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Concepts of *Manas* (~mind): An Insight from Vaiseshika Darshana and Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

Various means of valid or right knowledge have been discussed at its highest length are described in Vaiseshika Darshana. The concept of this philosophical system has enormously used in Ayurveda; off course they formed the fundamental base for acquiring the main objectives of Ayurveda. It is very necessary for an Ayurvedic scholar to screen the philosophical views which are present in Ayurvedic classics for the better understanding of the science in all aspects. The concept of *Manas* (~mind) is commonly seen as one key issue in Indian philosophy of mind. Therefore, here, an attempt has been made to highlight the concepts of *Manas* in Vaiseshika Darshana under the view of Ayurvedic texts.

Key words: Ayurveda, *Manas*, Mind, Vaiseshika, Darshana, memory.

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INTRODUCTION

Vaisheshika system is popular Indian mainstream philosophy. Vaisheshika makes a complete analysis of the phenomenal world. It attempts to explain the whole world of phenomena in terms of seven categories. The Vaisheshika school is best known for its metaphysics or cosmology.

Vaisheshika philosophy opines, the complete knowledge of an object can be obtained by its two qualities viz. *Ashesha Jnana* (complete knowledge of the object from its beginning to its presence and till its end if it is destructed) and *Vishesha Jnana* (specific knowledge of that object). *Sadharmya Vaidharmya* (positive and negative point) of an object is important to know about it.¹ All type of knowledge is gained by *Manas* (~mind) which is directly or indirectly indicated in Vaisheshika Darshana.

Vaisheshika begin with the beginning of universe in a continuous series of universe. Though all the substances in Universe possess a specific combination of five *Mahabhuta* (element) and *Chetana* i.e *Atma* (soul), every one of them is not considered to be alive or animate since witness of *Manas* is essential for expression of consciousness or *Chetana*. The ultimate goal of both *Darshana* is to get *Moksha Prapti* (rehabilitation). Vaisheshika opines that *Atma* and *Manas* are inseparable and they are detached only at the time of *Moksha*. Ayurveda also believe the same and also consider that for *Tattvajnana* (~deep knowledge) of *Moksha*, *Manas* is very important instrument.

Definition and qualities of *Manas*

Production or non- production of *Jnana* (knowledge) with the interaction of soul, and senses, is the features of *Manas*.^{2,3} *Indriya* (senses) is responsible tool for metaphysical objects like *Sukha* (pleasure), *Dukha* (misery) etc. Vaisheshika gives equal status to the mental and physical qualities. It speaks for 24 qualities such as color, taste, smell, touch, sound, number, magnitude, distinctness, conjunction, disjunction, nearness, remoteness, cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, effort, heaviness, fluidity, tendency, viscosity, moral merit and moral demerit.

According to Chakrapani, *Abhidhiyate* (by virtue of which any knowledge can be understood) itself indicates that it is the definition of *Manas*.⁴ This contains two parts i.e. the entity which establishes a contact of *Atma* or *Jiva* with *Spriikasharira* (body) and the entity which carries out control and co-ordination of *Indriya* i.e. *Manas* can be define as the bridge or connecting entity between soul and soma.

Anutva (atomic) and *Ekatva* (single) of *Manas*

According to Vaisheshika theory, *Manas* is subtle, *Paramanurupa* (atomic), eternal and always it exists hence the question of origin of *Manas* doesn't arise at all. *Manas* is one in

number and a actions at a time can occurred.^{5,6} *Manas* is having property of *Anu* and it is not *Vibhu* (ubiquitous). If *Manas* should be considered as *Vibhu*, one can have two or more perception at a time as *Vibhu Dravya* (substance) can unite with every substance at a time hence one can have two or more perception simultaneously.⁷ It cannot be perceived directly, it mediates and directs for inference of objects.⁸ Since there are no simultaneous perceptions, *Manas* is considered as minute.

