



BASIC DESCRIPTION OF KILAASA (VITILEGO) IN ANCIENT LITERATURE- A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT Description of *Kilaasa* dates back 3,518 years ago. It is mentioned in Vedic texts like *Atharva-veda* (1500 BC) and *Manu-smriti* (1250 BC – 1000 BC). *Kilaasa* is considered as one of the varieties of *Kushtha* in the *Ayurvedic* Classics, caused vitiation of *Tridoshas* and *Dhatus* like *Rakta*, *Mansa* and *Meda*. It is also known as *Daaruna*, *Aruna* and *Svitra*. *Meda Dhatugata Kilaasa* is called *Svitra*. Based on symptoms, *Svitra* can be correlated with Vitiligo. According *Ayurvedic* science difference between *Svitra* and *Kushtha* is based on non-secretory and non-infectious nature of disease, involvement of *Tvacha* only, peculiarity of *Lakshana*, Chronicity and *Sadhya-asadhya*. Incompatible diet, excessive sun exposure and inapt social behaviour are mentioned as causes of *Svitra* in *Ayurveda* literature. In present article we are trying to descriptive basic literature of *Svitra* (Vitiligo) by compilation from Vedic texts, Historical books, *Ayurvedic* science, and various articles.

KEYWORDS : Kilaasa, Svitra, Vedic & Ayurveda Texts.

INTRODUCTION:

Skin is the largest organ of body. The gorgeousness and attraction of individual depends upon the health of skin with physical and psychological health. Skin complaints affect all ages from paediatric to geriatric and cause harm in number of ways, such as discomfort, disfigurement, disability etc. Large community prevalence studies have demonstrated that about 20-30% of the world population have various skin disorders requiring attention (Davidson-18th edition).

Kilaasa means 'leprosy' or 'a kind of spotted deer' or a white leprosy or a species of leprosy (resembling the so-called white leprosy in which the skin be-comes spotted without producing ulcer). The word '*Svitra*' has its root in the Sanskrit word '*seta*', which means white patch. *Svitra* means whitish or morbid whiteness of the skin or Vitiligo. According to *Amarkosh*, *Kilaasa* is white *Kotha*. *Kotha* means patch (circumscribed flat discoloration, larger than 0.5cm). *Svitra* is one type of *Kilaasa*. It is mentioned in *Vedic* texts like *Atharva-veda* (1500 BC) and *Manu-smriti* (period of around 1250 and 1000 BC).

In *Ayurvedic* texts *Kilaasa* is described with *Kushtha*. All the skin diseases in *Ayurveda* have been described under heading of *Kushtha*, which are further divided into *Maha Kushtha* and *Kshudra Kushtha*. However, *Svitra* has not been counted among various types of *Kushtha* in *Brihatrayi*. Later on, this has been included under types of *Kushtha* by different *Acharyas*. Though *Svitra* is mentioned along with other types of *Kushtha*, but the difference between *Svitra* and *Kushtha* is based on non-secretory and non-infectious nature of disease, involvement of *Tvacha* only, peculiarity of *Nidana*, *Asadhya lakshana* and Chronicity. Vitiligo is a long-term skin condition characterized by patches of the skin losing their pigment. Vitiligo, characterized by milky white macules or patches on the body. The melanocytes of epidermis are gradually destroyed causing hypo-pigmented, de-pigmented area on skin. Although it is not harmful as such, it certainly affects the quality of life of an individual as a lot of psychosocial stigma is attached to it. Worldwide incidence of Vitiligo is 1% and 3%-4% population of India is affected by it. Males and females are equally affected. About half show the disorder before age 20 and most develop it before age 40.

