

## Human Environment, as Introspected by The Sages and Seers in Vedic Age : A Contemplative Scientific Review From *Manusmruti*

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### INTRODUCTION

Modern day environmentalists of the world over, have seriously started considering on the diversified aspect of the role of religion, that can; rather must play in saving the natural environment. Nature is the 'God's manifestation' to a religious believer, while from a scientific point of view, it is getting deteriorated at an exponential increasing rate. The complete devotion of the special millennium issue of the journal "The Ecologist" (Vol. 30, No.1, January 2000) published by Ecosystem Ltd., London, is an attempt to rediscover the wisdom inherited in ancient religions and to revive the cosmic or ecological theologies, that rendered the basis of different religious traditions once upon a time. The editorial comments "religion today has been very much effected by the shift from the traditional to the modern world; and despite the fact that the majority of the world's people are still religious believers, (yet) it no longer fulfils its original role".

In India, the Vedic knowledge since more than 6000 BC was the greatest indigenous institute, which has guided the society in right prospective through the various *Smruties* (ethical law books, numbered about 20 major and 30 minor) formulated by the sages and seers from time to time. *Manusmruti* is the prime among the *Smruties*, dates back to the Vedic age (which we have often referred as more than 2000 BC?), a monumental work of encyclopaedic status (Murty, 1994), is reflected as the highest doctrine for the formulation of human ethics (Goldstucker, 1977). Its contents, being original and based directly on the thoughts of Veda, was subsequently accepted as the torch bearer for the other *Smruti* writers of ancient India. *Manusmruti* is otherwise known as *Maanav Dharma Saastra* (compendium of human principles) with a basic theme that *Dharma* (Principle) is not religion (the so called belief or cult followed by a specific group, may be based on a specific personality or dogma) and it has created a vista for the human society, may not be specifically alone for the Aaryans of the ancient India. The time when *Manusmruti* was scribed (revealed) was free from the existence of any religion or cult. This speaks the highness of the compendium above any religion controversy or any

narrow viewing, as it is supposed to be (Kumar, 1995). In the Indian scenario since centuries, the importance of the contents of *Manusmruti* is felt in every one's day to day life, may be silently, knowingly or unknowingly within the socio-ecological structure of the concerned person; and it has played a major role for the formulation of Hindu law. In fact, any discussion about *Manusmruti* remains incomplete without Sir William Jones, the founder of Asiatic Society in India, a judge under East India Company of British India, was the pioneer to translate the epic into English in the year 1794, in the light of Kullukabhatta's interpretation. In the view of Sir Jones, the synchronised relationship between the words Manu – *Manushya* (Sanskrit) *Minus* (Greek) and Man (English), shows that the personified Manu of India, represents the human race of the world (c.f. Das, 1995) and may be the 'Adam' of Jews, Christians and Muslims is no other than the Manu of India. Interestingly, the word 'Adam' may be a derivative of Sanskrit word '*Aadima*' (ancient - first - primal) and anthropologically a synonymous of "*Aadi Maanava*". Moreover, in Hindi, the national language of India, which has adopted the Devanaagari script from Sanskrit, refers the word "*Aadami*" for human beings, which may have similar etymological origin like "*Adam*". More about the facts on *Manusmruti* and the author can be collected from a recent review (Padhy, 2000).

In a formal introduction the author (revealer) Maharshi Manu (Manu Vaivasswata) a renowned yogi: a man of wisdom and great elite of Vedas: (Das, 1960) the saver and conservator of bio-diversity during dissolution (*Satapatha Braahmana, Matsya Puraana*) and in some other context above the human level as the recipient of *Yogic* knowledge from Sun God (version of *Geetaa*); also equalised with mythological personalities (i.e. Gods) like *Agni* (fire God), *Prajaapati* (Lord of creations), *Indra* (King of Gods) and *Brahmaa* (the creator) (XII/123). Moreover, he was elevated as the ruler (rule giver) of human society for all times.

Study of ancient literature and mythology is a new dimension in Ethnobiology (Padhy, 1999), which conveys the ancient scientific thoughts, encapsulated in the Sanskrit hymns and religious icons in symbolic

terms and forms respectively. Our attempt to study *Manusmruti* from ethnobiological point of view since 1995 (Dash, 1998; Padhy, 2000) and also exposing the science concealed within the religious icons (Padhy et al., 1996, 1999, 2001) have provided enough scope to realise that the ancient Indian environmental and ethical education deserves a rediscovery and needs an ecological implementation in the new millennium at par. *Manusmruti* as an open volume of human life, dealing with aspects from birth to transmigration, is analysed in this article from environmental point of view and focus on the ecological theology, that was conceived long before being extrapolated in the Hindu cult. Many of the facts presented in this paper were discussed previously in different contexts; but felt necessary to be conglomerated with a didactic approach for an ecological perception. Human environment is to be considered in toto and in the present context the subject is divided into six categories as follows:

- I. Socio-ecological niche.
- II. Academic environment
- III. Family Atmosphere
- IV. Social Interaction
- V. Salubrity : An environmental necessity.
- VI. Ethical protection for biota.

The compendium *Manusmruti* has twelve chapters (*Adhdhaayas*) in which 2685 hymns (*Sslokas*) are presented dealing with diversified aspects of the human life, in and around. The meanings of the dicta so presented, are based mostly on Buhler's compilation (1886) which were based on the Sanskrit commentaries of Indian authors like Govindaraja, Kullukabhatta, Nandakarya, Medha-tithi, Narayana, Raghavendra and a Kashmir copy, the author being not known. Other reference books were of Roy, 1968; Acharya, 1993; Das, 1960, 1995 and Swain, 1998. The *Sslokas* related to particular subtopics are picked up from different chapters and brought together for a comprehensive compilation. In some cases the basic meaning of selected individual with conjoined *Sslokas* (if any) are presented and in every case references are mentioned in parenthesis in the order of *Adhdhaaya* in Roman / *Ssloka* in English numbers. In few instances to facilitate the reader, some dicta are repeated, which is unavoidable as the basic theme has equal importance in different sections.

### I. SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL NICHE

The term 'niche' from ecological point of view, signifies the definite position and definite role of an organism in the structure and operation of an ecosystem. In this context, it is the status and role of the human beings that manifests the form and function

of the society. *Manusmruti* has specified the socio-ecological status of the human beings on the basis of a defined livelihood i.e. *Varna* (which subsequently emerged into caste) and his social role i.e. *Karma*, a manifestation of simple life style.

*Aaryaavarta*, the ancient known human ecological formation of the Aaryans, the geographical expansion of the land, as specified in *Manusmruti*, was between the two mountains Himavat (Himalayas) – North and Vindhya - South, extended as far as the Eastern and Western oceans (II/22), was considered as a sacred land, created by Gods (II/17). The different consociations in it, were known as Brahmaavarta, Kurukshetra, Matsya, Paanchhala and Surasenakas, with rivers like Saraswatee and Dvishadvatee (II/19, 21,22). Coincidentally, this specific area, in the modern Indian geography, is demarcated as Indo-Gangetic plateau which is significant for its land's fertile status, massive agricultural output and enriched endemic culture. There are two schools of thought, on the origin of Aaryan culture: (a) that they have originated from the zone of the Caspian sea and widened throughout the Europe and Asian countries; and (b) the other indigenous view of India, which claims the origin of Aryan culture as endemic to this subcontinent alone that might have spread all over the world. The second view is supported by the most ancient literature of the world i.e. Vedas, which has its foundation and lively status in India only. Moreover, such equivalent literary support is lacking compared with other ancient civilizations of the world. *Manusmruti* claims in this regard as:

The custom handed down in regular succession (since time immemorial) among the (four chief) castes (*Varnas*) and the mixed races (*Varnassan-karas*) of this country is called the conduct of virtuous men (II/18).

From an elite (*Braahmana*), born in this country, let all men on earth learn their several usage (II 20).

The above narration indicates that the people of Aaryaavartta were conscious of the other human races of the world and as well their culture too. Certainly, they were the first reported elite and most cultured primal people of that time to proclaim that 'let others learn from them' and the civilisation developed by the then society was the foot print for others.

The cultural ecology of Aaryaavartta was further supported by bio-geographical aspects like distribution of Black Buck (*Antelope cervicapra*) in this area (II/23,24). Black Buck, the *Krushnasaara Mriga* in Sanskrit is an indigenous species of India, was used as an ecological indicator by the Vedic people (Padhy et al., 1997). The sensitiveness of the animal to

minute fluctuation of environmental parameters, has focused it as an indicator of a conducive environment suitable for human habitation and some one is advised to live on that landscape where the black antelope roams freely. The choice in *Manusmruti* for a specific indigenous animal as an ecological indicator amongst vast bio-diversity, focuses on the eco-consciousness of Aaryan people. The antelope presently tops the list of endangered animals of the world.

The consciousness for the dwelling environment is further focused in (IV/155, 156) and cautioned not to live in places as follows:

- Where the sacred law is not obeyed (prohibited area from cultural point of view) ;
- Where diseases are endemic (to avoid contamination and health risk) ;
- For longer time on a mountain (unproductive area – physico-ecologically unsuitable).
- Where the rulers (in a country) are *Ssoodras* (by profession uneducated; from political point of view, may not render justice) ;
- Which (place) is surrounded by unrighteous men (he may lose moral strength) ;
- Which (place) has become subject to heretics (from religious point of view) ;
- (The place) swarmed with men of the lowest castes (from social point of view).
- Nor to move alone like a vagabond being unsecured – rather get settled at a suitable place.

#### A) DEFINED LIVELIHOOD

The fourfold (*Chaturvarna*) classification of the society (without birth right initially) as *Braahmana*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaissyas* and *Ssoodra* in Indian scenario, was based on *Guna* (quality) and *Karma* (duty), an apparently concurrent genetic system, in course of time which evolved to an inherited caste system with birth right. The duty of the different *Varnas* and *Varnassankaras* (mixed *Varnas*: resulted out of sex adultery and illegitimate marriages) is specified in *Manusmruti* to signify the working cadre and social status of a person in the society. The intellectuals who guided the society were called *Braahmana*, the *Kshatriyas* rendered protection to all concerned, the *Vaissyas* were to shoulder the economic responsibility in a broader spectrum, such as: agriculture and commerce; and the *Ssoodras* being uneducated, without defined livelihood (occupation) were prescribed to serve (support / help) the other three *Varnas* for the smooth running of the society. So the *Chaturvarna* classification was more based on the division of labour and was more a natural system (not as Manu to be blamed as the classifier),

applicable not only to human beings but for all the worldly objects animates and inanimates (Dash and Padhy, 1998c).

In order to specify the social niche still in a refined form the occupation (*Vrutti*), irrespective of *Varna*, was further divided as follows (IV/5-8) :

- i) *Rita* : By gleanings of corn (pick up after reappears in corn fields)
- ii) *Amrita* : What is given unasked (*Daana*)
- iii) *Mrita* : Food obtained by begging.
- iv) *Pramrita* : What causes many deaths (referred to agriculture).
- v) *Satyaanrita* : A mixture of truth and falsehood (referred to trade) and
- vi) *Ssva-vrutti* : A dog's mode of life i.e. service to others.

Amongst the above six, *Rita* and *Amrita* are difficult to perform and mostly referred to people those who have renounced the world. Begging was never encouraged in ancient India and considered equivalent to death (*Mrita*). Agriculture causes hurdles to self and domestic animals and also involves unwanted spoilage of biota in order to grow a particular corn system. Trade is defined as a mixture of truth and false, where the truth refers to the right commodity and the trust on the business man; while the falsehood is the price which is not so but obeyed to be so and without this much falseness, business can not progress. *Ssvaavrutti* is referred to dog's mode of life, indicates the profession of service to others which is accepted and cheered by most of us in the present day society. Infact, this profession was discouraged in ancient India as a person loses his personality itself. It may be remembered well that in British India, a service holder used to write 'your's slave' at the end of the application to a higher authority and at present it is customary with "yours faithfully" (probably dogs are only faithful in true sense). Of course, out of the above six *Vruttis*, one may pick up more than one (IV/9).

