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Review Article

ACHARYA SUSHRUTA'S *SHALYA TANTRA* ARMAMENTARIUM: A BRIEF REVIEW ON *SHASTRA* AND *SHASTRA KARMA*

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ABSTRACT

Acharya Sushruta, revered as the "Father of Surgery" laid the foundation of *Shalya Tantra* (Ayurvedic surgery), emphasizing both surgical and parasurgical interventions. His treatise, the Sushruta Samhita, systematically describe *Shastra Karma* (operative procedures) and their role in managing various surgical conditions such as *Arsha* (haemorrhoids), *Bhagandara* (fistula), *Nadi vrana* (sinus wounds), and *Asthi Shalya* (foreign bodies in the bone). concerning to his philosophy is the concept of *Ashtavidha Shastra karma* (eightfold operative procedures), which form the core of surgical practice. These include *Chedana, Bhedana, Lekhana, Vedhana, Eshan, Aaharan, Visravan, Sivana*. Sushruta also emphasized on *Trividha Karma (Purva Karma, Pradhana Karma* and *Paschat karma).* This holistic approach integrates surgical precision with ethical practice, it aids to inculcate discipline methods of comprehensive medical science. The principles outlined by Acharya Sushruta continue to influence modern surgical thought, highlighting enduring contribution to global medical heritage.

INTRODUCTION

Definition and Conceptual Scope

Shastra (Surgical Instruments): Derived from the Sanskrit root meaning "to cut" or "to injure," a Shastra is defined as any sharp-edged instrument or device capable of causing intentional, therapeutic injury to tissue. Classical texts like the *Sushruta Samhita* detail roughly 20 distinct types of *Shastras*, each characterized by specific geometry and ergonomic properties (*Shastra sampat*).

Shastra karma (surgical operative procedures): This refers to the clinical application of these instruments. It is categorized under *Pradhan Karma* (the main operative stage) within the broader tripartite surgical timeline of *Trividh Karma* (pre-operative, operative, and post-operative measures).

Ashtavidha Shastra Karma: The Eightfold Operative Principles.

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Current academic publications in 2026 recognize these eight procedures as the "soul of surgery," providing a methodical framework for all invasive interventions.

Chedana (excision)/ *Bhedana* (incision)/ *Lekhana* (scraping)/ *Vedhana* (puncturing)/ *Eshana* (probing)/ *Aharan* (extraction)/ *Visravan* (drainage)/ *Sivan* (suturing), *Ashta Vidha Shastra Karma.* [1,2]

The evolutionary taxonomy of *Shastra* and *Shastra Karma*- The surgical landscape of Ayurveda is anchored in the precise utility of *Shastra* (sharp instruments). While the Sushruta Samhita provides the primordial blueprint, the later works of *Ac Vagbhata- Ashtanga Hridaya* (*Sutrasthan* Chapter 26) and *Ashtanga Sangraha* (Sutra -Chapter 34)- expand the surgical armamentarium, reflecting an evolution in clinical tool-crafting and procedural refinement.

Etymology and Conceptual Definition- A profound definition is offered by the commentator Chakrapani, who posits that a *Shastra* is characterized by its capacity to induce controlled pain and tissue disruption upon application. This definition highlights the "sharp" *(Teekshna)* essence of these tools, distinguishing them from *Yantras* (blunt instruments),

which are generally used for traction or displacement without incision.

Comparative Enumeration across Classical Treatises- The variation in the number of instruments described across the Samhitas suggests a dynamic tradition that adapted to different surgical needs over centuries:

Sushruta Samhita: 20 *Shastras* (The foundational "Su. Su. 8/3" classification).

Ashtanga Sangraha (Vagbhata): 26 *Shastras* (Reflecting a more specialized and expanded toolkit).

Harit Samhita: 12 *Shastras* (A concise selection focused on essential interventions).

Palkapya Samhita: 10 *Shastras* (Primarily focusing on specialized veterinary surgical contexts).

Nomenclature and Morphological Precision

In the Ayurvedic tradition, nomenclature is intrinsically linked to biomimicry and functional morphology. The names of the Shastras are not arbitrary; they are descriptive of their shape or the specific biological structure they emulate (e.g., *Mandalagra* for circular edges or *Suchimukha* for needle-like points). This onomatopoeic and descriptive naming convention ensured that the surgeon could instinctively select the correct tool for the specific Shastra Karma (operative action) required.

***Shastra Sampat* (Ideal *Shastra*) [3]**

In the context of Ayurvedic surgical excellence *(Shastra Sampat),* these six essential attributes describe the ideal qualities of sharp surgical instruments as detailed by Acharya Sushruta in the Sushruta Samhita.

The following conversions provide advanced, high-level vocabulary suitable for professional medical or historical articles:

***Sugraha* (Ergonomic Prehensility)**

The instrument must possess an anatomically optimized hilt, ensuring a secure, non-slip purchase that facilitates precise manual dexterity and tactile feedback.

