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HISTORICAL NOTE

Āyurveda Sūtram: A treatise on the concept of *Yoga* and *Āyurveda*

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Abstract
The present study examines the doctrines and historical stratification of *Āyurveda Sūtram,* a treatise by an anonymous author and edited by R Shamashastry. It consists of 16 chapters, with a detailed commentary by Yoganāthānanda up to the fifth chapter. The book is out of print, available, complete, and readable in *Devanāgarī* script with no translations. The text presents a distinctive synthesis of *āyurveda*, *yoga*, *rasāyana*, *cakra* theory, and medical astrology. Doctrinally, the treatise identifies *āma* as the primary cause of disease and gives significant importance to *Graha* influences and stellar astrology. The treatise synthesizes the principles of *āyurveda*, such as the three *doṣas*, seven *dhātus*, and six *rasas*, with concepts of *yoga*, including *nidrā*, *samādhi*, *cakras*, and *nāḍis*. It advances original concepts such as the gradation of tastes and their "cordiality", an alternative *vipāka* theory differing from that of the *Caraka saṃhitā*, and detailed correlations among *varṇa* (letters), anatomical loci, *cakras*, stars, deities, and diseases. Descriptions of the achievement of salvation through food, three types of *vāyu,* and *puśpāyurveda* are other important contributions of this book. Based on textual inconsistencies, repetitions of aphorisms, contradictory doctrinal positions, mismatched mnemonic "*citta*" structures, and abrupt chapter transitions, the paper proposes multiple authorship for the current book. The documentation of the book may have begun during the pre-Samhita period, when much significance was given to *daiva vyāpāśraya cikitsā*. Subsequent chapters deal with drugs, indicating the popularity of *yukti vyāpaśraya cikitsā* in later times. The study contributes to the historiography of *āyurveda*. The paper situates the text *Ayurvedasūtram* as a layered textual witness to early attempts to synthesize *āyurveda* and *yoga*.

Keywords Stellar astrology · Cakral healing · Ayurastrology · *Nakṣatra* · Floral healing

1 Introduction

The book was published by the Oriental Research Institute, Mysore, in 1989, following the editing of the three available manuscripts by Dr. R. Shamashastry. The author of the text remains unknown. As the title indicates, the book contains *sutras* (concise aphorisms) for which Yogānandanātha's commentary is available only up to the fifth chapter. Chapters are designated as *praṣnas*, and there are a total of fifteen such sections.

This paper aims to critically examine the structure and content of the *Āyurvedasūtram* and compare its doctrines with those of classical Ayurvedic texts. It also endeavors to investigate the textual history and authorship of the work and to evaluate the text's overall contribution to the history of *āyurveda*.

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2 Doctrines of the book

The text proposes a few unique doctrines which are as follows.

2.1 Cause of diseases

Āma is considered as the cause of all the diseases (1.9). *Āmanivṛtti* is regarded as a *puruṣārtha* (1.11). Excessive food consumption is believed to cause the obstruction of the *āmaśaya*, which, in turn, weakens the *pittakalā* located in *kuṇḍalini* (1.51). This results in the obstruction of the movement of *vāta* in *āmaśaya* and eventually leading to *prakopa* of *vāyu* (1.52). This subsequently leads to various types of fever, depending on the involvement of other *doṣas* (1.53).

Vitiated *grahaṇi* is considered as cause of diseases (1.64). When *grahaṇi* is affected by the intake of

viruddhāhāra, the food fails to nourish the *dhātus*. Thus, vitiated *grahaṇi* is the cause, and all indigestion-related diseases are its effects. However, because of the inability to increase fire through external fire, the digestive fire is increased by stimulation of *samāna vāta* (commentator on 1.64). Food taken with liquids becomes liquefied when ingested. It reaches the *koṣṭa* due to the action of *prāṇa vāta*. The food thus ingested, due to *samānavāta* located near *agni*, is digested, divided into *sāra* and *kiṭṭa*, and reaches *grahaṇi* (1.65). If this *kalā* is not strong, then it does not nourish the *dhātus* and causes the emaciation of *dhātus*.

When bitter, pungent, and astringent tastes get polluted, *pitta* gets vitiated. The vitiated tastes reach *āmaśaya* and cause *āma*. Through the *siras,* the *āma* travels upwards, reaches the heart, vitiates the movement of *vāta*, and pollutes the *rasadhātu* to cause anemia, *rakta* to cause edema, or *māmsa* to cause herpes (4.28).

While diseases, in general, are all traced to indigestion caused by the accumulation of *āma*, the location of particular diseases in particular parts of the body is decided by the indistinct utterance on the part of the diseased of such alphabetical letter-sounds as are assigned to those parts. The vowels and their respective body parts are described in Table 1. (4.35).

The *cakras* located in different anatomical locations of the body are endowed with *sirās*. Due to consumption of improper tastes and performing improper meditations, they do not carry the *amṛta pravāha* and vitiate *vāta*, *pitta,* and *kapha*. This further leads to diseases like indigestion, *āma*, *ambuvṛddhi*, and ascitis due to the sweet taste; deficiency disorders, edema, and herpes due to the pungent, sour, and salty tastes (commentator on 4.34–36).

