



Review Article

ROLE OF RASA DRAVYAS IN AGADA YOGAS: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Agada Tantra is one of the eight facets of Ayurveda that deal with the management of sthavara visha (plant and mineral poisons) and jangama visha (venomous bites, stings, etc.). For the management of poisons many formulations have been explained in the samhitas (treatise of Ayurveda). A literary review through Bruhatrayee (treatises of Ayurveda) revealed the use of rasa dravyas (mineral & metallic drugs) in the formulations mentioned for the management of sthavara and jangama visha. The common rasa dravyas used are orpiment, realgar, red ochre, etc. These formulations are used for external and internal use as pana (oral intake), nasya (nasal therapy), anjana (collyrium), etc. As most of the rasa dravyas used in the formulations are vishahara (anti-toxic), hrudya (cardioprotective), vranahara (wound healing), shulahara (analgesic) and kandughna (anti-pruritic) properties they are useful in the management of the toxic signs and symptoms manifested by various poisons.

Keywords: Rasadravyas, visha, formulations, vishahara

INTRODUCTION

A literary review carried out on the formulations used in the management of venomous bites revealed the use of rasa dravyas. The rasa dravyas (mineral and metallic drugs) found in the formulation are Manashila (Realgar), Haratala (Orpiment), Gairika (Red ochre), Shilajatu (Black bitumen), Parada

(Mercury), Kankshi (Alum), Swarna (Gold), Tuttha (Blue vitriol), Souviranjana (Antimony) and Srotanjana.

Rasa dravyasa like Swarna, Parada are said to be Vishaghna, tridoshaghna, have rasayana property, etc. and hence are employed in the yogas.

Table 1: Agada Yogas in Charaka Samhita

Sl. No.	Yoga	Rasadravya present	Mode of administration	Indication
1	Mrutasanjeevana Agada ¹	Haratala (Orpiment), Manahshila (Realgar)	Internally through oral route, Nasal drops, anointment, wearing, fumigation, keeping in the house	In all types of poison
2	Mahagandhahasti Agada ²	Shilajatu (Black Bitumen), Haratala (Orpiment), Manahshila (Realgar), Gairika (Red Ochre)	Internally as Pana (drinking), collyrium, anointment	In all types of poison
3	Kshara Agada ³	Gairika	Oral administration	In all types of poison
4	Mamsyadi yoga ⁴	Manashila (Realgar)	Oral administration, nasal route, collyrium, anointment	In all types of poison and inflammatory conditions
5	Paramo agada ⁵	Shilajatu (Black Bitumen), Manahshila (Realgar)	Nasal route, collyrium, anointment	In insect bite
6	Chandanadi Yoga ⁶	Manahshila (Realgar), Parada (Mercury)	Oral administration	In all types of poison

Table 2: Agada Yogas in Ashtanga Sangraha

Sl. No.	Yoga	Rasadravya present	Mode of administration	Indication
1	Sanjeevana Agada ⁷	Kankshi (Potash Alum), Haratala (Orpiment), Manahshila (Realgar)	Oral administration, Nasal route, collyrium, inhalation, fumigation, anointment, wearing on body	All toxic effects
2	Dashanga Agada ⁸	Manahshila (Realgar)	Oral administration	In all types of poison
3	Oushanasa Agada ⁹	Kankshi (Potash Alum)	Oral administration	In all types of poison
4	Balasurya Agada ¹⁰	Manashila (Realgar)	Oral administration	In all types of poison
5	Dushivishari Agada ¹¹	Gairika (Red Ochre)	Oral administration	In all types of poison
6	Taruna Palasha Kshara Yoga ¹²	Gairika (Red Ochre)	Oral administration	In all types of poison

7	Churnanjana ¹³	Sauviranjana	Collyrium	When eyes are vitiated because of visha (poison)
8	Vajra Churna ¹⁴	Manohva (Realgar), Parada (Mercury)	Oral administration	In all types of poison
9	Tarkshya Agada ¹⁵	Suvarna Gairika (Red Ochre)	Oral administration, Nasal route, collyrium, anointment	In all types of poison
10	Lodhra Agada ¹⁶	Manahshila (Realgar)	Oral administration	In all types of poison
11	Vachadi Agada ¹⁷	Shilajatu (Black Bitumen), Manahshila (Realgar)	Oral administration, Nasal route, collyrium, anointment	Insect bites
12	Vachadi Anjana ¹⁸	Manahshila (Realgar), Gairika (Red Ochre), Tamra (Copper), Mukta (Pearl), Swarna (Gold), Pravala (Coral), Tuttha (Blue vitriol), Srotanjana (Antimony)	Collyrium	In Spider bite
13	Sugandhakhya Agada ¹⁹	Manahshila (Realgar), Haratala (Orpiment)	Anointment	In all types of poison
14	Mahasugandha Agada ²⁰	Gairika (Red Ochre)	Oral administration, anointment	In all types of poison
15	Sharkaradi Lehyam ²¹	Swarnamakshika (Copper pyrite) & Swarna Bhasma (ash of Gold)	Oral administration	In all types of poison

