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Another Story: Re-composing the *Rāmāyaṇa*

Abstract

As the *Rāmāyaṇa* developed from an unfamiliar romance into a well-known, well-loved classic, successive presenters had to adopt new narrative strategies to maintain its audience appeal. Extracts could now be performed, allowing for much addition to the earlier text – new material and expansion of existing passages (identified in broad terms by their more elaborate diction). New episodes were included and others repeated or imitated, but the general lines of the plot remained unalterable. Episodes were now located in chronologically correct order, but creative authors were able to use their audiences' knowledge of the plot affectively. Older material was not discarded; the unitary text was becoming a compilation. Anomalies were corrected and new ones introduced. Beautiful lyrical passages were incorporated alongside banal lists. Character portrayals were given sharper definition, but society's changing values meant that the good fighter was now also expected to be a good man.

Study of the patterns of composition used by classical Sanskrit dramatists to present their plots has been an important part of Professor Byrski's long and varied career. This article will explore compositional techniques in an allied field, the oral presentation of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and I count it a privilege to have been asked to contribute it to this volume in his honour.

In a paper presented to the 13th World Sanskrit Conference, I explored the narrative strategies employed by the authors of the earliest layers of the *Rāmāyaṇa* now recoverable (Mary Brockington *pending*). This material has been identified according to strict linguistic criteria and the picture of the story as it was developed in the first couple of centuries of its existence that emerges is clear, if necessarily not completely precise (John Brockington 1985; Brockington and Brockington 2006: 373-378). At this early period this taut, coherent romance was still relatively unknown and could be presented fresh to audiences by means of a series of carefully contrived surprise developments of plot and characterisation. Once the plot became well known, however, and the surprises no longer surprised, the story might have been in danger of losing its appeal, the victim of its own popularity; the fact that

this did not happen, but that generations of subsequent poets, artists, sculptors, dramatists, dancers and practitioners in all branches of the arts and a multitude of languages continued to renew, refresh and embellish the original (as they still continue to do), gives testimony to its sustained popularity, but the opportunities offered by that popularity were balanced by the constraints it imposed. The later composers had to use different tactics.

The period from roughly the third century BC to the first AD may be thought of as the second stage in a continuous process of development, although the boundaries should not be rigidly applied, for the text had clearly been evolving since soon after its initial composition. The alterations attributable to this second stage, expressed in discernible changes in diction, also reveal a significant shift in the prevalent ethical framework in which these poets were working.¹ They are listed at the end of this article, with comments on representative passages.

The crucial factor in the second stage of development is that the story of Rāma continued to be presented live – as the equivalent of a single-voice drama – but that now the plot was so well known, there was no longer any need to perform the work in its entirety. The context had been firmly fixed in the audience's consciousness, so that extracts could be performed to a more relaxed schedule and elaborated in new and interesting ways; a more discursive style came to supplement the earlier taut narration. The text found in the Baroda Critical Edition, *kāṇḍas* 2 to 6, cannot be the record of a single performance, not only because of its length. It represents a compilation of the core story and the contributions of many later poets of varied interests and competence, and there is little evidence that these later poets knew each others' work; alternative versions of individual episodes are found which would not both have been performed on the same occasion. Such alternatives occurred even in the first stage,² pointing to the conclusion that from a very early point in the history of the Rāma story there had been no unitary text, but a series of parallel versions ("variants", in folk narrative terminology). We should think not of *the Rāmāyaṇa*, but of many *Rāmāyaṇas*.

In this article, I examine the purpose and effect of different kinds of alterations introduced in the *śloka* verses attributable to the second stage, excluding the verses in longer metres added at the end of many *sargas* throughout the poem and interspersed in a few, which form a different category requiring separate study. These alterations consist both of new material (relatively easy to identify) and the elaboration of existing passages, where it is now much more difficult, if not impossible, to isolate the older stratum. The general lines of the story remain clear, however: evidently it was now too well-known to allow its basic lines to be modified without raising objections from the audience, objections which could have been forcefully expressed in the context of oral presentation. There is a great variety of new material, narrative, lyrical and interpretive, but it seems that nothing found in the repertoire of the earlier tellers could be discarded. Passages in the obsolescent diction of the first stage were not reworded but retained alongside the

¹ The changing patterns of society, material and religious culture and environmental awareness revealed by this second stage are explored in detail by John Brockington (1985).

