PLANTS IN THE ATHARVAVEDA

In Vedic age, man had intimate contact with the environment particularly plant as he depended on them not only for his day to day requirements but also for necessary appliances and instruments for domestic use and agriculture. In rites, ceremonies and sacrifices, plants played a great role in various forms. They defined a group of trees which were useful in sacrifices [Yajña Vṛkṣa]. Moreover, plants were also used as Bheṣaja [drug] for alleviation of the diseases of man and animals.

In the preceding part of my investigations several lesser deities of the Vedic world have already been discussed in the context of those beings who are a kin to them. Some others like ‘Dyāvaprthivi’ do not cause any difficulties from the mythological point of view. The cult knows various sacrifices for them and has summarised its attitudes in the “Sūktavāka”, and in the vivid formula. Which is incorporated into the ‘Dyāvaprthivisūkta’ of the Vaiśvadevaśāstra. Akṛsmaṇah pratisthākāmāh offers a sacrificial beast to them, then from the sky parjanya sends rain for him and plants grow on earth. The sacrificial symbolism has seized upon the sky and the Earth and designated them as the ‘Havirdhane’ of the Gods or regarded the Earth as the Vedi¹ and the sky as the Dakṣina.² While we have the

1. ॐवरसन् परिष्वयो वेदिष्मधिरक्षत।
   तैतत्त्वनां भाष्यत विं संसें च रोहितं। Ṣ Atharvaveda. XIII. 1.146.
2. ॐह्रणान्वी वातुधानी ब्रह्मकुटी ब्रह्महुली।
   ब्रह्म दामनी इति रोहितत्व व्यविच। Ṣ Ibid. XIII. 1.152
impressions as though the sky and Earth have meant very little in the mythology of the Vedic tribes. This is not in the case of lesser deities like water and rivers, trees and plants were also objects of worship from time immemorial. The above statements are given by Alfred D. Hillbrandi who was a scholar in this particular subject.\(^3\)

The Indian intellect has classified the plant kingdom into convenient classes, found life and senses in plants and also identified the medicinal service of the trees to the mankind. All this has been in a very systematic manner preserved in the written records beginning from the Vedas. The earliest source of medical information in India is Veda. The Vedas contain different categories of knowledge for e.g. - spiritual, social, philosophical, scientific etc. Hence, Veda is the source of all knowledge.

The Vedas are four in Number - Rgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and Atharvaveda, revealed respectively to the sages Agni, Vāyu, Āditya and Angiras of the four Vedas, the fourth and the last being the Atharvaveda consists practically of prayers, formulas and charms of prayers, for protection against evil spirits, diseases, snakes and other noxious creatures. Hence, the science of the Āyurveda has been regarded as upaveda of the Atharvaveda.\(^4\) The informations regarding the Medicines, Herbs, Metals, Diseases and treatments have been amply found in the mantras of Atharvaveda. The presiding deities of Āyurveda and life and its welfare, Aśvinau and Rudra have been treated with high honour in the Atharvaveda and in the Āyurveda. Aśvinau and Rudra preside over all the


different aspects of life. Because, the gods Aśvinau and Rudra cure diseases. They treat with Medicine and surgery, they provide financial help and they lead on the spiritual path etc.\(^5\)

The Gods Aśvinau and Nasatya are concerned with the health care and medicare of all the animates. This information includes the Medicine, Surgery, Minor surgery, Pediatrics, Gynaecology, Miduwifery, Rasāyana and Vijkarana.

The range of Aśvinau activities projects:

a) their prime image as supreme medical as well as surgical authorities.

b) their image carrying ambulance in urgent and critical situations.

c) their image as protectors in hopeless situations.

d) their image of the promoters of health, wealth and life span.\(^6\)

Besides Rudra is regarded as:


2. Raksoha: the remover and destroyer of all sorts of external and internal infections and disturbances.

3. Amivacatanah: the remover of all and physical and mental ointments and derangements. An oft-repeated prayer for him is 'Let all the inhabitants of this flock or habitat become disease less and strong bodies'. He is often prayed for the well being of all

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5. Ibid - pp - 26, 27

6. a) गुरुं हि स्यो भिक्षा भेषानिर्ववः ह स्यो रत्वा रायोभिः।
अयो ह कश्चन्मिधि गत्व उसा यो वा हविभाननस्व द्वाः। Rv. I. 157,6

b) Rv.I. 116
animates of any age-group, as also for physical well being houses and mental sadness.

So too, the Gods Maruts are considered as the controllers of neurine and respiratory activities, they are identified as the presiding deities of agricultural and herbal growth.

Further, the God Varuna has been described as not only the prescribing deity of waters and seas, but also of all the diseases connected with the excessive accumulation or loss of water content in an animate body. He creates such ailments amongst the cursed ones more particularly amongst the liers when he keeps them away from the others.

Similarly, Soma and apah have been declared as the promoters of medical and other plants as well as the promoters of health and the removers of different ailments.\(^7\)

In the Vedic references we can get an unbroken continuity of medical tradition, “From them, it may be known that there were hundreds of medical practitioners and thousands of medicines”.\(^8\) [i.e., herbs and plants] “The medicinal plants have assembled as do the kings in assembly”.\(^9\)

R̄gveda defines the functions of the physicians that Brahmin is called physician who kills R̄kṣasa and Amiva. About a patient the Atharvaveda

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8. शतं व राजन् भिषजः सहस्रमयूर्वं गमित्वद्युस्त | बाध्यं दूरे निरक्षति पराशैलं कृद्यतिधितवम् प्रमुग्यस्यम | R̄gveda - I.24.9
9. यशोवर्धी सतमयत राजयां समितानिव | विषयं अति उच्चते शिष्यं राशोबामयमचतन | Dr. V.W. Karambelkar - “Atharvaveda & Āyurveda”, p - 3
tells a physician had attained the strong hold of thousand plants.\textsuperscript{10} From this it may be inferred that in the Vedic period existed the medical tradition consisted of hundreds of physician of an elaborate pharmacopoeia, for treating diseases with drugs and Atharvaveda bears testimony to the fact that these drugs were actually used by Atharvan priests.

**Material in the Vedic Literature:**

Vedic literature in general refers to a number of things which directly or indirectly constitute ancient medical tradition.

Rgveda deals with different aspects of life and its well being. It also contains some specialized medical knowledge without involving the wider technical details like those, found in Atharvaveda. Rgvedic hymns also seek protection from bacterial viral or any other infection. The contents of hymns suggests that he possessed a special knowledge of the preparation and use of medicines. The medical qualities of sunrays, fire, water, etc... have also been explained.\textsuperscript{11}

The Rgveda refers to poison germs and their killing,\textsuperscript{12} removal of various yaksmas,\textsuperscript{13} curing of heart diseases by the rays of the sun,\textsuperscript{14}

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\textsuperscript{10} Swami Satya Prakash Saraswati and Satyakam Vidyalankar - “Rgveda Samhita”, (Vol-II), Veda Pratishthana, New Delhi. 1977. p-32
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid - I. 163, 1-6
\end{flushright}
water as medicine, herbs as medicines and such diseases as yaksma Ajnatayaksma, Raja yaksma, Grahi, Harima, Prstya, Hrdroga etc.  

Some Vedic gods are invoked for:

1. Relieving Rjrāśava from the blindness, by giving him a new set of eyes. 
2. Relieving Atri from the effect of over-exposure to heat. 
3. Transploting head of Dadhici. 
4. Restoring the health of Jāhuṣa, who was almost dead. 
5. Restoring youth to ageing chyavan.

The four hymns, only of tenth mandala i.e., from 161 to 164 which contain scientific matter.

a) In the Hymn, 161 the diseases like Pnthisis, tuberculosis etc, have not only been declared as curable, but a confident assertion has also been made about their final eradications. The claim has been made that by taking the suffering out of the clutches of such diseases not only, he is

15. अध्ययनरूपतमथू भेषजमवांमुत प्रसारलेभ | देभ भवत वानिज ||
   Ibid - I. 23, 19

16. Rgveda - I. 97; 105; 137; 161; 167 etc.

17. शातं भेषजस्वमे भवायामुरुग्राहवं तं पितायं चक्रवर्तं |
    तस्य अश्वी नातनि विशेष आङ्गरं देवं भविष्याण्वाविष्ठु ||
    Ibid - I. 116. 16

18. हिदेमनामिनि प्रसवयार्थे विनिवीर्यांसमथम कायतम् |
    ज्ञवते अतिमिनाललोत्तमद्वित्तेन सर्वगान्य वर्षि ||
    Ibid - I. 116.8

19. तद्ध नर वनस्ते दोषामाविनिक्षोभिति तत्सुद्दरु कृष्टिः |
    दृष्टे ह बलायार्थ्यो वामस्य शीर्षां प्रवद्वीदुपाच ||
    Ibid - I.116.12

20. परिवर्तं वायूं विश्लेषं सी दुसुपचितास्तमः उपोष्योः |
    विद्विक्रुण नातन्त्र रचेन वि पर्वतों अवयष्टः अवधातम ||
    Ibid - I.116.20

21. तुहुस्तरो नासेयो वक्तं प्राप्तं तत्र प्राप्तसिद्धां चस्मान्तः |
    चतितरं जनिष्ठत्वांवर्त्तस्ताविष्टप्रशस्तं कलीनाम् ||
    Ibid - I.116.10
relieved of the immediate danger of the death. It is said that his life span could be extended to any limit on normal way. Such a cure has termed as ‘Rejuvenating’ i.e., turning the suffer in to a new man [Punarvana].

b) In the Hymn 162, different kinds of embroyonic and uterine diseases have been declared as curable, which otherwise tend to cause abortion and miscarriage. Amongst the uterine and vaginal diseases even the infections ones have been mentioned and the patient has been assured of its cure.

c) In the Hymn, 163 is most important from the point of view of unabmiguity about the enumeration of various kinds of diseases, pertaining to the different organs and parts of the body. Incidently, this hymn also reveals the anatomical divisions of the body, which tend to be affected by pathological, surgical or bacteriological dearrangements. A claim is made in this hymn that all such diseases can definitely be cured.

d) The last hymn i.e., 164th reveals the importance of “Auto suggestion” in curing psychological imbalanced diseases. This hymn is about the cure of spiritual diseases also, affecting the rational functioning of the mind. The sinning Nature in itself is the product of such spiritual dearrangement.

22. गृह्यामि त्वा हनविता जीवनाय कमजो तण क्षामित्त राज्याभासति।
   प्राहितांगाह यदि वैतेकेन ततः क्षणी प्रतिभूत मेनसु॥ र्गवेदा. एक्स. १६१
23. वृह्यामिनि मन्मादवी रक्तोऽहा वाष्पादिगः।
   अमीरा यस्ते गर्भा दुःस्माण योनिमालये॥ र्गवेदा. एक्स. १६२
24. अशीर्षानां ते मातिकाव्या कण्ठां बुकलधि।
   यथायम शीर्षानः मस्तिका जीव्यावा विन्नमामी ते॥ र्गवेदा. एक्स. १६३
25. अधिः मनस्वलेखप्राम परस्पर।
   परो निःक्षत्रा आच्छद्र बुध्या जीवतो मन॥ र्गवेदा. एक्स. १६४.
Atharvanveda:

Atharva means 'the Veda of Atharvan or the knowledge of magic formulas. The oldest name of the Atharvanveda is known as “Atharvan girasah” i.e., the atharvan and angiras. Atharvan means “Bringing Happiness” and Angiras means “Hostile Magic”.