There is no doubt that the life style of a person is responsible to create a niche for him with which he interacts. So a defined livelihood in ancient India was more precise and meaningful. Of course under any circumstance, one is cautioned not to take up a profession which causes pain to others; speaks of the highest social ethics, such as :

- One must seek a means of subsistence which either causes no, or at least little pain (to others), and live (by that) except in time of distress (IV/2).
- For the purpose of gaining bare subsistence let him accumulate property by (following those) irreproachable occupations (which are prescribed for) his (caste), without (unduly) fa-

- tiguig his body (IV/3).
- Let him never, for the sake of subsistence, follow the (unusual) ways of the world; let him live the pure straight forward, honest life of a *Brahmana* (IV/11)

## B) LIVING PATTERN

Above all the saying goes on “simple living and high thinking” a prevalent proverb in the society which seldom tempts to be followed, since lot can be spoken by many but difficult to be followed by some one. A simple life leads to a simple family, a simple village, -society and -nation. If we look underneath, the crave for physical world consequent upon the so called scientific developments, has led to a situation, where the human society feels breathless. The style of simple life in ancient India, is worthy as much as to be learned and to be rectifying oneself, out of that few are as follows;

### a) Be Content

- He who desires happiness must strive after a perfectly contented disposition and control himself; for happiness has contentment for its root, the root of unhappiness is the contrary (disposition) (IV/12). Discontentment leads to undue desire and further social and economical reactions thereof.

### b) Control Your Senses

- Let him not, out of desire (for enjoyment), attach himself to any sensual pleasure, and let him carefully obviate an excessive attachment of them, by (reflecting on their worthlessness in) his heart (IV/16). Uncontrolled sensual pleasure is the mother of diseases and immoralities in modern man.

### c) Be Natural as You are

- Let him walk here (on earth), bringing his dress, speech, and thoughts to a conformity with his age, his occupation, his wealth, his sacred learning and his wealth, his sacred learning and his race (IV/18). It is difficult to differentiate the originality and false vanity of a person in the present day society.

### d) Avoid Undue Involvement

- Let him not exert himself without a purpose (IV/63). It leads to frustration and breach of peace.
- Let him avoid - atheism, cavilling at the Vedas, contempt of the Gods, hatredness, want of modesty, pride, anger and harshness (IV/163).

### e) Be Self Dependent

- Avoid all undertakings (the success of) which depends on others, that results to pain; every-

thing that depends on one self (gives) pleasure; know that this is the short definition of pleasure and pain (IV/159,160).

### f) Assess Yourself

- When the performance of an act gladdens his heart, let him perform it with diligence; but let him avoid the opposite (IV/161).

### g) Be Righteous:

- Let him never turn his heart to unrighteousness (even if there is suffering in consequence); as unrighteousness cuts off the roots of him who committed it (IV/171,172)
- Even if the punishment for unrighteousness falls not on the offender himself, it falls on his son, if not on the sons, at least on his grandson; but an iniquity once committed, never fails to produce fruit to him who wrought it (IV/173). One should be aware of the repercussion -there is no scientific proof for it, but stands as an ethical agenda.
- Though, he prospers for a while through unrighteousness and gains great good fortune, may conquers his enemies; but at last he perishes and roots out completely (IV/174).

### h) Be Truthful and Balanced

- Let him always delight in truthfulness, obedient to the sacred law, conduct worthy of an Aryan, and purity; Let him chastise his pupils according to the sacred law; let him keep his speech (expression) his arms (action) and his belly (food habit) under control. (IV/175).

### i) Be Modest

- Let him not be (uselessly) over active with his hands and feet, or with his eyes, nor crooked (in his ways), nor talk idly, nor injure others by deeds or even think of it (IV/175).

### j) Follow the Ancestors

- Let him walk in that path of holy man, which his father and his grandfather followed; while he walks in that, he will not suffer harm (IV/178). It may be for safety way of life.

### k) Maintain Self Integrity

- Let him not be proud of his austerities; nor utter a falsehood after he has offered a sacrifice; nor speak ill of *Brahmanas* (elite), nor boast after bestowed with a gift (IV/236). Such activities spoils the essence of the good deeds.

### l) Be Non-crave for Wealth

- Further instructions are laid down for a purified income as the money earned is the root of all happiness. If it is ill earned, following the principle of cause and effect it will lead to painful consequences and disharmony such as:

- Whether he, be rich or even in distress, let him not seek wealth through pursuit to which men cleave, nor by forbidden occupations, nor (let him accept presents) from any giver (whose ever it may be) (II/15).
- Let him avoid the acquisition of wealth and (the gratification of his) desires if they are opposed to the sacred law and even lawful acts which may cause pain in the future or are offensive to men (II/176).
- Neither a man who lives unrighteously, nor he who acquires wealth by telling false hood, nor he who always delights in doing injury, ever attain happiness in the world (IV/170).

Further, it is ever discouraged to go for hoarding of food grains (IV/7,8) which is to be equally distributed among the needy subjects of the society and acquiring knowledge, is emphasized over acquiring wealth. But, however, it is also cautioned not to feel despise one self on account of former failures and until death one must try to seek fortune (IV/137) keeping aside his incapability and the unfavourable surrounding factors.

The qualities mentioned above to maintain a simple life have much socio-ecological significance, which are in a fast deteriorating trend in the modern society.

## II. ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

### A) STUDENTSHIP

The education system in Vedic age was no doubt disbursed under the open sky; but was not made open for all, unlike the present day system which is running within the close door compartments of high structured establishments but open for all. The ancient education system in India is often criticized for the restricted entry of the students for higher education. In fact, students those who had urge to read, were selected as disciples since the completion of education was not culminated with the award of a diploma or degree. Learning was a life long process and associated with the inquisitiveness of a person.

*Manusmruti* says:

*Yathaa yathaa hi purushah ssastram  
samadhigachchati,*

*Tathaa tathaa bijaanaati vijnyaanam chaashya  
rochate. (IV/20)*

**Meaning:** The more a man completely studies the institutes of science, the more he fully understands them and his great learning shines brightly.

Moreover, study of Veda was one of the prescribed duties of all *Varnas* other than the *Soodras* (I/88-91), but it subsequently blamed that *Braahmanas* were having monopoly over it. In fact education for women was never discouraged, rather they were educated for management of family life, supporting the husband with all household duties, worshipping of the sacred fire and were also allowed to dwell in the *Guru's* residence as evident too (II/67). It is worthy to refer here the Vedic female saints like Gargee, Maitreyee etc, who were the masters (specialists) in higher education. Above all, the education system was strict, rational and hard earned. The various conducts prescribed for the students, teachers and maintenance of the educational environment were as follows:

#### i) PREPARATORY

In the Vedic perception, a person was expected to pass through 52 types of *Samskaaras* (ethical process of purification), from the time of fertilisation in mother's womb (*Garbhaadhaana* - indiscernible), which envisages him to a discernible state in this world as human being and the state continues till he leaves for the heavenly abode and there after. Out of the above, 10 *Samskaaras* are considered to be vital in which the period for education commences on *Upanayana* and lasts up to convocation (*Samaavartana*). The various aspects about the *Upanayana* are depicted in *Manusmruti* in chapter II/36-67. The studentship which starts just after *Upanayana*, was totally devoted to the *Guru* (teacher) and the prime initiation was to teach the pupil the rules of personal purification (*Ssoucha*); of conduct (*Aachaara*); of the fire worship (*Homa*); and of the twilight devotion (*Sandhyaa*) (II/69). In a deeper analysis, the various *Mantras* followed in the above four activities, were mostly aimed to make the pupil eco-conscious in a very refined form. More elaboration of these facts are carefully avoided in view of the voluminous state of the article. Moreover, it is emphasised that *Upanayana* is considered as second birth (*Dwijaa*) as education enlightens some body dispelling him from the darkness of illiteracy (II/68,169)

#### ii) GENERAL INTEGRITY

The integrated characters (*Sanyama*) of a student are of paramount intrinsic value and are complementary to his academic environment (studies). A student (disciple) is cautioned to keep his senses under control, are as follows:

- Let him strive to restrain his organs (*Indriyas*)

which run wild among alluring sensual objects, like a charioteer to his horses (II/88).

- Through the attachment of his organs (to sensual pleasure) a man undoubtedly will incur guilt, but if he keeps them under complete control, he will obtain success (in gaining all his aims) (II/93).
- Desire is never extinguished by the enjoyment of the desired objects; it only grows stronger like a fire (fed) with ghee (clarified butter) (II/94).
- The renunciation of all pleasure is far better than the attainment of them, for the organs which are strongly attached to sensual pleasures can not so effectually be restrained (II/95,96)
- Neither the study of the Vedas, nor liberality, nor sacrifices, nor any self imposed restraint, nor austerities, ever procure the attainment of rewards to a man whose heart is contaminated by sensuality (II/97).
- That man is considered to have subdued his organs, who neither rejoices nor repines on hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling (II/98).
- It is also cautioned that if one among all the organs loses control, there by the person's wisdom slips among from him (II/99).

Further, a student is expected to live with his teacher by duly controlling all his organs in order to increase his spiritual merits (II/175) and practice of Yoga is prescribed to control the mind and the sense organs. In Indian scenario, wisdom of Yoga is a well known fact, need not be elaborated further.

### iii) FOOD AND CLOTHING

As studied previously, begging was considered as *Mritvrutti* equivalent to occupation of dead man. In this context a student is prescribed to live on begging, but, however, should not eat food from one person (confirmed source) only (II/188). This shows that he should not be a burden to a definite source for his food as he is away from his own parent and lives with his teacher. Further he should announce his collected alms without guilt to his teacher (II/51) and should accept his share as offered to him. The different customs outstanding in taking the food, were as follows:

- A *Dwija* should always eat his food with concentrated mind.
- Let him always worship his food and eat it without contempt; when he sees it let him rejoice, show a pleased face and pray that he may always obtain it (II/54).
- Food, that is always worshipped, gives strength and manly vigour; but eaten irreverently, it destroys them both (II/55). The modern science has em-

phasized to be cheerful and calm while taking the food.

- Let him not over eat himself, should be aware of eating the time period between the two consecutive meals (II/56), because over eating begets ill health, decreases life span; prevents spiritual merits and the over eater is considered odious among men. Ill health due to excess food is a well known fact, which leads to higher metabolic load and proved incompatible gerontologically.
- Let him not give the remnants of his meal and should not move without being cleaned himself after taking food (II/56), to prevent the expectation of infection.
- Moreover before taking food, one is expected to sip the water, a process followed to moisturise the food tract and he should cleanse himself duly after food and finally sprinkle the facial cavities (eye, ear, nose) with water. (II/53).
- Let him abstain from taking honey (maybe a sex provocateur), meat, delicious spices food, all food items converted to acids due to fermentation and specially food obtained by injuring living creatures (II/177).
- A student is expected to bear a clean and loose dress (II/70) and should not be adorned with perfumes, garlands, applying collyrium, even should be abstained from using shoes and umbrella (II/177,178).

