

Ethnobiological Analysis from Myth to Science V: Thought Vibration - A Human Environmental Factor

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ABSTRACT The human mind is a miniature system of the cosmic environment as declared by the ancient Indian sage scientists. The internal conditions of the mind is known as *Samskara* (mental impressions of one's last life) as well the habits of a person in the present life, both are responsible to control the vibrations in a mind; play an essential role to disturb it or enlighten it, which ultimately reflects on his environment. The Indian Yoga system, which synchronizes the process of breathing (*Praanaayama*) with the mental vibration makes the mind thoughtless and leads the soul towards a higher consciousness. Above all, mental pollution (thought pollution) is a great factor, which works in obscurity in the environment; needs special attention for its exact comprehension.

INTRODUCTION

The six *Darsans* constitute the basic philosophical system of India, founded by different sages. They are *Nyaaya* (system of logic for acquiring right knowledge - founded by Goutama); *Vaisesika* (study of the characteristics that distinguish a particular thing from all other things - by Kanaada); *Samkhya* (study of the principles of cosmic evolution by rational analysis - by Kapila); Yoga (ways and means by which the individual can know the reality by direct experience - by Patanjali); *Mimaamsa* (correct interpretation of Vedic ritual and texts - by Jaimini) and *Vedaanta* (inquiry into the nature of the ultimate principle (*Brahman*) - by Badaraayana. These six *Darsans* no way contradictory or antagonistic to one another, for they all lead to the same, practical end i.e. knowledge of the absolute and liberation of the soul. All the *Darsans* agree that, knowledge is the path to freedom and that Yoga is the method to attain final liberation (Bernard, 1989).

Yoga is defined as "the restraint of mental modifications". *Samkhya Darsana* is the philosophical basis of Yoga, while the later being very practical. The laws of *Samkhya*, that govern the evolution of the universe, can be extended for the evolution of an individual; thus the individual is a microcosm of the macrocosm. Yoga has eight limbs, viz. *Yama* (moral restraint), *Niyama* (self culture), *Asana* (posture), *Praanaayama* (breath control), *Pratyahara* (control of senses), *Dhaarana* (concentration), *Dhyana* (meditation) and *Samaadhi* (super consciousness state). The term Yoga comes from

the root Sanskrit word *Yuj*, means to join. Here it is used to mean the union of individual spirit with the universal spirit.

In the last century, there have been efforts to understand the physiology of meditation (Wallace and Benson, 1972). Clinical examination of subjects under meditation records the following physiological changes in their body such as: reduction in oxygen consumption, carbon dioxide elimination and the rate and volume of respiration; slight increase in the acidity of the arterial blood; a marked decrease in the blood lactate level; a slowing of the heart-beat; a considerable increase in skin resistance and an electroencephalogram pattern of intensification of slow *alpha*-waves with occasional *theta*-wave activity. These findings of the modern science on yoga is meagre compared to the vastness of the system. The initial aphorism of the famous treatise, the *Yogasutra* by Patanjali presents the aim of Yoga, i.e.

Yogah Chitta Vritti Nirodha

Meaning: Yoga is restraining the mind-stuff (*Chitta*) from taking various forms (*Vrittis*).

The waves of thought in the *Chitta* are called *Vrittis*. The aim of the present communication is to rediscover the ways and means of thought vibration generated from the mind, and its implications in the human environment.

HUMAN MIND: A COSMIC ECOLOGICAL UNIT

According to *Samkhya* philosophy two

ultimate realities of the universe i.e. *Purusha* (Spirit) and *Prakruti* (Matter), serve as the source out of which all things have evolved. The *Purusha* is the soul of the universe, the animating principle and subjective aspect of nature, eternal, indestructible, all pervasive, the ultimate principle of intelligence, who guides and directs the cosmic evolution. *Prakruti* is the original cosmic substance, the primal nature out of which all things have come and into which all things will finally return. The *Purusha* is neither produced (self existent) nor produces, while *Prakruti* is also not produced but produces. They exist as logical principles of the universe, as some thing can not be created out of nothing.

