AYURVEDA AND YOGA PHILOSOPHY: ANALYTICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

It has been questioned of what is the necessity of teaching of Padarth Vigyana, specifically Darshana (Indian Philosophies) Shastras in the syllabus of Ayurvedacharya course. Ayurveda is a Sarvadarshanaparishada Shastra which means this system of health science is related to various Darshanas. There are similarities of some concept of Ayurveda and Yoga Darshan Shastra, but as the Prayojana (aim) of both Shastra are same into some extent as acquaintance of healthy situation in body and mind that is physical, mental and spiritual well being of individual. These aim, these Shastra have been advocated in a different way. This indicates that Yoga Darshan related to Ayurveda in a various way. In this article it is trying to correlate a various concepts of Ayurveda and Yoga philosophy.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Yoga Darshan, Trishna, Chitta-Shuddhi.

INTRODUCTION

It has been said earlier, that Ayurveda does not generally mention any particular topic with reference to any particular philosophy by name except ‘Sankhya’ and ‘Yoga’. Topic of Yoga philosophy is no doubt found also in Ayurveda although to a lesser degree when compared to the other philosophies like, Nyaya, Vaishesika and Sankhya. Yoga philosophy in fact originally was a part and parcel of Sankhya philosophy only and was called Sankhya-Yoga philosophy. Sage Patanjali in whose name ‘Yogasutra’ stands was not original founder of ‘Yoga’ philosophy, but he was presented it in an organized manner in ‘Yogasutra’. Hiranyakarbh who lived prior to Patanjali is considered as the real founder of Yoga philosophy. ‘There is no one known to be Yoga philosopher prior to Hiranyakarbh’. This statement of Mahabharata proves the above fact.

Presently available Yogasutra is called as ‘Sankhya- Pravachan’¹[1]

MEANING OF YOGA

The word ‘Yoga’ is derived from the verb root ‘Yujir Yoge’ meaning to join or to unite. It is also derived from other root, ‘Yuj Samadhau’ meaning concentration of mind. According to the first, Yoga is an instrument helping to unite with something supremo or absolute principle and according to the second, Yoga is the name of ‘Dhyana’ or ‘Samadhi’, through which the performer can attain ‘Oneness with Absolute. Bhasyakara Vyas appears to have taken the second meaning only. Patanjali’s Yogasutra, defines Yoga as ‘Cittavrtti nirodh.

YOGA IN AYURVEDA: A REFLECTION

In Ayurveda, the term ‘Yoga’ is very commonly used for medicinal
preparation such as ‘Tail Yoga’, ‘Churna Yoga,’ ‘Guti Yoga’ etc., which means only a combination of more than one medicine [2]. It is also used to mean correct application of any therapy. Yet another common usage of the term in Ayurveda is to mean ‘contact-“Kalarthakarmanam yogo hin-mithyatimattrakah”’ [3]. The above instances are purely physical in nature and have nothing to do with Yoga philosophy as such. Ayurveda does not limit itself to physical meaning of Yoga but surely extends up to Yoga philosophy also. Although maintenance of health and removal of mental and physical disorders were the chief objectives as a medical science, the ultimate purpose of achieving perfect health also was only to achieve emancipation ultimately. Ayurveda considered birth and death also as natural disorders; salvation was the only solution to get rid of this Dhukha (misery) of birth and rebirth cycle. ‘Yogasutra’ regards ‘Vyadhi’ as one of the nine ‘Vikshepas’ and Patanjali advises to abandon Dhukha and all circumstances leading to it. ‘Japa’ in Yoga has been regarded as a means of purify the Indriyas. This corresponds to the Sattvavajaya Cikitsa narrated in Ayurveda. The proper line of treatment for mental disorders, as given in Carak Samhita is to take recourse to spiritual and scriptural knowledge, patience, memory and Samadhi. The term Samadhi used in the said context is one of the major components of Yoga philosophy.

CAUSE OF DISEASE: TRISNA

Sage Atreya explained that the root cause of misery is Trisna. If we abandoned Trisna then ultimately we got happiness. Tactile (all sensory contacts) and mental contacts (attachment) are the two types of contacts which bring about happiness and miseries. The happiness and miseries are due to Trisna (desire) in the form of like and dislikes [4]. The mind and body are the seats for manifestation of happiness and miseries. Yoga is the right treatment to avoid these and finally to attain Moksha (salvation). According to Atreya, this ‘Yoga’ is the ‘Atmashe manasi sthire’ (condition where the mind is concentrated and entered in the soul). Atreya admits that this is the science of yoga, as dictated by the sages of yoga and not by him. It can be concluded that Ayurveda owes a lot to yoga tradition a contemporary science then.

MEASURE TO ATTAIN CITTASUDDHI: AYURVEDIC VIEW

To attain Citta Suddhi as required for the purpose of discarding Trisna, Yoga prescribes following methods: 1) Yama, 2) Niyam, 3) Asana, 4) Pranayama, 5) Pratyahara, 6) Dharana, 7) Dhyana and 8) Samadhi. ‘Yama’ includes Ahimsa (nonviolence), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (nonstealing), Bramhacharya (celibacy) and Aparigraha (not keeping huge wealth). In Ayurveda the first three are considered as good conduct, opposite of which are considered as Papkarmas (sinful acts) [5]. Brahmacharya (celibacy) also considered as one of the tripods of health promoting factors [6]. It helps to preserve the vital Dhatu Shukra (tissue-semen) which in turn helps to preserve as essence factor called ‘Ojas’ [7]. It has a positive effect in preventing the diseases of body and mind. ‘Niyam’ encompasses cleanliness (both external-internal), pleasantness, penance, self-study and Iśvarpranidhan(worship of god). Snana (Bathing) is advocated as daily routine for good health in Ayurveda. Dana (Charity), peace, sacred rituals, nonviolence and
celibacy are stated to be helpful for self upliftment and liberation of soul in Ayurveda. In order to maintain purity of mind and body many steps of right conduct are advised under Sadvritta in Ayurveda [8]. Maitri (friendliness), Karuna (compassion), Mudita (happiness), Upeksha (detachment) are the means for internal purification according to Yoga and in Ayurveda [9].

