

THE CORE PRINCIPLE OF BHUTA AND AS A CAUSATIVE FACTOR IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda, the term "Bhuta" can be quite confusing because it appears in many references and is interpreted differently in each context. When I started working on my thesis- A CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF BHUTABHISANGAJA AND AUPSARGIKA VYADHI W.S.R. TO COVID-19 by Dr. Nippu Kumari Sharma, it was essential to first understand what Bhuta means and how it is referenced in Ayurveda. Only then could I explore its potential correlation with modern viruses or bacteria. Therefore, here my study extensively delved into the intricacies of Bhuta to clarify its meaning and significance.

The term "Bhuta" is primarily used in seven references 1. Sukshma Bhuta/Tanmatra, 2. Existence, 3. In reference to four types of *Yonis*, 4. In the context of living beings, 5. As a quality i.e. Bhutaguna - *Shabda*, *Sparsha*, *Rupa*, *Rasa*, 6. *Bhutaadi Ahankara i.e avayakt mahan ahankaar*, 7. Possession by *Bhuta (Bhutaabhisanga)*, *Bhuta* as a type

of *Pishacha* include *Devas*, *Asuras*, *Gandharvas*, *Yakshas*, *Rakshasa*, *Pitris*, *Pishachas*, *Nagas*, *Graha*.

The *Grahas* or *Bhuta* nature is to consume blood, fat, and flesh. They are inherently carnivorous and described as "*Nishavihari*". They are active and wander during the night. They are powerful, and based on their behavior, upon finding suitable humans, they possess or influence them.

In these *Bhuta*, the eight types of accomplishments reside, both in specific and aggregate forms, depending on their respective influences. Some *Bhuta* may possess two, three, or four of these qualities partially, while some *Bhuta* might have all eight qualities in their entirety.

According to *Amarakosha*, the general meaning of the word "*Bhuta*" is that which has come into existence. Based on this, anything created or formed, excluding the *Shasvat Mula Tatva*, is referred to as "*Bhuta*." In this sequence, everything which is created from *Purusha* and *Avayakta Mula prakriti* is also categorized as "*Bhuta*", including all elements (*Mahat aadi*) and the *Vyakt prakriti*.

KEYWORDS: *Bhuta*, *Bhutabhisangaja*, Bacteria, *Graha*, Virus.

INTRODUCTION

Etymology of the word *Bhuta*

✧ भूतः - पुं० - भू + कर्त्तरि क्तः - देवयोनिविशेषः^[1]

✧ भूतः - नपुं० - प्राणी

Synonyms of *Bhuta*^[2]

देवयोनिः, अप्सरस्, पक्ष, रक्ष, गन्धर्व, पिशाच, गुहाक, सिद्ध,

अतीतः, काल, प्राणी, जन्तु चेतन, शरीरन्, मनुष्येतरः ।

Bhuta word has been used in different References in Ayurveda these are

1. The word "*Bhuta*" also has a synonym "*Bhu*". Derived from the root "*Bhu-Sattayam*", its meaning translates to "existence". Anything that has an existence or a presence be it visible, invisible, material, immaterial, living, or non-living, is encompassed within the realm of "*Bhuta*".
2. A classification of "*Bhuta*" is made in reference to the four types of *Yonis* that are responsible for the production of creatures. These are *Jarayuja*, *Andaja*, *Swedaja*, and *Udbhid*.^[3]
3. *Acharya Charaka* has also used the word "*Bhuta*" in the context of living beings. "सुखार्था सर्वभूतानां " Which has been explicitly written by *Chakrapani*. "सुखार्था सर्वप्राणिनां" । (Ch.su.8)

