



# A Study of Health, Medicines, Hygiene and Etiquette in Ancient India

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## Abstract

**Background:** This paper explores health, hygiene, medicine, morality and social etiquette of the people in the contemporary societies in ancient India focusing on the accounts of Chinese pilgrims Yuan Chwang (629-645 A.D.) and I-tsing (671-695), the two pilgrims who visited India during 7th Century.

**Objective:** The paper aims to explore the travelogue of the Chinese visitors as the primary source of the article which is abound with the information in regard to health, hygiene and dietary habits including medicinal practices, moral practices and social etiquettes practiced by the monastic and non-monastic people in the contemporary societies in ancient India.

**Methodology:** Library based methodology of historical research, textual analysis, and comparative cultural study have been applied to complete this article.

**Result:** Yuan Chwang gives details of personal cleanliness, dietary rules, and measures for treatment of illness during 7<sup>th</sup> century India whereas I-tsing gives accounts of health practices - exercises, diet and medicine - in Buddhist monasteries. The paper compares the health practices of ancient India and contemporary China focusing on spiritual and physical discipline and their contribution in maintaining well-being of the people in the society.

**Conclusion:** The paper explores the prevalence of healthy characteristics in the societal people, like cleanliness, cultural values, morality, reverence and self-discipline, in both physical and spiritual world, in the societies of India during that time.

**Keywords:** Hygiene, Medicine, Manners, Buddhism, Monastic Life

**Paper Type:** Research Paper

## Introduction

The principal Chinese Pilgrims who visited India and wrote the accounts of their travel were Shih Fa-shien (400 A.D.), Sung Yun and Hwei Sang (500 A.D.), Yuan Chwang (629 A.D.) and I-tsing (670 A.D.). Out of these, only Yuan Chwang and I-tsing have left a detailed account of their travel which portrays every aspect of the life of ancient Indian people during 7<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D.

This paper is a humble attempt to understand the means of maintaining the health by keeping hygiene, showing good manners regarding the way of life inside the monastery and in the society by the common people in the ancient India during 7<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D. The centres which have been taken into consideration in this paper are the centres existent in India during 7<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D. The present researcher, having examined thoroughly the travel accounts of Yuan Chwang and I-tsing, the two illustrious Chinese pilgrims who depicted a splendid picture of the ancient India, renders an outlook of the general picture of the monk's and people's concerns regarding health in the ancient India, and more specifically Buddhist Centres.

## Yuan Chwang's Account

Yuan Chwang, who stayed in India for 16 years during 629 - 645 A.D., is more concerned with practices of the common Indian people and briefly, as compared to I-tsing, illustrates the ancient Indian way of fooding, drinking, clothing, cleanliness, ablution and manners in his celebrated travel account known as Ta-t'ang-Si-Yu-Ki.

## On Cleanliness and Ablutions etc.

Yuan Chwang writes about Indians in general that they are very particular in their personal cleanliness, and allow no remissness in their particular. All wash themselves before eating; they never use that which has been left over from a former meal; they do not pass the dishes. It was must to destroy the wooden and stone vessels after its use. After eating they cleanse their teeth with a willow stick, and wash their hands and mouth. Until these ablutions are finished they do not touch one another. Every time they perform the functions of the nature they wash their bodies and use perfumes of sandal-wood or turmeric. People also wash and bathe themselves before offering their religious services and petitions.<sup>1</sup>

## Use of Herbs, Foods and Drinks for Health

People were fond of edible herbs and plants like ginger, mustard, melons and pumpkins etc. Onions and Garlic were little grown and few persons ate them. Whosoever uses them for food, were expelled beyond the walls of the town. The most usual food was milk, butter, cream, soft sugar, sugar-candy, the mustard oil, and all sorts of cakes made of corn.<sup>2</sup> People would eat Fish, mutton, gazelle, and deer generally fresh and sometimes, salted. The flesh of the ox, the ass, the elephant, the horse, the pig, the dog, the fox, the wolf, the lion, the monkey, and all the hairy kinds of animals was forbidden to eat. Those who eat them were despised and scorned, and are universally reprobated. They live outside the walls of town and are seldom seen among men.<sup>3</sup>

The various kinds of wines and liquors were used. The juice of the grape and sugarcane by the Kshatriyas, strong fermented drinks by Vaishyas, a sort of syrup, but not of the nature of fermented wine, made by grape or sugarcane by the Sramanas and Brahmanas were used as drink. The mixed classes and base-born were not different from other castes as regards food and drinks but their vessels