***Suloha* (Metallurgical Integrity)**

It must be forged from high-grade, resilient alloys- such as carbon steel or tempered iron *(Kantaloha)*- to ensure structural robustness and resistance to corrosive degradation.

***Sudharani* (Acute Incisiveness)**

The cutting edge must be honed to an exceptional degree of keenness, capable of effortless tissue penetration and maintaining its sharpness through repeated clinical interventions.

***Suroop* (Aesthetic and Ergonomic Symmetry)**

The tool should exhibit a refined, proportional configuration that is both visually balanced and ergonomically intuitive, promoting ease of handling during complex maneuvers.

***Susamahit-Mukhagra* (Calibrated Terminal Efficiency)**

The distal working tip must be expertly aligned and precision-engineered for functional longevity, ensuring optimal efficacy and reliability throughout prolonged surgical utilization.

***Akaral* (Linear Edge Continuity)**

The instrument should feature a smooth, uninterrupted blade profile, strictly devoid of serrations or irregularities that might cause jagged or traumatic tissue disruption.

Standard Dimensional Archetype *(Shastra Pramana)* [4]

The quintessential longitudinal dimension for primary surgical instruments is established at six *Angula* (approximately 12cm), a metric derived from individualized anthropometric proportions to ensure optimal leverage and control.

***Nakha Shastra* and *Eshani* (Augmented Linear Specifications)**

Certain specialized tools, specifically the *Nakha Shastra* (nail parer) and *Eshani* (probe), require an extended reach, hence they are precision-engineered to a length of eight *Angula* (16 cm).

***Shararimukha Shastra* (Maximal Longitudinal Extension)**

The *Shararimukha Shastra* (surgical scissors) possesses the most significant longitudinal profile, calibrated at ten *Angula* (20cm) to accommodate complex mechanical articulation and deep-tissue maneuvers.

***Mudrika Shastra* (Digitally Integrated Miniature)**

Contrasting the standardized lengths, the *Mudrika Shastra* (finger-ring knife) is uniquely miniaturized to correspond with the anatomical dimensions of the distal phalanx (terminal knuckle) of the index finger, facilitating ultra-precise, localized tactile interventions.

Shastra Dosha

Acharya Sushruta's surgical principles *(Shastra-Avacharana),* the following are the eight primary demerits *(Shastra Dosha)* that render a sharp surgical instrument unsuitable for clinical use. [5]

Here is a list outlining the various deficiencies and limitations (demerits) associated with the design and condition of these historical instruments, presented with advanced vocabulary for formal discourse:

***Vakra* (Structural Asymmetry)**

An instrument exhibiting curvature or anatomical irregularity along its longitudinal axis is considered a demerit, as such deviations compromise the intended linear trajectory during application.

***Kuntha* (Attenuated Incisiveness)**

A blunted or dull cutting edge is a significant demerit, as it diminishes the instrument's capacity for clean severance and may necessitate increased force.

***Khanda* (Structural Discontinuity)**

Instruments with chipped, fractured, or otherwise compromised edges are deemed deficient due to the potential for unintended tissue trauma or fragmentation during use.

***Khardharam* (Coarse or Serrated Margins)**

Unless specifically designed for a particular purpose requiring such features, the presence of rough or serrated margins is a demerit that can result in irregular or excessive tissue disruption.

***Atisthula* (Excessive Morphological Stoutness)**

An instrument that is overly robust or substantial in its cross-sectional dimension may lack the necessary finesse for precise application and manipulation.

***Atituccha* (Structural Frailty)**

Instruments that are excessively slender or delicate may possess insufficient structural integrity to withstand the mechanical stresses encountered during their intended use.

***Atidirgha* (Hyper-Extended Linear Proportion)**

An instrument of excessive length can hinder controlled maneuverability and may be less practical in confined or restricted areas.

***Atihrasva* (Sub-optimal Linear Diminution)**

Conversely, a tool that is excessively short may limit reach and accessibility to the intended area of application, restricting its utility.

Parts of *Shastra*

The structural anatomy of a surgical tool is categorized to define its mechanical and clinical utility: [6]

***Yantramukha* (Functional Interface)**

The designated working end or terminal portion specifically engineered to interact with biological tissues.

***Mukhagra* (Distal Apex)**

The precise extremity or tip of the instrument, often the primary point of contact during localized interventions.

***Dhara* (Incisional Edge / Lamina)**

The acute cutting portion or blade, meticulously honed to facilitate surgical separation or excision.

***Vrutta* (Manipulatory Shaft / Hilt)**

The primary handle or grip, ergonomically designed to provide the surgeon with manual leverage and tactile control.

***Vruttafala* (Lamina Breadth)**

The lateral dimension or width of the blade, which determines the displacement and span of the surgical incision.

***Vruttagra* (Anterior Blade Profile)**

The forward-facing segment of the blade that initiates penetration or cutting.

***Vruttamula* (Proximal Hilt Junction)**

The base or root of the handle where it integrates with the instrument's body, ensuring structural stability.

