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Contribution of *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* to Ayurveda Pharmaceutics

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ABSTRACT

Bhaishajya Ratnavali is a compiled book of Ayurveda pharmaceutics that is from *Chakradutta*, *Rasendra Sara Sangraha*, *Charaka Samhita*, etc. *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* is the most popular reference book among the practitioners and students of Ayurveda. In this book *Utpatti* (Origin), *Bheda* (Types), *Guna* (Properties), *Shodhana* (Purification), *Marana* (Incineration) of *Maharasa*, *Uparasa*, *Sadharana rasa*, *Ratna* (Precious stones), *Uparatna* (Semi precious stones), *Visha*, *Upavisha* (Poisonous drugs) are explained. *Paribhasha* (Definitions), the concept of *bhavana* (Tricuration) and *murchana* (Special processing of raw oil or ghee) is also explained in this book. Line of treatment, *yoga* (Formulations), *pathya* (wholesome food) and *apathya* (unwholesome food) for each disease are also mentioned.

Key Words *Bhaishajya Ratnavali*, *Ayurveda Pharmaceutics*, *Bhavana*, *Murchana*

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda pharmaceutics there are a number of classical books that have a wide spectrum of formulations and protocol for treatment of diseases. *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* is one among them written by Kavi Raj Govinda Das Sen in 18th century AD. Two commentaries are available for *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* written by Shree Bhrahma Shankar Mishra and Ambika Dutta Shastri (1956). It is translated to Hindi and English by five authors¹. (Table 1)

Bhaishajya Ratnavali is a compiled book mainly from *Chakradutta*, *Rasendra Sara Sangraha*, *Charaka samhita*, etc. The book is divided into 106 chapters, each dealing with diseases.

Table 1 Translations of the Book *Bhaishajya Ratnavali*

Sl. No.	Author	Language	No. of Chapters
1	Ambika Dutta Shastri	Hindi	106
2	Dr S.N Mishra	Hindi	75
3	Rajeshwara Dutta Shastri	Hindi	106
4	Dr Kanjiv Lochan	English	65
5	Dr. Prabhakar Rao	English	106

Bhaishajya Ratnavali has been the most popular references book among the practitioners and students of Ayurveda. In this book *Utpatti* (origin), *Bheda* (Types), *Guna* (Properties), *Shodhana* (Purification), *Marana* (Incineration) of *Maharasa*, *Uparasa*, *Sadharana rasa*, *Ratna* (Precious stones), *Uparatna* (Semi precious stones), *Visha*, *Upavisha* (Poisonous drugs) are explained. *Paribhasha* (Definitions) are

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explained. Line of treatment, *yoga* (formulations), *pathya* (wholesome food) and *apathya* (unwholesome food) for each disease are also mentioned. Hence an attempt is made to review the contribution of *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* to *Ayurveda* pharmaceuticals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An extensive search was carried out in both print and digital media to collect the description of pharmaceuticals in *Bhaishajya Ratnavali*

OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS

1st Chapter²: In this chapter author has explained about *Mangalacharana*, *Shiva Parvati vandana*, *Vishnupada vandana*, *Ghrantakarthrivedana*, *Ayurvedasya lakshana*, *Ayurveda nirukti*, *Ayurvedotpattiprakara*. Mentioned about *Daksha*, *Ashwini*, *Indra*, *Atreya*, *Bharadhwaja*, *Dhanvantari*, *Charaka*, *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata*.

2nd Chapter³: *Rasa* (mercury) *paryaya* has been mentioned. The *paryaya* (synonyms) are as follows *Rasendra*, *parada*, *suta*, *sutaraja*, *sutaka*, *shivateja* and *rasa*. *Rasa lakshana* (*Characteristics*) are explained as the *parada* which possesses bluish tinge from within and a bright sunshine appearance from outside considered as pure mercury. Whereas, the impure mercury is said to have smoky or pale yellowish colour.

