

**KODESERYMARGAM-A LITERARY TREASURE****Anusree Mohan<sup>1</sup>, Jyothi Sajayan<sup>2</sup>, Chaitra H<sup>3</sup>**<sup>1</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Year P. G Scholar, Dept.of Agadatantra, SDMCA, Hassan, Karnataka, India.<sup>2</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Year P. G Scholar, Dept.of Agadatantra, SDMCA, Hassan, Karnataka, India<sup>3</sup> Asso.Professor, Dept.of Agadatantra, SDMCA, Hassan, Karnataka, India**ABSTRACT**

*Agadatantra* is one of the eight branches of *Ayurveda*. In Kerala *Agadatantra* has an ancient and established background. In olden times, a good number of books on toxicology were written by eminent scholars of Kerala. Many toxicological clinics were established at that time in Kerala by adopting the treatment principles mentioned in those books. Many such books and clinics are now disappearing. *Kodeserymargam* is one among such book enriched with many clinically relevant aspects of *vishachikitsa*. It also covers certain aspects for diagnosis of *visha*. So *Kodeserymargam* can be considered as a relevant reference book for *Agadatantra* practitioners. This book is written in Malayalam language for the purpose of *vishachikitsa* but it is also enriched with different grammatical styles like *varna*, *vrutha*, *prasa* etc. This makes the book difficult to read and understand. So it is essential to translate and pursue literary and clinical research based on this book. This book also deals with different poisons and its management. This article is aimed to do a review on hidden toxicological knowledge in this invaluable book.

**Key words:** *Agadatantra*, Kerala, *Kodeserymargam*

**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda is an integrated system of medicine which uses the inherent principles of nature. Ayurveda is divided as *Ashtangas*. *Agadatantra* is one among them, which deals with the bites of snakes, insects, spiders, scorpions, rats and others and their characteristic symptoms, the signs and symptoms of accidental or purposeful ingestion of poisons including artificial toxins (*Kritrimavisha*), concocted poisons (*Garavisha*) and denatured poison (*Dooshivisha*)<sup>1</sup>.

*Agadatantra* is a special clinical branch of *Ayurveda* which was in practice since time immemorial, has also fallen prey to the teeth of destruction as many of other ancient knowledge. There was a separate

*Vishachikitsa sampradaya* in Kerala. Those *Vishachikitsakars* used some manuscripts and books which they maintained as a family secret and passed on through generations as hereditary asset. It is essential to throw light over those books and make it reachable to the scientific community. The knowledge documented in those regional texts is to be scrutinized for the total upliftment of *Agadatantra*. *Kodeserymargam* is one among those books which is least explored. Most of the traditional practitioners followed this book for the treatment of various toxic ailments.

This book review is based on the text book, *Kodeserymargam*, which was published from Publication Division, Govt. Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram. One of the

main aims of Publication division is to publish rare books in various fields of Ayurveda. *Kodeserymargam* is published as 6<sup>th</sup> among rare books & 19<sup>th</sup> among total books published from there. It is not possible to ascertain the actual author or time period of this invaluable book, since it has been unearthed from some of the *vishavaidya* families by Rev. Dr. Trikkariyoor Sivarama Iyyer. He has done a great favour to the *Agadatantra* practitioners by taking pain to preserve and copy those manuscripts and get it published. From his own experience of treating visha, he added some *Anubhootayogas* which was published as 2<sup>nd</sup> part of this book, named as “Prayogamargam<sup>2</sup>”.

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To review the text book ‘*Kodeserymargam*’.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The book being a compilation of manuscripts collected from various sources, the actual author/authors are unknown. This book was published only because of sincere

effort of Sri Trikkariyoor. He collected some part of this book from his friends and properly arranged, copied, and given for publication. He was a famous practitioner in *vishachikitsa* and worked as Honorary Consultant in Postgraduate centre of Govt. Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram.

### ABOUT THE BOOK

This book was written in Malayalam language. The style followed was *Kilippattu*. This is the style of interrogation between author and a *suka*(parrot). This book is written for *vishachikitsa* which is enriched with different types of grammatical styles like *varna*, *vrutha*, *prasa* etc<sup>3</sup>. The literature used is *kandapadya* which is difficult to read and understand. But once this book is studied and properly understood it is useful for *Agadatantra* clinicians. The contents are not mentioned in separate chapters, but main headings and important highlights are given in Table 1.

