UNIQUE FEATURES OF AN UNEXPLORED MANUSCRIPT – KASHYAPA SAMHITA

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ABSTRACT

The Kashyapa Samhita is a well-known reference treatise for Paediatrics in Ayurveda. Available edited and translated Kashyapa Samhita is incomplete and is brought out by editing a single manuscript collected from Nepal. In this regard, in order to make it complete, a work was undertaken to explore if any similar manuscript authored by Kashyapa was available or not. During this process of exploration, it was found that there are other manuscripts also available which is authored by Kashyapa and the contents are different from that of the available Kashyapa Samhita. In this research venture, five manuscripts were identified and collected from IPGT & RA (with accession no 6512), Tanjore Sarvasati Mahal Library (with accession no.11045), Sampurnananda Library Varanasi (with accession no 1088604) and Oriental Research Institute Mysore (with accession no A129), Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda Library (with accession no 13474B). During the process of deciphering, extensive explanations about concepts regarding Desha (place), Nadi (pulse), Dosha (the three humours of the body), Daivavyapashravya Chikitsa (performing rituals related to god) Rasayogas (mercurial formulations) were observed which are unique and not found in any other published ayurvedic classics. Hence this work contributes to Ayurvedic knowledge.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Manuscript, Kashyapasamhita.

INTRODUCTION

Kashyapa Samhita is very well known text and is considered as the hand book of Balaroga Chikitsa (paediatrics) in Ayurveda. The sections of Kashyapa Samhita are similar to those of Charaka Samhita but have an additional Khilla Sthana¹. The contents of these sections match with those of Charaka Samhita but an additional importance is given to Kaumarabhritya. Unfortunately, the book is incomplete and is brought out by editing a single manuscript collected from Nepal². There was a need for exploring manuscripts related to Kashyapa Samhita to fulfil the lacuna. This contemplation resulted in the exploration
of other manuscripts available in the name of *Kashyapa Samhita*. During the process of deciphering, extensive explanations about concepts regarding De-sha (place), Nadi (pulse), Dosha (the three humours of the body), Daivayapashravrya Chikitsa (rituals related to god) Rasayogas (mercurial formulations) were observed which are unique and not found in any other published Ayurvedic classics.

**Materials**

For the study, five manuscripts were identified and collected from IPGT & RA (with accession no 6512), Tanjore Sarasvati Mahal Library (with accession no.11045), Sampurnananda Library Varanasi (with accession no 1088604) and Oriental Research Institute Mysore (with accession no A129), MS University Baroda Library (with accession no 13474B) found across India. Details of the collected ms considered for the study is as shown in the table1.

**Method**

For the critical study of the manuscript, a scientific protocol as mentioned in the book named *Introduction to Manuscriptology* by R.S. Shivaganesha Murthy was followed. The process of critical edition was done under lower criticism comprises of following stages viz; i) Collection, ii) Deciphering, iii) Transliteration, iv) Collation, v) Recension, vi) Emendation, vii) Critical analysis, viii) English translation.

Under collection, the copies of the text for its availability was identified using

1. A Check List of Sanskrit Medical Manuscripts in India by Rama Rao
2. Sanskrit Medical Manuscripts in India, 2nd ed. New Delhi: CCRAS; 2005

Table 1: Extent of copies available as per the catalogue of Sanskrit medical manuscripts-

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<th>S No</th>
<th>Name of the text</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<td>11045</td>
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*INA* Information Not Available

Among these nine copies, five manuscript copies were collected based on similarity in Title, Author, Subject and Language. The Manuscripts were procured from the repositories with permission obtained duly from the authorities concerned through proper channel. After collection, each copy is deciphered one by one and following observations are noted as shown in Table 2.
Table 2:

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The Collation was done by marking siglas for collected manuscripts using English alphabets as shown in Table No 2. After giving siglum, all the collected manuscripts were deciphered one by one. Upon deciding the trustworthiness among five manuscripts, Siglum A was transliterated. The orthographic peculiarities, scribal errors, omissions were noted as continuous superscripts and readings were noted in footnotes. Siglum B was then deciphered and compared with the Siglum A. The variant readings were noted as before. Similarly, the collations of the other three manuscripts were also carried out. In recension, one reading was accepted among variants by considering different criteria like understanding or-
thographic peculiarities and considering its meaning in Sanskrit dictionaries. Emendation was done at instances when there was difficulty in choosing one among the variants of reading. The external and internal evidences were sort off for emending. After completing each section, critical analysis of the same was carried out for understanding the different subject matter dealt and the authors view on it with respect to similar topics dealt elsewhere in other treatises. English translation was done of the verses except for the technical terms and the drugs mentioned in the manuscripts as it may blemish the genuineness of the verses.

**OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS**

Upon completion of the above stages it was found that the contents were jumbled and did not have any justifiable sequel. An effort was made in the study to arrange the contents in a proper justifiable sequence into five sections.

**Section I** - It deals with fundamental principles of Ayurveda. This section is divided into six chapters.

Chapter I - *Bhugola Prakarana* - It includes the explanations regarding Puri (cities), Shringa (Mountains), names of Saptasagara (seven oceans) and Saptadvipa (seven islands) with their dimensions.

Chapter II - *Pindotpatti* deals with embryogenesis, stages of development of embryo, twenty four influential factors for the development of specific characters of progeny.

Chapter III - *Anupadi Desha* deals with characteristic features of three types of lands, names of rivers, trees, birds, animals, nature of human beings. It deals

Chapter IV - It deals with the explanations regarding *Tridosha-Trimurti Sambandha* (relation between god and three humours), *Varnabhedena Tridosha* (complexion according to humours) , *Tridosha Karanatva* (Cause for all the disease manifestations), *Sharira Pramana* (measurements of the body), *Avayava Sankhya* (number of body contents), *Doshadhatumala Pramana* (quantities of body constituents) *Doshasthana* (abode of humours), *Annapacana Krama* (process of digestion), *Dhatupravardhaka Rasa* (effect of taste on seven constituents), *Doshadhatu Sambandha* (relation between humours and body constituents).

Chapter V - *Nadi Prakarana* - Deals with detailed explanations regarding *Chakras* (centres of spiritual power) named as *Adhara, Vishnu, Brahma, Vayu, Rudra* along with *Arishta Lakshana* (unfavourable symptom of approaching death), *Dwadasha Nadi* such as *Sushumna, Pingala, Rudra, Ida, Rajju, Vaikarika, Vishvodari, Dhari, Shankhini, Yashasvini, Saraswati, Hastijihva* are well explained. It deals with numbers of body parts, method of examination, prognosis, relation with humours and division based on upper, middle and lower parts of the body in detail.

Chapter VI - It includes characteristic features of an ideal physician.

**Section II** – Deals with the general cause, symptoms and treatment for various diseases caused by misdeeds done in the previous life.

**Section III** - Is in the form of conversation between Lord *Shiva* and *Parvati Devi* in question–answer form. In this section, each disease starts with the question of *Parvati Devi* and Lord *Shiva* answers the question in detail explaining the *Samanya Nidana, Lakshana, Chikitsa* (general cause, symptom and treatment), *Rogabheda* (classification), *Vishesha Nidana, Lakshana* and *chikitsa* (specific cause, symptom and treatment), *Sadhyasadhya* (prognosis) and *Pathya* (diet). The *Chikitsa* (treatment) aspect contain both *Daivavyapashraya* (rituals related to God) and *Yuktivyapashraya Chikitsa* (treating by using medicines of plant origin, animal origin, mineral and mercurial formulations) with an additional importance given to *Daivavyapashraya*. It includes specificities of *Rudrabhisheka* (pouring water on idol of Lord *Shiva* and chanting hymns) *Vishnupuja* (worshipping the Lord *Vishnu*) and *Danakarma* (Liberality). Another interesting observation under *Chikitsa* (treatment section) is the usage of mercurial
preparations with specific dosage and duration for each preparation.

**Section IV**- The methods of conduction of Dana Karma (offering) which are mentioned in earlier section are dealt in this also. It includes Dhanyadanam (offering grains), Tailaghatadanam (offering oil filled pot), Aiyaghatadanam (offering ghee filled pot), Guḍadanam (offering jaggery), Phaladanam (offering fruits), Lavanadanam (offering salt), Kalpasadanam (offering cow), Chagadanam (offering goat), Mahishidanam (offering buffalo), Tiladanam (offering sesame), Gajadanam (offering elephant), Ashvadanam (offering horse), Andvahadanam (offering ox/bull), Shakatadanam (offering cart), Dasidanam (offering servant), Grihanadanam (offering house), Veshyadanam (offering a lady), Bhumidanam (offering land) with specific Dakshina (remuneration).

