



UNDERSTANDING THE GENESIS OF PANCHAMAHABUTAS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AYURVEDIC SRUSHTYUTPATTI SIDDHANT.

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ABSTRACT:

Indian system of medicine, *Ayurveda*, is termed as the Science of Life^[1] and it provides solutions not only to keep the health of the healthy person intact but also to treat the ailments of the body and mind.^[2] *Ayurveda* mostly uses naturally occurring medicinal herbs for the treatment of the diseases. The study of these medicinal herbs is done in the faculty of *Dravyaguna Vigyan* within *Ayurveda* education. They are the *dravyas* which are being used in management of disease. These *dravyas* are considered to be made of all the five basic elements.^[3] To understand the functionality of the *dravyas* (medicinal herbs) better, the combination of the five basic elements is essentially required to study but to understand the basic elements and their functions one needs to begin study with the original creation of these five basic elements described in *Ayurvedic* and other related texts. The present paper tries to understand the genesis of five basic elements in view of *Ayurvedic* theory of creation along with the correlation of the related theories of creation accepted by *Ayurveda*. Critical analysis is done through all available classical literature. A theory of creation prescribed by *Ayurveda* points out that the universe is evolved from *Avyakta*, which is nothing but *Atmatattva* described in related accepted theories. The genesis of *Panchamahabutas* is by *Avyakta* and the combination of the *Panchmahabutas* results in formation of *dravyas*. These *dravyas* can be studied for their functionality by studying *Panchabhautikatva* or the combination of five basic elements.

Keywords- *Panchamahabuta*, *Srushtyutpatti Siddhant*, *Avyakta*, *Dravyaguna vigyan*, *Panchabhautikatva* of *dravya*.

INTRODUCTION:

Charakacharya defines *Ayurveda* as a science that studies and acknowledges the elements or matters i.e. *dravyas* with their characteristics i.e. *gunas* and functionality i.e. *karmas*, suitable or non-suitable for life.^[4] Hence *Ayurveda* is nothing but *Dravyaguna Vigyan* specified in *Ayurveda* Education System. *Dravya*, *Guna* and *Karma* along with *Agni*, *Jala* and *Prthvi*. They, along with *atma*, mind and senses form the living bodies that are part of flora and fauna. The creation of *dravyas* or five basic elements is discussed in *Srushti-utpatti siddhantas* prescribed by *Samkhya-Vaisheshika darshanas* and also by *Ayurveda*. By studying these *siddhantas* together one can acquire better understanding about these five basic elements, their qualities and functionalities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

All available classical literature i.e. *Samhitas*, *Tarkasangrah*, *Samkhyatattvakumudini*, *Vaisheshikdarshan*, *Vedantdarshan*, *Padarthavigyan*, *Nighantus* mainly and other related sources of *Dravyaguana* etc are compiled

2. This compiled data is well studied and discussed for deep understanding of *Srushtyutpatti siddhant* and creation of *Panchamahabuta*.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

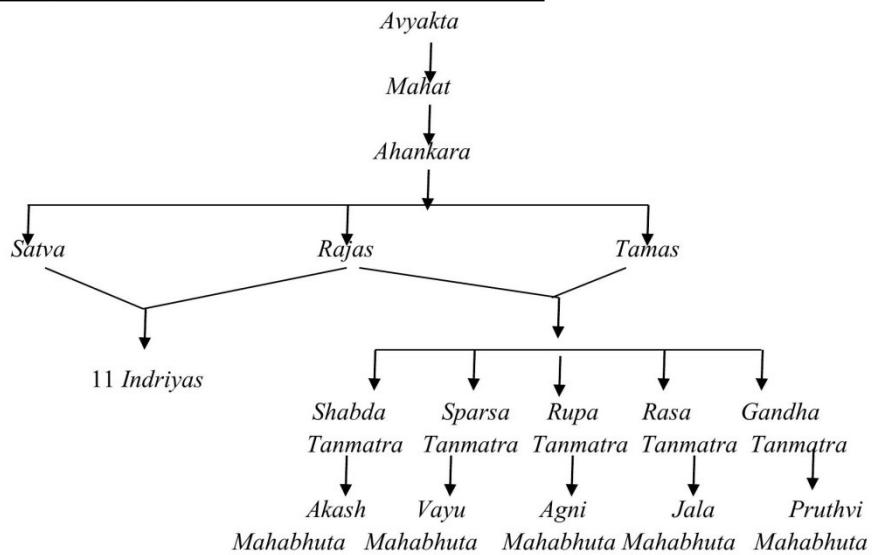
Samanya, *Vishesha*, *Samavaya* and *Abhava* are termed as *Padarthas* or the basic components of the universe as per *Vaisheshika Darshana* and it is accepted to *Ayurveda*.^[5,6] *Dravyas* are classified in *Murta* (tangible) and *Amurta* (untangible). The *murta* and *amurta* *dravyas* are the basic constituents of perceptible universe and are in the form of five basic elements, *Akasha*, *Vayu* ***Srushti utpatti according to Samkhya darshanashastra***^[7]

