MAN AND FLORA AND FAUNA
THE PICTURE OF THE ATHARYAVEDA
5-0: MAN AND FLORA AND FAUNA

5.1: THE PICTURE OF THE ATHARVAVEDA

Before the rise of human civilization, the cave-man lived in the forest and was fully dependent upon natural resources around him for all his necessities. They were both predators and prey also. Primarily man must have been a hunter and food gatherer. He was leading barbaric life. When food became less in a place, he had to leave that place for another place. As hunters and gatherers, men were subject to the same controls as other omnivorous predators. A natural balance was thus maintained between human numbers and carrying capacity of the environment. In the course of time, man learnt to kindle fire, to protect his body from the weather with skin, bark or leaves, and to tame the wild dog which lurked round his comfire.

So, perhaps right from the very existence of mankind, man was conscious about the importance of plants and animals around him only because he was entirely dependent on them for all his needs. Long before, the plants and animals were classified into various groups depending upon their usefulness, he had established various relationships as if were with them. Afterwards those animals which help man for day-to-day

1. Thripāthy, R.S., 1960: p.11
use are called domestic animals, such as dog used for hunting, horse used for mobility, elephants for transports, cattle for farming and milk etc., animals which are not useful were turned as wild animals. However, a large number of wild animals were used by man for food purpose and also used for some other raw-materials like skin, horn etc., plants are divided into various classes as edible, medicinal, useful for construction, furniture, housing etc., usable as fuel etc. Thus, all of them have definite purpose to serve for mankind and therefore, man is compelled to keep harmonious relations with them.

If we look at the attitudes and feelings of man towards plants and animals through various civilizations, it may help us in knowing the state of affairs in ancient India in a better manner. Mesopotamians had a well-developed sense of the distinction between the tame and the wild, between civilization and wilderness. The proper effort of mankind towards wild things, they believed is to domesticate them. They did this with such native animals as the donkey and the water buffalo, in addition to keeping the cows, pigs, sheep and goats, already known to their ancestors. They learned the use of the palm tree and planted it widely.

The Mesopotamians also displayed curiosity toward
and interest in the natural environment. They compiled many lists, which survive on clay tablets, of animals, plants, and minerals. These might be regarded as a step toward genuine scientific classification. However, the lists always classify natural things on the basis of the uses to which they were put by man.²

The attitude of the Indus valley people towards nature was remarkable. They did represent animals on their stamp seals, but their language has not yet been deciphered. Whatever their attitude, their practices may have made them a prime early example of the principle that human societies which fail to live in harmony with the natural environment eventually disappear or change beyond recognition.

Mohenjo-dara was a prosperous and well-planned city of Indus people. The wide streets, lanes, buildings considerably varying in size appear to have been plain but dignified. The system of drainage, public and private, was well-constructed. Dust-bins and rubbish chutes indicate the extreme care taken in matters of conservancy. Bath-rooms and circular brick-wells were important features of most houses.³

3. Hughes, J.D., 1975: p. 32
The Greek civilization shows a great awareness towards nature. Herodotus, whose interest in natural history was wide-ranging and who sometimes repeated fantastic stories about animals and plants without necessarily believing them, also pondered the problems of the relationship between predators and prey. Protagoras is made to say that the gods have given fur, claws, wings and the like to animals so as to compensate them with defenses against one another. This is an early statement of the idea of the balance of species. Aristotle's teachings about animals are the foundation of much of western thinking about the relationship of mankind to the whole natural environment. His reasoning was teleological. All things have a purpose or end for which they are formed. When a thing fulfills its end, it is useful and beautiful. Therefore, no animal lacks beauty, because all animals are formed for their proper ends. And what is their proper end? Aristotle says it is the service of mankind. All animals and indeed all other things, exist for human good. Therefore, they are fit instruments for human beings to use, as in domestication.

The Romans made some efforts to develop plantations of trees grown for wood, as in wood-lots on

4. Hughes, J.D., 1975: p. 63
5. Hughes, J.D., 1975: p. 64
forms, and sometimes used irrigation, for this purpose. But the major proportion of wood used was imported from various parts of the Roman Empire in a widespread and important sea trade.  

Roman works for irrigation and drainage were very extensive, and they are deservedly famous. In building, dams, canals, tunnels, and aqueducts they were preceded by the Etruscans and Carthaginians, but the Romans developed water diversion and control to a far greater extent. Water from melting snows of the mountains, from numerous springs and streams, was conducted to the fields. Among the many aqueducts constructed by the Romans, those with the clearest water were used for drinking, those carrying less pure or turbid waters for irrigation. Underground cisterns and reservoirs were constructed for water storage. Roman cities clearly illustrate Roman organization of the environment, wherever, they had the opportunity to build towns and cities on relatively open sides, the Romans revealed their conception of order by imposing upon the earth a rigid, rectilinear grid of streets.