1 Samuel Beal. *SI-YU-KI i.e. Buddhist Records of the Western World* (Tr. of Hiuen Tsiang or Yuan Chwang's Travel Account) (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 2004), Vol. I, p.77

2 Ibid, p.88

3 Ibid, p.89

were very much different in the value and material. When people get sick, they use copper drinking cups.<sup>4</sup>

### **Sickness and Treatment**

Everyone who falls sick would fast for seven days. During this interval many recover, but if the sickness lasts, they take medicine. The characters of the medicines were different depending on the disease. The doctors differ in their modes of examination and treatment.

In a house where there had been a death there was no eating allowed; but after the funeral they could resume their usual habits. Those who would attend a death were considered unclean; they all would bathe outside the town and then enter their houses.<sup>5</sup>

### **Clothing, Manners and Forms of Politeness**

When ever ancient Indian people sit or rest, they all use mats. The royal family and the great personages and assistant officers use mats variously ornamented, in they size they were same. The clothing of the people was not fashioned and mostly was fresh-white coloured. Those using mixed colour or ornament on the dress were considered little in the society.<sup>6</sup>

Ordinary people, being upright and honourable, were without cunningness in money matters and considerate in administering justice. They were not deceitful or treacherous in their conduct, and were faithful to their oaths and promises, being fearful of reaping the fruits of their evil deeds of this life in another life.<sup>7</sup>

There were nine methods of showing respects to others:<sup>8</sup>

1. by selecting words of a soothing character in making requests
2. by bowing the head to show respect
3. by raising the hands and bowing
4. by joining the hands and bowing low
5. by bending the knee
6. by a prostration
7. by a prostration on hands and knees
8. by touching the ground with the five circles
9. by stretching the five parts of the body on the ground

Of these nine methods the most respectful is to make one prostration on the ground and then to kneel and laud the virtues of one addressed. When at a distance it is usual to bow low; when near, then it is customary to kiss the feet and rub the ankles of the person addressed.

### **I-tsing's Account**

I-tsing is the only foreigner pilgrim among all, who has given us such detailed information regarding the etiquette being practiced by the monks as well as the common people in the 7<sup>th</sup> cent.A.D in India. I-tsing stayed in India for 25 years during 671 - 695 A.D. and gives a liberal account of the

4 Ibid

5 Ibid, p. 86

6 Ibid, p. 75

7 Ibid, p. 83

8 Ibid, p.85

advantages of the proper exercise to health, symptoms of illness, rules of giving medicine, variety of medicines used for different diseases as well as the kind of medicines which must be avoided. Moreover, at many stages, he narrates the practices of the Chinese people in the same situation, which not only throws abundant light on the way of treatment adopted by the monks of Buddhist centres and common Indian people but also encourage us to conduct a comparative study of the both way of healthiness in that age.

### Regarding Food

Among the priests and laymen, it was customary to distinguish between clean and unclean food. If but a mouthful of the food had been eaten, it became uncleaned, and the utensils in which food was put were not to be used again. As soon as the meal was finished, the utensils used were removed and piled up in one corner. All the remaining food was given to those who legally ate such (i.e. the departed spirits, birds, and the like); for it was very improper to keep the food for further use.<sup>9</sup>

At a reception or any ordinary meals, no one was ought to touch another or taste any fresh food until he had rinsed his mouth with pure water and after each course, a mouthful of which would defile him, he repeated the rinsing. When a man had touched a dog he had to purify himself. Those who had partaken of a meal remained together on one side of the hall, and washed his hands and rinsed their mouths and also washed the things used during the meal and the soiled pots.<sup>10</sup>

In his twenty seventh chapter, I-tsing says that one should take a small meal according to the condition the four great elements of which one's body consists.<sup>11</sup> Lighter meals are allowed by the Buddha in addition to the ordinary meal; be it rice-water or rice itself, food is to be taken according to one's appetite.<sup>12</sup>

Day break is generally called 'the time of phlegm' when the juice of the night food is still hanging about the chest, being as yet undispersed. Any food taken at this time disagrees. He gives an example here- "If, for example, one add fuel when the fire is already flaming, the added fuel will be consumed, but if one put grass over a fire which is not as yet blazing, the grass will remain as it is, and the fire will not even burn".<sup>13</sup>