### iv) GENERAL CONDUCT

- He should get up before the sun rises and perform his daily *Sandhyaa* (rites - twilight offering) with a concentrated mind in a lonely and sacred place during sunrise and sunset. Deviation from this schedule due to extended sleeping hours or nap, knowingly or unknowingly should be followed by a penance by observing fasting for the entire day (II/220,221,222).
- He should perform his daily studies and recitation of Veda in concentrated mind controlling his organs, without interruption, which will ultimately bestowed him with excellent rewards. There is no forbidden day (weekly or occasionally holidays), not to be devoted for self study (II/104-107).
- Let him abstained from sensual desire, anger, covetousness, dancing, singing, playing of musical instruments, gambling, idle disputes, back biting, lying and hurting others (II/178,179).
- Let him always sleep alone; not waste his *Veerya* (sperm) voluntarily; avoid women from looking and touching from the angle of passion (II/180). Even an unwanted involuntary discharge (waste

of man hood) should be followed with a bathing and worshipping the sun with an appeal muttering three times the *Mantra* “*Punarmaami*”-means again let my strength return to me, for its recovery (II/181). In this regard, the activities of the present generation are of great questionable significance.

- Let him not, even though in pain, speak words pinching to others and injure others in thought or deed (II/161).
- Even one is cautioned not to sit in a lonely place with one’s mother, sister, or daughter ; for the senses are powerful which can master over a learned man (II/215).
- Above all, one should learn to respect his elders, relatives and learned persons around him with perfect integrity, which is essential for his congenial public life in future (II/120—139,154-156). Details regarding this will be discussed under section ‘The Social Interaction.’

## B) THE TEACHER (*GURU*)

### i) *CONCEPT AND CLASSIFICATION*

The importance of Guru in Indian culture is so high, who is equalised with Gods like *Brahmaa*, *Vishnu* and *Mahesswara*. A reflection of such aspects are found in Chapter-II. The teachers were classified into the following categories.

1. *Aachaarya*: He who performs the *Upanayana*, initiates a pupil and teaches him *Kalpa* (*Karma Kaanda*, i.e the process of various rituals) and *Rahasya*, (*Jnyaana Kaanda* i.e the secret of knowledge along with Veda) (II/140).
2. *Upaadhyaya*: A person, who teaches a portion or a branch of the Veda for the point of his livelihood by taking salary, is considered as a “sub-teacher” (II/141).
3. *Guru* (Spiritual): He, who performs the various *Samskaaras* of a student; teaches him providing food and shouldering his every responsibility (II/142).
4. *Rrtvik*: He, who being chosen to perform various *Yajnya* (sacrifice), is considered as officiating priest (*Purohita*) (II/143).

The above four categories are referred to a *Brahmana* by caste. The glory of teacher is further described in II/144-150,153,154. However, the learning process was so wide in ancient India that one can learn from a broad spectrum of sources, which brings about the insignificance of the statement that teaching profession was monopolised by *Braahmanas*, are summarised as follows:

- If a women or man of low caste perform any good deed (things leading to happiness), let him dili-

gently practise it (II/223).

- He, who possesses faith, may receive pure learning even from a man of lower caste, the highest law (*Param-dharmam*) even from the lowest caste (II/238).
- One can learn good advise from a child, learn good conduct from a foe, knowledge on sacred laws, purity and good advice, as well various arts may be acquired from anybody (II/239,240).
- It is prescribed that even at the time of distress, may learn the Veda from one, who is not a *Braahmana* and should respect him as he is expected to respect his *Braahmana Guru* (II/241).

### ii) *STUDY ATMOSPHERE*

The ‘*Guru-Ssishya*’ cult in ancient India was unique, may have deteriorated presently with the interaction of the western culture; but we are not here to blame any one else, as there is little attempt for its conservation. The glimpses of such cosmic relation are not out of scenario and are still found in the heart of Indians and practised in the institutions controlled by great spiritual masters like *Sadgurus*, *Swaamees*, *Ssankaraacharyas* and *Gurukula* based schools etc. One’s devotion to his teacher as a means for obtaining the knowledge, presented in *Manusmruti*, is as follows:

As the man who digs with a spade (the ground) obtains water, even so as obedient (pupil) obtains the knowledge which lies (hidden) in his teacher (II/218).

More instructions and cautions are laid down, which further justify that Guru is not an individual person, rather the community source for the pursuit of knowledge, which should be respected, saved and protected for a greater universal benefit.

- At the beginning and at the end of a study period, the student should offer his respect, with crossed hand; he must clasped the feet of the teacher and touch the left foot with his left hand and the right foot, with his right hand a posture described as ‘*Brahmaanjali*’ (II/70,71 and 72).
- By the order of the teacher the disbursement of studies is expected to start with the recitation of the syllable ‘*OM*’ sitting on a mat of *Kussa* (*Desmostatchiya bipinnata*) after being sanctified by three times suppression of the breath (*Praanaayaama*). In Hindu cult the *Kussa* sedge is considered as symbolic non-conductor of magnetic and electric lines of forces. As the students elite sits on the ground and his Central Nervous System along with the spinal column at the point of *Coccygium ganglion* is expected to touch the ground, as a result the possibility of influence of

the earth's gravitational and magnetic field on the concentration of the mind can not be ruled out. Moreover, in Indian dress costume, the males put on Dhotis with one of its end portion kept as a pad round the distal part i.e. Sacral vertebra, where the Central Nervous System terminates, in order to supplement protection from earth's magnetic and gravitational pull during the sitting posture. Even, the conservative females also put on their Sari in similar fashion.

According to the yoga philosophy the mental vibration has an intimate relation with the breathing procedure. As some one gets angry or feared or sexually excited, his breathing rhythms are accelerated along with disturbed or failure of mental concentration. So at the commencement of the studies, it is deemed to concentrate the mind through *Praanaayaam*, a synchronised breathing technique. The syllable 'OM' is a combination of three alphabets A+U+M, which respectively signify the power of creation, power of maintenance and power of destruction; the three basic ecological principles of the universe. They are also attributed to the three important Gods: *Brahmaa*, *Vishnu* and *Ssiva*; the symbolic forms of the above three principles (Padhy et al., 2001). It is mentioned that under this imperishable syllable 'OM' is recited at the beginning of any discourse, the lesson will slip away and similarly if not followed, will fade away (II/74). In other words 'OM' acts as restorative for imbibing knowledge through any discourse, as starting key and closing bolt of the learning system. More research is required for such metaphysical phenomenon.

### iii) RESPECT FOR TEACHER

- Let his bed or seat be lower than his *Guru* and he shall not sit carelessly at ease within the sight of this teacher (II/198). But he may sit with his teacher in a carriage drawn by animals, or on a terrace, or on a bed of grass or leaf, on a mat, on a rock, on a wooden bench or in a boat (II/204).
- Let him always do what is beneficial (II/108) and serviceable (II/191) to his teacher.
- Controlling his body, his speech, his organs of sense and his mind, let him stand with joined hand looking at the face of his teacher (II/192).
- Let him always keep his right arm uncovered (ready to work), behave decently and keep his body well covered (II/193).
- Let him take a seat before the *Guru* when he is addressed; "be seated" (II/193).
- Let him always eat less (controlled), wear a less valuable dress and ornament in the presence of his teacher (II/194).

- Let him rise earlier from his bed and go to rest later when he is in company of the teacher (II/194).
- Let him not answer or converse with his teacher reclining on a bed, nor sitting, nor (while) eating, nor standing (on ease), nor with an averted face (II/195).
- Let him (student) converse with his teacher standing up if he (*Guru*) is seated, advancing towards him when he stands, going to meet him if he advances and following after him when he moves (II/196). Also going round to his face if his face is averted, approaching him if he stands at a distance, but bending towards him if he lies on bed or if he stands on a lower place (II/197).
- Let him not pronounce the mere name of the teacher (without adding on honorific title) behind his back even, and let him not mimic his gait, speech and department (II/199).
- He must not serve the teacher by the instruction of another, while he himself stands aloof, nor when he (himself) is angry, nor when a woman is near (with the teacher); if he is seated in a carriage or on a (raised) seat, he must descend and afterwards salute his (teacher) (II/202).
- Let him not sit with his teacher to the leeward or to the wind ward of him (precaution to avoid falling of spit or body odour) (II/203).
- Let him behave his *Guru's Guru* as his own *Guru*; but he should not salute any venerable person even of his own family without permission of his *Guru*, as long he resides in *Gurukula Aashrama* (II/205).
- Further, to learn about one's etiquette towards the sons, wives, and family members of his teachers II/208-212, 216, 217, 247 may be referred.

### iv) COUNSELLING OF STUDENT

We have mentioned previously that the studentship was neither opened nor of one's own choice in ancient India, which is evident from the following dicta.

- Unless (one) be asked, one must not explain (anything) to any body, nor (must answer) a person who asks improperly; let a wise man, though he knows (the answer), behave among men as (if he were) an idiot (II/110). It is certainly ridiculous for the modern day teachers, those who are forced to teach at times to wrongly motivated students without basic interest.
- Where merit and wealth are not obtained, nor at least yield due obedience; sacred knowledge should not be revealed there, as if good seeds have no effect shown in barren land (II/112). Even in time of dire distress, a teacher should prefer,

rather to die with his knowledge, than teaching an unwanted student (II/113).

- Knowledge should be rendered to a person who is pure with subdued senses, chaste and attentive and capable of conserving and making best use of it. (II/115). Even a person acquires knowledge without permission or with ill intention, should be discouraged (II/116).
- Moreover a person, whose conduct is well known, chosen to be a student, keeping strictly in view of the above mentioned narration; as such types are: (1) the teacher's son; (2) one who deserves to do service (to society); (3) one who imparts knowledge; (4) one who is inquisitive and intent on fulfilling the law; (5) one who is pure; (6) one with mental perseverance; (7) one who is honest; and also (8) who is capable of payments bearing the expenses; (9) may be a relative or (10) connected by marriage or friendship. Out of the above 10 qualities of a student the former seven, signify the real and worthiness of the studentship and the latter three categories, as a social need (II/109).

The profession of teaching was noble which was of complementary status for both the teacher and taught in ancient India. It is difficult to pinpoint whether such situation can be created in the present day scenario or not, as the mind of modern man, equipped with various scientific thoughts which accepts anything after settling a cause and effect to that. But, however, attempts to revive such an academic environment is welcome worthy.

### III. FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

Indian culture imbibes family as the nucleus of the society. In a family the congenial relation between the spouses and their descendants (children) is amenable for its integrity. The family life which is designated as the '*Gruhastha Aassrama*' is praised as follows in *Manusmruti* :

As all living creatures subsist by receiving support from air, even so (the members of) all orders (*Aassramas*) subsist by receiving support from the householder (III/77).

In a family, the importance of the wife was perceived as follows:

He, who carefully guards his wife, preserve (the purity of) his offspring, virtuous conduct, his family, himself and his (means of acquiring) merit (IX/7).

*Manusmruti* is on and often blamed for the division of *Varnas* and restriction of freedom for women. We have presented earlier, the scientific and social basis of *Varna* division (Dash and Padhy,

1998) and it is felt essential to expose the rationality shown for the women in the epic.

## A) MARRIAGE AND MARRIED LIFE

### i) *SELECTION OF BRIDE*

A twice born man (*Dwija*) should marry a woman of equal caste (III/4,13) as marriage with lower caste female will lead to production of *Varnassankaras*, always discouraged for the maintenance of eugenics (III/14,15). The damsel should not be a blood relative (*Sapinda*) on the mother's side, nor belongs to the same family on the father's side (III/5). This shows that marriage in blood relations was prohibited, which is true from genetic point of view as traced out by modern science. Moreover one should avoid choosing female from the following 10 categories of families (III/7).

(1) The family which neglects the sacred rites, (2) one in which no male children (are born), (3) Family in which Veda is not studied, (4) members of the family with thickly hairy body skin, (5) family members who are subjected to (piles) haemorrhoids or (6) Phthisis (tuberculosis) or (7) weakness (chronic) of digestion or (8) epilepsy, or (9) leucoderma or (10) leprosy, These features may be the qualities / diseases / inherited from gen-ecological view point.