4. *Acharya Charaka*, while describing *Shabda*, *Sparsha*, *Rupa*, *Rasa*, and *Gandha* as qualities, has used the term *Bhuta* "भूतगुणाः" (Ch.su 2/56)
5. The description of the *Bhutaadi Ahankara* is given in *Trividh Ahankara*.^[4]
6. The term "*Bhuta*" has been used in *Charaka Sutra* 7 by *Chakrapani* in the context of understanding the time of possession or entry by *Bhuta* (*Bhutaabhisanga*), so that protection from such *Bhuta* can be ensured.^[5]
7. In the 31st chapter, verse 31 of the "*Sutrasthana*" of *Acharya Sushruta*, Dal., while writing a commentary, has referred to "*Bhuta*" as a type of *Pishacha*. "भूताः पिशाचभेदाः"
Acharya Charaka described it under the title of "*Bhuta Vidya*". (*Chkrapani* - भूतानां राक्षसादीनां ज्ञानार्था प्रशामर्था च विद्या भूतविद्या ।) *Acharya Sushruta* described it under the name "*Bhuta Vidya*", while *Acharya Vagbhata* termed it as "*Graha Vidya*". (Ch.su.30/28), (Su.su.1), (A.h.su. 1/4)
8. *Acharya Sushruta*, while providing an elaborate definition, mentions that under the realm of "*Bhuta Vidya*," treatment and pacifying rituals are described for patients influenced or afflicted by various celestial and otherworldly beings. These beings include *Devas*, *Asuras*, *Gandharvas*, *Yakshas*, *Rakshasa*, *Pitris*, *Pishachas*, *Nagas*, *Graha*, and others. To treat and pacify patients influenced by these beings, rituals such as *Shanti-path*, *Bali-pradan*, *Havan*, and other pacifying treatments are described.^[6]

AIMS AND OBJECTIVE

- Detail study and understanding of *Bhuta*
- To list and understand all references in which *Bhuta* is used in *Ayurveda*
- To understand how *Bhuta* term has shifted its meaning with different reference

METHODOLOGY

- All the available data and references about *Bhuta* are comprehensively studied
- All the available data about *Graha*, *Bhutaabhisangaja*, *Aupsargika vyadhi*, and *Krimi* are comprehensively studied.
- Interpretation of the role of *Bhuta* as a causative factor in *Ayurveda*

DISCUSSION

A. Nature of *Bhuta* or *Graha*

The *Grahas* nature is to consume blood, fat, and flesh. They are inherently carnivorous. They are described as "*Nishavihari*," they are active and wander during the night. They are powerful, and based on their behavior, upon finding suitable humans, they possess or influence them.^[7]

The followers acquire the qualities of divinity due to their association with the essence of the deities. Therefore, their worship and rituals are performed in the same manner as those for the deities. Now, a question arises: When these followers, due to their association with the essence of the deities, qualities, and attributes similar to the deities, why do they consume blood and flesh? Especially when the *Devas* don't consume such things.^[8]

The answer is that these *Bhuta* or entities are descendants of the daughters of the demon patriarch, *Nirriti*. Thus, their inherent nature to consume blood, flesh, etc., is passed down through generations. Indicating that the origin of these followers is not directly from the deities, but through a lineage.^[9]

These entities are described as being dependent by nature because they always rely on humans for their sustenance and activities, who have deviated from the path of truth, purity, and proper conduct.^[10]

Acharya Dalhana has commented about the naming of these celestial entities and their assistants as '*Graha*'. He said that it is the nature of these deities to seize humans, and hence they are termed '*Graha*'. A prominent characteristic of these *Bhuta* is to affect or influence humans.^[11]

B. Specific characteristics and qualities of *Bhuta*

In these *Bhuta*, the eight types of accomplishments reside, both in specific and aggregate forms, depending on their respective influences. This means that some *Bhuta* may possess two, three, or four of these qualities partially, while some *Bhuta* might have all eight qualities in their entirety.^[12]

- I. *Anima* - The ability to minimize oneself to the size of an atom as per one's will.
- II. *Laghima* - The power to become weightless or incredibly light at will.
- III. *Mahima* - The capability to enlarge or magnify oneself to a vast form at will.

IV. *Garima* - The ability to attain immense weight or heaviness at one's discretion.

V. *Prapti*- The power to obtain or acquire any object as per one's desire.

VI. *Prakamya* - To have unrestricted desires.

VII. *Ishitva*- To be endowed with administrative or governing powers.

VIII. *Vashitva* - To have a remarkable ability to control or dominate.

These eight supernatural abilities are never used by the celestial entities to afflict or possess humans. As mentioned earlier, their followers, who acquire these qualities through association, tend to influence humans based on their inherent nature.

