



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 3 · Issue 1

Jan-Feb 2018

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS



Charaka
Publications

Indexed

Review on *Rasa Manjari* - A Text of Indian Alchemy

Naveen Kinagi,¹ Pavan Kulkarni,² Vijaykumar B. Chavadi,³ C. R. Honawad⁴

^{1,2}Final Year Post Graduate Scholar, ³Associate Professor, ⁴Professor & HOD, Post Graduate Department of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, BVVS Ayurved Medical College, Bagalkot, Karnataka, India.

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a multidimensional science using a set of complex pharmaceutical combinations in treatment. *Rasashastra*, pharmaceutical science mainly deals with the processing and therapeutic utilization of mercury, metals and minerals. *Rasa Manjari* is one of the important ancient texts on ancient Indian alchemy written by Shri Shalinatha in Approx. 15th century AD. Two commentaries are available on this text. Subject matter of the text contains total 862 verses which are divided into 10 chapters. There is description of *Dhatuvada* (conversion of lower metals into higher metals) and *Dehavada* (therapeutic usage of metals and minerals) of Mercury (*Parada*). The present paper will highlight the review of *Rasa Manjari*, providing information about the author, text and contributions.

Key words: Ayurveda, Rasashastra, Rasa Manjari.

INTRODUCTION

The *Rasashastra* is an integral part of Ayurveda that deals chiefly with Mercury, Metals, Minerals and Animal origin drugs having therapeutic and alchemical importance. Use of mineral and metallic preparation for health care is unique feature of *Rasashastra*. The presence paper highlights the review of the text *Rasa Manjari* authored by Shri Shalinatha, hence such books are need of the hour. Various aspects of this text are being discussed here to bring it to the knowledge of Ayurveda.

About the Author and Period

Rasa Manjari was written by Shri Salinatha. He is the son of Shri Vaidyanatha. *Rasa Manjari* belongs to

Approx. 15th century.

Editor, Publisher and Commentaries

The text book is edited by Siddhiprada Hindi Vyakhyasahita Dr. Siddhinandan Mishra and published by Chaukhambha Orientalia, Varanasi and 1st edition was published in 1995. This edition of book has been taken into consideration for writing this article.

Contents of texts

Shri Salinatha has named the Chapters of text as *Adhyaya*. Subject matter of the text contains total 862 verses which are divided into 10 chapters.

Adhyaya 1: *Parada Prakarana*

The chapter mainly deals with *Parada*. The importance of *Parada*, *Guru-Shishya Lakshanas* is told in the beginning. *Parada* - Its importance, synonyms, *Shuddha* and *Ashuddha Lakshanas*. *Parada Doshas* (8) - *Naaga*, *Vanga*, *Visha*, *Vanhi*, *Mala*, *Giri*, *Asahyaagni* and their ill effects. *Parada Shodhana* - both *Saamanya* and *Vishesha Shodhana* for the individual *Doshas*. Extraction of *Parada* from *Hingula* and its properties. *Ashuddha Parada Sevana*, its ill effects and treatment.

Adhyaya 2: *Parada Jaarana and Moorchana*

Parada Jaarana: By *Gandhaka* and *Swarna*. *Parada Maarana*: By addition of *Gandhaka*, followed by

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Naveen Kinagi

Final Year Post Graduate Scholar, Post Graduate Department of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, BVVS Ayurved Medical College, Bagalkot, Karnataka, India.

E-mail: naveenmkinagi@gmail.com

Submission Date : 20/01/2018 Accepted Date: 26/02/2018

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

DOI: 10.21760/jaims.v3i01.11639

Kumari swarasa Bhavana and subjecting to heat in *Bhudhara Yantra*. *Parada Moorchna: Rasa Sindoor* (7 methods), *Rasa Karpoora*, *Rasa Parpati*. The characteristics of *Moorchna Parada*, *Baddha Parada*, *Parada Bhasma* are given. The *Pathya-Apathya* during the intake of *Parada* is also dealt.

