



Review Article

A SURGEON'S INSIGHT ON KALA PAREEKSHA WITH THE AID OF GURVADI GUNAS

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ABSTRACT

The physicians around the world would have come across the patients complaining of a particular symptom arising in a particular time of the day or night, or similar complaints recurring around the same months for the past few years, in their clinical practice. The classical texts of Ayurveda have described *Kala* as a factor influencing pathogenesis, diagnosis and treatment of a disease. The term "*Kala*" indicates *Rogi avastha* as well as the time. Though the texts have given the details of various seasons along with the changes that the *Doshas* undergo in each of them and the regimens to follow respectively, the description of *Dosha avasthas* with respect to day and night is very limited. *Acharya Sushruta*, the father of surgery has given a key insight on this principle. Ayurvedic diagnosis and treatments cannot be standardized in a very broad scale but rather its approach should be target-specific, for which we need deeper analysis for the principles. For achieving this, a *Guna* based analysis of every aspect of the protocol is to be followed while diagnosing and treating the patient (*Guna Pratyaneeka pareeksha* and *Chikitsa*), a process which unearths the hidden secrets of Ayurveda. This article deals the concept of *Kala pareeksha* in terms of day, night and a season from the basis of *Gunas* rather than the basis of *Doshas* with respect to the references from mainly *Sushruta Samhita* and *Ashtanga Hrudaya* in a way showing the actual beauty of the ever-puzzling science we are striving to practice.

INTRODUCTION

Gunas are present everywhere in the universe^[1]. Anything which we see using the senses and those beyond their capacities are nothing but products arising from the various permutation and combination of these *Gunas*. In Ayurveda, *Guna pratyanka pareeksha* is of paramount importance and the need of the hour. It not only helps in arriving at a precise diagnosis but also helps in easy planning and adaptation of treatment principles mentioned in the Ayurvedic classics as it makes up a more basic unit of the body^[2]. The *Gurvadi gunas*^[3], which constitute 20 among the total 41 *Gunas* mentioned, are taken into consideration. All the primary functions of an *Oushadha dravya* are dependent on these *Gunas*^[4].

For example, the *Doshas* (which are the *Dravyam*) are nothing but a set of *Gunas*. The set of *Gunas* - *Ruksha, Laghu, Sheeta, Khara, Sukshma, Chala* constitute the *Vata Dosh*^[5]. Wherever the set of the above *Gunas* coexist, the *Dravya* is known as *Vata*. Hemadri in his commentary *Ayurveda Rasayana*, has given the predicted functions of each of the *Gurvadi gunas*^[6], building a key bridge to fill the gap between the *Doshas* and *Gunas* assessment and treatment of a disease.

In a nutshell, a set of *Gunas* are used to treat a disease which are a set of opposite *Gunas* (*Aturasya vikara prashamanam*) or to use the same set of *Gunas* to maintain health (*Svastasya swastya samrakshanam*).

Kala pareeksha constitutes the *rogi avastha* as well as the time^[7]. The *Rogi avastha* is known by a detailed *Rogi pareeksha*. Time constitutes a second to a day, night, season and *Yuga* - set of 5 years^[8]. The principle of seasonal variations and their influences on the *Doshas* are widely practiced and applied. The concept of seasonal variations has been beautifully adapted in different parts of the day and night by *Acharya Sushruta* which is discussed in the article.

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Six Seasons

Acharya *Sushruta* has clearly mentioned that in the context of *Dosha chaya*, *Prakopa* and *Prashama* the seasons are divided as *Varsha*, *Sharath*, *Hemanta*, *Vasanta*, *Greeshma* and *Pravrut*.^[9] The following key points are noted from the text with regards to the seasons, and based on this a *Guna* analysis has been done.

