**Review on Dhanwantari nighantu, bhavaprakasha nighantu and Raja nighantu**

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**Abstract**

The word *Nighantu* is one of the important aspect in the study of *Dravyaguna Vijnana* (Materia medica). The importance of *Nighantu* was highlighted for the first time by Acharya Narahari Pandit in his work called *Raja Nighantu* during 14th century A.D. He states that a physician without the knowledge of *Nighantu*, a scholar without the knowledge of *Vyakaranam* (Grammar) and a soldier without the knowledge of *Ayudha* (Weapons) are laughing stalk in the world. The *Nighantu* literature is one of the important aspect in the study of *Ayurveda* and specially in the subject of *Dravyaguna Vijnana*. The ancient *Nighantu* were actually like *Kosa* (Compendium), containing the synonyms, properties, actions and their uses of *Dravya* (Drugs). In true sense the *Nighantu* means collection of words, synonyms and the names of the medicinal drugs. The *Nighantu* may be defined as a glossary containing synonymous groups, the names of the drugs, plants, animals, minerals or anything that is administered either as food or medicine to the human body. The importance of *Nighantu* has been explained for the first time by Narahari Pandita, son of Isvarasuri in his work *Raja Nighantu* during 14th century A. D. The science and activities related to detection, evaluation, understanding and prevention of adverse drug reactions or any other drug related problems. Ancient texts clearly mention that if a drug is used without the knowledge of its proper action, it would certainly act as a poison. This statement clearly states that the knowledge of *Nighantu* is indispensable for a *Vaidya*. In *Ayurveda*, the *Tritoshia* are the essential triad influencing the health and disease conditions. Thus, the knowledge of side effects of drugs that affect their normal functions becomes necessary. The present work is systematically dealt with the introductory part of these *Nighantus*.

**Keywords:** Dhanwantari Nighantu, Raja Nighantu, Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Pandit Narahari, Acharya Bhavanamishra etc.

**Introduction**

Dhanvantari Nighantu is one of the oldest Ayurvedic materia medica placed between 8th -10th AD. The original name of this lexicon is *Dravyavali samucchaya*. This book contains seven Vargas namely; Guduchyadi varga, Shatabupshadi Varga, Chandanadi Varga, Karaviradi Varga, Amradi Varga, Swarnadi Varga, and Mishrakadi Varga, and the total numbers of drugs are 527. The drugs are classified in this book are on the basis of *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* etc. The *Nighantu* starts with salutation to Lord Dhanvantari. The peculiar of this *Nighantu* is the Varga starts with the name of the first drug e.g, *Guduchi as Guduchyadi varga*. And the Vargas of the medicinal plants are explained systematically first with synonyms and then the properties. The *Dadima* and *Kadali* mentioned in *Shatabupshadi Varga* and *Karaveeradi Varga* respectively, Acharya Hemadri the commentator of *Astangahridaya* mentioned this *Nighantu* in the name of *Dravyavali* [1]. The *Dravyavali* contains only the synonyms of the drugs; later on the properties of the drugs were added. Therefore the Dhanvantari Nighantu is the compiled book. The author of this book is still under mystery, but it is claimed that Mahendra Bhogika, son of Krishna Bhogika of Sthaneshwar now a days is called as *Thane of Maharashatra* had claimed the author of this book [2]. He told that without the knowledge [3] of the *Nighantu* the *Vaidya* is unable to treat the patient. *Ksheeraswami* the commentator of the *Amarakosha* has quoted the Dhanwantari Nighantu. The date of *Ksheeraswami* is 11th century AD [4]. Hence the Dhanwantari Nighantu can be placed in 10th century AD.

