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# Vaidya Kanda - A unique 18<sup>th</sup> century classical text of Ayurveda in Kannada

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## ABSTRACT

'Vaidyakanda' is a text in Kannada authored by *Bommaiah* probably belonging to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century AD which can be considered as a gist of *Brihatrayis* as declared by the author himself in the Pre colophon. The text presents in the order of *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Maana Paribhasha*, *Arishta Lakshanas*, *Nidanas* of *Vyadhis* and it's *Chikitsa* in a brief manner. The text consists of 923 *Padyas* (Stanzas) which are presented in the form of *Kanda* style of classical Kannada writing. The author of *Vaidyakanda* is *Brahma* or *Bommaiah*. The initial stanzas of the text indicate the author as *Brahma*. The end of *Tritiyadala* and post colophon refers *Bommaiah* as the author. *Karnataka Kavicharite* has attributed *Brahma* or *Bommaiah* to 1750 AD. It can be observed that the text seems to be a practical handbook for a local practitioner with commonly encountered diseases and conditions among folk. The author being a poet has presented the whole text in *Kanda Padya* form making the difficult and complex concepts easily understandable by the learners of Ayurveda. The simple translation of the verses given in Kannada language makes the reader more comfortable and the English translation will cater to the readers at large.

**Key words:** *Vaidyakanda*, *Manuscript*, *Kannada Literature*, *Kanda Padya*.

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, being a *Upaveda* has an extensive history which is evident through the available documented classics. Apart from *Brihatrayis*, *Acharyas* of later periods have extensively contributed to the different branches of Ayurveda. Though some of the texts follow the pattern of presentation from the *Brihatrayis*, the approach of these texts are nearer to practicality. Most of the texts are in Sanskrit which

was prevalent upto the medieval period.

Later works of Ayurveda seem to be influenced by the region and language to which the Author belongs. Kannada, a classical language which has its influence in the major parts of Western and Central South India has widely contributed for the science of Ayurveda.

*Vaidya Kanda* is one such text in Kannada authored by *Bommaiah* probably belonging to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century AD which can be considered as a gist of *Brihatrayis* as declared by the author himself in the pre colophon. The text presents in the order of *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Maana Paribhasha*, *Arishta Lakshanas*, *Nidanas* of *Vyadhis* and its' *Chikitsa* in a brief manner. The text consists of 923 *Padyas* (Stanzas) which are presented in the form of *Kanda* style of classical Kannada writing. (*Kanda* - is a prosodic form which contains sixteen units (*Gana*) and the total number of *Mātras* is sixty four.) *Kandapadya* was very popular in the medieval period for its unique feature of colloquial use at the same time maintaining its classical prosodic rule. The subject matter of the text

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is easily understandable and also very easy to memorize as it is in the form of *Kanda Kavya* (poetry form). This work can be considered as a valuable one, written with the perspective of catering to the needs of the Physicians serving common people.

### Importance of the Text

The author of *Vaidya Kanda* is *Brahma* or *Bommaiah*. As described by the author himself in the initial part of the text, *Bommaiah* being a *Badaganaadu Kannadiga* hails from *Ittige* of *Kotturu*, situated in the western direction of *Hampe* (Now Hampi – Ballari District of Karnataka, India). The author also mentions his grandfather as *Kulkarni Suryanarayana* and parents as *Hanumappa Dasa* and *Bhagambe*. He dedicates his work to Lord *Sri Bhande Ranga*. The temple of this name is presently situated near *Badami* in North Karnataka. He ascertains that the subject matter dealt is derived from *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, *Bāhata (Vāgbhata)*, *Shārangadhara*, *Vrinda Mādhava* and others. The text is written considering day to day utilization of medical remedies. The treatise is presented in *Kanda* style of *Chando Prakāra* which is ought to be appreciated by the learned and wise.

