṣa are fond of milk and live on milk diet. (I.52.19).

Sarsapa :

It is used in the worship of the Liṅga (I.27.15).

Vṛihi : (Rice, Guj. Daṅgara)

It is recommended in Liṅga worship (I.27.15).

Yava : (Barely, Guj. TJava)

It is mentioned in Liṅga worship. (I.27.15).

Fruits and Juices :

Over and above the mention of various eatables, soma-juice is also mentioned. It is said that the people of kimpuruṣavarṣa live on plakṣa fruits (I.52.34). The men in the Harivarṣa imbibe the auspicious sugar cane-juice. (I.52.36). The people of the Ilāvratavarṣa take the diet of the juice of the Jambū fruits (I.52.40). The resident of kuruvarṣa take the Amṛta (nectar) (I.52.22).

Asvattha fala (I.52.15) :

In the sub-continent Ramanaka, the living beings subsist on the fruits of the Nyagrodha (The holy fig tree).

Kālāmraphala (I.52.14) = Fruit of black mangoes.

Nyagrodha phala (I.52.18) :

It is referred in the description of the sub-continent Ramanaka. The living beings live upto twelve thousand five hundred years mainly subsisting on the Asvattha (holy fig tree) fruits.

Panasa phala (I.52.12) (Jack fruits) :

V.S.Apte gives the following meanings of Panasa :

1. The bread - fruit tree.
2. A thorn.

(ii) Dress and Decoration :General :

The clothes generally figure as objects of gifts to Brāhmanas on various occasions like the performance of sacrifices, etc.⁶⁷

Kinds of clothes and various garments :

Usnīṣa = turban.

The LP mentions that in the thirty-first kalpa a boy appeared who had long arms, a golden sacred thread and yellow turban. (I.13.3).

Dyeing of clothes :

As regards dyes and colours it may be noted that the art of dyeing was known during the period of the latter saṃhitās, the Brāhmanas and the Grhyasūtras⁶⁸. The LP refers, in many places, to white, yellow, red, black and multi coloured clothes. Vāmadeva had red clothes (I.13.3.). His four sons wore red garments (I.13.10). Brahmā was clad in yellow garbs. A boy appeared there wearing yellow robes (I.13.1-2).

Ornaments :

The names of various ornaments also occur, of course, without their details. The following is a list of the ornaments referred to in the LP with reference to their context.

Chatra : (Umbrella)

Both ³Brhatsaṃhitā (Ch.72.922-924) and Kṛtyakalpataru

(Ch.43,62-67) devote each a chapter to the umbrella. The LP states that Brahmā offered chatra to Nandīśvara (I.44.26). It is referred tas sataśalāka (hundred-ribbed) also.

Hāra :

Since vedic times the use of necklace or hāra as an ornament had been invogue⁶⁹. In the LP there is a reference to the hāra. Brahmā offered necklace to Nandīśvara. (I.44.25).

Hema : Gold (I.44.27).

Jambūnaḍa :

(I.44.29). It is a kind of gold⁷⁰.

Keyūra : (Armlet)

It is worn on the upper arm by both the sexes⁷¹. Hopkins says that armlets are the most frequently mentioned ornaments in the great epic⁷². The LP states that Brahmā offered a Keyūra to Nandīśvara. (I.44.25).

Kundala : (Ear rings)

..
⁷³
 Ear-rings are mentioned in the RV., and have been used in later times also. The LP refers to it. (I.44.25). The Vajravaidūryabhūṣita kundala (bedecked with diamonds and

Lapis Lazuli) is also referred to (I.43.43). Amala Kundala is also referred to (I.44.29).

Mukuta = Crown.

The RV does not provide any evidence whether the people used any head-dress such as a crown or a turban⁷⁴. The wearing of crowns was a later usage. The LP states that Brahmā offered a crown to Nandisvara (I.44.25). Kāncana Mukuta (a golden crown) was made by Visvakarman. (I.44.26).

Vyajana - a fan (I.44.28).

Hair-coiffure :

The discussion of ornaments leads to the consideration of the art of hair-dressing as it enhances one's beauty. It is quite well-known that in modern times various hair-styles are being developed day-to-day and in ancient times also various hair-styles were developed⁷⁵. The LP refers yellow hairs (Pīta mūrdhaja) (I.13.17).