Vitruvius, the great Roman architect, theorized that cities should be built on dry, healthy sites and constructed so as to avoid and control the winds. His ideal city would have been octagonal rather than

rectangular but would have retained most of the other elements found in existing Roman cities. 7

Coming to Indian literature, it was not the AV that far the first time shows an affinity towards the natural surroundings of man. We find the same feeling right from the time of the RV which is so reflected in various verses of the RV (X.184.2; VII.50.3; III.53.22; VII.86.6; X.34.1; I.34.9; III.52.5; I.138.2, I.105.7; II.39.4 etc.). When we turn to the AV, we find the Atharvavedic people not only knew and established relationships with many plants but they also knew the medicinal value of these plants. They knew their medicinal properties which would cure various ailments. All these are to be found in the Sūktas known as bhaveṣajyaṇī. On the other hand though they knew the medicinal properties and utility of these plants, the plants are never treated as the objects of the utility to man only, but they are worshipped and praised whole heartedly. They are treated very honourably as the deities are treated.

The collection of the following verses of the AV bears testimony to the above statements.

Verse: विक्षे तारस्य पितरं पञ्चाय भूरिघायसम्
विक्षे वल्स्य मात्रे पूर्वित्वे भूरिवर्णसम् ||

(AV, I.2.1)

Tr: We know the father of the shafts, Parjanya, liberal nourisher, know well his mother: Prthivi, Earth with her manifold designs.

Verse: यथा स्या - ते पृथ्विकं यान्तिष्ठितति नेतनम्
एवा रोगाः पास्यां यान्तिष्ठितानु मुषा इति ॥

(CMV: I, 2, 4)

Tr: As in its flight the arrow’s point hangs between earth and firmament, So stand this Muna-grass between ailment and dysenteric ill.

Verse: दीर्घियुताय गृहते रुधिराधिक्षयनो कुष्ठमाणोऽसदेव
तर्किं विषकन्धः कण्येः अजिंदे बिष्मो कथम् ॥

(CMV: II, 4, 1)

Tr: For length of life, for mighty joy, uninjured, ever showing strength. We wear viškandha’s antidote, the Amulet of Jaṅgīḍā.

Verse: अजिंदे जाम्मात् विजरात् विषकन्धः अभिशोजनानं
माणनी: सहस्त्रवीर्य: परिण: पाणु विष्यति: ॥

(CMV: II, 4, 2)

Tr: Amulet of a thousand powers, Jaṅgīḍā save us, all around, From Jambha, and from viśara, viškandha, and tormenting pain.

Verse: येवे रातो भागिना अजिंदेन महोऽभुवा
विषकन्धे सर्वाः रक्षांसि व्यांमो सहामहे ॥

(CMV: II, 4, 4)

Tr: With Jaṅgīḍā that brings delight, Amulet given by the Goods, we in the conflict overcome viškandha and all Rākṣasas.
Verse: अद्धाकवति देयवाणावीरक्षपेते मेघा | आपो महमवित्साणेश्वरीन्तु स्वान्तरङ्गथम अधिष्ठ ||
(AV, II, 7, 1)

Tr: Hated by sinners, sprung from Gods, this plant that turns the curse away. Hath washed from me all curses, as water clean from spot and stain.

Verse: अपेक्षा राज्युक्तपोतछन्तस्मिकुल्लकः | कीर्तिल मेघचित्तमार्गेश्वर कृत्तियाय मुच्छतेनु ||
(AV, II, 4, 2)

Tr: Vanish this Night, extinct in Dawn! let those who weave their spells depart. So let the plague-destroying plant remove inherited disease.

Verse: बृहोपशुपुषुनन्तकालेक्ष्य अवश्ये ने पलायना तिलस्य तिलिणिच्चा | कीर्तिल मेघचित्तमार्गेश्वर कृत्तियाय मुच्छतेनु ||
(AV, II, 8, 3)

Tr. With straw of barley tawn-brawn in colour with it's silvery ears, with stalk and stem of Sesamum; so let the plague-destroying plant remove inherited disease.

Verse: समास्वे लालन्तवा नम कोदायुक्तेः | कीर्तिल मेघचित्तमार्गेश्वर कृत्तियाय मुच्छतेनु ||
(AV, II, 8, 4)

Tr: Let homage to thy ploughs be paid, our homage to the pole and yokes. So let the plague-destroying plant remove inherited disease.

Verse: दशावृक्ष मुच्छेः समस्वे उत्ताहया आधिव गोष्ठी अधिकाह परिशु | अधो तन्व वनस्पतों जीवानं लोकमुखि य ||
(AV, II, 9, 1)
Tr: Free this man, Daśavṛksa! from the demon, from Grahi who hath seized his joints and members, And raise him up again, o Tree, into the world of living men.

Verse:

Verse: 

Tr: The Goddess Pṛṣnīparṇi hath blrest us, and troubled Nirṛti. Fierce crusher of the kaṇvas she:her have I gained, the mighty one.

Verse: 

Tr: Let not the enemy win the cause! strong and predominant art thou. Refute mine adversary's speech. Render them dull and flat, o plant!

Verse: 

Tr: May this, of all the beasts that paśupati rules, lord of animals, quadruped and biped, come purchased, to the sacrificial portion. May growth of wealth attend the sacrificer.

