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A Review on *Sharangadhara Samhita* - Pharmaceutical treatise of Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

Among the standard references for Ayurveda medicine, the *Brihatrayee* (greater triads) namely *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Sangraha / Ashtanga Hridaya* and *Laghutrayee* (lesser triads) namely *Madhava Nidana*, *Sarangadhara Samhita* and *Bhavaprakasha* occupy the top positions. In this article, an attempt has been made to discuss in detail about *Acharya Sharangadhara* and his work *Sharangadhara Samhita* which is a one among the *Laghutrayee*.

Key words: *Acharya Sharangadhara*, *Sharangadhara Samhita*, *Laghutrayee*.

INTRODUCTION

Human Basics of Ayurveda including the description of diseases and treatment lie embedded in many Ayurvedic treatises which have been written, re-written and revised since many centuries. Additions have been made to the older treatises by the newer authors along the timeline. New medicines, new diseases, new treatments and new formulations have been added to enrich this ancient medical science so as to provide it with fullness and comprehensiveness.

Sharangadhara Samhita is one of the best books on Ayurvedic medicine written by *Acharya Sharangadhara*. The *Samhita* is a part of *Laghutrayee*.

Acharya Sarangadhara ^{[1][2]}

Acharya Sharangadhara has written a popular treatise

on Ayurvedic medicine by the name *Sharangadhara Samhita*. It has been categorized under *Laghutrayee* or the lesser triad of Ayurveda along with *Madhava Nidana* and *Bhavaprakasha*. He has also written a treatise on *Neeti Shastra* known as *Sharangadhara Paddhati*.

Family details of *Acharya Sharangadhara*^[3]

In *Sharangadhara Paddhati* – *Acharya Sharangadhara* has given the particulars of his family and his family tree. According to this reference, the family details of *Sharangadhara* are as below mentioned. *Sharangadhara* was the eldest son of *Damodar* and the grandson of *Raghavadev*.

Raghavadev, the grandfather of *Sharangadhara* was a great poet in the court of the king of *Hammir*, who ruled the country *Shakambari* in the 13th century AD. *Raghavadev* was also the author of *Mahaganapati Stotra*. Even today, *Shakambari Devi Temple* is seen to be situated in Ambala Mandal, Haryana State near Kurukshetra.

Sharangadhara Samhita was one of the products which originated from the concept of simplification of Ayurvedic treatises. *Brihatrayee* textbooks were very voluminous works and were difficult for the general practitioners of Ayurveda to read and follow. Hence the authors and scholars of Ayurveda belonging to a later period felt that the important aspects and basics

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need to be extracted from these voluminous texts and simplified. They felt the need of writing down the short treatises which could help in Ayurvedic practice. Keeping this in view, most of the authors tried to compose short treatises from the 10th century onward, thus the *Laghutrayees* originated. *Sharangadhara* also adopted the same principle and wrote his work on medicine which later got popular as '*Sharangadhara Samhita*'. *Sharangadhara* was not only a good physician and author; he was also a good poet.

Sharangadhara Samhita^{[4],[5]}

Sharangadhara Samhita is one of the best books on Ayurveda medicine. Written by *Acharya Sharangadhara*, the *Samhita* is a part of *Laghutrayee*.

The whole treatise consists of 3 divisions, 32 chapters, and 2,600 verses.

Poorva Khanda

It is the 1st division of the *Samhita* and comprises of 7 chapters. It deals with the types of medicinal formulations, examination of pulse, processing the food items, numerology of diseases, technical terminology, anatomy, physiology, etc.

Madhyama Khanda

It is the 2nd division of the *Samhita* and comprises of 12 chapters. It deals with *Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana* (5 types of preparations), *Swarasa* (fresh juices of herbs), *Kalka* (paste of medicinal herbs), *Kwatha* (hot decoctions of medicinal herbs), *Sheeta* (cold infusions) and *Phanta* (hot infusions). Preparations of various types of medicinal formulations like *Churna* (herbal powders), *Vati* (tablets), *Lehyas* (confections), *Tailas* (oils), *Asava* and *Arishta* (fermented herbal preparations), *Rasa Aushadhas* (minerals and metallic preparations) etc. are described in this section.

Uttara Khanda

It is the 3rd division of the *Samhita* and comprises of 13 chapters. This section deals with details of *Panchakarma* (5 basic treatments of Ayurveda i.e. *Vamana* i.e. therapeutic emesis, *Virechana* i.e.

therapeutic purgation, *Asthapana Vasti* i.e. decoction enemas, *Anuvasana Vasti* i.e. oil enemas and *Nasya* i.e. nasal medications, *Swasthavritta* (hygienic principles), *Lepadi Karmas* (external applications), *Anjanadikriyas* (ophthalmic treatments) etc. are explained.

