

Review Article

A critical review of antiquity, authorship and contents of Haremekhala: A medieval work on humanities

I. Archana¹, Jeddu Ganapathi Bhat²

¹PhD Scholar, Department of Ayurveda Siddhanta, Institute for Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Gujarat Ayurveda University, Jamnagar, ²Professor, Department of Ayurveda Siddhanta, Alva's Ayurvedic Medical College, Moodbidri, Karnataka, India

Access this article online

Website: www.ayujournal.org

DOI: 10.4103/0974-8520.96116

Quick Response Code:



Abstract

Ayurvedic science of life is one of the great contributions of India to the systems of health science. Apart from classical medical works, much information related to this Indian system is found elsewhere in other branches of science, such as Philosophy, *Joutishya*, *Natyā*, *Kavya*, etc. Still much Ayurvedic information is clubbed in other compilations meant for general purpose. However, it is unfortunate that not all such works came into lime light; and still remain in the dark for many reasons. Haremekhala written by Mahuka is one such work, which contains Ayurvedic information along with various other themes, such as cosmetics. The author Mahuka lived in Dharanivaraha rājya of central India during Chapa Dynasty in 9th–10th century A.D. Haremekhala also known as Prayogamala comprises of five *Pariccheda*s written in *Prakṛita* language, later added by translations in Sanskrit called Chaya and foot notes in Sanskrit called *Tika*. The detail about this book is described in this article.

Key words: Cosmetics, Dharanivaraha, Haremekhala, Mahuka, *Prakṛita*, *Prayogamala*

Introduction

Haremekhala is a special work having the purpose to cover day-to-day activities of a person. Subject matter of Haremekhala also covers human health and disease, controlling a person or enemies, treatment for animal disorder, various cosmetics and perfumeries and so on. Thus it is a masterpiece on different aspects of human requirements of the ancient times—a book on “Humanistic.” Name of this book includes two words, HARA+MEKHALA, where *Mekhala* means *Mala*—the garland and *Hara* denote to Lord Siva. Thus Haremekhala refers to a special garland to Lord Shiva.^[1] The persons who aim at achieving *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, and *Yasha* in their life are called as “*Vidagdha*.” For them the knowledge of Haremekhala is very necessary, as it contains every matter in it. The work Haremekhala cannot be called a treatise on *Tantra*/incantations or Medicine or Worldly experiences rather it gives in a nutshell all essential sciences of such kind. Thus it is also called as “*Prayogamala*.”^[2]

इहेति परिसमाप्यते सुवर्णरत्नोज्ज्वला सुसंस्थाना ।

हरमेखला विदग्धानुरागकृतिद्वितीयनामाङ्क ॥ (H.M. 5/278)

Address for correspondence: Dr. I. Archana,
D/O I, Raghupathi Bhat, Shri Vishnu Sadana, Innanje,
Udupi Tq and Dist, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka, India.
E-mail: drarubhat@gmail.com

It is stated in the book that “To enlighten the knowledge of people this Mekhala is comprised”. A garland which is made up of *Suvarna*, *Hema*, *Ratna*, *Padmaraga*, and other precious materials is attracted by all equally. Haremekhala was written with precious subjects and liked by all scholarly people. So it is also called as “*Vidagdhanuragkriti*.”^[3]

Antiquity

This book comprises original *Sloka*s in *Prakṛita* language, *Chayas*—the renderings which are mere shadows or translations of original and the *Tika*—the notes in *Sanskrit*. Antiquity of any work can be accessed through the language used. The language in this work it is *Prakṛita*.

Prakṛita is a group of middle Indo-Aryan languages. These are the spoken languages of local people in different periods of time starting from 6th century B.C. till 11th century A.D. During this period it underwent three stages of evolution. In its final stage, (from 6th century A.D. to 11th century A.D.) it attained fullest form of evolution. The languages like *Apabhramsa*/*Abahatta*, *Brij Bhasha*, and a variety of dialects were originated in this period, which eventually blossomed as Modern languages such as Marathi, Gujarati, Hindustani, and so on. In Haremekhala the *Prakṛita* language used is similar to that of *Ardhamagadhi* and/or of *Apabhramsa*/*Abahatta*. These two languages were chiefly used by *Jains* of Central India during the period of 9th century A.D.^[4]

