

brave enough to face denunciations or opprobrious epithets.¹ Vedic society thus appears to have taken it for granted that the woman had her likes and dislikes, her loves and joys, as much as the man. This personal freedom of action of the unmarried woman develops into a dignified wifehood after her marriage.²

Both as wife and as daughter, women were admitted to the privileges of the highest education, at least amongst the intellectual sections of the people.³ (The early Vedic literature, as is well-known, contains contributions from women⁴; and women played an important part in the later Vedic period, in the Upaniṣadic discussions,⁵ a fact which explains the subsequent activities of women in the age of the Buddhistic Reformation.⁶) In the society of the Yv. Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas⁷ women love music and marry by preference men who can sing, so that they must have ordinarily been taught dancing and music; thus 'gāthās' were sung at weddings, and in Yv. ritual also the 'patnī-sāmans, or wives' songs have a recognized position. In an Upaniṣadic household it was thought worth while to go through special ceremonials in order to secure the birth of a daughter who would distinguish herself⁸ by learning. Learned women are often referred to in the Brāhmaṇas, Upaniṣads and Sūtras.⁹ The Atharvaveda, in the verses in praise of Vedic studentship, declares that it is by virtue of her 'brahmācarya' that a young maiden gets a husband¹⁰; this may point to some otherwise undetailed traditional course of instruction to girls,¹¹ similar to the well-known system of schooling going by that name; or it may well have been the case, that girl

1 E.g. 'agre-dadhns' (Yv. Saṃh^os); 'agre-didhiṣu' (Yv. Saṃh^os, Taitt. Brā. and Dh. Sūt^os); 'agre-didhiṣu-pati' (Yv. and Dh. Sūt.); cf. 'didhiṣu-pati' (Dh. Sūt.) ref. to elder sister; and 'parivitta' and 'parivividāna' (in Av., Yv. Saṃh^os, and Brā.^o, ref. to breaking of order of seniority amongst brothers).

2 When she is free, for instance, to address councils; vide *ante*, pp. 8, 10 and 11.

3 Cf. Hopkins. J. Am. Or. 8., 13, 351-52; Weber: Ind. Stud. 10, 118-19.

4 E.g. Rv. V, 28; VIII, 30; X, 39; 40; etc.

5 E.g. Bṛhad. Upan. III, 6, 1; 8, 1; Āśval. Gr. Sūt. III, 3, 4; etc.

6 As evidenced in convents, missions, philanthropic and educational work.

7 Taitt. Sam. VI, 1, 6, 5; Mait. Sam. III, 7, 3; etc.; Sat. Brā. III, 2, 4, 3-6 (where however music seems to be regarded as rather a vain pursuit for men, suiting women better).

8 Bṛhad. Upan. VI, 4, 17 (a 'paṇḍitā dūhitā').

9 Ait. Brā. V, 29; Kauś. Brā. II, 9; Bṛhad. Upan. III, 3, 1; 7, 1; Āśval. Gr. Sūt. III, 4, 4; Śāṅkh. Gr. Sūt. IV, 10.

10 Av. XI, 5, 18; ('brahmā-vādini' women, amongst both royal and priestly families, occur in Purāṇic traditional accounts from the very earliest steps; a few of them are mentioned in Vedic literature also, e.g. Māṃsā-Āngirās).

11 Courses of sacred instruction for both boys and girls are found amongst many primitive or ancient tribes.

students sometimes resided with the family of a teacher for a number of years, equally with boy-students, a system implied in the Epic-Purāṇic and in classical Sanskrit literature¹ as well. The extensive use of metronymics in post-Vedic literature (appearing from even the R̥gvedic times onwards),² is partly accounted for by the fact that women of the more intellectual groups amongst the brāhmanas or kṣatriyas had often as much reputation in the learned circles of teachers as their men,³ and a metronymic must often have been something to be proud of, serving as a good introduction to its bearer (like 'Gārgī-putra').⁴ Post-Vedic literature indeed knows of quite a number of women-teachers of philosophy and ritual, married or otherwise,⁵ who apparently flourished towards the end of the R̥gvedic period and immediately after it.⁶ «The unmarried ('kumārī') women-teachers were designated 'gandharva-gr̥hītā,' or 'married to the Gandharva(s).'⁷

- (1) E.g., the case of Ambā residing as a student with the Śakṣhāvatas, in the Epic; or the heroine of Kālidāsa's famous drama, along with her friends, in the charge of the venerable matron of the hermitage. (The ref. here may however be to purely Epic conditions.)²
- 2 Vide ante.
- 3 E.g. Patañjala-Kāpya's wife and daughter, Yājñavalkya's wives, etc.; Yājñavalkya proves his superiority by showing that he knows all that the former two ladies knew; some of these women are included in lists of ṛsis and teachers regularly honoured by Vedic students. Vide n. 5 below.
- 4 Bṛhad. Upan. VI, 4, 30. (Of the Vedic and post-Vedic metronymics some at least may thus refer to descent from women-teachers).
- 5 Ait. Brā. V, 29; Kauṣ. Brā. II, 9;—authoritative opinion of a 'kumārī gandharva-gr̥hītā,' on Agnihotra ritual. Patañjala-Kāpya's daughter was a 'gandharva-gr̥hītā': Bṛhad. Upan. III, 3, 1; so was his wife: *ibid* III, 7, 1; they instruct enquirers from distant lands; Patañjala himself learns from his wife. Gārgī Vācakanvi, Vaṣṭavā-Prāthitheyī and Sulabhā-Maitreyī are classed with ṛsis in the Sūtras: cf. Sāṅkh. Gṛh. Sūt. IV, 10; Āśval. Gṛh. Sūt. III, 4, 4.
- 6 The first two references in n. 5 above relate to the time of a Jātukarṇya; the others refer to the times of Uddālaka-Āruṇi and 'Yājñavalkya,' between two or four to seven generations after the R̥gvedic compilation. It may be noted that Patañjala was an inhabitant of Madra, while the other names may be located in Mithila.
- 7 Cf. V.I., I, 486; with the exception of Patañjala-Kāpya's 'bhāryā' who is also so called: apparently she was originally a 'gandharva-gr̥hītā kumārī,' and had established her reputation as such before she married Patañjala, so that she continued to be known by her old designation (or 'bhāryā' here may be taken in the older sense of 'female member of the household,' i.e., the same as Patañjala's 'daughter' mentioned in the same connexion). It seems (from the context) that such women-teachers were supposed to be possessed by the spirits of ancient Āngirasa (or Atharvanic) seers,—a remarkable point.

(This epithet is significant, and throws some light on the later¹ practice of formal or nominal marriage of courtesans or 'artistes'² to some deity or woodland spirit³; it also explains the paradoxical statement in the Vedic marriage hymns, that three divinities are the first three husbands of a maiden, the fourth being the 'husband proper.'⁴ Evidently the Vedic society conceived of girl-life as developing through three stages (physical, moral and intellectual) into the fourth,⁵ that of actual wifehood, where girlhood ended: the stage presided over by Soma represents gradual acquisition of beauty and grace,⁶ that by Agni, of knowledge of domestic religious custom⁷ and purity of character, and that by the Gandharva,⁸ of various accomplishments. It follows that in theory every girl was supposed to have passed through a period of training and acquired some accomplishments,—they may have been anything from dancing⁹ to the subtlest ritualistic or esoteric doctrines¹⁰—before she could

¹ (But probably a very ancient practice; marriage to a tree is known in the *Jātakas*. In the *Av.* women are believed to be possessed and enjoyed by Gandharvas, apparently in the course of village dances, music and swingings; probably the confirmed flirts and musical experts, who formed the central figures of village festivities, and refused to marry, were the first 'gandharva-grhitās.' They probably represent the 'apsarasas' of Vedic and Epic-Purāṇic tradition and the 'ganikā's' of Buddhist and post-Mauryan periods; cf. their eminent position in the learned, literary and court circles as described in the *Vāts. Kā. Sūt.*)

² Sometimes women of considerable wit and attainments, attached to the stage or the temple. Vide n. 1 above.

³ The temple god, a Kumāra image, or some tree, etc.

⁴ *Rv.* X, 85, 40.41—*Av.* XIV, 2, 3.4; cf. *Av.* V, 17, 2.

⁵ The analogy of the 'āśrama' theory is significant; probably it indicates an occasionally followed scheme of female education.

⁶ Cf. the traditional comparison of a girl's development with the moon's waxing (e.g., in *Kumāra*: I; cf. also the term 'śoḍaśī,' which alludes to the 16 lunar phases). Soma might also signify, more particularly, the development of adolescence (owing to the Moon's supposed connexion with menstruation).

(The ref. in *Av.* II, 36, however, to 'King Soma making the maiden of good fortune' and to Soma and Brahman enjoying (tasting), and Aryaman enriching (renewing) her fortune (or youth, person),—suggests another distinct yet similar conception (in perhaps another age or society), according to which the King (typified by the legendary ancestor of all Aila ruling families), and the Brahman or High Priest of the tribe (or the priesthood as a body), were regarded as in theory (or perhaps optionally in practice) the legal 'masters' of every maiden of the tribe, till her marriage, which was supposed to be due to the good offices of Aryaman and favour of Agni: all this acc. to the divine law of Dhītar. The explanation of the comm. that Brahman=Gandharva (!) and so the ref. is to XIV, 2, 3.4, is by no means convincing.)

⁷ Cf. the vital importance of the wife for the fire-ritual in a household. Agni's lordship might also imply a period of 'brahmacharya' for the sake of suitable marriage.

⁸ The presiding genius of the Fine Arts, like the Muses; just as the *Apsarasas* patronised games and sport (*Av.* X, 10, 3).

⁹ Cf. note 7, page 109.

¹⁰ Cf. note 9, p. 109; and note 4, p. 110.

enter married life.¹ At the same time such entry did not put a stop to the activities of her preceding life-stages, as many of the women teachers and debaters were wives,² and could follow their husbands through all the stages of their intellectual and spiritual development.³ It is also significant that in the Vedic society every woman seems to have been conceived of as ever in a state of marriage,⁴—as a child, with Soma or some other deity of abstractions,—as a young maiden, with the Arts personified,—and then finally with her human husband, for whom indeed her mother impatiently watches the development⁵ of her youth, carefully guides her toilet,⁶ and for whom she herself weaves the soft nuptial robes in sweet anticipation.⁷

1 For in theory the husband is the 'fourth' possessor of a woman.

2 E.g. Gārgī; Patañjala-Kāpya's wife; etc.

3 E.g. Yājñavalkya's wife; (the Vedic wife, like Mudgalāni-Indrasenā, could also share the husband's martial glory).

4 Cf. immediate remarriage or devy-marriage after widowhood. Cf. also the later and modified doctrine of Manu, regarding the perpetual dependence of woman on man.

5 Av. VIII, 6, 1.

6 Rv. 1, 123, 11, etc.

7 Av. XIV, 2, 51.

EVIDENCE OF TRADITION.

Re Primitive Forms and Special Customs.

INTRODUCTORY.

There is a good deal of agreement between the evidence of the Vedic literature and that of the Purāṇic and Epic sources, with regard to the types of marriage, traces of its primitive forms, and the general position of women in society. This is only what might be expected. In the scale of historical values the Vedas and the rest of the priestly literature are still taken to be the standard, and whatever is not mentioned therein is taken to be *non est* or late and fabricated, while the least suspicion of a mention is developed into an ingenious theory, often by the same process whereby the sesasum of proverb changes into a palm-fruit. It is ignored that whatever authority the priestly literature may have in questions of religious, mythological and theological developments (and even there it is by no means an exclusive authority),¹ it cannot, in the nature of things be taken as the prime and best source of historical facts. As is well known, priesthoods have, quite naturally, a strong tendency towards conceited isolation resulting in ignorance or ignoring of secular thought and events and towards perversion of whatever knowledge of affairs they might acquire, to serve the interests of their own order and pretensions; the first characteristic is displayed throughout the Vedic literature in both forms; the second becomes notorious in the Purāṇic and Epic literature,—the custody of which, according to well-attested traditions passed to the priesthood² from the professional chroniclers and bardic experts, some little time after the catastrophe of the Bhārata or all-India war, which apparently introduced a period of decline in the 'Vedic' ruling classes and court life, that had hitherto sustained this latter stream³ of historico-literary productions. But even the mis-use of this sacred custody has not been able to obliterate the traditions of that early pre-Bhārata age, some of which were too deeply rooted in the popular memory

- ¹ Cf. Sørensen: preamble to the Index, for the growing conviction that Vedic religion and mythology cannot be properly understood without reference to Epic and Purāṇic.
- ² Cf. Chānd. Upan. III, 4, where the King's daughter refers to herself as the daughter of the lauded person, and the purohita's daughter as the daughter of the laudator, and so inferior. By this time therefore the Purāṇic chronicles had passed under priestly control from Sūtas, and the time agrees perfectly with what the Purāṇas themselves disclose.
- ³ Distinct and independent, and associated with special classes and lands.

and knowledge to be removed or wholly modified, even though offending against the priestly theories or subsequently changed ideas; and through the blurring daubs and confusions of subsequent brāhmanical accretions and perversions, can still be discerned,—thanks to the naïve, uncritical, and unhistorical treatment of their otherwise intellectual authors,—something of the original basic fabric. This supplies what is wanting in the R̥gveda and other Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas, namely, *prima facie* and *bona fide* historical events and conditions for most of the period covered by the former group. The value of this source becomes greater, when 'incidental' evidence in the 'priestly' group of texts finds explanation, illustration, or support in the 'bardic' one.

The establishment of the position taken up here would involve a detailed examination of the historical elements in the entire Vedic, Purāṇic and Epic literature,—a matter outside the scope of the present dissertation. It will be sufficient to note here, that after a careful sifting of evidently later and brāhmanical modifications, and rejection of all of those well-known extravagances of fancy, there still remains a residuum of fact, which cannot be given any other name besides 'traditional history,'—which has every mark of having at one time been carefully handed down through professional recorders,—and which can be given a tentative, workable, framework of chronology to stand upon, by a consideration and collation of undoubted synchronisms and uniform assertions. These synchronisms, plain statements, and the resultant scheme of chronology, elucidate much ill-understood matter in the Vedic literature, correct wrong perspectives and give them their proper setting and importance. At the same time there is nothing in this clarified tradition that is really inconsistent with definitely 'Vedic' facts. It is indeed strange that such an obvious source of historical information has so long lain outside the critical ken of scholars,—and that so much of fanciful speculations, unnecessary theories, preconceived notions, almost prejudices, should have gathered round the study of that other group of texts,—historically the most unpromising. But a wider comparative study and estimate is bound to come, and a reaction is overdue. Often scholars shrink from it, as from an impossible task or perilous venture, simply because they have been accustomed only to the usual 'Vedic' studies conducted in a peculiarly bookish manner, and have imbibed the 'brāhmanic tradition' (if any) unconsciously or in spite of themselves. One has, however, only to swerve the searchlight of critical study from 'Vedic' to 'bardic' lore, for a time, and then to and fro, to strike the right course. As it is, we have too long been making for various misty uncertain shores,—for the solar or nebular

myths, or the vegetation dramas¹; or been engaged, in exposing imaginary fabricators of tales from sacred texts,² in following the Indo-Afghan Vedic conquerors, as they issued through the Khyber Pass, severed from their Persian kin,³—or in depicting the typical Vedic King,⁴ strengthened in Indra's favour by the medicine-man, killing 99 noseless Dāsas a day, ploughing his Punjab submontane field, tending his sheep and cattle, squatting on grass-mats, and sleeping in his hedge-girt hut or cow-pen, safe from forest spirits.

The very fact that the 'traditional' material makes clearer and fuller what might be obscurely suggested by the Vedic,⁵—and sometimes vice versa,⁶—and that a rational continuous history, dynastic as well as cultural, discloses itself on putting the two together,—which sufficiently explains⁷ all that is yet known about early Indian conditions,—is a strong proof of the validity of the position set forth above.

The results obtained from this view will now be detailed, so far as the selected topics are concerned.

- 1 It will be enough to mention Ludwig's identification of Kṛṣṇa and five Pāṇḍavas with the Earth and five seasons, and Keith's notion that the story of Kṛṣṇa and Kamsa is a vegetation myth, which was often dramatised ritually.
- 2 For this view cf. the recent Vedic Index.
- 3 Even the recently discovered Boghāz-kūi inscriptions have been sought to be explained away owing to this preconceived notion.
- 4 It is a common mistake to take the Vedic period as a very short one and at the same time the most primitive one in Ancient India.
- 5 For instance, the full explanation that the Epic-Purāṇic traditions give, of the vague mentions of Kuru, Pāñcāla, and their kings, in the Rv., and Brā.ṅs.
- 6 As in the case of Dirghatamas and Kākṣivant.
- 7 E.g., a rational explanation of Āryan expansion, of the Inner and Outer Āryan groups, or of development of Brāhmaṇism in the Sarasvatī and Kuru-Pāñcāla country is afforded by traditional history.

I.

BROTHER AND SISTER MARRIAGES.

As we have seen, sister-marriage was not very rare in the R̥gvedic period (the references indicating its actual occurrence, and theoretic discouragement in the latter part of it). The dynastic accounts in the common Purāṇic tradition, referring to the ruling nobility as well as the priesthood in that connection, contain many plain indications of the frequent occurrence of such consanguinous marriages, intermittently throughout the whole period covered by that tradition, viz., 90 steps, roundly,¹ backwards from the Bhārata War and the compilation of the Vedic texts. When these instances (along with those of other types and forms of sex-relations) are referred to and located in the general scheme of dynastic sequences, that evolves readily out of the patent synchronisms and consistent assertions, they² become very significant from the standpoint of early social history.

The first instance of a sister-marriage in the dynastic lists is that of Aṅga and his 'father's daughter' Sunithā, the parents³ of the famous Veṇa.⁴ As with other similar cases, the designation 'pitr-kanyā',⁵ though preserved without

- 1 The Purāṇic tradition indeed goes back to still earlier times, and the Ailas and Aikṣvākas are treated as continuations of an earlier ruling race or races,—portions of whose story are as much historical in form as the later dynastic accounts; some traces of the pre-Aila marriage-relations will be shown infra.
- 2 The following instances are given in order of chronological sequence only, and not according to clarity of illustration.
- 3 In all accounts of Pṛthu-Vaiṣya's ancestry in the Purāṇas and the Epic.
- 4 Celebrated in Purāṇic texts (as well as in early Vedic texts); cf. "chosen King, an ideal one, supplanting 'prajāpatis,'—before Nahuṣa, in the beginning of the (present) Vaivasvata epoch": Padma: II, 35.
- 5 This apparently curious expression becomes fully intelligible when it is considered that in the genealogical ślokas it is the practice to describe a wife as so-and-so's daughter, so that the only way in which a sister-marriage could be described was to call the wife 'pitr-kanyā.' It is possible that this expression was chosen as including half-sisters also, who would be only the father's daughters. In this connection it is noteworthy that in early Vedic texts (and the original Sūta-Māgadha texts must have been equally ancient) 'bhaginī' does not occur, and 'svaṣṭr' is a wide, general and relative term, while to designate sister as a blood-relation the qualification 'jām:' is used (vide ante). It is probable that 'pitāmaha-sutā' (or daughter of Prajāpati or Brahmā) in many genealogies really stands for a first cousin, just as 'pitr-kanyā'—sister.

comments in one Purāṇa,¹ has given rise to emended readings and fanciful fables²: thus 'Mr̥tyu-kanyā,'³ is another reading for 'pitṛ-kanyā,'⁴—which is closely connected with that figure about the mind-born daughters of the Pitṛs.⁵ A Purāṇic account also professes to give details of the wooing of 'Mr̥tyu-kanyā' Sunithā,⁶ where it is she who takes the initiative in it; it is interesting to compare Yamī's similar attitude⁷ in the Vedic poem; some of the later cases⁸ also imply similar initiative on the part of the 'pitṛ-kanyā,' viz. with Acchodā (m. Amāvasu) and Narmadā (m. Purukutsa).⁹

Eight generations after Aṅga and Sunithā's time (according to the Purāṇic computation) we come across with several alleged sister-marriages, amongst the fresh groups of kindred races¹⁰ that succeeded the Pṛthu-ites.¹¹ The clearest notice is that of Danu's son Vipracitti (by Kaśyapa) marrying Diti's daughter Simhikā (also by Kaśyapa), Danu and Diti being

- 1 Matsya : 4, 43-44 (Svāyambhuva Manu's dynasty, step No. 9).
- 2 In most Purāṇas, evidently by way of after-thought or through misunderstanding.
- 3 Matsya : 10, 3.
- 4 Or 'pituh,' or possibly 'Uroḥ' or 'Muroḥ' (the 'm' belonging to the preceding line) kanyā, Uru being Aṅga's father.
- 5 As Mr̥tyu=Yama=lord of the Pitṛs. Cf. the brāhmaṇical 'pitṛ-vaṇśa' sections of Purāṇas; and Pargiter : AHT. pp. 69-70; 86; 196, 213.
- 6 Padma : II, 29-36; urged by her father, and helped in her plans by her companions, she arranged a meeting with Aṅga (who wanted a strong successor), married him, and by him had the son Veṇa.
- 7 Her plea of the necessity of begetting a worthy grandson for their father and her arranging to meet the brother suitably.
- 8 Vide infra.
- 9 Probably this points to a type of sister-marriage similar to what prevailed amongst the ancient Egyptian ruling classes, where in the customary consanguineous royal marriages the sister was the central figure. (Cf. the dynastic history of Ancient Egypt, and the position of Cleopatra even in a much later period.)
- 10 I.e., 'the descendants of Dakṣa's daughters.' The Purāṇic accounts of these pre-Aila races are well worth studying from the ethnological and geographical points of view; they are consistent in many respects, and seem to embody real racial memories.
- 11 Some real personages of these groups have, however, become semi-mythical (e.g., the Danu-ite Vipracitti or the Vaivasvata Yama), apparently because subsequent developments of Aila and Aikṣvāke dynastic histories had little continued connections with these branches (after Duryanta in the Aila section, and earlier in the Aikṣvāke section), and these, by dropping out of the chronicles, tended to become legendary. But this does not make any difference here; it is sufficient that such marriage-relations are indicated by tradition at this particular stage of traditional history.

