

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ON VAIKRANTA

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ABSTRACT

Rasa Shastra is the pharmaceutical branch of *Ayurveda* which deals in detail about the processing of metals and minerals having therapeutic importance. *Vaikranta* is one among several important drugs used in *Ayurveda*. It is grouped under *Maharasa varga* and *uparatna varga*. *Vaikranta* has various therapeutic uses. In Indian system of medicine, particularly in *Ayurveda*, the therapeutic use of metals, minerals and precious stones falls under *Rasachikitsa* (mercurial treatment). These materials are used for internal administration only after their preliminary pharmaceutical procedures, known as *shodhana* (purification), *marana* (incineration) and *sattva patana* (extraction of essence). *Vaikranta* possesses the pharmacological and therapeutic properties like that of *vajra* (diamond). Hence it has been mentioned that *vaikranta* can be used in place of *vajra*(diamond) which is a precious stone. Although the mineral identity of *vaikranta* is the matter of controversy. In this review article an attempt has made to explore the wide range of descriptions available in ayurvedic literature.

KEYWORDS: *Rasa Shastra, Vaikranta, Maharasa, Uparatna*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is considered as *Upaveda* of *Atharvaveda*,¹ which deals with the science of life. The aim of this science is to maintain the healthy life and to cure the diseases for which several different medicaments are being used ranging from plants to metals, minerals, and gem stones². These metals and minerals are classified in various groups based on their therapeutic utility in medicinal use as well as alchemical field. The most useful drugs are classified into *maharasa* group³. *vaikranta* has been classified under *Maharasa varga* and *uparatna varga*.

Classification of *Vaikranta* as per different *Rasa Granthas*:

Table 1:

Sl. No	Maharasa varga	Uparatna varga
1.	<i>Rasopanishad</i>	<i>Rasa Tarangini</i>
2.	<i>Goraksha Samhita</i>	<i>Rasarnava</i>
3.	<i>Rasa Ratna Samucchaya</i>	<i>Rasa Ratna Samucchaya</i>
4.	<i>Rasapaddati</i>	-
5.	<i>Rasa viveka</i>	-

The first reference of *Vaikranta* as *dhatu*(mineral) is traced from the book *Koutilya Arthashastra* 33rd chapter, belonging to 4th century B.C⁴, later on, its descriptions are found in various *rasa* literature viz *Rasa Hrudaya Tantra*,

Rasendra Mangala, Rasa Ratna Sammucchaya etc.

Etimology: The word *Vaikranta* denotes 'that which deforms all kinds of metallic substances. 'Vikruyanti lohani' means it has the power to 'cut' all kinds of metallic substances due to its hardness and its judicious administration in appropriate dosage can kill (cure) the diseases of body⁵. This material is called by name 'vaikranta' because, when it is used judiciously for internal administration in appropriate dosage form, the *vaikranta* can cure many diseases like that of 'vajra'(diamond)⁶.

Occurrence: *Vaikranta* is available in southern and northern parts of *Vindhya parvata* (considered as Rajasthan, Gujrat). It can cut all the *tamra* (copper) and *lohas* (metals) and hence it is called as *vaikranta*⁷.

Synonyms; *Vaikranta, Vikranta, Jeerna Vajraka, Ku Vajraka, Kshudra Kulisha, Churna Vajra*.⁸

grahya Vaikranta Lakshana (fit for pharmacological use): should possess the following properties *asht asra* (eight edges) and *asht phalaka* (eight surfaces) and *shat kona* (six angles) Or eight surface and six angles, should be *snigdha*(smooth) and *guru*(heavy). The term smooth may refer to glossy surface of the grains and term heavy indicates its high specific gravity⁹. It may be of a single color or of a combination of colors.

Pharmacological properties of vaikranta:

*Rasa- shad rasa (six rasa)*¹⁰

Guna- guru (heavy)

Virya- sheeta (cold)

Vipaka- madhura (sweet)

Dosha prabhava- Tridosha hara.