In one place author Mahuka mentions his dwelling as *Dharanivaraha Rajya* (H.M.5/280). It is discussed that^[5] *Dharanivaraha* belongs to *Chapa* dynasty started from *Vikramarka* (820 A.D.) ruling in and around *Vardhamana* or modern day *Vadhvan*. They were the feudatory of *Palas* of *Konowch* ruled during 9th–10th century A.D. *Avani Varman II*—a ruler of *Calukya* dynasty belong to *Khatyavar* in *Gujarat* said to have defeated *Dharanivaraha* around 916 A.D. From this we can assume that the author Mahuka belongs to the same period (9th–10th century A.D.) during which *Dharanivaraha* was a separate territory. Reference of *Haremekhala Nighantu* quoted by *Kshiraswami* in *Amarakosa Vyakhya* (11th A.D.), *Niscalakara* (13th A.D.) in *Cakradatta* commentary, *Cakrapani* (11th A.D.), and *Srikantadatta* (12th A.D.) in his *Vyakyakusumavali* has been provided.^[6] A manuscript of *Haremekhala* in *Nepali* language has been recorded to the period 1374 A.D.^[7] By all these external evidences we can assume that the period of *Haremekhala* written by Mahuka is around 9th–10th century A.D.

A reference given by Mahuka himself in his work can be considered as an internal evidence for the period of the book.^[8] That is,

वत्सर (सु?श) तेष्वहसु समाधमासे । सप्तमदिने समाप्ता विदग्धजनज्ञातपरमार्था ॥
(H.M. 5/278)

श्रीविक्रमादित्यकालात् सप्ताशीत्यधिके धर्मशताष्टगते माघसप्तम्यामेषा हरमेखला
व्युत्पन्नलोकैरेवावगततत्त्वा निष्पदिता ठीका ॥ (*Chaya*)

From the passages of the originals, renderings and the commentary it is assumed that the date of Mahuka is 9th century A.D., corresponding to 887 of *Vikrama* Era, in which the *Mekhala* was completed.^[9]

Author

The author of this *Mekhala* is Mahuka, son of *Madhava*, grandson of *Kavimandana* lived at *Citrakuta*^[10] (At present located in *Satna* District of *Madhya Pradesh*). It is clear in the verse,

धरणिवराह राज्ये कविमन्डनतनयमाधव सुतेन ।
रचिता चित्रकूटे माहुकेन हरमेखला ॥ (H.M. 5/280)

माधवाख्यस्यतनयेन चित्रकूटे निवासिना ।
माहुकाख्येनेष हरमेखला प्रयोगमाला रचिता ॥ (*Chaya*)

Apart from the above no other information about his parents, teacher, position, and so forth, are available. From the name *Haremekhala* (garland for *Shiva*) we can assume that the author was a worshipper of *Shiva*; quoting *Vasikarana yogas*, *Vighatana yogas*, and other *Tantric* procedures may be a *Tantric*. A passing reference in fifth *Pariccheda* indicates that Mahuka had a disciple and probably he wrote commentary—*Chaya* on *Haremekhala*.^[11] In *Siddhayogeswara Tantra*—commentary on *Dakarnava Tantra* it is mentioned that Mahuka was the disciple of *Durgaya*.^[12] Unfortunately no other details about his disciple and his teacher are found.

By studying *Haremekhala* it is known that some other works are also attributed to Mahuka. At the end of fifth *Pariccheda* after 274 *shloka*, there is a list of variety of drugs, synonyms, etc, calling the work as *Haremekhala Nighantu*. Thus probably *Haremekhala Nighantu* is the appendix added to

Haremekhala itself. A splendor collection of *Mantras* and religious procedures entitled as “*Puttalikapanchavimshatika*” is added after 181st *Shlokas* of 4th *Pariccheda*. In this there is the discussion of various rites for killing the enemies, hymns which cause *Vasikarana*, various hymns related to *Tantric* procedures, and so on, with the necessary incantation and medicines. The author indicates that these *Mantras* and procedures have been collected from various sources and it is an abstract pertaining to various *Siddhis*. It is hoped that Mahuka himself had such an idea of compiling it along with *Haremekhala*. Another reference of existence of a work called *Haremekhala Tantra* is quoted.^[13]

