GADADHARA

By

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Vijayaraksita in his commentary on Madhavanidana provided a list of a few famous commentators of classical and later treatises as well as authors. It is believed by some of the medical historians that the names are listed chronologically maintaining metrical order. According to this view, Gaddghara’s position is after Jajjata among the commentators of Carakasamhitā.

D.C. Bhattacharya distinguishes two persons by name Gadadhara connected with medical treatises. They are Vaidya Gadadhara or Gadadhara and Gadadhara, the father of Vaṅgasena. The latter is considered ater to the first and he was known to the medical world only as the father of Vaṅgasena, a Bengali, living in Kāñjika and contemporary to the Sena dynasty. The former, i.e., Vaidya Gadadhara (Gadadhara) was quoted by Niścalakara, and he is considered as the medical author mentioned by Vijayaraksita. But Gadadhara was not quoted by Cakrapāṇidatta, Dalhana, Aruṇadatta or Hemājī. Even though, Dalhana does not quote him directly a close study of his commentary reveals that Dalhana preferred Gadadhara’s version of Suṣrutaśamhitā and modified his copy accordingly before writing Nibandhasangrahavyakhya. Information ascribed to Vaidya Gadadhara is quoted in the Saduktikarṇamṛta of Śrīdharadāsa, composed in 1205 A.D. Śrīkantṭhadatta, also quoted Gadadhara (G.D.) in his commentary on Siddhayoga. Bhāvamiśra quoted him in Jvaradhikāra.

Parentage:

Very little is known about his parentage and other details. Niścalakara indicated in Ratnaprabhā that G.D. was of the dāsa’s family in his reference ‘antarāṅgagadadhara-dāsa’.

According to Bhattacharya the word antaraṅga means a court physician. Cakrapāṇidatta used the word for his elder brother, who was antaraṅga to Gauḍādhinātha. Śivadāsasena designated this word to denote “a learned physician of good family” in addition to the previous one in his commentary called Tattvacandrika on Cakradatta. However,

1. Bhaṭṭāra jajjata gadadhara vāpyacandra śricakrapāṇi bakulesvarasena bhojaiḥ Īśāna kārtika sukra sudhira vaidyair maitreyas madhava mukhairlikhitam vicintya.
2. Indian Historical Quarterly, xxxiii p. 140
3. Indian Medicine by Jolly, p. 8
4. N. N. Dāsgupta, Indian Culture 3, p. 159
5. Bhāvaprakāśa, Jvaradhikāra, interpolation verse 88
6. Indian Historical Quarterly XXIII 1947
7. Cakradatta Chap. 79 verse 15
the term "antarajiga" only denotes that the particular person belongs to the inner circle in the court of a king, or a confident of a king. Usually, the court-physicians are "antarajaṅgas" of the king. The identity of the king is not clear from the statement of Niścalakara.

It is possible that he came from the famous family of vaidyas of Bengal and was so learned that he had the honourable title of Vaidya Gadādharadāsa or Antaraṅgā since a learned physician is supposed to be the shield of everyone's heart. G.D.'s nativity is also strengthened by internal evidence. He uses a Bengali word Tāksana for Svarṇacāḍa as quoted in the passages of pramehanidānam by Vijayarakṣita. Tākā for Svarṇa (gold) is purely a Bengali pronunciation, frequently in force for coins. This establishes that G.D. was a native of Bengal. His parents were of Dāsa family.

Works of Gadādhara

Judging from the references of G.D. quoted by Vijayarakṣita for the first ten chapters of Mādhavanidāna, Meulenbeld seems to have come to the conclusion that Gadādhara wrote a commentary on Suṣrutasamhitā. The close scrutiny of the quotations of Gaḍādhara mentioned by Vijayarakṣita's student Śrīkanṭhadatta indicates that he was associated with the commentary of Carakasaṃhitā also. Śrīkaṭhadatta in the supplementary stanzas of Madhukoṣa quotes G.D.'s passages from his commentary on Carakasaṃhitā pertaining to treatment (cikitsa) of prameha and Kuṣṭha respectively. Haridattasastri, in his introduction to Carakasaṃhitā also mentioned G.D. as one of the commentators of Carakasaṃhitā, perhaps on these grounds.

G.D. not only wrote a commentary but also seems to have revised Suṣrutasamhitā. This is clearly understood from the fact that Dalhana preferred the G.D.'s version of Suṣrutasamhitā and revised his copy accordingly.

Majority of the quotations by Vijayarakṣita and his student Śrīkaṭhadatta in Madhukoṣa are on the verses taken from Suṣrutasamhitā particularly from Nidānasthana and Uttaratantra.

G.D. is stated to have written a treatise called Vaidyaprasāraka. Niścalakara, pupil of Vijayarakṣita mentions G.D. by name of his work Vaidyaprasārake gadādharādayastu, meaning as also mentioned by G.D. and others in Vaidyaprasāraka. Besides, Niścalakara often quotes Vaidyaprasāraka by G.D. A work called Vaidyaprasāraka is repeatedly quoted in Śrīkaṭhadatta's commentary on Siddhayoga and G.D. is also quoted in the same commentary but Śrīkaṭha nowhere correlates Vaidya-

8. antaḥ = inner, aṅga = part
9. Com. of Śivadāsasena on 6 above.
10. Kvacit tāksaṇā cāsah iti gadādharah.  
11. Mādhavanidāna verse 13 & 14  
12. Madhukoṣa, netraroganidāna. verse 50 etc.  
13. e. g. on 9–51, 11–28, 37–59.
prasāraka with G.D. The manuscript of an anonymous medical work called Brahadvaidyaprasāraka is in the Coll-Cordier in Paris. Bhrad means voluminous and is only an adjective which is often omitted in common use as names are pronounced generally without the title. It may conclude, in this case, that Vaidyaprasāraka by Gadadhara is available in its anonymous form in that manuscript.

