

RAMAYANA

Myth or Reality ?

By

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PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Critical Edition and the Ramopakhyana contain much that is pure fancy or fiction.

Lecture II shows, for the first time, how archaeology in all its aspects—excavation, pottery, sculpture, architecture, inscriptions—might be employed in ascertaining the truth in the Ramayana story, or as the Germans would say the Ur or the original Ramayana. This quest was begun by Professor Jacobi over a century ago. In the beginning, and largely even now, it was based on literary and linguistic grounds. Later came ethnographic and geographic studies by Ramadas, Hiralal and Iyer. I have supplemented all this by archaeological as well as botanical evidences, and have shown how some idea of the original Ramayana might be had by this multiple approach. Much more might be learnt if Ayodhya and other Ramayana sites are explored and some, particularly Ayodhya, excavated.

Each lecture is followed by notes, particularly extracts from the Ramayana: English translation by M. N. Dutt, and Sanskrit original from the Critical Edition prepared by the Oriental Institute at Baroda.

I must thank my colleague Dr S. N. Bhavsar for getting the manuscript through the typist and checking the English and Sanskrit references.

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Alandi, Poona
23 September 1972

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Contents

PREFACE	v-vi
LECTURE I	
<i>Is Ramayana a Myth or Reality?</i>	1-43
Ramayana in Indian Consciousness; Excavation of Sites Mentioned in Epics; Critical Study Necessary; Cities; Rama as Vishnu; Various Versions of Ramayana; South India Unknown; Existing Ramayana—a Fiction	
Notes to Lecture I	
English References	20
Sanskrit References	33
LECTURE II	
<i>The Ramayana—A Reality</i>	44-76
The Historicity of Rama; Foundation of Ayodhya; Earliest Houses at Ayodhya of Mud; Rama's Journey to Dandakaranya; Satkara in Bharadvaja Ashrama; 100 Pots of Wine; Dandakaranya—Wrong Identification; Lanka in the Vindhya Hills; Ravana, a Gond King; Significance of Sala Trees; Ceylon and Rameshvaram; Rama in Place- and Personal-Names from Inscriptions of South India; Rama as God; Ramayana in Tamil Nadu; Ring Episode in Ramayana; Sita's Vastra (or Silk Sari); Satkara (Reception) in Bharadvaja Ashrama; Gold and Wine in India; Present Ramayana—c. 400 A.D.; Astras (Magical Weapons); Ayasa (Iron) in Ramayana; First Composition of Ramayana; <i>Ur</i> or the Original Ramayana; Summary; Diffusion of Ramayana	
Notes to Lecture II	
English References	67
Sanskrit References	73
Postscript	77-78
Bibliography	79-80
Index	81-86

List of Illustrations

- Fig. 1. Map showing the 'original' position of Lanka
Fig. 2. Lakshmi standing on a lotus and bathed by two elephants
Fig. 3. Lakshmi seated on a lotus and bathed by two elephants
Fig. 4. Panel from the Gupta temple at Deogarh
Fig. 5. Gateway of Amaravati city
Fig. 6. Animals with fish body from (1) Bharhut, (2) Amaravati, and Jagayyapetta
Fig. 7. Horse with the body of a fish from Amaravati
Fig. 8. Elephant with the body of a fish from Amaravati
Fig. 9. Ihamriga, Vyala rider
Fig. 10. 'Hanuman grows', though shown in a worshipping pose, from Suchindram temple
Fig. 11. Rings from Mohenjodaro, Harappa and other sites

ADDITIONS FOR LECTURE II

- Fig. 12. Vali-Sugriva fight
Fig. 13. Hanuman carrying Rama and Lakshmana

For map see pages 46-47. For other illustrations see at the end of the book.

Lecture I

Is Ramayana a Myth or Reality ?

For hundreds of years the Ramayana—the story of Rama and Sita, Ravana and Hanuman, and several other characters—has held the minds of the people, educated as well as uneducated, rich or poor, like a magnet. Everyone knows that its author was Valmiki. And there is current a tradition among the scholars as well as laymen that the Ramayana is an *Adikavya*. It is the first poem to be composed in Sanskrit (or in the world, according to one way of thinking).

RAMAYANA IN INDIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

Though the Ramayana is thus acknowledged to be a poem, a creation of a poet, still there will be few persons in India who think or regard that the stories woven round Rama and Sita, Vali, Hanuman and Ravana could be a figment of imagination. Almost everyone implicitly believes that everything that is narrated in the Ramayana is a fact, an incident which had taken place some time in the past. This belief about the historicity of the Ramayana is so deeply ingrained in the Indian mind that almost invariably I am asked the question: "Have you found any traces of Rama and Krishna? We know that Rama lived before Krishna, that he had built

a bridge of stones across the ocean between Ceylon and India” and what not.

When questions like these cannot be answered, people, including scholars, think that we—archaeologists—are wasting our time and nation’s money!

Of course, it is easy to brush aside such questions by saying that since the Ramayana is an *Adikavya*—the first poem, and not history (*itihasa*) or even a *purana* (traditional history), it is nothing but poet’s fancy and hence nothing of Rama or his time can be found!

Such an attitude would have been justified a hundred years ago, when Indian history was regarded hardly 2000 years old, and European nations in the first flush of conquest and colonization regarded everything oriental as not so old and inferior to that of Greece and Rome.¹ Discoveries since then in what is called the Near East (or Western Asia), and particularly in the Bible land (Old Palestine), have conclusively shown that after all the Bible is not only 5000 years old, but the sites mentioned in it go back to much earlier times, and these were the sites which bear some of the earliest civilizations known to man!

EXCAVATION OF SITES MENTIONED IN EPICS

We in India should have taken a leaf from this planned archaeological work in Western Asia, but unfortunately we have done little. These discoveries have fallen on deaf ears and closed eyes. Even the chance discovery of the Indus Civilization and its predecessor (which probably encompassed a still larger area) has not awakened us from our Kumbhakarna’s slumber. With the result that traditional sites like Ayodhya and Mathura have not been yet systematically excavated. We do not indeed know how old they are. In the absence of such a definite knowledge how can we say that Ayodhya is older than Mathura, because, according to our long and persistent belief and tradition, Rama lived before

Krishna? But this tradition has or seems to have solid foundation. For I found no reference to Krishna in the Critical Edition of the Ramayana. Is then the Ramayana all true?

CRITICAL STUDY NECESSARY

Before arriving at any conclusion, we should examine critically descriptions of some of the most important

- (1) Characters (a) Rama, Sita, Lakshmana
(b) Ravana and his kith and kin
(c) Hanuman and his tribe
- (2) Places (a) Ayodhya
(b) Kishkindha
(c) Lanka
(d) Dandakaranya ✓
- (3) Events (a) Rama's destruction of the Rakshasas (14,000) in Dandakaranya
(b) Rama's march to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) crossing the straits at Rameshvaram
(c) Rama's single-handed fight with Ravana and other Rakshasas
(d) Rama's alliance with Hanuman
(e) Rama's return flight to Ayodhya by Pushpaka Vimana and
(f) Sita's banishment.

Every item in each of these main groups cannot be discussed in the course of one lecture, nor is it necessary because the main features are known even to a child. Let us take the two main figures—Rama and Ravana and a few other events and places.

Rama's Weapons^{2.2a*}

Rama is universally known, described and shown even in sculptures as a man with just two hands. His normal weapons in war, either in *dvandva yuddha* (battle between two persons) or in a general war were the bow and arrow or a sword and shield. With his normal physical form he was to kill thousands of Rakshasas and the ten-headed Ravana, and perform other miraculous feats.

Of all the feats performed by the so-called Vanaras those performed by Hanuman were most unusual. All this he could do because Hanuman was the son of Vayu (Wind-God) and had the magic power to change his form at will and fly in the air.

CITIES

With these descriptions of characters, endowing them with phenomenal power so that they could perform most unusual feats, goes the fanciful description of cities. Only three cities—Ayodhya, Kishkindha and Lanka are described in some details. Of these I will briefly discuss the descriptions of Kishkindha and Lanka and compare them with that of Ayodhya.

Lanka^{3.3a}

Lanka is first referred to in the Balakanda. This obviously is a summary and later addition, so it was not helpful in discussing the genuineness of the description.

The second and in fact the earliest reference is in the Aranyakanda, then in the Kishkindha, Sundara and Yuddha kandas. Lanka is said to be situated on the Trikuta hill. This hill itself was in a Sagara (lake, sea or ocean). Few details

* Superior figures refer to English references, superior figures followed by letter 'a' refer to Sanskrit references given at the end of the lecture.

are given in the earlier kandas but repeated descriptions are given by Hanuman who first enters it at night and then searches for Sita and ultimately locates her in the Ashokavana.

While all this may be found in the Sundarakanda, the organization of the defence of Lanka and some further description occur in the Yuddhakanda.

Though we are repeatedly told that Lanka was situated on the Trikuta peak or on a hill, still at no time its extent has been given, though we are told that Ravana's palace was half a *yojana* in extent.

Lanka was protected by a fortification (*prakara*) all round, and additionally by a moat (*parikha*). The *prakara* was of gold (*kanchana*) as also the arches (*toranas*) inside. Inside the city (*puri*) was divided like a chess board by roads (*su vibhaktam patha*) and then there was a royal highway (*rajamarga*) with check-posts (*gulma*). The city boasted of seven and eight storey high houses, palaces and mansions (*griha, vesma, prasada, vimana and mandira*). The pillars of these palaces were made of gold and crystal and encrusted with pearls.

The *Pushpaka vimana* (here it means a residence) was decorated with beautiful sculptures among which Hanuman was struck by one of Lakshmi seated or standing and bathed by two elephants and pillar capital supported by wondrous figures (*ihamriga*).*

The Ashokavana in which Sita was kept was itself surrounded by a wall (*prakara*). Inside there was a hall with a thousand pillars.

Then there were gardens, recreation houses, art gallery (*chitrashala*) and drinking houses (*apanashala*). The city was stocked with jewels, food and weapons and was thus prosperous.

It was defended by an army which was well equipped by all kinds of weapons then known.

* See Figs 2-3 and 4-9.

When Hanuman saw this extremely well defended city he said to himself, "Lanka is difficult to be conquered even by gods."

Lanka's Defence^{4, 4a} and *Rama's Counter-Defence*^{5 5a}

Now let us look at its defence when Rama with a vast army of Vanaras invaded it. Rama had encamped on the Suvela hill which was to the south of Lanka. As in the Gita of the Mahabharata, Rama and Ravana inspect, we are told, the battle-field and the vyuha, the arrangements of the various units under various generals. Thus Prahasta guarded the eastern gateway, the southern was defended by Mahaparshva and Mahodara, the western by Indrajit and Ravana himself guarded the all important northern gateway.

Naturally against this well planned defence Rama should have one and so the poet gives us one.

The artificiality of all these descriptions is apparent. No doubt there were well-fortified cities in India with houses having a number of storeys. And we have the classic description of Pataliputra by Megasthenes. The existence of this wooden rampart has been proved by the discovery of wooden palisades. Not only storeyed houses (remains) have been found at Mohenjodaro but the caves at Karla, Kanheri, Junnar and Ellora have preserved visual proof, if any were needed, of such houses.

Then later we have the magnificent remains of the three or four storeyed monasteries at Nalanda. Thus the existence of storeyed houses is not in question.

Nor do we doubt that many of the houses were not just stark masses of wood, brick and stone as many of our modern constructions are, but were decorated with artistic sculpture—figures of animals and human beings as are the caves referred to above and as were the earlier monuments at Sanchi and Bharhut. We should not doubt the existence of a few gold plated pillars or furniture in the palace such as the royal chair (asana) and couches.

However, what is fanciful is the supposed existence of golden gateway, walls, etc., so that people always imagine when they talk of Lanka or Dwarka as golden. No such gateways ever existed. The nearest we have are the Ishtar gateways from Babylon now reconstructed and exhibited in the eastern sector of Berlin.

Compared to the description of Lanka and Kishkindha, the description of Ayodhya is more sedate and realistic because the author had indeed seen the city.

The Setu^{6 6a}

The sea was filled up with all kinds of trees—sala, asvakarva, tala, tilaka, kutaja, arjuna, bilva, saptavarva, karnikara, asoka (6-15-15-20) and then Nala, a son of Visvakarma, built a stone bridge which was 100 yojanas long and 100 yojanas broad.

One may ask, "From where did they bring all these trees?" Some (many) do not grow at all in the vicinity or for that matter in South India! What one can conclude is that the building of setu is one of the grand conceptions of the poet. Once conceived, he has tried to support the execution of the project by invoking divine help—the sea (personified) agrees to dry up sufficiently so that a bridge can be built and Nala, a son of divine architect-engineer Visvakarma, prepares the plan and the Vanaras help to fill up the now shallow sea by all kinds of ballast, and lo! the 100 yojana long bridge, the longest in the world, was built! On the face of it the whole thing is unbelievable, still the ignorant and unthinking people—laymen as well as scholars—believe in this fancy!

What has been said here would receive additional support from the fact that in two of the Mss of the Ramayana, one of A.D. 1954 and the other about 400 years old, we find the reading

समुद्रागमनं चैव नलसेतोरेच दर्शनम् ।

बालकाण्ड (अनुक्रमणी सर्वा), ३.२४.

This means when Rama and the Vanaras reached Lanka in Madhya Pradesh, either near the Amarkantak plateau, or

near Jabalpur, they found a narrow, pipe- or channel-like passage to cross the setu (here meaning only a large lake). However, this simple compound word was later misunderstood, and interpreted by commentators and Harikirtanakaras as a bridge built by Nala and with this started the whole grand but imaginary conception of Rama and the Vanaras building a bridge between India and Lanka.

This very interesting and important fact was first pointed out by Raikrishnadasaji in two articles,⁷ later used by Dr U. P. Shah in his very recent article.⁸

Dr Shah also tells us that Raikrishnadasaji had also said (as was done by Paramasiva Iyer some 32 years ago) that even in the present Ramayana Hanuman is described to have crossed (swum through) the *Lavanarva* (salty lake or sea). And this is exactly what *Raghuvamsa* (Canto 12.6) repeats. Hanuman uses similar words संतरिष्यामि सागरम् (Sundarakanda, 37.22) when he volunteers to rescue Sita from the Ashokavana on his own.

Thus there is little doubt that in the original story only a “small” lake which could be forded or swum across by a strong person figured. This was later converted into an open sea.

Kishkindha^{9, 9a}

Kishkindha is often described as the capital of the Vanara chief Vali. It was situated in the Vindhya hills, amidst forests, and was near *Rishyamuka* and *Pampa*. The place itself was a cave (*guha*), and in truth it should be and it should have been.

Recently, a large number of caves and rock-shelters have been discovered in the Vindhya hills which stretch from Bhopal in the west to Panna in the east. I have personally seen these caves and rock-shelters around Panchmari and those within a radius of 30 miles from Bhopal and also in the granite hills of Bellary and Raichur districts of Karnatak.

Some caves and rock-shelters are quite large and have been inhabited from the Early Stone Age (about a lakh of years ago) up to recent times, still none of these can be described

as a city—*puri* or *nagara*, as the Ramayana chooses to call such *guhās* and then suddenly tells us that when Lakshmana (full of wrath, because Sugriva had not fulfilled his promise of starting his search for Sita, at the end of monsoon, in the month of Kartika) saw not only gate-keepers but the royal highway (*rajapatha*) with houses as high as *Kailasa* and having seven courtyards. There were market places (*panya*) where grain and wine were sold. Here Lakshmana saw seated Sugriva on a golden seat embracing Ruma and surrounded by beautiful young women.

All this rich, poetic description of Kishkindha runs counter to the oft-repeated statements in this kanda itself that the place where Vali and Sugriva lived was a cave and in the midst of a hilly forest.

Further when Vali is mortally wounded he tells Rama. "Why did you kill me, who is a forest-dweller and living on fruits, roots and such forest produce?"¹⁰ These few lines spoken by Vali give the true insight about the Vanaras and their way of life and the place they lived in.

Of all the three descriptions of cities that of Kishkindha is (or would be) the most unreal, fanciful and after a set pattern. Still laymen and even some scholars are prepared to accept these statements.

Dandakaranya^{11, 11a}

For the correct identification of Dandakaranya, Marichi's testimony is extremely important, though it has been overlooked by many scholars.

When Shurpanakha goes to Lanka and reports to Ravana how Rama had killed her brothers and several thousand Rakshasas, and then tells him about the extreme, matchless beauty of Sita, Ravana only thinks of kidnapping Sita, but not of punishing Rama! Ravana immediately leaves Lanka in a golden chariot (which travelled as willed) and seeks Marichi's help. In particular he tells him how he should take the form of a golden deer and lure Rama away. Marichi first refuses to undertake the job because he says he knows the

powers of Rama. Though still a boy, with one arrow he shot him (Marichi) who was living in Dandakaranya, and violated the sacrifices of sages. Thus shot, he fell into a sea and regaining consciousness he ran to Lanka. (3.36.2 ff; 3.36.17)

Now if we for a moment consider the entire situation at the moment before Ravana appears on the scene and Sita is taken to Lanka, then we have before us the most natural geographical situation :

- (1) Vishvamitra goes to Ayodhya and requests for the help of Rama and Lakshmana against the Rakshasas.
- (2) Dasharatha grants his request though with great anxiety and reluctance.
- (3) Vishvamitra takes the two boys showing them on the way various important cities like Kausambi, Vaishali, Mithila and others.
- (4) They go to the forest (Dandakaranya) after crossing the Ganga which was to the south of Ayodhya.
- ✓ (5) In this forest Marichi and other Rakshasas harassed the sages and when they were killed or driven out some of them went to Lanka.

‘ Now where was this Lanka? This cannot be Ceylon across the seas, but in the forest (Dandakaranya) as it is today and called so by the Gonds and other aboriginal tribes of this region, though it is conceivable that even this original Lanka was situated in a lake, and there are many natural lakes in and around Jabalpur and in eastern Madhya Pradesh.

Ayodhya^{12 12a}

Ayodhya was in Koshala and situated on the bank of the Sarayu. It is said to have been first built by King Manu. The city was 12 yojanas long and 3 yojanas wide. It was divided into roads and streets. It was protected by a rampart and a moat. Within the city were high buildings, market places and dancing halls and traders and craftsmen of all sorts. The city was rich and prosperous with grains and jewels.

RAMA AS VISNU^{13a}

Unlike the Mahabharata Rama is the central figure in almost all the important events. It is he who with the help of Lakshmana kills the Rakshasas while still a boy of 16, it is he who destroys no less than 14,000 Rakshasas in the Dandakaranya, in a single combat, while standing bare-footed, while his opponents were initially seated in a chariot. It is Rama who with one arrow only pierces all the seven sala trees. Ultimately it is Rama who kills Ravana and after regaining purified Sita flies back to Ayodhya in Ravana's Pushpaka Vimana. These unique feats, but particularly the *ekapatni-vrata* of Rama, in days when polygamy and alliance with young beautiful girls was common, and so also steadfast love of Sita for Rama against all threats and temptations and the brotherly affection of Lakshmana and Hanuman's unflinching services have left indelible mark on the Indian mind. Everyone of these characters has become an *adarsha*, an ideal to be cherished.

How old is this belief and what is its source?

The story of Rama and Sita is natural. It may happen at any time and in any clime, hence its universality. But the behaviour of the four or five principal characters is rare and unusual and it has gripped all readers.

From the preparation of the Critical Edition at Baroda it is evident that the Ramayana in all its essentials was known in India by at least the 5th century A.D. It was at this time that important scenes, events in the story, began to be portrayed in sculpture in early temples devoted to the worship of Visnu and possibly Siva also (though as yet we have not found any temples dedicated to Rama of such an early date).

This was the time when Kalidasa composed a major *kavya*, the *Raghuvamsa*, in which the events of Ramayana were incorporated. And slightly later Bhavabhuti wrote the famous *Uttara-Ramacharita*.

Thus by the 5th century the Ramayana was known not only over a great part of India but the story began to spread out-

side India and we have got inscriptions and temples in Java as well as records from Central Asia.

Naturally there were different versions. In India two main versions are recognised.

VARIOUS VERSIONS OF RAMAYANA

The Northern recension has three further important divisions :

- (a) Sarada or North-Western Group
- (b) Nepali or North-Eastern Group,
(The latter had two further subdivisions:
 - (i) Maithili version
 - (ii) Bengali version)
- (c) Devanagari version.

Each of three principal versions has several subdivisions.

The Southern recension has three main divisions :

- (a) Telugu version
- (b) Grantha version,
- (c) Malayalam version.

