



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Ayurveda

BUDDHA DARSANA AND A GLIMPSE OF TIBETAN MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT

Philosophy has a vast arena of application which embraces all branches of human knowledge. Buddha darsana is a non vedic philosophy founded by Sree Goutama Buddha in the 5th century. According to Buddhists, the notion that things exists when everything is void, is termed ignorance. They believe that correct knowledge will destroy ignorance and thus will put an end to birth, aging and leads to ultimate liberation from all miseries. The essence of Tibetan medicine has very profound roots in Buddhist philosophy. According to Tibetan medicine there are many specific causes of diseases, but the basic cause is ignorance which leads to three mental poisons of desire, hatred and obscuration. These in turn give rise to imbalance in three humors and results in disease of an individual. Ayurveda and Tibetan medicine shares similarities in their basic concepts.

INTRODUCTION

India is a country which is rich in philosophical background. Philosophy has a vast arena of application which embraces all branches of human knowledge. The schools of Indian philosophy can be broadly classified into two broad classes. ie Asthika (Orthodox philosophies) and Nasthika (Heterodox philosophies). The Asthika darsana accepts the authority of Vedas, while Nasthika darsana won't. Buddha darsana comes under asthika- nasthika Darsana.

Tibetan medicine derives from Indian Ayurvedic knowledge, spreads around the 5th century on Tibet, when the first influence of Buddhism starts at the same land. Infact Indian medical knowledge spread to Tibet simultaneously with the consolidation of dharma and Buddhism there.

Concepts of Buddha darsana

Famous saying in Buddha darsana

“Sarvam dukham dukham kshanikam kshanikam swalakshanam swalakshanam soonyam soonyam”

According to this everything in the Universe is momentary. Everything which is produced will undergo destruction naturally. In the first moment production of matter takes place, which exists in the second moment and undergoes destruction in the third moment. Hence all the things are temporary.

4 principles of Buddha darsana are

- Life is full of miseries
- Miseries have causes
- Liberation from miseries is possible
- There is a way for liberation

The Buddhism reveals 12 causes of miseries as follows

1. Ageing (Jara) is a cause of death
2. Birth (Janma) is a cause of death
3. Fear (Bhayam) generates rebirth
4. Attachment (Upadana or Asakthi) cause misery
5. Craving for life (Trishna) cause misery
6. Touch causes sensation or pain
7. Sensation is the cause of misery
8. Panchendriyas and manas are 6 ways to misery
9. Mind with visible body is termed the name form (Namaroopa)
10. Vijnana is sentient nature and is cause of misery
11. Culture (Samskara) occurring to the actions in previous life (Poorvajanma) is a cause of misery
12. Ignorance is cause of misery

Historical background of Tibetan medicine

It is believed that it was during the reign of king Trison Detsen (early 7th century) that Indian tantric saint Padmasambhava

was invited to Tibet to subdue the demons and devil worshippers to establish the dharma and build Tibets first monastery at Samye.

Padmasambhava is a historical figure who was renowned for his mastery of tantric practices and wrote medical text 'The nectar essence'. His disciple, the great Tibetan translator Vairochana went to India and among the major religious texts he procured and translated was the original Sanskrit work by Vagbhata called '*Amrita Hridya Ashtanga Guhyopadesa Tantra*' which literally translates as '*The Secret Quintessential Instructions on Eight Branches of the Ambrosia Essence Tantra*'. The Tibetan text is popularly referred to by its abbreviated title, the *rGyud-bZhi* (gyu -shi), or the Four Tantras. Vairochana passed this knowledge to Yontan Gonapo- Tibets first great doctor saint and he rewrote the Four Tantras.

The rGyud-bZhi or Four Tantras

The text is written as a question -answer type of dialogue between two emanation of medicine Buddha. It comprises four volumes and through its 156 chapters and 5900 verses gives explanations on how to cure and combat 1616 diseases.

The 4 volumes are

- The Root treatise or Moola tantra
- The Explanatory text or Akhyata tantra
- The Practice Instruction text or Upadesa tantra
- The Last text (appendices) or Uttara tantra

The Root treatise explains, the importance of studying medical science to differentiate healthy and diseased one, the principle methods of diagnosis to be used and the basic categories of treatment. The concept of healthy and diseased body is included in the Root treatise in the form of an allegorical tree. Its upper part represents the psycho-physiological aspects of the healthy mind body entity. It mainly deals with 'Concept of Three humors' *r Lung* (vital energy) *mKhrispa* (bile) and *Bad kan* (phlegm).

7 bodily constitutions 1. *Dangs ma* or essential nutrients from ingested food; 2. *Khrag* or blood formed from the essence of absorbed food; 3. *Sha* or muscle formed through the essence of blood; 4. *Tshil* or fat formed through the essence of muscle tissue; 5. *Rus* or bone formed through the essence of bodily fats; 6. *rKang* or marrow formed through the essence of bones; 7. *Khuba* or regenerative fluids formed through the essence of marrow; and also of 3 excretory products namely *bShang* (faeces), *gCin* (urine), *rNgul* (sweat).

Explanatory text, explains physical diseases, behaviour, diet, medicines, medical instruments and how to maintain a healthy life.

Practice Instruction text, describes the causes, sub types and treatment of every disease a) the body in general b) children

c) women d) spirits e) injuries from weapons f) poisons g) rejuvenation of the aged h) use of aphrodisiacs

Last text, Appendices, describes the procedures connected with pulse and urine analysis, the pacification of disease with medicines compounded in decoctions, pills and powders and also eliminatory procedures like purgatives emetics, nasal drops or suppositories.

The essence of Tibetan medicine has very profound roots in Buddhist philosophy. According to Tibetan medicine, there are many specific causes of diseases, but the basic cause of all is ignorance. This ignorance leads to 3 mental poisons of desire, hatred and obscuration. These in turn gives rise to imbalance in the three humors. Desires stimulates the *rLung*/ vital energy, hatred stimulates *mKhrispa* / bile or bodily heat and obscuration stimulates *Bad kan* (phlegm) and its imbalance results in disease.

Ayurveda and Tibetan Medicine

We can found many similarities in the basic concepts of Ayurveda and Tibetan medicine. The Core concept in Ayurveda is Tridosha sidhanta where Vata, Pitta and Kapha forms the constitutional factors which maintains the integrity of our body, which is similar to the concept of Three humors in Tibetan medicine, and also other sidhantas like Panchamahabhoota sidhantas, concept of Sapta Dhatus, Trimala in Ayurveda shows resemblance in totality with 7 bodily constitutions and 3 excretory products in Tibetan medicine.

From the historical background it seems to be, the base of Ayurveda had gradually get rooted in the Tibetan soil and adds its own uniqueness and flourished as a well equipped medical branch of Science there.

CONCLUSION

The ultimate aim of all Darsanas is the elimination of sufferings of mankind. Buddha darsana also aims at liberation from miseries. In integration with spiritual aspects of Buddha darsana, Tibetan medicine forms a holistic approach which incorporates microcosm of the body and macrocosm of the Universe which are dancing with each other. When they are out of step or tune it results in diseased condition. The practice of Dharma is an essential means for remedying the mental and emotional obscurations of an individual. Hence darsanik view had an applied aspect in medical field too. And we can see that the substratum of Ayurveda and Tibetan medicine seems to be similar in many ways.

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