HISTORICAL REVIEW-

Kala	Text	Historical description
VEDIC KALA (4000-2500)BC	<i>Riga Veda</i>	The word <i>Svitra</i> is used for "land" which probably means earth but not for Vitiligo. Used for white spotted animals (deer)
	<i>Shukla Yajurveda</i>	The word <i>Svitra</i> has been used for various animals having white colour (The white animal belongs to the <i>Adityas</i> , the camel, the <i>ghrintivam</i> ..)
	<i>Atharva Veda</i>	Disease was described with detail etiopathology, cardinal symptoms, therapeutics etc Cited three herbs for <i>Kilaasa</i> – <i>Rama</i> , <i>Krishan</i> and <i>Asikni</i> Description of a drug named <i>Asuri</i> , <i>Asuri-Shyama</i> or <i>Shyama</i>
	<i>Kaushika Sutra</i>	The word <i>Svitra</i> appears for <i>Kushtha</i> <i>Kaushika Sutra</i> commented that the drug <i>Rama</i> is <i>Bhringraja</i> , <i>Krishna</i> is <i>Indra-varuni</i> and <i>Asikni</i> is <i>Nili</i>
	<i>Taittiriya Samhita</i>	Name of <i>Svitra</i> is given here
	<i>Mahabharata</i>	<i>Apumamsa</i> is considered as the causative factor of <i>Svitra</i>
	<i>Ramayana</i>	<i>Trikuta Parvata</i> , brought by <i>Hanumanji</i> in <i>Ram-Rawan Yudhha</i> had 4 types of drugs are consider as <i>Mahaushadha</i> namely – <i>Mrithsanjivani</i> , <i>Vishalyakarni</i> , <i>Savarnyakarni</i> and <i>Sandhankarni</i> , out of which <i>Savarnyakarni</i> was probably for the repigmentation of skin in various skin diseases.

PAURANIKAKALA,(1000 BC)	Text	Description
	<i>Garuna purana</i>	Three <i>Doshas</i> are responsible for initiation of the disease. 1. <i>Vatika</i> : The patches become dry and vermeil in colour. 2. <i>Paitika</i> : Copper colour, <i>lotuspetalus</i> like colour patches & burning sensation is present in these patches and attacks the hairs of affected parts causing their entire destruction. 3. <i>Kaphaja</i> –the patches become thick and white attended with itching sensation.
	<i>Agni Purana</i>	Several <i>Yogas</i> were recommended for Disease.
	<i>Manusmriti</i>	Manu has contraindicated ten families including <i>Svitra</i> affected family for marriages
SAMHITA KALA	<i>Charaka Samhita</i> (1000 BC)	Mentioned <i>Svitra</i> as a type of <i>Kilaasa</i> . Described <i>Kilaasa</i> along with <i>Kushtha</i> . Did not follow the pattern of description as like preceding chapter. Mentioned <i>Dhatugatatva</i> and symptom on the basis of color of the lesion. Total 15 Herbo-mineral compounds have been used.

