

## RETRO STUDY OF VEDIC AND ANCIENT LITERATURES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NETRA VIGYAN IN AYURVED

Shabaz Mansoori<sup>1</sup>, Satish S Hadimani<sup>2</sup>

Asst Professor, department of Shalakya Tantra Aligarh Unani Ayurvedic Medical College & ACN hospitals, Aligarh U.P., India

Asst Professor SGR Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya Solapur Maharashtra, India

Email: [drshabakhan@gmail.com](mailto:drshabakhan@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

In present era, there are so many new technology and advanced techniques are available in ophthalmic treatment and diagnosis. But in ancient era before the modern surgery was born in the world, the oldest texts *Vedas* have already mentioned the treatment of eyes and its origin as well. So present topic is been focused to know about the various descriptions given in *Veda, Upanishad, Samhitas and commentaries* etc. So, one can understand the richness of intellect and knowledge of old Indian philosopher or scientists. In context of the topic here attempt made to explore the chakshu, the eyes related references specially in *Rigveda, Atharvaveda and Yajurveda in vedas, Brihadaranyaka, Chandogya, Aitareyaupnishad* in various Upanishads. Here explained about the special contexts in *Charaksamhita, Shusrutsamhita, Astangahridayam, Astangasangraha, Haritasamhita, Kashyap and Bhelsamhita* as well. Apart from these other collective literatures explored in *Madhava nidana, Sharangdhara samhita, Vangsen, Bhavprakash, Yogratnakar and Chakradatta* as well. So, this all matter will give a thorough look over the precious contribution in field of eye of ancient India.

**Keywords:** *Ayurveda, Netra, Samhitas, Netra Vigyan*, ancient literatures.

### INTRODUCTION

Indian ophthalmic tradition began much before Susruta's time and references to structure and working of eyes, eye diseases and their cure are found in Vedic literature. While planning any research, foremost step is to study sequential evolution, the origin of the present knowledge and basic ideas given by scientists. Hence, for the complete knowledge of the subject, it is necessary to trace out its historical background, which gives a tangible form in the development of stages from time to time. Here is an attempt is made to trace the references regarding *Netra* in *Ayurvedic* literature.

In *Shalakya tantra, Netra* is given the prime importance. Various references about *Netra* are available in *Vedas, Upanishads* and the other literatures. *Aswini Kumaras, Nimi, Videha, Bhoja, Sathyaki, Poojyapada, Shivi, Krishnathreya, Karala, Bhadra Sonaka, Janaka Garghya, Galava, Chakshushya* etc. has stood as the testimonies in the development of this science.

#### **Aim and Objective**

The purpose of the study to bring all the reference about the *shalakya tantra* which is whole study of origin cause symptoms and treatment of eye. This will

make a complete picture to understand the developed science of *Ayurveda* in India with special attraction to eye.

#### Methodology-

1. Study through all the reference books i.e. *Veda*, *Upanishad*, *Samhitas*, *Samgrahgrantha* and commentaries to find texts about eyes in all.
2. Collect all the reference texts which evaluate the prime era of *Ayurved* in ophthalmic section
3. Describe chronological references with their importance.

#### Vedic Period

*Vedas* are considered as the oldest and first available literature of the world. They are four in number i.e. *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Atharvaveda* and *Samaveda*. *Ayurveda* is the *Upaveda* of *Atharvaveda*.

#### In Rigveda -

*Rujaswa*, *Paravrija*, *Kakasivit*, *KaviPuru* and *Kanwawere* treated for the blindness by *Ashwini kumaras*<sup>1</sup>.

*Bharadwaja* was treated for the blindness by *Indra*<sup>2</sup>. References are available about the the replacement of the injured eye with artificial eye<sup>3</sup>.

#### In Atharvaveda -

*Atharvaveda*, composed by seventh -eighth century B C, contains verses referring to eye diseases. Exact natures of these are not clear and the cure suggested consists both of magical spells and plant preparations. *Mantra chikitsa* is explained to invoke the blessings of the sun for the preservation of sight, like *Gayatri Mantra*, *Sooryanamaskara* etc<sup>4</sup>, *Mantrachikitsa* and other *Spiritual* treatments. *Vedic* physicians have invited the disease producing organisms to come out the head through the eyes and cured blindness. 'oh serpent, I will stop the glow of your eyes through the vision of my glowing eyes'.<sup>5</sup>

In *Yajurveda*-There are several prayers for normal functioning of sense organs. *Yajurveda* has identified the relationship of sense organs with universal phenomenon, like two eyeballs and tears etc. were compared with cosmic bodies,<sup>6</sup> the divine influence of eye is described as:

Parts of the eye                      Governors  
Blood and blood vessels        : *Rudra*

Watery portions (liquid)        : *Parjanya*

*Kaninaka* (center of the eye) : *Surya*

*Krisnam* (black portions)        : *Agni*

*Suklam* (white portions)        : *Indra*

Lower lid                                : *Prithwi*

Upper lid                                : *Aakasa*

Diseases of eyes find place in various hymns. *Sisa* (lead) is explained as *Anjana* which is beneficial to eyes<sup>7</sup>.

