

CRITICAL REVIEW ON PARADA SAMSKARA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ASHTASAMSKARAS

Dr. Swapnali Sukhatme & Dr. Reshma Yaranal

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana B R Harne
Ayurvedic Medical College Vangani Karav, Thane
Email id: ssukhatme@gmail.com

²Associate Professor, Department of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana B R
Harne Ayurvedic Medical College Vangani Karav, Thane
Email id: drreshmayaranal@yahoo.com

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Abstract

Rasa shastra is the branch in Ayurveda which deals with the use of Parada and other rasadravyas. Purification and samskaras are important processes on these dravyas in order to improve their efficacy and potency. Asamskarita shuddha Parada does not possess the desired potency; it needs to undergo special procedures named as Parada Ashta samskar. Parada Ashta Samskaras as Swedana, Mardana, Murchhana, Utthapana, Patana, Rodhana, Niyamana and Dipana are meant to make parada combine easily with other rasadravyas and also enhance its own properties. Each samskara specifies aims and objective of the method. In classical Ayurvedic texts, total Ashtadasha means 18 samskaras of parada are mentioned of which first eight samskaras are meant for Dehavada i.e. potentiating mercury for therapeutic purpose. The aim of each shodhana samskar is as follows : Swedana does Dosha Shithilikarana (Loosening of the Doshas), Mardana is Bahirmala vinashanam (eradicate the Bahya Mala), Murchhana is Nashtapishtatva karakam (conversion of mercury from natural form to Pishta / Kalka form), Utthapana is Swarup Aapadanam (Regains its lost natural form), in Patana samsakar, Parada gets rid of Naga, Vanga etc Doshas, Bodhana is to remove Klaihyatva of Parada (Impotency of Parada), Niyamana is to remove Chapalatwa i.e. Niyantrana, Deepana is to make Parada Grasarthi or Bubhukshita i.e to boost up its appetite. Hence, the literature study is focused on first Ashta Samskaras.

Key words: Ayurveda, Rasashastra, Parada, Samskara, Ashtasamskaras,



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Introduction

Ayurveda is a comprehensive system of natural health care that is originated in the ancient Vedic times of India. Its primary emphasis is on disease prevention and maintenance of health. *Ayurveda* is translated as the ‘Science of Life,’ and it addresses all aspects of life, including consciousness/mind, physiology, behavior, and environment¹.

The word *Rasa shastra* literally means the “Science of Mercury”. However, it is a specialized branch of *Ayurveda* dealing mainly with materials which are known as ‘*Rasa dravyas*’ i.e. metals and minerals. In *Rasashastra* the term *rasa* is indicative of *Parada* (Mercury), since the mercury does the *rasana* or *aswadana* (engulf) of *abhrakadi rasa dravya* and *swarnadi dhatu* it is called as ‘*Rasa*’².

The word *Samskara* means transformation or enhancing the properties which the drug already possess. *Ayurveda* quotes *samskara* as “*Samskaro hi gunantaradhanam*” which means transformation of *guna* or addition of *guna* for increasing the clinical efficacy/potency of medicinal drug³.

Rasashastra describes *Ashta dasha Parada samskara* for the removal of physical and chemical impurities in *Parada* and enriching pharmaceutical and therapeutic use of *Parada*. The *Ashtadasha Parada Samskaras* are meant for increasing the therapeutic efficacy of *Parada*.

The first eight *Samskaras* are meant for ‘*Dehavada*’ (Potentiating the Mercury for therapeutic purposes i.e. for curing the diseases and for *rasayana* and *vajikarana* and the remaining ten *samskaras* are meant for *Dhatuvada* (Conversion of lower metals into higher metals)⁴.

Quantity of *Parada* required for *Shodhana samskara*

For the purpose of *Parada Samskara* 2000 *pala* (100kg), 1000 *pala* (50kg), 100 *pala* (5 kg), 28 *pala* (1.4kg), 10 *pala* (500gms), 5 *pala* (250gms), 1 *pala* (50gms) or atleast half *pala* (25gms) should be taken. Quantity less than half *pala* should not to be taken for *Samskaras*⁵.

Table no. 1 : Ashtadasha Samskara as per different Ayurvedic texts

Sr No.	Name Of Samskara	The Rasa Ratna Samucchaya	Ayurved Prakash	Rasatarangini
1.	<i>Swedana</i>	+	+	+
2.	<i>Mardana</i>	+	+	+
3.	<i>Murcchana</i>	+	+	+
4.	<i>Utthapana</i>	+	+	+
5.	<i>Patana</i>	+	+	+

6.	<i>Rodhana / Bodhana</i>	+	+	+
7.	<i>Niyamana</i>	+	+	+
8.	<i>Dipana</i>	+	+	+
9.	<i>Anuvasana</i>	+		
10.	<i>Grasamana</i>	+		+
11.	<i>Charana</i>	+	+	+
12.	<i>Garbhadruti</i>	+	+	+
13.	<i>Bahyadruti</i>	+	+	+
14.	<i>Jarana</i>	+	+	+
15.	<i>Ranjana</i>	+	+	
16.	<i>Sarana</i>	+	+	
17.	<i>Kramana</i>	+	+	+
18.	<i>Vedha</i>	+	+	+
19.	<i>Gaganbhakshan</i>		+	+
20.	<i>Sharir Yoga</i>		+	+

1. *Swedana Samskara*⁶

Ingredients : *Rajika, Saindhav, Shunthi, Maricha, Pippali, Chitrak, Ardrak, Mulika* each 1 part and 16 parts *Parada, Kanji* – As per requirement.

