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The Editor (ISPS),

C/O D-301, Vrindawan Apartment PH-II,

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Conceptualizing Personality Dynamics from the Indian Thought

Shilpa S.

Research Scholar
Regional Institute of Education
Mysore

C. G. Venkatesha Murthy

Professor
Regional Institute of Education
Mysore

In this paper, the authors delve into the complexities of personality and its treatment in the Indian tradition from various perspectives as has been studied through the millennia and conclude that the Indian method is potentially scientific in its assessment amenability. They delineate various concepts of understanding personality from the Indian perspective and its scientific basis for doing so, as well as giving directions for a scientific analysis and categorization of people based on the same-irrespective of caste, creed, colour or nationality, hence making it applicable across the globe. They argue that, this wealth of literature needs to be carefully sorted out and empirically validated which in itself is a big agenda for psychologists which is doable.

Key words: Personality, Tridoshas, Trigunas, Ayurveda, Indian Psychology

The core of psychology is to study the persona. Development of the psyche and all it entails as well as its constituents is universal and is not restricted to the Indian thought. The study of personality and its dynamics has fascinated man ever since the beginning of social groups. Why people behave the way they do-and its repercussions, how to predict behavior and then to control it, seem to be the major concerns of man-not only today in our present scenario, but this also seems to have puzzled our forefathers. The study of the history of psychology reveals how it has come about to be what it is today, from the initial concerns and studies that were undertaken by great people from across the world, and how it influenced the whole world in its way of thinking (Singh, 1991). But thankfully, psychology today has moved away from the initial concern of trying to control people which is a more autocratic and egoistical way of looking "from the exalted domain of psychology" onto any particular group of people, and is now trying to find answers to the questions posed in the study of

personality and behaviour, including as to why people behave in certain ways and how to help in channelizing each person's strengths and weaknesses including the knowhow to modify the weakness to make it a strength as is necessary in each and every field that psychology, or human endeavour touches.

Personality has always captured the attention of psychologists in the past. This tradition has influenced Indian Psychology too. Personality is studied and understood with reference to two systems in Indian traditions. One is the biological system and the other is the psychological system. The biological system is set forth and understood by the medical texts and scriptures like Ayurveda, which have very specific ways of understanding health and ill-health and how it is to be treated. These texts are very descriptive and exhaustive, where Ayurveda is considered to be a part of the Atharva Veda. These rely heavily on the Pancha Mahabhutas, their combinations yielding to the biological humors of Tridoshas-Vata, Pitta and Kapha and their psychological correlates

of Trigunas-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, to explain the body, the mind, their constituents and corresponding behavior patterns including the spiritual aspect involved.

While Charaka and Susruta have enumerated the different psychological typologies that people can be classified under in addition to an exhaustive description of the Tridoshas, their balanced states and consequences of the imbalances, they have not gone into the minute detail with regard to the Trigunas, as they have done with Tridoshas. It is to be noted here that the Tridoshas or the physiological humors are derivatives of Trigunas, as fundamental constituents of Prakriti as enunciated in Samkhya-Yoga system of philosophy. The composition of both are the same, but their action and influence are on different systems that operate on man-the physiological (Tridoshas) and the psychological (Trigunas). Each has their own actions, methodology of behaviour, and categorization, which is unique and one cannot replace the other, though all six of them act in tandem and one cannot exist without the other. All six of them are present in all beings at all times, only the combinations and dominations are different (Sharma, P., 1981, 2004; Murthy, K.R.S., 2007).

Necessity for Personality classification in the Indian perspective

On the one hand, "The ancient Indian wisdom provides a wide range of concepts and ideas that may be retrieved to develop a number of psychological principles and laws of behavior" (Sinha, 2002, p. 446). While, on the other, "With the increasing realization that many of the western psychological concepts and methods lack relevance to different cultural systems, the need for developing indigenous psychologies was recognized all over the world (Kim & Berry, 1973). In India, attempts have been made for almost a century to develop indigenous models and theories from the rich source of knowledge viz., the Vedas, Upanisads, the Bhagavad -Gita and other philosophical texts. In recent times

more and more researchers have taken active interest in indigenizing and developing indigenous psychology (Kumar, in press; Misra & Mohanty, 2000; Paranjpe, 1999; Srivastava, 2002)". (Murthy & Kumar 2007, p.103).

The need of the hour is to be able to develop a comprehensive grouping of people based on their physical characteristics and be able to predict their psychological and spiritual manifestations. This would not only give us an opportunity to see the kinds and types of people prone to different kinds of health risks and behaviour patterns, but also how they could be avoided or modified if not cured. This would also give medical professionals an opportunity to prevent diseases rather than look for cures. The opportunities that this field of enquiry has to offer are unlimited and exciting to say the least. But it needs a lot of research from various angles and domains, before it can be conclusively proved. Though people could be grouped broadly, each person will have their own unique psycho-physical-spiritual system of behavior that gives them their own special and unique personality. This would also explain how no two people have identical fingerprints, skin tone and texture, hair and eye color, etc. The ultimate goal of modern Psychology-to be able to predict human behavior-is seen to be able to be met and fulfilled.

