



# A CRITICAL REVIEW ON PRITHVI MAHABHUTA

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**Abstract:** Dravya is one among the six categories accepted by Vaisesika and Ayurvedic philosophies. The main purpose of the Ayurveda i.e. Swasthasya swasthya raksana, Aturasya vikara prasamana, which is dependent on Ahara dravya and Ausadha dravyas. All the vegetable kingdom is developed on and from the earth and it is the base of food grain etc, which are essential for the development and maintenance of human being. Prithvi Mahabhuta has an important role in the formation, giving a particular shape and growth of the body. Earth, minerals and vegetable kingdom etc. are the objective forms of the Prithvi Mahabhuta, plays a most important role in the medical science. Hence an attempt has been made in this paper to arrive at a Critical review on Prithvi Mahabhuta.

**Key words - Prithvi, Mahabhuta, Dravya, Ayurveda.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

The one in which the Guna and Karma are existed with invariable concomitance and which is the ultimate cause for Karya is called as Dravya<sup>1</sup>. Susruta established the superiority of Dravya because, Rasa (Taste) and Guna (Qualities) etc. are dependent on it, and so, it is very important from the stand point of treatment<sup>2</sup>. “Dravati parinamam gacchati iti dravyam or dravati gacchati, Samyoga vibhagadi gunan iti va dravyam” – It means which is changed to result or which reaches to combination and separation is called Dravya.

Dravya (Substance or matter) is thought to be responsible for the evolution and destruction of the world, as all changes takes place in it. As clear from the etymological explanation it remains always changed with the help of Samyoga (combination) and Vibhaga (separation). The basic substance in which the change takes place is called Karana dravya.

The term Bhoota is derived from the root “bhoo” dhatu and “ta” pratyaya which means to exist. Hence anything that exists can be termed as bhoota. The term Mahabhoota denotes gross existent. Gross existents are formed by the combination of the five primary existents. Mahaa means gross or large. The gross existents are considered to be larger than the primary existents, which can be perceived with our eyes. The process of combining of the primary existents to gross existents is termed as Panchikarana.

Everything in the universe is made up of Panca Mahabhutas i.e. Akasa, Vayu, Tejas, Ap (Jala), Prithvi. Prithvi is one among the Panca Mahabhutas. Purusha comprises of six dhatus i.e Panca Mahabhutas and Atma is considered as Chikitsa Purusha. So, that Prithvi which is one among the Panca Mahabhutas is important.

**II. PRITHVI MAHABHUTA:-**

- In the Tatwa parampara and in the serial of evolution process, Prithvi is the last one and Sthula Tama dravya (Gross element).
- Susruta states that Prithvi is abundant in Tamo Guna<sup>3</sup>. Because of Tamo Guna, Prithvi is Sthula Tama, most heavy (Atyanata Gurutva) and it covers all the other objects (Avarana).
- According to Tarka Samgraha, “Tatra gandhavati Prithvi” Of the substances, Prithvi is that which has Gandha (as it’s inherent) quality.
- According to Vaisesika darshana, the substance containing the qualities of Rupa, Rasa, Gandha and Sparsha is called Prithvi Mahabhuta.

**III. DIVISIONS (PRITHVI BHEDA)<sup>4</sup>:-**

According to Tarka Samgraha, Prithvi Mahabhuta is of two types i.e. Nitya and Anitya. The paramanus of Nitya Prithvi are very minute and they are in Karana rupa. Anitya Prithvi is a gross element and it is born out of combination of the Prithvi paramanus. Hence it is Karya rupa. This Anitya Rupa Sthula Prithvi is present in Ghata (pot), Pata (cloth) etc.

The Prithvi is further classified into 3 types, (1) Sarira sanjnaka (2) Indriya sanjnaka and (3) Visaya sanjnaka.

**Sarira Sanjnaka** – The body of human beings, animals, birds and other creatures comes under this category. These are formed through Prithvi tatwa, hence it is known as Sarira sanjnaka or Parthiva Sarira. Atma experiences the Sukha and Dukha through the medium of this body only. Hence this body is called as Bhogayatana to Atma.

