# CHAPTER VI

## CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The sixth chapter discusses the concluding observations of the research work entitled 'A Study of the Charms and Spells of the Atharvaveda with Special Reference to The Medicinal Discourses'.

The *AV* is the last of the *Vedas*. The contents of the *AV* appeared to be complementary to those of the *Ṛgveda*. It consists of spells and charms prevalent at its time, and portrays a clearer picture of the *Vedic* society, religion and culture.

In the *Vedic* literature, the *AV* has other titles *Amṛtaveda*, *Ātmaveda*, *Aṁgiroveda*, *Atharvāṅgirasa*, *Bhṛgvāṅgirasa*, *Kṣatra*, *Bhaiṣajya*, *Mahīveda* and *Chandoveda*. The *Atharvaveda* presents its own name as *Atharvāngirasaḥ*. *Brahmā* is the *Ṛtvija* of the *AV*. Therefore, *AV* is also addressed as *Brahmaveda* after *Brahmā*, the chairperson of the *Yajñasaṁsad*-offering council. The *AV* is compiled in 20 *Kāṇḍas*-books, comprising 750 *Sūktas*-*Vedic* hymns, which in turn have about 6000 *Mantras*. About one sixth of these *Mantras* are in prose, the rest in the various *Candas* related to the *Vedas*. The two main post- *Saṁhitā* texts associated with the *AV* are the *Vaitāna Sūtra* and the *Kauśikasūtra*. The *AV* has one *Brāhmaṇa*, that is *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*. It has no any *Āraṇyaka*. There are three main *Upaniṣads* of the *Atharvaveda*, these are *Praśna*, *Muṇḍka* and *Māṇḍukya*. *Śaunakiya Caturādhyāyikā*, *Māṇḍūki Śikṣā*, *Atharvaveda Prātiśākhyasūtra*, *Atharva Prātiśākhya* are *Prātiśākhya* of the *AV*. *Vaitāna Śrautasūtra*, *Kauśika Gṛhyasūtra* and *Paṭhināsī Dharmasūtra* are *Atharvavedic Kalpasūtras*.

The *AV* is generally known for its magical charms, which are broadly divided into two parts-Black and White. The contents of the *AV* can be classified into fourteen heads—

Charms to cure diseases and possession by demons (*Bhaiṣajyāni*), Prayer for long life and health (*Āyuṣyāni*), Imprecations against demons, sorcerers and human enemies (*Abhicārikāni* and *Kṛtyapariharānāni*), Charms pertaining to the various kinds of relationship with women (*Strīkarmāṇi*), Charms to secure harmony in domestic, social and political spheres (*Sāṁmanasyāni*), Charms pertaining to the royalty (*Rājakarmāṇi*), Prayer and imprecations in the interest of the *Brāhmaṇas* (*Brāhmaṇyāni*), Charms to secure prosperity and freedom from danger (*Pauṣṭikāni*), Charms in expiation of sin (*Prāyaścittāni*), Cosmogonic and theosophic hymns, Ritualistic and general hymns, the books dealing with individual themes (books 13-18), the twentieth book and the *Kuntāpa* hymns.

According to a tradition represented by the *Charaṇavyūha*, *Pāṇini*, *Patañjali*, the *Purāṇas* the *AV* has nine schools. They are *Paippalāda*, *Tauda*, *Mauda*, *Śaunaka*, *Jājala*, *Jalada*, *Brahmaveda*, *Devadarśa*, *Cāraṇavaidya*. Of these, the text of only two-*Śaunaka* and *Paippalāda* are available. Others are found in references only.

*Āchārya Sāyaṇa* had written commentary on the entire *AV*. R.T.H. Griffith, W.D. Whitney and M. Bloomfield translated into English. C.R. Lanmann edited it in 1905. A. Ludwig and J. Grill translated some of the text of *Atharvaveda* into German. Its Hindi translations can be found by Śrī Śrīpāda Dāmodara Sātavalekara and Śrī Jayadeva Śarmā Vidyālaṁkāra.

The *AV* ranks quite high among the *Vedas*. It has cultural, philosophical, spiritual and sociological significance. It presents a detailed discussion of the culture and civilization. It is replete with valuable material on all the aspects of culture. The more this *Veda* is contemplated, discussed and analysed, the more useful material can be obtained from it. The chief characteristic of *AV* lies in the variety of its subject-matter,

enunciation of broadest to minutest elements and the admixture of the practical and the academic.

The objective of the study is to find an account of the cravings for wellbeing and welfare of mankind as found in the *AV*. A study of the healing devices and a survey of the medicinal plants is also an added objective of this study.

In the second chapter we discussed about humane welfare and wellbeing craved in the *AV*. The *ṚV*, the *YV* and the *SV* are described only in ritualistic terms but non-ritualistic thought has creeped up in the *AV*. It is the first Indian text dealing with medicine and spells. It consists chiefly of a variety of spells and incantation, intended to curse as well as bless. In the *AV* we find charms of a positive character to obtain benefits, happy family life, health and longevity, protection on journey, all beneficiary of human life.

Welfare is a typical term that denotes various kinds of social spending (in the form of assistance for the underprivileged) allocated by government following industrialization in some nations. 'Welfare' is defined as 'providing assistance to those who are otherwise unable to feed, house or cloths themselves'. It includes redistributive policies and programs that enable the disadvantaged to reach a minimal level of existence within a national state. Welfare may come in various ways—housing assistance, income supplementation, in-kind goods and service provision, and public education. However, the programs and policies to provide these aspects of a minimal human existence may vary contextually. Some governments provide more generous and comprehensive welfare programs while some other countries have less generous and comprehensive welfare programs. Human welfare is a very broad and universal term incorporating many aspects of human life.

The second chapter of the study aims at presenting various areas of human welfare and wellbeing craved in the *AV*. In the *Atharvavedic* society, people prayed and seek blessings for welfare for harvest, grain stores, ploughing of the field, sowing the seed, good business and even for success at dice. There were charms related to welfare of cattle. Education for knowledge of self or spiritual knowledge was also emphasized for human welfare as it helps man to attain knowledge of self or the *Brahman*. Educational welfare was related to the qualities and duties of the students, which was dealt with in the *AV* in the *Brahmacāryasūkta*. The *AV* also deals with penance and initiation with a view to promoting human welfare, national progress, strength and vigour. A celibate was charged with an immense responsibility to ensure national and public good.

