



Āyurveda: Relevance in Human Life

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Abstract: *Ayurveda is an Indian method of healing that has been passed down to us from very old times. In this piece, I look at this system from the point of view of a researcher, judging seriously the new ideas or perceptions about Ayurveda. In this way, it might seem like a different point of view or a position from what is said about where it came from, when it came from, whether it has a religious background, etc. This piece talks about how other medical systems might have affected Ayurveda. It does not connect Ayurveda to any one faith, and it looks at the three main figures of the system—Caraka, Śuśruta, and Bhagavata—as a separate medical practice.*

Key Words: *Atharvaveda, Caraka-saṃhitā, Śuśruta-saṃhitā, Ayurveda, Caraka, Śuśruta, Ayurveda.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Since ancient times, people in India have practised *Ayurveda*. There is a relationship between the Vedas and *Ayurveda*, as the *Atharvaveda*, one of the four *Vedas*, is the source of *Ayurveda*'s origins. *Ayurveda*, which is a Vedic tradition, is an example of an *Upaveda*, which is a source of knowledge that is aimed at improving the well-being of living creatures. In other words, the scriptures that, when read, convey knowledge about life or longevity, such as a short lifetime, a long lifespan, a healthy life free of sickness, and so on, are referred to as *Ayurveda*. When it comes to your longevity, Manu says—

“ārogāḥ sarvasiddhārthāścaturvarṣastāyuh |

krte tretādiṣu hyoṣāmāyuhāṣati pādaśḥ ||”¹

The following is an explanation of the term *Śhabdakalpadrum* according to Ayurvedic medicine:

“Āyuraṇen vindati vetti vettāyurveda, aṣṭādaśavidyāntargato dhanvantaripraṇītavidyāviśeṣaḥ |

Vaidika śāstram, cikitsyāśāstram, tatatu atharvavedāntargatam ||”²

2. DISCUSSION:

Ayurveda is a traditional medical practice that originated in India and literally translates to “the knowledge of being healthy and living a long life.” *Ayurveda* is not only a medical system that attempts to treat illnesses via the use of various medicines and ceremonies; rather, it is concerned with the whole of one's way of life. The ancient doctors believed that medicine was more than simply a collection of medications that were used to cure sickness. They believed that medicine was the key to a healthy and long life. The artificial information that underlies and controls the various physical, physiological, and mental aspects and stages of [human] life, or, to put it another way, the science of life as a whole, was what they considered to be medicine. In their view, medicine was not a list of temporary instruments for getting rid of diseases and restoring physical comfort. Caraka provides the following definition

¹ *Manusmṛti*. 1.83.

² *Śabdakalpadrum*, Pratham kāṇḍa.

of Ayurveda: the advantageous and the unneeded for a healthy life, the favourable (happy) and the unfavorable (unhappy) for a healthy life, the wholesome and the unhealthy for a healthy life, and the foundation on which a healthy long life (*diraghāyu*) is assessed (evaluated) is referred to as *Ayurveda*. To put it another way, Ayurveda is the science of longevity, which is the knowledge of healthy longevity.³ [*Ayu+Veda*] means knowledge of (healthy long) life or the science of longevity.

The Aśvīni Kumāras were the first to get the knowledge of *Ayurveda* from Brahmā, and Indra was the first to receive the Aśvīni Kumāras. The severe environment of the earth eventually caused the Āryans to get unwell, and this occurred after they had begun to settle in the vicinity of the Indus Valley. The first *Ṛṣi Sammelanam* was convened in the Caitrarath forest, which is located at the base of the Himālayas, in order to find a solution to this issue. In accordance with the judgment made by this *Sammelanam*, Bharadvājamuni was given an education in *Ayurveda* by Indra, and the practice of *Ayurveda* on earth was considered to be fortunate. Bharadvāja then provided Punarvasu and Dhanvantari with education in the fields of Kayatantra and Shaillyatantra, respectively, at the second Sage *Sammelanam*. Later on, Atreya instructed six more pupils, namely Agniveśa, Bhel, Jatukarna, Parāśara, Hārta, and Kṣārapāni, as well as the science of *Kāyatantra*. Dhanvantari instructed his disciples, including Śuśruta Aupadhenava, Aurabhra, and Puṣkalavata, as well as the science of surgery. Despite the fact that Brahmā, the creator of the universe, was the one who wrote the Ayurvedic texts, it is said that he reduced *Ayurveda* and wrote the *Aṣṭāṅga-ayurveda*. This is because he was aware of the limits that people had. *Saillyatantra*, also known as surgery, *Śālākya-tantra*, also known as head illnesses, *Kāyacikitsyā*, also known as physical medicine, *Kaumārabhṛtyatantra*, also known as child medicine, *Bhūtatantra*, sometimes known as mental medicine, *Agadatantra*, also known as poisons, *Rasāyanatantra*, also known as chemistry, and *Vājīkaraṇatantra*, also known as reproductive medicine are the eight components to consider.

