

## A LITERARY REVIEW ON LAUHA MARAKA DRAVYA

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### Abstract

*A view over concept of marana reflects that maraka dravya. (drugs used for incineration) strongly interferes the properties and ultimately responsible for the generation of newer properties as well as diminution of the harmful or adverse properties. Thus the concept of maraka dravya can explain multidimensional properties of any dhatu/metal and hence Lauha. Along with maraka dravya, bhavana (impregnation and trituration) with certain drugs as well as anupana dravya (vehicle) were also considered as an important factor in reference to pharmacological action of Lauha bhasma in the literature. Rasa experts had explored the fact that “Mritani Lauhani Rasi Bhavanti” The process of Marana brings the metals in to most assimilable form, along with generation of broad spectrum therapeutic effect in the bhasma. Rasa dravya’s as well as muli dravya’s (herbs) both were found useful for the purpose of Marana. The review presents sadharana as well as visishta maraka dravya, maraka gana for Lauha (iron).*

**Key Words:** *Lauha, Marana, Maraka Dravya, Incineration, Muli dravya’s (herbs), Rasa dravya’s*



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## Introduction

Marana plays most important role in the preparation of potent bhasma. The process of marana include two important factors i.e. a) Maraka dravya (Drugs for incineration) and b) Puta (quantum of heat with frequency of heat treatment). A careful view over the various procedures of marana indicates major role of maraka dravya (which are able to disintegrate the metal & transform the metal. Maraka dravya includes drugs of herbal origin as well as Parad, (Mercury), Gandhak (Sulphur), Makshika etc Different maraka dravya are advised but herbs were emphasized more. Herbs took important place from the very beginning as seen in Ayaskriti, where the metals are disintegrated by repeated treatment of intense heat followed by quenching in some liquids i.e. kwatha (decoction) of specific herbs, ksharjal, cow’s urine

etc. These herbs play a role in the disintegration of metals by providing specific media and also impregnate the specific therapeutic properties. Herbs were natural healers from the beginning and they convert the inorganic metals into a more favourable organometallic form. Thus herbs are strong agents which are responsible for the generation of newer properties in the metal bhasma's.

In the period of Rasashastra experts mainly emphasized over the use of Rasa (mercury) for the purpose of metal incineration and put the herbs secondary. At the same time classics referred specific groups of medicines (herbs) for the purpose of incineration so as to procure specific properties in the bhasma. These groups of herbs were named as marakagana.

### **Dhatu Marana Dravyas**

After the samhita period with the development of Rasashastra, the inclusion of Parada (Mercury), Makshika (Chalcopyrite), Gandhaka (Sulphur) etc. along with the adaptation of new procedures brought newer concepts in the field of bhasma nirmaan. Hence texts provided samanya (common) as well as vishishta (specific) methods for incineration concepts regarding marana of dhatu's (metals), developed during the period of Rasashastra.

लोहानां मारणं श्रेष्ठं सर्वेषां रसभस्मना ।

मुलीभिर्मध्यमं प्राहूः कनिष्ठं गन्धकादिभिः ॥

अरिलोहेन लोहस्य मारणं दुर्गुणप्रदम् ॥ [Rd.Cu. 14/14]

Which means incineration of metals with Rasa or Rasabhasma is best, incineration with Mulidravya (drugs of herbal origin) is of medium category/ potency, incineration with Gandhakadi is categorized as inferior / least potency, while incineration with Arilauha is said as durgunaprada (having harmful effects). The verse has supported the fact that the concept of marana with Mulidravya, Gandhaka & Arilauha was also in vogue. Same view is followed by Rasa Ratna Samuchchaya and Ayurveda prakash.

### **Specific Maraka Dravya For Different Dhatus**

During the period of Rasashastra along with the general concept for incineration, specific maraka dravya were also mentioned from the very beginning. The eminent text Rasendra Mangala has presented specific maraka dravya (incinerating material) for different metals as given-

तालेन वंगं दरदेन तीक्ष्णम्, नागेन हेमं शिलायां च नागम् ॥

गन्धाश्मना चैव निहन्ति शुल्बम्, तारं च माक्षीक रसेनहन्यात् ॥ [R.M. 2/53]

Followed by these individual drugs combination with specific liquids are also given.  
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**Table: Depicting Specific Maraka Dravya for Different Dhatus**