The *AV* used words like *Vṛtāvṛtā*, *Abhīvāra*, *Āvṛtā*, *Parīvṛtā* to denote environment. Apart from other *Vedas*, the *AV* specially has dealt in detail about various aspects of environment and showed more concern for ecology. Holy magic for securing wellbeing, and spells for causing various types of harms to the adversary are also found in the *AV*. There are hymns of cosmogenic and theosophic character, hymns addressed to the earth (*Bhūmisūkta* or *Pṛthivīsūkta*), water (in *Paippalāda Saṁhitā* of *AV*), air, *Ākāśa* or ether and for the glorification of the Sun, to *Kāl* (time) to *Prān* that is the life principle.

The knowledge about the origin and significance of plants can be traced out from *Vedic* literature. Plants are considered as the saviours of humanity in the *Vedic* literature. The *AV* mentions that the plants and the herbs possess qualities of all deities and have the power to cure diseases and destroy poisonous effect of the atmosphere. The *AV* talks about the relation of plants with earth. The *AV* prays for continuous growth of herbs. Plants were studied as a part of environment and their protection.

The sacrifice or the *Yajña* is considered as an important concept of *Vedic* philosophy. *Yajña* helps in minimizing air pollution, in increasing crop yield, in protecting plants from diseases, as well as in providing a disease free, pure and energized environment for all. It implies that our ancient texts are much more relevant today because science alone cannot be successful to save human beings from the horrible impact of environmental pollution. Thus, the welfare element is very much clearly evident in the *Vedic* literature in general and particularly in the *AV*.

The *AV* mentions about the establishment of the institutions *Sabhā* and *Samiti* for the welfare of the public. The *AV* considers *Sabhā* as a wider power and not as a local institution. According to *Sāyaṇa*, decisions are taken in a *Sabhā* on the basis of majority which cannot be denied. Showing the importance of *Sabhā* and *Samiti*, the *AV* describes the *Sabhā* as *Nariṣṭā*. *Nariṣṭā* may mean something conducting to public good. The *AV* states that the members of the *Sabhā* (*Sabhāsadaḥ*) of *Yama* were *Rājānaḥ* and who shared the sixteenth part of the merit accumulated from the good deeds of the people. Though there are some evidences that *Sabhā* and *Samiti* are the same. But there is an *Atharvavedic* passage which clearly mentions that the *Sabhā* and *Samiti* were two different bodies. *Sāyaṇa*, in his commentary on *AV*, has explained the meaning of the word *Samiti* as *Saṁgrāmīṇajanasabhā* suggesting that *Samiti* was an assembly of the people which was called in times of the war. The *Atharvavedic* passages seem to confirm that *Samiti* was a political institute.

The *Atharvavedic* society was ruled by a systematic government. The king was regarded as the originator or supreme head of these institutions who was selected by the king makers known as *Rājakṛtaḥ*. These kingmakers were the representatives of the common people. An *Atharvavedic* passage indicates that kingship in *Vedic* times depended upon the acceptability of the king by the *Viśaḥ* that is the subject. Passages

from the *AV* and the *ṚV* also confirm that the members of the *Sabhā* and *Samiti* required harmony and peace among themselves. The reference of common people in the same group of king intelligentsia leads to the fact that in that period common people got equal place in politics. The king is the maintainer and protector of his subjects. It was the duty of the members to observe the rules of the assembly and protect its dignity. Discussion and debates were held on various public issues for public welfare in the *Sabhā* and *Samiti*.

The main function of the *Sabhā* was to ensure justice. The most important function of the *Samiti* was the election of the king. It was represented by all the sections of the society. It undertook for discussion all matters pertaining to state administration. It kept safety and prosperity of the nation and its people as the utmost goal. Besides *Sabhā* and *Samiti*, the *AV* mentions another institution named as *Āmantraṇa*. It took up counseling at higher level. Thus there were three forms of national organization these were *Sabhā, Samiti,* and *Āmantraṇa.*

The *AV* mentioned the seven *Saṁsad*. This shows that the central government was divided into seven departments, each having one separate minister. But the names of the departments were not founed in the *AV*. Thus it can be seen that the ancient political system had a welfare system for the common people. Their problems were taken note of seriously and were taken care of through the institutions like *Sabhā*, *Samiti, Āmantraṇa* and *Saṁsad*.

Women are accorded great respect in *Vedas*. The *AV* held the education of girls important by saying that girls too should train themselves as students and only then enters into married life. The *Brahmacārya Sūkta* specifically emphasizes that girls should receive the same level of training as boys. Parents should gift their daughter a

dowry of intellectuality and power of knowledge when she leaves for husband's home. When girls ignore external objects and develops foresight and vibrant attitude through power of knowledge, she becomes provider of wealth of skies and earth. The *AV* emphasizes that the knowledge and noble qualities of the bride may please everyone at her husband's home. It also regards women to be the protector of children, having definite knowledge, worth thousands of prayers and impressing all directions. The women are pure, sacred and *Yajñīya* (as respected as *Yajña*); worth being worship, worth being served, of great character and scholarly. The *AV* ensures that women should be kept away from sorrow and diseases. The *AV* equalizes man with woman in regard to knowledge.

The *AV* comprises a good number of charms pertaining to the women. There are love charms aimed at men exercised on behalf, hymns which belong to the peaceful sphere of conjugal life as well, charms to secure birth of a child and charms to protect the embryo of the womb.

The *AV* is such a text which may be considered to be dedicated to the welfare of the people. It discusses various problems related to the health, their remedies, long life. In the *AV*, a large number of charms are directed towards expelling demonic beings. The *AV* appeals to the plant *Ajaśṛṅgi* to drive *Rākṣasas*, *Apsaras* and *Gandharvas*. The *Rakṣas* and fits are driven out of a possessed person with an amulet made from ten different kinds of holy wood.

*Āyuṣyāni* hymns of the *AV* are supposed to be capable of bestowing long life and good health. These hymns are similar to the medicinal hymns of the *AV*. There are prayers for the cure of diseases, exemption from death, secure life unto the ideal old age with good health, liberation from 100 or 101 kinds of death and for protection from all

sorts of diseases. The *Āyuṣya* hymns gives special prominence to *Agni* including other divinities.

The *AV* also referred to the use of some amulets which are considered as life-bestowing and life protecting. It is recommended that an amulet of pearls and gold secures and lengthens one's life without any disease. The sacred girdle (*Mekhalā*) is also considered as an *Āyuṣyam*. *Agni* is adored for salve (*Āñjana*), which has the power of protecting life and limbs, destroying various diseases. It is said that one who bears *Āñjana* is protected from curse, sorcery, burning pain and *Viṣkandha*. Likewise, the *AV* also refers to *Āñjanamaṇi*, *Śaṅkhamaṇi*, *Paraṇamaṇi* in order to ensure prosperity, long life, virility. Moreover, to make their life lengthened the *Vedic Āryans* used '*Rakṣāsūtra*' in the right hand. For the same purpose, an amulet of *Jaṅgiḍa* is also used.

