Chapter - II

Vivāha Samskāra

Ceremonial rites and rituals occupy a place of utmost importance in the life of a devout Hindu. Every little work in the Hindu home begins with the performance of appropriate rites according to the prescribed code, which is called samskāra. The word *samskāra* is a derivation from the root कृ with सम्व as prefix. So, it means *saṃskāra*. "संस्कृतवण संस्कारः" स्म means "in all possible ways" and कृ means "to do" or "to act" whatever we do or act upon, we leave a permanent impression behind it. This is called संस्कार. The word *samskāra* in Latin, is called caerimonia or ceremony. Hindus believe that in the cycle of rebirth, the individual brings back his or her past saṃskāras.1

Indian culture suggests sixteen saṃskāras in the life of a man right from the unborn child and the pregnant woman, till the end of life. A man, in his life time, should undergo all the sixteen saṃskāras ordained by the Dharmaśāstras. Among all the sixteen saṃskāras, vivāha saṃskāra or marriage ceremony is a very important event. The word vivāha has been formed from the root वह (vaha) prefixed by वि (vi). It is also called

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The root ज्ञाह means to carry forward and the prefix 'वि' is used in the sense of special, whereas 'उत्त' means 'high above'. This way 'विवाह' or 'ज्ञाह' is a process of carrying forward the social, domestic, religious and spiritual obligations which is impossible for a man till he is single or else; it is an institution through which a couple transcends the lower layers of self-interest and advances on the path of self-sublimation. It is slightly different from 'marriage', as in marriage it is the sense of conjugal union that plays supreme part where as, in 'विवाह' the fulfilment of obligatory requirements and transcendental journey is the most important. Marriage functions just as an agent or a licence to satisfy the lust (sensual desire), where as 'विवाह' unites the couple for innumerable births to come.

The tie due to marriage is rather eternal. It is confined to the worldly pleasures, where as the spiritual world or to attain mokṣa is the main object of 'विवाह'. In Indian culture, it is believed that the marriage is a means and vehicle to take the wedded couple to the sublime worlds through spiritual disciplining. The wedded couple no longer remains a couple, but moulded into one. It is believed that Brahmā had created only one body of husband and wife together.²

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2. विष्णु कृत्यादियो देशमयों पुष्पाकामययः ।
   अर्द्धेन नारी तत्त्वं स विराजमयस्यत् प्रभुः ॥ - Manu.1.32
So, a man who always has a contact with only his wife is considered Brahmachāri.\(^3\) Man should always try to fulfill the desires of woman as she keeps the man happy.\(^4\) She should be respected, as God resides there where women are respected (worshipped). Where they are not respected (worshipped), then all actions will be fruitless.\(^5\)

\begin{quote}
पूज्या लाल्कितत्वार्धच खियो नित्यं जनाधिप ।
खियो यत्र पूज्यते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः ॥
अपूज्यतार्थ यज्ञतः सर्वाय्मार्फळः क्रिया: ।
तदा चैतत्तु कुलं नालिति यदा शोचन्ति जामयः ॥
- Mbh.अनुशासन.46.5-6
\end{quote}

3. तस्मात् स्वादर्शितात् ब्रह्मचारी विधायते ॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.141.60
4. यदि वै श्री न रोच्ये पुमार्थं न प्रमोद्वेदः ।
अप्रमोदात् पुनः पुनः प्रजनो न प्रवर्धत ॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.46.4
5. यत्र नार्यस्तु पूज्यते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः ।
यज्ञतास्तु न पूज्यते सर्वाय्मार्फळः क्रिया: ॥ - Manu.III.56
Man loses his wealth and will not prosper in his life if women are unhappy.  

Woman deserves respect as she supports man even in every bad condition, and she is the root cause of Dharma. Though woman deserves respect and hence worthy to be worshipped. She is not independent right from the birth till death. She should be always safeguarded by men through out her life. Before marriage, she should be safeguarded by her father, after marriage by her husband, and in her old age, by her son.

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\text{पिता रक्षति कौमारे भर्ता रक्षति यीवने |}
\text{पुजार्थ स्थानिके भावे न ब्रह्म स्वातंत्र्यमहिति } II
\]

- Mbh.अनुशासन.46.14

6. जामीरामानि गंगानि निम्कृतानीच कृत्यया ।
\text{नैव भावति न वर्जते भ्रया हीनानि पार्थिव } II - Mbh.अनुशासन.46.7

7. शिष्यं पुरानं परिदेशं मनुरत्नगमीरुदितस् ।
\text{अनलः स्वत्वकौपीनः सुहः सत्यजिज्ञायः } II
\text{ईर्षयो मानकामाश्च चण्डाश्च सुहःसुधा: }|
\text{शिष्यसुतु मामहतिः ता मान्यत मानवः } II
\text{सीत्रत्ययो हि वै धर्मों रतिमोगाश्च केवलः }|
\text{परिचयं नमस्कारातः भवन्तु व: } II - Mbh.अनुशासन.46.8-10

8. पिता रक्षति कौमारे भर्ता रक्षति यीवने ।
\text{रक्षति स्थानिके पुत्रे न ब्रह्म स्वातंत्र्यमहिति } II - Manu.IX.3
Mainly husband and father are the only ways for women. Husband gives pleasure and father supports her in bad condition. According to the Mahābhārata, marriage is a Dharma for women, and it also regards women as the wealth of the house.

श्रियं पति: बियो नाम सत्कार्यं भूतिमिनच्छता।
पालिता निगृहीता च श्रीं भवति भारत॥

- Mbh.नाट्यसांग.46.15

Marriage is a very important event both in the life of a man and as well as a woman. After marriage, man enters into Gṛhausthāsrama, or the stage of a house-holder for which smṛtis give much importance. According to Manu Smṛti, the house-holder is as necessary for society as the breath is for the body. Mahābhārata states that an unmarried man is not entitled to perform वाण or यज्ञ or any sacrifice. It further says

9. पतिमिनिवार्यां: पतिं वा बर्षर्णी। - Mbh.उपोग.176.7
10. गति: पति: समयां बिचमे च पिता गति:। - Mbh.उपोग.176.8
11. पाणिधर्मो नाहुधर्मो न पुम्भि: सेवित: पुत्र।
तं मे त्वमग्रहित्वमे वृणोमि त्वामहं ततः। - Mbh.आदि.81.21.
12. यथा वायू संप्रभिप्रय वर्तन्ते सवाभिषितः।
तथा गृहस्थमात्रिक्ष्य वर्तन्ते सवाआभ्रमा। - Manu.III.77
13. अतस्योननाश्वतेऽन न च विप्रस्तुतः।
यूयं ततो भर्षितः स्वा वै पाणिज्ञानन्नः। - Mbh.अनुशासन.169.60
that the Grhasthāśrama or the state of house-holder is the supreme among the four āśramas, and thus it is the mother of all āśramas.

यथा मातरमाधित्य सर्वं जीवन्ति जन्तुः।
तथा गृहस्थाश्रमं प्रापत्य सर्वं जीवन्ति चार्मः॥

- Mbh.अनुशासन.141.60

A Grhastha or house-holder should render offerings to Gods, Ancestors and Guests. To welcome the Guests is the important dharma of a Grhastha.

गृहस्थानां च सुधोणि नातिनिर्विश्वस्ते परम्॥

- Mbh.अनुशासन.2.44

By performing all these duties, man attains Dharma, Artha and Kāma.

Hindu Dharmasāstras prescribe sacraments both for males and females. All the sacraments prescribed are equally necessary for both of them. But the difference is that in case

14. अत्याशमानं स्वाधिनयुहुद्विनिश्चयः॥ - Mbh.शालि.12.6

15. अश्यवः पितरे देवा मनुयाष्ट्रेव माधवः।
इवात्सचायाविनीयत्वं यथा चैव निबोधने न।
तदा यज्ञेन देवास्त्रं सदास्तिवेदन्यामनुष्यः।
‘ छन्दोदशम यथा नित्यमहान् भुषणः न नित्यः॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.97.5-6

16. पितृवातिष्ठकृतं समारम्बोधं शरयते।
अद्वैते श्री महाराज वषयं केवलं फलं॥ - Mbh.शालि.12.18
of females all the samskaras or the sacraments should be performed silently without the recitation of mantras. But only on the occasion of matrimonial sacrament, vedic mantras were being recited, by the kulapurohitas. Thus, marriage was a woman's first and foremost samskāra performed with vedic mantras. That is why, in the Mahābhārata, Devayāni prays Tapodhana to accept her as his wife with chanting vedic mantras.

All the Hindu smṛtikāras are unanimous so far as the sexual chastity of a lady is concerned. The most liberal Manu also is very particular about this point. He says that it is the bounden duty of a wife to serve her husband unreservedly while he is alive. Even after the husband is dead, she should not think of any other person. This is the characteristic feature of Indian culture.

Mahābhārata considers the love of husband and wife as selfish. A wife attains heaven and commands respect there

17. एवमेनः शाम्य याति बीजगम्बसमूद्रम् ||
   तुष्णीमेतः क्रिया: श्रीणां विभवहस्तु समन्नकः || - Yājñavalkya.1.13

18. स समावृतविषो मां भक्तं भजितमहिति ||
    गृहाण पाणि विविक्षनम मन्त्रपुरस्तुलम् || - Mbh.आदि.77.5

19. यद्यैं दशातिष्ठता स्वेच्छा म्हाता बाजुनुमते पितुः ||
    तं गुरुभेत जीवनं संस्किर्तं च न ववचैत्येत || - Manu.V.151

20. अर्थार्थं जीवलेलकोशं न कस्थित्ति कस्थित्ति प्रिय: ||
    सत्यं सोहर्वं ब्राह्मणोद्धोर्त्ययोभो पत्यस्तसं || - Mbh.शालित्र.138.152
only by serving and nursing her husband. For her, there is no sacrificial ritual to be performed alone and no vow or fast is necessary at all.21

नैव यज्ञिन्यः कार्यिन्य आदुः नोपवासकम्।
या तु भर्तीर्य शुद्धुष्णा तत् र्ववं जयस्वुत॥
- Mbh.वन.205.22-23

A husband should take care of his wife as she is the root cause for happiness, in this world and the world above. Therefore, it is the duty of a man that he should give proper protection to her in as much as she would be served in due manner.22 It is not only the duty of a husband to protect his wife, but it is the duty of the brother, father, kith and kins, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law etc., by providing food, clothes and ornaments as women deserve respect and protection.23

This indicates an exalted position of women.

21. नासित श्रीणां पुण्यपत्रो न वृत्तं नापूणपूर्णम्।
पति शुद्धुष्णेते देन तेन र्ववं महीयते॥ - Manu.V.155
22. लोकान्त्यं दिक्ष: प्रांतिः पुण्यपूर्णप्रियेकैः।
यस्मातः समस्तिः सेव्या: कर्त्तव्यास्तु चुर्विता॥ - Yājñavalkya.1.78
23. भूतः भूतुपपतास्तवतिस्थुलशुद्धदेवी:।
वनुभिन्न बिक्ष: पूज्या भूपणाच्छादनायस्य:॥ - Yājñavalkya.1.82
Kanyādāna:

According to Śrīmad Bhāratīya Dharmaśāstras, the authorised persons to make kanyādāna are the father, grand-father, elder brother, any senior member of the family or the mother. The claim of father in respect of kanyādāna comes first and after him anyone of the above mentioned persons in the absence of the previous one is authorised. If none of them is available, the girl is free to make her own choice of the husband. It is the bounden duty of a father to arrange the marriage ceremony of his daughter at a particular time. Mahābhārata states that the custom of pāṇिग्रहण or kanyādāna is not complete without the custom of samśādhi. The customs of kanyādāna and samśādhi increases the purity of vivāha saṃskāras and the important one among all the other saṃskāras ordained by the Dharmaśāstras.

24. पिता पितामहो भ्राता सकुक्लयो जननी तथा ।
कन्यााः पूव्याः पूर्वकातिष्ठ वरः ततः ॥
अप्रयच्छन्तसमागमौति भूषणहव्यामृतबुद्वति ।
गर्भ क्यों ते दालूणां कन्या कुर्यास्थववर्मवर्म ॥ - Yājñavalkya Smṛti.1.63-64

25. जातमात्रां तु दालव्या कन्यका सद्यसे बरे ।
काले दतासु कन्यासु पिता धर्मेण युज्यते ॥ - Mbh.अनुसारण.22.1

26. मन्त्रेवर्त्तकमभाषा दता चोरकप्यर्कम् ।
पाणिग्रहणमन्त्रावर्ष प्रधितं वर्त्वर्षम ।
न त्वेन निविद्यता निद्धा सत्सपी रम्यता ॥ Mbh.द्वैण.55.15-16
The origin of marriage:

The circumstances in which the institution of marriage originated, conditioned the nature of marriage rituals. The word 'marriage' has a reference to "a union of the male and the female which does not cease with the act of procreation but persists after the birth of offspring until the young are capable of supplying their own needs." 27 The weakness of the female was not responsible for marriage tie, because she was as strong and capable of self-defence as the male. The source of marriage is to be sought for the new-born offspring, which needs both the mother and the father for protection and food during a varying period of time. So, it appears that marriage has its source in the family, rather than the family in marriage. It was the natural desire of woman for adequate protection of her child in its helpless state of infancy that drove her to select a permanent companion in life. The desire for a son, the protection of wife and children, the need of running a home and ideal of domestic facility are duly reflected in the marriage ceremonies.

Evolution of marriage:

The Mahābhārata informs us that Śvetaketu, the son of Uddālaka, established the institution of marriage. The whole

legend is described by Pāṇdu, the father of the Pāṇḍava heroes, to convince his wife Kunti about the righteousness of the custom of niyoga which he wishes her to practice. He said that in ancient times, there were no restrictions on women. They were independent. If the women discarded their husbands and behaved as they pleased, right from their unmarried state, it was not considered irreligious; that indeed was the Dharma. This ancient Dharma is still practiced by the animals and birds who are free from sexual jealousy. The Dharma visualised by the sages still prevails in the uttarakuru. In the land of Uttarakurus\(^28\) and in the city of Māhishmati,\(^29\) the institution of marriage did not exist.

