

Contribution of Sanskrit in Psychology, Philosophy and Culture of the Indian Society.

The word 'Sanskrit' means which is cultured or developed with good intention. Sanskrit is such a cultured language. For the word 'culture' we use the Sanskrit word 'Sanskriti', which means giving good effects and good moral characters. Thus the language and the culture go hand in hand in India.

In raising any culture, Philosophy and Psychology play important role. The philosophy induces good psychology and the psychology plays a good role in creating philosophy. The culture, philosophy and psychology of the Indian society have their origin in the Vedas. The Rigveda is the main source of all these three and the Rigveda is the most ancient literature of the world. On astronomical data presented in the Rigveda we can calculate its period as 23720 years B.C.

The Vedas had a slogan 'Krinvanto Vishvam Aryam'. It does not mean to convert by force or by elusion. The slogan means 'we shall make the world cultured and civilized'. Arya is not a word depicting any race or religion. Arya means a civilized and cultured person.

The Rigveda has all the seeds of scientific studies of nature. All the branches of modern science are seen in the Rigveda, even the most recent scientific feat of cloning is reported in the Rigveda. Rubhus had prepared a cow from the skin of a cow. They rejuvenated their old parents to youthfulness. It is scientific feat not yet achieved by modern science. It shows the highest culture of the Hindu society.

After the Vedas came the Upanishads. They contain lot of philosophy. It is the root of the Hindu religion and culture. Psychology is also considered in the Upanishads. Let us see the examples. Psychology means the study of mind. The word 'mind' has no basic meaning; but the Sanskrit word 'Mana' shows the basic meaning from its root. The verb Mana means to think. Therefore the name 'Mana' means the power of thinking. This deep sense is not present in the English word 'mind'. The word 'Psychology' does not contain any word, suggesting mind. It is derived from 'Psyche', which means 'Soul', and not mind. This one example suggests how deep thinking is done in cultivating the Sanskrit language.

Very deep thinking is seen in the Upanishads about Psychology. Psychology means the study of mind. Let us consider the Aitereya Upanishad, which is developed from the Rigveda. In the Mantra 3/5/1 it is told that the seer or listener is Atman. In the same sense in 3/5/2, it is told that heart and mind also are Atman. Atman is omnipresent so Atman is present in heart and mind also. It is already told that Atman has taken form of everything in the world, so heart and mind are the forms of Atman only.

A person who cannot understand Atman may hold mind as Atman. Probably from this concept the English word 'Psychology' is derived for a study of mind. If mind is not working properly we cannot hear or see or use any other sense organ. Thus in our life processes, mind plays an important role. Therefore the Katha Upanishad tells that the chariot of life has five horses i.e. five sensory organs, whose reins are the mind. This rein should be in the hands of Buddhi, the intelligence, who is the charioteer. Atman is the

owner of that chariot. Atman has produced first life and then mind. Therefore mind is very close to Atman. It is the mind, which can reveal Atman.

It is already told, by Aitereya, that mind is produced from heart. The muscular organ which pumps blood in and out is heart. But heart has definite relation with mind. Hrudaya also means a center, which gives and takes. It is present everywhere in our body. Hrudaya is present in each and every cell where Atman is present being omnipresent. So Hrudaya can be taken as Atman. This is philosophy based on science.

Modern science does not know what is Jnana or knowledge. Here the Aitereya tells us sixteen different shades of knowledge. Modern science has not yet understood these different shades. Let us see these shades here.

- 1) Samjnana – ‘Sam’ means complete. Hence complete knowledge is Samjnana.
- 2) Ajnana – ‘A’ means surrounding. Knowledge about surroundings is Ajnana.
- 3) Vijnana - ‘Vi’ means special. Special knowledge means Vijnana.
- 4) Prajnana – ‘Pra’ is a suffix, which shows excessiveness and force or intensity.

Samjnana is complete knowledge; but as it is complete it must be a limited knowledge. Knowledge itself is limitless. Ajnana is limited to surroundings. Vijnana is limited to some special thing. Thus all the three varieties have their own limits. But Prajnana is excessive knowledge. It is excessive; it means it has no bounds. Prajnana can go in future or past. Prajnana can go beyond the limits of the Earth. Boundary of Prajnana is only Brahman. Therefore it is said, ‘Prajnanam Brahma’.

