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Sharangadhara's Nadi Pareeksha and its implications in Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

Ever since man has started colonising the knowledge for survival and dependence over each other made him social animal. But aggregated knowledge and added wisdom transformed such colonisation in to civilizations. Ayurveda is said to be *Upanga* of *Atharvanaveda*. The mythological connection yielded the Ayurveda in *Triskanda* Ayurveda but the amassing the doctrines of Indian philosophy made it to today's Living sciences the Ayurveda. By 2nd BC the classical works of Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita is believed to have been written. The trend of writing such voluminous work even extended upto 6th AD believed to be the period of Astanga Hrudaya Samhita. The upsurge of Rasa Shastra and the geopolitical changes happening in India had almost pull stopped the progress of Ayurvedic Literature for further 6 centuries. But it was post Shoddala period that is 12th century AD onwards, we find with the specific intent and with a particular domain literature emerged which we call period of Laghutrayee. The same post Shoddala period we find some serious, literary mammoth works in Ayurveda came in the form of commentaries. Dalhana, Chakrapaniduta, Arunaduta and Hemadri commentaries even today believed to more authentic came in this period for the Brihatrayee. This exploration of Sharangadhara in to the *Nadi Pareeksha* is one such add on with a specific reason addressing the entrance level teaching so that the system become more simpler and approachable. In the article an attempt is made to exhibit need specific moulding of *Nadi Pareeksha* which was imported from neighbours is specifically blended; not only to the basics of Ayurveda but was practised as a tool of a) diagnosis, b) prognosis c) treatment and d) even death was determined by it.

Key words: *Nadi Pariksha, Sharangadhara, Ayurveda.*

INTRODUCTION

Nadi Pareeksha can be accommodated in both the examination of *Roga* and *Rogi*; it is one of the *Yukti Pramana* used to assess the *Prakruti* and *Vikruthi* of humans. It may be considered as a diagnostic tool

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which gets included in *Sparsha Pareeksha* and it is one among the *Astavidha Pareeksha*, hardly gets mentioning in the *Bruhatrayees*. Unlike the pulse examination found in the rest of the world, be it pulse centric Chinese medicine or Unani medicine which took birth based on Greek-Arabian pulse reading (in 12 century i.e. Post Shodala period), Sharangadhara in particular make a small context with unique interest; but still adhering to the Ayurvedic principles and bridge up the gap of theoretical importance and to its day today clinical applicative aspects. Sharangadhara used *Nadi Pareeksha* as a tool of examination and for the easy in precise application of the Ayurvedic therapeutics. The work of Sharangadhara can be viewed under improvisation of existing clinical methods and addition of newer examination tools for making Ayurveda simpler. The *Nadi Pareeksha* of Sharangadhara is more of a tool of bed side clinical

assistance which is moulded on Ayurvedic basic principles with a more precision of therapeutic and safe and faster application.

Nadi Pareeksha by Sharangadhara appears more of a simplistic approach under the realm of the pulse centric Chinese medicine which was much versatile form of pulse reading both in observations and in divergent application aspects of health and treatment.

Even then one should not ignore the contributions of *Nadi Pareeksha* by Sharangadhara as developed keeping in mind the system specific needs and moulded into the principles of Ayurveda; though he had absorbed prevailing pulse reading methods at that time. The present paper is a literary dig out to exemplify this unique contribution of Sharangadhara on the *Nadi Pareeksha* and by attributing uniqueness of pedagogy followed by Sharangadhara.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Context and importance

There are two perceptions in the *Nadi Pareeksha Vignyanam*.

Post Samhita Kala

In specific to the post Shodala period where in western ideology including the influence on the native system forced to adopt the so called *Sangraha Kala* where in the specific area of approach was followed and inclusion of medical literature material opening of nut shell approach was attempted by Laghutrayees.

Ravana and Kanaada versions

The huge propagation of *Nadi Pariksha* was started from *Yogasastra* and *Sidhasastra*. The Philosophical knowledge on *Nadi Pareeksha* is transferred from *Shiva* to *Brahama* then to *Indra* and finally to *Kanada*. The famous research scholar on *Nadi Vignyanam* was *Mahrashi Kanada (Vidhyotani)* and second one was *Ravana (Sedheda)*.^[1]

In *Samhita Kala* except few instances the word *Nadi*, *Dhamani* and *Sira* are used as synonyms; but it is the post Shodala period is recognised as *Nadi Pareeksha* came in to existence. Uniquely Sharangadhara give

importance to *Nadi Pareeksha* and included in *Astavidha Pareeksha* and what makes it still special is reading in the 3rd lesson of *Poorva Khanda*. Though the *Shareera* Rachana related issues are dealt in one broader lesson call *Kalakyadhaya* the 5th of *Poorva Khanda*.

