Chapter VI
THE DYNAMICS OF SRADDHA CEREMONY

The chapter would focus on those who reside in Pushkar in various capacities like pandas on the ghat, priests in the temple, Brahman or mendicant and soothsayer cum astrologer, various sects of Sadhus and Babas(spiritual guru), numerous kind of shop owners, stall owners, eateries and etc. By offering an interpretative description of the way religious specialist and those connected with the sacred-live and conduct their business in Pushkar and of the institutions that tie them together. An attempt would be made to analyse the main forces that mould religious identity and experience. It would be argued that the web of relationships among the various groups of sacred (specialist, especially the dichotomy between the dwellers of Badi Basti and Choti Basti) to a large extent decides their social position and their leverage over laymen i.e.the pilgrims who come visiting Pushkar. To understand the way religious specialists are organised, and the beliefs that they hold, it is necessary to understand their interaction and competition between them. It would be pointed that relationships within Pushkar are not immune to the large scale political and economic processes. The relationships are primarily in a state of flux. In the post-modern world, the beliefs, values and religious experience are not fixed in a static system of meaning. The two chief groups of religious specialist from Badi Basti and Choti Basti are central to the ritualistic practices. The underlying arguement is simple but crucial. In Pushkar it would be detailed that cutting across various religious sects of Hinduism, various jati's (castes) and up-jatis (sub-caste). The concepts expressed in rituals may be the same, while the ritual styles in which they are expressed may be different. Thus Hinduism in Pushkar with all its ritualistic nuances, is non-social aspects and with
humanity's place in that reality. Infact, in pushkar religion is more of a thing done, not a thing "believed", and as a result any effort to uncover the assumptions and principles underlying this religious system must seek them in ritual activity.

To arrive at a true understanding, in context of the concerns detailed above, it is imperative, to closely examine the various rituals associated with Sraddha --- form of ancestor-worship. Ancestor-worship is prevalent almost all over the world in some form or other. It is however, in India and in China that it appears in the highest vigour. In India the ritual of ancestor worship is the most important ceremony of the Hindus. For these and other reasons the origin and development of this ritual as prevalent in the patriarchal Indo-Aryan society of India is an interesting subject of research.

Sraddha form of ancestor-worship, in its present form has three main elements - the rite of Agnankarna, on casting into the fine materials intended for the gratification of the Pitrs; the rite of Pinda daan on offering rice balls; and the rite of 'Brahmana bhojana' on feeding Brahmana. Further on the rites of the dead may be divided into three successive stages - Purva Kriya on Preliminary rites, Madhyana Kriya on Intermediate rites and Uttara Kriya on subsequent rites. By the performance of the preliminary rites the departed soul becomes fit for partaking of the intermediate rites and the performance of the intermediate rites make a deceased person fit for partaking of the subsequent rites. All these rites of ancestor-worship are very closely connected.

The various rites introduced into the ceremony of ancestor-worship of the Indo-Aryans have been systematically arranged and then discussed one by one in detail, during which the following conclusions have been arrived at :

1. In the Indo-Aryan society of the Hindus cremation is very closely connected with
the cult of sacrifice. It is, in a sense, a sacrifice, the dead man being an offering to
the gods.

(2) The Vrsotsarga, or the rite of setting a bull at liberty, is a survival of the Vedic rite
named animal sacrifice.

(3) The conception of a Preta is almost unknown to the Vedas; so are the rituals of the
Preta Ekoddista and Sapindikarana.

(4) The idea of an Ativahika body is almost unknown to the Vedas and the Grhya
works; so are the rituals of offering Puraka rice balls.

(5) The Astakas are older than Katyayana, the author of the Vartika aphorisms; in fact,
they are Pre-Buddhistic.

(6) The Sraddha rite is older than Panini, the author of the Astadhyayi.

(7) Sraddha owes its origin to Anvaharyya which is very closely connected with the
Grhya rite of Pind-Pitr-Yajna which, again, is almost identical with the Srauta rite
of Pinda-Pitr-Yajna.

(8) The ritual of Agnaukarna, or casting into fire materials intended for the gratification
of the Pitrs, is as old as the Rigveda; that of Pindadaan, or offering rice balls to the
manes, is at least as old as the Yajurveda; and that of feeding Brahmanas is Post-
Vedic.

(9) The merits and demerits of a person may be transferred to another.

(10) Pitr-Yajna is as old as the Rig Veda; Pinda-Pitr-Yajna is known to the Yajurveda;
and Sraddha is a Grhya rite.

(11) Although the fundamental features of a Sraddha rite must be regarded as belonging
to the Vedic period still the ruling priesthood of later ages exerted a strong influence
on the evolution of the Sraddha and to a large extent transformed them.

(12) The view that the Brahmanas in a Sraddha rite in India represent the beggars of White Russia in funeral or commemoration festivals cannot be maintained. At Sraddhas in India the Brahmanas represent the sacrificial fire into which the gifts should be thrown.

(13) Although in the rituals of some forms of ancestor-worship there are distinct signs, here and there, of Buddhistic influence, the rituals of Gaya Sraddha, in essence, are Pre-Buddhistic.

(14) The view that the Pitrs of the Rigveda are the aged living human beings of the twice-born caste belonging to the stage of the forest hermits cannot be maintained. The Pitrs are the departed ancestors.

(15) Reverence for the dead is at the root of the cult of the dead. Scholars of medieval India totally ignored this truth. In their pedantic and elaborate discussions on Sraddha there is no place for Sraddha or reverence. It has to be observed under heaps of quibbles on unnecessary points.

The ceremony connected to the disposal of the dead belongs to an age old tradition i.e. since Pre-Vedic times; it was known to the age of Indus civilization, to the age of the Vedas and to the Grhya and Pauranic ages. Though it has undergone, very naturally, some remarkable change of ideas and rituals in the path of its gradual development.

In the Vedic age, the belief was that the spirit of the dead man became a Pitr immediately after the disposal of his corpse. As soon as he became a Pitr, he became a sharer in the sacrifices like the Pinda Pitr Yajna.

With the lapse of time, the belief was changed. With the change of belief, the
change of ritual became inevitable. In the Grhya period, the idea was introduced that a man immediately after his death became a Preta and did not become a Pitr until some rites were performed for his release from the Preta stage. It took usually a year for a Preta to become a Pitr.

Here, the policy of ritualists, as almost in all other cases, is the policy of preservation and reform. They preserve the Vedic idea that the spirit of a departed person becomes a Pitr, and, their reformation is that the soul of a person does not become a Pitr immediately after the disposal of his corpse. It first becomes a Preta, and then, usually after a year, it is raised to the rank of a Pitr. For releasing the dead from the painful condition of a Preta the rituals of the monthly Ekoddistas and the Sapindi Karana are introduced. As soon as the Sapindi Karana rite is performed the departed person is elevated to the rank of a Pitr and becomes a sharer in an Anvaharyya or Parvana which undoubtedly owes its origin to the rite Pinda Pitr Yajna, which is both Srauta and Grhya.

Again in the age of the Puranas, a fresh line of thought almost unknown even to the Grhya works, was introduced. It was the conception of an Ativahika body. According to this conception, as soon as the gross corporeal body of a dead man is burnt the self takes resort to a subtle body, less subtle than the Preta body, conceived by the Grhya works, named the Ativahika Sarira. Thus embodied, the self suffers from extreme heat and cold, hunger and thirst. Ativahika stage is more painful than the Preta stage. In order to release the soul from this stage, the rite of the offering of the Puraka lumps was introduced. The rite of cremation creates this initiative subtle body and the offering of the Puraka lumps destroys this initiative body and creates an intermediate body called Preta Sarira. The rites of monthly Ekoddistas and Sapindi Karana destroy the Preta body and then the
spirit of the departed person becomes a Pitr and takes part in a Parvana rite which is the model of all kinds of ancestor-worship popularly known as Sraddha.

