CONTRIBUTIONS OF CHAKRAPANI DATTA IN INDIAN MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT

Chakrapani Datta, was the greatest and a renowned Commentator of various Ayurvedic samhitas. He was intelligent enough to critically analyse & reveal the hidden secrets of Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. He was the son of Narayan Datta and Naradatta, a courtier of the king, was his spiritual guide. Chakrapani's best known books on ancient medical science are Chikitsa samgraha, Dravyaguna and Sarvasara samgraha (Collection of the essence of things). It is the landmark contribution of Chakrapani in the history of ancient ayurvedic medical science. Entire Chakradatta is composed of 4800 verses which are divided into 79 chapters. Chakrapani was awarded the titles 'Charaka chaturanana' and 'Sushruta sahasranayana' for Charakatattva pradipika and Bhanumati, which were annotations on Charakasanghita and Sushruta respectively. He had excellent knowledge of Sanskrit language and grammar. Chakrapani has also seen so many faults while reading of Caraka Samhita and he has deliberately rejected all those, stating as unauthoratative. The present article highlights some of the glimpses of whole work done by him in the field of Ayurveda. This article represents the in depth knowledge & wisdom of a great Ayurvedic physicians like Chakrapani as well as his skill to elaborate and analyze the samhitas.

KEYWORDS: Chakrapani Datta, Chikitsasangraha, Charaka chaturanana, Dravyaguna, Sushruta sahasranayana, unauthoratative.

INTRODUCTION

Chakrapani Datta (11th century), an Ayurvedic physician and scholar in Sanskrit, was born in the village of Mayureshwar in the Varendra region (presently Birbhum district of West Bengal). He was the son of Narayan Datta, the head of the kitchen of Nayapala, the king of Gauda. Naradatta, a courtier of the king, was Chakrapani's spiritual guide.
Chakrapani’s best known books on ancient ayurvedic medical science are Chikitsa samgraha (Collection of medical practices and procedures), Dravyaguna (Properties of plants) and Sarvasara samgraha (Collection of the essence of things). Chikitsa samgraha, better known as *Chakradatta*, incorporates sections from two rare Ayurvedic books: Charakanyasa and Vrddhasushruta. Chakrapani was awarded the titles ‘Charakachaturanana’ and ‘Sushrutasahasranayana’ for Charakatattva pradipika and Bhanumati, which were annotations on Charaka samhita and Sushruta samhita respectively. Entire Chakradatta is composed of 4800 verses which are divided into 79 chapters. More than 50 sources have been acknowledged from where Chakrapani was inspired for these verses. The chapters are divided as per the diseases, clinical syndromes, therapeutic procedures and include also a chapter on preventive medicine. First 65 chapters are in the order of Madhava-Nidan who had dealt only with the diagnostics whereas Chakradatta only deals with therapeutics.

The uniqueness of Chakradatta is in the description of several metallic and mercurial preparations for the purpose of internal use as medications e.g. Rasaparpati made from purified and processed mercury and sulphur. These are used by experienced and successful Ayurvedic physicians even today. He described assistive devices and surgical techniques such as the “Ksharasutra” (medicated thread) which has currently regained its popularity for its application in various sinuses and fistula-in-ano. The Ksharasutra, which has undergone clinical trials and recommended by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), is widely used by Ayurvedic and allopathic surgeons for the successful treatment of sinus and fistula-in-ano. Many new herbs especially from the flora of Bengal were introduced by Chakradatta in the Ayurvedic preparations such as Ashtisamhara i.e. Asthisandhana (*Cissus quadrangularis*) commonly used in traditional practices and is a plant of interest being investigated for its bone healing activity with current methods of science. Chakradatta has proposed principal line of treatment pertinent to various diseases. He recommends six therapeutic modalities for Anavata (polyarticular inflammatory disease) viz. Langhana (fasting), Swedana (sudation), Tikta- Deepana-Katu dravya (medicinal substances with bitter, pungent taste and digestion-metabolism facilitators), Virechana (laxation), Snehapana (use of medicinal oils), and Basti (medicated enemas) which are to be employed sequentially if the patient reports at an early stage of the disease; otherwise these modalities may also be employed in isolation or in combinations as per the stage of the disease. Several herbal and herbo-mineral formulations are prescribed for Anavata which are still popular among the Ayurvedic practitioners such as Yograj Guggulu, Sinhanad Guggulu, Rasnasaptak kwath.
Panchakola kashayam, Nagarchoorna, Eranda taila etc. Regulation in dietary management with avoidance of certain food substances is emphasized in the chapter on Amavatachikitsa. In order to justify his views expressed in this commentary, Chakrapani has profusely quoted from other authoritative texts on medicine, philosophy etc. which was available during his time. Some of these has gone extinct. Besides Chakrapani used various ‘Nyayas’ to explore the meaning of the main verse of Charaka with proper understanding of it. Here is the elaboration of some of the Nyayas quoted by Chakrapani in the Sutra Sthana of Charaka Samhita.

**Kakadanta Pareeksha Nyaya**

It refers to searching of the teeth of a crow. Crow does not have the teeth. But still if we search for it, then it is of no use. Thus, whenever a work is done which is useless, not helpful for our self and also for society, this maxim is used. Doing the work whole day but at the end of the day if we feel it is of no use, at that time this Nyaya is utilized. Work with a definite aim is always praised. Ayurveda has a definite aim (Pravrutti) of attaining long and healthy life. This is the main reason of including all the factors related to human being and health in Ayurveda. Not even a single factor is explained without any particular aim. It can also be considered in the field of research. Initiation of any kind of research either clinical, literary or any other form should be for the benefit of a large group of the population. Otherwise, it is just like Kakadanta Pareeksha Nyaya. One has to administer the medicine which helps in curing that particular disease. Otherwise, it is of no use.

