



### CHAPTER III

#### SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY OF AYURVEDA

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#### 3.1. INTRODUCTORY

' All the Sciences were born into the realm of speculation; they all, in other words, started life as philosophy.'<sup>1</sup>

Ayurveda, the science of life, confirms this statement of Joad. Ayurveda and all the other ancient Indian sciences developed under the marked influence of philosophy. They continued to take support of philosophy even after they gained their individual and self-dependent existence. This is true in the case of Ayurveda also. It is interesting,

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<sup>1</sup> C.E.M. Joad, Man and Its Working in Modern Scientific Thought. (Home Library Club, 1943), p. 387.

to understand how and in what way Ayurveda was influenced by philosophy. It is equally useful to find out by which systems of philosophy Ayurveda was influenced and to what extent and for what purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to review the philosophical basis of Ayurveda.

### 3.2. ANALYSIS

To seek proper answer to this question of philosophical background of Ayurveda, the following topics have to be dealt with in succession.

1. The aim, purpose and scope of Ayurveda.
2. The Status and state of philosophy in ancient Indian history.
3. Relation between philosophy and science.
4. Permanent relation between philosophy and science and its revival in the present times.
5. Ayurveda as science and its characteristics as a science.
6. The philosophical background in Ayurveda.
7. Influence of Sankhya system in Ayurveda.
8. Nyaya-Vaisheshika's imprint on Ayurveda and Charaka's originality in its interpretation.
9. Charaka's philosophy and its influence on the psychological concepts.

### 3.3. THE AIM, PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF AYURVEDA

Ayurveda, as its very nomenclature signifies, is a science of life in its varied aspects. It is described by Charaka as 'Tri-based and extending without end.'<sup>2</sup> It is

<sup>2</sup>Charakasamhita:Jamnagar Edition. Vol. II, p.6, Sl.25.

ever growing and has no end. It lays down the positive and negative aspects of life, shows the right way of living and cautions against the wrong one. 'That is named the science of life wherein are laid down the principles governing good and the not good, the happy and the unhappy and what is wholesome and unwholesome in relation to life, as also the measure of life.'<sup>3</sup>

It shows humanity the goal of life and the way to its realisation. Such a science is regarded as the most useful. Charaka himself, in the name of philosophers, gives Ayurveda the first and foremost place among all sciences because of its varied utility. 'The science relating to life is regarded by the philosophers as the most meritorious (of all the sciences) because it teaches mankind what constitutes their good in both the worlds.'<sup>4</sup>

Ayurveda being a science of life covers important subjects like philosophy, psychology, logic and dialectics along with its main task of exposition of medicinal science in a comprehensive style. It defines life's goal, shows the right means for its realisation and emphasizes the vital point that the basis of all endeavours is health and normalcy, physical as well as mental. This is made clear only when one understands the place and value of philosophy

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.9.S1.41.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p.10.S1.43.

in ancient Indian life.

### 3.4. STATUS AND STATE OF PHILOSOPHY THEN

The meaning of philosophy was quite different in ancient Indian thought as it meant not merely formulating armchair speculative theories but creation of comprehensive knowledge, of course with all the aids of argumentation, logic, reason, creative imagination and intuition supported by facts and experience. There was idealism too in the attempt to philosophise as there was a definite goal before all the ancient Indian philosophies and that common goal was salvation or Moksha: 'Philosophy was not a matter of mere speculation or intellectual edification ; no subject of inquiry was worthy of study unless it helped the student to so regulate his life as to lead him to that state of perfection called Moksha.'<sup>5</sup>

Philosophy was an integral approach to life by which the ancient Hindus covered the whole ground of knowledge. 'Hindus thought is at once philosophy, science and religion, all in one and one in all. Considered in this light, it may not be so difficult to understand why Ayurveda draws so freely from Sankhya and other Darshans.'<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>G.Shrinivas Murti. The Science and Art of Indian Medicine. ( The Theosophical Society,Adyar,1945),p.40.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.,p.42.

(a) Synthetic Approach.— Ancient Indian philosophy was unique in its synthetic approach combined with its analytic acumen. It had well combined synthetic attitude with analytic attitude in its comprehensive philosophic formulations. Though it used analysis in discovering and discerning facts and data to a great extent, it <sup>is</sup> ultimately utilised for a construction of a whole concept and theory by full use of synthesis. This was the characteristic of the Hindu mind throughout the ancient periods. 'The Hindu mind is essentially synthetic. It always analyses a problem into its various aspects and considers them in their synthetic relation to one another. It never destroys the organic unity of a subject and makes a compartmental study of its different aspects.'<sup>7</sup>

By such an integral and comprehensive approach to a subject like philosophy, the ancients covered all aspects related to the subject and gave a fair treatment of every relevant aspect. In such a wide and appropriate treatment of the subject they always based their theory on facts of human experience. Every school of philosophy has made valuable contributions to psychology, logic, ethics and other mental and moral sciences. But these never have

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<sup>7</sup>Jadunath Sinha. Indian Psychology(Perception)(Kegan Paul Trench Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1934), Preface, p. IV.

been treated as separate branches of study in India.

