

Socio-Medico Charms in the Atharvavedic Tradition: Its Relevance in the Contemporary Society

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The *Atharveveda* occupies a unique position among the four Vedic *Samhitas* on account of its subject matter which encompasses not only the invocations and prayers to the deities like other three *Samhitas*, but faithfully presents the private day-to-day life of the common masses. It deals with varieties of customs, birth and burial, love and marriage, hearth and home, field and cattle, government and politics, trade and commerce, magic and medicine, anatomy and astronomy, theosophy and cosmogony and many more things. In this paper an attempt is made to study the socio-medico charms in the Atharvavedic Tradition and of its relevance in the contemporary society. At the very outset of my paper, I would like to make it clear that the present study has no claim of studying the ancient Indian medicine as today's science is concerned but as a medical practice followed by the tradition of Atharvavedic people. Further, it aims at drawing the attention as to how the primitive – rather, the pre-scientific – elements are spread over our ancient literature. A good many scholars have been studied in this context from various angles such as Prof. S. S. Bahulkar, who has written on the medical rituals in the *Atharveveda* Tradition, with special reference to the medical section of the *Kausikasutra*. Prof. G. U. Thite has written on “medicine” and its magico-religious aspects, according to the Vedic and later literature. But I have determined my study only at the socio-medical charms: i.e. human awareness about various diseases, different germs that cause diseases, the methods of healing processes of various diseases etc. The prescription of numerous medicinal herbs used to cure such diseases which are used by the Atharvavedic people will be analyzed elaborately in this paper.