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A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ON *KANAKASUNDARA RASA*: UNTANGLING THE SUBTLE ASPECTS

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Abstract

Introduction: Ayurveda focuses on sensing and maintaining the rhythm of life. However, only a practitioner, who can imbibe the different *bhavas* of the temple that is unique to each individual, can do the successful treatment. The real rationale of the practitioner should be able to untangle the cryptic wisdom by reading between the lines. Such an approach will bring back Ayurveda to be the science which seamlessly intertwines with the natural flow of life. The yogas (formulations) dealt under Rasasatra are always an inevitable component in Ayurvedic therapeutics. **Methodology:** Considering the treatment of *kushta* formulations of different *rasouashadhis* are mentioned in 20th chapter of Rasaratnasamuchaya. Among such formulations *kanakasundara rasa*, a *nirgandharasayoga* with a wide range of applicability was reviewed and analyzed for the present work. Review of the specific formulation was carried out in Rasaratna samucchaya as well as other classical textbooks of Rasasastra. **Results & Discussion:** Skin is a reflection of *Koshta* or *Rasadhatu*, which gives the superficial representation of

kushta. Gandhaka is explained as *devyaraaja*: The term rajas as '*rasajam*'. The philosophical concept in between these lines explains direct relation of *rasaja* or *twak* with *gandhaka*. Though *gandhaka* gives therapeutic excellence in *kushta*, its chronicity cannot be managed by this mineral alone. The potentiality of minerals like *parada*, *abhraka*, *swarna*, *tamra* etc can be imbibed from multidimensional action on higher *dhathus* like *majja*, *sukla* etc. Here comes the relevance of *mahayogas* like *arogyavardhinivati*, *mahathaleswararasa* etc; even use of *nirgandhayogas* are explained by Acharya. Target specific and *alpamatra prayoga* of *rasoushadhis* play a pivotal role in this concept. Holistic approach for selection and action of a *rasayoga* in *Kusta* can be analyzed through the example '*kanakasundara rasa*'.

Key words: Ayurveda, *rasoushadhis*, subtle aspects, *kanakasundara rasa*

Introduction:

Ayurveda focuses on sensing and maintaining the rhythm of life. However, only a practitioner, who can imbibe the different *bhavas* (aspects) of the temple that is unique to each individual, can do the successful treatment.¹ The real rationale of the practitioner should be able to untangle the cryptic wisdom by reading between the lines. Such an approach will bring back Ayurveda to be the science which seamlessly intertwines with the natural flow of life. Rasashastra, a branch considered as Indian pharmaceuticals of herbo-mineral preparations mainly. The principles associated with foundation and developments of Rasashastra are not clearly indicated and are scattered in various ancient classical texts. The formulations dealt under Rasasatra are always an inevitable component in Ayurvedic therapeutics. Rasaratna samucchaya is a systematic and comprehensive treatise in which scattered knowledge of *Rasaśāstra* is well compiled by *RasaVāgbhaṭa* and has its own specialty and consequence. Chapter 20 of Rasaratna samucchaya deals with the *cikitsa* of *kushta visarpadis*; by imbibing the *sukshma tatwa* (subtle aspects) in each *yoga* (formulation) mentioned here can clearly lead us to perfect management of *kushta* using *rasoushadhis*. The present paper is aimed to ascertain the approach towards *rasoushadhis* in a formulation with special reference to *kanakasundara rasa* mentioned in Rasasastra-Rasaratnasamucchaya and will throw a light towards their subtle aspects.

Methodology:

A review of the disease *kushta* along with the treatment principles was carried out in the classical text of Ayurveda mainly Ashtanga Hridaya of *Acharya vagbhata*. Contextual review of basic principles like *dhatu, upadhatu, dhatu pradoshaja vikarasetc.* were done in *Brihatrayees*. The treatise *Rasaratna samucchaya* was searched for formulations of mineral drug formulations in *Kushta chikitsa*. Among such formulations *kanakasundara rasa*, a *nirgandharasayoga* with a wide range of applicability was reviewed and analyzed for the present study. Review of the specific formulation was carried out in *Rasaratna samucchaya* as well as other classical textbooks of *Rasasastra*. *Sunti* (*Zingiber officinale Roxb.*), *marica* (*Piper nigrum Linn.*), *pippali* (*Piper longum Linn.*), *citraka* (*Plumbago zeylanica Linn.*), *vidanga* (*Embelia ribes Burm.f.*), *ajasringi* (*Gymnema sylvestre R.Br.*), *devadaru* (*Cedrus deodara (Roxb.) Loud. G. Don*) and *vatsanabha* (*Aconitum chasmanthum Staff. ex. Holmes.*) Were searched in monographs published in part-I of Ayurveda pharmacopeia of India in corresponding volumes. (Volume I, II, III, IV and IX.) Text books of *dravyaguna vijñana* were searched manually for collecting more information about these herbal origin drugs included in the specific formulation. Books written by recent authors and search engines including google scholar, Pub Med were also searched for information regarding the review of mineral drugs (*parada* (mercury), *swarna* (gold) and *abhraka* (mica)).

Results

(i) The disease *kushta* at a glance

Term '*kushta*' is defined as *kaalena sarvm vapu:-sariram, kusnaati tasmaat tatkusthmityucyte*. Which depicts condition that affects the whole body on progression².

As explained in *nidana stana* of Ashtanga hridaya, the *kushta nidanas* include, *midhyaharadiviharerna* (unsuitable food and activities), *visheshena virodhina* (with foods which are incompatible), *sadhunindvadhadihi*: (by sinful acts of the present life such as scolding/defaming or killing the pious; ascetics, elders, preceptors etc.), *papmabhi: karmabhi*: (sinful act of the previous life) etc.³

These *nidanas* lead to the aggravation of *doshas* as well as the *twak-lasika-asruk-amisha kopa* and by spreading the *bahya sarira desha*, produce signs and symptoms like *twak*

vaivarnya.Based on the predominance of *doshas*, *kushta* is classified as *sapta mahakushtas* and given the explanations of eleven *kshudra kushtas* in classics^{4, 5, and 6}. Then due to similar causative factors and mode of progression *switra* is mentioned next to *kushta*.

Raktadoshaja vikaras include *kushta visarpa pitakadi rogas*.⁷*twak* is mentioned as *upadhatu* of *mamsa* and during explanation of *saptha twacha*, *kushta* and *visarpa sthanas* are mentioned(4th&5th*twacha*).The same *twacha* comes as one among the *moola sthanas* of *mamsavahasrotas*⁸.The disease '*kusta*' is a widesprectrum entity where the symptoms ranges from '*twakvaivarnya*, *dhathugata*stages....to *swadaarapathyabadhana*.References of *Galithakustarogalakshanas* ,*switrushtalakshanas* can be seen in comprehensive treatise of *Rasasastra-Rasaratnasamacchaya*⁹.Considering the treatmentformulations of different *rasouashadhis* are mentioned in 20th chapter of *Rasaratnasamuchaya*. *Dhatugata kushta lakshanas* are given as¹⁰

	<i>Dhatu</i>	<i>Lakshanas</i>
1	<i>Twak</i>	तोदवैवर्ण्यरूक्षता
2	<i>Rakta</i>	स्वेदस्वापश्वयथवः
3	<i>Mamsa</i>	पाणिपादाश्रिताः स्फोटाः क्लेदः सन्धिषुचाधिकं
4	<i>Meda</i>	कौण्यगतिक्षयोङ्गानांदलनस्याच्च
5	<i>Asthi</i> <i>Majja</i>	नासाभंगनेत्ररागः स्वरक्षयः क्षतेचकृमयः
6	<i>Sukra</i>	स्वदारापत्यबाधनं (in commentary adds उपद्रवैः स्वेदादिभिः पीडनंस्यात्)

* table 1

Well-developed chronicity can be assessed in progressive stages of *dhatu*s.

Acaryas have mentioned such stages in *vishavega lakshanas*¹¹ *dhatu gata jwara lakshanas*¹² etc.to analyze the *atyayika* stage of *prana* .

