

# प्राच्यवीक्षा (PRĀCYAVĪKṢĀ)

(A collection of articles and research papers on Sanskrit literature)



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অন্যায়তো করেছেনই, তাঁকে বনবাসে দিয়ে গভীরতর অবিচার করেছেন।।  
তাঁরা বাল্মীকির আশ্রমেও ক্রটি খুঁজে ফিরেছেন।

আমাদের বোধ নয় এটাও সঠিক সিদ্ধান্ত। প্রথমতঃ বাল্মীকি এক দুর্নিবীক্ষ ব্যক্তিত্ব, সর্বজনের শ্রদ্ধাকেন্দ্র। তাঁর আশ্রম তপস্বী ও বিদ্যার্থীদের আশ্রয়স্থল। যেখানে সকলের জিহ্বা বেদমস্ত্রোচ্ছারণে শুদ্ধ ও পবিত্র। সেখানে কলুষ কথার চর্চা অসম্ভব। আশ্রমের শান্ত রসাত্মক সীতার মানসিক শান্তি প্রত্যাহারের যোগ্য, সমর্থ। এই মানসিক শান্তিই সীতার সর্বাঙ্গে প্রয়োজন ভাবি প্রজন্মের সুখাগমের নিমিত্ত। নিন্দা, কলুষকথার এখানে প্রবেশাধিকার নেই।

বাল্মীকি কুলপতি, সত্যাবাক সত্য দ্রষ্টা, প্রচেতার দশম পুরুষ। অখিল জ্ঞানের আধার। তাঁর রক্ষণাবেক্ষণের অধীনে ভারতবর্ষের সিংহাসনের ভাবী উত্তরাধিকারী ইক্ষ্বাকুবংশের উত্তরপুরুষ লালিত-পালিত হবে, তিনি তার যাবতীয় ভার গ্রহণ করছেন, সর্ববিধ জাতকর্ম, উপনয়ন সংস্কার এবং বিদ্যাশিক্ষার ব্যবস্থা করবেন এটা ইক্ষ্বাকুবংশের পরম কাম্য এবং পরম নির্ভয়যোগ্যও।

রামচন্দ্র প্রজাদের নির্বুদ্ধিতায়, হৃদয়হীনতায় ক্রুদ্ধ হয়েছেন একথা আমরা পাই বাল্মীকির আশ্রমে সীতার প্রতি লক্ষণের উক্তি। তাই পরবর্তী কালে অশ্বমেধ যজ্ঞের প্রসঙ্গে রামচন্দ্রকে অতি সংক্ষেপে ভারতকে নির্দেশ দিতে দেখি স্বর্ণময়ী সীতা সহ যজ্ঞের আয়োজন করতে। দ্বিতীয়বার দার গ্রহণের প্রসঙ্গ অতি সংক্ষেপেই স্তব্ব করেছেন। এই একটি মাত্র কথায় সীতার প্রতি রামের সামগ্রিক মনোভাব উদ্ভাসিত।।

রামচরিত্র যুগে যুগে পর্যালোচিত হয়েছে এবং হবে। ভবভূতির অনসরণে আমরা বলতে পারি-

বজ্রাদপি কঠোরানি মৃদুনি কুসুমাদপি।

লোকান্তরানাং চেতাংসি কো নু বিজ্ঞাতুমর্হতি।।”- লোকান্তর রাম চরিত্রের অবধারণা সহজসাধ্য নয়। শেষ কথা, এই— “ন কেবলং যঃ মহতেসুপভাষতে, শৃণোত্যস্মাৎঅপি যঃ স পাপভাক্”।

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## MEDICAL SCIENCE IN THE AGNIPURĀṆA

Dr. Parimal Kumar Datta

### Introduction :

*yo vidyāccaturo vedān sāngopaniṣado dvijah  
na cet purāṇam samvidyān naiva sa syād vicakṣaṇah  
itihāsa – purāṇābhyām vedam samupabṛmhayet  
vihheti alpa-śrūtād vedo mamayam prahariṣyati* <sup>1</sup>

