

## "A Review article on *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* : A Comprehensive Guide to Ancient Āyurvedic Practices"

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### Abstract

The *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā*, authored by the Buddhist scholar *Ravigupta* in the mid-7th century, stands as a significant text in Āyurvedic literature. Despite its historical importance, this treatise was largely unavailable to Indian practitioners for centuries, likely due to foreign invasions that disrupted the preservation of indigenous medical knowledge. Thousands of Indian medical manuscripts remain underutilized in libraries worldwide, highlighting the urgent need for literary research to uncover and disseminate these works.

*Ravigupta's Siddhasāra* was translated into Tibetan in the 9th century and Khotanese in the 10th century, indicating its broader influence. R.E. Emmerick extensively studied the manuscript, revealing its impact on Central Asian, Persian, and Arabic medicine, where it was held in high regard. This treatise is notable for its concise format, comprising 31 chapters and 1,300 verses that cover essential aspects of all eight branches of Āyurveda. The first four chapters focus on foundational concepts, while subsequent chapters address individual diseases and therapeutic practices, ultimately providing a comprehensive overview of Āyurvedic principles.

The *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* not only contains numerous herbal formulations that influenced later works, but it also serves as a vital resource for contemporary scholars and practitioners. The current study aims to revive interest in this invaluable text and encourage further research into its applications in modern medicine, ultimately reaffirming its status as a cornerstone of Āyurvedic knowledge.

**KEYWORDS:** *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā*, Ravigupta, Āyurveda, Manuscripts, *Cakrapāṇidatta*, Formulations.

## Introduction:

*Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* can be considered as one of the best works in the literature of *Āyurveda* and was written by a Buddhist scholar Ravigupta, son of Durgagupta in the middle of 7<sup>th</sup> century (650 A.D) <sup>[1]</sup>. Unfortunately, this treatise was not available to doctors in India for a long time. Most probably the reason for the non-availability of the great works of *Āyurveda* to the Indians may be the foreign invasions and taken over the treasure of medical knowledge by them.

It is a known fact that thousands of Indian Medical Manuscripts are lying ideally in the National and International libraries. Therefore, it is the need of the hour that such medical manuscripts are supposed to be revealed and make them available to the present generation by conducting literary research. Keeping this in view the present study has been taken up. *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* is one of such unrevealed text books in the literature of *Āyurveda*.

It is also found that Ravigupta's *Siddhasāra* was translated into Tibetan language early in the 9<sup>th</sup> century and into Khotanese language in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. R.E. Emmerick has studied *Siddhasāra* manuscripts most extensively and published it in two volumes in 1980 and 1982 in Germany. *Siddhasāra* text had widespread influence on Central Asian, Persian, and Arabic medical knowledge. Emmerick informs that Persian and Arabic scholars held *Siddhasāra* in high esteem <sup>[2]</sup>.

## Material-

- Chief Source Material:
  1. Siddhasāra Saṃhitā - Hindi translation by Acharya Balakrishna
  2. Siddhasāra Saṃhitā - English translation by R. Vidyanath
  3. Siddhasāra Saṃhitā - Hindi translation by Yogesh Chandra Mishra
- Secondary Source Material:
  1. Cakradatta - R. Vidyanath & K. Nishteswar
  2. Vaṅgasena - Ranjit Kumar Rai

## Review of Literature:

As it is not possible for an ordinary student to study the voluminous works, *Ācārya* Ravigupta composed *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* in a concise format having only 31 chapters and 1300 verses [3] which covers the essentials of all the eight branches of Āyurveda.

First four chapters are dealt on *Tantra*, *Dravyaguṇa*, *Annapānavidhi* and *Ariṣṭa*, 5 to 24 deals with individual diseases, Further chapters are related *Varṇa*, *Śālākya*, *Viṣa*, *Rasāyana-Vājīkaraṇa*, *Kumāra Tantra*, *Pañcakarma* and *Kalpa*.

Serial No.	Name of the Chapters
1.	<i>Tantra Adhyāya</i>
2.	<i>Dravyaguṇa Adhyāya</i>
3.	<i>Annapānavidhi Adhyāya</i>
4.	<i>Ariṣṭa Adhyāya</i>

Serial No.	Name of the Chapters based on diseases
5.	<i>Jwara Adhyāya</i>
6.	<i>Atisāra, Grahani, Krimi Adhyāya</i>
7.	<i>Raktapitta Adhyāya</i>
8.	<i>Yakshmā Adhyāya</i>
9.	<i>Gulma Adhyāya</i>
10.	<i>Udararoga</i>
11.	<i>Prameha Adhyāya</i>
12.	<i>Kuṣṭa Adhyāya</i>
13.	<i>Arshas Bhagandara Adhyāya</i>
14.	<i>Pāṇdu Kāmlā Adhyāya</i>
15.	<i>Hiccā Shvāsa Adhyāya</i>

