

CONTRIBUTION OF ANDHRA TO AYURVEDA IN SANSKRIT

B. RAMA RAO *

Sanskrit has been the unifying factor among the Indian people, speaking different languages in different regions of the country. The people of all regions enriched the divine language, alongwith their regional languages.

The people of Andhra region, who are well known as an individual entity since the times of the Brahmanas, never lagged behind in their contribution to the Sanskrit literature in all branches of science and arts.

In the field of medicine, Andhras contributed both in Sanskrit and Telugu. The region of Andhra evolved a special type of approach to the science of life combining the *traditions and practices* of North and South. From the early centuries of the Christian era, *rasavada* or the science of medicine with special stress on mercurial preparations became popular in the South, while classical method of treatment of the Atreya School was popular in the North. The tradition and art of treatment of Siddhas spread in the South from the time of Agastya and Nagarjuna. The Andhra region was a channel for the movements of scholars and traders between North and South. Apart from this, Andhra had, for a long period, sea ports like Motupalli, Vadarevu etc., which were big centres of trade with foreign countries. On account of this, people of various regions of the sub-continent used to pass through Andhra region. This made the Andhra physicians come into contact with the physicians of different regions and consequently there was evolved a tradition of their own embodying the best of both the classical medicine as well as *rasasampradaya*.

In the first place mention may be made of *Gathasaptashati*, though a Prakrit work. This interesting work of Prakrit gathas of 1st century B. C. contains several references pertaining to Ayurveda, thereby showing the prevalence of the perfect practice of Ayurveda. A gatha mentions, that a monkey got itching sensation, by touching the *Kapikachhu*, thinking it to be the hand of another monkey. Another verse narrates that a house wife was taken to the lover-physician with the very knowledge of her husband on the pretext of treating her for the scorpion-bite. This shows that patients were taken to the houses of physicians for emergency treatment. The Ayurvedic classics only describe about the visit of the physician to the patient's house, giving the details about the omens etc.

Apart from the above, *Gathasaptashati*, mentions vomiting, longings of pregnant women (*dauhrida*), and fever and a herb called *vishakandali*.

* Assistant Director incharge, Indian Institute of History of Medicine, Hyderabad.

Next and most important is the name of Nagarjuna* who is said to have flourished in the central place of Andhra on the banks of Krishna at Nagarjunakonda, where the remains of his great service to the humanity and their sufferings are uncovered. Nagarjuna, who was an alchemist lived in the early centuries of Christian era and Ayurveda was in a flourishing state under him. The inscription mentioning the jwaralaya (Fever Hospital) and the remains of the jwaralaya at the University area in Nagarjunakonda are ample evidence for it. He was a celebrated physician, alchemist, philosopher and guide of Satavahana kings. He was the first to introduce black sulphide of mercury. The following works are attributed to him.

1. Kachaputa
2. Rasakakshaputa
3. Rasaratnakara
4. Lauha Sastra
5. Rasendramangala.

King Bhoja wrote a work called Charucharya dealing with daily regimen and hygiene. There are no evidences to establish the place and identity of the author but mention is made here on the following points. Firstly, his work has been very popular in Andhra since 12-13th centuries A. D. till today, whereas it has not been popular among the Sanskrit and Ayurvedic scholars of other parts of India. Secondly the manurcripts of the work, so far traced, are found in the Andhra region in Telugu script except one paper manuscript at Calcutta in Davanagari script. Thirdly, this work was translated into Telugu verse as early as in 13th century A. D. by Mantri Appana. This work has been published twice in Telugu script so far.

Haribhatta wrote Ratirahasya, a work on erotics containing medical prescriptions for Vajikarana etc. During the reign of Kakatiyas in the medieval period and during the reign of Ikshvakus and Pallavas and other rulers, Sanskrit studies, and Hindu dharma and Buddhism flourished but no written records of the scholars of these periods have come down to us.

It may not be out of place here to mention the inscription in Sanskrit at Malkapuram in Guntur district. This has special significance to the history of Ayurveda. The inscription on a massive pillar is dated 1262 A. D. This contains references to Vishvesvara, a Saivite preceptor of Kakatiya queen Rudrama and her father Ganapati Deva. This inscription mentions that two villages were donated to Vishvesvara by Ganapatideva and Rudrama. The income from the villages was used for the maintenance of a hospital, a maternity home and a school.