In this day and age when the world has become a global village, people from any socio-demographic location can be found across the world, with a lot of cross mingling that stretch the barriers of place and time, caste, creed and race. In this scenario, the need is to develop a theory of personality that transcends this problem of cultural and racial bias and ethnicity to propound one that is valid across the world. For this, the basic requirement is that it should be universally acceptable, be of an elemental nature, and be valid to people across all genres and societies. To understand this, the first source of knowledge that comes to mind to tackle

the problem at hand is that of the Indian philosophical systems that have withstood the test of time to be applicable across millennia without losing their relevance and applicability to people from many millennia to the present day. The need is to develop a test or tool to assess personality that would be applicable to people irrespective of countries and cultures, and be able to give answers that are universally valid, understandable and relevant to each of them.

Manickam, (2005), suggests that "an assessment tool that incorporates the Taittiriya Upanisadic concept of person, the trigunas and the connectedness has to be developed. The methodology to study the concept could be a structured interview using a prepared tool.The tool could be applied to a general and clinical population, and would help psychological researchers in India and abroad to explore other psychological concepts of the Indian thought".

According to Murthy & Kumar (2007, P. 112), the Triguna is an important concept in Indian tradition which can help us to not only understand human nature but also man's relation with the cosmos as they underlie material and mental manifestations. Contemporary psychologists have not been able to understand the full significance of the trigunas and the available literature requires a lot more study as this concept is still not clear. They are of the opinion that attempts to relate trigunas to behavior as understood from modern psychological view point is not systematic and theory driven. Aspects of human nature like emotions, attitudes, preferences, lifestyle, etc., which have been linked to trigunas in our scriptures are yet to be examined and clarified empirically. Hence, they are of the opinion that there is a need to develop models on Indian concepts after a thorough study of the literature in such a way that it serves the purpose of the modern psychologists to categorize personality types and to do further research on Indian understanding of personality.

Ayurveda has so much to offer, while, from the psychological domain there does not seem to be any study conducted to assess these characteristics as delineated in the Ayurvedic texts. The field of psychology would be enriched by the information obtained from empirical research conducted in the areas of Tridosha and Triguna, their characteristics, blends and their typology and would lead to a better understanding of man and his behaviours.

Personality evolution from an Indian perspective

The Ayurvedic concepts of Tridosha and Triguna are well delineated and appear to be a consolidation of the concepts that have been borrowed from the other schools of thought or rather Darsanas. Even so, there is no coherent consolidation of the different aspects of personality from the various sources of Indian philosophical systems. Admittedly the Indian literary corpus is a vast ocean-of systems, philosophies, schools of thought, literary influences, artistic influences and what not. But the commonality in each of them is there to be found. The characteristics of man or the Lakshanas of great men as Varaha Mihira puts it in his *Brhat Samhita*, which is an extension of his *Brhat Jataka* is one such example. In the same way, each of the different philosophies of India, be it the Vedas, the Upanisads, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Nirukta*, the *Puranas* to name some, all have interpretations of the different characteristics of how people are to be assessed and understood to be of different kinds.

Psychology as a field, and human understanding, which is the main focus of Psychology would be enriched as a consequence of studying the nature or psyche of man through this elemental method of scientific and ancient tradition which is a treasure trove of psychological concepts which are waiting to be tapped.

Characteristics of the Pancha Mahabhutas

According to Charaka, the attributes derived from Akasa are sound, the auditory organ, lightness, minuteness, distinction. Touch, the tactile organ, roughness, impulsion, shaping of Dhatus and physical activities are derived from Vayu. Those derived from Agni are vision, the visual organ, light, digestion and heat; those derived from Ap are taste, the gustatory organ, coldness, softness, unctuousness and moistening; those derived from Prthivi are smell, olfactory organ, heaviness, stability and mass. (Sharma, P., 1981, p. 430, 12).

"In the person Prthivi, Ap, Tejas, Vayu, Akasa and Brahman are represented by form, moisture, heat, vital breath, pores (including vacant spaces) and inner self respectively. As is the magnificence of Brahman in the universe so is that of inner self in the Person. In the universe the greatness of Brahman is represented by Prajapati and in the Person the same of the inner self is represented by the psyche. What is Indra in the universe is ego in the Person, Aditya (the sun) receiving, Rudra agitation, Soma (the moon) cheerfulness, Vayu happiness, Aswins lustre, Marut enthusiasm, Visvadeva all sense organs and their objects darkness, ignorance, light knowledge; as initial creation in case of the universe so impregnation in the Person, krtayuga childhood, treta youth, dwapara old age, kali illness and end of creation death. Thus by inference commonness of other unmentioned entities of the universe and the Person may also be known." (Sharma, P., 1981, p. 441; 5).

