

THE RIDDLE OF THE *RĀMĀYANA*

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picious conjunctions of the planets in *rāśis* at the time of Rāma's birth and the one which contains a direct condemnation of Buddha are not found (as Mr. Abhyankar has pointed out) in this edition and these *ślokas* might have, therefore, been introduced in the Bombay edition still later. As a matter of fact we have already noticed in the body of the book that the *Rāmāyana* is being added to all along.

It is suggested by Mr. Abhyankar that Gorresio's text is the older and the more reliable of the two. We have already stated that this division of text and arrangement took place after the last compilation of the *Rāmāyana* had been made about 100 B.C. In both countries *viz.*, Bengal and Southern India this last compilation was subsequently subjected here and there to prunings and minor additions. But we believe that while more additions have been made in the South, in Bengal the text has been pruned with more liberty. We took the trouble of looking into the Bengal text to see how many of the *ślokas* which preserve ideas older than the last compilation and on which we have based much of our criticism in both its parts, can be found in that text. And strangely enough we found that many of these *ślokas* have been pruned and corrected in the Bengal text, so as to come into line with modern feeling. We give below these *ślokas*, for the sake of comparison.

ĀDI OR BĀLAKĀṆḌA

1. दशवर्षसहस्राणि दशवर्षशतानि च ।

रामो राज्यमुपासित्वा ब्रह्मलोकं प्रयास्यति ॥

is found in both.

2. When Nārada in the first *sarga* tells Rāma's story in short to Vālmīki the Bengal text adds

नारदस्य तु तद्वाक्यं श्रुत्वा वाक्यविशारदः ।

वाल्मीकिः शिष्यसहितो विस्मयं परमं ययौः ॥

This clearly shows that Vālmīki did not know Rāma's story.

3. मा निषाद प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः etc. is found in both.

4. Brahmā says to Vālmīki

वृत्तं प्रथय रामस्य यथा ते नारदाच्छ्रुतम् ।
 सर्वं विदितमेतत्ते मत्प्रसादाद्भ्रुविष्यति ।
 वैदेह्याश्चैव यद्वृत्तं प्रकाशं यदि वा रहः ॥

This strengthens the idea that Vālmīki did not know Rāma's story as also the following *śloka*

श्रुत्वा पूर्वं काव्यबीजं देवर्षेर्नारदादृषिः ॥
 लोकादन्विष्य भूयश्च चरितं चरितव्रतः ॥

5. The subjects of the Uttarakāṇḍa in the chapter of table of contents are given as follows :

राक्षसानां समुत्पत्तिं रावणस्य जयं तथा ।
 सीतायाश्च परित्यागं प्रकृतीनां च रंजनम् ॥
 प्राप्ताराज्यस्य रामस्य चरितं यच्च श्रीमतः ।
 अथागमनमृषीणां च शत्रुघ्नस्य विसर्जनम् ।
 वने प्रसूतिं सीताया लवणस्य रणे वधम् ॥
 कालदुर्वाससोः प्राप्तिः लक्ष्मणस्य विसर्जनम् ।
 स्थापयित्वा यथा पुत्रान् रामो राज्ये दिवं गतः ॥

6. The extent of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is given as 24,000 *ślokas*, the same as in the Bombay edition.

चतुर्विंशतिसाहस्रं सर्वपापभयावहम् ।

7. Śāntā and Ṛṣyaśṛṅga *ākhyānas* come before the advice of Vasiṣṭha. This is a correction over the Bombay edition. But the *putreṣṭi* sacrifice all the same seems to be superfluous as the Ṛṣis who performed the Aśvamedha, when they left, promised four sons to Daśaratha.

8. Kausalyā killing the sacrificial horse with three strokes of her sword has been changed. This is an improvement over the original text.

