Review Article

Importance of Manas Tattva: A searchlight in Yoga Darshana

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Abstract

Since time immemorial ‘Manas’ has been the subject of curiosity for scholars, scientists and philosophers. The reason behind this curiosity is its importance in the development of mankind. Human being is superior to other creatures in the series of development. This supremacy of man remains in his quality to work after thinking, which is the function of ‘Manas’. No other animal is capable to think logically. This is the only reason which leads the mankind to the crest of development in every aspect. To highlight the concept of Manas in Yoga Darshana, information extracted from Yoga literatures and Ayurvedic Samhitas. In Indian culture mind has been described from various angles. Vedic, Philosophical and Ayurvedic literatures have a vast and exclusive description of Manas. Philosophers either Astika or Nastika have described Manas Siddhanta vividly. Though many kinds of difference of opinions are there, Yoga Darshana accept the importance of mind in the process of perception and even for the birth of any individual.

Key words: Darshana, Manas, Yoga

Introduction

Philosophers either Astika or Nastika have described Manas Siddhanta vividly. One of the six Astika Darshana, is Yoga-Darshana, which is entirely dedicated to Manas. Maharshi Patanjali, in Yoga-Sutra, used the word Citta for Manas and in very first chapter defined Yoga in relation to Citta. Citta Vritti (mental functions), Cittabhum (mental planes), Pancaklesha (five emotional statuses) and many other things, which are directly related with different status of human mind, are deeply described in Yoga Sutra. Some of the scholars believe that Maharshi Patanjali himself was Maharshi Caraka of Ayurveda and the Abhidheya of Yoga Sutra was psychological health, while Abhidheya of Caraka Samhita was physical health.

The enormous knowledge of Yoga is spread in a good number of books. It will be a herculean task to compress this vast knowledge of the concept of Manas. Patanjali’s aphorisms of Yoga (Yoga Sutra), which is considered as the most pragmatic and authentic work on Yoga.

Manas and Citta

Manas and Citta are two terms used in Yoga Sutra, with the almost similar sense as Sattva. There are only two direct references of the word Citta in Yoga Sutra. According to the first reference, the concentration on sensory objects such as smell, taste, touch, color, or sound helps to stabilize the fluctuating Citta. It shows that Manas is fluctuating in the nature and that it has an ability to concentrate. As per the second reference, Citta is very bright and pure by nature, but its brightness is often masked by inborn psychological Klesha (disorders). Practice of Pranayama (Yogic respiratory exercise) gradually removes these inborn psychological disorders and Citta is brightened. This makes the Citta fit for concentration. This also implies the possibility of Citta to be affected with many disorders.

The meaning of the term Citta is more or similar to that of Sattva. The term Citta is quite frequently used in Yoga Sutra. According to Yoga Sutra, Citta has different states of existence, starting from the highly agitated state of Kshipta (raving) to the supreme calm state in Samadhi. The word Manas is used commonly to express all these different status of Citta.

The Yoga philosophy follows the same as that of the Upanishada conclusion that the soul must not be identified either with the body, the senses or with the mind or even with the Indriya (senses) and Buddhi (intelligence principle); and
says that one must penetrate into the inner spiritual core after ripping open the Kosha of materiality.\[3\]

**Utpatti of Manas**

Manas is nonself-illuminative and is exposed through Purusha (soul).\[4\] Citta is an object of experience, knowledge of self and that of external objects at a time is not possible for Manas to perceive.\[1\] According to Yoga Sutra, Citta is the first product of Prakriti, comprising Buddhi (intelect), Ahamkara (self-conscious) and Manas.\[6\] Here, Manas, Buddhi, and Ahamkara all are together known as Citta. However, Charaka Samhita Sharira Sthana, all these three differently explained and Hridaya (heart) is the seat of Manas.\[7\]

According to Yoga, Prakriti Citta is the first product of taken in a comprehensive sense so as to include intellect, self-consciousness and mind. The Yoga philosophies do not accept a separate subtle body in which Citta is encased.\[8\]

