Myanmar Traditional Medicine on Palm-leaf Manuscripts
Collected in Universities' Central Library

DAW YU YU TIN
CHIEF LIBRARIAN
UNIVERSITIES' CENTRAL LIBRARY
Introduction

At the eras of birth of Myanmar Traditional medicine, Bagan and Tagaung, Myanmar used Palm-leaf and Parabaik Manuscripts to document medicinal matters. Myanmar traditional Medicine treatise appeared along with the historical development of eras and all the written and translated medicine treatises were documented in (manuscript) Palm-leaf and Parabaik manuscripts. Those manuscripts can be classified into myin ni, myin net, myin phyu, kyan sit, shwe pane and etc. Medicinal treatises can be found in all these kinds of Pay.

At present time, in this world, there may be two kinds of Medicine. One is traditional and the other is modern medicine. In other words it can be called Western medicine and Oriental medicine. Whereas Western medicine is called Pathi and Oriental medicine is called (Ayurvedic). Myanmar traditional medicine developed from Oriental medicine (Ayurvedic).

In Myanmar, there developed about four kinds of medicinal studies. They are:
1. Beindaw or Ayurvedic, medicinal studies
2. Abhidhama medicinal studies based on the Buddhist Abhidhama
3. Astrological medicinal studies
4. Payawga medicine (paranormal medicine)

Every civilized nation has their own races, ancient culture, literature heritage and they are preserved and stored with reverence and esteem. So also, one of the largest academic library of Myanmar, Universities' Central Library collects and preserves ancient manuscripts as a national heritage’s treasure. We do it as duty of national cause.

Objective

This small research paper is intended to provide information about rare and antique Myanmar traditional medicine manuscripts collected in Universities' Central Library, Yangon, Myanmar. The data, information and knowledge of ancient Myanmar traditional medicine will be classified, and made easy to convey them to Myanmar traditional medicine physicians, Western medics, amateurs of traditional medicine, researchers of Myanmar traditional medicine, scholar from traditional medicine field. These medicine and therapy manuscript and belong to Myanmar Royalty, written and compiled by ancient Sanghas and Lay persons. It will also beneficial for the students, scholars of institute of Myanmar Traditional medicine and those who interested in traditional medicine.

Scope

In Universities of Central Library, the number of collected palm-leaves are over 15000. They are collected by buying and as received from contribution. Among the collected palm-leaves, there include valuable antique treatises such as Pitaka Pali texts, a word for word translation of Pali text (Nisaya), texts related to Pitaka Pali, traditional astrological treatises, traditional astronomical treatises, and traditional law books. Among the medicinal
treatises, some are completed with covers, number of sheets, completed year, introduction, and conclusion. Some are not completed as expressed above. Some of the medicinal treatises have been already printed. The paper analyzed some of the traditional medicinal Pay from UCL.

Arrangement of the Research Paper

This paper is done on only 12 parabaik (Traditional medical treatises) selected from the collection of Universities Central Library as best and perfect ones. Topic of canalized treatises are arranged alphabetically. Under each individual topic m subtopic are presented orderly first author, completed year, number of lines, sheet, size, and accession number. Then, brief annotation is presented too. As an example, two treatises are selected and presented together with their direction for dosage.

1. khwe’ choñ’ lyhok' thum” kyam’” (မြန်မာတက္ကသိုလ်မြို့ရှိသူ့စိုးကျော်တွင်)

Mss. Description: The author is Saya Myat Htun, year of completion (1113), Myin Net Pay, 80 pages, 9 lines, 50x6 cm, ucl 4489.

Mss. Description: သာချ်ငါးအပြင်သိုလ်မြို့ရှိသူ့စိုးကျော်တွင်
(၁၁၁၃) ကြည့်စိမ်းစာမျက်နှာ ၈၀ မျက်
Annotation: မြန်မာတက္ကသိုလ်မြို့ရှိသူ့စိုးကျော်တွင်

Annotation: The medicinal treatment for Gynaecological disorder, Perinatal disease, Paediatric diseases are written. Moreover, prescriptifor ointment, medicine for Piles, prescription for Duna, Vitilgo, Furuncle, Small pox, Arthritis, Aches, Paraplagia, Retention of Urine, Constipation, Diarrhoea, and Urinary are written too.
Menorrhagia during pregnancy
Directions for dosage-Powders of Wild ginger, black pepper, long pepper, beal fruit leaves, Christmas rose, horseradish root and black cumin. Then, it must be taken orally with honey.

