

CASE STUDY

# Exploring the ‘Vaidya Vilasa’

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## ABSTRACT

**1. Background-** *Ayurveda* is a vast body of knowledge. The primary means of knowledge transmission was vocal in ancient India. Later, as writing instruments advanced, we were able to preserve knowledge in the form of manuscripts (MSS). The manuscript (MS) is any document that is written or incised by hand.

**2. Problem** - A lot of MSS are available in libraries but are not being used. The availability of printed versions of the Ayurvedic MSS is only 2%. *Vaidya Vilasa* is such an untouched MS having more than fourteen copies as per various catalogs. This ancient manuscript is not studied by anyone. This project is an effort to investigate the ancient knowledge hidden this manuscript.

**3. Methodology** - The photostat copies of five manuscripts were gathered from various libraries. Each MS is examined, evaluated, and compared with the others.

**4. Results** – The observations are very encouraging. ‘*Taranga*’ is the name of the chapter in the *Vaidya Vilasa* manuscript. The author “*Raghunatha Pandita Manohar*” was resident of *Champavatipura*. In addition to other branches of *Ayurveda* and *Rasashastra*, he primarily combined the treatment of the General Medicine branch (*Kayachikitsa*). The first seven *Taranga* provide therapeutic details for sixty major illnesses. The eighth chapter highlights the *Shodhana* and *Marana* of *Dhatua* and *Upadhatu*s, while the ninth chapter, describes approximately fifty herbo-mineral remedies. The tenth *taranga* discusses the following: *Doota lakshana*, *Vaidya* and *Rogi lakshana*, *Dravya Mana Paribhasha*, *Nadi Pariksha* (pulse diagnosis), *Mutra Tailabindu Pariksha* (urine examination). He also discussed remedies for uncommon illnesses like *Raktajwara* and unknown formulations like *Roga Vighna Ganesh Rasa*.

**Key Words** Manuscript, Manuscriptology, *Ayurveda*, *Vaidya Vilasa*, *Raghunatha Pandit*, *Raghunath Bhatt*, *Champavatipura*

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## INTRODUCTION

Advancements in writing materials allowed information to be recorded in written form. The term “manuscript” originates from the Latin words “manu” (hand) and “scriptus” (to write), signifying any document written by hand<sup>1</sup>. The

study of manuscripts, known as manuscriptology, focuses on deciphering and understanding ancient writings. *Atridev Vidyalkar's Ayurveda ka Brihat Itihas*<sup>3</sup> and *Vaidya Shreelakshmiapati Shastri's Rajayakshma Chikitsa Adhyaya* of *Yogaratanakar*<sup>4</sup> have quotations of *Vaidya Vilasa*.

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Ayurvedic scholars and compilers contribute their knowledge to enhance the acceptance and understanding of the text to the people. The author of *Vaidya Vilasa*, *Raghunatha Pandita* explains that this work is an assemblage of well-practiced formulations<sup>2</sup>. Ten *Tarangas* cover the subject matter of *Vaidya Vilasa*. In addition to several herbal remedies and Herbo-Mineral preparations (*Rasa Aushadhies*), the author included traditional diagnostic techniques.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

**Table 1** Sources of manuscripts selected for study

Codex	Name of the text	Source	Accession No
P1	Vaidya Vilāsa	Anandasram Sanstha, Pune	2051
P2	Vaidya Vilāsa	Vaidik Samsodhana Mandal, Pune	AN-247
B3	Vaidya Vilāsa	Oriental Research Institute, Baroda II	1582
M4	Vaidya Vilāsa	Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Mumbai	BBRAS-206
M5	Vaidya Vilāsa	Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Mumbai	BBRAS-207

## OBSERVATIONS

This section examines the features of MS, structure and subject matter of *Vaidya Vilasa*.

**Features of Manuscript - This manuscript is written on paper with black ink** in the ancient *Devanagari* script. The *Mangalacharana*, closing, and beginning colophons are found in all five MSS. Each chapter's beginning colophon is absent, but each *Tarang's* ending colophon includes the author's name. All the manuscripts have bold, readable handwriting.

**P1** – This copy was available in photostat form. The inscription of this copy is clear, bold and evenly distributed. The right and left margins are indicated by double lines on both side. Corrections are not mentioned in any margin. The text वै. वि. and वैद्य. विला. are written in the upper

To critically examine the *Vaidya Vilasa* manuscripts

To verify *Raghunatha Pandita*, the author's time and location of residence.

To evaluate the peculiarities of *Vilasa Vaidya*.

## MATERIALS

Those manuscripts that shared similar titles and contents served as the basis for the study. The photostat copies of MSS were obtained from different sources, as shown in table no 1.

left margin. Below that, the folio number is placed. The numbering is given underneath the text "राम" in the right margin. The ending colophon does not include the details of the author, scribe, and timing.

