A Critical Review of Rakt as Dhatu or Dhosh W. R. T. kriyasharir
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ABSTRACT
Rakta – One amongst the seven Dhatavah. Acharya Sushruta says, it is extremely important for the sustenance of life- “Raktam Jeeva Iti Sthithi”. It is therefore needed to protect this Dhatu by every possible measure. As three Doshas govern the living body, Rakta Dhatu also usually participates in governing the body. In literatures of Ayurveda, acharyas have given importance to Rakta Dhatu as parallel body entity with Dosha. They say body consists of three Doshas: Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. The commentators of these literatures explain why Rakta, among all other Dhatus, has been given so much importance of Dosha. By this literary study a conclusion is drawn that, Rakta is primarily a Dhatu and it has been given the noun (Sadnya) ‘Dosha’ because of its importance similar to Doshas in the body.

Keywords: Rakta, Dhatu and Doshas.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES
Literary study of Rakta dhatu with respect to Dosha.

INTRODUCTION
Ayurved studies the human body with respect to Dosha, Dhatu and Mala. Body consists of three Dosha, seven Dhatus and three Malas. Among the seven Dhatus, Rakta is of prime importance.

“Dehasya Rudhiram Moolam Rudhirenaiva Dharyate II
Tasmat Yatnena Sanrakshyam Rakta Jeeva Iti Sthithi II” Su.So. 14/45

“Narte Dehe Kaphadasati Na Pittaana cha Marutaat II
In the branch of surgery in Ayurveda, Rakta has been given the importance of Doshatwa. So a question arises whether Rakta can be considered as fourth Dosha or not. Chakrapani, Dalhana and Arundutta commented on the terms- ‘Sharir Dosha Samgraha’, ‘Deha Sambhava Hetava’, ‘Trayo Dosha Samasataha’. By studying the commentaries of the treaties, it is seen that all acharyas have universally accepted Vata, Pitta and Kapha to be the three Doshas of the body and Rakta cannot be called as Dosha. But, yes is has the significant importance as compared with Doshas.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Bhrutrayee and Laghutrayee with their commentaries.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Charak Samhita

“Vayuh Pittam Kaphaschoktam Shaarire Dosha Samgraha I” Ch. So. 1/57

Chakrapanidutta commented on the above verse- He initially said that, Acharya Charak had included Vata, Pitta and Kapha in the Dosha Samgraha, as can be seen in the above verse, but had not included Rakta in it. So he had put forth few Statements in Poorvapaksha which he proved to be incorrect in the Uttarpaksha. (As per the modern science this Poorvapaksha can become the null Hypothesis, which is proved to be false in the Uttarpaksha that gives the alternate hypothesis)

Poorvapaksha
Like Vata, Pitta and Kapha, Rakta also have specific Dushti Hetu (etiological cause), Laxna (symptoms), Vikaara (disease), Chikitsa (treatment) and Nirdesh (synonym of Dosha) in the Samhita.
Also in other treaties like Shalya tantra, Doshatva is given to Shonit by saying ‘Shonit Chaturthe’. Then, why Charak has not included Rakta in Dosha Samgraha? Hence, Rakta should be considered as fourth Doshas.

Null Hypothesis- Rakta is neither a Dosha nor a Dhatu.

Uttarpaksha- Answers to the above questions by Chakrapanidutta,
1. “Dosha can independently vitiate others and aggravated Vatadi Dosha do not expect others for their own vitiation. Dushya expect others for their vitiation to become able to vitiate others. Shonit, expects Doshas for its vitiation and then become able to
vitiate others. It never gets vitiated without these Doshas, so Doshas are the causatives factors of Shonit Dushti. Hence, Shonit is a Dushya. Even if it aggravates in its own quantity, it cannot vitiate others unless it is vitiated by aggravated Vata, Pitta and/or Kapha”.

2. Dushti Hetu, Laxanas and Vikaras- “Etiological factors causing Rakta Dushti (vitiation) are actually the factors which vitiate Doshas, and these vitiated Doshas entering the Rakta Dhatu produce Laxanas (symptoms) according to vitiated Dosha in the locations of Rakta Dhatu (location). Thus they are termed as Raktaj Vikaras. Always Vatadi Dosha are etiological factors for the Rakta Dushti and because of the location of Dosha Dushti symptoms in Rakta, Raktaj Vikaras are explained”.

3. Chikitsa (treatment)- “Treatment of these Raktaj vikaras are also with reference to the vitiated Dosha in the Rakta and not actual treatment of Rakta”.

4. Sneha Dagdha (burn due to hot oleating liquids)- “When burns occurs due to hot liquids like Ghruta etc, it is not the Ghruta causing the burn, it is the heat or temperature of that Ghruta which causes burn. Similarly, Rakta causing diseases and producing symptoms doesn’t mean Rakta itself is doing so. It is the Dosha Dushti present in Rakta causing everything”.

