

APPENDIX

PARAPSYCHIC CONTENTS

A retrospective glance at the chapters of this thesis draws attention to the fact that psychology in Ayurveda covers many important aspects of human life. Starting with philosophic background it envelops the concept of mind, psychosomatics, physio-psychological principle of Tridhatu, sex and mental disorders, the normal and the abnormal, psychiatric approach in diagnosis and therapy and lastly the medical ethics. In this wise, a comprehensive and integral theory of psychology takes shape. But this is not all. The psychological concepts in ancient Ayurveda have parapsychic contents also. They are in the form of some definite references only but the references are made on the basis of sound faith, and conviction in the existence of parapsychic powers. It is useful and interesting to review the parapsychic references here succinctly.

CHARAKA'S CONCEPT

Charaka has not left this important subject untouched. He mentions the theme in the context of liberation of the soul by yoga. When the mind is stabilized man rises higher and when it rests in the self, it can have psychic powers: 'From the contact of the self, the senses, the mind and the sense-objects arise pleasure and pain; these two ~~cases~~ ceases to be the result of the inaction of the mind which

is firmly fixed in the self. Then while embodied, it acquires the psychic powers and such a state, the Rishis who are conversant with yoga, know to be as yoga.¹ This is the basis of psychic powers, according to Charaka. As the mind rises above sensations of pleasure and pain and when it is self-stabilized it acquires psychic powers even though it is still embodied in man. This is a sort of yoga and the psychic powers are yogic powers. It must be pointed out here that the powers are not sought but they are acquired as the result of mind's stabilization in the self. Psychic powers are nearer the goal but they are the by-products of mind's higher states. The powers belong to the self and they are revealed as soon as the mind becomes pure and concentrated.

The question would now be about the nature of these psychic powers, Charaka has mentioned some important psychic powers. They are eight in number. They are enumerated by him, thus: 'The entering into other bodies, telepathy, the doings of things according to one's will, clairvoyance, clairaudience, omniscience, effulgence, vanishing from sight at will - these eight are said to be the sovereign powers of the yogis. All this accrues from concentration of the pure mind.'² The stress is on the concentration and purity of the mind;

¹Charakasamhita - Vol.III Sh.A.I Sl.138-139,p.1001

²Ibid. Sh.A.I Sl.140-41, p.1002.

the powers accrue as a nature of course.

Over and above this, there are references to Bhutavidya or demonology in Charakasamhita. This may be due to traditional acceptance of the belief in beings - good and harmful - helping or troubling human beings. This may not merely be a traditional faith but a rational and logical conclusion of the philosophic view of life. The ancient Indians saw intuitively and reasoned out the theory of Karma and rebirth. Paranormal powers and Bhutavidya are the natural corollaries of this doctrine. It also explains the parapsychic powers enumerated above. The soul-theory and the theory of Karma easily explain the parapsychic powers.

SUSHRUTA'S CONCEPT

Sushruta also makes reference to the parapsychic powers of the mind of man. He says that the men of pure mind remembers the past life or lives. He can take advantage of the cultivation of virtues in the past life and make swift progress in this life.³ He too emphasizes the theory of rebirth and past actions in the whole phenomena of parapsychics and demonology or Bhutavidya.⁴

The cause of similarity of the views of both Charaka and Sushruta is the common philosophic and traditional

³Sushrutasamhita.Sh.A.2, Sl.41-42,p.456.

⁴Ibid. Vol.II Uttartantra A 60 Sl.1-20.

faith and factors. Both lay stress not on the parapsychic powers but on the purity of the mind and progressive higher states of mind and man's being.

PRESENT-DAY PARAPSYCHICS

The concept of paranormal powers of man is not mere superstition is already well established by the present-day research work in this field. Ample scientific investigations have been done and are still carried on in this direction. From Oliver Lodge to J.B.Rhine, hundreds of researchers have done admirable work in this area of knowledge. There is established 'Parapsychology Foundation' in New York. There are centres of this research working in almost all advanced countries of the West. The notable among them is parapsychological laboratory at the Duke University and there J.B.Rhine has achieved remarkable results in the research work in parapsychics. There is one such research centre working in Rajasthan in India. Some of the notable personalities in this field are Tyrrel, carrington, Zorab, Rhine and others. More than a thousand books including books on research work have already been published in different European languages. A bibliography of these books is published by Parapsychology Foundation.⁵

TWO APPROACHES COMPARED

The Ayurvedic and the present-day concepts of parapsychics have some common factors as far as both

5. George Zorab. Bibliography of Parapsychology.
Parapsychology Foundation, 1957.

accepts the paranormal as established fact. But the line of investigation and the emphasis greatly vary. Ayurveda lays stress on gaining and reaching higher states of mind by yogic methods by observing mental discipline. Present day parapsychic investigation is after finding out the working of the parapsychic powers by scientific methods and there is no stress on training one's mind in order to reach the parapsychic state of the mind. There are rules to be observed in this but not for training one's own mind subjectively but only to facilitate the research work objectively. In short, Ayurvedic approach is more subjective while the present-day methods are mainly objective. Ayurvedic approach is more of psychodynamics while the present day approach is more of psychoscientific. The conjunction of the two would bring excellent results and would certainly be useful to help man to get out of the present chaotic situation. 'The troubles of our times can only be curbed when science integrates the sixth sense and its evidence into its view of the world.'⁶

POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION

Charaka has only mentioned the psychic phenomenon in his text but there is a vast unexplored literature in

⁶.Raphael K.France in Proceedings of the First International Parapsychological Studies Published by Parapsychology Foundation,p.99.

India which can contribute a great deal in the advancement of para-psychology today. The yogadarshan of Patanjali, the Tantra literature, the Buddhistic literature, the Jain philosophy and the six systems of philosophy contain very useful and well developed paranormal psychology. There is found not merely the philosophy of parapsychology but psychodynamics which requires a practical application for its utilization. The ancients were superb in this field and were so profound that they did not attach much importance to psychic powers. The parapsychic powers are to be utilized only for self-realization. Charaka has well pointed out this goal-direction.