The *AV* also contains a number of spells for the restoration of harmony. These stand mid way between the expiatory formulas and benedictions and are known as the *Sāṁmanasyāni Sūktani*. These hymns are used to achieve peace and harmony in the family affected by discord as well as in preserving harmony in an assembly.

The *Pauṣṭikāni* hymns include prayers and rites about house, home, field, grain, river, rain, cattle, horses, trading, gambling, journey, returning, serpents, vermin, wealth, progeny, and exemption and protection from calamity and danger. In this class, benedictory stanzas are found for the uplifment of the farmer, the shepherd, the merchant, the gambler. It consist more than one fifth of the whole *Sūktas* of the *AV* excluding the *Sūktas* of the 20$^{th}$ book. The *AV* also contains prayer for building a new house. There are some exorcisms against serpents in the *AV*. The rest of the hymns of this class can be divided into two classes, one class of which is to procure health,

wealth and prosperity and other is to ward off danger and calamity. An amulet of *Udumbara* tree is seen used to secure prosperity (xix.31). *Anumati* (vii.20), *Sinīvātī* (vii.46), *Kuhū* (vii.47), *Rākā* (vii.48) are prayed for wealth and offspring.

In the third chapter we have discussed different kind of diseases, their causes and symptoms. It mentions many internal and external diseases, namely *Alaji*, *Āśarīka*, *Balāsa*, *Gaṇḍamālā*-scrofulous swelling, *Hṛdyota*, *Hariman*- jaundice, *Hrūḍu*, *Jalodara*- dropsy, *Jāyānya*, *Takman*-fever, diarrhoea, consumption, *Kilāsa*-leprosy, *Kṛmi*, abscesses, *Pra-mota*, *Saṃskandha*, *Viklindu*, *Vilohita*, *Viśara*, *Visalpaka*, wounds and fractures, inherited disease, flow of blood, poison of all kinds, worms and many others as well as protective measures against them, *AV* deals with that coverage of human life which is full of mysteries and miseries and took into the human life as full of hurdles and happiness as well.

Many names of the diseases as well as of plants mentioned in the *AV* could not have been worked out in present context. A large number of diseases have been mentioned in the *AV*, but they are not always in clear terms. Classification of the diseases based on etiological factors is not found in *AV*.

The *AV* depicts God of Rain, *Varuṇa* as creator as well as protector from all common diseases such as dropsy (*Jalodara*). It describes that man suffers from ailment due to his falsehood. God *Varuṇa* caused the diseases to those who resort to falsehood. Moreover, it mentions that diseases are also caused by demons.

It is a peculiarity of the charms of the *AV* that they have grouped together a variety of unrelated diseases, have not drawn a line of demarcation between the cause of diseases and the possession by demons, have used symbolism to play an important part in the cure of a disease and the medicine recommended is mostly in the form of

amulets derived from the vegetable kingdom. Many names of the diseases as well as of plants are in general quite obscure. A large number of diseases, both major and minor, have been mentioned in the *AV*, but somewhere they are in clear terms and somewhere vaguely. It also did not mention about the symptoms of the diseases.

In our study we have found mentions of a few common diseases in the *AV* along with their healings which includes *Takman* (fever), headache, and cough, *Jaundice*, *Balāsa* (muscle disease), pain (colic), dropsy, paralysis, heart-disease, diarrhea, consumption, leprosy, abscesses, scrofulous swelling, wounds and fractures, flow of blood, poison of all kinds, worms and some hereditary diseases. The *AV* not only described about the human diseases but also about the diseases of cattle. This study has elaborately discussed about the diseases mentioned in the *AV*.

*Ailaba* is a kind of eye disease caused by *Babhru* and *Babhrukarṇa*. *Alaji* are small pimples of red colour occurring at the juncture of the cornea and sclerotic. Its symptoms are burning and paining eye. *Amīvā* refers to distress, terror, fright, tormenting spirit, demon, affliction and disease and is associated with the committed sins attached with the body. *Apacits* is identified with the *Gaṇḍamālā* meaning scrofulous swellings of the gland of the neck. There are 55 *Apacit* in nape, 77 in neck and 99 in shoulders are found in the *AV*. In another place of the *AV* it is also mentioned that there are five *Apacit* they are one spotted, one whitish, one black and two red. They have itching with mild pain and, when burst, are dissolved giving rise to others and are caused by *Medas* and *Kapha*. *Apvā* has been defined as sickness or fear, a personification of colic or dysentery, diarrhea, a disease within the bowels. *Atīsāra* is diarrhea, caused by eating of heavy, excessively fatty, rough, hot, liquid and solid food; excessively cold food, intake of incompatible food items, eating when

previous food is not digested; improperly cooked and unsuitable food; excessive and faulty use of unction, poison, fear, anxiety, excessive drinking of contaminated water and defective wine, contrariety of suitability and seasons, excessive sporting in water, suppression of urges and infestation of helminthes. *Āśarīka* is a specific disease which means 'wholly injurious'. Bloomfield calls it 'breaking diseases'. *Āsrāva* refers to 'difficulty of urinating' or 'painful urination'. These kind of discharging diseases were cured by using the plant *Muñja*. *Balāsa* is a disease in which the bones and joints dissolve and is caused by love, disgust and heart disease. *Grāhi* is stated as a female demon of disease in which the female demon is assumed to fetter the sick man. *Hṛdyota* is related to 'heart-affliction' or 'chest pain' characterized by internal diseases. *Hariman* refers to yellowness and jaundice. Its visible symptoms are yellowish white colour of skin, yellowness of eyes, teeth and nails, which are the symptoms of jaundice. *Hṛdyota* is considered as the cause of or a complication of *Hariman*, that is heart-affliction or chest pain is the cause of yellowness or jaundice. *Hrūḍu* is a type of fever. It makes the life agonized by heating the whole body and thus punishes the sinner. *Jalodara* is a disease in which the entire blood of the body is changed into water. It is caused by the wrath of *Varuṇa*. *Jambhu* or *Jambha* is a evil sorcerer or a lockjaw. It may mean convulsions, cramps or colic. *Jāyenya* is a venereal disease. It is mentioned with jaundice (*Harimā*) and pains in the limbs (*aṅga-bhedo visalpakaḥ*). *Kāhābāha* is a rumbling noise in the bowels. *Kāsa* is closely associated with *Takman*. It is looked as one of the harmful effects of thunder and lightning.

