

Vanga in Ayurvedic literature

L.N. GUPTA and NEERAJ KUMAR

Department of Rasa Shastra, Faculty of Ayurveda, Institute of Medical Sciences,
Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi- 221005 (India).

(Received: April 21, 2010; Accepted: May 17, 2010)

ABSTRACT

Therapeutic importance of bhasmas of metals and minerals are time tested. It is very important to look over the history, to make available the evidences for the use of metals and minerals in therapeutics and to provide the knowledge of processing techniques in ancient India. Rasa Shastra, the branch of Ayurvedic science that deals with the pharmaceutical processing of metals and minerals. Vanga is one of the most important metals described in various ancient Ayurvedic literatures. The literatures reveals regarding different features, geological distributions and various processing techniques i.e. shodhana, jarana and marana. The efforts have been made to collect and compile all the related material in relation to Vanga from all possible ancient literary resources.

Key words: Vanga, Shodhana, Jaran, Marana, Bhasma.

INTRODUCTION

Since Vedic period till current time Vanga has been used in different way to fulfil the need of general life as well as ailing being. Initially Vanga was used for preparation of different house hold utensils in ancient past. Later on it is incorporated in medical use in the form of Bhasma. Ancient texts are much enriched with the description of therapeutic use with processing techniques of metals and minerals. In Samhita period very scant description of Vanga was found dispersed in the literatures. The manufacturing techniques are mainly developed in the medieval period and since then the novel dosage form of metals/minerals i.e. Bhasma are used frequently for the betterment of ailing society both in short term and long term conditions. History has its importance to exploring the information's of past and to facilitate the way running in future.

Chronological Appraisal of Vanga

Vanga in Vedic Period¹

In Yajurveda and Atharva veda the reference of Trapu is available for Vanga mentioned along with Suvarna, Rajat, Tamra, Loha and Naga.

The word Trapu is originated from the dhatu "Trap" means to be ashamed.

Vanga in Samhita Period

Caraka Samhita²

Caraka while describing Bhouma dravyas, included Vanga in Pancha Loha Group with Suvarna, Rajat, Tamra, Loha and Naga. Vanga is also a useful metal for the preparation of Jihva Nirlekhan Yantra, Vasti Netra along with Suvarna, Rajat, Tamra etc. In Chikitsa sthana Trapu churna is advised for Mandal Kustha.

Sushruta Samhita³

In sutra sthana Acharya Sushruta has mentioned Vanga in Trapwadigana and described its pharmacological properties viz. lavan rasa, katu vipak, krimighna and lekhan karma. In chikitsa sthana he also indicated the external application of tin plate while bandaging the Kaphaj Arbuda.

Astanga Samgraha⁴

In Astanga Samgraha Vanga is mentioned in Bhouma dravyas along with pharmacological properties and indicated in different diseases like pandu, krimi and vaman.

Table 1: Drugs used for Shodhana

S. No.	Drugs	Process/times	Textual reference
1.	Amla Takra	Dhalana	3 R.T.- 18/13,
2.	Amla Takra , Punarnava&Vatsanabha	-do-	3/7 R.Chu.- 14/136, R.J.N.-Vol-3,pp-104,
3.	Arka Dugda	-do-	7 A.P.-3/53,R.H.T.-6/14, R.S.S.-1/289, R.T.-18/10, R.J.N.-Vol-3, pp-105.
4.	Brahmavriksha Kwatha	-do-	21 R.K.D.-3/293
5.	Bhringaraja Swarasa	-do-	7/21 R.T.-18/14
6.	Churnodaka	-do-	7 R.T.-18/8
7.	Churnodaka	Swedana	3hrs R.S.S.-1/290
8.	Ghritkumari Swarasa	-do-	3/21 R.T.-18/14,
9.	Gomutra	-do-	3/7 R.K.D.-3/151, A.P.-3/48
10.	Kadalimula Rasa	-do-	3/7 A.P.-3/54
11.	Kanji	-do-	7 A.P.-3/52
12.	Katphala Kwatha	-do-	3/7 R.R.S.-5/157
13.	Ksharambu	-do-	7 R.R.S.-5/70
14.	Kulattha Kwatha	-do-	3/7 A.P.-3/48
15.	Mahishi Asthi Churna& Mutra	Sechana	Rasarnava.-7/112
16.	Mutravarga	Nirvapa	7 R.Pu.-274
17.	Nimbu Swarasa	-do-	7 R.S.S.-326/1-2
18.	Nirgundi Swarasa	-do-	21 R.Chu.-6/13
19.	Nirgundi Swarasa & Haridra Churna	-do-	3 R.R.S.-5/158,R.T.-18/11, R.Chu.-14/135, R.J.N.-Vol-3,pp-103,
20.	Taila varga	-do-	7 RSS -326/1-2,
21.	Snuhi Kshira	-do-	21 R.KD.-464, RSS- 326/1-2,R.P.-14/6