#### Upanishat Kala

*Upanisadas* from a part of *Vedanta* text that were traditionally supposed to be composed in the post-*vedic* period and are described as, date between 1000 BC to 200AD. The very first attempt to hypothesize relation between morphological components of the eye and natural and mythological forces expressed in terms of primary elements is seen in the *Upanisad* literature. In fact, its an attempt to explain anatomy and working of the eye.

*Chandogya Upanishad* has explained the internal features of eye with its reflection as *Suklabha*, *Neelabha* and *Krishnabha*. The space between *Krishna* and *Shukla* is called as *Antariksha*<sup>8</sup>. These details are comparable with:

*Suklam*: Sclera and conjunctiva

*Lohinam*: Choroid

*Krishnam*: Ciliary body and retina

*Hiranyakesah*: Optic nerves

*Suklabha*: Conjunctiva

*Kaninika*: Pupil, iris and lens

*Loka*: A region of retina (macula)

*Antariksha*: A space inside eyeball.

In *Chakshushya Upanishat* is devoted for the protection of eyesight and cure its diseases; *Chaksusopanishad* is a short summary of prayers to sun, chanting of which is said to promote eyesight and their better health, 40-45 mantras have been explained for the improvement of vision.<sup>9</sup>

*Aithareya Upanisad* quotes the origin of eye.<sup>10</sup>

#### Purana Kala

There are innumerable references to eye as one of the five sense organs in Sanskrit historical classics like *Mahabharat*. The fundamental concept of contribution of primary elements in the construction of human

body and also relation of eye to the primary element in the construction of human body and also relation of eye to the primary element 'fire' is time and again expressed in it.<sup>11</sup> The idea that manas or mind controls all perceptions and its separation from bodily organs. Moreover, it's not corporeal as expressed in *Mahabharat*. The references about *Akshisula* and *Aandhya* are available in *Mahabharat*.<sup>12</sup>

### **Samhitha Kala**

**Charakasamhita** *Charakasamhita* was the earliest complete work on *Kayachikitsa* or internal medicine. Along with *Shusrutasamhita* and *Astangahridayasamhita*, it is one of the three major treatises of *ayurvedic* medicine. It is described in between 100 BC to 100AD. *Charaka* defined various terms used in the formulation of basic concepts of *Ayurveda* in its first chapter viz. *Sutrasthana*. He gave considerable thought to five senses, senses organs and their locations in the body. *Charaka* thus defined five groups or *pancapancaka*, five *Jnanendriyas* or sense organs viz. eyes, ears, nose, organs of taste and touch; *Indriyadravyas* that each organ made of as five primary elements, *bhu-* earth,  *jyoti-* fire, *apa-*water, *vayu-*wind, and *kha-* empty space.<sup>13</sup>

### **Sushrutha Samhita**

*Sushruta's* compendium *Sushruta samhita* was made some two thousand years ago. *Sushruta Samhita* has devoted first nineteen chapters in *Uttaratantra*. The beginning of the *UttaraTantra* with vivid description of *Netra*, its anatomy, classification of its diseases and their management shows the importance of this organ of sight. Classification and description of *Netraroga* along with details of *rogas* affecting *Varthma*, *Shukla*, *Krishna* and *Drishti* were explained. The *Shashtra karmas* for *Netra* like small incision extra capsular cataract extraction, excision of pterygium, incision of style, scrapping the follicles and concretion, surgery for entropion, trichiasis and glaucoma were explained. *Anusastra karmaas* like *Kshara*, *Agni*, *Raktamoksha*, for eye diseases were mentioned. Several oral drugs as well as *Kriyakalpas* like *Tarpana*, *Putapaka Seka*, *Aschyotana* and *Anjana* were mentioned for the management of *Netrarogas*.<sup>14</sup>