In the manuscript of *Haremekhala* original *Shlokas* are in *Prakrita* language followed by same translation into *Sanskrit* in the form of *Shlokas* known as *Chayas*. Later these *Chayas* are given an explanatory note in *Sanskrit* referred as *Tika*. It is not clear either from external or internal evidences that who wrote these *Shlokas* in *Sanskrit* after the original compilation in *Prakrita*. It is assumed that Mahuka himself may have written these *Shlokas* or his disciple or both to make it understandable to all scholarly community. However, the *Tika* (explanations/footnote) in *Sanskrit* is definitely a later addition.

Manuscript and publication

The only original manuscript that forms the basis of the publication of *Haremekhala* was obtained from *Brahmashree C. Narayanan Bhattatiri Avarugal* of *Paramburillom* of *Tiruvella* near *Kottayam*. Later this Manuscript was published by the Department of Publications, Oriental Manuscripts Library, Trivandrum, by the authority of his Highness *Maharaja* of *Travancore* in the year 1938. The manuscript was very old written about 800–900 years before and was deplorably worn and unreadable. *Sri K. Sambasiva Sastri* edited this book in two parts. The first part contains 2nd, 3rd, 4th chapters and the second part contains 5th chapter. The 1st chapter of the text was not obtained by him.

Topics covered

The second *Pariccheda* contains 103 *Shlokas* along with its *Chayas* and *Tika*. This chapter mainly includes preparations for artificial inducement of diseases, such as *Chardi*, *Atisara*, and *Kusta*, along with their treatments.

The third *Pariccheda* contains 71 *Shlokas* with its *Chayas* and *Tika*. Here mainly various *Vasikarana yogas* are mentioned.

The fourth *Pariccheda* contains 389 *Shlokas*. We can consider this chapter as completely related to medical field where the author mentions various diseases and the treatments pertaining to both human and animals.

The fifth *Pariccheda* contains 281 *Shlokas* most of them related to cosmetology. Here Mahuka declares that these informations were collected from various sources which were dealt by enlightened persons and he only arranged them systematically. Interestingly, none of these preparations are found in *Brihatrayi*.

Unfortunately, in all the *Pariccheda* many of the *Shlokas* in *Prakrita*/*Sanskrit* and notes are either missing or incomplete. It is enlisted in Table 1. Contents of each chapter with its reference are given in Table 2.

Table 1: List of missing/incomplete *Shlokas* and notes in Haremekhala

<i>Pariccheda</i>	<i>Prakrita Shloka</i> (main text)	<i>Sanskrit Shloka</i> (<i>Chaya</i>)	<i>Notes</i> (<i>Tika</i>)
2 nd <i>Pariccheda</i>	7, 14, 19	12, 23, 38, 47, 57, 61, 71, 97, 103	
3 rd <i>Pariccheda</i>	24,	9, 21,	23
4 th <i>Pariccheda</i>	121, 125, 221, 264, 303, 312	69, 81, 276, 303, 312, 314, 315, 328, 331, 334	293
5 th <i>Pariccheda</i>	62, 66, 104, 137, 170, 203-206, 214, 219, 220, 224, 225, 229, 254, 256	13, 14, 18, 57, 65, 66, 88, 89, 99, 104, 130, 160, 169, 186, 188, 210, 214, 220, 224, 253, 254, 257, 262, 265, 267, 270	57, 103, 211, 212, 214-217, 219-223, 260-263, 265, 276