**Table 1:- Highlight of Important Headings**

| Important headings                               | Highlights  |
|--|---|
| <i>Divyasarpa prakaranam</i>                     | Description of <i>Ashta Divyasarpas</i>   |
| <i>Bhoumasarpa prakaranam</i>                    | Description of four <i>Bhoumasarpas</i> and <i>sarpakav</i>                           |
| <i>Dootalakshanam</i>                            | Description of <i>Doota</i> and <i>vishadantas</i>                                    |
| <i>Dhatus and vishas</i>                         | <i>Vishasamprapti</i> on each <i>dhatu</i> and <i>lakshanas</i>                       |
| <i>Mruthapareekshanam</i>                        | Examination of death  |
| <i>Indyanivargam</i>                             | Description of <i>Indyanivarga</i>  |
| <i>Amrutakala and vishakala</i>                  | Description of <i>Amrutakala</i> and <i>Vishakala</i>                                 |
| <i>Oushadha mathra</i>                           | Posology of vishahara yogas   |
| <i>Nakshathra based medicines for snake bite</i> | Astrology based treatment protocol  |
| <i>Agnipareekshanam</i>                          | For testing potency of medicines  |
| <i>Jaladhara yogas</i>                           | Procedure of <i>Jaladhara</i>   |
| <i>Vishavegas and lakshanas</i>                  | Description of ten <i>vishavegas</i> and <i>lakshanas</i>                             |
| <i>Moorkhavishaprakaranam</i>                    | Description of <i>Murkhavisha lakshana</i> and <i>chikitsa</i> based on <i>dathus</i> |
| <i>Mandalivisha chikitsa</i>                     | Description of <i>Mandalivisha lakshana</i> and <i>chikitsa</i>                       |

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Rajilavisha chikitsa</i>          | Description of <i>Rajilavisha lakshana</i> and <i>chikitsa</i>  |
| <i>Gulika yogas</i>                  | <i>Dravyas for Gulika yogas .Kandamrugasrungadipana gulika. Mruthasanjeevani gulika.</i>  |
| <i>Kashaya yogas</i>                 | Method of preparation of <i>kashaya</i>   |
| <i>Mana vivaranam</i>                | Description of <i>mana</i>  |
| <i>Yogas</i>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Yavagu yogas</i></li> <li>• <i>Sarvanga lepana</i></li> <li>• <i>Thala yogas</i></li> <li>• <i>Lehya yogas</i></li> <li>• <i>Thaila yogas</i></li> <li>• <i>Ghrita yogas</i></li> </ul> |
| <i>Mooshika visha</i>                | Elaborate description of <i>Mushika visha chikitsa</i> with <i>Thaila, Grita</i> and <i>Gulikas</i>   |
| <i>Vrischika visha</i>               | <i>Lakshanas</i> and <i>chikitsas</i> are mentioned   |
| <i>Kadannal visha</i> (Wasp)         | Specific treatment procedures for wasp bite are mentioned   |
| <i>Pazhuthara visha</i> (centipede)  | Specific treatment with <i>haridra</i> and <i>sthanya</i> mentioned.  |
| <i>Alarka visha</i>                  | Special treatment procedure and strict <i>pathyakramas</i> are mentioned  |
| <i>Nari visha</i> (fox poisoning)    | <i>Jalukavacharana</i> is indicated   |
| <i>Manushya visha</i>                | Single drug administration <i>neelimoola</i> is mentioned   |
| <i>Karadi visha</i> (bear poisoning) | Specific treatment procedures with milk as <i>anupana</i> is indicated  |
| <i>Aswa visha</i>                    | <i>Lepana</i> with <i>upavisha, kupilu</i> is indicated   |
| <i>Vanara visha</i>                  | <i>Tulsi</i> is the main herb indicated   |
| <i>Marjara visha</i>                 | <i>Agroushadha</i> is mentioned as <i>hingu</i>   |
| <i>Nakula visha</i>                  | Usage of <i>triphala</i> and <i>trikatu</i> mentioned here  |
| <i>Mandooka visha</i>                | Specific treatment with <i>chavya</i> and <i>hingu</i>  |
| <i>Pashana visha</i>                 | <i>Vamana</i> with <i>maricha jala</i> is indicated   |
| <i>Dathoora visha</i>                | Main treatment procedure indicated is <i>jaladhara</i>  |
| <i>Jayapala visha</i>                | <i>Paramoushadha</i> is <i>mustha kwatha</i>  |
| <i>Thuvaraka visha</i>               | <i>Thakra</i> is indicated  |
| <i>Karaskara visha</i>               | <i>Kashaya yoga</i> with <i>prakshepa churna silajathu</i> is mentioned   |
| <i>Ahiphena visha</i>                | <i>Sundi kashaya</i> is specially indicated   |
| <i>Ganja visha</i>                   | Intake of <i>kusmanda</i> is indicated  |

The book starts with the prayers to Gods, *Acharyas* and *Gurujanas*. The first portion of this book deals with the names of various *Divyasarvas* like *Vasuki*, *Sankhapalas*, *Takshaka*, *Mahapadma*, *Sesha*, *Gulikas* etc. Their origin is mentioned from various *Devas* and they gave birth to numerous *sarpas* which reside on the earth.

