

THE CONCEPT OF ECOLOGY IN AYURVEDA

Dr. Ashwini Patil*

PhD Scholar, Dept. of Samhita – Siddhanta, Government Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Mysuru – 570002, Karnataka, India.

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*Corresponding author: Dr. Ashwini Patil

PhD Scholar, Dept. of Samhita – Siddhanta, Government Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Mysuru – 570002, Karnataka, India.

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, the science of life, is from time immemorial has laid more emphasis on *Prakriti*, *Purusha*, *Srshti*, *Desha*, *Kala*, *Rutu* & its relation with human beings. The interdependency of *loka* and *purusha* is wisely explained by *Charakacharya*. The fundamental principles laid down in *Ayurveda* are based on *Panchamahabhuta* concept which says that the *shareera*, the *dravya* and the entire existing materials are made out of it. This marks the relation of *Ayurveda* with nature which aims at prevention of disease rather than cure, by adopting healthy regimens. The healthy regimens include both diet and activities. *Acharyas* insight towards the effect of *Prakriti* on human beings is remarkable. We find many scattered references regarding environment in our *Samhitas*. The concept of *Janapadhvamsa* clearly indicates the effect of *Prakriti* on humans. *Ayurveda*, an *Upaveda* of *Atharvanaveda*, includes all the concepts not only to prevent and treat a disease but it shows a path to lead a healthy and contented life by preserving and understanding the relation between human and nature.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda*, *Prakriti*, *Purusha*, *Srshti*, *Loka* – *Purusha*, *Desha*, *Janapadhvamsa*.

INTRODUCTION

The human mind is always in search of questions which are unanswered, which are debatable and which are beyond one's limit of understanding and perception. *Vedas*, the holy books of Indian civilisation contains answers for all these thoughts. These thoughts with time took new directions and new schools with their philosophical thinking emerged. These were the *Upanishads*, the *Puranas* and the *Darshanas*. *Ayurveda* too emerged as *Upaveda* of *Atharvanaveda*, and used many raw materials from all school of thoughts to formulate its own theories having clinical importance.

Ayurveda which is *Shashwatha*, *Anadi*, having *Swabhavasamsiddha lakshana* is a complete Science of Life. The entire *Ayurveda* is taught in form of "*Trisutra*" which can be understood to all the three *Shishyabuddhi*. As *Trisutra*¹ says:

"हेतुलिङ्गौषधग्न्यानं स्वस्थातुरपरायणम्।

त्रिसूत्रं शाश्वतं पुण्यं बुबुधे यं पितामहः॥"

Hetu, *Linga*, *Aushadha*, *Swastha*, *Aatura* are been said in *Ayurveda*.

The cause for health and disease, the features of health and disease, the medicine to prevent from disease and to treat a disease is the key role of *Trisutra*.

Ayurveda states that *Aarogya* is needed to achieve *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*.^[2]

"धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणामारोग्यं मूलमुत्तमम्।

रोगास्तस्यापहर्तारः श्रेयसो जीवितस्य च॥"

One can attain these *Purushartha*'s when a person is *Aarogya*. Thus *Aarogya* is not merely the absence of disease but well-being of physical, mental, spiritual and social life. This is the definition of health according to WHO and *Sushrutacharya*,^[3] has quoted the same as

"समदोषः समाग्निश्च समधातु मलक्रिय।

प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनः स्वस्थ इत्यभिधीयते॥"

Aarogya can be achieved only when a person follows the *Dinacharya* and *Rutucharya* in a proper way.

When the regimen of *Rutucharya* comes, *Acharyas* have clearly stated that whatever changes occur externally in environment it is going to have a direct effect on human beings over their health. This is because the *Shareera* is

made out of *Panchamahabhuta* i.e. *Panchamahabhutashareerasamayah purushah* (*Su. Sha. 1*) and all the existing materials on this Universe is made up of *Panchamahabhuta* i.e. *Sarvam dravam panchabhoutikam*.

In this way the relation of Environment/Nature with humans gets defined. The different concepts in Ayurveda which states nature are :- (to quote imp)

1. *Srishti Utpatti Krama*^[4]
2. *Desha*^[5]
3. *Rutucharya*^[6]
4. *Loka-Purusha Saamya Vaada*^[7]
5. *Janapadhvam*^[8] etc....

SHRUSTI UTPATTI KRAMA (BASED ON PANGU-ANDHA NYAYA)

Understanding the *Shruti Utpatti* leads a human being to know the cause of his birth, his role in life and his destiny after death.

Acharyas have clearly stated that *Prakriti* is *Karyavan* but *Achetana* i.e. continuous changes are occurring in this nature at sub-atomic level, new planets, galaxies are emerging but still life is not sustaining over there. *Purusha* is *Chetana* but *Akaryavan* i.e. *Sukshma Shareera* is present which is in search of *Sthula Shareera* and the day it comes in contact, *Jeeva utpatti/ garbha* is formed i.e. *Karya* starts.

Understanding this concept for human being that we are not separate from nature will realise him in protecting and nurturing his environment. When both goes together equally then life begins. This is what we the 21st century are facing. We are heading towards at the cost of our nature leading to many ecological disasters.