16.	<i>Kāsa Adhyāya</i>
17.	<i>Chardi Adhyāya</i>
18.	<i>Mutrakricchra Upadaṃsha Vriddhi Adhyāya</i>
19.	<i>Udāvrata Shula Hridroga Adhyāya</i>
20.	<i>Unmāda Apasmāra Adhyāya</i>
21.	<i>Vātvayādhi Vātrakata Adhyāya</i>
22.	<i>Mdātyaya Adhyāya</i>
23.	<i>Visarpa Adhyāya</i>
24.	<i>Shopha Shlipada Galaganda Gandamālā Grāndhi Arbuda Adhyāya</i>

Serial No.	Name of the Chapters
25.	<i>Varṇa Adhyāya</i>
26.	<i>Śālākya Adhyāya</i>
27.	<i>Viṣa Adhyāya</i>
28.	<i>Rasāyana-Vājīkaraṇa Adhyāya</i>
29.	<i>Kumāra Tantra Adhyāya</i>
30.	<i>Pañcakarma Adhyāya</i>
31.	<i>Kalpa Adhyāya</i>

It seems that this kind of arrangement of Chapters was adopted by *Mādhavakara*, whose order became standard to later scholars. *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* is also supplemented with *Nighaṇṭu* portion as an annexure in which description of 197 plants, salts, alkalis, metals, and certain animal products are available.

It is identified that many a number formulae have been taken from *Siddhasāra* by the later authors like *Vṛnda*, *Cakradatta* and *Vaṅgasena* etc <sup>[4]</sup>. Therefore, *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* should be considered as one of the excellent works in the literature of *Āyurveda*.

## Discussion:

A thorough study of this treatise reveals that it contains several mono-herbal as well as simple recipes useful in different disease conditions.

It is astonished to know that many a number of formulations documented in *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* are also available in the later works like *Mādhavacikitsā*, *Vṛndamādhava*, *Cakradatta*, *Vaṅgasena*, *Gadanigraha* etc.

## Some Single Herbal Formulations:

### For Example:

Si. Sā. Saṃ	C.D.	Vaṅgasena	Translation
1. क्वाथः पित्तज्वरं हन्यादथवापर्पटोद्भवः । [5]	क्वाथः पित्तज्वरं हन्यादथवापर्पटोद्भवः । [6]	एकः पर्यटकः श्रेष्ठः पित्तज्वरविनाशनः । [7]	<i>Parpāṭaka</i> alone added with sugar relieves <i>Pittaja</i> <i>Jvara</i> .
2. नस्यं दाडिम- पुष्पोत्थो रसोदूर्वाभवोऽथवा । आम्रास्थिजः पलाण्डोर्वा नासिकास्त्रुतरक्तजित् । [8]	नस्यं दाडिम- पुष्पोत्थो रसोदूर्वाभवोऽथवा । आम्रास्थिजः पलाण्डोर्वा नासिकास्त्रुतरक्तजित् । [9]	रसौ दाडिम- पुष्पोत्थो रसोदूर्वाभवोऽथवा । आम्रास्थिजः पलाण्डोर्वा नासिकास्त्रुतरक्तजित् । [10]	<i>DāḍimaPuṣpa</i> <i>rasa/Dūrvā</i> <i>Svarasa/</i> <i>Āmrāsthī</i> <i>rasa/Palāṇḍū</i> <i>rasa</i> in nasal bleeding.
3. गुडूच्याः स्वरसः पेयोमधुना सर्वमेहजित् । [11]	मधुनाऽमरास्वरस इव सर्वान्मेहान्निवारयति । [12]	गुडूच्याः स्वरसः पेयो मधुना सहमेहजित् । [13]	<i>Guḍūcī Svarasa</i> with honey relieves all types of <i>Prameha</i> .
4. प्रलेपोद्वर्तन- स्नानपानभोजनकर्मणा । शीलितं खादिरं वारि सर्वत्वग्दोषनाशनम् ॥ [14]	प्रलेपोद्वर्तन- स्नानपानभोजनकर्मणा । शीलितं खादिरं वारि सर्वत्वग्दोषनाशनम् ॥ [15]	प्रलेपोद्वर्तन- स्नानपानभोजनकर्मणा । शीलितं खादिरं वारि सर्वत्वग्दोषनाशनम् ॥ [16]	Regular use of the decoction of <i>Khadira</i> as <i>Pralepa</i> , <i>Udvartana</i> , <i>Snāna</i> , <i>Pāna</i> and <i>Bhojana</i> alleviates all types of skin disorders.