**P2** – The scanned copy of this manuscript (MS) is complete, though some portions have been damaged by worms. The paper is light brown in color and features a red margin on both sides. The upper and lower margins are present but unmarked. Corrections are noted in all the margins. In the upper end of the left margin, the text "वैद्य. विलास / वै. वि. स." is written, with the folio number placed below it. In the lower end of the right margin, the folio number is recorded, and sometimes the word "राम" appears. The scribe and author's information is not mentioned in the

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*Pushpika*, but the manuscript's copying date is recorded as शके १६६३ दुर्मती नामसंवत्सरे<sup>5</sup>. Following this, six pages of the index are described, leading into the *Shankhavati Kalpa*.

**B3** - The available scanned copy of this manuscript (MS) extends up to the tenth *Taranga*, though some *shlokas* are missing. The paper is brown and has a red margin on both sides. In the left margin, "वैद्य" is written, while "विलास" appears in the right margin. Numbering is provided in both margins—below "वैद्य" on the left side and in the lower corner on the right side. The names of formulations are highlighted in red, as is the concluding colophon of each *Taranga*. Corrections are noted in all margins. The *Pushpika*, before the ending colophon, mentions the name, place, and time of the author and his compendium<sup>6</sup>. Following this, the index, *Takra Prashasti*, and details of the scribe are provided. It states that **Vinayakrao Sadashi Dasturkhud** from **Sankheda** village copied this manuscript in शके १८२० संवत् १९५४/५५<sup>7</sup>.

**M4** - This manuscript (MS) is obtained in printed form. It is written on white paper. Margins are present but not marked with lines, except on two pages. A **Dr Bhau Daji Memorial** stamp is found on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> folios. There is variation in the size of the writing, and the number of lines per page differs throughout the MS. The epilogue at the conclusion provides details about the author, his *kula*, and the period in which he lived while composing this MS. However, it does not

mention the scribe or the time of copying. The description of **Daitendra Gandhak Kalpa**<sup>8</sup> follows.

**M5** - This partial manuscript contains only six *Tarangas*, which cover the treatment of various ailments. It is incomplete, lacking the last four *Tarangas*. The closing section mentions the author, his *kula*, and the time he lived, but it does not provide the scribe's name or the time of copying. After this, the **Unmada Bhairav Kalpa**<sup>9</sup> is described.

**Salutation** - The writer appears to be a devoted follower of Lord Ganesha, as reflected in his beautifully composed *Mangalacharana*. In his salutations, he vividly describes the divine beauty of Lord Ganesha<sup>10</sup>. There are only minor variations across all five manuscripts (MSS).

**Author Details** - The concluding *shloka* of each chapter mentions the author's first name as "इति श्रीवैद्यविलासमहाकाव्ये कविकुलावतंस रघुनाथ पंडितकृतो", identifying him as *Raghunatha*. The final colophon of the manuscripts B3, M4, and M5 further specifies his family name as Manohara, as seen in the verse: "मनोहर कुलांभोधे राघुनाथ विभोर्भुवः".

The author's place of residence is recorded as "चंपावतीपुर निवासवतादरेण संदर्भितश्च रघुनाथ कवीश्वरेण" (*Champavati*). The period in which the work was composed is mentioned as "ग्रहेन्दु रसचंद्रेच शर्कमासिच कार्तिके अयं वैद्य विलासश्च रचितो वृषवत्सरे", indicating that it was written in the Kartik month of a particular year, identified as *Vrishavatsara*.

**Folios/Pages** - The number of folios, pages, and lines per page varies across the manuscripts. A

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summary is provided below in Table No. 2. of verses is summarised in table no. 3

### Number of Verses - The variation in the number

**Table 2** Number of Folios, Pages, and Taranga / Shloka

Manuscript	Folios	Pages	Lines per page	Taranga
Vaidya Vilasa P1	82	174	7	10
Vaidya Vilasa P2	51	102	9	10
Vaidya Vilasa B3	62	125	9	10
Vaidya Vilasa M4	25	50	14-18	10
Vaidya Vilasa M5	8	16	19-21	6

**Table 3** Information on the Number of Verses in Each Taranga

Manuscript	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	Total
P1	111	38	37	46	63	54	109	127	141	51	777
P2	111	38	37	46	63	54	109	128	141	51	778
B3	113	32	37	60	63	49	92	126	136	57	765
M4	112	38	37	46	63	55	111	127	141	55	785
M5	71	19	33	49	44	112					328

**Subject Matter** - The primary objective of this text is to compile effective formulations. The text directly presents formulations for managing various diseases. It begins with *Jwara Chikitsa* (fever management) and highlights the significance of *Langhana* (fasting) right from the beginning. The text primarily focuses on *Kayachikitsa* (general medicine) while also

incorporating elements from other branches, including *Kaumarabhritya* (pediatrics), *Urdhwanga* (ENT and ophthalmology), *Shalya Tantra* (surgery), *Agada Tantra* (toxicology), *Vajikarana* (aphrodisiacs) and *Rasashastra*.

