viii. padārtha

viii. Padārtha - Theories of Dravya, Guṇa, Karma, Sāmānya, Viśeṣa, and Samavāya

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Padartha: The Conceptual Framework

Etymology and Purpose

- Padartha translates to "the meaning of a word" or "an object that can be known."
- In Indian philosophy, particularly Vaiśeşika and Nyāya, padārtha refers to basic categories or ontological realities through which the world (and experience) is classified.
- Ayurveda leverages this framework to systematize how substances (dravyas), their properties (guṇas), and actions (karmas) interact, thus aiding in diagnosing imbalance and formulating therapies.

Scriptural Roots in Ayurveda

Caraka Saṃhitā (Sūtrasthāna 1/28) references sāmānya-viśeṣa as critical for understanding doṣic augmentation or reduction, thus using fundamental padārtha logic in establishing **therapeutic principles**.

Dravya (Substance)

Definition

- **Dravya** is the substratum in which **guṇas** (qualities) and **karma** (actions) inhere. It is the **foundation** or **locus** for attributes and processes.
- In Ayurveda, **dravya** forms the basis of **pharmacology** and **dietary regimens**, as each substance exerts influences via its inherent properties.

Types of Dravya

According to Vaiśeşika philosophy (which Ayurveda often parallels), there are 9 classical dravyas:

- 1. Pṛthvī (Earth)
- 2. Āpaḥ/Jala (Water)
- 3. Tejas/Agni (Fire)
- 4. Vāyu (Air)
- 5. Ākāśa (Space)
- 6. Kāla (Time)
- 7. Diśā (Direction/Space)
- 8. Ātmā (Soul)
- 9. Manas (Mind)
- Ayurveda typically focuses on the first five as mahābhūtas for corporeal substances, plus the elements of consciousness (ātman) and mind (manas).

Ayurvedic Application

- **Medicinal Dravyas**: Herbs, minerals, animal products are dravyas carrying specific guṇas and karmas.
- **Dietary Dravyas**: Foods are classified by their **rasas (tastes)**, **vipāka (post-digestive effect)**, etc., reflecting the interplay of **dravya** + **guṇa** + **karma**.

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Guṇa (Quality)

Definition

- Guna refers to attributes or properties residing in a substance (dravya).
- They are **identifying characteristics** that define how a substance **behaves** or **interacts** with other substances.

Classification in Ayurveda

This comprehensive compilation on the **41 Gunas (qualities)** in Ayurveda, along with their classifications, provides a detailed understanding of their fundamental nature, effects, and applications. Below is the refined and structured version to organize and summarize the information for better readability:

Total 41 Gunas in Ayurveda

According to Charaka Samhita Sutra Sthana 1/49, the 41 Gunas are categorized into four main headings:

- 1. Physical Properties (Sharira Guna): 20 qualities
- 2. General Properties (Samanya Guna): 10 qualities
- 3. Spiritual Properties (Adhyatmika Guna): 6 qualities
- 4. Properties of Sense Objects (Indriyartha/Vishishta Guna): 5 qualities

1. Physical Properties (Sharira Guna)

These 20 properties form 10 opposite pairs and define the physical and functional characteristics of substances.

Property	Opposite Property	Fundamental Elements (Mahabhuta)	Effects on Dosha	Biological Effects	Applications	Examples
Guru (Heavy)	Laghu (Light)	Prithvi, Jala	↑ Kapha, ↓ Vata	Nourishes, increases density	Brimhana, Snehana	Black gram, sesame seeds
Sheeta (Cold)	Ushna (Hot)	Jala	↑ Kapha, ↓ Pitta	Pacifies burning, thirst	Stambhana, Brimhana	Sandalwood, cold water
Snigdha (Oily)	Ruksha (Dry)	Jala	↑ Kapha, ↓ Vata	Lubricates, softens	Snehana, Brimhana	Ghee, oils
Manda (Dull)	Tikshna (Sharp)	Prithvi, Jala	↑ Kapha, ↓ Pitta	Mild effects	Snehana, Stambhana	Guduchi, rice
Sthira (Stable)	Chala (Mobile)	Prithvi	↑ Kapha, ↓ Vata	Provides stability	Brimhana, Rukshana	Bala (Sida cordifolia)
Mridu (Soft)	Kathina (Hard)	Jala, Akasha	↑ Kapha, ↓ Vata	Softens, reduces inflammation	Snehana, Brimhana	Ghee, milk
Vishada (Clear)	Picchila (Slimy)	Vayu, Akasha	↑ Vata, ↓ Kapha	Cleans channels, reduces moisture	Langhana, Rukshana	Neem, alkalis
Shlakshna (Smooth)	Khara (Rough)	Jala	↑ Kapha, ↓ Vata	Soothes	Brimhana, Stambhana	Milk, ghee
Sthula (Gross)	Sukshma (Subtle)	Prithvi	↑ Kapha, ↓ Vata	Causes obstruction	Brimhana, Snehana	Curd, heavy food
Sandra (Dense)	Drava (Liquid)	Prithvi, Jala	↑ Kapha	Increases compactness	Brimhana	Butter, milk