² E.g. Kabandha's contradictory accounts of his history at 3,67.1-6 and 7-17.

newer material; distinct shifts of vocabulary and usage between the two stages have been observed (John Brockington 1985: 16-61). Constrained though they were by the story they had inherited and its old-fashioned values, successive poets accepted the constraints and took up the challenge they imposed, eager to display their own poetic talents or to demonstrate their ethical insights.

The more relaxed performance schedule allowed the poets to create totally new incidents, revealed not only by their later style but by the absence of any reference to them elsewhere in the text. Most of these new narrative elements relate to the basic story of Rāma: the number of in-tales incorporated at this period, whether the product of the poets' own creativity or repeated from other sources, was relatively small compared with those later to appear in the *Bāla-* and *Uttara-kāṇḍas*. In these new episodes the narrators could again use the surprise element employed to such striking effect by their predecessors in the first stage, although the effect is sometimes jarring, for they had little opportunity to prepare their audiences for developments such as Rāma's repudiation of Sītā. In the core narrative the audience's knowledge of the plot offered contrasting possibilities. It could be used creatively to produce a more poignant kind of tension, a sense of foreboding or pathetic irony; conversely, episodes which had been deferred by the first-stage poets as part of their surprise tactics, or omitted in the interest of moving the story on – "missing bits" (now already known to the audience) – were elaborately filled in, often robbing the text both of pace and dramatic impact, with the danger that it might as a result become banal. The impulse to locate episodes in the chronologically correct order did not extend, however, to any that were set before the beginning of the earlier story; these are presented as being recalled later by one of the characters, not narrated at the logically correct place by the impersonal authorial voice. Not until the third stage, the *Bāla-* and *Uttara-kāṇḍas*, is the story of Rāma extended backwards or forwards, although elements of the conclusion to the *Yuddha-kāṇḍa* are transitional between the second and third stages. Where there was no obvious gap in the narrative thread to be exploited, repetition and imitation were often employed. Past events already known to the audience were reported *in extenso* by one character to another,³ or repeated in slightly different form; in the case of duels, the earlier one, necessarily indecisive (since both participants must be kept alive until their final encounter), must normally be reckoned to be the later composition.

Errors and anomalies of detail are features typical of oral composition and presentation; in a fast-moving, unified work such as the first stage of the *Rāmāyaṇa* minor lapses of memory on the part of the poet are to be expected and are likely to escape the audience's notice. By the time of the second stage, fragmentation, both of composition and performance, increased the likelihood both that such discrepancies would occur and that they would escape detection, yet the blatant nature of some anomalies points to compilation of the text by redactors concerned only to preserve all relevant material,

³ Verbatim reports of actions, messages, battles etc. are a common feature of early oral literature in general and not necessarily a mark of multiple authorship. What is at issue here is reports or repeated narrations of the same or similar material made in an identifiably later style.

however contradictory. Fragmentation of the text occasionally diverted authors' attention from the overall picture: participants in the plot, not merely the audience, might be presented as knowing details of events that they had no opportunity of knowing. On the other hand, anomalies and improbabilities detected in the first stage could be corrected or explained away in second-stage expansions, no doubt in response to interaction with audiences who, no longer impatient to hear the end of the story, could reflect in more leisurely fashion on its details.

The second-stage poets employed a diction that was more elaborate than that of their predecessors, but had not yet developed the full complexities of Classical Sanskrit, and they exploited the more relaxed schedule available to them to expand the text with non-narrative elements of all kinds: extended ornamentation, lyrical passages of great beauty, formulaic descriptions or mere lists. Too often these lists are the product of lazy or unskilled poets intent on filling out first- or second-stage text with a display of erudition of no intrinsic merit, succeeding only in holding up the narrative or detracting from more poetic passages. Descriptions of nature often reinforce or contrast with the condition of the heroes or evoke their emotions. As one example, in Lakṣmaṇa's rhapsody on the delights of winter (3,15, when the exiles' thoughts turn to their family in Ayodhyā as the expected end of their exile draws near) the intrinsic beauty of his poem is enhanced by our knowledge that the illusion of calm is doomed to be shattered in the very next *sarga* by Śūrpaṇakhā's devastating irruption. The most dramatic points of the narrative were a natural focus for the later poets' attentions, to the extent that they sometimes overwhelmed and obscured the original plot and any material surviving from the first stage cannot be identified with certainty. The structure of the rest of the poem and individual references make it clear, however, that this extensive re-working has not significantly altered the general lines of the plot: only details can have been modified. Kaikeyī's scheming somehow causes Rāma's exile, and Hanumān is somehow captured and brought before Rāvaṇa. Kumbhakarna is woken and killed, but we must be grateful that the poet who elaborated these passages did not also feel he could improve on the refreshingly intimate first-stage conversation where Rāvaṇa opens his heart to his grumpy younger brother and wheedles him into entering the battle (6,50).