Considering the *dosha sthanas* Acharyas have mentioned *hrinnabhyoradhomadhyordhwa samsraya*:.Another context mentioned that every *gati*(movement) is incorporated with *vata* (*ie*,

va gati gandhnayo:). Within the body the five *vayus* are explained where the extremities ie, *prana* and *apana* are mentioned with movement directions *pranaga* and *apanaga* .

In the *kushta cikitsa snehapana* is given with prime importance-*kushtinam snehapanena purvam sarvamupacaret;*¹³

In Rasaratna samucchaya *galitakushtaroga lakshanas* like पादयोः श्वयथुस्तोदोगलंत्यंगुलयोयदिनासिकास्वरयोर्भ्रगोगलकुष्ठस्यलक्षणम्॥(*padayoswayathutodogalathyangulayoyati nasikaswarayorbhanga galakushtasya lakshanam*) are explained.

Switra kushtasya lakshanas are also available in this context and mentioned that which will get worsened on progression.

In the explanation of *kushta cikitsa* about 90 formulations were mentioned by Rasavagbhata. *Yogas* for *Vataja, pitaja, kaphaja, sannipataja* conditions are mentioned ,then *mahayogas* are mentioned according to increasing chronicity. As the synonym '*kushtari*'¹⁴ indicates, *gandhaka* is coming under most of the preparations.

(ii)Yogavicharam- 'kanakasundara rasa'

In the name '*kanakasundara rasa*' many references have been made available. *kanakasundara rasa* and *brihat kanakasundara rasa* are mentioned in Bhaishajya ratnavali *jwarathisaracikitsaprakarana*¹⁵ In Similar name '*hemasundara rasa*' is another *yoga* mentioned in *vajikaranaprakarana of Bhaishajya ratnavali*¹⁶. In compiled textbooks of Rasasastra like Rasarajachinthamani mentioned *kanakasundara rasa* in different *chikitsa prakaranas* like *ekshayaroga cikitsa, atisara cikitsa, grahani cikitsa, and vatavyadhi cikitsa* with different ingredients.¹⁷

*Kanaka sundara rasa*¹⁸ mentioned by Rasavagbhata *invisarpakushtaswitradiroga cikitsadhyaya* (Rasaratna samucchaya-20th chapter) differs by ingredients and by the method of preparation, it is this *yoga* that is being taught here.

समतुलकनकोत्थव्योमसत्वोत्थपिष्टीद्विगुणरससमेतांगोलमध्येविपाच्य।

त्रिकटुदहनवेल्लैर्वत्सनाभार्धभागैरससमनवशूङ्गीदारुयुक्तैः समस्तैः ॥

अजसलिलविपिष्टैर्गुञ्जयातुल्यगोलः कुपितकफसमुत्थंहन्तिकुष्ठगरिष्ठम्।

तदपरमथवातश्लेष्मजत्वविकारंगुदगतमपिसर्ववह्निमान्दंसुनिन्दम्॥

तुष्टेनशम्भुनादिष्टः सोऽयंकनकसुन्दरः त्वग्विकारविनाशायकुबेरायमहात्मने॥

* smtulknkothvyomstvotthpistin dvigaunrssmaan gaolmdhyevipaaky.
triktudhnvellairvtsnaabhaardhbhaagaai rsmnvnshringgaidaaruyuktai: smstai: ॥
ajslil vipistairgaunyjyaatulygaol: kupitkfsmutthn hntikusthngaristhm.
tdprmth vaatshlesmjtvgevikaarn gaudgatmpi srvnvhnimaanddn suninddm॥
tusten shmbhunaadist: so'ynknksundr: tvgavikaarvinaashaay kubaaymhaatmne॥

(iii) Method of Preparation of *kanakasundara rasa*

Equal parts of *swarnapishti*, *vyomasatwotthapishti* along with two parts of *suddha parada* were taken in a clean *khalwayantra*. Made them to bolus form by proper trituration. Place the bolus in a *sarava* and another *sarava* of same dimension is kept inverted and the junction of two *sarava* was sealed by a mud smeared with kora cloth. Three such mud plasters were given to provide proper sealing and dried. Such a *samputitha sarava* is subjected to *putainvalukayantra*. After self-cooling collect the incinerated material inside the *sarava*, then add the herbal drugs. The mentioned ratio of quantities of herbal drugs are

