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Chandranandana and madanadi nighantu: introduction and importance

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Abstract

It is the need of time to explain the subject critically and include the new information's, ideas in the light of available texts and commentaries from time to time which make the subject acceptable, approachable and applicable. In this sequence apart from the original texts scholars felt to merged some important aspects without disturbing their original concepts. To fulfill the above need a group of scholars started a new tradition to interpret existing subject in specific thoughts which is known as Vyakhya, Tika (Commentary), nighantu etc. In the eminent group of commentators, the name of Chandranandana became popular due to his good work and contributions. He was one of the renowned commentator of Madhya kala (Medieval period). Chandranandana, son of Ravinandana, was born in Kashmira in 10th A.D. He was a great physician, who has reached the goal of infinite knowledge and is called 'Paramartha' by a name given him therefore. "Padartha chandrika" is the most popular commentary over Ashtanga Hridaya (Only on Sutra Sthana). Apart from this, his next most useful contribution in the field of Dravyagu AEA is Madanadi Nighantu (Gana nighantu) having knowledge of many medicinal plants, synonyms and their functions in a group form.

Keywords: ayurveda, chandranandana, madanadi, nighnatu

Introduction

Chandranandana is a well – known author in the field of Ayurveda and there is controversy about his identity. He is said to be the son of Ravinandana (Ratinanda according to Tibetan version), grandson of Maharsinandana and a native of Kashmir. He is Placed as a contemporary of king Abhimanyu of Kashmir (958 – 972 A.D) ^[1]. This dates is also confirmed with of its Tibetan translation (1013 – 1055 A.D) ^[2]. It is further supported by Chandranandana (the author of the nighantu) being quoted by kshirasvami (11th cent. A.D.) ^[3], a notable commentator on Amarakosha. Thus there is no doubt that Chandranandana, son of Ravinandana and the author of the nighantu lived around 10th Cent. A.D. There is a Ms. Of the nighantu by Chandranandana in the Asiatic Socieity, Calcutta (No. G. 8426, Folios 1 – 34). While examining this Ms., I got information about the book 'Madanadi Nighantu' by Chandranandana edited by Vaidya N. S. Mooss and published from Kottayam (1985). This is based on four Manuscripts (Ms- three from South India and one from Paris). Thus the Ms. of the Asiatic Society was not take into account while editing the work. The Paris Ms. also differs from the Asiatic Society Ms. in the initial title (Sri Ravinandanasunu – Chandranandanakrtah Gananighantuh) which is not found in the later. The Asiatic Society Ms. Reads 'Chandrahcandana' but it seems to be a scriptural error and on circumstantial evidence it should be taken as Chandranandana as supported by other Mss. The title of the work, according to Asiatic Society Ms. also, is "Madanadi Nighantu' but on the margin is written 'gana – nighantu' in a different handwriting. Thus it is evident that the original title of the work is 'Madanadi – Nighantu' as it deals with the drugs enumerated in ganas, beginning with Madanadi in Vagbhata's Ashtanga hridaya (Su. Ch. 15). Later on, presumably, since it deals with (Ausadha) ganas, it became popular as gana nighantu. In some of the Mss., it is also known as 'Osadhinighantu'.⁴ After passage of time when 'Madanavinoda, popularly known as Madanapala Nighantu, came into existence, a state of confusion arose between the two works with the result that the Madanavinoda is also mentioned somewhere as Osadhinighantu.⁵ Perhaps on prevalence of the Madanapala Nighantu, the Madanadi Nighantu went almost into forgetfulness. Gunanighantu mentioned by Cordier seems to be a misnomer. The number of ganas in the Astangahrdaya is clearly stated as thirty three whereas the Madanadi – Nighantu has described only 32 ganas. The editor, discussing the issue leaned towards the Paris Ms., has arrived at a conclusion which cannot be accepted. He wants to make up the deficiency by dividing the Durvadi gana into two – Durvadi and Sthiradi but there is no any such indication in the Vagbhata's text, the fact is quite different.

