



REVIEW ARTICLE

## Unfolding of Yog Chintamani in the Perspective of Plant Invasion in India

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### ABSTRACT

Yog Chintamani is an ancient Sanskrit-based medicinal handwritten manuscript authored by a Jain Muni (Sedge) Harshkirti Suri. It deals with medicinal utilities exclusively. The recipes advised are polyherbal and has great impact of Ayurvedic system of medicine. This manuscript has not yet been studied from any point of view. The present author studied it intensively with particular emphasis on plant invasion in the ancient past of India. The plant names are Sanskrit, Prakrit and a few Marathi plant names. These have been equated with recent botanical (Latin) names and assigned to their respective families. Total 60 alien plant species belonging to various parts of the New and Old Worlds are revealed consulting relevant taxonomic literature. They belong 57 genera 38 families of angiosperms. These alien floral elements are evaluated for their role in Indian economy, invasion and culture.

Keywords: Yog Chintamani, Alien Plants, Plant Invasion, India.

## INTRODUCTION

Prior to Indian independence, many men of learning unfolded biodiversity of Indian sub-continent. They probed different regions and their efforts culminated in the publication of a monumental work 'Flora of British India' (Hooker, 1872-1897). We are also acknowledged with Vedic literature which divulged traditional, mythological and rational scientific treasure-trove. Most of the Sanskrit scripts contain, directly and indirectly, reckonable quantum of information about plant wealth of the bygone days. The ancient works inspired many Indians to write on utility of plants in different times. Their works are/were hand-written and have remained untouched.

The present author extended analytical studies to reveal the plant-wealth incorporated in them. The author has engaged particularly in divulging alien flora in India from various ancient scripts and epics (Patil, 2017a; 2018a,b; 2019a,b,c,d; 2020; Patil and Patil, 2019). On such treatise dealing with medicinal plants and their applications to better human-health is 'Yog Chintamani'. This hand-written script, to my knowledge, has yet remained in dark and has not been studied for any aspect embodied in it. The details of this hand-written manuscript (called 'Pothi') are: (i) Manuscript: It contains total 167 pages written on both sides on brown paper. It is 4.5 inch wide and 9.5 inch in length and wrapped in brown paper. 'Sanskrit Prakrit Vaidyak Yog Chinatamani' is a title on brown paper. The original script is deposited in Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune (Maharashtra: India). It is now also available in offset print form published by Itihasacharya V.K.Rajwade Sanshodhan Mandal, Dhule (Maharashtra: India). It is numbered as 731-31. Preface for this form is given by Shivaji N. Bhave dated 04.05.1980. (ii) Author of Manuscript: It is authored by Harshakirti Suri. He was honoured for this contribution by the then ruler of Delhi (India), Selim Shah (1545-1553). It is written in Sanskrit as well as in Prakrit Language. Prakrit is regarded earlier form of Marathi language. He was a Jain Muni (Sedge), a resident of Nagpur (Maharashtra). The author in preface stated that 'Yog Chintamani' is abstracted from earlier Ayurvedic texts viz., Charak and Susruta Samhita, and also incorporated his own wisdom. The title of manuscript contains two words, first 'Yog' and secondly 'Chintamani'. The first word is meant for purity of mind, however, the manuscript do not deal with 'Yoga'. The word 'Chintamani' means victory, victory over diseases. The treaty is thus an account on medicine. It contains Sanskrit, Prakrit and even some Marathi plant names, besides medicinal recipes, its administration and avoidances. Total 167 sub-titles are mentioned in the first nine pages indicative of subject-matter dealt in the main body of the manuscript. Interestingly, these 167 subtitled are completed only in 167 pages only.

Indian subcontinent has a rich heritage of biodiversity due to its variable geo-climate. However, some aliens have been introduced in this landmass intentionally and also reached negligently because of biotic interference (Patil, 2017a,b; 2019a,b,c,d). During the course of time, these have been appropriated from utilitarian viewpoint and are also incorporated in ancient texts and literature. These texts are also sources of information about plant invasion. It is, therefore, this ancient script 'Yog Chintamani' is being presented from point of biological invasion.

