

Jajjāṭa's *Nirantarapadavyākhyā* as an Early Commentary on the *Carakasamhitā*

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The genre of Sanskrit commentarial literature is a largely untapped reservoir of important and often crucial information that is too often forgotten or neglected. The significance of commentaries in technical literature in Sanskrit, such as *Āyurveda*, cannot be over emphasised, because frequently no other way exists to understand correctly both the meanings of specialised vocabulary and the ideas particular to the area.

The *Nirantarapadavyākhyā* by Jajjāṭa (or Jejjāṭa) is one of the earliest and, therefore, one of the most important commentaries on the *Carakasamhitā*. This commentary is incomplete, but sufficient portions survive to allow a study of the earliest form of medical commentary in India. The extant portions of this commentary are large sections of the Cikitsāsthāna and part of the Kalpasthāna and Siddhisthāna of the *Carakasamhitā*. The text of Jajjāṭa has never been critically edited. Our study is based on several copies of the lost palm-leaf manuscript in Malayalam script and an printed edition by Haridatta Śāstrin published in 1941.

Jajjāṭa's descriptive method follows that of a traditional commentarial style (*tīkā*) 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 *Carakasamhitā*. This may point to the existence of a different recension of the *Carakasamhitā*, which was known to Jajjāṭa, and the text of the *Carakasamhitā* was still in the process of evolution at the time.

In this paper, we would like to take a close look at Jajjāṭa's commentary and the information we have about it in order to shed some light on the controversies surrounding his teacher and original place; and to point to some significant aspects of his work.

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