कौसल्या तं ह्यं तत्र परिगम्य प्रदक्षिणाम्
 अर्धव्युसहिता चैनं समालभ्य शुचिद्रता ॥
 रजनीं पर्युपास्तैका कौशल्या पुत्रकाम्यया

9. Rāma was born of half the spirit of Viṣṇu as in the Bombay text विष्णोर्वीर्याद्धतो जज्ञे रामो राजीवलोचनः.

10. The *śloka* in the Bombay edition which betrays the interpolated nature of the *ślokas* and gives Sitā's age of marriage as six (see Appendix 6) is pruned in the

Bengal text in deference to the prevailing custom of child marriage in Bengal

अभिवाद्याभिवाद्यांश्च तत्र पूज्यान् गुरुंस्ततः ।
रेमिरे मुदितास्तत्र भर्तृप्रियहिते रताः ॥

11. Ahalyā's story is the same. She is not transformed into a stone.

तप्यमाना निरालंबा सततं भूमिशायिता । (Ayodhyākāṇḍa)

12. Daśaratha is said to be अनेकवर्षशतिकः वृद्धोस्यद्य नरेश्वर. This is less hyperbolic than वर्षाणामयुतं ययौ.

13. Kausalyā is not performing a sacrifice when Rāma sees her

ददर्श याचमानां तु देवतावेश्मनि श्रियम् ।
प्राणायामेन पुरुषं ध्यायन्ती सा जनार्दनम् ॥

This is perfectly modern as also the following

अकरोत्प्रयता पूजां देवानां नियतव्रता ।

14. The extremely interesting *śloka* about Rāma having many wives is suitably pruned

ऋद्वियुक्ता श्रिया जुष्टा रामपत्नी भविष्यति ।
कल्याणि त्वसमृद्धा हि स्नुषा ते च भविष्यति ॥

15. Rāma's character, when he sees Sitā after the order for his banishment is represented as more stern. ततो विवृततां गतः is not to be found.

16. आर्यपुत्र कथं चोरमहं बध्नामि शंस मे is less poetical than in the other text and she puts the garment on herself.

17. Sitā's prayer to the Ganges as she crosses it, is a change from a propitiation by *sura* to one by sacrifice.

18. The long-metred *śloka* about the Vatsas after the contradictory preceding line अद्य दुःखं तु वैदेही वनवासस्य वेत्स्यति is not found in Gorresio's text.

19. The interpolated *sarga* containing the famous *śloka* त्वदर्थमिव विन्यस्तः शिलापट्टोऽयमग्रतः quoted by Bhavabhūti and the काक and इषीकास्त्र stories are found in this text also. This probably shows that divergence of text took place after Bhavabhūti.

20. The कच्चिद् chapter is found but is not followed by

प्रष्टं समुपचक्रमे but by Bharata telling straight the news of Daśaratha's death. लक्ष्मण उवाच is hereafter strangely added contrary to the general way of introducing speeches in the *Rāmāyaṇa* which does not use this form but has a *śloka* instead.

21. Jābāli gives the same tirade against religion and *śrāddha*.

22. The *śloka* about बुद्ध is not found.

23. The *śloka* which refers to the वराह Avatāra is suitably changed in this text. Instead of ततःसमभवद्ब्रह्मा स्वयंभूदेवतैःसह we have ततः समभवद्ब्रह्मा स्वयंभूविष्णुरव्ययः and then follows

स वराहोय भूत्वेमामुजहार वसुंधराम् ।
असृजच्च जगत्सर्वं सचराचरमव्ययम् ॥

24. The story of *pādukas* being given to Bharata is somewhat different. Śarabhaṅga sent कुशपादुका at the same time by accident which Vasiṣṭha asked Rāma to give to Bharata.

ARANYAKĀṆḌA

25. Sītā's story about her marriage told to Anasūyā is in the same words. अथ दीर्घस्य कालस्य राघवोयं महाद्युतिः is also found there (see Appendix 6).

26. Rāma says the same incongruous words to Śarabhaṅga.

अहमेवाहरिष्यामि स्वयं लोकान्महामुने ।
आवासं त्विहमिच्छामि प्रदिष्टमिह कानने ॥

27. We have the same tirade against slaughter from Sītā cautioning Rāma against fighting with the Rākṣasas.

28. Rāvaṇa and Mārīca discussing the possibility of Sītā's abduction, before Śūrpaṇakhā suggests it, is not to be found herein.

