CHAPTER-II
SYSTEMS OF MEDICINE

Any society can be analysed in terms of a number of interconnected systems - for example, agriculture, transport and industry. The health system is usually one of the most complicated of these entities, its development having taken place slowly over the centuries, with inputs from people's beliefs, science, commercial factors, and other social forces, usually without any deliberate or systematic planning. Moreover, if one considers all the social and environmental factors that may contribute to or influence health status, one finds close relationships between the health system and many other systems - agriculture, industry, education, and so on. Thus, a health system must be seen as a coherent whole consisting of sectoral and intersectoral components and the community itself, which produce a combined effect on the health of a population. This chapter deals with different medical systems practised in India.

The human society has from time immemorial tried to adapt itself to the imbalances and disruptions which are a part of human existence through the application of knowledge. The same is true in relation to health and illness. Proliferation of knowledge in the field of health has been dependent on the overall socio-cultural development.

In the beginning of every civilization, medicine consisted of "a mishmash of religion, magic and empirically
acquired ideas and practices". Throughout the history of medicine, illness has been seen as the disruption of a balanced state, and healing art was required to bring the body back to the healthy state of equilibrium. Despite substantial differences in past and present ways of living and social structure, medicine today has to deal with the same basic problem of curing disease and keeping a man healthy.

The story of the evolution of medicine is a long one encompassing man through different ages and phases of evolution, culture and civilization. According to Henry Sigerist, medical history is but one aspect of the history of culture; while according to Dubos ancient medicine was the mother of sciences, and played a large role in the integration of early cultures. Thus, one can say that there is an organic relationship between medicine and human advancement and one cannot view medical system independent of the civilization in which it exists. We can gain useful knowledge from the efforts and achievements made by our predecessors in the field of medicine against the background of their social history.


HISTORY OF MEDICINE

Primitive man's medicine was based on practical knowledge superstition, magic, religion and witchcraft. He believed that many ailments were caused by supernatural powers as a result of past sins and that health could be restored by offerings, sacrifices, spells and sorcery.

Among the medical systems, Chinese medicine was the first organized body of medical knowledge and is based on two principles - the active yang and the negative yin. The balance of these two opposing forces meant good health. Chinese physicians made use of dietetics, hydro-therapy, massage, drugs and were pioneers of immunization. Chinese believed in preventive rather than curative aspect of medicine. Chinese system of "bare-foot doctors" and "acupuncture" has attracted world-wide attention in recent years.

However, popular medicine of today owes its origin to Egyptian medicine for its contribution to anatomy, clinical medicine, surgery and pharmacy. Egyptians gained some knowledge of human inoculation and surgery. They developed the arts of diagnosis, prognosis and treatment. We also find that specialization started from Egyptian times. Homer

considered the Egyptian doctors to be "the best of all".\footnote{WHO, World Health, May 1970.}

Greeks had two main schools in medicine - the practical which was free of supernatural speculations and regarded disease as a reaction of the body to the environment and the philosophical school of miracle mongers who practiced in the Aesculapian\footnote{Aesculapius (1200 B.C.) is called as the leader of Greek Medicine: he bore two daughters - Hygiea and Panacea. Daughlas Guthrie (History of Medicine, Thomas Nelson & Sons, London, 1947) reminded us of the legend that Hygiea was worshipped as the goddess of health and Panacea as the goddess of medicine. Panacea and hygiea gave rise to dynasties of healers (curative medicine) and hygienists (preventive medicine) with different philosophies. Thus, the dichotomy between curative medicine and preventive medicine began early and remains true even today.} temples. Hippocrate was the forerunner of practical school with his doctrine of elements and humours while Plato and Aristotle were the most important from the Philosophical school. Greeks thus gave new direction to medical thought by lifting disease from the realm of supernatural to natural process. Rome’s gift to medicine was Galen’s method of experimental physiology. His experiment on the function of the nervous, respiratory and circulatory system were the only real knowledge on these subjects for fifteen centuries.

In conclusion, one can say that during the pre-modern period, when religion considered human body sacred and disease as a punishment for past sins, treatment was within the realm of supernatural and confined itself to prayers and
fasting. With the alienation of religion from science tremendous changes came in medical systems and human body was no longer considered an extension of the supernatural powers. Thus, the last quarter of the 19th Century saw "microbe" as the most pervading physical agent in the causation of disease. This set a landmark in the development of modern medicine.

INDIAN SOCIETY AND DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF MEDICINE

The different systems of medicine in India have been the product of the forces of history and social conditioning. Ayurveda, the name of the Indian medical science, dates back to pre-Aryan times and finds mention in Atharva Veda. During the Ayurvedic period, it appears there were two main types of healing art. The first type was based on prayers to appease gods and charms to expel demons, while the other rational school depended more on the empirical rational use of herbs and other medicaments.8

The period of rational medicine starts about 800 B.C. and from that time until 1000 A.D. is the golden age of Indian medicine. In this period medicine became a regular subject of study at centres of learning like Taksasila and Varanasi. The school at Varanasi specialised in surgery and

Susruta samhita is a compendium of its teachings compiled in the 4th century A.D. The teachings of Atreya at Taksasila have been compiled as Caraka Samhita. Caraka and Susruta Samhitas reached as far as Manchuria through translation in Tibetan and other Asian countries.