Character portrayals were given sharper definition with much additional material, generally intensifying the picture established in the first stage; lengthy speeches, laments and consolations (set pieces particularly suitable for oral performance) padded out the earlier terse narrative. Again, the fixed framework of the inherited story provided both constraints and opportunities for creativity: the chief characters could not take on a totally different *persona*, but they could now appear in a more rounded, more sympathetic form, briefly indulging their weaker, more human impulses, for the audience knew that they would ultimately rise above the temptation to give way to despair or ungoverned rage. The effect of this process was to refresh the well-worn story and prevent it from becoming stale; successive audiences could find something new and stimulating in what was now turning from an old tale into a classic.

At all stages of the narrative's development, Rāma has been presented as the supreme exponent of contemporary values. But values change from generation to generation, and in some cases actions or opinions of Rāma that had been appropriate to the heroic ethos of the early poets were no longer compatible with the developing standards of an age with a different code of ethics and a gradually increasing pre-occupation with religious activity and ritual purity. Offensive elements inherited from the past were not eliminated but explained and excused: problems discovered in the hero's character were neither ignored nor avoided, but tackled head-on and with vigour. In the first stage Rāma had exemplified the warrior virtues and his twin aims were personal: to maintain his father's integrity by living peaceably in the forest, and to rescue Sītā. He hunted game to feed his family; he fought to protect them; and when he fought, he fought to win by whatever means he could. Audiences applauded his skill, courage, determination and loyalty. By the second stage the changing moral climate meant that the good fighter had also to be a good man according to a more altruistic set of values: he must fight successfully, but he must fight fairly, and a social dimension was introduced, with the suggestion that killing Rāvaṇa and other *rākṣasas* to protect ascetics, long before they pose any personal threat to him, is his prime purpose. A number of second-stage developments emphasise the threat posed by generalised *rākṣasa* activity to the well-being of ascetics living in the forest and to their ability to conduct religious rites without interference, even before the sudden irruption of Śūrpaṇakhā and the consequent battle with Khara. Now that audiences knew what was going to happen, stray allusions to *rākṣasas* from the end of the *Ayodhya-kāṇḍa* onwards must have sent shivers down the spine of the hearers, contributing in a different way to the dramatic effect. Killing Rāvaṇa and other *rākṣasas* to protect the ascetics becomes a major goal alongside rescuing Sītā, with hints in a few passages that this was the whole purpose of Rāma's stay in the forest, and that Sītā's capture merely provided the opportunity. The growing association with ascetics and their aims focuses attention more closely on Rāma's own conduct, and one-sided debates are devised to show that his actions do not in fact conflict with the moral standards now prevailing. Where these debates concern elements introduced in the second stage and therefore conforming to its *mores*, such as Rāma's willingness to fight on behalf of the forest ascetics, the efforts of the apologists are more convincing than when they attempt to explain away incidents inherited from the first stage and now viewed as inappropriate, the prime example being Rāma's concealed intervention in the fight between Sugrīva and Vālin, an incident that has continued to attract criticism.⁴ In cases where leading characters are undeniably at fault, a number of expedients are adopted to divert the blame, or to excuse the act, whether the action was considered blameworthy in the first stage (Daśaratha exiling Rāma) or not (Rāma killing Vālin). This new ethos can come to override the poets' vision of the poem as a whole: Rāma's first-stage integrity in supporting his father in a badly wrong action is diminished when that action comes to be regarded as venial, and this pre-occupation

⁴ Cf. Arjuna's stinging criticism of Yudhiṣṭhira's lie to Droṇa – that it will earn him universal disgrace, like Rāma's killing of Vālin – in a late part of the *Mahā-bhārata* (7.1375*). The handling of the Vālin-Sugrīva episode in the Vālmiki *Rāmāyaṇa* and by Kampan, Tulsī and Subramanya is examined by S.A. Srinivasan (1984).

with ethics rather than action can at times override or distort the poets' vision of the story as a whole, a danger made all the greater by fragmentation of the text in performance. Overwhelmingly, these new values are propagated by narrative means – by new episodes or by debates – but a relatively negligible amount of didactic material is also introduced, usually on the most tenuous pretext. In this respect the contrast with the *Mahā-bhārata*, at least in its developed form, is striking.

