



Review Article

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A REVIEW ON ASHTADASHA SAMSKARA OF PARADA

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ABSTRACT

Samskara, a special type of processing of mercury, apart from alleviating the blemishes, gives strength and luster to mercury. The author of Rasahrdya tantra holds that the samskaras of parada are eighteen. Some say they are nineteen while some hold that these are eight. According to Rasahrdyantra the eighteen samskaras of parada are Swedana (boiling), Mardana (grinding), Murcchana (swooning), Utthapana (revival), Patana (condensation), Rodhana (awakening), Niyamana (controlling), Dipana (appetising), Gagana grasa or Abhraka bhakshana mana, charana (adding), Garbhadruti (liquefying), Bahyadruti (liquefying), Jarana (digestion), Sarana, Kramana, Loha Vedha (transformation) and bhakshana. The first eight samskaras are considered as useful to make mercury eligible for adding into medicines and for internal administration, which is called dehavada. The remaining ten are aimed at alchemical and body- transmutation processes, which is called lohavada. The concept of lohavada – conversion of lower metals to higher metals served as the base for the development of dehavada concept. The concept of dehavada is to make the body strong, healthy, and free from diseases and oldage and make it immortal. According to acharyas the samskarita parada which has the ability to convert lower metals to higher metals can also convert diseased body into healthy one. With this healthy body, we can perform austerities and attain moksha, the fourth purushartha in this life itself. Here is a review on the different views of three different classical Rasasastra text books – Rasaratnasamucchaya, Rasahrdyantra and Ayurvedaprakasha on Ashtadasha samskaras of parada.

Key words: parada, ashtadasha samskara, dehavada, lohavada

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a science of life and is known to the mankind since time immemorial. Rasasastra is an important branch of Ayurvedic Pharmacology which deals with the knowledge of alchemical and pharmaceutical processes. Any drug to show its therapeutic effects must ensure that it is assimilated by the affected tissue. It should be noted that mercury and mercurial compound's structure is different from that of the tissue elements and hence will not be digested, absorbed, metabolized and assimilated by the tissue cells of the body. So, if these mercury and mercurial compounds are used in raw or unprocessed form it will be therapeutically ineffective. Even these heterogeneous drugs are likely to produce serious toxic effect in the body. But properly processed mercury and mercurial compounds is nontoxic, easily digestible and absorbable. It is suitable for metabolic changes and is easily assimilated by the tissue cells. And thus, they become therapeutically potent. Samskara potentiates mercury and renders it fit for all types of pharmaceutical and therapeutic purposes¹.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Swedana, niyamana and dipana samskara is conducted by subjecting parada to dolayantra swedana. Mardana and murcchana is by grinding parada along with various drugs. Parada which has been converted into a homogenous paste in murcchana is brought back to its original state by utthapana. Parada is ground with specific drugs and is subjected to patana (condensation) in upward, downward and oblique directions. In Rodhana samskara parada is kept in Saindhava lavana in an earthen pot with water for three days. Grasamana is subjected to ascertaining the quantum of the grasa (substance to be digested in parada), taken by a certain quantity of parada. Charana is the process of adding grasa into the womb of parada. Liquefying the substance given as grasa inside the womb of mercury is garbhadruti and that outside parada is bahyadruti. The process of digesting grasa in parada is jarana. The process in which bija processed by special operations is subjected to jarana in parada and imparted with the colours is called ranjana. Sarana samskara is to increase the prasarana sila of parada. Kramana samskara helps parada to enter deep into dhatus. Vedha is a process in which parada processed with vyavayi (quickly assimilating) drugs and is added into the metals like iron etc. Bhakshana vidhi tell us how we can take this processed parada internally². Brief description of ashtadasha samskaras according to Rasaratna samucchaya³, Rasahrdyantra^{4,6} and Ayurveda prakasha^{5,7,19} are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Brief description of ashtadasha samskaras