Verse: 

Tr: This Parna Amulet hath come. Strong and destroying with it's strength my rivals. The power of the Gods, the plants sweet essence, may in incite me ceaselessly with vigor.
Verse:

As Indra's gift, by Varuna instructed, Paṇa hath come, the mighty strength of Soma: This would, I brightly shining, love and cherish for long life lasting through a hundred autumns.

Verse:

The kings and makers of the kings, troop-leaders, masters of the horse make all the men on every side, Paṇa, obedient to my will.

Verse:

Heaven is the sire, the mother Earth, of Karsapha and Visapha, as ye have brought them hither, Gods! so do ye move them hence away.

Verse:

One and one hundred over earth are the visākandhas spread abroad. Before these have fetched thee forth. Visākandha quelling Amulet.

Verse:

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The shrine of Ila flows with oil and fatness: accept, o Jātavedas, our oblations. Tame animals of varied form and colour, may all the seven abide with me contented.

Verse:

Verse: फुमानु पुस्ति परिलालोऽधिष्ठाति शाक्ति राजाधि
स हनु शेषानां हामकान्त्य सागरं देविरे चेत्यमानः
(CAV, III, 6.1)

Masculine springs from masculine, Asvattha grows from khadira. May it destroy mine enemies, who hate me and whom I detest.

Verse:

Verse: प्रेसानु नुदे मनसा प्र सद्येनों ब्रह्मणा
प्रेसानु वृक्षस्य शालर्वाया-शक्तस्य नृदास्महे
(CAV, III, 6.8)

With mental power I drive them forth, drive them with intellect and charm. We banish and expell them with the branch of an Asvattha tree.

Verse:

Verse: उत्तानपरो सुभो देवपुरक सहस्विनि
अपलाणी मे परा नुदे परसे केवलं कृष्यि
(CAV, III, 18.2)

Auspicious, with expanded leaves, sent by the Gods victories plant, Drive thou, the rival wife away, and make my husband only mine.

Verse:

Verse: यासो दोः पिता प्रृथिवी माता अंत्योभवेन वीरयां व्रतव 
तालस्वा पुष्पविहाय देवी: प्रावन्तरे धार्येत
(CAV, III, 23.6)

May those celestial herbs whose sire was heaven, the earth their mother, and their root the ocean, may
those celestial healing plants assist thee to obtain a son.

Verse:

अक्रमणे अक्रमणे व्यापा! पुस्तो बृक्षं,
हिंकारं याति सिन्द्रो हिंकारं दिवो वनस्पतिर्हेकं नमनु शाकं॥

(AV: IV.3.1)

Tr: Three have gone hence and passed away, the man, the tiger and the wolf. Down verly, the rivers flow, down goeth the celestial tree, down let our foeman bend and bow.

Verse:

सृष्टि भूगत्स दन्ता अभिशिरालो नुष्ठमः,
निमुक्तं हेषो भवतु नीचायः दहश्त द्वारुमेह॥

(AV: IV.3.6)

Tr: Let the beast’s teeth be broken off, shivered and shattered be ribs! slack be thy bowstring; downward go the wild beast that pursues the hare!

Verse:

पयस्तैतो भास्यो! पयस्तव नमामक कस्य?
अयो पयस्तति नाम भवे ह सहस्कर॥

(AV: IV.24.1)

Tr: The plants of earth are rich in milk, and rich in milk is this my word. So from the rich in milk I bring thousand fold profit hitherward.

Verse:

यथाभिरुपं प्रसर्पणं इत्यं सहस्कराः
तसो यदैव व बधास्त उस्ते महत्यमश्चर्विव॥

(AV: IV.9.4)

Tr: Whom so thou creepest over, salve! member by member, joint by joint, from him, like son strong arbiter of strife, thou banishest decline.

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Verse:

अङ्गो दासा आऊणास्य तेकरा वलास आहेत!
vर्षित; पवित्रांत्य त्रिकुकुण्यां ने पिता॥
(AV. IV. 9. 8)

Tr: Tree are the slaves that serve the slave, fever, consumptions and the snake. The father is the loftiest mountains, named the triple peaked.

Verse:

अदाङ्ग्नां श्रैंकुंडः जान तिहवतस्य वाणुपुः समविपाक्षय वर्षवर्ष्य आलुहायम्। ॥
(AV. IV. 9. 9)

Tr: Sprung from the snowy mountain's side, this ointment of the three peaked hill. Crushes and rends all sorcerers and every witch and sorcerers.

Verse:

अदि काशि श्रैंकुंडः यद्य यामुनमुद्यसे
उहे ने मेण्डी नामिनी ताब्यांनां पाठ्याचाचान। ॥
(AV. IV. 9. 10)

Tr: If thou art from the three peaked hill or hast thy name from Yamuna, these names are both auspicious: by these two protect thou us, O' salve!