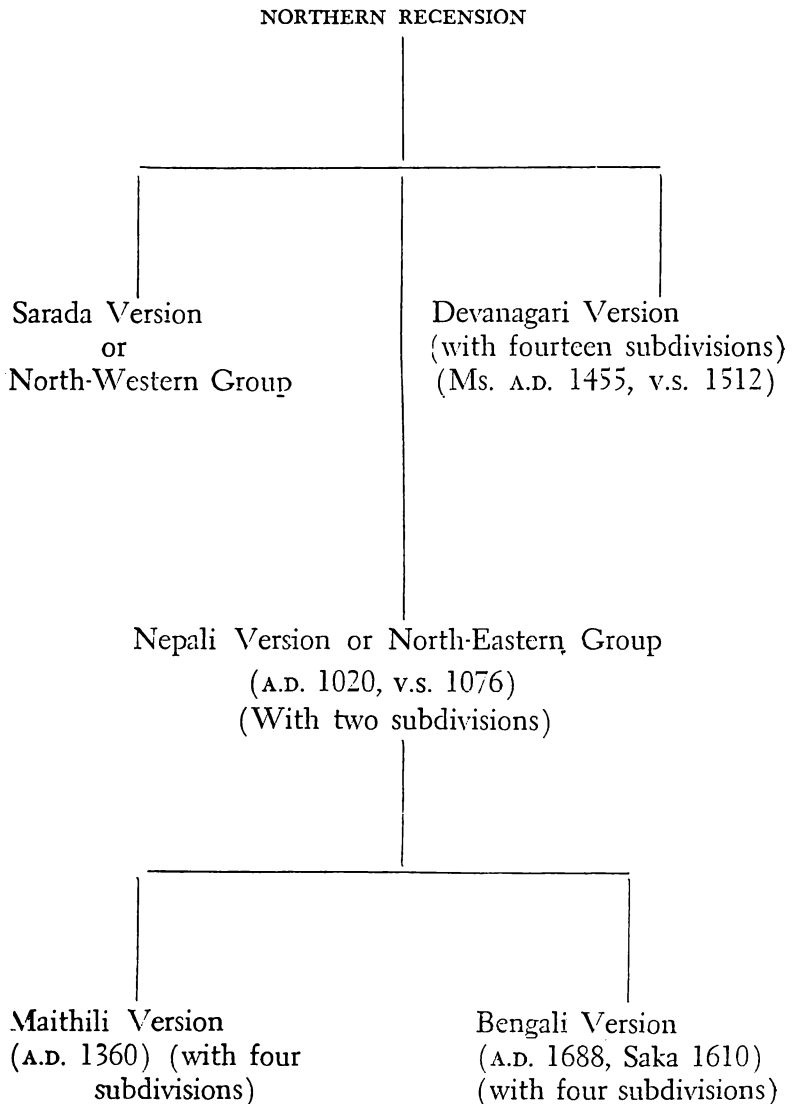
Each of three has again several subdivisions.

What is important to remember in all this mass of data is the fact that no Ms is earlier than A.D. 1020 and the latest is as recent as A.D. 1800.

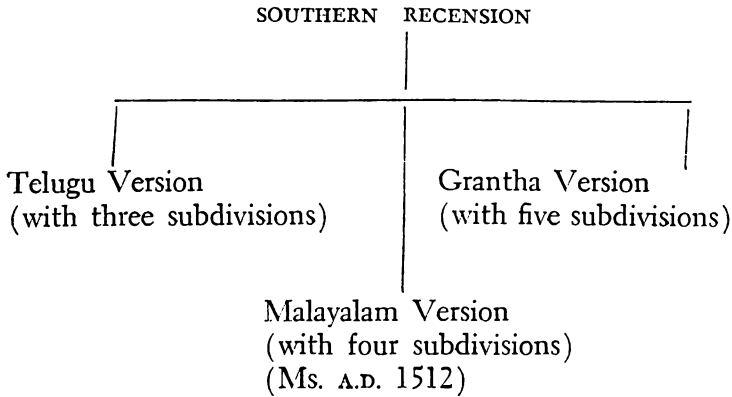
For an easy and clear understanding we may reproduce the chart of the various versions and subdivisions :

I

(only Balakanda)



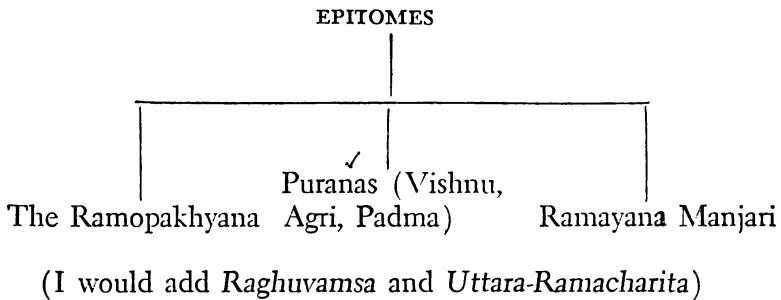
II



III

COMMENTATORS (OR TESTIMONIALS)

IV



*Critical Edition*¹⁴

The Critical Edition has been prepared at Baroda after collating all the manuscripts of these different versions. It is interesting to note that the oldest manuscript known so far

is one from Nepal. It bears the date A.D. 1020, whereas of all the four versions, the South Indian version is said to be more reliable because it contains lesser interpolations.

A critical edition of any work only gives us a reliable text which might prove to exist at a particular time. In the case of the Ramayana which we are discussing a text is now available which might have existed even in the 5th century A.D. But the reconstruction of a reliable text does not mean that whatever this text contains is true, either at that time or at any time in the past. What Valmiki created was a heroic poem, and this poem went on being inflated from time to time, incorporating at least some features of that time. When this heroic poem was created, mythical things—characters and events—were introduced into the story. This inflation has not stopped as I will have occasion to point out later. It is going on before our very eyes.

Divine Weapons^{15 15a}

Of the things mentioned by me just consider how Rama was made to acquire divine weapons in the Balakanda. The normal weapons of a warrior anywhere in the world were the bow and arrow for a long distance fight. For the hand-to-hand fight, there was either the gada (mace) or the shield and sword.

The Rakshasas also used these weapons, though at times they might uproot a tree, or pick up a large boulder, even a living rock and hurl it against the enemy.

The Vanaras never used the bow and arrow, sword and shield, or any other made weapons. They are invariably found to employ trees, rocks and small tops of hillocks.

Thus distinction made by the author of the Ramayana not only helps us to identify or categorize the three main participants in the epic, but when we further examine the terms used for describing the weapons, the arrows, shields, etc. of Rama, Lakshmana and the Rakshasas, we find that they are all made of iron. Though we cannot visualize the exact

form of the weapons to date them more precisely, we can definitely say that they are not very old. Further, they all belong to the Iron Age and the earliest date of this would be about 800 B.C.

Chronological study of the word 'astra' also shows that this word is not very old and its meaning as a magical weapon or a weapon to be used with the help of different kinds of mantras, so that one could create different kinds of effects—set ablaze a city or habitation, produce rain and storm—is comparatively a very late concept in Sanskrit literature. Historically, it may be said that astras, even if they existed, were not employed by the rank and file of the army. Their use was very rare and confined to only a few individuals, who had obtained divine powers. Ramayana itself gives an interesting description of the origin of these magical weapons, and the fact that this description occurs in the Balakanda would go to prove their late origin.

Further the introduction of astra-concept in the epics and Puranas seems to have taken place at a time when mythological descriptions began to outgrow small historical events, whereas these seem to have had no effect on the actual course of Indian history. For had the use of astras been common, we would not have been worsted in any war against a foreign invader. Therefore it is my considered view that astras are mythical.

The description of Kishkindha and Lanka as shown above are quite fanciful, though as will be shown later based on a few historical facts.

No ancient city known to archaeology either in India or outside had gates of gold, or even gold plated doors, so also toranas of iron (*avasa*) are unknown. The entire conception of Lanka situated on a hill was supposed to be on an island in the sea but also still having a moat, together with fortification, is mythical. This is further indicated when we examine how it was defended on all the four sides when Rama invaded it.

SOUTH INDIA—UNKNOWN

Lastly it can be shown that Valmiki or the author of the Ramayana does not know the South or the country south of the Vindhya. Not only he has no clear and definite conception of the various hill ranges, but shows complete ignorance of the people, places and customs of the South.

Burial Customs and Vali's Cremation^{10 16a}

Only one example should suffice to prove this statement. Some scholars who have identified Kishkindha, the capital of Vanara chief Vali, with the Bellary region in Andhra-Karnatak do not realise that this region and further south is full of monuments of the Megalithic and Neolithic periods, c. 500 B.C. to 2500 B.C. When Vali was killed by Rama, Sugriva along with all the members of his family orders Vali's cremation (*dahana*). This cremation ceremony is very elaborately described but few readers have realised and also enquired how old this custom of cremation is and whether it was current in the Andhra-Karnatak at this time. Anybody who reads these 30 verses or so will be convinced that the poet gives the description of a typical Hindu (Aryan) method of cremation, which has come down to us from Vedic times. But cremation, and that too of this type, seems to have been quite unknown in the whole of South India, from the Godavari in the north to the Tambraparni in the south, right from the earliest times to about 3rd century B.C. at least. Burial was the prevalent custom. The adults were buried in a specially made pit in north-south direction and children up to the age of 14 or so were buried in a series of pots and a very young child in one or two pots, either laid horizontally or vertically. This custom is first documented in about 2500 B.C. and continued up to about 1000 B.C. Then came still more elaborate practice of burying the dead in an underground chest, or a terracotta sarcophagus, which was kept in a specially made pit, and then the whole thing was carefully covered above the ground with large stone slabs. These take several forms, but generally the

name used for any of this huge stone burial is "megalith". As the early Tamil literature tells us, this custom was still prevalent in early historic times.

However, the author of the Ramayana is completely unaware of the Megalithic and the still earlier Neolithic burials which dotted the land.

EXISTING RAMAYANA—A FICTION

However old, widespread and deep-rooted the belief in the present Ramayana, enshrined as it is in all the existing version of the epic, so much so that even the Critical Edition prepared at Baroda has to incorporate many of these beliefs and stories and though documented in temple sculptures from about the 5th century A.D. and perhaps in small terracotta plaques as early as 1st-2nd century B.C. and in inscriptions from far-off Java and in Vietnam (ancient Champa), where at Tra-kien has been found an inscription which refers to the dedication of an image and temple to Valmiki himself by a king Prakasadharmā who ruled between 653-79 A.D.¹⁷, as early as the 7th century A.D., still one has to say regretfully, after critically examining the descriptions of events, places and persons, that these are very much exaggerated and hence have had no existence in real life. Everyone has become mythical and belongs to a time when Rama was looked upon as an incarnation of Visnu, and Ravana and other adversaries, as demons. Consequently, both Rama and Ravana, as well as their associates and places they lived in, were looked at from a different angle.

This was Valmiki Ramayana, a poet's creation.¹⁸ But a poet, however gifted and endowed with a faculty to know the past, present and future (*trikalajñani*), does belong to a certain time and clime, and might cursorily or occasionally throw hints of these in his poetic composition. If these hints about the time when the poet lived can be detected, then one may hope to get at the truth, the original story. This truth or reality of the Ramayana might be discussed with the help of archaeology and a careful study of the

geographical descriptions in the Ramayana. This might be supplemented by or checked against ethnographical data, as well as the knowledge of the flora and fauna. Such a multi-pronged approach might help get at the ur or the original Ramayana.

This original Ramayana cannot be such a narration like Ramopakhyana, as thought by Dr P. L. Vaidya (p. xxxvi). Though this appears in the Mahabharata which is regarded as history (*itihasa*), and not poetry (*kavya*), still a glance through it will show to any student of facts (archaeologist) that even this Ramopakhyana contains a number of myths, the most important being the building of the bridge over hundred yojanas long sea. Though this *akhyana* differs in a few details from that occurring in the Ramayana, such as the non-mention of Vibhishana, and the mention of Avindhya instead, and the proving of Sita's chastity by Vayu, and not by Agni, still it appears to me that it is indeed a summary of the Ramayana, as already shown by Jacobi, Sukthankar and other scholars. The more I read such literary approaches for deciding the antiquity or otherwise of our epics and puranas, the more I am convinced of the necessity of examining them from archaeological and other points of view.

Notes to Lecture I

ENGLISH REFERENCES

All the references are to M. N. Dutt's translation of the Ramayana, Calcutta, 1882-1893. This translation appears in several small volumes, but the pagination is continuous. The references within brackets are to the Critical Edition of the Ramayana, published at Baroda.

* * *

1. See Marshall, John, in Rapson, E. J. (Ed.), *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, 1922, p. 618.

2. *Rama's Weapons*

Then Sita of expansive eyes handed to the brothers excellent quivers, bows and shining swords. p. 521. (3.7.18)

I therefore tell thee, repair to Panchavati. That is a charming woodland, and there Mithila's daughter shall dwell with delight. p. 536. (3.12.17-18)

"O bestower of honour, do thou for securing victory, take this bow, these quivers, this arrow and this scimitar." p. 534. (3.36.16)

These descriptions occur in several kandas, hence a brief summary of the salient features is given. Even this has taken a lot of space.

3. Lanka

Beyond the ocean stands my beautiful capital Lanka, India's Amaravati, guarded on all sides by the terrible night-rangers and encircled by yellow walls. That beautiful city hath gateways of ornamented and jewelled arches and golden apartments. pp. 618-19. (3.47.10-11)

And the Lord of Rakshasas, passing beyond Pampa, directed his course towards the city of Lanka, taking Mithila's daughter along with him, indulging in lamentations. Experiencing the height of delight, Ravana ravished her, taking her, on his lap, like a sharp-toothed serpent of virulent poison. And speedily, like an arrow shot from a bow, he, coursing the welkin, left behind woods and streams and mountains, and pieces of water. And coming to the abode of Varuna, that refuge of rivers the exhaustless ocean—the home of whales and alligators, he crossed over it. In consequence of the carrying away of Vaidehi, Varuna's abode, from grief, had all its waves stilled and its fishes and mighty snakes inert. And the Charanas uttered in the heavens these words, "O Ten-headed One, this is thy end." p. 634. (3.52.5-12)

This Lanka measuring an hundred *yojanas* girt round by the ocean is incapable of being harassed by the celestials themselves headed by Indra. p. 635. (3.53.19)

Lanka (Seen from Chitrakuta)

Having crossed over the ocean incapable of being repressed, that one endowed with great strength, staying at the plateau of Chitrakuta, and having refreshed himself, cast his eyes on Lanka. p. 889 (5.2.1)

And having cleared an hundred *yojanas* that monkey gifted with first-rate prowess did not heave sighs or feel any fatigue. p. 889 (5.2.3)

And in vain shalt thou for Sita compass the destruction of the city of Lanka, adorned with diverse jewels and filled with golden edifices. p. 534. (3.37.21)

That great city in the midst of the ocean, Lanka, encircled on all sides by the sea and situated on the summit of a hill, is my capital. p. 616. (3.46.25)

And (Hanuman) saw goblins and Rakshasas storming and eulogizing Ravana, and mighty swarms of Rakshasas stationed, covering the highway. And in the central courtyard, he found innumerable spies of the Rakshasa (Ravana) some initiated, some bearing matted locks, some with their heads shaven, and some clad in cow-skins, some in cloths and some going stark naked, and (he found there persons) carrying handful of *darbha* for their weapons, and (having) the sacrificial fire-place for their arms; and those bearing in their hands clubs and concealed weapons, or holding rods as their arms, or having a single eye or single complexion, or having a single breast dangling down, and those looking dreadful with uneven attire, and dwarfs frightful to behold, and bowmen and swordsmen, and (warriors) carrying *sataghnis* and clubs for their arms, those bearing excellent *parighas* in their hands, or blazing in curious mail, persons not exceedingly fat, or exceedingly lean; not unduly tall, or unduly short; not extremely fair or extremely dark; not unduly crooked; or unduly dwarfish, and those deformed, or many-formed, or endowed with beauty or possessing splendour, standard bearers, and flag bearers. And (Hanuman) saw also various weapons; and those having for their arms darts and *vrikshas*, or bearing *patticas* and *asanis*, or having *kshepanis* and nooses in their hands, saw that mighty monkey, or wearing wreaths, or having their persons daubed with pastes, or adorned with noble ornaments, or clad in various kinds of raiment, and many a one ranging whither he listed; and those holding sharpened javelins, and mighty ones bearing *vajras* and hundreds and thousands of warriors garrisoned in central courtyard and engaged in vigilantly guarding the interior—having been directed the lord of the Rakshasas saw the monkey. And having seen that edifice situated in front of the inner apartment, that mighty monkey saw the famous mansion of the Rakshasa chief, pinnaced on the mountain-top, with huge golden arches over the gateway; surrounded by a moat enriched with pale lotuses; and completely guarded by a wall; resembling heaven itself, magnificent, resonant with grateful sounds, resounding with the neighing of horses and wondrous steeds, and adorned with cars and vehicles, chariots and dainty horse, elephants and four-tusked elephants resembling masses of white clouds, and possessing graceful gateways. And the

monkey entered the palace protected by the Rakshasa chief, guarded by maddened beasts and birds and thousands of goblins endowed with exceeding great prowess. pp. 598-99. (5.3.27-34)

And the monkey, Hanuman, beheld Lanka, as if moving in the sky, with her walls furnished with daises for her hips, the immense waters and woods for her cloth, *sataghnis* and darts for her hair-ends; and pennons on her walls for ear-rings,—built as if by the agency of the Mind; and constructed by Vicwakarma himself. p. 890. (5.2.14-18)

The city teeming with poisonous snakes,—as well as the method of defence (displayed in it)—the monkey reflected, (5.2.18)—“Even if the monkeys came here, they should fail to achieve success; for Lanka is incapable of being taken in battle by the celestials themselves. Even if the mighty armed Raghava should reach this terrible-looking and impregnable Lanka reared by Ravana, what could he do? Opportunity find I none either for conciliation with the Rakshasas, or for (winning them over) by gifts, or for sowing dissensions among them, or for conquering them in fight. pp. 890-91. (5.2.18-26)

And at dusk, the powerful Hanuman, springing up, entered the charming city of Lanka with its well divided highways; furnished with rows of edifices having golden pillars, and networks,—resembling the metropolis of the Gandharbas. And he saw that splendid city containing seven-storied and eight-storied edifices, studded with crystal and adorned with gold. And the dwellings of the Rakshasas were embellished with these (ornaments). And graceful golden gateways belonging to the Rakshasas everywhere lent splendour unto Lanka adorned all over. Beholding Lanka, wonderful and of inconceivable loveliness, the mighty monkey, desirous of beholding Vaidehi, became depressed and delighted at the same time. And he (entered Lanka) engarlanded with yellow edifices joined together, with the ornamented arches of her gateways furnished with nets of precious gold, famed (all over the world); ruled by the arm of Ravana, and vigilantly guarded by night-rangers of dreadful strength. And as if ministering unto him, the Moon furnished with many thousands of rays arose with the stars in the midst of the sky, spreading lunar light over all creatures. And that

heroic monkey beheld the Moon possessing the sheen of a conch, and hued like milk or the lotus-stalk, arisen and afloat (in the welkin), like a swan swimming in a tank. pp. 592-93. (5.1.47-55)

And the mighty monkey beheld there the great chariot going after the name of *Pushpa*, appearing beautiful, wheeling round in the splendour of the gems—which had surpassed even the care pertaining to the abodes of the celestials. And (in that car) were birds made of lapis lazulis; and (other) birds composed of silver and coral; and variegated serpents made of various precious metals; and fair-bodied steeds resembling those of superior breeds; and there were constructed birds having graceful mouths; and fair, tapering, playful and contracted plumage, bearing blossoms made of coral and gold; like unto the very plumage of Kama himself. p. 908. (5.7.14-17)

Staying in that mansion, that intelligent monkey, the offspring of the Wind-God, beheld that splendid aerial car, beauteous with excellent jewels, and furnished with windows of burnished gold. And the car, embellished with transcendently beautiful figures, —belauded by Vicwakarma—himself as constituting the acme (of his art)—which, mounting the welkin, looked like a mark of the Sun's orbit,—appeared resplendent. p. 909. (5.7.1-2)

In the midst of that mansion the Wind-God's offspring found another, excellently constructed, having innumerable mad elephants;—that noble car embellished with all gems, entitled *Pushpaka* which had been constructed in heaven by Vicwakarma for Brahma himself—which Kuvera obtained from the Great-father through high austerities,—and which vanquishing Kuvera by his powers, the Rakshasa chief got possession of. And the mighty monkey ascended the splendid car *Pushpaka*, containing figures of wolves,—made of *Karttaswara* and *Hiranya*; graced with ranges of goodly pillars, as if blazing in splendour; throughout garnished with narrow secret rooms and saloons, piercing the heavens and resembling Meru or Mandara and like unto the flaming Sun. Skilfully reared by Vicwakarma, with golden staircases and graceful and grand raised seats, rows of golden and crystal windows, and daises composed of sapphires, emeralds and other superb gems, embellished with noble *vidrumas*, costly stones, and round pearls, as also with plastered terraces; pasted

with red sandal, like unto gold, and furnished with a sacred aroma, and resembling the sun new risen. p. 911. (5.7.10-14)

And as the sovereign of the Rakshasas was sleeping, his graceful bed resembled a grand cascade, beside which stands an elephant breathing odour. And Hanuman saw the arms of the huge-bodied lord of Rakshasas, fastened with bracelets. p. 917. (5.8.13-14)

And (Hanuman) beheld (Ravana), with his countenance, aglow with ear-rings and decked with a golden diadem embellished with pearls and jewels, daubed with red sandal; and adorned with an elegant chain; having a large, broad, and full-developed breast; with a white silken cloth on, falling off his person; furnished with blood-red eyes, covered with costly yellow sheets; appearing like a mass of unrighteousness; breathing like a serpent, or an elephant asleep in the mighty Ganga during the rains; four lamps set on the golden pillars illumining four sides; even as lightnings display the entire surface of a mass of clouds. p. 918. (5.8.25-27)

