A Review on Shalakya Tantrayin Vaidyatharakam

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ABSTRACT
Background: Vaidyatharakam is a traditional Ayurvedic folklore of Kerala that was written by Vaidyakalanidhi C.N Narayanan. This book has been written with Ashtangahrudaya, Arogyakalpadruma and many other ancient manuscripts as their primary reference material. This work is now a ready reference for wide collection of simple and short herbo-mineral combinations that were used in the clinical practice by many renowned Ayurvedic practitioners of Kerala. Materials and methods: Literature related to Shalakya Tantra were studied in detail from Vaidyatharakam and Bruhatrayees. Concerned topics of the textbook were then compared with Bruhatrayees. Differences in opinion among the two groups of textbooks, extra references given in a particular literature, modifications in treatment modalities in the context of specific diseases were noted and analysed. Results and discussion: Vaidyatharakam has unique style of presentation that concises enormous detailing in Bruhatrayeess by grouping majority of diseases under broad headings of Doshic vitiation. Special formulations mentioned for Aschyotana in Netra Rogas and the technique of medicine preparation were innovative and simple. Conclusion: Ayurvedic folklore books like Vaidyatharakam opens up wide arrays of possibilities that can make Ayurvedic practices precised and cost effective. Such books should be identified and subjected to reviews that will add strength to Ayurveda in public health management.

Keywords: Vaidyatharakam, Ayurvedic Folklore, Shalakya Tantra, Kerala Ayurveda.

I. BACKGROUND
Vaidyatharakam is a traditional folklore Kerala Ayurvedic literature that was written by Vaidyakalanidhi C.N Narayanan. This work was made by this broad visionary author in 1974, with an aim to compile a wide collection of traditional and time-tested remedies that were popular in Kerala. Author was a disciple of two legendary paediatric Ayurvedic physicians Sri P.N Appavu Vaidyar, who was Balachiktsakof Thiruvithankur royal family and Sri C.K Narayan Vaidyan, who was also a renowned Balachiktsak and himself, the father of the author.

Although the literature is elaborately written upon Kaumarabhrtya, author has also included treatment modalities from other specialities and other common prevalent diseases of that time period in this book. This book has been written with Ashtangahrudaya, Arogyakalpadruma and other Manuscripts as their primary reference material. This work is now a ready reference for wide collection of simple and short herbo-mineral combinations that were used in the clinical practice by many renowned Ayurvedic practitioners of Kerala.

This work is also appreciated widely for its perfection in presentation of Slokas in terms of Vritta. The total content that is available with us in the present time was completed by two editions of the work. In the second edition, author included some topics as an add on to the first edition like Rakia-Atimardha, Arogya Raksha Vidhis, and some detailing in Kaumarabhrtya. Author himself has stated in the foreword section of this book that this literary work is done to serve the purpose of a handbook for the dull-witted group, who seek for ready references of medicinal combinations. Anyways, this book essentially is a shining star among other folklore Ayurvedic literature, as its name itself suggests.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS
Literature related to Shalakya Tantra were studied in detail from Vaidyatharakam and Bruhatrayees. Concerned topics of the textbook were then compared with Bruhatrayees. Differences in opinion between the two groups of textbooks, extra references given in a particular
literature, modifications in treatment modalities in the context of specific diseases were noted and analysed.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Peculiarity in classification of diseases

This textbook enumerates almost every disease by its name, that are mentioned in Ashtangahrudaya and Susruta Samhita. But when it comes to the description, majority of the diseases are classified and included in the broader headings of Doshic involvement like Vatika Rogas, Paithika Rogas, Kaphaja Rogas, Rakthaja Rogas. Sannipatika Rogas and Agantuja Rogas according to the need in that context of Rogas. As exceptions, some particular diseases are also explained with individual headings, that may be owing to their particular importances. Some of the diseases that comes under the latter category are like Badhirya in Karna Rogas, Ardhavabedhakain Siro Rogas, DishthaPrathislyaya Nasa Rogas etc. If prevalence and commonness in their occurrence of those diseases were the basis of that kind of elaboration, there also raises the question of why Abhishtyanda or Timira being a common Netra Roga was not elaborated in such a way.

The method of broad classification is used for both description of Roopas and Chikitsaof Karna Rogas, Nasa Rogas, Siro Rogas. In the context of Netra Rogas, thus mentioned classification can only be found in Chikitsa section. In the beginning of Netra Rogosadhikara, Acharya quotes the total number of Netra Rogasas 95, but then avoids the description of their specific features like their particular name, region of manifestation, Roopa etc. by giving the reason of fear of overelaboration. Contradictorily, Acharya has explained majority of MukhagataRogas with distinction on the basis of their sites of manifestation.

This gives a clue about the one of the notions of the author behind creation of such a work, which was probably to concise and simplify the whole content of diseases wherever possible, that can make the particular Tantra seem less complex. Elaboration of course can provide clarity of a subject, but when the fundamental of this science itself is about the manifestation of disease based on Vikriti of Doshas, such a classification is also right. Exceptions seen in some contexts like in MukhaRogas can be due to diverse nature of presentation that cannot be generalized or due to relevance and attention that diseases seek.

