

THE UNTOUCHABLES WHO WERE THEY AND WHY THEY BECAME UNTOUCHABLES?

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PART IV.

NEW THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF UNTOUCHABILITY

CHAPTER IX

CONTEMPT FOR BUDDHISTS AS THE ROOT OF UNTOUCHABILITY

THE Census Reports for India published by the Census Commissioner at the interval of every ten years from 1870 onwards contain a wealth of information nowhere else to be found regarding the social and religious life of the people of India. Before the Census of 1910 the Census Commissioner had a column called "Population by Religion". Under this heading the population was shown (1) Muslims, (2) Hindus, (3) Christians, etc. The Census Report for the year 1910 marked a new departure from the prevailing practice. For the first time it divided the Hindus under three

separate categories, (i) Hindus, (ii) Animists and Tribal, and (iii) the Depressed Classes or Untouchables. This new classification has been continued ever since.

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This departure from the practice of the previous Census Commissioners raises three questions. First is what led the Commissioner for the Census of 1910 to introduce this new classification. The second is what was the criteria adopted as a basis for this classification. The third is what are the reasons for the growth of certain practices which justify the division of Hindus into three separate categories mentioned above.

The answer to the first question will be found in the address presented in 1909 by the Muslim Community under leadership of H.H. The Aga Khan to the then Viceroy, Lord Minto, in which they asked for a separate and adequate representation for the Muslim community in the legislature, executive and the public services.

In the address*mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_1 there occurs the following passage –

"The Mohamedans of India number, according to the census taken in the year 1901 over sixty-two millions or between one-fifth and one-fourth of the total population of His Majesty's Indian dominions, *and if a reduction be made for the uncivilised portions of the community enumerated under the heads of animist and other minor religions, as well as for those classes who are ordinarily classified as Hindus but properly speaking are not Hindus at all, the proportion of Mohamedans to the Hindu Majority becomes much larger*mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_2 We therefore desire to submit that under any system of representation extended or limited a community in itself more numerous than the entire population of any first class European power except Russia may justly lay claim to adequate recognition as an important factor in the State.

"We venture, indeed, with Your Excellency's permission to go a step further, and urge that the position accorded to the Mohamedan community in any kind of representation direct or indirect, and in all other ways effecting their status and influence should be commensurate, not merely with their numerical strength but also with their political importance and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the empire, and we also hope that Your Excellency will in this

connection be pleased to give due consideration to the position which they occupied in India a little more than hundred years ago and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds."

The portion in italics has a special significance. It was introduced in the address to suggest that in comprising the numerical strength of the Muslims with that of the Hindus the population of the animists, tribals and the Untouchables should be excluded. The reason for this new classification of 'Hindus' adopted by the Census Commissioner in 1910 lies in this demand of the Muslim community for separate representation on augmented scale. At any rate this is how the Hindus understood this demand mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm:/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_3

Interesting as it is, the first question as to why the Census Commissioner made this departure in the system of classification is of less importance than the second question. What is important is to know the basis adopted by the Census Commissioner for separating the different classes of Hindus into (1) those who were hundred per cent Hindus and (2) those who were not.

The basis adopted by the Census Commissioner for separation is to be found in the circular issued by the Census Commissioner in which he laid down certain tests for the purpose mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm:/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_4 of distinguishing these two classes. Among those who were not hundred percent Hindus were included castes and tribes which :-

- (1) (1) Deny the supremacy of the Brahmins.
- (2) (2) Do not receive the Mantra from a Brahmin or other recognized Hindu Guru.
- (3) (3) Deny the authority of the Vedas.
- (4) (4) Do not worship the Hindu gods.
- (5) (5) Are not served by good Brahmins as family priests.
- (6) (6) Have no Brahmin priests at all.
- (7) (7) Are denied access to the interior of the Hindu temples.
- (8) (8) Cause pollution (a) by touch, or (b) within a certain distance.
- (9) (9) Bury their dead.
- (10) (10) Eat beef and do no reverence to the cow.

Out of these ten tests some divide the Hindus from the Animists and the Tribal. The rest divide the Hindus from the Untouchables. Those that divide the Untouchables from the Hindus are (2), (5), (6), (7), and (10). It is

with them that we are chiefly concerned.

For the sake of clarity it is better to divide these tests into parts and consider them separately. This Chapter will be devoted only to the consideration of (2), (5), and (6).

The replies received by the Census Commissioner to questions embodied in tests (2), (5) and (6) reveal (1) that the Untouchables do not receive the Mantra from a Brahmin; (2) that the Untouchables are not served by good Brahmin priests at all; and (3) that Untouchables have their own priests reared from themselves. On these facts the Census Commissioners of all Provinces are unanimous. mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_5

Of the three questions the third is the most important. Unfortunately the Census Commissioner did not realise this. For in making his inquiries he failed to go to the root of the matter to find out: Why were the Untouchables not receiving the Mantra from the Brahmin? Why Brahmins did not serve the Untouchables as their family priests? Why do the Untouchables prefer to have their own priests? It is the 'why' of these facts which is more important than the existence of these facts. It is the 'why' of these facts which must be investigated. For the clue to the origin of Untouchability lies hidden behind it.

Before entering upon this investigation, it must be pointed out that the inquiries by the Census Commissioner were in a sense one-sided. They showed that the Brahmins shunned the Untouchables. They did not bring to light the fact that the Untouchables also shunned the Brahmins. Nonetheless, it is a fact. People are so much accustomed to thinking that the Brahmin is the superior of the Untouchables and the Untouchable accepts himself as his inferior; that this statement that the Untouchables look upon the Brahmin as an impure person is sure to come to them as a matter of great surprise. The fact has however been noted by many writers who have observed and examined the social customs of the Untouchables. To remove any doubt on the point, attention is drawn to the following extracts from their writings.

The fact was noticed by Abbe Dubois who says mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_6:

"Even to this day a Pariah is not allowed to pass a Brahmin Street in a village, though nobody can prevent, or prevents, his approaching or passing by a Brahmin's house in towns. The Pariahs, on their part will under no circumstances, allow a Brahmin to pass through their *paracherries*

(collection of Pariah huts) as they firmly believe it will lead to their ruin". Mr. Hemingsway, the Editor of the Gazetteer of the Tanjore District says:

"These casts (Parayan and Pallan or Chakkiliyan castes of Tanjore District) strongly object to the entrance of a Brahmin into their quarters believing that harm will result to them therefrom". [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_7](#)

Speaking of the Holeyas of the Hasan District of Mysore, Captain J.S.F. Mackenzie says:-

"Every village has its Holigiri as the quarters inhabited by the Holiars, formerly agrestic serfs, is called outside the village boundary hedge. This, I thought was because they were considered as impure race, whose touch carries defilement with it." [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_8](#)

Such is the reason generally given by the Brahmins who refuse to receive anything directly from the hands of a Holiar, and yet the Brahmins consider great luck will wait upon them if they can manage to pass through the Holigiri without being molested. To this Holiars have a strong objection, and, should a Brahmin attempt to enter their quarters, they turn out in a body and slipper him, in former times, it is said, to death. Members of the other castes may come as far as the door, but they must not enter the house, for that would bring the Holiar bad luck. If, by chance, a person happens to get in, the owner takes care to tear the intruder's cloth, tie up some salt in one corner of it, and turn him out. This is supposed to neutralise all the good luck which might have accrued to the trespasser, and avert any evil which ought to have befallen the owner of the house.

What is the explanation of this strange phenomenon? The explanation must of course fit in with the situation as it stood at the start, *i.e.*, when the Untouchables were not Untouchables but were only Broken Men. We must ask why the Brahmins refused to officiate at the religious ceremonies of the Broken Men? Is it the case that the Brahmins refused to officiate? Or is it that the Broken Men refused to invite them? Why did the Brahmin regard Broken Men as impure? Why did the Broken Men regard the Brahmins as impure? What is the basis of this antipathy?

This antipathy can be explained on one hypothesis. It is that the Broken Men were Buddhists. As such they did not revere the Brahmins, did not employ them as their priests and regarded them as impure. The Brahmin

on the other hand disliked the Broken Men because they were Buddhists and preached against them contempt and hatred with the result that the Broken Men came to be regarded as Untouchables.

We have no direct evidence that the Broken Men were Buddhists. No evidence is as a matter of fact necessary when the majority of Hindus were Buddhists. We may take it that they were.

That there existed hatred and abhorrence against the Buddhists in the mind of the Hindus and that this feeling was created by the Brahmins is not without support.

Nilkant in his *Prayaschit Mayukhamk*:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_9 quotes a verse from Manu which says :-

"If a person touches a Buddhist or a follower of Pachupat, Lokayata, Nastika and Mahapataki, he shall purify himself by a bath."

The same doctrine is preached by Apararka in his Smriti. mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_10 Vradha Harit goes further and declares entry into the Buddhist Temple as sin requiring a purificatory bath for removing the impurity.

How widespread had become this spirit of hatred and contempt against the followers of Buddha can be observed from the scenes depicted in Sanskrit dramas. The most striking illustration of this attitude towards the Buddhists is to be found in the Mricchakatika. In Act VII of that Drama the hero Charudatta and his friend Maitreya are shown waiting for Vasantasena in the park outside the city. She fails to turn up and Charudatta decides to leave the park. As they are leaving, they see the Buddhist monk by name Samvahaka. On seeing him, Charudatta says :-

"Friend Maitreya, I am anxious to meet Vasantsena ... Come, let us go. (After walking a little) Ah ! here's an inauspicious sight, a Buddhist monk coming towards us. (After a little reflection) well, let him come this way, we shall follow this other path. (Exit.)

In Act VIII the monk is in the Park of Sakara, the King's brother-in-law, washing his clothes in a pool. Sakara accompanied by Vita turns up and threatens to kill the monk. The following conversation between them is revealing :

"Sakara - Stay, you wicked monk.

Monk - Ah! Here's the king's brother-in-law! Because some monk has offended him, he now beats up any monk he happens to meet.

- Sakara- Stay, I will now break your head as one breaks a radish in a tavern. (*Beats him*).
- Vita- Friend, it is not proper to beat a monk who has put on the saffron-robcs, being disgusted with the world.
- Monk- (*Welcomes*) Be pleased, lay brother.
- Sakara- Friend, see. He is abusing me.
- Vita- What does he say?
- Sakara- He calls me lay brother (*upasaka*). Am I a barber?
- Vita- Oh! He is really praising you as a devotee of the Buddha.
- Sakara- Why has he come here?
- Monk- To wash these clothes.
- Sakara- Ah! you wicked monk. Even I myself do not bathe in this pool; I shall kill you with one stroke."

After a lot of beating, the monk is allowed to go. Here is a Buddhist Monk in the midst of the Hindu crowd. He is shunned and avoided. The feeling of disgust against him is so great that the people even shun the road the monk is travelling. The feeling of repulsion is so intense that the entry of the Buddhist was enough to cause the exit of the Hindus. The Buddhist monk is on a par with the Brahmin. A Brahmin is immune from death-penalty. He is even free from corporal punishment. But the Buddhist monk is beaten and assaulted without remorse, without compunction as though there was nothing wrong in it.

If we accept that the Broken Men were the followers of Buddhism and did not care to return to Brahmanism when it became triumphant over Buddhism as easily as other did, we have an explanation for both the questions. It explains why the Untouchables regard the Brahmins as inauspicious, do not employ them as their priest and do not even allow them to enter into their quarters. It also explains why the Broken Men came to be regarded as Untouchables. The Broken Men hated the Brahmins because the Brahmins were the enemies of Buddhism and the Brahmins imposed untouchability upon the Broken Men because they would not leave Buddhism. On this reasoning it is possible to conclude that one of the roots of untouchability lies in the hatred and contempt which the Brahmins created against those who were Buddhist.

Can the hatred between Buddhism and Brahmanism be taken to be the sole cause why Broken Men became Untouchables? Obviously, it cannot be. The hatred and contempt preached by the Brahmins was directed against Buddhists in general and not against the Broken Men in particular. Since untouchability stuck to Broken Men only, it is obvious that there was

some additional circumstance which has played its part in fastening untouchability upon the Broken Men. What that circumstance could have been? We must next direct our effort in the direction of ascertaining it.

CHAPTER X

BEEF EATING AS THE ROOT OF UNTOUCHABILITY

WE now take up test No. 10 referred to in the circular issued by the Census Commissioner and to which reference has already been made in the previous chapter. The test refers to beef-eating.

The Census Returns show that the meat of the dead cow forms the chief item of food consumed by communities which are generally classified as untouchable communities. No Hindu community, however low, will touch cow's flesh. On the other hand, there is no community which is really an Untouchable community which has not something to do with the dead cow. Some eat her flesh, some remove the skin, some manufacture articles out of her skin and bones.

From the survey of the Census Commissioner, it is well established that Untouchables eat beef. The question however is: Has beef-eating any relation to the origin of Untouchability? Or is it merely an incident in the economic life of the Untouchables? Can we say that the Broken Men came to be treated as Untouchables because they ate beef? There need be no hesitation in returning an affirmative answer to this question. No other answer is consistent with facts as we know them.

In the first place, we have the fact that the Untouchables or the main communities which compose them eat the dead cow and those who eat the dead cow are tainted with untouchability and no others. The co-relation between untouchability and the use of the dead cow is so great and so close that the thesis that it is the root of untouchability seems to be incontrovertible. In the second place if there is anything that separates the Untouchables from the Hindus, it is beef-eating. Even a superficial view of the food taboos of the Hindus will show that there are two taboos regarding food which serve as dividing lines. There is one taboo against meat-eating. It divides Hindus into vegetarians and flesh eaters. There is another taboo which is against beef eating. It divides Hindus into those who eat cow's flesh and those who do not. From the point of view of untouchability the first dividing line is of no importance. But the second is. For it completely marks off the Touchables from the Untouchables. The Touchables whether they are vegetarians or flesh-eaters are united in their

objection to eat cow's flesh. As against them stand the Untouchables who eat cow's flesh without compunction and as a matter of course and habit.mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_11

In this context it is not far-fetched to suggest that those who have a nausea against beef-eating should treat those who eat beef as Untouchables.

There is really no necessity to enter upon any speculation as to whether beef-eating was or was not the principal reason for the rise of Untouchability. This new theory receives support from the Hindu Shastras. The Veda Vyas Smriti contains the following verse which specifies the communities which are included in the category of Antyajjas and the reasons why they were so included.mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_12

L.12-13”The *Charmakars* (Cobbler), the *Bhatta* (Soldier), the *Bhilla*, the *Rajaka* (washerman), the *Puskara*, the *Nata* (actor), the *Vrata*, the *Meda*, the *Chandala*, the *Dasa*, the *Svapaka*, and the *Kolika*- these are known as Antyajjas as well as others who eat cow's flesh.”

Generally speaking the Smritikars never care to explain the why and the how of their dogmas. But this case is exception. For in this case, Veda Vyas does explain the cause of untouchability. The clause”as well as others who eat cow's flesh”is very important. It shows that the Smritikars knew that the origin of untouchability is to be found in the eating of beef. The dictum of Veda Vyas must close the argument. It comes, so to say, straight from the horse's mouth and what is important is that it is also rational for it accords with facts as we know them.