As described in Indian Philosophical texts, Ayurveda accept *Manas* have only two *Guna* (qualities) i.e. *Anutva* (atomic) and *Ekatva* (single) have been mentioned.⁹ *Anutva* is one among the four *Parimana* (quantification) and *Ekatva* denotes *Samkhya* (numerological). If the qualities of *Manas* i.e. *Anutva* and *Ekatva* are not accepted, all kinds of perceptions would have occurred at same time. The sense faculties are capable of perceiving their respective objects only when they are motivated by *Manas*. To explore this view three *Nyaya* (logic) have been given by Chakrapani viz. *Utpalapatra Satavedhana*, *Dirghashashkuli Bhakshana* and *Alatachakra Darshana*.¹⁰ All the five *Indriya* (senses organs) can unite with its *Artha* (sense objects) at the same time but *Manas* due to above said qualities cannot. Due to its quality of pervasiveness, it is always in contact with all the sense organs and receives information at a time.

***Manas* one among *Dravya* (substance)**

The term Vaiseshika is derived from the word *Visesha* which means particularity. This system classifies all knowledge under six categories namely *Dravya* (substance), *Guna* (attribute), *Karma* (action), *Samanya* (generality), *Visesha* (particularity), and *Samavaya* (inherence).¹¹ Later, *Abhava* (non-existence) was added in it. Here, *Prithvi* (earth), *Jala* (water), *Teja* (fire), *Vayu* (air), *Akasha* (ether), *Kala* (time), *Dika* (direction), and *Atma* (soul) are included in *Dravya*.¹¹ *Manas* comes under the category of *Dravya* along with *Panchamahabhuta* (five basic elements), *Kala*, *Dika* and *Atma*.¹²

According to Vaiseshika, knowledge of the objective world comprises in the perception of things in three aspects i.e., *Dravya*, *Guna* and *Karma* (action). *Samanya* comprehend all these three aspects, whereas, *Vishesha* applies exclusively to the nine *Dravya* which are eternal. *Atma*, *Kala* (time), *Dika* (direction), *Akasha* (ether), *Manas* and the four *Paramanu* in their ultimate states are devoid of community and they do not belong to any genera. *Samanya* (the one which is present in many) and *Vishesha* (the one which is specific to some) both are the matter of *Buddhi* (intellect) and one expects *Buddhi* for the knowledge of these both entities.

[13] *Samanya* is also used for differentiation. Ayurveda define *Dravya* as the one which is the abode of *Guna* (quality), *Karma* (action) and the one which is *Samavayi Karana* (concomitant cause) for the *Karya Dravya*.^{14, 15} Ayurveda also admit totally nine *Dravya*

similar to that of Vaiseshika. Each of these *Karya Dravya* has its own significance in Ayurveda.¹⁶

Charaka has also considered *Manas* as *Adhyatma Dravya* (spiritual substance).^[17] Here, physiology is concerned with *Dravya* only, which are only two in this group viz. *Atma* and *Manas*. *Atma* is *Nirvikara* (pure), so the whole variety of alterations regarding various aspect of *Buddhi* are solely dependent on the acting entity i.e. *Manas*. *Manas* as a *Dravya* is under influence of three *Mahaguna*, out of which generally all three are necessary for normal physiology being responsible for knowledge, action and control or rest respectively. But specially *Rajas* and *Tamas* are considered as cause of morbidity, hence called as *Manas Dosha*, remaining *Sattva Guna* becomes synonyms for *Manas* being cause of benefit i.e. wellbeing which means knowledge applying normality of intellectual faculty. By these it can easily understood that various aspect of intellectual faculty is none other than physiology of *Manas* i.e. normal working pattern of *Manas*.

Kashyapa Samhita also accepts *Dravyatva* of *Manas*. The term, *Dravya* (substance) is used to refer to some underlying reality, in which qualities reside.^{18,19} The important qualities of *Manas* are the ability to perceive, think, remember, imagine. In western philosophy mind is considered immaterial substance, it is conscious and is characterized by thinking. Since it is substance it cannot be destroyed.^[20]

