

A STUDY ON THE CONCEPT OF *JALAPRASAADANA*

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ABSTRACT

Water is regarded as the most valuable and natural resource which sustains life. Only 2 % of the planets water resource is fresh and hence its contamination poses a great threat to the existence of life. Contamination of water has been a major crisis right from the period of the Samhitas. The classification of water as *Vaikruta jala* and *Prakruta jala* by *Acharya Charaka* justifies this. *Charaka Samhita* clearly explained about the nature and the harmful effects of *Vaikruta jala*. Impure water is the leading worldwide cause of deaths and diseases, accounting for the deaths of more than 14,000 people daily. An estimated 580 people in India die of impure water related illness every day. The measures of water purification like Reverse osmosis, Ultra filtration, UV filtration etc. are nowadays using. *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned about *Jalaprasaadana vidhi* which deals with various methods for water purification. *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned about *Jalaprasaadana vidhi* which deals with various methods for water purification. The principles told by ancient classical texts are found too applicable even today. The treatment methods which were told thousands of years ago seem to be working even today and survive in the presence of well-developed modern medical science. So the *Jalaprasaadana vidhi* gives a wide scope to consider the water purification methods even today.

Keywords: *Jala, Kalushasya prasaadana, Jalaprasaadana*

INTRODUCTION

Water is regarded as the most valuable and natural resource which sustains life. Only 2 % of the planets water resource is fresh and hence its contamination poses a great threat to the existence of life¹. Contamination of water has been a major crisis right from the period of the samhitas. The classification of water as *Vaikruta jala* and *Prakruta jala* by *Acharya Charaka*

justifies this. *Charaka Samhita* clearly explained about the nature and the harmful effects of *Vaikruta jala*². Existing freshwater resources are gradually becoming polluted due to increasing human or industrial activities. Impure water is the leading worldwide cause of deaths and diseases, accounting for the deaths of more than 14,000 people daily³. An estimated 580

people in India die of impure water related illness every day⁴. At present, water purification is achieved by adopting methods like Reverse osmosis, Ultra violet filtration, Ultra filtration etc⁵. *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned about *Jalaprasaadhana vidhi* which deals with various methods for water purification.

Jala and the concept of its prasaadana

JALA: *Jala* is one among in the *Panchamahabhoota*. It is not just water, but it represents the liquidity or Liquid state. One of the reasons may be water is in liquid state at room temperature, so it is considered as a representative of the liquid state. All *Mahabhoota* can be understood as per stages with the help of water. It is present in liquid state at room temperature as *Jala mahabhoota*; in gaseous state when heated in the form of vapors or steam; in a solid state when cooled down to form ice. In all these conditions *Agni* is the factor present all the time, which regulates the state. The conversion from liquid to steam is because of increased *Aakasha* in water and liquid to ice is because decreased *Aakasha*⁶.

DIVYA JALA: These are different types of water mentioned, but *Acharya Caraka* considered only one type of *Jala*; which falls from sky in the form of rain⁷. Such water in the form of rain is known as *Divya Jala* and it is *sheeta*, clean, sacred, devoid of impurities⁸. It takes up the qualities of container while falling on the ground or after falling on the ground, it gets *Guna* or *Dosa* according to *Desa* and *Kala*. That's why it is further divided into different types.

ANTAREEKSHA JALA: Water from the sky (rain water) is having taste which is not clearly manifest, is like nectar, enlivening, satisfying, supporting life and comforting the body, relieves fatigue, exhaustion, thirst, toxicity, fainting, stupor, sleepiness, burning sensation and especially suits for health.⁹

ANTAREESHA JALA 4 TYPES¹⁰

1. *DHAARA* (Rain water), 2. *KAARA* (Hail water), 3. *TAUSHARA* (Dew water), 4. *HAIMA* (Snow water) Out of these *Dhaara* is best because of its lightness.

DHAARA IS AGAIN OF TWO TYPES¹¹

1. *Ganga*¹², 2. *Samudra*. *Ganga jala* should be collected during *Asvayuja* month and collected from

a place which is clean, covered with clean white cloth or form the roof top which is clean or collected directly in to a clean vessel and then stored in vessels made of gold, silver or mud. This water can use all the times.¹³

BHAUMA JALA: In the absence of *Ganga Jala*, *Bhauma Jala* can be used.

