

A SCIENTIFIC REVIEW ON HIGHER CRITICISM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO  
THE MANUSCRIPT *CHIKITSASARA* BY GOPALADASA\*<sup>1</sup>Dr. Vidyarani K. P., <sup>2</sup>Dr. Shrinath M. Vaidya<sup>1</sup>Final Year PG Scholar, Dept. of Ayurveda Samhita Siddhanta Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Ayurveda College and Hospital, Hassan.<sup>2</sup>Professor, Dept. of Ayurveda Samhita Siddhanta Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Ayurveda College and Hospital, Hassan.

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## ABSTRACT

Manuscriptology is the scientific study of manuscripts. It is the branch of learning concerned with searching, collecting, cataloguing, preserving, transcribing, reading, collating, editing, and publishing of manuscripts.<sup>[1]</sup> Manuscriptology plays a vital role in the preservation and critical understanding of India's vast cultural and scientific heritage. One such valuable manuscript is *Chikitsasara*, composed by Gopaladasa, which encapsulates core principles of *Ayurvedic* therapeutics. The study is based on the two Manuscripts obtained from Gujarat Ayurveda University Jamnagar. This article presents a literary and critical analysis of *Chikitsasara* using the methodology of higher criticism— which includes: examination of linguistic features and style, Identification of sources and intertextual references, Study of internal evidence (colophons, authorial notes), Consideration of external references, Establishment of chronological context. By this process the data extracted through textual analysis and cross-referencing with established *Ayurvedic* literature. The study explores the author's intent, language, sources, influences, and the textual structure. This analysis contributes to the broader understanding of *Ayurvedic* manuscript literature, adds many points to existing knowledge and highlights the relevance of higher criticism in textual studies.

**KEYWORDS:** Manuscripts, Ayurveda, Higher Criticism, Style, Evidences, Chikitsa sara.

## INTRODUCTION

Manuscriptology is the scientific study of manuscripts.<sup>[2]</sup> Manuscriptology provides authentic records for tracing the cultural, social, political and economic history of the people of a region or a country.<sup>[3]</sup> Written records are the best source materials for linguists to study the history of a language. Editing a piece of work means reconstruction of the text closest to the author's point of view based on internal and external evidence.<sup>[4]</sup>

Higher criticism is one of the parts in critical edition of any manuscript. The researcher who does lower criticism can able to do higher criticism and will be done in majority. This study is based on the manuscript *Chikitsa Sara* by Gopaladasa. Two manuscripts written by two different scribes in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century CE were considered for the study. And both the manuscripts were collected from the Gujarat Ayurveda University, Jamnagar.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

## SOURCE OF DATA

The study is based on the two Manuscripts obtained from Gujarat Ayurveda University Jamnagar with accession no as follows.

SL NO	Name of the MS	Accession No	Source obtained	No of folios	Sigla given
1	Chikitsa Sara by Gopaladasa	134GAS/23/02/1970	GAU JAMNAGAR	34	Dn 1
2	Chikitsa Sara by Gopaladasa	135GON/24/02/1970	GAU JAMNAGA	49	Dn 2

## METHODOLOGY

The approach is based on Higher Criticism, which includes.

- Examination of linguistic features and style
  - Identification of sources and intertextual references
  - Study of internal evidence (colophons, authorial notes)
  - Consideration of external references
  - Establishment of chronological context
- Data was extracted through textual analysis and cross-referencing with established Ayurvedic literature.

## RESULT

### HIGHER CRITICISM

Historical criticism or higher criticism is a branch of literary analysis. It involves the assessment of author's original work.<sup>[5]</sup>

Higher Criticism is a scholarly approach aiming to uncover the origins and context of ancient texts. It examines the author's writing style, influences, and circumstances, enhancing understanding beyond simple textual analysis.

A key distinction is that higher criticism focuses on the text's origins, sources, and historical background, rather than the variations within manuscripts themselves, which is the domain of Lower(textual) criticism.

Higher criticism probes the following aspects.<sup>[6]</sup>

#### 1. The language used

In both the manuscripts language used is Sanskrit. And the script is in *Devanagari*.

#### 2. The style in which the writer presents his work

*Chikitsasara* contains the explanation regarding 6 branches of *Ashtanga Ayurveda* except *Rasayana* and *Vagikarana*.

- Author has referred the various texts written by *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, *Vagbhata*, *Harita*, *Rasarnava* and wrote the essence from all of them.
- The author in the beginning has explained that, he is writing the text from the knowledge whatever he has gained without leaving anything for the benefit and success of physicians.
- The author has given importance to both *Swasta rakshana* and *Atura chikitsa*. Hence initially before explaining about the diseases he has described *Nadi pariksha*, regarding *Rutus*, *Tridosha* and different *Ahara Vargas*.
- Most of the subject matter is explained in *padya* form only.
- The text has got Starting and Ending colophons for each context.
- All the description of *chikitsa adhyayas* is in the form of *Trisutra*. That is, *Hetu*, *linga* and *Aushadha*.