Toilets and Cosmetics :

Ancient Indians had their own ways and means for toilet and personal hygiene.

"Wearing yellow mālyas and āmbars" is a common expression in connection with lord Śiva. (I.13.3; I.13.16). The LP refers black garment (Kṛṣṇāmbara) (I.14.5); also red garlands and clothes (Raktamālyāmbardhara) (I.12.5; I.12.10).

Perfumes, Incense, etc.

References to perfumes, incenses, etc. occur in connection with the worship of the gods, and the pitrs as well as the 'srāddha ritual. Perfumes (gandha) (Pītagandhānuliṭṭāṅga) referred in the LP (I.13.3). Garland and arulepana are also mentioned (I.13.16; I.14.5). Bodies were smeared with red saffron (Raktakūṁkumālīpaṅga) (I.12.11); people applied red ashes over the bodies (Raktabhasmānulepnāḥ) (I.12.11). Red garlands and red unguents were used by the people (Raktamālyānulepana) (I.12.10).

A General personal outfit :

There are references in the LP to the objects like upavīta (sacred thread) usṇīṣa (turban) etc., which constitute among other things a paraphernalia of general personal outfit. Such as Pīṭṣṇīṣa = yellow turban (I.13.3). Hemayajñōpavīta = a golden sacred thread (I.13.3), Pītāśya = yellow face (I.13.17). Kṛṣṇayajñōpavīta = black sacred thread (I.14.5) Kṛṣṇamauli = black turban (I.14.5).

Persons were putting on yellow turban or black turban, a black sacred thread or a golden sacred thread. Their faces were yellow.

III. Customs and conventions :

A society has its own customs and conventions. The LP records that the son of Vasiṣṭha said to his son, at the first glance that the attributes and the prosperities Anīmā etc. have

attained by him, on seeing his face. That has always been said by the learned that one conquers the words through one's son (I.64.100-102).

The LP says that one shall duly perform his duties such as obeisance and standing up by way of welcome towards elderly persons who have acquired instructions, from preceptors and who strictly adhere to their routine. (i.e. the rules relating to their Āsrama). The Brāhmaṇa and the preceptor are to be honoured by obeisance with eight limbs touching the ground with the following three set aside. viz. head-dress, upper garment and footwear and with three circumambulations. Also, all elderly persons should be respected. If one wishes for excellent siddhi one shall never break their behests (I.89.33-35). We find another incident that the glorious sage Nārada and the highly intelligent Parvata came to the kingdom of Ambarīṣa. On seeing to the two sages come, Ambarīṣa of great refulgence bowed down and worshipped them. (II.5.53-54).

(IV) Daily and Periodical duties and ceremonies (Āhnikā and Ācāra):

Introduction :

The daily and periodical duties and ceremonies (Āhnikā and ācāra) form an important topic of the Dharmaśāstras. The LP also contains some information on the same. The data of the LP as regards the daily duties of a student, a house holder, a forest-permit and of an ascetic have already been discussed under the discussion on the Āsrama-system. Some further data about the duties (āhnikā) of an ascetic and of the house holder

are discussed here.

The matters to be discussed under "āhnikā" are : getting up from bed, 'sauca (bodily purity), danta dhāvana (brushing the teeth) snāna (bath), saṁdhyā, homa, tarpana, the five daily mahājajñas, vaiśvadeva, bhojana (taking of food), going to bed, etc.

Getting up from bed :

From very early times getting up before sun-rise was prescribed specially for a student and generally for every one⁷⁶.

The LP states that the rite of worship should begin by person before sunrise (I.85.13.5).

'Sauca :

Then the next act is to answer the calls of nature. Very detailed rules are laid down about these even in the most ancient sūtras and smrtis. Many of the rules are simply hygienic, but as religion, rules of law of morality, of health and hygiene are mixed up in the ancient works, they are given in works of Dharma⁷⁷.