**Dhanwantari nighantu Discussion**

Acharya of this *Nighantu* [5] quotes same drug having different names can be evaluated carefully with the help of Gopala, Tapaswi, Shikari, and Adivasi people.
The physician should carefully analyse the drugs with the help of Rasa, Virya, Vipaka, Prabhava and then applied for treatment. While explaining about the collection of the drugs the author has tried to rule out the controversies. While collecting the drug a physician come across the similar name to the other drug, and the controversy arises, so qualified Vaidya should carefully analyse the properties and then applied his Yukti to overcome the controversies. While explaining the importance of the Nighantu author enumerated a quotation which is admirable. To examine the patient Dosha, Aushadha, Desha, Kala, Sharira, Ayu, Satmya, Bala, Agni, Samprapti, Karana, Lakshana, Sadhyasadhyata are taking in to consideration for the examination and treatment of the patient. The book starts with following Vargas; Guduchyadi Varga- 128 Drugs- Drugs of bitter taste, Shamapushpadi Varga- 54 drugs- Containing spices, Chandanadi Varga- 79 drugs- Containing aromatic drugs, Karaveeradhi Varga- 75 drugs- Containing small plants and herbs, Amradi Varga- 74 drugs- Containing fruits, Suvarnadi Varga-16 mineral origin- Containing minerals and food substances, 2 animal, 27 Dhany Varga, 78 Dravya Varga, 44 Mansa Varga, 9 Mutra Varga, Mishrakadi Varga- 59 group of drugs. The Gajapippali is the said to be the fruit of Chavaya by this Nighantu. The types of Karanja is 2 in ancient texts, 5 in Amarakosha where as 6 in Dhanwantari Nighantu. Murva is Tikavalli the author took it as Morata (Maerua arenaria Hook & Th). The Yasa and Dhanvayasa are quite different plants. But in this Nighantu it is claimed that the Yasa is type of Dhanvayasa. Gandhapalashini is stated as type of Shati. The Shwasari is described as type of Patha. In ancient classical texts the Patha is of two varieties, Patha and Rajapatha. The Ajashrini is mentioned as synonyms of Meshashrini. The Kasagghi and Vrintaki are described as type of Brihati. The Aralu and Shyonaka are entirely different plants but the Dhanwantri Nighantu explains the synonyms. In the group of Asthavarga the Vijaya (Cannabis sativa Linn) is described as type of Meda under the Asthavarga. The Dadhupushpi and Kakandi is described as type of Kapikacchu. The Prachinamalaka is entirely different plant, in this Nighantu it is type of Amalaki. The Karnikara is mentioned as synonyms of Aragwadha. The Arani and Jayapala are mentioned as synonyms of Donki. The Kanchanashirini and Swarnakshi are the types of Kshirini plant. The Balapanchaka (Bala, Atibala, Nagabala, Mahabala, Rajabala) are mentioned by this Nighantu. The flours of barley, wheat, and rice are used as substitute for Vamshalochana. The Tavakshi or Tugakshi is a type of Vamshalochana. The starch obtained by this plant is used as substitute for Vamshalochana. The Krishnajiraka is termed as Kashirajiraka which indicates that the habitat of the plant. The seeds of Shigru Beeja is used as Shweta Maricha. The types of Yavani are Chauhara, Yavani, Parasikya Yavani. The types of Chandana are Rakt Chandana, Pattanga, Kaliyaka, Barbarika. The Gandhamamsi or Bhutak shepherd are described as synonyms of Mamsi. Rasanjana has been described as a type of Chakshushya where as Shilajit and Gairika have been described as type of Pushpanjana. The Tilvaka and Tilaka are the synonyms of Lodhra while the Kramuka is used as synonyms of Pattika Lodhra. The Kakajangha, Kakanaasa, Kakadani, Chudamani and Shwetakambohi are described as type of Kakamachi. The Gunja has Ucchata synonym. The Chaannaka, Moolaka and Grinjana are described as types of Moolaka. The Mandukaparni is described as Suvarchala and Bramhi as Bramhasuvarchala. Nakuli is synonyms of Sarpagandha and Gandhanakuli is Sarpakshi. Vishnukranta is describes as synonym of Shankhpushpi. Darbha is of two types viz; Mridu Darbha and Khara Darbha. The Mridu Darbha is Kusha where as Khara Darbha is Darbha. Koshamra is smaller variety of Amra. The Madhu Karkati is described as type of Beejapura. Because of similarity in taste, the Changeri is described as smaller type of Amlika (Kshudramalaki). Apart from Nuktamala, Prakirya, Udakirya, and Angaravallika have been described as types of Karanja. Asana is described as type of Sarja. Joorna is included in cereals, the Karata is described as type of Tripata. The Vanamethika or Hispitha is type of Methika. This is Ashwabala of the ancients. The Khastila is described as type of grains. The Aphuka has also been described as exudation of the plant. Ahiphenha is also included in Upavisha. Several groups of drugs have been defined such as Swada Triphala, Sugandha Triphala, Chatarbhadra, Pancha Bhiranga, Sarvaushadhika, Sugandhamalaka, Sugandhu Panchaka, Panchasarpak, Panchasurana, Panchusidhidushadhika etc. Yashada is first described in this Nighantu. Gauripushhana (Arsenic) and Agnijara (Amber gris) are described in Sadharana Rasas.

