

CONCEPT OF PRANA IN AYURVEDIC LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

Prana is prime and most significant energy source for a living body to perform all biological processes and corporeal activities. Ayurved science has very broad understanding on prana as it does not believe prana as only breath or as only food. There are twelve prana are accepted by ayurved science. The science of prana is given as much importance that it is said equivalent with atharva vidya. Vedas believe Surya (sun) is responsible to empower prana i.e. life force. All of living & nonliving creatures (chara & achara) are depending on principle prana. Prana is responsible for life, death & illnesses. & hence one shall do upasana of prana principle. Present, past & future all of three phases depend on prana principle. Prashnopanishada traces utpatti of prana right back to aatma. It also mentions that prana assigned different indriyas & its subtypes (prana, vyana, udana, apana, samana) their function & locations Upanishadic literature quotes prana as a precursor of all. Prashnopanishada quotes that, Once prana said to bhoota & antakarana chatushtaya that now it will divide itself into 5 types for dharana of sharir. Kindly do not get confused (moha grasta) with this differentiation. But they (bhoota & antakarana chatushtaya) did not believe him i.e. prana. Thus prana is considered as precursor. Kathopanishada refers that the one devtaswaroop aaditi which appears in form of prana, resides in buddhiroopi guha & is generated with bhootas is the same principle (brahma) asked by you (Nichiketa). Kathopanishada even quotes that the one who propels Prana in upward direction, apana in downward direction is residing in madhya (hrudaya) & is worshipped by all. Mundakopanishada mentions genesis of akshara brahma followed by genesis of prana & later mana, indriya & panchamahabhoota are said to be originated from prana. One may find prana been praised in many references in prashnopanishada.

Keywords: Prana, Upanishad, Vayu, Hrudaya, Kosha

1. INTRODUCTION

Science of yoga is the oriental heritage again based on basic concept of prana. 'Prana' & 'apana' are considered to be shakti. One shall control his Prana & Apana are responsible for life, death, long life & medha. Samaveda too mentions that bala is derived from prana & Apana shakti. Bhagvadgeeta has referred to different modes of sacrifices in fourth chapter, Some yogis scarify all functions of their sense organs & those of prana in the fire of yoga which is nothing but a form of self- control. Whereas some other yogis amalgam their prana into apana or vice versa. Some others regulate their diet & practice pranayama & thus are able to pour prana (vitality) in prana (pranamaya kosha). In Bhagvadgeeta there is also mention of a practise of equalization of prana & apana by which a contemplative soul intent on liberation & becomes free from desire, fear & anger. Prashnopanishad mentions that Uchchwas & Nishwas are like aahuti & sama i.e. equal distribution of it is done by samana vayu. Aptly used techniques based on yoga, pranayama & asana a kundalini gets awakened & prana gets dispersed in shoonya. It is known as laya of prana. Union of apana & prana & kshaya of mala & mooltra can transform old person in younger one.

2. METHODOLOGY

Prana shakti is nurtured by aagneya as well soma shaktis. It's not only surya but also Chandra, quotes atharvaveda. Varchas/tejas are synonymous with ojus in vedic literature. Varchas empowers prana shakti refers yajurveda 7/26. According to prashnopanishad, Aaditya is prana & rayi is chandrama. All moorta & amoorta are forms of rayi, where Prajapati united rayi & prana for srushti utpatti is the basic concept in Upanishad. Prana is said to be dependent on agni at many places. This is important as in ayurveda prana vayu & subtle prana are said to be dependent on agni only. Agni gives bala to 'prana principle' & thus to life. As in Atharva veda 8-2-13. At another place chandrama is equally believed to nurture prana along with agni. It is said that Yagna improves one's Prana & apana shaktis. & he do not have bhaya i.e. fear for mrutyu i.e. death. Apana & prana get merged with agni. Blended with prana agni becomes empowered. The interrelationship of prana with agni is very clearly stated by Bhagvadgeeta. Chapter fifteen mentions that bhagvan himself takes form of agni in all body creatures & unites with prana & apana so as to digest four kind of ingested foods. It is interesting to note that pranamaya kosha serves as mediator between The concept of pancha-kosha includes five sheaths. From external to internal levels they are, gross organic level of existence (Annamaya kosha), Bio-energy level of existence (Pranamaya kosha), Psychoenergy level of existence (Manomaya kosha), Level of insightful existence (Vijnanamaya kosha) and Level of Delightful existence (Anandamaya kosha). Aatma resides in hrudayakasha. Manomay

