EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTION TO RESEARCH ON AYURVEDA
- WORK OF J.FILLIOZAT, G.J. MEULENBEILD, R.E. EMMERICK

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Abstract: This paper is the adaptation of a talk given by the author at the University of Kelaniya (Sri Lanka) on 29 September 1998 on three European scholars who have made a signal contribution to philological studies on Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to focus attention on three European scholars whose work relates to the history of Indian medicine, the history of Indian medical literature and textual criticism.

The first of them, Jean Filliozat (1906-1982) started his career as an Ophthalmologist, a profession which he abandoned in 1947 to devote full time to Indology. He had the master of several Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages, especially Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan and Tamil. Jean Filliozat was Professor of college de France (Language and literatures of India 1952-78), Founder and first Director of the French Institute of Indology (Institute Francais d’ Indologie) Pondicherry (1955), Director of the French school for far Eastern studies (Ecole francaise d’ Extreme-Orient, Paris, 1956-77), Member of the French Academy (Institute de France, 1966).

Sanskrit (SKT) Medical Texts

These MSS are found in the following holdings:

(1) MS collection of Abbot Guerin, Parish priest of Chandanagar. Is MSS were acquired by the Bibliotheque nationale (BN) in 1855.

The Guerin collection has a curious carakottara – tantra (Cabaton’s catalogue no 1012). A well preserved paper MS of 23 folios, in the Bengali script, it seems to be incomplete. The unnumbered chapters deal with jvara (fever), jvaratisara (diarrhea with fever), hikka-s’vasa (hiccup and difficulty in breathing (dyspnoea), unmade (insanity) and anila-vyadhi (disease caused by vata = nervous diseases).

(2) The most important collection is that of palmyr cordier (1871-1914), physician of the colonial troops. He studies Indian medicine form the very beginning of is carer. Cordier collected material for that study wit great enthusiasm in Madagascar, Indochina and India. Most of his medical MSS (nearly 200) are copies of valuable...
originals some are unique documents. Cordier’s most important work is the Index du Tandjour (Tanjur One of the two canonical collections of Tibetan Buddhism). The Tanjur consist of some twenty medical treatises translated from the Skt; all the originals of these texts are not found now.

Among Cordier’s MSS is a commentary (no137) and a printed edition of the Carakasamhita (no155) with numerous variant readings from an ancient MS from Kashmir. “These variant readings often help restitute the correct readings of certain passages which have become unintelligible, thus making it possible to sort out a very much older text from a heap of modern interpolations”

The Bhedasamhita, of which only one MS is known, is also found in the cordier collection with three copies of that single MS (nos 35&36).

The Haritasamhita, of doubtful authenticity, is the other work of the Atreya School found in the cordier collection (no 22).

The same collection has some unpublished works attributed to legendary sages such as Kas’yapa, Bharadvaja, Vedavyasa and the twin gods as vins.

(3) A collection of south Indian medical MSS donated to the Bibliotheque Imperials (Royal Library which later became the Bibliotheque nationale) by the Asiatic society in Paris (Societe Asiatique) in 1866. That donation was made to the society Asiatique by the Tamil scholar Edouard-Simon Ariel who died in Pondicherry in 1854 after living there for ten years.

Secondary Works and Commentaries

An abridged version of the Astangasangraha (As) of Vagbhata is found in the Tibetan Tanjur with commentaries. But its Skt original is lost except for one copy in cordier’s collection (no31 and 116). A palm-leaf MS of the AS dating from the 17th century and coming from Mahe is also found in the Cordier collection (no131).

Several copies of the Yogasataka are found in the BN. Some of them give the name of vararuci as its author instead of Nagarjuna to whom the work is generally attributed. One of these MSS with an extensive sinhala translation (sane) belongs to the collection of the French Indologist Eugene Burnouf (1801-52). The Tibetan translation of the Yogasataka is also included in the Tanjur filliozat’s attention was drawn to this text when he examined and identified as the Yogasataka one of the fragmentary MSS from Kucha, brought to Paris by Paul Pelliot.

Te cordier collection has several commentaries of medical texts. The most important are those on caraka, susruta and vagbhata as well as the commentary on the Ratnaprabha which indicate the sources of the Cikitsasamgraha of cakradatta (11th cent).