Sites of Nadi Pareeksha and their relevance

Karasyangustha Moolae Ya Dhamani Jeeva Saakshini Tacheshtayaa Sukham Dukham Jneyam Kayasya Panidataih || 1 of 3rd lesson

Though we have various pulsatile structure called *Dhamani* in human body which gives pulsation to be explored by physician; out of which each has its own implication for the assessment; Sharangadhara states the wise persons use *Dhamani* which is under the *Angusta* of the hand and rate it as *Jeevasakshini* and represents the *Sukha* (health *Suksasangnakamarogyam*) and *Dhukha* (diseased *Vikarodhukamevacha*) context of the human body.

The commenter Addamalla in Deepika further explains that; *Dhamani* which is representative for the presence of life is present in the *Kara-Angusta-Mula*. By the pulsatile action determines the *Sukha Dhukha* in the people. It is so called *Dhamani* because it produces *Shabda* and carries the life, hence called as proof for life and the proof for the presence of *Prana Vayu* so it is called as *Jeeva Nadi*. It depicts not only the nature of *Doshas*, but also involved *Doshas*, other associated *Doshas* and their nature of association can be learnt by pulse examination. As a light can bring notice of the tender face in the similar manner the hidden *Doshas* are brought to light by *Nadi Pareeksha*. Its position is in the *Hastha Prakoshtasya-bhaya* (left lateral aspects). By stating *Jeeva Nadi Acharya* includes the *Vishmya Dharmartha Doshas* also. As it (pulse) is affected by various factors like after bath, after food one needs to learn the science from a learned scholar for the time and proper palpation methods.^[2]

As per Goodartha Deepika

That which is *Jeeva-Sakshi* (proof of life) and presence of life being learnt by it, is called *Dhamani*, The

variation like *Manda*, *Sthira*, *Chala* will determine the *Sukha* and *Dukkha*.^[3]

Further on *Sloka* no 6 to 9 he add the other sites of *Nadi Pareeksha* and preconditions for a proper *Nadi Pareeksha Vidhi*.

Citing as the opinion of other *Acharyas*, Goodartha Deepika says that the site of pulse examination are *Padanadika*, *Gulphaya Adho Nadika*, *Kantamoola*, *Nasa Mula* are other *Stanas* for *Nadi Pareeksha*. But the *Angusta Mula* is the site where in the *Prana* resides and this should be tested in life. The others should be seen in *Marana Kala*. The *Nadi Pareeksha* should not be carried out after *Snana*, *Bhuktha*, *Kshuditha*, *Athapa Grastha*, *Vyayama*, *Shrama*, as this is bound to give wrong interpretation. One who is load lifter, external injury, *Murcha*, *Bhaya*, *Shoka* in such cases the *Nadi* shall have *Samurchha Avastha* and after some time the *Nadi* shall attain life and this lapse of time shall bring proper assessment of *Nadi*.^[4]

Kara – Angusta- Mula is considered as the *Pareeksha Sthana* of *Dhamani* which represent the evidence of life in the body. This is detrimental at learning the *Sukha* and *Dukha* of the body by the learned scholars'.

Inferences

1. Site of palpation is stated as *Kara-Angusta-Mula* i.e, *Hashta Prakoshtasya-bhaya*.
2. *Jeevasakshini* means; that which produces *Shabdha* and carries the life, hence called as proof for life and the proof for the presence of *Prana Vayu* so it is called as *Jeeva Nadi*.
3. Indicator of *Sukha* (Health *Sukha Sangnakamarogyam*) and *Dhukha* (diseased *Vikarodhukamevacha*)
4. *Nadi* depicts actual nature of *Doshas*, involved *Doshas*, other associated *Doshas* and their nature of association.
5. Pulse is affected by various factors like after bath, after food one need to learn the science from a learned scholar for the time and proper palpation.
6. *Padanadika*, *Gulphaya Adho Nadika*, *Kantamoola*, *Nasa Mula* are other *Stanas* of *Nadi Pareeksha*.

They should be reserved to be examined in *Marana Kala*.

7. *Snana*, *Bhuktha*, *Kshuditha*, *Athapa Grastha*, *Vyayama*, *Shrama*, load lifter, external injury, *Murcha*, *Bhaya*, and *Shoka*; *Nadi* shall have *Samurchha Avastha* and after some time the *Nadi* shall attain life.