That twice-born (Brāhmaṇa) who knows the four Vedas with the Angas (supplementary sciences) and the Upaniṣads, should not be (regarded as) proficient unless he thoroughly knows the Purāṇa. He should reinforce the Vedas with the Itihāsa and the Purāṇa. The Vedas is afraid of him who is deficient in traditional knowledge (thinking) ‘He will hurt me’.<sup>2</sup>

### Scientific Elements in the Purāṇas

The Purāṇas are records of social, cultural, political, geographical, philosophical, religious, educational and scientific developments and progress of a highly advanced nation. The Agni Purāṇa, the Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa, the Garudapurāṇa and the Matsyapurāṇa are the main sources of scientific elements of botany, veterinary, science of war, agriculture, horticulture, snake-science, anatomy, pathology, astrology, astronomy, architecture and medicines and treatment of diseases.

### Āyurvedic (Medical Science) Tradition in India :

Āyurveda is found in the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, the Atharvaveda and the Brāhmaṇas, the Upaniṣads, the Sūtra literature, the Samhitās (Smṛtis), the Buddhist and the Jain

literatures, the Epics, the Arthasāstra, the Astādhyāyī of Pāṇini, the archaeological elements, classical literatures and the Purāṇas.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Āyurveda (Medical Science) and the Purāṇas :**

The elements of Āyurveda can be found in the Viṣṇupurāṇa, the Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa, the Skanda Purāṇa, the Brahmapurāṇa, the Padmapurāṇa, the Matsya purāṇa and the Garuda Purāṇa.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Medical Science in the Agnipurāṇa :**

The Agnipurāṇa deals with the science of medicine that was propounded by Lord Dhanvantari to Suśruta. Chapters 279 – 300 discuss the treatment of not only human beings but also of the elephant, the horse, the cow and even of trees.

#### **Classification of Human Diseases :**

The Agnipurāṇa classifies human diseases under four heads<sup>5</sup> sarīrika (physical), mānasika (mental), āgantuka (accidental) and sahaja (natural).

Fever, leprosy and the like are considered to be relating to the body (śārīrika). Anger etc. are considered to be relating to the mind (mānasika). Those that are due to a blow etc. are known as accidental (āgantuka). Hunger, old age and the like are known as natural (sahaja).

#### **Causes of Diseases :**

All the diseases are caused by Tridoṣa<sup>6</sup> due to the deranged wind, deranged bile and deranged phlegm. The Agnipurāṇa says that all the diseases are caused by excessive eating or not eating or forcing or retaining the flow of urine, faeces etc.<sup>7</sup>

#### **Nature and Symptoms of Diseases :**

All the diseases are diagnosed on the basis of symptoms<sup>8</sup>. The characteristics of the diseases due to the deranged wind are pain in the bones, bitter taste in the mouth,

parched state of feeling in the mouth, yawning and bristling of the hair. A disease due to deranged bile is marked by yellowness in the nails, eyes and veins, bitter taste in the mouth, thirst and burning heat in the body. The characteristics of diseases due to phlegm are languor, flow of water from the mouth, heaviness of the body, sweet taste in the mouth and longing for heat.

#### **Causes of Deranged Wind, Bile and Cough :**

The wind in the body gets deranged on account of eating bad food or on account of grief. Bile gets deranged on account of internal heat, eating hot food, making a journey as well as due to fear. Phlegm gets deranged due to excessive drinking of water, eating heavy food and lying down after eating.<sup>9</sup>

#### **Location of Wind, Bile and Cough :**

Phlegm, bile and wind have their places above and below the umbilical region and the regions of the anus and the buttocks respectively in the body. They are capable of coursing though the entire body. Especially wind can do so.<sup>10</sup>

#### **Scope of Medicine :**

The scope of medicine is stated to fall under six heads such as poison, influence of stars, ailments in general, violent deaths, minor ailments and love potents. Sacred formulas, meditation, medicine, conversation, mudrā (postures of the hand) and sacrificial worships are the means there in.<sup>11</sup>

#### **Group of Medicines :**

The medicines are classified into five groups-juice, levigated powder, the distilled, the cold and decoction. Juice is known to be that got by pressing. Levigated powder is got by pulverizing the drug after heating. The distilled is that got after boiling. The cold one is that allowed to cool the previous night. Decoction is that distilled immediately after boiling.<sup>12</sup> There are one hundred and sixty ways of doing so.