The new approach in the search for the origin of Untouchability has brought to the surface two sources of the origin of Untouchability. One is the general atmosphere of scorn and contempt spread by the Brahmins against those who were Buddhists and the second is the habit of beef-eating kept on by the Broken Men. As has been said the first circumstance could not be sufficient to account for stigma of Untouchability attaching itself to the Broken Men. For the scorn and contempt for Buddhists spread by the Brahmins was too general and affected all Buddhists and not merely the Broken Men. The reason why Broken Men only became Untouchables was because in addition to being Buddhists they retained their habit of beef-eating which gave additional ground for offence to the Brahmins to carry their new-found love and reverence to the cow to its logical conclusion. We may therefore conclude that the Broken Men were

exposed to scorn and contempt on the ground that they were Buddhists the main cause of their Untouchability was beef-eating.

The theory of beef-eating as the cause of untouchability also gives rise to many questions. Critics are sure to ask: What is the cause of the nausea which the Hindus have against beef-eating? Were the Hindus always opposed to beef-eating? If not, why did they develop such a nausea against it? Were the Untouchables given to beef-eating from the very start? Why did they not give up beef-eating when it was abandoned by the Hindus? Were the Untouchables always Untouchables? If there was a time when the Untouchables were not Untouchables even though they ate beef why should beef-eating give rise to Untouchability at a later-stage? If the Hindus were eating beef, when did they give it up? If Untouchability is a reflex of the nausea of the Hindus against beef-eating, how long after the Hindus had given up beef-eating did Untouchability come into being? These questions must be answered. Without an answer to these questions, the theory will remain under cloud. It will be considered as plausible but may not be accepted as conclusive. Having put forth the theory, I am bound to answer these questions. I propose to take up the following heads :-

- (1)(1) Did the Hindus never eat beef?
- (2)(2) What led the Hindus to give up be heating?
- (3)(3) What led the Brahmins to become vegetarians?
- (4)(4) Why did beef-eating give rise to Untouchability? and
- (5)(5) When was Untouchability born?

PART V

THE NEW THEORIES AND SOME QUESTIONS

CHAPTER XI

DID THE HINDUS NEVER EAT BEEF?

TO the question whether the Hindus ever ate beef, every Touchable Hindu, whether he is a Brahmin or a non-Brahmin, will say 'no, never'. In a certain sense, he is right. From times no Hindu has eaten beef. If this is all that the Touchable Hindu wants to convey by his answer there need be no quarrel over it. But when the learned Brahmins argue that the Hindus not only never ate beef but they always held the cow to be sacred and were

always opposed to the killing of the cow, it is impossible to accept their view.

What is the evidence in support of the construction that the Hindus never ate beef and were opposed to the killing of the cow?

There are two series of references in the Rig Veda on which reliance is placed. In one of these, the cow is spoken of as *Aghnya*. They are Rig Veda 1.164, 27; IV.1.6; V 82-8; V11.69. 71; X.87. *Aghnya* means 'one who does not deserve to be killed'. From this, it is argued that this was a prohibition against the killing of the cow and that since the Vedas are the final authority in the matter of religion, it is concluded that the Aryans could not have killed the cows, much less could they have eaten beef. In another series of references the cow is spoken of as sacred. They are Rig Veda VI.28.1.8. and VIII, 101. 15. In these verses the cow is addressed as Mother of Rudras, the Daughter of Vasus, the Sister of the Adityas and the Centre of Nectar. Another reference on the subject is in Rig Veda VIII. 101. 16 where the cow is called Devi (Goddess).

Reliance is also placed on certain passages in the Brahmanas and Sutras.

There are two passages in the Satapatha Brahmana which relate to animal sacrifice and beef-eating. One is at 111.1.2.21 and reads as follows :-

"He (the Adhvaryu) then makes him enter the hall. Let him not eat (the flesh) of either the cow or the ox, for the cow and the ox doubtless support everything here on earth. The gods spake, 'verily, the cow and the ox support everything here; come, let us bestow on the cow and the ox whatever vigour belonged to other species (of animals); and therefore the cow and the ox eat most. Hence were one to eat (the flesh) of an ox or a cow, there would be, as it were, an eating of everything, or, as it were, a going to the end (or, to destruction)... Let him therefore not eat (the flesh) of the cow and the ox."

The other passage is at 1, 2, 3, 6. It speaks against animal sacrifice and on ethical grounds.

A similar statement is contained in the Apastambha Dharma Sutra at 1, 5, 17, 29. Apastambha lays a general embargo on the eating of cow's flesh.

Such is the evidence in support of the contention that the Hindus never ate beef. What conclusion can be drawn from this evidence?

So far as the evidence from the Rig Veda is concerned the conclusion is based on a misreading and misunderstanding of the texts. The adjective *Aghnya* applied to the cow in the Rig Veda means a cow that was yielding milk and therefore not fit for being killed. That the cow is venerated in the Rig Veda is of course true. But this regard and veneration of the cow are

only to be expected from an agricultural community like the Indo-Aryans. This application of the utility of the cow did not prevent the Aryan from killing the cow for purposes of food. Indeed the cow was killed because the cow was regarded as sacred. As observed by Mr.Kane:

"It was not that the cow was not sacred in Vedic times, it was because of her sacredness that it is ordained in the Vajasaneyi Samhita that beef should be eaten."*mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_13

That the Aryans of the Rig Veda did kill cows for purposes of food and ate beef is abundantly clear from the Rig Veda itself. In Rig Veda (X.86.14) Indra says:- "They cook for one 15 plus twenty oxen". The Rig Veda (X.91.14) says that for Agni were sacrificed horses, bulls, oxen, barren cows and rams. From the Rig Veda (X.72.6) it appears that the cow was killed with a sword or axe.

As to the testimony of the Satapatha Bramhana, can it be said to be conclusive? Obviously, it cannot be. For there are passages in the other Bramhanas which give a different opinion.

To give only one instance. Among the Kamyashtis set forth in the Taittiriya Bramhana, not only the sacrifice of oxen and cows are laid down, but we are even told what kind and description of oxen and cows are to be offered to what deities. Thus, a dwarf ox is to be chosen for sacrifice to Vishnu; a drooping horned bull with a blaze on the forehead to Indra as the destroyer of Vritra; a black cow to Pushan; a red cow to Rudra; and so on. The Taittiriya Bramhana notes another sacrifice called *Panchasaradiya-seva*, the most important element of which was the immolation of seventeen five-year old humpless, dwarf-bulls, and as many dwarf heifers under three year-old.

As against the statement of the Apastamba Dharma Sutra, the following points may be noted.

First is the contrary statement contained in that Very Sutra. At 15, 14, 29, the Sutra says :-

"The cow and the bull are sacred and therefore should be eaten". The second is the prescription of Madhuparka contained in the Grahya Sutras. Among the Aryans the etiquette for receiving important guests had become settled into custom and had become a ceremony. The most important offering was Madhuparka. A detailed descriptions regarding Madhuparka are to be found in the various Grahya Sutras. According to most of the Grahya Sutras there are six persons who have a right to be served with Madhuparka namely; (1) Ritwija or the Brahmin called to

perform a sacrifice, (2) Acharya, the teacher, (3) The bridegroom (4) The King (5) The Snatak, the student who has just finished his studies at the Gurukul and (6) Any person who is dear to the host. Some add Atithi to this list. Except in the case of Ritvija, King and Acharya, Madhuparka is to be offered to the rest once in a year. To the Ritvija, King and Acharya it is to be offered each time they come.

What was this Madhuparka made of? There is divergence about the substances mixed in offering Madhuparka. Asv.gr and Ap.gr. (13.10) prescribe a mixture of honey and curds or clarified butter and curds. Others like Par.gr.13 prescribe a mixture of three (curds, honey and butter). Ap.gr. (13.11-12) states the view of some that those three may be mixed or five (those three with fried *yava* grain and barley). Hir.gr.L, 12, 10-12 give the option of mixing three or five (curds, honey, ghee, water and ground grain). The Kausika Sutra (92) speaks of nine kinds of mixtures, viz., *Brahma* (honey and curds), *Aindra* (of payasa), *Saurnya* (curds and ghee), *Pausna* (ghee and mantha), *Sarasvata* (milk and ghee), *Mausala* (wine and ghee, this being used only in Sautramanai and Rajasuya sacrifices), *Parivrajaka* (sesame oil and oil cake). The Madhava gr.l.9.22 says that the Veda declares that the Madhuparka must not be without flesh and so it recommends that if the cow is let loose, goat's meat or payasa (rice cooked in milk) may be offered; the Hir.gr. 1.13, 14 says that other meat should be offered; Baud.gr. (1.2,51-54) says that when the cow is let off, the flesh of a goat or ram may be offered or some forest flesh (of a deer, etc.) may be offered, as there can be no Madhuparka without flesh or if one is unable to offer flesh one may cook ground grains.

Thus the essential element in Madhuparka is flesh and particularly cow's flesh.

The killing of cow for the guest had grown to such an extent that the guest came to be called 'Go-ghna' which means the killer of the cow. To avoid this slaughter of the cows the Ashvateyana Grahya Sutra (1.24.25) suggests that the cow should be let loose when the guest comes so as to escape the rule of etiquette.

Thirdly, reference may be made to the ritual relating to disposal of the dead to counter the testimony of the Apastamba Dharma Sutra. The Sutra says smk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm:/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_14 :-

1. 1. He should then put the following (sacrificial) implements (on the dead body)
2. 2. Into the right hand the (spoon called) Guhu.
3. 3. Into the left the (other spoon called) Upabhrit.

4. 4. On his right side the wooden sacrificial sword called *Sphya*, on his left side the Agnihotrahavani (i.e., the laddle with which the Agnihotra oblations are sacrificed).
5. 5. On his chest the (big sacrificial laddle called) Dhruva. On his head the dishes. On his teeth the pressing stones.
6. 6. On the two sides of his nose, the two smaller sacrificial laddles called *Sruvas*.
7. 7. Or, if there is only one (Sruva), breaking it (in two pieces).
8. 8. On his two ears the two Prasitraharanas (i.e, the vessels into which the portion of the sacrificial food belonging to the Brahmin) is put
9. 9. Or, if there is only one (Prasitraharana), breaking it (in two pieces).
10. 10. On his belly the (vessel called) Patri.
11. 11. And the cup into which the cut-off portion (of the sacrificial food) are put.
12. 12. On his secret parts the (staff called) Samy.
13. 13. On his thighs two kindling woods.
14. 14. On his legs the mortar and the pestle.
15. 15. On his feet the two baskets.
16. 16. Or, if there is only one (basket), breaking it in two pieces.
17. 17. Those of the implements which have a hollow (into which liquids can be poured) are filled with sprinkled butter.
18. 18. The son (of the deceased person) should take the under and the upper mill-stone for himself.
19. 19. And the implements made of copper, iron and earthenware.
20. 20. Taking out the omentum of the she-animal he should cover therewith the head and the mouth (of the dead person) with the verse, 'But on the armour (which will protect thee) against Agni, by that which comes from the cows.' (Rig Veda. X. 16.7).
21. 21. Taking out the kidneys of the animal he should lay them into the hands (of the dead body) with the verse, escape the two hounds, the sons of Sarma (Rig Veda X 14.10) the right kidney into the right hand and the left into the left hand.
22. 22. The heart of the animals he puts on the heart of the deceased.
23. 23. And two lumps of flour or rice according to some teachers.
24. 24. Only if there are no kidneys according to some teachers.
25. 25. Having distributed the whole (animal), limb by limb (placing its different limbs on the corresponding limbs of the deceased) and having covered it with its hide, he recites when the Pranita water is

carried forward (the verse), 'Agni do not overturn this cup,' (Rig Veda, X. 16.8).

26. 26. Bending his left knee he should sacrifice Yugya oblation into the Dakshina fire with the formulas 'To Agni Svaha, to Kama Svaha, to the world Svaha, to Anumati Svaha'.
27. 27. A fifth (oblation) on the chest of the deceased with the formula 'from this one verily thou hast been born. May he now be born out of thee. To the heaven worlds Svaha.'"

From the above passage quoted from the Ashvalayan Grahya Sutra it is clear that among the ancient Indo-Aryans when a person died, an animal had to be killed and the parts of the animal were placed on the appropriate parts of the dead body before the dead body was burned.

Such is the state of the evidence on the subject of cow-killing and beef-eating. Which part of it is to be accepted as true? The correct view is that the testimony of the Satapatha Brahmana and the Apastamba Dharma Sutra in so far as it supports the view that Hindus were against cow-killing and beef-eating, are merely exhortations against the excesses of cow-killing and not prohibitions against cow-killing. Indeed the exhortations prove that cow-killing and eating of beef had become a common practice. That notwithstanding these exhortations cow-killing and beef-eating continued. That most often they fell on deaf ears is proved by the conduct of Yajnavalkya, the great Rishi of the Aryans. The first passage quoted above from the Satapatha Brahmana was really addressed to Yajnavalkya as an exhortation. How did Yajnavalkya respond? After listening to the exhortation this is what Yajnavalkya said :-"I, for one, eat it, provided that it is tender"

That the Hindus at one time did kill cows and did eat beef is proved abundantly by the description of the Yajnas given in the Buddhist Sutras which relate to periods much later than the Vedas and the Brahmanas. The scale on which the slaughter of cows and animals took place was colossal. It is not possible to give a total of such slaughter on all accounts committed by the Brahmins in the name of religion. Some idea of the extent of this slaughter can however be had from references to it in the Buddhist literature. As an illustration reference may be made to the Kutadanta Sutta in which Buddha preached against the performance of animal sacrifices to Brahmin Kutadanta. Buddha, though speaking in a tone of sarcastic travesty, gives a good idea of the practices and rituals of the Vedic sacrifices when he said:

"And further, O Brahmin, at that sacrifice neither were any oxen slain, neither goats, nor fowls, nor fatted pigs, nor were any kind of living creatures put to death. No trees were cut down to be used as posts, no Darbha grasses mown to stress around the sacrificial spot. And the slaves and messengers and workmen there employed were driven neither by rods nor fear, nor carried on their work weeping with tears upon their faces."

Kutadanta on the other hand in thanking Buddha for his conversion gives an idea of the magnitude of the slaughter of animals which took place at such sacrifices when he says :-

"I, even I betake myself to the venerable Gotama as my guide, to the Doctrine and the Order. May the venerable One accept me as a disciple, as one who, from this day forth, as long as life endures, has taken him as his guide. And I myself, O, Gotama, will have the seven hundred bulls, and the seven hundred steers, and the seven hundred heifers, and the seven hundred goats, and the seven hundred rams set free. To them I grant their life. Let them eat grass and drink fresh water and may cool breezes waft around them."

In the Samyuta Nikaya (111,1-9) we have another description of a Yajna performed by Pasenadi, king of Kosala. It is said that five hundred bulls, five hundred calves and many heifers, goats and rams were led to the pillar to be sacrificed.

With this evidence no one can doubt that there was a time when Hindus-both Brahmins and non-Brahmins ate not only flesh but also beef.

CHAPTER XII

WHY DID NON-BRAHMINS GIVE UP BEEF-EATING?

THE food habits of the different classes of Hindus have been as fixed and stratified as their cults. Just as Hindus can be classified on their basis of their cults so also they can be classified on the basis of their habits of food. On the basis of their cults, Hindus are either *Saivites* (followers of Siva) or *Vaishnavites* (followers of Vishnu). Similarly, Hindus are either *Mansahari* (those who eat flesh) or *Shakahari* (those who are vegetarians).

