CHAPTER : III

SMRTI

(A) SMRTI - GENERAL INFORMATION

(B) THE EXTINCTION OF SMRTIS - CAUSES THEREOF
The word 'smrti' is derived from the root 'smr' (1.P.) to remember or to recollect & hence grammatically, it means - "remembrance or recollection".

Annambhatta defines the term smrti, in his Tarkasaṅgraha. The knowledge is said to be of two kinds - namely smrti & anubhava. The knowledge, which is produced by mental impressions alone, is smrti. The mental impressions, which are the cause of recollection, are produced by apprehension. The object, perceived by the eyes, is reported to the mind & through the mind, it is reported to the soul. A kind of impression is produced in the mind. It remains there in a latent form. But when another object, similar to it, is perceived at another time, the earlier latent impression is aroused. This is known as smrti, which is different from pratyabhijña, as in the latter, the same object is perceived & the earlier perception of it, is awakened, while in smrti, the objects remembered & seen are not identical, but similar. The Vaiśeṣika-sūtra² (9/22) also defines the term smrti, in a similar manner.

The smrti is also defined in the Yogasūtra of Patañjali³ (1.11). Smrti or memory is said to be the retention of the experienced objects. It is a kind of mental modification by which the experienced objects are not lost, but are retained in the mind.
The word *smṛti* is used in this very primary sense of actual remembrance or recollection in the earlier *smṛti* literature. For example, Gautama (I/1/2)⁴ & Manu (II/10)⁵ mention the "*smṛti* of those, who know Veda" & Āpastamba (I/1/2)⁶ refers to "the consensus of those, who know veda" as a source of Dharma. Here at these places, the *smṛti* literature, in the form of Dharmasūtras & Dharmasastras, is not referred to. But they refer to the living mass of sacred literature, in the form of reflective & thoughtful recollections or memories of the wise & the knowers of Veda, regarding the rules & regulations of Dharma, to be followed by the masses.

It is only in the later period, that the term *smṛti* is mostly used for that literature on Dharma, known as Dharmasūtras & Dharmasastras, in which those recollections of the various vedic sages, were collected & traditionally handed down as a Dharmasūtra or a Dharmasastra of a particular sage.

The vedic sages are said to have actually perceived⁷ the Divine words, which are known as *Sruti* (revelation), while they are also said to remember or recollect the precepts & rules of different sciences (*śāstras*), which are known as *smṛti* (recollection).

It may be noted here that the words - *pratyakṣa* & *anumāna* occurring in the Vedantasūtras⁸ (I/3/28 & 3/2/24) are interpreted by the commentators (like Saṅkara-cārya, Rāmaṇujacārya, Vallabha-cārya etc.), as standing for *śruti* & *smṛti* respectively, as the former contains the directly revealed words, while the latter is
based upon recollections of facts, observed, during the state of trance.

WIDER & NARROWER SENSE:

The term smrti is used in both wider & narrower senses. In its wider sense, it stands for a wide range of inspired literature, in which the remembered or recollected rules or precepts of different sciences (śastraḥ), are found. The word smrti is thus used in contradistinction from śrti i.e. generally all the literature other than śrti is designated as smrti. Thus in its wider sense, the word smrti includes the six vedāngas, the śrātras, the Mahābhārata, works on Tantra, systems of Indian philosophy Jyotisa & Ayurveda.

In the narrower sense, the term is primarily used in case of the two kinds of works on Dharma, namely - the Dharmasūtras & Dharmasāstras (the metrical smrtis); According to Manusmṛti⁹, Smṛti means Dharmasāstra. Sometimes a Dharma-sūtra is also called as smṛti, as in case of Visnu-Dharma-sūtra, which is also known as Visnu-smṛti. Sometimes, it is also understood in a very restricted sense, of only 'the metrical smrtis'. But it is definitely understood to be standing for both these classes of works, namely, the Dharmasūtras & Dharmasāstras, by one & all the commentators, & digest-writers. For them, both these classes of works are of equal authority, as smṛti-works.
CLASSIFICATIONS OF SMRTIS:

The smrtis are classified in various ways, as mentioned below:

(1) **VEDAMULA - VEDABHYA**:

The smrtis can be either Vedamūla, i.e. based upon Veda or Vedabāhya i.e. those that are not based upon the Veda, but based upon logic. The latter are violently criticised by Manu. This classification of Smrtis is suggested by a verse in the Manusmṛti.