Verse:

शालन्तानो अपनारिगृहकृच्छुतो व्योगितम्यपरि
सने हिमपञ्चांशक्षास्त्र; कृष्णं; पात्यस्तसं। ॥
(AV. IV. 10. 1)

Tr: Child of the wind firmament, sprung from the lightning and the light, may this the gold-born shell that bears the pearl preserve us from distress.
Verse:

शो अभानो शेषनानो समुद्राकी जातिबे
रोज़न हत्या रुपांकालिणो वि अजहामे ॥

(CA¥ IV, 10.2)

Tr: Shell that was born from out the sea, set at the head of things that shine! with thee we slay the Rāksas asas and over come various fiends.

Verse:

शेषे नामीवामारी शेषनोत सदान्या:
शेषे नो विशेषे भज: कृत्यन: पाल्यहसे ॥

(CA¥ IV, 10.3)

Tr: We stay disease and indigence, and chase Sadānvās with shell. May the all healing shell that bears pearls preserve us from distress.

Verse:

दिविव जाल: समुद्रम: रीव्हैरप्रभुमः
स नो हिरण्यां: राख आशुप्रसन्नरो माणी: ॥

(CA¥ IV, 10.4)

Tr: Born in the heaven, sprung from the sea, brought to us hither from the flood. This gold-born shell shall be to us an amulet to lengthen life.

Verse:

(CA¥ IV, 10.7)

देवानाम्बर्ष कृशन बमुसू तदात्मनवन्धर्षयक्षे ॥
तावते कृष्णये युष्मे कर्णसे कलाय दुविमित्रो शतचारसुः
काशनस्वामि रक्षुनु॥

Tr: Bone the good became the pear’s shell-mother endowed with soul it moveth in the waters. I bind this on thee for life, strength, and vigour for long life lasting through a hundred autumns. May the pearl’s mother keep and guard thee safely!

Verse:

रोहण्यासे रोहण्यस्वनिघिन्नस्य शेषाणि रोहण्यस्वनिघिन्नस्य ॥

(CA¥ IV, 12.1)

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Tr: Thou art the healer, making whole, the healer of the broken bone: make thou this whole, Arundhanti!

Verse:
मते रिखते भरू ते खुलमसि वेदेव्हे तं ज्ञानमि
धाति तदृष्ट महाया पुनः से भवऽः परः पर्वतः

(CAV. IV. 12. 2)

Tr: Whatever bone of thine within thy body hath been wrenched or cracked, join together limb by limb.

Verse:
ईशानी लवं शेषाना समुद्रेऽग्रंथे आरामाते
यक्षे सहस्वीरे सबंधी भोजयि नवोऽवर्

(CAV. IV. 17. 1)

Tr: We seize and hold thee, conquering one! the queen of medicines that heal. O plant, I have endowed thee with a hundred powers for every man.

Verse:
अपामार्ग ओधधीनों अवसामेक इत्यवशी
तेन्ते दुलस्व आरामातम सष्ठायस्य वरी

(CAV. IV. 17. 8)

Tr: The Apāmārga is alone the sovran of all plants that grow. With this we wipe away whatever hath fallen on thee: go in health!

Verse:
अपामार्ग व मात्र आरामात्वा सबंधी भोजयि अपामार्ग व आरामात्वा सबंधी भोजयि

(CAV. IV. 18. 7)

Tr: Let Apāmārga sweep away chronic disease and every curse, sweep sorceresses clean away, and all malignant stinglī hags.
Verse:
अपमार्गस्य आतुःधानानाप्रवत्ति आतश्च ।
सर्वं सर्वं तत्त्वमाः प्रतिक्षाते ॥
(AV. IV. 18, 8)
Tr: Sweep thou away the sorcoerers, all stingy fiendish
hags away. All this, o Apāmārga, with thine aid we wipe
away from us.

Verse:
ओ पशुं गायिः पशुं पशुं पशुं पशुं पशुं गायिः पशुं
विपश्चतिमिव सर्वं तदं देवे पशुं गायिः ॥
(AV. IV. 4, 20, 1)
Tr: It sees in front, it sees behind, it sees after
away, it sees; the sky, the firmament, an earth: all
this, o Goddess, it beholds.

Verse:
गायो भगो गाय इन्द्रो म इत्यादिभवती:
सो मयं प्रम्यं मयं बक्षणं
क्षमा यो गायवः सं जन स रश्वं रश्यामि तथा मनसि चिन्द्रमा ॥
(AV. IV. 21, 5)
Tr: To me the cows seem Bhaga, they seem Indra, they
seem a portion of the first poured soma. These present
cows, they o ye men, are Indra. I long for Indra with
my heart and spirit.

Verse:
सा गायो आगमनुन महामर्गी नन्दिनाः गोद्ये संयते
स्वस्वस्वसः प्रणासवती: पुरुषः यह भविष्यति भूवेशस्वः सुहलनः ॥
(AV. IV. 21, 1)
Tr: The kine have come and brought good fortune: let
them rest in the cowpen and be happy near us. Here let
them stay prolific many-coloured, and yield through
many morns their milk for Indra.