For ordinary purposes the division of Hindus into two classes *Mansahari* and *Shakahari* may be enough. But it must be admitted that it is not exhaustive and does not take account of all the classes which exist in Hindu society. For an exhaustive classification, the class of Hindus called *Mansahari* shall have to be further divided into two sub-classes : (i) Those who eat flesh but do not eat cow's flesh; and (ii) Those who eat flesh including cow's flesh; In other words, on the basis of food taboos, Hindu society falls into three classes : (i) Those who are vegetarians; (ii) Those who eat flesh but do not eat cow's flesh; and (iii) Those who eat flesh including cow's flesh. Corresponding to this classification, we have in Hindu society three classes : (1) Brahmins; (2) Non-Brahmins; and (3) The Untouchables. This division though not in accord with the fourfold division of society called Chaturvarnya, yet it is in accord with facts as they exist.

For, in the Brahminsmk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_15 we have a class which is vegetarian, in the non-Brahmins the class which eats flesh but does not eat cow's flesh and in the Untouchables a class which eats flesh including cow's flesh.

This threefold division is therefore substantial and is in accord with facts. Anyone who stops to turn over this classification in his mind is bound to be struck by the position of the Non-Brahmins. One can quite understand vegetarianism. One can quite understand meat-eating. But it is difficult to understand why a person who is a flesh-

eater should object to one kind of flesh namely cow's flesh. This is an anomaly which call for explanation. Why did the Non-Brahmin give up beef-eating? For this purpose it is necessary to examine laws on the subject. The relevant legislation must be found either in the Law of Asoka or the Law of Manu.

II

To begin with Asoka. The edicts of Asoka which have reference to this matter are Rock Edict No.I and Pillar Edict Nos.II and V. Rock Edict No.I reads as follows :-

"This pious Edict has been written by command of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty) the King. Here (in the capital) no animal may be slaughtered for sacrifice, nor may the holiday feast be held, because His Sacred and Gracious Majesty, the king sees much offence in the holiday feasts, although in certain places holiday feasts are excellent in the sight of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the king.

"Formerly, in the kitchen of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King, each day many hundred thousands of living creatures were slaughtered to make curries. But now, when this pious edict is being written, only three living creatures are slaughtered (daily) for curry, to wit, two peacocks and one antelope: the antelope, however, not invariably. Even those three living creatures henceforth shall not be slaughtered."

Pillar Edict No.II was in the following terms :

"Thus saith His Sacred and Gracious Majesty, the King :-"The Law of Piety is excellent. But wherein consists the Law of Piety? In these things, to wit, little piety, many good deeds, compassion, liberality, truthfulness and purity.

The gift of spiritual insight I have given in manifold ways: whilst on two-footed and four-footed beings, on birds and the denizens of

the waters, I have conferred various favours-even unto the boon of life; and many other good deeds have I done.

For this purpose, have I caused this pious edict to be written, that men may walk after its teaching, and that it may long endure; and he who will follow its teaching will do well."

Pillar Edict V says :

"Thus said His Sacred and Gracious Majesty, the king :

When I had been consecrated twenty-six years the following species were declared *exempt from slaughter*, namely :

Parrots, starlings adjutants, Brahmany ducks, geese, *pandirnukhas*, *gelatas*, bats, queen-ants, female tortoises, boneless fish, *vedaveyakas*, *gangapuputakas*, skate, (river) tortoise, porcupines, tree-squirrels, *barasingha* stag, Brahmany bulls, monkeys, rhinoceros, grey doves village pigeons, and *all fourfooted animals which are not utilised or eaten*.

She-goats, ewes, cows, that is to say, those either with young or in milk, are exempt from slaughter as well as their off-spring up to six months of age. The caponing of cocks must not be done. Chaff must not be burned along with the living things in it Forests must not be burned either for mischief or so as to destroy living creatures.

The living must not be fed with the living. At each of the three seasonal full moons, and at the full moon of the month Tishya (December-January) for three days in each case, namely, the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the first fortnight, and the first day of the second fortnight, as well as on the first days throughout the year, fish is exempt from killing and may not be sold.

"On the same days, in elephant-preserves or fish-ponds no other classes of animals may be destroyed.

On the eighth, fourteenth and fifteenth days of each fortnight, as well as on the Tishya and Punarvasa days and festival days, the castration of bulls must not be performed, nor may he-goats, rams, boars and other animals liable to castration be castrated.

On the Tishya and Punarvasa days, on the seasonal full moon days, and during the fortnights of the seasonal full moons the branding of horses and oxen must not be done.

During the time upto the twenty-sixth anniversary of my consecration twenty-five jail deliveries have been effected."

So much for the legislation of Asoka.

III

Let us turn to Manu. His Laws contain the following provisions regarding meat-eating :-

- V.11. Let him avoid all carnivorous birds and those living in villages, and one hoofed animals which are not specially permitted (to be eaten), and the Tithbha (Parra) Jacana.
- V.12. The sparrow, the Plava, the Hamsa, the Brahmani duck, the village-cock, the Sarasa crane, the Raggudal, the woodpecker, the parrot, and the starling.
- V.13. Those which feed striking with their beaks, web-footed birds, the Koyashti, those which scratch with their toes, those which dive and live on fish, meat from a slaughter-house and dried meat.
- V.14. The Baka and the Balaka crane, the raven, the Khangartaka (animals) that eat fish, village-pigs, and all kinds of fishes.
- V.15. He who eats the flesh of any (animals) is called the eater of the flesh of that (particular) creature, he who eats fish is an eater of every (kind of) flesh; let him therefore avoid fish.
- V.16. (But the fish called) Pathine and (that called) Rohita may be eaten, if used for offering to the gods or to the manes; (one may eat) likewise Ragivas, Simhatundas, and Sasalkas on all occasions.
- V.17. Let him not eat solitary or unknown beasts and birds though they may fall under (the categories of) eatable creatures, not any five-toed (animals).
- V.18. The porcupine, the hedgehog, the iguana, the rhinoceros, the tortoise, and the hare they declare to be eatable; likewise those (domestic animals) that have teeth in one jaw excepting camels."

IV

Here is survey of the legislation both by Asoka and by Manu on the slaughter of animals. We are of course principally concerned with the cow. Examining the legislation of Asoka the question is: Did he prohibit the killing of the cow? On this issue there seem to be a

difference of opinion. Prof. Vincent Smith is of opinion that Asoka did not prohibit the killing of the cow. Commenting on the legislation of Asoka on the subject, Prof. Smith says: mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm:/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_16

"It is noteworthy that Asoka's rules do not forbid the slaughter of cow, which, apparently, continued to be lawful."

Prof. Radhakumud Mookerji joins issue with Prof. Smith and says mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm:/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_17 that Asoka did prohibit the slaughter of the cow. Prof. Mookerji relies upon the reference in Pillar Edict V to the rule of exemption which was made applicable to all four-footed animals and argues that under this rule cow was exempted from killing. This is not a correct reading of the statement in the Edict. The Statement in the Edict is a qualified statement. It does not refer to all four-footed animals but only to four-footed animals, *which are not utilised or eaten.* 'A cow cannot be said to be a four-footed animal which was not utilised or eaten. Prof. Vincent Smith seems to be correct in saying that Asoka did not prohibit the slaughter of the cow. Prof. Mookerji tries to get out of the difficulty by saying that at the time of Asoka the cow was not eaten and therefore came within the prohibition. His statement is simply absurd for the cow was an animal which was very much eaten by all classes.

It is quite unnecessary to resort as does Prof. Mookerji to a forced construction of the Edict and to make Asoka prohibit the slaughter of the cow as though it was his duty to do so. Asoka had no particular interest in the cow and owed no special duty to protect her against killing. Asoka was interested in the sanctity of all life human as well as animal. He felt his duty to prohibit the taking of life where taking of life was not necessary. That is why he prohibited slaughtering animal for sacrifice mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm:/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_18 which he regarded as unnecessary and of animals which are not utilised nor eaten which again would be want on and unnecessary. That he did not prohibit the slaughter of the cow in specie may well be taken as a fact which for having regard to the Buddhist attitude in the matter cannot be used against Asoka as a ground for casting blame.

Coming to Manu there is no doubt that he too did. not prohibit the slaughter of the cow. On the other hand he made the eating of cow's

flesh on certain occasions obligatory.

Why then did the non-Brahmins give up eating beef? There appears to be no apparent reason for this departure on their part. But there must be some reason behind it. The reason I like to suggest is that it was due to their desire to imitate the Brahmins that the non-Brahmins gave up beef-eating. This may be a novel theory but it is not an impossible theory. As the French author, Gabriel Tarde has explained that culture within a society spreads by imitation of the ways and manners of the superior classes by the inferior classes. This imitation is so regular in its flow that its working is as mechanical as the working of a natural law. Gabriel Tarde speaks of the laws of imitation. One of these laws is that the lower classes always imitate the higher classes. This is a matter of such common knowledge that hardly any individual can be found to question its validity.

That the spread of the cow-worship among and cessation of beef-eating by the non-Brahmins has taken place by reason of the habit of the non-Brahmins to imitate the Brahmins who were undoubtedly their superiors is beyond dispute. Of course there was an extensive propaganda in favour of cow-worship by the Brahmins. The Gayatri Purana is a piece of this propaganda. But initially it is the result of the natural law of imitation. This, of course, raises another question: Why did the Brahmins give up beef-eating?

CHAPTER XIII

WHAT MADE THE BRAHMINS BECOME VEGETARIANS?

THE non-Brahmins have evidently undergone a revolution. From being beef-eaters to have become non-beef-eaters was indeed a revolution. But if the non-Brahmins underwent one revolution, the Brahmins had undergone two. They gave up beef-eating which was one revolution. To have given up meat-eating altogether and become vegetarians was another revolution.

That this was a revolution is beyond question. For as has been shown in the previous chapters there was a time when the Brahmins were the greatest beef-eaters. Although the non-Brahmins did eat beef they could not have had it every day. The cow was a costly

animal and the non-Brahmins could ill afford to slaughter it just for food. He only did it on special occasion when his religious duty or personal interest to propitiate a deity compelled him to do. But the case with the Brahmin was different. He was a priest. In a period overridden by ritualism there was hardly a day on which there was no cow sacrifice to which the Brahmin was not invited by some non-Brahmin. For the Brahmin every day was a beef-steak day. The Brahmins were therefore the greatest beef-eaters. The Yajna of the Brahmins was nothing but the killing of innocent animals carried on in the name of religion with pomp and ceremony with an attempt to enshroud it in mystery with a view to conceal their appetite for beef. Some idea of this mystery pomp and ceremony can be had from the directions contained in the Atreya Brahamana touching the killing of animals in a Yajna.

The actual killing of the animal is preceded by certain initiatory Rites accompanied by incantations too long and too many to be detailed here. It is enough to give an idea of the main features of the Sacrifice. The sacrifice commences with the erection of the Sacrificial post called the Yupa to which the animal is tied before it is slaughtered. After setting out why the Yupa is necessary the Atreya Brahamana proceeds to state what it stands for. It says: mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_19

"This Yupa is a weapon. Its point must have eight edges. For a weapon (or iron club) has eight edges. Whenever he strikes with it an enemy or adversary, he kills him. (This weapon serves) to put down him (every one) who is to be put down by him (the sacrificer). The Yupa is a weapon which stands erected (being ready) to slay an enemy. Thence an enemy (of the sacrificer) who might be present (at the sacrifice) comes of all ill after having seen the Yupa of such or such one."

The selection of the wood to be used for the Yupa is made to vary with the purposes which the sacrificer wishes to achieve by the sacrifice. The Atreya Brahamana says :

"He who desires heaven, ought to make his Yupa of Khadira wood. For the gods conquered the celestial world by means of a Yupa, made of Khadira wood. In the same way the sacrificer conquers the celestial world by means of a Yupa, made of Khadira wood."

"He who desires food and wishes to grow fat ought to make his

Yupa of Bilva wood. For the Bilva tree bears fruits every year; it is the symbol of fertility; for it increases (every year) in size from the roots up to the branches, therefore it is a symbol of fatness. He who having such a knowledge makes his Yupa of Bilva wood, makes fat his children and cattle.

"As regards the Yupa made of Bilva wood (it is further to be remarked), that they call light'Bilva. He who has such a knowledge becomes a light' among his own people, the most distinguished among his own people.

"He who desires beauty and sacred knowledge ought to make his Yupa of Palasa wood. For the Palasa is among the trees of beauty and sacred knowledge. He who having such a knowledge makes his Yupa of Palasa wood, becomes beautiful and acquires sacred knowledge.

"As regards the Yupa made of Palasa wood (there is further to be remarked), that the Palasa is the womb of all trees. Thence they speak on account of the palasam (foliage) of this or that tree (i.e. they call the foliage of every tree palasam). He who has such a knowledge obtains (the gratification of) any desire, he might have regarding all trees (i.e. he obtains from all trees any thing he might wish for)."

This is followed by the ceremony of anointing the sacrificial post.
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"The Adhvaryu says (to the Hotar):"We anoint the sacrificial post (Yupa);

repeat the mantra (required)". The Hotar then repeats the verse:"Amjanti tvam adhvarē"(3, 8, 1) i.e."The priests anoint thee, O tree! with celestial honey (butter); provide (us) with wealth if thou standest here erected, or if thou art lying on thy mother (earth)."The"celestial honey" is the melted butter (with which the priests anoint the Yupa). (The second half verse from)"provide us"&c. means:"thou mayest stand or lie, provide us with wealth."

"(The Hotar then repeats :)"jato jayate sudinatve"&c. (3, 8, 5) i.e., "After having been born, he (the Yupa) is growing (to serve) in the prime of his life the sacrifice of mortal men. The wise are busy in decorating (him, the Yupa) with skill. He, as an eloquent messenger of the gods, lifts his voice (that it might be heard by the gods)."He (the Yupa) is called jata, i.e., born, because he is born by this (by the recital of the first quarter of this verse). (By the word) vardhamana,

i.e., growing, they make him (the Yupa) grow in this manner. (By the words:) punanti (i.e. to clean, decorate), they clean him in this manner. (By the words:)"he as an eloquent messenger, &c."he announces the Yupa (the fact of his existence) to the gods.

The Hotar then concludes (the ceremony of anointing the sacrificial post) with the verse"yuva suvasah parivatah"(3, 8, 4), i.e."the youth decorated with ribands, has arrived; he is finer (than all trees) which ever grew; the wise priests raise him up under recital of well-framed thoughts of their mind."The youth decorated with ribands, is the vital air (the soul), which is covered by the limbs of the body. (By the words;)"he is finer,"&c. he means that he (the Yupa) is becoming finer (more excellent, beautiful) by this (mantra)."

The next ceremony is the carrying of fire round the sacrificial animal. The Attreya Brahmana gives the following directions on this point.

It says mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_21 :-

"When the fire is carried round (the animal) the Adhvaryu says to the Hotar: repeat (thy mantras)'. The Hotar then repeats this triplet of verses, addressed to Agni, and composed in the Gayatri metre: Agnir Hota no adhvare (4.15.1-3) i.e. (1) Agni, our priest, is carried round about like a horse, he who is among gods, the god of sacrifices, (2) Like a charioteer Agni passes thrice by the sacrifice; to the gods he carries the offering, (3) The master of food, the seer of Agni, went round the offering; he bestows riches on the sacrificer.

"When the fire is carried round (the animal) then he makes him (Agni) prosper by means of his own deity and his own metre. 'As a horse he is carried' means: they carry him as if he were a horse, round about. Like a charioteer Agni passes thrice by the sacrifice means; he goes round the sacrifice like a charioteer (swiftly). He is called *vajapati* (master of food) because he is the master of (different kinds of) food.

"*The Adhvaryu says* : give Hotar! the additional order for despatching offerings to the gods.

"*The Hotar then says* : (to the slaughterers) : Ye divine slaughterers, commence (your work), as well as ye who are human! that is to say, he orders all the slaughterers among gods as well as among men (to commence).

