

DHARMAŚĀSTRA MATERIAL IN THE RĀMĀYAṆA

The aim of good poetry, according to Bhāmaha, is ability in the (means of) righteousness (*dharma*), worldly prosperity (*artha*), sensual enjoyment (*kāma*) and final emancipation (*mokṣa*)¹. Mammaṭa also recognizes acquaintance with the ways of life as one of the six aims of poetry². The authors of Sanskrit poetics appear to have been well aware of and greatly influenced by the poems of the order of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* for formulating rules of poetry and laying down standards of merits and demerits thereof. The two great epics of India have not outlived their utility even after the lapse of several centuries from the date of their composition and even after the invasion of science and technology on our social and moral values. Indian culture centres round the four objects of human life, known as righteousness (*dharma*), worldly prosperity (*artha*), sensual enjoyment (*kāma*) and final emancipation (*mokṣa*). Poetry – audio (*śravya*) and video (*drśya*) – aims at conveying the message of these four ends of human life, besides giving pleasure to the connoisseurs.

True to this tradition, Vālmīki claims the *Rāmāyaṇa* to be a means of the four ends of human life³.

1. *Kāvyaśālikā*, 1.2:

*Dharmārthakāmaṃmokṣeṣu vilakṣaṇyam kalāsu ca /
Prītim karoti kīrtim ca sādhuḥkāvyaniṣevanam //*

2. *Kāvyaśālikā*, 1.2:

*Kāvyaṃ yaśase'rthakṛte vyavahāravide śivetarakṣataye /
Sadyaḥ paranirvṛtaye kāntāsammitatayopadeśayuje //*

3. VRā. I. 1.21:

Dharmārthakāmaṃmokṣāṇām hetubhutaṃ mahāphalam /

Let us now examine and evaluate the principles of *Dharmaśāstra* found scattered throughout the *Rāmāyaṇa* under the well recognised categories. Ways of human life (*Ācāra*), principles of law (*Vyavahāra*), atonement (*prāyaścitta*) and polity (*rājadharma*).

Ācāra

Manu and Yājñavalkya have laid down a rule that one should pronounce his own name while paying obeisance to one's elders⁴. Rāma does exactly the same while paying respect to his father:

*Nāma svayaṃ śrāvayan Rāmo vavande caraṇau pituḥ*⁵.

Yājñavalkya, too, enjoins that one should pay salutations to one's elders saying that I, so and so, salute you⁶.

When Sītā comes to know that Rāma was leaving Ayodhyā for spending a long period of fourteen years in the forest at the behest of his father, she does not come in her husband's way, but she certainly insists on accompanying him to the forest and all efforts of Rāma dissuading her from her determination proved futile. In this context the poet of the *Rāmāyaṇa* has got an opportunity to describe at length the duties of a woman towards her husband. When Kausalyā insists on accompanying Rāma to the forest the latter reminds her of her duties towards her husband and tells that even the best of the ladies observing fast and other austerities are liable to meet the fate of the sinners if they do not follow their husband. On the other hand, a woman who abstains from paying obeisance (to her elders) and offering worship to gods, but engages herself in the service of her husband attains highest

VRā. I. 1.24:

*Dharmārthakāmamokṣāṇāṃ sādhanam ca dvijottamāḥ /
Śrotavyaṃ ca sadā bhaktyā Rāmāyaṇaparāmṛtam //*

4. *Abhivādāt paraṃ vipro jyāyāṃsam abhivādayan /
Asau nāmahaṃ asnīti svaṃ nāma parikīrtayet //*

Manu. 2.122

5. VRā. 11. 3.33

6. *Yājñavalkya. Ācāra* 1.26:

Tato 'bhivādayet vṛddhān asāvahaṃ iti bruvan /

of the heavens⁷. Rāma tries to convince Kausalyā that throughout the life of a woman it is her husband who is her god and who is her master⁸. Manu, too, lays down that a woman who does not disobey her husband either in deeds or in thoughts attains the regions of her husband (after her death) and she is known to be a noble lady⁹.

