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ceremony of the wedding itself, but also on the future life of the young wife.

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NARCOTICS IN HINDU MYTHOLOGY

Narcotics are the substances which are either anodyne in their action (relieving pain) or soporific (producing sleep). Every aboriginal culture has some narcotic, hallucinogenic or related active plant. Being intimately associated with Hinduism, narcotic intoxication has become an established luxury. In India, artisans, medicants and labourers are the chief consumers of narcotics. The middle and upper classes partake narcotic on some religious ceremonies, usually small amount, narrowing the narcotic abuse in the community.

Hallucinogens are rarely administered to children. Frequently, the first use of a narcotic occurs in puberty rituals. In almost all instances, in both old and new world, the use of narcotic is restricted to adult males. It may be due to aphrodisiac nature of these plants. There are, however, some exceptions. While purely speculative, there may be a basic reason for the exclusion of women from ingesting narcotic preparations. Narcotics are sufficiently toxic to have abortifacient effects. Since women in aboriginal societies are frequently pregnant, the fundamental reason may have been purely insurance against abortions. Scientific evaluations have also shown that narcotics have had effects on foetus. Soma the god narcotic of ancient India, attained an important place in the religious ceremonies of the Aryans, who 3500 years ago, brought with them the cult of Soma. These early invaders of India, worshipped Soma and drank an extract in their most sacred rites, whereas most hallucinogenic plants were considered as sacred mediators (WILKINS 1972).

In India, at present there are only a few narcotic plants, which are considered sacred or are offered to the gods. Of these major narcotic plants are:

I. Cannabis sativa

"Veda", the four scriptures of Hindus written about 3000 years ago, mentions it as one of the five plants, along with Soma, as 'liberators of

sin'. This implies that during vedic time, its narcotic property was well known. Right from the time of "Vedas", Cannabis is in use in India as re-juvenator (CHAKRAVARTY, 1975). "Vedas" sang of Cannabis as one of the divine nectars, able to give man anything from good health and long life to visions of the gods. In the Atharvaveda, a plant called bhanga, is mentioned as one of the five sacred plant headed by Soma, which has been interpreted as sana – a wild type of grass or hemp or cannabis. Bhang is classified with Soma, which is known for its rejuvenating properties.

In the Kausitaki Brahminia of the "Rigveda", the attributive form of the word Bhanga, derivable both from the feminine and masculine forms, occur both singly and in combination. One, Bhangajala, meaning a hempen net; and another, Bhangasayana, a bed-stead woven with hempen cords.

Cannabis is believed to have originated from Amrita (nectar) which came out during the churning of the ocean by gods. According to Hindu mythology, and Tantrik texts, Cannabis is divided into four types depending upon its colour. Latest taxonomic studies have shown that there are four subspecies of C. indica. Thus the vedic classification might be compared with taxonomic classification, otherwise, these four varieties of Cannabis might be having different levels of intoxication and physiological effects on human beings.

In mythological stories, it is stated that the leaf of this plant is like a trishula (Tridant) of Lord Shiva, which indicates that there are three leaflets in the leaf. Bhang leaf is a great home of yogi as brooding ascetic Mahadeva (Shiva). It is believed that before the religious user of sanctified bhang, stand the Eight Guardians (Ashtadevata, eight principal gods) with clasped hands ready to obey him and perform his orders. He, who pours bhang leaves with pure mind and due reverence over the Shiva lingam, will get all his desires fulfilled. Bhang is specially dear to Mahadeva, in his character of Tripur, the slayer of demon Tripurasur. It was a favourite drink of Indra the king of gods and was called Vijaya, and was supposed to give success to votaries. The gods through compassion on the human race, sent it to the earth, so the mankind by using it may attain delight, lose all fear and have their sexual desires excited. It was in ancient India that this gift of the gods formed excessive use in folk medicine. It was believed to quicken the mind, prolong life, improve judgement, lower fevers, induce sleep and cure dysentery. The intoxicating property of the drug has been implied in the names ananda, the eternal joyous; harshini, the delight giver; madini, the intoxicator and ganja and ganjakini, the noisy.

The probable import of narcotic in ancient India, in a prepared form is indicated in the name Kashmiri often mentioned in early literature. Thus, it is believed that uses of the narcotic or at least of charas was brought to India across the Himalayas (WATT, 1972).

Cannabis helps priests, ascetics, fakirs, yogis and sanyasis in their meditation and performance of religious rites. Devotees of Lord Shiva, Hanuman, goddess Kali and Druga, etc. offer and partake of it after the puja ceremony, with a view to achieve material and spiritual benefits (DASH, 1980). On festival occasions, like Holi, Durgapuja and Shivaratri, after puja, this is distributed among the family members, relatives and friends. In Bengal, on the last day of Durgapuja (Dusshera), after the idols are immersed into water, it is customary to offer friends a cup of Siddhi (bhang) and sweets - Siddhi meaning occult power in Bengali. According to tantrika texts, the use of this plant (drug) gained momentum during mediaeval period (SCHLEIFFER 1979). It is mentioned that Cannabis is useful for siddhas, those who have attained spiritual perfection; munis, sages or thinkers; yogis, those who are engaged in meditation and persons having many wives etc. It relieves people, who are exposed to hard physical labour from pain and fatigue. Among the ascetics, the sect known as Atits are specially devoted to hemp. No social or religious gathering of Atits is complete without the use of the hemp plant, smoked in ganja or drunk in bhang.

In the Himalayas of India, and the Tibetan plateau, Cannabis preparations assumed their greatest narcotic importance in religious contexts. The Tibetans considered Cannabis sacred. A Mahayana Buddhist tradition maintains that during the six steps of asceticism leading to his enlightenment, Buddha lived on one hemp seed a day.

