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CONCEPTUALIZATION OF AATMA NIRUPANA - A SUCCINT

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ABSTRACT: Ayurveda's history can be traced back to the Vedas. Despite numerous challenges, Ayurveda has thrived throughout the millennia and has remained a continuous professional practise for thousands of years. It is a vast knowledge base that covers not only systemic ailments and their prevention, but also philosophical concerns and the origins of Universal elements. As per Ayurveda, treatment is only feasible in the living, for which Aatma is responsible. Aatma is one of the components of Ayu, and it is difficult to exist without it. A thorough examination of the traditional resources accessible can aid in the extraction of certain short facts concerning the notion of Aatma. A literary study was conducted using all known Ayurvedic and other philosophical treatises, with the goal of accumulating and discussing information about Aatma and its existence. The inputs, as well as his distinctive additions to the notion of Aatma, are reviewed in this systematic review for easy understanding.

KEY WORDS: *Aatma, Soul, Ayurveda.*

INTRODUCTION: Aatma is commonly referred to as "the soul," and it is found within us in the form of the life element. The Aatma is one of elements of Ayu, without which it would be impossible to exist. Aatma governs the development, behaviour, and attainment of ultimate salvation in living beings in this cosmos. The presence of the soul in us is a sign of life and the unfolding of life's events. Even the soul is thought to be a unique dravya (Substance). As a result, it is vital to comprehend the notion of Aatma and its function in resolving sorrows in order to achieve ultimate happiness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

- **Study Design – Literary study**

The distinctive contributions of numerous Acharyas on the notion of Aatma to the field of Ayurveda will be collated and examined after a thorough literary examination of all accessible Ayurvedic materials and philosophical texts. This can be used as a starting point for additional investigation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

DEFINITION OF AATMA: The term Aatma comes from the Sanskrit word "At" or "Ap" dhaatu, which means "to spread all around and move eternally" or "to move continuously¹." The Kathopanishad defines Aatma in four ways: as the one who achieves/ gets knowledge, as the one who grasps/ moulds the objects of knowledge, as the one who begins karma/ enjoys prior acts, and as the one who is eternal/ who exists eternally. In contrast to Achetana or Jada, Aatma is described as chetana and karta in which Chaitanyabhava (sign of life) is felt (Non- Living).

SYNONYMS OF AATMA²:

<i>Avyakta</i>	Which is not clearly manifested
<i>Kshetranja</i>	Which lodges in <i>Kshetra</i> (Body)
<i>Shaaswata</i>	Which exists always
<i>Vibhu</i>	Which is superior
<i>Purusha</i>	Which is the base of everything
<i>Nitya</i>	Which is eternal
<i>Shareeri</i>	Which lodges in the <i>shareera</i> (Body)

AATMA IN VEDA AND UPANISHADS

VEDA: The word Aatma first appears in Indian literature in the Rigveda. Commenting on this Rigvedic verse, Yaaska, an ancient Indian grammarian, adopts the following definitions of Aatma: the pervasive principle, the organism in which other parts are linked, and the ultimate sentient principle.

UPANISHADS: The Upanishads all revolve around the concept of aatma, and their core theme is "Know Your Aatman." According to these writings, Aatma, which means "soul" or "self," is the core of every person's self, not the body, mind, or ego. Aatma is all animals' spiritual essence, their true core vital being. It is timeless, it is immortal, it is the essence. The deepest degree of one's existence is Aatma.

AATMA SWAROOPA ACCORDING TO DARSHANAS:

DARSHANAS	AATMA SWAROPPA
• <i>Chaarvaaka Darshana</i>	Never accepted <i>Aatma (Niraatma vaadi)</i>
• <i>Bauddha Darshana</i>	Never believed in <i>Aatma, Eeshwara, Veda</i>
• <i>Vedantanusara</i>	<i>Aatma is Sat- Chitaananda Swaroopa</i>
• <i>Vaisheshika Darshana</i>	<i>Aatma is responsible for Chaitanya, and Jnaana, Is eternal</i>
• <i>Saankhya Darshana</i>	<i>Aatma is Chetana – Aprasavadharmi</i> <i>Is Nirvikaara and Nishkriya</i>
• <i>Tarka Sangraha</i>	<i>Aatma is Jnaanadhikarana</i>

ORIGIN OF AATMA: Aatma is divided into two prakaras, one of which, paramaatma, having no birth or death because its Prabhava is Anaadi. Jeevatma is created by moha, icha, and dvesha karma, and is known as the Raashi Purusha³.

