

A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF *GORVARA PUTA* IN PREPARATION OF *RASA BHASMA*

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ABSTRACT

Ayurvedic formulations are of three types, Herbal, Mineral and Herbo-Mineral. Of which, Herbo-mineral is prepared either by *Khalweeya* or by *Bhasmeekarana* procedures. The quality of *Bhasma* depends on the number of *putas* given. *Rasa Bhasma* is one such kind of a Herbo-mineral preparation which can be obtained by *Putra* procedure as described in texts of *Rasa Shastra*. Though there are different procedures mentioned for preparation of *Rasa Bhasma*, *maarana* done with *Gorvara puta* seems to be an apt way to obtain the final product. *Putra* is the generalised way of heat application used during the pharmaceutical procedures of *Rasa dravyas*, where the purified organic Metal/Mineral is converted completely into powder form which can be absorbed easily into the body without causing any ill effects. Different types of *Putra* have been explained for *bhasmeekarana* of different metals and minerals. Among them, certain *putas* have been mentioned where *Mandaagni* plays a crucial role in *Maarana* (Incineration). These *Mandaagniputas* are in use of preparing certain *Bhasmas* like *ShilajitBhasma*, *HaratalaBhasma*, *GouripashanaBhasma*, and *PaaradaBhasma*. As these drugs are having relatively low boiling and melting points when compared to other *dravyas*, and are easy to evaporate when exposed to high temperatures, they need a standardized quantum of heat by which they can be transformed into *Bhasma*. *Gorvara puta* is one such kind where *agni* plays a major role in the preparation of *Bhasma*. So, the present study A Comprehensive Study of *Gorvara Puta* in Preparation of *Rasa Bhasmas* has been under taken.

Keywords: *Putra*, *Mandaagni*, *Gorvara puta*, *Rasa Bhasma*.

INTRODUCTION

Rasa Shastra, the science of Alchemy, deals mainly with two vaadas known as *Lohavaada* i.e., conversion of lower metals into Gold and *Dehavaada* i.e, making the body healthy, disease free and to achieve “*Jeevanmukti*” by

consumption of *Bhasmas* which are made up of purified metals and minerals.

Although there is a reference of making medicines with *Loha* and other *dravyas* in Charaka², Sushruta³ and VagbhataSamhitas⁴ detailed description about *Paarada* and other

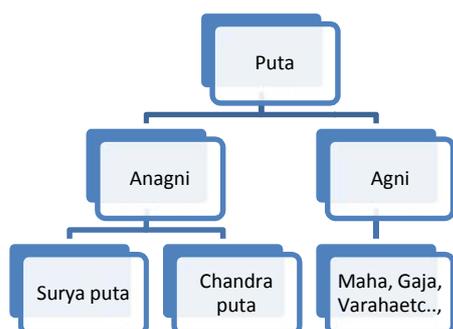
dhatu, their individual *sodhana*, *marana*, *jaarana*, etc., procedures were explained and came to existence widely after 7th century A.D., Bhasmas have been brought into use extensively with all *Rasa dhatu*s especially with *Paarada*. Vagbhata, the author of *Ash-tanga Hridaya* has first mentioned about the use of *Paarada* internally⁵. We can find many numbers of references regarding *rasa bhasma* in almost all the *rasa granthas*. Among them, *Rasa Chintamani*⁶ is one such book where we can get more than 20 references of *Rasa Bhasma*. He has mentioned different procedures for its preparation. In *Rasarnava*, colours of *PaaradaBhasma*⁷ have been mentioned.

That which indicates the quantum of heat required by *rasaadidravayas* for their proper *puta* (Incineration) is called *puta*.⁸

Bhasmas are peculiar preparations where a drug after undergoing specified *Shodhanasamskara* (purification process) is further processed with other drugs and is subjected to *Maarana* (Incineration). It is the process where the original form is completely lost and is transformed /reduced into *Bhasma* (ash) form, which will be possessing all qualities required for a medicine.⁹ This *Maaritadravya* when administered internally, can alleviate the diseases.