Filliozat says: “There is hardly any branch of medicine which is not represented in the cordier collection. I can only indicate in passing treatises on hygiene, materia medica, toxicology paediatrics, ophthalmology, examination of pulse, veterinary science (relating to horses) and even the art of cooking. The numerous dictionaries of materia medica and a long series of works on alchemy (nos 73-11) need special mention”.

Among the Tantric texts in the cordier collection are the Kumaratantra (no80) and
the Arkaprakas’a (n0 1010), both attributed to Ravana.

**Tamil Medical MSS**

Agattiyar (Agastya), considered in the Tamil country as the sage who gave to the world arts and sciences, including medicine, is well represented in the holdings of the BN. Of the not less than 205 medical works attributed to him, nearly 50 are found among the Tamil MSS of the BN. Their contents are not yet determined.

Another Tamil medical author of repute, Teraiyar, a disciple of Agattiyar, according to the legend, was so named because he managed to remove a toad (T.terai) from the brain of a patient given up by agattiyar himself. This same legend is told in reference to two other physicians known to Buddhists of Sri Lanka: Jivaka, the physician of the Buddha, and king Buddhadasa (Culavamsa 37. 142-144). In the case of Jivaka, the brain operation was supposed to have been performed to remove a reptile and not precisely a toad. This shows that there was a common medical lore known to the south Asian region.

Before being nicknamed Teraiyar, this medical practitioner and author was called Reran or terar, equivalent of the Pali Thera, meaning Buddhist in Tamil. Several works are attributed to Teraiyar in the cordier collection (nos 119,123, 125).

At least one treatise in the BN is attributed to Pulattiyar (Pulasti), ancestor of Ravana. Pulattiyar belonged to the class of Siddhas (T. Sittar, lit. “Perfect”), who were generally alchemists and authors of tantric works. Medical works of many siddhas are found in the BN, especially the Vaittiyasindamani (no 115) of Dhanvantari and the poganayanar – nigandu, the nighantu of Pogar or poganayanar (no231).

In the words of Filliozat “Indian medicine is important for the history of science, particularly that of India; its restitution is a delicate task which should not neglect a single detail form that point of view, it is desirable to begin or to continue studies on Skt, Pali or Tamil medical works, imitated in the vast domain of Indian Civilization. The reason is that medicine is the science which is easily exported and such studies (which are easily exported and such studies (which of course have to be collective) will surely throw new light on the exact contribution of India to Asian culture, especially in relation to the precise places and periods of diffusion of such influences”.

The most outstanding contribution of Filliozat to Ayurvedic research is his doctoral thesis, the classical Doctrine of Indian Medicine (see list of his publications).

In that work he says: “The spread of Indian science beyond the frontiers of the Indian peninsula was completely parallel to that of Greek science beyond the Hellenistic world. Indian science was adopted especially in Tibet, central Asia, in certain Chinese and Japanese circles, in the whole of Indochina and in Indonesia”.

The parallel spread of Indian and Greek science, according to Filliozat, ends with the rise and expansion of scientific inventions in modern Europe. From that time, Indian science did not keep pace, not having produced an comparable inventions.

With regard to ancient Indian science, Jean Filliozat emphasized the need to take into account the chronology of ideas and concepts and not the chronology of books in which those ideas and concepts are
subsequently codified. On the basis of the principle, he contests the belief that many Indian ideas and concepts were borrowed form Greek science. That belief, he pointed out, was based on the stud of only classical manuals which are later than the great Greek works. He showed tat the ideas and concepts supposed to have been borrowed originated in Indian itself earlier tan the great Greek works.

After analyzing Vedic texts, filliozat concludes that “the classical Indian medicine which is codified in didactic treatises of about the Christian era, has its basic theories (e.g the doctrines of vayu and prana, the burning quality of bile, pitta) in ancient Vedic texts anterior to the formation of Greek science but classical Indian medicine developed and formed into a system during the golden age of Greek science and parallel with it”.

