

i. Origin and Development of rasa śāstra and bhaiṣajya kalpanā

Table Of Contents

Add a header to begin generating the table of contents

Chronological Table of Rasaśāstra & Bhaiṣajya Kalpanā

Era / Period	Key Texts / Authors	Major Contributions & Highlights
1. Mythological / Earliest Mentions	- Associated with Lord Śiva - Rāmāyaṇa- Mahābhārata- Purāṇas	- Mercury (Pārada) is said to originate from Lord Śiva.- Rāmāyaṇa : Mentions of <i>maṇidāraṇa</i> , <i>dhātu-nirmīta śāstras</i> , <i>arka śāstra</i> by Rāvaṇa.- Mahābhārata : References to <i>kula-sampradāya</i> , processing of metals (<i>jāraṇa</i> , <i>māraṇa</i>), creation of artificial gold (<i>kṛtrima svarṇa</i>). - Agnipurāṇa/Garuḍapurāṇa : Usage of <i>dhātu-bhasma</i> , <i>maṇaḥśilā</i> , <i>haratāla</i> for skin disorders, initial references to gem testing (<i>ratna parikṣā</i>).
2. Vedic Period (c.1500-600 BCE)	- Rgveda, Yajurveda, Atharva Veda - Brāhmaṇa texts (e.g., Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa)	- Ayurveda as <i>Upaveda</i> of Atharva Veda. - Early Bhaiṣajya Kalpanā foundations: single-herb use (<i>ekamūlika</i>), forms like <i>svarasa</i> , <i>kvātha</i> , <i>cūrṇa</i> . - <i>Somarasā</i> preparation described in the Rgveda. - Fermentation methods (<i>abhisava</i> , <i>surā</i>) in Brāhmaṇa texts. - Different varieties of ghr̥ta (e.g., ājya, sarpi) and methods of dairy processing.
3. Epic & Early Classical References	- Overlaps with Itihāsa (Epics) & some Purāṇas - Early philosophical expansions	- Further elaboration on metals and gem usage. - Magical / alchemical aspects (e.g., <i>jāraṇa</i> , <i>ucchāṭana</i>) in Mahābhārata . - Discusses advanced metal usage for <i>śāstra-vaidyā</i> (weapon & surgical knowledge).
4. Kautilya's Arthaśāstra (4th-2nd Century BCE)	- Kauṭilya (Chanakya)	- Detailed references to minerals and ores (<i>khanija</i> , <i>dhātu</i>). - Śodhana (purification) using <i>kṣāra</i> , <i>tikṣṇa mūtra</i> , <i>gorocanā</i> , etc. - Various methods of gold production: <i>jātarūpa</i> (natural), <i>rasavidha</i> (mercury-based), <i>ākārodgata</i> (from ore). - Knowledge of Pārada (mercury) and Hīṅgula (cinnabar). - Lohabheda (metallurgical classifications) for iron, copper, tin, etc.
5. Saṃhitā Period (1st Century BCE – 6th Century CE)	Caraka Saṃhitā Suśruta Saṃhitā Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya & Saṅgraha Kāśyapa & Harita Saṃhitā	Caraka Saṃhitā - Systematic Bhaiṣajya Kalpanā : <i>pañcavidha kaṣāya kalpanā</i> (<i>svarasa</i> , <i>kalka</i> , <i>kvātha</i> , <i>hima</i> , <i>phāṇṭa</i>). - Fermented preparations (<i>sandhāna kalpanā</i>), dietetics (<i>maṇḍa</i> , <i>peyā</i> , <i>vilepī</i>), <i>kṣāra kalpanā</i> . - <i>Ayaskṛti</i> (iron processing): heating & dipping plates to get <i>loha-cūrṇa</i> . - Use of metals in <i>rasāyana</i> (<i>svarṇa</i> , <i>vaṅga</i> , <i>tāmra</i> , etc.). Suśruta Saṃhitā - Classification of <i>pārthiva dravyas</i> (<i>svarṇa</i> , <i>rajata</i> , <i>tāmra</i> , etc.). - <i>Loha-bheda</i> , metals for <i>yantra-śāstra</i> . - Detailed <i>kṣāra kalpanā</i> as part of surgery Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya & Saṅgraha - Summarize Caraka & Suśruta, elaborate on <i>ayaskṛti</i> , <i>netraroga</i> treatments with metals.
6. Post-Saṃhitā to Early Medieval (7th-11th Century)	- Ācārya Nāgārjuna (7th C) - Chakradatta (11th C)	- Ācārya Nāgārjuna credited with flourishing Rasaśāstra among <i>Nātha Siddhas</i> (84 siddhas). - Emphasis on <i>Parada</i> purification & transformations (<i>lohasiddhi</i> , <i>dehasiddhi</i>). - Chakradatta : Key Ayurvedic compilation with many new formulas; first to mention <i>parpati kalpanā</i> and incorporate <i>parada yogas</i> systematically.
7. Medieval Rasaśāstra Treatises (11th-17th Century)	Rasa Hṛdaya Tantra (11th C) Rasārṇava (12th C) Gorakhnātha Saṃhitā (12th C) Rasendra Cūḍāmaṇi (12th C) Rasa Prakāśa Sudhākara (13th C) Rasa Ratna Samuccaya (13th C) Rasa Ratnākara (13th C) Rasendra Sāra Saṅgraha (13th C) Rasa Cintāmaṇi (15th C) Ānanda Kanda (16th C) Rasa Kāmdhenu (17th C)	- Rasa Hṛdaya Tantra & Rasārṇava : 18 Saṃskāra (processing steps) of mercury, Tāntrika alchemy (Śiva-Parvatī dialogue). - Gorakhnātha Saṃhitā : Divided into <i>kadi-prakaraṇa</i> (Tānttric worship) & <i>bhūti-prakaraṇa</i> (<i>rasa</i> & <i>rasāyana</i>). - Rasendra Cūḍāmaṇi (Somadeva) : 18 saṃskāra of Pārada, various <i>parada-bandha</i> procedures. - Rasa Prakāśa Sudhākara : Four types of Parada-bandha, kupipākva method. - Rasa Ratna Samuccaya (Vāgbhaṭṭa) : Systematic classification of <i>Rasa dravyas</i> , Aṣṭa saṃskāra of Pārada. - Ānanda Kanda : In conversation form of Śiva-Pārvatī, includes <i>amṛtikaraṇa</i> (immortalizing processes). - Rasa Kāmdhenu : Detailed <i>yantra</i> , <i>mūṣā</i> , <i>pūta</i> , and 1000+ <i>rasa yoga</i> for diseases.