In Vedic times, surgery was a separate discipline and surgeons accompanied armies to the battlefield to extract arrows, amputate limbs and substitute artificial ones. Susruta considered it "the highest division of the healing arts and least of fallacy".

The Ayurvedic system of medicine along with its teachings and practice remained in low key sometimes between 1200-1800 A.D. Later Medical history of India was dominated by Mughals who brought their own knowledge which had a strong impact on Indian society, religion and literature. Since scientists were patronized by kings and chieftains, those branches which were of value to the latter developed to a great extent, medicine being one of them. This period saw the advent and growth of unani system of medicine.9 The knowledge and practice of medicine at the time reveals a strong and vigorous tradition, but it was a tradition based more on authority than on personal knowledge or experience. One finds few references to hospitals, but the practice of medicine was highly individualistic. The individual practitioners, even if distinguished could not command resources

9. Indian Journal of History of Medicine, 3, 1, 22.
to effect great improvements, either in basic knowledge or on the organization side due to prevailing socio-political conditions.

Seventeenth Century saw the advent of British to India who introduced India to the modern system of medicine - Allopathy which was adopted as an official system of medicine to serve the British military personnel and selected groups of civilian population. Various Christian missionaries also played important role in spreading the use of Allopathy among Indian masses. A number of medical colleges and research institutions were set up to promote modern medical system in traditional Indian Society.

Indian systems of medicine can be broadly categorised as traditional systems of medicine (or indigenous system of medicine) which includes Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Tantrik etc. While Allopathy is the modern system of medicine (in the sense that it is practiced in most industrialised countries). Folk medicine and yogic medicine are not regarded as systems of medicine in the modern sense. Yet they are based on some assumptions, principles and procedures concerning health and disease. Homoeopathy and Naturopathy are also widely practiced systems of medicine in India.

Ayurveda : Tridosha Theory of Disease

Ayurveda and Siddha systems of medicine are truly Indian in origin and differ little in theory and practice.\textsuperscript{11} While the former is practiced throughout India, the practice of the latter is restricted to Tamil speaking areas of South India. Ayurveda literally means the science of longevity and its origin can be traced back to vedic times. According to some authorities, the medical knowledge in the Atharvaveda gradually developed into the science of Ayurveda.

In ancient India, the celebrated authorities in Ayurvedic medicine were Atreya, Charaka, Susruta and Vagbhata. Atreya (about 800 BC) is acknowledged as the first great Indian physician. He lived in the ancient university of Taxila, about 20 miles of modern Rawalpindi.\textsuperscript{12} Ayurveda witnessed tremendous growth and development during the Buddhist times. King Ashoka (226 BC) and other Buddhist Kings patronized Ayurveda as state medicine. Buddhist universities in Nalanda and Taxila were the Centres of Ayurvedic learning for students from both within and outside India.

Ayurveda is composed of "Ayur" and "Veda" which put together mean "science of life". Ayurveda encourages follow-

\textsuperscript{11} Gokhale, B.V., \textit{Swasth Hind}, 1960, 4, 165.
ing a regulated diet, avoidance of mental strain and restricted sexual intercourse.\textsuperscript{13} Thus like Hindu religion, their medical science is but a way of life. Ayurveda believes in 'Tridosha' and even in the evaluation process of the universe and creation. It believes that there is no essential difference between the outside world and the human body as both are composed of panchabutas and thus influence each other.

According to Ayurveda, illness is the result of derangement of body humours such as \textit{vata} (wind), \textit{pitta} (gall) and \textit{Kapha} (mucus) or due to excessive or inadequate interactions of psychic factors (\textit{satwa}, \textit{rajas} and \textit{tamas}).\textsuperscript{14} When these humours are in perfect balance and harmony the person is said to be healthy.\textsuperscript{15}

Ayurveda, while accepting the body, mind and soul as the tripod on which a man stands, confines itself to the treatment of only body and mind. The basic requirement is that the physician should first of all regulate digestion and then turn to the curing of the disease.\textsuperscript{16} All kinds of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} \textit{Caraka Samhita}, Edited and Published in six volumes by Gulab Kunvera Ayurvedic Society, Jamnagar.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Kutumbian P., \textit{Indian Journal of History of Medicine}, 1956, 2-6.
\end{itemize}
food solid or liquid are grouped according to their medical properties and effects, their taste and natural temperature (warm or cold). Ayurvedic system thus places a lot of importance on the kind of food eaten and stresses that the quantity of food intake should be adjusted according to one's digestive capacity.17

Ayurveda has its roots in the cultural climate of the country and was therefore affected a great deal by religion. Religion enjoined certain practices which became the hygienic rule in disguise and were considered important tool for the treatment process. Diet, bathing, fasting, austerity and control of desires were recommended as elixir. Due to religious undertones, Ayurveda was readily accepted by society. Therefore, even today it is possible to find Ayurvedic physician i.e. the vaids in rural India as well in big cities and towns. People from all ages and from all walks of life have immense faith in Ayurveda.