Regarding the theory of vata or vayu common the both Indian and Greek medicine, he shows that the three great Indian medical works, Caraka, Bhela-and susruta samhitas, like the Hippocratic treatise on Winds agree that vata is the soul of the world and the body (the macrocosm and the microcosm): svayambhur esa bhagavan vayur iti abhisabditah (The self-existing Blessed One is the wind, it is said: Susr Ni 1.4) and “The breath found inside the body is called wind, found outside the body, air. Air is the most powerful agent of all, it exists in all.” Winds.

Filliozat edited the Yogasataka, using twelve MSS: two written in the Nepali script, one in the Nepali script, one in the Telugu script, one in the sinhala script, others in the Nagara script. The printed ed. of Pandit Batuwantudawe (Colombo 1898) is also used. The Tibetan version reproduced, facing the Skt text, is from the Tanjur preserved in peking (see list of his publications)

A concordance of parallel slokas found in the following texts is given: carakasamhita, (Ah), Cakradatta (Cikitsasamgraha), Vangasena, Sarngadharasamhita, Kamakautuhala.

Publications of Jean Filliozat

(1) Etude de demonologie indienne. Le Kumaratantra de ravana et les texts paralleles indiens, tibetains, chinois camboggien et arabe. Cahiers de la societe Asiatiqve, IV Paris 1937v+192.

(2) “La Kumaratantra de Ravana”. Journal Asiaticque (JA) 1935 1-66.

(3) La doctrine classique de la medicine indienne. Ses origins et ses paralleles grecs. Paris 1949 viii+ 230. 2nd ed. Paris 1975. English tr. By Dev Raj chanana, the classical doctrine of Indian medicine. Delhi: Munshi Ram Manohar Lal 1964 xxii+298.

(4) Yogasataka. Texte medical attribute a Nagaruna. Sanskrit and Tibetan texts, French tr., notes, Indexes. Pondicherry: Institut Francais d’Indologie 1979 xxxviii = 206.

(5) “La force organique et la force cosmique dans la philosohie medicale de l’Inde et dans le Veda.”. Revue Philosophique 1933 410-429.

(6) “La theorie greque des humeurs et la medicine indienne”.Revue Hippocrate, I 1933 413 -421

(7) “Les documents medicaux indiens au Department des Manuscrits de la
Biblioteque nationale.” Bulletin de la societe francaise d’ Histoire de ta medicine 1934 27-41.

(8) “Less etats typhoïdes et comateux dans la medicine et les croances popularizes indiennes.” Ibid. 1936 21-29.

(9) “Medecine indoue, Medecine des Iraniens” in Lagignel-Lavastine, Histoire generale de la medicine. Paris: Albin Michel I 1936 465-496.

(10)“Nagarjuna et Agastya, medecins, chimistes et sorciers” Actes du XXe Congres International des Orientalistes. Bruxelles 1940 28-229.

(11) “Le sommeil et les reves selon les medecins indiens et les physiologues grecs”. Journal de Psychologie 1947 326-346.

(12) “Pronostics medicaux akkadiens, grecs et indiens.” JA 1952 299-321.

(13) “La maladie dans les idees indiennes” Presences 68 1959 7-9.

(14) “Pali madhuraka” Studien um Jainismus und Buddhismus, Gedenkschrift fuer L. Alsdorf, Wiesbaden 1980 83-92.

A full list of jean Filliozat’s publications appears in the JA 271 1-2 1983 5-24.

Gerrit Jan Meulenbeld (1928- )

This Dutch scholar is a practicing psychiatrist, specialized in mental and nervous disorders. He also studied Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu an Tibetan along with Indian philosophy.

In his doctoral thesis, The Madhavanidana and its Chief Commentary (Madhukosa by Vijayaraksita and Srikanthandatta), Meulenbeld has given five very useful indexes: 1. Concordance of the Madhavanidana (ch. 1-10) and its sources; survey of the quotations and references in the Madhukosa and Atankadarpata, 2. Notes on the Skt medical authors and works quoted and referred to in the two commentaries (M&A), notes and appendices, 3. Technical terms, 4. Skt names of plants and their botanical equivalents, 5. Medical annotations.

