

Ayurvedic Treatment in Jain and Buddhist Texts

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That various branches of science, especially the natural sciences, like Physics, Astronomy, Botany, Zoology and Medical Science made significant progress in Ancient India, is well borne out by Jain and Buddhist texts. It has been an area of intense interest since the earliest times. The act of curing or healing the diseases was called **Tigiccham** or **Cikitsam**¹. It is said that **Āyurvēya** or **Āyurvēda** or **Tēgicchaya** had been invented and introduced by **Dhanavantari**² Physician was called **Vaidya**³. **Milindapanhō**⁴ refers to ninety-eight types of diseases. **Dhanvantari** was a famous **Vaidya** and was a specialist of the eight groups of diseases - (1) pediatrics (**Kumārabhicca**); (2) surgery and midwifery (**Salāga**) (3) treatment of eye, ear, nose and throat (**Salahattha**) (4) bodily diseases (**Kāyatigicchā**) (5) toxicology (**Jamgōlā**), (6) demonology (**Bhuūyavijjā**), (7) science and arts of recovering lost health in old age (**Rasāyana**) and (8) sexual rejuvenation (**Vājīkarana** or **Kharatanta**)⁵.

Milindapanhō states that when the wind is disturbed, it is so in one or other of ten ways - by cold or by heat, or by hunger, or by thirst, or by over eating, or by standing too long or by over exertion, or by walking too fast or by medical treatment or as the result of karma. Thus ten causes of diseases have been explained by **Milindapanhō** and nine causes have been explained by **Sthānānga**.⁶

In **Paumacariyam Rōga** or **Vahi** (**Vyādhi**) denoted the general disease⁷. **Ōsahi** or **Ōusadhi**⁸ denoted the herb while **Ōsaha** or **Ousadhi**⁹ meant the medicine compounded of several ingredients. The engaging of Vaidyas for making a diagnosis of the disease of animal indicates that veterinary doctors were also available¹⁰. **Paumacariyam** refers to **Jvara** (fever)¹¹, **Dāhajvara** (hot fever or inflammatory fever)¹², **Pittajvara** (the bilious fever)¹³, **Kusthavyādhi** (the leprosy)¹⁴, **Upaghāta** (the morbid affection), weakness or mental sickness¹⁵, **Sphōtaka** (the swelling, boil or tumour)¹⁶, **Aruci** (the want of appetite)¹⁷, **Śūla** (the shooting of acute pain in the body)¹⁸ and **Māri** (the epidemic or pestilence which is fatal in form)¹⁹. The reference to **Vauna Vilanghiyā** indicates the disease of rheumatism or paralysis²⁰. Diseases like ringworm (**Daddū**)²¹, blood dysentery²², piles (**Amsiyāo**)²³, rheumatic (**Vātaka**)²⁴, phlegmatic (**Slēsamika**)²⁵, typhoid (**Sannipatika**)²⁶ and insanity (**Unmāda**)²⁷ have also been discussed in the texts. These diseases appeared in the human bodies generally owing to the state of the physical

and mental disequilibrium and practically to the disturbed condition of the three most important physical elements, viz. **Vāyu** (rheum or air) **Pitta** (bile or heat) and **Ślēs-mā** (**Kapha** = phlegm or water).

Death

According to *Milindapanhō*²⁸ there are seven kinds of persons who die prematurely -

1. The starving man who can get no food, whose innards are consumed²⁹.
2. The thirsty man who can get no water, whose heart is dried up.
3. The man bitten by a snake, who, when consumed by the fierce energy of poison, can find no cure.
4. He who has taken poison and when all his limbs are burning is unable to procure medicine,
5. One fallen into fire, who when he is aflame, can find no means of putting out the fire,
6. The man wounded by a dart, who in his illness can find no surgeon, and
7. He who having fallen into water can find no firm ground to stand on.

