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# Praft of 6th April 2022 Draft of 6th April 2022 Jason Birch and Dominik Wujastyk Rot Pitty The Praft of April 2022 Draft of April 2022 Draft of April 2022 Draft of 6th April 2022 Draft of

### **Abstract**

The Suśruta Project is producing a new Sanskrit text edition of the Su-śrutasaṃhitā based on the early Nepalese manuscripts. As we gradually transcribe and edit the manuscripts, we are producing this new translation of the classic work.

<sup>1</sup> MS Kathmandu KL 699, MS Kathmandu NAK 1-1079, and MS Kathmandu NAK 5-333.

# Contents

The manuscripts and editions used in the vulgate editions	by
Yādavaśarman Trivikrama Ācārya	5
The sources of the 1915 edition	5
The sources of the 1931 edition	5
The sources of the 1938 edition	6
Evaluation	7
The 1939 edition	8
For the Bhānumatī	8
For the Suśrutasaṃhitā	10
Evaluation	10
Features of the manuscript transmission	12
Palaeographical features	
Chart of characters	12
0=4 41= 11 =	
Sūtrasthāna, adhyāya 1	13
Sūtrasthāna, adhyāya 2	20
Literature	20
Literature	. 20
Sūtrasthāna, adhyāya 16	13
	-3
Sūtrasthāna, adhyāya 28	21
Kalpasthāna, adhyāya 1	22
Literature	
Manuscript notes	_
Translation	_
[Threats to the king]	24
Kalpasthāna, adhyāya 2	34
Introduction	
Translation	
The effects of poisons	
Symptoms of tuber poisoning	
Slow-acting poison	
The stages of slow poisoning	43

Remedies for the stages of slow poisoning	43
The 'invincible' ghee	45
Curing the 'slow-acting' poison	46
Uttaratantra, adhyāya 16 (17 in the vulgate)	33
Literature	33
Translation	33
[Complications]	42
[Characteristics of the probe]	43
[Complications]	43
Uttaratantra, adhyāya 38	45
Ottaratantra, aunyaya 30	45
Abbreviations	57
Index of Manuscripts	60
	_
References	60
Glossary	75
On digital critical editions	67

## Kalpasthāna, adhyāya 2

### Introduction

This section begins with several lists of poisonous plants. The Sanskrit names for these plants are mostly not standard or familiar from anywhere in Sanskrit or ethnobotanical literature. It remains a historical puzzle why these particular names are so difficult to interpret. However, we are not the first to encounter these difficulties. In the twelfth century, the learned commentator on the text, Dalhaṇa, remarked,

In spite of having made the greatest effort, it has been impossible to identify these plants. In the Himalayan regions, Kirātas and Śabaras are able to identify them. <sup>100</sup>

Palhaṇa also recorded variant readings of these poison names from the manuscripts that he consulted of the lost commentary of Gayadāsa (fl. c. ce 1000). The identities of these poisons have been in doubt for at least a thousand years. Identifications have in many cases been equally impossible for us today.

One path for exploration in this situation is to attempt to reverse-engineer some identifications by considering the known toxic plants of India. 102

### **Translation**

- 1 And now I shall explain what should be known about stationary poisons. 103
- 3 It is said that there are two kinds of poisons, stationary (*sthāvara*) and mobile (*jaṅgama*). The former dwells in ten sites, the latter in sixteen places.
- Traditionally, the ten are: root, leaf, fruit, flower, bark, milky sap ( $k \circ \bar{\imath} r a$ ), pith ( $s \bar{\imath} r a$ ), resin ( $n i r y \bar{\imath} s a$ ), the elements ( $d h \bar{\imath} t u$ ), and the tuber.
- 5 In that context,

<sup>100</sup> After Suśrutasaṃhitā, kalpasthāna 2.5 (Su 1938: 564). From the view of Sanskrit authors, Kirāṭas and Śabaras were tribal peoples. The eleventh-century author Bhikṣu Govinda, however, cast his treatise as a dialogue with a Kirāṭa king called Madana who was a master of the alchemical art (HIML: IIA, 620).

<sup>101</sup> See Wujastyk 2003: 80-81.

<sup>102</sup> Valuable reference sources on Indian plant toxicology in general include Pillay 2013: chs. 10, 11 and Barceloux 2008: parts 1.II, 3 and 4.

<sup>103</sup> No reference is made to Dhanvantari (see Birch, Wujastyk, Klebanov, Parameswaran, et al. 2021). "Stationary" here is a term contrasted with "moving," and signifies plants as opposed to animals and insects.

- the eight root-poisons are:
  - 1. liquorice (*klītaka*)<sup>i</sup>, <sup>104</sup>
  - 2. sweet-scented oleander (aśvamāraka)<sup>ii</sup>, 105
  - 3. jequirity  $(gu\tilde{n}j\bar{a})^{iii}$ , <sup>106</sup>
  - 4. aconite (subhangurā)iv, 107
  - 5. *karaṭā*, 108 and ending with
  - 6. leadwort (vidyutśikh $\bar{a} \rightarrow agni$  or rakta-śikh $\bar{a}$ ?) $^{\rm v}$ ,  $^{109}$
  - 7. 'endless' (ananta)vi, and
  - 8. *vijayā*, 110
- the leaf-poisons include:
  - 'poison-leaf' (viṣapatrikā)<sup>vii</sup>,

