

# A Translation of the Nepalese Text of the *Suśrutasamhitā*

Jason Birch      Dominik Wujastyk      Andrey Klebanov  
Lisa A. Brooks      Paras Mehta      Madhusudan Rimal  
Deepro Chakraborty      Harshal Bhatt      Jane Allred  
et alii

Draft of 24th August 2023  
© The Authors



# Contents

<b>Sūtrasthāna</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Sūtrasthāna 1: The Origin of Medical Knowledge</b>	<b>9</b>
Literature . . . . .	9
Translation . . . . .	9
<b>Sūtrasthāna 2: The Initiation of a Student</b>	<b>17</b>
Literature . . . . .	17
Translation . . . . .	17
<b>Sūtrasthāna 13: On Leeches</b>	<b>19</b>
Literature . . . . .	19
Translation . . . . .	19
<b>Sūtrasthāna 14: On Blood</b>	<b>27</b>
Previous scholarship . . . . .	27
Translation . . . . .	27
<b>Sūtrasthāna 16: Repairing Pierced Ears</b>	<b>35</b>
Previous literature . . . . .	35
Translation . . . . .	35
<b>Sūtrasthāna 28: Unfavourable Prognosis in Patients with Sores</b>	<b>45</b>
Literature . . . . .	45
Translation . . . . .	45
<b>Nidānasthāna</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Nidānasthāna 1: The Diagnosis of Diseases Caused by Wind</b>	<b>49</b>

Literature . . . . .	49
Translation . . . . .	49
<b>Śārīrasthāna</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Śārīrasthāna 2: On Semen and Menstrual Fluid</b>	<b>57</b>
Literature . . . . .	57
Translation . . . . .	57
<b>Cikitsāsthāna</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Cikitsāsthāna 4: On the Treatment of Wind Diseases</b>	<b>61</b>
Literature . . . . .	61
Translation . . . . .	61
<b>Cikitsāsthāna 5: on the Treatment of Serious Wind Diseases</b>	<b>63</b>
Literature . . . . .	63
Translation . . . . .	63
<b>Cikitsāsthāna 15: On Difficult Delivery</b>	<b>65</b>
Literature . . . . .	65
Translation . . . . .	65
<b>Kalpāsthāna</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Kalpāsthāna 1: Protecting the King from Poison</b>	<b>69</b>
Introduction . . . . .	69
Literature . . . . .	70
Manuscript notes . . . . .	70
Translation . . . . .	71
[Threats to the king] . . . . .	71
<b>Kalpāsthāna 2: Poisonous Plants</b>	<b>81</b>
Introduction . . . . .	81
Literature . . . . .	82
Translation . . . . .	82

The effects of poisons . . . . .	87
Slow-acting poison . . . . .	90
The invincible ghee . . . . .	94
Curing the 'slow-acting' poison . . . . .	94
<b>Kalpasthāna 3: Poisonous Insects and Animals</b>	<b>95</b>
Literature . . . . .	95
Translation . . . . .	95
The origin of poison . . . . .	99
Patients beyond help . . . . .	101
<b>Kalpasthāna 4: Snakes and Invenomation</b>	<b>103</b>
Introduction . . . . .	103
Literature . . . . .	103
Translation . . . . .	105
[Types of snake] . . . . .	108
<b>Uttaratantra</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Uttaratantra 17: Preventing Diseases of the Pupil</b>	<b>111</b>
Literature . . . . .	111
Translation . . . . .	111
[Complications] . . . . .	121
[Characteristics of the probe] . . . . .	121
[Complications] . . . . .	121
<b>Uttaratantra 38: Diseases of the Female Reproductive System</b>	<b>125</b>
Summary of the Content . . . . .	125
Placement of the Chapter . . . . .	125
Parallels . . . . .	127
Philological notes . . . . .	127
Metrical alterations . . . . .	127
The original opening verses . . . . .	128
Translation . . . . .	129
<b>Uttaratantra 39: On Fevers and their Management</b>	<b>131</b>
Literature . . . . .	131
Translation . . . . .	131

<b>Uttaratantra 65: Rules of Interpretation</b>	<b>133</b>
Literature . . . . .	133
Terminology . . . . .	133
Characteristics of the Manuscript Transmission . . . . .	133
Translation . . . . .	133
<b>Editions and Abbreviations</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>Index of Manuscripts</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>Materia Medica Reference Works</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>Materia Medica</b>	<b>175</b>

# **Sūtrasthāna**







**Nidānasthāna**



# Śārīrasthāna





**Cikitsāsthāna**







# Kalpasthāna



# **Uttaratantra**





# Uttaratantra 65: Rules of Interpretation

## Literature

Meulenbeld offered an annotated overview of this chapter and a bibliography of earlier scholarship to 2002.<sup>380</sup> Earlier explorations of this topic include Nārāyaṇa 1949; Dasgupta 1952; Oberhammer 1967–68; Muthuswami 1976; Lele 1981; Scharfe 1993; Mejer 2000; A. Singh 2003. Manevskaia (2008) gave examples of the use of *tantrayuktis* in Buddhist commentarial literature.