Verse:
वामो व्ययसो गायिः वामो गायिः
सर्वं सर्वं रक्षं सर्वं गन्धर्वनः नाशय ॥
(AV. IV. 37, 2)
Tr: With the we scare and drive away Gandharvas and Apsarasess. O Ajaśr̥gī chase the fiends, cause all to vanish with thy smell.

Verse: 

tr̥thu vama ṛṣa-viśeṣa pānārā̤m śrāvam
hukṣ̥धpyuḥ pīla nגל̥vva 3 kagandhyā pālasva
Na r̥paratr̥ras bhitibhūḥ abhīvam

(C AV. IV. 37: 3)

Tr: Let the Apsarasess, puffed away, go to the river, to the ford, Guggulu, Pita, Naladi, Auksagandhi, Pramanadini. Ye have become attentive since the Apsarasess have past away.

Verse:

Tr: Where great trees are Asvatthas and Nyagrodhhas with their leafy, crests, There were your swings are green and bright, and lutes and cymbals sounds in tune, ye have become attentive since the Apapsaras have past away.

Verse:

Tr: Let Ajaśr̥gī penetrate, Arataki with sharpened horn.

Verse:

Tr: Āryaman is thy grand sire, Night thy mother, and
the cloud thy sire, the name is called Silāchī, thou thyself, art sister of the Gods.

Verse:

॥ श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं ॥

Tr: Thou clingest close to every tree, as a fond damsel clasps her love. Thy name is called the conqueror, she who stands fast, the Rescuer.

Verse:

॥ श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं ॥

Tr: Thou springest from blest plaxa, or Asvattha, Dhava, khadira, Parna, or blest Nyagrodha, so come thou to use, Arundhati!

Verse:

॥ श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं ॥

Tr: Silāchī is thy name: the sire, O goat brown! is a damsel's son. Thou hast been sprinkled by the mouth of yama's tawny coloured horse.

Verse:

॥ श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं श्रीकं ॥

Tr: Plant! I have those who shall avert the threatened danger, ten and one. O secred plant! produced aright! make sweetness, sweet thyself, for me.
Verse:

रात्रि ये सहस्रं कापवकतार ओशा। अष्टि आत्र फलावलि सदृ में संधुला करे। ॥

( AV, VI, 15, 11)

Tr: Both a hundred of me and a thousand (are) the exorcisers of herbs; Thou born of right (ṛta), thou rich in right, mayest thou, honeyed (madhulā), make honey for me.

Verse:

शामीध-चल्या आँके तपेसे पुंजुसने कवमू।
तरु दे पुजस्य वेदने ननु दीपिवा भरानिष। ॥

( AV, VI, 81, 1)

Tr: Asvasttha on the samī tree, there a male birth is certified. There is the finding oof a son: this bring we to the women-folk.

Verse:

मधु मृदुः नधा। परमातं ग्राशो मधु। मधु फलावली श्रीपाल। शामीधे अस्तु शो हुदे। ॥

( AV, VI, 12, 3)

Tr: With mead I mingle flowing streams; the hills and mountains shall be mead. Puruṣāṇi and Sīpālā mead. May it be well with mouth and heart.

Verse:

सोमो सोम ओषधयो मुलो मुलो कुमले।
वेदो तो आशीर्विनाहै सूर्यास्त मुलम! ॥

( AV, VI, 15, 3)

Tr: As Soma hath been made the best of all oblations mid the plants, so as Talāsā is the queen of trees, may I be chief of all.

Verse:

आवयो अनायो रसस्तु उस्त आवयो।
आ ते कराहमकात्स। ॥

( AV, VI, 16, 1)
Tr: O Ābayu, non-Ābayu, dire is thy juice. O Ābayu: we eat the gruel made of tree.

Verse:

अनेककृत्यस्य प्रयत्नं देवोंश्वस्त्वस्मृत्याः
आदेर्नवें वधकै रक्ष्य यत्तस्मृतप्रयः ||

(AV. VI. 69:1)

Tr: First, o Arundhati, protect our oxen and milky kine: protect each one that is in firm, each quadruped that yields no milk.

Verse:

प्रसीतिनिन्द्यो श्री ववासेनां मुख्यायिनीं
सर्वानुमंडलोप: अशिवर्धे अवथा इत्यतः ||

(AV. VII. 65:1)

Tr: With retroverted fruit hast thou, o Apāmārga! sprung and grown. Hence into distance remote drive every curse away from me.

Verse:

बहु दुःखोंक सर्वभन्नं अवथा चमरिम पापशा
त्यथा तर्क विन्ध्यासं मुख्यायिनीं मूलमें ||

(AV. VII. 65:2)

Tr: Whatever evil we have done, whatever vile or sinful act, with thee, o Apāmārga, who lookest all ways, we wipe it off.

Verse:

स्राद्वयेन माणिण महाक्षेत्रेष्व महाक्षिणा
अज्ञेष्व सर्वं पृष्टना वि मृद्धो हृत्तिर स्तुकस: ||

(AV. VIII. 5:8)

Tr: With Amulet of Sraktya wood, as with a thoughtful Rṣi’s aid, in every fight have I prevailed; I smite the foes and Rākshasas.
Verse:

May these be pleasant to our heart, auspicious, rich in store of milk, these plants of the Āngirasas which grow on mountains and plains.