104 Liquorice eaten in excess can be poisonous.

- 105 The roots of sweet-scented oleander are highly toxic, as are most parts of the plant (Pillay and Sasidharan 2019).
- 106 Jequirity does indeed contain a dangerous toxin called Abrin in its seeds and to a lesser extent in its leaves, but apparently not in its roots or bulb. Abrin is not harmful if eaten, but an infusion of the bruised (not boiled) seeds injected or rubbed in the eyes can be fatal (NK: # 6). The dose can be quite small.
- 107 The plant is usually called just bhangurā without the prefix su-"good."
- 108 This poisonous root cannot at present be identified. Similar-sounding candidates include <code>karkaṭaka</code>, <code>karaghāṭa</code> (emetic nut), and <code>karahāṭa</code>, but since this is a prose passage, there would be no reason to alter the word to fit a metre. Monier-Williams et al. (MW: 255) cite an unknown lexical source that equates <code>karaṭa</code> (mn.) with safflower (<code>Carthamus tinctorius</code>, L.), but this plant does not have a poisonous root.
- 109 The roots of both rose and white leadwort are very toxic.
- 110 Meulenbeld (1989: 61, n. 3) argued that our text read a masculine or neuter noun *vijaya*, which never signifies cannabis. However, unlike the vulgate, the unanimous readings of the Nepalese manuscripts give feminine *vijayā*. Nevertheless, even this form only started to signify *Cannabis sativa* L. after the end of the first millennium (Meulenbeld 1989; Wujastyk 2002; McHugh 2021). The *Sauśrutanighaṇṭu* gives a number of synonyms for *vijayā*, almost none of which have any poisonous parts (Suvedī and Tīvārī 2000: 5.77, 10.143). But one of them, *viṣāṇī* (also *meṣaśṛṅgī*), is sometimes equated with *Dolichandrone falcata* (*DC.*) *Seemann* (Sivarajan and Balachandran 1994: 518), a plant used as an abortifacient and fish poison (Nadkarni 1982a: #862). This identification is tenuous.
- i Glycyrrhiza glabra, L.; see AVS 3.84, NK #1136
- ii Nerium oleander, L.; see ADPS 223, NK #1709
- iii Abrus precatorius, L.; see AVS 1.10, NK #6, Potter 168
- iv  $\rightarrow bhangura = ativiṣ\bar{a}$ ? Aconitum ferox, Wall. ex Ser.; see NK #38
- v Plumbago zeylanica (or rosea?), L.; see NK #1966, 1967
- vi ?; see ?
- vii unknown; see?

Expected
(Pillay 2010):
Croton
tiglium, L.
= Naepala,
Jayapala,
kanakaphala,
titteriphala
(NL #720);
Calotropis
spp.;
Citrullus
colocynthus
(colocynth);
Ricinus
communis

Note about Gayī's edition.

- 'drum-giver' (*lambaradā*)<sup>viii</sup>,
- thorn apple (karambha)<sup>ix</sup>, and
- 'big thorn apple' (*mahākarambha*)<sup>x</sup>;
- the fruits of items like: jequirity  $(gu\tilde{n}j\bar{a})^{xi}$ , rūṣkara  $()^{xii}$ , viṣa  $()^{xii}$ , and vedikā  $()^{xiv}$ , are
  - kumudavati (kumadavati)\*\*,
  - renuka (?)xvi,
  - kurūkaka (?)<sup>xvii</sup>
  - 'little bamboo' (*venuka*)<sup>xviii</sup>, 111,
  - thorn apple (*karambha*)<sup>xix</sup>,
  - 'big thorn apple' (mahākarambha)xx,
  - 'pleaser' (nandanā)xxi,
  - 'crow'  $(k\bar{a}ka)^{xxii}$ ,
- the flower-poisons include those of:
  - rattan (vetra)<sup>xxiii</sup>,
  - wild chinchona (kādamba)xxiv,
  - black pepper ( $vall\overline{i}ja \rightarrow marica$ )<sup>xxv</sup>,
  - thorn apple (karambha)xxvi, and

### 111 Not poisonous.

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viii unknown; see?
    Datura metel, L.; see AVS 2.305 (cf. Abhidhānamañjarī), NK #796 ff., Potter 292 f., ADPS 132.
    Datura metel, L.?; see AVS 2.305 (cf. Abhidhānamañjarī), NK #796 ff., Potter 292 f., ADPS 132.
    ; see
хi
xii ; see
xiii; see
xiv; see
xv unknown; see?
xvi ?; see Piper aurantiacum Wall. (NK: #1924) is not poisonous.
xvii?; see?
xviiiBambusa bambos, Druce?; see NK #307
xix Datura metel, L.; see AVS 2.305 (cf. Abhidhānamañjarī), NK #796 ff., Potter 292 f., ADPS 132.
xx Datura metel, L.?; see AVS 2.305 (cf. Abhidhānamañjarī), NK #796 ff., Potter 292 f., ADPS 132.
xxi ?; see ?
xxii?; see?
xxiiiCalamus rotang, L.; see AVS 1.330, NK #413
xxivAnthocephalus cadamba, Miq.; see NK #204
xxv Piper nigrum, L.?; see NK #1929; Rā.6.115, Dha.4.85, Dha.2.88
xxviDatura metel, L.; see AVS 2.305 (cf. Abhidhānamañjarī), NK #796 ff., Potter 292 f., ADPS 132.
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- big thorn apple (*mahākarambha*)<sup>xxvii</sup>;
- the seven bark, pith  $(s\bar{a}ra)$  and resin  $(niry\bar{a}sa)$  poisons are:
  - 'gutboiler' (antrapācaka) xxviii,
  - 'blade' (kartarīya)<sup>xxix</sup>,
  - wild mustard (saurīyaka)\*\*\*,
  - emetic nut  $(karagh\bar{a}_{\dagger}a \rightarrow karah\bar{a}_{\dagger}a? \rightarrow madana)^{xxxi}$ ,
  - thorn apple (*karambha*)<sup>xxxii</sup>,
  - wild asparagus ( $nandana \rightarrow bahuputr\bar{a}$ ?) $^{xxxiii}$ , and
  - munj grass (*nārācaka*)<sup>xxxiv</sup>;<sup>112</sup>
- the three milky sap ( $k \bar{s} \bar{t} r a$ )-poisons are:
  - purple calotropis ( $kumudaghn\bar{\imath} \rightarrow arka?$ )\*\*xxv,\*\*113
  - oleander spurge (snuhī)xxxvi, and
  - 'web-milk' (*jālakṣīri*)<sup>xxxvii</sup>;
- the two element ( $dh\bar{a}tu$ )-poisons are:
  - 'foam-stone' (phenāśma)xxxviii, and