S.No.	Metal	Incineration Agents	
		Single	Compound (with addition of liquid)
01	Swarna (Gold)	Naag (Lead)	+ Snuhirasa (Latex of Snuhi)
02	Rajat (Silver)	Makshik (Pyrite)	+Snuhi kshira Latex of Snuhi)
03	Tamra(Copper)	Gandhak(Sulphur)	+Aja kshira (Goats milk)
04	Iron (Lauha)	Hingula(Cinnabar)	+ Naaripayah (Human milk)
05	Naag (Lead)	Manahsila(Realgar)	+Ravidugdha (Latex of Arka)
06	Vanga (Tin)	Hartaal(Orpiment)	+ Palash (Juice of Palash)

Rasarnava has quoted almost similar view only difference is Sindura with Snuhikshira is advised as incinerating agent for Swarna, Rajata & Makshika. Later on some other texts also presented this view with some variation in liquid and inclusion of other material. Here the concept of Arilauha is presented, means incineration with metals possessing antagonistic properties. As mentioned earlier this concept also runs parallel to the other one and followed by most of the others. Marana with arilauha was considered worst as depicted for the first time in Rasendra Chudamani. This view was accepted by some of the scholar's only.

#### **Lauha Maraka dravya's (Drugs used for incineration of iron)**

Maraka dravya means those, which helps to convert lauha into bhasma form. Maraka dravya's helps in disintegration of metals in microfine stage and magnifies the potential with impregnation of newer properties. Lauha kalpa (medicines having Iron as main ingredient) are considered comparatively more important than other aushadha kalpa, that's why Lauha marana (incineration of Iron) is presented specifically in the Rasa texts. Various methods of Lauha marana is presented in the text. A careful view over literature shows that Lauha marana was developed as a science in period of Nagarjuna. (Lauha shastra of jain Nagarjuna-3<sup>rd</sup> Cen. AD), which is found in concise form as Amritsara Lauha in the famous texts CD. and Rd.Ci. Study of Amritsara Lauha procedures shows that it is a highly complex procedure having steps like Marana, Bhanupaka, Sthalipaka & Putapaka & Nishpattipaka.

Incineration followed in this pattern is described here -

**NAGARJUNA SAMMAT LAUHA SHASTRA**  
**AMRITSAAR LAUHA RASAYANA**

Marana (sodhana) { L.P.  $\xrightarrow{\text{Smear Paste of indicated drugs* over it \& heat strongly}}$  Quench in T.K.  $\rightarrow$  Powdered and Washed

Bhanupaka { Washed, powdered  $\rightarrow$  Dried in Sunrays  $\rightarrow$  powder fine

Sthalipaka { L.C. (Procured from B.P.) + T.K. (Residual from sodhana)  $\xrightarrow{\text{Boiled till kwatha Evaporate}}$  L.C.  $\rightarrow$  Repeat same procedure with \*\*  $\rightarrow$  fine powder

Putana { L.C. (Procured from Sthalipaka) + T.K.  $\xrightarrow{\text{Triturate}}$  Prepare pellets  $\xrightarrow{\text{Subject to Putapaka [3-4 times]}}$   $\rightarrow$  Repeat same procedure with other indicated drug \*\*\* (3 times in each separately or jointly)  $\rightarrow$  Fine powder  $\rightarrow$  filter

Note - Repeat Sthali Paka after each puta

Pradhana paka/ Nishpatti Paka/ Amritikaran { L.B. (Procured from above procedure) + T.K.  $\xrightarrow{\text{Subject to Ghrita Paka Mridu, Madhya, Khara paka}}$  L.B.  $\rightarrow$  Add Prakshepa + (Pitta), (Vata) (Kapha) Goghrita (for Kaph, Pitta, Vata 2,3 & 4 part respectively) + Dughda

- \* Kutharchhinna, Triphala, Shweta aparajita, Harjoda, Hastikarna (Palasha) Patra, Shatavari, Kala Bhringraj, Shalinchak root, Kasa root, Punarnava & Bhangra,
- \*\* Palasha Patra & Mula, Shatavari, Sweta Bhringraj, Kala Bhringraj Swarasa/Kwatha
- \*\*\* Bhringraj, Naagkesara, Shatavari, Surankand, Bhankanda, Sahajrasa, Bhallatak, Palash Kshaal & Mula & Punarnava Swarasa.

