AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW ON JANAPADODHWAMSAS

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda the eternal life science from many centuries proved to be the most efficient tool in the health management system. It gives more weightage to the prevention than the cure. Janapadodhwamsas is one among the unique concept described in Ayurveda treatises which literally means demolition or annihilation of people or community. Acharya Charaka called it Janapadodhwamsa, Acharya Sushruta called it Maraka, and Acharya Bhela called it Janamaar. There are four factors that have been described which are common and essential for every living being, that is, Vayu (air), Jala (water), Desha (land), and Ritu (season). Among these four factors, Kaala is mainly main factor. Any abnormal alteration in these four factors can significantly influence individual or community or environment or all of them together. Vitiation of these four common factors is the cause for Janapadodhwamsas. Foremost reason for Janapadodhwamsa has been described as Adharma (immorality) and the root cause of Adharma is said to be Pragyangaparada (delinquency of wisdom). Considering the note worthiness of Janapadodhwamsa, a whole chapter has been depicted in Charaka Samhita illustrating its onset, causes, peculiar features, and management. Its causative agents, method of prevention has been clearly explained. To manage Janapadodhwamsa, it is advised to include the usage of Rasayana therapy, Panchkarma procedures, SadvritPaalan (code of right conducts), and Achara Rasayana, that is, behavioral therapy.

Keywords: Janapadodhwamsa, Maraka, Janamaar, Rasayana, Panchkarma, Pragyangaparada, Vaadchikitsa, Dhupana karma.

INTRODUCTION

The term homeostasis in the modern science defines that it is the maintenance of constant internal environment of the body. Here, it is not a static equilibrium. It is a dynamic equilibrium. As the change in external environment has its influence in the living organism, the importance of maintaining equilibrium with the nature is inevitable. Ayurveda, the science of life, deals the organism in a holistic way gives importance in maintaining health than the treatment of diseases. It gives more weightage to the prevention than the cure.

Ayurveda is made up of two Sanskrit words, Ayu which entails coming together of body, senses, mind, and soul and Veda meaning knowledge, wisdom. Ayurveda is a perennial source of knowledge, known to mankind since several thousands of years, about cause, features and treatment of diseases, and ways to restore as well as promote health.

Our ancient Acharyas explain Ritucharya which means methods for adapting with the changing environment which is not in our control. Ritus season appears in nature due to the movement of sun, the prime energy source of the nature. As part of the movement of sun, six Ritus manifest with diverse characteristics. Charya means the Anushthana or modifications which can make us in harmony with the environment. Acharyas explain modifications in every aspect of life such as Aharu and Viharas – bath, dress, sexual life, and sleep which help them to cope up with the environment thus help to lead a qualitative life. Ultimately help us achieve all the aims of life.

Natural calamities including epidemics and pandemic diseases are described in Ayurveda under the heading Janapadodhwamsas. Diseases having similar signs and symptoms affecting many people of town, state, and country at a time and can destroy the whole province is named as Janapadodhwamsa. According to Charakasamhita factors involved in Janapadodhwamsa which in turn lead to vitiation of environmental factors are air, water, place, and climate. War and other man-made calamities are also the causative factors for Janapadodhwamsa.

According to Chakrapani, there are two kinds of causes for diseases, Sadharana (typical) and Asadharana (atypical). Atypical is subjective cause that varies from human to human such as food and habits, which vitiates Dosha. Typical is common to many people such as air, water, place, and climate. Diseases due to such common causes are called Janapadodhwamsa. Among four factors, Kaala is considered as supreme among other three factors since Kaala Dushti may lead to vitiation of other three factors. Kaala has direct relation with Rita if Ritucharya is followed properly we can tackle Kaala Dushti effectively [1].

There are four factors that have been described in Ayurveda treatises which are common and essential for every living being, that is, Vayu (air), Jala (water), Desha (land), and Ritu (season) [2]. Any abnormal alteration in these four factors can significantly influence individual, or community or environment or all of them together. This alteration in the four factors may be understood with an instance considering environmental imbalance and disease outbreak emerged due to ongoing industrialization, pollution, etc. Description of such conditions affecting wide population has already been seen in Ayurvedic treatises dating thousands of years back. Acharya Charaka termed this condition as Janapadodhwamsa. The vitiated above-said four common factors are the cause for Janapadodhwamsa. Although many scholars considered Janapadodhwamsa as an endemic or epidemic or pandemic disease condition, whereas in Charaka Samhita, the causes for vitiation of such factors has also been described in a dedicated chapter focused on Janapadodhwamsa.