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xxviiDatura metel, L.?; see AVS 2.305 (cf. Abhidhānamañjarī), NK #796 ff., Potter 292 f., ADPS 132. xxviiinknown; see ? xxixunknown; see ? xxx Cleome viscosa, L.? (cf. Rā.4.144); see AVS 2.116, NK #615 xxxiRandia dumetorum, Lamk.; see NK #2091 xxxiiDatura metel, L.; see AVS 2.305 (cf. Abhidhānamañjarī), NK #796 ff., Potter 292 f., ADPS 132. xxxiiAsparagus racemosus, Willd.; see ADPS 441, AVS 1.218, NK #264, IGP 103, IMP 4.2499ff., Dymock 482ff. xxxiiSaccharum bengalense, Retz.?; see NK #2184 xxxvCalotropis gigantea, (L.) R. Br.; see ADPS 52, AVS 1.341, NK #427, Potter 63 xxxvIiuphorbia neriifolia, L., or E. antiquorum, L.; see ADPS 448, AVS (2.388), 3.1, NK #988, IGP 457b xxxviinknown; see ?
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<sup>112</sup> The bark of wild asparagus (Asparagus racemosus, Willd.) is toxic.

The name of this poison, *kumuda-ghnī*, means 'lotus killer'. In Sanskrit literature, the *kumuda* lotus is associated with the moon, since it blossoms by night. Since the sun causes this lotus to close, it is therefore an 'enemy' of the lotus. One of the chief words for the sun, *arka*, is also the name of *Calotropis gigantea*, which indeed has a milky juice which is a violent purgative, poison and abortifacient.

- orpiment (haritāla)xxxix;114
- the thirteen tuber-poisons are:
  - jequirity  $(k\bar{a}lak\bar{u}ta)^{xl}$ , 115
  - wolfsbane (vatsanābha)<sup>xli</sup>
  - Indian mustard (sarṣapa)xlii,
  - leadwort  $(p\bar{a}laka \rightarrow citraka)^{xliii}$ ,
  - 'muddy' (kardama)xliv, the
  - 'Virāṭa's plant' (vairāṭaka)xlv,
  - nutgrass (mustaka)xlvi
  - atis root (śṛṅgīviṣa)<sup>xlvii</sup>,
  - sacred lotus (prapuṇḍarīka)\*\*lviii,
  - radish  $(m\bar{u}laka)^{xlix}$ ,
  - 'alas, alas' (hālāhala)<sup>1</sup>,
  - 'big poison' (mahāviṣa)<sup>li</sup>, and

The *Rajanighantuparisista* (9.35) gives *kalakutaka* as a synonym for *karaskara*, or *Strychnos nux-vomica*, L., whose seeds are notoriously poisonous.

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xxxi:Arsenii trisulphidum; see NK v. 2, p. 20 ff.
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<sup>114</sup> Dutt (1922: 38–42) conjectured that 'foam-stone' may be impure white arsenic obtained by roasting orpiment.

The much later (perhaps sixteenth century) alchemical *Rasaratnasamuccaya* of pseudo-Vāgbhaṭa (21.14) says that the *kālakūṭa* poison, here translated as 'jequirity', is similar to '*kākacañcu*' or 'Crow's Beak', which is indeed a name for the plant jequirity or *Abrus precatorius*, L., more commonly called *guñjā* (not to be confused with *gañjā*). The black seed-pod is described as having a 'sharp deflexed beak' in botanical descriptions, so the Sanskrit name is quite graphic and appropriate. The poisonous scarlet seeds of *A. precatorius* can have a distinct black dot or tip, which could perhaps be translated '*kāla-kūṭa*', or 'Black Tip'. The *Rājanighaṇṭupariśiṣṭa* (9.35) gives *kālakūṭaka* as a synonym for *kāraskara*, or *Strychnos* 

xl Abrus precatorius, L.? Cf. RRS 21.14.; see AVS 1.10, NK #6, Potter 168.

xli Aconitum napellus, L.; see AVS 1.47, NK #42, Potter 4 f.

xlii Brassica juncea, Czern. & Coss.; see AVS 1.301, NK #378

xliii Plumbago zeylanica (indica? rosea?), L.; see Rā. 6.124, ADPS 119, NK #1966, 1967

xliv unknown; see?

xlv unknown; see?

xlvi Cyperus rotundus, L.; see ADPS 316, AVS 2.296, NK #782

xlviiAconitum heterophyllum, Wall. ex Royle; see AVS 1.42, NK #39

xlviiNelumbo nucifera, Gaertn.; see Dutt 110, NK #1698

xlix Raphanus sativus, L.; see NK #2098

l unknown; see Cf. Sodhalanighantu p.43 (sub bola) = stomaka = vatsanābha

li unknown; see?

• galls (karkaṭa)<sup>lii</sup>. 116

Thus, there are fifty-five stationary poisons.

6 There are believed to be four kinds of wolfsbane, two kinds of *mustaka*, and six kinds of Indian *sarṣapa*. But the rest are said to be unique types.

### The effects of poisons

7–10 People should know that root-poisons cause writhing (*udveṣṭana*), ranting (*pralāpa*), and delirium (*moha*), and leaf-poisons cause yawning, writhing, and wheezing (*śvāsa*).

Fruit-poisons cause swelling of the scrotum, a burning feeling and writhing. Flower-poisons will cause vomiting, distension ( $\bar{a}dhm\bar{a}na$ ) and sleep ( $sv\bar{a}pa$ ). The consumption of poisons from bark, pith ( $s\bar{a}ra$ ) and resin ( $niry\bar{a}sa$ ) will cause foul breath, hoarseness ( $p\bar{a}rusya$ ), a headache, and a discharge of phlegm (kapha). 117

The milky sap  $(k \circ \bar{i} ra)$ -poisons make one froth at the mouth, cause loose stool, and make the tongue feel heavy. The element  $(dh \bar{a} tu)$ -poisons give one a crushing pain in the chest, make one faint and cause a burning feeling on the palate.

These poisons are classified as ones which are generally speaking lethal after a period of time.