Manas is exposed through the Purusha and is not self-illuminating in nature.\[4\] Manas cannot obtain the self-knowledge and the knowledge of external objects at the same time.\[8] Simultaneously, Yoga describes Citta is described as an object of experience, when it undergoes changes, which have the forms of various kinds of things.\[9\]

The impression of Manas is mostly different about the same object; even though, the object is same; the mode of understanding by the Manas remains always different individually. Manas is subjected to the Triguna and undergoes various modifications according to the predominance of Guna. It is also modified when affected by the objects through the senses.\[10\]

**Sthana of Manas**

Hridaya is considered as the seat for Manas.\[7\]

**Types of Manas**

Types of Manas are classified into two as:

- Karya Citta
- Karana Citta.

Karya Citta manifests itself in the state of consciousness. This has got the capacity to control and also expand and these contractions and expansion are happening according to the body which it occupies.

Karana Citta is Vibhu or all pervading. At the time of death, it is always connected with the Purusha and manifests itself as Karya Citta in the new body; formed; according to past merits and demerits. It is the aim of Yoga philosophy to turn back the Citta to its original status of all pervading Karana Citta, by the suppression of Rajas and Tamas.\[6\]

**Status of Manas**

Five types of Cittabhumi are: Kshipta (raving), Mudha (blunt/ dull), Vikshipta (distracted), Ekagra (single pointed) and Niruddha (restrained).\[10\] Here, first three are important in the study of abnormal psychology. Again, there are two kinds of Manoyapara – Paridrasta (perceivable) and Aparidrasta (infallable).\[11\]

In the commentary of Yoga Sutra, Vyasa explains five statues of Manas:

**Kshipta**

In wakefulness, Manas has the temptation to be engaged with the sensory object. The innate energy of Manas forces it to go out through the sensory faculties. The attention of the Citta is always shifting from one object to the other. It has no control over itself. Mere fascination of the object is the guiding factor at this stage. This state of Citta is called Kshipta.

**Vikshipta**

The Manas when can’t concentrate on an object, but it is wandering to lots of objects e.g. while reading a book or watching any object the Manas is passing through a series of information; therefore, it cannot concentrate on an object. This state is called Vikshipta.

**Mudha**

Dull or lethargic state of mind is known as Mudha. Mudha is not suited to concentrate. During this stage, Manas is not acquiring any new knowledge. This state of Citta is called Mudha.

**Ekagrata**

In this stage, Manas fixes itself in a particular point or idea. The Manas that is fixed on an idea will not change too frequently. In this state, i.e. Ekagrata Manas stays at a single object with a single thought without any distraction.

**Niruddha**

It is the state when Manas is under control of a person and cannot be distracted. In this state, Yogi can achieve the spiritual level. It is the thoughtless state where Manas can function without distract. Usually everybody desires for possessing many things. As one desire more, one become unsatisfied. Dissatisfaction leads to frustration. Frustration leads to misery. In order to be happy, there should not be any desire. Giving up of desires is a technique to make the Citta calm. In this states, termed as Niruddha Manas ceases to crave for the satisfaction of desires.

**Citta Vritti**

The theme of Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra is the cessation of mental functions to unravel the true nature of self.\[12\] Here, mental functions mainly denote the cognitive mental processes consist of perceiving, thinking, remembering, and imagining. Contemplation and self-control also can be considered as mental activities. These different cognitive functions are attributed as actions of Antahkarana (internal faculties). When Citta establish a communication with an external object through sense faculties it triggers a number of memories to be correlated with the new stimulus. The aggregate of these processes is called Citta Vritti or mental function. After analyzing the data a conclusion is obtained. This is a function of Buddhhi (intelligence). Hence, it is called Buddhhi Vritti. In the next stage, Ahamkara (ego) processes this information and experiences it either as pleasure or as pain. This is Ahamkara
Vritti. All these four processes are happening in a fraction of second and appear as a single event. It is difficult to distinguish the separate features of this event. Subtlety and fastness are the features of mental function.

