A REVIEW ARTICLE ON TRIGUNA

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ABSTRACT
The term Guna refers to the inherent energy or tendency with which Prakruti is created and with which human mind functions. The individual’s vital collection of powerful energies which drives people to work. Guna is Sadviteeya. Until when Guna will be there, till then the universe will be there. One who is devoid of Guna is devoid of universe. Guna is Sahaja Prakruti which stays inside a person and is called as quality, impulse and propensity. The Prakruti is composed of three Guna; Satva, Raja and Tama. On an individual level Satva, Rajas and Tamas also corresponds to various psychophysiological state and personality types. Satvika response to clarity of thoughts and purity of Mind. Rajas denote passionate, excitable, aggresive states of Mind and Tamas denotes indifference, confusion and depression. In Srimad Bhagavad Geeta there is description about Triguna and its Swabhava, Lakshana, Karya, Phala and Parinama. The Trigunas reciprocally involve one another and form a Unity in Trinity. They are so interdependent that they can never be separated from one another. These three not only coexist but also stick together. They are in inseparable complex. In some, at one time, one may be dominant and the other two recessives. Human nature which is a complex of these Triguna.

Keywords: Satva, Raja, Tama, Triguna, Prakruti.

INTRODUCTION
One can find the Lakshana and Gunas of Manas described in Bhagavad Geeta. One of the great epics of India and in Srimad Bhagavad Geeta, Lord Krishna has beautifully explained the concept of Manas, the Triguna of Manas, characters of each Guna, the relationship between food and habits in Triguna and methods of controlling the Manas. Triguna as “Sarvada Sahasanchari”. Triguna are present in all human beings, none is free from the operation of any one of the three qualities. They are not constant. Sometimes Satva predominates and at the other time Rajas and Tamas predominates. One should analyze and stand as a witness of these three qualities.

For the performance of all the functions of the world, Triguna must be there. And all the Guna must not be in Sama Avasta. They should be in Vishama. This Asama Sammishrana of Triguna is Jagat niyama. So, one who know that the Satva is Shreshta and one cannot get rid of Rajas and Tamas, should do Sadhana in enlightening the Satva. One should work to increase...
the Satvamsha and to increase Rajas when compared to Tamo Guna.

These three Guna in different proportions influence the mental and intellectual caliber of every individual. Guna indicates the attitude with which human mind functions. Dominance of Guna determines the individual’s personality. Prakruti is the ultimate cause of the world of objects. All objects of the world including body and mind, the senses and the intellect are limited and dependent; things are produced by the combination of certain elements. So, it is assumed that the world is a series of effects and that it must have a cause and Prakruti is cause of creation.

Prakruti is made up of Triguna- Satva, Rajas and Tamas. These three qualities deluded the soul and make it forget its true nature, which is one with god. This delusion is termed as Maya, can only be removed by the grace of the lord himself.

Apart from Bhagavad Geeta the other Acharyas also mentioned about the Triguna. In Sushruta Samhita personality of a man is explained based on Triguna; Satvika, Rajasika, Tamasika Purusha Lakshana are explained.

Acharya Charaka mentioned mental faculty is of three types; Satvika, Rajasa and Tamasa. The Satvika is one which is free from defects as it is endowed with auspiciousness. The Rajasa is defective because it promotes wrathful disposition. The Tamasa is the one which is similarly defective because it suffers from ignorance.

In Astanga Hrudaya the characteristics of Triguna are mentioned as, Satvika persons having Guna like cleanliness, have faith in god, righteous, honest and intellect. Rajasika persons are talkative, having anger, jealousy and are proud. Tamasika persons are coward, illiterate, sleepy, lazy and non enthusiastic.

According to Sankhya philosophy, Prakruti is constituted by three qualities- Satva, Rajas and Tamas. At the level of Mula Prakruti the Triguna are in equilibrium. The moment this equilibrium is troubled, the Guna are thrown out of the balance leading to a continuous cycle of changes. Satva Guna is the indicator of purity, creativity and bliss. Rajas is distinguished by movement, dynamism and reactivity or Raga. Tamas is characterized by ignorance, delusion and power of resistance.

Srimad Bhagavata Purana explained about the nature of man, things and actions according to the dominance of Guna of Prakruti in their unspoiled or perfect and uncombined nature as also in combination. Also says, material substance, the place, the fruit of action, time, knowledge, activity, the performer, faith, the state of consciousness and the species and destinations of life thus all belong to the Triguna.

**SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GEETA**

14th CHAPTER OF BHAGAVAD GEETA:

The knowledge of these Triguna which hold the entire Universe and all creators under their way, is of vital importance to each one for their progress and happiness in life. Without this knowledge one will be forever bound by sorrow. This knowledge has the secret of success in worldly life as well as in spiritual life. Therefore, one should acquire this precious knowledge of knowing Triguna.

Lord Krishna reveals that these three qualities composed the Prakruti. This Prakruti is the primary source and origin of the entire creation and all things in it. Hence all things created are subjected to their influence and irresistible power. The individual soul also is bound to the body by these three qualities present in cosmic nature. The Supreme Being brings about creation through the help of his Prakruti endowed with these Triguna.

The highest of three qualities is Satva. It is pure. It brings about happiness, wisdom and illumination. The second quality is of Rajas gives rise to passion manifested by intense attachment and greed. It causes sorrow and suffering. The third, termed Tamas, is the worst of all. It arises due to ignorance and results in darkness, lethargy and delusion.

One should control and master Rajas, and by holding it in check, wisely divert its power towards good kind of activities. Satva should be carefully cultivated, developed and conserved in order to enable us to attain immortality. Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Geeta declares that, one who rises beyond all the Triguna through spiritual practices becomes free from birth, death, old age and sorrow and enjoys immortality.
Triguna; Satva, Raja, Tama are born of Prakruti, which binds immortal soul to body in its embodied state. Satva which from its Stainlessness is luminous and healthy, binds by attachment to knowledge and to happiness and is sinless one. Rajas to be of the nature of passion, the source of thirst (for sensual enjoyment) and attachment, it binds fast the embodied one by attachment to action. Tamas is born of ignorance, deluding all embodied beings, it binds fast, is full of thoughtlessness, sleep and ignorance.

### TABLE 1: Swaroopa of Triguna

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GUNA</th>
<th>Swabhava</th>
<th>Lakshana</th>
<th>Kaarya</th>
<th>Phala</th>
<th>Parinama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SATVA</td>
<td>Nirmala</td>
<td>Prakasha</td>
<td>Jnana</td>
<td>Sukha</td>
<td>Shanti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAJAS</td>
<td>Kama, Krodha</td>
<td>Atireekha</td>
<td>Avesha</td>
<td>Trushne Udvega</td>
<td>Paribramane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAMAS</td>
<td>Moha</td>
<td>Apravrutti</td>
<td>Ajnana</td>
<td>Pramada Alasya, Nidra</td>
<td>Dukha</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All the Guna are always combined in an unequal proportion not in equal proportion. Satva attaches to mood of joy and action, while Rajas to action. Tamas to ignorance and heedlessness. Satva prevails by overpowering Rajas and Tamas. Rajas dominate other two by suppressing Satva and Tamas. Tamas overpower itself by suppressing Satva and Rajas.

When through all the senses which are the portals of the body, knowledge, happiness and similar characteristics manifest then indeed it should be understood that Satva is dominant. Greed, extroversion, ceaseless planning and execution of work, restlessness, desire for enjoyment, these arises when Rajas is predominant. When Tamas dominates, there is lack of Intelligence, lack of effort, negligence and delusion arises.

When a person dies, if Satva was predominant, then he attains pure, Spotless regions of the knowers of the highest (Atmajnani). Those who die when Rajas dominates are born among those attached to action (Manushya/man) likewise those dying in Tamas, are born in the wombs of creatures without reason (animals).

The fruit of good action is spirituality and purity (Satva). The fruit of Rajas is pain, and ignorance is the fruit of Tamas. From the Satva arises knowledge and greed. From Rajas, Negligence. Delusion and ignorance are the product of Tamas. Those established in Satva evolve to higher goals, while those abiding in Rajas remain in middle and Tamasika abiding in the function of lowest Guna, which degenerates, go downwards.

The embodied one, having crossed beyond these Triguna out of which the body is evolved, is free from birth, death, Jara, Dukha and attains to immortality. When Prakasha (light), Pravrutti (action) and Moha (delusion) are present, a person doesn't hate anything, nor does he desire for them when they are absent.

One who is alike in honor and in humiliation; who views a friend and foe alike; who has abandoned all sense of agency, such a person is said to have transcended the Guna.

One who serves God through the communion of unwavering and exclusive devotion transcends the Guna and attends fitness to become Bramhan.

17TH CHAPTER OF SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GEETA:12

The Shraddha (faith) of the embodied manifest in three ways; Satvika, Rajasika, Tamasika. Those endowed with Satva, worship Devatas. Those with Rajas worship Yakshas and Rakshasas. Those with Tamas worship the Spirits of dead ancestors and elementals (Supernatural entity).

