

DRAVYARATNAVALI

An unpublished Ayurveda *Nighantu*

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Introduction :

A survey of the manuscript collections shows that the number of Ayurveda manuscripts is very high in Sanskrit as well as in regional languages. Among such several works the number of *nighantus* is also very significant and useful even for the present day practitioners. It also shows the development of the science by incorporating knowledge about new drugs and diseases. Such works have more practical utility in treating the diseases and maintaining the health of the society.

Dravyaratnavali

There are more than 200 titles dealing with *dravyaguna*. Among them Dravyaratnavali appears to be more unique in certain aspects. A cursory perusal shows that it is comparatively a very comprehensive work on *dravyaguna* and has more scientific approach and new trends in dealing with the subject.

Manuscripts

The New Catalogus Catalogorum gives the following information on Dravyaratnavali :

DRAVYARATNAVALI : (Medical)
Government Oriental Manuscripts Library Madras, MD 13280 (inc) 13281 (wants beginning and ending), 17631 (toyavarga). M15029. Mysore IP363. Oppert I 8017; Taylor II 170.

The following copies of manuscripts in different libraries are noticed.

Government Oriental Manuscripts Library,
Chennai 3 copies
Osmania University Library — 3 copies
Oriental Institute, Mysore — 1 copy
Arsha Rasayanasala, Muktyala (AP) - 1 copy

Five manuscripts are listed under the title Dravyagunaratanvali in the Catalogue of Manuscripts in Andhra Pradesh Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Centre, Hyderabad. A cursory perusal shows that these are almost identical with Dravyaratnavali.

The Descriptive Catalogue of Manuscripts in Government Oriental Manuscripts

Library, Chennai gives the following information of the following three manuscripts.,

MS. No. 5029: Palmleaf; size 16 x 1½. Folios — 37.6 lines per page. Slightly injured. Presented by Mudumba Narasimhacharyulu of Piduguralla in Guntur District. Same work as described under No. 13280. Wants the leaves 1 and 31 to 47.

End : Tambulakramam ताम्बूलक्रमम्
आदौ विषोपमं चैव द्वितीय चापि दुर्जरं ।
पश्चात्सुधामयं पीतं सम्यग्जीर्णं रसायनम् ।
पर्णमूले भवेद्व्याधिः पर्णाग्रे पापसम्भवं ।
जीर्णपर्णो हरत्यायुः सिरा बुद्धिं विनाशयेत् ।

Colophon :

इति द्रव्यरत्नावल्यां अष्टाङ्गाहृदयसंहितायां त्रिफलानुपानयुक्तवर्गः

The Ms is said to have been copied by Venkatacharya on Sunday the 5th day of lunar month of Asvina in Dundubhi year.

MS.No. 13280 : palmleaf; 15³/₄ x 13/8; pages - 186; lines 7; script Telugu; appearance old and incomplete;

Beginning:

प्राणोभवेत्प्राणभृतां तु नीरं तस्माद्विना नश्यति जीवलोकः ।

Colophon : इति द्रव्यरत्नावल्यां तोयवर्गः । समस्तद्रव्यवर्गः ।

क्षीराश्रितपात्रगुणाः ।

MS No. 13282: paper; pages-136; 26 lines per page; begins on folio 1a of MS. No. 13117. Same as 13280; wants beginning and end.

Nighantus

The *nighantu* works of Ayurveda deal with the description of qualities and effects of different substances and actions. The *dravyaguna* part in the *samhitas* (classics) and all *nighantus* exclusively dealing with this topic describe under different groups or *vargas*. Different groups in *nighantus* are shown below:

Dhanvantarinighantu

1. Guducyadivarga,
2. Satapuspadivarga,
3. Candanadivarga
4. Karaviradivarga,
5. Kancanadivarga
6. Amradivagra
7. Misrakadivarga

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Sabdacandrika

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. Vrksadivarga | 2. Svarnadi |
| 3. Ghrtadi | 4. Bhummyadi |
| 5. Manusyadi | 6. Simhadi |
| 7. Madyadi | 8. Pancaksyadi |
| 9. Triphaladivargo | |

Nighantusea

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Vrksakanda | 2. Gulmakanda |
| 3. Latakanda | 4. Sakakanda |
| 5. Trnakanda | 6. Dhanyakanda |

Dravyagunasatasloki

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. Jalavarga | 2. Dugdha |
| 3. Dhanya | 4. Mamsa |
| 5. Saka | 6. Iksukhanda |
| 7. Taila | 8. Madhu |
| 9. Draksadi | 10. Sugradi |
| 11. Siddhanna | 12. Madya |
| 13. Abhangadi | 14. Tambuladivarga |

Madanavinodanighantu

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Abhayadivarga | 2. Sugradi |
| 3. Karpuradi | 4. Dhatu |
| 5. Vanaspati | 6. Phala |
| 7. Saka | 8. Drava |
| 9. Madhura | 10. Dhanya |
| 11. Anna | 12. Mamsa |
| 13. Misraka | 14. Prasastivarga |

Rajanighantu

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Anupadivarga | 2. Bhumi |
| 3. Guducyadi | 4. Satavahadi |
| 5. Parpatadi | 6. Pippalyadi |
| 7. Mulakadi | 8. Salmalyadi |
| 9. Prabhadradi | 10. Karaviradi |
| 11. Amradi | 12. Candandai |
| 13. Suvarnadi | 14. Paniyadi |
| 15. Ksiradi | 16. Salyadi |
| 17. Mamsadi | 18. Manusyadi |
| 19. Simhadi | 20. Rogadi |
| 21. Satvadi | 22. Misrakadi |
| 23. Ekarthadi | 24. Dvyarthadivarga |

The groups of the above *nighantus* can be compared with the groups of Dravyaratnavali.

