

# Higher Criticism of *Yogasamuccya*: Establishing Gaṇapativyāsa's Lineage, Chronology, and Rationale for the Synthesis of a *Sangraha*

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## Abstract:

**Background:** The critical edition of *Yogasamuccaya* confirmed the existence of a high-quality Ayurvedic compendium. However, its intellectual value is rooted in the author's historical context, philosophical motivation, and the textual landscape that shaped his compilation.

**Objective:** This article utilizes Higher Criticism to investigate the author, *Gaṇapativyāsa*. The aim is to establish his precise lineage and date through internal and external evidences, explore his philosophical and religious beliefs, his motive for compilation and the influence of other classical and medieval texts on his work *Yogasamuccaya*.

**Methodology:** The research involved a comparative-historical analysis of internal and external evidences. Key verses and explicit analogies were analysed to extract the author's stated motives and philosophical beliefs regarding medical knowledge integration.

**Results:** *Gaṇapativyāsa*, a *Brāhmaṇa* of the Vatsa Gotra from Gujrat, is genealogically linked to *Śrī Soḍhala* (c. 12<sup>th</sup> CE). Quotations of *Vīrasimha* (late 14<sup>th</sup> CE) and the date of Ms. Dn2 (1415 CE) confirm the author's period as the late 14<sup>th</sup> /early 15<sup>th</sup> century CE. *Gaṇapativyāsa* justified his compendium by using the Single-Winged Bird Analogy, framing the *Yogasamuccaya* as a holistic necessity and demonstrating a clear belief in *Mishrā Cikitsā*. The text is a synthesis of the *Bṛhatrayī* and medieval works. And continues the systemic materia medica tradition of his ancestor *Śrī Soḍhala*.

**Conclusion:** The *Yogasamuccaya* is a product of a scholarly, regionally grounded tradition. *Gaṇapativyāsa*'s motive to compose a *Sangraha Grantha* was a deliberate, self-aware, philosophical choice to promote holistic, multi-disciplinary healing. Providing an essential framework for interpreting the text's unique therapeutic content.

**IndexTerms - *Yogasamuccaya*, *Gaṇapativyāsa*, Higher Criticism, Lineage, Dating, *Sangraha Grantha*.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Manuscripts are handwritten documents of cultural and historical value, typically recognised as antiques over 75 years old<sup>1</sup>. Manuscriptology is the scientific study of these artifacts, in which Critical Edition is given the highest importance<sup>1</sup>. Critical edition is the process of finding the most appropriate reading which is near to the author's view<sup>2</sup>. Broadly two methods of editing are adopted: Lower Criticism and Higher Criticism. Lower Criticism is reconstruction and authentication of the text through collation and emendation, and presenting it as close as possible to the author's original work<sup>2</sup>.

With the text *Yogasamuccaya* now authenticated through Critical Edition<sup>3</sup>, this article focuses on Higher Criticism—the scholarly inquiry into the author's time period, influence of contemporary and preceding works on the author, source of motivation, significance of the work and its popularity in the field, etc<sup>2</sup>.

In his work *Yogasamuccaya*, *Gaṇapativyāsa* undertook the ambitious task of compiling a comprehensive work covering all the eight *aṅgas* of *Ayurveda*, *Rasāśāstra*, and allied sciences<sup>3</sup>. Why, then, did he feel the necessity to compose this compendium? What intellectual forces shaped this polymath physician, and what motivated this massive synthetic work? The answers to these questions are embedded within the text's introductory verses and colophons, revealing a deep-rooted scholarly lineage from the Gujarat region. This article details the author's lineage, date, and intellectual context, emphasizing the philosophical necessity that drove *Gaṇapativyāsa* to compose such a comprehensive *Sangraha Grantha*.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This research was primarily based on the authenticated text of *Yogasamuccya* by *Gaṇapativyāsa*<sup>3</sup>. Higher Criticism involved three solid steps:

### 2.1. Tracing the Family Tree (Genealogical Context)

The introductory verses of Chapter 1 (V. 1-14)<sup>4</sup> were subjected to content analysis to extract all explicit names and lineage details. These names were then cross-referenced against scholarly works and histories (e.g., *Sodhala Nighantu* prefaces) to

reconstruct the author's complete genealogical chain, including his *Gotra* and regional provenance. This process yielded the final flowchart of the author's lineage.

### 2.2. Time Period of *Gaṇapatīvyāsa* (Chronological Determination)

The definitive date of the author was established using two independent methods of chronological evidence:

1. **Internal Evidence:** The names of *Ācāryas* cited within the text (both the Dn1 and Dn2 manuscript copies) were correlated with their established historical time periods. And the documented date of the manuscript copies was taken into consideration.
2. **External Evidence:** History books were referred to establish time periods of the authors cited in the text *Yogasamuccya*.

