## A Translation of the Nepalese Text of the Suśrutasaṃhitā

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

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### **Contents**

Sūtrasthāna			9
Sūtrasthāna 1: The Origin of Medical Knowledge			11
Literature			11
Translation		•	11
Sūtrasthāna 2: The Initiation of a Student			19
Literature			19
Translation		•	19
Sūtrasthāna 3: The Table of Contents			21
Literature			21
Translation		•	21
Sūtrasthāna 13: On Leeches			23
Literature			23
Translation			23
Sūtrasthāna 14: On Blood			31
Previous scholarship			31
Translation		•	31
Sūtrasthāna 16: Repairing Pierced Ears			39
Previous literature			39
Translation			39
Sūtrasthāna 28: Unfavourable Prognosis in Patients with Sore	S		49
Literature			49
Translation			49

4	Contents
T	

Nidānasthāna	51
Nidānasthāna 1: The Diagnosis of Diseases Caused by Wind Literature	<b>53</b> 53 53
Śārīrasthāna	61
Śārīrasthāna 2: On Semen and Menstrual Fluid         Literature          Translation          Diagnosis by humours          Therapies for menstrual blood          During menstruation	63 63 64 66 67
Śārīrasthāna 3: On Conception and the Development of the Embryo         Literature	75 75 75
Cikitsāsthāna	83
Cikitsāsthāna 4: On the Treatment of Wind Diseases  Literature	85 85 85
Cikitsāsthāna 5: On the Treatment of Serious Wind Diseases  Literature	<b>91</b> 91 91
Cikitsāsthāna 15: On Difficult Delivery         Literature          Translation	
Kalpasthāna	107
Kalpasthāna 1: Protecting the King from Poison	109

*Contents* 5

Introduction	
Introduction	_
Literature	
Manuscript notes	
Translation	
[Threats to the king]	11
Kalpasthāna 2: Poisonous Plants	21
Introduction	21
Literature	
Translation	
The effects of poisons	
Slow-acting poison	
The invincible ghee	
Curing the 'slow-acting' poison	
Curing the slow-acting poison	>4
Kalpasthāna 3: Poisonous Insects and Animals	
Literature	
Translation	35
The origin of poison	39
Patients beyond help	41
Kalpasthāna 4: Snakes and Invenomation	12
Introduction	
Literature	_
The Seven Stages of Toxic Shock	
Translation	
[The Taxonomy of Snakes]	
[Behaviours]	
[Enumeration of Snakes]	
[Breeding and Gender]	
[Symptoms of snakebite]	<b>5</b> 3
[Summary Verses]	55
Kalpasthāna 5: Therapy for those Bitten by Snakes	57
Introduction	
Literature	
Translation	
The application of mantras	

6 Contents

Blood letting
Kalpasthāna 6: Beating Drums Introduction
Uttaratantra 167
Uttaratantra 17: Preventing Diseases of the Pupil 160
Literature
Translation
[Complications]
[Characteristics of the probe]
[Complications]
Uttaratantra 38: Diseases of the Female Reproductive System 189
Introduction
Literature
Placement of the Chapter
Parallels
Philological notes
Metrical alterations
The original opening verses
Translation
Uttaratantra 39: On Fevers and their Management [draft]
Literature
Remarks on the Nepalese version
Translation
Uttaratantra 65: Rules of Interpretation 20
Literature
Early Sources
The Arthaśāstra
The <i>Yuktidīpikā</i>
Tamil literature
The <i>Visnudharmottarapurāna</i>

_	
Contents	7

The Saddanīti	. 208
Āyurvedic literature	
Tantrayukti-inventories	_
Earlier Listing	
Later Listing	-
Terminology	
1. adhikaraṇa	
2. <i>yoga</i>	
Characteristics of the Manuscript Transmission	
Translation	•
Editions and Abbreviations	233
Index of Manuscripts	241
Bibliography	243
Materia Medica Reference Works	273
Materia Medica	277







# Śārīrasthāna 2: On Semen and Menstrual Fluid

#### Literature

Meulenbeld offered an annotated overview of this chapter and a bibliography of earlier scholarship to 2002. <sup>155</sup> Das (2003: chs 6–8) also studied topics of this chapter and in chapter 13 provided an overview of the conceptual background of ayurveda on the topics discussed in this chapter.

