

Introduction, time and compositions of Acharya Ugraditya

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Abstract - The testimony existing in Mysore Archeological Report 1922 proves that, the disciple of Shri Nandi, who was a complete scholar of Ayurveda, Ugraditacharya is the author of most ancient, main and important Grinth of medical importance “The Kalyan Karaka Grinth”. Ugraditacharya was contemporary of the Rashtrakuta King “Amoghvarsha I and Calukya King Kali Vishnuvardhana V. A resident of Telengana having abode at Ramgiri hills of district called Ramtirtha or Ramkod, where he composed “Kalyankaraka” while sitting in Jinalaya in late eighth century.

Introduction

The 'Kalyankarak' of Ugraditya is the most ancient, main and important among the available texts of Ayurveda or Pranavaya composed by the Jaina of the South. The book 'Kalyanakaarak' was published by Seth Govind Rao Joshi from Solapur in 1940. In addition to the original Sanskrit text, a Hindi translation by Pt. Vardhman Shastri has also been published. Its editing has been done on the basis of four handwritten copies.¹

First of all, in 1922, Shri Narasimhacharya, in his Archaeological Report, published the following lines on the significance of this book and the subject matter.

“Another manuscript of some interest is the medical work “KALYANKARAKA OF UGRADITYA” a Jaina author, who was a contemporary of the Rashtrakuta King Amoghvarsha I and of the Eastern Chalukya King Kali Vishnuvardhana V. The work opens with the statement that the science of medicine is divided into two Parts, namely prevention and cure, and

gives at the end a long discourse in Sanskrit prose on the uselessness of a flesh diet, said to have been delivered by the author at the court of Amoghvarsha, where many learned men and doctors had assembled.” (**Mysore Archeological Report, 1922, Page 23**)²

Introduction of the Granthkar:- In the book 'Kalyankaraka', the author is named as Ugraditya. There is no introduction of his parents and original residence etc. There does not seem any special urge and need for a Jain monk who renounces all materialistic things in the world. However Ugraditya has introduced his Guru and Vidyapeeth in detail. Ugraditya has named his Guru as Shri Nandi, who was a scholar of complete Ayurveda (Pranavaya). Ugraditya received him all the knowledge from him pertaining to the “doshas” mentioned in Pranavaya, “doshas diseases” and treatment thereof etc. and has rendered it in this ‘Kalyankarak Granth’.³

This shows that Shri Nandi was a great and famous scholar of Pranavaya at that time. Shri Nandi was specially respected by a king named 'Vishnuraja'. It is written in 'Kalyankarak' that, whose feet are adorned by the garland of Vishnu's crown, that, the king bows to his lotus feet, who is the laureate wreathed with knowledge as a mark of honour. My emancipation has been done by him. With his permission, I have written this scripture and for the fulfillment of Penance in the form of Vatsalya demonstration by successful delivery of medicine by Vaidyas.

Vishnu Raj is mentioned here equivalent to God. This signifies him as the best supreme ruler. It was Vishnuraja, the Chalukya king Kali Vishnuvardhana V, who was a contemporary of Ugraditya, which is made clear by Ugradittachaya's opinion from his above quote.⁵

However the reign of the Chalukya king Kali Vishnu Vardhana V lasted from AD 847 to 848. It is often not possible for a king to accomplish great work in a short period of one year. Mr. Vardhaman Shastri opines that Vishnuraj might had been the name of Amoghvaisha's father Govind Raj III. Because Jinsen mentions Amoghvarsha in 'Parshavabhyuday' with the title of God. It may be that this title had been traditional symbolism of the Rashtrakutas.⁶

This opinion is not factual, but based only on conjecture. Because earlier Rashtrakutas did not had authority over Vengi. Amoghavarsha I was the first to control it. This Vishnuraja IV, who

was the ruler of Vengi, was unquestionably the most influential and popular predecessor of Chalukya king Kali Vishnuvardhana and Amoghavarsha I and he was a follower of Jainism. His reign lasted from AD 764 to 799. Dr. Jyotiprasad Jain has also mentioned that Shri Nandi was honored during the reign of Vishnuvardhana IV Chalukya king.⁷

Residence and period - Sri Ugraditya's land of residence was 'Ramagiri', where he obtained knowledge his from Shri Nandi Guru and composed the "Kalyankarak Granth" there is a mention of Ramgiri in the 'Kalyanakaraka' Granth.⁸