**Section V** -The Yoga (formulation) mentioned in this section ends with “Kashyapena Bhashitam”. The names of the formulations mentioned are Kharjuradi Lehya, Kadlikanda Rasayana, Vajra Rasayana, Navaratra Rasayana, Pancabana Rasa, Vishamuskhti taila, Kulattha Taila, Bhringamalaka Taila, Kumari Taila, Arakshira Taila, Mahakalyanaka Ghrita, Sudarshana Rasa, Jogirasa, Shankhadravaka, Nirgundi Leha, Vranadaru Lehya, Matsyashri Taila, Laksminarayana Taila, Grahaniyakrakavta Rasa, Mahanarayana Taila, Kapiṭhadi Lehya, Garudanjana and Draksadi Lehya.

**DISCUSSION**

**Author**: The whole structure of the text reveals that, Shiva is the narrator of the text. Many other texts of Ayurveda as well as other sciences/arts have the similar kind of beginning. Many Oushadha Yoga (medicinal formulations) are mentioned in the name of Shiva or Rudra. Many of the authors followed this trend to earn reputation and to authorise their works. Though the work is attributed to Shiva in many other various texts, the variations are observed according to time period, style of writing, social and political environment. Hence it is assumed that the present work also is attributed to Lord Shiva but is authored by someone else.

In the ancient time there was a tradition prevalent wherein different Gotra (a family) was being followed under which Guruṣhishya Parampara (lineage) was seen. This work also implies that it could have been written by a person or group of people from Kashyapa Gotra. Looking at the content it poses to be a good compilation work of many subjects that had great impact then.

**Time period**: There is an explanation regarding Somaroga which was first explained by Vangasena (12th cent). The era of Rasoushadhi Prayoga (use of mercurial preparations in treatment) was at its zenith during 10th century. This impact is also reflected in this particular work. Goraksha Shataka—a book of Yoga (11-12th century) deals with Dvadasha Nadi (Science related with Pulse) in brief. But this particular text has a detailed explanation of the same. References of some peculiar mercurial preparations such as Jogi Rasa and Dhurjati rasa are also seen in Vaidya chintamani (15th century). This suggests two possibilities- (a) Either this could be written by considering Vaidyachintamani or (b) Vaidyachintamani would have been written referring this work. Virasimhavalka—a medieval book of 13th century approached the Chikitsa aspect inculcating Jyotisha, Dharmashastra and Vaidyaka. The same has been reflected even in this work. Considering all the internal evidences, the text can be placed somewhere between 13th to 15th century.

**Place**: There is no direct reference regarding place of the author in the whole text but the style of writing and the words used has the tinge of south India. It could be that the scribe of the particular work belonged to this region but the whereabouts of the author is uncertain. **Structure of the text**: In the older Ayurvedic classics, one can find the explanations regarding basic concepts followed by treatment principles, drugs, and formulations as seen in the
classical texts. In the medieval period the trend of writing the text books of Ayurveda shifted from the above mentioned style to understanding treatment principles and formulations as seen in Madhava Nidana of 8th century. Down the line, between 9th to 13th centuries the style again changed to giving importance to Roga pariksha vidhi (diagnostic method) in the form of Ashtavidha Pariksha as in Sharangadhara Samhita. Having looked at different change of style according to era, this particular work stands out as an unusual work which gives importance to basic concepts, diagnostic methods, Karmaja Vyadhi (diseases caused by misdeeds), Daivavyapashravya Chikitsa (performing rituals related to god) and Rasowshadhi Yogas (mercurial preparations).

CONCLUSION

This particular study is a research which contributes to the understanding of Kashyapa Samhita that is quite different from the available Kashyapa Samhita. It implies that there was more than one type of Kashyapa Samhita which no much people know off. The topics such as Nadi (pulse), Dosha (the three humours of the body), Prakriti (constituent), Desha (place), Karmajavyadhi (diseases due to misdeeds) and Daivavyapashravya Chikitsa (performing rituals related to god) are very unique. Having worked on this, it has brought out a new way of looking at Kashyapa Samhita as like the usual way as the hand book of Kaumarabhritya (paediatrics). The narrator of the text is Shiva but there are no evidences regarding Author, the time period and place. Based on some internal evidences the time period of the text can be placed between 13th to 15th Century AD.

REFERENCES


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Conflict Of Interest: None Declared