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**Manuscriptology and Its Role in Understanding Ayurvedic Texts: A Critical Analysis of
Vaidyamrut in Comparison with *Ashtang Hriday*****Brijesh R. Mishra**Principal & HOD , Dept. of Ayurveda Samhita and Siddhant, Shri Ayurved Mahavidyalaya,
Nagpur, Maharashtra, India.**Author Correspondence: Email :** drbrijeshm74@gmail.com; : 7045315553**Abstract:**

The study of manuscripts, or manuscriptology, plays a critical role in the preservation, transcription, translation, and interpretation of ancient medical texts. In the field of Ayurveda, the study of these manuscripts is crucial for understanding the evolution and application of Ayurvedic practices. The Indian subcontinent, with its rich heritage, has preserved numerous manuscripts that discuss various aspects of Ayurveda, written in diverse scripts and languages. This article focuses on *Vaidyamrut*, a 16th-century Ayurvedic manuscript by Moreshwar Vaidya, in comparison with *Ashtang Hriday*, an Ayurvedic text from the 6th century by Acharya Vagbhat. The manuscript, written in Sanskrit and Devanagari script, offers insights into the management of 52 diseases and includes various formulations and treatments. This review explores the manuscript's significance, its transcription and translation, and its relevance to

contemporary Ayurvedic practices. A comparative analysis is conducted with *Ashtang Hriday* to identify similarities, differences, and potential contributions to modern clinical practice.

Keywords: *Ashtang Hriday*, *Vaidyamrut*, Ayurveda, Manuscriptology, Sanskrit, Devanagari, Transcription, Translation, Critical Analysis

Introduction

The preservation and interpretation of ancient manuscripts have been central to the study of historical knowledge, particularly in the realm of medicine. In the case of Ayurveda, an ancient system of medicine that originated over 5,000 years ago, manuscriptology provides critical insights into the foundations and evolution of this knowledge system. Ayurveda, derived from the Sanskrit words *Ayur* (life) and *Veda* (science), encompasses a comprehensive approach to health and wellness, balancing the body, mind, and spirit through diet, lifestyle, and medicinal herbs.

The early transmission of Ayurvedic knowledge was primarily oral, with teachings passed down through generations. However, as the need to preserve this knowledge grew, it was documented in written form, using materials such as palm leaves, birch bark, and copper plates. The ancient manuscripts, many of which are now in a state of decay or have been lost over time, are invaluable sources of Ayurvedic wisdom. Manuscriptology is the discipline that involves the collection, conservation, cataloging, transcription, translation, and critical analysis of these manuscripts. This field is instrumental in preserving the legacy of Ayurveda and ensuring that the knowledge contained within these manuscripts is available for future generations.

India is home to a wealth of manuscripts in various languages and scripts, many of which are related to Ayurveda. Among the manuscripts that have been preserved, *Vaidyamrut* is a significant text that offers a detailed account of the management of diseases through herbal formulations. Written by Moreshwar Vaidya in the 16th century, this manuscript is an important contribution to the Ayurvedic corpus. The manuscript focuses on the treatment of 52 diseases and is composed of 180 shlokas divided into four sections or *Alankaras*. The formulations included in the manuscript are varied, with different types of medicines such as *Kashaya*, *Kalka*, *Churna*, *Kalpa*, and more, specifically designed for different conditions.

In this article, we aim to explore *Vaidyamrut* through the lens of manuscriptology. By transcribing and translating the text, we will analyze its content and compare it with *Ashtang Hridaya*, another foundational text of

Ayurveda. *Ashtang Hridaya*, written by Acharya Vagbhat in the 6th century, has been an essential guide in Ayurvedic medicine, and its influence is evident in various later works, including *Vaidyamrut*. This comparative analysis will highlight the similarities and differences between the two texts and explore their collective impact on the development of Ayurvedic practices

Methodology

The study of *Vaidyamrut* follows a structured methodology, encompassing the stages of data collection, transcription, translation, comparison, and interpretation. The approach is systematic and grounded in the principles of manuscriptology.

1. Collection of Data

The primary source for this study is the manuscript *Vaidyamrut*, which will be obtained from Bharat Itihas Samshodhak Mandal, Pune. Digitalized scanned copies of the manuscript are available through the National Institute of Indian Manuscripts (NIIMH) database. The manuscript is written in Sanskrit and Devanagari script, which is typical for many ancient Ayurvedic texts. The data will be carefully gathered and organized for further transcription and analysis.

