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“A LITERARY REVIEW OF CLASSIFICATION OF RASADRAVYA IN ARKAPRAKASH”

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Abstract:

Rasashastra is a specialized branch of Ayurveda dealing with the pharmaceutical and therapeutic applications of Parad (mercury), Maharasa, Uprasa, Dhatu (metals), and other natural substances. Rasashastra occupies a unique and important position in the Ayurvedic medicine and clinical practice. Rasadravyas constitute an important group of substances in Ayurveda and play a significant role in Rasashastra. Numerous classical Ayurvedic texts describe their classification, properties (Guna), actions (Karma), methods of purification (Shodhana), incineration (Marana), Bhasma preparation, and therapeutic applications. Arkaprakash is an important Ayurvedic text written by Lankapati Ravana. Arkaprakash is a classical text that explains Arka kalpana in details and its therapeutic applications by Dr. Indradev Tripathi 1995. Text contains 10 chapters called 'Shatakas'. Although the major emphasis of the text is on the preparation and utility of Arka formulations, but 'several Rasadravyas' are also described in last two chapters. In navam shatakam describes Dhatu, Upadhatu, Rasa, Uparasa, Ratna, Uparatna.

Key words: Arkaprakash, Rasadravya, Dhatu.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the ancient system of medicine, has developed several specialized branches for the prevention and treatment of diseases. Among these, Rasashastra occupies a unique position due to its extensive use of Dhatu, Upadhatu, Rasa, Ratna, and Bhasmas after appropriate pharmaceutical processing. Rasadravyas are considered superior to other medicines because they are administered in very small doses, are easy to take, and produce quick therapeutic effects, resulting in rapid recovery from diseases.

This concept is well explained in Rasashastra as:

“अल्पमात्रोपयोगित्वादरुचेरप्रसङ्गतः।

क्षिप्रमारोग्यदायित्वादौषधेभ्योऽधिको रसः ॥१॥” (Rasa Shastra Samuccaya 1/4)^[1]

Arkaprakasha is one of the important classical Ayurvedic texts traditionally attributed to Lankapati Ravana. The text is primarily devoted to Arka Kalpana, a unique pharmaceutical dosage form prepared through distillation. It is considered one of the earliest and most comprehensive texts describing the preparation, administration, and therapeutic applications of Arka preparations. The Hindi commentary of the text was published by Dr. Indradev Tripathi in 1995.

The text consists of ten chapters known as Shatakas. The major portion of the text is dedicated to Arka preparations, the later chapters provide valuable information regarding various Rasadravyas. These include Dhatu, Upadhatu, Rasa, Uparasa, Ratna, Uparatna. In ninth Shatakam of Arkaprakash describe the classification and In tenth Shatakas of Arkaprakasha describes characteristics, properties, Shodhana (Purification procedures), Marana (incineration methods), Bhasma qualities, therapeutic indications, and pharmaceutical applications of several metallic and mineral drugs. The text mentions important Rasadravyas such as Suvarna, Rajata, Tamra, Vanga, Naga, Loha, Parada, Gandhaka, Abhraka, Haratala, and Manashila.

The Rasadravyas information scattered throughout the ninth and tenth Shatakas provides valuable insights into the pharmaceutical and therapeutic aspects of Rasadravyas.

Therefore, The present literary review has been undertaken to compile and critically analyze the Rasadravyas described in Arkaprakasha and to highlight their pharmaceutical significance and therapeutic utility in Ayurvedic practice.

AIM

To review the Rasadravyas described in Arkaprakasha.

3.Rasa Varga

4.Uparasa Varga

5.Ratna Varga

6.Uparatna Varga

OBJECTIVES

1. To compile the Rasadravyas mentioned in Arkaprakasha.
2. To study their classification and characteristics.
3. To highlight the contribution of Arkaprakasha to Rasashastra.

1.Dhatu Varga : Arkaprakasha describes seven Dhatus and their various types. ^[2]

Dhatu Varga	Number of Types
Suvarna	15
Rajata	8
Tamra	5
Vanga	2
Yashada	3
Naga	6
Loha	8

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is a literary review based on classical Ayurvedic literature. Arkaprakasha was considered as the primary source of information. Relevant references were collected from Rasashastra classics such as Rasa Ratna Samuccaya and published research articles. The collected information was analyzed and systematically presented.

Among the Dhatus ,Suvarna possesses the maximum number of varieties (15), whereas vanga is represented by only two types.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE**2. Upadhatu Varga** ^[3].

Seven Upadhatu are mentioned in the text :

Classification of Rasadravyas in Arkaprakash

The Ninth Shataka of Arkaprakasha classifies Rasadravyas into different groups.

These include:

1.Dhatu Varga

2.Upadhatu Varga

Upadhatu Varga
Swarnamakshika
Taramakshika
Tuttha
Kankushta
Rasaka
sindura
Lohakitta

3. Rasa Varga ^[3]

The text describes six important Rasa substances:

Rasa Varga	Number of Types
Parada	4
Gandhaka	4
Haratala	2
Anjana	2
Kasisa	-
Gairika	-

4. Uparasa Varga ^[3] :

Eight Uparasa are described:

Uparasa Varga
Darada
Tankana
Sphatika
Manashila
Shukti
Shankha
Shankhamurvaka
Mrittika

5. Ratna Varga ^[3]

Nine Ratnas are mentioned in Arkaprakasha:

1.Vajra, 2.Mukta, 3.Pravala, 4.Gomeda, 5. Nilam, 6. Shilvaka, 7.Pushparag, 8.Pichu, 9.Manikya.

6.Uparatna Varga ^[3]

The Text describes the following Uparatnas :

1. Vikranth ,2. Manikya , 3. Shukti 4. Rakshat 5. Lashu 6. Laja 7. Garudjanma 9. Sphatika

Discussion :

The present literary review highlights the unique classification system of Rasadravyas described in Arka Prakasha. The large number of varieties described under 'Suvarna', 'Rajata', and 'Loha' indicates the importance given to the identification. 'Sphatika' and ' Shukti ' has been mentioned under both Uparasa and Uparatna Vargas in Arkaprakasha, which may represent a textual variation or dual classification. Rasaratna Samuccaya mentions Kankustha under the Uparasa Varga,^[4] while Arka Prakasha places it under the Upadhatu Varga as the Upadhatu of Vanga. Arka Prakasha mentions Kankshi (Sphatika) under both the Uparasa and Uparatna groups, while Rasaratna Samuccaya includes it only under the Uparasa Varga.^[4] The classification of Tuttha and Rasaka differs among Ayurvedic classics. Arka Prakasha considers both substances under the Upadhatu Varga, while Rasaratna Samuccaya places them in the Maharasa Varga.^[5]

Conclusion :

Arkaprakash texts one of the practical book for Ayurvedic Pharmaceutics. The

book is more focused to Arka Kalpana but the author has given importance to Rasa dravyas also. A few purification, incineration of Dhatu, updhatu, Ratna, Upratna, Rasa, Uparas, visha is also mentioned. In total 7 Dhatu and 7 Updhatu, 6 Ras, 8 Uprasa, 9 ratnas (Gems) and 9 Upratna are explained. Although Arkaprakasha is mainly recognized for its contribution to Arka Kalpana, its contribution to Rasashastra has received comparatively less attention. However, the classification of Rasadravyas varies among different classical texts, reflecting differences in pharmaceutical concepts and therapeutic perspectives.

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