	<i>Sushruta Samhita</i>	Total 13 compounds were used in treatment
		He mentioned three <i>Doshik</i> types – <i>Vataja</i> , <i>Pittaja</i> and <i>Kaphaja</i> . Differentiated <i>Kushtha</i> and <i>Svitra</i> on the basis of <i>Dhatugatatva</i> . He also described <i>Nidana</i> , <i>Purvarupa</i> , and <i>Asadhya lakshana</i> .
	<i>Ashtanga Hridaya</i> (5th century)	Showed maternal habit of food and life-style as a causative factor. He declared that <i>Svitra</i> and <i>Kilaasa</i> were synonym.
	<i>Bhela samhita</i>	<i>Svitra</i> was included into eleven <i>Kshudra Kushtha</i> . <i>Svitra</i> was mentioned under <i>Asdhya</i> type of category.
	<i>Kashyapa Samhita</i> (6 AD)	<i>Shitra</i> mentioned under nine <i>Asadhya</i> type of <i>Kushtha</i> . While discussing the pathology <i>Acharya</i> tried to explain the pathogenesis of <i>Svitra</i> .
	<i>Harita Samhita</i> (10-12 AD)	He started to use the word <i>Svitra</i> instead of <i>Kilaasa</i> . And he also mentioned two synonyms – <i>Chitra-Kushtha</i> and <i>Pandura-Kushtha</i> . He first time mentioned the detail <i>Samprapti</i> of <i>Kilaasa</i> but not described symptomatology.
SAMGRAHA KALA	<i>Ashtang Samgraha</i> (4th century)	Differentiated the disease from <i>Kushtha</i> on the basis of <i>Kotha</i> , <i>Krumi</i> and <i>Kleda</i> .
	<i>Madhava Nidana</i> (7th Century)	As like <i>Brihata-trayi</i> , he continues the maneuver of describing <i>Svitra</i> under the roof of <i>Kushtha</i> .
	<i>Madhavi chikitsa</i>	Same way he also described <i>Kilaasa</i> under the heading of <i>Kushtha</i>
	<i>Kalyana Karaka Siddhha Yoga</i>	Contained several yoga of <i>Svitra</i> .
	<i>Skanda Samhita</i>	Considered <i>Pitta</i> is a main factor in formations of white color.
	<i>Chikitsa kalika</i> (10 AD)	Under the heading of <i>Shitra Chikitsa</i> , he described various compounds.
	<i>Chakra dutta</i>	<i>Chakrapani dutta</i> wrote his famous commentary <i>Ayurveda dipika</i> on <i>charaka samhita</i> . Following are the specialties having prevalence to <i>Kushtha</i> : According to <i>Chakrapani Shvitra</i> is a skin disease. “TWAKDOSHADHIKARANOSAMGHATA TWAK DOSA VISESASYA SHVITRASYA CHIKITSAMAHA”. <i>Chakrapani dutta</i> gives the justification of description of <i>Shvitra</i> starting with treatment and ending with <i>nidana</i> as the <i>chikitsa</i> of <i>Kushtha</i> is also beneficial for <i>Shvitra</i> hence while describing the <i>chikitsa</i> of <i>Kushtha</i> . <i>Shvitra Chikitsa</i> also being described continuously.
	<i>Vasavaraj-yam</i> (15 AD)	He mentioned <i>Asadhya Lakshana</i> like, involvement of <i>Hasta-pada tala</i> , <i>Guhya Pradesh</i> , <i>Agnidagdham</i> , <i>Chiram</i> . <i>Shvitra</i> comes under 20 of <i>Khustha</i>
	<i>Rsasa Ratna Samuch- chayam</i> (13 AD)	He described <i>Shvitra</i> under <i>Visarpadi Chikitsa</i> rather than <i>Kushtha Chikitsa</i> . He amalgamates two classifications i.e. <i>Doshika</i> and <i>Dhatugatatva</i> .
	<i>Gayadasa</i> (11 AD)	He mentioned three types of <i>Shvitra</i> like <i>Doshaja</i> , <i>Vranaja</i> , <i>Atmaja</i> and <i>Paraja</i> . He tried to differentiate <i>Kilasa</i> and <i>Shvitra</i> on the basis of treatment.
	<i>Indu</i> (1250 AD)	He considered <i>Kilasa</i> , <i>Shvitra</i> and <i>Charuna</i> were synonym. He differentiates <i>Shvitra</i> and <i>Kushtha</i> on the basis of secretion.
	<i>Gada-nigraha</i> (1175-1215 AD)	He illustrated the treatment of <i>shvitra</i> and <i>Kilasa</i> in different chapter. He displays total 27 internal and external compounds for treatment of this disorder.
	<i>Sharangdhar samhita</i> (13th Century)	Description regarding disease is not available in this text, but treatment aspects can be traced. Three <i>yogas</i> , one <i>kwatha</i> , one <i>Taila</i> , and one <i>rasa yoga</i> have been described for the treatment of <i>Shvitra</i> . Four <i>more yogas</i> have been explained in the 11th chapter of <i>uttar khand</i> .
	<i>Bhava-Prakasha</i> (16th Century)	He specified that <i>Raktadatu Gata</i> is <i>Kilasa</i> and <i>Mansadhātu Gata</i> is <i>Varuna</i> . He used the term <i>Varuna</i> in place of <i>Daruna</i> .
	<i>Ayurved Saukhyama</i> (16 AD)	He used the color of patches to differentiate the term <i>Shvitra</i> and <i>Kilasa</i> . And mentioned about natural recurrence of this Disorder.
	<i>Yoga-ratnakara</i> (17 AD)	In the description of <i>Kshudra Kushtha</i> , he mentioned about a variety of <i>Svitra</i> which was secretary in nature and at the end of the chapter he again cited <i>Svitra</i> as like <i>Charaka</i> prototype.

ADHISTHAN OF SVITRA (SITE OF SVITRA IN SKIN LAYER):

According to *Charaka* - 3rd layer of *Tvaka* is the site manifestation of *Sidhma* and *Kilaasa*. and according to *Sushruta* - *Tamra Tvaka* is the site manifestation of *Kilaasa*, *Kushtha*.

CLASSIFICATION:

According to the *Charak Samhita* three sub-type of *Kilaasa* is due to vitiated *Dosha* (bodily humors) and *Dhatu*. All three *Dosha* (bodily humors) are vitiated in three sub-types of *Kilaasa*.

1. Red patches are due to vitiation of *Dosha* (bodily humors) reaching at level of *Rakta dhatu*.
2. Coppery patches are due to vitiation of *Dosha* (bodily humors) reaching at level of *Maamsa dhatu*.
3. White patches are due to vitiation of *Dosha* (bodily humors) reaching at level of *Meda dhatu*.

