

Vaidyamrita - The Nectar of Ayurvedic Therapeutics

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Abstract

Vaidyamrita is an authentication for prodigious literature of *Ayurveda*. Present transcript was the contribution of *Vaidya Moreshwara* of *Ahammada nagara* in 1547 AD. Entire text deals with total 78 conditions and 129 formulations under four chapters. Available divergent versions, commentaries and translated works display the significance of the text. *Vaidyamrita* manuscript collected and published by *Hariprasad Sharma* is explored in the present study. It has been compared with the *Vaidyamrita* manuscript present in Anandashram, Pune. Exploratory review suggests that both are variants of *Vaidyamrita*. Content of *Vaidyamrita* has been compared with contemporary famous texts such as *Vrindamadhava*, *Sharngadhara samhita*, *Cakradatta*, *Rasaratna samucchaya* and *Basvarajiyam* to check the original source. Outcome suggests that much information has been picked up by the author from contemporary text books. Distinct drugs, pathological conditions and unique features of *Vaidyamrita* has been noticed and discussed in the study.

Key words: *Vaidyamrita*, *Vaidya Moreshwara*, *Hariprasad Sharma*

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Introduction

Vaidyamrita is a veracious literature on *Kayacikitsa* contributed by *Vaidya Moreshwara* of 16th century. Name of the work itself suggests that, lore of the text is similar to nectar for a *Ayurveda* practitioner, through this he can able to heal all ailments affecting mankind. The text might have been constructed by the author based on three aspects viz subject learnt through teachers, knowledge present in various texts, information gathered by experience and knowledge gained by the previous treatise^[1]. The text has been written in simple, understandable form of Sanskrit language.

Prime purpose of this study is to familiarize/ highlight the content and also to explore many idiosyncratic features of *Vaidyamrita* to *Ayurveda* fraternity. Especially *Vaidyamrita* manuscript procured and published by *Hariprasada Sharma* is probed and analysed. Each and

every context of the text viewed with scope of 'literary research' to disclose interesting components.

Author: *Vaidya Moreshwara* of 16th century is the creator of this work. *Manika bhatta* was the father of the author. Ending colophon of all four chapters reveals the locale of the author as *Ahammada nagara* (Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra state in India). In the ending colophon author revealed the time of inscription as 1547 A.D^[2].

Embodiment of *Vaidyamrita* manuscript

Two indigenous versions of *Vaidyamrita* manuscripts are available at present.

1. *Vaidyavara Praninathaji*, the resident of *Sumerupura* had indigenous *Vaidyamrita* manuscript (Manuscript 1) and it has been collected by *Hariprasad Sharma*; son of *Bhagirathaji*, *Mumbai*. Later it was translated to *hindi* by *Pandit Vasati Ramaji* with commentary. Further *Pandit Ramabhadraji* made the corrections of the same. Finally it has been printed and published by *Hariprasad Sharma*

at Jagadishwara press, Mumbai (Æaka 1862, Vikrama-1959)^[3].

2. *Bharat Bhikan Sangle et.al* identified another *Vaidyamrita* manuscript (Manuscript 2) in *Anandashram*, manuscript library, near Appa balwant chaowk, Pune^[4].

Diligent observation on both manuscripts (Manuscript 1 & 2) reveals that they are similar with respect to author and his lineage, aim of the work, targeted diseases, order of disease management narration etc. In many contexts significant variations has been spotted. Underneath examples depict those variations between those two manuscripts.

Example 1: Description of Isabgol is present in manuscript 1 but not in manuscript 2.

Example 2: Total 18 rasa dravya (Herbo-mineral) formulations found in manuscript 1 but not in manuscript 2.

Example 3: *Pathya mentioned for Jwara* is the administration of *Pippali* with water and milk as per manuscript 1, but as per manuscript 2, administration of *Pippali* with milk and honey.

Acharya P.V Sharma addressed another version of *Vaidyamrita* manuscript written by *NârâyaGa (Simhaji)* in his text *Ayurveda ka vaijnanika itihasa* and which is not available at present.^[5] For the present study *Vaidyamrita* collected and published by *Hariprasad Sharma* has been picked up.

Commentaries and Translations

'*Vaidya Jyoti swarupa*' translated *Vaidyamrita* to hindi and named it as '*Ayurveda dipika*' and it is published in Banaras. Another Hindi commentary and translation written by '*Ramanatha bhatta*' is also available. Marathi commentary and translation written by '*Krishna shastry bhatwadekar*' is published in Mumbai and it is available. *Vaidyamrita* with Simhali language! is published in Colombo ^[6].