Kausalyā complains to Daśaratha that she has been completely ruined by him, because there are three means of sustenance for a woman, one is her husband, the other is her son and the third ones are her kinsmen. For her, however, all of them are lost. She could depend upon her husband, but he has been made a captive by Kaikeyī; she could have been helped by her son Rāma, but he has been exiled, and she could have counted upon the support of her kinsmen, but they are far from her¹⁰. The same idea is echoed by Manu when he says that as a girl, a woman lives under the protection of her father, as a wife under her husband and as an old woman she is taken care of by her children. Thus, a lady never deserves independence¹¹.

Yājñavalkya also conveys the same idea when he says that there is no freedom for a lady inasmuch as she is protected by her father as a girl, as a married woman she remains under the protection of her husband and as an old lady she is looked after by her children¹².

7. VRā. II. 20.25-27:

*Vratopavāsāniratā yā nārī paramottamā /
Bhartāraṃ nānuvarteta sā ca pāpagatir bhavet /
Bhartuḥ śuśrūṣayā nārī labhate svargam uttamam //
Apī vā nirnamaskārā nivṛttā devapūjanāt /
Śuśrūṣam eva kurvīta bhartuḥ priyahite ratā //*

8. VRā. II. 20.21:

Jivantyā hi striyā bhartā daivataṃ prabhur eva ca /

9. Manu. 9.29:

*Patīṃ yā nābhicarati manovāgdehasaṃhyatā /
Sā bhartṛlokān āpnoti sadbhīḥ sādhvīti cocyate //*

10. VRā. II. 61.24-25:

*Gatir ekā patir nāryā dvītyā gatir ātmaiah /
Tṛtīya jñātayo rajaiś caturthī naiva vidyate //
Tatra tvam mama naivāsi Rāmaśca vanamāhitah /
Na vanam gantum icchāmi sarvathā ha hatā tvayā //*

11. Manu. 9.3:

*Pitā rakṣati kaumāre bhartā rakṣati yauvane /
Rakṣanti sthavire putrā na strī svātantryam arhati //*

12. Yājñavalkya. Ācāra. 1.85:

Completely shaken and shocked at the news of the banishment of Rāma, Kausalyā curses Kaikeyī and it is in this context that she says that the women are so fickle-minded that they are attracted neither by family, nor by learning, nor by gifts, nor even by treasures¹³. Manu expresses the same opinion about the nature of women, when he says that the women start behaving against their own husbands because the former are (generally) of easy virtues, fickle-minded and lack affection¹⁴.

Obedience and service of the parents and the preceptor have been highly spoken of in the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Rāma tries to convince Sītā that he is obliged to go to the forest in deference to the wishes of his father, because in his opinion even truthfulness, munificence, prestige and sacrifices can not be compared with the obedience to a father¹⁵. On the other hand, he believes that, by rendering service to one's parents and preceptor one can attain all of them – heavens, riches, learning, offsprings and happiness¹⁶. Those engaged in the service of the parents achieve everything – the regions of the gods, those of the Gandharvas, the Brahman, the cows and the others¹⁷. The same idea is conveyed by Manu, when he emphasises that by serving one's mother one attains this region, by serving one's father one attains the mid-region and by serving one's preceptor one attains the region of the Brahman¹⁸.

*Rakṣet kanyāmpitā vinnām patiḥ putrastu vārdhake /
Abhāve jñātayas teṣāṃ na svātantryam kvacit striyaḥ //*

13. VRā. II. 39.23:

*Na kulāṃ na kṛtam vidyā dattam nāpi saṃgrahaḥ /
Strīṇām gṛhnāti hṛdayam anityaḥṛdayā hi tāḥ //*

14. Manu. 9.15:

*Pauṃścalyāc calacittāc ca naisnehyāc ca svabhāvataḥ /
Rakṣitā yatnato 'pīha bhartṛsvetā vikurvate //*

15. VRā. II. 30.35:

*Na satyaṃ danamānau vā jajñō vāpyāptadakṣiṇāḥ /
Tatkā balakarāḥ site yathā sevā pitur matā //*

16. VRā. II. 30.36:

*Svargo dhanam vā dhānyam vā vidyā putrāḥ sukhāni ca /
Guruvṛtṭyanurodhena na kiñcidapi durlabham //*

17. VRā. II. 30-37:

*Devagandharvagolokān brahmalokāṃstathāparān /
Prāpnuvanti mahātmāno mātāpitṛparāyaṇāḥ //*

