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Review Article

A REVIEW ON PARADA BANDHANA

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ABSTRACT

Rasashastra is the branch of Ayurveda that deals with Indian alchemy. Mercury is the nucleus of the subject Rasashastra. It involves various processes of Mercury where it is subjected to various samskaras to potentiate it for deha and lohavada. Various processes are explained in Rasashastra for Mercury, one of the processes is termed as bandhana. The literal meaning of bandhana is to bind. This process is carried out to remove the quickness and ungraspable property of Mercury. Different types of bandhas are explained in texts of rasashastra. The characteristics of baddha parada have been explained and baddha parada is graded as superior, inferior, etc based on the media employed in the process of bandhana. The baddha Parada is useful not only in therapeutics but also in attaining various siddhis. Different bandhana procedures are explained in texts of Rasashastra but only a few are used in practice. This area opens a wide scope for research.

KEY WORDS: Alchemy, Bandha, Mercury, Parada, Rasashastra

INTRODUCTION

Mercury is in liquid condition at normal temperature. In this state, it is fickle and does not come into grip easily. Changing this form of Mercury either into powder form or bolus form is called Rasa bandhana (binding of Mercury).

Bandhana or Bandha is a process in which Mercury is converted from liquid to a solid state by application of various types of substances. This bandhana process is required to restrict the chanchalata (quickness) and durgrahatva (grip) property of Mercury¹.

Form and appearance of baddha Mercury: Baddha parada will be hard. It will be so hard that it can be compared to vajra (Diamond); it will be white and shiny like Moon².

The author of Rasa Ratna Samuchchaya has explained 25 types of bandhas namely- Hata, Arota, Abhasa, Kriyaheena, Pishtika, Kshara, Khota, Pota, Kalka, Kajjali, Sajiva, Nirjiva, Sabija, Nirbija, Shrinkala, Druti, Balaka, Kumara, Taruna, Vruddha, Murti, Jala, Agni, Susamskruta and Mahabandha³.

Other than these another bandha termed as Jalouka bandha has been explained⁴. This Jalouka bandha of mercury is meant only for sexual purpose and not for other therapeutic aims. There are ten varieties of Jalouka bandha described in Rasa Ratna Samuchchaya. It is named so as it looks like leech after mercury gets bonded. The length of the jalouka is prescribed as per the age of the female i.e., for an individual of below sixteen years it should be eight inches, ten inches for a young lady and twelve inches thereafter⁵.

Bandhas are classified as⁶

Jalouka bandha, Khota bandha, Pata bandha, Bhasma bandha

Jalouka bandha: Mercury is heated with other drugs and bandhana is done.

Khota bandha: Mercury is triturated with other drugs or dhatus in mortar and pestle and it turns into a form of pishti.

Pata bandha: Mercury is triturated with Sulphur till it turns black in colour and is lusterless and later heated and made into form of a parpati (flake).

Bhasma bandha: Mercury is mixed with other drugs and made into a form of bhasma.

Types of bandhana as per Rasendra Mangala

Chapala baddha⁷: Chapala baddha is explained with four colours of Chapala and use of other herbal drugs. It is beneficial in deha and lohavedha (transformation of body and metal to higher level).

Khota bandha⁸: Five types of Khota bandha have been explained. There remains no doubt about the binding of Mercury with drugs of maharasa.

Three types of rasa bandhana have been explained in Yogaratnakara⁹.

I Method: Mercury is to be triturated with herbal drugs like Rambha (*Musa paradisiaca*), Veera (*Coccinia grandis*), Snuhi (*Euphorbia nerifolia*), Haridra (*Curcuma longa*), etc

II method: Mercury is to be placed in the vagina during the monthly cycle by which it gets bonded.

III method: A paste of earthworm and shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*) are prepared and applied to a crucible. Mercury is placed in it and subjected to heat to bind Mercury.

Sadhana of Bandhana¹⁰

The different media for Parada bandhana are Moolika (Herbs), Mani (Gemstones), Suvarna (Gold), Naga (Lead)- Vanga (Tin) and Druti (liquid form of metals & minerals).

Moolika bandha: is one in which herbal drugs are used for the purpose of Parada bandhana. In herbal drugs divyoushadhis (celestial herbs) are adopted and are said to be best than vanoushadhis (herbs); as the former will be agnisthayi (heat tolerant). Mercury turns into gutika form and becomes hard. This gutika does sthambana of vanga (Tin) and turns into rajata (Silver). When it is placed in the mouth it controls the ejaculation of semen. It gives all siddhis and is useful in all the processes of Mercury. Five moolika bandhas have been described in Rasa Prakasha Sudhakara.

Vajra bandha: Vajra baddhita Parada is Shatavedhi (transmutation for 100 times), mrutyunashaka (immortal) and deha-lohakara (makes body strong and converts lower metals to higher metals respectively).

Druti bandha¹¹: It is prepared using different drutis specially Abhraka druti and is claimed to be Dehalohakara. Hemadruti baddha Parada (Mercury bonded with Gold) is dehalohakara (turns body & mind noble), gives all siddhis, destroys old age and daridrata (indigence).

Dhatu bandha: Dhatu baddhita Parada does Veerya sthambha and gives youthfulness. When it is tied to the ear, neck, hand or head then abhichari dosha does not occur.

