

## CLASSIFICATION OF RASADRAVYAS IN RASASHASTRA

<sup>1</sup>\*Vd. Shinde Rekha Bhagwat, <sup>2</sup>Vd. Kurkute B. R., <sup>3</sup>Vd. Shinde B. T. and <sup>4</sup>Vd. Tapare S K

<sup>1</sup>M.D. Scholar, Department of Rasashastra & Bhaisajya Kalpana.

<sup>2</sup>Prof. & HOD. & Guide. Dept. of Rasashastra & Bhaisajya Kalpana Shevgaon.

<sup>3</sup>Department of Kayachikitsa Principal, PMT'S Ayurved College Shevgaon.

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**\*Corresponding Author**

**Dr. Vd. Shinde Rekha**

**Bhagwat**

M.D. Scholar, Department  
of Rasashastra & Bhaisajya  
Kalpana.

### ABSTRACT

To study the concepts of any topic, it is necessary to have detail and deep knowledge of the concerned topic. Classification makes the hard and difficult topic simple and easy to understand, so that the drugs can be used easily in the practice. Classification should be done very carefully, or else it may misguide the learner and this type of classification is of no use. Proper knowledge of natural history, physical properties chemical properties of drugs is essential. It includes study of herbs, minerals and drugs from animal origin.

### SOURCES OF DRUGS

1. Audbhija Plant Origin
2. Jangham Animal Origin

3. Parthiv **Metals and Minerals.**

e.g. Gold, Silver, Copper, Iron, Lead, Tin, along with excretas.

Silica, Calcites, Realgar, Orpiment, Gems, Salts Galena, etc. are the drugs of Parthiv. origin.

**KEYWORDS:** Rasadravya, Parthiv Dravya, Rasashastra, Ras, Maharas.

### INTRODUCTION

Rasashastra is one of the most important branch of Ayurveda dealing with the preparation of Ayurvedic medicines by different methods, using metals & minerals in pure form. Along with Parada (Mercury) drugs from plant origin, animal origin, oceanic products are also used to prepare potent medicine. The range of these substances varies from simple, easily available substances like *Abhrak* (Mica) and potently poisonous drugs like *Somal* (Arsenic). Compounds from comparatively cheaper substances like *Gairika* (Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> hydrated Iron

Oxide) to precious stones like *Ratna* (Gems), purely plant products like *kampilla* to still ambiguous substances like *Kankustha*.

All these substances were used by the *Acharyas* for the experimentations on Mercury. On considering the development of *Rasashastra* over a period of hundreds of year, it can be seen that many substances proved to be of little use, while many new useful substances were discovered. Hence the need of classification was felt and every famous researcher and authour of the classical texts developed his own method of classification of substances. The criteria of classification changes from text to text, as many new concepts are cleared from time to time. In *Rasatarangini* an Ayurvedic text they are classified on the basis of chemical compositions.

Along with *Parada*, *khaneej*, *praneej* and *vanaspatee* drugs have been included in *Rasashastra* and are used in preparation of medicines. Different types of *Dhatus*, *Upadhatu*, *Ratna*, *Uparatna* *Visha* *Upavish* are used for these purpose. To study these drugs the *Rasacharyas* have classified them. In these classification *Maharas*, *Uparas* *Sadhaaran* *Ras* are also included. These classification is done on the basis of *guna karma* (physio-chemical properties) of the *dravya* (drugs). Different *Acharyas* have different opinion in different period.

In absence or unavailability of a drug one can use a drug having similar properties to prevent, cure and treat the diseases, if one has deep and thorough knowledge of classification of drugs. The classification stated in one of the honoured and respectable text viz. *Rasaratnasamuchchaya* is considered as baseline for comparision with other systems of classification

### **RASASHASTRA PRAYOJAN (PURPOSE)**

The main purpose to study *Rasashastra* is to achieve the four *pursharthas* *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*.

i.e. Consumption of good virtues and values, acquisition of wealth, achieve longetivity, and freedom or *nirvana* from life. Along with the four *purusharthas* the purpose is also to regain the lost kingdom.<sup>[1]</sup>

The importance of *Rasachikitsa* described in *Rasendrasarsangraha* is as bellow:

- Qualities of *Rasaaushadhis* like quick action

- They are effective in small dose
- Easily palatable and
- Their high efficacy makes the *Rasaushadhis* favourable, superior among other branch of medicines.<sup>[2]</sup>

The two important facts to classify the drugs are:

#### A] OBJECTIVE OF CLASSIFICATION

1] Drugs present in the nature can be used in various ways.

i.e. Minerals can be used in the preparation of medicines as well as to prepare ornaments and utensils.

e.g. *Suvarna* (Gold) *Rajat* (**silver**) *Tambra* (copper) can be used for making utensils as well as their *bhasmas* (ash/nanomedicines) i.e fine powder of metals and minerals are used as medicine.