Siddha Medicine

A system of medicine called Siddha medicine originated from the teachings of the Sittars (Shaivite ascetics). The Siddha system of medicine is basically Ayurveda, which under the influence of Arabs absorbed elements of the pulse, alchemy and medicinal chemistry.18 Nagarjuna the author of


Rasaratnakara and a few other works, was one of the greatest alchemists of India. Bogar is another prominent name among the eighteen Sittars who composed the alchemical treatises. The literature of Siddha which is in Tamil flourished in the Southern part of India. Instead of giving a name of any one individual as the founder of the Siddha system our ancestors wisely attributed its origin to divine being Siva. So the Siddha system is Saiva Sampradayam. Siva taught it to Parvathi, she to Mandideva, he to Agasthya and so on. Traditionally everything in Tamil which is culturally significant is traced to Agasthya; he is called Tamil Rishi whose permanent abode is in the hill ‘Pudya Malai’ near Madurai.

Siddhas are those who attained ‘Siddhi’ or perfection as a result of birth, drugs, mantras, austerities or samadhi (meditation). In addition to the cure of disease the Siddha system has given a transcendental motivation, a concern for what might be called the immortality of the body as the soul is immortal. The Hindu system of philosophy admits two modes of salvation. One is salvation after leaving behind the mortal body, which is called Videha Mukthi. The other is, salvation in this life with the body, called Jeevan Mukthi. The Siddhas aimed at Jeevan Mukthi hence, maintained by medicines which they gave the name ‘Kalpas’. According to

them, achievement of *Jeevan Mukthi* was possible by Yoga and 'Aushada' (meditation and medicine), the one being complementary to each other. The liberation of the immortal soul in conjunction with the perishable body is a concept that will not easily commend itself to the rational mind, but it will be conceded, that it had the effect of setting the aims of medicine superlatively high. Siddha principally uses medicines of metallic or mineral origin.(especially derived from mercury and gold).20

**Unani System**

The word unani (or Yunani) is a corruption of the Arabic word for Ionian (ie. Greek). Unani Tibbi medicine is widely practiced by Muslim *hakims* in India, even today. Basically, it is a classical Greek medicine as modified by Arab Scholars. The system was brought to India by the Muslims. the specialists of this system are called *Hakims*. Unani system makes use of herbs, minerals and metallic salts.

Its origin dates back to 5th century B.C. This system of pharmacy has many unique drugs different from Ayurveda and other systems of medicine. Its concept of disease and diagnosis are similar to the ones adopted by the early Allopaths. The method of taking medical histories originated

In this system. Wherever this system of medicine prevailed, it absorbed what was best in the native system of medicine. This has added to its vast repertory.

Unani system believes that disease is a natural process and the function of the physician is to aid the natural forces of the body. Like Ayurveda, Unani system is also based on a humoural theory. The four humours of this system are blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. Each humour is assigned a temperament; Blood is hot and moist; phlegm is cold and moist; yellow bile is hot and dry; and the black bile is cold and dry. Similarly, drugs are assigned temperaments. The system believes that every person has a unique humoural constitution which represents his healthy state. Any change in this brings about a change in his state of health. Unani system places great reliance on the power of people for self-preservation or adjustment through which they strive to restore disturbances within their constitution. The practitioners of the system attach great importance to diet and digestion both in health and in disease. For diagnosis unani relies heavily on the method of testing pulse.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{21} Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine, Research Activities in Unani System of Medicine, New Delhi, 1982.
According to Aziz Pasha M., the first independent and complete book on Arabic medicine was *Firdaus-ul-Hikmat* written by Abul Hasan Ali in 838 A.D. The first traceable book on Unani medicine in India was a Persian translation of *Kitab-ul-Saidana* (Materia Medica and Pharmacology) of Al-Beruni. This is the first system to have started institutionalized health system i.e. hospitals. Ancient Unani hospitals were the nearest approximation to modern hospitals. Unani was also the first system to pay attention to proper and sympathetic treatment of insanity.

**Self Treatment, Folk Medicine, and Home Remedies**

Besides, the traditional system of medicine in India, there are various types of localized folk medical beliefs and practices, often based on magic, sorcery etc., and home medicines.

Folk medicine is a body of knowledge that is found in all societies and in all groups within societies, and that is used occasionally by all persons. As a body of knowledge, it is affected by events within society, and in turn, affects society, its institutions, and members. As a form of medicine widely employed in the population and affecting

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mainstream medicine, it becomes important to study and understand it, not as an anachronism from the past, but as a contemporary dynamic body of knowledge with which the population is involved.