In the Atharvaveda there are the formulas for healing diseases, while the Angiras are the cures against enemies, rivals, evil magicians etc. It consists of songs and spells for the healing of diseases which belong to the magic rites of Healing. They are either Addressed to the diseases themselves imagined as personal beings. As demons are considered to be the creators of diseases. Some of these spells are also invocations and praises of the curative herb, which is to serve as the cure of diseases. Others are again prayers to the water to which special healing power. The symptom of the various diseases are often described in the songs and they are of great interest in the history of medicine.

In Atharvaveda numerous charms are mentioned addressed to the “TAKMAN”. This is the name of the fever imagined as a demon.26 We can also get the prayers for health and long life, which are called ‘Ayusyani Sūktāni”.27

26. अम्लतारमय बाध्यांधिता सोमो प्रावा वस्मु तूतवसाः।
वेदीविहि सरिषया शोधुषया अम्लतारमया भवतु॥
तुतीयं निंदस्य दिव्यमं शरास्मु॥
ताढमां शीते वर्ष क्रीयं नास्क कार्यमं॥ Atharvaveda V. 22.1 & 13

27. शतं जीवं शर्रतं वर्ध्मानं शतं हेमचन्द्रयुवस्तितं॥
ग्राह्यं ल्या पात बद्ध्यं ग्राह्यं नि नुस्यामि ल्या॥
जरा ल्या भद्रा नेत्र जने यथु मृत्यु यानाहुरित्याच्चलम्॥ Ibid - 3.11.4 & 7
The Atharvaveda refers to several cures with medicinal herbs. The cure for bleeding or haemorrhage has been suggested. Water itself is a cure in several maladies. For Apamarga, Pippali, Madulā, Pāṭā, and the medicinal herb Prṣniparpi has been described. The hazards of tuberculosis are described in several hymns.
Lākṣā has been described in Atharvaveda.36 Ṛtajāta, ṛtāvari and madhula may also be medicinal herbs.37 in connection with an eye treatment, a reference is made to ābayu, anābayu and as karambha or extract or mixture. Vihala is said to be the father ābayu and his mother is Madāvatī. There may or may not represent diseases, tauvilika is the name of an infection, producing certain diseases; Nirāla is also a disease in connection with these ailments, mention is made of alsāla, Silanjāla and nailāgalasāla, which may be grain creepers.38 The Veda also mentions a cure for the growth of hair [kesavardhini], revati39 and nitanti40 may or may not be herbs.41
There are references to Viṣānakā in reference to certain complaints. The medicinal herb Jīvalā is referred. Relation of particular herbs with the sun and the moon has been referred. Enyekā, Śyenyekā, Kṛṣṇaikiā and Rohipi have been mentioned in the Atharvaveda. These terms may have separate names. In connection with leprosy and leucoderma, a mention has been made of Aśvattha and for Yaksma, hiranyayī and hiranyā-bandhana. The diseases mentioned are vidradha, balāsa, lohita and visalpaka.

An important cure is Pippali, which is mentioned in a small hymn, of three verses. It cures gandāla diseases. Pustules or scrofulous tumours have been described.

→ हेष्ट मूलमात्र वच्च विवाचनं यादवीघ्वे ।
भेषजं नह इव वर्षन्तं श्रीरण्ति तरीता। परि ॥ AV - VI.137.1-3
42. हद्द्य मूलमयवृत्तत्व नामभि ।
विवाचनं नाम व अवि विनाश्च मूलदुश्चिता वातीकुटनाशनी ॥ AV - VI.44.3
43. हिस्तवा गुंधाृगंधादामि भीताम ।
ता नो हद्द्यास्त हेति दुर्व नयु गोयन॥ AV - VI.59.3
44. अगर्भका। प्रेततात गुणाणं वस्तेरि ।
सूर्यि कुण्ठि भेषजं ज्योतिः कोगोष्ठु ॥ AV - VI.83.1
45. एते नेनेरा क्रुणाका रोहिणीहे ।
सर्वात्मास्त्रं नामवीत्राधीपते ॥ AV - VI.83.2
46. अवलयो देववाताृतीयवात्यमिति दिविः ।
तात्रमृत्ति चवयम देवाृ कुटमवन्त ॥
हिरण्यी नौरहस्तहरिज्ञवताना दिविः ।
तात्रमृत्ति पुष्यम देवाृ कुटमवन्त ॥ AV - VI.95.1 & 2
47. विद्वर्ग्य बलास्त् लोहितस्य वनस्ते ।
विलक्षणीयचर्मो मोच्चियम पिषिं चन ॥ AV - VI.127.1
48. तथावि शिवभृस्तं शीतराृतिविषुषुभेषजीः ।
ता देवाृ समक्षविषं जीविता अल्पु ॥
पिषिः शास्त्रं समवदतास्तीन्द्रनादि । व जीवमन्यताय न स सिवपति पूर्वं ॥
अनुरुपस्त नवजनमेवदायोदवातु ुः । वातीकुटतल भेषजीमयो शिवस्ते भेषजीमृ ॥ AV - VI.109.1-3
49. AV - VII.74, 75 and 76
The Vedic literature speaks highly of some plants and herbs, for example we have in a verse from the Atharvaveda; “sweet is their root, sweet are these plants top branches, sweet also is their intermediate portion; sweet is their foliage and sweet their blessen, combined with sweetness is their taste of Amruta; food, fatness let them yield with kine preceeding”.  

It is not only man who has familiarity with plant kingdom for health and cure, the animals have perhaps a priority over man in this context - well doth the wild boar know a plant the mongoose knows the healing herb. I call, to aid this man the plants which serpents and Gandharvas know.

The Atharvaveda, in all mentions about 110 plants identified and non-identified, used in cure of various body ailements and most of these remedies come to occupy very significant places in the Āyurvedic literature of later periods in India and abroad.

A few of them are listed below:

- Apāmārga
- Arka
- Arjuna

50. मधुममूलं मधुमद्यप्रमां भूमिनामभीत्या बन्धुत ।
    मधुमद्य पर्व मधुमद्यप्रमां भूमिनामभीत्या संस्युति भक्तो भक्तो
    ज्वलति चुहतं गुप्तेनः। AV - VIII.7.12

51. वराहो वेद शैक्षं नक्तलो वेद नेप्जीम ।
    सर्वं गन्धर्वा या विहुता अस्य अस्य सुमुहे ॥ AV - VIII.7.23

52. भुधामार्कं दुःशामार्कंकोतामपशुकर्म ।
    अपामार्कं लया वर्ष सर्वं तद्व मुम्भे ॥ AV - IV.17.6

53. बाल्यातुरुढ्यात्वस्य वस्त्रस्य तेषां तिलजव तिलविम्मा ।
    गीतं कृत्यानानायथं कृत्यानानायथं || AV - II.8.3
The ancient sages identified the plants and classified them from various angels. According to form and size, they were initially divided into two - Auṣadhi (herbs) and Vanaspati (trees). Later in Atharvaveda each of these was again sub-divided; Auṣadhi into virudha and vanaspati into vanaspatya. Thus four divisions of plants were made - vanaspati, vanaspatya, auṣadhi and virudha.

The Auṣadhi-sūkta of Rgveda is the authoritative document of the knowledge about plants in that age. In Atharvaveda, there is more developed classification of plants, they have been classified according to

54. निन्दितनानां निन्दितित्तमुखोऽ पालितवाचः
   अवस्थ सदृशारघचल वाणहं देविशे ये गमयः II AV - III.6.5

55. आयुंतरयेन ग्रेशनं पुरुषकामाय वेदस्य
   पूर्वां स्मरणं स्मरिते मे स समिति करतु॥ AV - XIX.31.1

56. आ यो यो ध्येये देवकृतं समादु हुल्ला द्व अनिरुत्ता अहारीती
   तमोष्ठीति वनिसर्व गर्भ भूमिश्च विधायमस विभारी॥ RV - 7.4.5

57. a) वनस्तीतिन् वातस्यपाथानापदीत्वं वीर्यः।
   दिपास्वनवादियानीण यथा सेनाम्मुं हन्तु॥ AV - 8.8.14
b) वनस्तीतिन् वातस्यपाथानापदीत्वं वीर्यः।
   गंगर्वयोगस्त साध्यं देवानु पुष्यवनानु मित्तु॥
   सर्वाः सह च सत्त्वाः सुमिश्रयोऽप्रशां श्रव्याः
   अर्यः AV - II.9.24
c) त्य भूमिश्चालनस्यादिवर्यस्तवस्तवच वातस्यवाच वीर्यवाचार्युणत्वम् च चल्लु॥ AV - 15.6.2

58. या ओषधायो वृक्ष जाता देवम्यथ्यस्यनुपरं पुरा॥
   भनेनु जतु जतु शतं द्रामानि सत च॥
   शतं दो अथ धामानि सहस्मूह यो रहए॥
   अथ शतकुलो चूपविमां यथा अन्तरं कृत॥
   ओषधायो प्रति ब्रह्मिक्षु पुपानी दाराती॥
   अथ इव सत्त्वायो वर्णायोऽविचारिण॥
   ओषधायो रितिह मातुरस्तः देवीस्मुः॥
   सन्यमस्य गाः सर आन्सान्त तत पूर्ण॥ Rgveda - X.97.1-23
colour, morphological character, habitat and use of plants in various diseases was based on experience and observation of the effects of plants particularly on animals like boars, mongoose, snakes and cows.

Rgveda is the oldest document of Indian culture and the plants mentioned are oldest ones. Gradually the number of plants are increased which are found in later Vedic texts. Here mainly the plants mentioned in Atharvaveda and purāṇas are taken up because the number of medicinal plants goes up considerably.
APAMARGA [अपामार्ग]

Synonymous:

Sanskrit: Apāṁṛgah, Śikharī, Pratyakpuṣpī, Mayūrakah, Adhahāyaḥ, Kinhi, Durgrahā, Kharmaṇjarī, Śaikharikah, Markāṭ, Durabhigrahāḥ, Parākpuṣpī, Vaśiraḥ, Kanṭi and Markatippalī. 63a

English: Prickly chaff flower

Hindi: Chirchira

Kannada: Uṭtarāṇigida, Uṭtaraṇē

Botanical Name: Achyaranthes aspera

Natural order: Amaranthaceae

Habitat: It is found throughout the tropical and sub-tropical regions.

