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Review Article

CATEGORIZATION OF AMA AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF AGNI

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ABSTRACT

ETYMOLOGY:

Word *Ama* has its origin from root 'Am', with the suffix 'Ninj' having the meaning i.e. the substance, which is not digested properly and needs further digestion. i.e. substance which is incompletely metabolised or partially metabolised is called as *Ama*. i.e. the substance which creates disturbance in *Srotas* (channels) is called *Ama*.

Again the word *Ama* in literal meaning can be seen as = (as a prefix to verbs and nouns) near, near to, towards. = poison.

So *Ama* denotes a substance or group of substances which is near to poison or acts like a poison. So a substance which harms normal healthy state of body or any part of body can be considered as *Ama*. Therefore depending upon etymology *Ama* can be described as - raw, uncooked, unripe, immature, undigested or incompletely oxidised/metabolised or similar to a poisonous substance.

- **Definition**

Definition of *Ama* given by Bhavamisra in 16th century is Again it is stated that food if not digested properly due to hypofunction of *Agni* gets the name *Ama* and becomes the root cause of many diseases. Due to the feebleness of *Kayagni*, the *Ahara Rasa* is not properly formed in the *Amasaya* and in this state it is known as *Ama*. In other sense it is also told that the first *Dhatu* i.e. *Rasa Dhatu*, if not formed properly, then this first unconverted *Rasadhatu* is termed as *Ama*.

- **Classification**

The first category is further subdivided into three subtypes depending upon the type of *Agni*. Foremost in these is *Ama* produced by default of *Jatharagni*. This again depending upon sequence can be seen as *AnnarasarupaAma*, *MalasancayarupaAma*, *RasasesarupaAma*, *ApakwannarupaAma*. Though these four are considered at *Jatharagni* level but if one takes the broad meaning, these four can be applied to every *Agni*. Like in case of *Raktagni* the four divisions will be in the following way - *AnnarasarupaAma* here the *Annaras* for *Raktagni* will be the *Poskansa* given by *Rasagni* to get digested by *Raktagni*. So if it is not digested properly the remnant *Rasa* will be *AnnarasarupaAma* for *Raktagni*. *MalasancayarupaAma* again if the *Raktagni* does not work properly then the *Kitta* and *Prasada* products will not be formed properly. This improperly formed *Kitta* will be considered as *MalasancayarupaAma*, and improperly formed *Prasada* will be considered as *ApakwannarupaAma* and due to feebleness of *Raktagni* the part which remains as it is, will be taken as *RasasesarupaAma* for *Raktagni*. So it is clear that this concept can be further applied to every *Agni* and four types of *Ama* will be produced at every level of *Agni*. The next subtype is the *Ama* produced by *Dhatvagnimandya*. As *Dhatwagnis* are seven in number, so seven different categories of *Ama* will be produced which can be further divided into four types as described above. Similarly the *Bhutagnis* also produce *Ama* when they are improper in their working and that can also be divided into above four subtypes. The second main category of *Ama* is one which is independent of *Agni*. Though here the role of *Agni* is not totally absent but its working is insidious so it is considered as above. This category contains *Ama* produced due to first stage of *Dosik* vitiation and *Ama* produced by ingestion of poisons or other external factors (*Agantujdravyas*).

Types of Ama

In this section, we are describing each *Ama* in detail:

1. JatharagnimandyajanyaAma :

Jatharagni is the *Agni* present in *Mahakostha* and its function is to digest ingested food. *Jatharagni* is considered as (*Pradhanagni*) superior most *Agni* and it supports rest of *Agnis* in the body. Also other *Agnis* of the body are directly affected by its *Mandata* or *Samyakta* (Ca.Ci.15/3-4). The division of food into *Sara*

and *Kitta* is its main function (A. H. Su.12/12) When the function of *Jatharagni* is impaired, the ingested food is not digested properly and *Ama* is produced. This *Ama* is further divided into four types viz. *AnnarasarupaAma*, *AdyaharadhaturupaAma*, *RasasesarupaAmamalasancayarupaAma*.

- a. ***AnnarasarupaAma***: If the function of *Agni* is not proper the food will not be digested properly and this undigested/half-digested food undergoes the process of fermentation and acts like poison for the body. As a result this fermented *Annarasa* when comes out from upper passage is called as *Chardi* and if from lower passage known as *Atisara* and combined condition is known as *Visucika*. In this the disease is produced in *Mahasrotas* and is produced mainly due to local irritation of gastric mucosa.
- b. ***AdyaharadhaturupaAma***: When the food is digested improperly and the outcome of this improperly digested food is absorbed, it is known as *AdyaharadhaturupaAma*. This absorbed *Ama* then circulates in *Rasavahasrotas* if it gets digested by *Rasagni* it gets cured and if not it leads to the *Mandyata* of *Rasagni*. This is seen in the *Samprapti* of *Jwara*.
- c. ***RasasesarupaAma***: Here due to excessive intake of food or hypofunction of *Agni* food is not digested completely (in terms of quantity, not quality). This remaining food is termed as *RasasesarupaAma*. This leads to the *Samprapti* of *Rasasesajirna*. It is a local condition and at this stage its treatment is also simple.
- d. ***MalasancayarupaAma***: The action of *Jatharagni* is the division of *Ahara* into *Prasada* and *Kitta*. It is seen in above discussion that if *Prasada* is not properly formed due to hypofunction of *Agni* it leads to *AnnarasarupaAma* or *AdyaharadhaturupaAma*. Similarly the *Kitta* may also be not formed properly by hypofunction of *Agni* and become harmful to body. The *Kitta* produced by normal function of *Agni* has its role to play in normal physiology of the body and after some time is thrown out of the body. But improperly formed *Kitta* or *Mala* does not perform its normal physiological functions and is difficult to throw out of the body. This retained mala is then termed as *MalasancayarupaAma* at *Jatharagni* level. This *MalasancayarupaAma* when neither expelled out by upper passage nor by lower passage leads to the condition of *Alsaka*.

