



Review Article

**ARKA PRAKASHA OF RAVANA: A BOOK REVIEW**

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**Article info**

**Article History:**

Received: 07-02-2022

Revised: 09-03-2022

Accepted: 29-04-2022

**KEYWORDS:** *Arka Prakasha, Ravana,*

**ABSTRACT**

*Arka prakasha* is a text written by Ravana in the series of Sanskrit works by Ravana, the devotee of Lord Shiva. In this book there is extensive conversation between Ravana and his wife Mandodari. He explains each and every detail of the method of preparation of *Arka* (Distillate), the apparatus and different varieties of substance which is used for preparing *Arka*. He has explained everything in 10 chapters with each chapter containing 100 *Shlokas* in each chapter. Since each chapter contain 100 *Shlokas*, it is titled as *Shataka*. *Arka* is considered as one among the five basic principles (*Pancha Vidha Kashaya Kalpana*). The present work is an attempt to summarize the key feature of *Arka Prakasha* to highlight its utility and contribution in the development of *Rasa Shastra* and *Bhaishajya Kalpana*. And also, to study & summarize the important comprehensive and specific points mentioned in *Arka prakasha*. Thereby, to elaborate the contribution of *Arka prakasha* in the field of *Rasashastra* and *Bhaishajya Kalpana*.

**INTRODUCTION**

*Arka prakasha* is a text written by Ravana in the series of Sanskrit works by Ravana the devotee of Lord Shiva. In this book there is an extensive conversation between Ravana and Mandodari. He explains each and every method of preparation of *Arka* (distillate). The apparatus and the different varieties of substance which is used for producing *Arka*. He has explained 10 chapters and mentioned them as *Shataka* with each chapter containing 100 *Shlokas* in which there is explanation regarding preparation of *Arka*. Ravana has considered *Arka* as one among *Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana*. The present work is an attempt to summarize the key features of *Arka prakasha* and to highlight its utility and contribution in the development of *Bhaishajya Kalpana*. To study and summarize the important comprehensive and specific points mentioned in *Arka prakasha*. A critical review from Gyanendra pandey Sanskrit text with English commentary is done.

**About The Author:** The author of this book Lankadipathi Ravana<sup>[1]</sup>, is the grandson of *Bramhana Pulasthya* rishi, and son of *Vishwashrava*. Time period-Ravana is a worldwide well-known name for his warriorship and as a scholar. He was the king of Lanka and fought a battle against Lord Rama. History says "Although he was a great scholar and scientist his anti-heroic activities made him defamed in society". He was not only a king of Lanka but also a great scientist and scholar. *Pulastya* and *Malyavan*, who were scientists, attributed to the parents of king Ravana. It is considered that Ravana had contributed much for the development of Ayurveda. *Arkaprakasha*, *Nadipanksa*, *Kaumaratantra* and *Marmavijnana* are the works of Ravana on the subjects of Pharmacology, Clinical examination, Pediatrics and Surgery respectively<sup>[2]</sup>.

**Chapter Wise Explanation**

**Chapter 1: Prathama Shatakam**

Ravana and Mandodari conversation takes place in this chapter. Different varieties of *Aushadhi*, *Lakshana*, useful parts, *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Panchaushadhikalpa*<sup>[2]</sup>. Preparation of *Arka* and the *Arkayantra*, and various method of preparation of *Arkas* been mentioned in this chapter. The preparation of *Arka* of *vishadravya* using different *Arkapaatra* has been explained here. *Arkavaidya*, *Sevanavidhi*, *Yogya Arka*, *Nishidha Arka Sevana Dosha*, *Arkapan Vidhi* is also mentioned. Mentioning of *Shadagni Lakshanas*

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<https://doi.org/10.47070/ijapr.v10i5.2262>

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(*Dhumagni, Deepagni, Mandagni, Madhyamagni, Kharagni, Bhatagni*) to prepare *Arka* and *Rogoddharaka Chakra* etc are mentioned.

### Chapter 2: *Dvitiya Shatakam*:

Explanation regarding five drug forms and its utilization for distillation, quantity of drug to extract *Arka*, *Arkayogyaaushadhi*, method of extraction of *Arka* from *Phalapushpa, Ardra Dravyabheda*, extraction of *Arka* from *Patra*, aromatic process, fumigation to remove *Vatadidoshas* from the *Arka*, drug groups, eliminating bad odour from *Arka (Nirgandhikarana)*, name of the drugs mentioned in different groups, method of preparation of *Arka* from *Palandu* and *Lashuna* & removing bad odour of that *Arka* has been explained, preparation of *Arka* from flesh (*Mamsa*) has been explained, allied preparations like *Kanjika, Tusodaka* and *Arishta* is quoted, finally preparation of *Arka* from narcotic (*Madaka*)<sup>[3]</sup> *Dravya* is also explained in this chapter

