CHAPTER: V

THE MEDICINAL PLANTS (BHAIṢAJYĀNI) MENTIONED IN THE ATHARVAVEDA

This chapter discusses about the medicinal plants found in the *AV*. The *AV* mentions about many plants, which have medicinal properties such as *Kuṣṭha* or *Kuttha*, *Jaṅgiḍa*, *Viṣāṇakā*, *Rajanī*, *Śyāmā*, *Arundhatī*, *Lākṣā* or *Silāci*, *Ābayu*, *Nitatnī*, *Ajaśṛṅgī*, *Pṛśniparṇī*, *Pippalī*, *Āñjana*, *Rohiṇī*. It also discusses about the use of these plants in curing various diseases and the ways to use them. Therefore, the present chapter is devoted to the description of these plants and their uses as medicines, as mentioned in the *AV*.

The main constituents 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*. The *Sanskrit* term *Bheṣaja* means medicine. The term *Bhaiṣajyāni* is not found in the *AV* itself but the term is used in the *KS*, to denote the medicinal and remedial charms found in the *AV*. These are directed largely against various diseases and demons. Some of these charms are also invocation and praises of the medicinal plant that shall serve to cure the disease. It is to be mentioned here that all these hymns for curing diseases by different methods are not found in a serial order in the *AV*. They have been scattered here and there in the whole *Saṁhitā*.

Bloomfield points out various reasons for which the classification of the medical hymns of the *AV* is difficult. These are-'the meaning of the names of the diseases is often obscure, and the curative influences that are employed are either of the symbolic order or consists of amulets instead of healing substances. These amulets are largely

derived from the vegetable kingdom, the designation of plants being again generally quite obscure'.[579]

Besides, there are hymns in praise of herbs and amulets having curative qualities. Here in the *AV* we 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. 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*.

A brief note on the concept of ancient medicines found all over the world are being presented here. The uses of medicine and the role of biodiversity in preparation of the medicines remain common feature.

Medicine:

In its broadest sense, medicine denotes ideas relating to diagnoses, causes, and cures of illness, as well as the practice of restoring and maintaining health, and the substances used in the treatment of disease. Medicine is both a domain of knowledge and the application of that knowledge. A medical system is composed of medical ideas and practices as well as the social institutions relating to health. It includes ways of classifying disease (cancer, a cold, soul loss, and spirit possession), health specialists (doctor, herbalists, and shamans), and therapies to end illness (pharmaceutical, meditation, acupuncture, and divination).

Western medicine, or biomedicine, is currently the most widespread medical system, but thousands of others exist throughout the world. Although each tradition is

[579] Bloomfield, M., The AV and the GB, Arsha Prakashan, Allahbad, Varanasi 1975, p.59

different, diagnosis and treatment often consist of both magical and herbal components. For instance, many societies believe that ill health can be meted out by spirits, Gods, ancestors, sorcerers, or witches. These forces are capable of causing both the body and the soul to become ill. To combat disease, patients and healers can also invoke magical substances, rituals, or supernatural beings. Another common method of healing is herbalism—using plants to treat illness. A large variety of plant species are employed as remedies and include decongestants, pain relievers, and antiseptics. In America, plants have been used to derive important drugs including aspirin, quinine, and novocaine. Although non-biomedical traditions were once regarded as infective and superstitious, they are now acknowledged as providing new sources of medicinal plants as well as information regarding the social lives, environments, and experience of humans.

Medical ideas and practices both constitute and are constituted by social and cultural beliefs and concerns. Arthur Kleinman notes that medicine is a cultural system 'of symbolic meanings anchored in particular arrangements of social institutions and patterns of interpersonal interactions'. Illness dialogues, diagnoses, and treatments can express ideas regarding religion, morality, power, politics, identity, economics and gender. Consequently, social scientists are able to examine medical systems and their components as one method of understanding societal norms, attitudes, and practices. For instance, in the Birth of the Clinic (1973), Michel Foucault examines what he calls the 'clinical gaze', to show how medicine is linked to power. Social science research regarding the conceptions and use of medicine focuses on both local environments and global ones.

Origin of Medicine:

Probably the purposeful treatment of illness has occurred throughout the entire span of human existence. However as there are no written records, it is impossible to know the earliest types of medical treatment.

1) *Mesopotamian and Egyptian*: The first written evidence of medical knowledge comes from Mesopotamia and Egypt, dating back to more than four thousand years ago. It included lists of symptoms, diagnoses, and treatments. In ancient Mesopotamia, 250 vegetable and 120 mineral drugs were documented (Magner 1992, p.19). But the first real physician named, Imhotep (c.2980BCE) was an ancient Egyptian. The ancient Egypt also claims the first formalized medical system, which included medical schools, medical insurance, sick leave, and registered physicians of both sexes. It can be noted here that the ancient Mesopotamian and the Egyptian medical systems also incorporated magical remedies. These were the first among a number of codified medical traditions that developed around the world.
2) *Chinese*: The ancient medical system of China was developed later than those of Mesopotamia and Egypt. But it is in practice even today. The traditional Chinese medicine views disease as the result of an imbalance of the yin and yang elements in the body. Doctors often made diagnoses by studying the pulses of patients. They also possessed the knowledge that the heart was responsible for circulating blood long before Europeans came to know. Chinese medicine employs a variety of treatments. It included more than five thousand medical herbs (such as ginseng), acupuncture (inserting needles into the body at specific points), and moxibustion (applying a burning tinder to the skin).

3) *European*: The ancient Greek physician, Hippocrates (460-361BCE) sometimes called the 'Father of Medicine', believed that health was the result of a balance between the four humors (basic bodily fluids)—phlegm, yellow bile, black bile, and blood. During the Roman Empire the humoral approach was used by many physicians. Galen (130-200 CE) was one of them whose writings were used as important texts throughout Rome, the Islamic world, and Europe for centuries. The Islamic doctors embraced as well as modified the Greek tradition. They spread it from Spain to India. The medical writings of the doctor and philosopher Ibn Sina (Avicenna, 980-1037) were regarded as the standard texts throughout the Arab conquests and Medieval Europe. The scientific revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries led to abandoning of the Greco-Islamic tradition in Europe. In 1628, William Harvey (1578-1657) challenged the Galenic tradition by publishing an unconventional idea that 'the pumping heart moved a continuous flow of blood through the body'.

   Almost one hundred years later, the Turkish and African practice of purposefully exposing individuals to mild strains of smallpox to achieve in actuation caught the attention of Europeans and Americans. This led to the development of the first vaccine.

4) *Modern Medicine*: The 19th century advances in chemistry and medical technology led to the discovery of microbial sources of disease and their cures. This discovery helped researchers to isolate, treat and create vaccine for some diseases like tuberculosis, tetanus, cholera and rabies. The introduction of general anesthesia (1840s) and antisepsis (1870s) led to rapid growth of surgery and hospitals. But significant advances were made only in the 20th century. Biomedicine is the currently popular system of medicine used around

the globe. The biomedical system includes professional, scientific, educational, legal, financial and ethical frameworks. One is its characteristic feature is the use of science and technology to fight disease. Biomedicine views disease as caused by only natural factors and negates supernatural or magical sources of illness or treatments. Most biomedical treatments involve the use of synthesized pharmaceuticals and some require hospitalization. It considers the physical body, not the soul, as the only locus of illness. From the early history of biomedicine, it is implied that biomedical practitioners often have a tendency to look for and find a single cause of illness (such as a microbe) as well as a single cure to treat it (such as antibiotics). The focus of biomedicine is illness and not health which is often defined as the absence of disease. Apart from biomedicine, the patients have some other therapeutic options. These therapies include herbalism, meditation, yoga, massage, acupuncture, aromatherapy and chiropractic medicine. These are used either in conjunction with or as a substitute for biomedical treatment. They are often provided by non-licensed healers and can incorporate religious or non-Western traditions.

5) *Āyurveda system*: In the Indian medicine system, there are many myths about the origin of medicine. The *Āyurveda* was produced by *Brahma* as a result of his compassion on man's weakness and suffering, which started in the *Tretā Yuga* and kept on increasing even in the *Kali Yuga*. *Āyurveda* is an *Upaveda*, an appendix of one of the four *Vedas*, also produced by *Brahma*. It was intended to teach the proper manner of living in this world by preventing and curing diseases in the present state. This allowed people to enjoy a healthy

life, which in turn enable them to perform various purposes of this world, ensuring happiness and prosperity in life.

Āyurveda is the sacred medical record of the Hindus and is of the highest antiquity, and authority. It originally consisted of one thousand sections, of a hundred stanzas each, or a lack of verses. But *Brahmā* abridged it, and divided it into eight parts (*Tantra*), as he thought that it would be difficult for the people to learn so large a work. The original work has undergone changes with time. The commentaries could preserve only fragments of the original works. However, the information of the commentators on the science was derived from what was considered the full and true account of every branch of the healing art. Therefore, through their works, it was possible to judge of the arrangement of the great original. These divisions are as *Śalya*, *Śālakya*, *Kāyacikitsā*, *Bhutavidyā*, *Kaumārabhṛtya*, *Agadatantra*, *Rasāyanatantra* and *Vājikaraṇatantra*.

The *Āyurveda* (the science of life) was intended to maintain health as a whole, not simply treat disease. *Āyurvedic* practitioners believe that health is maintained by maintaining the balance of three *Doṣas* (elemental manifestations in the physical body) that govern body processes. Magner notes that ancient texts list more than one thousand diseases and almost one thousand drugs. They also describe advanced surgical procedures including cesarean section, amputation, lithotomy, cauterization, tonsillectomy, and plastic surgery.

Throughout our history, humans have employed a variety of techniques to treat illness and this process continues today.

According to Luis Renou, the medicinal hymns of the *AV* give us the first outline of Indian medicine.[580] *Caraka Saṁhitā* and *Suśruta Saṁhitā* admit importance of the *AV* as the source of medicinal science. *Caraka* says that a doctor should have studied the *AV* first as there is the description of the causes and remedies of the diseases.[581] Bloomfield mentions that the medicinal charms of the *AV* are known as '*Bheṣajam*', 'Remedy' the healing plant is '*Bheṣajī*', the waters are '*Bheṣajīḥ*'.[582] The term *Bheṣajam* includes also exorcism of demons and is related the conception of *Śānti*. The *AV*[583] gives a detailed classification of the plants. The plants are classified according to colour[584] and growth,[585] their varieties according to properties,[586] origin[587] and form.[588]

Medicinal Plants in the Atharvaveda:

Ajaśṛṅgī: The plant *Ajaśṛṅgī* is mentioned in the *AV*[589] and *KS*.[590] Its other names or epithet are *Arātakī*[591] and *Viṣāṇī*.[592] It is also known as *Tīkṣṇaśṛṅgī*.[593] The plant *Ajaśṛṅgī* is synonymously called *Meṣaśṛngi* by *Dārila*.[594] The literal meaning of the

[580] Renou Luis, Vedic India, p.21
[581] Caraka Saṁhitā i.30, xix.20
[582] Bloomfield, M. The AV and the GB, p.58
[583] AV.viii.7
[584] Ibid.viii.7.1
[585] Ibid.viii.7.4
[586] Ibid.viii.7.6,7,10
[587] Ibid.viii.7.9,17
[588] Ibid.viii.7.12,13,166,27
[589] Ibid.iv.37
[590] KS.28.9-11
[591] AV.iv.37.6
[592] अजशृङ्गि विषाणी स्यात् इत्यभिधानकोशप्रसिद्धा अजशृङ्गी। सात्र संबोध्या। अजशृङ्गाकृतिफलयुक्तत्वाद् अजशृङ्गीत्युच्यते । Sāyaṇa on AV.iv.37.2
अजशृङ्गी विषाणी स्याद्....Amarakośa.ii.4.120
[593] तीक्ष्णशृङ्गी तीक्ष्णे उग्रगन्धे शृङ्गाकृती फले यस्याः एवंगुणविशिष्ठा
[594] मेषशृंगा पिशाचगृहं सर्वतो वेष्टयति

Ajaśṛṅgī is 'Goat's Horn'. He also explains about *Arāṭakī* and *Tīkṣṇaśṛṅgī*.[595] According to Whitney, *Arāṭakī* seems to be used as specific name of the herb; but *Sāyaṇa* takes it as epithet, deriving it from *a-rā* 'non-giving' with a derivative from *aṭ* 'go' and meaning *hiṅsakān uccāṭayanti*. Its botanical name is Odina Pinnata. It is a creeper and climber.[596] The shape of its fruit is like a goat's horn and that is why it is called *Ajaśṛṅgī*,[597] '*Aja*' meaning goat and '*śṛṅgi*' meaning horn. The plant *Ajaśṛṅgī* (goats' horn) is celebrated as a demon-destroyer. It drives away the demon, *Piśāca* with its smell[598] and kills demon. With the help of this plant the *Atharvan*s, *Kaśyapa*, *Kaṇva* and *Aṅgirasa* killed the *Rākṣasas*.[599] According to Griffith, the plant is used in the incantation. The *SS*[600] mentions that the *Ajaśṛṅgī* eliminates *Kapha* and *Medas* (fat). It eases headache and internal abscess, pacifies *Raktapitta*, destroys three types of inflammation, alleviates all types of *Prameha* and removes defects of semen.