There are indications from quotations of G.D. by Vijayarākṣita that G.D. also wrote a commentary on Vāgbhaṭa.

Date

Bhattacharya assumes that the list of authors given by Niścalakara is in chronological order. According to that G.D. was later than Vāgbhaṭa, Ravigupta (author of Siddhāśara), Iśvarasena and Mādhavakara and anterior to Govardhana (author of Ratnamālā), Çakrapāṇī and Bakula.

But in the light of the references from Vijayarākṣita, it is proper to conclude that G.D. lived after Jajjaṭa and preceded Vāpyacandra.

Due to the position of Mādhavakara, another list by Vijayarākṣita also becomes chronological, because Kartikakunda is posterior to Mādhavakara and anterior to Vṛnda-kunda, if the remark of Śrīkāṭhadatta on Siddhayoga is to be trusted. In this Vāpyacandra is considered earlier to Mādhavakara.

G.D. adopted the view of Drḍhabala who was quoted by Jajjaṭa. In the various lists, G.D. is referred to after Jajjaṭa. Therefore the upper limit of G.D.'s date is 7th century or the date of Jajjaṭa. The lower limit must be 8th century or the date of Mādhavakara, who was posterior to Vāpyacandra, who lived after G.D. Therefore G.D. can be considered to have lived between 7th and 8th centuries.

As a commentator

G.D. was a great genius and his interpretations on treatises and texts have theoretical and practical applicability. He is quoted by later authorities viz., Vijayarākṣita and his pupils, Çakrapāṇī and Bhāvamīśra etc. as he widely covered the major three treatises—Bṛhattrayi by his valuable commentaries. The following are a few of the important interpretations which focus his ability and command over disciplines relevant to medicine.

1. G.D. provides an etymological exposition for the term nidāna. Nidāna is that, by which an instruction of a disease is discerned.

15. e.g. Madhukosa-pañcanidāna 4, Jvaranidāna 40, pramehanidāna 13 & 26 etc.
2. A grammatical observation on ‘utpatsyati’ (imminent) by G.D. is interesting. He revised the word utpatsyati as ‘utpitsati’ and derived it from the root ‘pada’ which is used in the sense of ‘gati’ (motion) with the suffix ‘san’. The suffix ‘isi’ is added to it by applying the Paninian rule ‘purvat sanah’ and the word ‘utpitsati’ is derived in parasmaipada form of the root, meaning ‘about to arise’ or ‘imminent(fever)’.

3. A question is raised in case of sannipāta fever. When fever occurs by concerted action (sannipātajvara) of the three morbific entities, of which the qualities are disagreeing to each other like snow and fire, how it then is possible that morbid alteration by concerted action is produced? G.D. justifies the concerted action by saying that “in a fever, by concerted action, there does not occur any mutual injury of the morbific entities by their disagreeing qualities, due to daiva (by chance) and owing to their inherent quality (of not harming each other)”.

4. G.D. interpretes that Suśruta’s term ‘vahni’ (fire) in the description of diarrhoea (atiśāra) arising from grief (śokaja) denotes only ‘pitta’.

5. The next verse mentions “if blood resembling kākānanti comes out from grief with smell or without smell and mixed with faeces or without faeces, the vaidyas declare this to be a very troublesome disease”. It (this type of diarrhoea, i.e., caused by grief) is extremely difficult to treat without the removal of grief as it is not appeased solely by a remedy. According to G.D. a diarrhoea by grief with only such an onset is troublesome but not the other (types) arising from grief.

6. The fourth type of ajīrūa (disintegration of the food) is due to a remnant of the rasa. G.D., however, says “A remnant of the rasa is a remnant with regard to the rasa, it is a remnant with regard to the rasa generated from the food, a component part of the food which has entered it additionally, and is not perceptible, like the water which is present in milk”.

7. A verse in Vatavyādhinidāna of Mādhavanidāna (originally taken from Susrutaśamhitā) runs thus: “Vāta, along with kapha and pitta, and also independently causes the disease ākṣepaka and the fourth is due to injury (abhīhata)”. According to Madhukosa, one is caused by independent vāta only, another by vāta along with kapha and pitta and the fourth is by injury. The last is numbered fourth since daṇḍapatānaka is also counted as
one clinical entity. It is interesting to note that G.D. does not count the daṇḍāpa-
tānaṇa but explains convincingly as follows: “One is by independent vāta, second by vāta
with kapha, third by vāta with pitta and the fourth by injury.

8. G.D. while commenting on Vāgbhaṭa’s words ‘dosāvṛta-pathethavā’ on pra-
mehanidānam quotes Caraka’s words and proves that madhumeha is caused only due to
sāvaraṇa vāyu (āvṛtatāva)

SUMMARY

Gadadhara, commentator of Caraka, Suśruta and Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya was a native of
Bengal. He comes of Dāsa family. He had also revised the Suśrütasamhīta. Gadadhara
was a great genius and his interpretations on treatises and texts have theoretical and
practical applicability. Gadadhara’s date is between 7th and 8th century A.D. He lived
after Jejjāṭa and preceded Vāpyacandra and Mādhavakara.

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