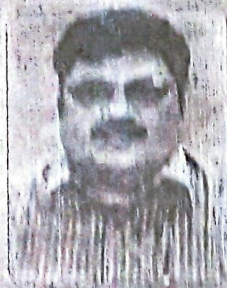


The Author



Dr. T. Karunakaran, is working as Professor Department of Sociology, Periyar University, Salem-11 and actively engaging in teaching, research and extension activities for the past 22 years. He has attended more than hundred national and international seminars and conferences and presented papers. He also conducted seminars in different academic areas. Different seminar proceedings were compiled and edited by him and published in ten book volumes. He also authored five books in the field of Medical Sociology, Human Rights, Reproductive Health, Medical tourism and Eco-Tourism. He has contributed about 25 chapters in edited volumes in various fields. His research papers are published in National and international reputed journals. Currently he is engaging in the ICSSR Sponsored Research Project on Effect of Open Defecation on children Adolescent Girls and Women.

The Book

This book, entitled Indian Culture and Tradition (In the light of Historical studies) is an outcome of the IOAC sponsored two day national Seminar on Sustaining Indian Culture and Tradition through Historical studies which was conducted by Dr. T. Karunakaran in the Department of Sociology, Periyar University, Salem-636011, Tamil Nadu on 25-26 February, 2016. Papers on different fields like family, marriage, health environment, trade & commerce, temples, agriculture and kingdoms etc., were presented in the seminars. All these areas were carefully recorded in History in various periods. The selected papers edited and compiled in this book. The book will be helpful to the Research Scholars and students of Sociology, History, Social work, economics and Literature. To undertake new research or to proceed with existing research and to fill the research gap this book will be very much useful.



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Traditional Indian Medicine System- An Overview

Dr. Mrs. M. Meenakumari

Medicine is as old as life itself. The survival of the species demands that simultaneously with the appearance of disease, all living things must have also evolved the means to combat disease. Every human society must have developed a rudimentary system of medicine, whether based on, incantations magic and rituals, which to us in this advanced age may appear meaningless. The progress from this primitive stage to a regular system of medicine has not been on the same lines everywhere. The development of a system of medicine depends on various factors; its form and content are decided by the civilization and the environment in which it is born. Archeological and modern genetic evidence suggest that human populations have migrated into the Indian subcontinent since prehistoric times. The knowledge of the medicinal value of plants and other substances and their uses go back to the time of the earliest settlers. The vast amount of medical knowledge that has come down to modern times is the result of long evolution through trial and error and exchange of know-how between diverse communities and regions. Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha have entered the mainstream to compliment biomedicine.

History certainly proves that India was also one of the wealthiest countries on the planet in its earlier days. Not only did she have vast treasures of knowledge and developments, but ancient India also had great wealth, such as sapphires, rubies, emeralds, pearls, and other gems, along with sunny climate, great fertility, and much more that was exported to various parts of the world, but the deep levels of knowledge and development was another of her greatest assets. For this reason, the ambition of all conquerors was to possess the area of India. It can be found that what became the area of India and its Vedic culture was way ahead of its time. This can be noticed in such things as industry, metallurgy, science, textiles, medicine, surgery, mathematics, and, of course, philosophy and spirituality. In fact, we can see the roots of these sciences and metaphysics in many areas of the world that can be traced back to its Indian or Vedic origins.

Excavations at different sites suggest that medical interventions such as dentistry and trepanation were practiced as early as 7000 BCE in the Indian subcontinent. Organized forms of agriculture practiced by the people of the Indus civilization, the importance they gave to certain medicinal plants and trees and the emphasis on hygiene and water sanitation suggest an advanced awareness of health management. The Vedic hymns of the migrant Aryan tribes are the earliest literary source of information about healing practices in the sub-continent. These hymns provide insights into diseases prevalent during the period and their perceived causes. Most ailments, both physical and mental, were attributed to malevolent spirits and cures consisted of rituals, charms, mantras, medicines and surgical intervention. The hymns in the Atharva Veda, the last of the four Vedas, and largely composed after the Aryans were well settled in the sub-continent, indicate that indigenous non-Aryan healing practices had influenced the Vedic Aryan healers.

Buddha himself was seen as the "healing guru" (Bhaishajyaguru) and healing practices were part of the Buddhist monastic tradition. Medical centers privileging humanistic values that