Description: This is an erect shrub which grows to about a metre in height. The branches are many and have nodes. The leaves are simple, opposite and leathery. The flowers are small and pink. The fruit is oblong, containing brown seeds. The flowers are seen in the cold season. 64

History: Dr. V.W. Karambelkar states in the following way – “This plant is regarded as the symbol of vigilant circumspection”. Because the

63a. अपामार्गलु सिक्खरी प्रत्यक्षुपी मयूरकाः।
अधा शालोप्प किनिही तुर्णा खरस्वर्जी॥
स पैवोक्तः शैरवरिका मरणोति दूरिलप्रहाः।
पराक्षुपी वसिरक्रृण रुपोति मरणविपली॥
Dr. S.D. Kamat - ‘Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal Plants & Drugs’. p - 100

64. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - “Encyclopedia of Indian Medicine”. p - 15
branches of the plant tend in one direction and the fruit in another. M. Henry observes – This lane and hideous personage; is regarded as an incarnation of sin and disease. It popularly resembles our popular devil. This term Apāmārga is derived from mṛj, to wipe with the particles apa and a prefixed.65

**Varieties** : There are three varieties –

a) White  
b) Black and  
c) Red 66

Red kind of Apāmārga of which synonymous are – Raktapuspāḥ, Vasirāḥ, Kapipippalī, Kṣudrāpāmārgakaḥ, Raktaḥ, Raktapūrvakaḥ.67

**Medical Action** :

Rasa : Bitter and pungent  
Guṇa : Dry and tikshna (active)  
Virya : Hot cold (Red variety).68

**Therapeutic Hints** :

1. The roots promote healing of ulcers.69  
2. The seeds are used as errhine.70

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66. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - "Encyclopedia of Indian Medicine". p - 15  
67. अन्यो रक्तो रक्तपुष्पो विरिया कविविभावी।  
धुद्वपारमाओऽरक्ताः स्थालको रक्तपुर्वकः ||  
Dr. S.D. Kamat - Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs. p - 101  
68. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - "Encyclopedia of Indian Medicine". p - 15  
69. Sushruta Samhita - 37,30; 39,6  
70. Caraka Saṁhitā sutras - 2,3-5; 20,1
3. The kshāra got by burning the entire plant can also be used as medicine.71

Classical Use:

Caraka prescribes dried fruits alone or in prescriptions internally in parasitic infections, as micrania and as errhine. Sushrūta uses alkaline ash of the plant for promoting growth of normal tissues after surgery. It is thick aqueous extract as ingredient of a massage cream for ulcers; internally for skin diseases, as an intergradient of a medicated salt in rheumatism internal tumour, cough, piles, intestinal parasites.

Dose: 20-50g of the drug for decoction juice 10-20ml. Alkaline ash 500mg to 2mg.72

USES:

* The whole plant and especially roots, characterised by their anti-inflammatory and uterine stimulant activity are prescribed in the rheumatism lembago, osteodynia, dysuria, post-partum.73

* Apāmārga is bitter, pungent and usṇavīrya and pacifies kapha. It is useful in piles, pruritus, ascites, Āmadoṣa, haemorrhagic disorders and is astringent and emetic.74

71. Sushrūta Saṃhitā Sūtra - 11, 11
73. Ibid - p - 6
74. Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal Plants & Drugs'. p - 100
* Raktāpāmārgah pacifies kaphadoṣa causes flatulance and is useful in wounds, pruritus and poisons. It is astringent in action and powerful emetic.75

* The white variety is useful in ascites, haemorrhoids, bleeding, pain, obesity, skin-diseases, dyspepsia and swelling of glands. It promotes good complexion.76

* Apāmārga - kshara [Alkali preparation] is a famous Āyurvedic remedy for treating respiratory ailments. Benzene extract of A.aspera has abortifacient activity in rabbits. Saponin obtained from the seeds of the plant has significant parasympathomimetic activity in animal models.77

* We get the mention of this plant in the treatment kapha i.e., two pala each of daśamūla, svayamgupta, śaṅkhapuṣṭi, sathi, bāla, hastipippali, apāmārga, pippalilmūla, citaraka, bharngi and puskaramūla, one adhakha of yava, haritaki one hundred by number are all boiled in five adhaka of water. When the yava becomes well-cooked, haritaki is taken out of the extract and again cooked along with the one tula of guda and one kudava each of ghṛta, taila, powder of pippali and maksīka. This confection consumes daily in the dose of two abhaya per day is a rejuvenator, dispels wrinkles and graying of hair, bestows colour complexion, life span and strength cures the five kinds of cough, consumption, dyspnoea, hiccup, irregular fevers, diabetes, abdominal tumours, haemorrhoids, heart diseases, anorexia and nassal catarrh. This Rasāyana formulated by sage Agastya is a best rejuvenator.

75. Amnwiifcwt I
    *rrf^if?TO
76. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - “Encyclopedia of Indian Medicine”, p -15
77. A.S. Sandhu & A.P. Singh - “A Dictionary of Medicinal plants”, p - 4
To cure kapha, even Vasistha also formulated rasayana which is more effective than Agastya's rasayana. Here also he prescribed the use of apamarga plant:

“दशामूलं बलं पूर्वं हरिमें चिप्पले मर्कम्।
पाठ्यवन्धापापार्ग्वयुपासत्यविनादतः॥” 78

References in Atharvaveda:

“अपामर्गा सेंडस बैक दिव दीड डीस टो आविडर”.

प्रतीचीनवलो ति त्वमपामार्गं द्रोहिष्ठः।
सर्वांतू मच्छप्याऽं अधिवर्तियो यावय इतः॥ 79

There in this plant is said to be used for sorcery, demons and enemies. It is a reputed remedy for kṣetriya roga and improves digestive fire and breaks.

ईशानं त्वा शेषाजनामुच्य आरभामहे।
चक्रं सहस्रविभां शरस्मा ओषधियो त्या इतः॥ 80(a)

अपामार्गा पापामार्गा यत्समानं जिरासंसति।
अश्मान्तस्य दशायां बहुला फद्ध करिवं इतः॥ 80(b)


79. वदु कुशतं वच्चम्यन्तं वदु ह वै चेरिम पापया।
ल्या तदु विब्हतोमुद्धायामार्गि मृत् महे॥
ब्याजता कुनिनां वषाहो वस्तहासिम।
अपामार्गं ल्या वर्यं सर्वं तदर्म ग्रुहधे॥ AVS - 7.65. 1-3

80. a) दीवा दीवा दीवा दीवा व श्रमरामाया।
तुष्रामर्गी सर्वं दुर्वचस्त्वात्स प्रभाबल्यामसी।
वधामर्गं तुष्रामर्गमोदाममपस्वताम्।
अपामार्गं ल्या वर्यं सर्वं तदर्म मृत् महे॥ AVS - 4.17, 1-8

b) अपामार्गांस्य मर्गं क्षेत्रविवें शपथवच्यं व।
अपाह यातुशानीरं सर्वं अरायः॥ →
P.V. Sharma who was scholar in this particular subject says that, “The word ‘Pratieśinaphala’ is symbolic which indicates that it sends back the evil deeds to the invader. This seems to be the source of the word ‘Pratyak-puṣpa’ a synonym of Apāmārga in later texts”. Even he says that “It destroys kṣetriya, worms poisonous and calculi and is used to avert sorcery”. Apāmārga, śaikhariko, dhāmārgav, Mayūraka, pratyakparṇī, keşaparṇī, kīṇhi, kharamañjari all these are synonymous.

The purāṇas states that brushing the teeth with tender branch of Apāmārga is beneficial. Even states that the stems of different plants should be used by people for achieving certain specific objectives. Among

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81. Dr. P.V. Sharma - 'History of Medicine In India', Indian National science Academy, New Delhi. 1992. p - 39
82. N. Rangnath Sharma - 'Amarkosa', 443-444's
83. a) सत्तवम् दत्तकाः स्यातंत्रणम् तु धाववेत् ||
श्रीमुखसमुज्जयं भालसामवं शुमम् ||
अपामार्गेऽविनिृं पस्यीं विशेषताः ||
ब्रह्मविशेषताम् ब्रह्माण्डम् ||
परिन्द्य विने वर्ण परम्परे विधानबिंति || Kūrma purāṇa - u.18-20
b) दत्तात्र्यानकास्त मिन्नम् धृष्ट नास ||
निनिम्नं सम्बद्धे हरणं चायायिनि ||
अपामार्गेऽविनिृं भाग्याम् || Brahma Vaivarta purāṇa - BK.26.43-44
them Apāmārga, Arka, Palāśa, Khadira, Audumbara, Śamī, Dūrvā used for satisfaction of Navagraha.84 Similarly for the achievement of wealth, peace and victory Arka, palāśa, khadira, Apāmārga, Pippala, Audumbara, Śamī, Dūrvā, Kuśa.85

**DARBHĀ [दर्भा]**

*Synonymous:*

Sanskrit: Kāśaḥ, Kāṇḍekṣuḥ, Kākeśuḥ, Vāyasekṣuḥ, Ikṣvārikā, Ikṣukāṇḍaḥ, Ikṣurakaḥ, Śvetacāmarapuṣpaḥ, Ikṣukusumāḥ, Kāṇḍekṣu, Sitapuṣpakaḥ, Darbhapatraḥ, Lekhani, Kāṇḍakāṇḍakaḥ, Gaulyaḥ.86

Kannada: Kuṣa - darbhā, Darbhe - hullu

Hindi: Kuṣa, Dabh

English: Large variety of sacrificial grass

Botanical Name: Eragrostis cynosuroides Beauv

[Saccharum Sapontaneum Linn]

Natural order: Gramineae.87

Habitat: Throughout India in hot and dry places.

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84. समिद्धोऽर्जुनलोकायते। बदिरार्माणित्तलाय।

85. अर्कः पलाशः बदिरो ह्यापार्माणि तिपलतः।

86. काशः काण्देशुकुषिरक जाकेदुर्वत्ससुकः।

87. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of Indian Medicinal Plants', p - 62
Description: The leaves are long, broad and rough.

Varieties: There are two varieties, the small and the bigger. The bigger variety is called Sita-darbhā or Dirgha-patra and is supposed to be medicinally superior.\(^8\)

Medicinal Action:
- Rasa: Sweet and astringent
- Guṇa: Unctous
- Vīrya: Cold.\(^9\)

Therapeutic Hints: It increases breast milk in lactating mothers.\(^9\)

Āyurvedic Name: Kāśaḥ

Parts used: Whole plant.\(^9\)

USES:

It alleviates all the three doshas, is appetizing, purifies the blood and semen and is used in dysuria, habitual abortion, urinary calculi, thirst, renal colic, menorrhagia, bleeding from internal organs, fatigue, sterility, dyspnoea, jaundice, vomiting, syncope and herpes. The root is used especially in cough, jaundice and dyspnoea.\(^9\)

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88. Ibid - p - 62
89. Ibid - p - 62
90. a) Caraka samhitā - 4, 12
    b) Sushrūta samhitā - sūtra, 38, 75-76
91. A.S. Sandhu and A.P. Singh - 'A Dictionary of Medicinal plants', p - 144
92. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of Indian Medicinal plants', p - 62
Kāśa is sweet and bitter in taste in vipāka, śītavīrya, nutrient strength promoting and vṛṣya. It is useful in alleviating thirst due to fatigue and consumption.⁹³

References in Veda:

It is mentioned among grasses in Rgveda and considered as soft grass.⁹⁴ It has numerous branching roots, which bind the soil. It is known as 'Manyu śamana' [A furry appears]. Because of sedative properties.⁹⁵ Darbhā is mentioned among five important plants.⁹⁶

In Amarkośa said as ‘Sacred Grass’ [Holy]. Synonymous are kuśa, kutha, Darbhā.⁹⁷

The Kūrma purāṇa ordains that for performing yogic exercises one should seat on a mat [āsana] made of darbhā.⁹⁸

