



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

(Peer-reviewed, Refereed, Indexed & Open Access Journal)

DOI : 03.2021-11278686

ISSN : 2582-8568

IMPACT FACTOR : 7.560 (SJIF 2024)

Putra Vigyan; a contemporary review

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DOI No. **03.2021-11278686** DOI Link :: <https://doi-ds.org/doilink/05.2024-92875785/IRJHIS2405004>

Abstract:

The use of mineral origin drugs as medicine are primarily mentioned in Rasashastra. The science of mercury – Rasashastra had described use of various metals and minerals as medicines by subjecting it for specific procedures of Shodhana and Marana. Here the solid and tough metals are converted to fine powders – Bhasma which are assimilated and reflects its clinical effects respectively. The procedure to transfer the heat energy to make this conversion is carried out by a special assembly called as Puta Yantra. Various types of these Puta Yantra are been discussed in Rasashastra. Here an attempt is made to brief the various types of Puta and its contemporary relevance.

Keywords: Puta, Puta Yantra, Shodhana, Marana

Introduction:

Ayurveda is an ancient life science. It had mentioned the use of herbal origin drugs as medicines and also the use of inorganic mineral ores as medicines in its ancient texts. The pharmaceutical branch i.e. Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana exclusively states the procedures to convert these raw drugs in medicinal forms which are easily assimilated and shows effects on respective diseases. There are many procedures like Grahya Grahyatva, Shodhana, Marana, Amritikarana etc. which are mentioned for subjecting this drugs in medicinal forms. Here the hard solid metals are also meant for making useful and potent medicines in the form of Dhatu Bhasma. A special procedural assembly for making these metals in Bhasma form is mentioned in Rasashastra texts, it is termed as Puta. In contemporary science we can correlate it with process of incineration.

Putra–

रसादिद्रव्यपाकनांप्रमाणज्ञापनंपुटम् |

नेष्टोन्यूनाधिकःपाकःसुपाकंहितमौषधं |

- R.R.S. 10/47

It is stated as a unit for subjecting *Parada – Rasa* and other *Dravya* to prescribed quantity of heat is termed as *Putra*. For conversion of basic raw drug to biologically active and assimilative medicine the *Agni Sanskara* is used. *Putra* is the unit which decides the optimum level of heat to be given in order to yield beneficial medicine.

Classification of *Putra* –

There are variety of *Putra* mentioned in *Rasashastra* text, which are meant for number of drug producing procedures. The basic criteria for classification of *Putra* are as follows;

- a) Dimensions
- b) Source of heat
- c) Number of Cow dung cakes – *Upala*
- d) Type of fuel used

Steps for *Putra* –

- a) *Dravya Sangraha* – collection of drugs
- b) *Shodhana* – purification of raw drugs
- c) *Bhavana* – trituration of these drugs with appropriate liquid medium
- d) *Chakrika Nirman* – round coin of *Bhavit* drug are to be made and dried
- e) *Sharava Samputa* – these *Chakrika* are to be placed in *Sharava* and concealed with *Mat Kapad* and dried well
- f) *Putra*– incineration according to drugs

The *Putra* mentioned in text are described as follows;

1. *Mahaputra*– (R.R.S. 10/51, 52)

As the name denotes, it is the largest of the all *Putra* mentioned in classics. To prepare *Mahaputra*, one has to dig a pit measuring two Hasta deep and breadth wise square shaped. Then it is filled with 1000 cowdung cakes at the base, over this layer the medicine to be prepared is kept over it in *Sampputa*. Then the pit is further filled with 500 cowdung cakes over it and then the assembly is set to fire.

Uses – used for *Marana* of *Parada, Vajra, Tamra* and to prepare *Trivanga Bhasma*.

2. *Gajaputra* – (R.R.S. 10/ 53, 54)

This is the second largest *Putra* mentioned in texts. In order to make it one has to dig a pit measuring one Raja Hasta deep and breadth wise square shape. Then it is filled with 750 cowdung cakes at the base, over this layer the medicine to be prepared is kept over it in *Samputa*. Then the pit is further filled with 250 cowdung cakes over it and then the assembly is set to fire.

Uses – used in *Marana* of *Abhraka, Kapardip, Akeek, Mandoor, Loha* etc.

3. *Varahaputra* – (R.R.S. 10/55)

It is the pit dug with depth and breadth of one *Artni* (length from elbow to little finger). Half of

this pit is filled with cowdung cakes and then *Musha / Samputa* is placed and remaining half is filled with cowdung cake.

Uses – make the *Bhasma* of *Abhraka, Tamra, Rajata, Makshika* etc.

4. *Kukkuta Puta* – (R.R.S. 10/56)

A small pit of two *Vit* (stretch offhand – length from thumb tip to little finger) is dug and filled half with cow dung cakes. Then *Musha* is placed over it and remaining pit is filled with cowdung cakes. Approximately ten cowdung cakes are required in this *Puta*.

Uses – in preparation of *Parada Bhasma, Makshik Bhasma* etc.

5. *Kapot Puta* (R.R.S. 10/57)

In this type of *Puta*, about eight cowdung cakes are placed on ground by placing the *Musha* between it and then it is set to fire.

Use – it is used to make *Parada Bhasma, Suvarna Bhasma* etc.

6. *Gomay Puta* (R.T. 3/44)

In this type the dried cowdung cake powder along with dried grass is used as fuel. It is placed on ground and then *Musha* is placed between it and then it is lit to fire. Some suggest the powder of dried cowdung cake should of eight *Upalas*. It is used for making *Rasa Bhasma*.

7. *Bhand Puta* (R.R.S. 10/60)

The *Musha* is placed in a vessel also called as *Kumbha* and husk powder is poured over it. It is then incinerated, this assembly is called as *Bhand Puta*.

8. *Valuka Puta* (R.R.S. 10/61)

A concealed *Musha* is kept in between sand and then incineration is done, it is called as *Valuka Puta*.

9. *Bhudhara Puta* (R.R.S. 10/62)

A concealed *Musha* is placed in earth 2 inches from the surface and cowdung cake are arranged on the surface and then fire is lit. This is called *Bhudhar Puta*.

10. *Lavaka Puta* (R.R.S. 10/63)

In this type, the incineration is done by *Shodashika*– nearly 40 gms of dried cowdungcake powder or husk. It is used for making *Bhasma* of soft drugs.

11. *Surya / Chandra Puta* (R.T. 3/37)

These are the type of *Niragni Puta*. In this the direct use of *Agni* – fire is not done. Exposure of the drugs to sunlight is called as *Surya Puat* while exposure to that of moon light is called as *Chandra Puta*. *Surya Puti Loha Bhasma* is example of *Surya Puta* while *Pravala Pishti* is example of *Chandra Puta*.

Inference:

Puta Vigyan is the specialty of *Rasashastra*. The assembly of *Putais* very special and serves

the purpose of controlled heating in incineration. This helps to supply steady and lasting heat to the drug which is required in formation of *Bhasma*. In present day muffle furnace is used for this purpose of incineration. According to the hardness of the drug the desired heat is given by the means of various *Puti* mentioned in classics.

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