

CONCEPT OF SWAPNA W.S.R. DOSHAJA PRAKRITI

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda included *Nidra* in *Triyaupstambha* of body with *Aahar* and *Brahmcharya*. *Swapna* or dream is an important part of *Nidra*. Dreams are succession of images, thoughts or emotions passing through the mind during sleep. *Swapna* come between *Jaagratawastha* and *Sushuptawastha* due to dominancy of *Raja Guna*. Mostly dreams are our imaginations. Dreams also depend on *Doshaja Prakriti* which is determined by *Utkatha Dosha*. This article is about *Swapna*, their causes and effects and how our *Doshaja Prakriti* affects *Swapna*.

Keywords: *Swapna*, *Doshaja Prakriti*, *Utkatha*, dreams

INTRODUCTION

Swapna or dreams are succession of images, ideas, emotions and sensations that usually occur involuntarily in the mind during certain stages of sleep. The purpose of dream is not fully understood though they have been a topic of scientific research. In *Ayurveda* there are many concepts like *Tridosha*, *Triguna*, *Panchmahabhuta*, *Lok Purusha Saamya* etc. One such concept is *Swapna* (dreams). Dream is present in both physiological and pathological condition of body. In physiological condition dream signifies physical constitution (*Doshaja Prakriti*) and mental status. In pathological condition it denotes diseases and *Arista*.

But this concept is not fully explored yet. It is neither used for clinical practice nor to determine health

status while ayurvedic scholars gave it great importance in different situations of life.

Aim and Objectives

1. Illustrated study of *Swapna* mentioned in different ayurvedic classics as well as modern text.
2. Description of *Swapna* according to *Doshaja Prakriti*.
3. To explore dependency of *Swapna* on *Dosha*
4. Framing of conclusion on the basis of description.

Material and Methods

It is a review article which is mainly based on ayurvedic texts. Materials related to *Swapna*, *Prakriti*

and related topics have been collected from different ayurvedic texts.

The main texts used in this analysis are *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita*, *Astang Samgrah*, *Astang Hridaya*, *Sharangdhar Samhita* and their commentaries. Other texts are also used for this study.

Concept of Swapna

Swapna is the state in which the individual is not in deep sleep, means they are present in between *Jaagratawastha* and *Sushuptawastha* at that time the mind, which controls and motivates the sense organs experiences different self created incidents.¹ In short we can say that a person comes across various dreams in subconscious stage because of the mind leading the sense organs.²

In *Jaagratawastha*, there is dominancy of *Sattva Guna* and in *Sushuptawastha*, there is dominancy of *Tama Guna* in mind. In between both stages when *Tama Guna* is dominant but *Raja Guna* is also effective dreams come. According to *Aacharya Sushruta*, when a slept person gain his past experiences due to *Raja Guna* in mind, is called *Swapna*.³ During sleep when effect of *Tama Guna* decreases then *Raja Guna* becomes active but still *Tama Guna* is effective so sense organs can't connect with mind. In this condition our desires which are collected in memory start appearing as *Swapna*. In *Gungrantha Swapna* is included in *Avidhya* (imaginary knowledge, false knowledge) along with *Sanshya*, *Viparyay* and *Andhyvsaay*.⁴

Classification of *Swapna* according to ayurvedic texts –

1. According to content –

Aacharya Charak mention seven types of *Swapna*⁵ –

- *Drista* – in this type whatever is seen in wakeful state, is presented in sleep in the form of dreams.
- *Shruta* - in this type whatever is heard in wakeful state, is presented in sleep in the form of dreams.
- *Anubhuta* - in this type whatever is experienced in wakeful state, is realized in sleep in the form of dreams.

- *Prarthita* – in this type we fulfill our wishes in dreams.
 - *Kalpita* – things which are neither seen nor heard nor thought of; are dreamt due to mental projections.
 - *Bhavik* – whatever is seen or heard is projected in some different dimension in dreams, sometimes vary in altered form also.
 - *Doshaja* – due to intense projection of any of quality of any *Dosha*, dream is projected.
2. According to efficacy of dream –
- *Aphala Swapna* – those which do not have any impact on person's health or life.
 - *Phala Swapna* – those which definitely have impact on person's health or life.
3. According to effect of dream⁶ –
- *Shubh Swapna*
 - *Ashubh Swapna*
4. According to applicability of *Swapna* in *Chikitsa*–
- *Swapna* denoting *Prakriti*
 - *Swapna* denoting the sex of unborn child⁷.
 - *Swapna* specific for *Arista*⁸.

Result of dreams

Dreams which are seen during first *Prahar* of night are little fruitful. Dreams occurring during first *Prahar* of night will take one year to become fruitful, second *Prahar* dreams take 6-7 months, third *Prahar* dreams take 3 months, fourth *Prahar* dreams will take 1 -1.5 months to become fruitful. Dreams experienced early in the morning became fruitful very quickly, if we see the bad dream and on the same night, if we see the good dream, the effect of such dream is also good⁹.

Dreams (according to modern science)

Dreaming is an integral part of REM (rapid eye movement) sleep. In REM stage brain activity is high and signalled by rapid horizontal movements of eyes. Dreams are as symbol and link to the inner core of the human subconscious. Analysis of dreams was shown that negative emotions such as aggression, hostility, apprehension and fear are more com-

mon in dreams than positive emotions such as happiness, generosity or friendliness. This is perhaps because many embarrassing or prohibited actions can be enacted and subconscious or repressed desires can be fulfilled quite safely and conveniently in dreams without leading to any undesirable consequences. Our finer feelings can be given expression in the wakeful state and hence do not have to take recourse to dreams. The opportunity which REM sleep provides to give vent hostility and anger may be an important contribution to our mental equilibrium¹⁰.

