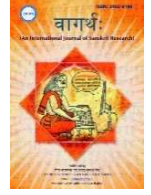




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## Caste and Gender in Sanskrit Studies

**Dr. Kaushalya (Kaushal Panwar)**

Assistant Professor, Department of Sanskrit,  
Motilal Nehru College, University of Delhi, New Delhi  
Email: panwar.kaushal@gmail.com

This Paper is based on secret Sanskrit texts specifically Rigveda and Yajurveda. Further this Paper has been corroborated with the help of other texts like Smiritis and Dharmashastra. We are aware of the fact that Sanskrit texts include knowledge of spirituality, philosophy, devotion, rituals and literature. We are also aware that these texts include scientific knowledge. The Scientists such as Aryabhata, Varahamihir, Bhaskar, Charak and Sushrut and Mathematicians have produced a vast ocean of knowledge. In spite of the fact of such a vast tradition of scientific thinking, it is a question to be considered as to why there is lack of scientific reflection on the question of caste and gender. This is a significant issue in modern era. The caste and gender both have been problems since the origin of the society and both have acquired a natural space in modern society. Therefore, it is in fitness of things that, they need to be debated today. In this context I want to raise few questions regarding caste and Gender in India. These are as follows:

1. On the basis of analysis of Rigveda and Yajurveda, can we argue that Vedas are responsible for the origin and development of the Caste in India?
2. With regards to question of Gender in Shastras, I would like to probe the reason as to why a male (Brahma) has been assigned an imaginary reproductive role.
3. Whether the status of Shudra women was worse than that of the status of women of other Varna.

### Varnvyavastha

The religious, social, cultural mainstream structure of Indian society is believed to have its origins in Vedic period. In the historical order, the study of caste and gender in Dharmashastra and Smiriti's period have been studied as a study and findings of Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyak, Upanishads, Vedang. In modern times also, both these subjects are being studied in Sanskrit. It is believed that the concepts of these two terms, Caste and Gender as contained in Vedic and Puranic texts and are also found in the memoirs called Smiritis, which we see in different forms in modern times. The Smiritis, after Vedas, are seen as a study of Vedas only which contain the conclusions of the Vedic texts.

In Indian literature, the first indication of Varna is found in the Purush Sukta of Rigveda. Thereafter, it is found in other Vedas and subsequent literature. In Rigveda, the division of four Varna has been personified with the use of a metaphor of an imaginary Purush. The fundamental mantras of Varnavyavastha in Vedas are:

brāhmaṇo'syamukhamāsīdbāhūrājanya: kṛta: |  
urutadasyayadvaiśya: padbhyāṃsūdro'jāyata ||  
(rgveda 10.90.12.)

brāhmaṇo'syamukhamāsīdbāhūrājanyaḥkṛtaḥ |  
madhyaṃtadasyayadaiśyaḥpadbhyāmaśūdroajāyataḥ ||  
(yajurveda 31.11)

rūcaṃ no dhehibrāhmaṇeṣurūcaṃrājasunaskṛdhi |  
rūcaṃvaisyeṣūsūdreṣumahyaṃdhehirūcāṃrūcam ||  
(yajurveda 18.48)

Brahmin is the mouth of this Brahma, Kshatriya is the arms, The Vaishya is thighs and foot is Shudra of this Brahma. We will discuss this in more detail later in this Paper.

## Caste / Varna Vyavasthaa in Dharmshatra and Vedic Studies Caste

The Caste is a social problem reflecting social contradiction. The recognition of the higher and lower order of people is called caste system. Whatever the caste one is born in, he/she remains in the same caste till his/her death. On Caste, we will come back in detail further.

In Indian society, many castes, class groups, religious groups, community identities and ethnic groups exist. Their conditions and evolving situations have been studied in many ways. Many researchers have done research on them from social, cultural, economic, political perspectives. These researchers have helped various existing social groups in understanding the continuously evolving conditions of these groups from ancient times to modern times. Through these studies and analysis, there has been significant progress in their development by way of making some inclusive policies for marginalized groups of communities. But there are many more such researches that still have to be done, in which many aspects of the various social conditions of the re-marginalized groups/communities can be re-underlined in the new form.

