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Review Article

RASA TO *VISHA*: AN EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE ON THE TAXONOMY OF *RASA DRAVYAS*

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ABSTRACT

Rasa Śastra is an important branch of Ayurveda concerned with the identification, processing, pharmaceutical transformation, and therapeutic use of metals, minerals, and other *Rasa Dravyas. Rasa Dravya Vargikarana* provides a systematic framework for understanding these substances based on their properties, pharmaceutical applications, therapeutic importance, and role in *Parada Karma*. The present review examines the development of *Rasa Dravya* classification through a comparative study of major classical *Rasa granthas*. Descriptions of *Maharasa, Uparasa, Sadharaṇa Rasa, Dhatu, Upadhatu, Ratna, Uparatna, Sudha, Sikata, Lavana, Kshara, Visha*, and *Upavisha Vargas* were reviewed, with emphasis on differences in nomenclature, composition, and grouping. The review shows that classification systems gradually evolved alongside the development of *Rasashastra* and its pharmaceutical practices. Earlier texts mainly emphasized substances associated with *Parada Karma*, whereas later works introduced additional groups based on material properties and pharmaceutical requirements. Differences in the classification of certain substances may reflect variations in the understanding and practices of individual authors. *Sandigdha, Kritrima*, and *Anupalabdha Dravyas* require further investigation. Correlating classical classifications with chemical and mineralogical information may support accurate identification, standardization, quality control, and appropriate utilization of *Rasa Dravyas* in contemporary Ayurvedic pharmaceutics.

INTRODUCTION

Taxonomy is the branch of science concerned with the nomenclature, description, identification, and classification of various entities. In Ayurveda, *Rasa Śastra* represents a specialized discipline that combines the knowledge of ancient Indian alchemy and metallurgy to explore the therapeutic potential of metals, minerals, and other inorganic substances. Although *Parada* (mercury) occupies a central position in *Rasa Śastra* because of its unique transformative properties, the discipline encompasses a much broader range of medicinal substances and pharmaceutical practices. The objectives of *Rasa Śastra* extend beyond the preparation of medicines and include *Deha Siddhi*, which is associated with the promotion of health, strength, and longevity, and *Loha Siddhi*, referring to the alchemical transformation of metals. One of the significant contributions of this discipline is the systematic classification of *Rasa Dravyas* into groups such as M*aharasa, Uparasa, Sadharaṇa Rasa, Dhatu, Ratna,* and *Uparatna*. These classifications were developed based on factors such as the origin, properties, pharmaceutical utility, and therapeutic importance of the substances. Such a systematic approach helped scholars in the proper identification, selection, processing, and rational use of mineral and metallic drugs. It also provided a framework for understanding their individual properties, compatibility, and roles in various pharmaceutical and mercurial processes. In this way, *Rasa Śastra* significantly expanded the scope of Ayurvedic pharmaceutics beyond plant-based medicines. Therefore, the classification of *Rasa Dravyas* should not be viewed merely as a method of grouping substances. It reflects the systematic and practical approach

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adopted by ancient scholars to understand, process, and utilize complex medicinal materials.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted as a systematic review of classical Ayurvedic treatises and major *Rasa Śastra* compendia spanning approximately from the 7th to the 20th century CE. The primary literary sources included *Rasahrudaya Tantram, Rasarnava, Rasaratnakara, Rasaratna Samucchaya, Rasendra Sara Sangraha, Bhava Prakasha Nighantu, Ayurveda Prakasha, Rasamritam,* and *Rasa Tarangini*. Additional information was obtained from supplementary texts, including *Ananda Kanda, Rasendra Chudamani, Rasopanishad,* and *Yoga Ratnakara*, wherever relevant to the classification and identification of *Rasa Dravyas*. In addition to the classical literature, contemporary scientific literature was reviewed to identify modern interpretations, mineralogical correlations, chemical nomenclature, and available scientific evidence related to *Rasa Dravyas*. Relevant information was obtained from indexed scientific databases such as PubMed and Scopus, as well as peer-reviewed research articles available through other scholarly sources. The systematic compilation of *Rasa Dravyas* under the classifications described in different texts, including *Maharasa, Uparasa, Sadharaṇa Rasa, Dhatu, Upadhatu*, *Ratna, Uparatna, Sudha Varga, Sikata Varga, Lavana*, *Kshara*, and *Visha*. The individual substances mentioned in these categories were subsequently compared across the selected classical texts. Particular attention was given to variations in the classification, nomenclature, and composition of *Rasa Dravyas* across different texts. Variant readings and textual discrepancies were critically examined, especially in relation to *Sandigdha* (controversial or doubtful) and *Anupalabdha* (unavailable) *Dravyas*. The study also explored the changes in classification systems over time through a comparative analysis of the selected texts. The traditional associations of *Grahas* with selected *Dhatus* and *Ratnas* were also examined wherever mentioned in the classical literature. All extracted information was systematically organized into comparative tables to facilitate the evaluation of similarities, differences, and the evolution of classification systems. Relevant Sanskrit *Ślokas* were documented along with transliteration and contextual explanations. This methodological approach was adopted to ensure a systematic, authentic, and accessible documentation of the taxonomy of *Rasa Dravyas*.