Verse:

The multitude of herbs where on the cows whom none may slaughter feed, all that are food for goats and sheep. So many plants, brought hitherward, give shelter and defence to thee!

Verse:

Let plants with flower and plants with bud, the fruitful and the fruitless, all, like children of one mother, yield their stores for his man's perfect health.

Verse:

Let Purushahva make them reeds, and let the bulrush strike them down: Bound in a mighty net let them break quickly like an arrow's shaft.
Verse:
काशसपूत सपूताला अधिकार विभक्तिति ।
हिंदुदायुष्यांकाळामय यथा सेनामधू हनन ||

(CNV. VIII. 8, 14)

Tr: Trees of the forest, trees that bear flower and fruit, and herbs and plants. Quadruped, and biped send I forth that they may strike this army derad.

Verse:
अय्य भाषिने मृण समाधिः । तत्र ही इन्द्री हिंदुदायुष्यः
सने महान धरानं पायसलिं व्रजस्वान ते ते देवी हिंदाने||

(CNV. X. 3, 3)

Tr: This charm, this Varana health all disease, bright with a thousand eyeos and golden glister. This charm shall conquer and cast down thy foemwn. Be thou the first to slay the men who hate thee.

Verse:
अम्म विभिन्ति करण मायुमायेनेनलंकारः
समे राज्यमाय पुष्कलोपास्य मे दयत ||

(CNV. X. 3, 12)

Tr: Through hundred autumn seasons, long to live, I wear this Varana. May it bestow on me great strength, cattle, and royalty and power.

Verse:
कैतिका कूजिन्यं संकर वजनस्त्वमेहतां
हिरण्यकी निराकृतिः सिरिश्चिरिणामस्थाप समुन्धु ||

(CNV. X. 4, 14)

Tr: The young maid of kirata race, a little damsel, digs the drug. Digs it with shovels wrought of gold on the high ridges of the hills.

Verse:
सम्म चुरे मुरे मधुनामोनां शान्तामहे
सनम पितेव पुत्रभेष्यमेव। भृत्यकृतिः सघोऽभो
ुषायो मणिशेष्य || (CNV. X. 6, 5)
Tr: To this we give apportioned food, clarify butter, wine and meath. May it provide each boon for us as doth a father for his sons, Again, again, from morn to morn, having approached the deities.

Verse:

Tr: Bhaga and Sarva, spare us, be not hostile. Homage to you, twin lords of beasts and spirits! Shoot not the arrow aimed to harm our quadrupeds and bipeds.

Verse:

Tr: Four times, eight times be homage paid to Bhaga, yea, lord of Beasts, ten times be reverence paid thee!

Thine are these animals, five several classes, oxen, and goats and sheep, and men, and horses.

Verse:
Tr: Thine is this ample wealth-containing storehouse that holds within it all these living creatures. Favour us, lord of Beasts, to thee be homage! Far from us go ill-omens, dogs, and jackels, and wild-haired women with their horrid shrieking!

Verse:

Tr: Covet not thou our kine or men, covet not thou our goats or sheep. Elsewhither, strong one! turn thine aim: destroy the mockers’ family.

Verse:

Tr: For thee were forest beasts and sylvan creatures placed in the wood, and small birds, swans, and eagles. Flood, lord of Beasts! contain thy living beings: to swell thy strength flow the celestial waters.

Verse:

Tr: Propoises, serpents, strange aquatic monsters, fishes, and things unclean at which thou shootest.
Nothing is far for thee, naught checks thee, Bhaga! The whole earth in a moment thou surveyest. From the east sea thou smitest in the northen.

Verse:

Tr: To this we give apportioned food, clarified butter, wine and meath, may it provide each boon for us as doth a father for his sons, Again, again, from morn to morn, having approached the deities.

Verse:

Tr: The charm Brhaspati hath bound, the fatness-dropping citron-wood, the potent khadira, for strength, this Agni hath put on: it yields clarified butter for this man. Again, again, from morn to morn. With sbdue thine enemies.

Verse:

Tr: The royal Parṇa is the caldrons cover: strength have we gained, force, power, and vigour. Bestowing length of life upon the living for long existence through a hundred autumns.

Verse:
Burning the spirit of the foe, vexing the heart of enemies. Darbha, on every side, like heat, inflame all evil hearted men.

Verse:

Tr: Darbha, thou hast a hundred shields, thou hast a thousand manly powers, all Gods have given thee to bear thee till extreme oldage.

Verse:

Tr: What time Parjayna roared to it with lightning flashes in the sea. Thence came the drop, the golden drop, thence Darbha into being sprang.

Verse:

Tr: Savitar make all cattle grow and prosper in my stable with. Amulet of Udumbara, helper of him who longs for wealth:

Verse:

Tr: May he who was our Household fire, the ruler of our
cattle, strong. Amulet of Udumbara endow us with prosperity.