***Shastra Dhara*[7]**

Ancient surgical edges are classified by their morphological sharpness and intended procedural function:

***Masuri* (Lenticular Incisivity)**

An edge profile optimized for *Bhedana* (precise incision); historically utilized in instruments like the *Vriddhipatra* (scalpel) and *Nakhashastra* (nail parer).

***Ardha Masuri* (Semi-Lenticular Abrasion)**

A modified edge designed for *Lekhana* (scarifying or surgical debridement), exemplified by the *Mandalagra* (circular-tipped knife).

***Kaishiki* (Capillary-Fine Penetration)**

An ultra-sharp edge intended for *Vyadhana* (puncturing or venesection) and *Visravana* (therapeutic evacuation or drainage), typical of needles and the *Kushapatra* (bistoury).

***Ardha Kaishiki* (Attenuated Dividing Edge)**

A variant optimized for *Chedana* (excision or complete division), utilized in complex scalpels such as the *Vriddhipatra* for thorough tissue separation.

***Shastra Payana* [8]**

Payana is a rigorous metallurgical treatment wherein surgical instruments are subjected to intense thermal exposure until reaching a critical core temperature, followed by immediate immersion (quenching) in specific media such as *Kshara* (alkaline solutions), *Udaka* (aqueous media), or Taila (oleaginous fluids). This cyclic process of heating and rapid cooling is iterated to achieve the desired structural resilience and molecular stability.

***Kshara Payana* (Alkaline Quenching)**

This method is employed to impart maximum structural hardness. It is specifically indicated for instruments designed for the *Chedana* (excision or fragmentation) of dense, calcified structures like *Asthi*

(osseous tissue/bones) or the extraction of metallic *Shalya* (embedded foreign bodies/arrows).

***Udaka Payana* (Aqueous Tempering)**

This technique utilizes water as a cooling medium to achieve a balanced sharpness suitable for soft tissue interventions. It is the primary choice for instruments utilized in the *Chedana* (excision), *Bhedana* (incision), and *Patana* (cleaving) of *Mamsa* (muscular and adipose tissues).

***Taila Payana* (Oleaginous Quenching)**

Quenching in oils provides a refined, tenacious edge that resists fracturing. This is quintessential for instruments used in *Sira Vyadha* (venesection/ phlebotomy) and the delicate extraction of superficial *Shalya* (foreign fragments), where precision and minimal trauma are paramount.

Process of *Dharasthapana* (Refinement and Edge Maintenance) [9]

Restoration of Acute Incisively (Abrasive Honing)

To remediate blunted or dull clinical instruments, the cutting margin undergoes controlled abrasion against a specialized whetstone, known as *Nishatani.* This stone- traditionally a *Mashavarna Shila* (a stone possessing the texture and hue of black gram)- facilitates the removal of microscopic deformities to restore a razor-sharp, uniform edge profile.

Preservation of Edge Integrity (Protective Stropping)

Once the optimal keenness is achieved, the instrument's edge is safeguarded through a process of delicate friction or stropping against a wooden substrate. For this purpose, a plank of Shalmali (*Bombax malabaricum*) is utilized; its unique fibrous texture serves to refine the blade's finish and protect the delicate edge from environmental degradation or premature dulling during storage.

***Shastra Grahan Vidhi* [10]**

***Vriddhipatra* and General Incisional Prehension-** The manual orientation for the *Vriddhipatra* (scalpel) and all instruments utilized in *Bhedana* (incisional and dissecting) procedures involves gripping at the junctional nexus between the *Vrutta* (handle) and the *Phala* (blade).

Tactile elevation for *Lekhana* (Scraping)- For *Lekhana* (surgical debridement or scraping), the required posture for instruments such as the *Vriddhipatra* and *Mandalagra* (round-headed knife) involves a slightly elevated hand position to facilitate the necessary strokes for superficial tissue refinement.

Distal Gripping for *Visravana* (Evacuation)

Sharp instruments designated for *Visravana* (therapeutic drainage) require being held at the extreme distal end of the handle.

Atraumatic Interventions with *Trikurchika*

For specialized drainage, the *Trikurchika* (tri-pronged brush/trocar) is the designated instrument for use in pediatric, geriatric, or hypersensitive patients, including those with a fragile constitution or a phobia of sharp edges.

***Vrihimukha* Prehension (Digital Coordination)**

The manipulation of the *Vrihimukha* (trocar) involves securing it within the palm with the hilt concealed, and the functional tip guided by a precise grip between the thumb and the index finger.

***Kutharika* Manipulation (Percussive Precision)**

The procedure for the *Kutharika* (axe-shaped knife) involves stabilizing it with the non-dominant (left) hand.

Proximal Anchoring for Specialized Tools

Instruments such as the *Ara* (awl), *Karapatra* (bone saw), and *Eshani* (sharp probe) are grasped at their anatomical roots (the base of the handle). All other ancillary instruments are held in a manner that optimizes their specific functional requirements and ergonomic utility.