Rasa Dravya Vargikarana

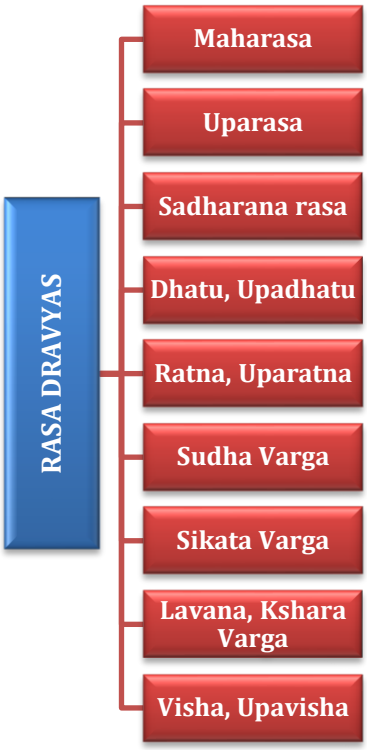


Table 1: *Rasa Dravya Vargas* According to Different Texts [1-7]

Reference	*Vargas* Mentioned
Rasahrudaya Tantram (7th C.E.) *Rasendra Mangalam* (8th C.E.)	*Rasa, Maharasa, Uparasa, Dhatu*
Rasarnava (12th C.E.)	*Rasa, Maharasa, Uparasa, Dhatu, Pancharatna*
Rasaratnakara (13th C.E.)	*Rasa, Maharasa, Uparasa, Dhatu, Upadhatu*
Ananda kanda (13th C.E.)	*Rasa, Uparasa, Dhatu, Ratna, Uparatna*
Rasaratna Samucchaya (14th C.E.)	*Rasa, Maharasa, Uparasa, Sadharana rasa, Dhatu, Ratna*
Rasendra Sara Sangraha (14th C.E.)	*Rasa, Uparasas, Dhatu, Ratna*
Bhava Prakasha Nighantu (16th C.E.)	*Rasa, Uparasa, Dhatu, Upadhatu, Ratna, Uparatna*
Ayurveda Prakasha (16th C.E.)	*Maharasa, Uparasa, Dhatu, Upadhatu, Ratna, Uparatna*
Rasamritam (16th C.E.)	*Rasa, Dhatu, Malla, Sudha, Sikata, Ratna*
Rasa Tarangini (20th C.E.)	*Shankhaadi, Taalakadi, Kshara, Dhatu, Upadhatu, Mishrakadhatu, Ratna, Visha, Upavisha*

Maha rasas

It is a group of minerals has been identified as highly effective in enhancing the properties of *Parada*. *Dravyas* classified under this category exhibit strong interactions with metals. They are utilized in the processing of *Parada* as well as for therapeutic applications. In the *Rasa Hrudaya Tantra*, substances possessing qualities equivalent to *Parada* and acting in a similar way are referred to as *Maha Rasas*.

अभ्रवैक्रान्तमाक्षीकविमलाद्रिजसस्यकम् ।
चपलो रसकश्चेति ज्ञात्वाऽष्टौ संग्रहेद्रसान् ।। (R.R.S 2/1) [8]

Table 2: Classification of *Maharasa*, English Name, Chemical Formula

Maharasa	**English Name**	**Chemical Formula**
Abhraka	Biotite Mica	Double silicate of aluminium & potassium or sodium
Vaikranta (Sandigdha Dravya)	Tourmaline/fluorspar	$K_2OAl_2O_3\,6SiO_2$
Makshika	Copper/Chalco pyrites	$CuFeS_2$
Vimala	Iron pyrites	$Fe\,S_2/Fe_2\,S_3$
Adrija (Silajatu)	Black bitumen/mineral pitch	-
Sasyaka (Tuttha) (Kritrima Dravya)	Blue vitriol/copper sulphate	$CuSO_4 5H_2O$
Capala (Sandigdha Dravya)	Selenium/bismuth ore	Se/Bi
Rasaka (Anupalabdha Dravya)	Zinc ore	$ZnCO_3$, ZnS, ZnO

Table 3: *Maharasa Dravyas* According to Different Texts [9]

Reference	Number	***Maharasas*** **Mentioned**
Rasa Ratna Samucchaya (6/50)	8	*Anjana, Vaikranta, Makshika, Vimala, Hingula, Sasyaka, Chapala & Rasaka*
Rasa Hrudaya Tantra (9/4)	8	*Vaikranta, Makshika, Vimala, Shilajit, Sasyaka, Rasaka, Kantaloha & Hingula*
Goraksha Samhita (2/20)	8	*Abhraka, Vaikranta, Makshika, Vimala, Shilajit, Sasyaka, Rasaka & Hingula*
Rasarnava (7/2)	8	*Makshika, Vimala, Shilajit, Sasyaka, Chapala, Rasaka, Hingula & Srotanjana*
Rasendra Chudamani (10/1)	8	*Abhraka, Vaikranta, Makshika, Vimala, Shilajit, Sasyaka, Tuttha, Rajavarta*

Rasa Prakasa Sudhakara (5/2)	8	*Abhraka, Vaikranta, Makshika, Vimala, Shilajit, Sasyaka, Rasaka, Rajavarta*
Rasopanishad (4/4)	7	*Vaikranta, Makshika, Vimala, Shilajit, Sasyaka, Chapala, Parada*
Rasa Paddhati (1/38)	6	*Abhraka, Vaikranta, Makshika, Shilajit, Sasyaka, Chapala*
Ayurveda Prakasa (2/347)	1	*Parada*

Upa Rasas

These drugs are not equal to *Parada*; their qualities are fewer and less potent compared to *Parada*. The *Uparasa* group consists of substances that support *Parada karma* and enhance its effects. Compared to the minerals in the *Maharasa* group, they are considered less potent and less valuable. These drugs mainly serve as adjuvants in the preparation of *Rasa* and *Maharasas*, functioning in a supportive role. Most of them are derived from *Gandhaka* (sulphur) and its compounds. Metals are not included in this category; instead, the group is largely made up of metalloids.