Śvetaketu, the son of Uddālaka, once saw his mother being taken away by force by a brahmin in the presence of his father. But Uddālaka told his son Śvetaketu, not to be angry, as in this world, women of all varṇas are free as cows and other animals are. But Śvetaketu could not tolerate this and established a restriction for human beings. "One man can make love with one woman only. If a woman is unfaithful to her

\(^{28}\) Cf. A.S.Altekar, The position of women in Hindu Civilization, Banarasidas, Delhi, 1938, Page No.29

\(^{29}\) Cf. A.S.Altekar, The position of women in Hindu Civilization, Banarasidas, Delhi, 1938, Page No.29
husband from today onwards, it will be a sin equivalent to the killing of a foetus, bringing happiness to her. A similar sin would be incurred by a husband who transgresses a wife who is faithful to him and virgin at the time of marriage. But if a wife, relied by her husband for the sake of progeny does not obey him, she also incurs the same sin." According to the Mahābhārata, it was the sage Śvetaketu who decreed that promiscuity should be supplanted by regular marriage.30 This

story of Śvetaketu, son of Uddālaka, proves that the ancient people had passed through a stage of society when such union was tolerated. The marriage as described in them was meant to be regular and permanent. The only instance of marriage by periodical contract is found in the story of Urvaśī and Purūravas in the Rgveda (X.59). This form of marriage, however, was not current in the Rgvedic times and must have been a recollection of ancient times when temporary marriages were in vogue.

The sexual relation between men and women in ancient times was not promiscuous. According to Westernmark "It is not of course impossible that among some people, intercourse between the sexes may have been almost promiscuous. But there is not a shred of genuine evidence for the notion that promiscuity even formed a general stage in the history of mankind. Although polygamy occurs among most existing people and polyandry among some, monogamy is for the most common form of human marriage. It was so among the ancient people of whom we have any direct knowledge. Monogamy is the form which is generally recognized and permitted. The greater majority of people are, as a rule, monogamous and other forms of marriages are usually modified in a monogamous direction."31 Almost the same observation is made

by Howard,\textsuperscript{32} on the topic "In a progressive society, monogamy is the natural and usual form of marriage. Other forms of marriage and degradation of retrogression to the primitive conditions. Promiscuity never creates the home, nor engenders those noble sentiments of self-sacrifice, and self denial that have helped to uplift the human race." Hindu culture always celebrates a regular marriage for a life-long companionship.

There are few passages in the Mahābhārata showing that a state of promiscuity may not have been an impossibility at an early period. They disclose an astounding laxity in sexual morality. Šarmištāḥā observes that there is no difference between one's own husband and the husband of a friend.\textsuperscript{33}

Marriage was well established in the vedic age, and it was also regarded as a social and religious duty and necessity. A vedic passage says that a person who is unmarried is unholy.\textsuperscript{34} Marriage opened a new period of holy life which was to be led truly with duty consciousness.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid
\textsuperscript{33} Cf. A.S. Altekar, Position of women in Hindu Civilization, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi, 1938, Page No.-31
\textsuperscript{34} Cf. A.S. Altekar, Position of women in Hindu Civilization, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi, 1938, Page No.-31
\textsuperscript{35} Rg Veda.X,85,24
of youths began to enter the monastery without caring to marry and some maidens like Sulabhā in the Mahābhārata began to follow their example with a view to achieve spiritual salvation.\(^{36}\)

Marriage was made obligatory for girls to prevent abuses. As Upanayana was obligatory for boys, marriage which was its counterpart, ought to be absolutely binding on girls. The Mahābhārata informs us that it was the sage Dirghatamas, who laid it down that women ought never to remain unmarried in future.\(^{37}\) Subhrū was the daughter of Kuṇi who remained unmarried for all her life, practising severe penance.\(^{38}\) At the time of her death, she learnt from Nārada that she could not go to heaven because her body was not consecrated by the sacrament of marriage.\(^{39}\) She announced that she will give half

\(^{36}\) साह हैतरुंकुले जाता मर्वदसति महिषे | 
विनीता मोक्षधातुं चरामयेका मुनिव्रतम् || - Mbh.शति.320.186

\(^{37}\) अपतिनां तु नारायणमयप्रैक्ति पातकम् || - Mbh.आदि.114.36

\(^{38}\) जगाम ब्रिच्छिंद राजन् सत्यप्रेयं कहेवर् ||
सुमुखः सा द्राघ कल्याणी पुण्डरीकिनिभेक्षणा ||
महतो तपसोब्रेण कृत्याभ्रममनिन्दिता ||
उपवासे: पुजयती पितृन, देवांश्च सा पुत्र || - Mbh.शत्य.52.5-6

\(^{39}\) असंस्कृताया: कन्याया: कुतो लोकार्थवानपे ||
परस्तु तु भूतस्मामामिन्दिकोषके भाह्यान्ते ||
तत: परमक्ष प्रांस न तु लोकार्थया जितता: || - Mbh.शत्य.52.12-13
of her penance to the person who marries her.\textsuperscript{40} Then, Gālava prince Śringavat agreed to marry her, but he puts restriction on her that she should stay with him for one night.\textsuperscript{41} She agreed to this and married him, accordingly stayed with him for one night. Thus she enabled herself to go to heaven.\textsuperscript{42} Marriage was made obligatory for girls, but not for boys. This seems to have been the fact that an unmarried woman has to face greater risks in society than an unmarried man.

**Importance of Marriage:**

During ancient period, marriage developed religious consciousness among the people. It became social necessity and also a religious duty for every individual. Marriage was

\begin{verbatim}
40. तदार्दवः धृत्या राजस्वीकृतसंसदिः ॥
तपस्तोधर्म प्रयणकामिः पाणिग्रहणय सतम ॥ - Mbh.शत.52.13-14

41. अष्टि: प्राचु हुन्म्वालाी तमयं चेममञ्जरी।
समयेन त्वाभाँ पाणिः स्वभामिः होभमने ॥
वयेकरात्रेः वर्तवपो ल्या राह सत्यिन ह ०
तथे ता प्रतिभूत्य तस्मी पाणिः ददी तदा ॥ - Mbh.शत.52.15-16

42. तां हत्या गालवः प्रीतो दीपवन्तीमिति श्रीवा।
उवास च क्षणामेकं प्रभाते सार्ववीरव तद् ॥
यस्तवप यमयं विद्र कृंतो में तपस्तं वर ।
तेनोषितामिः भद्रु ते त्वस्तिस तेतरतु ब्रजामप्याम् ॥ - Mbh.शत.52.19-20
\end{verbatim}
regarded as a sacrifice, and one who did not enter the married life was called "one without sacrifice." The Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa says "He indeed, is without sacrifice who has got no wife." It again adds "He himself a half man, the second half is wife." When the theory of three debts evolved, marriage gained greater importance and sanctity, as it was through marriage that one could pay off one's ancestral debt, by producing children.

During the time of Smṛtis, āśrama system was divinely ordained and they prescribed that a man should marry after his student life. According to Manu, "Having spent the first fourth part of his life in the house of his Guru, the second fourth in his own house with his wife, the third part in forests, one should take sanyāsa in the fourth part, casting away every worldly tie." Every individual had to pass through all these
four stages in his life. So, a man who did not marry was held in low scale. According to the Mahābhārata, an unmarried man cannot offer oblations to fire.\(^47\) This shows that marriage was held in high esteem among ancient people and also during Mahābhārata period.

Generally, it has been an admitted fact that सत्व is Dharma and असत्व is Adharma. On the contrary, the Mahābhārata particularises that if we tell lie at the time of settlement of marriage of a girl, or to save one's life, then that असत्व or lie is greater than सत्व or truth.\(^48\) This shows that marriage is an important event in the life of a girl as life is important for a man who is facing death.

**Forms of Marriage :-**

Hindus regarded marriage as a sacred religious union brought about by divine dispersion. It was felt that the mutual vows which the parties took in the presence of Sacred Fire sufficiently emphasised all the points that could possibly have been included in marriage ceremony. The marriage sacrament

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\(^47\) अन्राप्रयोजनायुक्तो न च विग्रहपुरस्कृता:।
युन्म ततो बर्षिता: स्थ मया वै पाण्डुपन्दन्त: ॥ - Mbh.आदि.169.60

\(^48\) प्राणान्ति के विवाहे च वक्तव्यमूच्यतं भवेत्।
अनूपत्तेन भवेत् सत्वं सत्यसत्यनेरुत्तं भवेत् ॥ - Mbh.वन.209.3
united the parties in an indissoluble union, and the husband and the wife each prayed that their love and friendship should be lasting, genuine and indissoluble.

Manu recognised eight forms of marriages for men and women of all the four varṇas, which bring heaven and hell both in *ihaloka* and *paraloka*.

They are Brāhma, Daiva, Ārsha, Prājāpatya, Āsura, Gāndharva, Rākṣasa and Pāiśāca. Among them, Pāiśāca marriage is strictly condemned.

Mahābhārata declares five types of marriages such as Brāhma, Prājāpatya, Gāndharva, Āsura and Rākṣasa. Among these five types of marriages, the first three viz. Brāhma, Prājāpatya and Gāndharva are accepted by Dharma, while the remaining two Āsura and Rākṣasa are considered as Adharma. The first three are fit to be followed. Daiva and Ārsha vivāhas come under Brāhma Vivāha. Rākṣasa Vivāha comes under Pāiśāca. Prājāpatya is also called Ksātra Vivāha.

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49. Manu.III.20

50. Manu.III.21

51. Mbh.3135TTrR.44.9

52. Mbh.3135TTrR.44.10
1) **Brahma Vivaha:**

Inviting the Brähmin bridegroom of good qualities such as education and good character and giving him the daughter in marriage is called Brähma.\(^{53}\)

\[
\text{नामाणां सतामेष ब्रह्मो धर्मी युविहिष्ठर्}
\]
\[
\text{आवामासबेदेवं यो दचादुनक्लुतं।}
\]

- *Mbh.अनुषासन.44.4*

2) **Daiva marriage:**

In Daiva marriage, the girl was given to a (Ritwik) chief priest performing a yajna (sacrifice). It was given this name because the marriage was settled while a sacrifice to Devas (gods) was being performed. But this form of marriage is not approved by the Smṛti writers, as they felt that while a sacrifice to Gods were being offered, neither the sacrificer nor any of his priests should think of secular matters like possible matrimonial alliances. Here, the daughter is given with ornaments, dresses, along with gifts to her, and as Daksīṇā to the bridegroom was the Daiva marriage.\(^{54}\)

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53. अच्छायच चार्चित्वा च श्रुतिश्वयं त्वम्।
आहुम दानं कनयाया ब्रह्मो धर्मं प्रकृतित:। - *Manu.III.27*

54. येषे तु विततं साम्यृतविजे कर्म कुरुविदे।
अलंकृत्वा सुलादानं देयं धर्मं प्रचक्षते। - *Manu.III.28*
3) Ārsā Marriage:

In this form of marriage, the bride's parents gave to the bridegroom a pair of cow and bull.55

4) Prājāpatya Marriage:

In this form of marriage, couple were blessed to stay together following Dharma.56 Here, the father of a girl makes arrangements for marriage.

आवाहमावहेद्वें यो द्वादसुकृत्त: ।
शिष्याः क्षत्रियाः च धर्मं एष समान: ॥

- Mbh.अनुसारण.44.4-5

5) Āsura Marriage:

In Āsura marriage, the guardian of the girl was given money for giving the girl in marriage. Here the husband purchases his wife by paying a reasonble price for her.57

55. एकं गोमियं हे वा बर्तादय धर्म: ।
कन्याप्रदानां विभिन्द्याँ धर्म: स उच्चते ॥ - Manu.III.29

56. सहनी बर्तां धर्ममिति वाचानुमह्य च ।
कन्याप्रदानमंभवं प्राजास्तो विधि: समूह: ॥ - Manu.III.30

57. ज्ञातिभ्यो द्रविण दन्तव कन्यादेय वैव जलित: ।
कन्याप्रदानां स्वाच्छान्यादासुरो धर्मं उच्छते ॥ - Manu.III.31
The Āsura marriage supposes a recognition by society of the fact that woman has a value and has to be paid for it. It therefore, helped in the improvement of the position of women as wife. The average husband became naturally unwilling to ill-treat his wife.

There are a few cases of Āsura marriages recorded in ancient Indian tradition. In vedic times, the custom of the bride purchase was known, but not held in esteem. The son-in-law in such cases was described as Vijāmāta or a disreputable son-in-law.58

In Mahābhārata, Pāndu's marriage with Mādri is an example of Āsura marriage in which Bhiṣma had paid a large sum to Mādri's father Śalya. Śalya was feeling guilty in making the demand and put forward the excuse that it being an old religious custom in his family, he could not avoid it.

58. 3T%r4 ft SfT RMHIc}5cT 5fT V*T I
n . Rg veda.1.109.2
This is clear from the words of Śalya that he recognised this custom as undesirable, though he had not the moral courage to give it up. This indicates that the Āsura marriage, though not banned completely, was out of practice.

In the Mahābhārata, there is another example of Āsura marriage in which the fisherman Dāsarāja demanded that if Santanu wanted to marry Satyavati, the son born to her should be entitled for the kingship.⁵⁹ For this shulka (price) Bhiśma

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⁵⁹. अस्याः जाप्यते य: पुत्रः स राजा पृथिवीपाले ।
लघुर्भमितिषेषतथो नास्यः कर्त्चन पार्थिकः ॥ - Mbh.आदि.100.56
took the vow of celibacy.\textsuperscript{60}

The Āsura marriage was considered as the sale of the daughter and was condemned in general.\textsuperscript{61} However, there are some who considered Āsura form faultless. They held that the money received for the bride should be given to her by her parents or guardians as it was her shulka, and it was an action of kindness towards her. This also was her property as stridhana\textsuperscript{62} (woman's property).

6) Gāndharva Marriage:

In this form of marriage, both the bride and the bridegroom accept to marry each other. The marriage takes place with the desire of both.\textsuperscript{63}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{60} अष्टमृगति मे दासा प्रशस्त्वर्नभविष्यति
    
    अनुस्मरणी मे लोका भविष्यन्त्यक्षया विदि \textsuperscript{॥} - Mbh.आदि.100.96
  
  \item \textsuperscript{61} प्रसिद्ध भाषितों दाने नैषां प्रत्यायकं दुन: \textsuperscript{॥}
    
    ये मन्यते क्रों शुल्कं न ते धर्मविदो नत्त्र: \textsuperscript{॥}
    
    न चैतेश्य: प्रदत्तत्वा न वोऽया तथाविधा \textsuperscript{॥}
    
    न श्रेष्ठ भार्या क्रेश्या न विक्रया कथंपं \textsuperscript{॥} - Mbh.अनुशासन.44.45-46
  
  \item \textsuperscript{62} प्राचेतस्य वचनं कीर्तायन्ति पुरुविवद: \textsuperscript{॥}
    
    वर्तम: क्षिप्रियादत्ते ज्ञातत्त्वो न स क्रिया: \textsuperscript{॥}
    
    अर्हं तत्तुमार्जिणांमानृशर्तोत्तरतं तत: \textsuperscript{॥}
    
    सर्व च प्रतिपद्यं स्वस्य क्षणां यद्वक्षत: \textsuperscript{॥} - Mbh.अनुशासन.46.1-2
  
  \item \textsuperscript{63} इच्छायायोथ्यंसंयोगं क्षणपारं सर्वच च \textsuperscript{॥}
    
    नान्यत: स तु क्षिप्रियो मेधुम: कामसंभव: \textsuperscript{॥} - Manu.III.32
\end{itemize}
In this form of marriage, it was not the parents of the girl who settled the marriage, but both the bride and the bridegroom approached each other and settled the marriage among themselves. This is a pure and simple love-marriage. From the vedic age, the Gandharvas were well-known. Atharva Veda suggests that parents usually encouraged their daughters in being forward in love affairs by giving them freedom in selection of their lovers. Mothers of such daughters thought that their daughters would win a husband for her, as they were grown-up. In the same vedic text, Gandharva husbands are actually mentioned.

