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Review on *Shatkriyakala* – A way to know and treat diseases

Rajendra Kumar Soni, Garima Srivastava¹

Lecturer, Dept. of Shalaky Tantra, ¹Lecturer, Dept. of Swasthavritta, S.A.M.C. Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India.

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a science of life. It is a system of traditional medicine native to Indian subcontinent but now days its knowledge is accepted worldwide. In *Ayurveda* prevention of all types of diseases is known as a prominent part of treatment which includes restructuring human lifestyle aligns with the course of nature. *Kriyakala* means the time of treatment or interception in the process of disease manifestation. These six stages mentioned by Acharya *Sushruta* gives an idea regarding the state of the disease in the body and it guides us when to intervene or where to inter intervene. Early diagnosis of diseases helps to cure the diseases successfully without much discomfort in planning treatment. The concept is traced in ancient *Ayurvedic* books. This is an objective approach of ancient scientists helping for the clinical practice. Apart from that the *Kriyakala* give us the knowledge of diagnosis, prognosis and the level of intervention and so that to prevent the establishment of a disease.

Key words: *Kriyakala*, *Ayurveda*, Diagnosis, Disease.

INTRODUCTION

Manifestation of a disease is a process which starts from the contact of etiological factors to establishment of a disease. The prime factors in pathogenesis of a disease are *Dosha* and *Dushyas* (Body elements). The causation of disease is attributed to *Doshas* hence it is essential to know the movement of *Doshas* (Body Elements) or stages of movement at a given point. This concept has been clarified under the heading of *Shatkriyakalas*. In which *Kriya*. means action/treatment/a opportunities and *kala* means time. So, *Kriyakala* means the time of treatment or opportunities in the process of disease

manifestation. These six stages mentioned by Acharya *Sushruta* gives an idea regarding the state of the disease in the body it guides us when to intervenes and where to intervene.

The term *Kriyakala* is also known as *Chikistavasara Kala* (the time which reveals or denotes the necessity of treatment). If the *Doshas* are at first stage by applying simple line of treatment we can stop the *Dosha* to go to next stage in the manifestation of disease by which the disease process will break, similarly if we know the *Doshas* in *Prasaravastha* (stage of migration) we can eliminate them by *Samshamana Karma* (pacification treatment) from the nearest possible way. This knowledge of *Kriyakalas* is most essential to fulfill the principle of *Acharya Charakacharya* i.e. to know the *Avastha* of *Vyadhi* (stage of disease).^[1] Apart from this the *Kriyakalas* gives us the knowledge of diagnosis, prognosis and the level of intervention and so that to prevent the establishment of a disease.

Shatakriyakala is the process of understanding the pathogenesis of disease in consecutive stages. Mainly 6 stages were described for the successive manifestation of the disease, i.e.

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Rajendra Kumar Soni

Lecturer, Dept. of Shalaky Tantra,
S.A.M.C. Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India.

E-mail: vaidya.rajsoni@gmail.com

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1. **Sanchaya:** Gradual accumulation of *Dosha* in respective seats.
2. **Prakopa:** Accumulated *Doshas* moving to other sites other than its main site.
3. **Prasara:** Aggravated *Doshas* leave their original place and spread to the other parts of the body through different *Srotas*.
4. **Sthanasamshraya:** Agitated *Doshas* spread to different places and struck somewhere because of obstruction in *Srotas* due to abnormality in *Srotas* is called *Sthanasamshraya*.
5. **Vyaktavastha:** Appearance of clear cut symptoms of the disease.
6. **Bhedavastha:** In this stage specific signs and symptoms of the diseases manifest.

So the *Shatakriyakala* are the need of an hour in understanding of disease process. So this article is selected.

OBJECTIVES

To study the concept of *Shatakriyakala* and to understand the role of *Shatakriyakala* in manifestation of diseases.

This conceptual study will be helpful in understanding pathogenesis of disease in consecutive stages.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Source of data

1. *Sushruta Samhita*
2. *Ashtanga Hrudaya*

Methods

1. To compile available literature on *Shatakriyakala*
2. To compile the importance of *Shatakriyakala* in manifestation of diseases.