गन्धाश्मगैरिकासीसकांक्षीतालशिलाञ्जनम् ।
कङ्कुष्ठं चेत्युपरसाश्चाष्टौ पारदकर्मणि ।। (R.R.S 3/1) [10]

Table 4: Classification of *Uparasa*, English Name, Chemical Formula

Uparasa	**English Name**	**Chemical Formula**
Gandhaka (Kritrima Dravya)	Sulphur	S
Gairika	Hematite	Fe_2O_3
Kasisa (Kritrima Dravya)	Green vitriol/ferrous sulphate	$FeSO_4 7H_2O$
Kankshi	Potash alum	$K_2SO_4Al_2(SO_4)_3.24H_2O$
Haratala	Orpiment/arsenic trisulphide	As_2S_3
Manahshila	Realgar/arsenic disulphide	As_2S_2
Anjana	Stibnite	Sb_2S_3
Kankustha (Sandigdha Dravya)	Rhubarb/*Garcinia morella*	-

Table 5: *Uparasa Dravyas* According to Different Texts [11]

Reference	**Number**	***Uparasas***
Rasa Paddhati (1/55)	3	*Gandhaka, Haratala & Manahsila*
Rasaraja Lakshmi	5	*Gandhaka, Gairika, Kankshi, Talaka, Manahsila*
Rasopanishad (4/5)	7	*Gandhaka, Gairika, Kaseesa, Kankshi, Talaka, Manahsila, Anjana*
Goraksha Samhita (2/29) *Rasa Hrudaya Tantra (9/5)* *Rasa Prakasa Sudhakara (6/1)*	8	*Gandhaka, Gairika, Kaseesa, Kankshi, Talaka, Manahsila, Anjana & Kankushta*
Rasarnava (7/56)	8	*Gandhaka, Gairika, Kaseesa, Kankshi, Talaka, Manahsila, Kankushta & Rajavarta*
Rasendra Chudamani (11/1)	8	*Gandhaka, Gairika, Kaseesa, Kankshi, Talaka, Manahsila, Souviranjana & Kankushta*
Ayurveda Prakasa	8	*Kankushta, Vajra, Vaikranta, Bhunaga, Shilajith, Sindura, Samudra phena & Sambuka*
Ayurveda Prakasa	19	*Gandhaka, Hingula, Abhraka, Haratala, Manahsila, Srotanjana, Tankana, Rajavarta, Kanta loha, Sphatika, Sankha, Khatika, Gairika, Kaseesa, Rasaka, Kapharda, Sikata, Bola & Saurashtri*
Rasendra Sara Sangraha (1/119)	20	*Gandhaka, Haratala, Manahsila, Kaseesa, Gairika, Anjana, Vajra, Vaikranta, Abhraka, Kharpara, Tuttha, Vimala, Varatika, Kaanta Pashana, Hingula, Sankha, Bhunaga, tankana, Shilajith & Khatika*
Rasa Manjari (3/1-2)	20	*Gandhaka, Haratala, Manahsila, Kaseesa, Kankushta, Anjana, Vajra,*

		Vaikranta, Abhraka, Kharpara, Tuttha, Vimala, Varatika, Kaanta Pashana, Hingula, Sankha, Bhunaga, tankana, Shilajith & Khatika
Ananda Kanda (1/4-8)	23	*Gandhaka, Gairika, Kaseesa, Kankshi, Talaka, Manahsila, Anjana, Kankushta, Abhraka, Kharpara, Tuttha, Swarna Makshika, Varatika, Kaanta Pashana, Hingula Sankha, Bhunaga, Tankana, Shilajith, Sikata, Sindura, Samudraphena & Sambuka*

Sadharana Rasas

It is explained only by *Rasaratna samucchaya.* रससिद्धिकराः प्रोक्ता नागार्जुनपुरःसरैः ।। (R.R.S 3/127) - It says that these are used in *Rasa siddhi*. [12]

- कम्पिल्लश्चापरो गौरीपाषाणो नवसादरः ।
  कपर्दो वह्निजारश्च गिरिसिन्दूरहिङ्गुलौ ।।
  मृद्दार श्रृङ्गमित्यष्टौ साधारणरसाः स्मृताः ।। (R.R.S 3/126 -127) [13]

Table 6: Classification of *Sadharana rasas*, English Name, Chemical Formula

Sadharana rasa	**English Name**	**Chemical Formula**
Kampillaka	*Mallotus phillippinensis*	-
Gauri pashana	Arsenic trioxide	As_2O_3
Navasadara	Ammonium chloride	NH_4Cl
Kaparda	Marine shell/ Cowrie	$CaCO_3$
Vahni jara (Sandigdha Dravya)	Ambergris	-
Giri sindhura (Sandigdha Dravya)	Mercuric oxide/ red oxide of mercury	HgO
Hingula (Kritrima Dravya)	Cinnabar / red sulphide of mercury	HgS
Mriddara shringa	Litharge/lead oxide	PbO

Loha (Dhatu)

Dhatus are the ones which does *Deha dharana* by curing all the diseases.

शुद्धं लोहं कनकरजतं भानुलोहाश्मसारम् ।
पूतीलोहं द्वितयमुदितं नागवङ्गाभिधानम् ।
मिश्र लोहं त्रितयमुदितं पित्तलं कांस्यवर्तम् ।। (R.R.S 5/1) [14]

Table 7: Classification of *Loha*

Suddha Loha	***Puti Loha***	***Misra Loha***
Swarna	*Naga*	*Pittala*
Rajata	*Vanga*	*Kamsya*
Tamra	-	*Varta*
Loha	-	-

In *Rasa Tarangini* [15] and *Rasamṛta* [16], *Yasada* (zinc) is classified under the group of *Puti Loha Varga*. *Rasajalanidhi,* however, expands this category by describing two additional forms:[17]

1. *Maṇḍura* (*Lohakitta*) - Iron which, when heated until red-hot and struck with a hammer, disperses into minute fragments.
2. *Triloha* (placed under *Miśra Loha*) - An alloy produced by combining 25 parts of gold, 16 parts of silver, and 10 parts of copper.

Meanwhile, Yoga Ratnakara records that *Parada* (mercury) itself is regarded as a type of *Loha*.[18]

According to *Rasa hrudaya tantra* [19]

1. *Sara Loha: Swarna, Rajata*
2. *Puti Loha: Naga, Vanga*
3. *Sattva Loha: Tamra, Pittala, Teekshna, Loha, Kanta loha, Abhraka satva*

According to *Rasa Kamadhenu*

1. *Sara Loha: Swarna, Rajata*
2. *Puti Loha: Naga, Vanga*
3. *Sadharana Loha: Loha, Tamra*

Table 8: *Dhatus* - Their Latin name, English name and relation with *Graha* [20]

Dhatu	**Chemical Formula**	**Latin Name**	**English Name**	***Graha***
Tamra	Cu	Cuprum	Copper	*Surya*
Rajata	Ag	Argentum	Silver	*Chandra*
Pittala	Cu+Zn	Cuprum Zincum alloy	Brass	*Mangala (Bhauma)*
Naga	Pb	Plumbum	Lead	*Budha (Shashija)*
Swarna	Au	Aurum	Gold	*Guru (Jeeva)*
Vanga	Sn	Stannum	Tin	*Shukra (Bhargava)*
Tikshna Loha	Fe	Ferrum	Wrought iron	*Shani (Suryaputra)*
Kamsya	Cu+Sn	Cuprum Stannum alloy	Bell metal	*Rahu (Saihikeya)*
Kanta loha	Fe	Ferrum	Magnetic iron	*Ketu*

Table 9: *Dhatu Dravyas* According to Different Texts [21]

Reference	**Number**	***Dhatus* Mentioned**
Rasa Hrdaya Tantra	6	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Vanga, Naga, Pittala*
Rasendra Sara Sangraha *Rasendra Mangalam*	6	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Loha, Vanga, Naga*
Rasarnava (7/97) *Goraksha Samhita bhuti prakarana (2/41)*	6	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Teekshna loha, Vanga, Naga*
Rasa Koumudi	7	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Loha, Vanga, Naga, Kamsya*
Rasopanishad (4/3)	7	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Teekshna loha, Vanga, Naga, Abhraka Satva*
Sharangadhara Samhita (11/1)	7	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Teekshna loha, Vanga, Naga, Pittala*
Rasa Tarangini (15/2) *Ayurveda Prakasha (3/1)* *Bhava prakasha purvardha dhatu 1*	7	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Vanga, Naga, Loha, Yashada*
Rasa sara (2/4) *Rasamrta* *Rasa Kamadhenu*	8	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Loha, Vanga, Naga, Pittala, Kamsya*
Rasa Paddhati (1/11) *Rasendra Chudamani* *Rasaprakasha Sudhakara* *Rasa Chintamani*	9	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Vanga, Naga, Loha, Pittala, Kamsya, Varta loha*
Ananda Kanda (1/9)	13	*Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Teekshna loha, Munda loha, Kanta loha, Vanga, Naga, Abhraka Satva, Pittala, Kamsya, Varta, Mandura*

Upa Dhatus

These substances exhibit qualities that resemble *Dhatu*, though they differ in certain aspects. When the actual *Dhatu* is unavailable, they can serve as *Pratinidhi Dravya* (substitutes).[22]

Table 10: *Dhatus* and their *Pratinidhi Dravyas* [22]

Dhatu	***Pratinidhi Dravya***
Swarna	*Swarna makshika*
Rajata	*Rajata makshika*
Tamra	*Tutha*

Vanga	*Kamsya*
Yashada	*Riti (Pittala)*
Naga	*Sindura*
Loha	*Shilajatu*

ताप्यं च विमला तुत्थं कांस्यं पित्तलकं तथा ।
सिन्दूरं शैल निर्यासः स्मृता सप्तोपधातवः ।। (Ay.Pa.3/4) [23]

Table 11: Classification of *Upadhatus*, English Name, Chemical Formula

Upadhatu	**English Name**	**Chemical Formula**
Tapya	Pyrite	$CuFeS_2$
Vimala	Iron pyrite	FeS_2/Fe_2S_3
Tuttha	Blue vitriol	$CuSO_4 7H_2O$
Kamsya	Bronze	Cu+Sn (8:2)
Pittala	Brass	Cu+Zn (2:1)
Sindoora	Red oxide of Hg	HgO
Shila niryasa (Shilajatu)	Black bitumen (mineral pitch)	-

Table 12: *Upadhatu Dravyas* According to Different Texts

Reference	**Number**	***Upadhatus* mentioned**
Bhava Prakasha [24]	7	*Swarna Makshika, Tara Makshika, Ritika (Pittala), Tuttham, Kamsyam, Sinduram, Silajith.*
Rasa Chandamsu [25]	7	*Swarna Makshika, Tara Makshika, Yasada, Tuttham, Kankushtam, Sinduram, Loha Kittam.*
Rasa Tarangini [26]	8	*Swarna Makshika, Tara Makshika, Kasisa, Tuttha, Kharpara, Giri sindhura, Mriddara sringa, Kantha pashana*

Ratnas

मणयोऽपि च विज्ञेयाः सूतबन्धनकारकाः ॥ (R.R.S 4/1) [27]- According to *Rasaratna samucchaya*, *Ratnas* are used in the *Parada bandha* as well as *Rasa karmas*. In Hindu tradition, *Ratnas* are believed to counteract the harmful influences of the *Navagrahas*. High-quality *Ratnas* are employed in *Parada karma*, rejuvenation practices, charitable offerings, and in the worship of deities. *Ratnas* play an important role in both *Bandhana* and *Marana* of *Parada*, while also enhancing its inherent qualities.

माणिक्यमुक्ताफलविद्रुमाणि तार्क्ष्यं च पुष्पं भिदुरञ्च नीलम् ।
गोमेदकञ्चाथ विदूरकञ्च क्रमेण रत्नानि नवग्रहाणाम् ।। (R.R.S.4/6) [28]

Table 13: Classification of *Ratnas*, English Name, Chemical Formula & *Graha* Relation

Ratna	**English Name**	**Chemical Formula**	***Graha* Relation** [29]
Manikya	Ruby	Al_2O_3	*Surya*
Muktaphala	Pearl	$CaCO_3$	*Chandra*
Pravala (Vidruma)	Coral	$CaCO_3$	*Mangala*
Tärkshya (Marakata)	Emerald	$Be_3Al_2(SiO_3)$	*Budha*
Pusparaga	Topaz	$Al(FOH)_2SiO_4$	*Guru*
Vajra (Bhidura)	Diamond	Carbon	*Shukra*
Nīlama	Sapphire	Al_2O_3	*Shani*
Gomeda	Zircon	$ZrSiO_4$	*Rahu*
Vaidurya	Cat's eye	$BeOAl_2O_3$	*Ketu*

Table 14: Classification of *Ratnas* [30,31,32]

Sreshta Pancha Ratna *(Rasaratna samucchaya 4/4)*	*Padmaraga, Nila, Marakata, Pushyaraga, Vajra*
Samanya Pancha Ratna *(Rasa Jala Nidhi 4/2)*	*Padmaraga, Nila, Mauktika, Vidruma, Vajra*
Ashta Mani *(Rasaratna samucchaya 4/2)*	*Vaikranta, Suryakanta, Chandrakanta, Rajavarta, Mauktika, Sarpamani, Vajra, Marakata*

Table 15: *Ratna Dravyas* According to Different Texts [33]

Reference	Number	*Ratnas* Mentioned
Rasa Ratna Samucchaya (4/5) *Rasendra Chudamani (12/1)* *Rasa Prakasa Sudhakara (7/2)* *Ananda Kanda (1/9)* *Rasa Paddhati (88)* *Rasa Tarangini (23/2)* *Rasa Sara* *Brhat yoga Tarangini* *Vishnudharmottara puranam*	9	*Manikya, Mukta, Pravala, Tarkshya, Pushpa, Vajra, Nilam, Gomeda, Vaidoorya*
Rasopanishad (4/9)	7	*Manikya, Mukta,Vajra, Nilam, Gomeda, Vaidoorya, Vaikranta*

Upa Ratnas

वैक्रान्तं सूर्यकान्तश्च चन्द्रकान्तो नृपोपलः।
पेरोजकञ्च स्फटिकं क्षुद्ररत्नगणो ह्ययम्।। (R.T.23/154) [34]

Table 16: Classification of *Uparatnas*, English Name, Chemical Formula

Uparatna Name	English Name	Chemical Formula
Vaikranta	Tourmaline/Fluorspar	$K_2OAl_2O_3\,6SiO_2$
Suryakanta	Sun stone	$(Na_2OAl_2O_3 6SiO_2 + CaOAl_2O_3 2SiO_2)$
Candrakanta	Moon stone	$KAlSi_3O_8$
Nṛpopala / Rajavarta	Lapis lazuli / Altra marine	$(Na_4(S_3Al)Al_2(SiO_4)_3$
Perojaka	Torquoise	$CuAl_6(PO_4)_4(OH)_8\,5H_2O$
Sphaṭika mani	Quartz / Rock crystal	SiO_2

Table 17: *Uparatna Dravyas* According to Different Texts [35]

Reference	Number	*Uparatnas* Mentioned
Ananda Kanda 1/12	9	*Suryakantha, Chandrakantha, Vaikranta, Rajavarta, Perojika, Tarakanta, Kanta, Sasyaka, Vimala*
Ayurveda Prakasha 5/8	15	*Suryakantha, Chandrakantha, Vaikranta, Rajavarta, Perojika, Lalamani, Muktashukti, Shankha, Karpoorashtma, Kaacamani, Nilamani, Pitamani, Vishaharamani, Agnistambhakamani, Jalastambhakamani*
Rasa tarangini 23/145	6	*Suryakantha, Chandrakantha, Vaikranta, Rajavarta, Perojika, Sphatika*

Table 18: These are added by CCIM under the *Uparatna varga* [36]

Uparatna	English Name	Chemical Formula
Vyomyasma	Jade	(Na Al (SiO_3))
Trnakanta	Amber / Succinum	$C_6H_{16}O$
Palanka	Onyx	$CaSO_4 2H_2O$

Puttika	Peridot	$(Mg, Fe)_2SiO_4$
Rudhira	Carneline	SiO_2

Table 19: CCIM mentioned these 17 *Dravyas* under *Uparatna Varga* [37]

Vaikranta	*Sphaṭika mani*	*Trnakanta*	*Nagapashana / Jaharmohara*
Suryakanta	*Badarsma / Hajrulyahud*	*Palaka*	*Dugdhapasana*
Candrakanta	*Kouseyasma*	*Rudhiraputtika*	*Akeeka*
Nṛpopala / Rajavarta	*Vyomasma*	*Saugandhika*	*Godanti*
Perojaka	-	-	-

***Malla Varga* [38]**

Rasamrita grouped arsenic compounds in one group.

Table 20: Classification of Arsenics, English Name, Chemical Formula

Arsenic name	English Name	Chemical Formula
Haratala	Arsenic trisulphide	As_2S_3
Manashila	Arsenic disulphide	As_2S_2
Gauripashana	Arsenic trioxide	As_2O_3

Sudha Varga

This classification was first given by *Rasamrita*. The term *Sudha* refers to *Chuna*, which are compound drugs composed of calcium carbonate ($CaCO_3$). They are valuable in *Parada bandhana*, *Jarana*, and *Mrudukarana* of *Rasa dravyas*. In addition, they aid in liquefying metals such as gold and in the purification (*Shodhana*) of *Dravyas* like *Haratala*.

- शुक्लवर्गः सुधाकूर्मशंखशुक्तिवराटिका ।। (Rasarṇava 5/40) [39]
- चुन्नं कूर्मं शंखशुक्तिवराटैः शुक्लवर्गकः ।। (Rasaratnakara 2/6) [40]

Although five drugs, from *Śukla varga/Sudha varga* are listed in each of the references mentioned above the total number of calcium-containing drugs described in *Rasashastra* is much higher. These drugs come from a range of sources - mineral, marine, animal and plant.

Based on the source, classification of *Sudha varga* [41]

1. Mineral Origin - *Badarasma* (silicate of lime), *Godanti* (gypsum), *Sudha* (quick lime), *Khatika* (chalk)
2. Marine Origin - *Mukta* (pearl), *Pravala* (coral), *Shanka* (conch shell), *Sambuka* (pila), *Mukta sukti* (oyester shell), *Varatika* (cowry), *Samudraphena* (cuttle fish bone)
3. Animal Origin - *Mrigasrnga* (antlers), *Kukkutanda twak* (hen's egg shell), *Kurmaprista*, *Ajasthi* (goat's bone)
4. Plant origin - *Vamsalochana* (bamboo)

Table 21: *Sudha varga Dravyas* According to Different Texts [42]

Reference	*Sudha varga dravyas* Mentioned
Rasaratnakara, Rasarnava	*Sudha, Shanka, Varatika, Kurmaprista*
Ananda kanda	*Shanka, Sambuka, Mukta sukti*
Rasamritam	*Sudha, Khatika, Godanti, Surmasapheda*
Ayurvediya Rasa Sastra	*Sudha, Khatika, Godanti, Shanka, Sambuka, Mukta sukti, Varatika, Kurmaprista, Pravala, Mukta, Kukkutanda twak, Ajasthi, Badarsma, Vamsalochana*
Rasasastra - The mercurial system	*Sudha, Khatika, Godanti, Shanka, Sambuka, Mukta sukti, Kurmaprista, Pravala, Mukta, Kukkutanda twak, Mrgasrnga, Swetanjana, Hastidanti*

Table 22: Description of *Sudha varga Dravyas* [42]

S.No.	Name	Chemical constituents	Form
1.	*Sudha*	CaO	Oxide
2.	*Khatika*	$CaCO_3$	Carbonate
3.	*Godanti*	$CaSO_4 \cdot 2H_2O$	Sulphate

4.	*Sankha*	$CaCO_3$	Carbonate
5.	*Sambuka*	$CaCO_3$	Carbonate
6.	*Mukta sukti*	$CaCO_3$	Carbonate
7.	*Varatika*	$CaCO_3$	Carbonate
8.	*Kurmaprista*	Calcite	Phosphate
9.	*Samudraphena*	$CaCO_3$	Carbonate
10.	*Pravala*	$CaCO_3$	Carbonate
11.	*Mukta*	$CaCO_3$	Carbonate
12.	*Mrigasrnga*	$Ca_3(PO_4)_2$	Phosphate
13.	*Kukkutanda twak*	$CaCO_3$	Carbonate
14.	*Ajasthi*	Calcium, Phosphorus etc.	Phosphate

Sikata Varga

Sikata means sand. They are the compound of silica (Si_2), magnesium (Mg_2) and water (H_2O). The classical Ayurvedic texts did not provide a systematic classification of *Sikata Varga*. Instead, scattered references to these substances appear in relation to their applications in alchemy, particularly in various methods of mercury binding (*Parada Bandhas*) and internal administration. It was only in the 20th century that later authors consolidated these dispersed mentions and formally grouped the drugs under the category now recognized as *Sikata Varga*.

Table 23: Classification of *Sikata varga*, English Name, Chemical Formula

Sikata varga	**English name**	**Chemical Formula**
Badarsma / Hajrulyahud	Silicate of lime	Si_4CaO_4
Kouseyasma	Silicate mineral/asbestos	$Mg_3Si_2O_5(OH)_4$
Nagapashana / Jaharmohara	Magnesium silicate/ophite/ serpentinite	$H_4Mg_3(SiO_3)_4$ / $H_4Mg_3Si_2O_2$
Dugdhapasana	Hydrated magnesium silicate/talc	$Mg_3Si_4O_{10}(OH)_2$
Akeeka	Silicon dioxide	SiO_2
Vyomyasma	Jade	(Na Al (SiO_3))

Table 24: *Sikata Varga Dravyas* According to Different Texts [43]

Reference	**Number**	***Dravyas* Mentioned**
Rasaamrita	5	*Dugdhapashana, Badrashma, Kausheyashma, Nagapashana, Sikta*
Rasa Mitra, Rasa Bindu, Rasa Darpana	5	*Dugdhapashana, Badrashma, Kausheyashma, Nagapashana, Trinakantmani*
Rasendra Sambhava	2	*Dugdhapashana, Trinakantmani*
Ayurveda Prakasha Ananda Kanda	1	*Sikta*
Rasa Tarangni	1	*Dugdhapashana*

Kshara Varga

Table 25: Classification of *Ksharas*, English Name, Chemical Formula [44]

Kshara	**English Name**	**Chemical Formula**
Sarja kshara	Sodium bicarbonate	$NaHCO_3$
Yava kshara	Potassium carbonate	K_2CO_3
Tankana kshara	Borax	$Na_2B_4O_710H_2O$
Surya kshara	Potassium nitrate	KNO_3

Table 26: *Kshara Varga Dravyas* According to Different Texts [45]

Reference	Number	*Ksharas* Mentioned
Rasa Tarangini 2/6	2	*Sarji, Yava*
Rasarnava, Rasa Tarangini 2/6	3	*Sarji, Yava, Tankana*
Rasa Tarangini 2/7	5	*Kimsuka, Muska, Yava, Swarji, Tila*
Rasaratna Samucchaya	5	*Palasha, Mushkaka, Yava, Suvarchika, Tila*
Rasa Mitra 7	5	*Palasha, Mushkaka/Padala, Yava, Suvarchika, Tilanala*
Dhanvantari Nigantu	6	*Tila, Palasha, Vacha, Apamarga, Kutaja, Mustaka*
Arka Prakasha 3/15	7	*Swarji, Yava, Tankana, Suvarchika, Palasha, Gaurya, Mustaka*
Rasa Tarangini 2/8	8	*Snuhi, Palasha, Apamarga/Sikhari, Chincha, Arka, Tila, Swarjika, Yava*
Rasarnava	8	*Kadali, Palasha, Apamarga, Chincha, Sigru, Tila, Mochaka, Ardraka*
Rasa Hrudaya Tantra	10	*Sigru, Mochaka, Palasha, Kadali, Tila, Ardraka, Chincha, Aswatta, Apamarga, Mochaka*

Lavana Varga

सैन्धवञ्चाथ सामुद्रं विडं सौवर्चलं तथा ।
रोमकञ्चति विज्ञेयं बुधैर्लवणपञ्चकम् ।। (R.T.2/3) [46]

Table 27: Classification of *Lavanas*, English Name

***Lavana* name**	**English name**
Saindhava lavana	Rock salt
Samudra lavana	Sea salt /common salt
Vida lavana	Ammonium salt
Sauvarchala lavana	Sochal salt/black salt
Romaka lavana	Lake salt

Table 28: *Lavanas* According to Different Texts [47]

Reference	Number	*Lavanas* Mentioned
Rasendra Chudamani 9/9, 10	8	*Saindhava, Sauvarchala, Vida, Samudra, Romaka, Chullika, Kacha, Gada*
Rasaratna Samucchaya *Rasajalanidhi* *Rasendra Manjari* *Rasendra sara sangraha*	6	*Saindhava, Sauvarchala, Vida, Samudra, Romaka, Chullika*
Rasahrudaya Tantra	5	*Saindhava, Sauvarchala, Vida, Chullika, Kacha*
Rasa Tarangini	5	*Saindhava, Sauvarchala, Vida, Samudra, Romaka*
Rasa Ratnakara 2/8	5	*Saindhava, Sauvarchala, Samudra, Chullika, Kacha*
Rasarnava 5/32	5	*Saindhava, Sauvarchala, Samudra, Chullika, Kacha*
Rasa Prakasha Sudhakara 6/80	1	*Vida*

Vishopavisha Varga

Rasarnava appears to be the first text to mention about *Visha* and *Upavisa* classification. They are useful in *Rasakarma* and *Rasabandhana*, and with the aid of these *Dravyas*, *Parada* is able to digest metals.[48]

Table 29: *Visha Dravyas* According to Different Texts [48]

Reference	Number	*Vishas* Mentioned
Rasarnava 5/33	5	*Kalakuta, Shringika, Saktuka, Krishnavisha, Sitamusta*
Rasendra chudamani 9/11 *Rasaratna samucchaya 10/82*	5	*Kalakuta, Shringika, Saktuka, Vatsanabha, Pita*

Rasa Tarangini 24/7-9 *Bhavaprakasha (Dhatvadi 191)* *Ayurveda Prakasha 6/12*	9	*Kalakuta, Shringika, Saktuka, Vatsanabha, Halahala, Pradeepana, Haridra, Brahmaputra, Sourashtrika*
Rasa manjari *Rasendra chintamani* *Rasajalanidhi*	18	*Kalakuta, Saktuka, Vatsanabha, Shringika, Mustaka, Halahala, Haridra, Mayura, Binduka, Sunama, Shankhanabha, Sumangala, Pushkara, Bhramara, Karkotaka, Shuklakanda, Raktashringi, Visha or Chakra.*

Table 30: *Upavisha Dravyas* According to Different Texts [49,50,51]

Reference	Number	*Upavishas* Mentioned
Rasaratna samucchaya 10/84	7	*Langali, Vishamushti, Karavira, Jayapala, Nilaka, Kanaka, Arka.*
Ayurveda Prakasha 6/108	7	*Arka, Snuhi, Dhatura, Langali, Karavira, Gunja, Ahiphena*
Ayurveda Prakasha 6/11	9	*Arka, Snuhi, Langali, Gunja, Karavira, Vishamushti, Ahiphena, Dhatura, Jayapala*
Rasa Tarangini 24/163-164	11	*Vishatinduka, Ahiphena, Jayapala, Dhattura bija, Vijaya, Gunja, Bhallataka, Snuhi kshara, Langali, Karavira*

DISCUSSION

The present review shows that the classification of *Rasa Dravyas* was not a fixed or uniform system. Rather, it evolved gradually with the development of *Rasashastra*. Over different periods, scholars classified mineral, metallic, animal, marine, and other substances based on various factors, including their relationship with Parada, pharmaceutical utility, physical and chemical characteristics, therapeutic applications, and, in some cases, astrological or cosmological associations. This diversity of approaches highlights the broad and evolving nature of *Rasa Dravya* classification within the *Rasashastra* tradition.

