



A REVIEW ON HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH IN AYURVEDA

- Vipin Kumar¹, Sapana Khatri², Sheetal Verma³
e-mail : dr.aroravipin@gmail.com

ABSTRACT :

The stream of *Ayurveda* medical knowledge is considered eternal because it was known by them to have been there since the beginning of time. Knowledge of *Ayurveda* was recollected by Lord Brahma and ultimately it reached to the mankind with the sole motto of health maintenance and health restoration. *Ayurveda Acharyas* are equivalent to modern era scientists who unfolded the *Trisutra Ayurveda* and enhanced the knowledge by various scientific methodologies. Chronological analysis of *Vedas*, *Upanishads* and *Samhitas* reveal that *Acharyas* enriched and expanded the knowledge of *Ayurveda* with the passage of time through their theoretical and practical expertise.

Key Words- *Ayurveda*, History, Research

INTRODUCTION-

Ayurveda is evidence based medical science. The knowledge of *Ayurveda* is eternal. Lord Brahma is regarded as the creator of the world and primary researcher. He recollected the knowledge of *Ayurveda*. It was an unscripted knowledge which was passed to *Daksha Prajapati*. He learnt it word to word and imparted it to *Ashwini Kumars*. *Ashwini Kumars* were twin brothers popularly known as "Physicians of God". *Ashwini Kumars* enriched the same with their theoretical and practical expertise and then surpassed this science to

Indra. But during that era diseases started dominating the planet and people got badly afflicted with diseases. So, *Bhardwaja* approached *Indra* and *Indra* showered *Bharadwaja* with knowledge of *Ayurveda*. This is the first time *Ayurveda* descended on earth from the divine world.

Historical record of *Ayurveda* begins with a medical conference in the Himalayan Mountains described in the collection of medical writing called *Charak Samhita*². The historical conference was a milestone in the history of medicine. Ancient *Ayurvedic* knowledge was in the form of *Trisutra*³ (*Hetu, Linga, Aushdha*). With the passage of time *Rishis* enfolded the *Trisutra* and enhanced the knowledge by various scientific methodologies. Even in this present era *Ayurveda* is blessing the world with its tremendous practical applicability in healthy disease state. It proves that research in *Ayurveda* is a continuous process since ancient time to present era.

Material and methods-

Ayurvedic Samhita literature, *Ayurveda* History literature and various journals are studied for this review work.

Research of *Ayurveda* in Vedic Period

An insight of *Ayurveda* research in *Vedic* period can be gained by the exploration and

¹Assistant Professor, ³Associate Professor, Department. of *Samhita, Sanskrit evum Siddhanta, Uttarakhand Ayurved University, Gurukul Campus, Haridwar*, ²M.D. Scholar, Department of *Agad Tantra, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur*.



analysis of four Vedas. Basic concepts of Ayurveda are mentioned in *Mantras* of Vedas especially *Rigveda* and *Atharvaveda*. Exploration of *Vedic* literature in terms of research reveals that there is mention of 67, 82 and 289 *Aushadha Dravyas* in *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda* and *Artharvaveda* respectively⁴. Names of diseases mentioned in *Rigveda*⁵ are *Rajyakshma*, *Grahani*, *Prishatamaya*, *Hridroga*, *Charam Roga* etc. *Artharvaveda*⁶ classifies diseases into two types *Shapthya* and *Varunya* and also mentions names of several diseases like *Kasa*, *Harima*, *Kilasa*, *Jalodar*, *Gandmala*, *Mutraghata*, *Ashmari*, *Arbuda*, *Visham Jwara* etc. *Rigveda*⁷ regarded *Tridosha* as *Tridhatu*. In addition to this *Atharvaveda*⁸ has clearly mentioned four types of *Vayu*, *Pitta* is regarded as *Mayu* and *Balasa* term has been used for *Kapha*. All this indicate the research process going on between the time period of first *Veda Rigveda* and last *Veda Atharvaveda*. Three types of *Aushadha dravyas* i.e. *Divya*, *Parthiv* and *Aapya* are mentioned. Organ Transplantation, *Sanjivani* therapy and *Rasayan* are specifically mentioned in *Rigveda*⁹. *Aushadha Sukta*¹⁰ of *Rigveda* is immensely important. It clearly describes the morphology, habitat, types and uses of *Aushadha dravyas*. But *Atharvaveda* depicts more advanced scenario of *Ayurvedic* knowledge. *Atharvaveda*¹¹ has description of digestive fire, digestive process and seven *Dhatu* metabolisms. In *Atharvaveda*¹² *Yuktivyaparasharya* and *Daivavyapashraya* treatment principles are mentioned. Besides toxicology (*Visha Vigyan*), *Shalakya*, *Bhoot Vidya*, *Rasayana* and *Vajikarna* knowledge had been attained by physicians up to *Atharvaveda*¹³ period. Therefore we can say that research in every field of

Ayurveda during *Vedic* period enriched the *Ayurvedic* knowledge with passage of time.

Research of Ayurveda in Upanishad Period.

The *Upanishad* part of *Vedas* are ancient Sanskrit texts that contain some of the critical philosophical concepts and ideas of Hinduism. *Chhandogya Upanishad*¹⁴ describes the process of assimilation of food and drink. Food eaten is divided into three parts. Coarsest part becomes faeces; the part which is medium becomes flesh and finest one nourishes mind. Physicians of *Upanishad* era knew about *Rasa* and *Kitta* parts of *Ahara Rasa*. Physiology of heart, aetiology of diseases, *Shodasha Kala Purusha*, specific dietetics for best progeny all this description is not possible without research in these fields. Ten *Pranayatana*, *Tridosha Siddhanta*, *Chatushpada siddhanta*, of *Ayurvedic* science are prominent during *Upanishad* era.

