



Contributions of *Sharangdhar* in the Field of *Dravyaguna Vigyan*

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ABSTRACT:-

Sharangdhar represents the clinical traditions of medieval India. At that time, the effect of *Mughal* tradition was visible at every aspect Indian tradition including medical science. Many new drugs like opium and therapeutic techniques were introduced by them. Use of *Rasayan* (rejuvenator) and *Vajikaran* (aphrodisiac) drugs became frequent. Apart from that *Sharangdhar* also documented medicinal uses of folklore drugs. Although *Sharangdhar* contributed a lot to Ayurveda in the form of *Nadi Pariksha*, concept of *Vishnupada Amrita* (oxygen) etc. but in the present paper the contributions of *Sharangdhar* in the field of *Dravyaguna* will be dealt.

Keywords- *Sharangdhar*, Medieval Period, new drugs etc.

INTRODUCTION-

India has a rich heritage of wisdom and knowledge. *Vedas* are the most ancient documented literature and the source of all kind of Indian knowledge. Science and technology, mining, medicine, surgery, civics, religion etc. got nourishment from *Vedas*. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian science of life originated mainly from *Atharva Veda*. The other *Vedas* had also described the methods of maintaining healthy state and elimination and prevention of onset of diseases.

In the developmental stream, after *Veda*, *Samhita* came with elaborated description of different branches of Ayurveda in a systematic manner. *Samhita* had been divided into *Brhitrtrayi* and *Laghutrtrayi*. *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita* and *Astang Hridaya* constitute *Brhitrtrayi* whereas *Madhav Nidan*, *Sharangdhar Samhita* and *Bhavprakash* are considered as *Laghutrtrayi*.

Samhita word with *Sharangdhar* authenticates the treaty, as treaties which cover the wide aspect and area of subject with full authenticity are considered as *Samhita*¹. *Sharangdhar* being a treaty of early 13th century reflects the clinical tradition of medieval period. In this period *Rasa-Shashtra* was developed and many mineral and metallic preparations came in frequent use. Those were incorporated by *Sharangdhar* in his treaty. After the 12th century A.D. influence of *Mughals* also became frequent in India. Many new drugs like opium and therapeutic techniques were introduced by them. Use of *Rasayan* (rejuvenator) and *Vajikaran* (aphrodisiac) drugs became frequent. *Sharangdhar* standing in the 13th century combines both these aspects and thus, *Sharangdhar Samhita* may be taken as representative work of medieval period.

Sharangdhar itself quotes that in this book, he has compiled the formulations specified by the ancient *Acharyas* along with many new formulations which are practiced by physicians as per their rationality². Thus, although, *Sharangdhar Samhita* specifically deals with formulations but various concepts about *Dravya* (drugs) has been introduced in this text. *Sharangdhar* had contributed significantly in *Dravyaguna Vigyana* right from introduction of new drugs to basic concepts, *Guna Karma* (pharmacodynamics) and *Prayog Paksha* (Pharmacotherapeutics).