Mandalagra

The *Mandalagra* is characterized by its distinct orbicular terminal profile, facilitating specialized surgical maneuvers. It is categorized into two primary structural archetypes based on the configuration of its working end.

***Vrunttamukha* (Annular/Circular-Faced Configuration)**

The *Vrunttamukha* variant features a fully circular or disc-shaped functional interface. This design is optimized for broad-surface debridement, ensuring a uniform distribution of pressure during the scraping of specialized tissues or the removal of superficial morbidities.

***Kshurakara* (Razor-Profile/Semi-Lunar Variant)**

The *Kshurakara* (or *Kshurapradhara*) subtype possesses an edge profile mirroring a traditional razor. This configuration provides a more acute, linear-to-curved incisivity, making it suitable for refined scraping operations and precision excision where a standard circular head may lack the necessary directional control.

Clinical Indications- *Chedana, Bhedana* measurement 6 *Angula*

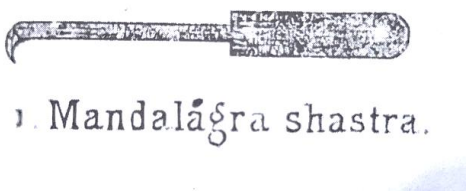

Fig. 1: *Mandalagra Shastra*

Karapatra

Chedana lekhana

6 *Angula*

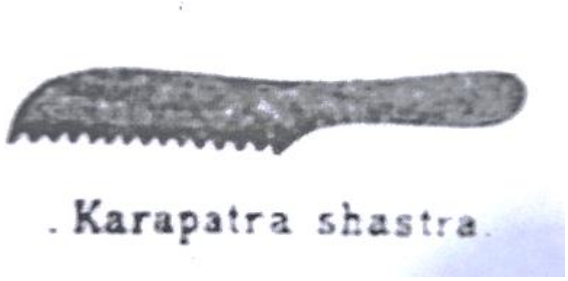

Fig. 2: *Karapatra Shastra*

Vruddhipatra

2 Types – *Anchintagram* and *Prayanthagram*

Both are 7 *Angul* in length in which the handle should be 5 ½ *Angula.*

Used for *Chedana* and *Bhedana*

Scalpel– Known as the 'surgeon's knife'. The instrument is detachable with handle and blade. This is used to incise the skin and subcutaneous tissues.

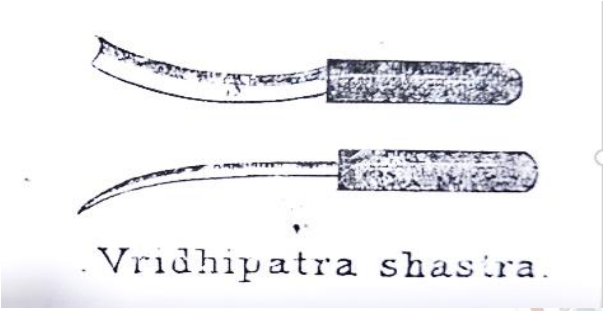

Fig 3: *Vridhipatra Shastra*

Nakha shastra

8 *Angula* in length in which blade is 2 *Angula* in length and 1 *Angula* broad *Chedana* and *Bhedana.*

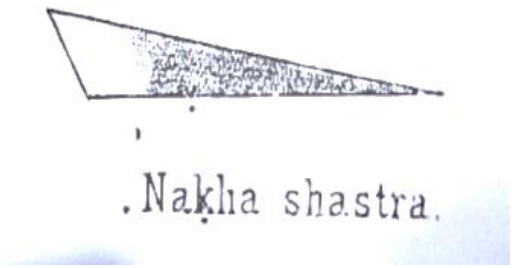

Fig 4: *Nakha Shastra*

Mudrika shastra

Mudrika means ring.

The instrument or *Shastra* which fits around index finger.

Also known as *Anguli Shastra.*

It is used for *Chedana* and *Bhedana* in *Kantha gat rogas*.

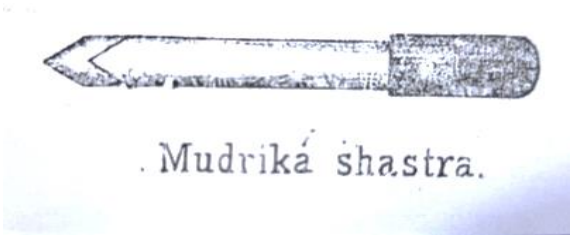

Fig 5: *Mudrika Shastra*

Utpala Patra Shastra

The blade of the *Shastra* looks similar to the petal of *Utpala* (water lily flower like).

It has got a sharp edge

Measurement– 6 *Angula*, Blade– 3 *Angula* long, 1 *Angula* broad.

Used for *Chedana, Bhedana*, incising *Vidhradhi*. rephrase the sentences without changing the meaning

Fig 6: *Utpala Patra Shastra*

Ardha dhara shastra

The *Shastra* is called so because half of the length of the *Shastra* is sharp.