In this article, I examine the ancient medical system from the point of view of a researcher, doing an in-depth analysis of the viewpoints, ethics, and politics of *Ayurveda* in modern times, using either the provided or perceived perspectives. In this way, it may seem to be a viewpoint that is paradoxical or contradictory to the narratives that come with its genesis, location of origin, date, non-religious basis, and other aspects of its history. Products and manufactured substances derived from nature, which include plants, animals, and minerals, have been the source of medicines and treatments for ailments that affect people, animals, and plants ever since the beginning of human history. *Ayurveda* is discussed in this article as an autonomous medical tradition that is not connected to any particular religion. Additionally, the article explores the potential impact of other medical systems on *Ayurveda*, as well as the three most influential gurus of the system, namely Caraka, Suśruta, and Bhagabhaṭas.

There is no evidence that the Vedic tradition was responsible for the development of *Ayurveda*; yet, the Vedic tradition has made major contributions to the lengthy heritage of medicine that *Ayurveda* possesses. The Brahmanization of Indian medicine took place over the course of time, resulting in the transformation of heterodoxy into doctrine. During the ancient period in India, it was most likely a completely autonomous and indigenous medical and therapeutic practice that was not connected to any particular faith. Healers who had achieved a high level of expertise in the art of healing were the ones who formed the specialized terminology of medicine. It is most likely that the healers originated from agricultural communities and ascetic fraternities; they did not come from a priestly or royal background. Furthermore, the healers refined the therapeutic procedures that they had learnt via observation by adding their knowledge of local flora and animals. According to my understanding, the study of the Brahmanical tradition, *Ayurveda*, and *Atharvaveda* are all contributions that came much later. With the use of herbs or plants, this Ayurvedic therapy is administered. Starting with the birth of civilization and continuing up to the present day, man has been persistently working toward the goal of a disease-free body and a life that is relatively lengthy. As a result, it is our responsibility to take the initiative to bring the wealth of information contained within our ancient Ayurvedic texts to the notice of the people of our nation and the rest of the globe. Given the present circumstances, it is probable that it will be impossible to ensure the health and happiness of all people without the use of this Ayurvedic text. Therefore, regardless of the objective of one's life, the foundation for accomplishing that objective is a healthy body and a healthy state of health. According to what is said in the *Caraka-saṃhitā*, the most significant cause for failure in the fight for life is the presence of illness:

“*dharmārthakāmamokṣāṇāmārogyam mūlamuttamam* |

³ *Caraka-saṃhitā*, 1.1.42. “*hititaṃ sukhaṃ duḥkhamastasya / mānañca tacca yatroktamāyurveda sa ucyate* ||”

*rogāstasyāpahartāraṃ śreyaso jībitasya ca ||*⁴

Caraka, Śuśruta, and Bhagabhaṭa are considered to be the three most important figures in Ayurvedic medicine. While Śuśruta was the most skilled surgeon, Caraka was the most prominent physician in the kingdom. The excellent physician and surgeon Bhagabhaṭa was a significant figure.

In the field of *Ayurveda*, Caraka is regarded as the most senior physician. One researcher, on the other hand, is of the view that the name "Caraka" was used to refer to nomadic ascetics who were not adherents of the Vedic tradition but rather "wandering practitioners of the medical art." Assuming that Caraka is a single person, the dates that have been attributed to him span from the second century BCE to the second century CE, which is the time period in which the Kuṣāna Empire was at its height of power in northern India. In the *Caraka-saṃhitā*, there is evidence that suggests that he resided in the north western region of India during the post-Buddhist era. This evidence comes from inside the text itself.

Śuśruta is connected to Kāśī, which may be found in either Banaras or Varanasi. In the field of Indian medicine, he was considered a prominent surgeon. When he was alive has been a topic of discussion among a great number of medical historians for a very long time. This individual is claimed to have lived and taught in the city of Varanasi prior to the arrival of the Buddha. It is stated that Śuśruta studied *Ayurveda* during the *Upanishad* era, which occurred in the sixth century BCE, with a particular focus on surgery (*śalya*). This was done under the guidance of the *Upanishad Dhanvantari*, ruler of Kāśī. He was the one who wrote the *Śuśruta-tantra*. The original text has been lost for a very long time; however, a revised version of Nāgārjuna's work, known as the *Śuśruta-saṃhitā*, has been preserved. This book was written in the sixth or tenth century CE. While the *Caraka-saṃhitā* was written considerably earlier, the *Śuśruta-saṃhitā* was written much later. Rhinoplasty was a procedure that he was the first person in India to do.