All the more striking is the absence throughout the *Rāmāyaṇa* until a very late stage of any allusion to the *Mahā-bhārata* or its characters despite the facts that the diction of the two works was beginning to draw closer together and that multiple references to the Rāma story are found in the *Mahā-bhārata* (John Brockington 1998: 481-484 and 1985/2000; Mary Brockington 2006). While it could perhaps be held that the first stage of the *Rāmāyaṇa* was composed too early for its authors to be aware of the *Mahā-bhārata*, the same cannot be true of the second, and we are left with the impression that, for reasons not at all clear, these poets and their successors (or the compilers) deliberately avoided or excluded any reference to the other text.

The figure of Hanumān presents a similar but contrary hint that sectarian rivalry was operating. In the first stage of the *Rāmāyaṇa* his exploits had been more spectacular than was consistent with his status as merely one among Sugrīva's captains. In the *Mahā-bhārata* his prominence is considerably diminished, and he is completely eliminated from the many allusions in the *Hari-vaṃśa* to the Rāma story (John Brockington 2004; Mary Brockington 2005). In *Rāmāyaṇa* second-stage passages his importance is considerably enhanced, reflecting the beginning of the process which was to transform him from one of Sugrīva's captains into a major warrior-deity in his own right.

It is worth emphasising that from its conception in about the fifth century BC right up to the present day the story of Rāma has been constantly and gradually evolving. There are no sharp boundaries between the stages, and most types of narrative and stylistic innovation characteristic of the second stage have limited precedents in at least the later parts of the first, merely becoming intensified in the second, with the changing pattern of performance being perhaps the most significant facilitator of change. More sharply defined is the effect of the developing ethical climate: the early plot and basic characterisation had been retained, but adapted to give them a new slant more relevant to the changing circumstances in a process which was to continue to develop through several more stages. It was still the story of Rāma the steadfast warrior, but it was now another story – or rather, set of stories – together forming the story of Rāma the virtuous and steadfast warrior.

But it was still a story with no beginning and no end ...

Passages that include material composed in the second stage

For detailed argumentation see John Brockington 1985: 329-346, supplemented 2006, summarised in Brockington and Brockington 2006: 373-378.

Śloka passages:

2,1-30; 31.1-12; 32.21; 40.13-30; 46-47; 57-58; 61; 65-69; 73.16-17; 74-75; 76.1-16; 77.12-15; 82.5-8; 85; 88-89; 92; 94-95; 98; 100-2; 103.1-11; 104.1-8; 106-8; 110-11.
 3,1-4; 5.1-5; 8-11; 13; 14.15-18; 15; 22.26-29; 25; 28-30; 33; 36.20-27; 40; 44-45; 46.1; 50; 53; 58; 60; 71.
 4,1.35-40; 13; 17-18; 19.1; 21; 23-24; 27-30; 32.10-11; 39-42; 49; 52.28-30; 53; 54.1-11b; 58-62; 65-66.
 5,1-8; 12-17; 26-27; 33-37; 43; 45-47; 51.31-33; 54-58.
 6,4-5; 15.16-17; 18; 23-24; 30-31; 35.23; 42.23; 46-48; 51-53; 55; 57-63; 70-73; 79-82; 87; 90-91; 102-7; 108.1a; 109.22-26.

6,111-16 transitional between stages 2 and 3.

Plus all verses in longer metres throughout books 2-6 (*not studied in this article*).