Prakruti is enriched with three essential constituents called *Gunas* (Quality). Such as *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Before creation the three *Gunas* were in homeostatic balance. More details about *Gunas* are presented later. For some unknown reason (may be wish of God ?) there was disturbance in the balance of the *Gunas*, they started interacting on each other and variegation in their combination and composition is responsible for manifestation, diversity and led to evolution. In the beginning Six universal principles (*Tattvas*) evolved such as:

- 1) *Mahattattva* (Cosmic intelligence - the capacity to expand, reveal and assertion to fulfil the ultimate destiny of nature - the undifferentiated energy takes a definite direction).
- 2) *Ahamkaara* (the individuating principle - state of self consciousness, self identification - a necessary condition before the onset of any action).
- 3) *Maanas* (principle of cognition - I am this: the individuating principle realises its existence - cosmic mind).
- 4) *Indriyas* (power of perception (1) Abstract knowing organs: *Jnanendriyas* - to hear, to feel, to see, to taste, To smell and (2) Abstract working organs: *Karmaendriyas* - to express, to procreate, to excrete, to grasp, to move).
- 5) *Tanmaatraas* (The Sense Powers - subtle elements: sound, touch, form, flavour and odour - makes the *Indriyas* functional).
- 6) *Mahaabhootas* (Sense particulars - the ecological factors: ether, air, fire, water and earth).

Out of the above six, the earlier five are metaphysical in nature and the latest one is

physical. Among the metaphysical factors *Mahattattva*, *Ahamkaara* and *Maanas* constitute the universal mental sphere. The human mind is a miniature of the cosmic mind where all the above principles interplay in similar rhythm as in the universe. The fourth factor *Indriya* is strictly biological and through the *Tanmaatraas* (fifth factor) the metaphysical and physical factors are precipitated and coordinated by mind. This way the human mind is a part of the universal mind. Each mind is connected with every other mind and each mind, wherever it is located, is in actual communication with the whole world. This is how, the whole world can be considered as a single mental sphere; similar as it is regarded as a single biosphere.

GUNAS: A UNIVERSAL QUALITY

The Sanskrit word *Guna* means quality, the property essence of all things. In the universal condition, the cosmic substance *Prakruti* (the nature) consists of three constituents or Powers called *Gunas*, named as *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. The Existence of *Prakruti* can not be realised in the absence of *Gunas*, as one can not expect the presence of fire in the absence of heat. So any individual, may be a plant, animal or a man, is a product of nature, must carry the *Gunas* as a Psychological basis. They are the root of all change, the foundation of reality and essence of all things. The *Gunas* never separate from each other rather intermingled with one another, nor function separately. They coexist in every thing and support each other. But one or the other among them may predominant in action. Variegated arrangement of the *Gunas* account for the manifestation of the nature, similar to the arrangement of atoms accounts for all the elements.

In the universal condition of the nature, the three *Gunas*: *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* respectively work to reveal, to move and to restrain; in the phenomenon world they signify adhesion, cohesion and disintegration; from the psychological point of view they illuminate, activate and obscure; on the basis of moral plan they express as emancipation, affinity and sin; in the nature they manifest as pleasure, pain and indifference and are attached to happiness, action and heedlessness. In general *Sattva Guna* is the power of the nature that reveals all manifestations; *Rajas Guna* points to energy or the

abstract principle of activity or the power of activating or exciting, without which the other two *Gunas* can not manifest their quality; and *Taamas Guna* is the abstract principle of restraint or the binding potency of nature. From the mental point of view, characters like compassion, concentration, courage, detachment, faith, enlightenment, forgiveness, gay and pure action are the expressions of *Sattva*; argumentation, attachment, back biting, craving of the senses, desire to kill, desire to buy and sell doubt, envy, disrespect, egoism, falsehood, gambling, insulting criticism, irregularity in conduct, jealousy, lack of shame, quarrelling, selfishness, treachery, temptation are the expressions of *Raajas*; and *Taamas* leads to carelessness, delusion, ignorance, Laziness, sleepiness, want of faith, and discrimination etc.