Earlier, the terms folk medicine & home remedies were associated with primitives and the studies on folk medicine were restricted to sub-cultures. However, folk medicine is widespread and is not limited to certain subcultures. It is found in all groups and groupings, although the content of remedies may differ among groups and may vary over time. Everyone uses home remedies and self-medication to some extent. Drinking a hot drink and going to bed when feeling a cold coming on, taking aspirin for a headache, using alcohol and turmeric powder for cuts and stopping bleeding, and juice of raw mangoes for heat stroke are all examples of commonly used folk medicine and home remedies.

Folk medicine can be defined so as to include all kinds of home remedies, rituals, dietary controls, and all other forms of treatment used by lay persons to care for their own illness. These forms of treatment however have no single theory or empirical base and there is no set of agreed-upon, successful remedies. Different treatments may be useful for different groups for the same illness.

In India, folk medicine was practiced during the Atharveda period; it is still practiced on a wide scale. One can trace this system of medicine in ancient manuscripts such as
Atharvaveda, Kautilya's *Arthasastra*, and even in the Ayurvedic *Samhitas* of Charaka and Susruta. Folk medicine finds mention even in the works of Muslim and European writers who came to India. The causation of illness is attributed to God, Goddesses and the spirits, who can also cure and protect one from illnesses. Indians also believe that one's own deeds (Karma) in this or previous births may be responsible for illness. Religious specialists which include priests, *Ojha* (a diviner), *tantrik*, *maulvi(s)* (one who is specially versed in Arabic and Persian literature), *Sadhu* or *Sannyasi* (a male recluse) are supposed to have powers to heal, but they can help only when the patient keeps himself morally, socially and physically above the mundane things. All these factors are seen as essentially related to health. In this configuration, *dava* (medicine) is one of the component of the entire therapeutic effort. If due blessings are there, medicine might expedite cure. 24

Students of folk healing sector often divide this sector into sacred and secular sub-sectors, to indicate its roots in religious (eg. Shamanism) and empirical (herbalism, bone setting), and physiotherapeutic traditions. The roles of folk practitioners are validated by social recognition and regulated by the community conventions, the caste and village leadership. The kinship and caste relationships play

important roles in such regulations. The folk practitioners administer simple folk medicines and remedies to a body of clients on a regular basis. In return they receive some form of direct or indirect remuneration but they have some other occupation as their mainstay. Social recognition and prestige are the major rewards. They share some basic concepts with Ayurvedic system, but there is much in their practice which Ayurveda will disapprove.\(^{25}\) Despite cultural borrowings and overlap, the practitioners in Indian medicine systems and folk practitioner are two distinct categories. There is one folk practitioner available for 200 population, while the formal health system has 1:5000 ratio at the most peripheral level.\(^{26}\) The folk health system as people’s health system has served the rural population for thousand of years and still serves in many different ways. The folk practitioners know their clients and their problems personally. The folk health system has deep roots in the local culture. The practitioners understand why people do what they do.

Home Remedies form a sub-section of folk medicine with a limited number of drugs which are readily prepared by housewives with materials available in the kitchen or the area surrounding the household. It is only when home reme-

\(^{25}\) Kochar, Vijay and others, "Linking the folk health system to rural health services", *Swasth Hind*, February, 1979, Vol. XXIII, No. 2, p.15.

\(^{26}\) Ibid, p.16.
dies fail that people go to seek medical care from outside agents. The importance of home remedies can be readily seen when we realise that the entire Indian population depended on them for centuries without the aid of any professionalized Western medicine or even the codified systematized Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani or Homoeopathy. In the home remedies, illness is first experienced, labeled, and treated by the individual (self-care) or more often by family members and other members of social network. The most common things which are used for the treatment are special foods, diets, local herbs, massage, blistering and other manipulative techniques, exercises, changes in life style habits. Practitioners of Ayurveda and Siddha tend to view folk medicine as a corrupt version of their 'pure system'. Whatever the historical roots of folk medicine may have been, it must be observed that it has been accepted by the villagers; it has served a social function for several centuries and continues to do so in large areas of the country and has survived by simple oral tradition.27 In folk medicine, there are several therapies which are not known to all practitioners. Several Vajds know and use only drugs based on selected herbal species.

**Yogic Medicine**

Unlike Ayurveda, the yoga is not a system of medicine though it enunciates principles through which one can remain healthy and physically fit. Yoga means joining or yoking of the individual soul to the universal soul, the union of personal spirit with God. The Sanskrit word Yuj, from which the word yoga seems to have been derived, means 'to join' or 'to yoke'. The Rigveda hymn tells of an ascetic who had achieved supernatural powers by following the yogic path.28 The term yoga in its technical sense first occurs in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*29 and the *Katha Upanishad*.30 Yogic concepts and techniques remained scattered in the Vedic and Upanishadic literature till about 300 B.C. *Patanjali* collected the old writings and compiled them into his *Yoga Sutras*. He created neither the Yoga techniques nor its philosophy; he merely edited and composed, the doctrinal and technical traditions of yoga(*Atma Yoga*). As regards providing theoretical framework and the metaphysical foundation, he made use of the already existing *Samkhya* philosophy and adopted it to the Yoga meditation.