C. *Bhuta utpattikarma*

According to the *Amarakosha*, the general meaning of the word "*Bhuta*" is that which has come into existence. Based on this, anything created or formed, excluding the *Shasvat Mula Tatva*, is referred to as "*Bhuta*." In this sequence, everything which is created from *Purusha* and *Avayakta Mula prakriti* is also categorized as "*Bhuta*", including all elements (*Mahat aadi*) and the *Vyakt prakriti*. सर्वभूतानां कारणमकारणंसम्भवहेतुरव्यक्तं नाम ||

Su.sha.1/3||

From that '*Avyakta*' (Unmanifest) emerges the '*Mahattattva*' (the Great Element or Cosmic Intellect). This '*Mahattattva*' possesses the three qualities or *gunas*, namely '*Sattva*', '*Rajas*', and '*Tamas*'. From this '*Mahattattva*' arises the '*Ahamkara*', and it too is of three types, characterized by the aforementioned qualities: *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*.

The '*Ahamkara*' is of three types: '*Vaikarik*', '*Taijas*', and '*Bhutaadi*'. Among these '*Ahamkaras*', with the assistance of the '*Taijas Ahamkara*', eleven '*Indriyas*' emerge from the '*Vaikarik Ahamkara*'.^[13]

The *Acharya*, while explaining the eleven senses, states that:

- Sensory organs (*Jnanaendriyas*) are - (1) Ear, (2) Skin, (3) Eye, (4) Tongue, (5) Nose.
- Motor organs (*Karmaendriyas*) are - (6) Speech, (7) Hand, (8) Reproductive organ, (9) Anus, (10) Feet.
- The mind - is both a sensory and motor organ.

With the assistance of the *Tejas Ahamkara*, the five *Tanmatras* are derived from the *Bhutaadi*. These five *Tanmatras* are of the nature of *Bhutaadi Ahamkara*. Namely, (1)

Shabda Tanmatra (sound), (2) *Sparsha Tanmatra* (touch), (3) *Rupa Tanmatra* (form or sight), (4) *Rasa Tanmatra* (taste), and (5) *Gandha Tanmatra* (smell).^[14]

The specific qualities of these *Tanmatras* are sound (*Shabda*), touch (*Sparsha*), form (*Rupa*), taste (*Rasa*), and smell (*Gandha*). From these, the elements air (*Vayu*), fire (*Agni*), water (*Jala*), and earth (*Prithvi*) are produced.

a) *Ativahik Purush /Sukshma Sharira /Linga Sharira*

The Indian philosophical understanding is that the '*Linga Sharira*' (subtle body) originated in ancient times, the primordial period. Its origin from the '*Pradhan*' (primary source) is distinct, implying each '*Linga Sharira*' originated independently. This '*Linga Sharira*' is attached and specific. The subtle body consists of eighteen elements, which include '*Mahattatva*', '*Ahankara*', the mind, ten senses, and the five '*Tanmatras*'. This body needs a physical body to experience pleasures and pains. It is capable of experiencing without the conjunction of the physical body. Hence, after death, this '*Linga Sharira*' keeps wandering with the body's components. Just like a painting doesn't exist without a base, and a shadow doesn't exist without a tree, similarly, the '*Linga Sharira*' cannot exist without the physical body.^[15]

In Ayurveda, *Bhuta* has been accepted as the cause of various diseases. They are as follows

1) *Bhuta* in the form of *Aagantuka Karanrup*

Bhuta is mentioned as a causes of exogenous diseases there's mention of '*Bhuta-Abhishanga*' and '*Bhuta-Upasarga*'. It is said that these *Bhuta* cause the onset of diseases due to *Pragayaapradh*.^[16]

According to Acharya Chakarpani "*Aagantuka*" implies that the diseases arise from *Bhuta*, poison, *Vaat*-related disorders, and other mental illnesses.

