

A. K. Bhattacharya

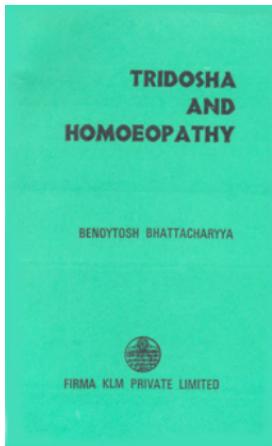
Tridosha and Homoeopathy

Reading excerpt

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of A. K. Bhattacharya

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CHAPTER ONE

THE THREE COSMIC ELEMENTS

The theory of Tridosha is one of the grandest, one of the noblest and one of the most sublime contributions of Ancient India to World Culture. Though its origin is almost lost in pre-history, although it is known and practised in India for more than 3000 years, its tenets are unknown in different parts of the world for understanding diseases and the diseased. The position of Tridosha is unique and supreme. Its practical value in diagnosis and treatment is excellent and without parallel, and it is required to be studied, grasped, realized, mastered and applied in all medical systems without exception, which claim to alleviate the physical sufferings of mankind. Man aspires to longevity for enjoying religion, wealth and happiness. Ayurveda deals with these. So he who desires these three should learn Ayurveda and follow its teachings,

The three cosmic elements of air, fire and water are the three components of Tridosha. These three cosmic elements are at the bottom of the macrocosm. Man being a small world or a microcosm is also composed of these three primeval elements. The mysterious workings of the three elements in the human body is explained in the system of Tridosha. In order to understand the meaning and significance of these three elements, they are required to be compared with the parallels in other sciences. Life is constituted of three elements—body, organ and soul. Due to its continuous flow it is called Ayu. It is perpetual, living and unbounded. Air, fire and water are the three main factors that make a healthy life. If they are in proper order, they give us good health, but if not, they ruin our body and mind. Air, Fire and Water are compared with the three main forces—The Sun, The Moon and The Air. As these three forces control the Earth, similarly our body is also controlled by these three forces.

In Ayurveda (Science of Life) the first element Vat (air) stands for the nerve force in the body and vital power. The second element Pit (fire) represents the circulatory system which imparts heat to the body necessary for its preservation. The third element Kaf (water) rules over all mucous surfaces of the body. These three elements must be in perfect equilibrium for the purpose of health.

In the language of the Unani system which is a disciple of the Indian science of medicine through Persia, the three elements are known as Hawa (air), Khun (fire) and Balgam (water). In the Unani system Hawa corresponds to Vat or Air, Khun to Pit or Fire and Balgam to Kaf or Water. In the medical systems of the world Unani stands next to the Indian system of medicine, Ayurveda. Unani is a perfect medical system advocating accurate pulse examination, excellent dietary and effective medicines. That Unani could develop so well is entirely due to the autocratic emperors and Nawabs who demanded from the Hakims (doctors) on pain of dire consequences quick relief without any kind of restriction on diet or bad habits. With Damocles' sword banging on their heads the Hakims had to develop a system full of sure medicines and accurate diagnosis.

In the language of philosophy the three primordial elements air, fire and water stand for the three Doshas—Vat, Pit and Kaf respectively. In philosophy the world is a macrocosm which is composed of the three basic elements of air, fire and water. Man being a part of the world is a small world or a microcosm and is composed of exactly the same elements as constitute the world. If there is heat in the outside world also becomes heated, and in winter when everything becomes cold man as a small world also becomes cold. The macrocosmic elements are present in the microcosm, and when they vary according to natural laws they cause variations in the equilibrium of the three elements in man.

In the language of modern nuclear physics these three basic elements are known differently as Neutron, Electron

and Proton. Here the element Neutron stands for the Vat element which splits up atoms into Electrons and Protons. When it joins with electrons *it* produces atomic heat, and by mixing with protons, the cold element, it produces atomic cold. Electron thus stands for Pit or fire while Proton is Kaf or water. The Vat element has wonderful mixing properties according to an ancient Indian view : 'Vat has high mixing qualities, and by mixing it helps the other two elements. When it joins with fire, it produces heat waves, but when it joins with water, it produces intense cold."

In ancient works it is said that the two elements, fire and water, are lame and cannot move. Only when they are driven by the element of air they shower like clouds.

In the language of mythology the three basic elements are expressed in terms of deities, namely, Bramha, Vishnu and Mahesvara. They are the famous Hindu Triad worshipped in Hindu temples of India. In mythology, Bramha with the red colour or the colour of blood stands for the element of fire which is red. Bramha is the creator even as Pit or heat in the body is responsible for creation. Vishnu with his blue complexion stands for air. The residence of air is in the space which is also of light blue colour. Vishnu is responsible for the preservation of the world even as air preserves life. Mehasvara with his white colour is the element of water or phlegm which is white. Mahesvara is the destroyer of the world even as cold kills by destroying heat.

The theory of Tridosha concerns itself with internal and external conditions, with the production or loss of equilibrium of the three elements in the human body. With Tridosha man is not merely a mass of bones, flesh, skin and chemicals, but a living organism with all parts and cells of the body vibrating with life. Tridosha, in fact, embraces the whole man with body, soul, sense-organs, mind and environs, and deals with the mysterious working of the three cosmic elements in the human organism. Tridosha is an all embracing theory which combines together all scientific facts

and empirical observations in relation to man in health and in disease. Tridosha is besides a standard which is required to be applied to all that is found in Nature as environs of man or with which man comes forcibly in contact. Tridosha is the crown of the Indian Medical Science, nothing can transcend the three elements which permeate the whole world. Everything in the world is a manifestation of Tridosha, and every little thing found in nature must have its Tridosha analysis before being put to human use. All names and forms must be traced to their basic elements before they can be of any use to the physician.

When the Tridosha method of analysis is applied to time factors, morning is water, noon is fire and afternoon is air. When the same standard is applied to seasons, spring represents water, autumn fire and the rains air. The three elements reach their highest aggravation point in these seasons. When the Tridosha method of criticism is applied to different ages, the group 1-16 come under water, 16-40 under fire and 40 and beyond under air. The 24 hours of the day and night also come under this classification. 6 to 10 is water, 10 to 2 fire and 2 to 6 air. This timing applies both to the day and night time. This timing gives a clear understanding as to the ailments of the patient during disease. Aggravations caused during particular times give an indication of the cause of the disease whether due to excess of water, fire or air. Similarly medicines having aggravations during these times in Homoeopathy can be taken to represent those of water, fire or air.

Under the predominance of one or the other of the three elements, each individual behaves differently. Through their behaviour an expert can recognize the elements predominant in the person according to Tridosha standards. For example air is fast and water is slow, and thus a person who talks fast, eats fast, and walks fast belongs to air, that is to say, he has an over-active nervous system, and he is subject to nervous diseases. A person on the other hand, who talks slow, eats slow and walks slow belongs to the elements of water. Such

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