The basic source material which proves its utmost importance for study and analysis of different caste groups and communities of India is the 'Study of ancient Indian knowledge system of Dharmashastra'. Religion holds an important place in the lives of all individuals, groups and communities in India. Without this man's existence cannot be imagined. The human, the society, and its progress, all the concepts of human origin, have been contained in the writings of ancient Dharmashastras. Whether it is a fantasy or a reality, but without its study, we can neither understand ancient Indian society, its various groups, communities, religious-spiritual beliefs, nor can we accurately assess them in today's context.

### What is the meaning of Caste

The word 'Caste' is derived from the root word 'jan' from feminine indicator 'KAin' suffix, which literally means - to originate. Maharishi Manu has defined the caste as:

ācāryastvasyayāmjātimvidhivadvedapāragah |

utpādayatisāvitrīyāsāsatyāsā'jarāmarā ||

(manusmṛti 2.148)

An accomplished teacher of the Vedas who accords a caste to a child, through systematically generated method, thereafter, for the child, the caste is the truth, in mortality and immortality because, on being initiated by the sacrament of Yajnavapavya rituals, and on acquisition of knowledge and the meaning of Vedas by studying them he becomes detached and the master of liberation.

According to Vaman Shiva Rama Apte, 'the meaning of caste is: birth, nature of existence according to birth, gotra i.e. clan, family, dynasty and class etc. These are special properties of a class that separates it from other classes. The unique characteristics of a pedigree that tell the basic

element such as the symptoms of a cow or a horse (caste) गोत्व या अशवत्व) gotava or ashvatva. Each Caste has its own name. It is also a social fact whose existence is known and also accepted by all. The place of any Caste is always either higher or lower the other caste (Apte, Sanskrit Hindi Dictionary Pg.402). For example, according to Manu Maharaj-

maḍgalyambrāhmaṇasyasyātkṣatriyasyabalānvitam

vaiśyasyadhanasamyuktamśūdrasyatujugupsiptam ||

(manusmṛti 2.31)

The Brahmin should be given a name which conveys goodness Shubhatva-nobleness, with expressive word such as Brahma, Vishnu, Manu, Shiva, Agni, वायु Vayu and Ravi etc., the Kshatriya be given a name which conveys his manliness and vigor with words eg. Indra, Bhishma, Sudhodan etc., Vaishya's name should be named which conveys wealth-aishvarya with expressions of words such as Vasuman, Vitas, Dhanish, etc. and Shudra's name should carry the expressions of words which convey his need for protection and nursing.

śarmavadbrāhmaṇasyasyādrājñōrakṣāsamanvim |

vaiśyasyapuṣṭisamyuktamśūdrasyapreśyasamyutam ||

(manusmṛti 2.32)

The name of Brahmin should be added to the words of welfare, auspicious, good luck, joy and happiness. The name of the Kshatriya should be attached to the words of the Protector. The name of Vaishya should be attached to the word wealth-Prosperity, and the name of the Shudra should be attached to the word conveying service to all. Maharishi Parashar also endorses the naming of all Castes by Maharaj Manu.

### The following are the basis for the development of Castes

1. Development of caste on the basis of birth.
2. Development of caste on the basis of ill deeds and Ineligibility of rights
3. Development of caste on the basis of vocations/functions

#### Development of Caste on the basis of Birth

Caste System in India means the parceling of society into artificial parts, which are bound by differences in customs and rituals of marriage [1]. Caste in India is the result of imitation of higher classes by the lower classes [2]. A person's caste is determined by birth only and his birth entitlements specific to caste are recognized. For example, Dharmashastra declares that all the wealth in the world belongs to the Brahmin because his birth is best thing to have happened on earth ('Parashar Smriti' pg.21). That's why only he is entitled to have wealth. The determination of Varna earlier was done in accordance with qualities, deeds and nature of the person, his beliefs and intellectual rights. For example, that the glorious Brahma had assigned different functions to all four Varna which sprang from his mouth, arms, thighs and legs, ('Parashar Smriti' pg.33). The good conduct of the person was recognized and his Varna

whether high or low was determined in accordance with his conduct.

yo'nadhītyadvijovedamanyatrakuruteśrmam |

sajīvannevaśūdratvamāśugacchatisānvayaḥ ||

(manusmṛti 2.168)

The Brahmin, the Kshatriya, and Vaisha who do not read the Vedas and labor in other scriptures they, along with their dynasty, get Shudravarna status in their life time.