The LP states that the rite of worship should begin after cleaning the body. (I.85.135). Again, the LP emphasises on internal purity also. The LP states⁷⁸ that one shall traverse the path sanctified by the eyes, shall drink the water rendered pure by a cloth (i.e. well filtered); shall speak out words sanctified by truth; shall practise those things that are purified by the mind⁷⁸. If one drinks impure water for a day

one incurs that sin which a fisherman, incurs in the course of six months. (I.89.7-8). One shall avoid all these things; taking up iron and other metals for sustenance, living in a desert or unproductive soil and using worthless mantras as means of support, snake-charming and back-biting, flattery or scandal. (I.89.36). One shall scrupulously avoid deception, stinginess in spending money, c^ensure of others. In the presence of preceptors and elders one shall avoid laughter, haughtiness, sportive dalliaⁿce and wilfulness. One shall never contradict the preceptor; one shall never speak unbecoming words against him. One shall scrupulously avoid mentioning things disliked by the preceptor and shall not think evil of him. One shall never touch these things with one's foot - the clothes, staff, etc. of ascetics their sandals, garlands, places of sleep (i.e. bedmatters, etc.), vessel, shadow and the requisite things of use in sacrifices (I.89.37-40).

Ācamana :

As regards the ācamana also, elaborate rules are laid down from very ancient times⁷⁹ and the LP also contains some of them. Even when one is pure, one shall perform the ācamana rite after sleeping, taking food, sneezing, drinking and spitting. At the beginning of the study of the vedas and on similar occasions one shall perform the ācamana rite. If the drops of water fell on the feet while others perform the ācamana rite, they shall be known as earthly things. One shall not become impure thereby. (I.89.71-72).

Danta-Dhavana (Brushing the teeth) :

Danta-dhāvana comes after sauca and acamana and before snāna (bath)⁸⁰. The LP is silent about this.

Snāna (Bath) :

Snāna comes after danta-dhāvana.

After sexual intercourse and after touching a fallen man, cocks, pig, crows, dog, camel, donkey, post, cāṇḍāla and others, one becomes pure, just by a bath. One shall not touch a woman in her monthly course, a woman after delivery and a sūdra woman. One defiled by pollution after birth ^{or} death shall not touch their dust. If he touches he shall be pure by taking bath. (I.89.74-76).

One shall avoid turbid water. He shall perform all rites by means of water that have been purified by filtering through the pores of a cloth and that do not contain cold foams. One shall avoid waters of these types : that which has defective smell, colour and taste; that which stagnates in impure places; that which is defiled by mud and pebbles, the sea water, the water from puddles, the water mingled with moss and that is otherwise defiled (I.89.50-52).

There are also certain rules about the clothes to be worn by a house-holder. One shall perform the rites of obeisance as well as service to the preceptors - with pure and clean clothes. One devoid of cleanliness and purify in clothes is -

undoubtedly impure. It is desired that the clothes used in divine rites should be washed everyday. Other clothes should be washed when they become dirty. One shall eschew the clothes worn by others. (I.89.53-55).

Sandhyā :

After bath comes sandhyā⁸¹. The word 'sandhyā' literally means 'twilight', but also indicates the action of prayer performed in the morning and evening twilight. This, act is generally styled 'samdhyopāsānā' or 'samdhyāvandana' or simply 'samdhyā'⁸².

The LP states that in the evening and in the morning he shall practise worship with a delighted mind. He shall begin the rite, clean in mind and body before sunrise and before sunset and perform it duly. A brāhmaṇa shall not transgress sandhyā due to lust, delusion, fear or covetousness. Since by giving up sandhyā prayers, the brāhmaṇa falls off from the status of brāhmaṇahood. (I.85.134-135). A brāhmaṇa guilty of the omission of sandhyā prayers becomes pure by repeating it thrice (I.89.44).

Homa :

After sandhyā comes homa⁸³. Homa was performed in the morning before sunrise according to one view (arudite juhوتي) and after sunrise, according to another (Udite juhوتي) but even on the latter view, homa must be performed before the sun rises one cubit above horizon (Gobhil smṛti I.123).⁸⁴

The LP states that the Homa shall be concluded with the following mantras "you are Puruṣa you lie down in the body, in the size of the thumb. Īśa is the great cause of all though based on the thumb⁸⁵. May the permanent lord of all the universe be pleased. You are the eldest of all Devas. You are Rudra. Foremerly you were Indra. You are soft by nature. May this sacrificial offering unto you be our food" (I.88.89-90).

