

Hrasa Hetur Visheshashcha – An Important principle from Charakasamhita

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Abstract:

Ayurveda is based on the basic principles which are described in the ancient books like Charakasamhita, Sushrutasamhita, Ashtanghridayam etc. *Vishesha* is one of the most important basic principles of Ayurveda, described in scattered manner in Ayurvedic texts. Description of *Vishesha* is also available in Vaisheshika Darshan. As the time passed different commentators have also given their views regarding *Vishesha*. This article provides all the details regarding *Vishesha* and its types. The most important property of *Vishesha* is only available in Charakasamhita i.e. *Hrasahetur Visheshashcha*. It shows the applied aspect of *Vishesha* which provides base for the management of various disorders in Ayurveda.

Key Words: *Vishesha, Ayurveda, Darshan, Hrasahetu*

Introduction

Principles of Ayurveda have significant value even in the life of modern man. The reason behind this is, life is the underlying theme over which the whole science of Ayurveda is interwoven. Hence one cannot deny the importance of these principles. Acharya Charaka has introduced the concept of *Shat Karana* in the first chapter of Sutrasthana.^[1] Maharsi Kanada in Vaisheshika Darshana describes these *Shat Karanas* as *Shat Padarthas*. The placement of these *Shat Karanas* in Charaka Samhita by Acharya Charaka is significant and it shows his vision as a physician rather than a philosopher. It shows that Acharya Charaka aims at nothing but to provide relief to the persons suffering from ailments. This *Dhatuvaishamyia* is of two types i.e. *Vridhhi* and *Kshaya*, this *Vridhhi* type of *Dhatuvaishamyia* can be redivided in three types i.e. Mild, Moderate and Severe and according to these three types, a physician has to use three types of *Vishesha* i.e. *Karma. Guna* and *Dravya Vishesha* respectively.

Aims and Objectives:

1. To study in detail the principle of '*Hrasa Hetur Visheshasca*'
2. To study in detail the concept of *Vishesha* from Ayurveda and Vaisesika Darshana

Materials and Methods

This article is based on review of Ayurvedic texts and Vaisheshika Darshana. Material related to Definition, types of *Vishesha*, opinion of all important commentators have been compiled. The main Ayurvedic texts like Charakasamhita, Ashtangahridayam and Vaisheshika Darshana along with available commentaries are referred

Vishesha in Ayurveda

Charakasamhita:

Concept of *Shat Karana* is introduced by Acharya Charaka. These *Shat Karanas* are the tools for a physician whose aim is to set up harmony in the body. These *Shat Karanas* comprises *Samanya, Vishesha, Dravya, Guna, Karma & Samavaya*. The sequence of these *Shat Karanas* in Vaisheshika Darshana is like that *Dravya, Guna, Karma, Samanya, Vishesha & Samavaya*. But Acharya Charaka while accepting these *Shat Padarthas* as *Shat Karanas*, changed the sequence.^[1] Causativity behind this change is crystal clear & i.e. Ayurveda is a practical science & aims at maintenance of health. Due to this reason *Samanya & Vishesha* has got first & second place in this sequence. According to Charaka, *Vishesha* is the principle cause for *Hrasa*.^[1] After application of this *Vishesha* in *Chikitsa*, it leads to diminution of provoked factors in the body. Here *Prithaktva* means separation.^[1] Acharya Charaka himself has described *Prithaktva* as the factor responsible for Non combination, Distinctness & Plurality.^[1] In reference to the above context one can say that *Vishesha* is the entity, which causes separation or distinctness. It is the entity, which shows difference between two objects and owing to that difference it separates that object from another one. *Vishesha* is the entity, which gives the sense of dissimilitude.^[1] Due to this sense of dissimilitude one can easily differentiate one object from another one. These are the three statements of Acharya Charaka regarding *Vishesha*.

Chakrapani – Ayurveda Dipika

Chakrapani defines *Vishesha* as the entity, which causes distinction or separation.^[2] This definition of *Vishesha* by Chakrapani shows the influence of Vaisheshika Darshana on him. But this definition is not sufficient to explain *Vishesha* in whole, as Ayurveda expects. Chakrapani has further clarified that *Vishesha* is the cause of *Hrasa* but only in absence of inhibitory factors.^[2]

Gangadhara- Jalpakalpataru

Gangadhara, one of the commentators of Charaka Samhita describes *Vishesha* as the entity used for the diminution of opposite or specific qualities or matter.^[3] Here one can

understand that *Vishesha* should be used for the purpose of diminution of provoked body constituents & it does the same owing to its opposite or specific qualities.