Rasa (mercury) dosha is explained which are *Naga* (lead), *Vanga* (tin), *mala* (impurities), *Vahni* (heat), *Chanchalata* (quickness), *Visha*

(poisonous), *Giri* (mountainous) and *asahyagni* (intolerance to heat). *Naga* and *vanga* are *dhatu doshaja*, *Mala Khanija samyogajanya dosha* (Combined metallic impurities), *Chanchala* is the guna of *parada* and this is also considered as *parada dosha*, *Chapalya dosha* is a because of *Chapala dhatu* (bismuth). *Giri dosha* is because of arsenic and antimony also called as *pashana samyogajanya dosha*. *Parada* (Mercury) will evaporate above 35⁰C but because of combination of other *dhatu parada* will evaporate fast. *Parada* (Mercury) can't tolerate more temperature this is called *ashyagnidosha*. Because of *naga*, *vanga*, *mala*, *vahni*, *chanchalata*, *visha*, *giri* and *ashyagni dosha* leads to *vrana* (ulcer), *kushta* (skin Diseases), *jadya* (lethargy), *daha* (burning sensation), *virya nasha* (loss in vigor), *marana* (death), *jadata* (lethargy) and *sphota* (blisters).

Author has explained the uses of *dosharahita parada* (pure mercury) which helps to increase the life span. *Shuddha parada* is called considered as *amruta of mrityuloka* (nectar).

Hingulottha parada (mercury extracted from cinnabar) is explained and the quantity of *parada* to be taken for *shodhana* (purification) and *marana* (tricturation) is also mentioned.

Parada shodhana has been explained. In this method, *parada* should be triturated with *lashuna swarasa* (juice of garlic), *tambula patra swarasa* (betel leaf) and *triphala kwatha* (decoction of fruits of *Terminalia chebula*, *Terminalia bellirica*, *Phyllanthus emblica*) later washed with *kanji* (sour gruel).

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Author has explained about types, synonyms, *shodhana* and *guna* of *Gandhaka* (Sulphur), *Vajra* (Diamond), *Abhraka* (Mica), *Haratala* (Orpiment), *Manashila* (Realgar), *Tuttha* (Copper sulphate), *Vimala* (Iron pyrites), *Kasisa* (Green vitriol), *Varatika* (Cowry), *Kanta pashana*, *Anjana* (Collyrium), *Hingula* (Cinnabar), *shilajatu* (Asphaltum punjabinum), *kankushta* (Rubharb), *Tankana* (Borax), *Shanka* (Cohn shell), *Swarna* (Gold), *Rajata* (Silver), *Tamra* (Copper), *Pittala* (Bronze), *Kamsya* (Bell metal),

Naga (lead), *Vanga* (tin), *Lauha* (Iron), *Mandoora* has been explained like other references

Shodhana and *marana* of *Manikya* (Ruby), *Mukta* (Pearl), *Pravala* (Calcium carbonate); *Sarvaratna samanya shodhana*, *Visha shodhana*, *Upavisha – Shodhana* of *dhatu* (*Dhatu metal*), *Jayapala* (*Croton tiglium*), *Snuhiksheera* (*Euphorbia nerifolia*). *Jalouka shodhana* (Purification of leech), *Agrahya Jalouka lakshana* has been mentioned (Table 2).

Table 2 Purification of drugs

Dravya (Drug)	Shodhana dravya (drug for purification)
Nimba Beeja (Seed of <i>Azadirachta indica</i>)	Apamarga Kashaya (Decoction of <i>Cassia fistula</i>)
Jayapala (<i>Croton tiglium</i>)	Kumari Moola Kwatha (Decoction of <i>alovera</i> root)
Raja Vruksha Beeja (Seeds of <i>Cassia fistula</i>)	Indravavuni (<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i>)
Dustura (<i>Datura metel</i>)	Uttara Varuni (<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i>)
Shigru (<i>Moringa oliefera</i>), Karpasa (<i>Gossypium herbaceum</i>), Apamarga (<i>Cassia fistula</i>)	Dry in Sun
Mahakaala Beeja (Seeds of <i>Trichosanthes tricuspidata</i>)	Amalaki (<i>Phyllanthus Emblica</i>)
Karanja (<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>) and Puti Karanja (<i>Caesalpinia bonduc</i>)	Bhringaraja (<i>Eclipta alba</i>)
Gunja (<i>Abrus precatorius</i>)	Nara mutra (Human urine)
Bhallataka (<i>Semicarpus anacardium</i>), Bilwa (<i>Aegle marmelos</i>)	Narikela (<i>Cocos nucifera</i>)
Guggulu (<i>Commifora mukul</i>)	Guduchi (<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>), triphala (Fruits of <i>Terminalia chebula</i> , <i>Terminalia bellirica</i> , <i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>)

3rd Chapter⁴- *Mishra varga prakarana*:

Classification of disease, cause of diseases, types of examination, description of treatment is mentioned.