Pañca Mahāyajñas : (The five daily observances or sacrifices) :

From early vedic times five daily observances called mahāyajñas were prescribed for each house holder. The LP states that the five sacrifices are : Brahma, Deva, Manuṣya Bhūta and Pitr. The study of the Vedic text of one's branch is Brahmayajña; the offering of cooked rice into the sacred fire is Devayajña; the offering of oblations to Bhūtas (living beings) as prescribed in the ritual is Bhūtayajña ; it bestows prosperity on all living beings. To bow down to Brāhmanas well-versed in the Vedic rituals and to feed them with their wives is Manuṣya- Yajña. What is offered for the sake of Pitrs (the departed souls) is Pitryajña (I.26.15-19).

These sacrifices are prescribed for expiation of the sins committed in five ways viz. while sweeping or wiping, while using fire, threshing, pounding things or while fetching water. (I.78.5-6)⁸⁷.

According to the LP Brahmayajña is the greatest of these Yajñas. A man engaged in Brahmayajña is honoured in the world of Brahmā. By Brahmayajña all the dēvas including Indra, Lords,

Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva all the Vedas and Pitrs are pleased. The Brāhmaṇa who is adept in Brahmayaજ્ઞā when he goes out of his village out of sight of hundreds of huts, shall turn towards the east, north or north-east and then perform the sacred rite of Ācamana for the sake of Brahmayaજ્ઞā. For propitiating the R̥ks, he shall fill the cup of his palm and drink, water thrice. For propitiating the Yajus, he shall wash his hands and wipe off his face twice with water. For the propitiation of sāmaveda he shall touch the head. For the propitiation of the Atharvan and Āṅgiras texts, he shall wash the eyes, nostrils & other limbs. For the propitiation of eighteen Upapurāṇas beginning with Saura and for the propitiation of holy Itihāṣas beginning with Śaiva he shall touch his ears and the cardiac region. For the propitiation of the Kalpa texts, he shall perform the Ācamana rite. After scattering bundles of Darbha grass, the devotee shall sit down and keep the right palm over the left palm. There must be a golden ring or the Kuśa loop round his finger. With great concentration and following his own school he shall perform the Brahmayaજ્ઞā duly. (I. 26, 20-31).

This shows that the concept of the Pancamahāyajnas widened the field of social duties by reorienting the purpose of yaજ્ઞā and incorporating the new yaજ્ઞās to men and to the bhūtas in the older concept of three debts⁸⁸.

Bhojana : (Taking one's meals)

Bhojana is one of the most important subjects treated of in Dharmaśāstra works and the greatest importance (next to

rules about marriage) attaches to the numerous injunctions and taboos about food.

The LP states that one shall eschew the cooked ^{of śrāddha} rice ~~at~~ that is stale, the naivedya offering, śrāddha (partaking of food therein) the cooked rice for the masses and at social functions or served as the doles by the king. The purity of the character is based on the purity of food and not by means of clay or water. One can attain siddhi only when there is purity of character. Hence, he should be scrupulous about the food he takes. Even those - Brāhmanas who are the expounders of Brāhman are defiled by accepting gifts from their patrons, kings, etc. Gifts from kings is sinful. It is comparable to poison. After realising this at the outset it shall be avoided by a learned man as he shall avoid the flesh of a dog. (I.85.137-142).

While taking food some rules - should be observed. The LP states that one shall not ^{take} ~~to~~ be food without taking bath, or performing japa or worshipping the fire. One shall not take food on the outer side of a leaf. At night one shall not take food without a lamp. One shall never take food in a broken pot, in the open street, and in the presence of fallen people. One shall not take food partly consumed by a śūdra nor shall one take cooked rice alongwith infants. One shall take in only pure food which is unctuous, emollient, consecrated and inspired with mantras. While taking food one shall remember that it is Śiva who eats. He shall keep silent and concentrated. (I.85.143-145).