AATMA – STHAANA: The sthaana of Aatma, according to the Bhagavat Gita and Acharyta Charaka, is Hridaya⁴, however Shwetashwataropanishad believes Aatma is located in shareera, similar to how taila is inextricably linked to Tila seeds and Ghee is in Curd⁵.

Acharya Vagbhata explains that there are ten places where soul resides, i.e; *Dasha Jeevita Dhama* which are: *Shiras, Rasana Bandhana, Kantha, Asra, Hrudaya, Nabhi, Basti, Shukra, Ojasi, and Guda. Sarvanga Sundara teeka* clarifies these are even the locations of *Shareera – indriya – satwa – and Aatma*⁶.

AATMA – SANKHYA : *Acharya Sushruta* opines, *Aatma is “Bahusankhya”* (Multiple) whereas *Acharya Charaka* opined, it is only one and is eternal⁷.

AATMA – LAKSHANAS :

As per *Tarka sangraha*, *adhikarana* for *jnaana* is *aatma*. *Acharya Charaka* opined, *aatma* is *nirvikaara*, it is an observer, which produces consciousness through *mahabhootas* and *indriyas*. *Aatma* is *avyaktha*. Lord *Atreya* mentioned that, the proofs of existence of the soul in living animates are as follows; inspiration and expiration, twinkling of eyes, ability to mentally teleport oneself, shift from one object of sense organ to another, inspiration and controlling mind and *indriyas*, journey to another aspect, anticipation of death, knowledge of something visualized in right eye by the left eye, desire, envy, happiness, misery, effort, consciousness, stability, intellect, memory and ego. All these are the signs of a living person. These signs are not available in a dead. So, they are considered to be the proof of existence of the soul, with all its associates departs, the body becomes vacant and is deprived of consciousness⁸. *Aatma* cannot be perceived by anything

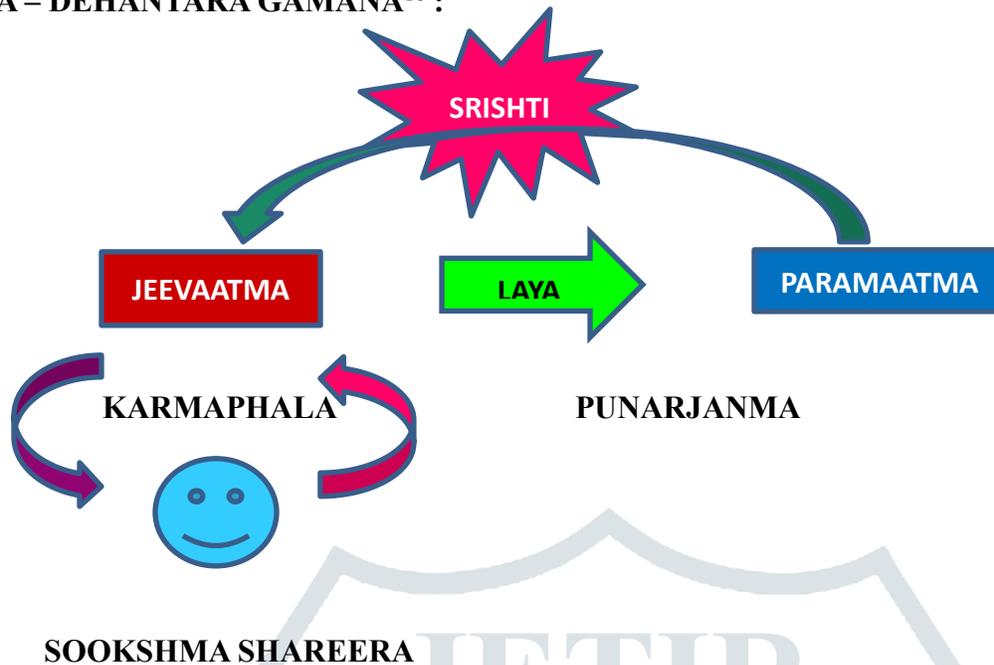
and which is eternal. *Aatma* perceives knowledge if it is associated with mind, *buddhi* and sense organs. If any of these are absent, *jnanarjava* cannot happen. This statement can be understood through a simile, one cannot get the reflection of real picture of an image if the mirror is covered with mud or dirt, similarly if mind is affected. *Bhagavat Gita* opines that, the soul can never be cut into pieces by any weapon, not burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind⁹. Even if the *aatma* is shapeless, limitless, and doesn't possess any physical attributes, but it still exists.