And that tiger-like monkey saw in capacious golden vessels flesh of fowls and peacocks, which remained (after the repast). p. 922. (5.9.12-13)

Then those Rakshasas, going to that subduer of enemies, Ravana, informed him that Rama along with the monkeys had laid siege unto the city. p. 1222. (6.32.1)

And the monkeys crushed golden gateways, and breaking down gates resembling the tops of the summits of Kailasa, bounded roaring, some towards the wall and some all around. p. 1222. (6.32.11-12)

And with meat consisting of many ingredients, fraught with diverse tastes, seasoned with many substances, and dressed by skilful cooks,—arranged separately in the scene of revel; and with noble and pleasant wines, natural and artificial, *asavas* from sugar, and *madhuvika* and *asavas* from flowers. p. 922. (5.9.18-19)

1000-Pillared Hall in Asokavana

And that foremost of monkey beheld in that garden of Asoka, a round palace, situated at a distance, fragrant as the *Gandhamadana* mountain and high as the lord of mountains. (The

palace) was white as the Kailaca hill and built on thousand pillars. All its stairs were made of coral and its pavements made of burning gold. Its beauty was as if burning all along and stealing the vision of the lookers-on. It was spotless and on account of its height touched the welkin. And thereupon he beheld there (Sita) wearing a soiled cloth, poorly, greatly reduced by fast, sighing again and again and encircled by a band of Rakshasees. She was (however) spotless like unto the rays of the moon on the first lunar day. p. 937. (5.13.18-20)

She was greatly reduced by fast, stricken with grief and anxious thoughts, disturbed with sorrow and was poorly and her eyes were always full of tears. p. 937 (5.13.22)

Having the countenance of the full-moon, beautiful eyebrows, round breast, she is as if dispelling the darkness from all quarters by virtue of her grace. p. 938. (5.13.27)

And beholding the forest filled, with flowery trees and desiring to have a full view of her, he, well-nigh, spent the night. And at that late hour of the night, he heard the chantings of the Vedas by the Rakshasas, conversant with the six supplementary parts of the Vedas, engaged in the performance of sacrificial rites and knowing Brahma. p. 946 (5.16.1-2)

And having slain the warders, that one of terrific prowess crowned with a luminous wreath forged from his flaming tail, and appearing like the sun garlanded with glory, once again cast his eyes over Lanka. p. 1049 (5.51.39)

Burnt is this city of Lanka with her turrets, walls, and gateways; and we are astonished that Janaki is not burnt. p. 1056. (5.53.26)

Asokavana

And as I was sorrowing, I saw a mansion with a charming grove encircled by a wall of excellent gold. And leaping over the wall, I saw a grove rife with trees, and (at last) saw in the midst of an *Acoka* wood a great *Sincapa*. And ascending the tree, I saw a golden tract of plantains, and hard by from the *Sincapa* tree I espied that transcendently beautiful one, dark-blue, having eyes resembling lotus-petals, with her face faded in consequence of fasting, clad in the same single piece of cloth, her hair covered with dust. p. 1067. (5.56.48-51)

Lanka and Asokavana

I, ploughing over the main extending over a hundred *yojana*, wended my way and by and by reached Lanka, the capital of the vicious-souled Ravana. Lanka is situated on the southern bank of the southern ocean. And I saw there Sita, in the inner apartment of Ravana. p. 1090. (5.63.8-10)

4. *Defence of Lanka*

Wearing the forms of birds, they entered into the hostile forces; and, having seen the measures that had been adopted (by them, have come back). O Rama, hearken to me as I tell thee truly anent the provisions which they have related, made by the wicked-minded Ravana. In the Eastern gate stayeth Prahasta along with his forces; in the Southern, the exceedingly powerful Mahaparwa and Mahodara and in the Western, Ravana's son Indrajit, supported by innumerable Rakshasas, equipped with patticas, swords, and bows, and bearing darts and maces in their hands,—surrounded by heroes carrying various weapons. And, backed by many thousands of Rakshasas wielding weapons, and accompanied by Rakshasas conversant with counsel, Ravana himself, his heart agitated to the height, guardeth the Northern gate of the city. And Virupaksha with a powerful force accoutred in javelins, clubs and bows, protects the garrison in the centre. p. 1206. (6.28.8-15)

5. *Rama's Defence*

Let that foremost of monkeys, Nila, surrounded by an immense number of monkeys, cope with Prahasta at the Eastern gate of Lanka. And, engirt by a mighty force, let Angada, son of Vali, resist Mahaparwa and Mahodara at the Southern gate (thereof). And let that son of the Wind-God, Hanuman, backed by innumerable monkeys, (beating the host stationed) at the Western gate, find entrance (into the city). I myself, determined to compass the destruction of the lord of Rakshasas, who waxing powerful in consequence of the boon he hath received, hath brought about the destruction of high-souled saints resembling gods and Danavas,—and who goeth round all regions, oppress-

ing people,—will, along with Sumitra's son, smiting (the foe), occupy the Northern entrance, where Ravana with his army is stationed. And let the powerful king of monkeys, and the puissant sovereignty of bears, and the younger brother of the Rakshasas manage the soldiery posted in the centre. p. 1207-8. (6.28.25-31)

6. *Setu* (Bridge)

O mild one, this one is named Nala, son unto Vicwakarma. He hath received a boon from his sire. Vicwakarma's son is well pleased with thee. Let this monkey, surcharged with exuberant spirits, build a bridge over me. I will hold that up. This one is as his sire. p. 1164 (6.15.8-9)

And on rocks being plunged into the waters, the latter, suddenly swelling up, mounted to the welkin, and again subsided.— And (the trees) dropping (into the deep), vexed it all around. And some took lines (for insuring straightness unto the bridge). And at the middle of the lord of rivers and streams, Nala made a grand bridge measuring an hundred *yojanas*. p. 1165. (6.15. 20-21)

The crossing the entire ocean incapable of being crossed, by the monkey-forces, and the building over the sea of the bridge by Rama—all this had never happened before. The construction of a bridge over the ocean cannot at all command credence. p. 1172. (6.16.22)

7. *Nagari Pracharini Patrika* (Hindi), Banaras, year 54, no. 4. (v.s. 2004 and 2006) and another "Valmiki-krite Adi Ramayan" in *Bharati*, Bulletin of the College of Indology, Banaras Hindu University, No. 6, Part I, 1962-63, pp. 105-31.

8. "Ramavanavasani Bhugol and Lanka," *Svadhyaaya* (Gujarati), Vol. 10, (v.s. 2028), pp. 1-23.

9. *Kishkindha*

Let Sugriva enter this magnificent celestial cave and do ye all instal him speedily on the throne. p. 764. (4.25.10)

And the city of Kishkindha, filled with stoutly built people and adorned with pennons and flags, appeared beautiful in the mountain cave. p. 766 (4.25.37)

And getting over the ditch around the city walls, those terrible-looking monkeys stationed themselves openly. p. 787. (4.30.27)

Thereupon, Lakshmana, entered, at the behest of Rama, the pleasant city of Kishkindha situated in the centre of caves. The graceful Lakshmana espied that huge picturesque and celestial cave adorned with jewels and flowery gardens. It was filled with palatial buildings, various jewels and flowery trees, producing at all times wished-for fruits. It was fragrant with the sweet smell of sandal wood, *aguru* and lotuses and its highways were equally fragrant with the smell of honey. And Lakshmana beheld there many spacious buildings like unto the hills Vindhya and Meru and rivers of clear water. And he also surveyed the picturesque dwellings of Angada and others. Permitted by Tara, that long-armed repressor of foes, urged on by (the required) speed, entered the inner apartment. There seated on a superb seat spread with a costly carpet, he found Sugriva resembling the sun himself, his person decked with noble ornaments, of a dignified presence, famous, wearing gay garlands and attire, invincible like unto the great Indra. And surrounded by dames adorned with elegant ornaments and wreaths. Sugriva, with his eyes still more reddened in wreaths, looked like the Destroyer himself. Then deeply embracing Ruma, the large-eyed hero of the hue of fine gold, seated on an excellent seat, saw the powerful Saumitri having expansive eyes. pp. 790-95. (4.32.24.27)

And the wrathful Lakshmana spake unto Sugriva stationed among women, having Ruma for his second, and resembling the moon with the stars. p. 795. (4.33.6)

... filled with rice and jewels and beautiful damsels. Unobstructed the highly powerful Saumitri entered the picturesque abode of Sugriva like unto the Sun entering into a collection of dense clouds. The abode of this lord of monkeys was like unto the palace of the Lord of celestials, ornamented with the tops of white buildings resembling the summits of the Kailaca hill and flowery trees producing at all times. . . . p. 79. (4.32.1-15)

10. *Vali—A True Forester*

Why hast thou then destroyed me, who am a monkey ranging always in the woods, living on fruits and roots and who have come here to fight with another person? p. 738. (4.17.21)

We are, O Rama, wild beasts ranging in the forest and living on roots and fruits—our nature is such—but thou art a man, O king. p. 738. (4.17.26)

11. *Dandakaranya*

रामस्य शरवेगेन निरस्तो भ्रान्तचेतनः ।
पातितो हं तदा तेन गम्भीरे सागरार्भासि ।
प्राप्य संज्ञा चिरान्तान लङ्कां प्रतिगतः पुरीम् ।

अरण्यकांड ३. ३७. १७

Says Marichi, "Struck by the arrow of Rama, I became confused, so that I fell in a deep sea (or pool of water). Regaining consciousness, I went to Lanka."

12. *Ayodhya (Balakanda, 5.5.5-32)**

Coshala by the Soroyou, a land
Smiling at heaven, of riches measureless
An corn abounding glad; in that great country
Ayodhya was, the city world-renowned,
Ayodhya by King Manou built, immense.
Twelve yojans long the mighty city lay
Grandiose, and wide three yojans. Grandly spaced
Ayodhya's streets were and the long highroad
Ran through it spaciouly with sweet cool flowers
Hourly new-paved and hourly watered wide.
Dussarutha in Ayodhya, as in heaven
Its natural lord, abode, those massive walls
Ruling, and a great people in his name
Felt greater,—door and wall and ponderous arch
And market places huge. Of every craft
Engines mechanical and tools there thronged,
And craftsman of each guild and manner. High rang
With heralds and sonorous eulogists
The beautiful bright city imperial.

* Sri Aurobindo's translation.

High were her bannered edifices reared,
With theatres and dancing-halls for joy,
Of her bright daughters, and sweet-scented parks,
Were round and gardens cool. High circling all
The city with disastrous engines stored
In hundreds, the great ramparts like a zone
Of iron spanned in her moated girth immense
Threatening with forts the ancient sky. Defiant
Ayodhya stood, armed, impregnable,
Inviolable in her virgin walls.

14. *The Valmiki Ramayana* (Critical Edition), Oriental Institute, Baroda:

Bhatt, G. H. (ed.), *The Balakanda*, Vol. I, 1960.
Vaidya, P. L. (ed.), *Ayodhyakanda*, Vol. II, 1962.
Divanji, P. C. (ed.), *Aranyakanda*, Vol. III, 1963.
Mankad, D. R. (ed.), *The Kiskindhakanda*, Vol. IV, 1965.
Jhala, G. C. (ed.), *The Sundarakanda*, Vol. V, 1966.
Vaidya, P. L. (ed.), *The Yuddhakanda*, Vol. VI, 1971.

15. *Visvamitra Gets More Astras from Mahadeva*

Still all are rendered ineffective (Balakanda, 1.54.16 ff; 1.55.24) by Vasistha's Brahmadaṇḍa or Brahmastra. (1.55.23)

16. *Vali's Cremation*

Sugriva, do thou perform the funeral ceremonies of Vali along with Tara and Angada. Do thou collect for cremation many a dry fuel and celestial sandal. p. 761. (4.24.13-14)

Let the monkeys dress themselves who can convey this hearse. The powerful and the capable only shall carry Vali. p. 761. (4.24.18)

It was ornamented with excellent ornaments and beautiful garlands, sprinkled with red sandal and skirted with strong ribs. It was covered with flowers and lotus-garlands, crusted with precious clothes and had the colour of the rising Sun. p. 761. (4.24.23)

Let the monkeys go before, scattering many a precious jewel and let the conveyance follow them. p. 762. (4.24.25)

Monkeys, ranging in the forest, made funeral piles on the banks of the hill-streams and in solitary watery nooks. Thereupon laying down from their shoulders the conveyance, those foremost of monkeys stationed themselves in a corner, being stricken with grief. p. 762. (4.24.30-31)

And putting the fire duly, he circumambulated his Sire, bound for a journey for good. Having duly cremated Vali's body the foremost of monkeys arrived at a river of auspicious water with a view to perform the watery ceremony. And all these monkeys along with Sugriva and Tara, placing Angada before them, sprinkled water. p. 763. (4.24.41-42)

17. K. V. Soundara Rajan, "Hindu Epics and Puranic Traditions in South-East Asia", in *India's Contribution to World Thought and Culture*, p. 504, citing *Bulletin de Francaise d'Extreme Orient*, Vol. III, p. 148.

18. On this point Sri Aurobindo had said long ago:

Disciple: Did Rama live, or is he merely the creation of Valmiki?

✓ Sri Aurobindo: There is no ground to believe that Rama is a historical figure.

Disciple: But the account of the conquest and other things?

Sri Aurobindo: Do you believe a king marches to Lanka with an army of monkeys? Valmiki may have taken it from tradition, or from imagination and, created figures which so well suited the Indian temperament that the whole race took them into its consciousness, and assimilated them.

Some even believe that there were Ramayanas before Valmiki's and that even in the Veda you find Rama symbolising the divine and Sita standing for the earth. It also may be that Valmiki brought it over from some Daivic plane to this earth.

✓ Rama might have lived but one cannot say anything definite.

Cf. *Evening Talks with Sri Aurobindo*, Second Series recorded by A. B. Purani, publishers: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, first impression, April 1961, p. 209.

SANSKRIT REFERENCES

All the references are to the Critical Edition

2a. Rama's weapons

ततः शुभतरे तूणी धनुंषीचायतेक्षणा।

ददौ सीता तयोर्भ्रात्रोः खड्गौचविमलौ ततः।। ३.७.१८

Sita's advice to Rama to leave weapons behind. (3.8.1-24)

For ten years stayed in the Dandakaranya. (3.10.25)

Agastya gives divine bow, inexhaustible supply of arrows.

(3.11.29-33)

इदं दिव्यं महच्छापं . . . ।

दत्तो . . . तूणी चाक्षयसायकौ।। ३.११.२६-३०

Thence on to पञ्चवटी देश

अतश्च त्वामहं भूमिं गच्छ पञ्चवटीमिति।

स हि रम्यो वनोद्देशो मँथिली तत्र रंस्यते।। १७

सदेशः श्लाघनीयश्च नातिदूरे च राघव।

गोदावर्याः समीपे च मँथिली तत्र रंस्यते।। १८

(3.12.17.18)

Also 3.14.12 अियं गोदावरी रम्या।

Heré was मधूकानां महद्वनम्।। २१

Here Jatayu comes to meet राम. (3.13.33)

Here Lakshmana built a पर्णशाला. (3.14.21)

Comes शूर्पणखा राक्षसी. (3.16.5)

and Lakshmana cuts off her nose and ears.

Fight with Khara and Dusana. (3.21.19-20)

Khara comes in a chariot, on a royal way bedecked with flowers. (3.22.2)

Sita kept in a cave while Rama fights. (3.23.11)

Rama fights alone, as Lakshmana was with Sita in the cave.

Rama ultimately kills Khara who first loses his chariot and then has to fight with gada. (3.29.1ff)

3a. Lanka

When Khara and Dusana were killed, Surpankha went to Ravana's Lanka.

जगाम परमोद्विवग्ना लङ्का रावणपालिताम् ।। ३.३०.१-११
Ravana was seated on a Vimana made of gold. (3.30.4-5)

Here he is described to have 20 arms and 10 necks (3.30.8)

(विंशद्भुजं दशग्रीवं)

On being guided by Surpankha Ravana gets into a chariot, driven by donkeys, went to Maricha's ashrama, which was beyond the sea (समुद्र). (3.33.6-36)

Ravana beseeches Maricha to help him get Sita.

Maricha tells him that Rama will destroy Lanka.

विनश्येत् पुरी लङ्का त्वया सह सराक्षसा ।। ३.३५.६

Maricha describes his first encounter with Rama in the Dandakaranya, when he tried to defile Vishvamitra's sacrifice and then Maricha says:

तेन मुक्तस्ततो बाणः ।

तेनाह ताडितः क्षिप्तः समुद्रे शतयोजने ।। १६

रामस्य शरवेगेन निरस्तो भ्रान्तचेतनः ।

पातितोऽहं तदा तेन गम्भीरे सागराम्भसि ।

प्राप्य संज्ञां चिरातात लङ्कां प्रतिगतः पुरीम् ।। १७

हर्म्यप्रासादसंबाधां नानारत्न विभूषिताम् ।

द्रक्ष्यसि त्वं पुरीं लङ्कां विनिष्टां मंथिलीकृते ।। २१

Says Ravana to Maricha. (3.38.19)

प्राप्य सीतामयुद्धेन वञ्चयित्वा तु राघवम् ।

लङ्कां प्रतिगमिष्यामि कृतकार्यः सह त्वया ।। १६

Ravana asks Maricha to get into his रथ which was the विमान. (3.40.7)

After crossing पत्तनानि, वनानि, राष्ट्राणि and क्षत्राणि they came to Dandakaranya. But nowhere the crossing of a sea is mentioned.

Lakshmana tells Sita.

राक्षसा विविधा वाचो विसृजन्ति महावने । ३.४३.२१

Ravana (in the guise of mendicant) tells Sita.

राक्षसानामयं वासः कथं नू त्वमिहागता ।। ३.४४.२७

And then Ravana tells Sita who he was, why he wants to abduct her and says. (3.45.25)

लङ्का नाम समुद्रस्य मध्ये मम महापुरी ।
सागरेण परिक्षिप्ता निविष्टा गिरिमूर्धनि ॥ २५

Ravana then describes his exploits (3.46.1ff) he had obtained by force—Kubera's Pushpaka Vimana (3.46.6) and then describes Lanka.

मम पारे समुद्रस्य लङ्का नाम पुरी शुभा । १०
प्राकारेण परिक्षिप्ता पाण्डुरेण विराजिता ।।
हेमकक्ष्या पुरी रम्या वैदूर्यमयतोरणतः ।। ११

And then Ravana after crossing Pampa went towards Lanka. (3.52.5-12)

स च पम्पामतिक्रम्य लङ्कामभिमुखः पुरीम्
जगाम ।

प्रविवेश पुरी लङ्कां सुविभक्तमहापथाम् ।।

And shows Sita forcibly his palace and Lanka. (3.53.6-12)
This description is as in Sundarakanda.