In ancient times, man could work according to his own nature, interests, ability and capacity, according to his needs, that could create the possibility of changing the Varna but in Caste system this change is not possible. From this it appears that the basis of Varna system was the service the society, not the birth of person in any particular lineage. Since, it being the birth-based system, caste was considered to be the basic premise. There are four Varna classifications in Chaturvanya, namely: "Chatavaro Varna Brahmin Kshatriya VitShudra: [3] Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, but the castes are numerous and there are further many sub-castes that emerged from the castes. To determine a place of these Castes and sub-castes in Varna is not only a difficult but an impossible task. Owing to the origin of caste from birth, many sub-Varna i.e. sub-classifications emerged. These sub-Varna or sub-classifications gave birth to many castes further.

In ancient times the basis of determination of the Varna was work, whereas the stamp of the caste comes from the person's birth. The Indian population remains divided into such groups of for nearly two thousand years, whose membership is determined by birth. The members of the groups marry within their groups. They stratify the society which means that they are not equal to each other but their high and low status is recognized. Here, the economic level and the reserves of knowledge can change, but once a caste has been stamped, it cannot change in your life. Every person, here, is born in the Caste, lives in the caste and dies in his caste. These groups are called the castes.

In India, the thinkers and scholars had attached caste system to birth to give permanence to the system as people can change other conditions of life but not the birth-based Castes.

sarvasyāsyatusargsyaguruptyarthamsamahādutyutiḥ |

mukhabāhūrūpajjānāmpṛthakkarmānyakalpayat ||

(manusmṛti 1.87)

In the beginning of creation, the creator God created the human beings for the different work and they will continue to remain in the same work in re-births.

jātimātropajīvīvākāmāmsyādbrāhmaṇabruvaḥ ||

dharmapravaktānrpaterntuśūdraḥkathamcana ||

(manusmṛti 8.21)

Those Brahmin who are not even capable to teach, can be a teacher of the king to teach Dharma but Shudra cannot

be his teacher even after three births. Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya, these three Varna are worth taking second birth for schooling and knowledge and are called twice-born, the fourth Varna cannot get second birth of dwij for acquiring knowledge. He is born for one birth only not second birth for knowledge.

ekamevatuśūdrasyaprabhuḥ karma samādīśat |

eteṣāmevavarṇānāmśūsrūṣāmanasūyayā ||

(manusmṛti 1.91)

The God has given only one work to Shudra and that is to serve these three Varna (Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya). The person who is born in a Varna is considered, due to his birth, to belong to the same caste, as below:

sarvasyāsyatusargsyagruptyarthamsamahādutyutiḥ |

mukhabāhūrūpajjānāmpṛthakkarmānyakalpayat ||

(manusmṛti 1.87)

In the beginning of creation, the creator God created the human beings for the different work and they will continue to remain in the same work in re-births.

It shows that with the development of Caste, the birth of a person in a caste used to give rise to special rights to him. This scheme helped reinforce caste. In this scheme the birth of descendants helped develop caste. New castes and sub-castes have originated on births of children on account of intermingling of castes.

brāhmaṇādvaiśyakanyāyāmambaṣṭhonāmajāyate |

niśādaḥśūdrakanyāyāmyaḥpāraśavaucyate ||

(manusmṛti 10.8)

The descendants of Brahmin father who are born of Vaishya mother are called 'Ambasth caste, and the descendants of Brahmin mother born from Shudra father are called Nishad also called Parashava. Yagnavalkya Rishi has also called the children thus born with the same names as-

viprānmūrdhāvasikto hi kṣatriyāyāmvīśaḥstriyām |

ambaṣṭhaḥśūdrāṇiśādojātaḥpāraśvo'pivā ||

(Yājñavalkyasmṛti, ācārādhyāya,91.)

