



**A LITERARY REVIEW ON VISHAGHNA (ANTI POISONOUS)  
PROPERTY OF SHWETA APARAJITA (CLITORIA TERNATEA.L.)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Aparajita* (*Clitoria ternatea*) commonly known as butterfly pea is a perennial, climbing plant found throughout India. Referred to as *Aparajita* in Ayurveda, it has been used as medicine since ancient times. It is taken in a variety of ways, both internally and externally. However, in Ayurveda, the root, root barks and seeds are the most important parts. According to recent researches, the extracts of the plant shows the potential as an antidote for snake poisoning. The plant also exhibits anxiolytic, anti-inflammatory, analgesic and antimicrobial activities. As per Ayurved classics, it is an important constituent of several *Agadas* (Anti-poisonous formulations). *Agada*, one of the modality used for treatment of poisoning is a combination of different herbs. During the study, it was found that *Aparajita* is included in nearly 12 *Agadas* which are mostly used in case of *Jangam visha* (poisonous bites). So this review paper is an attempt of the author to explore the medicinal value of *Aparajita* and highlight the *Vishaghna* property based on its pharmacological activity.

**Key Words:** *Aparajita* , *Agada*, *Shweta*, *Visha*, *Shweta Aparajita*, *Clitoria ternatea* .

**INTRODUCTION:** There exists a plethora of knowledge, information and benefits of herbal drugs in our ancient literature of Ayurvedic medicine. In *Atharvaveda*, *Aparajita* is considered as *Vishahara* and *Rakshoghna*. Charaka quoted *Shweta* and *Mahashweta* under *Shirovirechanopaga* groups which are considered to be *Shweta Aparajita* and *Katabhi* respectively by Chakrapani. In *Dhanwantari Nighantu*, two varieties of *Aparajita* - *Shweta* and *Nila* viz. one with white flowers and other with blue flowers are described. Both are identified as *Clitoria ternatea*.<sup>1</sup> *Aparajita*, which belongs to family Fabaceae is a very important herb with a broad spectrum of pharmacological activities, medicinal properties and *Vishaghna* (Anti poisonous) properties.

**AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

This review is aimed to provide an overview on Pharmacological activities and *Vishaghna* (Anti poisonous) property of *Shweta Aparajita*.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The data were collected from Ayurveda authentic texts, scientific journals and through the electronic media.

**OBSERVATION AND RESULTS**

**Morphology :** It is a perennial climber. Leaves are pinnately 3-7 foliate. Flowers are showy, white, petals unequal, style bearded below the stigma. Fruit are pods, linear and compressed. Seeds are 6-10 in numbers and black in colour. Flowers appears in rainy season and fruits in winter. It is found almost throughout India as wild or cultivated.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 1: Taxonomical classification of Clitoria ternatea (Aparajita)<sup>3</sup>**

Kingdom	Plantae- Plants
Order	Fabales
Family	Fabaceae
Genus	Clitoria
Species	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>

**Table 2: Vernacular names Clitoria ternatea (Aparajita)<sup>4</sup>**

Assamese	<i>Aparajita</i>
Gujarati	<i>Gokarni</i>
Hindi	<i>Aparajita</i>
Oriya	<i>Aparajita</i>
Kannada	<i>Girikarnika Balli, Girikarnika</i>
Bengali	<i>Aparajita</i>
Malayalam	<i>Shankhapushpam</i>
Marathi	<i>Gokurni</i>
Punjabi	<i>Koyal</i>
Sanskrit	<i>Aparajita, Girikarnika, Vishnukranta</i>
Tamil	<i>Kakkanam</i>
Telugu	<i>Dintena</i>

#### Chemical constituents

The chemical constituents of *Aparajita* are as follows –

Aparajitin, taraxerol, taraxerone,  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  – sitosterols, robinin, quercetin, kaempferol, ternatins, A,B,C,D etc.<sup>5</sup>

**Table 3: Pharmacological properties of Aparajita according to Ayurveda<sup>6</sup>**

<i>Rasa</i>	<i>Katu</i> (pungent), <i>Tikta</i> (bitter), <i>kashaya</i> (astringent)
<i>Guna</i>	<i>Laghu</i> (Lightness), <i>Ruksha</i> (dry)
<i>Virya</i>	<i>Shita</i> (cold)
<i>Vipaka</i>	<i>Katu</i> (pungent)
<i>Doshakarma</i>	<i>Vatahara, Pittahara, Kaphahara,</i>
Pharmacological Actions	<i>Kanthya, Medhya, Vishahara, Chakshushya, Buddhiprada</i>

#### Pharmacological activities of Aparajita according to Ayurveda

Based on the properties, *Aparajita* is used in the treatment of Fever, Urinary disturbances, Goitre, Ophthalmic diseases, Skin diseases, Rheumatoid arthritis, Poisoning, Thyroid disorders, abdominal disorders etc.<sup>7</sup>

#### Exploration of Aparajita and its formulations in Visha chikitsa

As per Ayurvedic texts, *Aparajita* is renowned for its *Vishaghna* (anti poisonous) properties and hence it is included in many

formulations used in poisoned person especially in *Jangam visha* (insect or animal bite poisoning).