2. Transcription and Translation

The next step involves transcribing the Sanskrit text of *Vaidyamrut* into modern Devanagari script. This process is crucial for making the text more accessible to contemporary readers, as the ancient manuscript's script may be difficult for modern scholars to interpret. The Sanskrit text will then be translated into English, allowing for a broader audience to engage with the content. The translation will aim to retain the accuracy and meaning of the

original text, while ensuring clarity for non-Sanskrit readers.

3. Comparison of Data

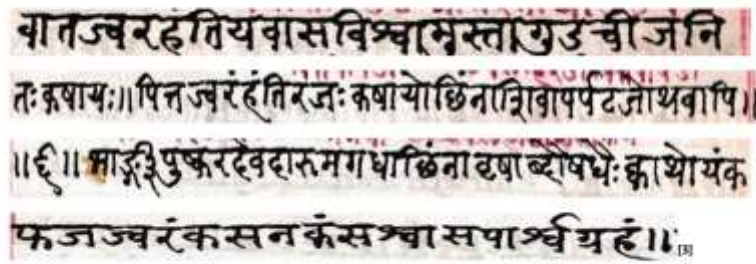
Once the manuscript is transcribed and translated, it will be compared with *Ashtang Hridaya*. This comparative analysis will focus on the treatment methodologies described in both texts. In particular, the focus will be on how each text addresses similar conditions, such as *Vataj*, *Pittaj*, and *Kaphaj Jwara* (types of fevers caused by imbalances in the three doshas). The comparison will explore both the similarities in the formulations and

Results: Transcription and Translation of Text

the unique approaches that may be specific to each text.

4. Interpretation of Data

The final step is the interpretation of the data through critical analysis. This will involve examining the historical and cultural context in which each text was written, as well as the broader Ayurvedic principles that underlie the treatments described in both *Vaidyamrut* and *Ashtang Hridaya*. The critical analysis will also assess the relevance of these texts in the modern-day practice of Ayurveda and suggest areas for further research.



Transcription of Manuscript

The transcription of a selected portion of the text from *Vaidyamrut* follows:

Original Text:

वातज्वर हन्तत यवास ववश्चामस्तागडची जनितः कषायः ॥

वित्त ज्वर हन्तत रजः कषायः छीति शिवा पटजोथवापि ॥

भारंगी प्कर देवदारु मगधा नछिता वषाब्दौषधः क्वाथः अय
कफजज्वरंकसिकसश्वास श्वपग्रहम् ॥

Translation: The *Kashaya* of *Yavasa* (*Dhamasa*), *Vishwa* (*Shunthi*), *Musta* (*Nagarmotha*), *Guduchi* (*Gulvela*) cures *Vataj Jwara*.

The *Kashaya* of *Raja* (*Pittapapada*), *Chhinna* (*Guduchi*), *Shiva* (*Haritaki*), and *Parpatak* cures *Pittaj Jwara*.

The *Kashaya* of *Bharangi*, *Pushkar*

(*Erandmula*), *Devdaru*, *Magadha*, *Chhinna* (*Guduchi*), and *Vrushabdau* (*Vasa* and *Musta*) cures *Kaphaj Jwara*, *Kasa*, *Shwas*, and *Parshwagraha*.

As mentioned earlier, *Vaidyamrut* was transcribed and translated from its original Sanskrit, written in the Devanagari script, to modern Devanagari script and English. The critical importance of this step lies in preserving the integrity of the ancient text while making it accessible to contemporary scholars and practitioners.

The selected portion, focusing on the treatment of various types of *Jwara* (fever), illustrates the highly systematic approach taken in *Vaidyamrut* to address disease. The

manuscript's structure reveals a well-organized system of classification for diseases, with specific herbal formulations attributed to particular conditions.

The transcription of the Sanskrit text into Devanagari ensured that the words and phrases were maintained in their original form while making it easier for modern readers to interpret them. The translation from Sanskrit to English, however, involved careful attention to both linguistic and cultural nuances. Sanskrit, being a language rich in meaning and context, requires precise translation to avoid loss of information. For instance, the word *Kashaya* refers to a decoction or herbal tea, which is often prescribed in Ayurvedic texts for various ailments. In the case of *Vaidyamrut*, the precise formulation and properties of each *Kashaya* are important for the efficacy of the treatment.

Comparative Analysis with *Ashtang Hriday*

The analysis of *Vaidyamrut* in comparison with *Ashtang Hriday* reveals both distinct similarities and subtle differences.