Adhyaya 3: Uparasa Nirmaana

20 *Uparasas* have been explained. They are: *Gandhaka*, *Vajra*, *Vaikranta*, *Gagana*, *Taalaka*, *Shika*, *Kharpara*, *Shikhi Tuttha*, *Vimala*, *Hema Maakshika*, *Kaseesa*, *Kaantapaashana*, *Varata*, *Anjana*, *Hingula*, *Kankushta*, *Shankha*, *Bhunaaga*, *Tankana*, *Shilajatu*. Each of the above with respect to their types, *Shodhana*, *Maarana* and *Gunas* are explained. Also *Ratna Samanya Shodhana*, *Maarana* and *Gunas* are explained here itself.

Adhyaya 4: Visha Niroopana

Kanda Visha - 18 in Number.

Visha: *Shodhana*, *Maatra*, *Anupaana*, *Prabhaava*, *Vegas*, *Visha Hara Mantras*.

Visha Maatra: 1 *Sarshapa* starting, increase upto 7 *Sarshapas* and then gradually reduce.

Adhyaya 5: Dhatu Shodhana Maarana

Dhatu: *Hema*, *Rajata*, *Loha*, *Taamra*, *Naaga*, *Vanga*, *Pittala*, *Kaamsya*, *Vartalooha*, *Mandoora*. *Samaanya Shodhana* for the *Dhatu* as well as individual *Dhatu Shodhana* procedures are explained.

Adhyaya 6: Rasa Yoga Niroopana

81 different *Rasa Yogas* are explained to treat different diseases.

Adhyaya 7: Rasayana Adhikaara

Kshetrikarana is explained here. 4 superior most *Rasayanas*: *Mrutasanjevani Gutika*, *Veeryashodhani Gutika*, *Hemasundara Rasa*, *Gandhamruta Rasa*.

Chapter 8: Netraranjana Kesharanjana

Different *yogas* for *Keshakrishneekarana*, *Shukleekarana* have been explained here. Different *Tailas* are also described for treating *Paalitya*, *Ranjana* etc.

Chapter 9: Veerya Stambhana and Baalaroga

Different formulations are described for *Veeryastambhana*, *Streedraavana*, *Vasheekarana*, *Sthana drudheekarana*, *Garbha Sraavakara*, *Shandatwa Karana*, *Garbhapradyogas*, *Vandhya Karana Yogas*.

In *Balaroga Tantra* context *Graha Baadhas* are described for children of age 1 to 16 years.

Chapter 10: Arishta Vijnaaneyam

Lakshanas of person nearing to death have been described here.^[1]

Opinion of other commentator

The book is edited by Bhashathikasahita Pandit. Narayanaprasada Mukundaram and published by Choukhambha Sanskrit Pratishtana, Delhi and Punarmurdita Sanskarana in 2004. No other commentaries are available on this text.

Here the total Number of the *Adhyaya* are 12, Total of 865 verses and upto 9 *Adhyaya* are same as that of *Rasa Manjari* by Mishra SN. 10th *Adhyaya* named as *Balatantra*, 11th *Adhyaya* named as *Kalajnana* and 12th *Adhyaya* named as *Chayapurusha Laxana*.^[2]

Contributions

A separate chapter dedicated to *Yogas* related to *Netraroga* and for *Kesharanjana*, *Palitya*, *Keshashukleekarana*, *Loma Shatana*. One among few *Rasa* texts to elaborate on *Arishta Lakshanas*. 81 different *Rasa Yogas* are described for different diseases.

CONCLUSION

A separate chapter dedicated to *Yogas* related to *Netraroga* and for *Kesharanjana*, *Palitya*, *Keshashukleekarana*, *Loma Shatana*. One among few *Rasa* texts to elaborate on *Arishta Lakshanas*. 81 different *Rasa Yogas* are described for different diseases. *Rasa Manjari* is an important text on *Rasashastra* and therapeutics. Text mainly deals with *Dhatu* and *Dehavada*. Special emphasis is given to cosmeceuticals. The difference between both the author is the number of *Adhyaya* and the total number of Verses.

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How to cite this article: Naveen Kinagi, Pavan Kulkarni, Vijaykumar B. Chavadi, C. R. Honawad. Review on Rasa Manjari - A Text of Indian Alchemy. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2018;1:56-58.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.v3i01.11639>

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.
