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 stones 2. 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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Maharasa varga</th>
<th>Uparatna varga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Rasopanishad</td>
<td>Rasa Tarangini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Goraksha Samhita</td>
<td>Rasarnava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Rasa Ratna Samucchaya</td>
<td>Rasa Ratna Samucchaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Rasapaddati</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Rasa viveka</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 lohan’ 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 body.\(^5\)

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 snigdhath(smooth) and guru(heavy). The term smooth may refer to glossy surface of the grains and term heavy indicates its high specific gravity.\(^9\) 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 types/eight types in colors.\(^12\)

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book name</th>
<th>Five types</th>
<th>Seven types</th>
<th>Eight types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rasa ratna sammucchaya</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayurveda Prakash</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasopanishad</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasa hrudaya</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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) vaikranta pieces and is immersed in a dola yantra (pot) containing kadalikanda swaras (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:

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

### Table 4:

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

### Vaikranta shodhana by nirvapa method as per different rasa grantha:
Table 5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no</th>
<th>Shodhana media</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Haya mutra</td>
<td>21 times</td>
<td>Ayurveda Prakash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Haya mutra</td>
<td>21 times</td>
<td>Rasa ratna samucchaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Haya mutra</td>
<td>21 times</td>
<td>Rasendra sara sangraha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Haya mutra</td>
<td>14 times</td>
<td>Yoga ratnakara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 obtained 19

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no</th>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Shodhita vaikrant, shuddha gandhaka (purified sulphur), Nimbu swarasa (lemon juice)</td>
<td>Shodhita vaikrant is triturated with equal quantity of gandhaka by giving Nimbu swarasa (lemon juice) bhavana and pallets prepared and subjected to 8 gaja putas (heating system).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Shodhita vaikrant, shuddha gandhaka (purified sulphur), Nimbu swarasa (lemon juice)</td>
<td>Gandhaka is triturated with nimbu ras (lemon juice) and this lepa is applied on shodhita vaikrant, dried and subjected to 8 puta (heating system), bhasma is obtained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Shudha Vaikrant, shudha hingula shudha gandhaka (purified sulphur), nimbu swaras (lemon juice)</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(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 *vaikrant bhasma* (ash).^{19}

### Table 7: Vaikranta marana as per different rasa grantha:

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

**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.
- 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\(^\text{23}\) (1 ratti=125m.g)
- 1 to 2 ratti\(^\text{24}\)

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 beleriaca) shudha tankana (borax), laksha churna (laccifera lacca), navasadhara (ammonium chloride) and meshasrungi churna (gymnema Sylvestre). 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 Chattva is obtained.\(^\text{25}\)

2. Vaikrant is mixed with satvapatana 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.\(^\text{26}\)

3. Vaikrant is mixed with satvapatana 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 chattva (essence) is obtained.\(^\text{27}\)

Table 8:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no</th>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Shuddha Vaikranta, (musa paradisiac linn), morada rasa (guaria morada), palasha kshara (butea monosperma) and gomutra (cow’s urine). Vajra kandha (surana kandha) (amorphophallus), nisha kalka (turmeric paste), triphala churna (powders of emblica officinalis, terminalia chebula, terminalia beleriaca) shudha tankana (borax), laksha churna (laccifera lacca), navasadhara (ammonium chloride) and meshasrungi churna</td>
<td>All ingredients are mixed together, and a bolus is formed. This bolus is dried and placed in andhamoosha (crucible) and subjected to teevragni (heating system). Vaikrant chattva is obtained.(^\text{24})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**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* (rejuvinative), *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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