



A CLASSICAL APPROACH TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING OF  
*MANOVAHA SROTAS*

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ABSTRACT

Mental disorders are a bane for the medical fraternity by the virtue of its complexity in handling them. *Manas* remained a mystery and very few attempts to understand it was made. *Manovaha srotas*, which is an essential channel for the hauling of *Manas* throughout the body and its accessibility out of the physical body, must possess a definite physical structure. In classics, we do not find the word '*Manovaha srotas*' while describing about different *srotas* but psychological disorders. Keeping the existent *srotas* in to account, we can claim that the regular *srotas* only can act as *Manovaha srotas*. Thus we can understand the relevance of such understanding by cross checking the references. Though *Pranavaha srotas* is concerned with respiration, it also is apprehensive with sensory and motor activities of the body. *Pranavaha srotas* extends from *Hridaya* till *shiras* which helps in comprehending the data. Mind can traverse elsewhere in the body by other *srotas* as well.

**Keywords:** *Manas, Hridaya, Pranavaha srotas, Vikaras.*

**INTRODUCTION:** *Manas* remained as a mystery though its existence is evident. One can neither find it physically nor can it be measured in any units. But it exists. It exhibits its existence by many ways. A student though is physically present during a lecture, looking at the teacher perceives nothing if his mind is elsewhere. This example shows that there must be an entity apart from physique.

*Manas* is notorious being unstable. It has accessibility to almost everywhere. But *Manas* needs a body for its functioning, a pathway for its movement and a location to situate. In human body, it's location is in *Hridaya*, proximity to the location of *atma, buddhi* and *indriyas*. The testimony for its existence is perception of knowledge itself.

*Mano vikaras* are due to three *dosha* and *agantu*<sup>1</sup>. Perhaps a disturbed bodily factor (*dosha*) can spoil mind and a disoriented mind will spoil the body. Thus, mind as

well as body is interlinked. Epidemiological studies reveal that prevalence rate for psychiatric disorders is varying from 9.5 to 370/1000 population in India<sup>2</sup>. These varying prevalence rates of mental disorders are from both Indian and international studies. Despite variations in the design of studies, available data from the Indian studies suggests that about 20% of the adult population is affected with one or the other psychiatric disorder.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:**

Any given situation is analyzed based on the basic information available. *Shaareera*, the structural and functional aspects are essential to analyze in any disease. A normal structure and function of *dosha, srotas* and mind should be understood to analyze mental disorders. The basic platform for the development of *mano vikaras* need to be understood.

**METHODOLOGY:** The work is a type of literary research.

Source of data: The literary source is from classical texts of Ayurveda, and published articles in reputed journals. The available literary information is analyzed critically correlated with contemporary classical texts for authentication.

**LITERARY REVIEW:** Ayurveda believes in harboring the mind inside the *Hridaya*, thus, it becomes essential to understand *Hridaya* prior to the understanding of mind and mental disorders. Modern science explains us about the impulses which traverses across the body through the dedicated pathways called as nerves. In Ayurveda, the same pathways are named as *srotas*.

In Ayurveda, *Hridaya* is given more importance than *mastishka* as it is said to be the storehouse of many entities in the body.

It is understood that mind can traverse across whole body and even beyond. Though it can move around, it has a location exclusively set for it. *Hridaya* is the seat of mind<sup>3</sup> it shares the location along with other entities such as *shadanga*, *Vijnana*, *indriyas*, *arthas* and *atma*.

*Hridaya* is not just an organ which pumps blood alone. It is a junction through which many *srotas* cross through. In *Hridaya*, *dasha dhamanis*, *prana* and *apana*, *Manas*, *buddhi*, *chetana* and *mahabhoota* are present in the form of wheel and axle<sup>4</sup>.

*Pranavaha srotas* and *Rasavaha srotas* have their roots in *Hridaya*<sup>5</sup>. *Pranavaha srotas* thus begin at *Hridaya* also it is said that *pranavata* is situated in *shiras*. It means, *pranavata* moves through *kantha* and *uras* and does *dharana* of *buddhi*, *indriyas*, *Hridaya* and *dhamani*. *Hridaya* acts as a support for *buddhi* etc.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, while explaining the

importance of *shiras* (head) charakacharya has said that, *indriyas*, *indriya-pranavaha srotas* are situated in *shiras* like an aura of sun<sup>7</sup>.