Ayurveda also advocate virtually identical right conduct. It is interesting to note that Ayurveda prescribe these qualities to be possessed by the physician from very practical point of view. Maitri-karuna (doctor is supposed to be sympathetic and kind to all patients), Sakye prithi (should be attentive to those who are likely to be cured) and Prakrtisthesu bhetesu upeksanam (should feel detached with those who are likely to die). These four are the the Vaidya Vritti (professional conducts) required to be possessed by a physician. Asana and Pranayama are not directly mentioned. However, it deserve to be noted here that Charak Samhita while describing the ways and means of getting salvation, clearly mentions ‘Yogarambhe satam anirvedah’ (one should have confidence in yogic practices) which naturally should include Pranayam and Asana. In the same context mention of ‘Dhyanaahetoh kayanibandhanam’ (a wooden resting plank to be used for meditation), Indriyarthesu anuraggopatapa-nigrakah (avoidance of attachment and hatred towards the object of senses), ‘niyamanam indriyannam cetasa atmani’ (the senses faculties to be concentrated in mind, the mind in soul, and the self in himself in reversed order) definitely stand for Pratyahar, Dharana, and Samadhi of yoga philosophy. Without naming them Charaka has actually narrated the technique of Yoga in Charak Samhita. This may probably be due to the fact that yogic steps had not been technically designated or were not very familiar among the physicians at the time this Samhita came into existence or the narration of ways and means of salvation was intended to be of utilitarian value directly to the ‘Sadhaka’ and hence giving of technical terms as Pratyahara, Dharana and Samadhi in an order was no longer felt necessary by sages of Ayurveda more so because Ayurveda was not purported to be a yogic text.

**CITTAVRTTI: ITS APPLIED ASPECT IN AYURVEDA**

Cittavrtti of yoga also mentioned in Ayurveda at many places, as and when the context demanded. Nidra (sleep), Smrti (memory) and S vapna (dreams) are described with reference to health and disease [9]. Proper sleep is considered essential for health and inappropriate sleep is considered a cause of many diseases. In answer to a question by Agnivesha, Punarvasu Atreya narrates certain factors such as ignorance, desire, hatred and purposeful action as the causes of global attachment. He further says that these four in fact lead to Ahankar (egoism). Sanga (attachment), Samsaya (doubtfulness), Abhisamplava (vanity), Abhyavapata (selfish disposition), Vipratyaya (mistaking or erroneous notion), Avisesa (lack of discrimination) which overcome and engulf an individual as a big tree engulfs a small one. These are considered as root cause of all miseries. Each one of these is explained with example.
The above narration appears to be a yogic topic, which was probably prevalent in contemporary ancient Yogic tradition, but not found in ‘Yogasutra’ as such.

**ISVARA 26TH TATTVA IN YOGA**

Yoga considered ‘Isvara’ as a 26th Tattva in addition to 25 of Yoga-Sankhya philosophy. According to Patanjali, the concept of Isvara is one of practical importance than a mere theoretical concept. In order to achieve ‘Dhyana’, Isvara-pranidhan is one of the ladders essential according to him. But the followers of Yoga philosophy of latter period were more inclined to explain ‘Isvara’ conceptually and prove his existence.

Yogsutra calls such Purusa afflicted by Klesa, Karmaphala Vipaka and Asaya (Samskara) as ‘Isvara’ which is somewhat different from ordinary sense of Isvara-as supreme Lord or God. Caraka mentions ‘Purusa’ who is also named as ‘Isvara’ in Yogsutra in the cited context appears to being equated with ‘Karma Purusa’ of Ayurveda.

**DISEASE AND MIND**

Mind has a definite place both in health and disease. Mind is considered as one of the seat of disease. The impairment of mind is responsible for error of perception by sensory faculties. Thus both Pajnaparadh and Asatmendriyarth-samyoga are considered as cause of various diseases. In order to keep the mind in a healthy condition, yoga is certainly helpful.

**CONCLUSION**

The philosophic thoughts like ‘Yama’, ‘Niyama’, ‘Asana’ etc., Cittavrtti, Manasa etc. which form the chief topics of discussion in ‘Yoga’ are undoubtedly interesting topics of Ayurveda also. These thoughts have surely played a key role in developing a science of mental health. The former two philosophies Nyaya and Vaisesika thoughts have guided the systematic development of Yuktivyasraya therapy of both preventive and curative nature; while thoughts of yogic science have played a pivotal role in giving well organized Indian psychology (both normal-abnormal), psychiatry, psychic therapy both preventive and curative under ‘Sattwawajaya’ therapy. These thoughts of Yogic nature are considered fundamental steps to raise the height of super consciousness when all miseries vanish. This forms a part of Naisthiki cikitsa.

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