5. “Like Rakta, Mamsa Meda Asthi Majja etc should also have specific Dushti Hetu, Laxana, Vikaras, and Chikitsa, so they should also be considered as Dosha. But it is not so, hence Rakta alone cannot be considered as Dosha amongst other Dhatavah”.

6. Nirdesh (synonyms)- “Charak has given the synonym Dosha to Rakta in Gulma Chikitsa. At many places in the Samhita, there are references of Dosha as a synonym to Rakta, which creates confusion about its identity”.

7. Apart from the above statements, Chakrapanidutta also took references of other Samhita to prove that Rakta cannot be considered as a Dosha. He comments that, “According to Acharya Sushruta, Shonit Dushti is seen in Vrana. Mostly Sushruta gave importance to Shonit along with other Doshas. But when explaining Deha Sambhava Hetu, he said that only Vata Pitta and Kapha are responsible for the origin, sustainence and destruction of the body. Later he explains that like the three Doshas,
Rakta is an important fourth entity—Shonit Chaturtha.

If Shonit is a Dosha, than like Vata, Pitta and Kapha it should also be responsible for the formation of Prakruti (body constitution), but it is not so. Hence, Doshas are only three is proved”.

Thus from above all discussion it is proved that Rakta is not a Dosha, but yes it is a Dhatu.

Alternate Hypothesis- Rakta is a Dhatu and not a Dosha.

Sushrut Samhita

“Vata Pitta Shleshana eva deha sambhavah I
Taipeyapannairadhormadhyasanmivisht ai Shariramidam dharyate aagaramiva sthoonaabhistasrubhiratascha tristhoonamaahureke I
Ta eva cha vyaapannah Pralaya hetavah I
Tadebhireva Shonitaschaturtheh sambhavasthisthirpralayeshvapayavirahitam shariram bhavati II”

Dalhana commented on the above verse—He said, Sushruta gave importance to Rakta, by saying that Shonit in Avirahit (along with) state, as fourth entity, is responsible for the origin, sustainence and destruction of the body. He clarified the intentions of Sushruta behind considering Shonit as a fourth entity. Then he comments that, Sushruta used the term Avirahitam for explaining the relation of Shonit with Doshas in the Sambhav, Sthithi and Pralaya of the body.

Clarifications given by Dalhana based on the following points in commentary form:

1. Role of Shonit in Deha Sambhava Hetu - “As per Sushruta Vata, Pitta and Kapha are Deha Sambhava Hetu i.e, the responsible factors for the origin of the body (Sambhava). We know that Shukra and Shonit are also involved in origin of the body (Deha Utpatti). So the responsible factors should include Shukra and Shonit along with Vata, Pitta and Kapha. But it is not so, because Vata, Pitta and Kapha, under normal physiological conditions (Avyapanna Sthithi), stays within Shukra and Shonit and through them they participate in the origin of the body. Hence Shukra and Shonit become the carriers of the responsible factors, which are only three, i.e Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

2. Role of Shonit in Deha Sthithi—

“These Vata, pitta and Kapha, under normal physiological
conditions (Avyapanna i.e, prakrutistha avastha) sustain the body by residing at their normal locations i.e, lower, middle, and upper portion of the body respectively. For example- a house is sustained by three pillars; similarly the body is sustained by the three pillars- Vata, Pitta and Kapha. So they are called Tristhoona, i.e, three pillars. These pillars stay within Shonit and sustain the body. Hence, Sushruta said Shonit in Avirahit form with Vata Pitta and Kapha sustains the body”.

3. Role of Shonit in Deha Pralaya-
“The Dosha when not under normal physiological conditions (Vyapanna) i.e. in Vikrut Avastha become responsible for the destruction of the body. Shonit which (in Avirahit form) always has in it the three Doshas is thus responsible for the destruction of the body when it gets vitiated by Doshas.

4. “In Shalya tantra, Shonit (Dushya) is given prime importance because the place of origin of Vrana is said to be Shonit. In the process of Vrana Paaka (abcess formation), pain do not occur without Vata Dosha, inflammation do not occur without Pitta Dosha and pus formation do not occur without Kapha. Here when Pitta Dosha is vitiated it reaches the Vrana place via Shonit only, hence it is said Shonit Avirahit (along with) Vata Pitta and Kapha is involved in Vrana Paaka”.

Asthang Hrudaya

“Vayuh Pittam Kaphascheti trayo Dosha samasatah II” A. Hr. So. 1/6

Commentary of Arundutta on the verse- he said that Vagbhatta had summed up (Samasataha) Doshas into three- Vayu, Pitta and Kapha. And Charaka has named Vata, Pitta and Kapha as Dosha, he did not say they are Dhatu, even if they do the function of sustainance (Deha Dharan) and development (Vardhan). Because, solely they can vitiate Rasa, Rakta etc Dhatu and can produce disease. In brief, Arundutta comments the following points giving examples and references of the various synonyms to Dosha.

