EXPERIMENTAL CADAVERIC STUDY TO DETERMINE ‘SIRA’ AS DESCRIBED IN SUSRUT SAMHITA

Dixit Ankur1*, Wanee Kalpesh2, Garg Puneet Kumar3, Tekawade UV4

1Assistant Professor, Rachna sharir dept. Patanjali Ayurved College, Haridwar, India
2(M.D. Rachana sharir) B.S.D.T’s Ayurved College, Wagholi, Pune, Maharashtra, India
3Assistant Professor, Rog nidan dept. Patanjali Ayurved College, haridwar, India
4Principal B.S.D.T’s Ayurved College, Wagholi, Pune, Maharashtra, India

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*Corresponding Author: Ankur Dixit,
Rachana Sharir Dept., Patanjali Ayurved College, Haridwar. Uttarakhand. India, Mo.no 9690269289

ABSTRACT

In the Context of Ayurved Acharya Shusrut explains the Rachna Sharir (Anatomy) of human being and he described many structures which have both structural as well as clinical importance but due to difference of era Ayurvedic scholars are unable to identified, understand and explain of that anatomical structures. ‘Sira’ is one of that structures which has its structural and clinical significance. So to understand the concept of Sira which is explained by Acharya Sushrut; this study was undertaken. To understand the concept of sira literary study and experimental cadaveric study was carried out. The literary study was carried out as done by the previous research worker in the field of applied anatomy of Ayurveda. And the experimental cadaveric study is carried out as per the guidelines described in Shusrut samhita.

It is not possible to understand the concept of Sira or any other structure which are explained in Sushrut samhita, by the method of preservation according to modern science through formalin because formalin change the property of structures. And the structures are not appeared in such a way as appeared during the time when Acharya Sushrut preserves the cadaver.

From the review of Ayurvedic Literature, Modern literature, and cadaveric study conclusion are drawn that Arun varna sira (Vata-vaha sira) means-Nerves of Body, Neel varna sira (Pitta-vaha sira) means-Veins of Body, Gour varna sira (Kapha-vaha sira) means-Lymph vessels of Body, Rohini sira (Rakta-vaha sira) means-Arteries of Body & Mool sira are the neurovascular bundle.

Keywords: Shushrut Samhita, applied anatomy of Ayurveda, Arun, Neel, Gour & Rohini- Sira

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda being an ancient system of medical science explain Rachna sharir (Anatomy) of different structures. In that, Sushrut samhita is best to explain Anatomical structures. ‘Sira’ described in the Sushrut Samhita as an important structure as well as a structure having clinical significance. The important descriptions of ‘Sira’ are explained by Acharya Shusrut in Sutrasthana, Nidanasthan, Sharirsthana, Chikitsasthan, of Sushrut Samhita.

It is needful to explain the above mentioned available description of ‘Sira’ for the purpose of understanding the concept of ‘Sira’. The Research work is carried out by thoroughly studied of entire Sushrut samhita to find out the answers to the scientific queries and by the experimental cadaveric study to Determination of ‘Sira’ and ‘Mool-Sira’.

The Research work is carried out to find out scientific answers regarding and related to the Sira, on the basis of the observations obtained from the literary study and experimental cadaveric study. The observations are correlated and interpreted to find out scientific answers regarding and related to scientific queries of Sira. The scientific statements regarding and related to Sira in respect of its structural and clinical aspects are derived from the description studied during the research work. The observations of the study are correlated and interpreted to derive the scientific statements on Sira.

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in two phase.

Phase 1:

Literature Study: Study of the Sushrut Samhita was carried out according to the methodology developed by the previous research worker in the field of Rachna Sharir (Anatomy). The thorough study of the Sushrut samhita was carried out & baseline thoughts were developed on the basis of this detailed study.
1. In the study to achieve scientific information, references from any other samhitas other than Sushrut–Samhita are not considered, for scientific extraction of meaning because such reference may lead to misdirection as the conceptual & terminological difference between Sushrut–Samhita, other Samhita & their Samhitakars.