Ahara is of three kinds; The person who are Satvika by nature, like food that promotes longevity, vitality, energy, health, happiness, cheerfulness and that are juicy, soft, nourishing and agreeable. Persons who are Rajasika by nature like food that are Katu, Amla, Lavana, excessively ushna, Teekshna, Ruksha, Vidahi and thirst producing, as also which brings on uneasiness, depression and diseases. Persons who are Tamasika by nature like food that is stale, tasteless,
putrid, decayed, unclean and constitutes the leavings of others (leftovers).

The Yajna (worship) which is performed as mentioned in Shastra without any desire of reward from it and by considering only as responsibility, with calm mind is considered as Satvika. The Yajna done seeking a reward or fruit from it and for vein display (excessively proud of one's own appearance, qualities, achievement) is considered as Rajasika. The Yajna done without following the Shastra Niyama, which is without any distribution of food, which is devoid of Mantra, without any sacramental presents and without sincere faith is considered as Tamasika.

The Tapa performed with the highest faith, by men who are not motivated by expectations of reward and who are established in mental equipoise is declared to be of the nature of Satva. The Tapa that is performed with much show and ostentation (too obviously showing your money, possessions or power) having in view recognition, praise and adoration as a pious man by others, is said to be of the nature of Rajas. The Tapa performed through the practice out of a foolish notion, with self-tortures or for the purpose of destroying anxiousness, said to be of nature of Tamasika.

The Daana (Gift/Charity) given to others with the absolute sense of duty, without expectation of any kind of return, given at the proper time and place to a fit recipient is said to be of the nature of Satva. The Daana which is given in consideration of some gift in return or with some fruit to be reaped in future or in a grudging mood, that is of the nature of Rajas. The Daana is made at an improper time and place to an unworthy recipient, who is with lack of courtesy and in a disregarded manner that is said to be of nature of Tamas.

The constantness in Yagna (worship) and in the Daana (charity) is called Sat (good). Any action in connection with these is also called Sat. Whatever is performed as Yagna, Tapa and Daana, without faith, in fact anything done without faith is declared to be Asat (not good). It is of no significance here (earthy life) or in the hereafter (death).

**SUSRUTHA SAMHITA:**
Kind, Merciful, Samvitbha ruchita, patient, truthful, follows righteous way, belief in god, Jnana, Buddi, intelligent, Smruthi, courageous, who is not blames by anyone, these are the characteristic features of Satva Guna. Rajo Guna predominant persons are always in grief, wandering, unhappy, Ahankara, telling lies, Akarunya, deceiving, respectful, joyous, Kama and Krodha. Tamo Guna predominant persons are in sadness, lack of belief in existence of God, doing unrighteous things, Buddha nirrodha, Ajani, foolish, does not like to work and Nidralu.

**CHARAKA SAMHITA:**
Acharya Charaka mentioned Mental faculty is of three types; Satvika, Rajasika and Tamasika. Satvika is one which is free from defects as it is endowed with auspiciousness. Rajasika is defective because it promotes wrathful disposition. Tamasika is the one which is similarly defective because it suffers from ignorance.

**ASTANGA HRUDAYA:**
Satvika persons having Guna like cleanliness, have faith in god, righteous, honest and intellect. Rajasika persons are talkative, having anger, jealousy and proud. Tamasika persons are coward, illiterate, sleepy, lazy and no enthusiastic.

**TRIGUNA IN SANKHYA KARIKA**
According to Sankhya philosophy, Prakrti is constituted by three qualities- Satva, Rajas and Tamas. At the level of Mulaprakrti the Triguna are in equilibrium. The moment this equilibrium is troubled, Guna are thrown out of the balance leading to a continuous cycle of changes. Rajas is distinguished by movement, dynamism and reactivity or Raga. Tamas is characterized by ignorance, delusion and power of resistance. Satva is said to be light in weight and illuminating. Its lightness helps in making the object nonphysical. Its illuminating power can give extension to the consciousness. Satva Guna is the indicator of purity, creativity and bliss. It can be compared with flame and is represented by white colour. Rajas by nature is; stimulant, hyperactive and fickle, Therefore, said to be the indicator of stimulation, impatience and pain. It can be compared with wick and is represented by red colour.
Tamas is said to be heavy and work as covering for the consciousness. It is indicated by ignorance, darkness and nobility. It can be compared with oil of a lamp and is represented by blue colour.