Maharishi Gautam has also called the descendant of Anulom marriage the marriages of high Caste Male and Low caste female under these names. Such as- (Manusmṛti 10.88) anulomāntaraikāntarad-vayantarāśujātāḥsa-varṇā-mbaṣṭhograṇiśādadauṣmantapāraśavāḥ”

kṣatriyācchūdrakanyāyāmkrūcāravihāravān |

kṣatraśūdravapurjanturugronāmaprajāyate ||

(Yājñavalkyasmṛti, ācārādhyāya)

The descendant of Shudra woman and Kshatriya man is said to be carrying names conveying fierceness/furiousness (ugrapan), but according to YagnavalkyaSmriti, the son

born to Vaishya and Shudra women by the Kshatriya is respectively called Mahishya and Ugra.As:

vaiśyāsūdrosturājanānmāhiṣyograusutaumr̥tau |  
vaiśyātukaraṇaḥsūdrayāmvinnāsveṣavidhiḥsmr̥taḥ ||  
(Yājñavalkyasmṛti, ācārādhyāya,92.)

According to Manusmṛiti, Soot caste is produced as follows:

kṣatriyādviprakanyāyāmsūto bhavati jātitaḥ |  
vaiśyānmāgadhavaidehaurājaviprādganāsutau ||  
(manusmṛti 10.11)

The descendant of a Brahmin girl from Kshatriya man is called a Soot. The children born from Vaishya and Kshatriya and Brahmin girls are called Maagadh and Vaidaiha respectively. From Shudra man to Vaishya women, Kshatriya and Brahman women are respectively called Ayogaya, Kshta and Chandal. It means, from Ambedh, Nishad and Namantar, Parashava, Ugra, Soot, Maghadh, Vaideh, Ayogaya, Khashta and Chandal are transformed into castes from Varna. Acharya Yagnavalkya also admits that the son born from the Kshatriya man and a Brahmin girl is Soot, the son born from Vaishya, Vaidaih, and from Shudra is called Chandal, who is excluded from all religions. For example:

brāhmaṇyāmkṣatriyāsūtovaiśyādvaidihakastthā |  
sūdrājātastucaṇālaḥsarvadharmabahiskṛtaḥ ||  
(yājñavalkyasmṛti, ācārādhyāya,93)

According to Aapasthamb Dharmasutra, 'A new caste has been mentioned in Amarkosh which is said to be the child of the Kshatriya man and a Vaishya woman (Manusmṛiti 10.12). Probably they were similar to the Mahishya who were described as Shudra along with Dravid, Kalinga, Pulinad, Ushinar, Kollisarp, Shaka, Yavan and Kamboj.

From this it appears that the cross-breeding of the four Varna among themselves, give birth to different castes, which are different from original four Varna and are called by above mentioned names. From these Castes also, sub-castes originate such as:

brāhmaṇādugrakanyāyāmāvṛtonāmajāyate |  
ābhīroambaṣṭhakanyāyāmāgavyāmtudhigvaṇa || [4]

The descendant of the Brahmin man and Ugra girl is called Avrat. From Brahmin man and Ambashat girl, the child is called Aabhir and Brahmin man and Ayogaya girl, the child is called as Dhigvana.

### Development of castes on the basis of deeds and

#### Ineligibility of rights

Some standard eligibilities/merits were determined which were to be followed by certain Castes. If the castes fail to follow them or live up to that standard, they were

called by different names, which, over a period of time, were turned into Castes with the same names as:

dvijātayaḥsavarṇāsujanāntyavrtānyastuyāna |  
tānsāvitrīparibhraṣṭhānvṛātanitīvinirdiśeta. ||  
(Manusmṛiti 10.20)

vṛātyāttujāyateviprātpāpātmābhūrjakaṇṭakaḥ |  
āvāntyavātadhānaucapuspadhaḥsaikhaevaca ||  
(manusmṛti 10.21)

### Development of Caste on the basis of Vocations/Functions

Some castes have also been formed on the basis of profession people followed for their livelihood. The kind of work, the people used to do, it formed the basis of development of their own separate caste in long run.

prasādhanopacārajñamadāsamḍāsajīvanam |  
sairindhraṃvāgurāvṛtiṃsūtedasyurayogave ||  
(manusmṛti 10.32)

maitreyakaṃtuvaidehomādhūkaṃsamprasūyate ||  
nṛnpraṃśamsatyajasraṃyoghaṇṭātāḍo'ruṇodaye ||  
(manusmṛti 10.33)

caṇḍlātpāṇḍusopākastvaksāravyavahāravān |  
āhiṇḍikonīśādenavaidehyāmevajāyate ||  
(manusmṛti 10.37)

caṇḍālenatusopākōmūlavasyanavṛtimān |  
pukkasyāṃjāyatepāpaḥsadāsajjanagarhitaḥ ||  
(manusmṛti 10.38)

niśādastrītucaṇḍālātpuṭramāntyāvāsāyīnam |  
śmaśānagocaraṃsūtebāhyānāmapiḥgarhitaḥ ||  
(manusmṛti 10.39)

It can be clearly said that castes, which emerged in various forms, continued to take concrete shape and has now solidified to take such a shape as to be seemingly impossible to be abolished even after 70 years of Indian Independence.

