

A CRITICAL REVIEW ON ARTAVAVAHA SROTAS W.S.R. ITS MOOLSTHAN

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ABSTRACT

In *Ayurveda*, the description of anatomy is gross and based on various principles like *Dhatu*, *Marma*, *Srotas*, etc. *Srotas* are *Vritta* (cylindrical), *Sthula* (macroscopic), *Anu* (microscopic), *Dirgha* (large) or *Pratana* (Reticulated) based on their shape. According to *Acharya Charaka* transportation of *Poshaka Dhatu* to the *Poshya* is dealt by *Srotas*. *Purusha* (organism) cannot exist without the organisation of *Srotas*. The concepts explained in *Ayurveda* are similar to a tree in which the root is *Srotas*. If the root of a tree is in proper condition it nourishes the tree (*Sharira*) very well, hence importance is given to *Srotas*. The present study is based on *Artavavaha Srotas* and its *Moolsthan* which are described by *Acharya Sushruta* in *Sharira Sthana*. The *Mool* of *Artavavaha Srotas* are *Artavavahi Dhamani* and *Garbhashaya* as per *Sushruta*.

KEYWORDS: *Dhatu*, *Marma*, *Srotas*, *Artavavahi Dhamani* and *Garbhashaya*.

INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurvedic* literature the description of anatomy is explained in different manner rather than modern science. Here the bodily organs are defined based upon principles than the structures. *Ayurveda* aligns the principles of *Anumana* (inference), *Aptopadesha*, as well as *Pratyaksha* (directly visible) but modern science is based on only *Pratyaksha*. Anatomical description varies in both the sciences. In *Ayurveda*, the description of anatomy is gross and based on various principles like *Dhatu*, *Marma*, *Srotas*, etc. *Srotas* are *Vritta* (cylindrical), *Sthula* (macroscopic), *Anu* (microscopic), *Dirgha* (large) or *Pratana* (Reticulated) based on their shape. According to *Acharya Charaka* transportation of *Poshaka Dhatu* to the *Poshya* is dealt by *Srotas*. *Purusha* (organism) cannot exist without the organisation of *Srotas*.^[1] *Acharya Sushruta* stated that *Dhamani* and *Sira* are quite different from *Srotas*^[2] because they are different in *Vyanjanyatvat* (symptomatology), *Moolsanniyamat* (system of origin), *Karmavaishashyatvat* (function) and *Aagamachcha* (textually).^[3] Though they seem to be homologous in *Parasparsannikarshata* (closeness), *Aagamachcha* (textually), *Sadrashakarmatvat* (same function) and *Saukshmyat* (small in structure).^[4] They are different in function and structure on subtle level.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

- Review of *Ayurvedic* literature from *Ayurvedic* classics including relevant commentaries.

- Relevant modern literature is also consulted for comparative study and drawing inferences and justification.
- Other print media, online information, journals, magazines etc. are also searched for and incorporated according to the need of the topic.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the description of eleven pairs of *Yogavahi Srotas*, *Acharya Sushruta* has included *Artavavaha Srotas*. The series of *Srotas* in *Sushruta Samhita* is as follows - *Prana*, *Anna*, *Udaka*, *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Mootra*, *Purisha*, *Shukra* and *Artavavaha Srotas*.⁵ The *Mool* of *Artavavaha Srotas* are *Artavavahi Dhamani* and *Garbhashaya* as per *Sushruta*.^[6] He also explained *Artavavaha Srotoviddha Lakshana*. These are symptoms produced by injury to *Artavavaha Srotas* as follows—*Impotence* (*Bandhyatva*), *Dyspareunia* (*Maithunaasahishnuta*) and loss of menstruation (*Artavanasha*).^[7]

In the beginning of concept of *Srotas*, *Acharya Sushruta* states that the *Srotas* are innumerable and for descriptive purposes he classified *Srotas* into 11 pairs. *Acharya Charaka* has not included *Artavavaha Srotas* in the description of *Srotas* in *Vimana Sthana*. even though he clearly stated that the description of 13 *Srotas* which were explained as an example, only these can be elaborated wisely by '*Vaidya*'. Beside this, in 13th chapter of *Chikitsa Sthan*, he had stated some references of *Rajovahi Sira*^[8] and said that, by having the foods

with predominance of *Vata*, the *Vata* aggravates and gets localised in *Rajovahi Sira*. Here it increases the volume of blood, this increased volume will create problems of excessive bleeding in females and this disease is called as *Asrigdara*. These *Rajovahi Sira* are represented by *Artavavaha Srotas* which denotes if there is no reference in the *Samhita* directly, that doesn't mean it is not explained in *Samhita*.

MOOL OF ARTAVAVAHA SROTAS GARBHASHAYA

Vyutpatti: It consists of two words *Garbha*+*Ashaya*^[9] means the organ that holds the *Garbha* (foetus) called *Garbhashaya*. In *Ashaya*, position of *Garbhashaya* is eighth.^[10] *Ashaya* means any recipient viscous. In human body there are 7 *Ashaya*. In a female body there are 3 more *Ashaya*, two *Stanyashaya* and one *Garbhashaya*.