Bring hither the instruments for killing, ye who are ordering the sacrifice, in behalf of the two masters of the sacrifice.

"The animal is the offering, the sacrificer the master of the offering. Thus he (the Hotar) makes prosper the sacrificer by means of his (the sacrificer's) own offering. Thence they truly say : for whatever deity the animal is killed, that one is the master of the offering. If the animal is to be offered to one deity only, the priest should say : *Medhapataye* 'to the master of the sacrifice (singular)', if to two deities, then he should use the dual 'to both masters of the offering', and if to several deities, then he should use the plural, 'to the masters' of the offering'. This is the established custom.

Bring ye for him fire! For the animal when carried (to the slaughter) saw death before it. Not wishing to go to the gods, the gods said to it: Come we will bring thee to heaven ! The animal consented and said: One of you should walk before me. They consented. Agni then walked before it, and it followed after Agni. Thence they say, every animal belongs to Agni, for it followed after him. Thence they carry before the animal fire (Agni).

Spread the (sacred) grass! the animal lives on herbs. He (the Hotar) thus provides the animal with its entire soul (the herbs being supposed to form part of it).

After the ceremony of carrying fire round the animal comes the delivery of the animal to the priests for sacrifice. Who should offer the animal for sacrifice? On this point the direction of the Atreya Brahmana

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"The mother, the father, the brother, sister, friend, and companions should give this (animal) up (for being slaughtered)! When these words are pronounced, they seize the animal which is (regarded as) entirely given up by its relations (parents, &c.)"

On reading this direction one wonders why almost everybody is required to join in offering the animal for sacrifice. The reason is simple. There were altogether seventeen Brahmin priests who were entitled to take part in performing the sacrifice. Naturally enough they wanted the whole carcass to themselves.mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_23 Indeed they could not give enough to each of the seventeen priests unless they had the whole carcass to distribute. Legally the Brahmins could not claim the whole carcass unless everybody who could not claim any right over the animal had been divested of it. Hence the direction requiring

even the companion of the sacrificer to take part in offering the animal.

Then comes the ceremony of actually killing the animal. The Atreya Brahmana gives the details of the mode and manner of killing the animal. Its directions

are [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_24](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables%20who%20were%20they_why%20they%20became%20PART%20II.htm%20-_msocom_24) :

"Turn its feet northwards! Make its eye to go to the sun, dismiss its breath to the wind, its life to the air, its hearing to the directions, its body to the earth. In this way he (the Hotar) places it (connects it) with these worlds.

Take off the skin entire (without cutting it). Before operating the naval, tear out omentum. Stop its breathing within (by stopping its mouth). Thus he (the Hotar) puts its breath in the animals.

Make of its breast a piece like an eagle, of its arms (two pieces like) two hatchets, of its forearms (two pieces like) two spikes, of its shoulders (two pieces like) two Kashyapas, its loins should be un-broken (entire); (make of) its thighs (two pieces like) two shields, of the two kneepans (two pieces like) two oleander leaves; take out its twenty-six ribs according to their order; preserve every limb of it in its integrity. Thus he benefits all its limbs."

There remain two ceremonies to complete the sacrificial killing of the animal. One is to absolve the Brahmin priests who played the butcher's part. Theoretically they are guilty of murder for the animal is only a substitute for the sacrificer. To absolve them from the consequences of murder, the Hotar is directed by the Atreya Brahmana to observe the following injunction [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_25](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables%20who%20were%20they_why%20they%20became%20PART%20II.htm%20-_msocom_25):

"Do not cut the entrails which resemble an owl (when taking out the omentum), nor should among your children, O slaughterers! or among their offspring any one be found who might cut them. By speaking these words he presents these entrails to the slaughterers among the gods as well as to those among men.

The Hotar shall then say thrice : O *Adhrigu* (and ye others), *kill* (the animal), *do it well*; kill it, O *Adhrigu*.

After the animal has been killed, (he should say thrice:) *Far may it* (the consequences of murder) be (from us). For *Adhrigu* among the gods is he who silences (the animal) and the *Apapa* (away, away!) is he who puts it down. By speaking those words he surrenders the animal to those who silence it (by stopping its mouth) and to those

who butcher it

The Hotar then mutters (he makes, *Japa*); "O slaughterers! may all good you might do abide by us! and all mischief you might do go elsewhere!" The Hotar Gives by (this) speech the order (for killing the animal), for Agni had given the order for killing (the animal) with the same words when he was the Hotar of the gods.

By those words (the *Japa* mentioned) the Hotar removes (all evil consequences) from those who suffocate the animal and those who butter it, in all that they might transgress the rule by cutting one piece too soon, the other too late, or by cutting a too large, or a too small piece. The Hotar enjoying this happiness clears himself (from all guilt) and attains the full length of his life (and it serves the sacrificer) for obtaining his full life. He who has such a knowledge, attains the full length of his life."

The Attreya Bramhana next deals with the question of disposing of the parts of the dead animal. In this connection its direction is mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_26-

"*Dig a ditch in the earth to hide its excrements.* The excrements consist of vegetable food; for the earth is the place for the herbs. Thus the Hotar puts them (the excrements) finally in their proper places. *Present the evil spirits with the blood!* For the gods having deprived (once) the evil spirits of their share in the Haviryajnas (such as the Pull and New Moon offerings) apportioned to them the husk and smallest grains, and after having them turned out of the great sacrifice (such as the *Soma* and animal sacrifices), presented to them the blood. Thence the Hotar pronounces the words : *present the evil spirits with the blood!* By giving them this share he deprives the evil spirits of any other share in the sacrifice. They say : one should not address the evil spirits in the sacrifice, and evil spirits whichever they might be (Rakshasa, Asuras etc.) : for the sacrifice is to be without (the) evil spirits (not to be disturbed by them). But others say: one should address them; for (he who deprives any one,"entitled to a share of this share, will be punished (by him whom he deprives); and if he himself does not suffer the penalty, then his son, and if his son be spared, then his grandson tviU suffer it, and thus he resents on him (the son or grandson) what he wanted to resent on you."

"However, if the Hotar addresses them, he should do so with a low voice. For both, the low voice and the evil spirits, are, as it

were, hidden. If he addresses them with a loud voice, then such one speaks in the voice of the evil spirits, and is capable of producing Rakshasa sounds (a horrible, terrific voice). The voice in which the haughty man *and* the drunkard speak is that *of* the evil spirits (Rakshasas). He who has such a knowledge will neither himself become haughty nor will such a man be among his offspring.”

Then follows the last and the concluding ceremony that of offering parts of the body of the animal to the gods. It is called the Manota.

According to the Atreya Brahmanamk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_27-

"The Adhvaryu says (to the Hotar) : recite the verses appropriate to the offering of the parts of the sacrificial animal which are cut off for the Manota. He then repeats the hymn : Thou, O Agni, art the first Manotamk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_28 (6.1)"

There remains the question of sharing the flesh of the animal. On this issue the division was settled by the Atreya Brahmana in the following

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"Now follows the division of the different parts of the sacrificial animal (among the priests). We shall describe it. The two jawbones with the tongue are to be given to the Prastotar, the breast in the form of an eagle to the Udgatar, the throat with the palate to the Ptatihartar, the lower part of the right loins to the Hotar: the left to the Brahma; the right thigh to *the* Maitravaruna; the left to the Brahmanachhamsi; the right side with the shoulder to the Adhvaryu; the left side to those who accompany the chants; the left shoulder to the Pratipashatar; the lower part of the right arm to the Neshtar; the lower part of the left arm to the Potar; the upper of the right thigh to the Achhavaka; the left to the Agnidhara; the upper part of the right arm to the Atreya; the left to the Sadasya; the back bone and the urinal bladder to the Grihapati (sacrificer); the right feet to the Grihapati who gives a feasting; the left feet to the wife of that Grihapati who gives a feasting; the upper lip is common to both (the Grihapati and his wife), which is to be divided by the Grihapati. They offer the tail of the animal to wives, but they should give it to a Brahmana; the fleshy processes (*manikah*) on the neck and three gristles (*fakasah*) to the Gravastut;

three other gristles and one-half of the fleshy part (on the back (*vaikartta*) to the Unnetar; the other half of the fleshy part on the neck and the left lobe (*kloma*) to the slaughterer, who should present it to a Brahmana, if he himself would *not* happen to be a Brahmana. The head is to be given to the Subrahmanya, the skin belongs to him (the Subrahmanya), who spoke, *svah sutyam* (tomorrow at the Soma sacrifice); that part of the sacrificial animal at a Soma sacrifice which belongs to Ha (sacrificial food) is common to all the priests; only for the Hotar it is optional.

All these portions of the sacrificial animal amount to thirtysix single pieces, each of which represents the pada (foot) of a verse by which the sacrifice is carried up. The Brihati metre consists of thirtysix syllables; and the heavenly worlds are of the Brihati nature. In this way (by dividing the animal into thirtysix parts) they gain life (in this world) and the heavens, and having become established in both (this and that world) they walk there.

To those who divide the sacrificial animal in the way mentioned, it becomes the guide to heaven. But those who make the division otherwise are like scoundrels and miscreants who kill an animal merely (for gratifying their lust after flesh). This division of the sacrificial animal was invented by the Rishi (*Devabhaga*, a son of *Sruta*). When he was departing from this life, he did not entrust (the secret to anyone). But a supernatural being communicated it to *Girija*, the son of *Babhru*. Since his time men study it."

What is said by the Atreya Brahmana places two things beyond dispute. One is that the Brahmins monopolised the whole of the flesh of the sacrificial animal. Except for a paltry bit they did not even 'allow the sacrificer to share in it. The second is that the Brahmins themselves played the part of butchers in the slaughter of the animal. As a matter of principle the Brahmins should not eat the flesh of the animal killed at a sacrifice. The principle underlying Yajna is that man should offer himself as sacrifice to the gods. He offers an animal only to release himself from this obligation. From this it followed that the animal, being only a substitute for the man, eating the flesh of animal meant eating human flesh. This theory was very detrimental to the interest of the Brahmins who had a complete monopoly of the flesh of the animal offered for sacrifice. The Atreya Brahmana which had seen in this theory the danger of the Brahmins being deprived of the flesh of sacrificial animal takes pains to explain away the theory by a simple negation. It

saysmk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_30 :

"The man who is initiated (into the sacrificial mysteries) *offers* himself to all deities. Agni represents all deities and Soma represents all deities. When he (the sacrificer) offers the animal to Agni-Soma he releases himself (by being represented by the animal) from being offered to all deities.

They say:"do not eat from the animal offered to Agni-Soma. Who eats from this animal, eats from human flesh; because the sacrificer releases himself (from •being sacrificed) by means of the animal". But this (precept) is not to be attended to."

Given these facts, no further evidence seems to be necessary to support the statement that the Brahmins were not merely beef-eaters but they were also butchers.

Why then did the Brahmins change front? Let us deal with their change of front in two stages. First, why did they give up beef-eating?

II

As has already been shown cow-killing was not legally prohibited by Asoka. Even if it had been prohibited, a law made by the Buddhist Emperor could never have been accepted by the Brahmins as binding upon them.

Did Manu prohibit beef-eating? If he did, then that would be binding on the Brahmins and would afford an adequate explanation of their change of front. Looking into the Manu Smriti one does find the following verses:

"V. 46. He who does not seek to cause the sufferings of bonds and death to living creatures, (but) desires the good of all (beings), obtains endless bliss.

"V. 47. He who does not injure any (creature), attains without an effort what he thinks of, what he undertakes, and what he fixes his mind on.

"V. 48. Meat can never be obtained without injury to living creatures, and injury to sentient beings is detrimental to (the attainment of) heavenly bliss; let him therefore shun (the use of) meat.

"V. 49. Having well considered the (disgusting) origin of flesh and

the (cruelty of) fettering and slaying corporeal beings, let him entirely abstain from eating flesh."

If these verses can be treated as containing positive injunctions they would be sufficient to explain why the Brahmins gave up meat-eating and became vegetarians. But it is impossible to treat these verses as positive injunctions, carrying the force of law. They are either exhortations or interpolations introduced after the Brahmins had become vegetarians in praise of the change. That the latter is the correct view is proved by the following verses which occur in the same chapter of the Manu Smriti. :

- "V. 28 : The Lord of creatures (Prajapati) created this whole (world to be) the sustenance of the vital spirit; both the immovable and the movable creation is the food of the vital spirit.
- "V. 29. What is destitute of motion is the food of those endowed with locomotion; (animals) without fangs (are the food) of those with fangs, those without hands of those who possess hands, and the timid of the bold.
- "V. 30. The eater who daily even devours those destined to be his food, commits no sin; for the creator himself created both the eaters and those who are to be eaten (for those special purposes).
- "V. 56. There is no sin in eating meat, in (drinking) spirituous liquor, and in carnal intercourse, for that is the natural way of created beings, but abstention brings great rewards.
- "V. 27. . One may eat meat when it has been sprinkled with water, while Mantras were recited, when Brahmanas desire (one's doing it) when one is engaged (in the performance of a rite) according to the law, and when one's life is in danger.
- "V. 31. The consumption of meat (is befitting) for sacrifices,' that is declared to be a rule made by the gods, but to persist (in using it) on other (occasions) is said to be a proceeding worthy of Rakshasas.
- "V. 32. He who eats meat, when he honours the gods and manes commits no sin, whether *he* has bought it, or himself has killed (the animal) or has received it as a present from others.
- "V. 42. A twice-born man who, knowing the true meaning of the Veda, slays an animal for these purposes, causes both himself and the animal to *enter* a most blessed state.

"V. 39. Swayambhu (the self-existent) himself created animals for the sake of sacrifices; sacrifices (have been instituted) for the good of this whole (world); hence the slaughtering (of beasts) for sacrifice is not slaughtering (in the ordinary sense of the word).

"V. 40. Herbs, trees, cattle, birds, and other animals that have been destroyed for sacrifices, receive (being reborn) higher existences."

Manu goes further and makes eating of flesh compulsory. Note the following verse :-

"V. 35. But a man who, being duly engaged (to officiate or to dine at a sacred rite), refuses to eat meat, becomes after death an animal during twentyone existences."

That Manu did not prohibit meat-eating is evident enough. That Manu Smriti did not prohibit cow-killing can also be proved from the Smriti itself. In the first place, the only references to cow in the Manu Smriti are to be found in the catalogue of rules which are made applicable by Manu to the Snataka. They are set out below:-

1. 1. A Snataka should not eat food which a cow has smelt.
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2. 2. A Snataka should not step over a rope to which a calf is tied.
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3. 3. A Snataka should not urinate in a cowpan.
mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_33
4. 4. A Snataka should not answer call of nature facing a cow.
mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_34
5. 5. A Snataka should not keep his right arm uncovered when he enters a cowpan.
mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_35
6. 6. A Snataka should not interrupt a cow which is sucking her calf, nor tell anybody of it.
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- [were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_36](#)
7. 7. A Snataka should not ride on the back of the cow.
[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_37](#)
8. 8. A Snataka should not offend the cow.
[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_38](#)
9. 9. A Snataka who is impure must not touch a cow with his hand.
[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_39](#)

From these references it will be seen that Manu did not regard the cow as a sacred animal. On the other hand, he regarded it as an impure animal whose touch caused ceremonial pollution.

There are verses in Manu which show that he did not prohibit the eating of beef. In this connection, reference may be made to Chapter III. 3. It says :-

"He (Snataka) who is famous (for the strict performance of) his duties and has received his heritage, the Veda from his father, shall be honoured, sitting on couch and adomed with a garland with the present of a cow (the honey-mixture)."