Other than the above a few agada yogas mentioned are

- Use of Swarnamakshika bhasma and Swarna bhasma with sharkara and madhu is said to be vishaghna²² in all types of poison.
- In scorpion sting lepa and anjana with Haratala (orpiment) with other herbal drugs is mentioned²³
- Kaseesa (Green vitriol) as ropana in loota visha (spider poison)²⁴ with other herbal drugs
- Lepa of haratala (orpiment) and manashila (Realgar) as lepa in loota visha (spider poison)²⁵ with other herbal drugs
- In visha janya Hikka (hiccup because of poison)- internal administration of a herbomineral combination containing shankha bhasma (calcified ash of conch shell), swarna bhasma (ash of gold) and gairika (red ochre)²⁶
- Pradhamana nasya with manashila (realgar), anjana (antimony) and haratala (orpiment) has been said along with other drugs in case of poison when patient is unconscious²⁷

Table 3: Agada Yogas in Ashtanga Hridaya

Sl. No.	Yoga	Rasadravya present	Mode of administration	Indication
1	Chandrodaya Agada ²⁸	Anjana (Antimony), Haratala (Orpiment), Manashila (Realgar)	Oral administration, Nasal route, collyrium, anointment	In all types of poison
2	Dushivishari Agada ²⁹	Gairika (Red Ochre)	Oral administration	In cumulative toxicity
3	Vajra Agada ³⁰	Manashila (Realgar), Parada (Mercury)	Oral administration	In all types of poison
4	Mandara agada ³¹	Haratala (Orpiment), Manashila (Realgar), Gairika (Red Ochre)	Oral administration	In spider bite

Table 4: Agada Yogas in Sushruta Samhita, Kalpasthana

Sl. No.	Yoga	Rasadravya present	Mode of administration	Indication
1	Tarkshya Agada ³²	Gairika (Red Ochre)	Oral administration	Snake bite
2	Mahasugandhi Agada ³³	Gairika (Red Ochre), Manashila (Realgar), Kaseesa (Green vitriol)	Oral administration, wearing on the body	In all types of poison

Other than the above in mandala visha (viper bite) – gairika (red ochre) with madhu (honey) for internal administration is mentioned³⁴.

Table 5: Properties of the rasa dravyas used in the above formulations

Sl.No.	Rasa darvya	Rasa	Guna	Veerya	Vipaka	Doshaprabhava	Karma
1	Gairika (Red Ochre) ³⁵	Madhura (sweet), Tikta (bitter), Kashaya (astringent)	Snigdha (unctuous), Guru (heavy), Kathina (hard), Vishada (clear)	Sheeta (Cold)	Madhura	Pittashamana (alleviates pitta)	Vishapaha (alexeterics), Balya (strengthens body), Vranaropana (wound healing), Kandughna (anti-pruritic)
2	Manashila (Realgar) ³⁶	Tikta (bitter), Katu (pungent)	Snigdha (unctuous), Ushna, Guru (heavy), Sara (mobile)	Ushna (Hot)	-	Kaphavatahara (alleviates kapha and vata)	Rasayana (rejuvenation of body), Vishaghna (alexeterics), Varnakara (increases complexion)
3	Haratala (Orpiment) ³⁷	Katu (pungent), Tikta (bitter), Kashaya (astringent)	Snigdha (unctuous), guru (heavy), Ushna	Ushna (Hot)	-	Vatashleshmahara (alleviates vata and kapha)	Ojaskara, Balakara (strengthens body), Mrutyuhara, Visha rakta, bhutanut (alexeterics)