A summary of the manuscript's subject matter is provided in Table No. 4.

**Table 4** Contents of Each Taranga

Sr. No	Chapter Name	Diseases Included
1.	<i>Jwara Chikitsa</i>	<i>Vata Jwara</i> , <i>Pitta Jwara</i> , <i>Kapha Jwara</i> , <i>Vata-Pitta Jwara</i> , <i>Vata-Kapha Jwara</i> , <i>Kapha-Pitta Jwara</i> (fever), <i>Raktaj jwara</i> (Haemorrhagic fever), <i>Sannipatik Jwara</i> (Tridoshaj fever), <i>Vishama Jwara</i> (Intermittent Fever), <i>Sutika roga</i> (Fever in puerperal Women), <i>Ashtaje Chikitsa</i> . (fever)
2.	<i>Atisaradi Chikitsa</i>	<i>Jwara atisara</i> , <i>Atisara</i> (dysentery), <i>Grahani</i> (irritable bowel syndrome), <i>Arsha</i> (Piles).
3.	<i>Ajeernadi Chikitsa</i>	<i>Ajeerna</i> (indigestion), <i>Vishuchika</i> (Colera), <i>Krumi</i> (Worms infestation), <i>Pandu</i> (Anemia), <i>Kamala</i> (Jaundice)
4.	<i>Raktapittadi Chikitsa</i>	<i>Raktapitta</i> (Hemoptysis), <i>Kshaya</i> (Emaciation), <i>Kshataksheena</i> (Chest diseases), <i>Kasa</i> (Cough), <i>Hikka</i> (hiccups), <i>Swasa</i> (Dyspnoea), <i>Arochaka</i> (loss of taste), <i>Chardi</i> (Vomiting), <i>Trushna</i> (Thirst), <i>Vatarakta</i> (Gouty arthritis), <i>Sleepada</i> (Elephantiasis), <i>Urustambha</i> (Immobility of thigh), <i>Amavata</i> (Rheumatoid Arthritis), <i>Shoola</i> (Abdominal Pain), <i>Parinama shola</i> (Abdominal colic), <i>Udavarata</i> (Reverse movement of Vata ).
5.	<i>Gulmadi Chikitsa</i>	<i>Gulma</i> (Tumor), <i>Hrudroga</i> (heart diseases), <i>Mutrakruchhra</i> (Dysuria), <i>Mutraghata</i> (Obstructed Urine), <i>Ashmari</i> (Urinary Calculus), <i>Prameha</i> (Diabetes), <i>Medodosha</i> (obesity), <i>Udara</i> (Ascites), <i>Andavruddhi</i> (Hydrocele).
6.	<i>Galagandadi Chikitsa</i>	<i>Galaganda</i> (Goiter), <i>Gandamala</i> (Scrofula), <i>Shleepada</i> (Elephantiasis), <i>Vipadika</i> (Kshudra Kustha), <i>Vidradhi</i> (Abscess), <i>Vrana</i> (Injury), <i>Shopha</i> (Swelling), <i>Bhagandara</i> (fistula), <i>Twagamaya</i> (Skin Diseases), <i>Sheetapitta</i> (Urticaria), <i>Kustha</i> (Skin Diseases), <i>Amlapitta</i> (Acidity), <i>Visarpa</i> (Herpes), <i>Upadamsha</i> (Venereal Diseases).
7.	<i>Kantharogadi Chikitsa</i>	<i>Kantharoga</i> (Disease of Throat), <i>Mukhamaya</i> (Disease of the Oral Cavity), <i>Dantamaya</i> (Diseases of Teeth), <i>Karnamaya</i> (Diseases of Ear), <i>Nasamaya</i> (Diseases of Nose), <i>Netramaya</i> (Diseases of Eyes), <i>Shiroruk</i> (Headache), <i>Pradara</i> (Excessive menstrual bleeding), <i>Garbhini Stree Chikitsa</i> (treatment plan of pregnant women), <i>Kumara Chikitsa</i> (Pediatrics), <i>Visha</i> (Poisoning), <i>Vamana</i> (Emetics), <i>Virechana</i> (Laxatives), <i>Vajikarana</i>