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93. तर्पणो बलिकृद गुणाः अमशोपशायापहेः।
कार्तफुं च पितालकृत्तविन्त्यधुरं हिंमेः।
Dr. S.D. Kamat - ‘Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs’, p - 359

94. शारसां दुर्कारात् दूषिताः सैयरं उत्त।
फौज्जा अदृष्टा दैर्घ्या सर्वेऽ सार्क त्वलिसत।
Rgveda - I.191.3

95. अर्थं दम्भं विमुक्तं तथा च चारणमयं च।
मन्योर्विन्युक्तस्यं मन्युवधनं उच्यते॥
अर्थं यो भूतिष्णः समुद्रपतितः।
दर्शं धृष्णया उत्तितो मन्युवधनं उच्यते॥
वि ते हनन्यं शारणं वि ते मुख्यं नतामस।
AVS - 6.43.1-3

96. a) अस्तलो दम्भं वीरयां सोमो राजामुृतं हरिः।
वीर्यकाल्य वेश्यां विस्मृतवक्तों।
AVS - 8.7.20

b) पवया राज्यार्यि वीरयां सोमावेश्चाति दूष।
दम्भं भक्तं यथा सहस्ते नौ गुणः लंकस।
AVS - 11.6.15

97. अति कुर्वं कुर्वो दम्भं पवित्रमयं कल्पयुर्म।
N. Rangnath Sharma - ‘Amarkosa’, 571’s p - 99

98. प्राक्केशु तद्भ भिष्यता दम्भु तुषामः।
Kūrma purāṇa - u.18.25
DURVA [दुर्वा]

Synonymous:

Sanskrit: Niladūrvā, Śvetadūrvā, Gaṇḍadūrvā
Kannada: Garikahulla, Kudigarike
Hindi: Dub, Durba
English: Conch grass, Dog grass
Botanical Name: Cynodon dactylon
Natural order: Asclepiadaceae
Habitat: Common throughout India.99

Description: A very hardy, much branched, leafy grass with numerous stems below and above soil. The aerial branches are either ascending or prostrate and rooting at the nodes. The underground stems are hard, brittle and thick. Leaves are 1-2 inches or more long in two rows, narrow and pointed.100

Varieties: There are three varieties –

a) Nila-dūrvā has the synonymous as śaśpam, śadvalam, Haritam, śataparvā, śītavīrya, śatavāli and śitalā.

b) Śvetadūrvā has the synonymous as Golomī, Śvetadanda, sitālatā, sahasravīrya, Anantā, Durmarā, Bhārgavī and Ruhā.

c) Gaṇḍadūrvā has the synonymous as Gaṇḍāli, Tīrā, Matsyākśikā, Bahvī, Nāḍikalāpaḥ, vāruṇi and śakulākśikā.101

99. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of India Medicinal plants'. p - 73
100. Ibid - p - 73
101. Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants and Drugs', p - 368
Medical Action:

Rasa : sweet, bitter and astingent

Guna : Light [Gaṇḍa-duṛvā]

Virya : Cold

Vipāka : Pungent [Ganda-duṛvā]. 102

Therapeutic Hints:

1) It purifies blood and is useful in bleeding from internal organs, skin diseases with itching, diarrhoea, fever, vomiting, thirst, burning and herpes.

2) It is in addition medicine for cough, fever, vertigo, thirst, fatigue disease of impure blood and skin diseases with burns. 103

USES : As a Medicine

* All the varieties of Duṛvā have certain properties in common. They alleviate kapha and pitta facilitate conception, beautify the complexion are useful in anorexia, thirst, vomiting, vertigo, burning pains and fatigue.

* Niḷa-duṛvā is appetizing, an analgesic, purifies the blood and is useful in bleeding from internal organs, skin diseases with itching, diarrhoea, fever, vomiting, thirst, burning and herps.

* Śveta-duṛvā has the same action as Niḷa-duṛvā. It is in addition beneficial in cough.

* Gaṇḍa-duṛvā is contispative and beneficial in fever, vertigo, thirst, fatigue, diseases of impure blood and skin diseases with burning. 104

102. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of Indian Medicinal plants'. p - 73
103. Caraka Sūtra - 3.27
104. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of Medicinal plants', p - 74
* Durvādiquatha is used in the treatment of seminal diseases. Alcoholic extract of the whole plant has antiviral activity against vaccinia virus. Even used in the treatment of epistaxis.105

* Durvā is sītavīrya, kaṣāya and pacifies rakta, pitta and kapha doṣas.106

References in Veda:

It is a very common plant since early times and is mentioned in Rgveda. That's why it is called as herb ‘born of gods’ [Devajātā vīrut].107 P.V. Sharma who is scholar in this particular subject says that - It spreads on the ground and has flowers [puṣpini]. Its roots emerging from joints establish it in the earth as kṣatriya ruler does to nation. Durvā is the life-sap of herbs and as such is the chief among them. It is ʻŚapathayopaniʻ [alleviator of sins-diseases]. Moreover, it is extensively used in rites and sacrifices. ‘Sāt’ may be its synonym.108

Durvā is used in a rite for welfare, to prevent conflagration of the house. There is Durvā śālā sūkta in Atharvaveda and given reference in this way - “In your course hither, course away, let the flowery durvā grow, either let a fountain spring up there, or a pond rich in lotuses”.109

106. Dr. S.D. Kamat - ‘Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs’, p - 368
107. a) ʻअव सेव इवाधितो विकर्षतं दिवशंʼ
हुर्वाया ʻइव तत्त्वो अस्मदेतु दुमतिवदीषीʼ
जनिनय जीवनदब्धा जनिनय जीवनतु ʻRg. 10.134.5

b) ʻअवाये ते पराय्ये हुव्वे रोहतु पुष्पिण्याʼ
हुदााय पुष्परीकाणि समुद्रवर्ष गुडाहि हने ʻRgveda - 10.142.8

108. P.V. Sharma - ‘History of Medicine in India’. Ibid - p - 46
109. आवने ते पराय्ये हुव्वे रोहतु पुष्पिण्या ʻ
उलो वा तत्र जातया हुव्वे वा पुष्परीकाणि ʻ
References in later literature:

According to the purāṇas, the plants are sacred in origin. The Dūrvā is originated from the back of Vāsuki.\textsuperscript{110} Even purāṇa states that seeing dūrvā, white flowers, candana, aśvattha by one at the commencement of one’s journey indicates success of the mission for which the journey is under taken.\textsuperscript{111}

The Vāyu purāṇa refers to a vast area, stretching for thousands of miles [sahasra yojanāyamān], which is covered with dūrvā vana i.e., grass land and there is animal in that area.\textsuperscript{112}

The Matsya purāṇa gives a graded list of the plants on the basis of preferability for using their stem as samidha. They are as follows: arka, palāśa, khadira, apāmarga, aśvattha, audumbara, śāmil, dūrvā and kuśa.\textsuperscript{113}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{110} Atharvaveda samhita - 6.106.1-3
\item \textsuperscript{111} Vāmana purāṇa - 17.9 (U)
\item \textsuperscript{112} Ibid - 14.36-37 [U]
\item \textsuperscript{113} Matsya purāṇa - 93.27
\end{itemize}
* Dūrvā was regarded as auspicious.114 For example: Dūrvā plant is prescribed for śivacaturdaśi vrata.115

* The Brahma vaivarta purāṇa considers the plants as holy beings can also be understood from its injunction prohibiting urination, or passing night soil at the root of a tree, in a place shaded by tree, on dūrvā or kusa and even at places considered suitable for sowing plants.116

The purāṇa states that dūrvā is required for worship of gods.117 The Agni purāṇa states that the stem of dūrvā used by people for achieving eradication of disease.118 Even it is used for achievement of wealth, peace and victory.119

This was regarded as auspicious. Ear-rings made of Apārājitā flowers strewn in Gorocana-coloured Dūrvā stems are worn on auspicious
Green leaves are eaten by horses. Its juice is dark green.

* Inhalation of the juice of dūrvā through nose stops nasal bleeding.

* A lady desiring to have a son should regularly drink milk spiced with aśvagandhā, root of lāvaṅga, vamśa, kuśa and aśvattha, powder of vṛihi, tīla, māṣa and dūrvā.

**Khadirā** [खदिरा]

**Synonymous:**

Sanskrit: Khadirāḥ, Raktasāraḥ, Gāyatrī, Dantadhāvanaḥ, Kaṇṭakī, Bālapatraḥ, Jihmasalyaḥ and Kṣata-kśamaḥ.

Kannada: Kaggali-mara

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120. रोचनाचित्र दूरवद्यपल्लव प्रशिक्षितमिरिकार्यकुमुखस्त कर्मपुरः

Harṣacarita - 96, kādambarī - 218

121. सादोपपुशाञ्जलित दूरवद्यपल्लव कारुणयुपलब्धि समर्पणवत् वांजिनः

Harṣacarita - 219, kādambarī - 380, 367

122. दूरवद्यपल्लवसुन्दरकल्पनान्

Harṣacarita - 108

123. नेशसीरे यो मोहुँ विकतं रोगे वितं विशोधा नासरकांस्यो नसादुर्गर्ष इस्तोतमः

Agni purāṇa - 282.7

124. गुजमातसीलसिमस्वरूपाङ्गिर सितानितिर्

वास्तववेदनां गृहं गृहं वैश्ववीतिकोऽपि

मुनि दूरवद्यार्पल्लवं पितेन सरीरं सुसूचितिर्

कौतीश्वर्या सिन्धु धारी वर्ज्य लोणं वद्वाहुर्म्

Agni purāṇa - 30.15 & 16

125. बदिरो रत्नसार्वत्य गाम्भीर वद्धाभवन्

कक्षनी बालपत्रब निधनवर्त वद्धाभवन्

Dr. S.D. Kamat - Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs, Ibid - p - 10
Hindi: Khair
English: Brown barked Acacia
Botanical Name: Acacia catechu wild
Natural order: Legumin osae

Habitat: Eastern slopes of western Ghats, Andhra pradesh, Bihar, Punjab and Himalayas up to the elevation of 1,500 m. 126

Description: This is a small sized tree from fifteen to twenty feet high. The bark is thick and branches spreading. Leaves are bipinnately compound, flowers are numerous whitish or pale yellow. The fruit is a legume two to five inches long with five to eight seeds. The tree flowers in the rainy season. 127

Varieties: There is a white variety called ‘Śveta khadirāḥ’. Its synonyms are soma - valkalāḥ, kadaraḥ.

Parts Used: Bark and the extract called khadirā-sāra [the product which is got by boiling the decoction of khadirā wood and inspissating it]. 128

Medicinal Action:

- Rasa: Astringent and bitter [khadirā] sweet [the gum] Astringent, pungent and bitter [śvetakhadirā]
- Guṇa: viśada [śvetakhadirā]
- Vīrya: Cold [khadirā], Hot [śveta khadirā]. 129

127. Ibid - p - 142
128. Ibid - p - 142
129. Ibid - p - 143
Therapeutic Hints:

1. It is useful in pruritus and especially in skin diseases.\textsuperscript{130}

2. The decoction is useful in certain urinary disorders.\textsuperscript{131}

3. Medicated ghee prepared from khadirāsāra is useful in skin diseases and bleeding.\textsuperscript{132}

4. The decoction of khadirā is used in skin diseases, diseases of throat, urinary disorders and glandular swellings.\textsuperscript{133}

USES:

* Khadirā alleviates kapha and pitta, purifies the blood, strengthens the teeth, is a digestive and is beneficial in pruritus, skin diseases, cough, anorexia, obesity, worms, urinary disorders, fever, leucoderma, oedema, dyspesia and anaemia.