2.] Practically while studying classification of drugs, sometimes a same drug is mentioned in other class also.

e.g. *Suvarnamakshik* (CuFeS ore of copper and iron pyrite) is included in *Maharas* as well as it is also mentioned in *Upadhatu varga*.

A same drug can also be mentioned in two different groups by the same *Acharya* e.g. *Vaikrant* is in *Maharas* group and also in *Uparatna*. Copper is mentioned in *Maharasa* and also in *Upavisha varga*.

3.] While looking at *Dravyagunashastra*, Drug *Madanphal* is used as emetic drug and also it is included in *Niruha gana*.

*Kampilla* drug in *Eladi gana* and also in *Rasashastra* it is seen in *Sadharan Ras*.

The classification and the criterias of *khaneej dravyas* made by the *Acharyas* is not same everywhere. While doing classification the basic concepts of classification are not mentioned in the texts. But in *Rasatarangini* they are classified on the basis of chemical compositions.

Pharmacologist, Botanist, Scientist and *Vaidhyas* classify the *Dravyas* (drugs) as per their objectives.

**B] BASE FOR CLASSIFICATION (VARGIKARAN AADHAR)**

In ayurveda, drugs have been classified in number of ways, but the classification based on *karma* (action) is widely accepted.

A drug can be classified on the basis of different crieterias. Deep and detail study of drugs is essential for the same. They can be classified according to *Rasa* (taste) *Virya* (potency) *Vipak Guna* (final digestive transformation of rasa). For classification knowledge as well as vision is essential.

Properties of drugs present in the nature and the human body constituents are similar and as such normalcy, increase and decrease in the body are caused by the substances. So, drugs are used to maintain the balance state in the body.<sup>[3]</sup>

**CLASSIFICATION OF RASADRAVYA**

Drugs are of two types, Organic and Inorganic. The Rasadravyas are mostly inorganic *Rasashastra* is basically known for *Khaneej dravyas* (i.e. Metals and Minerals).

Also *Jangham* and *Audbhij* origin drugs are included in *Rasashastra*.

Classification makes the differences in drugs specific.

**THE RASDRAVYAS ARE CLASSIFIED IN FOLLOWING GROUPS****1. RAS/ PARAD****Defination**

*Parad* assimilates all *dhatu*s in it. It prevents ageing, prevents diseases and wins over death and so called as *Ras*.<sup>[4]</sup>

*PARAD* is an independent drug accepted by all the *Achaaryas*. It is not included in any catagories. In *Rasashastra* it is the most important drug among all the drugs. It is the main drug, so it has a special place and importance in *Rasashastra* as compared to the other drugs due to its different properties.

It has the ability and power to assimilate all the drugs such as *Dhatu*, *Upadhatu*, etc.

But this is not on its own it can only be acquired by mixing potent drugs. e.g. *Parada* when mixed with *Gandhaka* (Sulphur) increases its potency and helps in curing chronic diseases. To make *Parada* more potent, the drugs from *Maharas* class are helpful. *Rasakalpa* are made

from *Parada*. As *Parada* acts as an catalyst when used in any formulation, it acts as per the drugs used in that formulations and increases the potency of the medicine.

The Formulations made from *Parada* and *Gandhaka* can be categorized into 4 types:

1. *Kajjali yukta khalvi Rasayan*.
2. *Parpati kalpa*.
3. *Sindurrasakalpa / Kupipakwa rasayan*.
4. *Pottali kalpa*

The *Aacharyas* classified the *dravyas*, as per their experiences.

In *Rasakamdheni* text *Parad* is included in *Maharas* where as, *Yogratnakar* has included it in *Dhatu varga*.

The importance of *Rasakalpas* as mentioned by *Rasacharyas* is as follows-

1. The dose required is too less as compared to herbal medicines.
2. The taste of herbal medicines is unpleasant, where as *Rasaushadhis* have no taste.
3. The *Rasaushadhis* are the best among all as the action is quick and fast where as result of herbal medicines is too late
4. The *Rasaushadhis* are also useful in incurable diseases.
5. *Rasaushadhis* are very easy and simple to use.
6. The potency of *Rasaushadhis* increases as it becomes old
7. The *Rasaushadhis* are the best among all types of medicines mentioned in *Ayurveda*.<sup>[5]</sup>

### **MAHARAS**

After *Rasa*, the next important group of minerals are named as *Maharasa*.

It is a group of minerals which have been recognized as most useful for the potentiation of the properties of *Ras* (Mercury).

