

A Miasmatic Interpretation of the Origin of Life According to Padma Purāṇa (Sṛiṣṭi-Khaṇḍa)

("Padma Purāṇa describes creation as progressive densification from consciousness to matter; homoeopathic miasms represent the same process pathologically, while cure is the reversal of this descent.")

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Abstract

The Padma Purāṇa, one of the eighteen Mahāpurāṇas, presents a detailed account of cosmic creation in its Sṛiṣṭi-khaṇḍa, describing the evolution of life from undifferentiated consciousness to gross material existence through the principles of ahaṅkāra, tanmātras, and pañcha-mahābhūtas. Homoeopathy, through Hahnemann's theory of chronic miasms, explains disease as a progressive deviation from harmony toward limitation, excess, and destruction. This article proposes a novel integrative model: the Paurāṇic stages of creation are interpreted as archetypal precursors of homoeopathic miasms. Psora, Sycosis, Syphilis, and Tubercular miasm are mapped onto the Sāttvika, Rājasic, and Tāmasika phases of creation, revealing a deep philosophical consonance between ancient Indian cosmology and modern homoeopathic doctrine. The concept of cure is further elucidated as a reversal of the Paurāṇic descent into matter.

Keywords: Padma Purāṇa, Sṛiṣṭi-khaṇḍa, Homoeopathy, Miasm, Psora, Sycosis, Syphilis, Origin of Life

Introduction

Indian Paurāṇic literature does not merely narrate mythological events; it encodes sophisticated cosmological and philosophical frameworks. The Padma Purāṇa, particularly its Sṛiṣṭi-khaṇḍa, delineates the origin of life through a systematic evolution of consciousness into matter. Parallely, homoeopathy conceptualizes chronic disease through the theory of miasms, which represent fundamental distortions of life force. While these two systems emerged in distinct cultural and temporal contexts, both attempt to answer the same existential question: *how does harmony degrade into disorder?*

This article attempts an interdisciplinary synthesis, interpreting the Padma Purāṇa's creation sequence as a metaphysical blueprint for the origin of miasms. Such an approach not only enriches homoeopathic philosophy but also restores the scientific depth of Paurāṇic cosmology.

Purāṇic Framework of Creation (Sṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa)

The Padma Purāṇa describes creation as proceeding from **Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu)** resting in the causal waters (*kāraṇa-jala*), symbolizing undifferentiated consciousness and a pre-manifest state of existence (Padma Purāṇa, Sṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa, **Adhyāya 1–2**). From Viṣṇu arises **Brahmā** through the navel-lotus (*nābhi-padma*), marking the initiation of sṛṣṭi or manifest creation (**Adhyāya 3**).

The creative process unfolds through **ahaṅkāra**, which differentiates into three functional modes:

1. **Vaikārika (Sāttvika) ahaṅkāra** — source of **manas (mind)** and **ten presiding devatās**, responsible for cognition, regulation, and harmony (**Adhyāya 5, śloka 12–20**).
2. **Taijasa (Rājasic) ahaṅkāra** — source of the **five jñānendriyas** and **five karmendriyas**, enabling perception and action (**Adhyāya 6, śloka 1–18**).
3. **Bhūtādi (Tāmasika) ahaṅkāra** — source of the **five tanmātras** (śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa, gandha) and subsequently the **pañca-mahābhūtas**—ākāśa, vāyu, tejas, jala, and pṛithvī (**Adhyāya 7, śloka 3–28**).

The mutual combination of these elements gives rise to the material universe and embodied beings, establishing the cycle of birth, death, and karma (**Adhyāya 8–9**). This sequence represents a graded descent from subtle consciousness to gross matter, explicitly narrated in the Sṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa.

Miasmatic Theory in Homoeopathy

Samuel Hahnemann postulated that chronic diseases arise from deep-seated miasms—fundamental disturbances of the vital force. Classical homoeopathy recognizes:

- **Psora** – functional imbalance and hypersensitivity
- **Sycosis** – excess, accumulation, and fixation
- **Syphilis** – destruction, degeneration, and dissolution
- **Tubercular miasm** – instability and conflict between construction and destruction

These miasms are not merely pathological entities but existential states reflecting humanity’s struggle with limitation and imperfection.

Miasmatic Mapping of the Paurāṇic Creation Process

1. Pre-Creation State: Viṣṇu in Causal Waters

Paurāṇic View: Absolute unity, no differentiation, no motion.