The initial stanzas of the text indicate the author as *Brahma*. The end of *Tritiyadala* and post colophon refers *Bommaiah* as the author. *Karnataka Kavicharite* has attributed *Brahma* or *Bommaiah* to 1750 AD. By considering the name of the author and style of writing, it can be considered that *Bommaiah* lived in and around 1750 AD.<sup>[1]</sup>

The published book "*Vaidya Kanda by Bommaiah*" edited by B.S. Sannaiah, is based on the collation study of two available manuscripts. The book contains all the available stanzas from both the manuscripts with its translation in present Kannada language.

- The manuscript "KA" is a Palm leaf manuscript (K 1492) containing 1-131 folios available at *Kannada Adhyayana Kendra(KAK)*, *Jnana Bharati* (Bangalore University).
- Manuscript "GA" is a Paper manuscript (KB 178) containing 1-83 pages written on both sides of the paper, available at *Kannada Adhyayana Samsthe*

(KAS), *Manasa Gangothri* (Mysore University), Mysore.<sup>[2]</sup>

Name of the text	Source	Source no.	Material	Lang/ script	Folios
<i>Vaidya Kanda</i>	KAK, Bengaluru	K 1492	PL	Kannada	131
<i>Vaidya Kanda</i>	KAS, Mysore	KB 178	Paper	Kannada	83

The subject matter of *Vaidya Kanda* projects most of the concepts similar to *Brihatrayi* (The three major compendiums in Ayurveda).

*dinādādiyoḷeddudēvaranenevutāyūsyavannurakśisuvu dakam |*

*ghanakaryakṛtyagaḷanumanugaidādamēlepurvamukh adōḷkuḷitum ||*

One should wake up in the morning praying to God for protecting longevity, perform the daily routine activities and face eastern direction.<sup>[3]</sup>

The above stanza is the first quote of *Vaidya Kanda* describing *Dinacharya*. This stanza is very much similar to the first verse of *Dinacharya Adhyaya* in *Ashtanga Hridaya*.

*Brāhmemuhūrtau uttiṣṭēt swasthorakshārtham āyūśaha | Śharīra chintām nirvartya kṛta śauchā vidhistataha ||*<sup>[4]</sup>

This indicates that the author has incorporated the concepts from *Brhatrayi* and has presented in a lucid manner in common language.

Mean while, the following dissimilarities also have been noted.

In the context of *Vyayama*, he mentions -"*Tirugāḍe Kapha Mala Haram*" – *Vyayama* removes *Kapha* and *Mala*.<sup>[5]</sup> Here, The word *Kaphahara* is probably derived from the opinion of *Acharya Chakrapani*. *Acharya Chakrapani* has commented on the word *Dosha Kshaya* as a result of *Vyayama* as *Kapha Kshaya*.<sup>[6]</sup> *Bommaiah* has considered the opinion of *Chakrapani* and has directly quoted the benefit of

Vyayama as Kaphahara. Further, the mentioning of the words Malahara and Vṛśya are important as it is not mentioned in any other classics.

By this we come to know that as Bommaiah is a recent author who has considered the opinion of commentators of various classical texts of Ayurveda.

While describing Ritu Vibhaga, the author opines that Ravi (Sun) is dominant in Uttarayana which is responsible for heat and Health. In Dakshinayana, Chandra is associated which undergoes Kśaya causing Śaityarōga.<sup>[7]</sup> This concept seems to be contrary to what is mentioned in Brihatrayi. Acharya Charaka quotes - "Ādāvante Cha Daurbalyam Visargādānayornṛñām".<sup>[8]</sup>

Here, it can be noted that the author has considered the practical observations in relation to the Health of the individuals in respective Ayana.

Describing the types of Prameha, the term Māndya Meha is used which resembles Śanairmeha.<sup>[9]</sup>

In Prameha Rōga, the author describes that due to vitiation of Vīrya, there is formation of Meha Jāla which leads to Madhumeha. This kind of Meha which is Vamśapāramparika is Asādhyā.<sup>[10]</sup> Here, the author clearly explains the Sādhyāsādhyata of Madhumeha.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Source of data

- The study was initiated based on the available published book in Kannada "Vaidya Kanda by Bommaiah" Ed. by B.S. Sannaiah, published by Abhinandana Prakashana, L2, Manasa Gangotri, Mysore. First Ed. 1991.
- Related literary sources were compiled from classical text books of Ayurveda, published articles and journals of Ayurveda and related sciences. The cross references and recent advances in the concepts and applications related to the subject dealt are being critically analysed and put forth before the reader.