Still even in very much later times, the Danu-ite and Diti-ite princes of traditional accounts are real persons, distinguished from the mythical as 'manuṣya-dharmāḥ' or 'odbanyāḥ' (Vāyu : 68, 15-16; Brahmāṇḍa : III, 6, 1-3; etc.), probably they had some traces of non-Aila or non-Aikṣvāke descent, though not always so.

sisters and co-wives¹; it is to be noted that their descendants (though recognized as a mixed "Daitya-Dānava" clan) were called Sainphukeyas, after the sister-wife.² The Yama and Yamī of R̥gvedic tradition are assigned by Purāṇas to the next generation, being children of Vivasvant,³ one of Vipracitti and Siphikā's step-brothers. Manu, another son of Vivasvant, also seems to have had a sister-wife: for Sraddhā is stated to have been a daughter of Vivasvant,⁴ and the genealogies make Sraddhā Manu's wife; Manu, again, is called 'Sraddha-deva'⁵; this ancient incest ascribed to a great name may have given rise to the Purāṇic question: "Why was Manu called Sraddhadeva"—which has introduced so many Brāhmaṇical fables and didactic matter in the Purāṇas.⁶ But a more historical reference is to be found in the story of Cyavana-Bhārgava,⁷ (contemporary with Saryāti-Mānava, a step lower), who was the son of a Pulomā, whom her previously 'betrothed husband,' a Puloman, forcibly abducted from her 'de jure' husband Bhr̥gu's house: when the sacrificial Agni is said to

- 1 Vāyu: 67, 60; Brahman̄ḍa: II, 5, 12; Hariv.: 3, 184-5; 204-5; 213-14; Matsya: 6, 25. Amongst Diti's near descendants, again, the Hālāhala 'gaṇa' (2 steps after Siphikā) are said to have sprung from Anubhāda's son Vāyu and daughter Sinibāli: apparently another instance in the same group (Vāyu: 67, 75; Brahman̄ḍa: III, 5, 33 ff.).
- 2 Vāyu: 68, 17-22; Matsya: 6, 25; Brahman̄ḍa: III, 6, 17-22. So also, other branch races of this age are designated by metronyms, except the Vaivasvatas or Mānvas, which may have an ethnic significance. But the point to be noted here is that the 'mother-side' is stronger even in case of a brother-sister marriage.
- 3 Son of Aditi, and alleged progenitor of the Aikṣvāka (and Aila) dynasties. This bordering on myth need not be ruled out, for real men and women with names of favourite gods and goddesses have been very common in India; so in detailed genealogies like this, apparently reasonable traditions must be given their due. The reference (in the 'Aditya' genealogies) to another contemporary parallel of Vipracitti and Siphikā's case, in 'Indra' son of Aditi and his wife Saci-Paulomi, may be legendary; nevertheless the traditional ascription of consanguineous connections to several members of a group has some value. It is curious that Pūṣan, who is a brother of Indra in these Purāṇic tables, should also be described in the Rv. as wooing his sister (vide ante).
- 4 Mbh. XII, 265, 2449.
- 5 Mbh. XII, 4507; but in XII, 13219, Sraddha-deva = Vivasvant (probably wrong for Vaivasvata?).
- 6 Cf. Hariv. 16-18. It is to be noted that the Purāṇic tradition assigns the origin of the cult and ritual of 'Sraddha' from comparatively later periods, either from the time of Nimi son of Dattātreyas, or from that of Jamadagni, both ascriptions relating practically to the same age, much later than Manu's. So the Brāhmaṇical connection between Manu and 'Sraddha' is wrong and probably dates from after the standardization of Manu's code, by which time an explanation of Manu's incest had become necessary; 'Sraddha-deva' is therefore derived from his wife and sister Sraddhā, just as Rāma has a variant appellation Śītāpatī: (probably 'Sraddhā-deva' would be a better reading).
- 7 Mbh. § 20 (Pulomā): 3, 5-7.

have admitted his rights over her (she being his by choice, and Bhr̥gu's by formal rites). This seems to refer to a custom among the Pulomites (cognate to the Diti-ites)¹ of consanguinous marriage, probably a brother-sister one.

Two steps further down we come upon firmer ground, and henceforward the references are without doubt historical in character, the details being dynastic and incidental.² The famous Nahuṣa-Aila is stated to have married a 'pitṛ-kanyā,' Virajā,³ who became the mother of Yayāti, etc. In the same connection Amāvasu-Aila is also stated to have been chosen by 'pitṛ-kanyā' Acchodā⁴ as her husband, apparently in the face of some opposition.⁵ So Nahuṣa had before him the precedent of his paternal uncle (the founder of the Kānyakubja line). In the same generation as Nahuṣa's, and in the same part of the country,⁶ there was another clear case,—amongst the Bhr̥gus (martial priests, who presently attached themselves to Yayāti and his descendants, specially the Yādavas): Sukra-Uśanas, Yayāti's father-in-law, married 'pitṛ-kanyā' Go (or Gā).⁷ This throws some light on the Kaca-Devayānī story, where Kaca refuses to accept her as wife, as she being his teacher's daughter was 'equal to his sister,' but Devayānī insists (cf. Yami's insistence) and finally curses him for refusing her.⁸ Devayānī naturally regarded the excuse as a lame one, her father having married a sister (who was his

1 Cf. n. 1 and 3, p. 118.

2 Concerned mainly with the Aila and Aikṣvāka kings, and closely connected priestly families like Bhr̥gus and Vāśiṣṭhas.

3 Vāyu : II, 93, 12; Brahma : 12, 1; Hariv. : 30, 1599; Matsya : 15, 23; Līnga : I, 66, 60-1; Kūrma : I, 22, 5.

4 Matsya : 14, 1 ff.; Brahmāṇḍa : III, 10, 54 ff.

5 Fable adds that the 'pitṛs' cursed her for this choice to be born again of Amāvasu or Vasu (Caidya) as Satyavati (Kālī), and the 'tithi' of the evil choice became 'Amāvasyā.' Such fables were obviously due to misinterpretation of 'pitṛ-kanyā,' and in this case the starting points of the fable may have been the common royal name Amāvasu (or Vasu), the Purāṇic saying that the Vasus were Pitṛs (e.g., Matsya : 19, 3), and the connection between 'Amāvasyā' and 'Kālī.' It seems the fable about 'Amāvasyā' arose out of Acchodā's appellation 'Amāvāsavi,' which again came to be confused with Vāsavi (Satyavati); probably Satyavati's being 'punarbhū' has also led to the story of the second birth of Acchodā; cf. similar confusion re Ajamiḍha's punarbhū wife, from which has originated the fable of Ajamiḍha's 2 births; cf. Vāyu : 99, 206-9; Matsya : 50, 17-19; where 'punarbhava' and 'putrābhava' are apparently corrupt readings for 'punarbhavā' ('bhūvi, etc.); cf. Ugrāyudha's would-be 'punarbhū' wife Satyavati, in the same Pāncāla line.

6 As the Yayāti story shows, besides other geographical references (re Vṛṣaparvan, Nahuṣa, etc.).

7 Matsya : 15, 15; Brahmāṇḍa : III, 1, 74-77. (Sukra is here said to have been daughter's son of Hiraṇya-kāśipu, whose sister Śūpikā married a half-brother). 'Go' was not a rare name; cf. Kakutṣṭha's daughter Go, whom Yati married in the next generation; and Suka's sister-wife Pivari, also called Go.

8 Mbh. § 145 (Sambhavaṃ. 9: Kaca) : I, 76-77.

'dayitā' wife)¹; her elder sister Devī married one 'Varuṇa'² and Kavi's immediate descendants ("sons") were called Varuṇas³; so Devī may have married a brother or a first cousin, —as Sukra-Uśanas was 'Kāvya,' or Kavi himself, according to one version.⁴ Kaca himself, being an Āṅgīrasa, had little moral ground to refuse; for among the Āṅgīrasas, Saṃyu's second son Bharata married his three sisters,⁵ and there were other incestuous marriages in the Āṅgīrasa group.⁶ As for marrying a preceptor's daughter, it is not very likely that custom was much stricter in Kaca's days, when so late as one or two generations after the Bhārata war⁷ a favourite resident pupil could be made the preceptor's son-in-law,⁸ and even be asked (or allowed) to beget children on his wife.⁹ Kaca's attitude therefore has no bearing on 'sister-marriage' in that age, but is an obvious case of political prudence,¹⁰ just as the subsequent marriage of Devayānī had an admittedly political significance.¹¹

For about ten steps after this we lose sight of sister-marriages; then we get two very probable instances in the Aila as well as in the Aikṣvāka line, in the latter apparently for the first time since the semi-legendary Vaivasvatas, Yama and Manu. In each case the texts are muddled in the extreme, and obviously the different readings are futile attempts to rectify something that was ill-understood or was considered improper and damaging; the motive was quite a natural one, as in both cases the reference is to the marriage-

- 1 Mataya : 15, 15. Devayānī was Sukra's daughter by another wife, a daughter of an 'Indra,' who may be Rāji who had become 'Indra' in his day; cf. Apnavān, another Bhṛgu of this time marrying Ruci, daughter of Nahuṣa, who also had become an 'Indra' like his younger brother; or Devayānī's mother may have been a daughter of Nahuṣa-'Indra' himself; in any case her marriage with Yayāti would be a consanguineous one.
- 2 Mbh. § 124 (Aṃśvat^o): I, 66, 2616.
- 3 Mbh. § 747, b. (Suvārṇotp^o): XIII, 85, 4149.
- 4 In Mbh. Sukra=Kavi; or Kaviputra sometimes; cf. Sorensen : Index : p. 403.
- 5 Mbh. § 490 (Āṅgīrasa) : III, 219, 14135-37; though the account as a whole is mixed up with mythology, that does not diminish the value of the detail quoted. (An Āṅgīrasa Saṃyu was somewhat earlier than the historical Bharadvāja-Āṅgīrasa whose chronological position is fixed by synchronisms.)
- 6 E.g., a daughter becoming a married wife : Mbh. § 490 (Āṅgīrasa); III, 219.
- 7 I.e., in Uddālaka-Arṇvi's time.
- 8 Kahoḍa married Uddālaka's daughter Sujāta.
- 9 Svetaketu was so begotten on Uddālaka's wife; cf. also the Vedic custom of transferring a widow to her deceased husband's pupil.
- 10 The Āṅgīras and 'Devas' were at war with the Bhṛgus and 'Asuras' or Vṛṣaparvites, and Kaca-Āṅgīrasa's mission was to cheat the latter.
- 11 As the Mbh. states, in reply to the question 'how Devayānī came to be Yayāti's wife,' that both Uśanas and Vṛṣaparvan courted Yayāti and sought his alliance.

relations of the immediate progenitors or successors¹ of famous Aila and Aikṣvāka kings. The Aila instance is further entangled in confusion, as there seems to have been an irregular succession after Matināra,² and a gap³ in the dynasty soon after this point,⁴ as a result of the Haihaya (Yādava) expansion and raids⁵ (the great historical event of these times).

Of the texts that give an account of the Paurava King Matināra's descendants down to Duṣmanta-Ailina (the reviver of the line), those of the Brahma and Harivaṃśa appear in this case to be the best⁶; Vāyu is here most corrupt,⁷ and cannot be checked by the corresponding Brahmāṇḍa text which is lost; the Matsya and the Mahābhārata⁸ have loosely followed and confused the two source-texts of Vāyu and Brahma-Harivaṃśa, while the Viṣṇu and the Agni⁹ give very brief and unsatisfactory summaries of these respectively. By collating these two latter texts first, and then that of Vāyu with it, a proto-text may be approximately drawn up, specially as the source of the¹⁰ Vāyu in this passage seems to have been the same in spite of various corrupt readings. According to this collated text,¹⁰ "From Matināra, by

1 Viz., Matināra and Duṣyanta (Bharata's father).—Ailas; Prasenajit, Yuvanāśva, Māndhātṛ, Purukutsa,—Aikṣvākas.

2 Vide infra.

3 This must be admitted partly on the strength of synchronisms, and partly because the undoubted Haihaya raids and supremacy implies prostration of the kingdoms of Madhyadeśa for the time being; so also, Kānyakubja, Kāśī and Ayodhyā are known to have fallen.

4 I.e., between Tamsu and Ailina-Duṣmanta.

5 From Śaśabindu son of Citraratha and Mahiṣmant son of Sāhajiya, to Jyāmagha and Durjaya and Supratika (an interval of between 13 to 20 steps).

6 Br. 13, 51-55; Hariv. 32, 1714-1721.

7 Vāyu : 99, 121-133.

8 Mat. 49, 7-10; Mbh. 1, 94, 3704 ff.

9 Viṣ. IV, 19, 2; Ag. 277, 4b-6a.

10 Collated proto-text :—

Matinārat Sarasvatyāms trayo' jāyanta dhārmikāh/Tamsur ādyo'
pratiratho Dhruvas cāpratimadyutiḥ/sarve veda-vidas tatra brāh-
maṇāḥ satyavādinah*/Gauri kanyā ca vikhyatā Māndhātur
janani tathā/(putro' pratirathasyāsīt Kaṇvaḥ sa nābhavan' rṣabā/
Medhātithih sutas tasya tasmāt Kāṇvo'bhavat dvijaḥ)** .

Ilinā nāma yasāsīt kanyā vai janamejayā

(Or Ilinā nāma cāsāsīt kanyā vai janamejayā.

Or Ilinā nu yamī syāsīt kanyā yājanayat sūtān.

Or Ilinānupamā tvāsīt kanyā yājanayat sūtān.

Or Ilinā tu pitur āsīt kanyā sājanayat sūtān.

Or Ilinā Matinārasya kanyā sājanayat sūtān.

brahma-vādinī adhistri ca Tamsus tām abhyagacchate*/Tamsuḥ
Śurodho rājarṣir Dharmanetro pratāpavan/brāhma-vādi
parākṛantas tasya bhāryOpadānavi*/ Upadānavi sūtām lebhe
caturas tvāilīnātmanjān/Duṣmantam atha Suṣmantam Pravṛtam
Anaghaṃ tathā.

* In Brahma and Hariv. texts only.

** May or may not be spurious.

"Sarasvatī, three virtuous sons were born, viz., Tamsu, the "eldest Apratiratha, and Dhruva, all of whom were truthful " Brāhmins learned in the Veda; and (he had) a famed " daughter, Gaurī, the mother of Māndhātṛ" [here occur two lines (with variants, in all the three texts), which may be spurious, and wrongly inserted here¹ owing to a probable confusion between two Kaṇvas; but as it stands in the collated text, it need not be so taken, for it rather explains what follows]; " Apratiratha's son was Kaṇva who did not become " king; hence his son Medhātithi-Kaṇva became a ' dvija' "; " but he " (either Matināra, if the intervening passage is spurious, or Apratiratha, if it is an integral part, though even then " he " may well refer to Matināra, as the text is about him, and these two lines are by way of explanation only), " (but he) had another daughter named ' Ilinā,' a ' brahma- " vādini' superior woman, whom Tamsu married, and who " gave birth to sons (i.e., heirs of the dynasty). In Tamsu's " line (were) Surodha, the rājarsi Dharmanetra, etc."—Here it seems clear that Matināra had three sons and two famous daughters, and of these a younger son Tamsu married his influential sister Ilinā, through whom the Paurava line was continued; if however the doubtful couplet is included, another possibility arises, that Ilinā, instead of being the sister of Tamsu may have been his niece; in any case the eldest son Apratiratha's line was displaced by a younger branch strengthened by a consanguinous marriage.²

The Aikṣvāka case is somewhat simpler. In each of the five texts³ collated here, the outline genealogy is quite clear: Samphatāśva, the 4th predecessor of Māndhātṛ, had two sons, Kṛśāśva and Akṣayāśva, between whom and Prasenajit in the next step is placed Haimavatī-Dṛṣadvatī, a ' famous lady,' the ' wife ' and the ' daughter ' of some of the persons named before her: while repeating this outline list, all the texts have evidently tried to gloss over some unacceptable feature in the relationship of this lady which is left vague.⁴ On collation,⁵

1 Cf. Pargiter: AIHT, pp. 225-28.

2 The disqualification is apparently due to adoption of ' brāhmap 'hood; ' Kaṇva ' might also refer to the blindness of the heir-apparent.

3 Vāyu: 88, 63-64 and Brahmanḍa: III, 63, 65-66.—forming one text; Hariv. 12, 708-10; Brahma: 7, 89ff; and Śiva: VII, 60, 72-74, forming another.

4 So also some other passages omit all details regarding Haimavatī: Matsya: 12, 33-34; Hariv. IV, 2, 13.

5 Collated proto-text:—

Samphatāśvo Nikumbhaśya auto raṇa-vidāradāḥ
Akṣayāśva-Kṛśāśvau tu Samphatāśva-sūtāv ubhau

- (a) tayorḥ patnī Haimavatī sa-mātura Dṛṣadvatī.
or tayorḥ patnī Haimavatī sammata tu Dṛṣadvatī.
or tayorḥ patnī Haimavatī satām matād Dṛṣadvatī.
or tayorḥ patnī Haimavatī tarya kanyā } Dṛṣadvatī.
pitṛ-kanyā }

vikhyatā triṣu loḥṣu putras cāryaḥ Prasenajit

however, it becomes clear that the famous Haimavati-Dṛṣadvatī was a daughter of Saṃphatāsva, and "in accordance with authoritative sanction" was also the wife of both his sons, Kṛśāsva and Akṣayāsva, so that Prasenajit was her son. Here, then, is a case of sister-marriage combined with polyandry: as Prasenajit was the grandfather of the famous Māndhātṛ, it was natural that this questionable feature of the original 'vaṃśa-sloka' was sought to be buried beneath diverse guess readings. It is to be noted that these two Aila and Aikṣvāka sister-marriages occurred in the same period (the latter being the earlier case).¹

After two important royal marriages with the Paurava and the Yādava dynasties,² Saṃphatāsva's line shows another instance of sister-marriage. Māndhātṛ's son Purukutsa married his 'pitṛ-kanyā,' Narmadā,³—who was later on, like so many other women of traditional history with names of rivers,⁴ fancifully identified with the R. Narmadā,⁵ but is simply a princess in all Purāṇic genealogies.⁶ In this case, again, there is probably a 'double' sister-marriage, a combination with polyandry, as in the case of Haimavati 4 steps above: the Brahmanḍa text⁷ gives the sequence Māndhātṛ—Ambariṣa (taking the second brother of the lists) = Narmadā—Yūvanāśva.....Anaraṇya, etc., instead of the usual sequence Māndhātṛ—Purukutsa = Narmadā—Trasadasyu.....Anaraṇya, etc., thus deriving the successors of both Purukutsa and Ambariṣa from the same sister-wife. As is to be expected, the various texts and readings at this point show signs of omissions and

or (b) tasya Haimavati kanyā satām matād Dṛṣadvatī
..... (a line prob. lost here)

vikhyatā triṣu lokeṣu putras cāsyāḥ Prasenajit.

or (c) tasya Haimavati kanyā tayoḥ patni Dṛṣadvatī
vikhyatā hi satām matāt putras cāsyāḥ Prasenajit.

1 For Prasenajit's son married Matināra's other daughter Gauri, an alliance that forms one of the bed-rocks of Purāṇic chronology.

2 Viz., Yuvanāśva=Gauri, and Māndhātṛ=Vindumatī.

3 In the 'pitṛ-vaṃśa' sections of most Purāṇas (Matsya : 15, 25, etc.; Brahmanḍa : III, 10, 98.)

4 E.g., Tapati; Kāveri; Kauṣiki, etc. Of the numerous stories (in Pur.⁶) of princesses being cursed and converted into rivers.

5 As in Mbh. XV, 20, 549-50.

6 Vāyu : 88, 74; Brahmanḍa : III, 63, 73; Brahma : 7, 86-6; Hariv. 12, 214-5. (Viṣṇu : LV, 3, 6-12, gives an account of how the Nāgas (of the S.W. seaboard, from the context) solicited Narmadā to obtain for them the aid of Purukutsa against invaders, and she accordingly led him forth into the Nāga country in a victorious campaign (N.B.—Māndhātṛ was already in the S.W.); the Nāgas blessed her: 'there shall be no breaking off of thy offspring by Purukutsa'; it seems possible, therefore, that the R. Narmadā derived its name from the 'saviouress' Narmadā.)

Brahmanḍa : III, 63, 72 ff.

alterations; a comparison of these suggests a collated text,¹ according to which,—“Of the three sons of Māndhātṛ, “Ambariṣa’s heir was ‘another’ Yuvanāśva begotten on “Narmadā; his son was Harita, from whom were descended “the Hārī(i)tas, military brāhman; while Purukutsa’s heir was “the famous Trasadasyu, begotten ‘subsequently’ on Narmadā, “and regarded as his ‘own’ son: his own son was Anarāya, “etc.” Evidently Narmadā was the wife of both the brothers, either at the same time, or by re-marriage (or ‘niyoga’). The R̥gvedic version of Purukutsa’s story, therefore, seems to embody a dynastic fact,² viz., that after Purukutsa’s death or captivity, his queen (herself of the same royal blood) obtained a son for his race,—and according to the Purāṇic indications, quite normally by her ‘husband’s’ brother, in this case also her own brother.