CLASSIFICATION OF PUTA¹¹

Puta is the methodical way of heat application during pharmaceutical procedures of *Rasa dravyas*. It is the one which indicates the intensity of heat, and number of *putas* to be given for a *Rasa dravya*. The main classification of *puta* has been divided into 2 types:



PUTANA VIDHI:-

For a *Rasa dravya* to get transformed into *Bhasma*, various steps are needed to be followed for the process of Incineration¹². They are:-

1. **Dravyasangraha:** collection of raw material.
2. **Shodhana:** Purification i.e., removal of external and internal Physical and Chemical impurities by subjecting the drug to various procedures like *Bhavana*, *Mardana*, *Nivapa* etc., for a specific period of time.
3. **Bhaavana:** Impregnation or trituration along with juice or decoction of certain herbal drugs to facilitate the therapeutic efficacy of drug and for reduction of particles resulting in nullification of physical and toxicological effects of drug.
4. **Chakrikanirmana:** Making the mass into small round flat coin sized structure is made and dried. This facilitates in drying of *chakra* and facilitates in uniform spreading of heat.
5. **Samputeekarana:** After preparing *chakrikas*, they are kept in a *sharava* and closed with another *sharava* and the joint is sealed with mud smeared cloth tightly for 7 times. So that the fire doesn't enter the *sharava* and burn the drug.
6. **Putana:** It is the process where *Marana* of the drug takes place. Various types of *putas* have been explained for processing different kinds of drugs basing on their melting and boiling points.

ROLE OF AGNI IN PUTA:

Agni plays a vital role in the process of *bhasmeekarana*. In *Arka Prakaasa*, six types of *agni* has been explained. They are: *Dhumaagni*, *Mandagni*, *Deepaagni*, *Madhyamaagni*, *Kharagni*, *Bhataagni* 13. Of these six types of *agni*, much importance and usage has been given to: -1- *Mandaagni*, 2- *Madhyamaagni*, 3- *Teevraagni*.

Mandaagni: it is the temperature required for the drug to attain the boiling point but does not let the drug evaporate. Temperature varies

from 200-250⁰c. Depending on the type of the drug used for *maarana*, the time of *agni* to be given can be decided.

Madhyamagni: It is the temperature required to cross the boiling point but does not allow the drug to let evaporate. It is used for sublimation of mercury. Temperature varies from 251-450⁰c.

Teevragni: It is the temperature required for certain drugs with highest boiling and melting points and Hardness. This helps in *bhasmeekarana*. Temperature varies from 451-650⁰c¹⁴.

GORVARA PUTA¹⁵

The term *Gorvara* or *Gobara* means Powder of Cow Dung Cakes which is available in the cattle shed. This is used as fuel for preparation in the *Maarana* of *Paarada*.

REASON FOR CHOOSING GORVARA PUTA FOR RASA BHASMA:

Paarada is the only metal which is available in liquid state at room temperature and also having low boiling point of 357.5⁰c, which if crossed, starts evaporating and there will be no outcome of final product.

For this purpose, a *puta* method with a low temperature is needed. *Gorvara/Gobara puta* is one such kind of *puta* where *Gobara* (powdered cow dung cakes) is used and the temperature does not exceed 250⁰c.

When a *Vanya Upala* is burnt as such, it starts burning slowly and attains a specific temperature and puts off after a period of time. But when it comes to *Gobara*, a total of 2 *Maanika* (768gms) is used. Here there will be even slower and uniform distribution of fire and the heat can be maintained, which facilitates the formation of *Bhasma*.

Keeping these parameters in consideration, *Gorvara puta* has been selected for the preparation of *Rasa Bhasma*.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Materials: *HingulotthaPaarada*, *ApamargaKshara*, *BhringarajaSwarasa*.

Method:

*Apamarga Kshara:*¹⁶ Freshly collected *Apamargapanchanga* is taken and dried. It is

then burnt completely to obtain ash. This ash is collected into a vessel and 4 times water is added, mixed and left for sublimation of ash. The next day the supernatant water is filtered through a four folded cloth. This process is repeated for 21 times and the collected water is kept on fire and *mandagni* is given till the water completely evaporates and white colour sediment is obtained. It is then scraped, collected and stored in an air tight container.