(V) Rules of Purity (Suddhi) :Introduction :

The rules of purity (suddhi) attach not only to human beings but to animals, objects, places, etc. and to special occasions like birth or death which cause impurity (asauca⁸⁹) for the nearest relative concerned, for various periods. Āsauca, however, is the most important subjects under 'suddhi' and therefore the 'Suddhikaumudī' defines 'Suddhi' as the state of being fit or capable of performing the rites that are understood from the Veda⁹⁰. The smṛtis employ the word 'Suddhi' also in relation to purification after āsauca.

Āsauca : (Birth and Death Impurities)

There are two great events in the life of a person, the birth and death. At both these crises in human life certain relatives are supposed to be affected by impurity. The period of impurity varies with different relatives.

The āsauca of the Brāhmanas is upto the collection of bones after cremation and they are purified merely by taking bath. Similarly for those who are initiated in the sacrifice (I.89.79). The pollution of the Kṣatriyas is for twelve days. A vaiśya becomes pure in fifteen days; a sūdra becomes pure within a month⁹¹. (I.89.90-91).

Those who had performed sacrifices the pollution is for one day. Then for those who have studied their respective

branches of the vedas, it is four days. Kinsmen do not have pollution due to birth or death beyond three days (if they hear of the birth or death) after the eleventh day. If one is ^epresent at the time of death one is purified merely by taking bath. If the fact of death is known after three seasons (i.e. six months) the pollution is for one day. If the fact of death is known before seven years (if the deceased is not seven years old) the pollution is for three days and beyond that for the Brāhmanas it is for ten days. The pollution due to birth is for the first day in the case of the father, in the case of the mother it is for ten days. If the fact is known after three years, the purity is attained by bath by the father as well as by kinsmen. If the fact is known after twelve years or beyond that, the ladies will have pollution for three days. Sapinda^ā (the state of being kinsmen by way of offering the funeral rice balls) recedes in the seventh generation. If the ten days immediately after death have elapsed, one shall be impure for three days. The Brāhmana beyond that period or after a year has elapsed, becomes pure merely by taking bath. If one touches a dead body, one becomes pure after three days. It is for the sake of Dharma that ablution is enjoined in regard to the persons who cremate the dead body. If he is not a relative, he need take bath alone. If one follows the dead body, one becomes pure by taking bath and drinking ghee. When the preceptor dies, or when a vedic-scholar passes away, pollution remains for three days. If materialⁿ uncles and their wives or brothers die, if kings and rulers die, the people become pure immediately. (I.89.81-90).

Purification of things :

The clothes used in divine rites should be washed everyday. Other clothes should be washed when they become dirty. One shall scrupulously eschew the clothes worn by others.

Woolen garments and silken clothes shall be washed by means of hard coarse substances. Woven-silk garments should be washed with white mustard seeds. Silk-garments called amsupattas shall be washed with bilva fruits. The peculiar type of blankets called kutapas should be washed with soap-berry nuts. The cleansing of leather, wicker work baskets and cane-boxes is in the same way as that of clothes. Leading sages who know the Brahman have mentioned that the cleaning of bark-garment of all varieties, of the umbrella and of the chowrie is like that of clothes. Bell metal is purified by bhasman, iron is purified by acid⁹²; copper, tin and lead are cleaned with vinegar. The pots of gold and silver can be purified with water. The cleansing of jewels, rock, conch and pearls is similar to that of metals. The purity of excessively polluted things is through contact with fire and water. The cleansing of all beverages is called Utplavan objects made of grass, wood, wetc., are purified by sprinkling them with sacred water. The purity of sruk and sruva (the sacrificial plate and ladle) is through hot water. The cleansing of the utensils of yajñas, that of the mortar and pestle and the purification, of those made of horn, bone, wood and ivory is by means of poring. Sprinkling is the means of purification of compact solid bodies; if the things are

disjointed they shall be severally cleansed. If a portion of a heap of grains not eaten, is defiled, that portion is removed and the remaining part is sprinkled with Kusa grass-water. It is desirable that vegetables, roots and fruits are purified like grains. The house is purified by sweeping and scrubbing⁹³. A mud-pot is purified by heating it over fire. The floor can be cleansed by scraping, digging, sweeping, sprinkling and by tethering cows over it. The water stagnating over the surface of lands becomes pure if a cow drinks from there and quenches its thirst, but ~~fifth~~ should not spread over it along with foul smell, taste and colour. The calf is purified in a spring; and the bird by throwing a fruit at it. During sexual intercourse the mouth of the wife is pure for the loving house-holder. (I.89.54-68).