2. Considering possibility of mistakes in the obtained script which may lead to wrong interpretation. Only correct script is studied & considered.

3. All meaning of a word which is carrying many meaning are considered, & selected appropriate meaning for correct interpretation

4. The typical methodology of description of Acharaya & sequence of the description considered.

5. Any commentators, commentary has not been considered because there is doubt about scientific authenticity of commentary

The reasons of doubt are as follows:-

a) There is gross difference between the era of Sushrut & its commentator’s era.

b) Competency of commentator over Sushrut acharya as Vaidya.

c) Unclearity regarding history of commentators.

Medical knowledge, as it is unclear that whether the commentators are Vaidyas or only Sanskrut proficiency.

6. Meaning of shlokas is not drawn independently. Every shloka was considered with all its references & with the Samhita.

7. In brief, scientific meaning is drawn by trying to enter into role of ‘Acharya Sushrut’, in the Sharira & Shalya pradhan view of Acharya Sushrut for the virtual extraction of the hidden scientific meaning & virtual thinking to interpret the Shlokas².

Phase 2:
Experimental cadaveric study: Experimental Cadaveric study was carried out according to Mrut-sanshodhan Vidhi as described in Sushrut samhita³.

The entire cadaveric study is carried out with co-research workers in the following manner.

Step 1.
On Day 1 of the experiment Unembalmed female cadaver was selected for obtaining body part for the purpose of the cadaveric study.

Step 2.
On Day 2 of the experiment Unembalmed body parts i.e. right upper limb was amputated from medial border of scapula and from lateral half of clavicle. Then arteries and veins of the amputated part were ligated by thread.

Step 3.
On Day 3 of the experiment the body parts were covered by leaves of Shan (Crotalaria juncce Linn.) and tied by thread. Then the body parts keep in running water in the appropriate container in the dissection hall. Precaution for the fully emersion of the body parts were taken throughout the duration of study. Out flow and inflow of water in container is maintained and the temperature of water was maintained from 2° to 10° centigrade. The body parts are kept for seven days in this manner. After seven days i.e. on the 8th day morning the wet macerated body parts were taken for dissection.

Step 4.
On day 8th to day 13th dissection of macerated body part is done layer by layer.

The observations were noted by photographs of body parts.

**OBSERVATION AND RESULTS OF LITERATURE STUDY**

Determination of Sira:-
Development of Sira described in the Garbhav-kranti Adhyay. It is described that Pitruja (Paternal), Matriuja(Maternal), Rasaja(Nutritional), Atmaja(Spiritual), Satvaja (quality of purity or goodness or magnanimity) and Satmyaja (habitual or united with the soul) bhav are the factors need for the development of various Avayavas (organ) of the Garbha (embryo). The avayvas Kesh(hair), Shamshru, Lom, Asthi(Bones), Nakh (Nails), Dant (Teeth), ‘Sira’, Stavyu, Dhamani, Shukra, are develop from Pitruja (Paternal) bhava⁴.

In embryonical development, ‘Sira’ is developed by mrudu paka of Meda & Sneha & ‘Snayu is develop by the khara paka of Meda and Sneha⁵.

Acharya Shusrut described 4 type of ‘Sira’ i.e. 1. Aruna (Vata-vaha sira) are filled with Vayu and are of Arun varna i.e Reddish colour as appeared during sunrise.
2. Neela (Pitta-vaha sira) are filled with Pitta, Ushnha(hot) in nature and blue in colour.
3. Gouri (Kapha-vaha sira) are filled with Kapha, Shit(cold) in nature & white in colour.
4. Rohini (Rakta-vaha sira) are filled with Rakta, moderately (not too much) hot & cold in nature & red in colour⁶.