It is also prescribed on the forbidden symptoms of a maiden to be particular while selecting a bride as (1) she should not have reddish hair; (2) nor is a redundant member (with obesity), (3) nor is sickly, (4) nor without/ too much hair on the body; (5) nor who is garrulous; and (6) nor who has red eyes (III/8). A prudent man also should not marry a maiden who has neither a brother, nor one whose father is unknown (III/11). She should not have been named after a constellation, a tree, a river, nor bearing the name of a low caste, or a mountain, nor named after a bird, a snake, a slave, nor a name which inspires terror (III/9). The significance of the naming, we have reported earlier (Mohapatra et al., 2000b) and the other way unwanted meaningless naming of children should be avoided from social point of view.

In fact there should be sufficient age difference between the spouses, the wife being younger (IX/94,95). This has a social implication by the time the male partner turns old, the female remains active in order to carry out the day to day affairs. As male continued to be with sexually vigorous to a later age compared to females, marriages with partners of similar age would lead to failure of cohabitation, may lead to mental incompatibility in the long run.

## ii) SELECTION OF GROOM

The male should be a distinguished one, handsome, of equal caste (IX/88). It is prescribed the maiden though marriageable, should not be given to a man who is destitute of good qualities, even she may be kept unmarried until death instead of identified with a non-qualitative partner (IX/89). But however, if the female seeks a husband of her own choice, neither she nor he to whom she weds incurs any guilt by doing so. In such case she shall not take any ornament from her family members and the male shall not pay any nuptial fee to her father (IX/91,92). This shows that self arranged love marriage was not discouraged in ancient India.

## iii) MARRIAGE SYSTEMS

Much is written about the environment of Hindu marriage system which is of eight types and broadly dealt with (III/21-44), such as:

1. *Braahma* rite: The gift of a daughter after decking her with costly garments and jewels to a learned man with good conduct being invited by the father of the girl .
2. *Daiva* rite: The gift of a daughter with ornaments to a priest who duly officiates at a sacrifice during the course of its performance .
3. *Aarsha* rite: If the daughter is given according to rule, receiving gift from the bride groom by the father of the bride.
4. *Prajaapatya* rite: The gift of a daughter with blessings "may both of you perform together your duties" and with honour to the bride groom
5. *Aasura* rite: When a bride groom receives a maiden after payment of wealth as he can wilfully effort to the bride and her kinsman .
6. *Gaandhava* rite: The voluntary union of a maiden and her lover due to sexual urge and the recognition received there after.
7. *Raakshaasa* rite: The forcible abduction of a maiden from her home slaying or wounding her kinsmen in an agonistic weeping state of helplessness; and
8. *Pissaacha* rite: The sinful rite of seducing a girl in deep slumber, intoxicated or disordered in intellect.

Further it was thought to be sinking low of the families where marriages were performed by omitting the sacred rites or neglecting the study of Veda or irreverence towards elite (*Braahamanas*) (IX/63).

The above said eight systems of marriage, there is no trace of offering dowry to the bride groom, rather the reverse is found in case of *Aarsha* and

*Asura* rites, where the bride's father receives money from the groom. The social instability due to failure of marriages and hazards of dowry cases there of in the modern day may be an unusual adaptation in cultural rites. In fact the torturing and killing of the bride on account of dowry expectation, certainly signifies the depletion in human ethics. Moreover the marriage system has an impact on married life and further reflects on the future off springs (III/140-142).

## B. IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN

### i) IN FAMILY / SOCIETY

- Where women are honoured, there the Gods are pleased; but where they are not honoured, no sacred rite yields rewards (III/ 56).
- Where the female relations live in grief, the family soon wholly perishes; but that family where they are not unhappy, ever prospers (III/57).
- The houses on which female relations, not being duly honoured pronounce a curse, perish completely, as if destroyed by magic (III/58).
- In that family, where the husband is pleased with his wife and the wife with her husband, happiness will assuredly be lasting (III/60).
- The female is considered as most fortunate because procreate the off springs, nurture and brought up them along with maintenance of daily life of man. They are worthy of worship and secure many blessings and should be treated equivalent with the goddesses of fortune in the families (IX/26,27).
- The integrity of the wife will not be lost in her family or social status either by sale or by repudiation (IX/46). In this context the validity of the diverse for any reason a social problem there of, needs to be reconsidered, if possible.
- Let man and woman, united in marriage, constantly exert themselves, that their mutual fidelity should not be disunited (IX/102).

### ii) CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FEMALES

Prescribing a code of conduct for any section of the society should not be misinterpreted as an imposition; which has often brought blames to *Manusmruti*. Introspection to the following narration aptly can erase the above conception pertaining to females.

- If the wife is radiant with proper clothing coupled with tasteful behaviour, the whole household atmosphere will be impressed by her personality and she can attract her husband for procreation (III/61,62).
- The husband is the source of happiness for the wife

both in this world and in the next life (V/153); even if he is destitute of virtues, devoid of good qualities or seeks pleasure elsewhere, he must be regarded and obeyed as a God by a faithful wife and must never do anything that might displease him whether he be alive or dead (V/154-157).

- Until death, let her be patient (of hardships), self controlled, and chaste, and strive (to fulfil) that most excellent duty which (is prescribed) for wives, who have one husband only (V/158)
- A woman should not violate her duties towards her deceased husband with a desire to have an offspring (V/161,162). Of course such violation is also prescribed in case of *Niyoga* and declared to be lawful (Mohapatra et al, 2000a).
- A wife should control her thoughts, words and deeds and should never slight or violates her duty towards her husband is called a virtuous woman (V/165; IX/29,30).
- Drinking spirituous liquor, associating with wicked people, separation from the husband, rambling abroad, sleeping at unreasonable hours and dwelling in other man's house, are the six causes of ruin of women (IX/13), as well if rebellious, diseased, barren, mischievous or wasteful may at any time be superseded (IX/80,81)

All these above indicate that maintenance of integrity and the conduct of females, were considered to be important complementary factors comparing to males in the family environment on social stand point.

### iii) FEMALES SHOULD BE PRESERVED

In order to have the safe maintenance of the family life, the women should be conserved by the man. It is advised that the father should protect her in childhood, husband in youth and sons in old age (V/148,IX/3). Failure of such duty is contemptible and declared as guilty (V/149;IX/4). Women must particularly be guarded against evil inclination because this will get sorrows and agony for families (IX/5) and may lead to impurity in his off-springs (IX/9). Whatever be the qualities of the man with whom the woman is identified such qualities she assumes like a river united with the ocean (IX/21-25). This shows that the man has a major duty in conserving the female.

The nature has created the women in such a way that their passion for sex, comparatively crosses the limits, which forces them to exceed the social limitations (IX/14,15). That is the reason why the Lord of creatures (*Prajaapati*) has created man, who should most strenuously exert him self to guard and conserve them (IX/16).

Moreover, most of the social problems related to bed (sex adultery), to seat (capturing), ornaments (wealth), impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice and bad conduct arise due to non conservation of women (IX/17).

The loyalty of the wife for her husband is well mentioned in the section 'Code and conduct of females'. But, however, she has the right to express her anguish and aversion towards a husband, such as a mad, an outcast, a eunuch, one destitute of manly strength or afflicted with contagious diseases and under such circumstances she should be protected (IX/79).

It is mentioned that a barren wife (IX/81) or with bad conduct (IX/80) should be superseded; yet a sick wife, who is kind to her husband and virtuous in conduct, may be superseded only with her own consent and must never be disgraced (IX/82).

However, *Manusmruti* after laying so many dicta on conservation of women, has finally agreed to the fact that women can not be completely guarded by force (IX/10), nor forcefully by confining in the house under care with trust worthy and obedient servants, rather, they are well guarded on their own accord if they desire so (IX/12). It is advised to keep them engaged in collection and expenditure of wealth, keeping clean and maintenance of the house, performance of religious duties; preparation of food and looking after the household utensils and assets, which are the most efficient way for conserving the women in the family environment (IX/11). In the present day environment too, the educational status of the women has taken them much more above than the aforesaid responsibilities, but, however, they are generous to perform all the household activities in addition to their other responsibilities compared to man.

No doubt marriage starts with a license for sex; but the *Smruti* has instructed for controlled sex with wife, with all rationality and urge for the future off springs (III/45 – 50; V /40 ,41). The respect extended for the women in sex matter should be deemed as the highest ethics; but they should not to be considered as machinery for sexual satisfaction predominated by man. Finally :

- Women must be honoured and adorned by their fathers, brothers, husbands and brothers-in-law, who desire (their own welfare (III/55)).
- Hence men, who seek their own welfare, should always honour women on holidays and festivals with gifts of ornaments, cloths and dainty food (III/59).
- In response: she must always be cheerful, clever in the management of her household affairs, care-

ful in cleaning her utensils and economical in expenditure (V/150).

- Because: Important aspects in life such as begetting the off-springs, performance of religious rites, availability of faithful service, enjoying of highest happiness i.e his conjugal life and heavenly bliss for the ancestors and oneself, depends on one's wife alone (IX/28).

#### iv) **PROPERTY RIGHT OF FEMALES**

Even in property matter to maintain harmony the female child has her right as depicted below:

- But to the sisters, the brothers should give a quarter property of their shares (IX/118). And after the death of their mother, both brothers and the sisters shall equally divide their mother's estate and even the grand daughters can enjoy the right to get something out of the estate of their maternal grand mother as a score of their affection (IX/192,193).
- Whatever may be the separate property of the mother, that is the share of the unmarried daughter (IX/131).
- As per law the women enjoy the property hailed from six different sources; such as property received (i) during the marriage, (ii) on the bridal procession, (iii) as a token of love from husband; (iv) from her brother; (v) from mother and (vi) from father (IX/194). Moreover, the ornaments worn by women during the existence of their husbands, should not be snatched away from her, after she turns widow (IX/200).

In the light of all the above it is evident that the rights of the females was very well safe guarded in ancient Indian families.

### C) **REGULATED LIFE (SADAACHAARA)**

#### i) **CONDUCT OF HOUSEHOLDER**

The conduct of a man is the vital force which drives him in right perspective and *Smruti* has claimed as mentioned previously "Let all men on earth learn the several uses of conduct, adopted by a virtuous Aryan of Aaryaavartta (II/18,20).

- Let him, untiringly follow the conduct of virtuous men, connected with his occupations, which has been fully declared in the revealed texts and in the sacred tradition (*Smruti*) and is the root of the sacred law (IV/155).
- Through virtuous conduct, he obtains long life, desirable offspring, and imperishable wealth; and destroys the effect of inauspicious marks (IV/156).
- For, a man of bad conduct, is blamed among

peoples; constantly suffers misfortunes, is afflicted with diseases and short lived (V/157).

- A man, who follows the conduct of the virtuous, has faith and is free from envy, lives a hundred years, though he be entirely destitute of auspicious marks (IV/158).
- Through deviation from the rule of conduct, through remissness (in the fulfilment of duties) death becomes eager to shorten the lives (V/4).
- Let him eagerly follow the customs which are auspicious and the rule of good conduct, be careful of purity (IV/145).
- No calamity happens to those who eagerly follow auspicious customs and the rule of good conduct, to those who are always careful of purity, and to those who mutter (sacred texts) and offer burnt obligations (IV/146).