A man dies before his time does so in consequence of suffering from the attack of some diseases like :

1. from excess of windy humour.
2. of bilious humour,
3. of phlegmatic humour,
4. from variations in temperature,
5. from inequality in protection, .
6. from treatment,
7. from hunger,
8. from thirst,
9. from water and
10. from the sword³⁰.

Dream

According to *Milindapanhō* there are six cases of dream -

1. the man who is of a windy humour,³¹

2. who is of a bilious one,
3. who is of a phlegmatic one,
4. the man who dreams by the influence of a god,
5. the man who does so by the influence of his own habits and
6. the man who does so in the way of prognostication.

The Simhalese³² gives the different kinds of dreams seen by each of these six - the first dreams of journeys through space, the second of fire and conflagrations, the third of water, the fourth of good or bad things according to as the god is kindly or malignant, the fifth of what he has himself seen or heard, and the last of his future gain or loss. When a man dreams a dream that is prognostication. His own mind does not itself seek the omen, neither does any one else come and tell him of it. The prognostication comes of its own accord into his mind. It is like the case of a looking-glass, which does not go anywhere to seek for the reflection; neither does anyone else come and put the reflection on to the looking-glass. But the object reflected comes from somewhere or other across the, sphere over which the reflecting power of the looking-glass extends³³.

When a man dreams a dream he is neither awake nor asleep. He sleeps like a monkey's sleep and in that interval it is that dreams are dreamt. When a man is in deep sleep his mind has returned home and he does not know the distinctions between bliss and woe, and he who knows not has no dreams. It is when the mind is active that dreams are dreamt³⁴. Again, just as the glory of a sun veiled in fog is imperceptible, as its rays, though they do exist, are unable to pierce through and as when its rays do not act there is no light, so when a man is in deep sleep his mind has returned into itself and a mind shut in, does not act, and an inactive mind does not know the evil and the good, and he who knows not does not dream. For it is when the mind is active that dreams are dreamt.

Under two conditions, the mind is inactive though the body is there - when a man being in deep sleep the mind has returned into itself and when the man has fallen into a trance. The mind of a man who is awake is excited, open, clear, untrammelled and no prognostication occurs to one whose mind is so. Just as a man seeking concealment avoids the man who is open, candid, unoccupied and unreserved, - just so is it that the divine intention is not manifested to the wakeful man, and the man who is awake therefore sees no dream³⁵.

Epidemic and Disabled persons

On the occasion of spread of an epidemic there are large scale death. It is said that an epidemic spread due to the air which was infected with germs of diseases³⁶. Disabled persons

such as the blind (**An□dhā**), the deaf (**Vadhira**), the dumb (**Muka**), the lame (**Pangu**), men having one arm withered (**Kun□i**), the dwarf (**Vāmana**) and the hunch-backed (**Khujja** or **Kūbja**) were found in ancient period³⁷.

Treatment

Two kinds of treatment-medicinal³⁸ and surgical-were undertaken to cure diseases according to their natures and classifications on the basis of diagnosis. In the case of a sudden swoon due to mental shock, the patient was brought to consciousness by sprinkling cold water on face and fanning air with a palm-leaf-fan, as it is evidenced in the case of the mother of the prince, **Jamāli** who fainted immediately after listening to the undesired, unpleasing, disagreeable and unheard words of request of her son for permission to undertake the state of houselessness³⁹. The patient was served with a Special kind of diet in the case of hir disease. When the Maurya king **Aśoka** became old he used to eat half piece of a myrobalan (**Āmalaka**). It is a small and very astringent fruit which was treated as medicine and verymuch useful for stomach⁴⁰.

