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#### MAHABHOOTAS: STRUCTURAL OR FUNCTIONAL ENTITY?

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#### **Abstract**

Ayurveda is centuries aged, still existing Science which has persuasive and considerate foundation of its principle. Panchmahabhoot and Tridosa has unique and utmost position among basic principle of Ayurveda. Fundamental of composition of all kind of Karya Dravyas is the principle of Panchmahabhoot. In Ayurveda, sharir (Body) is contemplated to be derivative of Panchmahabhoot this means structural perspective of body is of Panchamahaboot, these are reckoned as gross body. Gross body achieved self-activity only after coalescence of Chetan Dhatu with it. Basis of functional body is Tridosa viz Vata, Pitta, Kapha. Furthermore, Panchmahabhootas are also discerned as structural unit of Tridosa. Permutation and combination of Mahabhootas construct the various component of the body including Dosa. In the present review article interrelation between functional entities of body i.e. Tridosa and Panchmahabhoota has been evaluated. Furthermore, direct and indirect role of Panchmahabhootas has also been comprehensively examined in relation to evolution Tridosa. On the basis of Panchmahabootas, types and subtypes of Dosas have also been broadly investigated and their relation has been presented in the current research work.

## **Keywords**

Ayurveda, Panchmahabhoot, Tridosa, Dosa.

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Introduction

Ayurveda is centuries aged, still existing Science which has persuasive and considerate foundation of its principle. Panchmahabhoot and Tridosa has unique and utmost position among basic principles of Ayurveda. Fundamental of composition of all kind of Karya Dravyas is the principle of Panchmahabhoot. In Ayurveda, Sharir (Body) is contemplated to be derivative of Panchmahabhoot, this means structural perspective of body is of Panchamahaboot, these are reckoned as Akash, Vayu, Agni, Jala and Prithvi. Gross body achieved self-activity only after coalescence of Chetan Dhatu with it. Basis of functional aspect of the body is Tridosa viz Vata, Pitta, Kapha. Furthermore, Panchmahabhootas are also discerned as structural unit of Tridosa. Permutation and combination of Mahabhoota construct the various component of the body including Dosa. Pertaining to confirmation of Vata, Pitta, Kapha Dosa it is enumerated that Vata, Pitta and Kapha is made up of Akash and Vayu, Agni, Jal and Prithivi respectively. These Tridosa maintain and sustain the body by its peculiar absorptive, nutritive and motility or diffusive function. In the nutshell it could be asserted that these Panchmahabhootas are executive factors in the body and their functions are ostensible through the action of Tridosa in the body.

In the present review article interrelation between functional entities and structural entity of body i.e. Tridosa and Panchmahabhoota has been evaluated. Furthermore, direct and indirect role of Panchmahabhootas has also been comprehensively examined in relation to evolution Tridosa. On the basis of Panchmahaboota, types and subtypes of Dosas have also been broadly investigated and their relation has been established.

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#### Material and Method

Before writing the article, relevant literatures have been reviewed and studied meticulously, specially, all the major scriptures of *Ayurveda* like *Bṛihattrayi* (*Caraka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Astanga Hridaya*) and *Laghutrayi* (*Sharangadhara Samhita, Bhavaprakasha, Madhava Nidana*). Other than these scriptures *Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads, Sanskrit* dictionaries, online articles have also been looked into for subject related information and elucidation. On the basis of all information and collected data, subject has been discussed with erudite persons and after deliberation systematically subject has been finalized in present form.

#### Panchmahabhoota's siddhant

All the school of philosophy and Shastras of India has conceded the tenet of Panchmahabhoot. First and for most quarry is what is Mahabhoot or Bhoot, means how one could understand the term Bhoot? Term Bhoot is composed of 'Bhoo' dhatu which suffix 'kta' which means SATTA. This bears the sense of that always keep existing and termed as Bhoot, again the term "SATTAWAN" have been made vividly clear as in the universe only those matters be referred as "SATTAWAN" which are perceivable by sense organ.

