



Comparative Study Of Aashaya And Koshta

¹Dr. K. Ponraj , ²Dr. D. Mallika

¹Asst. Professor, Department of Rachana Shareera, Shri Veerpulikeshi Rural Ayurveda Medical College & Hospital, Badami, Karnataka, India.

²Asso. Professor & HOD, Department of Ayurveda Samhita & Siddhanta, SSSMT Shri Basaveshwara Ayurvedic Medical College & Hoapital, Kalaburagi, Karnataka, India.

ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda the term Ashaya and Koshta have been used in reference to cavity and the vital organs, both present with in Madhya –Sharir. The term Ashaya has been used for cavities like a sac or bladder. Ayurveda has also used the body cavity as one part of Shadanga sharira i.e. Antaradhi or madhya sharira for the term trunk. Antaradhi or Madhya sharira includes Uro guha(thoracic cavity) and Udara guha (abdominal cavity). Both these parts are lower cavities of trunk. They are partitioned by an important muscle known as Madhyachada (diaphragm).

The thoracic cavity which is the upper part of the trunk, extends from greeva-moola(root of the neck) to the diaphragm(abdomen).The cavity contains very important Ashayas or Koshtangas.

Key words- Koshta, Aashaya.

INTRODUCTION

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO). Where Ayurveda gives an definition on “Swasthya Purusha” by Acharya susruta as:

समदोषः समाग्निश्च समधातु मलक्रियः I

प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनाः स्वस्थ इत्यभीधीयते II

(S.Su.15/41)

When the balanced state of Dosha, Agni, Dhatu, proper eviction of Malas (these are related to the physical constitutions of the body) and the amusing state of Atma, Manas and Indriyas (these are the mental constitutions of the body) are seen that state is considered as healthy state of human body. So Ayurveda emphasizes the philosophy of maintaining the excellent health by appropriate harmonization between physical and psychological balance within the various cellular functions and between the body

and the environment, by enlightening the inherent vigor of the body. Towards this end, we require to know the importance of shareera.

Acharya Sushruta has not only described the anatomical situations of various structures but he has also given the detailed description right from evolution of universe, cellular structure to the development of various tissues and organs, beginning from the intrauterine life. He has so keenly mentioned that the sperm and ovum combines together to form Garbha (embryo) in the Garbhashaya(Uterus).

What is Aashaya

आशेरते दोष धातु मलाः येषु ते आशायाः

The term Aashaya meant is that hollow organ of the body which keeps within it either Dosha, rasa, Dhatu, Mala or Mutra or Garbha within it.

आशय्याभ्यास योगेन करोत्याशय सम्भवम्

Acharya Sushruta is of the view that Aashaya of body are those body cavities or organs where the Vayu has repeatedly staying at a place. Vayu is a force in the body which is always in motion. The movements of other elements in the body depend on the qualitative and quantitative equilibrium of Vata or Vayu. The Vayu constantly staying in the Mamsa(muscles) and Mamsa Peshi(muscle fibres), creates various Aashayas like Hrudaya etc i.e. When the Vayu permanently staying in the Mamsa and mamsa Peshis creates spaces within them so as to create the Aashayas.

Aashayas apart from being abode or spaces, facilitates the Dhatus(tissues) including Rasa(Plasma), Rakta(blood cells), Mamsa(muscle tissue) etc, normal kapha, normal pitta, Purisha(faeces) and Mutra(urine) for their normal physiology i.e. the ashayas allow Rasa, Rakta etc to stay in them and perform their normal activities.

Types of Ashayas

आशयास्तु-वाताशयः, पित्ताशयः, श्लेष्माशयो, रक्ताशय, आमाशयः

पक्वाशयोमूत्राशयः स्त्रीणांगर्भाशयोऽष्टम इति ॥ (सु. शा. 5/8)

Acharya Sushruta, Vagbhatta and Sharangdhara all the ayurvedic anatomists have enumerated sapta Aashaya (seven aashayas). They are Vataashaya, Pittashaya, Sleshmashaya, Raktashaya, Amashaya, Pakwashaya and Mutrashaya. In female the Garbhashaya is eighth aashaya. Sharangadhara has added two Stanyashaya (mammary glands) and Garbhashaya exclusively in females within the list of Aashaya. Thus total number of Aashaya become ten.