There are references to various kinds of treatments prescribed and given by the physician on the basis of the nature of diseases, such as rubbing with oil (**Abbahanga**)⁴¹, rubbing with powder (**Uvvāttana**), oil drinks (**Sinēhapāna**), vomiting (**Vamana**)⁴², purging (**Virēyana**), branding (**Avaddāhana**), medicated bath (**Avanahāna**), oil enema (**Asuvāsana**), head bath (**Batthikamma**), purging by drugs (**Virūha**), opening veins (**Sirāvēha**), cutting (**Taksana**)⁴³, scrapping (**Paksana**), bathing the head with oils (**Sirōbōtthi**), nourishing the body with oils (**Tappana**), by means of ingredients roasted on fire, **Putapāka** by method, barks, roots, bulbs, leaves, flowers, fruits, seeds, bitter (**Silikā**)⁴⁴, pills, drugs (**Ōsāhā**) etc⁴⁵. Snake-bites were cured by charms⁴⁶ Charmers were called **Janguliyātāra Jangōli** was one of the eight branches of Ayurveda⁴⁷. (But this certainly was a pseudo-medical practice).

In **Karanātaka** sandal-wood was commonly used for curing men who had fainted. Its water was sprinkled or its paste was applied on the body for the same purpose⁴⁸.

A long list of other kinds of treatment both medicinal and surgical is provided, such as the use of hairy or hairless (**Salōma-Nillōma**) skin for the old monks and nuns thus, the lying down on the skin in the case of flatulence (**Uddhavāta**) or paralysis (**Dhanuggāha**) or of piles or severe pain or of the dislocation of foot or of the attack of wind on the whole or the part of the body of a nun, the wrapping of the affected part of the body with the skin of hyena (**Taraccha**)

in the case of her rheumatism (**Vāta**) and the lying down on a tiger-skin (**Divicamma**) in that of dog-biting, etc.⁴⁹

The very name of **Visalyā** indicates that surgery was a common means of treatment in ancient period.⁵⁰ Madness was cured by psychological treatment.⁵¹ The texts throw light upon the surgical treatment by referring to various kinds of instruments⁵² for operation and to the surgical cases⁵³ treated by the surgeons. Hospital (**Cikitsāsālā** or **Tēgicchayasālā**) was found where surgeons and cikitsakas were appointed and salary was paid to them.⁵⁴ **Tonic** was prescribed to a sick man.⁵⁵ According to *Milindapanhō*, **Nārada**, **Dhanavantari**, **Amgirasa**, **Kandaraggisōma**, **Kakvāyana**, **Kapila**, **Atul** and **Pubba** were the teachers of the doctors. These teachers surely had thorough knowledge of the causes and nature of diseases. They had knowledge to cure the diseases. These doctors were able to point out that in such and such a body type, such and such a disease would arise. The text states that a doctor or surgeon would first procure for himself a teacher, either by payment of fee or by the performance of service, and then thoroughly trained himself in holding the lancet, in cutting, marking, or piercing with it, in extracting dart, in cleansing wounds, in causing them to dry up, in the application of ointments, in the administration of emetics and purges and oily enemas. Then after his apprenticeship he would make himself skilful, and visit the sick to heal them.⁵⁶ *Milindapanhō* also defines the qualities of medicine. Medicine is an antidote to whatever poison may have been imparted by bites or contact, by eating or by drinking in any way.⁵⁷ "A physician used to go to the sick man with the five kinds of drugs made from medicinal roots, and grinding them up, gave him to drink, and thereby the sick man would be cured. The wife of rich merchant of **Sākēta** was suffering from severe headache since more than seven years. While her disease was cured by the famous **Vaidya Jivaka**, he was presented sixteen thousand **Aśarphi**, one male-servant and one female-servant as fee by her husband⁵⁸. A **Brāhmana** of **Vārānasi** was suffering from jaundice and was cured by **Āyurvēdika** medicine.⁵⁹ *Jātaka* refers to a disease which could not be cured by the treatment of even five **Vaidyās** but when the patient ate boiled leaf of **Sāmākanivāra** and **Yavāgu** without sait, he recovered from illness. A man of **Vārānasi** was given poison and he fainted, the colour of his eyes changed; body bowed and he fall down. He was given mixture of medicine and **Ousadhi** of vomiting. He vomited. Then was given **Ghi**, **Guda**, **Madhu**, **Śakkara** etc. and he was saved. Medicine had done its work. According to *Milindapanhō* "A physician, a true follower of the sages of old, one who carries in his memory the ancient traditions and verses, a practical man, skilled in diagnosis and master of

an efficacious and lasting system of treatment, who had collected from medicinal herbs a medicine able to cure every disease. A clever physician and surgeon used to make a grievous sickness light by the aid of a powerful medicinal drug.⁶⁰

