

BOOK 2: THE PHILOSOPHIES GUIDING AYURVEDA MEDICINE

BOOK 2.1: History of Ayurveda

1. Introduction

This book aims at detailing the inception of Ayurveda. The gradual progress in the teachings and training of Ayurveda along with the beginning of handwritten texts, their spread to various geographies and inclusion of newer concepts will be discussed. The important texts of Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhata, Madhava, Sharangdhara and [Bhavaprakasha](#) will be discussed in brief. The specialisation knowledge of system-wise diseases is also included in this book.

1.1. Video: History of Ayurveda

Watch this video:

<https://youtu.be/308282DcLFg>

2. Mythological Origin of Ayurveda

According to mythology, the origin of Ayurveda is from Lord Brahma, the God of Creation.

Gods and demons once had a fierce war and eventually agreed as the peace deal, to churn the Milk Ocean in order to extract and share some priceless, divine entities; especially the Nectar of Immortality. Thence appeared from the ocean, Lord Dhanwantari, holding a pot of nectar of immortality and the text of Ayurveda. Brahma wanted to ease the suffering of humans by offering knowledge of Ayurveda to other Gods. One of those deities was Dhanwantari, who then preached the knowledge to mortal sages.

3. The Span of Textual Compilations

The rise and acceptance of Ayurveda as a system of medicine is associated with the compilation of samhitas such as Charaka [Samhita](#), Sushruta [Samhita](#), etc.

The [Samhita](#) means compilation or collection.

Ayurveda flourished from around 800 B.C. to 1,000 A.D. The three most important treatises in Ayurveda appeared during this phase and are referred to collectively as *the Great Three*: the Charaka [Samhita](#), the Sushruta [Samhita](#), and the Ashtanga Hridaya [Samhita](#).

- The Charaka [Samhita](#) is the earliest major medical text of Ayurveda, credited to the physician Charaka. Traditionally it is thought that he lived around 1000 to 800 B.C., but according to some Western scholars, his period was around the first century A.D., when the Charaka [Samhita](#) probably reached its present form.
- The Sushruta [Samhita](#) is the major surgical text of Ayurveda, by the surgeon Sushruta. It is the most advanced compilation of surgical practices of its [time](#). The exact period of Sushruta is unclear but some scholars put him at around 600 B.C.
- Ashtanga Hridaya [Samhita](#) is the third major treatise, attributed to Vagbhata. It is a concise version of the works of Charaka and Sushruta and his period is debated to be between 700 BC and 500 AD.

The next important treatises in Ayurveda are the Madhava Nidana, the Sharangdhara [Samhita](#), and the Bhava Prakasha, known collectively as the *Lesser Three*.

Some important texts of Ayurveda were ranked as Brihat trayee and [Laghu](#) trayee as per their popularity and utility.

- **Brihat trayee** are special for their authenticity, practicality, antiquity and originality.
- **[Laghu](#) trayee** are the works of later authors and are practical compilations from the originals like Charaka and Sushruta, along with inclusion of newer contemporary ideas, diseases and medicines, reflecting Greek invasion imprints as well.

Hence the Great three (Charaka [Samhita](#), Sushruta [Samhita](#), Ashtanga Hridaya) are called Brihat Trayee and the Lesser three (Madhava Nidana, Bhava Prakasha, Sharangdhara [Samhita](#)) are called [Laghu](#) Trayee.

3.1. The Great Three: Charaka Samhita

Charaka [Samhita](#) is the most important Ayurvedic text available today. It is reputed to be one of the most ancient, comprehensive and authoritative works of Ayurveda and the most authentic reference book on Ayurvedic internal medicine. The reason behind such a popularity of Charaka [Samhita](#), apart from being exhaustive, objective and practical is that it is a complete book, with no section missing.

Many of the other textbooks equally good, were destroyed or could not be reproduced completely in full form, causing these to fade.

Charaka [Samhita](#) follows philosophies of [Nyaya](#), [Vaisheshika](#), Sankya, Yoga, [Vedanta](#) and Mimansa.

As a practice in those times, the name of the writer of the chapter or topic is written at the beginning and the end of the chapter.