**a) In Raktagata visha :-** In poisoning of blood, root bark of *Shelshmataka*, shoots of *Badara*, *Udumbara* and *Shweta Aparajita* should be taken.<sup>8</sup>

**b) In Darveekara sarpa (Hooded Snake) bite :-** 1. Root of *Sinduvvara* along with *Shweta* root should be taken in snake poisoning or both drug should be taken along

with honey and *Kushtha* for drinking and as nasal drop in snake poisoning.<sup>9</sup>

2. Powder of *Sinduvara*, *Vacha* and *Shweta Aparajita* should be taken with water.<sup>10</sup>

3. Root of *Sinduvara* and *Girikarnika* (*Shweta Aparajita*) made into paste and consumed.<sup>11</sup>

**c) In Insect and Spider bites :-** 1. Barks of *Shweta Aparajita*, *Arjuna*, *Shirisha*, *Shleshmataka* and bark of latex bearing trees used as decoction, paste and powder destroy the wounds caused by insects and spiders.<sup>12</sup>

2. Roots of *Shweta Aparajita* and *Trikatu* are made into paste with *Ghee* and applied on bite by *Matsya* (Fish).<sup>13</sup>

3. Powder of *Vacha*, *Vamshatwaka*, *Patha*, *Tagara*, *Tulasi*, *Bala*, *Atibala*, *Shweta Aparajita*, *Shilajita* etc are used for Nasal Drop, Eye application and *Lepa* (unguent) in various insect bites.<sup>14</sup>

**d) In Poisoned Abhyanga (oils and unguents) :-** The remedy in such a case consists of sprinkling cold water over the body of the patient and applying a coating of *Chandana*, *Tagara*, *Kushtha*, *Ushira*, *Vanshapatra* (leaves of bamboo), *Giloya*, *Shweta*, *Kaliyaka* and *Dalchini* (cardamom) pasted together with cold water. A portion of the same drugs mixed with the

urine of a cow and the expressed juice of *Kapittha* is equally commended in the present instance.<sup>15</sup>

**e) During interval of stages of poisoning :-** After adopting the respective measures enjoined in respect of the several stages of poisoning, the patient should, in the interval of any two stages be made to drink in a cold state a gruel (*Yavagu*) prepared with the decoctions of *Koshdtaki*, *Ajamoda*, *Patha*, *Suryavalli*, *Amrita*, *Abhaya*, *Shirisha*, *Kinihi*, *Selu*, *Girikarnika* (white *Aparajita*), the two kinds of *Rajani*, the two kinds of *Punarnava*, *Harenu*, *Trikatu*, *Sariva* and *Bala* mixed with honey and clarified butter. This is beneficial in both animal and vegetable poisoning.<sup>16</sup>

**f) In treatment of Poisoned ground or soil :-** In these cases, the poisoned surface should be purified by sprinkling it over with the decoction of *Vidanga*, *Patha* and *Katabhi* (white *Aparajita*).<sup>17</sup>

**g) In Dog bite :-** A compound of *Shweta Aparajita*, *Punarnava* and *Dhattura* is prescribed for the patient of dog bite.<sup>18</sup>

**h) In Vishanashak Dhoom (Fumigation) :-** A powder of *Laksha*, *Ushira*, *Patra*, *Guggula*, *Bhallataka*, *Arjuna*, *Sarjarasa*, *Shweta Aparajita* is used to create smoke which destroys the smaller insects.<sup>19</sup>

**Table 4: Agada (Anti poisonous formulations) containing Shweta Aparajita**

S.No	Formulations	Ingredients	Indications	References
1	<i>Mahagandhahasti Agada</i>	<i>Sinduvara</i> , <i>Tejapatra</i> , <i>Agaru</i> , <i>Mustaka</i> , <i>Ela</i> , <i>Panchaniryas</i> , <i>Chandana</i> , <i>Sprikka</i> , <i>Twaka</i> , <i>Nalada</i> , <i>shweta</i> , <i>Utpala</i> , <i>Sugandhabala</i> , <i>Ushira</i> etc.	Cataract, night blindness, fever, indigestion, ringworm, cholera, scabies, constipation, fainting, poisoned person nearing death.	Ch.chi.23/77-94
2	<i>Amrita sarpi</i>	<i>Apamarga</i> , <i>Shirisha beeja</i> , <i>Shweta</i> and <i>Neeli Aparajita</i> ,	In all kinds of Poisoning	Su.ka. 5/12-13