Aashayas mentioned by different Acharyas:

S.No	Sushruta	Vagbhata	Sharangadhara
1	Vatashaya	Vatashaya	Pavanashaya
2	Pittashaya	Pittashaya	Agni ashaya
3	Shleshmashaya	Kaphashaya	Shleshmashaya
4	Raktashaya	Raktashaya	Jeeva Raktashaya
5	Amashaya	Amashaya	Amashaya
6	Pakwashaya	Pakwashaya	Malashaya
7	Mutrashaya	Mutrashaya	Mutrashaya
8			Garbhashaya
9			Stanyashaya

VATASHAYA

Vata dosha plays its vital role in whole of the human body and it controls all the activities in the body. Though any area is not confined for Vata and its activities, certain sites or places have been allotted to it(as is done with other doshas) from where they operate their activities. We know Pakwashaya is the chief site of Vata.Since we have some confusions regarding the terms Pakwashaya, Malashaya and Vatashaya. The explanation given by Sushruta regarding the site or place of Vata is Vatashaya(because he mentioned Pakwashaya in the list of Aashayas separately).

PITTASHAYA

The Pittashaya is said to be located between Amashaya(Stomach) and Pakwashaya(Large intestine, transverse colon to be precise in this context). Gall bladder should be considered to be pittashaya.Again though there are many sites for Pitta, Pittashaya is said to be one of the predominant sites of pitta(Nabhi or Umbilicus is said to be the chief site of Pitta, gall bladder falls in the approximate region of Nabhi). If we consider Pittashaya as the site of Agni, Agnyashaya or Pancreas too should be included in the term, since Agnyashaya has not been given a place in the list of Aashayas.

SHLESHMASHAYA

Charaka and Sharangadhara both are of the view that the actual seat of Shleshma is Uraha pradesha (thorax). Within the thorax the Shleshma –bhuvau or two phuphusa are present. Therefore the Shleshmashaya should be understood as two lungs. Shleshmashaya is related to the actions of Udana Vayu. Lungs are directly related to Oxygenation and deoxygenation process, which is vital for all functions of the body. All the functions of Udana Vayu depend on the proper functioning of Shleshmashaya.

RAKTASHAYA

According to Sushruta the seats of Raktashaya are Yakrit and Pleeha. Yakrit is a haemopoietic organ where as Pleeha breaks rakta kana (blood cells) based on scientific observations. During emergency spleen acts like a blood bank and provides blood whenever there is severe loss of blood during injuries.

जीवरक्ताशय इति जीवतुल्यं रक्तम् तस्य आशय स्थानम् तच्च प्लीहा

इति प्रसिद्धं हृदयस्य वामभागाश्रितं भवति (Addhamal)

Addhamal, an ayurvedic anatomist has located Pleeha (Spleen) on the left side of Hrudaya and Amashaya.In above quotation spleen has been termed as Jeeva Raktashaya. This means it is a life giving agent and acts like a blood reservoir.

AMASHAYA

The Amashaya is a Koshtanga as per Acharya Caraka and other Acharyas. Even by Acharya Sushruta also mentioned about Amashaya while mentioned about Koshta because it is an Ashaya. It is also been considered as the main seat of Kapha dosha by some of the Acharyas as Kapha sthana. The location of Amashaya is situated above the Nabhi and below the Hrudaya.

In the process of digestion the word Amashaya is mentioned i.e. in the first stage of digestion Kapha is formed in Amashaya. It is the place of first stage of digestion i.e. once the food reaches Amashaya the food will be digested partially and after this it will be moved into the first part of the small intestines where further digestion is carried out where the main digestion we take place which can be called as Grahani.

PAKWASHAYA

The Pakwashaya is a Koshtanga as per Acharya Caraka and other Acharyas. Even by Acharya Sushruta also mentioned about Pakwashaya while mentioned about Koshta because it was a Aashaya. It is also been considered as the main seat of Vata dosha by all the Acharyas as Vata sthana. The location of Pakwashaya is situated below Nabhi and above Shroni and Guda.