Meulenbeld points out that “Madhava set the standard as to the order in which the diseases should be described. In this e definitely improved upon the earlier samhitas in which a restricted number of diseases is dealt wit in the section on nidana while the remaining ones are found in various other sections.”

Meulenbeld is particularly interested in Ayurvedic nosology. In his paper, “The surveying of Sanskrit medical literature” (see list of is publicaiti ons), he points out new nosological terms occurring in later Indian medical texts Examples are the following:

1. Madhavanidana (8th cent): amlapitta, amavata, medoroga, sitapitta, masurika, youikanda.

2. Vrnada’s Siddhayoga (c. 800-950): snayukaroga, Vardhma.

3. Varigasena’s Chikitsasara-samgraha (c. 1050-1100): somaroga, mutratisara, pascattaka, sayyamutrana.

4. Sarngadharasamhita (c. 13th or 14th cent): dandakalasaka, jarapittabhavasula, pratyanaha, andavrdhi.
5. Damodara’s Arogyachintamani & Kalidasa’s Vaidyamanorana (14th cent): asthisrava.

7. Bhavamisra’s Bhavaprakasa (16th cent): Phirangaroga, identified as syphilis.

8. Samkara’s Vaidya-vinoda-samita (17th cent) munnatakhyaroga.

9. Basava’s Sivatattvaratnakara often called Basavarajiya (beginning of 18th cent.): contains a number of new disorders according to Hariprapanna’s rasayogasara which gives extracts from it.

10. Govindadasa’s Bhaisajya-ratnavalli (18th cent): introduces numerous new disorders undoubtedly borrowed from western medicine.

From these examples Meulenbeld draws several conclusions: (i) Indian medicine was not as static as has often been asserted, (ii) the system was flexible enough to admit the introduction of new diseases, (iii) a careful study of the texts leads to the discovery of developmental lines in nosology and (iv) these lines of development are extremely useful in determining the chronological position of authors and texts.

He adds: “In general, the investigation of developments in the history of Ayurveda as hitherto been neglected. This can, in my opinion, partly be ascribed to a contemporary trend in ayurvedic circles, dating already form the beginning of the revivalist movement, to present the body of doctrine as a unitary system tat as never been subject to fundamental changes. This was of presentation derives in principle from a basic feature of Ayurveda as a traditional science, emphasizing its being without a beginning and complete from the start.

Research on the origin of the system, developments within its framework, foreign influences etc, has therefore mainly to the conducted by western scholars.”

As priorities in the study of Ayurveda, Meulenbeld underlines the following areas:

(i) Developments in the field of diagnostics. Marked changes have taken place in this field: e.g. nadipariksa (introduced by Sārangadhara, 13/14 cent.) and mutrapariksa (introduced by Vangasna c. 1050-1100) are two methods employed not only as diagnostic instruments but also as methods for determining the prognosis of patients.

Another late development in Indian diagnostics is the astasthana-pariksa: Pulse (nadi), urine (mutra), faeces (mala) tongue (jihva), eyes (netra), general appearance (rupa), voice (sabda) and skin (sparsa). One of the texts which describes it is the Yogaratnakara (first half of the 18th cent).

(ii) Evolution of therapy. A general index of the yogas (compound medicines) would be an invaluable tool in the analysis of medical texts and be extremely useful for their chronological study (see items 4 & 5 in the list of his publications).

Meulenbeld’s greatest contribution to the study of Ayurveda is the comprehensive History of Indian medical Literature, expected to be released shortly. The works will be described under four different heads: (1) contents, (2) special features), (3) author, (4) date.
In 1983 Meulenbeld organized the International Workshop on Priorities in the study of Indian medicine in Groningen. Nineteen scholars took part in it and the initiative was taken to found the European Ayurvedic society with Meulenbeld as its first precedent. The society publishes its journal (journal of the European ayurvedic society, JEAS) since 1990 under the co-editorship of R.E. Emmerick and R.P. Das. Five volumes have already appeared.

**Publications of G.J. Meulenbeld**

(1) The Madhavanidana and its Chief Commentary. Chapters 1-10. Introduction, Translation and Notes. Leiden: E.J Brill 1974 xviii +709.