Twenty four *dhamanis* which take origin in *nabhi* are disseminated in different directions. Among them, ten *Dhamanis* which move upwards (from *nabhi*) goes to *Hridaya* and divides into three each, thus become thirty (30). Among those, eight *dhamanis* grasp *shabda*, *roopa*, *rasa* and *gandha*<sup>8</sup> (two for each).

*Manas*, due to its *anutva* and *ekatva*, it cannot engage itself in to all these (*arthas*) at once. Thus perception of each takes a minimum difference in time<sup>9</sup>. From *shiras*, where *Manas* is perceiving *shabda* etc will be carried to *chitta sthana (Hridaya)*<sup>10</sup> the movement must be happening through the same channels as mentioned earlier, as each *arthas* are provided with two *dhamanis* each.

In *Unmada nidana*, *doshas* will enter location of *budhi (Hridaya)* in a person with *upahata satva*, and situate in *Manovaha srotas* and spoils the *chetas*<sup>11</sup>.

**DISCUSSION:** It has been observed that *vata* is the *dosha* essential for the activities running through in the body. *Vata dosha* being responsible for regulation of *Manas* does maintain and support *Hridaya* while travelling through its respective *srotas*.

*Pranavaha srotas* is accommodating the movement of *pranavayu*, and *Manas*. *Manas* has no independent and dedicated pathway for its movement, but it is authorized to traverse through any *srotas* in the body.

The whole body shall be acting as pathway and location for *Manas*<sup>12</sup>. This endorses *Manas* to recognize any sensation across the body.

As all the *indriyas* are unified in *shiras*, *pranavaha srotas* can be identified as the

main pathway for *Manas* for the perception of knowledge.

*Pranavaha srotas* is a physical structure whereas *pranavata* and *Manas* are invisible entities.

The same *Pranavaha srotas* will be called as *Indriya -Pranavaha srotas* in *shiras*. This is because; the *indriya's buddhi* (after its perception) will be navigating through the similar and parallel pathway. The same pathway (*Pranavaha srotas*) near the *indriyas* is called as *indriyas Pranavaha srotas*.

#### How the knowledge is perceived?

Knowledge is perceived through a coordinated activity between different entities. It is perceived in presence of *Manas* which is in connection with *atma*, engaging with *indriyas*, connecting with *arthas*.

Regulator for the *Manas* is *vata*<sup>13</sup> and hence, the pathway through which perceived knowledge is carried towards the location of *buddhi* (*Hridaya*) is *Pranavaha srotas*. A typical and uninterrupted movement of *vayu* regulates the body functionalities<sup>14</sup>.

**Significance of Manovaha srotas in mano vikaras:** The basic factor essential for the *mano vikaras* is inconsistent *satva*<sup>15</sup>. *Dosha*, be it *shareerika* (*Vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*) or *mano doshas* (*rajas* and *tamas*) would need inconsistent *satva* to create *mano vikaras*.

A strong mind would resist and deal with annoyance of *dosha*.

The pathway through which *Manas* moves in the body for the perception of knowledge should be free from distorted *dosha*. Also, the knowledge perceived shall be carried through the *srotas* which are free from *doshas*.

Similarly, distorted *Manas* would spoil the *srotas* and would perceive the knowledge in a distorted way itself.

Collectively we can say that, *Manas* while going towards *shiras/indriya's adhishtana* would get spoiled due to *dushta srotas*. Also, the knowledge which is carried towards *Hridaya* would get spoiled due to *dushta srotas*. Distorted *Manas* would perceive the knowledge wrongly and distorted *Manas* would spoil the normally functioning *srotas* as well.

This explains the basic structure of any *mano vikaras*. *Shareerika doshas* can involve *Manas* and can lead to *mano vikaras*. Similarly, *mano doshas* can involve *shareera* and lead to *mano vikaras*.

**CONCLUSION:** The *Pranavaha srotas* can be called as *Manovaha srotas* while regulated *vayu* does the regulation of *Manas*. *Shareerika doshas* also can spoil *Manovaha srotas* and lead to *mano vikaras* and flawed *satva* is a basic essentiality for the onset of *mano vikaras*.

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