The Ahiphenha, Jayapala,and Agnijara, Zinc are important addition in the Indian Medica Medica during the medieval period during 12th century AD.

Raja nighantu introduction
Rajanighantu is a Ayurvedic medical lexicon written by Acharya Pandit Narahari. The work is also called Ahbidhanachudamani [6] or Nighantu Raja. This lexicon is placed in between 14-15th century AD. The names of different varieties of plants are enumerated in this lexicon along with their medicinal properties. The work is divided into 24 sections. This Nighantu contains total 23 Varga, Viz; Anupadi Varga, Dharnyadi Varga, Guduchyadi Varga, Shatavahagi Varga, Parpatadi Varga, Pippalyadi Varga, Moolakadi Varga, Shalamyadi Varga, Prabhadra Varga, Karaveeradi Varga, Amradi Varga, Chandanadhi Varga, Suvarnadi Varga, Paaniyadi Varga, Ksheeradi Varga, Shaladadi Varga, Mamsadi Varga, Manushyadi Varga, Simhadi Varga, Rogadi Varga, Savadi Varga, Mishrakadi Varga, Ekarthadi Varga. The book is compiled version of Madanapala Nighantu, Halayudha, Vishwaprakash, Amarakosha, Shesharaja Nighantu [7].

Raja nighantu Discussion
This is the only lexicon which is considered the Dravyaguna Vinijana is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda. It is said that the physician without knowledge of Nighantu, a scholar without the grammar and archer without practice are ridicule by the society [8]. The first two Vargas the Anupadi Varga and Dharnyadi Varga were taken from the Amarakosha. The Mahabhari Vacha and Dwipantara Vacha of Bhavaprakash Nighantu is enumerated in this Nighantu. Karpura Taila, Taila Pippili, Krishna Beeja, Kama Vriddh & Sarvakshara which have not been described by Bhavamishra, have been described in Raja Nighantu. The author also quotes a third variety of Karavira: Peetha Karavira along with Shwetha & Raktha. A description of Kulinjana found, while Bhavaprakash describes the same as Mahabhari Vacha. The Himavali described by Raja Nighantu probably is the Dwipantara Vacha. Description of Zanda was introduced in India in 16th century found. The text gives primary importance to nomenclature of drugs. Raja Nighantu has named drugs based on the 7 factors viz; Rudhi, Prabhava, Desshokti, Akruti, Upama, Veerya, Upatitishhana. The Nighantu classifies land
based on various castes & also on the basis of Panchamahabhuta: Parbhiya, Aapya, Tairaja, Vayavya & Antariksha. The Sthavara Dravyas are of 5 types: Vanaspathi, Vaanaaspathya, Kshupa, Valli & Oshadi, each again being of 3 kinds: Pulinga, Shreeelunga & Napumsakalinga. The description of Chetana (Conscious) & Panchbhoutikatva of plant drugs described. The description of the drugs like Lingini, Somavalli, Kaivathika, Katvi, Amrutashraya, Dhumrapatra, Rudantithi, Hasthishundithi, Dugdhopheni, Zandu, Kulanjan, Mayaphal, Karaskar is found. The Anupadi Varga concerned with characteristics and various types of Desha, tress, and types of trees.

The Dharanyadhi Varga deals with synonyms for earth, mountain, forest. Nakshatra Vriksha. The third to thirteenth chapters dealing with following group of drugs viz: Guduchiyadi Varga, Shatavadi Varga, Parapatadi Varga, Pippalyadi Varga, Moolakadi Varga, Shalmaladi Varga, Paribhadradi Varga, Karaviradi Varga, Amradi Varga, Chandanadi Varga, Swarnadi Varga. The fourteenth to seventeenth chapters dealing with Paniya Varga, Ksheeradi Varga, Shalyadi Varga, Mamadi Varga. The eighteenth chapter deals with Manushyadi Varga. It is about the names of human beings, anatomical terms. The nineteenth chapter is about Simhadi Varga, the names and symptoms of 48 animals. The Twenty Rogadi Varga is about name of diseases, medicinal preparations, their combinations, Astanga of Ayurveda. The twenty one chapter Satwadi Varga is about three Guns, and the three Doshas, Mana, Kala etc.

The twenty two chapter deals about the Mishraka Varga ie group of medicinal substances, The work ends with Ekarthas and Anekarthas. The Raja Nighantu explains more medicinal substances from that of Dhanwantari Nighantu.