5) Medha means maintaining (Dha) the self (Me). Medha is present in each living being with the help of which it lives.

6) Drushti means vision, to see. To see is not only limited to eyes. We say “hear this song and see, taste this snack and see, touch the upholstery and see, smell this rose and see, walk to that side and see, do this with your own hands and see.” In all these cases we use the word ‘see’ in the sense of taking experience. Some wise men can ‘see’ in the future. They can herald the dangers ahead. This vision is not of the eyes, it is a capacity of mind or intelligence. It is called as ‘Divya Drushti’.

7) Dhruti means tenacity, firmness, steadiness, constancy, consistency. Without this virtue nobody gets success.

8) Mati means thinking power.

9) Manisha means desire or wish present in mind. Without desire no animal can work or move.

10) Juti means speed, velocity, force. Unless Juti is present everybody becomes lazy.

11) Smruti means memory, it is important for living. We act according to memory.

12) Sankalpa means determination, intention, purpose, aim. Without Sankalpa nothing will happen in this world.

13) Kratu means power or ability to perform any work. If this is absent everybody will become idle.

14) Asu means to live, desire to live. Without this ‘Asu’, life becomes a distress and then a person commits suicide. Asu is very strong in all animals except a few human beings, who have suicidal tendencies.

15) Kama means desire, affection, love. This is essential in every animal in his life. Kama occupies body, mind, intelligence and life. Manisha is only in the mind.

16) Vasha means influenced by, charmed by, subdued by, humbled by. This influence works in every animal’s intelligence.

These faculties of intelligence or brain may be divided into three classes e.g. Cognitive, Creative and Supportive.

Cognitive faculties are in sensory part of the brain. They receive knowledge from outside.

Creative faculties are in motor part of the brain and they are necessary to do any work or any action.

Supportive faculties are useful to both creative and cognitive faculties and help in maintenance of life.

Cognitive faculties are Samjnana, Ajnana, Vijnana, Prajnana, Drushti and Vasha.

Creative faculties are Dhruti, Mati, Manisha, Juti, Sankalpa, Kratu and Kama.

Supportive qualities are Medha, Smruti and Asu.

These are the sixteen capacities of our brain, which are responsible for knowledge. I think this is exhaustive list. Modern Science cannot add any more ability to human intelligence. This shows how deeply seers worked on the capacities of intelligence and facts of knowledge. It also shows how deeply the sages studied mind and its faculties.

Is it not essential to study this store of knowledge in modern world and science?

The Aitereya Upanishad further states that all the living organisms are Prajnanetra i.e. they see by Prajnana, according to the seer. Let us see how true the seer is. When a seed gets water and warmth it germinates and a primary root comes out and starts growing towards the soil and into ground. This primary root also grows towards water. That means the root 'sees' where water and soil are. It has no eyes even then it sees by its Prajnana. That is why the seer calls it Prajnanetra. From the seed, just after the root, two leaves come out and they start growing towards light. How do the immature leaves get this knowledge? because, they are Prajnanetra. These primary leaves and stem grow into a big tree. The tree grows skywards while its roots grow deep into the soil. Prajnana teaches the tree from where light and food is available. The tree produces typical trunk, typical leaves, typical flowers and fruits. There is no mistake. Where this knowledge comes from? From Prajnana, which is stored in that small seed. Hence it is called as Prajnanetra based on Prajnana. All the plant-life is Prajnanetra like a seed. That is the reason how they can produce their own food from soil and water. Even the ultra-modern scientists cannot grow food from soil and water. This shows that plant life has Prajnana. Plants are capable of producing energy from light and they store it as food in their leaves. This technique comes from Prajnana.

How the egg-born animals recognize their mother? Without any relation to the mother how can they recognize their food and their enemies? How do they recognize directions? When they mature, who teaches them how to build a particular type of nest? Who guides them to select a partner for reproduction? Now scientists talk about giving sex education to all human population; but who gives sex education to all other animal population? It is Prajnana.