### 11-17 Symptoms of tuber poisoning

The tuber-poisons, though, are severe. I shall talk about them in detail.

<sup>116</sup> Leadwort root is a powerful poison. Nutgrass is tuberous, but non-toxic. Atis has highly toxic tuberous roots. Neither sacred lotus nor galls are toxic. The 'alas, alas' poison (hālāhala) is the mythical poison produced from the churning of the ocean at the time of creation: it occurs in medical texts such as the present one, and commentators identify it with one or other of the lethal poisons such as wolfsbane or jequirity. Agrawala (1963: 126) makes the intriguing suggestion that the word hālāhala, possibly to be identified with Pāṇini's hailihila (P.6.2.38), may be of Semitic origin, although his evidence seems uncertain (Steingass (1930: 1506a) cites Persian halāhil 'deadly (poison)' as a loan from Sanskrit). Mayrhofer 1953–72: iii.585 also cites a claim for an Austro-Asiatic origin for the word.

<sup>117</sup> At 1.2.6 (Su 1938: 11), Palhaṇa glosses hoarseness (pāruṣya) as vāgrūkṣatā, "a rough, dry voice."

<sup>118</sup> At 6.54.10 (Su 1938: 773), Dalhaṇa glosses loose stool (viḍbheda) as dravapurīṣatā, "having liquid stool."

lii Rhus succedanea, L.; see NK #2136

With jequirity  $(k\bar{a}lak\bar{u}ta)^{lii}$ , there is numbness and very severe trembling. With wolfsbane  $(vatsan\bar{a}bha)^{liv}$ , there is rigidity of the neck, and the faeces, and urine become yellow.

With sārṣapa ( $s\bar{a}rṣapa$ ),<sup>119</sup> the wind becomes defective ( $v\bar{a}tavaigunya$ ), there is constipation ( $\bar{a}n\bar{a}ha$ ), and lumps (granthi) start to appear. With leadwort ( $p\bar{a}laka \rightarrow citraka$ )<sup>lv</sup>, there is weakness in the neck, and speech gets jumbled.<sup>120</sup>

With the one called 'muddy' (*kardama*)<sup>lvi</sup>, there is a discharge (*praseka*), the faeces pour out, and the eyes turn yellow. The 'Virāṭa's plant' (*vairāṭaka*)<sup>lvii</sup> causes pain in the body and illness in the head. Paralysis of one's arms and legs and trembling are said to be caused by mustaka (*mustaka*).<sup>121</sup>

With great aconite (*mahāviṣa*) one's limbs grow weak, there is a burning feeling and swelling of the belly.<sup>122</sup>

-> ativișa

- 16a With puṇḍarīka (puṇḍarīka), one's eyes go red, and one's belly becomes distended. 123
- 16b With mūlaka ( $m\bar{u}laka$ ), one's body is drained of colour and the limbs are paralysed.<sup>124</sup>

Look up the ca. reference.

- 119 *Sārṣapa* would normally mean "connected with mustard," and excessive consumption of mustard oil can be harmful. However, the *Sauśrutanighaṇṭu* (156) gives *rakṣoghnā* as a synonym for *sarṣapā*. This can be *Semecarpus anacardium*, L.f., which has some poisonous parts.
- 120 The verse in the Nepalese version ends with a plural verb that does not agree with the dual of the sentence subject.
- 121 The substitution in MS NAK 5-333 affecting 15cd is caused by an eye-skip to the word *viṣeṇa* in 2.17. *Mustaka* commonly refers to Cyperus rotundus, L.; the root is used in āyurveda but is not poisonous. However other dictionaries list *mustaka* amongst serious poisons, for example *Rājanighaṇtu* (22 v. 42) and *Rasaratnasamuccaya* 16, v. 80. However, its ancient identity is still doubtful.
- 122 The poisonous root great poison (*mahāviṣa*) is not clearly identifiable, although *viṣa* is commonly aconite. Verse 6 above notes that there are several kinds of aconite.
- 123 The word <code>pundarīka</code> very commonly means sacred lotus, Nelumbo nucifera, Gaertn. The entire plant is edible and cannot be the poison intended here. Singh and Chunekar (1972: 252) noted that this poison is unidentified and that it is also listed as a poison in <code>Carakasam-hitāci.23.12</code>.
- 124 The word *mūlaka* very commonly means the radish, *Raphanus sativus*, L. The root is edible and cannot be the poison intended here. Singh and Chunekar (1972: 317) noted that this

liii Abrus precatorius, L.? Cf. RRS 21.14.; see AVS 1.10, NK #6, Potter 168.

liv Aconitum napellus, L.; see AVS 1.47, NK #38, Potter 4 f.

lv Plumbago zeylanica (indica? rosea?), L.; see Rā. 6.124, ADPS 119, NK #1966, 1967

lvi unknown; see?

lvii unknown; see?

- 17a With hālāhala (*Aconite*), a man turns a dark colour (*dhyāma*), and gasps. 125
- With atis root  $(\acute{s}r\acute{n}g\bar{\imath}vi_{\dot{s}}a)^{lviii}$ , one gets violent knots (granthi) and stabbing pains in the heart. 126
- 18a With markata (*monkey*), one leaps up, laughs, and bites. 127
- Experts have said that one should know that the thirteen highly potent tuber-poisons, which are mentioned here, have ten qualities (*guṇa*).

19b-20a The ten are:

- dry (*rūkṣa*),
- hot,
- sharp,
- rarified (sūksma),
- fast-acting,
- pervasive (vyavāyin),
- expansive (vikāsin),
- limpid (viśada),
- · light, and
- indigestible.
- Because of dryness, it may cause inflammation of the wind; because of heat it inflames the choler and blood. Because of the sharpness it unhinges the mind, and it cuts through the connections with the sensitive points (*marman*). Because it is rarified it can infiltrate and distort the parts of the body.<sup>128</sup>
- Because it is fast-acting it kills quickly, and because of its pervasiveness it

lviii Aconitum heterophyllum, Wall. ex Royle; see AVS 1.42, NK #39

poison is unidentified.