Patanjali has classified mental functions in to five categories viz., Pramana (means of valid knowledge), Viparyaya (illusion), Vikalpa (imagination), Nidra (sleep), and Smriti (memory).

Pramana (means of valid knowledge)

There are three types’ means of valid knowledge. They are Pratyaksha (direct perception), Anumana (inference) and Agama (authentic testimony). Direct Perception is the means of gaining knowledge through sense faculties. Smell, taste, vision, sound, and touch are objects of direct perception. Perceived knowledge may not be always valid. In order to verify its validity, the other two means are employed. There are many situations in which one may not perceive things directly where one employ inference. Where perception and inference are unable to provide valid knowledge, one have to opt to authentic testimonies.

Viparyaya (illusion)

Illusion is an interpretation like cognizing a rope as a snake. Perfect functioning of our sense faculties is essential for acquiring valid knowledge. Defective sense faculty, lack of optimal conditions for the functioning of the faculty and defective reasoning generate invalid knowledge. Such knowledge is called illusion.

Vikalpa (imagination)

 Fantasy or imagination is a thought pattern which has verbal expression and knowledge, but for which there is no such object or reality in existence is known as Vikalpa. One may imagine things those do not have any objective substratum, on the basis of mere verbal statements.

Nidra (sleep)

Nidra (dreamless sleep) is the thought process which has as its object inertia, absence of the other thought patterns. One may recollect the length and depth of sleep and dreams. This fact indicates that there were mental activities during the sleep. That is why, dreamful sleep is also considered as a mental function.

Smriti (memory)

Memory is recalling of our previously recorded experiences. Pramana, Viparyaya, Vikalpa and Nidra are the mediators to recall the previously stored information. A stimulus is generated in the Citta itself in the form of thoughts. This further triggers the recollection of the past action.

Techniques of Mental Restraint

Yoga is defined as the restraint of mental function. Mental restraint is essential to the realization of “self.” Self is true knowledge and is devoid of miseries. It is full of bliss. When Citta is active self is not revealed. When the ripples settle down, bottom of the pound is visible through the transparent water. There is hardly any time when Manas is settled. Even during sleep Citta is functioning. Hence, it is highly difficult to achieve mental restraint. Yoga proposes a solution to this problem. Yoga claims that one can stop mental functions through Abhyasa (practice) and Vairagya (renunciation). Mental functions can also be grouped as inhibitory and excitatory. Many people who preach virtues are not able to practice what they preach. In fact, they wish to practice what they preach. They even start practicing but are unable to continue. This is happening because of some inhibition. One experiences such inhibitions to work, to talk, to remember even for thinking. In modern psychology, it is called compulsive inhibition. To overcome this state, Yoga recommends a systematic and scientific practice of Astanga Yoga to achieve the goal of Moksha (liberation).

Astanga Yoga

Patanjali describes eight steps as practical measures to attain Samadhi. They are Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

These steps are supposed to be practiced in a sequential manner, as they are considered as links of a chain. When one lift any one of the links, the often links will also rise. Hence, these steps can be practiced sequentially or individually. Among these eight steps, first four are known as Bahiranga Yoga (external) and the other are Antaranga Yoga (internal). Yama and Niyama are ethical guidelines. Physical strength and energy strength are emphasized in Asana and Pranayama. Pratyahara is actually the link between internal and external steps. Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi are higher psycho spiritual practices and together they are called Samyam.

Panchaklesha

In many occasions, Manas goes out of control. In today’s fast society, people often lose their temper and burst out in anger or in tears. Manas generate negative emotions. When a person is emotionally disturbed he may talk nonsense, think rubbish, or do wrong acts. Person loses control over his activities. This state of affairs is known as compulsive obsession. Patanjali identifies the reasons for this as Avidya (ignorance), Asmita (egoism), Dvesha (aversion) and Abhinivesha (lust for life). Avidya is the cause of many psychosomatic ailments.