The inception of Charaka [Samhita](#), along with incarnation of Ayurveda is as follows:

- **Lord Brahma** taught Ayurveda to Prajapati
- The knowledge of life was taught to **Ashwani kumars** by Prajapati
- From Ashwani kumars it was passed on to **Lord Indra**
- From Lord Indra, it was taught to the first mortal, **Bhardwaj**
- Bhardwaj lived a long, happy and healthy life with the help of Ayurveda and he also spread this knowledge to other sages and disciples.
- After Bhardwaj, **Punarvasu Atreya** taught Ayurveda to his six students named Agnivesha, Bhela, Jatukarna, Parashara, Harita and Ksharapani.
- The most brilliant student, **Agnivesha** authored one [Samhita](#) in his own name, Agnivesha Tantra.
- Later on, **Charaka** modified this useful text and it became popular as **Charaka [Samhita](#)**.
- It is given in Charaka [Samhita](#) that the original scriptures of 17 chapters and two sections, Siddhi Sthana and Kapla Sthana, were not available at the [time](#) of creation, so **Dridhabala** in 9 AD completed these chapters and sections.

2. The book has 120 chapters, divided into eight Sthana (sections). These are as follows:

- I. Sutrasthana—Fundamentals/principles (30 Chapters)
- II. Nidanasthana—Diagnosis (8 Chapters)
- III. Vimanasthana—Specific features (8 Chapters)
- IV. Sharirasthana—Anatomy (8 Chapters)
- V. Indriyasthana—Terminal / fatal symptoms and signs (12 Chapters)
- VI. Chikitsasthana—Treatment (30 Chapters)
- VII. Kalpasthana—Pharmaceuticals (12 Chapters)
- VIII. Siddhisthana— Management with [PanchaKarma](#) techniques (12 Chapters).

Charaka [Samhita](#) lays greater emphasis on preventive aspects of [health](#) than curative ones.

3.2. The Great Three: Sushruta Samhita

This is the most authentic reference text on Ayurveda Surgery, written some 3,000 years ago by Sage Sushruta. He was a great surgeon of ancient times. Many of his surgical procedures hold relevance even today.

Inception

While Divodas Dhanwantari was spending his retired life, many sages, along with Sushruta came to him to learn about his medical/surgical expertise and all these saints became the King's students for Ayurveda. Knowing the plight of the saints, Dhanwantari happily taught them Ayurveda.

The difference between Sushruta [Samhita](#) and Charaka [Samhita](#) is that Sushruta [Samhita](#) is surgical text whereas Charaka [Samhita](#) is related to general medicine

As per the request of the students, Dhanwantari described Surgery (Shalya) related to Ayurveda. He explained to them that Ayurveda's purposes are to:

- 1) Protect from [disease](#),
- 2) Maintain good [health](#)

Sushruta recommended surgery only for situations where medicines were incapable of curing the [disease](#) condition. In addition to details of surgery, Sushruta [Samhita](#) also described more than a thousand diseases and conditions, problems associated with aging and mental illnesses. It also discussed in detail obstetrics and gynaecology. Sushruta [Samhita](#) listed 700 medicinal herbs and explained the methods of preparation of medicines. Sushruta [Samhita](#) also described the methods of [Panchakarma](#).

Sushruta [Samhita](#) is unique as it is believed by many to be more advanced and even older than Charaka [Samhita](#). Sushruta first gave the detailed importance of surgery out of which many surgical procedures are valid even today : such as the types of instruments, importance of anaesthesia, incision for cataract surgery and lithotomy position, abdominal surgeries, fractures with treatment and immobilisation etc.

It elaborated Pitta [Dosha](#) with its five subtypes, gave great importance to blood and even discussed it as the 4th [Dosha](#), only to deny it later. Description and importance of Marma is another unique contribution by Sushruta.

The textbook of Sushruta [Samhita](#) is organized into 188 chapters written in 9250 verses as follows:

1. Sutra sthana / Principles & Surgeries (46 Chapters)
2. Nidana sthana / Diagnostics(16 Chapters)
3. Sharira sthana / Anatomy (10 Chapters)

4. Chikitsa sthana / Medicine (50 Chapters)
5. Kalpa sthana / Pharmaceuticals (8 Chapters)
6. Uttara tantra / Miscellaneous (66 Chapters)

3.3. The Great Three: Vagbhat -Ashtanga Hridaya

Sage Vagbhat compiled two sets of texts called Ashtanga Samgraha and Ashtanga Hridaya. Some scholars believe that the two texts were authored by two different persons whereas some believe it to be one person. The [time](#) period is believed to range from 8 BC to 5 AD. It details the medicine of the *Charaka Samhita* and the various surgical procedures of the *Sushruta Samhita*.

The *Ashtanga Samgraha* is written in prose whereas the *Ashtanga Hridaya* is in poetry for recitation of the Verses. The *Ashtanga Samgraha* has approximately 9250 verses. The *Hridaya* (about 7120 verses) has a slightly different organization of material than *Ashtanga Samgraha*. Both works have been dated about the same [time](#) and are thought to date after the *Charaka* and *Sushruta Samhita*.