### Chapter 3: *Tritiya Shatakam*

Preparation of *Arka* from various drugs that is about 175 drugs has been explained, preparation of *Arka* and its significance in different diseases has been explained in this chapter. Explanation regarding *Haritakyadi Dravya Arka, Shunthi Arka* indicated in *Vibandha, Amavata Shoola. Ardraka Arka* is indicated in *Jwara, Daha, Agni, Deepana. Pippali & Maricha Arka* is indicated in *Shwasa. Pippali Moola Arka* in *Pliha & Gulma Roga. Vidanga Arka* in *Pliha Gulma Roga. Samudraphena Arka*<sup>[4]</sup> acts as *Lekhana. Kampillaka Arka* is *Vireki. Aragvadha Arka* is indicated in *Raktapitta, Udavarta Kandu, Prameha, Kushta. Devadali Arka* in *Udara Gulma, Arsha. Sudarshana Arka* is *Ushna* in nature indicated in *Kapha & Vata Roga*. In general this chapter explains distilled pharmaceuticals or preparation of 175 *Dravya* and other facts.

### Chapter 4: *Chaturta Shatakam*

Explanation of *Arka* prepared from six *Rasas, Dhanya Varga, Pashu Varga, Madhu Varga, Pakshi Varga, Matsya Varga*, & consumption of *Arka* according to season is explained. *Trisugandhi Arka* in *Mala Bhedana, Mukha Daurgandhyahara. Trikatu Arka, Chaturushana Arka, Panchakola Arka, Ashtavarga Arka, Dashamoola Arka, Jeevaniya Gana Varga, Viranjana Arka, Dugdha Kanda Arka. Ashwatha Phala Arka* indicated in *Yoni Dosh. Vishanam Arka* if *Lepa* done cures *Gandamala, Vataroga. Bhrumara Bheda* 8 types. *Gramya Pashu Arka- Veerya Vardhaka, Atahara*. Use of *Arka* according to season<sup>[5]</sup>, *Vasanta- Neem, Amrankura Arka, Greeshma- Gulab Arka, Varsha- Triphala Arka, Sharad- Parijata Arka, Hemantha- Yavani Arka, Shirisha Nimbu Arka*.

### Chapter 5: *Panchama Shatakam*

This chapter deals with administration of *Arka* formulations in clinical management. Explanation

regarding *Jwarastambhaka Arka, Sheetaajwarahara Arka, Vishamajwarahara Sura, Sannipataja Jwarahara Arka. Atisarahara Arka, Pravahikahara Arka, Balarogahara Dhoopa*<sup>[6]</sup> its composition process mode, efficacy, prevention, safety. *Krimighna Arka, Kamalahara Arka, Raktapittahara Arka, Amlapittahara Arka, Rajayakshmahara Arka, Kasajakshayahara Arka, Shasahara Arka, Hikkaghna Arka, Swarabhedaghna Arka, Aruchighna Arka, Moorchahara Arka, Samjna-prabhodaka Arka, Vishaghna Arka, Nidra Tandahara Arka, Madatyayahara Arka*. Different kind of *Madatyaya, Unmada, Apasmarahara Arka. Vatapittahara Arka, Pramehahara Arka, Dehadaaurgandhyahara Arka, Kushta, Pamahara Arka*.

### Chapter 6: *Shashta Shatakam*

Explanation regarding surgical disease like *Galaganda, Gandamala, Granthi, Arbuda* etc can be cured by using different *Arka*. He explains a procedure of incising the wound without using surgical intervention<sup>[7]</sup>. *Sarva Vrana Ropana Arka* is composition, proportion, procedure, indication is explained. *Sandhibhagnahara Arka, Nadivranahara Arka, Visphota Rogahara Arka, Phirangahaara Arka. Shanka Drava Arka & Drona Pushpa Arka* are both *Parada Yoga. Masurikahara Arka* is explained. Origin of disease and other aspects (*Rogadinam Utpatti Anyavishayaska*). Conversation between *Bramha & Shiva* has taken place.

### Chapter 7: *Saptama Shatakam*

In this chapter he mainly explains different sets of disease Like *Khsudraroga, Shiroroga, Netra Roga & different types of Netra Tarpana Vidhi & Netrarohara Arka, Karnaroga, Nasaroga, Mukharoga, Vishopakarana*, management of *Visha*<sup>[8]</sup>, *Shiroroga*. Management of vaginal disease, *Yoniroga Chikitsa Sutra, Balaroga, Vajikarana*, different types of *Arka & Godhuma Payasa*.