**Diseases mentioned in the Agnipurāṇa fall under the Modern Medical Science Departments :**

Specialization is one of the most important features of modern medical science. The diseases mentioned in the Agnipurāṇa fall under the following modern medical departments –

Paediatrics, Dermatology, Nephrology, Urology, Arthrology and Orthopaedic, Odontology (Dental), Toxicology, Tricology, Sexology, Splanchnology, Endocrinology, Neurology, Gynaecology, Parasitology, Virology, Ophthalmology, ENT, Gastroenterology and Cardiology.

**Diseases treated in the Agnipurāṇa :**

The Agnipurāṇa prescribes medicines for the following diseases <sup>13</sup> Asthma, Abscess, Abdominal disorder, Acidity, Affected arteries, Blindness, Bleeding of the nose and ears, Cough, Constipation, Colic, Catarrh, Dysentery, Dropsy, Diabetes, Deranged wind, Deranged bile, Diarrhoea, Diseases of legs, Diseases of children, Enlargement of spleen , Enlargement of abdomen, Epilepsy, Earache, Eye diseases, Elephantiasis, Fever, Fistula, Goiter, Gout, Bladder Stone, Greying of Hair, Hiccup , Headache, Haemorrhage, Inflammation of Gland , Indigestion , Intoxication , Insanity , Itching , Inflammation of anus , Jaundice , Leprosy , Loss of appetite , Mental Diseases, Miscarriage , Nasal Diseases , Piles , Phlegm with vomiting, Pulmonary Consumption, Post-delivery problems, Rheumatism , Swelling , Strangury , Senile Degeneration, Sore, Stiffness of thigh, Thirst, Toothache, Tumour, Unconsciousness, Urinary ailment , Ulcer , Venereal Disease , Vomiting , Wasting Disease , Worm etc.

Besides these diseases, this Purāṇa speaks of the treatment for speech improvement, complexion , intellect , beauty and longevity .

**Qualities of Doctor :**

According to the Agnipurāṇa, a doctor should render

treatment to a patient after examining the nature of the country, the disease, the strength , the stamina, the season, the nature of the patient and the strength of the remedy. He should have the knowledge about tithis. He should reject the fourth, ninth and fourteenth days of a lunar fortnight. He should also know the properties of the herbs such as taste, strength and flavour.<sup>14</sup>

**Remedies for Disease :**

The Agnipurāṇa prescribes remedies for diseases. These remedies consist of mantra, hymns, worship, amulets, gifts and herbal medicines.

**Mantra :**

The Syllable 'Om' confers longevity and sound health. The formula 'Om hrum namo visnave' is the foremost medicine. The Dharma (mantra) is a great remedy. The Sūryamantra,, the Vināyakamantra and the Rudramantra cure all diseases.<sup>15</sup>

**Hymns :**

A hymn to Lord Viṣṇu removes mental diseases.<sup>16</sup>

**Worship :**

One can destroy diseases by doing worship according to the rules of Rudraworship.<sup>17</sup>

**Amulets :**

The use of amulets for women after the delivery is always beneficial.<sup>18</sup>

**Gifts :**

One should give ghee, molasses and salt along with gold to a Brahmin on a Sunday in order to get rid of the diseases relating to the body and those that are accidental.<sup>19</sup>

**Herbal Medicines :**

Kalidāsa says,  
*udeti pūrvam kusumam tatah phalam  
ghanodayah prāk tadanantaram payah  
nimitta-naimittikayorayam krama –  
stava prasādasya purastu sampadah*<sup>20</sup>

The blossoms come first, then the fruitage ; first the rising up of clouds, afterwards the shower. This is the true sequence of the cause and effect. But my fortunes have had their courses in advance of your favour.