The Mool of all ‘Siras’ are Navel, from navel the branches (Pratan) of Siras are dispersed all in body parts. Navel is site of Prana. Navel is surrounded by Siras in the same way as the nave of the wheel is surrounded by spokes, the description of shloka can be correlate with garbhavasta (embryological condition)⁷.

It is found described that there are 700 ‘Sira’ which is responsible for nourishment of body. The nourishment process is happened like the garden in nourished by water through irrigating channels. The contraction and relaxation of Sira is responsible for this process⁸.

Functions of Sira as follows:
The main function of ‘Sira’ is that it is responsible for circulation of Vata, Pitta, Kapha and Rakta. And these Dosh circulate in Sira and perform different function so through concept of Ashray-Ashrayi bhav function of Dosh are the Function of Sira.

All (voluntary and involuntary) neurological functions are carried out by natural or unaltered Vayu during circulation in its own ‘Siras’. Praspadan (Locomotary function, contraction, relaxation etc), Udahvan (breathing, special sensory function etc), Puran, Vivek (discretion), Dharan (maintaining) are the function of Vayu. When vitiated Vayu occupies its own Siras, it causes various Vataj disorders⁹.

Lusture, relish in food, stimulation of agni (increase of appetite), and healthiness are the normal functions of Pitruja, Pratan, Tej, Medha, Ushma are the normal functions of...
Pitta. When vitiated Pitta occupies its own Siras, it causes various Pittaj disorders. Obleation in body parts, steadiness in joints, strengthness are the functions of natural or unaltered Kapha doing during circulation in its own Siras. Sandhi sansleshan, snehan, Ropan(healing), strengthness and steadiness are the function of natural Kapha. When vitiated Kapha occupies its own Siras produces various disorders of Kapha.

Dhatu-poshan (replenishes Dhatus), Varna (complexion), Sparsh dnyana (sensation of touch), steadiness are the function of natural Rakta(Blood) doing during circulation in its own sira. When vitiated Rakta occupies its own sira produces various disorders of Rakta.

**Determination of Mool Sira:**
Siras are 700 in no. in that 40 are Mool Sira. (10 Mool Sira of Each dosh). Each Mool sira is divided into 175 branches (Pratan). As described below:

### Distribution Of Shakhagat Koshtagata & Urdhvajatrugata Sira:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Body parts</th>
<th>Vatavaha</th>
<th>Pittavaha</th>
<th>Kaphavaha</th>
<th>RaktaVaha</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Shakh-gat (In limbs)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kosht-gat (In Trunk)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Urdhva-Jatru-gat (above clavical region)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total=700**

### Distribution Of Koshta-Gat Sira:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Body parts</th>
<th>Vatavaha</th>
<th>Pittavaha</th>
<th>Kaphavaha</th>
<th>RaktaVaha</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Shroni (Pelvic region)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Parshva(Side of trunk)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Prushthar(Back)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Udar (Abdomen)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vaksh (Chest)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total=136**

### Distribution Of Urdhva-Jatru-Gat Sira:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Body parts</th>
<th>Vatavaha</th>
<th>Pittavaha</th>
<th>Kaphavaha</th>
<th>RaktaVaha</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Griva (Neck region)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Karna (Ear)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jivha (Tongue region)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nasika (Nasal region)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Netra (eye)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total=41 Total=164**

The **Mool Sira** described by Achary Sushrut are structurally determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mool Sira</th>
<th>Structural determination of moo l sira</th>
<th>Vatavaha</th>
<th>Pittavaha</th>
<th>Kaphavaha</th>
<th>RaktaVaha</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Right upper limb mool sira</td>
<td>Neurovascular bundle at the inlet of right Axilla.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Left upper limb mool sira</td>
<td>Neurovascular bundle at the inlet of left Axilla.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Right lower limb mool sira</td>
<td>Neurovascular bundle at the base of right femoral triangle.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Left lower limb mool sira</td>
<td>Neurovascular bundle at the base of left femoral triangle.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Urdhva jatru Right side</td>
<td>Neurovascular bundle at the base of right side of neck.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Urdhva jatru left side</td>
<td>Neurovascular bundle at the base of left side of neck.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Koshtasta urdhvaga</td>
<td>Neurovascular bundle at the inlet of thorax.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Koshtasta</td>
<td>Neurovascular bundle at the inlet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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OBSERVATION AND RESULTS OF EXPERIMENTAL CADAVERIC STUDY

On 12 day of experimental cadaveric study, twacha was dissected and removed. And further dissection was carried out.