Verse:

मद्य किसानेच चतुर्पास्र आस-नानानि जे रसा:
जटले तु हे तैमानं बुमानं विकृतवेदोत्थरेण मागिन्।

Tr: I win great plenty, while I wear the Amulet of Udumbara. Of quadrupeds and bipeds, of juices and food of every sort.

Verse:

अयोमि कुर्मये भविन्नये वनसाय वहयसे
शनि: सर्वं मद्यसवि कृष्णोन रथं चन; सर्वबीं नित्यधारिण्।

Tr: For hero is this hero bound, Amulet of Udumbara. So may he make our offering sweetly-savouried, and grant us wealth all good men about us.

Verse:

सपन्तै शतकाष्ठ! महर्यावोम्बधी नाप्रथमः संग्रहीत
शोभेर्यार्येण यम: परि पानु किश्तस्तेन साधीय प्रहलादं।

Tr: First of all plants it sprang into existence victorious, hundred-stemmed, the foe-subduser. So may this Darbha from all sides protect us: with this may I subdue our foes in battle.

Verse:

जावेजः जावो जावी तस्मिनास्वा जाविद।
किपि-चतुर्पास्रस्य सर्वं स्थानं जाविदः।

Tr: Jangida, thou arto Āṅgiras: thou art a guardian
Jangiḍa. Let Jangiḍa, keep safely all our bipeds and our quadrupeds.

Verse:
रंगराहिकृतम भामार परिण पालु विस्मृताः
विष्कन्धं एन सासं संस्कन्धमोजः ओऽमसा ||

( AV. XIX. 34. 6)
Tr: Let Jangiḍa's protecting might encompass us on every side, where he quells visṅkandha and sanskandha might by greater might.

Verse:
नत्त्वा पूर्व औषधयो नत्त्वा तत्त्वी भ त्वा
विवायध उसे जांकउ परिपाणि सुभूझः ||

( AV. XIX. 34. 7)
Tr: The ancient plants surpass thee not, not any herbs of recent days. A potent charm is Jangiḍa, a most felicitous defence.

Verse:
आशरिकं विशरीकं बलासं पृष्ट्यामयमां
तकमां विश्वामिरस्व जांकउस्करसत ||

( AV. XIX. 34. 10)
Tr: Lumbago and rheumatic pain, consumptive cough, and pleurisy, and fever which each Autumn brings, may Jangiḍa make powerless.

Verse:
सा मो रक्षति अजिइऽ धनपालो धनेः
देवा शं स्वकृषिमणि परिपाणमहसोतिन ||

( AV. XIX. 35. 2)
Tr: So may this Jangiḍa guard us, even as a treasure guards wealth, even this which Gods and Brahmans made a
malign quelling sure defence.

Verse:

परि मा विद: परि मा पुष्पिला, परि मा विरुर: परि मा भ्रूणुल: परि मा श्रीरकु मुद विश्रोकिणो जाजिद: पालयुः।।

(AV, XIX, 35, 4)

Tr: Guard me from earth and guard me from the heavens, guard me from middle air, from plants protect me. Protect me from the present and the future. From every region Jangida preserve us!

Verse:

शतवारो अनीसहाय यद्धमान रक्षकी तेजसा आरोहन कर्मसा स्थे मण्डुः अभिमानन्।।

(AV, XIX, 36, 1)

Tr: The Hundred-haired hath banished hence fiends and consumptions by its might. With splendour hath the charm that scares demon of ill-name mounted up.

Verse:

शते वीरो नानाधे शक्मानपक्वन
दुर्लभन्; सचिन् हतवा रक्षकी बुजुर्गे।।

(AV, XIX, 36, 4)

Tr: A hundred men hath it produced, hundred consumptions chased away. All fiends of evil-name it hath smitten, and shakes the Rākṣasas.

Verse:

हिरण्यश्रृङ्ग अन्धकार: शतवारो अर्य मणि:
रुद्दिन्; सविन्द्रवाच रक्षान्ति क्रमिन्।।

(AV, XIX, 36, 5)

Tr: The Bull that weareth horns of gold, this Amulet with hundred hairs, Hath left the demons of ill-name and overcome the Rākṣasas.
Verse:
शतसंह तुराणिनों गन्धकृत्तरस्यं शतम्
शतं शतकल्याणीनों शतवारेण वारस्ये ॥
(CAV. XIX, 36. 6)
Tr: Hundred she-fiends, a hundred of Grandharvas and
Apsarasa, A hundred of dog-mated nymphs, I keep
away with Hundred-Hair.

Verse:
आधुःकृतः प्रतर्णी विश्रामः भक्ष्यान्विने
तदायतनः घत्य घातार्ज शामापो अभयं तुमम् ॥
(CAV. XIX, 44. 1)
Tr: Thou art the lengthening of life, thy name is
universal cure: Then ointment! send felicity, waters,
send happiness and peace.

Verse:
आण्वेण वृत्तीयो भाक्षस्त्रेन पुरुषाधिवनम्
कृष्णोत्तमाष्ट्रूत्वित्तिसागरसम् ॥
(CAV. XIX, 44. 3)
Tr: Let the salve born upon the earth, benignant, giving
life to man. Make the swift rider on the car sinless,
exempt from sudden death.

