

The transmission of Sanskrit medical literature in India

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Abstracts

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Nepalese recension of the *Suśrutasaṃhitā*

In my ongoing research I am concerned with the preparation of a comparative critical edition of a few selected chapters from what I call the **Nepalese recension of Suśrutasaṃhitā*.

This edition is based on the one hand on the witnesses of so far 3 Nepalese palm-leaf manuscripts and on the other hand on the evidences of 4 different vulgates of *Suśrutasaṃhitā* along with its 2 to 4 Sanskrit commentaries (dependent on the respective part of the text).

In the course of the workshop I would like to present my research at length and critically discuss some chosen passages of the **Nepalese recension* in order to make some of the outcomes and shortcomings of my study evident and in order to examine cooperatively some possible directions for the further research.

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On the textual background of the Yoga treatise of the *Carakasaṃhitā*

The Śārīrasthāna of the *Carakasaṃhitā* contains a short treatise of only 39 verses on the attainment of liberation through yoga (Śā.1, verses 137--155). This embedded treatise contains vocabulary and citations from Buddhist and Vaiśeṣika literature, and presents mindfulness as the key to mokṣa.

In the present paper, I shall study the variant readings available for this passage from the manuscript archive available at the Vienna Caraka Project, and the citations and parallels from Buddhist and other philosophical literatures.

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Cakrapāṇidatta and the transmission of the text of the *Carakasaṃhitā*

The *Āyurvedadīpikā* by Cakrapāṇidatta (11th c.) is the oldest commentary on the *Carakasamhitā* – itself the oldest of the three foundational treatises on classical Indian medicine (Āyurveda) – that has been preserved in its entirety. The compilation of the basic text of the *Carakasaṃhitā* may have taken place during the first two centuries C.E. and its editing concluded during the third century, to be followed by a decisive re-edition of the work by Dṛḍhabala around 500 which involved the reconstruction of its text and even some substantial rewriting. The names of authors of quite a number of further commentaries preceding Cakrapāṇidatta's are known to us; however, only three have survived in fragmentary form, one of them possibly preceding the re-edition of the *Carakasaṃhitā*. Cakrapāṇidatta's commentary therefore plays a special role in our understanding of the treatise.

The recent critical edition of *Carakasaṃhitā* Vimānasthāna chapter 8, achieved in a series of FWF-funded research projects conducted at the Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, University of Vienna (cf. <http://www.istb.univie.ac.at/caraka/>), has thrown new light on the transmission of the text. In spite of wide-spread contamination among the approximately

seventy mss. which were collated towards the establishment of this edition, two major branches of textual transmission – whose existence had already been assumed much earlier – could be clearly discerned and demonstrated, together with their respective sub-branches. This makes it possible now to situate Cakrapāṇidatta's commentary within the transmission of the basic text, by way of a careful and critical examination of his quotations and other references to the text of the treatise known to him. The paper will point out and discuss exemplary variant readings found in the *Āyurvedadīpikā*, especially from Vimānasthāna chapter 8, with recourse to the testimony of some mss. of this work; it will also take into consideration Cakrapāṇidatta's own statements and remarks concerning various versions and readings of the text familiar to him, and attempt to show the influence his commentary and its readings have exerted on editions of the *Carakasaṃhitā* ever since the publication of the *editio princeps* from 1868 onward.

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Once again on the authorship and original sequence of chapters in the
Carakasaṃhitā Cikitsāsthāna

The oldest compendium of classical Āyurveda composed in Sanskrit, the *Carakasaṃhitā*, contains accounts of its own textual history, according to which two authors contributed different chapters to its sixth book, the Cikitsāsthāna (i.e. the book on therapy). Caraka, who may have lived in the second century C.E., created the *Carakasaṃhitā* by editing an earlier work, the *Agniveśatantra*. For unknown reasons his work became (or remained) incomplete, and the missing parts were added later by a redactor named Dṛḍhabala (presumably in the fifth century C.E.). These additional parts are the complete books seven and eight, i.e. the Kalpa- and the Siddhisthāna, as well as seventeen chapters of the Cikitsāsthāna. It seems to be tempting to conclude that these are the Cikitsāsthāna's final seventeen chapters. Matters are, however, more complicated. Since the sequence of Cikitsāsthāna chapters varies in different versions of the CS, two questions have bothered scholars ever since the early days of Indology:

- (1) Which chapters did Dṛḍhabala fill into the Cikitsāsthāna, and which belong to the older stock of the work?
- (2) What is the temporal relationship of the two conflicting sequences of chapters?

In the present paper I shall try to answer these two questions. After reviewing previous research, I shall apply a stemmatical hypothesis developed from an analysis of variant readings in the CS Vimānasthāna to the transmission of the Cikitsāsthāna in order to establish the relative temporal relationship of different text versions. Finally, I shall try to establish a few fixed points in the history of the CS's transmission by drawing upon information from the commentaries of Jajjaṭa, Cakrapāṇidatta, and (if possible) Haricandra.

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Face-to-face learning: The transmission of *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya* in the Kerala tradition of Āyurveda

The *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya* has enjoyed a reputation amongst the Āyurvedic physicians of Kerala like no other region in India. The teachings of this text became the final word in therapeutic decision-making as well as in resolving debates on the theories of Āyurveda.

The *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya* has been learnt and taught in Kerala with a passion that has been unmatched. The physicians of Kerala have also produced several commentaries on this text.

The extant traditions of Āyurveda in Kerala enable us to get a glimpse of the oral traditions and writings that were involved in the transmission of *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya*.

The method of face-to-face learning or *mukhamukham* as it is known in Kerala is one of the traditional methods of teaching and learning *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya*. This technique has been preserved to the present day in Kerala.