Combining these chronological endpoints established the definitive window for the author's time period.

### 2.3. Understanding the 'Why' (Philosophical and Intellectual Influence)

Key philosophical and rhetorical verses, particularly Chapter 1 (self-praise) and Chapter 2 (the analogies of a single-winged bird and that of Vishnu's Avatars) were analysed to identify the specific influence of the texts like the *Brhatṭrayī* (Charaka, Sushruta, etc.) and *Rasa Śāstra* and *Gaṇapatīvyāsa*'s primary motivation for compilation of his work '*Yogasamuccya*'.

## 3. RESULTS

### A. Genealogical Lineage and Regional Origin

The text's introductory verses (Chapter 1, Verses 1-14)<sup>3</sup> and the colophon of the older manuscript (Dn2)<sup>4</sup> provide a clear scholarly pedigree:

1. **Direct Lineage of the Author:** The manuscript Dn2 explicitly traces *Gaṇapatīvyāsa*'s descent:

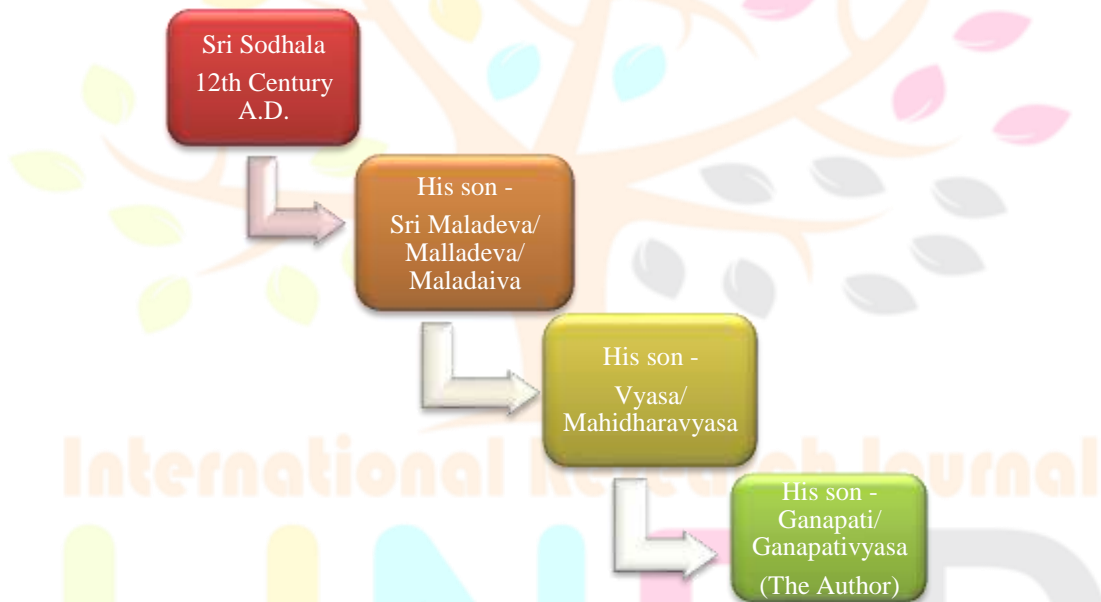


Image1: flowchart of lineage of ganapativyasa

2. **Caste and Gotra:** The lineage is identified with the *Rāikavāla Brahmin* family of the Vatsa Gotra. This lineage was already renowned for scholarship in different branches of Sanskrit, *Vyakarana*, *Alankarāśāstra*, *Jyotiṣa*, *Tarka* and *Ayurveda*<sup>5</sup>.
3. **Place:** According to internal evidence - the author's ancestor, Śrī Sodhala, is named as a resident of the city of Satyapura (Chapter 1, Verse 4)<sup>3</sup>. This evidence is corroborated with the external evidence - Prof. P.V. Sharma notes that the Raikavala Brahmins of the Vatsa Gotra are the residents of Gujrat province<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, the Gujrati names of the scribe of Dn2 manuscript- Raval Jaṭṣānkara Harajīvana<sup>4</sup> confirm that the text belongs to the Gujrat region.