परिक्षिप्ता समुद्रेण लङ्कयं शतयोजना । (३.५३.१६)

Pushpaka Vimana. (3.53.29.30)

Lanka. (Sundarakanda, 5.2.1-55)

स सागरमनाधृष्यमतिक्रम्य महाबलः ।
त्रिकूटशिखरे लङ्का स्थितां स्वस्थो ददर्श ह ॥ ५.२.१
जगाम वेगवांल्लङ्का लङ्घयित्वा महोदधिम् ॥ ३

सरलानू कर्णिकारांश्च खजूरांश्च । ६.१२

अद्यानानि च रम्याणि ददर्श । १३

परिखाभिः सपद्माभिः सोत्पलाभिरलंकृताम् ॥ १४

काञ्चनेनावृतां रम्यां प्राकारेण महापुरीम् ।

अट्टालकशताकीर्णो पताकाध्वजमालिनीम् ।

तोरणैः काञ्चनैः ।

गिरिमूर्धनि स्थितां लङ्कां पाण्डुरैर्भवनैः शुभैः ॥ १६

दीप्तिभिर्बहुभिः शूरेः शूलपट्टिशपाणिभिः ।

रक्षितां राक्षसैर्घोरैर्गुहामाशीवर्षीरव ॥ २१

दप्रप्राकारजघनां विपुलाम्बूनवाम्बराम् ।

शतघ्नीशूलकेशान्तामट्टालकवतंसकाम् ॥ २२

न हि युध्देन वै लङ्का शवया जेतुं सुरैरपि ॥ २४

अस्मां तु विषमां दुर्गां लङ्का रावणपालिताम् ।

प्राप्यापि स महाबाहुः किं करिष्यति राघवः ॥ २६

.....
 प्रविवेश पुरीं रम्यां सुविभक्त महापथाम् ।। ४१
 प्रासादमालाविततां स्तम्भैः काञ्चनराजतैः ।।
 शातकुम्भमयैर्जालैर्गन्धर्वनगरोपमाम् ।। ४८
 सप्तभौमाष्टभौमैश्च स ददर्श महापुरीम् ।
 तलैः स्फाटिकसंकीर्णैः कार्तस्वरविभूषितैः ।। ४९
 वैद्यमणिचित्रैश्च मुक्ताजालविभूषितैः ।
 तलैः शशुभिरे तानि भवनान्यत्र रक्षसाम् ।। ५०
 काञ्चनानि विचित्राणि तोरणानि च रक्षसाम् ।

.....
 अचिन्त्यामद्भुताकारां दृष्ट्वा लङ्का महाकपिः । ५२
 Again in almost identical terms in 5.3.1-10
 तां रत्नवसनोपेतां कोष्ठागारवतंसकाम् ।
 यन्त्रागारस्तनीमृद्धां ।। १८
 Again in 20-26

राजमार्गं समावृत्य स्थितं रक्षोबलं महत् ।
 ददर्श मध्यमे गुल्मे राक्षसस्य चरानू बहून् ।। २७
 दीक्षिताञ्जटिलान्मुण्डानू गोजिनाम्बरवाससः ।
 दर्भमुष्टिप्रहरणाग्निकुण्डायुधास्तथा २८

 परिघोत्तमहस्ताश्च विचित्रकवचोज्ज्वलान् ।। ३०

Again in 5.5.26ff

ददर्श राक्षसेन्द्रस्य रावणस्य निवेशने ।
 शिबिका विविधाकाराः ।। ३३
 लतागृहाणि चित्राणि चित्रशालागृहाणि च ।
 क्रीडागृहाणि ।। ३४

Description of वेश्म and गृह and विमान . 5.6.1-17

पुष्पाह्वयं नाम विराजमानं रत्नप्रभामिश्रं विवर्धमानम् ।
 वेश्मोत्तमानामपि चोच्चमानं महाकपिस्तत्र महाविमानम् ।। ११

.....
 नित्यज्यमानाश्च गजाः सुहस्ताः सकेसरश्चोत्पलपत्रहस्ताः ।
 बभूव देवी च कृता सुहस्ता लक्ष्मीस्तथा पद्मिनि पद्महस्ता ।। १४
 Again in 5.7.1ff

ददर्श
 अर्धयोजनविस्तीर्णमायतं योजनं हि तत् ।
 भवनं राक्षसेन्द्रस्य बहुप्रासादसंकुलम् ।। २
 विमानं पुष्पकं नाम सर्वरत्नविभूषितम् ।
 परेण तपसा लेभे यत्कुबेरः पितामहात् ।
 कुबेरमोजसा जित्वा लेभे तद्राक्षसेश्वरः ।। ११

अीहामृगसभायुक्तैः ।
सुकृतैराचितं स्तम्भैः प्रदीप्तमिव च श्रिया ॥ १२

.....
हैमसोपानसंयुक्तं चारुप्रवरवेदिकम् ॥ १४
जालावातायनैर्युक्तं काञ्चनैः स्फाटिकैरपि ।

.....
विमानं पुष्पकं नाम ।

हैमसोपानसंयुक्तं चारुप्रवरवेदिकम् ॥ १४ ५.७.१०-१४
. आरुरोहं महाकपिः ॥ १५
. शालां ददर्श ।

मुक्ताभिश्च प्रवालैश्च रूप्यचामीकरैरपि ।
विभूषितां मणिस्तम्भैः ॥ २०

Description of women in various positions. (5.8.1ff)
Ravana's harem (*Antahpuram*)

ददर्श शयनासनम् । स्फाटिकं रत्नभूषितम् ।

. . . पाण्डुरं छत्रं । २

. ॥ ४

ददर्श

. शयने वीरं प्रसुप्तं राक्षसाधिपम् ॥ ६

. विक्षप्तौ राक्षसेन्द्रस्य भुजाविन्द्रध्वजोपमौ ॥ १३

. तस्य बाहू शयनसंस्थितौ ॥ १६

पाण्डुरेणापविध्देन क्षौमेण क्षतजंक्षणम् ।

. पीतेनोत्तमवाससा ॥ २५

5.9.1ff

Hanuman enters पानभूमि (Drinking hall)

रौक्रेमेषु च विशालेषु भाजनेषु ॥ १२

शर्करासवमाध्वीकाः पुष्पासवफलासवाः ॥ १६

.....
क्वचिदधाविशेषाणि क्वचिचत्पीतानि सर्वशः ।

क्वचिन्नैव प्रपीतानि पानानि स ददर्श ह ॥ २३

Hanuman had searched for Sita in Ravana's palace and the harems. Now he continues his search. He had searched in

आपानशाला, पुष्पगृह, चित्रशाला, क्रीडागृह, विमानं, भूमिगृह, चैत्यगृह, गृहातिगृहक, opening द्वाराणि, कपाटानि, प्राकारान्तर रथ्या, वेदिका, स्वभा, पुष्पकरिण्यः

Hanuman locates Sita in the अशोकवन (5.13.15).

अशोकवनिकायां ।

स ददर्शिविदूरस्थं चैत्यप्रासादमूर्जितम् ॥ १५

मध्ये स्तम्भसहस्रेण स्थितं कैलासपाण्डुरम् ।
 प्रवालकृतसोपानं तप्तकाञ्चनवेदिकम् ॥ १६
 अप्वासकृशां दीनां ॥ १८
 पीतनैकेन संवीतां क्लिष्टेनोत्तमवाससा ॥ २०

पूर्णचन्द्राननां सूभ्रम् चारुवृत्तपयोधराम् ॥ २७
 सा स्नापयन्ती विपुली स्तनौ (5.23.7)

Sita surrounded by Rakshasis. (5.15.1ff)
 Hanuman describes the first dawn in Lanka.

षडङ्गवेदाविदुषां ऋतुप्रवरयाजिनाम् ।
 शुश्राव ब्रह्मघोषारुच विरात्रे ब्रह्मरक्षसाम् ॥ २ (5.16.1)

and then saw Ravana going to Asokavana. One person held an umbrella, another walked behind with a golden stick (14). Hanuman saw once again in Lanka. (5.51.17-19)

विमानानि विचित्राणि ॥ १७
 संवृतान् भूमिभागांश्च सुविभक्तांश्च चत्वरान् ।
 रथ्याश्च गृहसंबाधाः कपिः शुङ्गाटकानि च ॥ १८
 चत्वरेषु चतुष्केषु राजमार्गे तथैव च ॥
 घोषयन्ति कपिं सर्वे चारीक जिति राक्षसाः ॥ १९

Hanuman burns the whole of Lanka. (5.52.17)

लङ्कां समस्तां संदीप्य लाङ्गुलाग्निं महाकपिः ।
 निर्वापयामास तया समुद्रे हरिसत्तमः ॥ १७

Also in 5.53.5.7 and in 5.56.136

दग्धेयं नगरी लङ्का साट्टप्राकारतोरणा ।
 जानकी न च दग्धति विस्मायो द्भुत ओ व नः ॥ (५.५३.२६)

सीता (5.55.27)

अक्वेणीधरा बाला रामदर्शनलालसा ।
 अप्वासपरिश्रान्ता मलिना जटिला कृशा ॥

Still her breasts were full and round (5.56.57) स्तनौ पीनौ ।
 Hanuman narrates his exploits and describes Asokavana.

(5.56.46ff3)

. मयादृष्टं प्राकारेण समावृतम् ।
 काञ्चनेन विकृष्टेन गृहोपवनमूत्तमम् ॥ ४८
 पर्यामि काञ्चनं कदलीवनम् ॥ ५०

मधुवन (5.60.1.30ff, also 5.62) Vanaras get drunk after consuming (Mahuva wine).

Lanka (5.63.9)

तत्र लङ्कोति नगरी रावणस्य दुरात्मनः ।
 दक्षिणस्य समुद्रस्य तीरे वसति दक्षिणे ॥
 निपीडयाभिप्रवेक्ष्यामि सबलो यत्र रावणः ॥ ३०
 वानरेन्द्रश्च बलवानृक्षराजश्च जाम्बवान् ।
 राक्षसेन्द्रानुजश्चैव गुल्मे भवत् मध्यमे ॥ (६.२८.३०-३१)

Rama and others climb the Suvela hill to look at Lanka.

(6.29.1-18)

तां शुभां प्रवरद्वारां प्राकारवरशोभिताम् ।
 लंकाराक्षससंपूर्णां ददृशुर्हीरयूथपाः ॥ १४

And again in 6.30.1-26.

लङ्कायां ददृशुर्वीरा वनान्युपवतानिच ॥ १
 समसौभ्यानि रम्याणि विशालान्यायतानिच ।

शुक्लंभे

लङ्का अमरावती ॥ ५
 मनसापि दुरारोहं किं पुत्रः कर्मणा जनैः ।
 निविष्टा तत्र शिखरे लङ्का रावणपालिता ॥ २०
 सा पुरी गोपुरैरुच्चैः पाण्डुराम्बुदसंनिभैः ।
 काञ्चनेन च सालेन राजतन च शोभिता ॥ २१
 प्रासादैश्च विमानैश्च लङ्का परमभूषिता ।
 यस्यां स्तम्भसहस्रेण प्रासादः समलंकृतः ।
 कैलासशिखराकारो दृश्यते स्वमिवील्लिखन् ॥ २३
 चैत्यः स राक्षसेन्द्रं बभूव परमभूषणम् ॥
 तां रत्नपूर्णां बहुसंविधानां प्रासादमालाभिरलंकृतां च ।
 पुरीं महायन्त्रकवाटमुख्यां ददर्श रामो महता बलेन ॥ २६
 कैलासशिखराणि गोपुराणि प्रमथ्य च ॥ ६.३२.११

This is also called रावणमन्दिरम् । ६.३२.१.

4a. Ravana organizes the defence of Lanka. (VI.28.8-15)

विधानं विहितं यच्च तदृष्ट्वा समुपस्थिताः ॥ ८
 संविधान यथाहुस्तं रावणस्य दुरात्मनः ।
 ॥ ९
 पूर्वं प्रहस्तः सबलो द्वारमासाद्य तिष्ठति ।
 दक्षिणं च महावीर्यो महापाशर्वमहोदरी ॥ १०
 अिन्द्रजित्पाशिमद्वारं राक्षसैर्बहुभिवृतः ।
 पट्टसासिधनुष्यद्भिः शूलमुद्गरपाणिभिः ॥ ११
 नानाप्रहरणैः शूरैरावृतो रावणात्मजः ।
 राक्षसानां सहस्रेस्तु बहुभिः शस्त्रपाणिभिः ॥ १२

युक्तः परमसंविग्नो राक्षसैर्बहुभिर्वृतः ।
 अत्तरं नगरद्वारं रावणः स्वयमास्थितः ॥ १३
 विरूपाक्षस्तु महता शूलखड्गधनुष्मता ।
 बलेन राक्षसैः सार्धं मध्यमं गुल्ममास्थितः ॥ १४

5a. *Rama's counter-defence* (VI.28.25-31)

पूर्वद्वारे तु लङ्काया नीलो वानरपुंगवः ।
 प्रहस्तं प्रतियोध्वा स्याद्वानरैर्बहुभिर्वृतः । २५
 अङ्गदो बालिपुत्रस्तु बलेन महतावृतः ।
 दक्षिणे बाधतां द्वारे महापार्ष्वमहोदरौ ॥ २६
 हनुमान्पश्चिमद्वारं निपीडय पवनात्मजः । २७
 अत्तरं नगरद्वारमहं सीमित्रिणा सह ॥ ३०

6a. *Setu* (6.15.8ff)

अयं सौम्य नलो नाम तनूजो विश्वकर्मणः ॥ ७
 अेष सेतुं महोत्साहः करोतु मयि वानरः ।
 तमहं धारयिष्यामि तथा ह्येष यथा पिता ॥ ९
 दशयोजनविस्तीर्णं शतयोजनमायतम् ।
 नलश्चक्रे महासेतुं मध्ये नदनदीपतेः ॥ २०
 शिलानां क्षिप्यमाणानां शैलानां तत्र पात्यताम् ॥ २१ ६.१५.९.२१
 समग्रं सागरं तीर्णं दुस्तरं वानरं बलम् ।
 अभूत्पूर्वं रामेण सागरे सेतुबन्धम् ॥ ६.१६.१२

9a. *किष्किन्धा* (4.25.10ff)

सुसमध्दां गुहां दिव्यां सुग्रीवो ।
 प्रविष्टो विधिवद्वीरः ॥ १०
 बभूव नगरी रम्या किष्किन्धा गिरिगह्वरे ॥ ३७
 तामपश्यद्बलाकीणां हरिराजमहापुरीम् ।
 दुर्गाम् किष्किन्धां गिरिसंकटे ॥ १६ ४.३०.१६
 ततस्तं हरयः सर्वे प्राकारपरिखान्तरात् ।
 निष्क्रम्यादश्रत्त्वास्तु । २७ ४.३०.२७
 प्रविवेश गुहां घोरां किष्किन्धां । ४.३२.१
 द्वारस्था हरयस्तत्र महाकाया महाबलाः ॥ २

 स तां रत्नमयीं श्रीमान् दिव्यां पुष्पितकाननाम् ।
 रम्यां रत्नसमाकीर्णां ददर्श महतीं गुहाम् ॥ ४
 हर्म्यप्रासादसंबाधां नानापण्योपशोभिताम् ।

 मरैयानां मधूनां च संमोदितमहापथाम् ।
 विन्ध्यमेरु गिरिप्रस्थैः प्रासाद्वेनेकभूमिभिः ॥

अतेषां कपिमुख्यानां राजमार्गे महात्मनाम् ।
 ददर्श गृहमुखानि महासाराणि लक्ष्मणः ॥ १८

 प्रभूतधनधान्यानि स्वरत्नैः शोभितानि च ॥ १३

 वानरेन्द्रगृहं रम्यं महेन्द्रसदनोपमम् ॥ १४
 शुक्लैः प्रासादशिखरैः कैलासशिखरोपमैः ॥ १५

 हरिभिः संवृतद्वारं बलिभिः शस्त्रपाणिभिः ।
 दिव्यमाल्यावृतं शुभ्रं तप्तकाञ्चनतोरणम् ॥ १७
 सुग्रीवस्य गृहं रम्यं प्रविवेश महाबलः ।
 अवार्यमाणः सौमित्रिर्महाभ्रमिव भास्करः ॥ १८
 स सप्त कक्ष्या धर्मात्मा यानासनसमावृतः ।
 प्रविश्य सुमहद्गुप्तं ददर्शान्तःपुरं महत् ॥ १९
 हेमराजतपर्यङ्कैर्बहुभिश्च वरासनैः ।
 महार्हास्तरणोपेतैस्तत्र तत्रोपशोभितम् ॥ २०
 बह्वीश्च विविधाकारा रूपयौवनगर्विताः ।
 स्त्रियः सुग्रीवभवने ददर्श स महाबलः ॥ २२

 ततः सुग्रीवमासीनं काञ्चने परमासने ॥
 ॥ २५
 प्रमदाभिः समावृतम् ॥ २६
 रूमां तु वीरः परिरम्य गाढं
 वरासनस्थो ॥ २७
 ऋत्पपात हरिश्रेष्ठो हित्वा सौवर्णमासदम् ।
 रूमाद्वितीयं सुग्रीवं नारीमध्यगतं स्थितम् ।
 अङ्गवील्लक्ष्मणः क्रुद्धः सतारं प्रशाशिनं यथा ॥ ७

४. ३२. २७

४. ३३. ३

४. ३३. ६

11a. *Dandakaranya* (3.36.1ff)

Marichi's Story, as related to Ravana.

कदाचिदप्यहं ।
 ॥ १
 व्यचरं दण्डकारण्यमृषिमांसानि भक्षयन् ॥ २
 अयं रक्षतु मां रामः पर्वकाले समाहितः ।
 मारीचान्मे भयं घोरं समुत्पन्नं नरेश्वर ॥ ४

 बालोप्येष महातेजाः समर्थस्तस्य निग्रहे ॥ ७

 तेन मुक्तस्ततो बाणः शितः शत्रुनिबर्हणः ।
 तेनाहं ताडितः क्षिप्तः समुद्रे शतयोजने ॥ १६

पातिताऽहं तदा तेन गम्भीरे सागराम्भसि ।
प्राप्य संज्ञां चिरात्तात लंकां प्रतिगतः पुरीम् ॥ १७

12a. *Ayodhya* (Balakanda, 1.5.5ff)

कोसलो नाम जनपदो महान् ।
निविष्टः सरयूतीरे प्रभूतधनधान्यवान् ॥ ५
अयोध्यानाम नगरी ।
मनुना मानवेन्द्रेण या पुरी निर्मिता स्वयम् ॥ ६
आयता दश च द्वे च योजनानि महापुरी ।
श्रीमती त्रीणि विस्तीर्णा सुविभक्तमहापथा ॥ ७
राजमार्गेण महता सुविभक्तेन शोभिता ।
मुक्तपुष्पावकीर्णैर्न जलसिक्तेन नित्यशः ॥ ८
तां तु राजा दशरथो महाराष्ट्रविवर्धनः ।
पुरीमावासयामास दिवि देवपतिर्यथा ॥ ९
कपाटतोरणवती सुविभक्तान्तरापणाम् ।
सर्वयन्त्रायुधवतीमुपेतां सर्वांशिल्पिभिः ॥ १०

.....
अच्चाट्टालध्वजवती शतघ्नीशतसंकुलाम् ॥ ११
वधूनाटकसंयुक्तां सर्वतः पुरीम् ।
अुद्यानाप्रवनोपेतां महतीं सालमेखलाम् ॥ १२
दुर्गाम्भीरपरिधां

दुर्गामिन्यदुरासदाम् ।

वाजिवारणसंपूर्णा गोभिरुष्ट्रैः खरैस्तथा ॥ १३

.....
प्रासादैः पर्वतरूपशोभिताम् ।
कूटागारैश्च संपूर्णाभिन्द्रस्येवामरावतीम् ॥ १५
..... विमानगृहशोभिताम् ॥ १६
शालितण्डुलसंपूर्णाभिक्षुकाण्डरसोदकाम् ॥ १७

13a. *Rama as Visnu* (Balakanda, 1.15.1ff)

ततो नारायणो विष्णुर्नियुक्तः सुरसत्तमैः ॥ १

मानुषीं तनुमास्थाय रावणं जहि संयुगे ॥ ३

.....
कौसल्याजनयद्रामं दिव्यलक्षणसंयुतम् ।
विष्णौरर्धं महाभागं पुत्रमिश्वाकुण्डनम् ॥ १.१७.६

15a. *Rama gets Astras from Visvamisra* (Balakanda, 1.26.1ff)

जपत्स्तु मुनेस्तस्य विश्वामित्रस्य धीमतः
अपतस्थुर्महार्हाणि सर्वाण्यस्त्राणि राघवम् ॥ २२

.....
 बिमे स्म परमोदार किंकरास्तव राघव ।। २३
 प्रतिगृह्य च काकुत्स्थः समालभ्य च पाणिना ।
 मानसा मे भविष्यध्वमिति तान्यभ्यचोदयत् ।। २४

16a. Vali's cremation (4.21.11)

संस्कारयो हिरराजस्तु अद्दश्चाभिषिच्यताम् ।।
 (4.24.13ff)

कुरु त्वमस्य सुग्रीव प्रेतकार्यमनन्तरम् ।
 ताराङ्गदाभ्यां सहितो वालिनो दहनं प्रति ।। १३
 समाज्ञापय काष्ठाणि शुष्काणि च बहूनि च ।
 चन्दनानि च दिव्यानि वालिसंस्कारकारणात् ।। १४

.....
 सज्जीभवन्तु प्लवगाः शिबिकावाहनोचिताः ।
 समर्था बलिनाश्चैव निर्हरिष्यन्ति वालिनम् ।। १८

.....
 आरोप्य शिबिकां चैव वालिनं गतजीवितम् ।
 अलंकारैश्च विविधै माल्यैवस्त्रैश्च भूषितम् ।। २३

.....
 अग्रतः प्लवगा यान्तु शिबिका तदनन्तरम् ।। २५

.....
 चितां चक्रुः सुबहवा वानरा वनचारिणः ।। ३०
 अवरोप्य ततः स्कन्धाच्छिबिकां वहनोचिताः ।

.....
 ततो गिनं विधिवद्दत्त्वा सो पसव्यं चकारह ।

.....
 संस्कृत्य वालिनं ते तु विधिपूर्वं प्लवंगमाः ।
 आजगमुरुदकं कर्तुं नदीं शीतजलां शुभाम् ।। ४२

.....
 सुग्रीवतारासहिताः सिषिचुर्वालिने जलम् ।। ४३

Lecture II

THE RAMAYANA—A REALITY

If we have to prove that the Ramayana—the main story—is a reality, had actually happened, then it has to be shown that the main actors—Rama, Dasharatha, Sita, Janaka, Vali, Hanuman and Ravana, and the various important places or sites associated with them—did exist, and that too at a particular time, and that the main story—the exile of Rama, abduction of Sita and her recovery from Ravana—could have normally taken place in a certain geographical setting.

THE HISTORICITY OF RAMA

•

Rama was an illustrious descendant of the Ikshvaku dynasty with its capital at Ayodhya. For this statement though there is no contemporary (historical) record, still this fact is vouchsafed by all the Puranas and early Jain and Buddhist traditions which are not later than the 3rd century B.C. It is true however that there is no clear, unambiguous reference to Rama in the early and late Vedic literature, though Janaka, a king of Videha, figures often in the Upanishadas.

Likewise besides Ayodhya, Mithila, Kausambi, Kanyakubja are all well known places and the history of these places, though not fully laid bare archaeologically, might be as old as 800 B.C. at least.

Here I would say that excavations at Ayodhya are urgently necessary. When I visited the site, I found not one, but numerous mounds, named after the various personalities in the Ramayana. There is also a mound overlooking the river, which is being rapidly eroded.