(2) **DRSTĀRTHA,ADRSTĀRTHA ETC.**:

The smrtis are also said to be of two kinds - (1) Drstārtha i.e. having drsta - seen or tangible purpose (2) Adrstārtha - i.e. those having adrsta - unseen or intangible purpose. This kind of twofold classification is implied in the following verse from the Vākyapadīya of Bhartrhari.

The Bhavisyapurāṇa, has three more divisions, over & above the two-fold division suggested by Bhartrhari. According to this classification, the smrtis are of five kinds (1) Drstārtha (2) Adrstārtha, (3) Drstadrstārtha (4) Nyāyanūla (5) Anuvādasmrī.

All these, except the Drstārthasmṛti are based upon Veda i.e. they are Vedamūla. The Drstārtha smṛti is not based upon Veda & is said to have a 'Tangible purpose' (of wealth & pleasure). It deals with the topics, mentioned in the verses, from the same Purāṇa. The Arthasastra may be said to be a Drstārtha smṛti.
(in its wider sense) from this point of view. The other smrtis are said to be based upon Veda & have for their aim, some 'intangible' (adrsta) purpose (of dharma & moksa - duty & liberation). These other smrtis are - (2) Adrṣṭaṛṭha (otherworldly), (3) Drṣṭadrṣṭaṛṭha (worldly as well as otherworldly), (4) Nyāyamūla - (based upon maxims or universal rules), (5) Anuvādasmṛti - seen by the sītas, the wise & the knowers of Veda. These are also explained in the same purāṇa.

(3) SHRI GOVINDA DASA’S CLASSIFICATION:

Shri Govinda Dasa classifies the Smṛtis into seven groups, as mentioned below:

(1) Metrical redactions of Dharmasūtras, (2) Metrical redactions of Grhyasūtras, (3) Composite metrical redactions of both, Dharmasūtras & Grhyasūtras (4) Secondary redactions of the metrical Sūtrīs (to this group belong Sūtrīs, prefixed with Vṛddha, Brhat etc. & also the Sūtrīs, those of Vyāsa, Dakṣa, Devala, Atri etc., which do not seem to have any connection with any Vedic school (carana), (5) Later independent compilations - 'that is, works, not basing themselves on some particular Sūtrīs, for their inspiration, but ranging over a large field & making their own selections from them, like the Lohita-smṛti, (6) Sectarian forgeries, like the Brhat, Hariṭa, Vasistha etc. (7) Supplimentary Sūtrīs - like Brhashpatri-smṛti, which is a Vārtika on Manu or Kātyāyana Smṛti, which may be a Vārtika, on Vaiṣṇavalkya.
The stylistic feature of the Śārīti literature is that it has been handed down in prose, verse, & mixed prose & verse form. The Dharmasūtra of Gautama is completely in aphoristic prose style. While there are numerous metrical Śārīti like those of Manu, Yajñavalkya etc. that are completely in verse form. But there are also some Dharmasūtras & Śārīti, that contain both prose sūtras & verses also. Hence it is not quite unfair to believe that a mixed style was also current by the Śārīti literature, as the use of both - verses & prose-sūtras, are found.

Some scholars like Max Muller & others, believe that the works in continuous anustubh metre followed sūtra works. This view is not admitted by Mr.P.V.Kane; while Prof.K.V.Rangasvami Aiyangar propounds even a third intermediate stage of mixed form of Śārīti literature. He observes, "that this form, was an intermediate stage in the transition to Śārīti, which used verse alone, is denoted by the increasing number of verses, as compared with prose in Viṣṇusūrti, which has nearly 550 verses, as compared, for example, with Viṣisthaśūrti, which though smaller has over 200 verses. In the old sūtra-works, like those of Āpastamba & Kautilya, there is a sensible verse content, but it is relatively small in comparison with the prose". He also maintains that a Śārīti, wholly in verse & in the developed sloka form suggests a later stage in evolution, than one which is in prose & verse, & uses other old metres, besides the anustubh.
It may be remarked here that a slight glance at the literary form of works, like the caraka, the susruta etc., would convince one of the fact that such a mixed style was prevalent in the early Sanskrit literature & was naturally present in the smrti literature.