AATMA – PRAKAARA :

VISHNU PURANA	BHAGAVAT GITA	TARKA SANGRAHA	AYURVEDA
<i>Bhootatma</i>	<i>Kshara</i>	<i>Jeevatma</i>	<i>Parama Purusha</i>
<i>Indriyatma</i>	<i>Akshara</i>	<i>Paramatma</i>	<i>Ativaahika Purusha</i>
<i>Pradhanatma</i>			<i>Raashi Purusha</i>
<i>Jeevatma</i>			
<i>Paramatma</i>			

Jeevatma is independently manifested in each and every physical body which lives. *Jeevatma* is comprised of *Satwadi karanas*, i.e; means of action like mind etc and *sarva bhavas*. *Jeevatma* obtains re-birth according to the *karma*, i.e; deeds done in previous birth and he is the one who experiences the results of good and bad deeds. Therefore the individual soul is also called as *Phala- Bhokta*, the one who experiences the results and consequences.

Paramatma- The greater soul to which all the individual souls are related to. *Paramatma* is synonymous with *Ishwara*, i.e; God. Therefore *Aatma* is also said to be a supernatural being or God. The greater soul is said to be '*Sarvajna*' (All knowing) and is '*Eka*'(Only one). The greater soul is also known by the names "*Parabrahma*" or "*Sarva Bhava Rahita Parama Purusha*".

AATMA – DEHANTARA GAMANA¹⁰ :

AATMA – PARIMAANA : There are various opinions regarding the *Parimaana* of *Aatma*. *Shwetashwataropnishad* opined, it is of *Anu Parimaana* and *mahat parimaana*. *Vedanta Darshanaakara* opined, *Paramatma* is *parimaana rahita* and *Jeevatma* is of *Madhyama Parimaana*¹⁰. *Nyaaya darshana* opined, it is of *Madhyama Parimaana*, and *Jainakaara* opined based on the *shareera*, its *parimaana* can be varied¹¹.

DISCUSSION :

Gamana in the context of derivation of *Aatma* could be understood as; the *dehantara gamana* (Movement of *Aatma* from one *Deha* to other) i.e; Rebirth. The synonyms of *Aatma* points towards the fact that *Aatma* is intently related to *Shareera*, which is eternal, which is non- destructible.

AATMA AS A DRAVYA : *Aatma* is considered as one among the *Nava- Kaarana dravya*. *Dravya* according to *Ayurveda* is the one which has “*Dravti* and *Gachati*”(movement) qualities. *Aatma* which is defined as a factor which is in continuous motion. So, any substance which has movement can be considered as a *Dravya*. Thus *Aatma* is one among the *Nava- Kaarana Dravyas*.

SUPERIORITY OF AATMA : The role of *Aatma* and its superiority in cognition is understood through the *Satwa – Indriya – Indriyarth* axis. *Satwa* is inflicted with *Rajas* and *Tamas* in the human body. Human body is formed of five basic elements- *Panchamahabhoota*. *Aatma* is *Avidya* (Unpercievable), *Akshayaadi* (Eternal), *Avaleena* (Stays inside the body). When soul is not in contact with *Satwa*, and sense organs,

knowledge will not be gained. Soul will be in *Mukta* (Immune/let free) stage. When soul is linked with object, sensory organs and mind, the knowledge is gained. Even though the event of cognition and recollection happens independently, the process happens only due to the initiative of the observer the *Aatma* or soul. So, *Aatma* can be considered as the initiator as well as the regulator of the whole body. *Kathopanishad* explains this context with an example, Self is the rider of the chariot, where body is the chariot, Intelligence is the Charioteer, and mind is the Reins. Senses are the horses (Which can drag us everywhere), the objects are the roads. The self, associated with body and mind is the enjoyer.