#### **Translation**

- 1 We shall now explain the anatomy that is the purification of sperm (*śukra*) and blood (*śoṇita*).
- 3 Semen (*retas*)<sup>156</sup> is incompetent to produce offspring if it is [characterized by] wind, bile, phlegm, blood (śοṇita),<sup>157</sup> decomposition (kuṇapa), clumps (granthi),<sup>158</sup> stinking pus (pūtipūya), low volume (kṣīṇa), urine, or feces.

<sup>155</sup> HIML: IA, 244-246.

<sup>156</sup> The Nepalese version has -रेतांसि "semen" (in the plural) as the subject of the sentence: "seeds are unable to produce offspring...." In the vulgate, -रेतसः is a masculine bahuvrīhi, making "men whose semen has..." the subject of the sentence.

Note that the list begins with the four entities, wind, bile, phlegm and blood, hinting at a four-humour system (see Wujastyk 2000: 485–486).

<sup>158</sup> Modern Establishment Medicine (MEM) understands that normal ejaculate contains coagula which, however, dissolve after about half an hour. But coagula that do not dissolve may sometimes be a sign of an underlying disorder (see, e.g., Lamming and Marshall 1990: 2, 614–615; Cohen 1990).

#### Diagnosis by humours

4 When the disfunction is caused by wind, there is a colour and a type of pain that typically goes with wind problems. If caused by bile the colour and the pain are typical of bile afflictions. If caused by phlegm the discoloration and suffering are characteristic for phlegm disease. And if caused by blood (śoṇita) there will be a coloration due to blood and a sensation of a bile affliction. Moreover, when caused by blood (rakta) there is the smell of decomposition (kuṇapa). Phlegm with wind causes the appearance of clumps, bile with blood (śoṇita) causes the appearance of foul-smelling pus (pūtipūya). Bile with wind (māruta) cause a weakening of semen. Humoral colligation (sannipāta) causes the smell of urine and feces. 160

Cases of foul-smelling sperm, sperm with clumps, and when it reeks of pus are hard to treat.

However, when sperm contains urine or faeces there is no treatment.<sup>161</sup>

Moreover, seasonal blood ( $\bar{a}rtava$ ) too can become afflicted (upasrsta), seedless ( $ab\bar{\imath}ja$ ) because of the three humours, and blood as the fourth, taken individually, in pairs or triples or all together. <sup>162</sup>

This can also be known by means of the humour, colour and pain. In these cases, that which displays decomposition (kunapa), clumps and the putrid smell of pus is incurable ( $as\bar{a}dhya$ ). And otherwise it is curable ( $s\bar{a}dhya$ ).

Among these, the kind which shows decomposition, or coagula, or putrid pus is incurable. The other types, however, can be treated.

6 And there is a verse on this.

An expert should overcome the first three of these sperm pathologies

<sup>159</sup> Note that the text mentions both शोणित and रक्त. This raises the question of whether the author considered these to be different, or whether it is an artefact of textual transmission.

<sup>160</sup> The expression "humoral colligation," translating सन्निपात, refers to the simultaneous disorder of three humors at the same time, a condition that is difficult to treat (see Wujastyk 2016: 38 et passim).

<sup>161</sup> Note that the above characterizations presuppose the direct inspection of an ejaculate. The process of collection is not described in the sources in this chapter.