1. Sanchaya

First stage of *Kriyakala* is known as *Sanchaya* means collection, putting together i.e. the accumulation of *Dosha* due to various *Nidana* factors. In this stage *Doshas* get accumulated but they will not leave their own place, that state of *Doshas* is known as

Sanchaya.^[2] *Dosha* is going to accumulate in the irrespective seats and accumulated *Doshas* manifests certain symptoms are as follows;

Vata Sanchaya Lakshana - *Stabdha Poorna Koshtata* (Stiffness and fullness in abdomen)

Pitta Sanchaya Lakshana - *Pitavabhasata* (Yellowishness of the body parts), *Manda Ushamta* (Mild increase in body temp.)

Kapha Sanchaya Lakshana - *Angagaurava* (Heaviness in the whole body), *Alasya* (Lassitude)

This stage of *Doshas* is to be taken as *Samhatarupa Vriddhi* (solid state of *Doshas*) i.e. nothing but when *Doshas* has to move from one place to another or to move from its own place it requires (liquid state of *Doshas*) the *Vilayanarupa* to attain this *Rupa* (stage) of *Doshas* they must require the heavy *Nidanakara* factors, so here due to insufficient *Nidana* they will remain in increased state but in solid state in its own place.^[3] If the cause of *Doshadushti* (vitiation of body humors) is mild the *Dosha* increases in its own place and become stagnant. The etiology of *Sanchaya* can be classified into, 1) *Kala Swabhava* 2) *Trividha Hetu* i.e. *Pragynaparadha* (miss leads), *Asatmendriyarthasamyoga* (improper uses of sensory organs), and *Vyapannahetu* (Inherent cause). Which includes the seasonal variation, day night variation for *Kala* (time), change in *Ahara – Vihara* (food and regimen) is taken as *Trividha Hetus*. Based on the common and specific symptoms this state will diagnose. For ex: Common symptoms develop like, aversion to similar *Guna* (quality), *Rasa* (taste), etc. in *Chayaavastha*.^[4]

2. Prakopa

When the *Doshas* are in *Chaya* condition, if *Nidana* continuously persists, *Doshas* lands in *Prakopavastha*. *Acharya Vagbhatta* defines *Prakopa* simply in single word i.e. *Dosha* are ready to move from its own place or other place indicating *Kopa* state.^[5] But this meaning can be applied when we think of that there is no *Prasaravastha* or when we think about *Chaya*, *Prakopa* and *Prasara* stages only. Then this description of *Doshic* movement comes under the stage of *Prakopa*. Accumulated *Doshas* moving to

other sites other than its main site. It is the second stage for preventive measures. The following symptomatology manifests in *Prakopa* stage as per the involvement of *Doshas* are as follows;

Vata Prakopa Lakshana: *Koshta Toda Sancharana* (pain and movement of *Vata* in *Maha Srotasa*)

Pitta Prakopa Lakshana: *Amlika* (sour eructations), *Paridaha* (burning sensation all over the body), *Pipasa* (excessive thirst).

Kapha Prakopa Lakshana: *Annadwesa* (aversion to food), *Hrudhot Kledascha* (excess salivation in mouth)

Vagbhata^[6] describes this stage as '*Unmarga Gamita*' i.e. inclination of *Doshas* to leave its original site. *Prakopa* is of two types. 1) *Sachaya Prakopa* 2) *Achaya Prakopa*

When *Dosha* jump directly to *Prakopa* stage without passing through *Chayaavastha* it is *Achaya Prakopa*. *Sachaya Prakopa* means gradual increase of *Doshas*. *Achaya Prakopa* called *Pathyaja Prakopa* means it do not require any *Samshodhana Chikitsa* like *Vamana*, *Virechana*. *Sachaya Prakopa* is called *Apathyaja Prakopa*. This requires *Shodhana Chikitsa*. But in *Shatkriyakala Prakopa* stage should be limited to the state of readiness of *Dosha* to move from its own place, that means *Dosha* increases in its quantity and ready to move, but not moving which proves *Acharya Dalhanas* definition of *Prakopa* i.e. extended state in *Chaya* in which *Dosha* are in liquid or gaseous state which has ability to move. Solidified increase in *Chayaavastha* and liquid increase in *Prakopavastha*.^[7]

By observing this one, we can say that due to continuous intake of *Dosha Prakopakara Ahara* (food), *Vihara* (regimen), *Oushadha* (medicine) etc. the *Prakopa* state of *Dosha* will develop in which *Dosha Vriddhi* is in liquefied state at its own place which is of two types;

- Chayapurvaka Prakopa:* Means getting *Prakopa* after accumulation. Here *Sanchaya* state must be compulsory.
- Achayapurvaka Prakopa:* means getting overflow without prior accumulation.

