



REVIEW ON HISTORY OF AMAVATA

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ABSTRACT

Amavata has been named taking into two predominant pathological factors i.e. *Ama* and *Vata*. *Ama* is closely associated with *Vata* in *Amavata*. The entity *Amavata* is available since the period of *Charaka* as a reference in the context of various treatments. *Amavata* as a separate disease entity was described first in detail by Madhavakara in his famous treatise *Madhava Nidanam*. Presently Ayurvedic authors have correlated the disease *Amavata* with Rheumatoid Arthritis mainly on the basis of its clinical features and pathogenesis. *Amavata* has been described since ancient period which can be classified into *Vedic kala*, *Samhita kala*, *Samraha kala* and *Adhunik kala* for its historical review purpose.

Keywords: *Ama*, *Vata*, *Amavata*, Rheumatoid arthritis.

INTRODUCTION: The term *Amavata* comprises of two words *Ama* and *Vata*. *Ama* is being an important factor of the disease which is associated with the *Vata* thus causing the disease *Amavata*. In this case *Ama* plays major role in the manifestation of the disease. It is also considered the root cause of the maximum number of disease as per the Ayurvedic concept. In Ayurveda, most of the diseases are named taking into consideration of the vitiated *dosha*, *dushya*, *marga*, *avayava*, *lakshan* and *Karma*. In the same way *Amavata* has been nomenclatured taking

into two predominant pathological factors i.e. *Ama* and *Vata* having their important role in *Chikitsa* (treatment) and *Nidana* (etiology). The entity *Amavata* is available since the period of *Charaka* in different context. *Amavata* has been described since ancient period which can be classified into *Vedic kala*, *Samhita kala*, *Samraha kala*, and *Adhunik kala*. On the basis of clinical manifestations and pathogenesis *Amavata* is more similar to Rheumatoid arthritis as per opinion of the Ayurvedic authors of modern era.

Ama: In ordinary parlance the term *Ama* means unripe and partially digested food that is unwholesome to the body¹. Faulty digestive mechanism at the level of G.I.T., and faulty metabolism in the tissue and cellular level i.e. termed as *Mandagni* (poor digestive capacity) is largely responsible for the genesis of this *Ama*. Thus it is a product due to defect in digestion and or metabolism and it is directly related with the state of *Agni* (digestion or metabolism capacity). So, it is an important factor for the pathogenesis of the most of the diseases.

Etymology of Ama: According to *Amarkosha* the word *Ama* is derived as Combination of 'Am' *Dhatu* with 'Nich' *Pratyaya* forms the word *Ama* which means the substance subjected to digestion and that damages or is harmful to the different of *Srotasa* (channel) is known as *Ama*². According to *Vachaspatyam* the word *Ama* is derived as the word *Ama* is derived from the 'Am' *Dhatu* with the suffix 'A'. It means improper or partially digested matter³.

Vata: *Vata* or *Vayu* is the chief functional component of living human body and it gives rise to good and bad consequences according its normal or abnormal condition. All the life activities of the body especially voluntary and involuntary movements are performed under the control of *Vata dosha*. It is another pathogenic factor of *Amavata*. In this case, mainly *sandhishula* (joint pain) and *sandhigraha* (stiffness of joint) lead to the restricted movements of the joints and patients become crippled due to vitiation of *Vata* with *Ama*. Besides that other functions of *Vata* are also disturbed in case of *Amavata*.

Etymology of Vata :

The term 'Vata' is derived from root 'Va *Gatigandhanayoh*' which means to move, to enthuse, to make known and become of (*Amarkosha, Shabdastoma Mahanidhi*). In classics it is also referred by synonyms like *Anila, Marut, Pavana* etc⁴. "Vati Iti *Vayu*" substance which has got movement, is known as *Vayu* (*Vachaspatyam, Shabdakalpadruma*)⁵.

History of *Amavata* Science develops gradually on the basis of different *Pramanas* (tools of knowledge) those are universal truth. These are present since before the existence of mankind and will remain after the life of mankind. Mankind had required many centuries to discover the different forms of truth. But truth has no limits therefore it is very essential to do the research continuously by taking the supports of previous works. The entity *Amavata* is available since the period of *Charaka* as a reference in the context of various treatments. *Amavata* as a separate disease entity was described first time in detail by *Madhavakara* (700 AD) who devoted a full chapter (25th) of *Amavata* in his famous treatise *Madhava Nidanam* dealing with the etiopathogenesis of the disease in a systematic manner besides the signs, symptoms, complications and prognosis. *Amavata* has been described since ancient period which can be classified in the following manners which are given below:

Vedic Kala: *Amavata* word is not mentioned in the texts of *Vedic Kala* but *Ama* related words are found in *Rigaveda* and *Atharvaveda* which are given below:

Rigaveda: The term *Ama* has been mentioned in various forms like 'Amayath' and 'Amayatham' in *Rigaveda*⁶.

Atharvaveda: 'Amaya' and 'Amayam' words have been mentioned in the sense of a disease caused by a toxic or harmful

substance *Ama* in *Atharvaveda*. *Vata dosha* has been described with five types viz. *Prana*, *Samana*, *Udana*, *Vyana* and *Apana*. *Sandhi vikriti* (unhealthy joint) caused by *sleshma vikriti* (abnormal *sleshma*) is also available. Here, it can be explained that *Ama* and *Vata* have been mentioned separately but direct reference of the disease *Amavata* is not available during Vedic era⁷.