AATMA AND PANGU- ANDHA NYAAYA : According to *Pangu- Andha nyaaya*, a blind man can walk but not see, and a lame man cannot walk but can see. The blind man may take the lame man over his shoulder, as he walks the lame man may give him directions. Thus combined they may work, but individually neither the blind man nor the lame man can walk successfully. Similarly, *Aatma* is considered as lame and *shareera* is considered as blind. Both *Aatma* and *Shareera* work successfully in perceiving knowledge.

IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE OF AATMA

- **FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENT OF HOLISITC HUMAN BEING AND LIFE :** *Aatma* forms the fundamental structure of holistic human beings with mind (*Satwa*) and body(*Shareera*). *Aatma* is an essential component of life (*Ayu*) with a combination of body, sense and locomotor organs and mind.
- **ROLE OF AATMA IN EMBRYOGENESIS :** Life begins with the entry of consciousness during the process of conception or the union of sperm and ovum. The consciousness associated with embryo is also called as *Garbhatma* or *Antaratma*. Consciousness(*Chetana*) constitutes sixth structural component of a living being with *Panchmahabhootas*.
- **ROLE OF AATMA IN THE PROCESS OF COGNITION:** Fundamental process of perception involves as combination of *Aatma*, sense organs, mind and sense organs. This association results in action, sensation, and understanding. Manifestation of every effect can't occur in the absence of any of these components¹². Mind is active, but devoid of consciousness. The soul is conscious, but not active. Soul is considered a doer, or an actor, or an agent of deeds. Hence all the actions are performed by as combination of mind and soul¹³.
- **ROLE OF AATMA IN SELF – CONTROL:** *Aatma* is the supreme which controls all faculties like mind, intellect, and sense organs. Hence the control over diet and lifestyle habits is directly related to *Aatma*. *Aatmavan* word is used for a wise man that has self- control. This word is used in the context of medicated smoking. It shows there are chances of losing self- control and it may result in excessive smoking shall always be done with total self – control. A person desiring to live the full span of life should remain in self – control and live with great caution assuming that he is constantly surrounded by the foes to his health¹⁴. *Aatmavanta* (having self- control) is a quality of good – physician. The physician having self- control succeeds well in clinical practice¹⁵.

- **ROLE OF AATMA IN CLINICAL PRACTICE** : Blissfull state of *Aatma*, *Indriya*, and *Mana* is an essential component of health¹⁶. During clinical examination, the physician shall know inner self of the patient in order to have complete knowledge of disease¹⁷. It is important to reveal the fundamental cause of disease and its progression. Without this knowledge, treatment is incomplete. *Antaratmani* or the inner self is related to the mind. The sensation of pain is diminished after *langhana* therapy¹⁸. Knowledge of self is important to decide *satmya* or suitability. Self – deeds are responsible for all diseases.

CONCLUSION : *Aatma* is a *dravya*, which is responsible for life and activity. The presence of *Aatma* is essential for life, for attaining knowledge, for birth and Re-birth. Thus it is the most important factor among the *Nava- Kaarana Dravays*. Synonyms of *Aatma* points towards the fact that, *Aatma* is closely related to *Shareera* and *Manas*. The relationship between *Aatma* and *Shareera* can be understood the *Pangu- Andha Nyaaya*. The types, number and *parimaana* point towards an understanding that: *Aatma* is one and all pervading; types are only *Upaadhi Bheda*. By the opinions in the *Sthaana* of *Aatma*, it seems more logical to say *Aatma* being all pervading; it is present all over the body in each *Anu*. *Aatma* is eternal and is non-destructable. The living is differentiated from dead one by observing the *Aatma lakshanas* which is necessarily applicable in *chikitsa*. Understanding the concept of *Aatma* governing once life, one can essentially take the initiatives to lead their life happily. *Aatma* is essential to sustain life and hence for the treatment. Thus, through this review article we can understand the factor *Aatma* can be understood as the initiator as well as the regulator of other factors.

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