Method of Preparation

The drugs are taken in *Khalwa yantra* and triturated along with required quantity of *Kanji* to prepare fine *Kalka*. The *Kalka* is to be diluted with required quantity of *Kanji* and transferred to *Dolayantra*. Then the prescribed quantity of mercury is taken and tied into *pottali* in a cloth which is thickly applied with above prepared *Kalka* and hung in *Dolayantra*. Then the *Dolayantra* is placed over mild fire and boiled for 3 days i.e. 8 hours per day.

Benefits

This process is known to loosen the embedded / adherent *Doshas* present in the mercury.

2. *Mardana Samskara*⁷

Ingredients : *Gruhadhuma, Ishtika churna, Dadhi, Guda, Saindhav, Asuri* each 1/16th part of *Parada*.

Method of Preparation

Trituration of *Swedita Parada* in *Khalwa yantra* with above drugs and water / *Kanji* for 3 days is called as *Mardana Samskar*.

Benefits

This *Sanskara* is known to eradicate *Bahya Mala* (*Saptakanchuka Doshas*) of *Parada*.

3. *Murcchana*⁸

Ingredients : *Mardita Parada* – 16 parts, *Ghrutakumari*, *Triphala*, *Chitrak* – one part each

Method of Preparation

The mercury is subjected to seven *Bhavanas* of each of the above said drugs. After each *Bhavana*, mercury is washed with *Kanji* and subjected again for another *Bhavana*.

Benefits

The trituration removes *Vanga*, *Naga* and *Saptakanchuk Doshas* of mercury and the mercury loses its natural form i.e. *Chanchalatwa* and *Durgrahyatva* to *Pishta* or *Kalka* form (*Nashtapishtatwa* – paste like consistency)

4. *Utthapana*⁹

Ingredients : *Murcchita Parada*

Method of Preparation

Desired quantity of *murcchita parada* is taken in *Damaru yantra* and placed over moderate fire and heated till the mercury evaporates, after self-cooling of the *yantra* the mercury adheres at the base of the upper pot as droplet is collected and washed with *Kanji*.

Benefits

Removes the *Murcchita avastha* of Mercury i.e. brings back to its natural form, removes the *puti dosha* of *Parada*.

5. *Patana*

A. *Urdhwa Patana*¹⁰

Ingredients : *Shuddha Tamra churna* – 1 part and *Utthita Parada* – 4 parts

Method of Preparation

Desired quantity of above ingredients is taken in the *Khalwa yantra* and triturated to obtain the amalgam. This amalgam is taken in lower pot of *Urdhwapatana yantra* and subjected to intense heat for a day. After self-cooling the mercury in droplet form is collected at the base of the upper pot. This process is repeated for 7 times. After 7th time the Mercury is collected, filtered and stored.

Benefits

Mercury becomes free from all *Doshas*.

B. Adhah Patana¹¹

Ingredients

One part of *Utthita Parada* (obtained from *utthapana samskara*) fine powders of *Haritaki*, *Bibhitaki*, *Amalaki*, *Shigru*, *Chitrak mula*, *Saindhav lavana* and *Rajika* (1/16th part each of *Parada*).

Method Of Preparation

The above said drugs are taken in *Khalwa yantra* and triturated. The mixture is then mixed with desired quantity of *Amla dravya* and triturated to obtain whole mixture in homogenous *Kalka* form. This *Kalka* is applied at the base of the upper pot of *Adhaha patana yantra*. The *yantra* is then subjected to intense heat for a day by dry cow dung cakes around the upper pot. After self-cooling the mercury which is collected at the base of the lower pot is collected, filtered and stored.

C. Tiryak Patana¹²

Ingredients

One part of *Utthita Parada*, 1/4th part of *Dhanyabhrak churna*

Method Of Preparation

The drugs mentioned above are taken in *Khalwa Yantra* and triturated rigorously to obtain the mixture in *Kalka* form. This *Kalka* is taken in the steel pot i.e. pot placed on higher level of *Tiryak Patana Yantra* and subjected to intense heat. The mercury evaporates and passes through the pipe and trickles down in the receiver. After self-cooling the lower pot is carefully unsealed and the mercury inside is collected. The obtained mercury is then subjected for *Swedana* in *Dolayantra* for a day and again triturated with *Dhanyabhrak churna* and processed in *Tiryak patana yantra* and this is repeated till *Parada* attains the ability to withstand heat and stop vaporizing.