Guna* (qualities) and *Manas

The second category is *Guna* or quality. It resides in *Dravya*, (but still has its own identity), it having no attribute (*Guna*), is the independent cause in conjunction and disjunction (*Karma*) and is the common cause of substance, attribute and action.²¹ According to Kanada, there are only 17 qualities and no more. These are *Roopa* (color), *Rasa* (taste), *Gandha* (odour), *Sparsha* (tangibility), *Sankhya* (number), *Parimana* (dimension), *Prithkatva* (individuality), *Samyoga* (conjunction), *Vibhaga* (disjunction), *Paratva* (priority), *Aparatva* (posteriority), *Buddhi* (intellect), *Sukha* (pleasure), *Dukha* (pain), *Ichha* (desire), *Dvesha* (aversion) and *Prayatna* (volition).²² Later on, the *Bhashyakara* Prashastapada added 7 more qualities to the existing like *Gurutva* (gravity), *Dravatva* (fluidity), *Sneha* (viscosity), *Sanskara* (self-productiveness), *Adrushta* [*Dharma* (merit) and *Adharma* (demerit)] and *Shabda* (sound).²³ According to Ayurveda, as *Manas* is considered as *Dravya*, possess two *Guna* (attributes) within it. Classification of *Guna* based on the treatment aspect of view is the special contribution of Ayurveda. *Guna* is described in Ayurveda.²⁴ The one which resides in *Dravya* in *Samavaya Sambandha* (intimate relation), itself having no action and attribute and which is the cause for producing other *Guna* is called *Guna*.^{25, 26}

Panchabhautikatva and Nityatva of Manas

Manas is *Dravya* hence it is *Panchabhautika* i.e. made up of *Panchamahabhuta*.^[27] Ayurveda focuses mainly on *Panchamahabhuta*. Hence, *Indriya* are accepted to be *Panchamahabhuta*. *Indriyarthas* (objects of senses) are also told to be of the *Panchabhautika* origin as *Indriya* can percept the *Vishaya* only of the same *Yoni* (~gene).^[28] *Manas* neither produced during *Shrishti* (creation) nor destroyed in *Pralaya* (dissolution), therefore Vaiseshika school of thought considers *Manas* as to be *Nitya*.²⁹

Manas is also included under *Trividha Hetu* (three causative factor) for all the miseries of mankind. *Prajnaparadha* (intellectual error) is one of the important and strong causative factors for psychological disorders which in turn cause the somatic diseases. Detail description of *Lakshana* (attribute) and *Karma* (action) of *Manas* along with the treatment modalities for the *Manasika Roga* (mental disorders) found in Ayurveda.^{30, 31, 32} *Atma* has been given special emphasis in Ayurveda. It is considered that the combination of *Panchabhuta* along with *Atma* is the *Purusha* who is considered as the *Chikitsa Purusha*. Only when *Atma* is associated with *Manas* inside the body one can feel the world.^{33, 34}

Janotpatti Prakriya (development of knowledge)

It has been stated during the knowledge production phenomena, the *Atma* unites with *Manas*, *Manas* with *Indriya* (sensory organs), *Indriya* unite with the *Artha* (objects) and finally knowledge is produced.^{35, 36} while discussing the '*Manovijnana*' or psychology, Charaka has given a beautiful and scientific explanation of production of knowledge under the heading of the function of '*Manas*'. Charaka has included the '*Buddhi Pravritti*', the production of *Buddhi* does not take place directly or instantly but it is outcome of a phased phenomena or a series of various intermediary functions. In this contest, Charaka has described that *Indriyabhigraha* (control of sense organs), *Svanigraha* (self-restraint), *Uhya* (hypothesis), *Vichara* (consideration) and the production of *Buddhi* are the functions of *Manas*.³⁷ As these seem to be independent functions but when the process of knowledge production is analysed, it appears that they are the stages of knowledge production.

Characteristics of Manas

Manas cannot be perceived by direct methods. As it is directing and mediating for inference of the objects.^[38] *Gati* (speed) of *Manas* is derived from *Atma*.³⁹ A state of special relation between *Atma* and *Manas* aids to understand *Atma*, which is dependent on *Manas*.⁴⁰ Main function of *Manas* is to act as a mediator in attaining knowledge. Knowledge is mainly classified into two viz. *Anubhava* (imaginary experience) and *Smriti* (memory).⁴¹ Experiences is of two types namely *Yathartha Anubhava* (real experience) and *Ayathartha Anubhava* (unreal experience). Real experience is of four types. They are *Pratyaksha* (direct

perception), *Anumiti* (inference), *Upamiti* (analogy) and *Shabda* (authentic reference). *Ayathartha Anubhava* is of three types namely *Samshaya* (doubt), *Viparyaya* (antithesis) and *Tarka* (logic). Memory also is of two types, real memory and unreal memory.