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The three consecutive ganas – Bhadradarvadi, Durvadi and Aragvadhadi etc. – relate to three dosas – Vata, Pitta and Kapha respectively. The former two ganas contain single drug which needed description but in the third one i.e. kapha – nasaka gana there are all groups of drugs and no single drug is mentioned. As these groups (ganas) are already described separately, the author has knowingly left this because it did not require any description which is intended only for single drugs. Hence the deficiency occurred in the number of ganas. There are six quotations from Chandranandana in Kshiraswami's commentary ^[6] on the Amarakosha all of which are traced in the Madanadi nighantu. Thus it leaves no doubt that Kshiraswami has quoted this very work of Chandranandana. Dalhana has quoted Chandranandana once (Susruta, U. 65. 29) in the context of tantrayukti where he is said to have proposed a different definition of 'Vidhana' ^[7]. As there is no chapter on tantrayukti in the Astangahridaya, Dalhana evidently quotes his another work which may be a commentary on the Susruta – Samhita that was available at Dalhana's time. Hemadri (A. H. Su. 7. 40) also quotes Chandranandana along with other commentators such as Arunadatta, Indu, Jejjata, Brahmadeva, Madhava and Dalhana but the actual quotations (Maireyo dhanyasavah) is not found in Chandranandana's Padartha Chandrika Commentary on Ashtanga hridaya, though it is different from 'Maireyam Kharjurasavam' which is quoted by Hemadri as the view of Arunadatta and Indu. So this needs further examinations. Chandranandana is also known as the author of the Padartha chandrika commentary on the Ashtanga hridaya. Now about the identity of the authors of this commentary and the Madanadi Nighantu known as Chandranandana, there is some controversy. Mostly the authors of these two works are taken as identical but Vogel is right in putting question mark. Further, the following points draw attention towards their different identity: - 1) Although in Tibetan version of the Padartha Chandrika, Chandranandana is said to be the son of Ratinandana, the Bombay edition records the origin of the author quite differently. Here in the introductory verse ^[8] (No.3), the author explicitly says – 'Born from Kalyana – the milk – ocean and Vidya, the fathomless stream, Chandranandana is like moon pacifying the heat of ignorance'. So there is no doubt that this Chandranandana was son of Kalyana said Vidya and not of Ravinandana. 2) The author of the Madanadi nighantu offers salutations, in the beginning, only to "Sarvajna" ^[9] (Omniscient) which possibly refers to Lord Buddha whereas in the Padartha Chandrika commentary he first of all bows to Hari ^[10] (Vishnu). It shows that the author of the Madanadi Nighantu was a Buddhist whereas that of the commentary was a, vaisnavite. Hence according to Bombay edition the two Chandranandanas seem to be different but according to Tibetan version as presented by Vogel they seem to be one. But in that case, the authors of Padartha Chandrika commentary would be quite different according to the two traditions particularly when the quotation of Chandranandana is not found in the commentary of Bombay edition. The initiation of text is with Ganesh Vandana.

Observations & Discussion

- The time period of Chandranandana is 10th Cent. A.D.
- It is confirmed due to enumeration of Chandranandana in Siddhsara by Ravi Gupta (9th Cent.) and later on frequently cited as an authority in medical lexicography, by Kōhīrasvami (11th Cent. A.D.) in his commentary on

the Amarkosha, especially in his notes on the VanauḌadhi varga, the section on trees, shrubs and herbs.

- The book Madanadi nighantu or Gana nighantu as it is sometimes called is a glossary in Sanskrit written by Chandranandana, who appears to be none other than the author of the Padartha chandrika, commentary on the Ashtanga hridaya Samhita of Vagbhata.
- In present, Madanadi Nighantu is combination of 4-5 manuscripts.
- This work is based on the groups of drugs starting with Madanadi Gana of the Shodhanadi-gana-sangrahaniya – Chapter XV of the Sutrasthana – of the Ashtanga hridaya Samhita and hence it is called Madanadi or Gana Nighantu. This is being published for the first time (10th cent. A.D.).
- This entitled article is one step to collect, revive, explore and explain the contribution of great commentator and nighanḌakar Chandranandana in the field of DravyaguḌa.
- Madanadi nighantu or GaḌa nighantu based on different 32 groups of medicinal plants as main source of this article which is written by Chandranandana and edited by Ashta Vaidya Vayaskara N.S. Mooss.
- Under further study stress will be given mainly on medicinal plants groups (32 GaḌa) including contribution of new drugs as well as new contribution in the field of medicinal plants and their properties by Chandranandana.

Conclusion

From the above discussions, the following facts emerge about the identity and works of Chandranandana:

1. The identity of Chandranandana of the Bombay edition and Tibetan version differs because of their different parentage and religious faith.
2. Chandranandana, the author of the Madanadi – Nighantu, is different from the author of the Padarthachandrika comm. bearing the same name (according to Bombay ed.) for the reasons cited above though they seem to be identical according to Tibetan version but in Thanjavore the lexicographical work of Chandranandana is mentioned as 'Vaidya – Astangahridayavrttau bhesajanama Paryayanama' and not 'Madanadi nighantu or gananighantu. Probably the former work was a glossary of only synonyms of drugs like dravyavati while the Madanadi – Nighantu describes properties and actions as well.
3. Chandranandana also wrote a commentary on the Susruta – Samhita a portion of which is quoted by Dalhana. He may be the same person who wrote the commentary on the Astangahridaya.

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