In `Muktawali`, while amplification the predisposition of Bhoot, it has been delineated as "vahirindriygrahyavishesguntwam bhootatwam" this means Bhoot is that which bestowed with all attributes viz shape, test, colour etc. iv and is perceived by all five external sensory organs. This description concludes that which embodied with perceivable attributes and substances possessed only by these attributes be existent. Human Being has only five external sensory organs which assist to perceive the universe. In Realty, resort or recourse of those properties which are perceived by sense organ, could be conceded as existent. Owing to only five sorts of sense organs, living being experiences only five subjects. Hence only five Bhootas, five Mahabhootas and five existent Padarthas are approved. Charak has explicitly delineated regarding Mahabhootas and its inherent traits as- five Mahabhootas dwell in Akash, Vayu, Agni, Jal and Prithvi and possessed with Shabda, Sparsh, Rupa, Rasa, Gandha preposition respectively<sup>v</sup>

Antecedently, exceptional attributes of Panchmahabhootas are also described. Phenomenal feature or property of Akash, Vayu, Agni, Jal and Prithvi are Apratighata (nonresistance) which reflect the sense of paucity of abutment, Chalatva (motility), Ushnatva (warmthness or calor) Dravatva (liquidity), Kharatva (roughness) respectively. Characters of predecessor Mahabhootas endowed in successor Mahabhootas.vi This could be contemplated that in the descendant or successor Mahabhootas antecedent Mahabhootas collaborate vii Apart from these characteristic Sushruta has established the relation of Mahabhootas with Mahagunas. He candidly speculated that Akash is Satva predominant, Vayu is Rajo preponderant, there is ascendency of Satva and Rajas in Agni, Jal is galore by Satva-Tama and Prithvi is precedence by Tamguna.viii

**Table 1.Mahabhoota and its Various Gunas** 

Mahabhoot	Triguna	Asadharanaguna (Exceptional	Vishistaguna (Special	Anupravistaguna (Included
		Characteristics)	characteristic)	characteristics)
Akash	Satva	Apratighata	Shabda	-
		(Non-resistence)	(Sound)	

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Vayu	Raja	Chalatva (Motility)	Sparsh (Tactility)	Shabda
				(Sound)
Agni	Satva-	Ushnatva	Rupa	Shabda (Sound),
	Raja	(Warmthness)	(Vision)	Sparsha (Tactility)
Jal	Satva-	Dravatva (Fluidity)	Rasa (Taste)	Shabda (Sound),
	Tama			Sparsha (Tactility),
				Rupa (Vision)
Prithvi	Tama	Kharatva	Gandha (Smell)	Shabda (Sound),
		(Roughness)		Sparsha (Tactility)
				Rupa (Vision),
				Rasa (Taste)

Table 2.Denomination of Panchmahabhoot as per Philosphy (Prashastapad)ix

Akas h	Chaks hushy	Vayu 9 Guna	Chaks husya	Agni 11	Chaksh usya	Jal 14 Guna	Chaksh usya	Prithvi 14 Guna	Chakshu sya
6 Guna	a Guna	9 duna	Guna	Guna	7 Guna	duna	7 Guna	14 duna	Guna
Shabd	Does not exist	Sparsh	-	Rupa	Sankhya (Strengt h)	Rupa (Appear ance)	Sankhy a	Rupa	Sankhya
Sankh ya		Sankya	-	Spars h	Parima m (Quantu m)	Rasa (Taste)	Parima ma	Ras	Parimam a
Parim ama		Parima ma	1	Sankh ya	Prithkat va (Isolatio n)	Spash	Prithka tva	Gandha	Prithkat va
Prithk atva		Prithkat va	-	Parim ama	Sanyoga (Cohesi on)	Dravatv a (Fluidit y)	Paratva	Sparsha	Sanyoga
Sanyo ga		Sanyog	-	Prithk atva	Vibhaga (Segreg ation)	Sneh	Aparatv a	Sankhya	Vibhaga
Vibha ga		Vibhag	-	Ayoga	Paratva (Superi ority)	Sankhya	Sanyog a	Parimam a	Paratva
		Paratva aparatv	-	Vibha ga parat	Apartva	Parima ma Prithkat	Vibhaya	Prithkatv a Sanyoga	Aparatva
		a Sabnska ra		va apara tva		va Para		Vibhaga	

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		sansk	Apara	Paratva	
		ar			
		drava	Gurutva	.Aparatv	
		tva		a	
			Sanyog	Gurutva	
			Vibhaga	Dravatva	
			sanskar	Sanskar	
			a		

Vata, Pitta and Kapha are functional entity of body. These Tridosas are functional in living being only, in dead, merely Panchmahabhoot remains there, not the executer Tridosa. Entire body is constituted by Panchmahabhootas. Charak has explicated Sharir as abode of consciousness or soul and complex conglomeration of derivatives of Panchmahabhootas viz Dosa, Dhatu, Mala in appropriate combination.<sup>x</sup>