BHAUMA JALA IS AGAIN OF SEVEN TYPES¹⁴

Kaupa (tank with flight of steps), *Nadeya* (river), *Sarasa* (natural lake), *Tadaga* (artificial lake), *Prasravana* (water fall, *Audhbhidha* (spring), *Cauntya* (pit burrowed in the ground)

CAUSES OF DIFFERENT QUALITIES OF

JALA: *Acharya Susruta* explains *Antareeksha jala* will be different in their qualities due to various kinds of places such as *Nadi* and *Nada* (rivers), *Saras* (large natural lakes), *Tadaga*, *Vaapi*, *Kupi*, *Cunti*, *Prasravana*, *Udhbhidha*, *Vikira*, *Palvala* etc.¹⁵ *Acharya Caraka* says water falling from the sky contact with the moon, the air and the sun all ordained by the time. Similarly after its fall on the earth, it gets in touch with the proximal properties of the earth like cold, heat, unctuousness etc.¹⁶ *Ashtanga hrudaya* says the rain water falls on the earth and gets exposed to the sunlight, moon light and air.¹⁷

RASA ACCORDING TO THE LAND: The water falling on the ground which is red, brown, pale, blue, yellow and white will be having tests such as sweet, sour, salty, pungent, bitter and astringent respectively.¹⁸

Table 1: RASA ACCORDING TO THE LAND

Rasa	Colour	Soil
<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Lohita</i>	<i>Krushna</i>
<i>Amla</i>	<i>Kapila</i>	-
<i>Lavana</i>	<i>Pandu</i>	<i>Ooshara</i>
<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Neela</i>	<i>Pandura</i>
<i>Katu</i>	<i>Peeta</i>	<i>Parvata</i>
<i>Kashaya</i>	<i>Shwetha</i>	<i>Shwetha</i>
<i>Kshara</i>	-	<i>Kapila</i>

RASA ACCORDING TO PANCHAMAHABHUTA¹⁹

The taste of water is because of combination of different *Mahabhutas*. Taste depends on predominance of *Mahabhuta*.

Table 2: RASA ACCORDING TO PANCHAMAHAHABHUTA¹⁹

PANCHA MAHABHUTA	RASA
Prithvi	Amla and Lavana
Jala	Madhura
Agni	Katu and Tikta
Vayu	Kashaya
Akasha	No rasa

Table 3: JALA ACCORDING TO RTHU

RTU	TYPES OF WATER
Varsha	Ganga or Audhbhidha
Sarat	All types of Jala can be used as it gets purified
Hemantha	Sarasa or Tadaga
Vasantha	Kaupa or Prasravana
Grisma	Kaupa or Prasravana
Pravrut	Cauntya that which is not old, not falling with rain

DOSHAS OF RAIN WATER

The water which has been contaminated with presence of insects, urine, dead bodies of animals, putrefied, having great accumulation of grasses and leaves which is dirty or containing poisonous substances, such water should not use.²⁰

IMPURE WATER

Water which is covered over with slush, algae, weed and grass, leaves of lotus etc. which is not exposed to rays of sun, moon and air, associated with odour, colour and taste should be known as defective. It cause six defects related to *Sparsha, Roopa, Rasa, Gandha, Veerya* and *Vipaka*.²¹

PURE WATER

The water which is slightly astringent and sweet in taste, exceedingly thin, non-slimy, light, soft and non-grassy is best to be taken.²²

JANAPADODHWAMSA

Jala should be considered *Anarogyakara* if it is of very much *vaikruta Gandha-Varna-Rasa-Sparsa, kleda bahula* and if the animals and birds which are dependent on that water reservoir migrate leaving that reservoir. These are the signs which indicate the upcoming *Janapadodhwamsa*.²³

**JALA PRASAADHANA
VYAPANNA JALA**

Sushrutacharya mentioned the qualities of *Vyapanna jala*; Means the water which is polluted. The water which is covered with slush, algae, leaves of lotus etc. water does not exposed to sun rays, moon and air and having smell, colour and taste should be considered as spoilt or defective.

Such water have defect in its touch, sight, taste, odour, *Veerya* and *Vipaka*. Roughness, sliminess, warmth, producing tingling of the teeth are blemishes of touch. Presence of slush, sand, algae and many colours are blemishes of sight; prominence of taste is the blemishes of taste; unpleasant odor is the blemishes of smell; producing thirst, heaviness, abdominal pain, salivation are blemishes of *Veerya*, getting digested after a long time or constipation are the blemishes of *Vipaka*.²⁴

TREATMENT FOR VYAPANNA JALA

Vyapanna jala should be subjected for some procedures before use. It should be boiling over fire, heating by exposing ton sun rays, immersing heated iron balls, sand or stone in to the water are the methods to purify contaminated water. Introducing flowers such as *Nagakesara, Raja champaka, Utapala* and *Patala* into the contaminated water for get rid of the defects of water and make it wholesome for use and the same time for removing the bad smell and imparts good smell also.²⁵

TOOLS USED FOR KALUSHASYA PRASAADANA²⁶

Tools mentioned by *Sushrutacharya* are *Kataka, Gomeda, Bisagranthi, Shaivaalamoola, Vastra, Muktaa* and *Mani*. These things should be used for *Jala prasaadhana*.

1. *KATAKA*²⁷: *Kataka* is *Strychnos Potatorum*. As *Beeja* is told, its seed has to be used.
2. *GOMEDA*: *Gomeda* is a semiprecious stone. It is considered as *Rahu Ratna*. There are three varieties of stones which are considered as *Gomeda*. Those are Zircon, Hessonite and Alexandrite.
3. *BISAGRANTHI*: While explaining different parts of *Kamala* (Lotus), the word *Bisa* is used as synonym for *Kamala Naala*, along with the word

Mrunaala. So explanation for *Bisagranthi* may be *Granthi* in *Kamala naala*²⁸, as *Bisa* is *Kamala naala*. *SHAIVAALAMoola*: *Shaivaala* is mentioned in *Bhaavaprakaasha* under *Pushpavarga*. It is considered as *Ceratophyllum demersum*²⁹ (*Ceratophyllaceae*).