Some *Acharyas* used the another term for this as *Chayapurva Prakopa* is the *Kathinyabala* (solidified increase) and *Apathyaja*. Where as *Achayapurvaka* state is *Pathyaja*.^[8] This statement will also have an view like due to *Trividha Hetus* or indulgence in *Apathya* i.e. the *Aharavihara* of *Doshaprakopakari* the *Dosha* get accumulated leading to its *Sanchaya Vriddhi*, but it is in solid state i.e. *Samhatarupa Vriddhi* attaining *Kathinyabhava Prakopa* where as in *Swabhavika* (natural) *Prakopa* though person indulging in *Pathya Ahara – Vihara Dosha* gets *Prakopa* which is *Unnabhava Dosha* (irrespective of diet and activities *Dosha Prakopa*). This state can be diagnosed based on continuation of *Chaya Lakanas* and desire to opposite *Gunas* and aversion to similar *Guna* and common symptoms of *Dosha Prakopa*. Ex: in *Vata - Sramsas* (subluxation), *Bramsha* (breakdown of function), *Sada* (fatigue), *Ruk* (pain), *Toda* (prinking type of pain) etc.

3. Prasara^[9]

Aggravated *Doshas* leave their original place and spread to the other parts of the body through different *Strotas*. If the aggravation of *Doshas* is mild, it may not produce disease because it stays in hidden channels and produces disease, if preventive measures are not undertaken and after consuming causative factors in excess. It is third stage of *Kriyakala*. Aggravated *Dosha* spread to different places and produces following symptomatology are as follows;

Vata Prasara Lakshana: *Vimarga - Gamana* (regurgitation), *Atopa* (flatulence and gurgling)

Pitta Prasara Lakshana: *Osha* (sense of boiling), *Chosha* (squeezing sense), *Paridaha* (burning sensation), *Dhoomayanani* (emitting smoke from mouth)

Kapha Prasara Lakshana: *Arochaka* (anorexia), *Avipaka* (dyspepsia), *Chardi* (vomiting), *Angasada* (lassitude).

Doshas takes any one of the following three courses.

- Urdhwagati* - Upward diseases of ear, nose, eye etc.

2. *Adhogamana - Atisara, Shleepada.*
3. *Tiryakagamana - Charmavyadhi, Akshepaka, Sirapurana* (hypertension).

Doshas also moves to different places with the help of *Vayu* either alone or in combinations are as follows and it is of 15 types.

- 1) *Vata Prasara*
- 2) *Pitta Prasara*
- 3) *Kapha Prasara*
- 4) *Rakta Prasara*
- 5) *Vata Pitta Prasara*
- 6) *Vata Kapha Prasara*
- 7) *Vata Rakta Prasara*
- 8) *Pitta Kapha Prasara*
- 9) *Pitta Rakta Prasara*
- 10) *Kapha Rakta Prasara*
- 11) *Vata Pitta Rakta Prasara*
- 12) *Pitta KaphaRakta Prasara*
- 13) *Vata Pitta Kapha Prasara*
- 14) *Vata Kapha Rakta Prasara*
- 15) *Vata Pitta Kapha Rakta Prasara*

Hetu Linga Chikitsa is advised in *Prasaravastha*, later *Vyadhichikitsa*.