5) SMRTIS & UPASMRTIS:

The smrtis are also classified like puranas into two heads, namely - smrtis & upasmrtis. The names of the upasmrtikaras (compilers of upasmrtis) are mentioned in the verses from the viramitrodava.

6) PRIMARY & SECONDARY:

Shri J.R.Gharpure & Shri R.K.Agawal classify the smrtis into two broad divisions - namely the primary & secondary smrtis. Shri J.R.Gharpure includes the kalpasutras & smrtis, among the primary smrtis, while by 'secondary smrtis' he understands the commentaries on the primary smrtis & the digests, based upon them.

While Dr.Buhler enumerates smrtis of Añgiras, Atri, Daksa, Devala, Prajñapati, Yama, Likhita, Vyasa, Sañkha, Sañkha-likhita, Vṛddha Satatapa, under the head of 'secondary redactions of metrical Dharmaśāstras'.

7) SĀTVIKA, RĀJASA, TĀMASA:

Like Purānas, smrtis are also said to be of three kinds - i.e. Sātvika, Rājasa & Tāmasa smrtis, in the Padma purāna (Uttarakandha - 263.86 to 90).
(1) The satvika smritis are those of Vasistha, Harita, Vyasa, Parasara, Bharadvaja & Kasyapa. They are said to be auspicious & leading to liberation.

(2) The Rajasa smritis, leading to heaven, are declared to be those of Yajnavalkya, Atri, Tittiri, Daksa, Katyayana & Visnu.

(3) While the Tamasa smritis, leading to hell, are those of Gautama, Brhaspati, Samvarta, Yama, Saṅkhyā & Usanas.

Many important smritis (e.g. those of Manu, Narada, Devala etc.) are not taken into consideration, in this classification. Moreover, no reason is mentioned for their inclusion in a particular group. But the classification, at least, points out that there was an attempt (though not exhaustive), to classify smritis into the above three-fold division.

8) AVAILABLE & LOST:

Numerous smritis, ascribed to different vedic sages, are still available. They have also been published in several smrtri-collections.

But it is also a fact that several smritis, have been completely or partially lost. The names of different smr tikāras are enumerated in various lists. The digest-writers & commentators have also added many other names to these lists, to make the enumerations of smr tikāras, more exhaustive. It names of all such smr tikāras are collected, they would be "about one hundred". The original works of numerous smr tikāras are not available. Moreover, among smritis, that have been published in the smrtri-collections, number of smritis, are fragmentary or incomplete in their nature. The
nature & extent of such smritis can be understood from the profuse quotations from them in the digests & commentaries on Dharmaśastra literature. Devalasmruti is also one of such smritis, that are not completely available in their original form.
REFERENCES

1) Sarvavyavaharaheturbuddhirjnanam/ sa dvividha smrtianubhavasca/
   Saamskaramatrajanyam jnanam smrtih/
   - Tarkasaaghra (ed. Athalye & Bodas
   M.R., BORI, Poona, 1963), Sect. 34, p. 21/22

2) Atmamanasoh sahyogaviseshat saamskaracca smrtih -
   - Vaiyseika sutra 9/22

3) Anubhutasayasaamprasah smrtih
   - Y.S.I.I

4) Vedo dharmamulam/ Tadvidam ca smrtisile/
   - G.D.S., I.I.1-2

5) Vedo'khilo dharmamulam smrtisile ca tadvidam/
   acaraseiva sadhunamatmanastustireva ca/
   - Manu S. II.10

6) Dharmajnasamayah pramanam
   - A.D.S. I.I.2

7) Srutim pasyanti munayah smaranti ca tatha smrtim/
   tasmat pramanamubhayam pramanaih prapitam bhuvil/
   - ascribed to Manu by S.M. (V.I), P.2.
8) (A) 
Sabda iti cennataḥ prabhavat, pratyaksānumanānbhyām/
- Bh.Ś.1/3/28
(B) Api ca saṃrādhane pratyaksānumanānbhyām/
- Bh.Ś.3/2/24

9) Smrtistu vedo vijñeyo dharmāśastram tu vai smṛtiḥ/
- Manu.Ś.II.10
Cf.Smrtistu dharmasāṁhitā/
- Amarakosa-I.VI.6