### **Marana (Sodhana)**

In this process Lauha patra are smeared with specific drugs, heated strongly and quench in triphala kwatha. It is repeated till complete Lauha patra disintegrates, lastly it is pounded well and prepared powder. The Lauha which didn't get disintegrated even after the above procedure should be left aside considering material other than iron.

The durgs advised to smear over L.P. show variation. In Lauha sarvaswam they are gandarika, mahaushadhi, shalincha, haritparni, kalambuka, changeri, kutharika, vikankata, rakta marisha, twacha, manahsila, hingula and swarna makshika. No other text has accepted Marana as a part of Trividha paka. Mostly Bhanupaka, Sthalipaka and putapaka are said jointly.

### **Bhanupaka**

Cd. and Rd.Ci. has advised kshalana after Marana(sodhana) process and then sun treatment (Bhanupaka). In other texts triphala kwatha, water or kanji are said to mix with Lauha churna before sun treatment. The process of impregnation and sundrying is advised to repeat for three times or seven times.

**Sthalipaka** -Cooking (paka)of Lauha churna added with specified liquid placed in a sthali till complete evaporation of liquid is known as sthalipaka. Liquid advised for sthalipaka is mainly Triphala kwatha. Repeat the process with Palasha Patra & Mula, Shatavari, Sweta Bhringraj, Kala Bhringraj Swarasa/Kwatha. Apart from these drugs Cd. and Rd.Ci. has advised to do sthalipaka with the drugs favourable to prakriti of patient and disease. While R.S.S., R.T. and R.J.N. has advised that other than these drugs, herbs favourable to dosha (vitiated) or diseases can also be used. Sthalipaka helps in further disintegration of metal as well as magnification of properties.

**Putana**- The Lauha churna procured after sthalipaka is impregnated with the juice/kwatha of herbs indicated and triturated very well than pellet formation, dry them and subject to puta. In reference to Amrita saar lauha Cd. and Rd.Ci. has quoted that Lauha churna procured after

sthalipaka should be washed then subject to puta with Triphala kwatha and repeat the process with Bhringraj, Naagkesara, Shatavari, Surankand, Bhankanda, Sahajrasa, Bhallatak, Palash Kshaal & Mula & Punarnava Swarasa

In amrītsara lauha the drugs indicated for bhavana are advised to take individually (with each drug) or jointly. 3-4 puta should be given. other herbs favourable to prakriti and disease can be used. R.S.S., R.T. and R.J.N.advised drugs favourable for vitiated dosha and disease. Sthalipaka is advised after every puta.

Putana is most widely accepted way for incineration purpose, so that its assimilation becomes easy along with the therapeutic benefits. Puta involves mainly two factors viz

(1)Agnipramana (Heat treatment with particular quantity/measurement of fuel and particular duration/frequency) - Actually puta is incineration of Lauha in definite heat pattern as required for the particular metal, to convert it in niruttha state from where it can not be reobtained..

^^jlkfnzO;ikdkuka izek.kKkiua iqVe~^^ [R.S.S. 10/47]

The therapeutic potential of drug gets multiply with the repeated number of puta.It helps to convert the metal in to microfine ,fast acting nanoparticle state. More and more number of puta enhances the properties more and more.

(2)Maraka dravya (herbs/minerals/other material)- Treatment with different herbs removes the blemishes and impregnate newer properties in the Lauha.They are responsible for increasing therapeutic potential of bhasmas.

Specialization of incineration presented specific drugs of Lauha marana from the period of Nagarjuna. (i.e. Hingula for Lauha Marana). On the other hand review of Amrītsaar Lauha shows group of herbs advised for the purpose of puta. Also drugs favourable to prakriti and disease can be added or drugs opposite for prakriti and disease can be removed or replaced by the favourable ones.This concept accepted well and hence text of later period had presented group of drugs as well as single drug for marana of lauha according to the purpose.

A view over rasa literature shows 85 specifically described marana procedures for Lauha(iron) in different text of rasa shastra (from Rasendra Chudamani 12<sup>th</sup> century to Rasamritam 20<sup>th</sup> century). Early text suggested methods based on previous concepts with the introduction of new herbs for putapaka Later in samgraha period authors quoted methods form old treatise as well as introduced some new one also. Review on specific marana

procedures shows that various drugs of mineral and herbal origin are mentioned for the purpose.