Prakriti

Doshas are present in our body as *Praakrit Awastha* or *Vaikrit Awastha*. *Praakrit Dosha* forms our *Prakriti* (constitution). "*Prakriti Sharir Swaroopam*"¹¹ means *Swaroop* is *Prakriti* of *Sharir*. *Swaroop* includes structure, character, nature, complexion etc. of body. *Prakriti* is a group of characteristics inherited by an individual at the time of *Shukra Shonita Samyog* (fertilization). Which *Dosha* is '*Utkatah*' at the time of fertilization, that type of *Prakriti* is formed with characters of *Utkatah Dosha*. *Utkatah* means predominancy of *Dosha* in natural state not in aggressive state.¹² The intensity of *Dosha* exist in

natural state is not harmful or inconvenient for an individual just like a poisonous worm is not troubled by its poison. On the basis of *Dosha*, *Prakriti* is classified in two types, *Deha Prakriti* (constitution of body) and *Manas Prakriti* (nature). *Deha Prakriti* classified in two types –

- *Bhautik Prakriti* (as per dominancy of *Panchmahabhuta*)

- *Doshaja Prakriti*

Further *Doshaja Prakriti* classified in seven types.

These seven types are grouped under three groups –

- * *Ekdoshaja (Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja)*

- * *Dvandaja (Vatapittaja, Pittakaphaja, Vata-kaphaja)*

- * *Samprakriti or Sannipataja.*

Doshaja Prakriti and Swapna

Aacharya described different characteristics of *Ekdoshaja Prakriti*. A combination of two different constitutions should be called *Dvandaja* and of all the three constitution in a person should be stated as *Samprakriti*¹³. Along with different characters, the types of *Swapna* or dreams are also mentioned for each *Prakriti*. They are as follows –

Table 1: Swapna in Vata Prakriti

S.no.	Swapna in Vata Prakriti	S.S.	A.H.	A.S.	Sh.Sa.	B.P.	Bhela
1.	Travels in dry reservoirs of water	-	-	+	-	-	-
2.	Flies in sky	+	+	+	+	+	-
3.	Climbs on tree or mountain peaks	-	+	+	-	-	-
4.	Rides on camel	-	-	-	-	-	+

Table 2: Swapna in Pitta Prakriti

S.no.	Swapna in Pitta Prakriti	S.S.	A.H.	A.S.	Sh.Sa.	B.P.	Bhela
1.	Sees red coloured flowers	+	+	+	-	-	-
2.	Sees gold	+	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Sees fires, meteors, lightning, sun	+	+	+	-	-	+
4.	Sees bright light	-	-	-	+	+	-

Table 3: Swapna in Kapha Prakriti

S.no.	Swapna in Kapha Prakriti	S.S.	A.H.	A.S.	Sh.Sa.	B.P.	Bhela
1.	Sees water or water reservoirs (ponds, rivers, lakes)	+	+	+	+	+	+
2.	Sees lotus	+	+	+	-	-	-
3.	Sees birds	+	+	+	-	-	-
4.	Sees clouds	-	-	+	-	-	-

Vata Prakriti –

Vata prakriti person moves in sky, travels in reservoirs of water which are dry, uneven and irregular¹⁴, rides on camel¹⁵ and goes to mountain peaks in dreams. *Vata Prakriti* has dominance of *Vata Dosha*. *Vata Dosha* has *Chala Guna* so *Vata Prakriti* person like to travel. *Vata Dosha* has dominance of *Vayu* and *Aakash Mahabhuta* so *Vata Prakriti* person wants to move in sky¹⁶. Dreams of dry, uneven and irregular water reservoir may be due to the *Ruksha Guna*.

Pitta Prakriti –

Pitta Prakriti person sees gold, red coloured flowers like *Karnikara*, *Palasa*, forest fires, meteors, lightning, blazing, sun, flaming fire etc. in dreams¹⁷. *Pitta Prakriti* has dominance of *Pitta Dosha*. Due to *Ushna Guna* of *Pitta* he sees fire, meteors, lightning etc. Gold, red colour, fire, light etc. represents heat¹⁸. *Pitta* has dominance of *Agni Mahabhuta* and *Agni* is source of heat so person of *Pitta Prakriti* usually like to think about heat.

Kapha Prakriti –

Kapha Prakriti person sees dreams of seeing ponds and rivers full of water, lotus, lines of birds and clouds¹⁹. In dreams he experiences lotus, swan, *Cakravaka* and beautiful lakes. *Kapha Prakriti* has dominance of *kapha Dosh*. Due to *Saumya Guna*²⁰ of *Kapha* person sees lakes, ponds etc. Birds, clouds may be represents *Mridu Guna* of *Kapha*. Lotus, swan etc. remain in water and *Jala Mahabhuta* is main component of *Kapha* so he dreams about it.

DISCUSSION

Dreams are our imaginations which are based on our visual experiences, auditory experiences, other perceptions, strong desires, imaginations, future consequences and *Dosha*. Dreams denote our mental status, *Prakriti* and diseased condition. With the exception of *Charak Samhita*, in different *Samhitas* *Aacharyaa* described specific *Swapna* in the different *Prakriti*. The dominance of particular *Dosha* in the *Prakriti* is considered responsible for the type of *Swapna* and the *Mahabhuta* dominating in the

Swapna are homologous to *Mahabhuta* dominant in that particular *Dosha*.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that *Swapna* denotes our *Prakriti*. As *Prakriti* reflects our physical and mental health so it needs attention to explore interpretation and apply *Swapna* concept in present time to diagnosis of disease as well as maintenance of health.

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Abbreviations

S.S.	Sushrut Samhita
A.H.	Astang Hridaya
A.S.	Astang Sangrah
Sh.Sa	Sharangdhar Samhita
B.P.	Bhav Prakash