Grahas are also considered as causes of diseases (1.30). Although the text acknowledges eight branches of āyurveda, only *kāya*, *graha*, *śālākya,* and *śalya* are explicitly defined (1. 28–30). Since *graharogas* are not manageable by the treatment of *āma*, *graha* is explained as a distinct branch. The treatment of *graha* includes *mantra*, *tantra*, *bali,* and related measures.

Table 1 Relationship between *varṇa* and parts of the body

Location	Letter
Feet	A
Knee	I
Foreleg	U
Thigh	Ṛ
Bīja	E
Flank	O

2.2 Treatment

Several treatment modalities are explained in the treatise.

2.2.1 *Prāṇāyama*

There are three types of *vāyu* in a *yogi*: *mṛdu*, *madhya,* and *tīvra* (4.7, 4.8). *Mṛdusamyoga* is not explained. The *vāyu* of mediocre speed rises from the umbilicus and reaches till the heart (*hṛtkamala*) and combines with the *vāyu* stationed in the heart and travels within and reaches the state of *samādhi* and gains *ātmajnāna*. The *vāyu* of high speed reaches still higher up to the top of the head (*śira kamala*). It travels along the path of *suśmna* and fills all the body's channels with health (commentator on 4.8).

The *śvāsānila*, which rises from *kuṇḍalīni*, and *pitta*, which arises from *anala cakra*, help in sustaining the *grahaṇi kalā*. *Kuṇḍalīni* is made up of both fire and wind. It is the *pitta* which separates the food into *sāra* and *kiṭṭa*. Thus, *kuṇḍalīni* is correlated with *jātharāgni* (1.50). *Prāṇāyama* is thus helpful in eliminating *āma*.

Mūlādhāra – It is said that the living beings having a six-petalled *mūlādhāra* are able to produce sounds. The plants have ten petals in *mūlādhāra* and hence cannot produce sounds. It is associated with bitter and pungent tastes (commentator on 4.49).

2.2.2 Blood-letting

Letting blood from diseased parts is also considered as a means of removing the disease. The author explains the veins which should not be used for blood-letting. Each *cakra* is associated with a specific number of *siras* and an *akṣara*. Among the *siras* that surround the *cakra*, *rikta siras* are helpful in pronouncing the *hṛsva* letter, *atirikta* in *dīrgha* letter, and *atipūrṇa* in *svarita* and *pluta* letters. Out of 700 *siras*, 80 are helpful in pronunciation. The *siras* that are responsible for pronunciation of *hṛsva* letters are *adhomukha* and of *dirgha* letters are *vakra*. These should not be punctured (2.46). In addition, those located near *marmas* should not be injured for blood-letting (2.47).

The description of non-puncturable veins (*avedhya sirāḥ*) in the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* differs notably from the account presented in the *Āyurvedasūtram*. In the *Suśruta Saṃhitā*, the classification of *sirās* is systematic and closely tied to surgical practice. The anatomical reasoning underlying the identification of veins that are to be avoided during *sirāvyadha* is clear. In contrast, the present text offers a divergent description, both in terms of enumeration and conceptualization, lacking the same degree of anatomical precision and surgical contextualization.

Table 2 Action of flowers on *doṣa* and *dhātu*

Sl. No	Color of the flower	Action on *doṣa*	Diseases located in *dhātu*
1.	White	*Pitta*	*Māmsa* and *rasa*
2.	Yellow	*Kapha*	*Medas*
3.	Blue	Both	*Majjā* and *asthi*
4.	Multiple colors	–	*Śukra*

Table 3 Flower color and potent part of the plant

Sl. No	Color of the flower	Potent part
1.	Red	Fruit
2.	White	Heartwood
3.	Yellow	Leaves

2.2.3 *Puśpāyurveda*

The properties of the drug depend on the color of its flower, as shown in Table 2 (8.7–10). The text advocates flower colour pharmacology for the plants that originate from the seeds as shown in Table 3 (8.11–13).

The plants that germinate from tubers have potency in tubers; those that germinate from seeds have potency in seeds; and those that germinate from flowers have potency in flowers (8.14–16). Such a systematic association between flower colour, reproductive origin, and pharmacological potency is rarely encountered in classical Ayurvedic literature.

2.3 *Garbhiṇi paricarya*

During her menstrual cycle, a woman is regarded as *ṛtumati*, and this phase is considered as the first month of pregnancy. The prenatal care commences soon after her menstrual period. During the first month (pre-conception), *poṣaka dravyas* (nourishing substances) are to be administered to the woman. Appearance of signs of *garbhādāna* marks the commencement of the second month, during which *poṣaka dravyas* continue to be indicated. Thereafter, up to the tenth month, *poṣaka* and *śoṣaka* should be given alternatively so that the fetus is nourished and expelled properly at the end of the term (commentator on 2.65–66). However, in every trimester, a specific taste is preferred over others as tabulated in Table 4 (2.67–69). Special emphasis is given to the consumption of ghee during pregnancy (2.80).

2.4 Taste with *doṣa* and *dhātu*

Each taste is differentiated into two, viz., sweet and extremely sweet, and sour and extremely sour, and their properties are discussed in relation to *doṣas* (5.4–11).