* Śveta-khadirā alleviates kapha and vāta, promotes healing of ulcers and is useful in skin diseases, worms, diseases of the mouth and toxicosis.\textsuperscript{134}

* The extract alleviates kapha, purifies the blood, promotes healing of ulcers and is beneficial in diseases of the mouth and throat, urinary disorders, worms, skin-diseases, obesity and haemorrhoids.

* The gum is strength-giving and an aphrodisiac.\textsuperscript{135}

\textsuperscript{\textbf{References}}

130. Caraka sūtra - 4,17; 23,40
131. Suśruta sūtra, chikitsā - 130.11,9
132. Caraka saṁhitā, chikitsā - 7, 135
133. Ashtāṅga saṅgraha, chikitsā - 22
134. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of Indian Medicinal plants' - Ibid - p - 143
135. Ibid - p - 143
* Khadira is bitter in taste, śītavīrya pacifies kapha and pitta dosa. It is useful in blood disorders, skin diseases, āmadoṣa, cough, pruritus and worms.¹³⁶

* The stamens were used in perfumery along sahaṅkāra taila.¹³⁷

* In Vindhya region the labourers were carrying load of khadira wood devoid of bark.¹³⁸

* In villages pegs were made of khadira wood.¹³⁹ The arms of the tribal young men were solid like roots of khadira.¹⁴⁰

* The dry wood used as fuel.¹⁴¹ The wood of khadira was one of the substances for making balance.¹⁴² Khadira was very popular plant even among philosophers.¹⁴³

References in Veda:

There is reference to this plant in curing tuberculosis that is while constantly whispering the priest touche’s the patient’s head, two ears, two eyes, chin and two nostrils with his hand which has been an ointed with ritually prepared ghee or he should remove Yaskama with the ritual

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¹³⁶  बदिरक स्वादम रसोतितो हिंद्रा पितककावनुत।
कुड़ामकालकृष्णसुदपवहरस स्वृत।
Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants and Drugs', p - 10

¹³⁷  सहकारतंत्त्रस्पुतमुनालिकसीरकालालिनी।
Harṣacarita - 221

¹³⁸  अपल्लो बदिरकाचार्यां भार्कालोकमेंद्रवर्धनात।
Harṣacarita - 409

¹³⁹  बदिरकीवलवसंगि।
Harṣacarita - 411

¹⁴⁰  बदिरकोटिनिधियो दोष।
Harṣacarita - 415

¹⁴¹  अष्टात्तबदिरकाणाियाि विसमान।
Magha - Śiśupāla Vadham - 11, 45

¹⁴²  इति धर्माना रज्जनेन मण्डलयोगेन बदिरेष काव्य।
विद्वात पुनालं देवं शरण सा वा तुला प्रमणेन भवेकिलित्।
Br. Sam. 26.9

¹⁴³  Nyāyavārtika - 1, 1.14; 2, 1 : 36
mentioned in Rgveda\(^{144}\) which entails the sprinkling of the patient by means darbhā - grass the sacrificing of ghee in the fire and giving to the patient of a decoction of ghee and milk and spirituous extract made from water, pieces of khadirā - wood and flour mixed with honey and ghee to drink.\(^{145}\)

In Atharvaveda there is a charm devoted to the cure of a very similar injury, the fracture or wound caused by a club, an arrow. Here we get the mention of khadirā wood.\(^{146}\)

Khadirā a tree with very hard wood from which Sruva or sacrificial ladle and axlepins are made. The khadirā is mentioned together with the Aśvattha.\(^{147}\)

The Khadira of which the amulet was in part composed is said to have sprung from the rasa, essence of Gāyatrī.\(^{148}\)

Khadirā is one of the sacrificial trees. ‘Vibādha’ is one of its synonymous. Its heart wood is very strong of which parts of chariots, sacrificial posts and other appliances were made. It is a thorny tree in which lac thrives.\(^{149}\)

\(^{144}\) Rgveda - 10.163 & 4.16 - 1-15


\(^{146}\) Rgveda - 10.161

\(^{147}\) Atharvaveda - 5.5


\(^{149}\) a)
References in later Literature:

* According to Vāmana purāṇa khadirā plant originated from the mid region of Brahmas body.150

* The Vāyu purāṇa mentions trees which are fit for religious purposes. Plakṣa, Nyagrodha, Āsvattha, Vikaṅkata, Audumbara, Vilva, Candana, Sarala, Devadāru, Sāla and Khadirā.151

* It appears from the Kūrma purāṇa that mace [musala] can be made of the wood obtained from lakuca and khadirā trees. Here mace means a weapon.152

150. Vāmana purāṇa - 17.4 & 5

151. Kūrma purāṇa - U. 32.6 & 7
* The Agni purāṇa contains recipes for fragrant chewing spices. It continues that a fragrant powder may be obtained from the leaves and flowers of jāti are pulverized with karpūra, kuṃkuma, krāntā, mṛgadarpa, hareṇuka, kaṃkola, elā, lavana, kośaka, musta and kastūrika. If the same is invigorated with the alkaloid of khadirā and treated with mango juice it will acquire medicinal properties.\(^{153}\) Even it states that the plant khadirā has great medicinal value.\(^{154}\) In the opinion of the purāṇa immortality can also be obtained by consuming powder of all the five parts, recognizes five parts of a plant, viz., root, bark, leaf, flower and fruit of nimba, decoction of khadirā along with one karṣa juice of bhringarāj.\(^{155}\)

* The purāṇa contains many instructions about the treatment of kuṣṭha [leprosy] disease. Among them godūma, śālī, muttuga, adhayā, paṇcakola, nimba, dhātri, paṭola, jāṅgala, mātulaṅga, rasā, jāti and khadirā are beneficial to the patient. Drinking of water mixed with khadirā is also

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153. कुर्दूरुः कुख्मेः कान्ता मृगदर्प हरेण्कुमः।
कोकोलतत्वपक्त जाती कोकोकमेव च॥
लक्ष्यं शुद्धिरहितं च लता कालित्रिकम् तथा।
काण्डकाल्पनिः स्वस्तक्षेत्रं च ज्ञातिति॥
कटकुल्लकुस्तम्यं रामार्किण्यं गुणकमण्येत्।
तत्ततुः बादिरं सारं दशापुरुषं तु वासितवस॥ अग्नि पुराणः 223.35-37

154. विम्नं वादिरतिश्रेष्ठ कुन्तमालो हरिवत्।
वच्चा विद्वार्यं एतानि परिमेत्तल्पृणानि हि॥
क्रमादेवादिरास्यानि द्वीप्यायनि महात्वात् हि॥
सर्वरोगहरानि सुभूतार्कायनि च॥ अग्नि पुराणः 141.1-6

155. पञ्जवृं निम्म्पूर्णवशं बादिरतिश्राविविकम्।
कर्ष भूखकुमारि रोगिज्ञानामो भवेद्॥ इभि - भ 285.9 & 10

156. गोधुप्पकालो गुहा ब्रह्मविणरे भवति।
पञ्ज्यकोकल्लकुस्तम्यं निम्म्पूर्णवशं पतोलकाः॥
मातुल्लकु सत्यातिचुक्कमूलता॥ अग्नि पुराणः 278.13 & 14
The alkaloids of the leaves of nimba, mulaka, vata, khadira, kuśa, dārvi and triphalā are beneficial for vṛana [pimple].

The purāṇa states that for the maintenance of proper health of the horse in treatment of eye troubles the extracts of khadirā, audumbara and aśvattha help.

**KUŚṬHAH [कुष्ठा]**

**Synonymous:**

- **Sanskrit:** Kuṣṭham, Rogaḥ, Agadaḥ, Vyādhīḥ, Utpalam, Pākalam, Rujā, Vāpyam, Vānīrajam, Rāmam, Kauberam, Pāribhadrakam.
- **Hindi:** Kūṭ, Kuṣṭa
- **English:** Sassuria costus, Arabian costus
- **Botanical Name:** Saussurea Lappa
- **Natural order:** Compositae
- **Habitat:** In Kashmir, 8000-12000ft above sea level.

156. The purāṇa states that for the maintenance of proper health of the horse in treatment of eye troubles the extracts of khadirā, audumbara and aśvattha help.

157. Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs', p - 218

158. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of Medicinal plants', p - 157
**Description**: This is a tall, robust, perennial herb with an erect 1.2 to 2 metre high simple stem. The leaves are membranous, irregularly toothed, the basal ones being very large, triangular with a long lobately winged stalk. The stem leaves are smaller with two half-stem clasping lobes at the base. The flower-heads are dark blue-purple. The fruit is a compressed acheme. The root is very light, in crooked twisted pieces with longitudinal ridges, texture very firm. Odour, somewhat aromatic; taste bitterish at first but soon becoming hot pungent and biting.\(^{161}\)

**Medicinal Action**:

- **Rasa**: Pungent, bitter and sweetish
- **Guṇa**: Light
- **Vīrya**: Hot.\(^{162}\)

**Therapeutic Hints**:

1. Its external application relieves skin disease.\(^{163}\) It is also used as a dusting powder\(^{164}\) and is useful in impotency\(^{165}\) and headaches\(^{166}\) and is considered to be emaciating.\(^{167}\)

2. When used with gold, pippālī, honey, ghee and vācchā, it is an excellent tonic which enhances the mental and physical development of children.\(^{168}\)

\(^{161}\) Ibid - p - 157
\(^{162}\) Ibid - p - 157
\(^{163}\) Caraka Saṁhitā, Śūtra 3, 28
\(^{164}\) Ibid - 3, 10
\(^{165}\) Ibid - 4, 12
\(^{166}\) Ibid, śūtra - 3, 23
\(^{167}\) Ibid, śūtra - 4, 9
\(^{168}\) Suśruta Saṁhitā, Sarīra - 10, 68
3. An oil medicated with this drug is used in bleeding from the navel etc., of new born infants.\textsuperscript{169}

USES: As a medicine

* Kuṣṭha is pungent and bitter in taste, uṣṇavīrya. It pacifies all the three dosas and raktadoṣa. It is useful in poisons, pruritus and disorders of skin.\textsuperscript{170}

* It alleviates kapha and vāta enhances the complexion, bestows longevity is aphrodisiac and is beneficial in skin diseases, herps, scabies, pruritus, cough, dyspnoea, fever, hiccoughs, toxicosis, diseases of impure blood, vomiting and thirst. It is used externally in rheumatism. It is especially used in diseases of children.\textsuperscript{171}

* Used in the treatment of bronchial asthma. Inulin isolated from kuṣṭha roots has immunostimulant activity. Two alkaloids, costumlite and dehydro costus lactone from kuṣṭha powerfully supresses hepatitis B surface antigen gene expression in human hepatoma cells.\textsuperscript{172}

References in Veda:

Kuṣṭha is extensively described in Atharvaveda.