According to Woods\textsuperscript{31} in India the author of the Yoga Sutras is also the author of other great works on Yoga. This has not been traced definitely, but it may be estimated that it has not been later than the tenth century. These works were written sometime in the fourth or fifth century A.D., thus Yoga practices are very ancient. Some of the seals recovered at Mohenjdaro show a divinity sitting in a yogic posture. \textit{Rigveda} mentions a seer sitting in a Yogic Asana. Early upanishads mention different yogic asanas and procedures.

The system of yoga enunciated by Patanjali consists of eight components: \textit{yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi}. The first five components relate more to body: They prepare the body for the next three components which relate more to the mind. The basic tenets are: restrained social behavior (\textit{yama}), good personal conduct (\textit{niyama}), yogic exercise (\textit{asana}), breathing exercise (\textit{pranayama}), restrained use of sense organs (\textit{pratyahara}), concentration (\textit{dharana}), meditation (\textit{dhyana}), attainment of super-consciousness (\textit{samadhi}). One can practice them for enabling one to do sincere selfless service to other (\textit{Karma yoga}). These exercises are also conducive to calmness of mind. These also help to acquire maximum crea-

tive intelligence. 32

Practice of yoga is neither a Hindu religious dogma nor the monopoly of Indians alone. The pre-requisites of yoga practice are *vama* and *niyama*, not the concepts of any particular religion. Yoga practices are found as much in India as in China or among the Muslim Sufis and some of the Christian sects. Indian yoga is however, more systematic. *Hatha-Yog-Pradipika* text states that in all diseases, the skillful physician should carefully administer treatment according to the methods prescribed by the science of medicine and also administer yogic treatment. 33 Now a days yoga is being practiced very widely because it is a science that can calm both mind and body because it helps to attain physical and physiological harmony with the body.

**Allopathy**

Allopathy medicine is what most of us understand to be the "modern" and "scientific" medicine as practiced and distributed by the practitioners we recognize as being legitimate, true and credible. In broad definition, "Allopathic medicine is that practice which combats disease by use of remedies producing effects different from those


produced by the disease treated, including the use of all measures that have proved to be of some value in the treatment of disease". 34 Thus, from such a view, the human body in its normal state is free of disease, and any disease found must be regarded as a foreign intrusion into an otherwise healthy organism. Further, allopathic medicine is rooted in the rather general idea that in as much as disease is foreign its cure can usually be brought by the application of some form of "opposites" to it. Surgery to remove the affected part, the application of various physical manipulation and physical exercise to "restrain" misused, unused, or atrophied parts; and where deemed necessary the "temporary" reversal of the ill person's social behaviors so as to allow one's body to recover and regenerate itself. 35

Scientific medicine is characterised by the assumption that (1) all disease is materially generated by specific etiological agents such as bacteria, viruses, parasites, genetic malformations, or internal chemical imbalances; (2) a passive patient role; and (3) the use of invasive manipulation to restore/maintain the human organism at a statistically derived equilibrium point (health). Scientific medicine evolved in the late nineteenth century primarily from

French and German laboratories. It based itself around the discovery of micro-biological agents (bacteria) as the cause of disease and around the theory of scientific etiology as a mechanism for explaining the role of these agents. Scientific medicine had a different theoretical basis and epidemiology from existing modes of medicine of late nineteenth and early twentieth century, but it had an extremely limited clinical and therapeutic repertoire.

Allopathy is the most widely practiced system of medicine world over. Governments of all the countries spend millions to train the doctors in Allopathic field and research purposes. However, Allopathic medicine has been found to have side effects, which may not always be healthy for the patients.

Homoeopathy

The word 'homoeopathy' means 'similar suffering' and uses the principle 'like curing like'. What this means in everyday terms is that a substance that can produce a set of symptoms in a healthy person, may be used to treat a sick person who has the same set of symptoms.


The word 'homoeopathy' is derived from the Greek words 'homios' meaning like or similar and 'pathos' meaning suffering. Homoeopathy as it is practiced today was established in the late 18th and 19th century by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann. He gave the following three principles.38

1. A substance that causes symptoms in a healthy person can be used to treat these symptoms when they occur in a sick person.
2. Diluting the homoeopathic medicine increases its curative powers and avoids unwanted side-effects.
3. Homoeopathy treats the whole person and not just the sickness.

Hahnemann in a book called Organon, concluded that there is a balancing mechanism in man which keeps him in perfect health, in spite of all the stresses of life (psychological, physical and atmospheric), provided that the stresses were not too great or prolonged that the balancing mechanism itself, which he called the vital force, was impaired. But if the stress was too great, or the vital force was impaired, unusual signs, sensations, and symptoms followed. The sick body could be restored rapidly to its original state of health by a potential remedy that had been found by experience to produce a similar condition in a healthy body.

38. As given in Homoepathic Medicine, The Boots Company PLC, Nottingham, England.
The Homoeopathic system is based on a number of "principles" the most fundamental of which is the law of homoeopathy. It is a system of pharmacodynamics based on the Natural Law of cure' i.e., *Similia Similibus, Curantur* - let likes be cured by likes. This law is also alternatively referred to as the law of similitude or popularly, the law of Similia.\(^3^9\)

In practice this law maintains that a given cluster of symptoms in a sick person can be remedied by a drug capable of producing in a healthy person the same symptoms. Other principles of homoeopathy developed by Hahnemann included the use of single remedy often termed as "simplex".

He further noted that no two substances produced exactly the same set of symptoms. Each provoked its own unique pattern of symptoms. Furthermore, the symptoms were not just confined to the physical plane. Every substance tested also affected the mind and the emotions apart from the body.

Homoeopathy views the patient as a whole and treats the individual rather than just the disease. Homoeopathy consid-

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ers the human body as one unit comprising physical, mental and spiritualistic planes and thus has a holistic approach. As each person is different from the other it treats each person individualistically.

To prevent any toxic effects the homoeopathic medicine is used in the smallest amount that will provoke a healing response. As a result of these high dilutions, homoeopathic medicines are considered to be free of causing any known side-effects. People vary in their reaction to an illness and therefore different homoeopathic medicines may be needed for people with the same medical condition. On the other hand the same homoeopathic medicine may be used to treat many different illness.

Although homoeopathy does not remove harmful factors from the mind, it is able to clear the taint of the old illnesses carried down from an ancestral past along the genetic line. These miasmas as Hahnemann called them, contribute to the predisposing factors which permit the development of chronic incurable illness. The clearing of miasmas (after-effects of illnesses, emotional stress, injuries, vaccinations, infections and medicinal indiscretions) are tasks which must be accomplished in order to achieve good health. Once cleared these factors are no longer accumulate and perpetuate down the genetic line to posterity. Homoeopathic medicines are as yet the only remedies which offer this possibility. India is perhaps the only major country where homoeopathy, a medicine system of Western origin, is
extensively practised and officially recognised.

Homoeopathy entered India in 1839 when Dr. Jon Martin Hoenigberger was called to treat Maharaja Ranjit Singh (the ruler of Punjab), for paralysis of vocal cords and oedema. Later, Hoenigberger came to Calcutta and practised Homoeopathy there for quite sometime; since then Homoeopathy has progressed steadily in the country. The process of official recognition of Homoeopathy started with the passing of the first resolution by the central Legislative Assembly in 1937 followed by another resolution in 1948. But it was only in 1952 that it started getting recognition in the states and in 1973, a Central Act was passed for recognizing this system of medicine. Today there are about 1,30,000 registered practitioners of this system of medicine in India and more than 130 colleges conduct recognised courses in Homoeopathy.

Naturopathy/Nature Cure

The concept of nature cure includes not merely a cure for a disease after it has taken root, but also prevention of illhealth altogether by living according to the laws of nature. It can totally transform an individual's life, changing his physical, moral, mental and socio-economic aspects.

Naturopathy is a system of building a harmonious relationship between human beings. This school of thought that
the primary cause of weakness or disease is disobedience to the laws of nature. It does not prescribe drugs because it trusts the healing power existing within the body itself. The 'father' of this science was a simple farmer - Vincenz Priesintiz, who established a small clinic in the Silesian mountains. He had a fine-honed knowledge of the root causes of any disease and recommended natural ways of curing it. Perseverance is the essence of naturopathy. Its tenets state that the best way to treat chronic diseases is to increase resistance to them in the body, by which the 'wrong' substances accumulated in it can be thrown out.

The basic principle of naturopathy is the maintenance of the vital force within a body, which needs eight hours of sound sleep, sunlight, fresh air and plenty of water. One of the primary beliefs of this branch of medical science is that the way of life of a person leaves its imprint on his health. Overindulgence of any kind of drugs causes delirium, which can be permanent. Intake of too many artificial foods is thought to be the root cause of many diseases, increasing the amount of toxins in the body which ultimately results in various chronic diseases.

Every disease has its own course, but faulty medication can turn it into a chronic condition; even though the body reacts to prescribed medication, this is only a temporary healing, according to naturopaths. Naturopathy believes that sickness or disease is a crisis instituted by the body itself for the purpose of cleaning, repair and restoration.
In fact, sickness purifies the body, eliminating toxins and restoring the internal balance. One major cause of body imbalance is the accumulation of toxic matter when the body is not in a condition to cope with it. The best way to solve the problem is to do nothing, while simultaneously establishing basic conditions of health, such as a clean environment, lots of sunshine and mental tranquility.