The exposition is relatively straightforward and also deals primarily with medicine. In this work, the *Kapha* sub-doshas are also listed and described, completing the array of *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* with their five sub-types.

Ashtanga Hridaya very wisely picked practical aspects from *Charaka & Sushruta* and came up with a brief and useful textbook that is considered to be good enough to be included in The Big Three of Ayurveda.

The layout is as follows:

1. Sutrasthana — Fundamentals/principles, properties of articles of diet and drugs, kinds of diseases and methods of treatment, [Panchakarma](#), humoral physiology and pathology (30 Chapters)
2. Sharirasthana— Anatomy & embryology (6 Chapters)
3. Nidanasthana— Diagnosis—causes, prodromal and cardinal Sign & Symptoms, pathogenesis, prognosis of diseases (16 Chapters)
4. Chikitsasthana— Treatment including effective medicinal recipes, diet and care of patient (22 Chapters)
5. Kalpa-siddhasthana—Pharmaceuticals, [Panchakarma](#), management of complications, principles of pharmacy (6 Chapters)
6. Uttarasthana—Miscellaneous (40 Chapters)

The discussions revolve around [Prakriti](#) (genetic constitution of Vata-Pitta-Kapha) and [Vikriti](#) (imbalance of three Doshas).

3.4. The Lesser Three: Sharangdhara Samhita

Sharangdhara [Samhita](#) was written in the 15th century AD by Sharangdhara. It is well known for detailed explanation of pharmacological procedures such as collection, preservation and shelf life of raw herbs, ratios of herbs, [water](#), oils etc, procedures, precautions, dosage, storage, clinical effects etc. The book has also elaborated pulse diagnosis.

Written in easy language, the book consists of three sections with 32 chapters and 2600 verses in all; the first section with 7 chapters and 585 verses, the second with 12 chapters and 1261 verses and the third section with 13 chapters and 682 verses.

The First section has one chapter each for definitions, weights and measures, pharmaceuticals, examination of pulse and other methods of diagnosis of diseases, anatomy and physiology, dietetics, human constitution etc.

The Second section describes the composition, method of preparation and uses of different kinds of recipes. It has one chapter each for fresh juice-like extract forms of medicines, decoctions, infusions, cold infusions, powders, pills, confections, oils and Ghrita, fermented liquids, purification of minerals and metals etc.

The Third and last section explains the different kinds of treatment in separate chapters: Oleation, sudation, Vamana (emesis), [Virechana](#) (purgation), [Sneha Vasti](#) (oil enema), [Nirooha Vasti](#) (decoction enema), [Uttara Vasti](#) (vaginal and bladder douches), [Nasya](#) (nasal medications), [Dhoomapana](#) (inhalation of vapour of smoke), [Gandoosha](#) (mouth gargles), [Lepa](#) (topical applications), [Raktamokshanaa](#) (blood letting) and eye salves, collyriums, etc.

3.5. The Lesser Three: Bhavaprakasha

[Bhavaprakasha](#) was written in the 16th century by Bhava Mishra and is a compact representation of the earlier classical texts. Bhava Mishra lived in Banaras.

[Bhavaprakasha](#) is a more contemporary authoritative text on Ayurveda and is widely referred to and utilized by students, teachers and physicians of Ayurveda ever since it was written around 1550 AD. The [Bhavaprakasha](#) is comprehensive, dealing with basic principles, causes, symptoms, and treatment of many diseases. It has a large section called 'Nighantu' which is devoted to the elucidation of the qualities and indications of the different medicinal plants, foods, herbs and minerals. It repeats many verses directly from earlier writers.

It describes about 500 drugs belonging to vegetable, mineral and animal kingdoms. This wide spectrum of naturally-derived medicinal drugs (Nighantu) is considered by many to be the chief contribution of this text since it elucidates many new drugs unknown-or at least unmentioned-at the [time](#) of Charaka and Sushruta. In the treatment of diseases, both plant drugs and metallic and mineral drugs are advised.

This two-volume text systematically deals with the origin of Indian medicine, anatomy, embryology, physiology, pathology and medicine, [disease](#) of children, botanical therapeutics, dietetics, tonics, and elixirs to promote longevity.

Bhava Mishra clarifies many of the obtuse and disputed views of ancient writers in a lucid language and literary style. He is the first to mention medical drugs of countries other than India, and is the first to give a description of syphilis in Ayurvedic literature.