Table 4 Relation of taste with trimesters of pregnancy

Trimester	Taste	*Doṣa*
First	Sweet	Mitigates *vāta*
Second	Sour	Mitigates *pitta*
Third	Pungent	Dries up *kapha*

Table 5 Relationship between *dhātu* and *rasa* (9th chapter)

Sl. No	*Dhātu*	Nourishing taste	Destroying taste
1.	*Rasa*	Astringent	Sweet
2.	*Rakta*	Astringent	Sweet
3.	*Māmsa*	Pungent	Sour
4.	*Meda*	Bitter	Salty
5.	*Asthi*	Salty	Bitter
6.	*Majjā*	Sour	Pungent
7.	*Śukra*	Sweet	Astringent

Table 6 Relationship between the Penta-element and its properties

Sl. No	*Mahābhuta*	Penta-element	Properties
1.	*Pṛthvi*	Earth	Heavy, slow
2.	*Ap*	Water	Unctuous, cold
3.	*Teja*	Fire	Glossy, dense
4.	*Vāyu*	Wind	Soft, stable, non-heavy
5.	*Ākāśa*	Ether	Minuteness, clarity

Each *dhātu* is associated with two tastes, a nourisher and a destroyer, as shown in Table 5. The book describes the relationship between the *rasa* and the *dhātu* twice, first in the fourth chapter (4.44–49) and later in the ninth chapter. The *rasa* ascribed to increase the *dhātu* in the fourth chapter is said to be the destroyer of the same *dhātu* in the 9th chapter.

The food that is sweet in taste, when it gets digested with the help of *pācaka pitta*, progresses to become semen. Food that is astringent if taken during indigestion causes vitiation of *vāyu* and dries up the semen. The locus of semen is dominant in the ether element. (commentator on 5/44).

2.5 *Gurvādi guṇas* with *mahābhutas*

The association of *gurvādi guṇas* and the five elements is explained in Table 6 (5.16).

It is interesting to note that *vāyu* is considered as stable (*sthira*) and *teja* as dense (*sāndratara*) which deviate from classical Ayurveda texts. In tantric view of *kuṇḍalīni* as *agni*, terms like *ghana* or *sāndra* are used to describe "condensed" consciousness. In Ayurveda, vāyu is considered as unstable or mobile. This inversion of elemental property of vāyu may indicate either a reinterpretative framework, a specialized

yogic context (such as controlled prāṇic states), or textual corruption.

2.6 Yogic concepts and influence of Patañjali

The third chapter deals with the definitions of yoga and *sukha*, the relationship between the 6 *rasas* and the three *guṇas*, the process of *jñānotpatti*, the definition of *cittavṛttis*, and other technical terms of yoga, such as *samādhi*, *ānanda*, *vitarka*, *nirvikalpa*, *vairāgya*, *abhyāsa*, *vyapadeśa*, and so on. Finally, the process of salvation is explained. Definitions of a few more technical terms are given in the fourth chapter, such as *samvega* and *samādhiphala*. Most of these are similar to Patañjali's *yogasūtra*.

2.7 *Rasa* and *Rasāyana*

The best of *rasadravyas* is explained in Table 7. *Rasāyana* is defined as the usage of the best substance in the group to achieve excellent qualities of *rasa dhātu* (1.34).

2.8 Medical astrology and pre-vedic cosmology

The astrological dimension of *Āyurveda* are elaborated in the last three chapters. These sections discuss the stellar framework of 27 Vedic *nakṣatra*s in relation to health and diseases. The fourteenth chapter correlates each *nakṣatra* with a particular disease. In the subsequent chapter, the author extends this framework further by outlining the interrelationships among letter (*varṇa*), disease, deity, and *nakṣatra*, as tabulated in Table 8 (14.72–15.62).

Phālguṇi is associated with two diseases. Here, the first is *Pūrvaphālguṇi*, and the second is *Uttaraphālguṇi*. The same applies to *Prośṭapada*. *Prośṭapadā* is repeated three times while explaining anatomical locations and functions, as shown in Table 9.

2.9 Connecting *Āyurveda* with *yoga*

The one desirous of health and wellness should practice *yoga*. However, the practice of yoga may not be feasible for everyone. Hence, intake of *rasāyana* is recommended as it nourishes the *dhātus* and sense organs (1.33–34).

Viparyaya is defined as *cittavibhrama* and its causation is attributed to *pitta*. When *pitta* vitiates the *dhātus* of the body, it results in icterus, and the person sees white as yellow. Similarly, when *pitta* vitiates the mind, it leads to *viparyaya*, and the person sees a conch as silver (Commentator on 3.18).

Table 7 Best substances in each group

Sl. No	Group	Best
1.	*Ratna* (Gems)	Diamond
2.	*Maṇi* (Precious stones)	*Kāntamaṇi*
3.	*Pāṣāṇa* (Rocks)	*Abhraka* (Mica)
4.	*Sattvavad dravya*	*Bhūnāga sattva*
5.	*Rasavad dravya*	*Rasendra* (Mercury)
6.	*Samskāra karma*	*Bījakarma*

3 Discussion

The author's name is not mentioned in the text. Hence, the period of the work cannot be deduced with certainty. There are arguments for both the antiquity and modernity of the text. The lucidity of the *sūtras* and the lack of an inseparable syntactic and technical connection between them unlike the tightly structured *sūtras* of Pāṇini, may be taken suggest that the *sūtras* are of an early origin.