Thus it is clear that the Grhya conception is a development of the Vedic conception and the Pauranic conception is a further development of the Grhya conception. But the three distinct lines of thought meet together in one point. They all agree that the spirit of a deceased person becomes a Pitr before taking part in the Pinda Pitr Yajna sacrifice or in the rites which owe their origin to this sacrifice. The Vedic conception is that the self becomes a Pitr directly after the death of a person.

The belief of the Grhya period is that the soul becomes a Pitr through the via media of an intermediate body called the Preta Sarira. According to the Pauranic conception, again, the self of a deceased person, first takes resort to an initiative subtle body and then to an intermediate body and after a year the self becomes a Pitr. Thus the Vedas, the Grhyasutras and the Puranas walk about in different lines in order to reach the same destination. Their goal is to raise the departed soul to the rank of a Pitr.

No services are ordained to be rendered, in ordinary cases, to a deceased person whose dead body has not been properly cremated. If possible, the entire body should be burnt; if the entire body be, for some reason, unavailable, then the bones should be burnt. In cases where even the bones are not available, an image resembling a human figure and made mainly of Darbha grass should be burnt. Anyhow, the rite of cremation is obligatory: it is the foundation of the rites for the dead; it is the first service to be rendered to a deceased person. This rite is known in older works as Pitrmedha and in later works as Antyesti. Whatever may be the form, the rite has been practised in
India, from the very primitive times, not to speak of the Vedic period, with a series of solemn customs.

Nothing, whether agreeable or disagreeable, can be enjoyed without a body. So, the Smarta Conception is that as soon as the corporeal body is destroyed, the self of a recently deceased person takes resort to a subtle body, composed of only three subtle element named Ativahika Sarira. For the formation of the Ativahika body rite is necessary excepting Antyesti; for its annihilation Puraka lumps are to be offered. With the offering of Puraka lumps, the newly framed initiative subtle body named 'Ativahika Sarira' is gradually destroyed. As soon as the Ativahika body is destroyed, a fresh body known as intermediate body (Preta) is created. The offering of Puraka lump supplies a recently deceased person with this Preta body. Unless it provided with this newly created Preta body the soul is to remain in the Ativahika stage in which the departed souls wander about in the sky in the shape of air without any support. The Puraka lumps are to be offered during the first period of ten days since death.

The newly formed Preta body thus created must be nourished and supported by the performance of some rites. These rites are the monthly Ekoddistas to be performed on the day of death, every month, generally for a year after death until the Sapindi Karana rite is performed. An Ekoddistas rite is meant for one person only. The consequences of an Ekodista meant for a Preta are (1) to gratify a recently departed person and (2) to release him from the condition of a Preta. The consequence of the rite of Sapindi Karana is to raise a Preta to the rank of a Pitr. As soon as the dead person becomes a Pitr, he is entitled to partaking of all subsequent rites of ancestor worship.

Thus it appears that these rites of ancestor worship are interwoven. Without
cremation the Ativahika body is not formed. Unless the Ativahika body is formed a deceased person cannot enjoy anything, whether agreeable or disagreeable. Until the Ativahika body is destroyed the Preta body is not formed. Until the Preta body is formed the departed soul is to suffer from extreme heat and cold wandering about the sky in the shape of air. Until and unless the Preta body is destroyed, the deceased person cannot be raised to the rank of a Pitr. Unless a deceased person becomes a Pitr he cannot partake of all subsequent rites of ancestor worship.

Again, Madhava classifies the Ekoddistas under three heads: Nava or initiative, Nava-misra or intermediate and Purana or subsequent. The Ekoddistas which are to be performed within eleven days after one’s death are initiative; those which are performed after the eleventh day of one's death, every month during a year are intermediate; an Ekoddista which is performed on the day of death, every year, is known as subsequent. These three classes of Ekoddistas are interdependent, each former leading to a next one. The performance of the Nava Ekoddistas makes one fit performing the Nava-misra Ekoddistas, and the performance of the Nava-misra (Ekoddistas) makes one fit for performing the Purana Ekoddista.

The initiative and the intermediate Ekoddistas are meant for a Preta and the subsequent Ekoddista is for the gratification of a Pitr.

The rites for the gratification of a Pitr are of two classes -- Srauta and Grhya. The main form of Srauta rites for the Pitr is the Pinda Pitr Yajna. In this rite the father, the grandfather and the great-grandfather - these three generations are worshipped with the offering of lumps.

The rite Pinda Pitr Yajna is not exclusively Srauta; it has also a Grhya form. In the
Grhya form of the rite the feeding of Brahmanas is introduced. Gobhila seems to look upon the Pinda Pitr Yajna as itself a Sraddha. This Sraddha is, however, distinguished from the other, the true Sraddha, called Anvaharyya which follows it and which is properly known by the name of Parvana Sraddha. A commentator of Gobhila holds that even if there is no Pinda, the Brahmanas ought still to be fed. In the Srauta form of the rite there is no injunction for feeding Brahmanas; but in the Grhya form the feeding of Brahmanas is an essential part of the rite. Feeding of the Brahmanas being an essential function of Sraddha rite, it is found that, according to some, Pinda Pitr Yajna is a Sraddha while to others it is not a Sraddha.

Anvaharyya is purely a Grhya rite and it is a true Sraddha, because in it the feeding of the Brahmanas is an essential function, Sraddha owes its origin to Anvaharyya which, again, is very closely connected with the Grhya form of the Pinda Pitr Yajna, which, again, is almost identical with the Srauta form of the rite. The similarity of the domestic and Srauta ritual in the case of the offerings to the dead is most marked, indeed, more clearly so than in the case of the offerings to the gods. Thus, it is evident that a Sraddha ultimately owes its origin to the Vedic rite of ancestor-worship, Pinda Pitr Yajna. It is essentially Vedic.

According to the Mahabharata Nimi first conceived the ritual of Sraddha. The term Sraddha in the sense of a rite of ancestor-worship, is available in the Katha-upanisad, the Astadhyay of Panini, the Grhya work of Asvalayana and such other old works.

According to Kamatakara, the author of the Nirnayasindhu, there are mainly, four kinds of Sraddhas - (1) Parvana (2) Ekodista (3) Vrddhi and (4) Sapindi Karana. Madhava, however, divides them into two classes - (1) Parvana, and (2) Ekodista. A Vrddhi is a
modification of Parvana, and Sapindi Karana is a combination of Parvana and Ekoddista.
And, if we trace the development of the various kinds of Sraddhas it appears that a
Parvana is the Prakrti or model of all Sraddhas. Next to this, Ekoddista was introduced.
From these two forms of Sraddhas other forms of the rite originated. So, the classification
of Madhava seems to be founded on a very sound basis.

According to Hemadri the rituals of a Sraddha rite have three main elements (1)
Agnau Karana or the casting of fuels and the Pinda or lump into the fire, (2) Pinda Daan
or offering of lumps and (3) Brahmana Bhojana or the gratification of the Brahmanas.

If we trace the development of the rituals of a Sraddha ceremony we find that there
are three distinct stages of development of the rite.

(1) In its first stage the ritual consisted in only Agnaukarana or the casting of the
sacrificial materials into the fire. In this stage it was not very different from other
sacrifices. Probably, the Pitr-Yajna sacrifice referred to in the Rigveda was introduced
in this stage.

(2) In the second stage of the rites; the offering of Pinda or lump was, probably,
introduced. The rite of Pinda Pitr Yajna referred to and described in the Yajurveda,
the Brahmanas, and the Srauta works represents this stage.