2. General Properties (Samanya Guna)

These 10 universal properties apply to substances and their actions:

- 1. Paratva (Superiority): Shows excellence of substances (e.g., Amalaki for anti-aging).
- 2. Aparatva (Inferiority): Represents dormant or inferior quality (e.g., sheep's milk vs. cow's milk).
- 3. Yukti (Reasoning): Logical application of substances (e.g., poison as medicine).

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- 4. Sankhya (Enumeration): Relates to countable aspects (e.g., doshas, dhatus).
- 5. Samyoga (Conjunction): Combination of substances (e.g., compound formulations).
- 6. Vibhaga (Disjunction): Separation into components (e.g., isolating active principles).
- 7. Prithakatva (Separation): Differentiation between substances (e.g., oil and water).
- 8. Parimana (Measurement): Quantitative assessment (e.g., blood volume).
- 9. Samskara (Transformation): Changes through processing (e.g., medicated ghee).
- 10. Abhyasa (Repetition): Effects of repeated use (e.g., long-term milk consumption).

3. Spiritual Properties (Adhyatmika Guna)

These 6 qualities represent the psycho-spiritual aspects:

- 1. Buddhi (Intellect)
- 2. Sukha (Comfort)
- 3. Dukha (Discomfort)
- 4. Ichcha (Desire)
- 5. Dvesha (Aversion)
- 6. Prayatna (Perseverance)

4. Properties of Sense Objects (Indriyartha Guna)

These 5 sensory properties align with the **Panchamahabhuta**:

Sense Property Sense Organ Mahabhuta

Shabda (Sound) Ears (Shravan) Akasha Sparsha (Touch) Skin (Sparshan) Vayu Rupa (Form/Color) Eyes (Darshan) Agni Rasa (Taste) Tongue (Rasan) Jala Gandha (Smell) Nose (Ghran) Prithvi

Fundamental Universal Properties (Mahaguna)

These three primary qualities arise from Prakriti:

- 1. Sattva (Goodness): Enlightenment and balance.
- 2. Rajas (Passion): Activity and movement.
- 3. **Tamas (Ignorance):** Inertia and obstruction.

Clinical Applications

Understanding these properties is integral to:

- Formulating treatments based on individual constitutions.
- Selecting appropriate therapies (e.g., Snehana, Swedana).
- Conducting research and applying logical reasoning in Ayurveda.

This structured framework bridges traditional knowledge with modern applications, emphasizing the relevance of **Gunas** in holistic healthcare.

Clinical Relevance

- **Diagnosis**: Gauging the **guṇas** prevalent in a patient's symptoms or in doṣic aggravations clarifies the nature of imbalance.
- Therapy: Treatments rely on opposite gunas (viparīta guna) to counteract an excess property, exemplifying the
 principle "like increases like, opposite reduces (sāmānya viśeşa)."

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Karma (Action)

Definition

- Karma means action or activity. In the context of padārtha, karma is movement or dynamic process that belongs to a dravya.
- Ayurveda also uses the term to denote **functions** or **therapeutic actions** of substances.

Types in Vaiśeşika Logic

- 1. Utksepa (Throwing upward)
- 2. Avakşepa (Throwing downward)
- 3. Ākuñcana (Contraction)
- 4. Prasāraņa (Expansion)
- 5. Gamanāgama (Locomotion / approach and departure)
- Ayurveda conceptualizes karma more broadly—like how an herb or therapy "acts" in the body.