3.6. The Lesser Three: Madhava Nidana

Stated as one of the six top texts in Ayurvedic education, the **Madhava Nidana** of Madhavakara is a popular and comprehensive book on how diseases develop. This was written around 700 A.D. The actual name of the work is **Roga-Vinishchaya** ("Making exact diagnosis of diseases") but is commonly called "Madhava-Nidana" after the author's name. This book gives detailed information about causes (Nidana), pathogenesis, types, signs and symptoms, complications and prognosis of diseases.

The book has initial chapters on the basic principles of diagnosis and patient examination. It has elaborate description of all stages of common diseases from prodromal symptoms to the possible complications and outcomes. It deals with the five factors essential for the appropriate diagnosis of a [disease](#). The rest of the work deals with the description of various diseases like fever, diarrhoea, irritable bowel syndrome, anorexia, anaemia, jaundice, haemorrhage, pulmonary tuberculosis, cough, hiccough, asthma, vomiting, abnormal thirst, fainting, giddiness, diabetes and skin diseases.

Other conditions described in this book include: haemorrhoids, dyspepsia, indigestion, hepatitis, dyspnoea, anorexia, insanity, epilepsy, diseases of nervous system, rheumatism, cardiac disorders, diabetes, goitre, bone fractures, fistula-in-ano, leprosy, gynaecological disorders, abnormal pregnancy, diseases of the breast, diseases of children and diseases due to poisons.

4. Chapters and Divisions in Ayurveda

Keeping in [mind](#) the importance of specialised knowledge of physicians, Ayurveda was divided into eight branches, namely:

1. [Kaya Chikitsa](#)
2. Shalya
3. Shalakyā
4. Baala Roga
5. Agadatantra
6. Bhootvidya
7. [Rasayana](#)
8. Vajikaranaa

1. [Kaya Chikitsa](#) (General medicine): The word "[Kaya](#)" means body. Another meaning of [Kaya](#) is [Agni](#) (internal fire). Therefore, "[Kaya Chikitsa](#)" means the management of the disorders of internal fire as well as of the body. Sushruta states that the branch of Ayurveda which deals with the management of diseases such as diabetes, respiratory disorders, fevers, bleeding, mania, epilepsy, skin disorders, urinary disorders, diarrhoea etc, occurring in the whole body is [Kaya Chikitsa](#). The specialities of general medicine, for instance pathology, cardiology, neurology etc are included in [Kaya Chikitsa](#).
2. [Shalya Tantra](#) (Surgery): The word Shalya means everything that bothers the psyche and/or body. While defining [Shalya Tantra](#), Sushruta (Su. 1/8) states that [Shalya Tantra](#) (surgery) is the branch of Ayurveda which employs *Yantra* (blunt surgical instruments and tools), *Shastra* (sharp surgical instruments), *Kshara* (caustic chemical substances), *Agni* (cauterization) to extract various types of foreign bodies such as pus, wooden splinters, stones, minute particles, metal pieces, lumps, bones, hairs, nails, exudates, abnormal foetus, etc. as well as the study of traumatic wounds including inflammation. Hence [Shalya Tantra](#) incorporates the speciality of surgery.
3. [Shalakyā Tantra](#) (Diseases of Eye, Ear, Nose & Throat, Dentistry): The term Shalakyā is derived from the term "Shalaka", which means a lancet or probe, implying that the branch of Ayurveda employing the usage of lancet and probe for the management of [disease](#) is [Shalakyā Tantra](#). However, the scope of [Shalakyā Tantra](#) is much more than this. According to Sushruta, [Shalakyā Tantra](#) encompasses the management of the disorders in the organs placed above the clavicle bone i.e. head, neck, eye, ear, nose, throat, teeth etc. Thus specialties of ENT, ophthalmology and dentistry are included in [Shalakyā Tantra](#).
4. [Kaumarbhritya](#) (Children diseases, obstetrics and gynecology): The literal meaning of the word "Kaumarbhritya" is the nurturing of Kumara (Child) but in fact comprises much more. According to Sushruta, Kaumarbhritya is that branch of Ayurveda which deals with the management of nurturing of neonates, infants, kids, rectifying the problems of the mother's breast milk (Dhatri), as well as other diseases of infancy and childhood.

Subsequently, the Kumara Bhritya branch has come to encompass specialities of gynaecology and obstetrics together with paediatrics.

