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A REVIEW ON ROLE OF PANCHAMAHABHUTAS IN DEVELOPMENT OF FOETUS

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ABSTRACT

For true exploration and validation of Ayurveda in all its aspects, scientific inputs should conform to Ayurveda's basic principles and philosophy. Till date so many studies have been done for elaboration of fundamental principles like Tridosha, Dhatu, Strotas, Agni, Oja, Ama etc. No any rewarding work has been done on Panchamahabhuta siddhant and it is a still stalemate for us. In this perception present attempt is enlightened on clinical application and its importance in Ayurveda. Here emphasis has been given on evolution of Panchamahabhuta, its relation with other fundamentals like Dosha (humours), Rasa (tastes), garbhotpatti (embryonic development), The creation of garbha in the garbhashyaby the permutation of Shukra and Artava with atma is known asgarbha. So this process is known as garbhadhana. It is mainly explained by Acharya Charak, According to himthere are six factor i.e. matrujadi shad bhava which are helps in the formation of garbha and development ofangapratyangas. Other than these six bhavas there are shaddhatwatmaka bhavas i.e.akashaja, vayaviya, agneyajalaiya, parthiva, and atmaja have the influence on the constitution of the body. When shaddhatu come together garbha is formed.

INTRODUCTION

In present days of globalization, all the rational sceptics are concentrated in finding the basic reasons for transformations or existence. The concept of Panchamahabhutas (five elements) is defined vividly and scientifically in Ayurveda classics. It is stated that human body is panchabhautika (penta elemental) and the food we eat is also panchabhautik, when the food undergoes digestion with the help of jatharagni (digestive fire) parthiv (Prithvi Dominant) properties of food nourishes the parthiv parts of body. In these manner symmetrical properties of mahabhutas (elements) gives nutrition to corresponding symmetrical organs of body¹. The objective of this review article is to study the conceptual as well as applied aspect of panchamahabhuta siddhant and to prove this principle as the base foundation of all other fundamentals viz. tridosha siddhant (theory of humours), garbhotpatti (foetal development), guna- karma vada (Theory of Property & Action of substances), deha sanghatana (body composition). panchamahabhut siddhant is universally accepted theory. Even it does not oppose the development of other Acharya Charak said that the embryo is formed by the five Mahabhutas, viz. Akasha, Vayu, Agni, Jala and Prithvi and it serves as the receptacle of Chetana (consciousness). In fact, the Soul (conscious element) constitutes the sixth Dhatu (element) responsible for the formation of Garbha (embryo)¹. Acharya Vagbhatt I and Bhavamisra have also corroborated that the body is composed

of the Mahabhutas and combined also with Chetana, give life to the Garbha (foetus)^{2,3}. Sequence of descent of various components in Foetus Acharya Charak said that Soul, first of all, unites with Akasha before uniting with the other Bhutas. This is like the creation of Akasha by God after the period of deluge. As God, the indestructible one, equipped with the Manas (mind) creates Akasha first, and then the other Bhutas whose attributes are more and more manifested successively, so does the Soul, desirous of creating another body, first of all, unites with the Akasha, and then with other four Bhutas whose attributes are more and more manifested successively. All this action (association of the Soul with the five Mahabhutas) takes place in a very short time⁴. Sources of Pancha Mahabhutas in Foetus According to Acharya Charak the Garbha (foetus) are composed of four Mahabhutas. Each of these Mahabhutas is again of four types: (1) Those from the Mata (mother's ovum). (2) Those from the Pitra (father's sperm). (3) Those from the Ahara (diet) of the pregnant mother and (4) Those accompanying the Atmakrta (by Soul) which enters into the Garbha (foetus). Acharya Charak added that in the body of living beings, there are sixteen types of Bhutas. They are derived from Rasa (digestive product of mother's food), Atma (Soul) and MataPita (mother and father). Four of these Bhutas accompany the Atma (Soul) and the Atma Himself depends upon four of them for His existence. Bhutas from the Mata-Pita (mother and father) are derived through their Rajah and Shukra (ovum and sperm).

It is the Rasa (digestive product of food) which provides nourishment in the form of Bhutas to the Shukra and Asrk (sperm and ovum)⁵. Bhautik component of Foetus Specific function of Pancha Mahabhutas in development of Foetus According to Acharya Sushruta in Chetan (alive) Garbha, Vayu Bhuta does Vibhajana (cell division), Tejas Bhuta does Pachana, Jala Bhuta does Kledana (moistens), Prithvi Bhuta does Samhanana (hardness), and Akasha Bhuta does Vivardhana (enlarges)¹¹. Acharya Dalhana clarifying the above verse says that only because of Chetana the Garbha remains alive up to the time of Prasavakala (delivery), in absence of this it gets Kuthita (putrefied) or Vishna (degenerated).

