DHUPANA KARMA IN AYURVEDA TEXTS: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT
The ancient literature is enriched with the description of various Krimi, diseases caused by them and the remedies to get rid of those harmful micro-creatures. It includes various modalities like Yagya, Homa, Havana, Rakshoghana Karma, Krimihara Dravaya, Dhupana Karma. Dhupana Karma is the use of medicated fumes (by burning of dried plant & animal parts). The changing phase of preventive aspect of Dhupana Karma in Krimi Roga in Vedic period in form of Havana and Yagya to clinical focus in Samhita period reveals its escalating significance with due course of time. It presents the scientific approach to create aseptic environment by reducing microbial load to non-pathogenic levels. And along with emergence of various infectious diseases later, it molded into clear cut fumigation procedure with the use of many herbal drugs indicated as Dhupana Dravaya. Although due to many reasons like effectiveness, convenience & cost, modern fumigating physical & chemical agents has replaced this classical Dhupana technique. But the overweighing of harmful effects of these agents over the disinfection purpose directs us to think for the revival of this outdated primitive Dhupana technique. The present study is aimed to compile the classical concept of Dhupana Karma so as to do further studies regarding its efficacies in combating the infective diseases.

Keywords: Krimi, Krimi Roga, Rakshoghana Karma, Dhupana Karma.

INTRODUCTION
Our classical texts are well equipped with the description of the concept of Krimi. The Acarya were well aware about their existence. They have mentioned about their appearance types, action and diseases caused. Since Vedic time, the potentiality of these microorganisms in various diseases has been enlightened. A range of diseases produced by Krimi are mentioned such as Kustha, Yakshma, Atisara, Pandu, Siro Roga¹, Hrdya Roga etc. Along with vivid description of microorganisms, proper light have been thrown on the modalities to get free from these infections. “Rakshoghana gana” is described as group of plants possessing Krimighana properties². Also the Krimighana Mahakasaya³ is mentioned in Caraka Samhita focusing on the antimicrobial action of many drugs. Dhupana Karma having the literally meaning of fumigation⁴ is one of those natural and traditional methods which can be useful in controlling the infections. It is the use of medicated fumes. No specific Yantra has been described for this Dhupana Karma. Although Vrana Dhupana Netra is mentioned by our Acarya Sushruta to be made of Ashta Angula⁵, it has
been explained to sprinkle powdered herbal drugs and various animal products having antimicrobial properties over burning flame in a Sarava and fumes thus produced were supposed to be used as per local or generalized purpose. Thus it can be taken as modified form of Havana/ Yagya Karma. Dhumapana is the internal application of medicated fumes through oral & nasal route in various infectious diseases presenting the other face of Dhupana Karma.

**Materials and Methods:**
For the present study the primary source of literature are the classical text books of Ayurveda, various peer reviewed Journals, previous studies conducted on similar subject at different universities and other research centers. Information available on internet is also incorporated in the study.

**Description in Ayurveda texts**

**Vedic literature**
Beginning from the Vedic period, it is found that emphasis was done on preventive aspect of Dhupana Karma. Homa, Havana, Yagya these ceremonies were aimed at purification of environment from Bhuta or Rakshasa, creating positive energy in surroundings along with the religious values. These acts reduced the microbial load of the environment and thus aim of massive sterilization was achieved.

1) The indication of herbal drugs like Guggula, Ajashringi for Kriminashana purpose reveals that antimicrobial activity of medicinal plants was a well-known concept.
2) There is a complete Sukta dedicated to Rakshoghana Karma.
3) There is indication of act of perfuming, fragrance and making things odorous during offerings to the almighty God.
4) Yajurveda advocates performing Havana twice everyday i.e. morning and evening to attain spiritual enlightenment, mental peace, purification of mind and the environment.

**Samhita period:**
Samhita plays an imperative role in elaborating the concept of Dhupana Karma. It emphasizes on wide aspect of Dhupana Karma including detailed description of indications, classification, Dhupana drugs, and mode of administration / procedure of Dhupana.