The mineralogical identification of *Vaikranta* has unfortunately been a matter of controversy and many minerals differing widely in nature from one another, are recommended by different Ayurvedic physicians to be used as *Vaikaranta* in therapeutics. It is worth mentioning that at present at least four items viz. *Tourmaline, Fluorspar, Feldspar and Quartz* are being used for *Vaikranta* by different pharmacies and physicians.¹¹

Bheda (types): there are various opinions available regarding the types of *vaikranta* based on colors.

Some authors have suggested that *Vaikrant* can be of five types/seven types¹²/eight types in colors¹³.

Five types: *Hema vaikranta* (golden color), *Roupya* (silver color), *Rasa* (mercury color), *Pushpa* (red color), *Vajra* (diamond). (*Rasopanishad*)

Seven types: *Shweta* (White), *Krushna* (Black), *Rakta* (Red), *Peeta* (yellow), *Neela* (Blue), *Shyama* (Bluish), *Karbura* (blackish-Grey), *Parawatchavi* (grey).

Eight types: *Shweta* (white color), *Rakta* (black color), *Peeta* (yellow color), *Neela* (blue color), *Parawatachavi* (pigeon like / grey color), *Mayurkanth Sadrush* (peacock color), *Marakat Mani Samaan* (marakata stone color).

Table 2:

Book name	Five types	Seven types	Eight types
<i>Rasa ratna samucchaya</i>	--	✓	✓
<i>Ayurveda Prakash</i>	--	--	✓
<i>Rasopanishad</i>	✓	✓	--
<i>Rasa hrudaya</i>	--	✓	--

tantra			
Rasa paddati	--	✓	--
Rasarnava	--	✓	--
Rasa manjari	--	✓	--

Need for shodhana:

If *ashudha* (impure) *Vaikranta* is administered internally without undergoing its purification it leads to *Kilasa* (vitiligo), *daha roga* (burning sensation), *paarshwa peeda*(back ache) and *pandu roga* (anaemia).¹⁴

SHODHANA: (PURIFICATION)

1. *Ashudha* (impure) *Vaikranta* is taken in cloth, *pottali* (bundle) tied and immersed in *dola yantra* (pot) containing *kulatha kwatha*

(*dolichos biflorus* linn) as liquid media, *swedana* (steaming) is carried out for 3 hours it gets *shodhitha*.¹⁵

2. *Ashudha* (impure) *Vaikranta* is heated to red hot and quenched in horse urine, this procedure is repeated for 21 times, it gets purified.¹⁶

3. *Pottali* (bundle) is prepared with *Ashudha* (impure) *vaikrant* pieces and is immersed in a *dola yantra* (pot) containing *kadalikanda swarasa* (*musa paradisiaca* linn stem juice) as liquid media and *swedana* (steaming) is carried out for 3 hrs, so that the *vaikranta* gets purified.¹⁷

Table 3:

Sl. no	Ingredients for shodhana	Method
1	<i>Ashudha vaikranta, kulatha kwatha</i>	<i>Ashuddha Vaikranta</i> is tied in a <i>pottali</i> immersed into <i>dola yantra</i> (pot) containing <i>kulatha kwatha</i> , as liquid media <i>swedan</i> is carried out for 3 hours, it gets <i>shodhitha</i> .
2	<i>Ashudha Vaikranta, haya mutra</i>	<i>Vaikranta</i> is heated to red hot and quenched in horse urine, it gets purified.
3	<i>Ashudha vaikrant pieces, kadalikanda swarasa.</i>	<i>Pottali</i> is prepared with <i>vaikrant</i> pieces and is immersed in a <i>dola yantra</i> (pot) containing <i>kadalikanda swaras</i> as liquid media and <i>swedana</i> is carried out for 3 hrs, so that the <i>vaikranta</i> gets purified.