Table 2: Drugs Used for Jarana/Marana of Vanga:

a) A-Herbal Drugs		
S.No.	Herbal Drugs	Textual Reference
1.	Apamarga Panchanga	R.J.N.-Vol.3,pp-104, R.P.-14/14, R.T.-18/20, A.P.-3/156, R.S.S.-1/298
2.	Arka Dugdha	R.R.S.-5/159, R.J.N.-Vol-3,pp-104, R.P.-14/17, A.P.-3/170, R.T.-18/27
3.	Ashwath Twak	R.R.S.-5/159, R.J.N.-Vol-3,pp.104, R.P.-14/11, A.P.-3/177, R.T.-18/29,R.S.S.-1/297
4.	Babbul Twak	R.P.-14/32
5.	Bhallatak	R.J.N.-Vol-3.
6.	Chincha Kashya	R.R.S.-5/159, R.J.N.-Vol-3, R.P.-14/11, A.P.-3/174,
7.	Haridra	R.J.N.-Vol-3,A.P.-3/171
8.	Jiraka	R.J.N.-Vol-3,R.P.-14/24, A.P.-3/171
9.	Palasha	R.J.N.-Vol-3,R.P.-14/32,
10.	Pippali	R.R.S.-5/159,A.P.-3/167
11.	Tila	A.P.-3/176

Vanga in Mediaeval period / Rasa Literatures⁵

In Rasa Hridaya Tantra, Vanga has been mentioned under Puti Lohas along with Tamra, Abhrak, Loha etc. and also described its Shodhana, Marana, Naga-Vanga yoga with Abhraka satva for inducing Mukha in Parada.

First time in Rasarnava, Shweta and Krishna verities of Vanga are mentioned

In Rasendra Chudamani, Khurak and Mishraka verities of Vanga are mentioned with the Mehagna and Rasayana properties, which claim to cure 20 types of Pramehas and also described the

pharmacological properties and procedures of Shodhana and Marana.

In Rasa Kamdhenu first time described the Vanga Doshas along with pharmaco-therapeutical properties of metal such as Dhatuprada, Balakara, & Chaksushya.

In Ayurveda Prakash, synonyms, verities, pharmaceutical procedures, pharmacotherapeutic indications, characteristics of Khuraka Vanga are described.

Table 2(b): Mineral drugs

S.No.	Mineral Drugs	Textual Reference
1.	Haratala	R.H.T.-17/6, R.Chu.-14/130, R.R.S.-5/159, R.KD.-466, R.P.-14/11-13, A.P.-3/162, R.T.-18/26
2.	Makshika	R.J.N.-Vol-3
3.	Parad	R.R.S.-5/160, R.T.-18/16
4.	Saindhava	R.J.N.-Vol-3
5.	Shilajatu	R.KD.-483, A.P.-3/160

Table 2(c): Animal Origin Drugs

S.No.	Animal Origin Drugs	Textual Reference
1.	Kukkutanda twak	R.Mt.-3/92
2.	Mukta Shukti	R.J.N.-Vol-3, R.Mt.-3/92
3.	Shankha	R.J.N.-Vol- 3
4.	Varatika	R.J.N.-Vol- 3