Alasāla: This plant is found in the *AV*.[601] It is mentioned with two other plants *Śilāñjalā* and *Nīlāgalasālā*. The *Alasāla* is taken first, the *Śalāñjalā* in the middle and *Nīlāgalasālā* at last. Therefore, the *Alasāla* is also known as *Purvā*. According to *Sāyaṇa*, *Alasāla Śilāñjalā* and *Nīlāgalasālā* these three are crops.[602]

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[595] सा च अजशृङ्गी अराटकी। अरा अदातारो हिंसकाः तान् अस्मात् स्थानात् आटयति उच्चाटयतीति अराटकी। तीक्ष्णशृङ्गी तीक्ष्णे उग्रगन्धे शृङ्गाकृती फले यस्याः एवंगुणविशिष्टा सा AV.iv.37.6

[596] SS.sū.38.72

[597] एयमगन्नोषधीनां वीरुधां वीर्यावती।
अजशृङ्ग्यराटकी तीक्ष्णशृङ्गी व्यृषतु॥ AV.iv.37.6

[598] त्वया वयमप्सरसो गन्धर्वाश्चातयामहे।
अजशृङ्ग्यजरक्षः सर्वान् गन्धेन नाशय॥ Ibid.iv.37.2

[599] त्वया पूर्वमथर्वाणो जघ्नू रक्षांस्योषधे।
त्वया जघान कश्यपस्त्वया कण्वो अगस्त्यः॥ Ibid.iv.37.1

[600] SS.sū.38.10-11, 72-74

[601] AV.vi.16.4

[602] अलसालेत्याद्यास्तिस्रः संज्ञास्तिसृणां सस्यवल्लीनाम्। तत्र अलसाला नाम काचित् सस्यविशेषस्य मञ्जरी।

Alābu: The plant *Alābu* is found in the *AV.*[603] Its another name is *Tumbī.*[604] Its botanical name is Lagenaria vulgaris. *Sāyaṇa* does not explain about *Alābu*. In the *AV*, it is just said that the dried shell of *Alābu* was used as a water jar and also used as a musical instrument, a *Vīṇā* or a kind of lute. *Manu* also mentions its use as the bowl of beggars.[605] In English it is known as bottle-gourd. It is very light and floats in water. Whitny related *Alābu* with vacancy or voidness. He suggested the word *Alābuka* to mean the vacant or void world, *Brahmāṇḍa*, living cells or soul. The *SS* explains it as pungent, rough and sharp.[606] As such it is useful for blood-letting in that is affected by *Kapha*. *SS*[607] explains it is laxative, rough, heavy and very cold. One of its varieties, which is bitter, is disagreeable, emetic and eliminates *Vāta* and *Pitta*.

Apāmārga: The *AV*[608] mentions about the plant *Apāmārga*. Its botanical name is Achyranthes Aspera. *Apāmārga* is a shrub that grows up to one meter height. Its leaves are simple, opposite, obovate or elliptic; flowers are bracteates and bracteolate, greenish, in spikes and the fruits are oblong urticle (encyclopedia). According to *Sāyaṇa*, *apamārjanād apāmārga iti saṁjñā*.[609] It is considered as a magical plant. It is used against death caused by famine and thirst, failure to bear child, loss of kin,[610] curse, sorceresses and malignant stingy hags. It also cures chronic diseases. Griffith regards *Apāmārga* to be a biennial plant. He ascribes its power and virtues to the

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[603] AV.viii.(5)10.14 and xx.132.1-2

[604] स्यात्तुम्ब्यलाबुरुभे समे । Amarakośa.ii.4.156

[605] अलावुं दारुपात्रं मृन्मयं वैदलं तथा ।
एतानि याति पात्रणि मनुः स्वायंभूवोऽब्रवीत् ॥ Manusaṁhitā, 6.54

[606] SS.sū.13.7 and 46.215

[607] SS.sū.46.215

[608] AV.iv.17.6-8; iv.18.7, 8; iv.19.4; vii.65.1; 19

[609] Ibid.iv.19.4

[610] क्षुधामारं तृष्णामारमगतामनपत्यताम् ।
अपामार्ग त्वया वयं सर्वं तदप मृज्महे ॥ Ibid.iv.17.6

abundance of its roots and branches.[611] According to him, it is used in incantation, medicines, sacrifices and for washing linen. It has the power of making man proof against stings of scorpions. It rescues the innocent and kills persons with demonic qualities. Its name *Apāmārga* is believed to be derived because it was used by the Gods to drove off the *Asuras*. It is called *Parākapuṣpi*, *Pratyakpuṣpi* and *Pratyakparṇi* from the reverted direction of the growth of its leaves, flowers and fruits. According to *Sāyaṇa*, the plant is address as *Sahadevī*[612] and regard it as the chief plant among all the medicinal plants. However the plant *Sahadevī* is not found in any of the hymns. It is used by *Sāyaṇa* only in his commentary. Though the word *Sahamāna* occurs at *AV*[613] but it cannot be identified with *Sahadevī*. This plant has been blessed by *Brāhmaṇa, Kaṇva* and the son of *Nṛsada*. The *AV*[614] identifies it with a strong army which fears nothing. It is also known as *Vibhindatī* as it has hundred branches. *Vibhindan* is regarded as its father.[615] According to *SS*,[616] it alleviates *Kapha*, fat and poison, removes worms and *Kuṣṭha* and particularly cleanses wound. This plant also pacifies vitiated *Vāta*, *Kapha*, asthma, bronchitis, flatulence, painful inflammations, vomiting, skin diseases, renal and vesical calculi.

Araṭu: The *AV* and *ṚV* mentions about the plant *Araṭu*.[617] Its botanical name is Colosanthes Indica. According to Griffith, the wood of *Araṭu* tree is very hard.

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[611] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV., p.158, vol.i
[612] सहदेव्यपामार्गयोरन्यतरः संबोध्यः AV.iv.19.1
[613] Ibid.iv.17.2
[614] Ibid.iv.19.2
[615] विभिन्दती शतशाखा विभिन्दन् नाम ते पिता ।
प्रत्यग् वि भिन्धि त्वं तं यो अस्माँ अभिदासति ॥ Ibid.iv.19.5
[616] SS.sū.38.16-17
[617] AV.xx.131.15 and ṚV.viii.46.27

Therefore, the axles of a chariots and carts were made of its wood.[618] *Sāyaṇa* does not comment on the hymn xx.131.

Arjuna: The plant *Arjuna* is mentioned in the *AV*.[619] It is also known as *Nadīsarja*, *Vīrataru*, *Indradru* and *Kakubha*.[620] Its botanical name is terminalia arjuna and belongs to the family Combretaceae. According to *SS*[621] it destroys *Kuṣṭha*, alleviates *Prameha*, *Pāṇḍuroga*, intrinsic haemorrhage, burning sensation and disorders of female genital tract. It dries *Kapha* and *Medas* (fat). It is also beneficial for wounds and astringent and is union-promoting. Another use of *Arjuna*, as mentioned in the *SS*,[622] is that the bark of *Arjuna* is used as splint for fracture and dislocation.

Arka: *Arka* is perhaps found in one obscure passage of the *AV*.[623] It is also known as *Arkāhva*, *Vasuka*, *Āsphoṭa*, *Gaṇarūpa*, *Vikīraṇa*, *Mandāra*, *Alarka*, *Pratāpasa*.[624] Its scientific name is Colotropis gigantean. Its leaf *Arka-parṇa* has been referred to in the *Śa.Br*[625] and *Arka-palāśa* is referred in *Śa.Br*.[626] The use of *Arka* is found in *SS*.[627] The *SS* mentions that the flowers of *Arka* pacify *Kapha* and *Pitta* and alleviate *Kuṣṭha* and that *Arka* can also be used to alleviate *Kapha*, fat and poison. It removes worms and is particularly used to clean wounds.

Arundhatī: The plant *Arundhatī* is mentioned in the *AV*.[628] It is a medicinal climbing plant. It attaches itself to trees like *Plakṣa*, *Aśvattha*, *Nyogrodha*, *Khādira* and

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[618] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV, p.440, vol.ii
[619] AV.ii.8.3, ṚV.i.122.5, iii.39.2, vii.55.2
[620] नदीसर्जो वीरतरुरिन्द्रद्रुःककोभोऽर्जुनः । Amarakośa.ii.4.45
[621] SS.sū.38.8, 48-49
[622] SS.ci.iii.6
[623] AV.vi.72.1
[624] अर्काह्ववसुकास्फोटगणरूपविकीरणः ।
मन्दारश्चार्कपर्णोऽत्र शुक्लेऽलर्कप्रतापसौ ॥ Amarakośa.ii.4.81
[625] Śa.Br.ix.1.1.4.9
[626] Śa.Br.i.2.3.12.13
[627] SS.sū.xlvi.284, SS.sū.38.16-17
[628] AV.v.5; vi.59.1; viii.7.6

Parṇa.[629] It is also known as *Silācī*[630] and *Lākṣā*.[631] According to *SS*, *Lākṣā* is astringent, bitter and sweet. It removes disorders of *Kapha* and *Pitta*, alleviates *Kuṣṭha* and worms and cleanses septic wounds. According to Griffith, *Lākṣā* meaning apparently a plant on which the cochineal insect which produces the red dye is found.[632] *Rātrī* is the mother, *Nabhaḥ* is the father and *Aryamā* is the grandfather of *Silācī*. She is the sister of God.[633] She is regarded as the sister of *Āpa*.[634] *Vāyu* is her soul.[635] This plant is also known as *Niṣkṛti* because it is most lovely and brilliant as the sun, brings happy fate and has golden colour (*hiraṇya-varṇa*).[636] It has a hairy stem (*lomasavaksana*).[637] It stops bleeding of wounds and is used to join bones and skins and flashes.[638] It cures wounds inflicted by arrow or staff or violence. Griffith also regarded *Arundhatī* as a climbing plant. Though not identified, he places it in a variety of convolvulus or bindweed. It is used to bind the injured limb as it binds the tree which it grows.[639] The plant makes the cows rich in milk and makes the men free from diseases.[640] It wards off the missile of *Rudra* which are discharged against the

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[629] भद्रात् प्लक्षान्निस्तिष्ठस्यश्वत्थात् खदिराद्धवात् ।
भद्रान्न्यग्रोधात् पर्णात् सा न एह्यरुन्धति ॥ AV.v.5.5

[630] सिलाची नाम वा असि... Ibid.v.5.1

[631] रोहिणि लोहितवर्णे लाक्षे । Sāyaṇa on AV.iv.12.1

[632] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV.v.5.5

[633] रात्री माता नभः पितार्यमा ते पितामहः ।
सिलाची नाम वा असि सा देवानामसि स्वसा ॥ AV.v.5.1

[634] आपामसि स्वसआ लाक्षे Ibid.v.5.7

[635] वातो हात्मा बभूव ते

[636] हिरण्यवर्णे सुभगे सूर्यवर्णे वपुष्टमे ।
रुतं गच्छासि निष्कृते निष्कृतिर्नाम वा असि ॥ Ibid.v.5.6

[637] भद्रात् प्लक्षान्निस्तिष्ठस्यश्वत्थात् खदिराद्धवात् ।
भद्रान्न्यग्रोधात् पर्णात् सा न एह्यरुन्धति ॥ Ibid.v.5.5, v.7

[638] मज्जा मज्जा सं धीयतां चर्मणा चर्म रोहतु ।
असृक् ते अस्थि रोहतु मांसं मांसेन रोहतु ॥ Ibid.iv.12.4

[639] The Hymns of the AV., p.146

[640] शर्म यच्छत्वोषधिः सह देवीररुन्धती ।
करत् पयस्वन्तं गोष्ठमयक्ष्माँ उत पूरुषान् ॥ AV.vi.59.2

cattle.[641] *Sāyaṇa* identified this plant with *Sahadevī*[642] and *Jīvalā*.[643] He reads *Sahadevī* for *Saha Devī*. But Bloomfield does not agree with this interpretation.

Aśvattha: The plant *Aśvattha* is found in the *AV*.[644] It is also known as *Bodhidruma, Caladala, Pippala, Kuñjarāśana*.[645] *Sāyaṇa* explains *Aśvattha* as *aśvatthaḥ aśvarūaḥ san agnistiṣṭhatyatreti aśvatthaḥ*.[646] The *T.Br* explains *Aśvattha* as *Agni* resides in this tree for one year.[647] This plant is very strong. *SS*[648] explain *Aśvattha* as beneficial for wound, astringent, union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic haemorrhage, burning sensation, fat and disorders of female genital track. It grows on *Khādira* plant, which is why it is like a male born of male. It breaks the trunk of the *Khādira* tree and gross ascending or forest trees. *Aśvattha* mounts on *Śamī*. The stick of *Aśvattha* and *Śamī* are used for a rite for securing the birth of male child.[649] Of the two pieces of sticks the upper should be *Aśvattha* and the lower should be *Śamī*. *Aśvattha* is a sacred tree. It is placed in the third heaven of seat of God.[650] It is one of Indias greatest trees the Ficus religiosa later called *Pippala* (now peepal). The word *Pippala* designates the berry of this tree. It is mentioned in the *ṚV*[651] as a neuter. The *ṚV*[652]also mentions about the vessels made of the wood of *Aśvattha* tree. The berries of this tree are sweet

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[641] विश्वरूपां सुभगामच्छावदामि जीवलाम् ।
सा नो रुद्रस्यास्तां हेतिं दूरं नयतु गोभ्यः ॥ AV.vi.59.3

[642] अरुन्धति अरोधनशीले सहदेव्याख्यौषधे शान्त्युदकादौ प्रयुज्यमाना Ibid.vi.59.1

[643] जीवं जीवनं लाति ददातीति जीवला Ibid.vi.59.3

[644] AV.iii.6; iv.37; v.4; vi.11 and vi.95

[645] बोधिद्रुमश्चलदलः पिप्पलः कुञ्जराशनः ॥ Amarakośa.ii.4.20

[646] AV.iii.6.1

[647] अग्निर्देवेभ्यो निरायत । अश्वो रूपं कृत्वा सोश्वत्थेसंवत्सरम् अतिष्ठत् । तद् अश्वत्थस्याश्वत्थत्वम् । T. Br.i.1.3.6

[648] SS.sū.48-49

[649] शमी मश्वत्थ आरूढ़स्तत्र पुंसुवनं कृतम् ।
तद् वै पुत्रस्य वेदनं तत् स्त्रीष्वा भरामसि ॥ AV.vi.11.1

[650] अश्वत्थो देवसदनस्तृतीयस्यामितो दिवि । Ibid.v.4.3

[651] ṚV.i.164.20

[652] ṚV.i.135.8 and x.97.5

and are eaten by birds.[653] *SS*[654] also mentions that bark of *Aśvattha* is used as splint for fracture and dislocation.