In Europe, people use to inhale its vapour to excite themselves and forget sorrows. Women of Thebes were possessing secret of having a knowledge of qualities of hemp, by which they could dissipate anger or melancholy. Hemp is mentioned more frequently in Arabic and Persian works. In 658 A.D. Sheik Tafar Shirazi, a monk of the order of Haidar, learned from his master the history of the discovery of hemp. A tincture of hemp leaf in wine or spirit seems to have the favourite formula in which Sheik Haidar indulged himself (WATT 1972). To the north Indian muslimans (Muslims) bhang is the spirit of the great prophet Khizr or Elijah, the patron saint of water. Khizr also means green, the revered colour of the cooling water of bhang.

II. Areca catechu

Early Sanskrit literature has reference of arecanut (Gouvaka) in Hindu mythology and religious ceremonies. Reference to betel and betelnut chewing is available in Pali as well as in Jain scriptures (JAIN 1981). Arecanut is very closely associated with all social and religious ceremonies of Indians. The nut is a constant offering to the gods.

In India, arecanuts are extensively used as a masticatory. Unripe nut is pungent and leads to constriction of oesophagus, sensation of heat in head, red and congested face and dizziness. Fresh and sometimes dry nuts have shown intoxicating properties and have produced giddiness. Ordinary betel nuts have shown a stimulatory and ex-hilarant-effect, and are regarded as aphrodisiacal. Some of the old nuts also cause, in those not addicted to their use, great oppression in the chest and a sense of strangulation. Central portion of intoxication nuts are of red colour when cut open.

III. Calotropis Sps

According to "Vedas", the ancient name of the plant was Akra (wedge), alluding to the form of the leaves, which were used in sacrificial rites. From one of the sanskrit names (Mandara) of the plant, Madar is a corruption, which has been frequently mentioned in the writings of Susruta (WATT 1972).

The drug prepared from one or the other of these species was apparently well known to the Arabians. A traditional Oamarcate narrates that the great Emperor Akbar was born under an AK bush; hence his name. The word bar is applied to the liquid said to be prepared from AK juice.

The flowers are used in the worship of Shiva and Hanuman. In Bengal, the sections of the bluish corona of the flower are carefully picked from cerolla and strung into garlands which are worn at certain religious ceremonies.

In the Skand Puran, this plant is mentioned to be the transformation of Surya, or Sun. When a Hindu is to marry a third time, it is believed that the third wife will soon die, in order to avoid such a calamity, the man is first married to this plant, which is then cut down. This ceremony is believed to ensure the longevity of the fourth, but really the third wife whom he now really marries.

An intoxicating liquor 'Bar' is prepared from this plant by the tribes of the Western Ghats.

As mentioned in Shravan Mahatma, Maruti (also known as Hanuman) or the monkey god, is supposed to be worshipped on every Saturday with a garland of flowers of this plant. They are also employed as Samridhas for the feeding of sacred fires.

IV. Datura Spp.

Modern Indian name Dhatura and the Persian Tatulah came from the Sanskrit Dhustura, while the name given to it in southern India, Ummettak-kay comes from the Sanskrit synonym Ummatta.

It was believed that when Buddha preached, dew drops fell from heaven on Datura. In India, it is called "tuft of Shiva", the god of destruction. Datura is associated with the worship of the Hindu god Shiva. All the parts of the plant are powerfully intoxicating and narcotic. In China, the plant was considered sacred.

V. Nerium

Amongst the Hindu, the Kaner flowers are called as sacred offerings to Shiva. Root, bark, leaves contain a powerful narcotic poison.

VI. Other plants

Water lilies enjoy an exceptionally prominent place in Indian mythology. There exist numerous interesting parallels between the ritualistic significance of Nymphaea (Kamal) in old and the new worlds, suggesting its use as narcotic. Myristica fragrans (Jaiphal) has been mentioned as 'narcotic fruit' in ancient Indian writings. The term 'narcotic' has unfortunately been twisted by misuse to mean only the dangerous and addictive ones, which are few indeed. In spite of religious sanction and social approval, the use of narcotics were permitted only in restricted quantity, which is not harmful to the body and the mind. In ancient India, the imposition of the rule of its offering to a deity before use by the

individual had a considerable salutary effect on prohibiting its abuse and other luxurious purposes.

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THE AZTEC COMMUNITY AND ABNORMAL BEHAVIOUR: A LOOK AT ITS PROGRAM FOR
PRIMARY PREVENTION

When Western mental health practitioners think of the Aztecs, it is generally to connect them with the deadly rite of human sacrifice rather than to give them credit for any positive intellectual or social contributions (WASSERMAN 1982). However, this paper will take the position that, over four centuries ago, the Aztecs of Mexico-Tenochtitlan employed measures aimed at the primary prevention of abnormal behaviour that would be considered valid even by contemporary standards.

According to Caplan (1964), primary prevention consists of those efforts made to block the development of psychological disturbance. For Caplan, the aim of this kind of prevention is to reduce the frequency of mental disorder and, insofar as possible, to prevent it from occurring altogether. However, as Altrocchi (1980) points out, in addition to reducing abnormal behaviour, primary prevention also works to promote effective functioning. Indeed, as some mental health specialists have argued, a society which is sincere in its effort to prevent deviant behaviour needs to help its citizens gain control over their problems throughout the course of their lives (BLOOM 1977; CAPLAN 1974; GLIDEWELL 1970). Thus, the remainder of this paper on Aztec primary prevention will be organized around a broader, life-cycle approach.