Benefits

The mercury obtained through this *Samskara* is free from all *Doshas* and comes with high therapeutic values.

6. Rodhana / Bodhana¹³

Ingredients

Saindhava yukta jala, *Patita Parada*

Method of Preparation

Saindhav yukta jala is taken in a mud pot and *Patita Parada* is tied in a *pottali* and hung inside the mud pot and kept for 3 days. After 4th day the mercury is collected back and washed with warm water and stored.

Benefits

It alleviates the therapeutic impotency (*Shandhatwa*) of Mercury and adds additional potency to it.

7. Niyamana¹⁴

Ingredients

Maricha, Bhunaga, Saindhava, Rajika, Shigru, Tankana (Each 1/16th part of *Parada*)

Method of Preparation

The fine powders of above said drugs are taken in *Khalwa yantra* and triturated along with required quantity of *Kanji* to prepare fine *Kalka*. This *Kalka* is applied over a cloth and *Bodhita Parada* is placed onto it and tied as *pottali* and hung in *Dolayantra* containing *Kanji* as liquid media. This *yantra* is then placed on fire and boiled for 3 days on moderate fire.

Benefits

This *Samskara* eradicates the *Chapalya Dosha* in *Bodhita Parada* and improve its appetite.

8. Dipana¹⁵

Ingredients

Niyamana sanskarita Parada, Tri Kshar, Saindhav Lavana, Bhukhaga (earthworm), *Apamarga / Chitrak, Shigru, Rajika, Vacha, Amlavetas*, all four *lavanas*, *Marich, Tamra patra churna* together in equal parts with *Parada*.

Method of Preparation

The desired quantity of *Parada* is taken with all above ingredients in a *Khalwa yantra* and triturated with *Kanji* or *Nimbu swaras* till it acquires *Pishta* form (*Kalka* form) and this *kalka* is tied in a *pottali* and hung in *Dolayantra* containing *Kanji* and

Swedana is done for 3 days. This *Swedita* arade is triturated with Kanji / Amla dravya and subjected to Laghuputa.

Benefits

By this procedure *Parada* become *Grassarathi* (extra hunger) to digest metals and minerals.

Discussion

The *Ashta Samskara* of *Parada* are meant for removing the impurities in *Parada* and to enhance the properties of *Parada*.

Role of following Samskaras |:

- *Bhavana* - Reduction of particle size and also transfer of impurities from material to liquid media¹⁶, grinding the drug with specified liquid medium for a stipulated time in which particle size will be reduced¹⁷.
- *Swedana*- Boiling the drug in specified liquid for a stipulated time, which will reduce its toxicity and remove the impurities.
- *Mardana* - Trituration with *Swarasa*, *Kashay*, *Godugdha*, *Gomutra* etc - Particle size of drug becomes synergistic additives which causes an agonistic effect¹⁸.
- *Patana* (To Distil) - By giving heat to substances so that it vaporizes & the extract is collected - Separation of adulterants causes purification of medicine¹⁹; Subjecting the drug to distillation- *Parada shodhana* in which Lead & Tin will be eliminated²⁰. In this *Sanskar Parada* attains *manda viryatva*.
- During the *Mardana Samskar*, heat given during acts as stimulating agent to *Parada*. While triturating with *Ishtika churna* (silica), Carbon acts as reducing agent and silica acts as adsorbent for impurities.
- During the *Murchhana* procedure, drugs used are *Katu Kashaya pradhan*, it acts as *Bhedana*, *Shoshana*, *Kshalana*, and *Lekhan*, by which the blemishes are removed.
- In *Utthapan Samskara* maximum loss of *Parada* might be seen.

During first *Samskar*, the impurities of *Parada* dissolve in the liquid medium used and *Parada* become relatively free from impurities. Due to *Tikshna guna* of *Amla dravya* impurities of *Parada* gets loosened. The organic acids present in the *amla varga* are ascorbic acid, tartaric acid, oxalic acid, citric acid, etc. These acids are used in the priming of the metals and mineral by processing them with it (*Shodhana /Marana /Nirvapana /Dhalana /Bhavana*). Studies have proved that these acids possess

antibacterial, antifungal, antioxidant and many more properties. These organic acids in the *Amla varga* cleanses (purifies) the respective metal/mineral and also introduces trace elements in them so that the end product formed is completely bio-assimilable. These acids may also introduce more brittle property while processing so that the calx (*Bhasma*) of the metal/mineral forms at a faster rate²¹.

Conclusion

The Procedures which are performed to enhance the *Bala, teja guna* of *dravya* are called as *Samskar*. *Samskar* are responsible for the *Gunantaradhanam*. So these *Ashta Sanskaras* potentiate the *Parada* and renders it fit for all types of Pharmaceutical and therapeutic purposes. The first 5 *Sanskaras* of *Parada* are meant for removal of impurities and the last three *samskaras* are meant to potentiate its therapeutic use as *Rasayana* and *Vajikarana*.

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