Samhita Kala: No reference of *Amavata* as a full clinical entity is found in any of the Ayurvedic classics in *Samhita Kala* but few descriptions have been found in relation with *Ama* or *Amavata* which are given below:

Charaka Samhita: Few descriptions in *Charak Samhita* reflect the earliest and rudimentary forms of its clinical recognition. The term *Amavata* has been mentioned in following context those are therapeutic uses of *Kansa Haritaki*, therapeutic uses of *Vishaladi Phanta* and *Avarana* of *Vata* with *Ama*⁸.

Sushruta Samhita: *Ama* has not been described in *SushrutSamhita*, but in a commentary on this text 'Ayurveda RahasyaDeepika' by Dr. Bhaskar Govind Ghanekar has dealt with *Amavata Vyadhi*⁹.

Bhela Samhita: A section is entitled in *Bhela Samhita* as a "Atha *Ama Pradoshiya*". He has also described regarding *Nidana* (etiology), *Rupa* (clinical features), and *Chikitsa* (treatment) for *Ama Pradoshajanya Vyadhis*, and these all are most probably like that of disease *Amavata*.¹⁰

Harita Samhita: A separate Chapter on *Amavata* with its full description is devoted in *Harita Samhita*. However, copy of *Harita Samhita* which is available nowadays, is a controversial matter and

hence it has not been considered as a *Samhita* period text.¹¹

Anjana Nidana: *Hetu, Lakshana, Bheda, Upadrava* of *Amavata* have been described with details in *Anjana Nidana* but due to some controversy it is not considered into *Samhita* period.¹²

Sangraha Kala: In the texts of *Samraha kala Amavata* is described more vividly as a specific disease such as:

Vagbhatta: In *Astanga Hridaya Samavata* has been described firstly by *Vagbhatta*, a morbid state which arises with the combination of *Ama* and *Vata*. The clinical manifestations of *Samavata* are described similar to *Amavata*¹³.

Madhavakara: In *Madhav Nidan* *Madhavakara* recognized *Amavata* as a separate specific disease entity for the first time and described its etiology, pathogenesis, clinical features, classification and prognosis vividly¹⁴.

Others: Later many authors have mentioned *Amavata* as a separate disease and described properly in their book such as *Vrindamadhava* in 9th Cent., *Chakradatta* in 11th Cent., *Vangasena* in 12th Cent., *Gada Nigraha* in 12th Cent., *Sharangadhara* in 13th Cent., *Rasaratna Samuchyaa* in 13th Cent., *Bhavaprakasha* in 16th Cent., *Yoga Ratnakar* in 17th Cent., *Yoga Tarangini* and *Bhaisajya Ratnavali* in 18th Cent. etc.^{15, 16, 17}

Adhunika Kala: In this period authors have tried to correlate the *Amavata* with Rheumatism of modern Medicine on the basis of its clinical features especially.

Shri Gananath Sen: He classified the joint disease into five types including an specific entity termed as *Rasavata* and he has been suggested as a synonym of *Amavata* in order to draw attention on the role of incomplete processed Rasa i.e. *Ama* in the beginning of the disease. Four types

of *Manya stambha* have been also illustrated by him in *Ayurveda Rahasya Deepika* where *Amavata Manya stambha* is also shown one of the types¹⁸.

Prof. Y. N. Upadhyaya and other authors have correlated the disease *Amavata* with Rheumatoid Arthritis of the modern Medicine on the basis of its clinical features mainly¹⁹.

DISCUSSION: *Amavata* has been nomenclatured taking into two predominant pathological factors i.e. *Ama* and *Vata* having their important role in *Chikitsa* (treatment) and *Nidana* (etiology). According to clinical features of *Amavata* is more similar to Rheumatoid arthritis. Faulty digestive mechanism at the level of G.I.T., and faulty metabolism in the tissue and cellular level i.e. termed as *Mandagni* is largely responsible for the formation of this *Ama*. *Vata* is another pathogenic factor of *Amavata*. In this disease, mainly *Sandhishula* (joint pain) and *Sandhigraha* (stiffness of joint) lead to the restricted movements of the joints and patients become crippled due to vitiation of *Vata* with *Ama*. The entity *Amavata* is available since the period of *Charaka* as a reference in the context of various treatments. *Amavata* as a separate disease entity was described first time in detail by Madhavakara (700 AD) who devoted a full chapter (25th) of *Amavata* in his famous treatise *Madhava Nidanam* dealing with the etiopathogenesis of the disease in a systematic manner besides the signs, symptoms, complications and prognosis. *Amavata* has been described since ancient period which can be classified into *Vedic kala*, *Samhita kala*, *Samraha kala*, and *Adhunik kala*. Presently Ayurvedic authors have correlated the disease *Amavata* with Rheumatoid Arthritis of the modern

Medicine especially on the basis of its clinical features and pathogenesis.

CONCLUSION: *Amavata* word is available since the period of *Charaka* in different context. *Amavata* as a separate disease entity was first described in detail by Madhavakara in *Madhava Nidanam* in 25th chapter. Presently Ayurvedic authors have correlated the disease *Amavata* with Rheumatoid Arthritis.

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