*Kilāsa and Palita* are skin disease characterized by cutaneous whiteness (*Śvetakuṣṭha*). It is generally interpreted as 'leprosy'. *Kuṣṭha* with the body parts torn and profusely discharging, red eyes, loss of speech and not responding to *Pañcakarma*

measures proves fatal. *Krimi* refers to any type of parasitic and crawling vermin which enters either man or animal. The *Krimis* were born in the entrails, in the head, in the ribs, in the mountain, in forest, in plants, in domestic animals and in the waters. *Kṣipta* is a wound caused by shooting or throwing, scattered distraction or absence of mind. *Kṣetriya* is a hereditary disease, an infectious disorder, of various forms, appearing in a whole family, or perhaps endemic. It is the internal disease-demon. It is also associated with the *Kṣya, Kuṣṭha* and *Apasmāra*, a class of skin disease which includes leprosy. *Kunakhāni*, a disease related to the nails, results in having ugly nails or claws. *Pāman* is the name of a skin disease. It is characterized by the presence of small boils attended with discharge, itching and burning sensation.

*Pṛṣṭya-āmaya* denotes a pain in the sides or ribs. Its meaning is 'suffering from a pain in the side'. *Pra-mota* is assumed to be either deaf or dumb. *Rapa* is a sin, a generalized disease demon, which is occasionally equated with *Viṣa,* poison. It is allied with evils and demonically caused problems. *Rāja-yakṣmā* is considered to be pulmonary or a disease related to lungs. It is characterized by cough which is accompanied with bodily expectoration. *Śirṣakti, Śīrṣāmaya*, *Karṇaśūla* and *Vilohita* are some *Śiraroga* or head diseases. '*Takman*' is the name of a disease or a class of diseases accompanied with skin eruption. The *AV* imagines *Takman* as a demon. The *AV*.i.25 recognizes fever as the chief feature of *Takman*. *Unmādita* refers to madness, the causes of which are described variedly by different scholars. *Vidradha* means abscesses or a tumor. It is accompanied with swelling without any discharge, vomiting, hiccough, thirst, pain and difficulty in breathing, and may lead to death. *Viklindu* is a cow's disease. It may occur both in the cattle and the owner. It starts from the resting place of the feet and over tracks the individuals. *Vilohita* means 'flow of blood from the nose'. Whitney renders it 'anemia'. *Viśara* is 'tearing pain'. It is

also rendered as splitting or breaking in pieces, racking pain or perhaps convulsions. *Viṣa* refers to *poison*. According to the son of *Atri*, there are two types of poisons—static and dynamic. The notion of 'poison remedies poison' was prevalent during the period of *AV*. The snake is killed by removing the poison of the snake by hypnotizing it through practicing *Yoga-śakti* and through eyes. Moreover, the poison is removed by reciting the *Mantra*. The poison of some snake is known to be the remedy of their own poison. The *AV* also suggests treatment of *Viṣa* (poison). *Viṣkandha* is a disease which hinders from walking, is produced by *Rākṣas*, *Piśāchas* and instigated by (some hostile) disturbance. *Viskandha* is obstructing motion. It is a serious disease, caused by wind (in the body) and produces dislocation of the shoulders. *Visalpaka* is a kind of boil. According to Griffith, it causes throbbing or piercing pains in various parts of the body. *Viṣūchī* means cholera. It is also known as *Visucica*. Moreover the plants like *Yava, Durvā, Darbha, Kuṣṭha* are also prescribed as having medicinal qualities for curing this disease. *Yakṣmā* denotes 'illness', in general, which may indicate weakness of the body. *Yakṣmā* causes disintegration of the limbs, fever in the limbs, heartache and pain in all parts of the body. Some disease like *Durṇāma* (*Krimi*), *Nirāla, Śroṇa* (*Aśloṇa), Saṃskandha* (opposite and contrary of *Viskandha), Yakṣmodhā* are mentioned in the *AV* but we did not get any further explanation.

The external diseases like broken bones, fractures, wounds were also discussed in the *AV*. The *AV* regards water-sprinkling to be the best treatment for healing wounds. Water has been said as the remedy of all types of wounds. Plants like *Durvā, Silāchi, Lākṣā, Aśvatha* and *Khādira* are prescribed for the healing of injury caused by stick or arrow. The *AV* also recommends *Rohini* and *Arundhatī* as its remedy.

In the fourth chapter the researcher endeavours to describe the magico-religious healing devices found in the *AV*. The terms—magic, religion and magico-religious devices have been defined. The amulets, charms mentioned in the *AV* may come under magico-religious devices. In the *Atharvavedic* period, many diseases were cured by using amulets made of plants which are to be used with particular *Mantras*, these are amulet of *Jaṅgiḍa*, *Darbha*, *Parṇa*, *Varaṇa*, *Śatavāra*.

The word 'magic' is defined very comprehensively by Gourdriaan and Gupta as the performance of certain ritual acts and the belief in the efficacy of such acts—with a view to making use of certain natural laws of cause and effect which are supposed to exist, in order to enforce some results in the mundane sphere desired by the performer or his instructor. This also includes exorcism or the compelling of benevolent Gods and spirits (especially *Yakṣas* and *Yakṣiṇis*), excluding 'witchcraft'. Magic is the practice of malevolent arts which involve the use of religio-magical power, with perhaps a secondary idea of the use of private arts. These practices are meant to benefit not the community as a whole but a single individual.

Modern magic has been equated with primitive forbidden and private arts. The uncivilised people universally regard death and disease to be caused by so-called magic. That is they attributed these to some kind of non-natural causes. After this, the rituals and beneficent rites were originally regarded as magical. At present, magic represent itself to most of the people of the world as a thing of gradual growth. In the earlier stages anything 'prohibited' was essentially magic. Then with the rise of animistic beliefs and practices came the association of the magician with demons—the spirits of the dead, or of animals, or unattached spirits—upon whose cooperation the powers of magicians are often now held to depend. Eventually, it lost its importance. Then, all non-animistic practices tend to become ipso facto magical.