4th Chapter⁵- *Manaparibhasha* (Table 3), *Gana*

(groups) of *triphala*, *trimada*, *madhuratrika*, *ksharatraya*, *trikatu*, *trijata*, *chaturushana*, *chaturjataka*, *chaturbhadra*, *chaturamla*, *sneha chatushtaya*, *panchakola*, *Panchaamla*, etc (Table 4) explanation on *Astavraga*, *Jeevaniya gana*, *Astamutra*, *ksharastaka*, *sarvasugandhi*, *Shweta maricha*, *Sukhodaka*, *Jyeshtha ambu*, *Amla Mulaka*, *Katvara*, *Udaswita*, *Shukta*, *Sidu*, *Asava*,

Table 3 Manaparibhasha (Weights and Measures)

6 Sarshapa	1 Yava
3 Yava	1 Ratti (125mg)
10 ratti	1 Masha (1.25g)
4 Masha	1 Shana (5g)
2 Shana	1 Kola (10g)
2 Karsha	1 Shukti (20g)
2 Kudava	1 Manika (40g)
2 Sharava	1 Prastha (80g)
4 Prastha	1 Aadhaka (320g)
4 Aadhaka	1 Drona (1280g)
2 Drona	1 Shurpa (2560g)
2 Shurpa	1 Droni (5120g)
4 Droni	1 Khari (20.480kg)
Bhara	2000 Pala (96kg)
100 pala	1 Tula (4.8kg)

Maireya. Definition of *Asava* and *Arishta*, *Kanjika*, *Madhushukta*, *Mantha*, *Laja*, *Tarpana* is mentioned.

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Table 4 Mishra varga (Group of drugs) mentioned in Bhaishajyaratnavali

Sl No	Name of the group	Ingredients
01	Triphala	Haritaki (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>), Amalaki (<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>), Vibhitaki (<i>Terminalia bellirica</i>)
02	Swalpa triphala	Kashmarya (<i>Gmelina arborea</i>), Kharjura (<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>), Parushaka (<i>Grewia asiatica</i>)
03	Trimada	Musta (<i>Cyperus rotundus</i>), Chitraka (<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i>), Vidanga (<i>Embelia ribes</i>)
04	Madhuratrika	Ghrita (Ghee), Guda (Jaggery), Madhu (Honey)
05	Trikshara	Sarja kshara (phyto-alkali of <i>Vateria indica</i>), Yava kshara (phyto-alkali of <i>Trachyspermum ammi</i>), tankana kshara (Borax)
06	Trikatu	Pippali (<i>Piper longum</i>), Maricha (<i>Piper nigrum</i>) and Shunti (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>)

Different methods of *bhavana* (Triturating) is mentioned. For preparing *churna*, the *bhavana* (Triturating) should continue for one week, if time is unspecified in the given formula. For this, the prescribed powder should be kept in mortar and be triturated by mentioned *swarasa* (juices), decoction or *kanji*. The substances should be levigated and kept in the sun for drying or should be levigated under sun and be dried simultaneously. During the night, the substance in mortar are covered and kept in a safe place. The following day, the substances should again be triturated in the prescribed liquids and the process of levigating under sun should be repeated. This process should continue for a week.

Prakshepa pramana for Bhavana (Ratio of decoction and juices used in varieties of the *bhavana* process) the prescribed liquids for *bhavana* process of a given powder should be limited only to triturate the later, so that a bolus could be prepared from the preparation. However, pouring more liquids is more beneficial. One should not pour all juices, etc. at one time into the mortar holding the given powder. Instead, the

prescribed liquids should be poured into the mortar one by one. It helps in contusing the matter. Method of preparing decoctions for *bhavana* process: The ratio of the herbal powder (to be processed through *bhavana* method) and the herb (which decoction is to be levigated) and water should be 1:1:8. For preparing decoctions the boiling process should continue till the original amount of water is reduced to one eighth. This ratio is meant for the *bhavana* process for preparing general *Rasa* and *Churna* types of drugs. For bhavana involving metals like iron, different ratio has to be administered.