4. *Sthanasamshraya*

Continuation of *Nidana* factor along with *Prasaravastha Doshas* move further into stage of *Sthanasamshraya*. While vitiated *Doshas* are in circulation where ever *Shrotavaigunya* (depletion of tissue) presents there they settle. That settlement of *Doshas* at a place called *Sthana Samshraya*.^[10] For the settlement of *Doshas* at a particular site they require certain preconditions like *Nidana* must be potent enough to cause damage, there should be some place i.e. *Kha Vaigunya* (tissue depletion or certain disturbances in the normal surface of *Srotas*) and the *Doshas* (vitiating) in circulation if further damages or makes *Dushti* (vitiating) in that *Khavaigunya* area it is

called as *Dushya*. So, in another aspect a specific *Nidana* may have affinity towards a particular *Srotas* (channels) / *Dhatu*s (tissues) by its nature where it may cause *Khavaigunya* and manifest a disease.

All the etiological factors may not able to cause the disease at every tissue it may require its own etiological factors related to particular involved *Doshas* and *Dushyas* in the same manner a particular bacteria or virus will have specific affinity towards a particular tissue, where they cause a disease. Thus we can say that a *Nidana* (exogenous factor) itself by triggering the *Dosha* might cause *Shroto Vaigunya* (tissue depletion) there by foundation of a disease and another possibility may; by the time of *Doshaprakopa* if already *Khavaigunya* exist due to *Dhatukshaya* (may be atrophy or dystrophy) the *Dosha* may cause disease. In both these conditions the union of *Doshas* / *Dushya* at a particular site is actually called *Sthanasamshraya*. Like - *Nidana + Prasaravastha – PrasaraDosha – Dhatudushti* or formation of *Dushya – Dosha + Dushya* in circulation – *Khavaigunya* (Localization) = Disease manifestation (which is the first stage or foundation stage of *Vyadhi*). Hence this stage gives an idea or develops the *Purvarupas* (Prodromal sign and symptoms of particular disease) at a particular *Srotas* which indicates location and cause this is only seeding stage of disease.

Diagnosis in this state: This state of *Kriyakala* the complete picture of disease will not appear obviously because this is only seeding stage of disease. Hence *Acharya Madhavkara* states that by identifying this stage of *Kriyakala* is easy on presence of *Purvarupas* (prodromal symptoms) of a particular disease at a particular *Srotas* which indicates the location and type of disease.^[11] It is of two types: a) Indicators of disease ex: Aura incase of epilepsy with mild headache etc. b) Indicators of *Dosha* visualizing yellow colors on objects in case of *Pitta*.

5. *Vyaktavastha* ^[12]

5th stage of *Kriyakala* if *Nidana* continuously present in stage of *Sthanasamshraya*, *Dosha* surely enters into *Vyaktibhava* stage. *Vyadhi Darshana* means

appearance of all the signs symptoms of a disease this is known as *Vyakti*. Invisible signs and symptoms of a disease will come onto surface that condition is *Vaktibhava*, it is a stage in which the manifestation of fully developed disease appears it represents with full blown picture of disease.

The *Doshic* predominance, the involvement of *Dushya* and involvement of *Srotas* will clearly reveal the *Samprapti Karma*. This stage facilitates the physician to analysis, diagnose and plan the line of treatment.

6. *Bhedavastha*^[13]

In this final stage specific sign and symptoms of the diseases manifests. In this *Avastha* the proper diagnosis of diseases can be made or can be understood. In this *Avastha* the *Vyadhibheda* can be done for example, if the patient is suffering from *Atisara* or *Dravamalapravrutti* that means he is suffering from *Atisara* disease, during this period if he has pain in abdomen or *Udarashoola* that means he suffering from *Vataja Atisara*. If his stool have dark yellow colour that means he suffering from *Pittaja Atisara*. Hence in this *Avastha* the person can make or physician can make differential diagnosis of diseases. If this *Avastha* is not treated properly it becomes incurable. This particular stage of manifestation is very difficult to cure.

If the disease is untreated or encountered with insufficient *Vikhavighatakara Bhavas* that disease lands in next stage of *Bhedavastha* in which it gives birth to another disease which is called *Upadrava* (complications).

Significance of *Shatakriyakala*^[14]

1. By knowing the six *Avasthas* of *Kriyakala* one can get the knowledge of *Hetusevana* and so that he can stop *Hetusevana* and thus the further *Avastha* can be prevented.
2. With the help of *Shatkriyakala* one can give actual treatment with the use of various drugs.
3. By knowing *Shatkriyakala* the physician can give the treatment to weakened area or organ so that

further *Sthansamshraya Avastha* can be prevented.