Food at an improper time was forbidden in the monastic system but, in the case of disease one may eat food at any unprescribed time if this be the physician's order. "In such case, the Buddha said, the food is to be given in a private place".<sup>14</sup>

### Cleansing after Meals

I-tsing says, "When a meal is finished, do not fail to cleanse the hands. In getting the water, fetch a water-jar yourself or order others to do so...Chew tooth-wood in the mouth; let the tongue as well as the teeth be carefully cleansed and purified. If the (unclean) spittle be yet remaining in the mouth, the religious fast may not be observed, while the lips should be washed either with pea-flour or with mud

9 J. Takakusu. *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago* (Tr. of I-tsing's Travel Account), (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1966), p.24

10 Ibid, p.25

11 Ibid, p.126; I-tsing clearly endorses here the Buddhist concept of matter described in Abhidhamma Texts. For example, Abhidhammatthasangaho expounds that earth, water; fire and air are the essential Rupa-s.

12 Ibid, p.127

13 Ibid

14 Ibid

made by mixing earth with water, so as not to leave any taint of grease.”<sup>15</sup>

After wards the water was to be poured out of the clean jar into a conch-shell cup, which was to be held over fresh leaves or in the hands. If the cup touched the hand, it was necessary to rub it with the three kinds of cleansing material i.e. pea-flour, dry earth, and cow-dung, and washed it with water to take off the taint. In a secluded place water had to be poured right into the mouth from a clean jar, but this was forbidden in a public spot. After rinsing the mouth 2 or 3 times it was generally regarded as cleansed. Before doing this it was not allowed to swallow the mouth-water or spittle. Anyone Breaking this rule and so lowering his dignity was considered faulty.<sup>16</sup>

### Two Jugs for Keeping Water

The cleaned water was kept separately from water for cleansing purposes, (touched) and there were two kinds of jars (*i.e. Kundli and Kalasa*) for each. Earthenware or porcelain was used for the clean jar and the jar for water for cleansing purposes was made of copper or iron. The clean water was ready for drinking at any time and the touched water for cleansing purposes after having been to the urinal. The clean water had to be carried in a clean hand and placed in a clean place, while the jar for the ‘touched’ water was to be grasped by the ‘touched’ (or unclean) hand and was to be put in an unclean place. The water in a pure and fresh jar could be drunk at any time; the water in any other jar is called ‘special water’ (water to be used at certain prescribed times).<sup>17</sup>

To drink from a jar holding it upright in front was no fault, but drinking in the afternoon was not permissible. A jar was made to fit one’s mouth; the top of the cover had to be two fingers high; in it a hole as small as a copper chopstick was made. Fresh water for drinking had to be kept in such a jar. At the side of the jar there was another round hole as large as a small coin, two fingers higher than the drinking mouth. This hole was used for pouring in water, 2 or 3 gallons could be put in it. A small jar was never used.<sup>17</sup>

A priest, who travels, carries his jar, bowl, necessary clothes, by hanging them from his shoulders over his cloak taking an umbrella in his hand.<sup>18</sup> If his hand was not much occupied, a jar for unclean water, leather shoes in a bag etc. was also taken.

### The Morning Inspection of Water

Water had to be examined every morning. Accordingly as it was found in different places i.e. in jars, in a well, in a pond or in a river examining was different. Early in the morning jar-water was first to be examined. After pouring about a handful of it, by inclining the jar, into a pure bronze cup, a ladle made of bronze, a conch shell, or a plate of lacquer-work, poured it slowly on a brick. Or, by means of a wooden instrument made for this purpose, observed the water for some moments, shutting the mouth with the hand. Insects, even as small as a hair point, should be avoided. If any insects were found, the water was again returned into the jar, and washed the vessel with other water twice until no insects were left in it.<sup>19</sup>

If there was a river or a pond in the neighbourhood, they took the jar there and threw away the water containing insects; then fresh filtered water was put in the jar. If there was a well, water was used

15 Ibid, p.26

16 Ibid, pp.26-27

17 Ibid, p.28

18 Ibid, p.29

19 Ibid, pp. 30-31

after filtering it.<sup>20</sup> For straining water, fine white cloth was used in India whereas in China, fine silk.