**Indriya Sanjnaka** – The sense organ through which the attribute or Guna of Prithvi is perceived is known as Indriya sanjnaka. The Ghranendriya which exists in Nasantarabhaga and perceives the Gandha Jnana is called as Indriya Sanjnaka.

**Visaya Sanjnaka** – The earthy objects are like clay, stone and such other things.

**IV. GUNAS or ATTRIBUTES OF PRITHVI –**

Prithvi Mahabhuta has 14 Gunas as per Prasastapada. They are Rupa, Rasa, Gandha, Sparsa, Sankhya, Parimana, Prthaktva, Samyoga, Vibhaga, Paratva, Aparatva, Gurutva, Dravatva and Samskara<sup>5</sup>.

**Gandha** – Odour is the quality perceived by the olfactory organ. It is of two fold; Surabhi (fragrant) and Asurabhi (foul). It subsists in earth alone.

**Gurutvam** – Heaviness is the non – intimate cause of the first downward motion in a falling substance. It resides in earth and water.

**PARTHIVA DRAVYA GUNAS:-****Table no: 1****Parthiva Dravya Gunas acc. to various Authors**

Charaka (Ch.Su.26/11)	Susruta (Su.Su.41/3)	Astanga Hrudaya (A.H.Su.9/5)	Astanga Sangraha (A.S.Su.17/4)
Guru	Guru	Guru	Guru
Sthula	Sthula	Sthula	Sthula
Sthira	Sthira	Sthira	Sthira
Manda	Manda	-	Manda
Katina	Katina	-	Katina
Visada	-	-	Visada
Sandra	Sandra	-	Sandra
Khara	-	-	-
Gandha	Gandha Ishat Kashayam Prayasho madhuram	Gandha	Gandha

**PARTHIVA DRAVYA KARMAS:-**

- They promote Sthairya, Bala, Gaurava, Sanghata, Upachaya, have tendency of moving downward especially<sup>6</sup>.

**ASADHARANA GUNAS (OR) ATMA RUPA LAXANA OF PRITHVI MAHABHUTA<sup>7</sup>:-**

- Prithvi is characterized by Kharatva (roughness).

**PRITHVI MAHABHUTA SARIRA KARA BHAVAS<sup>8</sup>:-**

- Properties of Parthiva substances (predominant of Prithvi bhuta) are Gandha (smell), Gandhendriya (organ of smell i.e nose), Sarva murta samuha (all things having form i.e size and shape), Guruta (heaviness) etc.