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|-------------|------------|
| 1. Jala | 2. Ksira |
| 3. Dadhi | 4. Takra |
| 5. Navanita | 6. Ghrti |
| 7. Iksu | 8. Maksika |

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 9. Bijasarataila | 10. Drumasarataila |
| 11. Madya | 12. Trnadhanya |
| 13. Simbidhanya | 14. Peyadi |
| 15. Odana (apupadi) | 16. Supa |
| 17. Krtannapupadi | 18. Mrgamamsa |
| 19. Vihanga | 20. Matsya |
| 21. Saka | 22. Dravapatrasaka |
| 23. Phalasaka | 24. Puspasaka |
| 25. Amaphala | 26. Khaia |
| 27. Nala | 28. Suranadimula |
| 29. Majja | 30. Harita |
| 31. Suskaphala | 32. Vatakadi |
| 33. Tilapista | 34. Dhatriyadi-apakvaphala |
| 35. Pakvaphala | 36. Ausadha |
| 37. Dinacarya | 38. Dhupadi |
| 39. Mutra | 40. Vit |
| 41. Suka | |

This clearly indicates that *nighantus* give more importance to the groups dealing with medicinal plants rather than other groups related to the daily life and regimen. In contrast Dravyaratnavali gives less stress on medicinal plants and describes the other groups in more detailed manner. Even the substance explained in one group are classified in Dravyaratnavali into two or more groups. Oils are described in two groups - *bijisara* and *drumasara* differentiating the oils obtained from seeds and oils obtained from other parts of the plant or tree. Fruits are also described in separate groups—*ama* (tender), *apakva* (unripe), *pakva* (ripe) and *suska* (dry). Similarly the groups - *peyadi*, *apupadi*, *krtannapupadi*, *khala*, *vatakadi* and *tilapista* are special features of Dravyaratnavali. *Sakas* or vegetables are dealt with in separate groups- *saka* (common vegetables) *dravapatra* (used in liquids), *phala* (flowers), *nala* (stems) *mula* (tuber or rhizomes) *majja* (fleshy part) and *harita* (green vegetables). Among the groups of milk, milk of (milky sap) and some trees finds place; milk of cows of different colours and of different fodder-green or dried or other material - is mentioned.

When the number of different items in individual groups is considered it is also significant to find that very minute changes and differences

are noticed and described separately. Among leaves tender leaves and fully-grown leaves are separately described. The food articles are also dealt with in detail. The group of prepared food substances has many varieties of preparations of eatables, which appear to be more common in Andhra region and some other parts of South India.

Author

Though more than 5 copies of this work are available in different places it is unfortunate that no copy gives the name of the author. There are colophons at the end of each group but they indicate only the name of the book and the group. It is clear that several new drugs or parts of drugs are introduced and described under different method of classification and hence it suggests that the book is not completely a compilation from earlier sources.

The copy that has the beginning shows that the subject is directly introduced without any prayer to god, which is the usual practice in all scientific and literary books. One manuscript in Andhra Pradesh Government Oriental Library and Research Institute, Hyderabad has one verse in praise of Lord Ganesa but no other details are given. Copies where the last part is available also lack the name of the author, though the name of the scribe and the person for whom the books was copied are given.

Date

When the name of the author is not mentioned the date cannot be expected to be indicated. The earliest copy belongs to the 18th c. And it may be possible that the author might have lived at least one century earlier. The availability of more number of copies shows that the work was very popular for which a minimum period of 50-100 years may be required. The headings in Telugu have special features indicating that it is not very recent. In Telugu upto 16th-17th centuries *anusvara* (0) was in use in many words, especially after a long vowel and this later disappeared and was shown in script with a half *anusvara*. The use

of *anusvara* in the copies shows that the copies are not very recent. This shows that the author might have flourished not later than 17th century.

Place

The internal evidence give some clue to the place of the author. Under the description of water of different sources like rivers etc., water of Vanjara finds place. Vanjara is the original name of river Manjeera, a tributary to Godavari. Even now this name is in use in parts of Medak and Nizamabad districts where it flows. Starting from Karnataka this river enters Medak district of Andhra Pradesh and joins Godavari in Nizamabad district.

A Telugu literary work Bhojarajiyam describes the descent of this river Vanjara. Anantamatya, author of Bhojarajiyam, narrates a story similar to that of Bhagiratha. Vanjara was the name of a Gandharva, who was responsible to bring this river to this world. This shows that the author might have lived in the area of this river in Andhra Pradesh.

The local Telugu name for *japa* is given as *dasana*. This is in usage in this area whereas in coastal districts it is called *mandara*. The Telugu word for plate is '*tale*' in this book and this is also common in this area while *kancam* is used in other parts of Andhra. Among the prepared dishes some are common and popular in Telangana region. Many other words and usages are found and most of them indicate that the author belonged to the area of the river Manjeera in Medak and Nizamabad districts, which was called Metukusima.

There are some more examples for this. *Ragis* are called *ragulu* in coastal districts and Tamilnadu whereas they are called in Telangana *tayidalu*, which is the word used in this work. Similarly *pakalabhatu*, *manugubuvulu*, *ladvalu*, *voma*, *atukulu*, *pendu* and *lotapita* are used commonly in Telangana region only. It is also possible that a person other than the author might have written the headings in Telugu and then it shows that the copyist is from this region.