(2) “Observations on the Arkaprakasa, a medical Sanskrit text ascribed to Ravana” G. Mazar (ed), Les medicines de l’Asie. Actes du colloque de Paris 11-12 juin 1979. Strasbourg: Universite Louis Pasteur 1981 111 -139.

(3) “Developments in traditional Indian nosology: the emergence of new diseases in post-classical times”. Curare 4.4 1981 211-216.

(4) Ed. Proceedings of the International workshop on priorities in the study of Indian medicine held at the state university of Groningen 23-27 October 1983.

(5) “Priorities in the study of Indian medicine” Ibid. 13-20.

(6) “The surveying of Sanskrit medicine literature” Ibid. 31-114.

(7) Ed. with Dominik Wujastyk. Studies n Indian medical History. Papers presented at the international workshop on the study of Indian medicine 2-4 September 1985.

(8) “Reflections on the basic concepts on Indian pharmacology” Ibid. 1-17.

(9) “The search for clues to the chronology of Sanskrit medical texts as illustrated by the history of bhangā (Cannabis sativa Linn.” Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik 15 1989 59-70.

(10) Ed. Medical Literature from India, Sri Lanka and Tibet (panels of the VIIth world Sanskrit conference held at the kern institute, Leiden august 23 – 29 1987 Vol VIII). Leiden: E.J. Brill 1991.

(11) “The constraints of theory in the evolution of nosological classifications: a study on the position of blood in Indian medicine (Ayurveda)”. Medical literature from India, Sri Lanka and Tibet (Panels of the VIIth world Sanskrit conference held at the kern institute, leiden, august 23-29 1987, Vol. VIII). Leiden: E.J. Bill 1991 91-106.

(12) “The characteristics of a dosa” JEAS 2 1992- 1-5.

(13) History of Indian medical literature. 2 vols., Groningen oriental series XV, 1999.

A complete bibliography of Meulenbeld’s publication is found in the JEAS (felicitation volume in his honour) 3 1993 12-14.

**Ronald Eric Emmerick (1937- )**

Emmerick, Fellow of the British Academy, is a British national of Australian origin, living in Germany, professor of Iranian philology at the University of Hamburg since 1971. He is the vice-president of the European ayurvedic society and co-editor of its journal. Emmerick is a specialist particularly in Skt, Pali, Tibetan and Khotanese languages.

He has made two very important contributions to ayurvedic studies: (1) Critical edition of Ravigupta’s siddhāsara (Sī) and various studies pertaining to the text, (2) creation of a computarised voluminous data bank on an index of Skt medical verses and prescriptions.
Ravigupta’s Siddhasara: Palmyr cordier who first brought the Si to the attention of European scholars in 1902 points out that the treatise was often quoted in later medical literature, cordier also refers to a MS of the Si which corroborates unpublished data furnished by certain commentators, revealing a number of slokas borrowed by vrnda and cakrapanidatta from the Si In an article on the Skt medical texts included in the tanjur, cordier gave an analysis of the Tibetan version of the Si.

The Khotanese version of the Si was first published in transcription b H.W Bailey, Khotanese tests I, Cambridge University press (CUP) 1945 (2nd ed. 1969) and Khotanese Texts V, CUP 1963. The Introduction to the Si is found in Khotanese only, it has bee translated and commented upon by H.W. Bailey in A locust’s leg studies in honour of S.H. Taqizadeh, London 1962.

Emmerick remarks: “The Khotanese versions agrees closely with the Tibetan and claims to have been translated from Tibetan, but there are occasions on which it agrees with the Skt against the Tibetan the Khotanese version is probably to t dated to the tenth century.”

Six Skt MSS have been used for Emmerick’s ed. The text is completed at the end with the siddhasara-nighantu. Emmerick gives parallel slokas in the Si and other Skt medical texts.

In a second volume, Emmerick gives the English translation of the Tibetan version of the Si, along with the Tibetan test Roman characters (see list of publications).

Ravigupta, the author of the si, according to Emmerick, was either contemporary with vagbhata or else flourished shortly after him, as a working hypothesis, Emmerick dates vagbhata to AD 600, Ravigupta to c, AD 650 and Madhava to c AD 700.