		<i>Kakmachi, Cow urine</i>		
3	<i>Gandhahasti Agada</i>	<i>Shweta Aparajita, Vacha, Ashwagandha, Hingu, Guduchi, Kushtha, Sarshapa, Trikatu etc.</i>	Fever, Cholera, Indigestion, Insanity, Epilepsy, Eye diseases, Anemia, Alcoholism etc.	Ch.chi.23/70-76
4	<i>Rishabhakadi Agada</i>	<i>Rishabhaka, Jivaka, Bharangi, Mulethi, Utpala, Dhaniya, Keshara, Jeeraka, Shweta Aparajita, Kolamadhya</i>	Asthma, Fever	Ch.chi.23/95
5	<i>Amrita Ghruta</i>	<i>Shirisha bark, Shunthi, Black pepper, Pippali, Abhaya, Amalaki, Chandana, Sariva, Shweta Aparajita etc.</i>	It removes the effects of all poisons. Also used in Insanity, epilepsy, <i>Garavisha</i> , Abdominal disorders, Anemia, Tumour, Splenic Disorder, Jaundice etc.	Ch.chi.23/24-249
6	<i>Meghnad Agada</i>	<i>Tanduliyaka, Gambhari, Kinihi, Shweta Aparajita, Matulunga, Sharkara, Shleshmataka</i>	It removes the effects of poisoning of <i>Darveekar</i> (Hooded Snake) and <i>Rajiman</i> (Hoodless and striped) snakes.	A.h.u.36/60
7	<i>Ekasar Yog</i>	<i>Sinduvvara, Bakuchi, Bakuchi Flower, Shweta Aparajita, Choraka, Varuna, Kushtha, Sarpagandha, Yavatikta, Punarnava, Shirisa flower etc.</i>	Destroys all kinds of poison especially snakes. [56]	Su.ka.5/84-86
8	<i>Mahasugandhi Agada</i>	<i>Sinduvvara, Chandana, Agar, Kustha, Tagara, Hulhula, Prapoundarika, Nalada, Sarala, Devdaru, Shwet Chandana, Bharangi, Neelee, Sarvagandha, Madhuyashti, Jatamansi, Shweta and Neeli Aparajita etc.</i>	It removes effects of poisoning even of <i>Vasuki</i> (serpent of heaven). [57]	Su.ka. 5/14-27
9	<i>Darveekar and Rajiman</i>	<i>Shleshmataka, Katphala, Matulunga, Shweta, Kinihi,</i>	It removes the effects of poisoning of	Su.ka. 5/75

	<i>vishahara Agada</i>	<i>Sita and Tanduliya</i>	<i>darveekar</i> (Hooded Snake) and <i>Rajiman</i> (Hoodless and striped) snakes.	
10	<i>Mandali vishahara Agada</i>	<i>Drakshaa, Sarpagandha, Nagavruttika, Shweta Aparajita, Manjishtha, Tulasi Patra, Kapittha, Bilva Etc.</i>	It removes the effects of poisoning of <i>Mandali</i> (Spots bearing) snakes.	Su.ka. 5/76-77
11	<i>Nakulyadi Agada</i>	<i>Gandhanakuli, Mrudvika, Shweta Aparajita, Gajavruttika, Tulasipatra, Bilva, Kapittha, Dadima, Honey</i>	It removes the effects of poisoning of <i>Mandali</i> (Spots bearing) snakes.	A.h.u.36/62

**DISCUSSION:** Herbal medicines are in great demand in the developed as well as developing countries for primary healthcare because of their wide biological and medicinal activities, higher safety margins and lesser costs. Herbal medicine aims to return the body to a state of natural balance so that it can heal itself. Different herbs act on different systems of the body. The literature survey about the herb ‘Aparajita’ (*Clitoria ternatea*) tells us the importance of this medicinal plant with diverse pharmacological spectrum. The pharmacological activities like anxiolytic effects, anti-inflammatory, analgesic and antimicrobial activities were reported in literature. Aparajita is included in many anti poisonous formulations which indicate towards its *Vishaghna* property. Being *Tridoshahara*, it suppresses the symptoms of *Jangama Visha* like Pain, oedema and inflammation. Hence it is used in the *Jangama Visha* as decoction, nasal drop, collyrium, unguent, smoke etc. The classical pharmacological properties of *Aparajita* is needed to be explored practically and clinically, as far as management of poisoning is concerned.

**CONCLUSION:** Hence, we can conclude that *Shweta Aparajita* is a promising herb having a special place in anti poisonous formulations in classical texts. Although its effectiveness in snake bite has not been proven scientifically, it can be used to relieve the symptoms of poisoning like pain, oedema, swelling, abdominal disturbances etc. The pharmacological action of *Shweta Aparajita* on skin makes it a useful component of *Agada* (anti-toxic formulations) especially for *Jangam Visha*.

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