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# CRITICAL REVIEW ON MALLA AS PER CLASSICS

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# **ABSTRACT**

Rasashastra is a pharmaceutical branch of Indian system of medicine which mainly deals with the metals, minerals, animal origin product, toxic herbs and their use in therapeutics. These Rasadravyas have been classified into Maharasa, Uparasa, Sadhaaran Rasa are also included. Malla is second mineral drug of Sadharana rasa group. Malla is also known as GouriPashana. It is identified as White Arsenic or Vitreous in English. Chemically it is Arsenic trioxide. It is more toxic when compared to other two arsenic compounds of Rasashastra. These materials are used for internal administration only after their preliminary pharmaceutical procedures, known as Shodhana (purification), Marana (incineration) and Sattvapatana (extraction of essence). Here in this article, tried to compile historical review, occurrence, types, Shodhana, Marana, Sattvapatana, artificial preparation, dose, Pathya, Apathya of Malla from many Rasa grantas.

Keywords: Rasashastra, Sadharana rasa, Malla, Gauripashana, Arsenic trioxide

# INTRODUCTION

Malla is one of essential Sadharana Rasas¹which is placed second in the list. Most of Rasagranthas considered it under Sadharana Rasa. Malla as a drug molecule was found in Samhitha kala itself. It was considered under Dhatuvisha by Acharya Sushrutha as Phenashma along with Haratala and both of them are considered as Dhatuvisha².

**Vernacular names**<sup>3</sup>: Kannada- Pashana,Hindi-Shankhia, English- White Arsenic, Latin- Arsenicum Album, Gujarati- Somala, Sankhiyo. Marathi- Somalakhara, Bengali- Sankhavisa, Arabian- Sanmuluphar.

### **Historical Review**

**Vedic Period** (1500 B.C-800 A.D) -The Rigveda is the oldest composition and the sacred religious text of the Aryans. The Rigveda is regarded as genuine document of the period when the Aryans first established

their settlement in India i.e. 15th to 20th century B.C does not mention about *Malla*, other texts like Atharvaveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda are also devoid of *Malla* and its compounds.

### Samhita Period

**Charaka Samhita**:-The unique text of *Atreyaparam-para* on *Ayurveda* does not mentioned about *Malla*. But the references regarding other Arsenic compounds are found in many places.

**Sushruta Samhita**:-The oldest authentic text book for surgery also gives much emphasis on toxicity. He gave separate section (sthana) for poisonous substances with their classification, toxicological symptoms and when ingested their treatment. He quoted two *dhatu visha* namely '*Haratala*' and '*Phenashma*', where *Phenashma* is *Malla*.

AstangaSangraha:- In this Samhita not mentioned about *Malla*, but in *Uttarasthana* 40th chapter he added *Raktadivishas* in *dhatuvishas* of Susruta, and described same toxic effects. He added common symptoms of all *Sthavaravisha* like *Jwara* (pyrexia), *Hidhma* (Hiccup), *Dantaharsha* (sensitive tooth), *Hanustambha* (lock jaw), *Galagraha*, *Phenavami* (froathy vomiting), *Aruchi* (Anorexia), *Swasa* (Dyspnoea), *Moorcha* (Syncope) from this we can say that *Phenashmabhasma* as Arsenic trioxide due to its similarity in toxic symptoms with Modern literature and its appearance.

**Rasashastra Period**:- As per available texts of *Rasashastra*, *Malla* seems to be first quoted in Rasendrachudamani of 12th cent AD.

**Rasendra Chudamani** (12-13th cent AD) -Somadeva the author classified *Malla* under *Sadharana rasa*. *Pitas, Vikata, Hatachoornaka* are synonyms while *Rasabandhakara, Snigdha, Doshaghna* and *Rasaveeryakrit* are described as properties<sup>4</sup>.

Rasaratnasamuchchaya (13th cent AD) -Malla was classified under Sadharana rasa. He also gave description of synonyms, types, Shodhana, good qualities, properties; Satwapatana was mentioned as that of Haratala. Rasabandhakara is one of the properties of Malla was not observed while describing 26 types of Paradabandha<sup>5</sup>.