## B. Fixing the Time Period

The chronology of *Gaṇapativyāsa* is established by compiling the dates of the texts he consulted:

### i. Internal Evidence:

Table 1: list of authors cited in *yogasamuccaya* and their time period

Sr. No.	Names Cited in <i>Yogasamuccya</i>	Textual Location (Chapter: Verse)	Established Time Period and Significance
1.	Earliest Manuscript Date (Dn2)	Colophon (Ms. Dn2)	1415 CE <sup>4</sup>
2.	Latest Manuscript Date (Dn1)	Colophon (Ms. Dn1)	1788 CE <sup>6</sup>
3.	Vīrasimha	Chapter 7	Late 14th Century CE (c. 1383) <sup>7</sup> (The latest authoritative, fixing the earliest date of composition.)
4.	Charaka	Chapter 1 – 9	3rd – 2nd Century BCE (Standard classical reference)
5.	Atreya	Chapter 1 – 57 Chapter 3 – 74	c. 1000 BC (Standard classical reference)
6.	Suśruta	Chapter 1 – 6, 9, 15 Chapter 2 – 69 Chapter 4 – 18 Chapter 6 – 15	1st – 2nd Century CE (Standard classical reference)
7.	Vāgbhata	Chapter 1 – 6, 9, 167 Chapter 6 – 19	6th Century CE (Standard classical reference)
8.	Ṭisāṭa	Chapter 7	10th Century CE <sup>8</sup> (Medieval compendium influence)
9.	Bhoja	Chapter 1 – 137	11th Century CE (Medieval compendium influence)
10.	Soḍhala	Chapter 1 – 4	12th Century CE <sup>9</sup> (Medieval compendium influence)
11.	Rasa-Dravyas and Rasa-Auṣadhīs	Chapter – 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	Post-10th Century <sup>9</sup> CE (Development of <i>Pārada-Saṃskāras</i> and <i>Rasaauṣadhi</i> use)

### ii. External Evidence:

Table 2: list of external evidences

Sr. No.	Source Cited	Evidence Provided / Significance
1.	<i>Āyurveda ka Brhat Itihās</i> (Atrideva Vidyānānka)	States that the <i>Yoga-Samuccaya</i> by Gaṇapativyāsa was published by Jivaram Kalidas from Gondhal, Gujrat <sup>10</sup> .
2.	<i>Āyurveda ka Vyāgnyanic Itihās</i> (Ācārya Priyavat Sharma)	Confirms the publication of Jivaram Kalidas, dating the publisher's period to the 20th century (indicating the text's obscurity until modern publication efforts) <sup>11,12,13</sup> .
3.	Scribal Colophons (Ms. Dn2)	Explicitly names the scribe as Raval Jaṭāśānka Harajīvāna and owner as Raval Śrīpāda Rāma Keśava, confirming the Gujarat regional provenance of the transmission chain <sup>4</sup> .

Considering all the references, the author cannot be after 15<sup>th</sup> century and earlier than the late 14<sup>th</sup> century. Hence, the time period of the author can be said to be around late 14<sup>th</sup> century or early 15<sup>th</sup> century.

## C. Philosophical and Intellectual Influence

### Author's Beliefs and Influence

The author's philosophical motivations are explicitly stated:

#### 1. The *Sangraha Grantha* Philosophy:

*Gaṇapativyāsa* primarily believed in the necessity of an integrated, holistic knowledge and treatment (*Mishra Chikitsa*). He justified his compilation by warning against fragmented specialization: he uses the compelling similes of

- The Single-Winged Bird (Ch. 2, V. 84), stating that “Just as a great bird with only one wing is unable to fly high through skies, similarly the best of physicians is also unable to treat the diseases in people by relying on only one branch of knowledge (science).”

ii. The Vishnu’s Avataras (Ch. 2, V. 85), stating that “Just as to slay the enemies Hiranyakashipu and then Ravana, the powerful one (Vishnu) had to manifest as Narasimha and then as Rama, as the occasion demanded; so also in medicine, it is only through the combined use of the essence of the traditional texts (*Samhitas*), alchemy (*Rasa-shastra*) and rejuvenating therapy (*Rasayana* therapy), that one triumphs over disease. Never can a physician be strong and effective by relying on just one science/ method alone.”

2. **Influence of Texts and Lineage:**

- The structure of the materia medica (Chapter 1, *Rasavīryādhikāra*) and the detailed focus on therapeutic formulations trace directly to his ancestor Śrī Soḍhala (author of *Soḍhala Nighaṅṭu* and *Gadā Nigraha*), confirming a major familial influence.
- He directly cites and is influenced by the *Bṛhatrayī* for fundamental principles, *Mādhava Nidāna* for diagnosis, *Rasa* texts for alchemical practices and Vedas & Upanishads for *Mantra Chikitsa*.
- List of the texts cited in the manuscript:

Table 3: list of texts cited in *yogasamuccaya*

Serial No.	Name	Shloka No.
1.	Bhoja Grantha	Chapter 1 – 137
2.	Sushrutadi Shastra	Chapter 2 – 69
3.	Atreya	Chapter 1 – 57 Chapter 3 – 74
4.	Sushruta Samhita	Chapter 4 – 18 Chapter 6 – 15
5.	Vagbhata Samhita	Chapter 6 – 19
6.	Madhava Nidan	Chapter 7 – 41
7.	Tisata Samhita	Chapter 7
8.	Virasimhasana	Chapter 7
9.	Garudopanishada	Chapter 7
10.	Atharva-Veda	Chapter 7
11.	Rig-Veda	Chapter 7

3. **Significance and Popularity of *Yogasamuccaya*:**

- In the introductory verses of the text, *Gaṇapativyāsa* quotes a self-praise verse-  

“*Ganapati*, son of the glorious and greatest *Vyasa*, composes the excellent text '*Yogasamuccaya*' with masterful skill. His authority is manifest, for he is the singular *Hanuman* who has conquered the ocean of literature; the radiant sun that makes the lotus of metrics bloom; a mighty pillar bearing the mountainous burden of logic; the central jewel in the pearl necklace of sublime poetry; and the crest-jewel of the art of rhetoric.”  
 – (Chapter. 1, V. 13)
- Unfortunately, this assertion of supreme skill stands in stark contrast to the historical evidence of the text's limited dissemination. Similar to his ancestor, Soḍhala, whose Ayurvedic works were not popular nor current in Gujarat, even though he was a Gujrati scholar<sup>14</sup>, the work of Gaṇapativyāsa appears to have met the same fate. Despite being a compendium of high literary merit and sophisticated medical knowledge, *Yogasamuccaya* remained locally obscure, evidenced by the rarity of its manuscripts and its absence from current scholarly platforms following a limited 20th-century publication<sup>11,12,13</sup>. This suggests that even a master polymath like Gaṇapativyāsa could not guarantee the enduring popularity of his monumental work.

4. **DISCUSSION**

The rigorous *Higher Criticism* of the *Yogasamuccaya* manuscripts unveil the profile of a highly competent scholar operating during a transitional phase in Ayurvedic history.

**The Power of Synthesis:** Gaṇapativyāsa's decision to compose a *Sangraha Grantha* was a professional necessity. By the late 14th century, specialized texts like the *Nighaṅṭus* for dravyaguna, *Rasa* texts for alchemical preparations, specialized *samhitas* for specific *aṅgas* of Ayurveda, etc., had fragmented Ayurvedic knowledge. The author's use of the Single-Winged Bird analogy and of Vishnu’s Avatar analogy, is a powerful statement about the danger of over-specialization and a pragmatic call to arms for physicians to adopt a synthetic, all-encompassing knowledge base.

**The Soḍhala Legacy in Gujarat:** The proven descent from Śrī Soḍhala provides the intellectual pedigree for the *Yogasamuccaya*'s quality. Soḍhala was instrumental in codifying materia medica; Gaṇapativyāsa continued this effort by creating a *Sūtra*-based text that incorporated the latest medicinal advancements, such as advanced *Rasauśadhis*, which is reflected in his unique modifications to the mercurial faults. The fact that the author was a *Brāhmaṇa* of the Vatsa Gotra from Gujarat provides the final piece of the puzzle, localizing and validating his distinct medical tradition.

**Unpopularity Reconsidered:** External evidence confirms that *Yogasamuccaya* did achieve publication in the 20th century by Jivaram Kalidas<sup>11, 12, 13</sup>, validating the text's inherent value. However, the subsequent complete absence of this printed edition from modern archives, search engines, and online platforms highlights a different challenge: a failure of sustained visibility and contemporary scholarly dissemination, rather than a simple failure to reach print. As our study proves its high standard, this obscurity is not a reflection of the text's quality, but rather an unfortunate consequence of its regional or limited circulation after the 20th-century publication attempt. This research, by providing the definitive critical text and historical context, now opens the *Yogasamuccaya* for its deserved recognition as a crucial source of the medieval Gujarati Ayurvedic tradition.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The *Yogasamuccaya* was composed by Gaṇapativyāsa, a late 14th/early 15th century scholar from the esteemed Soḍhala lineage of Gujarat. This *Sangraha Grantha* was composed from a philosophical belief in the necessity of integrated, multi-disciplinary knowledge, as powerfully articulated in the Single-Winged Bird Analogy and the Vishnu's Avatar Analogy. By tracing his influences and establishing his context through Higher Criticism, this work authenticates Gaṇapativyāsa as a pivotal figure whose synthesis of classical, medieval, and regional medical traditions warrants extensive further study.

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