CONTRIBUTIONS OF SHARANGDHAR IN DRAVYAGUNA VIGYAN-

- **Basic Principles of Dravyaguna Vigyan-** Sharangdhar had significantly contributed to basic principles of *Dravyaguna Vigyan*. Sharangdhar had incorporated various principles enriching the basic principles of *Dravyaguna Vigyan*. Contributions of Sharangdhar in basic principles are-
 1. **Use of fresh and dry drugs-** Sharangdhar had stated that generally dry drugs should be used for medicinal purpose. In case of unavailability of dry drug, fresh drug can be used but the amount of fresh drug should be double of dry drug. This indicates that the dry drugs are more potent in comparison to fresh drugs. Sharangdhar had also quoted some exceptions for this general rule i.e. *Guduchi*, *Kutaja*, *Vasa*, *Kushmanda*, *Shatavari*, *Ashwagandha*, *Sahchhari*, *Shatpushpa* and *Prasarini* should always be used fresh³.
 2. **Properties of drugs according to place of origin-** Sharangdhar stated that drugs growing in *Vindhya* region are hot in potency while the drugs growing in *Himalaya* region are cold in potency. Plants growing in other regions will have the qualities of that place⁴.
 3. **Time for drug collection-** Drugs should be collected in *Sharad Ritu* (October-November) for all uses but specially for emesis and purgation drugs should be collected in the end of *Basant Ritu*⁵ (February-March).
 4. **Part to be used-** Sharangdhar mentioned about the part to be used for medicinal purpose⁶-
 - a) Plants having thick root- root bark
 - b) Plants having tender roots- entire root system
 - c) Big trees like *Nyagrodha*- outer bark
 - d) Trees like *Beejaka*- pith/ heartwood
 - e) Trees like *Talisha*- leaves
 - f) For drugs like *Triphala*- fruit
 - g) Trees like *Dhataki*- flowers
 - h) Plants like *Snuhi*- *Ksheera* (sap)
 5. **Five Bhaishajya-Kaal-** Sharangdhar confined the number of *Bhaishajya-Kaal* to five. The five *Bhaishajya-Kaal* as per Sharangdhar are *Suryodaye*, *Divas Bhojane*, *Sanyante Bhojane*, *Muhurmuhu* and *Nishi*. Sharangdhar only described first *Bhaishajya-Kaal* i.e. *Suryodya* for *Shodhan*, all other *Bhaishajya-Kaal* are for *Shaman Chikitsa*⁷.
 6. **Aushadha Karma (Pharmacological definitions)-** Sharangdhar described various terms related with the drug action like *Deepan*, *Pachan*, *Sanshamana*, *Anulomana*, *Sansrana*, *Bhedana* etc.
- **Introduction of new drugs-** Sharangdhar introduced a number of new plants that were not popularly used as drugs e.g. *Rudanti*, *Babbula*, *Sthula Babulika*, *Mahanimba*, *Jwalamukhi*, *Kuthaaracchinna*, *Patalagarudi*, *Aileya* and *Suvarnapushpi*.
 1. **Rudanti-** Sharangdhar had described *Rudanti* as *Rasayan* (rejuvenator) along with *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia* Miers ex Hook.f.& Jhoms), *Guggulu* (*Commiphora mukul* Engl.) and *Haritaki*⁸ (*Terminalia chebula* Retz.). *Aadhmal* has commented that it is a very famous drug of western region. *Raja Nighantu* had described that leaves of *Rudanti* are similar to leaves of Bengal gram and in *Shishir Ritu* oozing of water droplets occur from this plant. On the basis of these characteristics, *Rudanti* is botanically identified as *Cressa cretica* Linn. family *Convolvulaceae*⁹.
 2. **Babbula-** Sharangdhar had used *Babbula* in the formulations namely *Babbulaarishta*, *Lauh Rasayan* and *Babbula Rasakriya*. The parts used are bark, *Phala Rasa* (fruit juice) and leaves¹⁰. The pharmacological actions of *Babbula* as per Sharangdhar are *Kshaya* (emaciation), *Kasa* (cough), *Kustha* (skin disorders), *Atisar* (diarrhea), *Prameha* (~diabetes), *Netrasrava* (~epiphora). Botanically, *Babbula* is identified as *Acacia nilotica* (Linn.) Delile subsp. *indica* (Benth).