Narrative skills adopted

Text starts with "*Mangalacarana*" (Salutation) to lord *Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Ganesha* and *Dhanwantari*. Whereas the text ends with *Granthakarathru prarthana* and *shiksha* (appeals and guidelines by author). It's very interesting to note that there is no starting colophon for all chapters. But ending colophons are present in each chapter. (Example: *Iti Shri ahammada nagara sthita Manika bhatta vaidyatmaja Moreshwara viracita Vaidyamrita prathamalankara*). Ending colophon of the fourth chapter reveals the details about author i.e., place of residence, description about the family, deity of worshipping, method he followed to write the text, period during which the text was constructed. The Sanskrit language used is very simple and everybody can understand this. Complete text is in the form of verses. The text seems to be the outcome of the conversation, as the author used word *sakhe* (Dear friend), *priye* (Lovely women) often in different contexts. Subject contents are continuous^[7].

Among eight appendages of *Ayurveda*, *kayacikitsa* (General medicine) is the crux of the text. Meanwhile information related to various aspects of remaining branches of *Ayurveda* is also discussed. The text deals mainly with the treatment aspect of multiple ailments. The treatments narrated in the text are simple and easily applicable. On an average three to five treatment modalities and formulations have been narrated in the management of all most all diseases with some exceptions. Ingredients, quantity, method of preparation, indications, dose and vehicle are explained for all most all formulations. Controversial issues and ambiguity are very minimum in the text. Clarity of the subject makes the reader to understand the concepts easily. To convey the effectiveness of medications author described simile in most of the contexts ^[8] (Example: *Bharngyadi qwatha* relieves *Kaphaja jwara* similar to *jhanjhamaruta* i.e., strong wind in the rainy season uprooting the plants and trees)

Alankara

Chapters of *Vaidyamrita* are named as *Alankara*. There

are four *Alankaras* in *Vaidyâm[ta]*. Entire text comprises of 181 verses. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th *alankara* comprises of 51, 53, 53 and 24 verses respectively.

First *alankara* narrates about the treatment for 9 diseases such as *Jwara* (All types), *Jwaraatisara*, *Atisara*, *Arsha*, *Ajirna*, *Visucika*, *Krmi*, *Pandu*, *Raktapitta*. Second *alankara* explains the treatment for 21 ailments such as *Kshaya*, *Kasa*, *Shwasa*, *Hikka*, *Swara bhanga*, *Arocaka*, *Chardi*, *Trishna*, *Murcha*, *Daha*, *Apasmara*, *Vatavyadhi*, *Vata rakta*, *Urustambha*, *Amavata*, *Shula*, *Udavarta*, *Gulma*, *Pliha roga* and *Hridroga*.

Third *alankara* speaks about the management of 34 diseases such as *Mutrakricchra*, *Mutraghata*, *Ashmari*, *Prameha*, *V[cya yogas*, *Vajikarana yogas*, *Medo rogas*, *Udara*, *Shopha*, *Anda vriddhi*, *Gandamâla*, *Shlipada*, *Vidradhi*, *Vrana*, *Bhagna*, *Nadi vrana*, *Bhagandhara*, *Upadamsha*, *Shûla*, *Kushtha*, *Udarda*, *Kotha*, *Amplapitta*, *Visarpa*, *Visphota*, *Masurika*, *Kshudra roga*, *Mukhapaka*, *Gala roga*, *Danta roga*, *Karna roga*, *Nasa roga*, *Netra roga* and *Shiroroga*^[8]. Fourth *alankara* gives the information about managerial strategies for 14 conditions such as *Stri roga*, *Shulayukta pradara*, *Garbhadhana Prayoga*, *Garbha sthirikarana*, *Rakta sthambhaka*, *Garbha patana*, *Sukha prasuti*, *Yoni shula*, *Yoni sankoca Prayoga*, *Garbhapata Prayoga*, *Stana roga*, *Stanya vardhana*, *Bala roga* and *Visha cikitsâ*^[9]. Likewise entire text deals with total 78 conditions. For these conditions 129 formulations have been narrated^[9].

Exploratory review

In this section content, format and limitation of *Vaidyamrita* have been explored by consulting well known contemporary literatures of *Ayurveda*.