3.1 Arguments for antiquity

3.1.1 Stellar astrology

In naming months, Vedic nomenclature is used, such as *Madhu*, *Mādhava*, *Śukra*, *Śuci*, and so on, rather than *Caitra*, *Vaiśakha*, *Jyeṣṭa*, and other recent names (9.32, 9.45, 9.53, 9.60, 9.65, 9.69). In addition, the Vedic nomenclature of constellations is used like *Vicati, Śroṇa, Tiṣya*, *Śraviṣṭa, Prośṭapadā* and *Śraviṣṭa* instead of *Mūla*, *Śravaṇa, Puṣya*, *Dhaniṣṭa* and *Bhādrapadā* (14.1–14.29).

3.1.2 Lack of brevity

In Vedic literature, the grouping of drugs like *triphala*, *trikaṭu*, and *pañcalavaṇa* is absent; instead, each ingredient is mentioned separately. In *Caraka Samhitā,* both the above styles are seen. Until the first *pāda* of the *rasāyana* chapter, the drugs are mentioned separately, whereas from the second *pāda* onwards, the word *triphala* is seen. Neither the author nor the commentator elaborates *triphala*. The work of Agniveṣa might have contained the ingredients separately, and hence the influence of Agniveṣa is seen in the first few chapters. However, by the time of Caraka, the words like *triphala*, *trikaṭu,* and so on might have become popular. The current book does not mention the words *triphala*, *trikaṭu*, etc., and thus it might predate the current version of *Caraka Saṃhitā*.

3.1.3 *Rasapañcakas*

The treatise defines *vipāka* but does not assign it any pharmacological significance. In addition, it does not deal with

Table 8 Relationship between star, disease, letter, deity, anatomical location, and function

Sl. No	Star	Disease	Letter	Deity	Anatomical Position	Functions
1.	*Aśvini*	Fever	A	*Aśvini*	Feet	Sustenance the whole body
2.	*Bharaṇi*	Diarrhea	I	*Yama*	Knee	Locomotion
3.	*Kṛttikā*	Duodenal diseases	U	*Agni*	Thigh	Sustenance of the moving body
4.	*Rohiṇi*	Hemorrhoids	Ṛ	*Prajāpati*	Genitals	Reproduction
5.	*Mṛgaśīrā*	Indigestion	Lṛ	*Soma*	–	Sustains urinary and excretory systems
6.	*Ārdrā*	Anorexia	E, ai	*Rudra*	Buttocks	Bestows pleasure
7.	*Punarvasu*	*Visuci*	O, au	*Aditi*	–	Sexual pleasure
8.	*Tiṣyā*	Loss of taste	Am	*Bṛhaspati*	Umbilicus	Respiration
9.	*Āśleṣā*	Deficiency disorders	*Ka, kha*	-	Umbilicus	Respiration
10.	*Makhā*	Dysnoea	*Ga gha*	*Pitṛ*	Umbilicus	*Pācaka pitta* (Digestion)
11.	*Phālguṇi*	Cough	*Ṇ*	*Aryama*	Testicles	Nourishes all 7 *dhātus*
12.	*Phālguṇi*	Skin diseases	*Ca, cha*	*Bhaga*	Hairs	Elimination of feces, urine, semen, fetus
13.	*Hastā*	Urinary disorders	*Ja jha*	*Savitṛ*	Right side of the body	Conception
14.	*Citrā*	Abdominal diseases	*Ń*	*Indra*	Left side of the body	Development of the embryo
15.	*Svātī*	Eye diseases	*Ta tha*	*Vāyu*	Right hand	Voice
16.	*Viśākhā*	Ear disorders	*Da dha*	*Indra and Agni*	Left hand	Differentiating the male and female voices
17.	*Anurādhā*	Diseases of Nose	*Na / ṭa ṭha*	*Mitra*	Right shoulder	Sustenance of upper body
18.	*Jyeṣṭhā*	Epilepsy/ diseases of mouth	*Ḍa ḍha*	*Indra*	Left shoulder	Sustenance of upper body
19.	*Vicati*	Tuberculosis	*Ṇa*	*Pitṛ*	Right shoulder	All functions
20.	*Pūrvāṣaḍha*	Skin diseases and Urinary calculi	*Pa, pha*	*Ab*	Left shoulder	All functions
21.	*Uttarāṣaḍha*	Skin Diseases and Vomiting	*Ba, bha*	*Viśvadeva*	Right Elbow joint	Skills of Hand
22.	*Śroṇa*	Heart diseases	*Ma*	*Viśṇu*	Left elbow joint	Skills of Hand
23.	*Śraviṣṭa*	Diseases of *Vāta*	*Ya, Ra*	*Vasu*	Right palm	Acting skills
24.	*Śatabhiṣak*	Diseases of *Pitta*	*La, Va*	*Indra*	Lift palm	Acting skills
25.	*Prośṭapadā*	Diseases of *Kapha*	*Śa, Ṣa*	*Ajaikapāt*		
26.	*Prośṭapadā*	Alcoholic disorders	*Sa*	*Ahirbud* and *Agni*		
27.	*Revatī*	Wounds	*Ha*	*Puṣa*	Top of the head	Salvation

