LITERARY REVIEW OF STRI SHARIRA FROM VARIOUS AYURVEDIC SAMHITAS

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ABSTRACT
Ayurveda is an eternal science of life. Physician should have proper knowledge of anatomy and physiology for proper treatment of any disease. In Ayurveda this anatomy and physiology is described in Sharira Sthana of various Samhitas. Anatomy of female genital organs is also described in Samhitas in context with Stri Sharira. But it is present in sparse way. So in present study there is an attempt to collect all references regarding anatomy of Stri Sharira from various Ayurvedic Samhitas and texts in a cohesive manner and their correlation with modern science anatomy. It will help to understand concepts and terminologies regarding Stri Sharira with respect to modern terminologies and explore the knowledge of Stri Sharira.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Sharira Sthana, Stri Sharira, Female reproductive system

INTRODUCTION
Ayurveda is an ancient science. It is defined as system which uses inherent principles of nature, to help to maintain health in an individual by keeping one’s mind, body and spirit in perfect equilibrium with nature. Ayurveda is Sanskrit term which is comprises of two words, “Ayush” and “Veda”. Ayush means life and Veda means knowledge or science.¹ Ayurveda mainly consists of eight branches. There is detail description regarding each branch of Ayurveda. Acharya Sushruta has cited that every physician should have knowledge of all branches of Ayurveda so that it will help himself in diagnosis and treatment of any kind of disease. For treating any disease, one feels need of knowledge of knowing pathology of that disease. But before that physician must have proper cognizance about the anatomy and physiology of that specific organ involving in disease so that he can treat that disease seamlessly and precisely.² In Ayurveda, word “Sharira” encompasses anatomy along with physiology. The science which pacts with body (Sharira) including all the systems and their physiology are called as “Sharira”. Aacharya Sushruta has said that Vaidya (physician) should have Sharira Rachnatmaka Dnyana of every organ for curing any kind of disease from the root. In Ayurvedic Samhitas, there are many refinances of several organs of female reproductive system. Aacharyas have described Stri Sharira by numerous views. But this matter is extensively distributed in different texts and parts. There is very much controversy with respect to concept of Stri Sharir at present epoch. In present study, we have made efforts to collaborate these references and study Stri Sharira by modern point of view so it will help to expound the concept of it in present era.
MATERIAL AND METHOD
1. Literary study of Stri Sharira from various Ayurvedic Samhitas and texts in detail.
3. Correlation of Ayurvedic Stri Sharira with modern science.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Literary review of Stri Sharir from Ayurvedic Samhitas and texts is as given below -

Yoni

The word Yoni is obtained from “Yuj” Dhatu. It means to link or join. Aacharya Sushruta and Aacharya Vagbhata have defined the shape of Yoni as “Shankhnbhayakruti”.(3)(4) That means it is constricted at its commencement, dilated in the middle and narrowed near its uterine extremity. It is consist of three Aavarta in the inner side. These are like ridges or rugae. Garbhashaya is located in third Aavarta of Yoni. According to Aacharya Kashyapa shape of the Yoni should be “Shakhtakruti”. Also, he has stated the various anomalies regarding the shape of Yoni.(5) Vagbhata has used the word Yoni for describing Stri-Janendriya (female genitals).(6) Also Yoni is considered as Apatyapatha that is vagina by him.(7) While describing Chikista of Garbhapata, he has mentioned to put the Picshu of various Aushadhidravyaat Yoni. He called Yoni as Garbhashaya in some contexts.(8) Bhavprakasha has used the word Manohbavagara for Yoni and Manohbavagarmukha for Yonimukha in Garbhaprakaran. According to him, 3 Nadies are present in Manohbavagara namely Samirana, Chandramukhi and Gauri Nadi.(9) The main Nadi is Samirana Nadi. In this way, Aacharyas used the word Yoni as per requirement for different meanings.

Bhaga

Amarkosha has given the synonyms for Yoni as Bhaga.(10) Dalhana has quoted that Yoni is similar to the Bhaga. According to him Parinaha of Yoni is 12 Anguli.(11) Aacharya Charaka has said that Bhaga is 12 Anguli.(12) By the definition of Bhaga, given by Madhavvidana, Bhaga can be considered as ischiorectal fossa. Base of ischiorectal fossa is directed to the surface of perineum and its apex is at the line joining of the obturator and anal fascia.(13) Commenter Kaviraja Gangadhar has mentioned “Bhaga” as “Strilingam” According to Vaitaran, Basti lies below the Bhaga and Garbhashaya lies above it.(14) It can be considered as pubes. Aacharya Sushruta has specified the definition of Bhagandara Vyadhi. As per him, Bhagandara Vyadhi takes place in Bhaga, Guda, and Basti due to Daran of these places.(15)

Yonikarnika

Aacharya Dalhana has elucidated two Peshies which are called Yonikarnika. These are present laterally on the Yonimukha (one on each side). These are circular.(16)

Vishikhant - Aacharya Sushruta has used the word “Vishikhanta” while describing the procedure of labour.(17) He has said that Sevika should massage the Vishikhanta from inward to outward direction. Aacharya Dalhana has elaborated this term more specifically by saying it as Apatyamarga. Apatyapatha - Apatyapatha can be considered as vaginal canal or Yonimukha. According to Aacharya Sushruta Apatyapatha consist of 4 Peshies. Out of these, 2 Peshies lie on inner side of it and two lie outside on the Mukha which are circular. The Peshies which lie outside on the Mukha can be considered as Yonikarnika as per Dalhana.