Samkhya Darshana states that when *Prakriti* attracts the attention of the *Purusha*, it results into hyperactive mode which causes the loss of equilibrium in her *trigunas*, qualities of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*.^[8,9] This turbulent state is called as *Avyakta*. This hyperactive *Avyakta* state develops the first intellect which is termed as *Mahat-Buddhi*.^[10] Self-awareness (*Ahamkara*) is the first thought acknowledged by the intellect. Since *Avyakta* has three distinct qualities of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*; *Ahamkara* too, acquires them. *Sattvika* and *Rajasika Ahamkaras* collectively form *ekadash indriyas* i.e. the mind, five sensory senses and five motor senses. *Tamasika* and *Rajasika Ahamkaras* collectively form *Panchatanmatras* i.e. *Shabda*, *Sparsha*, *Rupa*, *Rasa* and *Gandha*. Each *Tanmatra* further forms corresponding basic element, i.e. *Shabda* forms *Akasha* element, *Sparsha* forms *Vayu*

element, *Rupa* forms *Agni* element, *Rasa* forms *Jala* element and *Gandha* forms *Prthvi* element. These five basic elements combine to form the entire non-living universe(*Nirindriya*

srushti) and all of them along with *Avyakta*, *Manas* (mind), five sensory senses and five motor senses form the entire living universe(*Sendriya srushti*).^[11]

Flow chart 1: *Srushti utpatti* according to *Samkhya darshana*



Different opinions on *Srushti utpatti*

When describing the evolution of the universe different theories were postulated by the different schools of thought. In present topic, we will be studying the *Srushti utpatti* according to *Ayurveda*, *Samkhya darshan*, *Vaisheshik darshan* and *Vedant*. While explaining *srushtiutpatti*, *Samkhya darshan* put forth *Prakruti-Purush siddhant* and *Nyaya*. *Vaisheshik darshan* explains *Paramanuvada*, *Ayurveda* followed *Prakruti purush siddhanta* of *Samkhyadarshan* ^[12] also explains the evolution of Universe by *Chaitanyaswarup atma*.^[13]

Collective opinion about formation of Mahabhuta:

Vaisheshikas explain it through the *Paramanu* *nitya* i.e. ever existing minutest particles of each basic elements. They further states that these basic elements when combine together form living and non-living *dravyas*. This act of combining all the five elements is called as *Panchikarana*. *Darshanas* like *Vedanta* agree with *Panchikarana*.^[14]

Ayurveda accepts the creation of *Panchamahabutas* by *Panchatanmatras*, just like *Samkhyadarshana*. *Ayurveda* states that when *Prakrti* is instigated by the attention of the *Purusha*, at the moment of formation of *Avyakta*, quality of *Chaitanya* is developed. This *Chaitanya* or *Chetana* activates further development in *Avyakta* which is similar to

Samkhya. Hence, it can be understood that *Avyakta*, along with *Chaitanya* and *Sattvika-Rajasika Ahamkara (Buddhi)* give rise to *Manas*, five *sukshma* sensory senses and five *sukshma* motor senses on one hand and on the other hand, *Avyakta* along with *Chaitanya* and *Tamasika-Rajasika Ahamkara (Buddhi)* give rise to *Pancha-Tanmatras* i.e. *Shabda*, *Sparsha*, *Rupa*, *Rasa* and *Gandha*. At this level, one can understand that formation of *Pancha-Tanmatras* is nothing but development of new qualities in the *Avyakta* itself and every such quality here has corresponding sense that is able to sense it. Further, *Avyakta* with *Chaitanya* and *Shabda Tanmatra* form the element of *Akasha Mahabhuta*, *Avyakta* with *Chaitanya* and *Sparsha Tanmatra* form the element of *Vayu Mahabhuta*, *Avyakta* with *Chaitanya* and *Rupa Tanmatra* form the element of *Agni Mahabhuta*, *Avyakta* with *Chaitanya* and *Rasa Tanmatra* form the element of *Jala Mahabhuta* and *Avyakta* with *Chaitanya* and *Gandha Tanmatra* form the element of *Prthvi Mahabhuta*. These are the *Karana dravyas*.^[15,16]

When these five basic elements, the *karana dravyas*, combine together in different amounts, they form the *Nirindriya Srushti* or the universe that is devoid of sensory perceptions. Also combination of these five basic elements, along with *Avyakta* with

