



CRITICAL STUDY OF AGASTYA VAIDYA CHANDRIKA

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ABSTRACT

Agastya Vaidya Chandrika was a well-known textbook among the practitioners in Kerala during the 20th century. It is considered as an Experience-based handbook written in Malayalam language. The text explains many simple and effective formulations of both Ayurveda and Siddha system. Unfortunately, the text does not receive the status it deserves among the current generation of physicians. The study is an attempt to understand the historical and cultural aspects of AgastyaVaidya Chandrika. It is a text which is a compilation of knowledge from different clinical texts books of Ayurveda and Siddha as well as the author's clinical experience. Hence Agastya Vaidya Chandrika holds some similarities to popular Ayurveda and Siddha textbooks in clinical practice prevalent in those days. This handbook covers all the eight branches of Ayurveda, and hence all realms of clinical practice. Siddha system of medicine is very much similar to the Rasashastra of Ayurveda. The core of Siddha medicine is its alchemy. This Text also describes Lohavada. Different Preparation methods of Bhasma and Sindhooras are discussed as well. For the study, a downloaded copy of the Malayalam text of AgastyaVaidyaChandrika originally published by Vatayattukotta K Parameswaran Pillai published in the year 1954 is selected.

KEYWORDS: Agastya Vaidya Chandrika; Siddha system; Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the science of life has a long tradition. It is an alternative medicine system with historical roots in the Indian subcontinent. The most accepted three Indian medicinal systems are Siddha, Ayurveda, and Unani. Siddha medicinal system is mainly practiced in south India. The masters of Siddha medicine are called Siddhars. Rasa (Mercury) is the main medicine in Siddha system.

Siddha system of medicine exists in Tamil Nadu and some parts of Kerala. In the early 20th century in southern part of Kerala, physicians practiced both Ayurveda and Siddha simultaneously. Agastya Vaidya Chandrika is a text published in that period written in Malayalam language. So this treatise contains both Ayurveda and Siddha formulations. Agastya Vaidya Chandrika is considered as a practical handbook that helps clinicians to manufacture medicines properly. In this text there is a clear description of manufacturing of both herbal and mineral formulations. Around 380 formulations and their method of preparation are discussed.

About the Author and Period

Author of the text is Vatayattukotta K Parameswaran Pillai. Even though there is no authentic evidence regarding the details of the author, it is believed that he lived in the 20th century AD at Kottarakkara, Kollam district of Kerala state. From Grantha soochika of Kerala Sahitya Academy site it is come to know that a good number of Tamil texts are translated to Malayalam by this author.

Publication

A downloaded copy of the Malayalam text 'Agastya Vaidya Chandrika' originally published by Vatayattukara K Parameswaran Pillai in the year 1954 and printed by Sreerama Vilasam press Kollam, Kerala is the source of data of this study. This is the second edition of the book. First and Third editions of the text are not available even after a thorough search. Fourth edition and fifth editions of the book were published in 1988 and 1998 respectively. These editions were printed and published by Devi books, Kodungallur, Thrissur District, Kerala.

This text deals with different formulations coming under Siddha and Ayurveda systems of medicines. Though the main content of the book is Siddha yogas, ingredients

and many of the preparation methods are familiar to Rasashastra of Ayurveda. An integrated system of Ayurveda and Siddha have been practiced during that period in many parts of Kerala. The medical tradition in the Thiruvitamkooor area of old Madras state was not like that of the Ashtavaidya tradition.^[1] At that time Kerala's medical tradition was an amalgamation of Aryavaidya, Folk, Siddha, and Tribal medicines. These medical traditions functioned in Travancore as an interconnected and mutually complementing system of knowledge. In the south of Travancore, Ayurveda has a peculiar relationship with the Siddha system of medicine. This influence fused with the existing indigenous medical traditions of the region. The basic characteristic of Siddha has similarities with that of Ayurveda. Its antiquity is equivalent to Ayurveda or more.

Subject matter of the text

There are fourteen chapters in this book. No particular name is given for chapters except for first chapter. Name of the first chapter is Muppu Chunnam. In this chapter preparation of Muppu, an esoteric substance in the Siddha System is mentioned. It is the combination of the three salts. It acts as a catalyst in complicated incineration processes. The author ends this chapter by quoting Acharya 'A wise physician who knows about the judicial use of Anupana could show miracles even with a single medicine.' In Second chapter some formulations are mentioned.

Third chapter details about Sarvalohamritheekaranavidhi and different types of Sindhooras. These Sindhooras can be used in many therapeutic conditions. Mezhuku, Matra, and Kattu are special Siddha Aushadha kalpanas that described in this chapter. In the fourth chapter, a good number of special preparations are mentioned. Agastya tailam and Ghandhaka tailam are some of them. There is a description of a tailam used in Meha condition.

In the fifth chapter "Mayoora Tamra Sindhooram" is mentioned. "Ayastamra Nagakalpa Sindhooram" a special preparation is mentioned in the sixth chapter. This Aushada can help to cure the disease and also gives *Kayasidhi*. More than 20 Anupanas are prescribed for some special preparations like Agastyarkuzhambu, ChandamaruthaKuzhambu. For example, Agastyarkuzhambu is given with Ksheeram in Pandu. In Asmari, medicine is given with Takra. Details of *Jaya Neer and Maha Dravakam*, KalpanaViseshas mentioned in the Siddha system of medicine, is seen in this chapter. Hitha and Ahitha Aaharas during medicinal intake are clearly described in this chapter. A good number of Mezhuku like Nandhimezhuku, Chandamarutha Mezhuku and Choornam like Bhoopathi choornam, Jeerakadi choornam are described in the seventh chapter. Many types of Sindhooram and Bhasmas are mentioned in eight chapter.

Maantha Rogam in children is well explained in the ninth chapter. Treatment for Maantha Rogam includes formulations like Swarasam, Kalkam, Kashayam and Gulika. Matras(Gulika) for virechana is explained. TamraNirmanam is explained in this chapter under the heading *KalpaSindhooram*.

In the tenth chapter, different types of Bhasmas prepared with the help of *NeetinaKuzhambu Guru* is explained. The importance of Lavana in SidhaVaidya is explained here. Kalpana like Chunnam, Kattu, etc are explained. Suddhi (Purification) of different Herbal and Mineral medicines are described in the twelfth chapter. According to the author, most of the formulations mentioned in the thirteenth chapter are added from some old Malayalam books written by unknown persons. All formulations are herbal in the last chapter, Formulations for Jwara and Peenasa are described.

Demerits of the text

Mainly formulations are explained in this book. Only two Therapeutic conditions are explained viz Meha roga and Maantha roga.

CONCLUSION

This text deals with different formulations coming under Siddha and Ayurveda systems of medicines. Though the main content of the book is Siddha yogas ingredients and most of the preparation methods are familiar to Rasashastra of Ayurveda. Language of this text is Malayalam. So it is difficult to understand for nonnative. Unfortunately, the text does not receive the status it deserves among the current generation of physicians.

REFERENCES

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