During this brief visit, very brief indeed, because we reached there from Banaras at 3 p.m. and left the site at 5 p.m., we were lucky to find potsherds of the Painted Grey Ware.¹ This is a pottery fabric which has been found at numerous places in North Rajasthan and at Kayatha near Ujjain in M.P. and in the Punjab in the north. It also occurs throughout the U.P. and reaches up to the Nepal Terai in the east. The date of its occurrence may be fixed between 800 B.C. and 400 B.C. and taking the uppermost limit, we can say that the antiquity of Ayodhya, and other places said to be contemporary to it, might go back to this period, that is 800 B.C. This date might be taken back still further, if the deepest layers of Ayodhya, Mithila, Kausambi yield the Ochre-coloured Ware (OCP), and dated to about 1700 B.C.²

FOUNDATION OF AYODHYA

Thus the foundation of Ayodhya and other sites in U.P. and Bihar might be placed provisionally to about 1500 B.C. I would say that this is not all archaeological speculation. Excavations at Chirand, on the confluence of the Ganga and the Ghoghra, have yielded evidence which places the beginning of a pastoral-cum-early-agricultural life, subsisting on rice, fishing and hunting, and going back to 2000 B.C. And Ayodhya is described in the Ramayana as having store-houses of rice, though this reference is very probably late, and might not belong to the earliest phase of the city.

Assuming that the foundation of Ayodhya could have taken place about 1500 B.C. or latest 1000 B.C., could it have developed into a city as described in the Ayodhya and Balakanda of the Ramayana? In the face of the Indus (and now also pre-Indus) cities in Sind, Punjab, Baluchistan and Kutch it would not be right to make a categorical statement and say

that no city, large or small, could have existed in the Ganga-Yamuna plains. Here again, our want of planned, problem-oriented excavations is responsible for our total ignorance. For a horizontal excavation at sites like Ayodhya, Vaisali, Kausambi, Ahichhatra would surely have given us a factual picture of the development of the city-life before and after Buddha. In fact we have no evidence at all of this kind, even for the Maurya, Sunga, Kushana and Gupta periods. I am therefore obliged to speculate on the slender evidence supplied by the Ramayana. It is my belief that the descriptions of Ayodhya, Kishkindha and Lanka, as available in the Critical Edition, are those of the cities which were built between the Kushana and Gupta periods, that is between A.D. 100 and A.D. 400. It is possible that some of the descriptions, particularly that of Ayodhya, might go back to the 3rd or 4th century B.C. as at that time we had fortified cities with houses, having a few floors and terraces. This inference may also be deduced from the extant sculptures at Sanchi and Bharhut.

EARLIEST HOUSES AT AYODHYA OF MUD

The single reference in the Ramayana to which I made a reference above is to my mind very significant. We are told that when Kaushalya learnt of Rama's exile, she fainted and fell down on the floor and her body was covered with dust.³ ^{3a} But if this floor was made of brick or made with stones, as the palaces are supposed to be, how or why there should be dust on the floor? I think this small, insignificant detail, overlooked by the poet, possibly gives us a clue to the real nature of the original houses at Ayodhya. These houses, though big, should be of mud or mud-brick, as have been exposed in our excavations outside the Indus civilization. These houses might have had a stone plinth, as at Ahar and Somnath, if stone was easily available. But the walls were invariably made of mud supported by a split bamboo frame and the roof was thatched. Where modern civilization has not penetrated the villages, such houses can be seen and are still in a majority all over India. Huts in villages near about Ayodhya are built in this way.

RAMA'S JOURNEY OF DANDAKARANYA

Though there is no archaeological evidence, on the strength of the early historical literature (see here map), from the Hindu and Buddhist sources, we should accept the fact that Rama lived at Ayodhya and that he left this city with Sita and Lakshmana for the south and then to Dandakaranya. The route of Rama's journey from Ayodhya to Chitrakuta, south of Prayaga—Allahabad can be very accurately plotted.⁴ In fact it has never been in dispute.

SATKARA IN BHARADVAJA ASHRAMA

But what does not seem to have struck the editors of the Ramayana and all the earlier scholars is the extreme impropriety of the reception (*satkara*) given by sage Bharadvaja to Bharata, his three widowed mothers and to his army in his *ashrama* on the south bank of the river.^{5 5a}

1000 POTS OF WINE

With this we should also consider the passage, fortunately deleted in the Critical Edition, where Sita promises to offer 1000 pots of wine to the river Kalindi, if she is safely allowed to cross this extremely broad river.^{6 6a}

These two incidents and the way they appear in the editions of the Ramayana help us date these editions more precisely. I will return to this point later. Let us now follow Rama to Dandakaranya.

DANDAKARANYA —WRONG IDENTIFICATION

Wrong identification of Dandakaranya and the sites mentioned within it have led to all the subsequent inferences, the most important being that when Sita was kidnapped from Panchavati near Nasik, Rama and Lakshmana during their search contacted the Vanaras and then marching across the whole of South India and after building a bridge on the Indian Ocean at Rameshvaram invaded Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and killed Ravana and most of his family, and rescued Sita.

Those who have read Ramayana in the original carefully have come to the conclusion that all these inferences are unwarranted.

LANKA IN THE VINDHYA HILLS

But the mistake started with the wrong identification of the river Godavari, and Dandakaranya. The Ramayana clearly mentions that they were within easy reach of the hill Chitrakuta.⁷ Here were Panchavati, Rishyamuka, Pampa, Kishkindha and Lanka. And above all Ramayana repeatedly tells us that all these were within the Vindhya hills and forests, the most remarkable thing being the fact that the river Narmada which flows south of the Vindhya, almost across the heart of India, is not once mentioned, except in the much later interpolated sargas in the Kishkindhakanda, wherein Sugriva gives instructions to Vanara chiefs how and where to seek Sita. These facts are extremely important, nay crucial, for the correct identification of Lanka. Now a few scholars like Dr Hiralal,⁸ Dr Ramadas,⁹ Sardar Kibe and Paramasiva Iyer have by a very detailed study of the Ramayana, particularly the instructions given by Sugriva to Hanuman and other Vanaras as to how and where to search for Sita, in the nooks and corners of the Vindhya hills and forests, coupled with the movements of Ravana as described by Suparshva in the Aranyakanda, have shown that all these places including Lanka, were situated south of Chitrakuta and north of the Narbada. This is the region formed by the Chota Nagpur Plateau and now shared by the eastern M.P., western Orissa, West Bengal and South Bihar. Hiralal and others tell us that there was a small river Godavari about 11 miles south of Chitrakuta. It has now disappeared. With the Godavari so located and as also Dandakaranya other places can be easily identified.

RAVANA, A GOND KING

Ramadas's important contribution was to show that Ravana and his kith and kin were ordinary human beings

and Ravana had only one head, two arms and two feet.^{10 10a} He further tells us that most probably Ravana belonged to the Gond tribe,¹¹ amongst whom Ravana is still regarded in high esteem, as a king, and that the word 'Lanka' means, 'a high place', 'an island', 'the home of the king'.¹² This was further confirmed, very accidentally, by Sri V. S. Patwardhan.¹³ He has spent his whole life as a Forest Ranger in the forests of Chanda (Chandrapur) which was formerly in M.P. He told me that Gonds call all important places as 'Lakka' (not Lanka). Thus the view that Ravana and other Rakshasas were in truth an aboriginal tribe, most probably the Gonds, and the Vanaras belonged to other tribes such as the Savaras and Korkus seems to be justified.

Sardar Kibe¹⁴ then proposed to identify Lanka with the Amarkantak plateau, whereas Paramasiva Iyer¹⁵ by very intelligent study of the topographical maps prepared by the Survey of India proposed to identify Lanka on the Trikuta hill and the Suvela hill on which Rama had encamped with his Vanara army, with the hills facing each other, and situated about 15 or 16 miles north of Jabalpur. (See map, Fig 1.) The hill on which Lanka was situated is locally called Indrana. He also pointed out that the Sagara regarded as a sea or ocean in the Ramayana and 100 yojanas in extent was indeed a small lake or a river which could be forded with some difficulty by Ravana and Hanuman. The lake according to one calculation of a yojana would not be more than 11½ miles wide, because a yojana is just a dhanussata (a hundred bow length) or 200 yards.

All this work had been done some 30 or 40 years ago. When I took up the problem and read and reread the Critical Edition of the Ramayana, not only was I convinced of the proposed identification of Hiralal, Ramdas, Sardar Kibe and Paramasiva Iyer but independently of their views (because these views I came to consult later), I had found that the sala trees formed an important clue in the identification of the Dandakaranya and even Lanka. Just consider the following:

SIGNIFICANCE OF SALA TREES

Rama proves his prowess and capacity to kill Vali by shooting 7 sala trees with one arrow.^{16 16a} In any fight between the Vanaras and Rakshasas or amongst the Vanaras themselves the Vanaras invariably uproot a sala tree for a fight and use it as a stick. Secondly, when Hanuman's rampage in Lanka was ultimately checked by Indrajit, Ravana's eldest son, by tying him with the magical and invisible Brahmastra, then other Rakshasas in their ignorance tried to tie him more securely with *sana*, *chira* and other natural fibres.¹⁷ These two facts immediately suggested to me the locale of Lanka and Dandakaranya. For these occur so naturally, and the sala trees figure so frequently in the Chota Nagpur plateau that the composer—Valmiki or anybody else could not ignore their presence, even though he placed Lanka beyond the sea where no sala trees ever grew.

Hence, I tried to find the habitat of the sala forest. At this time (1968) I had just been to the Chota Nagpur area and had previously seen the sala forest at Amarkantak, thus I could think of no other area than this. Later, a study of the botanical literature showed that the sala—*shorea robusta*—grew in the Chota Nagpur plateau only and nowhere else. Thus Nasik in Maharashtra, Dang forest in south Gujarat, and the Bellary region in Andhra-Karnataka were automatically ruled out. Lanka has had to be somewhere in the Chota Nagpur plateau. For this we must find linguistic, ethnographic and archaeological evidence. As I have shown if the Ramayana is carefully studied, then it provides all the geographical data to locate Lanka in this region. And this identification is supported by ethnographic and linguistic evidence. Lanka or Lakka is a Mundari word, and so also Ravana.

As against this positive evidence the older view which has traditionally sought to identify Lanka with Ceylon (now officially called Sri Lanka) has very little to offer. Briefly, though the Malaya mountains have to be or might be identified with the hill ranges in Mysore or Kerala, Mahendra and Vindhya cannot be. There are no two Vindhya ranges and one cannot conceive of Vindhya hills in South India!

CEYLON AND RAMESHWARAM

Secondly, the area around Rameshwaram is flat with low sandy mounds. Not a single piece of stone can be found there with which Rama and his Vanara bands could have built a causeway. Even trees are rare. What is believed to be remnant of a stone causeway—Setu—built by Rama is nothing but the tops of ancient ridge or ridges which are now proved to have extended towards Australia. These facts were revealed by depth charges and other oceanographic studies during the geophysical year of 1964.¹⁸

The distance between Rameshwaram and Ceylon is so much that nobody can think of building a bridge, if one actually sees the place. However, once the poet thought of *sagara* as sea, he has used all the synonyms like *lavana-ambhasa*, thus making it certain that a real sea is meant and not a large sheet of water, or a fresh water lake. Hence a layman or a scholar could not think of anything else than an island in the sea!

Ancient name of Ceylon

The ancient or early historical name of the island of Ceylon in inscriptions and literature is 'Simhala-dwipa',¹⁹ and in foreign travellers' accounts as Taprobane (Tamraparni).²⁰ The name Lanka is not known earlier than inscriptions of the 10th century A.D.²¹

In Ceylon itself the Ramayana—Rama's story—is not so popular, though some places are associated with Asokavana. Though the name of Lanka for Ceylon is not very old, the name as pointed out above is a Gondi word. It also probably exists in other Austro-Asiatic languages and means 'an island', 'a high elevated place', and hence it has been accepted in preference to Simhala, which is also at least 2000 years old.

Lanka and early Buddhist monuments in India

Lastly, in Ceylon (or Sri Lanka) itself, there are no monuments which answer to the description of Lanka given in

Sundarakanda of the Ramayana. Pushpaka and other places with beautiful pillars and pillar capitals, architraves adorned with young women (*shalabhanjika*), with elephants and fanciful animals (*ihamriga*), as Dr Sivaramamurti pointed out with great perspicacity, more than thirty-four years ago may be found in the sculptures at Bharhut, Sanchi, Jaggayapeta, Amaravati and cave 3 at Nasik.²² (See Figs. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

Both the epics—the Ramayana and the Mahabharata—have them, and this shows these epics seem to have in view the monuments created all over India by the rapid spread of Buddhism. Therefore these portions of both the epics are not older than or might be dated between the 2nd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D. One may go further and say that the repeated descriptions of Ravana's palace in the Sundarakanda, particularly women lying in all sorts of positions after the night's revelry—had for its model the architraves of the stupas at Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda. Here excavations have laid bare the ruins of a Roman amphitheatre and other structures. There could well be the *kridagrihas* (amphitheatre) and *apanhgrihas* (drinking houses) of Lanka. To me the more appropriate and correct inference is to say that the epics have based their descriptions on the existing monuments.

There are other independent proofs to prove that all these portions of both the epics were composed at this period or even later.

Gopuram in Lanka

I think the reference to the tall gopuram in Lanka should be a comparatively late interpolation in the Ramayana. In fact, the whole of the Sundarakanda and many sargas in the Kishkindhakanda from a hypercritical point of view, that is the point of view which questions not the propriety of a reading, but the very occurrence of incidents, persons—seems to be a later composition. For, though the word 'gopura', meaning an entrance to a village or a city, is as old as the 1st and 2nd century B.C., still as a term standing for tall *sikharas* of gates to temples, as now used in South India—is certainly late, not earlier than the 6th-7th century A.D.^{22a}

Lanka, not Ceylon

Thus to my mind the location of Lanka in the island of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) or any other island in South-East Asia has been based on the uncritical reading of the Ramayana and without taking into consideration the geographical, linguistic, ethnographic and archaeological evidence.

RAMA IN PLACE AND PERSONAL NAMES FROM
INSCRIPTIONS OF SOUTH INDIA ✓

There is one more source of evidence. This is the study of place and personal names in inscriptions of South India, say the Pallava, Chola and early Pandya. Our aim here should be to ascertain how many place names have 'Rama' as the first part of the name. My feeling is that places like Rameshwaram are comparatively very late. At the Deccan College two of my pupils have studied the place and personal names from the Pallava and early Chola records.²³ This study shows that there are no personal names after Rama in the Pallava records, whereas in the early Chola records there are not more than four. The Pandya records yet remain to be similarly examined.

RAMA AS GOD ✓

And among the gods and goddesses Rama does not figure at all, Siva is most prominent, then comes Visnu and other indigenous gods and goddesses.

Rama temples and panels depicting Ramayana scenes

This question of the introduction and popularity of Rama worship may also be examined by mapping the distribution of (a) Rama temples, (b) temples having Ramayana panels in different parts of India. Though I have not studied this problem as thoroughly as it should be, from my general knowledge, I would say at present that though Visnu worship became popular under the Early Guptas (c. A.D. 350), as yet Rama was not worshipped as god or as Visnu. However his

exploits were now familiar and these are found portrayed in sculptures on the walls of early Gupta temples at Devghar, Nachuakuthar, Bhita and other places in eastern M.P. and western U.P. (See Fig.). And if the small terracotta plaques from Kosambi do portray Sita's kidnapping by Ravana as interpreted by some scholars,²⁴ then we have additional archaeological proof that the story was known by this time. Four or five centuries afterwards there are found sculptures in the Chalukya temples at Pattadakal in Karnataka. Rama appears to be unknown or not so popular to the Pallavas who were familiar with the Mahabharata, as some of the scenes such as Arjuna's penance are depicted at Mahabalipuram near Madras.

The early Cholas, the successors of the Pallavas, do not yet seem to have taken to Rama worship, but it was not far now. Soon after we have some of the finest Chola bronzes portraying Rama and Sita. This sketch of the development of the Rama worship, if confirmed by detailed mapping, will establish conclusively the point I am making here, viz that the Rama worship is of a considerable late date and in South India not earlier than the 10th century A.D.²⁵

✓ RAMAYANA IN TAMIL NADU

The view here put forward is also corroborated by the fact that by the 7th century A.D. the Ramayana, as known in the north, was sung by a Saivite Saint Jnanasambandar in his Devaram hymns. It is also at this time that the temple of Rameshwaram was probably first built, because according to the saint it was built by Rama to expiate the sin of killing Ravana. I am informed that the present temple is late, it stands on the ruins of a small 8th-9th century temple. However, this is a much later tradition, and does not figure in any form in the Valmiki Ramayana.

Two centuries later the Ramayana stories are found sculptured in the Nagesvara temple at Kumbakonam, Sadaiyar Koil, etc. These are small.²⁶ (See figs. 12, 13.)

Rama in Sangam literature

A glance through the Sangam literature which is in Tamil and dated to a period between the first century B.C. and sixth century A.D. also shows the total absence of reference to Rama, particularly as god,²⁷ though it refers to Lanka as *Ilankai*.

The gradual spread, first of the Mahabharata and then of the Ramayana into the Deccan, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, shows the slow absorption by the society, high and low, of certain ethical values which were then cherished and which some of us cherish even now. It has nothing to do with Arayanization because nobody deliberately tried to propagate a particular cult (as it is still being done by some people under various guises), but the stories when recited as *Hari-kirtanas* appealed to the people and the rulers. These were first depicted on the temple walls and later its hero and heroine worshipped. Simultaneously places all over India came to be associated with episodes in the Ramayana. This constant, oral repetition of the story helped its phenomenal growth, inflation, because every kirtankara has an opportunity to add spices to the story.

THE RING EPISODE IN RAMAYANA

In this connection the ring episode, I think, is the most important. As in Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* this is crucial to the present Ramayana. It appears first at the end of the Kish-kindha and then again in the Sundarakanda.^{28a} This itself shows that there is a genetic relationship between these two kandas and both must have been composed by one person.

The story is briefly this: When Hanuman is being given detailed instructions to search for Sita in the Vindhya and the south, he asks Rama to give him something on the production of which Sita will recognize that he (Hanuman) had come from Rama himself. Some very personal object was necessary and Rama gives him his finger-ring bearing the name 'Rama' and as Hanuman had anticipated Sita asks Hanuman

to prove his *bona fides* and he immediately produces the finger-ring. With this passport Hanuman's way becomes easy.

This ring episode is quite necessary from the point of view of the development of the plot as conceived by Valmiki. But an archaeologist would inquire how did Hanuman acquire a ring bearing the letters 'Rama'? For as far as we know, all the earlier rings in India, from about 2500 B.C. to the first century B.C., are all simple, round wires of copper, bronze or terracotta (those of gold seemed to have disappeared). (See Fig. 11.) No ring, except the one from Harappa, has a bezel, i.e. a flat broad space on which the name can be inscribed. So all these early rings are without any name. Signet rings, i.e. rings bearing the wearer's name, usually of a king, were first introduced by the Indo-Greeks who ruled in North-Western India, at times up to Kausambi in the latter part of the second century and early part of the first century B.C. This being the origin of the signet finger-ring in India, its use in the Ramayana and even *Shakuntala* by Valmiki and Kalidasa respectively should be normally a century or two later. This episode helps to fix the date of the present Ramayana much more precisely than the various decorative sculptures in the Pushpaka and other palaces in Lanka.

SITA'S VASTRA (OR SILK SARI)

The same precise conclusion we may draw from Sita's sari. Sita alone among all the persons who figure in the Ramayana wears a *Kausheya vastra*—silk cloth (*vastra*) (*sari*).^{29 29a} All others—men and women, kings and queens—wear clothes of *kshauma*, which is generally translated as cotton or linen. It is significant that this sari, the colour of which is not specified in the Ayodhyakanda, is said to be *pita* (yellow) in the Aranya and all later kandas. This specification, I think, is deliberate, because the poet wanted to heighten the effect when Sita was being whisked away through the air and this yellow sari glistened in the sunlight and the poet expressly says so.^{30 30a}

Now it is well known that Chinese silk was a craze among the Romans and was transported to them through India in the early centuries of the Christian era. In India itself Chinese silk was introduced at this time. However, Kautilya refers to silk (*Chinapatta*) and China (*Chinabhumi*) both and if the Arthasastra is dated earlier we might say that the Ramayana reference would go back to the 2nd-3rd century B.C.³¹

First the ring and then the silk help to fix the date of the composition of a certain portion of the Ramayana to a period not earlier than 1st century B.C.-A.D. These are also the dates suggested by Sita's offer of 100 pots of wine to the Kalindi river and the *satkara* by Sage Bharadvaja to Bharata, his three widowed mothers and his fourfold army. A goat is killed and wine offered in many aboriginal, non-Aryan societies. These customs are reflected in the Atharva Veda and later Tantric works. These are still current today. But the offer of 100 pots of wine is indeed intriguing. Though this particular verse is now omitted from the reconstituted text of the Critical Edition, its occurrence in several versions of the Ramayana only indicates the popularity of the custom. When may such a custom arise? When certain wines were becoming popular but difficult to obtain and so its offer would entail some extra labour or cost to the devotee and so its fulfilment would be believed to bestow merit (*punya*).