But though the ancient Indian thinkers viewed life and its philosophy as one whole and included different sciences in its vast canvass, these sciences like psychology and others, with proper care of not breaking the unity of the original whole concept, can be individually treated now in the modern context by extracting the psychological or the pertinent material without disturbing its relation to philosophy. 'But though there are no independent sciences of psychology, logic, ethics, epistemology etc., we can collect ample material from the original works on different schools of Indian philosophy dealing with these sciences, disengage them from their metaphysical settings and make a consistent study of them.'<sup>8</sup> This is the right approach and it can yield good results if properly pursued.

(b) Influence of intuition .- But to revert to the subject of the true and full meaning of philosophy, we cannot ignore intuitive and mystic characteristic of the origin of Indian philosophy. Over and above using logical, rational and scientific methods, the ancient Indian philosophers relied on intuition also. This approach of theirs, is well described by Dr.Radhakrishnan: 'Philosophy is not so much a conceptual reconstruction as an exhibition of insights... Philosophy as a conceptual knowing is a

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.,

preparation for intuitive insight, and an exposition of it when it arises... The great truths of philosophy are not proved but seen. The philosophers convey to others visions by the machinery of logical proof.'<sup>9</sup> There was a mystic touch too in their intuitive experience and vision. In such comprehensive manner the ancient Indians philosophized and created different philosophic systems in accordance with the light they got, vision they saw and reason that guided them.

Sufficiently elaborate description has been made to present the correct meaning of philosophy generally understood in India. It is no mere speculation, or theorization or mere dialectics as generally meant in the West at present. 'The modern Western conception of philosophy is a pure speculative theoretical study dissociated as it were, from actual problems of life.'<sup>10</sup>

As science advanced with the passage of time in the west, philosophy began to be looked upon as logical speculation. Against this tendency in the West, Karl Pearson, a scientist, shows a red signal. He says, 'The scope of science is to ascertain the truth in every possible branch of knowledge, there is no sphere of

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Radhakrishnan: An Idealist View of Life. p.152.

<sup>10</sup> Srinivas Murti. The Science and Art of Indian Medicine. (The Theosophical Publishing House, 1945), p.40.

inquiry which lies outside the legitimate field of science. To draw a distinction between science and philosophy is obscurantism.<sup>11</sup>

This idea leads us now to the subject of relation between philosophy and science. There is an intimate relation between philosophy and science even in modern times of rapid scientific advancement and tendency of more and more specialization of scientific knowledge. In spite of such an attitude on the part of the scientist, there is a feeling slowly but visibly growing among the scientists themselves that there is no gain in utter diversification of science and philosophy. There is an intimate relation between the two and the binding chord between them cannot be broken without damage to both of them. It is worthwhile to understand the relations between the two and its subtlety in some more details as envisaged even by Western thinkers.

### 3.5. RELATION BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

Relation between philosophy and science is age-old. Their relation is very intimate.

Philosophical support for any science is necessary because it has to make some assumptions at the very start. Such assumptions should be logically true and to make them

<sup>11</sup> Karl Pearson. Grammar of Science, 3rd Edition, Vol. I, p. 35.



rational it has to philosophize directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, otherwise its very starting ground would be unsound. 'To begin work, every science without the exception of psychology, must make at least several assumptions.'<sup>12</sup>

It is quite well known that modern physics is driven more and more towards philosophical monistic truth. 'The rise of the Quantum theory in Physics, of the Gestalt or configuration theory in psychology, are interesting indications of a movement towards a psychical monism and away from physical monism.'<sup>13</sup>

C.Spearman has pointed out the tendency of diversification of science from philosophy in the last century and in the beginning of this century in his book on 'Psychology during Hundred Years' in the very first chapter and he has at the same time shown that it is not possible to make possible a complete divorce of the two. Even the stark materialistic behaviourists have to take support of the materialist philosophy of life ! Present-day scientists have realized this position of unavoidable relation of science with philosophy and have taken a more pragmatic and realistic attitude in this connection. The

<sup>12</sup>C.Daly King. The Psychology of Consciousness. (London: Kegan Paul T.Trubner & Co.,1932),p.13.

<sup>13</sup>W.McDougall.Outline of Abnormal Psychology. (Metheun & Co.,Ltd.),Sixth Edition,1948,p.522.

Indian scientist, Late Sir Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar has said, 'The Scientist today is not the hot-headed, blasphemous and conceited fellow which he used to be sometime ago. Physics has merged into meta-physics. The pride of the scientists has been humbled to such an extent that he no longer contends that science can explain even all that meets the eye.'<sup>14</sup>

This does not mean that philosophy can eliminate science and take its place any time. Philosophy can lend a sound support to scientific advancement. They are in a way, complimentary. Science advances where philosophy stops and philosophy prepares ground where science cannot reach. 'Philosophy is not scientific theory, nor should it be despised because it is easier. It cannot answer the problems of science as science, but it can make the scientist's task easier. Because philosophy is not enmeshed in the intricacies of scientific hypothesis and verification, it can help by eliminating blind alleys clarifying the subject matter of experiment and giving meaning to the finished product.'<sup>15</sup>

Science, without the help of philosophy experiences now the limits of its achievements. It cannot give a

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<sup>14</sup> Srinivas Murti. The Science and Art of Indian Medicine. (Theosophical Publishing House, 1945), p.7.