Table 9 Location and functions of *Prośṭapadā*

Prośṭapadā	Throat	Voice
Prośṭapadā	Neck	Sustains five types of *prāṇa*
Prośṭapadā	Heart	Desires and efforts

guṇa or *vīrya*. The drugs are described only with respect to taste and effect on *doṣa* and diseases. For example, *Jīvaka* is pungent, good for the eyes, and indicated in all diseases (10/47, p.281). *Dhātri* has astringent taste, mitigates *kapha* and *pitta,* and is aphrodisiac (10/60, p.281). This indicates that the treatise has an affinity for the pre-Samhita era, when rationale-based treatment (*yukti vyapāśraya cikitsa*) was not well developed.

Table 10 Relationship between *doṣa* and *rasa*

Sl. No	*Rasa*	*Vāta*	*Pitta*	*Kapha*
1.	Sweet and extremely sweet	↓	↓	↑
2.	Sour and extremely sour	↓	↓	↑
3.	Salty	↓	↑	↑
4.	Extremely Salty	↓	↑	↓
5.	Pungent	↑	↑	↓
6.	Extremely pungent	↓	↑	↓
7.	Bitter	↑	↓	↓
8.	Astringent	↑	↓	↓
9.	Extremely astringent	↓	↑	↓

3.1.4 Gradation of *rasa* and the concept of *prabhāva*

Table 10 illustrates the effect of taste on *doṣas*. Apart from substances that are inherently endowed with *madhura rasa*, other substances possessing a different (*svādu*-like) taste

may, over the course of time become sweet. Those born with *madhura rasa* reduces vata and those which become *madhura* over time reduces *pitta*. Similar is for sour taste too. "Extremely salty" is the salt found in the Sindhu region, where the *dravyas* have a sour taste, whereas "slightly salty" refers to the drugs found in regions with a sweet taste. Similarly, pungent increases *pitta,* whereas extremely pungent decreases it. The examples given by the commentator for the pungent taste are ginger, *Rāsnā, Karṅagranthi, Cavya, Mūlaka, Tamālapatra,* dry ginger, garlic, and asafetida. Extremely pungent are the substances which have only a pungent taste and no *anurasa*. (5.4–11 along with commentary).

The gradation of tastes is not elaborated in *saṃhitās*. The tastes at any gradation have the same effect on *doṣa*. This gradation of tastes is a novel contribution of *Ayurvedasūtram*. The concept of *prābhāva* was perhaps understood as a gradation of tastes.

3.2 Arguments for modernity

3.2.1 Cross references

Yogasūtras define *Iśvara* as one not affected by ignorance, egotism, love, hatred, and good and bad. *Ayurvedasūtra* defines him to be one who is not merely devoid of the above qualities, but also different from both *tamaseśvara* and *aja*. In the 5th chapter, the *sūtras* of *Taittariyopaniṣad* are used verbatim (Aphorisms 44–49 and 85–88).

The third chapter of *Ayurvedasūtra* begins with the first aphorism of *Yogasūtra*. Then, instead of quoting Patañjali's second *sūtra*, the author explains the meaning of *yoga* using the words of Bhojarāja's *Rājamārthaṇḍa* and Ramananda Sarasvati's *Maṇiprabhā*.

3.2.2 Concept of *vipāka*

Post-digestion effect is explained in terms of three *vipākas*. However, the *vipāka* described in the present book differs from that described in *Caraka Saṃhitā*, as tabulated in Table 11 (1.41–46) (Trivikramji, 2011, p. 146).

The text concurs with the *Caraka Saṃhitā* that sweet and sour tastes undergo sweet and sour *vipāka* respectively. However, the *Ayurvedasūtram* does not recognize pungency as a *vipāka,* instead introduces salt as another *vipāka*. As the commentator states, *rasa* attains the *vipāka* of its opposite taste, thereby ensuring a dynamic balance of the *doṣas*. For instance, a bitter taste increases *vāta*; hence, it undergoes sweet *vipāka*, since sweet decreases *vāta*. Similarly, astringent taste decreases *kapha* and *pitta*, but after digestion it becomes sour and increases *kapha* and *pitta*. Through this framework, the commentator establishes cordiality (*mitratvam*) among tastes. Bitter-sweet, sour-astringent, and pungent-salty are considered as the twin tastes, since one balances the other (1/47).