Bhavaprakasha nighantu introduction

The author of this compendium was Acharya Bhavamishra. This is recent lexicon placed in the 16th century AD. The Bhavaprakasha Nighantu has 3 parts known as Purva Khanda, Madhyama Khanda & Utara Khanda. Bhavaprakasha Nighantu is the most recent of the classical treatises in Laghutraya (The lesser triad of Ayurveda). This treatise contains knz. owdle of almost all the branches of Ayurveda however, the main focus is on the Kayachikitsa (Medicine in Ayurveda). Every compendium in Laghutraye has some unique characteristic feature of Ayurveda. This treatise is widely popular in Ayurveda for its unique contribution in understanding the properties and application of various herbs used in Ayurveda. This compendium for the first time, offered knowledge on all parts of Ayurveda along with the detail descriptions of medicinal plants used in clinical practice. This classical text has been written in Sanskrit language. Although it provides details on all the aspects of Ayurveda, it is also known as Karmousadhi Pradhan Nighantu which means the index of Ayurvedic clinical pharmacology. Bhavaprakasha Nighantu is a well-organized and compact re-presentation of the earlier classics like Brahathrayee (The grater triad of Ayurveda).

Bhavaprakasha Nighantu Discussion

The Bhavaprakasha Nighantu is also called as Bhavaprakasha Samhita. It clarifies many controversies on medicinal plants and exemplified many exotic plant species, making it an esteemed treatise for academicians of Ayurveda and botany. This Nighantu is providing Pratinidhik Dravya (9) (Substitutes for several medicinal substances) in case of their unavailability while making some medicinal formulation. These shrubs or substances can be used as alternatives when the originally recommended herbs are not available easily. One can find detail description of Sootikagara in this treatise. Sootikaagara is a part of a house appropriated for a woman who has recently delivered a baby. One can find description on various newer diseases (not available in Brahatrayee or other classical treatises) like Somaroga (Excessive vaginal discharge in females), Shavyamoodaata (Bed wetting) described for the first time in this compendium. This book contains 23 Vargas, one Dravya Pariksha chapter, and Parishishtha chapter. Each name of the Varga starts with the name of first drug. Viz: Haritakya Varga, Karpuradi Varga, Guduchiyadi Varga, Pushpa Varga, Vatatdi Varga, Amradi Varga, Dhattu Varga, Dhany Varga, Shaka Varga, Mamsa Varga, Kritanna Varga, Vasti Varga, Dugdha Varga, Dadhi Varga, Tikra Varga, Vanaumeeta Varga, Ghrita Varga, Mutra Varga, Taila Varga, Sandhana Varga, Madhu Varga, Ishku Varga, Anekartha Varga. The Nighantu explains Dwipantara Vacha(Chopachini), Parasika Vacha, Durusita, Padina, Akarakrabha. Kasha is mentioned the variety of Pushkaramoola. The Karpura is two types viz: Pakwa Karpura and Apakwa Karpura (10). Use of Camphor and Opium in Ayurvedic medicine can be found in this treatise for the first time. The types of Karanja are Naktamala, Pooti Karanja, Karanji have been enumerated. The Swarnakshiri Moolu is named as Choka. The Tagara and Pinda Tagara is the varieties of Tagara. In Dhatu Varga the Yashada, the Chaturbejha, Dhanya Panchaka are mentioned first time in this Samhit. Interestingly, a new disease named ‘Firanga’ (11) which can be compared with ‘Gonorrhea of the modern day is also described in this classical Nighantu. The author mentioned the types of Swarna is 5 and the types of Rajata is 3 types.

Conclusion

By the above discussion it reveals that these Nighantu covers the entire Dravyaguna Vijnana with clinical applications of the drugs. In the Suvarnadi 6th Varga of Dhanwantari Nighantu the animals origin drugs like Kshema, Romo, Mada etc., the Dhooopana of these drugs alleviate Bhoota and Gria Doshas, Unmada, Apasmarahara like property such drugs have to be studied with animal as well as clinical experiments. There are also some Visha hara dravyas which possess the anti allergic activity, such drugs can be taken for the study to rule out the immune I modulatory activity. The authors have highlighted Viruddha Ahara concept in the form of do’s and don’ts of the food articles. The Nighantu have to be explore for the more information like identification, phyto-chemical analysis, physico-chemical analysis knowledge about mentioned drugs.

References


