

A REVIEW OF *BHUNAG* (EARTHWORM), *BHUNAG SATWA* AND *BHUNAG SATWA BHASMA*

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ABSTRACT

Safety and efficacy are the two things which play an important role in the acceptance of any drug and in *Ayurveda* especially for *Rasaushadhis* this statement holds good more than any other system of medicine. Even though numbers of research articles are published on the safety profile of *Rasaushadhis*, repeatedly questions and doubts are raised on the safety aspects of *Rasaushadhis*. Hence, it's the time to rethink and focus on some alternate or substitutes for *Rasaushadhis*. No doubt it's a tough task to substitute all the *Rasaushadhis* but surely some of them can be done. One such example is *Bhunag* (Earthworm) for *Tamra* (Copper). This paper reviews about the *Bhunag*, its *satva* and the *bhasma*.

Keywords: *bhunag*, *bhunag satwa*, *bhunagsatwabhasma*

INTRODUCTION

In *Aanadakanda*, *Bhunaga* is mentioned as one of the *Uparasa* but in *Rasagranthas* very description about the *bhunag*, its type, different procedure regarding *satwapatan*, *bhunagsatwabhasma*, its uses and importance is found. *Tamra* (Copper) requires *shodhana*, *marana* and *amrutikarana* processes before it is deemed to be fit for internal administrations which are practically very tedious and time consuming. In *Rasagranthas* reference about *Bhunaga satwa bhasma* which is explained as substitution to *Tamra bhasma* is found. *Bhunag* is of animal origin i.e. earthworm which requires comparatively less duration for the preparation of its *satva* and *bhasma*. Hence, it is need of time to see substitute for *Tamra bhasma* which is easy to prepare, safe, & efficacious. So here effort to compile all review from *Rasagranthas* & modern view of *bhunag* (earthworm) is made.

Nirukti (Definition)¹

वर्षासु वृष्टीसंक्लिन्नभूगर्भे संभवन्तिही ।

जन्तवः कृयिरुपायेतेभुनागाइतिस्मृताः ॥ (आ.प्र. 4)

In *varsha rutu* due to *vrushti* soil become *aardra* and in that the *krumi* size *jantu* which are grown are called as *Bhunaga*.

Paryaya (Synonyms)²

भूनागः क्षितिनागश्चभुजडगोरक्तजन्तुक ।

क्षितिजः क्षितिजन्तुश्चभूमिजोरक्ततुण्डक ॥ (आ.प्र.4)

1) *Bhunaga*: *Bhu* means land/soil and *naga* is snake ie the snake of the earth

2) *Kshitinaga*: *Kshiti* means earth, land and *naga* is snake

3) *Bhujanga*: It is a name of snake.

4) *Kshitija*: *Bhunaga* lives on the earth so it is called as *Khitija*

5) *Kshitijantu*: It looks like *krimi* so it is called as *Kshitijantu*

6) *Bhumija*: They lives in soil so it is called as *Bhumija*

7) *Raktajantu*: Its body color is red like blood so it is called as *Raktajantu*

8) *Raktatundaka*: *Tundaka* means face. It's red color so it is called as *Raktatundaka*

Types according to soil rich with Metal Content:

Bhunaga utpatti bheda

Table 1: Four types of *Bhunag* according to source³

Source	Color
<i>Suvarna khan utpatti bhunaga</i>	<i>Pita</i>
<i>Rajat khan utpatti bhunaga</i>	<i>Shweta</i>
<i>Tamra khan utpatti bhunaga</i>	<i>Rakta (Adhika Guna yukta)</i>
<i>Loha khan utpatti bhunaga</i>	<i>Krishna</i>

Table 2: Four types according to *Rasendra Purana*⁴

<i>Suvarna bhunaga</i>	Hard to procure
<i>Rajata bhunaga</i>	--
<i>Tamra bhunaga</i>	<i>Shreshtha, atyanta gunakari</i>
<i>Loha bhunaga</i>	--

Bhunag satwa patana:

In the *Rasagranthas* different methods of *Bhunag satwapatana* are explained⁵. They are explained here:

क्षीरिण्पत्काभुनागंतमृदावाड्थटंकणैः ।

भृष्टैश्चक्रीविदयायाथापात्सत्वंततः किल॥(र.ज.नि. पृष्ठ235)

Essence can be obtained from earthworms, if they are boiled with milk, rubbed with the soil raised by these worms or with *tankana* and then heated in *musha* to get *satwa*.