The term ‘religion’ is derived from the Latin word ‘religio’ which means ‘reverence for God or the Gods, carefully pondering of divine things, piety’. In ancient times, today’s religion would have been known as only law. Many languages have words that can be translated as ‘religion’, but they may use them in a very different way, and some have no word for religion at all. In *Sanskrit* word the ‘*Dharma*’ is sometimes translated as ‘religion’ which also means law. The typical dictionary definition of religion refers to a ‘belief in or the worship of, a God or Goddess or the service and worship of God or the supernatural’. Anthropologist John Monaghan and Peter Just believe that many of the great world religions appear to have begun as some sort of revitalization movements. It emerged as a comprehensive answer to some problems provided by everyday beliefs.

Both the terms magic and religion are intertwined and therefore difficult to distinguish. Some scholars/societies have the tendency to mix the two concepts and others give a sharp distinction between them. The mere fact that we cannot draw an exact line between magic and religion suggests that they may have some fundamental features in common. The meaning of both the terms has greatly changed in the course of their existence. Religion seems to have meant originally magical spell. There is a universal tendency to regard the religions of alien races and outdated national religions as magical. An examination of the ideas of primitive people shows that there is a widely found notion of a power which manifests itself both in religion and magic. Observers have often been content to describe ceremonies without attempting to penetrate to the fundamental ideas which underlie them, more particularly with magic. Only recently anthropologists have realized that in many primitive societies a fairly well-defined idea of magico-religious power exists.

In the *Atharvaveda*, there are indirect mentions of magico religious power or device in the form of amulets and charms. In the *Atharvavedic* period, many diseases were cured by using amulets made of plants which are to be used with particular *Mantras*. The *Abhivarta*, made of the rim of a chariot wheel, is tied on the body for overcoming and overriding the enemy leading the wearer to royalty. *Savitar* and *Soma* strengthened and exalted this amulet so that whoever wears this amulet is being exalted. The *AV* mentions that *Arkamoṇi* is made of *Arka* tree. It is used for sacrificial ceremonies and to make the generative organ fit for enjoyment. The *Astṛtamaṇi* is tied by *Prajāpati* for becoming invincible, long life, splendor, strength and energy, protection from rivals, haters and enemies and to protect the wearer of the amulet ceaselessly so that neither the *Paṇis* nor the sorcerers can ever harm him. The amulet made of *Darbha* grass is bind for long life and brilliancy (xix.8.1, 4), destroying the enemy, cleaving the rivals. *Daśavṛkṣa* is an amulet made of ten holy trees such as *Palāśa*, *Audubar*, *Jmbu*, *Kampala* and is coated with lac of the trees. This amulet is used against diseases caused by *Piśāca* and *Grāhi*, who catch the joints of a person. The *Hiraṇyamaṇi* amulet is worn for longevity, for glory, for long life lasting through a hundred autumns. Those who wear this amulet can conquer fiends and *Piśāca*. The *Jaṅgiḍa* amulet can overcome *Viṣkandha* and *Rākṣasas*. The amulet of this plant is worn for longevity, great joy, taking no harm, all time capable. It protects from distress, cures from all diseases like *Takman*, *Balāsa*, *Āśarīka*, *Viśarīka*, *Pṛṣṭyāmaya*, *Viṣkandha* and *Saṃskandha*, *Jambha*, *Viśara*, *Viśvaśārada*. Therefore, it has earned the epithet *Viśvabheṣaja* which means 'all-healing'. It gives all round protection from heaven, earth, atmosphere, plants, past, future and all directions. It is a spoiler of witchcraft and of niggardly. The amulet of *Udumbara* helps him who longs for wealth. With this amulet *Bṛhaspati* and *Savitā* confirm to obtain prosperity of cattle,

quadrupeds, bipeds, the milk of kine and refreshing juice of herbs. It also grants possessions to the wearer. *Parihasta* is put on both hands to drive away the demons and to secure health. The amulet is invoked to hold apart the womb for the concept of a male child. *Parṇa Amulet* is worn for strength, wealth, long life (AV.iii.5.1, 2, 4). This talisman is tied on for securing splendor, for securing wealth, domain and superiority, in the sphere of kingdom, for long life, of hundred autumns, and for becoming superior patronage and knowledge. The *Phālamaṇi* amulet is made of strong *Khādira* wood. It was tied for strength and swift *Vāta*, heroism, perfect hearing and seeing, conquering the directions of space and welfare. The *Śaṅkha* amulet makes the wearer's enemy weak and protects the wearer from sin, the missiles of the Gods and the *Asuras*. This amulet enables the wearer to slay the *Rākṣas* and conquer the *Atriṇas* (devouring demons). It keeps him away from disease and poverty. It is fastened for long life, luster and strength. The *Śatabāramoṇi* banishes fiends and consumption by its own power (AV.xix.36.1). It also keeps away from fiends, *Gandharvas*, *Apsaras*, dog-mated nymphs. Apparently it is made of a great number of fibres of some magical plant, perhaps the *Darbha* grass (AV.xix.36.1). The *Saktu* medicine is used as a medicine against jealousy. *Sīsa* amulet was made of metal. It is explained as lead or river-lead, iron-filing or the head of a lizard. The amulet smites *Viṣkandha, Atrins* (devourers) and the host of the *Piśāca*. It affords protection against danger to the life of a cow or horse or man in the family of the person, who wears this amulet. The amulet made from *Sraktya* tree is also known as *Srāktya*. It is a *Pratisara*, a charm to revert the witchcraft of others. The amulet is a wise patron, protector of the body and bestower of splendor. It is full of source, slays enemies, wards off witchcraft, makes heroes of men, powerful, lusty, victorious, and strong, assails and attacks, cures disease and keeps secure an every side, protects the offspring and

wealth and brings luck. The amulet *Trivṛta* is also mentioned in the *AV*. *Varaṇa* is a plant or small tree used in medicine and supposed to possess magical virtues. Its amulet works as a medicine for all diseases. It crushes enemies, frees from sin, protects from human danger and from all evil, from *Arāti* (grudge), *Nirṛti* (misfortune), from sorcery and from danger of death and over strong weapons, protects from sin committed by mother, father, brother, sister and itself. It is worn for long life. *Vaiyāghramaṇi* protects from sin like disease and keeps away diseases and demons.

