



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Ayurveda**

**RAJA NIGHANTU- A REVIEW**

**KEY WORDS:** Raja Nighantu, Nighantu, Anupadi varga

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**ABSTRACT**

Nighantus are an essential part of Ayurveda. They are glossary of drugs or dravyas indicating their synonyms. Nighantus play an important role in the identification of plants through the systemic and scientific documentation. Raja Nighantu is an important lexicon in Ayurveda especially in Dravya guna. Raja nighantu written by Narahari pandit considers Dravya guna as one among the ashtangas of Ayurveda. It is the first nighantu which recognized the importance of nomenclature of plants.

**INTRODUCTION**

Nighantus plays a very significant role in Ayurveda. The etymology of the word Nighantu is 'Nigama' meaning that which brings out concealed or secret meaning. According to Vachaspatya, Nighantu is a collection of Synonyms. Raja Nighantu is an essential part of Ayurveda literature. Nighantu was written by Narahari Pandit. It consists of 23vargas.

According to Raja Nighantu, even the most learned physician may get confused in the selection of a choice drug without consulting the nighantu because there are numerous types of drugs with different rasa guna veerya vipaka etc.

आयुधं च विना योद्धा त्रयो हासस्य भाजनम्॥  
नियपुना विना वैद्यो विद्वान व्याकरण विना॥  
आयुधं च विना योद्धा त्रयो हासस्य भाजनम्॥

**Title**

The original name of the nighantu is Abhidana Chudamani. It is also known as Dravyabhidana gana samgraha. The nighantu is compiled after consulting various other works like Dhanwantari Nighantu, Madanapala Nighantu, Amarakosa etc and after analyzing the morphology, therapeutic uses etc of a medicinal plant. So the author Prefers the name Raja Nighantu as he considers it best among the nighantus.

**Time Period**

Narahari has not given any evidence about his time period. He mentioned Madana pala nighantu and Dhanwantari nighantu in the book, which means his period may be assigned between 14 AD and 15 AD.

But according to P V Sharma Raja Nighantu is witten after Bhavaprakasa nighantu and places it around 17AD. The reasons for this is peeta karavira, jhandu, karpura taila, krishn bija, surakshara etc mentioned in raja nighantu are not seen in bhavaprakasa nighantu

**Presentation of Work**

The nighantu contains 23 vargas starting with anupadi varga and ending with ekarthadi varga.

**1. Anupadi Varga:**

Describes the types and features of anupa , sadharana and janghala desa (region) along with their sub divisions. It is first time that a varga is dedicated to desa (region). Panchavidha oushadi is mentioned here. Description about Panchama-bhutas in vrikshas (katina as parthiva, ardra as jaleeya usna as tejas, vardhana as vayu, chidratva as akasa). Also the instincts hunger, thirst and sleep in plants is explained in this varga

**2. Dharanyadi Varga:**

Describes about bhumi (soil) and its varieties. Names, synonyms and collection of different parts of plants is mentioned here. It also denotes Nakshatra Vriksha (Plants denoted for 27 stars).

**3. Guduchayi Varga**

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Also known as valli varga most drugs in this varga are creepers or climbers

**4. Satahvadi Varga**

Most of the plants are kshupa or small plants. Five types of bala are mentioned in this varga.

**5. Parpatadi Varga**

Most of the plants are kshudra or small plants. Here four types of pashanabheda are mentioned

**6. Pippalyadi Varga**

Spices like ela, maricha etc are mentioned. Also two types of saindava (sweta & rakta), three types of rasna (mula, patra and trina rasna), four types of pippali (Pippali, Galjapippli, Sainheli, Vanapippali) and four types of manjista are mentioned in this varga.

**7. Mulakadi Varga**

Also known as saka varga. Here five types of mulaka and four types of sigru are mentioned

**8. Shalmalyadi Varga**

Mostly trees and grass which grow wild are included in this varga. This group consist of good dravyas for treatment and hence known as "Vaidakya vishaya Pravinya. Drugs of these varga are efficaceous in curing some of the deadly diseases. Eg: Salmali, Rohitaka

**9. Prabhadradi Varga**

Also called Vriksha varga. Mostly wild trees of medicinal importance are mentioned. In this varga five types of Prabhadradi (Prabhadradi, Mahanimba, Kaidarya, Bhunimba, & Nepala nimba) and six types of Karanja (Karanja, Ghruta karanja, Mahakaranja, Putikaranja, Gucchakaranja & ritha karanja) are mentioned. Eg: agnimantha, kutaja

**10. Karaveeradi Varga**

Mostly flowering plants are mentioned. Fragrance period of different flowers mentioned (Jati-2 muhurta, Chempaka-3 day, Ketaki-8 day). Also four types of Karaveera and three types of dhatura mentioned

**11. Amradi varga**

Mostly fruits are described .So it is also called Phala varga. Five types of amra (Aamra, Koshamra, Rajamra, Maharajamra & Badha rasalabhra) is mentioned in this varga.