Here *Bhuta* are various subtle creatures, *Graha* afflictions, etc.^[17]

2) *Bhuta* and Fever

Vishama Jwara is caused by *Bhutabhisanga*, an association with *Bhuta*.^[18]

The symptoms of fever arising from '*Bhuta Abhishanga*' (affliction by *Bhuta*) are similar to the symptoms caused by *Bhuta*.^[19]

Acharya Sushruta has described two primary symptoms of fever due to '*Bhuta Abhishanga*' (affliction by *Bhuta*) as intermittent laughing and crying. Along with this, he also mentioned that apart from laughing and crying, other symptoms indicative of the presence of the afflicting *Bhuta* also manifest.

In fevers caused by *Bhuta*, one should follow the protocols mentioned in '*Bhuta Vidya*' such as binding with a rope, invoking the *Bhuta* (by reading *Mantras*), and pacifying the fever through rituals and worship.

3) *Bhutaopasarga in Vranavastha*

Acharya Sushruta has described the occurrence of disturbances caused by these *Bhuta* or *Graha* in patients with wounds or the post-operative stage of surgical procedures. He advises that the patient with wounds or those in the post-operative stage should always keep their wounds clean, cover them with white cloth, trim nails, and hair regularly, and show respect to *Brahmins*, deities, and revered individuals. Additionally, they should engage in peaceful activities through prayers to deities for continued tranquility.

Here, the *Acharya* poses a question: Why should all these instructions be followed? In response, it's stated that the attendants of Lord *Pashupati*, *Kubera*, and *Kumar*, who are demons, engage in violent activities and revelries, possessing immense power. They are incredibly brave. By their nature, they always roam, engaging in violent acts. In this way, they approach the bed of a patient with a wound or someone in a post-surgical state of the wound. Due to their affinity for blood and flesh, they prey on the wounded patient. These demons are particularly attracted to the scent emanating from the patient's wound.^[20]

4) *Ojaaskhaya and Bhuta*

Acharya Charaka has considered "*Bhutaopghaat*" as one of the reasons for "*Ojaaskshaya*" along with other reasons.^[21]

Acharya Chakrapani Datta has commented on "*Bhutaopghaat*" stating that *Bhuta* and *Pishacha* can harm the "*Oja*" of an individual. It's a well-known fact that physical and mental capabilities in the body are due to this "*Oja*". *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned that the nocturnal entities (like *Bhuta* and *Pishacha*) who consume "*Oja*" don't find the human body desirable or preferred as food. This implies that these entities might feed on the vital energy or "*Oja*" of the body.^[22]

5) Psychics and *Bhuta*

Under the domain of "*Bhutavidya*" mental disorders are also considered. In addition to these, *Acharya Vagbhatta* has mentioned that various psychological disturbances arise due to the influence of these *Graha*.

“तत्रावलोकयन्तो जनयन्ति मनोविकारं सुरासुरग्रहाः ।” (A.s.u. 7/40)

6) *Arisht evam Bhuta*

Acharya Sushruta has stated that those individuals or patients who are near death are always surrounded by entities like *Bhuta*, *Preta*, and *Rakshasaadi* that wish to harm them. When any treatment or medicine is administered to such patients, this *Bhuta-Pretaadi* destroys the potency of those medicines. The therapeutic effectiveness of the medicines is neutralized by these *Bhuta*. Consequently, the patient succumbs to death.^[23]

7) *Devabalapravritta Roga and Bhuta*^[24]

Acharya Sushruta has categorized all diseases into seven groups. One of these categories pertains to illnesses that arise due to divine influence, termed "*Devabalapravritta*" diseases. About the causes of these *Devabalapravritta* diseases, *Acharya* has presented three main reasons:

- ✦ *Devabalpravrita* or *Devadrohadabhishapta*- Diseases that arise from offending deities or due to curses from them.
- ✦ *Atharvankrit*- Diseases that originate from causes mentioned in the *Atharva Veda* or due to certain specific rituals and chants.
- ✦ *Upsargaja*- Diseases caused by *Bhutaadi*.