The Mahābhārata incurs the Gandharva union within the group of approved marriages. Some thinkers approved that love unions ought to be commended, as they pre-suppose reciprocal attachment. Later writers disapprove both the Gandharva marriage and the self-choice by the bride

64. आ नो अन्ये तुम्हारै संभले गमेदियां कुमारिणि सह नो भयेन ||
   जुस्ता वरेयु समनेयु वल्लुनों पत्नया सीमणावल्लरये ॥ - Atharva Veda.II.36

65. जाया इद्यो अप्सरस्तो गण्यां: पतियो युध्यम् ॥ - Atharva Veda.VI.37.12
(swayamvara). In the Mahābhārata, Kanva the faster father of Śākuntala, says that it is the best marriage though it is performed without religious ceremonies. Because, here the marriage happens between the man and woman who desired each other.

क्षत्रियस्य हि गान्धर्वस्य विवाहः श्रेष्ठ उच्चते ।
सकामयाः सकामेन निर्मित्रो रहसिस्य स्मृतः ॥

- Mbh.आदि.73.27

Duṣyanta is also of the same opinion that Gāndharva form of marriage is the supreme among all other forms.

गान्धर्वण च मां भीर विवाहेनेहि सुन्दरी ।
विवाहानां हि समाहृत गान्धर्वः श्रेष्ठ उच्चते ॥

- Mbh.आदि.73.4

In early times, when brides were 16 or 17, at the time of their marriage, they had a more or less effective voice in the selection of their life partners. The beautiful brides selected their own husbands. Kṣatriya circles in society even conceded to grown-up brides, the exclusive right of selecting their own consorts, as is proved by the custom of swayamvara or self-choice.

The selection of husbands in cases of women like Draupati depended not upon their choice, but upon the ability of suitor to satisfy, the specific conditions previously laid
down by her father Drupada. Very often it resulted in the bride being married to a person she did not like. This happened in the case of Ambā, who was carried away by Bhiṣma for Vichitravirya much against her own wish. Ambā was in love with Sālva. She is seeing cursing her father for making her to Viryaśulkā, liable to be carried away by anybody who possessed the necessary valour. Ambā felt bitterly on the point and states that a lot of viryaśulkā maiden is none better than that of a prostitute, who has to offer herself to every customer. Mahābhārata states that a woman has the right to choose her husband whom she desires. Before marriage she is called as कन्या. The word कन्या is derived from the root कम्, which means desire. As she can choose freely any of the men whom she desired as her husband in the swayamvara hall, she is called कन्या.

The love-marriages were arranged by the parties themselves. It was not the father, or the mother, but the bride

66. Explained under 'Polyandry'
67. मया शात्यपरिति: पूर्व मनसाभिषृतो वरः ।
   तेन चालिस वृत्ता पूर्व रहत्यविदते पितु: ॥ - Mbh.उ.प्र.174.6
68. श्रीमीपम थिन्ह च मे मन्दि पिताम मुख्यंतसम् ।
   वेनाहि वीर्यशुच्येन पण्यस्वीर प्रचोदिता ॥ - Mbh.उ.प्र.175.31
69. सवान्तां कामयते वर्मातु कमेधर्थस्वच्छ भाविनि ।
   तत्सातो कन्येष सुभोणि स्वतन्त्रा वर्षापिनि ॥ - Mbh.वन.307.13
herself who had the right of giving herself away in marriage. Here, we can refer to the arguments of Dusyanta and Śakuntala\(^{70}\) and Surya and Kunti\(^{71}\) when trying to win them over.

7) **Rākṣasa Marriage** :

In this form of marriage, the girl was carried away forcibly.\(^{72}\)

\[
\text{हत्त्वा चित्त्वा च शीर्षाणि स्वतं स्वतीं गृहात्।}
\text{प्रसद्ध हल्यं तात राक्षसो विचित्रणे।}
\]

- *Mbh.अनुशासन.44.8*

This is also called as the Kṣātra marriage. It takes us to pre-historic times when women were regarded as prizes of war. The Rākṣasa marriage is called as the Kṣātra marriage as it was common among Kṣatriyas. The reason for this is that only Kṣatriyas were allowed to participate in wars and get the war-prizes as a sign of their victory. Thus it is clear that

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70. आत्मना बन्धुरामेव गतिरामेव चातमनः।
   आत्मनो मित्रमातैव तथा तस्मा चातमनः पिता॥
   आत्मनेत्रात्मनो दानं कर्तुमहिसिध्य मर्यादा॥  - *Mbh.अदि.73.7*

71. न ते पिता न ते माता गुरुः वा शुचिकिष्ठे।
   प्रभवनि वसारोहे भद्रं ते श्रुणे मे वचः॥  - *Mbh.वन.307.12*

72. हत्त्वा खित्त्वा च भित्त्वा च क्रोशात्तीं स्वतीं गृहात्।
   प्रसद्ध कन्याहलो राक्षसो विचित्रणे॥  - *Manu.III.33*
Rākṣasa form of marriage was mainly recommended for the Kṣatriyas. In this marriage, the victor carried away the bride and married her. The fight was necessary because, it was regarded as a point of honour for a warrior that he should have for his wife a woman, whom he could point out as a trophy of war. This point has been emphasised by Śri Krṣṇa when he proceeded to appease the anger of Baladeva and justify the conduct of Arjuna in forcibly carrying away Subhadrā, who though fallen in love with Arjuna, was about to be married to a son of Dhṛtarāstra. Arjuna says Śri Krṣṇa that he did not like Brāhma marriage, because, brides were treated there as the objects of gift like cattle. Purchase of bride, being disreputable procedure, was out of question. Since Subhadrā had fallen in love with him, to carry her away relying upon the power of his own arms was the only honourable course left open for Arjuna."73 This argument gives a good glimpse of the warrior mentality, which favoured the kṣātra marriage.

It is learnt from Mahābhārata that Bhiṣma defeated the king of Kāsi and carried away his daughter Ambā as a bride.

73. प्रदानमयो नन्दनाः पशुकुलकोट्जुम्मन्यते।
विक्रभयं चाष्यापंतयं कः कुर्यात्पुरो मुखः।।
एतत्त्वोपांस्तु कौलेश्वरों श्रद्धाविवरणेऽपि मतिः।।
अतः प्रत्याः हल्लवाक्न्यां भ्रमणं भाष्यः।। - Mbh.आदि.220.4-5
for his brother Vichitravirya. This procedure of Bhīṣma has been later condemned in the epic by Śiṣupāla.

In the Mahābhārata, Bhīṣma brought Kāsi princess Ambā from the swayamvara hall forcibly when she was crying. This is an example of Rākṣasa marriage as Ambā was not willing to go with Bhīṣma as she was already in love with the king Šalya.

In this form of marriage, like Ambā, many women faced difficulties.

8) Paisācha Marriage:

According to Manu Smṛti, in this type of marriage, the man cohabits with a girl when she is sleepy or intoxicated.74

74. सुसां मतां ग्रहातो वा रही यज्ञोपवर्षिनवति ||

- Manu.III.34
The girl lying unconscious was taken away for marriage. In this form of marriage, the bride is either duped very often by making her over drink or physically over powered by the bridegroom in order to make her yield to his passion.

With the above discussion, it is clear that there is no mention of swayamvara in the list of approved and unapproved forms of marriage. But this was very common among royal families. It is seen that swayamvara is similar to Rākṣasa form of marriage, as both are recommended for Kṣatriyas. That is why in Draupadi's swayamvara, the kings assembled there objected Arjuna, disguised as a Brāhmaṇa, taking part in swayamvara.75 Swayamvara was the monopoly of royal families and assured the form of a grand festival in which the invitees were introduced to the maiden by describing their names, family, qualities, bravery etc. and the girl chose one of them by garlanding him. Kunti's marriage with Pāṇdu is an example of swayamvara. Kunti's father Kuntibhoja invited kings to swayamvara to marry his daughter.76

75. अस्मान्मर्तिन्द्रम्युदीयृक्त्यं च संगतार् ।
   दातुसैयायिद्विप्राय त्रीणिवीयो योऽविवा वराम् ॥
   अवरोपेयस्वस्तुस्कुचो निपायते ।
   निहाृमेनुदातिकमुने योस्तवस्तम् न मन्यते ॥ - Mbh.आदि.188.2-3
76. तत: सा कुलिनिमोजेन राजास्यायुष्याय नराधिपान् ।
    पित्रा त्वैंकरे तता कुहिता राजसत्य ॥ - Mbh.आदि.111.3
But Kunti choose Pāndu among all other kings by garlanding him. Then her father gave Kunti in marriage with Pāndu. This shows that in swayamvara the marriage took place with the consent of bride and the marriage was arranged by her father. This form is continued in the classical Sanskrit literature.

But sometimes, some difficult condition was announced by the guardian of the girl for the invitees, and the one who won the competition, or one who, on his strength, carried her away defeating all others. The girl had no choice in this, as happened in case of Kāshi princesses Ambā, Ambikā and Ambālika, where Bhiśma carried them forcibly from the swayamvara hall. The brides were called Viryaśulka (price for valour).

In the Mahābhārata, Kṛṣṇa told that only one type of swayamvara was recommended for Kṣatriyas. As women did not have stable mind, she could be carried away by man before swayamvara because, she could change her decision and choose someone in the swayamvara hall. By saying this, Kṛṣṇa

77. snsr fnft tut:

78. cTT W cET I - Mbh.3TTfo 111.8-9

77. भ्रीमाना स्रजं कुत्ती राहः स्कन्धे समासतजत् ।
    तं निशाम्य वृत्तं पाण्डु कुत्त्वा सबे न्यापितः ॥
    यथागतं समाजमुरुण्डेद्रवी रवैरस्यं ।
    तत्स्तत्त्वम् पिला राजन् विवाहमुकतेऽपि प्रभुः ॥ - Mbh.आदि.111.8-9

78. शीर्षयुक्तकाशं ता ज्ञात्त्वा समारोह्य रथं तदा । - Mbh.उपोग.173.14
advised Arjuna to take her sister Subhadrā before swayamvara. Another speciality of swayamvara was not only the marriageable person but any other person could participate in the competition on his behalf as Bhiśma did for his brother Vichitravirya and carried away three Kāśi princesses. Bhiśma at the time of swayamvara of Kāśi princesses Ambā, Ambikā and Ambālikā, declared that swayamvara was praised by the ksatriyas. They participated in this because, they wanted to defeat the other kings and gain victory.

It is seen that in case of the four approved forms of marriages, viz.: Brāhma, Daiva, Prājāpatya and Ārśa, the union is completed from the religious point of view by bringing about the change in the Gotra of the bride at the end of Saptapadi ritual. But in Gāndharva marriage, the religious

79. स्वयंवरं: कृत्रिमयां विवाहः पुलशम ।
स च संशापि: पार्थ स्वभावर्यानिनित्ततः ||
प्रसाह हरणं चापि कृत्रिमयां प्रशस्यते ||
विवाहस्तु: प्रशस्यमिति धर्मविदो विदु: ||
स त्वमदु:न कल्याणं प्रसाह भगिनीं मम ।
हर स्वयंवरेः चार्यः: को वै वेद विक्रीरितम् ॥ - Mbh.आदि.218.21-23

80. इम: काशिपते: कन्या मया निर्जीवस्य पारिवारः
विविधविर्यप्य कृते चिरसौल्का हत्ता यति || - Mbh.उद्योग.174.2

81. स्वयंवरं तु राजनय: प्रश्नसत्यपालिन्ते च ।
प्रसाह तु हतामहुर्ग्ययस्तीथर्मवादिनः ॥ - Mbh.आदि.102.16
ceremonies are not important. But even then it is praised and approved by the Smṛtis as importance is given to the desire of the bride and the bridegroom. A marriage can become happy if the marriage took place between the bride and bridegroom who desired each other.

The ceremony of marriage prevalent now a days among the Hindus is the Brāhma form of marriage, which is the best and has the sanction of scriptures behind it. Respect for this marriage is naturally entertained by every Hindu heart. The chanting of Vedic mantras while offering oblations to fire, imparting of instruction to the bride and the bridegroom and the process of seven steps while taking marriage vows, these ceremonies embody the great deal of Hindu culture. According to our Hindu religion, the practice of devotion to one wife by the husband, and to one husband by the wife is the supreme ideal.

**Stri-dhana:**

Stri-dhana is women's special property. Movable properties like ornaments, jewellery and other costly items were considered as stridhana.

Stri-dhana was vitally connected with the custom of bride-price (dowry). This is affectionately given to the bride by her parents. If she died leaving some children behind, her father would not object to the property as they were also his grand
children. If daughter left no issue behind, her father would claim the property back from the son-in-law, who was expected to think of a fresh marriage in due course. According to Smṛti writers in case of Āsura form of marriage, where bride price to be paid by the husband would be repaid to her parents or brothers, if she left no issues behind.82 Even when no bride-price was paid, the bride used to receive some wedding gifts in the vedic age. The term Pāriṇāhya was used to denote them and the vedic texts declare that the wife was to be their owner.83 Women were allowed to own stridhana as it consisted of the ornaments and clothes worn on auspicious occasions by women alone. Men could have utilised them only by selling them at the time of financial crisis. Hence, it was used as Āpadadhana, or emergency fund. Smṛti texts declare that wives, sons and slaves could own no property; whatever they acquired would be their personal property.84 Manu is the earliest writer to give a comprehensive description of Stridhana. He provided as much protection to the women as any civilised society can do even in the modern age. He opposed the selling of daughter and provides full rights to the women.