<sup>125</sup> Identification of  $h\bar{a}l\bar{a}hala$  is uncertain. It may simply be a mythical poison, or its specific identity may have been lost over the centuries. Late nighantus identify it as  $stomaka = vatsan\bar{a}bha$ , i.e.,  $Aconitum\ napellus$ , L. ( $Sodhalanighantu\ p.43$ ). Dalhana on 5.2.17 (Su 1938: 564) interprets our "gasps" as "the man laughs and grinds his teeth." But this gloss is probably displaced and intended to apply to verse 2.18.

<sup>126</sup> Singh and Chunekar (1972: 407) noted that *vatsanābha* and *śṛṅgīviṣa* are two different varieties of poisonous Aconites that are difficult to distinguish.

<sup>127</sup> Singh and Chunekar (1972: 299) said of *markaṭa*, "an unidentified vegetable poison." Cf. Suvedī and Tīvārī 2000: v.36 for synonyms that lead to the non-toxic jujube tree.

<sup>128</sup> We read the active *vikaroti* with Dalhana against the transmitted passive *vikriyeta*, since it must be the parts of the body that are distorted, not the poison.

affects one's whole physical constitution (prakrti).<sup>129</sup> Because of its expansiveness it enters into the humour (doṣa)s, bodily constiuents ( $dh\bar{a}tu$ )s, and even the impurities. Because it is limpid it overflows, and because it is light it is difficult to treat. Because it is indigestible it is hard to eliminate. Therefore, it causes suffering for a long time.

Any poison that is instantly lethal, whether it be stationary, mobile, or artificial, will be known to have all ten of these qualities.

### Slow-acting poison

- A poison that is old or destroyed by anti-toxic medicines, or else dried up by blazing fire, wind, or sunshine, or which has just lost its qualities by itself, becomes a slow-acting poison  $(d\bar{u}_{\bar{s}\bar{i}}vi_{\bar{s}}a)^{131}$  Because it has lost its potency it is no longer perceived. Because it is surrounded by phlegm (kapha) it has an aftermath that lasts for a very long time.
  - 27 If he is suffering from this, the colour of his stools changes, he gets sourness and a bad taste with great thirst. Stammering and close to death, wandering about, he may feel faint, giddy, and aroused. 132
  - If it lodges in his stomach (āmāśaya), his wind and phlegm become diseased; if it lodges in his intestines (pakvāśaya), his wind and choler become diseased. The man's hair and body are ruined, and he looks like a bird whose wings have been chopped off.

29a-c If it lodges in one of the body tissue (*dhātu*)s such as the chyle (*rasa*), it causes the diseases that were described as arising from the elements, and it rapidly becomes inflamed on nasty days which are cold and windy.

Now listen to the preliminary signs of such a case: sleepiness, heaviness, yawning, slackness (viśleṣa) and exhilaration (harṣa), and a chafing of the limbs (aṅgamarda). Next, it causes food-mania (annamada) and indigestion, appetite-loss (arocaka), round blotches (maṇḍala), skin disease (koṭha), and delirium (moha). The body tissues dwindle away (kṣaya), the feet, hands,

<sup>129</sup> Dalhaṇa on 5.2.22 (Su 1938: 565) explained this as "takes the form of pervading the whole body (akhiladehavyāptirūpam)."

<sup>130</sup> Dalhana specified that this refers to the ten qualities that are mentioned above (5.2.26 (Su 1938: 565)).

<sup>131</sup> Dalhana cited this verse at 1.46.83 (Su 1938: 222) while explaining dūṣīviṣa.

<sup>132</sup> Similar symptoms of slow-acting poison are described at 2.7.11–13 (Su 1938: 296) in the context of contamination dropsy (*duṣyodara*). This this may explain why the vulgate inserted reference to this disease at this point.

- and face get swollen, dropsy develops, and there is vomiting and diarrhoea. Perhaps his colour may drain away and he may faint or have irregular fever (*viṣamajvara*). It may cause heightened, powerful thirst.
- These various disorders are of many different types: one poison may produce madness, while another one may cause constipation (\$\bar{a}n\bar{a}ha), and yet another may deplete the semen. One may cause slurred speech, while another pallid skin disease (\$kuṣṭha).
- Traditionally, 'slow-acting poison'  $(d\bar{u}s\bar{i}-visa)$  is so called because it corrupts  $(d\bar{u}sayate)$  the body tissue  $(dh\bar{a}tu)s$ . This corruption is caused by repetitively keeping to certain locations, times, foods, and sleeping in the daytime.

### 34- The stages of slow poisoning

In the first shock of having taken a stationary poison, a person goes a brown colour, his tongue becomes stiff, he grows faint, and starts to gasp.

- In the second, he trembles, collapses, has a burning feeling, as well as a sore throat. When the poison reaches the stomach ( $\bar{a}m\bar{a}\acute{s}aya$ ), it causes pain in the chest (hyd).
- In the third, the roof of his mouth goes dry, he gets violent shooting pains  $(\hat{sula})$  in the stomach  $(\bar{a}m\bar{a}\hat{s}aya)$ , and his eyes swell up and go a nasty, yellow colour.
- In the fourth shock, it causes the stomach and intestines to sting (*toda*), he gets hiccups, a cough, a rumbling in the gut (*antra*), and his head becomes very heavy.
- In the fifth he dribbles phlegm (*kapha*), is drained of colour, his joints crack (*parvabheda*), all his humours are inflamed, and he also has a pain in his belly (*pakvādhāna*).
- 39a In the sixth, his consciousness is annihilated and he completely loses control of his bowels.
- 39b In the seventh, his shoulders, back and loins break, and he is finished.

### Remedies for the stages of slow poisoning

In the first shock of the poison, he should vomit and be sprinkled with cold water. Then he should be made to drink an antidote (*agada*) together with honey and ghee.