पक्वाशयकटीसक्थिश्रोत्रास्थिस्पर्शनेन्द्रियम् ।

स्थानं वातस्य, तत्रापि पक्वाधानं विशेषतः ॥ (अ.ह.सू.12/1)

In the process of digestion the word Pakwashaya is mentioned i.e. in the last stage of digestion Vata is formed in Pakwashaya. It is the place of last stage of digestion i.e. once the food reaches Pakwashaya the food will be digested completely and after this it will be converted into Pureesha after moving from this place to the next stages of GI tracks.

MUTRASHAYA

The term itself speaks that Mutra (Urine) stored in Mutrashaya. Organ holding urine, mainly the term Mutrashaya includes Urinary bladder(but the whole of urinary apparatus starting from Kidneys to Urinary bladder can be taken. It is situated between Nabhi and Prstha(back) in the region of Kati(Pelvis) and Vanksana Pradesa(Pelvic region).

GARBHASHAYA

In the commentary of Sharangadhara Samhita, it is mentioned as the 3rd aavarta or circle of the Yoni(vaginal canal) is known as Garbhashaya and it is like wheel shaped. Anatomically the lower part of the uterus i.e.cervix opens into the upper portion of vaginal canal which can be considered as 3rd aavarta of Yoni. Yoni resembles the shape of a Shankha Nabhi (conch shell) and is having 3 spirals. In the 3rd of these three, the Garbhashaya is located. Garbhashaya resembles the shape of the mouth of a Rohita fish.Conceiving the Garbha and enabling it to grow to full term(in its state of perfect health) is the function of Garbhashaya. Monthly menstrual cycles too take place through this organ.

STANYASHAYA (MAMMARY GLANDS)

Stanya means milk. In feeding mothers stanya is produced for feeding the new born. Therefore Mammary gland is termed as Stanyashaya in females.

KOSHITA

Koshta – Large Anatomical Body Cavities:

The large spaces (or cavities) of our body which accommodate the organs (Koshtangas / Ashayas) are called Koshta. Here first we shall try to understand an Ayurvedic term called ‘Koshta’ with an anatomic vision.

What is Koshta:

Koshta means a cavity or space. The human body is made up of large cavities called Koshta. E.g. the thoracic cavity is a larger space which accommodates Lungs, heart, a part of oesophagus etc and doesn't allow any other organ because the space is designed to accommodate only these set of organs. Likewise the abdominal cavity and pelvic cavity are the large spaces and accommodate the specific organs. Thus they can be included under Koshta. Means organs located within the Koshta are called Koshtangas. Koshta accommodates the organs of our body.

Koshta explained by Sushruta:

स्थानानि आम अग्नि पक्वानां मूत्रस्य रुधिरस्य च

हृत् उण्डुक फुफ्फुसः च कोष्ठ इति अभिधीयते II (सु.चि.२/१२)

Sushruta explains the Koshta as a place or cavity occupied by the below said organs:

Amashaya – Organ accommodating improperly digested or semi-digested food(wherein first phase of digestion takes place), Stomach or upper part of digestive tract from mouth to stomach should be considered.

Agni-Ashaya – Site of fire, though the Pitta sthana(place of Pitta) i.e. the entire digestive tract involving the function of digestion of food should be taken as place for fire or Agni(Agni, in the body is represented in the form Of Pitta) i.e. Stomach, Small intestine, Pancreas ,Liver etc, we should mainly consider Pancreas as the site of Agni.

Pakwashaya – Organ accommodating the digested food, Intestines(mainly large intestines, but the term also can include both small and large intestine, i.e starting from the end part of stomach to the anal opening) should be considered as Pakwashaya.

Mutrashaya – Organ holding urine, mainly the term Mutrashaya includes urinary bladder(but the whole of urinary apparatus starting from kidneys to urinary bladder can be taken)

Raktashaya – Organs related to formation of blood (Liver and spleen should be considered as Rudhirashaya/Raktashaya)

Hrudaya – The organ related to circulation of blood, i.e pumping the blood, oxygen and nutrients to all parts of the body, the Heart.

Unduka – The organ which receives the digested food and starts forming the stools, the Cecum or beginning part of Large intestine should be considered as Unduka.

Phuphusa – The organ or organs related to respiratory mechanism, the Lungs.

We can justify by telling that, Sushruta has given a few examples of the organs comprising of Koshta without giving an entire list of the organs. He has included Hrudaya and Phuphusa i.e. lungs and

heart which are the main organs occupying the Uro-guha or thoracic cavity. He has mentioned Agnyashaya, Amashaya, Pakwashaya, Rudhirashaya, Mutrashaya, Hrudaya, Unduka etc.