82. अग्रजवींद्रः भट्टवर्गादिपु चतुर्यसि।
       दद्हित्राण प्रसूता चेच्चेचेशु पितुगमस्तु।। - Yājñavalkya.II.145

83. पत्नी वै पारीणास्य ईश ई। - T.S.VI.2.1.1

84. भार्या पुत्रव्य दासवाल्च नय एवाधनः स्मृतः।
       यस्य समाधिग्रहन्ति यत्ये तत्स्य तद्भनन्।। - Manu.VIII.416
to have their property independently. He says that if somebody takes her property during her life-time, that person will go to hell.\(^85\) He further said that every member of the society must provide protection to an issueless lady without any male protector.\(^86\) Because of this, peace might have prevailed in the society. Manu recognises six varieties of stridhana. 1) Whatever she gets from her parents, 2) Whatever she gets from her parents at the time of departing from her parental home, 3) Gifts from the husband, 4) After marriage, gift from the father, 5) Gift from the mother, 6) Gifts from the brothers on different occasions.\(^87\) Manu opines that nobody should deprive women of these presents after their husbands' death.\(^88\) Early Smṛti writers were not prepared to sanction the powers over stri-dhana to women. Manu declares that, a wife ought

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85. संबन्धी से तु तासा ये तदर्युः स्वचालनः।
तासा तिष्ठानां इति धार्मिकः पृथ्वीपारः। - Manu.VIII.29

86. वराहादुःस्तु चैव स्वदैश्यं निकुलतुः च।
परित्रापतु च श्रीपु विधवास्तुतुरतुः च॥ - Manu.VIII.28

87. अमयन्यायन्यायवहनिः दस्तां च प्रीतिकर्षणः।
प्राश्मायित्वनामसं पद्मिन्यं स्वर्णं स्मृतम्॥ - Manu.IX.194

88. शीलानां तु से मोहादुःस्त्रीविलित माणवः।
नारीनां वस्तुं वा ते पापा वान्यवोगतिम्॥ - Manu.III.52

पन्थिः जीवितः यः स्मीठिरकारी भृती भवेत्।
न ते भलौस्त्रावादा भजनानः प्रतिति ते॥ - Manu.IX.200
not to alienate even her own property without her husband's sanction.  

In course of time, however, gifts given by the husband during the married life came to be included in stri-dhana. Husband's usual expectation was that the property should pass on to his sons after the death of the wife. Manu, therefore, felt that the most equitable course was to allow both the sons and the daughters to inherit the stridhana of their mothers. But Mahābhārata allows only daughter to inherit her mother's property (stridhana). Mahābhārata allows a son to inherit his father's property. But it says that both daughter and son are of equal importance. Inspite of this, a daughter has no right in her father's property when his son is there.
Smṛtis have laid down that any income, which a wife will acquire by her own exertions, will not be her stri-dhana, but will be emerged in the general income of the family. However, now-a-days, circumstances have changed. Today, women are educated and earn as a teacher, professor, scientist, lawyer, police officer or as a pilot etc. Even the uneducated women work as labourers in various fields and earn. Such earnings should be regarded as her own property. It should be left entirely to the wife. She should have the full freedom in spending this money as per her will and wish. Hence women in modern society have developed their own identity and achieved success in every field at par with men.

Polyandry:

Polyandry is a form of marriage where one woman marries more than one man at a time. This can be termed as कहुपतित्व.

The custom of polyandry was practically unknown in Hindu society. In the vedic marriage hymn, Sūryā is married to Aśvins; the latter, however, are not two persons but a twin deity. The marriage of lady Rodasi (sky) with maruts (storm-gods) is figurative. It is intended to show the close

93. आत्मा प्रार्थना युज्मां युज्मान: शुभे निर्मितां विद्रेः पन्नाम्।
अर्कों यद्व वा मरसोऽहिन्यान गायद्व गायसंसोऽदिवस्यस्य:। - Rg.Veda.1.167.6
connection between the sky and the storm. There are some vedic passages in vedic literature where the wife is mentioned in connection with husbands in plural.\textsuperscript{94} In the later vedic literature, it is pointed out in several places how polyandry is not permissible, though polygamy is legal.\textsuperscript{95}

According to Iravati Karve, the word 'Devar' (younger brother of the husband) derived from the root 'div' to play, signifies the relationship between the younger brother of the husband (devṛ) and the wife of the elder brother with whom he is in terms of playing and joking.\textsuperscript{96} Upādhyāya is also of the same opinion, for he suggests that devar was not only looked upon as a possible husband after the death or during the absence of his brother. But what is even more important is that, he is looked upon as a second husband even during his brother's life time.\textsuperscript{97} Thus, polyandry seems to be a feature of ancient vedic culture.

\textsuperscript{94} Puṣṭ: पति:पतियो जायं दा अशे प्रजया सह || - Rg.Veda.X.85.38

स्यों पति:पतियो बहुः कृष्ण त्वम् || - Atharva Veda.XIV.1.61

\textsuperscript{95} यात्राणां रसाणूर्यूपोऽ: परिवर्यति तत्मालेका भी पति विन्दते || - T.S.6,4,3

also Cf. A.Br.III.23

\textsuperscript{96} Cf. Dhairyabāla P. Vora, Evolution of morals in the Epics, G.R.Bhatkal, Bombay, 1959, Page No.14

\textsuperscript{97} Ibid Page No.14
According to Prof. Macdonell and Keith: "Polyandry is foreign to the Vedas, as there is no passage containing any clear reference to such a custom."\(^{98}\)

Śmṛtis nowhere contemplate the possibility of polyandry, when they discuss the rules of marriage. It is only in the Mahābhārata and some purāṇas that we come across a few stray cases of polyandry. The most well-known case is that of Draupadi, who was married to the five pāṇḍava brothers. Pāncāli was born in the palace of Drupada, king of Pāncāla. She had a brother named Dhrṣṭadyumna. Droṇa insulted Drupada his classmate in the Gurukula. As a result, Drupada kept in mind the insult and decided to take revenge by defeating Droṇa in a battle. Brāhmīns advised Drupada to conduct yāga for that purpose. He decided to conduct one yāga on a large scale and went about in search of a Yajvā (one who performs sacrifices according to vedic rites) and reached Kalmāśapuri on the banks of the river Gangā. There, he saw a brāhmin's house where lived two sages Yāja and Upayāja. Drupada went to Yāja and after serving him, Drupada promised to give him much wealth for the yāga to be

\(^{98}\) Cf. Macdonell and Keith, Vedic Index, Vol.I. P.479
performed by him. 99 Yāja was ready to perform the Yajña. The
Yaga was successfully conducted and at the end, the priest
Yaja called the wife of Drupada and gave her havya 100
(clarified butter). Because the havya was prepared by Yāja and
was offered by Upayāja the sages said that the queen would
get two children. While Yāja was offering oblations to the
sacrificial fire a boy with a crown on his head and bearing
a sword and a bow in his hands rose from the fire. The ṛṣis
present there then said that, that boy would kill Droṇa. He was
named Dhṛstadyumna. 101 Then from the dias of the Yāga-fire
emerged a beautiful lady of dazzling brilliance, who came to
be known as Pāncāli. 102 It seems that Goddess Durgā herself

99. अयुतानि ददान्यधि गवं याजय मां विभो।

   द्रोणवर्तियसंतत्त प्रहादवित्तमि वर्षस्य ॥ - Mbh.आदि.166.22

   तद्व कर्म कुरु मे याज वितरमभुदं ग्याम॥

   तथेष्युक्ता तु तं प्रासयार्थभुक्तपत् ॥ - Mbh.आदि.166.31

100. याजस्तु हवनस्यान्ले देवीमातपत् तदा।

   प्रेति मां राजिः पुष्पति मिथुनेन त्वामपरस्यतम॥ - Mbh.आदि.166.36

101. भयभो राजपुत्रा पार्शलानां वशारकः।

   हर्षविद्वात्तत्सत्तति नेव नेव वसुन्धरा ॥

   राजा तोऽकाशो जात एष द्रोणवर्तिः कै॥

   हत्युस्माच महद्व-भुतमवः संयूज्ञं तदा॥ - Mbh.आदि.166.42-43

102. कुमारी चापि पार्शली देविमातात समधिषच।

   सुभागा दस्तनीयाहि स्वतितायतलोचना ॥ - Mbh.आदि.166.44
took birth again in the form of Pāncāli. According to the voice heard from the heaven, that lady came to be known as Kṛṣṇā and was born to destroy the Kṣatriyas. She would work on the side of God and will cause terror to the Kauravas.

The topic of the marriage of Draupadi is first introduced by the Epic writers in the beginning of the Caitra-Ratna parva of the Ādi parva. After killing the rākṣasa Baka, the Pāṇḍavas stayed with a certain Brāhmaṇ at Ekacakra-pura. That brahmin spoke of the forthcoming swayamvara of the daughter of the king Drupada. Vyāsa, the divine sage came to Pāṇḍava's abode in Ekacakra-pura and told them the story of Draupadi's life before her birth. He said that Draupadi was a daughter of a sage and was beautiful and virtuous. But she was unable to

103. मानुषेण विचारं कृत्वा राजादासमार्गिणी 
 नीलोत्पलसमे गण्धरे यस्य: कोशात् प्रशाश्वति || - Mbh.आदि.166.46

104. तां चापि जातं सुश्रुषाणि बायुवाचाचरीरिणी 
 सर्वायोपिद्वरा कृष्णा निन्दे: अविधायान् कश्चयम् || - Mbh.आदि.166.48

105. शुचिकाष्ठियं काले करिष्यति सुमध्यमा 
 अर्था हेतो: कौरवाण्यं महदुपत्त्यते भयम् || - Mbh.आदि.166.49

106. शुचिः पुरुषोहितेनोऽक्र श्रवणेऽप्रक्तिमानस्तदा 
 शोष्यात्तस्मि नरस्त्रीयवातु स्वयंवरस् || 
 पुराणसे तु तोहिण्या शुचिक्षे दुस्मने धीरी 
 दिवसे: प्रभससत्त्य भविष्यति स्वयंवर: || - Mbh.आदि.166.57
find a husband due to her actions of her previous life (purvakarma). Through strict penance, she pleased Lord Sankara. Lord Sankara wished to grant her a boon. "I desire a husband who is virtuous" was the boon asked for again and again. So, Lord said that she will get five husbands in her next birth as she asked the boon of a husband five times.

पुनररावशब्देन देव इर्दं वचनमुत्तमम्।
पक्षकृत्वस्त्वया हुक्तः पति देहीतवहं पुनः॥
- Mbh.आदि.168.13

That girl is reborn as Drupada's daughter Kṛṣṇā. By narrating this heroic event of Draupadi, Vyāsa induces the Pāṇḍavas to visit the Pāṇcāla country as suitable persons to

107. आसीति तथोबने काचिद्येशः कन्या महात्मनः।
विवस्मच्च युधिष्ठिरः सर्वदुर्मुक्तिः॥
कर्मभिः स्वकृतः सा तु दुर्मुक्त समपचताः।
नाथ्यस्मिन भूतः पति सा तु कन्या रूपवती सम्यक॥ - Mbh.आदि.168.6.7

108. तत्स्तत्तमुग्रेः पत्यथमुग्रेः ततः।
तोपुम्भास तपेऽसा सा किलोग्ग्रेष शचवशः॥ - Mbh.आदि.168.8

109. तत्स्तत्तमुग्रेः पत्यथमुग्रेः ततः।
वर्गं वर्गं भूतः ते कर्त्तव्यत्वमीति शङ्कः॥ - Mbh.आदि.168.9

110. अभेद्यस्तमुग्रेः शनात्मनः सा वचो हितम्।
पति सर्वगुणोपेतामिच्छामीति पुनः॥ - Mbh.आदि.168.10
marry Kṛśṇa whose marriage with them was almost pre-determined.\textsuperscript{111}

Pāṇḍavas went to the city of Pāncāla and took their abode in the house of a potter. They all were disguised as brāhmins. In the swayamvara hall, Drupada had placed a mighty steel bow. The king announced that his daughter would be given in marriage to him, who bent the steel bow and with it shot an arrow, through the central aperture of a revolving disc, at a target placed above.

\begin{verse}
\textit{इद्य सत्यं धनुः कृत्तिच सजोरेमिव सायके: ।
अतीत्व वक्ष्यं यो वेक्षा स स्वयं मत्तुतामिति ॥
- Mbh.आदि.184.11}
\end{verse}

Then Dhrṣṭadyumna, brother of Pāncāli announced that he who sends five arrows in succession through the hole in the wheel and unerringly hits the target shall win his sister.\textsuperscript{112}

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textbf{111.} निर्दिष्ठा भवते पत्नी कृणा पार्श्विनिन्दिता ।
\quad पाशालबन्धे तर्मासियस्यं महाबले: ।
\quad सुक्ष्मनस्तमुभव्य भविष्यथ न संशय: ॥ - Mbh.आदि.168.15
\item \textbf{112.} इदं भुनुलक्ष्यन्मे च बाणा: ।
\quad श्रुणवन्तु मे भूपतय: समेता: ।
\quad छिद्रिणं यन्त्रस्य समर्पयत्र शरी: शालिप्य्यम्चर्चिद्याची: ॥
\quad एतंहदूत करति यो दै कुलेन रूपेण बलेन युतः: ।
\quad तस्याच भार्यां मनोहरी ममेयं कृणा भविष्यमि न मृष्णम ब्रजामि ॥ - Mbh.आदि.184.35-36
\end{enumerate}
Many noted princes including the Kauravas failed to string the bow. It was too heavy and stiff for them. Then, Arjuna, disguised as a brähmin strung the bow with ease and hit at the target.

\[
\text{अर्जुनो धनुशोध्यासो स्थितो गिरिरीवाचलः।}
\]
\[
\text{s tād dhanu: परिक्रम्य प्रदक्षिणमधाकरोऽत्॥}
\]
\[
\text{प्रणाम्य शिरसा देवीमहानं बरंद प्रभुमं।}
\]
\[
\text{कृष्णं च मनसा कृत्वा जगृहे चार्जुनो धनुः॥}
\]
\[
\text{मर्त्यार्थिवे नवमुनीथव्रे: राधेयदुर्वधनस्थलव्यालः।}
\]
\[
\text{तद्रुपद्वश्यं न स न च सत्यं महतोश्च यत्नात॥}
\]
\[
\text{तद्रुपद्वश्यं न सत्यं महतोश्च यत्नात॥}
\]
\[
\text{सज्ज्यं च चक्रे निधिष्ठात रांगावं जग्राह दशार्थसंस्थवन॥}
\]
\[
\text{विन्याध लक्ष्यं निषपात तथ छिद्रेणं भूसिः सहसातिविद्रम्।}
\]
\[
\text{ततोस्नतिरिसे बभूष नाद माजमध्येय च महान् निनादः।}
\]

- Mbh.आदि.187.17-21

Thus, Arjuna won Draupadi in the swayamvara. Draupadi accepted Arjuna as her husband and all the Pāndavās went with her to their hut in sheer joy and called out for their mother Kunti to see the wonderful alms (bhikṣā) they had brought that day. Their mother who was inside the hut without even giving a look to what was described as bhikṣā, told them to

\[
113. गत्वा तु तां भार्षकर्मशालां पार्थे पृथ्वी प्राणे महानुभाव।
\]
\[
\text{तां च|कः लेनी परमप्रतीति भिक्षोपद्यत्तं नाश्य।}
\]

- Mbh.आदि.190.1
divide it in equal proportions and enjoy it. Kunti was pained to find her well-meant direction should result in a polyandrous marriage. Realising her mistake, Kunti went to Yudhiṣṭhira and asked him to find out a way. Kunti's request clearly indicates that she also considers the custom of polyandry as adharma indicating an absence of such a tradition in those days.