Just like this, bheṣaja (medicine) was created first by God in order to remove diseases and then came Āyurveda (Medical Science).<sup>21</sup>

According to Āyurveda, medicinal herbs and medicines are available in that place where a person is born – *yasya deśasya yatjanmanah tajjam tasya bheṣajam pathyam*.<sup>22</sup>

So the Agnipurāṇa also prescribes those medicines and medicinal herbs that are available in that place where various diseases are common.

Preparation of the Āyurvedic medicines :

The Agnipurāṇa prescribes the following for the preparation of various kinds of Āyurvedic medicines –

Flowers, seeds, fruits, leaves, roots, wood, barks, honey, rock-salt, ghee, water, wine, juice, milk of leaves, mercury, sulphur, salt, cow's urine, goat's urine, iron-dust, curd, rice gruel, shoots, powder, ashes, red arsenic, molasses, dew water, cake, sugar, camphor, castor oil, sesamum oil, red chalk, oysters, oil extracted from leech & frog etc.

**Names of Medicinal Plants and Herbs :**

Japā (Chin rose), Bibhītaka (Terminalia Bellerica), Viśālā (Colocynth Basella Cordifolia), Bhṅgarāja (Eclipta Prostrat), Guggula (Indian Bedellium), Hingu (Asafoetida), Viśva (Dried Ginger), Śrī (Black Holy Basil), Drāksā (Grapes), Svadangstra (Asteracanta Longifolia), Krṣṇā (Piper Longum), Ugra (Hyperanthera Moringa), Granthika (Pepper), Vahni (Plumbago

Ceylanica), Yuthika (Jasminum Auriculatum), Bhallātaki (Cashewnut), Pathyā (Citrina), Kulattha (Dolichos Uniflora), Snuhī (Euphorbia Antiquorum), Arka (Indian Ipecacaunha), Lāngulī (The Glory), Nirgundika (Indian Privet), Kramuka (Betel nut), Nārikela (Coconut), Śigru (Drum Stick), Ādraka (Ginger), Rasuṇa (Garlic), Devadāru (Himalayan Cedar), Śunṭhi (Dried Ginger), Ingudī (Balanite), Dādima (Pomegranate), Rāsnā (Ichneumon Plant), Citraka (White Leadwort), Āmalaka (Myrobalan), Kharjura (Dates), Badara (Jujube), Vṛṣa (Gendarussa Vulgaris), Ariṣṭa (Soapnut), Pippalī (Long Pepper), Śaṭī (Curcuma Zedaria), Haridrā (Turmeric), Ikṣu (Sugarcane), Bākucī (Malaya Tea), Rakta Yastika (Red Paddy), Kākamari (Menispermum cocculus), Dhātrī (Emblia Officinalis), Mālatī (Jasmine), Simhī (Solanum Jacquini), Vatska (Wrightia Antidysenterica), Māṣa (Black Gram), Musta (Cyprus Rotundus), Parpaṭaka (Oldenlandia), Uśīra (Cuscuta Grass), Nāgara (Dry Ginger), Yava (Barley), Śāli (a kind of rice), Masura (a kind of pulse, lentil), Caṇaka (Chick-pea), Kuṣṭaka (Saussurea), Paṭola (Snake Gourd), Nimba (Neem or Margo), Godhūma (Wheat), Makuṣṭha (Phaseolus Aconitifolius), Lodhra (Symlocos), Vāstuka (Chenopodium Album), Khadira (Black Catechu), Ṛkṣa (Bignonia Indica), Abhayā (Chebulic Myrobalan), Jāngala (Venison), Dhātrī (Myrobalan), Mātulunga (Citron), Jāti (Nutmeg), Mūlaka (Radish), Vidanga (Embelica Ribes), Marica (Black Pepper), Gokṣura (Tribulous Lanuginosus), Ajamoda (Liguisticum Ajwaen), Karanja (Indian Beech), Amṛtā (Ocimum Sanctum), Agniśikhā (Gloriosa Superba), Śmṅī (Water Chestnut), Atibalā (Indian Mallow), Ativiṣā (Indian Atees), Kuṭaja (Tellicherry), Palāśa (Flame of the Forest), Bacā (Sweet flag), Kalambikā (Convolvulus Repens), Śatāvarī (Asparagus), Arjuna (Terminalia Arjuna), Pāṭhā (Velvet leaf), Kola (Black Pepper), Yaṣṭimadhu (Liquorice), Bilva (Aegle Marmelos), Sthirā (Salmalia Malabarica), Nāgaballī (Piper Betel), Ankola (Alangium Hexapetalum), Puṣkara (Nymphaea Nelumbo), Saṅkha (Unguis Odoratus), Kuṣṭha (Costus Speciosus),