Analysis of Koshta explained by Caraka –

Though there is some similarity with respect to some organs mentioned by Sushruta, Caraka has mentioned some more organs or parts of organs. We will try to analyze and sort out the meanings of these terms.

Hrudaya, Yakrut, Pleeha, Basti (Mutrashaya by Sushruta), Pakwashaya, Amashaya, are explained in the list of Koshtangas by both Charaka and Sushruta.

Another reference from Caraka

This gives a gross definition of the term Koshta. Caraka tells that Koshta is also called Maha Srotas (Antaha srotas), which means the largest channel of the body. It is located in the deep recess in the middle portion of the body as it is called “ Sharira Madhya Maha Nimna ” and is comprised of Amashaya and Pakwashaya.

According to this definition, the term Koshta comprises of Amashaya and Pakwashaya. Caraka in a later context (Shareera sthana, which comes after Sutra sthana in the treatise) explains Koshtangas without defining what is Koshta because he had already quoted it in Sutra Sthana.

This also gives us an idea that according to Caraka, Amashaya and Pakwashaya are the major components of Koshta and all the other viscera surrounding them are called Koshtangas or organs in the vicinity of Koshta.

If we take Amashaya as the central cavity of digestive tract (Maha srotas) to be a cavity extending from mouth to the end part of stomach and Pakwashaya comprising of the lumen within the small intestines and large intestines put together, the Pakwashaya mentioned in the Koshtanga list would still be ‘intestines’ or the whole part of digestive tract where in the food is thoroughly digested.

CONCLUSION

Shareera Rachana or Human Anatomy is the basis for any medical science. We need to know about the construction of human body which includes the cells, tissues, organs and organ systems. The knowledge of Koshta gives us a precise anatomical knowledge of the cavities of human body and the viscera therein.

These three doshas are moving around the entire body. Each dosha has certain tissues and or organs as their abode. They stay in those organs and control the activities. Example, Phuphusa, Amashaya, etc are important sites of Kapha, Pakwashaya is an abode and controlling centre for Vayu, Nabhi, Amashaya, Agnyashaya, Hrudaya etc are the sites of Pitta. We need to understand the Koshta to understand the related physiology. Many of the organs of Koshta form the Aashayas or residence or place of stay for many elements. The name of the organ itself explains its relationship with that element. Example, the term Amashaya means an abode for Anna or improperly digested or semi digested food. Pakwashaya is an abode of digested food and holds it until it is converted into faeces and excreted. Mutrashaya holds the urine until it is voided. We need to understand the anatomical and physiological relationships between these Aashayas(abode) and the elements staying there. For this the knowledge of Koshta is essential.

Aashayas form the roots of origin for Srotases(channels of the body). Srotases are the channel systems related to formation, transportation of essential things within the body(like food,air,water,blood etc) and waste products out of the body(like stools,urine etc).The whole body is made up of Srotases and our health depends on the functional excellence of Srotases. These Srotas have their roots in the Aashayas. When the Aashayas are damaged or vitiated, the concerned srotas and dhatus are also vitiated.

On the basis of 'residence and resident' relationship, the resident will be happy if the residence is well built and equipped. Similarly, in the body also some important ingredients of the body which are travelling from one corner of the body to the other in order to carry out the life activities in a balanced way, some materials which stay at a place to perform certain activities and some substances to get excreted out of the body in a balanced way,need a residence where they can stay.Some elements like Rakta(blood) are also produced in their abodes.