<sup>162</sup> This translates the text of the oldest surviving witness, N, and the vulgate. But MS H, that normally follows K very closely, has a negative particle, ¬¬, reversing the sense of the sentence.

with special treatments such as unction and sweating, as well as by means of a urethral instillation (uttarabasti). 163

find out about uttarabasti

#### Therapies by humour

- In that context, when the sperm is of the nature of wind, there is a tisane (āsthāpana) consisting of Bengal quince and Indian kudzu. One may use an oily preparation in the instillations, with well-cooked mahua, grey orchid, deodar, and chir pine. One can also make the patient drink clarified butter cooked with pomegranate, citron fruit, rock salt, a caustic (ksāra), and two kinds of salt.
- 6b When the sperm is of the nature of bile, there is a tisane (āsthāpana) consisting of the cooked milky sap of Malay beechwood and liquorice with milk. One should also apply a paste (kalka) of a white dammer tree and axlewood in the vagina. One should apply an oily enema (anuvāsana) of sesame oil cooked with liquorice; and it should only be applied as an upper enema.<sup>164</sup>
  - One should make him swallow ghee cooked with wild sugar cane, common smilax, heart-leaved moonseed, white teak, false daisy, and the five roots.
- 6c When the sperm is of the nature of phlegm, there is a tisane (āsthāpana) consisting of a decoction (kaṣāya) of golden shower tree. And one should also apply an oily enema (anuvāsana) of sesame oil cooked with long pepper, embelia and honey; and it should only be applied as an upper enema. He should be given to drink a ghee cooked with hairy bergenia, white teak, emblic, long pepper, bearded premna, and prickly chaff-flower.
- 3.2.6d And there are verses about this.
  - 3.2.7 When there is blood in the sperm, the physician should give the person ghee cooked with flowers of the fire-flame bush, catechu, pomegranate, and arjun.

<sup>163</sup> Dalhaṇa on 3.2.6 (Su 1938: 345) noted that "unction and sweating" indicates the "five treatements": वमन, विरेचन, अनिरूह, अनुवासन and उत्तरबस्ति. He noted that the explicit mention of urethral enema in the verse was for the purpose of highlighting its priority. However, a natural reading of the verse does not suggest that these distinctions were in the author's mind.

<sup>164</sup> By specifying "upper enema" the author is clarifying that this is not a rectal enema.

- 3.2.8 When it smells like a corpse, he should drink ghee cooked with the sal group of trees. †When clumps appear, it is cooked with stones, or also in ash from a flame-of-the-forest. 165
  - 9 And also, when it resembles pus, it is treated with items such as phalsa and banyan. When the sperm is deficient it should be treated as was stated before and also as will be described. 166
  - 10 When it looks like feces, he should be made to drink ghee together with leadwort, cuscus grass and devil's dung.

10a ...

#### Therapies for menstrual blood

- For purifying the menstrual blood one should follow the procedure, the last of which is a urethral instillation (*uttarabasti*).<sup>167</sup>
  - One should use a paste (kalka) as well as cloths and a salutary lavages ( $\bar{a}camana$ ).<sup>168</sup>
  - In case of a bad smell and the appearance of pus, or the appearance of marrow in the blood.
  - 15 He should drink a decoction (*kvātha*) of white sandalwood or a decoction of red sandalwood. 169
  - 165 The Nepalese text and translation of this sentence are uncertain. The vulgate text reads, 3.2.8 (Su 1938: 345): ग्रन्थिभूते शटीसिद्धं पालाशे वा ऽपि भस्मिन "If clumps appear, it is cooked with *śaṭī* or in ash from a *palāśa*." The vulgate edition notes in a footnote that some vulgate manuscripts add an extra line, स्नेहादिश्व क्रमः षद्वेतासु विजानता. The Nepalese manuscripts read this line two verses further down.
  - 166 Dalhaṇa on 3.2.9 (Su 1938: 345) noted that "what was stated before" refers to the स्व-योनिवर्धन section, i.e., *Suśrutasaṃhitā* 1.15.10 (Su 1938: 69), and that "what will be described" refers to *Suśrutasaṃhitā* 4.26 (Su 1938: 496), the chapter on weakness and strength (क्षीणबलीय).
  - 167 The "procedure ending with a urethral instillation" probably refers to verse 6 above (see page 65).
  - 168 The word आचमन, normally "sipping water from the palm" is here translated "lavage" following the context and Dalhaṇa on 3.2.13 (Su 1938: 345), who described it as "water for washing the vagina" (योनिप्रक्षालनोदक). This treatment may be intended for the condition mentioned in 12cd, but in the vulgate text there is a preceding half verse stating that the treatment is for the "four disorders of menstrual blood."
  - 169 The name चन्दन may refer to several types of sandalwood; presumably one is meant here that is different from white sandalwood, i.e., perhaps Pterocarpus santalinus Linn. f. The vulgate has an extra half-śloka here.

