



Review Article

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THE CONCEPT OF BHUMI DESHA: HEALTHY AND DISEASED PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Bhumi Desha refers to the natural inhabitant of an individual. It has a major role in examination of disease as well as a diseased person. In the present era extensive research throws light on the influence of Bhumi Desha in its inhabitants, as the study has been explored even up to the molecular level of a person. Even though its importance has been clearly specified in Pareekshyabhavas (factors to be examined), a thorough understanding of this concept in Swastha (healthy) and Vyaditha (diseased) perspective is inevitable in the present scenario. Thus Desha has to be analyzed in a diseased person in order to determine the Nidana (causative factors) of a disease and to decide Chikitsa (treatment) which is opposite to the qualities of the Desha, and in a healthy person it helps to excavate the wholesome Ahara and Vihara.

Keywords: Bhumidesha, Pareekshyabhavas, Vyadhi, Swastha.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a holistic science which aims at the overall well-being of an individual. This optimistic approach has its root from the fact; where the person is born and brought up. The same idea mandates that the nature of land has to be examined with a view to ascertain the specific features of an individual.¹ Desha forms one among the concept of Pareekshyabhavas (factors to be examined), which has to be tackled with utmost importance. Ascertainment of place of birth and growth of a diseased person provides a clear cut idea about the prognosis of the disease and thereby it helps in treatment protocol, in turn in a healthy individual it helps in excavating the susceptible Nidanas and thereby susceptibility of diseases. Thus it paves the way in fulfillment of “swasthasyaswasthyarakshanam” and “Aturasyavikaraprashamanam” which forms the prime goal of Ayurveda. The modification of present day life style in response to the external environment is the need of the hour as it is necessary to maintain the homeostasis of an individual and thereby better health. This article is thus, an attempt to review the concept of Bhumi Desha in relation to Vyadhi (disease) Nidana and Chikitsa and Swasthya (healthy) Ahara and Vihara.

Categorization of Desha

Desha refers to the natural inhabitant of an individual and it is of two kinds – Bhumi Desha (geographical land) and Deha Desha (anatomical land).² Geographical land is classified into three according to its particular features and ecological status as Jangala Desha (dry land) which is predominant of Vata, Anupa (marshy land) which is predominant of Kapha and Sadharana (normal Land) which has all the Doshas in normal condition.³

Jangala Desha

It is an arid area with thick evergreen forests, dry soil with full of rough and hard granites and gravels; where birds such as quail, francolin, green partridge etc. inhabits. Here the tract is almost like a desert with scanty vegetation and limited water resources. The common trees found in this Desha are Kadara (*Acacia* species), Khadira (*Acacia catechu*), Asana (*Terminalia tomentosa*), Ashvakarna (*Shorea dalbergioides*) etc. Due to extremely dry condition of the soil and natural arid environment, biosphere must be predominant with Agni. Vayu and Prithvi Mahabhootas in turn produce plants containing Kashaya, Katu and Tikta sap. Such places have the predominance of Vata along with Pitta and the people inhabiting have Sthira Katina Shareera (sturdy and hard body). The predominance of Vata Dosha influences the herbs, birds, animals and human beings and it is reflected in their prakruthi.⁴

Anupa Desha

It is a comparatively low place near the sea level with full of trees, coconut gardens etc and the place is surrounded by lakes and rivers with frequent cold winds. The atmosphere is very moist and herbs and bushes show a very good seasonal flowering tendency. Birds such as flamingo, ruddy goose, cranes, woodpeckers, cuckoos etc. richly inhabit the place. Here the land is green grassy and has clusters of reedy plants (Nala), Nelumbo species (Kumuda) and Calamusrotung (Vethasa). Strong storm like wind laden with heavy moisture keeps blowing. Rows of Hindala (*Phoenix paludosa*), Tamala (*Garcenia morella*), Kadali (musa species) and Narikela (*Cocos nucifera*) bordering the river side present a scenic way to the land. The forest land there appears beautiful with

assemblage of various types of trees and shrubs with blossoming young branches. Due to the moist nature of soil and influence of Prithvi and Ap Bhuthas the herbs, creepers and annuals flourishing in the area generally bear sap that tastes sweet or sour. The place tend to produce the predominance of Kapha Dosh and it is reflected in the inhabitants.⁵

Sadharana Desha

Normal land is having mixed characteristics of the above two. Here the soil is gray, red or black in colour and the place is neither too moist nor too dry; neither it has an abundance of rock particles or sand. The land is fertile sustaining all kinds of trees and crops. Here Dosh is generally maintained in a balanced state and it is reflected in the Prakruthi of inhabitants. In contemporary science, the study of land, its features and its inhabitants comes under the branch of Geography. Geography has its division as - Human Geography and Physical Geography.⁶ Physical Geography deals with the study of Geographical land. Based on Agro-Climatic Zones, geographical land is classified into dry zone; hilly zone and transition zone.⁷ Each Desha have an influence in the inhabitants of that particular area. This influence is mainly reflected in their physical attributes and pathological features. Thus it has a main role in determining the Prakruthi (innate constitution) of individual and in disease causation and in pathology of a disease. The various treatment protocols has to be adopted in due regard to the place in which a person is born and brought up. In a healthy person the diet and regimens conducive to Desha with respect to Prakruthi has to be adopted.