This paper will give an overview of the oral traditions and writings in the Kerala tradition of Āyurveda that will give some insights into the methodologies adopted to transmit the knowledge of Āyurveda embodied in the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya*.

Special attention will be given to distinguish between the study of theory and practice. Variations between different schools of thought will also be highlighted. Material for the discussion will be drawn from ethnographic studies on the living traditions of Āyurveda in Kerala as well as subsidiary literature based on the *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya* that were composed by the physicians of Kerala.

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Modalities of the diachronic migration of ancient medical literature:
the textual witnesses of the *Carakasamhitā*

The editorial work that is behind the production of handwritten and printed books extends from the simple layout to a proper revision of the text on the basis of a critical attitude with regard to the text itself. The variant readings that a copy of a specific textual work bears reveal whether the transmitted text is the result of such a critical attitude. Textual witnesses of the *Carakasamhitā*, one of the most representative works of the corpus of the Sanskrit medical literature, show that the text of the work has been “edited” again and again through intentional changes, conjectural emendations and contamination.

The paper will examine some manuscript and printed books that bear an “edited” text. In the first part we will observe the textual innovations that some manuscripts bear and, on this basis, we will see how some ancient editors worked. The second part asks whether and how the editorial activity that the manuscripts display is also reflected in the printed books of the *Carakasamhitā*. The third part examines the attitudes towards the text and the praxis regarding textual problems on the part of those who were involved in the editorial activity of the *Carakasamhitā*, be they producing manuscript or printed books. The text contained in the books themselves will be our source of information. We do not have, in fact, explicit statements regarding the modalities of editing that are reflected in the manuscripts and we are often not informed by the editors of the printed editions about their method in taking editorial decisions. Observations concerning the history of printing in India will help to understand the case of the *Carakasamhitā*. For instance, it is interesting to observe that, when print was adopted, the handwritten reproduction that had been practised for several hundred years did not stop abruptly: both manuscript and printed forms of reproduction of textual works co-existed in the nineteenth century India.

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An allegorical trope on action and well-being

In the early years of the eighteenth century, Ānandarāya Makhin composed *The Joy of Life* (*Jīvānandanam*) as a performance piece for the Bṛhadīśvara Temple festival in Thanjavur, South India. *The Joy of Life* is a seven-act allegorical play, which interweaves key medical concerns with fundamental ideas of Indian thought through the personification of medical conditions (e.g., Queen Cholera, Prince Pallid, and Porter Goiter) and abstract philosophical and religious themes (e.g., Queen Reason, Confidante Concentration, and Devotion-to-Śiva). That the play was composed for public presentation suggests that one of Ānandarāya's objectives for *The Joy of Life* was to express the interconnectivity and centrality of India's classical medical system, Āyurveda, within the polythetic nature of Indian culture and history in an entertaining yet edifying way. In this paper, I discuss the allegorical transmission of the classical Indian dichotomy of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*, loosely translated as "extroversion" and "introversion," in *The Joy of Life*. I present a portion of a dialogue in Act Six of the play between two of King Life's courtiers, Time and Action, who discuss a power struggle that is underway between Life's chief advisors, Worldly Knowledge and Higher Knowledge. At the primary, or "literal," level of the allegory, Worldly Knowledge encourages the king to pursue matters of statecraft, while Higher knowledge advocates religious practice. At the allegory's secondary order of signification, we may read the behavioural models recommended by Life's advisors as correlates of the principles of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*. After a consideration of Worldly Knowledge and Higher Knowledge as personifications of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti*, I probe the significance of the *pravṛtti-nivṛtti* dichotomy in the Sanskrit medical context in general as well as in the overall presentation of "knowledge for long life" (*āyurveda*) in *The Joy of Life*.

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The relationships between the *doṣas* and *dūṣyas* in āyurvedic theory

This paper is based on a particular verse of Caraka, which discusses the *doṣas* and *dūṣyas*. The way in which Caraka presents this material also gives rise to reflections on the structure of the *Carakasaṃhitā*, being a metastatement on its interpretation.

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Critical Edition and Translation of Jajjaṭa's *Nirantarapadavyākhyā* on the *Carakasaṃhitā*

The *Nirantarapadavyākhyā* by Jajjaṭa (or Jejjaṭa) is one of the earliest and, therefore, one of the most important commentaries on the *Carakasaṃhitā*. Although the extant text of the commentary is incomplete, it includes large sections of the Cikitsāsthāna and part of the Kalpasthāna and the Siddhisthāna, therefore a critical edition and translation of this commentary will provide insight into the textual history of the *Carakasaṃhitā* and its early commentarial tradition. The text of Jajjaṭa has never been critically edited, translated or analysed. Jajjaṭa's descriptive method follows that of a traditional commentarial style (*ṭīkā*) in Sanskrit, with a specialization in āyurvedic terminology and concepts. A principal aim of the commentator is the establishment of the correct reading of the original (*mūla*) text, which in places varies from the extant printed editions of the *Carakasaṃhitā*. This might point to the existence of a different recension of the *Carakasaṃhitā*, which was known to Jajjaṭa.

In this paper, we present a sample of a critical edition and translation of part of an early commentary by Jajjaṭa on the *Carakasaṃhitā*. It is the first step in a project that result in the complete edition and translation of this important commentary. This critical edition is based on several copies of the lost original single palm-leaf manuscript in Malayalam script and an edition by Haridatta Śāstrin, published in 1941. It is hoped that a discussion based on the sample text and translation at an early stage of the project will offer opportunity to discuss finer details of textual criticism and analysis leading to a better and more complete critical edition in the end.