## METHODOLOGY

The offset print copy of Yog Chintamani (Suri Harshkirti, 1981) published by Itihasacharya V. K. Rajwade Sanshodhan Mandal, Dhule (Maharashtra) is consulted. The plant names in Sanskrit, Prakrit and Marathi have been carefully noted. Their equivalent botanised (latin) names have been deciphered through various botanical works or floras such as: (i) The Flora of Presidency of Bombay Vol.I-III (Coke, 1958) (ii) Flora of British India Vol.I-VII (Hooker, 1872-1897). (iii) Flora of Marathwada Vol.I-II (Naik, 1998). (iv) Flora of Maharashtra: Monocotyledons (Sharma *et al.*, 1996). (v) Flora of Maharashtra; Dicotyledons Vol.I (Singh *et al.*, 2000). (vi) Flora of Maharashtra: Dicotyledons Vol.II (Singh, *et al.*, 2001). (vii) Traditional Herbal Drugs (Wali and Bachulkar, 2016). (viii) Aushadhisangrah (Desai, 1975). The exotic status is inferred by consulting relevant taxonomic literature cited against each species in Table-I. The data accrued is critically assessed from the standpoint of plant invasion in Indian territory, besides their bearing on Indian bioculture and economy.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Background and earlier study

The term 'Biodiversity' gained currency more after the 'Earth Summit' (1992) held at Riode Janeiro (Brazil). World's biodiversity is being investigated at three levels viz., (i) Ecosystem, (ii) Species and (iii) Genetic/Genic. The composition and status of biodiversity of a region is not static. It goes on changing with time obviously due to biological invasions that take place, apart from the reason of abiotic factors. The biological invasions although are operated by introductions of certain species, it but affects biodiversity at the three different levels stated above. Biological invasions and dispersals of plant, animals or microbes usually go hand-in-hand depending upon the adaptive features of various organisms. Studies on Indian biodiversity were initiated before Indian independence by workers in various universities and Botanical Survey of India. There have been also special attention on alien flora elements. Nayar (1977), Maheshwari (1960, 1979) and Reddy (2008) evaluated alien plant taxa in India, based on

research conducted in past. However, revealing alien plant species from ancient literary sources have largely remained untouched. The present author recently made a headway on this line as stated earlier.

### Present investigation

The present attempt dealt with an ancient hand-written manuscript 'Yog Chintamani' authored by Harshkirti Suri, a Jain Muni (Sedge) and shed more light on this much neglected treatise. As many as 60 plant species are gleaned from this manuscript exotic in origin. They comprise total 57 genera and 38 angiospermic families. Of these, only seven species belong to monocotyledons from six genera and 03 families viz., Liliaceae, Arecaceae and Poaceae. Majority of alien species belong to dicotyledons (53 species, 51 genera and 35 families). Out of total 60 exotic species, herbaceous taxa play a major role (28 species) in medicine as documented by Harshkirti Suri (1981). Other taxa in descending order of medicinal utility are trees (15 species), shrubs (10 species) and lianas or climbers (07 species). It is to be noted that 36 species are found exclusively under cultivation on Indian landmass or even outside. Total 20 species run as wild exclusively, whereas few species (04) are either cultivated or even found naturalised in wild state e.g. *Albizia lebeck*, *Aloe vera*, *Tamarindus indica* and *Melia azaderach*. The plant species which are recorded as cultivated are brought in India intentionally for various human needs as food grains, pulses, edible fruits, spices and condiments, ornamental or as live hedge, oil-yielders, shade trees, cosmetics, vegetable, narcotic or even used for religious purpose. All these cultigens and the wild ones invaded unintentionally, as a result of plant dispersal, find place in medicine.

There are a few exotic species which are referred by a common name which point out to different species e.g. Rui (*Calotropis procera* and *Calotropis gigantea*), Patha [(*Cissampelos pareira* and *Cyclea paltata* (Lam.) Hookf. & Thoms.)] and different of *Gossypium* as Kapasi or Kapus. Probably, these would have been used in ancient past for similar medicinal treatments.

### Nativity

Interestingly, these exotic species are native of various continents, countries or certain geographical regions. They have been found belonging to different 28 native places. They are originally denizen nearly all regions of the world. Majority of species are from various parts of Asia (Excluding India) (18 species), Africa (15 species), Europe (13 species) and America (10 species). These are followed by Persia and Mediterranean region (05 species each), Afghanistan, Arabia and China (03 species). Other countries or regions represented are Baluchistan, Pakistan, Iran, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Turkestan, Siberia, Java, Bali,

Borneo, Sumatra, Johore, Labua, Japan, Fertile Crescent, middle east, East and West Indies (mostly one or two species each). These are indicative of plant migration in India vis-a-vis Indian past contacts with other world directly or indirectly.

### Significance

Ancient scripts are the means of reaching out to our historical past and human practices. It is, therefore, essential to pass this part of our rich culture, our heritage to our future generation. Plant invasion, plant dispersal and natural instinct of identifying medicine have always gone simultaneously in past and may continue so even in future. We must be aware of these for the sake of biodiversity management and conservation. The present biodiversity is the result of these natural forces and past human activities concerned with contemporaneous utilities. Our age is one of information explosion and hence we should also derive it from such ancient scripts for our welfare. Such scripts act as a mirror.