- The extent of influence of Brhatrayi and later texts on Vaidya Kanda and also contributions of this text to Ayurveda shall be evaluated.

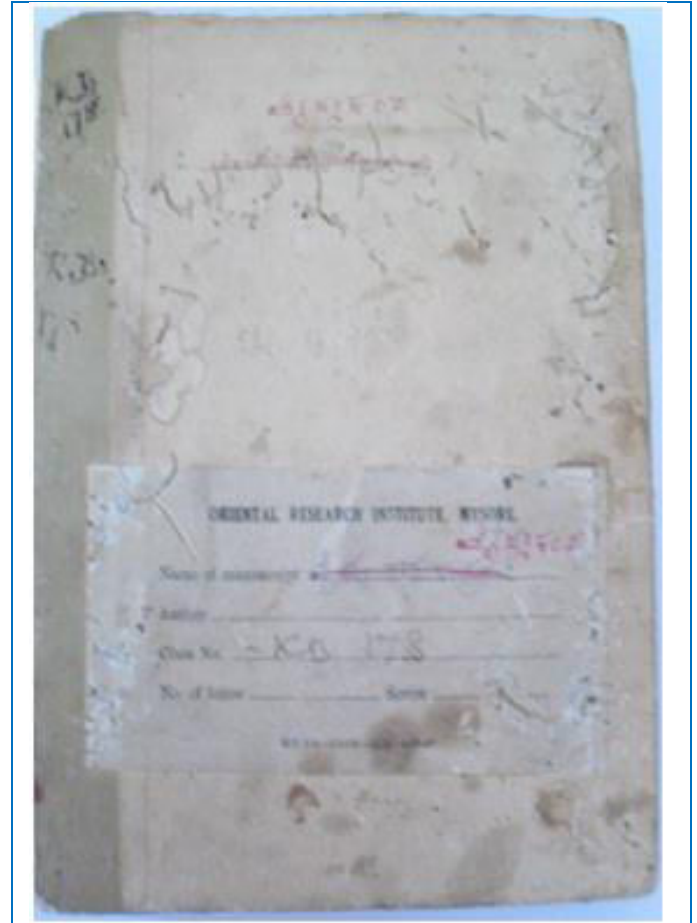
### Transliteration

All the stanzas as well as the Kannada words in the translation are being transliterated and put with diacritical marks which will also aid in proper pronunciation of Kannada words.

