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A REVIEW ON UNIQUE CONCEPT OF AYURVEDA “PURUSHA” AND ITS CLINICAL IMPORTANCE

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Abstract

The ayurveda term *Purusha* mainly described for man or holistic human being, this word further elaborated based on the constitution of individual. Ayurveda mentioned term *Purusha* for *Chetana Dhatu* or *Atma*. The constitutional elements of body gives different types of *Purusha* thereby diversified *Prakriti* of human beings. The soul or life elements related to *Purusha* make us live and ignite flame of life through the circulation of *Prana*. This life element or soul (*Purusha*) leaves us at the time of death. The term *Purusha* forms by the combination of two different words; *Pura* and *Shayana*, here *Pura* referred for body and *Shayana* used for residing, means elements or soul or internal strength that resides in human body. *Purusha* also called as *Chetana Dhatu* since it brings life (*Chetana*) in elements (*Dhatu*). This article presents an Ayurveda review on concept of “*Purusha*” and its clinical importance.

Key-Words: *Ayurveda, Purusha, Dhatu, Elements, Soul*

Introduction

Purusha means strength that resides in body, this term also used for composite of soul, psyche and senses. *Charaka Samhita* mainly considered term *Purusha* for individual person, *Atma*, consciousness and *Rashipurusha* [1-4]. The concept of *Purusha* also described on the basis of *Darshanas* as follows:

- ❖ *Sankhya* and *Yoga Darshan* for constituents of *Purusha*.
- ❖ *Panchvimshati Dhatawatamaka Purusha* includes concept of *Atma* and *Mana*.
- ❖ *Vaisheshika* and *Nyaya Darshana* includes physical entity and logics.

The other concept of *Purusha* is *Shad Dhatwatmaka Purusha* that talk about *Panchmahabhutas* and *Atma*. *Vedanta* and *Mimansa* deals about rituals of *Vedas* and *Brahma* while *Ekdhatuja Purusha* deals about *Atma*.

TYPES OF PURUSHA:

1. *Eka Dhatwatmaka Purusha*
2. *Shad Dhatwatmaka Purusha*
3. *Chaturvimshati Dhatawatamka Purusha*

Ekadhatwatmaka Purusha:

This concept talk about the single element of *Purusha* that is *Chetana dhatu* (life element), here *Chetana dhatu* resides in *Pura* i.e. *Shareera* that ignite flame of life and only one element considered responsible for existence therefore this concept considered as *Ekadhatwatmaka purusha*.

Shad Dhatwatmaka Purusha:

Purusha comprises of six *Dhatus* (elements) that includes five *Mahabhutas* and consciousness, here *Mahabhuta* remain present in their subtle form. *Atma* as imperishable and *Panchabhautik* elements as perishable constituents mainly forms composition of *Purusha*. This combination mutually supports each other during life tenure and at the end (time of death) consciousness disintegrates and merges with five elements and attains *Moksha*. The compositional elements of *Shad-dhatuka Purusha* are depicted in **Figure 1**.

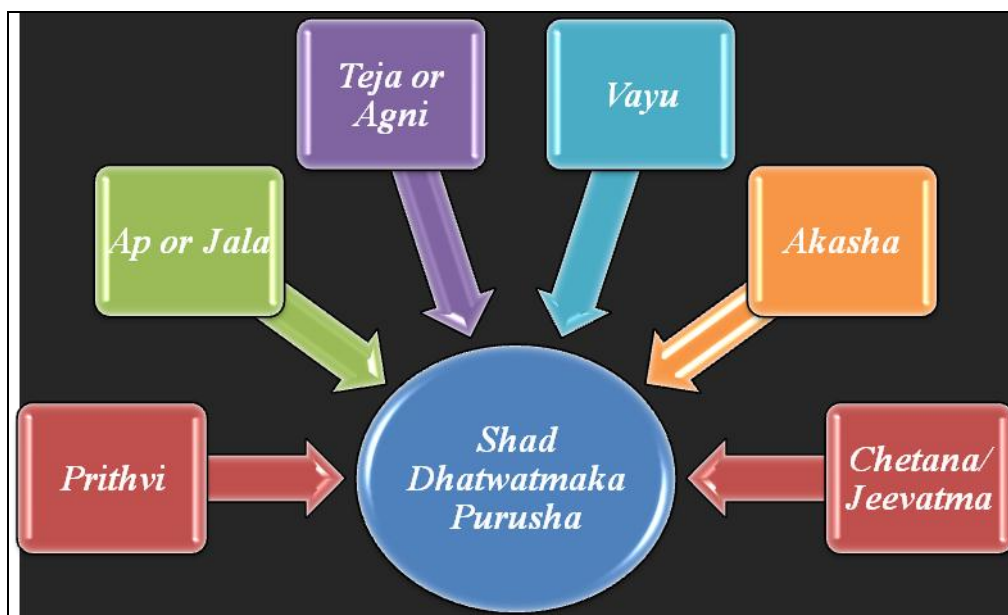


Figure 1: Constituents of *Shad Dhatwatmaka Purusha*

As mentioned above except *Chetana/ Jeevatma* other constituents are *Pancha Mahabhootas* of nature which also considered inert elements of body. Here *Atma* or soul or *Chetana/ Jeevatma* bring life into the inert elements [4-7].

Chaturvimshati Dhatwatamka Purusha

Purusha comprises of twenty four *Dhatu* (constituents) including mind, sensory organs, motor organs, five objects of sense organs, *Prakriti* (constituents of *Dhatu* and *Mahabhuta*), *Ahamkara*, *Mahan* and *Avyakta* (primordial element).