Permutation and combination of Mahabhootas constitute executive entity which is marked as Tridosa. Dosas are those which contaminate the body. Commentator of Madhav Nidan, Vijay Rakshit portrayed Dosa as "prakrityarmbhakatwe sati swatantrayem dustikrtritwam dosatwam" This means Dosa is that which has have power over the ability to constitute the Deha Prakriti (Constitution of body) and has intention to contaminate the body independently. Dosas are three in number-Vata, Pitta, Kapha. These Three collectively are referred as Tridosa and basically, they are responsible for execution of Vikchep (Motivation), Adan (Liberation of Energy), Visarga (Accumulation of Energy). When Chetan Dhatu (Soul) connected with Panchmahabhoot ensue the activation of Panchbhautik Sharir, this five Mahabhoot manifested in three forms in body, now this is known as Tridosa. Basic constituents of this Tridosa is unanimously accepted as Panchmahabhootas. Vayu and Akash Mahabhoot are constituents of Vata Dosas, Agni alone comprises Pitta while Jala and Prithvi are the basis of Kapha Dosa. Acharya has articulated two components for Vata (Akash + Vayu), Two components for Kapha (Jala + Prithvi) and only one for Pitta (Agni) which is matter of deliberation.

Apparently, it could be concluded that all the function of body is performed through Tridosa and grossly Panchmahabhootas form the building block of body. In view of these provenances it is crux of matter of discussion and analysis of interrelation between both i.e. Dosa and Panchmahabhoot. Various studies could be done to establish the relation between Panchbhautic perspective and Tridosas.

All the food articles which we consume are Panchmahabhautik. These Panchbhootas influence Dosas directly or indirectly and Dosa according to its constituent also affect the Panchbhautik components of the body. Basis of Bhautik composition of Ahar is concept of Sadrasa xii The component of Madhur Ras and Kapha Dosa is similar therefore Madhur Ras enhance Kapha Dosa directly. Similarly, components of Tikta Ras and vata Dosa are similar, component of Pitta is Agni with the attributes of Amla and Katu but Rasas have two components. According to constituent, group of three Rasas have direct abetting relation to one Dosa. This group of three Rasas are enhancer of one Dosa while pacifier of other Dosas, as depicted in following table-

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Table 3.Sadarasa, their Composition and Relation With dosas

Rasa	Bhautic	Vitiated	Composition	Pacifying	<b>Composition of</b>	
	Composition	Dosa	Of dosa	Dosa	<b>Pacifying Dosa</b>	
1.Madhur	Prithvi+Jala	Kapha	Prithvi+Jala	Vata+Pitta	Akash+Vayu	
					Agni+Vayu	
2.Amla	Prithvi+Agni	Pitta+Kapha	Agni+Jala	Vata	Akash+Vayu	
			Jala + Prithvi			
3.Lavan	Jala+Agni	Pitta+Kapha	Akash+Vayu	Vata	Akash+Vayu	
4.katu	Agni+Vayu	Vata+Pitta	Agni+Jala	-	-	
5.Tikta	Vayu+Akash	Vata	Vayu+Akash	Pitta	Agni+Jala	
				kapha	Jala+Prithvi	
6.Kashaya	Prithvi+Vayu	Vata	Akash+Vayu	Pitta	Agni+Jala	
				Kapha	Prithvi+Jala	

Acharya Vagbhatta has accepted Agni as component of Pitta but there is no description of other constituent along with Agni. In Ayurvedic classics Agni is said as "Pittantargata" mean which resides in Pitta but Sushruta while explaining the health as "sama dosa samagnisch" xiii mentioned Agni separately along with Dosas. From the etio- pathological point of view these three Dosas have been accepted as etiological factors in the pathogenesis of Agni viz-Vata causes Visamagni, Pitta leads to Tikchhnagni and Kapha accounts for Mandagni. Therefore, for the clinical point of view Agni is considered separately from Tridosas but in practical terms Pitta and Agni are accredited tantamount and synonymous.xiv

Physical composition of these three Dosas are acknowledged by 2, 2 and 1 for Vata, Kapha and Pitta respectively. Pitta is considered to be composed by Agni alone. Where the process of Paka of every Mahabhoot has been talked about considering Mahabhoot as Parmanu (Atom), separate Agnis are described there on the basis of individual Mahabhoot, that is to say every Mahabhoot has its distinct Agni which is recognized as Bhootagni and their process of Pak is termed as Bhootagni Pak. Regarding Bhootagni Pak Charak has stated that first of all, breakage of fascicules of devoured food transpires, in this instance "sanghatbhed" (breakage of fascicules) conveys the sense of separation of foodstuffs into excerpt or ingredient of Panchmahabhoot that is, it disintegrated into Parthiv, Apya, Taiyas, Vayavya and Nabhas components and get treated by their respective Agni. After the digestion of food is completed, the attributes of food sustenance the properties of corresponding compatible Dhatusconspicuously. \*\*V