Miasmatic Interpretation:

This state lies beyond miasm—perfect health and harmony. Disease is impossible in this undivided state of consciousness.

2. Vaikārika (Sāttvika) Ahaṅkāra → Mind and Devatās

Paurāṇic View: Emergence of awareness, intelligence, and regulation.

Dominant Miasm: Psora

Theme: *"I am, therefore I perceive."*

Clinical Reflection:

Functional disorders, hypersensitivity, anxiety, fear, early skin diseases, and psychosomatic complaints.

Psora thus corresponds to the first disturbance from unity—awareness of separation.

3. Taijasa (Rājasic) Ahaṅkāra → Indriyas

Paurāṇic View: Action, desire, movement, and interaction with the world.

Dominant Miasm: Sycosis

Theme: *"I must act, accumulate, and assert."*

Clinical Reflection:

Overgrowths, warts, fibroids, metabolic excesses, obsessive-compulsive patterns, and addictions.

Rajas represents expansion without wisdom, the essence of sycotic pathology.

4. Bhūtādi (Tāmasika) Ahaṅkāra → Tanmātras and Mahābhūtas

Paurāṇic View: Condensation into matter—space, air, fire, water, and earth.

Dominant Miasm: Syphilis

Theme: *"Structure decays; destruction begins."*

Clinical Reflection:

Ulceration, necrosis, congenital deformities, malignancy, severe mental illness, and degenerative diseases.

Tamas signifies inertia and breakdown, mirroring syphilitic annihilation.

5. Material Universe and Living Organisms

Paurāṇic View: Mixing of elements, birth-death cycle, karma in action.

Dominant Miasm: Tubercular

Theme: *"I seek freedom within confinement."*

Clinical Reflection:

Chronic infections, autoimmune tendencies, emaciation, alternating states, and restlessness.

Tubercular miasm reflects the tension between Sattva and Tamas.

Purāṇic Creation and Miasmatic Correlation

Paurāṇic Stage (Padma Purāṇa – Sṛiṣṭi-khaṇḍa)	Philosophical Process	Dominant Miasm	Core Miasmatic Theme	Clinical Meaning
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Viṣṇu in causal waters (Adhyāya 1–2)	Undifferentiated consciousness	Pre-miasmatic	Absolute harmony	Perfect health; no disease
Vaikārika (Sāttvika) Ahaṅkāra (Adhyāya 5)	Emergence of mind & regulation	Psora	Sensitivity, awareness, fear	Anxiety, allergies, functional disorders
Taijasa (Rājasic) Ahaṅkāra (Adhyāya 6)	Action, desire, interaction	Sycosis	Excess, fixation, expansion	Warts, PCOS, BPH, OCD, addictions
Bhūtādi (Tāmasika) Ahaṅkāra (Adhyāya 7)	Condensation into matter	Syphilis	Destruction, degeneration	Ulcers, malignancy, deformities
Mixed Bhūtas → Living beings (Adhyāya 8–9)	Birth–death cycle, karma	Tubercular	Struggle for freedom	TB, asthma, psoriasis, bipolar states

Concept of Cure: Reversal of Creation

In homoeopathy, cure is achieved by reversing the pathological process. This mirrors the Paurāṇic idea of *pralaya*—dissolution of gross forms back into subtle principles. Constitutional remedies act by guiding the organism from:

- Gross → subtle
- Tamas → Sattva
- Fragmentation → integration

Thus, healing represents a micro-pralaya followed by conscious re-creation.

Discussion

The striking parallelism between Padma Purāṇa cosmology and homoeopathic miasms suggests that ancient Indian thought had already conceptualized disease as a metaphysical descent long before modern medicine. Miasms are not merely pathological constructs but symbolic echoes of creation itself. This integrative understanding offers a deeper philosophical foundation for constitutional prescribing, especially in chronic, psychiatric, autoimmune, and oncological cases.

Conclusion

The Padma Purāṇa's Śṛiṣṭi-khaṇḍa provides a profound cosmological narrative that aligns remarkably with homoeopathic miasmatic theory. Creation, disease, and cure are revealed as different phases of the same universal process. Recognizing this unity allows homoeopathy to be practiced not merely as a therapeutic modality but as a science of life aligned with cosmic law.

References

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