*Bhoumasarpa prakarana*, starts with names of four *sarpas* as *Murkhan*, *Mandali*, *Pulakan* and *Vyanthara*. Instead of *Rajimanthra*, here *Pulaka* is mentioned. In this *prakarana* they mentioned the origin of *Sarpakav*(Abode of snakes). 16 *murkhajatis*(varieties) ,14 *mandalijatis*, 12 *pulakas* and 10 *vyantharajatis* are explained in this book which is different from the classification done in *Susruta Samhita*<sup>4</sup>. Four poison-

#### DANTA (POISONOUS FANG)

|                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Kali</b>      | Bow and arrow shaped |
| <b>Karali</b>    | Hoof of animals      |
| <b>Yama</b>      | Triangle shaped      |
| <b>Yamadooti</b> | Round and depressed  |

Visha when reaches each level of tissues, it exhibit specific symptoms as explained in Table 3.

| DATUS          | LAKSHANAS                 |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Rudhira</b> | Sweating over the face    |
| <b>Mamsa</b>   | Lusterless, hot sensation |
| <b>Medas</b>   | Blindness, deafness       |
| <b>Asthi</b>   | Sunken eyes               |
| <b>Majja</b>   | Hiccough                  |
| <b>Sukra</b>   | Death                     |

*Mruthapareekshanas* are well explained as per *dosha prakruti*. Based on the body part first touched by the messenger, site from where snake bite occurred can be

ous fangs named as *kali*, *karali*, *yama* and *yamadooti* are quoted in this *prakarana*. *Sancharakaala* (wandering time) of each *sarpa* is clearly mentioned. At the end of this *prakarana*, *Ashta karanas* (eight reasons) for snake bites are also mentioned.

In this book *Doota lakshanas*(messengers sign) are elaborately described. *Doota lakshanas* based on *Rashi* (Astrological sign), direction of *swasagati* of *vaidya* in relation with *doota*, *vaidya chesh-tas* during time of arrival of messenger is delineated.

Shape of bite mark is explained on the basis of type of poisonous teeth which is given in Table 2.

#### Table 2:- Shape of bitemark w.r.t Poisonous fangs

#### DAMSA LAKSHANAS (BITEMARK)

#### Table 3:- Lakshanas w.r.t Datus

understood. For instance – if head is the place of *dootanga sparsa* then forest is the site of bite.

Next section is dealing with *Indyanivarga* which is an unique concept of this text book. This *varga* constitutes of some insects like spider, frog etc. *Amrutakala* and *Vishakala* mentioned on the basis of *Suklapaksha* and *Krishnapaksha* is also found in this prakarana. *Oushadha matras* (posology) are also mentioned. Another aspect is describing specific medicines for specific *nakshathra* (birth star) where bite has occurred. Another important concept is *Agnipareeksha*. Most of the *vishavaidya* families, medicines are prepared already and stored in suitable plac-

es. When particular emergency cases come then they make use of these medicines. So it is necessary to analyse the potency of those prepared medicines. For this they put little amount of prepared medicines in to fire and analyses the *lakshanas* to assure its potency. In this prakarana ten *vishavegas* and their *lakshanas* are described.

*Damsakaranas* (reason for bite) are evaluated from *damsalakshanas* (symptoms). They are tabulated in Table 4.

**Table 4:- Bitemark and reason for bite**

| Features of bite mark          | Reasons for snake bite         |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Wet surface                    | Sudden crossing over the snake |
| Dry and depressed              | Due to thirst                  |
| Opened and centrally depressed | Stepped on the snakes          |
| Bleeding fang marks            | Due to enmity                  |

*Murkhavisha prakarana* deals with specific *lakshanas* in each *dhatu* along with its treatment. By analyzing we can see that they made use of combination of *ushna* and *seetaveerya dravyas* which are very commonly available like *maricha*, *chandana*, *sevy* etc. In *mandalivisha chikitsa* more of *pithahara* drugs used like *useera*, *chandhana*, *yasht* etc. Symptomatic treatments are also mentioned for swelling, pain etc. In *Rajila visha chikitsa theekshnadavyas* are used in different *Dhatugataavasthas*. *Pulakavisha*, *vyanthara vishachikitsa* are also delineated like this.