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LITERARY REVIEW

“Janapad” means group of people or community and “Dhwamsa” means demolition. Therefore, the literal meaning of the term
“Janapadodhwamsa” may be considered as a condition with massive demolition or annihilation of people or community. In Janapadodhwamsa, persons having distinct Prakriti (constitution), Aahara (diet), Deha (body), Bala (strength), Satmya (suitableness), Mana (mind), and Vaya (age) may be affected by one particular disease simultaneously. In Janapadodhwamsa, four factors, namely, Vayu (air), Jala (water), Desha (land), and Kaala (time period/season) are primarily altered. The sequences of these four factors are important in progressive order because of their essentiality. Among these, Kaala being the most powerful of them is cause of disaster.

Distinct terminology has been used for Janapadodhwamsa by different Acharyas. Acharya Sushruta has termed this condition as Maraka (destroying condition) and emphasized the utilization of Aushadh (herbs) and Jala (water) which are not affected or collected before the onset of Maraka [3].

Acharya Bhela used the term Janamaar for this condition (destroying condition) and emphasized the fasting of a person due to outbreak of medical epidemics (Mitt bhoj), should remain Dhritiman. With the use of mantras and medicines, one should remain engaged in the salvation of Brahmins, Janamaar by doing this can be avoided [4].

Acharya Kashyapa also talks about the disease which occurs in Janapadivishesa [5].

LOCATION OF SAMBHASHA (DISCUSSION)

In summer weather, forest area near the banks of Ganga at Kampilya, capital city of Panchala region (i.e., today Kampilya is Farakhabad district in UP of India), which was the residence of the Dwija (elite of the twice born communities like Brahmins). In this place, Panuravasu Atrya speaks to his disciple Agnivesha [6].

ORIGIN OF JANAPADODHWAMSA

Foremost reason mentioned by Acharya Charaka for Janapadodhwamsa is Adharma (immorality). Adharma is an antonym to Dharma which denotes lack of morality, or unrighteousness in the people. Unethical and non-harmonious practices among communities and people come under Adharma. The root cause of Adharma is said to be Pragavaparada (delinquency of wisdom). Asatmyendriyarthasamyoga, Pragavaparada, and Purinama have been described as the main factors for the development of any disease [7]. The word Pragavaparada is made from two words pragya+aparadha, Pragya=Dhee + Dhriti + Smruti, and aparadha means misdemeanor. Denowned Dhee (intellect), dhriti (patience), and Smritti (memory) lead to all sorts of Ashubha karma (unwholesome/inauspicious actions). This is called as Pragavaparada and causes vitiating of all Doshas [8,9]. Pragavaparada is said to be the cause of all Aagantuka (exogenous) and Manasika (mental) Vyadh [10].

Acharya Charaka has also described Lobha (greed) as a factor leading to Adharma. Further, reason for Bhutasangha (contact with an organism) Abhishapa (curse) has also been described as Adharma [11]. Lobha (greed) along with Abhidroha (affronting) and Kopa (anger) has also been mentioned as etiological factors for the occurrence of eight major diseases [12]. Acharya Sushruta has mentioned that the reason behind the change in Marakais Adrishta (invisible or idiopathic). Further, Dalhana explains these to be caused by the Adharma (immorality) of population of that particular area. Sometimes, the Ritu Vyasp (seasonal variations) may also be caused due to various reasons such as Abhishapa (curse) and Rakshkrodh (demon resentment) [13].

QUERY AND EXPLANATION

After properly collection of drugs, Agnivesha ask question to Acharya Panuravasu Atrya that “How does the simultaneous destruction of communities or Janapadodhwamsa take place by the incidence of only single disease, in spite of individuals who differ from one another in their constitution (Prakriti), diet (Aahara), physique (Deha), vitality (Bala), habits (Satmya), psychic make up (Sveta), and age (Vaya)?”

Acharya Panuravasu Atrya explained to Agnivesha that although a community may be dissimilar with respect to the constitution and other characteristics of its individuals, here are some common factors which often get adversly affected, resulting in outbreak of diseases having similar symptoms that destroy communities, that is, Samanya Tat Vaigyuntat Samankaalat Samanalingbha Vaadyhobhinivittamana Janapadam Udwnasayati [14]. The common factors which affect mass population are Vayu (air), Udaka (water), Desha (land), and Kaala (season).

