



PRANA AND ITS RELATED STRUCTURES - A TANTRIC REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The life is sustained through *Jiva* as the *Prana*. Mother gives the first *Prana*. *Prana* is the name given to *Vayu* in the body. *Vayu* with their movement nature, also enter into the body with *Anna*, *Agni*, *Soma*, *Vayu*, *Satvam Raja Tama Panchendriyani Bhutatma Iti Prana*.^[1] *Prana*, *Apana*, *Samana*, *Udana* & *Vyana* are the major *Pranas*, the *Naga*, *Kurma*, *Krkara*, *Devadatta*, *Dhanañjaya* are the five minor *Pranas* present in the body.^[2] All living beings wander in all the *Nadis*. Through the two nostrils *Prana* is moving. This *Nadi* is also essential for the movement and through the *Sankhini Vivara (Pterion)*, *Prana* getting inside the human beings. Then it travels some distance along with *Saumya*. So long travel of *Prana* is essential to with- hold *Vayu* inside, through all days, nights, fortnights, month and all the whole life. *Prana* has the color of ruby red. Like the *Mani (Bead)*.^[3] Neurons, like all other cells, exhibit a voltage difference known as the membrane- potential across their plasma membrane. It is the flow of ions through ion channels that is responsible for electrical signaling in neurons.

KEYWORDS: *Prana*, *Nadi*, Neurons.

INTRODUCTION

Prana is very similar to *Brahma*. The *Trika* of *Brahma* forms the *Prana*. *Prana Sabda* is equal to *Brahma*. The creation and formation of all *Bhutas* are due to the fact that happened with *Pralaya –Sutrabhave Drsyam*. In the *Panchavrttika* body *Vayu* is the *Kavyajivana*. The life is sustained through *Jiva* as the *Prana*. Mother gives the first *Prana*. (*Vacaspatyam*).^[4] *Prana* is the name given to *Vayu* in the body. *Vayu* with their movement nature, also enter into the body with *Anna*, *Agni*, *Soma*, *Vayu*, *Satvam Raja Tama Panchendriyani Bhutatma Iti Prana*. (*Vaidyaka Sabdasindu*).^[5] Breathe essence of life, inhaled breath, strength, life, Organs of sense. (*Sanskrit-English dictionaries*).^[6]

Stula and Sukshma Prana

Prana, *Apana*, *Samana*, *Udana* & *Vyana* are the major *Pranas*, the *Naga*, *Kurma*, *Krkara*, *Devadatta*, *Dhanañjaya* are the five minor *Pranas* present in the body. *Prana* is always in the *Hrdi* and *Apana* in the *Gudamandala*. In the *Nabhi* situated *Samana*. In the trench of the throat *Udana Vayu* and in the whole body *Vyana Vayu*. The *Naga* is for Belching, The *Karma* is for opening the eyes. The *Krkara* creates hunger and the *Devadatta* is employed in the act of Yawning. *Dhanañjaya* because of pervading every -where in the body does not leave even the corpses. All living beings wander in all the *Nadis*. *Naga* is for the cheerfulness. *Kurma* is for *Nimesha*, hunger and thirst by *Krkara*, *Devadatta* is for sneezing. All these are derived as *Surya Kirana* from the *Nabhi*. Like the *Hamsa* in the

Muladhara, so is the *Hrdpankaja*. So through the two nostrils the three functions can be carried out as *Puraka*, *Kumbhaka* & *Recaka*. (*Gheranda Samhita*)^[7]

Prana, *Apana*, *Samana*, *Udana* & *Vyana* are the major *Pranas*, the *Naga*, *Kurma*, *Krkara*, *Devadatta*, *Dhanañjaya* are the five minor *Pranas* present in the body. *Prana* is always in the *Hrdaya* and *Apana* in the *Guda*. In the *Nabhi* situated *Samana*. In the trench of the throat (*Kanda*), *Udana Vayu* and in the whole body *Vyana Vayu*. The *Naga* is for Belching, The *Kurma* is for opening the eyes. The *Krkara* creates hunger and the *Devadatta* is employed in the act of Yawning. *Dhanañjaya* because of pervading every -where in the body does not leave even the corpses. All living beings wander in all the *Nadis*. (*Goraksha Paddhati*).^[8]