<sup>15</sup> James Royce. Man and His Nature. (McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), Preface, P.XI.

satisfactory picture of the world in spite of its tremendous progress in almost all branches of scientific knowledge. 'The wonderful elation which we scientists now are experiencing and which comes from the new feeling of the power of our intellect, will be somewhat dampened by the recognition of the limits of the power. We will have to acquiesce in the fact that our intellect's toil cannot give us a satisfactory picture of the world such as the Greeks dreamed to attain in an effortless way, by easy speculation.'<sup>16</sup>

This shows that even the modern scientific thought and the philosophy of science do feel the need of the close connection between philosophy and science.

We have seen by now that an unbreakable chord between philosophy and science exists and the chord does not merely do the work of binding them together but it, like a live chord, enlivens both of them and revivifies them at the same time.

### 3.6. PERMANENT RELATION BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY

After looking into the intimate relation between philosophy and science, it becomes necessary to see the relation between philosophy and psychology. Psychology

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<sup>16</sup> Herbert Feigl and Brodbeck. Readings in the Philosophy of Science. New York, 1953, pp.761-62.

as a science should have some relation with philosophy, it is expected. But it has tried to sever its relation with philosophy in order to gain an independent status because it was considered a branch of philosophy in the past till the growth of scientific psychology. It would not like to be dependent on philosophy in one way or the other so that it can stand on its own and gain an independent status as a science in the array of modern sciences. 'Psychology, being the last of the sciences to escape the tutelage of philosophy, it is understandable if it is now the least receptive to a philosophical approach.<sup>17</sup>

But inspite of such an effort on the part of modern psychology, it cannot sever its connections with philosophy entirely. It tries to detach itself from philosophy but still some ties remain unbroken with more added strength in other respects. Dr.Gardner Murphy well presents this situation. 'But whereas contemporary British French and American psychology can be portrayed in some degree of detachment from prevalent philosophical systems, no such separation is possible in relation to contemporary German psychology. Germany is witnessing in many quarters

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<sup>17</sup> John Baloff. The Existence of Mind.,p.16.

a widespread revolt against experimentalism and a recourse to methods which are as fully philosophical as they are psychological.'<sup>18</sup>

In spite of this fact there are certain schools of psychology which would prefer complete detachment from philosophy. Some psychologists disown philosophy at their own cost. 'The psychologist's disclaim for philosophy has often robbed him of the fruits of over 2000 years of human experience with the very problems to which his science almost always leads.'<sup>19</sup>

Even modern psychology has its philosophy but it is not well formulated and is still vague. 'Of course, psychology's philosophy is yet too vague to draw definite conclusions. However, it is not impossible that we, or our students, are going to witness a real split of science right here.'<sup>20</sup>

(a) The Choice. - This shows that modern psychology is on the borderline and one has to think seriously before the split occurs. The choice is between creation of a fullfledged philosophy of its own or severance of connection with philosophy altogether. But the tide is

<sup>18</sup> Gardner Murphy. An Historical Introduction to Psychology, Preface, p. XII.

<sup>19</sup> James Royce. Man and His Nature. McGraw Hill Book Co., 1961, p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> Eugenl P. Winger. Limits of Science in the Philosophy of Science. Editors: Harber Feigl and May Brodbeck, New York, '53 p. 763.

turning and there a growing inclination towards reversion to philosophy. 'Modern scientific theories are largely a reversion to the ancient teaching: with the added force of experimental evidence and a greater knowledge of details.'<sup>21</sup> This reversion to philosophy is mainly due to some of perennial truths it contains and that is why some psychologists have even go to the length of saying that psychology one day will re-discover 'soul.' 'And J.M. Hunt, after surveying the past history and present status of psychology, concluded his presidential address to the American Psychological Association(1952), with a prediction that psychology would rediscover the soul. These cycles should assure the student who worries least what is contained here be soon outdated. Truth is perennial, and if he just hangs on, it will eventually be in style again.'<sup>22</sup>

This is not merely an opinion of an expert trodding his lonely way in the direction of reversion to philosophy but on the other hand, there are a number of authentic personages in the field of psychology even in the heart of American Psychological Association who are now more and more prone to relate psychology and philosophy. 'On the

<sup>21</sup>Kingsland. Rational Mysticism.,p.56.

<sup>22</sup>James Royce.Man and His Nature.McGraw Hill Book Co., 1961,p.16.

other hand, in symposia, presidential address, and other official activities, the members of American Psychological Association disagree more and more with the narrow empirical view of early twentieth-century psychology: They frankly recognize that scientific psychology is replete with metaphysical commitments.<sup>23</sup>

(b) The Reversion.— This trend in reversion is not a reaction. It is the very nature of psychology to be philosophic. It naturally tends to make fresh relationship with philosophy. Both have to deal with the subject of mind in one way or the other, both have a deep concern regarding man and both have to utilize the services of mind whatever they consider its nature. Even though psychology has established its independent status as a science, it has to revert to philosophy for its own benefit for further advance. This is because of the very peculiar nature of psychology. 'This peculiar nature of the subject matter of psychology, namely man, seems to place it in a very special relation to philosophy, even though now it is a distinct science. This seems to be true not only of psychology as an applied art (clinical) but even as a pure or theoretical science. The existence of this special

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., Preface, p.V.

relation is evidenced by (1) the nature of psychology and (2) the writings of psychologists.'<sup>24</sup>

### 3.7. AYURVEDA AS A SCIENCE

Once we saw the close relation between psychology and philosophy, it remains now to be seen that Ayurveda is a science. It contains, as we have just described in the very beginning of this chapter, not only philosophical ideas but psychological theories alongwith all round treatment of medicinal subjects. That is why it is named 'Science of Life.' But it is not merely a science of life in mere nomenclature but it is scientific in its methodology too. It is a scientific treatise in its true and full meaning.