5. **Agad Tantra** (Toxicology): In general, the word "Gada" means [disease](#), thereby implying that "A-gada" means without [disease](#), but in particular the word 'Agad' stands for "Anti-poison". Sushruta defines [Agad Tantra](#) as the branch of Ayurveda which deals with the management of disorders arising out of the bites from snakes, insects, spiders, rats and other vermin, as well as the effects of various venoms and plant and metal poisons. [Agad Tantra](#) incorporates the speciality of toxicology.
6. **Bhoota Vidya** (Psychiatry): The word "Bhoota" means that which came into existence, but over the years the word has been used in connection with ghosts, microbes and other supernatural beings. Sushruta also states that [Bhoota Vidya](#) is the branch of Ayurveda which advocates the use of appeasement rituals, sacrifice, etc. to rectify the problems arising out of the harmful influence of supernatural entities. While discussing the manner of influence of these supernatural entities, Sushruta further states that these entities do not themselves enter into a person but rather, innumerable followers of the particular entity enter the body of a person and accordingly produce signs and symptoms. This discussion brings into sharp focus, the school of thought which equates the concept of Bhoota with that of mental disorders. Thus the speciality of psychiatry is included under [Bhoota Vidya](#).
7. **Rasayana (Rejuvenation)**: Charaka defines [Rasayana](#) as the measures adopted to achieve the best quality of Dhatus (body tissues). Sushruta defines [Rasayana](#) Tantra as that branch of Ayurveda which deals with the measures to check the effects of ageing as well as to increase lifespan and memory. In the process, there may also be improvement from diseases. [Rasayana](#) Tantra, therefore, is a speciality dealing with the management of the phenomena of ageing (Geriatrics)
8. **Vajikarana (Aphrodisiacs /sexology)**: The literal meaning of the word 'Vaji' is stallion, thereby implying that [Vajikarana](#) means the process of metamorphosis of an ordinary man into a stallion, especially in terms of his sexual capacity. According to Sushruta, [Vajikarana](#) Tantra is that branch of Ayurveda which deals with the management of the various disorders of semen. Broadly speaking, [Vajikarana](#) Tantra incorporates the speciality of Andrology and Sexology.

5. Summary

In this book, we explained the inception of Ayurveda as per Indian mythology where it states that originally, the availability of Ayurveda was only for the deities and Gods in the heavens. Seeing the suffering of mankind and pleading by the sages from the [earth](#), the gods decided to preach this knowledge to the mortal mankind. Initially that knowledge was fully verbal, and eventually matured into textbooks. It was passed on for centuries and incorporated newer concepts such as the use of minerals apart from the herbs, and so on. The compilations of the most important textbooks by Charaka, Sushruta, and Vagbhata etc came into being.

We also explained the speciality classification of Ayurveda into eight clinical branches. This highlights the importance of specialist training of the physicians as per the [disease](#) and one physician should not treat all types of diseases.

6. Reference Books

1. Charaka [Samhita](#)
2. Sushruta [Samhita](#)
3. Ashtang Hridaya
4. Madhava Nidana
5. Bhava Prakasha
6. Sharangdhara [Samhita](#)
7. History of Ayurveda

BOOK 2.2: Philosophy of Ayurveda / Darshana

1. Introduction to Darshana

In this book, we discuss the various philosophies guiding Ayurveda Medicine.

Hindu philosophy ([Darshana](#)) schools are many. Each was formulated in verse form by its "founder," and elaborated in extensive commentaries by other writers. They are understood as varied attempts at describing Truth and the path to it.

The schools of Vedic philosophy aim to describe the nature of the external world and its relationship to the individual, to go beyond the world of appearances to ultimate Reality, and to describe the goal of life and the means for attaining this goal.

1.1. VIDEO : Introduction and Philosophy & Intro to Ayurveda

Watch the video:

<https://youtu.be/M8iqQc9T6Z4>

2. Types and Features of each Darshana/Philosophy

The most consistent and popular are the following six-

1. [Nyaya](#),
2. [Vaisheshika](#),
3. [Samkhya](#),
4. Yoga,
5. [Mimamsa](#) and
6. [Vedanta](#).

2.1. Nyaya

"System, rule; logic." It is a system of logical realism, founded around 300BC by Gautama, known for its systems of logic and concerned with the means of acquiring right knowledge. Its tools of enquiry and rules for argumentation were adopted by all schools of Hinduism.

[Nyaya](#) is predominantly based on reasoning and logic and therefore is also known as [Nyaya Vidya](#) or Tarka Shastra -- "*the science of logic and reasoning*", because this system analyzes the nature and source of knowledge and its validity and non-validity; it is also referred to as "the science of critical study." Using systematic reasoning, this school of philosophy attempts to discriminate valid knowledge from invalid knowledge.