(3) In its third or last stage of development the feeding of Brahmanas as the essential
element was introduced. In this stage we meet with the Sraddha rite in which all the
elements of the ritual of ancestor-worship in India, gradually incorporated in the
ceremony, are present. The Brahmanas play a very important part in this rite. If,
even a single Brahmana be unavailable then the Sraddha is to be performed with a
substitute. The substitute of a Brahmana is a young Brahmana made of Kusa-
In dealing with these distinct stages of development in the ritual of ancestor-worship in India the order adopted by Raghunandana seems to be, based on a very sound principle. Raghunandana divides the rites for the dead into three successive stages (1) Purva Kriya or Initiative rites, (2) Madhyama Kriya or Intermediate rites and (3) Uttara Kriya or subsequent rites. The commentator Kasirama explains them clearly. The rites of Burning, offering of Puraka lumps and the touching of water on the day next to the impurity period are the initiative rites. From the first Ekoddista which is to be performed on the day just following the impurity period and the Ekoddistas to be performed every month, up to the Sapinda Karana rite are the intermediate rites. The rites to be performed for a Pitr after the Sapindi Karana rite, are the subsequent rites.

From the meanings of the funeral verses of the Rig Veda (X) we can gather the following facts:

1. Burial and Cremation both were in practice.
2. A goat was burnt with the dead; so a cow. Here the idea clearly expressed in the text is that the body is covered with the hide, fat and marrow of the cow or goat, so that Agni may not consume the body to ashes and give pain to the dead body with its scorching heat of flames.
3. The sacrificial implements of a performer of Soma sacrifices were burnt with his dead body.
4. Agni was invoked to carry the dead man to the realm of the King Yama.
5. The sacrifice 'Pitr Yajna' was known.
6. Prayers were instituted to Pusan, Vayu, Agni and Savitr for the protection of the
dead man and for transferring him to a better world, the world of the Pitrs.

(7) A bank or lump of earth was raised between the village where the deceased dwelt and the cemetery as a rampart against death.

(8) A circle of stones was erected for the protection of the survivors.

(9) A prayer was made to Dhatr for supporting the lives of the kinsmen of the dead and for the death of the eldest member in the family first.

(10) A blessing was bestowed upon the kinsmen of the dead.

(11) The followers of the dead body returned from the cremation ground to the house in a procession.

(12) Women who were not widows, who had good husbands were asked to proceed first to the house being anointed with unguent and butter, being decorated with jewels and without tears and sorrow.

(13) Some one made the wife of the dead man, who remained lying by the side of her dead husband, rise, and follow the procession saying - Rise woman and go to the world of living beings: come, this man near whom thou sleepest is lifeless: thou hast enjoyed this state of being wife of thy husband, the suitor who took thee by the hand'.

Most of the funeral verses contained in the Atharva Veda (XVII) have their counterparts in the Rig Veda. From such verses as are not found in the Rig Veda we can gather the following facts:-

(1) Burial, cremation and other methods of disposal of the dead were known.

(2) Worship with homage was paid to those fathers who were father's fathers, who were his grand fathers who entered the wide atmosphere and who dwelt upon the
earth and heaven and oblation was offered in Vaisvanara which supports father, grand father and great grand father.

(3) The fathers were invoked to attend the sacrifice and to take their seats on the Varhis in the South.

(4) The formula to be recited for the invocation of the fathers was as follows: Come ye, O fathers, delectable, by profound roads that the fathers travel, assigning to us life, time and progeny; and do ye attach yourselves to us with abundance of wealth.

(5) The fathers were dismissed with the recital of the following formula - Go away, O fathers, delectable, by profound roads that go to the stronghold; then in a month, come ye, again, to our houses to eat the oblation with good progeny, with good heroes.

(6) The ritual of the sacrifice 'Pindapitryajna' was known.

(7) A new garment was supplied to the corpse.

(8) The staff was taken from the hand of the deceased person.

(9) It was the ancient duty of the wife of the deceased to lie down by the side of the departed choosing her husband's world.

(10) Grains were scattered along for the departed soul mixed with sesame, rich in Svadha.

(11) The dishes rich in cakes, milk, ghee, flesh, food, honey, sap, and water were offered to those present, sharing in the oblation of the gods.

(12) A brook of ghee, hundred streamed, over-flowing, was offered to fathers who went away earlier or later.

(13) A funeral pile was built and the eastern fire was addressed to burn in front, the householder's fire behind and the southern fire from each quarter.
The dead body was made an offering in a sacrifice in which Agni was the invoker, Vrhaspati the officiating priest, and Indra the supervising priest.

Prayers to Indra, Dhata, Aditi, and Soma for protecting the dead from all quarters - eastern, southern, western, northern, fixed and upward were instituted.

Pleasant waters were addressed to purify the mourner with purifiers.

There are several verses praying for long life, and good progeny.

King Yama who died first of mortals was honoured with oblation.

The making of Svadha was known.

The water carrying, water-floating Maruts were invoked to carry the departed soul up.

Agni was invoked to bring the fathers to eat the oblation.

Cakes and grains mixed with sesame were placed on bones and the corns mixed with different articles of food were placed near the bones in different quarters, and the vessels containing articles of food were buried under stones or bricks along with the remains of the dead body.

In the Rig Veda and the Atharva Veda no explicit clue is given to the particular ritual for which the formulas are intended. Sayana, with the help of ritual texts, supplies this deficiency in his commentaries on these two Vedas. But Sayana's account is mainly based on the views of the Sutra Karas and it will not help us, considerably, to show the gradual development of the ritual of the ceremony under discussion.

Our next duty, therefore, will be to consider the account of the funeral rite supplied by the Brahmanas. We can gather the following points from the Satapatha Brahmana.

(XII. 5. 1-2.)
1. When a sacrificer is about to die, one should take up the two-fires in the churning sticks and having churned out a new fire he should continue offering the Agnihotra sacrifice.

2. When the sacrificer departs one should build a pile for him in the midst of his tires and by burning him unite him with his fires. This is the view of the preceptor Nakamaudgalya. But the author of the Satapatha Brahmana maintains that this procedure is not a right one.

3. According to him one should seek three pots and having put therein either dried cowdung or straw one should place them separately on the three fires and they will burn the Agni-hotrin by means of the fire produced from that blaze.

4. In the first place one should wash the dead body, out and inside, and anoint it with clarified butter, and thus make it sacrificially pure.

5. One should insert then seven chips of gold in the seven seats of his vital airs; for gold is light and immortality; one thus bestows light and immortality on him.

6. Having then built a pile for him in the midst of his fires and out a black antelope skin with hairy side upwards and the neck towards the east, one should lay him thereon with the face looking upwards and put the Jhu spoon filled with clarified butter on his right hand and the Upabhrt on his left hand, the Dhruva on the breast, the Agnihotra-ladle on the mouth, two dipping spoons on the nostrils, two Prasitraharanas on the ears, the cup used for carrying forward the lustral water, on the belly the vessel used for holding the cuttings of Ida, filled with dotted clarified butter, the wedge (yoke-pin) beside the male organ two mallets beside the testicles and behind them the mortar and pestle, the other sacrificial vessels between the
thighs; and the wooden sword on the right hand.

Thus supplied with the sacrificial implements that sacrificer passes on to that place which has been won by him in heaven and fires touch him lovingly. If the Garhapatya were to reach him, one may know that the permanent fire has reached him first; that he will permanently establish himself and that those behind him, will permanently establish themselves in this world. And if the Ahavaniya were to do so, one may know the foremost fire has reached him first; that he has been foremost conquering the other world and that those behind him will be foremost in this world. And if the Anvaharyapacana were to do so, one may know that the food-eating fire has reached him first; that he will eat food in this world. And if they all were to reach him at the same time one may know that he has conquered a blessed world.

7. Whatever stone and earthen vessels of the deceased there are, may be given to a Brahmana. But he who accepts them is regarded as a remover of corpses.

8. These things should rather be thrown into the water: for, waters are the foundations of all this universe. One thus establishes the dead sacrificer firmly on the waters.

Either a son of the deceased or a brother or some other Brahmana then performs the offering with 'From out of him, O Agni, thou art born: from out of thee let him be born again into the heavenly world, hail.
The Preta-Ekoddistas, or, the Nava or Initiative and the Nava Misra or Intermediate rites for the dead.

The dead man does not immediately after his death and without more ado join the number of the ancestors who are worshipped with much anxious dread; on the contrary fixed ceremonies are necessary for elevating the deceased to the rank of the ancestors who are worshipped as divine.

In Tibet for the final disposal of the soul of the deceased many priestly services are required weekly until forty-nine days after death. During this period the soul is believed to remain in a purgatory or intermediate stage between death and regeneration and is associated onwards by the prayers of the priests. On the forty-ninth day this service is completed. The priests receive as presents some valuable articles from the property of the deceased and a feast concludes the ceremony.

In White Russia after the mourners have returned from the burning ground, one of the old women takes a piece of bread, turns towards the door and fixing a copper coin on it speaks the following words with which she introduces the deadman into the general lists of her departed relatives-grandfathers and grandmothers, uncles and aunts—'Take our dead fathers to yourself, live there with him in friendship, do not quarrel etc.' Moreover, it is a widespread idea that for forty days after his death the deceased has no rest in his grave, but visits his own house as well as those of strangers and is able to inflict all kinds of damage on those among the living with whom he stood in hostile relation during his life; and in fact he can do this all the more easily as the latter are deprived of the power to take vengeance on their opponent since he, owing to his immateriality is invisible or comes forward in the form of different animals which gives him ample scope to inflict
all sorts of injury on his enemies.

The peasants of White Russia also believe that for six weeks the soul of the dead, every twenty four hours and generally by night flies- into the peasant's hut and drinks water from a vessel which is set out for the purpose and filled to overflowing.

A corresponding idea is prevalent in India. The soul of the deceased does not enter at once into the world of the Pitrs, but rather wanders to and fro as a spirit or Preta, the departed. The spirits have also the inclination to return to the dwelling of the relatives where 'food' with a jug of water 'must be given to them'. In order to deliver the departed from this condition and to adopt them among the Pitrs were necessary the Sraddhas, the most important of which is the Sapindi Karana.

The word Sraddha is not available in very old records. It is in the Grhya Sutra of Asvalayana (IV.7.1) that we come across the word Sraddha for the first time. It was the Sraddha to be given for the sake of the departed, after his ashes had been collected in an urn and buried. This Sraddha is called Ekoddista. It was meant, for one person only, and not for the three ancestors. Its object was to raise the departed to the rank of a Pitr, and this had to be achieved by Sraddha offerings continued during a whole year. Apastamba says that the Sraddha for a deceased relative should be performed every day during the year, and after that, a monthly Sraddha, only, should be performed: no more personal sraddha is necessary, because, the departed shares, henceforth, in the regular Parvana Sraddhas. Sankhayana says the same thing: the personal Sraddhas last for a year and then the fourth, i.e. the great grandfather is dropped, while the lately departed occupies the father's place among the three principal Pitrs. This is called the Sapindi Karana, i.e. the elevating of the departed to the rank of an ancestor. Gobhila allows six months
instead of, a year or even a Tripaksa or three half months or any auspicious event as the occasion of the Sapindi Karana.

The full number of Sraddhas necessary for the Sapindi Karana is ordinarily sixteen—the first one, then one in each of the twelve months, then the two semestral ones and lastly the Sapindana. If the Sapindana takes place before the end of the year, the number of sixteen Sraddhas has still to be made up.

Madhava classifies the Ekoddistas which are meant for one person only and not for three persons, under three heads—Initiative, Intermediate and Subsequent—Nava, Navamisra and Purana. The rites which are performed within eleven days after one's death are Initiative, those which are performed after the eleventh day, but every month during a year are Intermediate: the annual Sraddhas are known as subsequent.3

According to Aswalayana, the number of the Nava Sraddhas is six. The same is the view of Angirah. According to Vasistha the number may be five, if for some unavoidable reason the Sraddha to be performed on the ninth day is omitted. Sivasvami, however, maintains the view that the number is five for those who belong to Aswalayana Sakha; it is six for those who belong to Apastamba Sakha; either of the two views is adopted by Taittiriyins.4 According to the Bhavisyat Purana, the Vaisyas are to perform nine Nava Sraddhas, the Ksatriyas seven and the remaining two castes six.

According to Aswalayana the Preta Sraddhas named Nava or Initiative are to be performed within ten days after the death of a person. Nagara Khanda declares that these Nava Sraddhas are nine in number. The first is to be performed in the place where a person dies, the second to the burning place where the procession takes rest with the daed body, and, the third in the place where the bones collected are buried. The remaining
six are to be performed on the fifth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and on the eleventh days. According to Katyayana, the number of the Nava sraddhas is four; they are to be performed on the fourth, fifth, ninth and eleventh days. Vyasa agrees with Katyayana, so far as the number is concerned, but he differs from the latter when he says that they are to be, performed on the first, seventh, ninth and on the eleventh days. According to Sankha, a man should perform a Nava Sraddha on the eleventh day. Although impure, he becomes pure for the time being; when he has finished the performance he becomes impure again.

In the Kurma Purana it is enjoined that three Brahmanas should be fed on first day at the entrance of the house, and two Brahmanas should be entertained with food on each of the fifth, ninth, and eleventh days; this and the rite of shaving on the second day as well; as the collecting of bones on the fourth day are known as Nava Sraddha. In the Brahmapurana we find that the Brahmanas should perform this on the fourth day, the Ksatriyas on the fifth, the Vaisyas on the ninth and the Sudra after the tenth day. Brhaspati says that food, cows, gold, and other valuable things should be given to Brahmanas for the Preta on the fourth day which is the day of collecting bones. The things which the deceased either liked to enjoy himself or wanted to give away as offerings should be given to the Brahmanas on this occasion.

According to the Brahma-purana sixteen Sraddhas are to be performed for a person after his death within a year. One Sraddha is to be performed on the fourth day, another on the fifth, the third on the ninth and the fourth on the eleventh day. After these, one sraddha is to be performed every month during a year. Twelve Sraddhas in twelve months and four Sraddhas in four days within eleven days after death make sixteen Sraddhas.
According to Jatukarna the twelve monthly sraddhas, the two six-monthly sraddhas, the Adyasraddha and the Sapindi Karana make the sixteen sraddhas. The two six-monthly sraddhas, according to Paithihast, should be performed on the day previous to the day of a monthly Ekoddista. If, for some unavoidable reason, the Sraddhas cannot be performed every month they should be performed in twelve days; if that also becomes impossible then all the sixteen sraddhas should be performed in a day. This is the view of Harita.

**The Initial Sraddha, or, the first Ekoddista, in modern practices.**

On the last day of mourning, the nearest relation of the deceased, before performing an Ekoddista for the recently deceased person, put on neat apparel, causes his house and furniture to be cleaned, offers the tenth Puraka lump, causes the hair of his head and body to be shaved and his nails to be cut, bathes, sips water, touches various auspicious things, and returns home, thus purified.

The obsequies on the first day after the period of mourning has elapsed are opened by the consecration of four vessels of water and sprinkling therewith the house, furniture and the persons belonging to the family. Immediately after this, he gives away a vessel of tila and also a cow, for the sake of securing the passage of the deceased over the Vaitarani, a river of hell. Afterwards a bed with its furniture and a golden image of the deceased or else a golden idol or both with clothes and various sorts of fruits are given away to a Brahmana, or more commonly, to a married couple. Afterwards, he distributes other presents among Brahmanas, for the greater honour of the deceased, making donations of land, and giving a chair or stool, clothes, water, food, betel leaf, a lamp, gold, silver, a parasol, an orchard, wreathes of flowers, a pair of shoes, another bed, milch-cow, and
any other presents he may choose to give, such as elephant, a horse, a carriage, a slave and so forth.

When performing an Ekoddista, the kinsman in the first place smears with cow-dung the spot where the oblation is to be presented; and after his hands and feet, sipping water and taking up kusagrass in his hand sits down on a cushion pointed towards the south and placed upon a blade of kusagrass the tip of which must also point towards the south. He then places near him a bundle of consecrated kusagrass, and prepares a fire for oblation; then lighting a lamp with clarified butter or with oil of sesamum and arranging the food and other things intended to be offered, he must sprinkle himself with water, meditating on Visnu surnamed the lotus eyed, or revolving in his mind the formula stated below - 'Whether pure or defiled or wherever he may have gone, he who remember the being whose eyes are like the lotus, shall be pure externally and internally'.

**Water for oblation**

Shifting the sacredotal cord on his right shoulder, the kinsman takes up a brush of kusagrass and presents water together with Tila, naming the deceased and the family from which he sprung and saying—"May this be water for oblations be acceptable to thee'. Then saying 'May this be right' he pronounces a vow or solemn declaration. 'This day I will offer on a bundle of kusagrass, or, if such be the custom 'on fire' a Sraddha for a single person, with boiled rice together with clarified butter and with water. The priest answering, 'do so' he meditates the Gayatri and thrice repeats salutation to the gods, to the names of ancestors and to mighty saints; to svaha, goddess of fire, to svadha, the food of the manes; salutation unto them for ever and for ever.
Cushion made of Kusagrass

He then presents a cushion made of kusagrass, naming the deceased, and saying 'May this be acceptable unto thee and afterwards distributes meal of sesamum and recites 'May the demons and fierce giants that sit on this consecrated spot be dispersed, and the flood-thirsty savages that inhabit the earth, may they go to any other place to which their inclination may lead them'. Placing an oval vessel with its narrowest end towards the south he takes up two blades of grass and breaking off a span's length, throws them into the vessel and after sprinkling them with water, makes a libation, saying 'May divine waters be auspicious to us for accumulation, for gain and for refreshing draughts; may they listen to us, and grant that we may be associated with good auspices'. He then throws in tila and says "Thou art tila, sacred to Soma, framed by the divinity thou dost produce celestial bliss for him that makes oblation mixed with water, mayest thou long satisfy our ancestors with the food of the Manes; be this oblation efficacious'. He afterwards silently casts into the vessel, perfumes, flowers, and Durbagrass. Then taking up the vessel with his left hand putting two blades of grass on the cushion with their tips pointed to the north, he must pour the water from the Argha thereon, and in the meantime, recite 'The waters in heaven, in the atmosphere and on the earth, have been united by their sweetness with milk: may those silver waters worthy of oblation, be auspicious, salutary and exhilarating to us; and be happily offered: may this oblation be efficacious'.

Offering of Argha

He then, pours out the water, naming the deceased and saying 'May this Argha be acceptable unto thee'. Then oversetting the vessel and arranging in due order the boiled
Offering of food

He next offers the rice, clarified butter, water and condiments, while he touches the vessel with his left hand and names the deceased saying 'May this food, with clarified butter and condiments together with water be acceptable unto thee'. After repeating the Gayatri, preceded by the names of the worlds, he pours honey or sugar upon the rice and recites - 'May the winds blow sweet, the rivers flow sweet, and salutary herbs be sweet unto us; may night be sweet, may the mornings pass sweetly: may the soil of the earth and heaven, parent of all productions be sweet unto us; may Soma king of herbs and trees be sweet; may the Sun be sweet, may Kine be sweet unto us'. Next, he recites 'Whatever may be deficient in this food, whatever may be imperfect in this rite, whatever may be wanting in its form, may all that become faultless'.

Feeding of Brahmans

He should then feed the Brahmans whom he has assembled either silently distributing food among them or adding a respectful invitation to them to eat. When he has given them water to rinse their mouths, he may consider the deceased as fed through their mediation. He, again, recites the Gayatri and the prayer 'May the winds blow sweet etc'. and adds the well known Purusa Sukta or Hymn of Man of the Rig Veda (X, 90).

Next spreading kusagrass near the fragments of the repast and taking some boiled rice with tila and clarified butter, he must distribute it on the grass, and recite these
prayers: 'May those in my family who have been burnt by fire or who are unburnt, be satisfied with this food, presented on the ground, and proceed contented towards the supreme path of external bliss. May those who have no father, nor mother, nor kinsman, nor food, nor supply of nourishment, be contented with this food offered on the ground and attain like it a happy abode'. He then gives the Brahmanas water to rinse their mouths; and once more recites the Gayatri and the prayer - 'May the winds blow sweet etc.'

**Offering of lumps**

Then taking in his left hand another vessel containing Tila and water and in right brush made of Kusagrass, he sprinkles water over the grass spread on the consecrated spot naming the deceased and saying, 'May this ablution be acceptable to thee'. He afterwards takes a cake or ball of food mixed with clarified butter and presents it saying—'May this cake be acceptable to thee' and deals out the food with the prayers—'Ancestors', rejoice, take your respective shares and be strong as bulls. Then walking round by the left to the northern side of the consecrated spot and meditating 'Ancestors be glad; take your respective shares and be strong as bulls' he returns by the same road and again sprinkles water on the ground to wash the oblation, saying—'May this ablution be acceptable to thee'.

Next touching his hip with his elbow, or else his right side and having sipped water, he must make six libations of water with the hollow palm, of his hand saying—'Salutation unto thee, deceased, and unto the saddening hot season; salutation unto thee, deceased, and unto the month of Tapas or dewy season; salutation unto thee, deceased, and unto
that season which abounds with water, salutation unto thee, O deceased, and unto the nectar of blossoms; salutation unto thee, deceased, and to the terrible and angry season; salutation unto thee, O deceased, and to female fire or the sultry season'.

He, next, offers a thread on the funeral cake, holding the wet brush in his hand, naming the deceased and saying—'May this raiment be acceptable to thee', and says 'Fathers this apparel is offered unto you'. He then silently strews perfumes, blossoms, resin, and betel-leaves on the funeral cake and places a lighted lamp on it. He sprinkles water on the bundle of grass, saying—'May the waters be auspicious' and offers rice, adding 'May the blossoms be sweet, may the rice be harmless' and then pours water on it, naming the deceased, and saying—'May this food and drink be acceptable unto thee'. In the next place he strews grass over the funeral cake and sprinkles water on it, reciting this prayer—'Waters, ye are the food of our progenitors; satisfy my parents, ye who convey nourishment, which is ambrosia, butter, milk, cattle and distilled liquor'. Lastly he smells some of the food and the funeral cakes, saying—'May this ball be wholesome food', and concludes by paying the officiating priest his fee with a formal declaration.

After he has thrice said 'Salutation to the gods to progenitors, to mighty saints, etc.', he dismisses the priest, lights a lamp in honour of the deceased, meditates on Hari with undiverted attention, casts the food and other things used at the obsequies into the fire or water.

The description of the rite of Ekodditsa, as stated above, shows clearly that even in modern practices the rite owes its origin to the Vedic rite of Pinda Pitr Yajna. The same Vedic formulas are still recited by the nearest relation, when offering lumps to a
recently deceased person.

It is very interesting to note in this connection that among the ancient Parsis, the funeral services, in memory of a deceased person, take place during the three days after the death and are repeated on the fourth, tenth, and thirtieth days and on the anniversary. In connection with these services works of charity are always performed.

According to Sankha quoted by Hemadri the son is to perform the Sraddha of his father. In absence of the son the wife is to perform it. In absence of the wife a brother born of the same womb will perform the rite.

The Sapindi Karana

Or

Elevating a recently dead person to the rank of the Pitrs.

We have seen that the soul of the deceased does not enter at once into the world of the Pitrs, but rather wanders to and fro as a Preta or spirit. In order to deliver the departed from this condition and to adopt them among the Pitrs were necessary the Sraddhas the most important of which is the Sapindi Karana. Sapindi Karana is a Grhya rite. In the Grhya Sutra of Sankhayana we find the following description of this rite:- When one year has elapsed or three and half-months or on a day when something good happens this Sraddha for the reception of dead person into the community of Pinda offerings with the other manes takes place. The offerer fills four water-pots with sesame, scents and water - there for the fathers, one for the newly dead person - and pours the pot that belongs to the newly dead person, out, into the pots of the fathers and thus also the lump.
This is Sapindi karana.

Harita makes it a point that after the performance of the rite of Sapindi karana a Preta becomes a Pitr in general and lives in the abode of the Pitrs. Henceforth, a Sraddha rite is performed for him. Here the word 'Sraddha' means a Sraddha other than the Preta Ekoddistas.

According to Hemadri, a performer, who does not maintain a perpetual fire, should perform the Sapindi karana rite of a father or mother, who did not maintain such a fire at the completion of a year after death or at the time, within the year, when the occasion for a Nandi Sraddha arises. In the latter case the Sapindi karana should be performed according to the method of Apakarsa or pulling before, on the day prior to the day of the Nandi Sraddha which is a part of Vrddhi. A man, who has not finished the Preta Sraddhas, is not entitled to perform a Nandi Sraddha. So before performing the Sapindi Karana one must finish the Preta Sraddhas. If the sapindi karana be performed before the completion of a year, then, according to Laugaksi, he is to perform the sixteen Preta Sraddhas before performing the Sapindi Karana and then, again, after the sapindi karana the monthly Ekoddistas are to be continued month by month till the completion of a year.

According to Gobhila, those who are unable to perform the monthly Ekoddistas in each month for a year, are allowed to perform the Sapindi Karana on a day at the completion of six months or three fortights, even though there be no occasion for a Vrddhi Sraddha. The Sapindi Karana is to be performed at the completion of a year, a six months, three fortights or on a day on which the occasion for a Vrddhi Sraddha arises. The injunction of Usanah prohibiting the performance of Sapindi Karana within a year excepting on an occasion for Vrddhi is intended for those who are capable of performing the monthly
Ekodistas, regularly, every month, during a year. His prohibition is very emphatic.

Some, however, explain Gobhila in a different way. A person who does not maintain a perpetual fire is enjoined to perform a Sapindi Karana at the completion of a year or on a day on which an occasion for a Vrddhi arises. But a man who maintains a perpetual fire is allowed to perform a Sapindi Karana for a man who used to maintain a fire at the completion of six months or three fortnights.

Here Hemadri remarks - 'We have no objection to the view that Sapindi Karana of a man who used to maintain the perpetual fire should be performed at the sixth month or at the third fortnight. The only thing we want to emphasise is that these two periods are also the times for a Sapindi- Karana to be performed by those who do not maintain any fire and are unable to perform the monthly Ekodistas'. Vyaghra on the other hand, maintains that even a man who does not preserve any fire is allowed to perform the Sapindi Karana on the twelfth day after death. As body is perishable, as the span of life is always decaying and as the family practices are endless, the twelfth day after death is praised for performing the Sapindi Karana rite.

If the performer of the Sapindi Karana does not maintain the Ahavaniya fire and the dead person be a Sagnika, with fire, then that performer will do the Sapindi Karana rite of that person at the completion of three fortnights after the death of a person. If, again, the performer such as a man preserving sacrificial fire and the Preta not maintaining such a fire then on the twelfth day after death, the Sapindi Karana should be performed. Katyayana makes this point clear. A man who maintains a perpetual fire is to perform Pinda Pitr Yajna and Pinda nvaharyya on the day of the new-moon. The dead Pitr with their wives are the deities in those sacrifices. Unless the Sapindi Karana is performed the
Pitrs cannot be the deities in a Sraddha to be performed on a new-moon day. So in order to perform Pinda Pitr Yajna which is a compulsory duty for one who maintains sacrificial fire one should finish the Sapindi Karana of one's mother or father on any day before the new moon after finishing the duties of a Preta on the eleventh day after death. According to Harita such a Sapindi Karana should be performed on the first available new-moon day after ten days after death. Thus, there are three occasions for a Sapindi Karana in the case of a performer who preserves sacrificial fire—the twelfth day, and day after ten days of the dark fortnight, the new-moon day after ten days of the dark fortnight, the new-moon day after ten days."

A Sapindi karana is explained by Hemadri in the following lines. The placing of the lump of Preta on the lumps of the Pitrs after due division, the Arghya and water of the Arghya and water of the Preta on the pots of Arghya of the Pitrs after the completion of the feeding of Brahmanas, taking, simultaneously, as one, the two functions—the rite of Parvana for those who have been elevated to the rank of the Pitrs, addressing them as qualified before attaining Pitrhood in their human state, and the rite of Ekoddista for those who are recently dead and belong to the category of the Pretas, addressing them as qualified in their human state, before death, is Sapindi karana."

In a Sapindi karana separate Brahmanas are to be invited for the Preta and the Pitrs. The view that the Preta has no separate Brahmana, is not accepted by scholars.

The view that the lump of the fourth ancestor is to be divided, is not acceptable. The word Preta is restricted to the recently dead. It does not mean the departed in general. So the pinda of the recently dead person is to be divided.

According to Markandeya a Sraddha for deceased sapindas does not exist for women
if they have no son and no husband.

If the father is living then the Sapindi karana of the mother is to be performed with the mother of the father; if the father is dead and the mother follows him as a Sati, then it is to be performed with the father. If the mother does not follow the dead father as a Sati, then her Sapindi karana may be performed either with the father or with the mother of the father. According to another view the sapindi karana of the mother should be performed with the ancestors of the mother's side, i.e. the dead ancestors of the family of the maternal grandfather.

The Pitr Yajna and the Pinda Pitr-Yajna are the Vedic forms of ancestor-worship. They are intended for paying homage to the Pitr. According to the Vedic conception, a departed soul becomes a Pitr, without much ado, immediately after the disposal of the corpse. The conception of a Preta and that of an Ativahika Sarira are almost unknown to the Vedas. So, according to the Vedic authorities a departed person is worshipped by the Vedic sacrifices like the Pinda Pitr Yajna immediately after the proper disposal. But according to the Post-Vedic conception the departed soul takes, generally, a year to become a Pitr. Immediately after the disposal be becomes embodied with an Ativahika Sarira the Puraka lumps are to be offered for releasing him from that stage. Next the deceased person becomes a Preta; for releasing him from that stage, the monthly Ekoddistas and the Sapindi Karana are enjoined. When the Sapindi karana is performed, the recently dead person becomes a Pitr. When he has attained the position of a Pitr he is worshipped by the rite of a Parvana. But the rite of Parvana owes its origin, to the Vedic rites of Pitr Yajna and Pinda Pitr Yajna.

We have discussed the rites which elevate a departed person to the position of a
Pitr. Now, it will be our duty to examine the rites intended for worshipping those departed souls who are raised to the rank of the Pitrs.

Pinda Pitr Yajna is a srauta rite to be performed by a regular priest selected by the sacrificer to act on his behalf. It forms part of many of the statuable sacrifices, and first of all of the New and Full-moon sacrifices. Similar ancestral offerings take place during other sacrifices too, of which the New and Full-moon sacrifices form the general type. This form of 'father-worship' seems to be the first step of development in the department of Rituals of ancestor worship.

The Yajur Veda contains the formulas required for the performance of this sacrifice. The Satapatha Brahmana contains the ritualistic details of this ceremony. In the srauta sutras we find a regular and elaborate description of this rite.

The following is an account of the Pinda Pitr Yajna contained in the Srautasutras.

This sacrifice is to be performed after mid-day of the day of the New moon. The sacrifice will take place in the southern fire. All movements are from right to left and recitations and acts take place once. In this offering the movements must begin in the north and end in the south. In the libations the hand has the outer part turned downwards, the space between the thumb and the index finger is the space which serves for the passage of the obligations. Water is touched after each naming of the fathers and the offerer looks south. A pit is dug in the earth, south or west of the southern fire to drive away the Raksasas and the Asuras and a fire brand from that fire is used as an additional mode of causing fear.

The offering begins with two libations of boiled grain or butter to Soma with the fathers and to Agni Kavya vahana, then the fathers are directly approached at the beginning,
middle, and end of the pitr, water is poured; and the fathers are invited to wash themselves.

Then Darbha-grass is strewn in the pitr and from the remains of the rice pap and butter, are made three lumps of food or according to some authorities four which are laid; down in the pit into which the water was formerly poured. In each case the fathers are held by name if they are known, as the father, grandfather, and great grandfather of the offerer. The fathers are invited to delight themselves. Then the offerer turns his back and remains with adverted head until he is breathless or the food is cold. He then turns to the lumps and says—'The fathers have delighted themselves', and pours water on the lumps, adds salve and some pieces of wool or if over fifty, hair from his arm or breast and invites the father to wash anoint and clothe themselves. If he desires a son, he may also smell the remains of the pot. The father are then honoured and the Advaryu looking south-east and pushing away the lumps bids them depart and pays reverence to the southern and Garhapatya fires. If the wife of the offerer wishes a son then she eats the middle lump; the other two may be thrown into fire or water or eaten by prescribed persons.

According to Ganagari, among the three upward generations, father, grandfather and great grandfather, the Pindas are to be offered only to those who are already dead; those who are alive should only be honoured; no lump is to be offered for them. But according to Taulvali, no distinction should be made between the living and the dead; lumps should be offered to the father, grandfather, and the great grandfather, whether they are alive or dead. Then again, according to Gautama, lumps are to be offered to three upward generations, no doubt, but if any one of the three generations, father, grandfather and great grandfather, be alive then that generation should be excluded from the three generations and the fourth upward generation should be included for making up
the three generations fit for receiving lumps. If two generations are alive then one is to
 include the fifth upward generation, too, and if all the three generations are alive, then,
lumps are to be offered to the fourth, fifth and sixth generations. Any how lumps are to
be offered to three upward generations who are already dead. Aswalayana, however,
differs from all these three views. According to him, lumps are to be offered to those
who are dead and homa' offering is to be made to those who are alive, but is not allowed
to go beyond the third generation.

It is the troika of fear of death, being combined with affection for the departed soul
and esteem for the ancestors that have induced families to supply food and other articles
to their ancestors for their nourishment. The Vedic Indians believed in a life to come and
in the power of the departed to confer blessings on their descendents. These elements
mingled together had, probably induced the survivors to secure the favour of their departed
friends by observances and offerings which were at first the spontaneous manifestation
of human feelings but which soon became ritual.

Dread of death, reverence for the dead and the belief in the existence of the dead
after death arise simultaneously at the death of a person; and therefore, the death of a
person is, in all probability, the occasion on which the first idea of father-worship germinated
and with the dead body food other articles are offered. This is Antyesti or the funeral
ceremony which is the first duty towards the dead. The rites for the recently dead or the
Ekoddistas are very closely connected with the general ceremonies. They may be regarded
as the second set of duties for the dead. When these rites are duly performed the recently
dead person becomes Pitr by the performance of a special rite called Sapindi Karana.
After this food is supposed to be required daily and specially on certain occasions not less
often than once a month and occasionally at other times. From this belief perhaps, the daily and monthly ancestor-worships originated. After the performance of Sapindi karana the recently dead father takes part in daily and monthly sraddhas and he is no longer worshipped separately alone. He is propitiated by the Pinda Pitr Yajna, Maha Pitr Yajna and such other rites. In the next stage the people of India came to believe that the Pitrs have power to aid even as the gods have; so we find that the fathers are invoked to confer boons similar to those which the gods grant, and they appear to be thought as not unworthy of invocation with the gods. Men pray to them as they pray to gods for success, for the defeat of enemies, for the gift of rain, or for the abundance of food. But the energy of the fathers in general has one special end—the production of offspring, in which they have the special interest, that the rites for the dead can only be kept up by the device of continuing the family. It is for this reason that at the offerings for the dead, the fathers are invoked to send sons and the fathers in later times are worshipped even in the ritual for marriage ceremony in order to induce them to give offspring to the bride. (Thus perhaps gradually the Abhyudayika or Nandimukha rite for the Pitr was introduced.) When a system of father-worship was once introduced, it seems to have spread very rapidly and not a day passed in the life of the ancient people of India on which they were not reminded for their ancestors, both near and distant, and on such occasions, they showed their respect for them partly by symbolic offerings to the manes and partly by charitable gifts to deserving persons.

Of the different rites for the Pitrs -- the Antyesti, Pitrmedha, Pitr Yajna, Pinda Pitr Yajna, Maha Pitr Yajna and such other rites are known to the Vedic Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and the srauta works. But the names, references and descriptions of other
rites like the offering of Puraka lumps, the Ekoddistas, the Sapindi karana, the Vrddhi and the Parvana are traceable only in the later literature—in the Grhya Sutras, Bhrama Sutras and Samhitas, the Epics, the Puranas, the Nibandhas and the Paddhatis. The very name 'sraddha' is unknown to the Vedic works down to the Srauta sutras. It is in the Grhya works that this name has been introduced. Moreover a statement of the Apastamba Dharmasutra makes it clear that the Sraddhas are of modern origin. It states that formerly men and gods lived together in this world. Then the gods, in recognition of the sacrifices they performed, went to heaven, but men were left behind. Those men who perform sacrifices in the same manner as the gods did dwell after death with the Gods and Brahman in heaven. Now, seeing men lagging behind, Manu revealed this ceremony which is designated by the word 'sraddha' and thus this rite has been revealed for the salvation of mankind.

Viswamitra classifies the sraddhas under twelve heads, and the Bhavisyapurana explains them:

1. The Nitya Sraddha or the daily obsequies, either with food or with water only in honour of ancestors in general but excluding the Viswadevas.

2. The Naimittika Sraddha or the obsequies for a special cause that is in honour of a kinsman recently defunct.

3. The Kamya or voluntary obsequies, performed by way of super-erogation for the greater benefit of the deceased.

4. The Vriddhi sraddha or obsequies for increase of prosperity, performed upon any accession of wealth or prosperity and upon other joyful occasions.

5. The Sapindi Karana or a Sraddha intended to introduce the soul of a deceased
kinsman to the rest of the manes.

6. The Parvanas or the obsequies performed on appointed days, such as that of new-
moon, full-moon, sun's passage into a new sign, etc.

7. The Gosthi Sraddha or a Sraddha to sanctify the food at an entertainment given to
a company of revered persons.

8. One performed when stated number of priests are led at the cost of a person who
needs purification from some defilement is called Suddhi Sraddha.

9. A sraddha preparatory to the celebration of any solemn rite, and considered as a
part of such a rite, is known as Karmanga sraddha.

10. Sraddhas in honour of deities are known as Daivilla Sraddhas.

11. Oblations of clarified butter, in main, previous to the undertaking of a distant
journey are the Yatra Sraddhas.

12. A sraddha to sanctify meal of flesh and meat prepared simply for the sake of
nourishment is Pusti Sraddha.

According to Brhaspati, the Sraddhas are of five classes—(1) Nitya, (2) Naimittika,
(3) Karnya, (4) Vrddhi and (5) Parvana. The Kurma Purana declares the same thing.
Madhava divides the sraddha into two main classes—(1) Parvana and (2) Ekoddista. He,
again, divides both of these two classes of sraddhas into three subdivisions (1) Nitya,
(2) Naimittika and (3) Kamya Sulapani opines that even the classification under twelve
heads is not exhaustive as there are other kinds of sraddha like Yugadya which are
overlooked in the classification. So the twelve kinds of sraddhas are for the elaboration
of the idea of a Sraddha.¹ Vacaspati Misra, the author of the Sraddha-Cintamani, says the
same thing.²

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Sulapani also remarks—'As the Gosthi Sraddha and such other Sraddhas are not different from the Parvana, Karnya and the Vrddhi sruddhas, so they are included in the list of the five kinds of sraddhas enumerated by Brahaspati and the Kurma Purana. A sapindi karana, is also not a different Sraddha from an Ekoddista and a Parvana, as it is partly an Ekoddista and partly a Parvana. As the deity in a Nitya Parvana is different from the deity of a Kamya Parvana so they are mentioned separately. Thus the twelve kinds of Sraddhas, mentioned by Viswamitra, are included in the five classes mentioned by Brhaspati and the Kurma Purana.