Table 3: Anupana of Vanga Bhasma for different diseases

S.No.	Disease	Anupana/sahapan
1.	Prameha	Shilajit, Gudichi satva, Tulasi swarasa
2.	Pandu	Goghrit
3.	Gulma	Tankana churna
4.	Napunsaka	Apamarg churna
5.	Agnimandya	Pippali churna
6.	Swetapradar	Lohabhasma, Suktibhasma & Rala churna
7.	Sukravardhaka	Musali churna, Haridra churna
8.	Sukrastambhaka	Kasturi, Jatiphala
9.	Kustha	Khadira kwatha
10.	Jalodar	Goat milk.

Table 4: Formulations Containing Vanga Bhasma

S.No.	Formulations	Ingredients	Bhavana Drugs	Indications
1.	Mukta Panchamrita Rasa (B.R.-14/219-221)	Mukta bhasma, Praval bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Shankha bhasma, Shukti bhasma etc.	Ikshu rasa, Godugdha, Ghritkumarai , swarasa	Jirna jwar
2.	Laxmivilas Rasa (B.R.-14/222-225)	Swarna bhasma, Rajata bhasma, Abhraka bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Tamra bhasma, Lauha bhasma, Naga bhasma, Mukta bhasma, Parada bhasma, Suddha Vatsanabha etc.	Madhu, Chitraka kwatha	Kshaya, Tridosha ja Pandu, Kamla, Arsha, Swasa, Kasa, Kushtha
3.	Mahakaleshwara Rasa (B.R.-15/74-79)	Lauha bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Tamra bhasma, Abhraka bhasma Swarnamakshika bhasma, Suddha Parada, Suddha Gandhaka, Suddha Vatsanabha, Lavanga, Choti Ela, Dalchini etc.	Bhanga swarasa	Kshaya, Swasa, Kasa, Rajyakshma
4.	Vasant Tilaka Rasa (B.R.-15/154-155)	Swarna bhasma, Abhraka bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Lauha bhasma, Mukta bhasma, Parada bhasma etc.	Gokshura kwatha, Vasapatra swarasa	Kshaya, Pandu, Swasa, Kasa, Prameha, Jwar
5.	Unmadabhanjan Rasa (B.R.-24/41-45)	Rajata bhasma, Abhraka bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Lauha bhasma, Praval bhasma, Trikatu, Triphala, Kutaki, Trivrita etc.	-	Unmada, Apasmara, Raktapitta
6.	Nageshwara Rasa (B.R.-32/88-90)	Suddha Parada, Suddha Gandhaka, Vanga bhasma, Naga bhasma, Suddha Manahshila, Lauha bhasma, Tamra bhasma, Abhraka bhasma Tankan, Yava kshara etc.	Arka dugddha, Chitraka kwatha	Pleehavridhi, Pandu, Shotha
7.	Tarkeshwara Rasa (B.R.-34/35-39)	Suddha Parada, Suddha Gandhaka, Abhraka bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Lauha	Gokshura kwatha, Panchtrina kwatha	Mutrakriccha

Table 4. Contd..

8.	Vasantkusumakara Rasa(B.R.-37/121-126)	bhasma, Yavakshar, Gokshura etc. Swarna bhasma, Rajata bhasma, Abhraka bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Lauha bhasma, Naga bhasma, Mukta bhasma, Pravala bhasma etc.	Ikshu rasa, Godugdha, Laksharasa etc.	Prameha, Kshayakasa, Swasa
9.	Vangeshwara Rasa (B.R.-37/164-165)	Vanga bhasma, Kanta Lauha bhasma, Abhraka bhasma etc.	Ghritkumarai swarasa	Prameha, Mutrakriccha, Pandu
10.	Apoorvamaliniwasanta Rasa (B.R.-37/184- 186)	Vaikranta bhasma, Abhraka bhasma, Tamra bhasma, Swarnamakshika bhasma, Rajata bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Pravala bhasma, Rasa sindoor, Tankan etc.	Shatavari kwatha, Haridra kwatha	Jirna jwar, Prameha, Mutrakriccha
11.	Chudamani Rasa (R.S.S.- 2/2/352-357)	Rasa sindoor, Swarna bhasma, Rajata bhasma, Abhraka bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Tamra bhasma, Lauha bhasma, Mukta bhasma, Pravala bhasma etc.	-	Jwar, Kasa, Swasa, Grahani, Kamala, Mutrakriccha,
12.	Sarvanga Sunder Rasa (R.S.S.- 2/29/42-46)	Swarna bhasma, Rajata bhasma, Abhraka bhasma, Vanga bhasma, Tamra bhasma, Lauha bhasma, Suddha Parada, Suddha Gandhaka, Suddha Manahshila etc.	Shunti, Vijaya, Dhattura, Jayanti	Vataroga, Kapharoga.