In fact every dravya (substance) in this universe has its panchamahabhuta composition doesn't matter whether they are chetan (living) or achetan (non living)². All the Karya dravyas (perceivable matters) existing in the world are panchabhautika. Panchamahabhutas are at the juncture of subtle to the more gross manifestation of the universe. But some people think that it is having less practical utility and more mental exercise. The reasoning of anything and everything which cannot be explained by tridoshas can be very well interpreted by panchamahabhuta siddhant. This concept of panchamahabhuta is capable in providing ultimate solution for the queries in the field of Ayurveda as per acharya Sushruta³. In present scenario all branches of science are busy in finding the basic causes of existence. Even the most

modernized equipment leads them to a more pensive problem. These are the limitations of theirs which has attracted them to eastern philosophy. Ayurveda can satisfy them with a more sound explanation on the basis of panchamahabhuta siddhant. Evolution of Panchamahabhuta theory⁴ It takes place in 3 levels a) First level: Evolution of Panchatanmatra (Subtle elements) b) Second level: Bhutantaranupravesha (Imitative pervasion) c) Third level: Panchikaran (Reciprocal pervasion) From avyakta (indistinct), a short look upto evolution of mahabhutas The division of Dosa, Dhatu, Mala, Anga and Pratyanga (major and minor body parts) is done by Vayu. The Teja by its function of Pachana (metabolism) changes the Rupa (shape), provides general appearance like human structure etc. along with specific features and complexion. Kleda (moistening) is done by Jala or in other words the dryness or absorption caused by Vibhaga (division) and Parinama (metabolism) being done by Vayu and Teja respectively is normalized by moistening action of Jala. The Prithvi perform Samhanana (hardness) or gives shape to Garbha already moistened by Jala. The Vivardhana (enlargement) is done by Akasha by providing space with Adhmapana (inflating or blowing upon) to the Srotas (channels) running all around the body i.e. in Urdhva (up), Adhah (down) and Tiryaga (oblique) directions, which are created by Vidarana (splitting or division) done by Vayu and Agni¹². Acharya Bhavamisra corroborating the earlier views regarding Prithvi, Vayu and Akasha explains that Agni

or Tejas stays in the body in the form of Pachaka, Alochaka, Ranjaka, Bhrajaka and Sadhaka Pitta along with specific Agnis of Pancha Mahabhutas and seven Dhatus. It is Adhidaiva (God or commander) of Vani (speech). By performing metabolic functions it maintains the life of Garbha. Jala stays in the form of all the five types of Sleshma, Rasa and Shukra etc. liquid substances and power of taste organ. It is God of Manas. Jala or Soma after nourishing Oja etc, Dhatus and moistening the dryness created by Vayu and Agni maintains the life of Garbha (foetus)¹³.

Clinical application of panchamahabhutas 1) Dhatusamyata (equilibrium state of dhatus): is the ultimate aim of our Ayurveda science¹⁰. According to Acharya Charak principle of samanyam(similarity) helps in increasing degraded similar dhatus in body and when there is dhatuvridhi condition we have to use vishesha dravyas (opposite substances) in treatment¹¹. To fulfil this purpose we must know the panchabhautik composition of therapeutic substances. 2) Tridosha Prakopa and Prasham (Vitiating and alleviation of humours): According to great sage Sushrut Vata, Pitta and Kapha are the main factors for the initiation of all pathogenesis inside the body, because of having their symptoms, their subsidence and scriptural evidence. As the entire universe is panchabhautik, the entire disorders present in different forms do not exist without tridoshas. These variations are due to difference in panchabhautika composition of doshas. Dravyas composed

of Prithvi, Agni and Jala mahabhuta helps in alleviation of Vata dosha; Dravyas having dominancy in Prithvi, Jala and Vayu mahabhuta alleviates Pitta dosha and dravyas having predominance in Akash, Agni and Vayu mahabhutas reduces Kapha dosha¹². Dravyas which are rich in Akash, Vayu mahabhuta violates Vata dosha, Agni mahabhut predominant dravyas creates Pitta prakopa (Increases Pitta) while Prithvi and Jala mahabhut predominant dravyas aggravates kapha. In this way all dravyas are having different composition of mahabhuta properties. So by seeking accurate knowledge of properties of mahabhutas one can apply