Varsha rtu: In *Varsha rtu*, the *Dravyas* like *Godhuma*, pulses and rice^[10] available are *Taruna* (young and fresh) and have *Alpa veeryam* (low potency) and are not clean as it keeps mixing with slush from the rains. Due to the overcast weather, *Vayu* increases, as a result of which the *Agni* decreases which further leads to an increase in *Kleda* in the body. Because of this such a person when he consumes the *Dravyas* already mentioned in this particular season it will cause *Vidaha* in the body due to which *Pitta Chaya* occurs.^[11]

Guna analysis: The *Dravyas* being *Taruna* and fresh are *Abhishyandhi*^[12] in nature and constitutes *Guru* and *Picchila*^[13] *Gunas* hence the *Alpaveeryatva* is present. These are covered with mud and other impurities, which points to the need of proper cleaning before using it, and as they are always getting mixed with slush the *Guna drava*^[14] can also be applied. Overcast weather always causes *Sheeta guna* to increase in the body which in this season allied with the other *Gunas* cause *Mandagni*. Thus the *Gunas* viz. *Sheeta*, *Guru*, *Drava*, and *Pichilla* causes the formation of *Kleda* which results in *Vidahitvam* by *Amla vipakam* i.e., causes *Daha*^[15] in the body after interaction with the *Mandagni*. This interaction of *Gunas* causes *Pitta Sanchayam*^[16]. So the *Gunas* of *Guru*, *Picchila*, and *Sheeta* can be attributed to *Kapha dosham*^[17], whereas the *Drava* and the nature of *Vidaha* can be attributed to *Pitta*^[18]. Thus in this season there will be *Kaphapitta-pradhana avastha*

Sharat rtu: In *Sharat rtu*, the clouds are dispersed to let in the hot rays of the sun touch the wet *Bhumi* which in turn dries up the ground of the slush, and the *Pittaja vyadhis* are caused in the person where the *Sanchaya* of *Pittam* has already occurred in the previous *Rtu*.^[19]

Guna analysis: The *Gunas* of the previous *Rtu* will be present here as well. However in this *Rtu* there will be an addition of *Ushna*, *Teekshna gunas* due to the sun rays, *Vishada*, *Ruksha*^[20] *Gunas* due to cleaning and drying up the ground of slush respectively, and the *Sara* and *Laghu gunas* which arise when the *Gunas* of *Teekshna* and *Ushna* reduce the impact of *Manda* and *Sheeta gunas* respectively. Since this season comes under the *Dakshinayanam*, the *Ushna* and *Teeksna gunas* arising from the sun in does not entirely neutralize the opposite *Gunas* mentioned earlier as they are not strong enough, but rather reduce them to some extent. Hence the *Gurutvam* and *Pichilatvam* of

Varsha rtu is reduced but not entirely eradicated. The unique combination of the *Ushna*, *Teekshna* and *Ruksha gunas* apart from causing a mild *Vata Vridhi*, particularly helps in the boosting of the *Pachaka pitta*^[21] which in turn plays a part in boosting the *Jataragni*. In the end, there will be the *Gunas* of *Ushna*, *Teekshna*, *Laghu*, *Sara*, *Vishada*, *Ruksha*, mild *Pichilita* and *Guruta*. The combination of *Gunas ushna* and *Teekshna* contribute to *Pitta prakopa* and that with *Ushna* and *Ruksha* results in a mild *Vata vridhi*^[22]. The remnant *Guru* and *Picchila guna* are attributed to *Kapha dosha*. Thus there will be a *Pittapradhana kaphavata avastha* in this season.

Hemanta rtu: In *Hemanta rtu*, the *Dravyas* become mature and fully potent (high in nutrition) due to the climatic changes over the past two seasons. The water is *Snigdha* and *Guru*. The body of the individual will be gripped with *Sheetam* causing a sort of stiffness (*Sthambitagatram*) due to the mild sunrays, and the presence of mist and cold wind of the season. Such a person when consumes the *Dravyas* and water as mentioned above causes *Kapha sanchayam* due to *Snigdha*, *Guru* and *Picchila gunas*^[23].