**Indications**

**a) Preventive aspect:** it includes fumigation for creating aseptic environment for the healthy beings so that no infectious disease can develop, especially wards fumigation and mass areas. In this context, we have following
- Homa, Havana and Yagya Vidhi in holy places
- Kumaragara Dhupana (paediatric wards)/ Arisṭagara Dhupana
- Vranitagara Dhupana (postoperative wards)
- Sutikagara Dhupana (labour wards)

These are aimed at using specific drugs indicated for specific diseases.

**Classification**

**a) On the basis of indication:**
- Preventive: for prevention of diseases and healthy well-being.
- Therapeutic: for infectious and non-infectious diseases.

**b) On the basis of action (Karma):**
Acarya Kashyapa has classified Dhupana on the basis of action (Karma) as follows.
- Dhupa: main Dhupa indicated for any particular purpose.
- Pratidhupa: to be done after Dhupa, for preventing reoccurrence of disease.
- Amudhupa

**c) On the basis of mode of use:**
- External: medicated fumes exposure to a whole i.e. Dhupana.
- Internal: intake of medicated fumes via oral or nasal route i.e. Dhumapana.
d) On the basis of origin of Dhupana drugs:
- **Sthavara Dravya**: Dhupana dravya of plant origin like Guggulu, Nimba, Vaca, Haritaki, Sarsapa etc.
- **Jangama Dravya**: animal origin, Sarpnirmoka, Bastaloma, Nракesa, faecas of cat, owl, hen, monkey hairs etc.
- **Mineral origin**: like Haratala, Manashila

e) Etymological:
- **Raksoghana Dhupa**: for protection from infections.
- **Svastika Dhupa**: for increasing auspiciousness.
- **Gana Dhupa**: for all diseases originating from Bhuta (microbes).
- **Punya Dhupa**: for holy people & holy purpose.
- **Varuna Dhupa**: for Shlesma Roga in summer season.
- **Shri Dhupa**: for prosperity

f) On the basis of area of exposure:
- **Local Dhupana**: e.g. Karna Dhupana, Vrana Dhupana
- **Systemic Dhupana**: e.g. Jvara (generalised Dhupana).

g) On the basis of action on wound:
- **Kaṭhinyakara Dhupana**: fumigation for hardening of excessively soft tissues of wound. When fumigated with aromatic drugs and heartwood of aromatic plants, the ulcerated tissue gets hardened.
- **Mardavakara Dhupana**: fumigation for softening of excessively hard tissues of wound. When fumigated with fumes of ghee, bone marrow and muscle fats (Vasa), softens the ulcerated tissue.

**Dhupana drugs:**
A variety of Dhupana drugs of herbal, animal and mineral origin are mentioned in our classical texts.

**Mode of administration / procedure:**

a) **Form of drug**: various references are found to use the drug in powder form (*Curna*)[^19,20], *Kalka*[^21,22] form for Dhupana Karma. Although reference Dhupana Karma using Dhupa Varti is not directly available in the texts. But it is mentioned in relation to odour of *Varti* made with various aromatic drugs[^23,24].

b) **Dhupana Yantra**[^25]: For fumigating wound, the wound pipe should be eight fingers long, having blunt mouth, thickness of Kalaya and a hole of horsegram size.

- **Caraka Samhita**: Acarya Caraka has indicated Dhupana Karma in many diseases which are tabulated below.

### Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.no.</th>
<th>Indication</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Drugs / comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Jvara</td>
<td>Prodromal stage Ni.1/36 Fumigation is prescribed&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Jirna Jvara Chi.3/176, 307-308 Guggulu, Nimba, Vaca, Kutha, Haritaki, Sarsapa, Yava with Ghrita. Relieves chronic fever</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Unmada</td>
<td>Ni.7/8 Indication of fumigation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Aparapatana</td>
<td>Sh.8/41 Bhurjapatra, Kacamani, Sarpanirmoka fumes exposed to yoni</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Kumaragara</td>
<td>Sh.8/61 Sterilising of beddings, clothings, Yava, Sarsapa, Atasi, Hingu, Guggulu, Vaca, Coraka, Brahmi, Jaṭamansi, Ashoka, Rohini, Sarpnirmok with Ghrita</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Kustha</td>
<td>Chi.7/159 Fumigation with Viḍanga and Khadira</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Apasmara</td>
<td>Chi.10/36 Guggulu, Vaca, Haritaki, Sarsapa, Jaṭamansi, Lashuna, Hingu, Coraka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Arsha</td>
<td>Chi.14/48-50 Fumigation formulations&lt;br&gt;- Human hairs, snake slough, cat’s skin, root of Arka, Shami leaves.&lt;br&gt;- Tumbaru, Viḍanga, Devadaru, Aksata &amp; Ghrita&lt;br&gt;- Brhati, Ashvagandha, Pippali, Surasa &amp; Ghrita</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- Dung of goat, Saktu and Ghrita
- Dung of elephant, Sarjarasa with Ghrita.

8. Vrana
- Chi.25/42, 108-109
- For hardening and softening of wound tissue.
- Relieves pain, discharges, foul odour, parasites infesting the ulcer, excessive looseness of tissue.

9. Pradara
- Chi.30/120
- For checking the discharge, vagina should be oleated and fumigated with Sarala, Guggulu, Yava mixed with Ghrita or by bitter fish (Saphari) mixed with oil

Acarya Caraka also advised to perform religious rituals like Yagya etc. in the wake of epidemic diseases (Janapadodhvansa)\(^{26}\).

Sushruta Samhita:
Acarya has described fumigation of postoperative wound with analgesic (Vedanahara) and disinfectant drugs (Raksoghana)\(^{27}\). It has also been mentioned to disinfect the Shastragara and the instruments used for Shastra Karma including dressing materials (Kavalika) etc.

The various references of indication of Dhupana Karma as mentioned by Acarya Sushruta are tabulated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.no.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Postoperative</td>
<td>Su.5/18</td>
<td>Guggulu, Agaru, Sarjarasa, Vaca, Sarsapa, Lavana with Ghrita. Fumigate not only wound but also beds etc. in order to remove foul odour and flies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Vranitagara</td>
<td>Su.19/24, 28</td>
<td>Sarsapa, Nimba, Lavana with Ghrita fumigation to be done twice a day for 10 days microbes are destroyed by Raksoghana drugs and do not re-attack the surgical patient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Vrana (wound)</td>
<td>Su.36/22</td>
<td>Shrivesṭaka, Sarala, Devadaru, Sarjarasa Guggulu, Yava, Ghrita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(wound)</td>
<td>Chi.1/8, 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Garbhasanga</td>
<td>Sh.10/13</td>
<td>Sarpanirmoka, Madanaphala</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Aparapatana</td>
<td>Sh.10/23</td>
<td>Kaṭukalabu, Kritavedhana, Sarsapa and Sarpanirmoka with Kaṭu Taila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Newborn</td>
<td>Sh.10/26</td>
<td>Raksoghana Dhupa</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>The child should be fumigated with incenses warding off evil organisms</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Karna Roga</td>
<td>Utt.21/11, 40, 52-53</td>
<td>Guggulu, Agaru, Ghrita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Yoni Roga</td>
<td>Utt.38/27</td>
<td>Brhatiphala, Haridra,Daruharidra</td>
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</table>

➢ Aṣṭanga hradaya
Acarya has described fumigation of dressing material\(^{28}\) also to be used after surgical procedure.

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Postoperative</td>
<td>Su.29/26</td>
<td>Guggulu, Agaru, Sarsapa, Hingu, Sarjarasa, Vaca, Nimba, Lavana with Ghrita.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Garbhasanga</td>
<td>Sha.1/83, 86</td>
<td>Krishna Sarpa Nirmoka, Bhurja, Langali, Tumbi, Kuth, Sarsapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Arsha</td>
<td>Chi.8/18, 27</td>
<td>Arka, Shami, human hairs, Sarpnirmoka, cat skin, Ashvagandha, Tulas, Brhati, Pippali with Ghrita. It helps in letting of vitiated blood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Paediatric ward Utt.1/25, 26
   Dead crow with Sarpi, Vasa, Majja
   Raksoghana Dhupa for sterilising beddings, clothings, coverings of child