Yudhiṣṭhira acted as if he had not heard Kunti's speech and turned to Arjuna and asks him to get married to Kṛṣṇā because she was his prize. But Arjuna was reluctant to get married prior to his elder brother and to act sinfully according

114. कृष्णानां को मया भाषितमित्रयुवाच || - Mbh.आदि.190.2

115. इत्येतु कन्या दुष्पदत्र राजः ||

116. त्वथ जिता फल्गुन यहोऽनी || - Mbh.आदि.190.7
to the belief of those days.\textsuperscript{117} Yudhiṣṭhira proposed her marriage with all the five brothers seeing that all were attracted by her.\textsuperscript{118} In defence of his action, he put forth that obedience to the mother was the most meritorious duty and cited the example of Jatila\textsuperscript{119} of ancient times and said that they should follow the example of their ancestors.

Drupada was shocked to hear this proposal\textsuperscript{120} which according to him was against popular custom\textsuperscript{121} as well as the

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{117} मां भर्त्रयमायणामं
कृष्णा न भर्त्रयमायणामं
भवानु मित्रवेशः प्रथमं ततोऽयं
भौमो महावशुरविश्वयमाः ¶
अह ततो नकुलोऽन्नतरं मे
पश्चात्य सहदेवसतवी
कुकोटोशं च वमी च राज-
-निष्यं च कन्या भवते निमोजनः ¶ \textsuperscript{2} - Mbh.आदि.190.8-9

\textsuperscript{118} अर्थव्यतर सहितता भागुन्तु मित्रोमेवदभाववृपः ¶
खब्रेष्ठां त्रिपती भाप्या भविष्यति हि न: शुभा ¶ - Mbh.आदि.190.16

\textsuperscript{119} भूयते हि युरारोदपि रक्तत्वा नाम गौतमी ¶
अंतिन्या सिंहवत रत्न धर्ममृताः वरा ¶ - Mbh.आदि.195.14

\textsuperscript{120} खब्रेष्ठां महीपुर भाप्युन्त्र त्रिपती नो भविष्यति ¶
एवं प्रभावतं पूर्वं नम मात्रा विशापते ¶ - Mbh.आदि.194.23

\textsuperscript{121} एवं: न: ममायो भाप्युन्त्र रत्नस्व सह भोजनम् ¶
एवं: तं हातुमिच्छाम: समयं राजस्वम् ¶ - Mbh.आदि.194.25
\end{flushleft}
vedas and said that such an action would be an adharma. He reproached Yudhiṣṭhira saying that he should not even think that way. "A man could marry more than one wife but not so a woman."

एकर्ष्य बहुर विहिता महिष्यः कुलनन्दन।
नैकर्ष्यः बहुः दुःस्थः भूखते पतनः क्षतिल।

- Mbh.आदि.194.27

Drupada was willing to give Draupadi in marriage to any one of the five brothers of Pāṇḍavas, but not all of them. But Yudhiṣṭhira justified it only on the convenient excuse of family tradition. Then sage Vyāsa assured him and narrated a boon from Śankara in Draupadi's previous birth and convinced him that Draupadis' marriage was ordained by God. Thus, Drupada, on seeing all this, was fully convinced that there was nothing objectionable in bestowing Draupadi on all the five brothers. It was added by Vyāsa that Draupadi would regain

122. अधर्मोऽयं मम मलो विद्वद्वो लोचनेद्योः।
      न खेका विषते पर्मी बहुतं विन्जस्तम॥ - Mbh.आदि.195.7

123. सूक्ष्मो भर्मो महाराज नात्मिको वषं गतित॥
      पूर्वामानपूर्व्य्य यातं वर्त्तमानुयमहे॥ - Mbh.आदि.194.29

124. पद्मानं विहिता पर्मी कृष्णं पार्ष्टव्यनिन्दिता। - Mbh.आदि.196.51
virginity after each marriage. It is thus clearly seen that Vyāsa satisfied Drupada only by miracle and tale-telling.

Nārada, who was present there, advised that Draupadi should be the wife of one brother only for one year turn by turn, and during that if someone else disturbed their privacy, he had to undergo an exile, for twelve years as later Arjuna had to do.

The Ādi parva refers to the polyandrous marriage of Draupadi as inhuman. So does Karna in sabhāparva, where he refers to Draupadi as a harlot serving five men at a time.
Thus, the fact that Draupadi’s marriage is rather an exception than a rule. Polyandry as an institution is absolutely out-dated and not only that but even the idea of polyandry is shocking.

According to Mārkandeya Purāṇa, all the five brothers were born as a fraction of Indra and they were representatives of Indra only. The Mārkandeya Purāṇa says that very often there was a war between gods and demons and it was customary with the gods to incarnate themselves on the earth in the human form. It was really the splendour of Indra which Dharmarāja established in the womb of Kunti. Then again the wind-god put the same essence from Indra in the womb of Kunti and Bhima was born. Indra incarnated himself in the form of Arjuna with the half of his potency. The Aśvini Kumāras put the same potency of Indra in the womb of Mādri and the twin brothers Nakula and Sahadeva took birth from Mādri. So, really speaking, all the five brothers were one and the same and Draupadi, who was an incarnation of Sachi, was married only to Indra and nobody else. According to this Purāṇa, Kunti had all the five sons from Indra only. This episode of Mārkandeya Purāṇa white washes all the blemishes of Draupadi that she was the wife of five husbands.

Mādhavi, daughter of Yayāti, is another example of woman marrying four different kings, which is a polyandrous type of
marriage. Viśvāmitra was immensely pleased with Gālava for the hospitality rendered to him and allowed him to go away free without any gurudakṣiṇa when his education was over. Gālava wanted to give some daksīṇā but Viśvāmitra refused to accept it. Gālava insisted on giving and then Viśvamitrā asked him to give eight hundred horses each with one of its ears black. Gālava was shocked to hear this and roamed about in search of horses of the type specified. Garuḍa taking pity on his sad plight, took him to the palace of Yayāti. Hearing the story of Gālava, Yayāti sent his daughter Mādhavi with Gālava saying that if she was given in marriage to any king he would give him the eight hundred horses of the type he required.

Gālava took Mādhavi to Haryāśva, a king of the Ikṣvāku line of kings. Haryāśva was doing penance at that time to obtain a child. Gālava said that Haryāśva would get a son of Mādhavi and he should therefore accept Mādhavi and give him in return 800 horses each with one ear black. But Haryāśva was having only 200 horses of the type specified. Finding this difficulty, Mādhavi said to Gālava that she had a boon from a brahmavādi sage that she would remain a maiden even after

129. एकत: ह्यामकर्णानां शतान्यष्ठी प्रवच्छ मे ।
ह्यानं चन्द्रशुभाराणं देशानां यथुभय्याम् ॥ - Mbh.उबोग.116.5
delivery. So she suggested him to give her in marriage to Haryāśva and get two hundred horses. After giving birth to a son, she would be given in marriage to another and thus by giving her to four kings, Gālava could get the eight hundred horses he required. Thus, Mādhavi was given in marriage to Haryāśva, Divodāsa, Rājā of Kāśi and to Uśīnara, king of Bhoja. Gālava thus got six hundred horses and finally, Mādhavi was given in marriage to Viśvāmitra with six hundred horses.

Mādhavi’s marriage with four persons is also an example of polyandry, but the husbands are not the brothers as in case of Draupadi, where Pāndavas were brothers.

The Duties of Husband and Wife:

After marriage, women received a good treatment in her new home from her elders and other family members. Early in the history of our civilization, brides naturally received affectionate and respectful treatment in their new homes. The vedic marriage hymn lays down that the bride should

130. एतच्छुल्या तु सा कन्या गाल्वव वाच्यमप्रवाट्।
    मम दत्ती वरं कस्मित्त केतचित्त ब्रह्मवादिता॥
    प्रसूत्यते प्रसूत्यते कन्यायं तेवं भविष्यति॥ - Mbh.उपोग.116.10-11

131. नृपेष्यो हि चतुर्घर्तेषु पुराणाण्विषी दशाविषि मे।
    भविष्यति तथा पुरुष मम चल्यार एव च॥ - Mbh.उपोग.116.12
immediately take the reins of the household from her elderly relatives.\(^{132}\) Her views were usually to prevail in the household management.\(^{133}\) Probably, these statements refer to the wife of the eldest son in the family, who has to look after his parents in their old age, and also his unmarried brothers and sisters in the joint family.

When the child and illiterate brides became the order of the day, the tone of the treatment which was given to them by their elders in their new homes began to change. They had ceased to be queens in their new households. The marriage came to be regarded as the bride's upanayana. The husband was regarded as her preceptor and the stay at his place as the counterpart of the stay at his teacher's house (Gurukula). So, like the teacher, the husband also was endowed by later writers.\(^{134}\)

The treatment which a wife receives from her husband is

\(^{132}\) सम्प्राणि श्वेतुर्भ: भव सम्प्राणि अधि देवेपु । - Rg Veda.X.85.46

\(^{133}\) यथा सिन्धुर्वर्दीनां साम्राज्यं सहुबे वृषा ।
   एवं लं साम्राज्येति पत्युरस्य पुरुषय च ॥ - Atharva Veda.XIV.1,43

\(^{134}\) भायां पुजञ्जच दासरुच प्रेमयो भ्राता च सोदर ।
   प्रासाप्राधास्तः: स्यौ रज्जा शुद्ध्दिगेन वा ॥
   पुज्ज्वलय शीर्षीयो मौस्मांगेन कशंचन ।
   अति:स्या प्रहर्षां: स्याद्राजफलिष्ठम् ॥ - Manu.VIII.299-300
more vital for the wife's happiness. According to the Mahābhārata, father, brother and son can give some happiness to a woman.

\begin{quote}
- Mbh.शान्ति.148.6
\end{quote}

But, only husband can give her unlimited happiness. So for a woman after marriage, nobody can protect her as her husband and no happiness equals him. So, a woman should leave everything including wealth for him.

\begin{quote}
- Mbh.शान्ति.148.7-8
\end{quote}

Since, Indo-Iranian times the husband and the wife were regarded as the joint owners of the household. The word for the couple, dampati etymologically means the joint owners of the house. In the Hindu household, the husband is the senior partner and the wife is under his general guidance. So, a wife should be always obedient to her husband. The Vedic marriage ritual, however, doesnot enjoin the duty of obedience upon the wife. Both parties take the same vows.\textsuperscript{135}

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}
Though, the supreme authority was clearly vested in the husband, the wife's position was one of the honourable subordinations. In the vedic and epic society, we find that the wife was treated with utmost courtesy and regard. It was recognised that the wife was the ornament of the house. Infact, the wife herself was the home.\textsuperscript{136} The home management was under her direct charge and ordinarily, her views prevailed there.\textsuperscript{137} It was she who used to rouse the servants and assign them their proper duties, and thus arrange for the normal running of the household.

There should be an absolute identity in the relations between the husband and the wife in their material and moral interests. This principle was recognised in the vedic age and is approved by later Dharmaśāstra writers like Manu and Āpastamba.\textsuperscript{138} The husband and the wife are the complements of each other. "Man is only one half" and he is not complete till he is united with a wife and gives birth to children.\textsuperscript{139} A

\textsuperscript{136} Jāyadevātāt vābksṛdu yoniḥ. - Rg Veda.III.53,4
\textsuperscript{137} yasya sīrṣāntāṁ Ātma ātmaṁ sūduṁ bṛṣa. - Atharva Veda.XIV.1,43
\textsuperscript{138} jāyāvāpyohāṁ vibhāme ṛṣṭये | pāṇिग्रहणादि सहतवं कर्मयु | tathā pūṇyaphalayu dṛṣṭyaphrīṣṭaḥ ch |
Cf. A.S. Altekar, Position of Women in Hindu Civilization, Motilal Banarasidas, Delhi, 1938, Page No.95
\textsuperscript{139} arthaḥ h tāvatraṃvatāt asya bṛdavjāyā vijnātayate tāṁ śravāḥ mābhut |
- Ś. Br.V.1,6,10
wife is considered as a better half of a man. She is a good of her husband, and a root cause of Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa. She is the only way for a man who wants to succeed in his life.

अर्थ भार्या मनुष्यार्थ भार्या श्रेष्ठतम: सखा ।
भार्या मूलं जिवविर्भय भार्या मूलं तारस्यत: ॥

- Mbh.आदि.74.41

Hindus believed that the creator Brahmā divided himself into two. Among these two, one half became man and another half woman. So, couples are considered as one body with one soul.140 The wise have observed that the husband is identical with the wife and vice versa.141 It was therefore natural that the happiness of each should be regarded as depending upon the other. If there was complete harmony between the two, the house would be a heaven, if there was discord, it would be a hell.142 Wife is the keystone of the arch of the husband's happiness. The house may be full of sons, daughters and daughters-in-law; but it is quite empty to a person if his wife is not there to supervise over it.

140. द्रिष्टां कृत्वाचान्तिर देहपर्यं पुरुषोऽभवत् ।
अर्थेन नारी तत्त्वं स विराजमणृज्ञत प्रथुः: ॥ - Manu.I.32

141. अग्नि: प्राहुस्तथा चैतन्यो भर्ता सा समदांग्ना । - Manu.IX.45

142. तदा भार्या च भर्ता स परस्परवशादुः॥
तदा भर्मार्थकामानां ग्राहामपि संगतम्: ॥ - Mārkandaya Purāṇa, 67-71
She is the surest solace to the husband, however serious his worries and miseries may be. She is the only friend, who never forsakes him in adversity. He may be in a forest, still his comfort is assured if his wife is by his side; in fact a home without wife is a forest.

Without his wife, a man cannot go to heaven either; so at the time of the symobolical ascent to heaven in the sacrificial ritual, he has to wait till his wife comes to accompany him.