Yogindranath Sen- Charakopaskara

This is just the interpretation of Charaka's main verse, it interprets *Vishesha* as the cause for *Apachaya* i.e. Diminution. As *Vishesha* causes differentiation or separation, it is termed as Separator or Differentiator.^[4]

Jyotishachandra Saraswati-Charaka Pradipika

One of the commentators of Charaka Samhita, Jyotishachandra Saraswati, in his Charaka Pradipika Commentary mentions *Vishesha* as *Hrasahetu*.^[5]

Ashtangahridayam:

In Ashtangahridayam there is no direct reference of *Vishesha* but one quotation *Viparitaihi Viparyayaha* gives the impression of *Vishesha*. Further Arunadatta, commentator of Ashtangahridayam, comments like "*Viparitaihi Vishishtataya Avasthitaihi*" and "*Viparyayaha Kshayaha*".^[6] So here the same meaning from Charaka Samhita is depicted in different words. According to this verse, *Viparita* i.e. *Vishesha* is interpreted as the cause for *Kshaya* i.e. *Hrasa*. Hemadri, commentator of Ashtangahridayam comments like *Viparitaih Viruddhadharmakaih Dravyaih* which means a substance which has got the power of diminution.^[6]

Process of Hrasa :

Gangadhar has explained the process of *Hrasa*. When there is an interaction between substances having mutually opposite qualities, the stronger dominates the weaker.^[3] As in the case of properties of *Tail* are *Snigdha*, *Ushna* & *Guru*, whereas properties of *Vatadosha* like *Ruksha*, *Sheeta* & *Laghu* which are equally opposite to each other. So according to '*Viruddha Guna Sannipate*' *Tail* alleviates *Vata dosha* only when it is used continuously for a longer duration. This is how *Vishesha* does the role of *Hrasa*.^[1]

Visheshastu Prithakvakrta & Visheshastu Viparyayah :

These are the interpretations of "*Hrasa Hetur Visheshascha*". Here *Vishesha* gives the sense of separation & dissimilitude. Further Chakrapani says that *Vishesha* on the other hand brings about distinction or separateness. Thus a cow & an elephant having dissimilar connotation bring about a sense of separateness.

Concept of Viruddha Vishesha & Aviruddha Vishesha :

Chakrapani, the most authoritative commentator of Charaka Samhita has introduced this concept of *Viruddha Vishesha* & *Aviruddha Vishesha*. According to him *Viruddha Vishesha* is that substance which alleviates the body constituents but *Aviruddha Vishesha* neither augments nor alleviates the body constituents.^[2] Here Chakrapani comments that

what Ayurveda expects is *Viruddha Vishesha* due to its alleviating property. Where as *Aviruddha Vishesha* is neutral in nature. But further Chakrapani himself has given an example & states the conclusion that *Aviruddha Vishesha* is also the indirect cause for *Hrasa*.^[2] *Vishesha* means inhibiting variant factor. This application is to be kept in view whenever this term is used subsequently. Even though non-inhibiting variant factor does not directly cause augmentation or diminution, still its indirect effect on diminution cannot be questioned. For e.g., the tactile quality of *Prithvi* which is neither hot nor cold does not augment nor lessen the cooling property of *Vata*; still it can be indirectly taken to be an inhibiting factor because of the absence of the productivity of the tissue elements in it that are being normally consumed by enzymes (in the process of metabolism).

It is rather an established fact that the application of a dissimilar object causes diminution in all the transient elements because of the absence of any other factor to compensate the natural loss. For example, if a dam is constructed on a river, the water in the downstream will get naturally lessened. In view of the fact that diminution is affected even when non inhibiting factor, in general is present. Therefore Agnivesha has made a general statement to the effect that the variant factor is the cause of diminution of all beings. Finally from all these quotations what Ayurveda expects is *Vishesha* as an entity, which can cause the diminution.

Types of *Vishesha*:

Different commentators of Charaka Samhita have explained *Samanya & Vishesha* are of three types as they are related to *Dravya, Guna & Karma*. Chakrapani has not mentioned anything regarding *Dravya, Guna & Karmavishesha*. But Yogindranath Sen in his Charakopaskar commentary given examples for *Dravya, Guna & Karma Vishesha*^[4]

1. *Dravyavishesha*

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|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <i>Gavedhuka (Vayu dominance)</i> | - | <i>Mamsa (Prithvi dominance)</i> |
| <i>*Kshara (Teja dominance)</i> | - | <i>Kapha Dosha (Apa dominance)</i> |

2. *Gunavishesha*

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Arnal (Kanji)</i> | - | <i>Kapha Dosha</i> |
| <i>(Laghu, Ruksha, Ushna, Vishada Guna)</i> | | <i>(Guru, Snigdha, Sheeta, Pichhhila Guna)</i> |

3. *Karmavishesha*

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------|
| <i>Asyasukha, Swapnasukham</i> | - | <i>Vata Dosha</i> |
| <i>Dhavana, Plavana, Langhana Karma</i> | - | <i>Kapha Dosha</i> |