Rasaprakasha Sudhakara (13th cent AD) - Yashodharabhatta mentioned its Swedana in Churnodaka (lime water) and advised in various Sheetavyadhis. He further used in Raupyanirmana, sumalakshara, sumila and sambhala mentioned as synonyms.

**Rasendrasarasangraha** (16th cent AD) - Author *Gopalakrishnabhatta* only mentioned its name. Synonyms, *shodhana*, *marana* and properties were not described.

**Rudrayamala Tantra** (16th cent AD) -He mentioned *Visha* as its properties and *Mallaraja* as synonyms properties were quoted as binds all *dhatus*, *Rasayana*, *Prameelanam*, *Gaganagrahak*, *Kaamaveeryavardhaka etc*.

**Rasakamadhenu** (16th cent AD) -This text gave synonyms, types, *Gunas*, indications, *Satwapatana* and *Shodhana* procedures etc.

**Ayurveda Prakasha** (17th cent AD) -He mentioned two types as per colour *Shweta* and *Pita*, three types as per appearance *Sphatikabha*, *Shankabha*, *Dadimabha* and classified under *Sadharana rasa*,he further mentioned that it works like poison and used in *Rasakarma*<sup>6</sup>.

Yoagaratnakara (17th cent AD) -He mentioned two types *Shweta* and *Rakta* he further explains its occurrence as *Shweta* is artificial where as *Rakta* is *Parvatasambhava* and both are poisons and used for *Rasakarma*. His description also contains *Shodhana* its uses in brief but devoid of *Bhasmikarana* and *Satwapatana*. *Ullipashana* a famous drug in Andhra vaidya was seems to be first appeared in these texts as per Yogaratnakara it is synonyms of *Malla*<sup>7</sup>.

Ananda Kanda (18th cent AD) -In this text Gauripashana and Akhupashana are mentioned as separate drugs but as per later texts these terms are synonyms of Malla. He described Mooshakapashana as a synonym of Akhupashana having the properties of Ruksha, Sara, Lauhasankarakaraka, Medodurmamsakruntana and useful in silver making. Pita and Vyaktadeha are the synonyms of Gauripashana and having properties of Rasabandhakara, Snigdha, Doshaghna and Rasaveeryakrit. In the time of Anandakanda these two substances may be used for separate purpose like Lauhaveda and Dehaveda respectively. It is classified under Uparasadishodhana and Marana<sup>8</sup>.

**Basavarajeeyam** (18th cent AD)- Author mentioned many types of *Pashanas* he described purification method for *Gauripashana* and *Ullipashana*<sup>9</sup>.

**Rasachandamshu** (19th cent AD) -He mentioned three types *Sphatikabha*, *Shankabha*, *Haridrabha* there *Shodhana* by five different procedures, three methods for *Marana* and two methods for *Satwapatana* and extensively used in *Vataraogas*<sup>10</sup>.

**Rasendrabhaskara-** The author gave its occurrence from the stone when the scorpion sting to stone it was found. It is mentioned as poison and having many types like *Peeta*, *Lohita* and *Sita*. He described one

*Bhasma* procedure and *Bhasma* in dose of *Sarshapa* is used for *Poshana* purpose.

**Rasatarangini** (20th cent AD) -Sadananda Sharma the author mentions two types *Shweta* and *Rakta* and are artificial and natural varieties respectively. He describes four types of *Shodhana* procedure and one *Marana* procedure but opines that it has same *Guna* as that of *ShodhitaMalla*. Advocated its use internally and externally.

**Siddabheshaja Manimala-** Krishnaramabhatta the author mentioned extensive use in *Jwara* and *Vataroga*. The *Kupipakwakalpa "Mallasindoora*" is first time appeared in *Vatarogadhikarana*, *Parpatika rasa* prepared with *Rala* and *Somala*, *Himamurchana rasa*, *Malladivati etc. Kalpa* having *Malla* as main ingredient was appeared frequently. *Mallaprayoga* through methi was innovative *Kalpana* also appeared. [Add *Malla* in soil and *methi* procedure from that soil: serve to a person suffering with *Jwara*]<sup>11</sup>.