4. *VASTRA*: *Vastra* is cloth. It is used as simple filter to separate insoluble impurities in water.
5. *MUKTA*: *Mukta* is Pearl.³⁰
6. *MANI*: Word *Mani* gives two meanings. Generally, word *Mani* is used for Rock crystal or any precious or semiprecious stones. *Acharya Dalhana* gives the explanation of *Mani* as *Sphatikaadi*.

Methods of purification for each drug

1. *Kataka* is to be cut in two pieces and the cut surface is rubbed on the inner surface of a vessel before pouring it with water. Then water is poured in it. That causes the impurities in water to get settled down at the bottom of the vessels.³¹
2. *Gomeda* should be immersed in impure water.
3. *Bisagranthi* is also immersed in impure water.
4. *Shaivaala moola* is either dried powdered and sprinkled or is immersed.
5. *Vastra* is used as filter.
6. *Mukta* is immersed.
7. *Mani* is stirred in water.

DISCUSSION

Jala prasaadana is a general term used for water purification. *Jala* means water and *Prasaadana* means purification. Another meaning of *Prasaadana* is *Prasannata kaaranam*.

KALUSHASYA PRASAADANAM: *Acharya Sushruta* has explained *Kalushasya prasaadana*³² in the context of water purification. *Kalusha* means impurities and *Prasaadana* means purification. So, it directly means that purification of impurities. *Acharya Sushruta* does not use any other term for water purification other than *Kalushasya prasaadana*. The term *Prasaada* means *Pra + Saadana*, *Pra* means *Prakarshena saada*, inducing *Saada*. *Saada* means slowing down. *Saada* is generally understood as laziness. The other meaning of *Saada* is slowing down. When *Anga saada*, *Gaatra saada* are used, it implies

the slowing down the activity of *Anga* and *Gaatra*. So exact meaning of *Prasaada* is the procedure which predominantly slows down. *Kalushasya prasaadana* slowing down the activity of *Kalusha* i.e. impurities. That means reducing the harmful effect of water and thereby making water more beneficial. That is why *Kalushasya prasaadana* is used here instead of *Jalaprasaadana*.

JALAPRASAADANA

Jalaprasaadana means water purification. *Prasaada* means inducing *Saada* and it means slowing down. Here it doesn't mean about slowing down the activity of water, where as it is related with *Ayu*. *Saada* occurs due to *Gurutva* and more *Gurutva* causes more *Saada*. More *Saada* increases *Ayu*. According to the theory of relativity³³, there are two factors which act on time; those are Speed and Gravity. More the Speed less is the time. Same way, more the Gravity, more is time. Time is always constant. The apparent change in time is relative. As an example, to substantiate this theory, if two people are living in two areas, one on earth and one on another planet with greater Gravitational force; then the person on the latter may live for more years compared to person on earth. Here gravity lengthens relative time. This is called Gravitational Time Dilation³⁴. Gravity defines speed. Increased gravitational force reduces the speed, movements, activities and even growth. Hence the speed of the person living in higher gravitational area is reduced. Being in the same time frame of that gravity, the person never realizes the time dilation. This even is effective in slowing down age.

According to *Surya siddhantha* of *Bhaskaracharya* the universal force of energy which attracts the celestial bodies to each other and the force which stabilizes or attracts the living or nonliving things within the planets is called *Akrusta sakthi* or *Gurutva*. Hence *Gurutva* in this context has similarity with force of gravitation³⁵. *Gaurava* is an inherent property of *Pritvi mahabhoota* which forms *Kapha dosha* and whose guna is *Mandatva*. This *Mandatva* is evidently found in the factors of ageing like a tortoise possess more *Manda guna* than rabbit which can also be a factor that tortoise have more life span than rabbit. Even,

there are similar examples of *Shleshmala* person having more life span than *Vatala*.

Gurutva effectively brings *Saada* in every aspect of its application. *Saada* decreases ageing. Hence in this context *Prasaadana* increases integrity and life of *Jala*.

Acharya Sushruta used the word *Prasaadana* which serves as explanation of multiple things in a single word. Slowing down the activity of impurities, Making impurities harmless and increasing the integrity of water

CONCLUSION

Water pollution can be compared with the *Vyapanna jala lakshana* and *Vishadooshita jala lakshana* mentioned in Ayurvedic classics. Our *Acharyas* mentioned about the water, their pollutions and the causes of pollution in *Samhitas*. To make the water desirable for use, different techniques are mentioned in *Samhitas* like *Jalaprasaadana* mentioned in *Sushruta Samhita*. The methods which are explaining *Samhitas* are giving better results and more purified water in a cost effective way.

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