**12. Chandanadi Varga**

Most of the drugs are aromatic. In this varga types and examination of Kasturi , seven types of Chandana etc are mentioned. Eg: guggulu, gorochana

**13. Suvarnadi varga**

Drugs of mineral origin are mentioned Eg: Swarna, Roupya

**14. Paniyadi Varga**

Liquid drugs are mentioned. Also called Rasa Varga. Eg: Jala, Madhu

**15. Kshiradi Varga**

Also called Peya Varga. In this varga types of ksira, ghrita, takra etc are mentioned.

**16. Salyadi Varga**

Also called bhojya varga. Mostly Pulses and grains are mentioned. Eg:Sali,Mudga

**17. Mamsadi Varga**

Describes about various types of mamsa and their qualities

**18. Manushyadi Varga**

In this varga names and synonyms of Purusha and stri are mentioned. Also mentions about synonyms of different body parts

**19. Simhadi Varga**

Describes about wild animals and birds

**20. Rogadi Varga**

Describes about various diseases and their synonyms. Seven types of kwatha is mentioned here (Pachana , Shodhana, Kledana, Shaman , Deepana, Tarpana,Shosha ). In this varga, Ashtangas of Ayurveda are mentioned placing Dravyaguna at the first position. 63 types of rasa are also mentioned here.

**21. Satwadi Varga**

Describes satwikadi guna /mental qualities (satwa,raja, tama) and related diseases. Ritu and their features and features of Prakruti are mentioned in this varga.

**22. Misrakadi Varga**

Different group of drugs are mentioned Eg:Panchasugandhi ,Triphala,Panchamutra

**23. Anekarthadi Varga**

Synonyms which represents different drugs are mentioned. Eg:Sahasravedhi for kasturi and hingu

**Contributions of Nighantu**

1. Has developed a unique criteria for dravya namakarana/ nomenclature .

नामानि क्वचिदिह रूढितः स्वभावात्  
देशोक्त्या क्वचन् च लान्चनोपमाभ्याम्  
विर्येण क्वचितितराह्वतिदेशात्  
द्रव्याणामिहिवजनम् ससोधोदितानि

Rudhi	Names have no specific meaning but have been in traditional use since generation	Eg:kinihi- apamarga, tuntuka-syonaka
Swa- bhava	Names that describe the plants special innate activity which is very familiar	Eg:krimighna- vidanga, hayamara- karavira
Deso- kti	Plants are named based on the basis of their source or habitat	Eg:malayaja-cha ndana, magadhi- pippali
Lanc- hana	Names which describe the specific morphological features of the plant or used part	Eg:dhavala- arjuna, triputa-ela
Upama	Certain plants are named on the basis of simile i.e. comparison of the plant parts to similar looking plants or animals or things	Eg:asoka-tamra pallava, eranda- panchangula
Virya	Plants are named based on their potency or property	Eg:seethakala- udumbara, bahuvirya- salmali
Itarah- waya	Other names which do not belong to the above categories are considered as itarahwaya or miscellaneous.	Eg:pura-guggulu, lavana- jyotishmati

2. A few special vargas like anupadi varga, manushyadi varga, rogadi varga etc are mentioned
3. Raja Nighantu introduced many new plants and synonyms
4. The concept Nakshtra vriksha (Plants denoted for 27 stars) is introduced.
5. Has given synonyms based on Prakrita, apabhamsa, kshetriya, and also on the basis of regional languages including kannada and telugu.
6. The grouping of drugs has been done either on the basis of karma or guna samartha.

**CONCLUSION**

Nighantus are very essential literature for the study and identification of drugs. Raja nighantu undoubtedly plays a vital role in Ayurveda literature. Nighantu gives detailing of drugs based on synonyms and action which makes the identification of plants easier.

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