This philosophy asserts that obtaining valid knowledge of the external world and its relationship with the [mind](#) and self is the only way to attain liberation. If one masters the logical techniques of reasoning and applies these in his daily life, he will rid himself of all suffering. Thus, the methods and conditions of determining true knowledge are not the final goal of [Nyaya](#) philosophy; logical criticism is viewed only as an instrument that enables one to discriminate valid from invalid knowledge.

"By successively dispelling false conceptions, bad character, entangling action, rebirth and misery - the disappearance of one of these allowing the disappearance of the next - one can achieve final liberation."

The ultimate goal of [Nyaya](#) philosophy, like that of the other systems of Indian philosophy, is liberation , i.e., the absolute cessation of pain and suffering.

2.2. Vaisheshika

"Distinctionism." From "[vishesha](#)," "differences".

Founded by Kanada around 300 BC, it teaches that [Moksha](#) is to be attained by understanding the nature of existence, which is classified into nine basic causative elements ([Dravya](#)): [earth](#), [water](#), light, [air](#), [space](#) (the [Panchamahabhoota](#)), [time](#), directions, [soul](#) and [mind](#).

[Vaisheshika](#) espouses a form of [atomism](#) and postulates that all objects in the physical universe are reducible to a finite number of [atoms](#). Thus this is the most original Cause and Effect Theory

According to the [Vaisheshika](#) school, all things which exist, which can be cognised, and which can be named are **padarthas** (literally - the meaning of a word), the objects of experience.

All objects of experience can be classified into six categories, [dravya](#) (substance), [guna](#) (quality), [karma](#) (activity), [sāmānya](#) (generality), [vishesha](#) (particularity) and [samavāya](#) (inherence). Later [Vaisheshika](#) added one more category [abhāva](#) (non-existence). The first three categories are defined as [artha](#) (which can be perceived) and they have real objective existence. The last three categories are defined as abstract or products of intellectual discrimination and they are logical categories.

[Nyaya](#) and [Vaisheshika](#) are viewed as a complementary pair, with [Nyaya](#) emphasizing logic, and [Vaisheshika](#) analyzing the nature of the world.

In its classical form, however, the [Vaisheshika](#) School differed from the [Nyaya](#) in one crucial respect: where [Nyaya](#) accepted four sources of valid knowledge which are perception, inference, comparison and verbal testimony, the [Vaisheshika](#) accepted only perception and inference.

2.3. Samkhya

"Enumeration, reckoning." A philosophy founded by the Sage Kapila around 500 BC, author of the [Samkhya](#) Sutras.

Ayurveda's prime text *Charaka Samhita* follows [Samkhya](#). The major text of this Vedic school is [Samkhya Karika](#), 200 CE. [Samkhya](#) is regarded as one of the oldest philosophical systems in India. There are no purely [Samkhya](#) schools existing today in Hinduism, but its influence is felt in the *Yoga* and [Vedanta](#) schools. Like other major systems of Indian philosophy, [Samkhya](#) regards ignorance as the root cause of bondage and suffering.

According to the [Samkhya](#) school, all knowledge is possible through three valid means :

1. Direct sense perception,
2. Logical inference
3. Verbal testimony.

[Samkhya](#) regards the universe as consisting of two realities; Dualism. [Samkhya](#) is primarily concerned with "categories of existence," *tatvas*, which it understands as 25 elements in number. The first two are the un-manifest [Purusha](#) and the manifest primal nature, [Prakriti](#) - the male-female polarity, viewed as the foundation of all existence.

[Purusha](#) is the Pure Consciousness. It is absolute, independent, free, imperceptible and unknowable, above any experience and beyond any words or explanation. [Purusha](#) is neither produced nor does it produce.

[Prakriti](#) is the first cause of the universe—of everything except the [Purusha](#), which is uncaused, and accounts for whatever is physical, both matter and force. It is the first principle (*tatva*) of the universe, unconscious and unintelligent. It is composed of three essential characteristics (*trigunas*). These are:

- [Satva](#) – Fineness, lightness, illumination, and joy;
- [Rajas](#) – Activity, excitation and pain;
- [Tamas](#) – Inertia, coarseness, heaviness, obstruction, and control.

All physical events are considered to be manifestations of the evolution of [Prakriti](#), or primal nature (from which all physical bodies are derived). Each sentient being is a [Purusha](#), and is limitless and unrestricted by its physical body. Bondage arises when the [Purusha](#) does not have the discriminate knowledge and so is misled as to its own identity, confusing itself with the physical body, which

actually is a product of [Prakriti](#). The spirit is liberated when the discriminate knowledge of the difference between conscious [Purusha](#) and unconscious [Prakriti](#) is realized.