#### ii) **DAILY LIFE**

##### a) **Morning Schedule**

- Let him awaken in *Braahma muhoortta* (commences on 4 A.M.) and think the acquisition of spiritual merit and wealth and get ready for the bodily fatigue arising there of, for the pursuit of knowledge (IV/92).
- Let him untiringly perform the daily rites prescribed for him according to his ability to attain the highest state of consciousness (IV/14).
- Let him get relieved from the necessities of nature after awakened and being purified carefully, reciting the *Gaayatri Mantra* in the morning and evening twilight and prolong the twilight devotions for long life, wisdom, honour, fame and excellence in Vedic knowledge (IV/93,94, 152, 203).
- As a principle, every day one is expected to perform five important sacrifices i.e (1) for the sages - the source of knowledge; (2) for the Gods - the source of eco-potentialities and energy; (3) for the Bhootas (all living creatures) - as an ecological responsibility; (4) for other men-obligation for society and mankind and (5) for the *Pitru* (Manes) - obligation for parents and ancestors, the heritage that has brought some one to this world and as well perform *Agnihotra & Yajnya* as prescribed (IV/21,25).

##### b) **Dress (Costume)**

- Let him dress to a conformity with his age, occupation, weather, learning and race (IV/18); shall not wear old and dirty cloth, if he possesses property (IV/34); and should clip his bear, hair and nails properly keeping himself pure (IV/35, 36).

**c) Self Expression**

- All things (have their nature) determined by speech; speech is their root, and from speech they proceed; but he, who is dishonest with respect to speech, is dishonest in everything (IV/256).
- Let him say what is true, let him say what is pleasing, let him utter no disagreeable truth, and let him utter no agreeable falsehood; that is the eternal law (IV/138).
- What is well, let him call well, or let him say well only; let him not engage in a useless enmity or dispute with anybody (IV/139).
- He, who describes himself to be virtuous (men), in a manner contrary to truth, is the most sinful (wretch) in this world; he is a thief who makes away with his own self (IV/255).
- As his character and the work in which he desires to perform, abide as the manner in which he means to serve, even so must voluntarily offer himself (IV/254).
- Let him not uselessly active with his hands and feet (avoid unnecessary work and movement), or with his eyes, nor crooked, nor talk idly, nor injure others by deeds or even think of it (IV/177).
- Let him speak and think to a conformity with his age, occupation, wealth, his sacred learning and his race (IV/18).
- Unnecessarily let him not dance, nor sing, nor play musical instruments, nor slap his limbs, nor grind his teeth, nor let him make uncouth noises, though he be in a passion (IV/64).
- Let him avoid atheism, cavilling at the Vedas, contempt of Gods, hatredness, want of modesty, pride, anger and harshness (IV/163).

**d) Self Study**

- Seeking of knowledge was a life long process in Vedic age and also practically implemented by the learned elite of the modern age.
- For the more, a man completely studies the institute of science, the more he fully understands (them) and his great learning shines brightly (IV/20).
- Let him daily pour over those institute of science to increase his wisdom, to learn the acquisition of wealth and benefits from every angle of consideration (IV/19).
- Let him go for self studies at the proper time to gain the endless bliss i.e knowledge (IV/147,148,149).

**e) Rest and Movement**

One is prohibited not to sleep during twilight, not to sleep alone in a deserted dwelling or in the vicinity of big trees, nor being naked or go to bed with wet

feet (IV/55,57,73,75,76).

One is prohibited too, not to go on a journey too early in the morning, nor too late in the evening, nor just during the mid day, nor with an unknown companion, nor alone, nor with a *Ssoodra* i.e. uneducated (IV/55,60,140), nor enter to a place difficult to across or impervious to his eyes, nor take a risk to cross a river by swimming (IV/77).

**D) INTERRELATIONSHIP**

The integrity and sanctity of the family environment is very well dependent on the inter-relationship in the family. The parents, one's teacher and elders are so much honoured in Vedic literature that the father is equalised with *Prajaapati* (the Lord of created beings) ; the teacher is the image of the supreme soul; the mother is considered as the image of the earth and an elder brother is an image of oneself (II/226). The pain and trouble which the parents undergo on the birth of their children, can not be compensated even in hundred years (II/227). So one should not neglect to his parents and teachers in order to attain the heavenly bliss (II/232). One should perform all his activities by seeking their permission (II/235); should be obedient to them (II/229) and should do his duties which is agreeable and pleasing to his parents and teacher and there is no highest austerity for a house holder than this. He should take care not to offend them under any circumstance (II/162).

- Let him not have quarrel and conflict with his father, with mother, with female relatives, with brother, with his son and his wife, with his daughter and with his servants (II/180), as avoiding the same with such persons, he gets free from all sins (II/181).
- He should consider the infants, aged, poor and sick as destitute (i.e *Niraadhaara*) (II/184). One's servant as one's shadow; one's daughter as one's highest object of tenderness; hence, if he is offended by any one of these, he must bear it without resentment (II/185).
- After clearance of all this worldly duties according to the sacred law, let him give charge of everything to his son and dwell in his house, not bothering of any worldly concerns (IV/257).

**E) GUEST TREATMENT**

In Indian scenario a guest in the house, is treated equivalent to God and worshipping them with food and proper treatment is considered a '*Nrutyajnya*' (Human welfare right). The etiquette shown to the guests, is symbolic to express some one's duty to-

wards the ethnic surroundings and has much ecological implications to improve the human relationships.

**i) Who is a Guest ?**

A person (outsider), who stays one night with a host (III/102); who arrives after sun set, or supper time, or at an inopportune moment (III/105); a student, who has arrived after studying the Veda; or a house holder arrived after completing their vows; or a person, who renounced the world without cooking food for himself, are to be considered as guests (IV/31,32).

**ii) Who is not a Guest ?**

A person who dwells in the same village; one who seeks his livelihood by social interaction (such as a story teller or singer); the foolish house holders who constantly seek the food from others (as if a profession) a *Kshatriya* or a *Vaissya*, or a *Soodra* in a *Braahmana's* dwelling (as he is poor) or a personal friend, or a relative, or even his own teacher (III/103,104,110); or a heretics, or a man who follows forbidden occupations; or rouges, a logician argues against the Veda; or hippocrate, who behave like cat and heron - discussed later), should not be considered as guests (IV/30).

**iii) Specialized Guests**

A personal friend and so forth who have come to the house out of affection, he should be honoured with food, garnished according to his ability and should be allowed to dine even with wife (III/113). A king, an officiating priest, a learned man, the teacher, a son-in-law, a father-in-law, a maternal uncle, should be given special status of 'guest of honour' (III/119).

**iv) Special Treatments**

- A newly married women, a pregnant women, infant and sick person should be given food before the guests without hesitation (III/114).
- Even if it is prohibited that the *Vaissya* and *Soodra* should not be guests in a *Braahmana's* house on their arrival, they should be treated as guest at par, on the ground of compassionate disposition (III/112).

**v) Importance of Guests**

- Let him offer a seat, water and food as well and garnish the guest according to his ability (III/99).
- Even if some one is a poor host, he should at least offer a mat, water, a place for rest and few kind words to his guest (III/101)
- It is cautioned that he who prepares food for himself (alone), eats nothing but sin (III/118).
- He must take care that no guest stays in his house without being honoured with a seat, a couch (bed), water and minimum food as roots and fruits (IV/29).
- However as a social custom, the guests should

be offered according to their social status (III/107).

- Let him not eat any food, which he does not offer to his guest; and hospitable reception of guests procures wealth, fame, long life and heavenly bliss (III/106).
- If a second guest comes, after everything is finished, the householder must give him food (again prepared) according to his ability (III/108).

And above all, the householder and his wife should eat afterwards, what remains after the guests, kinsmen and servants have dined (III/116). This reflects the nobility and highness of Indian culture and the various social bindings of a householder. On the contrary, can the present day householder tolerate the servant and offer him food before he eats?! as reflected earlier (II/185; III/116).

#### IV. SOCIAL INTERACTION

Ever since human beings are considered to be highly developed social beings because of rationality, in contrast to the social relationship of animals, which is mostly behavioural. Some one's social environment is based on his interaction with the persons around, may have arisen out of his habitation, kinship and profession. In every case whatever may be the social ecology, someone's personality and personal behaviour plays a vital role towards his interaction with the surrounding. It is a fact well known, that the excerpts of the Veda, are compiled in the form of *Smritis* to guide the society in right perspective. The social environment in *Manusmriti* is focused on inter-personality respect and congenial relationship. Moreover it is advised to avoid relationship with certain persons on the ground of self-conservation.

##### A. RESPECT TO ELDERS

Basically a student is taught how to behave with the elders, which ultimately reflects on his family and social life in the long run. Throughout the world every civilization has its own way of greeting protocol between the similar personalities or with elders. But the oriental protocol for respect is so much scientifically configured, which requires a special attention for a discourse. Wishing "*Namaskaara*" with folded hands positioned at the heart, with posture of bowing head and announcing his personal identity with name and *Gotra*, is an expression of submissiveness of a person and highest regard to the respected concerned. The way, the students should respect to the teachers,

is already discussed in the academic environment. But unfortunately, such behaviour is missing mostly among the present day student generations and both the teacher and taught extend their hands for a shake. Such a behavioural posture can not be deemed as we are one step ahead in social behaviour, rather is a depletion of Indian culture.

### **i) WHY TO RESPECT**

The metaphysical phenomenon of respect as depicted in *Manusmruti*, says, that the vital air (*Praana*) of a young man mount upwards to leave his body, when an elder approaches; but by rising from his posture to meet and greet him and saluting him, the younger recovers the *Praana* (II/120). This explanation seems to be ridiculous. But from physical stand point, the basic force of attraction between two objects can not be denied. In this context, the life force of an elderly man may have more electric and magnetic fields to pull the fields of the younger. Human magnetism and electricity are well known facts is modern science. However, this statement requires a scientific verification. Respect to elders is further explained ethically: He, who habitually salutes and constantly pays reverence to the aged, obtains an increase of four (things) viz. Length of life, knowledge, fame and strength (II/121).

### **ii) HOW TO RESPECT**

The oriental treatise to pay respect is as follows:

- One must not sit-down on a couch or seat, which a superior occupies; and he who occupies a couch or seat shall rise to meet a superior and afterwards saluting him (II/119).
- The salutation must involve pronouncing his name saying "I am so and so" followed by the word "*Bhoh*" (II/122,124). This utterance of '*Bhoh*' is a sign of respect to the person concerned and is used in lieu of the respector's (name such as *Mahaassaya*, Sir, *Aajnyaa* etc).
- In return the elder should reciprocate with blessing, "May'st thou be long lived, O' gentle one!" (*Aaayushmaan bhaba soumya*) (II/125).
- But an elite, who does not know the form of returning a salutation, must not be saluted by a learned man. However, if the Oriental procedure is not known to a person, specially referred to females, they should be made aware by saying it is "I, respect you" (II/126).
- On meeting, a *Braahmana* should be asked *Kussala* (i.e. Physical, mental and spiritual health), a *Kshatriya* should be asked *Anaamaya* (i.e. establishment), a *Vaishya* should be asked

*Kshema* (i.e about his financial and business prospects), a *Ssoodra* with '*Aarogya*' (i.e about his physical health) (II/127).

### **iii) WHOM TO RESPECT**

- A student shall first reverentially salute his teacher from whom he receives knowledge, concerned to any affair, either worldly or spiritual (II/117).
- An elite with perfect conduct is to be respected and is better than he who knows the Vedas but does not have control on himself (II/118).
- A younger, who has been initiated to perform a sacrifice must not be addressed by his name and should be respected with the pronunciation '*Bhoh*' and '*Bhavat*' your worship) (II/128).
- A female, wife of another man but not of blood relation, must be addressed (*Bhavati* / *Suvage* / *Bhaginee*) beloved sister (II/129).
- The maternal and paternal uncles, father's-in-law, officiating priests and teachers are to be respected in Oriental procedure even though they are younger (II/130).
- A maternal aunt, wife of a maternal uncle, mother-in-law, and paternal aunt must be honoured like the wife of one's teacher (II/131); and towards a sister of one's father/mother or his own (elder) sister, he must behave as he behaves towards his own mother (II/133).
- One should respect his brother's wife by touching her feet (II/132).
- Age difference upto 10 years in case of fellow citizens, upto 5 years with a person practising the same fine art (may be professional), upto 3 years difference between the fellow priests and minor difference of age between blood relation should be treated as equals (II/134). As it is required to be in contact with such persons on and often, an Oriental respect may not be applicable during any meet.