Detailed comments on representative second-stage passages

I: NARRATIVE PASSAGES

I A: *New elements (Rāma story)*:

- 2,57-58: *Daśaratha's dying recollection of the curse he incurred in his youth by killing an ascetic boy*. Identified also by the lack of mention anywhere else in the text: it is incongruous that such a portentous event should have escaped Daśaratha's memory until this point. Purpose: to relieve Daśaratha of some blame for exiling Rāma (see III A). Effect: mention of king's death at v.56 robs the following *sarga* (59, stage 1) of some of its poignancy. Not placed in correct chronological sequence, before beginning of story (see I E).
- 2,110.51: *Lakṣmaṇa's marriage to Ūrmilā*. The only suggestion of this marriage before the third stage.
- 3,2-3: *Virādha attacks Sītā*. Doublet of the first-stage Kabandha episode, with which it is subsequently linked (5,14.8); references within first-stage passages may reflect the overlapping nature of the stages, but these could all be isolated later verses (5,24.15; 6,21.31; 6,96.26); see I C.
- 4,61: *Niśakara's prophecy*: Sāmpātī's wings will regrow as a suitable reward for his help (fulfilled 4,62.8-13); Indra will take divine food to Sītā in Lankā, so that she can maintain her purity by not having to eat food provided by Rāvaṇa (see III A and Lefebvre 1994: 349-350).

5,54.1-8; 5,56.138: *Hanumān revisits Sītā*.

6,31: *Aṅgada's embassy to Rāvaṇa*.

Duels against new opponents at 5,43; 6,46; 6,57-59 and 6,63.

6,103, 104 and 106 form an integrated narrative unit, each dependent on the others, conditioned by the development of stricter standards of purity (see III A) transitional between the second and third stages.

6,103: *Rāma repudiates Sītā*. Not so much a “surprise” as a complete mismatch with the whole of the rest of the poem, including such second-stage passages as 6,4.5 and 6,5.18-20, where Rāma envisages his joy at being reunited with Sītā, and of a totally different order from his realisation at 6,39.5-6 and 89.6-8 (both first stage) that he values his brother more than Sītā.

6,104: *Sītā's suicide*. Expressing her grief and disappointment that so much physical and emotional suffering should meet a reward so different from her legitimate expectations, her reaction, however, is completely in character with the woman who from the first stage repeatedly threatened suicide if she should be parted from Rāma; cf. 2,26.19; 3,43.24, 33-34.

6,106: *Agni restores Sītā*. A further “surprise” as the poet returns to the technique of plot reversal so favoured in the first stage.

6,111-16: *Return to Ayodhyā*. The opportunity for multiple recapitulations of the story. See also III D.

I B: *New elements (in-tales)*:

2,68.15-24: *Surabhi weeps over the suffering of two of her sons*. Illustrates Kausalyā's grief for Rāma; cf. the fuller version at Mbh 3,10.5-18 applied to Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Duryodhana.

2,102.3: *Varāha raises the Earth*. Not a tale, but a brief allusion to the more archaic form of this cosmogonic myth with Brahmā as protagonist.

3,10.5-19: *Māṇḍakarnī and Pañcāpsaras pool*. Pure ornamentation.

3,10.52-64: *Ilvala and Vātāpi defeated by Agastya*. Enhances the status of Agastya and therefore of the visitors he praises. A much longer variant with a different outcome occurs at Mbh 3,94-97. Both variants reveal that at this date it was still thought acceptable for brāhmins to eat meat.

3,33.27-35: *Garuḍa and banyan*: cf. Mbh 1,25.10-26.25. An attempt to locate the events in a mythological context; examined Feller 1999: 204.

4,13.12-27: *Sapta-jana hermitage*. Incongruous excursus between Sugrīva's two duels with Vālin simultaneously relieves and builds up the tension.

I C: *Allusions to future plot elements now known to audience*:

2,16.18: *Rāma will obey anything his father commands*. No command has yet been expressed, but the audience knows what it will be (see II E).

2,88-89: *The beauty of Citrakūṭa*. The audience knows the happiness expressed by Rāma will not last.

2,108: *Ascetics' fears*: Khara's preying on ascetics brought forward, with hint of threat to Sītā.

Beginning of book 3: *Much greater emphasis on rākṣasa hostility*. Virādha's attack on Sītā (3,2-3) foreshadows her abduction, and at 3,4.19 Indra tells Śarabhaṅga of Rāma's forthcoming task (see III B).