The question is what is science ? Karl Pearson gives a very handy and acceptable description and definition of science. 'The man who classifies facts of any kind, who sees their mutual relations and describes their sequences in applying the scientific method is a man of science. Science is the critical systematic knowledge, based on generalization. The scientist systematizes the data, the observations and draws certain conclusions therefrom which ultimately assume the form of formula or a universal truth. He proceeds rationally and logically

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p.17.



through all his observations. It is the cumulative product of both the processes of analysis and synthesis, the knowledge of individual ideas and things against the background of universal laws and concepts.'<sup>25</sup>

Indian scientific methodology covers these general concept of scientific method and goes a step further and tries to adopt the method to the requirement of the subject in each case without losing the integral approach to life as a whole. 'What is characteristic of the Hindu scientific mind is that, without being content with the general concepts of science and general methodology, it elaborates the fundamental categories and concepts of such of the special sciences as it cultivates with assiduity and systematically adopted the general principles of scientific method to the requirements of the subject matter in each case.'<sup>26</sup>

In short, science has the following characteristics:

It (1) collects data by observation.

(2) classifies the facts by logical methods.

(3) draws some conclusions by reasoning.

(4) formulates a theory by synthesis.

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<sup>25</sup>Karl Pearson.Grammar of Science. Vol.I,Third Edition,p.36.

<sup>26</sup>Brijendranath Seal.The Positive Sciences of Ancient Hindus. Motilal Baranasidar,1958,p.288.

(5) Verifies the theory in actual practice by application.

(a) The tests applied.- Judging by these characteristics, not only the scientific method of the ancient Indian thinkers was sound to the core but their scientific terminology was also very appropriate and precise: 'Fortunately, the Sanskrit philosophico-scientific terminology, however difficult in its technical character, is exceedingly precise, consistent and compressive.'<sup>27</sup>

The description of ancient Indian scientific approach and method equally applies to Ayurveda which is one of the chief sciences in ancient times. Its scientific character is very well recognized and that is why the knowledge therein is hailed in the medical world without exception. 'The ancient system of Indian medicine possessed an inspiring treasure of empirical knowledge and technical achievement which cannot be safely ignored even in these days of rapid progress.'<sup>28</sup> Its utility is not only to India but to the medical world at large. It is a science and an art too and so should be preserved and fostered. 'The science and art of Indian medicine is part and parcel of our invaluable cultural heritage which should be zealously preserved, fostered and promoted, at least in

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. IV.

<sup>28</sup> Calcutta University Commission Report, Vol. V, p. 58.

India, and for the greater service to the cause of science, suffering humanity and the generations that are to come after us.'<sup>29</sup>

These eloquent words of Shri Ramnath Chopra are not an exuberance of sentimentality, of narrow nationalism or of pride in one's cultural heritage but they merely present the real position of the scientific utility of Ayurveda at present. Modern medical science is tending more and more to some of the fundamental concepts of Ayurveda. One such fundamental concept is the treatment of man as a whole. This concept is gaining more ground in the current medical thought. But the recent evolution of micro-biology, the progress of the knowledge of nutrition and metabolism, the concept of integrative functioning of endocrine glands and the vegetative nervous system and the studies of allergy and immunity have revived the clinical interest in the study of constitutional or integral or synthetic concept of personality of man as a whole.'<sup>30</sup>

Ayurveda has accepted this principle of treatment of man as a whole at the very start and the reversal to it at present, brings credit to Ayurveda and its scientific nature and method. Arturo Castiglioni, the great medical

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<sup>29</sup> Report of the Committee on Indigenous Systems of Medicine, Vol. II, 1948, p. 363.

<sup>30</sup> Charakasamhita. Jamnagar Edition, Part I, p. 513.

historian, describing this modern revival of ancient constitutional concept as neo-Hippocratism, says, 'Such principles indicate the orientation of modern medicine toward neo-Hippocratism (a term introduced by the author in 1925), return to some of the classical principles of medical thought.'<sup>31</sup>

(b) It is a science.— From this it can be concluded that Ayurveda is a science because:

1. It fulfils all the requirements of a science as shown above. It's scientific approach can be seen in the psychical, physiological and psychosomatic principles.
2. It collects data, classifies the facts, draws logical conclusions, formulates theory and verifies the same in actual practice.
3. It is comprehensive and configurational in nature and this is a characteristic of Ayurveda and other Indian sciences.

The discussion thus far points out that Ayurveda is a science in its full sense. It draws all its importance from utilization of philosophical concepts current in those times. It owes much to the ancient Indian scientific philosophies like the Sankhya and Nyaya Vaisheshika. Ayurveda has utilized the philosophical concepts and ideas to set its own purpose of presenting the science

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 513.

of life, coherently. In this sense philosophical truths are modelled to suit the purpose of Ayurveda.