10) Ya vedabāhyāḥ smṛtayō yāscā kāscā kudrṣtayah/
Sarvāstā nisphala pretya tamonistha hi tāḥ smṛtāḥ/
- Manu.Ś.12/95

11) Smṛtayō bahūrupāscā drstādṛṣṭprayojanāh/
tamevasṛitya liṅgebhya vedavidbhīḥ prakalpitāḥ//
- Vākyapādiya of Bhartrhari-Kanda 1 sloka 7

12) Drstārthā tu smṛtiḥ kacidadṛṣṭārthā tathāparā/
āṣṭādṛṣṭārthrārūpāṇyā nyāyamūla tathāparā//
Anuvadasmṛtistvanyā sistair drstā tu pañcamī/
sarvā etā vedamūla drṣṭārthāḥ pariḥṛtya tu//
- Bhv.P.quoted in V.M.(P)219 &
Bhāvapradīpa com. on Vākyapādiya,p.10

13) Sadgunasya prayojyasya prayogah kāryagauravat/
samādinumūpaṇām yōgo vyasaḥ samaḥ
Adhyaksanam ca nikseph kantakaman nirupanam/

14) Sandhyopastih sadh karya sunomamsam na bhaksayet/


17) Brhaspatismrti (Reconstructed) by Prof. K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, Intro., p. 93.


Virodhe tu vikalpah syat japahomasrutau yatha/


pathinasirgobhilasctyupasmrtividhayakah/

- V.M. (p), p. 18


22) Vāsistham caiva hārītam vyāsam pārāsaram tathā/
   bharadvājam kāsyam ca satvikā muktidā subhāḥ//
   Yājñāvalkyam tathā' tretīyam taittirīm dāksameva ca/
   katyaṇam vaiśnavam ca rājasāh svargadā subhāḥ//
   Gautamam bharhaspatayam ca saṁvartam ca yamam smṛtam/
   saṁkham causanasam devi tāmasā nirayapradāḥ//
   Kimatra bahunoktena purānēsu smṛtisvapi/
   Tāmasā nirayāyaiva varjayettān vicakṣanāḥ//

   - P.P. Uttarakhanda, 263.86-90
     (Ānandāśrama ed.);
   P.P. Calcutta edition, Uttarakhanda
   236/22-26 reads maṇavam yājñāvalkyam

   Caṇṭāreṣam dāksameva ca for Yājñāvalkyam tathā etc.

   - Sabdakalpadruma, Vol. V, p.464, reads

   Cyāvanam yājñāvalkyam ca atreyam dāksameva ca/ for
   Yājñāvalkyam tathā etc. & Saṁkhyam for Saṁkham.


24) Cf. Pt. I, Sect. I, Ch. II-C-n.5,6,7 & p.3 for details.


B. THE EXINCTION OF SMRTIS : CAUSES THEREOF

The digests & commentaries on Dharmasāstra, contain plentiful quotations from numerous smṛtis. It was previously mentioned that the original texts of many of them have been completely or partially lost. The original text of Devalasmr̥ti is also not at all available & has become extinct. Hence the reasons for the extinction of smṛtis are considered here.

GENERAL REASONS :

(1) In ancient India, there was an oral method for the transmission of knowledge. But due to the gradual degradation in the merit & competency of the students, the original knowledge might have been gradually lost by being not transferred. The foreign invasions & war etc. also interrupted the oral transmission of knowledge.

(2) There was scarcity of all kinds of writing material. The emphasis was given upon memorizing a particular treatise & reading or copying a manuscript was not generally encouraged.

(3) During foreign invasions, numerous libraries & manuscript-collections were destroyed by the invaders. When there was foreign rule, the study & propagation of ancient texts was diminishing, due to the absence of royal patronage.

(4) The Mahābhārata & the Purāṇas, absorbed almost all material, relating to the smṛti-topics. Hence, there was reluctance &
negligence towards the study & preservation of *smrtis*, as the purpose of the latter was served by the *Mahabharata* & the *Puranas*, which had obtained tremendous popularity among the people at large.