There was a couple of Gorillas in a Zoo of England. The gorillas were not copulating in captivity in their cage. So many scientists held a meeting to think about that problem. They unanimously concluded that since childhood the Gorilla pair is captured and kept in a cage. Therefore they have not seen other Gorillas copulate, so they do not know the sexual act. Hence it was decided that a team should go to Africa to take a film of Gorilla's coitus, and that film should be shown to the Gorilla couple. Accordingly a film

was made and shown to the Gorilla couple. The couple put one glance at the film and turned their necks away from the screen. They did not see the copulation. Thus sex education failed totally. The sex education comes from Prajnana in all the living animals. It comes from Prajnana in human beings, too. Then what is the necessity of sex education? The human being is wandering on the Earth for last million years and increasing in population. Then what is the need of giving sex education in the 20th century? Very few people may be ignorant about the sex act, but there are medical doctors to advise them. Why the sex education be given in the schools and colleges? The height is that some wise men say that it should be given from primary schools. They never think that in that case what will be the attitude of children to look to their teachers of opposite sex? Psychology and philosophy have a role here, but it is ignored totally.

The Kena Upanishad tells about mind as follows:

Mantra 25th says, ‘ Consider the self. Mind, as if, goes to its aim, because of Atman’. We many times say that her mind went on him. Some times we say, ‘ as soon as I heard about America, my mind went there.’ Does the mind really go anywhere? Has modern science any answer to this question. Science has not even thought about it. But the Kena Upanishad reveals a marvelous concept, while stating ‘the mind, as if, goes’.

Let us consider the point. Mind according to modern science is composed of electromagnetic waves. I think so, because we can examine mind by using electroencephalograph. The E.E.G. records tracings by which an expert psychiatrist diagnoses the mental condition. If mind gets disturbed, the graph also shows disturbance. Therefore we have to consider mind by wave theory.

About wave we say a wave came and went. However, science has proved that a wave does not come and go; but it appears so. In a wave the particles move up and down, but they never go anywhere. For example, take a rope and tie its one end to a pillar. Hold its other end in your hand and move your hand up and down. As you move your hand, you will see that waves of rope go to the pillar. But does the rope really move? No. It is tied by one end. Where and how can it go? In the waves of the rope only its particles move up and down and cause an illusion that the rope moves or the waves move. Therefore I can say ‘the rope, as if, goes.’

The same thing happens in the case of mind. Mind means electromagnetic waves. These waves move up and down, so mind appears to go from one place to another. Actually the mind does not go anywhere. To explain this fact, the sage says that the mind, as if, goes. Modern science assumes the mind to be electromagnetic waves; but the Indian sages assume the mind as the waves of Brahman. There is all pervading Brahman, therefore mind as if goes from one place to another.

In a pond of water if we throw a stone at one place, the whole pond shows waves. Disturbance at one place causes disturbance everywhere, because the medium of water is disturbed. In the same way, our mind gets disturbed by some thought wave. That thought wave comes from somewhere outside. See towards your mind keenly. You will realize that the thought comes from outside. Wherefrom the thought can come? It comes from the omnipresent Brahman. The disturbance in the Brahman moves the medium of Brahman, which reflects in the waves in our mind, which is a part of Brahman.

When I go into Samadhi, my mind becomes totally thoughtless. At that time if there appears some disturbance in the Brahman, my mind will get the same disturbance, and I will understand what has happened in the Brahman. When I go into Samadhi, my

mind becomes one with the Brahman. Then if I do some 'Samkalpa' and raise a thought wave, it will affect the Brahman. That wave, as if, goes to the place, aimed at, and returns to me again. That reflected wave gives some knowledge to me. In my experiment of the Astral travel to the Mars or the Jupiter, I went into Samadhi with a Samkalpa of getting knowledge about that planet. Due to that Samkalpa, a wave came up which went to the planet and rebounded back to me giving me knowledge of that planet. My mind as if went to the planet and came back. I published my reports about the Mars and the Jupiter, which were corroborated later by the spaceships. In May 1976, a scientist of NASA came to meet me in Pune to congratulate me. Thus I had achieved the real knowledge of the planets, though I was sitting at my home in Samadhi. Is it not a great feat of technology?