Also known as *Vakradharam*

Measurement – 8 *Angula* in length, 2 *Angula* broad.

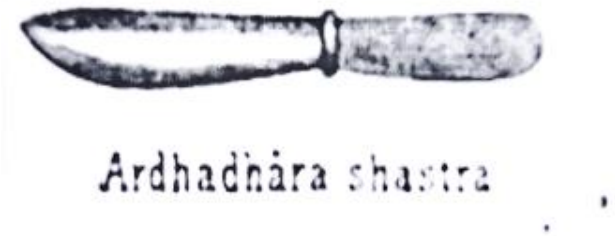

Fig 7: *Ardhadhara Shastra*

Soochi Shastra

These specialized instruments are primarily utilized for *Visravana* (drainage or bloodletting) and *Seevana Karma* (the art of surgical suturing). They are categorized into three distinct morphological types:

1. *Vritta* (The Cylindrical/Round-Body Needle)

Characterized by its circular cross-section, this needle measures approximately 2 *Angula* in length. It is specifically indicated for anatomical regions with minimal soft tissue *(Alpa mamsa*) and for procedures involving the articulations (*Sandhi*), where a delicate, atraumatic pass is required.

2. *Trikonaka* or *Tisra* (The Triangular/Cutting Needle)

Defined by its trihedral or three-sided geometry, this needle has a length of 3 *Angula*. Its sharp, cutting edges are designed to penetrate tougher tissues, making it the preferred choice for approximating the skin and managing voluminous, fleshy muscular structures.

3. *Dhanuvakra* (The Bow-Shaped/Curved Needle)

This needle features an arcuate or bow-like curvature and measures 2 ½ *Angula* in length. Its ergonomic design is engineered for deep-tissue navigation, specifically for the repair of visceral injuries involving the gastrointestinal tract (stomach/intestines) and other vital anatomical structures *(Marma).*

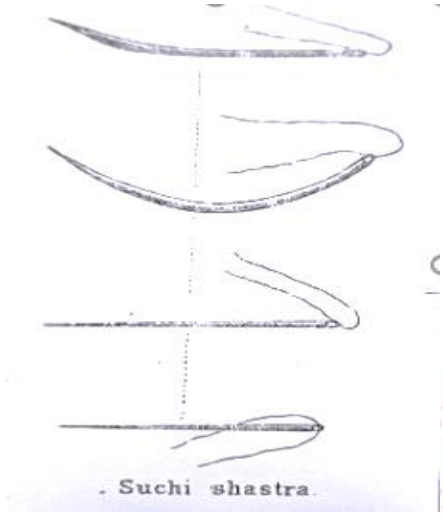

Fig 8: *Suchi Shastra*

Kushapatra

The *Kushapatra* is a micro-surgical instrument characterized by its slender, refined morphology, bearing a striking resemblance to the tapered blade of Kusha grass (*Desmostachya bipinnata*).

Visravana (Therapeutic Drainage): This instrument is the gold standard for evacuating pathological fluids and performing controlled bloodletting.

Siravyadha (Venesection): It is specifically indicated for performing venipuncture or vascular incisions in the management of:

Galaganda: Cervical lymphadenopathy or goitre.

Mukharoga: Various inflammatory and cystic conditions of the oral cavity.

Fig 9: *Kusha Patra*

Atimukha Shastra

This instrument is morphologically designed to emulate the rostrum (beak) of the Ati bird (*Turdus ginginianus* or *Jalavardhini*), featuring a distinct curvature optimized for surgical precision.

Anatomical & Dimensional Specifications

Manubrium (Handle): The instrument possesses a handle measuring 7 *Angula*, providing the surgeon with significant leverage for controlled manipulation.

Lamina (Blade): The primary blade extends 8 *Angula* in length. Notably, the anterior 1 *Angula* is designated as the *Phalabhanga* (the functional tip or breaking point of the blade), which is engineered for specific tissue entry.

Clinical Indications & Application

***Visravana* (Therapeutic Evacuation):** It is extensively used for the drainage of pathological fluids, such as pus or inflammatory exudates.

***Siravyadha* (Venesection/Phlebotomy):** The instrument is indicated for performing venipuncture to alleviate systemic or localized congestion, specifically in the following anatomical regions:

***Greeva* (Cervical Region):** Used for vascular procedures in the neck.

***Kaksha* (Axillary Region):** Employed for surgical interventions in the armpit.

Fig 10: *Atimukha Shastra*

Shararimukha

The *Shararimukha* derives its nomenclature from its morphological resemblance to the elongated, tapering mandibles of the *Sharari* bird (the Heron). In contemporary clinical practice, this instrument is functionally synonymous with the *Kartari* (surgical scissors).

Dimensional Specifications

Total Longitudinal Length: The instrument measures precisely 12 *Angula*, offering a substantial reach and mechanical advantage for the practitioner.

