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Different family relations as mentioned in the Rajatarangini of Kalhana

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Abstract

In India, people learn the essential themes of cultural life within the bosom of a family. The most widely desired residential unit is the joint family, ideally consisting of three or four patrilineal related generations. In joint family all members of that fail, living under one roof, working, eating, worshiping, and cooperating together in mutually beneficial social and economic activities. In traditional Kashmiri family setup includes many relations since ancient times, Kalhana in his chronicle gives plenty of references related to different family relations and presents a wide picture of contemporary family organization. Through this research paper I will try to highlight the family relations on the basis of references from Rajatarangini of Kalhana.

Keywords: Family relations, Rajatarangini, cultural life

Introduction

The joint family is an ancient Indian institution, under which all family members are socialized to accept the authority of those ranked above them in the hierarchy. Usually, the eldest male member was the head of the house and administered joint property. In general, elders rank above juniors, and among people of similar age, males outrank females. Males learn to command others within the household but expect to accept the direction of senior males. Ideally, even a mature adult man living in his father's household acknowledges his father's authority on both minor and major matters. At one place Kalhana says that if a man has seen his son dying of hunger, his wife under the necessity of being sent to another person's house, his best friend in distress, his milk cow paining by want of food and his parents ill and on the point of death. Then hell for that person is there. Through this passage of Rajatarangini one can easily make out the importance of one's family and their happiness for Kashmiri people.

Relation between parents and children

One of the most significant and intimate relationships among humans is that between parent and child. The parent child bond is unique both in its biological foundations and in the psychological meanings. Kalhana tells that any person on this earth only get union with each other to become parents. In other words parents are only the immediate cause for the production of a child and one obtain that only by one's own previous deeds. There are plenty of references where Kalhana has given the relationships related to father and son, father and daughter, mother and son and mother and daughter e.i. King Baladitya had a daughter who was like a glitter of a moon on the ocean of love. For a child, it is an essential relationship that ensures survival and helps to shape his or her destiny. The child is surrounded by his family, which provides a framework within which the child may find roots, continuity and a sense of belongingness. As we all know that "Fathering" is an important feature of socialization and "Mothering" symbolizes emotional support, inter-personal sensitivity and help. The loving and accepting parents provide a healthy atmosphere for the child to develop his capabilities into proper channels and exercise his potentials to the maximum. At one place Kalhana says that sometimes excessive love of the parents spoils the child. Traditional Indian notions endorsed the father's role as a provider, protector, teacher, and moral guardian to children.

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In one reference of Rajatarangini Kalhana narrates a scean when Kalasa tries to get the favour of his ministers against his own father. These ministers reply that in any circumstances your father will protect you and you will also protect him as you both have blood relation. Within the patriarchal family system in India, everyday care of young children remained primarily the mother's responsibility. Fathers maintained a distant, authoritative role, rather than an affective one. Kalhana has given many references where small child is particularly put under the guardianship of her mother, if his father dies in young age i.e., child King Cakravarman was put under the guardianship of his mother Bappatadevi, and then for next ten years under that of his grandmother Ksillika.

Traditionally, it is the duty of parents to create a conducive environment for their children's growth, address their children's health needs, support both present and future security of their children, and maintain healthy loving and close relationships with their children, guiding children's education, becoming more open and expressive, adopting less strict discipline measures, assigning more importance to children and to their fathering role, prioritizing communication with their children, and engaging children in extracurricular activities etc. Kalhana in his work has depicted this relationship very beautifully. At many references he says that if person does not have child, he always remain sad and miss the blessings of God in his life and if he dies before his parents then it was the most painful incident of once life. In one reference Kalhana says that when the son of King Kuvalayapida died, overtaking by grief, at the confluence of the Vitasta and Sindhu, which is as sacred as the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna, abandoned his life. Later his wife also followed her because of same grief. When King Meghavahana prohibited animal slaughtering in Kashmir, under the paternal feelings one day a Brahmana approached him with his dying son. Brahmana requested the King to allow him to offer animal sacrifice to mother Goddess Durga, otherwise his son will die.

But relationship between parents and children is not always shown healthy by Kalhana in his chronicle as many places this relationship is very bitter i.e., Kalhana tells that Kalasa being a father used o give monthly allowance to Harsa, but it was so insufficient for him that he used to had only one meal only every second day. Torman was put in prison by his own son Hiranya. At another place he refers that King Unmattavanti was anxious to kill his own father. Even Kalasa also wanted to get rid of his father Ananta.

Relations with grand parents

The word "grandparents" conjures up a unique world where the dual role of parenting is manifest. Grandparents act as shock absorbers, which cushion the aftershocks and they also act as bouncing boards, which help to ricochet a range of emotions. The different roles they play only serve to emphasize their vital link in the family. With a wealth of old-world experience behind them, and having the unique ability of being able to metamorphose from advisers and listeners to mediators and friends, they can offer support and stability. The underlying sense of responsibility that goes with this is tremendous. The role of grandparents in children's lives is varied. It is imperial at times, muted at others and goes underground whenever required but all the time solid and absolutely dependable. They are constantly performing artistes who do the balancing act all the time between their

adult children and their grandchildren.