18. Manu. 2.233:

*Imaṃ lokāṃ mātṛbhaktyā pitṛbhaktya tu madhyamam /
Guruśuśruśayā tvevaṃ brahmalokam samaśnute //*

Rājadharmā

Vālmīki has dwelt upon the duties of a king at length in the *Ayodhyākāṇḍa*. Bharata along with Śatrughna and a large number of his followers go to meet Rāma in his hermitage. There Rāma asks Bharata about the welfare of the kingdom of Ayodhyā. It is in this context that Vālmīki gets an opportunity to deal at length with the rights and duties of a king, his ministers, etc. Rāma enquires whether the king has appointed the priests who are well-versed in the knowledge of sacrifices and whether they are discharging their duties properly by pointing out to the king the right time for performing sacrifices. Rāma further enquires to know whether the gods, the ancestors, the attendants, the elderly people, the physicians and the Brāhmaṇas are duly respected by Bharata. While making an enquiry about the ministers Rāma reiterates the qualities of an ideal minister enumerated by the authors of the *Smṛtis*. Asks Rāma to Bharata if the latter has appointed such ministers as are like himself inasmuch as they are brave, learned in Vedic lore, have control over their senses, come out of noble families and are capable of understanding his mind just by his gestures¹⁹. This is essential because the root cause of the victory of the kings is good counsel, which is possible only if the ministers have good knowledge of polity and they can keep the counsel to their heart²⁰. Manu and Yājñavalkya have also enumerated the essentials of the ministers in the same manner. Yājñavalkya prescribes qualifications of the councillors as possessing good knowledge of the Vedas etc., well-versed in the juridical treatises, truthful and to whom friends and foes are all alike²¹. Rāma wants to know if Bharata does not go to sleep before time, if he gets up at the proper time and if he

19. VRā. II. 100.15:

*Kaccid ātmasamāḥ śūrāḥ śrutavanto jīvendriyāḥ /
Kulajñās ceṅgītajñās ca kṛtaste tāta mantriṇaḥ //*

20. VRā. II. 100.16:

*Mantra vijayamūlam hi rājñām bhavati Rāghava /
Susamvṛto mantridhurair amātyaiḥ śāstrakovidaiḥ //*

21. Yājñavalkya, Vyavahāra, 1.2:

*Śrutādhyayanasampannā dharmajñā satyavādinaḥ /
Rājñā sabhāsadaḥ kāryā ripau mitre ca ye samāḥ //*

concentrates upon the means of collecting the wealth in the last part of the night²². Manu gives the same counsel to the king when he lays down that a king should concentrate upon the means to achieve righteousness, riches and desires either during the midday or during the midnight when he is fully relaxed²³. Rāma desires to know if he does not discuss important matters concerning his reign either to a lonely minister or to a number of them. Rāma is also eager to know if the secret discussions held between him and his ministers are not disclosed to the public, including his enemies²⁴. Rāma further wants to know if Bharata makes ambitious plans yielding high results and acts upon them without losing any time²⁵. Do the other kings come to know his acts only when they are complete or nearing completion? Is it not that they come to know of his acts when they are in the stage of planning²⁶? The ancestors of Rāma are known for keeping their plans to themselves and the others come to know of them only by their results. That is at least the opinion of Kālidāsa about Dilīpa²⁷.

On the one hand Manu remarks that at the outset (of the creation) the Creator created punishment for the king to protect the subjects²⁸, but on the other hand he recommends caution and care in awarding it to the unjust in accordance with the place, time, his (own) power and

22. VRā. II. 100.17:

*Kaccin nidrāvaśaṁ naiṣi kaccit kāle'vabudhyase /
kaccic cāpararātṛeṣu cintayasyārthanaipuṇam //*

23. Manu. 7.151:

*Madhyandine'rdharātre vā viśrāṅto vigataklamah /
Cintayed dharmakāmārthān sārđham taireka eva vā //*

24. VRā. II. 100-18:

*Kaccit mantrayase naikaḥ kaccin na bahubhiḥ saha /
kaccit te manirito mantrō rāṣṭraṁ na paridhāvati //*