Table 11 Relationship between *rasa* and *vipāka*

Sl. No	*Rasa*	*Vipāka* acc. to *Ayurvedasutram*	*Vipāka* acc. to *Caraka Saṃhitā*
1.	Sweet	Sweet	Sweet
2.	Sour	Sour	Sour
3.	Salty	Salty	Sweet
4.	Pungent	Salty	Pungent
5.	Bitter	Sweet	Pungent
6.	Astringent	Sour	Pungent

Table 12 Sāñkhya Śārīra

Sl. No	Tissues	Number
1.	*Sira*	6330 (300)
2.	*Sandhi*	210
3.	*Snāyu*	89
4.	*Āśaya*	7 (8 in women)

There is discussion on different views of *vipāka* in *Suśruta Saṃhitā* (2016, 176–179). Few scholars consider that taste does not alter post-digestion (*yathārasa vipāka*). For example, sweet undergoes sweet *vipāka*, sour undergoes sour etc. There is also another opinion on indiscrete *vipāka*: any taste can undergo any *vipāka*; the stronger taste overpowers the weaker and becomes *vipāka*. *Suśruta Saṃhitā* disputes both and also the three *vipāka* theory and proposes the concept of dual *vipāka*. He reiterates the concepts of *guru* and *laghu vipāka*, as approved by the *Āgamas*, confirming their antiquity.

However, the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* does not address the *vipāka* theory mentioned in the *Ayurvedasūtram*. This suggests that the concept of *vipāka* based on the cordiality of *rasas* was perhaps formulated after the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* period.

3.2.3 *Saṅkhya śārīra*

The second chapter deals with the number of *sandhi*, *snāyu*, *sirā,* and *peśi* in the body as tabulated in Table 12. The number of *snāyu*, *asthi,* and *āśayas* mentioned in the present book is the same as that in *Suśruta Saṃhitā.* However, the number of *siras* are told as both 6330 and 300 (2.2). The author clarifies 300 for surgery in concordance with *Suśruta Saṃhitā* (2.2). This evidence suggests that the treatise was composed after the *Suśruta Saṃhitā* period.

3.2.4 Concept of salvation

The Vedic statement *"rasa vai saḥ"* has been interpreted divergently across intellectual traditions. *Rasa* is interpreted as "bliss or aesthetic experience" by *alankarikas* and used the word *Brahmānandasahodara* for the aesthetic experience. The scholars of alchemy interpreted it as mercury and the achievement of salvation through the use of mercury is discussed in terms of worshipping the *Rasaliṅga*, *Rasapūjā*, etc. (Tripathi, 2003, p. 3). Rupa Goswami formulated the theology of *rasa* as "the soul's particular relationship with the divinity in devotional love" (Schweig, 2005, 165).

In the present book, the six tastes are inferred with the term *rasa* (2.99*)* and positing that the supreme goal may be attained through proper regulation of diet (3.10, with commentary). Within this framework, *madhura rasa* (sweet taste) is elevated as a means to emancipation, being associated with the enhancement of *sattva*, while *āmla* (sour) and *tikta* (bitter) are linked with *rajas* and *tamas* respectively (3.7–9). This semantic shift from metaphysical, aesthetic, and alchemical interpretations of rasa to a dietetic and physiological one suggests an attempt to integrate spiritual attainment within a material framework.

Although *Caraka Saṃhitā* discusses *satyābuddhi* and *anupāyas*, the author refers the seekers to *Yogaśāstra* (Trivikramji, 2011, p. 300). This work gives an elaborate description of salvation through tastes. The author might have studied both *Yogaśāstra* and *Saṃhitās* of Āyurveda and written this work.

3.2.5 End note

The last chapter consists of 46 aphorisms. End note found before *puṣpika* has four verses taken from *Aṣtānga Hṛdayam*. This suggests that the treatise's documentation began before *Caraka Samhitā* and was completed between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries CE.

3.3 Multiple authors

It is possible that multiple scholars wrote the work over time. The evidence for the same is discussed below.

3.3.1 Repetition of *sutras*

A lot of aphorisms are repeated, for example, "*Raso hyasṛk; Raso vai saḥ*" (2.18–19) (13.13), "*Lakṣanyapi tathā"* (1.6) (13.3), *"Yogyaistacca nivartayet"* (1.7) (13.4), *"Anāmapālanam Kuryāt"* (1.8) (13.6), *"Āmam hi Sarvarogāṇām"* (1.9) (13.7), *"Ādibhūtamāha Brahmā*" (1.10) (13.8) and so on. Even in the initial chapters, which have commentary, the aphorisms are repeated. "*Annād bhūtāni jāyante, Jātānyannena vardhante, Adhyatetti ca bhūtāni, tasmādannam taducyate*" is told in both first and second chapters (1.84, 2.86–89).

Since the repetition of *sūtras* verbatim is not even contextual, it cannot be considered as *prasaṅga tantrayukti.* The repetition of *sūtras* does not add anything substantial to the text and may be due to multiple authors.

3.3.2 Contradicting statements

The text exhibits several internal inconsistencies. In the fourth chapter, the author asserts that sour taste increases muscle tissue, whereas in the ninth chapter similar effects are attributed to pungent and bitter tastes. In fifth chapter, sour is associated with marrow and in the sixth, bitter is related to fat, and pungent is associated with muscle fat.

In the second chapter, each part of the body is is conceptualized as containing lotus-like structures (*padmas*) endowed with specified number of *siras*. (2.9–44) However, in the fourteenth chapter, while the same organs are reiterated, each is described as possessing 37 *sirās*, indicating a lack of consistency. There are also variations in the association between organs and *varṇas*, as reflected in Table 13. In addition, *Anusvāra* (*Am*) is also mentioned for umbilicus in the fourteenth chapter, a detail not found in the earlier description. The explanation in fourteenth chapter ends abruptly at "*ta – tha"*, and notably omits organs of the abdomen, thorax, and supraclavicular region. However, it remains difficult to determine conclusively whether these variations reflect authorial intent, later additions, or lacunae in transmission.

