



ŚUKASAPTATI; A SANSKRIT DIDACTIC WORK WITH EROTICISM

Ven. Welipitiye Indananda

Department of Languages, Bhikshu University of Sri Lanka, Anuradhapura

Welipitiyeindananda@yahoo.com

Telling stories is a unique feature in Sanskrit literature. After the compilation of the two great epics, *Mahābārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa* Sanskrit stories were considered to be fine expressions of many human thoughts. Therefore, many Sanskrit literates decided to use stories in different shapes. Out of them, *Pancatantra* and *Hitopadeśa* are well known Sanskrit story collections. However, much attention should be paid to the set of Sanskrit story collection named *Śukasaptati* or seventy tales of parrot. These seventy stories are told by a certain parrot. The objective of writing this kind of book is to stop a wife whose husband had gone abroad from an undue sexual union. According to the theme of *Śukasaptati*, all research, done by western scholars during the past few decades, describe this work as a merely erotic writing. At the very beginning of each story in *Śukasaptati* the particular wife tries to unite with a paramour. But, the parrot always prevents her from that misconduct. In order to accomplish the aim the parrot uses three tricks. They are as follows;

1. Giving a challenge to the wife
2. Using gumption at the appropriate occasion
3. Emphasizing didactic saying

Someone who reads *Śukasaptati* with the mind of afore mentioned three aspects, he or she realizes the didactic importance of this work besides the erotic concepts. Sanskrit didactic stories mainly focus on four great values as *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. Didactic concepts which relate to these four great values are included in *Śukasaptati*. In this research paper, the researcher tries to discuss *Śukasaptati* as a Sanskrit didactic work through afore stated three aspects. Since the research is a fully literary based research, books, research articles and other writings on *Śukasaptati* are to be used here. Only a few stories of *Śukasaptati* will be used for the convenience of the research. As the conclusion of this research, the researcher hopes to highlight the hidden didactic values in Sanskrit literature, especially in *Śukasaptati*.

Keywords: *Sanskrit Didactic Literature, Eroticism, Śukasaptati, Didactic Concepts in Śukasaptati, Four Great Values*