

several points bearing on the moral condition of the people :
(a) the exposure of children ; (b) the exposure of the aged ;
(c) prostitution ; (d) adultery ; (e) incest.

(a) The exposure of girl infants is asserted by Zimmer³² on the strength of a passage in the Kāthaka Samhitā,³³ but it seems clear that the passage has been misunderstood,³⁴ and that it refers merely to laying the child aside, not exposing it, while a boy was lifted up. It is, however, true that the birth of a girl was not at all popular, not an unnatural sentiment in an early society, and paralleled among other Āryan peoples.³⁵

(b) The exposure of the aged is also inferred by Zimmer³⁶ from a passage of the Rigveda,³⁷ and from the mention of persons exposed (*ud-hitāḥ*) in the Atharvaveda.³⁸ The latter passage may well refer merely to the bodies being exposed after death to the elements (as is done by the Parsis). The former passage merely refers to the individual case of some person who may have been cast out, and proves absolutely nothing as to a habitual or recognized custom, nor can such a custom be inferred from, e.g., the legend of *Cyavāna*.

(c) That prostitution existed in Rigvedic times is certain, but its extent is disputed. Brotherless girls were frequently reduced to becoming prostitutes;³⁹ the putting away of an illegitimate child is referred to in the Rigveda;⁴⁰ besides the

³² *Altindisches Leben*, 319, 320. Cf. also Weber, *Indische Studien*, 5, 54, 260; Kaegi, *Der Rigveda*, n. 49; Schrader, *Prehistoric Antiquities*, 389, 390; Ludwig, *Translation of the Rigveda*, 6, 142; Fischel, *Vedische Studien*, 2, 48.

³³ xxvii. 9. Cf. Taittiriya Samhitā, vi. 5, 10, 3; Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, xv. 17, 12; Nirukta iii. 4.

³⁴ Böhtlingk, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 44, 494-496. The traditional rendering of the passages is not that it refers to exposure, but to getting rid of a daughter on her marriage.

³⁵ Av. viii. 6, 25; Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, vii. 15; Max Müller, *Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, 409; Zimmer, *op. cit.*, 320; Schrader, *op. cit.*, 390.

³⁶ *Op. cit.*, 327, 328. Strabo, pp. 513, 517, 520, reports the practice as prevailing in Iran; Bactria, and the Massagetae; it prevailed among the Norsemen, Weinhold, *Altindisches Leben*, 473, and conceivably among the early Romans (*de pontani senes*, Cicero, *Pro Roscio*, 100; but this and other cases may be really instances of the ritual casting into water of the worn-out vegetation spirit for the purpose of reviving it). See Kaegi, *op. cit.*, n. 50; Schrader, *op. cit.*, 379, n.

³⁷ viii. 51, 2.

³⁸ xviii. 2, 34. See *Anagnidagḍha*.

³⁹ Rv. i. 124, 7; iv. 5, 5; Av. i. 17, 1; and *of. Ayogū*.

⁴⁰ ii. 29, 1. Cf. Max Müller, *op. cit.*, 26.