Charaka explains the dominance of each of the Pancha Mahabhutas in the human body and its identification as follows: "The body part which is particularly thick, stable, massive, heavy, coarse and hard; and nails, bones, teeth, flesh, skin, faeces, hairs, beards and mustaches, skin hairs, tendons etc. along with smell and olfactory sense are parthiva (predominant in prthivi mahabhuta). The liquid, mobile, dull, unctuous, soft and

slimy; rasa, blood, muscle-fat, Kapha, Pitta, urine, sweat etc. along with taste and gustatory sense are apya (predominant in ap mahabhuta); Pitta, heat, lustre along with vision and visual sense are agneya (predominant in agni mahabhuta); respiration, twinkling of eye, contraction and relaxation, movement, propulsion and retention along with touch and tactile sense are vayaviya (predominant in vayu mahabhuta); the vacant space, big and small channels, along with sound and auditory sense are antariksa (predominant in akasa mahabhuta). Whatever impels is the principal one (principle of consciousness) along with intellect and mind. Thus enumeration of the body parts is done grossly." (Sharma, P., 1981, p. 460, 16).

Properties of substances with predominance of Akasa bhuta are sound, organ of sound (ear), all vacant places and action of separating things. Properties of substances predominant in Vayu bhuta are touch sensation, organ of touch (skin), all kinds of actions, throbbing (movement) of all the parts of the body and levity (weightlessness). Properties of substances predominant in Agni bhuta are sight (vision), organ of sight (eyes), colour, feeling of heat, brilliance of complexion, digestion (of food etc.) anger, quickness in action and bravery. Properties of substances predominant in Ap bhuta are taste, organ of taste (tongue), all liquids (in the universe), heavyness, coldness, unctuousness and more of semen (in men and animals). Properties of substances predominant in Prthvi bhuta are smell, organ of smell (nose), all things having form (size and shape) and heaviness. (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; and Murthy, K.R.S., 2007).

Combination of the Pancha Mahabhutas to form the Tridoshas

One of the basic tenets of all systems of Indian philosophy is that man is a microcosm of the macrocosmic world that he inhabits. This implies explicitly that whatever man is made up of, the world too is made up of those same things or elements, but with

different combinations and degrees. Here, by elements is meant the five mahabhutas—that is Akasa, Vayu, Tejas, Ap and Prithvi. (Sky or ether, air, fire, water and earth proto-elements respectively). The universe and man are made up of these five elements. In fact Ayurveda postulates that all living beings on the earth including the non-living too are made up of these same five elements in varying degrees, specific to each form, matter and species, and according to a predetermined ratio that cannot be changed. These five elements combine with each other to form the three humors of Vata, Pitta and Kapha, (also called as the Tridoshas in unison) which is the corner stone of Ayurvedic philosophy. (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; and Murthy, K.R.S., 2007).

This pertains to the biological and the physiological aspect of man. The Akasa Mahabhuta was the first to evolve and has only itself in it. From this evolved the Vayu Mahabhuta which has itself and Akasa Mahabhuta in it. This evolved into the Agni Mahabhuta with itself, Akasa and Vayu Mahabhutas. This further evolved into the Ap Mahabhuta which consists of itself along with Akasa, Vayu and Agni Mahabhutas. This in turn evolved into the Prithvi Mahabhuta which has itself and the other four Mahabhutas. Hence Akasa Mahabhuta is the first to evolve and has only itself, while the Prithvi Mahabhuta is the heaviest which has all the other Mahabhutas, with the other Mahabhutas containing the previous evolutes in them along with their own Mahabhutas. (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; Murthy, K.R.S., 2007; and Rao, N.H., 2003).

The Akasa and Vayu Mahabhuta (MB) combine together to form the Vata Dosha; Agni and Ap Mahabhuta combine together to form the Pitta Dosha and the Ap and Prithvi Mahabhuta combine together to form the Kapha Dosha. Consequently, Vata Dosha consists of the Rajas and Sattva gunas, with the Rajas guna being dominant; Pitta Dosha consists of the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas gunas with the Sattva guna being

dominant; and the Kapha Dosha consists of the Tamas and Sattva gunas with the Tamas guna being dominant. It can be represented as follows:

The Tridoshas are composed of all the Pancha Mahabhutas, but one or the other is predominant, with the other four in lesser dominance. There can never be a state when one or the other Pancha Mahabhuta is absent totally. All five are essential to sustain life.

Vata Dosha is composed of Akasa (ether or sky) and Vayu (air) Mahabhuta.

Pitta Dosha is composed of Tejas or Agni (fire) and Ap Mahabhuta.

Kapha Dosha is composed of Ap (water) and Prithvi (earth) Mahabhuta.

This can be inferred by a verse in the Susruta Samhita according to which the Akasa bhuta is predominant of Sattva guna, Vayu bhuta is predominant of rajo guna; Agni bhuta is predominant of Sattva and tamo guna, and Prthvi bhuta is predominant of tamo guna.

Out of the Pancha Mahabhutas, the first one has only one property and there is addition of one more property in each of the latter bhutas. Thus the former bhuta along with its property is associated with the latter one. Coarseness, liquidity, mobility, hotness and non-interruption are the specific characters of Prthivi, Ap, Vayu, Agni and Akasa respectively. (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; Murthy, K.R.S., 2007; and Rao, N.H., 2003).

Delineation of Tridoshas-Vata, Pitta and Kapha

The human body (the physical entity) is composed of three fundamental elements or categories called Doshas, Dhatus and Malas. (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; and Murthy, K.R.S., 2007).