The question is why should Manu recommend the gift of a cow to a Snataka? Obviously, to enable him to perform Madhuparka. If that is so, it follows that Manu knew that Brahmins did eat beef and he had no objection to it.

Another reference would be to Manu's discussion of the animals whose meat is eatable and those, whose meat is not. In Chapter V.18. he says :-

"The porcupine, the hedgehog, the iguana, the rhinoceros, the tortoise, and the hare they declare to be eatable, likewise those (domestic animals) that have teeth in one jaw only, excepting camels."

In this verse Manu gives general permission to eat the flesh of all domestic animals that have teeth in one jaw only. To this rule Manu makes one exception, namely, the camel. In this class of domestic animals those that have teeth in one jaw only- falls not only the camel but also the cow. It is noteworthy that Manu does not make an exception in the case of the cow. This means that Manu had no objection to the eating of the cow's flesh.

Manu did not make the killing of the cow an offence. Manu divides

sins into two classes (i) mortal sins and (ii) minor sins. Among the mortal sins Manu includes :

"XI. 55. Killing a Brahmana, drinking (the spirituous liquor called Sura) stealing the (gold of Brahmana) a adultery with a Gum's wife, and associating with such offenders."Among minor sins Manu includes:

"XI. 60. Killing the cow, sacrificing for those unworthy to sacrifice, adultery, setting oneself, casting off one's teacher, mother, father or son, giving up the (daily) study of the Veda and neglecting the (sacred domestic) fire."

From this it will be clear that according to Manu cow-killing was only a minor sin. It was reprehensible only if the cow was killed without good and sufficient reason. Even if it was otherwise, it was not heinous or inexplicable. The same was the attitude of Yajnavalkyamk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_40'

All this proves that for generations the Brahmins had been eating beef. Why did they give up beef-eating? Why did they, as an extreme step, give up meat eating altogether and become vegetarians? It is two revolutions rolled into one. As has been shown it has not been done as a result of the preachings of Manu, their Divine Law-maker. The revolution has taken place in spite of Manu and contrary to his directions. What made the Brahmins take this step? Was philosophy responsible for it? Or was it dictated by strategy?

Two explanations are offered. One explanation is that this deification of the cow was a manifestation of the Advaita philosophy that one supreme entity pervaded the whole universe, that on that account all life human as well as animal was sacred. This explanation is obviously unsatisfactory. In the first place, it does not fit in with facts. The Vedanta Sutra which proclaims the doctrine of oneness of life does not prohibit the killing of animals for sacrificial purposes as is evident from 11.1.28. In the second place, if the transformation was due to the desire to realise the ideal of Advaita then there is no reason why it should have stopped with the cow. It should have extended to all other animals.

Another explanationmk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_41 more ingenious than the first, is that this transformation in the life of the Brahmin was due to

the rise of the doctrine of the Transmigration of the Soul. Even this explanation does not fit in with facts. The Brahadamyaka Upanishad upholds the doctrine of transmigration (vi.2) and yet recommends that if a man desires to have a learned son born to him he should prepare a mass of the flesh of the bull or ox or of other flesh with rice and ghee. Again, how is it that this doctrine which is propounded in the Upanishads did not have any effect on the Brahmins upto the time of the Manu Smriti, a period of at least 400 years. Obviously, this explanation is no explanation. Thirdly, if Brahmins became vegetarians by reason of the doctrine of transmigration of the soul how is it, it did not make the non-Brahmins take to vegetarianism?

To my mind, it was strategy which made the Brahmins give up beef-eating and start worshipping the cow. The clue to the worship of the cow is to be found in the struggle between Buddhism and Brahmanism and the means adopted by Brahmanism to establish its supremacy over Buddhism. The strife between Buddhism and Brahmanism is a crucial fact in Indian history. Without the realisation of this fact, it is impossible to explain some of the features of Hinduism. Unfortunately students of Indian history have entirely missed the importance of this strife. They knew there was Brahmanism. But they seem to be entirely unaware of the struggle for supremacy in which these creeds were engaged and that their struggle, which extended for 400 years has left some indelible marks on religion, society and politics of India.

This is not the place for describing the full story of the struggle. All one can do is to mention a few salient points. Buddhism was at one time the religion of the majority of the people of India. It continued to be the religion of the masses for hundreds of years. It attacked Brahmanism on all sides as no religion had done before.

Brahmanism was on the wane and if not on the wane, it was certainly on the defensive. As a result of the spread of Buddhism, the Brahmins had lost all power and prestige at the Royal Court and among the people. They were smarting under the defeat they had suffered at the hands of Buddhism and were making all possible efforts to regain their power and prestige. Buddhism had made so deep an impression on the minds of the masses and had taken such a hold of them that it was absolutely impossible for the Brahmins to fight the Buddhists except by accepting their ways and means and practising the Buddhist creed in its extreme form. After the death of

Buddha his followers started setting up the images of the Buddha and building stupas. The Brahmins followed it. They, in their turn, built temples and installed in them images of Shiva, Vishnu and Ram and Krishna etc.,-all with the object of drawing away the crowd that was attracted by the image worship of Buddha. That is how temples and images which had no place in Brahmanism came into Hinduism. The Buddhists rejected the Brahmanic religion which consisted of Yajna and animal sacrifice, particularly of the cow. The objection to the sacrifice of the cow had taken a strong hold of the minds of the masses especially as they were an agricultural population and the cow was a very useful animal. The Brahmins in all probability had come to be hated as the killer of cows in the same way as the guest had come to be hated as *Goghna*, the killer of the cow by the householder, because whenever he came a cow had to be killed in his honour. That being the case, the Brahmins could do nothing to improve their position against the Buddhists except by giving up the Yajna as a form of worship and the sacrifice of the cow.

That the object of the Brahmins in giving up beef-eating was to snatch away from the Buddhist Bhikshus the supremacy they had acquired is evidenced by the adoption of vegetarianism by Brahmins. Why did the Brahmins become vegetarian? The answer is that without becoming vegetarian the Brahmins could not have recovered the ground they had lost to their rival namely Buddhism. In this connection it must be remembered that there was one aspect in which Brahmanism suffered in public esteem as compared to Buddhism. That was the practice of animal sacrifice which was the essence of Brahmanism and to which Buddhism was deadly opposed. That in an agricultural population there should be respect for Buddhism and revulsion against Brahmanism which involved slaughter of animals including cows and bullocks is only natural. What could the Brahmins do to recover the lost ground? To go one better than the Buddhist Bhikshus not only to give up meat-eating but to become vegetarians- which they did. That this was the object of the Brahmins in becoming vegetarians can be proved in various ways.

If the Brahmins had acted from conviction that animal sacrifice was bad, all that was necessary for them to do was to give up killing animals for sacrifice. It was unnecessary for them to be vegetarians. That they did go in for vegetarianism makes it obvious that their motive was far-reaching. Secondly, it was unnecessary for them to

become vegetarians. For the Buddhist Bhikshus were not vegetarians. This statement might surprise many people owing to the popular belief that the connection between Ahimsa and Buddhism was immediate and essential. It is generally believed that the Buddhist Bhikshus eschewed animal food. This is an error. The fact is that the Buddhist Bhikshus were permitted to eat three kinds of flesh that were deemed pure. Later on they were extended to five classes. Yuan Chwang, the Chinese traveller was aware of this and spoke of the pure kinds of flesh as *San-Ching*. The origin of this practice among the Bhikshus is explained by Mr. Thomas Walters. According to the story told by himmk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_42-

"In the time of Buddha there was in Vaisali a wealthy *general* named Siha who was a convert to Buddhism. He became a liberal supporter of the Brethren and kept them constantly supplied with good flesh-food. When it was noticed abroad that the Bhikshus were in the habit of eating such food specially provided for them, the Tirthikas made the practice a matter of angry reproach. Then the abstemious ascetic Brethren, learning this, reported the circumstances to the Master, who thereupon called the Brethren together. When they assembled, he announced to them the law that they were not to eat the flesh of any animal which they had seen put to death for them, or about which they had been told that it had been slain for them. But he permitted to the Brethren as 'pure' (that is, lawful) food the flesh of animals the slaughter of which had not been seen by the Bhikshus, not heard of by them, and not suspected by them to have been on their account. In the Pali and *Ssu-fen* Vinaya it was after a breakfast given by Siha to the Buddha and some of the Brethren, for which the carcass of a large ox was procured that the Nirgianthas reviled the Bhikshus and Buddha instituted this new rule declaring fish and flesh 'pure' in the three conditions. The animal food now permitted to the Bhikshus came to be known as the 'three pures' or 'three pure kinds of flesh', and it was tersely described as 'unseen, unheard, unsuspected', or as the Chinese translations sometimes have it 'not seen, not heard nor suspected to be on my account'. Then two more kinds of animal food were declared 'lawful for the Brethren viz., the flesh of animals which had died a natural death, and that of animals which had been killed by a bird of prey or other savage creature. So there

came to be five classes or descriptions of flesh which the professed Buddhist was at liberty to use as food. Then the 'unseen, unheard, unsuspected' came to be treated as one class, and this together with the 'natural death' and 'bird killed' made a *san-ching*"

As the Buddhist Bhikshus did eat meat the Brahmins had no reason to give it up. Why then did the Brahmins give up meat-eating and become vegetarians? It was because they did not want to put themselves merely on the same footing in the eyes of the public as the Buddhist Bhikshus.

The giving up of the Yajna system and abandonment of the sacrifice of the cow could have had only a limited effect. At the most it would have put the Brahmins on the same footing as the Buddhists. The same would have been the case if they had followed the rules observed by the Buddhist Bhikshus in the matter of meat-eating. It could not have given the Brahmins the means of achieving supremacy over the Buddhists which was their ambition. They wanted to oust the Buddhists from the place of honour and respect which they had acquired in the minds of the masses by their opposition to the killing of the cow for sacrificial purposes. To achieve their purpose the Brahmins had to adopt the usual tactics of a wreckless adventurer. It is to beat extremism by extremism. It is the strategy which all rightists use to overcome the leftists. The only way to beat the Buddhists was to go a step further and be vegetarians.

There is another reason which can be relied upon to support the thesis that the Brahmins started cow-worship gave up beef-eating and became vegetarians in order to vanquish Buddhism. It is the date when cow-killing became a mortal sin. It is well-known that cow-killing was not made an offence by Asoka. Many people expect him to have come forward to prohibit the killing of the cow. Prof. Vincent Smith regards it as surprising. But there is nothing surprising in it.

Buddhism was against animal sacrifice in general. It had no particular affection for the Cow. Asoka had therefore no particular reason to make a law to save the cow. What is more astonishing is the fact that cow-killing was made a *Mahapataka*, a mortal sin or a capital offence by the Gupta Kings who were champions of Hinduism which recognised and sanctioned the killing of the cow for sacrificial purposes. As pointed out by Mr. D. R. Bhandarkar [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm](http://MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables%20who%20were%20they_why%20they%20became%20PART%20II.htm) - [_msocom_43-](#)

"We have got the incontrovertible evidence of inscriptions to show that early in the 5th century A. D. killing a cow was looked upon as an offence of the deepest turpitude, turpitude as deep as that involved in murdering a Brahman. We have thus a copper-plate inscription dated 465 A.D. and referring itself to the reign of Skandagupta of the Imperial Gupta dynasty. It registers a grant and ends with a verse saying : 'Whosoever will transgress this grant that has been assigned (shall become as guilty as) the slayer of a cow, the slayer of a spiritual preceptor (or) the slayer of a Brahman. A still earlier record placing *go-hatya* on the same footing as *brahma hatya* is that of Chandragupta II, grandfather of Skandagupta just mentioned. It bears the Gupta date 93, which is equivalent to 412 A.D. It is engraved on the railing which surrounds the celebrated Buddhist stupa at Sanchi, in Central India. This also speaks of a benefaction made by an officer of Chandragupta and ends as follows :"Whosoever shall interfere with this arrangement .. he shall become invested with (the guilt of) the slaughter of a cow or of a Brahman, and with (the guilt of) the five *anantarya*"Here the object of this statement is to threaten the resumer of the grant, be he a Brahminist or a Biddhist, with the sins regarded as mortal by each community. The *anantaryas* are the five *mahapatakas* according to Buddhist theology. They are: matricide, patricide, killing an Arhat, shedding the blood of a Buddha, and causing a split among the priesthood. The *mahapatakas* with which a Brahminist is here threatened are only two : viz., the killing of a cow and the murdering of a Brahman. The latter is obviously a *mahapataka* as it is mentioned as such in all the Smritis, but the former has been specified only an upapataka by Apastamba, Manu, Yajnavalkya and so forth. But the very fact that it is here associated with *brahma-hatya* and both have been put on a par with the *anantaryas* of the Buddhists shows that in the beginning of the fifth century A.D., it was raised to the category of *mahapatakas*. Thus *go-hatya* must have come to be considered a *mahapataka* at least one century earlier, i.e., about the commencement of the fourth century A.D."

The question is why should a Hindu king have come forward to make a law against cow-killing, that is to say, against the Laws of Manu? The answer is that the Brahmins had to suspend or abrogate a requirement of their Vedic religion in order to overcome the supremacy of the Buddhist Bhikshus. If the analysis is correct then it is obvious that the worship of the cow is the result of the struggle

between Buddhism and Brahminism. It was a means adopted by the Brahmins to regain their lost position.

CHAPTER XIV

WHY SHOULD BEEF-EATING MAKE BROKEN MEN UNTOUCHABLES?

THE stoppage of beef-eating by the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins and the continued use thereof by the Broken Men had produced a situation which was different from the old. This difference lay in the fact that while in the old situation everybody ate beef, in the new -situation one section did not and another did. The difference was a glaring difference. Everybody could see it. It divided society as nothing else did before. All the same, this difference need not have given rise to such extreme division of society as is marked by Untouchability. It could have remained a social difference. There are many cases where different sections of the community differ in their foods. What one likes the other dislikes and yet this difference does not create a bar between the two.

There must therefore be some special reason why in India the difference between the Settled Community and the Broken Men in the matter of beef eating created a bar between the two. What can that be? The answer is that if beef-eating had remained a secular affair—a mere matter of individual taste—such a bar between those who ate beef and those who did not would not have arisen. Unfortunately beef-eating, instead of being treated as a purely secular matter, was made a matter of religion. This happened because the Brahmins made the cow a sacred animal. This made beef-eating a sacrilege. The Broken Men being guilty of sacrilege necessarily became beyond the pale of society.

The answer may not be quite clear to those who have no idea of the scope and function of religion in the life of the society. They may ask: Why should religion make such a difference? It will be clear if the following points regarding the scope and function of religion are borne in mind.

To begin with the definition of religion. There is one universal feature which characterises all religions. This feature lies in

religion being a unified system of beliefs and practices which (1) relate to sacred things and (2) which unite into one single community all those who adhere to them. To put it slightly differently, there are two elements in every religion. One is that religion is inseparable from sacred things. The other is that religion is a collective thing inseparable from society.

The first element in religion presupposes a classification of all things, real and ideal, which are the subject-matter of man's thought, into two distinct classes which are generally designated by two distinct terms the *sacred* and the *profane*, popularly spoken of as secular.