In the fifth chapter the medicinal plants (*Bhaiṣajyāni*) mentioned in the *Atharvaveda* have been discussed. The main constituent of the *AV* are the songs and charms for healing diseases which belong to the magico-healing rites. These classes of hymns have been conveniently described as *Bhaiṣajyāni*. These are directed largely against various diseases and demons and some are invocation and praises of the medicinal plant that cure the diseases. It is to be mentioned here that all these hymns for curing diseases by different methods are not found in any sequence in the *AV*. They have been scattered here and there in the whole *Saṁhitā*. Various reasons have been accorded to this. Besides, there are hymns in praise of herbs and amulets having curative qualities. Here in the *AV* we have find prayer to herbs namely *Kuṣṭha* or *Kuttha*, *Jaṅgiḍa*, *Viṣāṇakā*, *Rajanī*, *Śyāmā*, *Arundhatī*, *Lākṣā* or *Silāci*, *Ābayu*, *Nitatnī*, *Ajaśṛṅgī*, *Pṛśniparṇī*, *Pippali*, *Āñjana*, *Rohiṇī*, *Oṣadhaya*. Water is believed to posses the curative qualities and the fire which is believed to be the powerful frightener of demons is also praised. The *Atharvanic* medical charms have very well impressed the later Hindu medicine to such an extent that the *Āyurveda* is regarded as the *Upaveda* of the *AV*.

*Ajaśṛṅgī* (goats' horn) is a creeper and climber. It drives away the demon, *Piśāca* with its smell and kills demon. With the help of this plant the *Atharvan*s, *Kaśyapa*, *Kaṇva* and *Aṅgirasa* killed the *Rākṣasas* and also is used in the incantation. It is also used to eliminate *Kapha* and *Medas* (fat), ease headache and internal abscess, pacify *Raktapitta*, destroy three types of inflammation, alleviate all types of *Prameha* and remove defects of semen. *Alābu* is useful for blood-letting in that is affected by *Kapha*. *SS* explains it is laxative, rough, heavy and very cold. A plant *Apāmārga* (Av.iv.17, 6; 18, 7) is used frequently in witchcraft practices and for medical purpose, especially against *Kṣetriya*, against death caused by famine and thirst, failure to bear child, loss of kin, curse, sorceresses and malignant stingy hags. It also cures chronic diseases. It has the power of making man proof against stings of scorpions. It rescues the innocent and kills persons with demonic qualities. It is regarded as the chief plant among all the medicinal plants. It is also said to alleviate *Kapha*, fat and poison, remove worms and *Kuṣṭha* and particularly cleanse wound, pacify vitiated *Vāta*, *Kapha*, asthma, bronchitis, flatulence, painful inflammations, vomiting, skin diseases, renal and vesical calculi. The *Arjuna* plant destroys *Kuṣṭha*, alleviates *Prameha*, *Pāṇḍuroga*, intrinsic haemorrhage, burning sensation and disorders of female genital tract. It dries *Kapha* and *Medas* (fat), is also beneficial for wounds and astringent and is union-promoting. The bark of *Arjuna* is used as splint for fracture and dislocation. The flowers of *Arka* pacify *Kapha* and *Pitta* and alleviate *Kuṣṭha* and can also be used to alleviate *Kapha*, fat and poison. It removes worms and is particularly used to clean wounds. The plant *Arundhatī* removes disorders of *Kapha* and *Pitta*, alleviates *Kuṣṭha* and worms and cleanses septic wounds. It stops bleeding of wounds and is used to join bones and skins and flashes. It cures wounds inflicted by arrow or staff or violence. It is used to bind the injured limb. The plant makes the cows rich in milk

and makes the men free from diseases. It wards off the missile of *Rudra* which are discharged against the cattle. *Aśvattha* is beneficial for wound, astringent, union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic haemorrhage, burning sensation, fat and disorders of female genital track. The stick of *Aśvattha* and *Śamī* are used for a rite for securing the birth of male child. The bark of *Aśvattha* is used as splint for fracture and dislocation. *Asikni* plant is addressed to stain leprosy and gray spots on the body, as it gives colour. It is used for curing white leprosy. It is also used to cure leprosy in bone, body and skin and the white spots begotten of witchcraft and for removing the white spots from the body and restoring it to the original colour. *Ābayu* is a very benevolent plant which confers benefit on others even by suffering its own destruction. It removes the eye disease, caused by demon such as *Tauvilika*, *Babhru* and *Babhrukarṇa*. The plant *Ābayu* (Av.vi.16.1) is directed against ophthalmia. It is used with the mustard plant. *Āñjana* is used as a safeguard of men and kin. It protects the horses. It rends and crushes sorcerers, cures jaundice and keeps away from *Yakṣmā*. Those who adopt this plant are free from curses, sorceries, sorrow, lies, evil dreams, wicked acts and sinfulness. It is also the remedy of diseases like *Jāyānya*, *Harimā*, *Aṅgabheda*, *Visalpaka* and all other diseases. The plant is used in fourfold ways. It is used as an ointment and also as an amulet. It is also used in marriage ceremony. As an amulet, it is used while bathing and drinking. *Bajaṁ* or *Baja* is a strong smelling herb. Its scent chases away the demon. It is used for guarding the pregnant woman from the demons who cause embryonic diseases. It is used to stop them from creeping between the thighs of the pregnant woman. It also expels the *Asura*. It saves the women from miscarriage and still-birth. It chases away the evil spirits which roam around the house of the pregnant woman in evening. The yellow *Baja* is used to destroy *Anujighra*, *Pramṛśan*, *Kravyād*, *Reriham*, *Arātha*. It is also used to remove the

*Gandharvas* who causes still-birth. Therefore, a pregnant woman is asked to carry two stalks of white and yellow *Baja* under the knot of her garment. The fruit of *Bilva* or *Bel* is used for medicinal purpose. It is wound-healing, wholesome in *Pitta*, checks mature diarrhea and promotes union. It also pacifies *Vāta* and *Kapha*, body pain, poison, dysentery, vomiting, irregular fever, is *Laghu* in *Vipāka* and promotes digestive power. Its leaves cure diabetes, cough, inflammation and asthma. Its roots are also useful. *Cīpudru* is used as a remedy of *Balāsa*, flow of blood, neuralgia in the limbs, ears and eyes, heart-pain and *Yakṣmā*. It cures the boils that grow in the armpit as a result of *Balāsa*. *Darbha* is the killer of demons and purifier of sin. It is used for calming of anger, eliminating *Kapha* and *Medas* (fat) and alleviating headache, *Gulma* internal abscess, disorder of *Vāta*, calculus, gravels, dysuria and retention of urine. Griffith it has purifying qualities. *Darbha* is also used as an amulet for long life and to destroy enemy. *Dhava* destroys *Kuṣṭha*, alleviates *Prameha* and *Pāṇḍuroga* and dries *Kapha* and *Medas* (fat) and removes defect of semen. It is an excellent remedy for *Prameha*, piles, *Pāṇḍuroga*, calculus and gravels. *Gulgulu* is a costly fragrant gum. The smell of *Gulgulu* is used to remove *Yakṣmā* and curses. It pacifies *Vāta* and *Kapha*, destroys poison, improves complexion and removes itching, boils and allergic eruption. *Haridrā* is good for hair. It also removes *Kilāsa* and *Palita*. *Jaṅgiḍa* is considered as a fierce destroyer of the diseases and hostile witchcraft and the killer of demon and enemy. It confers bliss and happiness. *Jalāṣa* is the particular remedy of *Rudra*. It is used to cure tumor or boil. The exact way of using it to cure tumor or boil is described in the *AV*. It also promotes digestive power and intellect, increases *Pitta* while decreases *Kapha* and *Vāta*. It is useful in *Vāta*, colic, *Gulma*, *Udararoga*, hardness of bowels, purgatives, non-unctuous enema. *Khadira* destroys the enemy, destroys *Kuṣṭha*, alleviates *Prameha* and *Pāṇḍuroga* and dries *Kapha* and