4. The *Sadhyasadyatva* of the disease can be done or one can get the knowledge of *Sadhyasadyatva*.
5. It facilitates the knowledge about the prognosis of diseases in the respective *Avasthas*.

DISCUSSION

In the manifestation of disease it is necessary to rely upon the *Shatakriyakala*. If we are able to understand the *Shatakriyakala* properly the pathology can be judged at its initial stage only and it can be treated easily. Thus the proper knowledge of *Shatakriyakala* helps in understanding the process of manifestation of various diseases. Also the knowledge of *Shatakriyakala* is helpful for getting the knowledge of *Sadhyasadyatva* of disease.

Manifestation of a disease is a process starting from the contact of etiological factors to the establishment of a disease. The disease is nothing but a complex of *Dosha Dushya Sammurchana*. The prime factors in *Samprapti* of a disease are *Doshas* and *Dushyas* starting from the entry of pathogen (*Hetu*), vitiation of *Dosha*, establishment of a disease, the course of a disease and the end of disease are the factors concerned with the *Samprapti* of disease. In Ayurveda the causation of disease is attributed to *Dosha*, hence it is essential to know the movement of *Doshas* or stages of movement at a given point. This concept has been clarified under the heading of *Shatkriyakalas* which is mentioned by *Acharya Shusruta* in *Vrana Prashniya Adhyaya* in respect to *Vrana* and *Vrana Sopha*.

If the *Nidana* is continuously followed by the individual these *Sanchita Doshas* may enter into next stage known as *Prakopa* where the increased *Doshas* now ready to move from their own place. This is of two types either *Doshas* will get *Prakopa* after the *Sanchaya* or sometimes *Doshas* directly get *Prakopa* without *Sanchaya* and they will move to show their *Prakopa Lakshanas* like *Pitta Prakopa* - feeling of heat as if sitting beside fire i.e. *Osha* and *Daha* (burning type of pain) etc. Now these *Prakopita Doshas* starts

to leave their own place, this stage is known as *Prasara*, after leaving own place they are in search for the accumulation in other places where already either *Dhatus* or *Malas* present in vitiated condition by mixing with these they vitiate that *Dhatus* or *Malas* because of this only these are named as *Dushyas*, but for this movement of *Doshas* they need the help of *Vata Dosh* so, while treating or preventing the *Doshas* to this stage *Vata Dosh* must be checked and to be kept in equilibrium, when the *Doshas* will start to leave their own place now where ever *Kha Vaigunya* is existing in the body the vitiated *Doshas* along with *Dushya* takes their *Ashraya* i.e. known as *Sthana Samshraya* where the union of *Dosha Dushya* i.e. *Dosha Dushya Sammurchana* begins. The diagnosis of disease starts from this stage on the basis of prodromal symptoms or based on predominant *Doshas* in that particular disease nothing but *Purvarupavastha*. The last two stages i.e. *Vyakta* is considered when the wise physician is unable to diagnose the disease in *Purvarupa Avastha* and if treatment is not given, then disease will enter into *Vyaktavastha* which is the period of manifestation or picture of disease will come to know i.e. *Rupa Avastha* (actual sign and symptoms).

The final stage of *Kriyakala* i.e. *Bheda Aavastha*, where the disease course ends in relief or if continuous it attains chronicity, giving origin to some other disorders and finally they may lead to death.

CONCLUSION

To conclude the following are the points derived from the above discussion. Though Acharya *Sushruta* has mentioned *Kriyakalas* in *Vrana Prasaniya Adhyaya* in respect to *Vrana Sopha* and *Vrana*. It is a universal phenomenon can be observed in all the disorders. The proper knowledge of *Shatakriyakala* helps in understanding the process of manifestation of various diseases as well as to diagnose the diseases. The physician who diagnose a disease and treat accurately according to *Shatakriyakala* will become a successful practitioner. The knowledge of *Shatakriyakala* is helpful for knowing the *Sadhyasadyatva* of disease and also plays an important role in the treatment.

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