Clinical Utility and Procedural Indications:

***Visravana* (Exudative Drainage):** It is employed for the evacuation of morbid fluids and the clearance of localized inflammatory collections.

Incisional Extension: This instrument is specifically

indicated for the secondary expansion of primary incisions. Once an initial entry has been established-typically via the *Utpala Patra Yantra* (a scalpel-like instrument)-the *Shararimukha* is utilized to precisely widen the surgical field to facilitate deeper exploration or better drainage.

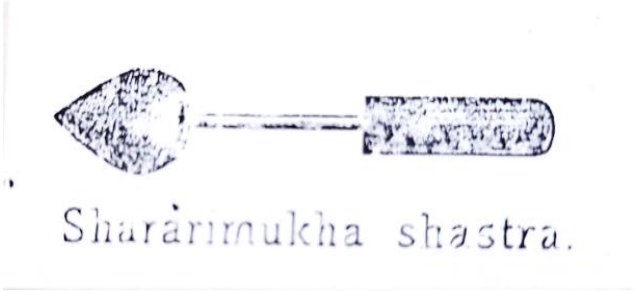

Fig 11: *Shararimukha Shastra*

Antarmukha Shastra

The *Antarmukha* is a specialized surgical instrument characterized by its semilunar or crescentic morphology. Within classical texts, it is also identified by the synonym *Chandraradam* (resembling the "moon's edge") and shares functional similarities with the *Kartari* (surgical shears) due to its specialized cutting action.

Cavitary Access: The primary indication for this instrument is the canalization or slitting of anatomical cavities.

Exploration of Hollow Viscera: Its design is optimized for the longitudinal incision of hollow structures, allowing for the decompression of abscesses or the surgical exploration of internal passages without damaging underlying tissues.

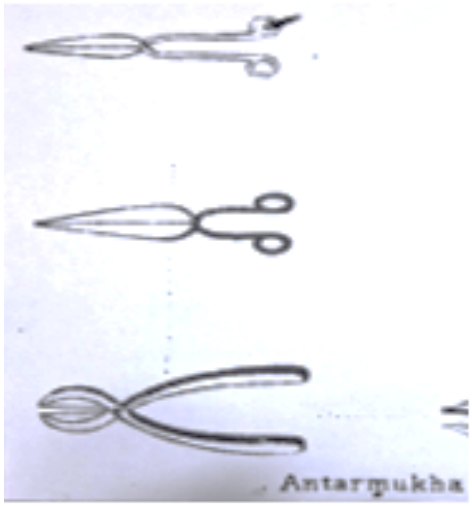

Fig 12: *Antarmukha Shastra*

Trikurcha

Shastra with 3 brush like sharp needles mounted on a strong needle.

Used for *Visravan.*

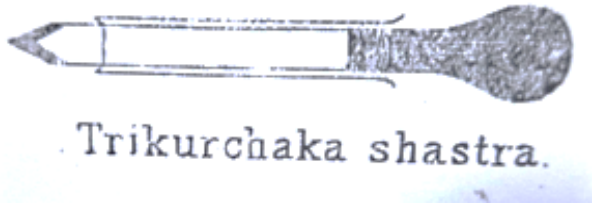

Fig 13: *Trikurcha Shastra*

Kutharika

The *Kutharika* is a specialized sharp instrument characterized by its aciform morphology, effectively functioning as a miniaturized surgical axe designed for high-impact precision.

Dimensional & Structural Specifications:

Manubrium (Handle): The instrument features a handle measuring 7½ *Angula*, providing the necessary length for a stable, weighted grip.

Lamina (Blade): The functional blade is remarkably compact, measuring a mere ½ *Angula* in length.

Phala (Apex/Terminal End): The working tip is described as *Godanta Sadrisha*, meaning it emulates the morphological structure of a bovine incisor.

Primary Clinical Indication:

***Vyadhana Karma* (Puncturing):** This instrument is indicated for *Vyadhana*, which translates to puncturing.

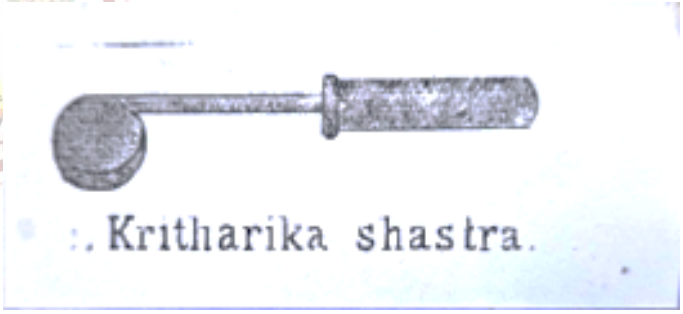

Fig 14: *Kritharika Shastra*

Vrihimukhi Shastra

Tip of the *Shastra* which looks like a *Vrihi mukha*

Measurement – Handle -2 Angula / Blade – 4 Angula

Uses – *Vyadhana* in *Jalodar*, *Mutravruddhi*, *Siravyadha*.