Through the two nostrils *Prana* is moving. This *Nadi* is also essential for the movement and through the *Sankhini Vivara (Pterion)*, *Prana* getting inside the human beings. Then it travels some distance along with *Saumya*. So long travel of *Prana* is essential to with-hold *Vayu* inside, through all days, nights, fortnights, month and all the whole life. This is *Antaramukha*, Related to the *Kala*. And keep relation with *Hrdvaram*, *Vayu Dvaram*, *Ūrdhva Dvaram*, this is the *Moksha Dvaram*, called as *Sushira* and *Mandala* is the place around this. *Prana* is situated in the *Hrdaya Sthana* (Mid brain) and *Apana* in the *Guda* (medulla) *Sihana*, *Samana* in the *Nabhi Desa* (of *Vishnu*), *Udana* is in the *Kanda* and *Vyana* is moving through all parts carrier of *Prana Vayu*.

Then the color of *Prana* is going to describe *Prana* has the color of ruby red. Like the *Mani* (Bead). *Apana* has the color with the color of *Indragopa* insect (Red). *Samana* has the color of *Gokshira Samam* (white of milk), *Udana* has the color of *Apandura (vik.Mqj)* (dark complexion). *Vyana* has the color of *Arci Samam* (dark). Here they travelled by crossing the *Mandalas* (From Forebrain to mid brain to hind brain) and reaches the head. These are all *Stula Pranas*. Then the *Sukshma Pranas* are *Naga, Kurma, Krkara, Devadatta* and *Dhanañjaya*. These *Pranas* are moving through the ten *Nadis*. In which *Prana* is most important. In between *Asya Nasika* (mouth and nostrils) situated the *Hrdaya* which is in the *Nabhi Mandala* and *Padangushta* is the *Prana Sthana*. According to seers, *Apana* is moving from *Brahma, Guda, Medhra, Uru, Janu. Samana* is moving in the whole body, *Udana* is moving in *Sarvasandhi of Pada and Hastha*. *Vyana* is moving in *Srothra, Uru, Kati, Gulpha, Skandha and Gala*. *Naga* is for belching, *Kurma* is for opening the eyes, *Krkara* creates hunger, *Devadatta* for Sleep (*Nidra*), *Danañjaya* is for the colour of corpse. (*Isadyopanishad*).^[9]

Like a thread inserting through the hole of a needle, the same way the *Jiva* is entering into the body, is the important diety present inside. *Jiva* is residing inside of every human being who is alive as *Mahabala* as the *Vayu* in every ones *Sharira*. (*Rudrayamala Tantram*).^[10]

There are five types of *Prana* and the minor *Pranas* such as *Naga, Kurma, Krkara, Devadatta* and *Dhanañjaya*. *Agni* is also considered along with *Dosha* and *Dushya* and they are also ten in number. *Prana* having the Color of *Indranila*, in between the mouth and nostrils (*Asyanasikayomadhya*), In the middle of *Hrdaya*, in the *Nabhi, Pranalaya* is the term used and in the *Padangushta*, like the big toe. *Apana* is *Apana* itself and convert food into digested form and separates the *Mala, Mutra, Sukra* etc from the essence and eliminate them from the body in time to time. The color of *Apana* is the same as *Indragopa* insect and the color is like the shining water in the evening light and it is situated in the *Medhra, Payu* Genital organs, anal region, thigh, groin, knee, calf muscle, sacral region, and in the *Nabhimula*.