There is a rare instance of the family of physicians about whom, insriptional evidence as well as a standard work on medicine by one of the members of the family,

* The controversy over the identification of Nagarjuna is not proposed to be discussed here.

have come down to us. The work is called Parahita Samhita composed by Shrinatha of Parahita family. This contains three parts: first Sadharanakanda, second Ashtangakanda and third Rasakanda. Sadharanakanda deals with the subject of Sutrasthana and Ashtangakanda has eight sections, one each for the eight branches of Ayurveda. Third part called Rasakanda, is about the preparations of mercury and other metals. The part Sadharanakanda was published in Telugu script more than twenty years back, and the Salyatantra and Salakyatantra of Ashtangakanda were published by the Sri Venkateshwara University, Tirupathi in Devanagari script.

Kaluvacheruvu grant of Anitalli, inscribed on copper plates, refers to the donation of the village Kaluvacheruvu in East Godavari district to a physician Parahitarya. The text of the inscription is in Sanskrit verse. The date is accepted as 1423 A. D. The donor was the queen of Virabhadra Reddy of Kondavidu dynasty. The recipient Parahitarya was a member in the sixth generation of the famous line of physician-surgeons of proved ability. The inscription gives the names of six generations of this family. Service to living beings was their motto. Parahitarya of third generation once saw a cobra suffering with a long bone of the frog it was eating, stuck up in its throat. It was not able to bring its jaws together and was not able to swallow. Parahitarya was moved with pity. He approached the cobra and treated it without any hesitation or fear and relieved it from the suffering. By his act of kindness to the poisonous cobra, Parahita name came to be literally true in his case. Therefore, it became a family name.

Shrishailam or Shripurvata, the abode of Lord Mallikarjuna and Bhramaramba, was a well known centre for the siddhas and rasacharyas, apart from tantrikas. Records of the Siddhas who dwelt there or of their works have been lost to us. The name of Nityanatha Siddha, of about 10th or 11th century A. D., who wrote Rasaratnakara may be mentioned here. Pujyapada is also a name frequently quoted in the book, Basavarajiyam, which is popular in Andhra. Several prescriptions are attributed to Pujyapada, but no details regarding the identification of Pujyapada, quoted in these texts are available. It is considered that he may be one of the siddhas of Shripurvata.

Another work related to Andhra is Maharnava or Madanamaharnava,* dealing mainly with karmavipaka. Recently, a palm leaf manuscript of Maharnava has been located in Hyderabad. This manuscript in Telugu script was transcribed at Dharmapuri, (in the present Karimnagar district) on the banks of holy Godavari. The colophon in the last page mentions that the work entitled Maharnava was compiled by Mandhatri son of Madanapala. No other evidences are available to establish the identity of the author. Another colophon in this manuscript itself attributes the work to Vishveshvarabhattacha, son of Peddibhattu. The name Peddibhattu makes us believe that the author was an

* A book was published under the name Madanamaharnava in the Gaekwad's Oriental Series, Baroda as No. 117. I could not procure a copy of it but the catalogue mentions that the treatise was compiled during the reign of Mandhatri, son of Madanapala.

Andhra. Peddibhattu is also known as the name of the brother of Mallinatha, the great commentator.

This work quotes puranas and many other works alongwith Chaturvargachintamani, which is believed to have been compiled in the later half of 13th century. Hence the work must have been compiled later than 13th century. Many works, mainly of the nature of dharma sastra are attributed or associated with the court of Madanapala of the family of Taka. The approximate date of the literary activity of Madanapala is between 1360-1390 A. D. It is, therefore, reasonable to conjecture that this work was compiled about the end of 14th century A. D.

Vaidyavallabha or Vaidyarajavallabha is a treatise composed by Lakshmanacharya, who was a personal physician or pranacharya of king Immadi Bukka (1404-1406) son of Harihara II, of Vijayanagara kingdom. Lakshmanacharya belonged to Vatsa gotra and was the son of Vallabha. It is mentioned that the author compiled the work on the request of the king and that the work is according to the dharma and artha and is delightful to the physicians. It also mentions that it contains remedies for the gods, demons, siddhas and human beings. The three copies of manuscripts of this work available in Mysore appear to be incomplete and deal with chikitsa-treatment of different diseases. The book might have also contained parts dealing with other branches.

Abhidhanaratnamala is a work on materia medica compiled by an unknown author. This small work is divided into six skandhas named after the six rasas. Substances are grouped into these six skandhas, according to the predominant rasa. First a list of the substances in the group is given and next synonyms of each substance are given in order. The work is earlier than 15th century A. D. This work is also called Shadrasanighantu, probably to differentiate it from another nighantu work with the same name, Abhidhanaratnamala by Halayudha of 10th century A. D.