Verse:
देवास्थनं ज्येष्ठकुद परि मा पार्थ विक्षुः
न तौ तरंगायो आह्यं; पर्वतीयः उत् ॥
(CAV. XIX, 44. 6)
Tr: Gods ointment from the three peaked Hill, preserve
thou me on every side. No plants of earth surpass thee,
none from mountain or from cultured ground.

This chapter speaks about the relationships between
man and flora and fauna, as reflected in the AV. In this we have collected many hymns describing various medicinal plants for various ailments. Many diseases such as kāmala, Jaundice (1.22.1), leprosy (1.23), Takman or fever (1.25) etc. and medicinal herbs like Munja-grass, Jaṅgida, Prśniparni, Parśhamani, Asvasttha, Khadira etc. are mentioned. Plants are also invoked and praised to heal diseases and also prayed to make the person free from enemies. In the context of fauna, the names of various animals are mentioned. It is also desired that, let the tame animals (grāmya-paśus) live happily with the human beings (AV.3.10.6). As regards the wild animals we also find the prayers such as let the teeth of wild animals be broken of (AV.4.3.6). Prśniparni is deified in the verse 2.25.1. In the verse 1.2.4, Munja-grass is praised to heal a person suffering from dycentry. In the verse 2.4.1, the plant Jaṅgida is praised to give strength and joy, and also prayed to be free from enemies. In the verse 2.9.1, the seer addresses an amulet made of Daśavrksa, which is to be used to join a broken. The hymn 3.5, refers to an amulet made of parṇa as a strength giver. Asvasttha tree is addressed in the verse 3.6, for the defeat and destruction of the enemies. In the hymn 4.9, the seer addresses Anjanamani as a good ointment. In the hymn 4.17, the Apāmṛga plant is mentioned for conquering others. The hymn 11.2, deals with the
animals which are meant for serve of mankind. The hymn 19.28, 29,30, is a charm for the destruction of enemies that mentions the Darbha plant. The verse 19.31.1, prescribes Udumbara plant as a medicine for a cattle, also the same plant is praised to increase wealth. In the verse 19.36.1, Satavara is praised for safety from enemies.

From the above, it seems that, the Atharvavedic people were using various plants and herbs for the removal of various ailments. The verse 10.4.14, intends that even the young girls in tribes knew the medicinal plants.

During that period, people were conscious of the worldly comforts and desired for healthy and longlife.

The AV is called the veda of masses only because of its here-worldly concern. It is apparent from the foregoing verses that they were treating various diseases as their enemies and to get rid of them were using many remedies. When we come across the deification of plants and desire of the seers that they should kill their enemies, it seems that their enemies were in the form of ailments external and internal.

From the verses like those that state let the wild animals teeth be broken we feel that they did not want to be harmed from them, but at the same time did not pray for their total destruction. So even in those
days of ancient times when white and black magic were prevailing in the masses, this is noteworthy that the desire for the total destruction of wild animals are never expressed. It is quite understandable that they have desired for their inability to kill the human beings.

It is their general desire and prayer to deities that let not the two legged and four-legged hurt them (AV.11.2.1,11.2.2.).

We also come across the prayer to the lord of the beasts for freeing the human beings from the horrors of wild animals (AV.11.2.1, 11.2.24 etc.)

The cows which are utilized by the human beings in various ways are praised and deified (4.21.5).

From all these references we may say that the Atharvavedic people wanted to live happily and harmoniously with all the beings i.e. beasts, animals, insects etc. without being hurt by them, which seems to be the most reasonable attitude: live and let live.
Flora in the Atharvaveda

(I) Śara: AV.I.2; 3

(II) Muñja: I.2.4

(III) Jāṅgida: II.4; XIX.34; 35

(IV) Prāniparnī: II.25

(V) Parnamanī: III.5

(VI) Asvasththa: III.6; VI.11.5; V.5.5

(VII) Khadira: III.6; V.5.5

(VIII) Āṅjanamani: IV.9

(IX) Āpāmārgha: IV.17

(X) Ajasrīgī: IV.37

(XI) Silācī: V.5.1

(XII) Arundhati: V.5.5

(XIII) Sāmī: VI.11.1

(XIV) Sipālā: VI.12.3

(XV) Talāsā: VI.15.3

(XVI) Ābayu & anābayu: VI.16.1

(XVII) Purushava: VIII.4

(XVIII) Rāktyamāni: VIII.5

(XIX) Varana: X.3

(XX) Darbhamaṇī: XIX.28; 29; 30; 32; 33

(XXI) Udumbara: XIX.31

(XXII) Satavāra: XIX.36

(Sāyaṇa has mentioned some more names of the plants in his commentaries, but the names of these plants are not mentioned in the verse, such as the plant Pāṭṭha (AV.II.27), Kapitthaka (IV.4), Trisandhyāmāni (IV.20), Palāsa (XVIII.4.53).
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