The next group of instances of sister-marriage occur very much later³ (21 steps below, according to one version, or 37 steps below, according to another); and these cases belong to the Aikṣvāka line again. According to the Matsya version⁴

1 Collated proto-text:—

- (A) Purukutsam Ambariṣam Mucukundam ca viśrutam
Ambariṣasya dāyādo Yuvanāśvo’paraḥ smṛtaḥ
Narmadāyām samutpannaḥ sammatāyām tadātmapaj
(or Narmadāyām samutpannaḥ sambhūtas tasya cātmapaj
Harito Yuvanāśvasya Hāritāḥ sūryaḥ smṛtaḥ
ete hy Aṅgīrasaḥ pakṣāḥ kṣātrōpētāḥ dvijātayaḥ
Purukutsasya dāyādas Trasadasyur mahāyadāḥ
Narmadāyām athotpannaḥ sammatas tasya cātmapaj
(or Narmadāyām athotpannaḥ san-matād tasya cātmapaj
or Narmadāyām athotpannas tv Amba(ur)iṣasya cātmapaj)
sambhūto’ayātmapaj putre’hy Anarāyaḥ pratāpavān
or (B) Purukutsam Ambariṣam Mucukundam ca viśrutam
Narmadāyām samutpannās teṣām sambhūya cātmapaj
Ambariṣasya dāyādo Yuvanāśvo’paraḥ smṛtaḥ
Harito Yuvanāśvasya..... dvijā’ayaḥ
Purukutsasya..... pratāpavān.

2 This would make the hypothesis of 2 Purukutsas and Trasadasyus largely unnecessary; ‘Durgaba’ and ‘Girikṣit’ offer no real difficulty, as these are simply obvious epithets of an unapproachable conqueror of the hilly S. W., whither Māndhātṛ was led by his wars and Yādava marriage; cf. ‘Trasadasyu,’ an epithet derived from similar circumstances, used as a name.

3 But a few steps below, in the time of Hariścandra-Aikṣvāka, there was apparently a dynastic custom and a ‘ṛṣi’ practice, of sister-marriage (and other incestuous connections) permitted for the sake of offspring (vide ‘Purāṇic’ gāthā quoted in Ait. Brā.). That Hariścandra was effectively advised with regard to attainment of offspring by the ṛṣis Nārada and Parvata, occurs in the present Purāṇic texts also; but the recommendation of incest is not there, as in the older ‘gāthā’ text. It would seem as if the original bardic account of Hariścandra’s life and times had been retouched in questionable details by subsequent brāhmanisation.

4 Matsya: 15, 18-19.

it was Sagara's grandson Amśumat who married 'pitṛ-kanyā' Yaśodā, who is further specified as 'daughter-in-law of Pañcajana, mother of Dilīpa, and grandmother of Bhagīratha.' But the Brahmanḍa¹ distinguishes the 'pitṛ-kanyā'-born Dilīpa from the Dilīpa who was Bhagīratha's father though in the 'pitṛ-varṣa' accounts the two are often mixed up. The genealogies in several Purāṇas² make Dilīpa-Khaṭvāṅga the son of 'pitṛ-kanyā' Yaśodā, making her the wife of Viśva-mahat and 'daughter-in-law' of Vṛddhaśarman,³ or wife of the latter.⁴ It is possible that both statements are correct; the recurrence of sister-marriages in the two dynasties is too apparent to make this unlikely, and such a statement about the descent of Bhagīratha who was subsequently made into a brāhmanical hero, is in itself proof of its authenticity. Repetition of names, even of women, is not unusual in the dynastic lists⁵; and both Amśumat and Viśva-mahat ('-saha) may have married sisters named Yaśodā and had sons called Dilīpa,⁶—quite a common princely name.⁷

Viśva-saha's sister-marriage was not however an isolated instance. At the 5th or 4th step⁸ in his line, the famous Daśaratha seems to have contracted such a marriage with 'Kauśalyā' who can only have been a sister or a first cousin⁹ (paternal uncle's daughter), probably the former, as the cumulative evidence suggests.¹⁰ It is to be noted that a Kauśalyā in the genealogies always means a daughter of the Kośala king (of Ayodhyā),¹¹ and never wife of a Kośala king, pure and simple; and appellations of similar formation, elsewhere in traditional accounts, have invariably and precisely the same import.¹² This gives added significance to the alleged succession trouble amongst Daśaratha's sons by his several wives: the rights of 'pure' dynastic blood could not be finally

¹ Brahmanḍa: III, 63, 166; 181-182; 10, 90 ff.

² E.g., Vāyu: 88, 180-182; Brahmanḍa: III, 63, 166; 181-182; 10, 90 ff; in both, the misreadings 'putrikasya,' 'putrikāsi,' 'putrikasyām,' etc., are obvious tamperings with 'pitṛ-kanyā,' and may date from a time when the 'pitṛ-varṣa' explanation had not yet been devised.

³ The names are variously read.

⁴ Liṅga: I, 66, 31.

⁵ This has led to fables about the same 'apsaras'es, Ghṛtāci, etc., being mothers of different kings in the same dynasty.

⁶ Unless the two Dilīpas are identified, from the standpoint of dynastic synchronisms; this point however still requires clearing up.

⁷ There was a Panrava Dilīpa also, before Pratiṅga, besides these two.

⁸ According as 'Dirghavāhu' is taken as a name or epithet.

⁹ This would probably sbook those who have imbibed in good faith the medieval Rāmāyaṇic tradition.

¹⁰ See the preceding cases, and also infra.

¹¹ Except in those very few cases where Kośalan titles were used by conquerors of Kośala. (vide infra).

¹² See infra, the case of Pṛyati or Pārpati.

suppressed. Thus it becomes clear that the later Kāvya version of the Rāmāyana is wrong in its statements about Rāma,¹ and the Buddhist reference² that makes Rāma brother and husband of Sitā is historically right, in view of all this collective evidence. The origin of the modified version discloses itself in Sitā's appellation 'janaka-duhitā' which need only be compared with the 'pitṛ-kanyā' of numerous other instances; the transition from the substantive 'janaka' in what was probably the old basic genealogical śloka, to the proper name 'Janaka,' was a very easy one, and had the merit of supplying a plausible and honourable connection for the subsequently deified tribal hero, while removing the objectionable feature smoothly.³

For 27 steps after this⁴ no sister-marriages are indicated in the dynastic accounts.⁵ Then we find several cases again,

- 1 As in fact in many other genealogical particulars, as compared with the consensus of Purāṇic traditions.
- 2 Cowell: Jāt, IV, 76-82. It is to be noted that an early Buddhist version would originate in Kōśala itself, and as Buddha himself belonged to the Kōśala dynasty (though probably a branch one), there can have been no motive of disparagement in such a statement; besides sister-marriages and first-cousin marriages were not unknown in early Buddhistic period. The Jātaka tradition indeed is based on the very early Purāṇic, and it is quite likely that some real pieces of historical fact have been better preserved here than in later Brāhmaṇical works like the Rāmāyana, having been taken out of the earlier 'Purāṇa' (9th Cent. B.C.), within 3 or 4 centuries of its collation. (N.B.—The Kāśmīriana version of Sitā's descent is a confusion between several popular cycles of stories connected with Rāvaṇa, and cannot be regarded as being drawn from authentic Purāṇic tradition.)
- 3 The nature of the transition is well illustrated by a popular stanza of an apparently unknown medieval Bengali 'Kavi' (ex tempore epic and purāṇic dramatiser), which is intended to serve as an encomium as well as a denunciation on Rāma at the same time:—
"Janama tomāra ativipule/Bhuvana-vidita Ajera kule/Janaka duhitā vivāha kari/Tāhāte bhāsāle yaśera tari." Evidently here is a trace of the earlier Buddhistic tradition (which lingered longest in Bengal). Many of the statements of Rāmāyana will have to be examined in the light of Purāṇic traditions and historical probabilities suggested by these latter: e.g., in the process of modernization and rounding angles, Siradhvaṇa may have been hit upon as a suitable 'janaka' for the 'janaka-duhitā,' because of the connection between 'sitā' and 'sira'; 'ayonijā Sitā' of original texts may have been made into mythical 'ayonijā' Sitā, etc.; one basis of identification of Sitā with Janaka's dtr. was probably the story of Vedavaśī, dtr. of Kusadhvaṇa (of Mithilā apparently), outraged by a 'Rāvaṇa': Rām. VII, 17.
- 4 The period may ultimately prove shorter, when all the synchronisms have been more thoroughly examined; the present estimate is based on the taking of the 'solar' lines as the standard, and so there is room for corrections.
- 5 Except another instance (noted infra) among the Yādavas of Mathurā-Śūrasena in the generation next to Rāma, apparently under Kōśalan influence.

only one or two steps above the Bhārata war. The Vāsistha Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana-Vyāsa's son Suka (the hero of many edifying brāhmanical didactic tales) married 'pitṛ-kanyā' Pivarī¹ (who was anxious to obtain a worthy husband),—just as, generations ago, the great Bhārgava brāhman, Sukra-Uśanas, married a sister. Though comparatively fewer instances of sister-marriages are recorded of brāhman families, this is no indication of their rarity among them,² but is merely due to the fact that it was only in exceptional cases of intimate contact with important ruling princes (like that of Sukra with Yayāti and Vyāsa with the Kauravas, etc.), on which much of traditional history turned, that such details about priestly marriage-relations were recorded; for as a rule the brāhman families kept no genealogies,³ and whatever traditions are found about their sex-relations, show that they were much more unfettered and loose in these, than the ruling nobility.⁴ The other two instances somewhat less definite, are amongst these latter, Pāñcālas and Yādavas, in the same generation as Suka and Pivarī (or Kṛtvī). Drupada apparently married his sister, and his sons and daughters, at least some of them, were by her, probably including Dhṛṣṭadyumna and Draupadī. A full account of Drupada's family is given in the Mahābhārata,⁵ where it is stated that, intent on avenging Droṇa's insult,

¹ In the 'pitṛ-vaṃśas' generally; Harivaṃśa: 23, 1242-3, where she is called Kṛtvī and a 'pitṛ-kanyā' (the variation in the name but consistence in the epithet showing that it is a 'sister' who is referred to); also called Go: Matsya: 15, 5-10 (where her daughter is called Kṛtvī and mother of Brahmādatta; but Brahmādatta's maternal grandfather Suka must be a different person from Vyāsa's son,—though as Vyāsa is said to have begotten Suka on a 'Sukī' called Ghṛtācī or Arapi, the same family may be indicated by both references). It is quite likely that the wives of Jaigṛsavya (85) and Kāśyapa Asita (91), Ekapātālā and Ekaparṇā, were the daughters of an actual brother-sister marriage, of Menā and Himavant, whoever they may have been. Cf. Parigter: ALHT pp. 69-70; 192. Cf. also n. 5 p. 75.

² Cf. the definite Āṅgīrasa instance noted ante, and other indications dealt with there. In the mythological case of Skanda's children (the 'gṛahaś'), amongst whom the brothers are said to have been husbands to the sisters, (Mbh. § 502 (Skandop²); III, 230) it is admissible to recognize a reflection of primitive 'ṛṣi' customs or Atharvavedic (hence Bhṛgvaṅgīrasa) ideas (it is interesting to compare Rv. X, 162 and VI, 55, 4),—as the myth is a continuation of the brāhmanical story of the six divorced wives of the Ṛṣis (Bhṛgu, Āṅgīras, etc.), to whom Skanda is affiliated, and as it falls properly within the scope of that strongly brāhmanical Veda.

³ The so-called 'ṛṣi-vaṃśas' being much later attempts at compiling some account out of hearsay, achieve nothing else but a list of Gotras and a few Pravaras, jumbled up without historical order; probably these emulative attempts were due to the Purāṇas having subsequently passed into the custody of the brāhmanas after the Bhārata battle.

⁴ See instances infra.

⁵ Mbh. § 218 (Ceitraratha.°: Drau.°-sambh.°): 1, 167.

and dissatisfied with his existing children, Drupada, for the sake of a suitable son, had a sacrifice performed by the Kāśyapa Yāja and his brother, who then summoned the Queen Pṛṣṭi¹ (or Pārṣati) to the sacrifice, to "accept the offspring," but she raised some objections, whereupon Dhṛṣṭadyumna and Draupadī were miraculously produced without her, but were regarded as the Queen's own children. Putting aside the fable, it seems clear enough that Drupada's queen was Pṛṣṭi (or Pārṣati), and she was, potentially, adoptively, or actually, mother of Draupadī and Dhṛṣṭadyumna, and she was also, the 'mahīṣī' (Drupada having apparently other wives), for she was summoned to the sacrifice.² Now Drupada himself was well-known as 'Pārṣata,' being Pṛṣṭa's son³; and 'Pṛṣṭi' (or 'Pārṣati') can only mean daughter or grand-daughter of Pṛṣṭa; thus Draupadī herself is, in the same connexion, called 'Pārṣati'⁴ (daughter of Pārṣata=Drupada) or 'Pārṣatasya svasā'⁵ (sister of Pārṣata=Dhṛṣṭadyumna). Hence Drupada-Pārṣata's wife Pṛṣṭi (Pārṣati) was his sister. The other case is not equally clear: Satrājīt the Vṛṣṇi, a near relative and a father-in-law of Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva, is said to have had ten sister-wives (or sisters as wives), who bore him a hundred children⁶; they may have been his own sisters and half-sisters. But according to another less reliable version⁷ these ten wives were the daughters of the Kekaya king⁸; while

¹ Pṛṣṭi: Mbh. I, 6390; Pārṣati: Mbh. I, 6405.

² Cf. 'Kauśalyā' being the chief queen of Daśaratha; or 'pitṛ-kanyā' Yāśodā being the 'śreṣṭhā' wife of Aṃśumat (Matya: 15, 28); it is possible that the rank belonged to the sister-wife by customary right (cf. the ritual precedence of the sister over the wife in Ait. Brā.); the much discussed 'Subhadrike Kāmpilavāsini, etc.' may after all refer to a Kāmpila princess of blood, the sister-wife and 'mahīṣī' of the Kāmpila king (it is well known that Yv. ceremonials often refer to the Kuru and Pāncāla courts).

³ In all Epic and Purāṇic genealogical accounts; cf. his several appellations derived from Pṛṣṭa.

⁴ Mbh. I, 6434; 7326; III, 215; V, 5520; 5565. Pṛṣṭa's predecessor (interval uncertain) Somaka's chief queen was also a 'Pārṣati'; this implies that there was an earlier Pṛṣṭa before Somaka who too married a sister; in that case this instance of sister-marriage would have to be placed shortly after Rāma-Dāśarathi and Sātīvatā's cases (vide infra).

⁵ Mbh. II, 2349.

⁶ 'Daśa-svasṛbhyo bhāryābhyah Satru(s)jittah satam sutāh': Vāyu: 96, 53. There are a number of variant readings, all of which are clearly tamperings that have nevertheless failed to obscure the original 'svasṛ' and 'bhāryā.'

⁷ Matya: 45, 17-19.

⁸ In that case they would not be 'svasṛah' proper, but consists of Satrājīt, his mother (or a near ancestress) being a Mādri (Matya: 45, 1 ff; Brahmanḍa: III, 71, 18 ff)=Kaikayī; (Mādri, Kekaya and Vāhlīka are often indifferently used in the genealogies; but these local particulars are unreliable in the case of the ill-kept Yādava ones).

yet another version omits all details¹ and notes only the ten wives and a hundred children,—evidently because something was felt to be unseemly here, in the line of the deified hero Kṛṣṇa's father-in-law. A collation of all the modified and senselessly corrupted texts,² however, makes Satrājī't's polygamous sister-marriage obvious.³ It is noteworthy that 'sisters as wives' without any distinct possessive reference occurs in another case in the same family, where Bhajamāna, a son of Sātvata (from whom Satrājī't was also descended, and who himself apparently contracted a sister-marriage),⁴ is stated to have married a 'Sṛñjayī,' whose son Vāhya(ka) married the two daughters of 'Sṛñjaya' (or probably the same Sṛñjayī'), being 'bhaginyau' (sisters), and begat children on the 'ārya(ā)-bhagini' (elder sister).⁵ Here 'bhagini' might refer either to the two wives as each other's sisters, or to them as own (or step-) sisters of their husband,—while in any case they were his 'cousin-sisters' (also called 'bhagini's')⁶; this ignoring of a sure confusion shows that 'full' sister-marriages were also recognized by these Yādava genealogies,⁷ even if such a marriage may not be clearly indicated in this particular case. A collation of the various texts, however, leaves little doubt on this point.⁸ This probability increases when we find the above-mentioned Sātvata

1 Hariv. 39, 2076; Brahma : 15. 45; these are of course emended versions with a late Kṛṣṇa-ite bias.

2 Two source-texts may be distinguished here: (1) Vāyu :—'Daśa-svasṛbhṛyo bhāryābhṛyaḥ Satrājītaḥ śataṃ sutāḥ'; (2) Brahma : Hariv : Brahmāṇḍa :—
Daśa-svasṛṣu Satrājīd-bhāryāsv asan

Satrājīto daśa-svasṛ-bhāryās tāsaṃ

śataṃ sutāḥ ('tvāsan' being an obvious emendation for 'svasṛ'.)

3 In the same family and generation Jayanta is said to have married Jayantī, whose son was Śubha (Padma : V, 13, 99-100; for the names cf. Ahuka and his sister Ahukī in the same group); this too would seem to be a case of sister-marriage.

4 Vide infra.

5 Vāyu : 96, 2-6; Brahmāṇḍa : III, 71, 3-6; Hariv. 38, 1899-2003; Brahma : 15, 30-34; Matsya : 44, 47-50.

6 So also, Duḥśalā is 'bhagini' of the Pāṇḍavas in the Epic.

7 Which do not lack instances of other varieties of consanguinous and incestuous marriages.

8 The Hariv. and Brahma text is evidently drawn up so as to evade the troublesome points. The Vāyu, Brahmāṇḍa and Matsya texts with their variants may be thus collated:

" Bhajamānasya Sṛñjayyāṃ	{ Vāhyakācō pavāhyakāḥ Vāhyakāyāṃ ca Vāhyakāḥ
" Sṛñjayyāśca	{ sutaḥ dve tu Vāhyakas te udāvahat
" Sṛñjayasya	
" tāsyā bhārye bhaginyau	{ dve sugvāto } sutaṃ vashū..... te pṛṣṭyātāṃ
" ye Vāhyād ārya-Sṛñjayyāṃ Bhajamānād vijajñire.... (Ayutājī't, etc.).	Bhajamānād vijajñire.....
" Vāhyād anyā-bhaginyāṃ ye (teṣāṃ Devāvṛdho rājā, etc.)."	

(son of Satvant and grandson of Jantu) marrying a ' Sātvatī Kauśalyā ' 1 (or perhaps better, a ' Sātvatī ' and a ' Kauśalyā '), This Jantu 2 married an Aikṣvāki (Kauśalyā); their son Satvant also 2 married a Kauśalyā, evidently a ' cousin-sister ' ; and their son Sātвата, again, married ' Sātvatī Kauśalyā. ' Here it is clear that this ' Sātvatī ' can only have been Sātвата's sister 3; and if she is the same person as ' Kauśalyā, ' then this latter appellation can be explained as loosely applied owing to her being descended from a number of ' Kauśalyā's married into the family every generation, 4—or by the fact of traditional history that Sātвата had reconquered the Yādava possessions lost to Rāma and established his dominion over a portion of the fallen Kōśala kingdom, 5 so that the Kōśalan titles could be used by his family 6; but a collation of the texts would suggest that two different wives of Sātвата and their children have been confused, and that originally the son of one of them was distinguished as ' bhāginya, ' i.e., ' sister-born. ' 7 In any case, Sātвата contracted a sister-marriage; and this is significant in view of the fact that he is a younger contemporary of Rāma-Dāśarathi, 8 in whose family there were several sister-marriages in that period, 9 and with whose family that of Sātвата had intermarried frequently. 10

If the Bhārata battle is taken to have occurred in about 950 B.C. roundly (a quite moderate and reasonable inference from the facts of traditional history), these last instances of sister-marriage would be assigned to cir. 1000 B.C.,—by which time almost all the R̥gvedic sūktas had been composed and were awaiting final compilation. In the light of these facts, the references in the R̥gveda to sister-marriages become more intelligible, and their significance gains perceptibly.

1 Vāyu : 95, 47; 96, 34.

2 Matsya : 44, 45-47; Brahma : 15, 27-30 and Hariv. 37, 1994-2000, make Satvant son of Madhu (instead of Jantu), but retain the Aikṣvāki mother.

3 Cf. ' Prṣṭi ' and ' Kauśalyā ' above.

4 So that she had almost as much of Kōśala blood as Yādava.

5 Hariv. 95, 5242-8; along with Vāyu : 88, 185-6; Brahmāṇḍa : III, 63, 186-7; etc; also cf. Hariv. 55, 3060-96.

6 Cf. the case of the Haihayas Bhadrāsrenya, Supratīka, etc.; the later case of the Kāśī princesses Ambā, etc., being called Kauśalyas as well; there was an Auśinara King of Kāśī; cf. also the converse case of Rohiṇī-Pauravi (w. of Vasudeva) who should have been called Rohiṇī-Mādrī or -Vāhṛiki.

7 The best collation would be :

" Sātvatī Sātvatāḥ jājñe divyaṃ Devāvṛdham nṛpaṃ

" bhāginyam, Bhajamānaṃ ca Kauśalyā suṣuve sutarā."

(It is possible however to read ' Kauśalyān, ' taking it as adj. to ' sūtān.')

