

**TWO ARTHASASTRA – ANTIDOTES IN THE ASTANGASANDRAHA****RAHUL PETER DAS***Berliner Stresse 26, 2085 Quickborn, Federal Republic of Germany***Received: November 2, 1983****Accepted: January 20, 1984**

While indexing Uttarasthana 40 of the Astangasangraha as Part of the indexing Project I have mentioned previously,<sup>1</sup> I came across two antidotes against poison ascribed to the author of the Arthasastra (see p. 319 b of the edition used as the standard for indexing<sup>2</sup>). I found the corresponding passages of the Arthasastra<sup>3</sup> in chapter 14,4 (= 149) of this text, a chapter which contains several antidotes. Similar passages in other medical texts could not be found, but it is possible that they may turn up in the course of indexing.

I give the correspondence below, as they might be of interest of scholars.

Astangasangraha :

Priyangu tagaram laksa manjistha  
madhukam madhu haridra cetyayam  
sresthah kautilya – dayito gadah,  
visamjnanam visair ghoraih praharair nasta  
– cetasm udbandhanam jalaughe ca  
mrtanam cetanavahah.

and

Sveta-puskara-tulyamsair jivantyah  
kusumaih krtah rukma – pisto manir  
dharyascanakyesto visapahah.

Arthasastra:

Priyangu – manjistha – tagara – laksa – rasa  
– madhuka – haridra – ksaudra – yogo  
rajjudaka – visa – prahara – patina – hih –  
samjnanam punah pratya – yanaya.  
Manusyanam aksa – matram gavasvanam  
dvi – gunam catur – gunam hasty –  
ustranam. Rukma – garbascaisam manih  
sarva – visa – harah. Jivanti – sveta –  
muskaka – pspavandakanam aksipe  
jatasyasvatthasya manih sarva – visa –  
harah.

The translation of the above passages offers little difficulty except for mani and aksipe. The word mani probably means “amulet”, but what about aksipe? A word aksipe has not yet been found in Sanskrit literature. In a similar passage of the Arthasastra (1, 20) we find

Jivanti – sveta – muskaka – puspa – van –  
dakabhir akspie (v.1 aksipe) jata –  
syavatthasya pratanena va guptam sarpa  
visani van a prasahante.

But an aksipa too is unknown. We know however that in Nagari manuscripts *p* and *v* (and) also *b*, as *v* and *b* are usually not differentiated are at times confused. Now we do have in Sanskrit the synonyms aksiva, aksiva aksipa and aksipa, which denote a plant (m.) as well as (sea-) salt (n.) (vide e. g. the Poona dictionary<sup>4</sup>) could we have one of these words here, in the locative case?

Then aksipe jatasyasvatthasya could denote an asvettha tree growing on another plant or on salt, i.e. saline soil; the amulet would then be prepared from this and the other ingredients. But as far as I know, growth of this sort or in such soil is no characteristic of this tree. On the other hand, many recipes in this and the forgoing chapters of the Arthasastra list ingredients which are, to say the least, quite uncommon, often indeed impossible. Probably such ingredients were held to be especially potent. May be we have a similar case here. The locative could however also be dependent upon the foregoing genitive, i.e. the asvattha tree could be held to have grown in or on the aksipa of the substances mentioned. Could

this refer to a seedling sprouted from a saline paste? This too poses problems.

Or do we possibly have aksiya (or aksiya) here (*P* and *V* often look alike in manuscripts)? The word aksiya too is the name of a plant (there is also a problematic Vedic aksiya “imperishable”, but that seems even more improbable here). Yet another possibility is to take aksipe (aksipe) as the wrongly, written dual aksipe of aksiba ( a plant) or of the above aksiva etc. as neuters, which they can in rare cases be even as the name of plants.

All these are however problems for further research ; I merely wanted to draw attention to the parallel passages here.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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