SURGERY HAD A DIFFERENT HISTORY FROM THE OTHER PARTS OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE. THE COMPENDIUM OF SU²RUTA INCLUDES MANY CHAPTERS ON THE TRAINING AND PRACTICE OF SURGEONS. THE EARLY DATE OF THIS TREATISE AND THE GREAT ACCURACY, INSIGHT AND DETAIL OF THE SURGICAL DESCRIPTIONS ARE MOST IMPRESSIVE. ONE CAN INFERR THAT THE SURGICAL PROFESSION HAD DEVELOPED OVER SEVERAL GENERATIONS AT LEAST, AND HAD ARRIVED AT AN ADVANCED STAGE.

SURGEONS WERE THOUGHT OF AS A SEPARATE GROUP OF PRACTITIONERS FROM THE MORE NORMATIVE HERBAL HEALERS, YET FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON, THEIR TRADITION WAS RECORDED IN THE SANSKRIT LANGUAGE AND INTEGRATED INTO THE MEDICAL CORPUS. THIS LEGACY WAS THEN PASSED DOWN THE CENTURIES AS PART OF EYURVEDA. HOWEVER, THE ACTUAL PRACTICE OF SURGERY DID NOT SURVIVE IN THE SAME WAY. THE EARLY AND MEDIEVAL HISTORICAL SOURCE IN INDIA GIVES US ALMOST NO EVIDENCE OF ADVANCED SURGERY BEING PRACTICED. BY THE TIME FOREIGN OBSERVERS FROM CHINA, AND LATER AFGHANISTAN AND EUROPE, BEGIN TO DESCRIBE INDIA; SU²RUTA'S
Surgery has all but vanished. A few barber-surgeon practitioners preserved limited skills in couching for cataract and bone-setting, and even in types of plastic surgery, but these were no longer integrated into the learned practice of classical Indian medicine. Early European surgeons were in much demand in India from their arrival in the sixteenth century onwards, although by contrast European physicians were not sought after, and the flow of knowledge about simples and drugs was from East to West.

The aim of the present thesis is to highlight the references of surgery in Sanskrit literature. It also presents an analysis of the contribution of Suṅrata in the field of surgery. The thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter deals with the references of Ēyurvedā in Sanskrit literature. References on surgery in Sanskrit literature are described in the second chapter. The third chapter is an analysis of the surgery schools in ancient India. The fourth chapter deals with the surgery concept of Suṅrata. In the fifth chapter it is tried to highlight the specific features of the surgical instruments in Suṅrata Sāãhitā.
THIS THESIS CONCLUDES WITH THE SIXTH CHAPTER WHICH SUMMARIZES THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY.

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KALADY,

P.P.

PRATHAPAN.