1. Similarities:

Disease Classification: Both texts share a similar classification of diseases, particularly the categorization of fevers into *Vataj*, *Pittaj*, and *Kaphaj*. These categories are aligned with the three doshas in Ayurveda—Vata (air), Pitta (bile), and Kapha (phlegm)—which are believed to govern the body's functions.

Treatment Formulas: Several formulations described in *Vaidyamrut* closely resemble those in *Ashtang Hriday*. For instance, the use of herbs like *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia*) and *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula*) for treating fevers is common to both texts. These

herbs are known for their anti-inflammatory, immune-boosting, and detoxifying properties.

Focus on Herbal Remedies: Both texts emphasize the importance of herbal treatments in managing diseases. The focus on natural remedies over synthetic drugs highlights the holistic and integrative approach of Ayurveda, which aims to balance the body and mind.

2. Differences:

Regional Variations in Herbs: While *Ashtang Hriday* includes some commonly used herbs, *Vaidyamrut* introduces regional variations in the formulations. For example, the text mentions the use of *Bharangi* (*Clerodendrum serratum*), a herb that is more regionally specific and not as commonly featured in *Ashtang Hriday*. This suggests that *Vaidyamrut* may have been influenced by the local flora and practices prevalent during Moreshwar Vaidya's time.

Formulation of Remedies: *Vaidyamrut* also presents a variety of formulations not found in *Ashtang Hriday*. These include specific types of *Kashaya*, *Kalpa*, *Anjan*, and *Lehana* (herbal pastes), each of which is tailored for different diseases and conditions. The comprehensive nature of these formulations underscores the text's practical approach to treatment.

Theological Influence: There are also slight differences in the emphasis on spiritual and mental health in the two texts. *Ashtang Hriday* integrates more of a philosophical aspect, particularly in the treatment of mental health, while *Vaidyamrut* appears more focused on physical ailments with less emphasis on the mind-body connection.

Critical Interpretation of Data

The comparative analysis of the two texts brings forward several critical insights regarding the development of Ayurvedic practice. The differences and similarities observed between Vaidyamrut and Ashtang Hriday highlight the evolving nature of Ayurvedic medicine over time. The transmission of Ayurvedic knowledge is a dynamic process that responds to local and cultural needs, which is evident in the regional specificity of some of the treatments in Vaidyamrut. The herbal formulations, while rooted in the classical Ayurvedic texts, reflect a localized understanding of the natural world and disease management. This adaptation of Ayurveda to different geographic regions and socio-cultural contexts is a hallmark of the tradition's resilience and relevance. Moreover, the use of both classical texts and manuscripts like Vaidyamrut underscores the importance of a critical, evidence-based approach to Ayurveda. While traditional wisdom is central to Ayurvedic practice, there is a growing need to validate and refine this knowledge through modern scientific methods, such as clinical trials and pharmacological studies. This is particularly crucial in a globalized world where Ayurveda is gaining popularity outside of India.

The transcription and translation of Vaidyamrut into modern Devanagari and English provide a vital link between ancient knowledge and contemporary practice. By preserving these texts and making them accessible to modern readers, we not only ensure that the knowledge of our ancestors is not lost but also pave the way for future research that can bridge the gap between ancient wisdom and modern science.

Discussion

The study of Vaidyamrut in comparison with Ashtang Hriday offers a deeper understanding of Ayurvedic practices, particularly in the treatment of fevers and respiratory ailments. Both texts share a commitment to natural remedies, but the uniqueness of each manuscript lies in its approach and application of these remedies. As we examine the manuscripts, we recognize the rich diversity of Ayurvedic knowledge and the adaptability of the system to different times, regions, and diseases. The detailed descriptions of the herbal treatments in Vaidyamrut offer significant insights into the historical practice of Ayurveda. These manuscripts, although written centuries ago, continue to hold practical value for modern Ayurvedic practitioners and researchers.

Moreover, the process of transcription and translation ensures that these ancient texts remain relevant and accessible in the contemporary world. Future research can build upon the foundational knowledge found in these manuscripts, using modern scientific techniques to validate and enhance the efficacy of Ayurvedic treatments.

In conclusion, manuscriptology plays a vital role in preserving and interpreting the knowledge contained within Ayurvedic manuscripts. By critically analyzing texts like Vaidyamrut and comparing them with established works such as Ashtang Hriday, we can gain a deeper understanding of Ayurveda's evolution and its continued relevance in today's world.

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