3. **Sthula Babbulika-** Sharangdhar had mentioned *Sthula Babbulika* at one place only mentioning use of juice of its leaves in diarrhea¹¹. Botanical identity of *Sthula Babbulika* is not clear till now.
4. **Mahanimba-** Mahanimba word although had been used in *Sushrut Samhita* once in the *Pippalyadi Gana* but in *Samhita Kaal*, Mahanimba was the synonym of *Aralu (Ailanthus excels Roxb.)* while in the *Madhyakaal* (8-16th century), Mahanimba stands for *Bakayana*¹² (*Melia azadirachta* Linn.). As the medicinal uses of *Bakayan (Melia azadirachta* Linn.) were augmented by Sharangdhar in the name of Mahanimba, thus, these are the original contributions of Sharangdhar. Sharangdhar used Mahanimba in *Brhita Manjisthaadi Kwatha*, *Mahanimba Kalka*, *Dhatu Taila*, *Kusthakuthara Rasa*, *Mehabaddha Rasa* and for *Pindika*. The part used are *Jata Kalka* (root paste), fruit and *Beeja*¹³ (seed).
5. **Jwalamukhi-** Sharangdhar had mentioned *Jwalamukhi* in context of *Swarnmarana* and as content of *Jwarankusha Rasa*, *Mrigankapotali Rasa* and *Sannipatabhairava Rasa*¹⁴. Leaf juice is the part used.
6. **Kuthaaracchinna-** Sharangdhar has used *Kuthaaracchinna* in context of *Lauh Maran* and *Lauh Rasayana*. *Aadhmal* has commented that the vernacular name of *Kuthaaracchinna* is *Tipani*. The botanical source of *Kuthaaracchinna* may be *Allophylus serratus* (Roxb.) Kurz., family *Sapindaceae*¹⁵. *Aadhmal* opines that *Jambu Twak* (bark of *Syzygium cumini* Skeels) can be used as a substitute for *Kuthaaracchinna*¹⁶.
7. **Patalagarudi-** Sharangdhar had mentioned *Patalgarudi* in context of *Lauh Marana* and *Lauh Rasayan*. The botanical source of *Patalgarudi* is *Cocculus hirsutus* (Linn.) Diels.¹⁷
8. **Aileya-** Sharangdhar had used the term *Aileya* as a content of *Jwarghni Gutika*. The commentators *Aadhmal* and *Kashirama Vaidya* had used the word *Aileeya*. *Aadhmal* stated that *Aileeya* is the *Niryas* derived from juice of *Aloevera* and leaf juice of *Aloe vera* can be used as its substitute. *Kashirama Vaidya* opines it to be *Elbaluka*. *Aadhmal* had discarded this opinion¹⁸. *Niryas* derived from juice of *Aloe Vera* seems to be appropriate as all other drugs in the formulation are also purgative in action.
9. **Suvarnapushpi-** Sharangdhar had used *Suvarnapushpi* as a content of *Shivtra Lepa*. *Aadhmal* had commented that its vernacular name is *Soni* and *Brihat Bala* can be used as its substitute¹⁹.
- **New Therapeutic Uses of Indigenous Drugs-** Sharangdhar introduced various new therapeutic uses of indigenous drugs-
 1. **Shakhotaka (Streblus asper Lour)-** Sharangdhar advised use of decoction of bark of *Streblus asper* Lour. admixed with cow urine in case of *Shalipada*²⁰ (elephantiasis).
 2. **Mahanimba (Melia azadirachta Linn.)-** Sharangdhar used root paste of *Melia azadirachta* Linn. for treatment of *Gridhrasi*²¹ (sciatica).
 3. **Vishnukranta (Evolvulus alsinoides Linn.)-** Root paste of *Vishnukranta* is advised in *Parinama Shoola* (peptic ulcer) admixed with *Sita* (sugar), *Kshodra* (honey) and *Ghrita* (butter). It will cure peptic ulcers in just seven days²².
 4. **Kunkuma (Crocus sativus Linn.)-** *Kunkuma* fried in *Ghrita* (butter), pasted with milk and mixed with *Sita* (sugar) is for nasal administration in neuralgia particularly migraine²³.
 5. **Tilaparani (Gynandropis pentaphylla DC.)-** Juice of *Tilaparani* is advised for ear dropping in ear ache²⁴.
 6. **Dronapushpi (Leucas cephalotes Spreng.)-** Juice of *Dronapushpi* admixed with powder of *Maricha (Piper nigrum* Linn.) is advised in *Vishamjwara*²⁵ (~malaria).
 7. **Aardraka (Zingiber officinale Rosc.)-** Juice of *Aardraka* combined with honey alleviates *Vrishana Vaat* (~scrotal pain) and respiratory disorders²⁶.