### Chapter 8 : *Ashtama Shatkam*

With the help of *Arka, Vashikarana, Unmadyakara* its application, effective administration of *Arka*, perfection of incantation, process of maliciousness (*Vidvesha*) *Uchatikarana* (process of enemy eradication), *Buddhistambhana* (stabilization of wisdom- stagnation of intelligence), *Shatru Parajaya Vidhi* (defeat of enemy), *Koutukakarana Vidhi* (astonishing application) *Marana Vidhi* (killing application), *Adhrushyakarana* (disappearing), *Mohana Karana Vidhi, Agnistambhana* (fire retaining), *Jala Stambhana*(water stabilizing), *Vayubhramnana Vidhi, Buddhi Bhasmikarana Yoga, Sambhoga Sandhikara Yoga, Khshudhvadha Yoga, Khudha Nirvahana*(hunger suppressing), *Chourya Raksha* (thief safety)<sup>[9]</sup>, *Sarva Kanya Siddhi Karaka Vidhi* has been explained.

**Chapter 9: Navama Shatakam**

It mainly explains regarding classification of different types of *Gana Vargikarana*. The *Arka* which acts as *Nadiposhaka*, *Netrya*, *Lavana*, *Ksharadigana Arka* & its utility in different disease has been explained. *Vamana*, *Ranjana*, *Twachya*, *Upavisha*, *Shimbi Dhanya*, *Kshudra Dhanya*, *Parashaka*, Different *Pakshi Gana*<sup>[10]</sup>, *Gramya Pashu Gana*, *Matsya Gana*, *Pachaka Gana*, *Ushna Gana*, *Deepana Gana*, *Poushtika Gana*, *Vataghna Gana*, *Krimighna Gana*, *Vriksha*, *Gulma Gana*, *Kusuma Gana*, *Valli Gana*, *Dhoopa Gana*, *Sugandhi Dravya Gana*, *Dhatu Varga*, *Rasa Varga*, *Uparasa Varga*, *Ratna Varga* and *Uparatna Varga* has been explained.

**Chapter 10: Dashama Shatakam**

In this chapter it mainly explains regarding *Dhatushodana*, *Marana* & *Bhasma Guna*, *Upadhatu Shodhana* & *Marana*, *Sindhura Sevana Vidhi*, *Ratna Shodhana* & *Marana Vidhi*, *Uparasa Shodhana Vidhi*, *Visha Shodhana Vidhi*, *Uttama Vanga Swaroopa* & *Bhasma Guna*, *Yashada Swaroopa* & *Bhasma Guna*, *Naga Swaroopa* & *Bhasma Guna*. He has mentioned *Loha Bhasma* uses according to different *Anupana*, for *Vata* (*Shunthi*), *Pitta* (*Sita*), *Kapha* (*Krishna*), *Sandhi Roga* (*Trijataka*), *Pandu* (*Triphala*). Mentioning of *Ashuddha Loha Bhasma*<sup>[11]</sup> *Sevana Vikara*, *Parada Shamshodhana Vidhi*, *Darada Shodhana*. *Haratala Bhasma Anupana Vidhi* are mentioned. Elimination of adverse effects of *Visha Dravya*.

**DISCUSSION**

This is a classical treatise written by Lankadipathi Ravana. While giving importance to both *Rasashastra* and *Bhaishajya Kalpana* he has explained in detail regarding preparation of *Arka*. The importance of *Arka* is that it has more shelf life and better palatability. The *Panchavidha Kashya Kalpana* explained by Ravana are *Kalka*, *Churna*, *Rasa*, *Taila* & *Arka*. Out of this *Arka* is considered as one of the potent preparations. He has explained the instruments used for preparing *Arka*, importance of *Arka* & its *Anupana*. Mentioning of different type of *Arka* preparation along with the ratio water used for its extraction. He has given idea regarding usage of *Arka* based on each season, *Arka Yogya Aushadhies* & *Shanka Drava Nirmana*. Administration of *Arka* for various disease along with internal and external administration is quoted. Mentioning of different *Varga*, *Shodhana Marana* of different *Rasaushadhi* are explained. This book is a unique and comprehensive book on *Arka Kalpana*.

**CONCLUSION**

This is an important book explaining regarding various method of preparation of *Arka* along with the instruments used and the different ratio of water used for preparing *Arka*. The important features are mentioning of 5 basic principles of preparation of medicine out of which *Arka* is one & considered as potent one. Mentioning of consumption of *Arka* according to different season. He has classified various substances in the form of *Gana* & prepared *Arka* out of it. Preparation of *Arka* from flesh is also mentioned. He has explained regarding *Shodhana* and *Marana* of different *Rasaushadhis*.

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**Cite this article as:**

Gaitonde Vrashank, Katti Anand. Arka Prakasha of Ravana: A Book Review. International Journal of Ayurveda and Pharma Research. 2022;10(5):92-94.

<https://doi.org/10.47070/ijapr.v10i5.2262>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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