14ab When clumps (*granthi*) appear, he should drink velvet-leaf, three heating spices, and Indrajao.<sup>170</sup>

- 14a He should drink a a decoction (*niḥkvātha*) that is the extracted juice (*surasa*) of a caustic (*kṣāra*), dried ginger, and devil's dung.
- 3.2.24 Thus a man has unblemished semen and a woman has pure menstrual blood.

#### **During menstruation**

- 9 In case the sperm appears purulent, a mixture of mangrove canon ball in some food leftovers or anything else should be prepared. When the sperm is depleted, one should perform these instructions straight away as soon as they have been explained.
- 10 One should make the patient drink ghee with citra, koshira and hingu by way of an antidote. A wise person should then perform one by one the six oleation processes on his own body.
- 10A By not engaging in sexual activities with women for a long time and similarly through the use of expedients and instruments
- 10B By intense use of astringent, pungent or bitter substances
- 10C Like an acid or a salty, oily or fermented solution, that has just stood somewhere for some time,
- 10D deteriorates both by the effect of time going by and by interaction with yogi's\*
- 10E similarly in case of affection of the female system one should prescribe oleation and other similar treatment.
- 10F Precisely as formulated for external use, one could prescribe exactly the same for internal administration as well.
- 10G In case of disease resulting from trouble with Vāyu, then the patient must drink a beverage consisting of clarified butter, prepared with split cedar and Kāśmarya fruit.

<sup>170</sup> On ग्रन्थि, see note 158.

- 10H One should prescribe either an intravaginal solution of Payasyā, Kāśmarya fruit, Kṣīravidārī and Udaka sap or lumps drenched in diluted milk.
- 10I A sip from the palm of the hand of Madhukamunga and astringent betel
- 10J Furthermore, in case of trouble caused by bile and in the menstrual cycle.
- 10K The patient should drink milky Kākolī sap and a decoction of Vidārī to which some candied sugar is added
- 10L and one should insert an intravaginal solution of Madhuka flowers and Kāśmarya fruit mixed with sugar cane juice or a paste with santal sap.
- 10M and a pinch of astringent Paan\*
- 10N When disease is caused by phlegm, he must drink an astringent sandalwood and acrid Christmas rose solution.
- 100 ... or a paste of young tree sprouts soaked in a plant juice.
- 10P he must lick or sip bits of Tinduka, wood apple, slime apple and sandal powder or Ksandra.
- 10Q Sarjadhava paste should be placed inside the vagina
- 10R a pinch of Ladhra and astringent Tinduka
- 10S In case of clots and lumps in the sperm he should take Sringavera and Pāṭhā to which is added some sandal powder as well as white Surasa.
- 10T One should insert into the vagina a salve\* with Kustha and cedar extracts.
- 10U and add just a pinch of something astringent
- 10V in case the sperm is clearly in decomposition, the patient must be prescribed to drink a astringent beverage of Manjista and astringent sandalwood
- 10W or of Kuṭaja fruit, sandalwood and sandal sweetened with sugarcane candy.
- 10% or in case there is obvious pus, this is exactly what the patient should be given
- 10Y and the lady should be prescribed to place inside the vagina a salve of cachou and arjuna
- 10Z and for both a pinch of something astringent is indicated is just right.
- 10A1 in case of ..........\*, he should ingest an astringent solution of

false black pepper, coral tree and Manjista.

- 10A2 one should introduce into the vagina a paste of Surastastra (?)\* and Rocana as well as a salve of Bhadrasriya.
- 10A3 Both must receive just a sip of something astringent.
- 10A4 Here is more.