8 Vide n. 5 above.

9 Vide pp. 125-126 above.

10 Vide n. 6 above.

Rv. VI, 55, which shows 'ṛṣi' approval of incestuous connexion with sister (and mother), reflects the same state of custom and opinion as the old 'gāthā' (in Ait. Brā.) referring to the time of Hariścandra-Aikṣvāka,—which agrees fully with the actual occurrence of sister-marriages amongst the Aikṣvākas on either side of Hariścandra, and amongst 'ṛṣi' families,—and is thus a very early reference. Rv. X, 162 also is comparatively early, as it is an Atharvavedic domestic charm, and as its evidence regarding the prevalence of such connexions, at least in the brāhmaṇ society contemplated by that Veda, agrees with the early cases amongst the same groups (Bhṛgu, Āngirasas, etc.), as noticed in 'tradition.' But Rv. X, 10, which shows the rise of better opinion (and some conflict of opinion also), is clearly later¹ than those two; hence it is best viewed as a 'vākovākya' or Purāṇic dialogue, of the character of a social drama on a small scale² with a moral; it is significant that the typical example selected for the moral dialogue belongs to the very earliest stage of the traditional dynastic history of the Aikṣvākas (and Ailas): this indicates that the author knew Purāṇic traditions well,³ and that the piece was probably intended for the reform of some Mānva (or Aila) court and its attached priesthood⁴;—all this again, points to the time of its composition as being close to that of the bringing together of priestly and bardic lore in 'saphitā's by Vyāsa and his disciples.

From this time (i.e. 1000—950 B.C. downwards), the Purāṇic tradition does not refer to any further sister-marriages. Though it notes some few details about subsequent dynasties for a century more down to cir. 850 B.C., for the succeeding period (850 to Magadhan ascendancy) it gives only the bare political facts and lists of kings, without personal details; yet there must have existed a mass of traditional history for these times, of which the stories about the kings contemporary with and preceding Buddha are surviving traces. Then in the early Buddhistic texts,—which though fixed and canonized much later, can very well be taken as evidence for the 6th and 7th cents. B.C.,—we get once again some references to sister-marriage (along with other primitive forms).

An important question is raised here: Is this recrudescence in the Buddhistic literature only similar to what the

- 1 This is also implied by its unknown authorship and subsequent ascription to the very persons who form its subject-matter.
- 2 Cf. the similar character of 'Purāṇic-Urvasī', and other pieces.
- 3 Just as about 250 years later, the Aitareya made use of an earlier Purāṇic compilation (probably the one of 9th cent. B.C.).
- 4 So also, the reverse teaching of the (Purāṇic) 'gāthā' in the Aitareya is for the benefit of the Mānva King Hariścandra, put in the mouth of ṛṣis patronised by him.

previous dynastic history in the Purāṇas reveal,—or is it the effect of some external influence and change in social elements?

The interval between the last Purāṇic-Vedic instances and the Buddhistic references is not too long to make the first view improbable, when similar previous intervals are compared. In fact these intervals of no information are no proofs against such practices, and the recrudescences may as well be taken as marking a continuity in dynastic or priestly custom. If the Purāṇa had not been closed, the continuity would in all probability have been well illustrated: it is indeed indicated by the fragments of non-Purāṇised tradition embodied in the Buddhistic texts. These Buddhistic texts are not all 'Buddhistic': among them are echoes from the older Purāṇic traditions regarding the pre-Bhārata times, such as Rāma's marriage with his sister Sītā,¹ or Kṛṣṇā's twin brother's marriage with his mother's daughter by her second husband²; or again, allusion is made to dynastic details at some stage or other in the post-Bhārata and pre-Buddhistic period,—such as the Kāśī prince Udayabhadra's becoming the heir-apparent by his marriage with his half-sister Udayabhadrā, who proved a most devoted wife³; while another reference might belong to Buddha's own times, such as the proud admission of the Sākya (a section of the Aikṣvākās)

1 Cowell: Jātakas: IV, 79-82, etc.; vide also ante, re earlier sister-marriages in Rāma's line (sp. pp. 125-126 and n. 2 & 3, p. 126).

2 Acc. to the Jātaka version, Draupadī and her brother were really children of the vanquished Kōśala King, their mother having been abducted and married by the victorious 'Kāśī' King, during her pregnancy; after the birth of the twins, the son was for safety brought up in secrecy away from the King's household, while the daughter was recognized as his own; subsequently the boy fell in love with his mother's daughter by her second consort, and being caught in her company and recognized, was duly married to his half-sister (vide Cowell: Jātakas: V, 226, etc.).

These dynastic details agree very well with those in the Epic and Purāṇas re the Pāñcāla line: Drupada himself married a sister, and his ancestor Somaka did the same (vide ante); so it is quite likely that Dhṛṣṭadyumna also contracted a similar alliance, and the practice was in accordance with Pāñcāla dynastic tradition. (Cf. also the 'miraculous birth' of Drau., and Dhṛṣṭa. in the Epic).

The selection was made after a good deal of search for a girl after the likings of Udayabhadra. The story makes them rather unwilling parties to the marriage at first; but this is probably an addition, as the subsequent portion of it shows: after the brother's death the sister continued to rule the country, and firm in chastity could not be seduced by others, as she longed for reunion with her lord and brother Udaya; subsequently she abdicated, retired as a recluse, and "became the wife of Udaya again"; "in fact she was Buddha's cousin-wife in a later birth." (Cowell: Jātakas: IV, 67).

that amongst them men ordinarily consort with their sisters.¹ Hence a continuity of the custom seems to be clearly indicated during the interval in question.

On the other hand, the Persian expansion into India from the first half of the 6th century B.C. onwards, makes it very probable that kindred Irāṇian court-fashions² were taken up in Indian aristocratic circles at that period or even somewhat earlier. This does not imply anything like Spoonerian Zoroastrianisation. The Purāṇic tradition helps us in viewing the so-called Irāṇian influences in their proper perspective. It looks upon these Trans-Indus peoples of the far West and North-West, as being originally Aila (and partly Aikṣvāka)³ communities, that migrated (or were pushed back) thither from Madhya-deśa (along with other offshoots to the S. W., etc.), at sundry times, but chiefly during the period from Yayāti to Uśinara (cir. 1900—1650 B.C. in Purāṇic computation). And throughout the traditional history of the pre-Bhārata age they are never wholly lost sight of, at least the more easterly sections of them,—though often termed 'barbarians,' etc. Indeed it seems very probable that the various 'barbarian' inroads⁴ from the N. W. and W. referred to in dynastic history, e.g., *temp.* Kuśika, the Haihayas and Sagara (cir. 1650—

- 1 Cowell: *Jātakas*: V, 219. (In a tribal quarrel the Koliyas charged the Śākyaas with having this incestuous custom: the Śākyaas retorting, acknowledged it, saying that these sister-marrying Sakyas were mightier men than the Koliyas.)
- 2 Every student of history knows that many West Asiatic dynasties cherished the custom of sister-marriage, e.g., the Ptolemide and earlier Egyptian dynasties, the Achæmenians and Sasanides, etc.
- 3 Thus a section of the Mānvas is said to have migrated beyond the Punjab and become known as Śakas; and the Druhyu-ite sections of the Ailas beyond Gāndhārā came to be called Yavanas. [Q.—Has the alternative name Dranghiānā of Siestān and Arachosia (acc. to the Gks.) a connection with Druṅghu (Druhyn)?] [This Purāṇic tradition *re* migration of Mānva and kindred tribes westward to the Punjab and adjacent countries early in the 2nd millennium or in the 3rd millennium B.C., seems to be substantially correct from the nature of the Harapps and Mahenjo Daro excavations of 1924].
- 4 Of Śakas, Yavanas, Kāmbojas, Pāradas and Pahlavas, forming one group,—and of Nāgas, Abhiras, and Niśādas, forming another. The Śakas, etc., who invaded Madhyadeśa with the Haihayas, came from the highlands beyond the Seven Rivers: the first group would thus represent purer Ailas, Airyas, or the Irāṇians proper; while the second group, coming by way of the sea, the lower Indus and Sarasvatī, up to Gujrat, Rājputānā and the Punjab, would consist of various races with non-Aryan affinities (probably partly Elamites, Sumerians and Semites of the Red and Arabian seacoasts, who had pre-historic connections with the Dravidians and the S. W. of India). The notion that every occurrence of Śakas and Yavanas refers to the Kushāns and Bactrian Greeks, must be modified: these names quite naturally came to be applied to all invaders from the Western regions beyond the Indus, whither the *original* Śakas and Yavanas had migrated from India.

1450 B.C.), or on the eve of and after the Bhārata war (cir. 1050—850 B.C.),—were of these ousted members of the Indo-Āryan stock, in the tide of return. In the social history of the early Indian ruling classes and connected priesthoods, therefore, the periodic reappearance of primitive types of sex-relations may have been, in some cases at least, due to strains of 'barbarian' (W. Aila or Irānian) blood and practices¹ from time to time;—and the Irānian expansion and influence of the 6th century B.C. would seem to have been merely a repetition of history. Hence few things absolutely foreign to Indian culture and traditions could have been introduced by it; and if as a result of the Persian conquests there were any social changes, these would be mainly reversions to, or modifications of those common features of Indo-Irānian (i.e., early Aila) culture, which may have been retained longer, or specially developed, in the Irānian or (Druhyu-ite) sections. It thus becomes intelligible how Persian influence in the early Buddhist period could have led to a revival (however temporary or limited) of extreme consanguinous marriages. (Similarly, the 'sale of brides'² and 'exposure platforms' at Taxila in the Persian period would be based on, and revivals of, the 'asura' custom of bride-selling as practiced (in the same area) by the Madras of tradition² 'from time immemorial,' and the sporadic usage of exposing the dead as noticed in Vedic texts. All the so-called Persian features may be thus viewed and explained through 'tradition,' without any far-fetched theory. That the Ksatriyas of Kapila-vāstu and Vaiśālī were foreign races from Tibet or some other unknown land who developed a new and a crude type of religion and culture, would be a supposition too fanciful and superficial to be entertained in this connection. The Purānic tradition knows the Sākya as a part of or offshoots from the old Aikṣvāka race of Kośala, and Vaiśālī and Videha as continuing under the rule of cognate Mānva families down to the close of the 5th cent. B.C.; while all that is known about the early history of Jainism and Buddhism show that they began as enlightened movements for betterment and reform in all directions, and arose from within the existing elements; the only external influence that may be suggested to have worked, can be the rapid expansion of Persia at the expense of India,—which

¹ Cf. Padma: V, 74, 15; where it is said that consanguinous and incestuous connexions are characteristic of the 'mlecchas' and 'daityas', whose speech is 'Pañściki' (an Indo-Irānian dialect).

² (Even if the Taxilan bride-selling is taken as a Mesopotamian feature this would be there as much because there were earlier West-Asiatic connections (through sea-faring Niśādas who traded in girls at the Western ports, and Nāgas who ruled at Takṣa-sīla on the eve of and after the Bhārata war), as on account of intermigration of institutions within the heterogeneous Persian Empire.)

must have given some sort of an impetus towards improving existing conditions. Buddhism or Jainism in themselves, therefore, cannot be supposed to have introduced primitive or consanguinous types of marriage; they were rather a source for purity and higher standards in sex-relations (as in many other lines of life and conduct). The so-called high Hindu ethics and personal morality of subsequent periods, is very largely a Buddhistic achievement,—a lasting reform and refinement, inherited by later forms of Brāhmaṇism.

The above Buddhistic references are thus partly echoes from, and continuations of, the Purāṇic tradition,—partly a reflection of lingering practices,—and possibly in part indications of some Irāṇian influence (consisting in direct court examples and indirect preparation of an atmosphere for revivals of ancient and common Indo-Irāṇian (Aila) customs that were gradually falling into disuse in India after the Bhārata war).

Incestuous marriages, however, must have continued far enough into the Buddhistic period to make it possible for the Indianised dynasty of Siam to have or retain a custom of sister-marriage by preference, even in later medieval times. Ruling families and priesthoods intimately connected with them, have always lagged behind the line of popular progress in such points of culture; and in ancient history generally we find them sticking to obsolete and primitive customs: this is equally true of India.¹ (The late and not uncommon performance² of the revoltingly primitive rite of the Aśvamedha, in spite of early protests from Kṣatriya kings (like Janamejaya-Pāriṣita II, cir. 900 B.C.),³ and subsequently from the Jaina-Buddhist reformers, shows the tenacity of old barbaric practices and their continuance even after a much higher level of culture was attained generally. And thus it must have been with sister-marriage and other crude types of relationship.)

1 Where on either side of what may be called the real 'higher classes' have existed remnants of earlier stages of culture: with the ruling aristocracy and connected priesthood on the one hand, and the gradually āryanised aborigines on the other.

2 E.g. In the Śuṅga and Gupta periods.

3 Cf. Hariv. 192, 11092 ff.; 196-6, 11236-69.

II PARENTAL INCEST.

Quite in agreement with the Vedic evidence on the point, we find in the Epic-Purāṇic tradition a few plain instances and some indications, of incestuous connexions of this type, some of which might be called marriages.¹

The mythological reference in the R̥gveda (X, 61) to the union of Prajāpati with his daughter finds its counterpart in the Purāṇa as well.² But whereas in the former the treatment and setting is cosmogonical and allegorical,³ that in the latter is semi-historical; and it would appear that the Vedic composer, Nābhā(ga)-nediṣṭa Mānava,⁴ utilised an ancient and current tradition regarding the first origins of a previous ruling race, probably taken from the 'sūta-māgadha' bardic accounts⁵ of the Pṛthu-ite dynasties that flourished in N. E. India during the two centuries (or more) before the rise of the Aikṣvākas and Ailas. According to these accounts,⁶ the first famous chiefs in that earlier period, Priyavrata and Uttānapāda, were sons of a 'Manu' who was begotten⁷ by 'Brahmā' (= 'Prajāpati',⁸ etc.) on his own daughter Satarūpā whom he loved.⁹ Sometimes it is explained how he

- 1 One instance is actually taken as a marriage in Mbh.; vide infra.
- 2 In the accounts of the origin of the First Dynasty of traditional history (in which Priyavrata, Uttānapāda, Dhruva, Bharata, Vepa and Pṛthu were the famous names, and which produced several 'Manu's and 'Prajāpati's, and also the first 'Kings' of India and their chroniclers and panegyrists, the Sūtas and Māgadhas.)
- 3 Quite in agreement with the usual want of ṛṣi appreciation of historical traditions.
- 4 A brother of Ikṣvāku, and progenitor of the Mānavas of Vaisālī, in the same region where the Pṛthu-ites once ruled, whose beginnings are placed by tradition in the 17th step (i.e. cir. 200 years) before Nābhā(ga)-nediṣṭa.
- 5 It is to be noted here that 'Sūta' traditions were older than the Aila-Aikṣvāka period, dating from at least a century before them (i.e., the reign of Pṛthu). (The Purāṇas profess to give one ancient 'Sūta' ballad, *re* Pṛthu's reign).
- 6 I.e. the version of them preserved in the Purāṇic compilation of a later age. The interval between the final compilation of Purāṇic tradition (cir. 850 B.C.) and the 1st step of the Pṛthu-ite dynasty would be about 1400 years (=100 steps after Manu+17 steps before him).
- 7 With six others: Matsya : 4, 24-32.
- 8 Possibly the Vedic legendary version arose out of a confusion between Prajāpati the divine creator and Prajāpati the usual Purāṇic designation of early chieftains, which, latter sense, evidently, is to be understood of Priyavrata's grandfather in the dynastic lists.
- 9 Matsya : 3, 31-44; etc.

did not incur guilt by such a connexion, and stories are told of his curse on Kāma, who became later on Pradyumna, and after the Bhārata battle, son of the Vatsa King.¹ This subsequent explanation of the incest is paralleled by the Brāhmaṇa commentaries² on Rv. X, 61; and the basis of the appended fables was probably similar incests originally also recorded of Pradyumna and the Vatsa prince,³—the case of a near ancestor of Pradyumna being actually on record.⁴ Another Purāṇic version,⁵ however, makes Satarūpā the wife of Svāyambhuva Manu,⁶ instead of the daughter and wife of his father: this is either a subsequent improvement by one step on the older version, or might imply a double incest involving another of the reverse order, which seems to be not altogether unknown to early legend and tradition.⁷ A parallel is afforded in the case of Vivasant and Manu, both being called 'Śrāddhadeva,' while Śrāddhā is a daughter of the former and wife of the latter.⁸ The R̥gvedic conception of Pūsan as the 'didhiṣu' of his mother,⁹ and 'jāra' of his sister,¹⁰ and the 'ṛṣi' advice to Hariścandra (Mānva) that the sister and the mother were permissible wives of one desiring offspring,¹¹ show that the two statements regarding Satarūpā are not contradictory.¹² Tradition also supplies similar particulars about the priestly groups: in an Āṅgīrasa genealogy (partly tinged with myths), "the maiden Rohiṇī, daughter of Hiranyakaśipu" is stated to have become "his 'bhāryā' as a result, of 'karma,'"—¹³—which agrees with the

¹ Matsya : 4, 1—32.

² Ait. Brā. III, 33, 5; etc.

³ This latter suggested instance would indicate that aristocratic morals had not improved much in the interval between the Bhārata battle and Buddhism. (vide the sec. on sister-marriage).

⁴ That of Taittiri and his daughter; vide infra.

⁵ Viṣṇu : I, 7, 15-16 (where, as well as in Hariv., the sin is cleansed by Satarūpā's penances; cf. 'aparūpām' in the corr. Matsya text); Hariv. 2, 54 ff. (prob. 'patniṃ Satarūpāmāyonijāṃ' in one of these verses is better read as 'āyoniṃjāṃ').

⁶ Svāyambhuva Manu is called an 'Apava' in Hariv. op. cit.; as 'Apava' is a real clan name in Pur.° tradition (applied to Himālayan Vāsīṣṭhas), it would seem he was a historical person and not a mere abstraction standing for the first origin of the Pṛthuite dynasty.

⁷ Vide infra.

⁸ Vide ante, sec. re sister-marriage.

⁹ Cf. the legend in the Epic, of Mahādeva as Pārvatī's child on her lap: Mbh. XIII, 161.

¹⁰ Vide ante, sec. re Vedic evidence on this subject.

¹¹ Vide n. 10 above.

¹² This is further supported by the fact that Satarūpā is also called Anantarūpā or Anantā(°), and this name is given in some texts to Svāyambhuva Manu's wife; cf. '...aparūpām Anantā māma...' in the Matsya text. (A similar incest seems to be referred to in some subsequent corrupt lines in the Hariv. text (cited above), about Priyavrate and Kāmyā (next generation); it is to be noted that Āṅgīrasa's sister-marriage also belongs to this dynasty.).

¹³ Mbh. § 400 (Āṅgīrasa) : III, 219-20, 14124, cf. Nil.° comm.°.

fact that the 'Āṅgīrasa' Veda also knows of actual cases like this.¹ In this connection the epithet 'Kanyā-Bhartṛ'² appears significant, as applied to Skanda in the brāhmaṇical legend of Skanda's birth (of Atharvanic character).

But apart from very early or semi-legendary instances, tradition also notices much later and actual cases of incests of this type; and it is noteworthy that the two definite occurrences are ascribed to the Vṛṣṇi (Yādava) family,—otherwise remarkable for laxity. Between 6 to 11 steps above Kṛṣṇa in the Vṛṣṇi dynastic lists, was a musician king, Taittiri, who personally instructed his daughter in music, dancing, etc., and becoming enamoured of her, begot a son Nala on that daughter; hence Nala (who succeeded him) was nicknamed 'Nandanōdara-dundubhi.'⁴ These details are by no means fanciful, as the dynastic lists wherein they occur, are full of all sorts of natural personal details,⁵ and kings instructing their daughters in music and dancing is quite a common thing in the dynastic accounts: thus in the same (S. W.) region and the same (Yādava) group of ruling families, Durjaya (the Haihaya) in an earlier generation taught these arts to his sons and daughters by a 'gandharvī' (i.e., a court dancing-girl)⁶; a few generations below Nala,

¹ Vide ante, re Vedic evidence on this subject.

² Mbh. III, 14633.

³ Nearer 6 than 11 (adopted by Pargiter), as all Purāṇas practically agree in the list from Kapotaroman to Kamsa.

⁴ The full accounts are in Matsya : 44, 62 ff; and Kūrma : I, 24, 49-54; other Purāṇas summarise; some give only the nickname of Nala often in corrupt unmeaning forms (—which makes it possible that Vasudeva's appellation 'Ānaka-dundubhi' is a modification of a nickname like 'Kanyakā-dundubhi' and points to a repetition of Taittiri's case in the family); and some simply give the succession list without any particulars; for the former cf. Padma : V, 13, 47-51; Viṣṇu : IV, 14, 4; Brahmāṇḍa : III, 71, 117-119; Vāyu : 96, 117; and for the latter, Hariv. 38, 2016-17, which being a specially Yādava chronicle omits Nala as well as his nickname. Nala also was musical; cf. Viṣṇu above. The words 'susūta' and 'viloman' in the Padma and Viṣṇu list seem to have been descriptive of Nala's parentage in the original verses, rather than separate proper names (i.e. = 'svasutāyam' and 'vilomaja'; cf. Matsya : 44, 63, where 'tanujah sarpo' is obviously a corrupt reading for 'tanujā-garbhō'^(e)). Vide n. 2, p. 143.

⁵ E.g., "Nala's son Punarvasu was born in the middle of the assembly at an Advamedha," etc. Matsya : 44, 64-5; etc.

