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A fundamental study of the Science of Life vs. Death w.s.r. to *Indriya Sthana*

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ABSTRACT

Having a long, vice-free life is seen as a great blessing by many people, especially those who idealize *Ayurveda*. *With this* if we find out how long we have left to live or when we will pass away *then it seems very pleasant and amazing*. It can appear magical to the common man but through the lens of *Ayurveda* it becomes plausible. *Ayurvedic* principles provide a comprehensive understanding of the different aspects of life, including the causes and symptoms of aging, as well as ways to maintain good health and treat disorders through wellness practices and therapy. While clearly describing the examination of *Kumar Ayu* in *Sharer Sthana* and of the remaining *Ayu* in *Indriya Sthana*, a detailed explanation has been presented on the fundamentals and applied aspect of science of life in *Sharer Sthana* and science of death in *Indriya Sthana*. It is not possible to achieve meaningful longevity without analyzing the causes of death. Changes in the natural expressions of the body are considered to be *Arishta*. *Arishta* can provide time-bound knowledge of death as well as its causes. The absence of the same symptoms that give knowledge of death, provides the knowledge of life. If the *Varnadi Parikshya Bhaavas* placed in *Purush* has a clearly articulated *Arishta* it is impossible to avoid that *Arishta*. One can view death in a positive light and by thoroughly examining and managing the situation patient, their families, doctors, and hospitals can reduce stress on the healthcare system and save time and money during pandemics like COVID-19. By studying and utilizing *Indriya Sthana* or *Arishta Vigyaan* doctors can gain more knowledge and increase their efficiency.

Key words: *Indriya, Ayumaan, Arishta, Parikshya Bhaava*

INTRODUCTION

While deeply perusing the word *Ayurveda* it is thought that *Ayurveda* is a complete human aging science along with medical science. On this basis it can also be called life science. Although life and death are two sides of the same coin, many people consider death to be the most important bitter truth in life. Nevertheless, despite this our medical researchers for a long time

have already been trying to postpone death while extending the happy age. Especially in *Charaka Samhita* all the essential parts of medical science are described in detail. Prior to the initiation of management the *Acharyas* have instructed to decide through the course of examination of the patient and disease the prognosis, that is whether the disease is curable, easily curable, just manageable or not curable and to avoid the treatment in the latter because it causes loss of money, time, fame, etc.^[1] In this sequence *Charaka* has presented a detailed description of the fundamentals and applied aspects of the science of life in the *Sharer Sthana* and the science of death in the *Indriya Sthana*.

Meaning of *Indriya*

The term *Indriya* is originally derived from the word *Indra*. *Rig Vedic Indra* is the most influential or the principal god. That is, the one who is omnipresent can be called *Indra*. In this perspective the soul is

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considered to be the supreme in living body, that is why the word *Indra* has also been adopted for *Aatma*.

Along with this while simplifying it for the common man, the meaning of *Prana* (life) has also been taken from the word *Indra*.^[2] According to *Ayurveda* it is clear that *Prana* is a combined form of the soul, and mind, as well as the *Indriya*, *Sukshma Bhoot*. Perhaps that is why the word *Prana* being considered plural in literature, after death it is said that *Pranas* have gone away. In *Ayurveda* it is also called the subtle body or the *Linga Shareer*. The soul is considered to be the most predominant among the elements that come under it.

In living beings the knowledge of *Prana* or life expression is reflected only by the knowledge obtained by the *Indriya* or their subject etc., therefore as a result of the knowledge of *Prana* through the *Indriyas* it is appropriate to call the *Indriyas* as the sign symptom of *Indra* which is *Prana*. All signs and symptoms of the living body come under this. The continuity of these symptoms (*Chetnaanuvriti*) is called *Ayu*. *Ayu* is the combination of body, *Indriyas*, *Mana*, and *Aatma*. Along with the five *Indriya* (sense organs) the whole body is called the abode of the *Indriya*. The symptoms of the four types of age mentioned in the famous quote of *Charaka* are related to the *Indriyas/Prana* and its *Adhishtana*.^[3]