Thus if we apply the Vedic knowledge at present we can get miraculous success.

The Katha Upanishadars, composed about 6000 years B.C., tells at 2/1/1 – The Ishwara made holes to the body. Those open only outwards. Therefore we can see outside, not inside.

The outward holes of the body are the sensory organs, which can see the outer world; but can never see inside the body. The sage has observed a correct fact. We can hear the outer sound, but can never hear the sounds produced by our lungs, heart, etc. We can taste outer material by the tongue. But the tongue can never taste the blood circulating inside it. The same is the condition of other sense organs of sight, touch and smell.

With this preliminary knowledge Patanjali, at about 5000 B.C., proceeded to study the mind and found out the way to control the mind. His Yoga Darshana shows how deeply he had studied the mind. Patanjali states that the mind has five Vrutis i.e. tendencies or attitudes, such as Pramana, Viparyaya, Vikalpa, Nidra and Smruti.

Pramana means the proof or evidence. Mind always combines with the thing, which is before any of the five sense organs. It is the first Vrutti of mind. Pramana is of three kinds, such as Pratyaksha, Anumana and Agama. Pratyaksha is the direct proof. It may be before any of the five sense organs. Anumana means an inference derived by the mind. Agama means whatever comes up to us from any person or tradition.

Viparyaya means a false conclusion drawn from the Pramana. Mind does this Viparyaya. A son says to his father to get admitted in a hospital for better improvement. But the father thinks that the son wants to drive him away from the home. It is Viparyaya. It is the action of the mind.

Vikalpa means to imagine anything though nothing is in front. Usually Vikalpa follows Shabda i.e. a sound. When I say 'a cat' in some context, here, ladies will think of a cat and will get afraid of the milk kept in kitchen. They will begin thinking about milk. It is Vikalpa. It is the act of mind.

Patanjali treats sleep as a tendency of mind. Modern science does not know anything about sleep. Science does not hold sleep as a tendency of mind. However it is a fact experienced by us many times. We go to a program of vocal music, expending a lot in purchasing ticket, because we are fans of the singer. The singer sings our favorite songs; even then we start getting sleep. It is because the attitude of mind changed. Then we leave the program and come home to sleep. But as we go to bed, the attitude of mind again changes and we find no sleep at all.

In that sleepless condition, we start memorizing the past events. It is Smruti, the memory. It is also a tendency of mind. Without any reason it props up and defeats the sleep totally.

Patanjali calls sleep as a tendency; but gives its reason too. He says that sleep is a tendency of mind, which appears when there is 'Abhava of Pratyaya' i.e. no cognition at all. Modern science admits this definition. Kleitman states that sleep is a state of mind when higher centers in brain stop their functions. The cessation of the work of brain centers occurs due to disconnection from body. Bremer also supports this theory. Bremer experimented on cats. Bremer proved that if the afferent nerves are cut and messages to the brain are cut, cat goes in profound sleep. He cut the afferent nerves in the mid-brain. Howell states that if the blood supply to the cerebral cortex is diminished sleep occurs. Diminution of blood supply is 'Abhava' as Patanjali states. Usually we get sleep after dinner, because after dinner the blood supply is diverted towards the splanchnic circulation. Pavlov theorizes that 'sleep is a special manifestation of conditioned inhibition.' 'Inhibition' means 'Abhava' as Patanjali says. Modern science thus concludes that inhibition of afferent impressions is the cause of sleep. Patanjali tells the same cause about 7000 years ago. Patanjali did not kill any cat or any animal to come to this same conclusion, which is derived by modern science after killing many animals.

We can experience sleep when we do not find interest in the Pramana in front of us. That lack of interest is 'Abhava'. Though Patanjali found the main reason of sleep, he still holds sleep as a mental tendency, because many times we get sleep in spite of interesting facts before us. We can easily see sleep as a tendency in case of children, who sleep within seconds, though interesting story is told to them.