Analysis

The *Nadi Pareeksha* was well established specialization, and was used to asses not only health but also nature and severity of *Doshic* association in the body. Which *Nadi* to be examined under which context and the spelt out the meaning of what *Prana* depicted. *Prana* that is the reflection of *Doshas* on the *Nadi* movements and nature can be broadly considered.

Conformation of Agni and its nature

Jwara Kope Tu Dhamani Soshna Vegavati Bhavet | Mandagheh Kshinadhatoscha Naadi Mandataro Bhavet || of the 3rd lesson, which translates that, *Dhamani* shall be *Ushma* and *Vega Nadi* if a person is affected by *Jwara Kopa*. The same in *Mandagani* will be *Manda Tara*^[5]

Inference

1. *Pakthisthanam Nirasyacha* seen in *Jwara Samprapti*, specifies the *Leenavastha* of the *Agni* into *Dhatu*.
2. *Mandataro Agni* in *Mandagni* the *Agni* is *Koshta* and is *Ksheenavastha*
3. *Mandataro Agni* in *Dathu Shosha Janya Nadi Avastha*.

Analysis

Very next the nature of *Agni* and its position are described; which will help in assessing presence of *Agni* in the *Koshta* or other than *Koshta* and to know the nature of *Agni*; The mentioning of *Agni* is to ascertain the three needs of specific line of remedies. *Langhana* therapeutics is one among the six basic therapeutics has to be initiated. But with in *Mandataro Nadi* type we find the *Ksheena Dhatu*

which should be confirmed by physical examination and needs further exploration.

Ekadoshaja Nadi and its Swaroop

If the Nadi is affected by Vata (Marutha) then on palpation of Dhamani one shall appreciate the Jalouka or Sarpavat Nadi. In Pitta affecting Nadi; Kulinga, Kaka or Manduka like palpation of Dhamani shall be appreciate. In case if Kapha Dosha is involved then the Hamsa, Paravata like palpation of Dhamani shall be appritiate.^[6]

In Sannipatha we find Nadi as that of Lava, Varti and Tittari^[7]

Lava, Varti and Tittari is felt in Sannipata. Varti as Varthika and possess Dhara Dhara (Like Gudurukk) sounds. And also have Uttala Gati^[8]

Doshas are in Prakopa state hence one cannot appreciate any of the above motioned living creatures. Behaviour of the Nadi shall be of admixed type, If Vata Dosha Sama Avastha one may find as that of Jaloka Vat, if in Vikruthi than Sarpa Vat shall be appreciated.^[9]

If involved Doshas are Dwidoshas then at time Nadi shall be Manda and at times Nadi shall be Vegavan.^[10]

Table 1: Nadi and its Doshic predominance

Dosha	Doshic influence	Clarification by Deepika Teeka ^[11]	Goodartha Deepika ^[12]
Vata	Jaloka or Sarpavat	Sthiragati	Athi Gamanam
Pitta	Kulinga (Gruha Chataka), Kaka and Manduka. Some reads Kulinga as Kalaapiti which stands for Peacock	Utpalavat	-

Sleshma	Sleshma – Paravata or Hamsa	Manda	-
Sannipata	Lava, Varti and Tittari	Varthika, possess Dhara Dhara (like Gudurukk) sounds, Uttala Gati	
Dvidoshas	At time Nadi shall be Manda and at times Nadi shall be Vegavan.		

Inference

1. Vata Nadi has Jaloka or Sarpa Vat, Sthiragati and Athi Gamanam
2. Pitta Nadi has Kulinga (Gruha Chataka and Kalaapiti (peacock), Kaka and Manduka, Utpalavat.
3. Sleshma Nadi has Paravata or Hamsa and Manda.

Analysis

Jaloka and Sarpagatis has to be appreciated in the Nadi of Vata, which can only be understood by Sthiragati and Athi Gamanam which not only quantify the Nadi but helps the appreciation through practice. Sthira Gati connotes the firmness rather and the Athi Gamanam spells the higher rate of pulse.

Pittaja Nadi- Kulinga (Gruha Chataka), Kaka and Manduka. Some reads Kulinga as Kalaapiti which stands for Peacock, Utpalavat. Though speculation of peacock appears out of context but the Chataka, Kaka and Manduka convey a meaning of agile nature. But the Utpalavat can only be made a meaning of more voluminous and tapered by termination.