Accordingly there can be a diverse classification of these symptoms such as healthy person symptoms, diseased symptoms, *Arishta* symptoms. On the basis of these symptoms the value of the entire age of the person is determined, which is also underlined in this definition "*Manan cha Tatchatm Ayurveda: Sa Uchyate*" that is for achieving the definitional target of *Ayurveda*, the value of the four types of age need to be understood in order to avoid the inauspicious two types of age and to achieve the auspicious two types of age. For this there is a clear instruction of *Kumar Ayu* test in the *Shareer Sthana* and the remaining *Ayu* estimation in the *Indriya Sthana*.

Indriya means the symptoms or the means of the *Indra* or *Praana*.^[4] But in place of the above-mentioned universal meaning *Chakrapani* has limited the word *Indra* to only *Arishta* symptom by using it as a tribunal

noun. Keeping in mind the broader meaning also *Charaka* has probably mentioned in brief the symptoms on various grounds of happiness, well-being, and auspicious age in the last chapter.^[5]

Without analyzing the causes of death the attempt to achieve a long life cannot be completed scientifically. *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, *Vagbhatta* all the three *Acharyas* have analyzed the factors of death. Death occurs due to wrong treatment, that is by treating the patient without properly observing all the senses of the body; due to the deeds done in the previous birth and the impermanence of the body.^[6] The *Sukshma Sharer* or *Shariri* or soul residing in the body leaves the habitation of the soul i.e., its beloved body in the process of *Prayaan* or *Mahaprayaan* entering the darkness of death which is connected with several death-suggestive phases.^[7]

Meaning of *Arishta*

The word *Rishta* is used in the sense of well-being, welfare, inauspicious. *Arishta* is derived from *Rish* which means violence. *Arishta* according to *Charaka* is the one which possesses knowledge of death.^[8] According to *Sushruta* and *Yogindranath Sen* *Arishta* is indicative of future death.^[9] *Charaka* has also considered *Arishta* as a precursor to death.^[10] *Acharyas* have considered this knowledge of death by *Arishta* similar to the origin of fruit, fire, and water by flower, smoke, and cloud respectively.^[11] *Arundatta* clarifying the various definitions of *Arishta* said that *Arishta* is not a sign of death but a shadow or impression of the coming death.^[12] It is clear from this that *Arishta* is different from death and although shadow and perception are considered to be suspicious, considering it to be pictorial it is also considered to be more sensitive and clear as per today's trend, as opposed to literal symptoms.

Therefore, any change or distortion in the natural state of the body without any reason is called *Arishta*. Its knowledge is based on the sign and symptoms generated in the body, so these signs and symptoms are also considered to be *Arishta*. According to the value known by the aforesaid age test, if there is remaining age then only there is a provision to give

medicine i.e., treatment^[13] as all types of medication or medicine fail in the person whose life is not left.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The following aim and objective of this study have been determined:

1. To make this hitherto neglected subject more practical and prevalent by studying and analyzing the *Indriya Sthana* and *Arishta Lakshan* and presenting it in a simple and systematic manner.
2. On the basis of the description and symptoms of *Arishta*, making successful decisions about curable and incurable diseases.
3. The study of life or health benefits based on all parameters of *Arishta*.
4. Study the parameters and processes of the examination described in detail in the *Indriya Sthana* and use it in health and medical science.
5. Study the *Indriya Sthana* and use it in the context of the examination, to put into practice *Charaka's* concept of becoming a skilled examiner and skilled *Ayurveda / Ayu* scholar.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Material

Entire 12 chapters of *Charaka Samhita Indriya Sthana*, 28-32 chapters of *Sushruta's Sutra Sthana*, Chapters 5, 6 of *Vagbhatta's Sharer Sthana*, and their commentaries by *Chakrapani*, *Dalhana*, *Arundatta* respectively.