The doshas are three in number, the dhatus are seven, and the malas are four. The three doshas (Tridoshas) are Vata, Pitta and Kapha. Their psychological correlates which play a role in the functioning and behavior of humans are the Trigunas-Sattva, Rajas and

Tamas. These psychological attributes are not restricted or confined to humans alone, but are the constituents of all living beings including the food we eat, and all other elements in the environment we live in, which are said to have a predominance of one or the other characteristic guna/ Prakriti which gives that matter its unique quality. "The concept of tridosha, the Ayurvedic theory of physiologic regulation involving the integrated function of the three doshas-Vata, Pitta, and Kapha-is a cornerstone of Ayurveda, named in the first chapter of the earliest text, Charaka Samhita (Angot, 1993; Sharma, 1981-1986). Its connection to modern science, showing that the doshas constitute systems of regulatory function, each with a particular area of responsibility (Hankey, 2001) and its present preliminary validation, are first steps to bringing the discipline wider acceptance within modern medicine." (Hankey, 2005b).

The Skanda Purana (Vol. 10, p. 464) gives the following descriptions of the Pancha Mahabhutas with their correlation to the human body, geometrical shapes, corresponding colours, and presiding deities:

Akasa-cerebral aperture-resembles mirage water-Lord Sadasiva

Vayu-middle of eye-brows-circular-resembles collyrium-Isa

Tejas (Agni)-palate-triangular-resembles glow worm-Rudra

Ap-neck-whiteness-Visnu

Prithvi-heart-rectangular/square-resembles haritala (yellow orpiment)-Brahma

Evolution of the Tanmatras into the Mahabhutas and the sense organs

Susruta defines Tanmatra as "that having its own size/not having any one similar to it in size, or in other words very very minute." (Susruta Samhita, chap. 1). The Sabda Tanmatra evolves into the Akasa Mahabhuta which evolves into the organ of ear and the sense of hearing. The Sparsa Tanmatra evolves into the Vayu Mahabhuta

which in turn evolves into the organ of skin and the sense of touch. The Rupa Tanmatra evolves into the Agni Mahabhuta which in turn evolves into the organ of eye and the sense of vision. The Rasa Tanmatra evolves into the Ap Mahabhuta which further evolves into the organ of tongue and the sense of taste. The Gandha Tanmatra evolves into the Prithvi Mahabhuta which in turn evolves into the organ of nose and the sense of smell.

The evolution of the Tanmatras into the respective Mahabhuta and the five organs are as follows

Akasa Mahabhuta	= Sense of Hearing
Vayu Mahabhuta	= Sense of Touch
Agni Mahabhuta	= Sense of Vision
Ap Mahabhuta	= Sense of Taste
Prithvi Mahabhuta	= Sense of Smell

The divisions and characteristics of Vata, Pitta and Kapha

Vata or Vayu is divided into five divisions based on the type of function it does in the body. They are Vyana which is in charge of all kinds of movement of every part of the body; Udana which is responsible for sensory perception; Prana which is responsible for filling the body with food; Samana which is responsible for digestion of food and separating its essence and waste; Apana which is responsible for retaining the wastes for some time and eliminating them later. Though these are some of the chief functions of Vayu and its major five divisions, there are many more.

Similarly, Pitta is also divided into five divisions based on the type of functions. They are Ranjaka which imparts red colour to the Rasa dhatu; Pacaka which aids in digestion of food; Sadhaka which is responsible for the production of ojas and retaining the essence of tissue in the heart; Alocaka which is responsible for helping vision and also intelligence; production of body temperature is the function of Bhrajaka. Likewise, though these are some of the chief functions of Pitta and its major divisions, there are many more.

In the same manner, Kapha too is comprised of five divisions, which help it in maintaining the body and its various functions. They are as follows: Slesaka which is responsible in keeping the body joints tight, firm and strong; Kledaka which moistens the food; Bodhaka which gives us the perception of taste and heals the body; Tarpaka fills the sense organs and head; and Avalambaka maintains strength and stability. Like the Vata and Pitta divisions, these are the chief functions of Kapha and its major divisions of which there are many more. (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; and Murthy, K.R.S., 2007).

Charaka and Susruta (Sharma, P., 1981, p. 71) also give the characteristics of people with dominant Vata, Pitta and Kapha Prakritis. Persons of Vata dominant constitution are more awake (sleeps less), hates cold; is ugly, prone to thieving, jealous, uncultured; has aptitude in music (and such other arts), his hands and feet are cracked (fissured); mustaches, nails and hairs are scanty and rough; he is cruel, grinds his teeth (in sleep). Lacks courage; is unsteady in friendship, ungrateful, thin (emaciated) in body, has prominence of veins (all over the body); is very talkative, quick in walk, wanders too much, unsteady in mind, dreams of moving in the sky, has disorganized mind and unsteady vision (sight); poor in accumulation of (collection of) gems, wealth and friends; speaks less that too irrelevantly; such a person is of Vata Prakriti. Persons of Vata Prakriti are described as imitating goat, goyal ox, rabbit, rat, camel, dog, vulture, crow, donkey etc (in their physical and mental behaviour).