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		(Aphrodisiacs)
8.	Dhatuguna	<i>Sapta Dhatu</i> – <i>Suvarna</i> (Gold), <i>Tara</i> (Silver), <i>Taamra</i> (Copper), <i>Aarakuta</i> , <i>Naaga</i> (Led), <i>Vanga</i> (Tin), <i>Teekshnaka</i> and <i>Upadhatu</i> – <i>Vyoma</i> , <i>Nilanjana</i> , <i>Tuttha</i> , <i>Makshika</i> , <i>Manashila</i> , <i>Taalaka</i> , <i>Rasaka</i> , <i>Darada</i> , <i>Gandhaka</i> , <i>Malla</i> , <i>Rasa Shodhana-Marana</i> (Processing) - <i>Guna</i> (qualities), <i>Varatika</i> , <i>Jaipala</i> ( <i>Croton tiglium</i> ) and <i>Vatasnabha</i> ( <i>Aconitum ferox</i> ) <i>Shodhana</i>
9.	Rasadi Sangraha	A total of fifty-four <i>herbo-mineral</i> formulations are described, forty-nine of which are common across four manuscripts. However, Manuscript M5 does not include the <i>Rasadi Sangraha</i> .
10.	Nadi Lakshana	<i>Ashtasthana Pariksha</i> with emphasis on <i>Nadi Pariksha</i> (pulse examination) and <i>Mutra Tailabindu Pariksha</i> (urine drop oil test). Additionally, <i>Doota Lakshana</i> (characteristics of a messenger), <i>Vaidya Lakshana</i> (qualities of a physician), and <i>Rogi Lakshana</i> (signs of a patient) are discussed. A detailed explanation of <i>Mana Paribhasha</i> (measurement terminology) is provided, covering units from <i>Rajika</i> to <i>Khari Mana</i> .

## DISCUSSION

**Variation in MSS** - The copies of MS *Vaidya Vilasa* are all very similar. The first and second MSS acquired from Puna seem identical. The third and fourth MSS acquired from Vadodara and Mumbai are similar. The fifth copy of MS is incomplete. The variation in the number of verses of the other four MSS is minimal and a consequence of scribal error.

**Information about Author** - The manuscripts identify *Kavi Raghunatha Pandita Manohar* as the author, stating that he was a resident of *Champavatipura*. This place is a historic settlement in the Colaba region of Northern Konkan<sup>11</sup>. The period of the manuscript is indicated using the phrase "चंद्रे रस इंदु ग्रहे" in the *Kartik* month of the *Shaka* calendar. Here, "Indu" represents 1, "Ras" denotes 6, "Chandra" signifies 1, and "Graha" stands for 9. Decoding this sequence gives the year **1619 Shaka**. To convert this to the *Gregorian* calendar, 78 years are added, resulting in the year **1697 AD (1619 + 78)**<sup>12</sup>.

**Unique features of the text** - This manuscript is a compilation of well-experienced formulations.

It covers treatments for *Kayachikitsa* (general medicine) and various other branches of *Ayurveda*. The name of the chapter based on first disease of that group (e.g., *Jwaradi Chikitsa*). The *Jwaradi Chikitsa Taranga* provides a comprehensive treatment approach for various types of *Jwara* (fever), including *Raktaja Jwara* (fever due to blood disorders) and *Sutika jwara Chikitsa* (postpartum care). The first seven *Tarangas* describe treatments for a total of sixty ailments. The eighth chapter discusses *Shodhana* (purification), *Marana* (incineration), and the properties of *Rasa Dravyas* (mercurial and mineral substances). The ninth chapter explains fifty-four *Siddha Rasayogas* (specialized mercurial formulations). The last *Nadi lakshana Taranga* mentions *Ashtasthana pariksha* with special emphasis on *Nadi* and *Mutra taila bindu pariksha*. The detail *mana paribhasha* is described starting from *Rajika* to *Khari Mana* is described

Pharmaceutical efficacy is often illustrated through similes. For instance, *Narayan Churna* is said to cure *Udara Vyadhi* (abdominal disorders) just as *Bhagavan Narayan* vanquishes all demons. The author demonstrates expertise in



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using metrical compositions, employing several *Chandas* (poetic meters), including *Anushtupa*, *Indravajra*, *Upajati*, *Bhujanga Prayata*, *Malini*, and *Vasantatilaka*.

### Limitations

This manuscript does not cover the underlying causes of diseases, their signs and symptoms, prognosis, or fundamental therapeutic principles.

### Conclusion

The oldest known copy, preserved at *Vaidyak Samshodhana Mandal* in *Pune, Maharashtra*, is complete and has been corrected. Manuscript M5 (BBRAS-207) is missing three chapters: *Dhatuguna*, *Rasadi Sangraha*, and *Nadilakshana*. According to internal references, *Raghunatha Bhatta* of the *Manohar* family authored *Vaidya Vilasa* in 1697. He was a resident of *Champavatipura* in colaba district of northan kokan. The structure and specific formulations in this text bear similarities to *Yogaratanakara*, and many formulations are presented in a coded format. Notably, this compendium does not directly reproduce information from other texts.

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