DESHA

Acharyas have identified three types of *desha* based on the nature of climate, types of vegetables grown, nature of water and characters of human being, animals, birds and medicinal plants potency. The *desha* as per classics are:

1. *Saadharana desha*
2. *Aanupa desha*
3. *Jaangala desha*

RUTUCHARYA

According to *Vagbhattacharya*, *heena*, *mithya* and *ati matra* of *Kala*, *Artha* and *Karma* is the one and only reason for *Aarogya* as well as *Anarogya*.

Here *Kala* refers to *Rutu*. Disturbance in the seasons have a greater health effects on all living organisms in the Universe. Following a healthy dietetic regimen according to *Rutu* as said by *Acharya* will lead a healthy life. The *hina*, *mithya* and *atiyoga* of *Kala* occurs due to *Prajnaparadha* i.e. with our own knowledge we do mistakes. This is what we are doing at present century

and getting affected with floods, droughts, irregular seasons etc.

LOKA-PURUSHA SAAMYA VAADA

Ayurveda states the *Loka-Purusha Saamya Vaada* which gives the relation between Man and Universe. *Charakacharya* states that-

"पुरुषोऽयं लोकसंमितः।यावन्तो हि लोके मूर्तिमन्तो भावविशेषास्तावन्तः पुरुषे, यावन्तः पुरुषे तावन्तो लोके इति.....॥"

Living being is part and parcel of Universe. Whatever is present in the Universe is present in the living person and vice-versa.

Health → Interaction between Universe and individual is normal.

Disease → Interaction between Universe and individual is abnormal.

Charaka gives detailed description between living person and Universe. The constituent parts of both Universe and person are innumerable.

List of factors in the Universe which are present in a person are:-

Universe	Person
<i>Brahma</i>	<i>Atma</i>
<i>Prajapati</i>	<i>Manas</i>
<i>Pruthvi</i>	<i>Murti</i>
<i>Aapa</i>	<i>Kleda</i>
<i>Teja</i>	<i>Abhisantapa</i>

Similarly drugs based on the shape of organ in body.

Ex:- *Brahmi* → Brain

Karavellaka → Pancreas

Kulattha → Kidney

Ushira → Nephron

Coconut → Scalp and Hair

When *Purusha* gets the *jnana* that he and *loka* are *samya*, then he gets the *jnana* that he is responsible for all the *sukha* and *dukha*. When he knows this he will follow *hita aahara-vihara, aachara* to get *sukha* and thus *Ayurveda prayojana* of *swasthasya swastha rakshanam* occurs.

Loka and *Purusha* have *hetu, utpatti, vridhhi, upaplava, viyoga*.

Hetu means → *utpatti karana*

Utpatti means → *janma*

Vridhhi means → *apayana*

Upaplava means → *dukhagama*

Viyoga means → *shad dhatu vibhaga*.

It is also called as *jivapagama, prananirodha, bhanga, lokaswabhava*.

Mula for all *upaplava* is *pravritti* and *mula* for *uparama* (*moksha*) is *nivritti*.

Pravritti marga is *dukha*, *nivritti marga* is *sukha* and this is *satya*. Getting of this *satya jnana* between *loka* and *purusha* is the *prayojana* of this *loka-purusha samya vaada*.

Janapadodhvamsa

Charakacharya have focused the cause for the occurrence of diseases basically into two, they are *Saadharana* and *Asaadharana*.

Asaadharana refers to different causes for the causation of diseases based on individual dietary and life style habits.

Saadharana refers to the causes which when get afflicted are sure to produce disease in all living organisms irrespective of the diet and life style. Those are *vata*, *jala*, *desha* and *kala*. The features when these get vitiated are clearly mentioned and said that they are inter – related.

It's also been quoted that cause for all this is *Adharma* and its *moola* is *Purvakruta karma* and all this occurs because of *Pragnyaparadha*. *Charakacharya* has scientifically enumerated the features when air, water, land and season get afflicted, what will be the effect of it on life. This vitiation is going to cause many diseases. *Acharyas* have also shown the path to overcome this calamity by following *Satya*, *Dharma*, *Dana*, *Tapa*, *Upavasa* etc which are inturn the *Saatvika margas*. When a person realises his responsibilities towards nature then surely he will protect the nature.

Occurrence of endemics, epidemics, pandemics all are due to various pollutants and pollutions occurring in environment.

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda is not only Science of life instead it's a Herbal Science life. This science is very closely connected with Nature as it originates from it, understands human, drugs, disease and medicine based on Nature only. It gives more importance in balancing the ecology because a balanced environment always yield a healthy life directly and when body, mind and soul are in equilibrium state then health is achieved.

Our ancient scholars have not only explained the equilibrium state between Man and Nature but also explained about how alarming state a Man can face when Nature gets disturbed. In the present scenario too we are facing many environmental threats only because of Human activities.

Deforestation has lead to many ecological issues and threats to living organisms on Earth. Deforestation has lead to rise in temperature, loss of wild species and rain.

All this have lead to an imbalance leading to many of the ecological disturbance leading to diseases of various forms.

CONCLUSION

Nature is our Mother--- if today we are not protecting her then in coming days there will be no nature and there will be none of us. *Ayurveda* principles stands here where it makes to realise the importance of nature to man and in understanding its importance. Following proper *rutucharya* and preserving our nature will yield man a happy, healthy and contented life.

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