**Nirukti**<sup>12</sup> - "*Mallatidharatibalamiti*" The one which does *Baladharana*, is strong, robust, to hold, Possess, Excellent.

### Synonyms-

RRS –Haathachoornaka, Malla, Sankhiya, Shankhavisha, Somala, Sumbalakara, Vikata. <sup>13</sup>

RT –Aakhupashana, Darumucha, Darumoosha, Gauripashana, Mallaka, Pita, Penashma,

Penashmabhasma, Sambala, Shankhamusha, Shankhavisha, Somala.

Occurrence<sup>14</sup>: -It occurs both in natural and in artificial form. To obtain this in a bulk quantity Arsenical pyrite is used, it is also available as a component of *Haratala* and *Manashila*, naturally it occurs very less in quantity.

Availability<sup>14</sup>:- In the mineral form it is available in China, Europe etc. In India Hazaaribagh (Zharkhand), Chitral mountain of Kashmir and nearby areas ob-

tained with ores of *Makshika* etc. The artificial forms are from chimneys of industries and the places where Arsenopyrites are burnt.

**Physical Properties**<sup>14</sup>:- When heated, *Malla* becomes soft and emits the odor like garlic. One crystalline variety of *Malla* is soluble in water, in very small quantity. The crystals of Arsenic oxide are Octahedral or Monoclinic, of which the latter is unstable. When heated with intense heat, it evaporates in the atmosphere, directly (sublimation) giving out garlic odor.

# Types of Malla

**Based on colour -** R.T & Y. R - *Shweta, Rakta* A.P & R. P - *Shweta, Peeta*, B.R.R.S- *Shweta, Rakta*, Peeta, *Krishna* 

**Based on Appearance** -R. R. S- Sphatikabha, Shankhabha, Haridrabha, A.P & Y. R-Shankhabha, Dadimabha, R.C – Vikata, Hatachoornaka, R.J.N – Haridrabha, Rakthabha

**Based on occurrence -** Natural/*Khanija/Parvatasambhava* and artificial (*Krutrima*). All the *Shweta* varieties are *Krutrima*. *Rakta* and *Peeta* are *Parvatasambhava*. According to *Rasakamadhenu* Two varieties are mentioned *Sphatikabha* and *Dadimabha*.

**Grahya Malla**: *SphatikabhaMalla* is of best variety, *ShankabhaMalla* is of better variety. *Haridrabha-Malla* is of good quality

**Need for Mallashodhana:** As *Malla* is considered as *Visha*<sup>15</sup>, *Aakhupashana*, *Shankhavisha*, *Dhatuvisha*, and now a days it is prepared and available in artificial form it should be subjected for Shodhana prior to its internal use as medicine.

**Toxic Symptoms - Sushruta-** *Moorcha* (Syncope) *Galagraha, Phenavami* (froathy vomiting), *Aruchi* (Anorexia), *Swasa* (Dyspnoea).

Vagbhata- Jwara (pyrexia), Hidhma (Hiccup), Dantaharsha (sensitive tooth), Hanustambha (lock jaw),

Table 1: Malla Shodhana

SL NO	REF	Procedure	Drugs Used	Method	Duration
1.	R.A <sup>16</sup>	Swedana	Karavellaswarasa/ajadugdha	Dolayantra	2 Yama
2.	R.J.N <sup>17</sup>	Swedana	Karavellaswarasa	Dolayantra	1 Yama
3.	R.M <sup>18</sup>	Swedana	Godugdha	Dolayantra	1 Yama
4.	S.Y.S <sup>19</sup>	Swedana	Goksheera	Dolayantra	1 Yama

5.	R.R.S <sup>20</sup>	Swedana	Karavellaswarasa	Dolayantra	1 Yama
6.	Y.R <sup>21</sup>	Pachana	Ghananadaswarasa	Dolayantra	1 Day
7.	Y.R <sup>22</sup>	Pachana	Manashila/yavaksharajala	Dolayantra	1 Day
8.	Y.R <sup>23</sup>	Pachana	Kaanji/Tankana/Godugdha	Dolayantra	2 Ghatika
9.	Y.R <sup>24</sup>	Pachana	Aja mamsa rasa	Dolayantra	2 Ghatika
10.	R.T <sup>25</sup>	Pachana	Meghanadaswarasa	Dolayantra	1 Day
11.	R.T <sup>26</sup>	Pachana	Aja rasa/Godugdha	Dolayantra	1 Day
12.	R.T <sup>27</sup>	Pachana	Karavalliswarasa	Dolayantra	2 Yama
13.	R.T <sup>28</sup>	Pachana	Tankanajala/Godugdha	Dolayantra	1 Yama