## Terminology

## Characteristics of the Manuscript Transmission

## Translation

- 1 Now we shall explain the chapter called, “the enunciation of the logical methods of the system (*tantrayukti*).”
- 3 There are thirty-two logical methods of the system. They are as follows:
  - topic (*adhikaraṇa*)
  - construing (*yoga*)
  - word meaning (*padārtha*)
  - premise (*hetvartha*)
  - mention (*samuddeśa*)

---

<sup>380</sup> [HIML](#): IA, 331.

- description (*nirdeśa*)
- prescription (*upadeśa*)
- statement of reason (*apadeśa*)
- indication (*pradeśa*)
- prediction (*atideśa*)
- exception (*apavarga*)
- ellipsis (*vākyasēṣa*)
- implication (*arthāpatti*)
- contraposition (*viparyaya*)
- recontextualization (*prasaṅga*)
- invariable statement (*ekānta*)
- variable statement (*anekānta*)
- objection (*pūrvapakṣa*)
- determination (*nirṇaya*)
- consent (*anumata*)
- itemization (*vidhāna*)
- future reference (*anāgatāpekṣaṇa*)
- past reference (*atīkrāntāpekṣaṇa*)
- (*saṁśaya*)
- (*vyākhyāna*)
- (*svasaṁjñā*)
- (*nirvacana*)
- (*nidarśana*)
- (*niyoga*)
- (*vikalpa*)
- (*samuccaya*)
- (*ūhya*)

4 It is said about this, “what is the purpose of these methods?” The answer is, “construing sentences and construing meanings”.<sup>381</sup>

5-6 There are **two** verses about this:

*The logical methods of the system prohibit statements employed by people who do not speak the truth. They also bring about the validity of one's own statements. And they also clarify meanings that*

<sup>381</sup> Ḍaḥaṇa on 6.65.4 (*Su 1938*: 815) explained “construing a sentence” as “connecting up a sentence that is not connected,” and “construing a meaning” as “clarifying or making appropriate a meaning that is implied or inappropriate.”



are stated back to front, that are implicit, unclear and any that are partially stated.

- 8 Among them, “topic (*adhikaraṇa*)” refers to the object, with reference to which statements are made, such as flavour (*rasa*) or humour (*doṣa*).<sup>382</sup>  
 9 “Construing (*yoga*)” is that by which a sentence is construed, as when words that are in a reversed order, whether placed close or apart, have their meanings unified.

Sesame oil he should drink, with heart-leaved moonseed,  
 neem tree, maidenhair fern, Indrajaio, and long pepper

that is cooked with heart-leaf sida and country mallow, and  
 deodar, always for a benefit in the case of the disease goitre.

In this verse, one ought to say, first, “one should drink cooked....” However, the word “cooked” is used in the second line.<sup>383</sup> Unifying the meanings of words in this way, even though they are far apart, is construing.

- 10 The meaning that is conveyed in an aphorism (*sūtra*) or a word is called word-meaning (*padārtha*). In other words, word-meaning is the meaning of one or more words. Word-meanings are unlimited. Where two or three meanings such as ‘fat,’ ‘sweat’ or ‘anointment’ appear to be possible, the valid meaning is the one that construes with prior and subsequent elements.<sup>384</sup> For example, when it is said that, “We are going to explain the chapter on the *veda*-origin” the mind may be confused about which “*veda*” will be spoken about. *Sāmaveda* and so on are the Vedas. Taking note of the prior and subsequent elements, the two roots *vind* “find” and *vid* “know” have a single meaning. Subsequently, the understanding takes place that there is a wish to talk about the origin of āyurveda. So that is the meaning of the word.<sup>385</sup>

382 The idea here is that “*rasa*” may be the topic of a chapter, and statements in that chapter are all understood to be about that topic

383 The Nepalese version reads द्वितीये पादे which would properly mean the second quarter of the first line; the vulgate reads “third quarter” which seems more correct.

384 There is a dangling relative clause, यो ऽर्थः, in the Nepalese version that is avoided in the vulgate recension by the addition of स ग्रहीतव्यः.

385 The Nepalese text here is hard to follow, and the vulgate has a significantly different reading. But the problem situation seems to be as follows. The *Suśrutasaṃhitā* opens with a statement saying that it will describe the “origin of the *veda*” (*vedotpatti*). The