⁶ Kūrma : I, 23, 6-44. The daughters subsequently married 'gandharvas' and the sons 'gandharvīs'; a detail indicating that the lighter pursuits of the Yādava courts tended to produce a general laxity in their marriage relations. Cf. Purāvas marrying a 'gandharvī', and their sons also doing the same, and associating with 'gandharvas' and 'gandharvīs' together with their father: Kūrma : I, 23, 46; for other refs. vide Pargiter: AIHT, p. 297, n. 5-8.

there is the well-known instance of the musical Revata¹ and his favourite daughter (about whose marriage there was some difficulty)²; and in the next step there is a somewhat similar case of Arjuna instructing a friendly cousin's daughter Uttarā-Vairātī (who evidently became enamoured of him).³ The probable indication of a parallel to Taittiri's case in the fable about Pradyumna's being 'Kāma' by Brahmā's curse, has already been noticed. Thus the early Vedic references⁴ to actual father-daughter connexions are confirmed by the traditional.⁵

Pūṣan's position as 'didhiṣu' of his mother has, however, no 'specified' parallels in tradition, except in the already noted mythical or semi-mythical statements about the two 'Manus,' and the 'gāthā' allusion to the custom in Hariścandra's time which, taken together, would suggest that amongst the Mānvas and connected brāhmaṇ families, there was a practice of transference of the father's wives to the son. But connexions between persons in 'similar' position are specified, and were probably frequent. A clear case is that of Sāmba,⁶ son of Kṛṣṇa, whose connexions with his step-mothers⁷ are said to have brought Kṛṣṇa's heavy curses⁸ on him as well as the wives, the initiative in the affair apparently belonging to Sāmba's 'mothers'; so, also, when Satyabhāmā-Sātrājīti seeks from Draupadī the secret of her power over her five husbands, the latter warns her against talking or staying in private with her step-sons Pradyumna, Sāmba, etc.⁹ With this may be compared the story of Arjuna and Urvaśī.¹⁰

On a careful consideration of all the dynastic relationships described in the Epic, it becomes clear that the stories about the miraculous birth and marriage of the Pāṇḍavas are all late after-thoughts, only of value as showing that after all they were begotten by just the ordinary type of Epic Niyoga

1 The Sāryātas (whose priests, too, were Bhṛgu) became early affiliated to the Yādava-Haihayas, and became scattered in the S. W. districts.

2 In all Purāṇic accounts.

3 Cf. Mbh., Virāṭaparvan.

4 Vide ante.

5 To these may be added a tradition that 'Rāvapa' would or did have his daughter by Mandodarī as consort (who was reborn as Sītā).

6 Varāha: clxvii; cf. Matsya: 70, 2 ff; etc. So also his brother Pradyumna marries his foster-mother Mayavatī, Sambara's wife, who takes the initiative, and discloses to him that she had only nursed him, and did not bear him. (The Purāṇic account tries to show that this doubly unseemly union was justified.)

7 'Kṛṣṇa's wives' and 'Sāmba's mothers,' without any specification.

8 Of leprosy and prostitution, respectively.

9 Mbh. 43 510-11 (Draup. S. Satya. °): III, 233-35.

10 Mbh. III, 45-46, 1812-1867.

or license, and married according to a form not yet totally obsolete—other cases of polyandry being known to the Epic and the Purāṇas, and instances of the raising of offspring by relatives or outsiders, and of illegitimate natural sons, being quite common amongst the ruling and priestly classes of those times.¹ It is thus evident that the fables in the present version of the Epic and Purāṇas regarding the Pāṇḍavas, arose out of actual but (according to later views) discreditable relationships, and it may be possible still to discover traces of what the original facts were like, divested of fabulous garb. Leaving out further details on this point,² it may reasonably be taken to have been an 'original' fact of the Pāṇḍava history, that the person (called 'Indra' etc., in the fables), who begot Arjuna by 'niyoga,' received Arjuna in his court,³ when he left the rest of the family to prepare for the battle, and materially helped⁴ him with arms and training, and also entertained him right royally. The Arjuna-Urvaśī episode comes in here.

Shorn of 'pantheonic,' legendary setting, the substance of it is that one Urvaśī, a chief dancing-girl attached to Arjuna's 'father's' court and recognized as being in the status of his 'mother,' became enamoured of Arjuna (who was being instructed in music and dancing in her company),⁵ and, with his 'father's' consent, approached him; but she was refused by him on grounds of higher morality⁶ (she being 'guru-patnī'), though she pointed out that, in accordance with custom, all Arjuna's forefathers, the great Paurava princes, had accepted precisely similar invitations, without any guilt being attached to them.⁷ There are indications that make it probable that the 'father' of Arjuna was a

1 Vide details in secs. re polyandry and 'niyoga.'

2 Cf. *infra*, sec. on 'niyoga,' re Kuntī.

3 At 'Amarāvati,' which may well have been a real city (of Central India: vide n. 1, p. 141); so also there was a real Tripura and a Vaibhāra in traditional history. The transference of the whole scene to Trans-Himālayas is evidently due to the 'Indra' fable.

4 As noticed later on, the three chief and original supporters of the Kaunteyas are also very likely persons to have been their progenitors by 'niyoga.'

5 Note the specially Yādava and South-Western feature, and the parallels noted above.

6 The Epic emphasises the 'great merit of this story of restraint' on the part of a prince; the parallel in the Purāṇas of the 'great merit' that is claimed for Arjuna's great-grandson Janamejaya III's story of opposing obscene ceremonials, is striking. This indicates that puritanic stands were exceptional, and laxity and barbarism were the general rule with the Yādava and Paurava ruling classes and their priesthoods.

7 Her curse on Arjuna has a remarkable 'harem' tone, which is probably more than accidental.

Yādava prince related to Kuntī's family, and he may have been Purujit the Kuntibhoja¹; this would agree fully with what tradition says about the harem life of these Yādava families, wherein such 'artiste'-concubines and lax morals were a chief feature.

These episodes of Sāmba and Arjuna point to an established dynastic custom, amongst the Yādavas and Pauravas,² of sons succeeding to the seraglio ('official' or 'non-official') of their father—very late medieval instances of which have been known in India as well as in other countries.³ The arrangements which were made by Arjuna after the fateful slaughter at Dvārāvati⁴ make the probability surer. The wives of the princes who had perished, were divided into three batches, and the three surviving young princes of Kṛṣṇa, Sātyaki and Kṛtavarma's direct lineage succeeded to them, and were established along with them in new principalities. So also Vicitravīrya's wives are proposed by his mother to be transferred⁵ as wives to Bhīṣma, who is requested to succeed him—only in this case by exceptional circumstances the proposed successor is an elder brother. So, again, the palaces of Duryodhana, etc., are, after the battle, transferred to Yudhiṣṭhira's brothers, who spend the nights happily there⁶—the inmates of the palaces may have been transferred too along with them. Such transfers would naturally involve incestuous connexions in the case of direct lineal successions. This is illustrated by the definite statement in Vāts. Kā. Sūt. (referring to practices of the post-Mauryan or possibly a much earlier period) that the princes of Vidarbha (Yādava), in accordance with ancient custom, freely consorted with all their father's wives, excepting their own mother.⁷ The later Sūtra dictum, therefore, that property in cattle, land and women, is not destroyed by changing hands,⁸ is in part a laconic crystallization of much more ancient customs.

1 Vide n. 1, p. 140.

2 As apparently among the Mānvas, vide p. 139 above; cf. Cowell: Jāt. VI, 133, for a Magadhan case, apparently of the Epic age, where Dirghavāhu receives his father Arindama's 16,000 wives in marriage.

3 E.g., the famous medieval case of the Rājput princesses of Guzrāt (mother and daughter) being transferred to successive Delhi Emperors.

4 Mbh. XVI, 7.

5 Mbh. § 168 (Bhīṣ.°Saty.°): I, 103.

6 Mbh. § 637 (Rājadh.°): XII, 44, 4147-68.

7 Vāts. Kā. Sūt. V, 6, 12.

8 Gautama: XII, 39.

The episode of Uttarā's marriage with Abhimanyu, (in the Epic) can now be viewed in the light of these observations: As Arjuna taught Uttarā music and dancing, the first thought that occurs to the court is that they should get married as a natural sequel¹; in fact Uttarā is described as being clearly in love with Arjuna², and she was a fully developed young woman and no toying child³; in spite of all this, she is married to Arjuna's son (barely 16), probably younger than herself.⁴ These details, therefore, are quite in keeping with the dynastic traits noted by tradition.

The Vedic evidence, considered by itself in a previous section, supplies no definite clue as to the nature and origin of the incestuous sex-relations there referred to. But the complementary evidence of traditional accounts helps in arriving at some reasonable estimate. Taking the two together, it seems clear enough that these references fall mainly into two classes, one referring to semi-historical beginnings of society and mythical personages, the other to actual genealogical facts amongst Vedic (=Epic-Purāṇic) ruling and priestly families,—some of them comparatively late. The former class may admit of mythological interpretations,⁵ though that does not explain why such parental incests should have been favourite similes and been at all ascribed to persons, historical or legendary. The second class is evidently historical, and certainly was not the product of a primitive and barbarous community: the Vedic civilization proper had already reached

1 Mbh. §553 (Vaivāh.) : IV, 70-72, 2267 ff.

2 Cf. the many indications in Mbh. IV, 35-37; e.g., Kṛṣṇā's hunt to Uttarā: "Arjuna will doubtless obey your sister of graceful hips"; voluptuous description of Uttarā's approaching Arjuna in the dancing-hall, and making her request to her 'sakhā', displaying 'praṇaya' and coquetry, 'like a she-elephant seeking her mate', vowing suicide if he did not keep her request, etc.

3 Vide n. 2, above. She is among the circle of court-ladies attending on the gay, spoilt and musical prince Uttarā. Her developed youth is described; and she bears a son about six months after her marriage a few days later. Playing with dolls, is still a common pastime with grown-up girls in many social circles in India, often continuing far into their married life; so also the post-Mauryan 'Nāgaraka' (in Vāta. Kā. Sūt.) captivates his lady love as much by presents of dolls as by taking her to clubs dances and theatricals. This in itself, therefore, is no reason for concluding child-marriage in Uttarā's case, as the Cambridge Hist. of Ind. does.

4 Cf. the parallels of Pratipa, Bhāgirathi and Santanu; and Jyāmagña, his captive maiden and Vidarbha; vide infra.

5 Such explanation is not seriously attempted by the Pūrāṇas; the Brāhmanas do it, and that because the R̥gvedic reference itself is a mythological version of a Purāṇic tradition. (It would seem as if the Ailas generally mythologised the traditions of the pre-existing peoples, viz., the Mānvas and Pr̥thivites.)

its highest point,¹ when these cases are indicated, and the last phases of the Epic age were being worked out. Thus such connexions between parent and offspring, or persons in equivalent position, cannot have been due to the needs of a strongly patriarchal, primitive and conquering community; they were rather the extreme result of two well-known forces that have worked amongst various early² but civilized peoples: the tendency in long-established hereditary priesthoods and ruling families to continued in-breeding, and to unlimited license. (As a matter of fact the close of the Vedic age, which is the same as the Epic age, shows evident signs of increasing social degeneracy in many other respects, which clearly continued till the time of the Upaniṣads and the development of the great Reformation in the Prācī.³) This general outline will emerge again and again in view as we proceed to examine the evidence in regard to other social details.

With regard to the nature of the sister-marriages also, the Vedic evidence by itself suggests no very adequate explanation⁴ of the references to them; and here, again, the 'traditional' evidence is somewhat helpful. An examination⁵ of the Vedic uses and imports of words designating brother and sister, and of their comparative position in the Vedic (Brāhmanical) family, as indicated by incidental references, yields rather uncertain results: these uses and indications only make it possible that sister-marriage may have developed in a community and age, which was either strongly patriarchal and emphasised the brother as master and supporter, or which, being originally matriarchal, still retained traces of the importance of the sister in the family and descent through the mother.⁶

1 Between Māndhātṛ and Sudās roughly, about 20 steps before the 'Bhārata' period.

2 Thus Artaxerxes Mnemon (early 4th cent. B.C.) married his daughter Atossa: Sykes; Hist. Pers. I. 246. Medieval and modern history is left out of account here. (This tendency is found also in small communities with a hereditary occupation: thus more or less consanguinous marriages are not infrequent amongst certain modern trading castes in Bengal.)

3 (The check, however, seems to have been only temporary; for post-Mauryan morality (cf. Vāts. Kā. Sūt., *re* dynastic and priestly customs) is quite as bad as pre-Buddhistic; indeed, the evidence of the Arthashastra would seem to show that within non-Buddhistic spheres of influence there was little change in tone even in the early Maurya period; probably the only puritanic age for the whole country was that of Aśoka, and that of the growth of early Buddhism from before his time, in limited areas.)

4 Except that the sister (and specially the twin-sister) was supposed in early times to be the brother's wife by birth-right (Rv. X, 10, and Av. XIV, 2, 53), and that such connexions were sanctioned in case of necessity for a son and heir (Rv. X, 10, and the 'gāthā' in the Śunahśepa legend): both of which indications point to a patriarchal origin.

5 Vide ante.

6 Vide ante.

The independent value of such linguistic evidence in history is rather doubtful. The Purāṇic evidence makes the ground somewhat clearer: while there are two probable cases of one sister marrying two brothers,¹ there are definite as well as probable cases of a brother marrying two, three, or more sisters²; and in other instances the sister is only one of several wives.³ Hence the noticed sister-marriages in the Purāṇa-Vedic period were rather more patriarchal in features than matriarchal, being more definitely connected with polygamy than with polyandry. On the other hand, some of the early instances show that the chief part in such unions was played by the sister⁴; and the two apparently polyandrous cases were also comparatively early.⁵ Hence the matriarchal type of sister-marriage was the earlier one. It looks like having an ethnic significance. But the references in view belong to all the three broad groups of the Pṛthuites, Mānvas and Ailas, though chiefly to the non-Ailas.⁶ Indeed, the selection of the Mānva case of Yama and his sister as typical in Rv. X, 10, would indicate that so late as the date of that 'vākovākya,' the sister usually took the initiative in such connexions; though on the other hand the earlier Rv. VI, 55 would suggest that it was the brother who took it; and one of Yami's motives is to have the full extent of a brother's rightful 'protection' and bear a worthy grandson for their father (i.e., a pure-blooded one),—a patriarchal trait.⁷

Thus the Vedic sister-marriage must have originated in two distinct pre-historic types of civilizations, which blended their features in one,—probably to be identified with the Aila and the pre-(and non-)Aila.

- 1 At the same time, or (apparently) in succession: with Haimavatī-Dṛṣadvatī and Narmadā, respectively, both in the Aikṣvāka line; cf. similar indication in Sītā's case (vide ante), also in the same family.
- 2 Bharata (Āṅgīrasa): 3; Bhajamāna and Satrājīt (Yādavas): 2 and 10.
- 3 E.g., with Daśaratha (Aikṣvāka), or Drupada (Pāṇḍala), or with Sukra-Uśanas.
- 4 E.g., Sunithā, Yami, Aachodā, Narmadā: vide ante.
- 5 About 70-74 steps before the Bhārata battle.
- 6 The instance of Aachodā alone being an Aila one; Sunithā is Pṛthuite; Yami and Narmadā, Mānva,—to which may be added Haimavatī-Dṛṣadvatī, for Prasenajit is known as her son (vide ante).
- 7 This is also the motive in the earlier Aṅga-Sunithā case.

III POLYANDRY

The Vedic evidence¹ suggests that polyandry was not altogether 'un-Vedic'; it was apparently known, though particular instances are not named, which silence has at best only a negative value, for full details of these matters cannot be expected from the nature of the Vedic literature. The Epic tradition definitely assigns polyandry to the close of the Vedic age; and very much earlier; even pre-Vedic² instances are known to Purāṇic and Epic tradition. The number of illustrations of peculiar customs is naturally not large, specially as later editors were busy in removing striking traces of primitive characteristics that had become offensive. A remarkable case of such removal is that of the polyandric marriage of a brāhmaṇ lady, Gautamī: the Epic affirms that in the time of the Pāṇḍavas one authoritative precedent of polyandry was that of Gautamī, who married seven 'ṛṣis,' and that the case is recorded in the Purāṇas³; but the Purāṇa texts, in their royal or priestly genealogies, have no such mention now: obviously the instance has been removed in brāhmaṇic interest.⁴ In the cases of sister-marriages and incestuous connexions, it has already been shown how texts have been emended, muddled, misinterpreted and mythified, wherever prominent examples of these were noticed; in the case of polyandry, as well, the explicit instances that have escaped weeding out and emendation are few, but it is still possible to see that many more were known at one time.

Before proceeding to examine these probabilities, and the the famous epic instance, which was too well known and late to be successfully buried,⁵ the two explicit references may be noted here. The ten grandsons (or great-grandsons) of the famous Pṛthu-Vaiṣṇa married a common wife Māriṣā,⁶

1 Vide ante.

2 I.e., Pṛthu-ite, being several steps above the earliest group of Mānva ṛṣis in the Rgveda; Pṛthu-Vaiṣṇa is, however, also included within the Vedic anthology; and the case referred to is assigned to three steps below Pṛthu.

3 Mbh. § 237 (Vaivāhika.^o): I, 196, 7265.

4 While the non-brāhmaṇic case of Māriṣā m. 10 Havirdhānas (or Pracetasas) referred to in the Epic in the same connection (Mbh. I, 196, 7266) is found in all Purāṇas.

5 Even here, cf. the explanation in the Mārkaṇḍeya, that it was really a 'monandry', since the five Pāṇḍavas were parts of the same Indra.

6 Viṣṇu: I, 15, states that Māriṣā in a former birth became a childless young widow, and obtained a divine boon for several husbands at the same time to ensure non-widowhood and progeny.

a daughter of Soma.¹ The Purāṇic account further specifies that this happened, because in the Cakṣuṣa-'Manu's' period² the population or dynastic birth-rate declined, and those ten princes, the Havirdhānas (also known by the common appellation Prācetasas),³ were admonished by Soma to procreate, who gave them his daughter Māriṣā as their common wife; 'they' had by her Dakṣa, the 'prajāpati,' who was very prolific,⁴ and other children also,⁵ but no 'fathers' are specified in any case: Dakṣa-Prācetasas in fact is often said to have had ten 'fathers.'⁶ The other explicit mention is about the brāhmaṇ lady, Jaṭilā-Gautamī and her seven 'ṛṣi' husbands.⁷ Her example must have been well known and appreciated at one time, for in Mbh. (besides Pāṇḍu's reference) the wives of citizens admire Draupadī in the company of her five husbands and compare her to Gautamī with her 'ṛṣi' husbands.⁸ The chronological position of this case is not so evident, but the outside limits can be fixed: she cannot be placed before the Gautamas are first mentioned⁹ in Bharata's or Marutta's time, or later than the Pāṇḍavas, to whom she is a precedent; and there are some indications in favour of the earlier limit.¹⁰

Taking the less definite cases, inferable or probable, in chronological order, we come first to the already noticed combined polyandry and brother-marriage of Haimavatī-Dṛṣadvatī, in the 18th step¹¹ from Manu and in the Aikṣvāka

1 As her son's daughters were also married to a 'Soma' (in all accounts of the pre-Ailas), it would seem that 'Soma' was a clan name even before it was used to designate the Aila dynasties derived from 'Soma'; cf. the curious question on this point in Viṣṇu: I, 15, 80-81.

2 I.e., the interval between the 6th and 15th steps in the Pṛthvīte dynasty, and between the 3rd and 12th steps before the Vāivasvata-'Manu'.

3 Matsya: 4 (Svāyambhuva genealogy).

4 Harivaṃśa: 2, 88-106; Mbh. § 137 (Sambhava.°) I, 75, 3130.

5 Matsya: ibid.; viz., Nandī, Candravatī, etc.

6 Mbh. I, 33: 3130: 75; etc.; cf. Hariv.° V, 66 ff., and Mbh. § 665 (Mokṣa.°): XII, 206, 7573.

7 Vide n. 3, p. 145.

8 'Maharṣin iva Gautamī': Mbh. § 635 (Rājadh.°): XII, 38, 1397.

9 Utathya-Āṅgīrasa being regarded in the 'ṛṣi' genealogies as the first Gautama,—or Dirghatmas, his son, according to other versions (cf. Pargiter: AIHT. pp. 219-220).

10 Vide infra.

11 About five steps above this, in the time of Kuvālīya-Aikṣvāka, the contemporary Paurava Sudhanvan-Dhundhu (made into an Asura adversary) is said to have been son of two brothers, Madhu and Kaiṭabha (Mbh. § 475 Dhundhu.°): III, 202, 13532; 204, 13537; this looks like legend; but it seems likely that 'Manasyabhayaḥ putram' of some dynastic śloka has been made into 'Madhukaitābhayoh putram', to remove odium from the Paurava dynasty: Manasyu and Abhaya were the immediate predecessors of Dhundhu. If this view may be taken, we have

line; and only four steps lower, to the almost parallel case of Narmadā (m. Purukutsa and Ambariṣa), where the somewhat meaningless 'sambhūta' of the texts (instead of being a proper name) may be a relic and a corruption of 'sambhūya,' 'san-matāt,' or 'sammata,'¹ referring to Narmadā's being wife of Purukutsa and brothers in common.