### CONCLUSION

International Union for Conservation of Nature And Natural Resources (IUCN, 2002) defines 'Alien Invasive Species' as an alien species which becomes established, in natural or semi-natural ecosystems or habitat, an agent of change, and threatens native biological diversity (Raghubanshi *et al.*, 2005). However, this is not always a fact. Local people carry on bio-prospecting and absorb potential valuable exotic plant species. The exotic species, numbering 60 of the present account, are rendered as an integral part of Indian system of medicine.

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Table-I: Exotic species in Yog Chintamani

Sr. No	Plant Species & Family	Common Name	Habit & Status	No. of Citations in Manuscript	Nativity
1.	<i>Acacia nilotica</i> (L.) Willd. ex Del. ssp. <i>indica</i> (Bth.) Brenan Mimosaceae	Bhabul	Tree Wild	1	North Africa & Arab Rajagopal & Panigrahi (1965), Purseglove (1968).
2.	<i>Albizia lebbek</i> (L.) Bth. Mimosaceae	Shirish, Siras	Tree Wild & Cultivated	10	Pan-tropical Africa & Tropical Asia: Bhandari (1978).
3.	<i>Allium cepa</i> L. Liliaceae	Kanda	Herb Cultivated	1	West Asia: Gaikwad & Garad (2015), Patil (2003). Persia: Bailey (1928).
4.	<i>Allium sativum</i> L. Liliaceae	Lasun	Herb Cultivated	8	Europe: Bailey (1949), Yadav & Sardesai (2002), Patil (2003).
5.	<i>Aloe vera</i> (L.) Burm. f. Liliaceae	Korphada, Kumari	Shrub Wild & Cultivated	3	North America: Yadav & Sardesai (2002), Gaikwad & Garad (2015), Patil (2003).
6.	<i>Amaranthus tricolor</i> L. var. <i>tricolor</i> Amaranthaceae	Tandulja	Herb Wild	1	Asia (Excl.India) & Africa: Stewart (1972). Tropical Asia: Yadav & Sardesai (2002).
7.	<i>Areca catechu</i> L. Arecaceae	Supari	Tree Cultivated	7	Tropical Asia: Gaikwad & Garad (2015).
8.	<i>Benincasa hispida</i> (Thunb.) Cogn. Cucurbitaceae	Kohola, Kushmand	Climber Cultivated	3	Java: Patil (1995).
9.	<i>Boerhavia repens</i> L. var. <i>diffusa</i> (L.) Hook f. (Syn.B. <i>diffusa</i> L.) Nyctaginaceae	Punarnava	Herb Wild	16	Tropical Africa: Panda <i>et al.</i> (2018).
10.	<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Ait.) R. Br. Or <i>Calotropis gigantea</i> (L.) Ait. Asclepiadaceae	Rui	Shrub Wild	12	Tropical Africa: Reddy (2008), Chandra Sekar (2012).
11.	<i>Cannabis sativa</i> L. Cannabaceae	Bhangi, Bhang	Herb Wild	2	Central Asia: Chandra Sekar (2012). Asia (Excl.India): Kaul (1986).
12.	<i>Carum carvi</i> Linn. Apiaceae	Shahajire	Herb Cultivated	5	Western Asia, Europe & North America: (cf.wikipedia)
13.	<i>Cassia fistula</i> L.	Bahava	Tree	12	North America: Debnath &

