

***Pancha Yajnya* (Five Sacrifices): The Scientific Philosophy of Human Ecological Responsibility Since the Vedic Age: A Review**

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ABSTRACT *Manusmruti* is considered to be the first ethical law book of the world for the human society, scribed during the immediate post-Vedic age. The compendium has prescribed to perform five sacrifices (*Pancha Yajnya*) as a part of routine activity in daily life of a house-holder. These five sacrifices elaborate one's socio-ecological responsibilities are such as: (1) *Rrushi Yajnya* - (sacrifices for the source of knowledge - teachers), (2) *Pitru Yajnya* (responsibility for the parents, ancestors and self genetic system), (3) *Deva Yajnya* (protection for the environmental powers as Gods), (4) *Bhoota Yajnya* (care for the protection of biodiversity) and (5) *Nrru Yajnya* (Positive interaction with fellow human beings of the society). Men should be committed to show obligation to the above environmental constituents as their ethical and ecological responsibilities. The analysis of the scientific basis behind the religious events of *Pancha Yajnya*, proves its aim to raise eco-consciousness amongst the human environment. These five sacrifices amounts to be as the highest ethno-ecological philosophy of the world, originated in the Vedic age and still practised today in the Indian social scenario being modified in different turns and tunes. In course of time the philosophy of *Pancha Yajnya* slowly entered into the daily rituals like *Tarpana* (ceremonial offering of water to all concerned) and *Biswadeva Puja* (offering of food) of a householder to reiterate his ecological responsibility. Further, with the growth of *Tantra* philosophy (Spread to save), *Pancha Yajnya* took a turn of worshipping iconic representatives, popularly known as *Pancha Devataa* (Five God powers). Amongst them, *Ganesh* is comparable with the community activity or *Nrru Yajnya*; obligation offered to Sun God (*Soorya*) is a token of respect and remembrance to forefathers represents *Pitru Yajnya*; *Vishnu*, the fostering power of bio-diversity, represents *Bhoota Yajnya*; *Ssiva* is comparable with the ancient sages and seers, a source of knowledge, universal teacher equalised with *Rrushi Yajnya* and *Durgaa*, an integration of all Godly powers, represents the *Deva Yajnya*. Geetaa has elaborated the spectrum of sacrifices in its 4th chapter *Jnyaana Karma Sanyaasa Yoga* (The yoga of action and renunciation). The integration of the Vedic age *Pancha Yajnya* philosophy in Geetaa says that: one should work with selfless motive for sacrifice (*Nrru Yajnya*) following the foot prints of his ancestors (*Pitru Yajnya*), those who had achieved perfection through sacrifice. The skill of the selfless work is to be learned from Vedas (Source of Knowledge - *Rrushi Yajnya*) and to be implemented in practical life as well to foster the nature (ecological powers - Gods - *Deva Yajnya*); in return rain is bestowed (by Gods) as gift that produces food for sustenance of life and proliferate the bio-diversity. Man, identified as one amongst the biosphere, should have a moral responsibility for the protection of all living beings (*Bhoota Yajnya*). In the present scenario the theme of *Pancha Yajnya* has turned to a community activity and celebration instead of an individual commitment. It is systematically celebrated through festivals of the rainy season in India as a welcome episode to rain and expression of gratitude to the environment, exhibiting through festive functions. Since the origin of the philosophy of *Pancha Yajnya*, in course of thousands of years may have undergone metamorphosis, yet its basic concept remains unaltered and unmutilated, readily acceptable for the present society, amenable worldwide, to raise up eco-consciousness in the human environment.