The dominance of *Gunas* in a human mind is mostly controlled by two factors; (1) internal and (2) external. The internal factor is the *Samskaara* of a person i.e. the mental impressions of his last life that he has inherited. The external factor is the basic environment around us which influences the internal system to react with it accordingly. Mostly, contamination of *Gunas* in a human body occurs through the food intake. Through ingestion only the external environment in the form of *Guna* pricks into the internal mental sphere and dominates over it. That is why, food is given so much importance in Indian culture. The type of food, the person from whom it is accepted or procured and the source of earning to prepare the food; are the factors responsible to carry the *Gunas* and contaminate one from another, through the process of giving and accepting. The same principle is also applicable to exchange of physical commodities. A details of forbidden food for human beings was reported earlier (Padhy et al., 2001).

THOUGHT VIBRATION: AN ECOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE

Human mind can be classified into five types based on their activity and expression such as *Moodha* (idiot), *Kshipta* (freckle), *Bikshipta* (disturbed), *Ekaagra* (concentrated) and *Niruddha* (thoughtless). Out of the above five, the first three stages are mostly controlled by internal factors. However, the habits of a person as well the external surrounding also contributes

to this phenomenon. A *Moodha* mind is unable to differentiate good and bad and flow with the environmental situation without his self identity and integrity. The *Kshipta* operates so fastly that he hardly gets time to look for the consequences of his actions; he commits mistakes on and often. The *Bikshipta* is unable to concentrate on a specific item and jumps from one to another creating, chaos in every sphere and unable to accomplish any work perfectly. A concentrated (*Ekaagra*) mind is also an internal strength of a person as well one can cultivate this habit to be so. To explain concentration, it is the basic difference of mental power between man and the animals. All success in any line of work is the result of concentration. Man has the greater power of concentration than the animals and there is difference in their power of concentration between man and man. Of course, many animals show greater power of concentration than man, but this is a behavioural character than psychological. Amongst man, the difference in the degree of concentration stratify them as the lower or higher; a sociological implication.

Some one concentrates upon a thing or action which he loves. The great trouble with concentration is that, we do not control the mind; it controls us. The external factor that we love, draws the mind into it and holds it as long as it chooses. Even people with greater capacity to work more time are designated as workaholic; a negative terminology for concentration at a work place. The danger of concentration is such that the mind is unable to detach even at its will, that causes great suffering. So, along with the development of concentrations one must develop the power of detachment. Powers to attach and powers to detach are the two equal parts of concentration, should be followed with balance.

The *Niruddha* is a thoughtless mind which is so calm that thought vibration never raise in it. The thoughtless mind is the highest state of mind; a state of *Yoga Samadhi* (apex state of Yoga) and the ultimate state of mental culture. In such a mind the reality of the self, the *Aatman*, is realised. Such a mind can be compared with a television screen without picture. From practical point of view, when a Yogi wants to know about a fact (may be past, present or future), he concentrates the theme of the fact on his *Niruddha* mind. The vibrations relevant to that fact appear before him, just like pictures on a screen.

Through the sense powers (*Indriyas*), mind

perceives the subtle elements (*Tanmaatras*). Above the normal sense powers there exists a sixth sense, which can be called as super-metaphysical state. Activities like: unknown telepathy, known telepathy, thought vibrations to influence others, mass mobilisation, perception of thought vibrations and events of past, present and future by yogic power or dream experience and expression of sixth sense in animals and certain human beings come under the category super-metaphysical expression. In some subjects these activities are expressed naturally; but, in all of us this power is in obscurity and can be developed with little concentration and effort to understand. These metaphysical manifestations of the mind are well realised in every cross section of the society. Yet it is not well analysed from functional and scientific point of view. Even, blessing and cursing some one, also comes under this category.

The mind vibrates on an often and not exceptional during sleep, as some one experience a dream. Mental vibration so released from wireless human mental broadcasting centre travel with lightening speed far and wide in all directions. They enter into the minds of other persons and produce in them similar thought vibrations. So, a vibration of peace, poise, harmony, spiritual and joyful waves produce similar thoughts of harmony and peace. On the contrary, vibrations like jealousy, revenge and hatredness enter the minds of thousands and stir in them similar thoughts. That is why people of similar thoughts are attracted towards each other. This universal law is continually operating whether we are conscious of it or not. Every one of us has his own mental world, own mode of thinking, understanding and acting. As the mode of thinking differ from person to person; may lead to friction and misunderstanding.