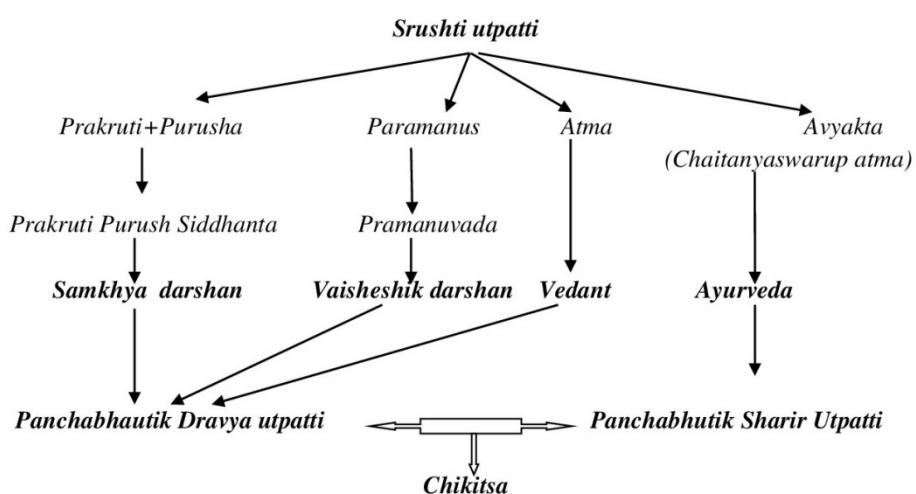
Chaitanya, *Manas*, five *sukshma* sensory senses and five *sukshma* motor senses forms the *Sendriya Srushti* or universe with sensory perception.^[17] This statement coincides with *Charaka's* definition of *Ayu* which is the combination of the body, Soul, mind and senses.^[18] The *Sendriya Srushti* is the same which is expressed by *Charaka* as *Chikitsa Purusha*.^[19] *Charaka* identifies *Avyakta* as *Atma*^[20] and calls *Avyakta* as *Chetanayukta Purusha*,^[21] and after further development ultimately he calls it as a *Purusha* comprised of 25 *tattvas*^[22] as expressed in the chart above. It should also be noted that in both these universes i.e. *sendriya* and *nirindriya srushti*. *Chaitanya* from *Avyakta* is always present. In *Sendriya Srushti* it is clearly visible and in *Nirindriya Srushti* it is not visible to the eyes but can be felt otherwise.

Charaka clearly identifies the five basic elements as *dravyas* or tangible elements. They form body for the soul, mind and the senses.^[23] This same situation is also present in the herbs. Therefore, herbs are primarily preferred as part of the treatment. The efficacy of the herbs depends upon their qualities and action. *Charaka* states that herb acts according to *gunas* or the qualities it has.^[24] But *Dravya* is always devoid of any qualities when formed and they obtain qualities from the second moment

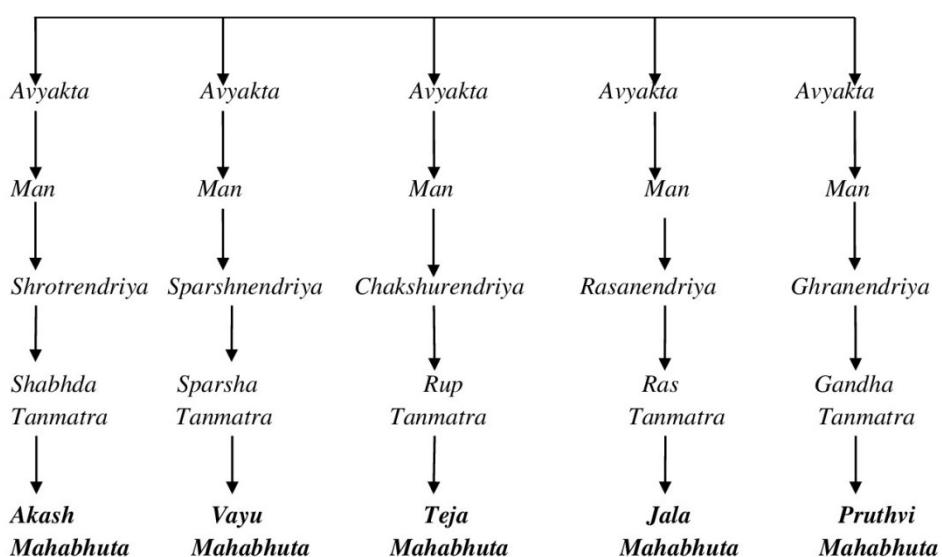
onwards.^[25] Hence, *gunas* depend on *dravyas*. Formation of *dravyas* is nothing but combining five basic elements and becoming stable with it. Therefore, it can be understood that when the combination of basic elements is stable, it gives rise to the characteristic or qualities of that *dravya*. The stable combination of five basic elements is nothing but

Panchabhartikatva. Hence, it can be concluded that the *Panchabhartikatva* itself give rise to *gunas* and it is only responsible for the functionality of the *dravya* (in this case the herb). When *Panchabhartikatva* of *dravya* is identified, it is easy to understand where and how the *dravya* is going to act in the body.