*Medas* (fat). *Kumuda* is useful in burning sensation, disorders of *Pitta* and *Rakta*; thirst, poison, heart disease, vomiting and fainting. Tuber of *Kumuda* is *Vāta*-aggravating, *Pitta*-pacifying, sweet in *Vipāka* and cold. Kuṣṭha, a medicinal plant is regarded as the best medicine for curing fever and other reactions of fever like head disease, evil eye, evil of the body. The *AV* mentions that if the patient does not utter its name in the morning, evening and after, he or she may be harmed or may die. It is the prince of remedies. It pacifies *Vāta* and *Kapha*, destroys poison, improves complexion and removes itching, boils and allergic eruption, removes disorders of female genital tract, purifies breast-milk and is digestive. *Madhulā* is an intoxicating drink, spirituous liquor. It cures the diseases of cattle. It is also a remedy against stinging insects and is used to remove the poison of the cross lined (*Tirasciraji*) snake, black snake, *Pṛdāku* and *Kangkaparvā* snake. *Māṣa* is a kind of bean, which eliminates faeces and urine, pacifies *Vāta* and increases semen and *Kapha*. It is rough, astringent and non-burning. *Muñja* is used to make *Mekhala* or girdle worn by *Brāhmans*. It is used in the treatment of *Āsrava*. The patient is given to tie a stalk of *Muñja* reed with a cord made from the same plant, as an amulet. A paste prepared from these plants or their leaves gives black colour to the skin. Its stamens and roots are also used. The plant *Nalada* is useful in intrinsic haemorrhage, poison and excessive internal burning sensation. *Nitatni* is a plant with deep roots and therefore supposed to strengthen the roots of the hair. This plant is to be used in medicine to strengthen old hair, increase its length, thicken it, grow new hairs and to promote a luxuriant growth of hair. This healing herb is also used to sprinkle the hair which drop off and have broken roots. *Nyagrodha* is beneficial for wound, astringent, union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic haemorrhage, burning sensation, fat and disorders of female genital track. The plant *Nyastikā* is used for keeping away ill-luck and to

raise fortune. It is also used to raise passionate love in the mind of woman. It dries up the heart and the mouth of the for the sake of the man and is attracted towards him. *Pātā* or *Pāṭhā* pacifies *Kapha*, *Pitta*, *Vāta* and alleviates coryza, anorexia, *Gulma* and colic; stimulates digestive power and digest *Āma*, heart disease, dysuria, destroys poison, alleviates *Prameha*, *Kuṣṭha*, fever, vomiting and itching and cleanses wound. It also destroys *Asura*. The fruits of *Pilu* pacify *Kapha* and *Vāta*. *Pippalī* is used as a remedy for wounds. It is the healer of wound produced by the missiles rent. It cures wounds and all disease. It alleviates *Vāta* and *Kapha*, fat, *Prameha*, *Kuṣṭha*, skin diseases, chronic coryza, all types of fever, anorexia, *Gulma* and colic; stimulates digestive power and digests *Āma*; is beneficial for eyes and aphrodisiac. It is also used in various ways in processing food preparations. Fresh *Pippalī* increases *Kapha* while dried one pacifies *Kapha* and *Vāta*, is aphrodisiac and slightly alleviates *Pitta*. *Plakṣa* is beneficial for wound, astringent, union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic haemorrhage, burning sensation, fat and disorders of female genital tract. The plant *Pṛśni-parṇi* is revered as God and Goddess. The Goddess *Pṛśni-parṇi* confers prosperity on men and causes distress to *Nirṛti*. The God *Pṛśni-parṇi* is invoked to drive away the demonic creatures *Kaṇvas* which eat away the embryo of women. It indicates that it prevents abortion. The plant *Pṛśni-parṇi* is very powerful and alleviates *Kuṣṭha*. It cures the diseases which cause anaemia and which reduce bodily growth. It pacifies *Pitta* and *Vāta* and alleviates consumption, *Gulma*, body-ache, cardiac dyspnoea and cough. *Pūtudru* or *Khadira* (Acacia Catechu) is used to kill rivals and demons. The juice of *Rāmā or Bhṛṅgarāja* is useful in inflammatory swelling caused by nail scratching. It is the medicine of *Kuṣṭha*. It is used for removing the white spots from the body and restoring the original colour to it. *Rajanī* is used for treating leprosy. It pacifies *Rakta* and *Pitta*, destroys three types of

inflammation, alleviates all types of *Prameha* and removes defects of semen. The plant *Śamī* is symbolical of an abundant crop of hair. It makes people happy. It nurtures the growth of hair. It is the medicine for *Kaṇva*. It is believed to give hundred years of life and cures diseases. It destroys the invisible enemies residing in the human body. The plant *Śamī* is asked to be gracious to the hair. According to *SS*, the ash of *Kadalī* and *Dīrghavṛnta*, orpiment, salt and seeds of *Śamī* pounded with cold water removes hairs. The plant *Śālūkam* is also known as *Nenuphar* and water lilies. It should be prescribed by the physician in the beginning of meal and never thereafter. *Śyāmāka* or *Āsuri* or *Śyāmā* is mentioned as a cure against leprosy. It destroys *Gulma* and poison, breaks *Ānāha, Udararoga* and accumulated faeces and removes *Udāvarta*. *Soma* is regarded as the king of herb as it retains a young body for ten thousand years. *Talāśa* is the remedy of *Vidradha, Balāsa, Visarpaka*. The *SS* mentions it as the plant *Palāśa* and that it removes fat, *Kapha* and defects of semen, disorders of female genital tract and poison, is astringent and cosmetic and is an excellent remedy for *Prameha*, piles, *Pāṇḍuroga*, calculus and gravels. It is also beneficial for wounds, union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic haemorrhage and burning sensation. Its fruit is anthelmintic and anti-diuretic. Flower of *Palāśa Kiṁśuka* pacifies *Kapha* and *Pitta*. The bark of *Palāśa* is used as splint for fracture and dislocation. *Tauvilikā* is praised for keeping away diseases. Three varieties of *Tila* or sesamum are found. The black sesamum is considered as the best, white is medium and others (yellow, green and red) are inferior. It pacifies *Vāta* and increases *Pitta*. It is a very good promoter of strength, digestive power and intellect. It is applied on wounds as an external paste, is beneficial for teeth, skin and hairs and reduces urine. The stalk of the sesamum plant is used as fuel (*tila-pinjī, til-pinja*). The wood of *Udumbara* tree was used for ritual purposes of all kinds. It is used to make amulets as