Small Pox
Directions for dosage-
Drink the mixture of skin of Eastern Gooseberry and Boa bile.
Brush whole body with Bitter Apple or White Pumpkin.

2. Chanavuti che’kyam’” (First and second volumes)  (ချ်ေျးချေြားရား ဦး- ရါး)
MSS. Description Year of copying Pay (1227), Myin Ni Pay, 152 pages, 8 lines, 50x5 cm. ucl 5009.

Mss. Description: ကျော်တွင်း အချောင်မှ ပါဝင်သော နံ (ကြွက်) + (ရီ) လူအား ကြောင်း ညစ်ညမ် ရွှေးပေးပါမည်။

Annotation: ကျော်တွင်း အချောင်မှ ပါဝင်သော နံ (ကြွက်) + (ရီ) လူအား ကြောင်း ညစ်ညမ် ရွှေးပေးပါမည်။
Annotation: It states the symptoms of disease connected with blood, wind, phlegm and heart and Four elements together with therapy and medicine formulae for them. It also includes the medicinal treatment of various epilepsy, phlegm diseases, sores, diarrhoea, scabies, coughing, gum pain, otitis, etc.

Phlegm Disease
Directions for dosage- Take orally the powders of nutmeg, betal, dry ginger, (copper sulphate) blue stone and brown slab-sugar.

3. Jivaka lyhok‘ thuŋ” che” kyam’” (စာရှင်းစာရှင်းသားစာမျက်နှာ)
Mss. Description The author is Saya Ziwaka, Year of copying Pay (1200), Myin Phyu Pay. 22 pages, 9 lines, 51x6 cm, ucl 139188
Mss. Description: စာရှင်းစာရှင်းသားစာမျက်နှာ စာရှင်းကျတ်စဉ် အရာများ သားစာမျက်နှာ စာရှင်း စာဆောင်းခဲ့သည် စာ (စာ-စာ) ကားသူ သားစာမျက်နှာ စာမျက်နှာ စာဆောင်းခဲ့သည်
Annotation: It is written, main causes of diseases, symptoms of diseases, directions for respective diseases, and medicinal formulae. Among the diseases written in this Kyan are fevers, gastritis, thrush, hlegm- diseases, tooth ache, invasive tumor, diseases related to blood, etc. It also presents the human embryonic life between one month and ten month.

Indigestion, abdominal colic, cough, anorexia, numbness and tingling
Direction for dosage- Mix Indian Atees, Clove and three trikatote (Cayenne pepper + Long pepper + Ginger) equally, then crash them. Take it with warm water twice a day at two O'clock am, and pm.

Asthma
Direction for dosage- Ground Pterocarpus santalious linn, Santalun album linn, Bitter oleander and Blood of Rhnos with water, then take it orally.
4. **Paṭisaneddha ku thām" kyam" (ဖျင်းဆီးများကြည်ကြည်)  

Mss. Description: Year of copying Pay (1268), Myin Phyu Pay, 46 pages, 11 lines, 27x8 cm. ucl 105652.

Annotation: It is written the methods of health care and treatment medicines for pregnant women if they are sick near delivery. The courses of health caring for the baby and mother after birth are also written on this Pay together with treatment medicines and suitable food and nutrients.

**Puerperal Haemorrhage, Effusion of blood, Puerperial pyrexia**

Directions for dosage: Take orally (4.15) grams of dry Eastern Gooseberry with water.
Menstruation during Pregnancy, Having great pain as though deliverance

Directions for dosage: Mix seven items of Wild ginger, Black Pepper, Long Pepper, root of Beal fruit, Christmas rose, Horseradish root and Black cumin equally then crash them and take orally with honey. If there is fever take it with warm water.