	Caesalpiniaceae		Cultivated		Debnath (2017).
14.	<i>Cassia tora</i> L. Caesalpiniaceae	Tarwata, Takala	Herb Wild	3	South America: Reddy (2008), Chandra Sekar (2012), Patil (2017a).
15.	<i>Cicer arietinum</i> L. Papilionaceae	Chana	Herb Cultivated	2	Mediterranean Region: Shetty & Singh (1987). South Europe: Patil (1990)
16.	<i>Cinnamomum zeylanicum</i> Blume (Syn. <i>C.verum</i> J.S.Presl.) Lauraceae	Dalchini	Tree Cultivated	15	Ceylon (Sri Lanka): John (1891).
17.	<i>Cissampelos pareira</i> L. Menispermaceae	Patha, Pata	Climber Wild	9	South America: Rajagopal & Panigrahi (1965), Panda <i>et al.</i> (2018).
18.	<i>Citrus medica</i> L. Rutaceae	Madhulunga	Tree Cultivated	1	China: Roxburgh (1814).
19.	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i> L. Apiaceae	Dhane, Dhanyakam	Herb Cultivated	20	South Europe: Bailey (1949), Gaikwad & Garad (2015), Yadav & Sardesai (2002).
20.	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i> L. Apiaceae	Jire, Jirak Jirakam	Herb Cultivated	33	South Europe; Gaikwad & Garad (2015). Mediterranean Region: Shetty & Singh (1987).
21.	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> Pers. Poaceae	Durva	Herb Wild	3	Tropical Africa: Debnath & Debnath (2017), Wagh & Jain (2015), Panda <i>et al.</i> (2018).
22.	<i>Datura innoxia</i> Mill. Solanaceae	Dhatur, Dhotra	Shrub Wild	7	Tropical America: Reddy (2008), Patil (2017a). North & South America: Stewart (1872).
23.	<i>Datura metel</i> L. Solanaceae	Kala-Dhotra	Shrub Wild	1	Tropical America: Chandra Sekar (2012), Patil (2017a), Patil (1990).
24.	<i>Delphinium zalil</i> Aitch. and Hems. Ranunculaceae	Trayman, Trayanmana	Herb Wild	10	Iran: Sharifnia <i>et al.</i> (2013).
25.	<i>Dryobalanops aromatica</i> C.F.Gaertn. Dipterocarpaceae	Bhimsemi- Kapur	Tree Wild	12	Borneo, Labuan, Sumatra & Jahore: Lake & Kalsall (1894).
26.	<i>Echinops echinatus</i> Roxb. Asteraceae	Uttaka Untkata	Herb Wild	5	Afghanistan: Reddy (2008), Chandra Sekar (2012), Patil (2017a).
27.	<i>Eclipta prostrata</i> (L.) L. Asteraceae	Maka, Bhrungraj	Herb Wild	11	South & Tropical America: Reddy (2008), Patil (1990), Rajagopal & Panigrahi (1965).
28.	<i>Ferula asafoetida</i> Linn. Apiaceae	Hing, Hingu	Herb Cultivated	18	Persia: Roxburgh (1814). Central Asia, Europe & North Africa: Patil & Dhale (2013).
29.	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill. Apiaceae	Badishop, Badishep Shatpushpa	Herb Cultivated	12	Europe: Dar <i>et al.</i> (2002).
30.	<i>Fumaria indica</i> (Hauskk.) Pugsley Fumariaceae	Pittpapda	Herb Wild	12	Pakistan & Afghanistan: Negi & Hajra (2007).
31.	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i> Linn. Papilionaceae	Jeshthamdh	Herb Cultivated	23	Arabia, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, Turkestan, Asia Minor & Siberia: Sawant <i>et al.</i>



					(2016).
32.	<i>Guizotia abyssica</i> (L.f.) Cass. Asteraceae	Khurasani	Herb Cultivated	2	Tropical Africa: Naik (1998), Yadav & Sardesai (2002). Abyssina: Patil (1995).
33.	<i>Lagenaria siceraria</i> (Mol.) Standl. Cucurbitaceae	Katu-Bhopala Kadu- Bhopala Pandhara- Bholapa, Tumbi	Climber Cultivated	1	Africa: Singh & Nigam (2017).
34.	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> L. Lythraceae	Mehandi	Shrub Cultivated	1	Middle East: Gaikwad & Garad (2015). Arabia & Persia: Shetty & Singh (1987).
35.	<i>Lens culinaris</i> Medik. Papilionaceae	Masur	Herb Cultivated	1	Central Europe Mediterranean Region & West Asia: Patil (1995).
36.	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i> L. Linaceae	Jav, Javas, Atasi	Herb Cultivated	5	Mediterranean Region: De Candolle (1886). Europe: Dar <i>et al.</i> (2002), John (1891).
37.	<i>Martynia annua</i> L. Martyniaceae	Vyaghranakh i	Shrub Wild	1	Tropical America: Reddy (2008), Naik (1998), Chandra Sekar (2012).
38.	<i>Melia azaderach</i> L. Meliaceae	Bakan-limb	Tree Cultivated & Wild	1	Asia (Excl.India): Ara <i>et al.</i> (1995).
39.	<i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houtt. Myristicaceae	Jayphal, Jatiphall	Tree Cultivated	22	Moluccas: Singh <i>et al.</i> (2001).
40.	<i>Nerium indicum</i> Mill. Cucurbitaceae	Kanher Kaneri	Shrub Cultivated	5	West Asia: Yadav & Sardesai (2002), Gaikwad & Garad (2015), Patil (2003). Persia: Bailey (1928).
41.	<i>Opuntia elatior</i> Mill. Cactaceae	Nivdung	Shrub Cultivated	7	South America: Chandra Sekar (2012), Patil (2003). Tropical America: Shetty & Singh (1987).
42.	<i>Papaver somniferum</i> L. Papaveraceae	Aphu	Herb Cultivated	2	Mediterranean Countries & Middle East: Coats (1956), Shetty & Singh (1987). Europe: Stewart (1972).
43.	<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> L. Arecaceae	Kharjur Kharjurika Kharik, Kharaka Khajur	Tree Cultivated	6	Arabia & North Africa: Graf (1980).
44.	<i>Piper betle</i> L. Piperaceae	Vidyache-pan Nagvalli, Tambul	Climber Cultivated	6	Bali & East Indies Graf (1980).
45.	<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> L. Plumbaginaceae	Chitrak	Shrub Wild	13	Africa: Rajagopal and Panigrahi (1965), Panda <i>et al.</i> (2018). Tropical of Asia, Africa, Australia & Hawaii: Bailey (1929).