For the *Devabalapravritta* diseases, it has been stated that they originate in two primary ways:

I. *Vidyudshanikrit* - This refers to diseases or harm caused due to the direct strike of lightning or related phenomena or it also includes diseases or problems arising from the wrath of *Graha* like *Shani*.

II. *Pishachaadikrit* - Caused by *Bhuta* or *Pishacha* etc.

Again it can be divided into two types.

1. *Sansargja* - Such diseases are believed to be caused by prolonged association or contact with *Bhuta*, *Pishachaadi*. This doesn't mean physical contact, but rather an influence or presence that affects an individual over a period.
2. *Aakashmikashch* -This category includes conditions where an individual is suddenly afflicted or possessed by *Bhutaadi* entity, causing immediate harm or disease.

8) *Baalaroga and Bhuta*

The term '*Bhutaadi*' also encompasses '*Bala Grahas*'. In the *Agni Purana*, *Bhutavidyokta*, and *Bala Grahaokta* both types of *Graha* have been described together and it is clarified that among them, the *Navagraha* are '*Matrugraha*'. Therefore, '*Bhutavidya*' could include '*Bala Grahas*'. They afflict children; hence they are called '*Balagrahas*'.

A description of all *Graha* under the domain of '*Bhutavidya*' is given, which includes a description of *Graha* that afflicts both children and adults.

In the *Puranas*, two types of *Graha* are described:

- (i) *Vridhdha Graha*,
- (ii) *Bala Graha*.

Additionally, mention is made of the *Yuva Graha* as well.

All types of *Graha* were included under the domain of *Graha vigyan* or *Bhutavidya*. Apart from *Charaka*, almost all Ayurvedic experts have described *Baala Graha*, and these *Graha* have been a primary subject of *Kaumarbhritya*. The significance given to *Baala Graha* as a subject matter of *Kaumarbhritya* by *Acharya Sushruta* is noteworthy.

Ayurveda described *Bhuta* in two forms – *Baala Graha* and *Abaala Graha*. While commenting on the chapter titled "*Navagrahaakritivigyaaaniy-adhyaayam*" in *Sushruta Samhita*, *Acharya Dalhana* states that various *Graha*, which are described here, affect children up to the age of one year. It's also mentioned that the word "*Baal*" should be understood as implied in the term "*Navagrahaakritim*". In this way, *Acharya Dalhana* has referred to these nine *Graha* as *Baala Graha* and further mentions that the description of eight *Abaalagraha* is found under *Bhutaavidya* in the chapter titled "*Amanushopasargapratishedhiya*". So, according to *Acharya Dalhana*, there are two types of *Graha* – *Baala Graha* and *Abaala Graha*. Since *Kaumarbhritya* is an independent branch of

Ayurveda, the study of children affected by these *Graha* is covered under *Kaumarbhritya*, not under *Bhutavidya*.^[25]

CONCLUSION

In the *Atharvaveda*, the science of microorganisms, including bacteria and viruses, is described. This knowledge is also integrated into the *Ayurvedic* scriptures as one of the branches of the *Ashtanga Ayurveda*. However, over time, due to various reasons such as the vast number of microorganisms, the potential adverse effects of anti-microbial herbs on the human body, and the decreasing effectiveness of antimicrobial herbs in microorganisms, this branch gradually lost attention. Possibly, the emphasis shifted towards cleanliness, ethical conduct, rejuvenating herbs, and practices like *Pranayama* to enhance the body's resistance to diseases.

As a result of these factors, the Ayurvedic sages might have shifted their focus to areas like hygiene, *Rasayana* (rejuvenation), and practices that enhance the body's immunity, diverting attention from the study of microorganisms and their destruction. With time, the emphasis shifted toward lifestyle practices and preventive measures, and the study of antimicrobial herbs took a backseat.

In the 21st century, witnessing the threat of diseases like COVID-19, there is a responsibility to extensively study and research this branch of Ayurveda. Efforts should be made to develop Ayurvedic formulations based on the principles of *Bhuta Vidya* (knowledge of microorganisms) for the management of such diseases. It is crucial to explore and innovate *Bhutaghna* (microbial destruction) formulations in Ayurveda to address the challenges posed by modern infectious diseases.

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