Ayurveda influenced by these systems of Indian philosophy, utilized in turn the philosophical ideas it assimilated for the purpose of enhancement of 'The Science of Life' and thereby profiting immensely rendered due service to philosophy by propagating the philosophic truths in the day-to-day work of medicine. Indian Philosophy is very much upheld by the modern science. 'Eastern philosophy, I may add, is gaining increased support from Western Science.'<sup>32</sup>

In short, Ayurveda has a sound background of some of the systems of Indian Philosophy which is considered sound even from the view point of modern science. It is necessary now to turn to this philosophic background.

### 3.8. THE PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND

The origin of philosophy and medicine seems to have similar purpose and identical causes. It is the problem of pain, disease, old age and death that inspired not only Buddha but almost all philosophers to find out the cause, and cure of this complex and evasive problem. Medicine too must have been guided from its very crude beginning

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<sup>32</sup> Sir John Woodroff. The Garland of Letters. (Madras: Ganesh & Co., 1951), p. 216.

to find out the cause and cure of pain, disease and its aftermath. In a way, religion and philosophy like medicine are primarily therapeutic in their nature and origin.<sup>33</sup>

Medicine has the therapeutic monopoly among all sciences. This therapeutic nature of the two brought Ayurveda and philosophy much closer together. This is one reason why Ayurveda remained open to philosophical influence and based its theories on philosophical background. This becomes entirely clear as Charaka propounds four sources of knowledge. They are: (1) Direct perception (2) Inference (3) Revelation or testimony of good men and (4) Common sense.<sup>34</sup> These make Ayurveda's approach faultless and foolproof.

The utilization of philosophical truths in building up the edifice of Ayurveda as the main pillars follows from this. Ayurveda gives importance to direct knowledge and logic at the same time. While depending on the philosophical theories, Ayurveda has always made the theory suit its purpose and thereby has made due changes in the philosophical concepts accordingly. It being a practical science, it had to make needful changes in the theory to suit its practical purpose. 'One finds in it snatches of

<sup>33</sup> Charaka-Samhita. Jamnagar Edition, Vol. I, p. 458.

<sup>34</sup> Charaka-Samhita. Vol. I. Jamnagar Edition, p. 466.

definitions and views expounded in extenso by Vaisheshika, Nyaya, Sankhya and Vedanta systems of Philosophy. The reason for this is not far to seek; for medicine, being a practical science, concerned itself with whatever was found applicable to suit its theory and practical concepts.<sup>35</sup>

By introducing such needful changes in current philosophical concepts, the Ayurvedic experts must have been drawn into dialectical controversies and from such logical discussions they should have developed logical theories. So there is a long full chapter devoted to the subject of logic and dialectics in Charaka-Samhita.<sup>36</sup>

It is supposed and argued as we shall soon see that Nyaya-system of philosophy was much influenced by logical theorization propounded in Charaka-Samhita. The influence of philosophical systems and Ayurveda was to a certain extent mutual. 'Medicine was the most important of all the physical sciences which were cultivated in ancient India, was directly and intimately connected with the Sankhya and Vaisheshika physics and was probably the origin of the logical speculations subsequently codified in the Nyaya-Sutras.'<sup>37</sup> This guess of Dasgupta seems to be reasonable and much probable.

<sup>35</sup>Charaka-Samhita. Vol. I. Jamnagar Edition, p. 466.

<sup>36</sup>Charaka-Samhita. Vol. II, Vimansthana, A. 8.

<sup>37</sup>Dasgupta. History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, Cambridge, p. 219.

It is necessary, now, to see the philosophical background and influence of each of these systems in a very broad outline as far as it is necessary to our purpose.

### 3.9. SANKHYA

Ayurveda is mainly influenced by Sankhya and Nyaya-Vaisheshika systems. In Charaka are propounded relevant theories of all the three systems while Sushruta propounds only Sankhya. It is only relevant to our purpose how, in what way and to what extent Charaka and Sushruta were influenced by those systems for providing philosophical background to their psychological theories. Charaka comes later than Kapil Muni who first propounded Sankhya system but was earlier than Ishwarkrishna whose final systemization on Sankhya Sutra is available at present. That is why Charaka's version of Sankhya differs from Ishwarkrishna's. 'Besides Charaka's account of Sankhya is quite different from the traditional account given in Ishwarkrishna's Karika and in the Sankhya-Sutra and seems to be one of the earliest versions of Sankhya.'<sup>38</sup>

The account of Sankhya given in Charaka is similar to Panchsikha in the Mahabharat. Certain influence of vedanta is seen in this account. It is thought that

<sup>38</sup> Dr. P. Kutumbiah. Ancient Indian Medicine. (Orient Longman, 1962), p. XXI.



Charaka's account falls midway between Upanishadic ideas and orthodox Sankhya. 'From the point of view of history of philosophy, the Sankhya of Charaka and Panchshiksha is very important, for it shows a transitional stage of thought between the Upanishadic ideas and the orthodox Sankhya doctrine as represented by Ishwarkrishna.'<sup>39</sup>

The Sankhya is so named because it propounds a number of twenty five Tattvas as the basis of the whole creation and these are resolved ultimately into two - Purusha and Prakriti. Purush is conscious and Prakriti is material and out of it evolves the whole universe by dint of the three Gunas-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Mind, Buddhi and Ahamkara (ego) are included in this number of twenty four evolutes of Prakriti and they together give full concept of mind in the sense understood today.