- “Dosha is one who can vitiate others. One who gets vitiated is called as Dushya.
• Vata, Pitta and Kapha can vitiate Rasa Rakta etc.

• They can get vitiated among themselves by any one of them. So they can also be called as Dushya. Eg. In Pandu Roga Nidan Adhyaya, Pitta dominantly vitiates Shleshma, Twaka, Rakta and Mamsa. Here Sleshma has became Dushya by the Dosha Pitta.

• Vata, Pitta and Kapha are independently dominant (Swatantryada Pradhan) i.e, they are independent in getting self vitiated and vitiating others. Whereas Ras Rakta etc are dependent on others for becoming dominant (Partantryada Pradhan) i.e, they need others for their vitiation.

• Vatadi Dosha can always vitiate Rasadi Dhatu, but Rasadi Dhatu cannot vitiate Vatadi Dosha”.

Few examples

• “In types of Prakruti (body constitution) only Vataj, Pittaj and Kaphaj Prakruti are mentioned. Raktaj Prakruti is not mentioned.

• In types of Jwara only Vataj, Pittaj and Kaphaj Jwara are mentioned. Raktaj Jwara is not mentioned.

• Raktaj Vikaras are mentioned. But it is not Rakta producing the disease. The Dosha Dushti in Rakta is causing the disease. Just like, by saying Ghruta Dagdha doesn’t mean burn is due to Ghruta, it is the temperature of the Ghruta causing the burn”.

Nirdesh /Synonyms to Dosha

• “In Kashta Chikitsa, Rakta Dhautu is given the synonym Dosha.

• In Visarpa Chikitsa, Purisha Mala is given the synonym Dosha.

• In Udara Roga Chikitsa from Charak Samhita and in Jwara Chikitsa from Astanga Hrudaya, Aama is the synonym given to the Dosha”.

So this way, Dosha are summed up (Samasataha) into only three. Rakta cannot be called as Dosha. Because if we broadly classify Dosha there can be numerous Dosha entities in the body. Hence Vata, Pitta and Kapha are the only three Dosha of the body.

DISCUSSION

1. On, Chakrapni’s view on Charak’s statement reveals that Vata, Pitta and Kapha are responsible for the specific Hetu, Laxana, Vikaras, Chikitsa and Nirdesh of Rakta. Charak has used the term Dosha to Vata Pitta and Kapha only. In Vidhishoniteya Adhyaya of Charak Samhita, Raktaj Roga are also called as Shonitaja i.e, diseases formed from vitiated Shonit, and Shonitasraya i.e, unless they are treated, they stay in vitiated Rakta.
only. Here though these diseases are called as *Shonitaja* and *Shonitasraya*, they are ultimately produced because of the three *Doshas*.

2. Sushruta included *Rakta* as fourth entity in the origin, sustainence and destruction of the body. In the origin of the body, *Shonit* acts as the carrier of the three *Doshas* under normal physiological conditions.

   In this samhita, *Deha Dharan Karma* i.e, sustainance of the body is governed by *Vata, Pitta, Kapha* and *Shonit*, is being described.

   Also the important function of *Rakta Dhatu* is *Jeevan Karma*, heart is the root of this body, and body is sustained by this heart. So it is important to protect *Rakta*, which flows through the heart, for the body to remain alive. Thus in *Pralaya* also *Rakta* is inevitable component which has init the three *Dosha* (*Avirahitam*).

3. Vagbhatt’s view clarifies that *Dosha* are those who vitiate others and those who get vitiated are called as *Dushyas*. *Vatadi Dosha* can vitiate *Rasadi Dhatu* but *Rasadi Dhatu* cannot vitiate *Vatadi* *Dosha*. *Dosha* can become *Dushya*, but *Rasadi* are always *Dushya*, they cannot become *Dosha*.

4. In Sharangdhar Samhita, *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha* are called as *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala* as per their functions, i.e, when they vitiate body they are called as *Dosha*, when they sustain and maintain the body they are called as *Dhatu* and when they pollute the body they are called as *Malas*.

5. *Rasa, Rakta* etc are called *Dhatus* as per their functions. They are not given the term *Dosha* anywhere. But still *Rakta* is an important entity, so it is given the importance of *Dosha*.

**CONCLUSION**

From the above commentaries, it is understood that, all three acharyas are of the opinion that *Rakta* is not a *Dosha*. *Rakta* is an important entity of the body. Its importance is being described with respect to the three *Doshas* of the body. It is one among the seven *Dhatus*. When it gets vitiated by the *Doshas* it becomes *Dushya*.

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Cite this article:

A Critical Review of Rakt as Dhatu or Dhosh W. R. T. kriyasharir
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