Table 2: Subject matter of individual *Pariccheda* of Haremekhala

Chapter	Contents	Reference
Second chapter	Inducement of various diseases and their treatments	
	<i>Mada</i>	2, 5
	<i>Chardi</i>	5
	<i>Virechana</i>	6
	<i>Rudhiratisara</i>	7
	<i>Mukharoga</i>	8-10
	<i>Mukatva</i>	11-12
	<i>Katipavana</i>	13-15
	<i>Kusta</i>	16-19
	<i>Rajahsravana</i>	22
	<i>Malanirodha</i>	23-25
	<i>Mutranirodha</i>	26
	<i>Varangadukha</i>	29-30
	<i>Unmada</i>	31, 90
	<i>Shandatva</i>	32, 36, 41s-44
	<i>Yonisthambha, Ratinirodha</i>	33-35, 37-40
	<i>Garbhasthambhana</i>	85
	Inducing blindness in	86
	<i>Garbhastha shishu</i>	
	Affliction with Luta Kaka and others along with their eradication	20, 21, 27, 28
	Inducing <i>Manastapa</i> and	3, 45, 46,
	<i>Vidvesha</i> along with its solutions	48-53, 56
	Making the breast adruata	47
	Inducing <i>Moha</i> by various methods with its solutions	
	<i>Dhupa</i>	57-59
	<i>Dipajwala</i>	60
	<i>Amoda</i>	69
	Inducement of dancing/ <i>Nartana</i>	61-64
	<i>Kesasuklikarana</i>	66-67
	<i>Adhara suklikarana</i> and its treatment	68

(Contd...)

Chapter	Contents	Reference
	Destroying and removing the hairs	70-71
	Suppression of animals like horse, elephant, hen belongings to enemies	72-75, 77-78
	<i>Balishtapurusha</i>	76
	<i>darpapaharanam</i>	87
	Inducing bitter taste to food with its solution	88, 89
	Burning the fire even in water	91-101
	Destroying of snakes, mosquitoes, bugs, and so on	
Third chapter	Various <i>Vasikarana Yogas</i>	
	<i>Tilaka Visesha</i>	5-14
	<i>Pana bhojana Visesha</i>	15, 30
	<i>Anjana Visesha</i>	16-20
	<i>Dhupa Visesha</i>	24-29, 61
	<i>Taila Visesha</i>	32-36, 59, 60
	<i>Curna Visesha</i>	37
	<i>Lepa Visesha</i>	38, 40-58
	Some Auspicious <i>Dhupa Yogas</i>	21-23
	<i>Lingadardiyah Yogas</i>	62-64
	<i>Lepas</i>	65
	<i>Dhuma</i>	66
	<i>Charanabhyanjana Taila</i>	67, 68, 69
	<i>Beeja sthambhaka lepa Yogas</i>	70
	<i>Dushta dhenu vasikarana</i>	
	<i>Anjana yoga</i>	
Fourth chapter	<i>Siro Rogas</i> and their treatments	2-29, 82
	<i>Karna Rogas</i> and their treatments	30-34
	<i>Karnapali Vridhikara Yogas</i>	35-40, 112, 115
	<i>Kucha Vridhikara Yogas</i>	38-40, 111-118
	<i>Linga dardiyahkara Yogas</i>	39-48, 112
	<i>Netra Rogas</i> and their treatments	49-69
	<i>Nasa Rogas</i> and their treatments	70, 151, 152, 156, 190
	<i>Oshta sphutana</i> treatment	71, 72
	<i>Aasya Rogas</i> and their treatments	73-79, 83-86
	Treatments of <i>Galaroga</i>	80-82, 104-109, 153, 181
	<i>Varnya Yogas</i>	87-103
	Treatment of <i>Apabahuka</i>	108, 109
	Treatment of <i>Pleeha</i>	119, 121
	Treatment of <i>Udara</i>	122
	Treatment of <i>Vidradhi</i>	123
	<i>Krimi roga</i> and its treatments	124, 125
	Various <i>Twak Rogas</i> and their treatments	126-146
	Treatment of <i>Raktapitta</i>	149-150
	Treatment of <i>Panduroga</i>	149
	Treatment of <i>Kamala</i>	66-69, 149
	Treatment of <i>Kasa</i>	154, 155, 156
		189, 190, 194
	Treatment of <i>Swasa</i>	156, 157, 158
		189, 190

(Contd...)