In Ayurveda, elucidation of DehPrakriti (Constitution od body) has been accomplished on the basis of Tridosa, xvi Sushruta has mentioned the direct involvement and impact of Dosa in the process of construction of Prakriti.xvii

Ascendency of Dosa in the genesis of Prakriti is in vogue but if the Charak notion of Prakriti formation would be analyses it could be concluded that Prakriti is constructed on the basis of preponderant Dosa through Panchmahabhootas. Charak has elucidated various factors extensively pertaining to genesis of Prakriti of fetus in the womb of mother. These factors are reckoned as Sukra-Shonit Prakriti, Kala-Garbhashaya Prakriti, Matur Ahar-Vihar Prakriti and Panchmahabhootas Vikar Prakriti<sup>xviii</sup> Implication of this description is that various Prakriti determining factors affect the fetus. These factors negotiate ascendant one, two or more Dosas

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which got adherent to fetus body and this is denominated as Deha-Prakriti (Constitution of body).

In above mentioned references, factors which influences the genesis of Prakriti has been explicitly elucidated that the Dosas which stipulated to fetus are also precarious to other factors preponderance by Panchmahabhootas which commit Dosas to be adhered with fetus. In this stance Shukra-Shonita. Prakriti has got very comprehensive and exhaustive interpretation. This does not simply convey the sense of ascendency of Dosa in Shukra or Shorit but it also be conceded the traits inherited by descendants. In this stance it is an important fact that constitution of Shukra; Shonit and fetus development is also founded on Panchamahabhootas pedestal. Pertaining to distinct role of Panchamahabhootas in the fetal development and Panchbhautikatva of Shukra and Shonita has been made pronounced by Acharya Sushruta while defining the Grabha (pregnancy). He articulated when Shukra, Shonita, Atma Prakriti (here atma prakriti is to be conceded as Asta Prakriti) and Vikara (sodas vikaras) in uterus amalgamate is designated as Garbha.xix After Chetana (consciousness) gets located in fetus that means ushering activation of Panchmahabhootas, then in the process of development of fetus occurs. Vayu Mahabhoot divides the cells, TejaMahabhoot digest the Ahar Rasa (Rakta etc) received by mother, Jala Mahabhoot moisten (kledan) the body which provide sustenance to the various factors of fetal body. Prithyi is responsible for genesis compaction of various organs and components of body along with stability. Akash Mahabhoot causes elongation and vacuousness of organs. Accordingly, when fetal body organized and developed by the unification of Panchmahabhootas then by the permutation and combination of these mahabhoot Dosas are manufactured as per their Panchbhautik composition viz with the ascendency of Jala and Prithvi Kapha come into existence. Again, when one dosa, two dosas or more dosas become preponderant and get engaged with fetus consequently form the Prakriti in that manner. xx

Acharya sushruta has directly co-related the relation between Ahar and Dosa on the basis of Panchbhautik composition. He articulated that articles which has been nascent from Akash and Vayu Mahabhootas augment Vata, Agni Mahabhoot predominated stuffs increase Pitta and the material which derived from Jala and Prithvi causes enhancement of Kapha. Position of Dosa in articles be speculated on ground of predominated Mahabhootas, it could be two or more.xxi

Aharas foster Shukra and Shonita bhawa (attributes)in uterus. Total sixteen Mahabhootas Paramanus participate in construction of fetus. There four Rasaja, four Matrija, four Pitraja and four Atamaja Mahabhootas are in fetal body. Atmaja four Mahabhootas depend on Atma and vice versa. Actually, Matraja and Pitraja Mahabhootas dwelling in fetus are the Mahabhootas of shukraja (sperms) and Raja (ovum). These Mahabhootas enhance the quantity of Shukra and Artava and Rasaja four Mahabhootas nourish Pritija and Matrija Mahabhootas and eventually these sixteen Mahabhootas construct the fetal body. xxiii

#### **Discussion**

There is interrelation between Panchmahabhoot and Tridosa theory. Panchmahabhoot is structural component and originator of body while Tridosa is functional component. Function of body transpires in accordance with the constitutional feature of Panchmahabhoot. Rumination and deliberation of interrelation between Panchmahabhoot and Tridosa have to be accomplished through fetus formation and development. In reference to Prakriti, Acharya Sushruta has illustrated "Yo Doso bhawati Utkatah" which specify the functionality of Dasas in