Flow chart: 2 Different opinions on *Srushti utpatti* and formation of *Mahabhutas*



Flow chart: 3 formation of *Mahabhutas*



DISCUSSION ABOUT EXTERNAL EVIDENCES:

Tarkasangraha calculates twenty-four *gunas*^[26] that includes *chetana* along with the *tanmatras* *shabda*, *sparsha*, *rupa*, *rasa*, *gandha*. It also identifies *buddhi*, *sukha*, *duhkha*, *iccha*, *dvesha*, *prayatna*, *dharma*, *adharma* and *samskara*. All these Properties are associated with *Avyakta* or *Atma*. It further identifies *samkhya*, *parimana*, *prthaktva*, *sanyoga*, *vibhaga*, *paratva*, *aparatva*, *gurutva*, *dravatva* and *sneha* which are of five basic elements or *Panchamahabutas*. We have already seen that *Chetanayukta Avyakta* forms all the basic elements. Hence all of these *gunas* given in *Tarkasangraha* are nothing but the properties of *Avyakta* itself.

Tarkasangraha further associates each sensory sense with corresponding *dravya*. Sense of *ghrana* is the part of classification of *prthvi*^[27], Sense of *rasa* is the part of classification of *jala* ^[28] and so on. This is happened because the sensory senses are formed along with the *Tanmatras* and are capable of identifying them and then on account of that identification, they are able to differentiate the *dravyas*. Ultimately, since a *Tanmatra* is associated with the corresponding basic element and a Sense is able to identify *Dravya* through that *Tanmatra*, that one sense and the related *Tanmatra* are considered to be

the part of that basic element. Hence, there is no discrepancy.

The process of acquiring the *Jnana* or knowledge is considered as follows. The senses identify the *Tanmatras* and hence elements. They pass the sensory information to *manas*. *Manas* then passes this information to the *buddhi* or intellect which stores it in the form of *jnana*. The abode of *buddhi* or *jnana* is *Atmatattva*. Therefore, *buddhi* or *jnana* becomes *guna* of *Atmatattva*. Therefore, *Charaka's* view of *Avyakta* is *Atmatattva*, seems logical.

Taittiriya Upanishad informs about the formation of *Panchamahabutas* in a specific way. It states that *Akasha* forms *Vayu*. From *Vayu*, *Agni* is formed. From *Agni*, *Jala* is formed. From *Jala*, *Prthvi* is formed.^[29] It also expresses that *Prthvi* forms the flora and fauna which become the food. This is acceptable to *Ayurveda* as well. It should be noted that *Akasha* doesn't have any *Paramanu* particles but *Vayu* has *Paramanu* particles. *Vayu* onwards every basic element has *Paramanu* particles. So the question arises, how *Akasha* is able to form *Vayu*? The answer could be the only tangible and omnipresent *dravya* considered by *Vaisheshikas*, *Atma*. Only *Atmatattva* is capable of forming *Vayu* with particles in the Space. The same is expressed in *Ayurveda* when *Chetanayukta Avyakta*

forms all the basic elements and *Avyakta* is identified as *Atmatattva*.

CONCLUSION:

The conclusion can be summarized as follows

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1. *Avyakta* is the *Atmatattva* and it is *dravya* while *Panchartanmatras* are *gunas*.
2. *Atma*(*dravya*) with *Vishesh guna* (*Tanmatra*) along with *Manas* and *Sukshma-indriyas* give rise to *Panchmahabutas* (*dravya*).
3. The *Sendriya Srushti* (Universe comprised of senses) and *Nirindriya Srushti* (Universe devoid of senses) are formed from *Avyakta* or *Atmatattva* and they have visible and invisible existence of *Chaitanya* within them respectively.
4. *Avyakta* with *shabda guna* forms *Akasha*, with *sparsha guna* forms *Vayu*, with *Rupa guna* forms *Agni*, with *rasa guna* forms *Jala* and with *gandha guna* forms *Prithvi* element and the combination of all the five elements forms *dravyas*.
5. All the properties of *Dravyas* calculated in ayurvedic texts and other related texts like *Tarkasangraha* are originally the properties of *Avyakta* or *Atmatattva*.
6. The basic elements are sensed through the particular sense and the information is sent to the *Atma* (Soul) through *Manas* (mind) which *buddhi* (intellect) synthesizes and stores as *Jnana* (knowledge).
7. The stable combination of five basic elements is nothing but *Panchabhautikatva* of *dravya*. *Panchabhautikatva* itself give rise to *gunas* and it is only responsible for drug action or pharmacodynamics of the *dravya*.

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