11

- 12 Generally speaking, at the end of the period one should apply an internal cleansing from menstrual discharge\*
- 13 and one should definitely prepare both cotton-plant paste and salutary beverages.
- 14 in case the sperm spreads a foul-smelling stench and definitely when there is blood
- 15 the patient should drink decoctions of sandal or sandalpaste.\*
- 14AB and in case of lumps and clots in his sperm he should consume a salutary Tryusana with coral swirl fruits.
- 14A and drink a beverage of acrid dry ginger, Hing and holy basil.

16

23

- 24 That being said, when sperm is not causing disease, even then all of this may serve to purify the female system\*
- 25 From the first day onwards\* when the period starts, she should shun young celibates, when they are alone, bathing, anointing, decorating and scratching themselves and she should also suppress day-sleep, put collyrium to her eyes, weeping, be frightened or cut her nails, run hither and tither, laugh or speak or listen to lots of talk or exert herself. Why should her partner arrive late during the day? It is claimed that if she puts a collyrium, a child will be born blind, if she is weeping, he will have abnormal vision, by bathing and anointing he will be depressive, by smearing oil on her limbs, he 'll be born a leper, by holding her nail downwards he will be a child with ugly nails, by being continuously busy he will become a restless and troubled character. When she behaves accordingly, she well be the best of future mothers. She should take rest on a layer of Kuśa grass, take Haviśya-food so pure that it is fit for a

- sacrifice\*\*, eat varied food from the palm of her hand or from a plate made of leaves and she should keep herself then from her husband from the third day onwards. However, on the fourth day, first she should take a ritual, put on a new untorn dress and some jewels, the make an auspicious happy recitation and then confidently hug her husband. What is the purpose of all this?
- 26 Once she has taken a ritual bath after her period, a woman should put eyes on her husband before anyone else.
- 27 Then the priest conducts the rites for procuring a son\* and at the end of i, the husband should be seen to closely observe the following.
- In order to beget a male child he should eat both clarified butter and milk as well as śāli-rice\* boiled in water. After observing a month of sexual abstinence, the wife should lubricate herself in oil from the very best Māṣa pulse and he should approach her at night. After gaining her complete trust by gentle words he should then make his move on the fourth, sixth, eighth, tenth and twelfth day (of the cycle)\*\* successively.
- 31 Each month again she should be approached sexually.\*
- And when conception has occurred in this way during one of these nights, it is claimed that she should press three or four drop of juice from Lakṣmaṇā, Vaṭaśuṅgā, Sahadevā, Viśvadevānā or any other drug and then administer them in the right nostril if she desires a son and in the left if she wants a girl, and not spit nor sneeze them out.
- 32a Here are some more verses.
- 11cd On top of that those around her want to see her smelling sweet as honey, sparkling like a crystal, agile and active, smooth and sweetly perfumed,
- 12ab bright with splendour equally due to the smell of honey as to the smoothness of oil.
  - 17 It is a token of good health when the menstrual blood is red like a hare's blood or like the shine of red lac and when its colour stains can be removed.
  - 18 Metrorrhagia or abnormal uterine bleeding is diagnosed when there is either excessive bleeding, untimely or irregular

bleeding or when symptoms are the opposite of what occurs in a normal menstrual cycle.

- 20 ... fever, lamenting pain, anaemia\*, tiredness and others signs of disturbance of Vāta. A minor concomitant disease may easily set in motion ............. (taruṇyā).
- 21cd Because these afflictions have a recurrent character, the woman becomes amenorrhoeic.
  - 22 In such a case a diet is indicated including meat, Kulattha-pulses, sour Tila-seeds, Māṣa-beans and whine and for drinks (cow)urine, whey and sour curd.
  - 23 In case of thin or scanty menses with features that cannot be treated with drugs, other measures indicated in case of uterine metrorrhagia must be taken.
  - 29 eṣūttarottaram vidyādāyurārogyameva ca || prajāsaubhāgyamaiśvaryam balam ca divasesu vai ||
  - 30 ataḥ paraṃ pañcamyāṃ saptamyāṃ navamyāmekādaśyāṃ ca strīkāmaḥ; trayodaśīprabhṛtayo nindyāḥ ||
  - 33 When the four ingredients for the embryo are combined, i.e. the right womb to grow in, the right seed to descend from, the propitious life juices to be fed upon and a lucky constellation of stars, according to age-old tradition, the newborn will grow into a child of unshakeable health.
  - 34 Conceived and developed in this way, they become beautiful, of noble character and they live a long life. Although, beings sons, they have obligations to fulfil towards their parents, they can take care of these and thus honourably discharge themselves.
  - 35 On the one hand there those who claim that it is the Tejas-element which lies at the base of the different types of complexions, on the other there are those who say that it is the colour of the food the mother eats while pregnant that dictates the complexion. The normal complexion of the foetus therefore is fair. But when earth (as a source of food) is the main determining element, complexion will shift

