Sharangadhara’s Nadi Pareeksha and its implications in Ayurveda

H Pampanna Gouda, Govind Raju,1 Seema MB.2
Associate Professor, Dept. of Basic Principles,1 Professor, Dept. of Shareera Rachana,2 Professor, Dept. of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara College of Ayurveda, Udupi, Karnataka, India.

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. 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 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 Vignyana.

**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 Yogasatra and Sidhasastra. The Philosophical knowledge on Nadi Pareeksha is transferred from Shiva to Brahma then to Indra and finally to Kanada. The famous research scholar on Nadi Vigyana was Maharshi 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 Kalakyaadhaya the 5th of Poorva Khanda.

**Sites of Nadi Pareeksha and their relevance**

Karasyangustha Moolae Ya Dhamani Jeeva Saakashini 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 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 Prakoshtaya-bhaya (left lateral aspects). By stating Jeeva Nadi Acharya includes the Vishmya Dharmarth 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*, *Chola* 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*, *Kantamooola*, *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*, *Atha 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, *Hastha 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*, *Kantamooola*, *Nasa Mula* are other *Stanas* of *Nadi Pareeksha*.

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

7. *Snana*, *Bhuktha*, *Kshuditha*, *Atha 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 *Prana* 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 Mandatara 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*\[^{[6]}\]

**Inference**

1. *Pakthisthanam Nirasyacha* seen in *Jwara Samprapti*, specifies the *Leenavastha* of the *Agni* into *Dhatus*.

2. *Mandatara Agni* in *Mandagni* the *Agni* is *Koshta* and is *Ksheenavastha*


**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 *Mandatara Nadi* type we find the *Ksheena Dhatu*
which should be confirmed by physical examination and needs further exploration.

**Ekadoshaja Nadi and its Swaroopa**

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 appreciate.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 *Dvidoshas* then at time *Nadi* shall be *Manda* and at times *Nadi* shall be *Vegavan*.¹⁰

**Table 1: Nadi and its Doshic prominence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dosha</th>
<th>Doshic influence</th>
<th>Clarification by Deepika Teeka¹¹</th>
<th>Goodartha Deepika¹²</th>
<th>Sleshma</th>
<th>Sleshma – Paravata or Hamsa</th>
<th>Manda</th>
<th>-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>Jaloka or Sarpavat</td>
<td>Sthiragati</td>
<td>Athi Gamanam</td>
<td>Sannipata</td>
<td>Lava, Varti and Tittari</td>
<td>Varthika, possess Dhara Dhara (like Gudurukk) sounds, Uttala Gati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>Kulinga (Gruha Chataka), Kaka and Manduka. Some reads Kulinga as Kalaapiti which stands for Peacock</td>
<td>Utpalavat</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Dvidoshas</td>
<td>At time Nadi shall be Manda and at times Nadi shall be Vegavan.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

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 Jeevitaam 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, Athiseetam specifying the Hima Sparsham. And that Nadi which has Urdhva and Adhagamana shall also kills the patient. If the Madhyama Angula is persieving the Athyaartha Ucchila 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 hava a Pranoshni effect. That which is Sheeta and Athiksheena death is inevitable.[14]

Inference

1. Sthanavichuthi Nadi
2. Sthitatva –Sthitatva-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, Athiseetam specified as Hima Sparsha; Urdhva and Adha Gamana is taken as Athyartha Ucchila 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 Chinta 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 Deepthagni 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 Athyantha 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 Athyarta Guru followed by description of Ama as Annarasa etc.
7. Such type of Athyarta Guru is seen in Sama Dosha, Sama Dushya, Samiyanya 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 Laghi 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 Svasthya Nadi.
10. The Kshudithasya and Bhubhukshita shall have Chapala Avastha. This Avastha shall be for Prakruthi Sthitva Agni.

11. Trupti referred to a person who has taken a full meal in such case the Nadi shall be of Sthira. According to 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 Mandatara.

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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-Ushshadi Nirupana and is carried out by Trividha Roga Pareeksha (Darshana, Sparshan and Prashnana) along with Panchavidha Roga Pareeksha. The Darshan, Sparshana, Poorvaroopa and Roopa are part of Pratyaksha Pramana. The Nidana and Sampapti is Shabdha / Aptaopadesha Pramana but Prashna, Upashaya / Anupashaya are always driven by Yukthi Pramana. A synergetic, 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 Shakti, 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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