In *Gulikayoga prakarana* numerous *gulika yogas* are mentioned for *nasya*, *pana* and *anjana*. *Ummathumkaya kuzhamb* is a special *thala yoga* described here. *Thala* is a special treatment procedure of retaining medicines over the head for a specific period of time. In *ghruta yoga* preparations, *jatyadi gruta* is mentioned where the indications are

same as that of *Ashtangahrudaya*, but the drugs used are different.<sup>5</sup>

*Mushika visha* is explained 2<sup>nd</sup> to *sarpavisha* among *jangama vishas*. 16 types of *mushikas* are explained along with its signs and symptoms. Various *vishahara yogas* are also mentioned here for the treatment of *mushika visha*. In case of doubt of rat poison also special treatment procedures are mentioned. A prognostic classification is made here as *Adi*, *Madhya* and *Jeerna*. In each stage different treatment protocol is adopted. Next is *Vrishchika visha prakarana* (scorpion bite). Its signs and symptoms are briefly explained. *Kadannal visha* (Wasp) is explained and is grouped under *kshaparavarga*. Its symptoms and treatment are explained. Centipede poison is then shortly explained, and also elaborate discussion is given for *Alarka visha* (Rabies). In *Nari visha* (Wolf) 4 types of *naris* explained they are *Krumeera*, *Vinaka*, *Vrika*, *Kumuda*.

Specific *lakshanas* and treatment is given for all types of *Nari visha*.

## DISCUSSION

Kodeserymargam can be considered as an invaluable text in the field of Ayurvedic toxicology. Special style of presentation in Malayalam language decorated with *varnavrithas*, *prasa* which makes this book very interesting to read. But on the other hand, it requires some effort for the proper interpretation. Here separate chapters are not given, but proper heading and a correct sequence is followed by the writer/writers. In this book instead of Sanskrit words regional language is used. From this it is evident that this book was written to make the *visha* treatment easy for common people. Initial stage of this book describes *bhouma* and *divyasarpa*, *dootalakshanas*, certain *vargas* etc. Followed by this an extensive review of *kashta oushadhas* (vegetative drugs) along with a few *rasa oushadhis* (Mineral drugs) are given. *Nasya*, *pana*, *anjana*, *lepa*, *thalam*, *kashaya* and *jaladhara* are the main treatment procedures followed. Commonly available and mostly non controversial drugs are used for all these procedures. It will help physicians to make use of those drugs to meet an emergency condition. The unique contribution of this book includes *Indyani varga*, *Mrutapareekshana*, *Agnipareekshana* etc. This book gives great importance to *Rashi*, *Nakshathra* (horoscope) and *Dootalakshanas* for the diagnosis of *visha*. From this book it is evident that *Dootalakshana* is very important for diagnosis and is a needed skill for the practice of *Agadatantra*. *Sarpakakav* is beautifully narrated, which is the natural habitat for the snakes with full of shrubs and trees. Other than *sarpavisha*, other *jangama vishas* like *Nari visha*. *Manushya visha* are

also well explained in this book. For *Rajimanta* (Krait) in *Brhatrayis*, another name is given as *Pulaka* in this book<sup>6</sup>.

## Scope for further study

- Translation and critical study of this book is needed to explore, analyse and interpret the subject matter.
- Extensive research can be done for the clinical evaluation of drugs given in this text book.
- Observational study can be conducted in case of *Nakshatra*, *Rashi*, *Dootalakshanas* in this text book for revalidation

## CONCLUSION

*Agadatantra* has an ancient and renowned background in Kerala. Ayurvedic toxicologists of Kerala regarded some treatise as their authentic reference books. *Kodeserymargam* is one such exclusive reference book which covers the entire aspect of *visha* and its management, which was published from Publication division Govt. Ayurveda College, Thiruvananthapuram. This book is not yet translated. There is sufficient knowledge in regional languages which should be translated to a common language so that the knowledge can be open to all. Based on this book Ayurvedic toxicologists successfully treated even snakebites. As time passed due to various reasons like lack of confidence, the development of *vishachikitsa* is lagging behind. So it is the need of time to reconstruct the principles of *vishachikitsa* from various books like *Kodeserymargam*. Clinical evaluation and conceptualization of matters in this book may impart confidence to the upcoming *Agadatantra* practitioners. This will help to re establish *Agadatantra* as a main clinical branch of Ayurveda.

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