People of Pitta dominant constitution, sweat a lot, emit bad smell; body parts are yellowish and flabby (loose), nails, eyes, palate, tongue, lips, palms and soles are coppery in colour; is ugly, has wrinkles of the skin, grey hairs and baldness; eats great amount of food; hates hot things, becomes angry quickly and gets relieved of it quickly; has moderate strength and span of life. They

are very intelligent, clever, defeat others in talk, brilliant, undefeatable in assemblies; see gold, flowers of palasa, karnikara (which are red in colour) fire, lightning and meteors in dreams; does not submit himself from fear (faces it courageously), is not soft towards the surrendered, desirous of consoling and granting gifts (charity) to those who are obedient and loyal; always has troubles (diseases) like ulceration etc in the mouth; such a person is of Pitta Prakriti. Persons of Pitta Prakriti imitate in their activities, animals such as snake, owl, gandharva, yaksa, cat, monkey, tiger, bear, and mongoose.

People of Kapha dominant constitution (Sharma, P., 1981, p. 72) possess colour (of the skin) of any one of durva (green grass), indivara (white lily) nistrimsa (durva grass), moist aristaka (round soap-nut), or sarakanda (stem of sara grass); is beautiful to look at; likes sweet things, is grateful, courageous, capable of withstanding hardship and not sensuous; is strong, slow in understanding, harbours enmity for long time; has white eyes, hairs which are curly and blue like the bee; he is rich, has full (loud) voice like thunder, cymbal and lion's roar; sees reservoir of water (ponds, lakes, rivers) having lotus, swans and cakravaka, bird (ruddy sheldrake) and pleasing to the mind in dream; his eyes are reddish at their ends (angles); body has well demarcated parts, greasy complexion, predominant in Sattva guna (virtuous and benevolent behaviour); is capable of withstanding hardship, honours his preceptors, steadfast in scriptures and intelligence, stable in respect of friends and wealth; grants gifts in plenty after considering the receiver; speaks with well selected words and sentences and always upholds the status of the preceptors-these are the features of person of Kapha Prakriti. Persons of Kapha Prakriti imitate (in their activities) Brahma, Rudra, Indra and Varuna, animals such as lion, horse, elephant, cow, bull, red eagle and swan.

"Finding the presence of features of combination of either two or three doshas, in

any person should be understood as being of *samsarga Prakriti* (mixed constitution). These features of constitutions of men, will neither increase, change otherwise, nor decrease naturally (of their own accord); they do so, only in a dying person. Just as insects born in poison are not killed by that poison, similarly the constitutions will not be able to harm the person." (Susruta Samhita, Sharma, P., 2004, pg. 72-73). Features of different constitutions are innate and born along with the person (congenital); though some of these are abnormal and troublesome to some extent, yet they are not going to cause severe distress; great variations do happen prior to death and such change then, are considered as fatal signs.

Susruta (Sharma, P., 2004, p. 73) is of the opinion that *Prakriti* (constitutions) arises from *bhutas*; one each from *Vata*, *Agni/Pitta*, *Apa/Slesma*, and the fourth from *Prithvi* characterized with strong and big body (physique) and capacity of withstanding troubles and fifth from *Akasa* with features such as cleanliness and long life.

Proper balance between these three *doshas* is essential for good health. In a balanced state the *doshas* sustain the body by endowing good mental and physical health to the individual. When they are in imbalance, it leads to a dominance of one or more *doshas* (in combination), which is the cause of many ailments and illnesses. The whole aim of *Ayurveda* is to restore proper balance between the *doshas* in the body, thereby restoring health, which leads to a sound mind too.

"The ancient texts name many other properties of the *doshas*. For example, all human beings can be classified according to the dominance of one or more *doshas* in their physiology, or their *Prakriti* (literally, "nature"). The classification gives a good indication of physiologic strengths and weaknesses, mental tendencies, and susceptibility to illnesses of different kinds. According to *Ayurveda*, the *Prakriti*, including its distortion by life history, is of fundamental importance

in maintaining health: It provides a guide to lifestyle and ways of healthy living appropriately individualized for each person.....Early, pre-pathologic stages of the development of illness depend on the pressure on the functioning of the *doshas*. Do they have the ability to cope with challenges presented? Simple knowledge of how they function, and what their state is at any time, can prevent disease, and help restore health more quickly." (Hankey, 2005a).

The play of the five proto elements or the *Pancha Mahabhutas* is not restricted to the physical body only. It finds expression in the mind too, which also is purported to be made up of the five elements. Frawley (1998b) in his book *Ayurveda and the Mind* is of the opinion that the mind transcends all the five gross elements, because, he says, that through the mind we can perceive all the elements and their inter-relationships. He further says, "We can observe, imagine and contemplate all the forms of earth, water, fire, air and ether. Yet the elements do provide a key to how the mind works. Though the elements in the mind are more subtle than those in the body, they retain the same basic attributes and actions. We can understand the mental elements through the analogy of the physical."