5. Paṭisaneddh taññṭ puṃ pra lakñṅ (မြို့သားပွဲစိန့်တွေ)

Mss. Description: Myin Phyu Pay, 10 pages, 10 lines, 52x7cm. ucl 105649

Annotation: This Parabaik expresses Conception and symptoms of a pregnant woman due to the disorder of five elements, Earth element, Water element, Wind element, Fire element and Space element. It also expresses the nutrient to be given when any kind of element is absorbed.

မိုး - အိမ်ထွက်ဘေးအလွန်များစွာကိုသေချထားသောမြို့သားပွဲစိန့်တွေ မြင်ဆိုမှုများအတွက် မြစ်သောများနှင့် မြစ်စိန့်တွေထဲမှ သေချထားသော သေချထားချက်များ၏ အစိုးရအားဖြင့် ထိန်းသက်သော သေချထားချက်များဖြင့် အိမ်ထွက်ထားသေးသည်။
Example-
If Space element is absorbed the diet to be given are plum jam, and lemonade. If earth element is absorbed the diet to be given are milk, water element banana jam, fire element coconut jam and bitter gourd, wind element soap acacia and beef roast.

6. Bindao rogā nidān‘” kyam‘” nhañ‘’ charā jīvaka lyhok‘ thup”

Mss. Description: Year of writing-1245, Myin Phyu Pay. 28 pages, 10 lines, 49x6cm, ucl 169999.

Annotation: It describes the symptoms, therapy and medicine formulae of sickness caused by biliary disease, gastritis, and phlegm disease. It also elaborates the symptoms of diseases due to the four elements, and therapy and medicine formulae for diseases of insomnia and loss of appetite, coryza, gynaecological disease, wound infection, septicaemia.
Phlegm Disease
Directions for dosage - Take sneeze wort, carombola, bitter gourd, chicken, taro, pumpkin, water dillenia.

Dry Phlegm Disease
Directions for dosage - Give lime medicine

7. Bindao sāra che” kyam” (ပေါင်စေးရင်းချီ )

Mss. Description: Myin Phyu Pay.58 pages, 8 lines, 23x5 cm, ucl 6300

Annotation: In this Myanmar Herbal Pharmacopoeia, it states eye drop, medicines for fever, abdominal colic, regulates menstrual cycle, conception, fistula in ano. It is only a kind of folk medicine.
Dysentery, ischuria and constipation, during pregnancy

Directions for dosage-
Take orally crashed powder of five kinds of lotus, cobra's saffron pollen, Spanish jamine, lotus root, fruit of citrine tree with pure water.

Infant with swollen belly, vomiting, Hicough

Directions for dosage-
Mixed Indian beech, Indian gentian, pyin nyar lin kar, rose coloured lead wort, black cumin and common salt equally and dried eastern Gooseberry and crash well then take orally with cold water or warm water.

8. Mui” nai likhanä ku thum” kyam”” (မြင်မှုသီးသန်းတောင်းချင်သူ)

Mss. Description: The author is Moe ne sayagy, Myin Phyu Pay, 16 pages, 9 lines, 49x6cm, ucl 8351
Mss. Description:

Annotation:

Annotation:

Example-

Water-melon- It cures the diseases due to the fire element. Papaya-it is very digestive. Coconut- it cures edema. Leaves of bitter gourd- it cures lame and headache. Leaves of Citrus lemonier is good for digestive. Deer meat cures phlegm disease and abdominal diseases.
9. Sabhāva dhamma che” cā (ဝါဓမ္မာဝါဓမ္မာ)

Mss. Description: Myin Net Pay, 164 pages, 8 lines, 25x6 cm, ucl 16998

Annotation: It states symptoms and therapy and prescription for the disease, various kinds of fever, diarrhoea, gout, cough, uremia, sore throat, epistaxis, diathesis, eczema, caused depending on the three seasons, age, regions, time and during.

