Conclusions
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This work attempts to present a concise account of the development of science especially Ayurveda, or the indigenous medical science in one of the most ancient culture areas of the world. This work should be understood in continuation of a series of works that have been produced in the recent times related to the study of the history and philosophy of science as one important aspect in understanding man’s cultural patterns. It can be fairly said that despite some periods of stagnation, the Indian subcontinent is one of the few areas where a fairly continuous tradition in science and technology is clearly seen. The new approaches have been developed recently to study the oriental sciences. One approach is to categorize the sciences developed by our ancients to be largely mystical. While another approach has been to interpret the selective works of our Indian forefathers with the help of the tools of modern science and to judge the validity of their claims through the application of the methodology of our contemporary sciences. The elements that remained unexplained in their theoretical framework have been declared to be irrelevant and void under the influence of Occam’s razor principle.

The approach followed here is quite distinct from all other approaches followed as mentioned above. Here an attempt has been made to understand the methodological framework and the epistemological backdrop of our indigenous sciences before passing any judgment regarding their true nature. It has been seen in the preceding chapters that the methodological and epistemological constraints of modern science quite often prove to be a major obstacle in the way of the explorations of scientific developments that took place in the various parts of the world. It is because the very essence of such scientific developments remains unexplained within the strict framework of the methodology of our contemporary modern science. It not only kills the novelty of the indigenous sciences that have grown and developed in the various geographical
locations of earth but also grossly misinterpret the true nature of such attempts.

It seems necessary here to make clarifications regarding the concept of science and scientific heritage so that any misunderstanding regarding these issues can be settled. Science literally means knowledge and knowledge can not be confined to geographical boundaries. Therefore, the term ‘Indian science’ needs to be explained to avoid any possible misgivings. ‘Indian science’ is not Indian in the sense that it is conditioned by Indian social beliefs, customs and conventions. But the science that grew on this land had some specific metaphysical presuppositions as its theoretical background in its initial stage. Since these distinctive presuppositions gave the science its identity and since they were Indian in origin, therefore, the science also could be referred to as ‘Indian science’. The valid point here is that the understanding of the original theoretical backdrop is very critical so that one can understand the true nature of one’s scientific heritage.

In this work, the central focus has been made the Ayurveda or Indian medical science to understand the essence of other branches of science that developed here. Ayurveda has been particularly selected as the medicine was the most important of all the physical sciences which were cultivated in ancient India. It can be seen there in Ayurveda that the definite role of insight in its diagnostic, prognostic and therapeutic aspects can hardly be underestimated. It can be fairly said that Ayurveda attempts to tackle the disease at much subtle level whereby the things has not yet entered in the domain of our visual world of experience. The first three steps of the five-stage disease process of Ayurveda are clearly not part of our ordinary visual experience. Clearly, something more has been suggested here. This something more cannot be captured with the help of our unaided or even aided sense-organs. Therefore, the claim made in the beginning of this chapter regarding the insight-based method of Ayurveda
can be substantiated on this ground that there are diagnostic processes in Ayurveda that can be observed only at the level of our higher intuitive faculties. At the same time, it is also true that the Ayurveda does not repudiate the validity of our sense-experience. It respects its validity but points out that it may not capture the entire truth. There are things beyond our visual experience and human being is capable of intuiting them. The vision of Ayurveda is all-inclusive and all-encompassing.

At the same time it is also interesting to note down the amount of emphasis given in Ayurveda in specific and in Indian sciences in general on the *śabda pramāṇa* or testimony as the source of knowledge. Both Caraka and Suśruta give very high place to the testimony as a source of Knowledge. Also the domain of applicability of verbal testimony in Ayurveda is quite wide and is not exhausted by the Vedas alone. It also extends it to the testimony of a trustworthy person or āpta. Etymologically, the term āpti implies, “the immediate perception of meaning” (*sākṣādarthasya āpti*). In other words, āpti means the direct or immediate perception of truth. A trustworthy person, or an āptapurusa, is one who can perceive the truth directly (*tattha pravṛttata ityāptah*). He knows the truth directly and is able to communicate it correctly. He is an enlightened person who is free from all kinds of lust, anger, greed, passions, and ignorance. His mind is free from the impurities of rajas and tamas through the force of his ascetic endeavors and as a result, he possesses unlimited knowledge extending through past, present and future. Such persons are pure to the core of their nature and therefore, their understanding embracing the past, present, and the future is also pure and unclouded. They always speak truth. They are themselves the embodiment of truth on earth. Therefore, their word is unimpeachable and true. Caraka himself says, “Why will such men, devoid as they are of passion and ignorance, utter anything but the truth?”
It seems necessary to explain here a little bit further the rationale of *śabda pramāṇa* so that any misunderstanding can be dissolved. It is very necessary to note down that *śabda pramāṇa* is not accepted merely as an article of faith or on the ground of argumentum ad valorem. The *śabda pramāṇa* instead refers to a sort of intuitive domain which is an independent domain and has a reality of its own. Therefore, the rationale of *śabda pramāṇa* is, basically the development of a sort of intuitive vision of a higher level that has as access to the intuitive world. This point is very important to understand so that we can understand *śabda pramāṇa* as an independent source of knowledge. This pramāṇa has always been seen by our ancestors in that light only. Now since the term intuition itself has been so much mystified, so the *śabda pramāṇa* has been declared to be just an article of faith without having anything to do with reality. But it is not difficult to see that this claim has no real basis except that is based on certain prejudices.