This concept also used for *Rashi purusha* that has 24 *Tatvas* amongst them 8 are eight primordial substances (*Ashta Prakritis*) while sixteen derivatives of primordial substances (*Shodasha Vikritis*) forms *Chaturvimshati Dhatwatamka Purusha*.

The *Prakriti* as primordial substance contributes towards the composition of *Chaturvimshati Dhatwatamka Purusha*, *Prakriti* are eight in number i.e. *Avyakta*, *Mahan*, *Ahankara*, *Shabda tanmatra*, *Sparsha Tanmatra*, *Rupa Tanmatra*, *Rasa Tanmatra* and *Gandha Tanmatra*.

Avyakta Prakriti referred for miniature universe, here humankind is representing as miniature of the universe. *Mahan Prakriti* referred for cosmic intelligence,

Ahankara referred for egoism, *Shabda tanmatra* referred for root of sound as sensation, *Sparsha Tanmatra* referred for root of touch sensation, *Rupa Tanmatra* referred for root of vision sensation, *Rasa Tanmatra* referred for root of taste sensation and *Gandha Tanmatra* referred for root of smell sensation. The *Shabda* to *Gandha Tanmatra* represents subjects of sense organs which are collectively known as *Pancha Tanmatras* and these also contributed significantly towards the composition of *Purusha*.

The derivatives of the above mentioned *Prakriti* (primordial substance) are as follows:

1. *Shabda indriya* (sense organ of hearing i.e.; ear)
2. *Sparshana Indriya* (sense organ of touch; skin)
3. *Rupa indriya* (sense organ of vision; eye)
4. *Rasana indriya* (sense organ of taste like tongue)
5. *Gandha indriya* (sense organ of smell; nose)
6. *Vak indriya* (motor organ of speech)
7. *Pani indriya* (motor organ of hands)
8. *Pada indriya* (motor organ of motion like foot)
9. *Payu indriya* (organ of excretion & excretory system)
10. *Upastha indriya* (sexual organs)
11. *Ubhaya Indriya* (mind as sensory and motor organ)
12. *Prithvi Mahabhuta* (Earth element)
13. *Ap or Jala Mahabhuta* (Water element)
14. *Tejas or Agni Mahabhuta* (Fire element)
15. *Vayu Mahabhuta* (Wind element)
16. *Akasha Mahabhuta* (Sky or Ether or Space element)

The *Purusha* has got properties of life such as *Srota* (one who can hears), *Ganta* (one who can walks), *Sparsha* (one who can touches), *Ghrata* (one who can smells), *Rasaita* (one

who can tastes), *Manta* (one who can thinks), *Kshetragna* (one who can knows the body) and *Chetaita* (one who possess motivating force of life), etc. According to *Charaka*, *Purusha* experiences existences of light and darkness, knowledge and action, truth and untruth, good and evil, pleasure and pain, birth and death, movement and rest, etc [4-6].

Purusha is *Sakshi* of all activities of the body. Soul or *Ayu* or *Prana* are living components of *Purusha* resides in subtle forms. “*Ayu*” goes continuously without any break, throughout the life period. The *Ayu* referred for combination of *Shareera*, *Indriyas*, *Satwa* and *Atma*. *Ayu* as *Dhaari* prevents body from decomposition and putrifaction, *Ayu* as *Jeevitham* keeps body alive, *Ayu* as *Nithyaga* serves as substratum of body and *Ayu* as *Anubandha* transmigrates from one body to other. *Prana* gives life energy to the *Purusha*; *Prana* is structural frame of life which enables life activities as continuous process. *Prana* is combination of *Doshas* of body, *Gunas* of mind along with *Indriyas* and *Atma* [6-11]. The subtle principles of *Prana* are as follows:

- ❖ ***Agni*** as principle of transformation. It also represents *Dhatwagnis*.
- ❖ ***Soma*** as principle of support and construction, it is considered energy of supporting substances like *Shleshma*, *Shukra* and *Rasa*, etc.
- ❖ ***Vayu*** is principle of activating force in body, control movement and represented by *Vata* or *Vayu* which may be different types i.e.; *Prana*, *Samana*, *Udana*, *Vyana* and *Apana Vayus*.
- ❖ ***Satwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*** are qualities of the mind (*Manas*).
- ❖ ***Pancha indriyas***; five sense organs of body.

Conclusion

The word *Purusha* referred to holistic human being with soul, senses and psychic constitution. *Atma* gives life to the body; it acts like element of consciousness (*Chetana dhatu*) which is very important for the creation of life. Ayurveda described that *Rashipurusha* as complete frame of life that experiences all things of life. The life span depends on coordination of *Daiva* and *Purushakara*. *Daiva* means divine or pre-determined destiny depends on action of previous life and *Purushakara* means human effort/*Karma* in present life. The *Purusha* free from *Rajas* and *Tamas* attain salvation. Thus ideal life or

characteristics of human being depends upon current action as well as *Karma* of previous life. One who knows concept of *Purusha* also knows about own internal strength. The union of *Prakriti* and *Purusha* forms universe, *Prakriti* means basic cosmic material that is also considered root of all beings, and *Purusha* is spirit or conscious energy that governs life. The *Purusha* combines with *Prakriti* for the creation of world; both these join together to form matter that we perceive. There are various types of *Purusha* based on compositional components such as; *Eka Dhatwatmaka Purusha*, *Shad Dhatwatmaka Purusha* and *Chaturvimshati Dhatwatamka Purusha*. Five basic elements (*Mahabhutas*), *Atma* as *Chetana dhatu* and *Prakriti*, etc. are major constitutional components of different *Purusha*.

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