

# **Epilogue of Ramayana**

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the sense of a monkey, as is evident from his use of its synonyms such as kapi, hari, shakhamriga and plavangama, which is a derivation of plava, 'jumping' which is freely used with reference to them. Hanuman reproves Sugriva for the levity of his mind and ascribes it to his monkey nature ( VR. 4. 2. 16 ).

Raama, when accused by Vali about his unknightly act, tells him that after all he is a vanara, a monkey.( VR. 4. 18. 36 ). When Hanuman is taken before Ravana after the destruction of Ashokvana, Ravana orders that his tail, which is the chief ornament of the monkey, should be set ablaze ( VR. 5. 53 ). Otherwise nowhere in the Kishkindhakanda is Vali, Sugriva or Hanuman described as having a tail. In order to explain their human behaviour, it is stated that they could assume any form at will. Thus when Hanuman went to meet Raama as told by Sugriva, he is said to have assumed the human form ( VR. 4. 5 ). On the other hand, Sugriva, Hanuman Vali and Tara as also other vanaras speak and argue like cultured men. Vali is said to be extremely wise, mahaprajna, equal of Indra in valour and proficient in warfare ( VR. 4. 11 ). Vali's wife Tara is said to be a devout woman, tapasvini ( VR. 4. 18 ). Sugriva is compared to Indra, when he is annomated as king ( VR. 4. 25 ) and said to be the Lord of vanaras and rikshas ( VR 4. 28 ). Sugriva's two ministers, who got to receive an angry Lakshmana along with Angada, are said to be his councillors in polity and righteens conduct, mantrinau arthadharmayah ( VR. 4. 30 ) All these passages make them out as human beings and not monkeys. The ecological conditions in the Doab were primitive in the days of Valmiki. According to Panikkar, during the period of Raama's story, the colonisation of the plains had not been complete and the great centres of ashrama life were deep in the forest in the heart of Hindustan.<sup>1</sup>

1. Panikkar, K. M. Geographical Factors in Indian History, p. 50.