There is a need to undertake Dharmshastric studies in the social and cultural studies in the Varna order for groups earlier known as Shudra and currently known as Dalit or Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe and Other Backward Caste in order to create egalitarian ideas in society. Therefore, it is important to pause and ponder over those tendencies which kept Shudras inferior to and at the mercy of twice-born, the Dwij (Twice-born).

### Gender

In India, Gender issues also are social problems reflecting social anomaly. The cultural, social, economic domination of men over women, and the rationale of this supremacy is called patriarchy which socializes the



domination of men in sex relations. Gender is socialization of male's domination over females in all aspects of their lives. On the basis of the above definitions, in Sanskrit studies, the equality, inequality and their merits and demerits of ideas concerning gender can be described.

### Gender question in Vedic studies and Dharmashastra

'Dharmashastra' is considered to be the main source for the study of India's social history and socio-cultural structure. Based on these, so many scholars have done research on 'the condition of women in ancient India'. These studies have often tried to show that the condition of women in ancient India was very advanced and there was no difference between the man and woman in the society; the daughters were married only when they were adult; they had the rights in the father's property; the practice of widow remarriage was prevalent; and the woman had the right to be divorced if she wanted and needed it. In short, the depiction of the conditions of women in studies of scholars is mainly eulogies of their conditions in society of Ancient India. However after, thorough study and analysis of the various texts written in ancient times, it becomes clear that most of the research and studies done so far are one sided and parochial; the conclusions have been reached by picking only such facts and citing pieces of texts, which depict the advanced conditions of women.

In this study I have produced details of those facts and as shown how these studies are biased in showing the advanced status of women and how it resulted in improper evaluation of the condition of women, as described in the Sanskrit Dharmashastra of ancient India. This is also an important fact, worth consideration for the condition of women, that these studies, so far, have centered around only women of one particular or elite group. What was the condition of women in general in different periods of history? Most of the scholars ignored this question. Keeping this in mind, in this presentation, I have analyzed the condition of women in general and Shudra women in particular, in the sacred text of Dharmashastra. The Varna-Vyavastha in Indian society, forced out the thought, the concept and the fact of woman being the origin of production, the progenitor. The origin of all four Varna has been accredited to man. Women were not even born! It is also no less surprising to see here that in origin theory of Varna System, an imaginary man (Brahma) has been conceived to be birth giver in the form of a mother in place of a woman.

### Why the concept of a man (Brahma) in the form of a mother?

After the study of various religious texts of ancient India, we have an amazingly unique concept of human origin. The important thing here is that in this religious and mythological conception of origin, there is no woman, but only man is there. Please see the eleven and twelve mantra of 90<sup>th</sup> Sukta of 10<sup>th</sup> mandala of PurushSukta of 'Rigveda' –

yatpuruṣamvyadadyu: katidhāvyaḥkalpayan |

mukhaṁkimasyakobāhubūrpādāucyate ||

(Regved 10.90.11)

brāhmaṇo'syamukhamāśīdbāhūrājanya: kṛta: |

urutadasyayadvaiśya: padbhyāmsūdro'jāyata ||

(Regved 10.90.12)