6. Balagraha Utt.3/55-56
   Horns, skin, hairs of cow, Sarpnirmoka, cats fecas, Nimbi , Kuṭaki, Madanaphala,
   Bṛhati, Yava, goat hairs, Devadaru, Sarsapa, Mayurapiccha, Sarjarasa, Tīsa,
   Hingu

7. Bhutagraha Utt.5/6, 18
   Karpashijadi Dhupa, GrahaRoga and jvara

8. Unmada Utt.6/40
   Brahmyadi Dhupa varti

9. Kukkunuka Utt.9/26
   Musta, Haridra, Daruharidra, Pippali, Sarsapa with Ghrita

10. Netra Roga Utt.11/40
    Mahanila Gutika

11. Karna Roga Utt.18/18
    Guggulu
    Helps in reducing pus and secretions.

12. Vrana Utt.25/45
    Yava, Bhurjapatra, Moma, Devadaru, Shrivesṭaka with Ghrita
    Removes pus and relieves pain

13. Visa Utt.37/23
    Human hairs, Sarsapa, old jaggery

➢ **Kashyapa Samhita**
   *Kashyapa Samhita* is a medical text dealing with diseases of newborn and children. *Acarya* has given a complete separate chapter describing near about 40 Dhupana formulations to be done for newborn, growing and diseased child\(^ {29} \). He also opined that physician should always possess fumigating material\(^ {30} \) with him at the time of visit to patient. The procedure of preparation of fumigation material and their collection in Pusya or Maitraya Naksatra from southeast or north direction is also described. *Acarya* has also mentioned to chant hymn at the time of fumigation. He also focused on antimicrobial potential of Dhupana drugs by indicating them in various Graha Roga as morphology and fate of Graha mentioned in Ayurveda texts in different can be unequivocally interpreted as microscopic pathogenic organism like virus and bacteria etc.

➢ **Bhela Samhita**\(^ {31} \)
   *Acarya* has indicated Dhupana Karma in Jvara, Aparasanga and Arsha

➢ **Harita Samhita**
   *Acarya* has dedicated a whole chapter on Havana Vidhi\(^ {32} \) in which Samidvarga & various aromatic drugs are described. Specific mantras for specific drugs for specific Naksatra are also mentioned. Indication of Dhupana can be cited in Arsha and Grahadosa.

➢ **Shargandhara Samhita**
   ✓ *Acarya* has described Vrana Dhupana as one of the six types of Dhuma\(^ {33} \)
   ✓ Vrana Dhupana Netra\(^ {34} \): 10 Angula Nadi, thickness of Kalaya, having hole of horse gram size.
   ✓ Described the procedure for Dhupana in Vrana.

**DISCUSSION**

*Dhupana* is a concept very well known since ancient times along with the concept of microbiology. Indication of Dhupana Karma in Sansargaja Vyadhi like Jvara and Kustha suggests its antimicrobial activity. Emphasis was laid on importance and utility of Dhupana Karma by coupling it with religious rituals so that the society can get benefit on mass level and can perform it on routine basis. Yagyā were done for the welfare of the society as it resulted in mass hygiene. It is also evident from its indication in epidemics (*Janapadodhvansa*) in classical texts. Thus the aim of Dhupana Karma is antiseptic, anti-inflammatory due to bactericidal effect of the *Kṛmighana* drugs\(^ {35} \) in the treatment of various diseases like Vrana, Arsha Roga, Shvasa Roga and Karna Roga and Yonivyapada\(^ {36} \).

**CONCLUSION**

*Dhupana Karma* is an important modality & primitive method of sterilization. Besides its antimicrobial potential, it also can be used as route of drug administration without any side effect. The classical indication of Dhupana Karma in epidemics suggests exploring its role in managing the outbreaks of many new emerging infectious diseases. The dispersed descrip-
tion make the need of proper compilation of the related facts and further studies should be done to elaborate the role and efficacy of Dhupana Karma in present context.

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