

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF RASAYANA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NAGA-
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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda being a holistic health science that concentrates on curative, preventive and promotive health. In this view various drugs and formulations have been mentioned in classics for maintenance of health and improve quality of life. *Rasashastra* and *Bhaishajya Kalpana* is one such area of *Ayurveda* which deals with formulations, its administration in suitable dose and with appropriate *Anupana* and *Pathya*. Various *Rasadavyas* and *Kalpana* have been explained in our classics and a concept of *Rasa Rasayana* has a prime focus in present era. *Chaturvidha Rasayana* namely *Parpati*, *Pottali*, *Kupipakwa* and *Kharaliya Rasayana* have been mentioned in various texts of *Rasashastra* which act as both *Srota Rasayana* as well as *Naimittika Rasayana* targeting specific diseases. *Rasoushadhis* as a single drug in the *Shuddha* and *Marita /Bhasma* form as well as *Rasa Rasayana /Compound* formulations have *Rasayana* properties. The present study focuses on the concepts of *Rasa Rasayana*, its types and indications and the *Rasayana Guna* of *Dhatu*-*Naga* and *Vanga* in particular.

KEYWORDS: *Rasayana*, *Rasoushadhi*, *Dhatu*, *Naga*, *Vanga*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is an ocean of knowledge not only with respect to treatment of diseases but also prevention of it. Medicines designed aid prevention of diseases and maintenance of health in addition to treatment of diseases. *Rasashastra* and *Bhaishajya Kalpana* is one such branch of *Ayurveda*, which concentrates on pharmaceuticals. Though not mentioned in *Astangas* of *Ayurveda*, it has a prime importance. In *Rasashastra*, various drugs/ *Rasadavyas* have been mentioned which are known to possess *Rasayana* property. The processing methods such as *Shodhana*, *Marana*, *Amrutekarana* etc. imbibe and enhance the quality of the drug which improves its action in *Vyadhiharana* as well as *Dhatuposhana*. These processes also help in removal of toxic elements of the drugs making it safe for therapeutic utility.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

a) *Rasa-Rasayana*

RASA is the context of *Rasashastra* refers to *Parada/ Mercury (Rasanat Sarvadhatunam)*^[1] or the class of compounds classified as *Maharasa- Uparasa- Sadharanarasa-Dhatu- Upadhatu* etc. These *Rasadavyas* processed by various procedures such as

Shodhana, *Marana*, *Amrutikarana*, *Agnipaka* are used in preparation of formulations termed as *Rasoushadhi*

Drug/ Medicine serve either of the 2 purposes of *Vyadhiharana/ Eradication of disease* and *Shareera Samyoga Dardyakara/ Strengthening of Body* or both. The drugs used for these purposes are of 2 kinds namely *Vrishya* and *Rasayana*^[2]. "*Rasayana*" term consists of 2 words: *Ayana- Circulation of Rasa- Nutrition (Rasasya Ayanam)*^[3] and thereby resulting in Rejuvenative effect. These factors are explained for the *Rasoushadhis* as well as Disease-specific and *Srotas*-specific *Rasayana* have been explained.

b) *Chaturvidha Rasayana*

In the context of *Rasashastra* owing to above mentioned effects of *Rasayana*, the preparations of *Rasadavyas/ Formulations* are classified into 4 categories under the broad heading of *Rasoushadhis* as *Rasa Rasayana* namely *Kharaliya*, *Parpati*, *Pottali* and *Kupipakwa Rasayana*. These are *Moorchita Yogas* where in *Moorchana* imbibes therapeutic effect to drugs. The classification is based on the process adopted in the preparation and instruments used.

Moorchana refers to procedures by which *Vyadhighataka* / Disease tackling properties of drug(s) are imbibed and enhanced^[4]. As they possess *Rasayana Guna*, the product formed after the processing known as *Moorchita Yogas* are termed as *Rasayana* serving the purpose of *Vyadhinasha*, *Jaranasha* and boosts the immunity of a person.

- **Kharaliya Rasayana**^[5] → Formulations prepared in *Khalwa Yantra* wherein the purified drugs undergo process of *Bhavana* or *Mardana*
- **Parpati Rasayana**^[5] → Formulations in the *Parpata/ Papad* form where in the ingredients are mixed well and the homogenous mixture taken in *Lohadarvi* is melted over the fire and pressed in between the *Gomaya/ Cow dung cakes* covered with *Banana leaf*
- **Pottali Rasayana**^[5] → Formulations prepared by filling it in a *Pottali* and then *Agni/ Heat* is applied.