This medical text had been widely known in the south Asian region. Several sinhala sannes of the text are available, However, it ad not been published even in India.

(2) The Preparation of a line-index of Skt medical verses and prescriptions: this project was proposed b Emmerick at the second World Skt conference held in Turin in 1975. It was officially endorsed b the international association of Skt studies and forwarded to the unit of research in indigenous medicine in the ministry of health Govt of India, but nothing came out of that initiative.

Finally, Emmerick managed to obtain funds from the German research Association and the project was launched in 1981. Peter Rahul Das indexed the caraka and susrutasamhitas, the as and the Ah and Emmerick indexed the Si. A primary index was completed in 1991. Since then, Emmerick, Occasionally assisted by Das, as worked on the primary indeed and a comprehensive line, word and reverse indexes of the Ah were scheduled to appear in 1997.

Publications of R.E. Emmerick

(1) “The Sanskrit text of the siddhasara” Bulletin of t school of oriental and African studies 34.1 1971 91-112.
(2) “On Ravigupta’s ganas”. Ibid 3.2 1971 363-375.
(3) “New light on the siddhasara” Ibid. 37.3 1974 628-654.
(4) “Ravigupta’s place in Indian medical tradition”. Indologica taurinensia, III-IV, 1975-76 Torino 1977 209-221.
(5) The siddhasara of ravigupta, Vol2: the Sanskrit Text Wiesbaden: F Steiner Verlag 1980 ix-199.
(6) The siddhasara of Ravigupta, Vol.2: The Tibetan version with facing English translation Wiesbaden: F. Steiner Verlag 1982 viii + 482.
(7) “Ravigupta’s Siddhasara in Arabic”. Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des vorderen orients, festschrift fuer bertold spuler zum siebzigsten geburtstag, ed .R. Roemer and A. Noth, leiden 1981 28-31.
(8) “Some emendations to the text of ravigupta’s siddhasara”. Sanskrit and world culture 18, Berlin 1986 579-585.
(9) “Some lexical items from the siddhasara” Contributions on Tibetan language, history and culture (Proceedings of the Csoma de koros symposium held at velm-vienna, Austria, 13-19 September 1981), ed.E. Steinkellner and H. Tauscher, Vol.1 Wien 1983 61-68.
(10) “A note on the Kyoto siddhasara manuscript” studien zur indologie und Iranistik, 15 1989 147-149.
(11) ‘On the indexation of Sanskrit medical verses and prescriptions” Etudes sur la medicine indienne (scientia orientalis, cahiers du seminaire sur les sciences et les techniques en Asie, 16), Strasbourg 1979 3-8.
(12) “The indexation of Sanskrit medical texts: progress and prospects” Proceedings of the international workshop of priorities in the study of Indian Medicine held at the state university of Groningen 23-27 October 1983 147-154.
(13) “Tetanus” Transactions of the philological society 1974 93-97.
(14) “Epilepsy according to the Rgyud-bzi”. Studies on Indian medical History Papers presented at the international workshop on the study of Indian medicine 2-4 September 1985 63-90.
(15) “Some remarks on Tibetan sphygmology” Medical Literature from India, Sri Lanka and Tibet (Panels of the VIIth world Sanskrit conference helps at the Kern Institute, leiden August 23-29 1987 Vol VIII) Leiden: E.J Brill 1991 66-72.
(16) “Some remarks on the history of leprosy in India”. Indologica Taurinensia, XII 1984 93-105.
(17) “Vagbhata”s Asangahdaya samhita, the romanised text accompanied by line and word indexes”, compiled and edited by Raul Peter Das and R.E. Emmerick, Groningen Oriental series XIII, 1998.

For a comprehensive list of Emmerick’s publications, see his A Guide to the literature of Khotan, 2nd ed., studia Philologica Buddhica, Occasional paper series III. Tokyo: The International institute of Buddhist studies 1992 61.

CONCLUSION

The scientific approach of western scholars to the study of Ayurveda has demystified certain aspects of the subject. An obvious case in point is the dating of ayurvedic works. The work of the three scholars under discussion is proof of such demystification in the fields of the history of Indian traditional medicine, the history of medical literature ad textual criticism of medical works.