Method

Keeping in view the usefulness and utility of the *Indriya Sthana* etc. and the neglect of the *Indriya* or *Arishta Sthana*, a 5-member study team was formed by the *Samhita evam Siddhanta* Department, GACH, Patna, as a departmental study project and on this, four departmental seminars were organized with ppt presentations from 27-02-2023 to 27-05-2023, and the project report (study report) was presented after an in-depth study by the scientific method of debate and analysis etc. Along with *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, *Vagbhatta*,

their interpretations were also studied and results, discussion, and conclusion were drawn.

RESULT

In common diseases the aetiopathogenesis, *Purvaroop*, symptoms, prognosis is according to the reasons mentioned in the *Nidana Sthana* but in *Arishta*-related disorders a specific process is reflected. The linked literary description is fragmented, short, and unclear, with numerous uncertainties or doubts. The fundamentals of *Arishta* obtained in the study are as follows:

1. There are two tests for knowing the *Ayu maan* – one is the longevity test, based on the natural characteristics of the body mentioned in the *Sharer Sthana*,^[14] *Vimana Sthan*^[15] and the other is the remaining *Ayu* test based on the *Arishta Lakshan* as described in the *Indriya Sthana*. These tests are instructed to be done both in healthy and in patient.^[16]
2. Basically, grossly or markedly derangement of physical and mental nature is called *Arishta*. This *Arishta* is known by the changes that arise in the natural state, i.e., the symptoms of deformity.^[17]
3. The absence of the same symptoms that lead to the knowledge of death, also lead to the knowledge of life.^[18]
4. Defects in the natural state of *Roopa* (form), *Indriya* (sense), *Swara* (voice), *Chaaya*, *Pratichaaya* (shadow) etc. physical and mental attributes without any reason i.e., by latent or unknown causes, spread throughout the body in violation of the healing process and produce the future death indicating *Arishta Lakshan*.^[19]
5. Often, the above-mentioned manifestation is related to patient-dependent *Arishta*. In those which do not relate to the patients like messengers, omens, mischief, etc., the process of vitiation of defects is unclear. In these, apart from the defects, the symptoms, etc. circumstantial evidence is more important and so the *Arishta* signs known by the messenger are called external

Arishta by Acharya Dalhan. Many scholars have also called it a patient-independent *Arishta*.

6. The conversion of the natural form of body and modesty into perversion is considered to be *Arishta*. *Sushruta* has linked mental emotions to *Sheela*. In this sequence, along with the natural conditions of physical and mental emotions, their unnatural or morbid condition also becomes important. Perhaps that is why *Dalhan* referring to *Charaka* has given a detailed explanation of *Prakruti* and *Vikruti*.^[20]
7. *Arishta* are quick in nature.^[21]
8. The body is definitely weakened by *Arishta*.^[22]
9. The relationship between *Arishta* and death is immutable.^[23]
10. Symptoms suggestive of imminent death once manifested do not disappear without death, conversely there cannot be any death either without being preceded by premonitory symptoms.^[24]
11. Premonitory symptoms that have not fully manifested may not necessarily indicate impending mortality.^[25]
12. Premonitory symptoms equally hold good in all cases of death irrespective of their being timely and untimely.^[26]
13. In untimely death, symptoms appear only when the disease produced out of unwholesome regimens transcends all therapeutic measures which is why it is said there is a sudden onset of *Arishta* in untimely death.^[27]
14. Some of the *Arishta* disappear in a short moment after their manifestation.^[28]
15. *Arishta* is closely and minutely related to the death-causing disease.^[29]
16. Not all the symptoms are seen in all moribund persons.^[30]
17. *Arishta*^[31] are of two types-
 - a. Niyata *Arishta* / permanent^[32]
 - b. Aniyata *Arishta* / Infinite

18. *Arishta* knowledge needs to be obtained by examining various *Parikshya Bhaava* like *varna*, *swara*, *gandha*, as per the requirement.^[33] Mentioned in table 1