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the developmental role of fetus since the commencement. Acharya Vijaya Rakchita explicated that since the inception of developmental process of Dhatu and fetus, ascendency of vitiating action of Vata, Pitta and Kpha, is the foundation of functional supremacy in Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja and Dwandaja fetus. Albeit, characterization of creative development and developmental action has been done on the basis of Panchmahabhoot viz-Akasham Vivardhayati, Vayurvibhajayati, Agnim Pachati, Apaakledayanti, Prithvisanghanati. In the present instance, Panchmahabhootas are backbone of both, functional and constitutive aspect. Acharya Charak has accredited the significance of Panchmahabhootas in context of Dosik Prakriti. In this reference, devoid of describing preponderant Dosa, he acknowledged Shukra-Shonita Prakriti, Matur ahar-vihara, Kala-Garbhashaya Prakriti and Panchmahabhoot Vikara Prakriti as influential factors to the Dosas. Out of these four, Panchmahabhoot, ahara (food articles) etc have direct relation to the Dosas and Kala-Garbhashaya and Shukra-Shonita Prakriti are matter of critical appreciation. Sustenance of body has been contemplated on basis of Panchbautik composition of food articles moreover this has been made more distinct by delineating the role of Bhutagnis in the process of digestion. In Ayurveda, Gurvadi Gunas have been portrayed in the functional form as virtue of Panchmahabhootas. After being classified these gurvadigunas are recognized as Vata, Pitta and Kapha, thus it could be clenched that substratum of interrelation between Tridosa and Panchmahabhootas is Gurvadiguna and this be noted that these Gunas are being acquainted with Ayurveda which are not in other philosophy. Homologation of these Gunas is the axiom of establishing the interrelation between constitutional and functional entity. Materiality of all bodily factors has been ascertained with functional Tridosa. Aharas (food articles) are Panchbhautik and ascendant with Rasa (taste). Where physical constitution is described as foundation of Rasas, thereat its relation has also been established indubitably with Tridosas because Tridosa could be irrefutably ascertained functional aspect of Panchmahabhootas, foundation of Tridosas are Panchmahabhootas viz physical basis of Vata are Vayu and Akasha Mahabhootas, backbone of Kapha are Prithvi and Jala while substratum of Pitta is Agni Mahabhoota has been asserted. Here Pitta has only one constituent which is crux of matter of deliberation. Possible elucidation would be that there are five Mahabhootas which include two constituents to Vata and Kapha for each, then only one Mahabhoota remains as constituent of Pitta. In order of development, intangible Vata evolved first which built up of Vayu and Akash these both don't possess tangibility and morph. Constituents of Kapha have both tangibility and morph. Because it evolved subsequent to Pitta (Agni) therefore Kapha acquires morph and owing to Jala and Prithvi, tangibility. Pitta is the Dosa of middle order, Agni is also placed in the middle of Panchmahabhootas so conceding its ascendency of Usnatva (warmthness) and Rupatva (morph), only Agni is recognized as constituent of Pitta, notwithstanding, attributes of other Bhootas also participate in the construction of properties of Pitta for case in point Dravatva is property of Jala and Amla is included with Agni which are few properties of Pitta.

At the initial stage where Mahabhootas are recognized as Paramanu, at this encampment, total sixteen Mahabhootas of four factors viz Matrija, Pitrija, Rasaja and Atmaja are also admitted as substratum for creation of fetus. At time of initiation of self-activities of fetus the functions of these Mahabhootas ostensible in three similitudes which are designated as Tridosa.

#### Conclusion

1. Whole universe is considered as Panchbhautik (made up of five primordial elements) that means all creation are Panchbhautik either these are living or nonliving.

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- 2. Panchmahabhootas prevail in living and nonliving being, however, Vata, Pitta and Kapha, due to its functional attribute, are ostensible in living being only.
- 3. Panchmahabhootas are liable for internal action in non-living beings.
- 4. All actions execute in the physical components of living beings but they are exhibited in the form of motility (Gati), absorptive (Adana) and nutritive (Visarga) functions which are discerned as Tridosa (Vata, Pitta, Kapha).
- 5. Formerly, Panchmahabhootas are organizer of the creation either it is living or non-living beings. Panchmahabhootas exist in constitutive form and its functional aspect is recognized as Tridosa in living beings.
- 6. The basic authority is of Panchmahabhootas only, its functional aspect is accredited as Tridosa in living body. Panchmahabhoota become operative by the amalgamation of Atma which grossly has three similitude acknowledged as Tridosa.

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