**REASONS IN PARTICULAR:**

1. These are the general reasons for the extinction of *smrtis*, but in spite of them, the original texts of numerous *smrtis*, were available, even up to the period of early digests & commentaries, which incorporated extensive material, in the form of *sūtras* & *slokas* from them. The commentaries & digests like the *Kṛtyakalpataru*, Aparārka's commentary on *Yajñavalkya*, the *Catuvargacintāmaṇi*, the *Smṛti-candrika*, *Paraṉaramadhaiya* are very much comprehensive (& were later on known as *akaragranthas*). They dealt with almost all the aspects of *dharma*, treated in the *smrtis*. They not only incorporated profuse quotations from various *smrtis*, on all the varied topics of *Dharmaśāstra*, but also tried to give their own decisions in case of conflicting statements & controversial points.

2. These works on *Dharmaśāstra*, became very much popular in the society & gained a place in the educational system. These were not only studied, but were preserved & handed down through proper manuscripts. Thus with the advent of these extensive works, the original texts of *smrtis*, had lost their significance & the study & propagation of them came to be neglected, as the necessary quotations from them were available in the *Nibandhas*.

3. Moreover, the subsequent writers, relied upon the comprehensive works of *Hemādri*, *Madhava* etc. & composed their works,
on the basis of the quotations, available in their works. They do not seem to have cared to consult the original texts of smrtikāras, quoted by them. The result was that the original texts of numerous smṛtis were gradually lost, due to the negligence towards their study & preservation. This extinction of smṛtis must have occurred in the period earlier than 16th cent. A.D., because the writers like Raghunandana, Kamalākarabhāṭṭa, Mitramiśra etc. did not have the original texts of numerous smṛtis before them & relied mostly upon Hemādri, Madhava etc. for the quotations from some extinct smṛtis. This can be understand from the statements, they make, while quoting the verses from the extinct smṛtis from the works of earlier writers. For example, Raghunandana\(^3\) clearly shows his indebtedness to the Gṛhasthāratnakāra for a quotation of Devala, with the phrase - 'Gṛhasthāratnakārā Devalah'. Such statements\(^4\) of indebtedness are quite frequent in the Nirnavasindu of Kamalākarabhāṭṭa. The fact that they do not make such assertions, while quoting from the texts of the extant smṛtis like Manu, Yājñavalkya etc., reflects that the original texts of some smṛtis, were no more existing, during their period.

CONCLUSION:

The absorption of smṛti-material by the Nicandhas, the non-inclusion of most of the original smṛtis, in the educational system, consequent negligence towards the study, propagation & preservation of them, in the subsequent period, & the reliance of the later writers mainly upon the works of their predecessors - these are the reasons, that led towards the extinction of some smṛtis.
However, fortunately enough, profuse quotations from the extinct smrtis are available in the digests & commentaries on Dharmasāstra, on the basis of which scholars have tried to reconstruct the lost texts. Here is also such an attempt to reconstruct likewise the lost text of Devalasmrta.
REFERENCES

1) Cf. Vidyayaiva samam kāmam martavyam brahmacādinā/
apadyāpi hi ghoraṇyam na tvenāṁīrīne vapet//
- Manu.S.II.113

2) Pustakapratyādhitam nādhītam gurusannidhau/
bhrajate na sambhāmadhye jāra garbha iva striyah//
Vedavikrayinaścaiva vedānanām caiva dūsakān/
vedānām lekhinaścaiva te vai nirayagāminənā/
Dyutam pustakasusrūṣa nātakasaktireva ca/
striyāstāndrī ca nidrā ca vidyāvighnakarānī sat//
- Quoted by Mm. P.V. Kane in H.D.S.

Pustakāsthā tu yā vidyā parahastagatam dhanam/
kāryakāle samutpanne na sā vidyā na taddhanam//
- Subhāsitaratnabhāndāgarām -Prakarana
  3, Sloka 413, p.162.

3) P.T., p.509, Cf.also - "Acaramādhaviyadhrtadevalavacanam"
Cf.also S.T.II-Vya.T, p.214 - "Dānasāgare devalah".

4) N.S., pp.20,20,82 - Aparārke devalah, pp.23,35 - Mādhaviye
devalah, pp.32,187 - Hemādrau devalah - pp.32,33,173 -
Madanaratne devalah, p.288 - Candrikāyām devalah.