#### Malla Marana:

- 1. Tankana 2 Tula, Somala 1 Tula mix well in Khalwa yantra, keep it in Sharava, give Puta by 1 Prasthavanopala, after Puta store in Kachapatra<sup>29</sup>.
- 2. Take a wide mouthed vessel and keep 2 *PalaSuryakshara* in it. Above that place 2 *Palas* of *Hastidantachurna* in such a way that it should look like a heap (i.e. wide at base and sharp at the tip). Keep this vessel on oven and heat it. When both the drugs get mixed up and there is no smoke, fire is extinguished. Take out the mixture, mix it well and preserve it. Take 2 Tolas of this in a *Moosha* and place 1 *Tola ShuddhaMalla Khanda* over it. Again, it is covered by 2 *Tolas* of above mixture. *Mukhabandhana* is done by using a *Sharava* and heat is given in a *Lavaka Puta*. By this white *MallaBhasma* is procured<sup>30</sup>.
- 3. Take white ash of *Kantharikashta*. Take one mud pot. Fill half of it with ashes of *Kantharikashta*. Keep 1*Karsha ShuddhaMalla* above that. Remaining *Kantharikashta* ashes are then put over it. Keep that pot on oven and *Badarakashtagni* is given for 2 *Yamas*. After self-cooling collect the *Malla Bhasma*<sup>31</sup>.
- 4. Take *ShuddhaMalla* in a mud pot. Put 5 *Karshas* of *Ajadugdha* above that. It is covered by a cloth. Place this in a pit and cover it by 1*Angula* mud. Ignite 10 *Vanopalas* of *Agni*. Like this the procedure is repeated for 21 times. For each *Puta*, add 5 *Tola Ajadugdha*. By this we will get *Peeta-Arunacoloured MallaBhasma*<sup>32</sup>.

# Malla Satvapatana<sup>33</sup>:

Take equal parts of *ShuddhaMalla* and *Saurashtrichurna*. Both are kept in a mud pot. Add 20 *Tolas Rambhatoya* to it. Place one more mud pot on it and do *Sandhibandhana*. Keep it on oven and heat it for one *Prahara*. After self-cooling collect the material deposited on the upper pot. It is indicated in *Shwasa, Kasa*, and *Jwara*. It can be given along with *Ghrita* and *Sita, Sheetajala, Dadhi, Dadhyanna. Mallasatwa* is prepared as that of *Haratalasatwa*. *Mallasatwa* is *Shubhra varnatmaka*. Essence of *Malla* is similar to that of *Haratala*. The essence is pure White, soothing and destroyer of the three *doshas*. It is used in the solidification of Mercury and increases the potency of the same.

Rogagnatha— According to Rasatarangini - Amavata, Atisara, Hriddourbalya, Jirnapandu, Kapharoga, Kushta, Phiranga, Rajayakshma, Sandhigatavata, Sheetajwara, Shlipada, Sotha, Vataroga, Vishamajwara, Vrishchikadamsha.

# **Artificial preparation of Malla**<sup>34</sup>:

Haratala rubbed with Castor oil (ErandaTaila) and Lime juice (Nimbu rasa) and heated by means of a Valuka Yantra, exhibits Red Gauripashana as its essence.

### Matra:

**Rasatarangini-** 1/120th -1/30th of *Ratti.* - 1/10th - 1/3<sup>rd</sup> *Sarshapa* 

Rasatantrasara&RasaprakashaSudhakara-1 Ratti Rasamrita-1/100-1/50 Gunja

Rasamitra-1/2 Gunja

**Matra Nirmana Vidhi**<sup>35</sup>:-Take 1gunja of *Shud-dhaMalla* and 15 *Masha* of *MarichaChurna* in a *Khalwa* and triturate with required quantity of *Aard-*

raka Swarasa for 3 days. Prepare 1 RattipramanaVatis. 1 vati in the morning and one in night is given for Doshashamana. In this quantity itself it is added to other formulations and is used.