### **iv) PRIORITY OF RESPECT**

No doubt the priority of respect goes to parents, the teachers and elders. Yet from social point of view the following norms are to be taken into consideration.

- Wealth, kindred, age, profession (related to *Varna*) and learning are the titles to be respected and in this sequence the latter named, is more weighty than the former ones (II/135). In this context, the teacher is the most respected one being learned than the professionals and wealthy people. In Indian scenario this ethics is very well within every body's knowledge, but reversibly and wrongly

followed in practical set up. In the above referred respected categories in each, the trend of superiority is further to be fixed based on *Varna* (II/137).

- In social congregations, an elite (*Snaattaka*) and the king must be honoured most and between these two the elite is superior, to be respected by the king (II/139).
- In a road traffic: a wheeled carriage; one very old man; one diseased person; the carrier of a heavy luggage (porter); a woman; an elite, the king and a bride groom must be given priority (II/138).
- Let him not awake (unnecessarily) a superior who is sleeping (IV/57).
- Let him pass by a mound of earth, a cow (dairy form) an idol (temple), a *Braahmana* (residence of an elite); Ghee and honey (stall); a well known tree (sacred) and a cross way turning his right hand towards them (IV/39). This is a mark of respect to the concerned; but the idea of walking with 'keep to left' in this narration can not be ruled out.
- Let him not intentionally step on the shadow (means not to go too much closer as a sign of respect) of the image of the Gods, a *Guru*, a king or of an elite person, or of his teacher, of the reddish brown animal (cow) and a priest (IV/130).
- Let him never despise a king, a snake, a learned person, even if they are feeble, if he desires prosperity (IV/135) -Possibility of revenge is expected.
- Let him reverentially salute venerable men, who visit him, offer them his own seat; sit near them with folded hands (respect) and accompany them walking behind when they leave (IV/154).

## B. PUBLIC RELATION

### i) CONSERVATION OF RELATIONSHIP

One's relationship with the human beings around, either within the family or out side of it (i.e. in communities), is responsible to maintain harmony in the society. Most of the times, slipping of such relationship leads to irreparable social damages. In fact some one should trace out his own mistake and moderate himself in order to set right the break down status. Maintenance of self integrity and character in every minor social structure, plays an important role in management of human resources. *Manusmriti* says:

- Let him not insult those who have redundant limbs or are deficient in limbs, nor those destitute of

knowledge, nor very aged man, nor those who have no beauty or wealth nor those who are of low birth (*Varna*) (IV/141).

- Let him never offend the teacher, who initiated him nor who explained the Veda, nor his father and mother, nor any other *Guru*, nor cows, nor *Braahmanas* (elite), nor any man performing austerities (IV/162).
  - Let him not have quarrels with his father, his mother with female relatives, with a brother, with his son and his wife, daughters, with his slaves, with his domestic priests, with his teacher, with a maternal uncle, with a guest and a dependent with infants, with aged persons and sick man, with learned man, with his paternal and maternal relations and with relatives connected by marriage (IV/179,180).
- Expression of truth is a big austerity. It is difficult to practice and also to relish it. The implementation of truth should be as follows:
- Let him say what is true, but pleasing. Let him utter no disagreeable truth and let him utter no agreeable false hood (IV/138).
  - What is well, let him call well or let him say well only; let him not engage in a useless enmity or dispute with anybody (IV/139).

The *Smruti* has channelised the principles of offering and acceptance of gift (*Daana*) and have mostly discouraged for acceptance which may lead to attachment (IV/186-200). But, however, to develop a social congenial relationship he may accept from anyone commodities like fuel, water, storage roots, fruits, food, honey, a couch, a house, *Kussa* grass, perfumes, flowers, jewels, sour milk, grain, fish, sweet milk, meat and vegetables, if they are voluntarily offered. Usually such things are offered to maintain good neighbourhood (IV/247-250).

There is restriction for acceptance of food from many sources, which will be discussed subsequently. Yet, to develop, personal relationship with certain people he may accept food from persons like his labourer in a tillage, a friend of his family (irrespective of social status), his cow herd, his slave, his barber, from a person who has surrendered to him, irrespective of their caste.

### ii) RELATIONSHIPS TO BE ABANDONED

An ambitious man who desires to raise his race should form connections (marital) with the most excellent person (known through his education conduct and family background) and shuns all inferior ones; by that he becomes distinguished (IV/244,245). He should preserve himself in good deeds, gentle-

ness, shun the company of man with cruel conduct and does not cause injury to any one, controlling his organs and by liberality, can achieve the heavenly bliss (IV/246). So tactfully he should pay particular attention to avert an enemy, to the friend of an enemy, to a wicked person, to a thief or (any illegal relationship with) the wife of another man (IV/133). Even he should not stay together with pariahs (outcasts) and lowest *Varnassankaras* like *Chan-daalas* and *Pukkakas*, nor with fools, nor with proudly over bearing men, nor with lower castes (IV/79).

The *Smruti* has analysed two important human negative characters comparing at par with the animals like cat (*Bidaala*) and heron (*Baka*), who are to be abandoned out and out and a house holder who is aware of the social law, should not offer even water to a person who acts like the former two animals (IV/192), such as:

*Bidaala-bratti* (Man behaves like a cat): Who behaves as if the follower of principles and moral conducts, but not so in reality, ever greedy; a hypocrite, a deceiver of people, intent on doing injuries to others and busy in searching the demerits of all (ignoring merits), is a man who acts like a cat - should be avoided (IV/195).

*Baka-bratti* (Man behaves like a heron): Who looks downcast (moves bowing down the head giving false impression as if not glancing the surroundings), of a cruel disposition, intended on attaining solely his own benefits (without bothering the pain, trouble and disturbances caused to others there of), dishonest, and above all behaves with false gentleness is a man who acts like a heron - should be avoided (IV/196).

### iii) NON-EXTENSION OF INVITATION

In ancient India *Yajnya* was a function of all concerned and open to all (III/149), but *Ssraaddha* (sacrifice for *Manes*) was an important ritual for a householder. About 165 hymns of chapter III /122 to 286, are devoted to explain all the details of *Ssraaddha*. A wide spectrum of people were abandoned to be invited to the *Ssraaddha* and other rituals for Gods, which we have categorised into four groups. Restriction of invitation to such persons indicates indirectly that a householder should avoid any social relation with these categories of the people under mentioned (III/150/166).

#### a) Category-I: Persons with Unusual Marital Status

1) Outcast (*Patita*); (2) A younger brother getting married before elder ones (*Paribettaa*); (3) An elder brother who marries after the younger (*Paribitti*); (4) One whose wife is *Ssoodra* female (*Brushaleepati*); (5) The son

of remarried women; (*Pounarbhava*). (6) In whose house a paramour of his wife resides; (7) The son of an adulteress (*Kunda*); (8) The illegitimate son of a widow (*Golaka*); (9) Alliance with outcaste through marriage; (10) He, who lasciviously dallies with a brother's widow (*Agredidhishupati*) and (11) The husband of a remarried women.

#### b) Category-II: Specific Professionals of Low Profiles

(1) Athists (2) *Braahmanas* who sacrifice for a multitude of sacrifices (3) Physicians; (4) Temple priests (5) Sellers of meat; (6) Those who subsist by shop keeping; (7) Paid servant of a village or of a king; (8) Usurer; (9) One who subsists by tending cattle; (10) One who subsists over income from company or corporation (public properties); (11) An actor or singer; (12) Who teaches for a stipulated fee (Private tutor); (13) Seller of *Soma* plant; (14) Who undertakes sea voyages; (14) A bard (*Bhaata*-Professional praiser of kings); (15) Oilman; (16) who subsists by gambling; (17) Seller of flavouring substances; (18) Maker of bows and arrows; (19) Keeper of gambling house; (20) Trainer of elephants, oxen, horses and camels; (21) Who subsists by astrology (22); A bird fancier; (23) Who teaches the use of arms; (24) an architect; (25) A messenger; (26) One who plants trees for the sake of money; (27) A breeder of sporting dogs; (28) A falconer; (29) Who gains his subsistence from *Ssoodras*; (30) Who offers sacrifices, (in public functions and rituals for money); (31) Shepherd; (32) keeper of buffaloes.

#### c) Category-III: Physical Debilitated/Diseased

(1) An eunuch; (2) One afflicted with a skin disease; (3) Man with deformed nails or black teeth; (4) An epileptic man; (5) Who suffers from scrofulous swellings of glands; (6) Who afflicted from Leucoderma; (7) A mad man and (8) A blind man.

#### d) Category-IV: Socially Denounced Persons

(1) Thieves; (2) One who wears his hair and braids (false saint - *Jataadhaari*); (3) Gambler; (4) Opposer of teachers; (5) Who has forsaken the sacred fire; (6) One who neglects the five great sacrifices; (7) An enemy of *Braahmana* race; (8) who has broken the vow of studentship; (9) Who is taught by a fee taking teacher; (10) Disciple of *Guru* from *Ssoodra* cult; (11) Instructors of *Ssoodras*; (12) Who forsaken his mother, father and *Guru* with out a sufficient reason; (13) An incendiary; (14) A poisoner; (15) Who sustains on the food of the son of an adulterers; (16) A suborner to perjury; (17) Who wrangles or goes to law with his father; (18) A drunkard; (19) Who is afflicted with a disease, conceived as due to his

former crimes; (20) A hypocrite; (21) Betrayer of friends; (22) A person who learns the Veda from his son; (23) An informer; (24) Who cavils of the Veda; (25) Who defile maidens; (26) Who delights in injuring living creature; (27) Who drives water courses unnecessarily and delights in obstructing them and (28) A career of corpses for money.

All the four categories discussed as above has lot of socio-ecological implementations. The socially denounced persons are no doubt, should be avoided in social gatherings and persons with unusual marital relationship are avoided in order to create a consciousness, sanity and discipline in marriage system, as well to discourage such anomalous activities. It is obvious that the diseased persons should not be invited to a social gathering in order to avoid contamination. Moreover, many professions are depicted as of low social profile because the earning in such profession is sinful to some extent. However certain professions like a physician, a temple priest, a owner of company and corporation, an actor or singer, a teaching professional who earns money by private tuition, an astrologer are also categorised in this group. Such professions, which are of public interest and to serve others. Accepting any extraordinary fiscal gain in such cases was considered to be sinful.

### C. PUBLIC SERVICE

#### i) CHARITY

Charity, a noble character with any human being, has greater social implication from the point of sustainable ecology. The way of equal distribution, a philosophy developed by Mahatma Gandhi, had its origin probably from the themes of *Manusmriti*. In order to encourage charity, the *Smriti* says:

- Both, he who respectfully receives a gift and he who respectfully bestows it, go to the heaven; in the contrary case they both fall into hell (IV/235).
- If he is asked, let him always give something, be it ever so little without grudging; for a worthy recipient will (perhaps) be found who saves him from all guilt (IV/228).

A wide spectrum of objects are marked to be given as gift, such as, water, food, lamp, gold, land, horse, silver, clothing, cows, carriage, bed, grains, knowledge (Veda), clarified butter and as well protection to others (IV/229 - 234). The above mentioned some of the gifts are comparatively costlier which indirectly gives the clue that the minor needy things should be sacrificed for others without reluctance. However, one is cautioned not to boast of his gift (*Daana*) when he has bestowed it along with other cautions (IV/

236,237) as follows:

- Let him not be proud of his austerities;
- Let him not utter a false hood after he has offered a sacrifice;
- Let him not speak ill of elite (*Braahmana*).