Next mention may be made of the two popular works in Andhra-Vaidyachintamani and Basavarajiya. Vaidyachintamani was written by Indrakanthi Vallabhacharya and Basavarajiya was composed by Basavaraja. These two contain mainly prescriptions for diseases, particularly those popular in Andhra and belong to 17th and 18th centuries respectively.

Ramachandrika is a work, probably written by Ramachandra son of Kashinatha. This work is a compilation dealing with the treatment of various diseases. The subject of Karmavipaka is also dealt with in detail, quoting many ancient works like Brahmapurana, Padmapurana, Brahmagita, Maheshwara tantra etc. There are no evidences to establish the date or place of the work. From the appearance of the paper and character of the manuscript, the date of the manuscript is suggested as 19th century. The compilation might be earlier by a few years.

Dravyaratnavali is an another manuscript from Andhra. Evidently it deals with materia medica-substances and their uses. Apart from articles, which are used as

medicines, it deals with the actions and properties of substances used in daily life of people. A number of substances such as dietetic preparations, from various kinds of fish, meat, cereals, vegetables, fruits, milk etc. is described. The substances described are mostly used in Andhra and have not been described in any other work of materia medica in Sanskrit or Telugu. Neither the date of composition nor the name of the author is mentioned anywhere in the work. So far seven copies of manuscript of this work have been located. Out of them one palm leaf manuscript mentions the date of transcription as 23rd June, 1789. Hence the work might have been compiled in the first or second half of the 18th century.

Ayurvedabdhisara is an another manuscript of 19th century. This is a compilation from earlier works and deals with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The work quotes authors like Charaka, Sushruta, Gayadasa and Jejjata. The author has not mentioned his name but mentions in the end that he compiled this work after studying assiduously many works for the use of physicians who are proficient in theoretical and practical knowledge. He also mentions that the work was completed in 1831 A. D.

Two more Sanskrit works have been noticed recently by the Institute. One is Rasasutrabbhidhana. It deals with the origin of mercury from the semen of Lord Siva. The popular story about mercury is narrated in prose of good literary standard. The author is not known.

Another work is a commentary entitled Sanjivani on Ahstangahridaya. The commentary appears to be on the sutrasthana of Ashtangahridaya. The author is Gelavan-gala Mangalasin. No other details about the author or book are available.

These two palmleaf manuscripts are preserved in the Andhra Pradesh Government Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Institute, Hyderabad where proper facilities for the study of the manuscripts are not available. These two works appear to be very important medico-historically.

SUMMARY

Andhra region contributed to Ayurveda by evolving a special type of approach combining the traditions of North and South. The article gives brief notes on the Sanskrit authors/works on Ayurveda like Gathasaptashati, Nagarjuna, Characharya, Parahitasamhita, Maharnava, Vaidyavallabha and others. Both published and unpublished works are mentioned. It gives the medico historical information in the Malkapuram

inscription about the establishment of hospital and maternity home. Inscriptional evidence about the parahita family of physicians is also given.

सारांश

आंध्रप्रदेश का संस्कृत में आयुर्वेद को योगदान

बी. रामाराव

आंध्रप्रदेश ने आयुर्वेद को जो अपना योगदान दिया है वह एक खास किस्म का है और उसने इसके लिये उत्तर तथा दक्षिण की परम्पराओं को मिलाकर ऐसा किया है। प्रस्तुत प्रबंध में कुछ संस्कृत भाषा के लेखकों के ऊपर संक्षेप में नोट लिखा गया है जिसके साथ गाथासप्तशती जैसे पुस्तकों पर एवं नागार्जुन, चारुचर्या, परहितसंहिता, महार्णव, वैद्यवल्लभ और ऐसे ही अन्यवर्णनों को सम्मिलित किया गया है जिनमें प्रकाशित अथवा अप्रकाशित दोनों प्रकार की कृतियों को बताया गया है। इसमें मलकापुर के अभिलेखके बारे में वैद्यकेतिहासीय दृष्टिसे सूचना दी गयी है जिसमें यह बताया गया है कि एक चिकित्सालय और एक प्रसूतिगृह की स्थापना की गयी थी। अभिलेख पर आधारित प्रमाणों से परहित के परिवार वाले वैद्यों की जानकारी दी गयी है।