Table 2: (Continued)

Chapter	Contents	Reference
	Treatment of <i>Hikka</i>	157
	Treatment of <i>Sosha/Kshaya</i>	156, 159-164
	Treatment of various types of <i>Shula</i>	165-167, 190, 191
	Treatment of <i>Atisara</i>	168-171
	Treatment of <i>Grahani</i>	172
	Treatment of <i>Visucika</i>	173
	Treatment of <i>Prameha</i>	174-175
	Treatment of <i>Mutrarogas</i>	176-180
	Treatment of <i>Jwara</i>	182-195, 198, 241
	Eradication of sleep	196
	Induction of sleep	197
	Treatment of <i>Daha</i> and <i>Trishna</i>	192, 193, 198, 199, 200
	Treatment of <i>Urusthambha</i>	201, 202
	Treatment of <i>Ranghini Vata</i>	203, 204
	Treatment of <i>Asthibhanga</i>	205
	Care of foot	206-210
	Treatment of <i>Mashaka</i>	211
	Treatment for <i>Agnidagdha</i>	212-214
	Treatment for <i>Sthavara</i>	215, 230, 247
	<i>Vishajanya vikara</i>	251-253
	Treatment of wounds due to weapons	216-226
	Treatment of <i>Nali vrana</i>	227-229
	Treatment of <i>Arbuda, Granthi, Gandamala</i>	231-235
	Treatment of <i>Apasmara</i>	236
	Treatment of <i>Grahabadha</i>	237-240
	Treatments of <i>Jangama</i>	241-248,
	<i>Vishajanya vikara</i>	250, 256-277
	Treatment of <i>Garavisha</i>	249, 255
	Treatment for <i>Madya Visha</i>	254
	Treatment for <i>Pitaka</i>	277, 278
	Treatment of <i>Jvalagardhabha</i>	279
	Treatment of <i>Sitalika</i>	280-283
	Treatment for <i>Raktapradara</i>	284-290
	Treatment of <i>Kashta Raja</i>	291-292
	Treatment for <i>Vandyata</i>	293-295
	Contraceptives	296-299
	Preparations which check Abortion	300-304
	Preparations for easy delivery	305-316
	Treatment of <i>Yonivedana</i>	317, 318
	Treatment of <i>Makkalla Sula</i>	319
	Increasing the Breast milk	320, 321
	Treatment for <i>Stanavedana</i>	322
	Preparation to make the abdomen thin after delivery	323
	Treatment for <i>Kikkisika</i>	324
	Treatment of <i>Yonivibhramsha</i>	324-328
	Treatment for <i>Yonidourgandhata</i>	330-333
	<i>Roma Satana Yogas</i>	334-336
	Treatments of diseases related to children	337-352
	Rejuvenators	353-367
	<i>Vajikarana Yogas</i>	368-370

(Contd...)

Chapter	Contents	Reference
	Treatment of various animals	371-388
Fifth chapter	<i>Jalasourabhyotpadanam</i>	3-8, 131-133
	Aromatic Tooth powders	9-11
	Aromatic Mouth fresheners	12, 16-32
	<i>Adharaparsadhana</i>	13, 14
	<i>Netra Prasadhana</i>	15
	Aromatic oils/ <i>Sugandhi tail</i>	33-57
	<i>Dhupa Yogas</i> which gives aroma to	58
	<i>Bhanda</i> /vessel	86, 87, 90
	<i>Pata</i> /cloths	91
	Beddings, hairs, fanning	59-61
	<i>Udvartana Curnas</i>	62-85
	Aromatic Bathing powders	88, 89
	Aromatic <i>Dhupa Yogas</i>	92-115
	Aromatic lightings	116-120
	Aromatic <i>Lepa Yogas</i>	121-130
	Production of aroma of various flowers	134-158
	Eradication of original aroma of flowers	159-161
	Purification of <i>Haridra, Rocanika</i>	162, 163
	Artificial production of aromatic drugs along with their preservation	164-195, 209-248, 264-266
	<i>Asava parikarma</i>	196-208
	Preparation of <i>Sahakara Taila</i>	249-256
	Preparation of <i>Karpura Taila</i>	257-263
	Keeping the vessel clean by applying <i>Sahakara Taila</i>	267
	Preservation of <i>Sahakara</i>	268, 269
	<i>Dravana</i> procedure of various flowers	270-272