The earliest classifications were mainly based on the functional role of substances in *Parada karma.* Classical texts such as *Rasahrudaya Tantram* and *Rasarnava* primarily described groups such as *Rasa*, *Maharasa, Uparasa*, and *Dhatu*. As *Rasashastra* developed, later treatises gradually expanded this system by introducing additional categories such as *Sadharana Rasa, Ratna, Uparatna, Sudha Varga, Sikata Varga, Lavana, Kshara, Visha,* and *Upavisha*. This expansion may reflect the growing availability of different substances, advances in pharmaceutical practices, and the gradual transformation of *Rasashastra* from a discipline primarily centred on Parada to a broader system concerned with pharmaceutical preparation and therapeutic application. The comparative analysis also reveals that the level of consistency varies considerably among different *Vargas*.

- *Maharasa* appears to be relatively more consistent across classical texts when compared with several other groups, although differences in individual constituents are still evident. Variations in the placement of substances such as *Vaikranta*, *Chapala*, and *Hingula* suggest that individual authors may have adopted different criteria while classifying these drugs. Therefore, the classification of a substance was not always based on a universally accepted list.
- *Uparasa*, on the other hand, shows greater variation in both the number and composition of its constituents. This could be because the category had a relatively broad functional basis, allowing authors to include substances that were considered useful in pharmaceutical procedures and *Parada karma.*
- The emergence of *Sadharana Rasa* represents another important stage in the development of *Rasa Dravya* classification. Its appearance in selected texts later suggests the recognition of substances with specific pharmaceutical importance that could not be conveniently included under *Maharasa* or *Uparasa*.
- The classification of *Dhatus* also reflects the evolving nature of *Rasashastra*. Major metals such as *Swarna, Rajata, Tamra, Loha, Vanga*, and *Naga* retained their importance across several classical texts. However, differences in the number and composition of *Dhatu* groups were observed among various authors. The later inclusion of substances such as *Yashada*, alloys, and other metallic derivatives may indicate the expansion of metallurgical knowledge and practical experience. Furthermore, the subdivision of metals into categories such as *Shuddha Loha, Puti Loha,* and *Mishra Loha* reflects a more refined understanding of their physical properties and pharmaceutical behaviour.

- In contrast, groups such as *Sudha, Sikata, Kshara*, and *Lavana* appear to be more closely associated with the material or chemical nature of the substances.
- *Ratna* and certain *Dhatu* classifications also demonstrate cosmological and astrological associations, particularly through their correspondence with the *Navagrahas*.
- The occurrence of the same substance in more than one category across different classical texts should also not necessarily be considered a contradiction. For example, substances such as *Shilajatu*, *Vaikranta, Sasyaka*, and *Vimala* have been placed in different groups by different authors. This variation suggests that classical scholars may have classified substances according to the specific context or property being considered.

The categories of *Sandigdha, Kritrima*, and *Anupalabdha Dravyas* are particularly significant from the perspective of contemporary research and standardization. Establishing the precise identity of certain substances described in classical texts continues to be a major challenge when attempting to correlate Ayurvedic terminology with modern mineralogical and chemical nomenclature. In addition, changes in the availability and geographical sources of certain substances have resulted in the use of artificially prepared materials or the discontinuation of traditionally available natural sources. These challenges highlight the need for systematic documentation of the identity, source, physicochemical characteristics, and current availability of individual *Rasa Dravyas*. Such efforts would be valuable for developing appropriate standards and identifying scientifically justified substitutes when the original substances are unavailable.

The development of specialized categories such as *Sudha Varga* and *Sikata Varga* further demonstrates the adaptive nature of *Rasa Dravya* classification. Grouping substances based on characteristics such as calcium or silicate content, along with their practical pharmaceutical relevance, suggests an increasing recognition of material properties in the classification process.

CONCLUSION

The variations observed in the classification of *Rasa Dravyas* across classical texts should not merely be regarded as inconsistencies or errors requiring a single universally correct classification. Rather, they reflect the historical development of *Rasashastra* and the adaptation of its knowledge to changing pharmaceutical practices and practical requirements. The present comparative review indicates that *Rasa Dravyas* were classified according to multiple interrelated principles, including alchemical utility, pharmaceutical application, material characteristics, therapeutic importance, and cosmological associations. A comprehensive understanding of *Rasa Dravya* classification therefore requires consideration of both its historical development and contemporary relevance. Integrating classical descriptions with modern mineralogical, chemical, and pharmaceutical knowledge may contribute to accurate identification, standardization, quality control, and rational utilization of these substances. Furthermore, unresolved issues related to *Sandigdha, Kritrima*, and *Anupalabdha Dravyas* require further interdisciplinary investigation. Thus, the classical taxonomy of *Rasa Dravyas* remains an important foundation for contemporary research, standardization, and pharmaceutical development in *Rasashastra* and Ayurvedic pharmaceutics.

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