Whatever the disease may be, the first step which naturopathy follows is cleansing of the entire body. The stress is on a balanced diet, which helps in increasing resistance. "Naturopathy" rests upon the rejection of any and all forms of artificially manufactured intervention and manipulation of the human body. It does not subscribe to the idea that a special and esoteric body of health knowledge can be acquired only after a long period of formal training and that persons must rely on the ministrations of medical professionals in order to preserve one’s health. In naturalistic systems illness is explained in impersonal, systemic terms. Naturalistic systems confirm above all to an equilibrium model; health prevails when the insensate elements in the body, the heat, the cold, the humours or dosha, the yin and yang, are in balance appropriate to the age and condition of the individual in his natural and social environment. If this equilibrium is disturbed illness re-
Naturopathy is a health-promotive way of life. It is often described as 'drug less treatment of disease'. Naturopathy treatment essentially consists of the elimination of the undesirable toxins or any mental or spiritual factors which cause ill health. It views man as a whole. Disease can be permanently cured only when man's entire attitude of life changes. The cure of bodily disease must, therefore, be sought primarily in the realm of spirit. Self-discipline, self-mastery, observance of the laws of nature in regard to health are necessary to overcome diseases. Physical and social environment conducive to the development of a sound body and a sound mind is equally important.

Naturopathy uses earth, water, air, sunlight (as hydrotherapy, sitz bath, mud poultice and sun bath, etc.)\(^{41}\). Experiments are being conducted on cardiovascular diseases and their amenability to cure/control by uncooked vegetables. Today some of the naturopathic practitioners have adopted many of the techniques of modern physiotherapy\(^ {42}\). As

40. For a more complete discussion of the personalistic naturalistic dichotomy, see Foster, G.M., "Disease Etiologies in Non-Western Medical Systems," *American Anthropologists*, 1976, 78: 773-782.


an identifiable social movement, however, naturopathy has no individual who can be singled out as its founder, although the name of Christian scientist, Mary Baker Eddy, must be noted. But Naturopathy was and is secular and does not possess any of the organizational or ideological components of theology. At the base of naturopathy rests the principle that "nature" itself can be relied upon to bring about cures and, perhaps most important, that disease produces bacteria, not the other way round.43

Two other systems which have found acceptance in India are 'Reiki' and "Tibetan"44 medicine.

REIKI

The key to Reiki, the Japanese word for the universal life force energy, is in its simplicity. We all have Reiki energy. Reiki is basically a system of self - healing and the employees have to meditate in a bid to dissolve the various problems that are cluttering the body. Anyone can lay her hands on another person and help accelerate the healing process by transferring magnetic energy. In addition, certain energy centres, known as 'Chakras', are opened


44. Tibetan medicine is based on certain Ayurvedic and Chinese principles that propound the balance of three homours - vayu(gas), 'pitt' (bile) and phlegm. Tibetan medicines are used as a supportive system for chronic cases including cancer, epilepsy and arthiritis. The maximum benefit can be got from these medicines only if the patient has a positive attitude to wards it.
to enable the person to channel higher amounts of this energy.

One of the greatest benefits of Reiki is self-treatment. Once a person is attuned, he or she needs only the intention to do Reiki on oneself and the energy is drawn through. Self-treatment is effective for relaxation and stress release. It also helps release emotional blocks.

DIENSIONS OF MEDICAL SYSTEMS

From the middle of 19th century onwards up to the present time, allopathy has developed surgery, diagnostic techniques (X-ray, scanning etc.), standardization of drugs, etc. These developments have coincided with the large scale growth of science and technology. The pre-modern medical systems of the west lacked such technical competence. In the Allopathic system there is a strong emphasis on the body. As the mind has a qualitative aspect, allopathy has been concerned mainly with the experimental and diagnostic approach to the treatment of body's illness.

The body-mind dichotomy produced two reactions. Psychoanalysis developed in response to the neglect of mental side. In the treatment of mental illness psychoanalysis (in contrast to Psychiatry) rejected the use of medicines, hypnosis and surgical techniques. To treat the body internal medicine and surgery developed, and the two systems thrived side by side in the west. Hahnemann who founded the homoeo-
pathic system held that individuals can "medicate" themselves without depending on the doctors. He was driven out of Germany by his angry colleagues. It was in Paris that he settled down and expanded his system.

Ayurveda and Siddha were the standardized medical systems. Since folk medicine was associated with magical properties, these two systems provided a rationalistic, empirically oriented treatment of sickness. Although they also emphasized on the body, they held that mental disturbances were often the result of morbid humors. However, the Ayurveda remained a preserve of elites since knowledge of Sanskrit was needed. It also became part of court culture. In contrast, the folk systems operated within the ambit of common people. The Unani was derived both from Greek medicine and Ayurveda. It reached both elite and folk categories of people in north India because its literature was written in Urdu, a common language of the people.

The Yogic practices related to the treatment of sickness were aimed at the restoration of both body and mind. Yet the yogic approach was limited to the guru-shishya circles. Yoga rests on the theory that medicines needed to cure sickness can be generated within the nerve centres (for example, the pain reducing endorphins). Besides, improvements in circulation through yogic exercises can help in the control of diseases related to heart, lungs, liver, eyes, spine, etc. While Yoga treats sickness internally i.e. by
activating circulation etc., Naturopathy uses external energies like sunlight, water and air to facilitate cure.