**Ashtanga Hridaya:** The next important authority in *Ayurved* after *Charaka* and *Sushruta* is *Vagbhata* of *sindha*, who flourished about the seventh century AD. In the *Uttaratantra* of *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Vagbhata* has described ninety four eye diseases and classified 18 chronic inflammatory conditions as *Pilla* and provided special line of treatment for them.<sup>15</sup>The *Kriyakalpa* including *Tarpana* and *Putapaka* were mentioned in *sutra sthana*, where *Putapaka* is mentioned as the follow up procedure of *Tarpana*. The complications of *Linganasa* are explained in detail.<sup>16</sup>

**Ashtangasangrah:** In the *Uttaratantra* of *Ashtangasangrah*, *Vagbhata* has described ninety-four eye diseases, *Vagbhata* has simply discussed essential of contents of *Sushruta* in its ophthalmic section. He did not describe the structural aspects at all but only disease.<sup>17</sup>

**Harita Samhita:** *Haritasamhita* is a rare tenth to twelfth century AD. In *HaritasamhitauttaraTritiyasthanana* chapter 45 *netrarogachikitsa* devoted for ophthalmic section. *Netraroganidana*, 7 types of *netrarogas* and Diseases like *Netrapushpa* and *Netra Patala* are mentioned along with their treatment.<sup>18</sup>

**Kasyapa Samhita:** *Kasyapasamhita* is a rare 1-2 BC, Under the *Kalpasthanana* chapter four *Sadalpa adhyaya*, various therapeutic measures for eye diseases of children and *pancabhautikata* are mentioned.<sup>19</sup> Under the chapter *vedanadhyaya* symptoms of *Kukoonaka* eye disease are mentioned.

**Bhelasamhita:** *Bhelasamhita* is a rare seventh century AD treatise that is chiefly devoted to *Kayachikitsa* or internal medicine Although it largely depicted *Charaka's* tradition it is also like *Sushruta samhita* in many ways. In *Bhelasamhita*, *sharirasthanana* described two types of *alocakapitta*, one is *caksurvaisesika* and the other, *buddhirvaisesika* (exclusively for intelligence or mental perception). They were supposed to be located between the eyebrows and were operational in visual perception.<sup>20</sup>

### **Sangraha Kala**

**Madhava Nidana:** *Madhava Nidana* is a six to seventh century AD; *Madhava* has described ophthalmic portion in *uttarardha*, *Netraroganidanas* along with Seventy-six *Netrarogas* like that of *Shusruta sama* and *nirama* condition of eye disease is unique contribution of *madhava*.<sup>21</sup>

**Sarangadhara Samhita:** *Sarangadhara Samhita* is a Thirteenth century AD; In this *Sarnghadhara* has mentioned the ninety four eye diseases in *purva khanda*<sup>22</sup> and treatment portion is mentioned in *uttarakhanda*; *Netralepa* along with the *Kriyakalpas* like *Seka*, *Aschyotana*, *Pindi*, *Bidalaka*, *Anjana*, *Putapaka* and *Tarpana* are mentioned in *netraprasadana* chapter.<sup>23</sup> *Sarnghadhara samhita* merely listed eye diseases on the basis of their location and added few common methods of treatment.

**Vangasena Samhita:** *Netrarogas* including *Upapakshma* and *Pilla* are explained along with their treatment. Symptoms of *Shalya* in the eye, *Sama* and *Niramalakshanas* of eye and its treatments are mentioned. *Akshipurana* is mentioned for *Vataja rogas*.<sup>24</sup>

**Bhavaprakasa:** *Bhavaprakasa* is a sixteenth century AD. *Bhavamishra* has explained Seventy-eight *Netrarogas* in *uttarardha*, *Netrarogadhikar* chapter is explained under *Varthmagatarogas*. *Pakshmagatarogas* are included in which *Pakhmakopa* and *Pakshmasatana* is mentioned.<sup>25</sup>

**Yogaratanakar:** *Yogaratanakar* is a sixteenth to Eighteenth century AD. *Yogaratanakar* has explained seventy-eight *Netrarogas* and their treatment in *uttarardha*.<sup>26</sup> *Dristipariksha* is unique explanation of *yoga ratnakar* described in *purvardha*.<sup>27</sup>

**Chakradatta:** *Chakradatta* is a Twelfth century AD. In Fifty nine chapter described only Treatment of *netraroga* and various uses of *Triphala*, *Chaksusya Varga* etc.<sup>28</sup>

### **DISCUSSION**

**VEDAS** there are references to structure and working of eye, eye diseases and their cure are found in *vedic* literature. Exact nature of these diseases is not clear, and the cure suggested consists both of magical spell and plant preparations.

**Upnisads** the very first attempts to hypothesize relation between morphological components of the eye and natural and mythological forces expressed in terms of primary element is seen in the *upnisad* literature, in fact it is an attempt to explain anatomy and working of the eye.