3.3.3 Lack of discretion in the separation of chapters

The division of chapters appears to be inconsistent, with several topics extending across chapter boundaries. For instance, the fifth chapter concludes with the effects of sweet and sour tastes on *dhātus*, and the sixth chapter begins with the effects of other tastes on *dhātus* and continues to deal with *rasa*, *doṣa*, etc. A similar lack of structural coherence is seen in the eleventh chapter which begins with the foundational aspects of *yoga* and abruptly shifts to *Aśṭaṅga yoga*. The chapter concludes with *pratyāhāra*, but the discussion continues in the following chapter, which proceeds from *samādhi* to concepts like *guṇas* like *pariṇāma*, *dharma*, etc.

The fourteenth chapter opens with stellar astrology and detailing the association of letter, organ and function of each of the 27 constellations from *Aśvinī* to *Revatī*. After a brief interlude of five *sūtras* on the calculation of time, the text returns to the *nakṣatras*, enumerating diseases associated with each, again from *Aśvinī* to *Revatī*. This is followed by detailed therapeutic considerations for each disease in relation to the constellations, beginning with *Aśvinī* and continuing up to *Ārdrā*. The fifteenth chapter then resumes

Table 13 Relationship between *varṇa* and parts of the body

Sl. No	*Varṇa*	No. of *Siras*	Organ in 4th chapter	Organ in 14th chapter
1.	*A*	34	Feet	Feet
2.	*I*	34	Knee	Knee
3.	*U*	20	Thigh	Thigh
4.	*Ṛ*	20	Hip	Hip
5.	*Lṛ*	34	Buttocks	Buttocks
6.	*E*	34	Waist	Waist
7.	*Ai*	34	Plank	Plank
8.	*O*	12	Groin	Umblicus
9.	*Au*	02	*Bīja pradeśa*	*Kundalikruta nābhi*
10.	*Ka, kha*	16	Plank	*Ka*- genital, *Kha- Romarāji*
11.	*Ga, gha*	63	Genitals	*Ga* – Right Flank, *Gha*- Left Flank
12.	*Ṇ*	34	Back	Right hand
13.	*Ca, cha*	14	Plank	*Ca*- Left hand, *Cha*- Right shoulder
14.	*Ja, jha*	14	Digestive fire	*Ja*- Right arm, *Jha* – Left arm
15.	*Ń*	20	Umbilical region	Right forearm
16.	*Ṭa, ṭha*	30	Umbilical region	*Ta*- Left forearm; *Tha*- Right palm
17.	*Ḍa, ḍha*	22	*Romarāji pārśva*	*Da*- Left palm *Dha*-throat
18.	*Ṇa*	30	Heart	Neck
19.	*Ta tha*	50	Breasts	*Ta*- Heart; *Tha*- Head
20.	*Da dha*	50	Throat	–
21.	*Na*	16	Cervix	–
22.	*Pa, pha*	16	Arm	–
23.	*Ba, bha*	50	Forearm	–
24.	*Ma*	50	Palm	–
25.	*Ya*	02	Tongue	–
26.	*Ra*	16	Lips	–
27.	*La*	16	*Vācaspati pradeśa*	–
28.	*Va*	34	Top of nose	–
29.	*Śa,*	02	*Gandhavaha*	–
30.	*Ṣa*	01	Palette	–
31.	*Sa*	54	Eyes	–
32.	*Ha*	02	Eyelids	–
33.	*Ḷa*	02	*Apāṅga*	–
34.	*Kṣa*	30	Teeth	–
35.	*Ra*	–	*Kapola*	–

from *Punarvasu*, further indicating a discontinuity in the organizational scheme.

3.3.4 *Citta*

At the end of the first two chapters, the text presents a string of words called *citta* which function as a mnemonic to memorize the *sūtras*. It is a statement consisting of the first word of the first *sutra*, then every tenth *sutra*, and the last word of *citta*, which is the total number of words in *citta*. *Cittas* are not found after two chapters. Even in the first two chapters, these *cittas* are not in accordance with the order of the aphorisms. For example, the third word in the *citta* is seen in the 29th aphorism instead of 30th indicating the omission of an aphorism. The total number of *sūtras* in the chapter should have been 90 since the *citta* concludes with the word ten. However, the chapter has only 89 *sūtras*.

In the second chapter, the aphorisms and *citta* are mismatched as shown in Table 14.

The table suggests that the book has many omissions and commissions. The total number of aphorisms should have been 90, not 99, indicating the addition of aphorisms in later times.

3.3.5 Extent of commentary

At the end of his commentary on the 51st aphorism of the fifth chapter, the commentator concludes that his

Table 14 *Citta* and aphorisms

Citta	Serial No. of *sūtra*
1.	1
2.	Absent
3.	Absent
4.	50
5.	60
6.	65
7.	Absent
8.	75
9.	84

commentary on each of the *sūtras* of the work, famous, acceptable to the learned, and made in the interest of the world, is brought to a close. Then there are two verses, one for *Śiva* and one for *Pārvati* followed by a phrase dedicating the work to the Lotus feet of Lord of all.