It is needless to go into details of this system of Sankhya here, or to give its substance, as it is not our task to find out how far Charaka and Sushruta were influenced by this system and in what way and where they differed from it. Our purpose is to see that in the making of the philosophic ideas of Charaka and Sushruta, this system had provided a background to a certain extent. In the course of our discussion on psychological theories such

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<sup>39</sup> Dasgupta. History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 219.

relevant references will be made.

### 3.10. NYAYA-VAISHESHIKA

As Sushruta is mainly influenced by Sankhya, Charaka has deep impress of Nyaya Vaisheshika. It must have been clear by now as referred to above that Charaka's exposition on dialectics had influenced later Nyaya-Sutra. But Nyaya thought or concepts were in the air in the times of Charaka and he propounded the same in his Ayurvedic treatise. They were in the state of transition and therefore, Charaka utilized some of the Vaisheshika concepts to his purpose. 'Charaka's Sutra's were therefore, written at a time when Vaisheshika doctrines were undergoing changes and well-known compendiums were beginning to be written on them.'<sup>40</sup>

So was the case of Nyaya system of philosophy. This system was useful to all sciences of the day for providing them a logical and scientific attitude and methodology. 'Vatsayana of course points out that so far as the logical side of Nyaya is concerned it has the widest scope for itself as it includes all beings, all their actions and all the sciences.'<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Dasgupta. History of Indian Medicine, Cambridge. Vol. I, p. 281.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 277-278.

As there is much common ground between Nyaya and Vaisheshika Systems as regard their approach to philosophical concepts and as they are to a great measure complementary, these two systems are synthesised and spoken as Nyaya-Vaisheshika.<sup>42</sup>

Nyaya system propounds sixteen fundamental substances and includes self and mind in the category of substance. But this substantially is spiritual. The soul is all pervading. Mind is the internal sense organ. Conjunction of the soul through mind and the mind through the senses with object is necessary for perception and cognition. This is the basic concept of the psychology in this system and this has influenced Charaka to a great extent.

Nyaya-Vaisheshikas believe in the reality of the external world and its knowledge can be had through the agency of the mind. 'The Nyaya-Vaisheshika believes that the existence of the external world although necessarily known through the mind, is in no way dependent on it.'<sup>43</sup>

Charaka's Interpretation.— This system depends solely on experience and reason and so it naturally influenced pragmatic science of Ayurveda to a great extent in matters of certain basic concepts. Draya(Substance), Gunas(qualities),

<sup>42</sup> Dr. P. Kutumbiah. Ancient Indian Medicine. (Orient Longmans, 1962), p. XXI.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

Karma( movement ), Samanya(generally),Vishesha(particularly) are the main categories which have been incorporated by Ayurveda in accordance with its needs. It would be interesting to cite one instance in this regard. The principle of Samanya and Vishesha is the main support of Ayurveda,for it is the principle which underlies the application and the course of diet. Still,however, Charaka adopted the meaning of Samanya and Vishesha to suit his own science. In the Vaisheshika system this word 'Samanya' means a class concept but Charaka adopts it to mean concrete things which have similar constituents or characteristics. Similarly Vishesha means ultimate specific properties differentiating one atom from another in Vaisheshas(Particulars), but in Charaka it means concrete things which have dissimilar or opposite constituents or characteristics. Samanya and Visheshas, thus have a significance quite different from what they have in Vaisheshika system.<sup>44</sup>

As Ayurveda had to deal with pragmatic work, it had naturally to make certain appropriate modifications in the conceptual value of such words as 'Samanya', 'Vishesha,' 'Action' and others. In spite of such due modifications not only in the meaning of certain words but in the number of certain categories also, Ayurveda had close relation

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.,p.XXIV.

with Nyaya-Vaisheshika. However, in spite of these modifications, the relation of Nyaya Vaisheshika with Charaka seems to be close.<sup>45</sup>

But Charaka does not rest content with pluralism of Nyaya Vaisheshika but resorts to Sankhya categories when necessary in case of Vyakta and Avyakta. From Sankhya it goes further and inclines to show one common origin of all things and thereby betrays Vedantic influence. 'In Charaka, there is a sudden transition from the pluralism of Nyaya-Vaisheshika to the Sankhya categories, again making a fundamental deviation from it betraying Vedantic inclination towards one common origin of all things.'<sup>46</sup>

All this attempt on the part of Charaka to imbibe different ideas from various systems of philosophy was not for any philosophical purpose but to create a workable and acceptable philosophy of his own which would suit his aim of presenting a practical science. 'This is an attempt at not explaining or elaborating any current system of thought, but culling such facts and definitions as are already current, in a manner suited to the purpose of building a framework of a positive science wherein drugs, man, disease and its care could be harmonised.'<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Charakasamhita. Vol. I. Jamnagar Edition, p. 469.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 468.