tod ark. When a mix of earth and sky are the main elements (in the food), it turns towards the dark bluish. By analogy, some say it is the colour of the food the woman eats while pregnant that fixes the complexion of her offspring. There are arguments in favour of both theories. In so far as in dark, yellow and white (krsnapītasvetāsu) earths (bhūmisu) snakes, trees, .... and so on (sarppavrścikagalagonādayah) are essential elements (satvāh), they are black, yellow and white (krsnapītasveta). (uncertain hence in italics) When the Tejas-principle fails, the child is born blind. Similarly, when penetration into the blood of this disturbance results in a newborn with blood-shot red eyes; penetration into the phlegm makes for a pale-eyed newborn; penetration into the bile makes for a yellow-eyed baby; penetration into the wind results the in a with eyes that have poor vision.

- 36 Here are some more verses.
- 36a He whose eyes are entered by a pure wind
- 36bj will have oblong downcast eyes, dark or bright.
- 36c When bile with phlegm both are present unsullied in a man's eye  $\,$
- 36d then in that man's eye the yellow, green and reddish-brown will all light up together.
- 36e when phlegm has shaken off all kinds of bodily secretions from someone's eyes,
- 36f then both irises of that person will light up brightly shining.
- 36g Whenever blood with phlegm move around in a someone's eyes,
- 36h he will appear to have either bluish-dark or blood-shot pupils.
- 36i Just as a lump of ghee melts when placed near a fire, 171
- 36j so a woman's propensity to ovulate glides into receptivity in contact with a man.
- 37 When sperm is divided in the uterus by the wind into two

<sup>171</sup> Cf. the attempt by Das (2003: 222–241) to identify the *Suśrutasaṃhitā*'s descriptions with the physical processes involved as known to Modern Establishment Medicine, and also the self-contradictions in the ancient āyurvedic medical models.

- beings, twins are born conditioned by the former good and evil deeds.
- 37.1 When in the mixture there is an excess of male sperm, a fertile woman will create two male children\*.
- 37.2 whereas when there is an excess of female semen then similarly the woman engenders two girls. But there is no certainty.\*
- 37.3 A child born from a man who has but a poor sperm to give his wife is called asevyah (impotent).\*
- 38cd When a man has a fellatio he does not have to doubt his penis will get up erect.\*
  - 38 A boy born from a father with poor sperm becomes an āsekya.
  - 39 He who is born in a sordid vagina is commonly known as a Saugandhika. Such a person becomes aroused only after smelling a vagina or a scrotum. \*
  - 40 When a man first had same-sex anal coitus because of a period of sexual abstinence from women and then turns towards his regular partners\* again, he should be known as a Kumbhīka. And now get it right about what an īrṣyakam is:
  - 41 somebody who has to watch sexual intercourse of others before being able to his own sexual activities should be known as an īrṣyakaḥ.\* He who turns towards copulation\*\*
  - 42 during the fertile days of the cycle\* but out of pure sexual ignorance ejaculates on the breasts of his virgin wife\*\* will create boys who also exhibit feminine character traits.
  - 42 see 3.2.41
  - 43 If a woman in her fertile days\* throws herself at the feet of males around her and she begets a girl, she will also have character traits of a man. \*\*\*
  - 44 Men who do produce sperm but have a pathology can be identified as āsekya, Sugandhi, Kumbhika or īrṣyaka. Men who do not produce any sperm are called saṇḍha.\*

