BOOK REVIEW

KĀŚYAPA-SAṂHITĀ by P.V. Tewari. Chaukhamba Visvabharati, Varanasi 1996 pp. LXXI + 792. Rs. 800

It is a pleasure to go through the work on Kāśyapa-Saṃhitā, translated and commented by Prof. (Dr.) P.V. Tewari. Nepal Rajguru Pt. Hemraja Sharma has already done a pioneering work on this treatise, which is considered a milestone in the annals of the history of Āyurveda even today. However the actual contribution of Kāśyapa, in terms of the details given by the other compendia, could not be evaluated yet. Dr. (Miss) Tewari has filled this void through her labour and deep insight of the subject, of which she has been a life long teacher.

This very aspect is quite precisely being dealt with here.

Only two points will be discussed in this regard. The commentator has appreciated the contribution of two *Śatva* i.e. *Prājāpatya* (śl-11, p.81) and *Yakṣa* (śl-24, p.84). But somehow she refrained from expressing her own considered opinion about the two. No doubt it is the writer's right, yet the reader feels deprived here.

The identical is the case, where Śakuni and Pūtanā are equated with Pitta & Kapha (śl-2, p.9). It is a brilliant hypothesis, yet one feels again deprived with the rationality of the thought the reasoning behind it.

The commentator also pin-points the short-falls of K.S., where it fails to touch the height attained by the other compendia.

The description of the uses of wine falls short in K.S. in comparison to other compendia. This is narrated quite elaborately in Carak and Vagbhaṭa who also present in detail about alcoholism.

Even the portions, where K.S. exceeds in certain aspects and also falls short of details about the same topic such as *Udāvarta* too have not been missed.

Such expositions of specialities and shortfalls are numerous and are scattered all over the book. Through these, the commentator has succeeded in establishing the originality of Kāśyapa, Saṃhitā.

The commentator has presented tables/ comparative statements to elucidate the topic at so many places. This gives an added advantage to the reader. To quote one such deliberation (p.119-124) where components-derived from *Mahābhūtas,* organs derived from Mother/Father, or features developing from *self, sātmya, rasa & satvā* etc. are compared with different compendia/texts. This has revealed the vast expanse of her approach towards the specificity of the subject, and also her ability to gauge the reader's quest precisely.

The commentator's touch-stone is the selection of a correct and appropriate word, where the original text is ambiguous. Dr. (Miss) Tewari appears to have crossed through this acid-test.

The commentator's suggestions as represented above have helped to obtain the meaningful explanations of *Kāśyapa Saṃhitā*. But, as we know that K.S. is quite dilapidated, broken and carries the transcriber's errors. This presents a huge and difficult task before the commentator. In spite of her sincere efforts, these suggestions have sometimes created confusions too. For example, the commentator accepts the word *Rāmaṭham* in place of *Sāmakam* at p.590 (ś1-135, footnote) there is no drug available by this name *(Sāmakam)*. Therefore only after exploring the other alternatives, the substitute *Rāmaṭham* should have been accepted.

Had K.S. intended two separate drugs i.e. *Dhānyakam* & *Sāmakam*, the text would have been instead of that *Sāmakam* is used herre as an adjective to *Dhānyakam*. With the word Sāma the suffix is probably used according to Pāṇini's which denotes-unmatured or the crude form of *Dhānyakam* (Also Ref. M.W. Sans.-Eng. Dictionary).

On similar analogy *Saralam-Dāru* in this very (recipe-ś1-136) can be accepted as one single drug - *Cīda* or *Pinus roxburgii* Sarg. In Gujarati this is known as *Saral-Dāru* or *Deodār* (Ref. Kirtikar & Basu pt-II, p. 2388).