Ayurvedic Use

- Pharmacodynamic Approach: A drug's "karma" includes pācana (digestion), dīpana (appetizer), śoṣaṇa (absorbent), bṛṃhaṇa (nourishing), etc.
- Lifestyle Guidelines: Activities like vyāyāma (exercise), abhyanga (oil massage), or śodhana (cleansing) are considered karma forms.

Sāmānya and Viśeşa

Sāmānya (Generality)

Definition

• **Sāmānya** signifies **commonality** or **similarity** among substances, leading to **vṛddhi** (increase or growth) when similar substances combine.

Caraka's Principle

Caraka Samhitā (Sūtrasthāna 1/44-45) states:

"Sarvadā sarvabhāvānām sāmānyam vṛddhikāraṇam."

Meaning: "Generality (sāmānya) causes increase or aggregation."

Therapeutic Corollary

- "Like increases like." If a person with a **hot** pitta constitution consumes **hot** (uṣṇa) foods excessively, pitta aggravation occurs.
- Understanding sāmānya helps in avoiding aggravations or intentionally using similar substances to nourish a
 depleted tissue.

Viśeșa (Particularity)

- Definition
- Viśeṣa denotes distinctiveness; it causes hrāsa (reduction or decrease) by applying opposite qualities or attributes.

Caraka's Principle

"Viśeşastu prthaktvakrt" — Particularity (viśeşa) brings differentiation, counteracting an excess property.

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• "Opposite reduces." If the doşa is hot, you use a **cool** regimen to calm it.

Therapeutic Corollary

- If there is an **excess** of cold, **hot** (uṣṇa) therapy is indicated.
- Hence the foundation of **gunasiddhānta—opposite** qualities rectify imbalance.

Samavāya (Inherence)

Definition

- Samavāya is the inseparable relationship between a substance (dravya) and its attributes (guna, karma).
- In Vaiśeşika logic, samavāya ensures that a quality cannot exist independently but is inherently tied to its substrate.

Ayurvedic Significance

- Explains why **gunas** and **karmas** are **not** free-floating—they **reside** within substances.
- For instance, the **coolness** (guna) of water is inseparable from water itself (the dravya).
- Medicinal properties (karma) are likewise inherent to the herb's dravya and cannot be abstracted as a separate
 entity.

Application in Herb Action

- The diuretic effect of a herb is **samaveta** (inherent) in the herb's molecular composition.
- Understanding samavaya underscores that therapeutic potency is innate to the material used in treatment.

Integration in Ayurveda's Diagnostics and Treatment

- 1. Analyzing a Substance (Dravya):
 - o Identify guṇas (qualities), karma (actions), dosage forms, and prabhāva (special potency).
- 2. Determining Dosha Influence:
 - Sāmānya-viśeşa logic identifies if the substance will increase or decrease a doşa.
- 3. **Prescribing**:
 - Select herbs/therapies that exhibit **opposite** or complementary guṇas to correct the patient's imbalance.
- 4. Ensuring Samavāya:
 - Recognize that the **potency** (karma) is **inseparable** from the herb's nature—so the correct herb (dravya) must be chosen for a particular condition.

Summary and Clinical Relevance

The six **padārthas**—**dravya**, **guṇa**, **karma**, **sāmānya**, **viśeṣa**, **samavāya**—provide the **structural logic** behind how Ayurveda:

- Classifies substances (both food and medicine) according to their qualities and actions.
- Understands therapeutic relationships (like "like increases like," or "opposites balance").
- Ensures a **scientific** approach to **drug action** and **holistic** patient management.

Key takeaways:

- **Dravya** is the **substrate** or medium of properties and actions.
- Guṇa are the identifiable attributes (hot, cold, heavy, light, etc.).
- **Karma** is the **function** or process, how the substance acts.
- Sāmānya (similarity) fosters increase; Viśeşa (oppositeness) induces decrease.

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• Samavāya (inherence) cements that **properties** and **actions** are **inseparably** tied to a substance.

This system underscores the **rational**, **systematic** way Ayurveda approaches the world of **medicinal** and **dietary** substances, ensuring **precision** and **consistency** in diagnosis and therapy across millennia.

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