The definition of *Karma* (function) explained in Ayurveda is much similar to that which explained by Vaiseshika school of thought.⁴²⁻⁴⁶ The types of *Karma* mentioned by Vaiseshika like upward and downward movements, flexion and extension and other oblique motions are accepted by Ayurveda. Along with this the activities of *Kaya* (physical), *Vaka* (oral) and *Manas* (mental) are also denoted as *Karma*.⁴⁷

Manas can not perceive different *Indriyārtha* (sense objects) at the same time but it occurs simultaneously. It is proved by practical experience also that even if the sense organs are connected with their objects, it does not necessarily follow, that the required knowledge will always be there. It is only, when required mental contact is there, that one can understand the things.⁴⁸

Atma and Manas

Contact of *Manas* with *Atma* is essential for all the above types of knowledge. One may say that contact of *Manas* with *Atma* is the common cause for acquiring knowledge.⁴⁹ In the cause of perception, *Sattva* should have contact with both the soul and the concerned sense faculty. Such perceptions are called *Indriya Pratyaksha* (external perception)⁵⁰. For *Atma Pratyaksha* or *Manas Pratyaksha* (internal perception), *Manas* is considered. Maharshi Kanada considers man himself is the *Karta* (doer) and *Bhokta* (occupier) of the *Karma*. He explains the *Papa* (sin) and *Punya* (virtue) or *Sukha* (pleasure) and *Dukha* (misery) of one *Atma* will not be the cause for other *Atma*.⁵¹ According to Ayurveda, *Manas* is the connecting link which connects the *Atma* with the *Sharira* (physical body). So, on the eve of death when the *Manas* starts leaving the body, there occurs a change in the normal behaviour and inclinations, the *Indriya* (sense organs) are disturbed, strength diminishes and living beings are attacked with diseases. Living beings devoid of *Manas*, breathe their last because the sense organs derive their inspiration from nothing but *Manas*.⁵²

Attributes of Atma

Buddhi (intellect), *Sukha*, *Dukha*, *Prayatna* (effort), *Ichha* (desire) and *Dvesha* (dislike), *Kama* (libido), *Abhilasha* (desire), *Raga* (affection), *Samkalpa* (ambition), *Karunya* (compassion), *Vairagya* (abstinence), *Upadha* (fraud) and *Bhava* (intention) are various types of desires.^[53] Even though these properties are attributed to the soul, the union of *Atma* and *Manas* is essential for their generation. Effort is the primary urge occurring in the generation of an action. It is of two types *Ichha - Dvesha Purvaka* (voluntary) and *Jivana Purvaka*

(involuntary). The former is the effort prompted by desire aversion. The latter is the effort essential for maintaining life. It is important that *Manas* is needed for both types of effort.⁵⁴ According to Charaka, inspiration and expiration, twinkling of the eye, life, mental perception, shift from one object of sense organ to another, mobility and stability of mind, journey to another country in dreams, anticipation of death, knowledge of something visualized in the right eye by left eye; desire, hatred, happiness, misery, effort, consciousness, stability, intellect, memory and ego are the attributes of *Atma*.⁵⁵

Functions of *Manas*

Mental functions have been elaborately explained viz. The functions of *Manas* are invisible; its functions are similar to that of *Hasta Karmendriya*; (action of hand) when *Atma - Indriya - Manas* are interacted the outcome will be the realisation of happiness, unhappiness, memory, dreams etc. When *Manas* gets seated in the *Atma* all the external pains are not perceived and that status is named as *Yoga*.⁵⁶

