

THE SCENARIO OF THE PRESENT SOCIETY AS REFLECTED IN THE SMRITISHASTRA

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This paper will attempt to look into the reflections of Smritishastras on our present society. These are very importance in our present society. If we follow the Smritishastras very carefully, it may be said that our present society will be benefited in various aspects. For the development of ancient society Smritishastra had a great role. In ancient time this Smriti scripture too influenced the individual, ideological and social life from different aspects. Broadly speaking, Smritishastras are included with Grihasutra, shrautasutra, yanjavalkasamhita, Manusamhita etc. The principles as depicted in Smritishastras performed a great role in our present society. The Smritishastras in ancient time are religious scripture. The verse which we get from Manusamhitas is follows:

Śrutistu vedō vijeyō dharmasāstram tu Vai smritiḥ.ⁱ

Veda is called Sruti, and the name of religious scripture is Smriti. Etiquette may be considered Smriti. The people in our present society almost forget to maintain the principals reflected in Smritishastras. It may be said that we should obey the principles of Smritishastras which will be valuable in making our society sound and healthy.

Yat kāyam dharmam śāstyartham tat dharmasāstram Yatra
dharma śiṣyate kartavyatā pratiyate sā smritiḥ.ⁱⁱ

The Smritishastras are importance in ancient time as in present. If a man detaches from morality, he may be liar and he may steal other property and he even tortures others. Thus our society invites conflict among the people. Its impact on our society is shown.

In the ancient period the people have to go to royal court to get judgment. The king judges maintaining the rule of just and unjust. This procedure is called Vyavahara.

Nānāsandeha haraṇad vyāvahaāraḥitismritiḥ.ⁱⁱⁱ

The way thought which doubt is removed is called vyavahara. It is admitted that the principals of the society of ancient India are very importance even in our present society.

Man and women are two basic components of human society. Without development of women, country's progress is not possible. We should not ignore women in our society. In connection with women's development Manu mention in his Manusamhita:

Yatra nāryastu pūjyante ramante tatra devatāḥ Yatraitāstu na
pūjyante sarvastatrāfalāḥ kriyāḥ.^{iv}

In this Verse it is mentioned that God's satisfaction is where women are respected. Another Verse mentioned that anybody does not success without showing dignity to women. It is seen in our present society that the family cannot be improved if the women of the family are

not placed in honorable position. To keep our family happy it is very necessary to maintain a good relation between husband and wife. In the ancient time the relation between husband and wife is mentioned in Smritishastras in a Verse:

Santuṣṭō bhāryayā bhartā bhartā bhāryā tathaiva cha Yasminneba
kale nityaṃ kalyāṇaṃ tatra Vai dhruvaṃ.^v

In the ancient time Guru or teacher was placed in a dignified position. In the Smritishastras it is mentioned that Guru or teacher must be respected. In the Manusmrities teacher or Guru was considered more respectable than father. In the present society students should respect their teachers as narrated in Manusmrities. In this context a Verse may be mentioned:

Brahma janma hi viprasya pretya cheha cha śāsvatam.^{vi}

There some people who are found in our society play card game on Casino. Those who always play this game face financial problem and waste their valuable time. Approximate 200BC it is mentioned in the Manusmrities that anybody should not engage in card game or Casino. In this context a Verse may be mentioned as follows:

Dyūtametat purākāla dṛiṣṭaṃ vairakaraṃ mahat
Tasmādyūtaṃ na sebeta hāsyarthaṃmapi buddhimān.^{vii}

In our country Indian the child marriage was a system of our society. If a child gets married with adult person, simply it is said that the married (child) may be widow. Thus child marriage was curse to the women in our society. The movement for widow marriage was started in our country in 19th century but in the Parasharsamhita, there is a verse for widow marriage. This verse is as follows:

Naṣtemriteprabrajiteklībe cha patitepatōū
Panchavyapatsunārīṇāmpatiranyaōbidhīyate^{viii}

At present time people of our society always expect justices from an eligible judge. For this, it is very necessary that the procedure for appointment of judge must be clean and fair. Naradasmritis mention for the appointment of judge that the judge must be eligible and wise.

It is difficult to get such a society free from crime. In ancient India, Naradasmritishastras mentioned different types of crime, and it is said that the judicial system is very essential to suppress the criminals in the context of the importance of judicial systems. There is a verse available in NaradSmritishastras;

Naṣte dharme manuṣyāṇāṃ vyāvahaāraḥ pravartate Draṣṭa cha
vyāvahārāṇāṃ rājā dandadharaḥ smritaḥ.^{ix}

In our present judicial court it is very common that if a man appeals for judgement in court he speaks differently from this writing submitted to the court for the first time. It is problem in our society such problem among people of ancient India was existing. In the context Yanjavalkayasamhita states which is said for the first time will not be changed latter on.

Nōktaṃ biprakritiṃ nayet.^x

At present the people get rebate from income tax. But in the ancient time, a verse is available in Smritishastras as follows:

Andhō jaraḥ pīthasarpī saptatyā sthaviraścha yaḥ
Śrōtriyeṣūpakurvanścha na dāpyāḥ kenachit karam.^{xi}

The people who get rebate from tax particularly are blind, physically handicapped and the people above 70 years old.

In the Smritishastra a verse mentioned is as follows:

Na mātā na pitā na strī na putrastyāgamarhatiḥ.^{xii}

The verse says that anybody should care his/her old parents. A man should be careful not only for his/her parents but also his/her children and wife.

We may conclude that our society is changing gradually but there are some values in our human society, which are very important to make our life happy and healthy forever. Such some principals or values are mentioned in Smritishastras. The principals of Smritishastras influenced the social life of the people of ancient India. In the same purposes, the principals or laws of Smritishastras reflect on the present human society. Finally it can be said that the Smritishastras are important as in present society of our country as that of ancient Indian society.

ⁱ Manusāṃhitā 2/10

ⁱⁱ Manusāṃhitā 2nd Chapter page--64ⁱⁱⁱ

Yājñavalkyaśāṃhitā bhūmikā-viii ^{iv} Manusāṃhitā
3/56

^v Manusāṃhitā 3/60

^{vi} Manusāṃhitā 2/146

Manusāṃhitā 9/227

Parāśarsaśāṃhitā 4/27

Nāradaśāṃhitā 1/2

^x Yājñavalkyaśāṃhitā 2/9

^{xi} Manusāṃhitā 8/394

^{xii} Manusāṃhitā 8/389

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