Another such omission is noted at p.644/ś1-59, where the commentator suggests to substitute *Trikarma* with *Trikarṣa* and explains it to be a congregation of *Aguru, Ativisā* & *Mustā*. Raj Nighaṇṭu has explained it as *Nāgara (Śuṇṭhi), Ativiṣā* & *Mustā*. Even *Vaidyaka -Sabda-Sindhu* supports this view. How *Nāgara* is replaced by *Aguru* is not understood.

However, the commentator's suggestions regarding unintelligible texts are quite apt, to the point and overall helpful in understanding the K.S. text properly. The carelessness or the lack of the knowledge of the transcribers has resulted into so many mis-quotes, which have been very ably corrected, suggested and dealt with by the learned commentator with apt attention. Such examples too are numerous - say at p. 223,286, 473-477, 527, 658 and many more specially in the *Khila-Sthānam* (Ch. 24).

Naturally the huge list of such corrections does leave the chances for an over sight. For example the commentator translates Versana as *Kāsamarda*, based on the authority of V.S.S. and the V.S.S. inherits the reference from *Hārāvalī*. Where-from *Hārāvalī* derives, the meaning of *Veṣaṇa* as *Kasamard* is not known. *Shabda Kalpadrum* too followed the line of Hārāvali yet he quotes *Veṣaṇa* meaning → *Dhanyakam* & *Tuttha*.

Now Monier Williams equates it *(Veṣaṇa)* with Flacourtia Cataphracta Roxb., Syn. *-F.Jangomas - Raeusch.*, identified in Patrī or Pāniālu. Kirtikar

and Basu too support it. Therefore such a categorical comment in favour of *Veṣaṇa* = *Kāsamarda* by the commentator requires a second thought. And this second thought must have occupied the commentator's mind. Since only this probability can explain as to why she omitted the mention of *Veṣaṇa* in the Appendix VI (Flora of K.S.)

However this does not mean that the commentator is soft cornered towards a particular idea or thought. She has translated the word *glana* as *languor*-denoting the loss of energy or a sense of tiredness. She has wisely differentiated it with the word *glāni* which carries a sense of decline.

Similarly the Word *Prāna* is translated as :

- the vital breath-(p.94); life-(p.113)
- inspiration & expiration-(p.118)

Apparently it may look confusing but to decipher and present the actual sense of the text, she has well excercised the liberty of a true translator.

Her commendable effort is to provide valuable appendices to the treatise. Prof. P.V. Sharma has provided such appendices in his *Carak Saṃhitā* and the commentator of K.S. has nicely maintained the tradition in I, II, IV, V, VII (Appendices). While dealing with the names of cities and countries (App. III) she has improved upon the list, as provided by Rajguru H.R. Sharma, by including the textual references from K.S. No doubt in this effort she had to give up the details propounded by the Rajguru. Appendices VI & VII are again the similar examples.

The commentator has thoroughly explored the whole text. This fact is quite perceptible through her masterly contribution in her chapter of Introduction (p. VII to XXXIV). She has discussed in detail about Kāśyapa, Kaśyap, Vṛddhajivaka, Vātsya, New diseases (like Phakka, Child Visarpa, Carmadala etc.) and doses of enema with logic. The period of Kāśyapa, is fixed for all the three posible origins with reason. By putting Vātya upto 7th cent. AD Dr. Tewari has accomodated Atri Deva, who puts K.S. in the 3rd cent. AD because it contains the verses from Suśruta (uttar-śl 33/6=*Āyurved Ka Itihas* p.208).

And lastly few words about her humane approach. There is nothing new in paying tributes to the Living Encyclopaedia of Āyurveda-Prof. P.V. Sharma-who commands reverence equally from her eulogists and critics, but to pay tributes to Prof. Chandan Chaturvedi, who quietly remained devoted to the cause of *Kaumāra-Bhṛtya* and allied subjects throughout his life, is really something very very touching.

I thank Prof. Tewari for bringing out such an excellent treatise (Kāśyapa-Saṃhitā), which will remain a mile-stone in its own field for the years to come.

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