#### ii) PUBLIC SERVICE AND SPIRITUAL MERIT

Further more, let him always offer sacrifices and perform (public work) of charity (such as; digging of well, tank, plantation, construction of educational institutions, rest sheds etc) without tiring, from his lawfully earned money, according to his ability with a cheerful heart and good faith (IV/226,227).

As the white ant, by accumulation of crystals of sand, gradually raises its hill, similarly let him slowly accumulate spiritual merit, slowly giving no pain to any creature that is declared to be the only means which stands by someone, when he leaves for the next world (IV/238 to 243).

### V. SALUBRITY: AN ENVIRONMENTAL NECESSITY

We have reported earlier, few aspects of pollution and contamination in *Manusmriti* (Dash and Padhy, 1998a). The environmental situation in more than 2000 B.C was quite different from that as it is existing today. The words pollution and contamination and their eradication, is a negative ecological implication, while the *Smriti* had a positive approach to maintain the cleanliness of the environment.

#### A. MAINTENANCE OF PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The basic structure of the ecological factors in the physical world, as classified by the ancient Indians, such as: Ether (*Akaasha*), Air (*Vaayu*), Fire, (*Tejas*), water (*Aapa*) and Earth (*Kshiti*) are reported and analysed scientifically by the authors recently (Mohapatra et al., 2000c). Their maintenance is advised to be as follows:

##### a) Ether

The utterance of the syllable 'OUM' and creation of vibrations there of, is a means to conserve the knowledge and as well implementation of truth in one's feeling, action and expression are the basis for the purification of the ethereal environment, which is discussed earlier in various context. Moreover, speech is the root for determination of all things, from which everything proceeds and dishonest with respect of speech is dishonest in everything (IV/256).

##### b) Air

A self maintenance is advised to a person to avoid

the smoke raising from a burning corpse (IV/69) and also not to blow a fire in his mouth to check fly ash and smoke pollution (IV/53) (Dash and Padhy, 1997).

**c) Fire**

let him not throw an impure substance into the fire (to avoid poisonous smoke pollution), nor place it in his bedroom (to avoid CO<sub>2</sub>, CO pollution) (IV/53).

**d) Water**

Let him not throw urine or faeces into water nor saliva, nor clothes defiled by impure substances, nor any other impurity, nor blood, nor poisonous things (IV/56).

**e) Earth**

Let him not step on hair, ashes, bones, potsherds, cotton seeds or chaff, if he desires long life (IV/78) and such garbages are generally found dumped in thickly populated human habitation, a source of contamination. It also indirectly advised not to accumulate garbage in public places where others would step over it (Dash and Padhy, 1998a).

**B. FOOD, A SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION**

Ayurveda says *Hita bhuk* (eat good), *Mita bhuk* (eat not more) and *Rita bhuk* (eat piously earned), if some one is in urge of a long life. Ancient Indians have realised that the ingestion process along with the improper food used to contaminate the body form physical and spiritual point of view. Much emphasis has been given in *Manusmruti* to regulate some one in food and eating habit and the source of the food.

**i) ETHICS OF DINNING ENVIRONMENT**

**Time:** let him not eat very early in the morning nor very late in the evening, nor during the twilight. (IV/62)

**Container:** Let him avoid a broken disc or one appears defiled (IV/65).

**Dress:** Let him not eat dressed with one garment only (IV/45) or covering his head (III/238).

**Posture:** Let him not eat lying on a bed nor holding the plates in his hands (contrary to a western civilisation often considered to be of status symbol in buffet reception), nor on a seat (dinning table) (IV/74).

Let him eat while his feet are wet, to attain a long life (IV/76).

**Direction:** For long life let him eat facing the east; for fame turning to the south; for prosperity turning to the west; for truthfulness turning to the north (II/52).

**Mode of eating:** Let him always worship his food and eat it without contempt; rejoice when he sees the food and show a pleased face and pray that he

may always obtain it (worshipping the food gives strength and mental vigour) (II/54,55).

**Amount of eating:** Let him be aware of eating between the two meal times nor over eat himself (II/56), nor eat anything in the evening if had a heavy lunch (IV/62). Excess eating is prejudicial to health, fame and prevents acquisition of spiritual merit (II/57).

Let him always sip water before and after eating, next twice wipe his mouth and lastly touch the cavities of the head with water (II/58-60).

Let him eat as long as the food remains warm and eat in silence (III/237), in a sacred place where a village pig, a cock, a dog, menstruating women and a eunuch must not look (III/239).

**Mode of service:** Let him (who serves the food) on no account drop a tear, become angry, utter an untruth, nor touches the food with his feet, nor violently serve the food (as if throwing) (III/229).

Let him not give the remnants of his meal to any body nor move any where without having purified after his meal (II/56).

The dicta (IV/205 to 217, 222 to 224 explain the quality and source of food, can be divided into three categories as follows, ( which should be avoided):

**ii) QUALITY AND SOURCE OF FOOD**

**a) Disrespectful food**

(1) Food offered by an invitation to all concerned; (2) declared to be bad by a learned man; (3) what has been touched intentionally with the foot; (4) food offered with out due respect (IV/207,209,213).

**b) Possibility of Contamination**

Food, in which (1) hair or insects are found; (2) which has been touched by menstruating women; (3) picked up by birds; (4) touched by dog; (5) smelt by cow; (6) which has turned sour; (7) which has been kept over night; (8) leavings (remnants) of another man; (9) sneezed over by anybody and (10) which is unpalatable (IV/207, 208, 209, 211, 213).

**c) Food from Specific Persons**

Let him not eat the food given by (1) intoxicated; (2) angry; (3) diseased; (4) harlot; (5) thief; (6) musician; (7) carpenter; (8) usurer; (9) one who is initiated for the performance of a sacrifice; (10) miser; (11) one bound with fetters (prisoner); (12) accused of moral sin; (13) hermaphrodite; (14) unchaste women; (15) hypocrite; (16) physician; (17) hunter; (18) cruel man; (19) who eats the fragments of another's meal; (20) an Ugra (a type of *Varnas-sankara*); (21) prepared by postnatal women; (22) person whose ten days of impurity have not elapsed after death or birth of a kinship; (23) a destitute female; (24) an enemy; (25) headman of the village;

(26) an outcast; (27) an informer; (28) who habitually tells false hood; (29) a blacksmith; (30) a goldsmith; (31) bamboo basket maker; (32) a dealer in weapons; (33) a *Nisaada* (a type of mixed caste *Varnassankara*); (34) a stage player; (35) a trainer of hunting dogs; (36) publicans (Soundhika); (37) a washer man; (38) a dyer; (39) a pity less man; (40) a man in whose house a paramour of his wife leaves; (41) a man who bears the paramours of his wives and (42) in female dominant families. Also (43) one should stop eating in a congregation if prematurely one guest finishes his meal and rises up and (44) should not take part in a dinner at a sacrifice that is offered by one who is not entitled to do so (IV/205 to 217). In an inner vision, the persons specified from whom food is not to be taken are either socially guilt or denounced or have earning source which is not free from ill activities. In such circumstances food is considered as a source of metaphysical contamination against the concept of *Rita bhuk* and the acceptor may have to suffer from the activities of the giver. It is wise to mention here that in Mahaabhaarata, Vishma and Dronacharya supported Duryodhana even if they were well conscious that the Paandavas were in right path and they have confessed that the food they take of Duryodhana is responsible to destined them doing so.

Moreover, through faults committed by eating forbidden food, death becomes eager to shorten the life of a person (V/14).

### C. SOME MORE HEALTH TIPS

The dicta concerned to purity of food is mentioned previously. Some other facts concerned to health ethics are mentioned as an advise to the house holder (IV/40, 45-48, 54, 57, 59,60, 62, 64, 66, 69, 73-76, 83, 99, 102-104, 120, 132, 134, 151 (Dash and Padhy, 1998a)

- Let him not bath naked (to avoid self passion)
- Let him not void urine on a road, on ashes, in a cow pan, on a ploughed land, in water, in a ruined temple, on an ant hill, nor in holes inhabited by living creatures (sanitation).
- Let him not blow a fire with his mouth nor warm his feet at it, nor sleep placing fire under a bed (cot) (avoid fire hazard) (Dash and Padhy, 1997).
- Let him not sleep alone in a deserted dwelling or under the trees during night time (fear psychosis).
- Let him not watch a rainbow (eye care).
- Let him not dwell in a place where diseases are endemic (preventive).
- Let him not eat anything from which the essence is extracted.

- Let him not (excessively) dance, sing, play musical instrument, clap or slap his limbs, grind his teeth or make uncouth noises (insanity).
- Let him not eat any food containing Sesame (til) grains after sunset (to avoid indigestion).
- Let him not use shoes, garments, a sacred ring, ornaments, garland, or a water vessel which has been used by others, nor any used materials of others and even nor carry his own shoes in hands (contamination).
- Let him not go to his bed with wet feet (may catch cold).
- Let him avoid to hold other person's hair or strike on his head in anger (avoid brain injury).
- Let him not tear his nails with his teeth (contamination).
- Let him not approach his wife during menstrual period (sex health).
- Let him avoid sex with any female, other than his wife (sex health).
- Let him not step intentionally on things used for cleaning the body, or water used for a bath, on urine or ordure, or on blood, on mucous, on anything spat out or vomiting (contamination).
- Far from the dwelling let him remove urine and ordure, for the water used for washing the feet and for the remnants of food and the water from his bath (cleanliness).
- Let him not read upto late in the night, during roaring windy nights or during whirling dust in day time, or during lightening, thunder and fiery meteors fall on all sides or sitting on a moving carriage or boat or animal (eye care).

Multiple aspects on maintenance of purity in conduct are already discussed in the past sections through which one attains long life, desirable offspring, imperishable wealth and over comes in auspicious omens, undoubtedly acts as an important tip in this regard.

### D. WHOLE-SOME-NESS (*SSOUCHA*)

Purity in Vedic India, was not only considered from the view point of microbial contamination, rather was an approach for some one's good health and wellbeing, suggesting a healthy condition from mental, physiological and physical stand point. It is mentioned that knowledge, austerities, fire, holy food, earth, control of internal organ, water, smearing with cow dung, the wind, sacred rites, the sun and the time are the purifiers of corporeal beings (V/105). Of course the maintenance of cleanliness in the environment is discussed previously in general and few specifications are depicted in table 1.

**Table 1**

<i>Factors of Impurity</i>	<i>Mode of Purification</i>
<b>i. Prime factor – the fiscal factor</b>	Amongst all mode of purification, purity in proper acquisition of wealth is declared to be the highest above all. He, who is pure in fiscal affairs is the most cleaned personality (V/106).
ii. Mental ( <i>Mana</i> ) purification ( V/107, 109)	
a. A learned man;	By a forgiving disposition
b. Committed forbidden action.	By liberality ( <i>Daana</i> )
c. Secret sinners.	By muttering <i>Mantras</i> ( <i>Japa</i> )
d. A man of wisdom.	Further by austerities
e. In general principle	By truthfulness
f. The soul	By austerities
g. The intellect	By knowledge
h. The bad thoughts of a woman	By menstrual secretion
i. A Braahmana	By abandoning the world
<b>iii) Physiological (<i>Ssareera</i>) purification (V/135, 136, 138, 144 and 145).</b>	
a) After voiding urine of faeces	By application of earth on the organ, anus and hand.
b) Daily cleaning of body	By bathing in water.
c) Vomited	By bathing followed by eating clarified butter.
d) Vomiting reiterated (may be due to illness)	By sipping water
e) After sexual intercourse	By bathing
f) After sleeping	
g) – Sneezing	
h) – eating	
i) – spitting	By sipping water
j) – telling lie (unwanted)	
k) – drinking (soft/ hot)	
l) Before reading	Sipping water

There are twelve exudes of impurities, declared to be excreted from the human body as follows: (I) oily exudes, (ii) semen, (iii) blood, (iv) bone marrow, (v) urine, (vi) faeces, (vii) Nasal secretions (mucus); (vi) Ear wax, (ix) Phlegm, (x) Tear, (xi) The rheum of the eyes and (xii) sweat.