### Use of Tooth-Woods

I-tsing says, "Every morning one must chew tooth-woods & clean the teeth with them and rub off the dirt of the tongue as carefully as possible." Only after the hands have been washed and the mouth cleansed is a man fit to make a salutation; if not both the saluter and the saluted are at fault. Tooth-wood is Dantakāshtha in Sanskrit, danta-tooth and kāshtha – a piece of wood.<sup>21</sup> The rough root of northern Burr—weed is the most excellent, he further claims.

Then breaking the wood and bending it, they rubbed the tongue. In addition to the tooth-wood, some toothpicks made of iron or copper were used or a small stick of bamboo or wood, flat as the surface of the little finger and sharpened at one end could be used for cleaning the teeth and tongue; but had to be careful of not hurting the mouth. After the use, the wood was washed and thrown away.

"Tooth-wood hardens the teeth, scents the mouth, helps to digest food, or relieves heart-burning. If this kind of tooth-cleaner be used, the smell of the mouth will go off after a fortnight. A disease in the canine teeth or toothache will be cured after a month", I-tsing declares.<sup>22</sup>

The younger priest would chew as per their likeness, but the elders hammered the stick at one end and made soft; the best one which was bitter astringent or pungent in taste.<sup>23</sup>

### Advantages of Proper Exercise

In his 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter, I-tsing describes the rules of sleeping and resting followed by monks, along with the note on the importance of exercise. Generally, monks and laymen would take a walk in the forenoon (before eleven o' clock) and late in the afternoon. I-tsing says, "If any one neglects this exercise he will suffer from ill health, and often be troubled by a swelling of the legs or of the stomach, a pain in the elbows or the shoulders. A phlegmatic complaint likewise is caused by sedentary habits".<sup>24</sup> But walking round a temple or a Caitya must be performed with special reverence for the sake of religious merit. Unfortunately, "This suitable practice has long since been discontinued at China" I-tsing laments. Senior monks while accepting the salutation by the junior monks would say ' Ārogya'. "This word implies one's praying that the one addressed may not have any disease"<sup>25</sup> I-tsing explains.

### Concerning Evacuation

One had to put on a bathing skirt for the lower part of the body, a Saṅkakshikā robe for the upper part. One had to fill up a jar with water for cleansing purposes, went to the lavatory with that jar, and shut the door in order to hide one. 14 balls of earth were provided and placed on a brick plate, or sometimes on a small board, outside the lavatory. The size of the brick or board is one cubit long and half a cubit wide. The earth-balls were to be grounded into powder and made into two rows, the powder of each ball being placed separately. There had to be an additional ball placed there.

One took three balls in the lavatory and put them aside. Of these three, one had to be used in rubbing the body, another in washing the body. The manner of washing the body was.<sup>26</sup>

20 Ibid, p. 31

21 Ibid, p. 33

22 Ibid, p. 34

23 Ibid

24 Ibid, p 114

25 Ibid, p 115

26 Ibid, pp. 92-93

One should wash the body with the left hand, and again purify with water and with the earth. There was still one ball left, with which one roughly washed the left hand once. If they had a piece of card (or peg) it was well to bring it in, but when it had been used, one threw it away outside the lavatory. But if an old paper was used, it was thrown away in the urinal. After the purification had been done, one adjusted the clothes, put the water-jar on one side, opened the door with the right-hand, and came out holding the jar in the right-hand. Again embracing the jar with the left arm but closing the left hand, one shut the door behind him with the right hand and left the urinal.

Now one came to the place where the earth-balls were kept and squat down on one side; if one used a mat, one placed it accordingly as the occasion demands. The jar was placed on the left knee and was pressed down by the left arm. First the seven earth-balls which were near one's body were used one by one in order to wash the left hand and then the other seven one by one was used to wash both hands.

The surface of the brick and wood (board) had to be cleanly washed. There was still another ball left with which the jar, arms, abdomen and feet (soles of feet) had to be washed. The water in the jar was not fit to be put in the mouth and to the lips. One came back to one's room and washed the mouth with water contained in a clean jar. When one touched the jar after having been to the lavatory, one had to wash the hands and rinse the mouth again, and then one was fit to touch any other utensils.