Guna analysis: Warmth always supports growth, and thus the *Dravyas* after exposure to the warmth of *Sharath rtu* become highly nutritious and mature. In this season the *Ushna and Teekshna* nature of the sun rays which were present in the previous season will reduce, hence the *Gunas* which were already present viz., *Sheeta*, *Picchila* and *Guru gunas* will once again start to dominate. But unlike the *Varsha rtu*, there are no sediments or slush present, resulting in a strong *Agni*, which in turn means that there will not be a formation of *Kleda*. The cold wind will cause an increase in the *Ruksha guna* in the body as it is more prevalent from the effects of the previous season. In the absence of proper diet, the strong *Agni* kindled by the aggravating *Rukshatva* will cause *Dhatu kshaya* and can lead to *Vata vridhi*^[24]. However, if he consumes the *Dravyas* mentioned above then, the *Sheeta guna* along with the *Guru*, *Snigdha* and *Picchila gunas* of the food will cause *Kapha sanchayam*^[25]. Being the last season of *Visarga kalam*, the *soma Padarthas* will be having the highest strength^[26], thus the influence of the mild *Teekshna* and *Ushna gunas* will be minimal in nature. In addition, the *Sanchita kapha* is stable and supports the body by not allowing the *Ushna* in the body to escape in response to the cold wind and hence the *Guna sthira* is applicable^[27]. The *Gunas* in this season include *Sheeta*, *Snigdha*, *Guru*, *Picchila*, *Sthira*, *Ruksha*, *Mandateekshna* and *Mandoshma*. Even though the *Gunas* - *Snigdha* and *Ruksha* have been mentioned together, this season forms the bridge between the shift from *Visarga to Adana kalam*^[28] where slowly the *Ruksha guna* will start to dominate its counterpart. From the start to the end of this *Rtu* the *Ruksha and Ushna guna* starts slowly increasing and driving the

changes happening in the body, thereby making the *Kapha* from being *Sthira*, *Snigdha*, *Guru*, *Pichila*, to a slightly unstable state where it gains *Chala* and *Drava Gunas* (*Vilayana* starts), which makes it a cause of concern in the next *Rtu*. Thus the *Gunas* starting from *Sheeta* to *Sthira* are for *Kapha*, *Sheeta* and *Ruksha* are for *Vayu*. *Pitta gunas* are not strong and hence it does not influence the *Dosha* much in the season and in fact it undergoes *Prashama*. Thus the season will have a *Kaphavata pradhana avastha*.

Vasanta rtu: In *Vasanta rtu*, when the accumulated *Kapha* is exposed to the hot and stronger rays of the sun, *Kapha prakopa* occurs in persons who have slightly stiff bodies^[29].

Guna analysis: Even with a very short description, it is very clear that the *Ushna* and *Teekshna gunas* of the sunrays are dislodging the *Guru*, *Snigdha*, *Sthira* and *Picchila gunas* of the accumulated *kapha*. As the *Vasanta rtu* is under *Adana kalam*, the *Ushnatva* and *Teekshnatva* are comparatively more than the ones crossed earlier in *Sharat rtu*. The dislodged *Kapha* gets a *Chala* and *Drava svabhava*^[30] in it because of which the *Vilayana* is occurring. When the *Guru* etc. *Gunas* of *Kapha* are being rattled, the slightly suppressed *Ruksha guna* in *Hemanta* now gets its shackles broken completely and along with the *Ushna* and *Teekshna gunas* cause complete dissolution of the *Gunas* of *Kapha* mentioned earlier. The *Vilayita kapha* (*Chaladrava guna yuta kapha*) needs to be eliminated as, if it is not then it can cause *Mandagni*^[31] which will further lead to complications as seen before under *Varsha rtu*. However, the situation will be more grave as unlike in *Varsha rtu*, here, equally *Vayu* and *Pitta* are aggravated too. The *Vilayita kapha* easily comes out with the help of the *Chala guna*, if the right treatment is given in the form of *Ushna*, *Teekshna gunas* thereby helping the body to eliminate it. Without question the *Prakruta gunas* of *Kapha* are changing in this season. Even though the *Gunas* of *Kapham* are transforming, it is this transforming process that is of highlight in this season marking its *Prakupita avastha*^[32]. *Ushna* and *Teekshna* and *Drava* are attributes of *Pittam* while the *Ruksha* and *Chala* are for *Vayu*. The *Vata gunas* are *Yogavahi*^[33] meaning it associates with the dominant set of another *Gunas* and accelerate the activity of the latter. In simple terms it acts like a catalyst. Now in this season the *Ruksha* and *Chala guna* of *Vayu* specifically accelerates the *Ushna teekshna gunas* of the season which results in the complete vitiation of the *Prakruta Kapha gunas* causing *Kapha prakopa* in the season^[32]. Hence this *Rtu* is a *Kaphatama pittatara vata avastha*.