Asikni: The *AV*[655] mentions this plant with *Rāmā*, *Kṛṣṇā*, *Rajani*. *Sāyaṇa* understands the *Rāmā* to be *Bhṛṅgarāja*,[656] *Kṛṣṇā* to be *Indravāruṇi*.[657] The plant is born at night and the place where it is produced is dark, black and dusky. Its hiding place is also dusky. It is very rich in colour. This plant is addressed to stain leprosy and gray spots on the body, as it gives colour. It is used for curing white leprosy.[658] It is asked to make the white spots fly away. It is also used to cure leprosy in bone, body and skin and the white spots begotten of witchcraft.[659] This plant is to be used for removing the white spots from the body and restoring it to the original colour.

Avakā: This plant is mentioned in the *AV*.[660] It is a grassy plant which grows in marsh land. Its botanical name is Blyxa octandra. According to *Sāyaṇa*, *Avakā* is a type of lichen which is growing on water.[661] Griffith also regards *Avakā* to be a water plant. It is called *Śaivala*. The *Gandharvas* are said to eat it.[662]

Ābayu: This plant is mentioned in the *AV*.[663] *Sāyaṇa* reads *Ābayu* as *Ābayo*. It is a very benevolent plant which confers benefit on other even by suffering its own

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[653] RV.i.138.8, i.135.8, i.164.4, 20, 22, x.97.5
[654] SS.ci.iii.6
[655] AV.i.23
[656] भृङ्गराजाख्या औषधिः
[657] कृष्णवर्णे कृष्णवर्णापादिके वा इन्द्रवारुणि
[658] नक्तंजातास्योषधे रामे कृष्णे असिक्नि च ।
इदं रजनि रजय किलासं पलितं च यत् ॥ AV.i.23.1
[659] अस्थिजस्य किलासस्य तनूजस्य च यत् त्वचि ।
दृष्या कृतस्य ब्रह्मणा लक्ष्म श्वेतमनीनशम् ॥ Ibid.i.23.4
[660] AV.iv.37.8-10; viii.7.9
[661] अवका जलोपरिस्थाः शैवालविशेषाः तान् अदन्ति भक्षयन्तीति अवकादाः Ibid.iv.37.8
[662] ताभिर्हविरदान् गन्धर्वानवकादान् व्यृषतु ॥ Ibid.iv.37.8
[663] Ibid.vi.16

destruction.[664] The juice of the mustard plant of both varieties—eaten or non-eaten, is very strong. The Gruel made with the leaves of *Ābayu* (mustard) is eaten.[665] The plant cures diseases. It removes the eye disease, caused by demon such as *Tauvilika*, *Babhru* and *Babhrukarṇa*.[666] However, the meaning these names are obscure. The *KS* also refers that the mustard plant cures eye disease.[667] According to *KS*,[668] it is an amulet derived from the mustard plant, anointed with the drugs of mustard oil, is fastened to the patient. Its stem is smeared with mustard oil. Its leaf is mixed with the oil and is given to the patient. After this, four fruits of the *Śāka* tree are given. Then a paste made from the sap of the plant is smeared upon the eyes of the patient and is also eaten by him. Griffith regards *Ābayu* to be a non-identified plant. In its natural condition, it is considered to be poisonous, but has medicinal qualities when cooked and prepared. Its father is *Vihahla* and mother is *Madāvatī*.[669] He also said that both the plant *Vihahla* and *Madāvatī* are unknown. The plant *Ābayu*[670] is directed against ophthalmia.

Āñjan: The plant *Āñjan* is found in the *AV*.[671] It is considered as the eye and son of *Trikakuda* Mountain, the highest mountain. It is also called by the name *Trikakuda* and *Yamunā*,[672] both of which are considered as auspicious. *Āñjan* is used as a

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[664] स हिन त्वमसि यस्त्वमात्मानमावयः ॥ AV.vi.16.2

[665] आवयो रोगनिवृत्त्यर्थम् अद्यमान सर्षप अनावयो अभक्ष्यमाण सर्षपकाण्ड Ibid.vi.16.1

[666] तौविलिकेवेलयावायमैलब ऐलयीत् ।
बभ्रुश्च बभ्रुकर्णश्चोपहि निराल ॥ Ibid.vi.16.3

[667] KS.30.1-6

[668] आबयो इति सार्षपं तैलसंपातं बध्नाति । काण्डं प्रलिप्य । पृक्तं शाकं प्रयच्छति । चत्वारि शाकफलानि प्रयछति । क्षीरलेहमाङ्के । अश्नाति ।

[669] विहह्लो नाम ते पिता मदावती नाम ते माता AV.vi.16.2

[670] Ibid.vi.16.1

[671] Ibid.iv.9; vi.102.3; ix.6.1; xix.44, 45

[672] यदि वासि त्रैककुदं यदि यामुनमुच्यसे । Ibid.iv.9.10

safeguard of men and kin. It protects the horses.[673] It rends and crushes sorcerers. The God like *Indra* used to gift *Āñjan* for health and long life. This plant cures jaundice and keeps away from *Yakṣmā*.[674] Those who adopt this plant are free from curses, sorceries, sorrow etc. It also protects us from lies, evil dreams, wicked acts and sinfulness.[675] It has three slaves—fever, *Balāsa* and poison of snakes.[676] 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. In marriage rite, the ointment is put in each other's eyes by the husband and wife. It makes their eyes like honey, anointed with ointment and their heart and mind become one.[677] As an amulet, it is used while bathing and drinking.[678]

Bajaṁ: *Baja* is found in the *AV*.[679] *Sāyaṇa*, believes that *Baja* to be *Sarsapa* (mustared),[680] Brassica compestris. Griffith believes *Baja* to be some strong smelling herb.[681] Its scent chases away the demon. There are two types of *Baja*—white and yellow. *Baja* 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

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[673] परिपाणं पुरुषाणां परिपाणं गवामसि ।
अश्वानामर्वतां परिपाणाय तस्थिषे ॥ AV.iv.9.2

[674] यस्याञ्जन प्रसर्पस्यङ्गमङ्गं परुष्परुः ।
ततो यक्ष्मं वि बाधस उग्रो मध्यमशीरिव ॥ Ibid.iv.9.4

[675] असन्मन्त्राद् दुष्वप्न्याद् दुष्कृताच्छमलादुत ।
दुर्हार्दश्चक्षुषो घोरात् तस्मान्नः पाह्याञ्जन ॥ Ibid.iv.9.6

[676] त्रयो दासा आञ्जनस्य तक्मा बलास आदहिः । Ibid.iv.9.8

[677] अक्ष्यौ नौ मधुसंकाशे अनीकं नौ समञ्जनम् ।
अन्तः कृणुष्व मां हृदि मन इन्नौ सहासति ॥ Ibid.vii.36.1

[678] आक्ष्वैकं मणिमेकं कृणुष्व स्नाह्येकेना पिबैकमेषाम् ।
चतुर्वीरं नैर्ऋतेभ्यश्चतुर्भ्यो ग्राह्या बन्धेभ्यः परिपात्वस्मान् ॥ Ibid.xix.45.5

[679] Ibid.viii.6

[680] बजम् श्वेतसर्षपरूपं भेषजम् औषधं …उत्तरत्र बजः पिङ्ग इति विशेष्यमाणत्वात् अत्र केवलबजग्रहणेपि श्वेतोभिमतः । श्वेतपीतोभयविधसर्षपाणां गर्भिण्या बन्धनं सूत्र उक्तम्

[681] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV, viii.6.3

pregnant woman.[682] It also expels the *Asura*, who is black, hairy, born on tuft, snouted and niggard.[683] The yellow *Baja* is used to destroy *Anujighra, Pramṛśan*, *Kravyād, Reriham, Arātha*.[684] *Baja* makes the invisible eunuchs disappear who sleep in dream with the pregnant woman as her father or brother[685] or who try to approach her as if she were their wife.[686] It saves the women from miscarriage and still-birth.[687] It chases away the evil spirits who make noise like donkeys, such as *Kusulas, Kukṣila, Kakubha, Karuma, Srima*, which roam around the house of the pregnant woman in evening.[688] The yellow *Baja* is also used to remove the *Gandharvas*[689] 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.

Bilva: The plant *Bilva* is mentioned in the *AV*,[690] the *Brāhmaṇas*[691] and the *TS*.[692] Its botanical name is Aegle Marmelos. According to Griffith, the *Bilva* or *Bel* is a kind of wood apple tree. *Vilva, Mālūraḥ, Śrīphala, Sadaphala, Śailūṣa, Śāṇḍilya* are the

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[682] मा सं वृतो मोप सृप ऊरू मावं सृपोन्तरा।
कृणोम्यस्यै भेषजं बजं दुर्णामचातनम्॥ AV.viii.6.3
[683] यः कृष्णः केश्यसुर स्तम्बज उत तुण्डिकः।
अरायानस्या मुष्काभ्यां भंससोप हन्मसि॥ Ibid.viii.6.5
[684] अनुजिघ्रं प्रमृशन्तं क्रव्यादमुत रेरिहम्।
अरायांछवकिष्किणो बजः पिङ्गो अनीनशत्॥ Ibid.viii.6.6
[685] यस्त्वा स्वप्ने निपद्यते भ्राता भूत्वा पितेव च।
बजस्तान्त्सहतामितः क्लीबरूपांस्तिरीटिनः॥ Ibid.viii.6.7
[686] पर्यस्ताक्षा अप्रचङ्कशा अस्त्रैणाः सन्तु पण्डगाः।
अव भेषज पादय य इमां संविवृत्सत्यपतिः स्वपतिं स्त्रियम्॥ Ibid.viii.6.16
[687] यः कृणोति मृतवत्सामवतोकामिमां स्त्रियम्।
तमोषधे त्वं नाशयास्याः कमलमञ्जिवन्॥ Ibid.viii.6.9
[688] ये शालाः परिनृत्यन्ति सायं गर्दभनादिनः।
कुसूला ये च कुक्षिलाः ककुभाः करुमाः स्रिमाः।
तानोषधे त्वं गन्धेन विषूचीनान् वि नाशय॥ Ibid.viii.6.10
[689] ये अम्नो जातान् मारयन्ति सूतिका अनुशेरते।
स्त्रीभागान् पिङ्गो गन्धर्वान् वातो अभ्रमिवाजतु॥ Ibid.viii.6.19
[690] Ibid.xx.136.15
[691] Ai.Br.ii.1; Śa.Br. i.3.3.20; xiii.4.4.8
[692] TS.ii.1.8.1.2

synonyms of *Bilva*.[693] The tree of *Bilva* is a medium sized thorny deciduous tree. Its leaves are trifoliate, aromatic, and alternate. The flowers of this tree are greenish white. The fruits are globose woody berry with yellow pulp. It is slightly bitter with sweet as after-taste. Its seeds are numerous, oblong and embedded in pulp. Its fruit is used for medicinal purpose.[694] According to *SS*, *Bilva* checks mature diarrhea. It is wound-healing, wholesome in *Pitta* and promotes union.[695] It also pacifies *Vāta* and *Kapha*, is *Laghu* in *Vipāka* and promotes digestive power.[696] *Sāyaṇa* does not explain this hymn. The plant also pacifies body pain, poison, dysentery, vomiting and irregular fever. Pulp of unripe fruit is constipating whereas that of ripened fruit is laxative. Its leaves cure diabetes, cough, inflammation and asthma. Its roots are also useful.

Cīpudru: The plant *Cīpudru* is found only in the *AV*[697] and does not occur elsewhere. It 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*.[698] According to *Sāyaṇa*, there is a kind of tree having this name.[699] He reads it as *Cīpadru*. He agrees it to be a kind of tree. This interpretation is supported by *KS*.[700] Griffith regards it to be some unknown tree or plant. However Whitney and Bloomfield regard the name of the tree to be *Cīpuḍu*.

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[693] बिल्वे शाण्डिल्यशैलूषौ मालूरश्रीफलावपि ॥ Amarakośa.ii.4.32
[694] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV, p.456, vol.ii
[695] SS.sū.38.46-47
[696] SS.sū.38.68-69
[697] AV.vi.127.2
[698] यौ ते बलास तिष्ठतः कक्षे मुष्काबपश्रितौ ।
वेदाहं तस्य भेषजं चीपुद्रुरभिचक्षणम् ॥ Ibid.vi.127.2
[699] चीपद्रुः एतत्संज्ञो द्रुमविशेषः Ibid.vi.127.2
[700] KS.xxvi.34

Darbha: The *Darbha* is found in the *ṚV* and *AV*.[701] According to *Sāyaṇa*, in the *ṚV*, *Darbha* is described as *Kuśa*.[702] The other name of *Darbha* is *Kuśa*, *Kutha*, *pavitra*.[703] It is a kind of herb which has hundred joints, thousand leaves and several roots (*bhūri-mūla*).[704] Its botanical name is imperata cylindrical Beauv. It is formidable and difficult to dig out. Though it grows on the earth, its tuft goes to the heaven.[705] It is spread over the three heavens and the three earths.[706] It makes the earth firm as soon as it is born. It supports the atmosphere and heaven.[707] It is considered as the best among all the medicinal plants.[708] So it is also known as the king of all medicinal plants and amulets. It is the killer of demons and purifier of sin.[709] The *AV* mentions that *Darbha* is used for calming of anger.[710] The *SS* mentions about *Darbha* with *Kuśa*, *Kāśa*, *Nala* and *Kaṇḍekṣu*.[711] These five grasses together are known as '*Tṛṇapañcamūla'*, roots of five grasses. This, last among the *Pañcamūla*, taken with milk alleviates defects and disorders of urine and intrinsic haemorrhage instantaneously. It also eliminates *Kapha* and *Medas* (fat) and alleviates headache, *Gulma* internal abscess, disorder of *Vāta*, calculus, gravels, dysuria and retention of urine.[712] It also removes sin.[713] According to Griffith, *Darbha*, which is

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[701] AV.vi.43.1-2; viii.7.20; x.4.3; xi.6.15; xix.28; xix.29; xix.30; xix.32 and xix.33

[702] दर्भासोदर्भाः कुशाः ṚV.i.191.3

[703] अस्त्री कुशं कुथो दर्भः पवित्रमथ कत्तृणम् । Amarakośa.ii.4.166

[704] शतकाण्डो दुश्च्यवनः सहस्रपर्ण उत्तिरः ।
दर्भो य उग्र औषधिस्तं ते बध्नाम्यायुषे ॥ AV.xix.32.1

[705] दिवि ते तूलमोषधे पृथिव्यामसि निष्ठितः ।
त्वया सहस्रकाण्डेनायुः प्र वर्धयामहे ॥ Ibid.xix.32.3

[706] तिस्रो दिवो अत्यतृणत् तिस्र इमाः पृथिवीरुत् । Ibid.xix.32.4

[707] यो जायमानः पृथिवीमदृंहद् यो अस्तभ्नादन्तरिक्षं दिवं च । Ibid.xix.32.9

[708] ....स्हानोषधा प्रतथमः स्भूव । AV.xix.32.10

[709] त्वां पवित्रमृषयोभरन्त त्वं पुनीहि दुरितान्यस्मत् ॥ Ibid.xix.33.3

[710] …..मन्योर्विमन्युकस्यायं मन्युशमन उच्यते ॥ Ibid.vi.43.1

[711] SS.sū.38.75-76

[712] SS.sū.38.10-13

[713] ...दर्भो भङ्गो यवः सहस्ते नो मुञ्चन्त्वंहसः ॥ AV.xi.6.15

also known as *Śara* and *Kuśara* grass is mostly used in sacrificial ceremonies. He also agrees that it has purifying qualities.[714] It is also known as *Brahmanaspati*. *Darbha* is also used as an amulet for long life and to destroy enemy.[715] According to *KS Darbha* is dug up (in the manner prescribed at KS.33.9; cf. Keśava) and is used as a talisman.[716]

Dhava: The tree *Dhava*[717] is mentioned in the *AV* and *SS*. According to Griffith, it is a shrub known as Grislea Tomentosa. Its botanical name is Anogeissus latifolia Wall. According to *SS*, it 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. *Sāyaṇa*, Bloomfield and Whitney do not explain about this tree.