Sleshma – Paravata or Hamsa, Manda. All the birds speculated are known for steady and slow pulse.

In the *Samsrusta* are stated for *Samishra Linga*. In mixed type as the pattern of the *Nadi* over laps it becomes more complicated pulse.

In *Sannipata* is more of unpredictability as the birds mentioned have uniqueness *Lava*, *Varti* and *Tittari*, *Varthika*, possess *Dhara Dhara* (like *Gudurukk*) sounds, *Uttala Gati*.

Nadi and prognosis assessment.

Hanti Cha Sthanavichyuta ||4|| Sthitwa Sthitwa Chalati Ya Saa Smrutaa Prananaashini || Atikshinaa Cha Sheetaa Cha Jeevitam Hantyasamshayam ||5||

Nadi plays a role in deciding *Sadhya* and *Asadhya*. The *Nadi* which is dislodged, on and off stagnated and propels, hyper reduced and cold kills the patient with out doubt.

As per Deepika commentary

Adds *Athiksheenam* as that of *Bisatantu Vat*, *Athisheetam* specifying the *Hima Sparsham*. And that *Nadi* which has *Urdhva* and *Adhagamana* shall also kills the patient. If the *Madhyama Angula* is persiving the *Athyartha Uchhila* and some times the upper note and some times the lower note that such difficult (*Kuttila*) *Nadi* brings a certain death.^[13]

As per Goodartha Deepika

That which has left its *Sthana* shall have a fatal out come. Regular but intermittent obstruction (*Kadachit Vahathi* and *Kadachit Navahathi*) shall have a *Pranashni* effect. That which is *Sheeta* and *Athiksheena* death is inevitable.^[14]

Inference

1. *Sthanavichuthi Nadi*
2. *Sthitvatva –Sthitvatva-Chalati*
3. *Athiksheena* and *Sheeta* are three set of *Laxana* decides the bad prognosis.

Analysis

Though *Goodartha Deepika Kara* finds translation but it is *Deepika Kara* attempts cracking the nut. *Bisatantuvat* is state in clarification of *Athiksheena*, *Athisheetam* specified as *Hima Sparsha*; *Urdhva* and

Adha Gamana is taken as *Athyartha Uchhila* which he connotes as *Kuttila* or difficult one perceived to the middle finger with certain death.

Nadi in Psyche involvement and other miscellaneous context

In the association of *Jwara* the *Nadi* shall be of *Ushna Vegavan*, *Nadi* of *Kama*, *Krodha* shall be of *Vegavan*, with *Chintha* and *Bhaya* the *Nadi* shall be *Ksheena*. *Mandaagni* and *Ksheena Dhatu* the *Nadi* is *Ksheena Tara*.

If the presence of *Gareeyasa Ama* (more involvement of *Ama*) than the *Nadi* is perceived as *Raktha Poorna*, *Koshna* (little *Ushna*), *Guru*. In case of *Deeptagni* the *Nadi* shall be of Light and *Vegavan*. If a person is *Sukitasha* and *Balavan* than the *Nadi* shall be of *Sthira*; *Chapal* in *Kshuditasya* and *Sthira* in *Trupti*.^[15]

Deepika commentary clarifies that,

1. *Ushmatha* in *Jwara* shall possess *Ushna Vega* also.
2. In *Krodha* and *Kopa*, *Nadi* shall be *Vegavan* but not the *Ushma* and get differentiated by *Jwara*.
3. In *Chinta*, *Bhaya*, *Shrama Nadi* becomes *Ksheena* and *Sukshma*.
4. In *Shrama*, *Glani*, *Mandagni*; *Nadi* shall be *Manda*, in this context the *Mandagni* refers to *Atyantha Mandagni*.
5. *Asrukh Poorna* is read as *Rudhira Prakopa Janya Ushna* and *Guru Nadi* i.e. *Ishath Koshna* and *Pashana Vat Gurutara*.
6. In case of *Ama Athyartha Guru* followed by description of *Ama* as *Annarasa* etc.
7. Such type of *Athyartha Guru* is seen in *Sama Dosh*, *Sama Dushya*, *Samjyanya Sama Roga*, *Doshaya* being *Rasadaya Dhatava*, even involving *Mala Mutra Prabruthani*.
8. In *Deeptagni* i.e. *Prabala Agni* the *Nadi* shall be *Laghu* and *Vegavati*, for *Laghvi* he says as that of *Tula* or physical balance like *Vega*.
9. In case of *Sukhi* it shall be *Sthira* and such shall be for *Swasthya Nadi*.