I D: *Irony*:

2,27.7-8 and 16: *Sītā declares she will not look at another man in the forest, to leave her behind is tantamount to giving her to others, and that Rāma will suffer no grief or displeasure on her account*.

2,88.17: *Rāma imagines that Bharata has been pleased to be appointed king*.

3,10.86: *Rāma declares he will spend the rest of his exile living near Agastya*.

3,15: *Lakṣmaṇa's rhapsody shows the exiles longing for home immediately before Śūrpanakhā's devastating irruption* (see II A).

5,8.49: *Hanumān mistakes Mandodarī for Sītā*.

I E: *Episodes now narrated in full and/or at right point in story*:

2,95: *Rāma enquires after Daśaratha, learns of his death from Bharata and performs the ritual offering*. Rāma's extravagant display of grief adds nothing to his stature; the queens' discovery of the *badam*-cake (2,96, first stage) loses its poignancy; curiously, though in 2,94.1-6 Rāma clearly assumes his father is still alive, the following "*kaccit*" material (vv.7-59) seems to imply that he thinks Bharata is now sole ruler.

2,107: *Bharata retires with army and slippers to Nandigrāma to take up the life of an ascetic*. Keeping this information from the audience until after the defeat of Rāvaṇa (as in the first stage) has become pointless, although it is still presented as a shock to Rāma (6,108.16 and 109.4-7; but see I H).

3,10.21-25: *Visits to various ascetics*. Pedantic filling in of the time that must elapse if the eventual return to Ayodhyā is to coincide with the stipulated end of the exile.

3,11.29-34: *Agastya gives Rāma weapons*. The unidentified "great sage" who had presented Rāma with the bow of Viṣṇu with which at 3,27.19 (first stage) he killed Khara is here identified with Agastya, who had been named at 6,97.4 as the donor of the arrow that killed Rāvaṇa. See also I J.

3,13: *Jaṭāyūs and Saṃpāti* (v.33) *introduced*. In the first stage they were not heard of before participating in the action at 3,48 and 4,55 respectively.

3,30: *Rāvaṇa introduced*. Audience familiarity, and the insertion of the second-stage 3,44-45 has robbed Rāvaṇa's earlier self-introduction (3,46.2-5) of much of its impact, making this passage appropriate.

4,28: *Hanumān prompts Sugrīva to muster vānaras before Lakṣmaṇa is sent to Kiṣkindhā*. Vindicates Sugrīva's statement at 4,36.10.

5,5.16-24: *Many new rākṣasas named*. Most occur only here.

See also I A 2,57-58.

I F: *Episodes reported, repeated, summarised or elaborated:*

<i>Second stage</i>	<i>First stage</i>
4,59.18-21; 4,60	4,57.4-7
5,33.25-41	4,2-6
5,33.57-61	4,55-57
5,36.12-54;	5,38; 5,63.19-23; 5,65
5,55-57	5,1-53
6,18	6,17.9-40
6,47	6,88; 6,90; 6,92-97
6,61	6,89.13-24
6,111; 6,114	See I A

I G: *Anomalies and contradictions suggest compilation:*

Age of Rāma: 2,17.26 and 3,45.10 (cf. 3,36.6) a notorious crux which it is unnecessary to resolve (see Pollock 1986: 358-360).

Two sets of divine weapons: 2,28.12-14 and 3,11.29-33.

Two variants of Virādha's identity: 3,3.5-6 and 18-21 (see Pollock 1991: 250-251).

Sītā refers to Daśaratha as if he is still alive: 3,8.25.

Was Kubera Vaiśravaṇa in Kailāsa (3,30.14; probably 5,7.7-8,11; all stage 2) *or Laṅkā* (3,46.5, stage 1; 5,2.20, stage 2) *when Rāvaṇa attacked him?*

Was Sītā wearing ornaments (5,13.39) *in the aśokavana or not* (5,13.35,37; 5,15.21,30; 5,17.5)? On the significance of Sītā's ornaments in more general terms see Hildebeitel 1980-81.

I H: *Plot elements improbably known to characters in poem:*

3,15.25-31: *Lakṣmaṇa knows Bharata is acting the ascetic*; see I E 2,107 and II A.

4,17.41-42: *Vālin claims he could have defeated Rāvaṇa for Rāma and rescued Sītā*; see III A 4,17-18.