VI) Superstitions and Beliefs :

The LP refers to ~~some~~^o beliefs and superstitions, some of which survive even to this day.

The belief that discuss Sudarsana dispels the evil effects of curses of the sages and similar calamities. It also destroys all enemies and ailment (II.5.43-44). It was believed that the twelve-syllabled mantra destroys sins.(II.7.31).

Those who are notorious as heretics should not be conversed with the twice-born. They should neither be seen nor touched. After seeing them one should look at the sun. Still they should not be killed by kings or other creatures. (I.78.21-22).

People had high respect towards Lord Śiva. By worshipping Lord Śiva even for once, a man attains Rudra's world. (I.78.23). Those who are devotees of Śiva, are fortunate. The minds of men are attracted towards sons, wives and houses. Just as the minds of ascetics and sages are attached towards the primordial lord. But if men turn their minds towards the lord atleast once by chance the world of great Īśa is not far for them. (I.78.25-26). When a man was compelled to hear the censure of Bhava, it was considered that he would have committed great sin in previous birth (I.107.40). It was believed that by making charitable gifts to yogins Śiva becomes pleased quickly (I.108.16).

It was believed that there is a river full of jewels within the range of heaven and nether worlds. Those who are unfortunate, being devoid of devotion to Śiva do not perceive it. Such persons do not obtain kingdom, heaven, salvation and the diet of milk. They do not achieve pleasing things unless Bhava is satisfied with them. Everything results from the grace of Bhava and not from the grace of other deities. Only that can be achieved, which has been gifted after exalting Śiva and not by exalting Viṣṇu or any other lord. (I.107.12-16).

Some moral standards were present. Such as, all unkind persons become miserable (I.78.24). Man is but the partaker of fruits of his own activities (I.64.10). People were afraid of death. On hearing the words of the God of death, the sage śveta cried out, "Hā Rudra". (I.30.10.).

People believed in omens. When the son of ^śilāda was born, the clouds Puṣkara, Āvartaka and others showered rain. The heaven walker-kinnars, sādhyas and siddhas sang songs. Viṣṇu showered fragrant flowers. (I.42.16). After the birth of the child, post natal and other holy rites were performed. (I.43.4).

Superstitions :

Superstitions are also found in the LP. It was believed that men in the sub-continent, Harivarsa imbibe the auspicious sugar cane juice. Hence old age does not afflict them and they do not decay. They live upto ten thousand years. In the sub-continent Ilāvṛta, the sun does not shine and men do not become old. There is no light in Ilāvṛta, neither the sun nor the moon nor the stars. (I.52.36-38).

The sun, the harbinger of the day moves a head quickly in a single-wheeled chariot drawn by seven green imperishable horses. He whirls day and night in his chariot which has a single wheel. He traverses in heaven over the seven continents and oceans with the help of seven groups. (I.55.81-82).

Brahmā created the waters, fire, earth, firmament, heaven, oceans, rivers, mountains, etc. (I.70.178). Dhruva - after attaining a fixed and steady abode is the first among all luminaries. (I.64.35).

There is a belief also in female ghost (I.64.25). Persons who are effected by afflictions from their birthday stars are liberated from that defect by devotion to their respective

planets. (I.61.50), keeping his sphere wider the moon revolves above the sun. All the groups of constellations move above the moon. (I.57.29). For the realization of purpose and (toward off evils) at time of harassment of the planets and the sun, the worship of the planets should be pursued by good men, offering should be made to fire in accordance with the injunctions of the śāstras. (I.57.38-39).

The LP has emphasized on the element of curse also. The persons affected by curse were as under :

The sacrifice of Brahmā perished due to the curse of a sage. Even though the sacrifice was meant for general welfare (I.29.25), Viṣṇu (I.29.26); Indra (I.29.27); Nahuṣa (I.29.28); the milk ocean and the watery ocean (I.29.29); Dharma (I.29.32); the Vṛṣṇis (I.29.33); Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Viṣṇu (I.29.34); Trisāṅku (I.66,10) and Ambarīṣa (II.5.135) were affected by curse.