About 19 steps later on, there is the much clearer case of Mamatā, amongst the first Gautamas (a section of the Āngirasas); and Jaṭilā-Gautamī's polyandric marriage (cited by the Pāṇḍavas) must have been due to a tradition of such marriages in this family. Mamatā² is said to have been Utathya's wife, but his brother Vṛhaspati had free access to and equal conjugal rights over her in Utathya's life-time; the only objection Mamatā once raises to their exercise is her pregnancy at that time; she asks him to wait, but does not refer to any impropriety or unlawfulness of conduct; evidently she was in the status of a wife to both brothers.³ So also Vṛhaspati and Mamatā's son Bharadvāja is said to have got that name from the circumstance of his being 'born of two fathers,' who both charged the mother Mamatā with his maintenance; the derivation may be an ingenious after-thought, but the fact referred to is original. This Bharadvāja is also called 'dvāmuṣyāyana,' which is usually explained as referring to his adoption by Bharata, so that being the son of a priest by birth, and of a king by adoption, he would be the son of 'two fathers.' But the details of that famous tradition⁴ of Bharata's adoption show that it was not Bharadvāja himself who was adopted, but his son or descendant Vitatha (or Vidathin), who seems to

a parallel instance in the Paurava line as well. The probability increases when we find a Saṃyāti section among the Kāśyapa brāhmanas (Matsya : 199), who counted a number of 'dvāmuṣyāyana' or biandric families amongst them (vide infra.); and Saṃyāti was a near successor of Dhundhu. (It was, of course, common for princes to found ṛṣi or brāhman families affiliated to different gotras).

- 1 Vide collated text, ante; cf. the epithet 'sammata bhāryā' of the Pāṇḍavas, given to Drupadī, and 'sātām matāt' in the case of Haimavatī.
- 2 For these details re Gautama family (connected with Bharata and Vali in tradition), cf. Matsya : 49, 11-34; Viṣṇu : IV, 19, 5-8; Matsya : 48, 32-57; Vāyu : 99; Brahmanḍa : III, 74; Mbh. § 170 (Dirgh.°) : I, 104.
- 3 It is noteworthy that Tārā, the wife of a much earlier Vṛhaspati, also stated to have been an Āngirasa, was desired by his brother Dharma, who however did not get her, being obstructed by her paramour Soma (Varāha : XXXII). Though rather semi-legendary, the tradition certainly is of value as showing trace of polyandry among Āngirasas (to whom other primitive forms of connexions are also ascribed).
- 4 For these and other connected details dealt with here, cf. Brahma : 13, 58-60; Matsya : 49, 11-34; Viṣṇu : IV, 19, 4-8; Vāyu : 99; Wariv. 32, 1726-31.

have been really a kṣetraja son of Bharadvāja through Sunandā¹; probably it was no case of adoption at all: 'samkrāmaṇa',—transmission, grafting or infusion,—may equally refer to a 'niyoga'². So Bharadvāja was a 'dvāmuṣyāyaṇa' in some other way,—evidently because he was 'born of two fathers,' Utathya and Vṛhaspati, whose joint wife Mamatā was, in the same way as Dakṣa was, 'son of ten fathers.' Thus we find, besides descendants of Bharadvāja, three other Āṅgīrasas and eight (or twelve) Kāśyapa families³ designated 'dvāmuṣyāyaṇas'; all of their forefathers cannot have been similarly adopted by childless kings, and they have no evident connexions with any dynasty; but these brāhmaṇ clans may well have had some sort of a biandric custom⁴ originally. It is noteworthy that in the next generation also, the same features are repeated to some extent.⁵ Thus Dīrghatamas freely approaches his younger brother's wife⁶; and like Mamatā, Dīrghatamas's wife Pradveṣī maintains her children, even the husband; and his ruling on her (and on all women thenceforwards, it is said) restricting her to one husband, shows that she too (probably like other Āṅgīrasa women) followed Mamatā,⁷ as Dīrghatamas followed Vṛhaspati.

- 1 Mbh. states that as a result of Bharadvāja's good offices, Sunandā, the queen of Bharata, bore Bhūmanyu, after the nine sons had perished: Mbh. § 151 (Puruvam^o): I, 94, 3710 ff.
- (N.B.—From a consideration of all the traditions about Duṣyanta, Marutta, Bharata and the Gotama-Āṅgīrasas, it is clear that the 'samkrāmaṇa' of Bharadvāja was due to the influence of Marutta's family; Marutta's daughter Saṃyatā was given to his Āṅgīrasa priest Saṃvarta, brother of Utathya; it is possible that the interest of the Marutta-ites in this adoption was due to Bharadvāja's being born of this princess, who may well have been the common wife of all three brothers, and the same as Mamatā.)
- 2 Vide infra, sec. re 'niyoga'.
- 3 Hūta, Samiga and Saiśira.—Āṅgīrasas (Matsya: 196. 52); for Kāśyapas,—Matsya: 199, 11-12 (Saiśira being common).
- 4 As amongst the Mānvas and other non-Aīla peoples; vide infra. (Kāśyapas are probably=Mānvas; the name Kāśyapa itself may be of Dravidian origin; so also the name Āṅgīrasa).
- 5 Cf. n. 2, p. 147.
- 6 Though he is cast out apparently for thus transgressing the limits of an 'elder' brother, the main objection against him was his passing the limits of decency in *other* ways, and it was more his wife than his brother who banished him. At most we have here probably an intermediate stage in the development of polyandry,—the wife of the 'elder' brother only being common to the younger brothers, but not vice versa (as also in the case of 'niyoga' and widow-remarriage, where the rights of the elder brother were restricted subsequently). Cf. one of the objections raised by Dhṛṣṭadyumna against Yudhiṣṭhira's marrying Draupadī, who, having been won by Arjuna, was virtually an younger brother's wife.
- 7 Mamatā and Pradveṣī's economic position in the Gautama family is evidently a trace of a passing matriarchal custom; cf. the metronymic Māmateya; cf. also the mother as 'bhartri' in Ved. lit. (vide ante).

Polyandric traits crop up again in tradition about 20 steps further down, and all in the same connexion. It is noteworthy that these refer mainly to the Deccān peoples connected with the Mānvas. The 'Rāmāyaṇic' tradition (common to both the epics and the Purāṇas) affirms this feature of Kiṣkindhā,¹ where Vālī and Sugrīva are born of the same mother Virajā, wife of Rkṣa, by two co-existent paramours²(?), and they, in turn, practically had either the wife Tārā, or the wives Tārā and Rumā, in common, though they quarrelled about it and excluded one another alternately.³ Further south the relationship between Mandodarī and 'Rāvaṇa' and Vibhīṣaṇa⁴ indicates a similar polyandric trait, over and above 'devī'-marriage. It is quite possible that in 'Sūrpanakhā' attending on her brothers⁵ during their early austerities, it is a case of combined polyandry and sister-marriage: for the only other 'traditional' instances where austerities are assisted by an attendant woman are those of Agastya and Lopāmudrā⁶ and (the legendary) Śiva and Umā,⁷ in both of which the woman is the wife. It is also significant that it is only the 'Rākṣasa' chiefs of the S.E., who hunt or roam about accompanied by a sister, who often acts independently, and excites the resentment of and endangers

- 1 Probably it is needless to say now that the Vānaras and Rākṣasas represent real races, perhaps in some way connected with later Dravidians and Kolarians, with occasional Aryan admixtures.
- 2 E.g., Brahmāṇḍa : III, 7, 212-16; etc.; cf. Mbh. III, 147, 11193 f.; Rām. VII, 42.
- 3 E.g., Padma : IV, 112 (Pur.° Rām.°) : 146-163 (Brahmāṇḍa III, 7, 218-21 names Tārā and Rumā, but omits the fraternal strifes); cf. Rām. IV (Kiṣk.°) : Tārāvākyaṃ, or secs. 5 to 36 generally, and sec. 46.
- 4 Cf. 'Tārā Mandodarī tathā' in the traditional couplet about famous polyandrous women of history. With Mandodarī it was apparently also a case of brother-sister or cousin marriage; for she describes herself (Rām. VI, 113) as a daughter's daughter of Sumālī, who was also the maternal grandfather of Rāvaṇa; Mandodarī's mother, the light-skirt Hemā (who had a disastrous amour with M.°'s father) was thus either the same as Rāv.°'s rather forward mother Nikaṣā (Kaikaṣī), or her sister.
- 5 Twin as well as step : Mbh. III, 275. For the possibility, cf. Rām. III, 21, where Sūrpanakhā calls Khara her 'nātha,' and he too speaks of himself as her 'nātha.' It is to be noted that Sūrp.° concealed her love for Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa from her 'nātha' and Rāvaṇa, and invented reasons for her plight. Sūrp.° is said to have first been married to the Kālakeya Vidyujjihva, but Rāv.° killed him in battle, and then made her over to his brother or cousin Khava, with whom she continued to live, obeyed by him (Rām. VII, 29). To Rāma she said : "Passing over (stī-krāntā) my brothers Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa and Vibhīṣaṇa, and the two brothers Khara and Dīṣaṇa, I am approaching thee as husband, falling in love with thee at first sight,—so be thou my husband for long" (Rām. III, 17).
- 6 Padma : V, 22, 40-1; cf. Mbh. III, 97, 8579-80.
- 7 In the later secs. of Pur.° and in the Kāvya : Matsya : 154-158 (the germ of 'Kumāra'); Varāha : XXI-XXII; etc.

her brothers, by her sudden and misplaced loves.¹ The fraternal polyandry of Sunda and Upasunda also seems to belong to the generation before Rāma, and to the N.E. part of the Deccān.² The Mbh. illustrates³ the danger of polyandry by the famous story⁴ of these two chiefs of the Vindhyan uplands quarrelling over the same woman; and even before Tilottamā's appearance, the two brothers seem to have had other women in common, but without any resultant troubles. Considering all this 'Rāmāyaṇic' evidence, and the already noticed polyandric (and biandric) traces amongst the Aikāvākas (Mānvas) and connected groups like the Āngirasas, etc.,⁵ it seems not unlikely⁶ that, in the original tradition, Sītā was

1 Cf. the stories of 'Śūrpanakhā and her brothers 'Rāvaṇa,' etc., and Khara, etc., and 'Hiḍimbā' and her brothers (Hiḍimba and Vaka, etc.), in different sources and periods. I agree with Pargiter in thinking that 'Śūrpanakhā' and 'Hiḍimbā' are Sanskritised forms of the original Dravidian and sensible epithets of 'Surupuṅgai' (ruling or crown princess) and 'Iḍimbā' (proud woman or empress); so also 'Rāvaṇa' = 'Iraivan' (lord, king), and 'Hanumant' = 'Anmaṇḍi' (male monkey = 'Vṛṣā-Kapi'), a patron deity of the Dravidian Vānaras, or perhaps even of Kosalas; elsewhere I have suggested that brāhmaṇ gotra names like Āngirasa or Kāśyapa may be Sanskritised forms of Dravidian clan names (meaning 'magician' and 'mat-seated father,' respectively).

2 In Rām.^o Mārīca is son of Tāḍakā (a non-Āryan chieftainess of Malaya and Kāruṣa) by Sunda (a descendant of Dhundhu), who shortly came by his end; and though not a pure Rākṣasa by birth he came to be regarded as such. In the Pur.^o, of the two brothers Sunda and Upa(Ni)sunda (vaguely derived from Diti's race), Sunda's son by Tāḍakā was Mārīca, while one reading seems to have implied that he was 'born of Tāḍakā from Sunda and Upa(Ni)sunda' (with which may be compared Dhundhu, son of 'Madhu' and 'Kaiṭabha,' ante). The geographical setting of SundOpasunda's story in Mbh. agrees with that of Mārīca and his parents in Rām.^o, being the same Vindhyan forests and tablelands bordering on the Gangetic valley. According to Mbh., Sunda and Upasunda raided the whole country from their Vindhyan home (cf. similar devastation attributed to Sunda's family in Rām.^o) and reached Kurukṣetra, which is quite probable, as at this step in the dynastic lists the Kuru kingdom was in abeyance owing to Pāñcāla raids (cf. the circumstances of the Rākṣasa occupation of Vāraṇasi); hence the story of Sunda and Upasunda's destruction through a biandric practice must have been well known in the Kuru country, and the allusion to it in Pāñcāva court is therefore genuine.

* E.g. Brahmāṇḍa: III, 5, 34 ff; Vāyu: 67, 72-3.

† Thus 'Nisunda' is an alternative for 'putrastu,'—Vāyu: op. cit.; prob. in Brahmāṇḍa op. cit. the true reading might be 'Mārīco SaundOpasundas Tāḍakāyām ajāyata' instead of '... Sunda-putrastu.'

3 Vide latter part of last note.

4 Mbh. § 246 (Rājyalā.^o: Sundop.^o): I, 209-212.

5 Vide ante.

6 These probabilities need not upset admirers of the epics, for the actual events of the Rām.^o occurred at least 1,300 years before their Kāvya idealization (which process indeed has continued through the middle ages to the present day),—and the ideals of subsequent ages of course do not suffer.

the common wife of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, just as it is clear that she was originally the sister-wife of Rāma¹; indeed, the episode of Lakṣmaṇa refusing to go to assist Rāma while his cries of distress are heard, and Sitā charging him (and Bharata) with a design of appropriating herself after getting rid of Rāma,² seems to point to this original relationship, which would then be paralleled³ by the case of Tārā and her husbands at strife, amongst a people friendly and probably kindred to the Mānvas.⁴

For about 25 steps after this, tradition supplies no trace of polyandry (or biandry). Then, again, indications become evident during the several generations before the Bhārata battle. It would almost seem as if these apparent recrudescences are due only to the variation of the tradition in fulness of detail, and are not real reappearances.⁵

In connection with the Pāṇḍava proposal of polyandry⁶, indeed, Drupada is said to have been shocked at its novelty; but Dhṛṣṭadyumna gives the whole show away by arguing that Yudhiṣṭhira as elder brother of Arjuna could not marry the girl won by the latter, thus showing that a restricted polyandry was known to the Pāṇḍava court⁷; and Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana further spoils the case by explaining how the practice was established and is to be recognized,—and one of his two

1 Vide ante.

2 Rām. III, 45 and 49. This original relationship seems to be confirmed further by Rāma's suggestion that Sitā might live as wife with Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata and Satrugṇa (Rām. VI, 117), and by Virādha's surmise that Sitā was the common wife of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (Rām. LII, 2). Rāma had proposed Sitā's transference to Bharata even before her abduction, on the eve of his exile as a convenient arrangement during his absence (Rām. II, 30, 8-9, with 26, latter part).

3 Cf. also the case of Nala, Puṣkara and Damayanti in Upper Deccān, a few steps above; also that of Mandodari (virtually a Mānva case, for Rāvaṇa's line was traced from that of Vaiśālī); cf. Vaiśālī and Rāvaṇa vowing to have wives in common (like Sugriva) as a token of friendship: Rām. VII, 39.

4 The Mānva families of Ayodhyā, Vaiśālī, etc., and the brāhmaṇ families of Āngirasas, Kāśyapas, Vaiśiṣṭhas, etc., were apparently originally Dravidian (at any rate extra-Aryan traits are found largely amongst them, though the Ailas are not altogether free from them). The comparatively later and wrong legend of Mitrā-Varuna and Urvāśi seems to indicate an original custom of biandry amongst the Vaiśiṣṭhas, as amongst Āngirasas and Kāśyapas, like whom they also might be called 'dvāmuṣyāyana.'

5 So also—with regard to the reappearance of other forms like sister-marriage, etc.

6 Mbh. § 237 (Vaiśāh.°): I, 195, 7226 ff.; 7255-7263. Vyāsa's expln.: § 238-9 (Pañcendrop.°): I, 197, 7316 ff.

7 So also Vidura is said to have advised householders of Indraprastha and Arjuna's successor there to desist from polyandrous marriages: Cowell: Jāt. VI, 139, etc.; vide infra, pp. 161-162 for Jātaka version of the Pāṇḍava polyandry (on Kṛṣṇa's own initiative).

explanations, shorn of fable, plainly indicates that even in the next previous generation polyandry could occur in a good 'r̥ṣi' family¹ (while the other explanation seems to refer to a dynastic case).² Above all,³ even before the 'svayamvara' of Draupadī, Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana takes the polyandry for granted as an ordinary thing supported by 'r̥ṣi' precedent, and advises the Pāṇḍavas accordingly, twice⁴; and Kuntī is remarkably insistent in her demands all along,—all that explanation by her 'dread of untruthfulness' being evidently silly.⁵

This last point, and the fact that, whether by way of 'niyoga' or by way of polyandry,⁶ Kuntī had herself known

- 1 The polyandric tendency, often amounting to unrestricted license, lingered on amongst the brāhmaṇ families, even after the Bhārata battle, specially among the Aṅgirasas, Kāśyapas and Ātreyas: vide infra.
- 2 Vide infra.
- 3 For other indications of frequency of polyandry, vide infra. The very fact that Draupadī was able to conceal her identity by professing to be the common wife of five 'gandharvas' (whatever may be the real meaning of that term,—'Kinnaras' = Upper Sutlej hillmen, or simply professional musicians or Kuśilavas, whose wives, according to Vāta. Kā. Sūt., are not confined to one husband), shows that polyandry was fairly well known in the Matsya country as well. (Probably even 'gandharva' is an after-thought, and the Pāṇḍavas in their incognito exile simply passed themselves off as another humbler polyandrous family; vide n. 7, p. 151). Drau.^o is taken to be a gandharvi w. of the sons of a gandh.^o king (Mbh. IV, 9, 257). She professes to be w. of five gandh.^o (IV, 9, 273 ff.; 14, 426; 16, 493; 21, 664; 22, 787). So also the Pāṇḍ.^o are mistaken for gandh.^o (Bhī.^o IV, 8, 235; 22, 792; 23, 819; 71, 2293; Nak.^o: 12, 323; Arj.^o: 45, 1406). Note that it was a 'gandharva' who advised the Pāṇḍ.^o to contract a polyandrous marriage with a Kāśyapa priest's help, and that gandharvas were Kinnaras (Mbh. II, 10, 396: etc.; vide Śr. Index, s.v. gandh.^o and Kinn.^o), among whom Pāṇḍu lived and allowed Kuntī's and Mādri's five connexions, and whose modern representatives the Kanwaris are still polyandrous.
- 4 Mbh. § 220 (Caitraratha^o): I, 168; 169, Dharmya was chosen (at the instance of a Gandharva chief) the Pāṇḍava family priest in view of their intended polyandrous marriage, and he performed their nuptial rites according to a form whereby the common bride was deemed to have regained virginity after each individual marriage and its consummation; he also performed the usual ceremonies for the children of this marriage; his kinsmen were also the royal chaplains of the Pāncālas (Mbh. I, 183; 198, 7338; 221, 8047; etc.). Thus the Gautama (Aṅgirasas), Vāsiṣṭha and Kāśyapa brāhmaṇas were all familiar with polyandric marriages, as much as the princes and people of Indraprastha, Matsya and Pāncāla. Cf. the regret of Draupadī that she and her husbands were not born as brāhmaṇas, for amongst Kṣatriyas she had been called a cow by Duryodhana for her polyandry; Mbh. § 340 (Arjunābhig.^o): III, 37.

⁵ Mbh. I, 196.

⁶ Vide infra.

several 'husbands,' make it likely that polyandry¹ was then also known amongst the Yādava races.² The uniform statement in the Purāṇas that 'Āhukī' (three steps above Kṛṣṇa) 'was given in marriage to the Avantis (or Avanti princes)',³ also Yādavas, may refer to this lingering practice; the form of the statement is too unusual in the genealogies to admit of any other meaning. In the Epic and Purāṇas the Avantis have two co-kings,⁴ in the third step after Āhukī; Vidarbha, another Yādava state, was in the same period ruled by joint kings, apparently representing two sections of the same dynasty, the Krātha and the Kaiśika⁵; Magadha in the same period had a succession of dual kings⁶; so also in Kiṣkindhā, where 'Mainda' and 'Dvidida' ruled the kingdom of Vāli and Sugriva.⁷ If these instances of 'diarchy,' in the same age and in a continuous belt of country (the Deccān and its borderlands), were not purely accidental, they may have easily led to a dynastic custom of having a common 'mahīṣī' by way of 'biandry.'⁸ Apart from this possibility there is surer indication that tradition knew of kings of different dynasties

- 1 Along with other primitive forms.
- 2 It was apparently also known amongst the people of Māhiṣmati and its Paurava princes; the custom of sexual liberty of Māh.° wives who were not confined to one husband was noticed by Sahadeva Pāṇḍava when he conquered that kingdom; it was said to have been sanctioned or established by brāhmaṇ ordinance (Mbh. II, 31, 1124-40); cf. the tradition about Uddalaka; also the w. of an 'Atri' (pro-Yādava and Central Indian) leaving one husband and having issue by another agent: (Mbh. XIII, 14, 684, ff.).
- 3 'Avantibhyah'; one text emends to 'Avantiṣu'; probably 'Avanti-bhyām' would be a good reading (vide next note):—Brahma: 15, 48; 54; Hariv. 38, 2017; 2023; Matsya: 44, 66-70; Brahmāṇḍa: III, 71, 121; 128; the Vāyu text is corrupt, but obviously its source was in the same form as other texts.
- 4 'Vindānuvindau': Vāyu: 96, 145 ff. Brahmāṇḍa: LII, 71, 150 ff. (confusing with the two Kekayas of same name mentioned in the Epic); Matsya: 46, 3-10; Viṣṇu: IV, 14, 10-11; same in Hariv.; Padma: V, 13, 56.
- 5 The brothers 'Krātha' and 'Kaiśika' were the joint rulers of Kuṇḍiṇa City: Hariv. 108, 5080-81;—Bhīṣmaka being the 'Kaiśika' in Kṛṣṇa's time (often in Hariv. 105 to 108) and Akṛ (hvṛ)ṭi being the 'Krātha' (ibid., sp. in the lists of kings opposed to Kṛṣṇa in connection with Rukmiṇī's abduction).
- 6 In Mbh.: cf. Śār. Index (p. 355) for their names,—chiefly, Jarāsandha and Jalasandha; Jayatsena and Sahadeva; Daṇḍa and Daṇḍa-dhāra, etc.
- 7 Mbh.; in the account of Sahadeva's southern campaign; and Hariv. in that of Kṛṣṇa's exploits. (These two names were probably dynastic ones, as they also occur in connection with Rāma's stories and in Purāṇic 'Vānara' genealogies).
- 8 As earlier in the case of Vāli and Sugriva; cf. Mandodari.

sharing the favours of a princess¹ by agreement: the apparently wild tales of 'Yayāti's daughter'² and the 'five Indras'³ prove this.