In Rasa Tarangini, the author has emphasised the importance of Vanga Shodhana and advised Prakshalana with water after Jarana to remove the Kshara of Jarit Vanga.

Varieties⁶

First time among Ayurvedic Rasa text the author of Rasarnava classified the Vanga on the basis of its colour, Sweta and Krishna. In Rasendra Chudamani, on the basis of appearance two types of Vanga, Khuraka and Mishraka are mentioned. Khuraka Vanga having the properties like silvery white, mridu, snigdha, guru, melts easily and nishbdam while Mishraka Vanga full of impurities, dirty white in colour, hard with bad smell and not melts easily.

Grahya Lakshana⁷

Khuraka Vanga is accepted for therapeutic purposes. This is having the properties like silvery white, mridu, snigdha, guru and nishbdam .

Asuddha Vanga dosha⁸

When apakva Vanga Bhasma or asuddha Vanga Bhasma is administered then following diseases may occur like kustha, gulma, pandu, prameha, vatarakta etc.

Shodhana of Vanga

Generally Shodhana of Vanga is done by dhalana method in "Pithar Yantra" with the use of various liquid media and methodologies applied for Shodhana procedure described in different texts are given in table-1.

Jarana/Marana of Vanga

Jarana is the intermediary process between shodhana and marana, whereas marana is the final process of Vanga for its intended use. These processes are described in different texts with use of different associated materials of plant, animal and mineral origin. Drugs used and methodologies applied for jarana/marana procedures described in table-2.A to C.

Pharmacological action⁹

The pharmacological properties of Vanga as described in Sushrut Samhita having Katu and Lavana rasa, Lekhan karma and Krimighna. In Rasa Tarangini, Vanga has tikta and kasaya rasa, laghu guna sita virya, vatahar prabhav.

Dose¹⁰

1-2 Ratti

Anupana¹¹

Anupana of Vanga Bhasma for different diseases are illustrated in table- 3.

Therapeutic use¹²

The therapeutic uses of Vanga Bhasma are indicated in Prameha, Swapnameha, Swasa, Pandu, Krimi etc.

Some important formulations of Vanga Bhasma along with therapeutic indications are mentioned in table- 4.

CONCLUSION

1. The geographical distribution Vanga has indicated several features.
2. On the basis of features, place of origin, appearance, utility and therapeutic uses, Vanga have different synonyms.
3. Shodhana, jarana and marana indicate the enriched ancient technology of metal processing by applying different types of procedure of different associated drugs.
4. The therapeutic importance of Vanga is shown by the use of it in different diseases.