Vaikranta shodhana by swedana method as per different rasa grantha:

Table 4:

Sl.no	Shodhana media	Duration	Reference
1.	<i>Amla varga dravya like kanji/ nimbu swarasa/ kulattha kwatha/ kodrava kwatha/ gomutra</i>	3 days	<i>Rasa ratna samucchaya</i>
2.	<i>Amla varga dravya like kanji/ nimbu swarasa/ kodrava kwatha/ gomutra</i>	1 yama [3hours]	<i>Rasa tarangini</i>
3.	<i>Kulatha kwatha</i>	1 yama [3hours]	<i>Ayurveda Prakash</i>
4.	<i>Kulatha kwatha</i>	1 yama [3hours]	<i>Rasamruta</i>

Vaikranta shodhana by nirvapa method as per different rasa grantha:

Table 5:

Sl.no	Shodhana media	Duration	Reference
1.	Haya mutra	21 times	Ayurveda Prakash
2.	Haya mutra	21 times	Rasa ratna samucchaya
3.	Haya mutra	21 times	Rasendra sara sangraha
4.	Haya mutra	14 times	Yoga ratnakara

MAARANA(INCINERATION)

1. *Shodhita vaikranta* (purified) is triturated with equal quantity of *gandhaka* (sulphur) by giving *Nimbu swarasa* (lemon juice) *bhavana* (ligation) and Pallets prepared, subjected to 8 *gaja putas* (heating system)¹⁸

2. *Gandhaka* (sulphur) is triturated with *nimbu rasa* (lemon juice) and this lepa is applied on *shodhita vaikranta*, dried and subjected to 8 *putas* (heating system), *bhasma* (ash) is obtained¹⁹

3. *Shudha Vaikrant* is mixed with equal parts of and *shudha hingula* (purified cinnebar), *shudha gandhaka* (Purified Sulphur). This mixture is triturated with

nimbu swaras (lemon juice). Pallets are prepared and Dried, enclosed properly in mudplates, sealed and subjected to *gajaputa* (heating system). Once it gets *swangsheet* (selfcool) powder is collected. It is mixed with equal parts of *shudha parada* (purified mercury) and *shudha gandhaka* (purified sulphur), triturated with *nimbu rasa* (lemon juice). The palletes prepared, dried completely, enclosed in mud pallets and again subjected for *gajaputa* (heating system). This method is repeated for 8 times to obtain mud brown coloured *vaikrant bhasma* (ash).²⁰

Table 6:

Sl.no	Ingredients	Methods
1.	<i>Shodhita vaikrant</i> , <i>shuddha gandhaka</i> (purified sulphur), <i>Nimbu swarasa</i> (lemon juice)	<i>Shodhita vaikranta</i> is triturated with equal quantity of <i>gandhaka</i> by giving <i>Nimbu swarasa</i> (lemon juice) <i>bhavana</i> and pallets prepared and subjected to 8 <i>gaja putas</i> (heating system).
2.	<i>Shodhita vaikrant</i> , <i>shuddha gandhaka</i> (purified sulphur), <i>Nimbu swarasa</i> (lemon juice)	<i>Gandhaka</i> is triturated with <i>nimbu ras</i> (lemon juice) and this lepa is applied on <i>shodhita vaikranta</i> , dried and subjected to 8 <i>puta</i> (heating system), <i>bhasma</i> is obtained.
3.	<i>Shudha Vaikranta</i> , <i>shudha hingula</i> <i>shudha gandhaka</i> (purified sulphur), <i>nimbu swaras</i> (lemon juice)	<i>Shudha Vaikrant</i> is mixed with equal parts of and <i>shudha hingula</i> (purified cinnebar), <i>shudha gandhaka</i> (Purified Sulphur). This mixture is triturated with <i>nimbu swaras</i> (lemon juice). Pallets are prepared and Dried, enclosed properly in mudplates, sealed and subjected to <i>gajaputa</i> (heating system). Once it gets <i>swangsheet</i> (selfcool) powder is collected. It is mixed with equal parts of <i>shudha parada</i>