25. VRā. II. 19:

*Kaccid arthaṁ viniścitya laghumūlaṁ mahodayam /
Kṣipram prārabhase karma na dīrghayasi Rāghava //*

26. VRā. II. 20:

*Kaccin nu sukṛtāny eva kṛtarūpāṇi vā punaḥ /
Vidus te sarvakāryāṇi na kartavyāni pārthivāḥ //*

27. Raghuvamśa, I. 20:

*Tasya saṁvṛtamantrasya gūḍhākāreṅgitasya ca /
Phalānumeyāḥ prārambhāḥ saṁskārāḥ prāktanā iva //*

28. Manu. 7.14:

*Tasyārthe sarvabhūtānāṁ goptāram dharmamātmajam /
Brahmatejomayaṁ danḍam asṛjat pūrvam īśvaraḥ //*

knowledge²⁹. In fact, it is the punishment which rules over the subjects, protects them and remains vigilant while all become inactive³⁰. The punishment awarded by a king very carefully and scrupulously makes the subjects happy, but if awarded indiscriminately and unscrupulously it ruins the king completely³¹. Yājñavalkya also provides for proper punishment but forbids a king from awarding improper punishment because it ruins the heaven, the fame and the (affection of the) subjects of a king³². Yājñavalkya assigns punishment a place in the seven ingredients of a kingdom, which are the king, the ministers, the subjects, the fort, the treasure, the punishment and the allies³³. If awarded in accordance with the scriptures, the punishment pleases the world, but awarded otherwise it enrages the subjects³⁴. In the opinion of Yājñavalkya a king who awards punishment to those who deserve it achieves his desired object which can be achieved only by performing sacrifices³⁵.

The king and his ministers have to maintain absolute secrecy regarding their discussions concerning state affairs. All of them should be careful not even to drop a hint about what has been discussed between them³⁶. The king should scrupulously avoid the company

29. *Ibid.* 7.16:

*Taṁ deśakālau śaktiṁ ca vidyāṁ cāveksya tattvataḥ /
Yathārhatāḥ sampraṇayen nareśvanyāyavartiṣu //*

30. *Ibid.* 7.18:

*Daṇḍaḥ śāsti prajāḥ sarvā daṇḍa evābhirakṣati /
Daṇḍaḥ supteṣu jāgarti daṇḍaṁ dharmāṁ vidur budhāḥ //*

31. *Ibid.* 7.19:

*Samikṣya sa dhṛtaḥ samyak sarvā rañjayati prajāḥ /
Asamikṣya praṇītastu vināśayati sarvataḥ //*

32. Yājñavalkya, *Ācāra*. 13.357:

*Adharmadaṇḍānam svargakīrtilokavināśanam /
Samyak tu daṇḍanaṁ rājñāḥ svargakīrtijayāvaham //*

33. *Ibid.* 13.353:

*Svāmyamātyajano durgaiḥ koṣo daṇḍas tathaiva ca /
Mitrāṇyetāḥ prakṛtayo rājyaṁ saptaṅgam ucyate //*

34. *Ibid.* 13.356:

*Yathāśāstrāṇi prayuktaḥ saṁ sadevāsuraṁānavam /
Jagadānandayet sarvaṁ anyathā tatprakopayet //*

35. *Ibid.* 13.359:

*Yo daṇḍyān daṇḍayed rājā samyag vadhyāṁś ca ghātayet /
Iṣtaṁ syāt kratubhistena samāptavaradakṣinaiḥ //*

36. VRā. II. 100.21:

of the fools. Even one minister, if intelligent, brave, skilled, and wise can be a source of immense riches for the king or the prince³⁷. The king should entrust duties to his attendants according to their status. He should engage the best type of them in the highest pursuits; the middle type of them should be engaged in the medium type of tasks; whereas the lowest type of tasks should be entrusted to the meanest type of attendants³⁸. For the (most important) assignments king should depend upon the ministers who cannot be bribed, who have been in the service of the father and grandfather of the king, who are pious (both internally and externally) and who are noblest among the nobles³⁹. The king should not alienate the subjects by awarding them excessive punishment, because by doing so the subjects will develop hatred for the ministers of the king⁴⁰. Manu, too, prescribes proper punishment for those who deserve it, but he prohibits improper and disproportionate punishment because such a punishment ruins the king himself⁴¹. According to Manu it is the proper punishment which is the ruler, the ruled, the guide and the controller. The sages have described the punishment as a witness to all the righteousness⁴².