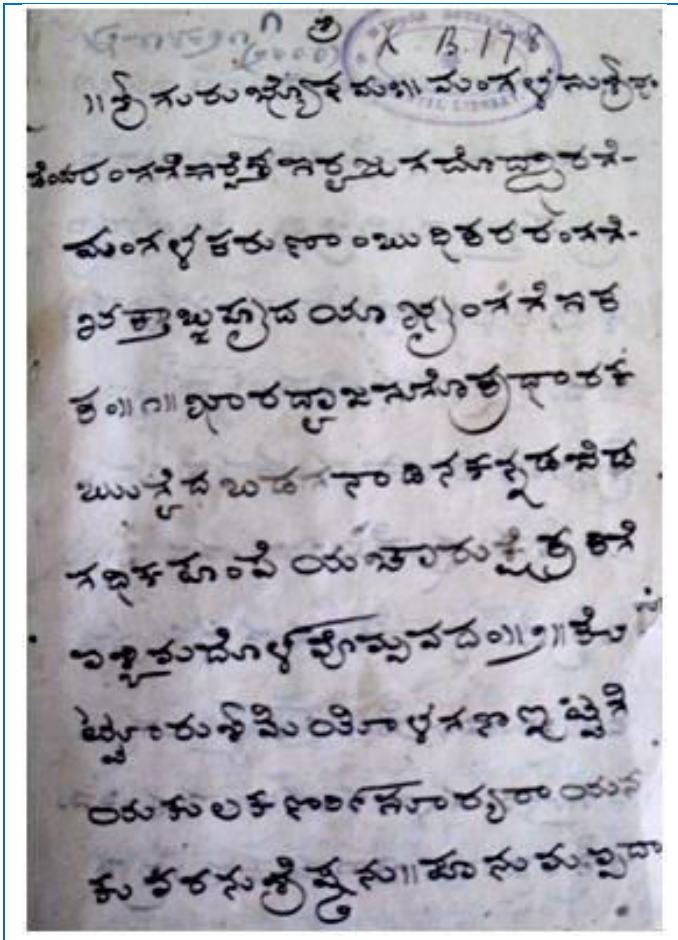
### Translation

English Translation is presented basically in 2 varieties - Direct translation i.e Gross translation of the Padya (stanza) and Exact word to word translation. Both of them are as per the contexts and maximum effort will be made to retain the meaning of the content intended in the original text.

### Illustration 1: Digital images of the Cover page and First page of the Manuscript – Vaidya Kanda (KB 178)







Exemplar of Transliteration, English Translation and Critical Analysis of selected verses from Vaidya Kanda

Verse No: 13

Verse in Kannada

ದಿನದಾದಿಯೊಳೆದ್ದು ದೇವ | ರ ನೆನೆವುತಾಯುಷ್ಯವನ್ನು ರಕ್ಷಿಸುವುದಕಂ  
ಘನ ಕಾರ್ಯಕೃತ್ಯಗಳನುಂ | ಅನುಗೈದಾದಮೇಲೆ ಪೂರ್ವಮುಖದೋಳು  
ಕುಳಿತುಂ | ೧೩ |

Transliteration of Kannada Verse

dinadādiyoleddudēvaranenevutāyusyavannurakṣisuvu  
dakam  
ghanakaryakṛtyagaḷanumanugaidādamēlepurvamukh  
adōḷkuḷitum

English Translation

One should wake up in the early morning, praying to God for protecting longevity, perform important cleansing activities facing eastern direction. |13|

Critical Analysis

The above stanza describes *Dinacarya*. This stanza is much similar to the first verse of *Dinacarya Adhyāya* in *Astānga Hr̥daya* - A well known text of Āyurvēda by Ācharya Vāgbhaṭa. Āyurvēda gives importance to maintenance of health by prevention of ailments. *Dinacarya* includes the daily routine, which is to be followed by a healthy person. It begins with waking up in the early morning.

The word *ādi* indicates beginning. *Bhāvaprakasha* states,

'Brāhmemuhūrtabuddhyētaswasthorakshārthamāyus  
aha |

tatrasarvādyaśāntyarthamsmareddhimadhusūdanam  
||

i.e. a healthy person for protecting himself has to wake up in *Brāhmimuhūrta* and after that has to pray Lord *Madhusūdana* (Lord *Krishna*) for the well being of all.

*Atharva Veda* also quotes that the rays of the morning sun destroys diseases. '*Udyanādityaharaśmibhihishirshnorōgavinīshat*'.

It is noted that waking up early in the morning and exposure to sunlight has numerous health benefits. Modern day research also substantiates this fact. Ultraviolet rays are principal source of vitamin D<sub>3</sub>. Vitamin D has a wide range of positive health effects, which include strengthening bones and possibly inhibiting the growth of some cancers. UV exposure also has positive effects for endorphin levels, and possibly for protection against multiple sclerosis. Visible sunlight to the eyes gives health benefits through its association with the timing of melatonin synthesis, maintenance of normal and robust circadian rhythms.<sup>[11]</sup>