<b>iv) Physical (<i>Drabya: Material</i>) Purification: (V/108; 111 to 128)</b>	
a. Dwelling place and house	By sweeping, smearing with cow dung, sprinkling fresh cow urine / milk.
b. A land	By scraping and keeping cows staying on it during a day and night.
c. Water	Normally water gets purified of its own by the current of its flow, possessing of proper smell, colour, taste, and un-mixed with impure substance collected from clean (oligotrophic) grounds are considered pure water.
d. Utensils	
1. Made of metals, gems, and stones	Cleansed with ashes, earth and water.
2. Vessel made of gold (without stain), stone, coral, stone or silver	By water alone
3. Copper, iron, brass, pewter, tin and lead	By alkaline and acid substances and water
4. All sacrificial vessels	By rubbing with hand and rinsing with water
5. Wooden spoons (eg. Ssruba, Ssrucha etc.) used in sacrifice to add ghee and wooden baskets (Kulaa), cart, mortar and pestle	By hot water
6. Pots made of conch shell, horns, bones and ivory	By mixture of cow urine and water
7. Earthen pot	By a second burning, but earthen vessels defiled by spirituous liquor, urine, ordure, saliva, pus or blood can not be purified by incineration.
e. Food materials	
1. All sorts of liquid like oil and ghee	By passing two blades (lamina) of <i>Kussa</i> grass through them.
2. Large quantities of grain, vegetables, roots and fruits	By sprinkling water
f. Clothing	
1. Large quantities of clothes (unused)	By sprinkling water
2. Small quantity clothes (used)	By washing with water
3. Silk and Wooden stuff	By alkaline soil
4. Blankets	By fruits of <i>Ithaa phala</i> ( <i>Sapindus trifoliatius</i> )
5. Staple clothes	With <i>Bel</i> ( <i>Aegle marmelos</i> ) fruits
6. Linen clothes	With paste of white mustard seeds.
g. All other materials	
1. Grass and wood	By sprinkling water
2. Wooden objects	By planning (scraping)
3. Anything inanimate	By applying earth and water, as long as the full smell does not leave an object defiled by impure substances and till the stain caused does not disappear.

v) *Metaphysical Purification (V/61, 62,66, 85, 87)*

The impurity on account of death, or on the birth of a child, or abortion of a pregnancy, menstruation period of a woman, and the guilt incurred having sex with a female other than wife, lapses after a specific time period during which one can not perform daily rituals and worships. In certain cases, like on hearing the death news of a kin after a long period staying at a long distance, a bathing instantly along with the cloths worn, cleans the concerned. Similarly by touching the watcher (*Chandaala*) of the grave yard, a menstruating woman, an outcast, a woman in child bed, a corpse or one who has touched a corpse and a human bone, gets purified through a bathing.

vi. *Conditions and Objects not Effected by Impurity (V/93, 95, 98, 129-133, 141, 142).*

The taint of metaphysical impurity does not fall on a king, a person engaged in the performance of a vow, nor on some one who has taken oath to perform a sacrifice. The same rule is applicable to the kinsman of a person died in a riot or battle, due to thunder bolt, lightning or punished by the king on a guilt and those who have sacrificed themselves for the cause of others.

Similarly the *Indriyas* of the body above the naval centre, the mouth of a woman, fruits dropped from the beak of a bird, the milk of a cow after suckled by the calf, the flesh of a deer or like caught by a hunting dog and as well flesh of an animal killed by carnivorous animals or pariahs; the touch by flies, drops of water, a shadow, a cow, a horse, the rays of the sun, dust, earth, wind, fire, and as well drops of water from the mouth, nor the hair of the moustache entering the mouth, nor water adheres to the teeth, nor drops of trickle which falls on the feet of one who offers for sipping to others, the hand of an artisan, the commodity exposed for sale in a market and food obtained begging by a student must not be considered as impure.

## VI. ETHICAL PROTECTION FOR BIOTA

The slogan, for the conservation of bio-diversity and its sustainable development, by the modern day environmentalists, seems to be confound with in the vicinity of four walls in the academic institutions as there is no pragmatic approach to solve the problem. In this context, religion plays a major role, which has an ethical approach with rules and regulations based on depths of indigenous ecological knowledge and practical approach through religious rituals for the conservation, of bio-diversity (Arora, 1986;

Maheswari, 1986; Alcorn, 1996). In *Manusmruti*, the basic theme, non-violence to the subhuman beings and vegetation, from ethical, social, sympathetic, administrative, dietic and religious point of view, is emphasized very much for the conservation of biota on ecological stand point. We have widely dealt with the topic in our previous papers (Padhy et al., 1997; Dash and Padhy, 1998C).

A broad spectrum of animals such as small and large insects, both bony and boneless animals, fishes, amphibians, reptiles, different birds and mammals as well including the microbes, their killing knowingly or unknowingly, is considered as crime and penance is prescribed for its expiation (XI/69, 71, 110, 116, 117, 132, 135 to 138, 140 to 152, 144). 'Penance' is a process of self restriction and prevention for committing or repeating any offence which has played a significant role for the conservation of biota by creating eco-consciousness. Man is advised to be vegetarian in food habit from health, ethical and social point of view (V/19, 34, 48 to 52, 55, 56) and cautioned not to destroy the animal kingdom for quenching the urge of satisfaction (Dash and Padhy, 1998b, c).

Non-violence is considered as the top among the social laws (X/63); and persons involved directly or indirectly in violence, even if for their livelihood, are discouraged in the society (III/152, 162, 166; IV/84). The ethical implementation of non-violence has come out with a metaphysical phenomenon, "that violence in this life will cause sufferings to him in his next life" (V/38, 45). Even there are dicta, that one should observe non-violence in every walk of life even at the time of distress (IV/2, V/43, 46,47; VI/68).

The *Smruti* was not only sympathetic towards the animals (III/92; IV/59, 67, 68; VIII/237, 242); but injuring living plants (Padhy, 1999a), cutting down the green trees for fire wood, spoilage of forest habitat including shrubs, creepers, lianes and flowering plants; destroying agricultural species as well as plants which spontaneously spring up, for no good purpose are considered to be sin (XI/63,65,143,145,146). Plantation was encouraged (VIII/246, 247) and earning livelihood by plantation was not considered as genius profession. Moreover the administrative responsibility was not only for the protection of human beings only but also for the plants and animals as well (VIII/285,286, 296, 298) and the king is advised to conserve himself from the involvement in the cruel play of hunting (VII/47 to 50). We are presenting here a single dictum which is sufficient to explain the bold ethics of non-violence in Vedic culture which hardly occurs in any other cult, in this world.

"He who permits the slaughter of an animal, he who cuts it up, he who kills it, he who buys or sells

meat, and who cooks it, he who serves it up and he who eats it, must be considered as the slayers of the animal (V/51).

### CONCLUSION

There is no end to any discussion on Manusmriti, which has spread up and deep seated in Indian society since time immemorial. We have analyzed a fragment of the epic from human environmental point of view. Unfortunately in Indian scenario, the ill opinion coined with a biased motif of political and irrational interpretation of such an invaluable legendary epic (Kumar, 1995), needs a perfect review in world over, since it is the ethical compendium of human beings (Maanav Dharma Ssastra) but not only of Indians. Of course, in course of time there are additions of hymns into *Manusmriti* by different elite as a prevailing social need of that time and the facts can not be ignored (Das, 1998). A saying goes on, 'A container half filled with milk, can be explained in two ways; it is partially empty or partially filled up; and as human beings we have to make the right perception.'

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**KEY WORDS** Vedic Ecology. *Manusmriti*. Socio-ecological Niche. Academic Environment. Family Atmosphere. Social interaction. Salubrity. Ethical Protection for Biological Environment.

**ABSTRACT** The science and culture in any civilisation is based on its past, stands on the present and looks forward for the future. Vedic culture is the glory of India. *Manusmriti*, the pioneer and highest authority for the formulation of human ethical law book, contains the excerpts of Veda, to guide and channelise the society in right perspective. An attempt is made in this review to bring out the various environmental aspects depicted in the *Smriti*, reflected on facts like (I) Socio-ecological Niche; (II) Academic environment; (III) Family atmosphere, (IV) Social interaction; (V) salubrity and (VI) Ethical protection for Biota. The defined livelihood through the *Varna* division and aspiration for a simple life style, is the basis to determine the socio-ecological niche of an individual. In an academic environment, the importance of the teacher (*Guru*) and respect for the teaching community, is focused as the highest obligation to acquire knowledge and the later is directly proportional to the integrity and conduct of the student. The hardship of the student life is to orient him for an integrated future. Family life commences with proper selection of bride and groom and the marriage system follows their union. The importance of women in family, various code and conduct for females, a basic need for their conservation and preservation for their rights is the cream of happiness in the family atmosphere. The house-holder's conduct, regulated daily life, inter-relationship among family members and hospitality for guests are the additional factors for the sanctity of the family. Inter personality respect and

conservation of inter-relationship along with charity and public service is the ethics of a homeostatic social environment. Of course the *Smriti* has abandoned to keep relation with various unsociable elements and also with persons who possess a degraded social status and an unethical earning source in order to maintain the self conservation of an individual. Wholesomeness and salubrity is focused as an environmental necessity. Moreover cleanliness is considered on deep depth from fiscal, mental, physiological, physical and metaphysical points of view. Ingestion of food, dining environment, quality of the food and its source is much emphasised to avoid any physical and metaphysical contamination. Non-violence to subhuman beings and vegetation from ethical, social, sympathetic, administrative, dietetic and religious points of view, is considered as the basic theme for the conservation of bio-diversity on ecological stand point. Environment is to be considered in toto and the consideration should be more qualitative than quantitative. The basic aim of *Manusmriti*, to create eco-consciousness in every walk of life, is the greatest contribution of this epic to the mankind; and the facts rediscovered in this work can decrystallise any ill opinion and wrong notion over the thoughts and philosophy of *Manu*, as it is wrongly deemed to be.

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Scientific study of interactions among organisms and between organisms and their environment. abiotic. A term that describes a nonliving factor in an ecosystem. biological community. The populations of plants animals and microorganisms living and interacting in a certain area at a given time. biosphere. Consists of all life on Earth and all parts of the Earth in which life exists, including land, water, and the atmosphere. biotic.Â a system formed by the interaction of a community of organisms with their physical environment. habitat. Place where an organism lives. mutualism. A symbiotic relationship in which both organisms benefit. niche. All of the physical and biological conditions in which an organism lives and how it uses these conditions. parasitism. This review examines the phenomenological approach as it might be used to explore environmental and architectural issues. After discussing the nature of phenomenology in broad terms, the review presents two major assumptions of the phenomenological approach--(1) that people and environment compose an indivisible whole; (2) that phenomenological method can be described in terms of a "radical empiricism."Â Partly influenced by the seminal works on the acoustic dimensions of the lifeworld by Schafer (1977) and Berendt (1985), there have also been phenomenological studies of the multimodal ways in which the senses contribute to human awareness and understanding (Jarvilouma, 1994; Pocock, 1993; Porteous, 1990; Tuan, 1993; von Maltzuhn, 1994).