The meaning of the first mantra is that, in how many ways had the Lord of Creatures (Prajapati) who created human Society personifying it with Man (Purush) though symbolically only, imagined the Man? What is the mouth of this man? Who are his two hands? Who are his both thighs and who are his both feet? Take a look at this verse (Shloka). Here the man is a progenitor or creator of Universe. Has a man ever been the originator of the Universe? Can he be? What is this fantasy? What would have been the reason and justification for establishing the Man as birth-giver, the mother? Just because, the woman has been respected in the society for bearing the child as a mother from time immemorial, what was the reason that Man had been conceived as the mother of the Man? Was it not, presumably, a conspiracy to dent the esteem of woman in the form of a mother? Numerous such questions arise to this effect. The Historians, Sociologists and Feminists and Researchers belonging to lower classes should investigate the depth of this mantra. Thereafter, in this mantra, the depiction of the social system of Indian society has been done as various parts of body of this Man conceived as mother. It has been told that the higher the body part, the higher is the caste and lower the body part, the lower is the caste of person. It means that the mouth of the so-called mother Purush is Brahmin, Arms are Kshatriya, the thighs are Vaishya and the feet are Shudra. How concocted and hypothetical is the depiction of this interpretation? Here, an interconnection in some form or the other can be seen between both the above-mentioned Mantra Shaloks. The question here also arises that why do these religious teachers, the Dharmacharyas, imagine the man as a mother? Why do they want to install him as mother? Are not they hinting towards prevailing male domination in society then? Had the women, in the beginning of ancient era, when the writings of Rigveda etc. or say when Mantras and Shaloks were being written, while being in the company of nature, not been reduced to second grade status in society? Probably this second-grade status of women might have been prevailing for centuries in society. Then, this is going to create a big problem for those scholars who do not tire narrating that in the Vedas and Puranas, we do get the glimpse of prevalent matriarchy i.e. Matri-vyavastha, in Indian society. If it is so, we will have to question these thousands of scholars, claiming matriarchy, Matri-vyavastha, to justify the conception of a man, as a mother. If there is a reason for every cause, so must be with this conception also. This Shaloka has given reason to question and the answer must also be found in that Shaloka. The truth lies in understanding this very Mantra Shaloka. If this conundrum is understood, this will open a door for proper understanding this issue, before us.

I feel that we should understand that gradually men's supremacy in society was taking roots in society. He must have established his own belief systems in all spheres. By reducing the women to second position in society and by restricting them to the houses after usurping all their rights, they might have been enslaved to be maids. But there was still a place where man used to feel defeated. As the birth-giver, women still had respect in society. The man's

supremacy wanted to crush this honor of the woman as birth-giver, as a mother. Thus defeated, man supremacy conceived the man, as being mother, of himself. He probably wanted to conquer her in this form also of woman through an imaginary which was impossible at that time.

Now let us come to the next mantra, in which the mother-as-man's body parts have been established in the society as being parts of Varna Order/Varnavyavastha. And this division of the Man's parts took the form of gradation in Varna Order of society. Over a period of time this division established deep roots in Varnavyavastha and this social gradation became birth based. Let us now, once again analyze the organic inter-relation of both the mantras. The first Mantra is indicative of male domination, and then the second Mantra Shaloka represents the Varna System. In the first Mantra, the woman was removed from her last honorable place as mother while in second, through depiction of mother-as-man's lower body parts that similar to the lower position of feet; her position is last in society. There are many Mantra/stanzas depicting this Varnavyastha and second grade position of women in the society. As:

vaiśyaśūdrāvapiṛāptaakuṭumbe'tithidharmaṇau |

bhojayetsahabhṛtyaisvānṛśasyamprayojanam ||

(manusmṛti 3.112)

If the Shudra come to Brahmin's house, they should have mercy on them and give them food by making them sit with their domestic servants. Here it should be seen that a Shudra has been invited to have food as a guest in the company of domestic servants. Is it honor for him, as a guest or dishonor? In this way, do the proponents of great Indian culture; include Shudra and women in "AthithiDevoBhava" slogan? Were Shudra and woman also considered as god in his Varna/man's Order? It should be said here that as a guest there was respect for men and only those men were respectable who were related to the so-called upper castes. In short, it can be said that, if we analyze deeply the Vedas, Dharamsutra and other literature there are many startling things.<sup>1</sup> The woman of the so-called upper classes could still, sometimes, attend religious ceremonies, acquire education and write Richa of Vedas. As:

1. GhoshaKakshivati (10-10 / 3 9 / 1-14),
2. Godha (r. 5 / 281-6),
3. Vishvaavara (5 .5 / 28 / 1-6),
4. Ups (8.8 9 1-7),
5. NishatuBahu (10/10/10/17),
6. Aditi (R.10 / 72 / 1-9),
7. Indranil (10.05.08.23 / 10, 145 / 1-6),
8. SermaDevshuni (10, 108, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11),
9. Romansha (R.1.17 9 / 1-6),
10. Urvashi (10.05.14, 2,4,7,11,13,15,16,18),
11. Lopamudra (R. 1 / 179 / 1-6),
12. YamiVaivaswati (10.0 / 10 / 1,3,5,6,7,11,13),
13. SashastiAhirsi (8.8.1134),
14. Surya (10/05/85),
15. Savitri (This woman Brilliant Mwadi the women loans. 10 / 85 / 1-47),

16. Siktaninavari (Hrik9 / 86 / 11 / 20),
17. YamiVaivaswati (10/10, 10, 1,3,4,6,7,11,13),
18. IndraSoonusha (10.28 / 1),
19. AgastyaSwasa (10/60/26),
20. DakshinaPrajapati (10/10 107/1-11),
21. Vagambhurni (10/02/2011 1-8),
22. Kushika's night (ra. 10 / 127 / 1-8)
23. RidhamKamayani (10.05.11-5),
24. IndraMatar: (10 \ 153 \ 1-5),
25. Shachi Pauli (10.05.16),
26. The solicitation (10/10/18/1-3) etc., etc.

But there is no such instance whether the women of Shudra Varna also could do the similar activities?

#### Situation of Shudra Woman in Dharmshastra

Although there is not much information about Shudra-woman in religious texts and Smiritis, nor is it separately analyzed like a Shudra man. But it should be assumed that when the policy of social exclusion, the values, and beliefs, religious, political, economic and statutory legislation, for the Shudra man was being formed, the Shudra woman was also included in these along with Shudra man. It was not so that there were different laws for the Shudra man and different for woman. The manner in which the Shudra-man was living under strict penalties and legislation for the exclusion from society. In the same way, the same legislations were imposed on the Shudra woman too. The only difference was that being a woman's body, she could be used for physical gratification. Somewhere, she was called a prostitute. As said:

takamanmaṇjavatogacchabhikānavāparasrām |

śūdrāmicchapravaryatātakmanvīvadhūnuhi ||

(mā.sahimṭā 23.21)

She was barred like Shudra man from accumulation of wealth, acquiring education, thread ceremony i.e. UpnayanSamskar, religious functions and fire-ritual.

yaddharīṇoyavamatīnapuṣṭambahumanyate |

śūdroyadaryāyajāronapoṣmanumanyate ||

(mā.sahimṭā 23.11)

Although women of upper caste also had restrictions, they were also not free, but at least, they were free to dream. While comparatively, the Shudra women could never think beyond rules and injunctions ordained by society what to think of dreaming.

The Shudra women were also cursed to suffer the same sting, which the Shudra man used to suffer with. The conditions were similar at that time also, wherein women of upper caste used to discriminate against the Shudra woman on the basis of Varna order. Although women of Shudra Varna and women of upper castes suffered equally at the hands of patriarchy, Savarna women used to take pride in considering themselves separate from Shudra women.

Even today there is no change in the thinking of society for Shudra women, from what has been depicted in Ancient Dharamgranth and Smiritis. What was required to be done,

was a joint fight by women and Shudra against Patriarchy and Varna Order. But it was never seen happening. But the changes in the condition of women and the Shudra woman have been observed after obtaining legislative rights. The Constitution has overturned the injunctions of Smritis by giving women the right to equality. The distinction can obviously be observed between modern woman and the women of Smiriti era. There is still a need to clarify the position of woman and caste in the perspectives of Dharmshastraas.

### Conclusion

I want to conclude that there existed descriptions of caste and gender in Dharmashatsra and Smritis as discussed in this Paper. However, these debates are only descriptive, normative and perceptive. Over the years, they have influenced the social, religious and cultural spheres of Indian society. They also influence people in their day to day lives. This is why, people like to adhere to these principles as discussed in the Shastras. If some people want to reform it, there is resistance to it. So much so, if lower strata like SC/ST and women want to go against these Shastrik injunctions, fierce atrocities are committed on them in the Indian society.

In the light of the above discussion, I would like to suggest that a new debate should be initiated in the Sanskrit Studies on the issues of Caste and Gender.

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