4	Swarnamakshika (Chalcopryrite) ³⁸	Tikta (bitter), Madhura (sweet)	Sheeta (cold), Laghu (light)	Sheeta (Cold)	Katu	Tridoshaghna (alleviates all the doshas)	Balya (strengthens body), Rasayana (rejuvenation of body), Sakalamayaghna (all diseases), Vrishya (aphrodisiac)
5	Swarna (Gold) ³⁹	Kashaya (astringent) Tikta (bitter), Madhura (sweet) & Katu (pungent)	Sheeta, Guru (heavy), Snigdha (unctuous), Picchila (mucilaginous)	Sheeta (Cold)	Madhura	Tridoshaghna (alleviates all the doshas)	Balya (strengthens body), Rasayana (rejuvenation of body), Ayushkara (longevity), Ojovivardhana, Vishagarahara (alexeterics), etc.
6	Kankshi (Potash Alum) ⁴⁰	Kashaya (astringent), Katu (pungent), Amla (sour), Madhura (sweet)	Guru (heavy), Snigdha (unctuous)		-	Tridoshahara (alleviates all the doshas)	Vishanashini, Garadosha vinashini (anti-poisonous), Raktasthambini
7	Shilajatu (Black Bitumen) ⁴¹	Madhura (sweet), Tikta (bitter)	Guru (heavy), Sheeta (cold)	Sheeta (Cold)	Katu	Vatapittahara (alleviates vata and pitta)	Rasayana (rejuvenation of body)
8	Tuttha (Blue vitriol) ⁴²	Katu (pungent), Kashaya (astringent), Madhura (sweet), Kshara	Laghu (light), Ushna	Ushna (Hot)	Katu	Kaphapittahara (alleviates kapha and pitta)	Balya (strengthens body), Rasayana, Garaghna (anti-poisonous), Krimighna (anti-microbial)
9	Kaseesa (Green vitriol) ⁴³	Amla (sour), Kashaya (astringent)	Snigdha (unctuous), guru (heavy), ruksha (dry), ushna (hot)	Ushna (Hot)	-	Shleshmashana, Vatakaphahara (alleviates vata and kapha)	Rasayana (rejuvenation of body), Vrana shodhana, ropana (wound healing), Vishapaha (alexeterics)
10	Sauviranjana (Antimony) ⁴⁴	Tikta (bitter), Kashaya (astringent), Katu (pungent)	Snigdha (unctuous)	Sheeta (Cold)	Madhura	Pittaghna (alleviates pitta)	Sangrahi, Drik prasadana, Netrya (beneficial for eyes), Vishaghna (alexeterics)
11	Srotanjana (Antimony) ⁴⁵	Kashaya (astringent), Madhura (sweet)	Hima (cold), Snigdha (unctuous)	Sheeta (Cold)	-	Kaphapittasrakopaut (alleviates)	Grahi, netrya, lekhana, used in Visha dosha (alexeterics)
12	Parada (Mercury) ⁴⁶	Shadrasa (All six taste)	Snigdha (unctuous), Sara (mobile)	Ushna (Hot)	Madhura	Tridoshaghna	Rasayana (rejuvenate), Vrishya (aphrodisiac), Balya (strengthens body), Ayushkara, Pushtikara, Sarvamayahara (useful in all diseases)
13	Tamra (Copper) ⁴⁷	Kashaya (astringent), Tikta (bitter), Madhura (sweet), Amla (sour)	Sheeta (cold), Laghu (light), Sara (mobile)	Ushna (Hot)	Katu	Vatakaphahara, Pittakaphahara (alleviates pitta and kapha)	Hridvishodhana, Garahara (anti-poisonous), Rasayana (rejuvenation of body), useful in visha dosha
14	Pravala (Coral) ⁴⁸	Kashaya (astringent), Madhura (sweet), Amla (sour)	Laghu (light), Snigdha (unctuous), Sheeta (cold)	Sheeta (Cold)	-	Pittajit, Tridoshaghna (alleviates all the doshas)	Vrishya (aphrodisiac), Balya (strengthens body), Grahadoshahara (Psychosis), Chakshushya, useful in vishajara roga (poisonous conditions)

DISCUSSION

The most common rasa dravya used in the management of venomous bites are Red ochre, Orpiment, Realgar, Mercury, Antimony, Coral, Gold, Chalcopryrite, etc. Most of these rasa dravyas have balya, vrishya, rasayana properties that help in tolerating the toxic nature of poison. It may give ability to tolerate the poison better. Many of the rasa dravyas like Pravala (coral), Tamra (copper), Srotanjana (antimony), etc. are said to have

vishaghna (anti-poisonous) action or are indicated in conditions of visha (poison) that may act as anti-toxic.

Acharya charaka explains that animal poison is situated below, and vegetable poison is situated above and hence one counteracts the other. This mutually antagonizing nature is made use of in the treatment and one acts as an antidote to the other, hence it can easily neutralize the snake envenomation⁴⁹.

CONCLUSION

A literary review of the formulations used in the management of venomous bites and stings revealed the use of rasa dravyas. The commonly used rasa dravyas are Red ochre, Orpiment, Realgar, Blue vitriol, Balck Bitumen, etc. By considering the properties of the rasa dravya it can be said that these have antagonizing properties to that of visha and hence act as antagonist to the other and so have a major role in the management of venomous conditions. Most of the drugs have vishahara (anti-toxic), hrudya (cardioprotective), vranahara (wound healing), shulahara (analgesic) and kandughna (anti pruritic) properties that help in the management of poisonous bites and stings. Hence these rasa dravyas have commonly employed in formulating the preparations of vishaghna action.

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