

cares whether a wife is 'unchaste' (*paraḥ-puṃsā*) or not is a mere mistranslation,⁵⁷ the expression *paraḥ-puṃsā* really meaning 'removed from the male persons.' And the uncertainty asserted in some passages⁵⁸ as to origin from a Ṛṣi is not a sign of doubtful descent, but is due to the fact that Ṛṣihood was a difficult matter to ascertain. None the less woman's position was lowered by the prevalence of polygamy, and such stories as that of Ahalyā and Indra⁵⁹ are not compatible with a very high standard of morality. A similar conclusion is pointed to by references in the Yajurveda⁶⁰ to relations between the Ārya man and the Śūdrā woman, and by a spell given in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad⁶¹ to expiate relations with the wife of a Śrotriya (Brahmin theologian).

(e) Incest was recognized in the marriage of brother and sister as appears from the legend of Yama and Yamī in the Rigveda,⁶² which clearly shows that such a marriage was not approved by the feeling of the Vedic age. There is also another hymn⁶³ in which reference to such intercourse appears to be made. Mention is further made in the Rigveda⁶⁴ to the wedlock of Prajāpati and his daughter, which is, however, interpreted mythologically in the Brāhmaṇas,⁶⁵ an interpretation which may be correct. That incest, however, actually did take place is clear from the Atharvaveda,⁶⁶ but even though the mythological interpretation of the passage were not justified, no conclusion could be drawn from the hymn as to the normal occurrence of such relations.

⁵⁷ So Böhtlingk, Dictionary, s.v.; Delbrück, *op. cit.*, 548.

⁵⁸ Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā, i. 4, II; Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, cited in Ludwig, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁹ Cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 65.

⁶⁰ Taittiriya Saṃhitā, vii. 4, 19, 2. 3; Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, xxiii. 30. 31.

⁶¹ vi. 4, II.

⁶² x. 10.

⁶³ x. 162, 5.

⁶⁴ x. 61, 5-7.

⁶⁵ Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, iii. 33; Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, i. 7, 4, I; Muir, *Sanskrit Texts*, 4, 46, 47; Max Müller, *op. cit.*, 529, 530.

⁶⁶ viii. 6, 7.

1. **Dhava** is the name of a tree (*Grislea tormentosa*) mentioned, together with the **Plakṣa**, **Aśvattha**, and **Khādira**, in the Atharvaveda.¹

¹ v. 5, 5; xx. 137, II. Cf. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, 62.