References

1. Mahuka-Haramekhala, K. Sambashiva Shastry, editor. 1st part printed by the superintendent, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1938.
2. Haramekhala by Mahuka, edited by K. Sambashiva Shastry, printed by the Superintendent, Government press, Trivandrum, 1938, 5/275. pg. 86..
3. Haramekhala by Mahuka, edited by K. Sambashiva Shastry, printed by the Superintendent, Government press, Trivandrum, 1938, 5/278. pg. 87.
4. Available from: <http://www.lonweb.org/links/hindi/lang/024.htm> [Last accessed on 2010 Dec 20].
5. Lionel D. Barnett in his work "Antiquities of India—An Account of the History and Culture of Ancient Hindustan. Available from: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/5645403> [Last accessed on 2010 Dec 20].
6. Prof. Acharya P. V. Sharma, Ayurveda Ka Vajyanika Itihasa. Varanasi: Choukamba Sanskrit Series; 1981.
7. Available from: <http://bhintuna.com/newanepal/language.html> [Last accessed on 2010 Dec 20].
8. Haramekhala by Mahuka, edited by K. Sambashiva Shastry, printed by the Superintendent, Government press, Trivandrum, 1938, 5/281. pg. 87.
9. Haramekhala, K. Sambashiva Shastry, editor. 2nd part printed by the superintendent, Government press, Trivandrum, 1938.
10. Haramekhala by Mahuka, edited by K. Sambashiva Shastry, printed by the Superintendent, Government press, Trivandrum, 1938, 5/280. p. 87.
11. Haramekhala by Mahuka, edited by K. Sambashiva Shastry, printed by the Superintendent, Government press, Trivandrum, 1938, p. 88.
12. Available from: <http://www.jstor.org/pss/25208195> [Last accessed on 2010 Dec 20].
13. Collections of Ayurvedic P.G. Institute of B.H.U. mentioned by P.V. Sharma in Ayurveda Vajnanik Itihasa. Varanasi: Choukamba Sanskrit Series; 1981.

हिन्दी सारांश

हरमेखला – एक समालोचनात्मक अध्ययन

आई. अर्चना, जेदु गणपति भट्ट

आयुर्वेद समस्त संसार के लिए भारतवर्ष का एक महत्वपूर्ण योगदान है। मूल संहिताओं के अतिरिक्त भारतीय चिकित्सापद्धति से संबंधित बहुत सी जानकारी अन्य भारतीय शास्त्रों में भी उपलब्ध है जैसे दर्शन, ज्योतिष, नाट्य, काव्य इत्यादि। परंतु अन्य स्थानों पर संकलित आयुर्वेद संबंधित यह जानकारी जनहितार्थ है। यह दुर्दैव कि बात रही है कि ऐसी अनेक रचनाएँ प्रकाशित हुयी नहीं और अनेक कारणों से अभी भी अंधकार में हैं। महुक लिखित हरमेखला ऐसी ही एक रचना है जो आयुर्वेद के साथ साथ अन्य कल्पनायें जैसे शृंगार आदि का संकलन दर्शाती है। लेखक महुक ९ – १० वीं शती के मध्य भारत के चप साम्राज्य अंतर्गत धरनिवरह राज्य के निवासी थे। हरमेखला जो कि प्रयोगमल नामसे भी ज्ञात है प्राकृत भाषा में लिखे हुये ५ परिच्छेदों में विभाजित है। कालांतर में उसमे संस्कृत भाषांतर एवं संस्कृत विमर्श जिन्हें अनुक्रम से छाया एवं टीका कहते हैं, सम्मिलित किए गये। यह शोधपत्र इस पुस्तक के सन्दर्भ में विवरण पर आधारित है।

New features on the journal's website

Optimized content for mobile and hand-held devices

HTML pages have been optimized of mobile and other hand-held devices (such as iPad, Kindle, iPod) for faster browsing speed.

Click on **[Mobile Full text]** from Table of Contents page.

This is simple HTML version for faster download on mobiles (if viewed on desktop, it will be automatically redirected to full HTML version)

E-Pub for hand-held devices

EPUB is an open e-book standard recommended by The International Digital Publishing Forum which is designed for reflowable content i.e. the text display can be optimized for a particular display device.


Click on **[EPub]** from Table of Contents page.

There are various e-Pub readers such as for Windows: Digital Editions, OS X: Calibre/Bookworm, iPhone/iPod Touch/iPad: Stanza, and Linux: Calibre/Bookworm.

E-Book for desktop

One can also see the entire issue as printed here in a 'flip book' version on desktops.

Links are available from Current Issue as well as Archives pages.

Click on  View as eBook