**Duties of a Husband:**

Wife is given to a man not by his own will but by God or destiny. So, it is the duty of a man to protect his wife the

143. न च भावतः किलिकाहस्तेभिष्जाम् भतम्।
वीर्यं सर्वदुःखं सत्यमेतदृढ़वीमि ते॥ - Mbh.वन.61.29

144. स रोहयायायामनन्तयेऽत्र, जायसे एकि रोहयेति।
रोहयेत्याह माया | तत्सात्त्यायामनन्तयेऽत्र अतों ह वैष्ण आत्मनो यज्ञः।
- Ś. Br. V.2,1,10
way, by which Gods will be happy. The husband should treat his wife as his dearest friend. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa states that, wife is the companion friend of a man. Mahābhārata is also of the same opinion.

Man without his wife is incomplete. The husband must, however, put up with her. To maintain and support his wife is the most sacred duty of the husband, which must be discharged at all costs; otherwise, he will have no right at all to be called a husband. A man should treat his wife as a mother, as she gives birth to a son who is his soul. Above

145. देवदत्तां पतिम्भाया बिन्दन्ते नेच्छायात्मनः ||
   तां सार्वी भिन्नायणित्य देवाना प्रियामाचारः || - Manu.IX.95

146. सखा ह जाया - A.Br.VII,3,13

147. आरामास्तुमेव जनित: पुत्र इत्युच्चते कुशे: ||
   तस्माद: भायां म: पश्येन्मातृवत् पुत्रमात्सरः || - Mbh.Ādi.74.48
all, he must be true to his vow of conjugal fidelity; its violation is the greatest sin he can commit.\textsuperscript{148}

**Duties of Wife:**

The wife, on her part has corresponding duties and obligations. In Atharva Veda, the duties of a woman (wife) are indicated.\textsuperscript{149} In ancient India, a woman was devoted to her husband and was not doing anything againist the will of her husband. Her chastity was the most important. She was thinking of the welfare of her husband's family and was taking part in sacrificial ceremonies with him for the well-being of the family. By giving birth to a good son, she was rendering her duty towards her motherland.

\textsuperscript{148} Manu.IX.101

\textsuperscript{149} Atharva Veda.VI.122.5

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148. अन्त्योच्चाच्यविव्रितयां भवेदामल्लितः ||
एष अर्थम् समासेन श्रेयं: क्षीरंसतोऽपि: परः || - Manu.IX.101

149. शुद्धः पुत्रा योपितो यशिया इमा ब्रह्माण हर्षेषु प्रपूःखः
यज्ञाय इदमाधिषुबांक योहमिन्द्रो महत्वाल्लस वदतु तत्त्वे || - Atharva Veda.VI.122.5
इदं गाढः पिपुली सीमाय विश्व प्रसन्नमल्लस देवा: || - Ibid.VII.35.1
एवा भगवद् ज्ञेयमल्लस नारी संप्रियाय पत्वाविराधवयन्तै || - Ibid.II.36.4
जाया पत्ये मधुमल्ली बारस वदतु शान्तिवाद् || - Ibid.III.30.2
प्रजावती श्रीस्वरूपस्वा न्योतेनमकिष्टोऽगर्षपत्यं सम्पर्वा || - Ibid.XIV.2.18
अधि इवोद् उक्तां च वश यत्वचा मिशुना या सम्पर्वतः ||
असंयमते ब्रह्मेते ते श्रेयति पुष्पावति भग्ना शक्तिश्चालानाऽसुष्कते ||- Ibid.XX.25.3
सं वा भगलो अयमसं चित्तानि रमु प्रति || - Ibid.II.30.2
In the Atharva-veda, it is said that the women were the treasure-house of happiness. According to the Mahābhārata, a wife must be true to her husband in her marriage vows and lead the life of an ideal Pativrata. She promotes her husband's happiness by giving birth to sons.

150. भार्षिायां जनितं पुनःमार्दःस्विव चाननम्।
झार्दते जनिता प्रेक्ष्य स्वर्ग प्राप्तेऽपि पुण्यकृत्।।
द्वारमाना मनोदुःख्योपधिमिद्वचातुर्व।।
झार्दते स्मेथु दारेरु धर्माः: तलिलेष्विव।।
- Mbh.आदि.74.49-50

So, a person should marry a good woman with good character. Woman gets happiness after suffering pain. Neither the father, nor the mother, neither a son nor a friend can do for a woman what a husband will. Her real happiness is centered in her husband.

There is no sacrificial ritual to be performed alone and no vow or fast is necessary. A lady who serves and nurses her husband faithfully, attains the heaven and commands respect.

150. सुमस्कृतस्मिन् ग्रहणां साहेबा पति श्रुति राज्य जन्म:।।
- Atharva Veda.XIV.2.26

151. एतस्मात् कारणाद राजस्त प्राण्यन्ध्रण्यमिथ्यते।
वदान्नति धार्मिकहोपि परत्र च।।
- Mbh.आदि.74.47

152. सुखं सुखेनेहं न जातु लघ्यं दुःस्वेत साधवी रघुते सुखानि।।
सा कृष्णामार्थविश्वेत्ते प्रेम्णा च नित्यः प्रतिकर्मणा च।।
- Mbh.वन.234.4
there too.\textsuperscript{153} The average Hindu wife will say like Sāvitri that if separated from her husband, she will desire neither pleasure nor prosperity nor heaven; she will prefer death to separation from him.\textsuperscript{154} This means that a Pativrata woman can not live without her husband.

That wife is considered as साध्वी woman who is well-versed in household work, who has a son, who loves her husband more than her life, and who is Pativrata.\textsuperscript{155} Wife is considered as a उपमित्र of a man. It is the first and foremost duty of a Pativrata woman to keep her house clean and to worship God, cow and Brāhmin. Because Laxmi will reside in such houses.\textsuperscript{156} Laxmi will not stay in those houses of

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{153} नाति श्रीणां पृथ्वियक्षी न वृत्ती नायण्युपोस्तितम्।
  पति शुद्धिते येन स्वयं महीयते॥ - Manu.V.155

  \item \textsuperscript{154} न कामे भृत्विनाक्रुता सुखः
  न कामे भृत्विनाक्रुता दिवसः॥
  न कामे भृत्विनाक्रुता धर्मः
  न भृत्वीद्वा व्यापसामि जीवितम्॥ - Mbh.वन.297.53

  \item \textsuperscript{155} सा भाय्या या गृहे दक्षा सा भाय्या या प्रजाय्यती॥
  सा भाय्या या पतिप्रणा सा भाय्या या पतिव्रता॥ - Mbh.आदि.74.40

  \item \textsuperscript{156} वसामि श्रीषु कान्तासु देवकिन्यपरासु च॥
  विष्णुदुःखमण्डलसबृहदक्ष्यामिततासु च॥ - Mbh.अनुसारन.11.10
\end{itemize}
women who will not keep her house clean. Hence, we can say that a good wife is a Laxmi of the house. So, a man who has a good wife is called श्रीमान.

भायावन्तः क्रियावन्तः सभायाः ग्रहादिन्हः ।
भायावन्तः प्रमोदस्ते भायावन्तः प्रियान्वितः ॥

- Mbh.आदि.74.42

नित्यं निवसते लक्ष्मीं कन्यकासु प्रतिशिष्टा ।
शोभना श्रुंवयोऽवा च पूज्या मद्रक्षमर्गः ॥

- Mbh.अनुशासन.22

कन्या महालक्ष्मीं सर्वेऽक्षम्य मक्षल्मः ॥

- Mbh.अनुशासन.22

A Pativrata woman should always be faithful to her husband and soft spoken. Otherwise, a man's house will be a forest. According to Manu Smṛti - after the demise of the husband, a lady is required to observe complete celibacy. If she does it, she attains the heaven even if she has no son.

157. प्रक्षीर्माणामवेश्चकरिणि

सदा च भर्तुः प्रतिकृत्यविदिनीम् ॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.11.11

158. यथं भायं गृहे नासि साध्वीं च प्रियवादिनी ।

अरण्यं तेन मनवं यथारण्यं तथा गुहम् ॥ - Mbh.शालिति,144.17

159. गृहं भति साध्विः स्री भ्रक्षेत स्वास्थ्यि ।

स्वर्गं गच्छत्युपापं तथा ते भ्रक्षारिणः ॥ - Manu.V.160
Even motivated by desire of having a son, if a lady transgresses the rule and over-steps the husband, she is condemned in this world and falls from heaven.\textsuperscript{160}

A Pativrata woman should always forgive her husband if he does mistakes.\textsuperscript{161} She should always serve him by preparing tasty and pure food timely and she should keep utensils clean and neat. She should offer every kind of hospitality to him. This is clearly expressed by Draupadi to Satyabhama in the Vanaparva of the Mahabharata.

\begin{quote}

\begin{align*}
\text{शेष्ट्राद बनाद वा प्रामाद वा भतारि गृहमाताम्।} \\
\text{अम्मुत्त्यायिन्यन्दामि आसमेनोदकेन च॥} \\
\text{प्रमृणाणां मृणाला काले भोजनादायिनी।} \\
\text{संयता गुस्सान्त्या च सुसम्पुष्पिनींक्षेत॥} \\
& \text{Mbh.वन.233,25-26}
\end{align*}
\end{quote}

A साध्यी की should not do anything which her husband does not want or like.\textsuperscript{162} A lady, desirous of her husband's abode,

\begin{quote}

\begin{align*}
\text{अपव्योर्वाचा तु की भतारिदत्तिवर्तते।} \\
\text{सेह निन्द्मयांनोत्तिकतीतीकाह दीपयते॥ - Manu.V.161} \\
\text{161. क्षण्या पतिकृते नार्यः पतिषृव्यं वृजन्ति तस॥ - Mbh.आदि.74.124} \\
\text{162. पापादउगातु पापात्ता: पतिमुष्कुज्युत ॥} \\
\text{न जातु निप्रियं भुतु: खळ्या कार्यं कर्षणचन॥ - Mbh.वन.233.17}
\end{align*}
\end{quote}
does not do any act unapproved by her husband. According to Draupadi, a wife should live under the protection of her husband, and that is considered as Sanātana Dharma. Husband is the only God for her and her only way. Other than her husband, no protection is there for a woman.

"A chaste woman liberates thousands of generations. According to Skanda Purāṇa the husband of a pativrata woman gets freed from all sins. He is not at all bound to enjoy or suffer the fruits of the good or evil acts due to the splendour of vows observed by the sati. Free from the shakles of his past actions, he enjoys eternally along with his wife in the abode of Lord Viśnu."  

In the Mahābhārata, Draupadi explains to Satyabhāma how a wife should be. She said "I am always careful not to permit

163. पापीप्रहय साध्वी की जीवतो वा मृत्युवाच ।
पतिलोकमप्पन्ती नाइकेरकिलितप्रवाच ॥ - Manu.V.156

164. पुरुषाणां तहतं ज सतीं क समुद्रते ।
पति: पतिप्रितां च मुच्यते सर्वपतिकान। ॥
नावति तेषां कर्मबोध: सतीं च ब्रजतेजसा ।
तथा साधू निष्कर्षि मोदते हरिमन्दिरे ॥ - Skanda purāṇa
any wrong to slip from my lips. Like uncultured woman, I do not stand here and there. Like other shameless women, I do not cast my eyes every where. I do not sit on a wrong and improper place. I always try to avoid evil conduct and am quite alert that even my walking may not be mannerless. I scrupulously follow even the hints of my husbands. My husbands are lustrous like sun and fire and at the same time soothing like moon. They are all great warriors and capable of killing their enemies through their glances only. They are terribly strong and splendidous. I always keep myself busy in serving them. Draupadi was sincere and faithful to each of her five husbands. On account of her vow and swearing the great epic Mahābhārata develops into a great story containing morals and guidance for human life.

The woman who does not keep her husband happy, is not a woman. If her husband is happy, then all Gods will be happy and bless her. That woman perishes who does not keep her

165. दुर्माहातांच्छेदमानाः दुर्स्थितास्तः दुवेशितास्तः।
   दुर्सिलाद दुर्ब्रजिदिशिलाध्यासितादपि।
   सूर्यविश्वान समान्, सोमकल्पान् महाराजान्।
   सेवे चङ्कुवेन: पार्थानुवृद्धीयोपतापितः। - Mbh.वन.233.21-22

166. न सा स्री श्रीमन्नत्वम् सत्यं भर्ता न सुभूत्यित।
   मुष्टि भर्ति नारीण तुम्हा: ततु: सर्वदेवताः। - Mbh.शाल्ति.145.3
husband happy.167

In the Anusāsana parva of the Mahābhārata, Śāndili, a very chaste devi living in Devaloka, once thought Sumanas, the Kekaya princess the duties of a chaste woman. She never used harsh words while dealing with her husband. On the contrary, she was more obedient to him.168 As a chaste woman, she always obeyed the orders of her parents-in-law. She always worshipped Gods, ancestors and brāhmaṇas.169 When her husband was to go to a distant place for some important work, she used to perform poojas for the welfare of her husband and success in his efforts to achieve the desired goals.170 She kept the family secrets as confidential. She maintained the cleanliness of the surroundings.171 It was her opinion that any
woman who follows these policies in her life would be worthy to be worshipped like Arundhati.\textsuperscript{172}

The Anuśāsana parva of the Mahābhārata narrates the story of Oghavati, wife of Sudarśana, who decided to succeed in his life by following Grhasta dharma, that is to welcome the guest.\textsuperscript{173} Oghavati, followed the way of her husband and treated well the brahmin in the absence of her husband.\textsuperscript{174} She offered herself to the brahmin as per his wish.\textsuperscript{175}

\begin{verbatim}
172. इसं धर्मपथं नारी पालयन्ती समाहिता ।
    अघनन्तरीय नारीणां स्वर्गलोके महीयते ॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.123.20

173. येन येन च तुथेत नित्येयं त्वयालिथि ।
    अप्यामनः प्रशानेन न ते कार्यं विचारणा ॥
    एतद् ब्रतं मम सदा हृदि सम्पर्वतैं ।
    गुहस्थानं च सुखोमि नातिनिष्ठे निवासते परम् ॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.2.43-44

174. इत्युक्ता तेन बिष्रेण राजपुर्णे यशास्तिमी ।
    विष्णुना प्रतिज्ञाग्रह देवोकेन विश्वामये ॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.2.51

175. ताम्ब्रवीधं ततो विप्रो राजपुर्णे सुदर्शननाम् ।
    त्वथा ममार्थं कल्याणं निर्विशेषं तदाचर ॥
    यदि प्रमाणं धर्मांस्ते गृहस्थाध्यामत्सम्वतं ।
    प्रशानेनात्मने राशि करुणाहि मे प्रयम् ॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.2.53-54
    सा तु राजसुता समुच्चा महुर्भवचनमादति ।
    तथेति लज्जाना सा तमुच्च विज्ञामभम् ॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.2.56
\end{verbatim}
Lopāmudra was pativrata woman who married sage Agastya. She was brought up in a royal family and always wore ornaments. But after marriage she removed all of them as per the advice of the sage.176

By repeating the names of great women like Ahalya, Draupadi, Tārā, Sitā and Mandodari, the man attains mokṣā or salvation.177

Pre-marital Sex Relations:

The samhitas often refer to sons of unwedded mothers exposed and attacked by animals. In the Rgvedaic period, unions without religious sanctions between men and women are not known. But the issues of such relations are suggested to be exposed to animals.178

Instances of unmarried girls having sexual relations with a man and attaining motherhood are to be found in the Epic. These girls in due course got married according to the usual

176. प्राण्य भायमातत्स्मतु लोपामुद्रयभाष्टत् | महाहाय्यलुस्तुलैतानि वासांस्याभस्मणि । ि - Mbh.वन.97.8
religious rites and the children born to them were considered as belonging to the husbands of their mothers. Such a child shared equal rights with the other children of the mother in the wedlock. Inspite of this, the husband of the mother was never addressed as the father of such a child. Vyāsa was addressed as the son of Parāśara and Karṇa as the son of Surya and not of Pāṇdu. This indicates that children were supposed to belong to their progenitor. This is the difference of opinion registered by the Dharmasastra writers. Manu in very definite terms declares that a seed sown in the field of another belongs to the owner of the field and not to the sower.  