Table 1: Showing examples of fundamental signs and symptoms

Fundamental Signs and symptoms of <i>Arishta</i>	Reference
1. Unexplained change in natural state of physical expression like <i>Varna</i> , <i>Swara</i> , <i>Rasa</i> etc.	--
2. Half-body <i>Prakrutir Varna</i> , half-body <i>Vikrutir Varna</i> , half-body <i>Raukshya</i> , half <i>Sneha</i>	Ch.I.1/9-10
3. Body emits pleasant or unpleasant smell continuously without any appreciable cause	Ch.I.2/16
4. Appearance of extremely abnormal taste or extreme sweetness	Ch.I.2/22
5. Sensation of coldness in heat, smoothness in coarseness, softness in hardness, and vice versa	Ch.I.3/4
6. Without special power in the senses perceiving things generally unavailable from senses	Ch.I.4/25
7. Appearance of cruel dreams and the manifestation of evil disposition for the patient	Ch.I.5/27-40
8. Diminution in complexion, strength, capacity for intake of food; Swollen hands, feet, cavities, abdomen	Ch.I.6/14
9. Emaciated, weak, all the three <i>Doshas</i> simultaneously aggravate	Ch.I.6/17
10. Sudden diminution of strength, intellect, health, flesh, blood and functions of <i>Grahani</i>	Ch.I.6/23
11. Shadow or reflected image changes in shape, measurement, color and lustre	Ch.I.7/7
12. Signs like fever, thirst, fainting, diminution of strength and looseness of joints	Ch.I.8/23
13. If a weak patient gets rid of a disease all of a sudden	Ch.I.9/15
14. Bodily heat diminution, absence of concentration power of, loss of complexion,	Ch.I.11/3

weakness of mind and absence of attachment for life	
15. Hostility of the messenger and change in complexion to that of a dead person	Ch.I.12/09-24

1. Special attention has been paid to the *Prakruti* and *Vikruti* examination.^[34] Subtle examination of *Prakruti*^[35] is done by six types namely - *Jatiprasakta*, *Kulaprasakta*, *Desanupatini*, *Kalanupatini*, *Vayoanupatini*, *Pratyatmaniyata Prakriti* and *Vikruti* by 3 types namely *Lakshan Nimmit*, *Lakshyanimmit*, *Nimmit Anuroopa*.^[36]
2. *Sushruta* has highlighted the perversion of natural smell, color, taste, etc. in *Vrani Purush*.^[37] Apparently a sick man can be taken from this *Vraninah Purush* as *Sushruta*'s patient is mostly a surgery requiring *Vrani Purush*.
3. On the basis of various *Arishta Lakshan* the period of death can be determined to be between *Sadya* (present) to one year.^[38]
4. Generally the details of the *Arishta* are not to be disclosed but can be stated under special circumstances.^[39]
5. Explaining the patient's condition to the patient or his relatives as necessary, informing the ill effects or the incurability of the disease.
6. Special intensive care is required after careful examination in case of uncertain death however, in exceptional instances or at the request of the patient's relatives *Mansrasa* should be administered for a month to assess whether there is benefit from nutrients and to forgo therapy if there is no benefit.^[40]
7. Divine and mantra therapy, especially by Siddha men, chanting and penance of *Arishta* preventing *Mahamrityunjaya*, etc.
8. According to *Sushruta* the use of *Rasayana* and medicines by *Siddha Purusha*.
9. In the dying state *Bhoota* (possibly virus, bacteria) try to destroy both the patient and his drug by coming in large quantities or infecting them.^[41] In this context efforts are required to protect the

dying and their medicines by arranging *Bhootadi* treatment.