**SRIMAD BHAGAVATA PURANA**

Control of the mind and senses, forbearance, discrimination, austerity, truthfulness, compassion, memory, contentment, self-sacrifice, lack of desire, faith, revulsion from evil, charity, absorption in the Self-these are the signs of Satva. Desire, activity, pride, greed, self-boasting, longing for one's selfish ends, sense of difference between man and things, sensuality, enthusiasm arising from excitement, craving for name and fame, indulgence in ridicule of others, demonstrativeness, and aggressiveness-these are the signs of Rajas.

Anger, greed, untrustworthy, cruelty, beggingliness, hypocrisy, inactivity, quarrelsomeness, depression, delusion, despondency, wretchedness, lassitude, wanton expectations, fear, lack of initiative and vigour in work-these are the characteristics of Tamas.

When Satva is illuminating, brilliant, pure and peaceful, dominates over the other two Gunas, then person will be happy and established in morality and knowledge. When Rajas, characterized by attachment, sense of difference, and consciousness of one's power, dominates over Satva and Tamas, then man becomes subject to suffering, sorrow, following as he does the path of desire-prompted actions seeking wealth and fame. When Tamas, characterized by lack of discriminative power by lethargy and by inertia dominates over Rajas and Satva, then man becomes subject to pessimism, delusion, sloth, cruelty and indulgence in vain expectations.

When one's consciousness clears up and the senses are no longer distracted, one achieves physical self-confidence and a detached mind; then Satva Guna dominates. When the intelligence is disturbed by too much activity, when one fails to disengage from one's senses, when one is not at ease with one's body and when the mind is unsteady, it shows that Rajas has become dominant. When the drooping mind, unable to sustain consciousness, dissolves into sleep, when thought ceases to function due to dominance of inertia and pessimism, then we know that Tamas is prevailing.

One who die when Satva Guna is dominating, will go to Swarga (heaven), one who die when Rajo Guna is dominating, will acquainted with Manushyaloka (human world), One who die when Tamo Guna is dominating, will go to Naraka (hell).

When a person does any work in the feeling of dedication to god or with good thoughts without desiring the fruits is in the mode of goodness, then he will become Satvika. When a person expects the benefit out of that work then he will become Rajasika. If he is self-praising himself and egoistic towards the work and performed with violence and pressure, then he will become Tamasika.

Spiritual knowledge of detachment is of the Satva, fostering opinions is of the Rajas and a materialistic conviction belongs to the Tamas. A worker free from attachment is of Satvika, blinded by personal desire is of Rajasika, having lost one's memory and doesn’t think about pros and cons before doing any work is of Tamasika.

Satva is the one who believes in spiritual matters, Rajas is the one who believes in outcome of fruit from activities, Tamas is the one who believes in Adharma.

Food that is wholesome, pure and attained effortlessly is of Satvika, food which is delicious and tasteful to oneself is of Rajasika and impure food that makes one suffer is of Tamasika.

Happiness derived from the soul is of Satvika, generated by sense objects it is of Rajasika, happiness derived from delusion and depravity is of Tamasika.

Those who have control over sense organs are called Satvika. Those who indulged in the enjoyment of the world are Rajasika.

**DISCUSSION**

A person having Satva Guna predominance is having qualities by which he can abstain from having diseases caused due to Prajnaparadha and Asatmyindriyartha Samyoga as the person is aware of the consequences and its outcomes. Acharya Sushruta not separately mentioned the types of Guna and Satva.
Pareeksha, but he explained according to the Pradhana Guna of the Manas.

Satva Guna of the person at the time of Vyasana, Abhyudaya and Chedya Bhedadhi Shatra Karma does not cause Dukkha. Satva is the capacity of mind which does not cause the frustration (agon, misery) at times of sorrow, joy (happiness, prosperity) etc. (other emotions like anger, fear). Satva Guna Yukta Purusha from his Atmabala or Manobala he overcomes from the pain or harm caused by the Shareerika and Manasika Vyadhi. Rajo Guna Pradhana Purusha with help of others he can bear and overcomes from his problems. But Tamo Guna Yukta purusha does not bear and overcomes from such problems.  

Manasika Prakruti can be identified on how a person behaves or reacts to a given situation considering the place and time. Acharya Sushruta describes the same in the aspect of Guna where each Guna is explained with each of the exclusive character of the person and each of the character defines how the person will react to a situation.

CONCLUSION

Bhagavad Geeta, Bhagavata Purana, Sankya karika and our Ayurvedic literature gives detailed information about Triguna, their function, characteristics and their role in maintenance of health of an individual. Triguna plays major role in treatment aspect to know about the mental faculty of each person and their mindset towards every situation. This article provides all that information compiled at one place.

REFERENCES


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