This defines the scope of religion. For understanding the function of religion the following points regarding things sacred should be noted:

The first thing to note is that things sacred are not merely higher than or superior in dignity and status to those that are profane. They are just different. The sacred and the profane do not belong to the same class. There is a complete dichotomy between the two. As Prof. Durkhiem

observes mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_45 :-

"The traditional opposition of good and bad is nothing beside this; for the good and the bad are only two opposed species of the same class, namely, morals, just as sickness and health are two different aspects of the same order of facts, life, while the sacred and the profane have always and everywhere been conceived by the human mind as two distinct classes, as two worlds between which there is nothing in common."

The curious may want to know what has led men to see in this world this dichotomy between the sacred and the profane. We must however refuse to enter into this discussion as it is unnecessary for the immediate purpose we have in mind. mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_46

Confining ourselves to the issue the next thing to note is that the circle of sacred objects is not fixed. Its extent varies infinitely from religion to religion. Gods and spirits are not the only sacred things. A rock, a tree, an animal, a spring, a pebble, a piece of wood, a house, in a word anything can be sacred.

Things sacred are always associated with interdictions otherwise

called *taboos*. To quote Prof. Durkhiem [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_47](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables%20who%20were%20they_why%20they%20became%20PART%20II.htm%20-%20_msocom_47) again :

"Sacred things are those which the interdictions protect and isolate; profane things, those to which these interdictions are applied and which must remain at a distance from the first"

Religious interdicts take multiple forms. Most important of these is the interdiction on contact. The interdiction on contact rests upon the principle that the profane should never touch the sacred. Contact may be established in a variety of ways other than touch. A look is a means of contact. That is why the sight of sacred things is forbidden to the profane in certain cases. For instance, women are not allowed to see certain things which are regarded as sacred. The word (i.e., the breath which forms part of man and which spreads outside him) is another means of contact. That is why the profane is forbidden to address the sacred things or to utter them. For instance, the Veda must be uttered only by the Brahmin and not by the Shudra. An exceptionally intimate contact is the one resulting from the absorption of food. Hence comes the interdiction against eating the sacred animals or vegetables.

The interdictions relating to the sacred are not open to discussion. They are beyond discussion and must be accepted without question. The sacred is 'untouchable' in the sense that it is beyond the pale of debate. All that one can do is to respect and obey.

Lastly the interdictions relating to the sacred are binding on all. They are not maxims. They are injunctions. They are obligatory but not in the ordinary sense of the word. They partake of the nature of a categorical imperative. Their breach is more than a crime. It is a sacrilege.

The above summary should be enough for an understanding of the scope and function of religion. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the subject further. The analysis of the working of the laws of the sacred which is the core of religion should enable any one to see that my answer to the question why beef-eating should make the Broken Men untouchables is the correct one. All that is necessary to reach the answer I have proposed is to read the analysis of the working of the laws of the sacred with the cow as the sacred object. It will be found that Untouchability is the result of the breach of the interdiction against the eating of the sacred animal, namely, the cow.

As has been said, the Brahmins made the cow a sacred animal. They

did not stop to make a difference between a living cow and a dead cow. The cow was sacred, living or dead. Beef-eating was not merely a crime. If it was only a crime it would have involved nothing more than punishment. Beef-eating was made a sacrilege. Anyone who treated the cow as profane was guilty of sin and unfit for association. The Broken Men who continued to eat beef became guilty of sacrilege.

Once the cow became sacred and the Broken Men continued to eat beef, there was no other fate left for the Broken Men except to be treated unfit for association, i.e., as Untouchables.

Before closing the subject it may be desirable to dispose of possible objections to the thesis. Two such objections to the thesis appear obvious. One is what evidence is there that the Broken Men did eat the flesh of the dead cow. The second is why did they not give up beef-eating when the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins abandoned it. These questions have an important bearing upon the theory of the origin of untouchability advanced in this book and must therefore be dealt with.

The first question is relevant as well as crucial. If the Broken Men were eating beef from the very beginning, then obviously the theory cannot stand. For, if they were eating beef from the very beginning and nonetheless were not treated as Untouchables, to say that the Broken Men became Untouchables because of beef-eating would be illogical if not senseless. The second question is relevant, if not crucial. If the Brahmins gave up beef-eating and the non-Brahmins imitated them why did the Broken Men not do the same? If the law made the killing of the cow a capital sin because the cow became a sacred animal to the Brahmins and non-Brahmins, why were the Broken Men not stopped from eating beef? If they had been stopped from eating beef there would have been no Untouchability.

The answer to the first question is that even during the period when beef-eating was common to both, the Settled Tribesmen and the Broken Men, a system had grown up whereby the Settled Community ate fresh beef, while the Broken Men ate the flesh of the dead cow. We have no positive evidence to show that members of the Settled Community never ate the flesh of the dead cow. But we have negative evidence which shows that the dead cow had become an exclusive possession and perquisite of the Broken Men. The evidence consists of facts which relate to the Mahars of the Maharashtra to whom reference has already been made. As has

already been pointed out, the Mahars of the Maharashtra claim the right to take the dead animal. This right they claim against every Hindu in the village. This means that no Hindu can eat the flesh of his own animal when it dies. He has to surrender it to the Mahar. This is merely another way of stating that when eating beef was a common practice the Mahars ate dead beef and the Hindus ate fresh beef. The only questions that arise are : Whether what is true of the present is true of the ancient past? Can this fact which is true of the Maharashtra be taken as typical of the arrangement between the Settled Tribes and the Broken Men throughout India.

In this connection reference may be made to the tradition current among the Mahars according to which they claim that they were given 52 rights against the Hindu villagers by the Muslim King of Bedar. Assuming that they were given by the King of Bedar, the King obviously did not create them for the first time. They must have been in existence from the ancient past. What the King did was merely to confirm them. This means that the practice of the Broken Men eating dead meat and the Settled Tribes eating fresh meat must have grown in the ancient past. That such an arrangement should grow up is certainly most natural. The Settled Community was a wealthy community with agriculture and cattle as means of livelihood. The Broken Men were a community of paupers with no means of livelihood and entirely dependent upon the Settled Community. The principal item of food for both was beef. It was possible for the Settled Community to kill an animal for food because it was possessed of cattle. The Broken Men could not for they had none. Would it be unnatural in these circumstances for the Settled Community to have agreed to give to the Broken Men its dead animals as part of their wages of watch and ward? Surely not. It can therefore be taken for granted that in the ancient past when both the Settled Community and Broken Men did eat beef the former ate fresh beef and the latter of the dead cow and that this system represented a universal state of affairs throughout India and was not confined to the Maharashtra alone.

This disposes of the first objection. To turn to the second objection. The law made by the Gupta Emperors was intended to prevent those who killed cows. It did not apply to the Broken Men. For they did not kill the cow. They only ate the dead cow. Their conduct did not contravene the law against cow-killing. The practice of eating the flesh of the dead cow therefore was allowed to

continue. Nor did their conduct contravene the doctrine of Ahimsa assuming that it has anything to do with the abandonment of beef-eating by the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins. Killing the cow was *Himsa*. But eating the dead cow was not. The Broken Men had therefore no cause for feeling qualms of conscience in continuing to eat the dead cow. Neither the law nor the doctrine of *Himsa* could interdict what they were doing, for what they were doing was neither contrary to law nor to the doctrine.

As to why they did not imitate the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins the answer is two fold. In the first place, imitation was too costly. They could not afford it. The flesh of the dead cow was their principal sustenance. Without it they would starve. In the second place, carrying the dead cow had become an obligation [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_48](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables%20who%20were%20they_why%20they%20became%20PART%20II.htm_-_msocom_48) though originally it was a privilege. As they could not escape carrying the dead cow they did not mind using the flesh as food in the manner in which they were doing previously.

The objections therefore do not invalidate the thesis in any way.

PART VI

UNTOUCHABILITY AND THE DATE OF ITS BIRTH

CHAPTER XV

THE IMPURE AND THE UNTOUCHABLES

I

WHEN did Untouchability come into existence? The orthodox Hindus insist that it is very ancient in its origin. In support of their contention reliance is placed on the fact that the observance of Untouchability is enjoined not merely by the Smritis which are of a later date but it is also enjoined by the Dharma Sutras which are much earlier and which, according to certain authors, date some centuries before B.C.

In a study devoted to exploring the origin of Untouchability the question one must begin with is : Is Untouchability as old as is suggested to be?

For an answer to this question one has to examine the Dharma Sutras in order to ascertain what they mean when they refer to Untouchability and to the Untouchables. Do they mean by Untouchability what we understand by it to-day? Do the class, to which they refer. Untouchables in the sense in which we use the term Untouchables to-day?

To begin with the first question. An examination of the Dharma Sutras no doubt shows that they speak of a class whom they call Asprashya. There is also no doubt that the term Asprashya does mean Untouchables. The question however remains whether the Asprashya of the Dharma Sutras are the same as the Asprashya of modern India. This question becomes important when it is realised that the Dharma Sutras also use a variety of other terms such as Antya, Antyaja, Antyevasin and Bahya. These terms are also used by the later Smritis. It might be well to have some idea of the use of these terms by the different Sutras and Smritis. The following table is intended to serve that purpose:-

I. Asprashya

Dharma Sutra	Smriti
1. Vishnu V. 104.	1. Katyayana verses 433, 783.

II Antya

Dharma Sutras	Smriti
1. 1. Vasishta. (16-30)	1. 1. Manu IV. 79;
2. 2. Apastambha (111.1)	VIII.. 68.
	2. 2. Yajnavalkyal.148.197.
	3. 3. Atri 25.
	4. 4. Likhita 92.

III. Bahya

Dharma Sutras	Smriti
1. 1. Apastambha 1,2,39.18	1. 1. Manu 28.
2. 2. Vishnu 16.14	2. 2. Narada 1.155.

IV. Antyavasin

Dharma Sutras	Smriti
1. 1. Gautama XXXI; XXIII 32	1. 1. Manu IV. 79; X. 39
2. 2. Vasishta XVIII. 3	2. 2. Shanti Parvan of the Mahabharatha 141; 29-32
	3. 3. Madhyamangiras (quoted in Mitakshara on Yaj. 3.280.

V. Antyaja

Dharma Sutras	Smriti
1. Vishnu 36.7	1. 1. Manu IV. 61; VIII. 279
	2. 2. Yajnavalkya 12.73
	3. 3. Brihadayama Smriti (quoted by Mitakshara on Yajnavalkya III. 260)
	4. 4. Atri. 199
	5. 5. Veda Vyas 1. 12.. 13.

II

The next question is whether the classes indicated by the terms Antya, Antyaja, Antyavasin and Bahya are the same as those indicated by the term *Asprashya* which etymologically means an Untouchable. In other words are they only different names for the same class of people?

It is an unfortunate fact that the Dharma Sutras do not enable us to answer this question. The term *Asprashya* occurs in two places (once in one Sutra and twice in one Smriti). But not one gives an enumeration of the classes included in it. The same is the case with

the term *Antya*. Although the word *Antya* occurs in six places (in two Sutras and four Smritis) not one enumerates who they are. Similarly, the word *Bahya* occurs in four places (in two Sutras and two Smritis), but none of them mentions what communities are included under this term. The only exception is with regard to the terms Antyavasin and Antyajas. Here again no Dharma Sutra enumerates them. But there is an enumeration of them in the Smritis. The enumeration of the Antyavasin occurs in the Smriti known as Madhyamangiras and that of the Antyajas in the Atri Smriti and Veda Vyas Smriti. Who they are, will be apparent from the following table:-

ANTYAVASIN	ANTYAJA	
Madhyamangiras	Atri	Veda Vyas
1. Chandala. 2. Shvapaka. 3. Kshatta. 4. Suta. 5. Vaidehika. 6. Magadha. 7. Ayogava.	1. Nata 2. Meda. 3. Bhilla. 4. Rajaka. 5, Charmakar. 6. Buruda. 7. Kayavarta.	1. Chandala* 2. Shvapaka. 3. Nata. 4. Meda. 5. Bhilla. 6. Rajaka. 7. Charmakar. 8. Virat. 9. Dasa. 10. Bhatt. 11. Kolika. 12. Pushkar.

From this table it is quite clear that there is neither precision nor agreement with regard to the use of the terms Antyavasin and Antyaja. For instance Chandala and Shvapaka fall in both the categories Antyavasin and Antyaja according to Madhyamangiras and Veda Vyas. But when one compares Madhyamanagiras with Atri they fall in different categories. The same is true with regard to the term Antyaja. For example while (1) Chandala and (2) Shvapaka are Antyajas according to Veda Vyas, according to Atri they are not. Again according to Atri (1) Buruda and (2) Kayavarta are Antyajas while according to Veda Vyas they are not. Again (1) Virat (2) Dasa (3) Bhatt (4) Kolika and (5) Pushkar are Antyaja according to Veda

Vyas but according to Atri they are not.

To sum up the position reached so far : neither the Dharma Sutras nor the Smritis help us to ascertain who were included in the category of Asprashya. Equally useless are the Dharma Sutras and the Smritis to enable us to ascertain whether the classes spoken of as Antyavasin, Antyaja and Bahya were the same as Asprashya. Is there any other way of ascertaining whether any of these formed into the category of Asprashya or Untouchables? It would be better to collect together whatever information is available about each of these classes.

What about the Bahyas? Who are they? What are they? Are they Untouchables? They are mentioned by Manu. To understand their position, it is necessary to refer to Manu's scheme of social classification. Manu divides the people into various categories. He first*[mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_49](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables%20who%20were%20they_why%20they%20became%20PART%20II.htm_-_msocom_49) makes a broad division between (1) Vaidikas and (2) Dasyus. He then proceeds to divide the Vaidikas into four sub-divisions: (1) Those inside Chaturvarnya (2) Those outside Chaturvarnya (3) Vratya and (4) Patitas or outcastes.

Whether a person was inside Chaturvarnya or outside, was a question to be determined by the Varna of the parents. If he was born of the parents of the same Varnas, he was inside the Chaturvarnya. If, on the other hand, he was born of parents of different Varnas i.e., he was the progeny of mixed marriages or what Manu calls *Varna Samkara*, then he was outside the Chaturvarnya. Those outside Chaturvarnya are further sub-divided by Manu into two classes. (1) Anulomas and (2) Pratilomas. [Anulomasmk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_50](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables%20who%20were%20they_why%20they%20became%20PART%20II.htm_-_msocom_50) were those whose fathers were of a higher Varna and mothers of a lower Varna. Pratilomas, on the other hand, were those whose fathers were of a lower Varna and the mothers of a higher Varna. Though both the Anulomas and Pratilomas were alike for the reason that they were outside the Chaturvarnya. Manu proceeds to make a distinction between them. The Anulomas, he calls *Varna Bahya* or shortly *Bahyas*, while Pratilomas he calls *Hinas*. The Hinas are lower than the Bahyas. But neither the Bahyas nor the Hinas does Manu regard as Untouchables.

Antya as a class is mentioned in Manu IV.79. Manu however does not enumerate them. Medhatithi in his comentary suggests that

Antya means Miecha, such as Meda etc. Buhler translates Antya as a low-caste man.

There is thus nothing to indicate that the Antyas were Untouchables. In all probability, it is the name given to those people who were living in the outskirts or *end* (Anta) of the village. The reason why they came to be regarded as low is to be found in the story narrated in the Brahadaranyaka Upanishad (1.3) to which reference is made by Mr. Kanemk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_51 The story is that-

"Gods and Asuras had a strike and the gods thought that they might rise superior to the Asuras by the Udgithana. In this occurs the passage 'this devata (Prana) throwing aside the sin that was death to these devatas (vak etc.) sent it to ends of these devatas there; therefore one should not go to the people outside the Aryan pale nor to *disam anta* (the ends of the quarters) thinking, otherwise I may fall in with *papmani* i.e., death".