Vyāsa, the legendary compiler of the great Epic was himself a progeny of unwedded love. His mother Matsyagandhā was the foster daughter of a fisherman and rowed her father's ferry boat from one shore of the Ganges to the other. When sage Parāśara saw her, she was attracted by him and the desire to get her arose in his mind. He expressed his desire. But Matsyagandhā refused him as she was ashamed of cohabiting in public with so many people on both shores looking upon them. But the

179. ओष्णवात्सहि बीजं यस्य क्षेत्रे प्ररोहिति ।
    क्षेत्रीकर्त्वे तद्भिः न कष्टता स्मरते पति ॥ - Manu.IX.54

180. संगमं मम कल्याणं कुश्चेत्यायमाप्त ।
    सान्तवीति वस्य भगवन् पारावरे स्तिरासृष्टिे ॥ - Mbh.आदि.63.72
sage at once created a mist round the boat so that nobody could see them. The maiden spoke again that she was living under the protection of her father. If her maidenhood lapses by his contact, she will not be able to stay in her father’s house thereafter. But she was relieved of her fear by a promise on the part of the sage that her maidenhood would be restored to her after the sexual union. The sage further undertook to grant Matsyagandhā any boon she cared to ask. Matsyagandhā expressed the desire that a sweet perfume should come out from her body.

एवमुक्तचा वर्ष वर्षे गौत्रसीमान्यमुत्तमम्।
स चाचमैं भगवानु प्रदाननमसः कामित्वं भुवि॥

- Mbh. आदि. 63.80

The sage granted it and after the sexual union, she gave birth to a child and she cast off on an island of Yamunā river.

181. आव्योद्धयोरेंमः कर्मं तु स्वात समागमः।
एवं तपोस्ते भगवानु नीहार्मसुरुष्टि प्रभोः॥ - Mbh. आदि. 63.73

182. विस्मिता साम्बवत्स कन्या श्रीहिता च तपस्यिनी।
विदि मां भगवानु कन्या सदा पितुदशानुगमाम्॥
त्वसंयोगाशु दुष्कर्म कन्याभावो ममावः।
कन्याल्ये दृष्टिः वापि कर्म शक्ये विमोतिम॥ - Mbh. आदि. 63.75-76

183. एवमुक्तवति तां तु प्रीतिमानुपासितम्।
उद्वच मलिनं कृत्वा कन्येव तवं भविष्यसि॥ - Mbh. आदि. 63.78
As the child was cast off on an island (dvipa), it was called as Dvaipāyana.\textsuperscript{184} In the same parva, when Matsyagandhā (as Satyavati) narrates this episode to Bhiṣma, she says that she agreed to the proposal of Parāśara because she was afraid of a curse if she were to refuse him.\textsuperscript{185} She also states that the child born out of the union was cast off by her on island as instructed by the sage himself, so that she might be a virgin again.\textsuperscript{186}

Parāśara’s spontaneous proposal to a fair fisher-woman without any idea of marriage with her indicates that such relations must not have been altogether unusual.

In the Mahābhārata Kunti, the mother of the Pāṇḍava heroes, had to undergo a similar experience. When Kunti was still a young girl and was staying with her father Kuntibhoja, she was entrusted with the task of receiving guests and treating them well. Once the famous sage Durvāsa happened to be their guest, Kunti served him so sincerely that the sage was pleased to grant her a boon. She was taught a mantra, by reciting

\textsuperscript{184} न्यस्तो दीपः स यद्व भालस्तस्माद् द्रैपायनः स्मृतः || - Mbh.आदि.63.86

\textsuperscript{185} तमहं श्रापमीता च पितुभीता च भारत || | वैरसुभैश्च स प्रत्याप्यायतुल्लभेः || - Mbh.आदि.104.10

\textsuperscript{186} ततो मामह स मुनिन्मभिमुल्लभ मामकम् || | विद्योत्त्वा यव सदितं कन्यैव लघुभिष्यति || - Mbh.आदि.104.13
which she could command any of the Gods to her service and conceive through that God. On receiving the boon, she became very curious as she was immature. Just to test it, she invited Surya by reciting those mantras. The God appeared before her at once and was ready to be of use to her for the bestowal of a son, strong and refulgent like his own self.

Kunti however wanted Surya to return to his abode. But he refused to return without fulfilling his desire and threatened to curse the girl's father as well as the brahmin who so foolishly bestowed a boon on such an immature girl. Then again Kunti tried to convince Surya on moral grounds saying that she did not want to destroy her dharma. Because in this world, maintaining the chastity is an honour for the virtuous way of woman's life.

187. य यं देवं त्वमेतेन मन्त्रेणावाहित्यति ।
   तेन तेन वशों भद्रं स्थात्वम् ते भविष्यति ॥ - Mbh.च.305.17

188. अथ गच्छाम्यां भद्रं त्वया संगम्म सुक्सितेऽ
    यदि त्वं बचनं नष्टं करिष्यति मम प्रियम् ॥ Mbh.च.306.16
    शपिष्ये त्वामाहं कृत्यं ब्रह्माणी पितरं च ते ।
    त्वत्कृतं तानं प्रभवायमि सर्वनिपि न संशयः ॥ - Mbh.च.306.17
But when Surya was not ready to go back without fulfilling the purpose for which his presence was desired, Kunti became afraid of the curse upon her family. But Surya did not think it necessary to inform any of her relatives because he declared "Neither your father, nor your mother, nor any of your elders have any right over you." He also said that a woman was free to behave as she liked. Yet he demolished the fears of Kunti by telling her that after the intercourse she would regain her virginity and that the son born of the union would be very famous.\textsuperscript{189} In due course, she gave birth to a son, who later came to be called as Karna. But due to the fear of the kinsfolk she put him in a chest and floated the chest into the Ganges.\textsuperscript{190}

\textbf{189.} सा मया सह संगम्य पुनः कन्या भविष्यांस।
पुत्रस्तु ते महाबालिविन्यति महाययाः। - \textit{Mbh.वन.307.16}

\textbf{190.} जातमांस च ते गर्भ धात्या सम्पन्नया भाविनी।
मदुष्णां समाधाय स्वास्तीयां सम्मन्तः। - \textit{Mbh.वन.308.6}
मुद्युक्तिष्ठितां सा सुस्वायं स्वतः तथा।
श्लभ्यां गुप्तिष्ठायामंदवयामवर्युजत्। - \textit{Mbh.वन.308.7}
In both the episodes of Matsyagandhā and Kunti, the father is said to be the proper person to handover the girl in marriage and hence sex relation without his knowledge and permission was against Dharma. Before marriage a maiden was the property of her father and was not independent to bestow herself to anybody. Recalling that swayamvara was an accepted type of marriage, even that was arranged by the father.

It should be noted that both of these women leave the child to nature's mercy, for different reasons. But Matsyagandhā in her married life as Satyavati makes no secret that she had a son before marriage. She frankly confessed everything to her step son Bhīṣma and invites Vyāsa for niyoga with her daughter-in-laws.¹⁹¹ Kunti keeps the birth of Karṇā a secret. She reveals this to Yudhiṣṭhira at the end of the war. The difference in behaviour of these two women may be because of the way these two women were brought up.

¹⁹¹. मीमांसक चार्य व्याख्यातियोगाचे मागानेच |
अनुश्रोतां भूतां साबोग्यं रक्षणयूँ च ॥
अनूदानां यद्व ब्रूपं तथा तत्षुत्वा कठिनृगति ॥
वधसरसवव्यायां त्रातुनाथविं सुतुरसारम् ॥
रूपमीवनसम्बनि पुनरुक्तम्व च धृतंः ॥
तत्वोष्ट्रायायात्मकं समभी द्वाति पुरक ॥
अनुरूपं कुलसद्यायां संतत्यां प्रसवस्य च ॥
पैदेन धर्म सत्यतिः परें चापमे च ॥ - Mbh.आदि.104.36-39
Incestuous Relations:

The Vedic hymns contain references throwing much light on the incestuous relations. In Rg Veda, Agni is said to impregnate his own mother.\(^{192}\) In the same Samhita, he described the incestuous relation of Prajāpati with his daughter is described.\(^{193}\) The twin God Āsvins - the children of Savitr and Usās married their sister Surya. Puṣan loved his sister.\(^{194}\)

The marriage hymn of the Rgveda (X.85) categorically indicates that marriage was contracted outside the family circle. Upto what generation family relationship was recognised for this purpose can not be definitely ascertained. The Mahābhārata

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192. तस्म निषेध महयतं रूद्ध यत्तः ते जनिम चाह जिवः।
पद्द यद्व विष्णोपम निधायि तेन पालि गुर्ण नाम गोदाम्॥ - Rg.Veda.V.3,3

193. प्रतिष्ठ यत्स्य वीरकर्मिणादृष्टिः नु नार्यों अपौहत्।
पुनर्तद्व वृहति यत्तः कनाया दुहितुरा अपूर्व्या तमववः॥
मथ्या यत्त कर्पमुखन्वदीके कामं कृष्णाने पितारि पुरश्याम्।
मानमेते जहुदिभिपल्ला सानी निषिद्द सुकुलत्र योगी॥
पिता यत्न त्वां दुहिततमशचन् क्षम्या रेतः सज्जमातो निकभिल्।
स्त्रायोडजनययः ब्रह्म देवा वासलोप्यति द्रत्या निरत्वक्य॥ - Rg.Veda.X.61,5-7

194. पूषणं न्य जात्ममुपस्तोषस्य दाविनम्।
स्वसुमां जार उच्चित्यः॥ - Rg.Veda.VII.55,4
अंहे शुक्रशुष्कशोचिचोरः प्रमणस्या वृहत्।
अभिरकान्त पुष्पायले वि वो मदेव गर्भ वधासि जामिनु विवक्षसे॥ - Rg.Veda.X.21.8
evidence confirms Vedic practice. The way in which Karna condemns sex freedom in the Madra and the Bālhika countries brings out the contempt the compiler of the Mahābhārata harboured for such laxity. "They are shameless. These Bālhikas, indulge at pleasure in the presence of everybody and with anybody, even with close relatives - with father, mother, son, mother-in-law, mother's brother, son-in-law, daughter, grand sons, kindred, friends, guests and also the slaves."195

There is also a positive evidence in the epic condemning incestuous relation, particularly between the father and the daughter. King Pratipa was approached by the river Goddess Ganga for the satisfaction of her sexual desire. She occupied the right side of his lap and requested the king to satisfy her passion. But the king refused and said that he will accept her as his daughter-in-law. He said "O beautiful one, your proposal is pleasing, but it is due to your own fault that I cannot accept it, because it would be destructive of Dharma. You have chosen the right side of my lap reserved for one's children (apatyas) and daughter-in-law. You have not occupied the left thigh which is occupied by a beloved. So, I will not be able to

195. *iw*riw ^ fmt jrm forcro i

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195. गायत्र्यम् च नृत्यन्ति खियो मत्त विवासमः ।
नगराणांक्रेणु बहिम्स्याबुलोपनं ॥
मत्तावैतैैः वस्तुंत्रः प्रीतनिन्दोपयः ।
अनावृत्ताः मैथुने ता कामचालस्य सर्ववः ॥ - *Mbh.*कृष्ण.44.12-13
satisfy you. But I select you as my daughter-in-law."¹⁹⁶ This episode indicates that not only the daughter but also the daughter-in-law was unapproachable.

The Mahābhārata also records that sex-relations between a mother and a son were not within the bounds of dharma. When Arjuna was in the heaven, Urvasī was struck with passion and approached him. But Arjuna refused her saying that cohabiting with her would be a sinful action, as she was a wife of his ancestors (Guru) to him. Hence he considered her as his Guru and of the same status as Kunti and Saci - wife of Indra. Convincing this way, he said that she should not entertain such unworthy thoughts about him as she was more respectable than all the elders. He concluded her to be the mother of his family like Kunti, Madri and Saci. Thus he said that she was fit to be worshipped.

¹⁹⁶. त्यथा निवृत्तमेति तु यन्मां चौदद्यसि प्रियम्।
अन्यथा प्रतिपन्न मां नाश्चेत् धम्मविषयः।
प्राप्य दक्षिणमुरुं मे त्यमालिल्या वतान्ने।
अपत्यामां सन्तुष्याणं च भीह विभ्येतद्यसम्।
संब्योहः कामिनीभोम्यस्तव्या स च विलितः।
तत्स्मादां नारीनिवेद्ये त्यधि कामं वरान्ने।
सन्तुष्यां मे भव सुरुणोणि पुजार्थव्यं वृषीष्यवस।
सन्तुष्याणं हि विमोह त्यमालिल्य समाधिता॥ - Mbh.आदि.97.8-11
Arjuna considered Urvasī as his mother because she was once the wife of Pururavā ancestor of Arjuna.