Synonyms: *Dhara*,^[11] *Garbhashayya*,^[12] *Kukshi*,^[13] *Vipul Srotas*.^[14]

Position of *Garbhashaya*: According to *Acharya Sushruta*, *Garbhashaya* is placed between *Pittashaya* (small intestine) and *Pakvashaya* (large intestine).^[15] *Acharya Sushruta* and *Vagbhatta* described in *Ashmari Chikitsa Adhyaya* that *Garbhashaya* is situated near the *Basti* (Bladder).^[16] According to *Acharya Sushruta* and *Vagbhatta*, *Yoni* shapes like a conch shell and it is composed of three *Avarta*. In the third *Avarta* of *Yoni*, *Garbhashaya* is situated.^[17]

Shape of *Garbhashaya*: *Garbhashaya* shapes like a fish namely *Rohita*.^[18] It is triangular in shape, apex being at the mouth. *Dalhana* says that its mouth is small, but internal cavity is a big one^[19]. *Rajovahi Sira* (uterine vessels) is the blood supply of the organ.

DHAMANI

Dhamani represent arteries. In *Artavavaha Srotas*, *Dhamani* is having great importance because without *Dhamani* there is no nutrition to *Artavavaha Srotas*, no menstruation has occurred and no conception is possible.

While describing *Artavavaha Srotas* by *Sushruta*, *Dhamani* is described as an important source or *Mool* for the *Srotas*. Women have two *Dhamani* to carry *Artava* and *Stanya* which correspond to those carry *Shukra* in males.^[20]

DISCUSSION

While considering the *Moolsthan* of any *Srotas*, following points are taken in consideration like *Utpattisthan* (origin point of view), *Sangrahassthan* (storage) and *Vahanasthan* (conduction). The *Moolsthan* or source is considered that without which the origin, maintenance and destruction of that specific carrier of body nutrient cannot be possible and the place which controls the entire functional dealings and processes of the specific carrier. In females, additional *Srotas* is

explained named as *Artavavaha Srotas*. *Ayurveda* mentions the *Garbhasaya* and *Artavavahi Dhamani* as a *Moolsthan* of *Artavavaha Srotas*. *Garbhashaya* is mainly responsible for conception, production and expulsion of *Artava*, from origin point of view. It shows same structural and functional characteristics of uterus along with ovaries and both have same pathological and clinical conditions after injury. The concept of *Artavavaha Srotas* can be understood by its functions, *Moolsthan* or retrogression method which means symptoms produced due to injury (*Viddha Lakshana*), or *Dushti Lakshana* (pathological changes) occurs in *Artavavaha Srotas*. *Artavavaha Srotas* is physio-anatomical structure present in female pelvic cavity having *Garbhashaya* and *Artavavahi Dhamani* of its *Moolsthan* i. e. most important parts. It is quite related with female reproductive system of modern science in which uterus along with fallopian tube and ovary are the most important parts for its structural and functional essentiality.

Concept of *Artavavaha Srotas* has been resolute in two ways-macroscopic and microscopic. Macroscopically it is considered as reproductive tract where menstruation, conception, and foetal development take place. While microscopically we must understand physiological aspect as *Artavavaha Srotas* is physio-anatomical concept. Functions of reproductive system like ovulation, menstruation, conception, endometrial changes etc. all these are controlled by various hormones under hypothalamus-pituitary-ovarian axis while some functions happen due to its proper blood supply and nerve supply. Capillary network present in reproductive system also play significant role in nutrition, development and proper functioning of the whole system. Both *Ayurveda* and modern science accept that fertilization, implantation, nutrition and development of foetus take place in *Garbhashaya* (uterus). Any injury to the *Artavavaha Srotas* or its *Moolsthan* causes symptoms like menstrual disturbances, dyspareunia or even infertility which is also accepted and well explained by modern science. By all the above argument concerning *Artavavaha Srotas* shows reasonably similarities with reproductive system.

In *Garbhashaya*, the word *Ashaya* refers as cavity or space in that particular organ which are prime functional areas or cavities of the body. *Garbhashaya* is a space which helps in implantation and development of *Garbha* (foetus) here it doesn't refer to only a single organ but it is the hollow space in the body where various bio physiological activities happens. *Yoni* is a very important structure of female body, shaped as "*Shankha Nabhi Akriti*", contains three *Avarta* (circular folds) in its structure. *Garbhashaya* or *Garbhashayya* is an important structure situated in third *Avarta* of *Yoni*. Here the term *Yoni* has ample meaning represent the whole reproductive system of female in which shows three circular folds or subdivision *Yoni* (vagina), *Garbhashayamukha* (cervical canal) and *Garbhashayya* (uterus) from external to internal respectively.

Artavavahi Dhamani can be taken as fallopian tube which conducts *Artava* (ovum) towards uterus during menstrual phase and ovarian and uterine vessels, *Dhamana* word refers to contraction, hence in this study as by contracting fallopian tube conduct the ovum so it works like an *Artavavahi Dhamani*.

CONCLUSION

Artavavaha Srotas shows quite similarity with the female reproductive system of modern medical science. It is determined in two ways macroscopic and microscopic. Macroscopically it is reproductive tract as conducting point of view and microscopically it is capillary network of uterus in context of nutrition point of view. *Moolsthan* of *Artavavaha Srotas* are the regions or structures in the body from where *Artava* originates, store for small duration and carry for ejection outside body. Here *Garbhashaya* (uterus) and *Artavavahi Dhamani* (blood vessels and capillaries of uterus) are the *Moolsthan* of *Artavavaha Srotas*.

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