

# Buddhist Philosophical Approach to Health Care- A Comparative Analysis of Buddhist Medicine and Ayurveda

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The paper explores the fact that Buddhism is not a medical system mainly but the Buddhist literature has an in-depth discussion on medical matters which are mostly similar to the modern medical systems. However, as this is a very wide field the present discussion is limited to the philosophical aspect of Buddhist Medicine and Ayurveda. The philosophical background of both is based on Indian philosophy of universe though there are some differences. Both philosophical analyses is based on the Indian philosophy of universe, primary elements (*mahābhūta*) The Tridosā theory (three humours); *vāta*, *pitta* and *kapha* (in Buddhist medicine – *semha*) are three biological elements that derived from the primary elements. They constitute the bodies of all the living creatures from microbes to man or any other gigantic creature. When they are in balanced position they are called *dhātu*. All the physical and philosophical processes in the human body and pathogenesis of diseases are explained by the theory of Tridosā. On the other hand, all the external materials are also composed of primary elements. When they are taken into body as food or medicine, they turn into seven *dhātu* or tissues that constitute the supporting and structural units of the body. Each of them has specific power digest it and generate the next form of *dhātu*. When there is disease due to imbalance position, it is cured by making the balance position applying external materials as food and medicine. Although, according to Ayurvedic philosophy, there are five primary elements that

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constitute the human body, there are only four elements in Buddhist philosophy. *Ākāśa* (emptiness) has not been considered as a primary element. This is one of the major issues intended to be discussed in this study.

Both types of medicine, tangible and intangible are recognized by Ayurveda and Buddhist medicine. However in the context of intangible medicine, Ayurveda used only asseveration while Buddhist medicine in addition to that, uses the knowledge of the nature of human body or awaking the realization of constituents of attaining the Super Bliss (bojjhnga)

Key words:- Ayurveda, Buddhist medicine philosophy, elements, Tridosa theory dhātu

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