- In the second, he should vomit as before, and then be given a purgative to drink.
- In the third, it is good for him to drink an antidote and take a nasal medicine (*nasya*) as well as an eye salve (*añjana*).
- In the fourth, he should drink a medical antidote mixed with oil.
- In the fifth, he should be prescribed the antidote together with a decoction  $(kv\bar{a}tha)$  of honey and liquorice  $(madhuka)^{lix}$ .
- In the sixth, the cure is the same as for diarrhoea. And in the seventh, he should have medicated powder blown up his nose, and after having a 'crow's foot ( $k\bar{a}kapada$ )' cut made on his head, he should have a piece of bloody meat put on it.<sup>133</sup>
- In the intervals between each shock, assuming that the above actions have been performed, one should give the patient cold porridge together with ghee and honey, to take away the poison.

<sup>133</sup> Suśruta explains the term <code>avapīda</code> 'medicated nasal powder' as the procedure either of administering nasal drops (<code>avapīda</code>), or blowing medicated powder into the nose (4.40.44–46): it is particularly recommended for unconscious or incapable patients. The 'crow's-foot' procedure is also recommended later in the 'Section on Procedures' (5.5.24a) in cases of snakebite. It is also described by Caraka (see p. ?? below).

lix Glycyrrhiza glabra, L.; see AVS 3.84, NK #1136

lx Luffa cylindrica, (L.) M. J. Roem. or L. acutangula, (L.) Roxb.; see ADPS 252, NK #1514 etc.

lxi Premna corymbosa, Rottl.; see IMP 1927, ADPS 21, NK #2025, AVS 4.348; GJM 523: = P. integrifolia/serratifolia, L.

lxii Cissampelos pariera, L.; see ADPS 366, NK #592, GJM 573, IMP 1.95; cf. AVS 2.277

lxiii Holostemma ada-kodien, Schultes; see ADPS 195, AVS 3.167, NK #1242, IMP 3.1619

lxiv Tinospora cordifolia, (Willd.) Hook.f. & Thoms.?; see ADPS 38, NK #2472 & 624, Dastur #229

lxv Terminalia chebula, Retz.; see ADPS 172, NK #2451, Potter 214

lxvi Albizia lebbeck, Benth.; see AVS 1.81, NK #91

lxviiAlbizia procera, (Roxb.) Benth.; see GVDB 98, NK #93

lxviiCordia myxa, L. non Forssk.; see GJM 529 (2), IGP 291b, cf. IMP 3.1677f; cf. AVS 2.180 (C. dichotoma, Forst.f.), NK #672 (C. latifolia, Roxb.)

lxix Clitoria ternatea, L.; see AVS 2.129, NK #621

the two kinds of turmeric  $(rajan\bar{\imath})^{lxx}$ , the two hogweed  $(punarnav\bar{a})^{lxxi}$ s (red and white), black cardamom (harenu) lxxii, the three pungent spices (trikațu) (dried ginger (śunthī) lxxiii, long pepper (pippalī) lxxiv, and black pepper (marica)lxxv), the two Indian sarsaparillas (sārive) (country sarsaparilla  $(anant\bar{a})^{lxxvi}$  and black creeper  $(p\bar{a}lind\bar{i})^{lxxvii}$ ) and country mallow  $(bal\bar{a})^{lxxviii}$ .

### The 'invincible' ghee 47 - 49

There is a famous ghee called 'Invincible' (ajeya). It rapidly destroys all poisons and 'always conquers'. It is made with a mash (kalka) of the following plants: liquorice (madhuka)<sup>lxxix</sup>, Indian rosebay (tagara)<sup>lxxx</sup>, costus (kuṣṭha) lxxxi, deodar (bhadradāru) lxxxii, black cardamom (hareṇu) lxxxiii, Alexandrian laurel (punnāga)lxxxiv, cherry (elavāluka)lxxxv, cobra's saffron  $(n\bar{a}gapuspa)^{lxxxvi}$ , water-lily  $(utpala)^{lxxxvii}$ , white clitoria  $(sit\bar{a} \rightarrow$ śvetā?) lxxxviii, embelia (vidanga) xxxix, sandalwood (candana) cassia cinnamon (patra)xci, 'going-to-my-darling' (priyangu)xcii, rosha grass (dhyā-

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lxx Curcuma longa, L.; see ADPS 169, AVS 2.259, NK #750
lxxi Boerhaavia diffusa, L.; see ADPS 387, AVS 1.281, NK #363
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lxxiiAmomum subulatum, Roxb.?; see PVS Caraka 2.734, AVS 1.128, NK #154

lxxiiZingiber officinale, Roscoe.; see ADPS 50, NK #2658, AVS 5.435, IGP 1232

lxxivPiper longum, L.; see ADPS 374, NK #1928

lxxvPiper nigrum, L.; see ADPS 294, NK #1929

lxxvHemidesmus indicus, (L.) R. Br.; see ADPS 434, AVS 3.141-5, NK #1210

lxxvIchnocarpus frutescens, (L.) R.Br. or Cryptolepis buchanani, Roemer & Schultes; see AVS 3.141, 3.145, 3.203, NK #1283, #1210, ADPS 434

lxxvBida cordifolia, L.; see ADPS 71, NK #2297

lxxixGlycyrrhiza glabra, L.; see AVS 3.84, NK #1136

lxxxTabernaemontana divaricata (L.) R.Br. ex Roem. & Schultes.; see GJM 557, AVS 5.232