There is still a great deal of regard for the *Caraka-saṃhitā* as a medicinal book. Sutra, Nidan, Vimān, Śarīra, Indriya, Madhyamika, Kalpa, and Siddhi are the eight parts or divisions that are included in the *Caraka-saṃhitā*, which is now accessible. Additionally, there are one hundred twenty chapters included.

After the *Caraka-saṃhitā*, the *Śuśruta-saṃhitā* is considered to be one of the most significant works in the field of medical science. Taking into consideration the subtleties of language, it seems that Śuśruta is relatively dry, succinct, and compact. Śuśruta is believed to be a relatively contemporary religion because of this reason. Furthermore, the texts that make up *Ayurveda* are known as the *Bhel-saṃhitā* and the *Aṣṭāṅga-saṃgraha*. The *Aṣṭāṅga-hṛdaya*, *Rasaratnasamucchaya*, *Rugaviniścaya* of Madhavakara, *Cikitsyāsāra-saṃgraha* of Cakrapāṇi Datta, Vaidyajivan of bhāvaprakāśa, and so on are all examples.

The whole of the human body is the manifestation of sickness, according to *śarīravayādhiṃandiram*. Being in good physical and mental health is essential to living a long and healthy life. Your mental and physical well-being are inextricably linked to one another. To maintain a healthy body and mind, it is necessary for an individual to adhere to a number of principles. People should constantly participate in excellent behavior, according to the *Sūtrasthāna* of the *Caraka-saṃhitā*, which is the eighth chapter of the *Sūtrasthāna*. These individuals need to conduct themselves in a cordial way with all living species. The *Caraka-saṃhitā* contains a discussion of the guidelines for appropriate social behavior. Laughter that is too loud in public, for instance, is not appropriate. Sneezing, yawning, and laughing are all activities that should be done with the face covered.

In the same way that illnesses manifest themselves when the metals that comprise the body are manipulated, the body may be liberated from diseases by restoring the metals to their natural state of equilibrium.

The *Caraka-saṃhitā* has the following passage:

“.....kāryaṃ dhātu sāmya mihocyate /

*dhātusāmyakriyā cōktā tantrasyāśya prayojamam ||*⁵

Because of this, the most important thing that people want in today's culture is to have their bodies and minds healed. The existence of a human being who is in good health is the foundation upon which a society is built. This is the primary need that Ayurveda seeks to fulfill. The *Caraka-saṃhitā* explains that worms are created within the body because of the 'Kapha-doṣa', which is one of the three predominant *doṣas*. When it comes to the *Śuśruta-saṃhitā*, the same thing is asserted. It is believed that mucus and bile, rather than *Kapha*, are the factors that lead to the development of worms.

⁴ *Ibid*, 1.1.15.

⁵ *Ibid*, 1.1.53.

Carak discusses twenty different kinds of worms in the eighteenth chapter of the *Sūtrasthāna*. Six of them are descendants of the bloodline. Out of the seven *Kaphas*, the sickness is *Kapha*, and five of them are caused by diet, while the other two are caused by filth from the outside. That is to say, with the exception of the final two, the other 18 varieties of worms are born as illnesses that are caused by different internal ailments inside the body. According to the *Sūtrasthāna*,⁶ all of the ailments that are born in the body are referred to as the combination of *Vāta*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*. In this sense, Carak asserts that the *Vāta*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* do not contribute to any ailments that occur inside the body; rather, they are the only causes of all diseases. In the same way that a bird cannot fly through its own shadow even if it does so for a whole day, all ailments that are produced by internal causes are the consequence of rheumatism, bile, and phlegm when they are present. There are twenty different varieties of worms, and out of them, eighteen have been identified as disorders that affect rheumatism, bile, and phlegm. There is a degree of resemblance between the work of germs and the growth of organisms that are found in dirt that is found on the outside. There has been a significant difference between the native and the foreigner who has the Caraka sickness.⁷ It is the internal reasons of one's own sickness that are responsible for the differentiation between phlegm, bile, and air inside the body. The term 'foreign' refers to the origin of the sickness, which originates from outside sources. As a result of the discomfort that it generates, rheumatism is responsible for the separation of bile and mucus. This knowledge is also recognized in the current notion of germs in a different manner, namely without rheumatism, bile, and phlegm by virtue of the fact that germs also originate from the outside and cause illnesses inside the body. It has been said that the same thing is true in the case of worms that develop in soil that is found outside.

