RASADRAVYA VARGEEKARANA CONCEPT AND RELEVANCE

Leejo Augustine Jose¹, Aparna Sharma², Arun Mohanan³

¹²PG Scholars, ²Assistant Professor,
Dept of Rasashastra & Bhaishajya Kalpana, Amrita School of Ayurveda

Email: aparnasharma1989@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Ancient Acharyas have classified the metals and minerals used in Rasashastra into different groups and have given different names. Most of the dravyas were grouped in different ways depending upon their usefulness towards Mercury and its various processes. Parada can attain the capacity to impart Deha siddhi (making the body healthy and strong) & Loha siddhi (Converting lower metals to higher metals) only with the help of Maharasa, Uparasa, Sadharanarasa, Loha & such other substances.

Key words: Maharasa, Uparasa, Sadharanarasa, Loha, Ratna.

INTRODUCTION

Rasashastra means the knowledge concerning to Mercury, metals and minerals, their processing techniques and uses. Acharyas classified these metals and minerals into different groups and has given different names. Adhunikavargeekarana (Modern classification) of Rasadrayyas started from 8th century AD and was initially done in Rasatarangini which includes Lohadi Vijnaniya Taranga, Ratna Vijnaniya Taranga etc. Later YadvyjiTrikamji Acharya, Siddinandan Mishra etc., contributed more. The dravyas are grouped in different ways depending upon their usefulness towards Mercury and its various processes. From this point of view following groups Maharasa, Uparasa & Sadharanarasa are mentioned. Certain dravyas were grouped on the basis of their chemical and physical characteristics. The best example is Loha varga (metals). Certain dravyas were kept in various groups on the basis of their external appearance and the cost. Ratnas comes under this group.

Maharasa

Substances that are very useful in Parada karma is categorized under Maharasa. Most of them are nearer to Parada. All of them are having metallic contents. Satwas useful in Parada karma are extracted from Maharasa. Acharyas are having difference of opinion regarding the number & substances of Maharasa.

Maharasas according to Rasavagbhata;
Abhraka (Mica), Vaikranta (Tourmaline), Makshika (Chalco pyrite), Vimala (Iron pyrite), Shirajatu (Black bitumen), Sasyaka (Blue vitriol), Chapala (Bismuth), Rasaka (Calamine).  

Here Acharya has given Rasa samnja for these 8 dravyas. Acharya has considered this varga as Rasa itself (so nearer to Parada). This group is generally considered as Maharasa. In another sloka he has given Maharasasamnja to another 8 dravyas i.e. Rasaka, Vimala, Tapya, Chapala, Tutha, Anjana, Hingula & Sasyaka. In the context of Rasapoojadravyas, has mentioned special place for these Maharasas in Rasamandapa.

Abhraka is given as Grasa to mercury, which alone is naivedya (offering). Herbal drugs merged in Seesa (lead), lead in tin & tin is merged in copper. Copper absorbed in silver, silver in gold & gold is absorbed in mercury. Parada which has taken Abhraka grasa attains the stability by absorbing all the metals.

Makshika said to be the life of mercury, inevitable in various mercurial operations like Dvandwamelapana. Shiveta Chapala which resembles silver is useful in mercurial operations especially Rasa bandhana. Rasaka and Parada are considered as best Sidha rasas. Those who can make Rasa & Rasaka sustainable to fire, can acquire & keep them in control – both Dehasiddhi & Lohasiddhi.

According to Rasahridayatantra, acharya has enumerated eight rasas namely Vaikrantha (flour spar), kanta (magnetite), Sasyaka, Makshika, Vimala, Shirajatu, Sasyaka, Hingula and Rasaka. In Gorakshasamhitha, the author has included Abhraka, Vaikrantha, Makshika, Vimala, Shirajatu, Rasaka and Hingula. In the text, we can find only seven. But the sloka ends as “Daradoastamah” which means that the eight one is “darada” (hingula). Sailo (Shirajatu) can be considered as Saila – duo, meaning Shirajatu and Saila, a synonym of Capala.