Body temperature follows a circadian rhythm in which temperature is highest in the evening and lowest in the early morning. Cortisol levels follow a circadian rhythm in which cortisol peaks in the morning and decreases throughout the rest of the day, at rest and during exercise.<sup>[12]</sup> In the early fasting state, cortisol

stimulates gluconeogenesis (the formation of glucose), and activates anti stress and anti-inflammatory pathways. Cortisol prevents the release of substances in the body that cause inflammation.<sup>[13]</sup>

#### Verse No: 14

#### Verse in Kannada

ಕರಿಯಾ[ಲ] ಹುಲಿಗಿಲೆಕ್ಕೆಯು ಧರಿಸುದುಗೇಣುದ್ದದಂತೆಕಾಷ್ಟವನದರಿಂ  
ಪರಿಹರಿಸು ಹಲ್ಲು ನಾಲಗೆ ಗೊಲಿದಿಹ ಮಲ[ವ]ರುಚಿಯು ಲಘು  
ದೃಢತರವಹವುಂ ||೧೪||

#### Transliteration

*Kariyālahuligilekkeyadharipudugēnuddadantekāśṭava  
nadarim*

*pariharisuhallunālagegolidihamalavaruchiyulaghudhṛ  
ḍhataravahavum*

#### English Translation

The twigs of *karijāli* (*Acacia farnesiana*), *Āla* (*Ficus bengalensis*), *Huligi* (*Pongamiapinnata*) and *Ekka* (*Calotropis gigantea*) which are of about a span size (nine inch measure) in length should be procured and used for brushing the teeth. By this, the dirt of the tongue and teeth will be cleaned and will be devoid of *Aruchi* (Anorexia) and meanwhile bestows lightness and stability. |14|

#### Critical Analysis

Oral hygiene is inevitable for the maintenance of proper health. The above stanza also stress the advantages of brushing teeth as seen in *Caraka Samhita* viz.

*nihantigandhavairasyamjihvādantāsyajammalam,  
niṣkṛṣyaruchimādhattesadyodantaviśōdhanam.*

Which means brushing of teeth helps to eliminate bad odour, inability to perceive taste and sludge deposited over teeth, tongue and mouth and improves taste. This indicates that the author has referred to explanations from *Charaka Samhita* as well.

#### Verse No: 15

#### Verse in Kannada

ಜ್ವರದೊಳ್ ಬಾಯ್ಬಸಳೆಯ ಮುಖಿ ವರಸಿದ ವಾತದೊಳ್  
ಜೀರ್ಣದೊಳ್ ತೃಷೆಕೆಮ್ಮಿ[ನ]

ಶಿರ ನೋತಕಣ್ಣುರೋಗದೊ | ಇರೆ ಮಾಡಲಿ ಬೇಡ  
ದಂತಧಾವನಗಳನುಂ ||೧೫||

#### Transliteration

*Jwaradolbaibasaḷeyamukavarasidavātadoljīṛṇadoltṛṣe  
kemmina*

*śiranōtakaṇṇurōgadoliremāḍalibēdadantadhāvanagaḷ  
anum*

#### English Translation

*Dantadhāvana* (Brushing teeth) is contraindicated in case of *Jwara* (fever), *Bāyibasale* (mouth ulcers), *Mukhavarasidavāta* (Dryness of oral cavity), *Ajīṛṇa* (indigestion), *Tṛṣe* (thirst), *Kemmu* (cough), *Śiranōta* (headache) and *Kaṇṇurōga* (ailments of the eye). |15|

#### Critical Analysis

The conditions mentioned above are either inflammatory conditions or immune-compromised conditions where in rigorous brushing of teeth and cleaning gums may further cause erosion of the mucosal layer of the oral cavity. Hence the procedure of brushing teeth is contraindicated.