Gulgulu: This plant has been mentioned in the *AV*.[718] *Kumbha*, *Ulūkhala*, *kauśika*, *Guggulu*, *Puraḥ* are the synonyms of *Gulgulu*.[719] The botanical name of *Gulgulu* is Bdellium-scented. *Sāyaṇa* uses the word *Guggulu* for *Gulgulu*. He explains *Guggulu* as a well known kind of article for incense.[720] Griffith regards it as a costly fragrant gum. This gum oozes out from the vine plum tree (Borassue Flabelliformis). He also supposes it to be a part of the girl's dowry. It was used to anoint or perfume the girl.[721] This plant is produced from the *Sindhu* or the sea.[722] The smell of *Gulgulu* is used to remove *Yakṣmā* and curses. The *SS* mentions that the *Guggulu* pacifies *Vāta*

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[714] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV, p.49, vol.i
[715] AV.xix.28
[716] KS.36.32
[717] AV.v.5.5; SS.su.38.8, 20-21
[718] AV.ii.36.7; iv.37.3; xix.38
[719] कुम्भोलूखलकं Amarakośa.ii.4.34
[720] गुग्गुलु धूपनद्रव्यविशेषः प्रसिद्धः AV.ii.36.7
गुग्गुलोः एतन्नामकस्य सुरभिः घ्राणसंतर्पको गन्धो Ibid.xix.38.2
[721] Griffith, the Hymns of the AV, vol.i, AV.ii.36.7
[722] यद् गुल्गुलु सैन्धवं यद् वाप्यासि समुद्रियम्॥ AV.xix.38.2

and *Kapha*, destroys poison, improves complexion and removes itching, boils and allergic eruption.[723]

*Haridrā***:** The plant *Haridrā* is not mentioned in the *AV*, but the *Sāyaṇa's* commentary of the *AV* and *ṚV* mentions about it.[724] He also mentions it as the cause of strengthening and increasing of hair. It removes *Kilāsa* and *Palita*. Its botanical name is Curcuma longa, family Zingiberaceae. It is a perennial herb. There are primary tubers at the base of aerial stem bearing many rhizomes. The rhizomes have distinct taste. The roots are fleshy with ellipsoidal tubers. The inflorescence is produced on short leaflets peduncles, consists of cone-shaped collection of numerous ovate bracts. The flowers are pale-yellow and borne in pairs in the axils. The seeds are black and shining with large, lace rate and white aril.

*Jaṅgiḍa***:** *Jaṅgiḍa* is found in the *AV*.[725] It is not found anywhere out of *AV*. Griffith says that it is frequently mentioned in the *AV* as a charm against demons and cure for various diseases. According to *AV*, it may have been cultivated; though there is no description about it. It cannot be identified now. It grows on earth. The Gods themselves have thrice produced it and *Indra* has put strength into it. In old times, the *Brāhmaṇa* called this plant and its amulet as *Aṅgiras*.[726] It is considered as a fierce destroyer of the diseases and hostile witchcraft. It confers bliss and happiness. Neither old nor new plants can surpass it in this respect.[727] *Jaṅgiḍa* is the killer of demon and enemy. Bloomfield regarded that *Jangiḍa* perfectly illustrates the absence of any

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[723] SS.sū.38.24
[724] AV.i.23.1, vi.21; ṚV.i.50.11-12
[725] AV.ii.4; xix.34; xix.35
[726] त्रिष्ट्वा देवा अजनयन् निष्ठितं भूम्यामधि।
तमु त्वाङ्गिरा इति ब्राह्मणाः पूर्व्या विदुः॥ Ibid.xix.34.6
[727] न त्वा पूर्वा ओषधयो न त्वा तरन्ति या नवाः।
विवाध उग्रो जङ्गिडः परिपाणः सुमङ्गलः॥ Ibid.xix.34.7

boundary line between disease and demonology. *Dārila* explains *Jaṅgiḍ* at KS.8.15 as *jaṁgiḍorjunaḥ acala iti dākṣiṇātyaḥ kuṭako mālavake prasiddhaḥ*. From this it can be learnt that it is a tree.

*Jalāṣa***:** It is mentioned in the *AV* and *ṚV*.[728] *Sāyaṇa* reads *Jālāṣa* as *Jalāṣa*. He glosses it as water.[729] According to *ṚV, Jalāṣa* means the foam of cow's urine. It is also mentioned in the *KS*.31.11-15 as *idamiṭvā ityakṣataṁ mūtraphenenābhyudya. prakṣipati. prakṣālayati. Dantarajasāvadegdhi. Stambarajasā*. It is the particular remedy of *Rudra*. It is used to cure tumor or boil. At first, the tumor is moistened with the foam of cow's urine by throwing the urine itself upon it. Then it is washed off and smeared with scouring from the teeth and with pollen from bunches of grass. According to *SS*, cow's urine is pungent, sharp, and hot. It does not increase *Vāta* because of its high alkalinity. It also promotes digestive power and intellect, increases *Pitta* while decreases *Kapha* and *Vāta*. In colic, *Gulma, Udararoga*, hardness of bowels, purgatives, non-unctuous enema where urine is indicated, cow's urine should be used.

*Kapittha***:** The plant *Kapittha* is not mentioned in the *AV*, but it mentions *Sāyaṇa's* commentary of the *AV*.[730] It is also known as *Dadhittha, Grāhī, Manmatha, Dadhiphala, Puṣpaphala* and *Dantaśaṭha*.[731] It was dug up by the *Gandharva* for *Varuṇa*, when his virility had decayed. This plant was first born sap of the water and

[728] AV.vi.57.2; ṚV.i.43.4

[729] जलाषम् इति उदकनामसु पठितम्

[730] AV.iv.4

[731] अश्वत्थेऽथ कपित्थे स्युर्दधित्थग्राहिमन्मथा ।
तस्मिन्दधिफलः पुश्पफलदन्तशठावपि ॥ Amrakośa ii.4.21

also of the plants. Moreover it is the brother of *Soma* and the lusty force of the antelope buck.[732]

*Karkandhu***:** The plant *Karkandhu* is mentioned in the *AV* and *VS*.[733] It is a berry of jujube or *Ber* tree, which grows wild and produces a small edible fruit. *Uvāchārya* and *Mahīdhara*, the commentator of the *VS* also support this.[734] Its scientific name is Zizyphus Jujuba. It is also known as *Badarī* and *Kolī*.[735] This plant is also mentioned in the *ṚV*,[736] but it does not mean the plant of jujube. In the *ṚV* the term *Karkandhu* is applied as the name of a man. It is also known as *Kuvalam* and *Badaram*.[737] *Sāyaṇa* does not comment on the hymn of the AV.xx.136.

*Khadira***:** The tree *Khadira* is found in the *AV*, *ṚV* and *SS*.[738] According to *Amarakośa* it is known as *Gāyatrī, Bātalatanaya, Dantadhāvana, Aribheda*, *Viṭkhadira, Kadara* and *Somavalka*.[739] Its botanical name is Acacia Catechu. It belongs to the family of Leguminaceae. The generic name Acacia catechu has been adopted from Greek word, 'Akis' which means a sharp point, referring to the thorns of the plant. It is medium-sized tree with thorny branches. Its bark is rough, dark grey or grayish- brown. The leaves are pinnate with a pair of recurves, prickles at base of rachis. Its flowers are pale-yellow in axillary cylindrical spikes. Flowering in this plant occurs in rainy season and fruiting during November—January. According to Griffith, the wood of

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[732] अपां रसः प्रथमजोथो वनस्पतीनाम् ।
उत सोमस्य भ्रातास्युतार्शमसि वृष्ण्यम् ॥ AV.iv.4.5
[733] AV.xx.136.3; VS.19.22, 23
[734] कर्कन्धुर्बदरविशेषः, कर्कन्धूनि स्थूलबदराणि दध्नो रूपम्
[735] कर्कन्धुर्बदरी कोली कोलं कुबलफेनिले । Amrakośa ii.4.37
[736] ṚV.1.112.6
[737] धानानां रूपं कुवलं परीवापस्य गोधूमः । सक्तूनां रूपं बदरमुपवाकाः करम्भस्य ॥ VS.19.22
[738] AV.viii.8.3; ṚV.iii.15.19, iii.18.19, iii.53.19; SS.sū.38.8
[739] गायत्री बालतनयः खदिरो दन्तधावनः ।
अरिभेदो विट्खदिरे कदरः खदिरे सिते ॥ Amrakośa ii.4.50

tree *Khadira* is solid and hard. It is the destroyer of enemy. According to *SS* it destroys *Kuṣṭha*, alleviates *Prameha* and *Pāṇḍuroga* and dries *Kapha* and *Medas* (fat).

Kumuda: The *AV*[740] mentioned about the *Kumuda*. According to Griffith it is either white esculent water-lily or the red lotus. Its fruit is edible. *Kumud*a is the name of a plant mentioned with other water plants in one passage of the *AV*. *Kumuda* is produced from oval shaped fruit (*Āṇḍrika*). However Griffith assumes *Āṇḍrika* to be a separate plant with egg-shaped fruit or bulbs. The *AV* does not mention about its medicinal benefit. But *SS* mentions that the *Kumuda* is useful in burning sensation, disorders of *Pitta* and *Rakta*; thirst, poison, heart disease, vomiting and fainting.[741] It is sweet, slightly slimy, unctuous, pleasant and cold.[742] Tuber of *Kumuda* is *Vāta*-aggravating, *Pitta*-pacifying, sweet in *Vipāka* and cold.[743]

Kuṣṭha: The plant *Kuṣṭha* is mentioned in the *AV* and *KS*.[744] Scientifically, this medicinal plant is known as Costus speciosces or Arabicus. Its birth place is mountain and north of the Himalaya Mountain.[745] It is the mightiest among all the plants. It is the dear friend and companion of *Soma*.[746] Its name is *Uttama* and its fathers name is also *Uttama*.[747] The plant *Kuṣṭha* has three names *Nadya-māra*, *Naghā-riṣa* and *Nadya*.[748] *Sāyaṇa* explain the three name of *Kuṣṭha* as *nadyamāraḥ iti ekaṁ nāma. nadyāṁ bhavā nadyāḥ. Nadīśabdena nadīsthāni udakāni lakṣyante. udakadoṣodbhavā*

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[740] AV.iv.34.5
[741] SS.sū.38.52-53
[742] SS sū.xliv.285
[743] SS.sū.xliv.308
[744] AV.v.4; vi.95; vi.102.3; xix.39 and KS.28.13
[745] यो गिरिष्वजायथा वीरुधां बलवत्तमः ।
कुष्ठेहि तक्मनाशन तक्मानं नाशयन्नितः ॥ AV.v.4.1
[746] ...सोमस्यासि सखा हितः...। Ibid.v.4.7
[747] उत्तमा नाम कुष्ठास्युत्तमो नाम ते पिता । Ibid.v.4.9
[748] त्रीणि ते कुष्ठ नामानि नद्यमारो नद्यरिषः नद्यां पुरुषो रिषत् । Ibid.xix.39.2

rogā ityarthaḥ. Yadvā nadyā nadanīyāḥ śabdanīyāḥ atyantaduṣpariharatvena śabdamānā ityarthaḥ. Tān mārayatīti nadyamāraḥ. Tathā nadyariṣaḥ. ukto nadyaśabdārthaḥ. tān riṣyatīti nadyariṣaḥ. nadyānāṁ mārakaḥ svayamapi nadya ityucyate.[749] 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.[750] Its mother's name is *Jīvalā* and father's name is *Jīvala*.[751] According to Griffith, the word *Jīvala* means Vivifien which means life-giving.[752] Next to the *Soma* plant the *Kuṣṭha* is one of the most valued members of the *Vedic* flora. The word is not mentioned in the *ṚV*. It is the prince of remedies, like unto the steer among domestic animals and the tiger among the beasts of prey. In fact both *Soma* and *Kuṣṭha* come from the third heaven; the *Kuṣṭha* grew originally under that wonderful *Aśvattha* tree (ficus-religiosa), under which the Gods shelter. *SS* mentions that the *Kuṣṭha* 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.[753]

Madhulā: The plant *Madhulā* is found in the *AV*.[754] According to M. Williams, *Madhu* means *Madhura* which can be translated as sweet. It is an intoxicating drink, spirituous liquor. It makes the person sweeter.[755] *Kauśika* (19.1) employs the hymn and the plant in curing the diseases of cattle. This plant is also used as a remedy against stinging insects and to remove the poison of the cross lined (*Tirasciraji*)