According to Madhava the twelve kinds of Sraddhas mentioned by Viswamitra, are included into the three classes - Nitya, Naimittika and Kamya.

Kamala Kara, the author of the Niranaya sindhu having mentioned the twelve kinds of sraddhas of Viswamitra and their explanations given by the Bhaviayapuruna, remarks that these twelve kinds are nothing but the elaboration of the four kinds of main Sraddhas which are - Parvana, Ekoddista, Vrddhi and Sapinda Karana.

According to Madhava, a Vrddhi is a modification of a Parvana and Sapindikarana is a combination of Parvana and Ekoddista. So the two classes of Sraddhas mentioned by Madhava include the four Sraddha - Parvana, Ekoddista, Vrddhi and Sapindi Karana.

The Matsya Purana divides the Sraddhas into three classes—Nitya, Naimittika and Kamya.

According to Visnu, there are only two classes of Sraddhas— Nitya and Kamya. Here Sulapani remarks - 'The Nitya Sraddhas are those Ekoddistas and Parvanas which are compulsory; the Kamyas are those Ekoddistas and Parvanas which are optional'.

Probably, this is the contention of the Matsya Purana also Madhava when dividing
the sraddhas, means the same thing.

If we trace the development of the various kinds of sraddhas it appears that the Parvana is the original form of Sraddhas. Next to this, Ekoddista was introduced. From these two forms of Sraddha the other forms of Sraddhas originated. So the classification of Madhava appears to be based on a very sound basis.

Maximiller, however, classifies the ceremonies of ancestor worship under four heads: (1) the daily ancestral sacrifices or the Pitr Yajna as one of the daily five great sacrifices (Panca maha yajna) (2) the monthly ancestral sacrifice or the Pinda Pitr Yajna as a part of the new-moon and full-moon sacrifices (3) the funeral ceremonies on the death of a house holder and (4) the Agapes or feasts of love and charity commonly called Sraddhas at which food and other charitable gifts are bestowed on deserving persons in memory of the deceased ancestors. The name of sraddha, remarks the renowned scholar, belongs, properly, to this last class only; but it has been transferred to the second and third classes of sacrifice also because sraddha or devotion forms an important part in them.

As time is formless, eternal and having no master to control it, it cannot have any part. But it can have its different stages under different conditions. Such stages are morning, noon, evening, day, night, fortnight, month, season, half year, year and the like. These stages depend, absolutely, on the different stages of the sun. These different stages are popularly called the different parts or limbs of Time.

In the Satapatha Brahmana it is stated that the three seasons—spring, summer end rainy, belong to gods. These three seasons together make the Uttarayana or the summer solstice or the northern course of the sun. Autumn, early winter and winter belong to the Pitrs. These three seasons make the Daksinayana or the winter solstice or the southern
course of the sun. The day belongs to the gods and the night to the Pitrs. The first half of the day belongs to the gods; the second half to the Pitrs.

According to Manu, a purified and sequested piece of ground smeared with cow-dung with a declivity towards the south is suitable for performing a sraddha rite. The divine manes are always pleased with an oblation in empty glades, naturally clear on the banks of rivers and in solitary spots. According to Yama Smrti, a place which is inclined towards the south, which is lonely, which has auspicious marks, which is holy, which is on the bank of a river, which belongs to the performer, which is in the vicinity of hill or a mountain, or which is in a lonely house is considered suitable for performing a Sraddha.

**The Sraddha materials**

Kusagrass, sesame seeds, barley, krsnajina or the skin of a black antelope, silver, gold, a Patra, scents, flowers, incense lamps, clothes sacred thread, waterpots, umbrellas, shoes and sandals, seats, beddings, fans of chowries, mirrors or looking glasses, hair brushes, betel leaves and dishes for offering them, ornaments of gold, cars, cows, female buffaloes, bullocks, camels land, houses, books, to pronounce absence of fear, ointments and threads (Anjanabhyanjanasutrani) and daksina or fees to the priests—these are required for the performance of a Sraddha.

The materials which are to be offered in a sraddha rite must belong to the performer himself. They must be earned by him with honesty.

Paddy, vegetables, fruits, roots, milk and such other things, earned honestly should be offered in a Sraddha.

According to Manu, inheritance, acquirement, purchasing, conquering profit or
interest or investment, to act as a priest or as a teacher, to earn by fine arts, service or such other means, to accept unprohibited gifts,—these are the seven means by which one can earn things honestly. Among these the first three are common to all. Conquering is restricted to the Ksatriyas only; investment is for the Vaisyas alone. Investment includes cultivation and trade. Priesthood and receiving gifts are for the Brahmanas alone. Fine arts are for the Karukas and service for sudras. According to Gautama, the property inherited and that which purchased, or obtained by partition, things, like water and fuel belonging to none, and hidden treasures are the things which a common to all human beings. Acceptance of gifts, teaching, and to act as a priest are the special means by which a Brahmana becomes the master of a thing. The Ksatriyas have their special means in conquering. Nirvista is the special means of a Vaisya and a Sudra. Cultivation and rearing cows are the Nirvistas for the Vaisyas, and to serve the twice born and to earn wages thereby are the Nirvistas of a Sudras. Agnaukarana is the first ritual of the sraddha rite.

Probably it was the sole element of a sraddha in its oldest form. Next to this probably the offering of Pinda has been introduced and at its last stage the feeding of Brahmana has been added.

Some perform this rite with the sacred thread on the right shoulder and others with the same on the left. The view that this should be performed with the sacred thread on the left shoulder is maintained by many. And, therefore, according to some this should be the general rule. According to others, again, the view maintained by ones own Sakha should be observed. The practice of performing the rite with one’s sacred thread suspended on the left shoulder seems to be the older one. It reminds us of the period when the Pitrs and the gods were worshipped in the same manner.
There are two practices regarding the offering of materials in an Agnau Karana. According to one practice, materials are to be offered into the fire. According to another practice it is to be poured into the hands of the Brahmanas. Between the two practices, it is evident that the former is older than the latter.

Hemadri, however, explains the injunction of the Vayu purana in a different way. If the offerer maintains and consecrates the sacred fire perpetually then the offering is to be made in the Daksina fire, if the offerer does not do so then he is to offer in the Aupasana or Grhya fire. If these two kinds of fire are not available then the offering is to be made into the hands of the Brahmana. If the sraddha is performed in the vicinity of water then the offering is to be made into water.

According to the Matsya Purana, when fire is not available, the offering of Agnaukarana may be made into the hand of a Brahmana, into the water, into the ears of a goat or a horse, in a cowshed, or in the vicinity of an image of Siva. According to Sankha this offering may also be made into a cluster of kusagrass, to gold and silver. Fire resides in them perpetually - Nityam vasati pavakah.

Baudhayana gives a more elaborate description of the rite. According to him fuels besmeared with clarified butter are to be offered into the fire before making the three offerings of clarified butter. This part of the rite probably represents the oldest stage of Pitr worship. Next the offering of boiled rice mixed with clarified butter into the sacrificial fire was introduced; next the offering of lumps and at last the feeding of Brahmanas.

According to some authorities three offerings - one to Agni, one to Soma and one to Yama-are to be made; according to other authorities two offerings - one to
Agni and the other to Soma-are to be made. According to the third view, thirteen offerings are to be made to maternal grandfather and such other deceased relatives. The performer is to follow his own Kalpa and Grhya Sutras.