2. ***BhutagnimandyajanyaAma* :**

Both Acaryas Caraka and Vagbhatta have quoted direct references to *Bhutagnipaka* while Susruta has made an indirect mention of it. According the Caraka - The digestion of food by *Jatharagni* results in the breakdown of food into five distinct physico-chemical groups i.e. *PancAmahabhutas* viz. *Parthiva*, *Apya*, *Taijasa*, *Vayavya* and *Nabhasa*. *Jatharagni* ignites the *Agni* fraction present in each of the five groups. This *Bhutagni* then converts the respective portion into assimilable form. If the function of *Bhutagni* is not proper, at this stage the *Ama* will be produced. Again different types of *Ama* will be produced according to the different aetiologies.

- a. **AnnarasarupaAma:** Due to feeble action of *Bhutagni* the improperly digested material when goes to further metabolism then *AnnarasarupaAma* is produced at *Bhutagni* level.
- b. **ApakwannarupaAma:** If *Bhutagni* is not able to metabolise the nutrients then they undergo undesired biochemical changes and act as *ApakwannarupaAma* at *Bhutagni* level.
- c. **RasasesarupaAma:** Due to excessive quantity of nutrients or weak status of *Bhutagni* the part left from digestion is called as *RasasesarupaAma*. Here the quantitative aspect is taken into consideration rather than qualitative as in *ApakwannarupaAma*.
- d. **MalasancayarupaAma:** As the action of every *Agni* is the division of *Prasada* and *Kitta* here also *Kitta* is formed but due to incomplete or improper action the *Kitta* form will be abnormal and hence termed as *MalasancayarupaAma*.

3. DhatwagnimandyajanyaAma :

Dhatwagni are seven in number as stated by Acarya Carakanvisagement of seven types of *Dhatwagnis* has been done in the seven types of *Dhatus*. These perform metabolic transformation of nutrients into assimilable and removable moieties. According to Vagbhatta the components of *Pacakagni* when situated in the dhatus are termed as *Dhatwagnis* (A.H.Su. 1). But according to Arunadatta when *Bhutagnis* reach along with *Annarasa* into dhatus then they are termed as *Bhutagnis* (on A. H. Su. 3/60). So it is clear from above description that the part of *Agni* which is situated in the seven *Dhatus* are termed as *Dhatwagni*. The seven *Dhatwagni* are *Rasagni*, *Raktagni*, *Mansagni*, *Medagni*, *Asthayagni*, *Majjagni* and *Sukragni*. The *Vaisamya* of *Dhatvagni* referred by Dalhana, Cakrapani and Vacaspati leads to the impairment of intermediate metabolism resulting in the production of incompletely metabolised substances which are obviously not fit for utilisation by the *Sthayidhatus*. Thus these products are in *Ama* state and cause *Amadosa* at this level. The division of *Ama* is again of four types.

- a. **AnnarasarupaAma:** The nutrients when not metabolised properly by *Dhatwagni* of that particular dhatu and there improperly digested nutrients when go further to form *Sthayidhatus*, then it is considered as *AnnarasarupaAma* and the metabolism leads to the production of improper *Dhatu* which in turn is termed as *Amadhātu*.
- b. **ApakwannarupaAma:** The nutrients when not metabolised properly and due to improper action of *Agni*, when changed into undesired forms may not go ahead in further metabolism and in this form only they may adhere to *Sthayidhatu*, then they are termed as *ApakwannarupaAma*. This leads to the pathological state termed as *Samadhātu*. In this *Ama* produced at *Dhatwagni* level, sticks to the normal present dhatu and vitiates its normal functioning. Here qualitative aspect is considered.
- c. **RasasesarupaAma:** As described earlier, this is the quantitative aspect of malfunctioning of *Agni*. Here because of the increased amount of nutrient or hypofunctioning state of *Agni* the metabolism is not

completed quantitatively and some part of nutrient is left as it is. That left part is then termed as *RasasesarupaAma* at *Dhatwagni* level.

- d. ***MalasancayarupaAma***: It is in the same way as explained earlier. Every *Dhatu* has its own *Mala*. Due to *Dhatwagnimandhya* the improperly divided *Kitta* when accumulates in that *Dhatu* the condition is called as *MalasancayarupaAma* at *Dhatwagni* level. These are four types of *Ama* produced at *Dhatwagni* level.

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