SATKARA (RECEPTION) IN BHARADVAJA'S ASHRAMA

The scene in the Bharadvaja Ashrama is very interesting and significant, for the light it throws on our society. When Bharata with the entire retinue crossed the Triveni at Prayaga, sage Bharadvaja who had his ashrama on the southern bank (a site is still there at Allahabad and might indicate how much the river has now receded) invited him to stay in his ashrama before he proceeded to Chitrakuta where Rama lived. Instead of offering Bharata a fare suitable to his status and the occasion which was far from pleasant, he

thought of offering a royal reception and with his *mantrabala* (magic powers) created as if out of nothing such feast of wine, women and meat dishes as well as other rich food that Bharata's soldiers—human as they were—said: "O, Bharata, you may return to Ayodhya or go to Sri Rama, we shall stay here because we are extremely happy. Let you, Rama and everybody be happy."³²

What is the propriety of such a reception, particularly when the entire retinue (we believe) was still in mourning? However, it is there and included in the Critical Edition because the editor found that it was in all the versions of the Ramayana. I think that this thing could never have belonged to the original story. Its inclusion or interpolation should have taken place at a time when owing to increasing trade with the Roman world, Roman wine and women were freely entering India and eagerly sought after by the kings and people, including sages like Bharadvaja. A clear reference to these features in our society was hitherto available in early Tamil literature,³³ but not documented archaeologically. But since 1946 when Sir Mortimer Wheeler identified sherds of Roman amphorae at Arikamedu, this definitely imported wine jar has been found all over India, even in the Buddhist monasteries at Deonimori³⁴ in the forest of Northern Gujarat and Nagarjunakonda in Andhra. And the Indian name for this wine was probably *varuni*, a definitely late word.

GOLD AND WINE IN INDIA

Wine drinking was not unknown in India before this period. But just as with the European contact it has become fashionable and a status symbol, so with the Roman influence many foreign objects—gods, goddesses and customs—were absorbed by the Indian society. Above all, the flourishing Roman trade brought in plenty of gold in the form of Roman coins. That this was severely deprecated by Seneca in the Roman senate,³⁵ is well known. In India, the gold was soon turned into ornaments, and occasionally for goldplating furniture, interiors of religious monuments and, perhaps, other

public monuments as well. An echo of this lavish use of gold is seen in the description of Lanka in the Ramayana and Dwarka in the Mahabharata.

Thus I have tried to show that the original Ramayana was quite different from the Ramayana we have at present. The origins or sources of the ur Ramayana might go back to a period between 1500 and 1000 B.C., whereas the present Ramayana could be as late as the 11th century A.D., for the earliest manuscript we have today is of A.D. 1020.

PRESENT RAMAYANA—C. 400 A.D.

But there is no doubt that the major elements of the present Ramayana were known in Northern India, in the 5th century A.D., as this is otherwise attested to by the *Raghuvamsa* and the panels depicting scenes from the Ramayana in Early Gupta temples, as well as small and large terracotta plaques.

It was this Ramayana which gradually spread to South India and in the process got more and more inflated. And this inflation has not ceased, for with every *Harikirtana* or *Harikatha* the reciters have a chance to and occasionally do concoct a story which is not to be found in any of the older versions. This I have myself heard on the Poona Radio during the months of June and July 1972.

Just as there is no proof for these stories, so also there is no proof for many of the stories in the Ramayana, current in the 5th century A.D. Thus Rama never crossed the Narmada, and went to Nasik and then across South India to Rameshwaram and then to Lanka. This Lanka is purely a myth and imaginary, and hence can never be located. So also the most wide-spread belief that Ravana had an aeroplane called Pushpaka which he had forcibly taken away from Kubera, and in which later Rama, Sita and Lakshmana flew back to Ayodhya is a myth. But a myth which was in existence in the 5th century A.D., as it was known to Kalidasa who exploited it so beautifully in the *Raghuvamsa*.

ASTRAS (MAGICAL WEAPONS)

Likewise the use of astras—Agni, Vayu, Indra and Brahma—is all imaginary. It is possible that an individual had acquired occult powers by yogic practices and could do things which are credited to these astras, all effected with *mantras* only. But in ordinary warfare only bows, arrows, sword and shield, spear and daggers and stone balls were used. There were certainly additions and improvements in all these basic weapons of offence and defence, owing to Greek, Saka-Kushana and Roman influence. And perhaps the greatest addition and improvement took place when the Sakas ruled parts of Western and Northern India. This is well reflected in the Ramayana. When Visvamitra tries to abduct the Kama-dhenu and so many new people—Saka, Pahlava, Yavana and others with their weapons—take part in this battle between Vasistha and Visvamitra.^{36a}

AYASA (IRON) AND RAMAYANA ✓

But when all is said and done, one will have to say that the present Ramayana belongs to the Iron Age, as all these weapons, and several other things, including the huge 8-wheeled chest in which the famous bow which Rama alone could wield and break was kept, were made of *ayasa* (iron). And *ayasa* in the Ramayana definitely means iron and not copper. Otherwise we would not have been told in the Ayodhyakanda after the scene when Kaikeyi insisted on Sita's donning *valkala* and *chira* and remove her silk sari, someone said that the heart of Rama's mother seems to be made of *ayasa*. For iron (*ayasa* here) like stone is hard, and not soft like copper.^{37 37a}

Thus the uppermost limit of the Ramayana cannot be earlier than the beginning of the Iron Age in India. As we know today, a solitary C.14 sample of a deposit at Atranjikhara, near Aligarh, gives the date of iron there to about 1100 B.C., but surprisingly all other dates from Hastinapur, Ahichhatra and elsewhere where the associated objects, viz

the Painted Grey Ware vessels, occur are late, and range between 800 and 400 B.C. More important, the Painted Grey Ware everywhere immediately precedes the NBP—the Northern Black Polished Ware—and so many characteristic ornaments of this culture are in no way different from those occurring in the NBP phase, as pointed out by me elsewhere. Thus in our present knowledge, it is not possible to date the first introduction of iron in Northern India, and particularly in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, before 800 B.C.

FIRST COMPOSITION OF RAMAYANA

This might be the time when Ramayana was first composed. However, the origin of the story, if we place any reliance on the dynastic history as reconstructed from the Puranas by Pargiter and Pusalkar³⁸ or from the coordination of the Vedic and Puranic data by Pradhan, Bhargava and others, then the foundation of Ayodhya and other cities in U.P. and Bihar might be placed around c. 1700 B.C. and the birth of Rama in the Ikshvaku dynasty about 1500 B.C. But this is pure speculation. Unless Ayodhya is excavated and a reliable time-table obtained it is not profitable to say anything about its antiquity.

But there is no doubt that once this dynasty was founded, it gradually extended its sway, east and south and the southern extent of its sway, as Rama tells Vali in a very natural way,³⁹ included the forested area of Chota Nagpur and eastern M.P. This region was inhabited, then as now, by several aboriginal tribes. Some of these, the most prominent and powerful, the Gonds opposed this, or their king kidnapped Sita—Rama's wife—who had been exiled and lived in their forest. Rama recovered his wife with the help of other tribes, particularly the Savara.

UR OR THE ORIGINAL RAMAYANA

This was the ur' of the original Ramayana—a simple and natural story of the family feud caused by rivalry for succes-

sion—and a struggle or a war between the adivasis and arya who had penetrated the forest reserve of the former. It was this story, probably current in the form of ballads, that Valmiki collected, and turned into an immortal *adikavya*—first poetic composition.

Valmiki not only made it into a heroic poem endowing with tales of adventure and daring, but also high ethical and philosophical principles which the whole of India has tried to imbibe and practise till today; only now, with the new ideas of woman's liberation, these eternal truths are being questioned, so that Rama and Sita are fast disappearing and Ravana produced.

SUMMARY

What has resulted from the archaeological approach to the *Ramayana* is briefly this :

(i) there is no doubt about the existence of Ayodhya and other cities mentioned in the *Ramayana* such as Kausambi, Mithila, Kanyakubja at least by 1000 B.C.;

(ii) whether these cities, now called by these names, were at that time respectively known by their names and were ruled by dynasties called Ikshvaku and others is very likely, but can be proved, only when the sites of these cities are excavated;

(iii) the core of the *Ramayana* story—viz Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and the exile of Rama with Sita and her being kidnapped by Ravana—was true and was known at this time;

(iv) Ravana was a dark-skinned man who had not more than two hands and one head and he had carried away Sita in his arms;

(v) Ravana belonged very probably to the Gond tribe;

(vi) Lanka of this Ravana was in the Chota Nagpur plateau in East M.P. and most probably near Jabalpur. All this area, *Ramayana* expressly tells us, was included in Rama's kingdom, i.e. (Southern) Kosala;

(vii) Rama and Lakshmana and the Gonds fought with bows, arrows and swords, and spears, whereas the Vanaras who were other aboriginal tribes fought with missiles like trees and stones;

(viii) All the places occurring in the Dandakaranya can be satisfactorily identified in this region, south of Prayag. Thus in the original Ramayana, the entire episode took place in a compact geographical area. There is nothing unnatural about it—either the persons or the places.

It was this nucleus which the poet named Valmiki, supposed to be himself a hunter, turned into a heroic poem—*adikavya*.

DIFFUSION OF RAMAYANA ✓

Being a *kavya*, it was recited from region to region and naturally events of later periods came to be interpolated in the story. The greatest interpolation seems to have taken place between the 2nd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D., when descriptions of Lanka, Ayodhya, Kishkindha came to be entirely recomposed. The story of the finger-ring was introduced at this time and Lanka imagined to be somewhere in the sea. Soon after the Gupta period Rama was deified and regarded as one of the avatars of Visnu. The scenes from Ramayana were now sculptured in temples, but it took some more centuries before Rama was actually worshipped. The Ramayana so composed slowly travelled south, as well as in other directions, but even by the 10th century it was not very popular there as can be gathered from the paucity of place and personal names after Rama, as well as the almost complete absence of Rama figures in temples before the 10th century A.D. It is therefore possible that the description of Lanka was further inflated when the poet saw the tall gopurams of temples in South India.

However, all these later additions—from the 6th century B.C. to 3rd century A.D., and still later, even after the 10th

century A.D.—made the Ramayana more and more unreal, a fiction, though it caught the mind, soul and eyes of the people—poets, saints, politicians, novelists and artists—so much so that the scenes described in this later Ramayana were depicted in painting and sculptures on the walls of temples and in the temple at Suchindram near Kanyakumari we have one of the most magnificent and majestic figures of Hanuman, stretching himself at his maximum height and strength after accepting the challenge to cross the 100 yojana long sea between Lanka and India.^{40 40a} (See Fig. 10.)

Such a fictitious Ramayana is still being created before our eyes. The Poona centre of All India Radio presented two pieces on the Ramayana in the past six months, by two well known *Harikirtanakaras*. These were not only melodious, highly ethical, but cent per cent original. The first piece narrated how the highly inflammable sage Durvasa, after accepting the invitation of Rama to dine with his 100 followers, later refused to go to the function and the reason was very simple. Rama was harbouring Sita who had lived in the Asokavana of Ravana and therefore became impure, according to the sage Narada. Rama was indeed perplexed. But Sita, to prove her purity, just turned all of them into women! And lo! Durvasa and his 100 followers found themselves suddenly changed, while still bathing in the river Sarayu. On learning the reason for this metamorphosis, Durvasa prayed to Sita and asked for her pardon.

These are all poetic creations. And Valmiki's Ramayana is traditionally known to be the *adikavya*—the first large poetical composition. It has all the characteristic features which a true *kavya* should have—a cent per cent human story which might take place in any society, where there is polygamy, and the problems of succession, so that there are numerous dramatic scenes, some full of pathos, others of adventures, all couched in simple, yet sweet melodious verse. But it is in the Ramayana alone, and not in the *Iliad* and not in other heroic poems, that the hero and the heroine remain so steadfast to the ideals they have vouchsafed, almost at the outset, throughout the story, through thick and thin, against all odds. Rama

and Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman have embodied in themselves the ideals of husband and wife, brother and friend. Let us listen to what Rama says, "I do not wish to have the kingdom, nor happiness, nor Maithili (Sita). I seek the truth and not falsehood."

नैवाहं राज्यमिच्छामि न सुखं न च मैथिलीम् ।

त्वयाहं सत्यमिच्छामि नानृतं पुरुषर्षभ ।।

२.३१.३२

Of Sita's many worth-quoting sentiments, only a few are here cited.

शुश्रूषमाणा ते नित्यं नियता ब्रह्मचारिणी ।

सह रंस्ये त्वया वीर वनेषु मधुगन्धिषु ।।

२.२४.१०

स्वर्गेऽपि च विना वासो भविता यदि राघव ।

त्वया मम नरव्याघ्र नाहं तमपि रोचये ।।

२.२४.१६

पतिहीना तु या नारी न सा शक्यति जीवितम् ।

काममेवंविधं राम त्वया मम विदर्शितम् ।।

२.२६.५

"I shall sport with thee, Oh great hero in that forest impregnated with the fragrance of flowers, tending thee constantly, having my senses subdued, and being engaged in austere performances." p. 271 (2.24.10).

"I shall never experience the reverse of fortune in as much as I do not like to live in the abode of celestials, Oh Raghava, if I am to dwell there without thee; no, it is not pleasing unto me. Oh best of men." p. 271 (2.24.16).

"A woman, without her husband, cannot live; this truth has been pointed out by thee, O Rama, into me." p. 274(2.26.5).

And then Kalidasa in his *Raghuvamsa* puts in Sita's mouth words which a Hindu wife has cherished all these centuries.

वाच्यस्त्वया मद्बचनात्स राजा बहूनौ विशुद्धामपि यस्समक्षम् ।

मां लोकवादश्रवणादहासीः श्रुतस्य किं तत्सदृशं कुलस्य ।। ६१

साहं तपः सूर्यनिविष्टदृष्टिरूर्ध्वं प्रसूतेश्चरितं यतिष्ये ।

भूयो यथा मे जननान्तरेऽपि त्वमेव भर्ता न च विप्रयोगः ।। ६६

"Please communicate to the king as a message from me thus : Is it befitting your renowned family that on simply

hearing popular talk you should have abandoned me who had even been proved to be pure by a fire-ordeal.” (14.61)

“Thus situated, I shall after the birth of the child, endeavour to practise penance with my eyes fixed on the sun in such a manner that I may gain you as my husband without (any) separation.” (14.66)

And then she reaches the climax, when after a mild protest to Lakshmana (who has to perform the unenviable duty of leaving Sita, once again in a forest) she says after the birth of the child, she will perform a penance so that in the next birth Rama will be her husband and she will not have to suffer separation from him.

These ideals have permeated through all strata of society. Hence though Greece might have forgotten Helen and Paris, and so also the world, in India not only Rama and Sita are ever remembered, but continually recreated. Herein lies the secret of the Ramayana, a fact turned into a highly didactic fiction.

Notes to Lecture II

ENGLISH REFERENCES

1. For C. 14 dates for Painted Grey Ware sites see Agarwal, D.P., *The Copper Bronze Age in India*, New Delhi, 1971, p. 100. These range from 1025 ± 100 B.C. to 335 ± 115 (according to 5730 years basis) and here the time bracket of c. 800 to 400 B.C. is suggested.
2. For OCP see *Antiquity*, March 1972, p. 62, where on the strength of thermoluminescent examination, a date around 1700 B.C. has been suggested by J. Huxtable and D. W. Zimmerman.
3. Rama seeing his mother, who deserved no distress, fell down like a plantain tree and insensible, raised her up, and finding her covered with dust all over her body like unto a mare risen up after rolling on the ground on account of toil of bearing heavy burden wiped off (her body) gently with his hand. (2.15.18)
4. See map showing the route of Rama's journey from Ayodhya to Dandakaranya.
5. 2.85.44-77, see Note 32.
6. 2.49.12 (1173*)
7. 3.13-14 (referred to above in Lecture I).
8. Hiralal, "The Situation of Ravana's Lanka", *G. N. Jha Commemoration Volume*, Poona, 1937, pp. 151-63.

9. Ramdas, *IHQ*, V. 281-99, VI. 285-289; IV. 339-346; also *Man in India*, V. 28-55.

10. *Ravana—a normal being*

Ravana fights with Jatayu with just two hands.

गुण्डिम्यां वरपाभ्यां (3.49.34)

Again he was seen carrying Sita in his two arms by Suparshva. And here we get perhaps the true description of Ravana, because compared to a later description by Hanuman (5.47.18), he is described as “black” or “dark”. Ravana was black or dark, and carried Sita in his arms. Suparshva says— “When I was sent to blocking the narrow passage in the Mahendra hill, I saw a black person going or coming carrying a woman as bright as the rising sun. On his requesting passage, I allowed him to go... and that I learnt that this man was Ravana, the king of Rakshasas.” (4.58.13-23)

Then again Hanuman mentions his two arms and two ears !

11. Ramdas, *op. cit.*
12. Cf. also Bhaduri, *A Mundari English Dictionary*, Calcutta, 1930.
13. Shri V. S. Patwardhan in a personal talk at Poona. He has also prepared a very useful vocabulary of the local dialects in Chanda district.
14. Kibe, *AIOC*, Poona, 1919, 2nd ed., p. 165; *IHQ*, IV, 1928, pp. 694-702 etc.
15. Iyer, T. Paramasiva, *Ramayana and Lanka*, Parts I and II, Bangalore City, 1940, pp. xlvi.
16. *Sala Trees*

Truly shall thy strength be manifested in the piercing of one of these sala trees. Having stringed thy bow like unto the trunk of an elephant and stretching it to thy ears, do thou shoot this mighty arrow. Doubt there is none that this arrow flung by thee shall bore this sala tree. (4.11.47-49)

That one, conferring honours upon others, holding his terrible bow and a shaft, darted it towards the sala filling all the quarters with a sound. The arrow, clear as the gold itself, hurled by that one of mighty strength, perforating the trees, entered into the mountainous expanse and the sevenfold regions of the earth. (4.12.3-4)

And Vali too was struck down by Sugriva, fearlessly taking up a sala tree, like unto a mountain clapped by a thunderbolt. Being thus smitted by the tree and overwhelmed with the strike of sala he was troubled like unto a heavily laden boat in the midst of an ocean. (4.16. 21)

17. And beholding that best of monkeys tied up with bark and liberated from the binding of the weapons, Indrajit reflected that the binding forces of the Brahma weapon became powerless when there was any other binding. (4.46.47)
18. *National Geographic Magazine*, October 1967, pp. 554-75.
19. Guruge, Ananda, *The Society of the Ramayana*, Saman Press, Ceylon, 1969.
20. McCrindle, J. W., *Ancient India vide Pliny*, p. 102.
21. Mendis, G. C., *The Early History of Ceylon*, 1947.
22. Sivaramamurti, C., *Sanskrit Literature and Art Motives of Indian Culture*, MASI, No. 73, Delhi, 1955.
23. Sheshadri, T., *Historical and Cultural Geography and Ethnography from Pallava Inscriptions*, Ph. D. Thesis, Deccan College, Poona, 1963; and Pillai, B. Suresh, *Historical and Cultural Geography of South India, c. 800 A.D.-1500 A.D.*, Ph.D. Thesis, Deccan College, Poona, 1965.
24. Sengupta, *Journal of Andhra Historical Society*, Vol. XXXII, 1971-72, p. 128 and pl. IA.
25. On this question my friends Shri K. V. Soundararajan and Shri K. R. Srinivasan, both of them from Archaeological Survey of India, have very kindly given useful information. Both of them have mentioned a number of temples in Tamil Nadu where Rama appears in small panels and then as a separate figure. This transition seems to be as

sketched by me; though without a very intensive study, it is not advisable to say anything for certain.

26. Information kindly supplied by Thiru R. Nagaswamy, Director of Archaeology, Tamil Nadu, Madras.
27. On this point Dr Vaidyanathan, Reader in Dravidian Linguistics, Deccan College, kindly informs me that in *Purananaru* occur words like *iraman* (verse 378, line 18) and *ilankai* (verse 379, line 6) which stand for Rama and Lanka respectively. According to him both these are loan words from Sanskrit in Tamil.
28. 4.34.2 and 4.43.11.
29. *Sita's silk sari*
Then Sita clad in silk apparel, eying the ascetic covering meant for her, became agitated, like a doe at sight of a noose. (2.33.9)
Thereupon that best of righteous person, Rama, speedily coming up to her, fastened the monastic garb over Sita's silk attire. (2.33.12)
Do you without delay bring unto Vaidehi excellent and costly attires and noble ornaments, counting these (ten and four) years. Thus desired by the foremost of men, that officer repairing to the treasury, procuring all those, speedily presented them to Sita. (2.34.15-16)
30. And then the king's daughter hued like molten gold, clad in a yellow silken cloth, looked exceedingly beautiful like unto lightning. And on her yellow cloth streaming up, Ravana looked surpassingly graceful like a hill aflame with fire. And coppery fragrant lotus-leaves belonging to the eminently auspicious Vaidehi showered upon Ravana. And her gold-glowing silken cloth, flying in the air, appeared like clouds coloured by the sunken sun. (3.50.14-16)
31. For Kautilya's date see Kangle, R. P., *The Kautilya Arthashastra*, Part III, p. 98 (Bombay, 1965), where after an exhaustive review, the author sticks to the orthodox view that Kautilya was a contemporary of Chandragupta

Maurya. However on p. 25 he opines that this sutra might be an interpolation.