In *Rasahrudayatantra* text the drugs having properties equivalent to *Parada* and acts similar to *Parada* are called as *Maharas*.

There are eight *Maharasas*. They are *Abhraka* (Mica), *Vaikrant* (Manganese), *Makshika* (Copper Pyrite), *Vimal* (Iron Pyrite), *Shilajatu* (Black Bitumen) *Sasyaka* (Copper Sulphate-),

Chapala (Bismuth Ore) Rasaka (Zinc Ore). The group of these dravyas are maharas. These are to be tested and kept in collection.<sup>[6]</sup>

### **UPARAS**

These drugs are not equivalent to Parada, but properties of this group of drugs possesses less guna than Parada.<sup>[7]</sup>

Gandhak (Sulphur), Gairik (Ochre), Kasis (Ferrous Sulphate), Kangshi (Potash Alum), Hartal (Orpiment), Manashila (Realgar), Anjan (Collyrium), Kankustha (Ruhbarb) are The Drugs Mentioned In Uparasa Varga.

The group of above 8 drugs are used in *Parada karma*.

*Parad + Gandhak Murchanaa* is called as *Kajjali*. It is useful for treatment.<sup>[8]</sup>

### **SADHARAN RAS**

Kampilla (Mallatus Phillippinensis Muell-Arg), Gauripaashaan (Vitreous or Arsenic Oxide), Navsaagar (Ammonium Chloride), Kaparda (Cowrie), Agnijaar (Ambargris), Girisindur (Red Oxide of Mercury), Hingul (Cinnabar or Red Sulphide of Mercury), Mrurdarshringa (Lead Oxide).

*Rasacharya* have mentioned these eight drugs as the drugs, which are used in *Rasakarma*. They are used logically in formulations to get good result.<sup>[9]</sup>

### **DHATU**

#### **Definition**

Dhatus are the drugs which are been extracted (removed forcibly) from their ore, (by melting or process of distillation) similarly the diseases are removed forcibly from the body by them so they are called as Loha.<sup>[10]</sup>

In Ayurveda the drugs mentioned as dhatus are as follows:

Pure Loha - Gold, Silver, Copper, Iron.

Puti Loha - Naag, Vanga (Lead and Tin)

Misra Loha (Alloy)- Kasya, Pital, Varta.<sup>[10]</sup>

Dhatus are the drugs which, when consumed prevents ageing, hair fall, greying of hair.<sup>[11]</sup>

Dhatu: Gold, Silver, Brass, Copper, Lead, Tin and Magnetic Iron. These seven drugs are dhatu.<sup>[12]</sup>

### **UPADHATU**

They are the ores from which metals are extracted.

e.g *Hingul* is the *Upadhatu* of *Parad* (mercury), as it is extracted from mercury.

*Sasyak* (CuFeS) is extracted from *Tamra* (copper). *Abhrak*, *Kantloha*, *Mandur*, *Makshik*, *Vimal*, *Hirakas*, *Geru* these 7 are the ores of *Loha* (Iron).

*Suvarnamakshik* is ore of copper.

Upadhatu: *Swarna Makshik* (Pyrite), *Sasyak* (Blue Vitriol), *Abhrak* (Mica), *Nilaanjan* (Antimony), *Manshila* (Arsenic disulphide), *Hartal* (Orpiment), *Rasak* (Zinc Ore or Calamine) these seven drugs are Upadhatu.<sup>[13]</sup>

### **SIKATAVARGA**

*SIKATA* means sand. This group of dravyas can be classified as follows:

They are the compound of Silica (Si<sub>2</sub>), Magnesium (Mg<sub>2</sub>) and Water (H<sub>2</sub>O).

1. *Parthiv*: *Ratna*, *Uparatna*
2. *Praneej*: Birds feathers.
3. *Udhabhija*: The dravya that is found in Grass, *Simbhi dhanya*, *Bamboo*.

In Rasashastra we consider only *parthiv* drugs.

*Dugdhaapaashaan* (Magnesium Silicate), *Kausheyashma* (Silicate of Magnesium), *Naagpaashaan* (Ophite/Serpentine) *Badarashma* (Silicate of Lime) are the drugs mentioned in *Sikata Varga*.<sup>[14]</sup>

### **RATNA**

#### **Defination**

Those which are precious among its category appreciated and loved by the people and supposed to be of the best quality are called as *Ratna*.