Mineral advised in vishishta marana methods of lauha bhasma are - Parad, Gandhaka, Rasa bhasma, Kajjali, Hingula, Swarnamakshika, Manahshila and Tankan. About 50 percent texts mentioned use of these drugs among which majority of texts used Hingula.

Herbs used in these methods were Triphala kwatha, Amalaki swarasa, shweta Punarnava, Adusa, Matsyaakshi, Bala bilva Swarasa, Shivlingi swarasa, Amlaphala swarasa, Punarnava, Sindubaar, Apamarga, Sehunda, Imli kshaar, Gomutra, Haridra, Nimbu swarasa, Kanji, Kumari swarasa, Rakta punarnava, Sajjikshara, Yavakshara, Hare's blood, Girikarni Swarasa, Changeri swarasa, Jalavetasa swarasa, Bhringraj swarasa & Girikarni swarasa, Patalgarudirasa, Kutherak kshaal, Giloya rasa, Chhilhint, Stanya or Arka dugdha, Naripayah, Chitraka kwatha, Gokshura kwatha, Sahdevi, Ardraka, Tallmuli swarasa, Hastikarna kwatha, Mulaka swarasa, Shatavari swarasa, Vidarikanda swarasa, Dashmula kwatha, Vrihati kwatha, Bijoura nimbu swarasa, Palashtwak kwatha, Shigru twak kwatha, Godughda, Arjuna twak kwatha, Vandhya karkoti, Machhechhi Kwatha, Maankanda, Bhallatak, Chitraka, Suranakand, Hastikarna palash & Asthi sandhani, Patal Garudi swarasa, Gandirika, Shalihanchi, Haritparni, Kalambuka, Changeri, Kutharika, Vikankat, Chaulai, Tinduka phala rasa, Kankari swarasa, Girikarni rasa, Changeri Rasa, Dadima rasa, Ghrita, Honey, Patalgarudi swarasa, Kutharchhina rasa, Thuhar, Arka, Kalihar, Ingudi, Haldi, Daruhaldi, Gunja, Ashwagandha, Nagarmotha, Nirgundi, Garudi, Kutherak, Kanak, Kutaki, Kangani, Hansapadi, Kuda Rajika, Takra, Panchamrita, Kamtakari swarasa, Dadima patra swarasa.

Triphala kwatha was most commonly used for sodhana and marana process.

In The Early Period Nirvapa Prakriya That Is Strong Heat Treatment, Then Quench In Any Liquid Was In Vogue. Repeated Quenching, Burying In Paddy, Roasting, Putapaka Methods Were Applied. Majority Of Text Advised Putapaka With Varying No. Of Puta I.E 4,8,10,12,21,50,101,268.

**Table: Showing Maraka Herbs Advised For Specific Diseases**

<b>Disease</b>	<b>Drugs/Herbs advised</b>
Jeerna Jwara	Guduci(SSMK)
Kasa, Swasa	Vyaghri, Brahmayashti (L.S.)
Yakshma Ashrika and Pittavikana	Vasa, Bala
Nasavrana, Raktasrava	Durva
Pradara	Kankola
Pravahika	Nichula dala Swarasa
Grahani	Mustaka
Atisaar	Kutaja kwatha
Meha	Vara (triphala), Guduchi (L.S.)
<b>Mutrakrichhra</b>	<b>Pashanabheda</b>
Swayathu	Punarnava, Sunthi kwatha
Pandu , udarroga, Apasmaar	Gomutra
Raktaja Vikar	Manakanda
Gulma	Rohitaka, Amla Dadima (L.S.)
Hikka. Swasa	Brahmi and Bharangi rasa
Ama Vikara	Eranda and sunthi kwatha
Shula	Dashamula, Gomutra, triphala, Erandamula, Tushodaka L.S.)
Yakrita, Pliharoga	Ghritakumari ,Arkadughda, Rohitaka
Krimi	Devadaru, Vidanga (L.S.),kushtha,aragvadha,nimbi,saptaparni, Palash, Vasa, Bhallataka,(LS) Bakuchi, Arka, Vritaka, Vidanga (LS)
Tridoshaja Mula Stambha	Ikshu, Abhiru, Varuna, Erand Trina panchmula, sailusha, Triphala
Ashmari, Mutraghata	Ksheeravriksha, Amrita, Draksha, Abhiru, Dashamula,(Both)
Kshaya	Ashwagandha
Amlapitta	Shatavari
Kalpakrama	Mundika, Shatmulu, Chitranga,, Kesharaja, Madhuka, Guduchi, Markawa, Musali
Rasayana	Nagbala, Ashwagandha, Gokarna, Vriddha daru, Amalaki
Vajikaran	Vanari, Shatamulika, Kshurika
Baddha Koshta	Shatavari, Shigru, Palash, Bhringraaj, Triphala kwatha
Mandagni	Pippali
Klaibya	VidariKanda
Aruchi	Jambir Nimbu Swarasa
Vivarnata	Shirish
Vataroga	Khareti



Pittahar	Pittapapda
Kaphahar	Maricha, Ardraka
Sannipata	Dashamula
Vishamjwara	Chirayata
Kasa	Vasa
Raktapitta	Kathagular
Pandu	Mahish Mutra
Mutraghaat	Nirgundi
Shula	Kanji
Pama, Dadru, vicharchika	Dadrughna (Pamad)
Arsha	Musali
Hridaroga	Arjuna
Aamvaat	Utangana root
Ashmari	Pashanabheda
udavarta	Nishotha
Swarakshaya	Brahmi

Text R.S.S. has advised different gana's for incineration as given below

- 1) **Triphaladi Gana** - Triphala, trivrita, danti, katuki, musali, vriddhadaru, punarnavaa,(white) ,vrishapatraka, chitraka, ardraka, vidanga, bhringaraj, bhallataka, dadimapatra, shatavari, punarnava, kuthaaraka, kramuka, surana, guduchi, mandukaparni, hastikarna palash, kulisha, mankanda, khandikarna, gojihva

This group is advised for general process/purpose.

- 2) **Erandadi Gana** - Drugs are eranda, shariva, draksha, sirisha, gandhaprasarni, mashaparni, mudgaparni, vidarikanda and ketaki. This is advised in vata vikra (disease cause by vitiated vata)
- 3) **Kiratadi gana-** - Kirattikta, amrita, nimba, kustumbaru, shatavari, patola, rakta chandana, padma, shalmali, udumbara and jatamansi.This group is advised for pittavikara/pitta har properties.
- 4) **Shringaveradi gana-** Ardraka, nirgundi, indrayava, karanja, latakaranja, murva, shigru,shirisha, varuna, arkapatra, patola and kantakari.This is advised for preparation of Lauha bhasma specifically of kapha dosha/kaphahar properties
- 5) **Gokshuradi Gana** - Gokshura, kshuraka (Tal Makhana), Vyaghri, Prishniparni, Shaliparni and Guduchi- this is advised to procreate vata-kaphahara properties.

- 6) **Patoladi Gana** - Patola, Ushir, Kasamarda, Aparajita, Lodhra, Neelkamal, Shweta kamal, Varahikanda and Priyrangu.  
This is for pitta- kapha hara properties .
- 7) **Kinshukadi Gana** - Kinshuka, Kashmari, Sunthi, Agnimantha, Trikantaka (Gokshura), Shyonaka, Shalaparni, Mashaparni, Prishiparni, Palash, Kantakari, Brahati, and Bilwa. These are for Tridosahara properties.
- 8) **Shatavaryadi Gana** - Shatavari, Bala, Amalaki, Giloya, Vriddhadaru, Kapikachhu, Bhringaraja, Vidarikanda, Gokshura, Ikshura, Ashwagandha and Pippali. This group is advised to produce for vajikarana properties.
- 9) **Vidarikandadi Gana** - Vidarikanda, Pindalu, Bhringaraja, Shatavari, Kshirakanchuka (?), Bhallataka, Amrata, Chitraka, Hastikarna palasha, Musali, yashtimadhu and Mundi. This group is advised to produce rasayana properties in Lauha.