Aberrations

R.S.S.- Rasendra Sar Sangraha, R.T.- Rasa Tarangani, R.R.S.- Rasa Ratna Sammucchaya, R.Chu.- Rasendra Chudamani, R.H.T.-Rasa hridaya Tantra, R.P.- Rasendra Puran, R.KD.- Rasa Kamdhenu, R.J.N.-Rasa Jal Nidhi, A.P.- Ayurveda Prakash, R.Mt. – Rasamritam, B.R.- Bhaishajya Ratnavali,

REFERENCES

1. A) Anonymous, edited by Shastri V. L., Suklayajurveda Samhita, Chaukambha Vidyabhawan, Varanasi, 1st edit., 18th Chapter, Verse-18/13, 447 (1992).
B) Anonymous, edited by Sayanacharya Viswabandhu, Viswesaranad Vedic Research Inst. Hoshiarpur, 1st edit., Part-3, Verse-11/3/8, Pp-1330 (1962).
2. Acharya Agnivesa, Charaka Samhita, edited by Tripathi. B, Chaukhambha Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 3rd edit, Verse- Su. Stha-5/74, Ch. Stha-7/88, Sidh. Stha-3/7 (1994).
3. Acharya Sushruta, Sushruta Samhita, edited by Shastri K.A, ChaukambhaSanskrit Samsthan, Varanasi, 4th edit., Verse-Su.Stha-46/331, Chi. Stha-18/38 (1979).
4. Srimad Bridh Vagbhatta, Astanga Samgraha, edited by R.D.Tripathi, ChaukambhaSanskrit Pratisthan, Delhi, Reprint Verse-Su.Stha-12/10, Pp-248 (1999).
5. A) Srimad Bhagvat Govindapadacharya, Rasa Hridaya Tantra, edited by Chaturbhuj Mishra, Krishna Gopal Ayurveda Bhawan, Ajmer, 2nd edit., Verse-5/5, 8/4, 18/15, 18/69 (2002).
B) Yogi Bhairavanand, Rasarnava, edited by I.D. Tripathi, ChaukambhaSanskrit series office, Varanasi, 2nd edit. Verse-7/110, Pp-103 (1978).
C) Acharya Somadev, Rasendra Chudamani, Chaukambha Orientalia, Varanasi, 1st edit., Verse-14/134: 265 (1984).
D) Vaidya Chudamani, Rasa Kamadhenu, edited by Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukambha Orientalia, Varanasi, reprint. 2/460-461: 172 (1988).
E) Sharma Sadanand, Rasa Tarangani, edited by Shastri, K.N, Motilal Banarasi Das, Varanasi, 11th edit., 18/34-35: 442 (1979).
6. A) Yogi Bhairavanand, Rasarnava, edited by I.D.Tripathi, Chaukambha Sanskrit series office, Varanasi, 2nd edit., 7/110: 103 (1978).
B) Acharya Somadev, Rasendra Chudamani, Chaukambha Orientalia, Varanasi, 1st edit., Verse-14/131-133, Pp-264-65 (1984).
7. Sharma Sadanand, Rasa Tarangani, edited by Shastri, K.N, Motilal Banarasi Das, Varanasi, 11th edit., Verse-18/5, Pp-436 (1979).
8. Pt. Ramprasad Vaidyaupadhyay, Rasendrapurana, Laxmivenkateswar, Mumbai, 14/50: 283 (1983).
9. Sharma Sadanand, Rasa Tarangani, edited by Shastri, K.N, Motilal Banarasi Das, Varanasi, 11th edit., 18/39: 443 (1979).
10. Madhava Upadhyay, Ayurveda Prakash, edited by, Sharma Gulraj, Chaukamba Vidya bhawan, Varanasi, 2nd edit., 3/152: 374 (1962).
11. Sharma Sadanand, Rasa Tarangani, edited by Shastri, K.N, Motilal Banarasi Das, Varanasi, 11th edit., 18/46: 445 (1979).
12. A) Sharma Sadanand, Rasa Tarangani, edited by Shastri, K.N, Motilal Banarasi Das, Varanasi, 11th edit., 18/47-67: 346-347 (1979).
B) Pt. Ramprasad Vaidyaupadhyay, Rasendrapurana, Laxmivenkateswar, Mumbai, Chapter-14/35-49, Pp-281-283 (1983).
C) Sri Govind Das, Bhaishajya Ratnavali, edited by Rajeshwardutta Shastri, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, Samvat 2038.
D) Sri Gopal Krishna, Rasendra Sara Sangraha, edited by Pt. Ambikadutta Shastri, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series, Varanasi (1994).