Hingulottha Paarada:¹⁷ *Ashuddha Hingula* with all the *graahyalakshanas* mentioned was collected, powdered in *khalwayantraandnimbuswarasa* is added and *bhaavana* is done till the mixture becomes dry. This process is repeated for times in total. After 7 *bhaavanas*, *Hingula* is collected and washed with warm water and dried. This *Shodhita Hingula* is then taken and placed inside a mud pot and another mud pot is inversely kept on it and the joint is sealed together with mud smeared cloth tightly and dried. This is called *Damaruyantra*. It is then placed on fire and *Madhyamagni* is given continuously for 8 hours. The upper portion of the *damaruyantra* is continuously cooled by placing a wet cloth repeatedly to facilitate the sublimation of *Paarada*. After completion of heating, and *Swangasheetala* (self-cooling), the joint is opened and the sublimated *Paarada* is washed with warm water, collected and further subjected for *Shodhana* with *Lashunakalka*, *Sudharaja*, *Saindhalavana* for 3 days¹⁸ Then again on 4th day, it is washed with warm water, filtered and *Paarada* is collected and stored.

Bhringaraja Swarasa: Freshly collected *panchanga* of *Bhringaraja* is washed and crushed well in *khalwayantra* and is squeezed through a cloth to obtain *Swarasa*. This is further used for preparation of *Rasa Bhasma*.

RasaBhasma:¹⁹ A clean mud pot is taken and is filled with *Apamargakshara* and a pit is made and *Paarada* is kept inside and closed with *ApamargaKshara*. It is then filled with *BhringarajaSwarasa* and closed with *sharava* and the joint is closed tightly with mud smeared cloth and dried. It is then subjected to *Gorvaraputa*.

Gorvaraputa: A clean round longsteel drum is taken and is filled with 3/4th of *Gorvara* and *Sharava* is laced in the middle and remaining 1/4th is again covered with *Gorvara*. It is then subjected to *Puta* for 6 hours on *Mandaagni*. After *swangasheetala*, the *sharava* is taken out, seal is opened and Greyish white coloured *RasaBhasma* is collected and stored.

DISCUSSION

Agni plays a crucial role in *Rasa Shastra* which helps in the pharmaceutical procedures like *Shodhana*, *Maarana* and *Gunantaradhana* of the drugs. It is very clearly said that a person needs to use his intellect in choosing the *puta* for *maarana* of a *dravya* when there is no mentioning of type of *puta* to be used. This makes very clear about the role of *agni* in pharmaceutical procedures. As *Agni* is very *teekshna* and can easily attain high temperature, one needs to control it for proper preparation of Medicine. For this purpose, classification of *Agni* has been done into *Mrudu*, *Madhyama*, *Teekshna* which helps in the transformation of medicine in each stage.

As *Paarada* is a metal available in liquid state and also having low boiling and melting points, one needs utmost care in its transformation into *Bhasma*. To achieve this, one needs to regulate and maintain the temperature continuously for a specific period of time. This can be achieved by *Mandaagni* where the maximum temperature attained will be up to 250⁰c. For this purpose, *Gorvara puta* is selected and used in preparation of *Rasa Bhasmaas Gorvara (vanotpala* which are made into powder) facilitates in regulating, maintaining and distribution of required amount of heat and temperature.

The drugs used in the preparation of *RasaBhasma* also play a major role in formation of *Bhasma*.

HinigulotthaPaarada has been taken as it is said to have the qualities equal to *Ashtasamskaarita Paarada*.

ApamargaKshara helps in increasing the *bubhukshata* (digestion capacity) of *Paarada* there

by making it more potent when used internally as a medicine.

BhringarajaSwarasa is said among the drugs which helps in *Paarada* bandha and also helps in *Bhasameekarana*.

Keeping all this in regard, the process of preparation of *RasaBhasma* has been under taken.

CONCLUSION

Maarana (Incineration) is the most advanced technique explained in *Rasa Shastra*. This can be achieved by subjecting the drug to a special process called *Puta*, where the drug under goes the process of transformation and turns into *Bhasma*. *Paarada*, being volatile to high temperatures, needs a stable quantum of heat to get transformed into *Bhasma*. Keeping all these in mind, the present work has been carried out to assist the manufacturing of *RasaBhasma*.

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