### 3.11. CHARAKA'S PHILOSOPHY

By systematic culling, ideas from these systems, Charaka himself created a synthetic philosophy of his own and in the light of this philosophic background he manipulated his science of medicine, giving due place to psychological, psychosomatic and physio-psychological theories therein. Sushruta had to resort to a philosophy but as already seen, he had stuck to Sankhya philosophy for his purpose. His main emphasis was on surgery and Sankhya's analytic approach suited him more and was quite sufficient for his task. Sankhya's twenty-five categories ultimately reduced to two, the Vyakta and Avyakta i.e. purusha and prakriti gave enough philosophic background to Sushruta because Sushruta unlike Charaka had not gone into philosophic, dialectic and ethico-religious discussions. It is necessary here to specify that sankhya influence was not Sankhya of Iswarkrishna in 200 A.D. but that prior Sankhya which seems to bear Vedantic influence during time of Mahabharata's Panchshiksha doctrine referred to before. So it is now necessary to examine and review Charaka's philosophy in nutshell.

Any philosophy worth the name, has to deal with three main topics of man, world and God or the ultimate reality. Ayurveda's main subject is man and treatment of man in all his aspects. So we must understand what man is, for he is

the subject matter of the science of medicine for whose sake it is promulgated.<sup>48</sup>

To understand man, one has to understand the world for he is similar to the world in his construction.<sup>49</sup>

Understanding the world, leads to the knowledge of the ultimate reality. This is the reason why Charaka constructed his philosophy to provide a proper background to his science of medicine.

Charaka defines one and the same thing in various ways. He states six elements of Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether and the sixth one the Conscious elements. Man has consciousness and therefore he is identical with the conscious element itself. Man, again, being an effect of these six elements, is also the aggregate of them all together. Again from the view-point of further elaboration of these principles, man is an aggregate of twenty-four elements.<sup>50</sup> Here is seen the influence of Sankhya on Charaka. Therein are included the mind, ten sense-organs, action, the sense objects( five elements ) and the eight-fold Prakriti or Subtle constituents of inner beings viz. the Atma(spirit) the Buddhi(intellect), the Ahankara(the ego) and the five subtle elements. This aggregate-individual

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<sup>48</sup>Charaka-Samhita.(Sutra 1-47), Vol.II, p.10.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., Sh.A. 5, Sl.3( ), Vol.III, p.1071.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., Sharirsthana, AI 16-17, Vol.III, p.974.

is to be treated not only for disease and for ignorance but for spirutual liberation. Freedom from disease, ignorance and the round of birth and death is the subject and purpose of the Ayurveda.

Primary question.— The basic philosophical question is why is this aggregation of elements ? Who or what has brought them together? Rajas and Tamas, the qualities of passion and ignorance are responsible for this endless aggregation. On one side, by elimination of these qualities and on the other by the increase of sattvic quality of knowledge, goodness and balance can this aggregate be dissolved. Consciousness or knowledge is affirmed as the inalienable quality of Atma or the self. The self does not possess these three qualities in the liberated state and he is not under their influence. Charaka is silent on the question to whom these qualities belong and how does the self suffer from them.<sup>51</sup>

Charaka establishes the permanance of the soul. In the absence of a continuous doing and knowing individual, there would be no light nor darkness, neither truth nor falsehood, no vedas and good and bad actions would cease to be. There would be no substratum of experience, no happiness, no grief, no exit, no entry, no speed, no

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid.,p.412.



science, no scriptures, neither birth, nor death, and neither bondage nor release. Therefore, it is that the knowers of the cause declare the self of the individual to be the cause. If the conscious self were not there, light etc. would be meaningless and without purpose. Without the self there would be no knowledge of light etc. produced and without the experiencing self, these would be purposeless.<sup>52</sup>

Then why some people have no inclination to believe in the self? It is out of ignorance that such men regard life as devoid of an author and a doer. It is against reason too.<sup>53</sup>

Charaka truly and vividly describes the fleeting and transitory nature of the physical body in contrast to the permanency of the self. The physical body is being consumed every moment, quicker than the winking of an eye.<sup>54</sup>

The next question is how the self functions in the physical body. The self is the knower. Its knowledge proceeds from its contact with the instruments of knowledge viz. the senses, mind and the understanding. But in the absence of the contrast of the organs or in case they are defective, there is no cognition.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, Vol.III (Sharira AI 39-42), p.980, Ibid. (Sharira 43-44)

<sup>53</sup> Ibid (Sharira AI 50-51), p.982

<sup>54</sup> Ibid (Sharira AI 50-51), p.982

<sup>55</sup> Ibid (Sharir I, 45), 980.

In Charaka, there is first a definition of the two 84  
categories of the unmanifest and the manifest. That which is  
unknownable and unrecognizable by the characteristics of  
being is unmanifest while the manifest is of the opposite  
nature. The self is the unmanifest, knower of the field,  
permanent, all pervasive and indestructible. The manifest is  
the object of sense perception when the senses are in contact  
with them. The unmanifest is different, beyond the senses and  
is recognized by its signs and characteristics.<sup>56</sup>

The five proto-elements, the intellect, the manifest  
and the ego which is the eighth are known as the Bhuta-  
prakriti, the cause of being as well as the sixteen evaluates.  
These latter are the five organs of knowledge and the five  
organs of action, the mind and the five sense-objects and is  
known as the field and the unmanifest as the knower of the  
field.