Vyana increases all types of *Vyadhis* in the name of *Maharajata*, and is very much appropriating to one's own self and situated in between eyes and ears, in the waist (*Kati*) or in the ankle region. In the nostrils, throat, in the buttocks, always in these position *Vyana* is the pulsating the lips, mouth body and eyes. *Udana, Marmas* are made into in a state of *Udyana*, so the name *Udana*. The color is of *Vidyuta* (electricity) or the color of *Agni*. Mainly controlling the sitting and standing posture. This is situated in the *Sandhi* (joints) of hand & foot. *Samana*- The type of food for drinking and eating forming *Akhadham* or any type of injury, the disease caused like *Rakta, Pitta, Kapha* and *Anila*, all activities of the body are controlled by *Samana*. *Samana* has the color of *Gokshira* and situated in all parts of the body.

Naga is in Belching, and have the shining color of *Nila Jimuta*- blue lotus. *Kurma* is for opening of eyes and having the color of *Anjana*. *Krkara* is for hunger and the color is of (*Japakusuma*) shoe flower. *Devadatta* having the color of *Suddha Sphatika*, and is for Yawning. *Dhanañjaya* is that type of *Prana* which produces different sounds and is the *Maharajata* as the color of Sun; all these five minor *Pranas* are also present on the forehead, chest, shoulder, *Hrdaya, Nabhi* and in the skin and bones. All these five minor *Pranas* are situated with the *Stula Prana*. In which *Dhanañjaya* is called *Acarya* because this is doing much activities than others. Hence it will not separate from the body even after the death. In some other places four more *Vayus* are explained. They are *Vairambha, Sthanamukhya, Pradyota, and Prakrti*. *Vairambha* and others are to work together with other ten *Vayus*. (*Sarada Tilaka Tantram*).^[11]

Prana, Apana, Samana, Udana, Vyana, Naga, Kurma, Krkara, Devadatta, Dhanañjaya are the *Ten Vayus* moving through all the *Nadis*. *Prana Vayu* is moving through mouth, nostril, throat, *Nabhi* and in *Padangushta Dvayam* and in the *Kundalini* upper and lower part of around the *Kundalini Prana* is moving. Through the ears, eyes, the hip, ankles, nostrils, neck, and buttocks *Vyana* is moving. *Guda, Medhra, Uru* (thigh), knee, *Udara, testis, Kati, calf region, Nabhi, Guda, Apana* is moving. Through all the *Sandhis Udana* is moving. In the hand & foot and in whole body known as *Sarvavyapi* is called *Samana* ingested food when acts with the *Agni* in the body, then transform through 72,000 of *Nadis* travel and *Samana Vayu* along with *Agni* reaches each and every part of body. The other 5 *Vayus* called *Naga, Kurma, Krkara, Devadatta* and *Dhanañjaya* are situated in *Tunda Sthana* (fire place) where the pots placed on the fire and the water and food to be prepared are to be placed. Here they may convert *Anna* into the *Rasadi Dhatu*. In the middle of the *Tunda* the whole process is separated in the *Apana Sthana*. The important factor of *Maruta* is *Prayati*, in the middle of the *Deha*. To blow the fire, we want to blow the air where the *Apana* is shining in the middle of *Deha Madhyam*. The furnace like action of the *Vayu*, in the *Deha Madhya* is increased by the *Apana*. When the fire glows then the *Prana* will produce the action on *Vahni* (fire) and boil the water in the fire place. The things placed inside for preparation then boil inside when the *Vahini* is attached to it. Along with the boiling water they get transformed into assumable form and the separation of *Sveda, Mutra, Mala, Sukra Viryra, Rupa, Rasa, Purisha* etc are separated by *Prana Vayu*. Along with *Samana Vayu* through the *Nadis, Rasa* is getting into the whole body as *Swasa Rupa*. Through the nine openings, the *Sharira Vayu* is eliminating the waste products after intake of *Rasa* or *Sara* only. *Nishwasa, Uchvasa, Kasa* are the functions of *Prana*. Elimination of waste products like faeces, urine etc are the functions of *Apana Vayu*. *Hanopanadi Cheshta* is the functions of *Vyana Vayu*. To make the *Deha* for *Unnaman* is the *Udana Vayu*. To nourish the body is the function of *Samana Vayu*.