		Rasaratnasamuchaya	Rasahradayantra	Ayurvedaprakasha
1	Swedana	Dolayantra swedana in kanji. Trikatu (dry ginger, pepper and pippali), chitraka, ardraka (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>), mulaka, saindhava, sarshapa- kalka for pottali preparation (3days)	Dolayantra swedana in kanji. Sarsapa, saindhava, trikatu, chitramula (<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i>), ardraka and mulaka – kalka for pottali preparation (3days)	Dolayantra swedana in kanji. Trikatu, lavana (salt), rajika, lasuna, triphala, ardraka, mahabala, nagabala, meshashringi (<i>Gymnema sylvestre</i>), meghanada (<i>Butea frondosa</i>), punarnava (<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i>), chitraka, navasara (Ammonium chloride) are used as kalka for pottali preparation (3days)
2	Mardana	Trituration in khalva yantra with grihadhuma, ishtikachurna, dadhi (curd), guda, lavana, asuri for 3days-wash-again triturate with jirnaabhra & sudhaswarna (each 1/16th part of Hg).	Trituration in khalvayantra with guda, dagdhoorna (ash), saindhava, grihadhuma, ishtikachurna, sarsapa (each 1/16th part of Hg)	Same as R.R.S
3	Murcchana	Triturate with kumari (<i>Aloe vera</i>) swarasa, triphala and chitraka to eradicate mala, vahni and visha dosha of parada`	Trituration with grha kanya (Aloe barbadens), thriphala and chitra mula to eradicate mala, vahni and visha dosha of parada	Same as R.R.S & R.H.T
4	Utthapana	Sublimation in damaru yantra	Dolayantra swedana in kanji or sublimation in patana yantra. This is to eradicate naga and vanga dosha of parada.	Triturate with nimbu (<i>Citrus lemon</i>) swarasa and keep it in sunrays. After that urdhwapatana in patana yantra.
5	Patana	Urdhwa & adhapatana- pishti of parada & tamra (Copper) churna (1/4) is kept in patana yantra and patana should be carried out. Tiryakpatana- pishti with abhraka churna (1/4) - patana, then dolayantra swedana.	Triturate parada with tamra churna and saindhava lavana. Upward, downward and oblique sublimation in patana yantra. Naga and vanga doshas are removed from parada.	Same as R.H.T. Here tamra churna- 1part, and parada – 2 parts
6	Rodhana	Keeping parada in srishtyambuja (solution of saindhava lavana) or swedana in shrishyambuja. This potentiate parada.	Same as RRS. This helps in mukheekarana of parada.	Dolayantra swedana in saindhava jala. Pottali with bhurja (<i>Betula utilis</i>) patra.
7	Niyamana	Dolayantra swedana in kanji. Maricha, bhunaga (earthworm), saindhava, rajika, tankana (borax), sigru twak are used to make pottali.	Dolayantra swedana in kanji. Sarpakshi, saindhava, lasuna, bhringaraj, karkoti are used to make the pottali.	Dolatantra swedana (1 day) in swarasa or kwatha of sarpakshi, chinchha, vandhya, bhringaraja (<i>Eclipta prostrata</i>), mustaka and dhattura (<i>Dhattura metal</i>).
8	Dipana	Dolayantra swedana in asavamla.	Dolayantra swedana in kanji. Maricha, bhunaga, saindhava, rajika, tankana, sigru twak are used to make pottali.	Dolayantra swedana in kanji or chittrakamula swarasa or kwatha (3days).
9	Grasamana/Gaganabhakshanamana	Abhraka is considered as the naivedyam of parada. Amount of grasa taken by a certain quantity of parada is grasamana or gaganabhakshana mana.	Grasamana is gagana bhakshana mana according to R.H.T. It is the amount of abhraka taken by parada for digestion in it.	Amount of swarna or abhraka (1/64 or 1/32 or 1/16 or 1/8 part of parada) that is to be added in parada for digestion.
10	Charana	Adding grasa into the womb of parada. Charana is considered as the first stage of jarana.	According to acharya, first abhraka should be put into parada after deepana samskara. Then bija and then grasa should be put into parada.	Adding 1/64 or 1/32 or 1/16 or 1/8 part of swarna or abhraka in one part of parada.
11	Garbhadruti	Process of liquefying the substance which is given as grasa inside parada.	Melting (dravana) of bija inside the womb of parada.	Triturate mercury with abhraka sattwa and swarnamakshika sattwa along with bida in tapta khalwa. Then abhraka sattwa is digested in parada.
12	Bahyadruti	Process of liquefying the substances like abhraka sattwa etc outside parada.	Dravana outside the womb of parada. Paradabandha can be made possible by adding abhraka satwadruiti in parada.	Abhraka (Mica) sattwa, swarna, loha etc. are melted along with oushadha dravyas outside parada and added to parada for digestion.
13	Jarana	The process in which grasa gets digested or become one with parada is called Jarana. This is with the help of bida and various yantras.	Grasa is digested in parada after dravana (melting) of grasa is called jarana.	Digestion of grasa like abhraka and swarna in parada without galana and patana` and without any change in the pramana of parada. is called jarana ie the quantity of parada remains the same as before.
14	Ranjana	The bija like swarna/, rajata which is processed by special operations is subjected to jarana in parada and imparted with the colours such as yellow etc.	When siddha bija is digested in parada, it gets imparted with the colour of that bija. If krishna abhraka is digested in parada, parada will get black colour, if sweta or pita abhraka	Shudha tamra purified by kanji like amladravya is triturated with hingula. Tamra is digested in parada and parada becomes laksharasa nibha ie it becomes red in colour.