The one who expects wealth is obsessive and deeply attached with this precious gems so the scientists of those days called these drugs as *Ratna*.<sup>[15]</sup>

Mautik (pearl), Vaidurya (cat's eye), Hirak (diamond), Pushkaraj (topaz), Padnyarag (ruby), Gomed (cinnamon stone), Neel (sapphire), Tarkshya (emerald), Praval (coral) these nine drugs are called as Maharatna.<sup>[16]</sup>

### UPARATNA

Vaikrant (Turmaline), Suryakant (Sun Stone), Chandrakant (Moon Stone, Rajavarta (Lapis Lazuli), Pairojaka (Turquoise), Sphatika (Quartz/ Rock Crystal), Vyomaashma (Jade), Trunakant (Amber/ Succinum)<sup>[17]</sup> are the Uparatna.

### SUDHAVARGA

Sudha means Chuna. These are the compound drugs of  $\text{CaCO}_3$ . Khanij, Praneej and Udhbhij dravyas are classified in Sudhavarga.

1. Khanij Sudha Varga: Chunkhadi, Godanti, Chandrakant, Suryakant, Spatik, Raja.
2. Pranj sudhavarga: Ajasti, Hastidanta, Mrugashruna, Kachyapprusta, Shankha, Shauktik, Mauktik, Kaparda and Praval
3. Udhbhij: Arjun, Arka, Kuda, Karanja, Suran, Kumari. etc. these dravyas contain max. amount of lime.<sup>[18]</sup>

### MALLAVARGA

Malla means Somal – Arsenic. ( $\text{As}_2\text{S}_4$ )

1. Hartaal –  $\text{As}_2\text{S}_3$  Arsenic trisulphide
2. Manasheel –  $\text{As}_2\text{S}_2$  Arsenic disulphide
3. Somal Gauripaashan / Shankhabha –  $\text{As}_2\text{O}_3$  Arsenic oxide. Saadhaaran ras is of three types as per Rasaratnasamuchchay.
  - a). Sphatikabha – Vitrious Arsenic
  - b). Shankaabha – White Arsenic
  - c). Haridraba – Yellow Arsenic.

The Sphatikaabha is the best among the three.<sup>[19]</sup>

According to Ayurved Prakash Somal is of 2 types

1. White - looks like Shankha and is abnormal.
2. yellow – looks like pommegranate and is original.

Both these types is poisonous and is used and supposed to be best in Parad karma Original Somal is Rason gandha, shining and after burning becomes soft.



## VISHAVARGA

### Defination

Just by looking at these drugs one feels sad and these drugs if consumed life immediately ends are the group of *dravyas* called as *Visha*.<sup>[20]</sup>

*Vishadravyas* are useful in *Rasakarma*. They hold *Parad* i.e Mercury.

if not used or consumed carefully no doubt they will end the life.<sup>[21]</sup>

Visha means poison. These drugs when mixed with any other drugs, the potency of that drug increases.

### TYPES OF VISHA

1. *Sthavar* / Plant and Mineral origin. A) Visha b) Upavisha
2. *Jangham*: Derived from animals such as snake, rat, scorpion, spider etc.

### VISHASCHYA NAV BEDAH

Haalaahal, Kaalkuta, Shrungak, Pradipan, Saurashtrik, Bhramhaputra, Haaridra, Saktuk And Vatsanaabha these nine drugs are mentioned in Vishavarga. From these nine drugs Vatsanaabha is the best for Rasakriya and Rasaayan karma. The use of other drugs is not seen so the specification of other drugs is not mentioned in details in the texts.<sup>[22]</sup>

### UPAVISHA

Laangali, Kuchalaa, Karvir, Jaya (Aphim or Bhang) Bhallatak(Nilaka), Dhattura, Arka These Seven are grouped In Upavisha Varga.<sup>[23]</sup>

### IMPORTANCE OF CLASSIFICATION OF RASADRAVYA

Properties of drugs present in the nature and the human body constituents are similar.

To choose a drug for treatment purpose or its unavailability, drug similar of the same properties can be used, hence for prevention, to cure the diseases and treatment purpose, classification of drugs is useful and very important.

### CONCLUSION

Today the ayurvedic medicines are gaining lot of popularity due its efficacy in many chronic diseases of all types. Also awareness has increased in the process of standardization. Modern drug based treatments is unaffordable and economically costlier has numerous side effects.

The drug as such should be naturally healing process which can be achieved by studying ayurvedic drugs with their scientific approaches in all fields, such as identification, purification, different methods of preparations of medicines etc.

There is huge difference in the approach of allopathic and ayurvedic medicines. Ayurveda has evolved a holistic approach. To study the drugs, classification of drugs is the base and it makes the topic easy to understand.

The main features of classification are:

1. Classification specifies the base and objectives.
2. The properties of similar category comes under same group. Which when studied as per their guna karma can be helpful for treatment.  
e.g. Loha Varga, Ratna Varga as per their paribhashaa
3. Specification help us the use of drugs and its importance easy.

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