First collect the *tamra bhumi bhunaga*. Then in *khalwa* add *bhunaga*, *guda*, *guggulu*, *laksha*, *una*, *matsa* (small fish), *pinyaka* (tilakhali), and *tankan*. All are mixed well and kept in *musha*. Heat it to get *satwa*.

First earthworms washed with *jala*. Then dried well and make the powder of it. For this *churna* give *bhavana* of *bhrungaraja swarasa*, *nimbu swarasa* and *nirgundi swarasa* for 3 days. Add *dravaka varga* in it, mix well and prepare *chakrika* (pellets) of it. Then kept in *musha* & (heat well) *tivragni* given for (48 minute) 2 *danda*. After *swangashit* make the powder of it & filter through cloth & separate the *Rajika sadrusha kana*. This is nothing but *satwa*. In that 1\12th parts add *shudha tamra churna* & again heated in *musha*. After that collect the *satwa*, wash with *jala*. It requires 2-3 times heat in *Musha*.

Uses: *Bhunaga satwa* is best in *hirakadhi vajra dravanartha*, it increases the strength of *parada* (mercury), *hiraka* etc.

Take 4 *ser* earthworms washed in *haridra* then washed in *jala*. Then it is to be given to *mayor* (peacock), later collect it *vishtha* and mix with *ksharamla*. Then keep for drying in sun rays. Fried with *kharpara* until it becomes black like charcoal. Then mix with *Dravaka gana* and kept in *musha*, heat it up to 2 *ghatika*. After *swangashita* it is taken out from *musha*, powdered and washed with *jala*.

Essence of earthworms is to be cleansed with water & rubbed for one day each with juice of *bhrungaraj*, *nimbu*, *nirgundi*. It is then to be mixed with *dravakagana* & made into a lump which is to be confined in a strong crucible, & heated steadily for 48 minute. When cooled of itself the contents of the crucible is to be taken out and kept on a piece of smooth stone slab from which are to be collected the heavy metallic dusts of the shape of mustard seeds. These are to be mixed with 1\12th their weight of copper and again heated in a crucible. The metallic dust is then to be separated from foreign matters by being washed off with water. It is then to be used for liquefaction of diamond etc. It is called *kharasatwam*.

Earthworms growing in *sharada rutu* (i.e. the two months after rainy season) are to be mixed with molasses (*guda*), *madhu* (honey), *tankan*, *kadali kanda* (tuber of the root of a banana), and *surana kanda* (tuber of *surana*). All these are to be rubbed into a ball, dried and then heated until essence is discharged. This essence is to be taken out of the dirty substances.

Earthworms growing in copper mines are to be rubbed with *guda*, *guggulu*, *laksha*, *una* (wool), *matsya*, oil cakes (*tilkhali*) and *tankan* and made into a ball. This is to be dried to be heated, resulting in the discharge of a copper like essence.

Four *prasthas* of earthworms are to be collected from mines of copper are to be washed by *haridra swarasa* (turmeric juice) and cold water. These are then to be gradually made to be eaten by a hungry peacock or cock and its stool collected. This stool is to be rubbed with *kshars* and *amlas*, dried by intense rays of the sun and then fried in an earthen pot till it turns as black as ink. This black powder is to be rubbed with the ingredients without facilitate the melting of hard metal and then heated for 48min by means of a bellows when the crucible is cooled, the content are to be powdered and washed off and the metallic dust is to be collected carefully. This dust is to be melted like gold dust.

The earthworms which are collected from *tamra bhumi* are to be added equal quantity of *guda*, *guggulu*, *laksha*, *una*, *matsya*, *suhaga*. Grind well and keep in *musha* and give the *tivragni* to get *satwa* from it.

Bhunag satwa guna (Properties)⁶

शीतंभुनागसत्वंतुसर्वकुष्ठव्रणप्रणुत ।

तदयुत्कजलपानेन्स्थावरंचापिजंगमम् ॥

विषंनश्यति ,तत्पानगत : सुतोअग्नितोदूढम् ।

एवंमयुरपक्षोत्थसत्त्वस्यापिगुणामताः॥ आ. प्र. 4/54

Sheetal, *Sarva kushta nashaka*, *Satwa yukta jala: sthavara & jangama visha nashaka*. In *Bhunag satwa yukta patra*, if we heat *parada* it becomes *baddha*.