The *Rāmāyaṇa* also prohibits excessive taxation. Rāma enquires from Bharata if he imposes heavy taxes on the public, because they

*Kaccin na tarkair yuktyā vā ye cāpyaparikṛtītāḥ /
Tvayā vā tava vāmātyair budhyate tāta mantritam //*
37. VRā. II. 100.24:

*Eko 'pyamātyo medhāvī śūro dakṣo vicakṣaṇaḥ /
Rājānaṁ rājaputraṁ vā prāpayen mahatīm śriyam //*
38. VRā. II. 100.25:

*Kaccin mukhyā mahatsveva madhyameṣu ca madhyamāḥ /
Jaghanyāśca jaghanyeṣu bhṛtyaste tāta yojitāḥ //*
39. VRā. 100.26:

*Amatyān upadhātītān pīrpaitāmahān śucīn /
Śreṣṭhān chreṣṭheṣu kaccit tvaṁ niyojayasi karmasu //*
40. VRā. 100.27:

*Kaccin nogreṇa daṇḍena bhīṣam udvejitāḥ prajāḥ /
Rāṣṭre tavāvajānanti mantriṇaḥ kaikayīsuta //*
41. Manu. 7.28:

*Daṇḍo hi sumahat tejo durdharaśca kṛtātmabhiḥ /
Dharmād vicalitāṁ hanti nṛpam eva sabāndhavam //*
42. Ibid. 7.17:

*Sa rajā puruṣo daṇḍaḥ sa netā śasitā ca saḥ /
Caturṇām āśramāṇāṁ ca dharmasya pratibhūḥ smṛtaḥ //*

dislike such a king in the same manner as a priest hates a defaulting sacrificer and the women look down upon a licentious man⁴³.

Manu recommends that a king should impose nominal annual tax in the same manner as a leach sucks the blood, a calf licks the milk from the udders of a cow and a bee takes juice from the flowers. He should take one fiftieth part of the profits earned on the cattle and the gold, and sixth, eighth or twelfth part of the crop as taxes from the subjects⁴⁴.

The Rāmāyaṇa also prescribes qualifications for an army Commander. The Commander of an army should possess contentment, valour, patience, intelligence, piety, family background, attachment for his master and should be skilled in warfare⁴⁵. The soldiers, too, should be brave and skilled in warfare and they should be given due regard by the king⁴⁶. Vālmīki is fully conscious of the fact that the salary and other allowances of the troops should be paid to them when they fall due. There should be no delay in that, because such a delay causes resentment in the army, which is a great catastrophe⁴⁷.

The Rāmāyaṇa enumerates qualities of an ambassador, who should be a resident of the country he represents abroad, should be

43. VRā. II. 100.28:

*Kaccit tvāṁ nāvajananti yājakaḥ patitaṁ yathā /
Ugrapratigrahūtāraṁ kāmāyānam iva striyaḥ //*

44. Manu. 7.129-130:

*Yathālpālpamadantyādyam vāryokovatsaṣaṭpadāḥ /
Tathālpālpō grahūtavyo rāṣṭrād rājñābdikaḥ karah //
Pañcāśad bhāga ādeyo rājñā paśuhiranyayoḥ /
Dhānyānām aṣṭamo bhāgaḥ ṣaṣṭo dvādaśa eva vā //*

45. VRā. II. 100.30:

*Kaccid dhṛṣṭas ca sūras ca dhṛtimān matimān chuciḥ /
Kulīnaścānuraktaś ca dakṣaḥ senāpatiḥ kṛtaḥ //*

46. VRā. II. 100.31:

*Balavantaś ca kaccit te mukhyā yuddhaviśārādāḥ /
Dṛṣṭāpadāna vikrāntas tvayā satkṛtya mānitāḥ //*

47. VRā. II. 100.32-33:

*Kaccid balasya bhaktaṁ ca vetanaṁ ca yathocitam /
Samprāptakālaṁ dātavyaṁ dadāsi na vilambase //
Kālātikramaṇe hyeva bhaktavetanayor bhṛtāḥ /
Bhartur apyati kupyanti so 'narthaḥ sumahān kṛtaḥ //*

learned, clever, intelligent and should be habituated to convey the message of the king represented by him to others⁴⁸.