lxxxSaussurea costus, Clarke; see NK #2239

lxxxfedrus deodara, (Roxb.ex D.Don) G. Don; see AVS 41, NK #516

lxxxiAimomum subulatum, Roxb.?; see PVS Caraka 2.734, AVS 1.128, NK #154

lxxx@alophyllum inophyllum, L.; see AVS 1.338, NK #425

lxxx₽runus cerasus, L.?; see BVDB 58, NK #2037

lxxxMesua ferrea, L.; see NK #1595

lxxxNiymphaea stellata, Willd.; see GJM 528, IGP 790; Dutt 110, NK #1726

lxxx@litoria ternatea, L.; see AVS 2.129, NK #621

lxxxEmbelia ribes, Burm. f.; see ADPS 507, AVS 2.368, NK #929, Potter 113

Santalum album, L.; see ADPS 111, NK #2217

xci Cinnamomum tamala, (Buch.-Ham.) Nees; see AVS 2.84, NK #

xcii Callicarpa macrophylla, Vahl.; see AVS 1.334, NK #420

maka)<sup>xciii</sup>, the two turmerics (ordinary turmeric  $(rajan\bar{\iota})^{xciv}$  and Indian barberry  $(d\bar{a}ruharidr\bar{a})^{xcv}$ ), the two Indian nightshade  $(brhat\bar{\iota})^{xcvi}$  (poison berry  $(brhat\bar{\iota})^{xcvi}$  and yellow-berried nightshade  $(k\bar{s}udr\bar{a})^{xcvii}$ ), the two Indian sarsaparillas  $(s\bar{a}rive)$  (country sarsaparilla  $(anant\bar{a})^{xcviii}$  and black creeper  $(p\bar{a}lind\bar{\iota})^{xcix}$ ), beggarweed  $(sthir\bar{a} \to s\bar{a}laparn\bar{\iota})^c$ , and 'spotted-leaf'  $(sah\bar{a} \to pr\hat{s}niparn\bar{\iota})^{ci}$ .

### 50-52 Curing the 'slow-acting' poison

Someone suffering from 'slow-acting poison ( $d\bar{u}$  $s\bar{i}visa$ )' should be well sweated, and purged both top and bottom. Then he should in all cases be made to drink the following antidote which removes 'slow-acting poison':

Take long pepper  $(pippal\bar{\imath})^{cii}$ , rosha grass  $(dhy\bar{a}maka)^{ciii}$ , spikenard  $(m\bar{a}ms\bar{\imath})^{civ}$ , lodh tree  $(s\bar{a}vara \rightarrow lodhra)^{cv}$ , nutgrass  $(paripelava \rightarrow plava \rightarrow must\bar{a}?)^{cvi}$ , soda crystals  $(suvarcik\bar{a} \rightarrow suvarjik\bar{a})^{cvii}$ , cardamom  $(s\bar{u}ksmail\bar{a})^{cviii}$ , 'scented pavonia'  $(toya \rightarrow b\bar{a}laka)^{cix}$ , and 'gold-chalk' ochre (kanakagairika). This antitoxin, taken with honey,

xciiiCymbopogon martinii (Roxb.) Wats; see AVS 2.285, NK #177

xciv Curcuma longa, L.; see ADPS 169, AVS 2.259, NK #750

xcv Berberis aristata, DC.; see Dymock 1.65, NK #685, GJM 562, IGP 141

xcvi Solanum violaceum, Ortega; see ADPS 100, NK #2329, AVS 5.151

xcviSolanum virginianum, L.; see ADPS 100, NK #2329, AVS 5.164

xcvilHemidesmus indicus, (L.) R. Br.; see ADPS 434, AVS 3.141-5, NK #1210

xcix Ichnocarpus frutescens, (L.) R.Br. or Cryptolepis buchanani, Roemer & Schultes; see AVS 3.141, 3.145, 3.203, NK #1283, #1210, ADPS 434

- c Desmodium gangeticum (L.) DC; see Dymock 1.428, GJM 602, NK #1192; ADPS 382, 414 and AVS 2.319, 4.366 are confusing
- ci Uraria lagopoides, DC; see GJM 577, Dymock 1.426, IMP 1.75off., NK #2542; ADPS 382, AVS 2.319 4.366 are confusing
- cii Piper longum, L.; see ADPS 374, NK #1928
- ciii Cymbopogon martinii (Roxb.) Wats; see AVS 2.285, NK #177
- civ Nardostachys grandiflora, DC.; see NK #1691
- cv Symplocos racemosa, Roxb.; see ADPS 279, NK #2420
- cvi Cyperus rotundus, L.; see ADPS 316, AVS 2.296, NK #782
- cvii Sodium carbonate; see NK 2, p. 101
- cviiiElettaria cardamomum, Maton; see AVS 2.360, NK #924, Potter 66
- cix Pavonia odorata, Willd.; see ADPS 498, NK #1822

- eliminates 'slow-acting poison'. It is called 'slow-acting poison antidote  $(d\bar{u}_{\bar{s}\bar{i}vi\bar{s}\bar{a}ri})$ ', and there is no situation where it is not recommended.
- If there are any side-effect (*upadrava*)s, such as fever, a burning feeling, hiccups, constipation (*ānāha*), depletion of the semen, distension, diarrhoea, fainting, illness in the heart, bellyache (*jaṭhara*), madness, trembling, or others, then one should treat each one in its own terms, as well as using the anti-toxic medicines.
  - 'Slow-acting poison' is curable ( $s\bar{a}dhya$ ) if caught immediately; it is treatable ( $y\bar{a}pya$ ) if it is of a year's standing; but it cannot be cured in someone who has unhealthy habits or who is weak ( $ks\bar{i}na$ ).

Thus ends the second chapter, called 'on the knowledge of stationary poisons', in the Procedures Section of Suśruta's *Compendium*.

### **Abbreviations**

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# **Index of Manuscripts**

The numbers after the colon refer to pages in this document.