\begin{quote}
"यो निरित्वज्ञायता बीर्यं बलवत्तमः
कुक्षेषि तत्कमनासान तक्कमानां नाशयति"
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{169} Aṣṭāṅga saṅgraha, uttara, 1
\item \textsuperscript{170} कुष्ठं कुष्ठं तिक्रं स्वात् कफमात्तरकांतिः।
निरोचितविचक्षुः तु कुष्ठेरो गार्वं नाशयेत्।
Dr. S.D. Kamat - Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs, p - 219
\item \textsuperscript{171} Dr. S.R. Sudarshan 'Encyclopedia of Indian Medicinal plants', Ibid - p - 157
\item \textsuperscript{172} A.S. Sandhu and A.P. Singh - "A Dictionary of Medicinal plants", Ibid - p - 148
\end{itemize}
From the above mentioned slokas Head disease, attack, evil of the eyes, of the body all that and takman relieve. It is said that ‘it was born in the third heaven and stands along with soma’. It is known as

173. a) इमे कुछ पृथ्वी त्राय यह ते निविकु ़हे तु मे अर्ज वृत्ति इति ।
देवशेष अधि जातोजि सोमावासि सचा हित ।
स प्राणाव ब्यायां चुकु णे मे असे मुड़ ।
उदहं जातो हिमवताद्र च प्राणां तीव्रो जयमु ।
तत्र कुछत्र नामानुष्ठानसी भिषंजर ॥
उत्तमो नाम कुछलातुमो नाम ते सिरा ।
यस्मि च सर्व नावाय तक्षाम् चारि तु कृष्णि ॥
श्रीशांभयुपयुहतामकोत्सवो उरपश ।
कुछलातु सर्व निष्कर्षू देवम समह कृष्णम ॥
Atharva Veda - 5.4.1-10

b) अस्त्यो देवसदस्तृतीयावासितो दिवि ।
तनामुक्तय चक्रानं देवछ कुछलातुत ॥
हिरण्येष्वी नौरचर्धिर्यवन्यन ।
तनामुक्तय पुष्पेन देवाः कुछलातुत ॥
गम्यं अवयोधिनं । गम्यं हिमसुभुतं ।
गम्यं विकल्य युतसेमः मे अर्ज वृत्ति ॥ AV - 6.95.1-3

173. c) ऐतु देवशेषमाणं कुछे हिमवतस्थरि ।
तक्षाम् सर्व नावाय सरिशय थातुधावाय ॥
श्रीरि ते कुछानामानि नवमारी नवारिचः ।
नवाय पृथ्वी रितश्च । यस्मी परिश्रीमि त्वा सार्वप्रातर्थ दिवा ॥
AV - 19.39.1-10
“viśvabheṣaja” because kuṣṭha vanish all the takman and all the sorceresses. It is one of the aromatic drugs.  

References in Purāṇas:

The Agni purāṇa considers the following plant as bathing articles [snānadraya] and states that continuous use of any three of these in bathing beautifies the user – kuṁkuma, śaileya, tagara, krāntā, karpūra, māṃsi, murā and kuṣṭha. Even the purāṇa states the eight sources of fragrance. Among these kuṣṭha is also one of them.

The purāṇa lists the following plants as the source of incense: nakha, kuṣṭha, dhana, māṃsi, sprkka, kuṁkuma, lāksā, aguru, nīrada, sarala, karpūra, kāntā, vāla, kumduṛu, guggula, śrīnivāsa and sarjā. Kuṣṭha,
mura, māṃśi, vaca, śaileya, sathi, campaka and musta plants are graded as versatile medicinal plants.\textsuperscript{178}

The Atisāra \textit{[gastro-enteritis]} patient should eat saktu, godhūma, lāja, yava, sāli, masūraka, kuṣṭha, canaka and mudga.\textsuperscript{179} There are many instructions about the treatment of kuṣṭha disease \textit{[leprosy]}. One of them is, the mixture of the juice of jāṅgala, the leaves of nimba and parpata, bidaṅga, marica, musta, kuṣṭha, lodhra, subarcīkā when pasted with urine of cow help in curing the disease.\textsuperscript{180} For the disease Gulma \textit{[chronic enlargement of the spleen]}, the powder or the extract of vaca, vata, abhayā, śuṣṭhi, hiṅgu, kuṣṭha and agnidi-paka helps in curing the disease.\textsuperscript{181}

The specific uses of plants and plant materials in counteracting the venoms of certain animals. Here kuṣṭha, candana, padmaka, latāmvu, uśira, pātala, nirguṇḍi, śārīvā and selu plants effectively counter acted for the poison of the spider.\textsuperscript{182} Even the purāṇa elucidates further that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{178} गुरामांसी वन्ना कुर्क्ष शैलेयं रजनीदरम्।
\item सदी चत्मकुमलयं सर्विविधिशश्राठ्यं सूपस्त। इबिद - 176.17
\item \textsuperscript{179} शकुत्तुपूर्वसंवल्लापूरं वर्षासतिमसूरका।
\item से कुर्क्ष चन्द्राकुर्क्ष गंगा गोपुरमुका हिताः। इबिद - 278.9
\item \textsuperscript{180} मदुरतुपुरी पेयां भोज्या जीवाल्क शालव।
\item निस्थेतुप्रिदे शाहीजवालां तथा रसं।
\item राज्य मरिचे मुते कुर्क्ष लोदे जुवविका।
\item मना शिष्या च वालेया कुर्क्षा जुवविकित। इबिद - 278.15-16
\item \textsuperscript{181} वचाविभवायां शिवटीहितुकछान्तनियेधकयाः।
\item दिनिकिरुचुरू कामसंप्रस्थानिकाः क्रमव।
\item चूर्ण पीतत हलति गुर्म उवरं दुलकातुग। इबिद - 284.54b-55
\item \textsuperscript{182} सर्वनित्रीत्व विशालामात् जन्तुविशिष्टानामिते।
\item चन्दन पर्चकुर्क्ष तत्तात्प्रभुरीं पालल।
\item संगुंश्चर्बित्वा सेलुदुर्विभावस्थर् गदः।
\item सिरोविरोंचनं वल्लं गुडऩारपकं दिवं। इबिद - 278.60-61
\end{itemize}
spraying of the water on and around the wound having padmaka patali, kuśṭha, uśira, sārivā and selu helps in removing the poison.\textsuperscript{183}

The purāṇa also prescribes treatment for certain ailments of the horse, some of them are enumerated below:

(a) The thick paste obtained by crushing agni, vacā, rāśnā, hiṅgu, kuśṭha, nāgara, mātularaṇga and the roots of karaṇja and lodhra should be rubbed over the affected limb to cure the sotha, i.e., dropsy.\textsuperscript{184}

(b) Kuśṭha, tila, sarśapa, rajanī should be pasted with the urine of cow, cowdung and sarjika and the paste thus obtained should be rubbed over the skin of a horse when the animal suffers from itching.\textsuperscript{185}

(c) When the animal suffers from jihvāstambha [paralysed tongue] a specific paste should be applied. The paste can be obtained by mixing honey and urine with the following plants - haridrā, dāruharidrā, vacā, kuśṭha, kṛṣṇa, pāthā and jyotismatī.\textsuperscript{186}

\textsuperscript{183} Ibid - 297.8-9
\textsuperscript{184} Ibid - 288.20
\textsuperscript{185} Ibid - 288.35-36
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid - 288.25b - 26a
The Agni purāṇa contains some information about the use of plants in vaśikarṇa and mentions certain methods. One of them is, “putting a dot on the forehead of the paste obtained by crushing the following plants together - priyangu, kumkuma, kuśtha and tagara along with ghee.”

A load of this plant was carried by the labourers in the vīndhya region.

**LĀKṢĀ [लाखा]**

**Synonymous:**

Sanskrit: Lākṣā, Palaṅkaśā, Raktā, Dīptīh, Kṛmija, Jatu, Kṣataghnī, Raṅgamātā, Drumavyādhiḥ and Alaktakah.

Kannada: Lakki

Hindi: Lākh

Bengali: Gālā

Tamil: Komburruki

Telugu: Kommolaka

Botanical Name: Coccus lacca

The name “Lac” is applied to the resinous incrustation formed on the bark or twigs of certain trees by the action of the lac-insect. Lac resinous
substance secreted on the twigs of many trees by an insect Trachardis lacca.\textsuperscript{190}

It is lākṣā [lac] as explicitly mentioned in Atharva Veda.

\begin{quote}
“राष्ट्री माता नभं पितार्यम् ते पितामहं।
सिताची नाम वा असि सा देवागवाससि स्वस।।
बरच्चा पिवति जीवति जायसे पुरज लमु।
भर्तीं हि शास्त्रायमसि जनायो च न्यथनी।।
श्रुतंसुर्वासमा रोहसि वृष्ण्वतीष कल्लत।।
ज्ञाती प्रत्यातिष्ठती सपर्णी नाम वा असि।।
यद् दण्डन वदिव्य यद् दार्शरसा कुतमु।
तस्य लमसि निष्कृतिः सेवं निलकृति पूर्वस्।।
भद्रात् पञ्चासिसिद्धान्याष्टत कविराजू धवात्।।
भद्राश्च्यत्रोधात् पर्यात् सा न एवाक्लप्ति।।” \textsuperscript{191}
\end{quote}

From the above ślokas, lākṣā is known as “Arundhati”.

It is healing and union promoting drug. Lac is obtained from various trees like palāṣa, Aṣvattha etc. literally ‘non-obstructing’, appears to be the name of a climbing plant having healing properties. It also helps recovery of milk in cows which is stopped due to injury or disease. It is also used to cure Yaksma in men.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{190} Ibid - p-239
\textsuperscript{191} अधर्मचर्यें सुमणे सूर्यचर्यं बुधुर्यं।
स्त्यं गच्छसि निकृति निकृतित्नाम वा असि।।
हिर्ष्यचर्यें गुमणे गृहमावकर्णे।।
अपामासं स्वसं नाशं वातस्त हल्ला हल्लु ते।।
सिताची नाम कानिगोमयिष्टं पिता सत्।।
अत्रो यवस्य वा व्यासस्य हल्लासुक्षिता।।
अवश्यताः सपातिता सा चुक्राः अभि सिष्यते।।
सरा पत्तास्य मूलसं सा न एवाक्लप्ति।। Atharva Veda - 5.5.1-7
\end{flushleft}
(Rohayasya) Rohayasvatvabhusevanam Rohanyi. Rohayeshamasthitam.

Vatu te rirte vatu te Pujaramitam peshu t Aataminn.

Aata tad Madhyam Puna se Dabhu Pavha Pashu.

San te Maha Maha Bhavu samute Pavha Pashu.

San te Mansya Vissita Satvamapi Rohuthu.

Maha Maha San Dhiyata Param Parama Parama Rohuthu.

Asaaka te Asyam Rohuthu Mansa Mansa Mansa Rohuthu."