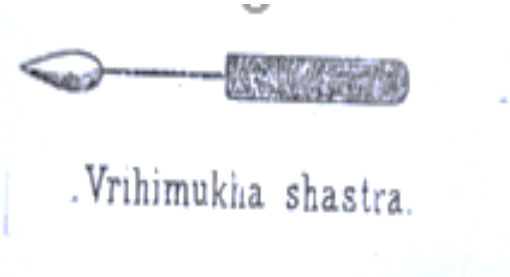

Fig 15: *Vrimukha Shastra*

Aara Shastra

The *Ara* is characterized by its distinct proximal-to-

distal taper, featuring a broad, semi-arcuate or rectilinear blade integrated into a compact, ergonomic handle.

Morphological & Dimensional Specifications

Total Longitudinal Dimension: The instrument measures 8 *Angula* in its entirety.

Phala (Functional Tip): The terminal apex is exceptionally refined, described as *Tila Pramana* (equivalent to the dimensions of a sesame seed).

Manubrium (Handle): The handle geometry is *Gopuccha Sadrisha*, possessing a tapered, conical profile resembling a bovine tail to ensure a secure, non-slip grip during high-pressure maneuvers.

Lamina (blade) Aesthetics: The blade morphology is traditionally compared to the delicate, pointed structure of *Kusha Patra* (*Kusha* grass) or the emergent *Durva Ankura* (bent grass sprouts).

Clinical Applications

Vyadhana (Precision Puncturing): Utilized for the controlled perforation of tissues.

Karna Vyadhana (Aural Piercing): Specifically indicated for the anatomical piercing of the ear lobule.

Asthi Gata Shalya Nirharanatham (Orthopaedic Extraction): This instrument is the primary choice for the extraction of foreign bodies *(Shalya)* that have become impacted within osseous tissue (bone).

Fig 16: *Ara Shastra*

Vetaspatra

The *Vetasapatra* is a sharp surgical instrument morphologically engineered to resemble the slender, elongated leaf of the *Vetasa* (the Willow or Bamboo leaf, Salix caprea).

Technical & Dimensional Specifications

Lamina (Blade) Dimensions: The instrument features a primary blade measuring 4 *Angula* in length.

Transverse Dimension (Breadth): The blade possesses a width of 1 *Angula*, providing a substantial cutting surface area relative to its length.

Morphology: Its design focuses on a balanced, symmetrical taper that allows for clean entry and exit during surgical maneuvers.

Clinical Utility

Vyadhana Karma (Percutaneous Puncturing): The primary functional indication for the *Vetasapatra* is *Vyadhana*. It is utilized for the controlled perforation of tissues, specifically in procedures requiring a precise, leaf-shaped incision to facilitate access to deeper structures or to initiate therapeutic drainage.

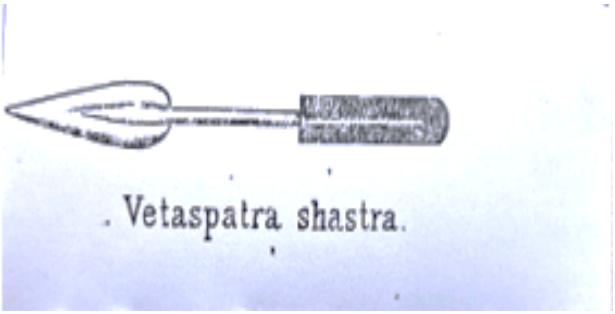

Fig 17: *Vetaspatra Shastra*

Badish Shastra

The *Badisha* is a sharp instrument characterized by a distal curvature specifically engineered to emulate the geometry of a fishing hook (hamulus).

Dimensional & Structural Specifications

Total Longitudinal Length: The instrument measures a total of 6 *Angula*.

Manubrium (Handle): It features a prolonged handle of 5.5 *Angula*, providing the surgeon with a high degree of control and a significant mechanical advantage.

Lamina (Functional Tip): The primary working end or hook is extremely compact, measuring only 0.5 angula in length.

Morphological Variations

The instrument is categorized into two distinct configurations based on the degree of its distal arc:

Swanatham (The Fully Arcuate Hook): Characterized by a complete, pronounced curvature, optimized for secure engagement with deep-seated tissues.

Natyanatam (The Semi-Arcuate Hook): Characterized by a subtle or partial curvature, designed for more superficial manipulation or delicate traction.

Primary Clinical Utility

Aaharanam (Surgical Extraction/Traction): The Badisha is the primary instrument indicated for *Aaharanam*. It is utilized to hook into, stabilize, and extract foreign bodies, necrotic tissue, or to provide traction on anatomical structures during complex dissections.