Charaka describes normal physiology of *Manas* that *Indriya* receives *Artha* (object) if stimulated by *Manas*.⁵⁷ This perception needs a chain of *Artha, Indriya, Manas* and *Atma*.^{58, 59} and is called *Uha* (logical thinking).⁶⁰ After this, procedures of actual analysis starts i.e. *Savikalpanam*, these thinking process has various shades highlight a vivid range of capacities or ability of *Manas*. These abilities are called as *Artha* and the process carried out by them are *Karma* of *Manas*. For every *Karma* which is to be carried out by any *Dravya* needs appropriate *Guna* in it i.e. Potential energy of every entity is necessary to carry out the desired effect by converting in Kinetic energy, similar is the case about *Manas*, due to its two main properties viz *Anutva* and *Ekatva*. It holds the capacities i.e. potential which termed as its *Artha*. So by this, various potentials like aspect of thinking or analysis which are *Chintya* (things requiring thoughts), *Vicharya* (consideration), *Uhya* (hypothesis), *Dhyeya* (attention), *Sankalpa* (determination) performed. It gives the determination to the perception. “*Tatah Param Buddhi Pravartate*” is the ultimate of function of *Manas* related with *Jnanendriya*.⁶¹

Smriti (memory) and *Manas*

Memory is the outcome of a special contact between *Manas* and *Atma*. It is the recollection of recorded experiences. The process of recording is known as *Bhavana* (imprinting). *Manas* is the tool for recollection.⁶² Another important thing is that the processes of sleep and dream occur at the level of *Manas*. Dream is considered as a type of *Avidya* (ignorance) and it occurs due to the special contact of *Manas* with the *Atma*. It is a false experience stimulating perception. It occurs when *Manas* is latent and the sensory faculties are disengaged. This is considered as a mental experience.^{63, 64}

Chakrapani on Charaka has commented on *Smriti* at various places. The ability to recognize the basic nature of all matters is *Smriti*. *Smriti* has been elaborated by Chakrapani in this context. *Smriti*, here does not stand for mere recollection but for the whole process involved in the formation of the faculty of memory. *Smriti* is based on what is seen, heard or otherwise experienced. There are eight factors for *Smriti* i.e. *Nimittagrahana* (knowledge of cause), *Rupagrahana* (knowledge of form), *Sadrishya* (knowledge of similarity), *Saviparyaya* (knowledge of dissimilarity), *Satvanubandha* (concentration of mind), *Abhyasa* (repetition), *Jnanayoga* (attainment of metaphysical knowledge) and *Punasrita* (subsequent partial communication of an event)⁶⁵ In Charaka *Vimana* it is described that it can be examined by recollection of an object in *Manas* i.e. '*Smriti Smaraṇena*'⁶⁶ In Charaka *Sharira*, it is defined as '*Smarnam Smriti Uchyate*' which means subjects ability to recall things. According to *Dalhana*, '*Smriti Purvanubhuta Smaranam*' which means recalling the past experiences. i.e. regaining of past knowledge. In Charaka it has been accepted as one type of *Prajna* or *Buddhi*.

According to Chakrapani, *Uhapohavichara* (~logical thinking) and *Smriti* have been termed as *Buddhi*.⁶⁷ So, it is obvious that without *Smriti*, the function of *Buddhi* is impossible. Function of *Buddhi* cannot occur without *Uhapoha* and *Vichara*, which come through *Smriti* or past experiences. According to Charaka *Sharira*, when *Smriti* occurs it will give rise to *Buddhi* by *Uho* and *Vichara*. Due to *Smriti Vibhrama* (distracted memory), the *Buddhi* of a person is not clear. If complete *Buddhinasa* has not occurred *Buddhi* is directed to *Akarya* or *Akaryata*, because the factor which is responsible for *Buddhi* is impaired i.e. *Smriti Vibhrama* might have taken place.

CONCLUSION

Reviewing the Vaiseshika philosophy, it is impressive to see the efforts of philosopher of Vaiseshika system to relate and contribute to the concept of *Manas*. Ayurvedic concept of *Manas* cannot be appreciated unless the basic principles of his philosophy are known. For the future, there is a greater need for critical analysis and documentation of concepts and studies on *Manas*. We hope that our descriptions will stimulate an interest in the theme of *Manas* in philosophical and applied aspects of research.

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