It is of 4 types depending on the media used for filling of drugs

- **Gandhakadrava Swedana method** → Drugs filled in cloth made into *Pottali* is boiled in a pot filled with *Shuddha Gandhaka*
- **Kaparda poorana method** → Drugs are filled into *Kaparda*
- **Putapaka method** → Drugs pounded are placed in *Sharava* in the form of pills/ pellets and heat is applied
- **Valuka Yantra method** → *Pottali* is placed in *Valuka Yantra*
- **Kupipakwa Rasayana**^[5] → Formulations prepared by filling the drugs in a *Kupi/ Glass bottle* and then *Agni/ Heat* is applied

c) Rasoushadhis

Rasoushadhis act not only as a cure of diseases (*Vyadhiharanartha*) but also help in improving the health status of tissues in the body and maintain the proper functioning of cells. Hence they are termed as *Rasayana*.

Table 01: List of few of Rasoushadhis having probable Rasayana property.

RASOUSHADHI ^[6]	RASADRAVYA	SROTAS TARGETTED	DISEASE TARGETTED
<i>Shwasakasachintamani</i>	<i>Shuddha-Swarnamakshika, Shuddha Mukta-Loha</i>	<i>Pranavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Shwasa</i>
<i>Hemagarbha Pottali</i>	<i>Shuddha Swarna, Shuddha Tamra</i>	<i>Pranavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Rajayakshma</i>
<i>Hridayarnava Rasa</i>	<i>Shuddha Tamra</i>	<i>Pranavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Hridroga</i>
<i>Grahanikapata Rasa</i>	<i>Shuddha Ahiphena, Parada, Gandhaka, Kaparda Bhasma</i>	<i>Udakavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Atisara</i>
<i>Navayasa Loha</i>	<i>Shuddha Loha Bhasma</i>	<i>Rasavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Pandu</i>
<i>Chandraprabha Vati</i>	<i>Shuddha Makshika, Loha, Shilajatu</i>	<i>Raktavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Kamala</i>
<i>Panchamrita Parpati</i>	<i>Parada, Gandhaka, Abhraka, Tamra, Loha</i>	<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Grahani</i>
<i>Sameerapannaga Rasa</i>	<i>Shuddha Parada Shuddha Gandhaka Shuddha Gauripashana Shuddha Haratala</i>	<i>Manasaroga</i>	<i>Unmada Sannipataja Vyadhi</i>
<i>Kamadugha Rasa</i>	<i>Shuddha Swarnagairika, Shuddha Abhraka</i>	<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Amlapitta</i>
<i>Chandrakala Rasa</i>	<i>Shuddha Parada, Shuddha Tamra, Shuddha Abhraka, Shuddha Gandhaka</i>	<i>Mutravaha Srotas Medovaha Srotas Raktavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Mutrakrichra Prameha Raktapitta</i>
<i>Saptamrita Loha</i>	<i>Shuddha Loha Bhasma</i>	<i>Rasavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Pandu Shotha</i>

d) Naga-Vanga Yukta Rasoushadhis

Though various *Rasadravyas* have been indicated as *Rasayana*, claims regarding the toxicity of certain *Dhatu*s are raised from time to-time. Though they are poisonous in the form metals, minerals and salt, they imbibe special properties after *Shodhana* and *Marana*, proving to be non-toxic and excellent *Rasayana*. Among such drugs, *Putilohas- Naga* (Lead) and *Vanga* (Tin) are the most discussed drugs. These are used in the form of *Marita Dhatu* or *Bhasma*.

Table 02: List of Properties of Naga and Vanga.

PROPERTIES ^[4]	NAGA	VANGA
Chemical Name	Lead	Tin
Types	<i>Kumara, Samala</i>	<i>Khuraka, Mishraka</i>
Shodhana	<i>Dhalana in Churnodaka/ Nirgudi Swarasa</i>	<i>Dhalana in Churnodaka/ Nirgudi Swarasa mixed with Haridra</i>
Marana	<i>With Shuddha Parada/ Shuddha Gandhaka/ Shuddha Haratala- Manahshila/ Shuddha Apamarga Churna</i>	<i>With Shuddha Haratala- Manahshila/ Shuddha Apamarga Churna</i>
Guna- Karma	<i>Snigdha, Ushna, Guru, Lekhana, Rasayana</i>	<i>Laghu, Medhya, Chakshushya, Lavanyakara, Rasayana, Vajeekara</i>
Rogagnata	<i>Prameha, Vatavyadhi, Grahani</i>	<i>Meha, Pandu, Shwasa, Mutrakrichra</i>
Matra	<i>Bhasma- ¼- 1 Ratti(Upto 125mg)</i>	<i>Bhasma- 1-2 Ratti(Upto 250mg)</i>

The properties of these drugs when looked upon have their utility in many of the grave diseases owing to their *Rasayana Guna* along with *Vyadhisamak Guna*.