The comparative knowledge of Koshta and Aashaya helps a doctor to track down the status of an organ. At the same time it also helps them to identify the koshta and Aashaya are good,bad,ugly or disturbing and also to diagnose if the ashaya is healthy or not. By doing so, an effective treatment can be given at the right time and the balance between the residence and resident can be established, which in turn is the key for perfect health.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. VaidyaBhagavan Dash edited, CharakaSamhitaShareerasthana 7th Adhy,10thShlo...Reprint. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series office, Varanasi: 2010.
2. Prof. P.V. Tiwari edited, KashyapaSamhitaShareerasthana 3rd Adhy,4thShlo...Reprint. ChaukhambhaVishwabharati, Varanasi :2004.
3. VaidyaJadavjiTrikamjiAcharya edited, SushrutaSamhitaChikitsasthana 2nd Adhy,12thShl..Reprint. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi: 2012.
4. Acharya K.R. Srikanthamurthyedited,AstangaHridayamShareerasthana 3rdAdhy, 12thShl...5th Edition, Krishnadas Academy, Varanasi :2001.
5. Dr. Shivprasad Sharma edited, AstangaSamgrahaShareerasthana 5th Adhy,46thShlo...3rd Edition. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series office, Varanasi: 2012.
6. Murthy Krishna K.H & P.V. Sharma edited, BhelaSamhitaShareerasthana 7thAdhy, 11thShlo..Reprint. ChaukhambhaBharati Academy, Varanasi :2003.
7. Prof. P.V. Tiwari edited, KashyapaSamhitaShareerasthana 3rd Adhy,12thShlo...Reprint. ChaukhambhaVishwabharati, Varanasi :2004.
8. Monner-Williams M, A Sanskrit English dictionary, Is ted., Delhi, MohanlalBanarsidas publisher's pvt ltd, 1990:81
9. V.S. Apte, The student's Sanskrit English dictionary, Delhi, The Auspicious of Govt of India, 1965:21/331

10. VaidyaJadavjiTrikamjiAcharya edited, SushrutaSamhita, Reprint 2003 :75. ChaukhambhaSurbharatiPrakashan, Varanasi.
11. P.V.Sharma, SushrutaSamhita, First edition. Pp 148, ChaukhambhaVisvabharati, Varanasi.
12. VaidyaJadavjiTrikamjiAcharya edited, SushrutaSamhita, Reprint 2003 :354. ChaukhambhaSurbharatiPrakashan, Varanasi.
13. VaidyaJadavjiTrikamjiAcharya edited, SushrutaSamhita, Reprint 2003 :3303. ChaukhambhaSurbharatiPrakashan, Varanasi.
14. P.V.Sharma, SushrutaSamhita, First edition. Pp 186, ChaukhambhaVisvabharati, Varanasi.
15. Dr. KrushKanthPandey. RachanaShareera (Comprehensive Human Anatomy) 2nd edition, Varanasi: ChaukhambhaKrishnadas Academy; 2003.
16. Dr. Giridhar M. Kanthi. ShareeraRachanaVijnana (A Text book of Ayurvedic Human Anatomy), Varanasi: ChaukhambhaOrientalia; 2015.
17. Prof. D.G. ThatteShareeraRachanaVigyan(A Text book of Human Anatomy), 1st edition, Varanasi: ChaukhambhaKrishnadas Academy; 2005.
18. Dr. U. Govindaraju. Human Anatomy in Ayurveda, New Delhi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratisthan; Reprint 2007.
19. Dr. MahendraSingh.RachanaShareeraVijnana Vol-1, Varanasi: ChaukhambhaOrientalia; Reprint 2014.
20. Dr. MahendraSingh.RachanaShareeraVijnana Vol-2, Varanasi: ChaukhambhaOrientalia; Reprint 2014.
21. Dr. M. Rama SundaraRao. ShareeraRachana(A Text book of Anatomy in Ayurveda).
22. Gray Henry, Peter L.williams, Roger Warwick, Mary Dyson and Lawrence Bannister, editor, Gray's Anatomy 39th edition, London:1989.
23. B.D. Chaurasia. Human Anatomy Vol-1, 7th edition, New Delhi, Bengaluru: CBS Publishers and Distributors Pvt Ltd; 2016.
24. B.D. Chaurasia. Human Anatomy Vol-2, 7th edition, New Delhi, Bengaluru: CBS Publishers and Distributors Pvt Ltd; 2016.
25. B.D. Chaurasia. Human Anatomy Vol-3, 7th edition, New Delhi, Bengaluru: CBS Publishers and Distributors Pvt Ltd; 2016.
26. Doland's Pocket medical Dictionary 27th edition, Elsevier, India: 2005.

27. Atlas of Human Anatomy by Frank H. Netter 3rd edition, USA: Icon Learning Systems; 2003
28. SampathMadyastha. Manipal Manual of Anatomy 3rd edition, New Delhi, Bengaluru: CBS Publishers and Distributors Pvt Ltd; 2016.