**Ghunakshara Nyaya**

Here, Ghuna refers to a type of Kiida (insect) Visheshha(woodcutter). A woodcutter when cuts the wood there occurs some design(Akshara). Its main purpose is not to produce any design, or it does not know about the design, but due to Daivayoga it happens, and a beautiful design will be in front of us. This is called Ghunakshara Nyaya. It is relevant, when a physician provides the treatment without proper judgment and without knowing the disease properly or the characteristic of the drug in detail, sometimes accidentally the disease gets cured. To fulfill the two main aims of Ayurveda, Oushadha (drug) plays an important role. Similarly, physician is also important as like drug. Both drug and physician are equally significant to cure or prevent disease. A physician who does not know about judicious use of the drug at that time, even that drug is having nectar like qualities is of no use. Any kind of drug and its action entirely depends upon the thoughtful utilization of the physician. He can convert a
poisonous drug into medicinal drug by his attentive knowledge. This indicates the key role of a physician in the treatment field. But sometimes, a bad physician who has no knowledge regarding the judicious use of drugs when gives the treatment sometimes the disease may get cure. This is not because of the physician rather it is an accidental cure. Without any effort by that physician, there is a result. This is the Ghunakshara Nyaya.

**Utsarga Apavada Nyaya**
When a general rule is broken due to some special reason, this Nyaya is utilized.[3] Here, Utsarga means a general rule and Apavada denotes exception.

For example, it is mentioned that in Kaphaja Roga, Swedana is indicated, but in Kaphaja Timira Roga there is an exception for this rule.

**Shringa Grahika Nyaya**
In a mass of many cows, when it is obligatory to denote a particular cow, by touching the horn of a cow, we can symbolize it. This is called Shringa Grahika Nyaya.[4] Most of the diseases mentioned in Ayurveda are having much common signs and symptoms. At that time, we have to find out the special symptom which is helpful in the differential diagnosis. Thus, to mention the Pratyatma Lakshana of the disease or for the pinpoint explanation of the subject, this Nyaya is used. When we tell to do Pathyapalana in general, patient cannot understand what to do. But if we explain to take Shadangapaniya in Jwara, it is the utilization of this Nyaya.

**Bhuyasa Alpam Avajiye Nyaya**
The strong people will overpower the weak person; this is the meaning of this Nyaya.[5] In Ayurveda, the relation of Deha Bala, Dosha Bala, and Oushadhi Bala will be explained by this Nyaya. When the strength of a person is less than the aggravated Doshas, they over power and produces disease in that person. Similarly, the Oushada, which we are administered to cure the disease, should overpower the Dosha. Otherwise, it would not have any effect on the disease. For example, when we administer Sneha, the Samyak Sneha Lakshana appears in some people on 3rd day, in some on 5th day while in some on 7th day. This shows the strength of the aggravated Dosha either less or more. Thus, while explaining both vyadhi utpatti and vyadhi shaman, this Nyay is utilized.
Ardha shoucha Nyaya

When the given principles are implemented in half, this Nyaya is utilized. It is explained while mentioning the Anaditva and Nityatva of Ayurveda as it is not completely agreed by all. Similarly, when we suggest the Pathyapathya of Ahara, Vihara, and Oushadha, if patient not follows it completely this Nyaya is applied.

The concept of ‘Khale kapotea nyay’, Kedari-kullya-nyay⁶ in the context of the process of metabolism and the concept of Posshya (Sthayi) and Poshaka (Asthayi) dhatus⁷ and the concept of Sahaja and Vainayiki buddhi.⁸ etc. are extremely important for the understanding of a disease properly. Necessity of the descriptions of Physiological events⁹ before the descriptions of morbid conditions is unique in chakrapani. Chakrapani has frankly expressed his likes and dislikes¹⁰ for the views expressed by other commentators and authors.

Chakrapani is considered to be the most authoritative commentator of Charaka. The full version of Ayurveda dipika is available with us (except on a few verses). He was acquainted with the input made by Dridavala and other scholars on Caraka samhita. He has made justifications almost all interpretations made by him. While doing so, some portions of the text which even now appear to be later interpolations may be overlooked by chakrapani.¹¹ Chakrapani also made significant contributions to Sanskrit grammar and Nyay philosophy (described earlier). One of his famous book is Vyakarana tattva chandrika (Treatise on theories on grammar). It is believed that he also annotated Gautam's Nyayasutra and compiled the dictionary Shabda chandrika.

Chakrapani has seen so many faults while reading of Caraka Samhita and he has deliberately rejected¹² all those stating as unauthoritative. Although we have no known information regarding his appearance, we will always remember him as the most influential physician of Ayurveda in Indian history.

CONCLUSION

Chakrapani was the greatest commentator in the history of Ayurveda. He is the only person who has given us an insight for the understanding of Caraka properly. His contribution in the explanation of Charaka, annotations, specific yogas will always be remembered in the history of next generations. The legacy of therapeutic principles specific for the disease recommended by Chakradatta will continue in the ages to come.
REFERENCES
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