29. The *śloka* which suggests the interpolated nature of the story of the golden deer is partly found and partly omitted. We simply find आगमिष्यति मे भर्ता वन्यमादाय पुष्कलम् but not रुरुन् गोघान् etc.

KIṢKINDHĀKĀṆḌA

30. The interpolated geographical chapters are found in the same manner, Daṇḍakāraṇya and the Godāvārī being twice mentioned, once in the south and again in the east.

31. तत्रासीनं नगस्याग्रे मलयस्य महौजसः

द्रक्ष्यथादित्यसंकाशमगस्त्यमृषिसत्तमम् ।

is also found in this text.

32. The contradiction in Sugrīva first saying "I do not know Rāvaṇa's abode" and subsequently in this geographical chapter saying "Laṅkā is that Rākṣasa's abode" is found here also. We have the same two *ślokas* in the same two places.

न जाने निलयं तस्य सर्वथा पापरक्षसः

सामर्थ्यं विक्रमं वापि दौष्कुलेयस्य वा कुलम् ॥

यत्र देवैरवध्यस्य रावणस्य दुरात्मनः ।

राक्षसाधिपतेर्वासः श्रूयते वानरर्षभाः ॥

SUNDARAKĀṆḌA

33. The *śloka* about Sitā performing *sandhyā* has been carefully omitted here. But it is difficult to conceive how Māruti expected her there. We have simply the line—इह सा राममहिषी नूनमेष्यति जानकी.

34. No mention is made in this text also of the finding of Rāmeśvara temple or of stones floating on the sea.

YUDDHAKĀṆḌA

35. Māruti brings a mountain-top from गङ्गमादन but the name Droṇagiri does not occur.

36. The heads of Rāvaṇa are cut off in the same way and grow again. We have the same *śloka*,

तच्छिरः पतितं भूमौ दृष्टं लोकैस्त्रिभिस्तदा ।

तथैव सदृशं चान्यद्रावणस्योत्थितं शिरः ॥

37. The following *śloka* suitably altered is found

तस्य क्रुद्धस्य नेत्रेभ्यःप्रापतस्त्र्यम्बुबिन्दवः

दीपेभ्य इव दीप्तेभ्यः सार्षिषःस्नेहबिन्दवः ॥

But a little before this we have तस्य क्रुद्धस्य ते नेत्रे रक्ते क्रोधाग्निना पुनः. And also when Rāvaṇa's widows are wailing

उत्क्षिप्य च भुजौ काचिद् भूमौ विपरिवर्तते
काचिदंके शिरःकृत्वा रुरोद भृशमीक्षती ॥

38. We have as in the other text, the mention of मंदोदरी once only; also Daśaratha appearing before Rāma; also Rāma asking Brahmadeva who he is and the same *stuti* by Brahmā.

39. Rāma does not say to Sīta as they are returning in the *vimāna* अत्र पूर्वं महादेवः प्रसादमकरोन्मम but on the contrary says what had actually taken place before : viz. —

अत्राहं शयितो देवि कुशास्तीर्णे महीतले ।
दर्शनार्थं समुद्रस्य त्रिरात्रं नररूपिणः ॥

40. In the last benediction we have the moderate praise आसीद्दर्शशतायुश्च तथा पुत्रसहस्रवान्.

41. We have the very suggestive *śloka* as in the other text, आदिकाव्यं महच्चैतत्पुरा वाल्मीकिना कृतम्.

Before finishing this, we may give the extents of the two versions as given by Mr. Abhyankar :

Kāṇḍa	Bengal Version		Bombay Version	
	Chapters	Ślokas	Chapters	Ślokas
Bāla or Ādi	80	2292	77	2250
Ayodhyā	127	4121	119	4350
Araṇya	79	2842	75	2445
Kiṣkindhā	63	2302	67	2467
Sundara	95	3300	68	2815
Yuddha	113	4936	133	6198
Uttara			111	4003
Total	557	19793	650	24528

The excess of chapters and *ślokas* in the Bombay edition over that declared in the poem itself viz., 50 in the former and 528 in the latter has, we believe, compelled

the commentators to declare certain chapters and *ślokas* as interpolated.