32. Bharata's soldiers say :

“Let wine-drinkers drink wine, the hungry eat Payaca, and those that are inclined to it, feed on clean meat.” And every seven or eight females taking a man bathed him on the lovely banks of the rivers. And damsels furnished with expansive eyes, having wiped the persons (of the bathers), pressed their legs, and those magnificent women made them drink (wine). And the keepers duly fed excellent horses, elephants, camels and Suravi's sons (oxen), with their (proper) food. And some persons possessed of mighty strength, being directed thereto, fed the bearers of the foremost Ikshwaku warriors with sugar-canes, honey, and fried paddy. And the groom forgot his horse, and the elephant-keeper his elephant: that army there became transported with wine and exhilaration. And sumptuously entertained with every enjoyment, with their bodies decked with red sandal, the soldiery in the company of bevvies of Apsaras exclaimed, “*To Ayodhya will we not go, nor yet to Dandaka. Peace be unto Bharata, and may Rama reap happiness.*”

33. Warmington, E. H., *The Commerce Between the Roman Empire and India* (Cambridge, 1928), p. 265.

34. Mehta, R. N. and Choudhary, S. N., *The Excavation at Deonimori, Baroda*, 1966.

31. Warmington, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-82.

37. Surely the heart of Rama's mother is made of iron, for it does not burst on witnessing her son resembling Skanda repairing to the forest. (2.35.20)

38. Majumdar R. C., (ed.) *The Vedic Age*, 1965, p. 274.

38. *The extent of Kosala kingdom*

This land, abounding in hills and woods, belongs to the Ikshwakus. Along with it was conferred on them the powers of administrating favour and chastisement unto beasts, birds and human beings. (4.18.6)

40. *Hanuman*

Seeing that foremost of monkeys enlarge his person for crossing over an hundred yojanas and suddenly filled with energy, (the monkeys) at once renounced sorrow, and filled with delight, set up ululations and fell to eulogizing the mighty Hanuman. (4.66.1)

SANSKRIT REFERENCES

अुपावृत्योत्थितां दीनां वडवामिव वाहिताम् ।
पाशुगुण्ठितसर्वाङ्गीं विममर्शं च पाणिना । । २.१५.१८
6a. *Satkara or atithya in Bharadvaja ashrama* (2.85.1-77)

सुरां सुरापाः पिबत पायसं च बभुक्षिताः ।
मांसानि च सुमेघ्यानि भक्ष्यन्तां यावदिच्छथ । । ४६
अुत्साद्य स्नापयन्ति स्म नदीतीरेषु वल्गुषु ।
अप्येकमेकं पुरुषं प्रमदाः सप्तचाष्ट च । । ५०

.....
.....
नैवायोध्यां गमिष्यामो न गमिष्याम दण्डकान् ।
कुशलं भरतस्यास्तु रामस्यास्तु तथा सुखम् । । ५५
Sita's offer of 100 pots of wine

स्वस्ति देवि तरामि त्वां पारयेन्मे पतिर्ब्रतम् ।
लक्ष्ये त्वां गोसहस्रेण सुराघटशतेन च । । २.४६.१२ (११७३)
10a. *Ravana—a normal human being*

Ravana abducts Sita and places her in the chariot (3.47.19).
He had also won an armour (काङ्गमन्) and had a bow (3.48.20).
Jatayu broke the chariot which could go at will (क्वच) (3.49.14), and Ravana fell on the ground, together with Sita in his lap (3.49.18).

Though he has 20 arms, he fought with two hands only (3.50.12-13).

सुपाश्र्वं (4.58.13-23)

अहं तात यथाकालमाभिषाधीं समाप्लूतः ।
महेन्द्रस्य गिरेर्द्वारमावृत्य च समास्थितः ॥ १३
तत्र कश्चिन्मया दृष्टः सूर्योदयसमप्रभाम् ।
स्त्रियमादाय गच्छन्वै भिन्नाञ्जनचयोपमः ॥ १५
सो ह्यभ्यवहारार्थी तौ दृष्ट्वा कृतनिश्चयः ।
तेन साम्ना विनीतेन पन्थानमभियाचितः ॥ १६

.....
अवेमुक्तस्ततो हं तैः सिद्धैः परमशोभनैः ।
स च मे रावणो राजा रक्षसां प्रतिवेदितः ॥ २०

Hanuman sees Ravana sleeping in his palace and describes him with only two hands.

शयने वीरं प्रसुप्तं राक्षसाधिपम् ॥ ६
विक्षिप्तौ राक्षसेन्द्रस्य भूजाविन्द्रध्वजोपमौ ।
..... तस्य बाहू शयनसंस्थितौ ॥

Again he had only two ears and one head.

आदित्यवर्णाभ्यां कुण्डलाभ्यां विभूषितः । । ५.२०.२७
Hanuman beholding Ravana exclaims:

अहो रूपमहो धैर्यमहो सत्त्वमहो द्युतिः ।
अहो राक्षसराजस्य सर्वलक्षणयुक्तता ॥ १७
यद्यधर्मो न बलवान्स्यादयं राक्षसेश्वरः ।
स्यादयं सुरलोकस्य सशक्तस्यापि रक्षितः ॥ ५.४७.१८

16a. *Sala trees*

अिमे च विपुलाः सालाः सप्त शाखावलम्बिनः ।
.....

यदि भिन्द्याद्भवान्सालानिमांस्वेकेषुणा ततः ।
जानीयां त्वां महाबाहो समर्थं वालिनो वधे ॥ ४.११.४७-४९
स विसृष्टो बलवता बाणः स्वर्णपरिष्कृतः ।
भित्त्वा सालानू गिरिप्रस्थे सप्तभूमिं विवेश ह ॥ ३
प्रविष्टस्तु गृहूर्तेन रसां भित्तवा महाजवः ।
निष्पत्य च पुनस्तूर्णं स्वतूर्णीं प्रविवेश ह ॥ ४.१२.३-४

सुग्रीवेण तु निःसंगं सालमृत्याटय तेजसा ।
गाजेष्वभिहतो वाली वज्रणेव महागिरिः । । ४.१६.२१

28a. *Finger-ring*

ददौ तस्य ततःप्रीतः स्वनामांकोपशोभितम् ।
अंगुलीयमभिज्ञानं राजपुत्याः परंतपः । । ४.४३.११

A recognizable object in the form of a ring bearing his
(Rama's) name.

Hanuman produces the ring, saying—I am Rama's messenger
(*duta*) and here is his ring bearing the word 'Rama'.

वानरो हं महाभागो दूतो रामस्य धीमतः ।
रामनामांकितं चेदं पश्य देव्यङ्गुलीयकम् । ५.३४.२

29a. *Sita's silk vastra (sari)*

अयोध्याकण्ड (२.३३.६)
अथात्मपरिधानार्थं सीता कौशेवासिनी ।

.....

..... रामोधर्मभृतां वरः ।
चीरं बबन्ध सीतायाः कौशेयस्योपरि स्वयम् । । १२

.....

कैकेयि कुशचीरेण न सीता गन्तुर्महति । । १४

.....

वासांसि च महार्हाणि भूषणानि वराणि च । ।
वर्षाण्येतानि संख्याय वंदेह्याः क्षिप्रमानय । । (२.३४.१५)

.....

प्रायच्छत्सर्वमाहृत्य सीतार्यं क्षिप्रमेवतत् । । १६

30a. *Yellow silk sari*

Sita took her yellow silk sari which shone all the more
(3.50.14.16).

अुद्धतेन च वस्त्रेण तस्याः पीतेन रावणः ।
अुद्धलेन अधिकं परिबभ्राज गिरिदीप्तं अिवाग्निरना । । १४
अधिकं तस्याः कौशेयगुद्धतमाकाशे कनकप्रभम् ।
वभौ चादित्यरागेण ताम्रमभ्रमिवातपे । । १६

Sita threw her silk upper cloth and leg-ornaments.

उत्तरीय वरारोहा शुभान्यामरणानिच । ३.५२.२

36a. *Vasistha-Visvamisra war*

(Balakanda, 1.53.11ff—1.54.11ff)

तस्या हुम्भारवोत्सृष्टाः पह्ल्वाः शतशो नृप ।।

पह्ल्वाः शतशो नृप ।

विश्वामित्रादिर्दितान्द्वष्टवाह् पह्ल्वाञ्शतशस्तदा ।

भूय अवासृजदधोराञ्जकान्यवनमिश्रितान् ।। २०

तस्या हुम्भारवाज्जाताः काम्बोजाः ।

. . . पह्ल्वाः . . . ।

१.५४.२

योनिदशाच्च यवनाः शकृद्देशाच्छकास्तथा ।

रोमकूपेषु म्लच्छाश्च हारीताः सकिरातकाः ।। १.५४.३

37a. *Iron*

आयसं हृदयं नूनं राममातुरसंशयम् ।

यद्देवगर्भप्रतिमे वनं याति न भिद्यते ।। २.३५.२०

39a. *Extent of Kosala kingdom*

अिक्ष्वाकूणामियं भूमिः सशैलवनकानना ।

मृगपक्षिमनुष्याणां निग्रहानुग्रहावपि ।। ४.१८-६

40a. *Hanuman grows* (4.66.1-46)

संस्तूयमानो हनुमान्यवर्धत महाबलः । ४.६६.१

Postscript

RAMAYANA IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

With regard to the spread of the Ramayana in South-east Asia, the story did not spread, as other aspects of Indian culture, all at once, to what is called Champa (Viet Nam), Kambuja (Cambodia), Siam (Thailand), Java-Sumatra (Indonesia). It was in several waves and spread over a period of thousand years and more. Secondly, this colonization was partly due to trade, partly due to the efforts to spread Buddhism, and then Hinduism, and above all not from one part of India alone. In the early centuries of the Christian era, it seems to have been from Tamralipti (Tamluk) on the eastern coast, and from some port—Sihor (ancient Simhapura)—near Bhavnagar in Saurashtra on the western coast of India. Later colonists followed during the Pallava and Chola periods (c. 500-900 A.D.), from South India, and also from Bengal under the Palas.

As far as Indonesia and our present problem are concerned, it is pertinent to mention that it is held by Indo-Javanese scholars that “the local *Ramayana* version was based on the Indian versions, written and traditional—and perhaps, more primitive not so much on Valmiki—though at Tra-Kien in Champa (Viet Nam), a temple was dedicated to Valmiki by Prakasa-dharma (A.D. 653-79).¹ The

¹ “Hindu Epic and Puranic Traditions in Southeast Asia” in *India's Contribution to World Thought and Culture*, Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee, Madras, 1970, p. 504.

Ramayana reliefs from Prambanan (West Java) were the most celebrated and ancient (9th century A.D.) and, though clearly Indian in character, are not based on Valmiki's work. On the other hand, strangely, the later Panataran (East Java) scenes of the 14th century A.D. in Indo-Javanese style are more coherent in following Valmiki."

Though this author (K. V. Soundara Rajan)² found it strange, the explanation of Valmiki's influence seems to be, as here suggested, due to the fact that the Pallava and Chola immigrants introduced this Ramayana in Java, after it had spread to the south.

This view is further corroborated by another study.

After a detailed comparison between the *Thai Ramakian* and the Malay *Hikayat Seri Rama*, it is concluded by S. Singaravelu³ that "these represent popular versions of the Great Story of Rama, whose certain episodes were carried . . . by very enterprising Tamil-speaking pundits who were obviously conversant with the versions of the Kamban and Valmiki and possibly others, between the 10th and 18th centuries."

In fact, during the last 45 years, a considerable body of literature⁴, both Indian and foreign, has grown up. From a perusal it will be seen that the topic of "Ramayana in Southeast Asia" deserves to be studied independently.

Poona,

5 December 1972

² Ibid.

³ *Proceedings of the First International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies*, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, April 1966, Vol. I. p. 134.

⁴ The most handy, one volume edition of R. C. Majumdar, *Hindu Colonies in the Far East*, Calcutta, 1944, will be found useful.

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Index

- Aeroplane, and Pushpaka Vimana,
Ravana and Rama, 59
- Ahichhatra, ancient site and iron,
61
- Allahabad and Bharadvaja ash-
rama, 58
- Amarkantaka plateau and Lanka,
49
- Amaravati sculptures, 52
- Apanagriha* (drinking houses in
Lanka), 5, 52
- Amphitheatre, Roman and *Krida-
griha* in Lanka, 52
- Amphorae, Roman wine jar in
Indian sites, 58
- Archaeology and Ramayana, 18
- Arikemedu and amphorae, 58
- Arrow, use in Ramayana, 4, 15,
60
- Aryan customs and cremation, 17
- Aryanization, 55
- Asokavana*, 5, 25, 26, (Sanskrit ref.
37), Ravana in, 38
- Āstras*, chronology, 16
mythical weapons, 60
- Atranjikhera and earliest iron in
India (?), 61
- Aurobindo, Sri, on Ramayana, 32
- Australia, 51
- Austro-Asiatic languages and the
word 'Lanka', 51
- Avindhya, instead of Vibhishana
in, 19
- Ayasa* (iron) and Ramayana, 60
- Ayodhya, need of excavation at,
2-4
description in Ramayana, 7, 10,
30, 58
foundation of, 61, 62
- Babylon. Ishtar gateways at, 7
- Balakanda and Lanka, 4
- Bellary, rockshelters, 8, 17
and Kishkindha, 17, 50
- Bharadvaja ashrama, and *satkara*
of Bharata, 50, 58
- Bharata at Chitrakuta, 58
- Bhargava on Puranas, 61
- Bharhut sculptures and Ramayana,
6, 11, 52
- Bhita and Ramayana panel, 54
- Bhopal, rockshelters at, 8
- Bible, antiquity of, 2
- Bow, use in Ramayana, 4, 15, 60
- Buddhist monuments and Ceylon,
51
- Burial customs, Ramayana and
South India, 17
- Caves in Vindhya hills, 8
other sites, 33
- Ceylon and Lanka, 2, 3, 10

- and Rameshvaram, 51
 ancient name Simhaladwipa, Tamraparni, 51
 not Lanka, 53
- Champa and Ramayana, 18
- Chinabhumii*, 57
- Chinese silk, 57
- Chinnapatta*, 57
- Chirasala* in Lanka, 5
- Chitrukuta and Lanka, 21; Bharadvaja ashrama, 58
- Cholas and Rama figures, 54
- Chota Nagpur plateau and sala trees, 50; and Lanka, 62
- Cities in Ramayana, 4
- Cotton and *kshama*, 56
- Cremation and Ramayana, 17
 and *dahana* of Vali, 17
- Critical Edition of Ramayana, 14
 its value, 15, 18, and 100 pots of wine, 57;
 and *satkara*, 58
- Dandakaranya, identification of, 3, 9, 30, 49, 63
- Dang forest and Dandakaranya, 50
- Defence of Lanka 39; of Rama, 40
- Deonimori, Buddhist monastery and amphorae, 58
- Devghar and Ramayana panels, 54
- Divine weapons, 15
- Drinking hall in Lanka, 37
- Durvasa, sage, 64
- Dutta, M. V., and English translation of Ramayana, 20
- Early Stone Age, 8
- Ellora, caves with storied structures at, 6
- Ethnographic data and Ramayana, 19
- Fauna of Ramayana, 19
- Flora of Ramayana, 19
- Ganga, 10
- Geographic description in Ramayana, 19
- Geophysical year and buried reefs in the sea between India and Australia, 51
- Godavari, (Sanskrit ref.), 33
- Gold and Roman trade with India, 58-59
- Gold-plated pillars etc., 6
- Golden chariot of Ravana, 9
- Golden, Lanka and Dwarka, 7, 59
- Gond tribe and Ramayana, 10, 49, 61
 and Ravana, 62, 63
- Gopuram* and Lanka, 52
- Greek influence on India, 60, 66
- Griha* (houses) in Lanka, 36
- Guha* (caves) as puri or nagari (city), in Lanka, 5
- Gulma* (check-post) in Lanka, 5
- Hanuman, 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 23
 on Ravana, 25
 burns Lanka (Sanskrit ref.), 38
 swam through the Sagara, 49; and
 signet ring, 55, in Sachindra temple, 64;
 ideal set by, 65, 72, 76 (Sanskrit reference)
- Hastinapur and iron, 61
- Harikatha* and *Harikirtana* and spread of Ramayana, 59
- Helen (of Troy), 66
- Hiralal and Lanka, 49
- History (*itihasa*) and Mahabharata, 19
- Houses in Lanka, 5
- Ihamriga* (fanciful animals) on pillars in Lanka, 5
- Iksavaku dynasty, and extent of kingdom, 61
 date, 61
- Iliad and Ramayana, 64
- Indo-Greeks, and signet ring, 56
- Indrajit, Ravana's son, 6
- Indus civilization, 2
- Inscriptions and Ramayana, 18

- Iron, weapons of, 15, Age, 16
and Painted Grey Ware, 61
Ayasa (iron) and Ramayana, 60,
and Atranjikhera, 61 (Sanskrit
ref.), 76
- Jabalpur and lakes, 10, 49, 62
Jacobi, 19
Jaggayapeta sculptures, 52
Java and Ramayana, 18
Jnanasambandar, Saiva saint and
Ramayana, 54
Junnar Caves and storied houses, 6
- Kaikeyi, heart of, of *ayasa* (iron),
60
Kalidasa and Ramayana, 11, 60, 65
Kangle, on Chinese silk, 70
Kanheri caves and storied houses,
6
Kanyakubja, antiquity, 62
Kanyakumari, Suchindram temple
near, 64
Karla caves and storied houses, 6
Karnataka, caves in, 8
Kaushambi (or Kosambi), ancient
site near Allahabad, 16,
plaque from, 54, 62
Kaushheya, Chinese silk, 56
Kautilya and Chinese silk, 70-71
Khara, Rakshasa in a chariot, 33-
34
Kibe, Sardar, and Lanka, 49
Kirtanakara (reciters) and diffusion
of Ramayana, 55
Kishkindha, 3, 4, 8, description
unreal, 9, 16, 17, 28
Korkus and Vanaras, 49
Kosala (southern), extent of, 61,
63, 71, 76
Kridagriha (amphitheatre) in
Lanka, 52
Krishna, antiquity, 1, 3
Kshauma, cotton or linen, 56
Kubera and Pushpaka Vimana, 59
Kumbakonam, Nageshvara temple
with Rama panels, 54
- Kushana, 60
- Lakshmana, 3, 10, weapons of, 10,
15, ideal set by, 65, 66
Lakshmi on pillar capitals in
Lanka, 5
Lanka, in Kishkindha and Sunda-
rakanda, 4,
defence of, 5, 6; setu, 8, 9
defence fanciful, 16, 21, 27, 34,
35, 38 (Sanskrit original), and
Ceylon, 50; Buddhist burnt, 38,
39
on Amarkantaka plateau, 49,
Mundari word, 50, *not Gondi*,
51,
Sala trees, 50,
Gopurams in, 52; palaces in, 56,
62
Lavana-ambhasa, salt water lake
and sagara, 51
Linen and *kshauma*, 56
- Mace, weapon, 15
Madhya Pradesh and lakes, 10
Mahabharata, 59; as *itihasa* (his-
tory), 19
Mahabalipuram and Mahabharata
stories, 59
Mahendra, mts. and S. India, 50
Mahodara, Ravana's general, 6
Malaya, mts., 50
Manu, King, 10
Mansions in Lanka, 5
Ms. of Ramayana, 12
Maricha and Dandakaranya, 9,
and Ravana, 34
Mathura, excavations at, 2
Megalithic monuments, and Rama-
yana, 17, and Tamil literature, 18
Megasthenes and Pataliputra, 6
Mithila, town, antiquity, 10, 62
- Nachnakuthara and Rama panels,
54
Nagara and Kishkindha, 9

Nagaswamy, R., 70
 Nagesvara Temple and Rama panels in S. India, 54
 Nala, builder of setu, 7; younger brother (*tanuja* of Visvakarma and *not son*)
 Nalanda, storied houses at, 6
 Narada, 64
 Narmada river and Ramayana, 59
 Nasik, Dandakaranya and sala trees, 50 and Rama 52, 59
 National Geographic and submerged ridges, 69
 Neolithic monuments and S. India, 17, 18
 Nepal, earliest Ms. of Ramayana, 15
 Northern Black Polished Pottery and iron, 61
Pahlava, foreign people, 60
 Painted Grey Ware (pottery) and antiquity of iron, 61
 Palaces in Lanka, 5
 Pampa and Kishkindha, 8
 Panabhumi (drinking halls in Lanka), 37
 Panchavati, 33 (Sanskrit ref.)
 Panchmarhi rock-shelters, 8
 Pandya, inscriptions and place names with Rama, 53
 Paramasiva Iyer, and setu, 8 and Lanka, 49
 Pargiter and Puranas, 61
 Paris and Helen, 66
 Pataliputra and Megasthenes, 6
 Patwardhan, V. S., and Lakka, 49
 Pillars etc. in Lanka, 5, 6
Pita (*yellow*) sari of Sita, significance, 57
 Pradhan, and Puranas, 61
 Prahasta, Ravana's general, 6
Prakara (fortification) at Lanka, 5
 Prayag, 63
 Purana, age, 61
 Puri (city) and Kishkindha, 9 and Lanka, 5