Greeshma rtu: In *Greeshma rtu*, the mentioned *Dravyas* will become very *Ruksha* and *Laghu* and without nutrients. The body will be extremely dried, light and weak. Such a person when he consumes the *Dravyas* in this season causes *Vata dosha sanchayam*.^[34]

Guna analysis: Once the *Kapha gunas* are neutralized or eliminated, it is very clear that only *Ruksha*, *Laghu gunas* are dominating in the body of the individual. Moreover, in this season the *Ushna* and *Teekshnatva* of the sun rays are the most powerful when compared to the other times of the year. This forms a vicious cycle where the *Ushna* and *Teekshna gunas* keep aggravating the *Ruksha* and the *Laghu gunas* in the body thereby crippling it with weakness. The *Vata* being a *Yogavahi* will increase the effects of the *Ushna* and *Teekshna gunas* as well in the body. Thus the *Gunas* of *Ruksha*, *Laghu*, *Ushna*, *Teekshna* together causes *Vata sanchayam*^[35]. In addition, the *Ushna* and *Teekshna Guna* causes an increase in the same *Gunas* present in the body due to lack of opposite *Gunas* which were present in the previous seasons. Thus the Season will have a *Vatapittapradhana avastha*.

Pravrut rtu: In *Pravrut rtu*, the body is exposed to the cold wind and dampness due to rain. The body becomes slightly *Klinna* (*Snigdha*)^[36]. When such a person is exposed to the cold wind and damp weather it causes *Vata prakopa* and its diseases^[37].

Guna analysis: Now clearly the *Laghu* and *Ruksha gunas* have been suddenly influenced by the *Sheeta guna* of *Pravrut* season. This will definitely cause various diseases arising due to *Vata prakopa*^[38]. Even though, the *Guna* of *Snigdha* can be taken in the context, it is very minimal as it only comes from *Klinnatvam* derived from the rains. On the other hand, the cold wind will continue to cause *Rukshtavam* alone which is the responsible factor for *Vayu prakopa*. Hence the *Snigdha guna* does not neutralize the *Ruksha guna*. The *Ushna* and *Teekshna gunas* of *Greeshma* are balanced by the *Sheetatvam* of the *Rtu*. Hence in this *Rtu* the *Gunas* will be *Sheeta*, *Ruksha*, *Laghu*, *Ishathsnigdha* that are noticeable. The *Sheeta guna* and *snigdha* will cause some degree of *Kapha* accumulation^[39] which will continue into the *Varsha Rtu* and form a part for the formation of *Kleda*. Hence, a *Vatapradhana kapha avastha* will be seen in this season.

Doshavastha in a day and night-A mini Rtucharya

Having discussed the seasonal variations and effects on the *Doshas* based on the *Gunas*, it is now clear that there is more depth in the concept than what it actually seems to depict. The community of Ayurvedic physicians are quite familiar with the following table:

Table 1: Doshavastha in a Day and Night

	Adi (Beginning)	Madhya (Mid)	Anta (End)
<i>Dina</i> (Day)	<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Vata</i>
<i>Ratri</i> (Night)	<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Vata</i>

Acharya *Sushruta* however, explains the *Dosha avastha* in a different way where he incorporates the season itself in various time of the day and night viz.,^[40]

Table 2: Acharya Sushrutas Doshavastha in Ahoratri with reference to season

Part of the day or night	Season Attributed
<i>Purvahna</i> (5 <i>Muhurtas</i> after sunrise)	<i>Vasanta rtu</i>
<i>Madhyahna</i> (5 <i>Muhurtas</i> following <i>Purvahna</i>)	<i>Greeshma rtu</i>
<i>Aparahna</i> (5 <i>Muhurtas</i> till Sunset)	<i>Pravrut rtu</i>
<i>Pradosha</i> (5 <i>Muhurtas</i> after sunset)	<i>Varsha rtu</i>
<i>Ardharatram</i> (5 <i>Muhurtas</i> following <i>Pradosham</i>)	<i>Sharat rtu</i>
<i>Pratyushasi</i> (5 <i>Muhurtas</i> before sunrise)	<i>Hemanta rtu</i>