		(purified mercury) and <i>shudha gandhaka</i> (purified sulphur), triturated with <i>nimbu rasa</i> (lemon juice). The palletes prepared, dried completely, enclosed in mud pallets and again subjected for <i>gajaputa</i> (heating system). This method is repeated for 8 times to obtain <i>vaikrant bhasma</i> (ash). ¹⁹
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table 7: Vaikranta marana as per different rasa grantha:

Sl. no	Media	Method	No of puta (heating system)	Reference
1.	<i>Shudha vaikranta + Gandhaka (purified sulphur) + nimbu Rasa (lemon juice) bhavana</i>	<i>Putra</i> (incineration)	8	<i>Rasa Ratna Samucchaya & Rasa prakasha Sudhakar</i>
2.	<i>Shudha vaikranta, Haya mutra</i>	<i>Nirvapa</i> (heating and quenching in liquid) followed by <i>puta</i> (incineration)	Till it reduces to ash.	<i>Rasa Ratna Samucchaya</i>
3.	<i>Shudha vaikranta + 1part gandhaka (purified sulphur) + 1part hingula + nimbu rasa (lemon juice) bhavana</i>	Gaja puta. (incineration)	8	<i>Rasa tarangini</i>
4.	<i>Shudha vaikranta + nimbu Rasa (lemon juice) bhavana</i>	<i>Putra</i> (incineration)	8	<i>Ayurveda Prakash</i>

VAIKRANTA BHASMA GUNAS^{21,22}:

(Therapeutic properties)

- Properly prepared *vaikranta bhasma* mitigates all the three vitiated *doshas*.
- It possesses all the *six rasa*.
- Its judicious administration provides the physical strength and makes the body strong and healthy.
- It cures *pandu roga* (anemia), *udara roga* (abdominal diseases), *jirna jwara* (chronic fever), *nava jwara* (first stage of fever), *shwasa* (bronchial asthma), *kaasa* (cough),

kshaya roga (tuberculosis), *prameha roga* (diabetes mellitus).

- By consuming *vaikranta bhasma maha roga* gets cured.
- Increases *medhashakti* (memory).
- Cures the chronic *agni mandhaya* (reduced appetite).
- When *swasthya* (healthy person) consumes it produces *uttama rasayana gunas*.
- It is also mixed with various other *bhasmas* to increase its therapeutic efficacy.
- It is equivalent in efficacy to *vajra bhasma*.

-It is *uttama twachya* (good for skin) and *rajayakshma nashaka* (cures tuberculosis).

-It is a good rejuvenate.

-It cures *shosha* (emaciation), *jwara* (fever), *kushta* (skin ailments), *pandu* (anemia), *udara* (ascitis), *swasa* (bronchial asthma), *kasa* (cough), *prameha* (diabetes mellitus), *shwayathu* (elevation on the surface of skin) etc.

-It enhances the body power.

VAIKRANTA BHASMA PRAMANA:

Dosage

-1/24 to 1/11 parts of 1 *ratti*²³ (1 *ratti*= 125m.g)

-1 to 2 *ratti*²⁴

SATTVA PATANA: (Extraction of essence)

1. *Shuddha Vaikrantha* is given *bhavana* with *mocha kanda* (*musa paradisiac linn*), *morada rasa* (*guaria morada*), *palasha kshara* (*butea monosperma*) and *gomutra* (cow's urine). Added to mixture of *Vajra kandha* (*surana kandha*) (*amorphophallus*), *nisha kalka* (*turmeric paste*), *triphala*

churna (powders of *emblica officinalis*, *terminalia chebula*, *terminalia belerica*) *shudha tankana* (*borax*), *laksha churna* (*laccifera lacca*), *navasadhara* (*ammonium chloride*) and *meshasrunji churna* (*gymnema Sylvester*). All these are mixed together, and a bolus is formed. This bolus is dried and placed in *andhamoosha* (crucible) and subjected to *teevragni* (heating system). *Vaikrant sattva* is obtained.²⁵