ဗားစီးချင်းစိတ်ဝင်စာရင်းများ

အခြင်း ပစ္စည်းများစွာ သို့မဟုတ် အခြေခံအား အခြင်း

အခြင်း များစွာ ဆောင်ရွက်နိုင်သော အခြေခံအား အခြေခံအား

အတွက် - ကြိုးစားချင်း ဝင်ပစ္စည်းများ သေချာ (၁) အစိတ်အပိုင်း ဆောင်ရွက်အား ဆောင်ရွက်များ

မြန်မာ Traditional Medicine on Palm-leaf Manuscripts Collection Universities’ Central Library
Symptoms of Dwaywun thalake pya tat fever

Lack of sleep, giddiness, hungry, thirsty, headache, dry mouth, shaking, vomiting, pain in bone, yawning.

Directions for dosage- Mix three items Terminalia, long pepper and solid salt equally and crash then, take with ripe tamarind at noon if it is in summer. If it is in rainy season, take with citrus at night.

Mss. Description: အိမ်ကျောင်းမှာ ၃၉ (၁-၂၈) အတွင်း လွဲ ၄၈၀၂x၂၈၅၀၀

Annotation: မြင်အောက်တွင် သတိ မှုကြောင့် အချိန်ပေါ် တွေ့ရှိရာ အတွက် သတိပေးထားပါသည်။ သို့သော်လည်း ပြည်သူ အကျိုးအားဖြင့် အခြေခံဝါကျ အထိမ်းအမှတ်နှင့် ပြောင်းလဲခြင်းများကို နှစ်သက်ရာ မှန်ကန်သော ပြန်လည်ရှိခြင်းကို ပြောင်းလဲရန် ဖြစ်သည်။

Mss. Description: Myin Net Pay, 90 pages, 10 lines, 49x6cm, ucl 4502

Annotation: Description of Traditional physicians' about diseases incident to women, various kinds of child's diseases, red spotted skin disease, numbness, wound caused by tiger attack, and pile with prescription.
Diseases incident to women

Directions for dosage - Boil dye weed, ripen tamarind, salt and pepper with two liters of water till 1/3 left, then take it orally.

11. Sū ńya ‘nā ku che” kyam’” (ဗောက် ရွေ့ရှေ့ပေါ်တယ်)

MSS. Description: Myin Phyu Pay, 18 pages, 8 lines, 21x6 cm, ucl 137028

Annotation: It expressed pharmacological method and effect of drugs, in two ways of presentation, prose and poems to cure child diseases and their symptoms, such as Convulsive, Diarrhoea, Small fever, unable to have nutrients and indigestion.
Seizures in children
Direction for dosage- Crash yellow orpiment, kenforia, sweet flag, mustard seed, asafetida, galangal, then dried in the Sun. Mixed with water and toss into the eye.

Unable to have nutriment
Direction for dosage- Crash Indian gentian, pyin nyar lin kar, serpent wood, borax, sulphur, clove, and nut meg then apply or take orally.

Conclusion
Myanmar traditional medicine arises and exists associated with natural conditions such as woodland, soil and water of Myanmar environment together with traditional customs and thought, as the Myanmar saying "New myat thit pin say bat win" (Every vine, grass, and trees are medicated). Myanmar traditional medicines are manufactured from medicated roots, herbaceous leaves, and flowers which are grown naturally in Myanmar soil. As they have no side effects and effectively cure, they have been used for ages.

The formulas and treaties of medicines of Myanmar traditional medicines were documented on pay, parabaik, nhin sar, stone inscriptions and printed media.
So, we should not be satisfied with the present status of Myanmar traditional medicine. The research should be done along with the modern method of pharmaceutical production to promote the role and its application for the people by keeping abreast with modern medicine.

To do so, it should be revive the treatise of traditional medicine, therapy, and Myanmar herbal pharmacopoeia in addition to the research and renewal.

With the aim of reviving the tremendously effective traditional medicine and therapy, the paper attempts to present some diseases from Myanmar traditional medicinal treatises documented on Pay and Parabaik. Those disease may be gynaecatogical disorder, fever, small pox, gout, diarrhea, convulsion, urinary, paralytic stroke, and so on.

Today, Myanmar traditional medicines become widespread not only in Myanmar but also in internationality. The development of Myanmar traditional medicine has its momentum. This paper will provide somewhat help to develop more effective traditional medicine to heal some peculiar diseases arises in modern day.

Reference:

