

Review of *Rasashastra Dravya* in Classical text of *Ayurveda* - *Kashyap Samhita*

Review Article

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Abstract

Ayurveda is science of life. *Ayurveda* not only focuses on curing of diseased individual but also gives importance to maintenance of health of healthy person.

Ayurveda is basically divided in *Ashtangas* (Eight Appendages). All these *Ashtangas* represents specific field of expertise in *Ayurveda* context. Out of these eight, *Kaumarbhritya* is field related to care of children. *Kashyap Samhita* is considered as the masterpiece of texts related to *Kaumarbhritya*. *Kashyap Samhita* was written by *Acharya Kashyap*, in the same time during which *Charak Samhita* was written.

Rasashastra is study of use of metallic and mineral compounds for preparation of mineral & herbomineral formulations. References of *Rasashastra* being a specialty are found in classical texts since 800 A.D. But, there are some references scattered in various *Samhitas* regarding use of *Rasashastra Dravyas*. *Kashyap Samhita* being one of the old *Samhitas* is also not an exception to this.

In this review article, an attempt was made regarding unveiling the references of *Rasashastra Dravya* in *Kashyap Samhita* and it was noted that a lot of references of *Rasashastra Dravya* are there in *Kashyap Samhita* in form of either internal administration or external application or for giving *Drushtant* (example).

Keywords: *Rasashastra, Kashyap Samhita, Rasadravya, Kaumarbhritya.*

Introduction

Ayurveda is not only science of health focused on curing of diseased individual; rather, it is a science of life. The primary aim of *Ayurveda* is maintenance of health of healthy person while curing diseased person is a secondary objective.(1)

To achieve these objectives, *Ayurveda* treaties have led a few principles on which *Ayurveda* system works. These principles are known as "*Sidhhanta*". While studying *Ayurveda*, it is essential to keep in mind these *Sidhhanta*.

Ashtanga Ayurveda is a term granted for collection of eight specialties of *Ayurveda*.(2) They may be termed as eight appendages of *Ayurveda* health system. One of the important appendage is

Kaumarbhritya. In *Kaumarbhritya* facts related to child care right from childbirth is studied. *Kaumarbhritya* is branch of *Ayurveda* where study of nutrition of child, *Dhaatri Ksheer Dosh Chikitsa*, *Baalgraha* and treatment of child is studied.(3) *Acharya Kashyap* or *Vrudhhajivaka* are known as pioneer in *Kaumarbhritya* with their manuscript named *Kashyap Samhita* or *Vrudhhajivaka Tantra*. *Kashyap Samhita* focuses their importance on child care, but also there are some references which make it complete from *Ashtanga Ayurved* point of view.

Kashyap Samhita is also known as *Vilupta Tantra* because larger part of this *Samhita* is missing. It was revised by *Nepal Rajguru Pandit Hemaraj Sharma*, with the help of old incomplete manuscript available in their library. In present scenario, only 77 *Adhyaaya* (Chapters) are available partially out of 200 *Adhyaaya* of *Kashyap Samhita*. This *Samhita* would have been as good and important as *Charak* and *Sushrut Samhita* but as larger part of this *Samhita* is missing today, led to the fact that lesser importance is being given to it. Presence of *Khilstan* is said to be the specialty of *Kashyap Samhita*.

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Table No. 1: Showing distribution of Adhyaayas of Kashyap Samhita

Sr. No.	Sthaan	No. of Adhyaaya in original Samhita	No. of Adhyaaya in present Samhita
1	Sutrasthan	30	1, 19 to 28 = 11
2	Nidanasthan	08	00
3	Vimanasthan	08	02
4	Sharirasthan	08	05
5	Indiyasthan	12	01
6	Chikitasasthan	30	18
7	Sidhhasthan	12	08
8	Kalpasthan	12	09
9	Khilasthan	80	23
	Total	200	77 (Some are incomplete)

Rasashastra is a science where study of metals, minerals, poisonous compounds useful in preparation of medicine is studied. Rasashastra preparations i.e. Rasaushadhi are known to be useful in minute quantity, quick acting and do not produce aversion reaction in patients due to their tastelessness.(4) The references of Dravya mentioned in Rasashastra, are found since Charak & Sushrut Samhita.(5)(6). But it was only after 8th century A.D. that practical use of Rasaushadhi started to flourish.

Acharya Nagarjuna are considered as the pioneer of Rasashastra. It is because of Rasashastra that study of alchemy was given so much importance those days. The main aim of Rasashastra is to achieve Moksha. The reason behind Moksha achieved with help of Rasaushadhi is considered to be the healthy life procured by person after consuming them.(7)

Kashyap Samhita being as old as Charak Samhita has number of places where use of Rasadravya either in form of internal administration or external application or for manufacturing a device or to give as a Drushtant (example) is made. Here, those references have been collected, categorized and tabulated in order to understand the use of Rasadravya in period of Kashyap Samhita.

Objectives

- To collect references of Rasadravya explained in Kashyap Samhita
- To categorize these references according to their types (Internal/ External use, Manufacturing of equipment etc.)
- To establish the state of use of Rasadravya in Samhita Kaal.

Material and Methods

This paper serves as a collection of references

pertaining to minerals, metals and poisonous drugs during period of Kashyap Samhita, along with some information on these minerals, metals and poisonous drugs explained in textbooks of Rasashastra.

These references are categorized as under.

- Utilization in Therapeutics
 - Internal Use
 - External Use
- Utilization in preparation of equipment/instrument.
- Utilization in showing similarity between things. (Drushtaant)

SHILAJATU:

Rasashastra classification Maharas varga
Latin Name Asphaltum punjabinum
English Name Black Bitumen or Mineral Pitch.

Shilajatu is one of the few mineral compounds whose internal use is described in Kashyap Samhita. In Rasaratnasamuchhaya, which is considered as most prime reference book in Rasashastra written by Rasvaghbat, there are references of use of Shilajatu for internal administration.(8)

Table No. 2: Table showing references of Shilajatu in Kashyap Samhita.

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in therapeutic – Internal administration		
1	Shilajatu (9)	Internal administration in Raktagulma
Utilization in therapeutic – External use		
2	Kumar Dhoop (10)	Dhoopan (Fumigation)

GAIRIK:

Rasashastra classification Uparas Varga.
Latin Name Red Ochre
English Name Ochre/ Haematite.

There are two types of Gairik.
 Pashan Gairik – Hard – Tamravarna
 Swarna Gairik – Soft- Raktavarna.

Of these two types Swarna Gairik is useful for medicinal purpose.(11)

Table No. 3: Table showing references of Gairik in Kashyap Samhita.

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics – External application		
1	Lohitika Gutika (12)	Anjan in Akshirog
2	Lepa (13)	Lepan in Visarpa

KASIS

Rasashastra Classification *Uparas Varga.*
English Name Green Vitriol.

In *Rasashastra* text, emphasis is given on external application of *Kasis*. When used internally it shows the property of *Rajah-Pravartan* (stimulates Menstruation) (14)

Table No. 4: Table showing references of *Kasis* in *Kashyap Samhita*.

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics- External Use		
1	<i>Sawarnakar Yoga</i> (15)	Restoration of Skin colour

HARTAAL

Rasashastra Classification *Uparas Varga*
English Name Orpiment

Hartaal is Arsenic trisulphide. *Hartaal Bhasma* is *Ushna Virya* with properties such as *Snigdha* and *Guru*.(16)

Table No. 5: Table showing references of *Hartaal* in *Kashyap Samhita*.

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics- External Use		
1	<i>Sidhha Taila</i> (17)	<i>Abhyang</i> in <i>Putanagraha chikitsa</i>
2	<i>Gudavarti</i> (18)	Suppository in <i>Udavart</i>

MANASHILA

Rasashastra Classification *Uparas Varga.*
English Name Realgar

Manashila is Arsenic disulphide. It is quoted as useful in *Raktvikar*. It also has property of *Bhutopdrav Nashini*.(19)

Table No. 6: Table showing references of *Manashila* in *Kashyap Samhita*.

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics- External Use		
1	<i>Sidhha Taila</i> (17)	<i>Abhyang</i> in <i>Putna Chikitsa</i>
2	<i>Gudavarti</i> (18)	Suppository in <i>Udavart</i>
3	<i>Savarnakar Yoga</i> (15)	<i>Lepa</i> in <i>Vran</i>
4	<i>Raskriya/Taila</i> (20)	Local application or <i>Abhyangn</i> in <i>Arunshika</i> (Eczema of scalp)
5	<i>Netravarti</i> (21)	<i>Anjan</i> in <i>Akshirog</i>

PUSHPAK / PUSHPANJAN

Rasashastra Classification *Uparas Varga.*
English Name White Zinc, Flower of Zinc.