2. Description of Nidanasand Pathyapathyas

Although author has obviously adapted the content from Bruhatrayees, at many sites additions are seen, other than the information available from Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hrudaya. Nidana and Pathyapathyare some of the such fields. For example, while describing the Vatika Karna Roga context, Nidanas are elaborated by the extra mentioning of intake of Kashaya, Tikta, Katu Rasas. Another example is in the context of Nasa Rogas where, Ashtangahrudaya reference of Vata Dosh a Kopa is incorporated in Vatika Prathishyaya Nidana. This can be an assertion for signifying the role of Vata in Prathishyaya. In the context of Apathyas for Netra, consumption of Katu, Amla, Lavana Rasas are contraindicated for health of eyes.

These mentionings provide the reader with vision and updation in the concept of pathogenesis. Author himself has acquainted this knowledge through years of observation and has contributed greatly by passing on such valuable information to further generations.

3. AsadhyaatamBadhirya

Towards the end of the Karna Roga, Author gives the Asadhyyata of Badhirya Chikitsa. According to the author, treatment may won’t give desired output in chronic cases, Bala and Vridha. Throughout the Sutra, chronicity of a particular disease is observed as a bad prognosis for the disease. In children, where the majority of deafness has a congenital origin, it will be associated with a structural deformity resulting in the malfunction. When a particular initial phase of active development of senses has passed, conservative measures become incapacitated in providing a desired outcome. In the phase of old age, Sareera itself is unable to rejuvenate in proper ways as Dhatu shas already entered into state of Kshaya. This would also result in biasing the efforts to cure the condition.

4. Formulations

i. Lepana in Nasarshas

A simple, easy to implement was observed in the context of Nasarshas Chikitsa. Application of fresh Kalka of Swetha Gunja seeds over the Nasarshas is indicated. Gunja is categorized as a Mula Vishyab Susrutha and as a Upavisha by Bhavaprakash. Being Tiksha in Gunja, Katu in...
Vipaka and Ushna in Veerya, Gunja is expected to have better results by its application over Nasarshas.

ii. LekhanaGulika
A reference ofGulika for the purpose of Anjana in Sukaarogas is given in the text. Ingredients of the formulation are tender leaves of Karamja, Godhanta, Sankha, bone of donkey, Samdruphenaand Tamra. All these ingredients should be powdered and Bhavana should be done in Gomutra. Majority of the drugs in this combination has KatuVipakaand Tikshna Guna which will serve the purpose of Lekhana. Medium of Anjana is Madhu which is both Lekhana and Ropana.

iii. Aschyotana Yoga
A combination of Trikatu, Haritaki, Yashthinadhuanand Tuthais mentioned for Aschyotana. These drugs are to be taken inside a Potali and the Potali should be dipped in Dhanyamakept in a vessel made from Tamra. After dipping, the liquid should be instilled by squeezing the Potali. This way of medicine preparation is unusual and opens up many possibilities for trial purposes. Since the medium is Amla and majority of drugs are with Lekhana properties except Yashthinadhu, they will be more effective in diseases of Kaphavitiation.

iv. VartiKalpanas
Acharya has mentioned three sets of Vartis, one each for one particular dominant Dosha dominant eye diseases, ie. Vatika, Rakta-Pittajaand KaphajaNetraRogas. Particular combinations are:

- Vatika Netra Rogas- Supernatant part of curd from cow’s milk should be taken and spread over silver vessel and thus dried. When this achieves a blue colour, it should be mixed with Mustu and made into a Varti. This can be applied as collyrium in eyes.
- Rakta-PittajaNetra Rogas– JatiMakula, Sankha, Triphala, Yashthinadhuan roots of Bala should be subjected to Bhavana in Sudha Thoyaand made into a Varti. This would be beneficial for eye diseases with Rakta-Paithikadominance.
- KaphajaNetra Rogas – Saindhava, Triphala, Trikatu, Sankha, Samdruphena, Shala Niraysa, Shilajatu should be subjected for Bhavana in ShudhaThoyaand made into a Varti. This combination would be especially effective for Kaphaja Netra Rogas.

v. Karnapoorana in KarnashoolChikitsa
For the purpose of Karnapoorana, any of VataharaGana processed with AmlaVarga, Mutra Vargaand Maha Sneha is advised inBruhatrayees. In this text, BhadradarvadiGanais specifically mentioned for such processing. This Gana along with the other two mentioned with it are sometimes referred to as VataghnaGanas, owing to their potency. Karna being a VataSthana, this Yoga suites the best for the particular intervention.

IV. CONCLUSION
Simplicity and uniqueness can be considered as the highlights of Vaidyatharakam. Periodic updation in the field of medicines is considered as a lacuna of present era. Ayurvedic folklore books like Vaidyatharakam opens up wide arrays of possibilities that can make Ayurvedic practices precised and cost effective. Such books should be identified and subjected to reviews that would add strength to Ayurveda in public health management.

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