

REVIEW

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Bhīmacaritam – A Critical Study, by Dr. Kartik Pandya, published by Sunrise Publications, New Delhi, 110 092, First Edition, 2014, pp. i-xvii + 1 – 299.

Bhīmacaritam is a Sanskrit epic composed by Dr. Hari Narayan Dikshit on 12th February 1991 according to the situation of modern time though being based upon traditional account of an epic. There are twenty (20) cantos and one thousand one hundred eighteen (1,118) verses in it. At the end of the epic, we find five verses of short introduction of the poet. Therefore, the total number of verses in it are one thousand one hundred twenty three (1,123) and the total number of pages in it are four hundred fifty six (16+440). In this epic, there is the description of life of Bhīcma starting from his birth till his death.

The present book is doctoral thesis prepared under the guidance of Prof. Rabindra Kumar Panda, Head, Department of Sanskrit, Pali & Prakrit, Faculty of Arts, The M. S. University of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat. This doctoral thesis has been selected for the “**Publication Award**” by Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi (under Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India) and this book is the outcome of this success. The credit of this success goes to researcher’s guide Prof. Rabindra Kumar Panda and partially to Dr. Kartik Pandya.

This books contains seven chapters along with bibliography and three appendixes at end. The first chapter is entitled as “Origin and Development of Sanskrit *Mahākāvya*”. The author has appropriately written this chapter by giving comparative view on the concepts and definitions of Sanskrit *Mahākāvya* starting from the classical age (i.e. *RāmāyaGa*, *Nāmyaaāstra*, *AgnipurāGa* etc.) up to the modern period (i.e. *AbhinavakāvyaālaEkārasūtram* of Prof. Radha Vallabh tripathi and others). Apart from this, he has also given the Western opinions on *Mahākāvya* (Epic). By giving the oriental and the occidental opinions on *Mahākāvya* (Epic), he has compared them critically. In the light of these characteristics, he has evaluated the *Bhīmacaritam* of Dr. Hari Narayan Dikshit under the heads like canto, naming of the work, plot, descriptions, hero/heroine, sentiment, figures of speech, metres, language and style.

The second chapter is “The Poet and His Works”. The author has elaborately given the life, date and works of the poet Dr. Hari Narayan Dikshit. The poet has composed many origianl Sanskrit works

as well as other research works and he is still composing Sanskrit works. The author has revealed the poet’s multi-facted personality in the branch of Sanskrit literature by giving his scholarship in different branches of Sanskrit lore. He has given the introduction of each and every work of the poet and thus, the valuable contribution of the poet is rightly estimated here. In nutshell, this chapter reveals the biographical account of the poet and his scholastic contributions. The third chapter is named as “Canto Wise Summary of the Epic”. The author here gives an account of every canto in brief for quick reading.

The fourth chapter is “Life of Bhīcma as Depicted in the *Mahābhārata*” and the fifth one is “Life of Bhīcma as Depicted in the *Bhīmacaritam*”. The source of the *Bhīmacaritam* is *Mahābhārata* and the poet has made many changes in it. By comparing both, the author has minutely examined the deviations and innovations made by the poet. Thus, he has revealed before us the nine deviations made in the *Bhīmacaritam* by the poet with the icidents at the end of chapter five.

The sixth chapter is “A Critical and Literary Study of the Epic”. It is the heart of the present book. The author has shown the poetic skill and power. He has pointed out the successful use of five elements, five stages and five *nāmyasandhis*. Literary evaluation of the epic including *rasa*, *rīti*, *alaEkāras*, metres, desription, narration, set of characters etc. Is covered carefully with supportive examples. The author’s observation and study of the epic says that the poet has very skillfully and aptly employed fourteen varieties of *VaAaastha* metre in union with the *IndravaAaā* metre as well as fourteen varities of *Upajāti* as depicted in *V[ttaratnākara* of Kedāra Bhamma. Thus, on the basis of this, he has rightly concluded that the *VaAaastha* and *Upajāti* mes tres with their manifold varieties have remained the poet’s favourite metres. The author has identified the single example of *Indravajrā* metre through out the epic and it is *Bhīmacaritam*, X.45. In total, eleven metres are employed in the entire epic.

The seventh chapter is “Conclusion”. At last, the author succeeds to present a logical conclusion drawn from the observations. At the end, a detailed bibliography is given. Appendix-1 is concerned with all varities of metres employed in the epic. Appendix-2 gives a list of wise-sayings occuring in the epic. Almost 219 wise-sayings are collected here canto-wise with English translation. Appendix-3 is concerned with the table of forty-four (44) *alaEkāras* of the epic.

The language of the book is English and therefore, it has got a wide range of readers all over the world including Sanskrit and others. Its language is lucid, impressive and self explanatory. The literature cited is up-to-date and relevant. The important point to note about this book is that the author has given English translation of all the exempld taken from the *Bhīmacaritam*.

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