- 11 The statement that serves as proof of an argument is the premise (*hetvārtha*). For example, as a lump of earth is moist by water, the same way a wound becomes moist by substances like milk with black grams and so on.
- 12 A brief statement is called mention (*samuddeśa*), such as pain-causing agent (*śalya*).
- 13 A detailed statement is description (*nirdeśa*). For example, the pain-causing agents are endogenous or exogenous.
- 14 Prescription (*upadeśa*) refers to statements like “it should be this way”. For example, one should not stay awake at night; you should not sleep during daytime.
- 15 prescription (*upadeśa*) refers to statements like “this happens because of this”. For example, in the sentence “Phlegm increases by sweet substances”, the reason is stated.
- 16 Substantiation of the subject matter through past evidence is indication (*pradeśa*). For example, he removed the pain-causing substance from Devadatta so he can do it from Yajñadatta.
- 17 Substantiation of the subject matter through future event is prediction (*atideśa*). For example, if his wind goes up he would get colic by that.
- 18 A deviation after generalization is exception (*apavarga*). For example, those afflicted by poison should not go through sudorific treatment other than the cases of poisoning by urinary worms.
- 19 Ellipsis (*vākyaśeṣa*) refers to an unstated word that completes a sentence. For example, despite not mentioning the word ‘person’, when mentioning someone as ‘the one having a head, hands, feet, flanks, and abdomen,’ it’s apparent that the reference is to a person.
- 20 arthāpatti (*Implication*) refers to an unstated idea that becomes evident through context. For example, when one said, “We will eat rice” it becomes evident from the context that he did not wish to drink gruel.
- 21 When there is the reversal of it it is contraposition (*viparyaya*). For example, when it is said, “Weak, dyspneic, and fearful people are difficult to treat,” the converse holds true: “Those who are strong and so on are easily treatable.”
- 22 Recontextualization (*prasaṅga*) refers to a concept common to another

---

problem is, what does this word “*veda*” refer to? Is it the Veda, as in Sāmaveda? Or something derived from the roots √vind or √vid? Context (“prior and subsequent elements”) can help us to know that “*veda*” means only “*āyurveda*” and that the *Suśrutasaṃhitā* is talking about the origin of ayurveda, specifically.

- section. For example, a concept belonging to another section is brought up by mentioning it repeatedly throughout.
- 23 Invariable statement (*ekānta*) is one that is stated with certainty. For example, *turpeth* causes purgation; *emetic nut* induces vomiting.
  - 24 Variable statement (*anekānta*) is one that is true in one way in some cases and in another way elsewhere. For example, Some teachers identify the main element as substance, others as fluid, some as semen, and some as digestion.
  - 25 That which is mentioned undoubtedly is objection (*pūrvapakṣa*). (???) For example, how are the four types of diabetes caused by wind incurable?
  - 26 Its answer is determination. For example, afflicting the body and trickling downwards, it creates urine mixed with fat, fatty tissues, and marrow. Thus, those caused by wind are incurable.
  - 28 Consent (*anumata*) refers to others' opinion that is not rejected. For example, when the assertor says that there are six flavours and that somehow gets accepted with affirmation, it is termed consent.
  - 29 Itemization (*vidhāna*) refers to sequentially ordered statements within a chapter. For example, the eleven lethal points of thigh are mentioned sequentially in a chapter.
  - 30 A statement like "Thus will be stated" is future reference (*anāgatāpekṣaṇa*) such as when one says in the *Sūtrasthāna*, "I will mention it in the *Cikitsāsthāna*."
  - 31 A statement like "Thus has been stated" is past reference (*atīkrāntāpekṣaṇa*) such as when one says in the *Cikitsāsthāna*, "As mentioned in the *Sūtrasthāna*..."

# Todo list

■ subject-verb-object . . . . .	49
■ Don't put guesses in the main text. Footnote them. . . . .	49
■ Cf. Arthaśāstra 1.21.8. . . . .	72
■ I'm still unhappy about this verse. . . . .	75
■ Mention this in the introduction as an example of the scribe knowing the vulgate. . . . .	75
■ fn about sadyas+ . . . . .	75
■ Bear's bile instead of deer's bile. . . . .	76
■ punarṇṇavā in the N & K MSS . . . . .	77
■ śrita for śṛta . . . . .	77
■ explain more . . . . .	77
■ Medical difference from Sharma. . . . .	78
■ example where the vulgate clarifies that these should be used separately; appears to be a gloss inserted into the vulgate text. . . . .	78
■ The two uses of prāpta are hard to translate. prāptāḥ → kṣipraṃ is an example of the vulgate banalizing the Sanskrit text to make sense of a difficult passage. . . . .	78
■ √ vyadh not √ vedh (also elsewhere and for the ears), causative optative. . . . .	78
■ -> ativiṣa . . . . .	88
■ Look up the ca. reference. . . . .	88
■ Come back to the issue of "kalpa". Look up passages in the Kośa. . . . .	95
■ write footnote: don't repeat ativiṣā; vulgate similar to H. . . . .	99
■ material corresponds to SS.1.45.205ab, where it describes how alcohol affects the body. . . . .	102

■ Or “There are 20 phaṇins and 6 maṇḍalins. The same number are known. There are 13 Rājīmants.” Or even, “there are 20 Phaṇins and six of them are Maṇḍalins.” Are phaṇins really the same as darvīkaras? . . . . .	105
■ grammar . . . . .	107
■ where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. .	112
■ maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs. . . . .	112
■ find ref. . . . .	118
■ Check out these refs. . . . .	118
■ meaning of kalpa . . . . .	118
■ or a dual? . . . . .	123

