

TRANSLATION

When he desired to experience softness, hardness, lightness, heaviness, warmth and coolness, the gross skin became differentiated along with body hairs and **plants, the sense devatās of the hairs**. Vāyu, the sense devatā of the skin, along with the subtle sense organ skin, pervades internally and externally.

COMMENTARY

When the universal form desired to receive the sensations or qualities of softness, hardness, lightness, heaviness, warmth and coolness in objects, skin appeared. Oṣṇa stands for “ā uṣṇa”, which means slight heat. Since intense warmth is the sense object (which only arises after the desire), slight warmth is mentioned because of the desire for warmth in general. There is also a version without the prefix, gurv uṣṇa.

The skin is the location of the sense organ. Because one understands the lightness or heaviness of objects by placing them in the hands, lightness and heaviness are the sense objects. This is according to the followers of the Purāṇas.

In that location (adhibhūta) the devatā Vāyu (adhidaiva) is situated, extending internally and externally, by the sense organ (adhyātma) called skin which receives the sense object called touch (adhibhūta). In that location also, the hair is the sense organ, **the herbs are the devatā** and the sense object is itching. Thus in the skin there are two sense organs. The meaning is this. The sense organ skin is called hair when it receives touch sensation along with itching externally. **The plants act as the presiding deity of that skin (hair)**. When the sense organ skin receives touch internally or externally it is called skin. Its deity is Vāyu or air. In the Third Canto it is said:

nirbhinnāny asya carmāṇi loka-pālo 'nilo 'viśat |  
prāṇenāmśena saṁsparśaṁ yenāsau pratipadyate ||  
tvacam asya vinirbhinnām viviśur dhiṣṇyam oṣadhīḥ |  
amśena lomabhiḥ kaṇḍūm yair asau pratipadyate ||

“When there was a manifestation of skin separated from the gigantic form, Anila, the deity directing the wind, entered with the sense organ skin, and thus the living entities can realize tactile knowledge.”

“When the gross skin of the universal form appeared, **the presiding deities the plants (along with their portion subtle organ called body hair)** entered. By these body hairs, relief from itching appears.” SB 3.6.16,18

Carmāṇi indicates skin. Prāṇena amśena means “with the sense organ called skin, which is spread with prāṇa-vāyu.” In the Bahvṛca-śruti this is partly described.

tvañ nirabhidyata tvaco lomāni lomabhya oṣadhi-vanaspatayaḥ

“The skin differentiated. From that came hairs. From hairs came the plants and trees.”

Aitareya Upaniṣad 1.4

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SB 3.6.18 ~ VCT Commentary

When the gross skin (adhibhūta) of the universal form appeared, **the presiding deities the plants (adhidaiva)**, along with their portion subtle organ called body hair (adhyātma) entered. By these body hairs, relief from itching (adhibhūta, function) appears.

Commentary

Oṣadhīḥ stands for oṣadhyāḥ. On the adhiṣṭhāna of skin, two subtle sense organs—skin, previously mentioned, and body hairs—appeared. The presiding deity of the skin sense organ is Vāyu, and the sense object is touch. **The presiding deities of the hair sense organ are plants,** and their function is relief from itching.