Peshies in Stri Sharira

Females have 20 extra Peshies than male. Out of these, ten Peshies are present in Stana of both sides (5 Peshies on each side of Stana) which enlarge during puberty and pregnancy. Four Peshies present in Apatyapatha which has been described as above. Three Peshies are present at Garbhachhidra and remaining three are present where Shukra and Aartava enters the Garbhashaya. Among these three Peshies, two are present at the entrance Aartava and one is present at the entrance of Shukra in the Garbhashaya.(18) Vagbhata has also explained the same.

Shroni
Aacharyas has given the variance between Strishroni and Purushshroni. Strishroni Pramana is equal to Purusha Uraha Pramana. Strishroni is wider than Purushshroni. Stri Uraha Pramana is equal to 18 Anguli and it is equal to Purusha Kati Pramana.\(^{(19)}\)

In modern science, this can be termed as pelvis. Asthi and Sandhi in Stri Shroni

**According to Aacharya Sushruta Strishroni has 5 Asthi. These are as follows** –

- Two Nitambasti are present on each side of Shroni. These Nitambasti are called as Kapalasthi. Other Asthi present in Gudpradesha, Trikpradesha, Bhagpradesha.\(^{(20)}\) The Sandhi present in between the Asthi is of Samudga type

As per Aacharya Charaka, Shroni consist of 3 Asthi. Out of these, 2 are present in Shroniphalaka and one is present as Bhagasthi.\(^{(21)}\)

**Marma**

Aacharya Sushruta has enlightened Marma present in pelvic region of female in Chikista Sthana. These are eight in number. These are Sevani, Shukravah Strotas, Phala, Guda, Mutraprasek, Mutravaha Strotas, Yoni, and Basti. These should be protected while performing any operative procedure.\(^{(22)}\) In this way, these Marma have more importance in Stri Sharira according to Ayurveda.

**Aartavah Strotasa**

Aacharya Sushruta has described mainly two types of Strotasa. These are Bahirmukhi Strotasa and Antamukhi Strotasa. He has described 9 Bahirmukhi Strotasa and 11 pairs of Strotasa which are called Yogavahi Strotasa or Antarmukhi Strotasa common in both male and female. But he has added 3 more Strotasa in female viz. 2 Stana and 1 Rajjovaha Strotasa or Aartavavaha Strotas.\(^{(23)}\) He has expressed Aartavaha Strotasa Viddha Lakshane and their Moolsthana. Moolsthana of Aartavaha Strotasa are Garbhashaya and Aartavavahi Dhamnya. Viddha Lakshane are Vyandhiwa (sterility), Maithuna-sahishnuta, and Aartava-nasha.\(^{(24)}\) During pregnancy Aartavaha Strotasa becomes Avruddha that is it gets block. So there is loss of menses during pregnancy. Some of this Avruddha Aartava helps in formation of Apara and some helps in development of breast.

**Vaghbata** has also prearranged the definition of Aartava. As per him, the blood which excretes for 3 days from the Garbhakoshtha is called as Aartava.\(^{(25)}\) Commenter Arundatta has given the definition of Shuddha Aartava. As per him, the blood from Yonimarga expels out at regular interval. This expelled blood is called as Aartava.

During every month, menstrual bleeding occurs generally at fix period. If there is failure to conceive by a lady then ovum excretes out along with menstrual blood which is called Aartava as it is excretes from Aartavavaha Strotasa. It can be considered as Bahipushpa. On the other hand, if ovum takes part in fertilization, thereby leading to formation of embryo then it is can be called as Antapushpa or Bija. In this way Aartava can be categorized as per its physiology.

**Shuddha Aartava Lakshane** – It is like hare blood, Laksharasa. It does not have fowl smell. It does not causes discoloration of clothes. It is easily washable.\(^{(26)}\)

**Garbhashaya**

**Nirukti of Garbhashaya** - As per Vachspatyama, it is the Garbha-aadhar Sthan that is it is place which gives support to developing foetus. He has given the synonym as Garbhashayya for Garbhashaya.