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[749] AV.xix.39.2

[750] त्रीणि ते कुष्ठ नामानि नद्यमारो नद्यरिषः नद्यायं पुरुषो रिषत्।
यस्मै परिब्रवीमि त्वा सायंप्रातरथो दिवा॥ Ibid.xix.39.2

[751] जीवला नाम ते माता जीवन्तो नाम ते पिता। Ibid.xix.39.3

[752] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV.xix.34.3

[753] SS.sū.38.24, 44-45

[754] AV.v.15.1; vii.56.2

[755] Ibid.v.15.10

snake, black snake, *Pṛdāku* and *Kangkaparvā* snake.[756] *Sāyaṇa* does not comment AV.v.15 but he glosses about this plant in the AV.vii.56.2 as *madhulā madhumatī.*

Madugha: It is found in the *AV, ṚV* and *KS.*[757] Its birth place is the *Trikakuda* Mountain. According to *ṚV*[758] 'honey plant' is the name of a sweet herb in the *AV.* The spelling is somewhat uncertain, since many manuscripts read it as *Madhugha*. The botanical name of *Madugha* or *Madhuka* or *Mahuva* is Madhuka indika and its family is Sapotaceae. According to ṚV.i.191.10-13, *sūryevuṣamāsajāmidṛtiṁsurāvatogṛhe…..madhulācakāra.* It is a large deciduous tree. The bark is grey or blackish with shallow wrinkle and vertical cracks. The leaves are clustered at the ends of branches, elliptic or oblong-elliptic and have shortly acuminate base. The flowers are borne on dropping pedicels at the ends of the branches. The fruits are ovoid, fleshy and green berries. There are 1—4 seeds. The plant flowers during April—May and bears fruits in June—July. *Sāyaṇa* reads *Madugha* as *Madhugha*. According to him it is a medicinal plant.[759] According to Griffith, this is probably licorice and grass battered by a storm (it symbolizes girl's agitated mind). It is applied by mixing with the sacrificial butter. Though the mode of application is not mentioned, it can be assumed that the two lips were anointed with it.

Māṣa: The plant *Māṣa* is mentioned in the *AV* and *Brhadāraṇyokapaniṣad.*[760] According to the *AV* and later *Vedic* literature it is a kind of bean. M. Williams supports it.[761] Its scientific name is Phaseolus Radiatus. It is still one of the most

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[756] तिरश्चिराजेरसितात् पृदाकोः परिः संभृतम्।
तत् कङ्कपर्वणो विषमियं वीरुदनीनशत्॥ AV.vii.56.1
[757] AV. vi.102.3; ṚV.vi.70.1.5; KS.76.8-9
[758] ṚV.vi.70.1.5
[759] मधुघस्य मधूकबृक्षस्य यष्टिमधुकस्य वा कुष्ठस्य एतत्संज्ञकस्य औषधस्य नलदस्य Sāyaṇa on AV.vi.102.3
[760] AV.vi.140.2; xii.2.53 and Br. Up., vi.3.22
[761] Williams, A Sanskrit English Dictionary

valuable among similar plants in India. It is a valued kind of pulse having seeds marked with black and grey spots. The seeds were pounded (*piṣṭa*) according to the *AV*. The pulverized *Māṣa* is the oblation of *Kravyādi Agni*. According to the *SS*, *Māṣa* (black gram) is heavy, sweet, hot, unctuous, saturating and aphrodisiac. It eliminates faeces and urine, pacifies *Vāta* and increases semen and *Kapha*.[762] Wild black gram is rough, astringent and non-burning.

Muñja: The *Muñja* is mentioned in the *AV* and the *ṚV*.[763] According to Griffith, *Muñja* is a kind of grass which grows to the height of about ten feet. It is a tall perennial grass with erect culms. The leaves are linear, somewhat glaucous beneath, scabride on the margin and up to 2 cm broad. Its botanical name is Sacchrum munja, and it belongs to the family Gramineae. It is used in basketwork. The *Mekhala* or girdle worn by *Brāhmans* is also made from it. It can be implied from the *KS*[764] and *Dārila*'s commentary thereon, that the head of a stalk of *Muñja* grass is to be tied with a cord, then perhaps, to be suspended from the neck of the patient or to be otherwise attached to his body. 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. These plants are found in dark places. A paste prepared from these plants or their leaves gives black colour to the skin. Its stamens and roots are also used.

Naḍa: The plant *Naḍa*, 'reed', is mentioned in the *ṚV* and *AV*.[765] According to *Sāyaṇa* it is a *Tṛṇa*.[766] It grows on the river bank. Reeds were used, after being split, for making mats, a work carried out by women.[767]

[762] SS.sū.46.34
[763] AV.i.2.4; ṚV.i.161.8, i.191.3
[764] ...मुञ्जशिरो रज्ज्वा बध्नाति। KS.25.6
[765] ṚV, viii.1.33 and AV iv.19.1, vi.137.2-3; vi.138.4-5, xii.2.1, xix.50.54

Nalada: The plant *Nalada* is mentioned in the *AV* and *SS*.[768] It is the root of Andropogon Muricatus.[769] *SS* mentions that the *Nalada* is useful in intrinsic haemorrhage, poison and excessive internal burning sensation. Griffith translates it as Spikenard.[770] *Sāyaṇa* explains it as *sugandhistṛṇaviśeṣo naladaḥ uśīrāparaparyāyaḥ*.[771]

Nitatni: The plant *Nitatni* is found in the *AV* and *KS*.[772] The word is not mentioned elsewhere as the name of a plant, but Bohtlingk's Lexicon mentions it as a kind of spirituous liquor.[773] *Sāyaṇa* explains it as sending its roots far down.[774] According to Griffith, *Nitatni* is an unidentified plant with deep roots and therefore supposed to strengthen the roots of the hair. The scholiasts agree in defining *Nitatni* by *kākamākī*. KS.31.28 explains it as *devī devyāṁ yāṁ jamadagniriti mantroktāphalaṁ jīvyalākābhyāmamāvāsyāyāṁ kṛṣṇavasanaḥ kṛṣṇabhakṣaḥ purā kākasaṁpātādavanakṣatrevasiñcati*. It means the fruit of the *Nitatni* plant, together with the plant *Gīvī* and *Ālākā*, are connected into a solution and poured by the medicine-man (who is clothed in black and has eaten black food[775]), in the early morning before the rise of the crows upon the head of the person for whom the hair cure is undertaken. This plant is dug out of the ground to be used in medicine to strengthen old hair, increase its length, to thicken it, to grow new hairs and to promote

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[766] नडास्तृण्विशेषाः । ते यथा तटाकोदकप्रान्तेषु उत्पन्नाः संहताः सन्तः शीघ्रं वर्धमाना द्राघीयांसो भवन्ति तथा केशा अपि वर्धन्ताम् इत्यर्थः ॥ AV.vi.137.2

[767] यथा नडं कशिपुनेस्त्रियो भिन्दन्त्यश्मना । AV.vi.138.5

[768] AV.vi.102.3; SS.sū.38.41

[769] William, A Sanskrit English Dictionary, p.530

[770] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV.vi.102.3

[771] AV.vi.102.3

[772] AV.vi.136 and vi.137; KS.31.28

[773] Bloomfield, Hymns of the AV, p.536

[774] नितत्नि नितन्वाने न्यक्प्रसरणशीले औषधे AV.vi.136.1

[775] That is sesame, beans and like; cf Kaućika, introduction, p.xlix

a luxuriant growth of hair.[776] This healing herb is also used to sprinkle the hair which drop off and have broken roots.[777] With the use of the plant *Nitatni*, the hair grow up excessively, so as to be measured with reins or outstretched hands or reeds and cluster round the head with their black colour.

Nīla: The commentator *Sāyaṇa* explains about this plant in the *AV*.[778] But this medicine is not mentioned in this hymn. There is a legend produce of this plant.

Nyagrodha: *Nyagrodha* is mentioned in the *AV* and *Ch Up*.[779] The scientific name of this plant is Ficus indica. *Uvata* and *Mahīhara* explain it as *nyagrodhaścamasaiḥ avatu somasaṁbandhena* and *nyagrodhaḥ camasaiḥ somapātraiḥ tvāmavatu* respectively. It means the sacrificial bowls (Camasa) were made of its wood.[780] The sister tree, the *Aśvatha* (Ficus religiosa), already occurs in the *ṚV*. The *SS*[781] explains *Nyagrodha* as beneficial for wound, astringent, union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic haemorrhage, burning sensation, fat and disorders of female genital track.

Nyastikā: The plant *Nyastikā* is mentioned in the *AV*.[782] The KS.36.12 also mentions about this plant as *bhagena mā nyastikedaṁ khanāmīti sauvarcalamoṣadhivacchuklaprasūnaṁ śirasyupacṛtya grāmaṁ praviśati*. Its scientific name is Andropogon aciculatus. *Sāyaṇa* identifies *Nyastikā* as a *Śankhapuṣpikā*.[783] It is also known as *Subhaṅgakaraṇī*, *Sahasraparṇī*, *Saṅvananī*,

[776] यस्ते प्रत्नान् जनयाजातान् जातानु वर्षीयसस्कृधि। AV.vi.136.2
[777] यस्ते केशोवपद्यते समूलो यश्च वृश्चते।
इदं तं विश्वभेषज्याभि षिञ्चामि वीरुधा॥ Ibid.vi.136.3
[778] वनस्पतीन् नील्यादीन् Ibid.i.24
[779] AV.iv.37.4, v.5.5 and Ch Up.vi.12.1
[780] TS, vii.4.12.1; VS, xxiii.13
[781] SS.sū.38.48
[782] AV.vi.139.1; vii.38.3
[783] शङ्खपुष्पिके न्यस्तिका दौर्भाग्यलक्षणं नितराम अस्यन्ती त्वम्

Samuṣpalā, Babhru, Kalyāṇī.[784] Its hundred branches grow upward and thirty three grows downward. Because it helps hundred *Puruṣas* and thirty three Gods. It has thousand leaves. The plant is used for keeping away ill-luck and to raise fortune.[785] This plant is used in a magical rite to arouse passionate love in the mind of woman. It is invoked to cause affection, kindle love and draw the woman towards the man, who loves her.[786] The heart of the woman, along with mouth, is dried up for the sake of the man and is attracted towards him.[787]

Pātā: The plant *Pātā* is mentioned in the *AV* and *KS*.[788] *Sāyaṇa* reads it *Pāṭhā*. Very possibly the word should be read as *Pāṭhā*. *KS* explains it as *nechatruriti pāṭāmūlaṁ pratipāśitam anvāha badhnāti. mālāṁ saptapalāśīṁ dhārayati*. According to Griffith, *Pātā*, probably identical with *Pāṭhā*, is a climbing plant possessing various medicinal properties and employed for magical purpose.[789] The word *Pātā* is doubtless, like other words for plants (*Apāmārga*, *Arundhatī*). Its scientific name is Clypea hernandifolia. At first *Garuḍa* found it out and after that *Varāha* dug out it by his nose.[790] *Indra* wears it on his shoulder to destroy *Asura* and he also eats it to kill *Asuras*. *SS* mentions that the plant *Pāṭhā* pacifies *Kapha*, *Pitta*, *Vāta* and alleviates

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[784] न्यस्तिका रूरोहिथ सुभंगकरणी मम ।
शतं तव प्रतानास्त्रयस्त्रिंशन्तिनाः ।
तया सहस्रपर्ण्या हृदयं शोषयामि ते ॥ AV.vi.139.1
संवननी समुष्पला बभ्रु कल्याणि सं नुद ।
अमूं च मां च सं नुद समानं हृदयं कृधि ॥ Ibid.vi.139.3

[785] न्यस्तिका रुरोहिथ सुभगकरणी मम । Ibid.vi.139.1

[786] यथा नकुलो विच्छिद्य संदधात्यहिं पुनः ।
एवा कामस्य विच्छिन्नं सं धेहि वीर्यावति ॥ Ibid.vi.139.5

[787] शुष्यतु मयि ते हृदयमथो शुष्यत्वास्यम् ।
अथो नि शुष्य मां कामेनाथो शुष्कास्या चर ॥ Ibid.vi.139.2

[788] AV.ii.27.4; iii.18.1; viii.2.6 and in the KS xxxvii.1; xxxviii.18

[789] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV.iii.18.1

[790] सुपर्णस्त्वान्वविन्दत् सूकरस्त्वाखनन्नसा ।
प्राशं प्रतिप्राशो जह्यरसान् कृण्वोषधे ॥ AV.ii.27.2

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.[791]

Pīlu: This plant is found in the *AV* and *SS*.[792] No explanation about this plant is found in *Sāyaṇa*'s commentary. According to Roxburgh, *Pīlu* is a very large-sized tree. It grows on the mountains of Coromandel. It blossoms during the hot season. Its seeds ripen about 3-4 months after it blossoms. Some other scholars regard it to be Salvadore Persica, an uncommon tree, which is middle-sized and produces flowers and fruits all the year round.[793] Fruits of *Pīlu* are sweet, bitter, pungent, hot and pacify *Kapha* and *Vāta*.

