

Review of: "The Ancient Indian Knowledge System and the Medical Sciences"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Title: The Ancient Indian Knowledge System and the Medical Sciences

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This paper is of interest because there is very little coverage and understanding of the ancient Indian knowledge system and its role in the medical sciences. This takes me to one aspect the author ought to address. She needs to distinguish more clearly between a knowledge system based on beliefs, on historical experience and observations and the modern medical approach based on hypotheses, experiments, and test results. Both are concerned with sickness and health and there are obviously some overlaps. These overlaps needs to be highlighted

On Line 2 of the Abstract the author had better write: "Ethnopharmacologically important medicinal plants and therapeutically used insects and insect products have been used by humans since time immemorial." Then continue with "They had and still play a significant role...countries. Plants are now being incorporated....nutraceuticals and insects and their products are receiving an increasing amount of attention by pharmaceutical companies."

NOTE: Consult the comprehensive review by Meyer-Rochow 2017 in the Journal of Ethnobiol and Ethnomed (DOI 10.1186/s13002-017-0136-0) on Therapeutic Arthropods or see: Appl Entomol Zool (2013) 48:105–112 Notes on entomophagy and entomotherapy generally and information on the situation in India in particular. DOI 10.1007/s13355-013-0171-9

Delete 'There has been a global....in this field.' And continue with "People are turning to Indian wisdom and attempt to integrate it.....treatments."

Delete 'Wearable health monitoring....anywhere.' And continue with "Ancient India hadin place more than 3,000 years ago and archaeological evidence from...hygiene. A study...medicine. The Atharva Veda in particular, is...medicine. Additionally, Ayurveda.....Atharva Veda."

Change the last sentence to: "This article explores and explains the foundations of the Indians' understanding of sickness and health in relation to modern medical sciences."

Introduction, 2nd line: add "...from India, compiled 3,500 years ago."

On Line 4 the author writes 'nadi vigyan (pulse diagnosis)', but on Line 7 it says 'nadi pariksha (pulse diagnosis). Please

explain.

The author refers to five senses, but physiologists distinguish more than five senses: electrosense, magnetosense, pain sense (nociception), photo- chemo- thermo-, mechano-reception...

The author mentions, but does the word stand for worms as well as insects or even more broadly (as in Japanese folklore) for anything in or on the ground that is creepy crawly? When mentioning the 'wind' as a cause of illness, does that include 'smells and odours' as it does for Trobriand Islanders (see Malinowski B.: The Sexual Life of Savages New York, H. Ellis Publ; 1929.

What is the evidence that ancient sages knew or had a concept of UV- and other forms of radiation (waves)? The author claims that there are 'thousands of other investigated and uninvestigated medicinal plants that have the potential to provide therapeutic agents...' Where is the evidence? Is this just a guess?

The author mentions antidotes to poison, but it would be nice to know more about that! She also mentions 'prudent food habits and a healthy lifestyle'. Perhaps one should highlight that in western countries a vegetarian (plant-BASED) diet and even a vegan diet (no meat or animal-derived food items whatsoever) have become more and more widespread in recent decades. Supermarkets are full of vegan products, ranging from oat-, soyabean-, almond-milk to plant based cheeses and vegan sausages) and many schools now regularly offer meatless days. In this context it might also be useful to introduce the general concept of food taboos in promoting health (see "Food Taboos" doi:10.1186/1746-4269-5-18).

In the list of 'synonyms and varieties of fever', the authors had better use the heading "Observations ", instead of 'causes'

Under 2 Vataja, vitiation should be with a lower case 'v'

Under 5 Anga, limbs should be with lower case 'l'

Under 11 Sadandi it says Continuous, but WHAT is continuous? The fever?

15: what is 'type disease'? Spelling 'malaria with a small 'm'

16: Spelling: red-coloured

18: Due to tree-cutting and forest work

21: typhoid (brackets are NOT necessary)

On page 6: '...effects on well-being' a Reference is needed here!

Spelling: Archaeological record...; travellers...

Page 5: Use British spelling 'behaviour'

Page 6/7 A reference is needed for '...Pythagoras and Democritus who journeyed to India in search of...'

Reference needed for Hippocrates proposed model....dry, cold, and wet.'

Page 8: spelling 'endeavour';

What is the meaning of the letters in front of the authors' names in front of references, e.g., a,b Narayana...; a,b,c TandonGupta...; Shamasun...; a,b,c,d Vedam...and the symbol in front of Gupta or Shamasundar... or Sebastian..., Thaker...

Why is Shamasundar, C (2208) listed twice, but only a single page number is given?

Throughout the paper you use mainly British spelling, but sometimes American spelling. Use one or the other, preferably British, but not both.

For mind/body relationships you should add some pertinent references: there would be HUNDREDS of them! Is there no need to at least mention the role that religious beliefs have in advocating acceptance or rejection wisdom that is based on observations and traditions?

Please NOTE: Since I am not a specialist in Ayurvedic Medicine, I had been waiting for comments from a 'real' ayurvedic specialist, namely:

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You may contact her, please.