Characteristics of bandhas

Jalouka bandha: The mercury bonded will be of different colours, clear, similar to leech and which gets baddha when kept in the vagina

Murthi bandha: Mercury will be heavy, reddish in colour and with luster of the sun. When this is placed in the middle of the fire mercury will become agnisthayi (heat resistant).

Patta bandha: When white or yellow coloured, heavy and wax consistent mercury is stable on heat application, it is termed as patta baddha parada.

Bhasma bandha: When mercury loses its quickness property and turns black, white, yellow, blue and lustrous is termed as Bhasma bandha.

Khota bandha: On chedana (breaking) with little pressure it turns powder, it will be smooth, hard and white in colour.

Gradation of Baddhita Parada¹²

Bandhana done with herbs is said to be best. Parada bandhana done adopting mani (Gemstones) is said to be Madhyama (moderate), with Gold is adhami (inferior) and with Lead and Tin is adhamadhama (least inferior). But binding of Parada using drutis especially Abhraka druti is said to give deha and loha siddhi.

Classification based on changes to heat

Agni sthayi (Stable to heat): In this mercury is stable to heat.

Anagni sthayi (not stable to heat): Mercury evaporates when subjected to heat. Anagnisthayi bandhana facilitates temporary form change in mercury as per the process, i.e., powder form or bolus form which is not stable on heating.

Bandhas can be grouped as

1. Method of bandhana are explained: The bandhas are Kriyaheena bandha, Pishtika bandha, Kshara bandha, Jala bandha, Kajjali bandha, Abhasa bandha, Pota bandha, Kalka bandha, Arota bandha, etc.
2. Method of bandhana are not explained: The bandhas are Maha bandha, Agni bandha & Khota bandha

Bandhas can be classified by the process that is adopted

Bandhas where only trituration process is applied are Kriyaheena bandha, Pishtika bandha, Kshara bandha, Jala bandha, Kajjali bandha. Bandhas where trituration and heating

process are both employed are Abhasa bandha, Pota bandha and Kalka bandha.

Properties of baddha Parada¹³

The solidified and highly potentiated Mercury when kept in mouth will act as veerya sthambaka i.e., it arrests early discharge of semen. It turns the milk dry when kept in milk. It gives all siddhis (supernatural powers), prevents jara (old age), removes Daridrata (deprivation), removes wrinkles, greying of hair, cures all diseases and arrests ageing. It makes the body strong like diamond, will have power of vedha. When the baddha Parada is placed in mouth it destroys mukharoga (diseases of the mouth), Kramana of mercury in the body will make the man free from old age and greying of hair.

Suitability of Parada for bandhana¹⁴: Mercury should be Abhrajirna (Mercury processed with Mica), Gandhakajirna (Mercury processed with Sulphur), Pakshachinnata (heat resistant) and Sabijakata (Mercury processed with Gold). Herbs will be able to do bandhana of Mercury that has been previously processed with certain metals and minerals only.

Advantage of bandha¹⁵

Compared to murchita and marita mercury (Mercury in ash form) the bonded mercury will be able to get siddhis.

Rasa bandhakara aushadha¹⁶

Raktasnuhi (*Euphorbia nerifolia*), Somalata (*Sarcostemma acidum*), Rudanti (*Cressa cretica*), Raktachitraka (*Plumbago indica*), Ajamoda (*Trachyspermum roxburghianum*), Devadali (*Polyalthia longifolia*), Arka (*Calotropis procera*), etc.

Because of the strong odour, taste and touch of plant and animal drugs and by adopting various processes like steaming, trituration, etc. mercury gets bonded.

DISCUSSION

As Mercury is a liquid metal various processes were carried out by experts of Rasashastra to make Mercury into a graspable form and make it more stable. Different trials were carried out to achieve Mercury in a bonded form. The literary review carried out suggests it. Different authors have classified different number of bandhana based on the drugs employed in the process of bandha and on the form in which the baddhita Parada attains. Based on the form the Parada attains after the process the author of Rasa Prakasha Sudhakara has termed it as Bhasma bandha, etc. Based on the media used for bandhana it has been graded. Bandhana done with herbs is said to be best as it may add to the therapeutic efficacy of the drug. Whereas the bandhana done with Tin and Lead is said as least inferior as these are puti lohas may add some undesired compounds. Different processes are also explained for bandhana such as trituration, heating, etc. As Mercury is processed using different samskaras and by employing different herbs, metals, minerals, gemstones, etc; it may get potentiated and will be able to give all siddhis like deha and Loha. The bonded Mercury will be useful in therapeutics in curing various diseases, preventing old age, etc.

CONCLUSION

Parada bandhana is a process solely aimed to bind Mercury. Different bandhas have been explained in texts of Rasashastra. Various media used for the bandhana like herbs, metals, minerals, gemstones, etc and gradation of bonded Mercury is based on the media used. Baddhita Parada is said to be superior to murchita Parada. The bonded Mercury is not just indicated in treatment of various disorders but also is said to be useful in conversion of lower metals to higher metals like Gold, Silver,

etc; to make the body strong devoid of old age, graying of hair, etc. and baddhita Parada is said to give all siddhis (pinnacles in all areas). The classification of bandhas is different by different authors of Rasashastra. The properties and effects of different bandhas have also been explained. Different ways had been exercised to achieve baddhita Parada capable of giving all siddhis. A lot of scope remains in understanding and carrying out research in this area.

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