- Only medicated formulations for individual disease have been explained. But there is no description about the causative factor, signs and symptoms, prognosis, treatment principles mentioned.
- Disease specific formulation has been narrated throughout the text. Such as in cases of *Jwara* and *atisara* only decoction based formulations, in *ajirna* only powder based formulations have been explained. It shows formulation specificity towards individual disease.
- Author himself says that, *Isabgol* is indicated for the first time!, which is not written in any of the treatises^[10]. *Isabgol* is a Persian word, which legitimately shows the influence of Persian language and tradition during author's period. Likewise *Nagaphena*/*Ahiphena* also mentioned in the management of *atisara*, this suggests the Arabic influence!. By these it can be confirmed that the book belongs to medieval period.
- In most of the diseases, easily available and procurable drugs are narrated. Meanwhile minimum drugs are used in the preparation of formulation. As an example, in case of hoarseness of voice powder of *Amalaki* (*Emblica officinalis*) is indicated along with milk.
- In the beginning itself author boldly accept that, mainly by referring various medical texts *Vaidyamrita* has been framed. Underneath evidences proves the same.
 - a. Drugs, preparation method and indications of *Aragwadhadi qwatha* mentioned in *vâtakaphaja jwara* in *Vaidyamrita* exactly matches with 'Aragwadhadi qwatha' mentioned in *Gadanigraha* of 12th century^[11].
 - b. *Kulatthâdi lepa* including *kulattha*, *katphala*, *shunthi* and *karavi* indicated in *kanGamula shotha* explained in *Vaidyamrita* absolutely equivalent - to *Kulatthadi lepa* of *Gadanigraha* text^[12].
 - c. Description of usage of *Vaca curna* mentioned in *Cakrapanii datta's Cakradatta* of 11th century perfectly matched! with the administration of *Vaca curna* of *vaidyamrita*^[13].
 - d. Details of *Sitopaladi curna* in provided in *Vaidyamrita* and *Sharngadhara samhita* of 13th century are exactly same!^[14].
 - e. 17 herbo-mineral formulations have been mentioned.

They are *Laghmalini vasanta rasa*, *kanakasundara rasa*, *laahi curna*, *Vadavanala rasa*, *Vahninama rasa*, *Shankhapotali rasa*, *kasashwasari gutika*, *Tamra bhasma*, *Haratala bhasma*, *Parada bhasma*, *Shankha vati*, *Shankha rasa*, *Vangeshwara rasa*, *Gandhasutadi vati*, *Rasakeshwara vati*, *Tutthadi vati* and *Virecana vati*. Out of which few formulations such as '*kanakasundara rasa*, *Shankhapotali*' *rasa* are exactly similar with the contents given in the text *Rasaratnasamucchaya* of 13th century of *Vagbhata*^[15].

By above evidences it can be concluded that many information are referred directly from different treatises of before author's era and quoted in *Vaidymrita*.

- '*Basavarajiyam*' a well known text of 18th century might have borrowed little information from *Vaidyamrita*. This guess is made because, details of *kanakasundara rasa* mentioned in *Basavarajiyam* entirely same with details in *Vaidyamrita*^[16].
- In case of *Visphota*, chanting and singing the sacred verses or mantras of *Shitala devi* is indicated. *Shitala devi* is a folk deity worshiped by many faiths in the India mainly in North India. It is believed that by worshiping and pleasing her many eruptive diseases such as poxes, sores, ghouls and pustules gets cured^[17]. Famous *Shitalashtaka stotra* 'from *Skanda purana* is available and the whole stotra various measures and prayers to please *Shitala devi* have been mentioned in order to cure *Visphota*. Example: *Shitale Shitale ceti bruayaddahapiditah/visphotakabhayam ghoram kshipram tasya pranashyatid/Continuous chanting the name Shitala itself is also sufficient to cure Visphota!*^[18].
- Some of the formulations seems to be 'folk practicing measures' such as a person can greatly satisfy his female partner by having sexual intercourse in the light emerged out of a lamp containing castor oil and wick made out of *Arka* (*Calotropis procera*).

Vishishta Dravya: Few drugs which are **distinct** in this text are enlisted here^[19].

- *Raja – Parpata*
- *Ringani – Kantakari*
- *Payodhara – Musta*
- *Jatu – Laksa*
- *Balaka – Hrivra*
- *Kita nishthivana- Madhu / Honey*
- *Nagaphena – Ahiphena*
- *Kaliphala – Vibhitaki*
- *Barhata phala – B[hati*
- *Tejani – Jyotishmati*
- *Akallaka – karakarabha*
- *Takrahwa – Kutaja*
- *Surasa- Nirgundi*
- *Marahittika -?*
- *Rtujanma- Punarnava*
- *Rtu bhu – Punarnava*
- *Lola – ?*
- *Dwarika – Geru*
- *Vipusha – kachari*