Chinnaruha (Boswellia Thurifera), Punarnava (Hogweed horsepurshene), Priyangu (Calicarpa Macrophylo), Agnimantha (Clerodendron), Putikā (Indian Spinach), Guduci (Tinospora), Śyonaka (Tutun), Pṛṣṇiparnī (Uraria Picta), Śelu (Cordial Myxa), Kṣudra (Oxalis Pusilla), Vyoṣa (Dry Ginger, long pepper and black pepper), Brāhmī (Ruta Gravedens), Bhūnimba (Creat), Viṣāṅikā (Odina Pinnata), Padma (Lotus) etc.<sup>23</sup>

### SOME OF THE COMMON DISEASES AND THEIR MEDICINES MENTIONED IN THE AGNIPURĀNA

Dysentery	Sunhī, ?atī, two kinds of Niśā, Vatsaka
Worms	Devadāru, Mahāsigru, three Myrobalans, Payomuca, Long Pepper, Honey.
Urinary infection	Nutmeg, Dry ginger, Pepper, Long Pepper, Turmeric
Piles	Buttermilk, Yuthikā, Vahni, Turmeric, Myrobalans, Vyoṣa, Abhayā
Diarrhoea & Jaundice	Granthika, Ugra, Mustard, Long Pepper, Vidanga, Ghee, Butter milk
Acute gout	Vasā, Molasses and Honey.
Fistula	Trivṛt, Jīvati, Dantī, Manjiṣṭhā, Turmeric, Tarkasaja, Neem leaves
Ulcers	Black holy basil, Cotton leaves, Nutmeg, Rock-salt, Turmeric
Bladder Stone	Bamboo bark, Varuṇa
Elephantiasis	Sakhotaka, Honey, Milk
Insanity	Asafoetida, Natrum, Vyoṣa, Pepper, Ghee, Cow's urine.
Greying of hair	Mārkava, Madhuka, Utpala
Tumour	Vacā, Vid, Mustard, Dry ginger, Long pepper, Myrobalans, Agni, Cow's urine.
Fever & swelling	Daśamūlī, Chinnarūhā, Mustard, Dāru, Sigru, Punarṇavā, Dry ginger.
Constipation	Long pepper, Vacā, Citraka, Dry ginger.

### Potency / Strength and Dosage :

The effect of the herbs is indescribable. Those that are sweet, astringent and bitter are said to be having cold potency. Those that are sour, saline and pungent are said to be hot.<sup>24</sup>

### Physical Exercises and Physiotherapy :

The Agnipurāṇa warns that one should not do any physical exercise while the food still remains undigested. One should not expose his body to sunlight or enjoy the company of women after doing exercises. It suggests massages in different seasons. Massaging the body should be done in summer. In winter it should be equilibrium. It is known to be of middling type in spring.<sup>25</sup>

### Diet for the Sick :

The Agni Purāṇa prescribes diet for people suffering from different diseases like fever, haemorrhage, dysentery, dropsy, leprosy, diabetes, pulmonary consumption, asthma, hiccough, swelling, rheumatism, heart disease, wasting, painful discharge of urine etc.<sup>26</sup>

According to Āyurveda.<sup>27</sup>

*vināpi bheṣajairvyādhih pathyādeva vimucyate  
na tu pathyavihinānām bheṣajānām śatairapi*

Only diet can cure diseases. Hundreds of medicines cannot cure anyone without proper diet. The Agni Purāṇa gives importance on it and prescribes diet accordingly. It also honours the maxim.<sup>28</sup>