DISCUSSION

Acharyas believe that no patient or healthy person dies without *Arishta* but in reality, some people display it before death while others don't, especially in accidental cases. Many academics hold the view that because there is little or no time for the testing of *Arishta*, death is interpreted to be without *Arishta* but the *Acharyas* strongly believe that *Arishta* is necessary for death. Astrologers and experts in body features can also predict deaths caused by accidents through *Arishta Pariksha* over time. The *Acharyas* consider the unavailability of *Arishta* to be mainly due to doctors' ignorance. Due to the following reasons there is an illusion that many times death occurs without *Arishta* symptoms -

- *Sukshmyat* - *Arishta* are sometimes very subtle. Subtle can be understood as the temporary existence of *Arishta Lakshan* and the presence of fewer symptoms.
- *Pramada* - Due to the inattention or lack of expertise etc. of the doctor many times the symptoms of the disorder are not outlined or known.
- *Ashu Vyatikaran* - As soon as the *Arishta Lakshan* develops the person dies and therefore the knowledge of *Arishta* cannot be attained.

The absence of a cause (*Animmit*) in the origin of *Arishta* is seen as a crucial fact and those *Arishta* symptoms through which knowledge of impending death arises are considered to be the cause. But according to the scientific theory of causality, these death-related *Arishta Lakshan* are also expected to have some cause, *Animmita* means latent or unknown and not absence.^[42]

Charaka has described that *Arishta Lakshan* arise suddenly, clarifying which *Chakrapani* has told sudden origin due to its quick nature.

Almost all the *Acharyas* have considered the relationship between *Arishta* and death to be

immutable except for a few exceptions. After the complete *Arishta Lakshans* are generated, death is certain.

Chakrapani has explained that death is not inevitable in incomplete or *Avyakt Arishta*, which means it can be avoided by proper medical arrangements.

Death is considered of two types: *Kaala* and *Akaala*. In *Kaala Mrityu*, the *Arishta Lakshan* are often easily identified, but in *Akaala Mrityu* many times the *Arishta Lakshan* come soon at the last moment so they are not identified or may get identified through special attention.

Arishtas arise and disappear quickly. They rapidly appear, kill patients, and die themselves, resulting in their quick disappearance. If incomplete or latent *Arishtas* disappear quickly due to certain reasons, there may be health benefits in exchange for the patient's death.

In a short amount of time and in a discreet way, many *Arishtas* are linked to the disease making it difficult for examiners or doctors to detect the outcome of the investigation without careful observation. Therefore, it is important to test these *Arishtas* with utmost skill, concentration, and expertise.

It is not possible to find all the symptoms of *Arishta* mentioned in the *Samhitas* in all humans. Taking into account the difference in each person, there can be many different *Arishta Lakshan* which is why it is necessary for doctors and examiners to have knowledge of all *Arishta Lakshan*.

According to *Acharyas* *Arishta* has a detrimental influence on all of the body's *dhatu*s. As a result the body's nourishment is interrupted, deformation process cannot be controlled, and the body's weakness gradually worsens. *Chakrapani* has therefore referred to this vulnerability as inevitable.

In *Aniyat Arishta* it is not necessary for effect to be according to cause. In this due to the excess of doshas there is only a feeling of *Arishta* and on the pacification of doshas the *Arishta* symptom is pacified. Death is not certain in *Aniyat Arishta* and doubt remains. This is compared to how not all flowers produce fruit or all

clouds produce rain. It is likely to occur in *Purush Anashrita Arishta* such as *Shakun*, path, *Doota*, etc.

In *Niyat Arishta* it is necessary for the effect to be due to the cause. Death certainly arises. Example: *Doshaj Arishta*. It is considered to be a definite *Arishta*. This has been explained by the *Acharyas* with the example of *Dhoom* and *Agni*. Just as fire is certain to occur from smoke, similarly in *Arishta* occurring due to defect in *Dosha Dushyaadi Dalhan* has expressed the definite knowledge of death.^[43]

These are considered by *Vagbhatta* to be *Asthayi* and *Sthayi Arishtas* respectively,

Sthayi Arishta - *Vagbhatta* has called the characteristic on the basis of its permanent presence. It can also be called immutable. Death is considered certain in such *Arishta*.