5.ससैन्धवं पिबेत्सर्पिर्वातच्छर्दि निवारणम्॥ <sup>[17]</sup>	ससैन्धवं पिबेत्सर्पिर्वातच्छर्दि निवारणम् <sup>[18]</sup>	ससैन्धवं पिबेत्सर्पिर्वातच्छर्दि निवारणम् <sup>[19]</sup>	Intake of <i>Saindhava</i> <i>Lavaṇa</i> mixed with ghee relieves <i>Vātaja Chardi</i> .
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6.धातव्यो युक्तितः क्षारः क्षीरेणोदधिशुक्तिजः। पयसा वा प्रयोक्तव्याः पिप्पल्यः प्लीहशान्तये॥ <sup>[20]</sup>	पातव्यो युक्तितः क्षारः क्षीरेणोदधिशुक्तिजः। पयसा वा प्रयोक्तव्याः पिप्पल्यः प्लीहशान्तये॥ <sup>[21]</sup>	पातव्यो युक्तितः क्षारः क्षीरेणोदधिशुक्तिजः। पयसा च प्रयोक्तव्याः पिप्पल्यः प्लीहशान्तये॥ <sup>[22]</sup>	Proper administration of <i>ŚuktiKṣāra</i> with milk (or) <i>Pippalī</i> with milk alleviates <i>Plīhodara</i> .
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### Some Simple Formulations:

For Example:

Si. Sā. Saṃ	C.D.	Vaṅgasena	Translation
1.आखुपर्णीदलैः पिष्टैः पिष्टकेन च पूपिकाम्। अद्यात् सौवीरकं चानुपिबेत् क्रिमिविशुद्धये॥ <sup>[23]</sup>	आखुपर्णीदलैः पिष्टैः पिष्टकेन च पूपिकाम्। जग्ध्वा सौवीरकं चानुपिबेत् <sup>[24]</sup> क्रिमिहरं परम्॥	आखुपर्णीदलैः पिष्टैः पिष्टकेन च पूपिकाम्। जग्ध्वा सौवीरकं चानुपिबेत् <sup>[25]</sup> क्रिमिहरं परम्॥	By eating <i>Pūpikā</i> (sweet cakes) prepared with leaves of <i>Ākhuparṇī</i> and <i>Piṣṭa</i> followed by drinking of <i>Sauvīraka</i> destroys internal worms.
2.क्रिमिघ्नं प्लव शुण्ठीनामथवा श्लेष्मजां वमिम्। <sup>[26]</sup>	विड्गं प्लव शुण्ठीनामथवाश्लेष्मजां वमिम्। <sup>[27]</sup>	विडङ्गं प्लव प्लक्षशुङ्गनामथवाश्लेष्मजां वमिम्॥ <sup>[28]</sup>	<i>Viḍaṅga</i> , <i>Plava</i> and <i>Śuṇṭhī</i> <i>Cūrṇa</i> mixed with honey also useful in <i>Kaphaja Chardi</i> .
3.रसांजनं शिरीषेण पथ्यया वा समन्वितम्। सक्षौद्रं लेपनं योज्यं	रसांजनं शिरीषेण पथ्यया वा समन्वितम्। सक्षौद्रं लेपनं योज्यं सर्वलिङ्गगदापहम्॥ <sup>[30]</sup>	रसांजनं शिरीषेण पथ्यया वा समन्वितम्। सक्षौद्रं लेपनं योज्यं सर्वलिङ्गगदापहम्॥ <sup>[31]</sup>	Application of the paste of <i>Śīrīṣa</i> or <i>Pathyā</i> with <i>Rasāñjana</i>

सर्वलिङ्गगदापहम् ॥  
[29]

and *Kṣaudra* is useful for management of all types of diseases related to Upadamaśa.

4. तीव्रशूलातुरे कर्णे सशब्दे क्लेदवाहिनि। बस्तमूत्रं क्षिपेत्कोष्णं सैन्धवेनसमन्वितम् ॥ [32]

तीव्रशूलातुरे कर्णे सशब्दे क्लेदवाहिनि। बस्तमूत्रं क्षिपेत्कोष्णं सैन्धवेनसमन्वितम् ॥ [33]

तीव्रशूलातुरे कर्णे सशब्दे क्लेदवाहिनि। छागमूत्रं प्रशंसन्तिकोष्णं सैन्धवसंयुतम् ॥ [34]

*Karṇapūraṇa* with mixture of lukewarm state of goat's urine and rock salt relieves severe case of *Karṇaśūla*, *Karṇanāda* and *Karṇasrāva*.

## Conclusion:

- Since, limited research work has been carried out so far on the formulations of entire *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā*. This Article will be helpful for further research as well as made available to the practitioners.
- By going through the preface of *Cakradatta* written by P. V. Sharma, it is known that the author *Cakrapāṇidatta* has composed his work by consulting nearly 50 books and one among them is *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā*. [35] It is surprised to know that even though *Cakrapāṇidatta* referred about 50 books, a greater number of formulations are taken from *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* only.
- Thus, there is a wide scope to study *Siddhasāra Saṃhitā* in various aspects to find out its importance for the present-day scholars and to conduct further research.

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