Care during *Matranirmana*:-1 *Ratti Malla* causes death. So according to *Desha, Kala, Rogibala, Dosha* etc. *Matra* is decided and given.

**Fatal dose**:-*Rasamrita & Rasatarangini*-1 *Ratti* (125mg)

**Pathya**<sup>36</sup>:-Milk, Sugar, Butter, grams and other nutritious substances should be taken in large quantities.

Apathya:-Avoid Amla, Katu and Tikshnapadartha. Salt, chillies, oil, asfoetida and other hot and spicy things should be avoided. According to Rasamrita Amla and KatuPadarthas are avoided

### DISCUSSION

Malla is classified under Sadharana rasa which has been accepted by many Rasagrantas. Malla was not mentioned in the Vedic period. In Samhita period Acharya Charaka has not mentioned about Malla but other arsenic drugs were seen. Acharya Sushrutha has catagorised Malla under Dathu Visha with the name Penashma. Acharya Vagbhata has not mentioned Malla. Coming to Rasagrantas it was first explained in Rasendra Chudamani book where he classified Malla under Sadarana Rasa and mentioned its synonyms, properties which include Rasaveeryakrit. Rasaratnasamuchaya has classified in Sadarana Rasa and mentioned its synonyms, properties, types and Satwapatana was mentioned as that of Haratala. Rasabandhakara is one of the properties of Malla was not observed while describing 26 types of Paradabandha. Yogaratnakara has mentioned two types, occurrence as Shweta is artificial where as Rakta is Parvatasambhava. Anandakhanda has classified under Uparasa. Shankhabha variety is the best which is as white as Shankha. Now a days it is prepared and available in artificial form it should be subjected for Shodhana prior to its internal use as medicine. Shodhana is done by Dolayantra with Swedana or Pachana procedures mentioned by different authors in the above table using Karavellaka Swarasa, Godugdha, Kanji, Tankanajala. The properties of Shudha Malla and Haratala Bhasma are almost similar.

Malla being very toxic and fatal, dose is mentioned in Rasatarangini as 1/120th to 1/130th Ratti, since this dose is difficult to measure for administration, he gave another reference 1/10th to 1/3rd of a Sarshapa. Matra Nirmana Vidhi is mentioned Rasatarangini and even precautions for dose making also been mentioned. Since 1 Ratti administration at once is fatal, addition of another drug to increase the bulk of the medicine is necessary. However, the dosage of Malla is cautiously contemplated by considering the Roga, Bala, Desha, Kala, etc. Therapeutical uses are Amavata, Atisara, Hriddourbalya, Jirnapandu, Kapharoga, Kushta, Phiranga, Rajayakshma, Sandhigatavata, Sheetajwara, Shlipada, Sotha, Vataroga, Vishamajwara, Vrishchikadamsha.

# CONCLUSION

Malla is grouped under the Sadharana rasa which is chemically known as Arsenic trioxide. It is found in the form of native and artificial form. Dalhana the commentator of Sushrutha Samhita did not comment on the *Penashma*, including P.C Ray many scholars opine that it is Arsenic trioxide or white arsenic. Malla seems to be first quoted in Rasendrachudamani of 12th cent AD. After this period *Malla* was mentioned in brief or detail in the books. SpathikabhaMalla is considered as the best variety. Malla being toxic Shodhana is mandatory, mainly Dolavantra and Pachana method with Karavellaka Swarasa and Godugda is used majorly. He describes four types of Shodhana procedure and one Marana procedure but opines that it has same Guna as that of ShodhitaMalla. Very few Rasa grantas explained the Marana and Satvapatana for Malla. Therapeutic uses of Malla in Sandhigatavata, Phirangaroga, all types of Kushta, Agnimandhya, Vishamajwara, beneficial in severe Swasaroga, Atisara, Amavata, as external application it acts as Kshara. Malla being toxic and fatal the dose of it is mentioned separately which is not seen for other minerals.

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