*hitam mitam yathākālam ca bhunjīta.*

The diet which is useful and moderate should be taken at proper time. It says that one should moderately eat food that is good for health after the food already taken had digested. The purity of food is for the sake of digestion. A good digestion is the root cause of the strength of men.<sup>29</sup>

### Influence of Trees and Seasons upon Health :

The Agni Purāṇa acknowledges the role of trees and

seasons upon human body.<sup>30</sup>

It suggests that it is good to have a plakṣa tree (Ficus Infectoria) on the north, a banyan tree on the east, a mango tree on the south and a holy fig tree on the west. It is better to have thorny trees on the south near the house.

### **Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology, Osteology and Embryology :**

The Agni Purāṇa discusses the anatomical, physiological, pathological, osteological and embryological elements like asthi (bone), majjā (medulla), śukra (semen), meda (marrow), tvak (skin), rakta (blood), mastaka (brain), hṛdaya (heart), nābhi (navel), kaṇṭha (throat), jihvā (tongue), caksu (eye), vasti (abdomen), gulpha (ankle), kara (hand), pada (leg), pṛṣṭha (back), peśī (muscle), kandara (tendon), bandhanī (ligament), snāyu (nerve), śirā (artery), danta (teeth), rasa (lymph), vasā (serum), mūtra (urine), viṣṭhā (faeces), jihvā (tongue), stana (breast), yoni (vagina), grīvā (neck), granthi (joints), brkka (kidney), karna (ear), nāsikā (nose), jarāyu (uterus), garbha (foetus), śukrāśaya (testes), bhrūṅānu (zygote), stanagranthi (mammary gland), śukrotpādana (spermato genesis), garbhāvasthā (pregnancy), karṇamala (ear-wax), sveda (sweat), nāsāmala (mucuse of the nose) etc.<sup>31</sup>

### **Poison :**

The chapter 279 partly and the chapter 297 and 298 wholly deal with toxicology. This Purāṇa elaborately discusses the characteristics of different kinds of serpents, symptoms of snake-bite, spreading of poison and treatment of the snake-bitten patients. It also prescribes treatment of dog-bite, spider-bite, scorpion-bite, ass-bite, centipede-bite etc.<sup>32</sup>

### **Treatment of Animals :**

Chapters 287, 289, 290, 291 and 292 are wholly dedicated to animal treatment. These chapters prescribe medicines for the treatment of elephant, horse and cow.<sup>33</sup>

### **Conclusion :**

Modern medical science began its journey from the Empirical Health Era 1850, passed through the Basic Science Era 1900, crossed the Public Health Era 1975 and fell into the Political Health Science Era 2000. Still the benefits of this development of medical science have not been achieved by all. Modern medical health centres, dispensaries, clinics, nursing homes and hospitals are not set up in all the villages and urban areas. Many villages are still without any modern medical facilities. A large section of people remain untreated on account of poverty. Many people still prefer Ayurvedic and indigenous treatments to modern allopathic system. Those people have to solely depend on the Āyurvedic and indigenous medical treatments prescribed by the Vedas specially the Atharvaveda, Āyurvedic works and the Agnipurāṇa. Thus millions and millions of people in India are treated by the kavirajas, vaidyas, gunins, ojhas, hakims, sannyasis, tankrikas and quacks who follow the medical systems prescribed by the Agnipurāṇa and other Ayurvedic works. Medical Science in the Agnipurāṇa still bears the torch of light to show the path of treatments to innumerable traditional Āyurvedic practitioners and indigenous physicians.

### **References :**

- 1) As quoted in the Cultural Heritage of India, Vol. II, P. 268.
- 2) Ibid.
- 3) Āyurveda Kā Itihāsa, Ps- 8 – 11
- 4) Ibid, Ps. 75 – 83.
- 5) Internet domain – Āyurveda in Puranas and epics.
- 6) Yogabale Rogarogya, P. 18.
- 7) Agni Purāna, 280/31b.
- 8) Ibid, 280/44-46
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