well as the sacrificial posts (*yupa*) and the sacrificial ladle. It is beneficial for wound and astringent, is union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic haemorrhage, burning sensation fat and disorders of female genital tract. The bark of *Udumbara* tree is also used as splint for fracture and dislocation. *Upa-jīkā* originally denotes a species of ant. It is a perennial twining herb with fleshy stem and leaves. These ants have the capacity to produce water which is beneficent and has healing quality. They are beneficent to wherever they are applied and were used in all sorts of spells against poisoning as they cure poison. Their healing quality is believed to be due to the well-known properties of the earth of ant-heaps which contains their water. It is used as the medicine of *Atisāra*. It pacifies vitiated *Vāta*, *Pitta*, burning sensation, hemorrhage, skin diseases, several weakness and ulcer. It is also used as a laxative in children and pregnant women. Stems and leaves are also useful. *Vaṁśa* is a kind of bamboo used to make 'rafters' or 'beams' of the house. The bark of *Vaṁśa* is used as splint for fracture and dislocation. *Viṣāṇakā* is the urine of *Rudra*. It removes illness caused by wind or *Āsrāva*. The plant *Viṣāṇakā* is used as a remedy against the disease *Vātīkāra* (Av.ix.8.20; Vātī-kṛta; vi.44, 3; 109, 3). *Viṣāṇā* is the horn on the head of the swift-running antelope. Its skin is also used in the medicine. It is the remedy of *Kṣaya*, *Kuṣṭha* and *Apasmāra*. The *Vrīhi* possess constipative quality. *Yava or barley* is applied in charms to cure disease and ward off demons. It removes various complains in the body of the patient. It also makes us free from sin. It is considered as a cure of all diseases (*sarvabhaiṣajyam*). It is useful in pacifing *Kapha* and *Pitta* and also useful for wounds. It is anti-diuretic, produces abundant flatus and faeces, promotes firmness, digestive power, intellect, voice and complexion, eliminates fat, *Vāta,* thirst and normalizes *Rakta* and *Pitta*. Its fumigation is beneficial for the child. It is also useful for sacrifice. The Sun-rays of the rising sun and *Ushas*, the dawn is especially

calculated to dispel the evils associated generally with misery and disease and primarily with night. When the sun rises, it kills worms and when it sets, it kills insects on cow's body when the sun sets. The sun destroys all the seen and unseen worms. The first rays of the sun help in removal of impotence in men. The *AV* also clearly mentions about its use to cure heart diseases. The water forms the chief medicine. It is considered as nectar and *Bheṣaja* (medicine). They make the horses and cows strong. The water, plain or mixed with salt, is given to sick cows. Thus the water contains protective powers, medicine and nectar, to prolong one's life in this world. It is also prayed for the cure of *Kṣetriya*. It contains all varieties of medicine and protects our body and gives us long life. It cures heart disease, eye disease, heel or toes disease and has the power of destroying consumption.

Our submission is the *AV* is a powerful document which shows strong evidence that the *Atharvavedic* society was very much concerned about the welfare of the human beings. It has given solutions to many negative aspects of human life like diseases, aging, death, sorcery. This study has discussed all the diseases and plants having medicinal qualities mentioned in the *AV*. The cures given are in the form of amulets and charms which are described here as magico-religious healing devices. Other literatures like *Suśruta Saṁhitā*, *Kauśika Sūtra*, *Caraka Saṁhitā* also have followed the path shown in the *AV* regarding the medicinal qualities of the plants. Apart from plants, the *AV* also mentions the healing capacity of some natural forces like water, sun-rays. Some plants are used for curing diseases; some are used for killing devil. It also does not mention which parts of the plant are to be used and how they are used for diseases, killing demon and for wellbeing of the people. The plants used for curing diseases include *Apāmārga*, *Arundhatī*, *Ābayu*, *Āñjana*, *Cipudru*, *Guggulu*, *Haridrā*, *Jaṅgiḍa*, *Muñja*, *Nitatni*, *Pippali*, *Rāmā*, *Rajani*, *Śamī*, *Soma*, *Talāśa* and *Viṣāṇā*. For

killing demons or to drive away demons, some of the plants used are *Ajaśṛṅgī*, *Alābu*, *Baja*, *Nyastikā*, *Pātā* and *Putudru*.

It is implied that *AV* is a good reference for medicinal uses of various plants, but with a note that it does not give detailed descriptions about the uses of these plants. In some cases, the descriptions of the plants have been given but the names of the plants are not mentioned. *Jalāśa*, sun-ray, water are not plants, but they have medicinal qualities to cure diseases. Some plants like *Avakā*, *Alasāla*, *Arka*, *Arjuna*, *Aratu*, *Aśvattha*, *Bilva*, *Dhava*, *Karkandhu*, *Khadira*, *Puṇḍarīka*, *Kumuda*, *Pṛśniparṇi*, *Kuṣṭha*, *Plakṣa*, *Taudi*, *Māṣa*, *Pilu*, *Tila*, *Naḍa*, *Upajīkā*, *Nalada*, *Nīla*, *Tājadbhaṅga*, *Puṣkara*, *Putirajju*, *Urvāvā*, *Śālūkam*, *Śilāñjālā*, *Śyāmāka*, *Sadampuṣpa*, *Vaikaṅkata*, *Vadhaka*, *Vandana*, *Viṣāṇakā*, *Vrīhi* are mentioned only in their names in the *AV*, but their medicinal uses are not found. The humane welfare was the mother of the *AV* in different aspects and phases and craved in present days also.