There are differences between [Samkhya](#) and Western forms of dualism. In the West, the fundamental distinction is between [mind](#) and body. In [Samkhya](#), however, it is between the self (as [Purusha](#)) and matter ([Prakriti](#)).

2.4. Yoga

“Joining”; Ancient tradition of philosophy and practice codified by Patanjali around 200 BC in the *Yoga Sutras*. It is also known as *Raj yoga*, "king of Yogas," or *Ashtanga yoga*, "eight-limbed yoga."

Ashtanga Yoga consists of the following steps: The first five are called external aids to Yoga-

A. **Yama** refers to the five abstentions as social responsibility. These are the same as the five vows of Jainism:

- i. **Ahimsa** -non-violence, inflicting no injury or harm to others or even to one's own self. It goes as far as **nonviolence** in thought, word and deed.
- ii. **Satya**- truth in word and thought.
- iii. **Asteya** -non-covetousness, to the extent that one should not even desire something that is not his own; never to steal.
- iv. **Brahmacharya** -abstain from sexual intercourse; celibacy in case of unmarried people and monogamy in case of married people. One should not possess any sexual thoughts towards any other man or woman except one's own spouse. It is common to associate Brahmacharya with celibacy.
- v. **Aparigraha** - Non-possessiveness.

B. **Niyama** refers to the five observances for self-discipline:

- i. **Shaucha** - cleanliness of body & **mind**.
- ii. **Santosha** - satisfaction; satisfied with what one has.
- iii. **Tapa** - austerity and associated observances for body discipline and thereby mental control.
- iv. **Swadhyaya** - study of the Vedic scriptures to know about God and the **soul**, which leads to introspection on a greater awakening to the **soul** and God within,
- v. **Ishwar Pranidhana** - surrender to (or worship of) God.

C. **Asana** - This is the most popular of the Eight branches these days. It stands for discipline of the body: rules and postures to keep it **disease**-free and for preserving / promoting vital energy. Correct postures are a physical aid to meditation, for they control the limbs and nervous system and prevent them from producing disturbances.

D. **Pranayama** - control of breath. Beneficial to **health**, steadies the body and is highly conducive

to the concentration of the mind.

E. *Pratyahara* - Non – feeding; Disengagement; withdrawal of senses from their external temptations / objects.

The last three levels are called internal aids to Yoga-

F. *Dharana* - concentration of the mind upon a physical object, such as a flame of a lamp, the midpoint of the eyebrows, or the image of a deity.

G. *Dhyana* - steadfast meditation. Undisturbed flow of thought around the object of meditation. The act of meditation and the object of meditation remain distinct and separate.

H. *Samadhi* - oneness with the object of meditation. There is no distinction between act of meditation and the object of meditation.

Thus its objective is to achieve, at will, the cessation of all fluctuations of consciousness, and the attainment of Self Realization. Yoga is wholly dedicated to putting the high philosophy of Hinduism into practice, to achieve personal transformation through transcendental experience, *Samadhi*.

2.5. Mimamsa

Enquiry, Analysis; *Mimamsa* is also known as *Purva (Elementary) Mimamsa*, as against *Uttara (Later / Higher) Mimamsa*.

[*Uttar Mimamsa* is better known as *Vedanta*, discussed next.]

Mimamsa was developed by Jaimini and was described in his text "*Mimamsa Sutra*." *Mimamsa* means detailed investigation or analysis of the subject.

According to *Mimamsa*, the correct performance of the Vedic rites or rituals is the means to salvation. It discusses in detail the nature of ritual obligations, ethical and moral duties (*Dharma*) based on correct interpretation of the scriptures. It deals with linguistic methods. It describes critical analysis and explanations of scriptural texts – words, sentences, and the language as whole.

If [Nyaya](#) is a system of logical analysis and [Vaisheshika](#) is a system of particles and cosmic analysis, [Mimamsa](#) is a creditworthy ancient Hindu scientific system of linguistic analysis for the study of scriptural texts.

The origin of [Mimamsa](#) was timely when the Vedic system of ritualism was decimated by many religious, historical, and political factors. [Mimamsa](#) has tried to re-establish the validity of Vedic ritualism portion that had become monotonous and meaningless over [time](#). For that, [Mimamsa](#) used the science of [Nyaya](#) system for its Vedic interpretation.

[Mimamsa](#) analysed in detail the meanings of the words rather than sentences of the Vedic literature and the actions prescribed by them. In this manner, it has emphasized more on the rituals, leaving behind the essence of knowledge.

Purva [Mimamsa](#) and Uttara [Mimamsa](#) supplement each other.