Frawley (1998b) postulates that the mind is made up of three layers-the Inner, the Intermediate and the Outer, which corresponds to *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* (or air, fire and water) model of the composition of the body, thus taking this energy to a deeper level. He is of the opinion that the Inner Mind or Deeper Consciousness corresponds to the Air element; Intermediate Mind or Intelligence to Fire and Outer Mind or Sensation-Emotion (awareness of mind) to water. Further, he states that the Self is made of two levels, the Outer Self and the Inner Self. The Outer Self (or ego), he says corresponds to Earth and the Inner Self (or Soul) corresponds to Ether. Thus all the five elements or *Pancha Mahabhutas* have their representation in the

mind and its functioning other than in the body (gross level) too. When this is the case, as postulated, believed and acted upon by the various theories of Ayurveda, it is easy to see how elemental the Pancha Mahabhutas are to the functioning of both the mind and the physical body. This in itself is enough to indicate the inter-dependence and the inter-relatedness of the mind and the body to each other. Any effect or imbalance in one will naturally affect an imbalance on the other. One cannot be diagnosed (in the case of any illness) with the exclusion of the other and one cannot be treated without taking into consideration the symptoms and treatment that has to be accorded to the other.

Charaka Samhita expresses this idea in verses 46-47 as follows: "Mind, Soul and the Body-these three constitute a tripod, upon the meaningful combination of which the world is sustained. They constitute the substratum for everything, which is endowed with life. This (combination of the above three) is Purusa who is sentient and who is the subject matter for this science. It is for this, that Ayurveda has been brought to light." Verse 1-55 also states: "The body and the mind are the abodes of diseases as well as health. Proper body-mind interaction is the cause for happiness."

Hankey, (Establishing the scientific validity of Tridosha, personal communication, March 7, 2008), is also of the opinion that "the functions of Vata, Pitta and Kapha are fundamental is confirmed by the fact that each represents an independent definition of 'life' used in modern biology." He reinstates this statement by delineating the functions of the Tridoshas with the knowledge obtained by modern science, and more specifically the area of biological, cellular, chemical sciences as we know them today. He is of the opinion that, ".....These three, (homeostasis, the ongoing production of 'negative entropy', and inheritable structure,) (the modern biological equivalents of Vata, Pitta and Kapha) have all been used as definitions of life. Comprising all three makes Tridosha the most powerful definition of life ever formulated!"

When we talk about imbalance of doshas, we say that a person is Vata, Pitta or Kapha dominated. This does not mean an absence of the other two doshas, but that the other two doshas are suppressed compared to the dominant dosha. This also does not mean that a person who is either of the dosha dominated is not in good health. That particular dominant dosha is his natural state of being or Prakriti. It is not ill health.

"Prakriti is specific for each individual. It is said to be determined at the time of conception (in modern terms, by the recombination of zygotic DNA from sperm and ovum) and remains unaltered over the individual's lifetime. Prakriti specific treatment, including prescription of medications, diet, and lifestyle, is a distinctive feature of Ayurveda. We hypothesize that Prakriti has a genetic connotation that could provide a tool for classifying the human population based on broad phenotype clusters." (Patwardhan, et al., 2005).

Tridoshas and their blends

Each dosha gives certain characteristic qualities to the person, based on which an individual can be classified as belonging to that particular dosha type. Charaka and Susruta recognize seven types or categories into which people can be classified, depending on the dominance of the doshas in their body. They are said to belong to a particular Prakriti or Constitution, as follows:

1. People with dominant Vata (constitution or) Prakriti.
2. People with dominant Pitta Prakriti.
3. People with dominant Kapha Prakriti.
4. People with dominant Vata-Pitta Prakriti.
5. People with dominant Vata-Kapha Prakriti.
6. People with dominant Pitta-Kapha Prakriti.
7. People with balanced doshas or with Vata-Pitta-Kapha Prakriti.

This is accepted by all the different schools of Ayurveda-Charaka, Susruta, Vagbhata, etc., to name a few. (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; Murthy, K.R.S., 2007; Krishnan, B., 2002; Johari, 2003; and Svoboda, 2005).

Delineation of the Trigunas-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas

Prakriti is composed of three gunas, Sattva (white, knowledge, happiness, pra), Rajas (red, activity, pain, kr) and Tamas (dark, resistance or inertia, confusion, ti). Thus it is endowed with all the necessary and sufficient powers of production, preservation and dissolution of the phenomenal world. Mainly, it is the material cause of multiplicity. (Rao, S.K.R., 1987, p. 161).

The three gunas-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas also promote different kinds of temperament based on the dominance of one or the other gunas. The temperament of a person can be discerned based on the "mode of worship, the type of food consumed and other activities of everyday life." (Krishnan, B., 2002).