Zinc oxide is considered as *Pushpanjan* and is used in pathological conditions relating to eye. (External application)

Properties of *Pushpanjan* has been given in *Kashyap Samhita*. It is said to be *Tikshna*, *Ushna*, *Malhar*, *Rakt-Pitta-Kapha Paham*, *Drushtiprasadan*. (22)

Table No. 7: Table showing references of *Pushpanjan/Pushpak* in *Kashyap Samhita*

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics- External Use		
1	<i>Raskriya</i> (22)	<i>Akshirog</i>
2	<i>Anjan</i> (22)	<i>Akshirog</i>
3	<i>Anjan</i> (22)	<i>Akshirog</i>

SWARNA

Rasashastra Classification *Loha Varga*
(Saar Loha)

Latin Name *Aurum*
English Name Gold

Swarna has been known to mankind since *Vaidik* Times. It is noble metal used for ornament making since long time.

Internal use of *Swarna Bhasma* is *Medhya*, *Bruhan*, *Vrushya*.(23)

In *Kashyap Samhita*, Gold is the second *Rasa-shastra* entity that is used in internal use. In *Sutrasthaan Lehadhyay*, *Kashyap* have described procedure of *Suvarnaprashana*. It is said to be *Medhya*, *Agni* and *Bal-varadhaka*. Administration for 1 month gives *Param-medhavi* child while use for 6 month makes child *Shrutdhar* (Child memorizes whatever he listens once) (24).

Table No. 8: Table showing reference of *Swarna* in *Kashyap Samhita*

	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics- Internal Use		
1	<i>Suvarnaprashan</i> (24)	<i>Lehan</i> in healthy Child
Utilization in Therapeutics- External Use		
2	<i>Akshipuran Yoga</i> (25)	<i>Akshirog</i>

Table No. 9: Table showing reference of Swarna in preparation of equipment/instrument/pots

Sr. No.	Description	Probable Translation
1	<i>Toyapurn Bhajan</i> (26)	Pot filled with water
2	<i>Bhajan</i> (27)	Pot
3	<i>Mani</i> (28)	Small pebble like structure
4	<i>Hiranyapani</i> (29)	Anything made of Gold to be held in hand

Table No. 10: Table showing references of using Swarna as an example (Drushtant)

Sr. No.	Description	Probable Translation
1	<i>Swarna churna sadrushya Ashmari</i> (30)	Stones resembling Gold powder
2	<i>Hiranya kurvanti Ye Anruta</i> (31)	Faulty practices regarding Swarna
3	<i>Swarna Maladhari Jaatharini</i> (32)	Jaatharini wearing Gold necklace

RAJAT

Rasashastra Classification Loha Varga (Saar Loha)

English Name Silver

Latin Name Argentinum

Rajat is another noble metal used for making ornaments and pots since long time.

Rajat Bhasma is Sheet Virya and is Snigdha, Guru, and Sar.(33)

Rajat Bhasma is specifically indicated for Koshthagat vaat. It is also useful for students and those persons who are engaged in mental activities.(34)

In Kashyap Samhita, various references show that pots of Silver were extensively used for various purposes.

Table No. 11: Table showing references of Rajat in preparation of equipments/instruments/pots

Sr. No.	Description	Probable Translation
1	<i>Kshiren Rajate Patre....</i> (35)	Pot for drinking milk
2	<i>Rajat Bhaajan</i> (27)	Pot for making Basti
3	<i>Rajat Mani</i> (28)	Small pebble like structure
4	<i>Rajat Bhaajan</i> (26)	Pot

TAMRA

Rasashastra Classification Loha Varga (Sadharan Loha)

English Name Copper

Latin Name Cuprum

Copper is being used in making Coins, Pots, Ornaments and other equipment since long time. Even today Copper wires are widely used for making electrical cables.

Because of its *Lekhan Guna*, use of Tamra in eye diseases is also accepted by Rasashastra texts.(36)

In Kashyap Samhita also, Tamra is used in treatment of *Kukkunak*, an ophthalmic condition affecting primarily children of breast feeding age.

Table No. 12: Table showing references of Tamra in Kashyap Samhita.

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics- External Use		
1	<i>Anjan</i> (22)	<i>Akshirog</i>
2	<i>Anjanvartika</i> (12)	<i>Kukkunak</i>

Table No. 13: Table showing references of using Tamra Patra as equipment of formulation.