Thought is very contagious. A sympathetic thought raises a sympathetic reciprocation of anger produces a similar vibration and a cheerful thought in someone produces cheerfulness in others. This is how a mind interacts with another mind and the mental environment. For example, in a social environment we come across certain persons, their presence itself is painful for others; the interactions with a pious person automatically induces calmness and serenity; a crowd surrounding many a times is intolerable and we find a way out of it; when we enter to a

Pujaa get a different vibration compared to a night club etc. etc. We have to watch our mental vibration in every situation when we come across sense-objects and work accordingly. One can acquire the power of mind watching with little effort.

GEETASAYS

The man dwelling on sense - objects develops attachment for them; from attachment springs up desire, and from desire (unfulfilled) ensues anger.

From anger arises infatuation; from infatuation, confusion of memory; from confusion of memory, loss of reason; and from loss of reason one goes to complete ruin. Geeta: II/62,6 3 (Anonymous, 2002).

The above are the chain of reactions occur inside the mind when it comes in contact of a sense-object.

The thought vibrations released from a mind never perishes, rather gets recorded in the ethereal environment. They reach the cosmos, colloid and combine with similar vibrations present earlier in the surrounding, again rebound to the place of origin being reinforced. Further such vibrations activate the mind again and again in the similar direction and like vibrations are multiplied, which ultimately dominate in the mental sphere. This is how positive or negative vibrations grow in human mind, influences the other minds and stratifies in a community or society. By this, the mental vibration works as a human ecological principle such as "good for good", "negative for negative" and so on. The whole scenario is such that, as if, we are immersed in an ocean of thought vibrations; forcefully directed to think in a specific line and unable to protect our mind from such attacks. So, everybody is experiencing the power of thought unconsciously to a greater or less degree.

Thought has got tremendous power. In positive implication, they can heal diseases, can transform the mentality of other persons, can be used to communicate with other minds and many other works. One must be careful of his own thoughts. Whatever is sent out of one mind, which comes back to the centre of origin being reinforced. So every thought we think works like a boomerang. Any good or bad thought has three effective spheres (i) it effects the thinker at its own mental environment, (2) effects the person

who is the object, and finally it effects (3) the mankind by joining with the cosmic mental atmosphere.

There is a common saying “as a man thinketh so he becometh”. This is the greatest laws of thought: Thinking positive of self that ‘I am young’; ‘I am capable’; ‘I am strong’; ‘I am pure’; ‘I can do it’ etc. has a strong effect on the mental sphere and psychology; accordingly the body metabolism is reflected and channelled. This is how ageing process can decline or can make some one strong, able and pure. Similarly, mental expressions for worry, fear, anxiety, grief, anger, cheerfulness, treachery, depression, gloom, peace, harmony, joy, health, power, strength and beauty etc. are reflected on the face of a person and his eyes speak the inner truth in him. The facial expression truly advertises the inner state of mind. In our daily life the mental energy is misdirected in various worthless worldly thoughts. To conserve this energy and orient in right direction one should monitor his thoughts positively. Even it is advised not to store useless information in the brain and one step ahead not to learn whatever has no use to some one.

THE INTERNAL MENTAL ENVIRONMENT

In a human body, the soul is encased successively in three bodies (1) the external gross corporeal body (*Sthoola*), (2) the middle astral body (*Sukshma*), (3) The inner causal body (*Karana*). The causal body is a matrix of 35 ideas or thought forces, out of that, 19 elements compose the astral body and 16 elements form the physical body. Further details on this, is beyond the scope of this paper.

The actions and events performed in a person’s life time leaves an indelible trace in the subconscious region of the mind which finally gets recorded in the causal body in the form of *Karmic* seeds. These seeds are the *Samskaara* (the balanced statement of deeds of past life experienced in the present life) carried in the subconscious memory as experience of one’s past life and grows into a character or destiny in the present life. *Samskaara* is the theme of the inner mental environment or the mental impression resulted as the effect of *Karma* transmitted from life to life and forms the bondage of the soul. As a universal factor, the internal environment is also governed by three *Gunas* (quality); the

property essence of all things as described earlier.