Milindapanhō States - "Suppose in treating a wound full of matter and blood, in whose grievous hollow the weapon which caused it remained, which stank of putrid flesh, and was made worse by the pain that varied with constantly changing symptoms, by variations in temperature, and by the union of the three humours - windy, bilious and phlegmatic - an able physician and surgeon were to anoint it with a rough, sharp, bitter, stinging ointment, to the end that the inflammation had subsided, and the wound had become sweet. Suppose he were then to cut into it with a lancet, and burn it with caustic, and when he had cauterised it, suppose he were to prescribe an alkaline wash, and anoint it with some drug to the end that the wound might heal up, and the sick man recovers his health.⁶¹ Patinets were brought to the private physician for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and his medical advice. The private physician was called into the house of the patient, honoured and entertained with the present of food, valuable utensils and fees. The state physician was appointed and maintained by the king for the medical service of the royal family on a certain rate of salary⁶². A physician should first find out the age of his patient before treatment him⁶³.

Thus the **Pāli** and **Prākṛita** texts throw light on the development of the different branches of science. Medical science was studied and practised in ancient India. Medicinal and surgical treatments were undertaken to cure diseases. The texts concentrate on treatment of diseases more than diagnosis. In special cases meat and wine were prescribed by physicians to treat special cases⁶⁴. All these evidences regarding the development of science show that the ideas relating to the operations of forces of Nature intensely intrigued our ancient thinkers leading gradually to the evolution of true Scientific temper and the liberation of pure Scientific thinking from pseudo-scientism. All these evidences of the forces of Nature worked in the minds of the great thinkers of those days.

- ¹. **Paūmacariyam** 110-27, K.R. Chandra, **A Critical Study of Paūmacariyam**, Muzaffarpur, 1970, p. 410; **Sthānāngasūtra** 9.678; **Niśīthacūrni** 15.944.
- ². The Questions of king Milinda, Translated by T.W. Rhys Davids, part II, **Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. XXXVI, Delhi, 1965, p. 109, **Jātaka** Allahabad, 1985, Vol. V, No. 510, p. 87, **Dighanikāya** 1.2.27.
- ³. **Paūmacariyama** 22.64, K.R. Chandra, **op.cit.**, p. 410.
- ⁴. The Questions of king Milinda Translated by T.W. Rhys Davids, part II, **Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. XXXVI, Delhi, 1965, IV.1.16, p. 152.
- ⁵. Jogendra Chandra Sikdar, **op.cit.**, p. 345; Suśruta 1.1.18; **Niśīthacūrni** 15, p. 512; **Āvaśyakacūrni**, p. 385; **Vrhatkalpabhāsyā** 3.4408-10; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 236.14; **Sthānānga** 8, p. 404; **Vipākasūtra** 7, p. 41; Jagadish Chandra Jain, **op.cit.**, p. 308.
- ⁶. The Questions of King Milinda, IV.1.63, **Sacred Books of the East**, p. 192; **Sthānānga** 9-667.
- ⁷. Paumacariyam 3.124; 13.33.
- ⁸. **Ibid.**, 3.158
- ⁹. **Ibid.**, 22.46
- ¹⁰. **Ibid** 81.12; **Niśīthacūrni** 20.6396; **Bhagavatisūtra** 10.3.407
- ¹¹. **Ibid** 22.63; 63.36; **Niśīthabhāsyā** 11.3646; 1.599.
- ¹². **ibid.**, 63.26; **Uttarādhyānasūtra** 10.27
- ¹³. **Ibid.**, 37.22; **Vrihatkalpabhāsyā** 5.5870; 3.3907; **Bhagavatisūtra** 9.33.386; 18.10.647; 15.1.557.
- ¹⁴. **Ibid.**, 77.101; The Questions of King Milinda, **Sacred Books of the East**, XXXV, IV.3.18, p. 240; **Carakasamahitā** 2.7.1049; **Vrihatkalpabhāsyā**, 3.4380; **Niśīthacūrni** 1.798; **Mahābagga**, 1.30.88;