Pippalī: The plant *Pippalī*[794] is found in the *AV*, *ṚV* and *Br Up*. *Pippalī*, the feminine form of the word *Pippala*, appears denoting berries used as a remedy for wounds, like *Arundhati*. In the *ṚV* the word *Pippalī* means 'berry', used with mystic signification, and in neither case with any certain reference to the berry of the fig-tree. *Sāyaṇa* explains it as *pippalī etatsaṁjñā kaṇādyaparaparyāyā auṣadhiḥ. tādṛśīṁ pippalīṁ devā indrādayaḥ amṛtamathanasamaye sam akalpyan samyak kalpitabantaḥ*. It is also mentioned in the KS.[795] The *Pippalī* speak to one another, as they came out, after having been created. He whom we shall find (as yet) alive, that man shall not suffer harm.[796] It is buried by the *Asuras* at first, after that the Gods uplifted it for human wellbeing. It is the healer of wound produced by the missiles rent. Griffith renders it

[791] sū.38.6, 22-23 and 31-34
[792] AV.xx.135.12; SS sū.39.6, 46.194
[793] Griffith, The Hymns of The AV
[794] पैप्पलयः समव्दन्त …..AV.vi.109.1-2; ṚV.i.164.20 Br Up.iv.1.41
[795] अघद्विष्टा शं नो देवी वरणः प्पपली विद्रधस्य या बभ्रव इति KS.26.33
[796] पिप्पल्यः समवदन्तायतीर्जननादधि।
यं जीवमश्नवामहै न स रिष्याति पूरुषः ॥ AV.vi.109.2

the fruit of the *Aśvattha*, *Pippal* or *Peepul*.[797] According to William, *Pippalī* is piper Longum (both plant and berry).[798] Whitney also agrees that *Pippalī* is piper Longum. In the *Bṛhdāraṇyaka Up*,[799] the general sense of berry is not necessary, and the special sense of the *Peepal* is quite possible. It cures wounds and all disease.[800] According to *SS*,[801] it is pungent, hot, relishing. 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* is heavy, sweet, cold and increases *Kapha* while dried one pacifies *Kapha* and *Vāta*, is aphrodisiac and slightly alleviates *Pitta*.[802]

Plakṣa: The plant *Plakṣa* is mentioned in the *AV* and *SS*.[803] According to Griffith, it is the waved-leaf Fig-tree, a large and beautiful tree with small white fruit. Its scientific name is Ficus Infectoria. It is beneficial for wound, astringent, union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic haemorrhage, burning sensation, fat and disorders of female genital tract. *Sāyaṇa* does not gloss about this disease.

Pṛśni-parṇi: The plant *Pṛśni-parṇi* (having a speckled leaf) is mentioned in a hymn of the *AV*, *KS* and *SS*.[804] The commentator *Sāyaṇa* makes no attempt to identify the *Pṛśni-parṇi* as any particular plant, but simply paraphrases it with citraparṇī oṣadhiḥ.[805] Its botanical name is Hemionites Cordifolia. It is mentioned in the *SS* with *Gokṣura*, *Bṛhatī*, *Kaṇṭakārī*, *Pṛśni-parṇi* and *Śālaparṇī* and known as *Laghu*

[797] Griffith, The Hymns of the AVvi.109.1
[798] William, A Sanskrit- English Dictionary, p.628
[799] Bṛ Up.iv.1.41
[800] पिप्पलीं क्षिप्रभेषज्यूऽतातिविद्धभेषजी । AV.vi.109.1
[801] SS.sū38.22-23, 58-61
[802] SS.sū.46.223
[803] AV.v.5.5, SS.sū.38.48-49
[804] AV.ii.25; KS.8.25; SS.sū.38.66-67
[805] पृश्निपर्णी चित्रपर्णी औषधिः AV.ii.25.1

Pañchamūla. It is a small herb. It was born first among the medicinal plants.[806] According to Griffith, it is a medicinal plant.[807] The Goddess *Pṛśni-parṇi* confers prosperity on men and causes distress to *Nirṛti*. The God *Pṛśni-parṇi*[808] is invoked to drive away the demonic creatures *Kaṇvas* which eat away the embryo of women (evil beings procuring abortion) to the mountain and to go after burning them. The plant *Pṛśni-parṇi* is very powerful and alleviates *Kuṣṭha*.[809] It cures the diseases which cause anaemia and which reduce bodily growth. It prevents abortion. The word is given doubtingly by Wise as *Pristapurni*.[810] *SS*[811] reads it *Pṛthakparṇī*. It pacifies *Pitta* and *Vāta* and alleviates consumption, *Gulma*, body-ache, cardiac Dyspnoea and cough. It is astringent, bitter and sweet and promotes body weight and strength.

Puṇḍrīka: This plant is mentioned in the *AV* and *ṚV*.[812] It is a lotus flower, especially a white lotus.[813] Its medicinal uses are not mentioned in the any of the *Saṁhitās*. Its botanical name is Nelumbo nucifera and belongs to the family Nympheaceae. It is a perennial herb. It has creeping rhizomes. The leaves are orbicular, glaucous, floating and pettate. The flowers of this plant are solitary, bisexual, regular, large, rosy, white or rarely yellow. Its fruits are torus, spongy and rope-shaped. Its seeds are elongated, spherical, smooth, black and exalbuminous.

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[806] सहमानेयं प्रथमा पृश्निपर्ण्यजायत । AV.ii.25.2
[807] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV.2.25.1
[808] अरायमसृक्पावानं यश्च स्फातिं जिहीर्षति ।
गर्भादं कण्वं नाशय पृश्निपर्णि सहस्व च ॥ AV.ii.25.3
[809] शं नो देवी पृश्निपर्ण्यशं निर्ऋत्या अकः ।
उग्रा हि कण्वजम्भनी तामभक्षि सहस्वतीम् ॥ Ibid.ii.25.1
[810] Wise, The Hindu System of Medicine
[811] SS.sū.38.4
[812] AV.vi.106.1 and ṚV.vi.16.13, vii.33.11, viii.72.11, x.107.16, x.142.8
[813] Williams, a Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p.631
Apte, The Student's Sanskrit-English Dictionary
पुण्डरीकाणि पद्मानि ṚV.x.142.8

Puṣkara: The plant *Puṣkara* is mentioned in the *AV* and *ṚV*.[814] According to Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, it is the blue lotus. Its botanical name is Nelumbium Speciousum or Nymphaea Nelumbo. Though this plant is mentioned in these two *Saṁhitās,* they does not mention about its medicinal uses.

Putirajju: It is mentioned in the *AV* and *KS*.[815] Griffith deems it unidentifiable but says that it is a malodorous plant. According to Prof. Ludwig, it is a species of serpent.[816] *Dārila*, in *KS*, considers the meaning of *Putirajju* to be a rotten rope (*Jirnarajju*).

Pūtudru: The plant *Pūtudru* is mentioned in the *AV* and *KS*.[817] According to Griffith, it is the *Khadira* (Acacia Catechu). Some others like *Keśava* and *Dārila*,[818] says it to be the *Deva-dāru* (Deodar) (Pinus Deodar). *Sāyaṇa* reads it *Pūtadr*u.[819] It is the body of *Agni*. *Pūtudru*[820] is used to kill rivals and demons. *KS* seems to refer to *Pūtudru* by the word *Pūtudāru*.[821]

Rāmā: It is mentioned in the *AV*, *KS* and *SS*.[822] According to *Sāyaṇa*, *ramata iti rāmā bhṛṅgarājākhyā auṣadhiḥ*. The juice of *Bhṛṅgarāja* is useful in inflammatory swelling caused by nail scratching. It is the medicine of *Kuṣṭha*. The plant *Rāmā* is used for removing the white spots from the body and restoring the original colour to it.

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[814] AV.v.17.16; vi.14.2; viii.10 (5).6; ṚV.vii.33.11
[815] AV.viii.8.2 and KS.16.10
[816] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV, p.412, vol.1
[817] AV.viii.2.28 and KS.viii.15; lviii.15
[818] पूतदारुर्देवदारुः । KS, p.25
[819] पूतद्रुर्नाम पूतद्रुसंज्ञकं भेषजम्
[820] अग्नेः शरीरमसि पारयिष्णु रक्षोहासि सपत्नहा....AV.viii.2.1
[821] पूतुदारुं बध्नाति KS.8.15, 58.15
[822] AV.i.23.1, KS.26.22 and SS.kal.8.56

Rajanī: This plant is mentioned in the *AV* and *SS*.[823] *Sāyaṇa* explains it as *rajanī rañjayati svasaṁsṛṣṭhaṁ vastrādikam artham iti rajanī*.[824] Here this word is used to indicate its derivative '*rañj*' which means to colour. The scientific name of *Rajanī* plant is Cuncuma Longa. This plant is used to cure leprosy or treating leprosy. According to *SS*, it is a creeper and climber. It pacifies *Rakta* and *Pitta*, destroys three types of inflammation, alleviates all types of *Prameha* and removes defects of semen.

Śamī: The plant *Śamī* is mentioned in the *AV KS* and SS.[825] Its characteristics are totally wanting in the two trees, Prosopis spicigera or Mimosa suma, with which the *Śamī* is usually identified.[826] The plant *Śamī* grows with hundred branches, which is so symbolical of an abundant crop of hair. It has mighty leaves, holy one, nurtured by the rain. *Śamī* fruit is heavy, sweet, rough, hot and destroys hair.[827] It is described in the *AV* as destructive to the hair (the *Śamī* and its fruit are said to destroy the hair),[828] as producing intoxication, and as broad-leaved. It makes people happy. It nurtures the growth of hair like a mother nurtures her son. 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. According to Griffith, *Śamī* is regarded as a holy tree as its wood was used to form part of the drill by which the sacrificial fire was kindled.[829] The lower of the two sticks (*Araṇī*) used for kindling the sacred fire are formed from the soft wood of the *Śamī*[830] the upper one (the drill) being of *Aśvatha*. The fruit of the tree is called *Śamīdhānya*.[831] The plant *Śamī* is asked to be gracious to

[823] AV.i.23.1 and SS.su.38.72
[824] AV.i.23.1
[825] AV.vi.11.1; vi.30.2-3; vi.52.3, KS.36.6; SS.ci.1.106
[826] Roth in Whitney, Translation of the AV 302
[827] SS.sū.46.193
[828] AV.vi.30.2-3
[829] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV
[830] AV.vi.11.1; Śa.Br.xi.5.1.15; of 13; iii.4.1.22; TS.v.1.9.6; 4.7.4
[831] Śa Br.i.1.1.10

the hair.[832] According to *Sāyaṇa agnidāhaśamanaheturvṛkṣaḥ śamī*.[833] According to T.Br.1.1.3.11 and 1.16.1 *prajāpatiragnim asṛjata. Sobibhet pra mā dhakṣyatīti. taṁ śamyāśamayat. Tacchamyai śamitvam iti and shame śamīgarbhād agniṁ manthati. eṣā vā agnīrjñiyā tanūḥ. Tāmevāsmai janayati iti.* According to *SS*, the ash of *Kadalī* and *Dīrghavṛnta*, orpiment, salt and seeds of *Śamī* pounded with cold water removes hairs. Traditionally it is commonly known that *Śamī* with red fruits destroy hairs by application as paste and intake as elder physicians say.

Śālūkam: This plant is found in the *AV* and *SS*.[834] According to *Sāyaṇa, Śālūkam* is also known as Nenuphar and water lilies.[835] *Saphaka* and *Mulālin* have also been mentioned with the plant *Śālukam*. But Griffith regards them to be unidentifiable aquatic plants. The *SS* explains it as stalk, stem and root of lotus. It should be prescribed by the physician in the beginning of meal and never thereafter.

Śilāñjālā: It is mentioned in the *AV* and *KS*.[836] It is a creeper or weed growing in grain field (KS, introduction p-xlv). Griffith also identified it as a weed growing in corn.[837]

Śyāmāka: The plant *Śyāmāka* is found in the *AV* and *SS*.[838] According to Griffith, *Śyāmāka* is a small edible grain. In English it is known as millet. The later *Saṃhitās*[839] and the *Brāhmaṇas* also identifies it with the cultivated millet. The botanical name of this plant is Panicum frumentaceum. According to *Sāyaṇa* and *Mahidhara Śyāmāka* is a type of paddy.[840] The lightness of its seed is alluded to in

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[832] AV.vi.30
[833] Ibid.vi.11.1
[834] AV.iv.34.5 and SS.sū.46.464
[835] शालूकम् उत्पलकन्दम् । शफकः शफाकृतिः जलोत्पन्नः । मुलालीति मृणाली विवक्षिता । AV.iv.34.5
[836] AV.vi.16.4 and KS.51.16
[837] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV.vi.16.4
[838] AV.xix.50.4 ; SS.sū.38.29-30
[839] TS.i.8.1.2; ii.3.2.6; iv.7.4.2; MS.ii.11.4; KS.x.2
[840] शाम्याकः श्यामाकाख्यो धान्यविशेषः , श्यामाकास्तृणधान्यानि ग्राम्याणि कोद्रवत्वेन प्रसिधानि VS.xviii.12

the *AV*, where it is spoken of as blown away by the wind. There it is also mentioned as the food of pigeons.[841] The *Śyāmāka* and its seed (*Taṇḍula*) are referred to as very small in the *Ch Up*.[842] Another plant named *Āsuri* or *Śyāmā* is also mentioned as a cure against leprosy.[843] *Śyāmā* is also mentioned in the *SS*. It destroys *Gulma* and poison, breaks *Ānāha, Udararoga* and accumulated faeces and removes *Udāvarta*.