Susruta clearly describes the five Mahabhutas as being constituted by the Trigunas. According to him, (S.S. III. 1.20.) Akasa is predominant with Sattva, Vayu with Rajas, Agni with Sattva-Rajas, Ap (Jala-water) with Sattva-Tamas, and Prithvi with Tamas. Inferentially, since both Charaka and Susruta clearly state that Vata Dosha is a combination of Akasa and Vayu, Pitta Dosha of Agni and Ap and Kapha Dosha of Ap and Prithvi, we can deduce the Gunas that are predominant in each of them. Hence, Vata Dosha is a combination of Sattva and Rajas Gunas but is referred to as being predominantly Rajasic-as Rajas guna overtakes or is stronger than the Sattva guna. Pitta Dosha is said to be more Sattvic in nature, though it has an element of Rajas and Tamas in it. Kapha Dosha is said to be more Tamasic in nature though it has an element of Sattva in it (but no Rajas). Hence we understand the Doshas in respect of the Gunas exhibited by them due to the relative

dominance of one or the other Pancha Mahabhutas that they are made up of. "This, trigunatmaka description of the constitution of Panchabhutas, is the most applied aspect of philosophical concept of gunas in the field of science and medicine." (Gupta, S.P., 2000). This is invaluable to us in deducing the behaviour exhibited by individuals depending on the dominance of one or the other dosha or guna that is constitutionally present in the person from conception-which is referred to as the particular Prakriti-guna combination that a person exhibits. This Prakriti-guna combination is unique to every individual and is not changeable during the course of their lifetime. (Gupta, S. P., 2000, pg. 299).

The characteristics of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas

According to Susruta, Sattvic people, who have a predominance of Sattva guna, have qualities such as: non-violence, desire of sharing goods with others, forgiveness, truthfulness, right conduct, belief in gods, scriptures etc. good amount of knowledge, intelligence, ingenuity, memory, courage, steadfastness and tendency of doing benevolent acts without any expectation in return. (Sharma, P., 2004).

Rajasic people, who have a predominance of Rajo guna have qualities such as: more of grief, habit of wandering, cowardice, pride, harsh speech, cruelty, crookedness, selfishness, self-boasting, seeking only pleasure, lust (sexual acts) and anger.

And, Tamasic people, who have a predominance of Tamo guna, have qualities such as remorse-less-ness, no belief in gods, scriptures etc., tendency of indulging in sinful acts, restraining the intellect, ignorance (lack of knowledge), bad (cruel) mentality, not inclined to do any activity (due to lack of interest and enthusiasm) and tendency to sleep always.

Krishnan, (2002) says that Varaha Mihira, an eminent scholar, using the "guna" theory, presents a seven-fold classification of

persons. They are Sattvic, Rajasic, Tamasic, Sattvic-Rajasic, Sattvic-Tamasic, Rajasic-Tamasic, and Sattvic-Rajasic-Tamasic. Quite evidently the mixed types are recognized too, other than the basic three types of gunas.

In the Indian Psychological literature, Guna theory is already empirically tested and accepted. (Murthy and Kumar, 2007).

"Mental disposition (Sattva) is basically three-fold: pure (suddha), violent (Rajasa), and dull (Tamasa), depending on the prevalence of each of the three gunas. The first is largely free from defects (specially abnormalities with respect to speech, thought and bodily behaviour), while the other two are defective or abnormal. The distinction is between the disease-free (the first type) and the disease-prone types (the other two types). Among the disease prone types, one is dominated by excessive activity prompted by anger, and other emotions, while the other is dominated by inactivity due to delusions and confusion. Each of these has varieties depending upon physical characteristics and psychological tendencies. It is recognized that the mind and the body are interdependent, and that there is an impact of the mind on the body and of the body on the mind. There is also a hierarchical notion in describing the pure type as the best (sreshtha), the violent type as middling (madhya) and the dull type as the worst (adhama). (Rao, S.K.R., 1987, p. 161).

The Trigunas and their blends

Each guna gives certain characteristic qualities to the person, based on which an individual can be classified as belonging to that particular guna type. Charaka and Susruta recognize seven types or categories into which people can be classified, depending on the dominance of the gunas in their body. They are said to belong to a particular guna combination, as follows:

1. People with dominant Sattva Guna.
2. People with dominant Rajas Guna.
3. People with dominant Tamas Guna.

4. People with dominant Sattva-Rajas Guna combination.
5. People with dominant Sattva-Tamas Guna combination.
6. People with dominant Rajas-Tamas Guna combination.
7. People with balanced gunas or with Sattva-Rajas-Tamas Guna combination.

(Charaka and Susruta Samhitas, Vagbhata's Ashtanga Hridaya and Johari (2003), Svoboda (2005) and many other books and classical texts have emulated references to these seven types of doshas and gunas).

The different types of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas

Besides the basic seven types of Prakriti (Vata, Pitta and Kapha and their blends) Ayurveda recognizes 16 types of personalities based on the classical guna theory. Both Charaka and Susruta Samhitas have a description of these types. According to them there are seven types of Sattva, six of Rajas and three of Tamas, totaling sixteen types of personalities under which all people can be grouped. (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; and Murthy, K.R.S., 2007).

The seven types of Sattva are: Brahma Sattva, Mahendra Sattva, Varuna Sattva, Kubera Sattva, Gandharva Sattva, Yama Sattva and Rishi Sattva.

The six types of Rajas Sattva are Asura Sattva, Rakshasa Sattva, Paisaca Sattva, Sarpa Sattva, Praita Sattva and Sakuna Sattva.