**Purana Kala** references to eye, eye diseases and their treatment and visual perception that appear in Sanskrit literature express their presuppositions that were based on natural as well as supernatural and non-corporeal phenomena.

### **Samhita Kala**

**Charaka Samhita** *charaka* mentioned in the *cikitsasthana*, the chapter on diagnosis, that ninety-six eye diseases were differentiated by them. *Carakar* refined from elaborating the topic since he considered it to be a privilege only of the specialist of the field (which he was not).

**Shusruta Samhita** defines fine wheels or *mandalas* of the eye, five parts of the eyes viz. muscles, blood, black and white parts and empty channels and relates them to five elements, defines four *patalas* in the eye viz. *tejojala*, *pisita*, *meda* and *asthi*, and states *Linganas* (cataract) to be the outcome of disorder advancing to the fourth layer. states that the lens is *masurdalamatram* signifying curvatures of two sides of the lens. States that the eyeball is supported by an arrangement of blood vessels, muscles etc. *aalocaka pitta* is one of the five *pittas*, and it is the vision giving fire.

**Astangahsamgrah/Astangahridaya:** like *Sushruta samhita* the last chapters called *uttarasthana* of both *Astangasamgraha* and *Astangahridaya samhita* are devoted to *Shalakyatantra* that included ophthalmology. *Vagbhatta* simply discussed the essentials of contents of *uttara tantra* of *sushruta* in its ophthalmic section. He did not describe the structural aspects at all but only symptoms for diagnosis of disease and their treatment.

**Haritasamhita** *netra patala* and *netra puspa* is unique contribution.

**Kasyapasamhita** it is mainly devoted for children eye diseases.

**Bhelasamhita** described two types of *alocakapitta* is unique contribution. The *Dosas* situated between the skull and palate successively affects the *manas*, *chitta* and *buddhi*, (thus suggesting the location of brain).

### Samgraha Kala

**Madhava Nidaan** and **Bhavaprakash** are selective and discussed only a fraction of *Sushruta's* extensive material viz. diagnosis and therapeutics respectively.

**Sarangdhara samhita** merely listed eye diseases based on their location and added few common methods of treatment.

**Vangasena Samhita** and **Yogaratanakar**, dealt with almost all topics of *Sushruta's* ophthalmology, including surgical treatments which are less elaborate.

**Cakradatta** dealt only treatment of *netrarogas*.

Now days since 19<sup>th</sup> century same attempt was made by modern science (advance technique or gradual upgradation of Vedas to Samhita etc) related to anatomy, physiology, diseases of eye, signs and symptoms of eye disorders, examination of eye, advanced diagnostic instruments, equipments, medicinal line of treatments (topical and systemic), parasurgical procedures related to eye disorders, surgical procedures (even with advanced technology equipments viz. phacoemulsification, LASIK etc) related to intraocular and extraocular eye disorders and preventive measures for eye disorders as well as eye donation.

### CONCLUSION

After thorough study of ancient *vedic* and *samhita* etc references which have been mentioned about the origin, cause, prevalence of diseases and their treatment for the eyes, we can admit that the medical science was developed more in those periods. All the common diseases of eyes have been explained with their etiology, diagnosis, prognosis and treatment comprehensively. We can explore more choices and option by understanding and research trail on ophthalmology from these references in the future on regular basis. With the help of modern science technology and equipments the *Ayurveda* treatment in ophthalmology can make a significant role as *Panchkarma* therapy and *Kriyakalpa* is expanding so effectively in all over the world.