Grandparents often bridge the gap between parents and their children. Rebellious independent children who are trying to find their feet are almost always at loggerheads with their parents. The role of the grandparents can be very important provided they act as impartial judges and are able to convey this feeling to both parties. Grandchildren prefer to listen to the grandparents rather than the parents with whom they are unfortunately involved in everyday tussles. The sense of objectivity and the absence of bias lend a sense of credibility to their roles as mediators. Honestly done, this goes a long way in lulling both the parties into a sense of arbitration. Gulfs widen, but at the same time bridges are also built. One important thing, which seems to be missing in the lives of children without these elders in family, is the sense of family, values, religious beliefs and principles. Kalhana has also depicted this relationship in very beautifull way in his chronicle. When King Jayapida was in his youth, his ministers told him that he should be like his grandfather, who was full of ambition. He should also build strong army and conquer this world. In another reference Kalhana brings us to know that though Kalasa and Ananda did not share good relationship. Ananta always was against the deeds of Kalasa was against the deeds of Kalasa but he had great affection for his grandson Harsa. When Ananta died, Kalasa did not come to his funeral ground but his grandson did. When Harsa touched the feet of his grandmother, she kissed him on his forehead and told him never to trust his father. At many places grandchildren were also get love affection and power from their maternal grandparents too. As Durlabhaka Pratapaditya II had been declared by his mother the son of his maternal grandfather, being the daughter's son, he took the name Pratapaditya II in accordance with the usage of that grandfather's family. As Baladitya died without male issue, function prescribed by religious law devolved naturally on his daughter's son as well as the inheritance. When King Pratapasena II, as Kalhana says, conquered the whole world, resided in the city of his grandfather, Pravarasena I and there he also founders the town on the name of his grandfather. Asoka was grandson of Sakuni and Gopaditya was great-grandson of Yudhisthira.

Relations between brothers and sisters

In family organization next most, important relationship comes between brother and sister. Kalhana has given a wide picture of this relationship in his work. Candrapida was killed by his brother by using witchcraft. Harsa is said to have killed his own brothers in lust of power. On other hand when Jayendra met his nephew and sister after a long time, Kalhana says that that both brother and sister looked long at each other with deep emotions and suddenly their tears of long separation. This incident clearly depicts the depth of their relationship. At one place Kalhana tells that mother of King Apatajayapida was greatly respected by her brothers, in whom the eldestlaka.

Relations with in-law

In Rajatarangini we come across many references where husband of a daughter gets many favours from his in-laws. Kalhana says that there was a pond of sweet water in the valley. A Naga named *Susravas* lived in it. Once upon a time a young Brahmana named Visakha, who was fatigued by a long marched, went at midday to the bank of that pond to seek the shade. When he was about to start his meal, two

sweet-eyed maids appeared in front of him. There he saw the moon-faced maiden eating this grass. But he did not consider it good food. Ksmendra called it Kachidani. It grows plentifully on the meadows of the valley. It is now known as *kacdan* and grows in abundance in the meadows of the Valley. A third one *sanda* is modern *hand*, which grows all over the valley and is appreciated for its medical properties. When Brahmana came to know that it is because of a ascetic, who was the guard of fields, does not allow them to eat fresh crop, as long as it is not touched by the protectors of that field. When the field guard was inside his hut, Brahmana secretly dropped fresh corn in to his food dish which was cooking outside and how he helped that Naga and his daughters. Naga in gratitude married his daughter to that Brahmana. Later when King Nara had bad eye on the Naga wife of that Brahmana, Naga not only helped him by protecting him against that king but later he was also made Naga by his father-in-law. In another reference Kalhana talks about the relationship between Baladitya and his son-in-law Durladha vardhana. When Baladitya's daughter was a child, it was predicted that her husband will be the ruler of this earth. In the course of the time Baladitya distinguished his son-in-law, as he was spreading light by his intellect, he made him master of a fortune and made him the ruler of Kashmir. At many places sons-in-law are shown to be known by their famous fathers-in-law. Kalhana says that Isanacandra, who was physician by profession, was the son-in-law of minister Cankuna. Jarasamda, who was the King of Magdha, was the father-in-law of Kanisa. In another reference *Kalhana* tells that when Jayapida defeated five Gonda chiefs. He made his father-in-law their sovereign. Relationship between mother-in-law-and daughter-in-law is also mentioned in *Rajatarangini*. When Suryamati, under her love for her son, Kalasa pressurized her husband Ananta to give all ruling powers to their son, Ananta unwillingly did so. Who so ever would be the King, only his wives could be the chief Queen. Suryamati under her jealousy started ill-treating her daughters-in-law. Kalhana tells that whenever Kalasa used to go out of his palace, Suryamati is said to treat her daughters-in-law as a slave girls and used to make them smear of the house floor with cow dung.

Other family relations

There are many other family relations which are also mentioned by Kalhana i.e., relation of brother-in-law, sister-in-law, relation with aunty, uncle, nephew, niece etc. Kalhana tells that once Jayasimha was on his complain saw a handsome boy of great character and concluded that he was not born from common race and guessed on account of the resemblance of his brother-in-law and thought that this boy might be his own nephew. So, he followed him with the anxiety desire of as pertaining the truth and when he reached that boy's house, he saw there his sister. Kalhana further says that he got so emotional by that time that his eyes filled with water. At another place Kalhana writes that Sura had four nephews from his younger brother namely Dina, vinnapa etc. Dina and Vinnapa built temples under his name. For the relationship of brother-in-law Kalhana tells that when King Jayapida was away from his palace, his brother-in-law, whose name was Jija, entered the Kashmir by treachery and forcibly usurped the throne.

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