- **Use of Animal Products-** *Sharangdhar* frequently used the animal products like urine, bile etc. *Sharangdhar* had used powder of tooth of elephant, pig, camel, horse and goat as a content of *Dantavarti* indicated in eye disease namely *Shukra*²⁷ (corneal opacity). The bile of goat was used by *Sharangdhar* for the purification of *Manhashila*²⁸ (Realgar, Red Arsenic).
- **Introduction of New Therapeutic Techniques-** In ancient days too, drug was introduced directly into blood to bypass gastrointestinal tract. *Charak* had prescribed administration of drug through incised wound in the head of the patient in case of poisoning²⁹. *Sharangdhar* had elaborated it further. He had advocated the use of *Suchikabharan Rasa* through wounds incised in the head. The medicine is to be rubbed there for a while so that it comes in contact with blood sufficiently. *Sharangdhar* had emphasized particularly on *Rakta-bheshaj Samparaka*³⁰ (contact of blood and drug). Similarly, he had prescribed the use of *Gunja* (*Abrus precatorius* Linn.) in sciatica by the similar technique³¹.
- **New Groups of Drugs-** *Sharangdhar* had contributed to *Dravyaguna Vigyan* not only by adding single drugs but also by formulating new groups of drugs.
 1. *Sushrut's Varunaadi Gana* had been modified by dropping *Darbha* (*Imperata cylindrica* Beauv.) and *Putika* (*Holoptelia integrifolia* Planch.) and adding *Kirattikta*³² (*Swertia chirata* (Roxb. ex Flem.) Karst.)
 2. *Panchkashaya*- a specific formulation of five drugs namely *Tinduka* (*Diospyros embuopteris* Pers.), *Abhaya* (*Terminalia chebula* Retz.), *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa* Roxb.), *Samanga* (*Rubia cordifolia* Linn.) and *Aamlaki* (*Embllica officinalis* Linn.) for *Karnasrava* (otorhoea) had been described by *Sharangdhar* as *Panchkashaya*³³.
- **Use of Poisonous and Psychotropic Drugs-** use of poisons like *Vatsnabha* (*Aconitum ferox* Wall) and *Vishamushti* (*Strychnos nux vomica* Linn) and psychotropic drugs like *Vijaya* (*Cannabis sativa* Linn) and *Dhatura* (*Datura metel* Linn and other species of *Datura*) is seen frequently in *Sharangdhar Samhita*. Although, the use of poisons is seen first in the work of *Vagbhatta* but it developed under the patronage of alchemists and *Tantariks*. Cannabis became more popular than *Dhatura*. Cannabis along with opium has been given as an example of *Vyavayi*³⁴ (which is absorbed quickly through mucus membrane). *Sharangdhar* has mentioned the use of cannabis in insomnia, loss of appetite, diarrhea and dysentery³⁵.
- **Vajikarana Aushadha-** *Vajikarana* is the part of *Ayurveda* from ever since. *Sharangdhar* had contributed in this field in the following ways-
 1. **By classifying the drugs acting on Shukra Dhatu in detail-** *Sharangdhar* has classified the drugs acting on *Shukra Dhatu* (~semen) as follows³⁶-
 - a. *Vajikaran- Kapikacchu Beeja* (seeds of *Mucuna prurita* Hook)
 - b. *Shukrala- Ashwagandha* (*Withania somnifera* Dunal), *Mushli* (*Curculigo orchioides* Gaertn), *Shatavari* (*Asparagus racemosus* Willd), *Sharkara* (~sugar)
 - c. *Shukra Janak & Pravartak- Dugdha* (milk), *Masha* (*Phaseolus mungo* Linn), *Bhallatak Phala Majja* (kernel of *Semecarpus anacardium* Linn)
 - d. *Shukra Pravartaka- Stri* (women)
 - e. *Shukra Rechana- Brhatiphala* (fruits of *Solanum indicum* Linn and *Solanum surattense* Burm.f.)
 - f. *Shukra Stambhaka- Jatiphala* (*Myristica fragrance* Houtt)
 - g. *Shukra Shoshaka- Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula* Retz)
 2. **By prescribing formulations for allied purposes-** apart from main sexual performance, *Sharangdhar* suggested many formulations for *Yoni Sankocha* (contraction of vagina), *Linga Evam Stan vridhhi Yoga* (enlargement of penis and breasts) etc³⁷.

3. **By prescribing treatment for venereal diseases-** *Sharangdhar* suggested many formulations for venereal diseases e.g. *Karveer Moola Lepa* (paste of root of *Nerium odorum* Soland) and *Triphala Mashi Lepa* (paste of ash of three myrobalan) for *Upadansha*³⁸

Conclusion-

Sharangdhar was a doyen in the field of Indian medicine during the medieval period. *Sharangdhar* & its commentators made significant contributions in the field of *Dravyaguna Vigyana* by adding many new drugs, new therapeutic uses and modes of drug administration. *Sharangdhar* revolutionized the practice of Indian medicine and paved the way for barefoot physicians working in rural areas.

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