I J: *Anomalies and improbable elements addressed:*

3,9.13-14: *explains why first-stage ascetics* (3,5.14-18) *do not protect themselves by their ascetic power*; but cf. 3,10.64 (Agastya blasts Ilvala).

2,28.13 and 3,11.30: *Rāma given inexhaustible quivers*; see I G.

4,62.6-7: *Sampāti asks his son why he did not rescue Sītā when he saw her being carried off* (4,58.6-22, also second stage).

5,35.22-64: *Hanumān offers to carry Sītā to Rāma himself; she refuses*.

6,104.11-14: *Sītā asks Rāma why he has left his repudiation of her so late* (see I A, III A).

II: LYRICAL ELABORATION

II A: *Lyrical expansions and ornamentation:*

Descriptions of forest, positive and negative (2,25.5-13; 2,88-89; 3,33; 4,13.5-10; 5,12; 5,13.1-17; 5,54.10-14); of people or animals (3,30; 3,33; 3,40.13-19; 3,44.15-30; 5,13.18-25; 5,15-17; 5,47); of towns or *āśramas* (2,106; 3,1; 3,53.4-16; 5,2-3; 5,5; 5,7); of seasons (3,15; 4,27, cf. first-stage 4,1; examined Feller 1995: 62-70); outpourings of emotion (2,69.14-28, cf. Mbh 13,95 and 96; 2,92.4-7; 3,45.29-39; 4,30.10-31; 5,34.14-26); and elaboration of events such as Sītā's abduction (3,50).

II B: *Passages where the earlier plot outline has been obscured:*

2,1-30: *Kaikeyī's scheming prevents Rāma's installation as yuva-rāja and causes his exile.*

The original form of the opening of the *Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa* (and therefore of the whole poem) is particularly open to doubt.

2,46-47: *Rāma sends Sumantra back to Ayodhyā with the chariot and bids farewell to Guha. The exiles continue their journey on foot, and cross the Gaṅgā.*

2,65-69: *Bharata returns to Ayodhyā to learn that his father is dead and Rāma has been banished; he rejects Kaikeyī and her scheming.*

3,28-29: *Rāma kills Khara.* The end of 3,27 is complete without this elaboration.

5,1-8: *Hanumān leaps to Laṅkā and searches for Sītā.*

5,12-15: *Hanumān identifies Sītā.*

5,46: *Indrajit captures Hanumān.*

6,23-24: *Sītā, thinking Rāma dead, mourns, but Saramā tells her she has been deceived.*

6,48; 51-53; 55: *Kumbhakarṇa is woken and killed.*

6,87: *The duel between Rāvaṇa and Rāma begins.*

II C: *Lists:*

Lists of trees, flowers and wildlife (2,88.8-10; 2,95.42-43; 3,10.72-74; 3,14.15-18; 3,71.21-22; 4,1.35-40; 4,49.20; 5,2.9-10; 5,12.3) may include species inappropriate to the habitat; lists of *vānaras* and *rākṣasas* (4,32.10-11; 5,5.16-24) include names not found anywhere else in the text, invented for the purpose; there are fanciful lists of craftsmen (2,77.12-15) and ascetics (3,5.2-5; 3,33.15,30). The technique can be used in extended passages of description or narrative, with the poet being carried away by his own rhetoric (2,74: preparation of Bharata's road belies his claim to be in a hurry; 2,85: Bharadvāja's entertainment is utterly inappropriate to host and guests alike); 2,65, Bharata's return route to Ayodhyā, is a more restrained amplification of the first-stage messengers' outward route at 2,62.10-14, and 4,39-42 are little more than extended lists of places to be searched by the *vānaras*.

II D: *Laments, consolations and other speeches:*

3,58.4-34; 3,60: *Rāma laments the loss of Sītā, with frenzied appeals to nature for help.*

Further laments at 4,29 and 6,5.

4,21; 4,23: *Hanumān consoles Tārā over Vālin's death, and Tārā laments* (see III A).

6,23-24: *Sītā laments the apparent death of Rāma, and is consoled by Saramā.*

6,70-71: *Lakṣmaṇa laments the apparent murder of Sītā by Indrajit, and Vibhīṣaṇa consoles Rāma.*

6,80: *Rāvaṇa laments death of Indrajit.*

6,82: *Bereaved rākṣasīs lament loss of their menfolk.* Sympathetic portrayal cf. Tārā (see III A).