Vishesha - Darshanika View

The word *Vishesha* itself means particularity or distinguishing feature or distinction and the word 'Vaisheshika' is derived from '*Vishesha*'. The Vaisheshika Darshana, therefore, is a 'Pluralistic Realism', which emphasizes that diversity is the soul of the Universe. The category of *Vishesha* or particularity is dealt with at length in this system and is regarded as the essence of things. As this *Darshana* has accepted the existence of *Vishesha Padartha*, it is termed as *Vaisheshika Darshana*. According to *Vaisheshika Darshana*, each and every object in this Universe has its own existence. Each atom (*Paramanu*) is different from another one. As 'Vedanta' accepts 'Fundamental unity', *Vaisheshika Darshana* believes in pluralism and difference e.g. consider an earthen pot, it has got its own colour, structure and other different qualities. These qualities are similar to that of other earthen pots. It means that these qualities are common. But this earthen pot has got its own individuality, which differentiates this earthen pot from other pots. This is the entity, which differentiates one object from another one and is termed as '*Vishesha*' by *Vaisheshika Darshana*. After excluding all similar characteristics between two *Paramanus* (atoms), the remnant characteristic which remains at last and which differentiates these two atoms is termed as *Vishesha*. Each and every atom has its own specific *Vishesha*. This *Vishesha* of each and every fundamental reality can never be seen in others. As Kanada has accepted this 'Atomistic Pluralism', his *Darshana* is termed as '*Vaisheshika Darshana*'. *Vaisheshika Darshana* comprises a minute analysis of existing substances, which cannot be seen in others. It has accepted the existence of different substances and this shows the Analytical view of the same.^[7]

Vishesha :

An entity that differentiates one object from another one in this Universe is termed as *Vishesha* by Maharsi Kanada. Hence *Vishesha* means *Vyavartaka*, *Vyavachedaka* (differentiator). *Samanya* is also used for differentiation eg. *Ghatatva* is the *Jati*, which differentiates an earthen pot (*Ghata*) from a *Pata* (i.e. cloth). As *Ghatatva* is *Samanya* and here it is used for differentiation. But this *Samanya* is not sufficient to differentiate one *Ghata* from another one. Here the need comes of an entity, which can differentiate one *Ghata* from another one, *Vishesha* fulfils this need. Hence it can be said that *Samanya* can be used for differentiation but it is not sufficient for Absolute Differentiation. If two earthen pots (*Ghata*) are similar in all external characteristics then also they differ in their atoms because each and every atom has its own existence. This particularity is known as *Vishesha*. One *Vishesha* can be seen in only one object not in another one. Due to this reason, each and every fundamental reality has its own existence. Hence, *Vishesha* is the only one which can cause absolute differentiation. Hence *Vishesha* is termed as Absolute Differentiator (*Antya Vyavartaka*).

One *Vishesha* resides in only one object. One of the chief commentators of Vaisheshika Sutra is Prashastapada. Prashastapada in his 'Padartha-Dharmasangraha' commentary has given detail description of *Vishesha*. According to Prashastapada *Vishesha* can never be destroyed because it resides in only eternal atoms i.e. *Nitya Paramanus*. *Nitya Dravyas* ever existing realities and *Vishesha* is the entity which inheres with them. Hence,

Vishesha also becomes ever existing. Neither it can be destroyed nor generated. *Ghatadi Dravyas* can be generated and destroyed but the existence of their atoms before the production and after their destruction remains the same. These atoms may remain in whatsoever condition but their separate existence is always with them. Owing to this *Vishesha*, each atom has got its own specificity. *Vishesha* gives specific characters to its substratum i.e. *Ashraya*. Further Prashastapada says that *Vishesha* is the Absolute Differentiator between eternal *dravyas*.

Conclusion:

1. According to Ayurveda *Vishesha* is one of the *Shat Karanas* and it is meant to be utilized for the purpose of *Dhatuamyata*.
2. According to Vaisheshika Darshana, *Vishesha* is one of the *Shat Padarthas* and its knowledge is useful to achieve the goal of *Moksha* by getting the knowledge of all the objects present in the Universe.
3. Ayurveda agrees with the definition of *Vishesha* from Vaisheshika Darshana as an entity having dissimilar characteristics.
4. In Ayurveda there is addition in the definition of *Vishesha* i.e. "Hrasa Hetur *Visheshasca*". Difference between the definitions of *Vishesha* in Ayurveda and Vaisheshika *Darshana* is owing to the difference in their goals.
5. Ayurveda defines *Vishesha* as a substance having dissimilar characteristics and having the ability of *Hrasa* (diminution).
6. *Vishesha* is a matter of intellect because if a substance is *Vishesha* for one substance then the same substance becomes *Samanya* for another one owing to its properties.
7. Concept of *Viruddha Vishesha* and *Aviruddha Vishesha* introduced by Chakrapani is not * much useful because what Ayurveda expects is only *Viruddha Vishesha*.
8. Concept of *Dravya, Guna* and *Karma Vishesha* is useful in the *Chikitsa* of various diseases, but it is difficult to differentiate a *Dravya* and *Guna Vishesha*. *Dravya Vishesha* should be selected on the basis of "*Jati*" and opposite properties. *Guna Vishesha* should be selected on the basis of opposite properties only
9. Selection of *Vishesha* is totally dependent on the *Gunas* of the substance. After getting proper knowledge of *Gunas* (properties), one can use it for the purpose of *Hrasa*.
10. *Vishesha* is the one and the only cause of *Hrasa* so whenever there is *Hrasa* of body constituents one should search out the *Vishesha*.

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