The mind as a whole is called *Antahkarana* (the internal doer). It is the internal instruments of mind, the seat of thought and feeling, the thinking faculty or the mind as a whole. In fact, the sense organs (*Indriyas*), the mind (*Maanas*), the determinative faculty (*Buddhi*) and egoism (*Ahamkaara*) all form a group known as *Antahkarana*, the later is influenced by the *Samskaara* and the *Gunas*.

Through the sense organs, the mind first perceives the sense objects in the form of sense powers (*Tanmaatras*). By this a desire to have the sense object is implemented. A desire stimulates a thought; a thought embodies itself in an action (*Karma*). So each thought is an endless chain of cause and effect; each cause having an effect and each effect having a cause. Every action (*Karma*) produces two fold effect, one on the individual mind and the other on the world. This way a mind remains in connection with the global mental sphere.

The mind is otherwise termed as *Chitta* - the mind stuff. It is divided into three categories in accordance with its respective functions such as *Buddhi* (intelligence), *Ahamkaara* (ego) and *Maanas* (Mind) as described earlier. Each has its distinguishing character, individual function. But actually each one is only a separate department of a single functioning unit without a tendency of being separated to individual parts. The *Chitta* is defined as the organised totality of conscious experience. Its distinguishing feature is awareness and capacity to know its environment. It has twofold behaviour i.e. (1) conscious and (2) unconscious. The individual is aware of the first behaviour and record it as experience; while the second one is subconscious experience occur without the awareness.

The *Buddhi* is the seat of intelligence or the initiating capacity of the individual. It is the capacity of determination. It is the basis for knowing, willing, feeling and resolving. It dwells upon a thought that rises in a mind (*Maanas*). It is analytic in nature.

The *Ahamkaara* is the individuating or arrogating principle. It is responsible for the position and identity of an individual. It accounts for the mental attitude of “I know”, “I exist”, ‘I have’ etc. It is a self-conscious principle. It relates to all the experiences that had by the mind (*Maanas*) and intelligence (*Buddhi*). It has the function of accepting or rejecting the demands

or wishes made by the impulses, for its benefit as a whole.

The *Maanas* is the mind in real sense what a common man understands. It is the unit of performing mental processes. It has the rational directing power behind all action. It is the seat of desire and associated with the five knowing sense (*Jnaanendriyas*) and working senses (*Karmendriyas*). It is the seat of all conditions of thought imagination, dreaming, affection, desire, moods and temper. It is instrumental through which thoughts enter from the subjects. It constantly vacillates between objects.

In toto, the *Maanas* perceives and presents the *Ahamkaara* - arrogates; and the *Buddhi* discriminates, decides and resolves which finally leads to rise of an action (*Karma*). These three

aspects constitute the *Chitta* as a whole. The waves of thought in the *Chitta* are called *Vrittis*. According to the predominance of the *Gun*as, mental vibrations are induced which indulge someone to execute a *Karma* (resultant action); an ecological basis of performance of right and wrong. The *Vrittis* are manifested in the following forms - scattering (activity), darkening (dullness), gathering (struggling to centre itself) one pointed (tries to concentrate) and concentrated. *Chitta* creates the world according to its own thought (*Sankalpa*). In a different explanation *Chitta* is always trying to get back to its natural pure state i.e. thoughtlessness; but the organs draw it out. To check this outward tendency of *Chitta* is the first step in Yoga. Yoga checks, controls and stops the root function of the mind i.e. thought (Fig. 1).