Specific role of Vayu and Agni in development of Foetus Acharya Sushruta said that growth of the Garbha (foetus) is brought about by Rasa and Maruta Adhmana (inflated by Vata) ¹⁴. Jyoti Sthana is present behind the Nabhi (umbilicus of the Garbha) when it is inflated by Vata combined with Usma (heat / Pitta), performs development of body by splitting and Tiryaga (obliquely) running Srotas (channels) and provides specific shape or features to the Garbha (foetus)¹⁵. Acharya Kasyapa said that by nature only, the finest particles (atom) of Vayu perform Samyoga (union), Vibhaga (division), Chesta (activities), Akunchan (flexion), Prasarana (extension), and Anga Pratyanga of Kosta (formation of major and minor body-parts of abdominal cavity), Dhatus, Chetana (consciousness) and divide minute Srotansi (channels)¹⁶. All this Vibhajana (splitting) and Dharana (retention) is done by Vayu in association

with Kala (time factor)¹⁷. Acharya Harita opines that Bija (sperms and ovum) attains the shape of Kalala by the action of Agni situated in all the five Bhutas. Kalala gets the shape of Budbuda by the action of outside Vayu. This Budbuda again becoming Kalala gets solidified in the shape of Pinda (solid) by the action of Pancha Bhutagni by further metabolism this mass becomes a heap of Ghana (solid) substance, then Vyana Vayu forms the Panchatatvas, Hasta (arms), Pada (legs) and Shira (head) etc. body parts. The same internally situated one Vayu reaching different parts gives this solid mass a shape of body. Udana Vayu which is situated in Gala Hridaya (neck and heart) forms Mukh Dvara (oral cavity) and its aperture. Apana Vayu situated Adhah (downwards) clarifies the Apana Dvara (anal orifice), similarly internally situated Vayu comes out of the body making Prthaka Prthaka Marga (different orifices). Thus with the influence of Vayu, nine Dvara (external meatuses) i.e. Mukha (oral), Ghrana (both nasal), Karnau (both ears), Netra (both eyes), Apana (anal) and Mehana (urinary) are formed¹⁸. Acharya Bhela lays equal emphasis on the role of Agni and Vayu, both these entering the Sharir (body) form different Anga Pratyanga (major and minor body parts), as well as initiate activity and growth¹⁹.

1). Vayurvibhajati¹¹ Vayu elements divide the fertilized ovum and so many cells are developed from one unit. It acts as a generator and controller movements of gases and impulses. 2). Tejaenampachati¹¹ Agni elements

dissolves the nucleus and nucleus of each of the developing cells during its process of cell division and ultimately, the zona pellucida of multiplying cells also will be dissolved on the 7th day of fertilization to enable the developing cells to come in direct contact with endometrium after implantation. It is present in various forms in each and every particle of the body and universe. The function of enzymes (digestive system, metabolism) all denotes Teja Mahabhuta.

3). Apah klediyanti¹¹ Jala Mahabhuta provides wetness and moisture which nourishes the dividing cells and helps in the growth of the tissue. It should not be mistranslated to water as it is an all body fluid circulating in different forms in the body like ECF, CSF, Saliva, Plasma etc. 4). Prithvisamhanti¹¹ A Prithvi element brings the accumulation and integrity (Samhanana) which maintains the combination and compactness of the cells under the process of division. It gives material forms (Murti) and Akara (shape) to the body or any Panchabhautika substance. It evolved as a result of collocation and condensation among Tanmatra. Solid structures of body like bones, teeth, muscle, hairs etc. denotes Prithvi Mahabhuta. 5). Akashamvividhaya¹¹ Akasha elements provides Vivardhana (the action of multidimensional development with porousness of different cells). It is not just a vacuum, but is all occupied by subtle energy potentials. Developed with the combination of five Mahabhutas the combination of Shukra and Shonita (sperm

and ovum) is converted into various parts like Hasta (hands), Pada (legs), Jihva (tongue), Ghrana (nose), Karna (ear), Nitamba (buttocks) etc. are developed and the whole combination is known as Sharir (living body). It contains six parts viz. Four Shakha (limbs), Madhya (middle part) and Shira (head)¹¹. CONCLUSION The fruitful conclusions, which have automatically emerged through the discussion of the conceptual review study, are being presented here. All the available dravyas can be used as medicine but it requires proper logic and yukti, also this is possible only after deep understanding of panchamahabhutas as it forms the foundation base of all other siddhantas(principles). The concept of Panchamahabhuta principle is peculiarity of Ayurveda. Though, Ayurveda is having similar views with Darshana shastras like Vaisheshika, Sankhya etc. in many aspects, but the concept of Panchamahabhuta in Ayurveda is moulded in such a way that, it becomes helpful in Nidan and Chikitsa, thereby fulfilling its aim of dhatusamya. Mahabhuta dominance of a panchabhautika dravya can be detected, but it is not possible to understand or predict the configuration of Mahabhutas, shapes and size of Mahabhuta-molecules due to limitations of human senses and intelligence. So in this regards the present review article also opens a new research window in the field of Ayurvedic fundamental research on this siddhant.

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