			is digested, it will get sweta or pita varna.	
15	Sarana	Parada is taken in sarana yantra filled with oil. Then bija (metals like swarna, rajata etc) is liquefied and added as prakshepa from above.	Same as R.R.S.	Swarnadi bija (equal part) along with parada is added to andha musha filled with sarana taila and in tikshnagni.
16	Kramana		Kramana samskara enhances the sookshma guna of parada. Then parada can enter deep into lohas and perform dehavedha and lohavedha.	With kramana samskara parada can enter deep into dhatus like tamra etc. and change their colour into that of swarna etc.
17	Vedha	Vedha is a process in which parada processed and prepared with the help of drugs which are vyavayi (capable of assimilating quickly) in nature is added into the metals like iron etc.	Parada is processed with vyavayi drugs and this parada is used for converting lower metals to higher metals.	
18	Bhakshana	Parada bhasma is to be consumed after worshipping gods, cows and brahmins, keeping it in betel leaves, along with proper anupana.	This samskara tell us how we can take this processed parada internally.	In the body which is properly purified and that which is free from diseases, parada should be administered in the morning time.

DISCUSSION

Dolayantra swedana method is used in swedana, niyamana and dipana samskaras. But the drugs used for pottali preparation are different in these three cases. Swedana helps in loosening the malas present in the parada. The external malas are destroyed by mardana. Naga, vanga, bhoomija as well as kanchuka type of doshas are removed by murchana samskara. Utthapana samskara helps in eradicating the unwanted qualities acquired by parada during the the process of murchana. Naga and vanga doshas, which are artificially mixed with parada (adulterated in parada) are eradicated with the help of this patana samskara. Rodhana samskara eradicates the mandaviryatva of parada attained as a result of above samskaras. Niyamana samskara removes the mobility attained by parada as a result of rodhana. Dipana enhances the power of parada, in consuming minerals like abhraka etc. According to Rasaratnasamucchaya, charana, dravana, and jarana are the three stages of jarana. A special type of taila called ranjana taila prepared by taking red flowers as kalka and kwatha can be used for ranjana karma of dhatus according to Anandakanda⁹ Vedha samskara helps parada to assimilate quickly in dhatus. Bhakshana vidhi is mainly for dehavedha. Before parada taken internally as rasayana, body should be properly purified through specified procedures of shodhana therapies. This process is called kshetrikarana in Rasachikitsa⁸.

CONCLUSION

The process of parada samskara mitigates all types of dosas (physical as well as chemical impurities), potentiates the mercury and renders it fit for all types of pharmaceutical and therapeutic purposes. The ultimate purpose of the administration of purified/processed mercury is to achieve jivan mukti, ie salvation from the bondage of the world while remaining alive in this world. Another purpose of Parada samskara includes inducing qualities and helps in transforming the lower metals to higher form. To ascertain the suitability of parada for administration in individual, it is tested over other base metals. If it is capable of transmutation of base metals into gold, then it

is considered to be suitable for administration to the individual. In conclusion, the parada which is processed by eighteen samskaras or ashtadasha samskarita parada helps us to attain dehasiddhi as well as lohasiddhi.

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