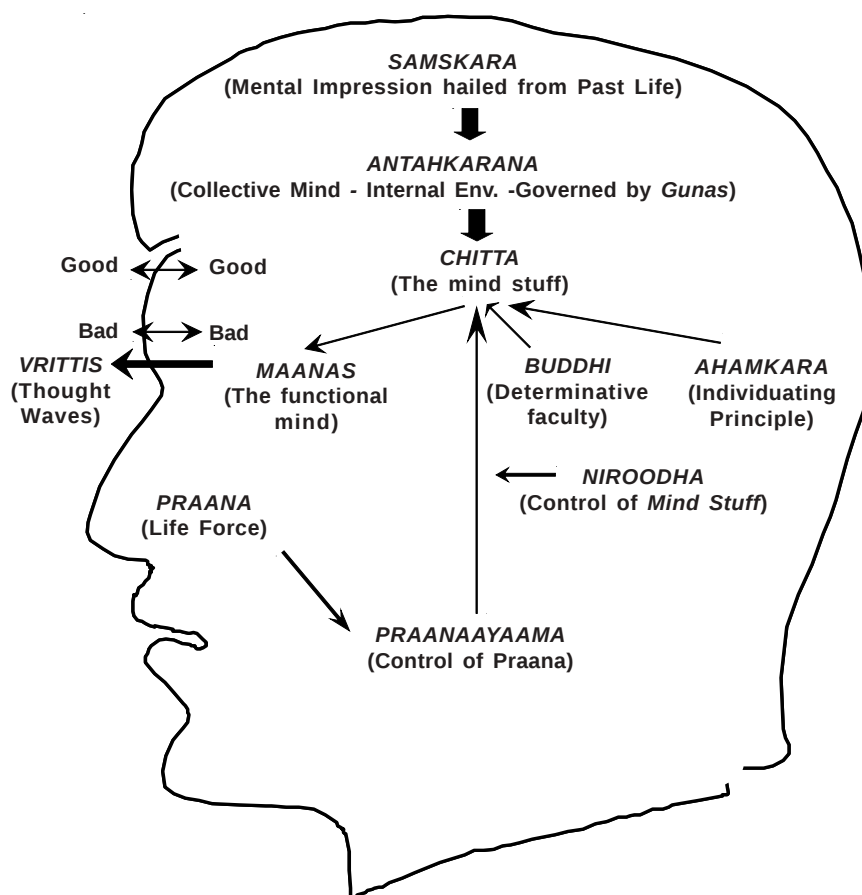


Fig. 1. Possible interactions in the internal mental environments

THE BASIC PHILOSOPHY OF YOGA

Indian yoga system is so much elaborated, that it itself forms a school of thought. Yoga is not only from physical point of views, as often considered and advertised now-a-days; but mostly aimed to control the mind. Indian sage scientists have experimented that, the mind (*Chitta*) has coordination with the breathing of an individual. Between mind and breath (*Praana*), the former is an abstract principle and the later is physical one. If any one of them is disturbed the other gets automatically disturbed; otherwise calmness of any one induces calmness in the other. In a normal life, if some one becomes angry, worried, frightened or sexually excited the *Chitta* gets disturbed, followed by violent breath. So, yoga is a system to synchronise the mind and breathing leading to calmness and serenity. But, it is difficult to catch the mind being abstract.

IN GEETA, ARJUNA SAID

You have told me this Yoga of peace and unity of beings; but my mind is restless, I do not understand what you say.

For the mind, Krishna, is powerful, freckle, violent and uncontrollable. Harnessing the mind, is like harnessing the wind.

KRISHNA REPLIED

The mind indeed is all that you say, Arjuna, but determination helps; and renunciation curbs it.

Without determination, no man can reach Yoga, but the self-disciplined, struggling nobly, can achieve it.

Geeta: VI/33-36 (Transcreted, Lal, 1965).

In yogic technique the breathing system is brought under control (*Praanaayaama*) which

ultimately keeps the mind under subdue, makes it free from unwanted vibrations either being induced internally or influenced externally; finally the mind leads to a thoughtlessness condition. Such a yogic mind is most powerful, acquires the power of creation, maintenance and destruction. Stoppage of vibrations in a yogic mind stops the recording of *Karmic* seeds in the astral body. As the Yogi performs all his *Karma* without being attached, the possibility of rebirth becomes remote and the soul migrates in the line of salvation. One must learn the techniques of *Praanaayaama* from an authorised teacher (*Guru*) and progress in this line under his guidance, otherwise failure is a must. More elaborated discussion on Yoga is not within the scope of this paper.

It is rightly pointed out:

Man sows a thought and reaps an action. He shows an action and reaps a habit. He shows a habit and reaps a character. He sows a character and reaps a destiny (Sivananda, 1970).

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