#### Verse No:16

#### Verse in Kannada

ಅಂಜನ ಕಣ್ಣೊಳ್ [ಸೌವೀ |೧೦೦] ಜನವಿಡು ನಿತ್ಯದೊಳೇಳುಂ  
ದಿವಸದೊಳ್ ರ

ಸಾಂಜನ[ನೇತ್ರಕ್ರಿಮಿ] ಗಿವು | ಸಂಜೀವನವೆಂಬುದು ಬಾಹಟನಾ ಮತವುಂ  
||೧೬||

#### Transliteration

*anjanakaṇṇolsauvirānjanaviḍunityadoḷēlumdivasadōḷ  
rasānjananētrakrimigivusanjīvanavembudubāhaṭana  
matavum*

#### English Translation

*Añjana* (*Collyrium*) should be applied to the eyes, specifically the *Souvīrāñjana* daily. Every seventh day, usage of *Rasāñjana* will be an elixir to the eyes is the opinion of *Bāhaṭa*. |16|

#### Critical Analysis

Here, two types of collyriums are advised. one which is to be used on daily basis called the *Sauvirāñjana*. *Sauvirāñjana* is said to be obtained

from the mountains of *Sauvira*, a country along the Indus, whence it derives its name.<sup>[14]</sup> The material used as *Sauvirāñjana* is Antimony trisulfide.<sup>[15]</sup> The other type of collyrium named *Rasānjana* [*Rasaunt or Rasont*] (the extract of *Berberis aristata*) is to be used once a week.

Here the author has mentioned the opinion of *Acharya Bāhaṭa*. The name *Bāhaṭa* is synonymous with *Ācharya Vāgbhaṭa*, the author of *Aśtāṅga Hṛdaya* - A well known text of Āyurvēda.

## RESULTS

The text *Vaidya Kanda* taken up for transliteration, translation and critical analysis contains four major sections viz.,

- *Sutra Prakarana*
- *ShareeraPrakarana*
- *NidanaPrakarana*
- *ChiktsaPrakarana*
- *Parishishta*

A total of 938 (923+15[Parishishta]) verses are distributed among the five sections as follows:

Name of the Section	Verses from-to	No. of Verses
<i>Sutra Prakarana</i>	1 - 98	98
<i>Shareera Prakarana</i>	99 - 128	31
<i>Nidana Prakarana</i>	129 - 307	178
<i>Chiktsa Prakarana</i>	308 - 923	615
<i>Parishishta</i>	1 - 15	15
		<b>938</b>

## Subject matter dealt in each section

Name of the Section	Subject Matter Dealt
<i>Sutra Prakarana</i>	<i>Dinacharya, RituCharya, Ahara Krama</i>

<i>Shareera Prakarana</i>	<i>Arishtha Lakshana</i> - In general and disease specific
<i>Nidana Prakarana</i>	Description of symptomatology of 11 Major Diseases and a few minor diseases
<i>Chiktsa Prakarana</i>	The section starts with the description of properties of water and preparation of therapeutic gruel. Detail description of treatment for about 22 diseases and conditions are seen.
<i>Parishishta</i>	<i>Nadi Nidana (Lakshana)</i> are described briefly.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the review, it is observed that the text seems to be a practical handbook for a local practitioner with illustrations commonly encountered diseases and conditions among folk.

The author being a poet has also emphasized in presenting the text for the learners of Ayurveda practice to be more attractive and easy to memorize. Hence he has presented the whole text in *Kanda Padya* form. This has made the difficult and complex concepts easily understandable by the learners of Ayurveda.

The simple translation of the verses given in Kannada language makes the reader more comfortable and the English translation will cater to the readers at large.

The critical analysis gives conceptual, theoretical and practical perspectives in the light of present day health care needs.

## CONCLUSION

*Vaidya Kanda* is a text in Kannada authored by *Bommaiah* belonging to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century AD. It can be considered as a gist of *Brihatrayis*. The text presents in the order of *Dinacharya, Ritucharya, Maana Paribhasha, Arishtha Lakshanas, Nidan* of *Vyadhis* and it's *Chikitsa* in a brief manner. The text consists of 923 *Padyas (Stanzas)* which are presented in the form of *Kanda* style of classical Kannada writing. '*Karnataka*

*Kavicharite'* has attributed Brahma or Bommaiah to 1750 AD. The text seems to be a practical handbook for a local practitioner with commonly encountered diseases and conditions among common men.

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