### REFERENCES

1. Sharma Jay Dev, Rigveda Samhita with Bhashabhasya, Arya Sahitya Mandala, Ajmer, 1953. 1\112, 116, 117, Page no 235,249,254.
2. Sharma Jay Dev, Rigveda Samhita with Bhashabhasya, Arya Sahitya Mandala, Ajmer, 1953. 1\111\8. Page no 252.
3. Sharma Jay Dev, Rigveda Samhita with Bhashabhasya, Arya Sahitya Mandala, Ajmer, 1953. 1\116\16, Page no 249.
4. Dixit vedant Atharva Veda, Maoj Publication New Delhi 2012 10/2/6,31
5. Dixit vedant Atharvaveda: Maoj Publication New Delhi 2012.5\13\4,
6. Arya R.P, Joshi K.L. Yajurveda Samhita, Parimal Publication, Delhi, 1997 First edition.25\9, Page no 368.
7. Arya R.P., Joshi K.L. Yajurveda Samhita: Parimal Publication, Delhi,1997 First edition.21\36, Page no 325.
8. Tirth vedant, Chandokya Upanishad: Manoj publication Delhi, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 1\6\5,6
9. Chaksusyopnisat: <https://www.scribd.com>.
10. Aitareya Upanishad: Gita Press Gorakhpur 27<sup>th</sup> edition, 1\1\4. page no 37.
11. Sukthankar V S and Belwalkar SK (ed) The Mahabharat, (The Shantiparv), Bhaudarkar Oriental research institute, Poona, 1954.
12. Sukthankar V S and Belwalkar SK (ed) The Mahabharat, (The Shantiparv), Bhaudarkar Oriental research institute, Poona, 1954.
13. Trikamjiyadavaji, Charaka Samhita revised by dra-dhbala with a commentary of Chakrapanidatta 5th edition, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi 2001. Sutra sthana 8.8.9 and sharirasthana 1.27.
14. Trikamjiyadavaji, Sushruta Samhita with Nibandha-Sangraha Commentary of Sri. Dalhanacharya Published by: Chaukhamba Surbharti Prakasan, Varanasi Edition:1994, Utharathatra 1-19 chapter. page 492-539
15. Paradkarharishastri, Astanga Hridaya with commentaries Sarvangasundari of Arunadatta and Ayurvedarasayana of Hemadri. Published by: Krishnadas Academy, Varanasi Edition:2006, Uttarasthana. 13/98 page no 825.
16. Paradkarharishastri, Vagbhata: Astanga Hridaya with commentaries Sarvangasundari of Arunadatta and Ayurvedarasayana of Hemadri Published by: Krishnadas Academy, Varanasi Edition: 2006, Uttarasthana. 13/98 page no 825.

17. Jyotirmitra, Sharma shivprasad, Vridha Vagbhata: Ash-tanga Sangraha with Hindi Commentary Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series, Varanasi,2006, Sha. 5\48- 49 page no 304
18. Pandey jayshri, Harita Samhita nirmala commentary, Chaukhambha Vishwabharti 2010 ch. 3/45
19. Sharma hemraj, Satyapadbhishag Acharya, Kasya-pasamhita with Vidyotini Hindi commentary Chau-khambha Sanskrit series Varanasi 2010
20. Krishnamurthy K.H., Bhela Samhita text with English translation commentary and critical notes published by Chaukhambha Vishwa Bharathi oriental publishers, Va-ranasi, 1<sup>st</sup> edition (2000). 4\4 page no 206
21. Tripathi brahmanand, Madhavanidana, Madhavanidana, Vol 2 Edited Published by: Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi 59/1-2 page no 366
22. Shrivastava Dr Shailaja, Sarangadhara Samhita of Acharya Sarangadhar "Jiwan Prada" Hindi commen-tary, fourth edition: 2005, Chaukhambha Orientalia Va-ranasi, purwakhand chapter 7-page no-114.
23. Shrivastava Dr Shailaja, Sarangadhara Samhita of Acharya Sarangadhar "Jiwan Prada" Hindi commen-tary fourth edition: 2005, Chaukhambha Orientalia Va-ranasi, uttarkhand chapter 13-page no-477.
24. Saxena Dr Nirmala, Vangasena- Vangasenasamhita Text with English translation, Notes, Historical Intro-duction comments, Index and Appendages, Choukhambasanskrit series office varanasi. 1st Edition -2004 VOL-2 NR/1-3 page no 882.
25. Mishra B.S., Bhavamisra-Bhavaprakasha, uttarardha with Vidyotini hindi commentary Published by: Chau-khamba Sanskrit sansthan, Varanasi Edition-5<sup>th</sup> 1993, MK 63/119, page no 646.
26. Shastri Laxmipati, Yogratnakarvidyotini commentary Choukhambasanskrit series office Varanasi 1973 Nrchnidan/114 page no 348.
27. Shastri Laxmipati, Yogratnakarvidyotini commentary Choukhamba sanskrit series office Varanasi 1973 Nrchnidan/114 page no 348.
28. Vidyabhushan Pt. Asubodh, Vidyabhushan Pt. Hit-yabodh, Chakrapanidatta - Cakradatta with Tattvacandrika explanations and annotations of Sri Si-vadas Sen and commentaries in Sanskrit Chowkhamba Orientalia, Varanasi. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition - 1993 Nr C/26s page no 563

**Source of Support: Nil**  
**Conflict of Interest: None Declared**

How to cite this URL: Shabaz Mansoori & Satish S Hadimani: Retro Study of Vedic And Ancient Literatures with Special Reference to Netra Vigyan In Ayurved. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2019 {cited December, 2019} Available from: [http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/2278\\_2283.pdf](http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/2278_2283.pdf)