Murchana⁶ (Special processing of Raw oil or ghee)

In *Jwara chikitsa* (Treatment for fever) for the first time, *Murchana* (Special processing of raw oil or ghee) concept has brought in *chikitsa*. *Murchana* (Special processing of raw oil or ghee) is the prime stage for any *ghrita* or *taila siddha yoga* (prepared formulation). At first *murchana* (Special processing of raw oil or ghee) is to be done according to classics for *sneha shodhana* (Purification of Sneha). Herbs which can be used for particular condition can be taken as *kwatha*

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(Decoction) *dravya* (Drug) and to be boiled with *sneha*. In 3rd stage *kalka* (Paste) *dravya* (Drug) and in 4th stage *gandha draya* (Aromatic drugs) like *Shati* (*Hedychium spicatum*), *Pushkara* (*Inula racemosa*) to be added and heated in *mandagni* (mild heat) till all water content evaporates and all froth ceases. At this stage *sneha* will be devoid of impurities and *dosha*.

DISCUSSION

Bhaishajya Ratnavali is a compiled book of *Ayurveda* pharmaceuticals; where in references from *Chakradutta*, *Rasendra Sara Sangraha*, *Charaka Samhita*, etc. written by Kaviraj Govinda Das Sen in 18th century. In this book *Rasa paryaya* (Synonyms of mercury), *Rasa dosha* (Impurities of mercury), *Utpatti* (Origin), *Bheda* (Types), *Guna* (Properties), *Shodhana* (Purification), *Marana* (Incineration) of *Maharasa*, *Uparasa*, *Sadharana rasa*, *Ratna* (precious stones), *Uparatna* (Semi- precious stones), *Visha* and *Upavisha* (Poisonous drugs) are explained. Procedure of *Hingulottha Parada* (Mercury extracted from cinnabar) is mentioned. In *paribhasha prakarana mana paribhasha*, different groups of drugs are also explained. *Pratinidhi* (Substitute) *dravya*, *Pancha vidha kashaya kalpana* (Fundamental preparations), *Ghritha* and *taila murchana* (special processing of raw oil or ghee) are mentioned. *Shodhana* (Purification) of herbal drugs are also described. Author has divided the chapters as per *chikitsa* (treatment). Basics of *Ayurveda* pharmaceuticals are

found. Author has given description of *bhavana* in different way compared to other literature. Author has mentioned about *bhavana* (Tricuration) in order to reduce the particle size to have more absorption property. The concept of *murchana* (special processing of Raw oil or ghee) explained by the author for the first time in the *jwara chikitsa* (Treatment for fever) chapter to remove the *ama dosha*; with the reasoning that *Ama* to be the main cause of *jwara* (Fever).

Author has divided the chapters based on line of treatment for particular disease. In these chapters author explains simple formulations like *Pancha vidha kashaya kalpana* and its *upakalpana* formulation (Fundamental preparations), *Vati* (Tablets), *Guggulu preparations*, *Sneha yoga* (Medicated oil/ghee), *Sandhana yoga* (Fermentative preparations) and at last author mentioned *Rasaushadi* (Mercuric preparations). This is the general order author has followed in every chapter of *Bhaishajya Ratnavali*. The probable reason behind this common protocol is simple formulations are for *alpadoshavastha* (Initial stage) condition of disease and *ghrita yoga*, *sandhana yoga* and *Rasaushadi* are for *bahudoshavastha* (Chronic) condition of disease where long term usage of medicine and highly potent medicine is required. At last *pathya* (wholesome food) and *apathya* (unwholesome food) for each disease has explained.

CONCLUSION

Bhaishajya Ratnavali is divided into 106 chapters, each dealing with separate diseases. *Bhaishajya*

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Ratnavali has been the most popular reference book among the practitioners and students of the *Ayurveda*. Descriptions about mercury, Purification and properties of minerals and gem stones are mentioned. Purification method for poisonous drugs and also some herbal drugs are told. Author has explained *Paribhasha* and *Manaparibhasha*. Detailed description of Procedure of *Bhavana* (Tricturation) and Concept of *Murchana* (Special processing of raw oil or ghee) are explained by author in this text. Author initially explains simple formulations then *Vati* (Tablets), *Guggulu preparations*, *Sneha yoga* (Medicated oil/ghee, *Sandhana yoga* (Fermentative preparations) and at last author mentioned *Rasaushadi* (Mercuric preparations). This is the common protocol author has followed in his every chapters of the book this may be based on *doshavastha* (condition) of disease. This style of presenting the treatment protocol for particular disease makes author different from other author.

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