The commentary on the first chapter begins with salutations to Ganeśa in *śloka* meter. The commentator prays to Goddess Tripurasundari in *pṛthvi* metre before commenting on the second chapter. The same verse with slight variation is repeated at the commencement of the commentary of the fifth chapter. No such prayers are available for the 3rd or 4th chapters.

From this, it may be suggested that the commentator regarded the text as having ended with 51st *sūtra* in the fifth chapter. Other authors might have added later chapters.

3.3.6 Dating the commentator

The commentator expands upon the aphorisms and supplements them with cross-references. The commentator's affinity for *Aśṭāṇga Hṛdaya* is clearly visible. As he calls himself Ananda, he may have belonged to the school of Ramānanda Sarasvati, the disciple of Govindānanda and author of *Maṇiprabhā* on the *Yogasūtras*. Since Ramānanda Sarasvati belongs to 1550 CE, the commentator is unlikely to have lived prior to the sixteenth century.

4 Doctrines

4.1 Causes of diseases

Āma is accepted as the cause of disease by all the major treatises of Āyurveda. However, linking *Agni* with *kuṇḍalini* and *cakra* theory suggests a synthesis with yogic traditions. The yogic practices emphasize *vāta* to awaken the *kuṇḍalini*, and the current text instructs increasing *agni* through *samāna vāta*. The importance of *grahaṇi* in indigestion is also evident in the *Caraka Saṃhitā*, where the entire physiology and pathology of digestion are explained in the *grahaṇicikitsā adhyāya*. This intertextual borrowings suggest that the *Āyurvedasūtram* occupies a liminal space between classical *Āyurveda* and later scholastic and yogic traditions.

In the current treatise, only bitterness, pungency, and astringency are considered causes of disease. However, in *Caraka Saṃhitā*, one can see a more advanced idea of excessive consumption ofall tastese leading tovarioust disorders.

The *varṇa* – anatomical model of cause of diseases, perhaps predates the *Saṃhita* period of Āyurveda and possibly the framework on which the Mantra therapy of the pre-*Samhita* period was based. The treatise expands the concept of *loka-puruṣa sāmya*, including the stars and constellations, which are also correlated with the human body.

4.1.1 Puspayurveda

While this framework appears internally coherent, its correspondence with established Ayurvedic materia medica is inconsistent. For instance, *Palāśa*, a red-flowered plant propagated primarily through seeds, aligns well with this model, as its seeds are indeed regarded as the principal therapeutic component. However, this pattern is not uniformly observed. In the case of *Japā* and *Dhātakī*, both of which bear red flowers, classical Ayurvedic practice emphasizes the medicinal value of the flowers themselves rather than the fruits or seeds. Similarly, Sandalwood, despite having reddish flowers, derives its therapeutic significance from the heartwood, while *Asana*, a yellow-flowered plant, is likewise valued for its wood rather than leaves or flowers.

These divergences suggest that the colour-based pharmacological model of the *Āyurvedasūtram* does not consistently reflect the empirical traditions preserved in classical texts such as the *Caraka Saṃhitā* and *Suśruta Saṃhitā*. From a historiographical perspective, this raises important questions regarding the origin and function of such a schema. It may represent an attempt to systematize pharmacological knowledge through symbolic or analogical reasoning, possibly influenced by broader cosmological or tantric frameworks. Alternatively, it could indicate the preservation of a localized or parallel therapeutic tradition that did not become mainstream within classical Ayurveda.

Thus, rather than being dismissed as a theoretical anomaly, this doctrine may be understood as evidence of the plurality of knowledge systems within the Ayurvedic tradition, reflecting processes of synthesis, adaptation, and intellectual experimentation across different historical phases.

4.2 Taste with *doṣa* and *dhātu*

The information on the relationship between *doṣa* and *dhātu*, however, is not in line with the classics, for the treatment of

asthi-related diseases, an enema with bitter drugs processed in milk is suggested (Trivikramji, 2011, p. 180).

4.3 *Cakra* healing

Taittariyopaniṣad mentions the concept of *śaṭcakras*. The book extends the concept of six *cakra* to each organ and assigns a letter and a constellation to each. This shows the significance of *daiva vyapaśraya cikitsā*, or energy healing. *Caraka Saṃhitā* states that medicines should be administered during an auspicious star (Trivikramji, 2011, p. 376). There is also mention of stars and constellations in deciding prognosis (Trivikramji, 2011, p. 374). These descriptions are merely suggestive and not dealt with in detail. This treatise deals in detail with medical astrology.

5 Conclusion

The *Āyurvedasūtram* emerges not as a single-authored treatise but as a layered textual tradition reflecting successive phases of Ayurvedic thought. Its synthesis of Āyurveda, Yoga, and astrological medicine challenges linear models of textual history and instead supports a historiographical framework based on accretion, adaptation, and interdisciplinary exchange.

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Conflict of interest The author declare have no conflict of interest.

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