Sr. No.	Description	Probable Translation
1	<i>Tamra-Patt</i> (37)	Copper Plate
2	<i>Tamra-Patra</i> (37)	Copper pot
3	<i>Tamra-Patra</i> (37)	Copper pot
4	<i>Tamra-Patt</i> (37)	Copper plate

LOHA

Rasashastra Classification Loha Varga (Sadharan Loha)

English Name Iron

Latin Name Ferrum

Loha Bhasma Guna- Rasayan, Vajikaran, Balya, Vrishya, Medhya, Chakshushya(38)

Loha is third Rasa Dravya which is quoted for internal use by Kashyap Samhita.

Table No. 14: Table showing references of Loha in Kashyap Samhita.

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics- Internal Use		
1	<i>Churna</i> (39)	Taken orally for treatment of <i>Shotha</i>
2	<i>Churna</i> (39)	Taken orally for treatment of <i>Shotha</i>
3	<i>Katukbindu Leha</i> (40)	<i>Lehan</i> in <i>Shotha</i>
Utilization in Therapeutics- External Use		
4	<i>Savarnakar Yoga</i> (15)	<i>Lepa</i> in <i>Vran</i>
5	<i>Anjanvartika</i> (40)	<i>Anjan</i> in <i>Kukkunak</i>

KANSYA

Rasashastra Classification Loha Varga
(Mishr Loha)
English Name Bronze

Kansya is prepared by melting together 8 parts of Copper and 2 parts of Tin. Knowledge of Bronze is from centuries, since we can see bells hung at the entrance of *Hindu* temples are made up of Bronze.

Though internal use of *Kansya* is seen in *Rasashastra* texts only, it's use for external application as well as for pot making is seen in *Kashyap Samhita* also.

Table No. 15: Table showing references of *Kansya* in *Kashyap Samhita*

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
1	Anjan(22)	Netraroga

Table No. 16: Table showing references of *Kansya* for making equipment/instrument/pots.

Sr. No.	Description	Probable Translation
1	Kshiren Kansye Patre....(35)	Pot for drinking milk
2	Kansya Patra (22)	Pot for preparation of Anjan
3	Basti Patra(27)	Pot for preparation of Basti
4	Mani(28)	Small pebble like structure
5	Bhajan(26)	Pot

NAGA

Rasashastra Classification Loha Varga (Puti Loha)
English Name Lead
Latin Name Plumbum

Guna of Naga Bhasma – Prameha Nashak, Vrana, Arsha, Gulma, Grahaneer, Atisar Nashak.(42)

Table No. 17: Table showing reference of *Naga* in preparation of instrument/equipment.

Sr. No.	Description	Probable translation
1	Mani(28)	Small pebble like structure.

MUKTA

Rasashastra Classification Ratna Varga
English name Pearl.

Mukta is Pearl obtained from oyster shells. It is beautiful gem which is reason why it is included in *Ratna Varga*.

Kashyap Samhita have quoted use of *Mukta* at two places.

Table No. 18: Table showing references of *Mukta* in *Kashyap Samhita*

Sr. no.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics- External Use		
1	Lepa(41)	Local application in <i>Visarp</i>

Table No. 19: Table showing references of *Mukta* for use other than medicinal purpose

Sr. No.	Description	Use
1	Mukta(28)	<i>Mukta</i> is taken in <i>Shashthi Pooja</i> ceremony

PRAVAL

Rasashastra Classification Ratna Varga.
English Name Coral

Corals are dead and calcified bodies of marine animal *Anthazoan polyyps*. Chemically it is Calcium Carbonate. *Praval* which is pink or red in colour are considered as *Ratna* by *Rasashastra* textbooks.

Kashyap Samhita has quoted *Praval* in following reference.

Table no. 20: Table showing references of *Praval* in *Kashyap Samhit*

Sr. No.	Description	Use
1	Praval(28)	<i>Praval</i> is taken in <i>Shashthi Pooja</i> ceremony

VAJRA

Rasashastra Classification Ratna Varga
English Name Diamond

On Moh's hardness scale, the hardness of *Vajra* is found to be 10. It is allotropic form of Carbon in which atoms are tightly bound giving rise to hard and transparent structure.