Manu and Yājñavalkya have their own standards of an ambassador. The qualifications prescribed by Manu for an ambassador are that he should be well-versed in all the scriptures, he should be able to understand the minds of people by hints dropped by them, by their demeanour and conduct. He should be pious, skilful, possessed of strong memory, having knowledge of place and time, having attractive personality, fearless and a good conversationalist⁴⁹. The *Manusmṛti* holds the ambassador responsible for peace and war. An ambassador unites those who have gone astray and disunites the united ones. While on duty in a foreign country he is charged with the responsibility of uniting the already separated countries and separating the already united ones. He should have the capability of understanding the minds of the employees of the enemy kings by their demeanour and conduct. Thus a king should make all out efforts to read the minds of the rulers of other countries in such a way as he does not suffer in the least⁵⁰. Yājñavalkya also enjoins upon a king to appoint ambassadors in the kingdoms of his counter-parts⁵¹. The commentator classifies the ambassadors under three categories - one, who can undertake to perform state duties according to their own discretion, taking into consideration the time and place, others who performed

48. VRā. II. 100.35:

*Kaccid jānapado vidvān dakṣiṇaḥ pratibhānavān /
Yathoktavādi dūtas te kṛto Bharata paṇḍitaḥ //*

49. Manu. 7.63-64:

*Dūtaṁ caiva prakurvīta sarvaśāstraviśārdam /
Iṅgitākāraṇeṣṭajñāṁ śucim dakṣaṁ kulodbhavam //
Anuraktaḥ śucir dakṣaḥ smṛtimān deśakālavit /
Vapuṣmān vītabhūr vāgmī dūto rājñāḥ praśasyate //*

50. Ibid. 7. 66-68:

*Dūta eva hi samdhatte bhinattyeva ca samhatān /
Dutas tat kurute karma bhidyante yena mānavāḥ //
Sa vidyād asya kṛtyeṣu nigūḍheṅgitaceṣṭitaḥ /
Ākāram iṅgitaṁ ceṣṭāṁ bhṛtyeṣu ca cikīrṣitaṁ //
Buddhvā ca sarvaṁ tattvena pararājacikīrṣitaṁ /
Tathā prayatnam ātiṣṭhed yathātmānaṁ na pīdayet //*

51. Yājñavalkya, Ācāra. 13.328:

.....Dūtān preṣayen mantrisaṅgataḥ //

duties assigned to them and those who can take the documents of another king under their possession⁵².

Yājñavalkya has emphasised the necessity of appointing spies in the territories of other kings. Yājñavalkya has recommended that the king should find out some time for giving audience to the spies planted by him in the territories of other kings - *paśyec cārāms*⁵³. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* Rāma enquires of Bharata if the latter is keeping an eye upon the eighteen officers of the rival kings and fifteen officers working under him⁵⁴. The eighteen officers belonging to the rival kings, according to the commentary *Tilaka*, are the Ministers, Priests, Heir-apparent, Commander-in-chief, Doorkeeper, Officer of the harem, Superintendent of Jails, Treasurer, Burser, Security Officer, City Magistrate, Superintendent of works, Chief of Religions, Speaker of the Assembly, Judicial Officer, Superintendent of the fortress, Customs Officer and Conservator of Forests. All but first three officers of one's own side have to be taken care of. A king should behave in such a manner as the subjects do not keep away on account of his fear, nor should they be allowed to become quite informal and free with him. In fact a king should follow the middle path⁵⁵. The same idea has been echoed by Kālidāsa when he narrates the characteristics of the king Dilīpa, who was like an ocean – fierce on account of the aquatic animals living in it and attractive on account of the precious jewels found therein⁵⁶. Manu also ascribes a king the characteristic features of the

52. *Ibid.*, Commentary:

*Dūtāśca ye prakāṣam eva rājyāntaram prati gatāgatam
acaranti / Te ca trividhāḥ-niṣṛṣṭārthāḥ, saṁdiṣṭārthāḥ, śāsanaharās ceti /
Tatra niṣṛṣṭārthāḥ rājakāryāṇi deśakālocitāni svayam eva kathayituṁ kṣamāḥ,
uktamātram ye parasmai nivedayanti te saṁdiṣṭārthāḥ, śāsanaharās tu rājalekhahā-
riṇaḥ /*