- *Trikatu* (*sunti, maricha and pippali*), *citraka, vella*- one part each
- *Suddha vatsanabha* - half part
- *Sringi, daru* - one part each

Then trituration with *ajamutra* (goat's urine) in *khalwayantra* has to be done and finally prepare *vati* with a size of *gunja thulya gola*. *Valuka yantra*¹⁹ mentioned here for the preparation is to give uniform heat distribution during the process. Indication of this medicine is mainly in *vata-sleshmaja twak vikara, gudagatavikara, sarvam vahni mandhyam sunindhyam*. Mineral contents of the formulation include *swarna pishti*, *abhraka satwa pishti* and *suddha parada*. *Kanakasundara rasa* is mentioned as a *nirgandha rasa yoga* in *kushta*.

(iv) Biological roles with appraisal of subtle aspects

Herbal drugs included in this *yoga* along with their properties and classically mentioned pharmacological actions are summarized in table 2.

Sl.no.	Herbal drug	Rasa	Guna	Virya	vipaka	Karma & prabhava
1	<i>Sunti (Zingiber officinale Roxb.)</i> ²⁰	Katu	Laghu-snigdha-ushna	Ushna	Madhura	Dipana, vrishyam, hridyam
2	<i>Maricha (Piper nigrum Linn.)</i> ²¹	Katu-tikta	Tikshna- usna-ruksha- laghu	Ushna	Katu	Kapha-vatahara,
3	<i>Pippali (Piper longum Linn.)</i> ²²	Madhura- katu-tiktam	Laghu- snigdha	Anushna	Madhura	Kapha-vata hara, vrishya, rasayana, kushta-pramehajt
4	<i>Citraka (Plumbago zeylanica Linn.)</i> ²³	Katu	Laghu-ruksha	Ushna	Katu	Vahnikrit ,vatata
5	<i>Vella(vidanga) (Embelia ribes Burm.f.)</i> ²⁴	Katu- tiktam	Laghu-ruksha – tikshna	Ushna	Katu	Sleshma krimi vata vibandhanut, vata kaphahara, Vatanulomana
6	<i>Aja sringi (Gymnema sylvestre R.Br.)</i> ²⁵	Katu- tiktam	Ruksha – laghu	Ushna	Katu	Vatata, swasakasahrit, kushtam eha kapha pranut (BP) Kapharsa-sula sophajt, jataranalakrit, hridyam (Ra.Ni.) Visha nasini (Ni.Ra.)
7	<i>Devadaru (Cedrus deodara (Roxb.) Loud.) G. Don</i> ²⁶	Tikta	Laghu- snigdha	Ushna	Katu	Kapha-vatahara
8	<i>Vatsanabha (Aconitum chasmanthum Staff. ex. Holmes.)</i> ²⁷	Madhura	Laghu- ushna-ruksha- tikshna- vyavayi- vikasi	Ushna	Madhura	Rasayana, sita prasamana, deepana, dartyakara

* Table 2

Bhavana dravya used in this formulation is *aja mutra* which is *lavana-kashaya-madhura* in *rasa* and *tridoshaghna*, *pathya* in nature.

Properties of *rasoushadhis*²⁸ mentioned in *kanakasundara rasa* can be summarized as in table 3,

Sl. no.	Rasoushadhi	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Prabhava & karma
1	Abhraka (Biotite Mica)	Kashaya Madhura	Snigdha	Sita	Madhura	Rasayana, vajikarana, Varnya, ruchikara, Bala vriddhikara
2	Swarna (Gold metal)	Madhura, kashaya, tik ta, katu	Sita, guru, snig dha	Sita	Madhura	Vrishya, balya, Brahmana, rasayana, Medhya, smritiprada, Balya, ayushya, kanthikara
3	Parada (Mercury)	Shadrasa	Snigdha, sara, guru	Ushna	Madhura	Yogavahi, rasayana, amritha, sarvarogahara

*Table 3

*swarnapishtinirman*a is explained as *suddha swarnapatra* are cut in to small pieces. *suddha parada* is taken in a clean *khalwa yantra* and after that *suddha swarnapatra* pieces are add one by one with proper trituration up to homogenous form. *nimbu swarasa* is added for proper preparation. Thus semisolid, soft *swarna pishti* will be formed.