Research of Ayurveda in Samhita Period

The analytical study of *Brihatray* brings forth the following facts regarding research in *Ayurveda*.

Charak Samhita- In the field of fundamental principles *Charak Samhita* describes *Tridosha siddhanta*, *Panchamahabhautta siddhanta*¹⁵ in a very systematic and scientific manner. *Lok-Purusha samya siddhanta*¹⁶, *Yukti Pramana*¹⁷, use of term *Pariksha* for *Pramana*¹⁸, *Samanya-Vishesh Siddhanta*¹⁹, *Panch-Nidana*²⁰, *Roga-Purusha Siddhanta*²¹, *Dashvidha Parikshya Bhava*²², description of *Agni* all symbolises multidimensional keen vision of *Acharya Charaka*. Essence of *Karya-Karana Siddhanta* can be seen in the subject matter of *Charak Samhita*. Research is nothing but



establishment of *Karya-Karana Bhava* which is big contribution of *Charak Samhita* to the mankind.

In the field of medicine *Samshodhana-Samshamana*, six *ChikitsaUpkramas*, *Panchkarma*, *Sansarjana Krama*, *Rasayana*, *Vajikarana*, *Aachara Rasayana*, *Arishta Vigyan*, *Avarana* are the some of the independent contributions of *Charaka Samhita*. Animal description mentioned in *Basti Chikitsa*²³ and milk description in *Vajikarana*²⁴ chapter is nothing but few examples of animal experimentation.

In addition to fundamental principles of six *Padarthas*, *Rasa-Guna-Veerya-Vipaka* etc *Acharya Charak* also describes - Classification of *Dravyas* according to morphology and pharmaco therapeutics. Five types of *Kshaya Kalpana*, *Sneha Paka*, *Vadamarga*, *Sambhasa* etc. are independent contribution of *Acharya Charaka* and also proves *Acharya Charaka* as a great researcher.

Sushruta Samhita- five types of *Pitta Dosh*, role of *Rakta Dhatu* (Blood) in aetiopathogenesis of disease, *Shadkriyakala*, *Shadvidha Roga Pariksha*, analysis of *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Veerya*, *Vipaka*, in context of *Dravya*, dissection etc. are the fundamental principles independently described by *Acharya Sushruta*²⁵.

Description of *VataVyadhi*, *Jala-Santras Roga* (Hydrophobia), *Aatap-Dagdha*, *Dhumuphat*, *AupsargicRoga* along with several diseases of *ShalyaChikitsa*, *KayaChikitsa* and *Shalakyachikitsa* are the outcome of research going in that phase.

In the field of *Dravya Guna*, *Panch-Panchmool*, 37 *Mishrak Varga*, *Tuvrak*, *Khadir* and *Beejak* in *Kustha*²⁶, *Kutaja* and *Bhallatak* in *Arsha*²⁷, *Haridra* in *Prameha*²⁸, *Navayasa*

and *Lauha Arishta* in *Prameha Pidika*²⁹ etc. are the independent discoveries of *Acharya Sushruta*.

Detailed description of *Nasa-Sandhana*³⁰, *Karna Sandhana*, *Siravedha*, *Shadvidha Kshaya Kalpana*, *Kshara* and *Agni Karma* etc. are established by *Acharya Sushruta* as a great researcher.

Ashtanga Hridya

In the purview of basic principles, five types of *Kapha Dosh*³¹, the reconciliation of *Dhatu Vridhi Lakshana* with *Dosha Vridhi Lakshana*, use of *Lehsun*, *Palandu*, *Guggulu*, *Swarnamakshika* as a *Rasayana Dravyas*³³, *Dhamni Marma*³⁴ description, scientific approach in *Vipaka*³⁵ description etc. are the independent researches of *Vagbhata*. Use of *Parad* and *Gandhak* in treatment, use of *Guggulu* in *Medoroga*, mention of *Klaivya Roga* as a complication of excessive use of *Guggulu*, number of *Shastra* as 26 unlike 20 as mentioned by *Sushruta*, use of *Visha/poison* in treatment, *Urdhavguda Roga*, internal use of *Parad*, number of *Balgraha* 12 unlike 9 mentioned by *Sushruta*, *Vatabalask* and *Haridrak Jwara*, use of *Uchata* as *Vajakarak Dravya* are some of the advances in field of research in the time period of *Vagbhata*.

In the field of *Dravya Guna* description of *Saptapanchmoola*, *Vatsakaadigana*, use of *Kampillaka* for *Virechana*, use of *Amalaki* in *Prameha*, *Pippali* in *Pliharoga*, *Laaja* in *Chhardi*³⁶ etc. are the contributions of *Vaghabhatta*.

CONCLUSION-

Any science is not fully specialized at its initial level. In the beginning every science is in concise



or *Sutra* form and it gets evolved to its fullest by new inventions and scientific experimentations. Similarly inventions and discoveries in different fields of *Ayurveda* with the passage of time led to the inclusion of new medicinal *Dravyas*, pharmacological preparations, new therapeutics, new diseases in this *Trisutra Ayurveda*. All this expanded and augmented the knowledge of *Ayurveda* and brought forth the scientific foundation of *Ayurveda*. Ancient research and methodologies of our *Acharyas* have also successfully overcome the challenges of modern scientific techniques and experimentations. Scientific analysis of *Ayurvedic* knowledge is yielding out positive results. In today's era people are accepting the *Ayurvedic* science with full enthusiasm and faith.

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