Here, the first step should be the erase of ignorance. Every act of the human being is intended for acquiring happiness. The ignorant Citta believes that the happiness is in the external sensory objects. This tempts the Citta to attach with these objects. When these desired objects are denied person gets irritated and becomes emotionally disturbed.

Yoga teaches that the happiness is within us. When once Citta Vritti is settled, the Citta experiences the natural self. This is a blissful state of Manas. Once a person realizes this truth, he starts developing the aversion toward the external sense objects. This is called Vairagya (renunciation). The first step of Astanga Yoga-Yama is meant for cultivating an attitude of renunciation.

Karma of Manas

Paridrasta Karma are those which are visible, perceivable, and cogntional or Pratyakshatmak, under these five types of Citta Vritti (mental operations) are incorporated. Excluding Nidra, the other four activities are directly related with the mental operations.
Amin, et al.: Manas in Yoga Darshana

Discussion

Taking place in awakened status and out of this Viparyaya or pervasive cognition is of special significance in psychology, there are five subtypes of Viparyaya viz., Yamas (darkness), Moha (ignorance), Maha Moha (extreme ignorance), Yamisra (blind stupidity), Andha Tamisra (blind stupidity).14

Aparidrsta (inferable) mental transactions are Nirodha (restraint), Dharmas (peculiarity), Samskara (habit), Parinama (change), Jivana (life force), Ceshita (activity), Shakti (power),19 and these can be understood only by means of Anumana and or Aptopadesha.

Jnanotpatti

Manas acts in such a speed that the sequence of transactions cannot be traced out, even then based on inference by Antah Nirikshana (introspection), mental operations can be reclassified as Jnana Pradhana (cognitive functions), Bhavana Pradhana (affective) and Ceshta Pradhana (conative functions). The Cognitive process is again of two types: Yatharthanubhava (true knowledge) and Ayatharthanubhav (false knowledge).20 The Bhavana (affective) is of again nine types, which are destructive in nature and are called Citta Vikshepa or mental distractions Vyadhi (mobidity), Styanan (debility), Samshaya (doubt), Pramada (inadverntence), Alasya (sloth), Dvesha (aversion), Avidya (nonattainment of plan), and Anavasthitattva (instability).21

Mind is a great battle field, where different types of Citta Klesha (forces or afflictions) are combining each other to trace their presence; and Mental afflictions are of five types - Avidya (nonscientific), Asmita (egoism), Raga (attachment), Dvesha (aversion) and Abhinivesha (clinging to life).22 Raga, Dvesha and Moha are the major mental afflictions where all other types can be incorporated.23 Bhavana Pradhana (affective processes) is nine Sthayi Bhava (constant affects) and 33 Vyabhhchari Bhava (transient affects); for the orientation of Manovyanayana, understanding the effort of these Bhava on body and mind is of great value. Causes for fluctuations and absoluteness of Manas are described in Table 1.24

Table 1: Causes for fluctuations and absoluteness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vritti (intellectual)</th>
<th>Kelsha (emotional)</th>
<th>Vikshepa (environmental or impediments that disturb Manas)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prayaksha (direct perception)</td>
<td>Avidya (lack of wisdom)</td>
<td>Obstacles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anumana (interference)</td>
<td>Asmita (ego, sense of “I”)</td>
<td>Physical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agama (testimony)</td>
<td>Raga (desire and attachment)</td>
<td>Vyadhi (disease)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viparyaya (mistaken identity)</td>
<td>Dvesha (pain and hatred)</td>
<td>Styanan (lack of interest or sluggishness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vikalpa (knowledge devoid of substance)</td>
<td>Abhinivesha (attachment to life and fear of death)</td>
<td>Mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nidra (sleep or inert state)</td>
<td>Samshaya (lingering or doubtful)</td>
<td>Samshaya (lingering or doubtful)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smriti (memory)</td>
<td>Pramada (carelessness)</td>
<td>Pratyaya (false knowledge)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yoga Shastra deals more with health giving aspect of Manas. Yoga is the most developed science which draws attention to the neurological, psychological, and etiological aspect of Manas. Yoga also illustrates the various methods to sustain the Manas in healthy status as well as to treat the common abnormalities which consequence the psychosomatic disorders. Yogic Kriya can be useful to control the negativity of thoughts, which may ultimately cause the controlled status of Manas.