In verse no. 87 and 3, Ramgiri has been described as the principal place of the "Triking State". The region from Ganges to Cuttack was called Utkal or North Kalinga, the mountainous part from Cuttack to Mahendragiri as the middle Kalinga and the place from Mahendragiri to Godavari is called South Kalinga. The combined name of these three was 'Trikinga'. In fact Ramgiri is a place called Ramatirtha, Vijayapattam district. There is also an inscription on the wall of 'Durgapanchagufa', in which information is given about a Chalukya king. This inscription is of AD 1011-12. From this it appears that Ramatirtha was a sacred place of Jainism. Many Jain followers lived here. In the above inscription Ramkirtha is also written as Ramkod. According to Pandit Kailash Chandra, in the early centuries of the year AD, lot of Buddhism remnants have been obtained from Ramatirtha

Buddhism. It is noteworthy that in the fall of Buddhism, the Jainas occupied this place and converted it into their place of worship.⁹

Dr. Jyoti Prasad Jain has considered the grand status of Ramatirtha in the middle of the eleventh century Ramatirtha (Ramgiri) also remained a famous and advanced cultural center Jains till the middle of the eleventh century, as evidenced by an inscription there in a Kannada inscription (1022 AD) also shows that his Guru was Trikala Yogi Shridaladeva and Vimaladitya The king himself also went to worship Ramgiri as a Jain shrine.¹⁰

Ramagiri was in its full glory during the period of Ugraditya. His contemporary ruler was Vengi's Chalukya king Vishnuvardhana IV (764-799 AD). Vishnuvardhan IV was a great worshiper of Jainism. During this period, a great Jain cultural center existed on the hills called Ramatirtha or Ramkod in Vijay Pattam (Visakhapatnam) district. This Ramgiri mountain, located on the flat land of Vengi region of Trikaling (Andhra) region, was adorned with many Jain Guha, temples, jinalayas and other religious works. Many learned Jain sages lived there. This institute was a great school for higher education of diverse disciplines and disciplines. Jainacharya Shri Nandi was the Principal of this Vidyapeeth under the patronage of Chalukya King of Vengi. He was a master of various subjects like Ayurveda etc. Maharaj Vishnuvardhana himself worshiped his feet.¹¹

The main disciple of this Acharya was Ugradityacharya. Who was a great scholar of Ayurveda and medicine. Shortly before 799 AD, he wrote his well-known medical text 'Kalyankaraka'. It is clear from the Grantha citation that he composed the original book under the reign and patronage of Maharaj Vishnuvardhana.¹²

The Trikalinga state is nowadays called Tailangana or Tilangana, which is a distorted form of the word Trikalinga. The Vengi kingdom was under this area. The boundary of the Vengi state was the Godavari River in the north, the Krishna River in the south, the coastline in the east and the Western Ghats in the west. Its capital was Vengi Nagar, which is presently known as Peddwengi or Godavari district.¹³

Hence, it can be said with certainty that Ugradityacharya was originally a resident of Telangana (Andhra Pradesh), and his abode was Ramgiri, the Ramtirtha or Ramkod hills of the district Visakhapatnam. It was here where he composed 'Kalyanakaraka' while sitting in the Jinalaya. His period was late eighth century. The above discussion also reveals the fact that Ugradityacharya got great patronage from Vishnuvardhana IV (764-799 AD), the Chalukya king of Vengi in 615 AD. The Chalukya emperor Pulakeshi II gained authority over Andhra Pradesh and his younger brother Kubj Vishnuvardhana was appointed as the provincial ruler. The capital of this land was Vengi. The ruler of Vengi became independent in the last period of Pulakeshi and

established the Chalukya empire of Vengi. There was a lot of faith in Jainism in the emperors of this kingdom. It was in this empire that the aforesaid Vishnuvardhan IV (764-799 AD) existed and fought many wars with the Rashtrakutas. Vishnuvardhan IV was a follower of Jainism. After his death, the successive rulers in this empire were weak. The Rashtrakuta emperor Govind III (793-810 AD) and his son Amoghvarsha I invaded Vengi several times and defeated the Chalukya kings. Therefore, it seems reasonable that after the death of Chalukya Emperor Vishnuvardhana IV, when the glory of the Chalukyas began to downfall, and the fame of Rashtrakuta emperor Amoghavarsha I and faith in Jainism started increasing, Ugradityacharya obtained patronage in the royal court of the king in order to remove the love of Amoghavarsha for liquor and meat, he might have had to appear in his Rajya Sabha, or the emperor might have invited him. Hence, at the end of 'Kalyanakaaraka' there is also a mention of "Nriptung Amogh Versha".