Distinct pathological conditions^[20]

- *Anghri daha-* Burning sensation of feet
- *Urdhwa vata – Upward movement of vata*
- *Netra vata – Neurological diseases of eyes*
- *Payuja – Ano rectal diseases.*
- *Picchasrava- Slimy anal discharge*
- *Hutashanasha- Loss of appetite.*
- *Nicaya roga- Disease originated by vitiated of all three dosha*
- *Mrgi vyadhi- Epilepsy*

Technical Specialties of the text

- To state the duration of 7 days the word "*Munimita dina*" is used "*Muni*" represents seven sages here (*Saptarshi*) (V 1/45-46).
- The word "*Veda sankhya*" represents four parts (V

2/7).

- ‘Nayana bhaga- indu bhaga- bana bhaga’ are the terms used to represent 2 parts, 1 parts and 5 parts respectively (V 2/35).

Unique features of the text^[21]

- ‘Isabgol’ is indicated in *Jwara atisara*, which is the clinical experience of the author (V.1/22)
- *Shunthi putaapaka swarasa* and *Bilwa putapaka swarasa* are indicated in *Atisara* (V.1/5-26).
- ‘Lahi churna’ a unique formulation is mentioned, which is an experimented and experienced formulation told by *Dhatri* named *Lahi*.
- The formulation ‘*Gurutatwa vati*’ is mentioned as in *atisara* context, which the author learnt from his teacher.
- *Katukula bhuti* (Ash of silk cloth) is indicated for application. ‘*Bhuti*’ is an unique term (V.1/51).
- Root of *Sharapunkha* is indicated for fumigation in *Shwasa- kasa* (V 2/10).
- *Capala* (Bismath) is the ingredient of *Kasa shwasari gutika* (V 2/16).
- Highly simplified! procedures for *Bhasma* preparation are given Eg. *Tamra bhasma* for *Kasa* and *Shwasa*.
- ‘*Shrikhanda*’ said to be invented by *bhima*, is mentioned for the treatment of *Trishna* (V 2/24-25).
- *Tejohwa* which is mentioned as the ingredient of many formulations of *vatavyadhi cikitsa*. It is considered as *Jyotishmati* (?) in hindi translated text.
- *Nalika yantra* is the unique instrument mentioned in the preparation of *Shankhadrava rasa*. (V 2/50-55).
- ‘*Daiva vyapashraya cikitsa*’ has been incorporated practically. Eg. Worshipping *Shitala devi* in the disease *visphota* (V. 3/37)
- *Irishcika taila* is indicated in *Karna roga* (V 3/34)
- “*Bhalli rasa*” is the ingredient of formulation

indicated in *Stri roga* (V 4/1). In Hindi translation it is translated as *Bhallataka rasa*. But it seems better to consider as *Malli rasa* i.e., Juice of *Mallika* which is indicated in *stri roga*.

- All kinds of basic formulations have been tried by the author during the treatment of various ailments. Details have been included in below tabulation (Table 1)

Type of Formulation	Total Number	Type of Formulation	Total Number
<i>Kashaya</i>	33	<i>Dhupa</i>	1
<i>Curna</i>	27	<i>Rasa/ Bhasma</i>	18
<i>Avaleha/ Paka</i>	2	<i>Kalka</i>	6
<i>Kshira paka</i>	3	<i>Dhumrapana</i>	1
<i>Hima</i>	1	<i>Masi</i>	1
<i>Putapaka</i>	2	<i>Anjana</i>	2
<i>Vati</i>	11	<i>Nasya</i>	2
<i>Lepa</i>	8	<i>Ghrta/ Taila</i>	10

Types of formulations (Table 1)

Conclusion

Vaidya Moreshwara, the resident of *Ahammada nagara*, inscribed a significant literature on *Ayurveda*, named *Vaidyamrita* in 1547 A.D. 181 verses of four idiosyncratic *alankaras* unveils 129 effective formulations for total 78 conditions. *Vaidyamrita* manuscript collected and published by *Hariprasad Sharma* is quite different from *Vaidyamrita* manuscript identified by *Bharat Bhikan Sangle et.al* in *Anandashram* library. Exploratory review suggests that, *Vaidya Moreshwara* collected much information from the earlier treatises like *Vrindamadhava*, *Sharngadhara samhita*, *Cakradatta* and *Rasaratna samucchaya* and framed *Vaidyamrita*. Many distinct drugs and pathological conditions have been mentioned shows the literary richness. As this text written mainly based on experience, especially it helps for *Ayurveda* practitioners and scholars.

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