In winter one may use warm water, in the other three seasons one may use whatever he liked. Some kept water in their mouth and went out of the lavatory; this practice was against the rules of purification.<sup>27</sup>

### **Bathing at Proper Times**

I-tsing's concern towards health precautions followed by the monks begins with the depiction of bathing habit of them. There were more than ten great pools, with abundant water, near Nālandā monastery and there every morning a bell was sounded to remind the monks of the bathing hour.<sup>28</sup> Monks would always take meals after bath because it had two benefits. First, the body becomes pure and empty, being free from all dirt. Second, the food will be well digested, as the bathing makes one free from phlegm or any disease of the internal organs.<sup>29</sup> I-tsing presents here a Chinese concept of cleanliness quoting a Chinese saying: "Wash hair when hungry, but bathe after food". But, he says, "Bathing after a good meal is forbidden in the (Indian) science of medicine" (Cikitsā Vidyā).<sup>30</sup> The regulations instructed to build a bath-room, use of bathing-sheet, way of coming to bathing place and taking bath with the reference of medical bath and use of oil instructed by Buddha himself, is also expounded.

### **On Symptoms of Bodily Illness**

The medical science, one of the five sciences (*vidyā*) in India, shows that a physician, having inspected the voice and countenance of the diseased, prescribes for the latter according to the eight sections of medical science. The first treats of all kinds of sores; the second, of acupuncture for any disease above the neck, the third of the diseases of the body; the fourth of demoniac disease, the fifth, of the Agada medicine (i.e. antidote); the sixth, of the disease of children; the seventh, of the means of lengthening one's life; the eight, of the methods of invigorating the legs and body.<sup>31</sup>

27 Ibid, pp. 94-95

28 Ibid, p.108

29 Ibid, pp.109 -110

30 Ibid, p.110

31 Ibid, pp.127-128



'Sores' (1) are of two kinds, inward and outward. The disease above the neck (2) is all that is on the head and face; (3) any disease lower down from the throat is called a 'bodily' disease. (4) The 'Demoniac' is the attack of evil spirits and the (5) The Agada is the medicine for counteracting poisons (6) By 'children' is meant from the embryo stage until after a boy's 16<sup>th</sup> year (7) Lengthening life is to maintain the body so as to live long, while (8) invigorating the legs and body means to keep the body and limbs strong and healthy. These eight arts formerly existed in eight books, but lately a man epitomized them and made them into one bundle. All physicians practice according to this book.<sup>32</sup>

### Regarding Medicines

I-tsing further describes the subdivision of the above mentioned diseases also. Having examined the classifications presented by I-tsing, one can easily understand that Monks would follow Ayurvedic method of treatment as these are the eight sections of Āyurveda, with a little difference that the I-tsing's fifth section 'Agada' is the sixth and sixth section 'Kaumārabhritya' is the fifth section of the Āyurveda.

I-tsing gives credit to 'a man' who epitomized these eight sections in one book, which formerly existed in eight different books. Takakusu, in his additional notes, states that "this epitomizer may be Susruta, a famous physician, disciple of Dhanvantari and contemporary of I-tsing or just before I-tsing".<sup>33</sup> I-tsing in this context gives a small account of his Divine Land's (China) herbs and Indian herbs also. Chinese herbs viz. "*Ginseng (Aralia Quinquefolia)*, *the Chinese fungus (Panchyma cocos)*, *the Tang-Kuei (Aralia Cordata)*, *the Yuan-chih (Polygala sibirica)*, *the tubers of Aconite (Aconitum fischeri)*, *the Fu-tsze (Aconitum variegatum)*, *the Ma-huang (Corchorus capsularis)*, *the Hsihsin (Asarum sieboldii)* and such like are best herbs in the China, and are never found in the West (i.e. India)"<sup>34</sup> he says.

Haritaka, Saffron, Assafoetida, Baroos camphor, three kinds of Cardamoms and two kinds of Cloves were used in India in the same way as in China. I-tsing repeatedly warns the people to be alert in their food habit. He is in full agreement with the way of life of Buddhist monks of Nālandā, stating that an established disease may be cured without expending much medicine, and that a fresh disease may be prevented by leading a life of abstinence and controlling the mind. "Each man is himself the king of physicians and any one can be the Jīvaka."<sup>35</sup> These words of him reminds us the words of the Buddha as said in the Dhammapada: "*attā hi attano nātho, attā hi attano gati*" i.e. self, indeed, is the saviour of self; self, indeed is the refuge of self.<sup>36</sup> I-tsing, despite attributing the past actions (*Karma*) as the cause of present suffering or happiness, does not forget to accept the importance of a free-will to make our life healthy or hell and, therefore, he suggests that one should try his best to avoid the situation that leads to disease in the present life.