Properties of *Swarna* are mentioned as

- *Brahmana, snigdam rasapakayo Madhuram, sakashayam satikthakam, hridayam kanthi pradam, buddhi Medha smritikaram, vranaknam.*²⁹
- *Rasatarangini* adds *vrishyam, rasayana, pumsavanopayogiproperties.*
- *Rasavagbhata* explained properties of *swarna* as *akhilavyadhidwamsi, bhutavesa prasanthi.*

Classical methods of *abhraka satwapatana* include,

- *Suddha abhraka* added with one fourth part of powder of *suddha tankana* (*Sodium tetraborate decahydrate*) .Further do *pehana* with juice of *musali* (*Curculigo orchioides Gaertn.*) and subjected to *puta* to obtain *satwa*. (RT, RRS)
- Trituration of powdered *Abhraka* with *kanji, soorana* (*amorphophallus paeoniifolius* (Dennst.) nicolson. thoya, *kadali kanda* (*Musa paradisiaca L.*) thoya- add one fourth part *tankana* (*Sodium tetraborate decahydrate*), *pippali* (*Piper longum Linn.*) *churna, kshudra matsya* (fish of small size) and *mahishee*

mala(excreta of buffalo).Made to bolus form and subjected to puta in dritagni.Thus satwa will evolved.

- Two more methods are available in Rasatarangini.³⁰
- *Satwavaishishtyais* mentioned in Rasatarangini³¹
- *Satwabhra rasayana* is mentioned in Rasaratna samucchaya³²

Suddha parada is another major content of *kanakasundara Rasa*.

पारदीयस्यदिव्यस्यरसेन्द्रस्यमिदौजसः।
शास्त्रंचलक्षणोपेतंदृष्टारिष्टानुसारियत्॥
यत्सारंसर्वलोकेषुनवनीतमिवोद्धृतं।
तदिदंस्वर्ग्यमायुष्यंयशस्यंधन्यमक्षयं॥
विचित्रंविस्मयंसूक्ष्मंपरंविश्वस्यसाधनं।
अनेकलक्षणोपेतंयुक्तिमद्व्यक्तनिर्नयम्॥

* paardiysy divysy rsendrsymidaujs:.

shaastrn k lksnopetn dristaaristaanusaari yt||
ytsaarn srvlokesu nvnitnivoddhritn.
tdidn svrgaymaayusyn yshsyn dhnymksyn ||
vikitrn vismyn suksmn prn vishvsy saadhnn .
anek lksnopetn yuktimd vyktnirnym||

The given explanation is; It is peculiar extraordinary, most secret or with appropriate power with effectiveness.

As Rasasastra said it is supreme, the most required therapeutic form is *parada bhasma*.(*Nishkkampa Vega teevragnou ayurarogyato mrita:.(RRS).*)³³.

*RRS - Rasaratna samucchaya.

*RT - Rasatarangini.

Discussion

On the basis of the results obtained we can approach Skin as a reflection of *Koshta* or *Rasadhatu*, which gives the superficial representation of *kushta*. *Gandhaka* is explained as *devyaraja* (*devya rajo bhavet gandho*). The term *rajas* as '*rasajam*' (*rasajam sravati tyaham*). The *nidanas* lead to the *dosha kopas* as well as the *twak-lasika-asruk –amisha kopa* in case of the disease *kushta*. The linking in the *dosha dushya samurchana* will be more evident while checking these concepts. The term *kushta* also includes some other diseases of the skin as will be evident from details further on given in the context of explanation of diagnosis.

