

Bhānuguptā (most probably a daughter of the Gupta king Bhānugupta) was the 'wife of a certain Ravikīrtti, evidently a brāhmaṇa, who was the grandfather of Dharmadosha, the minister of Yaśodharman.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, we see that three of the Gupta princesses were married to brāhmaṇas.<sup>37</sup> There is only one instance of the Guptas marrying a daughter of a Kadamba king, who was a brāhmaṇa.<sup>38</sup>

It is to be noted that matrimonial alliances played a significant part in the foreign policy of the Guptas. Candragupta I rose to power by marrying the Licchavi princess Kumāradevī and Samudragupta accepted the offers of daughters from his feudatories. Thus, marriages with the most powerful and distinguished royal families in different parts of India continued to be an important policy of the Guptas.<sup>39</sup>

Hence, the matrimonial alliances of the Guptas seem to have sprung from political considerations.<sup>40</sup> Politically the Kadambas were no match for the Guptas. It may be inferred that it was on account of political pressures or as a matter of pride for the Kadambas that they had married their daughter to the Gupta king. We can explain all the matrimonial alliances of the Guptas even without bringing political reasons in the picture. As we know, intercaste marriages, especially of the *anuloma* type, have been permitted by the Smṛtis. In three out of the four cases Gupta princesses were married to brāhmaṇa bridegrooms. If these are taken to have been *anuloma* marriages Guptas could have belonged to any of the remaining three *varṇas*. It is only the marriage of a Kadamba princess with a Gupta king which requires the Guptas to have been brāhmaṇas, otherwise it will be a case of a *pratiloma* marriage.

The Guptas do not mention their caste in any of their records. Had they been brāhmaṇas they must have been proud to refer to it, especially because they were staunch supporters of Hinduism. We find a parallel in the case of Pāla kings of Bengal who are silent about their caste since they were Buddhists.

Finally Candragupta I agreed to have a joint coinage with the Licchavis after his marriage with the Licchavi princess Kumāradevī. Had the Gupta kings been brāhmaṇas, they