There have always been certain objections raised against any sort of intuitive claim. It would be appropriate here to mention what are the major criticisms that have been leveled against the intuitive truths. The term, intuition has been criticized on the ground that the knowledge it supplies is vague. Anything that is not clear and distinct can not become the part and source of our knowledge. Moreover, it is said that intuitive claims are highly personal and subjective with no objective contents in them. There is no subject-neutral criterion here to study the matter-of-fact objectively. Furthermore, it has been repudiated on the ground that it has strong mystical associations and, therefore, it is a domain about which we cannot talk sensibly. The intuitive claims are not revisable and they are given once and for all.

A deeper investigation reveals that these objections are largely based on misgivings. It does not seem to be justified to label intuition as some mystical entity as the faculty of intuition is very frequently used in
cognitive enterprise. In logic or mathematics, when we derive a proof, we move from one step of proof to the next step only by means of intuition. The faculty of intuition is the sole means we have to relate one step of the proof to next stage. It is another case that finally when we reach to the conclusion of our proof, the result may appear to be counter-intuitive. But the process of proof itself reveals that the proof is attained by applying our intuition step by step.

Another objection that has been raised against intuition regarding its verifiability also is not tenable as the possibility of its verification at one level is certainly there in the realm of intuition. The possibility of intersubjective verification is there in the intuitive world. At that level of existence, one's intuition cannot be counterintuitive to another person. Therefore, a criterion of objectivity or neutrality is precisely there in our intuitive claims and it is possible to verify them. Some scholars also tend to pose intuitive claims to be against rational claims. It may be mentioned here in passing that there is real clash between reason and intuition. According to Kant, the reason is neutral and it cannot supply knowledge on its own. Reason supplies us the form or the categories of knowledge. It cannot supply us the content of our knowledge. The contents are normally believed to be coming from our sense-perception. The faculty of intuition also has an ability to supply contents to reason. Intuition has a domain of its own and it is an independent domain constituted of intuitive objects. The huge variety of versatile information is awaiting us if we are ready to shed our constructed prejudices against this faculty. Also, the proposed clash between reason and intuition is constructed and artificial and not real.

It is very interesting to note the definition of health given in the Ayurveda. A person is said to be healthy if he is happy at all the three levels of its existence, i.e., physical, psychological and spiritual. The term spiritual here should not be taken in other-worldly sense but it should be seen as concerning the spirit in which we live. In Ayurveda, happiness itself
has been considered to be essential to health. If one is not happy at any of the above mentioned three levels then it can be taken as the biggest cause of illness and premature death. It is also significant to notice here that it is a counter-thesis to those who are accustomed to thinking of disease as an unfortunate affliction unrelated to our states of mind. But, Ayurveda, in contrast explicitly believes in an intimate connection among body, mind and spirit. Also the current advances in medical science are forcing doctors to begin to take it seriously. The idea of a psychosomatic cause behind every disease is becoming more and more popular in the medical circle now a days. The idea of Ayurveda is that it is possible to take charge of our thoughts and emotions in such a way that they become health-inducing rather than illness originating. While a positive attitude heals and protects, the negative emotions such as sorrow, anger, hate, hopelessness are antagonistic to life and health. This view of Ayurveda is really interesting and deserves a thorough probe by contemporary medical specialists. It will be appropriate here to begin by establishing the nature of mind in Ayurveda and its relationship vis-à-vis body and soul.

Another important aspect that has been highlighted in the preceding chapters is that the medicine in India was directly and intimately connected with the Sāmkhya and Vaiśeṣika philosophy and was probably the origin of the logical speculations subsequently codified in the Nyāya-sūtras. Also the methodological framework and the epistemological backdrop of Ayurveda are much older than the origin of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophy itself. According to Caraka, the medicine in India is as old as the existence of life in the world. Therefore, it seems reasonable to believe that the various schools of Indian philosophy are significantly influenced by the developments in the medicine that took place in India long before the development of various schools of philosophy. A close study of the various schools of Indian philosophy clearly reveals the influence of Ayurveda on the various philosophical treatises. Therefore, a new approach has been suggested here to study the various philosophical concepts discussed in
Indian philosophy by keeping Ayurveda in centre. It might help us in resolving various anomalies and also help us understanding the various schools of Indian philosophy in a better light.

The vast Ayurvedic literature also contains many interesting ethical instructions and reveals a view of life which although resemble with the instructions found in the works of pure philosophy but also challenge them at various fronts as well. For instance, Ayurveda does not believe in the caste rigidities. Also, there is no bar in Ayurveda on being a woman be awarded with the status of a Vaidya. Similarly, Ayurveda took very radical stand on many philosophical issues prevalent those days, for instance, the nature of soul. Therefore, on the one hand, the medicine in India acted as the source of the origination of various philosophical schools but at the same time Ayurveda continuously challenged the rigidity of the tradition and the stand taken by various schools on rational ground.