In the episode, not only the mother but any lady who may be considered to have the same status as one's mother is considered unapproachable. According to Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa, sixteen varieties of women are known to be the mothers. They are a foster-mother, the wife of the preceptor, the consorts of one's own chosen deity, wife of the father, a virgin, a real sister, the wife of the master, mother-in-law, maternal grand mother, grandmother. The wife of the brother, the sister of the mother, the sister of the father and the wife of the maternal uncle.
Though one of the duties of the Brahmachārin was chastity, reference is made in several places to the possibility of misconduct between a student and the wife of his preceptor. The Mahābhārata also refers to Śvetaketu who begot a son on the wife of his preceptor.\(^\text{198}\)

But in another anecdote, sexual relations with a preceptor's wife is considered as an unworthy act. In the absence of the preceptor Devāśarma, his pupil Uttanāka was entrusted with the management of the hermitage. His preceptor's wife then entered in the period of her ṛtu. The women of the āśrama there upon approached Uttanāka with a request to cohabit with the preceptor's wife so that her ṛtu may not go waste. But Uttanāka


\(^{198}\) उक्तैवं स महापापः सर्वप्राणिक्षमाजः।
पुरुषानुत्साधत्तस्य च यष्ठे: सत्तयर्द्वेषः।
- Mbh.शालि.220.
thought he should not act in that unworthy manner, and he was not instructed by his preceptor to fulfill that demand. When the preceptor returned, he was much pleased with Uttanka and bestowed upon him all the siddhis (mysterious powers) and permitted him to go home. This episode states that preceptor's wife is given the status of the mother and accordingly any connection with her is considered incestuous and therefore unrighteous. This indicates that Uttanka's behaviour is ideal rather than normal. The Mahābhārata along with the smṛti literature enumerate sexual relations with the wife of a preceptor as the greatest of the sins (Mahābhārata) and prescribe death as its atonement.

Mahābhārata considered preceptor's daughter as a sister. Kaca's refusal to Devayāni's proposal of marriage must have been on the same ground though the Mahābhārata does not

199. उच्छ सैन्य वशोलत्र फिंग ते प्रियं कर्मशीति
भर्मतो हि शुभ्रुपितोऽस्मि भवता तन प्रीति: ॥
पर्यप्रोण नै संवृद्धा तदनजाने भवत्ना
सर्वनिर्याकामानावयवस्यति गम्यतामिति ॥ - Mbh.आदि.3.89

200. प्रवक्तत्वा सुलभानो स्वते गृहनागमः ॥
महात्मि पालकान्याहु: संसर्गशचि तै: तह ॥ - Manu, XI.54
clarify the point. Manu prescribes a punishment in the form of a lunar penance for marriage with a female related in the third generation.

**Varṇa System:**

Mahābhārata records marriage taboos in terms of Varṇa position of an individual, the breaking rules of which were not very seriously punished; breach of rules regulating inter-varṇa marriage however was a serious lapse in social behaviour which was not tolerated.

The Mahābhārata is conversant with the technical words anuloma i.e. taking a wife below one's own varṇa and pratiloma which meant marrying a woman belonging to a

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201. पूज्यो मान्यत्र भर्गवान् यथा तव पिता मम ||
तथा त्वमन्वचारः पूज्नीयतरा मम ||
प्रणेमयोः प्रियतता भार्गवस्य महात्मनः ||
त्वं भद्रं प्रभतं पूज्या गुर्गुर्गी सदा मम ||
यथा मम गुरुनिष्ठवं मान्यः शुचिः पिता तव ||
देव्यानि ततैव त्वं नैव भां वकुमदिः || - Mbh.आदि.77.6-8

202. पैतृकस्वयं भैरौभैरौ स्वश्रीवं मातृवेच ||
मातृवेच प्रातृतन्तनां मन्यं चान्द्रयं चरेत ||
एतत्सिद्धं भार्गवेऽन्नपपक्षेषु वृद्धिमानं ||
हातित्वेननुपन्यायंः पतिति शुपयच्यम् || - Manu.XI.171-172
higher varna. Giving a discourse upon marriage, Bhiṣma says "A brahmin has a right to marry a woman of three varnas. A kṣatriya has a right to marry a woman belonging to the two varnas, while a vaisya has a right to marry a woman of only one varna, because it is only on these wives that a progeny equal to one's own status can be produced."\(^ {203} \)

Bhiṣma records a different opinion with regard to taking śūdra wife. He states "It is believed that a man of the higher three varnas can marry a woman belonging to a śūdra varna; but such a wife is meant only for pleasure, and not for acquiring religious merit or begetting progeny, because good people do not appreciate procreation in a śūdra woman.\(^ {204} \)

Again some religious people also state that a brahmin who begets children on a śūdra woman should expiate his sin."

\(^ {203} \) frrefl

\(^ {204} \) inpiFT ftarns l

It has been believed that a Brāhmin can marry a woman of all the four varṇas. But only a brāhmin woman can serve him better than the woman belonging to the other three varṇas.205

A kṣatrya woman is not equal to a brāhmin woman, and a Vaiśya woman is not equal to a kṣatriya woman due to their samskāras.206

205. लिखः कुल्या पुरो भार्या: पश्चाद् विनिहेत ब्राह्मणीम्।
शा जेहा शा च पूजया स्वातः शा च भार्या गरियसी॥
स्नानं प्रसाधनं भूतैंनित्तथायमविनमस॥
हर्षं कथ्यं च वहान्याद्धर्मिगुं गृहेः भेवेत॥
न तस्यं जातु तिष्ठान्त्यायमया तत्त् कपुरुसंहिति॥

ब्राह्मणी त्वेव कुर्यं द्वा ब्राह्मणव्युः पुरुषेऽपि॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.47.31-33

206. यथा च सत्सी जातु ब्राह्मण्या: क्षत्रियं भवेत॥
क्षत्रियायास्तथा वैश्यं न जातु सत्सी भवेत॥ - Mbh.अनुशासन.47.39-40
It is clear that even when a śudra wife is allowed, the progeny of such a union is not given any status in society but is looked down as sinful. This represents the final state in the anuloma marriages with a woman of a śudra varṇa. Inspite of this theoretical ban on marriage with a śudra wife, the eminent persons in Mahābhārata had contract marriage with women of śudra or even lower varṇas. King Santanu not only married Matsyagandhā, a daughter of a fisherman, and her children succeeded him on the throne of Hastināpura. He also married Gangā whose lineage is not given in the Mahābhārata and a son Bhīṣma is the ruler at the court of Hastināpura.

Arjuna married Nāga woman Ulupi by name. Once Arjuna happened to enter the palace in which Dharmaputra was living with Pāncāli. As a result, Arjuna had to go on a pilgrimage for twelve years. Arjuna reached Gaṅgādvāra. When he got down into the river Gaṅgā he saw Ulūpi, the daughter of Nāgarāja. Ulūpi told him that she grew amorous when she saw him.207 But Arjuna told her that Dharmaputra had imposed on him celibacy for twelve years and that it was right to marry in the meantime.208 Ulūpi argued with him and convinced him

207. तां मामन्नक्षणपितां त्वस्तृतेः कुलनन्दन ।
अनन्यां नन्दयस्वाच प्रवर्तनेनात्मनोनः नच ॥ - Mbh.आदि.213.20

208. प्रभुत्वयमिदं भेदे मम झादसवर्षिकम् ।
धर्मराजेन चाविण्ं नामास्मि स्वयंवरः ॥ - Mbh.आदि.213.21
that it was not wrong to marry her.\textsuperscript{209} She gave Arjuna a boon that all creatures living in water will be under his control.\textsuperscript{210}

In Śānti Parva of the Mahābhārata, a story is narrated. A brahmin, Gautama married a dasyu woman\textsuperscript{211} and by adopting the profession of a hunter fell from his status.\textsuperscript{212} Not only that, his friend who visited him refused to touch his food.\textsuperscript{213} This indicates that brahmin Gautama by his marriage with a südra woman lost his brahminhood and a fellow brahmin who had preserved it, refused even to touch things or eat the food offered by him. Though the reason of his losing his varṇa is not entirely on account of marriage to a südra woman but also due to his long association and adoption of the profession fit for a südra. But marriage and long association apart from the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{209} Bhāg. 213.29
\item \textsuperscript{210} Bhāg. 213.36
\item \textsuperscript{211} Bhāg. 168.34
\item \textsuperscript{212} Bhāg. 168.38
\item \textsuperscript{213} Bhāg. 168.52
\end{itemize}
profession was one of the reasons of losing one's varṇa. This represents the final state in the anuloma marriages with a woman of śūdra varṇa.

The above survey reveals clearly that anuloma marriage was allowed and encouraged.

Pratiloma marriages on the other hand were prohibited from the very beginning. Nowhere has the Epic shown any consideration for that type of marriage. This is clearly reflected in Draupada's remark when his daughter was taken away by the Pāṇḍavas disguised as unknown brahmīns. He asked Dhṛṣṭadyūmna with a fallen face "Did any śūdra or a person of a low birth take her away? or is she taken away by a vāisyā? who has placed his foot over my head? who has cast the garland in the cemetry?\(^{214}\)

The Śānti Parva of Mahābhārata says that the man should accept the woman even of a lower varṇa because, women, त्वम् and water these three according to Dharma have no दोष.

\(^{214}\) पाण्डवानान्तर्विषेणपरतानि पाण्डवानप्रतिविन्दुद्यान् ||
भृगुभन्म पर्ययुक्तहमात्मा छ सा गता केन नीता च कृष्णा ||
कविःश्रुत्वा न हीनजेन वै वेश्येन वा करदेवोपपलः ||
कविः पदं मृत्ति न पुनिःश्च कविः माला पतिता हस्ताने || - Mbh.आदि.191.14-15
This shows that good women with good characters of all varṇas are considered as pious and man can accept any such woman of any varṇa as his wife.

**Divorce:**

The ideal of life long fidelity to husband had some exceptions in which a woman was asked to leave her husband to marry another person. The later Dharmaśāstra literature liberally permits the husband to remarry during the life time of the first wife, but refuses the remedy of divorce to the wife even when completely forsaken by the husband. Manu advances the extreme view that the wife's marital tie and duty do not come to an end even if the husband were to sell or abandon her. According to the Hindu tradition, the marriage union was indissoluble. Manu himself observes that a wife is not to blame if she abandons a husband, who is impotent, insane or suffering from an incurable or contagious disease.

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215. न निक्रयविरितां भूतमीयाय विमुच्यते ।
एवं चर्म विपणनीम् प्राक्षोपायंपुरितप्रविध्यताम् ॥ - Manu.IX.46

216. ज्ञात वं पतितं कलाव्याजि य पापोरोणिणम् ।
न त्यागोस्ति बिषम्भायवं न च बायाप्ततां ॥ - Manu.IX.79
abandonment of the husband practically amounted to a divorce, for Manu permits such a wife to remarry if her previous marriage was not consummated.\textsuperscript{217} The children of the new union were legal heirs to their parents. The Atharva veda refers to a woman marrying again,\textsuperscript{218} very probably in the lifetime of her first husband; it lays down a ritual intended to unite her permanently in heaven with her husband. Her second marriage presupposed a divorce.

Karna told Draupadi in the assembly to leave her husbands and marry someone else.

\begin{verse}
त्रय: किलेमे ब्रह्मणा भवन्ति
दास: पुत्रचारसतन्त्रा च नारी ।
दासस्य पत्नी त्वकोनस्य भद्रे
हीनेष्वरा दासस्य च सर्वम् ॥
अन्ते वृणीष्व पतिमात्राय भविनि
यस्मात् दासस्य न लभिः देवनेन ।
\end{verse}

\textsuperscript{217} य त्यया चा परित्यत्ता विधया चा स्वयप्च्छया ।
उत्पाद्येपत्युपसूच्या स पौर्णमिद उच्चते ॥
सा चेताश्रययोति: त्याद: गतप्रथागतात्य पि ।
पौर्णमि विवाह त्या पुनः संस्कारमहैति ॥ - Manu.IX.17.4-5

\textsuperscript{218} या पूर्व शति विन्याखयायं विन्यतेत्सप्सम् ।
पंचोदन्त तस्य ददातो न विद्योयतः ॥
समानस्लोको भविति पुनःपुनःसवः पति: । - Manu.IX.5.27.8
It seems it was possible for a woman to leave her living husband and marry any other person.

Sairandhri was the pseudonym assumed by Panchali. After their twelve years of exile in the forests, Dharmaputra and his brothers with Panchali spent that period in the palace of the king Virata. Each assumed a new name and accepted different types of service under the king. Panchali assumed the name of Sairandhri and served as a companion and attendant to the princess. One day, Kichaka, the mighty brother-in-law of the king, tried to molest Panchali, though Panchali's husbands were alive. But she was timely protected by Bhima by killing

219. स्वामिनी स्वरुपात्रा प्रकुल्लभ मम प्रियम् ॥
सुवर्णमाला कुमुदवच कुड़दते परिहारके ॥
नामाकाले शुद्धे मणितल्ल च शोभनम् ॥
आहरतु च वशाणि कौशिकानन्दिनि च ॥
अस्ति मे शयनं दिव्यं त्वर्धनसमपवित्तम् ॥
प्रहि तत्र मया साधी वित्तम मदुभाववी मम ॥ - Mbh.विराट.16.1-3

अन्या भद्रे निक्षयन्ति राजयुधा: प्रतिभुतम् ॥
इत्येकां देशिणेपणो सूतुपुष्प: परामुखात् ॥ - Mbh.विराट.16.5
Kichaka. According to Sairandhri, it was the duty of a husband to protect his wife, as she gives birth to his sons.

**Remarriage:**

Sati custom was not common. Madri is the only example of the woman character who died as Sati in the Mahābhārata. Satyavati, Kunti and Vichitravirya's widows Ambikā and Ambālikā lived as widows but never thought of remarriage and sati. If a young wife without consummation became a widow, her second marriage with her husband's younger brother was legitimate. If there was no younger brother, she could marry someone else. If a bride, after going to her husband's house came back to her parents without being polluted could marry

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220. पञ्चाधिकं शतं तत्त निहितं तेन भारत ।
महावनिविच्छन्तं शिरये विगलितद्वृत्तम् ॥
एवं ते निहिता राजानां पञ्च च कीक्षाः ।
स च सेनापतिः पूर्वभिक्षेपत् सूत्रवर्तात् ॥ - *Mbh.*विराट.16.32-33

221. तमयं रथवाणानां भार्यां यो न भविष्यति ।
भार्यांं रथवाणाम् प्रजा भवति रक्षिता ॥
प्रजायं रथवाणामात्रम् भवति रक्षित तः ।
आत्मा हि जापते तत्त्वं तेन जात्मां विदुरुप्च: ॥
भर्ता तु भार्यां रथः कथं जायान्मोदे: ।
बदन्त्वं वर्णधर्मवच ब्राह्मणानामिति शुभं: ॥ - *Mbh.*विराट.21.40-42
another with marriage rites and become a punarbhu wife (a widow remarried). The marriages described in the Mahābhārata show more understanding and generosity for helpless women.

The Vivāha samāskāra described in the Mahābhārata, are a guideline for the present and future also.