Pusalkar and Puranas, 61
 Pushpaka Vimana, 3, 5, 35, (Sanskrit ref. 37), 52, palace, 56
 Raghuvamsa and Ramayana, 8, 11, 60
 Raikrishnadasa, on setu, 8
 Rakshasas, 3, 10, weapons, 15, and sala trees, 50
 Rama, 1, 3, and Krishna, 2, weapons, 4, inspects his army, 6, 27; and Sita, 7; Vali, 9, 10; and Visnu, 11, 18
 and weapons, 15, 20 (Sanskrit ref., 33)
 temples, 11; spread of story, 11
 panels, 53-54; Rama as god, 53; names in Chola place names, 53, Pallava, 53, in Sangam literature, 55
 temple, 54; in Tamil Nadu, 54
 extent of Rama's Kingdom, 51
 fought with, 63, and Narmada, 59
 character, 64; ever recreated, 66
 Ramayana, mythical, 1
 in Indian consciousness, 1
 Adikavya, 1, true (!), 3
 and sala trees, 11, and *ekapatnicrata*, 11
 earliest Ms., 12
 Critical edition, 14
 South Indian version, 15
 South India, 17, burial customs, 17
 fiction 18
 sculpture, 18
 Sri Aurobindo, 32
 Ramayana, flora and fauna, 19
 earliest Ms. 12
 diffusion, 63,
 what made it unreal, 64
 the secret of, 66
 Ramdas and Lanka, 49
 Rameshvaram, 3
 Ramopakhyana, 19

- Rampart, 6
 Ravana, 1, kith and kin of, 3
 10 headed, 4, inspects his army,
 6, demon, 18
 true description, 28, 34
 and Sita, 34; 37
 in Asokavana, 38
 dark-skinned, with 2 hands and
 one head, 49, 62
 aeroplane, 59
 Sanskrit ref., 74
 Ring episode and Valmiki, 55-56,
 Sanskrit ref., 75
 Risyamuka and Kishkindha, 5
 Roman wine in India, 58, gold,
 58-59, women, 58
 influence, 60
 Ruma, Sugriva's wife, 9

 Sagara and Lanka, 4, meaning, 49
 Saka, foreign tribe, 60
 Sala trees, and identification of
 Lanka, 49, 50,
 and Chota Nagpur plateau, 50
 Sana, hemp, 50
 Sanchi sculpture, 6, 52
 Sangam literature and Rama, 55
 Sarayu, river, 64
Satkara (reception) in Bharadvaja
 ashram, 57 (Sanskrit ref., 73)
 Savaras and Vanaras, 49, and
 Rama, 61
 Sculptures, Ramayana, 18
 Sea and Lanka, 10
 Seneca, on export of Roman gold,
 58-59
 Setu, 7, 8, 28, and submerged
 ridge, 51
 Shah, U. P., on setu, 8
 Shield, 15, 60
 Shakuntala and the ring-episode,
 55
 Shorea robusta (sala trees), distri-
 bution, 50
 Shurpankha, 9, 34
 Signet-ring and Indo-Greeks, 56,
 Sanskrit ref., 75

 Silk, Silk sari, 56, Sanskrit ref., 75
 Sita, 1, 3, 5; chastity tested by
 Vayu, 19,
 in cave, 33, and Ravana, 34
 in Asokavana (Sanskrit ref., 37),
 38
 Silk sari, 56; offer of 100 pots
 of wine, 57;
 ideal set by 65, recreated, 66
 Sivaramamurti, identification by,
 52
 Soundararajan, K. V., 69
 South India, unknown to Valmiki,
 17, and Vindhya hills, 50;
 Gopuram, 52
 Southeast Asia and Lanka, 53
 Spear, 60
 Srinivasan, V. K., 69
 Stone balls, 60
 Storied houses, 6
 Suchindram Temple and Hanu-
 man, 64
 Sugriva in Kishkindha, 9
 Sukthankar, 19
 Suvela Hill, 39 and Lanka acc. to
 P. Iyer, 49
 Sword, 15, 60

 Tamil literature and megaliths, 15
 Tamil Nadu and Ramayana, 54
 Tamraparni and Ceylon, 51
 Taprobane (Tamraparni) and
 Ceylon, 51
 Temples of Rama, 3; of Vishnu, 11
 Terracottas and Ramayana, 18
 Toranas in Lanka, 5
 Trikuta Hill and Lanka, 49
 Trakien, Valmiki Temple at, 18

Ur (original) Ramayana, 19, 62
 Uttararamacharita, 11

 Vaidya, P. L. and Ramopakhyana,
 19
 Vaidyanathan, 70
 Vali, 1, 8, 9, cremation of, 17,
 true forester, 30, and sala trees,
 50, 61

- Valmiki, 1, and S. India, 17;
 temple at Trakien, 18
 Ramayana, poet's creation, 18,
 56, 62-64
- Vaishali, ancient site, 10
- Vanaras, 4, 7, 38, 50, 63, Savaras
 and Korkus, 49
- Varuni, probably Indian name for
 Roman wine, 58
- Vasistha, war with, 60, 76
- Vayu, and Sita's chastity, 19
- Versions of Ramayana, 19
- Vesma*, Sanskrit ref., 36
- Vibhishana, 19
- Vimana, of gold, and Ravana, 34,
 35 (Sanskrit ref., 37)
- Vindhya hills, 8, and S. India, 50
- Vishvamitra, 10; war with Vasis-
 tha, 60
- Visnu temples, 11
- Visvakarma, Nala's elder brother
not father, 7
- Weapons, divine; of iron, 15
- Wine, offer of 100 pots by Sita, 57
 drinking in India, 58-59
- Yavana, 60



Fig. 2

*Lakshmi standing on a lotus and bathed by two elephants,
from Sanchi, c. 100 B.C.*



Fig. 3

*Lakshmi seated on a lotus and bathed by two elephants,
from Sanchi, c. 100 B.C.*



Fig. 4

Panel from the Gupta temple at Deogarh. It shows Rama and Sita seated in the hut, while Shurpanakha approaches Lakshmana, who has closed his ears with two hands (c. 400 A.D.).

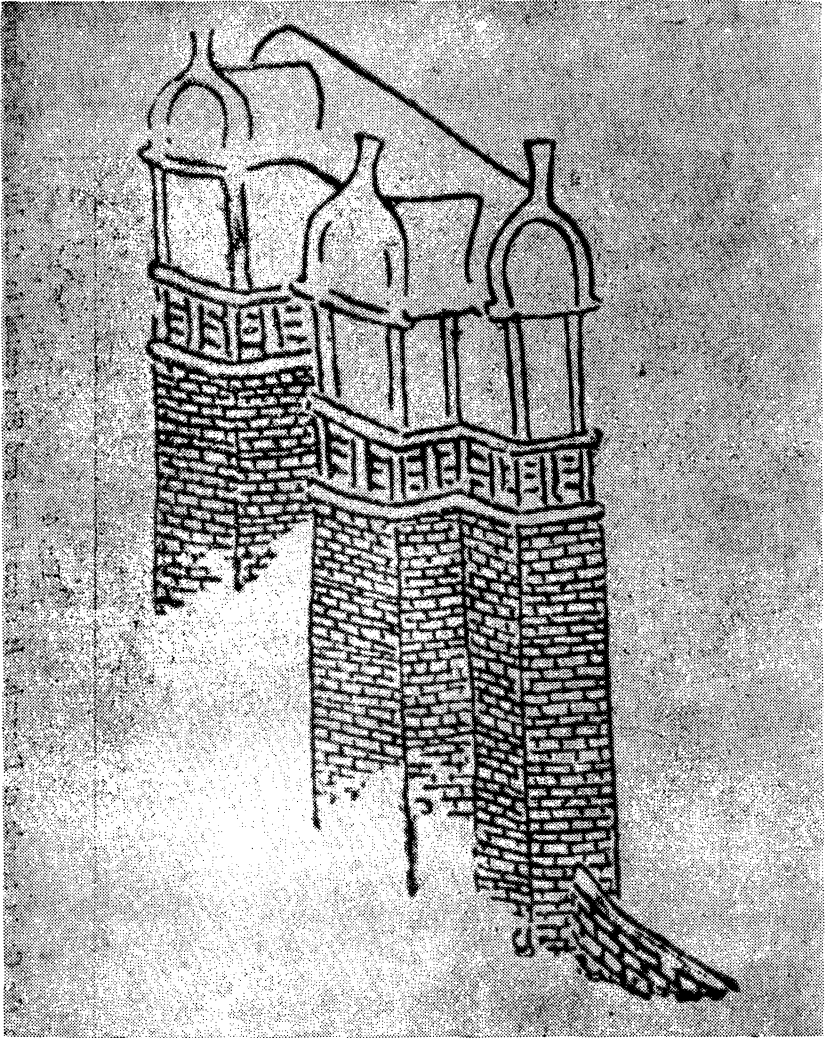


Fig. 5

Gateway of Amaravati city, showing attaka sala (JOI, XIII, ii, 1939).

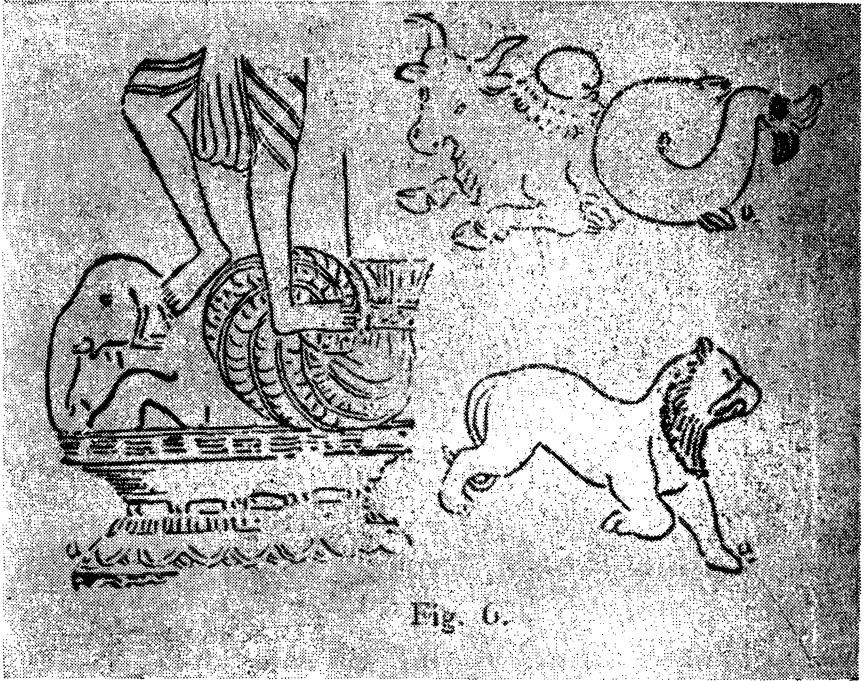


Fig. 6.

Fig. 6
*Animals with fish body, from (1) Bharhut, (2) Amaravati,
(3) Jagayyapetta (JOI, XIII, ii, 1939).*

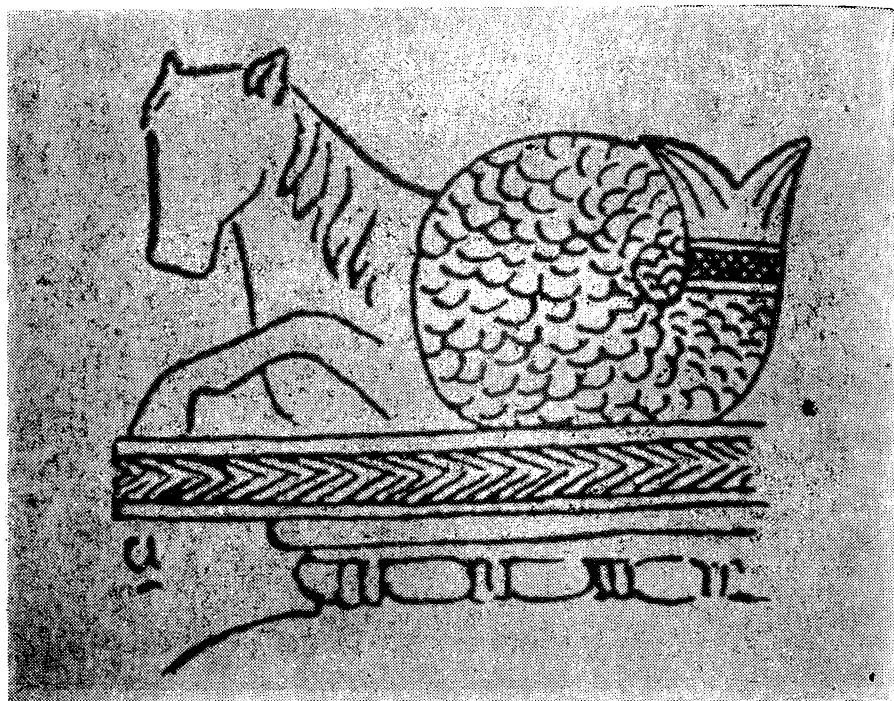


Fig. 7

Horse with the body of a fish, from Amaravati (JOI, XIV, iii, 1940),

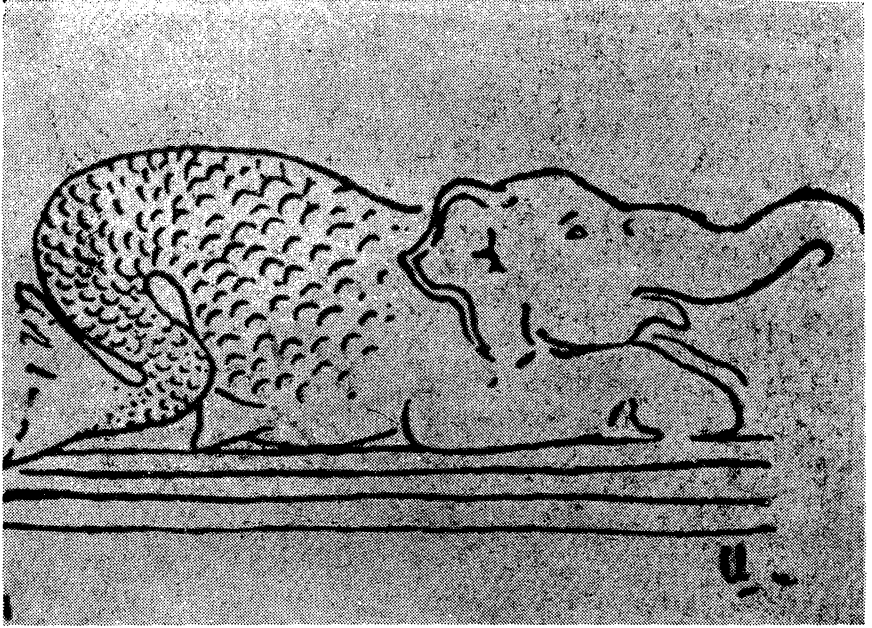


Fig. 8

Elephant with the body of a fish, from Amaravati (JOI, XIV, iii, 1940).



Fig. 9

Ihamriga: Vyala rider from Sanchi (JOI, XIV, iii, 1940).

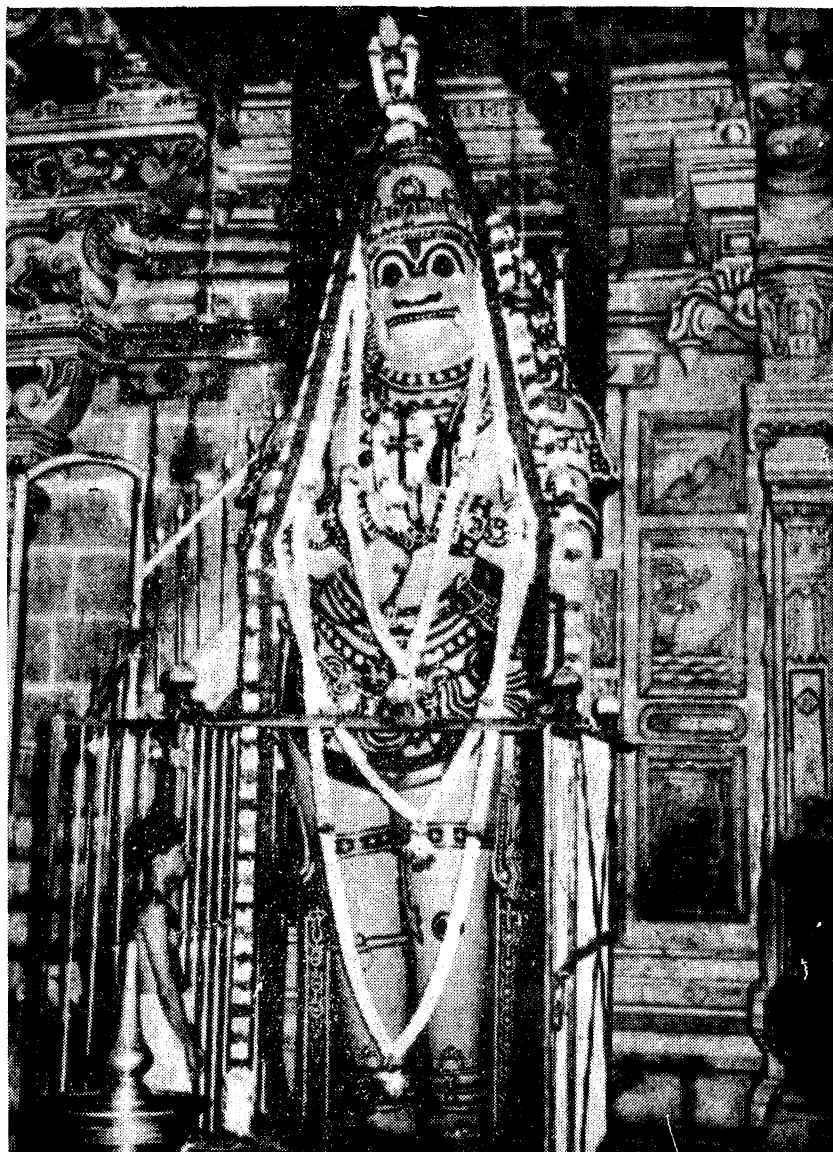


Fig. 10

“Hanuman grows”, though shown in worshipping pose, from Suchindram temple, near Kanyakumari. The image is 16 ft. 4 in. high.

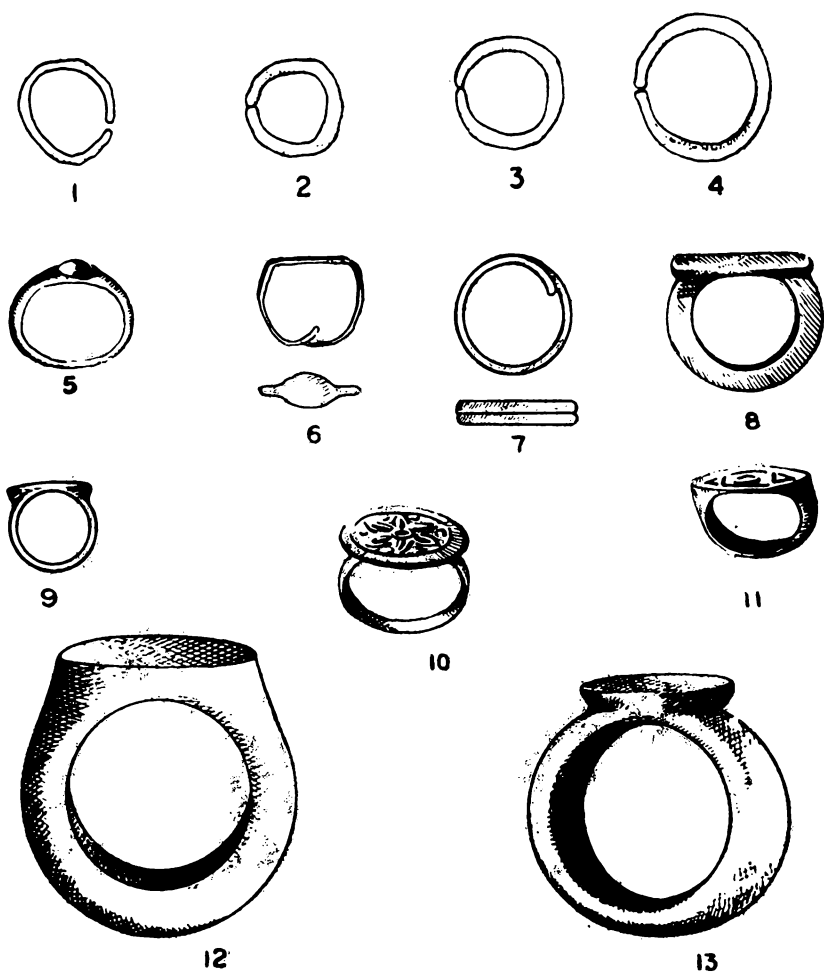


Fig. 11

Rings from Mohenjodaro, Harappa and other sites, 1-5: Mohenjodaro, Harappa. 8: Reconstructed ring (original half) from a late period III, Hastinapur. 9: Horn-ring from Period III, Hastinapur. 10: Signet-ring from Period I, Eran (on personal enquiry this statement was contradicted and we were told that the ring is from early historical levels).

12-13 from Taxila... c. 50 B.C.



Fig. 12

*Vali-Sukriva fight. Rama aiming an arrow.
Nageswara temple, Kumbakonam. c. 800 A.D.*



Fig. 13

Hanuman carrying Rama and Lakshmana. Nageswara temple, Kumbakonam.