The meaning of Antya turns on the connotation of the phrase 'disam Anta' which occurs in the passage quoted above. If the phrase 'ends of the quarters' can be translated as meaning the end of the periphery of the village, without its being called a far-fetched translation, we have here an explanation of what Antya originally meant. It does not suggest that the Antyas were Untouchables. It only meant that they were living on the outskirts of the village.

As to the Antyajas, what we know about them is enough to refute the view that they were Untouchables. Attention may be drawn to the following factsmk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_52':

In the Shanti Parvan (109.9) of the Mahabharat there is a reference to Antyajas who are spoken of as Soldiers in the Army. According to Sarasvativilasa, Pitamaha speaks of the seven cases of Rajakas included in the term Antyajaja as Prakritis. That Prakritids mean trade guilds such as of washermen and others is quite clear from the Sangamner Plate of Bhillama II dated Saka 922 which records the grant of a village to eighteen Prakritis. Viramitrodaya says that Srenis mean the eighteen castes such as the Rajaka etc., which are collectively called Antyajajas. In view of these facts how could the Antyajajas be said to have been regarded as the Untouchables?

Coming to the Antyavasin, who were they? Were they

Untouchables? The term Antyavasin has been used in two different senses. In one sense it was applied to a Brahmachari living in the house of the Guru during his term of studentship. A Brahmachari was referred to as Antyavasin [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_53](mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables%20who%20were%20they_why%20they%20became%20PART%20II.htm%20-%20_msocom_53) It probably meant one who was served last. Whatever the reason for calling a Brahmachari Antyavasin it is beyond dispute that the word in that connection could not connote Untouchability. How could it when only Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas could become Brahmacharis. In another sense they refer to a body of people. But even in this sense it is doubtful if it means Untouchables.

According to Vas.Dh.Sutra (18.3) they are the offspring of a Sudra father and Vaishya mother. But according to Manu (V.39) they are the offspring of a Chandala father and a Nishad mother. As to the class to which they belong, the Mitakshara says they are a sub-group of the Antyajas which means that the Antyavasin were not different from the Antyajas. What is therefore true of the Antyajas may also be taken as true of the Antyavasin.

III

Stopping here to take stock of the situation as it emerges from such information as we have regarding the social condition of the people called Antyavasin, Antya, Antyaja, as is available from ancient literature, obviously it is not open to say that these classes were Untouchables in the modern sense of the term. However, for the satisfaction of those who may still have some doubt, the matter may be further examined from another point of view. Granting that they were described as Asprashya we may proceed to inquire as to what was the connotation of the term in the days of the Dharma Sutras.

For this purpose we must ascertain the rules of atonement prescribed by the -Shastras. From the study of these rules we will be able to see whether the term Asprashya had the same connotation in the times of the Dharma Sutras as it has now.

Let us take the case of the Chandalas as an illustration of the class called Asprashya. In the first place, it should be remembered that the word Chandala does not denote one single homogenous class of people. It is one word for many classes of people, all different from one another. There are altogether five different classes of Chandalas

who are referred to in the Shastras. They are (i) the offspring of a Shudra father and a Brahmin mother mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_54 (ii) the offspring of an unmarried

woman mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_55 (iii) the offspring of union with a sagotra

woman mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_56 (iv) the offspring of a person who after becoming an ascetic turns back to the householder's

life mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_57 and (v) the offspring of a barber father and a Brahmin mother mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_58

It is difficult to say which Chandala calls for purification. We shall assume that purification is necessary in the case of all the Chandalas. What is the rule of purification prescribed by the Shastras?

Gautama in his Dharma Sutra (Chapter XIV, Verse 30) also refers to it in the following terms :-

"On touching an outcaste, a Chandala, a woman impure on account of her confinement a woman in her courses, or a corpse and on touching persons who have touched them, he shall purify himself by bathing dressed in his clothes."

Below is the text of the rule given by the Vasishta Dharma Sutra (Chapter IV. Verse 37) -

"When he has touched a sacrificial post, a pyre, a burial ground, a menstruating or a lately confined woman, impure men or Chandalas and so forth, he shall bathe, submerging both his body and his head."

Baudhayana agrees with Vasishta for he too in his Dharma Sutra (Prasna 1, Adhyaya 5, Khanda 6, Verse 5) says :-

"On touching a tree standing on a sacred spot, a funeral pyre, a sacrificial post, a Chandala or a person who sells the Veda, a Brahmin shall bathe dressed in his clothes."

The following are the rules contained in Manu :-

V. 85 : When he (the Brahmin) has touched a Chandala, a

menstruating woman, an outcaste, a woman in childbed, a corpse, or one who has touched a (corpse), he becomes pure by bathing.

V. 131 : Manu has declared that the flesh of an animal killed by dogs is pure, likewise (that) of a (beast) slain by carnivorous (animals) or by men of low caste (Dasya) such as Chandalas.

V. 143: He who, while carrying anything in any manner, is touched by an impure (person or thing), shall become pure, if he performs an ablution, without pulling down that object.

From these texts drawn from the Dharma Sutras as well as Manu, the following points are clear :-

- (1) (1) That the pollution by the touch of the Chandala was observed by the Brahmin only.
- (2) (2) That the pollution was probably observed on ceremonial occasions only.

IV

If these conclusions are right then this is a case of Impurity as distinguished from Untouchability. The distinction between the Impure and the Untouchable is very clear. The Untouchable pollutes all while the Impure pollutes only the Brahmin. The touch of the Impure causes pollution only on a ceremonial occasion. The touch of the Untouchable causes pollution at all times.

There is another argument to which so far no reference has been made which completely disproves the theory that the communities mentioned in the Dharma Sutras were Untouchables. That argument emerges out of a comparison of the list of communities given in the Order-in-Council (which is reproduced in Chapter II) with the list given in this chapter prepared from the Smritis. What does the comparison show? As anyone can see, it shows :-

Firstly : The maximum number of communities mentioned in the Smritis is only 12, while the number of communities mentioned in the Order-in-Council comes to 429.

Secondly : There are communities which find a place in the Order-in-Council but which do not find a place in the Smritis. [msitstore.c:\important\writing_of_babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_59](http://msitstore.c:\important\writing_of_babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables%20who%20were%20they_why%20they%20became%20PART%20II.htm_-_msocom_59) Out of the total of 429 there are nearly 427 which are unknown to the Smritis.

Thirdly : There are communities mentioned in the Smritis which do not find a place in the Order-in-Council at all.

Fourthly : There is only one community which finds a place in both. It is the Charmakar community mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_60

Those who do not admit that the Impure are different from the Untouchables do not seem to be aware of these facts. But they will have to reckon with them. These facts are so significant and so telling that they cannot but force the conclusion that the two are different.

Take the first fact. It raises a very important question.

If the two lists refer to one and the same class of people, why do they differ and differ so widely? How is it that the communities mentioned in the Shastras do not appear in the list given in the Order-in-Council? Contrarywise, how is it that the communities mentioned in the Order-in-Council are not to be found in the list given by the Shastras? This is the first difficulty we have to face.

On the assumption that they refer to the same class of people, the question assumes a serious character. If they refer to the same class of people then obviously Untouchability which was originally confined to 12 communities came to be extended to 429 communities! What has led to this vast extension of the Empire of Untouchability? If these 429 communities belong to the same class as the 12 mentioned by the Shastras why none of the Shastras mention them? It cannot be that none of the 429 communities were not in existence at the time when the Shastras were written. If all of them were not in existence at least some of them must have been. Why even such as did exist find no mention?

On the footing that both the lists belong to the same class of people, it is difficult to give any satisfactory answer to these questions. If, on the other hand, it is assumed that these lists refer to two different classes of people, all these questions disappear. The two lists are different because the list contained in the Shastras is a list of the Impure and the list contained in the Order-in-Council is a list of the Untouchables. This is the reason why the two lists differ. The divergence in the two lists merely emphasizes what has been urged on other grounds, namely, that the classes mentioned in Shastras are only Impure and it is a mistake to confound them with the Untouchables of the present day.

Now turn to the second. If the Impure are the same as the Untouchables, why is it as many as 427 out of 429 should be unknown to the Smritis? As communities, they must have been in existence at the time of the Smritis. If they are Untouchables now, they must have been Untouchables then. Why then did the Smritis fail to mention them?

What about the third? If the Impure and the Untouchables are one and the same, why those communities which find a place in the Smritis do not find a place in the list given in the Order-in-Council? There are only two answers to this question. One is that though Untouchables at one time, they ceased to be Untouchables subsequently. The other is that the two lists contain names of communities who fall in altogether different categories. The first answer is untenable. For, Untouchability is permanent. Time cannot erase it or cleanse it. The only possible conclusion is the second.

Take the fourth. Why should Chamar alone find a place in the lists? The answer is not that the two lists include the same class of people. If it was the true answer, then not only the Chamar but all others included in the list given by the Smritis should appear in both the lists. But they do not. The true answer is that the two lists contain two different classes of people. The reason why some of those in the list of the Impure appear in the list of the Untouchables is that the Impure at one time became Untouchables. That the Chamar appears in both is far from being evidence to support the view that there is no difference between the Impure and the Untouchables. It proves that the Chamar who was at one time an Impure, subsequently became an Untouchable and had therefore to be included in both the lists. Of the twelve communities mentioned in the Smritis as Impure communities, only the Chamar should have been degraded to the status of an Untouchable is not difficult to explain. What has made the difference between the Chamar and the other impure communities is the fact of beef-eating. It is only those among the Impure who were eating beef that became Untouchables, when the cow became sacred and beef-eating became a sin. The Chamar is the only beef-eating community. That is why it alone appears in both the lists. The answer to the question relating to the Chamars is decisive on two points. It is conclusive on the point that the Impure are different from the Untouchables. It is also decisive on the point that it is beef-eating which is the root of Untouchability and which divides the Impure and the Untouchables.

The conclusion that Untouchability is not the same as Impurity has an important bearing on the determination of the date of birth of Untouchability. Without it any attempt at fixing the date would be missing the mark.

CHAPTER XVI

WHEN DID BROKEN MEN BECOME UNTOUCHABLES?

THE foregoing researches and discussions have proved that there was a time when the village in India consisted of a Settled Community and Broken Men and that though both lived apart, the former inside the village and the latter outside it, there was no bar to social intercourse between the members of the Settled Community and the Broken Men. When the cow became sacred and beef-eating became taboo, society became divided into two - the Settled Community became a touchable community and Broken Men became an untouchable community. When did the Broken Men come to be regarded as Untouchables? That is the last question that remains to be considered. There are obvious difficulties in the way of fixing a precise date for the birth of Untouchability. Untouchability is an aspect of social psychology. It is a sort of social nausea of one group against another group. Being an outgrowth of social psychology which must have taken some time to acquire form and shape, nobody can venture to fix a precise date to a phenomenon which probably began as a cloud no bigger than man's hand and grew till it took its final all-pervading shape as we know it today. When could the seed of Untouchability be said to have been sown? If it is not possible to fix an exact date, is it possible to fix an approximate date?

An exact date is not possible. But it is possible to give an approximate date. For this the first thing to do is to begin by fixing the upper time-limit at which Untouchability did not exist and the lower time-limit at which it had come into operation.

To begin with the question of fixing the upper limit the first thing to note is that those who are called Antyajias are mentioned in the Vedas. But they were not only not regarded as Untouchables but they were not even regarded as Impure. The following extract from Kane may be quoted in support of this conclusion. Says

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"In the early Vedic literature several of the names of castes that are spoken of in the Smritis as Antyajias occur. We have Carmanna (a tanner of hides) in the Rig Veda (VIII.8,38) the Chandala and Paulkasa occur in Vaj. S., the Vepa or Vapta (barber) even in the Rig., the Vidalakara or Bidalakar (corresponding to the Buruda of the Smritis) occurs in the Vaj.S.and the Tai,Br-Vasahpalpuli (washer woman) corresponding to the Rajakas of the Smritis in Vaj.S.But there is no indication in these-passages whether they, even if they formed castes, were at all Untouchables."

Thus in Vedic times there was no Untouchability. As to the period of the Dharma Sutras, we have seen that there was Impurity but there was no Untouchability.

Was there Untouchability in the time of Manu? This question cannot be answered offhand. There is a passage [mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_62](#) in which he says that there are only four vamas and that there is no fifth vama. The passage's enigmatical. It is difficult to make out what it means. Quite obviously the statement by Manu is an attempt by him to settle a controversy that must have been going on at the time he wrote. Quite obviously the controversy was about the status of a certain class in relation to the system of Chaturvarnya. Equally obvious is the point which was the centre of the controversy. To put briefly, the point was whether this class was to be deemed to be included within the Chaturvarnya or whether it was to be a fifth vama quite distinct from the original four vamas. All this is quite clear. What is, however, not clear is the class to which it refers. This is because Manu makes no specific mention of the class involved in the controversy.

The verse is also enigmatical because of the ambiguity in the decision given by Manu. Manu's decision is that there is no fifth Vama. As a general proposition it has a meaning which everybody can understand. But what does this decision mean in the concrete application to the class whose status was the stibjett-matter of controversy. Obviously it is capable of two interpretations. It may mean that as according to the scheme of Chaturvama there is no fifth vama the class in question must be deemed to belong to one of the four recognized vamas. But it may also mean that as in the original Vama System there is no provision for a fifth vama the class in

question must be deemed to be outside the Varna System altogether.

The traditional interpretation adopted by the orthodox Hindu is that the statement in Manu refers to the Untouchables, that it was the Untouchables whose Status was in controversy and that it was their status which is the subject-matter of Manu's decision. This interpretation is so firmly established that it has given rise to a division of Hindus into two classes called by different names, *Savarnas* or Hindus (those included in the Chaturvama) and *Avarnas* or Untouchables (those excluded from the Chaturvama). The question is, is this view correct? To whom does the text refer? Does it refer to the Untouchables? A discussion of this question may appear to be out of place and remote from the question under consideration. But it is not so. For if the text does refer to the Untouchables then it follows that Untouchability did exist in the time of Manu- a conclusion which touches the very heart of the question under consideration. The matter must, therefore, be thrashed out.

I am sure this interpretation is wrong. I hold that the passage does not refer to the Untouchables at all. Manu does not say which was the fifth class whose status was in controversy and about whose status he has given a decision in this passage. Was it the class of Untouchables or was it some other class? In support of my conclusion that the passage does not refer to Untouchables at all I rely on two circumstances. In the first place, there was no Untouchability in the time of Manu. There was only Impurity. Even the Chandala for whom Manu has nothing but contempt is only an impure person. That being so, this passage cannot possibly have any reference to Untouchables. In the second place, there is evidence to support the view that this passage has reference to slaves and not to Untouchables. This view is based on the language of the passage quoted from the Narada Smriti in the chapter on the Occupational Theory of Untouchability. It will be noticed that the Narada Smriti speaks of the slaves as the fifth class. If the expression fifth class in the Narada Smriti refers to slaves, I see no reason why the expression fifth class in Manu Smriti should not be taken to have reference to slaves. If this reasoning, is correct, it cuts at the very root of the contention that Untouchability existed in the time of Manu and that Manu was not prepared to include them as part of the Varna System. For the reasons stated, the passage does not refer to Untouchability and there is, therefore, no reason to conclude that there was Untouchability in the time of Manu.