53. Yājñavalkya, *Ācāra*. 13.328.

54. VRā. II. 100.36:

*Kaccid aṣṭādaśānyeṣu svapakṣe daśa pañca ca /
Tribhis tribhīr avijñātair vetsi tīrthāni cārakaiḥ //*

55. VRā. II. 100-52:

*Kaccin na sarve karmāntāḥ pratyakṣaste 'viśaṅkayā /
Sarve vā punar utsṛṣṭā madhyame vātra kāraṇam //*

56. *Raghu*. 1.16:

*Bhīmakāntair nṛpagaṇaiḥ sa babhūvopajīvinām /
Adhṛṣyaścābhigamyāśca yādoratnair ivārṇavaḥ //*

goddess of wealth in his pleasure but those of the god of death in his anger⁵⁷. In the opinion of Yājñavalkya also a king should be bubbling with zest on the one hand and polite on the other⁵⁸.

Vālmīki enumerates fourteen demerits which a king should try to avoid. They are non-believing, untruthfulness, anger, negligence, delay in actions, avoiding the company of the learned, laziness, swaying away by the powers of the senses, contemplating on official duties all alone, taking counsel from the fools, postponing the well thought of plans, divulging the secret counsel, not performing sacred duties and attacking several enemies at one and the same time⁵⁹.

The knowledge of ten demerits; five types of forts; four types of policy; seven types of good things useful for a king; eight types of demerits borne out of anger; three types of strength required by a king; three types of lores; six merits necessary for an army; physical and natural calamities; ten types of diplomatic actions; twenty types of persons with whom a king should not enter into any sort of treaty and two means, each of peace and war – all these are essential for a successful king according to the *Rāmāyaṇa*⁶⁰. Almost the same essentials have been enumerated by Manu also⁶¹.

57. Manu. 7.11:

*Yasya prasāde padmā śrīr vijayaśca parākramah /
Mṛtyuś ca vasati krodhe sarvatejomayo hi saḥ //*

58. Yājñavalkya, Ācāra 13.309:

*Mahotsāhah sthūlalakṣah kṛtajño vṛddhasevakah /
Vinūtaḥ sattvasampannaḥ kulīnaḥ satyavāk śucīḥ //*

59. VRā. II. 100.65-67:

*Nāstikyam anṛtam krodham pramādam dīrghasūtratām /
Adarśanaḥ jñānavatām ālasyaḥ pañcavṛttitām //
Ekacintanam arthānām anarthaājñaiśca mantraṇam /
Niścītānām anārambham mantrasyāparirakṣaṇam //
Maṅgalādyaprayogaḥ ca pratyutthānam ca sarvataḥ /
Kaccit tvam varjayasyetān rājadoṣāṃścaturdaśa //*

60. VRā. II. 100.68-70:

*Daśapañcacaturvargān saptavargaḥ ca tattvataḥ /
Aṣṭavargaḥ trivargaḥ ca vidyās tisrāśca Rāghava //
Indriyāṇām jayaḥ buddhvā śāḍgūṇyām daivamānuṣam /
Kṛtyaḥ viṃśativargaḥ ca tathā prakṛtīmaṅḍalaḥ //
Yātrādaṇḍavidhānaḥ ca dviyonī sandhivigrahaḥ /
Kaccid etān mahāprājña yathāvad anumanyase //*

61. Manu. 7.154:

*Kṛtsnam cāṣṭavidham karma pañcavargaḥ ca tattvataḥ /
Anurāgāparāḡgau ca pracāraḥ maṅḍalasya ca //*

Yājñavalkya also concurs with Manu when he narrates seven ingredients of a kingdom as the king, the ministers, the subjects, the fortress, the treasury, the army and the friends⁶².