10. The *Kshudithasya* and *Bhubhukshita* shall have *Chapala Avastha*. This *Avastha* shall be for *Prakruthi Sthita Agni*.

11. *Trupti* referred to a person who has taken a full meal in such case the *Nadi* shall be of *Sthira*.^[16]

As per Goodartha Deepika

The *Nadi* of palpation seen in the *Jwara* (presence of higher degree of temperature), shall be (*Jwara Kopa* is a state of hyper pyrexia) with *Ushma* and *Vegavathi*. In *Mandagni* and *Ksheena Dhatu* the *Nadi* shall be of *Mandatarā*.

Analysis

Deepika Kara in fact made a through inference of the *Moola* and clarified the different between the findings which help to identify the particular stage.

DISCUSSION

Limiting the discussion to the aspects of

a) Liaison work Sharangadhara attempted in Clinical methods of Nadi Pareeksha.

The *Nadi Pareeksha* is a bed side assessment made by the physician by the feel of pulse through his fingers. Certainly this is an art which can only be nurtured by those who has compassion to the system. *Nadi Pareeksha* is a affirmation of the macroscopic clinical presentation in a given patient. Clinical presentation in Ayurveda is driven by assessment of *Dosha-Oushadi Nirupana* and is carried out by *Trividha Rogi Pareeksha* (*Darshana, Sparshan* and *Prashnana*) along with *Panchavidha Roga Pareeksha*. The *Darshan, Sparshana, Poorvaroopā* and *Roopā* are part of *Pratyaksha Pramana*. The *Nidana* and *Samprapti* is *Shabdha / Aptopadesha Pramana* but *Prashna, Upashaya / Anupashaya* are always driven by *Yukthi Pramana*. A synergic, logical and rational in an algorithm approach is must for to raise a suspicion index to narrow down the given clinical presentation is an art which every physician learns by practice and clinch the proper diagnosis or in close proximity to a diagnosis.

A question need to be answered, is there any short

cuts? Yes with *Nadi Pareeksha* you can but the very learning and mastering of *Nadi Pareeksha* itself is of higher order of learnings, one can achieve by total dedication; having stated this the work of Sharangadhara's work on *Nadi Pareeksha* can be summarised as a Clinical method which is done by *Prathyaksha* in confirmation of the clinical findings, further giving a confidence in a precise therapeutical application, at times may also be implemented for prognosis and even assessment of efficacy of therapeutics.

b) Nadi Pareeksha by Sharangadhara eased the therapeutic applications of Ayurveda.

- i. Acharya Charaka in *Vimana Sthana* 4th chapter and 8th verse lists up the *Anumana Pareeksha Gneya Bhavas*. For example; *Agni Pareeksha* by *Jarana Shakthi, Manasika Pareeksha* by *Anumana Pramana*. *Nadi Pareeksha* aides this *Anumana Pareeksha* and gives conformation by *Pratyaksha Pramana* through *Nadi Pareeksha*; further explores which type of *Agni* i.e. *Manda, Teekshna* and *Sama* can also be elicited.
- ii. *Sama Avastha* is stated by *Astanga Hrudaya* as *Shrothavarodha Bala Bramsha* etc. *Laxanas* though which one need to infer (*Anumana*) of *Sama*; the same in *Nadi Pareeksha* may help in the conformation through *Prathyaksha Pramana*.
- iii. To aide the *Arishta Nadi* may help as a *Prathyaka Pramana* for the assessment of prognosis of any given clinical presentations.

c) Fractional contributions by Sharangadhara in updating Ayurveda.

Change is an inbuilt mechanism of update and liveliness of any system. Changes towards positive and enriching the given system helping in easing or simplifying should be welcome and embraced with open hands.

Howsoever in decimals the contributions of Sharangadhara through *Nadi Pareeksha* have attempted should be viewed as dynamic changes that a science enriched Ayurveda.

CONCLUSION

Nadi Pareeksha is well established clinical methods if mastered can bring Ayurveda science to meaning full therapeutic application and assist bed side judgement of *Doshic Avastha*. *Nadi Pareeksha* is a *Prathyaksha* Pramana aids the *Anumana Pareeksha* of health and illhealth parameters hence precision of Therapy can be appreciated. Acharya Sharagadhara has added *Nadi Pareeksha* with in the realm of Ayurvedic principles and linked the clinical findings for both ease of Ayurvedic therapy but also aid in assessment of therapeutics.

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