Although these different systems have often collided with each other, there are medical practitioners who have combined different techniques to treat the patients. As the human beings differ from each other in many respects, alternative systems would be needed. It is essential for medical knowledge that some competition persists between the alternative systems, otherwise there is the risk of medical monopoly developing and imposing itself on society. Ivan Illich drew our attention to the danger to human freedom, where individuals are placed under the constraints of a monopolistic medical system. In the area of treatment of mental illness Foucoul noted that the French state exercised monopolistic control over its people. According to him medical knowledge became a powerful weapon with the state to control the people. P.K. Feyerabend noted that the claims of superiority of Western medicine rest on facile assumptions. According to him a non-western medical system such as the Chinese medicine has effectiveness as well as vitality. The problem in Western medicine arises from the rather arbitrary definition of science (For example, Naturopathy has shown that bacteria do not cause illness in a healthy body).

SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF MEDICAL SYSTEMS

Having dealt in detail with different systems of Medicine, let us now dwell on certain socio-cultural dimensions
of Medical systems, because a medical or health care system does not develop and function in isolation, but is a reflection of the society at large.

A health system is "a set of relationship among institutions, social groups and individuals that is directed towards maintaining and improving the health status of a population". Health System contains three social arenas in which lay persons experience and responses to episodes of illness. These are popular, folk and professional arenas. The popular arena comprises essentially the family context of sickness and care including the community setting. The folk arena consists of non-professional healers. The professional arena consists of professional scientific (Western or cosmopolitan) medicine and professionalized indigenous healing traditions. This reflection shows immediately that the health care is intimately involved in the functional pre-requisite of the social system.

The traditional systems emphasized on "treatment" or "therapy", that is, on dealing with cases which have already developed a pathological state, and the attempts was to restore them to health or normality. Recently with the

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modern medicine there is an increasing emphasis on prevention of disease, that is, controlling the conditions which produce illness. This, we can say, is a reflection on the changing social and cultural environment. Ancient man was a non-scientific man who was learning to cope with phenomenon around him, and thus his medical system was drawn largely from natural products, his religion and day-to-day activities. He could deal with an act or a phenomenon only when it had already happened or started. By contrast, modern man has controlled his physical and social environment to a considerable extent and so his ability to control diseases has developed.

In agrarian society, where there was no division of labour, there existed only a single type of doctors who were consulted for varying type of diseases; whereas in an industrial society, where division of labour exists, one finds division in medical care practitioners also. There are not only specialists for dealing with different parts of the body, but even superspecialists who have perfected their knowledge of the single disease or particular region of the body.

Institutionalized medical care i.e. hospitals also developed as a part of the changes in the wider social system. This was necessitated because of the demands which were made on the institution of family. The family no longer held the task of imparting education, health care, religion as this was taken over by specialised institutions. Medical
system lost its previous appeal where a traditional healer was accorded divine appeal with magico-religious powers. In Industrial societies the medical system is transformed into a principal economic activity.

In pre-industrial societies, there were only two strata of physicians: one the 'royal physician' who was consulted by the members of royalty and other was the 'folk physician' or the common doctor. This common doctor was approachable to the masses and shared a close bond with his clients. Their relationship was not restricted to the 'treatment process' but went beyond that to include their families. The physician was respected by all irrespective of caste or creed. The physician was paid in kind for his services rendered which included not only providing medicines but also acting as a friend, philosopher and guide. The caste restrictions were however followed.

The royal physicians catered to the upper strata or elite group and had a life style similar to some physicians of today who live in fashionable areas and caters to the new rich class. Besides, we have general practitioners of small localities who correspond to the 'folk physician' of agrarian society because of the love and prestige they get from their patients for whom they act as friend and guide.

In between there are hospital doctors who cater to the general public irrespective of their background i.e. social
or financial. However, the hospitals themselves create a system of stratifications by categorization of wards in terms of VIP wards, private and general. Private hospitals act somewhat similar to five star hotels. Obviously, the process and pattern of hospitalization has become a status symbol.

In agrarian societies medicine and religion were never separated. Disease was an expression of the wrath of Gods. Religious men were the healers who could cure a person through rituals, mantras, tantras, puja and Vedic chants. Sometimes the healing process involved the entire community, where everyone gathered to perform a religious ceremony; this is especially true in case of Chicken pox, Small pox, etc. Giving of alms, feeding the poor and the Brahmins were also used as diagnostic tools. In cases where services of a healer were not required, home remedies were the answer to problems. Elders of the house knew a number of remedies which helped the patient. This knowledge was transferred to the next generation.

However, with the advent of technological and industrial revolution, men turned towards science through which the exact cause of a disease was known and hence the appropriate treatment. With Science there was no place for magic and religion and health care became more generalized than personalized. The alternative systems of medicine like Ayurveda, Unani and homeopathy consider both body and mind for treat-
ment purpose. By contrast, the modern system of medicine considers a particular region of the body, and not both body and mind. This makes former holistic in their approaches. According to Ivan Illich, most of the problems of the modern medicine are due to the dichotomy of body and mind. Thus, we see that systems of medicine through ages were being affected by the prevalent social and cultural situations.