This former story takes us back to a period⁴ before the 'Gautama' cases of polyandry, quite an early stage; and is told of persons who are otherwise⁵ famous in tradition; hence the amount of fable and brāhmanical edification that has entered into the account⁶ is only what might be expected, specially as the behaviour of those personages was far from creditable.⁷ There are some obvious historical mistakes in the story due to subsequent brāhmanical handling,⁸ but their sources can be discovered⁹; some of the persons named as contemporary are clearly so,¹⁰ while about others there is no direct traditional evidence to the contrary¹¹; and the story as a whole is referred to in other connexions and finds support from incidental Vedic, Purāṇic and Epic allusions.¹²

1 A probable case of such sharing (though not peaceful, apparently) is indicated among the Yādava-Pauravas of the S.W., a generation before the Bhārata battle: the King of Kāruṣa (either Vrddhasarman or Dantavakra), Śiśupāla of Cedi, and Vasudeva of Dvārāvati (and Mathurā), are all stated to have had Bhadrā-Vaiśālī (which name can have belonged to only one person) for their wife. (Śiśupāla, however, obtained her by impersonation or force; but regarding Vasudeva and Kāruṣa there are no special statements. This Bhadrā is also stated to have been Śiśupāla's maternal uncle's wife, whom he enjoyed under the disguise of the Kāruṣa king, who was his mother's sister's husband. So Vasudeva and his brother-in-law apparently had equal access to Bhadrā-Vaiśālī. She however subsequently ascended the funeral pyre of Vasudeva). Vide Mbh. § 291 (Śiśupāla.°): II, 45, 1570 ff; § 793 (Mauśala.°): XVI, 7, 194; cf. Brahmāṇḍa: III, 71, 173.4, and corresponding passages in other Pur.°

2 Mbh. § 565 (Gālava.°): V, 114-120.

3 Mbh. § 238 (Vaiśāhika.°): I, 197.

4 Before the 40th step and after the 20th step from Manu (which latter is the date of the beginning of Haihaya raids).

5 Specially in connection with the Haihaya invasions.

6 So also in other stories told about Śivi, Pratardana, Viśvāmitra; or about Sagara, the Bhr̥gu, etc.

7 So also the Pāṇḍava polyandry is cloaked with ill-fitting puerile tales.

8 E.g. in making Gālava the central figure of the story, or Yayāti a contemporary of the four kings.

9 Thus Yayāti may easily have been substituted for Ahanyāti or Samyāti, who were contemporary Yayātiya kings at Pratiṣṭhāna.

10 E.g. Viśvāmitra and Samyāti (through Kṛtavīrya); Uśinara and Haryaśva.

11 E.g. ve Uśinara, Divodāsa, Haryaśva and Viśvāmitra.

12 E.g. Mbh. III, 197, 13301.2; I, 88-93; V, 119-122. Matsya: 35, 5; 37-42. Rv. X, 179; III, 31, 1-3 (by a Viśvāmitra or Kuśika ṛṣi) seems to refer to and justify Haryaśva's begetting a famous son for the benefit of his father-in-law, apparently by a similar arrangement. In Pur.° genealogies the wives of all these four kings (and the mothers of their heirs) are called Dṛṣadvatī.

The substance of the tradition, apart from details and variations, mistakes and embellishments, may be put thus: A king of Yayāti's race, ruling at Pratiṣṭhāna (and prob. = Ahampyāti or Saṃpyāti Paurava, i.e., Yāyātya), had a daughter Mādhavi, also called Dṛṣadvatī, who, by some agreement of obscure motive and origin,¹ was jointly queen to four contemporary and neighbouring kings² (viz., Haryaśva of Ayodhyā, Divodāsa of Vārāṇasī, Uśinara of the N.W., and Viśvāmitra of Kānyakubja), and who edified, and bore famous sons (namely, Vasumanas, Prataradana, Sivi and Aṣṭaka) to four different families (viz., Aikṣvāka, Kāśī-Aila, Anava-Aila and Kauśika-Aila),—and at the same time secured for her father's race the 'merit of perpetuation' through daughter's sons.³ Later on she held a 'svayamvara' afresh,⁴ and finally went into exile with her last choice King Haryaśva (ousted from his kingdom),⁵ who was also the first; and their subsequent progeny became merged in the Yādava groups,⁶ Mādhavi is also

1 The story is told at Dhṛtarāṣṭra's court to illustrate to the princes the evils of persisting in one's whim recklessly and of too much insistence on any one object; apparently it is Galava's insistence on paying his guru's fee that is illustrated: but this clearly belongs to the subsequent brāhmanical setting of the story; originally the insistence exemplified before a Paurava court must have referred to an ancient Paurava court episode rather than a brāhmaṇ teacher's fee; and the kernel of the story is in fact such an episode. The point of the illustrative story seems to be that by insisting on a dowry or bride-price of 800 horses of rare breed for his daughter,* the Paurava king of Pratiṣṭhāna had to give her as common wife to four suitors,† and even then, the arrangement proving unsatisfactory, he had to offer her in 'svayamvara' again.

* Prob. following the famous example of Gādhi of Kānyakubja in the preceding generation; cf. Av., V, 17, 11—15, where horses of precisely the same breed are a prized possession of kings, valued equally with a beloved 'rich-dowried' queen.

† Who had other reasons also for a close combination, viz., the common danger from the Haihayas (at this time allied, by marriage, with the Pratiṣṭhāna court).

2 For a Jātaka parallel, vide infra.

3 It is to be noted here that the Prācinvant-Ahampyāti section of the Yāyātya-Paurava dynasty evidently became extinct at this point, probably as much through failure of male line as through Haihaya expansion. Raudrāśva-Keeyu-Matīnāra introduce a fresh Paurava branch. Thus the story about the 'fall' of Yayāti and his 'salvation' through the fame of his daughter's sons had a historical foundation.

4 Probably because the first arrangement could not work well for long.

5 His expulsion may well have been due to the other three kings.

6 The Śarasana section of the Yādavas (desc. from Kṛtavīrya, conn. with Ahampyāti by marriage, and thus with Mādhavi and Haryaśva) had just risen in the period contemplated by this episode; obviously the Hariv. version has confused a real tradition re the affiliation of an exiled Aikṣvāka family to the related Śarasana-Yādavas, by identifying the earlier Śarasanas with the later race of Mādhva,—probably under the influence of the name Mādhavi.

said to have obtained a 'boon' from a 'ṛṣi' that after every connexion and child-birth she would regain her virginhood without prejudice to the next case, and she accordingly herself suggests that polyandric arrangement; and the four kings also are fully aware of what they and Mādhavī were about, and show every sign of approval and delight; while their sons by her are their heirs by preference.

Such a remarkable tradition regarding famous kṣatriya dynasties and heroes must have been well-known in the days of the Bhārata war, and Vyāsa as a Paurāṇika might be expected to refer to its precedent on the question of a 'sādhārāṇī' wife for the Pāṇḍava princes. He does refer to it; only later mythical and edifying accretions have obscured this reference: the "Pañcendropākhyāna" is nothing but a garbled brāhmanical account (with an admixture of folk-tale)¹ of this once famous and striking tradition about the Paurava princess Mādhavi-Dṛṣadvatī and her four (or rather five) royal husbands.

It is a noteworthy feature in the Mādhavī-¹ Pañcendra-² accounts that the polyandry described is not a 'fraternal' one: there is some amount of blood relationship between Mādhavī's several husbands no doubt, owing to common Aila descent and dynastic intermarriages,² and Mādhavī herself is so related to them; but there is no immediate fraternal relationship between the four kings. So also the several 'Indras' ('Sivi,

1 With this tale of one wife for five 'Indras' may be compared the still lingering folk legend of 1 Indrāṇī for 7 Indras (cf. a communicated note by Grierson in J.R.A.S.). The Purāṇic basis of such legends may be traced to traditions like that of Nahuṣa courting 'Indra's' queen when he too became an 'Indra' (Śalya tells the story to Yūdha.° on the eve of the battle: Mbh. V, 11—15.). The tradition of the common queen of these four great kings, some of whom might well be called 'Indras,' may also have been one source of such a legend. It is noteworthy that Viśvāmītra's father was 'Indra' incarnate; and Sivi and Prataḍana were famous and powerful enough for the title; so also other Aila and Aikṣvāka princes had actually become 'Indras.' Perhaps the ancient kings who were called or said to have become 'Indras,' only held or usurped the position of High Priest of the tribe or realm, in addition to that of King. Cf. the Devarāj and Dharmarāj (or Dharma) of Bhutan, its High Priest and Chief Judge. So also Epic-Purāṇic tradition knows of 1 Videha and 1 Ikṣvāku king as Devarāj (a), and 1 Vāsiṣṭha with the same designation (vide Pargiter: AIHT. p. 342 for refs.), and Nahuṣa is called 'Devarāj' (and equivalents) about 24 times in Mbh. (V, and XIII); while Vidura and Yudhiṣṭhira were Dharma(rāja)s. (Cf. also the current idiom, 'Ludra-pāta' = passing away of a great social leader). It is thus possible that the Pañcendra and 'Saptendra' legends are echoes of the times when High Priests (royal or otherwise) had often wives in common ("maharāṇī va Gautamī"; cf. n. 1, p. 161).

2 This is quite apparent from the genealogies.

Viśvabhuj, etc.) are unconnected personages, the only community being their suspended 'Indra'-hood or royalty. Another feature is the initiative taken by the common wife. In the one case the brāhmaṇ Gālava plays an ill-fitting and almost uncalled for leading part, and in the other an advance is made by putting Siva in the same position. But it is quite evident that the ṛṣi and the god are there to silence criticism¹; the chief share in arranging the polyandric connexions belongs to Mādhavī and "Śrī"²; the former herself suggests such connexion and guarantees that no question of her 'virginity' can be raised by the several husbands; the latter allures an 'Indra' into the 'cave' where four others have already been led to complete her quota, and paralyses her victims by her touch. A third feature is an indication that such a polyandric arrangement was incidental to times of great distress, expulsion from 'Indratva' or lordship in one case, and that from their respective kingdoms in the case of the four contemporary kings, owing to the famous Haihaya-Yādava invasions: evidently the connexion was intended to serve as the basis of a combination against the common danger.

The parallels in the Pāṇḍava age are significant. Like Mādhavī, Kuntī is also granted a 'boon' or a 'mantra'³ by a ṛṣi, whereby she could, without detriment, summon any number of notable persons ('gods') to her presence and bear children to them; and after her first experiment she was granted a further boon (if it was not already included in the first) that she would continue to be a virgin all the same.² In connection with Draupadī's five consecutive marriages and consummations it is stated that every time she became a virgin afresh.³ Satyavatī, 2 steps before Kuntī retained her "maidenhood" even after bearing a son to Parāśara by virtue of a similar 'ṛṣi' boon.⁴ Amongst the Yādavas, besides Kuntī, Bhānumatī, daughter of Bhānu a relative of Kṛṣṇa, is given in marriage to Sahadeva-Pāṇḍava like an ordinary maiden, after her rape by Nikumbha, with whom she lived for a pretty long time before her rescue.⁵

1 So also Garuḍa is brought in and dismissed by Gālava to supply him with divine sanction in his transactions,—an improvement upon improvement.

2 Śrī=Mādhavī, in later mythological equations; this may be one of the starting points of the Śrī and Pañcendṛa story.

3 This was used by her co-wife Mādri also: Mbh. I, 124.

4 Mbh. §131 (Kuntī): I, 67, 2768—74; §175 (Kṛṣṇa-sambh.): I, 111, 4385 ff; § 189 (Pāṇḍu): I, 122, 4748; § 190 (Pāṇḍavotp.): I, 123, 4760. Cf. § 569 (Bhagavadvyāsa): V, 144; XI, 27,—§ 620 (Śrāddha.): § 799 (Putradarś.): XV, 29—30; § 547 (Kṛṣṇa) III, 303—307, etc.

5 This was a 'ṛṣi' view quoted to Janamejaya: Mbh. §240 (Vaiśāh.): I, 199 (end).

6 Mbh. § 171 (Bhisma-Satyav.): I, 103; cf. 63.

7 Rv. 149. 8471—8547.

And Kuntī's own sister Śrutadevā, though married to Vṛddhaśerman of Kāruṣa, is stated to have been mother of Ekalavya, famed as Naiśādi (and son of Hiraṇyadhana), having been brought up by the Niśādas near Dvārāvātī: clearly, Śrutadevā had a similar adventure to Kuntī's, and Ekalavya was her 'kāñina' son,—which however was no detraction from her 'maidenhood' or a bar to subsequent marriage. The frequent ascription in stories of restored maidenhood to 'apsaras'es (some of whom were real women)² after connexions with ṛṣis or princes, is thus partly a reflex of actual conditions and opinions. This legal fiction of restored or continued maidenhood was evidently invented at a later period to justify undeniable cases of polyandry (and license) in the near past,—or may have been coeval with that institution in its last days. Like Mādhavi, again, Kuntī herself suggests to Pāṇḍu how she might become mother of children by other men³; and like her and 'Sri,' Draupadī captivates all the five brothers by gazing upon each one of them in love, when she is brought to the hut by Arjuna and Bhīma.⁴ Subsequently, on the eve of the great battle, Kṛṣṇa, the 'sakhā' of Draupadī had a secret conference with Karṇa, the 'kāñina' son of Kuntī, in which he tried to win him over to the Pāṇḍava side, by promising that the covetable Draupadī will approach him also as wife when the 6th turn came.⁵ Such a bait could not have been offered if Kṛṣṇa's 'sakhī' had not taken the initiative in the matter and expressed to him her willingness⁶ to extend the scope of her polyandry by co-option. (The Pāṇḍavas it is said came to know the truth about Karṇa after his death⁷; it may or may not be true; but that presents no difficulty, as Pāṇḍu also did not know about the early amours of Kuntī who persuades him that she was for the first

- 1 Hariv. 35, 1937-8; together with Vāyu: 96, 145 ff. (and corr. portions, i.e., of Vasudeva's sisters, of Matsya, Brahmāṇḍa, Viṣṇu, etc.); in Brahmāṇḍa: III, 71, 189-90, Ekalavya, the child brought up by Niśādas, is ascribed to a nephew of Śrutadevā; apparently her 'kāñina' connection was with this near nephew.
- 2 'Apsaras' status being ascribed to them owing to similarity of the names (like Urvaśī, Menakā, Ghṛtācī, etc.) which were quite usual; e.g. the wives of Raudrāśva and Purūrava, or Viśvāmitra and Bharadvāja, etc.
- 3 She is no doubt first requested to bear children, but the method for this is her own.—Mbh. §189 (Pāṇḍu): I, 122.
- 4 Mbh. §236 (Svayamvara): I, 192.
- 5 After his embassy to Hāstīnapura, Kṛṣṇa took Karṇa on his car and spoke to him of their being cousins and about Draupadī, etc. Mbh. § 569 (Bhagavadgītā): V, 140.
- 6 The incidents at her 'svayamvara' and the 'dyūta' partly explain how this willingness may have arisen.
- 7 But Karṇa knew, at least from Bhīṣma, Kṛṣṇa and Kuntī herself; cf. also Mbh. §620 (Śrāddh.°): XI, 27; §621 (Rajadh.°) XII, 6; Yudh.° had suspected it at the dice-match (from resemblance): XII, 1.

time going to experiment with the 'license' she had from a "r̥ṣi."¹ The non-fraternal type of polyandry in the Mādhavī and Śrī stories is found also in the case of Jaṣṭilā-Gautamī, about a dozen steps later, where no relationship between the 7 husbands is suggested, while in the same connection² the 10 husbands of Soma's daughter are stated to have been brothers with a common appellation. In Kuntī's case (which is as much one of 'niyoga' as of polyandry),³ some of the 'husbands' may have been related as half-brothers or cousins, but others were not.⁴ In Draupadī's case also, it is not purely 'fraternal,' for Nakula and Sahadeva had no blood relationship with the other 'brothers' at all, and were simply in the 'status' of brothers; the rest were but half-brothers. Mādhavī's being the common wife of four kings did not prevent her sons by them from duly succeeding to their respective fathers' kingdoms (even by preference over other sons, as with Aṣṭaka and Sivi), or those kings from having other individual wives (as with Viśvāmitra and Uśinara) and other sons by them.⁵ So also in Draupadī's case, her sons by some of her husbands are recognized as 'dāyādas' to them individually,⁶ and probably this was so in all cases, with the exception of Arjuna's son by Draupadī (being apparently born after Subhadrā's son Abhimanyu)⁷; and the Pāṇḍavas also have other wives individually,⁸ though not without some opposition from Draupadī,⁹ and other sons by them. Again, just as Mādhavī is free to select a husband in the regular manner, even after her previous connexions,¹⁰ so also Draupadī is asked by Duṣṣāsana and Karṇa in the 'sabhā' to select

1 Mbh. §189 (Pāṇḍu): I, 122 (latter part) and 123.

2 Mbh. I, 196, 7266.

3 For the 'niyogas' were not confined to one person, and Pāṇḍu all along lived with his two wives, exercising full conjugal rights (at least subsequently).

4 Vide infra. sec. on 'niyoga,' re Kuntī.

5 Uśinara married 4 other dtrs. of 'rājarsis', and their sons were established in a number of Punjab principalities named after them, the main line being continued by Sivi: cf. Brahma: 13, 20-24; Hariv. 31, 1674-79; Vāyu: 99, 18; Brahmāṇḍa: III, 74, 17-20; Viṣṇu: IV, 18, 1. Re Viśvāmitra's other wives and sons, cf. references to them in the Trīśaṅku stories in all Pur.^o and the Kauśika gotra accounts in the same.

6 E.g. Satānika, Nakula's 'dāyāda' (often called Nakuṇḍ): cf. Mbh. VII, 1086. (It is to be noted that Nakula's son by an individual wife of his, Nirāmitra, is not his 'dāyāda'). Prativindhya, her son by Yudhiṣṭhira, is apparently the latter's own 'dāyāda'; cf. Drau.^o's lament in the Sabhā that she cannot bear the thought that Prati.^o should be called a slave's son being the 'rāja-putra' (the King's or Yudh.^o's heir).

7 Mbh. §253 (Harapāhar.^o) I, 221.

8 For these individual wives and their sons, vide: Vāyu: 99, 240-43; Matsya: 60, 51-57; Viṣṇu: IV, 20, 11-12; and numerous refs. in full detail in Mbh. itself to each of these wives and their sons.

9 Mbh. §253 (Harapāhar.^o) I, 221.

10 Mbh. V, 120.

anew a husband from amongst the Kurus¹ (though the occasion for the request is a special circumstance), and later on Jayadratha asks her to leave her five husbands and be his queen²; Kicaka also wanted her: he did not know who she was, but knew that she was a maid-in-waiting with five husbands whose vengeance might fall upon him³;—the underlying idea apparently was that previous polyandric or irregular connexions (like those mentioned above) were no bar to subsequent regular marriage. The third feature of the Mādhavi-Pāñcendra stories is also common to the cases of Kuntī and Draupadī, particularly to the latter. On the continuity of Pāñḍu's claim to the throne through sons raised by Kuntī (who was a Yādava princess), on the securing of Pāñcāla support and maintenance of fraternal unity amongst these 'Pāñḍavas,' turns the whole story of the Great Epic.

For no instance of polyandry, however, is so much detail available as that of Draupadī; and an examination of these details should bring out what polyandry was like⁴ in its last days amongst the ruling classes of the end of the Vedic period.

Polyandry in some form seems to have continued longer amongst certain priestly sections (as noted above). When Utañka, a pupil of Veda (the 'purohita' of Janamejaya III) is most calmly requested by the latter's wife to take the place of her husband and approach her for the sake of 'virtue,'⁵ it is evident that this was not a mere instance of laxity and adultery (which were common enough), but a customary latitude allowed to the brāhmaṇ wife, amounting to polyandry. So also, Uddālaka's⁶ 'wife' is free to go with other 'brāhmaṇs,' either of her own will, or in response to invitations, and this fully in accord with 'honoured ṛṣi custom'; and Svetaketu is her son by one of her 'husband's' pupils.⁷ Such a state of affairs⁸ would show that in priestly settlements and retreats, isolated from public city life, resident brāhmaṇs of

¹ Mbh. § 304 (Anudyūta °) II, 77 (Duḥ. ° 's request); § 300 (Dyūta °) II, 71 (Karṇa's request).

² Mbh. § 522 (Draupadī-har. °) III, 267.

³ Mbh. § 551 (Kic. °) IV, 14 ff.

⁴ These details are enough for a separate monograph; it is interesting to follow the jealousies and conflicts of the co-husbands, and the changing favours of the common wife, or the legal and social position of the *partis* concerned so far as illustrated in different episodes.

⁵ Mbh. I, 3.

⁶ Contemp. of Janamejaya III. cf. Mbh. I, 53a, 2047.

⁷ Mbh. § 187b (Pāñḍu) I, 122, 4724—35; vide n. 2, p. 153.

⁸ Mbh. § 535 (Rājadh. °) XII, 34, 1220.

⁹ 6 steps further on (cf. Parāṣarī: AIHT, p. 330) Satyakāma-Jābāla is born of a woman who had connexions with a number of brāhmaṇs in one household (or establishment), so that the parentage of her famous son remained uncertain (Chānd. Upan. IV, 4, 1-2).

a group often had a woman or women in common.¹ It is noteworthy that these two instances refer to the Āṅgīrasa, Kāśyapa and Ātreya groups,² otherwise noted for traces³ of polyandry and laxity.