**V. IMPORTANCE OF PRITHVI MAHABHUTA –**

- Prithvi is one among the six basic constituents of Purusha. Purusha is nothing but the combination of the six dhatus i.e. Prithvi, Jala, Tejas, Vayu, Akasha and Brahman the manifested one<sup>9</sup>.
- In the person Prithvi is represented by Murti (form) “Purushasya prithvi murtih”<sup>10</sup>.
- Mahabhuta and Dosa Sambandha<sup>11</sup> –
  - Kapha dosa – Prithvi and Ap Mahabhutas
- Ap and Prithvi Mahabhuta constitute the substratum for the origin of Rasa (taste)<sup>12</sup>.
- Mahabhuta and Rasa Sambandha<sup>13</sup>–
  - Madhura rasa – Prithvi + Jala
  - Amla rasa – Prithvi + Agni
  - Kashaya rasa – Vayu + Prithvi
- Madhura, Amla and Kashaya rasas have predominance of Prithvi Mahabhuta.
- Mahabhuta and Karma Sambandha<sup>14</sup> –
  - Virechana drugs possess qualities of Prithvi and Ambu bhutas predominantly.
  - Drugs predominant of qualities of Prithvi and Ambu are Brmhana.
- Dosha Prashamana<sup>15</sup> –
  - Prithvi, Teja and Jala Mahabhuta pacify Vata dosa.
  - Prithvi, Jala and Vayu Mahabhuta pacify Pitta dosa.
- Mahabhuta and Virya Sambandha<sup>16</sup> –
  - Snigdha is from the predominance of Prithvi and Ap bhutas.
  - Vaisadya is due to the predominance of qualities of Prithvi and Vayu bhutas.
- The entities derived from Prithvi are Gandha (smell), Ghrana (olfactory organ), Gaurava (heaviness), Sthairya (stability) and Murti (hardness of body parts)<sup>17</sup>.
- The Olfactory faculty are specially dominated by Prithvi Mahabhuta “Ghrane kshtih”<sup>18</sup>.
- In Garbhutpatti, Prithvi is one of the important factor<sup>19</sup>.
- During Garbha utpatti, Prithvi bhuta plays an important role as “Prithvi samhanti” which means Prithvi bhuta hardens it<sup>20</sup>.
- In determining the complexion of progeny, Predominant Prithvi and Vayu Mahabhutas produces Krishna varna (dark complexion)<sup>21</sup>.
- Bhautika Prakrti – Prakrti arise from Prithvi characterized with strong and big body and capacity of withstanding troubles<sup>22</sup>.
- In the Netrabudbuda (eyeball), pala (muscles of the eye) are made of bhuva (Prithvi bhuta)<sup>23</sup>.
- Prithvi and Ambu bhutas are predominant of tamoguna and the odour of Rakta is made up of these bhutas<sup>24</sup>.
- Parthivagni acts on Parthiva Amsha of Ahara and nourishes Parthiva dravya<sup>25</sup>.
- Because of action of Asthi dhatvagni on the aggregation of Prithvi, Agni and Anila, Kharatva (roughness) is attained during the formation of the Asthi<sup>26</sup>.

## VI. DISCUSSION

- The fundamental theory of Ayurveda is based on Panca Mahabhuta Siddhanta.
- All the Karya dravyas of the universe are produced from Panca Mahabhutas and so in Ayurveda, Karya dravyas are mostly deals with treatment being the emphasizes as these are more important in treatment.
- The Prime aim of Ayurveda is “Swasthasya swasthya raksana, Aturasya vikara prasamana”, is fulfilled through Panca Mahabhutas.
- The treatment is given to the living body (Sarira) in other words all parts of the body are Pancabhoutika. The Dravyas used for the treatment are also Pancabhoutika. The purpose of the Ayurvedic treatment cannot be achieved if the Sarira and Aushadhas are not Pancabhoutika.
- The body stands on the physical base of Panca Mahabhutas. It thrills with action prompted by Dosa, Dhātu and Malas<sup>27</sup>.
- There is no substance in this world, which is not Ausadha (medicine) i.e. every substance is medicine in appropriate selection through with the Yukti (application) and Artha (utility).
- Prithvi Mahabhuta has an important role in the formation, giving a particular shape and growth of the body.
- Organs which are Sthula, Sthira, Guru, Khara and Katina like Nakha, Asthi, Danti, Mamsa, Twak, Kesha, Smasru etc are dominated by Prithvi Mahabhuta<sup>28</sup>.
- Heavy food articles which are predominant of Prithvi and Ap Mahabhutas, being by nature, suppressors of appetite are exceedingly harmful if taken in excess unless there is a strong power of digestion.
- Various Graha rogas, Arista Gandhas and Vrana Gandhas are due to the predominance of Prithvi Mahabhuta.
- Thus Prithvi Mahabhuta plays a very important role in the medical science.

## VII. CONCLUSION

- The Human body is considered to be Pancabhautik, as it is and embodiment of universe and all that is available in universe must be presented in the body.
- The Development and Maintenance of the body is done through the diets etc. which are also Pancabhautik in nature.
- The Dietic imbalance is the main cause in the occurrence of any disease, which can be cured only by the proper utilization of dietetic regimen.
- The Equipments used in the treatment such as different types of pots, mortars, knife, thread etc. are the manifestation of Prithvi Mahabhuta.
- The Diagnostic equipments are also made from this Prithvi Mahabhuta, plays an important role in the treatment by means of proper diagnosis.

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