Patanjali advises to stop all the Vrutis. He advises to close all the windows of mind and imprison the mind inside. Mind is very unsteady, so it does not stay at one place. It has no way to go out. Therefore it runs inside and meets Atman, which resides inside. It is called as 'Yoga', meeting of mind and Atman. It is not known to science.

The ancient Sanskrit literature thus presents psychology and philosophy of high quality. Accordingly, the sages advised people to behave. Taittiriya Upanishad advises to honour mother, father, teacher and guest. If all the mothers, fathers, teachers and guests are honored, there will be peaceful society. It is culture and civilization. In the Mahabharata, Vidura tells about Neeti and Dharma in one sentence. He says, 'You behave with others in a way you expect them to behave with you'. It is in short the culture. If we follow this Neeti, there will be a grand and cultured society.

The Rigveda says that there is only one energy governing the Universe; but wise men call it by different names. It is proved and accepted by modern science. This philosophy is followed by the Ishavasya Upanishad. It says, 'Whatever is moving in this world is occupied by the Isha. Whatever Isha gives you, accept it; but do not grab other's money. Isha is present inside and outside every thing. If anybody sees that Isha in himself and all others, how can he hate anything? How can he be perplexed and lament?' Is this philosophy not great? If it is followed by the world, peace will govern the world.

The Karma Siddhanta of the Vedas is based on science. It tells that every Karma gives a 'Phala'. This is the same as the principle of Physics 'every action has got equal and opposite reaction.' This philosophy tells that whatever you have to suffer is a result of your own previous deed. Rebirth theory is based on this principle. Whatever Karmas you perform in this life, you have to bear their fruits. But if all the fruits are not enjoyed

or suffered from, then that force drags you to take rebirth, when you have to face the reactions of your previous deeds.

There are ample examples to prove the rebirth theory. If it is accepted, every one will behave properly, will not trouble others, will gladly face his poverty or will live generously in riches, helping the poor. There will not be conflicts in the world. Peace will rule over the world.

I think this short essay is quite sufficient to prove the relevance of Sanskrit in this modern technical age, where all people live under stress and strain. There are plenty of ways to please mind; even then mind is not calm and quiet. People run to satisfy their Vasana, desires and wishes. The Hindu philosophy advises to curtail the desires, so as to get bliss. Bliss is a ratio of the desires fulfilled divided by the total desires in mind. This ratio will never be a complete number, unless the denominator is reduced. Complete happiness is possible only when the desires are reduced. I hope that the Indians will behave according to this great philosophy and get complete happiness.

End

Summary of

Contribution of Sanskrit in Psychology, Philosophy and Culture of the Indian Society.

The Indian culture is based on the Vedic Philosophy, which is based on science. Psychology is also fully considered in the Vedic philosophy.

The Aitereya Upanishad considered sixteen faculties of the brain, which are yet not considered by modern science. It is not possible to add any more faculties. The word 'Mana' is more scientific than 'mind', because it is derived from the root, which means to think. Mind is said to be the rein of five horses, namely the five sensory organs. It is scientifically true that the five sense organs are controlled by mind. It is rightly told that mind should be governed by intelligence. It is truly said that the life is 'Prajnanetra'. It means that any form of life, man or maggot, possesses knowledge. Science feels that mind is electromagnetic waves, while the Vedic philosophy holds it to be waves of Brahma Tatwa. Therefore, the Kena Upanishad is right in saying that mind, as if, goes to its aim.

The Katha Upanishad tells that the five sense organs are the windows opening outwards, because we can see outside, but not inside. Taking advantage of this philosophy Patanjali tells to shut these windows, so that mind runs inside to meet Atman. Patanjali tells five tendencies of mind. They are true to modern science. Patanjali holds sleep as a tendency of mind. It is not known to modern science. The etiology of sleep, told by Patanjali, 7000 years ago, is accepted by modern science.

The Vedic philosophy of Karma Siddhanta and rebirth theory appear very scientific, and if accepted now, will help the society to be peaceful and happy. Sanskrit philosophy tells to curtail the desires and wishes, so as to reduce the denominator and get a complete number of bliss. It is beneficial for peace to the lustful society of today.

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