While enquiring from Bharata the welfare of the kingdom of Kosala, Rāma mentions a number of schemes which have to be launched by a welfare state. The sacrifices are performed for purification of the environment, drinking stalls are to be installed to provide pure drinking water to the people and the tanks are made for providing drinking water to the cattle and also for purposes of irrigation. There should be healthy oxen for ploughing the fields, but it should be free from the wild animals. It should not depend on the rain-god for irrigation, which is mostly done from the rivers and tanks. People should be fearless and a large number of mines should be there for fulfilling mineral requirements of the kingdom. This, in fact, is Vālmiki's idea of a welfare state, which is applicable even today⁶³. An idea of an ideal welfare state is found in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* where Rāma's reign is described in detail. At that time the subjects followed the path of righteousness. There were no liars in the society. People were virtuous

Manu. 7.156-157:

*Etāḥ prakṛtayo mūlaṃ maṇḍalasya samāsataḥ /
Aṣṭau cānyā samākhyātā dvādaśaiva tu tāḥ smṛtāḥ //
Amātyarāṣṭradurgārthadaṇḍākhyāḥ pañca cāparāḥ /
Pratyekam kathitā hyetāḥ samkṣepeṇa dvisaptatiḥ //*
Ibid. 7.160-161:

*Sandhiṃ ca vīgrahaṃ caiva yānam āsanam eva ca /
Dvaidhībhāvaṃ saṃśrayaṃ ca ṣaḍguṇāṃścintayet sadā //*
*Āsanam caiva yānam ca sandhiṃ vīgrahaṃ eva ca /
Kāryaṃ vikṣya prayuñjīta dvaidhaṃ saṃśrayam eva ca //*

62. Yājñavalkya, *Ācāra*. 13. 353:

*Svāmyamātya jano durgam koṣo daṇḍas tathaiva ca /
Mitrānyetāḥ prakṛtayo rājyaṃ saptāṅgam ucyate //*

63. VRā. II. 100.43-46:

*Kaccic caityaśatairjuṣṭaḥ suniviṣṭajanākulaḥ /
Devasthānaiḥ prapābhīśca taṭākaiś copaśobhitāḥ //*
*Prahṛṣṭanaranārikāḥ samājotsavaśobhitāḥ /
Sukṛṣṭasīmāpaśumān himsābhir abhivarjitāḥ //*
*Adevamātrko ramyaḥ śvāpadaiḥ parivarjitāḥ /
Parityakto bhayaīḥ sarvaiḥ khanibhiścopaśobhitāḥ //*
*Vivarjito naraiḥ pāpaiḥ mama pūrvaiḥ surakṣitāḥ /
kaccid janapadaḥ sphūtaḥ sukham vasati Rāghava //*

and they used to perform their duties⁶⁴. Not only this, even the nature was helpful. It used to rain at proper time, the crop was produced in abundance and the towns were inhabited by healthy citizens. As Rāma ruled over Ayodhyā there were no untimely deaths, nor were there sickly people and nor were there natural calamities⁶⁵.

It is on account of the vast material related to the *Dharmaśāstra* literature that the *Rāmāyaṇa* has an everlasting value. Vālmīki, the embodiment of pathos and piety, has really laid down the humanity under a great debt by composing such a poem, which is a source of eternal inspiration, bestower of long life, victory and fame⁶⁶. Vālmīki rightly claims that his story of Rāma shall live as long as there are rivers and mountains on the earth⁶⁷.

64. VRā. VI. 128.105:

*Āsan prajā dharmaparā Rāme śāsati nānṛtāḥ /
Sarve lakṣanasampannāḥ sarve dharmaparāyaṇāḥ //*

65. VRā. VII. 99.13-14:

*Kāle varṣati parjanyaḥ subhikṣam vimalā diśaḥ /
Hṛṣṭapuṣṭajanākīrṇaṁ purāṁ janapadās tathā //
Nākāle mriyate kaścīn na vyādhiḥ prāṇinām tathā /
Nānartho vidyate kaścīd Rāme rājyaṁ praśāsati //*

66. VRā. VI. 128.107:

*Dharmyaṁ yaśasyaṁ āyuṣyaṁ rājñāṁ ca vijayāvaham /
Ādikāvyam idaṁ cārṣaṁ purā Vālmikīnā kṛtam //*

67. VRā. I. 2.36-37:

*Yāvat sthāsyaṁti girayaḥ saritaśca mahātale /
Tāvad Rāmāyaṇakathā lokeṣu pracariṣyati //*