Sadampushpa: It is mentioned in the *Sāyaṇa's* commentary of the *AV*.[844] It is also known as *Sahasrakṣo*[845] and *Sahasracakṣo*.[846] According to Williams it is a flower.[847]

Soma: The plant *Soma* is mentioned in the *AV, ṚV* and *SS*.[848] According to Griffith, this famous plant has remained unidentified till recently. Dr. Aitchison has lately stated that *Soma* must be the Ephedra pachyclade, which in the *Harirud* valley is said to bear the name of *Hum, Huma* and *Yahma*. This supposition is confirmed by Dr. Joseph Bornmuller, a botanist. He identifies the *Soma* plant with some kind of Ephedra, probably Ephedra distachya. But he remarks that different varieties of Ephedra are to be found from Siberia to the Iberian peninsula, so that we must give up the hope of determining the original name of the *Aryas* by means of the habitat of the *Soma* plant. The *SS* mentions twenty four different types of *Soma* in different forms according to place, name, shape and potency. They are as *Aṁśumat, Muñjavat, Candramas, Rajataprabha, Dūrvāsoma, Kanīyas, Śvetākṣa, Kanakaprabha, Pratānavat, Tālavṛnta, Karavīra, Aṁśavat, Svayaṁprabha, Mahāsoma, Garuḍāhṛta,*

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[841] ….श्यामाकं पक्वं पीलु च वारस्मा अकृणोर्बहुः ॥ AV.xx.135.12

[842] श्यामाक तण्डुलाद् वा Ch.Up.iii.14.3

[843] AV.i.24

[844] Ibid.iv.20.1-9

[845] तां मे सहस्राक्सो देवो दक्सिणे हस्ते दधत् ।
तयाहं सर्वं पश्यामि यश्च शूद्र उतार्यः ॥ Ibid.iv.20.4

[846] आविष्कृणुष्व रूपाणि मात्मानमप गूहथाः ।
अथो सहस्रचक्सो त्वं प्रति पश्याः किमीदिनः ॥ Ibid.iv.20.5

[847] Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary

[848] AV.v.24.7; vi.15.3; vi.96.1; viii.7.20; x.4.26; ṚV.ii.13; SS.ci.xxix.5-9

Gāyatra, *Traiṣṭubha*, *Pāṅkta*, *Jāgata*, *Śākvara*, *Agniṣṭoma*, *Raivata*, *Yathokta* and *Uḍupati*. These types of *Soma* are well known by their auspicious *Vedic* names. The method of their use is similar and they all have similar properties. *Soma* is regarded as the king of herb as it retains a young body for ten thousand years. All types of *Soma* are known as having fifteen leaves, with latex, tuber and in form of creeper and having various types of leaves. *Aṁśumat* smells like ghee, *Rajataprabha* is tuberous, *Muñjavat* has tuber like banana and leaves like those of garlic, *Candamas* has golden hue and is aquatic, *Garuḍāhṛta* and *Śvetākṣa* are pale in colour, like snakes slough and hanging on tops of trees. Others look like painted with coloured circles. These various types of *Soma* are found in *Himālayas*, *Arbuda*, *Sahya*, *Mahendra*, *Malaya*, *Śrīparvata*, *Devagiri*, *Devasahagiri*, *Pariyātra*, *Vindhya* and *Devasunda* Lake.

Talāśa: The plant *Talāśa* is mentioned in the *AV*, *ṚV*, *KS* and *SS*.[849] *Sāyaṇa* reads it *Palāśa*. He glosses it as *Palāśa* is the best among the trees.[850] It is the remedy of *Vidradha*, *Balāsa*, *Visarpaka*.[851] But the *AV* does not mention the word *Palāśa*. In this *Mantra*, the word *Vanaspati* may mean *Palāśa*. Its botanical name is Butea Frondosa belonging to the family Leguminaceae. According to *Dārila* School, *talāśā mālikā avalī prasiddhaḥ*. The *SS* mentions that the plant *Palāśa* 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. It is union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic haemorrhage and burning sensation. Its fruit is anthelmintic and anti-diuretic.[852]

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[849] AV.vi.15.3, ṚV.iv.2.7-4, x.97.5, vi.127.1 and KS.8.16; SS.sū.38.12-15, 20-21, 48-49

[850] वृक्षाणां मध्ये पलाश इव…..AV.vi.15.3

[851] विद्रधस्य बलासस्य लोहितस्य वनस्पते।
विसल्पकस्योषधे मोच्छिषः पिशितं चन॥ Ibid.vi.127.1

[852] SS.sū.46.197

Flower of *Palāśa Kiṁśuka* pacifies *Kapha* and *Pitta*.[853] The *SS*[854] also mentions that the bark of *Palāśa* is used as splint for fracture and dislocation.

Tauvilikā: *Tauvilikā* is mentioned in the *AV*.[855] *Sāyaṇa* explains about it as it is the name of a *Piśāci* that produces disease.[856] Griffith regards *Tauvilikā* as some kind of animal or plant.[857] The *AV* mentions this plant in praise for keeping away diseases.

Taudi: It is found in the *AV*.[858] *Taudi* appears to denote a plant. According to Bloomfield, *Taudi* is a fanciful name, 'the piercer', since it is associated with *Ghṛtācī* which means 'dripping with ghee', which is clearly such a word.[859] Griffith regards its meaning to be uncertain.[860] Neither Whitney translated this word, nor *Sāyaṇa* explain about it.

Tājad-bhaṅga: It is mentioned in the *AV* and *SS*.[861] It is apparently a tree or a plant. The *KS* treats it as a compound word. According to Whitney, *Tājad* and *Bhaṅga* are two separate words. He thinks the passage means 'may they be broken suddenly (*Tājat*) like hemp (*Bhaṅga*)'. Botanically, the etymology meaning of the word *Tājad-bhaṅga* is 'breaking suddenly'. *Dārila*, the commentator of *KS*, regards it to be the castor oil plant (*Eraṇḍa*).[862]

Tila: This plant is mentioned in the *AV* and *SS*.[863] In the *AV Tila* denotes sesamum plant, particularly, its grains. There are different types of sesamum. Out of these, the

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[853] SS.sū.46.277
[854] SS.ci.iii.6
[855] AV.vi.16.3
[856] तौविलिका एतत्नामिके रोगनिदानभूते पिशाचि Sāyaṇa on AV.vi.16.3
[857] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV, p-253, vol.i
[858] AV.x.4.24
[859] Bloomfield, Hymns of the AV, 608
[860] Griffith, The Hymns of the AV.x.4.24
[861] AV.viii.8.3 and KS.xvi.14
[862] ताजद्भङ्ग एरंडः । KS, p.42
[863] AV.ii.8.3; vi.140.2; xii.2.54xviii.3.69; 4.32; SS.sū.46.40

black is considered as the best, white is medium and others (yellow, green and red) are inferior. The *SS* explains about this plant or may be the grain as slightly astringent, bitter and sweet. As it is unctuous, rich oil (*Taila*) was extracted from its grains. *Tila* is mostly connected with *Māṣa* or 'kidney bean'. According to *TS* both the bean and the sesamum are attributed to the winter (*Hemanta*) and the cool (*Śiśira*) seasons. 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. It is also beneficial for teeth, skin and hairs. It reduces urine and is heavy. The stalk of the sesamum plant is used as fuel (*tila-pinjī, til-piñja*).[864] The seeds were boiled and taken in the form of porridge.[865]

Udumbara: The *Udumbara* is mentioned in the *AV* and *ṚV*.[866] According to Roxburgh, *Udumbara* is the Glomerous Fig tree or Ficus Glomentara, a large tree. It belongs to the family Moraceae. It is generally found in and about villages, on the river banks and water courses where the soil is rich and moist (Griffith). The sweetness of this fruit is compared with that of *Madhu* by the Ai Br.vii.15. It also mentions that the fruits of this tree ripen three times a year (Ai.Br.v.24). The wood of this tree was used for ritual purposes of all kinds. It is used to make amulets as well as the sacrificial posts (*yupa*) (TS.11) and the sacrificial ladle (*TS*.). Like other kinds of fig trees, *Aśvattha*, *Nyagrodha* and *Plakṣa*, the wood of *Udumbara* was considered to be suitable for employment at the sacrifice (*TS*). According to *SS, Udumbara* is beneficial for wound and astringent. It is union-promoting and alleviates intrinsic

[864] AV.ii.8.3; xii.2.54
[865] Br.Up.vi.4, 16
[866] AV.xix.31 ṚV.x.14.12

haemorrhage, burning sensation fat and disorders of female genital tract.[867] *SS*[868] also mentions that bark of *Udumbara* is used as splint for fracture and dislocation.

Upa-jīkā: It is mentioned in the *AV* and *Ṛ.V.*[869] *Mahidhara* and *Uvaṭa* at *VS*,[870] reports it as *Upa-dīkā*. He explains it as it is a small creature like ant. The word *Upa-jīkā* originally denotes a species of ant. Its botanical name is Basella Rubra. *Kalambi*, *Mohini* and *Pothee* are its synonyms. It is a perennial twining herb with fleshy stem and leaves. It is reddish green in colour. Its leaves simple, alternate, lamina narrowed into petiole. The flowers are red or white, bracteoles longer than perianth, fruits red white or black, globose. According to *AV*,[871] these ants possess the power of penetrating to water, which have curative properties. According to *Sāyaṇa*, *upajīkā valmīkaniṣpādikā vabhryaḥ samudrāt pṛthivyā adhovasthitāt jalarāśeḥ*.[872] He also explains in AV.vi.100.2 *upajīkāḥ valmīkasya nirmātryaḥ etatsaṁjñāḥ prāṇaviśeṣā*. *Upa-jīkā* is the daughter of *Asuras* and sister of Gods. It is produced from earth and heaven. Griffith regards it to mean termites or white ants. According to Bloomfield, *Upa-jīkā* or *Upadīkā* is a kind of ant. These ants have the capacity to produce water which is beneficent and has healing quality. They are beneficent to wherever they are applied. These ants were used in all sorts of spells against poisoning as they cure poison.[873] The belief is in their healing qualities was no doubt due to the well-known properties of the earth of ant-heaps which contains their water. It is used as the

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[867] SS.sū.38.49
[868] SS.ci.iii.6
[869] AV.ii.3.4; vi.100.2 and Ṛ.V.viii.102.21
[870] उपजिह्बिका उपदीपिका पिपीलिकासदृशः क्षुद्रजीवः यद्दारु अत्ति भक्षयति अधःशयत्वादेव।
उपजिह्बिका उपदीपिका। VS.xi.74
[871] यद् वो देवा उपजीका आसिञ्चन् धन्वन्युदकम्।
तेन देवप्रसूतेनेदं दूषयता विषम्॥ AV.vi.100.2
[872] Ibid.ii.3.4
[873] असुराणां दुहितासि सा देवानामसि स्वसा।
दिवस्पृथिव्याः संभूता सा चकर्थारसं विषम्॥ Ibid.vi.100.3

medicine of *Atisāra* and destroys it totally. According to the Ni.3.20 of *Yāska upajihbikā upajighryaḥ*. It pacifies vitiated *Vata*, *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 useful part of this plant.

Urvāvā: This plant is mentioned in the *AV*, *ṚV* and *VS*.[874] *Sāyaṇa* explains it as it is the fruit of the *Karkaṭī*.[875] *Karkaṭī* is a sort of cucumber.[876] Its scientific name is Cucumis Utilissimus/ Cucumis sativus and belongs to the family cucurbitacae.

Vaikaṅkata: This plant is mentioned in the *AV*.[877] The commentator Whitney explains it as a thorny plant. Its scientific name is Flacourtia sapida. In the *AV*, its medicinal uses are not mentioned. The commentator *Sāyaṇa* does not explain about this plant.

Vadhaka: The plant *Vadhaka* is found in the *AV*.[878] *Sāyaṇa* does not explain about this plant. It is also found in the *KS*.16.14 as *Badhaka*. It is also read as *Vādhaka*, *Bādhaka*. The plant is identified by the commentators *Keśava*, *Darila* of *KS* as *Girimālā*, *Girimālaka*, *Krimimālaka*, *Karimaalakah*, themselves of unknown meaning.[879]

Vaṁśa: The *Vaṁśa* is found in the *AV*, *ṚV*, *SS* and *KS*.[880] It is denotes the 'rafters' or 'beams' of the house as made of bamboo cane. It is a very important part of the house; sometimes it splits, and elaborate performances are prescribed in KS.135 to meet that

[874] AV.vi.14.2, ṚV.vii.59.12 and VS.iii.60
[875] उर्वारुः कर्कट्याः । AV.vi.6.14.2
उर्वारुकं कर्कटीफलं मुच्यते । ṚV.vii.59.12
[876] Apte, The Student's Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p.135
[877] AV.v.8.1
[878] Ibid.viii.8.3
[879] वधकः करिमालकः KS.16.14
[880] AV. iii.12.6; ix.3.4; ṚV.i.10.1, SS.ci.iii.6 and KS.135

misfortune.[881] *Sāyaṇa* does not explain about the *Vaṁśa* plant. Its botanical name is Bambusa arudinacea Roxb and family is Gramineae. It is a tall bamboo with crowded culms arising from branching roots stock. Culms-sheaths are rounded at apex and hairy with dark-brown hairs on the back and glabrous within. The leaves are linear or linear-lenceolate and glabrous or hairy beneath. According to *SS*, the bark of *Vaṁśa* is used as splint for fracture and dislocation. *Yāska* in the Ni.5.5, *Vaṁśo vanaśayo bhavati. Vananācchruyata iti vā*.

Vandana: It is found in the *AV*.[882] According to *Sāyaṇa*, *Vandana* is a herb.[883]

Viṣāṇakā: The plant *Viṣāṇakā* is mentioned in the *AV*. and *ṚV*.[884] According to Griffith, it is an unidentified plant or tree. The botanical name of this plant is Gymnema sylvestre and it belongs to the family Asclepiadaceae. It originates from the saints in the heaven. It is the urine of *Rudra* and also the closest to kin of *Amṛta*. It removes illness caused by wind or *Āsrāva*. Bloomfield[885] however thinks that the word may merely mean 'horn'.

Viṣāṇā: It is mentioned in the *AV*.[886] According to *Sāyaṇa viṣāṇayā svaśṛṅgeṇa*….[887] It is the horn on the head of the swift-running antelope. The skin of the antelope is also used in the medicine.[888] It is the remedy of *Kṣaya*, *Kuṣṭha* and *Apasmāra*.

Vrīhi: The plant is found in the *AV* and *SS*.[889] But it is not mentioned in the *ṚV*. In *AV*, it is mentioned with the plants *Yava*, *Māṣa* and *Tila*.[890] It is translated to English as

[881] Bloomfield, Hymns of the AV., p.346
[882] AV.vii.113.1; vii.115.2
[883] वन्दना लताविशेष इति। Ibid.vii.115.2
[884] AV.vi.44.3, ix.8.20; ṚV.vi.16.20, ix.96.8
[885] Bloomfield, Hymns of the Atharvaveda, p.482
Karambelkar, The Atharvaveda and the Ayurveda, p.116
[886] AV.iii.7
[887] Ibid.iii.7.1
[888] Ibid.iii.7.1, 3

rice. Its plural form is grains of rice. The *SS*[891] mentions varieties of *Vrīhi* thes are *Kṛṣṇa Vrīhi*, *Śalāmukha*, *Jatumukha*, *Nandīmukha*, *Lāvākṣaka*, *Tvaritaka*, *Kukkuṭāṇḍaka*, *Pārāvata*, *Pāṭala*. These are astringent—sweet, not sweet (pungent) in *Vipāka*, *Uṣṇavīrya*, slightly slimy, constipative and similar to *Ṣaṣṭika*. Amongst them, *Kṛṣṇa Vrīhi* is the best one, light and with astringent as subsidiary taste. Other varieties of *Vrīhi* are gradually inferior in properties.