Kathmandu KL 699 3 Kathmandu NAK 1-1079 3 Kathmandu NAK 5-333 3 NAK 5-333 40

Thanjavur TMSSML 10773 57

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# Glossary

'gold-chalk' ochre	bodily constiuents	slow-acting poison
kanakagairika		46
'invincible'	body tissue	dūṣīviṣāri
ajeya 45	dhātu 42f	slow-acting poison
4	bṛhatī	antidote 47
Aconite	indian nightshade 46	duṣyodara
hālāhala 41		contamination
ādhmāna	chafing of the limbs	dropsy 42
distension 39	aṅgamarda 42	dwindle away
agada	chest	kṣaya 42
antidote 43	hrd 43	
ajeya	chyle	element
'invincible' 45	rasa 42	dhātu 34, 37, 39
akhiladehavyāptirū <sub>l</sub>	pam constipation	exhilaration
takes the form	of	harşa 42
pervading the w	whole contamination dropsy	expansive
body 42	duşyodara 42	vikāsin 41
āmāśaya	crow's foot	eye salve
stomach 42f		añjana 44
ānāha	kākapada 44	3 11
constipation 40	curable	food-mania
47	sādhya 47	annamada 42
aṅgamarda		•
chafing of the	limbs dark colour	granthi
42	dhyama 41	knots 41
añjana	decoction	lumps 40
eye salve 44	kvātha 44	great aconite
annamada	delirium	mahāviṣa 40
food-mania 42	moha 39, 42	great poison
antidote	dhātu	mahāviṣa 40
agada 43	bodily constiuents 42	guṇa
antra	body tissue 42f	qualities 41
gut 43	element 34, 37, 39	gut
appetite-loss	dhyāma	antra 43
arocaka 42	dark colour 41	uma 43
	discharge	hālāhala
arocaka	. 1	Aconite 41
appetite-loss 4	distension	harşa
avapīḍa	ādhmāna 39	exhilaration 42
nasal drops 44	doșa	hoarseness
1 11	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
belly	humour 42	pāruṣya 39
pakvādhāna 43		hṛd
bellyache	rūkṣa 41	chest 43
jaṭhara 47	$dar{u}$ ṣ $ar{i}$ viṣ $a$	humour

doṣa 42	granthi 40	hoarseness 39
		parvabheda
indian nightshade	mahāviṣa	joints crack 43
bṛhatī 46	great aconite 40	pervasive
indian sarsaparillas	great poison 40	vyavāyin 41
sārive 45f	maṇḍala	phlegm
intestines	round blotches 42	kapha 39, 42f
pakvāśaya 42	markaṭa	pith
irregular fever	monkey 41	sāra 34, 37, 39
viṣamajvara 43	mash	pralāpa
	kalka 45	ranting 39
jaṅgama	milky sap	praseka
mobile 34	kṣīra 34, 37, 39	discharge 40
jaṭhara	mobile	puṇḍarīka
bellyache 47	jaṅgama 34	puṇḍarīka 40
joints crack	moha	puṇḍarīka
parvabheda 43	delirium 39, 42	puṇḍarīka 40
1	monkey	puṇṇarika 40
kākapada	markaṭa 41	qualities
crow's foot 44	mūlaka	guṇa 41
kalka	mūlaka 40	guiu 41
mash 45	mūlaka	ranting
kanakagairika	mūlaka 40	pralāpa 39
ʻgold-chalk' ochre 46	mustaka	rarified
kapha		sūkṣma 41
phlegm 39, 42f	mustaka 40	rasa
knots	mustaka	chyle 42
granthi 41	mustaka 40	resin
koṭha	nasal drops	
skin disease 42	-	niryāsa 34, 37, 39
_	avapīḍa 44	round blotches
kṣaya	nasal medicine	maṇḍala 42
dwindle away 42	nasya 44	$r\bar{u}k$ ș $a$
kṣīṇa	nasya	dry 41
weak 47	nasal medicine 44	o = 41
kṣīra	niryāsa	sādhya
milky sap 34, 37, 39	resin 34, 37, 39	curable 47
kuṣṭha	nișkvātha	sāra
pallid skin disease 43	stewed juice 44	pith 34, 37, 39
kvātha	!! -	sārive
decoction 44	pakvādhāna	indian sarsaparillas
	belly 43	45 <b>f</b>
limpid	pakvāśaya	sārṣapa
viśada 41	intestines 42	sārṣapa 40
loose stool	pallid skin disease	sārṣapa
viḍbheda 39	kuṣṭha 43	sārṣapa 40
lumps	pāruṣya	side-effect

upadr	ava 47	rarified 41	side-effect 47
skin diseas		svāpa	
koṭha	42	sleep 39	viḍbheda
slackness	•	śvāsa	loose stool 39
viśleșa	7.42	wheezing 39	vikāsin
sleep	- 1-	_	expansive 41
svāpa	20	takes the form of	viśada
slow-acting		pervading the whole	limpid 41
antidot		body	vișamajvara
	iṣāri 47	akhilade-	irregular fever 43
		havyāptirūpam 42	viśleṣa
slow-acting		three pungent spices	slackness 42
dūṣīvi 	şa 46	trikaṭu 45	vyavāyin
stationary		toda	pervasive 41
sthāvo		sting 43	
stewed juic		treatable	weak
	ātha 44	yāpya 47	kṣīṇa 47
sthāvara		trikațu	wheezing
station	nary 34	three pungent spices	śvāsa 39
sting		45	writhing
toda 4	.3	13	udveșțana 39
stomach		udveṣṭana	
āmāśa	aya <mark>42</mark> f	writhing 39	yāpya
sūkṣma		upadrava	treatable 47

# Todo list

añjana	20
Cf. Arthaśāstra 1.21.8.	25
I'm still unhappy about this verse.	28
Mention this in the introduction as an example of the scribe knowing	
the vulgate	28
fn about sadyas+	28
Bear's bile instead of deer's bile.	29
punarṇṇavā in the N & K MSS	30
śrita for śṛta	30
explain more	31
Medical difference from Sharma.	31
example where the vulgate clarifies that these should be used separ-	
ately; appears to be a gloss inserted into the vulgate text	31
The two uses of prāpta are hard to translate. prāptā $ u$ $ u$ $ u$ kṣipra $ u$ is an	
example of the vulgate banalizing the Sanskrit text to make sense of	
a difficult passage	32
$\sqrt{\text{vyadh not }\sqrt{\text{vedh}}}$ (also elsewhere and for the ears), causative optative.	32
opposite of the vulgate Same as As 1.8.89 (As 1980: 79)	32
Medical difference.	32
Expected (Pillay 2010):	
Croton tiglium, L. = Naepala, Jayapala, kanakaphala, titteriphala (NL	
#720); Calotropis spp.;	
Citrullus colocynthus (colocynth);	
Ricinus communis (castor);	35
Note about Gayī's edition	35
-> ativiṣa	40
Look up the ca. reference.	40
got to here	42
where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm	33
maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs.	33
find ref	39
Check out these refs	40
or a dual?	44

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