According to the *Acharya Sushruta*, on dominance of single *Dosha* *Kilaasa* have three sub-type - *Vataj*, *Pittaj* and *Kaphaj* *Kilaasa*.

1. *Vataja Kilaasa*: rough and coppery colour, round patches

2. *Pittaj Kilaasa*: patches resemble colour of lotus petal with burning sensation
3. *Kaphaja Kilaasa*: smooth, white patches in large size with itching

According to the *Ashtanga Hridaya* *Kilaasa* originates from three *Dosha* (bodily humors) (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*) and three *Dhatu* (*Rakta*, *Maamsa* and *Meda*).

There are three types of this skin disease due to separate vitiation of *Dosha* (bodily humors) and *Tridhatu*.

1. *Vataja Kilaasa*: dry and light red patches due to *Vata Dosha* predominance in *Rakta Dhatu*.
2. *Pittaja Kilaasa*: characterized by itching and loss of hair on *tamra* patches (copper / lotus petal like skin lesions) due to *Pitta Dosha* predominance in *mamsa dhatu*.
3. *Kaphaja Kilaasa*: itching present in white patches due to aggravated *Kapha Dosha* localized in *Meda dhatu*.

Three types of the *Kilaasa* described in *Madhav Nidana* same as

Ashanga Hrdaya.

NIDANA(AETIOLOGICAL FACTORS):

According to *Acharya Charaka* factors mainly responsible for occurrence of *Svitra* are *Vachansi Atathyani* (Untruthfulness), *Krutaghna bhava* (Ungratefulness), *Suranam Ninda* (Disrespect for the gods), *Guru Gharshanam* (Insult of the preceptors), *Papa Kriya* (Sinful acts), *Purvakrutam Karma* (Misdeeds of past lives), *Virodhi Annam* (Intake of mutually contradictory food). *Viruddhahara* has been widely accepted as causative factors of *Svitra* by almost all ancient authors. *Acharya Charaka* has listed the *Svitra* under the *Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara*. Consequently the factor causing *Rakta pradosha* may also be considers as causative factors of *Svitra*.

PURVARUPA (PRODROMAL SYMPTOMS):

No separate prodromal symptoms are described in ancient texts. Only *Kushtha Purvarupa* is mention in texts.

Symptoms of Svitra according to Dhosha involvement are ...

Type	Symptoms	Su.	V.&M.N.
Vatika	Arunam	+	+
	Parusham	+	Ruksha +
	Paridhvansi	+	-
Paitika	Padampatravata	+	-
	Kamalprativata	-	+
	Paridaha (su.), Daha(va.)	+	+
	Romadhvansi	-	+
	Tamram	-	+
Shleshmaja	Kandu	+	+
	Shvetam	+	+
	Bahalam	+	+
	Guru	-	+
	Snigdham	+	-

SAMPRAPTI:

Vagabhata said that vitiated *Dosha* are circulating in *Shiras* and *Dhamani* and they get engorge in *Dushya* and caused *Srotorodha* and produced their first symptom *Vaivarnya* and *Mandala*. These both lesions are readily available in *Svitra*.

PROGNOSIS

The three types of *Kilaasa* viz. *raktam*, *tamram* and *shwetam* are difficult to treat in succession. Later one is more difficult to cure than the previous one.

INCURABLE KILAASA:

When the patches are knotted with each other in multiple formations (*Parsparto-abhinam*), colour of hair becomes red (*Railomvata*), duration of disease is more than one year. White patches are formatted by burn and end site of body (*Ante-jatam* like -fingers, lips ect.) according to *Sushruta samhita* and *Vagbhata*

TREATMENT:

Management of the *Kilaasa* is almost similar to the *Kushtha*. *Shodhana* and *Shaman* is mainstay for treatment of *Kilaasa*. After the purification, sunlight therapy, local ointments and *Ayurvedic* formulations are used for *Shaman* therapy. In *Ayurvedic* texts many formulations are given for the management of *Kilaasa*

CONCLUSION:

Vitiligo (Kilaasa) is not physically as painful as other systemic disease but it creates great p-psychological and social disturbances in the society, therefore one should take necessary treatment as early as possible. The description of *Kilaasa* disease dates back to 3,518 year ago in Vedas. *Kilaasa* is a skin disease characterized by whitish patches all over body without any pain and secretions. On basis of its non-infectious and non-exudative nature, it is different from *Kushtha*.

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