6,104: *Sītā laments her repudiation by Rāma.*

6,51-52: *Moralising and tactical speeches by Kumbhakarṇa and Mahodara.*

II E: *Character portrayals:*

2,16.18-19: *Rāma promises to go wherever or do whatever his father commands before he knows what it is:* from the start a picture is built up of the impulsive character of the son of Daśaratha who will offer to help Sugrīva kill Vālin before enquiring into the rights and wrongs of their quarrel (see also I C).

2,47: *Rāma's lament:* (out of character but realistic) can safely enlist the audience's sympathy because they already know he conquers such weakness.

3,8: *Sītā's sermon against violence:* inserted to give Rāma the opportunity to justify his conduct (see III A, III B), this challenge to Rāma paradoxically gives her greater prominence than her role warrants.

III: INTERPRETIVE MODIFICATIONS

III A: *Effect of new moral climate:*

See passages 2,57-58; 4,61; 6,103-4, 106 in section I A.

4,17-18: *Vālin reproaches Rāma.* Rāma's self-justification and Vālin's retraction are equally unconvincing.

4,21; 4,23: *Hanumān consoles Tārā over Vālin's death, and Tārā laments.* The poet seems unconstrained by the positive image he has inherited of Tārā, who is able to remarry, and, like other widows in the first stage, is not inauspicious, but contrives to evoke more sympathy for her, as he or another poet does at 6,82 for the bereaved rākṣasīs.

6,105: *Brahmā discloses Rāma's divine identity.* An attempt at aggrandisement that in fact diminishes the achievement of Rāma the man, out of keeping with all but the most highly developed view of Rāma's status.

6,107: *Daśaratha appears.* A more complete rehabilitation than in 2,57-58.

6,116: *Rāma-rājya.* Building on declarations of Rāma's ability as a ruler found from the first stage (e.g. 2,36.1-7), this new concluding passage reflects the preoccupation with issues of sovereignty to be explored in greater depth in the third-stage *Uttara-kāṇḍa*.

III B: *Purpose of Rāma's life:*

- 2,104.4: *Seers 'eager for the destruction of Rāvaṇa'* persuade Bharata to give in to Rāma's insistence on remaining in exile.
- 3,1.17-20: *Ascetics demand Rāma's protection*, unlike other persecuted ascetics who merely move site (2,108).
- 3,4.19: *Indra predicts that Rāma will accomplish his great task.*
- 3,8: *Sītā's sermon against unprovoked violence* acknowledges (v.8) that Rāma's purpose in coming to the forest is to kill *rākṣasas*. He reinforces this view at 3,9.
- 3,28.2-13; 3,29.9-12: *Rāma reproaches Khara for killing sages*: Rāma's purpose (v.10) is to kill evil-doers; in the first stage it was in self-defence that he had resisted Khara and his armies.

III C: *Didactic elements:*

- 2,94: '*kaccit' sarga*: cf. Mbh 2,5 and Sītā's enquiry after Rāma's welfare at 5,34.14-28.
- 2,100: *Jabāli's materialism.*
- 2,102: *Ikṣvāku genealogy*: cf. Rm 1,69 (virtually identical).
- 3,13: *Jaṭāyūs' genealogy*: cf. Mbh 1,60.54-67.
- 5,33.17-19: *proportions of Rāma's body*: see Goldman and Sutherland Goldman 1996: 438-443.

III D: *Hanumān's role enhanced:*

See John Brockington (*pending*).

- 4,21; 4,28; 4,49; 4,53: *Given a generally more responsible role.*
- 4,65-66: *Jāmbavān encourages Hanumān to make the leap to Laṅkā and Hanumān brags about his ability.* These *sargas* are intended to aggrandise Hanumān, giving him a divine birth-story that turns into reality the earlier metaphor 'Son of the Wind', and explaining his name (both frequently-used and widespread tactics of the oral tradition), but the attempt to enhance his status by introducing the divinely-conferred boons that he cannot be killed by any weapon in battle and that his death can occur only when he wishes it (vv.25-27) in fact detracts from his later military achievement: if he need not fear death the reckless courage he showed in first-stage battles is belittled.
- 5,1: *Leap to Laṅkā.* Exploits become even more extravagant.

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