  - 46 It is to be expected that what the mother eats will reflect in how children behave both in the uterus and after birth.\*

- 47 Now when two women are having sex and somehow succeed in making fit both their sperm contributions then a boneless being is born.
- 48 A woman could even get carried away and reach an orgasm in a dream following her ritual bath. The Vāyu then transporting her fertilized egg into the uterus, results in her belly ...
- 49 ... showing the obvious signs of pregnancy month by month in the pregnant lady.
- 50 In addition, it should be known that monster-like creatures looking like serpents, scorpions and pumpkin-gourd shaped foetus, are born frequently from the womb as a consequence of sins committed.
- 51 When a pregnant woman's wishes are not respected due to a deranged condition of the Vāta, the child stands in danger of being born a humpback or .......... (kūnipaṇgur) or dumb,
- 52 and when the parents are atheistic or due to the aggravation of Vāyu are under the effect of misdeeds in former lives, the newborn may develop malformations.
- Due to the scantiness of bodily excretions, itself due to a disabling of Vāyu with respect to processing of food, the foetus, whilst in the womb, produces (almost)\* no urine nor stools.
- and because of this dwindling away of the Vāyu in mouth and throat, in the bowels and especially in the small intestine, these all get wrapped up in phlegm resulting in impediment of intestinal transit; moreover the foetus does not weep all the time ...\*
- Furthermore, the ups-and-downs of the foetal respiratory movements during its sleep are coordinated with the ups-and-downs of the respiratory movements of the mother.
- 56 The adjustment of the limbs of the body to its bodily constraints, both the appearance and the falling out of teeth, the disappearance of hair from the palms of hands and soles, all of this follows intrinsic laws of nature.
- 57 Men who have uninterruptedly entered one previous existence after another and who have a vast understanding of the scriptures, do remember their own previous births.

  This was the second chapter of the śārīrāsthana.







## **Todo list**

Can't be "sedation"	37
find out about uttarabasti	65
This is a change we should make in the edition	85
You need not give all the grammatical details about śrotādi. As-	
sume you are talking to knowledgeable Sanskrit scholars	86
Perhaps kalka here could also mean the Terminalia Bellerica (विभीतक). ः	88
Euphorbia Antiquorum (Antique spurge)	90
The webpage https://hindi.shabd.in/vairagya-shatakam-bhag-	
acharya-arjun-tiwari/post/117629 says that this verse belongs	
to the <i>Nītiratna</i> . I could not find this text	93
The provisional edition should be modified accordingly	95
There, Dalhana comments that deliberation on avapīḍa had been	
done earlier when it was mentioned. Find that description to	
	97
	98
<u> </u>	98
	04
]?	-
?	-
(?)	
Cf. Arthaśāstra 1.21.8	
I'm still unhappy about this verse	15
Mention this in the introduction as an example of the scribe know-	
	115
	115
	16
1	17
śrita for śrta	