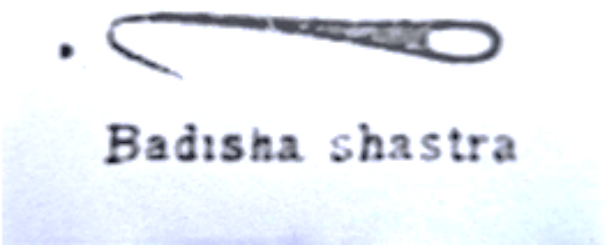

Fig. 18: *Badish Shastra*

Dantashanku Shastra

The *Dantashanku* is a sharp instrument with a very sharp tip.

Technical & Dimensional Specifications

Total Length: The instrument is 6 *Angula* long.

Handle: It has a handle of 5.5 *Angula*.

Blade: The blade measures 0.5 *Angula*.

Clinical Indications and Procedural Utility

Used in several dental disorders.

Used to scrape out the dental debris f from the surfaces, corners, and cervices of teeth.

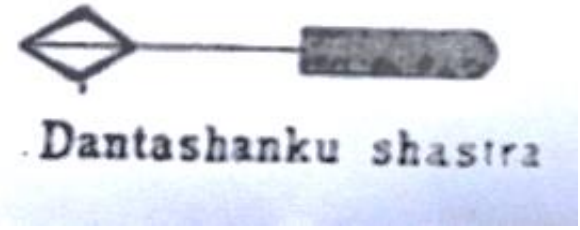

Fig 19: *Dantashanku*

Eshani Shastra

The Sharp *Eshani* is distinguished by its attenuated, acicular (needle-like) geometry and its refined cutting edge.

Technical Specifications

Dimensions: The instrument measures 8 *Angula* in total length, providing sufficient reach for deep sinus exploration.

Morphology: It possesses a slender, linear profile terminating in a sharp apex, specifically designed for both tactile feedback and tissue penetration.

Clinical Utility and Procedural Indications

***Eshana* (Exploratory Probing):** Utilized to accurately map the topography, depth, and trajectory of fistulous tracts or sinuses.

***Anulomana* (Directional Localization):** Employed to ascertain the precise orientation of purulent collections within a *Vidhradhi* (abscess).

***Bhedana* (Incisional Entry):** Due to its sharp configuration, it is used to facilitate the primary incision or puncture of a localized infection.

Taxonomy according to *Acharya Dalhana*

The commentator *Dalhana* categorizes these probes into three distinct distal morphologies:

***Tikshnakantak Mukhi*:** Featuring an apex resembling a sharp thorn, optimized for piercing.

***Tarunyavapatra Mukhi*:** Designed with a tip emulating a young sprout or leaf, offering a balance between sharpness and flexibility.

***Gandupadakar Mukhi*:** Characterized by a vermiform (earthworm-like) tip, typically used for non-traumatic navigation of sensitive tracts from the surfaces, corners, and cervices of teeth.

Fig 20: *Eshani Shastra*

Anushastra [11]

Anushastra are biological, mineral, or elemental agents that serve as surrogates for metallic instruments. While they lack a metallic composition, they are capable of executing primary surgical maneuvers such as *Chedana* (excision) and *Bhedana* (incision).

I. Classification of the 15 *Anushastras*

Tvaksara: Siliceous bamboo rind

Sphatika: Crystalline quartz/Rock crystal

Kacha: Vitreous fragments (Glass)

Kuruvinda: Corundum/Ruby stone

Jalauka: Medicinal leeches (Hirudotherapy)

Agni: Thermal cautery

Kshara: Alkaline/Caustic pH agents

Nakha: Biological ungual structures (nails)

Gojivha Patra: Leaves of *Elephanlopus scaber*

Sephalika: Leaves of *Nyctanthes arbortristis*

Shakpatra: Leaves of *Tectona grandis*

Karira: Bamboo sprouts/shoots

Bala: Human or animal hair/pilus

Anguli: The digital digit (Finger)

II. Clinical Indications for Use

The deployment of *Anushastra* is prioritized under the following circumstances:

Special Populations: Pediatric patients (children) or individuals exhibiting *Bhiru* (surgical phobia/ psychological aversion to metallic blades).

Logistical Constraints: Instances where standard metallic surgical instruments are unavailable or inaccessible during emergency procedures.

III. Functional Applications

Biological Instrumentation (*Nakha*): The surgeon's nails are utilized as versatile tools for extraction (*Aaharana*), excision (*Chedana*), and resection in anatomical regions where digital precision is superior

to metallic tools.

Therapeutic Draining (Botanical Modalities): The abrasive textures of *Gojivha, Sephalika*, and *Shakpatra* leaves are indicated for the evacuation of pathological fluids and surface scarification in oral (*Mukharoga*) and ophthalmic (eyelid) pathologies.

Surrogate Probing: In the absence of a metallic *Eshani*, exploratory probing (*Eshana Karma*) may be performed using pilous structures (hair), fingers, or vegetative sprouts, ensuring minimal trauma during the investigation of fistulous tracts.

Advanced Modalities: The systemic and localized application of *Kshara* (chemical cautery), Agni (thermal cautery), and *Jalauka* (bloodletting) represent specialized para-surgical procedures governed by distinct clinical protocols.

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