Vajra Bhasma Guna – Hridya, Yogavahi, Rasayan, Medhya, Vajikar, Netrya, Varnya.(44)

Table No. 21: Table showing references of using *Vajra* as an example (*Drushtant*) in *Kashyap Samhita*

Sr. No.	Description	Probable Translation
1	Vajra Tunda-Nakha-Dashan -Danshtra(32)	Diamond like hard nails, teeth and stings of <i>Jaatharini</i>

SHANKHA

Rasa-shastra Classification Sudha Varga.
English Name Conch Shell

It is an outer shell of *Molluscum* class animal living in oceans. Chemically it is Calcium Carbonate. According to *Hindu* mythology, during *Samudra Manthan*, *Shankh* appeared from *Kshirsagar*.

Netrapushpahar property of *Shankha Bhasma* is noted.(45)

Table No. 22: Table showing references of Shankh in Kashyap Samhita

Sr. No.	Formulation	Use
Utilization in Therapeutics – Internal Use		
1	<i>Apup</i> (37)	For oral intake in <i>Akshiroga</i>
Utilization in Therapeutics – External Use		
2	<i>Anjanvartika</i> (41)	<i>Anjan</i> in <i>Akshirog</i>
3	<i>Gudika</i> (12)	<i>Timir, Koth</i>
4	<i>Aashyotan</i> (12)	<i>Akshirog</i>
5	<i>Sidhha Taila</i> (37)	<i>Akshirog</i>
6	<i>Lepa</i> (43)	<i>Visarpa</i>

VISHA DRAVYA

In *Rasa-shastra*, use of *Visha Dravya* or poisonous compounds is done for various purposes like *Raskarma*, *Rasbandhan* etc.(46) According to classical text of *Rasa-shastra* *Visha-Dravya* are chiefly divided under two headings.

Visha – Vatsanabh etc. (Total 9 in number)

Upvisha – Vishtinduk etc. (Total 11 in number)(47)

Table no. 23: Table showing references of Visha Dravya in Kashyap Samhita

Sr. No.	Name of Drug	Formulation	Use
1	<i>Sudha (Snuhi)</i> (48)	<i>Mahabhayarishta</i>	<i>Kaphaj ailments</i>
2	<i>Danti</i> (48)	<i>Mahabhayarishta</i>	<i>Kaphaj ailments</i>
3	<i>Langli</i> (49)	Powder for inhalation	Prolonged labour
4	<i>Bhallatak</i> (50)	<i>Dashang Dhoop</i>	<i>Dhoopan (Fumigation)</i>

Discussion

Kashyap Samhita is one of the oldest *Samhita* dating back to year 600 B.C. Due to fact that a large part of this *Samhita* is missing; knowledge of some topics has been remained hidden. Still this *Samhita* guides us very well towards different subjects such as Child Care on which *Kashyap* have primarily focused. With this primary subject, *Kashyap* have also covered other entities of *Ayurveda* as well.

It becomes clear from screening of *Kashyap Samhita* that metals like Gold, Iron and mineral compounds like *Shilajatu* and *Shankha* were used in internal as well as external administration. Meanwhile other metals and minerals like Silver, Copper, Orpiment, Realgar etc. were in use for external application in various forms like *Anjan* or *Sidhha Taila* etc.

In addition to this, there are some references

which show that different metals like Silver, Copper, Iron, Bronze etc. were in use for making different pots essential either for medicinal preparation or medicine storage.

To explain things by giving example of other similar thing is called as *Drushtant*. In *Kashyap Samhita*, there are references where we can deduce presence of *Drushtant*. In these *Drushtant*, various *Rasadravya* are used as an example.

Conclusion

Reviewing *Kashyap Samhita* reveals that use of metals, minerals etc. is found since long time. It is generally thought that *Ayurveda* classics of “*Samhita Time*” such as *Charak* and *Sushrut* have their share in development of *Rasashastra* during its initial stage.

From having looked at references mentioned in above article, it is clear that *Kashyap Samhita* have also dealt significantly in development of *Rasashastra*.

Unfortunately due to unavailability of larger part of this *Samhita*, it has become difficult to establish proper meaning of some part of text like *Baalgraha*, *Jaatharini* etc.

Therefore it has become necessity to study *Kashyap Samhita* from various point of view of *Ayurveda*. This research paper was an attempt to study from *Rasashastra* perspective. Scholars would be delighted to know how immense research one can carry out in this *Samhita* and bring new knowledge in front of the world.

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