Synonyms for Garbhashaya –

**VipulStrotas** – While describing genesis of organs Aacharya Kashyapa has labelled Garbhashaya as Vipulstrotas

Kukshi – Aacharya Charaka has explained the Garbha Utpatti in detail in Sharira Sthana.\(^{(27)}\) He said that Kukshi is nothing but Garbhashaya in which formation and development of Garbha takes place. He has also used the word Antkukshi for it. Aacharya Vagbhata used both the words Garbhashaya and Kukshi as a site for Garbha transformations.\(^{(28)}\)

Kshestra - Aacharya Sushruta has also called the Garbhashaya as “Kshetra” in Sharira Sthana.\(^{(29)}\)
Garbhakoshtha - Aacharya Vaghbatha in Astangsan-graha has called the Garbhashaya as Garbhakoshtha, in Sharirasthana of Samhita.\(^{(30)}\)

Dhara - Sharangdhara has also called the Garbhashaya as “Dhara”.\(^{(31)}\)

Phala and Phalyoni – Dalhan has used the words Phala and Phalyoni in context with Garbhashaya

Also there are various synonym for Garbhashaya such as Kalala, Jaraya, Ulba.

Position and shape of Garbhashaya

Aacharya Sushruta has described the position of Garbhashaya as it lies on the Parshwa of Basti while describing Ashmari Chikista.\(^{(32)}\) He has also stated that Garbhashaya lies between Pittashaya and Pakwashaya and Garbha resides in it.\(^{(33)}\) Vagbhata has given same position of Garbhashaya as that of Sushruta. Also in Shariraa Sthana, he has mentioned position of Garbhashaya in Tritriya Aavarta of Yoni and he has described its shape like that of RohitMatsya Mukha.\(^{(34)}\) Bhavprakasha has also given the shape of Garbhashaya as that of RohitMatsya. Like RohitMatsya, Garbhashaya has constricted mouth and wider belly above. Other Acharyas also have defined the shape of Garbhashaya same as above.

Antargatphalama

Dr. Ghanekar, commenter of Susruta Samhita has elaborated the term, Antargatphalama in his commentary. As per him Antargatphalama can be called as ovary. Dalhana and Bhavprakasha has correlate it with “Garbhashaya”.\(^{(35)}\) Also Haranchandra, commenter of Susruta Samhita considered Antargatphalam as fallopian tube.

**DISCUSSION**

Word Yoni can be used in context with whole female genital system. Aacharya Vaghbatha used the word Yoni with reference to Apatyapatha that is only vagina. Aacharya Dalhana has used the word Vishikhanta for Apatyapatha. This Apatyapatha can be considered as the vagina as per modern science. Yonikarnika described by Dalhana can be called as labia majora as mentioned in modern science.

Aacharya Sushruta has described Aarvtavaha Strotasa Moolsthana as Garbhashaya and Aartavavahi Dhamnya. Also he has described its Viddha Lakshne such as Vyandhtwa (sterility), Maithunasahishnuta, and Aartava-Nasha. In present era, fallopian tubes are cut during the procedure of tubectomy leading to sterilization in females. From this, fallopian tubes can be considered as Aartavavahi Dhamanya. Garbhashaya is one of the Aashaya which is present only in female. It is the Moolsthana of Aartavavah Strotasa. It is the main site of conception of Garbha. This Garbhashaya is nothing but the Uterus. Acharyas have given the shape of Garbhashaya as RohitMatsya Mukhakruti. It can be elaborated as the RohitMatsya has constricted mouth, and wider belly above. Uterus is also wider in above in the form of fundus and it has constricted lower part in the form of cervix. This shows the micro-observation of Aacharya at that era though they didn’t have proper tools for the study.

Aacharya Sushruta has given the position of Garbhashaya in relation with Basti and Pakwashaya. Grossly, this Basti can be taken as Bladder. Commenter Gananatha Sena has described the Pakwashaya as Malashya as a part of Bruhadantra. Also Sharangadhara has also described 7 Aashaya similar to that of Aacharya Sushruta. But he has said Malashya inspite of Pakwashaya as per Aacharya Sushruta. Malashya can be considered as rectum which is part of large intestine. In this way, he has given the position of Garbhashaya in accordance with bladder and rectum. As per modern science also, the uterus lies between bladder and rectum. This also denotes the minute reflection of Aacharyas though they had lack instruments for learning.

As per the role of Aartava Strotasa described by Aacharya Sushruta in his Sharira Sthana chapter number 4, Aartavavaha Strotasa can be considered as uterine vessels as these have major role in menstruation and development of foetus.
CONCLUSION
There is scattered description of *Stri Sharira* in different Ayurvedic text. But in correlation with present era, *Aacharya* has described almost all organs of female genital system. *Garbhashaya* described by them is uterus. *Yoni* word can be used in relation with whole female reproductive system or vaginal fold as per condition. *Apathyapatha* or *Vishikhanat* can be considered as vagina. *Aartavvahi Dhamnya* words are used for fallopian tubes. *Bhaga* described in *Ayurvedic* texts can be correlated with ischiorectal fossa. *Aartavaha strotas* has relation with uterine vessels. *Shroni* word can be used for pelvis. *Aand* and *Phala* indicates ovary. Thus this overall study shows the microscopic view of *Aacharyas* at that olden epoch instead of having deficiency in resources for collection of knowledge.

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