For the intervening period⁴ between the later Pāṇḍavas and Buddhism, cases of polyandry are not known to the Purāṇic dynastic history.⁵ But the great prevalence of metronymics in this age amongst the brāhmins is suspicious, and cannot have been all due to polygamy,⁶—for this was more or less general in various other earlier or later periods, and equally amongst the ruling classes.⁷ This crop of metronymics⁸ amongst the priesthood must have been therefore partly due to continued laxity⁹ and polyandry, in a proportion that cannot very well be determined. Buddhist references to polyandry are not many, and these are mostly true echoes from the earlier Purāṇic traditions. Thus the story of Kṛṣṇā's marrying the 5 Pāṇḍava princes¹⁰ is told plainly and without fables, with the explanation that she was a passionate girl who fell in love with five youths at the same time, insisted on marrying them all (to which her father agreed rather reluctantly),—and yet craved for a sixth consort;¹¹ quite in agreement with epic indications. Again, Vidura the Kuru (prince and) counsellor warns Arjuna's son against having a wife in common with others,—a calamitous thing for a householder; yet it appears that his own sons had a common wife, on whom he relied for their guidance.¹² The story of Pañcapāpā, the

1 In the orthodox 'saṅghas' of Buddha's time (i.e. brāhminical settlements) a few women were common to the whole congregation; (one of them accused Buddha of connexion with her); cf. the almost parallel practice in the late medieval Vaiṣṇava 'maṅhas', etc.)

2 Uddālaka's father Aruṇa was a Gautama (Aruṇa-Aupaveśi-Gautama); so also Uddālaka is stated to have been an Āṅgīrasa (Matsya: 196, 4. 6. 8); he however founded an Ātreya gotra (Matsya: 197, 2); Veda, like Uddālaka, was in residence with the Kāśyapa Dhaumya; Veda was also an Aruṇi (Varāha: 37, 7).

3 Vide ante and infra.

4 Of 3 centuries, bet. 850 and 550 B. C. >

5 Apparently owing to the concise character of the traditions for these times.

6 As Keith supposes in his Ait. Āraṇ.

7 Vide infra. sec. re polygamy.

8 Later on in history there is a parallel prevalence of metronymics in the Andhra inscriptions and coins; but such clear Dravidian character is not evident in the earlier case; though it is possible that some of these metronymics embody traces of matriarchy in the originally non-Aīla brāhmin families.

9 Of this several instances are known in contemporary literature.

10 Cowell: Jātakas: V, 225—'27; 240; 243.

11 The basis of this particular may be either the epic tradition of her agreeing to marry Karna as her 6th husband, or that of her having a favourite eunuch attendant (Vṛbhannā, whom Arjuna impersonated).

12 Cowell: Jātakas: VI, 125—139.

common wife of the princes Vaka and Pāvārika¹ of Kāśi and a neighbouring principality lower down on the Ganges, may however belong to the intervening pre-Buddhist period; and the introduction of Kṛṣṇā's story to illustrate a contemporary statement, that a woman with even eight husbands (apparently the limit reached by fraternal polyandry) yet longs for a ninth,² shows that the practice was not infrequent in Buddha's own time. Polyandry as an institution existed in well-known civilized states and communities in the Western sub-Himālayan area,³ in the post-Mauryan age.⁴ It still survives in those outlying 'āryan' tracts of country,⁵ and amongst various Tibeto-Burman tribes on their border.

- 1 Cowell: Jātakas: V, 236—239. This is a case of non-fraternal polyandry, the wife being shared in alternate weeks; (cf. the Pāṇḍava arrangements in the Epic); (the story adds that the queen co-opted a third husband to keep her company during her journeys between the two capitals). It is to be noted that all these instances belong to the Gangetic plains.
- 2 Cowell: Jātakas: V, 243, (so also, Vidura's warning against polyandry is applied to "all householders", showing that the Jātakas knew it as a not very restricted custom).
- 3 In Strī-rājya, Grāma-nārī (next to it), and Vāhlika; the country between and including Kumāon and N. Punjab. 'Strī-rājya' is known to Mbh., where its king is a candidate for the Kāliṅga king's daughter.
- 4 Cf. Vāta. Kā. Sūt. II, 6, 41—44; 39, 41 (with comm.); also V, 6, 12 (re Strī-rājaka harems).
- 5 E.g. in Rāmpur-Bashāhr, Nārkaṇḍā (corr. to Nārī-khaṇḍa or Strī-rājya, Grāmanārī, etc.), and other districts around and beyond Simlā, amongst the Kanwārīs (who are popularly taken as 'kinnaras' of literature) and other tribes; many of these are Aryan ethnically; some are supposed to belong to the 'Khaśā' race; others are clearly Mongoloid.

IV.

No case of 'Niyoga' is definitely mentioned in the Epic-Purāṇa tradition until about 41 steps below Manu; the next definite instances being at the 54th, 93rd, 94th, and 97th steps (with one not very-long before the 93rd).¹ This rarity in the earlier ages, and increasing number of cases later on, must partly have been due to gradual discouragement of polyandry and widow-remarriage² amongst certain sections of the ruling nobility,—partly to increasing degeneracy of the polygamous wealthy princes³,—and partly to the growing pretensions of the priests.⁴ The first circumstance would afford the scope for a specialised 'niyoga,' which would otherwise have been superfluous; the second created necessities for dynastic continuity, whose urgency increased with the duration of those lines; the third developed a morbid esteem for introduction of sanctifying 'ṛṣi' blood in the priest-ridden families. Indications of all these circumstances will be noted in the following account.

No definite 'niyogas,' again, are recorded of any other ruling family besides the Eastern Ānavas (Aṅga), Aikṣvākas (Kosala) and Pauravas (the Doāb and Kurukṣetra); while the brāhman families expressly connected with the practice are the Gautamas (Āṅgirasas) and the Vāśiṣṭhas,—with apparently the Kāśyapas and the Ātreyas,⁵—all connected with those regions and dynasties. There are a few probable cases amongst the Pāñcālas, Kānyakubjas and later Yādavas,⁶ but hardly any traces amongst the Turvaśas, Druhyus, W. Ānavas, Haihayas,⁷ Kāśis⁸ Vaiśāleyas⁹ and Vaidehas.⁹ It would

¹ The numbering is on the basis of Pargiter's comparative lists; the approximate general sequence would stand even if those numberings have to be altered later on. Of Manu's immediate descendants (within 3 steps?), Rathitara's wife is said to have undergone a 'niyoga' to an Āṅgirasa, the resultant progeny being optionally known as Āṅgirasas or 'Kṣetropetāh dvīātavah' (Viṣ. IV. 2, 2 f. and comm. on it; cf. Vā. 88, 7; Bḍ. III. 63, 7; Hv. 11, 658); but acquisition of brāhman clan name and of the above designation is so frequent amongst Māva and Aila branch families (vide Pargiter AIHT.), and the alleged instance is so isolated, that it is more probable that the commentators' explanation arose from a var. lec. 'Kṣetropetāh, etc.' in a Bḍ. text.

² As with the Hāstinapura dynasty (cf. Bhīṣma's refusal to marry his brother's widows, and the singularity of the Pāṇḍava polyandry).

³ As with Vali, Vicitravīrya, or Pāṇḍu.

⁴ As with Āṅgirasas and Vāśiṣṭhas over various dynasties.

⁵ Vide *infra* for the indications.

⁶ Vide *infra*.

⁷ Except what is said in brāhmanical stories about the kṣetrajña kṣatriyas amongst them after their defeat by the Bhṛguṣ; vide *infra*.

⁸ Though the Āṅgirasas are directly connected with the Vaiśāleyas, and for a time with the Kāśis, while the Vāśiṣṭhas are similarly connected with the Vaidehas.

seem as if the practice originated in the eastern kingdoms and spread westwards along with the Āṅgīrasa, Vāsiṣṭha and other priestly groups, in the same way as Mānva Brāhmanism can be said to have spread to the Ailas.¹ But the Kāśis, Vaiśāleyas and Vaidehas were as much eastern and priest-ridden as the Aṅgas and Kośalas; the explanation may be the martial character of the two former,² and the absence of laxity in the latter.³ So also the absence of the practice amongst Druhyus, Turvaśas and W. Ānavas may be due to their having been virile fighting communities outside the Mānva-Brāhman influence; and though connected with the Bhṛigus and Ātreyas, the Haihaya-Yādavas were too strong and martial a race for priest domination,⁴ and were vigorous, prolific polygamists, with a good deal of license in the sex-relations.⁵ The main position, however, as stated above, is significant: the practice is associated with the Āṅgīrasas and Vāsiṣṭhas (of Aṅga, Vaiśālī, Kośala and Kuru-Pāñcāla).

The first⁶ clear instance, of the practice (that of Dirghatamas' sons by Vali's wives)⁷ discloses several noteworthy features: There is no sign that it was regarded as unusual or novel. The brāhman guest is already a privileged person, who is at once sent into the harem to have a pleasant time.⁸ The previous history of Dirghatamas leaves no doubt as to how he used the privilege. It is after this that Vali commands his queen to obtain for him sons from Dirghatamas, who, like other solicited personages in later instances, agrees forthwith. Sudesṇā also readily assents, but afterwards not liking connexion with a pur-blind man, substitutes a maid-in-waiting¹ (apparently a secondary co-wife, Auśīnarī², of the

1 Vide Pargiter: AIHT, pp. 303-14.

2 About the Kāśis, the mention of the Haihaya wars is enough; for the Vaiśāleyas, vide the graphic account of Märk.^o Purāṇa.

3 Later on, in Aṣṭāvakra's time, however, there were temptations at the Janaka court (Mbh. III. 133).

4 Cf. their expulsion and oppression of these priests, leading to wars.

5 As is evident from the Yādava dynastic accounts, and as noted already.

6 Earlier legendary reference to 'kṣetraja' sons is very rare; one such is ascribed to a king Svarāstra on the Vipāśā, driven out of his kingdom, whose queen had a son by a 'ṛṣi,' who became the Tāmsa Manu (of uncertain chronological position): vide Märk.^o Pur.^o

7 The details that follow are given in full in: Mbh. § 170 (Dirgh.^o): I, 104; (cf. XII, 342, 13182): § 277 (Jarās.^o II, 21; (cf. II, 17, 698; III, 84, 8083; XIII, 7108; 7663; XII, 7593; also XII, 1796). Visṇu: IV, 18, 1-2; Brahma: 13, 28 ff; Matsya: 48, 23-24; 56-58; Brahmāṇḍa: III, 74, 26-34; 35-99; Hariv. 31, 1683-90; Vāyu: 89, 27-34; 35-99; 100-1.

8 For the much later post-Mauryan period also, Vāts. Kā. Sūt. refers to the practice of allowing brāhmaṇa free access to the king's women, in Gauḍa specially; does this show the eastern origin of this priestly influence?

W. Ānava family, and thus a cousin of the king). Dirghatamas then went on begetting one son after another on this Auśinari, and it was not until the 11th son had been born that the substitution was made known to Vali,—as he now claimed them from Dirghatamas; from the details it is clear that Dirghatamas was allowed to live for all these years within the palace in the same relation to the whole harem as the king himself⁵, but all the while he was living specially with Auśinari⁴; the claim after the 11th birth is significant; probably the eldest son having completed his 12th year had to be definitely 'affiliated' in view of usual ceremonials. After the disclosure, Sudeṣṇā was sent for 'niyoga' once again, and this time there was no difficulty,—the prolific brāhman having apparently made the harem all his own. After Sudeṣṇā had borne 5 (or probably 6)⁶ sons by 'niyoga,' Dirghatamas got full rights over Auśinari and continued to live with her separately, begetting other children on her, as well as on other women (who may well have been inmates of Vali's seraglio like Auśinari). The scene of all this is placed in Girivraja⁶, where Dirghatamas' own family became settled, while the 5 kṣetraja princes settled in 5 different provinces of the original kingdom, which seems to have included a large part of Bengal, Bihār and Orissā, with Girivraja as a chief centre; and later on the 5 princes used to pay visits to their real father in his retreat at Girivraja. Three things are most striking in this common Epic-Purāṇic tradition: the revolting license of the (Āṅgīrasa) priest,—the laxity of harem life,—the utterly priest-ridden⁷ and incapable type of king.⁸ All this

- 1 'Sūdrā Auśinari' may have been her full name; one of the Paurava King Raudrāśva's daughters was named Sūdrā. (Possibly Sūdrā was also the name of Vidura's mother).
- 2 Cf. the parallel case of Ambikā the chief queen similarly substituting a 'maid' who is also a co-wife and apparently a princess. Cf. also the Purāṇic legend of Sureṇu's substitute, which shows a similar custom. Auśinari, shortly 'Auśi,' is a better source for the metonymic Auśija, than Uśij, which is otherwise unknown as a feminine name; the epic version is clearly in the right here. Princesses in the harem suffering frequent changes of status, owing to royal or their own freaks, was very common all along; cf. Buddhistic references to pre-Bhārata and post-Bhārata court stories, and Vedic references re 'parivṛkṭi,' etc.
- 3 Cf. the chosen brāhman agent 'living with' Śāradaṇḍāyapī till 3 sons are born to her; vide infra.
- 4 So also Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana was particularly pleased with Vidura's mother.
- 5 Including Anapāna. (It is prob. better to read 'so'parāśca' in the text for 'sāparādha,' etc.; prob. also the real name was Annapāna='food-protector'; cf. Śāli-vāhana).
- 6 The epic tradition is very clear and consistent with regard to this location of the episode; so also the Purāṇic: e.g. Mat. 48, 84-88; Vā. 99, 37-39; etc.
- 7 Also shown by the brāhmanistic economies on Vali in the Purāṇas.
- 8 Cf. "he was born when the race had dwindled": Matsya: 48, 23-24; etc.

cannot have developed in a day; the sort of 'niyoga' as exemplified amongst the E. Ānavas and Āngirasas, therefore, must have been an accepted and established practice long before the 41st step from Manu; the E. Ānavas had not separated from their more vigorous kinsmen, the N.W. Ānavas, for more than a century and a half,¹ and their rapid degeneration implies some pre-existing tradition of harem life and priest-influence in the land of their settlement, already peopled by the 'Saudyumna' and Mānva races.²

The 'niyoga' of Madayantī, Kalmāṣapāda's queen,³ also, discloses somewhat similar features,—the main difference with the previous case being that Vali takes the practice for granted and is glad to employ it, while Saudāsa-Aikṣvāka is an unwilling victim of it. It would almost appear from the details given about Saudāsa's persecution of Vasiṣṭhas and Āngirasas,⁴ the curse of the injured Āngirasī, and his final reconciliation with 'Vasiṣṭha,'—that his queen was part of the price he paid for his restoration (which was assured when Saudāsa had actually solicited Vasiṣṭha to beget a son on Madayantī), and that there was an element of retaliation and humiliation involved in the whole affair. Madayantī seems to have come into touch with Vasiṣṭha⁵ even before the 'niyoga,' while the king was in exile⁶; and when on return he approaches her, she dissuades him from his desire of begetting a son himself, and then Vasiṣṭha is asked to visit the queen, with whom he remains till she is with child.⁷ On the whole what is an accomplished fact in the earlier case, is shown in the process of being completed, or reasserted after temporary

- 1 About 14 steps before this, branching off from Mahāmanas, under Uśīnara and Titikṣu.
- 2 As the dynastic accounts clearly show; for details, vide Pargiter: *AIHT*, Chaps. XXIV and XXV.
- 3 The following details are given in full in:—*Mbh.* I, 182, 688 ff; III, 218, 14128, etc.; I, 122, 4737; 177, 6768; 6791; (cf. 176-177); XII, 49, 1792; 235, 8604; *Vāyu*: 88, 176 ff; *Brahmaṇḍa*: III, 63, 177 ff; *Viṣṇu*: IV, 4, 19-38; etc.
- 4 At the instigation of the Aila 'Viśvāmitra.'
- 5 So also, while Trisāṅku remained in exile for 12 years, 'Vasiṣṭha' protected the royal harem and the kingdom, and the latter resented it very much; (in all *Pur.*^o).
- 6 One account makes her accompany her husband in his frenzied wanderings; it is not however clear whether the exile had begun then.
- 7 And seems to be connected with her later on also.

protest and check.¹ It is notable that while nothing is said regarding Vali's merit in lending his wife (or wives) to Dirghatamas (though he is generally lauded as a pious king), Saudāsa by 'giving his dearly loved queen to Vasiṣṭha' (not simply 'raising a kṣetraja son') is declared to have 'attained heaven together with that wife'; a befitting praise for a fresh or repentant¹ convert to the system.

The next group of clear cases of 'niyoga' (of Vicitravīrya's wives, Pāṇḍu's wives and Uddālaka's wife) are different in features from the above two. They do not show that domination of the king and the harem by the priest in the presence of the king himself. The court life is equally lax and degenerate, if not more so; and the continuance of the dynasty is equally a necessity; but that end is achieved through relatives or equivalents of relatives,—and not through an unconnected priest as such.² In these 'niyogas' therefore, another element is present,—the rights of kinship; the practice in this form is a corollary to and an off-shoot from 'group' or fraternal polyandry, while the form typified by Saudāsa's and Vali's cases is derived from ascendancy and pretensions of the priesthood.³ This, however, was still present; Kuntī is referred to an (apparently not much) earlier definite instance⁴ of the 'niyoga' of a Kṣātriya⁵ wife, Śāradaṇḍāyani⁶, who, at her husband's request, came out prepared into the public square⁷ and selected and solicited a suitable brāhman from amongst the passers-by as the agent, and had successively three sons by him after due ceremonials. Pāṇḍu mentions brāhman amongst others as suitable agents Kuntī might think of.⁸ Bhīṣma, citing in full the instances of the Bhṛgu and Dirghatamas, recommends a 'ṛṣi' agent to Satyawatī when she presents to

1 The latter is more likely, as the Āṅgirasas and Vāsiṣṭhas were long since intimately connected with the Mānuvas, and had other conflicts with them before.

2 The Paurava princes had many struggles with the brāhman, and were only partially and for short periods under their sway.

3 Cf. the claim in AV. : the brāhman has rights over every wife of every other man; cf. a revolting example in the Epic story of Oghavatī (a Śāryāta-Yadava princess and wife of a Nila (Paurava) prince of Māhiṣmati, settled in Kurukṣetra), who was enjoyed by a brāhman in her gratified husband's presence,—by right: Mbh. § 720. b. (Sudarsanop. 9) : XIII, 2, 122 ff.

4 Mbh. I, 4677-9.

5 'Virapatnī' ; but 'Vira' may be the husband's name.

6 The name looks brāhmanic; she may have been a brāhman Śāradaṇḍa's daughter married to a kṣātriya or a prince,—not an unusual thing. [Q. Is she the same as Śārakānta's dir. (apparently a corr. reading), w. of Andhaka Mahābhoja (Padma. V, 13, 46) ? in that case Kuntī was aptly referred to her example.]

7 For an Aikṣāka parallel (of somewhat later period perhaps), vide n. 10, p. 220.

8 Mbh. I, 4680.

him the case of his widowed sisters-in-law.¹ But in these latter instances, Pāṇḍu also mentioned his brothers, friends and 'good men' (equal or superior to him) as his substitutes,²—and the first proposal of Satyavati was 'niyoga' or remarriage of his sisters-in-law with Bhīṣma (the elder brother) himself, while her last and finally accepted proposal was their 'niyoga' to her own illegitimate son Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana (equally an elder brother)³; it was accidental that he was a 'ṛṣi'; he was expressly selected for being an elder brother (on the mother's side)⁴, though Bhīṣma is made to approve of it doubly because he was a 'ṛṣi'.⁵

The 'niyoga' of Uddālaka's wife to his disciple⁶ belongs to about the same age⁷; but though there is one common point, in the selection, as agent, of a person who is almost a member of the same family (in theory, if not by blood,—which was sometimes the case), it stands on a somewhat different footing. As noted already, 'niyoga' of this type is but a form of the general license that prevailed amongst brāhman settlements (which may have been connected with a sort of 'group' polyandry). The brāhman disciple indeed was often regarded by the preceptor's wife as being in the status of her husband (as shown by Veda's wife's request to Utaṅka),⁸ in spite of all the denunciations and prohibitions of the (later) brāhman law-givers,—which only show what actual conditions often were. If for instance Utaṅka had consented (as others like him evidently did), Veda would have had a 'kṣetraja' son by a 'niyoga' arranged independently by his wife, because he was absent. It is noteworthy that Uddālakāni's is the first, and probably the only recorded, example of 'niyoga' of a brāhman woman⁹ while brāhmani

1 Mbh. §§ 169-71: 1, 103 ff.

2 Mbh. I, 4671-80.

3 Called 'devara' in the text; this word therefore applied to all the brothers of a husband; so also Ambikā understands Bhīṣma by 'your devara.' (Prob. the original meaning of 'devr' is a person with whom 'dalliance or amour' is permissible even in the married state.)

4 The one on the father's side declining.

5 It is to be noted that the Vāsiṣṭhas (to which family Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana belonged) had become connected with the Psuravas from Samvaraṇa's days.

6 Mbh. XII, 34, 1229.

7 Three or four steps lower.

8 It is to be noted that Veda was an Āṅgīrasa (Gautama), being an Āruṇi; vide ante.

9 Even this can hardly be called a 'niyoga,' for Uddālaka's wife was certainly not restricted to one husband, and probably the ascription of a 'niyoga' may be nothing more than giving a better name to some acknowledged connexion with a disciple. (In Mbh. XII, 34, 1229, the justification of her case is that connexion with a 'gurupatni' is no sin if the result is for the benefit of the 'guru').