Belching etc, are the functions of *Naga Vayu*, Blinking the eyes are the function of *Kurma Vayu*, to produce appetite is the *Krkara Karma*. *Tandra* (Drowsiness state) is due to *Devadatta* and the production of *Sleshma* is *Dhanañjaya Karma*. So the *Nadi Sthana* and *Vayu Sthana* and their functions are known *Vayus* for *Nadi Samshodhana* (Purification). (*Shandilya Upanishad*).^[12]

Naga, Kurma, Krkara, Devadatta, Dhanañjaya are the five minor *Pranas* present in the body. *Prana* is always in the *Hrdi* and *Apana* in the *Gudamandala*. In the *Nabhi* situated *Samana*. In the trench of the throat (*Kanda*) *Udana Vayu* and in the whole body *Vyana Vayu*. The *Naga* is for Belching, The *Kurma* is for opening the eyes. The *Krkara* creates hunger and *Devadatta* is employed in the act of Yawning. *Dhanañjaya* because of pervading every- where in the body does not leave even the corpses. All living beings wander in all the *Nadis*. As a ball thrown by the hand moves and does not stop at one place like that *Jiva* moved by *Prana* and *Apana* does not stay at one place. The *Jiva* under the pressure of both *Prana* and *Apana Vayu* runs up and down through the left and right nostrils. The *Jíva* under the pressure of *Prana* and *Apana* continuous to move up & down through the *Nadis*. *Apana Vayu* drags *Prana*, and The *Prana Vayu* drags *Apana*. He who knows these two airs *Prana* and *Apana* moving up & down is a *Yogi* in the true sense. (*Yoga Cudamani Upanishad*).^[13]

Discussion on *Prana*

Why the discussion on *Prana* is necessary? The answer to this question is that all the *Nadis* are carriers of *Prana*. All *Tantra, Yoga & Upanishads* are with the same opinion on this part and ten types of *Prana* are explained in many of the *Tantra Granthas*. When we consider *Nadis* as Neurons.

Neurons differ from most other cells in their particular ensemble of membrane ion channels, which allow the generation and propagation of action potentials in complex temporal patterns. Finally describes the diversity of voltage-gated ion channels, with particular focus on calcium and potassium channels. This diversity of channel types allows being adapted very precisely to its function in the brain.

Axon diameter also varies, from less than 1 μ m to almost 1 mm, and the diameter of any single axon may be different at different distances from the cell body. Axon diameter is an important factor in determining the speed at which information moves along the axon. Moreover, we shall see that whether or not an axon is myelinated also influences speed of transmission.

How information is passed along an axon, and then discusses the diverse patterns of electrical activity exhibited by different kinds of neurons.

To summarize the descriptive message: there is a voltage difference across the axonal membrane, and information

is carried in the axon in the form of rapid changes in this voltage difference. **These voltage changes, which are generally really referred to as nerve impulses, spikes, or (most commonly) action potentials, travel rapidly along the axon from the cell body distal portion of the axon.**

Neurons, like all other cells, exhibit a voltage difference known as the membrane- potential across their plasma membrane. It is the flow of ions through ion channels that is responsible for electrical signaling in neurons.

In addition, the lipid bilayer provides an extremely thin insulating layer between two conducting solutions. This allows the membrane to act as an electrical capacitor, a device that is capable of separating and storing electrical charge. The membrane capacitance, C_m , is measured in farads (F). **This description is introduced not to torment the student of cell and molecular biology, but rather because it is extremely useful in understanding the electrical behavior of biological membranes under a variety of physiological conditions.**

To summarize this descriptive treatment of axonal information transfer, several important characteristics of axonal membranes enable action potentials to carry information faithfully from one part of the neuron to another:

1. There is a threshold for generation of action potentials that guarantees that small, random variations in the membrane potential are not misinterpreted as meaningful information.
2. The all-or-none law guarantees that once an action potential is generated, it is always full size, minimizing the possibility that information will be lost along the way.
3. The strength—latency relationship and the refractory period, together with the threshold, allow the encoding of information in the form of a frequency code.
4. The phenomenon of passive spread, which arises simply from the cable-like properties of the axonal membrane, allows the propagation of action potentials along the axon and the transfer of information over long distances within the neuron. **(Neuron, Cell and Molecular Biology).**^[14]