Kuvalayamālakahā 55.15; **Jātaka**, Vol. V, No. 519, pp. 176-78.

¹⁵. **Ibid**, 63.26; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 41.28; 154.12.

¹⁶. **Ibid**, **Mahābagga** 8.1.4; 8.4.6-9; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 274.8, Prem Suman Jain, **Kuvalayamālakahā Kā Sāmskritika Adhyayana**, Vaishali, 1975, p. 172.

¹⁷. **Ibid**; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 19.17, 19.19; **Milinda Praśna** translated by Viksu Jagdish Kashyap, Nagpur, 1986, p. 196.

¹⁸. **Ibid**; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 274.8-10.

¹⁹. **Ibid**, 27 32; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 274.9; 114.13.

²⁰. **Ibid**, 109.2; 114.2; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 114.27; **Bhagavatisūtra** 18.10.647.

²¹. **Bhagavatisūtra** 7.6.288; John S. Strong, **The Legend of King Aśōka**; A study and translation of the **Aśōkavadāna**, Delhi, 1983, p. 273.

²². **Ibid**, 15.1.557

²³. **Ibid**, 16.3.572; **Niśīthacūrnipithikā** 283, p. 100; **Vrihatkalpabhāsyā** 1.1051; **Kuvalayamālakahā**, 274.6.

²⁴. **Ibid** 18.10.647; **Vrihatkalpabhāsyā** 5.6028-31; 1.2995

²⁵. **Ibid**; The Questions of King Milinda, **Sacred Books of the East**, XXXVI, IV.8.42, p. 167.

²⁶. **Ibid**; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 114.27; The Questions of king Milinda, **Sacred Books of the East**, XXXVI, IV.8.40, p. 164

²⁷. **ibid**, 14.2.503; **Vyavahārabhāsyā** 2,122-25

²⁸. The Questions of king Milinda, **Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. XXXVI, IV.8-40, pp. 163-64.

²⁹. **Upahata-Abhbhāntar** (whose interior is burnt by the fierceness of the stomach fire).

³⁰. The Questions of Milinda, IV.8.42, **Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. XXXVI, p. 167; Vol. XXXV, IV. 1.63, pp. 191-92.

³¹. **Vātika** which childers renders wrongly rheumatic.

³². Cited in, The Questions of Milinda, IV, 8.33, **Sacred Books of the East**, XXXVI. pp. 157-58.

³³. **Ibid**, XXXVI, IV.8.33-34, pp. 157-58

³⁴. **Ibid**, IV.8.35-36, p. 159.

³⁵. **Ibid**, IV.8.37-38, pp. 160-61.

³⁶. **Paūmacariyam** 65.68 **Bahurōgasamūbbhavam Vāyuma**.

³⁷. **Ibid**, 2.77; 14.31; **Sthānānga** 8, p. 404; **Vipākasūtra** 7, p. 41; **Niśīthabhāsyā** 11.3646; **Uttarādhyayanasūtra** 10.27; **Ācārānigasūtra** 6.1.173; **Niśīthacūrni** 11, p. 737; **Jivābhigamasūtra** 3, p. 153; **Bhagavatisūtra** 9.33.384.

³⁸. The Questions of king Milinda, **Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. XXXV, IV.1.68, p. 197; IV.215, p. 210.

³⁹. **Bhagavatisūtra** 9.33.384; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 114.13 and 27

⁴⁰. John S. Strong, **The Legend of king Aśōka**, Delhi, 1989, pp 288-91.