46.	<i>Punica granatum</i> L. Punicaceae	Dadim, Dalimb	Tree Cultivated	22	South Asia: Gaikwad & Garad (2015). Afghanistan, Baluchistan & Persia: Patil (2000), Shetty & Singh (1987).
47.	<i>Raphanus sativus</i> L. Brassicaceae	Mula	Herb Cultivated	2	Europe & Temperate Asia: Singh <i>et al.</i> (1991), John (1891). Western Asia: Purseglove (1568). China, Japan & West Asia: Voight (1845).
48.	<i>Ricinus communis</i> L. Euphorbiaceae	Aarandel Aarand	Tree Cultivated	17	Tropical Africa: Yadav & Srdesai (2002). Africa: Bailey (1949), Stewart (1972).
49.	<i>Rubia cordifolia</i> L. Rubiaceae	Manjistha	Climber Cultivated	22	Asia (Excl.India) & Africa: Kaul (1986).
50.	<i>Sesbania sesban</i> (L.) Merr. Papilionaceae	Shevari Sevari	Tree Cultivated	2	Tropical Africa: Martin <i>et al.</i> (1987).
51.	<i>Sida cordifolia</i> L. Malvaceae	Bala, Chikana	Herb Wild	6	Tropical & Subtropical Regions of Both Hemispheres: Bhandari (1978).
52.	<i>Smilax china</i> L. Liliaceae	Chopchini	Climber Wild	1	China & Japan: Perera (2014).
53.	<i>Syzygium aromaticum</i> (L.) Merr. [(Syn. <i>Eugenia caryophyllus</i> (Spreng) Bullok <i>et</i> Harrison)] Myrtaceae	Lavang	Tree Cultivated	27	Moluccas Roxburgh (1814).
54.	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i> (L.) R.Br. Apocynaceae	Tagar, Ananti	Shrub Cultivated	13	Tropical Asia: Singh <i>et al.</i> (1991).
55.	<i>Tamarindus indica</i> L. Caesalpiniaceae	Chinch	Tree Wild & Cultivated	5	Tropical America: Shetty & Singh (1987), Patil (1990).
56.	<i>Trachyspermum ammi</i> (L.) Sprague Apiaceae	Owa, Ajmoda	Herb Cultivated	39	South Europe: Gaikwad & Garad (2015). Africa: Shetty & Singh (1987).
57.	<i>Trapa natans</i> L. var. <i>bispinosa</i> (Roxb.) Makino Trapaceae	Sindhade	Herb Cultivated	3	Europe: Kak (1990).
58.	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i> L. Zygophyllaceae	Ghokharu, Gokhur Gokshur Gosur, Sarate	Herb Wild	19	Tropical America: Reddy (2008), Chandra Sekar (2012). Africa & Asia (Excl.India): Kaul (1986).
59.	<i>Trigonella foenum-graecum</i> L. Papilionaceae	Methi	Herb Cultivated	2	South Europe: Shetty & Singh (1987). Africa: Patil (2019). Asia (Excl.India) & Europe: Kaul (1986).
60.	<i>Triticum aestivum</i> L. Poaceae	Gahu	Herb Cultivated	2	Fertile Crescent: Singh & Nigam (2017).
61.	<i>Vitis vinifera</i> L. Vitaceae	Drakshe	Liane Cultivated	14	South-East Europe To West Indies: Singh <i>et al.</i> (2000). Asia (Excl.India) & Europe: Stewart (1972).