2

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RĀMOPĀKHYĀNA OF THE MAHĀBHĀRATA AND THE RĀMĀYAṆA

The following differences can be marked in the story of the Rāmopākhyāna (महाभारत-वनपर्व) and that of the present *Rāmāyaṇa* showing how the latter has increased the marvellous element.

1. Sītā is said to be the daughter of Janaka but no mention is made of her being born of the earth.

विदेहराजजनकः सीता तस्यात्मजा विभो ।

यां चकार स्वयं त्वष्टा रामस्य महिषी प्रिया ॥

This does not state that she was अयोनिजा but the commentator thinks otherwise.

2. The birth of Rāvaṇa is differently given

स राजराजो लंकायां न्यवसन्नरवाहनः

राक्षसीः प्रददौ तिस्रः पितुर्वै परिचारिकाः ।

पुष्पोत्कटा च राका च मालिनी च विशांपते

पुष्पोत्कटायां जज्ञाते कुंभकर्णदशग्रीवौ ॥

मालिनी जनयामास पुत्रमेकं विभीषणम् ।

राकायां मिथुनं जज्ञे खरशूर्पणखे तथा ॥

3. Rāma is an Avatāra of Viṣṇu. But the story of the पायस is not given in the Rāmopākhyāna.

4. The रथ of Rāvaṇa is not mentioned at the time of Sītā's abduction. He flew into the sky taking Sītā by the hair—मूर्धजेषु निजग्राह ऊर्ध्वमाचक्रमे ततः.

5. The story of the building of the *setu* is behind as well as a little ahead of the *Rāmāyaṇa*; the Sea showed himself to Rāma in a dream and told him that Nala should build a *setu*. The story of Rāma's taking out an arrow in anger against the Sea is not given. The story of stones floating on water not found in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, may perhaps have been suggested by the following *śloka*—

यत्काष्ठं वार्तृणं वापि शिला 'क्षेप्यते मयि ।
सर्वं तद्धारयिष्यामि स ते सेतुर्भाष्यति ॥

Curiously enough the proposal to cross the sea in boats is here discussed and disposed of by Rāma as follows

नावो न संति सेनाया बव्ह्यस्तारयितुं क्षमाः ।
वणिजामुपघातं च कथमस्मद्विघश्चरेत् ।
विस्तीर्णं चैव सैन्यं च हन्याच्छिद्रेण वै रिपुः ॥

The *setu* is still known, says the *Mahābhārata*,
दशयोजनविस्तारमायतं दशयोजनम् ।
नलसेतुरितिख्यातो योऽद्यापि प्रथितो भुवि ॥

6. Kumbhakarna is killed here by Lakṣmaṇa.

7. Indrajit fought unseen and made Rāma and his brother insensible. They were brought round by Sugrīva with the aid of herbs used with supernatural incantations

विशल्यो चापि सुग्रीवः क्षणेनेतौ चकार ह ।
विशल्यया महौषध्या दिव्यमंत्रप्रयुक्तया ॥

There is no mention of the *Sañjīvanī* herb being brought from the Himalayas by Māruti.

8. Rāvaṇa is said to have been simply burnt alive by *brahmāstra*. There is no mention of his heads being cut off several times and new heads rising in their place as stated in the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki.

9. Sītā does not go through fire ordeal but there is an *ākāśavāṇī* of Vāyu and Agni testifying to her purity.

3

SOME EXCELLENT SAYINGS IN THE RĀMĀYAṆA

मा निषाद प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः शाश्वतीः समाः ।
यत्क्रौंचमिथुनादेकमवधीः काममोहितम् ॥
धिग्बलं क्षत्रियबलं ब्रह्मतेजोबलं बलम् ।
सह रंस्ये त्वया वीर वनेषु मधुगंधिषु ॥
रामं दशरथं विद्धि मां विद्धि जनकात्मजाम् ।
अयोध्यामटवीं विद्धि गच्छ तात यथासुखम् ॥