I-tsing has devoted his twenty eighth chapter describing rules on giving medicine. He starts with the reference of a Sutra preached by the Buddha on the Art of Medicine, which asserts that the disharmony of the four elements of the body makes us diseased. Disharmony of the earth should be understood by the 'inflammation of the abdomen' or 'chronic enlargement of spleen'. Disharmony of the latter three elements represents what is called, Tri-Dosh, a disturbance of the three humours of the body i.e phlegm (*Kapha*), bile (*Pitta*) and wind (*Vāta*) in the Āyurveda. I-tsing has prescribed a certain rules of medication<sup>37</sup> which can be summarized as follows:

32 Ibid

33 Ibid, p.222

34 Ibid, p.128

35 Ibid, p.133

36 Narada Thera (Tr.). *Dhammapada*, (Calcutta: Maha Bodhi Society of India, 1992), p.285.

37 J. Takakusu. Op.cit, pp.132-137



1. One should examine himself the cause of illness in the morning.
2. If any disturbance in the four elements is found on inspection, abstaining from eating must be observed as first aid.
3. If one feel that there is food remaining in the stomach, one should drink hot water mixed with dry ginger. Putting the finger inside the throat to cause vomiting can also be a solution.
4. If someone is severely suffering from the problem of phlegm, fasting is an effective cure and is in accordance with the general rule of the science of medicine (Cikitsā Vidyā).
5. Take the bark of *Haritaka*, dry ginger and sugar in equal quantities, grind the former two and mix them with sugar by means of some drops of water, and then prepare them in pills. This pill is effective to cure a sudden rush of blood causing fever, a violent pain in the hands and feet, any injury or wound of the body by any cause, cholera, diarrhea, headache, heart disease, eye disease and toothache.
6. If one bite a piece of Haritaka every day and swallow its juice, one's whole life will be free from disease.
7. After disease is cured, one should eat newly boiled rice and drink a plenty of well boiled lentil water mixed with some pepper, ginger or the piper longum (pippali) to recover from weakness caused by disease.
8. If one feels cold, kashgarian onions or wild mustard must be applied.
9. Anything of acrid or hot flavour removes a cold, with the exception of dry ginger but if ginger is mixed with other thing, it is also good.
10. In the case of being troubled by cold or fever, medical decoction prepared by well boiling a bitter ginseng is the treatment. Ghee, oil and honey also help.
11. It is not good to force a sick person attacked by violent fever to take cooked rice or food. It can be a dangerous thing.
12. Fasting for a week can be fatal also if the body is not diseased. But if it is diseased, fasting for a long time also can be beneficial.

I-tsing, as Yuan Chwang also has mentioned, informs us that Indian people, generally, would not eat onions at that time. Having observed the Indian people's practice of fasting, he proposes that Chinese people should also adopt the same. As compared to Chinese people, who always would eat uncooked fish and vegetables, Indians eat well cooked food mixed with assafoetida, butter, oil and spice, he states. I-tsing is highly pained and grieved with some wrong practices existed on the name of the treatment in India. In the case of sickness, people would use urine and feces as medicine, sometimes the dung of pigs or cats, which was put on a plate or kept in a jar. People would call it the "Dragon Decoction".<sup>38</sup>

I-tsing attacks on the foul practices and suggests some real medicinal substances to tackle the problems, like, stones of sulphur, flowers of sulphur and gamboge for snake-bite as antidote, decoction of liquorice root, wild tea and bitter ginseng for malaria and so on.<sup>39</sup> The people, who take 'Dragon Decoction' are doing grave offence to the noble teaching (of the Buddha), he says. Unfortunately, a lot of such kind of foul practices can still be traced in the many Indian villages. While on the other hand, he says, in the Buddhist monasteries, even onions were allowed in the case of illness only. A monk, who has eaten onions, had to keep himself in a separate room to be purified by washing and bathing for seven days.

38 Ibid, p.138

39 Ibid. p. 140

As is evident from the above sketch, Yuan Chwang and, especially, I-tsing gives a liberal account of the advantages of the proper exercise to health, symptoms of illness, rules of giving medicine, variety of medicines used for different diseases as well as the kind of medicines which must be avoided. Moreover, at many stages, they also narrate the practices of the Chinese people in the same situation. These descriptions not only throws abundant light on the way of treatment adopted by the monks and common people of India, but also encourages us to conduct a comparative study of the both way of treatments in that age on the ground of such evidences.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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