Than dissect the Axilla and observed 4 to 5 “Arun varna” (i.e. reddish coloured as appeared during sunrise), thick, long, solid, cord like structure identified as nerves of Brachial plexus. (Vat-vaha sira)

Than further dissect the medial side of axilla and observe a white colour, hollow, cord like structure. Identified as a Gauri (kapha vaha sira).

Than further dissect the medial side of arm and observe another red colour, thick, hollow cord like structure identified as Brachial artery. Rohini (Rakta vaha sira).

Than further dissect the forearm and observe another Arun varna, cord like structure we identified as median nerve.

DISCUSSION

The unsolved mystery of the description Sapt-Sira-Shatani was the challenge undertaken at the starting point of the research work. The ambiguity regarding the meaning and structural determination of Vat-vaha, Pitta-vaha, Kapha-vaha and Rakta-vaha Sira was another concept which was needed to be resolved on the basis of literary study and cadaveric study.

The observations obtained and the data collected by means of various stages of the study i.e. (phase 1 and phase 2 of study) were needed to be correlated and interpreted on the basis of the baseline concept and thought described by the Acharya Sushrut.

Vata-vaha siras are Arun varna sira. And observation during cadaveric study is that, nerves of brachial plexus, median nerve, radial nerve are found Arun varna, thick, cord like structure.

Pitta-vaha sira are Neel varna sira (blue in colour) and observation during cadaveric study is that, structure identified as basalic vein and cephalic vein are blue in colour and another property of pitta vaha sira i.e. Ushna(hot) in nature are perception of Acharya Sushrut for live person.

Kapha-vaha sira are white in colour and observation during cadaveric study is that structure was found white, thick, hollow, cord like, but it was not possible to identified the structure because of limitations of experimental cadaveric study.

Rakta-vaha sira are red in colour and filled with Rakta and observation during cadaveric study is that structure identified as brachial artery was thick, hollow, and red colour.

Definite structure information described in the respect of Sira prakara i.e. Aruna (Vat-vaha Sira), Neela (Pitta-vaha Sira) Gauri (Kapha-vaha sira), Rohini (Rakta vaha sira).The Sira means definite Pratan like structure.

During the study above mentioned clarity is observed by means of data obtained. The only queries remain regarding the
CONCLUSION

Sira is the independent structure. The term Sira described in the Sushrut samhita carries two different meanings.

A) The term sira itself i.e. mool sira.
B) Pratana of Sira i.e. branches of mool sira

The term described as Sira sapta Shatani means Saptshata (700) pratana i.e. branches of mool Sira.

The structure described by means of the term Aruna (Vata-vaha sira) means pratana (branches) of the nerve plexus in case of the Limbs. And in Head, neck, abdomen and thorax the Aruna (Vata-vaha sira) means nerves or branches of the nerves.

The structure described by means of the term Neela (Pitta-vaha sira) means pratana (branches) of veins in limbs, abdomen, thorax, head and neck.

The structure described by means of the term Gouri (Kapha-vaha sira) means pratana (branches) of lymphatic channels in limbs, abdomen, thorax, head and neck.

The structure described by means of the term Rohini (Rakta-vaha sira) means pratana (branches) of Arteries in limbs, abdomen, thorax, head and neck.

From the review of Ayurvedic Literature, Modern literature, and cadaveric study following conclusion are drawn:
1. Arun varna sira (Vata-vaha sira) means-Nerves of Body.
5. Mool sira are the neurovascular bundle.

REFERENCES