The Self. - The important usage of one word in Charaka is  
chetanadhatu (Consciousness). He considers as a therapist  
'Chetna' also as a Dhatu, which is consciousness. He has  
propounded the sense-organs, the mind, the ego and the  
intellect as insentient. They appear sentient only when they  
are in conjunction with the self illuminates them by his  
consciousness. Hence it is the self which possesses inherent  
consciousness and is regarded as the doer; mind as insentient  
is not regarded as the doer.<sup>57</sup>

The self is the knower even without the help of the  
senses and is never without conscious quality at any time.  
There is knowledge manifested only if it is already there. The

56. Ibid. (Sharira - I, 62), p. 985.

57. Ibid. (Sharira - I, 75-76), p. 985.

lack of the senses cannot remove the knower's power of knowing. The particular perceptions of things only are not there but the capacity to perceive is always there, just as the knowledge of jar-making in potter does not find its expression in the absence of earth etc.<sup>58</sup>

The question how the aggregate being comes into being is answered by Charaka in this wise: The supreme self is beginningless and has no origin, but the aggregate being is born of acts, desire, delusion and aversion.<sup>59</sup>

The evolution of man is like this: from the unmanifest supreme is born the Buddhi, the principle of intellect, and from the intellect the ego-sense is derived; from the ego the ether and other proto-elements are born in their successive order. Then the whole man possessed of all the faculties springs in view and is said to be born, and at the end of an age when the world dissolves, this being merges back into those constituents in the reverse order.<sup>60</sup>

But this does not mean that every individual has to wait for liberation till the end of an age but he can liberate by the recollection of the true nature of the self.<sup>61</sup>

This is, in short, the philosophy of Charaka. He covers the whole panorama of the universe, its creator God, the man and his mind. But the idea of God is not an olden

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. (Sharira - I 18-19), p. 975

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. (Sharira - I 53), p. 983

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. (Sharira - 66-67), p. 984

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. (Sh. AI. St. 143-146), p. 1010

idea of the ancient philosophers all over the world but modern scientists too, have begun to accept the idea of God. The Indian scientist Sri Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar says, 'It looks certain that in the Utopia of scientists, God and science will be brought into a fertile union, in which the idea of God, instead of being diluted, will be enriched. This is my conviction and also the brief of a great many top-rank scientists of the world.'<sup>62</sup>

The New Physician.- The physcist and physician should also have faith in philosophy. Ayurvedic physician had a sound philosophic knowledge but the new physician shall also have a philosophical approach. 'The new physician must not only know his own subjects but must have been well grounded in such fundamentals as the position of man in the universe and in society and in the family. In addition, he must have studied man in his completeness body, mind and soul. In short, to be a complete physician, he must understand the position that man occupies in the entire scheme of universe and the full complexity of man himself. To do this he must, to the extent, be a philosopher. What Plato held to be necessary of political rulers, 'Unless philosophers are kings and kings are philosophers there shall be no ceasation of the ills of mankind,' is equally, if not more true of the physicians.'<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup>Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Research Institute in North India on 19-4-1946, quoted in Chopra Report, Part II.

<sup>63</sup>New Physician in Chopra Committee Report, Vol. I, p. 98.

This applies to the new psychologist too ! Psychology tried to be independent of philosophy and the psychologist is proud of being called a scientist, yet they cannot altogether run away from philosophy. Explicitly or implicitly the connection between them has persisted: 'As a matter of fact, psychologists rarely succeeded in avoiding at best an implicit reliance on philosophy, in spite of professing to stay in the realm of pure science.'<sup>64</sup>

Charaka's philosophy provides a proper background for the science of life and construction of psychological concepts. It is mainly in Charaka-Samhita that the bulk of psychological material is found. Sushruta no doubt gives glimpses of the psychological concepts current in his times but a good treatment to psychological theories is found only in Charaka-Samhita. That is why Charaka's philosophy has been outlined above. It is Charaka who has dealt with the concept of mind with all necessary details.

### 3.12. SUMMARY

Ayurveda as a science of life covers almost all aspects of life and has a philosophical background. Philosophy has its own importance in ancient India and it had a deep impact on growing sciences and Ayurveda was no exception to this. On the contrary, Ayurveda well exemplifies the fact that it had a philosophy of its own as a science though that philosophy was influenced by Sankhya and Nyaya-Vaisheshika systems of philosophy.

<sup>64</sup>James Royce. Man and His Nature, McGraw Hill Co., 1961, p.18.

Sushruta mainly based its thesis on Sankhya system, Charaka took resort to both Sankhya and Nyaya-Vaisheshika systems. Charaka's philosophy was so constructed as to suit the purposes of medicinal principles and requirements but it remains faithful to the main principles of Nyaya-Vaisheshika system. Its main thesis, in short, is that the Avyakta is consciousness and that is the doer and the creator of the universe. Man's self too is consciousness enveloped by the Vyakta which consists of different categories. Mind too is material according to Charaka as all other elements are material except the self. Charaka has based his psychological concepts on such an integral philosophy of life. It is he who gives a complete theory of mind in his texts. He starts with consciousness as the basic fact. It is a new approach, in a way.