Asthayi Arishta are those that disappear after a period of time. Due to the excess of *doshas* the severity of the symptoms results in the appearance of the *Arishta*. Temporary *Arishta* does not seem to be an expressed and mature stage. Here both life and death are doubtful. Inadvertently it seems to be *Arishta* but it is *Arishtabhasa* only. Through a thorough examination by a knowledgeable and skillful examiner it will be clear that this seemingly *Arishta* condition not being fully expressed can be remedied by special treatment. Thus by separating this classification *Arishta*'s definite dying theory also becomes clear.

If someone shows signs of *Arishta* during an examination, it suggests that they are nearing the end of their life. However, it does not necessarily mean that they will die soon. The timing of their death depends on the specific class of *Arishta* present. This determination of time is called the *Arishta* period. In some cases, the time of death is directly mentioned, but in others, it needs to be inferred indirectly. There are methods in *Samudrik Shastra* and astrology to calculate a child's age using their horoscope. In the *Samhitas* the *Arishta* period has often been described from *Pratyasanna* or *Sadyomaran* to one year. According to *Chakrapani*, the literal meaning of *Sadya* and *Pratyasanna* is quick or early death but with the difference of opinion *Sadya* is stated within three or

seven days. Completion of the twelfth year of the life span of *Markandeya* was called *Arishta Kaal* which ended as a result of *Mahamrityunjaya Mantra* and devotion to *Shiva* and he became a great *Maharishi* at later stage of his life.

Disclosure of *Arishta*

It is quite controversial whether the patient and his family members should be made aware of the *Arishta* period or not. Both types of details are available. Reviewing the situation or time of the concerned person, his relatives and the effect on them, etc. it can be told if asked but if as a result of telling there is a possibility of fatal tragic effect on the person or his relatives then it is not to be told.

If the symptoms begin to disappear and auspicious symptoms begin to appear, then it is advisable to inform the patient and his relatives about it.

The investigation of *Arishta Vigyan* can be mainly used to avoid loss of money, fame, time etc. It is clearly mentioned by the *Acharyas* not to do treatment in clearly confirmed *Arishta*, but in the absence of a completely clear *Arishta* or on the special request of the patient or his relatives, special medical arrangements can be made. According to *Chakrapani*, an attempt can be made to avoid *Arishta* by the offerings of *Siddha Apta Purusha* like *Maheshwar* and *Rama*.^[44] *Sushruta* instructs that *Bhoota* try to kill the dying person by neutralizing the patient's medicine and by their other attempt thus the experts should try to protect the mortal and the common *Rakshoghna* medicines and process used by him.^[45]

CONCLUSION

In *Indriya Sthana* or *Arishta Vigyan* many topics related to examination, examination process and nature and pathology examination, etc. are described in great detail and precision. Its study and use greatly increases the knowledge of the doctor and especially the skill related to examination. It also leads to the practice of subtle and careful examination.

Before the complete examination of the *Arishta Lakshan* both the knowledge and examination of the natural state of the body are indispensable. In such a

situation *Arishta Vigyan* study provides complete knowledge of the healthy and pathological state and examination skills.

Knowledge of the availability and unavailability of the *Arishta Lakshan* enhances the confidence of the doctor as well as the concerned person and his family can benefit by fulfilling or planning the objectives in a fixed time.

In today's context, in a disease with definite death, the money of both the patient and the nation, time of the doctor and the hospital can be saved and in that remaining time the life of another avoidable patient can be saved especially in an epidemic, pandemic-like condition. By interpreting this in another way one can attempt to properly deliver intense care.

The expression of a reference to the *Charakokta Chakrapani* interpretation seems to be influenced by *Shrimad Bhagwad Gita* etc. and accordingly, it can be understood as - The living entity in a state of disrepair of his habitable body, inspite of being dear under compulsion is ready to go to *Mahaprayan* for the acquisition of a new residence or new clothes. As a result, painful *Arishta* are generated. If the soul understands that it has to get new house or new clothes in exchange for the old house, then it probably will not be a remorse or anger.

Therefore the one who knows this science of *Indriya* is the real knower of medical science and the real knowledgeable physician.^[46]

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