**Rasa Tarangani** has mentioned different gana's for putapaka as.

- **Lauhamaraka Gana - Triphala**, Shatavari, Adusa, Musali, Neelkamal, Sugandhabala, Dashamula, Punarnava, Vriddhadaru mula, Bhringraj, Vishva, Vidanga, Karanja, Shigru, Nirgundi, Sursa, Eranadamula, Hastikarna palash, Parpataka and Chandana are grouped under Lauha maraca gana.
- **Vatanashak Gana** - Erandmula, Rasna, Dashamula, Prasarani, Mudgaparni, Mashaparni, Shatamuli, Punarnava, Ashwagandha, Amrata, Mansi, Bala, Naagbala are grouped as vatahar gana.
- **Pittanashak Gana** - Ushir, Neer, Sinhika, Kirat, Bhuriputrika, Patola, Chandana, Amrata, Saroj, Taalmulika, Sutikta, Shalmali Sifa, Sifa, Laksha are grouped as pittanashak gana to eradicate pittaja diseases.
- **Kaphanashak Gana** - Rasna, Maricha, Avika, Nagini, Vishva beshaja, Eranda, Pippalimula, Tulasi, Shringvera, Bharangi, Raktarka Kusum, Murva, Shigru, Vibhitak These are advised as kaphanashak gana to eradicate kaphaja diseases.

Apart from these gana's, drugs specific for particular disease can be used or if such drugs are unavailable then only Triphala Kashaya can be used and this triphala putika Lauha bhasma can be used for all purpose.

Drugs for specific dosha's are also mentioned in Gudhartha dipika commentary of S.S.M.K.

- 1) Triphala and Dashamula – for Vata

- 2) Sheeta – madhur dravya, Triphala, Vidari, Shatavari for Pitta
- 3) Ardraka, Dashamula, - for Kapha
- 4) Vata Sleshma and Swayathu - Varshabhu, Shringavera, Manakanda.
- 5) Pitta-vata and pitta-rakta - Draksha, Vidari, Shatmuli, Kshir-Kakoli, Kakoli, Madooka pushpa, Kharjura.

## DISCUSSION

An overall review on Lauha marana shows that drugs of mineral origin, animal origin as well as plant origin (in abundance) were in vogue for incineration (puta). Among mineral drugs hingula is most abundantly used drug, while triphala is most abundantly used among the herbal drugs and gomutra, human milk are from animal origin.

Out of all the drugs advised during process of Lauha marana triphala seems most important. It took part in all the steps of Amritsaar Lauha. In other texts it is mentioned for sodhana (mostly) as well as marana purpose. In context of Amritsaar lauha specification about the quantity of triphala, method for preparation of decoction (ie. ratio of water, reduction of water) are mentioned. Similarly some other texts also presented specific method for triphala kwatha for different purpose.

Marana with Herbs is emphasized more, because incineration with herbs definitely effects the resultant quality of bhasma. This fact is supported by literature where various maraka gana (group of incinerating herbs) have been advised for Lauha for specific purpose). The concept of Tridosha Shamana is applied for the indication of maraka Gana. For Ex. – Triphaladi gana (for general purpose, Erandadi gana- for vatahar properties, Kiratadi gana for pitta vikara, Shringaveradi gana for kaphaja Vikara. Other than these gana individual herbs were also advised according to the purpose (prayojanvasa-Lauha putapaka prayojya vanaspatya) Analysis of this review helps in understanding the science of bhasma nirmana with development of broad spectrum therapeutic values in the bhasma.

## Abbreviations

A.K.- Anandakanda, A.P. -Ayurveda Prakash, CD. – Chakradatta, L.B.- Lauha bhasma, L.C.-Lauha churna, L.P. - Lauha patra, L.S. -Lauha Sarvaswam,  
R.Ci. –RasaChintamani, R.H.T. -Rasa Hridaya Tantra, R.J.N - Rasa Jala Nidhi  
R.K.D. - Rasa Kam Dhenu, R.M. - Rasendra Mangal,,R.Mj.-Rasa Manjari  
R.P.S. -Rasa Prakash Sudhakar, R.R. - Rasa Ratnakar, R.R.S.- Rasa Ratna Samuchchaya  
R.S.S. - Rasendra Saar Samgraha, R.T. - Rasa Tarangini, Rd.Ci. - Rasendra Chintamani

Rd.Cu. - Rasendra Chudamani, Rm - Rasamritam, Rn –Rasarnava, S.S.M.K.- Sharangadhar Samhita Madhyama Khanda , V.R.R.S.- Vrihad Rasa Raj Sundara

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