2. *Vaikrant* is mixed with *sattvapatana yoga* (*mitra panchaka*) and triturated. Bolus is formed and kept in *andhamoosha* (crucible), subjected for *dhamana* (fire) for one *yama* (3 hour's). *Sattva* (essence) of *vaikrant* is obtained.²⁶

3. *Vaikrant* is mixed with *sattvapatana yukta aushadha dravya* (*guda*, *guggulu*, *tankana* etc) and *mardana* is done. Bolus is prepared and kept in *andhamusha* (crucible) which is subjected to *dhamana* (heating system) for 1 *yama* (3 hour's). *Vaikrant sattva* (essence) is obtained.²⁷

Table 8:

Sl.no	Ingredients	Methods
1	<i>Shuddha Vaikranta</i> , (<i>musa paradisiac linn</i>), <i>morada rasa</i> (<i>guaria morada</i>), <i>palasha kshara</i> (<i>butea monosperma</i>) and <i>gomutra</i> (cow's urine). <i>Vajra kandha</i> (<i>surana kandha</i>) (<i>amorphophallus</i>), <i>nisha kalka</i> (<i>turmeric paste</i>), <i>triphala churna</i> (powders of <i>emblica officinalis</i> , <i>terminalia chebula</i> , <i>terminalia belerica</i>) <i>shudha tankana</i> (<i>borax</i>), <i>laksha churna</i> (<i>laccifera lacca</i>), <i>navasadhara</i> (<i>ammonium chloride</i>) and <i>meshasrunji churna</i>	All ingredients are mixed together, and a bolus is formed. This bolus is dried and placed in <i>andhamoosha</i> (crucible) and subjected to <i>teevragni</i> (heating system). <i>Vaikrant sattva</i> is obtained. ²⁴

	(<i>gymnema Sylvester</i>).	
2	<i>Shuddha Vaikrant, satwapatana yoga (mitra panchaka)</i>	<i>Vaikrant</i> is mixed with <i>satwapathna yoga</i> and triturated. Bolus is formed and kept in <i>andhamoosha</i> (crucible), subjected for <i>dhamana</i> (fire) for 1 <i>yama</i> (3 hour's). <i>Sathva of vaikrant</i> is obtained.
3	<i>Shuddha Vaikrant, satwapatana yukta aushadha dravya (guda, guggulu, tankana etc)</i>	<i>Vaikrant</i> is mixed with <i>satwapathana yukta aushadha dravya (guda, guggulu, tankana etc)</i> and triturated. Bolus is prepared and kept in <i>andhamusha</i> (crucible) which is subjected to <i>dhamana</i> for 1 <i>yama</i> (3 hour's). <i>Vaikrant satva</i> is obtained.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Description of *vaikranta* is first traced from *kautilyas artha shastra*. According to *ayurvedic rasa literatures vaikranta* may either have eight angles and eight surfaces or eight edges, eight surface and six angles. Smooth heavy and may be of single color or a combination of colors. The term smooth refers to flossy surface of the grains and the term heavy indicates its high specific gravity. Detailed descriptions of its *grahya lakshanas* (pharmacological properties), *bheda* (types), *shodhana* (purification), *marana* (incineration) *sattva paatana* (extraction of essence) are explained in all the *rasa classics*. *Vaikranta bhasma* possesses *six rasa, tridosha* hara (balances vata, pitta, kapha). Therapeutically it is very good *Rasayana* (rejuvenative), *vrishya* (aphrodisiac), *balya* (strengthens body and mind), *kshaya nashaka* (cures emaciation or tuberculosis) and is considered as *sarvaroga nashaka* (capable of curing all diseases). As all the therapeutic properties are same as *vajra* (diamond) it is used as a substitute of *vajra bhasma*. In view of the comprehensive controversies pertaining to the identity of drug, presently 4 drugs viz., Tourmaline,

Florspar, Feldspar and Quartz are being used in the name of *Vaikranta*.

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