Yava: The plant *Yava* is mentioned in the *AV*, *TS*, *ṚV*, *VS* and *Ch Up*.[892] *KS* explains about it.[893] In English, it is known as barley. The etymology of root *Yava* is *yu* which means 'ward off'. Its botanical name is Hordeum vulgare Linn belonging to the family Gramineae. It is an annual erect, stout and tufted grass with few leaves and terminal spikes. The fruit is a caryopsis and elliptic, short pointed, smooth free or adherent to palea or both to lemma and palea and groove on the inner face. It is a sweet, astringent and pungent grain. It becomes tall as soon as it is sprouted. The ground was ploughed with incantation for the growth of the grain. It was ploughed with yokes pulled by six or eight bulls. The number of oxen employed is related with the efficacy of the corn. This grain was produced for the man by the God at the bank of river *Saraswati*. *Indra* was the Lord of the plough and the men were farmers. There are several kinds of *Yava*. It is applied in charms to cure disease and ward off demons. Barley removes various complains in the body of the patient.[894] It also makes us free

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[889] AV.vi.140.2; viii.2.8, viii.7.20; SS.sū.46.12-13

[890] व्रीहिमत्तं यवमत्तमथो माषमथो तिलम्। AV.vi.140.2

[891] SS.sū.46.12-13

[892] AV.ii.8.3; vi.30.1; vi.50.1, 2; vi.91.1; vi.140.2; vi.142.1.2; vii.50.7;viii.2.18; viii.7.20; ix.1.22; 6.14; xii.1.42; TS.vi.2.10.3; 4.10.5; vii.2.10.2, in the ṚV.i.23.15; 44.11; 66.3; 117.21; 135.8; 176.2; ii.5.6; 14.11; v.85.3;vii.3.4; viii.2.3; 22.6; 63.9; 78.10, VS, v.26;xviii.12; xxiii.30 and Ch.Up.iii.14.3

[893] दिवे स्वाहेमं यवमिति चतुर उदपात्रे संपातानानयति। द्वौ पृथिव्याम्। तौ प्रत्याहृत्याप्लावयति। सयवे चोत्तरेण यवं बध्नाति KS.28.17-20

[894] इमं यवमष्टायोगैः षड्योगेभिरचर्कृषुः।
तेना ते तन्वो रपोपाचीनमप व्यये॥ AV.vi.91.1

from sin.[895] 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. It produces abundant flatus and faeces. It promotes firmness, digestive power, intellect, voice and complexion. It eliminates fat, *Vāta* thirst and normalizes *Rakta* and *Pitta*.[896] Its fumigation is beneficial for the child. It is useful for sacrifice.

Sun-ray: The *AV* and *ṚV* describe about the sun-ray treatment.[897] The rising sun and *Ushas* (the dawn) are especially calculated to dispel the evils associated generally with misery and disease and primarily with night. The sun kills worms when it rises. Its light also kills insects on cow's body when the sun sets.[898] The sun destroys all the visible and invisible worms.[899] 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.

Water: The water is mentioned in the *AV*, *ṚV* and *SS*.[900] As it is evident from its profound existence in a large number of hymns, the water forms the chief medicine. The *Atharvanic* poet calls the water as nectar and considers them as *Bheṣaja* (medicine). They contain sweet honey. They make the horses and cows strong.[901] They rule over human beings.[902] The water, plain or mixed with salt, is given to sick cows.[903] Thus the water contains protective powers, medicine and nectar, to prolong

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[895] ....एतौ मुञ्चतो अंहसः ॥ AV.viii.2.18

[896] SS.sū.xlvi.41

[897] AV.i,22.1; ii.32.1; iv.4.2; v.23.6; ix.2.15; ix.8.22 and xiii.1.32; ṚV.i.50; ii.13

[898] उद्यन्नादित्यः क्रिमीन् हन्तु निम्रोचन् हन्तु रश्मिभिः ।
ये अन्तः क्रिमयो गवि ॥ AV.ii.32.1

[899] उत् पुरस्तात् सूर्यएति विश्वदृष्टो अदृष्टहा ।
दृष्टांश्च घ्नन्नदृष्टांश्च सर्वांश्च प्रमृणन् क्रिमीन् ॥ Ibid.v.23.6.

[900] AV.i.4.4; i.5; i.6; ii.10; iii.7.5; iii.13; vi.23; vi.24; vi.91.3; vi.96.2; vii.64.1vii.89.3; vii.107.1; ix.3.23; x.5; xix.2; xix.54.1; ṚV.vii.47; vii.50; x.123.8; x.137.6; x.138.2 and SS.sū45.3-46

[901] AV.i.4.1-4

[902] ईशाना वार्याणां क्षयन्तीश्चर्षणीनाम् ।
अपो याचामि भेषजम् ॥ Ibid.i.5.4

[903] KS.19.1 and Sāyaṇa on AV.i.4

one's life in this world. The doctors realized that water rule over human beings.[904] The water coming down from the *Himavat* Mountain, from the fountains, from the desert tract, from marshy lands and from canals or wells and lakes is more healing than the healers that are the physicians. Waters from the snowy mountains, fountains, wastes, marshes, canals, running waters, rain-water and water brought in vessels are superior. Thus it means that water itself has the curative effects on the bodies of the sick persons (19.2). It is also prayed for the cure of *Kṣetriya*.[905] It contains all varieties of medicine and protects our body and gives us long life. Water is the medicine, destroyer of diseases and removes all disease.[906] Various etymological names of water are explained in the *AV*.[907] Water is known as *Nadī*, *Āpa*, *Vāri*, *Udaka*. The water strikes the cloud and makes a '*nad*' or roar, which gives it the name '*Nadī*'. When *Varuṇa* sent waters, they meet (*Āpnot*) *Indra*, which makes another derived name '*Āpa*'. As *Indra* accepted the waters, it got its name '*Vāri*'. *Indra* respected the waters, and they hailed it as 'the great'. Thus, the name '*Udaka*' is derived.

The water is kindly and actually were ghee. Both *Agni* and *Soma*, bring water.[908] It is golden coloured.[909] Gold is the heart and frog is the calf of water.[910] The water pours from *Himālaya* Mountain and meets in *Sindhu*. This sacred water gave the balm that heals the heart disease. These water also cures eye disease, heel or toes disease. The rivers which are wives and queen of the *Sindhu*, provide medicines. Water releases from the curse from the noose of *Varuṇa*, from *Yama's* fetter and from every sin

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[904] Dasgupta, History of Indian Philosophy, pp.302ff vol.ii

[905] आप इद वा उ भेषजीरापो अमीवचातनीः ।
आपो विश्वस्य भेषजीस्तास्त्वा मुञ्चन्तु क्षेत्रियात् ॥ Av.iii.7.5

[906] Ibid.iii.7.5, xix.2.5, vi.91.3

[907] Ibid.iii.10.1-4

[908] आपो भद्रा घृतमिदाप आसन्नग्नीषोमौ बिभ्रत्याप इत ताः । AV.iii.13.5

[909] .....हिरण्यवर्णा अतृपं यदा वः । Ibid.iii.13.6

[910] इदं व आपो हृदयमयं वत्स ऋतावरीः ।
इहैत्थमेत शक्वरीर्यत्रेदं वेशयामि वः ॥ Ibid.iii.13.7

against the Gods.[911] It arises from time[912] and has the power of destroying consumption.[913]

The *SS*[914] explains about water. Water from *Antarīkṣa* (intermediate sphere between earth and sky) (rain water) is of indistinct test, nectar like, vitaliser, satisfying, sustaining, assuring. It pacifies fatigue, exhaustion, thirst, narcosis, fainting, drowsiness, sleep and burning sensation. It is absolutely the most wholesome. When water falls down on earth, it acquires any of the *Rasas* due to contact with particular land situated in rivers, large rivers, lakes, tanks, well, staired well, shallow well, waterfall, springs, sandy ditch, fallow land, earthen ditch. Some say—types of water are found with sweet, sour, salty, pungent, bitter and astringent tastes situated in red, brown, pale, blue, yellow and white lands respectively. However, this is not correct, because the taste in water emerges due to inter-combination of *Pṛthivī* on the basis of predominance or otherwise. Amongst them, land having predominance of *Pṛthivī* possesses sour and salty taste. The land with predominance of the properties of *ap* has sweet taste. The land with predominance of the properties of *Tejas* has pungent and bitter taste. Astringent taste emerges in the land having predominance of the properties of *Vāyu* while the land with predominance of the properties of *Ākāśa* has unmanifest taste. It is because *Ākāśa* itself is unmanifest. This is the chief because of having unmanifest taste. It is recommended to be used in absence of rain water. The water from sky is of four types—rain-water, hail-water, dew water and snow-water. Amongst them, rain water is the chief because of lightness. This again, is of two

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[911] मुञ्चन्तु मा शपथ्यादथो वरुण्यादुत ।
अथो यमस्य पड्वीशाद् विश्वस्माद् देवकिल्बिषात् ॥ AV.vi.96.2

[912] कालादापः संमभवन्...। Ibid.xix.54.1

[913] इमा आपः प्र भराम्ययक्ष्मा यक्ष्मनाशनीः ।
गृहानुप प्र सीदाम्यमृतेन सहाग्निना ॥ Ibid.ix.3.23

[914] SS.sū.45.3-46

types—Gangetic and oceanic. The former generally comes down in the month of Āśvina. These may be examined as follows—a lump of cooked Śāli rice, neither stinking nor of abnormal colour, put in a silver utensil should be kept outside in open while it is raining. After keeping it for a *Muhūrta*, if there is no change it should be taken as Gangetic. If there is change in colour and consistency it should be known as oceanic which is not to be used. The oceanic water also becomes like Gangetic one, if it comes down with rains in the month of *Āśvina*. The Ganetic water is the chief. It should be collected in the month of *Āśvina* on a part of clean and white cloth spread or on the roof of the building. It should be collected in clean utensils and then kept in golden, silver or earthen jar. This should be used at all times. However, in its absence ground water may be used. This is of seven types—those coming from well, river, lake, tank, waterfall, spring and shallow well. The groundwater is predominant in properties of *Ākāśa*.

In rainy season, water of rain or spring should be used as it has great merits. In autumn, all types of water may be used because of its purity. In early winter, water from lake or tank may be taken. In spring and summer, water from well or waterfall should be taken. In early rains, water from shallow well, and all that is old (from lake or tank) and not fallen with rain should be taken.

Rain-water collected in a good vessel is *Tridoṣa*-alleviating, strengthening, *Rasāyana* and intellect-promoting. Its merit increases in accordance with betterment of quality of the vessel. Water emanating from moon-stone destroys *Rakṣas*, is cooling, exhilarant, *Pitta*-alleviating, clean and alleviates fever, burning sensation and poison. Old water is recommended in fainting, *Pitta*, hot seasons, burning sensation, poison, disorders of blood, alcoholism, giddiness, exhaustion, feeling of darkness, vomiting and upward intrinsic haemorrhage. Cold water is contra-indicated in chest pain,

coryza, disorder of *Vāta*, obstruction in throat, flatulence, stiffened bowels, immediately after evacuation, acute fever, hiccough and after intake of unctuous substance. Water of rivers is *Vāta*-increasing, rough, light, stimulates digestive power and reduces body weight; if the same, however, is sweet and thick, it is heavy, increases mucus secretion and *Kapha*. Water of lake is astringent, sweet, light, alleviates thirst and promotes strength. Water of tank is sweet, astringent, *Kaṭu*-vipāka and *Vāta*-increasing. Water of staired well alleviates *Vāta* and *Kapha*, is alkaline, pungent and *Pitta*-increasing. Well-water is alkaline, *Pitta*-increasing, *Kapha*-alleviating, appetizer and light. That of shallow well is rough, sweet, promotes *Agni* and does not increase *Kapha*. That of water-fall is kapha-alleviating, agreeable, light and stimulates *Agni*. Spring-water is sweet, *Pitta*-pacifying and non-burning. Sandy water is pungent, alkaline, *Kapha*-alleviating, light and stimulates *Agni*. Water of fallow land is sweet, heavy in *Vipāka* and vitiates *Doṣas*. Water of ditch is similar particularly alleviates *Doṣas*. Sea-water has fishy smell, is saline and vitiates all *Doṣas*. Water from moderate land is non-burning during digestion, thirst-alleviating, pleasing, appetizer, agreeable, cold and light. Water which is free from smell, with unmanifest taste, thirst-alleviating, pure, cold, clean, light and agreeable is said to be of commendable quality. Rivers flowing towards west are wholesome due to light water whereas those flowing towards east are not commended as they have heavy water. Those flowing towards south are not so vitiating due to their moderate nature. The rivers originating from *Pāriyātra* are wholesome and promote strength and health. Generally rivers in deserts have water with slightly bitter, salty and sweet tastes are light, aphrodisiac and promotes strength. Hot water removes *Kapha*, *Medas*, *Vāta* and *Āma*, stimulates digestive fire, cleanses urinary bladder, alleviates dyspnoea, cough and fever and as such is always wholesome. Water which does not move, is

free from froth, clean, light and reduced to one-fourth is regarded as of good quality. In disorder caused by alcoholic drinks, *Pitta* or *Sannipāta*, water cooled after boiling is commended. Coconut-water is unctuous, sweet, cold, agreeable, appetizer, diuretic, aphrodisiac, heavy and pacifies *Pitta* and thirst. Water, cooled after boiling, is useful in burning sensation, diarrhea, *Pitta*, *Rakta* (or *Raktapitta*), fainting, alcoholism, poison, thirst, vomiting and giddiness. Water should be taken in small quantity in cases of anorexia, coryza, increased salivation, oedema, wasting, deficiency of *Agni*, *Udararoga*, *Kuṣṭha*, fever, eye-disease, wound and diabetes.