There is still more distinction that can be made between the contemporary way of thinking about spores and the modern way of thinking about worms in Ayurveda. At one point in the description of worms, Caraka refers to invisible worms as 'sūkṣatāccaikē bhavantyādrśyā'.⁸ These worms are unseen due to the fact that they are so little. According to the *Caraka-saṃhitā*, these correspond to the disease known as leprosy. In this case, Caraka believes them to be illnesses that are caused by worms, rather than diseases like *bījānu*, which are caused by animals. Again, in one of the chapters of the book, it is said that the distortion of *vāta*, *pitta*, and *kapha* is the cause of the development of physical deformities-

“*vayuḥ pittaṃ grahakaphaścokta śarīro doṣasaṃ
manuṣyaḥ punarudiṣṭo rajaśca tama eva ca*”⁹

Body is able to heal itself when the components are in harmony, but illnesses are caused when there is an imbalance in the elements. When seen from this angle, the *Caraka-saṃhitā* makes the following statement:

“*caturṇāṃ bhiṣagādīnāṃ śastānāṃ dhātubaiḥ*
pravṛttir dhātusāmīyarthā cikitsetyabhidheyate”¹⁰

When it comes to disorders of the body and mind, as well as the treatments for them, the *Caraka Samhita* describes:

“*śarīraṃ sattvasaṃjñāṇca vyādīnāmāśrayomataḥ
tathā sukhaṃ yogāstu sukhānāṃ kāraṇaṃ samaḥ*”¹¹

The *Caraka-saṃhitā* has the following passages in reference to the emancipation of humanity from ailments that affect the intestines and stomach for example:

“*gavyaṃ samadhuraṃ kiñcit doṣaghaṇaṃ krimikuṣṭnutaḥ
kaṇḍughnaṃ śamayet pītaṃ samyag doṣadare hitam*”¹²

Again, there are recommendations in the field of medical research about whether or not to smoke, how often to wash one's body, where to have an oil massage, and other similar topics. Within the realm of medical research, there are

⁶ *Śuśruta-saṃhitā*, uttartaṇtra, 54.1.

⁷ *Caraka-saṃhitā*, 1.20.7.

⁸ *Ibid*, 3.7.11.

⁹ *Ibid*, 1.1.57.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 1.9.4.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 1.1.55.

¹² *Ibid*, 1. 1.100.



several exercises that are discussed. These activities pertain to physical activity. Although these workouts are beneficial for increasing strength, excessive activity may potentially lead to ailments such as:

“śramaḥ klamaḥ kṣyastrṣṇā rakta pittam pratāmakaḥ |
atibhāyāmataḥ kako jvaracchardīśca jāyate |”¹³

3. CONCLUSION:

It is evident that experience had a significant part in the development of Ayurveda, which is a logical system. Both the *Caraka-saṃhitā* and the *Śuśruta-saṃhitā* describe the condition of health and sickness in terms of the elements, the main and general systems of the body, and the impact of time and seasons. However, they did not pay a great deal of attention to mysticism and magic in their explanations. The medical system was founded on experience, which may be understood as the principle of the natural explanation of a phenomena or the justification of a quality that can be seen. There was no dogmatism involved; rather, it was adaptable.

In all likelihood, Caraka lived at a period in India's history when the intellectual life was very lively and vigorous. During this historical period, the orthodox schools of Indian philosophy (not Vedānta) were in different phases of development. The intense resistance that these schools faced from intellectuals who were Gnostic, Carvāka, Ājivik, Buddhist, and Jain was a reflection of the times. Ideas came into conflict with one another, rigid dogmas and confronting heterodoxy faced one other, systems were sharpened and redefined, and the old gave way to the new. India had an intellectual atmosphere that was characterized by these situations.

In terms of the Bhagavad Gita, he adheres to the fundamental principles of Buddhist philosophy, which hold that the present moment and the life that is now being lived are of the highest significance. It is only feasible to have a healthy body in order to be able to exercise the Buddhist notion of the body, which is considered to be holy and important for spiritual practice (*adhyātmika sādhana*). Both the metaphysics of the body, which states that the body is composed of five components (*pañcabhūta*), and the notion of equality of the body, which states that there is no higher or lower body (according to birth, caste, or gender), were prevalent practices throughout this time period. In order to have a healthy mind, one must have a healthy body. In Buddhism, the mind and the body are not seen to be two distinct beings but rather interconnected. The subtlest minds of Indian medicine and healing wanted a system that would cure ailments and pave the road for a healthy long life. This was because they were suffering from bodily and mental sickness, which is a basic fact of human existential pain.

Because of this conversation, it is abundantly obvious that Ayurveda has established itself as a distinct medical practice, apart from the Atharvavedic medical concerns. Another point to consider is that the *Caraka-saṃhitā* does not include any miraculous reflections of Path Ravi. The *Atharvaveda* medicinal system seems to have been made essentially obsolete by the practice of Ayurveda. Then, the use of more sophisticated therapeutic methods may be seen in Ayurveda. In contrast, therapy has evolved into a neutral practice, which has cleared the path for its autonomous growth in addition to the development of religious ideas. Therefore, when Ayurveda exceeds the limitations of traditional beliefs and attempts to climb beyond the belief in miracles in order to achieve more advanced therapy, it is considered to be a kind of alternative medicine.

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¹³. *Ibid*, 1.7.32

