It is widely known that in point of richness the *Gṛhya* literature of the Sāmaveda ranks next to that of the Yajurveda and comprises of a large number and variety of texts. However, it seems that scholars have not so far paid much attention to the study of this literature in the manner they have done in the case of the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda and the Atharvaveda. The present thesis is therefore an attempt to study thoroughly one of the problems pertaining to the Sāmavedic *Gṛhya-ritual*.

While going through this rich literature, one often notices the mention of an age-honoured authority, viz. Gautama. It is unfortunate, nevertheless, that the whole of the *Gṛhya*-literature of his school has not been available in print. Furthermore, occasional references to Gautama in ritualistic literature have always kept on demanding attention of scholars, who have at times expressed only their conjectures about the existence of the school of Gautama. Therefore, in order to solve the problem "Did there really exist a school of Gautama?" inquiry was made in several ways and its answer forms this thesis. It brings out that there did exist a school of Gautama and also throws light on the significant contribution made by this school of Gautama to the *Gṛhya-ritual* of the Sāmavedins.