The presentation and content and chronology of written material in *Sharangadhara Samhita* were different from that of other treatises. As a result, many commentaries were written on this work by various scholars like *Adhamalla*, *Kasiram Vaidya*, *Rudra Bhatt* etc.

Specialty of Sharangadhara Samhita^{[6],[7],[8],[9]}

- The seasons are classified according to constellations.
- Examination of pulse or *Nadi Pariksha* has been described in detail.
- Definitions of various terminologies like *Deepana*, *Pachana* etc. have been detailed.
- Detailed classification of the diseases has been given.
- The methods of *Shodana* (purification), *Marana* (preparing the ash) procedures of minerals have been explained in detail.
- *Panchakarma* techniques and their importance in treatment have been explained.
- Single herb formulations have been given.

Commentaries and Commentators on Sharangadhara Samhita

The below mentioned are the commentaries and commentators of *Sharangadhara Samhita*.

Dipika - commentary by Adhamalla

Adhamalla wrote a popular commentary on *Sharangadhara Samhita* by the name '*Dipika*'. *Adhamalla* was the court physician of *Jaitrasimha*, the king of *Hastikantapura*, situated on the banks of river *Charmavati*. He also belonged to the native place of *Sharangadhara* i.e. *Hammirapura* in the *Shakambhari* kingdom.

The uniqueness of Adhamalla's explanation

It is inferred that *Vaidya Adhamalla* belongs to 14th century AD. *Adhamalla*^[10] in his commentary *Dipika* interpreted the verses of *Sharangadhara* in a different way. Example, in the context of respiration *Sharangadhara*, quotes '*Hridayam Chetana Sthanam*' in *Purva Khanda* 5/47-50 verses. But it was interpreted for the functions of the central nervous system by *Adhamalla* in his commentary.

▪ *Gudardha Dipika - commentary by Kashiram Vaidya*^[11]

Kashiram Vaidya was one of the best commentators of *Sharangadhara Samhita*. His commentary is known by the name '*Gudardha Dipika*'. *Kashiram* belonged to the period of king *Sahasa Lema*, son of *Shershaw*, who ruled approximately around 1550 AD. Hence it is inferred that *Vaidya Kashiram* belongs to 16th century.

Kashiram Vaidya has quoted references from *Madana Vinoda* (14th century AD), *Pathya Nighantu* (15th century AD) and *Bhavaprakasha* (16th century AD). Thus it can be inferred that *Kashiram Vaidya* belongs to 17th century AD.

▪ *Ayurveda Dipika - commentary by Rudra Bhatt*^[12]

The commentary written by *Rudra Bhatt* on *Sharangadhara Samhita* is known as '*Ayurveda Dipika*'. *Rudra Bhatta* was the son of *Kinnera Bhatt*, the royal physician of *Abdul Rahim*.

The work of *Rudra Bhatta* is not available in full form. The work only up to *Madhyama Khanda* was available with *Vaidyaraj Yogeshwara Sharma*. It was not published. *Rudra Bhatta* also wrote a commentary on *Vaidya Jivana* by the name '*Dipika*'. *Vaidya Jivana* was written by *Lolamba Raja*. *Rudra Bhatta* wrote a voluminous treatise on medicine also. *Krishna Bhatt*, grandfather of *Rudra Bhatt* wrote a commentary on *Charaka Samhita*. *Rudra Bhatta* belongs to 17th century AD.

▪ *Commentary by Vopadeva*^[13]

Acharya Vopadeva was a great scholar who was well versed in Ayurveda, *Vyakarana* (grammar), *Jyotisha* (astrology) and allied subjects. He wrote a

commentary on *Sharangadhara Samhita*. *Vopadeva* was the son of *Keshava*, a great physician and a friend of *Hemadri*. *Hemadri* was the commentator of *Ashtanga Hridaya*. He was the disciple of *Pandit Dhanesa*. He was the royal physician of *Mahadev*, king of *Devagiri*.

Vopadeva also wrote a commentary on *Siddha Mantra*, a work of his father. *Vopadeva* also wrote *Shatashloki*. He also wrote a commentary on his own work. *Hemadri* wrote commentaries on the other 2 works of *Vopadeva* namely '*Muktaphala*' and '*Harileela*'. *Vopadeva* has a number of works on his name in various subjects. He belongs to 14th century AD.

Vopadeva also has composed a *Nighantu* by the name '*Hridaya Dipika*' which was edited and published by *Acharya Priyavrata Sharma*. *Vopadeva* belonged to *Vedpur*, capital of king *Simharaj*, on the banks of River *Varda*.

CONCLUSION

Sharangadhara Samhita is an important reference text for Ayurvedic doctors. Its uniqueness in explaining and presenting certain topics like *Nadi Pariksha*, measurements, *Kashaya Kalpanas*, terminologies, Ayurvedic formulations, etc. makes it an important treatise.

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