8. Later Medieval to Pre-Modern

(18th–19th Century)

– **Āyurvedaprakāśa** (18th C, Mādhava Upādhyāya) –
– **Bhaiṣajya Ratnāvalī** (18th C, Govindadās Sen)

Rasa Tarangiṇī (Sadananda Sharma) **Rasa Jala Nidhi** (Pt. Bhudeb Mookerji) **History of Chemistry in Ancient & Medieval India** (Acharya P. C. Ray) **Rasa Yoga Sāgara** (Vaidya Hariprapanna Sharma) **Bhārat Bhaishajya Ratnākara** (Vaidya Gopinatha Gupta) **Rasamṛtam** (Yadavaji Trikamji) **Pārada Vīgyāniyama** (V. M. Dvivedi) **AFI & API**

– **Āyurvedaprakāśa**: 6 chapters, simplified *Pārada saṃskāra*, new instruments, *dantāgre na kacā kacā* (unique bhasma test). – **Bhaiṣajya Ratnāvalī**: Massive popular formulary with broad coverage of classical & new herbo-mineral formulations, *mūrcchanā saṃskāra* of oils & ghṛta, pathya-apathya guidelines.

– **Rasa Tarangiṇī**: 24 *tarāṅga*, practical handbook, only 8 *saṃskāra* of mercury described. Introduces some modern chemical methods (*gandhakāmle*, *lavanāmle*, etc.). – **Rasa Jala Nidhi**: 5 volumes, Sanskrit classics + English commentary, enumerates metal/mineral drug usage. – **P. C. Ray**: Pioneering work on Indian alchemy's chemical aspects. – **Rasa Yoga Sāgara**: Over 100 *pottali kalpanā*, alphabetical listing of yogas. – **Rasamṛtam**: Summarizes classical Rasaśāstra with modern scientific explanation; includes 66 original formulations. – **Bhārat Bhaishajya Ratnākara**: 5 parts, alphabetical array of thousands of Ayurvedic medicines. – **AFI & API**: Standardize and codify Ayurvedic formulations.

9. Modern Period

(19th–20th Century)

Key Takeaways

1. **Mythic Origins**: Mercury (pārada) was revered as a divine substance tied to Lord Śiva.
2. **Vedic Foundations**: Primitive references to single-herb extracts, fermentation, and the earliest forms of medicinal preparations.
3. **Epic & Purāṇic Influences**: Growing knowledge of metals, gems, and basic alchemy.
4. **Arthaśāstra Era**: Systematic mention of mineral ores, purification methods, and the economic aspects of metal usage.
5. **Samhitā Period**: Formalization of the five basic preparations (*pañcavidha kaṣāya kalpanā*), plus the inclusion of metals and mercury in therapeutics and rasāyana.
6. **Medieval Flourish**: Multiple specialized Rasaśāstra texts detailing mercury purification, metal incineration (bhasma), and advanced formulations.
7. **Pre-Modern & Modern**: Continued refinement and standardization of Rasaśāstra processes; integration with chemical principles; expanded Ayurvedic pharmacopoeia.

This **flow** from **mythological** to **modern** times shows how **Rasaśāstra** and **Bhaiṣajya Kalpanā** evolved hand-in-hand—incorporating early divine/ritual elements, then scientific methodology and practical pharmaceutical applications, culminating in standard texts still used in contemporary Ayurvedic practice.