All the five sheaths are pervaded by *Prana*, which nourishes and sustains them and maintains their appropriate relation-ship. The movement from one *Kosa* to another is also achieved with the help of *Prana*. The *Pranamaya Kosa* acts as the neutral space, allowing one to move from *Annamaya* to *Manomaya*, *Manomaya* to *Vijñanamaya*, *Vijñanamaya* to *Anandamaya*, and so on. One must use the faculty of *Prana Sakti* in order to move from any one state to another. Therefore, the dimension of energy is like the neutral space in the gear box. With the activation of *Prana*, one gains access to the physical, mental, psychic and spiritual dimensions.

The aim of the practitioner who focuses on *Pranayama* and *Prana Vidya* is to work with the *Pranamaya Kosa* until the activation and perception of *Prana* becomes subtle enough to penetrate the other *Kosas*. The techniques of *Prana Vidya* train one to perceive and experience *Prana* directly at different levels of subtlety. After the awakening of *Prana*, is how, form, colour and quality are experienced at all levels.

At the level of *Annamaya Kosa*, *Prana* is experienced in the form of nervous energy. The awareness of *Prana Sakti* in the other sheaths develops through *Pratyahara* or sensory withdrawal, by transcending the gross body and external environment. The perception of *Prana* in *Manomaya Kosa* can be compared to a house at night with the lights switched on. The quality and luminosity of that light depends on the purity of the mind. Some people experience *Manomaya Kosa* as a sheath of light, having a shape and form, others as light emanating cyclically from a central source. (*Hatha Yoga Pradipika*).^[15]

CONCLUSION

Nadi Literally means a river, a channel or passageway; there are innumerable *Nadis* in the human body, from the very subtle to the very gross, carrying substances into, out of, or throughout the body. (Lad, M.A.Sc, Vasant, 2002). So we found that all the *Tantric* and *Yogic* literatures are in the same view as *Nadis* are structures through which something flows and they are very much related with *Ida Nadi* as *Ganga Nadi* (river), *Pingala Nadi* as *Yamuna Nadi* (river) *Sushumna Nadi* as *Sarasvati Nadi* (river).^[16] When we look on to the functions of Neurons they are carrying the sodium, potassium, calcium from the CSF to the different parts to make you energetic. The neuron utilizes a process known as axonal transport for moving vesicles and other organelles to regions remote from the neuronal cell body. Proteins called molecular motors make use of the energy released by hydrolysis of ATP to drive axonal transport. Thus the **neuron** has evolved unique mechanisms to establish and maintain the form required for its specialized signaling functions. Neurons, like other cells, exhibit a voltage difference across their plasma membranes. The diversity of voltage-gated **ion channels** with particular focus on **calcium** and **potassium** channels. This diversity of channel types allows us to be adapted very precisely to its function in the brain. **It is the flow of ions through ion channels that is responsible for electrical signaling in neurons.** The voltage-dependent **sodium** channel is a particular kind of ion channel that plays a fundamental role in action generation and propagation in axons. Thus we can said that the flow of energy through *Nadis* are identified by almost all Yogis and we can said that the *Nadis* are related with Neurons.

Nadis are considered as channels or tubes in the human body that carry *Prana*. *Prana* is also known as energy or life force. These energy channels, or *Nadis*, can be found in both the physical and the subtle body (Kripalu, 2008).

Of course there is flow of some or other matter in all these systems. But the flow of energy is concentrated, flow like a stream, flow of most important part of live, *Prana* is flowing, is specified to the **Neurons** and the **Tracts of nervous system** was justified through this study. Here *Prana* the *Jiva* (life force) can be correlated with the Sodium. Potassium & Calcium etc. as the energy for electrical signalling of Neurons.

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