Five Citta Bhumi of Yoga Darshana may be understood in the terms of various normal and abnormal states of Manas. This
concept of Citta Bhumi can easily be interpreted in the terms of different psychological and personality disorders. Apart from this five Klesha are also described in Yoga Darshana, which are different emotive aspects of Manas.

Being a science for controlling the Citta, Yoga Darshana pointed out two ways for betterment of psychic hygiene, which are Abhyasa and Vairagya. To overcome from the general materialistic attitude and to achieve upliftment toward spiritual progress various conduct are postulated there over known as Astanga Yoga. Caraka has taken an important but brief note of these in under the caption of “Tattva Smiti and Satyabuddhi”[10] which are said as the tools and path toward Moksha. Impact of Yogic Yama, Niyama etc., is there on Acharya Rasayana and Sadruttta.

All the eight limbs of Yoga are to achieve steps achieved once own control over mind through Abhyasa and Vairagya. The nine conditions described as in the name of Vikshepa are the conditions which are obstacles in achieving the goal point. All these can be classified into four levels those are physical, mental, intellectual, and spiritual.

For Triskandhatmaka approach Yogic references are helpful only up to Adravyabhuta factors. The Adravyabhuta part, i.e. Sattvavajaya really is derived from Yoga Darshana as it is defined as “Ahitebhyoarthkebhyo Manonigraha.”[31]

There is some controversy regarding the origin of Mana between Yoga and Samkhya Darshana. However, in the end both reach in Jhatva of Manas. Atma is Jna, Vibuddha and Karta, but it is Akrityshila. It performs its work by involving Manas. Here, this explanation of Atma is only for jivatma (bound with Mana and Shaurita) not for Paramatma (Nirvikar).

Conclusion

There are plenty of references regarding Manas in Vedic, Patañjali and Darshhanika literature, which prove that ancient Indian people were familiar with psyche and psychology. The concepts of Yoga Shastra are accepted not only by Ayurveda, but also by other ancient Hindu Sciences. All these ancient sciences are inter-connected with each other. All the streams of Indian Philosophy have described the concept of Manas in full length but Yoga Darshana contains maximum references and material, which can be used for treating and strengthening Manas. Whole Yoga Shastra is developed for controlling the Manas, i.e. Citta Vritti Nirodha and through the Abhyasa and Vairagya one can achieve the goal of Moksha.

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44. Agnivesha, Dridhabala, Chaukhamba Orientalia, Varanasi, 2002; 2.
हिन्दी सारांश

योग दर्शन में मन का महत्व

हेतुल डी. अमीन, रोहित शर्मा, हितेश ए. व्यास, महेशकुमार व्यास

मन का विषय कई वर्षों से सभी के लिये जिज्ञासायुक्त रहा है। मनुष्य के विकास में मन महत्वपूर्ण कारण है। यहीं इस जिज्ञासा का युक्ति कारण हैं। सिर्फ मनुष्य में ही तर्कयुक्त विचार करने की क्षमता है। भारतीय संस्कृति में मन को विविध पहलुओं से जाना गया हैं। वेद-दर्शन और आयुर्वेद में मन का गहन वर्णन मिलता है। आस्तिक और नास्तिक दोनों दर्शनकारों ने मन का वर्णन किया है परन्तु उनके मतों में कुछ विविधता हैं। यह अध्ययन मन का योग दर्शन में महत्व को प्रस्तुत करता है।