FEATURES OF JANAPADODHWAMSA

In Janapadodhwamsa, mainly the said four factors are affected and results in mass annihilation. Acharya Charaka has described Vikritalakshanas (altered characteristics) of the said factors which are as follows [15].

SHUSRUTA SAMHITA NIDANA STHANA CHAPTER – 5

“पर्यायोऽस्मात्संधिकर्मोपद्धार्थहृदयादिज्योति "\n
Sahadhiyuddhasanapravarnavishatarakshastranukrayat|| (Sū, nī.3/32)

Acharya Sushruta (The Father of Surgery) has explained Usaspargik Rogaas. Usaspargika diseases are communicable diseases that spread through direct contact or contaminated objects of patient.

By physical contact, expired air, eating with others by sharing plates, sharing bed, clothes, and cosmetics spread the communicable diseases from one person to other person. Here, according to Acharya Duhana Prasangant means excessively and frequently, if these activities are performed [16].

JANAPADODHWAMASAKARA BHAVA (MOST DANGEROUS BHAVA)

Impairment of Vayu (air), Udaka (water), Desha (land), and Kaala (season) is more lethal in their increasing order. Kaala impairment is most dangerous. The wise man should know that “Gariya Param Iti” water is more important than air, land is more important than water, and Kaala is yet more important than Desha by virtue of their degree of indispenability [17].

GENERAL TREATMENT OF JANAPADODHWAMSA

विनाशितप्रकंपकलक्षणसंपदांपविशेषतःकुशातुधेस्त्रेंजीविप्रयाप्तार्यमात्रायथायथोपतितीयायः ||18||

वेष्मयुद्धसनायुतसामायंसामायंवस्तुग्राहायम्।

कुशातूथप्यर्द्विगुणाप्रथपुष्यती॥

रामायणायांविविधायापृष्ठभराती॥

शस्यतेदेहवृत्तिश्चभेषजै:पूर्वमुदधृतैः॥

Vinnashita prakamapakalakshana sampdham punapadha tushtastra strema vishayatala ryanamaya punamayatiti [18] 3/13-14

One does not suffer from these diseases even if all four vitiating factors are at work if people are assured with proper medicines which are already collected and processed. Use of Panchakarma, proper administration of Rasasyana therapies is advised in the effective management of Janapadodhwamsa (communicable diseases). The herbs used for the medicine preparation should be collected before the onset on diseases in that particular area.

Along with this Satyabhuta (truthfulness), Bhoota Daya (compassion for living beings), Dana (charity), Bali (scarcities), Devatarchana (prayer to the gods), and Sudrarta Anuvruti (good deeds), protection of the self by Mantra, etc. is very effective, Shivamupanveham (devotion towards God), “Sevanambrahmcharyayatathebivhramchaoarinaam” service to
those observing brahmacharya (celibacy) and following it, Samkatha Dharmshastranam (discussion on religious scriptures), Samkatha Maharishinaam (befriending great sages), Jeetatmananam (who have self-control), Dharmika (who follow religion), who are Satvika and who are learned people. These therapies, which when adopted during spread of communicable diseases (Janapadodhvamsa), can easily save the lives of individuals provided the death of the individuals is not pre-determined (Yesham Na MrityuSaamnyamiti).

In the situation of Maraka, Acharya Sushruta has also suggested to utilize medicines that have been collected before the onset of diseases and to use pure water [18].

**IMPORTANCE OF RASYANA**

Several Rasayana botanicals described in Ayurveda are used in clinical practice for strengthening immunity. Based on our research data, we find that Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera), Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia), Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus), Amalaki (Phyllanthus emblica), and Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra) are potential immunomodulators.

According to kalpadruma Rasayana means rasaraktadidhatus (the seven basic tissues) reaches their proper destination or the process which help in proper nourishment of tissues by poshaka rasa. According to Sushruta, Rasayanatantra includes different steps of delaying aging process, increases longevity, and intelligence and provides disease resistant power to the individual [19]. According to Charaka Rasayana is the method to produce the dhatus of optimum quality.

According to Sharangadhara, Rasayana treatment is one which results in the prevention of diseases due to old age [20].