⁴¹. **Niśīthacūrni** 11.3436; **Oughaniryukti** 368, p. 134

⁴². **Ibid**; **Kuvalayamālakahā** 145.15; 154.12; **Vrihatkalpabhāsyā** 3.3839-40; **Niśīthasūtra** 3.22-24; 12.32; **Niśīthabhāsyā** 12.4199; **Vipākasūtra** 8, p. 48.

⁴³. **Niśīthacūrni** ; 4.1566, **Kallānghayam Tittanga Mahāttittagam**; 20.6396.

⁴⁴. **Vivāgasuya** Comm. by Abhayadeva, Baroda, ch. 1, p. 8.

⁴⁵. **Vrihatkalpasūtra** 3.3.6; **Vrihatkalpabhāsyā** , 3839-41.

⁴⁶. **Paūmacariyam**, 15. 45-48; **Jātaka**, Vol. 3, no. 367, p. 364.

- ⁴⁷. **Sthānānga**, Abhayadeva's commentary, 4.341; 8, Su. 6.1 **Visavighātatantram** **Nīśīthabhāsyapīthikā**, 230; **Ōghaniryukti** 341, p. 129; **Pindaniryukti** 48.
- ⁴⁸. **Paūmacariyam** 30.14; 64.37.
- ⁴⁹. **Vrihatkalpabhāsyā** 3816-18, The Questions of king Milinda, **Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. XXXVI, IV.8.67, p. 190.
- ⁵⁰. **Paūmacariyam**, 64.63.
- ⁵¹. **Ibid**, chapter 113.
- ⁵². **Nīśīthacūrni**, 11.3436, **Lauhakantikā**, **Sandasi**, **Anuvēdhaśalākā**; **Sthānānga**, 8, p. 404.
- ⁵³. **Vivāgasuya** 8, p. 48; **Vinayavastu of Mūlasarrāstivāda**, p. 27-43.
- ⁵⁴. **Jātādharma-kathā** 13, p. 143; The Questions of king Milinda, part II, **Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. XXXVI, 4.6.25, pp. 64-65; 4.6.27, p.67
- ⁵⁵. The Questions of king Milinda, part II, **Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. XXXVI. IV.5.7, p. 7; VI.12, p. 256.
- ⁵⁶. **Ibid**, VI.10; pp. 254-55.
- ⁵⁷. The Questions of king Milinda, **Sacred Books of the East**, Vol. XXXVI, VII.7.10, p. 368
- ⁵⁸. **Vinayapīṭaka**, p. 268.
- ⁵⁹. **Jātaka** vol. 3, Hindi Sāhitya Sammēlana, Allahabad, 1985, no. 293, pp. 156-57.
- ⁶⁰. **Ibid**, XXXV, IV.1.30, p. 165; **Buddhacharita** of **Aśvaghōsa**, Edited and translated by Suryanarayana Chaudhary, Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi, 1985, 23.55, p. 257; 25.78, p. 273; 26.73, p. 282; 27.49, p. 292.
- ⁶¹. The Questions of king Milinda. **Sacred Books of the East**, XXXV, IV. 1.33, p. 168, **Buddhacharita**, 26.39, p. 278, 23.55, p. 257.
- ⁶². **Ibid**, IV.2.13, p. 211; **Buddhacharita**, 16.47, p. 208; 27.49, p. 292; **Vrihatkalpabhāsyā** 1.1910-70; **Vyavahārabhāsyā**, 5.21.
- ⁶³. **Ibid**, IV.4.12, p. 272, **Kāūō** 15.10, p. 198.
- ⁶⁴. **Nāyādhammakahāō**, comm. by **Abhayadēva**, **Āgamōdaya Samīti**, Bombay, 1919, ch. 5. p. 80; **Vivāgasuya**, comm. by **Abhayadēva**, Baroda, 1922, ch. 2; **Mahāvagga**, Banaras, 1956, VI. 10-2.