This gives an entirely new picture in the representation of the *Dosha avastha* in different times of the day. The time frame given in the above table is just for a reference on an average. Their period can vary based on the seasons. For example, the night is longer in the *Hemanta rtu*^[41]. Hence the number of *Muhurta* may accordingly vary. Comparing the above two tables some intriguing doubts may arise. A classic Example being that *Pitta* increases in midnight as well as mid day. The midnight being compared with the *Sharath rtu* is pin point in its answer. But the midday being compared with *Greeshma kala*, a season being said as one where *Vata sanchaya* occurs does not directly justify the fact that the time frame of the middle of the day is a *Pittakala*. Similarly, the end of the night, a typical *Vata kala* being compared with *Hemanta rtu* a *Kapha sanchaya kala* does not properly justify the principle as well. The answer though can be sought after analyzing the *Gunas* and hence know about the associated *Doshas* involved in each of the Season which has been discussed in this entire article, a process by which the importance and significance of this form of *Pareeksha* has been thoroughly and strongly established. Thus the practical adaptation of the table should be as follows:

Table 3: Practical adaptation of dosha avastha in a day and night after Guna based analysis

	Adi (Beginning)	Madhya (Mid)	Anta (End)
<i>Dina</i> (Day)	<i>Kapha-+++</i> <i>Pitta-++</i> <i>Vata-+</i>	<i>Pitta-++</i> <i>Vata-+++</i>	<i>Vata-+++</i> <i>Kapha+</i>
<i>Ratri</i> (Night)	<i>Kapha -+++</i> <i>Pitta-++</i>	<i>Pitta +++</i> <i>Kapha-++</i> <i>Vata +</i>	<i>Kapha-+++</i> <i>Vata-++</i>

Key +++ - *Doshatama*, ++ - *Doshatara*,

DISCUSSION

The slightly controversial point in the table is that of the end of the night which is supposed to be actually a *Vata pradhana kalam*, but the table points otherwise. The fact can be understood as the symptoms of *Kaphavruta janya vata vyadhi* can be seen in this time. A classic example is that of pain in an acute MI due to vascular obstruction by atherosclerotic changes where the pain is most commonly seen in the early morning.^[42]

The complexity of the journey of a doctor with a patient, right from history taking till the completion of the treatment is always baffling and is always a challenge. In *Ayurveda*, we have many parameters to look into right from the *Roga* and *Rogi pareeksha*, to

planning the treatment, which is way more challenging than we can imagine. The *Guna Pratyaneeka Pareeksha* is needed as it not only helps in arriving at the right diagnosis, but also in choosing the apt medicine and in the best treatment method that needs to be adopted. *Kala pareeksha* is an important part of this journey.

Diagnostically, a symptom arising in the evening at around 7PM in a patient and the same complaint seen in another patient at around 7AM, will have different *Dosha* involvement which will be missed out by the clinician if he just uses the *Dosha* theory, but definitely will not falter if he uses the *Guna* theory in the analysis. There is a separate purpose in describing a *Vata vyadhi* as it is or as a *Ruksha pradhana vata*

vyadhi or even *Sheeta ruksha janita vata vyadhi* which eases the selection of treatment protocol.

A few diseases have a few specific characteristics like the example of Acute MI quoted before. Rheumatoid Arthritis patients will have early morning stiffness and more pain which is again pointing out at a *Kaphavata* like *Doshavastha* in the disease. Another example is of *Suryavartham* and *Viparita suryavartham*^[43] where the pain will be the most in the midday and midnight respectively. Though the *Samprapti* is not mentioned clearly of the latter, the treatment definitely will not be the same as even though the pattern of the disease is similar, the *Gunas* and hence the *Doshas* involved are entirely different. As the pain is more in midday and midnight we cannot give the same medicines even though the time of aggravation of the pain being a *Pitta pradhana kala*. The *Gunas* associated with *Pitta dosha Gunas (Ushna and Teekshna)* are *Guru*, etc. in midnight whereas it is *Laghu* etc. in midday, thereby entirely changing the treatment method. *Guna Pratyaneeka pareeksha* and *Chikitsa* are being practiced by some of the top *Ayurveda* physicians in India. The most basic explanation for this is that the success rate of this method will be exponentially better than the *Dosha pratyaneeka* diagnosis and treatment as highlighted by the above examples.

CONCLUSION

It is indeed proven that the *Guna pratyaneeka pareeksha* is far superior to the conventional *Dosha Pratyaneeka pareeksha* and hence it calls the need of adaptation of this method in practice in all the parameters under *Roga* and *Rogi pareeksha*, which will definitely be a huge boost in understanding, application, and globalization of the concepts of *Ayurveda*.

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