**DHUPANAA KARMA (FUMIGATION)**

In ancient time and even today, Yoga are done for the welfare of the mass population as it resulted in mass hygiene. It is also mentioned in janapadodhvamsa in Ayurvedic literatures. In Kashyap Samhita, Raksoghana Dhupana is mentioned for protection from infections and Gana Dhupana for all diseases originating from Bhuta (microbes) [21]. In Charaka and Sushruta Samhita, different types of Dravyas, that is, drugs are mentioned in different diseases that are used for Dhupana Karma. Like, Guggulu (Commpihora mukal), Nimba (Azadirachta indica), Vacha (Acorus calamus), Katha (Saussurea lappa), Haritaki (Terminalia chebula), Sarsapa (Brassica campestris), Yova (Hordeum vulgare) with Ghrita [22]. In Sushruta Samhita, Rakshoghna Dravya is mentioned like Sarsapar, Nimba, Lavana with Ghrita fumigation with them to be done twice a day for 10 days. Microbes are destroyed by Raksoghana drugs [23].

**VAAD CHIKITSA (SOUND THERAPY)**

Acharya Sushruta said that if food is contaminated with poison, then different symptoms arises due to that poison and to treat them apply different pastes on various types of instruments and produce sound from them.

| S. No. | Factor | VikritaLakshana (altered characteristics) |
|-------|--------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1.    | Vayu (air) | 1. Vishama (absence of features in accordance with season)  
2. Astitirma (excessive calm)  
3. Atichalam (excessive violent)  
4. Atiparusha (excessive rough)  
5. Atishita (extreme cold)  
6. Atiyusha (extreme hot)  
7. Atiruksha (excessive dry)  
8. Atulyahisyan (excessive humid)  
9. Atihairava (wind blowing with excessive sound)  
10. Atipratihatapasparatsa (colliding in nature)  
11. Atikundalin (excessively cyclonic)  
12. Asatmaygandhavashpasiktapanshudhumophatamit (wind with unwholesome smell, mixed with gases, sand, ashes, and smoke) |
| 2.    | Jala (water) | 1. Vikrutgandhavaranarasapara (Abnormal smell, color, taste, and touch)  
2. Kledalahula (excessive stickiness)  
3. Jalcharavihangam (water bodies are devoid of aquatic animals such as fishes)  
4. Upkshinamjalelaya (reduced water levels in lakes and ponds)  
5. Apritikaram (unpleasant appearance or taste)  
6. Upgataganam (devoid of natural qualities) |
| 3.    | Desha (land) | 1. Vikrutgundhavaranarasasapara (Abnormal smell, color, taste, and touch)  
2. Kledalahula (excessive stickiness)  
3. Abundance of serpents, wild animals, mosquitoes, locusts, flies, rats, owls, vulture, and jackals  
4. Pratanaadihulam (excessive orchard with grass, weeds, and creepers)  
5. Atishukhamajalelaya (extremely dried land with destroyed crops)  
6. Dhumrapavanam (abundance of smoke in air)  
7. Suffering of different animals and birds due to bewilderment and agony  
8. Land where religion, truth, modesty, manners, conduct, and other qualities of the inhabitants are absent  
9. Kshubhitdirnajaalashayam (disturbed and turbulent water bodies)  
10. Pratataulkapatnaghatabhumaikampa (Frequent occurrence of meteorites, thunderbolts, and earthquakes)  
11. Atibhayavaramroopam (hearing of fearful sounds)  
12. Sun, moon, and stars appear as they are covered with coppery, reddish-brown, and whitish-colored clouds  
13. People living on the land appears as confused, bewildered, agitated, sorrowful, frightened, etc. |
| 4.    | Kaala | Features opposite, excessive, or less to the features of normal course of season |
The main objective of Ayurveda is Swasthya Swasthya Raksanam, that is, to maintain health of a healthy person. Prevention is best way to avoid Aupsargik Vyadhi (communicable diseases) and consider under Janapadodhwaamsa so remedies are told in Janapadodhwaamsa such as Rasayan therapy, Panchakarma procedures, Sadhrit Polan (code of right conducts), and Aachara Rasayanaya, that is, behavioral therapy, Homa (Yagya) should be tried as preventive measure. Adoption of Ayurveda dietetics and lifestyle, Panchakarma therapies, Rasayanaya therapies may effectively contribute to prevent and manage situations especially like disease outbreak. Further research studies are required to support the preventive and curative aspects of Ayurvedic management during epidemic and pandemic conditions.

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