Use of Bhunag satwa⁷

Bhuanasatwa Mudrika

भुनागोभद्वसत्त्वमुत्तममिदं श्रीसोमदेवोदितं ।

दत्तं पादमितं द्विशाणकनकेनैकं गतेनोर्मिकाम् ॥

तद्वैताम्बुविलेपितांस्थिरचरोभदतंविषंनेत्ररुक ।

शूलंमूलगदंचकर्णजरुजोहन्यातप्रसृतिग्रहम्॥

Prepare *mudrika*/ring by melting *Swarna 2 Shana* (8 *masha*) and *Bhunaga satwa* (2 *masha*). This ring is kept in water for sometime & taken *jala* of it. This *jala* acts as a *sthawara*, *jangama vishabadha nashaka*, useful in *netraroga*, *arsha*, *kar-naroga* and in *prasuti roga*.

Prepare *mudrika* of *Sasyaka satwa* 1 part and *Bhunaga satwa* 1 part. This *mudrika* acts as a *shulaghna*, *bhuta*, *preta*, *badha nashaka*, *andvishabadha nashaka*. So in ancient times kings were used to keep this *mudrika*/ring with them.

Bhunagasatwa is best in *hirakadhi vajra dravanartha*, it increases the strength of *parada*, *hiraka* etc.

Bhunaga satwa bhasma review

In *vedas* and *samhitas* no references of *Bhunaga* or use of *Bhunaga satwa* or *Bhunaga satwa bhasma* are found. In *Rasagranthas* references regarding the preparation of *Bhunagasatwa* are found. There are almost 9 methods of preparation of *Bhunagasatwa*. In *Aanada-kanda Bhunaga* is mentioned as one of the *Uparasa*. *Bhunaga satwa mudrika* acts as a *shulaghna*, *bhuta*, *preta*, *badhanashaka*, and *vishabadha nashaka*. So in ancient times kings were keeping this *mudrika*/ring with them.

In *Rasatarangini* we are getting the reference of preparation of *Bhunaga satwa Bhasma*. Its use, *anupana*, *sahapana* is same as of *Tamra Bhasma*⁸.

Bhunaga satwa bhasma Procedure

भूनागसत्त्वंपलंसमितन्तुरसेश्वरंद्वयक्षमितञ्चंशुद्धम् ।
पलोन्मितंशुद्धसुगन्धचूर्णदत्वापुटेदवन्यकरीषवर्हो ।
भूनागसत्त्वंपुटितं त्रिधैवं त्वनुत्तमांयाति मृतिनिकामम्
रसागमाम्भोनिधिकर्णधारः प्रयोजयेतामविधानरीत्या ॥
(र.त.१७/१२०पृष्ठ 433)

Ingredients:

Bhunagasatwa -- 1 pal (8 tola)

Shudha parada -- 2 aksha (4 tola)

Shudha gandhaka -- 1 pal (8 tola)

Procedure:

First prepare the *kajjali* of *parada* and *gandhaka*. Then add the *bhunaga* and grind well. Then it is kept in *sharava* and *sandhibhanda* is done and submitted to *gajaputa* for 3 times to get *bhasma* from it. This *bhasma* is used as of *Tamra bhasma*.

Therapeutic Use

भूनागसत्त्वंसुमृतंतुवरंकुष्ठनाशनम् ।

विषघ्नश्च विशेषेण ताम्रवदगुणकारकम् ॥ र.त.पृष्ठ 434

Rasa – *kashaya*

Rogaghanata – *kushtaroganashaka*, *visharogahara*

Guna: same as of *Tamra bhasma*.

Aamayika Prayoga

भूनागसत्त्वमतिमान ताम्रवद्विनियोजयेत् ।

ताम्रवच्यानुपानानिसहपानानिचादिशेत ॥

र.त.१७/२२पृष्ठ 434

The *bhunaga satwa bhasma* is used as of *Tamra bhasma* and its *anupana* and *sahapana dravya* also same as of *tamrabhasma*.

Formulations

1. *Kamdhenurasa*

2. *Madansanjivanrasa*

3. *Ratnakarandrasa*

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Form the references listed above it is very clear that *bhunag* has the properties as that of *Tamra bhasma* and can be used as its substitute. *Acharya Charaka* has said *Tamra* is the most dangerous *visha* and

even almost all the *Rasa granthas* have explained about the *vishaktata* of *Tamra bhasma*. That's the reason why most of the texts have explained the method of *amrutikarana* for *tamra bhasma*. Hence by reviewing all these points it can be strongly put forth that there is a need to substitute *Tamra bhasma* with a safe and efficient drug like *bhunag*. Further research has to be carried out in this regard to substantiate the view.

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