Various preparations or medications prepared using these drugs are often used in conditions which are grave, chronic and deep rooted diseases.

Shodhana helps in removal of toxic elements of the drugs where as Marana brings about chemical changes enhancing the therapeutic properties.

Table 03: List of Rasoushadhis with Naga Bhasma and Vanga Bhasma.

Rasoushadhi ^[6]	Rasadravaya	Srotas Targetted	Disease targetted
<i>Trailokhyachintamani rasa III</i>	<i>Naga Bhasma</i>	<i>Rasavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Jwara</i>
<i>Hirnyagarbha Pottali V</i>	<i>Naga Bhasma</i>	<i>Pranavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Rajayakshma</i>
<i>Viswadhara Parpati</i>	<i>Naga Bhasma</i>	<i>Medovaha Srotas</i>	<i>Prameha</i>
<i>Suchikabharana Rasa XVI</i>	<i>Naga Bhasma</i>	<i>Roganusara</i>	<i>Sannipataja Vyadhi</i>
<i>Swarnavanga</i>	<i>Vanga Bhasma</i>	<i>Shukravaha Srotas Medovaha Srotas</i>	<i>Shukrala Prameha</i>
<i>Mukta Panchamrita Rasa</i>	<i>Vanga Bhasma</i>	<i>Rasavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Jeerna Jwara</i>
<i>Unmadabhanjana Rasa</i>	<i>Vanga Bhasma</i>	<i>Manovaha Srotas</i>	<i>Unmada, Apasmara</i>
<i>Tarkeshwara Rasa</i>	<i>Vanga Bhasma</i>	<i>Mutravaha Srotas</i>	<i>Mutrakrichra</i>
<i>Trivanga Bhasma</i>	<i>Shuddha Naga, Vanga, Yashada</i>	<i>Shukravaha Srotas Artavavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Shukradushti Artavadushti</i>
<i>Laxmivilasa Rasa</i>	<i>Vanga bhasma, Naga bhasma</i>	<i>Rasavaha Srotas Raktavaha Srotas Medovaha Srotas</i>	<i>Prameha, Kshaya, Pandu, Kamala, Kushta</i>
<i>Vasanta Kusumakara Rasa</i>	<i>Vanga bhasma, Naga bhasma</i>	<i>Pranavaha Srotas Medovaha Srotas Shukravaha Srotas</i>	<i>Kshaya, Shwasa Prameha Vajikara</i>
<i>Ekgaveera Rasa</i>	<i>Vanga bhasma, Naga bhasma</i>	<i>Roganusara</i>	<i>Vatavyadhi</i>
<i>Garbhapala Rasa II</i>	<i>Naga Bhasma</i>	<i>Roganusara</i>	<i>Garbhini Vyadhi</i>
<i>Grahanikapata Rasa</i>	<i>Naga Bhasma</i>	<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Grahani</i>
<i>Jalodarari Rasa</i>	<i>Naga Bhasma</i>	<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Jalodara</i>
<i>Vatavidhwasa Rasa</i>	<i>Naga Bhasma</i>	<i>Asthivaha Srotas</i>	<i>Vatavyadhi</i>

DISCUSSION

a) Role of Rasadravyas in Rasoushadhis

Rasoushadhis are given prime importance owing to its

- ✓ Lesser dose(*Alpamatropayogitwat*)
- ✓ Palatability(*Aruche, Aprasangatah*)
- ✓ Quicker action(*Kshipram Arogyadayitwat*).^[7]

Rasoushadhis can be administered even in case of Acute and Chronic diseases as well as *Asadhya Vyadhis*. They not only act as mere medicines to cure the diseases but

also to strengthen the Srotas and Shareera which had undergone debility due to disease. They also help in tackling post complications of any disease. *Rasadravayas* gain *Rasayana* and other properties after they undergo *Samskaras* (Processing) which makes it a more potent drug of choice for a treatment modality.