* Läksä is bitter and kašāya in taste and snigdha [unctuous]. It is useful in bleeding disorders, worms, wounds, bhūtabadha [antiseptic] and in fever.193

* Läksä was used as a dye.194
* The organic matter obtained by mixing the following should be used to sterilize the hide-made musical instruments and banners: reṇukā, jatāmamśā, haridrā, madhukā, aḵṣa, surasā, lākṣā and the bile of dog.195

* Lākṣā, priyaṅgu, maṇjiṣṭha, ēla, reṇukā and yaṣṭimadhu plants and plant materials as antidotes of poisons. These plants along with the spleen of mongoose should be kept underground in a horn-made utensil for seven nights.196

* Use of candana, lākṣā, buds of mālati and girimṛttikā can help in curing the deformed sperms.197

**ŚAMI [शमि]**

**Synonyms:**

Sanskrit: Šamī, šaṅkuphalā, Tuḍgā, kesahantrī, Śivāphalā, Īsāni, Šaṅkari, Lakṣmīth, Maṅgalyā and Pāpanāśini.198

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195. हरेयमातिरी मलिक्करा रणसी मथुरा मघु।
शुता गद्धा समासाम सधो भवति निर्विषा।
अमात्रकु सुरं साता जवितसं पूर्ववदृ भुनि।
वातित्राणि पताकाभु निधरितेत प्रतेविताः। Matsya purāṇa - 218.11-12

196. लात्साप्रियम् मलिक्करा समस्तात् हरेयुका।
यक्षाप्रिया मथुरा चैत बुद्धिपदित कलिताः।
निवासदू नोविषाण्यं सत्रात् महीतले।
तथाऽ कुत्ता मिष्ठ हेमा बदं हलेन धर्मेतु। Matsya purāṇa - 218.6-7

197. गिरियुगिनं लाता माली कलिका तथा।
संयोज्या ना कुंता वर्तिस्स कस्तुलकर्ते तु सा। Agni purāṇa - 279.45

198. शमी श्रुष्णा तुद्यु मेहनती किविलप्रत।
ईणांशे शब्रायु तथाप्रियसं गिरियुगिन।
Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs', p -442
Kannada : Banni-mara  
Hindi : Chhikura

Botanical Name : Prosopis spicigera
Natural order : Leguminosae

Habitat : Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Sind and Baluchistan.¹⁹⁹  
Common tree about Calcutta and over Bengal.²⁰⁰

**Description**: This is a moderate sized, nearly evergreen thorny tree with the branches and branchlets having conical broad-based prickles. The leaves are bipinnate with two pairs of opposite pinnae. There are 7-10 pairs of opposite linear oblong leaflets. The flowers are in axillary spikes or panicles. The fruit is a slender, torulose pod, 10-26 cms long with 10-15 seeds in a dry, sweetish pulp. Flowers appear from March to May.

**Medical Action**:

- **Rasa**: Astringent, bitter and pungent sweet [fruits]
- **Guṇa**: Dry and light Heavy, dry and sharp [fruits]
- **Virya**: Cold Hot [fruits].²⁰¹

**Varieties**:

Two plants are included under the heading 'A' Šaṅkupalā [षकुपला] and 'B' Aparājitā [अपराजिता].

**A. Šaṅkupalā**

Botanical Name : Prosopis spicigera Linn

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¹⁹⁹. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of Indian Medicinal plants', Ibid - p - 235  
²⁰⁰. Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs', p - 443  
²⁰¹. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of Indian Medicinal plants', Ibid - p - 235
Habitat: Commonly grown in Punjab, Rajputana, Maharashtra, Baluchistan

Sanskrit synonymous are: Lakṣmī, Śaṅkuphalā, Keśahantrī

Hindi: Zānd

**B. Aparājitā**

Botanical Name: Acacia Suma

Sanskrit synonymous are: Śāmī, Śāntā, Śubhā, Bhadrā, Aparājitā.\(^{202}\)

**USES: As a Medicine**

1. It alleviates kapha, is appetizing and is beneficial in bleeding from internal organs, diarrhoea, dyspnoea, cough, vertigo, skin diseases, hemorrhoids, worms, tremors and fatigue.

2. The fruits aggravate pitta, are a brain tonic and are used to remove unwanted hair.\(^{203}\)

3. The fruit of śāmī is sweet in taste, uṣṇavīrya, guru, rūkṣa [roughening] and has depilatory properties.\(^{204}\)

4. Its bark is astringent and is used in treating cough and Asthamā.\(^{205}\)

**References in Literature:**

Śāmī, Saktuphalā Śiva are the synonymous of śāmī vrkṣa.\(^{206}\) The tree was common in arid zone and leaves were dried and fallen by the hot winds

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204. Dr. S.D. Kamat - ‘Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs’, Ibid - p - 443
205. S. Shyamsunder - ‘Sacred plants’, Ibid - p - 69
206. अत्य शामी बांधर रसाच्छं रस्तुपल किवा।
   Amarkośa - śloka 407, vana oṣadhi varga IV
in summer.\textsuperscript{207} These were used in ceremonies like marriage.\textsuperscript{208} Fire was produced by rubbing the sticks of šami.\textsuperscript{209}

Šami also in the śānta group. It has many uses. Fire was manifested by rubbing the wood of Aśvattha on that of šami.\textsuperscript{210} On its application, hairs fall down. A person, who has come in contact with ‘šami tree’ is called ‘shamiluma’ and he was supposed to be in danger of suffering from injuring to his head.\textsuperscript{211}

S. Shyamsundar who studied about the ‘sacred plants’. He states in the following way: Šami is treated as sacred tree. A common tree in central and south India. It is stated that shree Rāma worshipped this plant before entering the warfield to fight against Rāvana.\textsuperscript{212}

\begin{flushright}
207. श्रावणीतार्थभाषाविषयकल्पना - 83
208. कविताविचार - 59
209. अनुवाद श्रीमदभागित - 9
210. a) श्रीमलस्तम्भ आराधना नुकसन श्रीमल कृतम्।
    तद्वै उदस्य वैद्यवन तन्त्र स्त्रीवाभ्रा भरामसि॥| Atharva Veda - 6.11.1

b) परिप्रायविषय मूसोदिकों मन्निमाममम्।
    राशी जयवितावधिवंसति तेना ते वार्ये विचम्॥| Atharva Veda samhitā - 6.12.1-13

211. रेवत इम महुना संयुक्त तव्य वर्षव्यवाहिणिवाचवर्षक्रुद्यु।
    इन्द्र विद्यवाक्षरितिः तत्क्रुद सुधारा बालवा मदयवा॥| Benevolent Brahman
    मते मददीक्षको विक्रमो वेदान्तविश्वेत्तर नुकसन कृत्यवि।
    आरामेवद्वन्य बनानि वृपवि तद्वी श्री शतर्वाविवाहो॥
    ब्रह्मवाङ्ग्ये सुभागे वर्षवृद्ध खत्यारे॥| Ibid - 6.30.1-3

212. S. Shyamsundar - “Sacred Plants”, Ibid - p - 69
\end{flushright}
Pāṇḍavas before going for their exile kept their weapons under śāmī tree. After the completion of their thirteen years exile, they took those weapons. This day celebrated as “Āyudha pooja” during Vijaya dashmi.213

References in Purāṇas:

There is references of Medicinal plants at a later date, other than Atharva Veda. Here later date means purāṇas, Brāhmaṇas, Upaniṣads and Śūtra works etc. At present we deal with purāṇas.

According to the purāṇa, the plants are sacred in origin. In various chapters, the purāṇa describes the origin of plants and plant groups from different gods. Among them, śāmī belongs to the auśadhi group and originated from kātyāyana.214 The purāṇa states certain plant materials are preferred in the worship of Viṣṇu. The leaves of śāmī is also required here.216

Śāmī plant has been considered as ‘forest plant’ and an essential constituent of the sacred hermitage.216 The purāṇa contains specific instructions regarding the use of plants in the layout of a house and in its construction. It recommends that the presence of kaṇṭakī, kṣiravṛkṣa,
āsana and sarala trees on those four sides causes destruction. If these trees should preferably be uprooted, if and when they are observed. However, eradication of the plants cannot be done, then following plants sown in between them; punnāga, asoka, bakula, śamī, tilaka, campaka, dādimba, pippali, drākṣā and kusuma.

Some other plants are recommended by the purāṇa as universal antidotes of poisons. Even it suggests certain methods of obtaining antidotes of poisons from plant materials. One of them is; manohvā, śamī, tumbikā, śveta, sarṣapa, kapittha, kuṣṭha and maṇjiṣṭha plants are mixed with the bile of kukkura and kapila, then an antidote against all types of poisons can be obtained.

The purāṇas contains some instructions for maintaining the health. It ordains that a king should fortnightly eat the following plants after mixing them with ghee; śirīṣa, audumbara, śamī and vijapura. The purāṇa gives a graded list of the plants on the basis of preferability for

217. Matsya purāṇa - 255.20-21
218. Ibid - 255.23
219. Ibid - 218.8-10
220. Ibid - 219.2
using their stem as samidha. Śamī is one among them. The purāṇa gives a long list of plants which, according to the purāṇa should be stored in a kings abode by the king for the welfare of the subjects. The purāṇa classifies those plants into five groups, perhaps according to the taste. There is reference of plant śamī in caustic group [kaśāya].

The purāṇa states that the stem of śamī plant should be used by people for achieving satisfaction of Navagraha. Similarly the purāṇa states that for different objectives homa/havana should be done with specific plant materials. Śamī is used for the achievement of wealth, peace and victory.

ŚĪMŚAPĀ [सिंसपा]

Synonymous:

Sanskrit: Mahāśyāmā, Kṛṣṇasārā and Aguruḥ. There is an another kind called as “कुसिंसपा” [kuśimśapa] for which synonyms are Kapilā, Bhasmagarbha and Vasādani.

221. अर्किव पतलाय:विराय:पाया गोव: विपायः।
भ्रुवर्के समीय: पुर्वाय: कुसाव: समिय: कमात्। II Ibid - 93.27

222. एवमादनी चाणःनि राजाः समियः दुर्वायः पुर्वायः।
अन्वयामके चांभे त्यायः च ज्ञेत्रित्सम्।
विहितमास समस्यक्षिं कुसाव: कुसाव: दुर्वायः।
नान्तोर्चुन्नाराश्चन्तस्मिलः उपसः समीयः। II Ibid - 217.75-80

223. समियोऽकृपायःविरायः विरायः विपायः।
उदुभर्के समीयःकुसाव: शातत्व: च। II Agni purāṇa - 95.52

224. अक्की पतलाय: विरायः विपायः समियः कमात्।
उदुभर्के समीयः विकुसाव: समियः कमात्।
महाष्ठ्योऽकृपायः रोत्यायः दुर्वायः शातत्व:। II Agni purāṇa - 167.6-7

225. सिंसपातु नमाय: कृष्मायः स्त्रियायः शुरुयायः।
कुसिंसपातु दीप्तिः भाषमयाय: शिल्पितायः।
Dr. S.D. Kamat - “Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal Plants & Drugs”, Ibid - p-473
Kannada: Śishmabāge, Ibaḍi-mara
Hindi: Śisu, Śisav
English: Sissoo wood
Botanical Name: Dalbergia latifolia Roxb
Natural order: Leguminosae
Habitat: Most parts of India.226

**Description**: A fairly large tree with a full, rounded crown and a grey, thick, somewhat longitudinally furrowed, exfoliating bark. The young parts are grey and downy. The leaves are alternate, imparipinnate with three to five leaflets which are alternate, broad ovate, tough and acuminate. The flowers are pale white, the racemes in short axillary panicles. The fruit is a linear-lanceolate, pale-brown pod with light brown seeds.227

**Varieties**: There are two other varieties

1. Śveta - śimsipā [white variety]
2. Kapilā [yellow variety].228

Under this heading compiler of Dhanvantri Nighantu has recorded two tree species:

(A) Mahāśyāmā Kṛṣṇasārā [महाशय्मा कृष्णसारा]

Botanical Name: Dalbergia sissoo
Synonymous are: Mahāśyāmā, Kṛṣṇasārā, Guruh, Aguru
Kannada: Agaru didda

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227. Ibid - p - 247
228. Ibid - p - 247
(B) Kuśimśapā Bhasmagarbha [कुसिम्शपा भस्मगर्भा]

Botanical Name: Dalbegia latifolia
[The black wood or Rose wood of Southern India]

Synonymous are: Kuśimśapa, kapila, Bhasma garbhavasadanī

English: Black wood tree

Habitat: A deciduous tree attaining a large size in South India. Eastern Bengal and Central India. Common throughout Western India. The tree grows extensively and vigorously in Deccan, Konkan and Gujarat forests.229

Medical Action:

Rasa: Pungent, bitter and astringent
Guna: Bitter [śveta - śimśipa and kapila]
Virya: Hot, cold [śveta - śimśipa and kapila].230

Parts Used: Bark, leaves and roots

Medical content: Fixed oil.231

Medical Uses:

* Given in fevers and worn infestation.232

* It alleviates kapha and vāta, purifies the blood, is an abortifacient, appetizing, strength giving, enhances the complexion and is beneficial in tuberculosis, obesity, skin diseases.233

229. Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs', Ibid p-474, 475
231. A.P. Singh & A.S. Sandhu - 'A Dictionary of every day useful plants', Ibid - p - 67
232. Ibid - p - 67
* Both the varieties [Mahāśyāmā kṛṣṇasāra and kuśimśapa bhasma garbhā] are useful in improving complexion, hiccup, odema. These pacify pitta doṣa, alleviate burning sensation are strength promoting and promoting desire for food.234

* Ladle was made of its wood.235

* Wheels of chariot were made of its wood. It is one of the śānta vṛkṣas.236

* Śimśapā plant has been mentioned in Matsya purāṇa.237 The purāṇa states further that the under mentioned plants make good building materials if used exclusively, but these plants do not produce good results if used along with other plants; śimśapa, śrīparṇi, tinduki, syandana, panasa, sarala, arjuna and padmaka.238

* Śimśapā plant is considered as terrestrial plant.239

234. शिम्पापुष्पं वर्ण हिकालापी विहितवित्।
विनात्वम् प्राप्तम् बल्ल हिकालकर्ष्यं परस्॥
Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants', Ibid - p - 473

235. शिम्पापा हिकारिः शांतविकसताः। मर्काप्देय पुराण - 28, Kasika - 7.3.11

236. a) भग्नेण ना शांतवें शक्तिग्रस्तेष्य संदिता।
कुञ्जाति भग्ने भाप श्रवणात्तथाः॥
येन द्रुःश्च अभिरवन्त भग्नेण वर्षसा सह॥
तेन न भग्नं कुञ्जाति श्रवणात्तथा॥
बो अनंतं यथ पुनः सर्वं भग्नं द्रुषोद्याहितं॥
तेन न भग्नं कुञ्जाति श्रवणात्तथा॥ Atharva Veda samhitā - 6.129.1-3

b) यष्टसुलिपतता शिम्पापा। Atharva Veda samhitā - 20.129.7

c) अधिष्ठव बहुरस्त्र सारापानो वेहिष्ठयने शिम्पापासू।
अधिवीदो वीरितं वीरविष्यं ना याबद्धस्वादव जीविहय॥ RV - 3.53.19

237. शालेतत्सतेल्लाभेऽहर्ष कर्मिकारः सङ्गमरै।
व्य्रोधेऽव तत्कालवस्ती विरीरीह शिम्पापासू॥ Matsya purāṇa - 118.3

238. बहुधिञ वारि तत्कालवं भेस्ते।
एककलिङ्गञ्जन्ता श्रीरप्रणां तिरुमकी तथा॥
एता नायसामायूकसा कलिङ्गञ्जनकारका॥
सन्तनं नससवं तत्कालवं चारकाः॥ Ibid - 257.10-11

239. The Brahma purāṇa - 42, 43, 51 [chapters]
UDUMBARAH [उदुम्बराः]

Synonymous:

Sanskrit: Kṣīra vrksaḥ, Hemadugdhaḥ, sadāphalaḥ, Apuṣpa-phalasambandhaḥ, yajnyāṅgaḥ and śītavalkaḥ.240

Kannada: Atti mar

Hindi: Gular

Botanical Name: Ficus glomerata Roxb

Natural order: Moraceae

Habitat: Throughout India.241

History: “The Brahman mounts a chariot wheel placed on a post, with the following line of text if the sacrificer is a Brahman. Indra, as the representative of the kṣatra or nobility. This part of text being used when the sacrificer is Rajanya, a man of the princely, noble or military class. The third line also is it to be used when the Brahman descends from the wheel. If the sacrificer be a Brahman and fourth when he is Rajanya.

Seventeen being the number sacred to Prajāpati, whose favour is to be won in the ceremony, seventeen four horse chariots have been prepared and assembled, the goal round which they have to turn being the branch of an Udumbara tree [Ficus Glomerata Roxb] planted in the ground at a distance of seventeen bow shots from the starting place”.242

240. उदुम्बरो श्रीरूपो हेमदुधि सदाफलम्।
अपुष्पफलसंबंधो यज्ञांगो शीतवल्कलम्॥
Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants', Ibid - p - 435


242. 'The texts of white Yajurveda', p - 86
Description: This is a large, deciduous tree with a few short aerial roots. The bark is grey or reddish-brown and smooth. The leaves are alternate, elliptic-lanceolate or ovate, glabrous, three ribbed with a narrow apex. The flowers are small found on the inner surface of fleshy hollow receptacles which can be seen in large clusters on leafless branches.243

Varieties: There are two varieties –

1. Nadyudumbaraḥ
2. Kākodumbarah.244

According to Dhanvantri Nighantu under this heading two kinds of Udumbara are included 'A' उदुम्बर [Udumbara proper] and 'B' लघुदुमरिका [Laghūdumbarikā].245

Medical Action:

Rasa: Sweet and astringent, Astringent [the bark and unripe fruits]

Guṇa: Heavy and dry

Virya: Cold.246

Therapeutic Hints:

1. It is used in dhūmapāṇa and is one of the drugs which diminish the quantity of urine.247

2. It is excellent for external application.248

244. Ibid - p - 273
245. Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal plants & Drugs', Ibid - p-436
246. Dr. S.R. Sudarshan - 'Encyclopedia of Indian Medicinal plants', Ibid - p - 273
247. Caraka sūtra : 4, 15; 5, 22
248. Ashtāṅga samhīṭa sūtra, 13
3. The til oil which is extracted after bhāvanā with the milky exudation is used for medicating a tampon applied in menstrual disorders.249

4. The ripened fruits are useful in bleeding and haemorrhages. The juice of the ripe fruits is excellent for relieving thirst.250

5. The kshara is given with honey and ghee in hiccoughs.251

6. The unripe fruit is given with goat’s milk to prevent abortion.252

7. The bark is used in relieving voracious appetite.253

**Parts Used:** Roots, bark, leaves, fruits, latex.254

**USES:**

* Udumbara fruit is kaśāya [astringent] in taste and when ripe is sweet and śītavīrya. It is helminth promoting and pacifies pitta and raktadosa and is useful in fainting, burning sensation and thirst.255

  * It alleviates kapha and pitta, promotes healing of wounds and fractures, facilitates conception and enhances the complexion.

  * The bark is also a galactagogue.

  * The unripe fruits alleviate pitta and kapha, purify the blood are constipative and relieve thirst. The slightly ripe fruits aggravate pitta, cause thirst and syncope and are useful in bleeding, vomiting and menorrhagia.256

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249. Caraka samhītā, Chikitsā, 30, 77-78
250. Sushrūta samhītā, Uttara - 45, 23, 48, 22-23
251. Ibid - Uttara, 50, 20
252. Caraka samhītā, Sarira 8, 24
253. Caraka samhītā, Chikitsā 15, 230
255. उदुङ्ग्रेण कपालं स्त्रायं पक्षं तु भयं हिष्मम्।
क्रिमिज्ञेन नित्यकलाध्युपद्यते।
Dr. S.D. Kamat - 'Dhanvantri Nighantu on Medicinal Plants', Ibid - p-436
The branches of udumbara were used in sacrifices. It is sacred to Lord 'Dattātreya' whose worship cannot be accomplished without it. Bark, leaves and unripe fruits are used externally and internally in dysentery. Fruit and the sap extracted from the trunk of the tree are efficacious in diabetes. Powder of the seed mixed with honey is regarded as a specific in diabetes. Bark is applied to ulcers externally to remove poison from wounds. The sap of root gives relief in diabetes and is applied externally to inflammatory glandular enlargements.

References in Veda:

There is reference as 'udumbala' which was modified later as 'udumbara', but preserving the original sense of energy - providing. It had an important position among the sacrificial items.

The fruits of udumbara become tasteless due to excessive rain in rainy season.

257. Harṣacarita. 78
258. S. Shyam sundar - 'Sacred plants', Ibid - p - 124
259. RV - 10.14.12
260. Raśmi - 1.11.8
261. Maitrāyani Samhitā - 1.11.8
From the above references we can conclude that udumbara, for the pious one desiring prosperity and removes the niggard, misery and hunger.

* ‘Bhadra’ is its synonym.\(^{262}\) It is adjective of Bilva and udumbara. The benevolent vilva tree or penetrating fire is great. The benevolent udumbara tree or the mighty fire too is great. It compels for the luxuries always admirable with great reputation.\(^ {263}\)

**References in later literature:**

* Four things are made of Udumbara wood. Of udumbara is the sruva, of udumbara is the cup of udumbara is the sacrificial fuel and of udumbara are two churning vessels.\(^ {264}\)

* Udumbara, Jantuphala, Yajña, Hemadugdhak are synonyms.\(^ {265}\)

* Kṛṣṇodumbarka plant originated from the God ‘Rudra’.\(^ {266}\)

* Udumbara tree is fit for religious ceremonies.\(^ {267}\)

* Utensils could be made of the udumbara.\(^ {268}\) According to purāṇa a Brahmin loses his status, if he eats any of the following : chatrāk, setu,

\[^{262}\] AVŚ - 5.5.5

\[^{263}\] AVŚ - 20.136.15

\[^{264}\] Bj-hadaranyaka - 6.3.13

\[^{265}\] Amarkoḍa - 377 [vanoṣadhi varga]

\[^{266}\] Vāmana purāṇa - 17.7

\[^{267}\] Vayu purāṇa - [U] 13.70-71

\[^{268}\] Atharvaveda samhitā - 19.31.1-14
* If vāta, udumbara, aśvattha and plakṣa trees are planted on the east, south, west and north of the house. Then the house would be the cause of prosperity of the owner.270

* Audumbara stem used as samidha.271

* Twigs of the udumbara plant are good for brushing the teeth.272

* The extracts of khadirā, udumbara and aśvattha help in treatment of eye troubles of the horse.273

* The stem of udumbara used by people for achieving desired goal that is ‘satisfaction of Navagraha’.274 For the achievement of wealth, peace and victory udumbara should be used.275

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