(vii) Pastimes :

There are several ways and means of diversion in society and the LP refers to the following ones :

King Kauṣika was fond of singing. On hearing about it, the king Kalinga came there. (II.1.23). The sage Nārada was fond of music (II.ch.3). Various musical instruments are depicted as follows :

Ānaka :

This is a large military drum beaten at one end. The Ganas are stated to play it. (I.44.7).

Bheri :

A kettle-drum. At the time of coronation of Nandīśvara, the bheris were played by Ganas (I.44.7).

Gomukha :

Monier Williams doubts whether this is a horn or a trumpet. Gomukhas were played by Ganas (I.44.7). Also, they were in the worship of Mahādeva (I.51.17).

Jharijharaj :

This is a kind of drum. They were used in the worship of Mahādeva. (I.51.17).

Mrdāṅga :

Again a kind of drum which the LP refers to. It was played at the coronation of Nandīśvara. (I.44.8).

Muraja :

A kind of drum played at the time of coronation of Nandīśvara (I.44.8).

Pataha :

It is a kettle-drum or war-drum. It was used in the worship of Mahādeva. (I.51.18).

Panava :

It is a small drum or a kind of cymbal used to accompany

singing. It was played at the time of coronation of Nandīśvara (I.44.8).

Saṅkha :

This is actually a conch-shell used for offering libations of water or as an ornament on the arms or at the temples of an elephant, such as a conch-shell perforated at one end is also used as wind instrument or horn in the battles in epic poetry, each hero being represented as provided with a conch-shell which serves as his horn or trumpet. Often each of these has a name. The LP refers to it. They were used in the worship of Mahādeva (I.51.18).

Venu :

A flute. It was played at the time of coronation of Nandīśvara. (I.44.8).

Vīṇā⁹⁴ :

The vīṇā or Indian lute is supposed to have been invented by Nārada. It usually has seven strings raised upon nineteen, frets fixed on along rounded board, towards the ends of which are two large gourds. Its compass is said to be two octaves, but its range can be widened by the number of strings used. The LP states that it was played at the time of coronation of Nandīśvara. (I.44.8).

(viii) Measurement of Time :

In the LP, there are stray references to measurements of time.

A nimesa forms the lowest unit in the measurement of time.
A nimesa means one wink in the eyes of a man of normal health in normal condition.

Fifteen nimesas	= One kāsthā
Thirty Kāsthās	= One kalā
Thirty Kalās	= One muhūrta
30 muhūrtas	= One day-night
30 day-nights	= One month
12 months	= One year
One year	= One day-night of gods
360 years	= One year of gods
12,000 divine years	= One caturyuga
One thousand caturyuga	= A day of lord Brahmā
A day of Brahmā	= One kalpa
One kalpa	= 14 manvantaras
(I.3.8-35) ⁹⁵ .	

This shows that the material of the LP closely resembles that of the MS, the difference being that in the LP 15 nimesas make a kāsthā while in MS 18 nimesas are said to be equal to a kāsthā⁹⁶.

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6. Vide Kane, P.V., Op.cit., Vol.II, Pt.I, pp.38, 105 f.
7. MKP, 32.74 and MS 5.83.
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9. Cf. MS 7.4-5.
10. RV. 7.64.2 and 8.25.8 (in both to Mitra and Varuna) RV 8.67.1. (to Ādityas), RV. 10.66.8. (to gods in general); vide Kane, P.V., Op.cit., Vol.II, Pt.I, p.30.
11. e.g. RV. 4.42.1.; 10.109.3.
12. VI, Vol.II, p.252.
13. Cf. MS. 7.8.
14. Cf. MS. I.89.

15. VI, Vol.II, p.388.
16. MKP, 25.8; 47.77.
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24. Cf. MKP. 14.44.
25. Cf. MS. 2.203.
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27. Cf. MS. 4.25.
28. Cf. MS. 6.4; YS. 3.45; GDS 3.27.
29. Cf. MS. 6.33.
30. Cf. MS. 6.52.
31. Cf. BG. 4.23 and 5.21.

32. Cf. BG. 2.56.
33. Cf. BG. ~~182~~. 18.2 .
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42. MS. 3.27.
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