In Rasarnava, Makshika, Vimala, Shirajatu, Rasaka, Sasyaka, Hingula and Srotonjana (Stybnite) are considered as Maharasas. In Rasendra Chudamani, Ghana (Mica), Rajavartha (Lapiz lazuli), Vaikrantha, Sasyaka, Vimala, Shirajatu, Tutha, and Tapya (Copper pyrites) are enumerated as Maharasas. According to Rasapaddhati, Maharasa are eight in number namely Vaikrantha, Abhraka, Shirajatu, Capala, Makshika and Tutha and according to Rasaprakasha Sudhakara, Abhraka, makshika, Vaikrantha, Vimala, Rasaka, Shirajatu, Rajavarta and Sasyaka comes under Maharasa.

Uparasa

Uparasa group includes substances useful in Parada karma and potentiation. They are comparatively less useful than the minerals of ‘Maharasa’ group. Uparasa group of drugs are used as an adjuvant in the processing of Rasa&Maharasas. Most of them are supportive drugs. Most of them are Gandhaka & its compounds. No metals are included under this category & most of them are metalloids.

According to some Acharyas the minerals found used for Parada karma is grouped as Uparasa. These texts did not classify them as Maharasa, Uparasa and Sadharana rasa groups. According to Rasaratnasamuchaya Uparasas includes Gandhaka (Sulphur), Gairika (Red ochre), Kasisa (Green vitriol), Kankshi (Alum), Haratala (Orpiment), Manahshila (Realgar), Anjana (Collyrium) & Kankushtha (Rubharb). Mythologically Gandhaka got its origin from
the menstrual flow of Goddess Parvati (Abhraka as Sukra). As these are the products of Goddess hence can mix up with mercury which is claimed to be the Retas of Lord Shiva. Gandhaka & Abhraka are highly important and essential to potentiate Parada in many ways. Gandhaka is used for Jarana and Murcchana.\textsuperscript{16} Gandhaka is capable of increasing potency of Parada. Gairika satva can readily mix with Parada and has better properties compared to Gairika itself.\textsuperscript{17} Tuvari is used for Paradajarana and satva is useful in the kramaanassamskara of Parada. Talaka satva is used for attaining Rasasiddhi. Anjana when given seven bhavana in each of cowdung juice, cow’s urine, ghee, honey & vasa; gains power of Rasabandhana very quickly.\textsuperscript{18}

According to Rasahridayatantra, Acharya has enumerated Gandhaka, Talaka, Manashila, Sphatika, Kasisa, Gairika, Kankushta, and Anjana under Uparasa.\textsuperscript{19} The authors of Rasahridayatantra, Goraksha samhitha, and Rasa-prakasha Sudhakara have same opinion as mentioned in Rasaratnasamuchaya regarding the drugs under Uparasa. Gandhaka, Talaka, Sila, Saurastri, Khaga, Gairika, Rajavarta and Kankushta comes under Uparasa according to Rasarnava.\textsuperscript{20} The author of Rasendra Chudamani included Gandhaka, Haratala, Sphatika, Manashila, Sawiranjana, Kankushta, Kasisa and Gairika under this category.\textsuperscript{21} The author of Rasapaddhati included only three drugs under Uparasa namely Gandhaka, Haratala and Manashila.\textsuperscript{22}

Sadharana rasa

Sadharanarasa includes Kampillaka (Mallotus philippinensis), Gauripashana (Arsenic oxide), Navasadara (Ammonium chloride), Kapardika (Cowry), Agnijara (Ambergris), Girisindhoora (Red oxide of Mercury), Hingula (Cinnabar) and Mriddarashringa (Litharge).\textsuperscript{23} Sadharana rasa are helpful in attaining Rasasiddhi. Gauripashana has the ability to enhance the power of Parada.\textsuperscript{24} Varatika is very useful in the process of Parada Jara- na.\textsuperscript{25} Agnjara apart from enhancing the potency of parada, useful in Deepana & Jarana processes.\textsuperscript{26} Girisindhoora is considered to be the best in doing Paradabandhana & is useful both in Deha siddhi and Loha siddhi.\textsuperscript{27} Hingula is useful in Jarana of Para- da.\textsuperscript{28} Mriddarashringa is supposed to be the best in the process of Paradabandhana.\textsuperscript{29}

In Rasendra Chudamani, Kampilla, Malla, Navasara, Kaparda, Agnijara, Girisindura, Hingula and Mriddarsringa are included under this group.\textsuperscript{30}

Loha

The word Loha is derived from ‘Luh’ which means extraction. The synonym Dhathu is due to the fact that the substance which helps to hold the body tissues in proper health for a long period of time (Dharana). Dhathus are therapeutically used since thousands of years. These substances which, when taken in Bhasma form, helps to get rid of grey hairs, wrinkles, weakness, old age & diseases.