Rasayana Dravyas which are mentioned to possess *Rasayana Guna* as per classics are-

Parada, Abhraka Satwa, Vaikranta, Makshika, Vimala, Shilajatu, Sasyaka, Rasaka, Gandhaka, Sphatika, Haratala, Manahshila, Nilanjana, Hingula, Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Loha, Naga, Vanga, Manikya, Mukta, Pravala, Vaidurya, Vajra, Rajavarta, Vatsanabha^[3] (in either their *Bhasma* form or *Shuddha* form).

b) Action of Rasadravyas –Dhatu As Rasayana

Dhatu/ Metal toxicity as Ashuddha- Apakwa Bhamsa Lakshana have been described in the classics wherein the effects are due to improper *Shodhana* or *Marana*. The treatments of such conditions have also been mentioned in *Rasagranthas*.

Naga and *Vanga* are proven to be non toxic if proper *Shodhana* and *Marana* are carried out thus removing / reducing the toxic contents in the drug. These are said to be excellent *Rasayana* helping in mitigation of diseases and strengthening the *Srotas*.

In the present world, because of the lifestyle, occupation and demanding schedules a person acquire ageing process early along with many life-style disorders i.e. Diabetes (*Prameha*), IBS, Acid peptic disorders, Chronic Bronchitis etc. By using certain *Rasadravyas* like *Rasa, Abhraka, Vanga, Naga, Shilajatu etc.*, human being can safely and effectively post pone/ pass this stage of life i.e. ageing.(*Jara*)

Vanga and *Naga* are not used individually for *Rasayana* therapy. They are used along with *Parada, Gandhaka, Swarna, Rajata* etc metals for this purpose.

c) Role of Naga and Vanga As Rasayana

In Ayurvedic Pharmaceutics, A compound formulations contains various ingredients which have synergetic as well as antagonistic mode of action. The poisonous drugs in the formulation are always accompanied by the drugs which possess antidotal effect against such drugs to have an effective yet controlled drug action so as to avoid adverse drug reaction. This principle holds well in the utility of *Naga* and *Vanga* as well.

Naga and *Vanga* are often used in *Shuddha- Pakwa Bhasma* form along with *Shuddha Parada- Shuddha Gandhaka* amalgam known as *Kajjali*.

- *Kajjali* is known to possess *Sarvarogahara* property along with *Yogavahi Guna*. This helps in tackling the probable ADRs if caused and also helps in controlled action of *Dhatu*.
- *Kajjali* also helps in enabling the target specific action *Naga* and *Vanga* thereby bringing the desired drug action, thus proving it to be non-toxic and safe for use.
- The property of *Naga* and *Vanga* discussed above helps in *Srotoshodhana, Agnivardhana* thereby helping in absorption of active principles of the formulation and also strengthen the *Srotas*, does *Dhatuposhana* thus acting as *Rasayana*.

d) Mechanism of rasayana in Vyadhi-Jaranashana

Rasayana action of *Dhatu/ Rasadravyas* mainly aims at

- ✓ Immuno-modulatory action
- ✓ Free radical scavenging action
- ✓ As an Antioxidants
- ✓ To prevent cellular damage
- ✓ To prevent tissue damage
- ✓ Dissolves the toxins in the body
- ✓ As Nutrition supplement

The drugs scavenge the free radicals or electrons which are prime reason for ageing and other immunosuppressant and lifestyle disorders, thereby acting as *Naimittika Rasayana*. In this process they also protect the tissues and prevent the further damaging along with providing nutrition to the cells helping them to regenerate, thereby acting as *Sroto Rasayana*.

As a result, they prove to be excellent *Rasayana* and help in combating the diseases in the form of *Naimittika Rasayana* and help in maintenance of good health of *Srotas* by acting as *Sroto Rasayana* along with *Jaranasha*.

CONCLUSION

Rasadravyas and *Rasoushadhis* have its own importance in *Chikitsa* of a *Vyadhi*

Rasadravyas have been proven to be beneficial in various forms either as

- Formulation/ *Rasoushadhis/ Chaturvidha Rasayana*
- *Pisti* form as in Calcium compounds where purified drugs are mixed with *Gulab Jala* and made into paste
- *Bhasma* form / Ash form as in case of *Dhatu*(Metals and Minerals)
- In the *Shodhita* form/ Purified drug

If administered with appropriate *Anupana* (Adjuvant) in advised *Matra* (Dosage) and *Sevanakala* (Time of administration) proves to be a great tool for eradication of diseases as well boost the immune system of an individual.

Any drug by proper processing turns into *Amrita* which possess *Rasayana Guna*; and by improper processing turns into *Visha*^[8] Thus it is the need of hour for Ayurvedic practitioners to look upon these aspects and judiciously use the medications in the health practice.

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