explain more	117
Medical difference from Sharma	118
example where the vulgate clarifies that these should be used sep-	
 arately; appears to be a gloss inserted into the vulgate text	118
The two uses of prāpta are hard to translate. prāptā $h \rightarrow k$ ṣipram is	
 an example of the vulgate banalizing the Sanskrit text to make	
sense of a difficult passage	118
$\sqrt{\text{vyadh not }\sqrt{\text{vedh (also elsewhere and for the ears)}}$ , causative	
optative	118
-> ativișa	128
Look up the ca. reference	128
Come back to the issue of "kalpa". Look up passages in the Kośa.	135
write footnote: don't repeat ativiṣā; vulgate similar to H	139
material corresponds to SS.1.45.205ab, where it describes how al-	
cohol affects the body.	141
Or "There are 20 phanins and 6 mandalins. The same number are	
 known. There are 13 Rājīmats." Or even, "there are 20 Phaṇins	
and six of them are Mandalins." Are phanins really the same as	
darvīkaras?	147
C 40 10 10 0 4	. 0
grammar	148
ri- r-?	
	150
ri- ṛ-?	150 151
ri- ṛ-?	150 151 162
ri- ṛ-?	150 151 162 170
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm.	150 151 162 170 170
ri- ṛ-?  varṇa means "colour" elsewhere?  write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś  where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm.  maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs.	150 151 162 170 170 176
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs.	150 151 162 170 170 176 176
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs.	150 151 162 170 170 176 176
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs. find ref. Check out these refs. meaning of kalpa	150 151 162 170 170 176 176 176 181
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs. find ref. Check out these refs. meaning of kalpa or a dual?	150 151 162 170 176 176 176 181 191
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs. find ref. Check out these refs. meaning of kalpa or a dual? Footnote here about who is speaking to whom. a kind of asthma? Not happy with the last part.	150 151 162 170 176 176 176 181 191 197
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs. find ref. Check out these refs. meaning of kalpa or a dual? Footnote here about who is speaking to whom. a kind of asthma? Not happy with the last part. connecting with the previous pāda?	150 151 162 170 170 176 176 176 181 191 197 197
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs. find ref. Check out these refs. meaning of kalpa or a dual? Footnote here about who is speaking to whom. a kind of asthma? Not happy with the last part. connecting with the previous pāda? (atyartha? excessive?)	150 151 162 170 176 176 176 181 191 197 197 197
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs. find ref. Check out these refs. meaning of kalpa or a dual? Footnote here about who is speaking to whom. a kind of asthma? Not happy with the last part. connecting with the previous pāda? (atyartha? excessive?) fordvādaśādikaḥ)? not clear to me, is it dvādaśādhikaḥ?	150 151 162 170 176 176 176 181 197 197 197 198 198
ri- ṛ-?  varṇa means "colour" elsewhere?  write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś  where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm.  maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs.  find ref.  Check out these refs.  meaning of kalpa  or a dual?  Footnote here about who is speaking to whom.  a kind of asthma?  Not happy with the last part.  connecting with the previous pāda?  (atyartha? excessive?)  fordvādaśādikaḥ)? not clear to me, is it dvādaśādhikaḥ?  (any better medical terms for them?)	150 151 162 170 176 176 176 181 197 197 197 198 198
ri- ṛ-? varṇa means "colour" elsewhere? write note on pariṣekān pradehāṃś where is cutting with a knife related to removing bile or phlegm. maṣī burned charcoal. Find refs. find ref. Check out these refs. meaning of kalpa or a dual? Footnote here about who is speaking to whom. a kind of asthma? Not happy with the last part. connecting with the previous pāda? (atyartha? excessive?) fordvādaśādikaḥ)? not clear to me, is it dvādaśādhikaḥ?	150 151 162 170 176 176 176 181 197 197 198 198 198

(not sure about it)
(Not in vulgate)
(I am looking for a better translation)
(I'd need to rework on it)
(I'd need to rework on it and think about the sequencing of the
number)
(āmadoṣa? Not too sure)
(2nd hemistich is incomplete)
(not too sure about the meaning of vyapada)200
not so sure about sodāvarte
not so sure about it, MW mentions others like Cordia Myxa and
Alangium hexapetalum
not sure about it
(sāmāhāya- any better word?)
Not so happy with this translation
( Not happy with it)
(the second hemistich is incomplete) 203
can śṛta mean here boiled milk? Not happy with the last part 203
the rest of the text is unclear to me
(not so sure about it). [ghṛtābhyaṅgonavasthāsu should it be like
ghṛtābhyaṅgo 'navasthāsu?, svedā lepaḥ ghṛtābhyaṅgonavas-
thāsu ca yojayet] (Not so happy with the translation) 204
Check if Jejjaṭa is available
See also Dalhaṇa at 1.1.1 (Su 1938: 1)
See chapter 40 of Sūtrasthāna
vasā / medas / majjan
Does bhūtādi a compound or it means ahaṅkāra or ego? 230