In the starting of any disease, its *hetu* and *samprapti* is explained in brief and followed by that, the *lakshanas* will be given. Then *Chikitsa* is explained.

- The importance is given to *Adravayabhuta chikitsa* too at wherever it is required. Hence it covers *Daivavyapashraya*, *Yukti vyapashraya* and *Satvavajaya* aspects of *Chikitsa*.

### 3. Literary aspects involved in the work

Subject matter dealt in the text

The text has explained about the 6 branches among *ashtangas* of *Ayurveda* except *rasayana* and *vajikarana*. Most of the diseases explained in *Ayurveda* were explained in the text.

### 4. Life of the author & his equipment

The salutations at the beginning of the text are as follows.

॥श्री गणेशायनमः॥ श्री मन्महागणपतये नमः॥

श्री धन्वन्तरे नमः॥ श्री गुरुवे नमः॥

॥अथ चिकित्सा सार प्रारम्भः॥१॥

Salutation to the Lord Ganesha. Salutation to the Lord Dhanvantari. Salutation to the Guru. Now begins the *Chikitsa sara*.

The author states that he is writing the text for the purpose of benefiting the physicians.

परं परोपकारार्थं यदृष्टं लिखितं मया ।

लिख्यते तत्र संक्षिप्तं वैद्यानां यशदायकम् ॥ ६॥

For the purpose of benefiting successive generations, what was retained as it is by me is written concisely here, bestowing fame on the physician.

From all these references one can conclude that the author was a follower of Hindu Dharma.

### 5. Source for the work

Author at the end of the manuscript has quoted that he has referred different ayurvedic texts like *Sushruta*, *Vrunda*, *Harita*, *Caraka*, *Atreya*, *Vagbhata*, *Siddharasarnava* *Dipika* and wrote the essence of all the texts. And he has also quoted that he has written whatever he had listen, seen, and also experienced.

चिकित्सासारनामोज्यं ग्रन्थः परमदुर्लभः ।

श्रीमद्रोपालदासेन वादीन्द्रेण च धीमताः ॥

बहुनां ग्रन्थमात्राणां सारमुद्धृत्य यत्नतः ।

श्रुतं दृष्टं चानुभूतं तत्सर्वं लिखितं मया ॥

## 6. The circumstances that made the author to compose the work

As the author has quoted that he is writing the text because it was rarely available and also for benefitting the physicians to get success in treating the patients. This shows the authors concern about the public and society.

## 7. Influence of other authors in the field

परोपकाराय पुण्यं प्रयासेन विनिर्मितः ।

आले सुश्रुतं वृन्दं हारितं च चरकं तथा ॥

आत्रेयं वाग्भटं सिद्धरसाणव दीपकम् ।

- As the author quotes different names of other texts suggests the influence of all those authors on the writer.
- The pattern of explaining the whole subject matter is similar to *Yogaratanakara*.
- As the text is written in the pattern of *Hetu, Linga, Aoushadha* suggests the influence of *Caraka Samhita*.

## DISCUSSION

### Discussion on the Author, and time period

#### ➤ Based on internal evidences

Sl. No	Author	Time period
	Atreya	600-700 BC
	Harita	600-700 AD
	Caraka	300- 200 BC
	Sushruta	600- 700 BC
	Vagbhata	600-700 AD
	Vrinda	700-800 AD
	Siddha Rasarnava	1200 AD

➤ And the two scribes of the manuscript which are taken for the study have mentioned the time period of their work in the end colophons as follows In Dn1 which is considered to be the older one – 17<sup>th</sup> century and In the Dn2 the date is mentioned as 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### BASED ON EXTERNAL EVIDENCES

Yogaratanakara(17<sup>th</sup> century work) mentions different references from which the contents are being taken. One among them is Chikitsa sara and the text is being mentioned by Yogaratanakara as - *CHIKITSA SARAT* (indicating matter considered from this text). (Ex- in the context of Apasmara chikitsa- shuna pittasya Anjana dhupana and Yashtyahvadi navananjana<sup>[7]</sup>) From this reference we may infer that the *Chikitsasara* written by Gopaladasa might have existed during the period of *Yogaratanakara* or may be even before that. Based on all these evidences the time period of the author Gopaladasa is concluded as early 16<sup>th</sup> century AD.

## CONCLUSION

- The manuscript Chikitsasara, written by Gopaladasa written in Devanagari script, comprehensively

covers six branches among *ashtangas* of *Ayurveda* except *Rasyana* and *Vajikarana*.

- The text was written for the physicians to get success in treating the patients.
- By looking into external evidence, it is concluded that chikitsa sara was kept as one of the bases by Yogaratanakara.
- This text is a *sangraha grantha* written by taking references from Caraka, Sushruta, Vagbhata etc samhitas.
- By considering both internal and external evidences the time period of the work /author is estimated as early 16<sup>th</sup> century CE.

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