2.6. Vedanta - "Veda-end"

"[Vedanta](#)" means the purpose or goal of the Vedas.

By the 8th century CE, the word also came to be used to describe a group of philosophical traditions concerned with self-realisation, the ultimate nature of reality.

Traditional [Vedanta](#) considers scriptural evidence or *Apta* as the most authentic means of knowledge, while perception and logical inference are considered to be subordinate (but valid). [Upanishad](#) and [Vedanta](#) have for long been used as synonyms. The primary philosophy captured in the Upanishads, that of one absolute reality termed Brahma is the main principle of [Vedanta](#).

The systematization of Vedantic ideas into one coherent treatise was undertaken by Badarayan in around 200 BC.

The symbolic descriptions of the [Vedanta](#) *Sutras* are open to a variety of interpretations, resulting in the formation of numerous [Vedanta](#) schools, each interpreting the texts in its own way and producing its own sub-commentaries. There are a total of six important interpretations of these source texts, out of which, three (*Advaita* / Non dualism, *Vishishtadvaita* / special dualism and *Dvaita* / dualism) are prominent, both in India and abroad. These Vedantic schools of thought were founded by Shri Adi Shankar, Shri Ramanuja and Shri Madhavacharya, respectively. There has always been a quest to understand the supreme Nature ([Brahman](#)) which is the source of everything, the Atman(the Self) and the relationship between [Brahman](#) and Atman. The [Vedanta](#) / *Upanishads* explore these issues *from different angles*. Thus, there exists difference of opinion as duality or not of the both, Nature and Self.

[Vedanta](#) proposes that rituals be avoided in favour of the individual's quest for truth through meditation governed by a loving morality, secure in the knowledge that infinite bliss awaits the seeker. Nearly all existing sects of Hinduism are directly or indirectly influenced by the thought

systems developed by [Vedanta](#). Hinduism to a great extent owes its survival to the formation of the coherent and logically advanced systems of [Vedanta](#).

3. Summary

This chapter on [Darshana](#) explained the origin of six important schools of Indian philosophy which hold good for all times and have a direct implication on Ayurveda as well. The role, movement and characteristics of [mind](#) and [soul](#) and their impact on this physical body is explained. The philosophical schools discussed are as follows -

- [Nyaya](#),
- [Vaisheshika](#)
- [Samkhya](#)
- Yoga
- [Mimamsa](#)
- [Vedanta](#)

[Nyaya](#) is based on reasoning so it is also known as Tarka Shastra - "the science of logic and reasoning". This system analyzes the nature and source of knowledge and its validity and non-validity, so it is also referred to as "the science of critical study."

[Vaisheshika](#) teaches that [Moksha](#) is to be attained through understanding the nature of existence, which is classified in nine basic causative elements the [earth](#), [water](#), light, [air](#), [space](#) ([Panchamahabhoota](#)), [time](#), directions, [soul](#) and [mind](#). [Vaisheshika](#) postulates that all objects in the physical universe are reducible to a finite number of [atoms](#). This is the most original Cause & Effect Theory. [Nyaya](#) and [Vaisheshika](#) are viewed as a complementary pair, with [Nyaya](#) emphasizing logic, and [Vaisheshika](#) analyzing the nature of the world. Ayurveda's prime text Charaka [Samhita](#) follows [Samkhya](#). [Samkhya](#) regards ignorance as the root cause of bondage and suffering.

Yoga is the tradition of philosophy and practice codified by Patanjali. It is also known as Raj yoga, "king of yogas," or [Ashtanga yoga](#), "eight-limbed yoga." It encompasses all the aspects of a healthy personal & social life along with freedom from bondage of all sorts. [Mimamsa](#) discusses in detail the nature of ritual obligations, ethical and moral duties based on correct interpretation of the scriptures. It deals with linguistic methods. It describes critical analysis and explanations of scriptural texts – words, sentences, and the language as whole. If [Nyaya](#) is a system of logical analysis and [Vaisheshika](#) is a system of particles and cosmic analysis, [Mimamsa](#) is a creditworthy ancient Hindu scientific system of linguistic analysis for the study of scriptural texts. Traditional [Vedanta](#) considers scriptural as the most authentic means of knowledge, while perception and logical inference are considered to be subordinate (but valid). [Upanishad](#) & [Vedanta](#) have for long, been used as synonyms. The primary philosophy captured in the Upanishads, that of one absolute reality termed Brahma is the main principle of [Vedanta](#).

4. Reference Books

1. Padartha Vigyana
2. Metaphysics by Priyavrat Sharma