It is clearly evident that Ugradityacharya had composed 'Kalyanakaaraka' in Ramgiri itself by 799 AD. But later, when he came to the Rajya Sabha of Amoghvarsha I, he annexed a new chapter called Hita-hit at the end of the granth, while presenting the tips to prevent alcohol and meat consumption. Dr. Jyoti Prasad Jain also has the same opinion. Acharya Ugraditya had composed 'Kalyankarak' of medicinal use before 800 AD, but on the request of Amoghvarsha, he came to his Rajya-Sabha in front of many Vaidyas

and scholars and described the scientific explanation prohibition for prohibition of alcohol and meat consumption. He included this historical speech in his granth as an appendix titled "Hita-hit".

In this way, the period of Acharya Ugraditya was contemporary of Rashtrakuta dynasty emperor Amoghavarsha I of the South. The ruling period of this emperor was from 814 to 878 AD. Samrat Amoghavarsha I was also adorned and honoured with the sobriquets such as Nripatung, Maharaj Sharva, Maharaj Shaand, Veer Narayan, Atishay Dhawal, Sharvadharm, Vallabharam, Shri Prithvi Vallabh, Lakshmi Vallabh, Maharajadhiraj, Bhattar, Param Bhattarak etc.¹⁵

Amogha was the son of Govind III. At the time when he ascended the throne, he was nineteen years of age, so Karkaraja, the ruler of Gurjara land, who was the son of his uncle Indra, became his guardian. On becoming adult, Kirrkraj duly enthroned amoghvarsha in 821 AD.

His father Govind III had shifted the new capital of the Rashtrakutas from Ellora and Mayurkhandi to Malkhedi, near Nasik. However, only its outer ramparts could be built in his period. Later, Amoghvarsha embellished it by constructing many beautiful and grand palaces, ponds and buildings.

Amoghavarsha was a peace-loving and religious ruler. Wars were usually conducted by his commanders and warriors. Therefore, he got

opportunity to had ample time to increase the, prosperity and power of his empire.

In 851 AD, the Arab merchant Sulaiman came to India. He has described Amogh by the name of longliving Balhara (Vallabh Rai) and wrote that the four great emperors all over the world at that time were Vallabh Rai (Amoghvarsha) of India, Emperor of China, Khalifa of Baghdad and Kustuntunia of Russia.¹⁶

Being a heroic, virtuous and scholar himself, he provided shelter to many scholars, poets and virtues in his Rajya Sabha. During this rign, literature-creation of diverse subjects in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Kannada and Tamil languages received unprecedented encouragement.

Samrat Amoghavarsha was a follower of Digambar Jainism and an ardent devotee. Acharya he was the disciple of Veerasen Swami who had been his Rajguru and Dharma Guru.¹⁷

Amoghatvarsha Nripatunga Vallabhaya was the contemporary ruler of Acharya Ugraditya. We find evidence of this in the following lines of “Kalyankarak Granth”.

It means that the royal court of famous Nripatunga Vallabh Rai Maharajadhiraj where many famous scholars of vaidyak knowledge were present who nurtured the primacy of meat eating this Jainendra (Jain Matanuayi) Vaidya appeared in front of them fully proved the uselessness of alcohol and meat consumption. Thus Ugradityacharya proclaimed the matter in the court of the Nripatunga Vallabh king.²⁰

In this description, the king for whom Ugradityacharya has used as Nrupatunga, Vallabh, Maharajadhiraj, Vallabhendra, etc. was clearly Rashtrakuta dynastic emperor Amoghavarsha I (814-877 AD), because all these words were used for him only.

**“Khyat Sri Nriptunga
Maharajadhiraj Stitha: I
Prodhadbhooris bhatarey
bahavidhi Prakhyat Viddwajane
II
Masam Shipra Karandrata Khil
Bhishgvidha Vidamagrate I
Masey Nishphalatam nirupya
netara Jainendra Vaidya
Stitham II”**

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