Geo-climatic factors with reference to Prakruthi

The study on the role of geo-climatic factors (Deshanupatini) on pathophysiological activities of the body is important to understand the state of Tridoshas in health and disease for proper diagnosis and treatment. Thus the energy template (Doshasthiti) termed Prakruthi has to be studied with special reference to the place in which an individual inhabit.⁸ Dry land is said to have the predominance of Vata-Pitta and the people inhabiting have sturdy and hard body, whereas marshy land have the predominance of Vata-Kapha and the people inhabiting have a tender body nature. In normal land having the predominance of all Doshas in equal proportion, the people are said to be sturdy, tender, endowed with strength, complexion and compactness in nature.⁹ Thus the Geo-Climatic factors play a major role in determining the Prakruthi of an individual and thereby it contribute to the unique phenotypic features of different geographic population.

Bhumi Desha in Vyadhi Nidana and Chikitsa

Bhumi Desha has an important role in determining the causative factors of a disease. As dry land is having the predominance of the humor Vata, this made the people more susceptible to diseases pertaining to Vata Dosh whereas in marshy land the humor predominant is Kapha,

thereby people are more susceptible to diseases related to Kapha Dosh. Thereby the understanding of Bhumi Desha in Pareekshyabhavas helps to tackle the possible Nidan of a disease, its prognosis and in turn aids in treatment aspects. If Jangala Desha inhabitants are resorted to Vata enhancing Aharas and Viharas leads them to the manifestation of Vata Vikaras. The Vata predominant Vikaras manifesting in this particular Desha becomes Krichrasadhya (difficult to cure) because of equivalent nature of Dushya, Desha and Prakruthi. Therefore the treatment protocol adopted to such diseases should be of opposite nature of the qualities of Desha (Desha vipareeta).¹⁰

Bhumi Desha in Swastha Ahara and Vihara

Study of geo-pathological factors is considered as an important factor for pathophysiological activities of the body. In Jangala Desha (arid land), Vata Dosh will be predominant and people inhabiting there are generally strong in built. The predominance of Vata Dosh influences the herbs, birds, animals and human beings and it is clearly reflected in their Prakruthi. In Anupa Desha (marshy land) there should be the predominance of Kapha Dosh and people inhabiting have tender body nature. In Sadharana Desha, Doshas are generally maintained in a balanced state and it is reflected in the Prakruthi of inhabitants.

The energy template – Doshasthithi (Prakruthi) is considered with special reference to geo-climatic factors (Deshanupatini). Understanding of Bhumi Desha as included in one among the Pareekshyabhavas, is essential to tackle the predisposition of diseases in an individual.¹¹ Among the three pillars of life, Ahara has its prime importance in maintaining the health of a healthy person. The acclimatization of a particular habitat is possible by adopting Ahara with opposite qualities pertaining to Desha, such as hot and unctuous substances in marshy land whereas cold and unctuous substances in dry land.¹² Adoption of diet and activities in due consideration to Desha helps in prevention of diseases in an individual. Excessive intake of sweet, sour and salty dishes and the habits such as day sleep, lack of exercise has to be strictly prohibited in Marshy land. Inculcation of habits with strong physical activities clubbed with revised diet has to be followed in Anupa Desha people as they are more prone to Kapha related disorders. In Jangala Desha, excessive intake of pungent, bitter and astringent dishes, vigorous physical activities provoking Vata has to be avoided. Considering the unique attributes of the land one can inculcate revised diet with sweet, sour and salty dishes in due proportion and can follow Abhyanga (oil massage), day sleep in regard to season and other activities in due respect to Desha. Sadharana Desha has the predominance of the humors in equal proportion and hence people are having mixed features with regard to the physical and pathological attributes. Hence the diet and regimens can be followed by keeping in view of one's Prakruthi in mind. Thus the role of Bhumi Desha is found to be inevitable to fix the appropriate diet and activities pertaining to a healthy individual.

CONCLUSION

Even though Desha is mentioned as one among the entity to be examined in healthy as well as in a diseased person (Pareekshyabhavas); the importance of this concept is not fully conceived in the present scenario. Hence its importance has to be tackled with utmost care to achieve the prime goal of Ayurveda. The influence of Bhumi Desha need to be explored in both healthy and diseased perspective to provide the new insight of this concept and thereby a better interest to humanity.

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