The philosophical concept in between these lines explains direct relation of *rasaja* or *twak* with *gandhaka*. Though *gandhaka* gives therapeutic excellence in *kushta*, its chronicity cannot be managed by this mineral alone. The potentiality of minerals like *parada, abhraka, swarna, tamra* etc can be imbibed from multidimensional action on higher *dhatus* like *majja, sukla* etc. Here comes the relevance of *mahayogas* like *arogyavardhinivati, mahathaleswararasa* etc; even use of *nirgandhayogas* are explained by Acharya. Target specific and *alpamatraprayoga* of *rasoushadhis* play a pivotal role in this concept. Holistic approach for selection and action of a *rasayoga* in *Kusta* can be analyzed through the example '*kanakasundara rasa*'. By analysing the indications of the formulation indications we can have the multidimensional action of *rasoushadhis* other than *gandhaka* (which act mainly at the level of *rasa..or rakta* to an extent) on higher *dhatus* like *majja, sukla* etc along with the subtle aspect of *mahayogas*.

When searching the subtle aspect of *vata* the stages of *vata* (*sthula*), *vayu* (*sukshma*) and *prana* (*sukshmatara*) along with the thread in between is inevitable. Within the body the five *vayus* are explained where the extremities ie, *prana* and *apana* are mentioned as *pranaga* and *apanaga* which are having the *gati* beyond the *panchabhutatmakashareera* or the *dravyarupa*. Importance of *prana* is clearly mentioned in these contexts. Description of treatment of *kushta* especially with importance to *snehapana* which is *brahmana* in turn *prananulomana*.

By examining the essence of the *dhatus* or *rasoushadhis* used here we can clearly see that Acharya has a holistic and subtle logic expressed in the *mahayogas* (compound formulations).

Rasadhatu transformed to other *sariradhatu* by perfect *dhatuparinama*³⁴ and attains *rasayanatwa*. *Swarna* is a *dhathu* which is capable of giving *ojovridhi* and in turn act on

manovahasrotas. The perfection of *dhathuparinama* which is perfect for the subtle aspect of *prana* is chosen here. In *kanakasundara Rasa* swarna is mentioned in *pishtiRupa*.

The next major content is *abhraka*.

- *Abhraka* → *abhraka bhasma* → *abhraka satwa*
- *Sthula* → *sukshma* → *sukshmatara*

By examining this transformation we will be able to understand the alterations that have been made in harmony with subtle *prana*. In the event that the body is struggling to maintain the rhythm of *dhathuparinama*; Acharya has applied logic to assimilate the *sukshmamsha* of *oushadha*. Acharya has explained *abhraka* as '*gouriteja: paramamamrutam*'³⁵ in classics. The exaggeration in the explanation of '*devisuklam*', then comes to the logic of being the '*sarvadhatuteja*' by reading in between. There lies the logic behind *abhraka* as the helmsman in *maharasa* group. *Prajnabodhi, prasamitaruja*, etc are mainly pertained to the same *abhraka*. By mentioning *sthanyasamvardhana* we can make out the capability of *abhraka* leading to perfect *dhathuparinama* even in *ksheerada*.

Samskaritaparada can convert lower metals to higher metals³⁶. As an extension to this superiority, we can imbibe the *sukshmatara tatwa* of *parada*.

येनलब्धमिदंशास्त्रं स कर्मतु निश्चितं।

तेनलब्धमिदं सर्वत्रैलोक्यं स चराचरं॥

*yen lbdhmidn shaastrn rskrm tu nishkitn .

ten lbdhmidn srvn trailokyn skraakrn ॥

The person who has attained full, proper and actual knowledge of Rasasastra and techniques, procedures and methodology, really enjoys supreme power par excellence of *trilokas*.³⁷

Conclusion

This conceptual search can be concluded that Untangling the *sukshmatara tatwa* of *rasoushadhi* along with the paths of trans logical thinking approach will lead a practitioner to the right track of perfect treatment, one example of Acharya's clarification for this concept is the selected formulation, *kanakasundara rasa*. Every processes given for each *rasoushadhi* is with the alterations that have been made in harmony with subtle *prana*. Selection, deselection, processing as well as *kalpana* (main mode of preparation) of a

rasoushadhi in a formulation is imprinted with a subtle aspect of the science and holistic approach is the path finder. The obtained results will empower the statement-The person who has attained full, proper and actual knowledge of Rasasastra and its techniques really enjoys supreme power.

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Conflicts of interest

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