The three types of Tamas Sattva are Pasava Sattva, Matsya Sattva and Vanaspatya Sattva.

A brief description of the characteristics of people belonging to the different types of Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic gunas are as follows (Susruta Samhita, p. 74, 75). (While Charaka uses the word Sattva to indicate the state of the mind, Susruta uses the word Kaya for the same. Both mean the same and either one can be used).

Types of Sattva and their characteristics

Brahma Sattva or Brahma Kaya- Cleanliness, belief in god, scriptures etc, practice of studying Vedas, worshipping preceptors and guests, performing fire sacrifices.

Rsi (Arsha) Sattva-Indulgence constantly in meditation, vows, celibacy, fire sacrifice and study of scriptures; endowed with general and special knowledge.

Mahendra (Aindra or Indra) Sattva-Glory, courage, commanding, having knowledge of sciences and always protecting/supporting servants.

Yama Sattva-performing actions at the proper time and with strong determination; not getting afraid (of anything), having good memory, cleanliness, devoid of passion, delusion, infatuation (pride) and hatred.

Varuna Sattva-Desire for cold, forbearance, brown colour of the body, eyes, and hair, speaking affectionately.

Kubera (Kaubera) Sattva-Adopting the middle path in all activities, capacity to withstand difficulties, parting with wealth and not accumulating it, capacity to produce many children.

Gandharva Sattva-Fondness towards perfumes and garlands; desirous of dance, playing musical instruments and going for picnics. (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; and Murthy, K.R.S., 2007).

Types of Rajas and their characteristics

Asura Sattva-Persons who is wealthy, terrifying, courageous angry, jealous, who partake food alone and who fills his belly with large quantity of food (gluttonous, with a demon like temperament).

Raksasa Sattva-Understanding things alone (without the help of others explaining), is terrifying, jealous, violating the stipulated norm and flattering himself greatly (a demon like temperament).

Paisaca Sattva-Consuming foods which have been discarded by others, cruelty,

fond of adventures, desirous of women and lack of shyness (a demon like temperament).

Sarpa Sattva-One who is sharp (quick in actions), gets tired quickly, is fearful, angry, deceiving, unsteady, desirous of recreation and other pastimes (snake like temperament).

Praita Sattva-One who does not share anything with others, lazy, always grief stricken, jealous, sensuous, and not giving anything to others (devil/ghost like mentality).

Sakuna Sattva-One who indulges in sexual activities (copulation) greatly, who consumes food without break, is impatient, and not remaining at one place (constantly roaming around, with a bird like temperament). (Sharma, P., 1981; Sharma, P., 2004; and Murthy, K.R.S., 2007).

Types of Tamas and their characteristics

Pasava Sattva-One who has bad thinking, slow in all activities, dreams every day as indulging in copulation, and denying everything (with an animal like mentality).

Matsya Sattva-One who is unsteady, idiotic, fearfulness, desire for water, fighting with one another (with a fish like constitution).

Vanaspatya Sattva-One who has a desire of remaining at one place always, engaged in food only always and devoid of actions of truthfulness, righteousness, lust and wealth (with a vegetative constitution).

This seven-fold classification of people with respect to the gunas is similar to the seven-fold classification of people with respect to the dosha Prakriti. In fact it is identical in as much as one is concerned with the body constitution (Doshas = physical = Vata, Pitta and Kapha Prakriti) while the other is concerned with the mental or psychological characteristics exhibited by people with these doshas. (Gunas = psychological= Sattva, Rajas and Tamas gunas). Taking these two striking classifications one-step further, it would not be wrong to say that the physical constitution leads to the corresponding psychological attributes in a person or vice

versa as both are inter dependant. Indian tradition does not share the Cartesian dichotomy of the body and the mind as is common in Western psychological thinking. In fact the interplay between the mind (Sattva), soul (Atman) and body (Sarira) in a tripod allusion is the corner stone of Ayurvedic Philosophy. (Charaka Samhita, 46-47; Rao, SKR, 1990).

For a proper understanding of man and his behaviour, a proper analysis of both the Tridoshas-the physiological process, as well as the Trigunas-the psychological processes are essential. The consciousness or the spirit in conjunction with the body and the mind make up the unique psycho-physical structure of man. Reading one without the other is not only a fractured understanding of the complex nature of man, but is also misleading. Hence the mind-body dualism is not only accepted in the Indian context but is added upon with the consciousness principle, without which it is incomplete and fractured like its western counterpart. The sixteen personality types delineated in the Tridosha literature and also the sixteen personality types delineated in the Triguna literature have concordance with each other as one is a physiological state of characterization and the other is psychological. Since the study of consciousness is beyond the purview of the present researcher, it has not been dealt with in this study, and is limited the physiological (Tridosha) and the psychological (Triguna) systems. But it can be clearly understood that each make up different layers of the complex nature of man.

One can safely infer that a lot of literature is available in the Ayurvedic literature and other indigenous sources which have relevance for psychologists. This wealth of literature needs to be carefully sorted out and could be empirically validated. This itself can be a big agenda for psychologists.

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