

### 3.Epics and Puranas

#### **Dharmakutam, a rare text of commentary on Valmiki Ramayana by Jayanthi Manohar**

`Dharmakutam' written in Sanskrit by Sri.Tryambakarayamakhi around 1684 A.D. is a remarkable text. The author has examined Valmiki Ramayana in the light of his vast knowledge of all major Dharmashastras. This text remains unknown by many since the translation of the entire text is not available in English.

The author was a minister of King Shahji (1684-1710) and King Serfoji II (1711-1728). He takes up every situation of Ramayana in which a question relating to Dharma Shastra presents itself for solution. As subjects allied to Dharma, questions relating to the several arts and sciences that form part of cultured man's make-up are also taken up for consideration. All the crucial discussions go to the great length of quoting the relevant passages from different Dharma Shastras. This has rendered the text `an Encyclopedia of Indian culture' of his times.

This paper examines the relevance of various points brought out by the author regarding the duties of the Kings (Kshatriya Dharma) in modern context. For example, the author gives a very lengthy commentary on the advice given by Kabandha to Rama about making an ally (Sandhi) with Sugriva in the 72nd Chapter of Aranyakanda. He quotes profusely from a well known text on ethics, `Kamandakanitisara' about the six judiciously effective ways (Shadyuktis) of combating misfortunes. He deals with each of the Shadyuktis, viz., Sandhi, Vighraha, Yana, Asana, Dvaidhibhava and Samshraya at great length. This passage of the commentary assumes more importance because the author gives the direct account of his experience being a prominent minister to the King Shahji in his turbulent days.

This paper also makes an attempt to bring out the fact that many such passages are telling us the political situation of the kings during the author's life time in India. I have taken up the assignment of translating the entire text of `Dharmakutam' in to English at present. I have found many useful points that are applicable to our modern age.

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