& pranaswaroop aatma resides in hrudaya in annamaya purusha Panchakosha. Pranamaya kosha is the kosha of vital energy. Annamaya (physical, matter) kosha is the layer where our physical sensations are felt and all our elements and minerals come together as the material body. Yoga postures (Yogasanas) operate at this level of organization. Pranamaya (physiological, vital energy or air) kosha represents our vital energy body. This physiological sheath is where we breathe and observe our heart beating for example. Through the practice of appropriate breathing and breath control exercises (pranayama) Manomaya (mental, or mind) kosha is the sheath where our emotions, thinking, feelings and desires are grouped together. During the dream- state this kosha brings together many aspects of the mind. It is also where the ego can create obstacles, and psychosomatic factors causing physical illness begin their journey into the body's cell structure resulting in a breakdown of tissue. Optimal functioning at this level, according to Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, is facilitated through dharana (concentration exercises) and dhyana (meditation, or spiritual contemplation). These practices may ultimately lead to Samadhi (or super-consciousness). annamaya kosha & manomaya kosha.

3. DISCUSSION

Both of ayurveda & yoga have adopted theory of five types of vata & importance of prana & its location as hrudaya & its transport in body through different vessels. Yogic idea of prana is more related with mind & its movement through ida, pingla & sushumna nadi. Yoga adds five subtypes of vata (naga vayu for udgar, koorma for unmeelana, krukala for kshudha, devadatta for jumbhana, dhananjay for poshana) whereas ayurveda describes different abnormal conditions caused by alone of five types of vata & in combination with pitta & kapha, observes Kenneth G Zysk Prana & respiratory phenomenon played key role in development of yoga & its ecstasy practises in later orthodox upanishada & texts on yoga. However medical physiology of prana & body winds split from upanishadic tradition & developed into a separate discipline. K G Zysk observes that this was probably due to intimate partnership between medicine & heterodox ascetic tradition such as Buddhism whose followers utilized ascetic techniques from upanishada & contributed to early codification of medical doctrine.

Prana , apana , vyana, udana & samana are five prana vrutti. Yoga shastra is having mention of jaya over samana & udana only & not prana, vyana & apana. In phalashruti of rudropanishad again there is mention of prana shchme , vyana shchme, apana shchme & again samana and udana are not mentioned observes kolhatkar Keshav Krushnaji. He remarks that prana & apana & vyana are less in control of humans in comparison with udana & samana. For both a healthy life and the practice of meditation, Vedanta says that it is very useful, or essential that this level of our being be trained, regulated, and directed, so that it flows smoothly. In meditation, we become aware of Pranamaya kosha, explore it, and then go inward, to and through the other koshas.

4. CONCLUSION

Ayurved science describes prana in broad sense. Acharya sushruta describes twelve prana. Prana supply nourishment to whole body or Ayu. Four main division of concept of ayu – Sharir, Indriya, Sattva and Aatma getnourished by four division of twelve prana. There are certain mechanism of resides of prana and circulation of prana. Prana are residing in ten pranayataniya and circulated from heart to whole body through ten great vessels. Ayurvedic literature contains numerous references underlining importance of prana. According to Parashar rishi, nabhi is first organ to be developed in fetus. Simply because nabhi is the place for prana along with bodily ushma. The verse implies association of agni & prana & also it highlights prana as a precursor. According to Charakacharya, while treating aavruta vata , vaidya shall particularly take care of prana & udana as life ' depends on prana & bala ' depends on udana. This is why the definition of genuine vaidya is pranabhisara vaidya'. A physician dully engaged in the study of the science of medicine, in mastering their actual implications, in the right application of the therapy & having practical experience is known as savior of prana i.e. pranabhisara', says Charaka. According to another definition from same classic, there are 10 sites as resorts of life i.e. prana, called as pranayatana including two temples, three vital organs (hrudaya, basti, shira), kantha, rakta, shukra, ojas & guda. The wise physician who is well acquainted with these pranayatana, the internal as well external factors like senses, intelligence, soul, causes of disease, their recovery & signs & symptoms of disease is known as pranabhisara vaidya i.e. savior of life. At another place referring to physician of kings, there is again mention of prana.

5. REFERENCES

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