Thus we can be sure of fixing the upper limit for the date of the birth of Untouchability. We can definitely say that Manu Smriti did not enjoin Untouchability. There, however, remains one important question. What is the date of Manu Smriti? Without an answer to this question it would not be possible for the average to relate the existence or non-existence of Untouchability to any particular point in time. There is no unanimity among savants regarding the date of Manu Smriti. Some regard it as very ancient and some regard it as very recent. After taking all facts into consideration Prof. Buhler has fixed a date which appears to strike the truth. According to Buhler, Manu Smriti in the shape in which it exists now, came into existence in the Second Century A.D. In assigning so recent a date to the Manu Smriti Prof. Buhler is not quite alone. Mr. Daphtary has also come to the same conclusion. According to him Manu Smriti came into being after the year 185 B.C. and not before. The reason given by Mr. Daphtary is that Manu Smriti has a close connection with the murder of the Buddhist Emperor Brihadratha of the Maurya dynasty by his Brahmin Commander-in-Chief Pushyamitra Sunga and as even that took place in 185 B.C., he concludes that Manu Smriti must have been written after 185 B.C. To give support to so important a conclusion it is necessary to establish a nexus between the murder of Brihadratha Maurya by Pushyamitra and the writing of Manu Smriti by strong and convincing evidence. Mr. Daphtary has unfortunately omitted to do so. Consequently his conclusion appears to hang in the air. The establishment of such a nexus is absolutely essential. Fortunately there is no want of evidence for the purpose.

The murder of Brihadratha Maurya by Pushyamitra has unfortunately passed unnoticed. At any rate it has not received the attention it deserves. It is treated by historians as an ordinary incident between two individuals as though its origin lay in some personal quarrel between the two. Having regard to its consequences it was an epoch - making event. Its significance cannot be measured by treating it as a change of dynasty-the Sungas succeeding the Mauryas. It was a political revolution as great as the French Revolution, if not greater. It was a revolution- a bloody revolution-engineered by the Brahmins to overthrow the rule of the Buddhist Kings. That is what the murder of Brihadratha by Pushyamitra means.

This triumphant Brahmanism was in need of many things. It of course needed to make Chaturvama the law of the land the validity of which was denied by the Buddhists. It needed to make animal

sacrifice, which was abolished by the Buddhists, legal. But it needed more than this. Brahmanism in bringing about this revolution against the rule of the Buddhist Kings had transgressed two rules of the customary law of the land which were accepted by all as sacrosanct and inviolable. The first rule-made it a sin for a Brahmin even to touch a weapon. The second made the King's person sacred and regicide a sin. Triumphant Brahmanism wanted a sacred text, infallible in its authority, to justify their transgressions. A striking feature of the *Manu Smriti* is that it not only makes *Chaturvama* the law of the land, it not only makes animal sacrifice legal but it goes to state when a Brahmin could justifiably resort to arms and when he could justifiably kill the King. In this the *Manu Smriti* has done what no prior *Smriti* has done. It is a complete departure. It is a new thesis. Why should the *Manu Smriti* do this? The only answer is, it had to strengthen the revolutionary deeds committed by Pushyamitra by propounding philosophic justification. This interconnection between Pushyamitra and the new thesis propounded by *Manu* shows that the *Manu Smriti* came into being some time after 185 B.C., a date not far removed from the date assigned by Prof. Buhler. Having got the date of the *Manu Smriti* we can say that in the Second Century A.D., there was no Untouchability.

Now to turn to the possibility of determining the lower limit to the birth of Untouchability. For this we must go to the Chinese travellers who are known to have visited India and placed on record what they saw of the modes and manners of the Indian people. Of these Chinese travellers *Fah-Hian* has something very interesting to say. He came to India in 400 A.D. In the course of his observations occurs the following passage¹ :-

"Southward from this (Mathura) is the so-called middle-country (*Madhyadesa*). The climate of this country is warm and equable, without frost or snow. The people are very well off, without poll-tax or official restrictions. Only those who till the royal lands return a portion of profit of the land. If they desire to go, they go; if they like to stop they stop. The kings govern without corporal punishment; criminals are fined, according to circumstances, lightly or heavily. Even in cases of repeated rebellion they only cut off the right hand. The King's personal attendants, who guard him on the right and left, have fixed salaries. Throughout the country the people kill no living thing nor drink wine, nor do they eat garlic or onion, with the exception of *Chandalas* only. The *Chandalas* are

named 'evil men' and dwell apart from others; if they enter a town or market, they sound a piece of wood in order to separate themselves; then, men knowing they are, avoid coming in contact with them. In this country they do not keep swine nor fowls, and do not deal in cattle; they have no shambles or wine shops in their market-places. In selling they use cowrie shells. The Chandalas only hunt and sell flesh."

Can this passage be taken as evidence of the prevalence of Umouchability at the time of Fah-Hian? Certain parts of his description of the treatment given to the Chandalas do seem to lend support to the conclusion, that is, a case of Untouchability.

There is, however, one difficulty in the way of accepting this conclusion. The difficulty arises because the facts relate to the Chandalas. The Chandala is not a good case to determine the existence or non-existence of Untouchability. The Brahmins have regarded the Chandalas as their hereditary enemies and are prone to attribute to them abominable conduct; hurl at them low epithets and manufacture towards them a mode of behaviour which is utterly artificial to suit their venom against them. Whatever, therefore, is said against the Chandalas must be taken with considerable reservations.

This argument is not based on mere speculation. Those who doubt its cogency may consider the evidence of Bana's Kadambari for a different description of the treatment accorded to the Chandalas.

The story of Kadambari is a very complex one and we are really not concerned with it. It is enough for our purpose to note that the story is told to King Shudraka by a parrot named Vaishampayana who was the pet of a Chandala girl. The following passages from the Kadambari are important for our purpose. It is better to begin with Bana's description of a Chandala settlement. It is in the following terms: mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_63:-

"I beheld the barbarian settlement, a very market-place of evil deeds. It was surrounded on all sides by boys engaged in the chase, unleashing their hounds, teaching their falcons, mending snares, carrying weapons, and fishing, horrible in their attire, like demoniacs. Here and there the entrance to their dwellings, hidden by thick bamboo forests, was to be inferred, from the rising of smoke of orpiment. On all sides the enclosures were made with skulls; (627) the dust-heaps on the roads were filled with bones; the yards of the huts were miry with blood, fat, and meat chopped up.

The life there consisted of hunting; the food, of flesh; the ointment, of fat; the garments, of coarse silk; the couches, of dried skins; the household attendants, of dogs; the animals for riding, of cows; the men's employment, of wine and women; the oblation to the gods, of blood; the sacrifice, of cattle. The place was the image of all hells."

It is from such a settlement that the Chandala girl starts with her parrot to the palace of King Shudraka. King Shudraka is sitting in the Hall of Audience with his Chieftains. A portress enters the Hall and makes the following announcement

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"Sire, *there* stands at the gate a Chandala maiden from the South, a royal *glory* of the race of that Tricamku who climbed the sky, but fell from it at the order of wrathful Indra, She bears a parrot in a cage, and bids me thus hail your majesty:"Sire, thou, like the ocean, art alone worthy to receive the treasures of whole earth. In the thought that this bird is a marvel and the treasure of the whole earth, I bring it to lay at thy feet, and desire to behold thee. Thou, 0 king, hast heard her message, and must decide!"so saying, she ended her speech. The king, whose curiosity was aroused, looked at the chiefs around him, and with the words Why not? Bid her enter' gave his permission.

Then the portress, immediately on the king's order ushered in the Candala maiden. And she entered."

The King and the Chieftains did not at first take notice of her. To attract attention she struck a bamboo on the mosaic floor to arouse the King. Bana then proceeds to describe her personal appearance

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"Then the king, with the words, look yonder* to his suite, gazed steadily upon the Candala maiden, as she was pointed out by the portress. Before her went a man, whose hair was hoary with age, whose eyes were the colour of the red lotus, whose joints, despite the loss of youth, were firm from incessant labour, whose form, though that of Matanga, was not to be despised, and who wore the white raiment meet for a court. Behind *her* went a Candala boy, with locks falling on either shoulder, bearing a cage, the bars of which, though of gold, shone like emerald from the reflection of the parrot's plumage. She herself seemed by the darkness of her hue to

imitate Krishna when he guilefully assumed a woman's attire to take away the arnritit seized by the demons. She was, as it were, a doll of sapphire walking alone; and over the bine garment, which reached to her ankle, there fell a veil of red silk, like evening sunshine falling on blue lotuses. The circle of her cheek was whitened by the earring that hung from one ear, like the *(ace* of night inlaid with the rays of the rising moon: she had a tawny tilaka of gorocana, as if it woe a third eye, like Parvati in mountaineer's attire, after the fashion of the garb of Civa.

She was like Cri. darkened by the sapphire glory of Narayana reflected on the robe on her breast; or like Rati, stained by smoke which rose as Madana was burnt by the fire of wrathful Civa: *or* like Yamuna, fleeing in fear of being drawn along by the ploughshare of wild Balarama; or, from the rich lac that turned her lotus feet into budding shoots, like Durga, with *her* feet crimsoned by the blood of the Asura Mahisha she had just trampled upon.

Her nails were rosy from the pink glow of *her* fingers; the mosaic pavement seemed too hard for her touch, and she came for placing her feet like tender twigs upon the ground.

The rays of *her* anklets, rising in flame-colour, seemed to encircle her as with the arms of Agni, as though, by his love for her beauty, he would purify the strain of her birth, and so set the Creator at naught.

Her girdle was like the stars wreathed on the brow of the elephant of Love; and her necklace was a rope of large bright pearls, like the stream of Ganga just tinged by Yamuna.

Like autumn, she opened her lotus eyes; like the rainy season, she had cloudy tresses; like the circle of the Malaya Hills, she was wreathed with sandal; like the zodiac, she was decked with starry gems; like Cri, she had the fairness of a lotus in her hand; like a swoon, she entranced the heart; like a forest, she was endowed with living beauty; like the child of a goddess, she was claimed by no tribe; like sleep, she charmed the eyes; as a lotus-pool in a wood is troubled by elephants, so was she dimmed by her Matanga birth; like spirit, she might *not*. be touched; like a letter, she gladdened the eyes alone; like the blossoms of spring she lacked the jati flower, her slender waist, like the line of Love's bow, could be spanned by the hands; with *her* curly hair, she was like the Lakshmi of the Yaksha king in Alaka. She had but reached the flower of *her* youth, and was beautiful exceedingly. And the king was amazed; and the

thought arose in his mind. Ill-placed was the labour of the Creator in producing this beauty! For if she has been created as though in mockery of her Candala form, such that all the world's wealth of loveliness is laughed to scorn by her own, why was she born in a race with which none can mate? Surely by thought alone did Prajapati create her, fearing the penalties of contact with the Matanga race, else whence this unsullied radiance, a grace that belongs not to limbs sullied by touch? Moreover, though fair in form, by the baseness of her birth, whereby she, like a Lakshmi of the lower world, is a perpetual reproach to the gods, she, lovely as she is, causes fear in Brahma, the maker of so strange a union.' While the king was thus thinking the maiden, garlanded with flowers, that fell over her ears, bowed herself before him with a confidence beyond her years. And, when she had made her reverence and stepped on to the mosaic floor, her attendant, taking the parrot, which had just entered the cage, advanced a few steps, and, showing it to the King, said: 'Sire, this parrot, by name Vaicampayana, knows the meaning of all the castes, is expert in the practice of royal policy, skilled in tales, history, and Puranas, and acquainted with songs and with musical intervals. He recites, and himself composes graceful and incomparable modern romances, love-stories, plays, and poems, and the like; he is versed in witticisms and is an unrivalled disciple of the vina, flute, and drum. He is skilled in displaying the different movements of dancing, dextrous in painting, very bold in play, ready in resources to calm a maiden angered in a lover's quarrel, and familiar with the characteristics of elephants, horses, men, and women. He is the gem of the whole earth; and in the thought that treasures belong to thee, as pearls to the ocean, the daughter of my lord has brought him hither to thy feet, O king! Let him be accepted as thine.'

On reading this description of a Chandala girl many questions arise. Firstly, how different it is from the description given by Fa-Hian? Secondly Bana is a Vatsyayana Brahmin. This Vatsyayana Brahmin, after giving a description of the Chandala Settlement, finds no compunction in using such eloquent and gorgeous language to describe the Chandala girl. Is this description compatible with the sentiments of utter scorn and contempt associated with Untouchability? If the Chandalas were Untouchables how could an Untouchable girl enter the King's palace? How could an Untouchable be described in the superb terms used by Bana? Far from being

degraded, the Chandalas of Bana's period had Ruling Families among them. For Bana speaks of the Chandala girl as a Chandala princess mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_66 Bana wrote some time about 600 A.D., and by 600 A.D. the Chandalas had not come to be regarded as Untouchables. It is, therefore, quite possible that the conditions described by Fa-Hian, though bordering on Untouchability, may not be taken as amounting to Untouchability. It may only be extreme form of impurity practised by the Brahmins who are always in the habit of indulging in overdoing their part in sacerdotalism. This becomes more than plausible if we remember that when Fa-Hian came to India it was the reign of the Gupta Kings. The Gupta Kings were patrons of Brahmanism. It was a period of the triumph and revival of Brahmanism. It is quite possible that what Fa-Hian describes is not Untouchability but an extremity to which the Brahmins were prepared to carry the ceremonial impurity which had become attached to some community, particularly to the Chandalas.

The next Chinese traveller who came into India was Yuan Chwang. He came to India in 629 A.D. He stayed in India for 16 years and has left most accurate records of journeys up and down the country and of the manners and customs of the people. In the course of his description of general characters of the cities and buildings of India, he says mk:@MSITStore:C:\Important\Writing_Of_Babasaheb.chm::/39B.Untouchables who were they_why they became PART II.htm - _msocom_67 :-

"As to their inhabited towns and cities the quadrangular walls of the cities (or according to *one* text, of the various regions) are broad and high, while the thoroughfares are narrow tortuous passages. The shops are on the highways and booths, or (inns) line the roads. Butchers, fishermen, public performers, executioners, and scavengers have their habitations marked by a distinguishing sign. They are forced to live outside the city and they sneak along on the left when going about in the hamlets."

The above passage is too short and too brief for founding a definite conclusion thereon. There is, however, one point about it which is worthy of note. Fa-Hian's description refers to the Chandalas only while the description given by Yuan Chwang applies to communities other than the Chandalas. This is a point of great importance. No such argument can be levelled against the acceptance of a description since it applies to communities other than the Chandalas. It is,

therefore, just possible that when Yuan Chwang came to India, Untouchability had emerged.

On the basis of what has been said above we can conclude that while Untouchability did not exist in 200 A.D. it had emerged by 600 A.D.

These are the two limits, upper and lower, for determining the birth of Untouchability. Can we fix an approximate date for the birth of Untouchability? I think we can, if we take beef-eating, which is the root of Untouchability, as the point to start from. Taking the ban on beef-eating as a point to reconnoitre from, it follows that the date of the birth of Untouchability must be intimately connected with the ban on cow-killing and on eating beef. If we can answer when cow-killing became an offence and beef-eating became a sin, we can fix an approximate date for the birth of Untouchability. When did cow-killing become an offence? We know that Manu did not prohibit the eating of beef nor did he make cow-killing an offence. When did it become an offence? As has been shown by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, cow killing was made a capital offence by the Gupta kings some time in the 4th Century A.D.

We can, therefore, say with some confidence that Untouchability was born some time about 400 A.D. It is born out of the struggle for supremacy between Buddhism and Brahmanism which has so completely moulded the history of India and the study of which is so woefully neglected by students of Indian history.