Lohavarga includes Swarna (Gold), Rajata (Silver), Tamra (Copper), Loha (Iron), Naga (Lead), Vanga (Tin), Yasada (Zinc), Pittala (Brass), Kamsya (Bronze) & Vartaloha (kaamsya+taamra+pittala+loha+sisa)

Different types of Lohas are mentioned by ancient acharyas which includes 4 Sud- dhalohas namely Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Loha, 2 Putilohas Naga, Vanga and 3 Mishra lohas namely Pittala, Kamsya & Vartaloha.\textsuperscript{31} According to Rasajalanidhi two more types are mentioned.
- **Mandura (Lohakittam)**– Iron when heated red hot & hammered, small pieces out of it & scattered all around.

- **Triloha** (under *Mishra Loha*) which is prepared by melting 25 parts of Gold, 16 parts of Silver, 10 parts of Copper together.

The Swarna produced with the help of *Parada* after *Vedhasamskara* is called *Parada-vidhaSwarna*. It is an excellent rejuvenator.**32** *Tamra* which is light, brittle, rough & layered is useful in various mercurial processes.**33** *Tamrabhasma* is also used in *Rasa karma*.**34** *Rakthaloha* variety of *Kanthaloha* is useful in making *Parada* inert (*Baddha*). *Karshaka* & *Dravaka* types of *kanthaloha* are said to be useful in *Rasa karma*. *Vanga* is also used in *Parada karmas*.**35** *Bhunaga sattva* enhances the radiance i.e., energy of both *Parada* & *Vajra*.**36**

*Rasatarangini* and *Rasamrta* have included *Yasada* under *Loha varga*. Under the heading *upadhatus*, *Rasatarangini* has mentioned Mandura, Makshika, Kasisa, Tuttha, Kharpara, and Naga sindhura. Arsenic and Arsenic compounds are mentioned separately in *Rasamrta* by the name *Mallavijnaniyam*.**37**

**Ratnas** (Gems/ precious stones)

*Ratnas* are very useful in *Parada-bandhana* as well as *Rasakarmas*.**38** According to Hindu belief *Ratnas* are capable of mitigating the bad effects of *Navagrahas*. Good quality *Ratnas* are used in *Parada karma*, for rejuvenation, for donation, in worshipping Deities etc. *Ratnas* are helpful in both *Bandhana* & *Marana* of *Parada* apart from enhancing its qualities. *Ratnas* include Vaikrantha, Suryakrantha, Hiraka, Mauktika, Mani, Chandrakantha, Rajavartha, Garudodgarka, Pushparaga, Gomeda, Padmaraga, Pravala, Vaidurya & Nilamani.**38** *Vajra* is helpful in both *Bandhana* & *Marana* of *Parada* apart from enhancing its qualities.**39** According to *Rasajalanidhi*, *Samanya Pancaratna* (Common five gems) includes Nila, Vajra, Padmaraga, Mauktika and Vidruma.**40**

**Upatranas** (Semi – precious stones)

According to *Rasatarangini*, Vaikranta, Suryakanta, Candrakanta, Rajavarta, Perojaka and Sphatikamani are categorised under *Upatranas*.**41**

**CONCLUSION**

The basis of *Rasadravyavargeekarana* is their role in *Parada karma*. While explaining the need for *shodhana* & *marana*, *Rasavagbhata* says, *Parada* can attain the capacity to impart the *Deha siddhi* & *Loha siddhi* only with the help of *Maharasas*, *Uparasas*, *Lohas* & such other substances; which have special qualities and are used after purification & processing.**42**

**REFERENCES**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Source of Support:** Nil

**Conflict Of Interest:** None Declared